

The Jews of Germany: From Early Settlement to Kristallnacht

SPERTUS INSTITUTE OF JEWISH STUDIES Fall 1998

Time: Wednesdays, 6:00pm-8:30pm
Dates: September 16-November 25; no class on September 30
Instructor: Dr. Dean Bell
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Course Description:

Since the early Middle Ages there has been a rich and diverse Jewish presence in Germany. This course explores the history of German Jewry from its first permanent settlements in the ninth century until its near annihilation in the Holocaust. In particular, this course focuses on: settlement patterns and cultural developments of medieval German Jewry; effects of late medieval persecutions and rural communal shifts; resettlement, reintegration and communal development in the early modern period; and, intellectual, religious, and political developments in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Basic Course Objectives:

- A basic understanding of the history of German Jewry from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century—in particular:
 - Periodization of German Jewish history
 - German Jewish social structure and communal relations
 - German Jewish cultural, religious, and intellectual strands and issues
 - Jewish and Christian relations
- The ability to read primary sources (largely in translation) critically

Structure of the Course:

This course will be run as a lecture/discussion, combining close textual and broad secondary reading with weekly sessions focusing on particular themes and/or texts.

Course Requirements:

- Completion of all reading prior to class sessions
- Preparation of specified texts and any “pre-reading” questions
- Participation in in-class discussion of texts and general themes/contexts
- Completion of a final take-home examination

Basis of Evaluation:

Mastery of the following will be assessed:

- General content of material
- Synthesis of materials and discussions
- Analytical skills and interpretation

Selected Methods of Instruction:

- Broad and comprehensive lectures
- Directed questions prior to class session
- In-class discussion of a variety of texts and perspectives

Required Texts:

All materials will be held on reserve at the Asher library. Required readings will be available for purchase through the Bariff Shop.

Required Readings:

- A *Reader* of xeroxed materials, including primary and secondary sources;
- Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem* (University Press of New England);
- Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (Oxford University Press).
- David Sorkin, editor, *Profiles in Diversity: Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750-1870* (Wayne State University Press).

{Note: Weekly bibliographies will orient students to the variety of historical scholarship available on particular subjects in English, German and Hebrew. Two particularly useful journals for this subject are: Zion (Hebrew) and The Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook.}

Session Schedule:

Session I (September 16):*Early Jewish Settlement and the Texture of Medieval German Jewry***Topics:**

- Introduction to the Course:
 - Defining Germany
 - Recent Developments in the Field
 - The Historiography of German Jewish History
 - The German-Jewish Symbiosis
 - What's at Stake?
- Medieval Germany: An Overview
- Medieval Germany and the Jews:
 - Business, Migration, Settlement
 - Intellectual Developments and Cultural Life
 - Social and Communal Structure
 - Relations with the Environment

For Discussion:

Charter granted by Otto I (377-379), Charter granted by Rüdiger Huozmann Bishop of Speyer (400-402), both in Amnon Linder, *The Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages*;

“The Chronicle of Solomon bar Simson,” selections, in Shlomo Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusades*, pp. 21-72;

Rabbenu Gershon ben Judah, responsum, in Solomon B. Freehof, *A Treasury of Responsa*, pp. 13-16.

Session II (September 23):*The Later Middle Ages: From Promise to Persecution***Topics:**

- Orientation to Late Medieval Germany
- Renaissance of German Jewish Thought
- The Imperial Position of the Jews
- Marginalization:
 - Persecution*: Rhindfleisch, Deggendorf, the Black Death, and Urban and Territorial Expulsion
 - Accusation*: Blood Libel, Ritual Murder, Host Desecration
- Jewish Social and Communal Structures

Required Readings:

Mordechai Breuer, “Introduction,” in *German Jewish History in Modern Times*, Volume 1; pp. 7-77;

Dean Phillip Bell, “Community, Conflict and Change: Jewish Communal Structures in Fifteenth-Century Germany,” [“Gemeinschaft, Konflikt und Wandel: jüdische Gemeindestrukturen im Deutschland des 15. Jahrhunderts,” in *Landjudentum im*

deutschen Südwesten während der Frühen Neuzeit, edited by Rolf Kiessling (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, February, 1999);

For Discussion:

“The Community of Frankfurt’s Call for Help,” in *Letters Through the Ages*, pp. 331-334;

Meir of Rothenburg, responsa 493, 494, 567-70, 576, 581, 121-130 in Irving Agus, *Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg: His Life and his Works as Sources for the Religious, Legal, and Social History of the Jews of Germany in the Thirteenth Century*;

Joseph Kolon’s request for assistance in the ritual murder accusations against the Jews of Trent, in *Letters Through the Ages*, 241-45.

Session III (October 7):

Resettlement and Reorientation in the Early Modern Period I

Topics:

- Early Modern Germany: An Overview
- Jews in the Villages: “Dorfjuden”
- Major Centers of Jewish Life
- Communities and Demographics
- Effects of the Reformation
- Resettlement

Required Readings:

Heiko Oberman, *The Impact of the Reformation*, pp. 81-121;

Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Volume XIII, pp. 206-247 and 279-291;

Jonathan Israel, “Germany and Its Jews: A Changing Relationship (1300-1800), in *In and Out of the Ghetto*, edited by R. Po-chia Hsia and Hartmut Lehmann, pp. 295-304;

For Discussion:

“The Fate of the Jews of Hesse: Documents from Langraf Philip, Josel of Rosheim and Martin Bucer” [translated by Dean Phillip Bell];

A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague c. 1615, edited by Abraham David, pp. 38-62;

“Jews in the Reformation,” in Jonathan Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe, 1400-1600*, pp. 117-124.

Session IV (October 14):

Resettlement and Reorientation in the Early Modern Period II

Topics:

- *Judenpolitik*: Legal and Political Considerations
- Economic Considerations
- Anti-Jewish Tendencies
- Demographics
- Jewish Exclusiveness, Segregation, and Interaction
- The World of the Court Jew

- Thirty Years War

Required Readings:

Selma Stern, *The Court Jew*, pp. 1-13, 227-246;

Rolf Kiessling, "Between Expulsion and Emancipation: Jewish Villages in East Swabia During the Early Modern Period," *Shofar* 15/4 (Summer, 1997), pp. 59-87;

Otto Ulbricht, "Criminality and Punishment of the Jews in the Early Modern Period," in *In and Out of the Ghetto*, pp. 49-70;

Christopher R. Friedrichs, "Jews in the Imperial Cities: A Political Perspective, in *In and Out of the Ghetto*, pp. 275-288;

For Discussion:

"Appointment of Samson Wertheimer," in Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, pp. 17-19;

"Münzenberg Judenordnung 1562," in Friedrich Battenberg, "Judenordnungen der frühen Neuzeit in Hessen," in *Neunhundert Jahre Geschichte der Juden in Hesse*, edited by Kommission für die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen [translated by Dean Phillip Bell];

"Pfersee Jahrbuch," selections [translated by Dean Phillip Bell].

Session V (October 21):

Early Modern Cultural and Religious Development

Topics:

- Intellectual and Messianic Strands
- Synods
- Customs
- Rabbinic Thought and Controversy
- Women and Family

Required Readings:

Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah*, 1626-1676, pp. 546-591;

Mortimer Cohen, *Jacob Emden: A Man of Controversy*, pp. 17-26 and 102-151;

For Discussion:

Glückel of Hameln, *Memoirs*, translated by Marvin Lowenthal, pp. 1-39;

The Frankfort Synod, 1603, in Louis Finkelstein, *Jewish Self-Government in the Middle Ages*, pp. 257-264;

"Pinkas Hakehila," in Sholomo Eidelberg, *R. Juspa, Shammash of Warmaisa*, pp. 97-108.

Session VI (October 28):***On The Edge of Modernity*****Topics:**

- The Romantics
- *Haskala*
- Absolutism
- Revolution and Napoleonic Code: Legal Positions
- Social Conditions and Gender

Required Readings:

Deborah Hertz, "Work, Love and Jewishness in the Life of Fanny Lewald," in David Sorkin, editor, *Profiles in Diversity*, pp. 202-220;

Steven Lowenstein, "Jewish Upper Crust and Berlin Jewish Enlightenment: The Family of Daniel Itzig," in *Profiles in Diversity*, pp. 182-201;

David Sorkin, *The Transformation of German Jewry, 1780-1840*, pp. 13-62;

For Discussion:

Mendes-Flohr, pp. 70-80;

The Biography of Hirsch Oppenheimer, in Monica Richarz, *Jewish Life in Germany: Memoirs from Three Centuries*, pp. 77-80;

Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem*.

Session VII (November 4):***Assimilation, Reform, Emancipation*****Topics:**

- Orthodoxy and Reform
- The Meaning of Assimilation
- Social Questions/Activity
- The Debate over Emancipation

Required Readings:

David Sorkin, "Preacher, Teacher, Publicist: Joseph Wolf and the Ideology of Emancipation," in *Profiles in Diversity*, pp. 107-125;

Jacob Katz, "Towards a Biography of the Hatam Sofer," in *Profiles in Diversity*, pp. 223-266;

For Discussion:

Mendes-Flohr, pp. 123-26, 139-145, 150, 153-54, 221-235, 237-40.

Session VIII (November 11):***Self and Other: Identity and Antisemitism*****Topics:**

- Jewish and Christian Relations: Renewed Symbiosis?
- The Role and Parameter of Religion
- Identity and Self
- Internal Life

Required Readings:

Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction*, pp. 57-104, 147-220;
 Sander Gilman, *Jewish Self Hatred*, pp. 139-208;

For Discussion:

Mendes-Flohr, pp. 162-85, 194-206, 250-253, 254-260, 262-265, 309-11, 321-34.

Session IX (November 18):*Nationalization, Historicism and War***Topics:**

- Unification 1871: The Turn of Jewish and German Jewish History?
- Historicism
- WWI
- Communal Organization

Required Readings:

Marion Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany*, pp. 3-63;

For Discussion:

Mendes-Flohr, pp. 241-243, 269-274, 276-277, 282-284, 287-289, 340-351.

Session X (November 25):*Weimar and the Nazis; a Look Ahead***Topics:**

- Jews in the Weimar Government
- Toward Nazi Restriction
 - The Final Solution
 - Holocaust
- Reestablishing Jewish Communities After 1945
 - The State of German Jewry
 - Jewish Identity and Writers
- Conclusions: Synthesis and Where to Go from Here

Required Readings:

Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, pp. 36-99;
 Sander Gilman and Karen Remmler, "Introduction," in *Reemerging Jewish Culture in Germany: Life and Literature Since 1989*, edited by Sander L. Gilman and Karen Remmler, pp. 1-12;

Y. Michal Bodemann, "A Reemergence of German Jewry?," in *Reemerging Jewish Culture*, pp. 46-61;

For Discussion:

Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, pp. 112-155;
 Mendes-Flohr, pp. 636-699 (student's selections).