

EUH5934 - Jews in the Early Modern Atlantic World

Instructor Nina Caputo
Tuesday, periods 8-10
Keene-Flint 013

Office, KF 216
Office Hours, Wednesday 1:30-3:30

Jews and conversos were instrumental in shaping and realizing the European efforts to explore and establish trade throughout the Atlantic world. Until recently, though, there has been little effort to study their role in a systematic way. This seminar will examine the development and evolution of Atlantic networks through the lens of Jewish and converso history. Beginning in the Iberian peninsula, we will explore Jewish-Christian relation, the reception and perception of Jewish converts to Christianity, role of the Inquisition in shaping migration patterns, important European centers of Jewish and converso migration and settlement and their colonial satellites, and shipping and the slave trade. We will explore historiographies and methods of the Iberian world, Jewish, and Atlantic networks in the medieval and early modern period. This course is designed to allow you to pursue projects that fit with your own research interests and needs.

Grade distribution:

Participation — 25%

Book review — 15%

Paper proposal — 10% -

A final research paper – 50%

Written assignments : Academic writing demands that you make your arguments in a clear and precise manner and that you back them up with evidence. Thus, written assignments will be graded on the basis of **style as well as content**. Completion of the written assignments is *absolutely required*. Late assignments **will not** be accepted without penalty. Please make every effort to apprise the instructor of adverse circumstances that affect your ability to attend class or complete assignments on time. Official documentation is required to excuse an absence and to schedule make-up assignments. Unless otherwise noted, assignments will be collected at the end of the precept session for which they are assigned. Do not submit your work to via email – written work must be presented in hard-copy.

Attendance: Please contact me if you fall ill or if you are unable to attend. We will meet in person (unless the university administration gives us permission to meet online). You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings and ready to discuss them. Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive for lecture promptly. A penalty will be imposed on students who arrive late for class. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused

absences will be penalized in the following manner: you will be permitted three absences over the course of the term; every absence thereafter will lower your grade by one third. Absences will be excused if students provide proper documentation.

Conduct PLAGIARISM and will not be accepted in this class because it violates the University of Florida's honesty policy. Please review the policy at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/> ([Links to an external site.](#))). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Please turn off your cell phones. If your cell phone rings or if you spend your time texting, you will be asked to leave the class and this will count as an unexcused absence.

Online Course Evaluation Process: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Accommodations for Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Books: Most of the readings are available through the Canvas site. The following required books are not available online:

Jonathan Ray, *After Expulsion: 1492 and the Making of Sephardic Jewry* (New York: University Press, 2013).

Jonathan Schorsch, *Hidden Lives of Jews and Africans: Underground Societies in the Iberian Atlantic World* (Princeton N.J.: Marcus Wiener, 2019).

Stuart B. Schwartz, *Blood & Boundaries: The Limits of Religious and Racial Exclusion in Early Modern Latin America*, The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2020).

Course schedule

I – 24 August Jewish History and the Medieval Context

Jonathan Ray, "The Jews of Medieval Spain: Community, Marginality and the Notion of a Mediterranean Society," in *From Catalonia to the Caribbean: The Sephardic Orbit from Medieval to Modern Times, Essays in Honor of Jane Gerber*, ed. Federica Francesconi, Stanley Mirvis, and Brian M. Smolelett, Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, v. LXVI (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 60–80.

Moshe Rosman, *How Jewish Is Jewish History?* (Oxford ; Portland, Oregon: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2007), Chapter 1. (I copied the introduction as well, in case you're interested in reading it).

John K. Thornton, *A Cultural History of The Atlantic World, 1250-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapter 1.

II – 31 August late medieval context

Graizbord, David. "A Crisis of Judeoconverso Identity and Its Echoes, 1391 to the Present." In *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, 54:3–21. Brill, 2019.

Glazer-Eytan, Yonatan. "Incriminating the Judaizer: Inquisitors, Intentionality, and the Problem of Religious Ambiguity after Forced Conversion." In *Forced Conversion in Christianity, Judaism and Islam: Coercion and Faith in Premodern Iberia and Beyond*, edited by Mercedes García-Arenal and Yonatan Glazer-Eytan, 235–65. Numen Book Series. Studies in the History of Religions. Leiden: Brill, 2020.

Ray, J. "Beyond Tolerance and Persecution: Reassessing Our Approach to Medieval Convivencia." *Jewish Social Studies* 11, no. 2 (2005): 1–18.

Gampel, Benjamin R. *Anti-Jewish Riots in the Crown of Aragon and the Royal Response, 1391–1392*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, Introduction, Prologue of Part I, Chapter 1 and Chapter 4

Recommended

Szpiech, Ryan. "On the Road to 1391? Abner of Burgos / Alfonso of Valladolid on Forced Conversion." In *Forced Conversion in Christianity, Judaism and Islam: Coercion and Faith in Premodern Iberia and Beyond*, 175–204. Numen Book Series. Studies in the History of Religions. Leiden: Brill, 2020.

III – 7 September rosh hashannah no class

IV – 14 September 15th century

Feros, Antonio. *Speaking of Spain: The Evolution of Race and Nation in the Hispanic World*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 3

MUCHNIK, NATALIA. "Being against, Being with: Marrano Self-Identification in Inquisitorial Spain (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries). An Essay." *Jewish History* 25, no. 2 (2011): 153–74.

Yovel, Yirmiyahu. *The Other within: The Marranos: Split Identity and Emerging Modernity*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009. Selections

V – 21 September The Expulsion of 1492 and its consequences

Ray, Jonathan. *After Expulsion: 1492 and the Making of Sephardic Jewry*. New York: University Press, 2013.

Benito, Ana. "Inquisition and the Creation of the Other." In *Marginal Voices. Studies in Converso Literature of Medieval and Golden Age Spain*, edited by Amy Aronson-Friedman and Gregory B. Kaplan, 43–67. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

da Silva Tavim, José Alberto Rodrigues. "Jews in the Diaspora with 'Sepharad' in the Mirror: Ruptures, Relations, and Forms of Identity: A Theme Examined through Three Cases." *Jewish History* 25, no. 2 (2011): 175–205.

VI – 28 September Portugal, 1497, and the birth of the Sephardic diaspora

Schorsch, Jonathan. *Hidden Lives of Jews and Africans: Underground Societies in the Iberian Atlantic World*. Princeton N.J.: Marcus Wiener, 2019.

Tavares, Maria José Pimenta Ferro. "The Castilian Jews in Portugal: An Approach to Their History." *Hispania Judaica Bulletin*, 2010.

Kaplan, Yosef. "Secularizing the Portuguese Jews: Integration and Orthodoxy in Early Modern Judaism," *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 6 (2007): 99-110."

Soyer, François. "King Manuel I and the Expulsion of the Castilian Conversos and Muslims from Portugal in 1497: New Perspectives." *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* 8 (2008): 33–62.

VII 5 October Conversos in the empire

Schwartz, Stuart B. *Blood & Boundaries: The Limits of Religious and Racial Exclusion in Early Modern Latin America*. The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures. Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2020.

Stuczynski, Claude B. "Harmonizing Identities: The Problem of the Integration of the Portuguese Conversos in Early Modern Iberian Corporate Polities." *Jewish History* 25, no. 2 (2011): 229–57.

Feitler, Bruno. "Four Chapters in the History of Crypto-Judaism in Brazil: The Case of the Northeastern New Christians (17th-21st Centuries)." *Jewish History* 25, no. 2 (2011): 207–27.

VIII 12 October Amsterdam

Antunes, Cátia. "Cross-Cultural Business Cooperation in the Dutch Trading World, 1580-1776, A View from Amsterdam." In *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*, edited by Francesca Trivellato, Leor Halevi, and Cátia Antunes, 150–68. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Bodian, Miriam. "Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: The Ambiguous Boundaries of Self-Definition." *Jewish Social Studies* 15, no. 1 (2008): 66–80.

Moreno-Goldschmidt, Aliza. "New Jews in Amsterdam: Some Social Aspects Reflected in the Thesouro Dos Dinim by Menasseh Ben Israel." In *Religious Changes and Cultural*

Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities, edited by Yosef Kaplan, 54:452–68. Brill, 2019.

Fisher, Benjamin. "For God and Country: Jewish Identity and the State in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam." In *Jewish Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of David B. Ruderman*, 50–62. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2014.

Recommended

Nadler, Steven M. "Spinoza and Menasseh Ben Israel: Facts and Fictions." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 80, no. 4 (2019): 533–54.

IX 19 October The Sephardic Empire

Crome, Andrew. "English National Identity and the Readmission of the Jews, 1650-1656." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 66, no. 2 (April 2015): 280–301.

Novoa, James Nelson. "A Family of the Nação from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and Beyond (1497–1640)." In *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, 54:22–42. Brill, 2019.

Studemund-Halévy, Michael. "Sea Is History, Sea Is Witness: The Creation of a Prosopographical Database for the Sephardic Atlantic." In *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, 54:487–511. Brill, 2019.

Klooster, Wim. "Communities of Port Jews and Their Contacts in the Dutch Atlantic World." *Jewish History* 20, no. 1 (2006): 129–45.

X 26 October The Caribbean

Mirvis, Stanley. *The Jews of Eighteenth-Century Jamaica: A Testamentary History of a Diaspora in Transition*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.

Hordes, Stanley M. "The Sephardic Legacy in the Spanish Caribbean: Crypto-Jewish Settlement in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica." *Journal of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Crypto Jews* 1 (2009): 68–76.

XI 2 November The Caribbean

Ben-Ur, Aviva. *Jewish Autonomy in a Slave Society: Suriname in the Atlantic World, 1651-1825*. Early Modern Americas. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020, Introduction and Chapters 1-4

XII 9 November

research presentation

XIII – 16 November

research presentation

XIV – 23 November
research presentation

XV – 30 November
research presentation

XVI 7 December
Wrap up