

UKRAINE AND JEWS

Spring, 2023

Instructor: Professor Dragan Kujundzic

dragan@ufl.edu

JST 4936

LIT3 4930

T | Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)

TH | Period 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 3:50 PM)

Room: TUR 120K (Seminar Room, Center for Jewish Studies)

Office: 1120 Turlington Hall, Center for Jewish Studies

Office Hours, Thursday, 1-2pm in 1120 Turlington, and by appointment

Fascinating literature, art and films have been produced by the Jews living in Ukraine and the territories of Russia and East and Central Europe. The course will discuss these works, sometimes written in Yiddish but deeply steeped in Ukrainian and Russian history, (*Tevye the Dairman* by Sholem Alechem) and watch the films based on them (*Fiddler on the Roof*). Paintings by Marc Chagall will be discussed, as well as writings by Isaak Babel. Films by Serguei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov (Kaufman) will be screened and discussed as well as the politics of Lev Trotsky or Boris Nemtsov. Other figures from East and Central Europe may include the works of Franz Kafka, Paul Celan, or Danilo Kish. Particular accent will be placed on issues of Ukraine Jews, in film and media (Loznitsa, Volodimir Zelenski), in the context of the current Russian aggression on Ukraine. Class will be held in the form of a seminar with active student participation, presentations and class discussions. The class will be held in the form of a seminar with active student participation, presentations and class discussions. The class discussions and presentations will form 30% of the grade, attendance, film screening offline and reports, and class participation and attendance 10%, and one midterm and one final paper 60% (30% each). No final exam. All readings in English, and films with English subtitles. The exact readings will be provided for each class by the instructor over the list serve and/or canvas. No books or textbooks to purchase. There will be however some minor costs involved in streaming films not available in the library, (via Amazon, Hulu). No final exam. The exact readings will be provided for each class by the instructor over a listserve. **The goals: the students will be introduced to the cultural, political and historical conditions of Ukraine and Jews, their life and tradition, and learn to assess and think critically about the major works of literature, film, works of art, politics and philosophy written by the Jews of Russia, the Soviet Union and the post-Soviet period and emigration to Israel and the United States.**

Midterm and Final paper (three single space pages each paper, 30% of grade each), Homework (20%), individual presentations (10%) due on the days indicated in the syllabus and on Canvas. Attendance and participation 10% of the grade. The syllabus may change to accommodate the reading time required and benefit the students. All changes will be announced on Canvas and via list serve in a timely manner.

UF COVID policy:

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of all.

- If you are not vaccinated, please note that vaccines are readily available at no cost. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.

- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated.

- If you are sick, please stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.

- o Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

- o If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities.

Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

Course Evaluation Process:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS AND SCREENINGS

The exact topics, assignment, and format of presentation will be given in class and via email as well as the canvas in a timely manner. The syllabus may be adjusted to accommodate student participation, the rhythm of reading or an ad hoc visited lecture. *Assignments specified and in detail for each class, in class, online and via canvas, each week.*

Tuesday marked as 1
Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)

Thursday marked as 2
Period 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 3:50 PM)

Week one, 01/10-01/12

1 Introduction.

2 *Ukraine and Jews 1*, YouTube Lecture, Henry Abramson.

Screen in class.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=747FyJNfj9w&t=10s>

Read: "Jews of Ukraine, Until 1914" Yevo,

<https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/ukraine>

Screen at home: Parfenov, *Russian Jews, 1*, YouTube, screen at home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfN3yQJxe8E>

Week two, 01/17-01/19

1 Ukraine and Jews, continue discussion. Students report on the reading.

Read: Yivo article, section "1914 to present."

<https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/ukraine>

Screen: *Russian Jews, 2*, Parfenov. YouTube, screen at home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2dgWV63GMc>

2 *Ukraine and Jews, 2*. Abramson, YouTube, **screen in class.**

Week three, 01/24-01/26

1 **Read:** Sholem Aleichem, *The Tevye Stories*, selection and introduction provided by instructor (excerpts); Students discuss the readings individually.

Screen: *Fiddler on the Roof*, Screen, Amazon and elsewhere, UF Library. Discussion.

2 *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Tevye Stories*.

First Group Presentation, Group 1: Parfenov 1 and 2, Yivo. Abramson 1.

Second Group Presentation, Group 2, *Tevye Stories*, *Fiddler on the Roof*

Week four, 01/31-02/02

1 *Laughing in the Darkness*. Conclusion, Sholem Aleichem.

2 **Screen:** Parfenov. *Russian Jews* 3. **Third group presentation, Group 3.** Introduction, Odessa.

Week five, 02/07-02/09

1 Odessa.

Read: Simon Sebag Montefiore, and Vladislav Davidzon, on Odessa.

Isaak Babel, *Odessa Stories* (excerpts) Instructor's introduction

Yivo: *Isaak Babel* (handout)

Screen: Once Upon a Time in Odessa, YouTube, 1-5

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc6_gsWCQfw

2 **Fourth Group Presentation, Group 4,** Odessa (the series 1-5, Babel, Montefiore Davidzon).

Week six, 02/14-02/16

1 Conclusion, Isaak Babel, *Odessa Stories* (excerpts) continue, and *Benia Krik*, stream in class, excerpts, You Tube, available, silent film.

Screen: *Once Upon a Time in Odessa*, Amazon, 6-12; **Screen,** *Benia Krik* (free, YouTube)

Read: Babel, *Odessa Stories*.

2 **Conclusion,** Odessa

Week seven, 02/21-02/23

1 **Discuss,** Europe, Ukraine and Jews, the Holocaust.

2 **Continue discussion,** Europe, Ukraine and Jews, the Holocaust.

Week eight, 02/28-03/02

1 The Holocaust. The Danube, Celan and Heidegger, **Frozen Time, Liquid Memories**, screen in class

2 **Conclude**, Ukraine, Jews and Europe, Lecture, **Frozen Time, Liquid Memories**, part two screen in class

Introduce: Loznitsa, *Babi Yar*

Read: Gessen, *Babi Yar*; Glaser, *Babi Yar*

Week nine, 03/07-03/09

1 **Discuss**, Ukraine and Jews, the Holocaust. Babi Yar.

Screen: *Babi Yar*;

Read: Kuznetsov, *Babi Yar* (excerpts)

Discuss: Sergey, Loznitsa

2 All group presentation and discussion, Loznitsa.

Screen: *Small Jewish Cemetery. Austerlitz*

Screen during the break: *Servant of the People*, Season 1-3, Netflix

Week ten, 03/14-03/16

Spring Break

Week eleven, 03/21-03/23

1 **Midterm Presentations individual and group.**

2 **Midterm presentations, individual and group.**

MIDTERM DUE ONLINE, 03/23 by evening.

Week Twelve, 03/28-03/30

1 Zelenski, Jews, Ukraine Today. Abramson on Zelenski, screen in class.

Read: handouts, TBD

2 **Screen:** *Servant of the People*, the film, in class, clips.

Week thirteen, 04/04-04/06

1 Zelenski, Jews, Ukraine Today, Instructor's lecture

Screen: Zelenski, *Interview with David Letterman* (YouTube, free access)

Read: handouts, TBD

2 Passover, No class

Week fourteen, 04/11-04/13

1 Zelenski, Jews, Ukraine Today, continue, Instructor's lecture

Read: handouts, the war in Ukraine, TBD

2 Discussion, readings, the war in Ukraine, ***all groups combined participation and presentation.***

Week fifteen, 04/18-04/20

1 ***Final project presentations, individual and group***

2 ***Final project presentations, individual and group***

Week sixteen, 04/25

1 Classes End. Concluding remarks. Paper due, April 26 by 17:00.

Scholarship excerpts will be made available by instructor:

1. Avrutin, Eugene. *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.
2. Dubnow, Simon. *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times Until the Present Day*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1916- 1920.
3. Frankel, Jonathan; Zipperstein, Steven, eds. *Assimilation and Community. The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
4. Freeze, ChaeRan. *Jewish Marriage and Divorce in Imperial Russia*. Hanover: University Press of New England for Brandeis University Press, 2002.
5. Gitelman, Zvi. *Century of Ambivalence*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2001.
6. Haberer, Erich. *Jews and Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

7. Lederhendler, Eli. *The Road to Modern Jewish Politics: Political Tradition and Political Reconstruction in the Jewish Community of Tsarist Russia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
8. Litvak, Olga. *Conscription and the Search for Modern Russian Jewry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.
9. Nathans, Benjamin. *Beyond the Pale: the Jewish Encounter With Late Imperial Russia*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.
10. Petrovsky-Shtern, Yohanan. *Jews in the Russian Army, 1827-1917: Drafted Into Modernity*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
11. Stanislawski, Michael. *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews: the Transformation of Jewish Society in Russia, 1825-1855*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983.
11. Stein, Sarah. *Making Jews Modern: the Yiddish and Ladino Press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.
12. Zipperstein, Steven. *The Jews of Odessa: a Cultural History, 1794-1881*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985.

Films (selection) : "Fiddler on the Roof," and "Jewish Luck" (1925) for pre-revolutionary Russia, "Return of Nathan Becker" (1932) - for Soviet transformation, "Commissar" (1966) - for Russian Civil War, and "Everything is Illuminated" (2005) - for the Holocaust and contemporary post-Soviet issues, *Voices from the Booth-* Russian Jews in Israel, *Friends From France--*Russian Jews After Communism.