

RS 6: ISLAM, JUDAISM, AND CHRISTIANITY*

SPRING 2005, CSUC

Instructor: Loren D. Lybarger
Class Hours: Section 1 MWF 10:00-10:50
Section 2 MWF 1:00-1:45
Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-4:00

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Course Description and Goals

This course is an introduction to the three major monotheistic religions: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. The course reviews basic practices, beliefs, institutions, and historical developments. It also explores the overlap and interdependency between these religions through an in-depth case study of Jerusalem.

Requirements/Evaluation

- 60% **Three End-of-Unit Exams (20% each)**: You will complete three end-of-unit exams that test your knowledge of the basic beliefs, practices, history, and institutions of the three religions. These exams will be in the form of multiple choice and/or short answer questions. Unless otherwise indicated, all exams will be taken on WebCT. You must take the exams during the assigned times. **NO make-up exams** will be allowed unless there is a clear and compelling reason.
- 25% **Critical Reflection Paper**: You will write a six- to seven-page paper that summarizes and critically reflects on the claims that Jews, Muslims, and Christians have historically made toward Jerusalem. The paper will be due during final exam week. I will provide you with criteria that outline how you are to write this paper. **I accept no late papers** unless you can convincingly document a medical emergency or sudden death in the family.
- 10% **Class Participation**: You are expected to raise questions and contribute thoughts during lectures and class discussions. Write down questions as you read the required assignments and bring these questions to class. Class time is your opportunity to clarify anything that you are having trouble understanding in your reading. It is also your chance to explore issues that are important to you or about which you are curious. Your daily attendance will also count toward your class participation grade. You also will be required to do weekly essays on course readings and small-group presentations during the final unit on Jerusalem. These presentations will count toward your class participation.
- 5% **Outside Cultural Events**: This class fulfills a General Education requirement. You must therefore attend four cultural events during the semester. At the end of the semester, you will submit to me a single document that briefly describes each of the events you attended. One of these events may be a current film or documentary related to one of the three religions that we are studying in this course. **The other events must be visits to the Islamic Center of Chico, the local synagogue, and a ritual or service at a church that belongs to a denomination you are unfamiliar with.**

Grades will be based on percentages (no class curves) and are assigned as follows:

A	=	95-100%
A-	=	90-94%
B+	=	87-89%
B	=	84-86%
B-	=	80-83%
C+	=	77-79%
C	=	74-76%
C-	=	70-73%
D	=	65-69%
D-	=	60-64%
F	=	0-59%

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism and cheating are grave violations of the academic integrity policy of the California State University, Chico. This policy (EM 04-36) is posted at http://www.csuchico.edu/prs/EMs/EM04/em04_36.htm. Every student enrolled in a Religious Studies course is required to read through the policy **and complete the RS tutorial and self test** at http://www.csuchico.edu/rs/pdf/Plagiarism_Tutorial.pdf. The answers to the self-test are at http://www.csuchico.edu/rs/pdf/Plagiarism_Tutorial_Answers.pdf. We view plagiarism and cheating as serious offenses. The policy of the Department of Religious Studies is that anyone found to have blatantly cheated or plagiarized on an assignment will automatically fail the course and be referred to student judicial affairs for further disciplinary action.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class period.
- Your level of attendance will directly affect your class participation grade.
- Multiple and consistent absences will result in an F for the course.

Incompletes

As a rule, I do not give incompletes. I will make an exception only in very special circumstances (severe medical emergency, documented death in the family, e.g.). A student must have a passing grade at the time s/he requests an incomplete. If it is awarded, the student must complete all remaining coursework in the following semester. I do not grant incompletes if a student is unable or unwilling to keep pace with the requirements of the course.

Contesting Grades

If a student feels an error in grading has been made, the student has one week from the time of the assignment is returned to him/her (or the grade is posted on the web, whichever is later) to request a review of the grade. The request must be in writing attached to the original assignment and must include a specific statement as to what is in error, how it should be corrected, and what supporting evidence is available.

Documented Disabilities Proviso

If you have a documented disability that may require reasonable accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. DSS is located in Building E. Building E is adjacent to Meriam Library and Bell Memorial Union (BMU).

The DSS phone number is 898-5959 V/TTY or FAX 898-4411. Visit the DSS website at <http://www.csuchico.edu/dss/>

Add/Drop Procedures

Students are responsible for handling the necessary paperwork for adding or dropping this class. University guidelines for dropping classes are strictly adhered to. I accept no adds after the third week of class.

Classroom Etiquette

- **Please turn off all pagers, cell phones and other electronic devices during class time.**
- Please do not eat in the classroom.
- Please be on time. Talk to me in person if you will have difficulty doing this.
- Read the standards set in the ***Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities (EM 96-38)*** for further information on expectations for classroom comportment.

Required Texts

Armstrong, Karen. Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths. New York: Ballentine Books, 1996, 1997.

Ludwig, Theodore. The Sacred Paths of the West, 2nd Edition. New York: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Course Reader (available for purchase at Mr. Copy)

COURSE CALENDAR

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION

Monday, January 24

- Introduction to the class
- Syllabus, course expectations
- Discussion: what is religion? What is monotheism?

Wednesday, January 26

- **Discussion:** What is a religious studies approach to religion? How does this approach differ from a theological approach?
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths*, Chapter 1, 3-24.

UNIT 2: JUDAISM

Friday, January 28

- **Lecture/Discussion:** Origins of Judaism: the Abrahamic story
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths* 87--91; 107-111; ***Reader***, Abraham's Call, Covenant with God, Ishmael's Birth, Genesis 12-15, 15, 17, 20-22.

Monday, January 31:

- **Discussion:** Key Narratives: Moses and the Second Covenant
- **Reading:** ***Reader***, Moses: Exodus 1:15-3:22, 6:1-14; 11:1-14:30, 20:16-23:33.

- **Writing assignment:** Write 2-3 paragraphs to hand in on the following questions: How does Moses' story compare to Abraham's? Are there any themes found in both stories, and if so, what are they?

Wednesday February 2

- **Lecture:** Judaism from Mosaic times to the rabbinic era
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths*, 90-98, 111-118; **Reader**, Joshua 1-7; Psalm 137; Ezekiel 2, 17, 21, 37.

Friday February 4:

- **Lecture/Discussion:** Torah and Talmud
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths*, 125-130; **Reader**. Jacob Neusner, "The essentials of rabbinic literature,"

Monday February 7

- **Discussion:** Talmud in Jewish life
- **Readings:** **Reader**: Jonathan Rosen, selections from *The Talmud and the Internet*; "Leviticus Midrash."
- **Writing Assignment:** Write one page (total) on the following questions: What is the role of the Talmud in Rosen's life? What do you think of the comparison he makes between the Talmud and the world wide web? Why does God study Talmud?

Wednesday February 9

- **Film:** Jewish Ritual
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths*, 119-125.

Friday, February 11

- **Discussion:** How does halakhah shape Jewish life?
- **Reading:** **Reader**: Rabbi Irving Greenberg, "The Dream and How to Live it: Shabbat"
- **Writing assignment:** Write 2-3 paragraphs on the following question: What does Greenberg say is the role of the sabbath in Jewish life?

Monday, February 14

- **Lecture:** The role of ritual in Jewish life.
- **Reading:** **Reader**: Michael Fishbane, "Judaism as a Ritual System."

Wednesday, February 16

- **Lecture/Discussion:** Medieval and early modern Judaism
- **Reading:** *Ludwig*, 103-106; **Reader**: Lis Harris, Selections from *Holy Days: The World of A Hasidic Family* (Reader).
- **Writing assignment:** Write 2-3 paragraphs on the following questions: What is the goal of Hasidism? How does it differ from other forms of Judaism?

Friday, February 18

- **Lecture/Discussion:** Modern Judaisms: the Reform, Orthodox, and Conservative movements
- **Reading:** **Reader**, Frida Furman, "Synagogue Life Among American Reform Jews," Morton Applebaum, "Do All Jews Believe Alike," "Declaration of Principles adopted by a group of Reform Rabbis at Pittsburgh, 1885."
- **Writing assignment:** Why did yarmulkes become a controversial issue in the Reform synagogue?

Monday, February 21:

- **Lecture/Discussion:** Controversies in modern Judaism
- **Reading: Reader:** Samuel Heilman, "Orthodoxy in an American Synagogue;" Aviva Cantor, "Jewish Women's Haggadah," (Reader).
- Show evidence of having completed the **WebCT CSUC and RS Academic Integrity Policy and orientation materials**

Wednesday, February 23: Judaism Exam

UNIT 3: CHRISTIANITY

Friday, February 25

- **Film:** From Jesus to Christ
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 138-140 (Stop at Beginnings of the Christian Church); Reader, Gospel of Luke 12-24**

Monday, February 28

- **Film:** From Jesus to Christ
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 140-145 (Stop at Emperor Constantine and Imperial Christianity); Reader, Book of Acts, 1-10**

Wednesday, March 2

- **Film:** From Jesus to Christ
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 145-148; Reader: Eusebius on Constantine's conversion**

Friday, March 4

- **Lecture:** From Medieval to Modern Christianity; Geographical and demographic distribution of Christians worldwide, today
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 148-157**

Monday, March 7

- **Lecture:** Key Beliefs: Trinity, Creation, Sin
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 158-164 (Stop at The Path: Salvation by Grace); Reader: Articles on, and copies of, the Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds and councils**

Wednesday, March 9

- **Lecture:** Key Beliefs: Salvation
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 164-169; Reader: Conflict over Justification (excerpts from Luther's *Lectures on Romans* and Council of Trent, *Decree on Justification*)**

Friday, March 11

- **Lecture:** Core Rituals, Festivals, and Institutions: Sacraments, Holy Days; Central Institutions: Hierocratic and Lay Models of Church Organization
- **Reading: Ludwig, *Sacred Paths*, 170-184**

SPRING BREAK

Monday, March 21

- **Lecture:** Artistic Forms in Christian Cultures

- **Reading:** *Reader: Material Culture in Christianity*
- **UNIT EXAM #3: CHRISTIANITY**
- **VISIT TO GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, Sunday, March 27???**

UNIT 4: ISLAM

Wednesday, March 23

- **Lecture:** a) Geographical and demographic distribution of Muslims worldwide, today; b) How Islam began: Muhammad and His early life, formation as a prophet, and early preaching in Mecca
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 185-190 (Stop at Establishing the Ummah in Medina)*; **Reader,** *Qur'an: The Opening, The Star, and The Cheats, from Sells, Approaching the Qur'an; Excerpts from the biography of the Prophet Muhammad, pp. TBA*

Friday, March 25

- **Lecture:** The establishment of the *ummah* in Medina, the conquest of Mecca, the death of Muhammad, and the struggles for the succession to the Prophet's mantle; the conquest of an empire
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 190-195 (Stop at The Islamic Ummah in History)*; **Reader,** *Excerpts from biography of the Prophet Muhammad, pages TBA*

Monday, March 28

- **Film:** *The 'Ulama' and the Philosophers of Islam*
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 195-200 (Stop at Religious Ideas of the Shi'ites)*

Wednesday, March 30

- **Lecture:** Shi'ism and its branches; the medieval and early modern empires
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 200-203 (Stop at Reform Movements and the Modern World)*

Friday, April 1

- **Film:** *Muslims: An In-Depth Look at What It Means to Be a Muslim in the 21st Century*
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 203-209; Reader, Excerpt Making Muslim Space (article on*

Monday, April 4

- **Discussion:** The Islamic concept of God and the implications for theodicy
- *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 200-214 (Stop at Negligence and Unbelief)*

Wednesday, April 6

- **Discussion:** The Islamic concept of the world, human existence, evil, the straight path as a solution for evil
- **Reading:** *Ludwig, Sacred Paths, 214-220;*

Friday, April 8

- **Film:** *The Five Pillars or Inside Mecca or Sacrifice to Allah*

- **Reading:** **Ludwig**, *Sacred Paths*, 221-227 (*Stop at Art in Islamic Worship and Life*)

Monday, April 11

- **Lecture:** Islamic Material and Musical Arts: The Aesthetic of Willed Ambiguity (calligraphy, painting, mosque architecture, and decoration)
- **Reading:** **Ludwig**, *Sacred Paths*, 227-228; **Reader:** *Material Culture in Islam* (**Optional stuff:** Check out the articles on Islamic art, music, and architecture at <http://www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/IsIArt.html>)

Wednesday, April 13

- **Lecture:** *Shari`ah* and its requirements and principles; the notion of a well-regulated community (*Maḥkama* and *Masjid*; *Qāḍī*, *Wā`iz*, and *Mūftī*)
- **Reading:** **Ludwig**, *Sacred Paths*, 229-235
- **UNIT EXAM #1: ISLAM**
- **VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC CENTER OF CHICO???**

Unit 5: JERUSALEM

Friday, April 15

- **Discussion:** Jerusalem and the problem of religious and ethnic pluralism
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. xiii-21*

Monday, April 18

- **Discussion:** Zion; Israel; City of David
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 2 and 3, pp. 22-55*

Wednesday, April 20

- **Discussion:** City of Judah; Exile and Return
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 56-102*

Friday, April 22

- **Discussion:** Antioch in Judea; Destruction
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 6 and 7, pp. 103-152*

Monday, April 25

- **Discussion:** Aelia Capitolina; The New Jerusalem
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 8 and 9, pp. 153-193*

Wednesday, April 27

- **Discussion:** Christian Holy City
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapter 10, pp. 194-216*

Friday, April 29

- **Discussion:** Bayt al-Maqdis; al-Quds
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 11 and 12, pp. 217-270*

Monday, May 2

- **Discussion:** Crusade; Jihad
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapters 13 and 14, pp. 271-322*

Wednesday, May 4

- **Discussion:** Ottoman City
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapter 15, pp. 323-346*

Friday, May 6

- **Discussion:** Revival
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Chapter 16, Jerusalem, 347-370*

Monday, May 9

- **Film:** Either Gaza Strip or Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapter 17, pp. 371- 397*

Wednesday, May 11

- **Discussion:** Israel; Zion?
- **Reading:** *Armstrong, Jerusalem, Chapter 18, pp. 398-430*

Friday, May 13

- **Film:** Documentary on the Temple Mount and Jerusalem

* This syllabus is subject to change at any moment during the semester.