The study of Eastern European Jewry has benefited from new interest and new capabilities following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the re-emergence of the independent states of East-Central Europe. The earlier conditions of censorship and restricted access have given way to new scholarly initiatives and renewed support. This course will focus on the following themes:

The specific character of the Jewry of East-Central Europe: their religious, cultural, intellectual, political and economic history

Relations between Jews and non-Jews from the later 18th century through difficult times under a variety of ruling empires up to the most recent developments of independence and the slow revival of Jewish life.

Contemporary attempts to engage the Jewish past by both Jews and non-Jews and their attempts to come to terms with the difficult legacy of the Holocaust.

The course will also explore the nature of the archival resources now available for genealogical research in the context of gaining a deeper understanding of the social and personal history of the Jewish community.

**Required Books:**

**Table of Contents**

1. The Polish-Lithuanian Background to 1750

**Required Reading**

Paul Wexler, 'The Reconstruction of Pre-Ashkenazic Jewish Settlements' in The Slavic Lands in the Light of Linguistic Sources, in Polin pp.3-17

Alexander Gieysztor, 'The Beginnings of Jewish Settlement in the Polish Lands' in The Jews in Poland, pp.15-21

Andrzej Sulima Kaminski, Ch. 1: The East European Rivals in Republic vs. Autocracy, 1993, pp.16-68
Optional Reading


Andrzej Link-Lenczkowski 'The Jewish Population in the Light of the Resolution of Dietines in the Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries', in The Jews in Old Poland, pp.35-43

Gershon Hundert, 'Some Basic Characteristics of the Jewish Experience in Poland', From Shtetl to Socialism, pp. 19-25, also in POLIN, volume 1, pp. 18-35

Mordechai Zalkin, 'Lithuanian Jewry and the Concept of East European Jewry'. POLIN, Vol.25, 2013, pp.57-71

Jewish Population Estimates

Q.

How did the Jews get to Eastern Europe?

Discuss some of the different perspectives in the readings about the nature of Jewish settlement in Eastern Europe

2. Jews and Christians in Early Modern Poland-Lithuania

Required Reading


Moshe Rosman 'A Minority views the Majority: Jewish Attitudes towards the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Interaction with Poles', From Shtetl to Socialism, pp. 39-49, also in POLIN, volume 4, pp. 31-41.

Gershon Hundert, 'The Implications of Jewish Economic Activities for Christian-Jewish Relations in the Polish Commonwealth', The Jews in Poland, pp. 55-63
**Optional Reading**


Jan Malecki, *Jewish Trade at the end of the Sixteenth Century and in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century* in The Jews in Old Poland, pp.267-281

Q.

Pre-partition Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was aä paradise for the nobles, heaven for thyè Jews and hell for the serfs". Do you agree?

Describe the main factors for Jewish economic activity in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth

3. Jewish Autonomous Institutions

**Required Reading**

Jacob Goldberg' *The Privileges granted to Jewish communities of the Polish Commonwealth as a stabilizing factor in Jewish support*, in The Jews in Poland, pp. 31-5

Shmul Ettinger 'The Council of the Four Lands', in The Jews in Old Poland, pp. 93-109

Israel Bartal ' The Pinkas of the Council of the Four Lands', in The Jews in Old Poland, pp. 110-118

Jacob Goldberg' *The Jewish Sejm: its Origins and Functions*, in The Jews in Old Poland, pp. 142-160.
Optional Reading


Shmuel Shilo 'The Individual versus the Community in Jewish Law in pre-eighteenth century Poland', in The Jews in Old Poland, pp. 219-234

Q.

What can we learn about the conditions of Jewish life from the charters of rights issued to Jews?

How effectively did the Jewish autonomous institutions in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth function?

4. Religious and Spiritual Life

Required Reading

Antony Polonsky, 'Introduction', POLIN, Vol. 15 pp. 3-57

Optional Reading


Q.

What were the main characteristics of the Jewish Community in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?

Why was Hasidism so much more successful among the Jews in Poland?

5. Attempts to Transform and Integrate the Jews 1750-1914
Required Reading

Artur Eisenbach, 'At the Close of the Nobelman's Republic', in The Emancipation of the Jews in Poland, 1991, pp. 21-113

Jacob Goldberg, 'The Changes in the Attitude of Polish Society Toward the Jews in the 18th Century', From Shtetl to Socialism, pp. 50-64, also in POLIN, Vol. 1, pp. 35-48

Stanislaw Grodzki, 'The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II', 1772-1790, POLIN, Vol. 12, pp. 61-73

Optional Reading

Theodore R. Weeks Poles, Jews, and Russians, 1863-1914: The Death of Ideal of Assimilation in the Kingdom of Poland, POLIN, Vol. 12, pp. 242-257

Q.

Why were the Jews not emancipated in XVIII c. Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?

What changes came with the Austrain reforms to the Galician Jews?

6. Jewish Shtetls and Towns in the Nineteenth Century

Required Reading


Abraham Ain, 'Swislocz: Portrait of a Shtetl', in Irving Howe, Eliezer Greengerg, Voices from the Yiddish: Essays, Memoirs, Diaries, 1972, pp. 87-108

Optional Reading
Q. How did "traditional" Jews in the Tsarist Empire respond to the challenges they faced in the nineteenth century? What do you understand by Haskala? Critically evaluate its achievements.

7. Women in the Jewish Eastern Europe

**Required Reading**
- Shaul Stampfer, 'Gender Differentiation and Education of the Jewish Woman' in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Europe, From Shtetl to Socialism, pp.168-186; also in POLIN, Volume 7, pp.63-87
- David Biale, 'Eros and Enlightenment:Love against Marriage' in East European Jewish Enlightenment From Shtetl to Socialism, pp.168-186, also in POLIN, volume 1, pp.49-67
- Chaeran Freeze, When Chava Left Home: Gender, Conversion, and the Jewish Family in Tsarist Russia, POLIN Vol. 18, pp.153-189

**Optional Reading**
- Eliyana R. Adler, Women's Education in the Pages of the Russian Jewish Press, POLIN Vol. 18, pp.121-131

Q. What was status and position of Jewish woman in nineteenth century Eastern Europe?

8. The Rise of Jewish Modern Culture and Identity

**Required Reading**
- Benjamin Nathans, 'In the Court of Gentiles in Beyond the Pale' in The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia, 2002, pp.311-383


Optional Reading

Roman Wapinski, 'The Endecja and the Jewish Question', POLIN, Vol. 271-284
Larisa Lempertienè, 'Authentic and National: Some Lithuanian-Jewish Correlations in the Search for "Folk Culture" in the First Half of the Twentieth Century', POLIN, Vol.25, pp.165-183
Justin D.Cammy, 'Tsevorfene bleter: The Emergence of Yung Vilne', POLIN Vol. 14, pp.170-192

Q.
The trends in the transformation of Jewish Identity.

Account for the development of either Hebrew or Yiddish literature in the Russian Empire down to 1914.


Required Reading
Antony Polonsky, The History of Inter-War Poland Today, Survey, 1970, pp.143-159

Optional Reading
Q.
What were Jewish aspirations at the Paris Peace Conference?
Were the National Minority Treaties established to protect Jewish rights?
Did the situation of the Jews deteriorate in new East European countries?

10. War and Holocaust in Eastern Europe

*Required Reading*

Antony Polonsky, Polish-Jewish Relations and the Holocaust, POLIN Vol.4, pp.226-241


*Optional Reading*

Saulius Sužiedėlis, Listen, the Jews are Ruling Us Now: Antisemitism and National Conflict during the First Soviet Occupation of Lithuania, POLIN, Vol. 25, 305-331


Jorg Hackmann, Concepts of German Nationalities Policy in Eastern Europe during the Second World War: The case of Werner Hasselblatt, in Collaboration and Resistance During the Holocaust, 2002, pp.95-111

Aharon Weiss, Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Western Ukraine During the Holocaust in Ukrainian Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective,1988, pp.409-420.

Q.
What accounts for the anti-Jewish violence in 1941?
Could the Soviets have done more to aid the Jews during World War II?
Give an account of the behavior of one of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

11. From the End of the Second World War to the Collapse of the Communist System
Required Reading


Krystyna Kersten and Jerzy Szapiro, The Contexts of so called Jewish Question in Poland After World, Polin, vol.4, 1993, pp.255-267


Optional Readings

Natalia Aleksiun, Where was there a future for Polish Jewry? Bundist and Zionist Polemics in Post-World War II Poland in The Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Bund at 100, 2001, pp. 227-243


Q.
What factors have determined Soviet policy towards the Jews since 1945?
Comment on the Jewish historical heritage under the Soviet rule
Was the Soviet Union oppressive to the Jews?


Required Reading

Saulius Sužiedėlis and Šarūnas Liekis, Conflicting Memories: The Reception of teh Holocaust in Lithuania in Bringing the Dark Past to Light. The Reception of the Holocaust in Post Communist Europe, 2013, pp.319-352


Vytautas Toleikis, Some Remarks on the History of the New Lithuanian Jewish Community: The Road Tracelled in Establishing a Litvak Identity, POLIN Vol. 25, pp.405-417

Optional Reading


John-Paul Hlimka, The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine, Bringing the Dark Past to Light. The Reception of the Holocaust in Post Communist Europe, 2013, pp.626-663

Q.

Give a comparative account of the issues of the Holocaust Memory and Politics in two of the countries.

What explains the present day politics of Holocaust Memory in East European Countries?

Has the end of Communism seen a significant increase in anti-semitism in the countries of Eastern Europe?
Is there a future for the Jews in Eastern Europe?

14. Reflection and assessment of what happened in the course – some summary comments and discussion on accomplishments