

**JDST 212, Winter 2009**  
**“Medieval and Early Modern Judaism”**  
**Prof. Daniel Stein Kokin**  
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***Course Description***

This course explores Jewish life, literature, and thought in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period in both the Muslim and Christian spheres. It fulfills the **General Education** requirement for **Arts and Letters** and the **Multicultural** requirement for **Category B: Identity, Pluralism, and Tolerance**.

***Requirements and Grading:***

Students are expected to prepare and attend each class. Attendance will be taken in every class. Only **3** unexcused absences are allowed without penalty. Notify the Instructor in advance of an absence, if at all possible. In addition, your grade will be based on the following:

1. Midterm exam: **Tuesday, Feb. 9**, in class (30%)
2. Final exam: **Tuesday, March 16 at 8:00 AM** (40%)
3. Two 3 page papers (30% [15% each]) **Due Friday, Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> and Friday, Mar. 5<sup>th</sup> BY 12 NOON (IN MY BOX, PLC 840)**

***Class and Office Hours:***

Class Times: TuTh 10:00-11:50 (Esslinger 105)  
Office Hours: MW 1:00-3:30 or by appointment (814 PLC)

***Class Demeanor:***

**Academic Misconduct:** The University Student Conduct Code (available at [conduct.uoregon.edu](http://conduct.uoregon.edu)) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at [www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students](http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students). The discovery of cheating on any quiz or exam or plagiarism or collaboration on any written assignment will result in (1) immediate

expulsion from the course with a failing grade, and (2) a report to the appropriate University officials. Appeals may be made through the appropriate channels.

Please behave in a courteous manner towards your fellow students and the instructor, and do your best to help foster a mutually supportive, tolerant, and constructive classroom environment for us all.

***Required Texts:***

I. Course Packet: Available for purchase at the Duckstore (Note: readings denoted below with \* are found in the packet)

II. Books available for purchase at the Duckstore or independently:

1. Eli Barnavi, ed., *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (HA)
2. John Efron, et al., *The Jews: A History* (TJ)
3. William Hallo, et al., *Heritage: Civilization and the Jews Source Reader* (HCJ)

III. Additional readings will be uploaded to the course website on Blackboard (Note: readings denoted below with + are to be found here)

**Lectures and Assigned Readings:**

*Week 1*

**Jan. 5 Backgrounds of Medieval Judaism**

Early Christian Sources on the Jews (HCJ, pp. 73-82)  
 The Koran on the Jews (HCJ, pp. 82-4)  
 The Pact of Umar (HCJ, pp. 84-86)

HA 62-71; TJ, 120

**Jan. 7 Dhimmis and Exilarchs: Jewish Life and Culture in Islamic Babylonia**

\* Early Islamic Sources on Judaism (Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands*, 159-168)  
 “Nathan the Babylonian on the Installation of the Exilarch” (HCJ, 87-89)  
 “The Itinerary of the Radhanite Jewish Merchants” (HCJ, p. 86)

HA 74-77, 80-83, 86-7; TJ 116-27

+“The First Encounter: Muhammad and the Jews” (Stillman, *The Jews*, 3-39)

*Week II***Jan. 12 The Karaite Movement**

\* Leon Nemoy, *Karaite Anthology*, pp. 16-18, 266-7

\*“A Rabbinite Account...,” “A Karaite Attack...,” pp. 234-5, 8-9

\*Daniel J. Lasker, “Rabbanism and Karaism: The Contest for Supremacy,” in *Great Schisms in Jewish History*, eds. Raphael Jospe and Stanley Wagner, 47-72

**HCJ** 90-93

**HA** 88-89

**Jan. 14 Jewish Life in the Medieval Islamic World**

\*Stillman, “The Best Years: Mediterranean Jewry...,” 40-63

**HCJ** 95-9

**HA** 84-86, 90-93, 118-9; **TJ** 127, 132-6

(please commence readings for Week III)

*Week III***Jan. 19 Sepharad: Jewish Life and Culture in Muslim Spain**

\*Judah Halevi, *The Kuzari*, Book 1 (pp. 27-49)

**HCJ**, 99-114

**HA** 94-97, 100-101; **TJ** 127-131, 136-145

**Jan. 21 Maimonides and the Maimonidean Controversy**

\**Guide of the Perplexed*, 234-251, 270-274, 278-290

\*“Faith versus Reason”; “The Admonition of a Philosopher...,” 248-5, 265-271

**HCJ**, 115-22

**HA** 102-103; **TJ** 171

*Week IV*

**Jan. 26 Kabbalah: Mysticism in the Medieval Jewish Imagination**

\*“The Prophetic Mysticism of Abraham Abulafia,” pp. 71-91

\*Daniel Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment*, pp. 43-5, 49-59

HA 144-145, 148-149; TJ 139-145, 170-3

**Jan. 28 Ashkenaz: Jewish Life in Medieval Northern Europe**

+Judith Baskin, “Jewish Women in the Middle Ages,” pp. 101-27 [20]

HCJ 93-94; 123-4

HA 78-79; 98-99; 112-113; 122-3; TJ 147-8, 160-169

**PAPER 1 DUE FRIDAY, JAN. 29<sup>TH</sup> BY 12 NOON (IN MY BOX, PLC 840)**

*Week V*

**Feb. 2 The Crusades and their Aftermath**

\*“The Chronicle of Solomon bar Simson,” pp. 21-37, 55-8. 67-72

HCJ 127-9

HA 106-109; TJ 148-154

**Feb. 4 Religious Developments in Medieval Jewish Life**

\*“The Mystical Piety of Rabbi Eleazar of Worms,” pp. 61-70

\*Edward L. Greenstein, “Medieval Bible Commentaries,” pp. 213-227

HCJ 140-50

HA 112-3, 128-9

+Jacob Katz, “Social and Religious Segregation,” pp. 458-468

*Week VI*

**Feb. 9 MIDTERM****Feb. 11 Church, State and Jews: 1200-1400**

\*Robert Chazan, “The Forced Disputation,” pp. 265-76

\*“Toldot Yeshu” (“The Life of Jesus”), pp. 98-102

+David Berger, “From Crusades to Blood Libels to Expulsions: Some New Approaches to Medieval Antisemitism,” pp. 1-29 [optional]

**HCJ** 134-6

**HA** 104-105, 110-111; **TJ** 154-157

*Week VII*

**Feb. 16 The End of Jewish Life in Spain and the Beginning of the Sephardic Diaspora**

\* “The Massacre of the New Christians of Lisbon,” pp. 56-59

\* “Marranos” from *A Treasury of Responsa*, pp. 210-223

**HCJ** 151-4, 156-9, 194-9

**HA** 94-95 (Review), 114-115, 120-121; 132-133, 150-1; **TJ** 157-60, 174-189

+Renee Levine Melammed, “Life-Cycle Rituals of Spanish Crypto-Jewish Women,” pp. 143-154 (optional)

**Feb. 18 Jews in an Age of Renaissance and Reformation**

**HCJ** 161-71, 174-6

\*John Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe, 1400-1600*, pp. 102-4, 117-119, 133-4, 136-9

\*Jacob Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World*, pp. 159-64

\*“Cum Nimis Absurdum” (papal bull on creation of Rome ghetto)

**HA** 126-7, 136-7; **TJ** 193-202

*Week VIII*

**Feb. 23 Ottoman Jewry**

Guest lecture: Paul Bessemer

**HA** 130-1; **other readings TBA**

**Feb. 25 Jews in Early Modern Ashkenaz**

**HCJ** 177-180

HA 118-9, 134-5, 142-3, 146-7; TJ 204-217

*Week IX*

### **Mar. 2 Developments in Law and Mysticism**

\*Daniel Matt, *The Essential Kabbalah*, pp. 92-99

\*Jacob Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World*, pp. 200-204, excerpts from *Shulkhan Arukh*

+Elliot Horowitz, "The Eve of the Circumcision: A Chapter in the History of Jewish Nightlife," pp. 554-574

HCJ 180-5

TJ 189-193

+Isadore Twersky, "The Shulhan `Aruk: Enduring Code of Jewish Law," pp. 141-158 (optional)

+Lawrence Fine, *Safed Spirituality*, pp. 61-79 (optional)

### **Mar. 4 Port Jews**

HCJ 199-204

\*Simone Luzzatto, "A Discourse on the Status of the Jews," pp. 385-398

\*Menasseh ben Israel, "How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are (1655)," pp. 10-17  
 Marcus, 66-7 if we don't have anything better...

TJ 217-226

**PAPER 2 DUE FRIDAY, MAR 5<sup>TH</sup> BY 12 NOON (IN MY BOX, PLC 840)**

*Week X*

### **Mar. 9 Shabbetai Zvi and Sabbateanism: Roots and Consequences**

\*Harris Lenowitz, "The Messiah of Izmir," pp. 149-165

HCJ 185-9

HA 148-9; TJ 227-9

### **Mar. 11 Conclusion: The Legacy of Medieval and Early Modern Judaism**

HA 126-127, 130-133, 136-137.

**Mar. 16 (Tuesday) FINAL EXAM 8 AM**