SYLLABI

Paideia Intensive Text Courses

2011 - 2012
SYLLABUS for Paideia Intensive Text Course

Studying the Bible, the Inter-testamental Literature and the Midrash
August 29 – September 21, 2011

Professor Yair Zakovitch and Professor Avigdor Shinan
zakovitch@gmail.com; shinan@huji.ac.il

Yair Zakovitch is the Father Takeji Otsuki Professor of Bible at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His primary research interests are the Bible as literature, biblical thought and ancient interpretation of the Bible. Prof. Zakovitch served as Head of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University, and also as its Dean of Humanities. He has published numerous books and articles.

Avigdor Shinan was born in Prague 1946 and arrived to Israel in 1949. His academic studies (BA, PhD) were at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he has taught since 1972 at the Department of Hebrew Literature (full professor since 1998). His fields of research are the Midrashic and Aggadic literature, the Aramaic Translations of the Bible and the Jewish Prayer book. His list of publication contains more than 120 scholarly articles and 8 books.

Course description
This course aims at showing the rich variety of interpretations, the different ideologies they convey and the continuity from pre-biblical traditions to late rabbinical traditions. The first week is taught by Prof. Zakovitch and is devoted to a general survey of the Hebrew Bible and its main genres: Narrative, Law, Prophecy, Poetry and Wisdom. The second and third weeks are co-taught by Prof. Zakovitch and Prof. Shinan and focus on the reading of selected biblical narratives in light of their post-biblical various interpretations: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Jewish-Hellenistic literature, the Dead Sea scrolls, ancient Christianity and mainly the literature of the Rabbis. The fourth week is taught by Prof. Shinan and deals with rabbinic texts not related to the Bible such as stories about the rabbis, prayers, fables and parables.

Units and Bibliography

First week:
Monday: General introduction to the Bible
Tuesday: Morning – Genesis 15
         Afternoon – Genesis 27
Wednesday: Morning – Exodus 22: 2-11 and Deuteronomy 15:12-18
          Afternoon – Psalm 126
         Afternoon – Psalm 126
Friday: Song of Songs 1:5-6, 2:1-3, 2:15, 3:1-5, 8:13-14 and Proverbs 31:10-31

Bibliography

Second Week:
Monday: General introduction to Second Temple and rabbinic literature
Tuesday: Morning – The story about Abram and Sarai in Egypt and its inner biblical interpretations
Afternoon: The story about Abram and Sarai in Egypt in the Dead Sea scrolls and rabbinic literature

Wednesday: Morning – The birth of Moses in the Bible and the New Testament
Afternoon – The birth of Moses in Flavius Josephus and the Midrash

Thursday: The binding of Isaac in the Bible and the Midrash

Friday: Elijah in the Bible, Ben Sira and the midrash

Bibliography

Third Week:
Monday: Morning – King David in the Bible and the Dead Sea scrolls
Afternoon – King David in rabbinic literature

Tuesday: Morning – the Creation and Garden of Eden in the Genesis and its Aramaic targums
Afternoon – the Garden of Eden in biblical prophecy and the Midrash

Wednesday: Morning – The book of Ruth
Afternoon – Midrashim on the book of Ruth

Thursday: Jerusalem in the bible, the Siddur and rabbinic literature

Friday: Introduction to the stories about the life of the Sages

Bibliography
A. Shinan, “King David of the Sages”, in: *From Bible to Midrash*, Lund 2005, pp. 53-78
Y. Zakovitch, “David's Last and Early Days”, *ibid*, pp. 37-52

Fourth week:
Monday: Stories about the life of the Sages and folk stories
Tuesday: The Wisdom of the Fathers and rabbinic parables and fables
Wednesday: The Siddur and halakhic midrashim
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The Jewish Society in Modern Era - Between Tradition and Modernity
October 3 – 12, 2011

Professor Motti Zalkin
zalkin@bgu.ac.il

Professor Motti Zalkin was born in Jerusalem and received his university training at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is an associate professor of modern Jewish history at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. His special fields of interest are the social and economic history of the Jews in Eastern Europe, mainly in Lithuania, and the history of Jewish education in Eastern Europe. Among his publications are A New Dawn: The Jewish Enlightenment in the Russian Empire – Social Aspects (2000); From the Hidden Treasures of Jewish Vilna: Historical Documents From the Annals of Lithuanian Jewry (2001); The City of Vilna (Ed.)(2002); From Heder to School: Modernization Processes in Nineteenth Century East European Jewish Education (2008).

Course Description
The course will concentrate on the main religious, educational, social and economic processes which had a crucial impact on the Jewish collective consciousness and way of life from the mid 18th century to the Holocaust.

Units
1. Introduction: The pre-Modern Jewish society – structure, characteristics and worldview.
2. New cultural horizons - the Haskalah [Enlightenment]
3. New religious horizons – Orthodoxy, Hasidism, the Reform movement, the Conservative movement, etc.
4. New perception of humanity – A new Jew or a new Man?
5. New classroom – from Heder to school
6. New library – from Beit Hamidrash to the Laboratory
7. New homelands – Auf nach…
8. New ideologies – Socialism, Zionism, Capitalism, Liberalism

Bibliography
Ellenson, David Harry, "Church-sect theory, religious authority, and modern Jewish Orthodoxy: a case study", Approaches to Modern Judaism (1983) 63-83
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Early Kabbalah and its Origins
October 17 – October 27, 2011

Professor Boaz Huss
bhuss@bgu.ac.il


Course Description
The course will investigate the major concepts and the historical development of early Kabbalah. We will examine major Kabbalistic themes, such as theosophy, theurgy, the problem of evil and the structure of the human psyche, and discuss the question of the origin of Kabbalah, as well as the major movements and central texts of the early Kabbalah, including the Bahir, Abraham Abulafia and the Zohar. The course will include reading of primary Kabbalistic texts, especially, from the Zohar.

Units
1. Introduction: Beginning of Kabbalah and its Major Characteristics (Theosophy, Myth, Theurgy & Mysticism)
2. The Debate on the Origins of Kabbalah (Scholem, Idel, Liebes)
3. The Doctrine of the Sefirot and Early Jewish Theosophy
4. Kabbalistic Myths and their Biblical and Rabbinic Precursors
5. Shechina: The Divine Feminine
6. The Other Side: Kabbalistic Perceptions of Evil
7. Theurgy in Kabbalah and in Rabbinic literature
8. Kabbalistic Perceptions of the Human Body and Soul
9. Prophecy and Heavenly Ascents
10. Magic and the Power of Divine Names
11. Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and the Significance of the Torah

Bibliography
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Medieval Halakhah
November 7 – 17, 2011

PhD Candidate Rachel Furst
rachelfurst@gmail.com

Rachel Furst is a Ph.D. candidate in Jewish History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where she is working on a dissertation entitled, “Claiming Credibility: The Makings and Meanings of Gender in the Legal Literature of Medieval Ashkenaz.” She received a B.A. in Medieval Studies from Barnard College and an M.A. in Jewish History from the Hebrew University. Rachel is a lecturer at Matan, Jerusalem and has taught at various institutions in Israel and abroad.

Course Description
This course will survey the development of Jewish law from the end of the Talmudic period until early modernity. Focusing on text and meta-text, we will trace the different and conflicting ways that Jews extracted practical conclusions from the multivalent layers of the Talmud and the various influences that were liable to impact the process. We will become acquainted with historical figures including Rashi, Rambam, and Rabbi Joseph Karo and will seek insight into the complex nature of halakhah.

Units
1. From Sugya to Halakhah – Geonic literature
2. Moving West – North Africa and Spain, Alfasi
3. Maimonides
4. The Rise of the North – Italy and Germany
5. Tosafot – Rashi and his descendants in France
6. Towards a Global Village – the 13th Century
7. Expulsions and their aftermath
8. Codification and literary form
9. Manuscript and Print
10. Periodization in the history of Halakhah

Bibliography
Yehuda Dov Galinsky, “A straightforward path for all” : Jeruham the exile and his recensions of the “Guide to Justice” (“Sefer Meisharim”), Jewish Studies Quarterly 15,3 (2008) 251-268
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Maimonides
November 21 – December 1, 2011

Professor Frederek Musall
frederek.musall@hfjs.eu

Prof. Musall studied Jewish studies, Islamic studies, Semitic languages and comparative religion at Heidelberg and Jerusalem. He received his PhD in 2005 on Moses Maimonides and Hasdai Crescas. He is currently Professor of Jewish Thought at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, Heidelberg.

Course Description

Units

Bibliography
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Choices in Modern Jewish Philosophy and Culture
January 4 – January 12, 2012

PhD Candidate Rani Jaeger
ranijaeger@gmail.com

Rani Jaeger is a PhD Candidate at the Bar Ilan University at the department of Hermeneutics and Cultural Studies. For the past 10 years, Rani has been on the faculty of the Shalom Hartman Institute, and is currently the Director of the Shalom Hartman Institute School for Teacher Education. He teaches as well at the Tel-Aviv University. Rani is one of the founders of Beit Tefilah Israel ( Israeli House of Prayer), a “secular” synagogue that seeks to create a new spiritual community in the heart of Tel-Aviv. He has also been Paideia’s scholar in residence in 2009-2010.

Course Description
In this course we will examine the responses of Jewish thought to the challenges of the modern world. This encounter provoked a reexamination of old paradigms which where the foundations of Judaism for centuries. The thinkers, whose works we will read, have committed themselves to find new ways of giving meaning and direction to modern Jewish life thus approaching the past from the perspective of the present. Their achievements, dialogue and disagreements are very stimulating efforts to address issues we still struggle with.

Units
1. Introduction – understanding the challenges of Modernity to Judaism and mapping the responses.
2. Moses Mendelssohn and the beginning of modern Judaism
4. Humanism as a Jewish mission: Hermann Cohen
5. Religion and Existentialism Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber
6. The national paradigm: Herzl and Achad Ha'am
7. Ultra orthodoxy as a modern reaction- responsa
7. In the New World: Mordechi Kaplan and Abraham Yehoshua Heschel

Bibliography
Buber, Martin, Israel and the World ( Schocken 1965) At the Turning, Three Addresses on Judaism,(Schocken, 1952) 
Cohen Herman, Reason and Hope, Selections from the Jewish Writings of Hermann Cohen, trans. Eva Jospe, 1971
Herzberg Arthur, The Zionist Idea ( Jewish Publication Society, 1997) 
Heschel, Abraham Yehushua, God in Search of Man, ( Jewish Publication Society, 1956) 
Jacob Katz, Tradition and Crisis ( Free Press) 
Kaplan ,Mordhechai, Judaism as a Civilization (Reconstruction Press 1957) 
Mendelssohn, Moses, Jerusalem or on Religious Power and Judaism, trans. A. Arkush ( Part 2) 
SYLLABUS for Paideia Intensive Text Course

Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations: From Sour Grapes to Sacrament
January 16 – January 20, 2012

Professor Jesper Svartvik
jesper.svartvik@teol.lu.se

Prof. Jesper Svartvik is Krister Stendahl Professor of Theology of Religions at Lund University and at the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem. He is also a member of the Peer Review Board of Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations.

Course Description
It is often said that the twentieth century contained both the worst and the best moments in Jewish-Christian relations. On the one hand, the Shoah besmirches not only the European Continent and Modernity, but also Christendom. On the other hand, the post-war European dialogue between Jews and Christians—characterised by an unsurpassed mutual respect and candour—belongs to the most promising phases ever in European religious history. The course From Sour Grapes to Sacrament (an expression coined by Dr. Peter Pettit at Muhlenberg College) surveys the most important phases of Jewish-Christian encounters in history (Antiquity, Middle Ages, Reformation, Modernity, the Shoah and Postmodernity), seeks to identify stumbling blocks in the past and present, and also presents how a growing number of Jews and Christians define and describe their religions no longer over against each other but as two authentic expressions of faith.

Bibliography
A number of documents and articles on Jewish-Christian relations: The Ten Points of Seelisberg, Nostra Aetate, Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate, Ten Anti-Jewish Impressions, Dabru Emet, A Sacred Obligation, The Ways of God etc.
Jesper Svartvik, “Forging an Incarnational Theology Two Score Years after Nostra Aetate”, Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations 1 (2005-06), pp. 1-13 (free access at this web adress: escholarship.bc.edu/scjr/vol1/iss1/2).
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The Hasidic Path: Theory and Society
January 30 – February 9, 2012

PhD Candidate Assaf Tamari
assaf.tamari@gmail.com

Assaf Tamari is a doctoral student at the department for Jewish thought in Ben-Gurion University in the Negev. His main field of expertise is sixteenth-century Lurianic Kabbalah, and his research is focused on the Lurianic Body Discourse. His academic interests vary, and include Kabbalistic anthropological models, theories of subjectivity, individuation and agency, rhetorics, myth making, and political and critical theory.

Course Description
The Hasidic movement is a Jewish religious movement that began in Eastern Europe in the second quarter of the 18th century, and is still existent and popular until today. The founder of Hasidism is the polish Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem Tov, and the movement was developed by his disciples. There are many Hasidic groups, and each is centered around the charismatic figure of a rabbi, “Zaddik”. The course will present central Hassidic ideas by reading excerpts from the vast Hasidic library, and will focus on the relationship between theory and social order in Hasidism.

Units
1. The inception of Hasidism: between old and new: Hasidism- a result of crisis or a continuation? Background - Jewish existence in Eastern Europe Jewish ethical literature Developing Hasidic identity
2. The Hasidic Zadik: Background - mystical leadership in Jewish mysticism The Zadik as a magician The Zadik as a theologian The Zadik as a story teller Controversies between Hasidic masters
3. The Hasidic community: Structure of the Hasidic court; The meaning of being a Hasid; Hasidic families
4. The Hasidic tale: Background - the controversy about the place of the tale in Hasidism and in the Study of Hasidism Hasidic stories and their literary context. Psychological process in Hasidic tales.

Bibliography
- Simon Dubnow, “The Beginnings: The Baal Shem Tov (Besht) and the Center in Podolia”, pp. 25-57
Excerpts from Martin Buber, Tales of the Hasidim, New York 1991
Excerpts from: Moshe Idel, Hasidism: between ecstasy and magic, New York 1995
SYLLABUS for Paideia Intensive Text Course

Jewish Philosophical Responses to the Holocaust
February 13 – February 23, 2012

Dr. Nicham Ross
nicham@bgu.ac.il

Nicham Ross is a lecturer in the Department of Jewish Thought at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. Nicham received his PhD in Jewish Thought at Ben Gurion University and he specializes in researching identity and tradition in Jewish literature from the beginning of the 20th century. He received a Fulbright Scholarship to carry out his post-doctoral studies at the University of Pennsylvania. In the past he has served as Assistant to the Dean of Jewish Studies at Touro College, Jerusalem and lectured in the Department of Philosophy at Bar Ilan University and the 'Kerem' Teacher Training College. He received the Dov Rafael prize for research in Jewish Thought, the Goren-Goldstein Scholarship, and is a Research Fellow at the Lamda Pozen Foundation for Secular Jewish Culture. Nicham Ross is also the Director of the Gandel Institute for Adult Jewish Learning

Course Description
Where was God during the Holocaust? Does the answer to this question entail a transformation of the inner world of man or of the nature of Jewish belief? In our discussions, we will focus on the varying responses of several Jewish theologians and spiritual leaders to the problem of evil in general, and to the extreme example of the Holocaust in particular, in light of pre-modern Jewish attitudes to catastrophe and destruction.

Units
1. Theodicy in the Bible and in Rabbinic literature
2. Responses of ultra-Orthodox thinkers
3. Kabbalistic and Hassidic Responses
4. “The pains of redemption” (in the circle of Rabbi Kook’s disciples)
5. Defiance without Abandonment (Fackenheim, Wiesel)
6. Free will, Covenant and divine providence (Eliezer Berkovits, Yitz Greenberg, Yeshayahu Leibowitz)
7. Divine impotence (A.J. Heschel, Hans Yonas, Steven Jacobs)
8. The death of God (Richard Rubenstein, Christian Theology)
9. The banality of evil (The Hannah Arendt Controversy)
10. In the wake of the Holocaust: conclusions and educational messages

Bibliography
Cohn-Sherbok, Dan, Holocaust theology: A reader, Exeter 2002
SYLLABUS for Paideia Intensive Text Course

Modern Hebrew Literature  
March 5 – March 16, 2012

Professor Anat Feinberg  
anat.feinberg@hfjs.eu

Prof. Feinberg was born in Tel Aviv and studied at Tel Aviv University as well as at the University of London (Ph.D.). She teaches Hebrew and Jewish Literature at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien in Heidelberg and is editor in charge of Modern Hebrew Literature, Encyclopaedia Judaica (2007), Kindlers Literaturlexikon (2009). Her fields of research are Modern Hebrew Literature, Jews and German Theatre, German-Jewish Literature. She has published numerous books and articles as well as three novels.

Course Description  
This course invites students to explore major themes in modern Hebrew Literature and their relations to social and cultural phenomena in Israeli history and contemporary life. Some of the themes we will address are: the Hebrew language and the formation of a new national identity; Holocaust and remembrance; war(s) and yearnings for peace; encountering the Arab; the Israeli “at home” – modes of living in the city, country, kibbutz; etc. All texts (prose and poetry) will be provided as a reader in English translation. Poems will appear also in Hebrew. Textual analysis and discussions will be accompanied by visual material.

Bibliography  
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Judaism and Islam: Contact and Conflict as reflected in the Qur'an and Muslim tradition (=Hadith)
March 19 – March 23, 2012

Professor Meir Bar-Asher
barasher@mscc.huji.ac.il

Prof. Meir Bar-Asher was born in the village of al-Rashidiyya in south-east Morocco brought up and educated in Jerusalem. He has done his academic studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His Ph.D. dissertation on early Imami-Shi‘i exegesis was submitted in 1991. During his Ph.D. studies he learnt for one year in the university Sorbonne in Paris. He teaches at the department of Arabic Language and Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where he has been the director of the Institute of Asian and African Studies. Professor Bar-Asher is an expert on Quranic Studies and Shi‘i Islam. He is the author of several books and of numerous articles in the field of Imami Shi‘ism and Quran.

Units
1. Historical outlines of the relationships between Judaism and Islam throughout the Medieval Ages. Jews and Judaism in Arabia in pre-Islamic times (the origins of the Jewish tribes in Yathrib (al-Madina) and other regions of North-West of the Arab peninsula; their relationships with Muhammad and his new religion). Jewish participation in the medieval Muslim civilization in the Middle East.
2. Qur'an and Hadith: The multi-faceted attitude of Islam toward the Jews and Judaism as reflected in the Qur'an and the Hadith. Terminology as reflecting the various facets: "The Children of Israel" (bann isra’il), Jews (yahud) and "The People of the Book" (ahl-al-kitab). Positive versus negative images of the Jews in the Qur'an and the Hadith: e.g. the chosen People of God, the recipients of the Holy Land, the recipients of a Holy Book vs. e.g. falsifiers of the Holy Scriptures, killers of prophets sent to them; worshipers of the golden calf and other idols. The attitude of Shi‘i Islam toward Jews and Judaism.
3. Reflection of Biblical and Midrashic elements in the Qur'an and the Hadith. Direct and/or indirect affinity of the Qur'an to Jewish sources. Terminological similarity. Similarity in Content.

Bibliography
2. Selected passages from the Qur‘an and the Hadith.
3. Selected verses from the Qur‘an compared to their Biblical and post-Biblical parallels.