

CONTEMPORARY INTERRELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Dr. Barbara Meyer

Spring Semester

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Office Hours: Thursday 2-3 p.m.

Short description:

Contemporary Interreligious Thought

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the relationship between Judaism and Christianity was transformed into a philosophical topic. Both Jewish and Christian thinkers defined what they regarded as the “essence” of the two religions, sometimes in surprising and challenging ways. Franz Rosenzweig for example, identifies Judaism with love and calls Christianity “the Way”. During the second half of the twentieth century, Christian theologians tried to correct their conceptions of Judaism. As a result, Christian self-understanding changed completely.

In this class we will trace these conceptual changes as well as examine more contemporary thinkers who follow in its wake: for example, the Talmud scholar Daniel Boyarin who attributes the principle of difference to Judaism, while the philosopher Peter Ochs emphasizes that Judaism and Christianity refer to the same God. We will discuss these and other thinkers while asking whether it is now possible to refer to a new tradition of “interreligious thought.”

Assessment:

Mid Term: Short Essay (20% of the grade)

Final requirement: Seminar papers (80% of the grade)

Participation: bonus (max. 5 points)

- a) Students that are taking the course as a research seminar (third-year students only) – for their final assignment will submit a seminar paper of 6,000-7,000 words. The paper will be submitted directly to the Liberal Arts office in a hard copy by 22.9.19.
- b) Students that are taking the course as a referat (third and second- year students) – for their final assignment will submit a shorter referat paper of 3,000-3,500 words. The paper will be submitted directly to the Liberal Arts office in a hard copy by 14.7.19.

Attendance is mandatory.

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously.

Additional requirements:

Please keep phones turned-off while in class (except for students with small kids), and to turn off all electronic apparatuses.