

Class time: T, Th 11-12:15, 209 Burnham
Professor Stauter-Halsted, 1003 UH
Office hours: Tues. 12:30-2:00 and by appt.
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History 234
History of Poland
Spring Semester 2019

Course objectives. Poland is once again in the news. During the past 30 years, the Poles have transformed their country from a communist regime controlled by the Soviet Union to a democratic society based on a free market economy. More recently, Polish voters have elected a conservative right-wing government that has proposed dramatic changes to the post-communist order. The public has taken to the streets, protesting both in support of and in opposition to these reforms, while the European Union is pressuring Polish leaders to reverse them. All of this has unfolded in an atmosphere of heightened anxiety over the refugee crisis and worldwide terrorism.

This class explores the antecedents of contemporary problems in Poland. It examines the social, political, and cultural history of the Polish lands from the earliest written record in the 10th century to the present day. The course considers the consolidation and expansion of the Polish state in the medieval and early modern periods, the evolution (and decline) of “noble democracy,” repeated foreign incursions and Poland’s changing place in the world. Emphasizing the changing meanings of Polishness over time, we look at the fluctuating boundaries of Polish territory, the shifting membership in the Polish national community, and the diverse population that has comprised this heterogeneous state. Along the way, we consider the role of religious dissenters, the meanings of Sarmatism, and the position of witches, Roma (gypsies), Jews, and other “outsiders” in Polish culture. In the modern period, the course examines Polish refugees and migrants, peasant and worker. Topics also include the Golden Age of Polish culture, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Poland, constitutionalism and the 18th century partitions, the rise of modern nationalism, the construction of democracy during the interwar Second Republic, the impact of the dual Nazi and Soviet occupations, the Nazi Holocaust; Communism and political dissidence, Solidarity and the collapse of the communist system, and the transition to liberal democracy.

This course is not designed to provide fixed answers or a single historical narrative, but rather to pose questions about how historical developments were experienced by people of diverse interests and backgrounds. At the same time, since the class deals with national history, we will look at issues of how national identity and collective memory are constructed.

Requirements. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the following:

- Map quiz (5%) on January 24
- First paper (2 pages) on religion in early modern Poland (15%) due January 31
- Second paper (4-5 pages) on the deluge (20%) due February 19
- Third paper (2 pages) on the Second Republic (15%) due March 21
- Fourth paper (4-5 pages) on WWII (20%) due April 16
- Fifth paper (2 pages) on the communist legacy (15%) due May 2
- Attendance and Participation (10%)
- Extra credit will be awarded for attendance at Polish Studies events on campus

Please complete all assigned readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss them. In addition to large class discussions, we will divide into small groups on occasion to analyze texts in a more focused way.

Extensions on papers will be granted only by prior arrangement and only with a legitimate excuse. You must contact me before the due date if you wish to request an extension.

Required texts (available at UIC Bookstore):

Patrice M. Dabrowski, *Poland: The First Thousand Years* (also available as e-book from the Daley Library)

Marzena Sowa, *Marzi: A Memoir*

Additional readings have been posted on Blackboard and are marked in the syllabus.

Additional Notes:

1. **Plagiarism.** Make sure you understand the definition of plagiarism and that it will not be tolerated in this class. *If you take words from any source, you must use quotation marks and acknowledge the source with proper citation in your footnotes. Even when you use your own words but have borrowed an idea from another source, you must reference it.* Presenting someone else's work as your own can result in the disqualification of your work and a failing grade for this class. It can also result in your being suspended from the University. This is a very serious offense and should be treated that way.
2. **Safe Assign.** All papers must be submitted electronically through Safe Assign on Blackboard before the beginning of the class on the due date AND turned in as hard copy in class.
3. **Late papers.** Late papers drop one-third of a letter grade per day: An A becomes an A- then a B+ then a B.
4. **Electronics.** No laptops or I-pads are permitted in class. I will post power point slides to blackboard the evening before each lecture so that you can use them to take notes. If you have a special reason for needing a computer during class, please speak to me privately. Cell phones should be set to silent and stored away. If you are waiting for an emergency message, please let me know beforehand and sit where you can check your phone without being disruptive.
5. **Common courtesy.** Please come to class on time and wait until class is finished before packing up your things to leave. Students who regularly come in late, text during class, leave to take phone calls, chat merrily with their neighbors during lecture, and are otherwise disrespectful will incur the wrath of the professor. At the very least, I will give you one warning then ask you to leave class.
6. **E-mailing the instructor.** Be aware of appropriate etiquette when e-mailing your instructor. She likes proper salutations (Dear Professor Stauter-Halsted) and signatures (with your full name the first time you write). It is often difficult to determine who wrote an e-mail if it is not signed, especially when it comes from a gmail account.
7. **Religious holidays.** Students who wish to observe their religious holidays should notify me by the second week of the semester of the date when you wish to be absent. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request.
8. **Disability accommodation.** Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to an/or participation in this course must register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 312-413-2183 (v) or 773-649-4535 (VP/Relay) or consult the following: <http://drc.uic.edu/guide-to-accommodations>.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments:

The course outline is tentative and subject to change during the semester. Students are responsible for all changes announced in class.

Week 1 - Reading: Dabrowski, *Poland: The First Thousand Years*, 5-40; Piotr Wandycz, "The Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe: Poland," *American Historical Review* vol. 97, Nr. 4 (1992), 1011-25 (BB).

Jan 15 Introduction to the course. Shape shifting in the Polish lands. The construction of Polish history: whose history is it anyway?

Jan 17 Origin myths and realities. The early Slavs from warlords to monarchs: Piast rule and the Christianization of Poland. *Map quiz guide distributed.*

Week 2 - Reading: Dabrowski, *Poland*, 41-68.

Jan 22 German colonization, Tatar raids, and the Teutonic conquest.

Jan 24 The Union with Lithuania and the beginnings of the Jagiellonian Dynasty.

Map quiz. *Distribute prompts for paper #1.*

Week 3 - Reading: Dabrowski, *Poland*, 69-105; Magda Teter, "Christians on Trial, Jews Expelled," in *Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation*, 157-175 (BB); Michael Ostling, "Healing and Harming," in *Between the Devil and the Host: Imagining Witchcraft in Early Modern Poland*, 107-139 (BB).

Jan 29 The Protestant Reformation, religious dissent and the role of witches in Early-Modern Poland. **Discussion of readings on witchcraft.**

Jan 31 The Counter Reformation. Bona Sforza and the Golden Age of Polish culture.

Paper #1 due in class and online: Religious practices in early modern Poland

Week 4 - Reading: Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia 1350-1881*, 40-67 (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 107-142, 172-227.

Feb 5 Social stratification in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; the role of the Jews; the rise and fall of the Vistula Grain Trade

Feb 7 The Deluge: Foreign policy under the Commonwealth.

Week 5 - Reading: Nathan Hanover, *The Abyss of Despair: Chronicle of the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648-49*, 27-49 (BB); 27; Linda Gordon, *Cossack Rebellions*, 61-97 (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 143-72, 228-270.

Feb 12 **Small group discussion of *The Abyss of Despair* and Linda Gordon chapter.** *Distribute prompts for paper #2.*

Feb 14 Noble democracy or political anarchy? Elected monarchy and its abuses.

**** Poland Now! Lecture: Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, "The Roma Holocaust: Breaking Silence," 4 pm, Institute for the Humanities, Stevenson Hall, Lower Level ****

Week 6 - Reading: Andrzej Nowak, "From Empire Builder to Empire Breaker," *Ab Imperio* 1 (2004): 255-289 (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 228-302.

Feb 19 The End of the Polish Monarchy. The Four-Year Sejm and the May Third Constitution. **Paper #2 due in class and online: The deluge**

Feb 21 The Erasure of Poland: The great powers and the partitions

Week 7 - Reading: Adam Asnyk, “Oh, Void Complaints”; Adam Mickiewicz, “Invocation” (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 303-37.

Feb 26 The Polish Question: Imagining the Polish nation in the long 19th century.
Feb 28 Polish Romanticism and the insurrectionary tradition, 1794-1863.

Week 8 - Reading: Dabrowski, *Poland*, 338-367; Patrice M. Dabrowski, "Constructing a Polish Landscape: The Example of the Carpathian Frontier," *Austrian History Yearbook* 39 (2008): 45-65 (BB); Adam Walaszek, “Preserving or Transforming Role: Migrants and Polish Territory in the Era of Mass Migration,” 101-24 (BB)

Mar 5 The Great Emigration, Realism, reform, trilateralism
Mar 7 Imagined highlanders and mobile peasants. Everyday life in the 19th century countryside. **Discussion of Dabrowski, “Constructing a Polish Landscape” and Walaszek, “Migrants and Polish Territory”**

Week 9 - Reading: Robert Blobaum, “Warsaw’s Forgotten War,” *Remembrance and Solidarity: Studies in 20th Century European History* vol. 2 (March, 2014): 185-207 (BB); Dabrowski, 371-402.

Mar 12 Fin de Siècle: The birth of modern mass politics, industrial development and the movement of people.

Mar 14 From revolution to independence: World War I, and the birth of the Polish Second Republic. Discussion of Blobaum’s “Warsaw’s Forgotten War.”
Distribute prompts for paper #3.

Week 10 - Reading: Konrad Zielinski, “Population Displacement and Citizenship in Poland, 1918-24,” in Nick Baron and Peter Gatrell, *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia, 1918-1924*, 98-118 (BB); Kathryn Ciancia, “Borderland Modernities: Poles, Jews, and Urban Spaces in Interwar Volhynia,” *Journal of Modern History*, 2017 (BB).

Mar 19 The Second Republic and the challenges of the new state.

Mar 21 Ethnic struggles and the turn to the Right. Poland on the eve of the Second World War. Film: *Image Before My Eyes*.

Paper #3 due in class and online: Who was a Pole in the Second Republic?

Spring break, March 23-31 – No Class – Begin reading *Marzi*

Week 11 - Reading: Anna Cienciála, *Katyń: A Crime Without Punishment*, selections (BB); Jan Tomasz Gross, *Polish Society Under German Occupation*, 259-291 (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 404-422.

Apr 2 WWII: The September Campaign, occupation and fourth partition of Poland.

Apr 4 WWII: Resistance, the Holocaust, and ethnic violence.

Week 12 - Reading: Jan Błoński, “The Poor Poles Look at the Ghetto,” including Czesław Miłosz, “A Campo di Fiori,” “A Poor Christian Looks at the Ghetto,” and Dedication, in *My Brother’s Keeper: Recent Debates on the Holocaust*, ed. Antony Polonsky, 34-52 (BB). Continue reading *Marzi*.

- Apr 9 Remembering the Holocaust in Communist Poland. **Group discussion of Miłosz and Jan Błoński readings.** *Distribute prompts for paper #4.*
- Apr 11 The redrawing of Polish borders and postwar population exchanges. The birth of the Polish People's Republic and the solidification of Communist power.

Week 13 - Reading: Katherine Lebow, *Unfinished Utopia*, 44-73; Adam Wążyk, "A Poem for Adults" (BB); Dabrowski, 423-449.

- Apr 16 Whose communism was it anyway? Native communists and the rebuilding of postwar Poland. Screen selections of *Man of Marble*.

- Apr 18 **Paper #4 due in class and online: Commemorating WWII in Poland**
Screen selections from *Interrogation*.

Week 14 - Reading: Finish reading *Marzi*; Adam Michnik, "Why You are not Emigrating," *Letters from Prison*, 16-24 (BB).

- Apr 23 Reform communism and resistance movements. Screening of footage from Warsaw 1968 student movement. The election of a Polish Pope.

- Apr 25 Solidarity and the collapse of communism. *Distribute prompts for paper #5*

Week 15 - Reading: James Traub, "The Party that Wants to Make Poland Great Again," *New York Times*, November 2, 2016 (BB); Dabrowski, *Poland*, 450-457.

- Apr 30 Unity and diversity in the Polish Third Republic: EU Integration; the language of rights; and the legacy of communism.

- May 2 Current social, political, and cultural issues in Poland.
Paper #5 due in class and online: The legacy of communism in contemporary Poland