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 (Tevye 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 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 discussions and presentation will form 50% of the grade, attendance 20% and one final paper 30%. No final exam. All readings in English. The exact reading will be provided for each class by the instructor over a listserve.

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.

**Week one**

Fiddler on the Roof. The Tevye Stories. Sholem Aleichem. Screen Sholem Aleichem, Laughing in Darkness (Excerpts)

**Week two**

Emmanuel Levinas: Is it Righteous to Be? (Excerpts)  
*Tevye the Milkman* (Library of Yiddish Classics Edition) by Sholem Aleichem (excerpts); *Fiddler on the Roof.*  
*Yiddish; First Student Group Presentation*

**Week three**

*The Protocols of Wise Men of Zion* (Excerpts) and Anti-Semitism  
*Yiddish; Gitelman*
Week four

The Soviet Revolution, Cinema, Politics and Art;  
*Gitelman; Russian-Jewish Artists*, selection  
(Lev Davidovich Bronstein) Trotsky (selected essays)  
Danilo Kish, *Tomb for Boris Davidovich* (excerpts)  
Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diaries* (selection)  
Eisenstein, *October; Dziga Vertov, Man With the Movie Camera*  

Week five

The Soviet Revolution, Cinema, Politics and Art;  
Babel, *Benia Krik*. Film and reading  
*Gitelman*  

Week six

*Gitelman; Babel, Presentations  
Russian-Jewish Artists*, selection  

Week seven

Michal Katz, Russian-Jewish Emigration Class.  
*Gitelman*  

Week eight

*Gitelman; Refusenik*  

SPRING BREAK  

Week nine

*Gitelman; Russian Jews in Art; Mandelstam*  

Week ten  
Olga Gershenzon, *Phantom Holocaust* (selection); Jeremy Hicks, *First Films of the Holocaust: Soviet Cinema and the Genocide of the Jews, 1938-1946*; *Screen Profesor Mamlock; The Unvanquished* (excerpts)  

Week eleven

Lara Vapnyar; *There Are Jews in My House; The Concert*  

Week Twelve

*Everything is Illuminated; Gitelman, Selection. Voinovich*
**Week thirteen**
*Gitelman. Russian Jews and Emigration to Israel; Nadezhda Mandelstam, Hope Against Hope;*

**Week fourteen**
*Voices From the Booth and the Russian Jews in Israel*

**Week fifteen** *Friends From France, Final Paper Due PRESENTED IN CLASS EACH STUDENT 10-15 Minute*

**Scholarship excerpts will be made available by instructor:**


**Films:** “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