

HEBREW 2350: INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH CULTURES

Fall 2008

Naomi Gale PhD.

Schusterman Visiting Professor

Tuesday 9:30

Thursday 9:30

Course description

From time immemorial, Jews lived amongst other societies as minorities and as such during their interaction with the majority' culture were influenced by the majority's culture and in turn contributed to the indigenous culture. Consequently, there is no one Jewish culture but remarkable number, which is the product of these interactions, i.e. Israel hosts Jews from over one hundred countries where each group brought its own colorful and amazing culture, which makes it a truly multicultural society. Furthermore, even the manifestation of the Jewish religion, its rites, liturgies and rituals differs from one group to the other.

This introductory course explores Jewish cultures their development and their manifestation across a chronological and geographical map of the history of the Jews. Students will be required to carry a fieldwork in which they visit a Jewish institution or Jewish cultural event and describe their experiences.

Office Hours:

Thursday 12:00-2:00PM

Required Readings:

R. Scheindlin, *A Short History of the Jews* 1998 (Oxford U).(available in the university bookshop)

D. Biale, ed., *Cultures of the Jews*, 2002 (Schocken). (available in the university bookshop)

Atlas of Jewish History, Martin Gilbert

The Sunflower, Simon Wiesenthal

Grading:

Your grades will be composed of three parts

1. Two Summaries submitted (see guidelines) 30%

Fieldwork assignment 20%

Take-home exam (due on day of final) 40%

Class attendance and Participation 10%

1. Accommodations due to disability.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to the Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>

Disability Services' letters for students with disabilities indicate legally mandated reasonable accommodations. The syllabus statements and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found at: <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see guidelines at:

<http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/go.cgi?select=temporary.html>

2. Religious observances.

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance.

See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Calendar of the religious holidays most commonly observed by CU-Boulder students is at <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>

3. Class room Behavior Conduct.

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_cod

4. Policy on Discrimination and Harassment

If any student believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the resources available to assist individuals regarding harassment or discrimination can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

5. Honor Code

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

6. Requirements & Expectations

Students must be prepared for each class. Students are responsible for the preparation of all the material detailed in the syllabus below, as well as any additional texts and assignments that may be added during the semester. It is essential that all work must be completed and submitted on time. Extensions will be given only with the doctor's note.

Class Schedule: 27 classes (*please note that changes may be made by instructor*)

8/26 Organizational Session

I Introduction to Jewish History

- 8/28 The "Biblical" Period, and the origin of Diaspora: Scheindlin, 1-24
- 9/2 The Second Temple and Hellenistic Periods: Scheindlin, 25-49
- 9/4 The Formation of Classical Rabbinic Judaism in Late Antiquity: Scheindlin, 51-70
- 9/9 Jews and Judaism under Islam and Christendom: Scheindlin, 71-121)
- 9/11 "Early Modern" Judaism in the Middle East under the Ottoman Empire and in Europe: Scheindlin, 123-171
- 9/16 The "New era" of Judaism from Eastern Europe to the United States: Scheindlin, 173-197
- 9/18 The Jewish Twentieth Century the Holocaust, Zionism and the states of Israel: Scheindlin, 199-263

9/18 First Reading Assignment is due at the beginning of class

II Jewish Cultures in Antiquity

- 9/23 Frame of Analysis: The Cultural Identity
- 9/25 Israelite Cultural Origins: Biale: 43-75 (Hendel)
- 9/30 NO CLASS ROSH HASHANA**
- 10/2 Hellenism influence on Jews in Diaspora: Biale: 77-132 (Gruen)
- 10/7 Jewish Culture in Greco-Roman Palestine: Biale: 135-179 (Meyers)
- 10/9 NO CLASS YOM KIPPUR**
- 10/14 NO CLASS SUKKOT**
- 10/16 Jewish Culture under in the Byzantium World: Biale: 181-221 (Irshai)
- 10/21 Babylonian Rabbinic Culture: Biale: 223-265 (Gafni)
- 10/23 Arabian Jewry in the formative period of Islam: Biale: 267-302 (Firestone)

10/23 Second Reading Assignment is due at the beginning of class

III Ashkenaz and Sefarad: Diversities of Diaspora

- 10/28 Frame of Analysis: Communal Boundaries of "Self" & "Other"
- 10/30 Judeo-Arabic Culture in the Golden Age of Islam: Biale: 313-386 (Scheindlin)
- 11/4 Sephardic Identity and Culture in Christian Iberia: Biale: 389-447 (Gampel)
- 11/6 Christianity in Ashkenazic Culture: Biale: 449-516 (Marcus)
- 11/11 Jewish Culture in the Polish-Lithuanian Ashkenaz: Biale: 519-570 (Rosman)
- 11/13 The Western Sephardic Diaspora: Biale: 639- 669 (Kaplan)
- 11/18 Jewish Folklore and Material Cultures: Biale: 671- 729 (Sabar)

11/18 Fieldwork Assignment description and experiences, is due at the beginning of class

IV Modern Age: The influence of Cultures on the Definition of Jewish Religion and Culture

11/20 Defining Religion, culture and The Urbanization of Western Ashkenaz: Biale: 731-796 (Cohen)

11/24 Mon. - 11/26 Wed. Fall Break. No classes. University open

11/27 Thurs. – 11/28 Fri. Thanksgiving holiday. No classes University closed

12/2 From Partition of Poland to the Holocaust: Chaos in Eastern Ashkenaz: Biale: 799- 860 (Biale)

12/4 The Cultural Mosaic of Jewish communities in North Africa, (Valensi 887-931), Middle East (Tobi 933- 974)

12/9 Jews under Christian Ethiopia: Biale: ((Salamon 974- 1096)
Israeli Culture (Hirschfeld 1011-1160; Yassif 1063- 1196)

12/11 American Jewish Cultures in the twentieth Century: Biale: (Whitfield 1099-1150)

12/13 – 12/18 Final exams for fall 2008

Guidelines for reading and writing Summaries

In order to help you read understand and write the major arguments, and/or analysis, and/or the framework of the author or the article you should pay attention to the following:

What is the main argument?

How the author(s) substantiate his argument(s)/analysis etc?

What did you learn from the article?

How the article contribute to your understanding of Jewish Culture?

Summaries should be approximately 1200-1500 words, 1.5 spaced, Time New Roman. You can write your essay following the above format of questions, or in your own way.

You can prepare these summaries in pairs, if you do please hand out one copy with both names on it. You may bring it to class or e-mail it to me.

The articles for the two summaries will be given in class at the beginning of the term.

I am looking forward to have productive learning and enjoyable time with you.