**Jews and the City**

**Winter 2021**

**Mondays, 13:30 -15:10, 15:30 – 17:10**

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**Nationalism Studies Program**

**Central European University**

**Jews have been identified with the city to such an extent that they are often described as the quintessential urban dwellers. This course examines the multifaceted and multivalent relationships between Jews and the city, from medieval Europe and North Africa to modern Europe, America and the Middle East. It explores various forms of Jewish urban settlement, from the Venetian *ghetto* and Moroccan *mellah* to the Eastern European *shtetl* and the cosmopolitan metropolis. Jews were not always a predominantly urban people, but they underwent mass urbanization in the nineteenth century, especially in Europe and America. Using documentary sources, belles-lettres and film, this course explores the impact of this urbanization on religious practice, social relations, and patterns of assimilation, paying particular attention to the growing identification of Jews with the charms and vices of the big city. Three cities will be examined in greater detail: Budapest, New York and Tel Aviv. We will also reflect on “cities without Jews,” probing the perceived relationships between Jews and the city that come into sharper focus only with the Jews’ real or imagined absence.**

**Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:**

** Place various forms of Jewish urban settlement in their historical and regional context**

** Discuss the relationship between Jews and modern urban culture**

** Expound on the role of the city in the formation of Jewish stereotypes and Jewish lifeways**

** Examine representations of space in a wide variety of primary sources**

** Develop critical reading skills**

**Requirements: All students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. In addition, all students are required to give a 20-minute class presentation, a 4-6 page (1,000-1,500 word) book review, and a 10-12 page (2,500-3,000 word) research paper.**

**Class Participation: 15%**

**Class Presentation (20 minutes): 15%**

**Book Review (4-5 pages) 20% Due date: February 26**

**Research Paper (10-12 pages): 50% Due date: April 9**

**Week 1 (Jan. 11): Introduction**

**Week 2 (Jan. 18): The City**

Georg Simmel, “The Stranger”

Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life”

J. Rumyaneck, “An Urbanized Community,” *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 38, No. 4 (January 1938), 523-535.

**Week 3 (Jan. 25): The Ghetto**

Benjamin C. Ravid, “From Geographical Realia to Historiographical Symbol: the Odyssey of the Word ‘ghetto’,” in David Ruderman, ed., *Essential Papers in Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (New York: NYU Press, 1992), 373-385.

Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994, Chapter 7 (“Fear of Touching: The Jewish Ghetto in Renaissance Venice”), 212-251.

Brian S. Pullan, "Shakespeare's Shylock: Evidence from Venice," in Bernard D. Cooperman and Barbara Garvin, eds., *The Jews of Italy: Memory and Identity* (Bethesda: University Press of Maryland, 2000), 193-208.

William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I, Scene III.

FILM: *The Merchant of Venice* (2004), directed by Michael Radford (selections).

**Week 4 (Feb. 1): The Mellah**

Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), Chapter 7 (“The Jew as Townsman”), 121-128.

Emily Gottreich, “Rethinking the ‘Islamic City’ from the Perspective of Jewish Space,” *Jewish Social Studies* 11, No. 1 (Fall 2004): 118-146.

Susan Gilson Miller, Attilio Petruccioli and Mauro Bertagnin, “Inscribing Minority Space in the Islamic City: The Jewsih Quarter of Fez (1438-1912),” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (September 2001): 310-327.

William Lempriere, “The Manners and Customs of Moroccan Jewry” and “The Jews of Marrakesh,” in Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1979), 312-316.

Amram Elmaleh, “Beginnings of Westernization and Reform in the Mellah Fez (1913),” in *JMW*, 464.

Albert Memmi, *The Pillar of Salt* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 1-29, 93-103. Originally published in French in 1955.

**Week 5 (Feb. 8): The Shtetl**

Israel Bartal, “Imagined Geography: The Shtetl, Myth and Reality,” in Steven T. Katz, ed., *The Shtetl: New Evaluations* (New York: NYU Press, 2007), 179-192.

Dan Miron, “The Literary Image of the Shtetl,” *Jewish Social Studies*, New Series, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Spring 1995): 1- 43.

Elie Wiesel, “The World of the Shtetl,” in Steven T. Katz, ed., *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, 290-306.

Sholem Aleichem, “The Town of the Little People,” in Sholem Aleichem, *The Old Country* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1946)

FILM: *Fiddler on the Roof* (1971), directed by Norman Jewison (selections)

**Week 6 (Feb. 15): Urbanization and Assimilation**

Steven M. Lowenstein, “Was Urbanization Harmful to Jewish Tradition and Identity in Germany?” in Ezra Mendelsohn, ed., *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*. *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 15 (New York: OUP, 1999), 80-106.

Marsha Rozenblit, “Jewish Assimilation in Habsburg Vienna," in Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein, eds., *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992) 225-245.

Richard I. Cohen, “Nostalgia and ‘Return to the Ghetto’: A Cultural Phenomenon in Western and Central Europe,” in *Assimilation and Community*, 130-155.

Franz Kafka, “My Father’s Bourgeois Judaism (1919),” in *JMW*, 800-801.

Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews of Today* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1913), 98-105

Arthur Ruppin, *The Jewish Fate and the Future* (Macmillan and Co., 1940), 61-73.

**Week 7 (Feb. 22) No Class (National Holiday)**

**Book Review Due: Friday, February 26, 2021**

**Week 8 (March 1): Urbaphobia and Judeophobia**

Hillel Kieval, “Antisemitism and the City: A Beginner’s Guide,” in Ezra Mendelsohn, ed., *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*. *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 15 (New York: OUP, 1999), 3-18.

Judith R. Walkowitz, *The City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1-13, 41-80.

Sander Gilman, *The Jew’s Body* (New York: Routledge, 1991), Chapter 4 (“The Jewish Murderer: Jack the Ripper, Race, and Gender”), 104-127.

Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1905), selections

Max Nordau, “Jewry of Muscle,” in *JMW*, 547-548.

**Week 9 (March 8): Sites of Urban ‘Jewishness’**

1. **The Coffeehouse**

Steven Beller, “’The Jews Belongs in the Coffeehouse’ – Jews, Central Europe and Modernity,” in Charles Ashby et al., eds., *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (New York: Berghan Books, 2013), 50-58.

Francesca Bregoli, *Mediterranean Enlightenment: Livornese Jews, Tuscan Culture, and Eighteenth-Century Reform* (Stanford: SUP, 2014), Chapter 6 (“Coffee and Gambling: Jewish Recreation and ‘National’ Separation”), 152-180.

Scott Ury, “In Kotik’s Corner: Urban Culture, Bourgeois Politics and the Struggle for Jewish Civility in Turn of the Century Eastern Europe,” in Glenn Dyner and François Guesnet, *Warsaw. The Jewish Metropolis. Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 207-226.

Theodor Herzl, *Old New Land* (1902), Chapter 1.

SUGGESTED READING:

Sarah Wobick-Segev, “Buying, Selling, Being, Drinking: Jewish Coffeehouse Consumption in the Long Nineteenth Century,” in Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev, eds., *Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life* (New York: Berghan Books, 2011), 115-134.

John M. Efron, “The ‘Kaftanjude’ and the “Kaffeehausjude’: Two Models of Jewish Insanity. A Discussion of Causes and Cures among German –Jewish Psychiatrists,” *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 37 (1992): 169-188.

1. **The Department Store**

Paul Lerner, *The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880-1940* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 21-55.

Theodor Herzl, *Old New Land* (1902), 95-102.

F. Roderich-Stoltheim, *The Riddle of the Jew’s Success* (1927), 5-9, 120-140.

**Week 10 (March 15): Budapest: ‘Judapest’**

Fredric Bedoire, “Budapest-Judapest,” in *The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture 1830-1930* (Stockholm: KTAV, 2004), 344-375.

Mary Gluck, “The Budapest Flaneur: Urban Modernity, Popular Culture, and the ‘Jewish Question’ in Fin-de-Siècle Hungary,” *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Spring/Summer 2004), 1-22.

Kati Vörös, “How Jewish is Jewish Budapest?” *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Fall 2001), 88-125.

Endre Ady, “Korrobori” (written in 1917, published in 1924)

Dezső Szabó, “Recapturing Budapest” (1921)

SUGGESTED READING:

Miklós Konrád, “Music Halls and Jewish Identities in Budapest at the Turn of the Century,” in Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė and Larisa Lempertienė, eds., *Jewish Space in Central and Eastern Europe: Day-to-Day History* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 143-156.

**Week 11 (March 22): New York: The Promised City**

Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York’s Jews, 1870-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 76-94, 144-168, 258-267.

Eli Lederhendler, “New York City, the Jews, and the ‘Urban Experience’,” in Ezra Mendelsohn, ed., *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*. *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 15 (New York: OUP, 1999), 49-67.

Isaac M. Rubinow, “The Economic Condition of the Russian Jew in New York City (1905),” in *JMW*, 541-542.

Morris Rosenfeld, “The Sweatshop,” in Irving Howe et al., eds., *The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse* (New York: Viking, 1987), 84-85.

Abraham Cahan, *Yekl: A Tale of the New York Ghetto* (New York: D. Appleton, 1896).

FILM: *Hester Street* (1975), directed by Joan Micklin Silver

**Week 12 (March 29): Tel Aviv: The Hebrew City**

Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 3-14, 85-140.

Anat Helman, “Was There Anything Particularly Jewish about ‘The First Hebrew City’?” in Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett and Jonathan Karp, eds., *The Art of Being Jewish in Modern Times* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 116-127.

Hizky Shoham, "Tel-Aviv's Foundation Myth: A Constructive Perspective,” in Maoz Azaryahu and S. Ilan Troen, eds., *Tel-Aviv: The First Century* (Indiana University Press, 2012), 34-59.

Ludwig Levinsohn, “A City Unlike New York,” *Menorah Journal* 11 (April 1925): 167-172.

FILM: *The White City* (1999), film clips from the Spielberg Jewish Film Archives

**Epilogue: The City without Jews**

Ruth Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Chapter 1 (“Cities without Jews”), 3-24.

Hugo Bettauer, *The City Without Jews: A Novel of Our Time* (New York: Bloch, 1926). Originally published in German in 1922.

FILM: *Die Stadt ohne Juden* (1924), directed by H.K. Bresslauer

**Final Paper Due: Friday, April 9, 2017**