

Introduction to Judaism
 RELI 220/2 – Fall 2020
 W/F 10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Instructor: Dr. Steven Lapidus
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 Dept. Religions & Cultures
 Office hours: Thursdays 1-1:30 via zoom & by appointment
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 Office hours: Wednesdays 11:45-12:15 PM & by appointment

Territorial Acknowledgement

Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

Course Description (from Undergraduate Calendar):

This course examines the continuities and changes in Jewish society, institutions, concepts, and traditions from ancient times to the present. It also provides an introduction to Jewish practice and belief in its contemporary diversity, including a survey of the rituals, symbols, and ceremonies of Jews today.

NOTE: Students who have received credit for RELI 222 may not take this course for credit.

COURSE OBJECTIVES :

The goal of this survey course is to familiarize the student with a social-scientific understanding of the history of the Jewish people and religion, including an emphasis on the larger social context in which Jewish history plays out. Major historical periods and events will be analyzed as well as important elements of Jewish thought and tradition. Students should leave with a good grasp of the major periods of Jewish history as well as with an understanding of how Jewish history and religion have evolved.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Identify major figures, religious and political debates and cultural products of Jewish history.
- Read and carefully interpret primary ancient sources.

- Analyze and critique how scholarly sources have been used to describe the history and development of Judaism.
- Offer innovative, creative readings of Jewish sources.
- Articulate contemporary implications (ethical, political, or theological, etc.) for the way we describe understand Jewish history.

HOW THIS COURSE WILL BE RUN

The move to an online course means that the teaching methods used have changed as well. Since we cannot meet in person a variety of synchronous and asynchronous methods will be used. In terms of contact with me, I will hold regular weekly office hours, during which you can join me on zoom. As well, zoom appointments can be made outside of office hours. Finally, I will try to linger on zoom after the lectures, in case someone wants to speak with me at the end of the zoom class. I hope these will compensate for in-person teaching and guidance. Since we cannot meet in person, please do not hesitate to contact me via email to set up a time to speak. It is of great importance that if you wish to speak with me or the TA, that you please let us know.

Each week you will be responsible for readings and a pre-recorded lecture (available through Moodle and YuJa). Narrated powerpoint presentations as well as film clips may also be assigned. Since you will have an assigned pre-recorded of approximately one hour as well as powerpoint presentations, we will only hold one live (zoom) lecture per week. It will usually be held on Wednesdays, and this will be clear on the Moodle page. Each week, you will be provided with a summary of the requirements for the upcoming week which you are to review BEFORE the zoom lecture, so that we can use the zoom time to discuss, answer questions and elaborate on the week's assignments. On Fridays, you will be expected to watch the pre-recorded lectures, video clips and/or powerpoint presentations, as listed on Moodle.

All material (or hyperlinks) are available through Moodle and/or YuJa.

In order that you are able to understand clearly what you are required to do in the course, I will provide a clear checklist on the Moodle site broken for each week.

If you cannot attend Zoom sessions regularly, please be in contact with me at the outset of this course.

All course information and any modifications will be posted on Moodle and accessible there. In our first Zoom session, we will discuss where you can locate all needed information, including assignments and readings.

Note that a 3-credit course is equivalent to 135 hours, or approximately 10 hours of work/week. Plan accordingly!

For help on using Moodle, Concordia has multiple sources including instruction sheets and webinars on how to use Moodle. A good start can be found here: https://moodle.concordia.ca/moodle/file.php/1/HELP/Students/Students_GettingStarted.pdf

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Consistent Participation is a course requirement. This entails attending Zoom sessions, viewing all assigned content and doing all assigned readings in preparation for these

meetings. If you are unable to attend the Zoom sessions, please contact me. Participation means active engagement with the course readings and lectures, discussions, on or offline, and the completion of all assignments.

2. **Online Course Etiquette.** During live Zoom sessions, please turn your audio off, until you are participating in discussion. To participate, it is best to click on the “raise hand” icon so I can see you have a question. You can also type a question into the chat box that all will see and I will respond. Ideally you should leave your camera on (you can use a generic background if you have concerns about privacy). You should remain present at your computer or tablet for the duration of the session. Communication with the instructor, teaching assistant and your fellow students should be respectful at all times. Please be mindful of this when posing questions in Zoom, writing in the chat forum, or communicating with me or the teaching assistant.
3. Please contact the instructor and TA via their email addresses listed above. The moodle message service is cumbersome and does not permit attachments, etc. We will respond to most queries within 48 hours. I will hold Office hours every week by appointment. Please write to me via Moodle to set a meeting. The teaching assistant will host Office hours periodically throughout the term. Details will be outlined on Moodle and in our Zoom sessions.
4. All email must have as the subject line: lastname.firstname.220. You can add to the subject line, but it’s not necessary. But you must use this format for email subject lines. Responses to emails without this format cannot be guaranteed.
5. **PLAGIARISM and Other Suspected Academic Code Violations** detected by the instructor or teaching assistant will be sent directly to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Be familiar with the Academic Code of Conduct and your academic rights and responsibilities: <http://www.concordia.ca/programs-and-courses/academic-integrity/code/>.
6. *Online lectures, course notes, and video recordings for RELI 220 remain the instructor’s intellectual property. Do not distribute, publish, or broadcast, in whole or in part, without my express permission. Unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the Academic Code of Conduct or the Code of Rights and Responsibilities.*
7. **TRIGGER WARNING:** The content of this course will often be emotionally challenging. You will be presented with unsettling material (including visual material) throughout the course on issues such as violence, abuse, genocide, persecution, murder, rape, antisemitism and racial hatred. It is expected that everyone exhibits a respectful yet engaged attitude when discussing this material. Please respect the opinions of others on these difficult topics. Our class will be a space where opinions can be shared freely and safely despite possible disagreements. Please do not hesitate to email me if you have concerns about this. It is also advisable to familiarize yourself with Concordia’s

diverse resources for student well-being:

<https://www.concordia.ca/coronavirus/wellbeing.html>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. ALL submissions are to be on Moodle in PDF or Word format only. Email submissions will NOT be accepted.
2. 6 Reading Reports – 10% each:
 - a. Choose one of the readings or videos. Choose a topic or topics from that reading to comment upon. You are to write objective, educated and informed responses to the reading. Clearly you may have a personal reaction to a reading or video, which is fine to inspire you, but your response is to remain objective and not personally biased.
 - i. Identify the author's thesis and purpose (2-3 sentences)
 - ii. Identify the main ideas (2-4 sentences)
 - iii. Summarize the work (2-3 sentences)
 - iv. Evaluate the means by which the author has accomplished his purpose
 1. If the purpose is to inform, has the material been presented clearly, accurately, with order and coherence?
 2. If the purpose is to persuade, look for evidence, logical reasoning, contrary evidence
 3. “Part 4” This should form the bulk of your report
 - b. Each thought piece should be 500 – 750 words, typed, double-spaced, font 12.
 - c. You may submit as many as you wish and the best 6 will count for 60% of your grade.
3. Two term papers – due October 16 & November 20.
 - a. Each term paper will consist of a series of essays questions that you will have to answer and submit by the dates indicated.
 - b. Each one is worth 20% of the final grade.
 - c. Details to follow.
4. Due to the large number of submissions, you must name your files as follows:
 - a. for Reading Reports (RR): lastname.firstname.220.RR# (eg. lapidus.steven.220.RR.1, lapidus.steven.220.RR.2, etc.)
 - b. for Term Papers (TP): lastname.firstname.220.TP# (eg. lapidus.steven.220.TP.1, lapidus.steven.220.TP.2)

GRADE SCHEME FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS

A Range: Outstanding; superior grasp of material, well written, clear, original insights

B Range: Very good; solid understanding, clear and orderly presentation, ability to apply material and concepts

C Range: Satisfactory; adequate grasp of material, reasonably clear

D Range: Marginal pass; evidence of having done the reading but inadequate comprehension

F Range: Failure; absence of evidence that the work was done

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Readings are subject to change or modification. Any changes will be announced in live Zoom sessions and appear on Moodle. It is your responsibility to keep track of them.

1. Biblical History

Brettler, M. (2010). The Hebrew Bible and the Early History of Israel. In J. Baskin & K. Seeskin (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Jewish History, Religion, and Culture* (Comprehensive Surveys of Religion, pp. 6-33). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511780899.003

2. 1st and 2nd temples

Segal, A. (2010). The Second Temple Period. In J. Baskin & K. Seeskin (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Jewish History, Religion, and Culture* (Comprehensive Surveys of Religion, pp. 34-57). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511780899.004

3. Rabbinic Judaism

“The Rabbis,” in Michael L. Satlow, *Creating Judaism: History, Tradition, Practice* (NY: Columbia, 2006), 115-39.

4. Holidays and beliefs and rituals

“Worship & Festivals,” in Partridge, Christopher and Tim Dowley. *A Brief Introduction to Judaism*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2019, 88-95. Project MUSE
muse.jhu.edu/book/65759.

5. Sfard & Ashkenaz

Chris Lowney, “The Second Moses and Medieval Medicine,” Chap. 11 in *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 143-56 & notes.
Michael Brenner, “From Lucca to Mainz,” in *A Short History of the Jews* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), Ch. 8, pp. 95 – 115.

6. Expulsions & Mysticism

Renee Levine Melammed, “Jews and Conversas: The First Century of Crypto-Judaism,” Chap. 1 in *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile*, (NY & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 16-30 & notes.

Mysticism:

Segal, Eliezer “Kabbalah,” Chap. 6 in *Introducing Judaism*, (London & NY: Routledge, 2009), pp. 86-105. CP.

7. Flight East

Martin, Bernard. "East European Jewry," in *A History of Judaism: Volume II – Europe and the New World*, (NY: Basic Books, 1974, Ch. 5, 113 – 140).

Sharot, Stephen, "Hasidism in Modern Society," in Gershon David Hundert, ed. *Essential Papers on Hasidism: Origins to Present* (NY: NYU Press, 1991), 511-31.

8. Haskala, emancipation

Marsha L. Rozenblit, "European Jewry: 1800-1933," in Judith R. Baskin & Kenneth Seeskin (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Jewish History, Religion, and Culture* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 169-207

"The Development of Modern Zionism," in Hilary L. Rubinstein, Dan Cohn-Sherbok, Abraham Edelheit, & William D. Rubinstein, *The Jews in the Modern World: A History Since 1750* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 303-16.

Primary documents on pogroms of 1919

9. Early 20th century

Documents from Ukraine (Kitaigorod)

Bialik, H.N. "City of Slaughter"

Sacher, Howard M. "The Legacy of Progressivism: Immigrant Jewry in the United States," in Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in the Modern World* (NY: Alfred Knopf, 2005), 370-398

Gerber, Jane S. "Return to Islamic World: The Sephardic Diaspora in Muslim Lands," Chap. 6 in *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience*, (NY: Free Press, 1992), pp. 145-76.

10. Holocaust

Saul Friedlander, "The Holocaust," in Martin Goodman, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 412-44.

"Jewish Resistance," in Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (NY: Meridian, 1987), 133-55.

Emanuel Ringelblum, "Last Letter from Warsaw," in Paul Mendes-Flohr & Jehuda Reinharz, eds. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 764-67.

Yuri Suhl, "Underground Assignment in Auschwitz," in Yuri Suhl, ed. *They Fought Back: The Story of the Jewish Resistance in Nazi Europe* (NY: Crown, 1967), 189-95.

11. State of Israel & Sephardi Diaspora

Emanuele Ottolenghi, "A National Home," in Nicholas de Lange & Miri Freud-Kandel (Eds.), *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 54-65.

Tsur, Y. (1997). Carnival fears: Moroccan immigrants and the ethnic problem in the young state of Israel. *Journal of Israeli History: Politics, Society, Culture*, 18(1), 73-103.

12. Jewish Women & Black Jews

Judith R. Baskin, "The Changing Role of the Woman," in Nicholas de Lange & Miri Freud-Kandel, eds., *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 389-400.

Gold, Roberta S. "The Black Jews of Harlem: Representation, Identity, and Race, 1920 – 1939." *American Quarterly*, Vol. 55(2), June, 2003, 179 – 225.

13. Contemporary Jewish life

"An American Kaleidoscope: Reconstructionist, Renewal, and Secular Forms of American Jewishness," in Sylvia Barack Fishman, *The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness*, (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2007), 173-91.

Salo W. Baron, "Ghetto and Emancipation," in Leo. W. Schwarz (Ed.), *The Menorah Journal: Harvest of Half a Century*, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964, pp. 50-63).