



Center for Urban History  
of East Central Europe

**Connecting (to) Histories: Engaging with the Urban Pasts and  
Displaying Jewish Heritage**

**8<sup>th</sup> Summer School  
July 10 – August 4, 2017**

**PROF. MARCIN WODZINSKI**

**SYLLABUS**

**"EAST EUROPEAN JEWS IN MODERN TIMES"**

**LVIV 2017**

**Center for Urban History of East Central Europe**

“Connecting (to) Histories: Engaging with the Urban Pasts and Displaying Jewish Heritage”

8th Summer School

July 10 – August 4, 2017

Marcin Wodziński (Uniwersytet Wrocławski)

**East European Jews in Modern Times**

Syllabus

The course will cover the major development of the East European Jewry from the mid-eighteenth century till the present. More specifically, it will focus on the apparently largest category of modern Jewish history, i.e. modernity itself. The course will start with the discussion of what modernity means in contemporary scholarly discourse, and—more specifically—how it is applied today in historiography of East European Jewry. This introduction will provide a frame for the focus of the course: the analysis of the changing life patters and differing strategies of adopting, rejecting, or negotiating modernity in every-day lives of East European Jews.

1	Jews in Eastern Europe in the Eighteenth Century. On the treshold of modernity
---	--

General theoretical introduction to the subject. What is modernity? How Jewish modernity in Eastern Europe differs, if it does, from the general model? When does it start? The situation of East European Jews in mid-eighteenth century and how ‘modern’ it was.

Literature:

- 1.1. Marcin Wodziński, ‘Modernity and Polish Jews: Recent Developments in Polish-Jewish Historiography’, *Studia Judaica* 19 (2016), 1: 65-86.
- 1.2. Gershon Hundert, *Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century: A Genealogy of Modernity* (Los Angeles, 2004), 1-20.

2	Reformers, Enlighteners, Maskilim. On the paths of modernization
---	--

European Enlightenment and its vision of the new society. Place of the Jewish community in the projected society after reform. Between enlightened reforms and old prejudices. Partitions and their impact on the situation of the East European Jews. Emergence of the Jewish Enlightenment. Alternative paths of Jewish modernity. Non-ideological modernization – what was it? The Haskalah, pseudo-Haskalah, post-Haskalah.

Literature:

- 2.2. Wodziński Marcin, “‘Civil Christians’: Debates on the Reform of the Jews in Poland, 1789--1830’, in Benjamin Nathans and Gabriella Safran (eds.), *Culture Front: Representing Jews in Eastern Europe* (Philadelphia, 2008), 48-76.

3	Anti-Modernist Modernity. The Case of Hasidism
---	--

Hasidim, mitnagdim, and the others. On the composition of traditional segment of the Jewish community in Eastern Europe. What is the Jewish Orthodoxy and when does it emerge? Orthodox reactions to the modernity. What is anti-modernist modernity and how does it work? Fundamentlization.

Literature:

- 3.1. Moshe Rosman, 'Hasidism as a Modern Phenomenon — The Paradox of Modernization without Secularization', *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts/Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 6 (2007), 215-224.

4	On Modern Jewish Politics
---	---------------------------

Is Jewish politics a modern phenomenon? What is modern about it? How does it change and what does it change in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What are the major trends in modern Jewish politics in Eastern Europe?

Literature:

- 4.1. Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (New York–Oxford, 1993), chap. 1.

5	The end and the beginning
---	---------------------------

Two world wars and their effect on East European Jews. Demographic, social, and cultural changes and their far reaching consequences. Jewish religious life during and between the two world wars. Anti-Jewish violence between symbolic exclusion and the Holocaust. Emigration.

Literature:

- 5.1. David Biale, 'A Journey Between Worlds: East European Jewish Culture from the Partitions of Poland to the Holocaust', in David Biale (ed.), *Cultures of the Jews. A New History* (New York, 2002), 799-860.

6	After-Life? Jews in post-Holocaust Poland. 1945 to present
---	--

Periodization of the post-Holocaust Polish-Jewish history. Major turning points, major trends.

Literature:

- 6.1. Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska and Magdalena Ruta, 'From Jewish Culture to Culture about Jews', in Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska and Feliks Tych (ed.), *Jewish Presence in Absence: The Aftermath of the Holocaust in Poland, 1944-2010* (Jerusalem, 2010), 823-846.
- 6.2. Moshe Rosman, 'Categorically Jewish, Distinctly Polish: The Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the New Polish-Jewish Metahistory', *Jewish Studies Internet Journal* 10 (2012), 361–387.