

Jews and Christians: Conflict and Conversation from Antiquity to the Present

REL 482

MWF 1:30 – 2:35pm / Alum 113

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Office Hours: MF 10:00 – 11:30am / TW 4:00 – 5:00pm / by appointment

Course Description

In this course we will examine the various ways in which Jews and Christians have interacted over the past 2000 years, paying particular attention to moments and areas of conflict, points of fruitful co-existence and conversation, and the character and status of Jewish-Christian relations in the contemporary world. We will chart some of the theological, historical, political and economic bases and effects of Christian attitudes toward Jews and Judaism (often in the form of anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism), and corresponding Jewish responses to such views. We will also explore the current prospects for mutual understanding and embrace, while attending also to those areas of seemingly irreconcilable difference. Where appropriate we will also extend the scope of our study to Islam and Jewish-Christian-Muslim interactions.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES:

- Use the basic vocabulary and methods of the academic study of religion
- Articulate clearly and knowledgeably the nature of biblical texts, the historical contexts in which they arose, and their scholarly interpretation
- Articulate clearly and knowledgeably major theological questions that have emerged in the history of tradition and the variety of answers that have been proffered for them
- Write respectfully about different religious traditions
- Articulate clearly and knowledgeably the role of religion in the manifold dimensions of social existence

Course Requirements

This course will be heavily discussion-based, so students should be prepared to engage in intelligent conversation about the assigned readings for any given class period. We will encounter some difficult concepts, ethical issues, and cultural differences, and students are expected always to maintain appropriate standards of respect and open dialogue. Participation is a major part of the final grade for this course.

The course will also be fairly reading-intensive, but I will try to keep reading assignments within the bounds of reason. There is an enormous amount of material we could investigate, but I want us to strike the right balance between comprehensiveness and depth. In other words, perhaps it is better to look at fewer things in greater depth than a mountain of material at a superficial level...

Each student will write one 10-12 page paper on an assigned topic (or other topic to be determined in consultation with the instructor). There will be four reflection papers, each of which will address a central issue in Jewish-Christian relations; these will be 2-3 pages in length. There will be two site-visit reports, each of which will be 1-2 pages. Finally, each student will be part of a small group that will be responsible for presenting a topic and leading the classroom discussion.

Final grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

Major Paper	40%
Reflection Papers (4)	20%
Site-Visit Reports (2)	10%
Presentation	10%
Participation	20%

More on the papers: Writing is one of the most important – and one of the most difficult – things you must learn, and as such I take it quite seriously. Writing well requires foresight and planning, careful organization of the material, and the development of a compelling style or voice. Above all, it requires *practice*.

Do not wait until the last minute to crank out a paper that you don't have time to proofread or revise – it is likely that I will be able to detect this, and your grade may suffer as a result. I advise you to write a detailed outline ahead of time and speak with me about it. I am willing to work with you on writing a good paper – so don't hesitate to work with me!

Policy of Academic Honesty

All students are expected to know and to conform to the Policy on Academic Honesty found in the *Student Handbook* and to sign the statement specific to this course.

Students with Disabilities

CLU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to **students with various documented disabilities** (physical, learning or psychological). If you are a student requesting accommodations for this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and register with the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities (Pearson Library, Center for Academic and Accessibility Resources, x3260) for the facilitation and verification of need. I will work closely together with you and your coordinator to provide necessary accommodations.

Required Texts

Leon Klenicki and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds. *A Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1995. [DJCD] – Bookstore

John Merkle, ed. *Faith Transformed: Christian Encounters with Jews and Judaism*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2003. [FT] – Bookstore

David Fox Sandmel, ed. *Irreconcilable Differences? A Learning Resource for Jews and Christians*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2001. [ID] – Bookstore

[E-Res]: In order to cut down on book purchases, I will place quite a few readings on Electronic Reserves. These readings will be for the most part REQUIRED; I advise that you print a copy of the text and bring it with you to class. The password for E-Res for this course is: election

You must also have or have access to both the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible or Old Testament) and the New Testament.

Course Schedule

Jews and Christians in Antiquity

- [1] W Jan 17: Course Introduction: What is a Jew? What is a Christian? What is 'Jewish-Christian Relations'?
- [2] F Jan 19: Historical Overview of Jewish-Christian Relations
- ID, 15-31, "Jewish-Christian Relations in Historical Perspective"
 - DJCD, "Jewish-Christian Dialogue," "Tolerance-Pluralism"
- [3] M Jan 22: Jesus the Jew
- Matthew 1-5; 23-24; 26-27
 - E-Res, Chilton, "Jesus and the Question of Anti-Semitism"
 - DJCD, "Anti-Semitism"
 - **Reflection Paper #1 Due:** What does it mean to say that Jesus was Jewish?
- [4] W Jan 24: Heirs to the Promise: Abraham, Jews, Christians and the Law
- Genesis 12-17; Romans 1-4 / 7-11; Galatians 1-3
 - E-Res, Wyschogrod, "Paul, Jews and Gentiles"
 - DJCD, "Election," "Law, Halakhah"

- [5] F Jan 26: Scripture and Canon
- **ID**, 53-74
 - **DJCD**, "Bible," "Revelation"
 - **Optional: E-Res**, Blenkinsopp, "Tanakh and the New Testament"
- [6] M Jan 29: International Factors: Jews and Christians in Rome
- **E-Res**, Walters, "Romans, Jews, and Christians: The Impact of the Romans on Jewish/Christian Relations in First-Century Rome"
 - **DJCD**, "Christ-Jesus-Son of God"
- [7] W Jan 31: Early Communities of Jews and Christians
- **E-Res**, "The Ways that Never Parted"
 - **DJCD**, "Covenant," "Church and Synagogue"
- [8] F Feb 2: Church and Synagogue in the Early Centuries
- **E-Res**, Hoffman, Langer, Wilken, "Worship"
 - **Optional: E-Res**, Yuval, "Passover and Easter"
 - **DJCD**, "Sacrament"
- [9] M Feb 5: Early Christian Polemics against Jews and Judaism
- Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 18-29, 36-44
<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/justinmartyr-dialoguetrypho.html>
 - Aphrahat, Demonstration 16 (handout)
 - Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews* 1-6
<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/tertullian08.html>
 - **E-Res**, Ruether, "Adversos Judaeos Tradition" (174-89)
 - **DJCD**, "Tradition"
- [10] W Feb 7: Early Jewish Prayers and Polemics (?) against Christians
- *Shemoneh Esreh* – 18 Benedictions and the *Birkhat ha-Minim* (handout)
 - **E-Res**, Schiffman, "At the Crossroads"
 - **DJCD**, "Prayer"
 - **Reflection Paper #2 Due**: How would you describe the Jewish-Christian relationship in terms of the theological categories of election and covenant?
- [11] F Feb 9: Jews in Imperial Christianity
- Apostolic Canons, 62, 64, 70, 71
<http://www.ccel.org/fathers/NPNF2-14/7appndx/apcanons.htm>
 - Jews in Imperial Legislation
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/jews-romanlaw.html>
 - **E-Res**, Severus of Minorca, *Conversion of the Jews*
 - Ambrose of Milan, *Letter to Theodosius as to the Burning of a Synagogue*
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.v.ix.html>

- [12] M Feb 12: Jews and Judaism in Patristic Theology
- John Chrysostom, *Homily Against the Jews*, I.1-VII.2:
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chrysostom-jews6.html>
 - Augustine, *Reply to Faustus*, 12.9-13
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/140612.htm>
 - **E-Res**, Simon, "Christian Anti-Semitism"
*Note: This article is long, and thus is assigned for both M and W – you should determine how best to divide the reading so as to complete it by Wednesday.
- [13] W Feb 14: Christian Anti-Semitism: An Assessment
- **E-Res**, Simon, "Christian Anti-Semitism"
 - **DJCD**, "Ideology"
- [14] F Feb 16: Jewish and Christian Views on "Israel"
- **ID**, 91-110
 - **DJCD**, "Israel"
 - **Presentation / Discussion – Group 1**
What are the meanings of "Israel" for Jews and Christians?
- [15] M Feb 19: **NO CLASS – President's Day** (but do the following reading)
- 2 Maccabees 6:18-7:42
<http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/2maccabees.html> (RSV version)
 - Acts 7 (New Testament)
 - Martyrdom of Polycarp
<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/martyrdompoly carp-lake.html>
- [16] W Feb 21: Jewish and Christian Martyrdom
- **E-Res**, Boyarin, "Whose Martyrdom Is This, Anyway?"
 - Note: the readings for Monday and Wednesday for this week both pertain to the topic of martyrdom. The Monday readings are the primary (ancient) texts we will address, and the Wednesday reading is an important essay on the nature of Jewish / Christian martyrdom.
- [17] F Feb 23: **NO CLASS – Inauguration of CLU President**
- **ID**, 33-52
- [18] M Feb 26: "Toledoth Yeshu" and Jesus in the Talmud
- "Toledoth Yeshu"
<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~hummm/Topics/JewishJesus/toledoth.html>
 - **E-Res**, Schaefer, "Jesus in the Talmud"
 - **Reflection Paper #3 Due**: Do Jews and Christians Worship the Same God?
- [19] W Feb 28: Setting the Stage for the Crusades
- **E-Res**, Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 184-205

- [20] F Mar 2: Jews, Christians and the Crusades
- Rabbi Eliezer bar Nathan
http://www2.wnorton.com/college/english/nael/middleages/topic_3/nathan.htm
 - Solomon bar Samson
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1096jews-mainz.html>
 - **E-Res**, Marcus, "From Politics to Martyrdom"
 - *Optional*: **E-Res**, Ruether, "From the Crusades to Emancipation"
- [21] M Mar 5: The Blood Libel: Accusations of Ritual Murder and Host Desecration
- Thomas of Monmouth on William of Norwich
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1173williamnorwich.html>
 - The Legend of the Golem
<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/golem.html>
 - **E-Res**, Hsia "Ritual, Magic and Murder"
- [22] W Mar 7: Christian Representations of the Jews in the Middle Ages
- Readings, images TBD
 - **Presentation / Discussion – Group 2**
What are the primary Christian stereotypes of Jews in the Medieval period, and how do they develop? How are these stereotypes portrayed in literary and visual representations / images?
- [23] F Mar 9: Disputation – The Friars, the Dominicans and the Jews
- **E-Res**, Cohen, "Scholarship and Intolerance in the Medieval Academy"
- [24] M Mar 12: More Disputation – Nachmanides and the Talmud on Trial
- **Film** – "The Great Disputation"
- [25] W Mar 14: The Flourishing of an Intellectual Tradition: The Recovery of Aristotelian Philosophy by Maimonides, Averroes and Aquinas
- **Synagogue Visit**
- [26] F Mar 16: Jewish and Christian Mysticism in the Middle Ages
- **Reflection Paper #4 Due**
What lines of continuity are there from early Christian characterizations of Jews to those of the Middle Ages? Why do the stereotypes persist in the way they do?
- [27] M Mar 19: Rashi and the Victorines: The Fruits of Biblical Exegesis
- **Site Visit Report Due**

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

- [28] W Mar 21: Expulsions of the Jews – England, France and Spain
- **E-Res**, "A Petition for the Readmission of the Jews to England"
 - Expulsion from Spain
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1492-jews-spain1.html>

- [29] F Mar 23: Luther and the Jews
- Luther, "On Jews and their Lies"
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/luther-jews.html>
 - **E-Res**, Edwards, "Against the Jews"

[30] M Mar 26: **NO CLASS – WORK ON PAPERS**

[31] W Mar 28: **NO CLASS – WORK ON PAPERS**

[32] F Mar 30: **NO CLASS**
First Draft of Paper Due Electronically by 5pm – 8 Pages Minimum!

SPRING BREAK

[33] M Apr 9: **NO CLASS**

- [34] W Apr 11: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and the Dreyfus Affair
- "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"
 - Wikipedia entry on "The Dreyfus Affair"

- [35] F Apr 13: Jews and Christians in the Twentieth Century
- **E-Res**, Henry Ford, "The International Jew"
 - **E-Res**, Duehring, "The Question of the Jew is a Question of Race"
 - First draft of papers returned with comments

- [36] M Apr 16: The *Shoah* I
- Bergen, *War and Genocide* (handout)

- [37] W Apr 18: The *Shoah* II
- **E-Res**, Heschel, "Reading Jesus as a Nazi"
 - **E-Res**, Barth, "The Jewish Problem and the Christian Answer"

- [38] F Apr 20: The *Shoah* III
- **Presentation / Discussion** (Leslie, Katie, Diana, Theo, Ebere)
To what degree was the *Shoah* a result of Christian thought and activity? Does the Church bear a burden for the Nazi atrocities?

- [39] M Apr 23: The Jewish State and the State of Israel
- **E-Res**, Herzl, *The Jewish State*
 - **FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER DUE IN CLASS**

- [40] W Apr 25: Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, and a New Era of Dialogue
- *Nostra Aetate* (<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2non.htm>)
 - **E-Res**, Signer and Pawlikowski, "Conversation One"
- [41] F Apr 27: Post-Holocaust Christian Theology
- **E-Res**, Haynes, "Christianity, Anti-Semitism, and Post-Holocaust Theology"
 - **FT**, Fisher, "Enriching Christian Life Through Encounter with Judaism"
- [42] M Apr 30: Post-*Shoah* Jewish Theology
- **E-Res**, Ellis, *Toward a Jewish Theology of Liberation*
- [43] W May 2: A Way Forward?
- **FT**, Merkle, "Faith Transformed by Study and Friendship"
 - **Presentation / Discussion** (Stephanie, Chad, Ginger, Samantha, Ashlee, Christiana)
What are the primary avenues for fruitful dialogue among Jews and Christians in the 21st century? What is the future of Jewish-Christian Relations?
- [44] F May 4: Conclusions, Final Discussion