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ENGLISH

ENGL 462: The Hebrew Bible as Literature

TTh 4:30-5:45 pm

Sandor Goodhart

A study of Hebrew Scripture. In this course we will read closely selections from Hebrew Scripture—the Pentateuch (the five Books of Moses), the books of the Prophets, and the Holy Writings—with the goal of understanding these texts within the Rabbinical tradition of Biblical interpretation. All texts will be examined in English and no knowledge of the Hebrew language (however desirable) will be expected. There will be no exams but students will keep a journal and write weekly informal papers and one final longer paper. Classes will proceed by paying repeated close attention to the kinds of matters one would consider in any advanced course on literary reading.

ENGL 463: The Bible as Literature: The New Testament

MWF 10:30

Angelica Duran

This course takes a multi-disciplinary approach to the New Testament Bible. Close readings will be contextualized by the textbook. Understanding the Bible and Special Collections research; and supplemented by events on campus, the Greater Lafayette area, and maybe even Chicagoland, including film viewings.

LANGUAGES & CULTURES

HEBR 101: Modern Hebrew Level I

MTWF 9:30

Alon Kantor

Introduction to Modern Hebrew: The writing and sound systems, and systematic presentations of basic structures. All language skills – reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension – are emphasized. No previous knowledge of Hebrew required.

HEBR 201: Modern Hebrew Level III

MWF 10:30

Alon Kantor

Extensive practice in reading, speaking, and writing Hebrew, based on a variety of subjects from daily life and literature. Continued study of grammar and reading in the modern language. Prerequisite: HEBR 102 or equivalent.

HEBR 121: Biblical Hebrew Level I

TTh 9:00 – 10:15

Stuart Robertson

The first semester of biblical Hebrew will seek to master the basic elements of the language, including alphabet, vocabulary, and grammar. No previous knowledge of Hebrew required.

HEBR 221: Biblical Hebrew Level III

TTh 10:30 – 11:45

Stuart Robertson

The third semester of biblical Hebrew focuses on reading and translation of extended passages from the Pentateuch and the use of textual criticism. Prerequisite: HEBR 122 or equivalent.

LANGUAGES & CULTURES

HEBR 280: Modern Israel: Cinema, Literature, Politics, and History

MWF 11:30 (meets with Comparative Literature 230)

Alon Kantor

Critical survey/exploration of major traits of Israeli culture through a variety of media: literature, film and music, in the larger context of Judaism, Zionism, as well as the creation of a new state and culture. Conducted in English; no knowledge of Hebrew is necessary.

HISTORY

HIST 103: Introduction to the Medieval World

TTh 8:30

John Contreni

Recitation

WF 8:30

W 11:30

This course is an overview of medieval history in Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the birth of the Renaissance. We explore political, religious, and social changes as well as economic, technological, and cultural developments. We seek to understand the complexity of the medieval past, including an awareness of the experiences of ordinary men and women, as well as the rich and powerful. Topics include: The Birth of Christianity; The Decline of the Roman Empire; The Barbarian Nations; Islam; The Feudal World; The Crusades & Chivalry; Daily Life; The Church, Heresy & Witchcraft; The Black Death; The Renaissance.

HIST 390: Jews in the Modern World

MWF 10:30

Rebekah Klein-Pejšová

What does it mean to be a Jew in the modern world? Are Jews a religious, ethnic, or national group? How have Jews dealt with catastrophe, relations with non-Jews, the challenges of assimilation, of anti-Semitism? What is Zionism, and how did it develop? This survey of Jewish history examines Jewish responses to modernity with special attention to the Jewish relationship with the state and with the surrounding non-Jewish society, Jewish cultures, and the diversity of the modern Jewish experience. Special attention will be given to strategies of survival, modernization, and dissent in the Jewish and non-Jewish world using a variety of primary and secondary sources, including memoirs, film and music. Featuring: The Great Greater Lafayette Jewish Scavenger Hunt!

HIST 408: Dictatorship and Democracy: Europe 1919-1945

MWF 12:30

William Glenn Gray

This course examines the fleeting triumph of democracy across Europe, followed by the rise of fascism, communism, and Nazism. Emphasis will be placed on broad economic, social, and cultural transformations as well as individual choices to resist or conform.

HONORS

HONR 199: The Evolution of the Bible and its Revolutionary Effects

MWF 1:30

Stuart Robertson

This course traces the story of the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, from its roots before being included in a Sacred Canon of Scripture to the 1611 King James Version of the Bible. It will then observe the impact of the Bible not only on religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but also on culture generally: its vocabulary, phrases, ethics, politics, gender-issues, race-issues, science, geography . . . This will be a hands-on course, including student's writing on papyrus and visiting treasure-houses of early manuscripts of the Bible and sacred literature deriving from the Bible.

JEWISH STUDIES

JWST 590: Directed Readings in Jewish Studies

Time and instructor TBA

A reading course in aspects of Judaica directed by the instructor in whose particular field of specialization the content of the reading falls. Permission of Instructor required.

PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 206: Philosophy of Religion

TTh 1:30

Michael Bergmann

Recitation, Staff

M 8:30, 9:30, 11:30

Is belief in God rational? The first part of this course will deal with this question that has loomed so large in the philosophical history of western monotheism (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). Our focus will be on arguments for God's existence (e.g., the argument from the fact that the universe seems to have been designed), on arguments against God's existence (e.g., the argument that a loving God wouldn't permit horrific suffering of the sort we find in the world), and on whether belief in God can be rational if it isn't supported by argument. The second part of our course looks at the plurality of religions in the world, most of which claim to be the only religion that is right about the most important truths. Our main concern here will be to consider whether belief in such claims can be rational. Finally, we will also discuss some questions in philosophical theology. One such question asks whether we can be free if God foreknows what we will do. Another question is whether it makes sense to make requests of God in prayer given that, whether we pray or not, a perfect being would know what we want and would do what is best. Grades are based on several short quizzes, a midterm exam and a final exam.

PHIL 505: Islamic and Jewish Philosophy and the Classical Tradition (and its Critique by Spinoza)

TTh 1:30-2:45

Daniel Frank

Often medieval philosophy is presented in its Christian guise alone, giving the impression that the medieval philosophical tradition, influenced by the great thinkers of Greek antiquity, is exclusively a Latin tradition, with no substantive contribution by those who wrote in Arabic and Hebrew. We shall revise this view.

After a few weeks reading and discussing Plato's *Republic*, a key foundational text for thinkers working in Arabic-speaking lands, our focus will turn to a select group of philosophers who lived between the 10th-12th centuries, a roughly three hundred-year period that is a high point in medieval Islamic and Jewish philosophy—a time *before* Greek philosophy was rediscovered in Christian Europe. Philosophers to be studied in some detail are Farabi, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), and Maimonides, and in addressing topics in the philosophy of language, metaphysics, epistemology, cosmology, philosophical psychology, and especially in philosophy of law, ethics, and political philosophy, we will see how these philosophers adapted Greek philosophical insights for their own specific purposes.

This Greek-inspired religio-philosophical tradition came to a screeching halt with Spinoza, who published (anonymously) in 1670 the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (*TTP*), a work variously described upon its appearance in print as “harmful and vile,” “most pernicious,” “subversive,” “blasphemous,” “diabolical,” “full of abominations,” and “godless.” It's not difficult to see why, but we shall read the *TTP*, not just as a groundbreaking, founding document in modern (secular) political thought and biblical criticism, but also as a work engaged, and in debate, with the philosophical monotheisms of the medieval past. The Janus-faced nature of the *TTP* thus provides a fitting end to the philosophical tradition that commenced with Plato and the Greeks, and in so concluding we will nuance our understanding of the beginnings of modern philosophy.

A background in Greek philosophy will be helpful and is assumed. Course requirements include class presentations and written examinations.

Required texts:

1. Plato, *The Republic* [tr T Griffith] (Cambridge UP, 2000) ISBN: 9780521484435
2. Alfarabi, *Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle* [tr M Mahdi] (Cornell UP, 1969) ISBN: 9780801487163
3. GF Hourani [ed/tr], *Averroes, On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy* (Gibb Memorial Trust, 2007) ISBN: 9780718902223
4. Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed* [abridged; tr C Rabin] (Hackett, 1995) ISBN: 9780872203242
5. Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise* [trs M Silverthorne and J Israel] (Cambridge UP, 2007) ISBN: 9780521530972
6. S Nadler, *A Book Forged in Hell: Spinoza's Scandalous Treatise and the Birth of the Secular Age* (Princeton UP, 2011) ISBN: 978-0691160184

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

REL 231: Religions of the West
MWF 1:30 (meets with PHIL 331)

Thomas Ryba

The purpose of this course is to provide a systematic survey of those religions variously described, in the West, as 'Western Religions' or 'Religions of the West.' Immediately, a problem arises because the adjective, 'Western,' is questionable. The descriptions 'Western' or 'of the West' have been understood as designating a problematic geo-cultural location-but also a homogeneous style of religious thought because of their common origins as Abrahamic monotheisms. Contemporary scholars of religion, and indigenous believers, often contest this imputed homogeneity and have pointed to the incredible complexity and fluidity of these traditions, characteristics which resist simplistic classification. Well aware of the challenges such descriptions present, we, in this course, will engage in a comparative study of the systems of belief, thought, and practice traditionally termed 'Western Religions' by Western scholars of religions. This will be accomplished through a series of readings on these systems' histories, philosophies and scriptures. The approach adopted in this course is phenomenological and comparative. Adopting the phenomenological method in the academic study of religion means that we shall try to study these religions objectively and empathetically. Adopting the comparative method in the academic study of religion means that we shall try to compare and contrast the features of these religions with the intent of observing similarities, dissimilarities and regularities, where meaningful points of comparison occur. The phenomenological method (properly applied) gives us access to a religion's rationale; the comparative method (properly applied) gives us access to the rationale of Religion. The systems of belief, thought and practice which will be studied and compared in this course are: (1) the Judaic tradition, (2) the Christian tradition, and (3) the Islamic tradition. This survey and comparison will take place according to a fixed set of categories. Surveyed for each of these traditions will be: (a) its worldview, (b) its scriptures, (c) its hierology, (d) its cosmology, (e) its anthropology, (f) its soteriology, and (g) its most important schools of thought (or forms of scholasticism). Prerequisites: None. Course requirements: three objective examinations; six optional extra-credit assignments.

REL 317: Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
TTh 3:00-4:15

Stuart Robertson

This course traces the story of the earliest roots of the Jewish people from the Ancient Near Eastern civilizations, and of their forebears in the Old Testament, to the first two centuries of our era by when the ancient Israelites were known as Jews, and then as Christianity, itself an early Jewish sect, separated into a distinct religion and culture.

SOCIOLOGY

SOC 310-04: Racial & Ethnic Diversity

TTh 3:00-4:15

TBA

Examines racial and ethnic pluralism in America: ways groups have entered our society; their social and cultural characteristics; and their relationships with other groups. Groups include the English, Germans, Irish, Jews, Chinese, Japanese, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

SOC 310-06: Racial & Ethnic Diversity

TTh 10:30-11:45

TBA

Examines racial and ethnic pluralism in America: ways groups have entered our society; their social and cultural characteristics; and their relationships with other groups. Groups include the English, Germans, Irish, Jews, Chinese, Japanese, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

SOC 367-05: Religion in America

TTh 10:30-11:45

TBA

Examines the social dimensions of religion in American life; religion in American culture; social profiles of America's religious groups, trends in individual religious commitment; and religion's impact on American life.