

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Rabbinic Polemical Encounters with Heretics in the Roman and Sasanian Empires - 14111

Last update 18-10-2015

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: jewish thought

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Yakir Paz

Coordinator Email: yakirpaz@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday, 10:30-12

Teaching Staff:

Dr.

Course/Module description:

This course will address explicit theological polemics in Rabbinic Literature, most of which are fashioned as a dialogue between a Rabbi and an anonymous rival with a generic title (e.g. Min, Philosopher, Caesar). During the course these polemics will be analyzed within their historical, geographical and literary context. The course will be divided thematically and each session will focus on a specific subject in the center of debates between the Rabbis and various "others", such as: Sabbath, Circumcision, Resurrection, Two Powers in Heaven, Metatron, and more. Alongside the Rabbinic texts we shall read polemic literature of the period from both the Roman and the Sassanian Empires and get acquainted with the diverse religious landscape of Late Antiquity: non-Rabbinic Jews, Pagans, East and West Christians, Gnostics, Manichaeans and Zoroastrians.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To get to know the Rabbinic and non-Rabbinic Polemical literature and to acquire the methodological tools to analyze it in its historical, geographical and literary contexts. In addition, the student will be introduced to the diverse religious currents in Late Antiquity.

Attendance requirements(%):

900%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture, Discussion and Presentations

Course/Module Content:

1. Introduction
- Palestine:
2. Sabbath
3. Circumcision
4. Resurrection
5. Falsifying Scripture

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6. The Jealousy of God
 7. "Let Us Make Man"
 8. Two Powers in Heaven
 - Babylonia:
 9. Zoroastrianism (I): Dualism
 10. Zoroastrianism (II): Burial and Menstruation
 11. Eastern Christianity (I)
 12. Eastern Christianity (II)
 13. "He Who Created This Did Not Create This"
 14. Metatron

Required Reading:

Secondary Literature (Primary source will be given during the course)

2)

מ' הירשמן, המקרא ומדרשו: בין חז"ל לאבות הכנסייה, תל אביב, תשנ"ב, עמ' 28-44
פ' שפר, יודופוביה: גישות כלפי היהודים בעולם העתיק, תל אביב, תשע"א, עמ' 122-137
S. Inowlocki, Tertullian's Law of Paradise (*Adversus Judaeos* 2): Reflections on a Shared Motif in Jewish and Christian Literature Paradise in Antiquity, in M Bockmuehl and G. G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Views*, Cambridge 2010, pp. 103-119

3)

פ' שפר, יודופוביה: גישות כלפי היהודים בעולם העתיק, תל אביב, תשע"א, עמ' 122-137 עמ' 138-157
Maren Niehoff, *Circumcision as a Marker of Identity: Philo, Origen and the Rabbis on Gen 17:1-14*, *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 10 (2003), pp. 89-123

4)

Claudia Setzer "Talking Their way into Empire': Jews, Christians, and pagans debate Resurrection of the Body", C. Bakhos (ed.), *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context*, Leiden / Boston 2005, 155-175

5)

Grant, Robert. *Heresy and Criticism: The Search for Authenticity in Early Christian Literature*. Philadelphia 1987
K. M. Vaccarella, *Shaping Christian Identity: The False Scripture Argument in Early Christian Literature*, Dissertation, Florida State University 2007, pp. 34-80

6)

A.H.B. Logan, *The Jealousy of God: Exod 20:5 in Gnostic and Rabbinic Theology*, *Studia Biblica* (1978), pp. 197-203
Nils A. Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God: A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos: the Work's Sources, Aims, and Relation to Its Contemporary Theology*. Leiden: Brill, 2004. pp. 225-233

7)

מ' קיסטר, נעשה אדם: הייחוד בין אחדות לריבוי, סוגיות במחקר התלמוד: קובץ הרצאות לזכר א"א אורבך, ירושלים תשס"א, עמ' 38-57

Visotzky, Goys 'Y'n't us : Rabbinic Anti-Gentile Polemic in Yerushalmi Berachot 9:1, E. Iricinschi and H. M. Zellentin (eds.), *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, Tübingen 2008, pp. 299-313

8) Choice of one article

Boyarin, Two Powers in Heaven: or, the Making of a Heresy, in H. Najman and J. H. Newman (eds.), *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation; Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, Leiden 2004, pp. 331-370

Marmorstein, *The Background of the Haggada*, HUCA 6 (1929), 141-204

A. Schremer, Midrash, Theology, and History: Two Powers in Heaven Revisited, *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 39,2 (2008), 230-254

A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism*, Leiden 1977

מ' קיסטר, "פנים בפנים": תפיסות דמות האל במדרשים וקשריהן לטקסטים נוצריים, תרביץ פא (תשע"ג), 103-142.

9-10)

Herman, G., "'Bury My Coffin Deep!": Zoroastrian Exhumation in Jewish and Christian Sources," in: J. Roth, M. Schmelzer and Y. Francus (eds.), *Tiferet Leyisrael: Jubilee Volume in Honor of Israel Francus*, New York 2010, pp. 31-59.

S. Secunda, Reading the Bavli in Iran, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 100 (2010), pp. 310-331

S. Shaked, Zoroastrian Polemics against Jews in the Sasanian and Early Islamic Period, *Irano-Judaica* 2 (1990), pp. 85-104

א' אחדות, הפולמוס היהודי-זורואסטרי בתלמוד הבבלי, איראנו-יודאיקה ד (1999), 40*-17.

11-12)

Yair Furstenberg, *The Midrash of Jesus and the Bavli's Counter-Gospel* (forthcoming)

N. Koltun-Fromm, A Jewish Christian Conversation in Fourth-Century Persian Mesopotamia, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 47 (1996), pp. 45-63.

משה הלברטל ושלמה נאה, מעייני הישועה: סטירה פרשנית ותשובת המינים, בתוך: י' לוינסון, י"א וג' חזן-רוקם (עורכים), היגיון ליונה: היבטים חדשים בחקר ספרות המדרש, האגדה והפיוט; קובץ מחקרים לכבודו של פרופסור יונה פרנקל במלאות לו שבעים וחמש שנים, ירושלים תשס"ז, עמ' 179-197

13) Source will be given during the course

14) Choice of one article

D. Boyarin, Beyond Judaism: Metatron and the divine polymorphy of ancient Judaism, *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 41,3 (2010) 323-365

Peter Schafer, *The Jewish Jesus: How Judaism and Christianity Shaped Each Other*, Princeton 2012, pp. 103-149

קיסטר, מטטרון והאל ובעיית שתי הרשויות: לבירור הדינמיקה של מסורות, פרשנות ופולמוס, תרביץ
פב (תשע"ד), עמ' 43-88

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 30 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 50 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: