

## INTRODUCTION

This fifth volume of Central European University's Jewish Studies Yearbook provides an overview of the activities of the Jewish Studies Program in the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years.

The Jewish Studies Project at CEU was launched twelve years ago with the aim of revitalizing the study of Jewish history, culture, and society in the region. Since then, we have assembled a staff of full-time and visiting professors, who help attract graduate students wishing to specialize in Jewish Studies in Central and Eastern Europe. These students pursue master's and doctoral degrees at CEU and participate in the university's varied Jewish Studies events.

Among our students, we have Jews and non-Jews, Europeans, Central Asians, and North Americans, all of whom are united by a passionate desire to learn about Jewish history and culture in a region where this was once nearly impossible. Some are seeking to learn about their own heritage, others about the heritage of their neighbors, but all of them are committed to studying in the open, thoughtful, and diverse environment offered by CEU.

Jewish Studies at CEU has developed gradually, with an emphasis on academic quality, regional and international connections, and outreach to the local community. We began in 1996 with a *public lecture series* (now entering its thirteenth year), which is widely attended by students, faculty, and members of the public at large. These lectures, and other articles on Jewish studies, are published in our *Jewish Studies Yearbook*, which has been published biannually for the past eight years. In 2001, we began offering a *Jewish Studies specialization*, which provides our MA and Ph.D. students with a wide range of courses in Jewish history, culture, and society. In the last ten years we have been running several *research projects*, and we have also organized a number of highly successful *conferences*, giving our program the kind of international exposure it needs to develop even further.

### JEWISH STUDIES SPECIALIZATION

Since 2001, we have offered a specialization in Jewish Studies for MA and Ph.D. students. In keeping with the interdisciplinary nature of CEU, the Jewish Studies specialization is offered within the broader framework of the History Department and the Nationalism Studies Program, thereby encouraging students to examine Jewish history, culture, and society in a comparative context, using a wide range of theoretical and methodological tools. Alongside courses in the History Department or Nationalism Studies Program, these students can choose from Jewish Studies courses taught by the permanent faculty, as well as a wide range of courses taught by visiting professors from Israel, North America, and Europe. Our recent courses, which cover the

ramified Jewish experience in Central and Eastern Europe, are listed in Appendix 3.

The permanent faculty consists of András Kovács, Victor Karády, and Michael Laurence Miller. In the 2005–2006 and 2006–2007 academic years, we hosted the following visiting professors: Shlomo Avineri (Hebrew University), Zvi Gitelman (University of Michigan–Ann Arbor), John Klier (University College London), Ivan Sanders (Columbia University), and Frank Stern (University of Vienna). We mourn the untimely passing of Professor Klier (1944–2007), teacher, scholar, mentor, and *mensch*, who did so much on behalf of Jewish Studies in Central and Eastern Europe. This yearbook is dedicated to his memory.

Each year, our Jewish studies courses are attended by more than thirty students, who come from highly diverse backgrounds. In the 2005–2006 and 2006–2007 academic years, these courses were attended by History and Nationalism students from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, and the United States. In this period, seven students completed the Jewish Studies specialization, writing their theses on a wide variety of topics, including Jewish attitudes towards the Polish national question, Jewish identity formation in post-Soviet Kharkov, cognitive approaches to contemporary Hungarian antisemitism, representations of Israel in Soviet caricatures, the decline of the Israeli Left following the Second Intifada, Ukrainian-Jewish relations in post-Soviet Ukrainian historiography. One student wrote a case study of Salaspils, a work camp in Nazi-occupied Latvia, which serves as the basis for a documentary film on the same topic. (For a full list of MA theses, see Appendix 4.) Four of these students have continued their studies since graduating with a Jewish Studies diploma. One is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in the Jewish Studies track in the CEU History Department. The others have pursued advanced degrees at Yeshiva University (Wurzweiler School of Social Work), Harvard University (Department of History), and Oxford University (Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies).

Many of our students from Central and Eastern Europe are supported by a grant from the **Joods Humanitair Fonds (Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund)**, and we are grateful for its support. We are happy to announce a recent grant from the **Chais Family Foundation**, which will fund Jewish Studies students from the former Soviet Union and visiting professors from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. We appreciate the continued support of the **Rothschild Foundation Europe**, whose generous infrastructural grant has helped turn Central European University into the leading institute for advanced Jewish studies in the region.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

In the last two academic years, we have conducted two wide-ranging research projects. The first project, “The Communist Party State and the Jews:

Exploration and Study of Sources," is a continuation of "Jewish Issues in Communist Archives," which was originally launched in 2002. In the last two years, with funding from the **Rothschild Foundation Europe** and the **CEU Research Fund**, we have conducted research in the archives of the former political police, in the Communist Party archives, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives in Budapest and Warsaw. The research team, led by András Kovács, focused on communist state policy towards Israel, and in particular, on the repercussions that the changing policies towards Israel had on domestic policies vis-à-vis the Jewish population in Hungary and Poland, respectively. A selection of these documents are published (in English translation) in the current volume of the CEU Jewish Studies Yearbook.

The second project explores the relationship between anti-Americanism and antisemitism in Austria and Hungary during the last fifteen years. Funded through a joint grant from the **Ford Foundation** and the **Rothschild Foundation Europe**, this project has examined mainstream media publications in both countries. The research team, led by András Kovács and Anton Pelinka, has subjected these publications to a discourse analysis in an effort to isolate and examine the characteristic themes. The research has been completed, and the results are currently being prepared for publication.

#### PUBLIC LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

In the 2005–2006 and 2006–2007 academic years, we hosted twenty-one biweekly public lectures and movie screenings, which attracted an audience from CEU and the public at large. Most of the texts published in this yearbook are edited versions of the lectures given in this period. For a full list of public lectures, see Appendix 1. The lecture series included joint ventures with CEU's Nationalism Studies Program, Gender Studies Department, and the Open Society Archives.

In May 2007, the Jewish Studies Program hosted an international conference, entitled "Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and the Jews of East Central Europe," which was co-organized by Michael L. Miller of CEU and Scott Ury of Tel Aviv University. The conference was co-sponsored (and co-funded) by the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research; Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies, Columbia University; Center for International Studies & Jewish Studies Program, Duke University; Nevzlin Center for Research on Russian and East European Jewry, Hebrew University; Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Institute for the History of Polish Jewry and Israel-Poland Relations, Tel Aviv University; and University of Texas at Dallas. For the full conference program, see Appendix 2. Many of the papers delivered at the conference are scheduled to be published in a special volume of *European Review of History*, *Revue Européenne d'Histoire*, to be edited by Michael L. Miller and Scott Ury.

Our accomplishments in the past decade in general, and in the past two years in particular, have been made possible thanks to the generous support

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of the Rothschild Foundation Europe; the Joods Humanitair Fonds (Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund); the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research; and the Ford Foundation. We are looking forward to our newly launched partnership with the Chais Family Foundation.

*András Kovács, Michael L. Miller*