

THEO5318 PROPHETIC LITERATURE (先知文學)

First Term 2020/2021

Wed 2:30pm-5:15pm

Online

Dr Sam Lau (Email: drsamyslau@gmail.com)
9 September 2020 (Wed) – 3 December 2020 (Wed)

Course Description:

This course covers selected readings from the second portion of the Hebrew Bible, the Prophets, in particular the Latter Prophets, which includes Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets). Historical studies aided with contextual interpretations will be the approach taken in engaging the biblical text, while theological and exegetical studies of the text will interact vigorously with contemporary social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of the public life. Insights and influences from modern literary and critical theories, social sciences and humanities, and various inter-disciplinary approaches will also be introduced in the course of interpretation.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the compositional background, major literary features, genres, and motifs of the prophetic literature
- Deepen their awareness of how social, cultural, and political contexts of ancient Southwest Asia may have shaped the literary production of the prophetic literature
- Demonstrate a familiarity of the critical issues and approaches in the scholarship of the Latter Prophets
- Develop a contextual awareness in their own reading of the prophetic literature and a critical attitude toward the implications of its ideological content to the contemporary world

Course Syllabus:

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
The social world of the Hebrew prophets	This section covers the role of a prophet and the nature of prophecy in ancient Southwest Asia and Israel in relation to the social issues of its time.
The historical context	The Hebrew prophets will be situated in their signifying contexts from the Neo-Assyrian empire to the Persian empire.
Major sections and Individual books	The structure and literary features of prophetic literature of different major sections (the Former Prophets, the Latter Prophets, and the Twelve) and individual books will be adumbrated.
Critical approaches	Recent scholarship in a variety of critical methods will be discussed.
Theological notions	Major theological notions include covenant, messianism, inviolability of Zion, theodicy, retributive logic, universalism, <i>hesed</i> , and restoration.
Critical issues	Critical issues include <i>vaticinium ex eventu</i> , the scheme of prophecy and fulfillment, social justice, the marital and sexual metaphor, divine violence, and historicity.

Course Components:

The course consists mainly of lectures, interwoven with class discussion, independent reading and research activities. The time allocation (on average per week) of the learning activities is as follows:							
Online Lecture		Class Discussion		Reading and Research		Written assignments	
In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class	In class	Out of Class
2-2.5 hrs	NA	0.5-1 hr	NA	NA	3 hrs	NA	2 hrs
M		M		M		M	
M: Mandatory activity in the course							

Assessment Scheme:

Task nature	Purpose	Learning Outcomes
Class Participation (10%)	To encourage learning collaboration and exchanges of ideas among the students in class. To facilitate students' preparatory work on their term paper.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate the students' understanding of the reading materials. 2. Develop critical attitude toward the reading materials. 3. Arrive at a viable thesis for their term paper.
Reading Report (40%) <i>Due on Oct 28 (W)</i> (Blackboard and VeriGuide)	To facilitate the students to critically synthesize and analyze the reading materials and to engage the content dialogically with one of the following suggested books: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. David L. Petersen, <i>The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction</i>. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002). (Chp 1 & 6 only) 2. Bruce C. Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence E. Fretheim, David L. Petersen, <i>A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament</i>. 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005). (Chp 9 & 10 only) 3. Walter Brueggemann, <i>An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination</i>. 2nd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.) (Chp. 11 & 21 only) 4. Mark Harold McEntire, <i>A Chorus of Prophetic Voices : Introducing the Prophetic Literature of Ancient Israel</i>. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.) (Chp. 1 & 12 only) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a book review of no less than 2400 words in English (or 2700 words in Chinese) of one of the suggested books and engage the course reading materials in the review. 2. Summarize the author's approach, interpretive framework, thesis, and main arguments. 3. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the approach and his/her main arguments.

<p>Term Paper (50%) <i>Presentation of Abstract on Nov 18 (W)</i></p> <p><i>Paper due on Dec 3 (W)</i> (Blackboard and VeriGuide)</p>	<p>To evaluate the students' ability to critically engage current scholarship in the criticism of the prophetic literature and to analyze and critique the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and/or to apply a diachronic or synchronic model in an exegesis of a prophetic text.</p>	<p>Write a term paper of 5500-6000 words in English or 6500-7000 words in Chinese on one of the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A critique of a major thesis on the prophetic literature 2. A diachronic analysis of a passage or a literary theme in the prophetic literature 3. A(n) (re)assessment of a textual issue of the prophetic literature 4. An analysis of the literary structure or genre of a particular book of the prophetic literature 5. Topic agreed with or assigned by Lecturer <p>A critical exegesis of a passage from the prophetic literature with a contextual, ideological-rhetorical, narrative-literary, reader- reception, social-scientific, psychological or theological perspective. In addition, as a student in post-graduate level, you are required to use what you have learnt in the identifying and solving of a research problem and give your comments and opinions on the research process.</p>
<p>N.B. Please upload your assignment on the Blackboard website on/before the deadline. Otherwise there will be a mark deduction (10% per day). Both MS Word and PDF format are allowed. Also upload a soft copy of the completed assignment to the plagiarism detection engine VeriGuide, at the URL: https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.aspx The system will issue a receipt which also contains a declaration of honesty. The declaration should be uploaded in pdf to the blackboard system.</p>		

Recommended Learning Resources:

Textbooks (required):

Petersen, David L. *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002 [= Petersen]. [BS1198 .P46 2002] 中譯本：大衛·彼得森著。伍美詩譯。《先知文學導論》。香港：道聲，2007。[BS1198 .P4612 2007]

Books:

Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination*. 2nd ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012. [BS1140.3 .B78 2012] Second Edition, 2012. 中譯本：布魯格曼著，許子韻譯。《布氏舊約導論：正典與基督教的想像》。香港：天道，2012。[BV2020 .C36 2000]

Day, John, ed. *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*. New York: T&T Clark, 2010. [BS1505.52 .O94 2010]

Freeman, Hobart E. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1981. 中譯本：傅理曼著。梁潔瓊譯。《舊約先知書導論》。台灣：華神，1986。

- Gordon, Robert P., ed. *"The Place Is Too Small for Us": The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*. Winnona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996. [BS1505.2 .P57 1995]
- Matthews, Victor H. *Social World of the Hebrew Prophets*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001. [BS 1505.2 .M355 2001]
- McConville J. G. *Exploring the Old Testament: Vol. 4 The Prophets*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2002. [BS1140.3.M33 2002] 中譯本：麥康維爾著。紀榮神譯。《先知書》。香港：天道，2008。
- McEntire, Mark Harold. *A Chorus of Prophetic Voices : Introducing the Prophetic Literature of Ancient Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015. [*ebook available in CU Library]
- Pleins, J. David. *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible: A Theological Introduction*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001. [BS1199.S6 P54 2001]
- Smith-Christopher, Daniel L. *A Biblical Theology of Exile*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002. [BC1199 .B3 S55 2002]
- VanGemeren, Willem A. *Interpreting the Prophetic Word: An Introduction to the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapid, Mich: Zondervan, 1996. 中譯本：范甘麥倫著。湯定民、戎翰譯。《舊約先知書概論》。南帕薩迪納：美國麥種傳道會，2013。

Essays and Articles:

- Berquist, Jon L. "Dangerous Waters of Justice and Righteousness: Amos 5:18-27." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 23.2 (1993): 54-63. [Online]
- Brenner, Athalya. "Pornoprophetsics Revisited: Some Additional Reflections." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 70 (1996): 63-86. [Online]
- Carroll, Robert P. "Textual Strategies and Ideology in the Second Temple Period." In *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period*, ed. Philip R. Davies, 108-124. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.
- Childs, Brevard S. "Retrospective Reading of the Old Testament Prophets." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 108.3 (1996): 362-77. [Online]
- Craig, Kenneth M. "Jonah and the Reading Process." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 47 (1990): 103-14. [Online]
- Fox, Michael V. "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 51 (1980): 1-15. [Online]
- Gitay, Yehoshua. "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1-15." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 42.3 (1980): 293-309.
- Haak, Robert D. "Mapping Violence in the Prophets: Zephaniah 2." In *The Aesthetics of Violence in the Prophets*, edited by Julia M. O'Brien and Chris Franke, 18-36. New York and London: T & T Clark, 2010. [BS1505.6 .V56 A37 2010]
- Holladay, John S., Jr. "Assyrian Statecraft and the Prophets of Israel." *The Harvard Theological Review* 63.1 (1970): 29-51. [Online]
- Lundbom, Jack R. "Poetic Structure and Prophetic Rhetoric in Hosea." *Vetus Testamentum* 29.3 (1979): 300-308. [Online]
- Magdalene, Rachel F. "Ancient Near Eastern Treaty-Curses and the Ultimate Texts of Terror: A Study of the Language of Divine Sexual Abuse in the Prophetic Corpus." In *A Feminist Companion to The Latter Prophets*, ed. Athalya Brenner, 326-52. The Feminist Companion to the Bible 8. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995. [BS521.4 .F46]
- Mays, James Luther. "Justice: Perspectives from the Prophetic Tradition." *Interpretation* 37.1 (1983): 5-17. [Online]
- O'Connor, Kathleen M. "Reclaiming Jeremiah's Violence." In *The Aesthetics of Violence in the Prophets*, 37-49.
- Petersen, David L. "The Temple in Persian Period Prophetic Texts." In *Second Temple Studies 1*, 125-44.
- Premnath D. N. "Latifundialization and Isaiah 5.8-10." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 40 (1988): 49-60. [Online]

- Tucker, Geme. M. "The Role of the Prophets and the Role of the Church." In *Prophecy in Israel: Search for identity*, ed. David L. Petersen, 159-74. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1987. [PS 1198.P75]
- Weinfeld, Moshe. "Ancient Near Eastern Patterns in Prophetic Literature." *Vetus Testamentum* 27 (1977): 178-95. [Online]
- Yaron, Reuven. "Social Problems and Policies in the Ancient Near East." In *Law, Politics, and Society in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, eds. Baruch Halpern and Deborah W. Hobson, 19-41. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993. [UL DE71.L38 1993]

Course Schedule:

Class	Date	Topics	Key concepts/topics	Readings
Week 1	Sep 9	Course Introduction, Introduction to prophetic literature	Nabiim, prophetic literature,	Petersen, Chp 1
Week 2	Sep 16	Isaiah: Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	International Politics; Literary Structure	Petersen, Chp 2
Week 3	Sep 23	Isaiah: Theological Issues	Immanuel passages, Servant's songs, Messianic	Petersen, Chp 2
Week 4	Sep 30	Jeremiah: Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	Socio-political contexts, Literary Structure; LXX/MT textual versions; Jeremiah	Petersen, Chp 3
Week 5	Oct 7	Jeremiah: Theological Issues	Theological implication	Petersen, Chp 3
Week 6	Oct 14	Ezekiel Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	Apocalypticism, figuring the speech	Petersen, Chp 4
Week 7	Oct 21	Ezekiel: Theological Issues	Prophetic imagination	Petersen, Chp 4
Week 8	Oct 28	The Book of Twelve: Hosea, Joel, Amos	Hesed, covenantal love	Petersen, Chp 5
Week 9	Nov 4	The Book of Twelve: Obadiah, Jonah, Micah	Judgment, divine love	Petersen, Chp 5
Week 10	Nov 11	The Book of Twelve: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah	Social and public justice	Petersen, Chp 5
Week 11	Nov 18	The Book of Twelve: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	Second temple, priest-prophet relationship, post-exilic ideology	Petersen, Chp 5
Week 12	Nov 25	Prophetic Literature Outside Prophetic Books	Prophetic Literature in the Pentateuch, the Former Prophets and the Writings	Petersen, Chp 6
Week 13	Dec 5	Course Summary; Theology of the Hebrew Prophets	Hopeful imagination	

Contact Details for Teacher:

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Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR A Term Paper

CATEGORY	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor/ Inadequate</i>
Introduction/ Thesis ——	*exceptional introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic. **thesis is exceptionally clear, arguable, well-developed, and a definitive statement.	*proficient introduction that is interesting and states topic. **thesis is clear and arguable statement of position.	*basic introduction that states topic but lacks interest. **thesis is somewhat clear and arguable.	*weak or no introduction of topic. **paper's purpose is unclear/thesis is weak or missing.
Quality of Information/ Evidence ——	*paper is exceptionally researched, extremely detailed, and historically accurate. **information clearly relates to the thesis.	*information relates to the main topic. **paper is well-researched in detail and from a variety of sources.	*information relates to the main topic, few details and/or examples are given. **shows a limited variety of sources.	*information has little or nothing to do with the thesis. **information has weak or no connection to the thesis.
Support of Thesis/Analysis ——	*exceptionally critical, relevant and consistent connections made between evidence and thesis. **excellent analysis.	*consistent connections made between evidence and thesis **good analysis.	*some connections made between evidence and thesis. **some analysis.	*limited or no connections made between evidence and thesis. **lack of analysis.
Conclusion ——	*excellent summary of topic with concluding ideas that impact reader. **introduces no new information.	*good summary of topic with clear concluding ideas. **introduces no new information.	*basic summary of topic with some final concluding ideas. **introduces no new information.	*lack of summary of topic.
Organization/ Development of Thesis ——	*exceptionally clear, logical, mature, and thorough development of thesis with excellent transitions between and within paragraphs.	*clear and logical order that supports thesis with good transitions between and within paragraphs.	*somewhat clear and logical development with basic transitions between and within paragraphs.	*lacks development of ideas with weak or no transitions between and within paragraphs.
Citation/ Bibliography Format ——	*conforms to academic rules for formatting and citation of sources are perfect.	*conforms to academic rules for formatting and citation of sources with minor exceptions.	*frequent errors in academic format.	*lack of academic format/numerous errors.