Theo 60172: Scripture in Judaism and Islam

MEETINGS: SUMMER 2015; M.T.W.TH.F. 8:30-11:00 am (220 Malloy)
WEBSITE: GO TO SAKAI.ND.EDU
CLASS EMAIL ADDRESS: THEO60172SU15@SAKAILOGIN.ND.EDU
PROFESSORS: MICHAEL NOVICK
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment
GABRIEL SAID REYNOLDS (REYNOLDS@ND.EDU, X15138)
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment in 227 MALLOY

Course Description
This course will introduce students to the various ways in which Jews have read the Bible, and Muslims the Qur’an, through the centuries. Students will develop a greater familiarity with the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and be introduced to the Qur’an. In addition they will read commentaries on both scriptures – with a particular focus on the material related to Adam, Eve, and the Garden of Eden -- from the classical and modern periods. Finally students will have the opportunity to reflect on the similarities and differences in the strategies which Jews and Muslims use to interpret their holy texts. This course will be team taught by a specialist in Judaism, Prof. Novick, and a specialist in Islam, Prof. Reynolds. No background in Judaism or Islam is necessary for this course.

Learning Goals:
By the end of this course students should:
- Acquire knowledge of the form and contents of the classical Jewish and Islamic sources, above all midrash, the Qur’an, and tafsir.
- Appreciate the diversity of genres and methods of Jewish and Islamic commentaries
- Be familiar with the basic scholarly resources for the study of Jewish and Islamic exegesis
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze Quranic and Biblical texts in conversation with the classical and contemporary exegesis
- Analyze critically the theological issues raised by Jewish and Muslim exegetes

Class Readings
Two books are required:
1. The Qur’an, trans. A. Droge (see here)
2. G. Anderson *The Genesis of Perfection* (see here)
All other readings will be available as .pdfs at sakai.nd.edu

Electronic Resources
http://www.bibleandkoran.net/
**Work/Grading**

Class participation and attendance 25%
Daily posts on class forum (sakai) 20%
Class presentation 20%
Final exam 35%

**A Few Rules**

- As this is an intensive 3-week course attendance and punctuality are extremely important (note that attendance/class participation is 25% of your grade).
- Please be sure to bring your the Droge translation of the Qur’an to each class.
- All students must post a question or brief reflection on the readings for the next day’s class on the sakai “discussion forum” by 10 pm.
- Class presentations will be a comparative project on one character shared between Bible and Qur’an, to be given on 6/29. Be prepared to give a brief oral presentation and to hand in a 1-3 page summary of your research.

**Schedule of Classes**

1. (6/15) Introduction to Jewish Exegesis
   Reading: J. Kugel, “Two Introductions to Midrash”

2. (6/16) Introduction to Islamic Exegesis
   Reading: P. Sookhdeo, “Issues of Interpreting the Koran and Hadith.”
   M. Ayoub, “Imami tafsir,” ch.9 of Approaches (ed. Rippin) 177-198
   R. Firestone, Introduction to Journeys in Holy Lands

3. (6/17) Creation of Humanity (Jewish Sources)
   Reading: Excerpts from rabbinic texts, Anderson, Kugel

4. (6/18) Creation of Humanity (Islamic Sources)
   Reading: Qur’an 2
   Excerpts from Tabari, Kisai, Ibn Kathir

5. (6/19) The Garden of Eden (Jewish Sources)
   Reading: Excerpts from rabbinic texts, Anderson, Kugel

6. (6/22) The Garden of Eden (Islamic Sources)
   Reading: Qur’an 7
   Excerpts from Tabari, Kisai, Ibn Kathir

7. (6/23) Sex and Gender Relations (Jewish Sources)
   Reading: Excerpts from rabbinic texts, Anderson, Kugel, Boyarin
8. (6/24) Sex and Gender Relations (Islamic Sources)
Reading: C. Bronson: “Eve in the Formative Period of Islamic Exegesis”

9. (6/25) Sin (Jewish Sources)
Reading: Excerpts from rabbinic texts, Anderson, Kugel

10. (6/26) Sin (Islamic Sources)
Reading: Excerpts from Tabari, Kisai, Ibn Kathir

11. (6/29) Student Presentations

12. (6/30) Descendants of Adam and Eve (Jewish Sources)
Reading: Excerpts from rabbinic texts, Kugel

13. (7/1) Descendants of Adam and Eve (Islamic Sources)
Reading: Excerpts from Tabari, Kisai, Ibn Kathir

14. (7/2) Modern Exegesis
Reading: Excerpts from Zornberg
Excerpts from Islamic Commentators: Qutb, Mawdudi, Shafi
J. Pink, "Tradition, Authority and Innovation in Contemporary Sunni tafsir,"
56-82

15. (7/3) Final Exam