

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Department of Religion, SAS
01:840-212 Religions of the Western World
Spring 2011

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This course explores the sacred writings, beliefs, rituals, and historical development of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Textbooks:

I-Boyce, M. (ed.) *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism*. The University of Chicago Press 1990

II-Metzger, B.M. Murphy, R.E. (Ed.) *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*. Oxford University Press

III-Arberry, A.J. (Ed.) *The Koran Interpreted*. Oxford University Press

IV- Articles on reserve at Alexander Library -Identified by “R” in the Reading List

V-E- sources (Articles from the Library’s e-sources) identified by “E” in the Reading List

Course Requirements and procedures:

The textbooks used in this course are the scriptures of Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam- the four major western religions. Given the comparative approach used in this course, students are urged to attend the classes regularly and to participate in class discussions.

Examinations will be based on the material covered in lectures, as well as the textbooks, and handouts The final Grade will be calculated on the following basis: Class attendance and Participation: 10% *First Hourly Test: 40%* , *Second Hourly Test: 25%* , *Final 25%*

Reading List

Topics and Reading Assignments

Sessions

I-Introduction:

1/20

“Diffusion” in: International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, 1968 Ed. Sills, D. “E”

II-Zoroastrianism

1/24,27,31

Historical Background:

Boyce, Chapter one and pp. 57-59

Boyce, pp.27-33; 61 (Atash Nyayesh) , 104-115

Handouts I&II

Zoroastrian Dogma:

Boyce, pp.34-42,45-53

Suffering and Salvation, Zoroastrian Eschatology

Boyce, pp.80-104;

III- The Jewish Tradition

2/3-3/3

Background and Introduction:

2/3

“History of Judaism” **R** (Schmidt, R. et al : *Patterns of Religion* (2nd ed.)

Chapter 8; The Bible: pp. xxxi - xxxvi (Hebrew Bible) ; *Handouts III& IV*

Story of Creation, Noah and the Flood: The Documentary Hypothesis

2/7,10

Genesis, Ch:1:1-2:4 and 2:4-3:24;

Handout V, Genesis 6-10; Handout VI

The Patriarchs, the Covenant with Israel, and Settlement in Egypt Genesis: 11-end	2/14,17
Moses, Exodus, and the Journey toward the Promised Land: Exodus 1-19; Exodus 26-end, Deuteronomy: 34; Numbers:12; Exodus 20-25;	2/21,24
The Monarchy, Canaanite influence, and the Prophets: The Deuteronomistic History Books Entry “El” in <u>Encyclopedia of Religion</u> , 2 nd . Ed (E) Joshua 1-6 (and Judges1-3,11) II Kings 22-24, Amos 4,5,7,8; Hosea, 7-14; Isaiah 1-3,7 & 10; Deuteronomy 6,7,9,10. 32	
Babylonian Exile and the encounter with Zoroastrianism Isaiah: 40-56; Daniel: 7-12; Jonah (entire); Ruth (entire) II Samuel: 24; I Chronicle: 21; Jeremiah:1; <i>Handout VII</i> Entry “Angels” in <u>Encyclopedia of Religion</u> , 2 nd . Ed (E)	2/28; 3/3

First Hourly Examination: 3/7 (40 Points)

<i>IV - The Christian Tradition</i>	<i>3/10-4/11</i>
Background and Introduction Schmidt, R. et al, “History of Christianity” R ; Introduction to the New Testament	<i>3/10</i>
The lives of Religious Heroes The Gospel of Mathew (entire); The Acts:1, 6-10, 22&26; Galatians (entire); Romans (entire)	<i>3/21,24,28,31</i>
Sectarian Movements: John 1, 2, 12,14; Philippians 2:5-11; <i>Handout VIII, Handouts IX & X</i> Entry “Free will & Predestination: An Overview” in <u>Encyclopedia of Religion</u> , 2 nd . Ed. (E)	<i>4/4,7</i>

Second Hourly Test 4/11 (25 Points)

<i>V- The Muslim Tradition</i>	<i>4/14-5/2</i>
Background and Introduction: Ayoub, M.M. “ The Islamic Tradition” “ R ” in Oxtoby, W.G. World Religions, Chapter five and, the Koran, 29:61-end; 23:80-93; 43:5-15; 29:61-end; Compilation of the Qur’an and Hadith <i>Handout XI</i> , The Qur’an:87, 16:100-105; 17:75;10:16 ;18:26; 69:44-48;22:50-55	<i>4/14</i>
Beliefs, Rituals and the Ideal Society: The Koran : 96:1-6;53(entire);106; 2:30-39;7:10-30; 20:115-125; 15:28-32; 41:5-12; 2 (entire), 4/1-40,125-135 Entry “Free will & Predestination: An Overview” in <u>Encyclopedia of Religion</u> , 2 nd . Ed. (E) {Suffering and Salvation: The Koran: Chapter 81, 43:70-75; 55:35-75; 56:1-60 }	<i>4/25,28& 5/2</i>

Final Examination (25 points)