HISTORY 283
JEWISH STUDIES 235

JEWS
IN MODERN TIMES
Movie

• “Magician of Lublin” based on a novel by I. B. Singer
Reading for Sections

- Solomon Maimon autobiography
- the edited version is attached to the syllabus in two places; please use the full text and scholarly introduction in McKeldin
- Questions will be posted Thursday to guide you in preparation for the quiz
- Paper should include overview and analysis
Doctrines of Toleration

• more than one approach
  – government policies (mercantilism; centralizing state)
  – religious change (reformation….)
  – political theory (division of Church and State)
  – humanitarian attitudes
  – changing conception of the Jews and Judaism

• not yet emancipation
(I) Economic Usefulness

- precedes ideological change
- Jews “resettle” areas from which they were long absent
- papal precedent (Ancona, 1514) and new legal terminologies
- mercantilist state picks up the notion
- new image of Jews as useful, wealthy
Spokesmen

• Simone Luzzatto
• Manasseh ben Israel
• Thomas Munn (laissez-faire capitalism)
• John Toland 1714
Reformation/Counter-Ref.

• short run decline
  – Luther’s about face
  – spread of ghettos in Italy
  – expulsions
  – hostile popular literature

• long run: groundwork for toleration
  – state contains more than one faith
  – Jews aren’t the only religious deviants
Political Theory

• Jean Bodin: natural law
  – weakens canon law; rational basis for law
  – Old Testament precedents

• Hugo Grotius
  – 1615 argues for Jews to be tolerated
  – cause for Jewish hatred in Christian actions
In England & the Colonies

- debate over religious toleration spills over and applies also to Jews
- Roger Williams (1644)
  - separation of church and state
- John Locke
  - “On Toleration” 1689
Jewish Learning

• Protestant emphasis on O.T.
• Christian Hebraism (John Selden)
• conversionary biases (Buxdorf father and son)
• J.C. Wagenseil
  – attacks blood libel and Judaism (*Tela Ignea Satan*)
• Johann Andreas Eisenmenger
  – *Entdecktes Judentum*
• Jacques Basnages
  – 7 volume history (1706; 1716-20)
Enlightenment

• G.E. Lessing
  – “The Jews” (1749)
  – “Nathan the Wise” (1779)
• Jew as representative of natural religion
• Voltaire
  – attacks on Judaism with a new vengeance
W.C. Dohm

- at Mendelssohn’s request, he writes an argument “On the Civil Betterment of the Jews” (1783)
- humanitarian arguments for toleration
- history has made the Jews what they are!
- slow developments leading to full equality
Developments in Practice

- **Holland**
  - Amsterdam since 1593
  - Italian precedents and initial restrictions
  - defend Jewish interests as “subjects” (1657)

- **Britain**
  - 1655 Manasseh ben Israel
  - “admit” Jews through legal back door
Colonial Practice

• Surinam 1655
  – Jews given full citizenship within colonial context
  – not “required” to serve in public office
  – maintain separate courts

• Plantation Acts 1740
  – Jews exempted from Christian oath to become citizens
Limits

• 1753 Jew Bill revoked within a year
Austrian Innovations

- Maria Theresa’s harsh policies
- Joseph II -- great emancipator
- *Toleranzpatent* 1781–2
- allows Jews to make a living
- makes the Jews useful to the State
- limitations
- imposed Germanification
Summary

• arguments for toleration still explicitly or implicitly assume a Jewish alienness and inferiority
• Jewish rights require acculturation
• expectations on both sides very high