

**History 495-3: Research in Historical Topics,
Interwar Jewish History**

Fall 2010: TTh 9-10:15am, UNIV 319

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Course Description:

The Jewish experience between the two world wars was steeped in paradox. While the Interwar period saw a steep rise in anti-Semitism, radical politics, and violence, it was also an era of flourishing Jewish culture and politics, and a renaissance in Jewish communal and individual life. This research seminar investigates how the First World War and imperial collapse, the rise of nation-states and radical politics affected Jews in Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East through focus on issues of Jewish/state and Jewish/non-Jewish relations, Jewish national and socialist political orientations, the development of Jewish secular culture, the quest for authenticity, forced and voluntary migration, and the expansion of the Diaspora.

Issues arising from the study of Interwar Jewish history serve as a springboard for students to carry out their individual research and produce a serious work of document-based historical writing by the end of the semester. This course is carefully designed to guide students through the historian's craft: from identifying and developing a research question, through conducting research effectively, and drafting and revising a polished a 20 page research paper.

Required Texts: The following books are available for purchase at University & Folletts bookstores, as well as through internet vendors:

-Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983)

-Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996)

-Jeffrey Veidlinger, *The Moscow State Yiddish Theater: Jewish Culture on the Soviet Stage* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000)

-Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate*, translated by Haim Watzman (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000)

•All other shared course readings will be available on Blackboard, and are marked with an asterisk (*) on the syllabus.

Requirements and Expectations:

1. Attendance: On-time arrival and regular attendance is expected in this class. This course follows a careful schedule, with sufficient time allotted for individual work. Missing scheduled class meetings and/or your scheduled individual consultations will count against you. Absences may be excused on the basis of legitimate, written documentation, or permission granted in advance. Please be prepared to provide such documentation when asked. **Cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices are not to be used in the class at any time. Turn off the devices, or don't bring them. This is a small seminar that requires your active engagement and participation.

2. Participation. 10% of course grade: This grade depends on your preparedness and the quality of your participation in class discussions, as well as in your individual research consultations. The discussion postings and research methodology short writing assignments will significantly aid you in preparing for active seminar discussion.
3. Discussion postings and Research methodology writing assignments. 20% of course grade: Eight (8) discussion postings, and four (4) research methodology writing assignments are required for this course. Deadlines and content for each posting and assignment is indicated in the syllabus. Each is intended to aid your active reading of the material and guide the development of your individual research, and all will be submitted through Blackboard. The Blackboard program will not accept entries submitted after the deadline. Postings and writing assignments will be graded by ✓, +, -, or X (missing).
4. First Draft of the Research Paper. 30% of course grade: The first version of your 20 page research paper is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, November 16th**. You are expected to turn in a complete paper, which you will then critically assess and revise. Late papers will not be accepted. Email attachments will not be accepted.
Format Requirements: Papers should be double-spaced, with one-inch margins, in Times New Roman 12 point font. You will use footnotes, not in-text citations, to refer to all primary and secondary sources, regardless of whether these sources are obtained as print or electronic media. Your footnoted citations should follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, as detailed in chapter 7 of the Rampolla guide (Rampolla file #4, posted on Blackboard). You need not include a separate Works Cited page.
5. Final Draft of the Research Paper. 40% of course grade: The final version of your 20 page research paper, as polished as you can make it, is due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday, December 7th**. You will present your topic and conclusions during the final class session on Thursday, December 9th. Late papers will not be accepted. Email attachments will not be accepted.

Cheating / Plagiarism:

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution. University Regulations contains further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University policies allow. Don't do it. Any instances of academic dishonesty will likely result in a grade of F for the course and notification of the Dean of Students Office. For more information, see the online brochure, "Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students" at www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/integritybrochure.php

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted on Blackboard once the course resumes or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email or phone.

Course Evaluations:

On Monday of the fifteenth week of classes, you will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site. You will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. Your participation in this evaluation is an integral part of this course. Your feedback is vital to improving education at Purdue University. I strongly urge you to participate in the evaluation system.

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**Course Schedule** (Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class and/or via email):

1) T, 8/24: Course Introduction: aims, requirements, expectations  
Rampolla file #1, pp.1-5\*

Primary sources to discuss in class:

- Franz Kafka, "My Father's Bourgeois Judaism" (1919)\*
- Henry Ford, "The International Jew: The World's Problem" (1920)\*
- Sigmund Freud, "Address to the Society of B'nai B'rith" (May 6, 1926)\*

Th, 8/26: World War One and the End of Empires: Part I

- Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires*, pp.7-33\*

2) T, 8/31: World War One and the End of Empires: Part II

*In class cameo by Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, PhD, History and Microtext Librarian*

- Mazower, "City of Refugees," from *Salonica: City of Ghosts*, pp. 333-346\*
- go to the site <http://centropastudent.org/?nID=77&fLang=ENG> and watch:  
"Jewish Soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian Army" and  
"Maps, Central Europe, and History"

Th, 9/2: Jews and the Legacies of Empire: Poland and Hungary

- Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars*: read Introduction, chapters on Poland and Hungary (pp. 1-128)

Discussion posting due by Wed., Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> at 9pm: How would you characterize the differences between the position of the Jews in Poland and Hungary after the First World War?

3) T, 9/7: Jews and the Legacies of Empire: Czechoslovakia and Romania

- Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars*: read chapters on Czechoslovakia and Romania, and concluding remarks (pp. 131-211, 255-258)
- What research topics are you considering? Be prepared to tell the group.

Discussion posting due by Mon., Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: Which questions should we ask to better understand the position of the Jews in Interwar Czechoslovakia and Romania?

Th, 9/9: No Class - Rosh Hashanah

**Instead: Writing assignment due by the usual class time, 9am on Simon Dubnow, et al, "Documenting Jewish History in Eastern Europe" (February 25, 1927)\*: More information will follow in class.**

- Explore sites [www.yivo.org](http://www.yivo.org) and <http://digital.cjh.org>

4) T, 9/14: "Post-Assimilatory" Jewish Culture

- Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, intro, pp. 1-8, and chs. 2 and 3 (pp. 36-99)
- Franz Rosenzweig, "Jewish Learning and the Return to Judaism" (1920)\*  
Discussion posting due by Mon., Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: What did it mean to be a "post-assimilated" Jew in Weimar Germany?

Th, 9/16: Ach, to be an Authentic Jew!

- Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, chapters 5-7 and epilogue (pp. 129-220)  
Discussion posting due by Wed., Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: What was the big deal about authenticity in Interwar German-Jewish culture? How did German-Jews seek authenticity?

5) T, 9/21: Effective Use of Library Research Tools and Sources

This session is essential for your success in this course.

Meeting place TBA.

- Rampolla file #2, pp. 6-31\*

Th, 9/23: No Class - Go Source Hunting!

**Writing assignment due by Fri., Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> at 5pm: identify your subject of research, list your preliminary secondary sources and how you will get your hands on them (checked out from Purdue, ordered through ILL, or other); evaluate your hunt: What went well? What did not go so well?**

6) T, 9/28: Performing Secular Jewish Culture

- Veidlinger, *The Moscow State Yiddish Theater*, intro (pp. 1-18), and chapters 1 and 3 (pp.19- 54, 89-111)  
Discussion posting due by Mon., Sept.27<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: To what extent did the Moscow State Yiddish Theater resist being used as a platform of Soviet propaganda and expressed authentic secular Jewish culture?

Th, 9/30: Jewish Nationals in "Our Socialist Homeland"

- Veidlinger, *The Moscow State Yiddish Theater*, chapters 5-6 (pp. 150-214)  
Discussion posting due by Wed., Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: How would you characterize the tensions surrounding Jewish national culture within the Interwar USSR?

7) T, 10/5: Expansion of the Diaspora

- Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, intro (pp. 1-10), chs. 8-12, (pp. 173-292 - a surprisingly quick read!)  
Discussion posting due by Mon., Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: The new Jewish culture that emerged in Mandate Palestine has been described as "informed by both European and Jewish elements fused in an entirely novel and experimental way." What examples from the reading would you use to support that assessment? Refute it?

Th, 10/7: Violence and Diplomacy

- Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, chs. 13, 18-20 (pp. 295-313, 375-443)

Discussion posting due by Wed., Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> at 9pm: In what ways does Segev present the factors leading to a deterioration of Jewish-Arab relations in Mandate Palestine? How might other authors portray these factors?

8) T, 10/12: No Class - October Break

--Use this time to locate **primary sources**, additional secondary sources—

Th, 10/14: Research Discussion

**Writing assignment due by Wed, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> at 5pm: restate your research subject, list your primary sources and secondary sources; identify which sources you have in your possession (checked out through Purdue or ILL; also copies, files of primary sources); how has your subject evolved in the research process so far?**

- Bring primary sources to class for discussion

*Monday, October 18 ~ Krannert Auditorium ~ 8:00 p.m.*

*3rd Annual Larry Axel Memorial Lecture*

*Michael Satlow, Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies, Brown University.*

*"Big Givers: The Origins of Jewish Philanthropy."*

9) T, 10/19: Moving from Topic to Thesis

- Rampolla file #3, pp. 43-87

Th, 10/21: Your Annotated Bibliography, Documenting Your Sources

**Writing assignment due in class today: your annotated bibliography – building on your list of primary and secondary sources: include 1. full bibliographic citations (done correctly), 2. short statements about the kind of information in the source, and 3. how you expect to use this source for your paper.**

- Rampolla file #4, pp. 88-137

10) T, 10/26: No class - Individual Consultations

Th, 10/28: No Class – work on your first drafts

11) T, 11/2: No class - Drop-in consultations - write

Th, 11/4: No class - write

*~Required Event!~*

*Monday, November 8 ~ Krannert Auditorium ~ 8:00 p.m.*

*Maroš Borský, Director of the Slovak Jewish Heritage Center in Bratislava, "The Future of Jewish Heritage in Slovakia."*

<http://www.slovak-jewish-heritage.org/>

12) T, 11/9: No class - write

Th, 11/11: Progress Check

- 13) T, 11/16:           **First Drafts Due!!**  
Th, 11/18:           No class  
• **Critically read your first drafts and prepare for individual consultations**
- 14) T, 11/23:           No class – individual consultations  
Th, 11/25:           No class – Thanksgiving Break - write
- 15) T, 11/30:           No class – drop-in consultations  
Th, 12/2:           Progress Check
- 16.T, 12/7:           **Final Drafts Due!!**  
Th, 12/9:           Presentation of Topics, Wrap-Up Discussion