

JEWISH HARTFORD

EUROPEAN ROOTS



Spring 2021, Five-Week Mini-Course with Professor Samuel Kassow



Vilna - *The Jerusalem of Lithuania*, **Warsaw** - *The Jewish Metropolis* and **Lodz** - *The Jewish Chicago*. In this new online course, we will explore the diversity, vitality, and contributions of three cities that were significant centers of pre-WWII Jewish culture and history. We will also examine Jewish responses to Nazi persecution in these cities during World War II.

This class will meet via Zoom on Monday evenings at 7:30pm:

<https://zoom.us/j/92340359570?pwd=ZFNuUFJiaFRMQU4veEkrQ3lHQWNSQT09>

Class schedule and readings:

(Readings marked with a * are available as PDF on class blackboard site).

January 25 and February 1:

Vilna: The Jerusalem of Lithuania

Readings:

Background: <https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Vilnius>

- Moshe Kulbak, "Vilna" (poem)*
- Lucy Dawidowicz, "Vilna: A City of the Past," *From That Time and Place**

- Lucy Dawidowicz, “The YIVO: The Ministry of Yiddish,” *From That and Place**
- Abba Kovner, “A Summons to Resistance in the Vilna Ghetto,” from Lucy Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader**
- Jacob Gens, *Speech in the Vilna Ghetto**
- Zelig Kalmanovich diary, *Pondering Jewish Fate* (excerpts)*
- Avrom Sutzkever, Poetry from *The Literature of Destruction**
- Avrom Sutzkever, “The Lead Plates of the Romm Press” from *The Penguin Book of Yiddish Verse**
- Chaim Grade, “My Quarrel with Hersh Rasseynier”*

February 8 and February 22:

Warsaw: The Jewish Metropolis

Readings:

Background: <https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Warsaw>

- Introduction to Dynner and Polonsky eds. *Warsaw, the Jewish Metropolis**
- Y.L. Peretz, *Bontshe the Silent; If Not Higher**
- Bernard Goldstein, *Twenty Years with the Jewish Labor Bund: A Memoir of Interwar Poland**
- Rachel Auerbach. *Yizkor*, 1943*
- Kassow, *The Warsaw Ghetto in the Writings of Rachel Auerbach**
- Kassow, *The Story of Emanuel Ringelblum and the Oneg Shabes Archive**
- Sermons of the Piaseczner Rebbe (Kalonymus Kalman Shapira)*
- Peretz Opoczynski, “The Ghetto Mailman”*
- Wladyslaw Szlengel, “Counterattack”*
- Leyb Goldin, “Chronicle of a Single Day”*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoO47PEmwcw>

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March 1

Lodz: The Jewish Chicago

Readings:

Background: <https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/%C5%81odz>

- Chava Rosenfarb. *Confessions of a Yiddish Writer**
- Simkhe Bunem Shayevich. *Lodz**
- Simkhe Bunem Shayevich. *Lekh Lekho Written in Lodz Ghetto in 1942**
- Joseph Zelkowicz. *Two Essays from Lodz Ghetto**
- Joseph Zelkowicz. *Days of Nightmare (September 1942)**
- Review of Horowitz, *Ghettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City**

Recommended reading: IJ Singer, *The Brothers Ashkenazi* (entire novel)

