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How Odessa Inspired a Jewish Renaissance: Lecture and Art Exhibit Kick-off Exciting Slate of Fall Programs at the Rutgers Bildner Center

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. – Professor Olga Litvak (Clark University) will explore how city life in nineteenth century Odessa inspired a Jewish renaissance that altered the course of Russian-Jewish history. Through the eyes of some of its most famous Jewish residents, Litvak will show how Russian-speaking, secular Jewish Odessa became the incubator of Jewish nationalism, producing a Hebrew revival and a political movement committed to Zionism. The lecture, “Inventing Odessa: Jewish Culture on the Edge of the Russian Empire,” will be held on September 14 at 3:00 p.m. at the Zimmerli Art Museum at 71 Hamilton Street in New Brunswick. Guided tours of the art exhibit “Odessa’s Second Avant-Garde: City and Myth” are available at 2:00 p.m., prior to the lecture, and at 4:15 p.m., following the lecture.

The talk and tour are free and open to the public. The talk is the Toby and Herbert Stolzer Endowed Lecture sponsored by the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University, and cosponsored by the Zimmerli Art Museum. **Advance registration is requested by contacting csjlrsvp@rci.rutgers.edu or 848-932-2033.** Free parking is available behind the museum. The lecture is the first of numerous public programs this fall sponsored by the Bildner Center, including the Rutgers Jewish Film Festival (Oct. 29 – Nov. 9), a live music performance, and a talk on Hanukkah in America. (For full schedule, visit **BildnerCenter.rutgers.edu**.)

Olga Litvak is a leading scholar of Jewish Eastern Europe and holds the Leffell Chair in Modern Jewish History at Clark University. Her recent books include *Conscription and the Search for Modern Russian Jewry* (Indiana University Press, 2006) and *Haskalah: The Romantic Movement in Judaism* (Rutgers University Press, 2012). She is currently working on a study of Russian Zionism.

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life connects the university with the community through public lectures, symposia, Jewish communal initiatives, cultural events, and teacher training.

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