Interaction: Creating Sex: Greco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Stories of Origins and Sexuality (10 ECTS)

Course content
This course will discuss the ways in which creation myths and stories of origins aspire to describe, but, more often than not, also prescribe a contested sexual ideology. We will familiarize ourselves with a variety of ancient Jewish, Christian and Greco-Roman creation and origin accounts, and, by reading comparatively and critically, try to decipher the precise version of sexuality naturalized by them. We will then analyze how each tradition might overtly respond or covertly interact with one another in forming what Judith Butler termed “a sensical notion of the human.” Our reading of these creation and origin accounts will be theoretically informed, and thus should also provide us with the lenses to review the long-standing and heated debate between the “essentialist” and the constructionist approach to sexuality.

Time period
Teaching: week 5-19. There will be a break in week 12, Easter and another in week 15 because of the compact seminar for other courses in Helsinki.

Compact seminar: Copenhagen, February 29 to March 4.

Exam: Paper to be handed in no later than June 24; those with a fixed exam will receive the question on June 20.

Responsible teacher and institution
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Learning outcome
The student will acquire:

- Knowledge of differences and parallelisms between at least two of the three religious traditions pertaining to an important theme within these traditions.
- Skills in analysing and discussing such differences and parallelisms.
- The ability to demonstrate such skills in practice and to communicate such knowledge in writing both academically and to the general public.

Prerequisites
The same as for the programme in general.

Form of teaching; course activities
The teaching will combine:
* Compact seminar in Copenhagen (see above for more details).
* Tutorials at your home university.
* Distance learning, with written assignments. E.-tivities on the e.-learning platform CourseSites.

Required reading
The syllabus will include approximately 1300 pages of secondary scholarly literature and primary texts in translation. Approximately 850 of these pages are defined by the teacher before the beginning of the term. Students doing free exams choose their remaining approximately 450 pages. The teacher will define for the students doing a fixed exam their remaining approximately 450 pages no later than one month before the deadline for submission of the exam paper (cf. article 6.7).

Fixed syllabus

Primary Sources:
- Epistle to the Romans; First Epistle to the Corinthians; Epistle to the Galatians
- *The Apocryphon of John*
  (Many different translations available online at http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl_sbj.htm)
- *The Hypostasis of the Archons*
• On the Origins of the World

• Hippolytus of Rome, *Rebuttal of all Heresies* 5.6.1-5.11.1
  – Franc Legge (trans.), *Hippolytus’ Philosophumena or the Refutation of All Heresies* (London: SPCK, 1921), 118-146.
  (Available online at [https://archive.org/details/philosophumenaor01hippuoft](https://archive.org/details/philosophumenaor01hippuoft))

• Irenaeus, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* 11-17; 31-40


• Plato, *Symposium.

• Tertullian, *On the Flesh of Christ
  (Available online at [http://www.tertullian.org/articles/evans_carn/evans_carn_00index.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/articles/evans_carn/evans_carn_00index.htm))

**Secondary Literature:**


Examination form

If the student has participated regularly, actively and satisfactorily in a course (cf. article 6.2), she or he may choose between a free and a fixed written examination. A student failing to fulfill these requirements must sit a fixed written exam.

In the free written examination, the student writes a paper of between eight and ten pages on a subject, question or material chosen by the student and approved by the responsible teacher.

In the fixed written examination, the student is given four days to write a paper of between eight and ten pages on a subject, question or material provided by the responsible teacher.