HIST349 Alternative Histories: Jewish Greeks and the modern nation  
Spring 2019

Course Instructor

NAME Daphne Lappa
HOURS AVAILABLE After class and by appointment

Class Meetings

DAY HOURS
Tuesday & Thursday 17.20 – 19.00

Course Description

The course focuses on the experiences of Jews living in the Greek nation-state during the 19th and 20th centuries. It is structured around a core issue: The encounter of pre-national Jewish identities with the exigencies of a new, ‘modern’ at the time idea, namely that of a common Greek national identity.

This encounter was part of the wider transition from the era of empires to that of nation-states. And it was not an easy encounter. Since the formation of the Greek state in the 19th century, Greek-Orthodox religion has been conceived as one of the main components of Greek national and cultural identity, binding together the expanding new-born nation-state. Nevertheless, being the heir of the multi-religious Ottoman Empire where Greek-Orthodox Christians lived alongside Muslims, Jews, and Christians of different denominations, the Greek state that emerged out of the Ottoman Empire had to take up the challenge of dealing with this non-Orthodox population that came included in its territories.

The course will thus follow this encounter focusing primarily but not exclusively on two aspects: a) on the policies that the Greek state adopted in order to «manage» the Jewish populations that were being gradually added in its territory; and b) on the reactions that the Jews living in the various communities had in front of the new exigencies of the Greek state; reactions that covered the whole spectrum from assimilation to migration.

The study of the Jews in Greece will be also framed by case-studies of other non-Orthodox Greeks, tracing the responses that they devised in order to articulate their plural identities combining non-Orthodox religious and cultural elements with the idea of a common, unique Greek national identity. The course will close by briefly examining the redefinition of “Greekness” after new immigrant populations reached Greece in the post-WWII era.

Understanding how Jews and more broadly people of different creeds and origin devised alternative versions of “Greekness”, which undermined the intimate connection between religious and national identity, is more than relevant today that nation states and their supposed homogeneity is seriously challenged by the waves of global migration, forcing us to reflect anew on forms and definitions of belonging.
Course Resources and Activities

Readings
We will read a wide variety of texts, secondary literature and primary sources, in order to understand both how the above raised issues are conceptualized in historiography as well as how historical actors thought, felt and remembered their experiences.

Discussions
Each meeting will be structured around a couple of core questions. Discussing them will be a vital part of the course.

Documentary screenings
We will be using excerpts of documentaries or whole documentaries as tools enriching our insight into the eras and people we will be studying.

Walking tour, visits and food
We will have the chance to walk the area that in pre-WWII times used to be the heart of the Jewish neighborhood in Athens. We will visit the two Synagogues in the city center and the Jewish Museum of Greece. We will also have a dinner of Sephardic cuisine at Gostijo restaurant.

Oral presentations
During the semester two kinds of oral presentations will take place: a) weekly presentations of reading assignments will be conducted by a pair of students, offering a critical review and some opening questions; and b) individual presentation of term papers, which will take place during the last two meetings of the course.

Writing
Instead of a final exam all student are required to prepare a term paper addressing one of the core issues linked to the course. I will be discussing individually with students their interests so as to assist them in identifying the subject of their paper.

Meetings
Students are encouraged to approach me after class, by appointment or through e-mail and share with me any concerns regarding the course, ideas that you would like to discuss etc.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1) Have a general overview of Greek history in the 19th and 20th centuries.
2) Have a general overview of the history of the Jews in Greece and become aware of the distinct traditions of Greek Jewry.
3) Reflect critically on the process of the transition from empires to nation-states, and understand the continuities and ruptures that this transition entailed for both the state and its citizens.
4) Become aware of different versions of ‘Greekness’ that non-Orthodox Greeks have devised and embodied in the course of the 20th century.

Course Requirements
Weekly readings & participation
Weekly readings will be assigned, roughly around 120 pages of textbook reading per week or 40 pages of close, analytic reading of academic journal or monograph. All students are expected to read them. Each week a pair of students will present the readings, offering a critical review and some opening questions. Presentations should last about 15 minutes. All students are expected to participate actively in the discussion that follows; this is vitally important for the successful attendance of the course.

Midterm exams
Thursday March 7

Term papers
Term papers will be addressing one of the core issues linked to the course. They can be based either exclusively on secondary literature or make use of primary sources as well. Papers need to involve clearly articulated research questions set in context and put forward answers based on argumentation. Individual meetings with students will take place so as to identify areas of interest, assist them in choosing the subject of the papers and follow the progress of their work. A first outline of the paper, that is a 2-3 pages working outline explaining the research question, context, tentative conclusions, and a partial bibliography, is due on Thursday April 18.
In-class individual presentations of term papers are scheduled for the last two meetings of the course. Students will be expected to present key issues of their papers to their peers as well as share with them the reasons why they focused on the specific subject matter. The use of PowerPoint is encouraged.
Final papers of no more than 4,000 words are due on Thursday May 16. Term papers must be turned in on the due date. No late assignments will be accepted.

Grading and Evaluation
Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

Class participation: 15%
Readings’ presentation: 15%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Oral Presentation of term paper: 20%
Term Paper: 30%

Grades are intended to give students a sense of the quality of a particular piece of work. Roughly speaking, a B means that you have done a good job with the writing, the ideas, and the organization of the work; a C conveys that the work lacks some important qualities and has some problems, while an A means that the work is exemplary in some key ways: the writing is particularly clear, the ideas thoroughly treated, the organization of the presentation well considered and effective.

Use of Laptops: In-class or on-site use of laptops and other devices is permitted if that facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other devise privileges will be suspended if there are not used for class-related work. ‘Laptop-free zone’ in the classroom for students who do not use electronic devises and feel distracted if they sit close to one will be created following students’ request.

Attendance: Students are expected to report for classes promptly. CYA regards attendance in class and on-site as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately in the Student Affairs Office.

Policy on Original Work: Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided.
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Director of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Books & Course Materials

All books and course materials can be found at the CYA Library or will be distributed digitally.

Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Day</th>
<th>Day/Date</th>
<th>Topic / Readings / Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tu Jan 29</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to the course: General concept, structure &amp; requirements.</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Th Jan 31</td>
<td><strong>Jews in the Ottoman Empire.</strong></td>
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*This meeting will offer an overview on Ottoman Jews, their geography in the empire and their social profile. We will discuss what was their position within the Ottoman social structure and compare it with that of other non-Muslim communities.*

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


| 3 | Tu Feb 5 | The Greek Revolution (1821), the first emergence of the Greek state and the reversal of hierarchies.  
*The Greek Revolution came together with widespread violence against the Jews living in the Ottoman Empire. The Greek state that soon emerged established the primacy of Greek-Orthodox religion. This meeting will be thus dedicated to the reversal of hierarchies existing in the Ottoman empire and the new position that non-Orthodox population acquired within the 'new-born' Greek state.*  
**Required reading**  
**Optional reading**  
| 4 | Th Feb 7 | Greece in the 19th century. An expanding new-born state facing its non-Orthodox citizens.  
*As the Greek state was expanding, new non-Orthodox populations came to be added to its territory. This meeting will discuss the first reactions of the state towards them and the policies it devised in order to manage this multi-religious and multi-ethnic landscape.*  
**Required reading**  
**Optional reading**  
| 5 | Tu Feb 12 | **Jews in the Greek state before 1912.**  
*This meeting will deal with the first decades of Jewish-Christian coexistence within the Greek state. After introducing an overview of the communities incorporated in Greece until 1912, we will focus on the case of Corfu, the most prominent Jewish community at the time, so as to trace the reactions of the Jews confronted with the new reality of the Greek nation-state.*  

**Required reading**  
Eyal Ginio, ‘To Write the History of Jews in Modern Greece. The Case of Corfu’, *Archeiotaxio* 19 (2017), [1-25].  

**Optional reading**  
| 6-7 | Th Feb 14  
Tu Feb 19 | **The Balkan Wars and the incorporation of the city of Salonica in the Greek state (1912).**  
*The Balkan Wars brought about the redrawing of borders in the region and the almost complete withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from it. Salonica was eventually incorporated in the Greek State. And with it came one of the most prominent Jewish communities. This meeting will focus on the state policies devised to deal with this new reality as well as the on the reaction of the Jews of Salonica in front of a state that insisted in its Greek-Orthodox outlook.*  
**Required reading**  
Th Feb 14  
Tu Feb 19  
**Optional reading**  
|---|---|
| 8 | Th Feb 21 | **Other Non-Orthodox in the Greek state (1912-1923).**  
*Jews were not the only non-Orthodox living in the Greek state in the early 20th century. This meeting will focus on the Muslim population and compare their case with that of the Jews.*  
**Required reading**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tu Feb 26</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Is it enough to be Greek-Orthodox? Population exchange after the Asia Minor catastrophe (1922) and its repercussions.</td>
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*By briefly examining the Asia Minor catastrophe in 1922 and the consequent influx of a considerable number of migrants to Greece, we will consider the reactions of Greek society against these newcomers as well as the wider repercussions that this event had on the Jews of Greece.*

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


| 10-11 | Th Feb 28  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tu Mar 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Romaniote Jews in Greece. A social and cultural profile.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>In these two meetings we will focus on Romaniote Jews, that is Jews that trace their past back to the Roman and Byzantine times. We will explore their geographic location, social and cultural characteristics, their relationship with the other major Jewish group, the Sephardim, as well as the paths that they followed in order to articulate their plural identities, both Jewish and Greek.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Required reading</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Th Feb 28</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Tu Mar 5</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Optional reading</strong></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Th Mar 7</td>
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<td><strong>Midterm exams.</strong></td>
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<td>13-14</td>
<td>Tu Mar 19</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Sephardic Jews in Greece. A social and cultural profile.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In these two meetings we will focus on Sephardic Jews, that is Jews that came to the Ottoman Empire from Spain in the late 15th century. We will explore their geographic location, social and cultural characteristics, their relationship with the other major Jewish group, the Romaniotes, as well as the paths that they followed in order to articulate their plural identities, both Jewish and Greek.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Required reading</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Th Mar 7</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Tu Mar 19</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eyal Ginio, ‘Enduring the Shift from an Empire to Nation-state. The Case of the Jewish Community of Kavala during the First Balkan War’, in <em>Jewish Communities between East and West</em>, eds. Anna Mahera and Leda Papastefanaki, Ioannina: Isnafi, 2016, 173-181.</td>
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<td><strong>Optional</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Jewish Salonica: Prof. Devin E. Naar Book Launch at the University of Washington</em> (video)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Tu Mar 26</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Visit to the Greek Jewish Museum of Athens.</strong></td>
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### 16-17

**Th Mar 28**

**Tu Apr 2**

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<tr>
<th><strong>WWII and the Holocaust in Greece.</strong></th>
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<td>These two meetings will offer an overview of the Holocaust in Greece. We will follow the actual events and discuss about the paths that Jews could take to save themselves; the reaction of the Christian fellow citizens, neighbors and friends; and the ways that the camp experience transformed survivors.</td>
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**Required reading**

**Th Mar 28**


**Tu Apr 2**


**Optional reading**


### 18

**Th Apr 4**

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Walking tour in Jewish Athens.</strong></th>
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<td><em>The Monastiraki and Psiri neighborhoods.</em></td>
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<td><em>Visit to the Synagogues.</em></td>
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**Required reading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading and Notes</th>
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| 19-20 | **Post-Holocaust itineraries.**  
*The destruction of the Jews during the war brought about a new geography of the communities in post-war Greece as well as a new prioritization of these communities. Within this context, we will focus on the choices that survivors returning from concentration camps or coming out of hiding places were left with after the end of the war, namely rehabilitation in post-war Greece or migration.*  

**Required reading**  
**Tu Apr 16**  

**Th Apr 18**  

**Optional reading**  
**Post-war migration redefining ‘Greekness’?**

During the 19th and, especially, the 20th century the Jews of Greece had to reinvent their identities while at the same time the Greek state had to devise policies to accommodate them. In the post-World War II period and especially since the 1990s a similar to a certain extent process has been taking place, shaped this time by the arrival to Greece of migrants from the Balkans, Central Europe, Russia, East Asia, Africa and the Middle East. We will thus discuss the challenges that migration has posed and still poses to migrants and the state alike.

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


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**Concluding remarks: Different versions of identities.**

**In-class presentation of term papers.**

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*Course schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and in keeping up to date with current research.*

**Bibliography**


Ginio, Eyal. ‘Enduring the Shift from an Empire to Nation-state. The Case of the Jewish Community of Kavala during the First Balkan War’. In *Jewish Communities between East and West*, edited by Anna Mahera and Leda Papastefanaki, 173-181. Ioannina: Isnafi, 2016.


Naar, Devin E. ‘The «Mother of Israel» or the «Sephardi Metropolis»? Sephardim, Ashkenazim, and Romaniotes in Salonica’. *Jewish Social Studies, 22:3* (Fall 2016): 81-129.


