This semester-long course will examine the political relationship of the Jewish community to the
gentile authorities among whom they lived (and live), to the internal authority structures within
the Jewish community, and to the modern Jewish state. We will examine how Jews rebelled
against and accommodated to structures of power in varying historical contexts. We will
examine select aspects of traditional Jewish politics, such as the concepts of dina de-malkhuta
dina ("the law of the gentile hosts is the law") and the “royal alliance,” as the basis for our study
of the continuities and challenges inherent in modern Jewish politics. The ideological
assumptions in the words “power” and “powerlessness” will be critiqued throughout the course,
which covers discrete topic areas in chronological order. Topics to be discussed include: Roman
Rebels; Spanish Inquisitors and Jewish Courtiers; Kings, Nobles and Jewish Administrators in
Early Modern Poland; Military Conscription and Communal Responses in Nicholas I’s Russia;
Jewish Socialists in late Imperial Russia; Gender Politics of Jewish Women; The Appeal of
Communism and Socialism in the Interwar Years; Jewish Liberalism and its Discontents; Zionist
Empowerment and the challenge of the Holocaust. Primary and secondary sources, as well as
fiction, poetry and films, will be used.

Course Requirements: The assigned readings have been put on the Sakai website
(https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal) and on Undergraduate Reserve at Alexander Library. Students
are required to prepare the course readings and to participate actively in class. Please note that
some weeks have more reading than others, so try to pace yourself accordingly. Students should
bring the course packet and any primary sources that are assigned from the Sakai site to class.
Students are also required to post, via Sakai and/or an email listserv, terms and discussion
questions for each session. Students will be asked to lead mini-discussions in class about
particular readings.

There will be a short assignment to compensate for the cancellation of class on Yom Kippur, an
in-class midterm examination and a take-home final. Students are also required to write an
analytic paper (approximately 1500-1750 words).

The analytic paper will require the ability to synthesize both historical information and
interpretive concepts and to present them in a coherent informed argument. No late work will be
accepted under any circumstances. The exams will include identifications and essay questions
based upon the lectures as well as upon assigned readings (even if those materials were not
discussed in class).

Grading:

Attendance and class participation: 10%
Short Assignment: 10%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Analytic Essay: 25%
Final Exam: 35%

The following books are available for purchase at the Rutgers University Bookstore:
   Amos Oz, In the Land of Israel (Oxford, 1993).

[Robert Seltzer, Jewish People, Jewish Thought, an excellent survey of Jewish history, is on Reserve and can be useful]

* A required course packet is available from Pequod Copy Center, 119 Somerset Street.

1. Introduction and Statement of the Problem
   [Links to Rutgers University Writing Guides]

2. Traditional Rabbinic Political Postures
   David Biale, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History, (New York, 1986),
   “Introduction.” (Sakai website)
   Michael Walzer, “Introduction: The Jewish Political Tradition.” (P*18-29)
   Genesis 47:7 (handout)
   Jeremiah 29:5-7 (handout)
   Ezra 6:10 (handout)

3. Rabbinic Power and the War with Rome
   Richard G. Marks, The Image of Bar Kokhba in Traditional Jewish Literature, pp. 13-56. (Sakai website)
   BT Gittin (P*3-8)

4. Traditional Rabbinic Political Postures and their Influence on Medieval Jewish Political Quietism:
   Salo Baron, The Jewish Community, 1 (Westport, CN, 1942): 208-282. (Sakai website)
   Walzer, The Jewish Political Tradition, pp. 430-436. (P*30-36)
   “Jewish Autonomy in Babylon about 1168.” (P*9-11)
5. Medieval Jewish Political Quietism Continued
   Biale, pp. 58-85. (Sakai website)
   Walzer, The Jewish Political Tradition, pp. 436-446. (P*36-47)

6. The Royal Alliance; Shtadlanut; Magnates and Jews in Early Modern Poland
   Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, The Lisbon Massacre of 1506 and the Royal Image in the Shebet Yehudah (Cincinnati, 1976). (P*56-57)
   Charter of Boleslaw the Pious (P*12-14)
   “The Massacre of the New Christians of Lisbon, April 1506.” (P*58-60)

7. The Jewish Enlightenment and the State; Russian Jewry and the Breakdown of Traditional Authority and Politics [**Holiday Assignment Due**]
   Lederhendler, pp. 36-83. (Sakai website)
   Michael Stanislawski, Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews (The Jewish Publication Society of America, Phil., PA, 1983), pp. 13-34; 97-122. (Sakai website)
   Psalms for the Tsar (packet)

8. Yom Kippur. No Class.

9. Enlightenment and the State Continued
   Lederhendler, pp. 84-110 (Sakai website)
   Biale, pp. 87-117. (Sakai website)
   Sources: Joseph Perl’s Memo Regarding Rabbis, Kosher Slaughtering, and Circumcisers in Galicia. (handout)

10. The Damascus Affair and the Alliance Israelite Universelle
    Jonathan Frankel, The Damascus Affair, ‘Ritual Murder,’ Politics, and the Jews in 1840, pp. 17-30 and conclusion (Sakai website)
    Aron Rodrigue, French Jews, Turkish Jews, pp. 1-8. (Sakai website)
    “The Damascus Affair,” Appeal to All Israelites (packet, pp. 51-52), “Alliance Israelite Universelle.” (P*70-77)
11. Class Conflict and the Rise of Jewish Labor
   Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (Oxford, 1993), Chapter One (whole class); individual students, individual chapters.
   Jonathan Frankel, “The Crisis of 1881-8 as a Turning Point in Modern Jewish History.” (Sakai website)

12. Midterm

13. Class Conflict and the Rise of Jewish Labor/Trade Unionism Continued
   Joshua Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality*, pp. 36-56; 83-98; 288-92; 295-299. (Sakai website)
   “Decisions on the Nationality Question, 1899, 1901, 1905, 1910.” (P*79-83)

14. Jewish Socialists, Jewish Communists

15. Jewish Socialists, Jewish Communists continued
   Film: “Arguing the World” [80 minutes]

16. Jewish Liberalism
   Finish “Arguing the World” [27 minutes] and discussion.

17. Jewish Liberalism continued
   Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America*, pp. 3-18; 129-163. (Sakai website)
   Benjamin Nathans, “The Other Jewish Politics: Integration and Modernity in Fin de Siècle Russia” (Sakai website).

18. Jewish Women and Social Protest

19. Jewish Women and Social Protest Continued
20. Zionism Confronts Jewish ‘Powerlessness’
   Hayim Nachman Bialik, “City of Slaughter.” (handout)


22. Zionism Confronts Jewish ‘Power’
   “Reservists Balk at Occupation.” (P*182-184)

23. No Class. (Considered a Friday)

24. Zionism, Messianism, and Jewish ‘Power’
   Gershom Scholem, “Toward and Understanding of the Messianic Idea in Judaism.” (ALEX Reserve)

25. The Holocaust, Jewish Politics and Jewish Resistance [**Analytic Paper Due**]
   Film: “The Partisans of Vilna” [80 minutes]

26. The Holocaust, Jewish Politics and Jewish Resistance
   Finish “The Partisans of Vilna” [50 minutes]
   Michael Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Hanover, NH, 1987): 133-155 (ALEX Reserve)
   Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, pp. 662-669. (Sakai website)

27. Religion and Politics
   Gershon Bacon, “Imitation, Rejection, Cooperation: Agudat Yisrael and the Zionist Movement in Interwar Poland.” (Sakai website)
   Walzer, pp. 450-458. (P*47-55)

28. Religion and Politics Continued
29. Conclusions [Take-Home Exam Handed Out]

Conduct Code

Regular attendance of class and active participation in class discussion is required. Students are expected to come to class on time, having prepared the assignments due that day; to respect the protocols of classroom conduct (e.g., arriving promptly, turning off cell phones, not eating during class, avoiding distracting chatter); to check their email regularly for class announcements (e.g., changes in schedule or assignments); and to turn in written work on the dates due. Students who find that they are unable to attend class regularly for some pressing reason are required to notify their dean as well as the instructor as soon as possible. Excuses for absences will not be accepted after the final assignment for the course is due.

Except for collaborative assignments officially approved by the instructor in advance, all work a student submits must be his/her own independent effort. Students must cite properly all outside sources consulted in preparing written assignments. Students should review the university policy on Academic Integrity (see the website for the Teaching Excellence Center). Failure to comply with this policy can result in failure of the course. I wish to reiterate that the final exam, which is a take-home, must be done independently.