

**UKRAINE AND JEWS
SPRING, 2024**

Instructor: Professor Dragan Kujundzic

T | Period 8-9 (3:00 PM – 4:55 PM)

TH | Period 9 (4:05 PM – 4:55 PM)

Room: TUR 120K

JST 3930

LIT3 4930

EUS 3930

Office: 1120 Turlington Hall, Center for Jewish Studies Seminar Room

Office Hours, Thursday, 2:00-3:0) PM 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 Holocaust (“Babin Yar”)the current Russian aggression on Ukraine. 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 40% of the grade, attendance, film screening offline and reports, and class participation and attendance 10%, and one midterm and one final paper 50% (25% 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). 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 Ukraine, 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.

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.*

2 Tuesday marked as 2 for Period

T | Period 8-9 (3:00 PM – 4:55 PM)

TH | Period 9 (4:05 PM – 4:55 PM)

1 Thursday marked as 1 for Period

TH | Period 9 (4:05 PM – 4:55 PM)

Week one, 01/9-01/11

2 Introduction.

Read for next class: Vladislav Davidzon, “Ukraine and Jews” handout.

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

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

Discuss, Davidzon

Read: “Jews of Ukraine, Until 1914” Yevo,

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

Week two, 01/16-01/18

2

Introduction and Screen: Parfenov, *Russian Jews, 1*, YouTube,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfN3yQJxe8E>, **finish screening at home.**

Read: Yivo article, section “1914 to present.”

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

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

Discuss: Yivo article, section “1914 to present.”

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

Week three, 01/23-01/25

2 **Introduction and Screen:** *Russian Jews, 2-3*, Parfenov. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2dgWV63GMc>, **finish screening at home.**

1 First Group Presentation, Group 1: Parfenov, Yivo. Abramson 1. Davidzon.

Week three, 01/23-01/25

2 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.

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

Second Group Presentation, Group 2, Tevye Stories

Week four, 01/30-02/01

2 Screen: *Laughing in Darkness*, Library UF online, also YouTube. Instructor's Lecture

1 **Third group presentation, Group 2.** *Laughing in Darkness*

Conclusion, Sholem Aleichem.

Week five, 02/06-02/08

2 Odessa.

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

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

1 **Third Group Presentation, Group 3**, Odessa (the series 1-4, Babel, Montefiore Davidzon).

Week six, 02/13-02/15

2 Ukraine and Jews, the Holocaust. Babi Yar. **Read:** Kuznetsov, *Babi Yar* (excerpts),

Screen: Hewitt, *Ukraine. Holocaust, Ground Zero*,

<https://vimeo.com/863137054>; Loznitsa, *Babi Yar*, screen at home.

Yevtushenko, *Babi Yar*.

1 **Fourth Group Presentation, Group 4.** Babi Yar.

Week seven, 02/20-02/22

2 Ukraine and the Partisan Jewish Resistance; **Screen**, Shumunov, *Berenshtein*; **Loznitsa**, Babi Yar.

1 **Fifth Group Presentation, All group presentation.** Loznitsa, *Babi Yar*, Shumunov, *Berenshtein*

Week eight, 02/27-02/29

2 **Screen:** *Shttl*

1 **Discussion**, *Shttl*

Week nine, 03/05-03/07

2 **Screen:** *Everything is Illuminated*

1 **Discussion**, *Everything is Illuminated*

Week ten, 03/12-03/14

Spring Break

Week eleven, 03/19-03/21

2 **Midterm Presentations individual and group.**

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

MIDTERM DUE ONLINE, 03/21 by evening.

Week Twelve, 03/26-03/28

2 Ukrainian Jews in Israel: *Golda Meir*, screen in class

1 Discussion, *Golda Meir*

Week thirteen, 04/02-04/04

2 Abramson on Zelenski, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9M2eJ5WFR2M>
Servant of the People, start screening.

1 Discussion, Zelensky, *Servant of the People*

Week fourteen, 04/09-04/11

2 Zelensky, Jews, Ukraine Today; **Screen:** Mark Feygin, Vitaly Portnikov (*Why did Putin Become Hitler*). **Read:** handouts, the war in Ukraine, TBD

1 Discussion, readings, the war in Ukraine and Russian instigation of the war against Israel, all groups combined participation and presentation.

Week fifteen, 04/16-04/18

2 Final project presentations, individual and group

1 Final project presentations, individual and group

Concluding remarks

Week sixteen, 04/23 (Passover)

2 Classes End. Paper due, April 25 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. Sergey Loznitsa, *Babi Yar*. Other films to be added as they become available.