JEWISH HISTORY

Please answer any two questions. You are allowed a total of four hours to complete this exam (two hours per question). You are on your honor not to consult any materials, including notes or papers or anything stored in your computer. You are also on your honor not to discuss the exam or its content with any faculty or student until the exam period is over.

1. What guiding trends or motives can you identify in Jewish historiography from the beginning of the 20th century, especially in Eastern Europe?

2. What did David Sorkin have in mind when describing a Jewish “subculture” in 19th-century Germany? Do you think that this designation makes sense? Please elaborate your reasons.

3. What periodization schemes have been proposed for the modern period in Jewish history? Do you think that it is possible to answer the question of when modern Jewish history commenced? If so, when? If not, why not?

4. When and under what circumstances do we encounter the phenomenon of “dissimilation” among German Jews? What were some of its more interesting and important cultural manifestations?

5. Trace the ebbs and flows of anti-Semitism in Europe from the economic crisis of 1873 up to the First World War.

6. How do you assess Salo Baron’s “Ghetto and Emancipation”? In what tradition of thought can we place him? Was he right?

7. Compare the evolution of the political and social situation of the Jews in France and Germany between the first years of the twentieth century and the end of World War One.

8. Analyze and assess the main trends of Jewish political life in Poland between the two World Wars.

9. Discuss the rise of political anti-Semitism in France between the accession of the Popular Front to power and the outbreak of World War Two.

10 “The Jew” in Adolf Hitler’s worldview: Discuss and analyze its traditional and “unique components.”
11. Assess the various historiographical interpretations for the immediate origins of the Final Solution.

12. Discuss the various aspects of Jewish Resistance in Eastern Europe during the Holocaust, including the internal tensions between the different political movements and their relations to the immediate Jewish and non-Jewish surroundings.