Spring 2014, WYLLIS 114

Magda Teter, 204 Allbritton; Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:30-3pm, Wednesday, 9-10:30, or by appointment (email: mteter@wesleyan.edu)

HIST267: East European Jewish History

This course offers Jewish history in Eastern Europe that takes us beyond the (legendary) shtetl and into a complex, more textured world of Jews living among Christians from the beginnings of Jewish settlement in the thirteenth century to the contemporary period and Poland's small Jewish community, trying to reinvent Jewish life in Poland in the aftermath of the Holocaust and the 1968 forced migrations.

Descendants of East European Jews are now the largest demographic group among Jews in the United States, they were crucial in shaping American culture and media. But until the Second World War, Jews in Eastern Europe were the largest Jewish community in the world. From the 16th century, their impact on Jewish culture and society has been tremendous, from shaping one of the most important codes of Jewish law, the Shulhan Arukh, in the 16th/17th centuries, to shaping the ideology of the Zionist movement at the turn of the 20th century. Yet, the history of this important Jewish community has been vastly misunderstood, largely due to the devastating legacy of the Holocaust and the persistence of imagery of "the shtetl" created by 19th- and early 20th-century writers of Yiddish fiction, later popularized through Broadway plays and films such as "Fiddler on the Roof."

Films and additional lectures and workshops will be part of the class.

This is a "service-learning" course. One of the assignments will be related to the collection of Judaica from eastern Europe at the Adath Israel Congregation in Middletown. Students will be part of a workshop on Jewish art and material culture and will investigate the material aspects of Jewish culture.

SCHEDULE

Week 1:
1. Thursday 01/23 Introduction: East European Jewish History

Week 2:

2. Tuesday 01/28: The Image of the Shtetl
   - "Mendele: The Call" in A Treasury of Yiddish Stories, 97-111;
   - I.L. Peretz "Bontche Shvayg" and "The Dead Town" in The I.L. Peretz Reader, 146-152; 162-171.
3. Thursday 01/30: The beginnings

- **S. Dubnow** History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, pp. 1-16;
- **Omelijan Pristak** "The Pre-Ashkenazic Jews of Eastern Europe in Relation to the Khazars, the Rus' and the Lithuanians" in Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective, pp. 3-21,
- **Primary Sources**: Polish and Jewish Legends (on Moodle)


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4. Tuesday 02/04: Jewish status in Medieval Poland

- **Dubnow** History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, pp. 16-45;
- **Baron** SRHJ vol. XVI, pp. 120-163;
- **Maurycey Horn**, "Jewish Jurisdiction's dependence on Royal Power in Poland and Lithuania up to 1548" Acta Poloniae Historica [Poland] 1997 (76): 5-17.
- Privilege of Boleslav the Pious of 1264 (on Moodle).
- **Primary Sources**: Royal privilege of 1453 on www.earlymodern.org; Privilege for the Jews of the Przemysł Region and Rus', Privilege for the Jews of Lw? presented by Adam Teller in Summer 2008


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5. Thursday 02/06: The Catholic Church and the Jews

- **Dubnow** History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, pp.82-87
- **Early Church decrees regarding Jews in Poland**
Week 4

6. Tuesday 02/11: Jews, the Nobles, and the Economy
   - Teter, *Jews and Heretics*, chapter 5
   - Primary Sources:
     - Nathan Nata Hanover, *Abyss of Despair*, 23-86
     - [Jampol private privilege of 1711](#) presented by Adam Teller in Summer 2004 and
     - [1711 Lithuanian Tribunal Decree](#) presented by Magda Teter in the Summer of 2005
     - [The Will of Todros Kozuchowski](#) (1647) translated by Moshe Rosman in 2006 at the [www.earlymodern.org](http://www.earlymodern.org)


First paper assignment announced

7. Thursday 02/13 The Changing Political and Religious Landscape
   - Teter, *Jews and Heretics*, chapters 2-3

Primary Sources:
   - Martin Luther on Jews; "That Jesus Christ was born a Jew"; and "On Jews and Their Lies"
   - [Papal Bull "Cum Nimis Absurdum,"](#)
   - Selections from *Hizzuk Emunah (Strengthening of the Faith)* by Isaac of Troki; introduction, ch 1-5, 9

12-1 Allbritton 204 LIBRARY RESOURCES WORKSHOP (lunch sandwiches will be served).

Week 5

8. Tuesday 02/18 Daily Life: Jewish-Christian Relations
   - Fram, *Ideals Face Reality*, chapter 1
   - Teter, *Jews and Heretics*, chapter 4

• Primary Sources: *Trials of two converts to Judaism in Dubno 1716* presented by Magda Teter at the [www.earlymodern.org](http://www.earlymodern.org) website

9. Thursday 02/20 Jews and the Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation in Poland: Between Ideology and Pragmatism:
   • Teter, *Jews and Heretics*, chapters 6-7
   • Kalik "Patterns of Contact between the Catholic Church and the Jews in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: The Jewish Debts" in *Studies in the History of the Jews in Old Poland in Honor of Jacob Goldberg*, pp.102-122

   • Primary Sources:
     - *Church Robbery and Host Desecration* (click on DOWNLOAD to read the texts)
     - *Pope Benedict XIV's bull of 1751 "A Quo Primum"


**First assignment DUE: Friday 02/21 at 3pm**

Week 6:

10. Tuesday 02/25 Jewish Community and Culture in Pre-Modern Poland I: Rabbis and the Formal Community
    • Fram, *Ideals Face Reality*, "Introduction" and chapters 2--4, pp. 1-12, 38-105
    • Magda Teter, "There Should Be No Love Between Us and Them"
    • Primary Sources: Nathan Nata Hanover, *Abyss of Despair*, chapter 16, pp.110-121; Community ordinances of Cracow (1595), Ordinance of Poznań (1686), A Responsum by Rabbi Isaac the Great of Poznań on [www.earlymodern.org](http://www.earlymodern.org)

11. Thursday 02/27 Jewish Community and Culture in Pre-Modern Poland II:
Women and Popular Culture
- Moshe Rosman, "The History of Women in Early Modern Poland" in *Jewish Women in Eastern Europe*, Polin 18, pp. 25-56
- **Primary Sources:** *A Book of Women's Commandments, Hillel Baal Shem* on www.earlymodern.org

12. Tuesday 03/04 Adath Israel Museum Workshop - we will meet at the Adath Israel, Broad Street.
- *Vivian Mann,* Jewish Ceremonial and Decorative Arts, *YIVO Encyclopedia.*
- **Image of a Jewish betrothal ring at the Met**

13. Thursday 03/06 Visit to Adath Israel: We will look again at the collection and discuss our options for the exhibition. We will photograph the objects, and measure them. We will begin to collect preliminary material for our object description. If more time will be necessary we will schedule another section to finish our work.

**First assignment (final revised version) DUE: Friday 03/07 at 4pm**

**03/07-03/24 SPRING BREAK**

**MIDTERM announced 03/24, 7am**

14. Tuesday 03/25 Polish Partitions and the Rise of New Jewries: Political Status
- *Israel Bartal,* *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881,* chapters 2-3, 5-6
- *Franz Szabo,* "Austrian First Impressions of Ethnic Relations in Galicia" in *Focusing on Galicia: Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians 1772-1918,* Polin 12, 49-60
- **Primary Sources:** *Texts nos. 2-4 in Chapter VII "East European Jewry" in* *Jew in the Modern World*; Edict of Toleration 1782 (moodle).

15. Thursday 03/27 NO CLASS-WORK ON YOUR MIDTERM AND START WORKING ON YOUR OBJECT DESCRIPTION

**MIDTERM DUE: Friday 03/28 at 3pm**

16. Tuesday 04/01 Jewish Culture: the Enlightenment and Modernity
- *Israel Bartal,* *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881,* chapters 8-9

• **Primary Sources**: Texts nos. 6-9, 16-20 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World*

17. Thursday 04/03 Trip to NEW YORK, details TBA.*Let me know if I should contact your instructors to let you be absent on that day.*

18. Tuesday 04/08 Jewish Culture: Orthodoxy, East vs. West
• Moshe Rosman, *Essential Papers on Hasidism*, 209-225
• Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881*, chapters 4, 10-11
• **Primary Sources**: Texts nos. 10-15 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World*; and *In Praise of Baal Shem Tov* (1814)

19. Thursday 04/10 Jewish Culture: Economic Life
• Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881*, chapter 3
• Rebecca Kobrin, *Jewish Bialystok and Its Diaspora*, chapter 1

**Extra credit opportunity: Lecture by Adam Mintz, 4:15 pm, TBA**

**Object description due, Friday, 04/11 at 3 pm**

20. Tuesday 04/15 Secular Identity: Diaspora Nationalism and Socialism
• **Primary Sources**: Texts nos. 21, 30-31, 33-34 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World* and text no. 12 in Chapter V; S. Dubnow "The Doctrine of Jewish Nationalism," *Jews as a Spiritual (Cultural-Historical) Nationality in the Midst of Political Nations,*

21. Thursday 04/17 Nationalism: Zionism
• Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe 1772-1881*, chapters 12-13
• **Primary Sources**: Texts nos. 23-25, 27, 32 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World* and texts no. 1, 5, 12, 14, 16-17 in Chapter X "Zionism"
• Hayim Nachman Bialik “The City of Slaughter.”

**Contextual/historical essay about the object due Monday 04/21 at 3 pm**

22. Tuesday 04/22 Jews in the Soviet Union
• Zvi Gitelman, *Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union*, ch. 2
• **Primary Sources:** Texts nos. 35-38, 40, 43 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World*

23. Thursday 04/24 Poland between Wars
- Kobrin, *Jewish Bialystok*, chapters 2-3
- Eva Plach, "Feminism and Nationalism on the Pages of Ewa 1928-1933" in *Jewish Women in Eastern Europe*, Polin 18, 241-262
- **Primary Sources:** Texts nos. 39, 41-42 in Chapter VIII "East European Jewry" in *Jew in the Modern World*; *Awakening Lives*, ch. 12 "Esther" and 13 "J. Harefuler"
- Film "Jewish Life in Bialystok" (10 min, on YouTube)

**Required Lecture:** MONDAY, April 28: Samuel Kassow: "The Secret Archive in the Warsaw Ghetto" 8pm

24. Tuesday 04/29 WWII:
- Jan Gross, *Fear*, chapter 1 "Poland Abandoned"
- Zvi Gitelman, *Century of Ambivalence*, ch. 4 "The Holocaust"
- **Primary Sources:** Texts nos. 24-29, 31-35 in Chapter XI "The Holocaust" in *Jew in the Modern World*

25. Thursday 05/01 Jews in Eastern Europe after WWII
- Jan Gross, *Fear*, chapter 2 "The Unwelcoming of Jewish Survivors"
- Kobrin, *Jewish Bialystok*, chapter 5
- **Primary Sources:** Memoir of Michal Friedman

**Final revised object assignment due Friday 05/02 at 3pm**

26. Tuesday 05/06 Jews in Eastern Europe--A Reassessment: History and Memory

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**HIST267: East European Jewish History**

**All work in the course is done under the Honor Code.** Cases will be brought to the Honor Board, should questions concerning potential, or actual, violation of the Honor Code arise

**Students' Rights:**
- To express their ideas freely, while being respectful to others.
- To meet with me during office hours to discuss issues related to the course or students' performance in the classroom.
- To make an appointment outside office hours (via email).
- To know their grade at any give time during the semester.
- To give me feedback throughout the duration of the semester (in fact, you are encouraged to do so).
Requirements:

• One 5-7 page papers based on primary sources.
• One assignment based on the museum object: I. description of the object; II. Historical/contextual narrative related to the object.
• Take-home midterm and final exam
• 4 one-page responses to the readings of secondary sources (2 in the first half of the semester, two after the Spring Break)
• Class attendance (3 unexcused absences allowed, 4+ will entail grade penalty)
• Excessive lateness (more than 15 minutes) counts as absence.
• Sleeping in class also counts as absence.
• Class participation: the success of this class depends on our mutual involvement and therefore your participation in class discussions is crucial. You can earn points for: participating in class discussions; responding to post-class surveys; and posting on the Moodle Forum (3 points possible /per class), for a total points of 50 to get an A for class participation, translating to about an average 2 points/class to get an A. But if you earn more than 50, you will get a bonus grade. There are several extra credit opportunities by participating in extra credit events.

Written assignments:

• There are writing fellows available at the Writing Center, I encourage you to work with them on your papers.
• All written assignments are due on the day noted in the syllabus. Papers must be submitted through Moodle. No extensions will be given. There will be a grade penalty for lateness (1 grade per day).
• Papers are graded based on: clarity of writing; evidence provided to support the claim; insight; argument; spelling and punctuation; proper use and acknowledgment of sources (footnotes, proper acknowledgment of ideas and sources).
• Footnoting should follow Chicago Manual Style 15thA or 16thA (on EndNote), they correspond to the formats given in Mary Rampolla’s book A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, which is required for this class. Improper footnoting will result in grade penalty, and/or referring the case to the Honor Board.
• Plagiarism is one of the most serious academic offenses a student can commit at Wesleyan.
• Instances of plagiarism:
  o submitting essays or portions of essays written by other people as one’s own;
  o failing to acknowledge, through footnotes and bibliographical entries, the source of ideas that are essentially not one’s own;
  o failing to indicate paraphrases or ideas or verbatim expressions not one’s own through proper use of quotations and footnotes;
submitting an essay written for one course to a second course without having sought prior permission from both instructors (self-plagiarism).

**Grading:**
- Primary source paper: (draft 10% each, final version 15%)
- Material culture project: (object description 10%; historical/contextual narrative 10%)
- Responses to readings (5%)
- Midterm and final exams (15% midterm, 25% final)
- Class participation: 10% (bonus: 100% rate of attendance).
- Penalties: missing more than 3 classes, missing the assignment deadline.

**Policy on Religious Observance:**

The absence due to religious observance will not count toward your 3 unexcused absences.

If you need to miss a class due to religious observance, you are still responsible for the readings and should contact your class mates about the material we discussed during class. You are also welcome to meet with me to discuss the material.

**Accommodation for Disability:**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Wesleyan University has a policy of accommodating learning and other disabilities. If you identify as disabled, or are chronically ill, although the requirements of this course remain the same, you are eligible for accommodation and/or assistance. If you have not already registered with the university, please see Associate Dean of Student Academic Resources before the end of drop-add (x2332) and discuss assistance the office can provide. You should also talk to me so that we can make sure that your needs are accommodated.