[Draft Syllabus]

History 371

[Int]olerance in Eastern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Holocaust

Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Curtis G. Murphy

ICC 597; 687-7801

Office Hours: T/R 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and by appointment
cgm2@georgetown.edu

Introduction

The seminar course will examine the history of religious and ethnic coexistence in Eastern Europe, with a particular focus on the region known as the Pale of Settlement. Established in 1804 as the only legal residence for the Russian Empire’s Jews (the largest Jewish population in the world), the Pale was also home to Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Protestants and Muslims. In World War II, the Pale would become the epicenter of the Holocaust, and the Nazis found no shortage of willing collaborators in their efforts to exterminate the Jews and other “undesirable” populations. Disputes about the culpability of Poles, Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Russians in anti-Semitic violence and ethnic cleansing continue to arouse controversy, and many people associate the region with violent nationalism and intolerance. For hundreds of years, though, inter-religious interaction was largely peaceful, and neighbors crossed confessional and ethnic boundaries on a regular basis. By examining the social and political factors that promoted or undermined cohabitation and cooperation, we can better appreciate the context, in which the extraordinary violence of the twentieth century occurred.

Beginning with an examination of multi-confessional interaction in the Middle Ages, this course will proceed chronologically through the periods of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian Empire, the interwar Nation States to the Holocaust. The readings will include both scholarly studies of Jewish-Christian-Muslim interaction, as well as memoirs, novels and other auto-documents, in which encounters with “the other” as well as “othering” play a prominent role. Students will be encouraged to examine changes in customs and behaviors within communities, as well as political and ideological transformations over the course of several centuries, in order to unlock the motivations behind interethnic cooperation and conflict. We will also consider how representations of the “the other” in both literature and film reinforced or challenged dominant conceptions about inter-ethnic interaction in the region.

This course is a Doyle Seminar, part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, a new campus-wide curricular initiative, and gives faculty the opportunity to enhance the student research component of upper-level seminars that address questions of national, social, cultural, religious, moral, and other forms of difference. The Doyle seminars are intended to deepen student learning about diversity and difference through enhanced research opportunities, interaction with thought leaders, and dialogue with the Georgetown community and beyond.

Format and Requirements
This is a weekly seminar course, which requires attendance and active participation in the discussion of weekly readings. Readings will be assigned for each day’s class, and we will read approximately 200 pages per week. The course will follow a largely chronological format, though thematic issues will take priority of strict periodization. Students will be expected to complete all reading assignments and response papers, which will serve as the basis for general group discussion.

Students will be assessed based on their participation, weekly response papers, a book review assignment, a film review, and a final research paper. On the first day of class, the instructor will distribute guidelines for the weekly response papers and a sign-up sheet for the book review assignments. Guidelines as well as grading rubrics for later assignments will be distributed two weeks prior to the deadline.

You must submit all work on time or you will face penalties of one-third of a letter grade per day for each day late. Late work and missed examinations will only be considered valid with documented evidence of a legitimate excuse.

**Participation**
Attendance is crucial to your success in this course, as we will meet in person only thirteen times. Students are allowed one free absence without consequence, but those who miss two classes without a documented excuse will see their participation score reduced by a letter grade, and a third unexcused absence will lower the participation score by another letter grade. Four unexcused absences will result in a 0 grade for participation (20% of the total).

**Weekly Response Papers**
Students will write a one-page response paper for five of the classes, commenting on the main themes addressed in the reading, as well as posing questions and problems for discussion. The weekly response papers will serve as the basis of a general group discussion. Students may choose the specific five classes, for which they wish to write papers, but no response papers paper will be required for the first day of class, the last day of class, the film review discussion day, or the day on which a student submits a book review.

**Book Review**
Students will write one, five page book review of an academic book dealing with various aspect of interfaith interaction in our region, broadly conceived. Book reviews will address the motivations, biases, and conclusions of a given book, tying the subject into the themes of the course and analyzing the book’s effectiveness. Book reviews will be distributed on a rolling basis over the course of the semester, so that each week a different student will complete a book review assignment and discuss the book in class. The instructor will distribute a list of possible books, as well as a schedule of deadlines, on the first day of class.

**Film Review**
In lieu of class on April 12, students will watch a film from a list provided by the instructor. Students will then write a four-five page review, discussing the film’s historical accuracy, perspective, and effectiveness in addressing interfaith conflict and/or coexistence. We will discuss the films during the subsequent class.


**Research Paper**

Students will write one long, research paper (20 pages for undergraduates, 25 pages for graduate students) based on original research on any topic connected with the course. Students are encouraged to make use of all relevant language abilities in determining a topic. The instructor will provide detailed guidelines, as well as possible topics.

As this is a Doyle seminar, much of the course will focus on developing an appropriate topic and refining outlines and drafts in preparation for the final paper. Students are expected to consult with the instructor prior to finalizing a topic and present a proposed bibliography and outline for the project by February 22. The outline will be worth 5% of your total grade. Drafts of the paper will also be due on a revolving basis, and completion of the draft will count for 10% of your final grade. Some classes will feature external experts who will help students improve their papers.

**Grading**

Rubrics for the presentations and papers will be supplied with the assignments.

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<tr>
<th>Grading Breakdown</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation:</td>
<td>A = 100 – 93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Papers (3% each x 5)</td>
<td>A- = 92 – 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>B+ = 89 – 87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Review</td>
<td>B = 86 – 83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline and Bibliography</td>
<td>B- = 82 – 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft of Final Paper</td>
<td>C+ = 79 – 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper:</td>
<td>C = 76 – 73</td>
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<td>C- = 72 – 70</td>
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<td>D = 66 – 60</td>
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<td>D- = 69 – 67</td>
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<td>F = below 59</td>
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**Academic Integrity and Course Policies**

As per the Georgetown Honor Pledge, students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all aspects of the course. Plagiarism, which includes both claiming another’s work as one’s own and failing to attribute sources properly, will result in a formal report to the Honor Council. In addition, a student demonstrating academic dishonesty on a given assignment will receive a failing mark on the assignment and, possibly, the class. If you have questions or concerns about this issue, please consult the instructor.

If you have a disability, please contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu), which can arrange for an accommodation.

Students are responsible for checking their Georgetown e-mail account regularly, as well as Blackboard, for updates and announcements. Paper assignments, grades, and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

**Required Texts**

Most of the readings for this class will be available as excerpts available on Blackboard or Lauinger Reserves. The following required books have been ordered for the bookstore, though you may obtain them how you wish.
David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (Chicago, 2014)


Glenn Dynner, *Yankel's Tavern: Jews, Liquor and Life in the Kingdom of Poland*

Sholem Aleichem, *Tevye the Dairyman and Motl the Cantor's Son* (Penguin, 2009)


**Schedule of Classes**

**No Class January 11: Only Monday classes meet**

**January 18**

Introduction: Multinational and Interfaith Cohabitation in Eastern Europe: Problems and Perspectives

**January 25**

Others and Othering: Interfaith Interaction in the Medieval World

- Michel Bouchard and Gheorghe Bogdan, “From Barbarian Other to Chosen People: Ideology and Evolution of ‘Nation’ at the Shifting Edge of Medieval Western Christendom”
- David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today*

**February 1**

The Creation of Religious Plurality in Eastern Europe

- Jacob Goldberg, “Introduction” *Jewish Privileges in the Polish Commonwealth*
- Antony Polonsky, *The Jews of Poland and Russia, 1350-1881*, 1-62

**February 8**

Coexistence and Conflict in the City

- Magda Teter, *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland*

**February 15**

Haskalah, Hasidism, and Frankism in the Context of Christian-Jewish Interaction

- *The Autobiography of Solomon Maimon*
- Pawel Maciejko, *The Mixed Multitude: Jakob Frank and the Frankist Movement, 1755-1816*
- Arthur Eisenbach, *The Emancipation of the Jews in Poland*

**February 22**
Inside the Pale: Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Russian Empire
- Adam Mickiewicz, Pan Tadeusz, cantos VI and VII
  “The Statute of 1804;” “Statute on Military Service”
- Glynn Dynner, Yankel’s Tavern: Jews, Liquor and Life in the Kingdom of Poland
- Kelly O’Neill, “Between Subversion and Submission: The Integration of the Crimean Khanate into the Russian Empire”
- Bibliography and Outline Due

March 1
The Shtetl: Myth and Reality
- Sholem Alichem, Tevye the Dairyman
- Antony Polonsky, “The Myth of the Shtetl”
- Ellie Schainker, “Jewish Conversion in an Imperial Context: Confessional Choice and Multiple Baptisms in Nineteenth-Century Russia”

March 6-10: Spring Break

March 15
Pogroms, Anti-Semitism and Blood Libel across the Revolutionary Divide
- Blood Libel in Late Imperial Russia
- Brian Porter, When Nationalism Began to Hate (excerpts)
- John Doyle Klier, Russians, Jews, and the Pogroms of 1881-1882

March 22
Odessa: A Cosmopolitan Alternative?
- Vladimir Jabotnitsky, The Five
- Isaac Babel, “How it Happened in Odessa”
- Charles King, Odessa: Genius and Death in a City of Dreams

March 29
Trapped between the Interwar Nation State and the Friendship of Peoples
- Czeslaw Milosz, Native Realm: A Search for Self-Definition, 91-107
- Theodore Weeks, Vilnius Between Nations 1795-2000, 96-154
- Anna Shternshis, Soviet and Kosher: Jewish Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939, chapters 1-4

April 5
The Holocaust: Culmination or Aberration?
- Tory Kovno Ghetto Diary Excerpts
- Shner-Neshamit, “Jewish-Lithuanian Relations during World War II: History and Rhetoric”
- Marci Shore, “Conversing with Ghosts: Jedwabne, Żydokomuna, and Totalitarianism”
April 12
Break Movie Project

April 19
After the Pale
  • Discussion of Film Reviews
  • Jeffery Veidlinger, *In the Shadows of the Shtetl: Small Town Jewish Life in Soviet Ukraine*

April 26
Discussion of Research Papers