

# RUSSIAN JEWS

**FALL 2020**

**JST 4936 / T7, R7-8**

Cross-listed with RUT 3442

**Dragan Kujundzic**

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History of Russian Jews from the Tsarist times, the pogroms, to the modern day and emigration. Fascinating literature, art and films have been produced by the Jews living in Russia and the territories of East and Central Europe. The course will discuss these works, deeply steeped in Russian Tradition (Tevye the Dairman by Sholem Alechem) and watch the films based on them (Fiddler on the Roof, Bennie the Krik). Paintings by Marc Chagall will be discussed, as well as philosophy by Lev Shestov, writings by Isaak Babel, Ilya Ehrenburg, Lydia Ginsburg, Osip Mandelstham or Yosef Brodsky, or the chess player Garry Kasparov and his recent politics. Films by Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov (Kaufman) will be screened and discussed, along with the politics of Lev Trotsky. The class will be held in the form of a seminar with active student participation, presentations and class discussions. The discussions and presentation will form 50% of the grade, attendance 20% and one final paper 30%. No final exam. All readings in English. Taught entirely in English. No prerequisites or knowledge of Russian required.

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**RUT 3422 (0308) Russian and East Central European Jews, T 9–11 (Dr. Dragan Kujundzic) [3]** This course is cross-listed with JST 4936. Taught entirely in English. No prerequisites or knowledge of Russian required. **(Counts toward a Russian major or minor.)**

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

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

**Room: ZOOM**

**JST 4936**

**RUT 3930**

**Office: 1120 Turlington Hall, Center for Jewish Studies**

**Office Hours, Fall 2020, Th. 1-2pm and TBA, Zoom and phone meeting only**

Fascinating literature, art and films have been produced by the Jews living in Russia and the territories of East and Central Europe. The course will discuss these works, sometimes written in Yiddish but deeply steeped in Russian Tradition (*Teveye 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 philosophy by Lev Shestov, writings by Isaak Babel, Ilya Ehrenburg, Lydia Ginsburg, Osip Mandelstham or Yosef Brodsky, or the chess player Garry Kasparov and his recent politics. 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. The 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 20%, and one midterm and one final paper 40% (20% 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 listserv 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. All readings in English. The exact readings will be provided for each class by the instructor over a listserv. **The goals: the students will be introduced to the cultural, political and historical conditions of Russian 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.**

**Midterm and Final paper, three single space pages each paper, due on the days indicated in the syllabus,. Exact topic and format instructions will be given in class and via email in due time.**

**When attending a Zoom class or meeting:**

*Do not share your Zoom classroom link or password with others.*

The Zoom link and password will be provided on the canvas page for this class/or via the list serve for the course.

- Join the Zoom meeting on time or a few minutes early if possible. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class session, and tardiness will be marked.
- Set up and mount the webcam video at the level of your eyes to show your full face. Test the audio of your webcam. *For any technical difficulties, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk (352-392-4357).*  
<https://elearning.ufl.edu/media/elearningufledu/zoom/How-to-Join-a-Meeting.pdf>
- During class session, set yourself on mute unless you want to speak or you are called upon.
- If you want to speak, you can raise your hand (click the “raise hand” button at the center bottom of your screen).
- Your webcam must remain on throughout the class hour. If you have a reason to keep your webcam off, please communicate that reason with me or through the Dean of Students Office.
- As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.
- If you are assigned to a breakout room, enable your webcam and microphone so that your partners may hear and see who they are working with.
- Find a quiet indoor space with stable internet connection to attend class. The study space does not need to be a separate room. The space should be conducive to work, including pair/group work. Make sure you are uninterrupted by other household members, including pets.
- Your professor and classmates can also see what is behind you, so be aware of your surroundings. You may use a virtual background if your device supports this feature. Be sure to avoid using backgrounds that may contain offensive images and language.
- Follow the same rules of respectful interaction as you would in a face-to-face course.
- Alert your instructor as soon as possible if you experience technical difficulties. A “chat” can be sent at any moment during a Zoom session if, for example, you find that your webcam or microphone are not functioning properly.

### For 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/>

Relax and enjoy class! Remote learning presents some challenges but many rewards as well.

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS AND SCREENINGS

### Week one, 09/01-09/03

Fiddler on the Roof. *The Tevye Stories*, selection provided by instructor.

Russian Jews, 1. Parfenov. STREAM, YOUTUBE

*Laughing in Darkness* SCREEN OFFLINE, Library UF

Gitelman, selection.

### Week two, 09/08-09/10

*Tevye the Milkman (Library of Yiddish Classics Edition)* by Sholem

Aleichem (excerpts); *Fiddler on the Roof*, Screen Amazon.

Gitelman, selection.

### Week three, 09/15-09/17

The Soviet Revolution, Russian Jews and Anarchism. Inna Shtakser

*Gitelman; Russian-Jewish Artists*, selection; Chagall

Eisenstein, *October*; *Once Upon a Time in Odessa*, Amazon, stream (1-4).

### Week four, 09/22-09/24

**Babel**, *Odessa Stories* (excerpts) and *Benia Krik*, FILM, STREAM, You Tube, available, silent film.

*Once Upon a Time in Odessa*, Amazon, stream (5-9).

Film and reading

*Gitelman*

**Week five, 09/29-10/01**

The Soviet Revolution, Cinema, Politics and Art 2

*Russian Revolution, the Jews*, Vassily Schedrin

Russian Jews, Parfenov, Part 2, STREAM, YOU TUBE.

Slezkin, *The Jewish Century*, Selection

**Week six, 10/06-10/08**

*Russian Jews 3*, Parfenov, STREAM You Tube

*Gitelman*

**Week seven, 10/13-10/15**

Jews and Jazz, *Jolly Fellows*, STREAM, Lisa Booth

**Week eight, 10/20-10/22**

Amelia Glaser, LECTURE TO CLASS, and student event attendance

**Week nine, 10/27-10/29**

**MIDTERM PAPER PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS AND DUE VIA EMAIL TO INSTRUCTOR**

*Gitelman*, selection

**Week ten 11/03-11/05**

The Holocaust. Poetry of Sutzkever, selection

Film: *Black Honey*, STREAM

**Week eleven 11/10-11/12**

Lara Vapnyar; *There Are Jews in My House*, excerpt; ***The Concert***. UF Library, STREAM

Gitelman, Selection

### **Week Twelve, 11/17-11/19**

*Everything is Illuminated*, UF library STREAM; Film plus Jonathan Safran, novel, excerpts.

Excerpts *Gitelman*, Selection.

### **Week thirteen 11/24, Thanksgiving 1hr**

*Friends From France*, Film, STREAM, Amazon

REFUSENIK Amazon STREAM

### **Week fourteen, 12/01-12/04**

*Russian Jews and Emigration to Israel*; *Svetlana Boym*

*Boym Svetlana*, FILM, Stream

Selection from Boym's work on Hannah Arendt, and Masha Gessen, on Svetlana Boym, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/postscript-svetlana-boym-1959-2015>

## **FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS 1**

### **Week fifteen, 12/08--End of Classes 1 hr**

## **Concluding remarks and FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS 2**

### **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.