

From Immigrants to a Minority: Jews in the Americas

Syllabus Fall 2022

LAS3930 | EUH3931 | LAH3931 | JST3930

The Russian Tsar visits one of his army regiments and asks the soldiers if they have any complaints. "Sir, I am so unhappy in Russia," Pinchus, a Jewish private, says. "As a Jew, I cannot live where I wish, I cannot choose a profession that I am interested in, I cannot go to university, and my family is starving!" The Tsar sighs: "Do you think I am in a better situation? My ministers cheat and rob me and the anarchists throw bombs at me. I feel as miserable as you do!" Pinchus answers with a suggestion: "Majesty, we should emigrate together to America!"

István Hajdu (ed.), *The Whip of Herschel Ostropoli* (Budapest: Minerva, 1985), 87-88.

Instructor: Katalin Franciska Rac

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Class meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in period 4 (10:40 am–11:30 am) in [Turlington Hall](#) 2306

Office hours: on Mondays 11:45 am–12:45 pm and by appointment, via Zoom (link TBA).

Course description:

This course surveys the history of Jewish immigration to the Americas and the diversity of Jewish experiences in the Western Hemisphere from the sixteenth century until World War II. We will explore in what circumstances Jewish individuals moved to the Americas and how the Jewish institutions and communities they built continued European and Middle Eastern traditions while also reflecting the influences of the local conditions. We will reconstruct this complex history based on a broad range of sources, but chiefly by looking at how Jews in Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America described migration and integration in the Americas and how they told and documented their life stories.

Course objectives:

- Students will become familiar with major historical events that shaped migration to the Americas in general and Jewish migration in particular from the early modern period to the mid-twentieth century

- Students will gain insights into Jewish communal life and individual experience in the Americas during this period
- Students will develop skills to critically read a broad range of autobiographical sources and communal/institutional documents pertaining to the history of Jewish immigration to the Americas
- Students will explore the role of minority-majority relations in the evolution of American societies from the vantage point of Jewish history
- Students will use the analytical tools of the historian and develop their narrative voice in writing

Course policies:

Classes will include lectures and discussions. Students are encouraged to ask informed questions during lectures and discussions or after class. Informed questions attest to interest in the course material and completion of the required readings listed below in the course schedule. To ensure a high-level learning experience, students will engage their peers and the instructor in conversations and written exchanges that, in addition to being academically driven and critical, will be based on mutual respect and sensitivity toward and appreciation of differences in worldviews and cultural values. The instructor will address the students accordingly and will work to ensure that the classroom is an inspiring place for learning and intellectual growth. (See more about communication below.)

Students may use silenced electronic devices to take notes and refer to the readings during lectures and discussions. Using phones, computers, tablets, etc. for purposes irrelevant to the scope of the class is counterproductive and disrespectful. Moreover, it can be disruptive.

In addition to regular attendance, completing the readings, and participating in class discussions, students will answer ten short take-home prompts, take two quizzes, and write two short and one long(er) paper during the semester. Deadlines and the dates of the quizzes are indicated on the course schedule. The short prompts will be available on Canvas after the last class of the week and will be open until the beginning of the first class of the following week.

Late work will be accepted to a certain extent; however, the instructor will deduct points for each day of delay.

Attendance:

Requirements for class attendance and make-up quizzes, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. To read the university attendance policies, visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. Students are asked to inform the instructor in advance if they are unable to attend class and to discuss the deadline to make up the material covered during the absence. In case prior notification is not possible, the student will contact the instructor about the absence at the earliest possible time. For each unexcused absence, 1% will be deducted from the final grade.

Communication:

Students are required to communicate in writing with the instructor about their absences, make-up work, and requests for extensions of deadlines. They are encouraged and welcome to put in writing any concerns or questions they have regarding the course curriculum. Students will use email and Canvas for written communication with the instructor. Students are also encouraged to speak with the instructor before or after class, during office hours, or by scheduling an appointment regarding these issues or any concerns, ideas, and questions pertaining to the course curriculum. Asking questions is part of the learning process.

To ask for help with technical and technological issues, please visit the Helpdesk website at <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>. The Helpdesk can be reached at (352)-392-4357 and is located at the HUB.

Accommodation for students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. To get started with the Disability Resource Center, visit <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access—or any other educational—needs as early as possible in the semester.

Grades and grading

Students’ written work will be evaluated based on the rubric accompanying the description of each assignment. Rubrics will include a policy regarding late work. In addition, students will be given quizzes and earn points through class participation. Students’ work will be graded in accordance with UF grading policy, available from <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

The following grading scale will apply:

Grade	Grade Points	Percentage
A	4.0	93-100
A ⁻	3.67	90-92
B ⁺	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	83-86
B ⁻	2.67	80-82
C ⁺	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	73-76
C ⁻	1.67	70-72
D ⁺	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	63-66
D ⁻	.67	60-62
E	0	0-59

The final grade will be computed of the following elements:

Participation in class discussions 5%

Quizzes (2*5 points)	10%
Short prompts (10*3 points)	30%
Short paper1	15%
Short paper2	15%
Final paper	25%

Writing: 4000 words

Online course evaluation

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.aa.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/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Conduct

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. To read the Conduct Code, visit <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care](#) website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center](#) website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [Student Health Care Center](#) website.

University Police Department: Visit [UF Police Department](#) website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the [UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center](#) website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell](#) website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

[Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#) webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process at <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>

Required readings:

Students are not obliged to purchase books or other reading materials for this course.

Required readings are available via the library or Canvas. To learn how to search the library catalog and access electronic resources, consult this libguide:

<https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/eresources/home>.

Students, nonetheless, should remember that it is a worthwhile and enriching endeavor to collect books and build one's library.

Recommended readings:

Diner, Hasia. *The Jews of the United States: 1654–2000*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004.

Elkin, Judith Laikin. *The Jews of Latin America*. Revised edition. Ann Arbor: MPublishing, The University of Michigan, 2011.

Tulchinsky, Gerald. *Taking Root: The Origin of the Canadian Jewish Community*. Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1993.

Additional recommended readings are listed below.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

**Please note that we may take more time to discuss certain topics than originally scheduled.

Accordingly, there may be changes in the scheduling and/or the listing of the readings. Any change will be indicated on Canvas and discussed in class.**

Week 1 | August 24, 26. Introduction: Jews in Europe and the Middle East, 14th–15th Centuries: Diaspora, Community, and Expulsion(s)

1st short prompt

- Jewish Diaspora: diversity and shared customs
- Ego-documents in Jewish studies and in the history of Jews in the Americas
- Key concepts used in the course
- 1492
- New Christians and Jewish history

Readings:

Yitzhak Baer, "Abraham Bienvéniste and Communal Reorganization in Castile," in *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, vol. 2 *From the Fourteenth Century to the Expulsion* (Jerusalem, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1992), 259–270.

Jane Gerber, "Introduction: An Enigma of 1492," in *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), ix–xxv.

J. H. Chajes, "Accounting for the Self: Preliminary Generic-Historical Reflections on Early Modern Jewish Egodocuments," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 95, no. 1 (Winter 2005): 1–15.

Recommended reading:

Dean Phillip Bell, “Chapter 3: Community and Social Life” in *Jews in the Early Modern World* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 93–107.

- » In class, we will look at excerpts from the English translation of Solomon Alami, *Iggeret Musar* (1415) אגרת מוסר; the bylaws of the Majorca fraternity *La Novella Confraria de Sant Miquel*, municipal rulings from the 1410s; the 1449 *Limpieza de sangre* (Blood Purity) Statutes of Toledo; and the edicts of expulsion from Spain and Portugal in English translation

Week 2 | August 29, 31, September 2. Spain, Portugal, and Beyond: Exploration and Migration in the 16th Century

No short prompt, next week 1st quiz

- Jewish chronicles of the expulsion(s) and histories of Jewish collectivities and individuals
- Ideas of the Americas and other faraway places
- Jewish community organization in Iberia and beyond

Readings:

Noah Efron, “Knowledge of Newly Discovered Lands among Jewish Communities of Europe (From 1492 to the Thirty Years War),” in *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West vol. 2, 1450-1800* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2001), 47–72.

Flora Cassen, “The Last Spanish Expulsion in Europe: Milan 1565–1597,” *AJS Review* 38, no. 1 (April 2014): 59–88.

Joseph Hacoheh (HaKohen) and the Anonymous Corrector, *The Vale of Tears* (Emek habakha עמק הבכא), translated by Harry S. May (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 1, 73–83.

- » In class, we will read the accounts HaKohen and Elijah Capsali wrote of the expulsions and excerpts from HaKohen’s *Sefer Haindia Hahadasha ספר האינדאיה החדשה* (1568).

Week 3 | Labor Day: September 5, no class. September 7, 9. Conversion to Judaism in the Americas

1st quiz at the beginning of class on September 7

2nd short prompt

- Early modern autobiography
- Autobiography and the Inquisition
- Jewish identification in New Spain: sources of religiosity

Readings:

Martin A. Cohen, “The Autobiography of Luis de Carvajal, the Younger,” *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (March 1966): 277–318.

David M. Gilitz, “Chapter IV Books, Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews” (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 425–441.

Sara T. Nalle, “Literacy and Education among Judeo-conversa Women in Castile, Portugal, and Amsterdam, 1560–1700,” *Early Modern Women* 11, no. 1 (Fall 2016): 69–89.

- » In class, we will read [Maimonides’s Thirteen Principles](#) and excerpts from Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo*, translated, edited, and with an introduction and epilogue by Seymour B. Liebman. Pref. by Allan Nevins (Coral Gables, Fla., University of Miami Press, 1967)—two letters Carvajal wrote to his sister in prison and Carvajal’s testament. We will examine Carvajal’s notebooks preserved in the National Archives in Mexico; available from <https://digitalcollections.nyhistory.org/islandora/object/nyhs%3A10467#page/1/mode/2up>; <https://catalog.princeton.edu/catalog/10013425>

Recommended readings:

Ilan Stavans and Steve Sheikin, *El Iluminado* [graphic novel] (New York: Basic Books, 2012)

Ilan Stavans, *The Return of Carvajal: A Mystery* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019)

Week 4 | September 12, 14, 16. The Portuguese Nation and the Americas: The 17th Century 3rd short prompt

- Centers and peripheries: *Converso* and Jewish settlement in Amsterdam, Western Europe, and the Caribbean
- Overlapping networks of commerce and family (endogamy) connecting Conversos and New Jews
- Dowry Society
- Community leadership and the absence of rabbinical authority
- The Jewish encounter with native Americans
- Messianism

Readings:

Miriam Bodian, “The Formation of the Portuguese Jewish Diaspora,” in *The Jews in the Caribbean*, ed. Jane S. Gerber (Oxford, Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2014), 17–27.

Jessica V. Roitman, “Marriage, Migration, and Money: The Santa Companhia de dotar orphas e donzelas pobres in the Portuguese Sephardic Diaspora,” *Portuguese Studies Review* 13, no. 1, (January 2005): 347–367.

Arnold Wiznitzer, “The Minute Book of Congregations Zur Israel of Recife and Magen Abraham of Mauricia, Brazil,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 42, no. 3 (March 1953): 217–259.

Menasseh ben Israel, *Hope of Israel* (1644), including Antonio de Montezinos, “Relación,” translated by Moses Wall; the first and second English editions from 1650 and 1651 in original print (scanned) are available online through the Library, and the electronic (typed) version of the

first English edition is available from

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A89453.0001.001/1:7?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>

- » In class, we will read the Amsterdam Dowry Society’s bylaws (*Ascamotoh*) (1615), the merger document of three communities in Amsterdam (1638), The Minute Book of Congregation Zur Israel, Recife (1648), and “The Oldest Hascamotoh of Congregation Mikve Israel,” 1671–1699 in Curaçao, that is the bylaws of the Curaçao Jewish congregation. (We will explain the difference between Ascamotoh and Hascamotoh.)

Recommended readings:

Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.)

Jonathan Israel, *Diasporas within a Diaspora: Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World Maritime Empires (1540–1740)* (Boston: Brill, 2002.)

Week 5 | Sept 19, 21, 23. Material Life and Afterlife in the Americas: The 18th and Early 19th Centuries

4th short prompt

- Plantations in Suriname
- Commerce in Curaçao
- הלכה *Halakhah* (Jewish law) and slavery
- Wills
- Epigraphs and tombstones

Readings:

Francesca Trivellato, “Images and Self-Images of Sephardic Merchants in Early Modern Europe and the Mediterranean,” in *The Self-Perception of Early Modern Capitalists*, eds. Jacob M.C. and Secretan C. (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 49–74; available from:

https://albert.ias.edu/bitstream/handle/20.500.12111/7841/Trivellato_Images%20and%20Self-Images%20Sephardic%20Merchants_2008.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

“Personalialia. Abraham Mendes de Castro’s (1689–1762) will and epigraph,” in Isaac S. and Suzanne A Emmanuel, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles II* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archive, 1970), 1095–1099.

Aviva Ben-Ur, “Still Life: Sephardi, Ashkenazi, and West African Art and Form in Suriname’s Jewish Cemeteries,” *American Jewish History* 92, no. 1 (March 2004): 31–79.

Michael Hoberman, “More Disgrace than Honor: The diminishment of paternal authority in the letters of Aaron Hart,” *American Jewish History* 98, no. 4 (2014): 211–236.

- » In class, we will read Wilfred S. Samuel “Will of Rabbi Carigal,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 31 (1928): 242–243 and from Leo Hershkowitz, “Wills of Early New York Jews (1743–1774)” *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (September 1966): 62–122. We will study tombstones in Hamburg/Altona and Jamaica

documented in R.D. Barnett and P. Wright, *The Jews of Jamaica: Tombstone Inscriptions 1663–1880* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 1997); available from UFDC:

<https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00001365/00001/21x>

Recommended reading:

Aviva Ben-Ur, *Jewish Autonomy in a Slave Society: Suriname in the Atlantic World, 1651–1825* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.)

Week 6 | September 26 [*Rosh Hashanah* תשס"ז], 28, 30. Emancipation, Revolutions, and Independence, 1750s–1820s

First short paper is due on September 30 in hard copy and electronically at the beginning of the class

No short prompt

- Emancipation, abolition, and manumission: slavery and Jewish exclusion
- Political rights and citizenship: broadening the course's vocabulary
- The Americas' republics
- Jewish Enlightenment in the Americas, Western Europe, and Central Europe
- Ashkenazic and Sephardic experiences

Readings:

Manumission (Barbados, August 5, 1801) and Conversion and Circumcision of Isaac Lopez Brandon (Suriname, December 24, 1812) in *Jews in the Americas 1776–1826* (London and New York, Routledge, 2018), 316–318; 161–162.

Laura Arnold Leibman and Sam May, “Making Jews: Race, Gender and Identity in Barbados in the Age of Emancipation,” *American Jewish History* 99, no. 1 (January 2015): 1–26.

Sina Rauschenbach, “Patriots at the Periphery: David Nassy, the French Revolution, and the Emancipation of the Dutch Jews,” in *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, ed. Yosef Kaplan (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 581–609.

Exchange of addresses between George Washington and Moses Seixas, Warden of the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island in *Jews in the Americas 1776–1826* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 299–302.

- » In class, we will study the texts of several legislative acts, such as The Plantation Act (1740) and The Jewish Naturalization Act (1753) enacted by the British Parliament (the latter was repealed a year later); Frederick II's Charter Decreed for the Jews of Prussia from 1750; and Joseph II's Edict of Tolerance, in *The Jew in the Modern World*, eds. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 21–22; 27–28; 22–27; 36–40.

Recommended readings:

Laura Arnold Leibman, *Once We Were Slaves: The Extraordinary Journey of a Multiracial Jewish Family* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021.)

Israel, Jonathan I. “Dutch Jews, David Nassy, and the 'General Revolution' in the Caribbean (1770-1800)” *Studia Rosenthaliana* 44, Mapping Jewish Amsterdam: The Early Modern Perspective (2012): 173-190.

Jonathan Schorsch, *Jews and Blacks in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.)

Week 7 | October 3, 5 [*Yom Kippur* יום כיפור], 7. Jewish denominations

5th short prompt

- Reform Judaism in Central Europe and North America
- Modern Orthodoxy
- Conservative movement
- Reconstructionist Judaism
- Scholarship and religious practice
- Modern rabbinical training and the yeshiva

Readings:

Jonathan D. Sarna, “Jewish Culture Comes to America,” *Jewish Studies* 42 (2003–2004): 45–57.

Lance J. Sussman, “Another Look at Isaac Leeser and the First Jewish Translation of the Bible in the United States,” *Modern Judaism* 5, no. 2, Gershom Scholem Memorial Issue (May 1985): 159–190.

Isaac Mayer Wise, “To the Editor of The Asmonean,” *The Asmonean* 1, no. 3 (November 9, 1849), 1, available from

http://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/wise/attachment/5368/1849_v01_n03_017-000.pdf;

“To the Ministers and Other Israelites,” *The Occident* 6, no. 9 (December 9, 1949), 431–435, available from

http://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/wise/attachment/3364/occ_1848_12_09_431.pdf;

- » In class, we will read the “Constitution of the Hamburg Temple” (1817), Moses Sofer’s (Pressburg [Bratislava]) “A Reply Concerning the Question of Reform” (1819), “Hebrew as the Language of Jewish Prayer” (Frankfurt, 1845), “The Pittsburgh Platform,” by the Conference of Reform Rabbis (1885), “The Orthodox Jewish Congregational Union of America” (1898), in *The Jew in the Modern World*, eds. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1995), 161; 169–173, 178–183; 468–469; 469–470.

Recommended reading:

Christian Wiese, “The Philadelphia Conference (1869) and German Reform: A Historical Moment in a Transnational History of Proximity and Alienation,” in *American Jewry*:

Transcending the European Experience? eds. Christian Wiese and Cornelia Wilhelm (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 136–158.

Week 8 | October 10, 12, 14. War and Peace, More Revolutions, Liberation, and Unification— from the U.S. to the Russian Empire, 1820s–1880s

6th short prompt

- Political change
- Spatial and social mobility
- Tradition(alism)
- Jews in the military
- The rise of the modern Jewish professional
- Journalism

Readings:

Josette Capriles Goldish, “Nineteenth-Century Caribbean Circumcisions: An Analysis of the Journal of Births and Circumcisions Performed by Moises Frois Ricardo,” *American Jewish History* 91, no. 2 (June 2003): 315–323.

James A. Padgett, “The Life of Alfred Mordecai: As Related by Himself,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 22, no. 1 (January 1945): 58–108.

Don C. Seitz, “Birth and Beginnings,” in *Joseph Pulitzer, his Life and Letters* (New York: Garden City Publishing Co. Inc., 1927), 40–57. (Available from Hathitrust.org)

» In class, we will explore Pulitzer’s journalism and Jewish educational and professional paths in the Americas.

Recommended reading:

Hasia Diner, *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers Who Forged the Way* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015.)

Week 9 | October 17, 19, 21. Amidst Global Migration: From the Zenith of European Imperialism to the Disintegration of Empires in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, 1880s–1920s

No short prompt, 2nd short paper is due next week

- *Ostjuden*: Eastern European Jewry on the move
- *Landsmanshaften* לאנדסמאנשאפטן
- Paths of integration in the Americas: secular societies and synagogues
- Jewish Gaucho
- Agriculture, industry, and Jewish colonies
- Jewish welfare and philanthropy on the international level
- Zionism and other forms of Jewish politics

Readings:

The Pittsburgh Section, National Council of Jewish Women, *By Myself I'm A Book!* (Waltham, Massachusetts: American Jewish Historical Society, 1972), ix–15.

Theodore H. Friedgut, “Jewish Pioneers on Canada’s Prairies: The Lipton Jewish Agricultural Colony,” *Jewish History* 21, no. 3/4 (2007): 385–411.

Devi Mays, “Becoming Illegal: Sephardi Jews in the Opiates Trade,” *Jewish Social Studies* 25, no. 3 (Spring/Summer 2020): 1–34.

Rebecca Kobrin, “When a Jew Was a Landsman,” *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 7, no. 3 (November 2008): 357–376.

Adina Cimet, “Chapter 3 Profiles of Thought: The People Behind the Ideologies,” in *Ashkenazi Jews in Mexico: Ideologies in the Structuring of a Community* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997), 73–93. (Available as e-book at the Library.)

» In class, we will discuss excerpts from Joseph Roth’s *The Wandering Jews*, translated by Michael Hoffman (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), 95–100; 102–103; look at photographs that Morton D. Winsberg took in the Jewish colonies in Argentina during the 1940s, available from UFDC: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/iufjudwinsberg>; and explore the album the Jewish community gifted to the Argentine Minister of Immigration Juan Alsina in 1910, available from UFDC: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00046752/00001/1j?search=album>

Recommended readings:

Rebecca Kobrin, *Jewish Bialystok and its Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.)

Devi Mays, *Forging Ties, Forging Passports: Migration and the Modern Sephardi Diaspora* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2020.)

Week 10 | October 24, 26, 28. Parallel wor(l)ds? Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Jewish Identification

2nd short paper is due on October 24 in hard copy and electronically at the beginning of the class
7th short prompt

- Language as a transnational and transgenerational nexus
- The Jewish museum and the Jewish archive
- *Yiddishland*: Yiddish press, literature, and theater
- Ladino press
- Jewish publications in various languages

Readings:

Salomon Schechter, “English and Hebrew must be the Languages of American Jewry,” in *The Jew in the Modern World*, eds. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1995), 492.

Mariusz Kałczewiak, “Yiddish in the Andes. Unbearable Distance, Devoted Activists and Building Yiddish Culture in Chile,” *Jewish Culture and History* 20, no. 4 (2019): 297–316.

Elisabeth Kaplan, “We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity,” *The American Archivist* 63, no. 1 (Spring–Summer, 2000): 126–151.

Watch an excerpt (until 17:52 minutes) of the YIVO presentation “Professional Jokers: Jewish Jesters from the Golden Age of American Comedy” on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gq1A4i-lefI>

» In class, we will visit the virtual exhibition about the life of the actress Molly Picon at <https://ajhs.org/Molly/index.cfm> and watch an interview with her (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyMoZ7R0la4>) as well as excerpts from the Yiddish Book Center’s Wexler Oral History Project (2014). We will explore Reverend Safer’s papers available from UFDC: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00103299/00001>; <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00103127/00003/5j>; and we will read the testimony of Joseph Gedalecia and a letter sent to the Ladino newspaper *La Amerika*: Source 118 “‘Sephardi but not Oriental’: A Polemic in New York (1914–1915),” in *Sephardi Lives: A Documentary History, 1700–1950*, eds. Sarah Abrevaya Stein and Julia Phillips Cohen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 342–346. Finally, we will also familiarize ourselves with different Jewish publications in the Americas. Many digitized newspapers are available from UFDC.

Recommended reading:

Adriana Brodsky, *Sephardi, Jewish, Argentine: Creating Community and National Identity, 1880–1960* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016.)

Week 11 | October 31, November 2, 4. Migrant Women and Women’s Activism, 1880s–1930s

No short prompt, 2nd quiz next week

- Women’s organizations within the Jewish community
- White slavery
- Women at work, in the school, and in national and international politics
- Birth of the Jewish cookbook and the kosher food industry

Readings:

Devi Mays, “‘I killed her because I loved her too much’: Gender and Violence in the 20th-century Sephardi Diaspora,” *Mashriq & Mahjar* 2, no. 1 (2014): 4–28; available from <https://lebanesestudies.ojs.chass.ncsu.edu/index.php/mashriq/article/view/24/26>

Sandra McGee Deutsch, “Changing the Landscape: The Study of Argentine Jewish Women and New Historical Vistas,” *Jewish History* 18 (2004): 49–73.

Mir Yarfitz, “Marriage as Ruse or Migration Route: Jewish Women’s Mobility and Sex Trafficking to Argentina, 1890s–1930s,” *Women in Judaism: A Multidisciplinary e-Journal* 17, no. 1, 1–35; available from

<https://wjudaism.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/wjudaism/article/view/34964>

- » In class, we will study the philanthropist Rebecca Gratz's legacy and read "Some Unpublished Letters of Rebecca Gratz" published by David Philipson in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 29 (1925): 53–60. We will explore the Argentine Raquel Lieberman's personal documents and read entries from December 24, 1909 through January 13, 1910 from Helen Jacobus Apte's *Heart of a Wife: The Diary of a Southern Jewish Woman*, edited and with essays by her grandson Marcus D. Rosenbaum (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1998), 15–19.

Recommended readings:

Pamela S. Nadell, *America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2019.)

Mir Yarfitz, *Impure Migration: Jews and Sex Work in Golden Age Argentina* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2019.)

Week 12 | November 7, 9. November 11 Veterans Day, no class. New States and Minority Protection in Central Europe, Immigration Quotas and Closing Doors in the Americas

2nd quiz at the beginning of class on November 7

8th short prompt

- The refugees of World War I and the immediate postwar years
- Religious and ethnic minority status in the successor states
- Numerus clausus and immigration quotas
- Rerouting immigration to the US

Readings:

Carole Fink, "Chapter 2: Bucharest, August 1913," in *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 39–66.

Jonathan D. Sarna, Zev Eleff, "The Immigration Clause that Transformed Orthodox Judaism in the United States," *American Jewish History* 101, no. 3 (July 2017): 357–376.

Jeffrey Lesser, "The 'Other' Arrives," in *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995), 23–45. (Available as e-book at the Library.)

Watch the oral history interview with Alex Lauterbach describing the effect of the numerus clausus legislation in Poland. Available from

<https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/collections/oral-histories/excerpts/woh-ex-0002755/rent-exchange-medical-school-admission-numerus-clausus-racial-quotas-interwar-poland>

Week 13 | November 14, 16, 18. Antisemitism and Jewish Responses 1880s–1930s

9th short prompt

- Universities
- Country clubs and hotels

- Jewish athletic clubs and youth movements
- Summer camps

Readings:

“Leo M. Frank, Appellant, against C. Wheeler Mangum, Sheriff of Fulton County, Georgia,” Supreme Court of the United States, no. 775, October term 1914: 1-8; available online via the Library from https://heinonline-org.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/HOL/Page?collection=trials&handle=hein.trials/aall0001&id=11&men_tab=srchresults

Adam S. Ferziger and Hillel D. Spielman, “Reverence and Integration: Boy Scouts, Jewish Camping and American Orthodoxy,” *American Jewish History* 101, no. 3 (July 2017): 271–295, focus on pages 271-283.

Victor Mirelman, “Jew and Gentile in Argentina,” in *Jewish Buenos Aires, 1890-1939: In Search of an Identity* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, (1990) 2018), 46–75. (Available as e-book at the Library.)

- » In class, we will read about Jewish responses to the Kishinev pogroms (1903, 1905) and watch the documentary *My Grandparents Had a Hotel* by Karen Shopsowitz (1991).

Recommended reading:

David S. Koffman, *The Jews’ Indian: Colonialism, Pluralism, and Belonging in America* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 2019.)

Week 14 | November 21

Short presentations of research paper topics.

Week 15 | November 28, 30, December 2. The Berlin Olympics and the Evian Conference—the Eve of World War II and the Holocaust

10th short prompt

- Jewish intellectuals fleeing Europe
- First reports on the Holocaust

Readings:

Tara Zahra, “The First Final Solution,” in *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016), 143–179.

Marion Kaplan, (part of) “Chapter 2 The Exasperations and Consolations of Refugee Life After 1940: Fear of Portugal Regime and Appreciation of Its People,” in *Hitler’s Jewish Refugees: Hope and Anxiety in Portugal* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2020), 66–81.

Anne C. Schenderlein, “Americanization before 1941” in *Germany on Their Minds: German Jewish Refugees in the United States and Their Relationships with Germany, 1938–1955* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2020), 22–52. (Available as e-book at the Library.)

Listen to (or read the transcript of) an “Interview with Martha Feuchtwanger,” Tape no. XVII, side one, August 8, 1975; available from the UCLA Library Center for Oral History Research, <https://oralhistory.library.ucla.edu/catalog/21198-zz0008z8g9>

- » In class, we will watch the women’s foil finals at the Berlin Olympics https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_9_KSoZiJI, study German brochures advertising emigration to the Americas, and look at the documentation of Argentinian Jewish efforts of sending aid to the Soviet Union. We will also look at pictures of Jewish refugees in Sosúa, the Dominican Republic, available from <https://archives.jdc.org/project/dominican-republic-dorsa/>

Week 16 | December 5, 7. Conclusion

Final paper is due on Wednesday December 7 in hard copy and electronically at the beginning of the class

- Review and critique the course vocabulary
- Jewish history in the Americas: a part of larger pictures