Modern Political History of the Jews
Emancipation and the Making of Modern Jewish Politics, 1589-1919

History/Jewish Studies 373
2:30-3:45 MW 1101 Humanities
David Sorkin djsorkin@wisc.edu office hours: M, 4-5, R, 3-4

This is the first semester of a two-semester sequence about Jews and modern politics. This course will explore the ways in which the modern period reshaped the nature of Jewish politics. It will follow four themes:

1. The Jews’ internal traditions of political self-understanding and behavior, especially their relationship to political authority.
2. The changing political status of Jews in Europe from 1589-1922, especially the acquisition of increased privileges under the ancien regime and equal rights or emancipation in civil society.
3. The internal politics of the Jewish community.
4. Jews’ participation in politics in the larger society, and especially their relationship to the ideologies or movements that promoted their emancipation, namely, liberalism and socialism, or opposed it, namely, Zionism and Anti-Semitism.

We will explore how the modern period (circa 1589-1922) reshaped the political principles that had governed diaspora Jewish life (the “quietism” of “autonomy,” “intercession,” & the “vertical alliance” vs. revolt-rebellion and/or “messianism”). We will begin with the resettlement of Western and Central Europe and the movement of Jews into Eastern Europe (1600-1700) that marked a new era in European Jewish life, namely, the acquisition of extensive “privileges” in estate society. This was the first phase of the prolonged process of emancipation, the Jews’ acquisition of equal civic and political rights, that took over three centuries and dominated their experience of the modern period. We will study the last great messianic movement, Sabbateanism. We will then study the second phase of emancipation, the acquisition of equal rights in civil society. Finally, we will examine the development of Jewish political movements as well as the Jews’ participation in the politics of the larger society, both of which took place during, and as a result of, emancipation. We will also pay attention to the changing internal politics of the Jewish community under emancipation’s impact.

The course will meet four hours per week. There will be two lectures per week (MW). Lindsay Starkey will lead discussion sections and grade assignments. This is an upper division 4 credit course.

Readings:
David Biale, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History (New York, 1986)
Michael Burns ed., France and the Dreyfus Affair: A Documentary History (Boston, 1999)
David Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara (New York, 1997)
Allen Levine, Scattered among the Peoples: the Jewish Diaspora in twelve portraits (Overlook, 2003)
Raphael Mahler ed., Jewish Emancipation: A Selection of Documents (New York, 1944) (photocopy; on-line)
Theodore Herzl, The Jewish State (Herzl Press)

Assignments
You will write four short essays on assigned topics. You will do peer review of these paper in discussion section and you will have the opportunity to rewrite them. You will also write a final 6-8 page paper. There will be no exams.
January 21: Introduction

January 26: Political Archetypes I
Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, “Political Ideologies of Antiquity,” 27-33;
Joseph Story: Genesis 37; 39-41; 47:1-26; Exodus 1:1-14

Book of Esther; Maccabees I 1-2;

January 28: The Jewish Diaspora in the Middle Ages

1st paper: bring to Discussion Section on January 29th

February 2: 1593 Venice and Livorno
David Sorkin, “The Port Jew: Notes Toward a Social Type,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (Spring 1999) 87-97
“La Livornina,” 1593 (trs. by Bernard Cooperman)

February 4: Amsterdam
Levine, *Scattered Among the Peoples*, “The Portuguese Nacao - Amsterdam, 1700,” 113-140
Mahler, Declaration of the Estates General of the United Netherlands, 10

February 9: 1656 England

February 11: Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
Jampol Community and Town Privilege, 1711, 1753 (trs. Teller Early Modern Workshop)
*Memoirs of Ber of Bolechow* (London, 1922) 60-67

February 16: Constantinople, 1666
Paul Rycaut, History of the Turkish Empire (1687), in Marcus, The Jew in the Medieval World, 262-268
Levine, Scattered Among the Peoples, “Physicians, Poets and a False Messiah, Constantinople, 1666,” 79-112

February 18: Prague 1744
Levine, Scattered Among the Peoples, “Court Jews -Vienna, 1730,” 141-168
Biale, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History, 87-117.

2nd paper: bring to Discussion Section on February 19th

February 23: Berlin, 1781
Christian Wilhelm Dohm, “Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews” (1781)
Werner Mosse, “From ‘Schutzjuden’ to ‘Deutsche Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens’: The Long and Bumpy Road of Jewish Emancipation in Germany,” in Birnbaum & Katznelson, Paths of Emancipation, 59-93
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 18-20 (Austria)

February 25: Paris, 1790-1791
Paula Hyman, Jews of Modern France, 17-35
Malino, “From Patriot to Israelite: Abraham Furtado in Revolutionary France,” in Reinharz and Swetschinski eds., Mystics, Philosophers and Politicians (Durham, NC, 1982) 213-33

March 2: Paris 1806-08
Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim, or Acts of the Assembly of Israelitish Deputies of France and Italy trs. Diogene Tama (London, 1807) 105-08, 130-38, 149-56, 176-95, 201-07, 242-47, 255-56
Malino, “From Patriot to Israelite: Abraham Furtado in Revolutionary France,” 233-48
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 30-37 (Poland, 1807, Westphalia, Frankfurt, Prussia, Denmark, France, Germany & Austria)

March 4: 1815-1818 Congress of Vienna, Aix-la-Chapelle
Wilhelm von Humboldt, “Regarding the Draft of a New System of Legislation of the Jews,” (July 17, 1809) [Max Kohler, Jewish Rights at the Congresses of Vienna (1814-15) and Aix-La-Chapelle (1818) (New York, 1918) 71-83]
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, Congress of Vienna, 37-38

3rd paper: bring to Discussion Section on March 5th
March 9: Damascus 1840

March 11: Frankfurt 1848
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 47-52
Allan Levine, Scattered Among the Peoples, “The Age of Emancipation,” 169-98

March 23: Constantinople 1854
The Khatt-I Humayun (February 18, 1856) in Norman A. Stillman, The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Sourcebook, 357-361

March 25: London 1856
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 40-43, 53-57

March 30: Bologna 1858
David Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara (New York, 1997) 1-161

April 1
David Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara (New York, 1997) 162-end

April 6: Odessa 1881
Allan Levine, Scattered Among the Peoples, “The Pale of Settlement,” 199-230
Michael Stanislawski, “Russian Jewry, the Russian State, and the Dynamics of Jewish Emancipation,” in Paths of Emancipation, 262-83

April 8: Jews in Politics
April 13: Jews as Civil Servants

April 15: Berlin 1878/79
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 57-61

4th paper: bring to Discussion Section on April 16th

April 20: Berlin 1893

April 22: Paris 1894-1906
Michael Burns ed., France and the Dreyfus Affair: A Documentary History (Boston, 1999) 1-123

April 27: Basel 1897
Biale, Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History, 118-141
April 29: Vilna 1897

May 4: Versailles 1919
Mahler, Jewish Emancipation, 63-5 (Russia), 67-71 (Poland, Balfour Declaration)

May 6 Conclusion

Final Paper due