

Jews and Judaism in Antiquity

HIST 1600, NELC 1600, JWST 1600

Tentative Syllabus



The Arch of Titus (Rome)

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 Tues/Thurs 8:30-10am
 Location: TBD
 Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12 (842 Williams Hall)

Course Description

What is Judaism? Who are Jews? How did ancient Jews – and the modern scholars who study them – variously define and understand those terms and what they signify? These questions are particularly salient in the formative period covered by this course, spanning the Exile of Judah following the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE, until the rise of Islamic rule over a thousand years later.

The course is structured chronologically while focusing on continuities and changes in several key thematic areas. The course introduces students to the major political, social, and cultural developments in Jewish history, including: the rise of regional Jewish identities following the Exile of Judah; the formation of “scripture(s);” the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucids and the rise of Jewish autonomy; the life and death of Jesus and the movement(s) that formed around him; the destruction of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem the rise of synagogues; the rabbis and the production of rabbinic literature; and more. The course assesses the shifting notions of Jewishness under different imperial contexts, engaging diverse thought, practice and institutional changes through material, textual, and visual culture.

The course views history not as a mechanical act of retrieving the past; it is an ongoing process of knowledge production that changes based on interpretation, methodology, and evidence we include (or ignore). The aim of this course is not for students to memorize ancient Jewish history as a series of already established facts, but to think critically about what we think we know, why we think we know it, and to feel empowered to consider alternative models

The Importance of Historical Context:

This course takes it as axiomatic that Israelite and Jewish history cannot—and should not—be isolated from broader historical processes. Throughout the long period of time that this course covers, Jews lived within or alongside a dizzying succession of imperial powers: Assyria, Babylonia, Achaemenid Persia, the Hellenistic monarchies, Rome and Christian Rome (Byzantium), Sasanian Persia, and Islam. These empires do not just provide a useful background to understanding Jewish history, but played integral roles in its unfolding. So did the cultural, social, economic, and political currents in each period. We will, therefore, approach the history of the “Jewish people” within the broader context of ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean history.

Writing requirements

Submission. All assignments should be submitted on the day and time it is due. If for whatever reason you require an extension, please contact me *prior to the deadline*.

Formatting. Submit papers as an MS Word document. Text must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and twelve-point Times New Roman font. Use 0.5-inch tabs at the start of paragraphs and no spaces between paragraphs. Number your pages but do not add a cover page.

*The Chicago Manual
of Style*
chicagomanualofstyle.org

Writing style. All papers completed for this class must be written in formal, academic prose, with correct grammar and punctuation and attention to style. Use Chicago style footnotes and bibliographic citations for this class.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when writers misrepresent others’ work as their own. To be sure when to cite your sources in written assignments, read [“Is It Plagiarism Yet?”](#) If I suspect that you have submitted work that is not your own, the two of us will enter into a period of collective misery. So, please, save us both a lot of grief: do your own work, learn something in the process, feel justifiable pride in that accomplishment, and enjoy the learning experience!

Grading:

1. Participation – 15%

Our class meets twice a week and will incorporate lectures, collaborative work, as well as partner study. Regular attendance and preparation of assigned material will be essential to the success of our intellectual community. You will be graded on attendance and articulation:

- Attendance: Regular attendance is mandatory. Students have one unexcused absence, no questions asked. Subsequent absences may significantly affect your grade. When possible, speak to Prof. Gross in advance if you must miss class for religious holiday, illness, or other essential reasons.
- Articulation: Students are expected to voice their thoughts, concerns, and questions during classroom discussion and study. During discussions, dinner-party rules apply. While we talk around the table (aka class discussion), we will set our phones, laptops, and other nagging devices aside. Maximum credit is given to

students who are engaged in each class through discussion, questions, suggestions, and general involvement and interest.

- Preparation: Your ability to contribute to class is dependent on how well you prepare in advance. You may prepare by doing the readings, reviewing notes, and, when interested, investigating further on your own. The response papers (see next section) are meant to help you prepare fully for each class.

2. Assignment 1: Jew vs. Judean: Response Paper – 10%

Read the *Jew and Judean Forum* published by Marginalia, focusing on the following: Adele Reinhartz - <http://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/vanishing-jews-antiquity-adele-reinhartz/> + Steve Mason - <http://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/ancient-jews-judeans-different-questions-different-answers-steve-mason/> + Annette Reed - <http://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/ioudaios-religion-annette-yoshiko-reed/>, as well as Seth Schwartz, “How Many Judaisms Were There,” 221-238.

In a 1000 word essay, address the following questions: What appear to be the points of disagreement among the scholars? What evidence do they use to support their claims? How do others interpret that same evidence? What position (or positions) did you find most persuasive and why?

3. Assignment 2: Jew and Judean in the New Testament – 10%

Choose ONE text in the New Testament, and within an English translation of the text, search for the term “Jew” (see, e.g., searchable [online](#) RSV): Inasmuch as this English translation conventionally renders Greek *Ioudaios*, consider whether there are passages in which it would make a difference in meaning to translate the Greek term in a geographical/ethnic sense as “Judean” instead of “Jew.” Does your text include any good examples of why some scholars (e.g., Steve Mason) suggest that the translation of *Ioudaios* as “Jew” is anachronistic? If your text does NOT include the term “Jew”—or includes it only rarely—why do you think this is? What are the identity terms that it includes instead to denote insiders, subsets of insiders, outsiders, etc.? If you have time/space to do so, please also reflect on how the term “Jew” functions within your text in relation to other categorical identity-terms with which it is equated (e.g., “Israel”), with which it is contrasted (e.g., “Greek”), and/or which are subsets thereof (e.g., “Pharisees,” “Sadducees,” “scribes,” “priests,” “the people”).

4. Object Biography and Presentation – 20%:

A major part of the practice of writing history is understanding the full range of our available sources, including material culture. This is especially true in the study of religious communities who are often reduced in the modern world to a series of disembodied core tenets and beliefs. As such, students will write a biography and prepare a class presentation (= SP below) on an object they select from the list provided by the instructor. There are two components to this assignment.

A) Each object corresponds to one of the class meetings, during which students will present on their objects for up to 3 minutes. In your presentation, please describe the object, what we know about it, and why it matters. In preparation for the presentation, students must read at least two secondary sources on their object. Student presentations should include a powerpoint presentation.

B) Students must submit a 1000 word “object biography” based on their reading and preparation for the class presentation. These reports are due two days after the student’s presentation.

All of the object reports will be assembled online at the end of the semester to create a curated exhibition of artifacts pertaining to the course.

5. Midterm Exam – 20%

The midterm exam will be comprised of short and long synthetic essay questions on major themes and material covered in class.

6. Final Exam – 25%

The final exam will be comprised of short and long synthetic essay questions on major themes and material covered in class.

Required Books:

1. Lawrence Schiffman, *Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (USED copy: [https://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/B00866AJ9C/ref=tmm other meta binding used olp sr?ie=UTF8&condition=used&qid=&sr=](https://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/B00866AJ9C/ref=tmm_other_meta_binding_used_olp_sr?ie=UTF8&condition=used&qid=&sr=))

2. Seth Schwartz, *The Ancient Jews from Alexander to Muhammad* (<https://www.amazon.com/Ancient-Alexander-Muhammad-Themes-History/dp/1107669294>)

All Other Readings: Available on Course Site.

Well-being

We are living in uncertain and unprecedented times, and may be dealing with a range of issues that interfere with our ability to succeed in this class over the course of the semester. I will regularly check in with students on their wellbeing and in order to optimize the structure of the course for our individual needs. Students should feel free to contact the instructor with any issues or concerns related to the class or the students' academic life in general, and I will do my best to help accommodate and sort out the issues at hand.

I. Introduction: What is it we are studying?

Class 1: Introduction: Defining Jews and Judaism?

- Who are “Jews”? What is “Judaism”? What are the different ways these questions might be answered? What categories are commonly used to answer these questions, and how useful are they? What are the major themes we will explore throughout the semester? How does the approach of this class differ from other kinds of approaches to the study of ancient Jews and Judaism?

Secondary Reading:

Mike Chin, “Marvelous Things Heard: On Finding Historical Radiance,” *The Massachusetts Review* 58 (2017), 478-491 [13 pages].

- Reading Preparation:
 - o What is the approach to the past that Chin seeks to replace with the term “radiance/radiant historiography”?
 - o What are the intellectual and moral benefits of studying ancient history according to Chin?

Class 2: Who do we study and how do we study?

- What kind of evidence and sources do we have, and how should we use them? What sources have traditionally been privileged, what kinds of narratives do they encourage, and how might “broadening the archive” change who we study, what we study, and how we study?

Primary Sources:

Numbers 6:22-27 and Ketef Hinnom Amulets (translations in Smoak article)

Secondary Sources

Sarah Anne Carter and Ivan Gaskell, “Introduction: Why History and Material Culture?” in *The Oxford Handbook of History and Material Culture* eds. Sarah Anne Carter and Ivan Gaskell (OUP 2020), 1-13 [13 pages]

The inaugural editorial of *Material Religion* 1 (2005), 4-8 [4 pages]

- Reading Preparation:
 - o Consider the different benefits the two pieces list for studying material culture alongside texts. How do they complement, supplement, or offer an entirely different vantage point from the literary documents typically privileged by scholars of history and religion?

Jeremy D. Smoak, “You have Refined us like Silver is Refined” (PS 66:10): Yahweh’s Metallurgical Powers in Ancient Judah,” *AABNER* 1 (2021): 81–107 [26 pages]

- Reading Preparation:
 - What are the Ketef Hinnom amulets? What do they say?
 - How do scholars think they compare with texts found in the Bible? What are the different possible options?
 - How does Smoak use a material religions approach to better understand not just the incantation on the amulets, but the choice of silver and design of the amulets?
- Class Exercise: Preparing for Object Report and Material Religion
 - Break up into groups to write short object reports on the following pieces of public art at Penn:
 - Benjamin Franklin in front of College Hall, 1896.
 - Split Button, Van Pelt, 1981.
 - “Ben on the Bench,” 1987.
 - Love Sculpture, 1999
 - Brick House, 2020.
 - Questions to consider:
 - What were the supposed occasions for the commissioning and creating of these pieces? What do those occasions tell us about the way administrators, students, and other interested parties experienced Penn at that time?
 - Who was the artist? In what ways does the piece reflect the specifications of the commissioner(s) and in what way the choices of the artist?
 - In what ways do they reflect ideas of their time about anything from culture, politics, religion, society, to commemoration, art, acts of memory, architecture, design.
 - How are these pieces experienced today? How does the current understanding and interaction with these monuments relate to the original purpose and intention behind their creation?

II. The Persian Period: Creating Torah and Defining Jewishness

Class 3: The “Torah of Moses” and the Achaemenid Empire

- Why not begin the course with “The Bible” or the “Biblical period”? Why begin in the Persian period? What is “The Torah of Moses” according to works from the Persian period (especially Ezra and Nehemiah)? How does it relate to “the Torah” as it is conventionally understood today? Is the appearance of “the Torah of Moses” generated in some way by Achaemenid Persian rule?

Primary Sources:

Ezra 7 and Nehemiah 8

Secondary Reading:

Seth Schwartz, *The Ancient Jews*, 23-29 [6 pages]

Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Was the Pentateuch the Civil and Religious Constitution of the Jewish Ethnos in the Persian Period,” in *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* ed. James Watts (SBL Press, 2001), 41-62 [21 pages]

Michael Satlow, *How the Bible Became Holy*, 69-84 [15 pages]

Class 4: Those who Returned and Those who Remained

- The return of some “Jews” to Judah after decades and then more than a century, and their confrontation with those who had remained, raised a crucial set of questions that we will engage throughout the semester: who were Jews, what made a Jew a Jew and according to whom? Did they even use the term “Jew” or something else, and what do those terms tell us about their self-understanding?
- Apart from explicit discussions of identity in some sources, what do Jewish texts and artifacts from three regions – Egypt, Babylonia, and Judah – tell us about different ways of being Jewish at this time?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Traditions, 96-99.

- Why does Schiffman refer to this group as “the Samaritans”? Why does he call this the “Samaritan schism”? Are these terms found in the primary sources themselves? Consider other approaches to the social and identitarian dynamics at play here.

Texts and Traditions, 104-110, Ezra 9-10.

- What practice(s) of the people in Judah trouble(s) Ezra and his associates? Based on what authority do they condemn these practices? On what basis might the people engaging in these practices have done so?

Secondary Reading:

Katherine Southwood, “The Holy Seed: The Significance of Endogamous Boundaries and Their Transgression in Ezra 9–10,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period Negotiating Identity in an International Context* ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Eisenbrauns, 2011), 189-208 [19 pages]

Laurie E. Pearce, “‘Judean’: A Special Status in Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Babylonia?,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period*, 267-275 [8 pages]

Student Presentation (= SP):

1. Yehud Stamp Seals
2. Yehud Coinage

Class 5: Esther and Ruth, Political and Social Commentaries?

Primary Sources:

The Book of Esther and the Book of Ruth

Secondary Reading:

Neil Glover, “Your People, My People: An Exploration of Ethnicity in Ruth,” *JSOT* 33 (2009): 293-313 [20 pages]

Adele Berlin, “The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling,” *JBL* 120 (2001), 3-14 [11 pages]

III. Greek Rule and its Discontents: Hellenism, Scripture, and Revolt

Class 6: Hellenistic Rule

- How did the conquests of Alexander the Great and the rule of his successors impact Jewish life—religiously, politically, culturally? In what way did Greek imperialism differ from Persian imperialism? How might these differences impact Jewish life, culture, identity, and more?
- What do different scholars mean when they use the term “Hellenism”? What conceptual and evidentiary baggage does the term carry, and can it still be salvaged?

Primary Sources:

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 11.321-347 (Alexander), Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12.129-146 (Antiochus III), found in *Texts and Tradition* 130-133, 136-138.

Secondary Readings:

Schwartz, *The Ancient Jews*, 29-38 [9 pages]

Sylvie Honigman, “Jewish Communities of Hellenistic Egypt: Different Responses to Different Environments,” in *Jewish Identities in Antiquity* ed. Lee Levine and Daniel Schwartz (Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 117-135 [18 pages]

John Collins, “What is Hellenistic Judaism,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 53 (2002), 567-576 [9 pages]

SP:

- 3. Golden Earring with Animal Head
- 6. Zenon Papyri

Class 7: Greek Jewish Culture: When Moses meets Aeschylus

- Compare and contrast Gruen and Whitmarsh's approaches. What does Jewish literary production in Greek under Greek rule say about Jewish self-definition in relation to the dominance of Greek culture?

Primary Sources:

Ezekiel the Tragedian

Secondary Reading:

Erich Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (U of California, 1998), 110-136 [26 pages].

Tim Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic: Adventures in Greek Postclassicism*, 211-227 [16 pages]

Class 8: The Hasmonean/Maccabean Revolt and its Memory

- What is the traditional story about the causes for the Hasmonean revolt (hint: it's "Hellenism!")? Why have scholars challenged this story in favor of new approaches (Honigman and Ma)?
- Upon what different assumption about the nature of 1 and 2 Maccabees do these new approaches rest? How do scholars simultaneously question the historicity and reliability of aspects of these sources, while also using them to reconstruct the causes of the revolt?
- How do 1 and 2 Maccabees differ from one another? What do they tell us about the different ways later Jews thought of the causes of the revolt (Himmelfarb).

Primary Sources:

1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees

Secondary Reading:

Schwartz, *The Ancient Jews*, 39-58 [19 pages]

Martha Himmelfarb, "Judaism and Hellenism in 2 Maccabees," *Poetics Today* 19 (1988): 19-40 [21 pages]

John Ma, "Re-Examining Hanukkah," *Marginalia*, July 9th, 2013 [c. 5 pages]

Sylvie Honigman, “Religious Persecution or High Taxes? The Causes of the Maccabean Revolt against Antiochus IV,” *The Bible and Interpretation*
(<https://bibleinterp.arizona.edu/articles/2014/10/hon388014>) [c. 2 pages]

SP:

4. Hasmonean Coins (Antigonos II)
5. Hasmonean Mikvah

Class 9: Hasmonean Expansion, “Conversion,” and Circumcision: From Ethnicity to Ethno-religion?

Primary Sources:

2 Maccabees 9:12-17 (Antiochus IV) Judith 14:10 (Achior), Josephus 13.9-15 (Idumeans, Itureans).

Secondary Reading

Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 15-26 [11 pages].

Cynthia Baker, “Terms of Debate,” in *Jew* (Key Terms in Jewish Studies; New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2017), 16-46 [30 pages]

IV. Textual Imaginations: The Emergence of “Scriptures”

Class 10: The Development of “Scripture”

- This class will think seriously about the categories that have shaped the varying reception of certain literary works from Jewish antiquity: “The Bible,” “Canon,” “Apocrypha,” “Pseudepigrapha,” and more recently, “Parabiblical Scripture” and “Rewritten Scripture.” How do these different terms elevate and marginalize certain works, and what assumptions do they encode about these varying works and their standing in the eyes of ancient Jews?
- Compare Jubilees

Primary Sources:

1 Enoch 1-20, Genesis 6, Epistle of Jude 1:14-15.

Jubilees 1-2 with Exodus 19-20 and Genesis 2:1-3, Jubilees 3 with Leviticus 12, Jubilees 17-18 with Genesis 22

Secondary Reading:

Annette Yoshiko Reed, “Canon,” *Marginalia* [c. 5 pages]

Molly Zahn, “Rewritten Scripture,” *Oxford Handbooks Online* [c. 10 pages]

Sidnie Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times*, 60-82 [22 pages]

Class 11: Ongoing and Replicated Revelation, End Times

Primary Sources:

Ben Sira 40-50, Letter of Aristeas, Daniel 7-8, Daniel 10-12.

Secondary Readings

Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity*, 86-96 [10 pages]

Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, 1-19 [19 pages]

Anathea Portier-Young, "Jewish Apocalyptic Literature as Resistance Literature," in *Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature* ed. John J. Collins (Oxford, 2014), 145-160 [15 pages]

V. The Temple(s) and the Rise of the Jewish Sects

Class 12: Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes (oh my!): Defining and Understanding Jewish "Sectarianism"

- What were the sects? Is that an appropriate term (see Baumgarten)? Why may they have come into being? What were the differences between them? Is our primary source on the sects, Josephus, a transparent description lacking artifice (see Haaland)? What do the existence of these groups tell us about changes to Jewish conceptions of cosmology, philosophy, practice, law, and more (Goodman)?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 266-284

Secondary Readings

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 59-74.

Albert Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era: An Interpretation* (1999), 5-33, 114-135 [21 pages]

Martin Goodman, "Religious Variety and the Temple in the Late Second Temple Period and Its Aftermath," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 60 (2009): 202-13 [11 pages]

SP

7. Phylacteries (Tefillin) from Qumran

Class 13: The Dead Sea Community: Representative or Unique, to Lump or to Split?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 285-299; 354-367, Selections from Damascus Document, War Scroll, Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.

Secondary Reading

Timothy Lim, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction*, 84-105 [21 pages]

Jodi Magness, “The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Archaeology of the Holy Land From the Destruction of Solomon’s Temple to the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge, 2012), 108-132 [24 pages]

SP

8. Copper Scroll

VI. Roman Rule to Jewish Revolt

Class 14: The arrival of Rome, Herod and his Construction Projects: What are the purposes of imperial monuments?

Primary Source:

Watch Israel Museum clip on Herod’s construction projects
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nT97R3R0BHg>)

Secondary Reading

Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism in Jewish Palestine*, 42-66 [24 pages]

Adele Berlin, “Herod the Tastemaker,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77 (2014), 108-119 [11 pages]

Achim Lichtenberger, “Herod and Rome: Was Romanisation a Goal of the Building Policy of Herod?” in *Herod and Augustus: Papers Presented at the IJSConference, 21st–23rd June 2005*, ed. D. M. Jacobson and N. Kokkinos (Brill, 2009), 43–53 [10 pages].

Class 15: Jews outside of Judea (“Diaspora”): Community, Allegory, and Violence

Primary Sources

Letter of Aristeas, Philo, “Migration of Abraham,” Philo, *Embassy to Gaius*

Secondary Sources

Maren Niehoff, "Comparative Mythology," in *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 77-94 [17 pages]

Sandra Gambetti, *The Alexandrian Riots of 38 C.E. and the Persecution of the Jews: A Historical Reconstruction* (Brill, 2009), 1-6 [6 pages]

(Suggested reading: Heidi Wendt, "Tudaica Romana A Rereading of Judean Expulsions from Rome," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 6 (2015), 97-126)

Class 16: Judean Dissident Groups: Story of Decline or Continuity?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 385-407 [22 pages]

Secondary Reading:

David B. Levenson, "Messianic Movements," *Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 530–35 [5 pages]

Geza Vermes, "Jewish Miracle Workers," *Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 536-37 [1 page]

Adele Berlin, "Romanization and Anti-Romanization in Pre-Revolt Galilee," in *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, history, and ideology* ed. Andrea M. Berlin and J. Andrew Overman (Routledge, 2002), 57-70 [13 pages]

SP:

9. Stone Vessels

10. Clay Lamps

11. Nash papyrus

Class 17: Christ Believers in their Jewish context(s): Parting of Ways to Ways that Never Parted

Primary Sources

Josephus, *Antiquities* 18 (Testimonium Flavianum); Matthew 1, Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount); Epistle to the Romans.

Secondary Reading

Adam Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions," in *The Ways that Never Parted* ed. Adam Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Fortress Press, 2007), 1-3, 16-22 [9 pages]

Matthew Thiessen, “Did Jesus Plan to Start a New Religion?,” in *Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship Between Christianity and Judaism* ed. Gerald McDermott (Bellingham, WA. 2021) 18-32 [14 pages]

Matthew V. Novenson, “Did Paul Abandon Either Judaism or Monotheism?,” *New Cambridge Companion to St. Paul* ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Cambridge 2020), 239-259 [20 pages]

SP:

- 12. Jewish Tombs/Tomb of Jesus
- 13. Menora-Cross from Asia Minor
- 14. Jewish Ossuaries

Class 18: The Great Revolt: Jewish rebels and Jewish facilitators

- - What might have motivated the rebels to revolt (think: economy? Messianism? Nationalism? Something else? All of the above? Depends who you ask?).
- Equally, why did some Jews *refuse* to revolt (Sepphoris), and even join the Romans (pragmatism? Ideology? Nationalism? Prophecy? All of the above? Depends who you ask?).
- Why did the Romans respond to the rebellion the way they did?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition: 435-468

Secondary Reading

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 75-85 [10 pages]

James McLaren and Martin Goodman, “The Importance of Perspective: The Jewish-Roman Conflict of 66–70 CE as a Revolution,” in *Revolt and Resistance in the Ancient Classical World and the Near East : In the Crucible of Empire*, eds. John J. Collins and J.G. Manning (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 205-218 [13 pages]

Steven Mason, “Josephus’ *Judean War*,” in *A Companion to Josephus*, eds. Honora Howell Chapman and Zuleika Rodgers (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2016) 14-35 [21 pages]

SP:

- 15. Jewish Coins minted during the Great Revolt
- 16. Colosseum Inscription

VII. Aftermath

- What were the social, religious, cultural, and political consequences of the suppression of the revolt?

Class 19: Was 70 CE a Watershed? Aftermath of Destruction, Bar Kokhba and the Diaspora Revolts

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 469-470, 487-495; 568-570.

Secondary Reading:

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 85-97 [12 pages]

Daniel R. Schwartz, "Introduction: Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History? Three Stages of Modern Scholarship, and a Renewed Effort," in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History: On Jews and Judaism before and after the Destruction of the Second Temple*, eds. Daniel R. Schwartz and Zeev Weiss (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 1-19 [19 pages]

Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, "The Uprisings in the Jewish Diaspora," in *CHJ* 4, 93-104 [11 pages]

SP:

17. Bar Kokh/siba Coins

18. Incense Shovel from the Cave of Letters

Class 20: Responses to Destruction: The End of Temple, Rise of the Synagogue

- Where did synagogues come from? What roles did they serve in Jewish communities? Who paid for them? Who came to the synagogue, and for what purposes?

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 326-330; 471-474, 479-486, 650-656, 4th Ezra.

Secondary Reading:

Jodi Magness, *The Archeology of the Holy Land: From the Destruction of Solomon's Temple to the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), "Chapter Fourteen: Roman and Late Antique Period Synagogues in Palestine," 286-319 [33 pages]

Rina Talgam, *Mosaics of Faith: Floors of Pagans, Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Muslims in the Holy Land*, chapter 6: The Synagogue as a "Lesser Temple." [12 pages]

(Suggested reading: Leonard Victor Rutgers, "Diaspora Synagogues: Synagogue Archaeology in the Greco-Roman World," in *Sacred Realm: The Emergence of the Synagogue in the Ancient World*, ed. Steven

Fine (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press and the Yeshiva University Museum, 1996), 67-95.)

SP:

19. Magdala Stone

20. Knee/Elbow Keys from Cave of Letters

Class 21: Women and Agency

Primary Sources:

Babatha's Archive, Mary/Miriam the Alchemist

Secondary Reading:

Sara Parks, Shayna Sheinfeld, and Meredith Warren, *Jewish and Christian Women in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Routledge 2021), Chapter 7: "Religion in Daily Life: From Birth to Death."

Kimberley Czajkowski, *Localized Law: The Babatha and Salome Komaise Archives* (Oxford, 2017), 25-59 [24 pages]

SP:

21. Inscriptions of the *Mater Synagogae* and Female *Archisynagogos* (Brooten)

22. Dividers in Ancient Synagogues?

Class 22: The Rise of the Rabbis: Continuity and Change, Dominance to Marginal

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 453-457; 622-632. Mishnah Avot 1-2, Mishnah Avodah Zarah 1-2.

Secondary Reading

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 98-123.

Christine Hayes, "Inventing Rabbis," in *Early Judaism: New Insights and Scholarship*, ed. Frederick Greenspahn (New York: New York University Press, 2018), 199-226 [27 pages]

Katell Berthelot, *Jews and Their Roman Rivals: Pagan Rome's Challenge to Israel* (Princeton, 2021), 257-275 (skim until 300) [18 pages]

SP:

23. Lintel of The Beit Midrash of Rabbi Eliezer ben ha-Kappar

24. Rehov Synagogue Mosaic

Class 23: Christianization of the Holy Land, Imperial Christian Imaginations of Jews

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 574-595, Bourdeaux Pilgrim.

Secondary Reading:

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 124-137 [13 pages]

Paula Fredriksen, “Augustine and ‘Thinking with’ Jews: Rhetoric Pro- and Contra Iudaeos,” *Ancient Jew Review*, February 13, 2018 [c. 5 pages]

Andrew Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews*, Chapter 4: “A Province like Paradise: Jews in Christian Travel Writing,” (Stanford UP, 2004), 103-130 [27 pages]

(Suggested reading: Joshua Levinson, “There Is No Place Like Home: Rabbinic Responses to the Christianization of Palestine,” in *Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire: The Poetics of Power in Late Antiquity*, eds. Natalie B. Dohrmann and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 99-120).

SP:

- 25. Jewish Graffiti from North Africa
- 26. Inscriptions from the Western Jewish Diaspora
- 27. Jewish Catacombs in Rome
- 28. Tiberius Donor Inscription to synagogue of Stobi

Class 24: Late Antique Roman Law: Anti-Jewish or Indirect Harm, Imperially Driven or Local Agitation?

Primary Sources:

Byzantine Laws concerning Jews (selections from Amnon Linder), Justinian’s Novella 146

Secondary Reading

Schwartz, *Ancient Jews*, 137-151 [14 pages]

Ross Kraemer, *The Mediterranean Diaspora in Late Antiquity: What Christianity Cost the Jews*, Chapter 8: “In the aftermath of Theodosius II in the East, 450-604 CE), 276-291 (skim till 314) [15 pages]

Joseph Sanzo and Ra’anan Boustán, “Mediterranean Jews in a Christianizing Empire,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila*, ed. M. Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 360–76 [16 pages]

SP:

29. Love Amulet from H. Rimmon

Class 25: Jewish Byzantine Cultural Production: Lachrymosity to Neo-Lachrymosity

Primary Sources:

Piyyut (Lieber), Jewish Palestinian Aramaic Poems (Lieber).

Secondary Reading:

Lee I. Levine, *Visual Judaism in Late Antiquity: Historical Contexts of Jewish Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), “Art and Jewish Identity in Antiquity,” 456-467 [11 pages]

Oded Irshai, “Confronting a Christian Empire: Jewish Culture in the World of Byzantium,” in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History*, ed. David Biale (New York: Pantheon Books, 2002), 181–221 [40 pages].

(Suggested reading: Ophir Munz-Manor, “Liturgical Poetry in the Late Antique Near East: A Comparative Approach,” *JAJ* 1 (2010), 336-361)

SP:

30. Jewish Aramaic Magical Amulet from the Balkans

31. Huqoq Mosaics

IX. Jews and the Sasanian Empire

Class 25: Jews under Sasanian Rule, from Autonomy to Negotiation, from Static to Dynamic

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 746-748.

Secondary Sources:

Isaiah Gafni, “The Political, Social, and Economic History of Babylonian Jewry, 224–638 CE,” in *Cambridge History of Judaism* 4, 792-820 [28 pages]

Gross, “Historiography of Babylonian Jewish Communities: A Critical Evaluation and Future Directions” in *Routledge Handbook of Jews and Judaism in Late Antiquity* ed. Catherine Hezser [10 pages]

SP:

32. Jewish Sasanian Seals

Class 26: Babylonian Jewish History from the Perspective of the Incantation Bowls

Primary Sources:

Texts and Tradition, 596-604, 610-613, 633-638.

Secondary Reading

Dan Levene, “Curse or Blessing: What’s in the Magic Bowl?” [c. 15 pages]

Gideon Bohak, “Conceptualizing Demons in Late Antique Judaism,” in *Demons and Illness from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period* eds. Siam Bhayro and Catherine Rider (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 111-133 [22 pages]

Kathryn T. McClymond, *Ritual Gone Wrong: What We Learn from Ritual Disruption* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 1-7 [7 pages]

33. Business Incantation Bowl

X. Jews and Islam

Class 27: Jews in Arabia at the Dawn of Islam

Primary Sources:

First Letter of Simeon of Beth Arsham, Qur’ān selections, The Constitution of Medina

Secondary Reading

Fred Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 39-50 (“The Traditional Biography of Muhammad the Prophet”) [11 pages]

Meir M. Bar-Asher, “The Representation of Judaism and Jews in the Qur’an,” in *Jews and the Qur’an* (Princeton University Press, 2022), 27-57 [30 pages]

SP:

34. Jewish Inscriptions in Arabia

35. Jewish Inscriptions from the Kingdom of Himyar

Class 28: From Local to Global: The Abbasids, the Geonim, and Rabbinization

Primary Source:

The “Pact of Umar,” The Epistle of Pirqoi ben Baboi, The Epistle of Sherira Gaon

Secondary Reading

Marina Rustow, "Jews and the Islamic World: Transitions from Rabbinic to Medieval Contexts," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Jewish Studies* ed. Dean Phillip Bell (Bloomsbury, 2013), 90–112 [22 pages]

Milka Levy-Rubin, "The Pact of 'Umar," *Routledge Handbook on Christian-Muslim Relations* (Routledge, 2017) [10 pages].

Robert Brody, *The Geonim of Babylonia and the Shaping of Medieval Jewish Culture* (New Haven: Yale, 1998), 35-53 [18 pages]

(Suggested Reading: Mark Cohen, "Islamic Policy Toward Jews from the Prophet Muhammad to the Pact of 'Umar'," in *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations From the Origins to the Present Day* ed. Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (Princeton University Press, 2013), 58-73).