

## Jewish Tradition: Classic Rabbinic Texts

### Course Content

The course offers a study of a selection of texts from classical rabbinic literature from the Mishnah to the Babylonian Talmud. After a brief survey of the emergence of the rabbinic movement and the political, cultural and linguistic context in which it developed, the main part of the course is devoted to close readings of a selection of rabbinic texts in Hebrew/Aramaic with a translation. To enable the inclusion of a larger number of texts in order to display the various genres included in rabbinic literature, some texts will be read only in translation. In addition to acquiring and developing skills in rabbinic Hebrew, students will gain insights into rabbinic thought and culture, and acquire a basic knowledge of the scope, style and characteristics of rabbinic texts. The main focus will be on the Mishnah (early 3<sup>rd</sup> century), the *Mekhilta* (late 3<sup>rd</sup> century), *Genesis* and *Leviticus Rabbah* (early 5<sup>th</sup> century) and the Babylonian Talmud (300–700 C.E).

### Intended learning outcome

- Demonstrate knowledge of the most important rabbinic texts and their respective genres and characteristics
- Acquire a basic ability to read and analyze rabbinic texts
- Gain insight into rabbinic thought and culture through a reading of a selection of rabbinic texts
- Critically discuss the emergence and development of rabbinic Judaism in relation to previous and contemporary Jewish groups, including Jesus-oriented ones, and critically assess rabbinic texts as sources for historical reconstruction
- Independently evaluate the significance of rabbinic literature for later Jewish tradition

### Instructor and institution:

Karin Hedner Zetterholm ([Karin.Zetterholm@ctr.lu.se](mailto:Karin.Zetterholm@ctr.lu.se)), Lund University

### Time period

E-learning: weeks 36–51

Compact seminar in Lund, November 7–9 November

Examination: Paper to be submitted by December 21

### Form of Teaching; Course Activities

Instruction is provided via the internet and through a compact seminar (2,5 days in Lund). Participation in the course forum on the internet (weekly assignments) is a requirement, as well as the submission of an exam paper. A minimum of 6 out of a total of 8 assignments must be submitted. Please note that the weekly assignments have deadlines. Students may be asked to respond to other students' assignments as well as submitting their own.

#### Examination

The examination is a paper of between eight and ten pages on a subject, question or material chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. A page is defined as having 2400 characters, including spaces. By the time of the exam students must have submitted any missing assignments.

#### Bibliography and syllabus

1300 pages of secondary scholarly literature and primary texts in translation. Of these, 800 pages are fixed and appear on the syllabus. The rest relates to the exam paper and is chosen by the student.