

## SYLLABUS

*In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit any written work that is to be graded in English or in French.*

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information).

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. John Efron *et al.*, *The Jews: A History*, Pearson-Prentice-Hall, 2009.
2. Coursepack

*The textbook (and the Coursepack after a few weeks) will be available on Reserve in the library.*

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STUDENTS MUST READ **pp. 1-146** IN THE TEXTBOOK AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN THE TERM. THIS WILL PROVIDE A BASIC FAMILIARITY WITH WHAT IS DISCUSSED IN CLASS AND IN THE SPECIFIC ARTICLES IN THE COURSEPACK.

Week 1 1-8 IX

1. Introduction to the Course
2. Alexander the Great
3. Ptolemaic Rule

Readings:

Erich S. Gruen, "Hellenistic Judaism," *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (NY: Schocken, 2002), 77-132.

*Coursepack Materials*

The Political Order in Palestine under the Ptolemies

Week 2 13-15 IX

4. Seleucid Period
5. Hellenism?

Readings:

Jonathan Goldstein, "Jewish Acceptance and Rejection of Hellenism," *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 2: "Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period," ed. E. P. Saunders, A. Baumgarten, A. Mendelson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981, pp. 64-87.

*Coursepack Materials*

Hecateus of Abdera

Posidonius

Week 3 20-22 IX

**Book Review due September 20**

6. Maccabean Revolt
7. Hasmonean Dynasty
8. Roman Influence; Roman Rule

Readings:

Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*. New York: Atheneum, 1970, pp. 152-203, 463-479.

*Coursepack Materials*

II Maccabees 4:1-25

Week 4 27-29 IX

9. "Sectarians": 1
10. "Sectarians": 2
11. The Great Revolt

Reading:

Lawrence H. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple Judaism*. Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav Publishing House, 1991, pp. 98-138.

Week 5 4-6 X

12. Early Christianity
13. Diaspora Communities

Readings:

Seth Schwartz, "Christianization," in his *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* Princeton UP, 2001, 179-201.

Tal Ilan, "Women in Jewish Life and Law," *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. IV: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period, ed. Steven T. Katz, Cambridge UP, 2006 [=CH IV], 627-646.

[http://histories.cambridge.org/uid=1763/pdf\\_handler?id=chol9780521772488\\_CHOL9780521772488A026&pdf\\_hh=1](http://histories.cambridge.org/uid=1763/pdf_handler?id=chol9780521772488_CHOL9780521772488A026&pdf_hh=1)

Week 6 11-13 X

14. Bar Kokhba
15. Rabbinic Judaism: 1

Readings:

Hanan Eshel, "The Bar Kochba Revolt," *CH IV*, 105-127.

[http://histories.cambridge.org/uid=1763/extract?id=chol9780521772488\\_CHOL9780521772488A006](http://histories.cambridge.org/uid=1763/extract?id=chol9780521772488_CHOL9780521772488A006)

Shaye J. D. Cohen, "The Significance of Yavneh: Pharisees, Rabbis and the End of Jewish Sectarianism," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984), pp. 27-53.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0000945712&site=ehost-live>

Daniel Boyarin, "On Stoves, Sex, and Slave-Girls: Rabbinic Orthodoxy and the Definition of Jewish Identity," *Hebrew Studies* 41 (2000), pp. 169-188.

Judah Goldin, "Toward a Profile of the Tanna, Aqiba ben Joseph," in *idem, Studies in Midrash and Related Literature*, ed. B. Eichler, J. Tigay. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1988, pp. 299-323.

Week 7 18 (**Midterm**) -20 X

16. Rabbinic Judaism: 2

- 17. Rabbinic Judaism: 3
- 18. Adversus Judaeos

Readings:

Robert Goldenberg, "Law and Spirit in Talmudic Religion," *Jewish Spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages*, ed. Arthur Green. New York: Crossroad, 1986, pp. 232-252.

*Coursepack Materials*

Rabbis in the First Two Centuries

Tractate Berakhot: first page

Rabbinic Tradition

Orders of the Mishnah and the Talmud

From Midrash Literature

Week 8 25-27 X

- 19. Jews and Arabs/Islam and Jews

Reading:

Reuven Firestone, "Jewish Culture in the Formative Period of Islam," *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (NY: Schocken, 2002), 267-302.

Week 9 1-3 XI

- 20. The Muslim Conquests
- 21. Socio Economic Changes
- 22. Khazaria

Reading: *Coursepack Materials*  
Routes of Jewish Merchants

Week 10 8-10 XI

- 23. Redisposition of Jewish Leadership I
- 24. Redisposition of Jewish Leadership II
- 25. Messianic and Sectarian Resistance I

Reading:

Daniel J. Lasker, "Rabbinism and Karaism," *Great Schisms in Jewish History*, ed. R. Jospe, S. Wagner. New York: Ktav, 1981, pp. 47-72.

Menahem Ben-Sasson, "Varieties of Inter-Communal Relations in the Gaonic Period," *The Jews of Medieval Islam: Community, Society, Identity*, ed. Daniel Frank. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995, pp. 17-31.

*Coursepack Materials*

On the History of Jewish Sects

## The Conventional Story of Anan's Schism

Week 11 15-17 XI

### Term Paper due November 15

- 26. Messianic and Sectarian Resistance II
- 27. Cultural Achievements I
- 28. Cultural Achievements II

Reading:

Robert Brody, *The Geonim of Babylonia and the Shaping of Medieval Jewish Culture* (Yale UP, 1998), pp. 137-154, 185-201, 235-248.

Week 12 22-24 XI

- 29. Decentralized Leadership
- 30. Maimonides
- 31. The World of the Geniza

Reading:

S. D. Goitein, *Jews and Arabs: Their Contacts through the Ages*. New York: Schocken Books, 1964, pp. 89-124.

Week 13 29 XI – 1 XII

- 32. Muslim Spain 1
- 33. Muslim Spain 2
- 34. Summary

Reading:

Ross Brann, "Andalusian Hebrew Poetry and the Hebrew Bible: Cultural Nationalism or Cultural Ambiguity," *Approaches to Judaism in Medieval Times* 3 (1988), pp. 101-131.

Ross Brann, "Judah Halevi, the Compunctious Poet," *Prooftexts* 7 (1987), 123-143.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=7159405&site=ehost-live>

### *Coursepack Materials*

Verse by Dunash ibn Labrat

Poem by Moses ibn Ezra