



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course Name:	History of the Jews in Bohemia and Central Europe
Course Number:	RELI 3002 PRAG
Programs offering course:	CES, CNMJ
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Fall 2019

Course Description

This course examines the Jewish experience in the Czech Lands and the other countries of Central Europe. It touches upon the history of Jews in Russia, in addition to Central Europe, since Russia shares some commonalities with the history of Jews in Poland and the Czech Lands. The course will be of interest to History and/or Jewish or Religious studies students, as well as those who want to learn about the history of the Jewish people in the heart of Europe. It is of interest to US students in particular, as one of the largest Jewish communities worldwide lives in the United States and most North American Jews are of Central or Eastern European decent. The History of Jews in Central Europe is not only a story of prejudice and contempt, but also a story of hope and suffering which culminates in the worst tragedy of the Jewish people in history, the Holocaust. However, the issue of the Holocaust is not principal in this course. This course aims at providing students insights into this most flourishing center of Jewish life of Prague and Central Europe. Students will gain a great deal from excursions to Prague's Jewish Quarter with its famous Jewish cemetery, and to the new Jewish cemetery where Franz Kafka is buried. Further, students will participate in a class excursion. The course will deal partly with some Jewish philosophical ideas and practices, but is not a course in the Jewish Religion.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand Jewish experience in Prague and other Central European centers
- Identify the main obstacles in the life of Central European Jewry
- Contextualize the existence of Jewish population within plurality of cultures in the region
- Discuss the acquainted knowledge about Jewish existence before Auschwitz



Course Prerequisites

A student should have a curiosity and desire to explore Jewish History in Prague and Central Europe using the on-site opportunity to explore real sites and locations and "walk" where this history took place.

Methods of Instruction

Experiential excursions, presentations, group discussions, research

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Presentation on an assigned topic	15%
2. Tests	20%
3. Final paper and presentation	20%
4. Reading checks	20%
5. Class participation	20%
6. Group presentation during a day excursion	5%

Course Requirements

Presentation on an assigned topic

A mandatory 30-40 minutes presentation on an assigned topic. This task includes a PowerPoint presentation with information about the author(s) of the reading(s) used, multiple slides with content presentation with difficult points explained and final slides with questions and polemic points for moderating the debate. Grading takes into account the accuracy in delivering main issues to the class and success in stimulating discussion. Assessed areas are: clarity, delivery, organization and capacity to engage fellow students.

Schedule of presentations will be determined at the beginning of the semester.

Tests

In addition to two tests (dates specified in the Weekly Structure), the study groups prepare and exchange tests on the content of the previous class at the beginning of most classes.

Final paper and presentation

1,500-2,000 words, spacing 1.5 lines. The projects are evaluated according to the quality of research and ability to add your own commentary. The work MUST have resonance with topics and readings covered in class. The topic must be consulted with the lecturer and approved by the lecturer in advance. A presentation of a research paper takes approximately 10-15 minutes.

Reading Checks

There will be ten readings requiring a reading check. Each check is worth up to 10 points. It is part of a consistent preparation for the class. First page - check: Author, title (event/ exhibition,



etc.), year (if relevant). Bullet points with quotes, names, and data. One question for whole class discussion. Second page – reaction: your evaluation, polemics, criticism, etc. Only accepted BEFORE class. Submit by Sunday 10:00 p.m. on Canvas and bring a printed version to the class.

Class Participation

Class participation involves more than mere attendance. A consistent acquaintance with SOURCES and readings is required as well as an active participation in class discussions. Field trip checks include: place(s) visited, time of construction, a text including learned facts. Length: min 500 words. Guest lecture checks: there will be two guest lectures held during the semester. A guest lecture check must include: the name of the Holocaust survivor, bullet points learned, second page: how it was for you.

Group presentation on a day trip

A 30-minute group presentation on an assigned topic. This task includes outdoor presentations. Assessed areas are: clarity, delivery, organization and capacity to engage fellow students.

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy



Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and **all absences are treated equally regardless of reason** for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

90-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 90-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one to two 90-minute classes	up to 10%	no penalty
three 90-minute classes	10.1–15%	reduction of the final grade by 3%
four 90-minute classes	15.1–17%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
five 90-minute classes	17.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning
six and more 90-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

180-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 180-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one 180-minute class	up to 10%	no penalty
two 180-minute classes	10.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
three and more 180-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion



Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student's home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a **course failure**, and **potential program dismissal**. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. **Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.**

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student's presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, **make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances**, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor's note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor's notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however **the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.**

Should a truly **extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), **always contact the Academic Assistant** to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. **Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records.** In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant **within one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.



CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one's own.

The first principle is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an "open book" basis).

The second principle applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

The third principle is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another's work or including information told to you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1	Jews in the Ancient world and in the Middle Ages, Ashkenazim
Week 2	Crusades, medieval antisemitism, status of Jews in the Middle Ages <i>Discussion:</i> Blood Libel and other accusations <i>Sources:</i> Thomas of Monmouth's account of the <i>Life and Miracles of St. William of Norwich</i> (a ritual murder accusation from 1173);

	<p>A ritual murder accusation from Blois, 1171; Accusations of well-poisoning levelled against Jews during the Black Death (c. 1346-52)</p> <p><i>Readings</i> (reading checks due):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Langmuir 1990, 263-281. II. Nirenberg 2013, 183-216. III. Michael 2008, 67-73. <p><i>Presentations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crusades and Blood Libel Accusation 2. Host Desecration and Ritual Murder 3. Black Death
Week 3	<p>Jewish mysticism and Hassidism, Jews in the 17th and 18th centuries</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Potok 1966, 104- 113.</p> <p><i>Reading Check:</i> IV. Tirosh-Samuelson, 2010.</p> <p><i>Presentation:</i> 4. Jewish Mysticism</p> <p>Field trip to the Old-New Synagogue</p>
Class Excursion	<p>Kolín: one of the main centers of Jewish life in Bohemia since the 14th century. The 15th century Jewish cemetery is the second most important one in the country after the Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague.</p> <p><i>Group presentations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Medieval antisemitism and representations of Jews 2) Architecture of a synagogue 3) Maharal and his followers <p><i>Reading:</i> Fiedler 1991, 27-36.</p>
Week 4	<p><i>Sources</i> in: Mendes-Flohr, Reinhartz 1995:</p> <p>The French National Assembly: Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789 The French National Assembly: Debate on Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship, 1789 Moses Mendelsohn, The Right to be Different, 1783 Joseph II: Edict of Tolerance, 1782</p> <p><i>Reading</i> (reading check due):</p>

	<p>V. Laquer 2003. <i>Presentation:</i> 5. Enlightenment and Haskalah</p>
Week 5	<p>Field trip to the Jewish Museum in Prague <i>Reading:</i> Kling 1999, pp. 22-58.</p>
Week 6 <i>Midterm Exam Period</i>	<p>Test 1 <i>Film:</i> Yaakov Lifshin, The Way of Man – on Martin Buber</p>
Week 7 <i>Midterm Exam Period</i>	<p>The Pale of Settlement Jews in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the 19th Century <i>Sources in:</i> Mendes-Flohr, Reinhartz 1995. : Alexander I: Statutes Concerning the Organization of Jews, 1804 Nicholas I: Statutes Regarding the Military Service of Jews, 1827 Nicholas I: Delineation of the Pale of Settlement, 1835 Map of the Jewish Pale of Settlement, 1835-1917 <i>Reading:</i> Beller 2007.</p>
Week 8	<p>19th Century Antisemitism, Zionism, Modern Racial Theories, Blood Libel <i>Sources in:</i> Mendes-Flohr, Reinhartz 1995. : Moses Hess: Returning Home, 1862 The Bilu: Manifesto, 1882 Theodor Herzl: A Solution of the Jewish Question, 1896 The First Zionist Congress: The Basle Program, 1897 N. Tchaykovsky: The Massacre of Jews at Kishniev, 1903 The Beilis Trial, 1913 <i>Reading (reading check due):</i> VI. Bronner 2004, 81-94.</p>
Week 9	<p>Interwar Situation in Central Europe <i>Readings (reading check due):</i> VII. Brustein 2003, 1-48. <i>Presentation:</i> 6. Various aspects of pre-war antisemitism <i>Reading:</i> Mendelsohn 1983, 131-169.</p>
Week 10	<p>The Holocaust <i>Sources in:</i> Mendes-Flohr, Reinhartz, 1995: Hitler 1923. The Nuremberg Laws, 1935, Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor, The Reich Citizenship Law</p>

	<p>Security Service Report on the Kristallnacht, 1938 Decree for the Elimination of the Jews from German Economic Life, 1938 Numerus Nullus in Schools, 1938 Protocols of the Wansee Conference, 1942 Estimated Numbers of Jews Killed by the Nazis <i>Readings (reading checks due):</i> VIII. Peukert 1994, 274-299. IX.&X. Bronner 2000, 1-70. (worth 2 checks) <i>Presentations:</i> 7. Protocols of the Elders of Zion 8. Germany and Colonialism 9. Modernity, Science and the Holocaust 10. Eugenics and Genocides</p> <p>Research paper due on Sunday, 11:59 p.m., Prague time</p>
Week 11	<p>Postwar situation in Central Europe and Jews under Communism Guest lecture: A Holocaust survivor Film screening on Sir Nicholas Winton, Matěj Mináč, The Power of Good</p>
Week 12	<p>Test 2 Field trip: Jerusalem synagogue</p>
Week 13 Final Exam Week	<p>Final presentations of research papers End-of-course discussion</p>

Course Materials

All readings are available on Canvas or provided by the lecturer.

Required readings

- Beller, Steven. *Antisemitism, A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Breuer, Mordechai "The Black Death and Antisemitism", in: Shmuel Almog, ed., *Antisemitism Through the Ages*. Oxford, New York, Pergamon Press, 1988, p. 139-151.
- Bronner, Stephen Eric, *Reclaiming the Enlightenment*, Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Bronner, Stephen Eric, *A Rumor About the Jews, Reflections on Antisemitism and the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2000.
- Brustein, William I. *Roots of Hate, Antisemitism in Europe before the Holocaust*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Evans, Richard J., *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Fiedler, Jiří. "Ghettos, Synagogues and Cemeteries", *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991.
- Kieval, Hillel J. „The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands“, *Languages of Community*. University



- of California Press, 2000.
- Kling, Simcha. *Embracing Judaism*, revised by Carl M. Perkins, New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1999.
- Langmuir, Gavin. "Ritual Cannibalism", *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990.
- Laquer, Walter. "Out of the Ghetto", *The History of Zionism*, Tauris Parke Paperbacks, London, New York, 2003.
- Mendelsohn, Ezra. *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1983.
- Mendes-Flohr, Paul, Reinhartz, Jehuda (ed.), *The Jew in the Modern World. A documentary history*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Michael, Robert, *A History of Catholic Antisemitism, The Dark Side of the Church*, Pallgrave Macmillan, New York, Hampshire, 2008.
- Nirenberg, David. *Antijudaism, the Western Tradition*, Norton, London, New York, 2013.
- Pařík, Arno „From the History of the Jewish Communities in Bohemia and Moravia“, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991.
- Peukert, Detlev J. K. "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science." In David Crew, ed. *Nazism and German Society, 1933-45. Rewriting Histories*. London & New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Potok, Chaim. *The Chosen*. Penguin, London, 1966.
- Tirosh-Samuelson, Hava. "Jewish Mysticism", Judith R. Baskin. Kenneth Seeskin (ed.), *The Cambridge Guide to the Jewish History, Religion and Culture*, 2010, p. 399-423.
- Turda, Marius. *Modernism and Eugenics*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2010.

Electronic resources

Accusations of well-poisoning levelled against Jews during the Black Death (c. 1346-52)

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1348-jewsblackdeath.asp>

A ritual murder accusation from Blois, 1171 -

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1171blois.asp>

Thomas of Monmouth's account of the *Life and Miracles of St. William of Norwich* (a ritual murder accusation from 1173) -

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1173williamnorwich.asp>

Films

- Yaakov Lifshin, *The Way of Man*, Hamsin Productions Ltd., 2015.
- Ages. Oxford, New York, Pergamon Press, 1988, p. 139-151.



- de Gobineau, Joseph. *The Inequality of Human Races, translated by Adrian Collins*. (London: William Heinemann, 1915 [orig., Paris, 1853]).
- Fiedler, Jiří. "Ghettos, Synagogues and Cemeteries", *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991.
- Hoffman, Eva. *Shtetl*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
- Judt, Tony. *From the House of Dead: An Essay on Modern European Memory*. New York, Penguin Books, 2006.
- Kieval, Hillel J. „The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands“, *Languages of Community*. University of California Press, 2000.
- Kling, Simcha. *Embracing Judaism*, revised by Carl M. Perkins, New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1999.
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