



THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
JEWISH STUDIES PROJECT
AND
NATIONALISM STUDIES PROGRAM

cordially invite you to a lecture by

Dr. David Frey

United States Military Academy at West Point

Lessons on nation and nationalism from wartime Hungarian film

Using the Hungarian film industry as a medium, I will interrogate concepts of nation and nationalism in circulation during the wartime era, when integral nationalism and conformity reigned supreme. My talk will draw lessons about subversion of national narratives by discussing the reasons for a persistence of diversity and hybridity in Hungarian cultural politics. Specifically, I will examine the film establishment's failed attempts to develop a national film style during the Second World War. My talk will begin with a summary of the prewar evolution of the Hungarian film industry, placing it in a comparative Central European context and explaining the centrality of its "Jewish Question." It will discuss the problem of Hungary's semi-authoritarian political system and how it created conflicting imperatives, both weakening and strengthening top-down attempts to centralize and standardize business and aesthetic practices. This bulk of the talk will engage with several specific films as case studies. These purposeful attempts to create a national style will show how Hungary's wartime political economy, its industry politics, and even the micro-politics of production communities caused film to become so politicized that the film community virtually abandoned its quixotic pursuit of a national form, despite the fact that most contemporaries believed that conditions had never been more favorable for realization of this national ideal.

Tuesday, December 4 at 6 p.m.

Nador 11/004

Budapest, 1051 Nádor utca 11.

David Frey is an Associate Professor of History and the Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the United States Military Academy at West Point who earned his Ph.D. in Central European History at Columbia University. I.B. Tauris will publish his manuscript, *Jews, Nazis, and the Cinema of Hungary: The Tragedy of Success, 1929-44*, in 2013. His articles have appeared in numerous journals and edited volumes, including the award-winning *Cinema and the Swastika*. He is presently in Hungary as a Fulbright researching Hungarian-American relations, 1944-51.



A reception will follow