

History 100:129: Introduction to Modern Jewish History

Course Description:

An examination of the history of Jews over the past three hundred years. Explores the dramatic encounter at the close of the 18th century between rapidly changing European societies caught up in intellectual, political, and economic revolution and a 2000-year old traditional civilization living in their midst; the kaleidoscopic array of Jewish political, religious, cultural and social responses to this encounter; the new forms of Jewish communal and individual life and consciousness which emerged in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries; the extension of this new modern framework to the Jews of the Middle East in the context of European imperialism and colonialism; the key roles played by the Jews as agents and symbols of political, economic, and cultural modernity; the phenomenon of anti-Semitism and whether it is a pathology or integral part of modern civilization; the massive shifts in Jewish life from the mid-20th century in light of the Holocaust, the creation of the state of Israel, and full integration into American society. Extensive use of primary sources allows students to develop their own analytical skills and syntheses; wide focus on the Jews of Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and beyond develops the essential skill of comparative analysis and provides a valuable perspective from which to view the larger, intertwined histories of these parts of the world.

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Course Requirements and Grading: This course is primarily a lecture course, and much of the essential information and context will be communicated in the lectures, so attendance is mandatory and essential. Reading all assigned readings and communicating your understanding in the Friday section is equally essential, and section attendance is mandatory. The final decision on any grade derives from my global assessment of your work in consultation with the teaching assistants, and cannot be quantified exactly. Roughly speaking, however, the breakdown is as follows:

Two 3-4 page papers: 15% each
One 7-8 page final paper: 35%
Participation in section: 35%

No extensions will be granted without my prior permission, and late papers will be graded lower at the rate of one grade-step per day (A to A-, A- to B+, etc).

The last day a student can drop a class this semester is Friday, October 11.

Accommodations and Wellness:

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu

These are difficult times to be a student. If you are struggling with anxiety, stress, depression or other mental health related concerns, please consider using the JHU mental and emotional health resources. The resources are described and can be accessed at <https://wellness.jhu.edu/resources/mental/>

Ethics Policy: Needless to say, complete honesty and probity in your work is a must. The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student conduct (or designee) by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 410-516-8208 or via email at integrity@jhu.edu. For more information, see the Homewood Student Affairs site on academic ethics.

Family accommodation policy: You are welcome to bring a dependent family member to class on occasional days when your responsibilities require it (for example, if emergency child care is unavailable, or for health needs of a relative). In fact, you may see my children in class on days when their school is closed. Please be sensitive to the classroom environment, and if your family member becomes uncomfortably disruptive, you may leave the classroom and return as needed.

Classroom climate: We are committed to creating a classroom environment that values the diversity of experiences and perspectives that all students bring. Everyone here has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. I believe fostering an inclusive climate is important because

research and my experience show that students who interact with peers who are different from themselves learn new things and experience tangible educational outcomes. Please join me in creating a welcoming and vibrant classroom climate. Note that you should expect to be challenged intellectually by me, the TAs, and your peers, and at times this may feel uncomfortable. Indeed, it can be helpful to be pushed sometimes in order to learn and grow. But at no time in this learning process should someone be singled out or treated unequally on the basis of any seen or unseen part of their identity. If you ever have concerns in this course about harassment, discrimination, or any unequal treatment, or if you seek accommodations or resources, I invite you to share directly with me or the TAs. I promise that we will take your communication seriously and to seek mutually acceptable resolutions and accommodations. Reporting will never impact your course grade. You may also share concerns with the department chair (Prof. Peter Jelavich, jelavich@jhu.edu) the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Prof. Erin Rowe, erowel@jhu.edu) the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Inclusion (Darlene Saporu, dsaporu@jhu.edu), or the Office of Institutional Equity (oi@jhu.edu). In handling reports, people will protect your privacy as much as possible, but faculty and staff are required to officially report information for some cases (e.g. sexual harassment).

Religious holidays: Religious holidays are valid reasons to be excused from class. Students who must miss a class or an examination because of a religious holiday must inform the instructor as early in the semester as possible in order to be excused from class or to make up any work that is missed. If possible, try to avoid scheduling exams for major holidays. More information may be found at the Religious and Spiritual Life website (<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/religious-spiritual-life/religious-holy-days/>).

Required Texts:

David Engel, *The Holocaust* (Seminar Studies), 2nd edition

Lloyd Gartner, *History of the Jews in Modern Times*

Gershom Gorenberg, *The Unmaking of Israel*

Paula Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History*

Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World*, 3rd edition

Copies of the required texts are on reserve at Eisenhower Library and I believe they are fairly accessible online. In addition to readings in these books, readings drawn from other sources as well as films are marked with an * and are also available on the course e-reserves list at JHU Sheridan Libraries/Reserves/Readings/Moss (<http://reserves.library.jhu.edu/access/reserves/findit/articles/index.php>)

The reading assignments listed below a given session should be completed by the date under which they appear.

8/31 Introduction: What is Modern Jewish History?

9/2 Traditional Jewish Societies

*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*: 12-15, 24-29, 18-19; 36-37, 48-49, 54-55, 56-57, 62-63, 72-73, 82-83, 86-87, 92-95, 104-107, 110-111, 118-123

*"Selections from the Hebrew Bible, Talmud, medieval commentators, legal texts, Zohar, early modern popular culture" [collection of sources prepared by the instructor]

9/7 **Labor Day; no class**

9/9 Enlightenment, Absolutism, and the Jews in 18th Century Europe

Overview: Gartner, ch. 3

*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*: 128-139, 144-149

Fellow humans, useful subjects: Enlightenment debate and state practice toward the Jews: *JMW* 27-45, 54-58; 279-282

The Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah): *JMW* 74-83, 444-45, 94-96; 803-804

Paper #1 assigned

9/14 The Emancipation Debate, the French Revolution, and the New Conditions of Western and Central European Jewish Life, 1780-1815

Overview: Gartner, 95-121

The French (and American) Revolution, Emancipation, Napoleon: *JMW* 121-125, 127-28, 148, 508-510

Reactions outside France, early Nationalism, post-Napoleonic Reaction: *JMW* 283-84, 163-165

9/16 East European Jewry 1772-1815: Religious Revolution, Sociocultural Change, and New Political Realities

Gartner, 122-126; *JMW* 365-369, 350-351, 159-61; *Barnavi, *Historical Atlas*, 162-63

- 9/21 Jewish Political and Social Trajectories in Western and Central Europe and the US, 1815-1845
Gartner, 128-155; *JMW* 285-289, 238-242, 166-67, 807
- 9/23 Religious Contestation and Religious Revolution in Mid-19th Century Central Europe
Central Europe: Religious Reform and the birth of Orthodoxy(s): *JMW* 201-208, 220-223, 518-19
Jews beyond Judaism: *JMW* 805-806; *Heinrich Heine, "When of a Morning Early"
Contrast: the very different trajectories of East European Judaism: **Out of Our People's Past*,
387-90; *JMW* 796-99, 369-371
Poems by Rachel Luzatto Morpurgo in *The Defiant Muse: Hebrew Feminist Poems*, pp. 79-81
(bio on 249-251)

Paper #1 due in section 9/25

- 9/28 **No class – Lecture will be made up in combined Friday section**
- 9/30 Imperial Subjecthood, Communal Breakdown, Jewish Culture Wars: East European Jewry 1810s-1860s
Gartner, ch. 6; *JMW* 352-365, 380-81, 212-216, 372-373, 378-87
*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 176-77, 168-169

10/2: Lecture in lieu of Friday section, in combined 11 AM Zoom lecture: Between Assimilation and Self-Segregation, Social Mobility and Dislocation, Integration and Rejection: European Jewries West and East, 1848-1870s

Overview: Gartner, 155-161
1848/1860: Jewish Politics in Revolution and After: *JMW* 173, 517-18, 292-293
Religious debates, Ultra-Orthodoxy, and Schism: *JMW* 224-231
"The Jewish Question" on the Left: *JMW* 297-301, 311

Paper #2 assigned.

- 10/5 "The Jewish Question" in Western Europe: Emancipation, Antisemitism, Uneasy Integration 1871-1895
Overview: Gartner, 217-234
The Triumph of Emancipation in Western Europe: *JMW* 174-76, 293-296
Antisemitism and "The Jewish Question" after Emancipation: *JMW* 302-307, 315-16, 319-26,
336-38
*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 186-87
Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation*, ch. 1
- 10/7 Sephardic/Mizrahi Jewry in the 19th Century: Imperialism, Capitalism, and Imported Modernity:
Gartner, 191-201
JMW 449, 445-447, 460-464, 466, 472, 476-479
*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 178-79, 184-185, 188-89, 212-13
- 10/12 East European Jewry, 1881-1905: Political Dilemmas, Social Upheaval, Cultural Change:
Overview: Gartner, 238-245, 248-251, 258-266; *JMW* 350
Sources: *JMW* 339-342, 356, 387-391, 393-396, 589-594, 597, 405-06
Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation*, ch 2
*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 192-193, 200-201
- 10/14 America and the Jews Before the Great Migration and After
Overview: Gartner, 201-212
Sources: *JMW* 521, 528, 532, 539-542, 545-46
Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation*, ch 3
*Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 194-195, 204-205
- 10/19 Zionism, Palestine, and the Yishuv, 1881/1897-1914
JMW 599-625, 630-639, 642-647, 483-84

- *Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*, ch. 1
- *Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*, 1-21
- *Haim Nahman Bialik, "In the City of Slaughter"
- *Other sources related to Bialik's poem at <http://www.teachgreatjewishbooks.org/resource-kits/haim-nahman-bialiks-city-slaughter#resources>, sources 3-5

- 10/21** Nationalism, Socialism, Antisemitism and the Jews in Western and Eastern Europe, 1896/1905-1914
 Gartner, 215-17, 234-38, 245-248
 Western Europe: *JMW* 328-335, 817-19, 825-28
 Eastern Europe: *JMW* 397-405, 626-629, 640, 407, 392
 *Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, 190-91

Paper #2 due in section 10/23.

- 10/26** World War, Revolution, and the Prospects of the New World Order, 1914-21
 Overview: Gartner, 267-288
 Sources: *JMW* 660-62, 670, 411-18, 451, 568, 809
 *Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* 210-211

- 10/28** Post-Imperial Trajectories: Jews in the New Nation-States and the Soviet Union, 1921-1939
 Overview: Gartner, 288-304
 Jewish life in the new East European states: *JMW* 422-427, 648, 681
 In the Middle East and North Africa: *JMW* 465-66, 470-71, 479-80, 484-89
 The Russian Revolution and the Soviet Alternative: *JMW* 421-22, 428-29
 *Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*: 207, 214-15, 252-53

- 11/2** Zionist Visions, National Conflict, and Jewish Life in Palestine, 1917-1936
 *Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*, ch. 3
 *Ian Black, *Enemies and Neighbors*, ch. 4
 Sources: *JMW* 661-666, 473, 671-80, 683-85, 405-06 (again)
 *Poetry by Esther Raab in *Defiant Muse: Hebrew Feminist Poems*, 93-97 (bio on 249-251)
 *Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*: 208-209, 220-225

- 11/4** At Home in America, England, France, Germany? Integration and Extrusion amidst the Crisis of Liberal Democracy and Capitalism, 1918-1939
 Overview: Gartner, 304-333
 Sources: *JMW* 837-38, 841-42, 820-21, 558-60, 570, 573-74, 723-26, 730, 742
 *Goldstein, *Price of Whiteness*, ch. 7
 David Engel, *The Holocaust*, ch. 2-5 and sources 2, 3, 5

- 11/9** Interwar Jewish Politics, Cultures, and Identities
 Toward secular cultural revolution: *Hebrew and Yiddish poetry by A. Shlonsky, U. Z. Greenberg, Natan Alterman, Ana Margolin, Yankev Glatshteyn [available in e-reserves under authors' names]
 The interwar generation in a nationalist age: *Jacqueline Kahanoff, "A Culture Stillborn" in Kahanoff, *Mongrels or Marvels*; *Loveh Levitah, "Poland's Diaspora" (1929) [sent by instructor]; *Max Weinreich, from *Path to Our Youth* [sent by instructor]
 Engel, *The Holocaust*, sources 8-12
 Far-flung communities: Barnavi, *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* 266-267, 256-257

Final Paper Assigned

- 11/11** The Holocaust
 Engel, *Holocaust* ch 6-8 and sources 6, 7, 4, 16-33
JMW 750-788
 Film: "Black Honey: The Life and Poetry of Avraham Sutzkever"

11/16 From Yishuv in Palestine to the State of Israel

JMW 686-97, 705-714

*Ian Black, *Enemies and Neighbors*, ch. 7

*Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*, ch. 8

Film: "The Five Houses of Leah Goldberg"

11/18 The State of Israel to 1987

*Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*, 103-141

Gorenberg, *Unmaking of Israel*, ch. 1-3

*Selections from *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization*, v. 10: 608-611, 634-36, 648-50, 662-66, 676-80, 723-24, 760-63

Film: "Write Down, I am an Arab" [re: Mahmoud Darwish], available through Sheridan Libraries: Kanopy on jhu.kanopystreaming.com

11/23-11/27 **Thanksgiving Break**

11/30 The Remaking of Diaspora Jewish Life, 1950-1990

Gartner 396-420

JMW 581-584, 846-55, 875

*Selections from *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization*, v. 10: 685-86, 765-67, 687-89, 694-95, 701-06, 341-42, 351-52, 353-354, 363-64, 711-12, 744-45, 752-55, 709, 750-51, 851-56, 794-98, 877-79

12/2 Israel to the Present Day

Gorenberg, *Unmaking of Israel*, ch. 4-7

*Etgar Keret, "Siren," in *The Bus Driver Who Wanted to be God and Other Stories*

Film: "Song of Loves – Rabi David Buzaglo"

*Selections from *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization*, v. 10: 849-51, 859-61, 865-869, 915-20, 922-25, 931-33, 935-39, 959-61, 965-66, 968-70

12/7 Jewish Life in the 21st Century -- Looking Forward, Looking Back

Gorenberg, *Unmaking of Israel*, ch. 8

Film: "The Gatekeepers"

JMW 866-74

The final paper will be due 12/14 at 5:00 PM.