SC-636 Images of Jesus in Christian and Muslim Sacred Writings
Syllabus

Fall Semester 2014

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Course Description

This course will be conducted as a graduate seminar. We will study in depth images of Jesus in Christian and Muslim sacred writings. On the Christian side, the texts to be examined will include the four canonical Gospels, as well as the “synoptic-type” apocryphal gospels”, but not the Gnostic gospels. On the Muslim side, we shall study the Qur’an, hadith, Tales of the Prophets, and the relevant materials in the works of classical historians. We shall finally look at images of Jesus in some modern and contemporary Christian and Muslim writings. Lectures will be given as the need arises, but greater emphasis will be placed on student participation and class presentations.

The course will be structured around the following major themes in the life and mission of Jesus: his birth, subsequent life and teaching, death and resurrection and eschatology. We shall finally look at some 19th and 20th century images and critical investigations of Jesus by both Muslim and Christian thinkers.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and on-time arrival is expected at all class sessions. If you are unable to attend a class session please inform the instructor or teaching assistant in advance so arrangements for make-up work can be made. Since attendance and participation constitute 10% of your grade, excessive tardiness or absence will lower your grade. Students who miss more than three classes will not be able to successfully pass the course.

Course Schedule and weekly readings

Online and other electronically assigned readings are to be printed out and carefully read by the students.

Week 1 – Introducing the course and syllabus
Reading: ch.1 and 2. of Jesus as a Figure in History by Mark Allan Powell (on SonisWeb)

Week 2 – Jesus’ Nativity

Week 3 – Jesus’ Nativity
Readings Surah 3:33-49; 19:1-38; Tales of the Prophets ch. 86 on Jesus (in SonisWeb); Jesus in Shi’a Narrations – His Birth, His childhood (online - http://www.al-islam.org/jesus_shiite_narrations/); History of Tabari (in SonisWeb), Images of Jesus Christ in Islam by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD

Week 4 – Life and Teaching
Reading: Matthew 5-7, 12; John 17; Mark 1, Luke 9; Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of the Hebrews, Gospel of the Ebionites from Ch 4 of The Other Bible or http://www.earlychristianwritings.com, Seeking the Identity of Jesus eds Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Richard Hays pages TBD

Week 5 – Life and Teaching

Week 6 – Life and Teaching
Reading: The Muslim Jesus by Tarif Khalidi, Images of Jesus Christ in Islam by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD

Week 7 – Life and Teaching
Reading: Jesus in Shi’a Narrations online; Mahmoud Ayoub in A Muslim View of Christianity ch.11 “Jesus the Son of God” & ch.12 “Toward Islamic Christology I”, Images of Jesus Christ in Islam by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD

Week 8 – Death and Resurrection

Week 9 – Death and Resurrection
Reading: Jesus in Shi’a Narrations; Ayoub, “Towards an Islamic Christology, part 2” in A Muslim View of Christianity p156-197; Todd Lawson Ch 4 “Modern Developments” from The Crucifixion and the Qurʾān (in Sonisweb), Images of Jesus Christ in Islam by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD
Surrah 3:52-55, 4:157-159, 19:19-34

Week 10 – Eschatology
Reading: Revelation, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2, Matthew 25, The Apocalypse of Peter from The Other Bible or http://www.earlychristianwritings.com, Seeking the Identity of Jesus eds Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Richard Hays pages TBD

Week 11 – Eschatology
Reading: Mishkat al Masabih, *Images of Jesus Christ in Islam* by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD
Smith and Hadaad in *The Muslim World* 100:4 (SonisWeb)

Week 12 – Modern Scholarship of Jesus
Reading: *Seeking the Identity of Jesus* eds Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Richard Hays pages TBD

Week 13 – Modern Scholarship of Jesus
Reading: *Images of Jesus Christ in Islam* by Oddbjørn Leirvik pages TBD

Week 14 – Class presentations and concluding the course

Course Requirements

All students are expected to read and discuss the weekly reading assignments. Every week students are expected to submit a one-page summary/reflection on the reading for that week. Each student will be responsible for leading one of the class discussions on the weekly readings. In addition, every student will prepare a major term paper, 12-15 pages in length with proper footnotes and bibliography due (?). Students will share their research in a brief class presentations scheduled for that purpose.

Grading

Grades will be computed as follows:
Class participation and discussion 25%
Class assignments 25%
Major term paper 50%.

Required Books

*The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature*
Tarif Khalidi

*A Muslim View of Christianity* - Mahmoud Ayoub

*The Other Bible* - Willis Barnstone (Editor) or find these texts here: http://www.earlychristianwritings.com

*Images of Jesus Christ in Islam* by Oddbjørn Leirvik

*Seeking the Identity of Jesus* eds Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Richard Hays

Students should have in class, a copy of *The Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV* and a recognized translation of the Qur'ān