Description: The course examines literature by Latin American Jewish authors and the impact of Jews and Judaism (what Borges called lo hebreo) on major Latin American writers. Class discussions explore issues of cultural identity and linguistic transfer in these works, as well as their relation to Latin American modes of narration such as magical realism and testimonial writing. Authors read include, Alberto Gerchunoff, Jorge Luis Borges, Jacobo Timerman, Moacyr Scliar, and Rosa Nissan. Films and videos are part of the course. Class discussions and readings are in English translation, but students who can read the originals in Spanish or Portuguese are encouraged to do so.

Required Books:

--Jacobo Timerman, Prisoner without a Name, Cell without a Number, U of Wisconsin P 2002.
--Rosa Nissan, Like a Bride / Like a Mother, U of New Mexico P, 2002.
--From Pale to Pampas, course packet

Course Requirements:

1. The assigned readings. These readings form the basis of each session. Please bring the material we are reading to class. Your preparation and participation will count in the final grade.
2. Exams and assignments: Two short papers; oral presentations; a midterm; a final paper. Paper topics will be provided.
3. Classroom environment: To ensure the proper learning environment do not bring food to class. Turn off beepers and cell phones, and come on time.
4. Final Grade: The final grade is based on a combination of all the marks received as well as on classroom work. Excessive absence, tardiness, and assignments handed in late will affect the grade.
   10% of the grade will be left to the instructor’s discretion based on an assessment of the student’s interest, participation, and motivation.
Course Topics:


Discussion: Who are Latin America’s Jews? Why Latin American Jewish literature now? Is there a theory for this literature?

**Week 2:** Cutting the Ground (cont.)

**Week 3** Alberto Gerchunoff: A Problematic Precursor: Gerchunoff, *Parricide on the Pampa*; In *Pale to Pampas*: Alpersohn, “From Russian Pale.”

Discussion: Immigration and belonging; the gaucho as symbol; a genealogy for Argentine Jewish literature.


Discussion: Other voices: Gerchunoff vs. Alpersohn; vs. Borges. Where are the foremothers? See Glickman


Borges, reality and unreality; Judaism, the West, and the Latin American condition; representing the Holocaust.

**Week 6** Borges (cont.): Judaism, models of writing, and literary theory: In *Pale to Pampas*: Selections from Scholem on the Kabbalah; Borges, “A Vindication of the Cabala,” “The Golem”; In Stavans, “Emma Zunz.”

Borges, Judaism and models of writing; the Bible and fantastic literature, Kabbalah and criticism.


**Week 8** Timerman (cont.)
Entering Latin American history, or the end of the dream? The AMIA bombing and its aftermath: making monuments. Midterm.

**Week 9:** Spring Recess


*Jewishness and Latin American politics. Differences in Holocaust replays, North and South.*

**Week 11:** Agosín (cont.): films: Bortnik, “Poor Butterfly,” documentary, “Threads of Hope” on Chile under Pinochet and the *arpilleras*.

**Week 12:** *Moacyr Scliar: Judaism and Magical Realism:* Scliar, *The Centaur in the Garden*; In *Pale to Pampas*: Vieira, “Judaic Fiction in Brazil” and Chanady on Magical Realism.

*Viewing magical realism, minority and postcolonial discourse*

**Week 13:** Scliar (cont.). Film: “18J” on the AMIA bombing.


**Week 15:** Nissán (cont.): film: Novia que te vea

**Week 16:** Windup; Final paper due
Bibliography of Secondary Sources

Most available at NYU

Marjorie Agosín, ed., Memory, Oblivion, and Jewish Culture in Latin America, U Texas P, 2005
Senkman, Leonardo. La identidad judía en la literatura argentina, Pardes, 1983.