

Modern Jewish History

Professor Nancy Sinkoff

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

Spring 2022

Tuesdays and Thursdays: Miller Hall 115 - T/H: 5 (3:50-5:10)

SYLLABUS (subject to modification)



Assemblée Nationale, where the Jews of France were granted citizenship in 1791

Modernity posed challenging questions to the Jews, unsettling previously held beliefs and sources of identity. What, moderns—and Jews themselves—asked, are Jews? A religion, a race, a nation, an ethnicity, or a people? What language(s) do they speak, read, and write? To whom do their loyalties belong? To their local community, to the political states or empires in which they reside, to Jews around the world, to a Jewish state, or to all of humanity? What role would traditional religious structures and authority play in the Jews' encounter with modern values, such as secularization, democracy, gender equality, and religious tolerance? How would Jews respond to new forms of antagonism or hatred against them?

This course will address these challenges through a survey of the social, economic, political, religious, and cultural history of European and N. American Jewry from the sixteenth century to the present. Topics to be covered include: Marranism and New Christians, the European State and the Money Economy and the "Jewish Question," Jewish autonomy, the political emancipation of Textbook: The Jews, religious reform, modern antisemitism, nationalism, WWI, Jewish life during the interwar years in both the United States and Europe, WWII, and postwar

Jewish life. 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.



LEARNING GOAL

1. [CORE HST K]: Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.

Students will acquire an overview of the major issues related to the process by which the Jews in Europe and in the United States became *modern*.

2. [CORE HST L]: Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Students will engage in the craft of history by studying a variety of primary sources, such as autobiographies, legal charters, poetry, and testimonies, and through reading secondary interpretations, including scholarly articles and textbook readings.

Students will develop skills of communicating orally and in writing through classroom discussion, oral presentations, and writing assignments.

Additional Learning Goals:

Students will:

- Understand the complex history of the Jews in the modern period.
- Contextualize Jewish history in the broader history of the modern period.
- Learn to read and analyze a variety of historical sources.
- Learn how to pose and discuss historical questions.

Required Texts (available for purchase at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore and online):

John Efron, Steven Weitzman, Matthias Lehmann, Joshua Holo, eds., *The Jews: A History*, 2nd ed. (Pearson, 2014) [ISBN 10: 0205858260 / ISBN 13: 9780205858262]. \$20.36.

Course Requirements and Grading: Students are required to prepare *all* the course readings and to participate actively in class. **Except for readings in the required textbook, all *required source material* is on the **CANVAS** site (canvas.rutgers.edu), Modern Jewish History, and should be read before each class session. It is advisable to print out the primary sources and to keep them in a folder so you can follow along with the analysis during sessions. Materials are organized by Modules with subheads: textbook; primary sources; secondary sources; maps; image; study questions).**

You **must** keep notifications from Canvas active during the semester. I will be communicating with you outside of class through announcements that come to your Rutgers emails.

Grading:

- 1. Attendance and Class participation:** Students are required to prepare the course readings for a given session *before* we meet and to participate actively in class discussion, working with other students, and posing questions. As noted, students *must* bring the primary sources, printed from the Canvas site to class on assigned dates and have them available—ideally printed out—on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. The best way to keep track of them is in a folder. **Participation will be graded on a 0-10 point scale. (10%):**

At the beginning of class, I will take attendance. Attendance is *not* graded, but *class participation is graded*. At the end of each class session, I will grade your participation using the following rubric:

10 points	Present, on time, fully prepared, actively, and thoughtfully participating in class discussions and activities
8 points	Present, on time, partially prepared, minimally participating in class discussions and activities and/or using English without instructor permission
6 points	Present, on time, partially prepared, not participating in class discussions and activities and/or using English without instructor permission
4 points	Present, on time, unprepared, minimally participating in class discussions and activities
2 points	Present, but frequently late
0 points	Absent

Audio recordings of the class will be available and uploaded to CANVAS in the case of absence.

- 2. Online Quizzes:** To maximize class participation, there will be regular quizzes on the course material. There will be 11 online quizzes throughout the semester, on either Tuesday or Thursday. These quizzes will be quick answer questions (true/false, multiple choice, or “fill in the blank”) based on that session’s readings. You will be quizzed on material *before* we discuss it in class. The quizzes will be posted either on Monday morning—for a Tuesday class session—or on Wednesday morning—for a Thursday class session (with extensions on holidays) and will be due an hour before class. You will have two hours to do the quizzes, which are open book/open sources. These quizzes are intended to help you study and to enhance our discussions in class. No make-up quizzes are allowed. The lowest quiz grade for the semester will be dropped. Each quiz will be graded on **a 0-2 point-scale, 20 points. (20%).**
- 3. Short Primary Source Analyses.** Four essays, each three double-spaced pages (750-800 words), are due on designated dates and should be uploaded to the Canvas site. Prompts will be given out a week ahead of the assignment. The primary source analyses are due on the following dates [to be determined]. **The writing assignments will be graded on a 0-10 point scale. The rubric is on the Canvas site. Your writing counts! (40%).**
- 4. Ungraded, required short assignment for the Passover holiday.**
- 5. Final Take-Home Exam:** Questions, as well as a study guide, will be posted on Canvas on **5/3**. The final exam is due on **5/10 by 5:00 p.m.**, and should be uploaded to the Canvas site. **It will be graded on a 0-30 point scale. (30%)**

All these components must be met to fulfill completion of the course

****Gradebook in Canvas only functions with percentages. Because there are no minuses at Rutgers, I grade on a point system with 100 points as a perfect score + 3 points in total for extra credit.****

Points translated to Letter Grades:

93-100=A
86-92.9=B+
79-85.9=B
72-78.9=C+
65-71.9=C
Below 65=D

below 59=F

*****Extra Credit Opportunities, such as attending films or lectures related to the course material, will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester*****

1. Tues. 1/18: Introduction: Jewish Modernity, Rewards and Challenges

Textbook: *The Jews: A History*, "Timeline of Jewish History," and "Glossary," pp. 489-521.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGJRWf7qZfs>

2. Thurs. 1/20: The Aftermath of the Expulsion: Marranism, Historiography, and Consolation

Textbook: *The Jews*, map on pp. 195-199; 203-205; 213-216; 228-230.
Primary Source: Samuel Usque, excerpts from *Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel*.
Secondary Source: Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, "Marranos in the Seventeenth Century."
PowerPoint Slides: Converso Migration.

3. Tues. 1/25: The Aftermath of the Expulsion: Codification

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 209-213; 216-220.
Primary Sources: "Shulkhan Arukh: The Power of Minhag;" "Shulkhan Arukh examples."
Secondary Source: Isadore Twersky, "The Shulhan 'Aruk: Enduring Code of Jewish Law."

4. Thurs. 1/27: The Kabbalah in Safed [Questions for Primary Source Analysis #1 posted]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 199-202; 221-223.
Primary Sources: "The Communications of the Heavenly Mentor to R. Joseph Karo;" "Lecha Dodi."
Secondary Source: Arthur Green, "Introduction to the Zohar"
Image: Kabbalistic Tree
Study Questions: "Glossary and Guide to Terms in Joseph Karo's Work"

5. Tues. 2/1: The Cultural World of Ashkenazic Jewry and the Beginnings of East European Jewry

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 240-244.
Secondary Sources: Gershon Hundert, "Some Basic Characteristics of the Jewish Experience in Poland;" E. E. Urbach, "Tosafot."
Diagram of a page of Talmud with Rashi and Tosafot.
PowerPoint Slides: Cultural World of Ashkenazic Jewry; Jewish Women's Piety in Ashkenaz

6. Thurs. 2/3: Lords and Jews in Eastern Europe; 1648-1649 [Primary Source Essay #1 Due]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 234-240.
Primary Source: Nathan Neta of Hanover, excerpts from *The Abyss of Despair*.
Image: 5-griven Ukrainian currency, Chmielnicki
PowerPoint Slides: Lords and Jews in Eastern Europe
Study Questions on Nathan of Hannover's Abyss of Despair

7. Tues. 2/8: Messianism and Sabbatianism

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 256-258.

Primary Sources: Sir Paul Rycout, excerpts from *History of the Turkish Empire*; Glikl, *Memoirs, 1691-1719*, excerpts; “Reactions to Shabbetai Zevi, excerpts.”

Images: Jews of Salonika Doing Penance; Shabbetai Zevi Enthroned and Shabbetai Zevi.

Study Questions on Messianism and Sabbatianism

8. Thurs. 2/10: Ghettoization in Early Modern Europe; Sephardim in the Ottoman World

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 224-228; 245.

Primary Source: Leone Modena, “The Life of Judah.”

Secondary Source: Aron Rodrigue, “The Ottoman Diaspora, the Rise and Fall of Ladino Culture,” pp. 864-873.

Study Questions on the Autobiography of Leone Modena

9. Tues. 2/15: New Settlements within the Western Diaspora; the West European State and the Jews: Economic Changes [Questions for Primary Source Analysis 2 posted]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 244-252.

Primary Sources: Menasseh ben Israel, “How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are;” John Toland, “Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain.”

Secondary Source: Steven Lowenstein, “Court Jews: Tradition and Modernity,” pp. 369-382.

Images: Portraits of Daniel and Miriam Itzig; Cup with Portrait of Daniel Itzig; Portrait of Nathan Meyer Rothschild.

Study Questions on Jewish Resettlement in England

10. Thurs. 2/17: The Jews and Colonial Expansion

Textbook: *The Jews*, p. 255-256.

Primary Sources: Peter Stuyvesant, “Petition to Expel the Jews from New Amsterdam,” “Reply to Stuyvesant’s Petition,” “The Plantation Act (1740),” “The Jew Bill.”

Study Questions on Settlement of the Jews in the Colonies

11. Tues. 2/22: Western Europe, Conversos and Philosophic Skepticism [Primary Source Essay #2 Due]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 252-254.

Primary Sources: Uriel da Costa, excerpts from his *Autobiography*; Benedict de Spinoza, excerpts from *Theological-Political Treatise*; “The Writ of Excommunication against Baruch Spinoza.”

Secondary Source: Yosef Kaplan, “The Intellectual Ferment in the Spanish Portuguese Community.”

Image: Copernican Model of the Solar System

Study Questions on Da Costa and Spinoza.

12. Thurs. 2/24: Western Europe: Ideological Changes, Enlightenment and Haskalah

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 268-272; 299-304.

“The Right to be Different;” “The Stream of *Besor*,” “The Jews;” “Nathan the Wise;” “A Parable of Toleration;” “*Hame’assef*;” “On the Need for a German Translation of Scripture;” “On the Curtailment of Jewish Juridical Authority;” “Judaism as Revealed Legislation;” “Letter from Fromet to Moses Mendelssohn;” “Words of Peace and Truth.”

Image: Mendelssohn’s *Be’ur*

Study Questions on the European and Jewish Enlightenments

13. Tues. 3/2: Religious Ferment in Eastern Europe; Hasidism; The Partitions of Poland

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 288-295.

Primary Sources: Excerpts from *In Praise of the Ba’al Shem Tov*; “The New Hasidim;” Excommunication of the Hasidim.”

Secondary Source: Biale, Wodzinski, et. al., “Hasidism, Introduction.”

Study Questions on Hasidism and its Opponents

14. Thurs. 3/3: Political Emancipation in France

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 272-275.

Primary Sources: “An Essay on the Physical, Moral, and Political Reformation of the Jews;” “The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen;” “Debate on the Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship;” “Decree Recognizing the Sephardim as Citizens;” “The Emancipation of the Jews;” “The Constitution of France;” “Constitution of the United States.”

Secondary Source: Salo W. Baron, “Ghetto and Emancipation: Shall We Revise the Traditional View?”

Study Questions on Political Emancipation, and “Terms of Modernization”

15. Tues. 3/8: Political Emancipation in Europe Continued; Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Central Europe [Questions for Primary Source Analysis #3 posted]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 317-321.

Primary Sources: “The Imperial Decree Calling for an Assembly of Jewish Notables;” “The Answers to Napoleon;” “Prussian Jewry Law;” “The Congress of Vienna.”

Primary Sources: “Constitution of the Hamburg Temple;” “These are the Words of the Covenant;” “A Reply Concerning the Question of Reform.”

PowerPoint Slide: “Making the Liturgy Modern.”

Study Questions

16. Thurs. 3/10: Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Central Europe, Continued

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 313-316.

Primary Sources: “The Reform Rabbinical Conference at Brunswick;” “Question of Patriotism;” “Hebrew as Language of Jewish Prayer;” “The Question of Messianism;” Zecharias Frankel, “On Changes in Judaism;” Samson Raphael Hirsch, “Religion Allied to Progress;” “The Secession of the Orthodox.”

Study Questions on Religious Adjustment in Central Europe

SPRING BREAK, 3/13-21, no class on 3/15 or 3/17

17. Tues. 3/22: The Beginning of Modern East European Jewry: New States and New Politics

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 281-285.

Primary Sources: "Statutes Concerning the Organization of Jews;" "Statutes Regarding the Military Service of Jews;" "Delineation of the Pale of Settlement."

Secondary Source: Yohanan Petrovsky-Stern, "Military Service in Russia."

18. Thurs. 3/24: Enlightenment and Modernization in Eastern Europe in the Nineteenth Century. [Primary Source Essay #3 Due]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 307-313.

Primary Sources: "Awake My People!" "The Need for Enlightenment;" "A Jewish Program for Russification;" "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."

Miriam Markel-Mosessohn to Judah Leib Gordon, 1868

Study Questions

20. Tues. 3/29: Jewish Politics after 1881; Nationalism; Zionism

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. pp. 325-329; 349-358

Primary Sources: "European Culture Destroyed My Family;" "Auto-Emancipation;" "A Solution of the Jewish Question;" "Protest against Zion;" "The May Laws."

21. Thurs. 3/31: Diaspora Nationalism and Immigration to the United States

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 345-349; 359.

Primary Sources: "Cultural Autonomy;" "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;" "Jewish Immigration into the United States: 1881-1948, and map."

22. Tues. 4/5: Creating an American Jewish Community [Questions for Primary Source Analysis #4 posted]

Textbook: pp. 359-364.

Primary Sources: TBD

23. Thurs. 4/7: Modern Judeophobia/Antisemitism

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 329-345

Primary Sources: "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."

23. Tues. 4/12: Ottoman Jewry in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries [Primary Source Essay #4 Due]

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 280-281.

Primary Sources: "The Privileges and Immunities of the Non-Muslim Communities (1856)," and "The Cremieux Decree and its Aftermath."

Secondary Sources: Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire*," pp. 98-124.

Aron Rodrigue, "The Ottoman Diaspora, the Rise and Fall of Ladino Culture," pp. 873-885.

Image: Jewish Communities in Ottoman Europe

24. Thurs. 4/14: WWI, Europe and the Middle East

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 368-379; 381-384.

Primary Sources: "The Allies and the Republic of Poland;" "Minorities Treaty;" "The Balfour Declaration," "The March Revolution;" Adolf Hitler, "A Letter on the Jewish Question," "Jewish Learning and the Return to Judaism;" "The American Yeshiva;" "The Columbus Platform."

Maps, East Central Europe 1910 and 1919-1923

24. Tues. 4/19: The Destruction of the European Jewish Heartland

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 406-413; 419-436.

Primary Sources: "Decrees Excluding Jews from German Cultural and Public Life;" "Law for the Protection of German Blood;" "*Kristallnacht—A Preliminary Secret Report to H. W. Goering*," Adolf Hitler, "A Prophecy of Jewry's Annihilation;" "Chaim Kaplan, 'A Warsaw Ghetto Diary,'" "Protocols of the Wannsee Conference."

25. Thurs. 4/21: No Class. The Eve of the 7th Day of Passover.

25. Tues. 4/26: The Founding of the Modern State of Israel

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 394-401; 446-448; 453-458.

Primary Sources: "The Case for a Bi-National Palestine;" "Proclamation of the State of Israel;" "Address to the Knesset on the Law of Return."

26. Thurs. 4/28: The Postwar Jewish World; American Ascendancy

Textbook: *The Jews*, pp. 458-468.

David Ben Gurion and Jacob Blaustein: Exchange of Views;" Rachel Adler, "The Jews Who Wasn't There."

Secondary Source: Goldscheider/Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews*.

27. Thurs. 5/3: CONCLUSIONS and REVIEW [Final Exam Handed Out**]**

****FINAL EXAM DUE, MAY 10, uploaded to Canvas, by 5:00 p.m. The exam should be typed, 12-pt. font, and double-spaced.****

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. For the complete academic integrity policy, see: <https://policies.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/10.2.13%20-%20current.pdf>

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

CREATING A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the whole university. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendix A to University Policy 10.3.12. For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit endsexualviolence.rutgers.edu

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AT RUTGERS

If you are having personal or other problems, there are many options at Rutgers for assistance.

- When you *don't know where to start* looking for assistance, contact the [Dean of Students office](#).
- If you need *mental health services*, please contact Rutgers Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/>

- If you need some *temporary guidance*, there is “Lets Talk” – which is a CAPS service offering drop-in hours at a number of locations across campus. No appointment is necessary. <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/therapy/community-based-counseling/#runbhc>
- If you are in need of *physical health* services due to illness, please reach out to the Rutgers Health Services: <http://health.rutgers.edu/>
- If you do not have enough *food*, there is a Food Pantry on College Ave campus that is exclusively for Rutgers Students: <http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/food/>
- If you need accommodation for a *disability*, obtain a Letter of Accommodation from the Office of Disability Services that provides student-centered and inclusive services: <https://ods.rutgers.edu>
- If you are a military *veteran* or are on active military duty, you can obtain support through the Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services: <http://veterans.rutgers.edu/>
- If you are in need of *legal* services, please visit <http://rusls.rutgers.edu/>
- If you are in need of additional *academic assistance*, please contact the Rutgers University-New Brunswick Learning Center: <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>
- If you or somebody you know has been victimized by a *crime or interpersonal violence* (e.g., stalking, sexual assault), support is available at the Rutgers Office for Violence Prevention and Victim assistance: <http://vpva.rutgers.edu>

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Electronic devices (computers, tablets, phones) are permitted in this class, but I request that they be used to the extent that they offer minimal distraction to you and your fellow classmates. This means muting all sounds, and keeping screens focused on course content, for instance. It is up to you to remain vigilant about using your electronic devices to enhance your learning experience and not detract from it.

LATE POLICY

Without prior discussion regarding an extension with Professor Sinkoff, students must submit all assignments on time. Failure to do so will result in a zero for the assignment. Because I am aware that certain times of the semester are busier than others, you may need an extension. Make sure to discuss this with me in advance of the due date. Students are expected to anticipate this and to take responsibility for their work. I am happy to find a mutually-agreeable extension date. **However, you must discuss an extension request with me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due.** In the case of emergencies or sudden illness, I will accept a late assignment, but you must communicate with me about the delay.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

EMAIL CONTACT: Every student has been given an official Rutgers email address by the university. I will use the email program through the Canvas website to make any necessary

changes to the syllabus and for announcements. Therefore, if you do not use your Rutgers' email regularly, it is your responsibility to set up your Rutgers account to forward to the appropriate address.