

Karen Auerbach – Proposal for Burch Seminar

“The Texture of Memory”: Memory of Jewish Life and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Poland was one of the heartlands of Jewish civilization from pre-modern times to the Second World War, giving rise to many of the most important religious, cultural and political developments in Jewish history and in the contemporary Jewish world. In this seminar we will visit the neighborhoods where Jews lived before the genocide of approximately 6 million European Jews; the synagogues where they prayed and the cemeteries where they were buried; mass graves in forests; and the ordinary places where the crematoria of the Nazi camps were located. Through these physical reminders of the murdered Jewish populations and other victim groups, we will examine competing narratives of memorials and museums built in different postwar periods and by different groups as well as the country’s grappling with this history’s significance for contemporary politics and national identities.

Poland was home to Europe’s largest Jewish population before the Second World War, with 3.3 million Jews comprising 10 percent of the country’s population. Polish Jewry developed to a significant degree according to its own religious and cultural norms, forming a population that was distinct from surrounding society even while interacting with their non-Jewish neighbors. Many lived in small towns where they comprised the majority of the population, while they also were a large presence in large cities, making up more than one-third of prewar Warsaw’s population and as high as 80 percent of the prewar population in the medium-sized city of Bialystok. Poland was also the location for all six Nazi death camps constructed for the genocide of the Jews. During our visits to cities, small towns, camps, and other locations of Jewish life and death, we will also examine the impact of the Communist and post-Communist periods on memory and commemoration. Even today, memory of the Jewish past and the Holocaust often functions as a barometer of contemporary political and cultural identities, so that studying memory of the Holocaust is necessarily also about studying both countries’ broader pasts and presents. The course will therefore introduce students throughout the trip to broader political and cultural developments that shape Polish society today. During the last four days of

the trip, we will travel to the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, just across the border from Poland. Before the Second World War, Vilnius was part of Poland and was one of the most important centers of Jewish culture. The city became part of the Soviet Union after the war, and following the breakup of the Soviet Union, it became the capital of the independent Lithuanian state. Therefore a visit to Vilnius will provide a broader, comparative perspective on the impact of Communist and nationalist politics on the evolution of Holocaust memory in Eastern Europe.

As European societies have undergone the process of “coming to terms with the past” in relation to the Second World War, public memory has sought to incorporate the Holocaust into broader wartime narratives. Yet memorials at the sites where Jews lived and died have served not only to preserve memory of the Holocaust and the Jewish past, but also at times to distort this memory. Holocaust memory was often politicized and suppressed even as remnants of the absent Jewish populations maintained a quiet presence on the landscape.

Our visits will connect memory of the Holocaust with the cities, towns, and Nazi camps where the events took place, helping us to understand a central problem in studying this history: how to approach a past that is both part of the mundane world and therefore explicable, but also, according to those who experienced it, a world seemingly impenetrable to those who did not.

Studying the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, particularly during visits to sites of genocide, can be an intensive experience. Students should take this into account before deciding to undertake this study-abroad trip. All students will meet individually with the faculty director before the trip and in regular small-group discussions during the trip during which they will have an opportunity to reflect on the often emotionally charged content of Holocaust sites.

A detailed itinerary is included.

Length of seminar: 5 weeks (35 days, not including arrival and departure days)

Locations of trip:

Poland (main locations: Krakow, Warsaw): 32 days

Lithuania (Vilnius): 3 days

Significance of site locations

- **Krakow** is central to Polish history and remains a cultural center equal to Warsaw, and its historical sites (not specifically relating to prewar Jewish history or the Holocaust) will provide students with an introduction to Polish history. The city has the best preserved prewar Jewish quarter, which is the locus of the “Jewish tourist industry” in Poland, and will provide students with an understanding of the key role that memory of the Jewish past plays in contemporary Polish culture. There are numerous synagogues, cemeteries, museums, and other locations relating to Jewish history and the Holocaust. An extended stay here will allow students to experience the city’s culture and nightlife, much of which takes place in the former Jewish

quarter. It is also the main base for visiting Auschwitz. Students will also meet here with members of the contemporary Jewish community.

- **Nowa Huta** was a centrally planned “socialist city” that developed around a steelworks during the Communist period. A visit here will underscore the ways in which the Communist period shaped the physical surroundings of everyday life and the ways in which architecture reflected political ideology.

- **Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek, Belzec and Treblinka**: These are four of the six Nazi death camps (the other two are also located in Poland). The memorials at each one and museums at two of the camps reflect differences in victim groups, symbolic languages, functions and political conditions in which the memorials/museums were constructed. Visiting these four camps will allow students to understand how memory of the Holocaust has evolved from the early wartime years through the Communist period to the contemporary period as well as how memorialization reflects political and cultural developments of the period in which they were constructed.

- **Tarnow** is a medium-sized town that is home to the only museum in Poland focusing on the history of the Roma, including the genocide of the Roma population during the Holocaust. Several mass graves of Roma victims of the Holocaust are located on the route from Krakow to Tarnow. Our visit to the town is therefore mainly to understand the history of Roma experiences during the Holocaust. In addition, the town is en route between Krakow and Lublin, and its location provides an appropriate break in the drive between these two cities. The town also has remains of an historic synagogue.

- **Zamosc** is a picturesque small town whose 16th century Italian architecture reflects the Renaissance period in Poland and will provide students with an example of how cultural ideas manifest themselves in the character of the urban landscape. It is also the birthplace of one of the “fathers” of Yiddish literature. A main reason for stopping here is that its location between the Belzec camp and Lublin makes it an appropriate evening stopping point to avoid a long evening drive to Lublin after visiting Belzec, and it will provide the most enjoyable visit of all of the towns in this area.

- **Lublin** is one of the most important cities in East European Jewish history. The three main reasons for visiting are: first, there is a cultural center there that has become a center of “memory work” relating to Polish Jewry in this region and that also has a museum-style exhibit; second, there still remain standing numerous buildings of importance in Jewish religious history, including a 16th-century yeshivah (school of religious study in traditional Jewish life) that is one of the most important educational institutions in European Jewish history and one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries with gravestones still standing in Poland; and third, because the Nazi camp of Majdanek is located within the city’s borders.

- **Warsaw** is the capital of Poland and was home to the largest Jewish population in Europe before the Second World War. It therefore warrants an extensive stay to study sites relating to

Polish history more generally and Jewish history in particular. The new Museum of the History of Polish Jews, whose permanent exhibition opened a year ago, will make it possible for students to understand how the most recent phase of Polish memory of the Jewish past, including the Holocaust, has manifested itself in memorials and museums. There are dozens of sites throughout the city relating to the Holocaust and prewar Jewish history. The city also provides an ideal location for understanding the impact of the Communist period on the urban landscape and on memorialization of Polish history as well as the politicization of memory more generally.

- **Tykocin** is a small town that was a medieval capital of Polish Jewish life. We are visiting for three reasons: first, it was a typical *shtetl* – Yiddish for “small town” – in that the majority of the population was Jewish, and the layout of the town reflects social relations in the shtetl; second, there is a well-preserved synagogue with a museum as well as other Jewish buildings; and third, there is a mass grave here. This mass grave contains victims of one of the mass shootings with which the Holocaust began in eastern Poland and the Baltic states, and it will be the only such grave that we will visit.

- **Bialystok** is the largest city in northeastern Poland. At the turn of the twentieth century its population was approximately 80 percent Jewish, and it remained a majority Jewish city until the Second World War. There are numerous Holocaust memorials in the area of the former wartime ghetto as well as remnants of synagogues, a large, partly preserved cemetery, and other buildings of the prewar Jewish community. Its wooden architecture and less modernized character compared with Warsaw and Krakow will provide students with a different perspective on contemporary Poland economically and culturally.

- **Jedwabne** is a small town where in July 1941, ethnic Polish residents of the town killed their Jewish neighbors. A book about the massacre in 2000 prompted extensive public debate about Polish-Jewish relations and was a turning point in the process of “coming to terms with the past” in Poland. The construction of a new memorial at the site of the massacre was part of this process.

- **Vilnius** is the capital of present-day Lithuania and was one of the most important centers of Jewish culture and politics before the Second World War. The city was part of Poland before the war and became part of the Soviet Union after the war; following the breakup of the Soviet Union, it became the capital of the independent Lithuanian state. Therefore including the city in this trip will provide a broader, comparative perspective on the impact of Communist and nationalist politics on the evolution of Holocaust memory in Eastern Europe.

2. PROGRAM GOALS

The course aims to teach students about:

- The history and culture of Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust
- The everyday lives of Jews during the Holocaust
- Familiarity with the broader history and cultures of the countries we will visit, including contemporary politics, cultures and societies
- Key scholarly debates in Holocaust studies and memorialization of the Holocaust
- Theoretical issues regarding memory and representation of the past through museums, memorials, and other sites
- The processes of “coming to terms with the dark past” in contemporary Europe and the relationship between memory of the Holocaust and contemporary political and cultural identities
- The impact of Communism on representations of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe
- Reconstruction of Jewish communities in Poland and Lithuania after the Holocaust
- Methodologies of using testimonies in research about the Holocaust

3. ACADEMICS

This program will be divided into two courses:

HNRS 353.001S: “The Texture of Memory,” Part I: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe before the Second World War

HNRS 353.002S: “The Texture of Memory,” Part II: The Holocaust in Eastern Europe

Course structure

These courses will be taught through a combination of lectures, site visits, and discussions, including recitation-like discussions of readings. On some days, lectures and discussions will take place as we visit sites related to the history we will be discussing. On other days, lectures will take place during classroom sessions. Lectures will be given by the instructor as well as by guest lecturers, drawing on the expertise of local scholars. On most days, students will have three contact hours in the morning, and they will have afternoons free for reading, written assignments and free time. The total number of classroom hours per week will be approximately 15, including occasional evening film viewings and group dinners where informal discussions will take place. Additional contact hours for site visits will total at least 6 hours per week. Total contact hours are estimated at 105 for the seminar. Students will usually have two free days each week.

Talks will also occasionally be given by Holocaust survivors and other Jews who live in the cities we will visit. More information is in the itinerary below.

The students will develop together a web site for the course that includes a shared blog about their encounters; and materials from their course presentation about an individual whose life relates to one of the locations we will be visiting, using testimonies, memoirs, diaries, and other written or recorded primary sources. Students will be expected to illustrate this material on the blog with images from the locations described in these primary sources.

Assignments for each course will include one essay and a final exam. In addition, students will give an oral presentation as part of the first course and will write a diary of their responses to site visits as part of the second course. For the oral presentation, students will select a testimony, memoir, diary, or another source written or recorded during or after the Holocaust by an individual whose life relates to one of the locations we will be visiting. Each student will present about that individual’s life in a town or city that was a setting for the individual’s experiences. Students will also participate in a workshop in Warsaw about archival research and the use of testimonies in writing the history of the Holocaust.

If possible, the trip will be scheduled so that our stay in Krakow will overlap with the city’s Jewish Cultural Festival, which is the largest such festival in Europe and raises many of the issues that the course addresses. The festival takes place over 10 days in late June and early July.

4. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

HNRS 353.001S: “The Texture of Memory,” Part I: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe before the Second World War

1 essay (8-10 pages) (35%) (due at the start of week 2)

Oral presentation (30%) (students will sign up for presentation dates, which will be during the trip)

Final exam (35%) (week 5)

HNRS 353.002S: “The Texture of Memory,” Part II: The Holocaust in Eastern Europe

1 essay (8-10 pages) (35%) (due at the end of week 5)

Diary of analytical responses to sites visited (30%) (due on the last day of the trip)

Final exam (35%) (week 5)

Guest lecturers

Each local scholar will give guest lectures of approximately one hour to 90 minutes, sometimes during classroom sessions and at other times during site visits. These local scholars include:

Professor Michal Galas, Department of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University. Expert on modern Jewish history, particularly Judaism and comparative religions.

Dr. Edyta Gawron, Jagiellonian University (Krakow), director of the Center for the Study of the History and Culture of Krakow Jews. Historian of the Holocaust in Krakow.

Adam Bartosz, founder of the Museum of Roma Culture (Tarnow). Historian of Roma culture, particularly in Poland.

Tomasz Kuncewicz, director of the Auschwitz Jewish Center.

Professor Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, Department of Comparative Linguistics, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (Lublin). Expert on Yiddish literature and translation.

Professor Pawel Spiewak, director of the Jewish Historical Institute (Warsaw). Scholar of political theory.

Professor Barbara Engelking-Boni, Center for Holocaust Research and the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Historian of the Holocaust in Poland, especially memory of the Holocaust.

Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Kimblett, professor of performance studies and Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University; program director of the core exhibition of the Museum of the History of the Polish Jews (Warsaw). Scholar of museum studies and Jewish folklore.

5. SEMINAR CONTENT

WEEK 1: POLAND AND JEWISH LIFE BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Jeffrey Shandler, ed., *Awakening Lives: Autobiographies of Jewish Youth in Poland before the Holocaust*, selected chapters

Sean Martin, *Jewish Life in Krakow, 1918-1939*, selected chapters

WEEK 2: THE HOLOCAUST AND POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS

Emanuel Ringelbum, *Polish-Jewish Relations During the Holocaust*

Michael Meng, *Shattered Spaces: Encountering Jewish Ruins in Postwar Germany and Poland*, selected chapters

WEEK 3, PART 1: JEWS IN POLISH MEMORY, POLAND IN JEWISH MEMORY: REPRESENTATIONS OF JEWISH LIFE AND THE HOLOCAUST

Erica Lehrer, *Jewish Poland Revisited: Heritage Tourism in Unquiet Places*

James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, selected chapters

Tadeusz Borowski, "This Way for the Gas Ladies and Gentlemen" (short story)

WEEK 3, PART 2: THE MAKING AND REMAKING OF MEMORIALS AT NAZI CAMPS AND OTHER SITES OF MASS MURDER, 1980 TO TODAY; AND THE POLISH JEWISH SMALL TOWN

Agata Tuszyńska, *Lost Landscapes: In Search of Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Jews of Poland*, pp. 3-23, pp. 35-42

Short stories of Isaac Bashevis Singer

WEEK 4: CONTEMPORARY POLAND AND MEMORY OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE STREETScape OF WARSAW: PRESENCE, ABSENCE AND RECONSTRUCTION

Young, *The Texture of Memory*, selected chapters

Meng, *Shattered Spaces*, selected chapters

WEEK 5: "COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST" IN CONTEMPORARY POLAND AND LITHUANIA

Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*

Antony Polonsky and Joanna B. Michlic, *The Neighbors Respond: The Controversy over the Jedwabne Massacre in Poland*, selected chapters

Excerpts from Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania*

6. PROGRAM LOGISTICS

Selection

Students will be required to have a minimum 3.0 GPA and rising sophomore status. All students will be interviewed individually before the trip by the faculty director and Director of Burch Programs and Honors Study Abroad.

Affiliations:

Krakow: Jagiellonian University

Warsaw: University of Warsaw

Vilnius: Vilnius University

Student housing:

Krakow: Floriańska guest house of Jagiellonian University

Warsaw: Sokrates guest house of Warsaw University

Vilnius: Vilnius University

In locations where our visits will be 1-2 nights (Lublin and Bialystok in Poland), accommodation will be in shared rooms in mid-range hotels.

Classroom space: On days when lectures will be held in classrooms, classes will be held in rooms available for a fee at the local institutions with which we will be affiliated. In locations where we will not be affiliated with an institution (Lublin, Bialystok and smaller locations in Poland), classes will be held in small conference rooms, for a fee, in the hotels where we will be staying. Some lectures and discussions will be held in rooms available for that purpose in museums and other sites we will visit, such as the Auschwitz Jewish Center, the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

Library space: Students will not need any reading or research materials to which they will not have online access, aside from the assigned books. Arrangements will be made with the affiliated universities or other institutions (such as the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow, and other such locations) to provide a quiet space in which students can study.

Transportation

Private coaches will be our primary mode of transportation between cities. Students will travel by private coach to and from the airports in Krakow and Vilnius; and between Warsaw, Krakow, Vilnius and intermediary cities.

Safety, Security and Medical Care

Poland and Lithuania are both safe countries in which to travel. Students will have a safety orientation on the first day of the trip.

In Poland, prior contact will be made with the LIM Centrum Medyczne, which has branches in Warsaw and Krakow and provides medical care to many foreign residents of these cities. Similar arrangements will be made in Bialystok, Lublin, Bialystok and Vilnius with medical centers recommended by the U.S. embassies in each country. The students will also be covered by medical and evacuation insurance through the UNC Study Abroad Office. The faculty director will request first-aid training from the university prior to the trip.

During the interview, students will be informed about the resources available from the university for students' mental-health needs. Students will be informed that they and their parents should take into account the topic of the course and the nature of the sites visited when deciding whether they are emotionally prepared to enroll for this study-abroad seminar.

The faculty director will coordinate with the university's psychological counseling services prior to the trip to ensure that assistance from counseling center staff can be accessed remotely (by phone or Skype) if needed during the trip. In addition, the faculty director will check in with students individually and during small-group discussions over the course of the trip to ensure that she is aware of any mental-health concerns arising from the content of the trip and the sites visited.

7. FACULTY DIRECTOR

Statement of interest

My interest in teaching this proposed Burch seminar stems from transformative experiences while researching and teaching at locations of European Jewish life and the Holocaust. During research trips and previous study-abroad courses that I have taught, I found that visiting landscapes, streets, synagogues, cemeteries, Nazi camps and other locations of memory forces one to confront the complications of this history and historiographical challenges in understanding this past. I want to make it possible for students to have similar experiences.

In addition, interacting with residents of Poland and Lithuania, both Jewish and non-Jewish, has challenged my own notions of relations between Jews and non-Jews in European history. I hope that facilitating similar interactions for students can prompt them to probe their understanding not only of Jewish history but also of race relations, immigration, genocide and other relevant issues far beyond Europe. During a study-abroad trip in Europe about the Holocaust with students from Australia, for example, our conversations during and after the trip often included discussions of Aboriginal history, race relations in Australia and the legacy of British rule. Students from that trip subsequently went on to write honors theses not only about Holocaust memory and Jewish life, but also about Aboriginal history as well as the genocide in Rwanda. I remain in contact with many of those students, and many of them have remained in close contact with one another, continuing to discuss issues from the trip even after their university studies.

I have also found that an intensive study-abroad trip makes it possible to establish a group dynamic that facilitates student learning in a way that a traditional classroom setting cannot. The students' interactions with one another during formal and informal discussions motivate them to grapple together with fundamental questions about their experiences in the world and conceptions of the "other" in their own communities. Although I seek to develop such an environment in the classroom during the regular academic year, shared experiences and spontaneous encounters during a study-abroad can bring this history to life in a much deeper way.

Experience in the field

I am an assistant professor in the Department of History and Stuart E. Eizenstat Fellow in the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies. My research focuses on the social history of Polish Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth century, including Polish-Jewish relations and the history of the Holocaust. My publications include *The House at Ujazdowskie 16: Jewish Families in Warsaw after the Holocaust* (Indiana University Press, 2013) as well as journal articles in English and Polish. I have taught modern Jewish history, East European Jewish history and the Holocaust. Prior to arriving at UNC, I taught courses on the Holocaust and Jewish history at Brown, Virginia Tech, the University of Southampton (England) and Monash University (UK).

Over the past fifteen years I have lived for extended periods in Poland and have developed extensive contacts with Polish scholars of Jewish life and the Holocaust. I have held a visiting fellowship with the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, with which I remain affiliated.

I also have experience leading study-abroad trips in Europe. At Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, I organized and led a two-week study-abroad trip on Holocaust memory, traveling with a group of approximately twenty undergraduate and graduate students to Italy, Germany, Poland and Lithuania. Previous to this, at the University of Southampton in England, I initiated and led a week-long trip to Poland with approximately fifteen undergraduate students as part of an honors seminar on the Holocaust.

A teaching assistant from the history department with expertise in the history of the Holocaust will accompany the group.

**Karen Auerbach – Proposal for Burch Seminar
Itinerary**

WEEK 1: POLAND AND JEWISH LIFE BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

DAY 1: KRAKOW: Introduction to trip: Orientation

Morning: Group introductions

Afternoon: Introductory tour of Krakow: Visits to pre-World War II historical sites.

DAY 2: KRAKOW: Introduction to trip: The History of the Holocaust and Memory of the Second World War in the Landscapes of Europe

Morning: Lecture and discussion

Afternoon: Study/free time

Group dinner

DAY 3: NOWA HUTA: Introduction to the History of Poland

Morning: Site visit to Nowa Huta with lecture/discussion on Poland in the Communist period.

Afternoon: Study/free time

Evening film: “Jewish life in Krakow” (1939, 10 minutes)

DAY 4: KRAKOW: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe before the Second World War: The Case of Krakow

Morning: Lecture/discussion on East European Jewish history before the Holocaust.

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 5: KRAKOW: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe before the Second World War: The Case of Krakow, part 2

Morning: Walking tour of Jewish sites in the Kazimierz neighborhood with Professor Edyta Gawron

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 6: FREE DAY

DAY 7: FREE DAY

WEEK 2: THE HOLOCAUST AND POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS

DAY 8: KRAKOW: Polish-Jewish Relations during the Second World War

Morning: Lecture/discussion

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 9: KRAKOW: Krakow during the Holocaust, 1

Morning: site visits with lectures/discussion: The Krakow ghetto (Podgorze) – the ghetto square and memorial, Museum of the Pharmacy under the Eagle

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 10: KRAKOW: Krakow during the Holocaust, 2

Morning: Oskar Schindler's Factory

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 11: KRAKOW: Film and the Holocaust, 1

Morning: Film viewing of segments of Claude Lanzmann's "Shoah" with discussion

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 12: KRAKOW: Film and the Holocaust, 2

Morning: Film viewing of segments of Claude Lanzmann's "Shoah" with discussion

Afternoon: Study/free time

Group dinner with members of Krakow's contemporary Jewish community

DAY 13: FREE DAY

DAY 14: FREE DAY

WEEK 3: JEWS IN POLISH MEMORY, POLAND IN JEWISH MEMORY: REPRESENTATIONS OF JEWISH LIFE AND THE HOLOCAUST

DAY 15: KRAKOW: "Virtual Jews" and "Wooden Jews": The Holocaust and Tourism

Morning: site visits with lectures/discussion: Museum in Oskar Schindler's Factory and the Plaszow concentration camp

Afternoon: Study/free time.

DAY 16: KRAKOW: Holocaust Representation in Photography

Morning: Visit to the Galicia Jewish Museum (Kazimierz neighborhood) and discussion with Professor Jonathan Webber, anthropologist and museum founder

Afternoon: Study/free time.

Evening film: “Night and Fog” (1955)

DAY 17: AUSCHWITZ/BIRKENAU: Memorialization of the Holocaust at Nazi Camps: Competing Memories and Polish-Jewish Relations (overnight in Krakow)

Morning: Lecture/discussion at the Auschwitz Jewish Museum and discussion with Tomek Kuncewicz, director of the Auschwitz Jewish Museum

Afternoon: Guided visit to Auschwitz and Birkenau camps

Evening (Krakow): Discussion

WEEK 3, PART 2: THE MAKING AND REMAKING OF MEMORIALS AT NAZI CAMPS AND OTHER SITES OF MASS MURDER, 1980 TO TODAY; AND THE POLISH JEWISH SMALL TOWN IN YIDDISH LITERATURE

DAY 18: KRAKOW-TARNOW-BELZEC-ZAMOSC: Murder of the Roma in Eastern Europe during the Holocaust (overnight in Zamosc)

Morning: Drive from Krakow to mass graves of Roma in small towns, en route to Tarnow

Afternoon: Belzec camp

Guest lecturer: Adam Bartosz, historian of the Roma and founder of the Museum of Roma Culture in Tarnow

Evening: Zamosc

DAY 19: LUBLIN: In Search of Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Polish Jewish Small Town (overnight in Lublin)

Morning: Travel from Zamosc to Lublin

Afternoon: Jewish life in Lublin before the Holocaust - lecture/discussion during site visit to Brama Grodzka cultural center; walking tour of Jewish sites in Lublin

DAY 20: MAJDANEK: Memorialization at Nazi camps in the Communist period (overnight in Lublin)

Morning: Lecture/discussion during site visit to Majdanek camp

Afternoon: Study/free time

Guest lecturer: Professor Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska about representations of Poland in Yiddish literature

DAY 21: FREE DAY

WEEK 4: CONTEMPORARY POLAND AND MEMORY OF JEWISH LIFE IN THE STREETScape OF WARSAW: PRESENCE, ABSENCE AND RECONSTRUCTION

DAY 22: WARSAW: Introduction to a Reconstructed City: Presence, Absence and the Politics of the Streetscape

Morning: Brief tour of the old town, palace, and the monument to the Warsaw uprising.

Afternoon: Study/free time.

DAY 23: WARSAW: Overview of Jewish Life in Warsaw before the Holocaust

Morning: Lecture/discussion and exhibition at the Jewish Historical Institute.

Afternoon: Study/free time.

Guest lecturers: Professor Pawel Spiewak, director of the Jewish Historical Institute; and Yael Reisner, director of the institute's genealogy section

Evening film: "A Day in Warsaw" (1938, 10 minutes) and "A Film Unfinished" (2010)

DAY 24: WARSAW: Ghettoization and the Holocaust in Warsaw

Morning: Lectures/discussion during site visits in the former Warsaw ghetto – Warsaw Ghetto Monument, Warsaw Jewish cemetery, memorial at the Warsaw ghetto resistance headquarters, ghetto wall fragments, Janusz Korczak's orphanage

Guest lecturer: Professor Barbara Engelking-Boni

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 25: WARSAW: Holocaust Museums in Contemporary Europe: A New Case in Warsaw

Morning: Visit to the Museum of the History of the Polish Jews– lecture, discussions, exhibitions

Afternoon: Study/free time.

Guest lecturers: Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, program director of the museum’s core exhibition; and Dariusz Stola, museum director

Evening: Dinner with students from Warsaw University

DAY 26: WARSAW AND TREBLINKA – The Art and Symbolism of Holocaust Memorials

Morning: Lecture/discussion during site visit to Treblinka camp

Afternoon: Study/free time.

DAY 27: FREE TIME

DAY 28: FREE TIME

WEEK 5: “COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST” IN CONTEMPORARY POLAND AND LITHUANIA

DAY 29: WARSAW: Contemporary Polish Politics and Society: Nation, State, Religion?

Morning: Lecture on contemporary Polish politics, identities and the Catholic Church.

Afternoon: Site visit – Museum of the Warsaw Uprising.

DAY 30: WARSAW: Jewish Life in Europe after the Holocaust and Today: The Case of Warsaw

Morning: Visit to Nozyk synagogue, Jewish communal building, Yiddish theater and Praga neighborhood; meeting with members of the Polish Jewish youth group

Afternoon: Study/free time

Guest lecturer: Monika Krawczyk, a synagogue council member and director of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland

Evening film: “Farewell to My Country” (2002)

Group dinner

DAY 31: WARSAW-TYKOCIN-BIALYSTOK: “The Holocaust by Bullets”: Mass Shootings of Jews in the East (overnight in Bialystok)

Morning: Drive to Tykocin – synagogue, mass grave and lecture/discussion.

Afternoon: Study/free time in Bialystok.

DAY 32: BIALYSTOK-JEDWABNE: Polish-Jewish Relations and Memory in Contemporary Poland (overnight in Bialystok)

Morning: Drive to site of mass murder at Jedwabne and lecture/discussion during site visit

Afternoon: Return to Bialystok.

Group dinner

Evening film: “The Legacy of Jedwabne” (2005)

DAY 33: VILNIUS: “The Jerusalem of Lithuania” Jewish Life in Vilnius before and during the Holocaust

Morning: Walking tour of Vilnius Jewish quarter and the Holocaust museum

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 34: Mass Graves of the Holocaust in the Former Soviet Union

Morning: Visit to mass grave at Ponar

Afternoon: Study/free time

DAY 35: VILNIUS: Concluding discussion



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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

HAMILTON HALL
CAMPUS BOX 3195
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3195

T 919.962.9824
F 919.962.1403
brundage@email.unc.edu

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

W. FITZHUGH BRUNDAGE
*William B. Umstead Professor
Chair, Department of History*

Dear members of the Burch Seminar Selection Committee:

On behalf of the Department of History I enthusiastically support Prof. Karen Auerbach's proposal. It meshes nicely with our department's longstanding commitment to the study of the Holocaust and Jewish history, to experiential learning, and to enriching the undergraduate experience in general.

Our department is eager to participate in and develop study abroad opportunities that will allow UNC students to study history *in situ*. We are keenly aware of the power of historical artifacts and spaces to deepen and intensify the learning experience. And as much as any historical event, place is crucial to understanding the Holocaust. By visiting sites in Germany, Poland, and Lithuania, students will gain first hand insights not only to the places where Jewish life and culture flourished but also the places where the business of genocide was conducted.

We have ample grounds for optimism that Karen's proposed seminar will attract substantial undergraduate interest. We have a well-established course in Holocaust history that is likely to provide a pool of students interested in participating in a study-abroad trip devoted to the topic. We also have recognized faculty strength and a popular curriculum in East European, Soviet, and German history. Consequently, a study abroad opportunity that includes visits to Germany, Poland, and Lithuania is certain to appeal to students in our department who have studied these regions. Moreover, we anticipate that Karen's course will have appeal beyond History majors. A majority of the students in our Holocaust course are neither History majors nor minors; they come from a wide range of disciplines. Non-History majors who have had their interest in Holocaust history heightened by our class on the topic almost certainly will apply to participate in the seminar.

Karen's proposed seminar also will be an important step in our departmental plan to integrate study of the Holocaust into Jewish history before and after the war more broadly. With the addition of new faculty, especially Flora Cassen and Karen, we have substantially increased the number of courses we offer on Jewish history. We can now begin to weave these offerings together so that interested undergraduates can gain a comprehensive understanding of the Jewish historical experience. This proposed seminar, which places the Holocaust in the *longue duree*, will contribute directly to this goal.

For all of these reasons, I support Karen's proposal with great enthusiasm and urge you to give it careful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. F. Brundage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "W" and "F".

W. Fitzhugh Brundage
William B. Umstead Professor of History
Chair, Department of History



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CAROLINA CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES

February 1, 2016

PETTIGREW HALL, SUITE 100 T 919.962.1509
CAMPUS BOX 3152 F 919.962.7444
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3152 www.unc.edu/ccjs

Dear Gina,

It is a great pleasure to write this letter of support on behalf of Karen Auerbach's planned Burch seminar on "*The Texture of Memory: Memory of Jewish Life and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe and Germany.*" Karen's seminar is directed to students interested in European studies, history, and Holocaust studies and the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies is certain that this course will attract many students.

Karen Auerbach has experience teaching a similar course and she received various grants from the Center in order to develop more courses on similar topics. Given her strong commitment to students and the promising topic, I wholeheartedly support her application for a Burch seminar.

I am happy to answer any further questions should the occasion arise.

Sincerely,

Ruth von Bernuth
Associate Professor
Director, Carolina Center for Jewish Studies
Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures
CB# 3160 432 Dey Hall
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3160