Jewish History II: Jews in the Modern World

HIS 254 (RST/JST 254)
M/W/F 9:00-9:50, STA 316
Spring, 2009
Prof. Matthew Hoffman
Office: Stager 308
Office Hours: Wed. 1:00-3:00, Fri. 1:00-3:00
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Course Description
This class is intended to serve as a broad introduction to Jewish life in the modern era beginning with the period of Emancipation and Enlightenment at the close of the 18th century and continuing to after World War Two. In this course we will survey key events, personalities, movements, and themes as we trace the transformations of Jewish life during this turbulent era. Broad historical sketches will be combined with close readings of particular texts, movements and thinkers in an effort to flesh out the contours and dynamics of the Jewish experience in the Modern world. We will read both secondary and primary sources, including memoirs, ideological manifestos, and excerpts of literature; view works of visual art, and see both feature and documentary films.

Required Readings (All available at the F&M Bookstore)
Paul Mendes-Flohr, Jehudah Reinharz, eds., The Jew in the Modern World
Howard Sachar, The Course of Modern Jewish History
Pauline Wengeroff, Rememberings: The World of a Russian-Jewish Woman in the 19th Century
Zvi Gitelman, A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present
Marion Kaplan, Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany

Films on Reserve (Available at ATS)
Hester Street (1975, 90 mins.)
Sunshine (1999, 180 mins.)
The Garden of the Finzi-Continis (1987, 90 mins.)
The Harmonists (1999, 115 mins.)
Europa, Europa (1992, 115 mins.)
Cast A Giant Shadow (1966, 141 mins.)
Course Requirements
-- Reading Responses/Quizzes (25%): There will be two types of “reading response” assignments—five one-page responses to a broad question provided by me on the weekly readings, and five in-class quizzes asking some basic questions on the readings for the week. (Additional guidelines will be provided.)

-- Primary Text Analysis (20%): This will consist of a 4-5 page paper based on in-depth analysis of a short primary text, which will be handed out about one week before the paper is due on Friday 3/6. Additional guidelines will be provided.

-- Film Analysis (10%): a 2-3 page analysis of one of the films on reserve at ATS. Films analysis papers will be due in class on Monday the week after the film is listed on the syllabus, unless otherwise noted; check course schedule for due dates. Additional guidelines will be provided.

-- Group Discussion & Study Questions (20%): Small group discussions will be an integral part of our class, and will make up 1/5 of your final grade. Group discussions will take place on Wednesdays or Fridays (a total of 10 times for the semester), and will last approximately 30 minutes. Groups will discuss a reading passage and answer discussion questions, as well as take part in a larger class discussion. Students must bring the Jew in the Modern World book to class for the group discussions. Additional guidelines will be provided.

-- Final Essay (25%): A 6-8 page essay on themes to be provided; this will be in place of a final exam. This is not a research paper, and will focus on major themes and topics from the semester; a list of topics will be passed out 2-3 weeks before the deadline. The Final Essay is due on Monday, 5/4.

Class Format & Policies
-- Format: Class time will be divided between lectures, full class discussions and small group discussions; lectures are designed to be interactive and will include questions, texts or art to discuss and will involve students as much as possible. Group discussion days will be devoted primarily to work in small groups.

-- Participation and Attendance: Participation in small group and class discussions is a required part of class and will help determine final grades. All students are expected to take part and actively contribute to discussions; Regular attendance in class is also required; more than 3 unexcused absences will lower your final grades by one (A to A-) and every two absences after that will lower the grade again by one each time. Medical reasons or family emergencies, accidents, etc. count as excused absences when accompanied by proper documentation.
--**Class Etiquette:** Please arrive on time and don’t leave early without prior notification. Be courteous to me and your classmates by not talking when someone else is, turning off your cell phones, not reading outside materials or playing on your laptops, etc. Laptop use in class is o.k. as long as you are using it for taking notes or doing class-related work.

--**Assigned Readings:** Assigned readings for each week of class are listed below on the course schedule of the syllabus by author’s last name and page number. There will be readings from at least two and sometimes three books each week. The amount of reading will vary from week to week, but 75 to 100 pages a week is average. You should have the majority of the assigned reading done by the Wednesday class and will be handing in reading responses or taking reading quizzes on Fridays. Always start with the Sachar book as this provides a broad overview that the other books often complement.

**Grading Scale:** The following grading scale will be used in this class: 93-100=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 68-69=D+; 63-67=D; 60-62=D-; 59 and below=F. For assignments receiving straight letter grades, A=96, B=86, C=76, D=66, F=59. See pp. 207-210 in college catalog for general grading policies.

--**Academic Honesty:** All written course work must be done individually and all outside sources included in your work (e.g. books, websites, course lecture notes, etc.) must be cited properly to avoid plagiarism. Proper guidelines for maintaining academic honesty will be distributed.

--**Consultation with Professor:** Students may consult with me during office hours, or by scheduling an appointment, and are encouraged to meet with me whenever the need arises. I will look at rough drafts of assignments as long as you show them to me (in person or via e-mail) 72 hours or more before the assignment is due. Questions can be directed to me in person, via e-mail and through my office tel. # 358-4675.

**Course Resources:**

**eDisk:** Course materials such as the syllabus, assignment guidelines, lecture outlines, and supplemental readings will be available in the distribution folder for this class located on eDisk. Lecture outlines and notes for the week will generally be available after the Monday class.

**Websites:** In the eDisk distribution folder for this class is a collection of helpful websites that will provide background information, glossaries, etc. that will be invaluable in helping you with difficult terms, concepts, etc. Please only use websites given or approved by me (no Wikipedia), and if you use material from them in your written work, make sure to cite them properly
Course Schedule

Week #1 (1/21—1/23) Introduction, Overview & Background
--Overview of Course: Major Themes, Syllabus, Assignments, etc.
--Brief History of Jews of Europe before Era of Emancipation & Enlightenment
Readings: Sachar, pp. 3-37; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 3-7.

Week #2 (1/26—1/30) Enlightenment and Emancipation in Western Europe
--The origins of Jewish Political Emancipation in Western Europe
--Formulating the Jewish Question; the Emancipation bargain
--The path of Jewish Enlightenment: Transformation & Resistance
Readings: Sachar, pp. 38-61; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 28-53, 70-99 112-143
**Reading Response #1 due in class on 1/30

Week #3 (2/2—2/6) The Jews of Eastern Europe
--Jews of Poland and Russia under the Old Order
--Hasidism, Traditionalism and the Seeds of Enlightenment
Readings: Sachar, pp. 62-93; Wengeroff, pp. 3-26, 71-104; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 372-379, 387-393

Week #4 (2/9—2/13) Patterns of Religious Change: the Transformation of Judaism
--Reform Judaism in Germany and its Detractors
--The “Science of Judaism” and the Return to History
--Varieties of Orthodox Judaism and the Invention of Tradition
Readings: Sachar, pp. 148-174; Mendes-Flohr, 155-206, 233-236
**Reading Quiz #1 on 2/13

Week #5 (2/16—2/20) Paths to Jewish Emancipation: Triumphs & Setbacks
--the Emancipation Debate Continues
--Liberalism & Reaction in the West; Revolutions of 1848
--Rise of Anti-Semitism in Germany & France
Readings: Sachar, pp. 94-119, 253-276; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 144-54, 327-350
**Reading Quiz #2 on 2/20

Week #6 (2/23—2/27) Jewish Enlightenment in East Europe to 1881
--Origins & Development of the Haskalah (Enlightenment) in Eastern Europe
--The Transformation of Russian Jewish society; Secularization & Modernization
Readings: Sachar, pp. 202-252; Wengeroff, pp. 107-117, 183 (bot.)-213; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 381-386, 400-406
**Reading Response #2 due on 2/27
Week #7 (3/2—3/6) Jewish Responses to 1881: the Modern Jewish Revolution
--Anti-Jewish Policies in Russia, the Crisis of 1881
--the Origins of Jewish Nationalism and the Development of Zionism
--Jewish Migrations and Settlement in Palestine
Readings: Gitelman, pp. 1-49 (top); Sachar, pp. 303-331; Wengeroff, pp. 217-233; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 532-564
Primary Text Analysis Due on Friday 3/6

Week #8 (3/9—3/13) Jewish Responses to 1881: Growth of Jewish Socialism
--Rise of Jewish Socialism & Revolutionary Politics
--Jews and the Left in Europe and beyond
--The Jewish Labor Bund
Readings: Sachar, pp. 332-358; Gitelman, pp. 49-58; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 405-406, 419-423, 425-436
**Reading Quiz #3 on 3/13

Spring Break (3/16—3/20)

Week #9 (3/23—3/27) To the Golden Land: The Jews in America
--Jewish Migration & settlement in America (1881-WWI)
--Jewish Immigrant Life & Culture in America
Readings: Sachar, pp. 359-413; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 472-504
Film: Hester Street (Analysis due on 3/30)
**Reading Response #3 due on 3/27

Week #10 (3/30—4/3) Jews in Eastern Europe Between the Wars
-- WWI and the Jews of Europe
--Jews and the Russian Revolution
-- Jews in the Soviet Union; Jewish Culture in Poland
Readings: Gitelman, pp. 59-114; Sachar, pp. 414-439; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 437-448
Films: Image Before My Eyes (in class), Sunshine (Sunshine Analysis due on 4/6)
**Reading Quiz #4 on 4/3

Week #11 (4/6—4/10) Jewish Life Between the Wars II
--Jewish life in Weimar era and Nazi Germany
--Jews in Palestine between the Wars
Readings: Sachar, pp. 504-529; Kaplan, pp. 17-73, 94-118; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 582-618, 636-658
Films: The Harmonists, or The Garden of the Finzi-Continis (Analysis due on 4/13)
**Reading Response #4 due on 4/10
**Week #12 (4/13—4/17) Jewish Life During World War Two: The Holocaust**
--Overview of the Nazi-led Genocide
--The Holocaust in Art and Culture
  **Readings:** Sachar, pp. 530-556; Kaplan, pp. 145-200; Gitelman, pp. 115-143;
  Mendes-Flohr, pp. 660-696
  **Film:** Europa, Europa (Analysis due on 4/20)
  **Reading Quiz #5 on 4/17**

**Week #13 (4/20—4/24) Jewish Life After World War Two I: Birth of Israel**
--The Establishment of Israel & its Early Years
--Israeli Culture & Society: 1948-Present
  **Readings:** Sachar, pp. 557-593, 733-762; Mendes-Flohr, pp. 629-633
  **Film:** Cast A Giant Shadow (Analysis due on 4/27)
  **Reading Response #5 due on 4/24**

**Week #14 (4/27—4/29) Jewish Life after World War Two II: Israel & America**
--Overview of Arab-Israeli Conflict; Israeli Politics & Society
--Jews in America after WWII
  **Readings:** Sachar, pp. 705-732, 763-778
  **Final Essay due on 5/4**