

The Passover Haggadah rev 2-28-21  
Comp Lit 222/ Hebrew 255/ HDS 164101  
Spring 2021  
Professor David Stern

Time Wed 4-6:45 pm

The Passover Haggadah is the Jewish book of redemption par excellence. As the script for the seder (the ritual banquet on the first night(s) of Passover), the Haggadah has changed and developed as the Jews have moved from one diasporic center to another from Late Antiquity until the present day. In this course we will study the history and development of both the seder and the Haggadah-- as a ritual, as a text, and as a physical book. Readings will be drawn from the Bible, Mishnah, the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds, the New Testament and early Christian writers, medieval Haggadah manuscripts and early printed editions, as well as more recent versions of the Haggadah from both Israel and America (including non-traditional haggadot). We will deal extensively with the tradition of Haggadah illustration, and will utilize Harvard's extensive collection of Haggadot in both Widener and Houghton Library. The focus of the course will be on the reading and analysis of primary sources. No previous experience with Passover is required, but students should have at least two years of Hebrew (Biblical or modern) and be prepared to read texts in Hebrew. Any student with questions about their Hebrew competence should contact Professor Stern.

#### REQUIREMENTS:

The course will have three writing assignments:

- 1) One short paper (approx. 5-7 pp. each).  
To be assigned: **TBD** Due: **TBD**
- 2) Haggadah log (to be explained in class).
- 3) a final lengthier paper (10pp.). Due: **TBD**

The other major requirement is CLASS PARTICIPATION, which includes both regular preparation, participation in class, and short oral presentations.

#### **HOW WE PLAN TO RUN THE COURSE:**

The course will be run to encourage student participation and interaction as much as possible—both with me, and between yourselves. I hope to divide the class into groups of two or three students (depending on enrollment), and give assignments to each group to prepare for the following class; in most weeks, we will ask the groups to post their responses on a discussion board before class, and they will, we hope, as a basis for class discussions. Class will consist of our reading texts together.

Grading:

There will be three components to the final grade:

- 1) Class participation including the pre-class assignments will count for 30%.
- 2) The short paper and Haggadah log will count for 40% (20% each).

- 3) The final paper will count for 30%.

### BOOKS AND READINGS:

All readings for the class, with one exception, will be on the Canvas site UNDER MODULES (not Files!) where they are organized by class. These readings include Baruch M. Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder* (California, 1984), henceforth referred to as Bokser.

The one exception is:

*The Ashkenazi Haggadah*, edited by David Goldstein (Abrams/Abradale/Thames, ISBN 0-8109-8192-0), a facsimile of a lavish 15<sup>th</sup> c. Italo-German Haggadah, which I recommend that you buy on the web. For comparative prices, I recommend that you check Amazon or [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com). Prices range from \$10-\$25. (There is also a deluxe edition in a slip-case, ISBN 0500-23411-6, that sells for about twice or three times as much.)

You will also need a TaNaKH (any edition).

### I. Passover before the Seder: Biblical and Early Postbiblical Evidence

#### 1) Introduction and Biblical Beginnings

Exod.

Exod. 12-13; 34: 18-21 (please read with commentaries on page)

Lev. 23:4-8

Numb. 9:1-15; 28:16-25

Deut. 16:1-8

#### 2) From the Bible to the Mishnah (400 B.C.E—220 C.E.)

Joshua 5:10-11

2 Kings 23:21

Ezek. 45:21

Ezra 6:19-22

II Chron. 30:1-27; 35:1-19

### Second Temple Period Literature

Selections from Elephantine Archive. On Elephantine Jewish community, please look at Wikipedia entry and read Porton, *Archives from Elephantine* (on Canvas), selections relevant to Passover.

Jubilees. Chap. 49

Selections from Philo

Josephus, Antiquities III.x.5 (bracketed section on page)

Please look up on Wikipedia the basic background for Jubilees, Philo, and Josephus.

Bokser, pp. 1-28

### 3) The Seder during the Classic Rabbinic Period (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> c.)

#### 1) Read through the entirety of the Haggadah and prepare an outline of the seder's structure.

According to the Haggadah we use, what is the center of the seder? Why? What comes before and after the center? Is there any organizing system or punctuation to the seder that divides its different parts?

2) To understand the structure of the seder as a Greco-Roman banquet, read Blake Leyerle, "Meal Customs in the Greco-Roman World," from *Passover and Easter*, ed. P.F. Bradshaw and L.A. Hoffman (U of Notre Dame Press, 1999). (There is a second article on the site by Gordon Bahr that covers much of the same material, but Leyerle is enough, unless you're really hungry for more.)

3) Mishnah Pesahim 10. The text we will use is the one found in the Kaufmann Codex, the earliest (Italy, 11<sup>th</sup> c.) and best manuscript of the Mishnah. I have posted a color facsimile of the two pages you will need on the module site for this coming week (along with all the other readings). It begins in the middle of the left column on the first page ('erev pesahim samukh le-minhah...) and concludes in the middle of the left column on the second page (at the letter tet). There is an English translation in Bokser, pp. 29-49 (at the top of the modules).

Please compare the text in the Kaufmann Codex with the one in H. Albeck's edition, also posted on the site, esp. in the first couple paragraphs of the chapter.

For background on the Mishnah, see A. Goldberg, "The Mishnah...", in *The Literature of the Sages*, ed. S. Safrai, pp. 211- 62

4)Tosefta Pesahim 10. For translation and commentary, see Bokser, 32-36.

For background on the Tosefta, see A. Goldberg, "The Tosefta...", in *The Literature of the Sages*, pp. 283-301

The Two Talmudim: N.B. For translation of the Yerushalmi, see Bokser's English translation.

For the Bavli, we will use the Steinsaltz text in class but I have also scanned the Vilna ed. and provided you with the Soncino translation.

For background on the Yerushalmi and the Bavli, see A. Goldberg, "The Palestinian Talmud," pp. 303-22; and idem, "The Babylonian Talmud" by A. Goldberg, pp. 323-55.

The readings from the Yerushalmi and the Bavli are organized according to topics as they appear in the Mishnah.

I. Mishnah 10:1-- on Reclining and the Four Cups: Yerushalmi 37b, 11 lines up- 38a , 13 lines down

II. Mishnah 10:4-- on Questions and Answers: Yerushalmi 37d, lines 15-36; Mekhilta Pisha on Exod. 13:16/Deut. 6:20 (Lauterbach ed., I: 166-167;

6) March 3-- Early Christianity and Passover

We'll finish up the interpretations of Genut and Shevah: Bavli 116a

III. Mishnah 10:5-- Rabban Gamliel: Bavli 116a (very bottom) -b (entire page)

IV. Mishnah 10:7—Afikomen: Yerushalmi 37d (section of 5 lines about 3/4 down the page); Bavli 119b-120a

Josef Stern, "Gesture and Symbol," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, ed. A.A. Cohen and P.Mendes-Flohr (New York, 1987), pp. 275-83.

Then we'll move on to Early Christianity

Mark 14: 1-52.

Matthew 26:1-46

Luke 22:1-53

John 11:55; 12:1; 13:1-38

1 Corinthians 5:7-8, 11:20-27

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## 7) The Church Fathers on the Seder; The Symposium and the Seder

*In Sacra Pascha* and Clement of Alexandria, selection

Melito of Sardis, selection from "The Homily on the Passion," English. trans. and ed. C. Bonner) (Philadelphia, 1940)

Israel J. Yuval, "Easter and Passover As Early Jewish-Christian Dialogue," in *Passover and Easter*, ed. P.F. Bradshaw and L.A. Hoffman (U of Notre Dame Press, 1999)

Israel J. Yuval, "Passover In the Middle Ages," from *Passover and Easter*, ed. P.F. Bradshaw and L.A. Hoffman (U of Notre Dame Press, 1999)

Plutarch, *Table-Talk* (from *Plutarch's Moralia*, Vol. 8 [LCL, 1927], pp. 5-23; 337-65

S. Stein, "The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesah Haggadah," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 7 (1957): 13-44

Jacob Neusner, "The Rabbinical Traditions about the Pharisees," *From Politics to Piety* (1973), pp. 81-90. Bokser, 50-100.

## III. The Haggadah as a Book

### 8) The Haggadah in the Geonic Period and the Early Middle Ages (9-13 C.)

Dropsie Genizah Haggadah (from D. Goldschmidt, *Haggadah shel Pesah* (Jerusalem 1981), pp.

73-84. See manuscript at <http://www.library.upenn.edu/cjs/geniza/>

Selection from Natronai Gaon

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Haggadah, pp. 38-56

Louis Finkelstein, "The Oldest Midrash..." *Harvard Theological Review* 31 (1938): 291-317

L. Hoffman, "Sacred Myths," from *Beyond the Text* (Notre Dame, 19 ), pp. 75-115

S.T. Lachs, "Two Related Arameans," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 17 (1986): 65-69

Y. H. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor* (Seattle, 1982), Chap. 1, pp. 5-26.

Other Geonic and Early Sefardic and Ashkenazic Haggadot

*Siddur Rav Saadiah Gaon*, pp. 134-14

Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Zemanim, Chap. 7; and Nusah Ha-haggadah

Rashi's Seder from *Mahzor Vitri* Vol. 1, pp. 281-83, 295-98

We will use the texts of Saadiah Gaon, Natronai Gaon, Amram Gaon, and Rambam (Maimonides) as the listed on the Haggadot Rishonot file on the module.

The following are the sections of the Haggadah we will look at in these sources:

- 1) *Ha Lahma*
- 2) Rabbis in Benei Beraq and R. Eleazar ben Azariah passage (see Mishnah Berakhot 1:5)
- 3) *Ve-hi she-'amdah* (and transition to *Arami Oveid Avi*)
- 4) Midrash on Deut. 26. Please read Lawrence Hoffman, "Sacred Myths," from *Beyond the Text* (Notre Dame, 19 ), pp. 86-108.
- 5) R. Yosi and the expansions of the plagues through *Dayyeinu*
- 6) *Shefokh Hamatekha*. See *Mahzor Vitri*
- 7) *Hallel Ha-Gadol* and the question of the Fifth Cup. See Saadiah
- 8) *Hasal Siddur Pesah*
- 9) *Va-yehi be-ḥatzi ha-lailah* and *Va-amartem zevah pesah*
- 10) Songs at end (*Adir hu*, *Eḥad Mi Yodei'a*, and *Ḥad Gadya*)

### Optional Readings

Louis Finkelstein, "The Oldest Midrash..." *Harvard Theological Review* 31 (1938): 291-317

S.T. Lachs, "Two Related Arameans," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 17 (1986): 65-69

#### 9) The Manuscript Haggadah in Ashkenaz and Sefarad

Bezalel Narkiss, *The Golden Haggadah*, pp. 10-11, 55-59, 64-67.

Sarit Shalev-Eyni, "Who are the Heirs of the Hebrew Bible? Sephardic Visual Historiography in a Christian Context," *Medieval Encounters* 16 (2010), 23-63 (a lot of the pages are pictures!)

Marc Michael Epstein, *The Medieval Haggadah*, pp. 45-63, 73-75, 105-128. (NOTE that the section on the Bird's Head Haggadah is preceded by a series of reproductions of select pages that are even better than the reproductions in the facsimile.)

Optional: Evelyn M. Cohen, "The Decoration of Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts," in *A Sign and a Witness*, ed. L.S. Gold (New York, 1988), pp. 47-60.

#### Sefaradi Haggadot

Rylands Haggadah

Sarajevo Haggadah

Golden Haggadah

Barcelona Haggadah

B. Narkiss, *The Golden Haggadah* (London, 19 ), pp. 7-11; 55-67.

#### Ashkenazi Haggadot

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Bird's Head Haggadah

Damrstadt Haggadah

#### 10) The Ashkenazi Haggadah and the Late Medieval Haggadah

Main Text: The Ashkenazi Haggadah

Joseph Guttman, "The Messiah at the Seder, *Raphael Mahler Jubilee Volume* (Tel Aviv, 1971), 29-38.  
Shefokh Hamatekha texts

The Washington Haggadah

The Murphy Haggadah (inside *Four Haggadot* box)

The Flohrsheim Haggadah

The Rothschild Miscellany Haggadah

The Monk's Haggadah

We will devote this class to studying closely The Ashkenazi Haggadah. Please read the English introduction pp. 5-40, and specifically 9-16. (Most of the rest is a translation of the text and the commentary, some of which you will need) Please go through the Haggadah and as you do, answer the questions that are found on the "Questions to Ask about a Medieval Haggadah" sheet (under the first module). But as you go through the text of the Haggadah, please compare it to the Goldberg no-frills Haggadah and please note all differences.

In addition, I would like you to look at the Cincinnati Haggadah online at <http://mss.huc.edu/manuscripts/ms-444/> This Haggadah was written at the same time and in the same area as the Ashkenazi Haggadah.

Finally, I would like you to go to Houghton and look at two other Haggadot that Joel ben Simeon wrote and/or illustrated: (1) the Washington Haggadah, which I co-edited (**BM674.63 .W3713 2011**); and the Murphy Haggadah (**Heb 49 09.89.13**). The Murphy Haggadah is inside a box called *Four Haggadot* (or *Arba'ah Haggadot*); feel free to glance at all four, but please look more closely at the Murphy. As you go through them, please note any similarities and differences you find between them and the Ashkenazi Haggadah.

### Required Reading

M. Epstein, "The Elusive Hare," *Orim* II 91986), 70-86.

Mira Friedman, "The Four Sons and the Four Ages of Man," *Journal of Jewish Art* 11 (1985): 16-40

Katrin Kogman-Appel, "The Illustrations of the Washington Haggadah," *The Washington Haggadah* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 52-113.

### Optional:

David Stern, "The Monk's Haggadah (Munich Codex Hebrew 200): An Introduction," *The Monk's Haggadah* (Penn State University Press, 2017), 1-17. The text of the book is listed on the Module as "The Monk's Haggadah text." To see the Haggadah itself, hit the link under the Facsimile, and it will take you to the Haggadah.

David Stern, "The Washington Haggadah: The Life of a Book," *The Washington Haggadah* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1-51.

### 11)Haggadah Commentaries and the Early Printed Haggadah

Selection from MaHaRaL of Prague (Rabbi Judah Loewe) pp. 505-506

Please look up Abravanel and Loewe on Wikipedia.

Y.H. Yerushalmi, *Haggadah and History* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 51- 85

Ashkenazi Haggadah, commentary of Eliezer Rokeah

Selections on "Seeing Oneself As If One Left Egypt"

Selection from Don Yitzhak Abravanel, *Zevah Pesah*, pp. 3-5 (Intro.); pp. 140-41; 141-42.

Y.H. Yerushalmi, *Haggadah and History* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 13- 50

### Other Haggadot we will look at:

Prague Haggadah (1526)

Mantua Haggadah (1560)

Venice Haggadah (1609)

Amsterdam Haggadah (1695)

Amsterdam Haggadah (1712)

Trieste Haggadah (1864)

David Stern, "Mapping the Redemption: Messianic Cartography in the 1695 Amsterdam Haggadah,"

*Haggadah shel Pesah* Ihringen (?) 18<sup>th</sup> c. **Houghton MS Heb 69**

*Haggadah shel Pesah* ?, 1825 **Houghton MS Heb 70**

*Haggadah shel Pesah* Pressburg 1726 **Houghton MS Heb 71**

*Commonplace Book... including Haggadah*, Yemen, early 19<sup>th</sup> c. **Houghton MS Heb 103**

## 12) The Haggadah in the 20<sup>th</sup> C.

### The Ideological Haggadah

Union Haggadah (Cincinnati, 1908) (Reform)

Union Haggadah Revised (1923) (Reform)

The New Haggadah (Reconstructionist, 1942)

Art Scroll Haggadah selections (Orthodox) Secular Haggadah

Secondary Readings:

Balin, "The Modern Transformation of the Ancient Haggadah (on Reform and later Haggadot)

Werttheimer, "Kaplan's Vs. the D-Nothings" ( on the Reconstructionist Haggadah)

### The New Illustrated Haggadah

Steinhardt Haggadah (Berlin, 1923)

Zador Haggadah (Budapest, 1924)

Geismar Haggadah (Berlin, 1928)

Secondary Reading:

H. Friedberg, "The Unwritten Message-- Visual Commentary in Twentieth Century Haggadah Illustration," *Journal of Jewish Art* 16 (1990-91): 157-71.

### The Souvenir and Advertising Haggadah

The United States Bank Haggadah

The Maxwell House Haggadah

Secondary Reading:

Jonathan D. Sarna, "'Next Year in Jerusalem' in the American Haggadah"

### The Children's Haggadah

E. Segal, "Uncle Eli's.... Haggadah"

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### Haggadah Parodies/Travesties

"The Red Haggadah" (Moscow 1927)

## 13) The Untraditional Contemporary Haggadah

Kibbutz Haggadah

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The

Haggadah, Geva' 1950

A Haggadah (Munich, 1946) (=A *Survivor's Haggadah*, Philadelphia, JPS, 1999)

Secondary Readings:

Lilker, "Ritual and Culture in the Kibbutz"

Jacobson, "Nationalism, Nature, and Zionism...."

#### The Re-Written Haggadah

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Survivors Haggadah (A Haggadah)     Andrew

Waskow, The Freedom Seder

Broner, The Women's Haggadah

San Diego Women's Haggadah

Santa Cruz Haggadah (New Age)     Melissa

Freedom Haggadah for Soviet Jewry     Gabe

Out of Slavery, Out of Addiction: A Haggadah of Recovery (Alcoholics)     Ben

The Liberated Haggadah (Vegetarian)     Maxwell

Journey Towards Freedom (Abused Women)

Humanist Haggadah     Jon

Haggadah for All Seasons (Senior Americans)

Paschal Meal/ Jesus in the Jewish Passover Seder

The Seder of the Children of Abraham, Hagar, and Sara \

Secondary Readings:

Schwartz, "The Secular Seder"

"Passover Do-Over" (on the Third Seder)