

Jindřich Toman

Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures
3218 Modern Languages Building
ptydepe@umich.edu

Affiliation

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, University of Michigan (courtesy appointment)

Brief Profile

Trained in Czechoslovakia, Germany and USA, Jindřich Toman follows an academic path defined by languages and cultures of Central and Eastern Europe. In the 1970s and 1980s he focused on linguistics, with special emphasis on Czech and German (see his dissertation *Wortsyntax*, Tübingen: Niemeyer 1983; 2nd ed. 1987), as well as on the history of linguistics in Central and Eastern Europe (see his *The Magic of a Common Language: Mathesius, Jakobson, Trubetzkoy and the Prague Linguistic Circle*, MIT Press 1995).

His subsequent research addresses interfaces of visual culture and cultural history, with topics including Central European avant-gardes and modernist book design (cf. his *Photo/Montage in Print*, Prague 2009). He also co-curated the exhibition of the Czech Surrealist Jindřich Heisler at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2012 (see J. Toman & M. Witkovsky, eds., *Surrealism under Pressure*, Yale UP and Art Institute of Chicago 2012) and an exhibition of interwar Czech design (see J. Toman and Z. Sylvestrová, eds., *Horizonty modernismu*, Brno: Moravská galerie, 2015).

A concurrent research area has been the history of Bohemian Jews, see his monograph *Bohemia's Jews and Their Nineteenth Century* (Karolinum Press, Prague 2023), as well as studies on the Golem legend (Toman 2009a), nineteenth-century Czech anti-Semitism (Toman 2011b, d; Frankl and Toman, eds., 2013), and the Prague Jewish Cemetery (2012a). He also initiated the translation of the Holocaust prose *Colors* by Jiří Weil into English.

His teaching focuses on literary and cultural studies, including undergraduate courses "Prague: The Magic City" (Slavic 150), "Jewish Prague" (Slavic 290), "Arts and Cultures of Central Europe" (Slavic 225), "Modern Czech Literature" (Czech 484) and "Visual Culture of the USSR" (Slavic 470).

Service includes chairing the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures through 1995-2000, and 2001-2004; interim chair W 2015.

During his academic career he has been the recipient of several major awards, including the Alexander-von-Humboldt Research Prize (*A.-v.-Humboldt Forschungspreis*), 2010/2011.

Degrees

MA Germanic and Slavic Philology, Universität Freiburg, 1972
dr. phil. Germanic and Slavic Philology, Universität Köln, 1981

Theses

MA Thesis: *Hugo Ball und der Dadaismus in Zürich*. Universität Freiburg, 1972.
Doctoral diss. *Beiträge zur Wortsyntax: Eine Diskussion ausgewählter Probleme deutscher Wortbildung*.
Universität Köln, 1980. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983; second, enlarged ed. 1987)

Languages

Czech, English, German, Russian

Positions Held in the US

2005- Frankel Center for Judaic Studies (assoc. member; courtesy appointment 2019)
1995- Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, U of Michigan
1990-95 Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, U of Michigan
1987- Center for Russian and East European Studies (associate member)
1987-90 Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, U of Michigan

Major Awards

2017 Michigan Humanities Award, Winter 2017
2014 Fellow, Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies, Fall 2014
2010/11 Alexander-von-Humboldt Research Prize
2007 Center of Russian and East European Studies, U of Michigan: Ronald and Eileen Weiser Professional Development Award, Slovakia
1998/89 IREX Individual Research Grant, Czech Republic

RESEARCH

Current Research Areas—Central European modernism, history of the modern book, history of the photomontage, Bohemian Jewish culture