

# JEWISH CULTURE IN PRAGUE

PENN IN PRAGUE, Summer Abroad Program, July 7 – August 13, 2009

Folk 298 @ CERGE, Politických veznu, Prague 1, Czech Republic

Lecturer: Michaela Sidenberg, Curator of Visual Arts at the Jewish Museum in Prague,  
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Lectures: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00-12:30 am & 1:30-3:00 p.m.

For details on the field trips see *Appendix I*

For information on libraries and additional bibliographical information see *Appendix II*

(TENTATIVE SYLLABUS)

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## **WEEK I**

Tuesday – JULY 7, 2009

### **Introduction**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Entry test (no marks)
- b) Introductory remarks on Jewish culture in Czech lands, material/visual culture (Jewish art), historical landmarks and movable property as a historic evidence
- c) Short survey of Jewish history in Czech lands
- d) History of the Jewish Museum in Prague as the Center for Jewish studies in Czech Lands

Afternoon field trip (FT):

- a) THE CITY MUSEUM OF PRAGUE (Jewish history and topography within the urban context of Prague – permanent collection exhibit – historical topography, architecture, and life-style from the mid of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Langweil's model of Prague)
- b) JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE (JMP) Library & Reference Center (orientation)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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Thursday – JULY 9, 2009

### **History, Demography, Topography, and Architecture of Jewish Prague I**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Demography and topography of the Prague Ghetto in the medieval period (from the latter decades of the 13<sup>th</sup> to the first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries)
- b) The ghetto's early architecture & other landmarks

Afternoon FT:

JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE / PRAGUE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Pinkas Synagogue, medieval *mikvah* (ritual bath) excavated in the early 1990s, Old Jewish Cemetery, Old-New Synagogue

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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## **WEEK II**

Tuesday – JULY 14, 2009

### **History, Demography, Topography, and Architecture of Jewish Prague II**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) The Prague Ghetto in the Renaissance period (Prague Jewish community in the times of Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel and his contemporaries: David Gans, Mordechai Maisel, Rivkah bat Meir Tikotin...)
- b) Architecture and artifacts of the period, beginning of Prague Jewish book-printing

Afternoon FT:

THE JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE / PRAGUE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Maisel Synagogue, Old Jewish Cemetery, High Synagogue (meeting with the JMP historian and epigraphist Daniel Polakovic)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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Thursday – JULY 16, 2009

### **History, Demography, Topography, and Architecture of Jewish Prague III**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) The Prague Ghetto in the Baroque period (Prague Jewish community in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, from the expulsion toward the Enlightenment; Messianic movements, the Jews of Prague under the rule of empress Maria Theresa and her son, emperor Joseph II.; Josephinian reforms and their effect on Jewish emancipation)
- b) Toward a new future: 19<sup>th</sup> Century nationalism, process of Jewish emancipation within the context of Czech National Revival
- c) Architecture and artifacts of both periods

Afternoon FT:

THE JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE / PRAGUE JEWISH COMMUNITY  
Architecture of the Emancipation period – Moorish style and the "Fictive Orient:" Spanish Synagogue, Jubilee (Jerusalem) Synagogue

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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## **WEEK III**

**Tuesday – JULY 21, 2009**

### **Jewish Customs and Traditions**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Jewish customs and traditions (course of the Jewish year and the Jewish life-cycle)
- b) Collecting Judaica – ritual objects and objects of "Jewish interest" within a museum environment, typology and classifying of objects

Afternoon FT:

JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE  
Klausen Synagogue, Ceremonial Hall of the *Hevrah Kaddishah* (Burial Brotherhood) of Prague

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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**Thursday – JULY 23, 2009**

### **Mid-Term Exam / Out of the Ghetto Walls**

Morning class @ CERGE:

MID-TERM EXAM

Afternoon FT:

OUT OF THE GHETTO WALLS: Jewish sites outside of the historical district of Josefov – Zizkov & Liben (Zizkov Jewish Cemetery, Liben synagogue, The New Jewish Cemetery at Olsany, The Old Smichov Jewish Cemetery)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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## **WEEK IV**

**Tuesday – JULY 28, 2009**

### **Textiles of Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Jewish ritual textiles – historic survey, typology & terminology
- b) Iconography

Afternoon FT:

JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE

Depository of the textile collection in the Maisel Synagogue (meeting with JMP curator of the textile collection Dana Veselska)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

**Thursday – JULY 30, 2009**

### **Silver of Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Metal ritual objects - historic survey, typology & terminology
- b) Iconography

Afternoon FT:

Depository of the silver and other metal objects collection in the Maisel Synagogue (meeting with JMP curator of the metal collection Jaroslav Kuntos)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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## **WEEK V**

**Tuesday – August 4, 2009**

### **"Booklore:" Hebrew and Jewish Books**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Typology and classification of hand-written material
- b) Jewish book printing in Prague (history and masterpieces, the Prague Haggadah)

- c) Illuminations & illustrations – iconography
- d) Jewish Libraries

Afternoon FT:

JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE / FRANZ KAFKA SOCIETY (FKS)

JMP Library – Collection of Rare Books (meeting with the JMP curator of the manuscript and prints collection Olga Sixtova)

FKS – An attempt for reconstructing Franz Kafka private library (introduced by Marketa Malisova, Director of the FKS)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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**Thursday – August 6, 2009**

### **Dybbuks and Golems**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Folklore, popular beliefs, and superstition
- b) Romantic legends – golem in love
- c) Modernism – human machine – golem as a silent cinematic icon
- d) Postmodern reading of artificial life – art and science

Afternoon FT:

PRAGUE CASTLE: IMPERIAL STABLES

Visiting the special exhibition organized by the Jewish Museum in Prague to commemorate 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Rabbi Jehudah Loew ben Bezalel a.k.a. the Great Maharal of Prague (c.1525 – 1609)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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## **WEEK VI**

**Tuesday – August 11, 2009**

### **No Graven Images? Jewish Icons!**

Morning class @ CERGE:

- a) Jewish Art of the Emancipation and Post-Emancipation Periods
- b) Art in the Ghetto of Terezin (Theresienstadt) 1941-1945

Afternoon FT:

JEWISH MUSEUM IN PRAGUE

Depository of the Visual Arts collection in the Smichov Synagogue (browsing the collection with Michaela Sidenberg, the JMP Visual Arts curator)

Required reading: TBD

Recommended reading: TBD

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**Thursday – August 13, 2009**

**FINAL EXAM**

# APPENDIX I - Field Trips

Location of all sites listed here below as well as other places of potential interest such as kosher restaurants, bus and train stations, etc. can be found at:  
<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105962782077377838.000467b183a2591ca7ea5&ll=50.098725,14.423118&spn=0.016159,0.044546&z=15>

The exact field trip schedule (times & dates) is specified in the syllabus.

**1. Orientation – Library and the Reference Center of the Jewish Museum in Prague**  
Admission fee: -

**2. The City of Prague Museum (CPM) – permanent collection exhibit (2 floors),  
Langweil's Model of Prague**

a) Jewish history and topography within the urban context of Prague (permanent collection exhibit – historical topography, architecture, and life-style from the mid of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Langweil's model of Prague)

Admission fee: 40.00 CZK (approx. \$2.00; reduced fee with ISIC card / students) / individual admission fee – full price: 100.00 CZK (approx. \$5.00)

**3. Josefov – historical district of the "Prague Jewish Town" / Jewish Museum in Prague (JMP) / Jewish Community of Prague**

\* Admission fee (Jewish Museum in Prague): 20.00 CZK (approx. 1.00; special rate for the students of the course only; valid for all JMP sites and for multiple entry)

\*\* Admission fee (Old-New Synagogue): 25.00 CZK (approx. \$1.25; special rate for the students of the course only; valid for all JMP sites and for multiple entry)

3.1 Topography of the Prague Ghetto and its early architecture: Pinkas Synagogue, medieval *mikvah* (ritual bath) excavated in the early 1990s, Old Jewish Cemetery, Old-New Synagogue

Admission fee: \*, \*\*

3.2 Jewish customs and traditions: Klausen Synagogue, Ceremonial Hall of the *Hevrah Kaddishah* (Burial Society) of Prague

Admission fee: \*

3.3 Architecture and artifacts from the life-time of the Great Maharal of Prague: Maisel Synagogue, Old Jewish Cemetery, High Synagogue (meeting with the JMP historian and curator of the Old Jewish Cemetery Daniel Polakovic)

Admission fee: \*

3.4 Toward a new future: Architecture and Artifacts of the Emancipation Period: Spanish Synagogue, Jubilee (Jerusalem) Synagogue

Admission fee: \*

3.5 Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues: Depository of the textile collection of the Jewish Museum in Prague (Maisel Synagogue, meeting with the collection curator Dana Veselska)

Admission fee: -

3.6 Silver from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues: Depository of Silver and other 3D collection items (Maisel Synagogue, meeting with the collection curator Jaroslav Kuntos)

Admission fee: -

3.7 "Booklore:" Manuscripts and Prints from the collection of the Jewish Museum in Prague, Franz Kafka's Private Library (Library of the Jewish Museum in Prague, meeting with the collection curator Olga Sixtova; The Franz Kafka Society – reconstruction of Franz Kafka's private library with an introduction by the Director of the FKS)

Admission fee: 120.00 CZK (approx. \$6.00; FKS)

3.8 Jewish Art: Images of the Emancipation and Post-Emancipation Periods / Art of the Holocaust: Art & Education in the Terezin Ghetto (Smichov Synagogue, with the lecturer and the collection curator Michaela Sidenberg)

Admission fee: -

#### **4. Outside the ghetto walls**

Jewish sites outside of the historical district of Josefov – Zizkov, Liben, Smichov (Zizkov Jewish Cemetery, Jewish Cemetery at Olsany, Liben synagogue, The Old Smichov Jewish Cemetery)

Admission fee: 50.00 CZK (approx. \$2.50; Zizkov Cemetery)

#### **5. The Prague Castle – Imperial Stables**

Visiting the special exhibit *Path of Life: Rabbi Judah Loew ben Bezalel (1525-1609)* organized by the Jewish Museum in Prague to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Rabbi Loew known as the Great Maharal of Prague

Admission fee: 80.00 CZK (approx. \$4.00; reduced fee with ISIC card / students) / individual admission fee – full price: 130.00 CZK (approx. \$7.00)

## APPENDIX II

### Required Reading – Publications

Recommended for purchasing, availability marked by asterisks, see the footnotes

Kieval, Hillel J. *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2000

ISBN 0-520-21410-2

Relevant passages will be reproduced.

Parik, Arno: *Prague Synagogues*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2000

ISBN 80-85608-33-2

\*price: \$18.00

Putik, Alexandr; Sixtova, Olga ed., *History of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia: From the First Settlements Until Emancipation* (Exhibition Guide: The Maisel Synagogue), Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2002

\*price: \$10.00

Frankova, Anita; Hamackova, Vlastimila; Krejcova, Helena; Parik, Arno; Putik, Alexandr, Sedinova, Jirina: *History of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia: From Emancipation to the Present* (Exhibition Guide: The Spanish Synagogue), Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 1999

\*price: \$10.00

Kosakova, Eva; Putik, Alexandr: *Jewish Customs and Traditions: Festivals, the Synagogue and the Course of Life* (Exhibition Guide: The Klausen Synagogue, The Ceremonial Hall of the Burial Society), Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 1998

ISBN 978-80-86889-83-2

\*price: \$10.00

Kosakova Eva ed., *Dictionary of Judaica*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006

ISBN 80-86889-21-1

\*price: \$11.00

\* Available through the Jewish Museum in Prague at <http://www.jewishmuseum.cz/shop/ashop.htm>

Required reading texts excerpted from publications that are out of print will be photocopied and made available in bulk-packs. Recommended reading and pertinent referential titles can be studied in the Jewish Museum in Prague's Library and Reference Center (see the enclosed information).

## Recommended Reading & Reference Literature

Publications listed here below are accessible from the JMP Reference Center and JMP Library; optional purchase of available publications is possible (availability marked by asterisks, see the footnotes)

## **History of the Jews in Bohemia and Moravia**

*The Jews of Czechoslovakia: Historical Studies and Surveys*, Vol. I, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America / New York: Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews, 1968

*The Jews of Czechoslovakia: Historical Studies and Surveys*, Vol. II, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America / New York: Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews, 1971

Dagan, Avigdor; Hirschler, Gertrude; Weiner, Lewis ed., *The Jews of Czechoslovakia: Historical Studies and Surveys*, Vol. III, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America / New York: Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews, 1984

Berger, Natalia ed., *Where Cultures Meet: The Story of the Jews of Czechoslovakia*, Tel Aviv: Beth Hatefutsoth, The Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, 1990, ISBN 965-05-0503-2

Kieval, Hillel J. *The Making of Czech Jewry: National Conflict and Jewish Society in Bohemia, 1870-1918*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988  
ISBN 0-19-504057-0

Kieval, Hillel J. *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2000  
ISBN 0-520-21410-2

\*price: \$50.00 (price for a new hardback at amazon.com)

## **Josefov – The Former Jewish Ghetto of Prague: Topography & Architecture**

Volavkova, Hana: *The Lost Jewish Town of Prague*, Prague: Paseka 2004  
ISBN 80-7185-609-6

Volavkova, Hana: *The Pinkas Synagogue: A Memorial of the Past and of Our Days*, Prague: Statni pedagogicke nakladatelstvi, 1955

Wischnitzer, Rachel: *The Architecture of the European Synagogue*, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1964

Vilimkova, Milada: *The Prague Ghetto*, Prague: Aventinum, 1993  
ISBN 80-85277-83-2

Parik, Arno: *Prague Synagogues*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2000  
ISBN 80-85608-33-2  
\*\*price: \$18.00

Parik, Arno: *Prague Jewish Cemeteries*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2003  
ISBN 80-85608-69-3  
\*\*price: \$18.00

Parik, Arno: *Images of the Prague Ghetto*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2005  
ISBN 80-86889-24-6

Hajkova, Michaela ed., *Ales Vesely: Three Gates – Project for Pinkas Street in Prague*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2005 (exhibition catalogue)

### **Jewish Museum in Prague: History & Collections**

Volavkova, Hana: *The Synagogue Treasures of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague: Sfinx, 1949

Volavkova, Hana: *A Story of the Jewish Museum in Prague*, Prague: Artia, 1968

Altshuler, David ed., *The Precious Legacy*, New York: Summit Books / The Smithsonian Institution, 1983 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN O-671-49448-1

ISBN O-671-49498-8 (pbk.)

Veselska, Magda ed., *Defying the Beast: The Jewish Museum in Prague 1906-1940*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN 80-86889-38-6

\*\*price: \$7.00

Busek, Michal ed., *Hope is on the Next Page: 100 Years of the Library of the Jewish Museum in Prague*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2007 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN 978-80-86889-55-9

\*\*price: \$7.00

Kosakova, Eva ed., *100 Items from the Jewish Museum in Prague: Curators' Choice*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006

ISBN 80-86889-33-5

\*\*price: \$31.00

Kybalova, Ludmila; Kosakova, Eva; Putik, Alexandr ed., *Textiles from Bohemian and Moravian Synagogues from the Collection of the Jewish Museum in Prague*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2003

ISBN 80-85608-65-0

\*\*price: \$50.00

Veselska, Dana ed., *The Second Life of Czech Torah Scrolls: Czech Torah Scrolls and Binders from the Memorial Scrolls Trust in London and the Jewish Museum in Prague*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN 80-86889-41-6

\*\*price: \$7.00

Sixtova, Olga: *From the Scroll*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN 80-86889-32-7

\*\*price: \$7.00

### **Jewish Customs & Traditions**

Dolezelova, Jana; Putik, Alexandr; Sedinova, Jirina: *Jewish Customs and Traditions*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 1994

ISBN 80-85608-10-4

Kosakova, Eva; Putik, Alexandr: *Jewish Customs and Traditions: Festivals, the Synagogue and the Course of Life* (Exhibition Guide: The Klausen Synagogue, The Ceremonial Hall of the Burial Society), Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 1998

ISBN 978-80-86889-83-2

\*\*price: \$10.00

Veselska, Dana: *MAZAL TOV – HODNE STISTI – GOOD LUCK. Jewish Wedding Ceremonies: Past and Present*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006 (exhibition catalogue)

ISBN 80-86889-31-9

\*\*price: \$7.00

Hajkova, Michaela ed., *Melissa Shiff: Reframing Ritual – Postmodern Jewish Wedding*, Prague: Jewish Museum in Prague, 2006 (exhibition catalogue)

\*\*price: \$2.50