

# Jewish Life From the Enlightenment: The 200 years that brought us where we are

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## .....Overview.....

When Napoleon helped usher in the Enlightenment in the 19th century, he set the stage for the emancipation of Europe's Jews. Over the course of a century, the Jews of Western Europe, under the lasting influence of Napoleon, would become a religion instead of a people, and would see widespread acceptance in society. The Jews of Eastern Europe would remain a people and would remain more oppressed by their rulers.

As the Enlightenment spread, Jews and non-Jews alike looked forward to a time without the ancient curse of war.

The 20th-century promise of world-wide peace and better times was quickly broken first by World War I, then by the Holocaust. As the world fell apart as was put back together, the Modern State of Israel was formed and the value of the New World was made clear.

Against this traumatic backdrop, thriving Jewish communities flourished first in the New World, then in Israel, and finally again in Europe.

## .....Content.....

*First class:* Setting the Stage: The Enlightenment.

*Second class:* Reactions in Germany and Poland.

*Third class:* The Nightmare of the Holocaust.

*Fourth class:* The Dream of 2,000 Years: Israel.

*Fifth class:* The Dream of Freedom: America.

## ..... Selected Bibliography .....

You do not need to read anything between classes. But the following are used to greater or lesser degrees during the course, either to supplement or to reinforce the material presented in class.

On the list, the books most worth having on your bookshelf are marked with an asterisk (\*). Those most relevant to the course are marked with a plus symbol (+).

Barnavi, Eli, ed. 1992. *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*. (Miriam Eliav-Feldon, ed. English Edition.) Schocken Books. /0679403329/ (\*)

Eban, Abba. 1968. *My People: The Story of the Jews*. Out of print.

Ellenson, David. 2004. *After Emancipation: Jewish Religious Responses To Modernity*. HUC Press. /0878202234/

Fullbrook, Mary. 1990. *A Concise History of Germany*. Cambridge University Press. /0521368367/ (+)

Gilbert, Martin. 2003. *The Routledge Atlas of Jewish History*. Routledge. /0415281504/ (\*)

Oz, Amos. 2005. *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. (Fiction/memoir.) Harvest Books. /015603252X/ (+)

Sarna, Jonathan. 2004. *American Judaism: A History*. Yale University Press. /030010197X/

Scholem, Gershom. *From Berlin to Jerusalem*. Out of print. (+)

Singer, Israel Joshua. *The Brothers Ashkenazi*. (Fiction.) Out of print. (+)

Weinryb, Bernard D. 1972. *The Jews of Poland*. JPS. /082760016X/.