

## 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 European civilization; the extreme shifts in Jewish life from the mid-20th century in light of the Holocaust, the creation of the state of Israel, and 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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Lectures: MW 11-11:50, Gilman 55  
Section: F 11-11:50, Maryland 309 (Section 1) and Gilman 308 (Section 2)

### Course Requirements:

This course is primarily a lecture course, and much of the essential information and context will be communicated in the lectures. There is a fair amount of reading. Section participation is essential.

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-page papers: 15% each  
One 7-page final paper: 20%  
Final exam: 30%  
Participation in section: 20%

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). Needless to say, complete honesty and probity in your work is a must. For information, see <http://ethics.jhu.edu>

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Dr. Richard Sanders, in Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, [studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu).

Please feel free to contact the TA or the professor with any questions. However, please be aware that the professor was born and raised in the pre-internet age, and has young children, and both of these facts mean that the professor will check his email at most once per day, if that.

### Required Texts

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

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

Sasson Somekh, *Baghdad, Yesterday: The Making of an Arab Jew* [**note: you will need to order this yourselves**]  
Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*

Copies of the required texts are on reserve at Eisenhower Library. Given the cost of some of the books (esp Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz), I have arranged to have multiple copies on reserve at the library. Additional readings online are marked with an \*. You may find them online in 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.

- 1/28**     Introduction: What is Modern Jewish History?  
Traditional society, changing societies: *Jew in the Modern World (JMW)*, 1-15, 20-25, 503, 59-65
- 1/30**     Traditional and Early Modern Jewish Society  
Overview: Gartner, pp. 2-10
- 2/4**     Enlightenment, Absolutism, and the Jews in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Europe  
Overview: Gartner, ch. 3  
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

### **First short paper assigned**

- 2/6**     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
- 2/11**     East European Jewry 1772-1815: Religious Revolution, Sociocultural Change, and New Political Realities  
Gartner, 122-126; *JMW* 365-369, 350-351, 159-61
- 2/13**     **CLASS IN DIFFERENT ROOM TODAY: Gilman 55**  
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
- 2/18**     Judaism(s) East and West in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century  
East European Judaism: \**Out of Our People's Past*, 387-90; *JMW* 796-99, 369-371  
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"

### **First paper due section 2/22.**

- 2/20**     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

### **Second paper assigned.**

- 2/25**     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
- 2/27**     "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

336-38 Antisemitism and “The Jewish Question” after Emancipation: *JMW* 302-307, 315-16, 319-26,

**\*Midterm paper assigned today; due Friday 3/15.**

**3/4** Sephardic Jewry in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: Imperialism, Capitalism, and Imported Modernity:  
Gartner, 191-201; *JMW* 449, 445-447, 460-464, 466, 472, 476-479

**3/6** 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; \*Y. L. Peretz, “In the Mail Coach”

**3/11** America and the Jews Before the Great Migration and After

Overview: Gartner, 201-212

Sources: *JMW* 521, 528, 532, 539-542, 545-46

**3/13** Zionism, Palestine, and the Yishuv, 1881/1897-1914

*JMW* 599-625, 630-639, 642-647, 483-84; Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* 1-21

**Second paper due in section 3/15.**

**3/18-3/24 Spring Vacation**

**3/25** 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

**3/27** 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

**4/1** 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

**4/3** Zionist Visions, National Conflict, and Jewish Life in Palestine, 1917-1936

Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*, 22-85

Sources: *JMW* 661-666, 473, 671-80, 683-85, 405-06 (again)

**4/8** 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

**4/10** Interwar Jewish Politics, Cultures, and Identities

Poland: Loveh Leviteh, “Poland’s Diaspora” (1929) [handout]

Iraq: Sasson Somekh, *Baghdad, Yesterday* 1-69, 109-122; *JMW* 489-92

**4/15** The Holocaust

Gartner, 347-382; *JMW* 750-788

Film by Yael Hersonski: “A Film Unfinished” 2010

**Final paper assigned**

4/17 From Yishuv in Palestine to the State of Israel

*JMW* 686-97, 705-714; Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* 85-102; \*Salim Tamari, *Mountain Against the Sea*, pp. 4-12.

NO SECTION ON 4/19.

4/22 The State of Israel to 1987

Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*, 103-141

\*Eli Yassif, "The 'Other' Israel: Folk Cultures in the Modern State of Israel"

\*Amichai, "Jerusalem, 1967"

**Film: "Israel: A Home Movie" [<http://www.go2films.com/Anthropology/Israel-A-Home-Movie>]**

4/24 The Remaking of Diaspora Jewish Life, 1950-1990

Gartner 396-420; *JMW* 581-584, 846-55, 875; Phillip Roth, "Eli the Fanatic"

4/29 Israel to the Present Day

Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* 142-219

\*Kimmerling, *Rise and Decline of Israeli Identity*, ch 7

5/1 Jewish Life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century -- Looking Forward, Looking Back

Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* 220-266

*JMW* 866-74

**Film: "The Gatekeepers"**

The final paper will be due 5/3 at 5:00 PM.

The final exam: TBA (sometime between May 8 and May 16).