



**ANGLO-ISRAEL
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Ancient Judaism A Nation, an Ethnicity, or a Religion?

Professor Erich S. Gruen

(University of California, Berkeley)

Monday 22 July at 5.00pm (BST, UK time) with Zoom access

from 4.45pm (BST, UK time) followed by Q&A

To attend please register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ancient-judaism-a-nation-an-ethnicity-or-a-religion-tickets-925886941767>



Erich Gruen in his study.
Photo courtesy of
Erich Gruen.

The lecture discusses the question of how the Jews defined themselves in antiquity. Did they regard themselves as a descent group, stemming from Abraham and thus related by blood? Or did they see commonality as a nation, through shared territory, a collective name, and at least a claim on an autonomous existence? Or were they united by religion, i.e. not just belief but common ritual, practice, and tradition? Each of these alternatives is explored, not only in terms of the Jews' self-awareness but the perception by others. The evidence discussed comes essentially from the Second Temple period and the Jewish experience in the Graeco-Roman world.

Erich Gruen is the Gladys Rehard Wood Professor of History and Classics Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of several books, including *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (1998), *Diaspora: Jews Amidst Greeks and Romans* (2002), *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (2011), *Ethnicity in the Ancient World: Did it Matter?* (2020), and the forthcoming *Scriptural Tales Retold: The Inventiveness of Second Temple Jews*.

The talk is free to members and non-members. Email secretary@aias.org.uk for enquiries.