

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
FALL 2006

History 35  
Trotter 218

Office Hours: Monday 1-3  
Wednesday 1-3  
And By Appointment

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8133

**From Emancipation to Extermination:  
European Jewry's Encounter with Modernity**

Why did the hopes and promises shared by so many West and East European Jews at the beginning of the nineteenth century literally turn into ashes in the death camps of Nazi Germany? This course focuses on the fate of West and East European Jewry from the beginning of Jewish emancipation in the eighteenth century to the Holocaust. Major themes include the process of emancipation, the transformation of Jewish self-identity, and collective responses to modern antisemitism. Special attention is paid to situating the history of European Jewry in the context of general social, political, intellectual, and economic trends and developments.

**Course Requirements:**

Three five-page papers  
Eight-page research paper  
In-class final exam  
Class participation and attendance

Class sessions will be a mix of lecture and discussion of readings. It is imperative that you keep up with the assignments and come to each class prepared to discuss them.

All students are expected to read the College's policy on academic honesty and integrity that appears in the Swarthmore College Bulletin. The work you submit must be your own, and plagiarism will be penalized. Any work containing plagiarized material will be granted the grade of "no credit" and may subject you to prosecution by the College Judiciary Council. When in doubt, check with me.

In addition, I will not accept late papers and will assign a failing grade for the assignment unless you notify me and receive permission to submit the paper after the due date. Students are required to attend all classes, and unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.

The following books are available for purchase and are also on reserve in McCabe:

Rachel Calof, *Rachel Calof's Story: Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains*  
Lloyd Gartner, *A History of the Jews in Modern Times*  
Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews*  
Helmut Walser Smith, *The Butcher's Tale: Murder and Antisemitism in a German Town*

The following reference works may also be useful:

*Blackwell Companion to Jewish Culture: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (In Reference)  
Norman Roth, ed., *Medieval Jewish Civilization* (In Reference)  
*The Blackwell Dictionary of Judaica* (In Reference)  
*Encyclopedia Judaica* (In Reference)  
Evyatar Friesel, *Atlas of Modern Jewish History* (In Reference)  
Geoffrey Wigoder, *Dictionary of Jewish Biography*  
Martin Goodman, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*

The following websites provide links to dozens of websites devoted to Jewish Studies:

Web Sites for Jewish Studies: <http://www.princeton.edu/~pressman/jewebs.html>  
Center for Jewish History: <http://www.cjh.org/> Go to the "Sites of Interest" link  
Educational Program on Yiddish Culture: <http://epyc.yivo.org>  
Bibliography of Websites: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/bibliowf.html>  
Beyond the Pale: The History of the Jews in Russia: <http://www.friends-partners.org/partners/beyond-the-pale/>

### **September 5: Introduction: Themes of the Course**

### **September 7: European Jewry on the Eve of Emancipation**

Salon Baron, "Ghetto and Emancipation" and "Newer Approaches to Emancipation" **BB**

### **September 12: European Jewry on the Eve of Emancipation**

Gartner, chapters 1 and 2  
Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, pp. 18-20  
Watch the film *Jud Suss* (90 minutes) before class. On reserve in McCabe

### **September 14: Emancipation in England: The Social Variant**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, pp. 8-17, 21-22, 27-28, 146-150, and 151-152

### **September 19: Emancipation in France: The Legal/Political Variant**

Gartner, start reading chapters 3-5 for next several classes

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 114-136

### **September 21: Emancipation in Central Europe: The Intellectual Variant**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 28-40, 42-44, 48-49, 70-74, and 144-145

Michael Meyer, *The Origins of the Modern Jew*, pp. 8-56 and 85-114 **BB**

Monika Richarz, ed., *Jewish Life in Germany: Memoirs from Three Centuries* (Selections by Ascher Lehmann, Isaac Thannhauser, Eduard Silbermann, and Faibel Siegel) **BB**

### **September 26: Emancipation in the Russian Empire**

Gartner, chapter 6

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 375-386 and 400-404

### **September 28: Jews in Arab Lands**

Gartner, chapter 7

## **FIRST PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**

### **October 3: Emancipation in Perspective**

The following essays are useful summaries of what we have been discussing for the past several weeks:

Paula Hyman, "The Social Contexts of Assimilation: Village Jews and City Jews in Alsace" **BB**

Pierre Birnbaum, "Between Social and Political Assimilation: Remarks on the History of Jews in France" **BB**

Michael Stanislawski, "Russian Jewry, the Russian State, and the Dynamics of Jewish Emancipation" **BB**

Werner Mosse, "From 'Schutzjuden' to 'Deutsche Staatsburger Juden': The Long and Bumpy Road to Jewish Emancipation in Germany" **BB**

### **October 5: Religious Reform and Counter-Reform**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 161, 167-173, 177-185, and 194-197

### **October 10: The Rejection of Emancipation and the Emergence of Modern Antisemitism**

Gartner, start reading chapter 8

Shulamit Volkov, "The Written Matter and the Spoken Word" **BB**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 304-305, 309-312, 325-334, 339-350, and 356-367

### **October 12: Honing Your Research Skills**

Meet in Computer Classroom, McCabe Library, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

### **October 24: Life in the Old Country**

Isaac Bashevis Singer, “Why the Geese Shrieked,” “A Major Din Torah,” and “The Boy Philosopher” **BB**

Eva Hoffmann, *Shtetl*, chapter 2 **BB**

Isaac Babel, “The Story of My Dovecot” **BB**

Sholem Asch, “Kola Street” **BB**

### **October 26: The Blood Libel**

Helmut Walser Smith, *The Butcher’s Tale: Murder and Antisemitism in a German Town*

## **SECOND PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27**

### **October 31: Jewish Responses to Antisemitism: The Liberal and Radical Variants**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 417-423

Vladimir Medem, “The Youth of a Bundist” **BB**

Leon Trotsky, “A Social Democrat Only” **BB**

Bronislaw Gasser, “From Pole to Jew” **BB**

### **November 2: Jewish Responses to Antisemitism: Immigration**

Rachel Calof, *Rachel Calof’s Story: Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains*

Watch the film *The Yidishe Gaucho* (30 minutes) for class. On reserve in McCabe

### **November 7: Jewish Responses to Antisemitism: The Nationalist Variant**

Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai, “The Third Redemption” **BB**

Rabbi Zvi Kalischer, “Seeking Zion” **BB**

Peretz Smolenskin, “It is Time to Plant” and “Let Us Search Our Ways” **BB**

Leo Pinsker, “Auto-Emancipation” **BB**

### **November 9: Jewish Responses to Antisemitism: The Nationalist Variant**

Theodor Herzl, “The Jewish State” **BB**

Ahad Ha-Am, “The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem” and “The Negation of the Diaspora” **BB**

Yehiel Michael Pines, “Jewish Nationalism Cannot Be Secular” and “Religion is the Source of Jewish Nationalism” **BB**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinhartz, pp. 493-497, 538-543, 547-548, and 565-566

### **November 14: Jews and European Culture: The Reshaping of Jewish Identity**

Franz Kafka, "Report to the Academy" **BB**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, pp. 254-262, 267-268, 272-275, and 282-284.

Marion Kaplan, "Gender and Jewish History in Imperial Germany" **BB**

**November 16: No Class**

**November 21: Jews under Communism**

Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, pp. 428-436

**November 28: Jews in Interwar Europe**

Gartner, start reading chapter 9

Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, pp. 437-439 and 440-442

Ezra Mendelsohn, "Jewish Politics in Interwar Poland: An Overview" **BB**

Marion Kaplan, "Jewish Women in Nazi Germany: Daily Life, Daily Struggles" **BB**

Watch the film *Image Before My Eyes* (90 minutes) for class. On reserve in McCabe

**November 30: European Jews View Themselves**

Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews*

**THIRD PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1**

**December 5: Defining Jewishness in the Modern World**

"Oswald Rufeisen v. Minister of the Interior" **BB**

**December 7: European Jewry after the Holocaust**

Philip Roth, "Eli, the Fanatic" **BB**

**December 12: In-Class Final Exam**

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22**