



Virtual Courses 2022-23



Biblical Apocalyptic Literature: Studies in Daniel 7-12

Prof. Michael Segal

Second semester, Tuesday, 16:30–18:00 | 2 Israeli credits

This course will investigate: the meaning of "apocalypse" and "apocalyptic"; the visions in the Book of Daniel through close reading and textual and philological analysis, with emphasis on theological and chronological aspects; the historical background of the composition of the Danielic visions and their literary development; and the relationship of the Danielic visions with contemporaneous literature.

Course requirements: (a) short presentation in class; (b) paper



Jewish Law in the New Testament

Prof. Yair Furstenberg

Second semester, Tuesday, 18:30-20:00 | 2 Israeli credits

This course explores the key role of law in the Jesus traditions. We will learn how debates concerning the nature and purpose of biblical law marked the dividing lines between the different ideologies of Second Temple Judaism and nurtured the emergence of the Jesus movement towards the end of the period.

Course requirements: active participation and final paper



Golden Age Karaite Bible Exegesis

Dr. Miriam Goldstein

Second semester, Tuesday, 18:30-20:00 | 2 Israeli credits

This course will introduce students to the revolutionary innovations in tenth-century Jewish Bible exegesis in Arabic, with a focus on the exegetical works of the Baghdadi Karaite Ya'qub al-Qirqisani. Students will learn the broad lines of this formative period of Bible exegesis and will gain familiarity with Judeo-Arabic manuscript reading.

Course requirements: Weekly reading assignments in medieval Judeo-Arabic to prepare for reading aloud and translation in class, Final paper based on reading and analysis of medieval manuscript texts.

*Course requires good working knowledge of Arabic and familiarity with Hebrew alphabet.



Jews of Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages

Prof. Alexander Kulik

Second semester, Tuesday, 16:30-18:00 | 2 Israeli credits

East European Jewry had evolved into the largest and most visible Jewish community in the world, yet its beginnings remain one of the most enigmatic of unsolved historical puzzles. We will revise the main sources and develop historical reconstructions for the earliest stage of Jewish presence in Eastern Europe.

Course requirements: paper; prerequisite: basic reading ability in Hebrew



Judeo-Persian Literature in Translation

Dr. Julia Rubanovich and Dr. Ofir Haim

February 20, 2023 – May 29, 2023 | 2 Israeli credits

Monday, 18:00-19:30

The course deals with the evolution of Judeo-Persian literature from its emergence in the 10th century until its decline in the 20th century. We will discuss texts of diverse literary genres (biblical exegesis, poetry, midrashic literature, folk prose and more) in English translation. We will contextualize the texts within their broader historical, cultural and social perspectives to better grasp the various aspects of Jewish life throughout the centuries. The course can be of interest for students in the following fields: Middle Eastern Studies, Iranian Studies, Jewish Studies, Religious Studies, as well as Comparative Literature. The course does not require knowledge of Persian or Hebrew.

Course requirements: Weekly reading assignments; active participation; final paper



Course requirements: Weekly reading assignments; active participation; final paper



The Population of Israel

Prof. Uzi Rebhun

Second semester, Tuesday, 16:30-18:00 | 2 Israeli credits

This course examines and discusses different complementary aspects of Israeli society from the foundation of the state through today. Attention is directed to immigration and absorption, ethnic stratification, family and gender, Jewish identity, voting patterns, Israel-Diaspora relations, and the Israeli Diaspora. These characteristics of the population are presented using figures and illustrations suitable for students in the humanities.

Course requirements: two assignments and a final exam



Topics in Contemporary Political Philosophy

Prof. David Enoch

First semester, Wednesday, 16:30 – 18:00 | 2 Israeli credits

This course is an in-depth discussion of several central issues in contemporary political philosophy (in the analytic tradition). After a quick reminder of some of the basics, we will proceed to discuss such issues as the role of adaptive preferences in politics, the role of suffering in politics, the role of consent (especially of flawed consent, such as consent under coercion or manipulation); and some issues in political epistemology (for instance, what should voters know for democracy to be justified?).

Course requirements: Reading and participation; and a take-home exam at the end of the course (72 hours).



Great Walls, Borders and Frontier Zones in Asia: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives

Prof. Gideon Shelach-Lavi

Second semester, Thursday, 14:30-16:00 | 2 Israeli credits

Borders between societies and states are important political, cultural and social phenomenon. Borders reflect the political reality (separating between two independent states) but are also instrumental in the formation of identities and the shaping of the political and cultural reality. The demarcation and fortification of border-lines, in the form of walls and fences, shape the physical geography of the border zones as well as the mental landscape of people and societies. In this seminar we will use historic texts and archaeological data to examine together case studies that represent different types of borders and border demarcation and examine the processes that occurred in the political frontiers and their social and cultural affects. The seminar will be focused on Pre-Modern Asian (or Eurasian) history and will emphasize the use of advanced theories and multi-disciplinary research methods.

Course requirements: participation in of all the seminar meetings, a book report and project presentation in class, a final written assignment or seminar work.



Traditional Chinese Political Culture

Prof. Yuri Pines

Yearly, Tuesday, 12:30-14:00 | 4 Israeli credits

Chinese empire was an exceptionally durable political structure. How was this durability achieved? What were the advantages and disadvantages of traditional Chinese political system? How this system adapted to new challenges and evolved without abandoning its guiding principles? The course explores Chinese political culture, including ideals and values that shaped the behavior of major political actors, and the actualization of these ideals and values in the empire's political life.

Course requirements: a) active participation in the classroom discussions (25% of the final grade); b) reading relevant materials before every class and presenting short (up to 350 words) summaries of ten articles from the syllabus before the class (25%); c) oral presentation and a short book report (25%); d) a final book report or a short essay (25%).



The Desi Sangye Gyatso and the Tibetan State: History, Theory, Practice

Dr. Ian MacCormack

Second semester, Thursday, 16:30–18:00 | 2 Israeli credits

A lecture course on the life and works of the Desi Sangye Gyatso (1653–1705), an influential Tibetan ruler and prolific Buddhist intellectual. We will address the Desi's rise to power and concealment of the death of the fifth Dalai Lama, the Desi's ideas about state and ruler, and his major works such as the Dalai Lama's golden tomb. The course will shed light on the history, theory, and practices of the Tibetan state in this era.

Course requirements: (a) attendance and participation at all lectures; (b) preparation of all assigned readings; (c) weekly participation in online discussion forum; (d) final essay, due at the end of the semester.