

THEO2212 PROPHETIC LITERATURE (先知文學)
(For CUHK undergraduates)

Second Term 2022/2023 Tue 7:00pm-9:30pm

ELB203

Dr Sam Lau (Email: drsamyslau@gmail.com)

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

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 Mar 13 (Tue)</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 1600 words in English (or 2000 words in Chinese) of one of the books suggested 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 <i>Presentation of Abstract on Apr 3 (Tue)</i> <i>(10%)</i></p> <p><i>Paper due on May 2 (Tue)</i> (Blackboard and VeriGuide) <i>(40%)</i></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 4000-4500 words in English (or 5000-5500 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.</p>
<p>N.B. Please upload your assignment on the Blackboard website on/before the deadline. Late submission will not be accepted without prior written approval and may suffer penalty in grade. 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*. Winona 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. "Pornoprophets 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:

Date	Topics	Key concepts/topics	Readings
Jan 9 2023	Course Introduction, Introduction to prophetic literature	Nabiim, prophetic literature,	Petersen, Chp 1
Jan 16	Isaiah: Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	International Politics; Literary Structure	Petersen, Chp 2
Jan 23	Lunar New Year Holiday		
Jan 30	Isaiah: Theological Issues	Immanuel passages, Servant's songs, Messianic hope	Petersen, Chp 2
Feb 6	Jeremiah: Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	Socio-political contexts, Literary Structure; LXX/MT textual versions; Jeremiah studies	Petersen, Chp 3
Feb 13	Jeremiah: Theological Issues	Theological implication	Petersen, Chp 3
Feb 20	Ezekiel Historical Context and Literary Structure Overview	Apocalypticism, figuring the speech	Petersen, Chp 4
Feb 27	Ezekiel: Theological Issues	Prophetic imagination	Petersen, Chp 4
Mar 6	Reading Week		
Mar 13	The Book of Twelve: Hosea, Joel, Amos	Hesed, covenantal love	Petersen, Chp 5
Mar 20	The Book of Twelve: Obadiah, Jonah, Micah	Judgment, divine love	Petersen, Chp 5
Mar 27	The Book of Twelve: Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah	Social and public justice	Petersen, Chp 5
Apr 3	The Book of Twelve: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	Second temple, priest- prophet relationship, post- exilic ideology	Petersen, Chp 5
Apr 17	Prophetic Literature Outside Prophetic Books	Prophetic Literature in the Pentateuch, the Former Prophets and the Writings	Petersen, Chp 6
Apr 24	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.

A Paper-grading Rubric

CATEGORY	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor/ Inadequate
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.

Name Exegetical Paper Grading Rubric

Description Students should be able to analyze on the passage by different exegetical methods (Part I Exegetical, 30%) and to respond and comment to critical issues posted by scholars (Part II Critical issues, 20%). 1. Describe the exegetical methods the student used in the critical handling of the biblical passage 2. Analyze the biblical passage critically. 3. Relate the critical result to the scholarly discussion of the critical issues of the biblical books. 4. Construct implications of the ideas in the biblical passages critically and in a scholarly manner.

Rubric Detail

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	Poor/Inadequate	Fair	Good	Excellent
Thesis on the Critical issue of the Biblical books	There is no thesis or central argument/proposal to tie the paper together, or the thesis is unclear.	The thesis is present, but a reader must work hard to reconstruct from the entire paper.	The thesis is easily detectable after reading the paper, but it is not presented in a single and clear statement.	A clear statement of what is being proposed or argued in the paper.
Methodology and handling of the Biblical text	There is no explanation of the method used and the method used to analyse the text is unclear. The text doesn't seem to be understood.	Methodology has been mentioned in the paper but not enough description and how it is used. Methodology has been used but reader must work hard to relate the application of the methodology and the text. The text has been interpreted but not adequately.	There is description of what and how the (exegetical) methodology is being used but less thorough. Application of the methodology to the Biblical text is less clear. The text has been interpreted but less convincingly.	Well description of what and how the (exegetical) methodology is being used and clear application of methodology to analyse the Biblical text is demonstrated throughout the paper. The text has been convincingly interpreted.
Arguments	Arguments to support the thesis are missing, irrelevant, or not convincing. The paper makes lots of claims or assertions that are not substantiated. There are few or no references to the biblical text in question to show why the proposed thesis is valid.	Arguments made to support the thesis are acceptable but sketchy or their relevance unclear. Some references are made to the biblical text in question to show why the proposed thesis is valid.	Arguments made to support the thesis are clear, but less thorough, relevant, and/or convincing. References are often made to the biblical text in question to show why the proposed thesis is valid, but this is done not as consistently.	Each reason, support, or argument to follow the thesis is made clear, thorough, relevant and convincing. Proper references are consistently made to the biblical text in question to show why the proposed thesis is valid.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	Poor/Inadequate	Fair	Good	Excellent
Counter-Arguments	No awareness or acknowledgment of conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, or opposing positions.	The paper acknowledges and accounts for a few obvious conflicting evidence, counter-examples, and counter-arguments, but miss other obvious opposing positions. Or the paper acknowledges counter-arguments without accounting for them.	The paper acknowledges and accounts for obvious conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions.	The paper acknowledges, anticipates, and accounts for conflicting evidence, counter-examples, counter-arguments, and/or opposing positions, even ones that are not obvious or not yet been made in writings of others.
Organization	The paper does not flow well in terms of organization or for the argument of the thesis. Transitions from paragraph to paragraph or from one idea to the next are missing. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is non-existent.	There are signs of sensible and logical organization, but these are mixed with abrupt or illogical shifts and ineffective flow of ideas. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is not clearly distinguishable.	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is largely sensible and logical. Transitions are mostly appropriate. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is distinguishable if not easy to follow.	The paper's flow, from one paragraph to another, is consistently sensible, logical, and always with clear transitions. The movement from introduction to the body and then the conclusion is easy to follow and coherent.
Style	The paper is written with many incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is not understandable and definition of particular terms or words is not given even when needed. The paper has clearly not been spell-checked or proofread, and hence contains an excessive number of errors.	The paper contains some incomplete or grammatically incorrect sentences. Word choice is imprecise, at times not understandable, and/or not defined when needed. Not clear if the paper has been spell-checked and proofread because of the number of errors present.	The paper is written in complete sentence and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is understandable, definitions are generally (though not always) provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains only a few errors.	The paper is written in complete and grammatically correct sentences. Word choice is precise; definitions are provided if and when needed. Paper has been spell-checked, proofread, and contains no errors.
Documentation	Source materials are used without documentation.	Sources of information are not consistently documented. If they are, format is inconsistent or does not conform to required academic standard.	Notes to indicate sources of information are generally given when they are needed. Notes and bibliography are generally but not always consistent or conform to required academic standard.	Notes to indicate sources of information are given whenever they are needed. Both notes and bibliography use consistent and academically acceptable format.