

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Semester I, 1987-88

History 572

Kenneth Sacks

Judaism and Hellenism

General reference works, to be found in the reference rooms at memorial and H.C. White Libraries. Use them frequently!

Encyclopaedia Judaica DS/=102.8/-496

Oxford Classical Dictionary (2nd ed.): DE/5/09

All readings are from books purchased for this course or from the reserve collection at H.C. White Library. These are a very limited number of copies of books and articles for this course there, so please be considerate when using them.

Meeting I (Sept. 10): General Background to the Greco-Judaic World.

A. Schalit, World History of the Jewish People, vol. VI: The Hellenistic Age, pp. 33-50.

W.F. Albright, "The Biblical Period," in L. Finkelstein, The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion, pp. 3-65.

Meeting II (Sept. 17): A Closer Look at Contacts.

V. Tcherikover, Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews, 1-36.

E. Bickerman, From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees, 1-53.

M. Hades, Hellenistic Culture, cc. 1-4, 6-7.

A. Momigliano, Alien Wisdom, 74-96.

Meeting III (TBA): Hellenization of Judaea to 175.

Josephus, Ant. xii 1-4 (= pp. 1-12).

Diodorus Siculus, xviii 43, xx 113; xxi 4b.5.

Appian, Syrian Wars c. 52.

Tcherikover, 39-142.

M. Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism, I, 1-106, or:

M. Hengel, Jews, Greeks and Barbarians, 1-92.

E. Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, vol. I (2nd ed.), 136-145.

Meeting IV (Oct. 1): Ecclesiastes or Koheleth: Early Response to Hellenization. **First papers due today.**

Ecclesiastes (all).

R. Gordis, Koheleth: The Man and his World, 22-38, 51-58, 63-68.

Hengel, I, 107-130.

Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, ed. by R.B.Y. Scott, 196-206.

E. Bickerman, Four Strange Books of the Bible, 139-167.

Meeting V (Oct. 8): Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sira) and Proverbs: Rejection of Hellenism?

Ecclesiasticus (all).

Proverbs 1-9

R. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times, 352-398.

Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism I, 131-169.

Tcherikover, 142-151.

L. Perdue, Wisdom and Cult, 142-155.

E. Schürer, History of the Jewish People, III.1 (2nd ed.), 198-212.

Meeting VI (Oct. 15) Greeks and Jews in Alexandria.

M. Stern, Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism I, 20-52, 62-86, 389-421.

Tcherikover, 269-377.

P. Fraser, Ptolemaic Alexandria I, 38-86, 281-286, 298-300.

J.G. Gager, Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism (skim).

M. Stern, "The Jews in Greek and Latin Literature," in The Jewish People in the First Century, ed. by S. Safrai and M. Stern, II, 1101-1117.

L. Feldman, "The Orthodoxy of the Jews in Hellenistic Egypt," Jewish Social Studies xxii (1960), 215-237.

J. Daniel, "Anti-Semitism in the Hellenistic Roman Period," Journal of Biblical Literature xcvi (1979), 45-65.

Meeting VII (Oct. 22): The Purpose of the Apologetics. Second paper due today.

Bickerman, From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees, 54-92.

Fraser I, 687-716.

Pfeiffer, 197-232.

Hadas, c. 8.

V. Tcherikover, "Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered," Eos xlvi (1956), 169-193.

A. Haire Forster, "Propaganda Analysis Applied to Alexandrian-Jewish Apologetic," in The Study of the Bible Today and Tomorrow, ed. by Harold R. Willoughby, 268-278.

Meeting VIII (Oct. 29); Letter of Aristeas and the Creation of the Septuagint.

Letter of Aristeas to Philocrates, ed. by M. Hadas, pp. 1-9, 59-84, 92-227.

V. Tcherikover, "The Ideology of the Letter of Aristeas," Harvard Theological Review li (1958), 59-85.

S. Jellicoe, "The Occasion and Purpose of the Letter of Aristeas: A Reexamination," New Testament Studies, xii (1966), 144-150.

O. Murray, "Aristeas and Ptolemaic Kingship," Journal of Theological Studies xviii (1967), 337-371.

- G.E. Howard, "The Letter of Aristeas and Diaspora Judaism,"
Journal of Theological Studies xxii (1971), 337-348.
 S.P. Brock, "The Phenomenon of the Septuagint,"
Oudtestamentische Studiën xvii (1972), 11-36.
 E. Schürer, History of the Jewish People, III, .1 (2nd ed.) 474-480.

Meeting IX (Nov. 5): Maccabean Revolt, 175-161.

- I Maccabees 1-9:22.
 II Maccabees (all).
 Josephus, Ant. xii 5-11 (= pp. 12-42).
 Daniel 8:23-26; 9:24-27; 11:21-45.
 Tcherikover, 152-234, 381-390, 395-400, 404-409 (optional).
 Momigliano Alien Wisdom, 102-112.
 Bickerman, From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees, 93-135.
 Hengel, I, 95-99, 277-314.
 Schürer, 136-173, esp. 150, n. 32 nnd 152, n. 37.
 O. Mörholm, Antiochus IV of Syria, 64-101.

Meeting X (Nov. 12): Hasmonean Rule: Freedom and Imperialism, 161-105.
Third paper due today.

- I Maccabees, 9:23 to end.
 Josephus, Ant. xiii 1-10 (= pp. 42-90).
 Tcherikover, 234-265.
 Schürer, 174-215.
 Bickerman, From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees, 136-182.

Meeting XI (Nov. 19): Resistance, Acceptance, and Apocalypse.

- I Maccabees 9.
 II Maccabees 6:18-35, 12:38-48.
The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 1 (ed. by James Charlesworth), pp 317-320; 354-361; 364 line 97-369 line 349; 373 line 489-380.
 Daniel (all).
 Hengel I, 180-218.
Book of Daniel, ed. by Louis Hartman, 46-54, 62-71.
 J.J. Collins, "Jewish Apocalyptic against its Hellenistic Near Eastern Environment," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research ccxx (1975), 27-36.

Meeting XII (Dec. 3): Two Important Splinter Groups: Pharisees and Hasidim (Pietists)

- I Maccabees 2:42; 7:13-14; II Maccabees 14.6.
 Daniel 11:33-35
 Josephus, Ant. XIII 10.5-7 (pp. 89-90): War II 162-166.
 L. Finkelstein, The Pharisees I, 73-100, 145-159; II, 570-625.
 Hadas, 264-280.
 Hengel I, 175-180.

L. Bronner, Sects and Separatism during the Second Jewish Commonwealth: skim for background.

R. Marcus, "The Pharisees in the Light of Modern Scholarship," Journal of Religion xxxii (1952), 153-164.

E. Rivkin, "Pharisaism and the Crisis of the Individual in the Greco-Roman World," Jewish Quarterly Review, lxi (1970), 27-53.

Meeting XIII (Dec. 10): Wisdom of Solomon: Near the End of the Struggle.

Wisdom of Solomon (= The Book of Wisdom): all.

The Wisdom of Solomon, ed. by David Winston, 20-64.

J. Reider, The Book of Wisdom, 1-5, 9-43.

S. Lange, "The Wisdom of Solomon and Plato," Journal of Biblical Literature, lv (1936), 293-302.

Parti, Wisdom and Cult, 216-219.

E. Schürer, History of the Jewish People III.1 (2nd ed.) 568-579.

Final papers will be discussed.

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Semester 1, 1987-88

History 572: Judaism and Hellenism

Mr. Sacks

Meetings I and II:

1. What are the types of institutions and cultural values important to the Greek and Jewish experiences?
2. What are the potential areas of harmony and conflict?

Meeting III:

1. What do we mean by Hellenistic Culture? What was its relationship to the indigenous populations of the Near East during the Third Century, B.C.?
2. How were the Jews affected by Seleucid and Ptolemaic policies and actions? Were the Jews forced to take sides, and, if so, which sides did they take?
3. Who were the Tobiads, and what was their role in understanding Third and Century Palestine and her relationship to Hellenistic culture?
4. How did Antiochus III treat the Jews of Palestine and why?

Meeting IV:

1. What are the dating and circumstances of the composition of Ecclesiastes?
2. What is its relationship to Hebrew, Egyptian and Near Eastern Wisdom literature? Is there a new departure within Koheleth's philosophy?
3. Is Koheleth influenced by Greek thought? If so, how? Does he seem to accept Greek ideas or is there evidence of rejection and/or syncretism?
4. Is Koheleth a hedonist? Is his philosophy a dead end or does he express reason for hope?

First Paper Topic: What are the types of institutions important to the Greek and Hebrew experience which, by the Third Century B.C., could potentially result in general harmony and/or conflict between the two civilizations? Pay particular attention to cultural values which could result in philosophical/religious syncretisms or reactions.

Meeting V:

1. What is "wisdom" to ben Sira and to the author(s) of Proverbs? How does it compare to that understood by Koholeth?
2. In general in Judaism, have there been to his time any changes in the notion of wisdom and in the teaching of wisdom?
3. What is Sira's advice to the Jewish gentleman?
4. How threatening is Hellenism to ben Sira? Does the threat loom larger for him than for Koholeth?
5. How does ben Sira reflect the cultural crisis of the early Second Century, B.C., in Palestine?

Meeting VI:

1. What is the political and economic status of Jews in Alexandria down to c. 150? How does their position compare to that of the Egyptians and Greeks?
2. Is there any evidence of Egyptian or Greek anti-Semitism or racial tension during this period? Include any evidence of negative portrayals of the Jews in Greco-Egyptian literature.
3. If so, what conditions and factors are the cause of such a situation?

Meeting VII:

1. What kinds of materials compose the Jewish apologetics and what are their main purposes?
2. How does Jewish apologetic literature relate to the sacred literature in the Bible?

Is it factually consistent with Biblical writings?

Does it represent a continuation of the "holy word"?

3. Are there any indications that this material reflects the influence of Hellenism? In what way?

Second Paper Topic: Compare and contrast the lives (as we conjecture them) and works of Koheleth and ben Sira: what do they perceive to be the main social and cultural problems of their day and how do they propose to deal with them.

Meeting VIII:

1. What are the circumstances in which the Septuagint was created? What is the purpose of the LXX: who was it aimed at, and what, if any, was its immediate effect?
2. How accurately does Aristeas describe the process of the creation of the LXX?
3. What are the circumstances and purpose of the Letter of Aristeas? What is his message and who is he aiming it at?

Meeting IX:

1. What is the chronology of 170-167, and why is the order of events important for our understanding of the responsibility for the war? Do the Book of Daniel and material in Josephus affect the interpretation of the events recounted in I and II Maccabees?
2. Why did Antiochus IV impose his policy of Hellenisation on the Jews of Palestine?
3. What did Judah Maccabee hope to accomplish from the time of Lysias' concessions in 163/2 until his own death in 161? Who were his friends, and who were his enemies?

Meeting X:

1. What was the aim of Hasmonean imperialism and what was the Hasmonean policy toward the Seleucid monarch?
2. What were the sources for Jewish support of and antagonism towards the Hasmonean monarchy?
3. How lasting were the anti-Hellenistic reforms in Palestine? What evidence of Hellenistic influence can be found within the Hasmonean dynasty?

Third Paper Topic: It states in Deuteronomy that, because of the enslavement of the Hebrews by Pharaoh, the Jews are subsequently forbidden to go to Egypt. Yet by the third and second centuries, B.C., they are back in great numbers--why? From the material that we've read, did they consider themselves well off in Egypt, spiritually and materially? What attempts did they make to convince themselves and others that they were?

Meeting XI:

1. What is apocalyptic and how does it differ from prophetic literature and thought?
2. What are the historical circumstances which give rise to such thinking in the time of Daniel and I & II Maccabees?
3. How do you account for the theological differences between Daniel/Maccabees and the Third Sibylline Oracle?
4. What, if any, is the influence of Near Eastern and/or Greek thought on Jewish apocalypics?

Meeting XII:

1. From our reading of the past two meetings on the Maccabees and from this week on the Pharisees, who were the Hasidim and what role did they play in the rebellion during the decade of the 160's?
2. What are the main tenants of the Pharisees?--
 - their social composition
 - their religious and philosophical outlooks
 - how do these compare for those of the Sadducees?
3. From the readings for last meeting (X) and this week, what roles do the Pharisees and Sadducees play in Jewish history during the second half of the Second Century, B.C.?
4. How did the Hellenistic reforms of 175-167 and the subsequent Maccabean rebellion affect the major outlooks of Judaism?
 - Who carried on with Hellenism and how?
 - Who opposed Hellenism and how?
 - Were the issues the same for the period of 160-104 as there were for earlier decade of the 160's?

Questions for Week XIII:

1. What is the main purposes of the Wisdom of Solomon?
2. How does the concept of wisdom within this work compare with that in Koheleth and ben Sira?
3. How does the concept(s) of resurrection and/or apocalypse compare with such thoughts in Daniel?
4. What, if any, are the main lines of Greek influence on the work?