

## HIST392 DIALOGUE BETWEEN GREEKS AND JEWS THROUGH THE AGES Athens-Chalkida-Thessaloniki and Crete

Summer 2019

**Course Instructor:** Prof Steven Bowman

### Course Description

This month-long seminar will explore the encounter between Jews and Greeks through the past three and a half millennia. Topics include aspects of thought and language, myths and sacred texts, mutual encounters that inter weave like a double helix throughout the history of the two peoples unique in their contributions to western civilization and their influence upon each other and their discipline nations.

The seminar is divided into 4 segments corresponding to 4 periods of their encounter:

The Biblical-Classical period [mid second to mid first millennium BCE];  
Hellenistic Period [mid first millennium BCE to mid first millennium CE];  
Roman-Byzantine [mid first to late second millennium CE]; and  
19<sup>th</sup> and 20 centuries CE

**Class Participation:** Your attendance and in class writing and analysis – is vitally important to your success in this course.

**Use of Laptops:** In-class or on-site use of laptops and other devices is permitted if that facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if there are not used for class-related work.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to report for classes promptly. CYA regards attendance in class and on-site as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately in the Student Affairs Office.

**Policy on Original Work:** Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. (Check Student handbook, pg. 9)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Director of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

## Class Schedule

### **Week 1: Origins, Language, Sacred Texts, Sea Peoples and Migrations, Philistines and Israelites, Literary Parallels.**

May 28 - Introduction to sources and myths, first encounters –Minoans and Hittites literary parallels

Required readings:

Cyrus Gordon, *The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilization* (NY: Norton, 1965), 206-278.  
- further development of his "Homer and the Bible: The Origin and Character of East Mediterranean Literature," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 26 (1955), 43-108.

Thorlief Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with the Greek* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960).

#### **May 29 - Encounter with Philistines**

Required readings:

Eberhard Zangger, "Who were the Sea People?" *Aramco World* 46 (May-June 1995).

Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion*, Book I

#### **May 30- Flavius Josephus, Against Apion, Book II**

Suggested readings:

Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (1995).

Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, *Hebrew Myths. The Book of Genesis*.

Erich Aurbach, "Odysseus' Scar" in *Mimesis. The Representation of Religion in Western Literature* (Princeton UP, 1958, 1968).

R. J. Hopper, *The Early Greeks* (1977).

### **Week 2: Alexander to Justinian: The Hellenistic Encounter**

Alexander and Persia versus the Jews and Persia; the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, The Maccabees and the Hasmoneans; the challenges of nationalism and citizenship.

Required readings:

Elias Bickerman, *From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees* (NY: Schocken, 1947, 1962)

The Letter of Aristeeas, Philo on Moses.

**June 3 class: outline due – about five pages. Proposal for a paper on one of the themes of the class. This will be a major component of the grade. Choose a topic and discuss it with the professor. Bibliography to be included in proposal**

June 3 – The expansion of Macedonians and Hellenes

June 4-7 Chalkida and Thessaloniki prepare for trips with *Jewish Sites and Synagogues of Greece*.

June 10 – The Tale of Two Temples: the interplay of religion and nationalism in Athens and Jerusalem and the question of exclusivity and misanthropy. The translation of the Septuagint and how it became the bible of the Mediterranean.

Josephus, *The Antiquities*, Book 15 on Herod's Temple.

Suggested readings:

*The World History of the Jewish People. The Hellenistic Age*.

Louis Feldman and Meyer Reinhold, ed., *Jewish Life and Thought among Greeks and Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996).

Nicholas de Lange, *Apocrypha. Jewish Literature of the Hellenistic Age* (NY: Viking, 1978).

Bart Ehrman, *The New Testament and Other Early Christian Writings. A Reader* (Oxford UP, 1998).  
David Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," *HUCA* 22 (1949), 239-264.

## June 11-14 trip to Crete

Read section on Hania in Stavroulakis, *Jewish Sites and Synagogues in Greece*, pp. 83-100

**Assignment: Due Monday class following the trip. Four pages (ca. 1000 words) on each trip: Chalikda, Thessaloniki, Crete**

## Week 3: Byzantium Challenge of Citizenship and Oppression

June 17 – Christianization of Greeks and conflict with polytheists and Jews. Byzantine persecutions  
Romaniot Jews of Apulia, Book of Yosippon

Required readings:

Greek Orthodox Jewish Consultation, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, XXII (Spring, 1977).  
*Routledge Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages*, "Byzantium"

Suggested reading and research:

James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue. A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (1935, 1969).

Cecil Roth, ed., *The World History of the Jewish People. The Dark Ages. Basic collection of Orthodox Church canons, imperial laws and commentary*

## Week 4: Modernization, Nationalism, anti-Semitism, Holocaust

June 18 Ottoman Jewry and arrival of Sephardim

June 19 modernization in Kingdom of Greece, new settlements after massacres of 1820; Salonica and Palestine. Emigration of Greeks and Jews, Greek responses.

Required readings:

Leon Sciaki, *Farewell to Salonica. Portrait of an Era* (Portland, 1946)

June 20 – Holocaust and Resistance of Greek Jews during World War II, Anti-Semitism during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Required readings:

Steven Bowman, *The Agony of Greek Jewry 1940-1945* (Stanford UP, 2011)

Steven Bowman, *Jewish Resistance in Wartime Greece* (London, 2006).

Jason Chandrinis, *Synagonistis. Greek Jews in the National Resistance* (The Jewish Museum of Greece, 2013)

John O. Iatrides, ed., *Greece in the 1940s. A Nation in Crisis*. 2 vols (University Press of New England, 1981).

## Last assignment. Critical book report on a Holocaust memoir.

**Use one of the following:**

Lisa Pinhas, *A Narrative of Evil* (The Jewish Museum of Greece, 2014).

Berry Nahmia, *A Cry for Tomorrow 76859 ...* (Jacksonville, Fl: Bloch, 2011).

*The Holocaust in Salonika: Eyewitness Accounts*, edited with introductory essay by Steven Bowman; translated by Isaac Benmayor (New York: Bloch, 2002).

The course grade is based on attendance and participation and the papers which are due on a date to be announced. There will be no exams to allow time for research and organization of material for writing assignments.