

INTRODUCTION

1. General Information

Identity of the Jews from Transylvania in the XX century

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2. Personal information about teacher who submitted the lesson plan

Horațiu Suciu (ratiosuciu@yahoo.com) has a degree in History from the University de Vest from Timișoara, Romania. Currently he is a History teacher and deputy headmaster at Colegiul Național Iulia Hasdeu in Lugoj. Since 2004, he has been particularly interested in teaching about Jewish history and the history of the Holocaust. He is the author of several articles about the history of the Jews from Lugoj and how to teach it in the classroom.

3. Summary

This lesson is an opportunity to make the students understand the situation of the minorities, namely the Jewish minority, who lived in the 20th century South-Eastern Europe, where nationalism soared to alarming levels leading to extremism. The lesson is particularly relevant for its target audience, as it was conceived for a class in which Hungarians, Romanians, Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants study together. The lesson makes use of personal accounts of historic events in order to help the students understand and identify with the characters. The films used in the lesson are: Jewish Soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian Army, Laszlo Nussbaum Europe without Borders and the Centropa interviews with Eva Deutsch.

4. Target audience and the total required time

The target audience are a group of twenty-four 15 to 16 year-old students (10th grade) of a public school. In the four years they attend high-school these students study history 2 hours a week. From the total number of history lessons they study in high-school only three deals with topics related to Jewish history, the problems of the minorities, and the Holocaust.

The estimated time required for teaching this lesson is 50 minutes.

5. List of classroom supplies required

The classroom where the lesson is to be held needs to be equipped with an Internet connected computer and an overhead projector / smart board. It is also recommendable that the teachers prepare DVD versions of the films they intend to use.

- „Jewish Soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian Army” (3, 48 min.)

<http://centropastudent.org/?typ=sprache&fLang=ENG&movID=33&nID=78&q=m>

- „Laszlo Nussbaum „Europe without Borders” (4, 17 min.)

<http://centropastudent.org/?typ=subtitel&fLang=ENG&movID=7&nID=78&q=m>

In case the students do not benefit from an Internet connection at home the teacher should provide printed copies of Centropa interviews with Eva Deutsch <http://centropa.org/?nID=52&countryID=176>. As the interview is rather long, it is recommended that the teacher selects 5-6 pages, keeping from the entire text the elements he/she wishes to emphasise. The students will receive hand-outs and they can also write down the most relevant information.

Other materials required - four maps (wall maps or digital maps): one of South-Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, one illustrating the political situation between 1918 - 1940, another one for the period between 1940-1945, and the last one for the situation after 1945.

6. Subject-related Objectives and Skills-Related Objectives

Subsequent to this lesson the students will be able use the new information and their previous knowledge to better understand the situation of the Jews in Transylvania in the 20th century. The lesson is addressed to students who have already studied the history of Europe (especially that of SE Europe) during

the 19th and 20th century (i.e. World War I, World War II and the interwar period). Consequently, the students have all the knowledge they need to understand the events presented in this lesson.

At the end of the lesson the students will be able to point out what role the territorial and political changes play in shaping national and linguistic identity.

After this lesson the students will have the ability to explain concepts such as *national minority*, *cultural identity* and *majority*.

7. Feedback/Remarks

The lesson can be taught with students who have some knowledge about World War II and the Holocaust. Because of its particular objectives this lesson is much more difficult to be taught in other schools from Romania where the population is much less culturally diverse and much more uniform as far as the inhabitants' nationality is concerned. And it is obvious that it would hardly be understood in countries such as the USA where the concept of *national minority* does not exist, or it does not have the exact same meaning it has in SE Europe. For instance, in Romania for most people a person who speaks Romanian as their mother tongue is "Romanian", whereas a person who speaks Hungarian as their mother tongue is not. Nevertheless, Romanian citizens who speak Hungarian as their first language have been living in this territory for centuries; they have Romanian citizenship and represent 7% of the country's population.

It can, however, be appropriate for European schools teaching students with migrant background.

Lesson plan detail

Part I (15 minutes)

The basic prerequisite of the lesson is that the students have read *Centropa interviews with Eva Deutsch*. The opening stage consists of an open-class discussion between the students and the teacher. The teacher should ask the students several questions about the book:

What impressed you most about Eva Deutsch's story?

Which are the most significant moments of the story and of her life?

How did the political and territorial changes influence the life of this woman?

What do you know about her life in the concentration camps?

Part II (15 minutes)

Thinking about what you have read and using the four maps say to how many countries did Eva Deutsch's town – Marosvásárhely - Târgul Mureş – belong? Explain why?

Read again the fragments below.

„He left home at a very early age and graduated from the teacher training college in Budapest before World War I, sometime in the early 1910s. Then he joined the army and during World War I he fought on the Italian and the Russian fronts. He was a reserve lieutenant there. He was wounded. He had some military medals and I think he had four decorations, including a silver medal, and another one called Palmed Military Cross with Swords.”

„In 1940, everybody was happy that the Hungarians came in. My mother had never really managed to learn proper Romanian; she graduated from a Hungarian school. This change was received with great joy.”

„My husband Gyula Deutsch was born in 1918. At home they talked in Hungarian, but in German too, as everyone in his family spoke German well.”

(Centropa interviews with Eva Deutsch)

Express your opinion on them. In what country did Eva Deutsch and her husband live? What religion were they? What language did they speak at home? What nationality were they and what nationality did they actually feel they were? What is the explanation for this?

Part III (8 minute)

The students are shown the film – „Jewish Soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian Army” (3.48 min.)

<http://centropastudent.org/?typ=sprache&fLang=ENG&movID=33&nID=78&q=m>

After watching the film the students have to say what nationality the Jews from the Austro-Hungarian Empire / Dual Monarchy declare. Do you think they were proud of this? Why?

To what country did our town – Lugoj (Lugos in Hungarian, Lugosh in German) – belong before 1918? In what army did your great-grandparents fight? Which country to the south-east of the Austro-Hungarian Empire / Dual Monarchy fought against it in World War I? Could your great-grandparents have fought against Romania?

Part IV (10 minute)

The students watch Laszlo Nussbaum’s film: “Europe without Borders” (4, 17 min.)

<http://centropastudent.org/?typ=subtitel&fLang=ENG&movID=7&nID=78&q=m>

After watching the film the students point out what nationality the Jews from Transylvania declared after 1918, once the region had become part of Romania. What was their reaction to this change? How did this affect the life of the Deutsch family?

Part V - Home assignments

For homework, write an essay starting from the statements: Keeping in mind what you have learnt today imagine that the borders of Romania were moved overnight and you woke up living in another country. Write an essay about how your life would change considering that you would have to study in a different language at school. Say whether you think the term „national minority” should be replaced in textbooks by that of „Hungarian speaking Romanian citizens” (or make other suggestions) and give arguments to support your opinion. Try to explain why terms such as „minority” and „majority” can have negative/positive connotations.