

Interaction: Apologetics and Conversion: Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Course objective

This course will discuss and compare how Jews, Christians and Muslims through apologetic writings have argued for the innocence, venerability and truthfulness of their own religious position and against the position of others. The course will chronologically and geographically have two foci, one on the 1st-2nd century in the Roman Empire (Jews and Christians) and one on the 9th-10th Century in the Abassid empire (Christians and Muslims). The course will be biased towards the Christian material (app. 50 % with app. 25 % to Jewish material and 25 % to Muslim material) and towards a particular trait of many apologetic writings namely the author's reference to conversion (upbringing, calling, philosophical or religious training and education). How and why do many authors of apologies refer to conversion?

Objectives, learning outcomes, The student will acquire:

- Advanced knowledge of differences and similarities among the three religious traditions pertaining to apologetics and conversion.
- Advanced knowledge of the religious traditions at the root of European culture in their formative periods pertaining to apologetics and conversion.
- Advanced knowledge of the history of scholarship on formative Judaism, Christianity and Islam pertaining to apologetics and conversion in these traditions.
- The skills in analysing and discussing key topics and concepts of all three religions from a comparative perspective.
- The skills to communicate the acquired knowledge of the subject matter in writing.
- The competence to develop their own scholarly specialisation and to navigate with confidence in interdisciplinary, complex and unpredictable academic processes in professional and academic settings.
- The competence to actively participate in innovative scholarly work.
- The competence to independently initiate and plan projects that explore hitherto neglected aspects of interaction in regard to apologetics and conversion among Jews, Christians, and Muslims in various social settings.

Teacher and institution

Jakob Engberg (je@cas.au.dk), Aarhus University

Period

Teaching: week 5-18 (break in week 13, Easter).

Compact seminar: Copenhagen March 15-16.

Examination: Paper to be handed in before June 8

Prerequisites

The same as for the programme

Teaching Methods

E-learning, compact seminar, tutorials

Examination

The student writes a paper between eight and ten pages in length (19,200 to 24,000 characters including spaces and references but excluding bibliography and table of contents) on a subject, question or material chosen by the student and approved by the teacher. To qualify for the exam the students must complete 80% of the e-learning assignments.

Literature and syllabus

The syllabus will include approximately 1300 pages of secondary scholarly literature and primary texts in translation. Approximately 900 of these pages are defined by the teacher before the beginning of the term. Students choose the remaining approximately 400 pages.

Registration:

No later than January 15: E-mail your teacher (je@cas.au.dk) and your local coordinator/tutor. Your teacher will then invite you to join the course on CourseSites.

General rules for examination, Aarhus University

<http://www.au.dk/en/internationalcentre/international-housing-office/exchange/studies/proever/guidelinesonexaminations/>