

## Table of Contents

<b>I. Emanuel Ringelblum and the Oyneg Shabes Archive</b>	Page 1
<b>II. The Responsa of Rabbi Ephraim Oshry</b>	Page 29
<b>III. The Paper Brigade</b>	Page 53
<b>IV. The Sermons of the Piaseczna Rebbe, Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira</b>	Page 73
<b>V. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising</b>	Page 99

## Session I

# Emanuel Ringelblum and the Oyneg Shabes Archive

### Assignments:

- Samuel Kassow, “Ringelblum, Emanuel,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2010).
- Samuel Kassow, “Oyerbakh, Rokhl,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2010).
- “The Oneg Shabbat Archive,” *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Holocaust Encyclopedia*.
- Images: Yad Vashem, “Oyneg Shabes Archival Material.”
- “The BBC Broadcast About the Situation of Jews in Poland,” *The Jewish Historical Institute’s Oneg Szabbat Program* (2018).
- Emanuel Ringelblum, “Thoughts About Resistance and its Consequences are Evoked When News About Massacre Reach the Ghetto,” *Yad Vashem Studies* (1968).
- Jack Fischel, “Review of Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto and the Oyneg Shabes Archive,” *Jewish Book Council* (2012).

### Guiding Questions:

- Why did Emmanuel Ringelblum found the Oyneg Shabes group, and what made it successful?
- What kinds of documents and materials were placed in the archive? What can we learn about Jewish life in the ghetto from these items?
- How is creating an archive resistance?
- What was the goal of the Oyneg Shabes group, and how did its goal change over time?
- The Oyneg Shabes group had members from different political organizations. What are some of those political groups? Why is this significant?

## Session II

# The Responsa of Rabbi Ephraim Oshry

### Readings:

- Amos Goldberg, “Oshry, Ephraim,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2010).
- Douglas Martin, “Ephraim Oshry, 89, a Scholar in Secret During the Holocaust,” *The New York Times* (2003).
- Ephraim Oshry, *Responsa from the Holocaust* (1983), pp. 9-10, 85, 95-96.
- Michael A. Grodin, Johnathan I. Kelly, Robert Kirschner, Erin L. Miller, Joseph Polak, “Rabbinic Responsa and Spiritual Resistance During the Holocaust: The Life-for-Life Problem,” *Modern Judaism* (2019), pp.301-312.

### Guiding Questions:

- How would you define resistance to the Holocaust? Does Rabbi Oshry’s role change your definition?
- Rabbi Oshry said in an interview, “One resists with a gun, another, with his soul.” What do you think it means to resist with the soul?
- Rabbi Oshry largely relied on his memory of Jewish law to answer questions. Before you read the answers to some of the questions asked of Rabbi Oshry, please take a minute to write down your own answers to the questions (write down a few key words and we will discuss your answers in class). Don’t worry about getting it “right” – just answer based on what you think makes sense.
- What do these responsa tell us about the Jews and Jewish life in the Kovno Ghetto?

## Session III

# The Paper Brigade

### Assignments:

- Video: Eddy Portnoy, “A Brief History of the Paper Brigade.”
- Ruth R. Wisse, “Sutzkever, Avrom,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2017).
- “The Paper Brigade: Smuggling Rare Books and Documents in Nazi-Occupied Vilna,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2017).
- Talya Zax, “Q&A: Remembering the Written Writers Who Defied the Nazis to Save Jewish Texts,” *The Forverts* (2018).
- Video: David Fishman, “The Paper Brigade: Tour of the YIVO Exhibit with Dr. David Fishman.”
- Images: David Fishman, “The Smugglers of the Vilna Ghetto: Choosing a Life of Meaning Under the Spector of Death.”

### Guiding Questions:

- How would you define this type of resistance?
- Who were the members of the Paper Brigade?
- Compare the Paper Brigade with the Oyneg Shabes group. Did they engage in the same form of resistance?
- Why do you think the members of the Paper Brigade risked their lives for the books and documents that they smuggled?
- What does this form of resistance teach us about the Nazis’ plan?

## Session IV

# The Sermons of the Piaseczna Rebbe, Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira

### Readings:

- Nahemia Polen, “Shapiro, Kalonymus Kalmish ben Elimelekh of Piaseczno,” *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (2010).
- Henry Abramson, *Torah from the Years of Wrath 1939-1943: The Historical Context of the Aish Kodesh* (2017), pp. 1-3, 79-86.
- Kalonymous Kalman Shapira, “Dedication Page of *Aish Kodesh*,” in *Torah From the Years of Wrath 1939:1943: The Historical Context of the Aish Kodesh* (2017), pp. 13-14.
- Nehemia Stern, “To Sanctify the Name of God: Ritual Precision and Martyrdom in Rabbi Ephraim Oshry’s Holocaust Responsa,” *Holocaust Studies* (2016), p. 106.
- Pesach Schindler, *Hasidic Responses to the Holocaust in the Light of Hasidic Thought* (1990), pp. 25-27.
- Yvette A. Miller, “How the Rabbi of the Warsaw Ghetto is Giving Me Comfort Today,” *Aish.com* (September 2020).

### Guiding Questions:

- Do you see the Piaseczna Rebbe’s sermons as a form of resistance? Why or why not?
- What was his goal in delivering these sermons?
- Compare the role of the Piaseczna with that of Rabbi Oshry. Did they engage in the same kind of spiritual resistance?

## Session V

# The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

### Readings:

- “Warsaw Ghetto Uprising,” *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Holocaust Encyclopedia* (2021).
- “Warsaw Ghetto Uprising,” *Yad Vashem*.
- Eyewitness Accounts of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, various sources, curated by Sarah Wapner.
- “Anielewicz, Mordecai,” *Yad Vashem*.
- “From the Diary of Emanuel Ringelblum on the Women Fighters in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising,” *Yad Vashem*.

### Guiding Questions:

- Who were the Jewish fighters in the uprising?
- Given the slim chance of success or survival, why did they take up armed resistance?
- What unique role did women have in the uprising?
- Are the reasons that motivated the fighters similar to the reasons that motivated other resistance figures or groups that we discussed, or was each form of resistance unique?
- What do you think is the relationship between armed resistance and nonviolent resistance?