

History 384:  
The History of Judaism – The Middle and Modern Periods



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Email:  
Class meets: MWF

Office: 139 Gambrell Hall  
Office Hours:  
Meeting Place: 006 GAMB

### **Course Description:**

This course will introduce students to the major developments in Jewish history since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. The first half of the course will explore Jewish life on the European continent and focus, among others, on the Sephardi Diaspora, on Court Jews, and on the Jewish Enlightenment (the *Haskalah*). We will then turn our attention to the modern period and examine the quest for legal and social emancipation, the rise of the Jewish Question, and the various responses to this question on the part of the Jews, incl. acculturation, Socialism, Zionism, and large-scale emigration to the West. In the second half of the course our lens thus widens to include the American-Jewish experience.

### **Required Readings:**

- Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times* (Oxford University Press, 2001)
- Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky* (Penguin, 1993)
- Marvin Lowenthal, trans., *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln* (Schocken, 1987)

### **Course Assignments:**

- Paper #1 (5-6 pages) 200 points
- Midterm examination covering topics from week 1-6: 200 points
- Paper #2 (5-6 pages): 200 points
- Final examination (cumulative) 300 points
- Attendance and Participation 100 points

At the end of the semester, the points will correspond to the following letter grade:  
900-1000 = A; 800-899 = B; 700-799 = C; 600-699 = C; Below 600 = F

You will be expected to write two papers, each of which will ask you to evaluate primary source material and to relate these to the secondary readings and lecture material. Your writing assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due dates (see weekly schedule). Late papers will be marked down one grade for each day they are late.

Let's be rigorous with ideas but gentle with each other. I expect courtesy toward me and your fellow students. That does not mean we can't disagree, but I expect from you, as you should from me, a sense of responsibility and respect toward others.

### **Plagiarism:**

I tolerate a lot in my class room, but I do not tolerate plagiarism. Any time you rely on information from someone else in your paper, whether a direct quote, paraphrase, or fact, you should cite your source (including from a website). It is not only intellectually honest, but increases the authority of your own work. For information on academic integrity, please see [http://www.cas.sc.edu/ENGL/fye/students/student\\_guide\\_responsibility.html](http://www.cas.sc.edu/ENGL/fye/students/student_guide_responsibility.html)

# Weekly Calendar and Reading Assignments

## Week 1: Introduction

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Friday August 22: Out of the “Ghetto”

- Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapter 1 (pp 1-25)

## Week 2: European Jewry in the Early Modern Period

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August 25: The Converso Experience and the Sephardi Diaspora

August 27: The Sephardim of Holland and France

August 29: Slide lecture of Jewish life in early modern Europe

- *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln* (pp?)

## Week 3: Court Jews

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September 1: **Labor Day Holiday**

September 3: Court Jews in Central Europe

September 5: discussion of *Glückel of Hameln*

- *The Memoirs of Glückel of Hameln* (finish)
- *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapter 2 (pp 26-60)

## Week 4: The Haskalah

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September 8: The Enlightenment and the Jews

September 10: Moses Mendelssohn and the *Haskalah*

September 12: The Radicalization of the *Haskalah* in Germany

- *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapters 3-4 (pp. 61-127)
- Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, “Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews” (1781), MFR pp. 28-36
- Johann D. Michaelis, “Arguments Against Dohm” (1782), MFR pp. 42-44
- Moses Mendelssohn, “Response to Dohm” (1782), MFR pp. 44-47
- “Remarks Concerning Michaelis’ Response to Dohm” (1783), MFR p. 48-49

*Hand Out Paper Assignment #1*

## Week 5: Towards Emancipation?

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September 15: The French Revolution and the Emancipation of the Jews

September 17: The Struggle for Legal Rights in Germany + the Rise of the Jewish Question

September 19: *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

**\*\* Paper #1 Due \*\***

- *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapters 5-6 (128-190)
- Abbé Gregoire, “An Essay on the Physical, Moral and Political Reformation of the Jews” (1789), in MFR, pp 49-53
- Berr Isaac Berr, “Letter of a Citizen to His Fellow Jews” (1791), MFR pp 119-121

### **Week 6: The Jews of Eastern Europe and Russia**

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September 22: The Origins of Hasidism

September 24: East European Jewry in the Late-Nineteenth Century

September 26: The Events of 1881 in Russia and Its Consequences

- *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapter 8 (pp. 213-266)
- Judah Leib Gordon, “Awake My People!” (1866) and “For Whom do I Toil?” (1871), MFR pp. 384, 386.
- Leon Pinsker, “Auto-emancipation” (hand-out, 25 pp)
- “Awaiting a Pogrom” (1882), MFR p. 408
- Judah Leib Levin, “To America or to the Land of Israel?” (1881), MFR p. 413

### **Week 7: Jewish Responses to Rising Antisemitism**

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September 29: Radical Assimilation and the Flight from Jewishness

October 1: Socialism and the Bund + Political Zionism

October 3: **\*\* In-Class Midterm Exam \*\***

- The Bilu, “Manifesto” (1882), MFR p. 532
- Theodor Herzl, “A Solution of the Jewish Question” (1896), MFR pp. 533-38
- Protestrabbiner, “Protest Against Zionism” (1879), MFR pp. 538-40
- Rabbi Zadok Hacoheh Rabinowitz, “The Zionists Are Not Our Saviors” (c. 1900), MFR pp. 544-45
- Max Nordau, “Jewry of Muscle” (1903), MFR pp. 547-48

### **Week 8: The American-Jewish Experience I**

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October 6: East-European Immigrants in America

October 8: Second-Generation American Jews

October 10: **Fall Break**

- Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, pp. 3-111
- “Jewish Immigration into the United States: 1881-1948,” MFR p. 472-473
- Abraham Cahan, “The Russian Jew in America” (1898), MFR pp. 474-76

## **Week 9: The American-Jewish Experience II**

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October 13: Judaism and Jewish Identity in Interwar America

October 15: American-Jewish Responses to Antisemitism

October 17: Discuss Cahan and Ford

- Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, pp. 115-217
- “Temporary Suspension of Immigration” (1920), MFR pp. 509-512
- Henry Ford, “The International Jew: The World’s Problem” (1920), MFR pp. 512-14
- “A Protest Against Antisemitism” (1921), MFR p. 514

## **Week 10: Urban Visibility and Cultural Vitality in the Interwar Period**

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October 20: Jewish Renaissance in Central Europe [[base lecture on Cohen, “Urban Vis.”]

October 22: Jewish Women

October 24:

- Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, pp. 219-399

*Hand Out Paper Assignment #2*

## **Week 11: Jews and the Rise of Fascism in Interwar Europe**

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October 27: Jewish politics and Rising Antisemitism in Interwar Europe

October 29: Zionism, the British Mandate, and the Growth of the Yishuv

October 31:

- Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, Chapter 9 (pp 267-319)
- Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, finish. **\* Paper #2 Due \***

## **Week 12: The Rise of Nazism**

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November 3: Anti-Jewish policies in Nazi Germany

November 5: Jewish Responses

November 7:

- Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, chapter 10 (pp. 319-346)
- Hitler, “A Letter on the Jewish Question” (1919), MFR p. 636
- Excerpt from Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1923), MFR p. 637
- Robert Weltsch, “Wear the Yellow Badge with Pride” (1933), MFR pp. 640-41
- Short pieces on Nazi legislation, MFR pp. 645-649
- Hitler, “A Prophecy of Jewry’s Annihilation” (1939), MFR pp. 656-658
- “The Plight of the Refugees” (1939), MFR pp. 659-660

### **Week 13: The Holocaust**

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November 10: The Origins of the Final Solution

November 12: Ghettoization, Deportation, Mass Murder

November 14: Documentary Film: *Night and Fog*

- Hans Frank, “We Must Finish with the Jews” (1941), MFR pp. 660-662
- “Protocols of the Wannsee Conference (Jan. 20, 1942), MFR pp. 662-665
- Chaim A. Kaplan, “A Warsaw Ghetto Diary (1940), MFR pp. 666-667
- Janusz Korczak, “Warsaw Ghetto Memoirs (1942), MFR pp. 668-673
- Shmuel Zygelboym, “Where is the World’s Conscience?” (1943), MFR p. 683
- Rudolf Höss, “Commandant of Auschwitz (c. 1945), MFR pp. 686-690
- Mordecai Chaim Rumkowski, “On the Deportation of Children from the Lodz Ghetto” (1942), MFR pp. 690-691
- Franzi Epstein, “Inside Auschwitz – A Memoir” (c. 1970), MFR pp. 692-695

### **Week 14: The State of Israel**

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November 17: Discuss *Night and Fog*

November 19: The Foundation of the State of Israel

November 21: Will There Be Light at the End of the Tunnel? Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

- Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, Chapter 11 (pp. 347-395)
- Hashomer Hazair, “The Case for a Bi-National Palestine” (1945), MFR pp. 622-24
- Moshe Shertok, “Bi-Nationalism is Unworkable” (1947), MFR pp. 625-26
- UN General Assembly, “Resolution on Palestine” (1947), MFR pp. 626-27
- “Proclamation of the State of Israel” (May, 1948), MFR pp. 629-630

### **Week 15: Jewish Life in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century**

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November 24: *Wiedergutmachung* in Germany?

November 26: **Thanksgiving Holiday**

November 28: **Thanksgiving Holiday**

- Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*, Chapter 12 (pp. 396-437)

### **Week 16: Jewish Life in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century**

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December 1: Bagels in Berlin

December 3: From Seinfeld to Matisyahu

December 5: Review, Conclusions, and Evaluations

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**\*\* Final Examination December ? \*\*** (Time and Place TBA)