



# **The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492 (The Princeton Economic History of the Western World)**

*Maristella Botticini, Zvi Eckstein*

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In 70 CE, the Jews were an agrarian and illiterate people living mostly in the Land of Israel and Mesopotamia. By 1492 the Jewish people had become a small group of literate urbanites specializing in crafts, trade, moneylending, and medicine in hundreds of places across the Old World, from Seville to Mangalore. What caused this radical change? *The Chosen Few* presents a new answer to this question by applying the lens of economic analysis to the key facts of fifteen formative centuries of Jewish history. Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein offer a powerful new explanation of one of the most significant transformations in Jewish history while also providing fresh insights into the growing debate about the social and economic impact of religion.

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