

PROJECT JUDAICA UPDATE:  
JUNE 1994

Spring 1994 Program of Instruction

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This was a semester of intensive study and intellectual growth for the students of PROJECT JUDAICA, the joint program in Jewish Studies at Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow. 36 students are currently enrolled in the program as Jewish studies majors at RSUH. A group of 19 concluded their third year of Judaica course-work at the University's Historical-Archival Institute, and are well on their way to becoming scholars, educators, and leaders; a group of 17 others successfully completed their first year of Judaica courses at RSUH's School of Historical and Literary Studies and its School of Comparative Religion.

The spring semester featured an increased number of course-offerings, to meet the curricular needs of both the first year and third-year students. The program's faculty continued to consist primarily of outstanding scholars from the United States and Israel, with first-rate Russian-born instructors playing an expanded role compared to previous years.

The Semester's course-offerings were as follows:

1. Elementary Hebrew II  
Instructors: Edna Nahshon (JTS) and Lev Gorodetski (Moscow).  
15 weeks, 8 hours per week [both contingents].
2. Jewish Philosophy and Religion  
Instructors: Warren Harvey (Hebrew U.) and Moshe Tutnauer (Bet Midrash).  
8 weeks, 6 hours per week [both contingents].
3. Contemporary Jewish History: Israel and Europe  
Instructors: Yosef Gorni (Tel Aviv) and Zvi Gitelman (Michigan).  
6 weeks, 6 hours per week [third-year students].
4. Guided Readings in Yiddish  
Instructors: Mikhail Krutikov (Moscow/JTS), Genadi Estraykh (Moscow/Oxford), Chava Lapin (YIVO).  
12 weeks, 4 hours per week [third-year students].
5. Introduction to Biblical Literature II  
Instructors: Burton Visotsky (JTS), Alexander Rofe (Hebrew U.).  
8 weeks, 6 hours per week [first-year students].
6. Seminar in Judaica: Jewish Ethno-History  
Instructor: Mark Kupovetski (Institute of Ethnology, Moscow).  
15 weeks, 2 hours per week.

As can be seen from the above listings, the third-year students continued to focus on modern Jewish history and Yiddish culture, while the first-year students concentrated on the classics of the Jewish tradition: Bible, Midrash, religious ritual and thought. Students attended 16 classroom hours per week of Judaica, in addition to pursuing the general curricula of their respective schools at RSUH - in history, literature, and religion. (For grades, see Appendix I.)

During the spring semester, the students worked on completing their year-long research-papers, under the guidance and supervision of PROJECT JUDAICA's Academic Curator Mark Kupovetski. The academic year culminated with "The First All-Russian Student Conference in Judaica", held at RSUH on May 30-31, at which 13 of the program's students read papers based on their research projects. Papers were also ready by students from the Jewish Universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. The conference, which was attended by members of the RSUH faculty and administration and leaders of the Russian Jewish community, was on an extremely high level. Several student-papers have been accepted for publication in scholarly journals. (For the conference program, see Appendix II.)

Although the formal academic year is over, the third-year students will once again conduct a summer practicum this coming July. Five students will work in the Lithuanian National Library in Vilna, cataloguing and arranging Hebrew and Yiddish books, and 14 others will work on describing Jewish collections in various Moscow archives. Libraries and archives in various parts of the former USSR have expressed interest in utilizing the rare skills and abilities of PROJECT JUDAICA's students.

#### Extra Curricular Programs and Activities

PROJECT JUDAICA faculty continued to share their knowledge and expertise in various academic and communal frameworks.

Dr. Edna Nahshon, Chair of the JTS Department of Hebrew, met several times with the Hebrew faculty of Moscow State University's Institute of Asia and Africa to discuss pedagogical methods and materials.

Drs. Warren Harvey and Burton Visotsky gave guest lectures to RSUH's Program of Cultural Studies and School of Comparative Religion, on: "What Is Jewish Philosophy?" and "Jewish-Christian Polemics in Antiquity".

Rabbi Moshe Tutnauer conducted teacher-training seminars for the two Conservative-sponsored Hebrew schools in Moscow, and the Jewish day-school in Chernovitz.

Mark Kupovetski and Lev Gorodetski both edit major Russian-Jewish publications. Kupovetski is the newly-appointed editor-in-chief of Vestnik, the journal of the Jewish University of Moscow, and Gorodetski is editor-in-chief of Moscow-Jerusalem, a bi-weekly Jewish newspaper.

As in the past, PROJECT JUDAICA faculty and students met several times during the semester for informal gatherings, celebrations, and films. Foremost among these were the large Passover seders conducted by the program for its students, staff, faculty, and friends within the University (over 60 people in all). The seders were conducted by Professor Burton Visotsky of JTS, a specialist in Jewish Liturgy and Exegesis, and were the culmination of his course on Jewish Bible exegesis.

Program students participated in a variety of Jewish communal events and activities: several students attended the Judaica Seminar sponsored by Midreshet Yerushalayim in January; Matvei Chlenov was a delegate to the World Congress on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem in March; Anya Shternshis and Anya Khanina participated in the "March of the Living" trip to Poland during Holocaust Commemoration Week in April; Lev Krichevski concluded his service as editor of Rodnik, the Russian journal of the World Union for Progressive Judaism in May. Notices on Jewish communal and cultural events are now routinely posted on a bulletin board in the Judaica library.

### Library and Archival Project

The 5,000 volume Judaica Library at RSUH continues to attract a considerable number of readers from the University community and beyond. The library includes a large collection Russian-language Judaica (both turn of the century and contemporary), a strong reference collection in English, and invaluable works on East European Jewry in Yiddish. The library cataloging project, to prepare Library of Congress numbers, cards, and a computerized catalogue for the entire Judaica collection, is now in its advanced stages and should be concluded in early 1995.

To date, PROJECT JUDAICA's Archival Survey has amassed information from 115 repositories in the Russian Federation. 2,307 collections of Jewish origin and/or subject matter have been recorded, 528 of which have been entered into the Survey's computerized data-base. A sampling of this information is available in the Guide to Jewish Collections in Moscow Museums, Libraries and the Former Communist Party Archives, published by PROJECT JUDAICA in February.

With the addition of extensive information from St. Petersburg, thanks to the co-operation of Mr. Dmitry Eliashevich of the St. Petersburg Jewish University, the Survey's collection of information in the Russian Federation is nearly complete. The coming year will mainly be spent translating and editing the vast volume of information at the Survey's disposal. Publication of the first volume of the Guide to Archival Collections on the History of the Jews in Pre-Revolutionary Russia and the USSR, in both English and Russian, is slated for 1996. Subsequent volumes will be devoted to Belarus and the Ukraine.

The archival Guides will be an invaluable reference tool for students of modern Jewish history and culture. It will enable

scholars to check a name, place, and/or subject, and discover what relevant materials exist in the numerous archival repositories of the Russian Federation.

### Future Plans and Challenges

A new contingent of PROJECT JUDAICA students will be admitted into RSUH's School of Historical and Literary Studies in September 1994. 15 applicants who pass the University's entrance exams will be admitted as full-fledged university students; up to 10 others will be allowed to join the program as "auditors". The anticipated addition of 20-25 new students will bring the total number of PROJECT JUDAICA students to approximately 60.

The new contingent will join the on-going Judaica curriculum offered in the School of Historical and Literary Studies; they will study Elementary Hebrew language separately.

Meanwhile, the advanced group of students, who will enter their fourth year in September, will be preparing for their "senior year abroad". For six full months, from January to July 1995, a group of 8 students will study in New York, at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and at YIVO, and 11 others will study in Jerusalem, under the auspices of the Seminary of Judaic Studies - the Israeli affiliate of JTS. Students will benefit from the rich human and academic resources available in these two centers of Jewish life and learning. (For personal statements by students, see Appendix III.)

PROJECT JUDAICA has entered into a consortium arrangement with the Jewish University of Moscow. According to the arrangement, outstanding students at the Jewish University will be able to take PROJECT JUDAICA courses for credit. This will open up the program's courses to additional promising young people enrolled in Jewish studies. Discussions concerning a reciprocal consortium, and other areas of co-operation are being held.

In order to bring Jewish Studies to the broadest possible audience, PROJECT JUDAICA will launch a monthly public lecture series this coming fall, with presentations by the program's permanent and visiting foreign faculty. The program will be conducted in the evenings, and will be publicized at the University and in the Jewish press and institutions.

RSUH, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and YIVO have also decided to publish a University-level introductory textbook, in Russian, on Jewish history and literature. Chapters will be written by outstanding authorities from the United States and Israel, who have taught for PROJECT JUDAICA during the three years of its existence. The book will be published and distributed by Russian State University for the Humanities Press. Slated for publication in 1996, the text will be assigned reading in World History courses taught at the University.

Appendix I  
PROJECT JUDAICA - SPRING '94 GRADES  
 First Year Group (School of Historical and Literary Studies)

"Jewish Philosophy and Religion". Instructor: Ze'ev Harvey (Hebrew U.) and Moshe Tutnauer (Bet Midrash). 8 weeks, 6 hours per week.

"Survey of Biblical Literature". Instructors: Burt Visotzky (JTS) and Emanuel Rofe (Hebrew U.). 8 weeks, 6 hours per week.

"Elementary Hebrew". Instructor: Edna Nahshon (JTS) and Lev Gorodetsky (Moscow). 14 weeks, 8 hours per week.

"Seminar in Judaica". Instructor: Mark Kupovetski (Moscow). 15 weeks, 2 hours per week.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Philo</u>	<u>Bible</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Sem.</u>
1. Andreeva, Lilia	4	5	5	4
2. Bootsens, Olga	3	4	3	4
3. Danilkova, Yulia	4	4	5	5
4. Gavomov, Alexei	3	3	3	4
5. Kaspina, Maria	5	5	5	5
6. Kondratovitch, Nadya	4	4	4	5
7. Lantsman, Leonid [aud.]	4	5	5	5
8. Lemeshko, Iren	4	4	5	5
9. Lifshits, Alexander	5	5	4	4
10. Lifshits, Kate [aud.]	4	4	5	4
11. Lobovskaya, Vera	5	5	5	4
12. Mironova, Stasia	2	2	4	Inc.
13. Roikhman, Alex [aud.]	4	4	5	4
14. Skopina, Veronika	5	5	4	5
15. Smirnova, Inna	5	3	4	4
16. Alexei Liavdansky [Comp. Rel.]	4	5	5	5
17. Zhukova, Mila [Comp. Rel.]	4	5	5	4

PROJECT JUDAICA - SPRING 1994 GRADES  
Advanced Group (Historical Archival Institute)

"Jewish Thought and Religion". Instructors: Ze'ev Harvey (Hebrew U.), Moshe Tutnauer (Bet Midrash); 8 weeks, 6 hours per week.

"Contemporary Jewish History". Instructors: Yosef Gorny (Tel Aviv U.), Zvi Gitelman (Michigan); 6 weeks, 6 hours per week.

"Elementary Hebrew". Instructor: Edna Nahshon (JTS) and Lev Gorodetski (Moscow). 15 weeks, 8 hours per week.

"Readings in Yiddish" Instructors: Mikhail Krutikov (Moscow/JTS), Genadi EstraiKh (Moscow/Oxford), Chava Lapin (YIVO), 12 weeks, 4 hours per week.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Phil/Rel</u>	<u>Cont</u>	<u>Hist</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>
1. Astashkevitch, Ira	5	5		5	4+
2. Chlenov, Matvei	4	5		5	4-
* 3. Dubrova, Katya	4	3		3	3
4. Eliasberg, Galina	5	4		5	5-
5. Khanina, Anya	3	4		4	4-
6. Kheifets, Karina	5	4		5	4+
7. Kornilov, Aleksei	5	4		4	5-
8. Krichevski, Lev	5	5		5	5-
9. Levitova, Anya	5	4		5	5-
10. Malchikova, Anya	4	4		4	4-
11. Martinova, Yarosl.	4	3		4	4-
12. Mogiliova, Yulia	4	4		4	3+
13. Pichugin, Ivan	4	5		4	4
14. Shkolnikova, Elena	4	5		5	4+
15. Shternshis, Anya	5	4		4	4+
16. Sivertsev, Aleksei	5	4		5	5
17. Solntseva, Anya	5	4		5	5
18. Tarutin, Pavel	4	4		4	4+
19. Vekselman, Larisa	4	4		5	4

Auditors from the Advanced Group in Bible courses (Visotzky and Rofe): Alexei Sivertsev - 5; Anya Solntseva - 5.

Appendix II

PROGRAM OF FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN STUDENT CONFERENCE  
OF JUDAICA  
(Moscow, May 30-31, 1994)

First Session. May 30, 10:00 AM

Greetings:

Professor Evgenii Starostin, Director, Historical-Archival Institute, RSUH

Professor David Fishman, JTS and YIVO

Mark Kupovetski, Academic Curator of Jewish Studies Program, RSUH

Papers: The History of Jewish Studies in Russia and the USSR

1. Alexei Sivertsev (3rd year, RSUH), "The Development of Hebrew Studies in the USSR"
2. Galina Eliasberg (3rd year, RSUH), "Israel Zinberg, Historian of Jewish Literature"
3. Larisa Vekselman (3rd year, RSUH), "Yuli Gessen, Historian of Russian Jewry"
4. Anya Levitova (3rd year, RSUH), "The Jewish People's University of Moscow (1918-1921)"

Second Session. May 30, 2:45 PM. Ancient and Modern Jewish History

1. S. Charney (Jewish U. of Moscow), "The Foreign Policy of King Solomon"
2. I. Turov (Jewish U. of Moscow), "A Comparative Analysis of Talmudic and Christian Sources on Early Christianity"
3. Anya Shternshis (3rd year, RSUH), "The Subbotniki Sect in Russia and the USSR"

Third Session. May 31, 10:00 AM. Jewish Literature

1. Alexei Liavdanski (Comparative Religion, RSUH), "The Rhetorical Tradition of the Bible"
2. Masha Kaspina (1st year, RSUH), "Symbol and Metaphore in the Torah"
3. Nadya Kondratovich (1st year, RSUH), "Mythological Themes in the Torah"
4. P. Farberov (Jewish U. of St. Petersburg), "The Publications of the Mountain Jews"

5. Anya Solntseva (3rd year, RSUH), "Shmuel Halkin and the Development of Soviet Yiddish Literature"

Fourth Session. 2:45 PM. The History of Soviet Jewry

1. Lev Krichevski (3rd year, RSUH), "Jews in the Soviet Security Apparatus"
2. Elena Shkolnikova (3rd year, RSUH), "The Fate and Evolution of the 'Shtetl' in the Late 1920s and Early 1930s"
3. Matvei Chlenov (3rd year, RSUH), "The Jewish Cultural Movement of the 1970s and the Journal Our Ivrit"
4. Ira Astashkevich (3rd year, RSUH), "The Soviet Jewish Movement of the 1960s-1970s And Its Ties With Western Jewry"



Appendix III  
PERSONAL STATEMENTS OF STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

**Anna Levitova**

*Third-year student, Project Judaica, Moscow*

My interest in Jews and Jewishness was affected by two main causes: the memory and history of my family and the growth of anti-semitism in Russia. At home we had a gold medal and Dubnow's *World History of the Jews*, which were presented to my grandfather after he graduated from Commercial School. The growth of anti-Semitism pushed me into the search for self identity. Being already a student of our University at the time when the program was organized, I joined it happily because I considered it the best opportunity to combine my personal and academic interests.

The Judaica program not only gave me knowledge on subjects I was interested in, it also gave me a possibility to learn the language of my ancestors, and connected me with Jews of the whole world in space and time. It led me to the understanding that Jews are defined not only by persecutions, but by their rich culture and original way of thinking. Mostly I'm attracted to the history of Jews in Russia from the middle of the nineteenth century and during the Soviet period, to problems of Jewish identity and to the Jewish way of life during the Soviet regime. I would also like to improve my linguistic education.

Next year I would like to work at the best libraries, to see a lot of Yiddish materials that were published abroad, and to work with scholars of Judaica. My aim is to improve my knowledge of Yiddish and Hebrew, to deepen my knowledge of tradition and literature, and the history of Jewish political parties.

I would like to do research on different issues in Soviet Jewish history, to support a permanent Judaica program in Moscow, not only thanks to the contribution of foreign professors, but also with local researchers, like me, to support the tradition of Russian Jewish historians.

**Karina Kheifets**

***Third-year student, Project Judaica, Moscow***

I was born in 1973 in Moscow, in a completely assimilated family. Even my grandparents didn't know Yiddish and didn't observe any Jewish holidays. I really was embarrassed and ashamed about my Jewish origin. My dream was to marry a Russian man and help my children not to be members of the "second class." So, as you can understand, I knew almost nothing about Jewish culture. As to my other interests, I love music, and during my school years I was in the State chorus of Soviet radio and television, and took part in lots of performances in Moscow and other cities, and TV and radio programs.

It is not enough to say that Judaica studies have changed me, my self-consciousness, my surroundings, etc. Studying Jewish history helped me to understand that I am a child of a great people with a great past, with a rich culture, and it depends a lot on me and my children to provide the future of the Jewish people.

It is difficult to say what subjects interest me most, because everything is new and exciting.

For some time I worked in a Jewish school, helping little children to know the history of their people.

Most of my best friends are now Jews, so we try to take part in all Jewish activities in Moscow. During my free time I went to the Yiddish department of Touro College in order to improve my knowledge of Yiddish. During the last winter holidays, my friends and I went to a winter Jewish camp which was organized by "Midreshet Yerushalayim" in Moscow.

The Judaica program provides for us the best professors and specialist in Jewish studies from the USA, Israel, etc. Not all of them can come and stay for a long time. During my year of study abroad, I hope to have an opportunity to choose the subjects and the teachers, to pay more attention to what I would like to concentrate. This choice will help me to choose the area of my future research. Besides that I would like to make my English as good as possible, to study it in an English-speaking country.

I would like to apply my knowledge of Jewish culture, languages and history in any sphere where I could be useful, teaching, or archives, etc. In any case, I will teach my children and bring them up with pride and love for their people.