**Course description**

The past few years have witnessed a remarkable revival of interest in nationalism. A field that was thought to be all but exhausted two decades ago, has become the focus of great intellectual ferment producing an impressive number of strikingly innovative studies and generating much theoretical debate. It is to this debate that we wish to bring the case-study of the Jews. What are the Jews? The nature of their collective identity-religious, racial, ethnic, national- has been the focus of much interest and intense
debate during the last two centuries, up to our very day.

Over the years, Jews and non-Jews, scholars and laymen, have expressed a broad range of views, mostly unambiguous, on the subject. In this course we would like to re-examine the subject of Jewish collective identity and nationalism by turning to the historical record of the past two hundred years. In the spirit of current inquiry we would like to problematize many of the cherished notions not only of Jewish nationalists and their opponents, but also of various theories of nationalism. The Jews can serve as an ideal case-study to test the contrasting notions of such key theoreticians as Hobsbawm, Gellner, Anderson, Armstrong and Smith in the eighties, as well the newer crop of scholars of the nineties. Hopefully, there will emerge from the course a better understanding not only of Jewish history, but also of nationalism.

The **first part** of the course opens with a survey of various theories of nationalism and turns to examine the nature of Jewish collective identity in the pre-modern era. Traditional religious and often mystic ideas, both Jewish and Christian, came to interact with new, secularized conceptions of the Jewish collectivity in the course of the early modern era. These notions became highly problematic in the era of emancipation and integration ushered in with the French Revolution.
How to preserve a legitimate form of Jewish collective identity within the newly emerging nation-states with their exclusivist demands became the overriding concern of the first century of the emancipation era, and even beyond. The initial response was to insist on the religious nature of Jewish identity, denying or "denationalizing" its Jewish national components. This "contraction" permitted Jews in principle to adopt the national identity of their host nations. The interaction of Jews with different forms of European nationalism greatly varied, never remained static, displaying a dynamic over time.

The varieties of nationalisms in several European countries and the evolving Jewish strategies of integration and distinctiveness in the different settings is examined in the **second part**.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of Jewish nationalism, first in Eastern Europe and later in Central and Western Europe. Dissatisfied with the prevailing paradigms of a "confessionalized" Jewishness, a small minority of European Jews sought to construct a national Jewish identity. How this was done in areas as diverse as literature, art, music, even architecture, in both the Diaspora and Palestine is the focus of the **fourth part**.

This construction of a national identity was sharply contested at every turn by a wide spectrum of opponents ranging from liberal assimilationists, traditional and reformed religious leaders, to socialist revolutionaries, the theme of **part three**.

Part **five will** examine in greater depth the interaction of the two great rivals of nationalism in the modern era, religion and socialism.

The **sixth part** will turn to the increasing acceptance of Jewish nationalism after World War I both within Jewish society and the international scene, culminating in the recognition of the Jews as a national minority in Eastern Europe by the Versailles Treaties and the creation of a Jewish National Home in Palestine by the Balfour Declaration and the League of Nations. But this triumph, especially the establishment of the State of Israel, has not put to rest nagging questions on the nature of Jewish identity and the limits of Jewish nationalism, but rather has generated soul-searching in both Israel and the Diaspora.

 **Finally,** the course concludes on a reflective note, re-examining the theme of Jews and theories of nationalism.

Because the course will re-examine the course of Jewish history during the last two centuries from the vantage point of one specific problematique, it will be assumed that even those who are well acquainted with the modern Jewish history or the history of the Jews in their own region, will find much of the material new. Thus the course hopes to satisfy both the advanced student of Jewish history as well as the scholar who is just making his acquaintance with the subject.

The course will be conducted primarily as a series of advanced lectures on a graduate level, but with considerable time set aside for reading primary sources and discussion. Several sessions will be set aside for students' workshops where papers on the theme of the course will be presented and discussed. Students will be encouraged to prepare in advance such papers and applicants for the course should mention their proposed presentations in the application.

There will be intensive reading for the course and students are expected to come prepared for the classes. An extensive reader will be prepared that will also contain further recommended readings.

**Course Calendar**

*I. Jewish Collective Identity from Pre-Modern to Emancipatory Times*
1. Introduction to the Course (Silber)
2. Theories of Nationalism (M. Kovács)
3. Jews and Christians on Jewish Collective Identity in Early Modern Europe  (Cohen)
4. The Emancipatory Offer (Silber)
5. Evolving Patterns of Jewish Collective Identity  (Silber)

*II. The Jewish Encounter with European Nationalisms*
6. German Nationalism (Cohen)
7. French Nationalism (Cohen)
8. Hungarian Nationalism (Silber)
9. Romanian Nationalism (Neumann)
10. Czech and German Nationalism in the Habsburg Lands (Kieval)
11. Russian Nationalism (Stanislawski)
12. Polish Nationalism (Mendelsohn)
13. Jews and the Construction of National Narratives (Mendelsohn)

*III. Jewish Nationalism and its Opponents*
14. The Rise of Jewish Nationalism in Eastern Europe (Stanislawski)
15. The Emergence of Jewish Nationalism in Central and Western Europe (Kieval)
16. Resisting Jewish Nationalism (Stanislawski)
17. Zionism and its Opponents in the West (Kieval)
18. Theoretical Intermission

*IV. Jews and the Creation of National Cultures*
19. Nationalism and Culture (Mendelsohn)
20. Nationalism and Music (Frigyesi)
21. Creating a Jewish National Culture in Palestine (Bartal)
22. Nationalism and Architecture (Klein)

*V. Nationalism and its Rivals*
23. Religion and Jewish Nationalism I (Etkes)
24. Religion and Jewish Nationalism II (Etkes)
25. Socialism and Jewish Nationalism I (Frankel)
26. Socialism and Jewish Nationalism II (Frankel)

*VI. The Dilemmas of a Triumphant Jewish Nationalism*
27. International Recognition in the Interwar Period (Frankel)
28. Zionism and Israel (Bartal)
29. The Conflict over Jewish Identity in Israel (Bartal)
30. Searching for a Diaspora Alternative in Europe (A. Kovács)

*VII. Conclusion*
31. Jews and Theories of Nationalism I (M. Kovács)
32. Jews and Theories of Nationalism II (Silber)

*Other activities*
19 July afternoon: Field trip to the Jewish Museum and Archives (Haraszti & Silber)
22 July afternoon: students' presentations