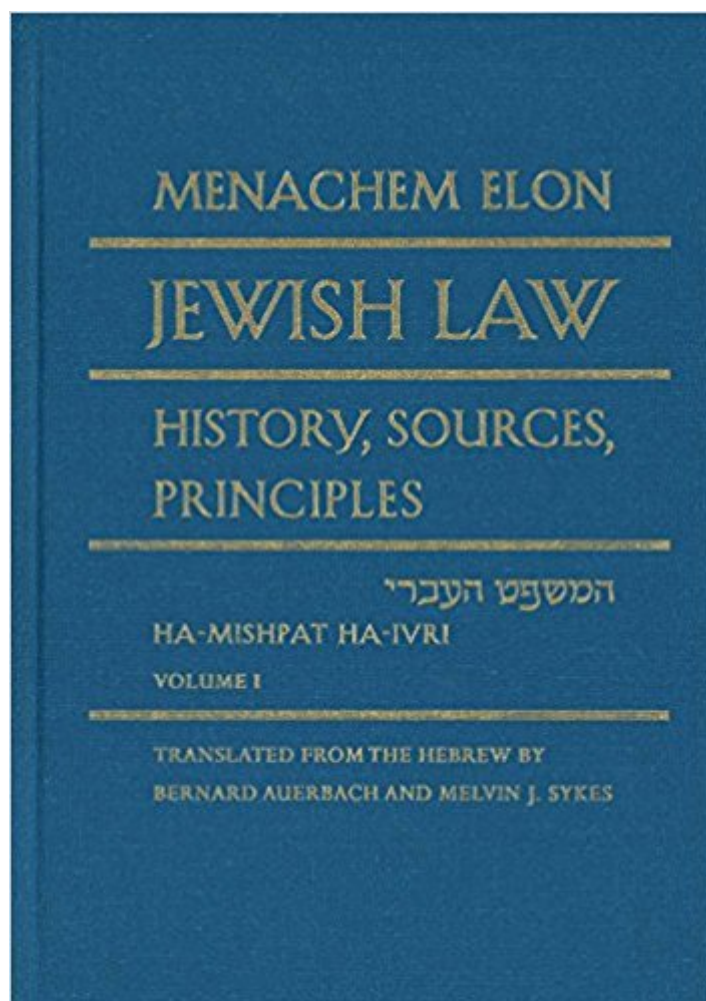


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Jewish Law : History, Sources, Principles (4 Volume Set)



Synopsis

A Philip and Muriel Berman Edition; Translated from the Hebrew by Bernard Auerbach and Melvin Sykes
Justice Menachem Elon's classic text surveys the panorama of Jewish law from biblical times to contemporary Israel. The result is the most definitive record to date of a unique legal system that integrates criminal, civil, and religious law to form a unified whole of unprecedented range. This four-volume set is an essential resource for academic, legal, and personal libraries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1973 Elon, deputy president of Israel's Supreme Court and one of the world's experts on Jewish and Israeli law, published the first edition of this comprehensive overview of Jewish law in Hebrew, and it won immediate acclaim. This felicitous, sumptuously produced translation of the revised third edition, which includes new material, makes Elon's entire work available for the first time to English readers. Assuming no prior knowledge, Elon surveys the history and basic principles of Jewish law, the legal sources and processes that enabled it to adapt, and the literary sources-ancient to contemporary-that students of Jewish law rely upon. Volume 4 focuses on the State of Israel. Elon devotes little attention to Jewish law in America, though he does treat women's issues extensively. Copious quotations from primary sources, extensive cross references, scholarly footnotes, a detailed table of contents, and a helpful glossary contribute to making this the definitive work in its field. For all libraries.
Jonathan D. Sarna, Brandeis Univ., Waltham, Mass.
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It is welcome pleasure when an important subject is dealt with by a top expert and the work is translated by people who are similarly expert. Jewish law, its history, sources and principles, has been the subject of many books by many rabbis and scholars. However, most of the works by the traditional Jewish scholars - including the seminal work by Sherirah Gaon and the intellectual masterpiece by Maimonides - present a theology or philosophy whose goal is to promote and explain Judaism as conceived by the writer, and not a true history. Many stressed the importance of the Bible and revelation and the significance of the Oral Law which is not in the Torah, rather than an objective scientific history. Menachem Elon, an ordained rabbi, served on the Supreme Court of Israel since 1977 and was its Deputy President since 1988. This book won the Israel Prize in 1979. The two translators are distinguished American lawyers. Bernard Auerbach was a professor of law at the University of Maryland and a rabbi. Melvin J. Sykes is one of the most sought-after attorneys to handle appeals before Maryland's top court.

Menachem Elon's work on Jewish Law is exceptional. The work provides the most comprehensive discussion of Jewish law in English that I have ever seen. This work was recommended by a law school professor many years ago. I never cease going back to it. The discussions regarding each of the major legal sources along with their relevant commentaries is invaluable for learning what one should "know" to be conversant in this topic. The footnotes are also excellent and provide quick references to relevant passages in the original sources. This is not light reading and needs to be approached when one is fresh. Given that, if one has a desire to get an overview of the history and inner workings of Jewish law, there is no better source of which I can think to recommend.

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