

**Jewish Society and Culture II:
The Early Modern and Modern Experience
(provisional syllabus)**

History 01:506:272:01/Jewish Studies 01:563:202:01

Professor Nancy Sinkoff

Office Hours: Thursday, 11:00-12:30 or by appointment, Miller Hall

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This course will survey the social, economic, political, religious, and cultural history of European Jewry from the sixteenth century to the mid-1930s. Topics to be covered include: Marranism and New Christians, the European State and the Jews, the Money Economy and the "Jewish Question," Jewish autonomy, the political emancipation of the Jews, religious reform, modern antisemitism, nationalism, WWI, and Jewish life during the interwar years in both the United States and Europe. It will examine the changes in Jewish life engendered by modernity and explore the responses of the Jews to its challenges. Attention will be paid to the regional diversity in the modern Jewish experience, as well as to the nexus between gender and modernization. Primary and secondary readings, including fiction, memoirs, and poetry, will be used.

Course Requirements: Students are required to prepare *all* the course readings and to participate actively in class. Please note that some weeks have more reading than others, so try to pace yourselves accordingly. All of the assigned readings have been put on Sakai in .pdf form and will be available for your use as a member of the class through the website sakai.rutgers.edu. Students *must* bring the *course packet* to class on assigned dates. There will be two in-class midterms, a written assignment to compensate for the missed class times on the Jewish holidays, and an in-class final. The assignment for the paper will be posted by the third week of class. You will have a choice of topics for the essay assignment, but will be required to inform me, with a brief proposal, of the topic. 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*). Pop quizzes will be given at the discretion of the professor.

Grading:

Paper Assignment (inclusive of timely-submitted proposal): 30%

Midterms: 20% each (40%)

Final Exam: 30%

The following book is available for purchase at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore and is on reserve at Alexander Library, College Avenue Campus:

John Efron, Steven Weitzman, Matthias Lehmann, Joshua Holo, eds. *The Jews* (Pearson) ISBN: #9780131786875.

All students must purchase a *required* course packet (*P) from the Barnes and Noble Bookstore, 1 Ferrin Mall. (732.246.8448)

1. Introduction: The Early Modern and Modern Ages in Jewish History

Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, pp. 3-7; 701-711. (SAKAI)

Cecil Roth, "The Success of the Medieval Jewish Ideal," in Leo Schwarz, *Great Ages & Ideas of the Jewish People*, pp. 287-311. (SAKAI)

On writing:

http://history.rutgers.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=106&Itemid=147

On plagiarism:

http://history.rutgers.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=109&Itemid=147

"Jewish Studies Glossary" and "Jewish History Timeline" will be of help throughout the course. (SAKAI)

2. The Aftermath of the Expulsion: Marranism, Codification, Historiography, and Consolation

The Jews, pp. 174-193.

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, pp. 1-50. (SAKAI)

Isadore Twersky, "The Shulhan 'Aruk: Enduring Code of Jewish Law," in *The Jewish Expression*, Judah Goldin, ed. (SAKAI)

Samuel Usque, excerpts from *Consolations for the Tribulations of Israel*. (P*)

Excerpts from *Shulhan Arukh* (SAKAI)

3. The Kabbalah in Safed

Gershom Scholem, "Isaac Luria and His School," in G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 244-286. (SAKAI)

"The Communications of the Heavenly Mentor to R. Joseph Karo." (P*)

4. The Cultural World of Ashkenazic Jewry and the Beginnings of East European Jewry:

The Jews, pp. 204-213.

E. E. Urbach, "Tosafot," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Mircea Eliade, editor, pp. 568-573. (ALEX Reference Room)

Diagram of a page of Talmud with RaSHI and Tosafot. (P*)

Israel Halpern, "The Jews of Eastern Europe: From Ancient Times until the Partitions of Poland." (SAKAI)

"The Charter of Bolesław the Pious." (P*)

5. Lords and Jews in Eastern Europe; 1648-1649

Nathan of Hannover, excerpts from *The Abyss of Despair*. (P*)

6. Messianism and Sabbatianism

The Jews, pp. 227-230.

Sir Paul Rycaut, excerpts from *History of the Turkish Empire*. (P*)

7. Ghettoization in Early Modern Europe [Paper assignment posted on Sakai**]**

The Jews, pp. 193-203.

"The Life of Judah," in *The Autobiography of a Seventeenth-Century Venetian Rabbi*, pp. 85-86; 95-100; 105-108; 122-128. (P*)

The Memoirs of Glück of Hameln, pp. 1-26; 32-39, 136-163. (P*)

8. Catch UP

9. Midterm #1

9.5 Jewish Communal Autonomy and Rabbinic Authority

Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis* (new edition), pp. 10-25; 65-87. (SAKAI)

"The Constitution of the Jewish Community of Franconia." (P*)

10. New Settlements within the Western Diaspora; The West European State and the Jews: Economic Changes

The Jews, pp. 213-226.

Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism*, pp. 1-37. (SAKAI)

F.L. Carsten, "The Court Jews: Prelude to Emancipation." (SAKAI)

Menasseh ben Israel, "How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are;" John Toland, "Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain." (P*)

11. The West European State and the Jews: Economics and Colonial Expansion

Peter Stuyvesant, "Petition to Expel the Jews from New Amsterdam," "Declaration of Independence." (P*)

12. The Converso World and Philosophic Skepticism

Yosef Kaplan, "The Intellectual Ferment in the Spanish-Portuguese Community of Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," in Haim Beinart (ed.), *The Sephardi Legacy*. (SAKAI)

"The Writ of Excommunication against Baruch Spinoza" and "Letter to Albert Burgh." (P*)

Excerpts from Uriel da Costa's *Autobiography*. (P*)

Benedict de Spinoza, excerpts from *Theological-Political Treatise*. (P*)

13. The West European State and the Jews: Political Changes

The Jews, pp. 231-244.

“The Plantation Act;” “Charter Decreed for the Jews of Prussia;” “The ‘Jew’ Bill;”
Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews;” “Edict of Tolerance;” “An
Essay on the Physical, Moral, and Political Reformation of the Jews.” (P*)

14. The European and Jewish Enlightenments: Ideological Changes

The Jews, pp. 269-274.

“The Jews;” “Nathan the Wise;” “The Right to be Different;” “Words of Peace and
Truth;” “*Hame’asef*;” Selections from Moses Mendelssohn (P*)

15. Political Emancipation in Western Europe

The Jews, pp. 244-253.

Michael Meyer, “Where Does the Modern Period of Jewish History Begin?” (SAKAI)
Salo Baron, “Ghetto and Emancipation.” (SAKAI)

“The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen;” “Debate in the French
National Assembly;” The Emancipation of the Jews; “The Constitution of France;” “The
Assembly of Notables;” “The Parisian Sanhedrin;” “Emancipation in Prussia;” “The
Congress of Vienna.” (P*)

16. Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Western Europe

The Jews, pp. 282-288.

“Constitution of the Hamburg Temple;” “These are the Words of the Covenant;” “A
Reply Concerning the Question of Reform;” “The Reform Rabbinical Conference at
Brunswick.” (P*)

Spring Break, March 15-March 19. No Classes.

17. Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Western Europe Continued

The Jews, pp. 288-293.

“On Changes in Judaism;” “Religion Allied to Progress;” “The Secession of the
Orthodox.” (P*)

18. Midterm #2

19. Passover. No Class.

20. Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Eastern Europe, Hasidism [Proposal for Paper Due**]**

The Jews, pp. 260-269.

Excerpts from *In Praise of the Ba’al Shem Tov*. (P*)

Gershom Scholem, “Hasidism: The Latest Phase,” in Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish
Mysticism*, pp. 325-350. (SAKAI)

“Excommunication of the Hasidim.” (P*)

21. Passover. No Class.

22. East European Jewry in the Nineteenth Century

The Jews, pp. 253-259.

“Statutes Concerning the Organization of Jews;” “Statutes Regarding the Military Service of Jews;” “Delineation of the Pale of Settlement;” “Awake My People!” “A Jewish Program for Russification.” (P*)

23. East European Jewry in the Nineteenth Century Continued

“The May Laws;” “Russian Must Be Our Mother Tongue;” “Society for the Promotion of Culture Among Jews;” Yiddish is a Corrupt Jargon;” “Hebrew – Our National Fortress;” “My Soul Desired Yiddish.” (P*)

24. Modern Antisemitism and the Rise of Nationalism

The Jews, pp. 294-308.

Baron, pp. 338-359.

“On the Jewish Problem;” “The Victory of Judaism over Germandom;” “The Question of the Jew is a Question of Race;” “Jewish France;” “What We Demand of Modern Jewry.” (P*)

25. Jewish Politics After 1881; the Maturation of Zionism [*Paper Assignment Due*]

The Jews, pp. 309-324.

Selections from the writings of Ahad ha-Am. (P*)

Theodor Herzl, “A Solution of the Jewish Question.(P*)

Haim Hazaz, “The Sermon.” (P*)

26. Diaspora Nationalism and Immigration to the United States

“Awaiting a Pogrom;” “The Massacre of Jews at Kishinev;” “The City of Slaughter;” “To America or to the Land of Israel;” “The Bund’s Decisions on Nationality;” “The Provisional Government of Russia: Emancipation Decree;” “Jewish Immigration into the United States: 1881-1948” and map. (P*268-269)

27. WWI and the Interwar Period

“The Allies and the Republic of Poland.” (P*)

“The Provisional Government of Russia: Emancipation Decree;”

Franz Rosenzweig, “Renaissance of Jewish Learning and Living,” “On the Scriptures,” “Jewish Learning and the Return to Judaism;” “The Columbus Platform.” (P*)

28. Conclusions: Post-Modern Jewish Life? [Final Exam Questions Posted on Sakai**]**

Goldscheider/Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews* (SAKAI)

“Exchange of Views, David Ben-Gurion and Jacob Blaustein.” (P*)

FINAL EXAM, Monday, May 10, 8:00-11:00 a.m. in Hardenberg B5.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Regular and punctual attendance is expected. I will take attendance before each class begins. Anyone who misses three classes will lose one ½ grade for each absence. Exceptions will be made only for extended medical or personal problems that can be documented to my satisfaction. If you miss two classes in the early part of the semester for undocumented reasons and then you miss a third later in the semester because you have the flu, I will not treat a doctor's note for the flu as sufficient grounds to exempt you from the attendance policy. In such a case, I will need evidence that ALL absences are justifiable before I agree to release you from the attendance policy.

Because of this policy, you should not enroll in this course if your work schedule or obligations for a sports team conflict with the class period. Such conflicts will NOT be excused absences. Personal and medical issues necessitating multiple absences are the only causes that I will consider as legitimate grounds to mitigate the attendance penalty.

My policy concerning late arrivals is as follows. You are allowed to be late up to two times during the semester without penalty. If you arrive late, you must sign a sheet for late arrivals. Your third late arrival will be treated as an absence, as will any subsequent late arrivals. Please note that I will not make exceptions on account of campus bus schedules; you should not schedule back to back classes on different campuses. Finally, attendance means physical presence for the full 100 minutes of class. Anyone who leaves class early will not be credited with attendance for that day, unless they obtain special permission from me to depart early.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: The History Department at Rutgers has established a set of guidelines setting forth the department's policy on appropriate classroom etiquette for both professors and students (<http://history.rutgers.edu/undergrad/policy.htm>). The guidelines endeavor to create a classroom environment appropriate for effective learning. They note that students who conduct private conversations (either with a fellow student or using a cell phone), work on crossword puzzles, or read material not related to the class while the class is in progress distract the attention of the professor and fellow students from course material. I take this part of the policy seriously, and will ask you to leave the classroom if you engage in such activities. You will not receive credit for attending class if you are asked to leave because of rude or inappropriate behavior.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is unacceptable. Any work you hand in must be done independently and with appropriate citations. Cases of plagiarism will immediately be sent to the appropriate college dean for review. When I hand out the paper topic, we will discuss further what constitutes plagiarism. In the meantime, reread this website:

http://history.rutgers.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=109&Itemid=147

EXAM EXCUSE POLICY: Excused absences from exams will only be granted for students who can document a medical or family emergency. Students who feel a personal emergency is sufficiently grave to warrant an excused absence must speak with the dean of their college, and obtain a written letter from him/her explaining the nature of the emergency. Otherwise, non-attendance at an exam will result in failure of that exam.

EMAIL CONTACT: Every student has been given an official Rutgers email address by the university (an "eden" account). I will use the email program through the SAKAI website to make any necessary changes to the syllabus and for announcements. Therefore, if you do not use your eden email regularly, it is your responsibility to set up your Rutgers account to forward to the appropriate address.