

# **Jewish Community in Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages and Modern Times**

Dr. Ilia Lurie (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)  
**Chernivtsi, 2013**



Opening the course at the Red Hall of the Chernivtsy National University.  
Dr. Ilia Lurie (on the right) and Dr. Vlad Lerner, the first secretary of Israel embassy in Ukraine (on the left)

The course addresses the most significant social and cultural processes that shaped the image of the Eastern European Jewry in modern times. It presents various aspects of social, economic, cultural, and political life of the Jews of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, Habsburg and Russian empires in the broader context of the general socio-cultural changes that characterize the European Jewry in the aforesaid period.

## **1. Origins: The Jews of Ancient Russia and Central Europe in the early Middle Ages:**

- The emergence of the Jewish communities in the Slavic lands.
- Jewish community of Central Europe (Ashkenazi) and its cultural profile.
- The Talmud, Halakha and ideals of Torah learning.
- The emergence of the Jewish community in the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom - the historical and demographic aspects.
- Karaites in Volhynia and Galicia.

## **2. Legal and economic frames of the Jewish community:**

- Charters of Privileges

- Jewish communities and medieval corporations
  - The main features of the Jewish economy in the Middle Ages.
  - Economic structure of the Jewish community in Eastern Europe
- 3. The structure of the traditional Jewish community in Eastern Europe and the ideals of traditional Jewish society.**
- 4. The world of Torah in Eastern Europe in the late Middle Ages:**
- Emergence of a "Polish" Ashkenazi culture.
  - The spiritual leaders of Eastern European Jewry: Jacob Polak, Shalom Shachna, Solomon Luria, Moses Isserles.
  - Torah culture in Volhynia and Galicia.
- 5. Kabbalah and the Messianic movement in Eastern Europe:**
- Kabbalah and Sabbatians in Eastern Europe in the XVII.
  - Jacob Frank and Frank's sect in Galicia.
  - Mystic circles in the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and their social status.
  - Kloyzes in Brody and Kutuy.
- 6. Israel Besht and the foundation of the Hasidism**
- Israel Besht and his environment.
  - Key elements of the Besht's teaching and their social significance.
  - Circle of Besht's disciples.
- 7. From the group to the movement: the spread of Hasidism:**
- Rabbi Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezerichi and his disciples.
  - The doctrine of a Tzadik and the formation of a new type of charismatic leadership in the Jewish community.
  - Structure and functioning of the Hasidic court.
  - The spread of the Hasidic movement in Ukraine.
  - Chassidim and Mitnagdim: a split of the Jewish community.
- 8. Absolutism, the European Enlightenment and the Jews.**
- The European Enlightenment and the discussion of the Jews emancipation in Europe.
  - Enlightened Absolutism and Toleranzpatent of Joseph II.
  - The partition of Poland and its impact on the life of the Jewish community.
  - The development of the policy of the Russian authorities towards Jews.
  - The reaction of the traditional Jewish society to the legislative initiatives of the authorities.
- 9. Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment:**

- Ideological sources of Haskalah in Eastern Europe.
- First enlighteners (maskilim) and their attitude towards traditional Jewish culture.
- Haskalah in Galicia and in the Russian Empire.
- 

#### **10. The Jewish religious tradition in the face of modernity: the reform and the orthodoxy:**

- The crisis of the Jewish religious tradition.
- Reform of Judaism: the first steps.
- The reaction of traditional society: orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy.
- The split of the Jewish community.

#### **11. The formation and development of the Jewish national movement in Eastern Europe:**

- The crisis of Haskalah ideology.
- The pogroms of 1881 and the beginning of the Hibbat Zion movement.

#### **12. Jewish political movements of modern times.**

- Zionism and its different forms.
- Jewish socialism.
- Autonomism

### **Selected Bibliography:**

#### **Obligatory reading:**

**Ш. Эттингер (ред.),** Очерк истории еврейского народа. Изд. Библиотека Алия (вып. 28-29). Иерусалим, 1979.

**Ш. Эттингер (ред.),** История еврейского народа. Изд-во Гешарим, Москва-Иерусалим, 2001.

[http://jhist.org/code/ettinger4\\_01.htm](http://jhist.org/code/ettinger4_01.htm)

**И.Барталь.** От общины к нации: евреи Восточной Европы в 1772 - 1881 гг. М., Иерусалим, 2007.

\*\*\*

**Ш. Авинери.** Происхождение сионизма. Основные направления в еврейской политической мысли. М., Иерусалим: 2008.

**Д. Ассаф.** Мир еврейского законоучения в Польше // Главы из истории и культуры евреев Восточной Европы. Изд-во Открытого ун-та, Тель-Авив. Ч. 2

**Г. Бэкон.** Положение евреев в России после разделов Польши // Главы из истории и культуры евреев Восточной Европы. Изд-во Открытого ун-та, Тель-Авив. Часть 5-6.

<http://books.google.co.il/books>

**Я. Кац.** Кризис традиции на пороге Нового времени. Изд. Библиотека Алия. Иерусалим, 1991

**Я. Кац.** Исход из гетто. Москва-Иерусалим, 2007.

**Я. Кац.** Евреи в средневековой Европе. Иерусалим: изд. Библиотека Алия, 1994.

**Дж.Клиер.** Россия собирает своих евреев. М.-Иерусалим, 2000.

**А. Кулик.** История еврейского народа в России. Т.1. От древности до раннего нового времени. М., Иерусалим, 2010.

**И. Лурье.** История еврейского народа в России. Т.2. От разделов Польши до падения Российской империи. М., Иерусалим, 2012.

**М.Росман.** Еврейская община Польши // Главы из истории и культуры евреев Восточной Европы. Изд-во Открытого ун-та, Тель-Авив. Ч. 1-2.

**М.Росман.** Экономическая и социальная деятельность польского еврейства // Главы из истории и культуры евреев Восточной Европы. Изд-во Открытого ун-та, Тель-Авив. Ч. 3-4.

<http://books.google.co.il/books>

**Э. Эткес.** От группы к движению // Главы из истории и культуры евреев Восточной Европы. Изд-во Открытого ун-та, Тель-Авив. Часть 3-4.

**Ш. Эттингер.** Хасидизм – действительность и идеалы. В кн. Социальная жизнь и социальные ценности еврейского народа. Изд. Библиотека Алия, с. 369-395

**Ш. Эттингер** Россия и евреи. Изд. Библиотека Алия. Иерусалим, 1993.

#### **Additional Reading:**

**С. Дубнов.** Новейшая история еврейского народа. М. – Иерусалим, 2002. т. 1, т. 2.

**В.Лакер.** История сионизма. М., 2000. С. 93-122.

**Й. Френкель.** Пророчество и политика. Социализм, национализм и русское еврейство 1862-1917. М., Иерусалим: 2008.

**А. Херцберг.** Сионизм в контексте истории. Изд. Библиотека Алия. Иерусалим, 1992.

**Г. Шолем.** Основные течения в еврейской мистике. М., Иерусалим, 2004.

**I. Etkes.** The Besht : magician, mystic, and leader. Waltham : Brandeis University Press, c2005.

**J. Goldberg.** Jewish privileges in the Polish commonwealth. Charters of rights granted to Jewish communities in Poland-Lithuania in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Jerusalem, 1985

**A. Polonsky.** The Jews in Poland and Russia. 3 vol. Oxford.2010-2012

**A. Rapoport-Albert** (ed.) Essential papers on Hasidism. N.Y. 1991.

**Reinharz, Jehuda , Shapira, Anita** (ed.). *Essential Papers on Zionism*. New York: New York University Press. 1995.

**M.Stanislawski.** Tzar Nikolas I and the Jews, The Transformation of Jewish Society. Philadelphia, 1983.

**G. Shimony,** *The Zionist Ideology*. Hanover, London: Brandeis University Press. 1997

