

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester I, 1990-91

Jews, Greeks, and Romans: Contacts and Conflicts in Civilization
History 251 Kenneth Sacks
TAs: Kim Georgedes, Jeff Lerner, Fred Sher

Largely from a Jewish context, the course explores religious, social, and philosophical values shaped by the collision between Jews, Greeks, and Romans, 300 B.C. - A.D. 400. The interaction brought about the end of antiquity, the rise of Christianity, and the establishment of a common culture that has largely defined the Western World: Judeo-Christian moral attitudes and Greco-Roman civilization. There is no prerequisite or assumed knowledge of the period, but students should be prepared to examine religion from a secular, intellectual point of view.

Lectures: one 2 and 1/2 hr. lecture per week.

Discussion sections: one per week, led by a T.A.

Readings: lectures will be based largely on the weekly readings. Discussion sections will emphasize understanding the ancient sources in the Bible and the "Reader" and interpreting that evidence historically. Read the ancient sources especially carefully.

Written Assignments and Examinations: 6 week, 12 week, and final exam. 4-unit and honors students will also write papers or undertake other projects.

Exams: Will be essay style. They will require an understanding of the fundamental questions, supported by evidence found in the readings and lectures. Make-up exams are given only for well-documented emergencies, and not for travel plans (the twelve-weeks exam occurs right after Thanksgiving). There will be no alternative test for students having 3 finals within 24 hours.

Papers: 4-unit non-honors students are required to write one 7-10 page paper. Some suggested topics are at the back of the syllabus. Students are also encouraged to choose their own topic or a different type of project. But, all topics of your own choosing must be approved first by your T.A. by November 6. Papers are due by December 4.

Grading: 3 units: approximately 25% for the 6 and 12 week exams, 40% for the final, and 10% for participation in the section meetings. 4 units: approximately 20% for the 6 and 12 week exams and for the paper, 30% for the final, and 10% for participation in the section meetings. For all students, strong consideration will be given for improvement.

If you register for 4 credits, you MUST do the required written work. If you decide that you don't want to complete the written work, you MUST formally drop the credit, with the Registrar, by the 9th week of class. Otherwise you shall be held responsible for it.

Books to be purchased:

Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha (Oxford 1989),
ed. by Bruce Metzger

M. Rostovtzeff, Rome (Oxford)

READER: available at Kinko's, 620 University Ave.

Office: 4117 Humanities Building

Phone: 263-2528

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 and by appointment

How to find the readings:

Example: Bible:

Acts of the Apostles 13:16, 26, 43, 50

That means: look in Bible under Acts of the Apostles.

Then read chapter 13, verse 16; then read chapters 26, 43, and 50.

Example: READER: pp. 1-19

Tcherikover, Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews, 1-36

That means: read pp. 1-19 in the READER, which contains pp. 1-36
of Tcherikover's book.

*** There are excellent maps at the end of Metzger Bible ***

I. GREEK AND JEWISH BACKGROUND

Sept. 4: General Introduction

1. Greek History to 175 B.C.

READER: pp. 1-19

Tcherikover, Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews, 1-36

2. Jewish History to 175 B.C.

READER: pp. 20-30

Bickerman in Finkelstein, The Jews I, 72-93

Sept. 11: Conflicting Cultural Values

3. Greek Cultural Values

READER: pp. 31-54

Homer's Iliad: Bailkey, 113-129

Robinson, Sources for Greek Athletics, 76-77

Thucydides, Pericles' Funeral Oration

Xenophanes & Empedocles: Tierney, 54-55

Plato's Apology of Socrates: Bailkey, 211-216

Stoic Fragments in Long & Sedley, 429-430

Ruler Cult in Burstein, 63-66

Review Tcherikover, 1-36 (READER 1-19) from lecture # 1

4. Jewish Cultural Values

Bible:

Genesis 1:24-31

Exodus 19-24

2 Samuel 7:4-17.

Isaiah 40, 44, 49

READER: pp. 55-61

Josephus, Antiquities, 1-13

Review Bickerman in Finkelstein, 72-93 (READER 20-30)
from lecture # 2

II. RISE OF THE HELLENIZED-JEWISH STATE

Sept. 18: Liberation and Imperialism

5. The Maccabean Revolt

Bible:

1 Maccabees 1-9:22

2 Maccabees (all)

Daniel 8:23-26; 9:24-27; 11:21-45

READER: 62-72

Bickerman, From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees, 93-111

6. The Hasmonean State

Bible:

1 Maccabees 9:23-end

READER: pp. 73-108

Josephus, pp. 79-128

Addition to Song of Songs 8:7-12.

Tcherikover, 235-253

Sept. 25: Jewish Cultural Response to Hellenism

7. The Cult of Wisdom

Bible:

Ecclesiastes (Koheleth): all

Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach [Ben Sirah]):

1, 7, 9, 15-17, 19-25, 30, 37-39, 43, 51

Proverbs 1, 2, 5, 8-9

John 1:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

READER: pp. 109-124

Dead Sea Scrolls no. 19, in Vermes

Praises of Isis: Burstein, 146-148

Hellenistic Jewish prayer: Charlesworth II 678-680

Bickerman in Finkelstein, The Jews I, 93-112

8. Martyrdom, Apocalypse, and Resurrection

Bible:

Daniel 1-12, esp. 2, 7-12

2 Maccabees 6-7, 12:38-48

READER: pp. 125-135

I Enoch 83-90, esp. ch. 90 (Charlesworth I, 5-10, 61-72)

Pslam of Solomon 17 (Charlesworth II 639, 666-669)

Oct. 2: Splinter Groups and a Unifying Force

9. Jewish Sectarianism: Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes

READER: pp. 136-165

Review READER 73-98 (Josephus 79-128) from lecture 6

Tcherikover, 253-265

Josephus BJ ii 8.2-13 (119-61)

G. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah, 122-123

Dead Sea Scrolls, pages 61, 81-99, 279-289, in Vermes.

III. THE DOMINANCE OF ROME

10. Rome: Republic and Empire

Rostovtzeff, Rome, 24-49, 117-182

Oct. 9: Jews and Greeks in the Roman World

11. Judea in the Age of Herod

READER: pp. 166-219

Josephus: pp. 78-94, 120-140, 145-182, 217-245, 252-259,
280-284, 343-353

12. Graecia Capta: Fashioning Classical Civilization

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Rostovtzeff, 66-94
READER: pp. 220-233
Polybius, Livy, Cato: Bailkey, 285-301
Lewis and Reinhold I 490-503
Lewis and Reinhold II 289-290

Oct. 16: EXAM: on everything through last week

Oct. 23: Pagan Universalism

13. Stoicism

Rostovtzeff, 183-184

Bible:

Review 2 Maccabees 6:18-31; compare to 4 Maccabees (READER)
John 1:1-14

READER: pp. 234-249

Long and Sedley, Selections on Stoicism

Cicero: Tierney, 120-122

Seneca, Letter 90

Epictetus: Tierney, 131-132

Marcus Aurelius: Bailkey, 402-405

Aelius Aristides: Lewis & Reinhold, II, 135-138

4 Maccabees: Charlesworth II, 544-545, 549-553

14. Mystery Religions and Cults

Rostovtzeff, 184-186, 292-302

READER: pp. 250-264

Isis and Syncretistic Rule Cult: Burstein, 63-66, 146-148

Diffusion of Religions: Lewis and Reinhold II 573-575

Syncretism: Lewis and Reinhold II 578-581

Apuleius: Bailkey, 406-409

Imperial Cult: Lewis and Reinhold II 560-566,

IV. FUSION AND CONFLICT OUTSIDE JUDEA

Oct. 30

15. Jewish Life in the Mediterranean

Bible:

Acts of the Apostles 13:16, 26, 43, 50

Matthew 22:15

READER: pp. 265-298

Tcherikover, 328-357

Josephus, Against Apion ii 282; Jewish Wars 7.45;

Antiquities 12.148-153; 14.110-12; 20.17-96

Juvenal 3.10-18; 6.153-160

Stern fragments of Horace (FF 127 & 129), Martial (F 245);

Seneca (F 186); Epictetus (FF 252-254)

16. The Promise of Alexandria: Jews Among Greeks and Egyptians

READER: pp. 78, 83, and 299-340

Tcherikover, 296-328

Theocritus: Bailkey, 273-276

Papiri selections: CPJ I sections III-VI

Letter of Aristeeas: Bartlett I.1, 11-34

Josephus Ant. 13.10.4 = pp. 88-89 (assigned for lecture 6)

13.13.1-2 = pp. 98-99 (assigned for lecture 6)

Nov. 6: Alexandria: In the World of Philo

17. Jewish Universalism

READER: pp. 340-366

Aristobulus: Charlesworth II 831-842

Philo, On the Creation 1-37, 129-end

Wisdom of Solomon: Bailkey, 105-107

18. Resistance and Nationalism

READER: pp. 367-411

Josephus, Antiquities 19.279-294

Papyri selections: CPJ II nos. 150-153, 156-159

Potter's Oracle: Burstein

introduction to Sibylline Oracles: Bartlett I.1, 35-41

3rd and 5th Sibylline Oracles: Charlesworth I 365-6, 394-5

Philo, Ad Flaccum pp. 295-301, ccs. 125-191

Nov. 13: Racism and Anti-Semitism

19. Racism and Anti-Semitism: Alexandria and the Mediterranean

READER: pp. 296-298 and 412-454

Tcherikover, 357-377

Demetrius and Artapanus: Charlesworth II, 843-854, 889-903

Stern: Theophrastus (F 4); Hecataeus (F 11); Clearchus

(F 15); Manetho (F 21); Apollonius Molon (F 48);

Tacitus (281)

Review Martial, Seneca, and Epictetus from lecture 12.

Cicero, Pro Flacco (a different Flaccus than Philo's!)

Juvenal 3.58-125; 6.541-7; 14.96-106

Pliny Letters 8.24

V. NEW APPROACHES TO CONTACTS AND CONFLICTS

Nov. 20: Jewish Revolt, Christian Origins

20. Iudaea Capta: First Jewish Revolt, 66-74

Rostovtzeff, 193-204

READER: pp. 455-492

Josephus: Antiquities pp. 504-527 (20.5-11)

Jewish War 2.487-498

Schuerer, History of the Jewish People, I, 455-470, 484-513

21. Judaism and Early Christianity

Bible:

Matthew 5

Acts of the Apostles 5, 10-18

Galatians 2-3

READER: pp. 493-507

Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, esp. chap 47

Nov. 27: 12 WEEKS EXAM:

Covers from last exam up to and including lecture # 20.

Does NOT include last week's lecture # 21

Dec. 4: Jewish Catastrophe, Christian Success

22. Bar Kachba, Hadrian, and the end of Jewish Judea

Rostovtzeff, 205-214

READER: pp. 508-533

E. Schuerer, History of the Jewish People I, 520-557

Lewis and Reinhold II 412 (bottom) - 414

Papyri selections: CPJ II 438, 439, 445, 450

Tacitus, Histories v 1 & 13

23. The Christian Winning of the Roman Empire

Rostovtzeff, 279-290

READER: pp. 534-547

Christianity and Greco-Roman Thought: Bailkey, 430-456

Dec. 11: The End of the Beginning

24. Roma aeterna: The Ancient World turns Middle Aged

Rostovtzeff, 309-324

READER: pp. 548-574

Augustine: Gochberg I, 628-642

Ausonius & Paulinus: Bailkey, 451-54

Midrash Rabbah on Gen. 9:15 and Deut. 2:24

Babylonian Talmud Baba Kamma 82b-83c

Babylonian Talmud Shabbath 33b & 116a

Babylonian Talmud Megillah 9a-b

Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 56a-60a

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, Dec. 18th, 7:25 p.m.

FOR FOUR-CREDIT STUDENTS

4-unit students are required to write a 7-10 page paper. Below are some topics. Students are also encouraged to choose their own topic or a different type of project, with the consent of their T.A. Original projects might include putting on a play (see below), doing art work, composing a board game with an appropriate theme -- the possibilities are endless. Have fun; be creative! But, if you decide to do a topic other than those listed below, you must first get approval from your T.A. by November 6. All papers and projects are due by December 4th. Papers written by freshmen and sophomores may be submitted early and rewritten with the consent of their T.A.

SOME SUGGESTED PAPER TOPICS FOR FOUR-CREDIT STUDENTS

All reading materials listed below are on reserve at H.C. White Library. The questions which accompany each topic are suggestions. Feel free to reshape the questions, to ignore some, to add others of your own.

1. Read Homer's Iliad, Books 1, 6, 9, and 24, and Genesis 12-50 and 2 Maccabees from the Bible; draw also on the other syllabus readings and your lecture notes from the course. How does Homer depict his characters? How does Genesis portray the Jewish ancestors, men and women; how does that depiction compare with that in 2 Maccabees? How can you account for those differences? In what ways do Genesis and 2 Maccabees differ in their portraits and in what ways are they similar or different to the portraits of personalities in Homer? How do these differences and similarities help us understand the relationship between Hellenism and Judaism?

2. Read as much as you can of Martin Hengel's, Judaism and Hellenism, and especially pp. 277-303; and read the following book reviews: A. Momigliano's "Review of Hengel" in Journal of Theological Studies, vol 21 (1970), 149-53; Fergus Millar, "The Background of the Maccabean Revolution," in Journal of Jewish Studies vol. 29 (1978), pp. 2-21; and Louis Feldman, "Hengel's Judaism and Hellenism in Retrospect," in Journal of Biblical

Literature vol. 96 (1977), pp. 371-382. According to Hengel, how much Hellenism was there in Palestinean Judaism at the time of the Maccabean revolt, and how significant is that question to deciding who was responsible for Antiochus IV's persecutions?. Using also your readings from the lecture, "The Maccabean Revolt" and Tcherikover, 404 ff., decide to what extent Hengel's theses are correct.

3. Read The Letter of Aristeas to Philocrates, ed. by M. Hadas, pp. 1-9, 59-84, 92-227 (you can read the English translation and skip the Greek, if you want!), and the following secondary works: V. Tcherikover, "The Ideology of the Letter of Aristeas," Harvard Theological Review, li (1958), 59-85; S. Jellico, "The Occasion and Purpose of the Letter of Aristeas: A Reexamination," New Testament Studies xii (1966), 144-150; G.E. Howard, "The Letter of Aristeas and Diaspora Judaism," Journal of Theological Studies xxii (1971), 337-348; Harry Orlinsky, "The Septuagint and its Hebrew Text," The Cambridge History of Judaism vol. 2, pp. 534-562. What are the circumstances and purpose of the Letter of Aristeas; that is: What is Aristeas's message and who is he aiming it at? To what extent is there Greek influence in his narrative method? How accurately does Aristeas describe the process of the creation of the Septuagint (LXX: the Greek translation of the Bible)?

4. Read Sarah Pomeroy's, Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity and Leonard Swindler's Women in Judaism: The Status of Women in Formative Judaism, and refer to Mary Lefkowitz and Maureen Faunt's Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Source Book in Translation. Select certain aspects of the condition of women in Jewish, Greek, and Roman society (for example, economic status, employment, marriage, inheritance rights, political rights, burial, parenting, domestic duties, sexuality, etc.). Compare and contrast the women of these three societies in respect to the aspects you've chosen. What accounts for the differences and similarities? Use examples from and analyze the ancient evidence. For those interested in writing on women, topic # 1 can be shaped to address that issue.

5. Read about the Beth Alpha Synagogue in the Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land, edited by Michael Avi-Yonah vol. 1, pp. 187-91, and in Erwin R. Goodenough Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, vol. 1, pp. 241-253, 264-267, and vol 12, pp. 64-77. Also read Morton Smith's, "The Image of God: Notes on the Hellenization of Judaism with Especial Reference to Goodenough's Work on Jewish Symbols," in Bulletin of the John Rylands Library vol. 40 (1957-58), pp. 473-512 and "Goodenough's Jewish Symbols in Retrospect," Journal of Biblical Literature, vol 86 (1967), 53-68; and Michael Avi-Yonah's "Ancient Synagogue," in Art in Ancient Palestine, pp. 271-28. How can one determine what is a Jewish and what is a Greek symbol? To what degree does Jewish art show Greek influence: is that influence substantial or merely decorative. To what degree does the art indicate a "popular" Judaism independent of rabbinic influence?

6. Read Louis Finkelstein's Akiba: Scholar, Saint, and Martyr and Royston Lambert's Beloved and God: the Story of Hadrian and Antinous. Compare and contrast the cultural environment and the

values of Rabbi Akiba and the Roman emperor Hadrian. Was there room enough in that world for both of them? What solutions would you propose to the conflicts that arose?

7. Read the following by Lucian: On Salaried Posts in Great Houses (Loeb edition, translated by A.M. Harmon, vol. 2, pp. 411-481), Apology (Loeb edition, translated by K. Kilburn, vol. 6, pp. 191-213), and Nigrinus (Loeb edition, translated by A.M. Harmon, vol. 1, pp. 97-141). Read also Polybius book vi chapters 49-58 (Loeb ed. vol. 3). Compare and contrast how Polybius, writing in the second century, B.C., and Lucian, writing in the second century A.D., viewed the Roman empire and Roman values. What accounts for their different attitudes? What dilemma was Lucian in and how did he try to resolve it? Can Lucian's works be considered "racist"?

8. Read Frederick C. Grant's Roman Hellenism and the New Testament, as much as possible and certainly at least chapters 6-8, and Helmut Koester, "Paul and Hellenism," in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, edited by J. Philip Hyatt, pp. 187-195. Read also Acts of the Apostles in the New Testament. Draw on your course readings and your lecture notes. To what degree is Paul's version of Christianity a synthesis of Hellenistic mystery cults and Judaism?

9. Consult the following books: A.H.M. Jones, Constantine and the Conversion of Europe, 17-105, esp. 85-105; Ramsay MacMullen, Constantine, 57-78; and Peter Brown, The World of Late Antiquity, 82-94. How do these different authors describe the personality of Constantine and how do they explain Constantine's decision to recognize Christianity? Which of these views seems most correct?

10. Exekiel's Exodus (Exagoge) is an Alexandrian Jewish play of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt, using Greek tragic structure and devices. It is not completely preserved, but does survive to a great extent. Fill-in the rest of the script and stage the play at an arranged time for the class. About 7 students are needed for a theatre company. The text is in James Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 2, pp. 803-819; see also Howard Jacobson's The Exagoge of Exekiel.