Syllabus

Mysticism Magic and Messianism among Medieval Jews in the Lands of Islam - 13929

Last update 25-08-2016

HU Credits:  4

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: history of jewish people & contemporary jewry

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Miriam Frenkel

Coordinator Email: miriam.frenkel@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday 14.00-15.00

Teaching Staff:
Prof Miriam Frenkel
Course/Module description:
The seminar concerns manifestations of mysticism, magic and messianism in medieval Jewish practice and thought. Special attention will be given to encounters between Judaism and Islam in these fields.

Course/Module aims:
The student will be acquainted with transcendental perceptions and practices in an age generally perceived as rationalistic.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
Identify mystical dimensions in medieval texts; distinguish between mysticism and magic; criticise academic research in these fields; compare between transcendental perceptions in different religions; point at the relevance of religious practices to transcendental perceptions

Attendance requirements(%):
100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: seminar

Course/Module Content:
1. Introduction
2. Medieval Jewish messianism
3. The discourse of medieval Jewish messianism
4. Messianic discourse in Poetry and liturgy
5. Messianic events following the Islamic occupations
6. Fifty years of messianic events in Iraq
7. A false messiah in Yemen
8. R. Saadia Gaon’s messianic postures
9. Judah Halevi’s messianic postures
10. Maimonides' messianic perceptions
11. What is mysticism?
12. Medieval Jewish mysticism in the lands of Islam
14. Bahya ibn Paqudah and his “Duties of the Hearts”
15. Mystical elements in Judah Halevi’s thought
16. Mystical elements in Maimonides’ thought
17. Abraham Maimonides and his pietistic movement
18. Nathanael al-Fayyumi
20. 22. Medieval Jewish mysticism in the Land of Islam
21. 23. Astral Mysticism
22. 24. Jewish demonology: on Lilith
23. 25. Dream interpretation

Required Reading:
- Bohak Gideon, Jewish magic in the Middle Ages, The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West (2015) 268-299
- Bohak Gideon, The Jewish magical tradition from late antique Palestine to the Cairo Genizah, From Hellenism to Islam (2009) 324-342
- Carlebach Elisheva, Between History and Hope: Jewish Messianism in Ashkenaz and Sephard, new York 1998.
- Cohen G. D., Messianic Postures of Ashkenazim and Sephardim (Prior to Sahbtaï Zevi), New York 1967.


Additional Reading Material:


Morris C., The Discovery of the Individual, pp. 148-152.
Ohana David, ”J. L. Talmon, Gershom Scholem and the price of Messianism”, History of European Ideas 34.2 (2008) 169-188
Saperstein Marc, ”A `ritual dance of distruction`?”, Jewish Quarterly Review 90,1-2 (1999) 151-158
Shaffir William, ”When prophecy is not validated: explaining the unexpected in a messianic campaign”, Jewish Journal of Sociology 37,2 (1995) 119-136

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 90 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:
Changes may occur in the lessons' order and content.