

Morris Jastrow lecture notes on the Talmud, Hebrew festivals, and worship sacrifice

Ms. Coll. 1294

Finding aid prepared by Kelin Baldrige.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2017 April 24

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Jastrow, Morris, Jr., 1861-1921
Title	Morris Jastrow lecture notes on the Talmud, Hebrew festivals, and worship sacrifice
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1294
Date	circa 1885-1921
Extent	0.2 linear foot (1 box)
Language	English
Abstract	Morris Jastrow (1861-1921) was a professor of Semitic languages and librarian-in-chief at the University of Pennsylvania from 1885 to 1921. This collection contains lecture notes that likely come from a class taught by Morris Jastrow. These handwritten lecture notes discuss the contents, history and meaning of the Talmud, Hebrew festivals and worship sacrifice.

Cite as:

Morris Jastrow lecture notes on the Talmud, Hebrew festivals, and worship sacrifice, circa 1885-1921, Ms. Coll. 1294, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Morris Jastrow was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1861 and immigrated with his family to Philadelphia in 1866. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1881 and then studied theology at the Jewish Seminary of Breslau in Germany while simultaneously pursuing the study of Semitic languages at various German universities. He received his Ph.D. in 1884 from the University of Leipzig and continued the study of Semitic languages at the Sorbonne, the Collège de France and the École des Langues Orientales Levant Vivantes during the following year. In 1885, Jastrow returned to the United States, at which point he was appointed assistant to his father in Philadelphia, a position from which he voluntarily resigned after one year. He went on to devote himself entirely to linguistic and archaeological studies and gradually extended his field to include the history of religions. He joined the University of Pennsylvania in 1885 as an instructor of Semitic languages, and became professor of Semitic languages in 1891. In 1888, he became a librarian at the University of Pennsylvania, becoming librarian-in-chief in 1898. He was also the president of the American Oriental Society from 1914 to 1915 and of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1916. He died in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, in 1921.

According to the City Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, "the Talmud, a central Jewish text, ... has two components. The first part is the Mishnah; a written account of the oral Torah, and second part is the Gemara, an analysis and commentary on the Mishnah. The Talmud is the basis for Jewish law and was recorded from oral tradition with the initial intention of memorization."

Works cited:

City Congregation for Humanistic Judaism. Secular Talmud Study. (accessed April 24, 2017)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains lecture notes that were likely created for a class taught by Morris Jastrow during his career as a professor at the University of Pennsylvania from 1885 to 1921. These handwritten lecture notes discuss the contents, history and meaning of the Talmud, and worship sacrifice. The Hebrew Festivals document is labeled slightly differently: instead of containing a number indicating the order of the lectures, this document is labeled "Ms. of Dr. M. Jastrow." It is unclear if this document was part of the lectures on the history of the Talmud, or if it was intended as a manuscript for publication.

The handwritten notes contain significant edits by Jastrow and appear to be a first draft rather than the version used for teaching.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

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Access Restrictions

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Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- University of Pennsylvania.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Lecture notes
- Lectures
- Manuscripts (document genre)

SUBJECT(S)

- Education
- Education, Higher
- Judaism--Study and teaching
- Religion
- Religion--Study and teaching

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
I. The Meaning of the Talmud.	1	1
II. The Contents of the Talmud.	1	2
III. The History of the Talmud.	1	3
IV. Worship Sacrifice.	1	4
The Hebrew Festivals.	1	5