

המכון הבינלאומי לגנאלוגיה יהודית ומרכז פאול יעקבי, ירושלים



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH GENEALOGY AND PAUL JACOBI CENTER

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Jewish Genealogy and Family History Course
for BA or MA students
- 2-Semester (1-year) Program ©

Academic Guidelines – 2nd Semester ©

Wider Topics & Practical Aspects

(a) Wider Topics [approximately 1/2 of 2nd semester lecture time]

➤ **Jewish Demography for JG**

- Overview of historical demography
- Dispersion of the Jewish communities post-1st Temple
- Early development of the Diaspora
- Formation of major groupings of Jews
- Migrational patterns in medieval and pre-modern times
- Modern shifts in Jewish demographics, especially since 1880's
- Statistics - over time and place
- Distribution - over time and place
- Birthrates (fertility) and lifespans (expectancy) - over time and place
- Effects of plagues, warfare, pogroms
- Migration as challenge to genealogical memory
- Acculturation, conversion/assimilation
- Affiliation/denial of Jewish origins in the modern world
- Impacts on Jewish families and communities

Bibliography:

DellaPergola (2001)
DellaPergola (2002)
DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts, (2005)
Foa (2000)
Gilbert (1993)
Hundert (1999)
McEvedy (1972)
McEvedy (1982)
Sack and Newman in Sack, Mokotoff (2004)
Wagner, Klauzinska (2007)

➤ The Shoah and JG

- Holocaust research, focussing on basic historical questions.
 - Overall outline and processes involved
 - Pre-War Nazi threat in Germany and Austria
 - Fear, persecution, dislocation
 - Increased emigration
 - During War, following Nazi invasions of Poland and other countries
 - Deportations to concentration camps
 - Systematic liquidation of communities, *in situ* and in death camps
- Problematics of identifying victims and their names
 - Changing of names or their pronunciation
 - Concealed identities and hiding (leading to the adoption of gentile names and nicknames)
 - Round-ups and deportations (during which names were misspelled, distorted).
- Memorialization -Yad Vashem/US Holocaust Memorial Museum/other Holocausts museums
- Construction of the major databases to recover names of victims and survivors ("*Dapei-Ed*" – Pages of Testimony; use of deportations lists; immediate post-war lists of survivors; listings made since the mid-1990s for restitution purposes)
- Additional sources
 - International Tracing Service - ITS (Bad Arolsen)
 - "*Yizkor*" Books; necrologies; local histories commemorating Jewish communities (growing phenomenon in Germany and western European countries; often include necrologies)
- Restitution and other claims employing JG
- Use of databases as primary sources/raw material for JG research projects

Bibliography

DellaPergola (1996)
 Friesel (1990).
 Gilbert (1982)
 Gutman (1990)
 Lestchinsky (1948).
 McEvedy (1982)
 Michman [2010]

➤ Genetics and JG

- "Relatedness" of different Jewish ethnic groups
- Uses of DNA for JG
- Existence of a Jewish Haplotype?
 - Y-DNA in paternal line
 - MtDNA in matrilineal lines
- Ashkenazi and Sephardic DNA
- Cohanic and Levitic identities
- African tribes and other groups (Lemba, Abayudaya tribes)
- Jewish genetic traits, medical conditions and hereditary diseases

Bibliography:

Behar *et al* (2008)
 Boster, Gaulin (1998)
 Hammer *et al* (2000)
 Entine (2007)
 Levy-Coffman (2005)

➤ **Rabbinical Genealogy**

- Centrality in JG
- "Jewish aristocracy" = Leading rabbinical families (Ashkenazi/Sephardi)
- Survey of rabbinic sources and literature (e.g. Sherira Gaon, Maimonides, Ha-Meiri, recording their personal lineages)
- Genealogies of eminent rabbis and scholars
- Chassidic dynasties
- Fictive/"constructed" rabbinical trees
- Rabbinical lineages in contention
- Rabbinical anthologies, compendia, encyclopedias as sources

Bibliography:

Ben Sasson, *et al* (eds.) De Botons (1998)
 Friedman (1997)
 Friedman in Sack, Mokotoff (2004), pp. 77-89
 Rosenstein (1990)

➤ **Myths, Legends, Polemics and Abuses in JG**

- Sumerian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman myths (descendants from the gods)
- Biblical genealogies (descendants from men); king lists, royal pedigrees
- Priestly lineage (Eleazar and Itamar, non-Aaronites)
- Claimed descent from the House of David
- The Rashi Legend
- Contested lineages (e.g., Luria, Vilna Gaon)
- Manipulation of lines for political and other purposes (status, legitimisation, inheritance)
- "Aristocratic" origins (e.g., Spanish origins of Ashkenazi families)
- Self-attributed trees/ self-aggrandisement

Bibliography:

Einsiedler (1992)
 Franklin (2005)
 Friedman (1997)
 Rosenstein (1990)
 Rosenstein (2006)
 Schellekens (2003)
 Schellekens (2006) on Biblical genealogy
 Schellekens (2006) on the House of David
 Wilson (1977)

(b) Practical matters [approximately 1/2 of 2nd semester lecture time]

➤ **JG Ethics and Standards**

i. Ethics

- Use of data/information in the public domain
- Use of data conveyed by living informants
- Privacy issues
- Holocaust issues
- Legal issues
- Copyright issues
- Plagiarism, Fraud

Bibliography:

Kallmann (2008)
Sobel (2007)
Swift (2000)

ii. Standards

- Genealogical standards in general
- Citation of evidence
- Admissible evidence, supporting evidence, - as against probability, hypothesis, speculation
- Recording of Names, Places and Dates
- Recordings of generations (Jacobi's Absolute Generations Scale)
- Transliteration systems (Hebrew, Yiddish, Arabic, etc.)

Bibliography:

BCG Standards Manual
Mills (2007)
Mokotoff (2008)
Rapaport (2009)

➤ **Oral History**

- Importance contribution of Oral History and its potential for JG
- Theory and practice
- Conducting an interview to maximize JG information retrieval
- Construction of questionnaire
- Interviewing techniques:
 - Preparation of interview (maximizing data on informant, etc.)
 - equipment;
 - frequent problems:
 - reliability/tendentiousness
 - impact of personal relations
 - techniques for the revival of memory

- Legal permission from informant
- Means of collecting documents, pictures etc.
- Differentiating between Oral History (“primary information”) and Family Lore (“*bobbe mayses*”)
- Critical evaluation of the narrative and its reliability; verification/corroborations
- Interpretation of the narrative
- Indirect information on historical context - social environment, traditions and customs, political motivations, patterns of acculturation etc.
- Identification of Oral History archives appropriate for given research project (e.g. for modern Jewry, the Oral History Division at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem at: http://icj.huji.ac.il/archives_ohd.asp ; for Central Europe research, the Centropa archive at www.centropa.org. for Holocaust research, the USC Shoah Foundation at <http://college.usc.edu/vhi>

Bibliography:

Henige (1971)

Epstein, Lewit, Mendelsohn (1994)

Thompson (2000)

➤ **Research Strategies and Methodologies**

- Working with JG information explosion
 - o Effective strategies and methodologies
 - o Integrating/merging datasets
 - o Synthesis – creating new knowledge from existing data
- Original research
 - o Research plans
 - o Research questions
 - o Working hypotheses
- Problematics in primary sources
 - o Accuracy of sources
 - o Special problems with censuses – including “fixing” of censuses; uncensused populations, compatibility of census data
- Critical use of sources (direct vs. indirect evidence; inaccurate names, ages, etc. etc.)
- Essential skills
 - o Language skills
 - o Research skills, including archival skills
 - o Data organisational skills

Bibliography

Gladstone (2004)

Kurzweil (1980)

Kluzinska (2009)

Schellekens (1995).

➤ Jewish JG Records

- Vital records (including *Mohel* books)
- Rabbinical Courts records (including *Ketubot*, *gittin*)
- Synagogue records, minute books
- Community Registers (*Pinkasim*), minutes of synagogues, communal societies
- Burial Society records (*hevra kadisha*)
- Special sources (*Memor* books, *Prenumeraten*)
- Montefiore Censuses in Palestine, Egypt
- Shoah records (including Yad Vashem, etc, Bad Arolsen etc.)
- Jewish Agency records
- Hebrew Immigration Aid Society (HIAS) and Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) records

Bibliography:

➤ Jewish Cemeteries and Necrologies

i. Gravestones

- Cemeteries as bridge to generations past and their re-construction
- Burial practices in cemeteries (family plots, separation of men and women, infants, suicides, bastards, prostitutes, etc.)
- Reading stones in Hebrew:
 - o Names (male, female)
 - o Dates (Jewish calendar)
 - o Conventional abbreviations (*פ"נ, ת.נ.צ.ב.ה, וכדומה*)
 - o Standard phrases
 - o Symbols on gravestones (*Kohanim, Levi'im*, scholars, trades, etc.)
 - o Painted stones
- Differing traditions where relevant (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, etc.)
- Physical problems
 - o Broken, weathered stones
 - o Wooden stones
 - o Ancient cemeteries
 - o Untended, razed cemeteries from modern era
 - o Unearthed, re-located cemeteries
- Limitations of tombstone information
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ii. Auxiliary sources

- Utilization in conjunction with other sources:
 - o Cemetery registers and other burial records
 - o Online cemetery records JewishGen, etc.
 - o Necrologies in various forms (*Yizkor* books, etc.)
- Merging incomplete data from stones and other records
- [Practical exercise – visit a traditional Jewish cemetery]

Bibliography:

Krajewska (1993)
 Kurzweil (1994), pp. 342-358.

Menachemson (2007)
 Reiner, *Tarbitz*
 Sachs and Blatt (2004)
 Schafer (1991)
 Schwartzman (1993)

➤ **JG in Cyberspace – Techniques and Technologies**

- Search engines
- JewishGen, in its various aspects
- SephardicGen and its resources
- JRI-Poland and SIG's
- Other Jewish sites on the Web
- JG Software (*Ilanot*, Dorotree, My Heritage, etc.) – advantages/disadvantages of different systems (static, dynamic, interactive)

➤ **Additional Sources and Resources**

- Archives (primary sources) – overview by regions
- Civil and religious vital records
- Public records, printed sources (secondary sources) - among others, immigration, naturalisation, military, death/burial records
- Censuses - Russian “Revisions”; European, US and other national censuses.
- Notarial records of early Spain and Italy
- LDS collections/ Family History Library Catalog
- Databases (Ellis Island) Shipping records
- Name changing records, etc

Bibliography

➤ **Auxiliary Tools**

- Maps, gazetteers
- Local histories
- City and business directories
- (Jewish) newspapers (many languages)
- Libraries, reference works, guidebooks to sources
- Online people finders
- Bibliographies
- Language translating devices
- Date Converters

➤ **“Hands on” computer lab and library session**
