Inter-religious relations: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, 7.5ECTS

Middle Eastern and North African Studies II, First Cycle, Spring 2018
Teacher: Emmanouela Grypeou (emmanouela.grypeou@rel.su.se)

Course description
This course offers an historical overview of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam from a religious historical perspective. The purpose of the course is to introduce and discuss encounters and counter-influence through the study of selected religious texts and historical sources pertaining to these three religious traditions. The course will focus on the early encounters between the three religions as well on crucial historical developments of their relations in the Middle Ages and up to modern times. In this context, the course will also offer insights into historical and religious aspects related to anti-Semitism, islamophobia, as well as the status of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa.

Learning outcomes
After completing the course, the student is expected to:

- Show knowledge about, and ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Show knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- Show knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa.

Lessons plan
I. Judaism and Early Christianity in Antiquity:
Lesson 1: The Parting of the Ways?

Questions:
- What is Early Christianity?
- What is Early Judaism?
- What were the relations between early Christianity and early Judaism?
What is the “parting of the ways” between early Christianity and early Judaism?
Who was a Jewish-Christian?
Who was a Judaizer?

Reading List
Annette Y. Reed – Adam H. Becker (eds), The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004; 1-64; 373-392.
Daniel Boyarin, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (to which is Appended a Correction of my Border Lines)”, in: Jewish Quarterly Review, 99: 1 (2009), 7-36 (Review).

Lesson 2: Adversus Judaeos Literature and Jewish responses

Questions:
- What is the so-called Adversus-Judaeos literature?
- Which were the main issues of controversy between early Christianity and early Judaism?
- How did Anti-Semitism start and develop historically and theologically?
- What were the consequences of anti-Semitism for Jews living in the Roman Empire?
- What is the text known as “Toledot Yeshu”?

Reading List

II. The Emergence of Islam:

Lesson 3: Jewish and Christian Responses to Early Islam

Questions:
- How did Islam emerge and spread in the Eastern Mediterranean?
- How was Muslim rule established and consolidated?
- What was the reaction of eastern Christians to the emergence of Muslim rule?
What was the Jewish reaction to the Muslim conquests?

Reading List


Lesson 4: The Qur'an as a Late Antique Text and the Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Questions:

- What were the relations of pre-Islamic Arabs with Judaism?
- What were the relations of pre-Islamic Arabs with eastern Christianity?
- Who were the Christian Arabs?
- Which are the relation between the Qur'an and Jewish and Christian traditions?
- Which were the most important issues of the early Christian-Muslim dialogue

Reading List


Robert Hoyland, “Late Roman Arabia, Monophysite Monks, Arab Tribes”, Semitica Classica 2 (2009), 117-139.


III. Jews and Christians and the Early Muslim Rule: Apologetics, Controversy, Encounters

Lesson 5: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Bagdad

Questions:

- Who were the Umayyads?
- Who were the Abbasids?
- What was the status of Christians and Jews in the Early Islamic Empire

Reading List

Lesson 6: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Al'Andalus

Questions:

- Which was the contribution of Christian and Jews to Islamic civilisation?
- Which were the main characteristics of the Al-Andalus rule in Spain?
- What were the relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Al-Andalus?

Reading List


IV. Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Middle Ages


Questions:

- What were the Crusades?
- Which were the main historical phases of the Crusades?
- What was the historical impact of the Crusades on Muslim and Eastern Christian populations?
- How did the Crusades influence the relations between Christians, Jews and Muslims?

Reading List


Lesson 8. Christian-Jewish-Muslim Dialogue in the Middle Ages and Beyond.

Questions:

- Who was a “Saracen”?
- Which are the main works and authors pertaining to the Medieval Christian-Jewish-Muslim Dialogue?
- Which are the main characteristics and themes of the medieval Christian-Jewish-Muslim dialogue and controversy?

**Reading List**


**V. Jews, Christians and Muslims in Modern Times.**

**Lesson 9. Religious Minorities in Islamic Lands and in Europe**

*Questions:*
- What is the status and the situation of religious minorities in Arab lands in modern times?
- Which are the Christian communities of the Middle East?
- Who are the Jews of the Muslim lands?
- What is modern Islamophobia?

**Reading List**


**Lesson 10. Inter-Faith Relations and Dialogue in Modern Times. Concluding Discussion.**

*Questions:*
- Which are the main characteristics and issues of modern Inter-Faith dialogue?
- How did the Holocaust influence Christian-Jewish relations in its aftermath?
- What are the Abrahamic religions?
**Reading List**


**Examination**

The student’s performance in the course is examined by a written assignment.

**Submission deadline:** March 25th  
**Late submission:** May 5th

**Obligatory attendance**  
This module has obligatory attendance. That means that attendance is a course requirement. In order to get a final grade for the module, achieving an attendance record of at least 80% is required. Students with 70-79% attendance can receive their final grade after submitting supplemental assignments. Grades for the module are assigned according to the result on the exam.

- 80% attendance is equivalent to 8 lessons  
- 70-79% attendance is equivalent to 7 lessons

Students who, at the end of the module, haven’t met the requirement for attendance may take the exam, but will not receive a grade for the module until the course requirement has been met. The student can catch up on their attendance the next time the course is given.

Students who meet the course requirement for obligatory attendance, but do not pass the exam have the opportunity to take the exam again, as long as it is given and not significantly changed, without needing to meet the requirement of obligatory attendance once more.

**Course Readings**  
*(in the order they appear in the lessons plan)*


Daniel Boyarin, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (to which is Appended a Correction of my Border Lines)”, in: *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 99: 1 (2009), 7-36 (Review). Available at:  

Guy Stroumsa, “From Anti-Judaism to Antisemitism in Early Christianity”? in O. Limor and G. Stroumsa, eds., *Contra Iudaos Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen:
Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 1-26. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/9204288/From_Anti-Judaism_to_Anisemitism_in_Early_Christianity


Robert Hoyland, “Late Roman Arabia, Monophysite Monks, Arab Tribes”, Semitica Classica 2 (2009), 117-139. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/3567964/Late_Roman_Arabia_Monophysite_Monks_Arab_Tribes


John Tolan, “A wild man, whose hand will be against all: Saracens and Ishmaelites in Latin ethnographical traditions, from Jerome to Bede”, in: Clemens Gantner (ed.), *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300–1100*, Routledge: London 2016, 513-530. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/1842898/A_wild_man_whose_hand_will_be_against_all_Saracens_and_Ishmaelites_in_Latin_ethnographical_traditions_from_Jerome_to_Bede](https://www.academia.edu/1842898/A_wild_man_whose_hand_will_be_against_all_Saracens_and_Ishmaelites_in_Latin_ethnographical_traditions_from_Jerome_to_Bede)


David Nirenberg, *Islam and the West: Two Dialectical Fantasies, Journal of Religion in Europe* 1 (2008), 3-33. Available at: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/526c4cfce4b0a46a4603527b/t/5851e94b9f74566bed524a91/1481763148752/Islam_and_the_West_Two_Dialectical_Fanta.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/526c4cfce4b0a46a4603527b/t/5851e94b9f74566bed524a91/1481763148752/Islam_and_the_West_Two_Dialectical_Fanta.pdf)


Grading Criteria

This course uses a seven-point, goal-related grading scale: A-F. The grading will be based on the following grading criteria.

A: The student has shown very good knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The student has also shown very good knowledge about, and a very good ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, the student has shown very good knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. The student fulfils the course requirement on obligatory attendance and has submitted the exam in time.

B: The student has shown good knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The student has also shown good knowledge about, and good ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, the student has shown good knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. The student fulfils the course requirement on obligatory attendance and has submitted the exam in time.

C: The student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The student has also shown knowledge about, and ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, the student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. The student fulfils the course requirement on obligatory attendance.

D: The student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The student has also shown knowledge about, and ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, the student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. The student fulfils the course requirement on obligatory attendance. The student has fulfilled the criteria above, but in a somewhat superficial way or with some minor flaws.

E: The student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of the relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The student has also shown knowledge about, and ability to critically discuss Jewish, Christian and Islamic religious texts as well as historical sources on inter-religious encounters in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, the student has shown knowledge about the origins and historical development of anti-Semitism and islamophobia as well as of the position of religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa. The student fulfils the course requirement on obligatory attendance. The student has fulfilled the criteria above, but in a somewhat superficial way and with some minor flaws and/or some smaller misconceptions.

Fx: The student has not fulfilled some of the criteria for a passed grade.
F: The student has not fulfilled the criteria for a passed grade.

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Note that both FX and F are failed grades.