

Charles University, Faculty of Arts East and Central European Studies

Summer 2016

Jewish Art and Architecture

CUFA ART 305

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Classroom: H 203, Hybernská 3, Prague 1

Course Description

The Jewish nation is spread over centuries in multiple parts of the world. Therefore, it is uneasy to talk of specifically Jewish art. Only a synagogue developed into a typical Jewish form of architecture. In the Middle-Ages, Jews were often inspired by existing architecture that they adapted to their needs and thus a specific form was created. The Jews of the Eastern Europe developed their own architectural concepts especially between the 16th and the 18th centuries.

The course examines architecture of synagogues in the Ancient world, the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque period as well as in the contemporary era, alongside with the introduction into the Jewish history, tradition and beliefs. Students learn about the specific features characterizing different architecture styles over centuries and symbolism of architecture used in Jewish prayer rooms.

Classroom lectures are combined with regular field trips and two one-day trips. There is the oldest functioning synagogue in Europe dating from 1200's in Prague. Rich collections of the Jewish museum in Prague house a number of synagogue curtains, silverware and other liturgical objects esp. from the baroque era and the 19th century.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Upon the completion of the course the student will be able to identify specific features of architecture from the ancient world, through the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque period to eclecticism and functionalism. The student will also gain an orientation in Jewish history, tradition and beliefs and ways in which these are reflected in forms of religious objects and shapes of architecture of places of prayer and gathering of Jewish people.

Required Readings

The readings are selected from:

Jiří Fiedler, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991.

Čtíbor Rybar, *Jewish Prague, Guide to the Monuments*, Most 1991.

Eva Kosáková, *Dictionary of Judaica*, Prague 2005.

All readings and presentations are accessible at www.jewsandjudaism.wordpress.com
<https://jewsandjudaism.wordpress.com/>

Recommended Readings

Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol 2-16, Jerusalem 1972.
Jewish Encyclopedia, New York 1906.

Classroom Procedures

Participation extends mere presence. While no prerequisite knowledge of the problematics is required, students are expected to be actively interested in the subject matter. The use of cell phone, computers and other electronic devices is not permitted. Students with disabilities are kindly asked to contact the lecturer in advance.

Assignments and Grading Policy

The lecturer tracks active **participation** during every class with a $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$ or $\sqrt{-}$. Every class starts with a class discussion on the past field trips and readings.

A student is supposed to write a **field trip check** after every field trip due always on the next class, submitted both per e-mail and printed. The first page of the check contains bullet points learnt and highlights of the trip. The second page contains a personal reflexion written in an academic form and a discussion question raised. Student actively searches to complete the parts of information that he or she missed during the field trip prior to raising additional questions.

The **test** is based on short answers.

A student will prepare a **presentation** on a selected topic that must be consulted with the lecturer in advance. Students can work individually or in groups up to three people.

A student can submit an academic **paper**, 2000 words, 1,5 spacing that constitutes 10% of the final grade. The topic must be consulted with the lecturer in advance.

Participation	25%
Field trip checks	25%
Test	20 %
Presentation	20 %
Paper	10 %

Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is mandatory for all students. Absence of 180 minutes is allowed. Three or more absences (90 minutes each) lower the grade automatically (A to A-, A to B+ in case of 4 absences etc.). Students must attend at least 70 % of the course. If a student attends less than 70 % of the class meetings, he or she will receive the final grade 'F' on their transcript.

Presentation Policy: Missing the presentation will result in an F (when applicable). If the student wants to switch the date, he/she must find someone to do it and both students must confirm the change in e-mails to the professor at least 10 days in advance. If the student is sick and has a medical note, then the professor must agree with the student on how the work will be made up for.

Final Test or Paper Policy: Completing the final test or paper is required. Failure to submit the final test or paper according to the deadline will result in a letter grade F for the entire course.

For further details, please see the Attendance Policy at the ECES website under “Academic Policies and Procedures”: <http://eces.ff.cuni.cz/>.

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Student Responsibility and Code of Conduct

Students are subject to the general standards and requirements of Charles University in regard to attendance, examinations, and conduct, as well as to the specific requirements of the program. The student is expected to assume the initiative in completing all requirements at the time specified.

Schedule

Week 1

Ancient world, Middle Ages and Renaissance

June 20, MON, 3:15- 6:00 pm

Synagogue in the Ancient world

Introduction into the Jewish history and tradition. The Jerusalem Temple. Synagogue as a place of gathering. Erec Jisrael and Diaspora.

June 21, TUE, 9- 11:45 am

The Middle Ages

Ashkenazi Jews. Synagogues and cemeteries in "SHUM" in Rhineland. Typology of synagogal architecture in relation to the Prague Altonaue Shul. Old synagogue in Cracow. Renaissance and the leagacy of the Middle Ages in the 16th century architecture.

Required readings:

Arno Pařík, „From the History of the Jewish Communities in Bohemia and Moravia“, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991, p. 5-12.

Jiří Fiedler, “Ghettos, Synagogues and Cemeteries”, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991, p. 27-36.

June 22, WED, 9- 11:45 am

The Old- New Synagogue, Maisel synagogue, Pinkas synagogue

Field trip

Required readings:

Ctibor Rybar, *Jewish Prague, Guide to the Monuments*, Most, Spektrum, 1991, selected chapters.

June 24, FRI

Day trip to Kolín

Historical town with a 13th and 14th century gothic temple of St. Bartholomew, remains of Renaissance castle and noteworthy Baroque houses. The Jewish presence dates to the early 14th century. 15th century Jewish cemetery with remarkable Renaissance and Baroque tombstones. Early baroque synagogue.

Week 2

Rudolph II., Baroque Era, Jewish Liturgical Objects

June 27, MON, 3:15- 6:00 pm

1600's

Golden Era and flowering under Rudolph II., 30 years war and wooden synagogues in Poland, Early Baroque style and famous synagogues and jeshivot in Moravia.

Required reading:

Arno Pařík, „From the History of the Jewish Communities in Bohemia and Moravia“, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991, p. 13-22.

Recommended reading:

Jewish Encyclopedia, New York 1906, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/>

June 28, TUE, 9- 11:45 am

Jews under Habsburgs

Classroom (60 min) : 18th century art and architecture in a historical context

Field trip: a baroque Jewish Cemetery at Prague 3 and the early 20th century Jubilee synagogue in the Jerusalem street. Exhibition on synagogues in Bohemia.

June 29, WED, 9- 11:45 am

Jewish Liturgical Objects

What are a parochet, a kaporet or a vimpl? Sources of Christian liturgy in the Jewish tradition.

Field trip: Klausen synagogue, Chevra kadisha, Old Jewish cemetery

Required readings:

Eva Kosáková, *Dictionary of Judaica*, Prague 2005, selected parts.

Jiří Fiedler, “Ghettos, Synagogues and Cemeteries”, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991, p. 37-40.

Week 3

Day trip to Mořina

July 8, FRI

An 18th century baroque Jewish cemetery in the historical region of the 14th century royal castle at Karlštejn. **Test & Student presentations.**

Week 4

Nationalism and eclecticism, Interwar period and functionalism

July 11, MON, 3:15- 6:00 pm

From eclecticism to functionalism

19th and 20th century art and architecture in a historical context demonstrated on examples of synagogal architecture. Influence of Sephardi architecture.

Possible field trip: Spanish synagogue

Required reading:

Arno Pařík, „From the History of the Jewish Communities in Bohemia and Moravia“, *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Prague 1991, p. 22-26.

July 13, WED, 9- 11:45 am

Field trip

Libeň synagogue at Palmovka and Smíchov synagogue at Anděl. **Student presentations.**