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The Faculty of Central European Studies at Andrassy University
in cooperation with the Jewish Studies Program at Central European University

cordially invite you to a guest lecture
by

ANNA CICHOPÉK-GAJRAJ
(ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY)

on

A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO THE
POSTWAR HISTORY OF JEWS IN POLAND

Location	Andrassy University Budapest, Österreichbibliothek (Austrian Library)
Date & Time	Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 6:30 pm
Introduction	Ursula Mindler-Steiner (AUB)
Moderator	András Kovács (CEU)
Further Information	Ursula Mindler-Steiner (ursula.mindler@andrassyuni.hu)

With the exception of a few works, scholars of Polish history tend to shun from the broader comparative perspective and they rarely venture outside the national context. As Raymond Grew wrote, "few historians are willing to abandon the benefits of specialization" as it seems that for a comparison to work a historian needs intimate knowledge of at least two societies. Is, then, a comparison worthwhile?

In my presentation, I will compare property restitution in Poland and Slovakia in 1944-1948. I will argue that the problem transcended national borders, becoming a universal obstacle in Jewish attempts at rebuilding life in Eastern Europe after the war. At the same time, a comparative discussion of property restitution shows that East European Jews did attempt to rebuild their lives, reclaim their roles in society, and were willing to fight lengthy battles in order to do so. It also tells us about the complex relationship between the new state ideology and the bottom up attempts of citizens to retain their property rights under the pressures of advancing nationalization.

Anna Cichopek-Gajraj is an Assistant Professor of East European Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Arizona State University (USA).

Organizers:

Andrassy University Budapest, Central European University Budapest

Andrassy Universität Budapest • Pollack Mihály tér 3.

+36 1 266 3101 • uni@andrassyuni.hu

www.andrassyuni.eu



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