



RSOC 154. Winter 2016

Jesus in Islam and Christianity: A Comparison of Christologies

Instructor: Professor D. Pinault

**Tuesday-Thursday 2.00-3.40pm
Classroom: Kenna 310**

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**Office hours:
Tuesday & Thursday 4.15-
5.15pm
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**NB: This is an RTC level 3
course.**

**Course prerequisites:
Introductory- and
intermediate-level courses in
Religious Studies.**

Course description.

A prefatory comment: Too often, in my experience, Muslim-Christian dialogue, motivated by a praiseworthy and entirely understandable desire to minimize violence and destructive prejudice, tends to emphasize whatever the two religions share in common. Interfaith gatherings motivated by such concerns sometimes neglect points of substantive difference between the faiths, especially with regard to Islamic and Christian understandings of Jesus.

This is regrettable, and certainly not the approach I propose to attempt as you and I undertake this course. Instead, while acknowledging certain similarities between Islam and Christianity, and giving attention to the highly important commonalities they share with Judaism (all three faiths, it should be noted, are given a special shared status in Islamic theology as *al-adyan al-samawiyah*, “the heavenly religions”), I nonetheless will emphasize the radical differences between Islam and Christianity in their understandings of Jesus.

I do this for a specific reason. I believe that highlighting only the similarities between these traditions does a disservice to both, whereas a critical yet sympathetic comparison of Islamic and Christian Christologies allows us to appreciate the distinctive spiritual treasures available in each religion. Both religions, after all, make sincere attempts to ask: what does it mean to experience *Geworfenheit* (as the German philosopher Martin Heidegger would say), the state of “having been flung into existence,” of having to negotiate the reality of being a flesh-and-blood human, with all the consequent limitations of finitude, awareness of death, and idealistic aspirations—even if barely understood or articulated—aspirations that lead humans through their flesh-and-blood nature to yearn for an experience of the Transcendent.

The Christologies of each of these religions are ways of addressing this existential reality of *Geworfenheit* from varying Abrahamic perspectives, which is to say: the more we study the Christologies of Islam and Christianity, the more we come to realize that Muslim and Christian understandings of Jesus are ways of talking about how humans experience the Transcendent. Moreover, I believe that studying the Jesus of Islam and Christianity in tandem, giving special attention to their divergent approaches, causes each faith to shed new light on the other, thereby offering fresh perspectives on important questions that (consciously or unconsciously) concern us all: What does it mean to be a faithful Muslim or a faithful Christian or—more generally, regardless of how we identify ourselves—a person who cultivates spiritual interiority?

To achieve these goals, this course investigates understandings of Jesus in a variety of textual sources: the Qur’an; Islamic folklore and poetic/mystical traditions; polemical works condemning Christian Christology; apocryphal and Gnostic Christian texts of the Near East; and Gospel accounts contained within the Christian Bible. We will read the Qur’an and the Bible side-by-side; this juxtaposed reading has the goal of generating fresh understandings of Christian and Islamic Christologies. Such an investigation is conditioned by my own identity as a Catholic Christian whose professional area of work involves the study of Islam.

Course content: RSOC 154 offers an introduction to Islamic theology and Qur’anic Christology, with attention to Muslim scriptural understandings of Jesus as a prophet and healer. Thereafter we examine representations of Jesus in Sufi mysticism, medieval Islamic folklore, and modern

Arabic literature. The course includes consideration of the extent to which understandings of Jesus can play a role in Muslim-Christian dialogue.

This course is intended to provide the background necessary to appreciate the history and current status of Muslim-Christian relations. To do this we will explore representations of the figure of Jesus in Qur'anic scripture, vernacular Islamic literature of the Middle Ages, and contemporary Arabic poetry. Additionally, in this course we will examine the concept of prophethood in the Abrahamic traditions by comparing representations of Jesus and Muhammad in Christianity and Islam. Because I cannot assume a prior knowledge of Islam on the part of students beginning this course, I will include an overview of Islamic doctrine and Qur'anic teachings in the initial weeks of the quarter.

The course begins with an introduction to the cosmology of the Jahiliyah (the religion and society of the pre-Islamic Arabian peninsula) and then compares this with the worldview presented in the Qur'an. Discussion of the Qur'anic understanding of prophethood will be followed by a close reading of textual passages concerning Jesus in both the Qur'an and medieval Islamic devotional literature. We will work with this textual material to construct an Islamic Christology. Here I emphasize how Qur'anic Christology illustrates larger Islamic beliefs concerning humankind's relation to the Divine and the ways in which humans are expected to function with regard to the world they inhabit.

The course then moves on to examine portraits of Jesus in medieval Sufi mystical literature and the Sufis' use of the Islamic Jesus to criticize the religious hierarchy of Muslim society. Thereafter we will study how present-day Muslim Arab poets—especially members of the “Tammuzi” movement—combine the figure of Jesus with references to pre-Islamic pagan gods to create a mythological landscape of suffering and hoped-for redemption as a way of describing contemporary Arab societies. Course readings will include the testimony of both Christian converts to Islam and Muslim converts to Christianity.

It is the argument of this course that frankly acknowledging and exploring such differences in Christological understanding constitute a prerequisite to interfaith dialogue that is in any way substantive and meaningful. Analysis of the variant Christologies present in Islam and Christianity will position students to ask the question: does the shared heritage of these two faiths as Abrahamic traditions offer any significant basis for collaboration on contemporary global concerns?

RSOC 154 and Santa Clara University's Core Curriculum.

RSOC 154 has been approved as an RTC (Religion, Theology & Culture) level 3 course. Santa Clara University's Core Curriculum guidelines list as follows the *goals* of RTC 3 courses: “Critical thinking; ethical reasoning; religious reflection; perspective.”

The Core Curriculum guidelines list as follows the *Core Learning Objectives* for RTC 3 courses: --“Students will be able to identify diverse perspectives and evaluate ethical positions on contemporary questions.” --“Students will be able to evaluate and apply insights from the study of religion to open-ended questions facing contemporary society.”

Assessment of learning.

The *final grade* will be assigned on the following basis:

There will be *four essays*, each worth 15% of the final grade.

The *first essay* will involve your comparison of Qur'anic and Biblical concepts of prophethood. Here you will take into account the Islamic doctrine of *'ismah* (infallibility/sinlessness/divine protection from error). Reflection on this doctrine will illuminate Islamic understandings of both Jesus and Muhammad.

In your *second essay*, you will investigate a spiritual odyssey that moves from Islam to Christianity. Our primary-source text for this assignment will be *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*, by an ex-Muslim named Nabeel Qureshi. You will be asked to do two things in this essay. First, you will compare the conversion experiences of ex-Christians (as anthologized in Haleem's text) and of an ex-Muslim (as recounted by Qureshi), evaluating the ethical implications of the social responses they encounter (ranging from acceptance to harassment and ostracism) with regard to issues of freedom of conscience and religious pluralism. Second, you will apply insights from our classroom analysis of Islamic and Christian scripture to evaluate Qureshi's comparative Christology and to consider the question: can Muslim and Christian understandings of Jesus be harnessed so as to facilitate interfaith understanding rather than trigger competitive proselytizing?

The *third essay* will take the quest for interfaith understanding down the path of Sufism (the mystical tradition within Islam). Here you will analyze the primary-source portraits of Jesus in medieval Islamic legend and literature that are gathered in Tarif Khalidi's anthology *The Muslim Jesus*, and you will evaluate these medieval Sufi perspectives on Jesus in light of several sources that influenced Sufi Christology: the Qur'an, Muslim folk narratives derived from episodes recorded in the New Testament, and the "Arabic Infancy Gospel." The Jesus portrayed in Khalidi's anthology is very much an exemplar of the Sufi lifestyle; in the final part of this assignment, you will evaluate the moral dimensions of this "Sufi Christ" in light of the barrage of condemnations directed against Sufi faith and practice by contemporary Wahhabi Islamists such as Ismail al-Faruqi.

The *fourth essay* will give you the chance to evaluate 21st-century writings by contemporary Muslims who cite the suffering, anguish, and doubt experienced by Jesus as portrayed in the New Testament in an attempt to disprove his divinity. You will compare these writings with the literary work of the so-called "Tammuzi" school of poets—Arab authors, many of them Muslim, who identify themselves intensely in their own personal sorrows and political struggles with the sufferings and even the Crucifixion of Jesus that are critiqued by fellow-Muslim polemicists. Finally, this essay will also lead you to explore how the kenotic Christology of Catholic writers such as theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar embraces precisely the notion of divine suffering that has been condemned by so many Muslim polemicists.

These four essays will afford you opportunities *to identify diverse perspectives and evaluate ethical positions on contemporary questions in today's Islamic societies*. Furthermore, you will be able *to evaluate and apply insights from the study of Islam and Islamic Christology to*

questions facing both Muslims and non-Muslims in contemporary society, especially with regard to issues relating to evangelization, apostasy, and freedom of conscience.

The **research project** is worth 20% of the final grade. This may involve a focus on either textual analysis or ethnographic research. With regard to the latter focus, please note the following: Several Bay Area places of worship are particularly relevant to the themes explored in this course. Two—the South Bay Islamic Association, in San Jose, and the Naqshbandi Sufi Tariqah, in Oakland—include significant numbers of ex-Christian converts to Islam. The third—the Iranian Christian Church, in Sunnyvale—is composed largely of ex-Muslim converts to Christianity. You have the option of soliciting interviews with members of these congregations to discuss topics such as the following: a.) how their understandings of Jesus have changed and developed in the course of their own personal spiritual journeys; and b.) how their conversions have affected their self-understanding in relation to their families, local communities, and the global population of believers (and non-believers). Attending worship services at these sites and interviewing members of these congregations will give you the opportunity to create a research project in which you integrate ethnographic field data with textual analysis of primary sources related to representations of Jesus in the Islamic and Christian traditions.

This research paper will offer you opportunities *to identify and evaluate diverse perspectives on conversion and religious identity. Furthermore, you will be able to evaluate and apply insights from the study of Islamic Christology to open-ended questions—notably the search for spiritual meaning in pluralistic settings, and the dialectic between personal identity and communal identity—facing contemporary societies, both in the San Francisco Bay Area and abroad in Muslim communities worldwide.*

Class participation is valued at 20% of the final grade.

This is meant to encourage your daily engagement with the assigned materials, so that you *develop the discipline of identifying perspectives on contemporary questions in Islam and evaluating these issues on an ongoing basis* throughout the academic quarter. Daily participation, like the writing assignments described above, is structured so as *to facilitate religious reflection*: analysis of how contemporary Muslims and Christians understand Christology (whether Qur’anic or Biblical) in relation to issues of conversion, proselytizing, and interfaith relations will encourage you to reflect on how you integrate your own personal and spiritual identity in today’s globalized and pluralistic world.

Performance feedback. In addition to written remarks which I will append to each essay, research prospectus, and research project that I evaluate and return to you, I encourage you to meet with me individually in my office so that we can discuss your performance, both with regard to your written work and your classroom participation. I particularly urge you to meet with me before each written assignment is due, so that I can discuss with you outlines and rough drafts as you work on each paper. This will help you build confidence as you learn to identify, articulate, and communicate your thoughts in writing.

Islamic Studies Pathway. This course is associated with SCU’s Core Curriculum Pathway in Islamic Studies. If you declare a Pathway in this area, you may use a representative piece of work from this course in the Pathway portfolio you will complete during your senior year.

COURSE SYLLABUS.

(Please note: readings are to be completed in time for the class under which they are listed. Be sure to bring to class the books and photocopied materials assigned for the given day.)

1.) Tuesday, January 5.

Introduction to the course: what the study of Jesus can bring to the understanding of Islam and Christianity. Methodology and terms. The religion of the Jahiliyah: culture, tradition, and values in the Arabian peninsula of the pre-Islamic era. Discussion of Writing Exercise.

Topics to be discussed in your Writing Exercise: A.) a statement in which you identify and briefly reflect on your own personal worldview, however you define this for yourself (whether in terms of denominational religious affiliation, unaffiliated spirituality, self-identification as an agnostic, skeptic, atheist, freethinker, etc.). B.) a discussion of whatever previous experience—whether devotional, doctrinal, academic, or pop-cultural—you’ve had of the figure of Jesus, with consideration of whether Jesus plays any role in your worldview and personal life as described above in part A. C.) A discussion and brief analysis of the following primary-source readings: Qur’an: 3.42-59; 4.155-159; 5.109-118; 9.30-31; 19.16-38 (Note especially n.2485 in A.Y. Ali’s translation!); 19.88-90; New Testament: Gospel of Mark: chapters 1-4; 5.24-34; chapters 14-16; Gospel of Luke: 1.26.-38; Gospel of John: 1.1-18; First Letter to the Corinthians: 11.23-26 (a reference predating the Gospels to the Last Supper); First Letter to the Thessalonians: 5.9-11 (a reference to the purpose of Jesus’s death from one of the very earliest New Testament texts). Compare the Islamic verses relating to Jesus in the Qur’an with the above Christian verses from the New Testament, noting both similarities and differences with regard to doctrinal teachings, emotional tone and literary style. What is your own personal response to this literature? Use brief citations from the above sources in support of your argument.

Minimum length of assignment: 750 words/3 pages, typed, double-spaced. Suggested maximum length: 1,250 words/5 pages.

NB: This is an ungraded assignment. ***But failure to submit this assignment at the beginning of class this Thursday, January 7, will result in the lowering of your final grade for this course by at least one step (eg, from C to C-).*** Your final course grade will be lowered an additional step for each day late this assignment is submitted (eg, if your assignment is submitted on Friday, January 9, your final grade will be lowered two steps—eg, from C to D+). **NB: Lateness penalties also accrue over the weekend; this pertains to ALL of the writing assignments for this quarter!** I will offer written comments on what you submit, and you will incorporate a revised version of portions of your writing exercise in the various essays you submit later in the quarter.

2.) Thursday, January 7. WRITING EXERCISE DUE.

The early life of the prophet Muhammad. The Qur’an: tawhid (divine oneness) and final judgment. Human nature as depicted in Islamic scripture. Qur’anic responses to the Jahiliyah. The Prophet Muhammad in Mecca: initial revelations of the Qur’an and Islamic views of the afterlife.

Readings: Faruqi, 1-44 (chapters 1- 3); Qur’an, surahs (chapters) 1, 96, 112 (tawhid and human nature); 45.21-35 (cf. 44.34-42) (judgment, the natural world, and the Jahiliyah); 4.131, 6.133

(cf. n.955), 10.68, 29.6 (cf. n.3428), 31.12 (cf. n.3594), 31.26 (cf. n.3615), 35.15 (cf. n.3898), 39.7 (cf. n.4254), 60.6 (cf. n.5419), 64.6 (cf. n.5486) (Allah's "attribute/name" as al-Ghani {cf. A.Y. Ali's index, p.1726, s.v. "Allah's attributes... 'free of all wants' [Al-Ghani]}). Read entire syllabus. Begin readings for first essay assignment.

Questions for classroom discussion:

What do surahs 1, 96, and 112 tell us about God, human nature, and divine-human relations? What does the Qur'an say about: human nature; the physical world; the afterlife; the values of the Jahiliyah? What do the Qur'an passages relating to God's attribute as al-Ghani suggest about Islamic understandings of divine-human relations?

3.) Tuesday, January 12.

The natural world in relation to divinity. The Qur'an: silsilat al-anbiya' ("the chain of the prophets"). The patterns of human history according to Qur'anic revelation.

Readings: Qur'an, chapter 7 (the chain of the prophets) and chapter 55; Faruqi, 45-80.

Questions for classroom discussion:

How does surah 55.1-34 portray the natural world in relation to Allah? Discuss Faruqi's presentation of how "nature and wealth" are viewed in Islam (see esp. Faruqi, pp.7-8 and chapter 5 in his book). Qur'an, chapter 7: Describe the recurrent patterns of human history and the events that tend to befall prophets as described in this chapter. How does Qur'an 7.182-185 clarify the themes of this chapter? Compare the story of Noah in this Qur'anic chapter with the story of Noah as presented in the Bible (Genesis, chapters 6-9).

4.) Thursday, January 14.

FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE.

The prophet Muhammad in Medina. The "greater" and the "lesser" jihad. The exemplary status of Muhammad: the role of sunnah and hadith. Implications of the doctrine of prophetic '*ismah*' (sinlessness/infallibility/perfection/protection from error; cf. adj. *ma'sum*) for Islamic ethics. A comparison of prophetic portraits in two scriptures: David in the Bible and Qur'an.

Readings: Abu A'la Mawdudi, "The Prophethood," 29-35 (photocopy, from Mawdudi's book *Towards Understanding Islam*); Pinault, "The Doctrine of Prophetic '*Isma*h in Islam: Readings" (photocopy); "The Sunnah of the Prophet: A Sampling of Exemplary Behavior and Statements" (Pinault, 2 pp., photocopy handout) & "The Prophet Muhammad and His Interactions with Certain Poets, Singers, and Storytellers" (Pinault, 3 pp., photocopy handout). Qur'an 80.1-10 (Muhammad and the blind man). Bible, First Samuel, chapter 16.14-23, chapter 17 (King Saul, David, and Goliath); Second Samuel, chapters 11 and 12 (David, Bathsheba, Uriah, and Nathan). David in the Qur'an: surahs 2.249-251 (Talut=King Saul), 27.15, 38.12-26 (cf. note 4178 in Ali's Qur'an commentary).

FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:

a.) Summarize and evaluate Mawdudi's concept of prophethood, especially with regard to what it implies about human nature and ethics. b.) What portrait of the prophet Muhammad emerges from the sunnah/hadith and biographical data in "The Sunnah of the Prophet" and "The Prophet Muhammad and His Interactions..."? What are the moral implications and challenges associated with this material, in light of the doctrine of prophetic '*ismah*' as presented by Mawdudi and our other Islamic sources? c.) Compare the portraits of David in the Bible and Qur'an. Compare in particular the Biblical and Qur'anic versions of the story of the "dispute over the ewes." What

does Abdullah Yusuf Ali say about this? What is his view of prophetic *'ismah*? (see his commentary, esp. note 4178). d.) Based on your reading of the above material, compare Biblical and Islamic concepts of divinely appointed sacred leadership/prophethood, taking into account what these texts imply concerning human nature, morality, and human relations with the divine. What is your own evaluation of, and personal response to, this material? NB: These questions will also be addressed in today's classroom discussion.

5.) Tuesday, January 19.

The Qur'an: Islam as an Abrahamic faith. Qur'anic interpretations of Judaism and Christianity. Community, family, and issues of personal identity in the Qur'an. The dhimmi and jizyah and the question of tolerance: Qur'anic verses on the status of Jews, Christians, and other non-Muslims.

Readings: Bible, Deuteronomy 6.1-9 (Catholic Study Bible, pp.207-208; Dt. 6.4-9 is known in Judaism as the "Shema" [from Hebrew shema= "hear"]); "The Martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba" from *The Babylonian Talmud* (1-page photocopy: Rabbi Akiba [also known as Akiva ben Joseph] is revered as one of the founders of rabbinic Judaism and was reputed to be a supporter of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Akiba was executed (c.AD 132-137) by the Roman state for publicly practicing and teaching the Jewish faith); Qur'an: chs. 6.71-92 & 21.51-75 (Abr. and Azar); 37.99-111 (Abr.'s sacrifice of his son); 2.125-129 (Abr., Isma'il, and the Kaaba); 3.64-68 (Abr. as a hanif); Qur'an 5.51, 3.85, 9.28-31 (cf. the term jizyah in 9.29), 11.118-119, 5.48, 5.69-77 (cf. esp. mithaq Bani Isra'il, "the Covenant of the Children of Israel," 5.70), 5.82-86 (note how the Qur'an ranks Christians in relation to Jews), 2.62, 2.256, 18.29-31, 10.98-103 (the status of non-Muslims); review Faruqi, 59-80 (chapter 6, "The Islamic World Order" and chapter 7, "Islamic Culture and History").

Questions for classroom discussion:

What do the biblical Shema and the account of "The Martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba" suggest to you about affinities between Jewish and Islamic doctrines? What do the above Qur'anic passages say about Abraham? What does the Qur'an say with regard to salvation for non-Muslims? Evaluate the status of non-Muslims in contemporary Islamic societies in the light of Faruqi's discussion of "the Islamic world order," ummah, da'wah, and jizyah.

6.) Thursday, January 21.

A first look at the question of conversion: the issue of Christians "reverting to" or "embracing" Islam. "Natural religion," primordial intimacy with Allah, and conversion to Islam: the implication of the Qur'anic verse "Am I not your Lord?"

Readings: Qur'an 7.172; Haleem, The Sun Is Rising in the West, preface (xv-xviii), 27-29, 36-37, 58-61, 64-66, 67-71, 74-75, 76-83, 109-112, 118-120, 121-127, 128-140.

Questions for classroom discussion: What motivates the individuals described in these autobiographies (Haleem, pages indicated above) to convert to Islam? What strikes you as interesting in the spiritual journeys undergone by these "new Muslims"? What attracts them to Islam? Do you see any patterns or common factors in their background or experiences? Analyze what these converts say about Christianity, Christian teachings, Jesus, and their previous religious background or lack thereof. What is your own assessment of the assertions and experiences presented in this book?

7.) Tuesday, January 26.

Qur'anic Christology (I). Depictions of Jesus in the Qur'an. "*Shubbiha la-hum*" and the question of *al-tashbih*: the legacy of Gnosticism and Gnostic forms of Christianity in the Qur'an's docetic Crucifixion. Qur'anic references to the Prophet Muhammad. A comparison of the Qur'an's representation of Muhammad and Jesus.

Readings: Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, 42-47 (Camino); *The Nag Hammadi Library*: "The Second Treatise of the Great Seth," 362-371, and "Apocalypse of Peter," 372-378 (Camino). Qur'an 112.1-4 (the question of divine sonship); 3.42-59 (the Virgin Mary and the miracles of Jesus); 4.155-159 (the docetic crucifixion); 5.116-120 (Jesus and the Last Day); 97.1-5 ("The Night of Power"); 53.1-18 (the Prophet's mystical experience of the Divine); review 80.1-12 (the Prophet and the blind man); 33.40 (*Khatim al-nabiyin*, "the Seal of the Prophets"), and footnote 3731 in A.Y. Ali's Qur'an translation.

Questions for classroom discussion:

Compare Islamic and Christian understandings of Jesus. Check an encyclopedia such as the *Britannica* for a discussion of Gnosticism and docetism/doceticism. Compare the Qur'an's statements about the Prophet Muhammad with Faruqi's discussion, 35-44.

8.) Thursday, January 28.

Qur'anic Christology (II). Qur'anic "Tales of the Ancients" and the question of analogues in Islamic scripture, the Bible, and Christian deuterocanonical/apocryphal Gospels. Qur'anic understandings of the "*Injil*" (Gospel). Jesus's Apostles in the Qur'an.

Readings: *The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy of the Saviour* (also known as the *Arabic Infancy Gospel* or *AIG*) (photocopy); Qur'an 3.46, 5.109-115, 19.20-35 (Jesus's miracles, especially relating to his infancy); Qur'an 6.25, 8.31, 23.78-83, 25.1-9 (note esp. 25.5, "Tales of the Ancients, which he has caused to be written," and A.Y. Ali's note 3058), 27.67-69, 46.17 (*asatir al-awwalin*, "Tales of the Ancients"); Qur'an 3.3, 3.45-48, 5.46-48 (*Injil*), A.Y. Ali, App.II and III ("*Tawrah*," "*Injil*"), pp.288-292 in our Qur'an translation; Qur'an 3.52 (Apostles as *Ansar Allah*), 61.14; cf. Qur'an 9.117 and A.Y. Ali's note 1368.

A note on *The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy of the Saviour*: This text, dating from c.mid-5th-mid-6th century AD, was originally composed in Syriac and later translated into Arabic; versions of the stories contained in this text circulated in the Arabian peninsula during the Jahiliyah. I consider this text a fifth-century version of religious "pulp fiction," intended for a mass-market Christian audience eager for legends about Jesus's childhood. It is a non-canonical text, composed long after the four canonical Gospels and other Biblical literature. It is *not* a Gnostic text, although it is sometimes included in "Gnostic libraries" because it shares with Gnostic Gospels the quality of being non-canonical and apocryphal material relating to the life of Jesus.

Questions for classroom discussion: Compare the *Arabic Infancy Gospel* with descriptions of Jesus in the Qur'an, noting differences, similarities, and points of convergence in these texts' portraits of Jesus. What sort of portrait of Jesus emerges from the AIG, and how might this portrait make sense in terms of its original audience (see note above)? Evaluate this portrait: what, in your opinion, is particularly distinctive or potentially troubling about the AIG's representation of Jesus, and why might it have been excluded from the roster of canonical

Christian texts? Do the Qur'an's recurrent references to "Tales of the Ancients" shed any light on Islamic scriptural representations of Jesus? Compare the *Arabic Infancy Gospel* with descriptions of Jesus in the Qur'an. How does the Qur'an describe the relation between Jesus and the Injil (Gospel)? Comment on the description of Christ's Apostles as "God's helpers" (Ansar Allah).

Friday, January 29: Last day to drop this course without a W!

9.) Tuesday, February 2.

Qur'anic Christology (III). Mary, John the Baptist, and the birth of Jesus. Jesus and the Trinity. Jesus and the "Holy Spirit." The status of Jesus as "Masih" (Messiah/the Christ).

Readings: Qur'an 19.1-40 (Mary and the birth of Jesus); Qur'an 4.171, 5.73, 5.116 (Jesus and the concept of the Trinity); Qur'an 2.87, 2.253 (cf. A.Y. Ali's notes 292-A and n.401), 5.110, 21.91 (the Holy Spirit); Qur'an 3.45, 4.171-172, 5.75 (Jesus as Messiah/Christ). Bible: Genesis 1.1-2 (wind/spirit/creation; cf. note to this verse); Gospel of Mark 1.1-13 (Jesus's baptism); Mark 8.27-31 & Gospel of Matthew 16.13-28 (Jesus as Messiah and "Son of Man"; cf. Daniel 7.1-14 [p.1159]: "Son of Man"); Gospel of Matthew 11.25-27 (Father and Son); Gospel of John 1.1-18 (Jesus as Word of God); Acts 2.1-24 (Pentecost); Second Corinthians 13.11-13 (Christ, God, Holy Spirit); Gospel of Luke 19.41-42 (Jesus weeps over Jerusalem; cf. Matthew 23.37).

Questions for classroom discussion:

Compare Islamic and Christian understandings of: Mary and the birth of Jesus; the Trinity; the Holy Spirit; the significance of the title "Messiah/Christ." How does the Biblical Jesus apply the term "Son of Man" to himself? Compare the Gospel depictions of Christ weeping over Jerusalem with the Qur'anic name/attribute of Allah as al-Ghani (cf. Qur'an readings for class #2).

10.) Thursday, February 4. SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE.

An ex-Muslim compares the lives of two figures from the Qur'anic and Biblical traditions.

Readings: Qureshi, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*.

SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: a.) Compare Nabeel Qureshi's life story with the selected autobiographies from our assigned readings in Haleem's text. b.) Compare the portrait of Islam in *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* with the portrait of Christianity that emerges in Haleem's text. c.) What motivates Qureshi's decision to leave Islam and become Christian? What attracts him to Christianity? d.) Conversely, what, in your opinion, motivates the 11 ex-Christians whose accounts you've read in Haleem's book to leave Christianity and become Muslim? What attracts them to Islam? e.) Compare the Jesus portrayed in Qureshi's book with the Jesus of the Qur'an. In this context, compare Gospel depictions of Jesus weeping (Luke 19.41-42; John 11.1-36) with Qur'anic descriptions of Allah as *al-Ghani*. f.) What is your own assessment of the assertions and experiences presented in Qureshi and Haleem's books? NB: These questions will also be addressed in today's classroom discussion.

11.) Tuesday, February 9.

Reading the Christian Gospels in the light of the Qur'an: the Gospel of Mark.

Readings: Gospel of Mark, chapters 1-16; Qur'an 19.88-92 (the question of blasphemy) and note 2529 in Ali's Qur'an text. Compare the Qur'an's discussion of blasphemy with accusations made by Jesus's opponents in the Gospel of Mark 2.1-12 and the Gospel of John 10.22-39. Begin reading assigned sections from Khalidi in preparation for the sixth essay assignment (see below under readings for Khalidi's Muslim Jesus).

Questions for classroom discussion: Compare Jesus's self-understanding as portrayed in the Qur'an and the Gospel of Mark. What similarities and differences do you note in the Qur'anic and Biblical portraits of Jesus? Compare the Gospels of Mark and John with the Qur'an on the topic of Jesus's miracles, tawhid, shari'ah (divine/religious law), and blasphemy.

12.) Thursday, February 11.

Reading the Christian Gospels in the light of the Qur'an(II): Kenosis, the Book of Revelation, and the Gospels of Luke & John.

Readings: Camino: "Kenosis/Dupuis/Taylor"; Gospel of John, chapters 1-12; Gospel of Luke, 11.45-53 (Jesus's self-understanding; cf. 2 Chronicles 24.20-21), 22.39-46 (the Agony in the Garden); Letter to the Philippians, 2.5-8 (the doctrine of kenosis [self-emptying], cf. the words "he emptied himself"); "Lamb of God" imagery: Exodus 12.1-28; Mark 14.12-26 (the Passover lamb & the Last Supper); John 1.29 (John the Baptist's testimony); 1 Corinthians 5.7 (Paul's testimony); First Peter 1.17-21 (Christ as a "spotless unblemished lamb"); cf. Qur'an 37.99-109, notes 4102-4103 in Ali's Qur'an text, and Faruqi, 32-34 (Hajj & 'Id al-Adha); Revelation 13.1-8 ("the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world").

A note on the concept of kenosis: The Christology associated with this Greek term is linked to the New Testament's Letter to the Philippians 2.5-8, where the "self-emptying" that is referred to is understood as a form of self-limitation freely entered into by the second Person of the Trinity upon undergoing the Incarnation. Considerable controversy surrounds the various interpretations of this theology. The following is excerpted from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*: "Kenosis: ...a self-limitation of the Word's omniscience, omnipresence, etc....the Incarnation implies a real depotentiation of the Word...According to [some Christian theologians], the Word in His kenosis strips Himself even of His immutable holiness, His infinite love, and His personal consciousness, so as to enter into a human development similar to ours...According to Catholic theology, the abasement of the Word consists in the assumption of humanity and the simultaneous occultation of the Divinity. Christ's abasement is seen first in His subjecting Himself to the laws of human birth and growth and to the lowliness of fallen human nature...[P]ains and penalties...fall partly on the body, partly on the soul, and consist in liability to suffering from internal and external causes...Christ had the right to be free from all bodily pain, and His human will had the power to remove or suspend the action of the causes of pain. But He freely subjected Himself to most of the pains resulting from bodily exertion and adverse external influences, e.g. fatigue, hunger, wounds, etc. As these pains had their sufficient reason in the nature of Christ's body, they were natural to Him. Christ retained in Him[self] also the

weaknesses of the soul, the passions of His rational and sensitive appetites...The origins, intensity, and duration of...these emotions were subject to Christ's free choice."

Questions for classroom discussion: a.) Evaluate Biblical descriptions of Jesus in the New Testament in light of the concept of kenosis as presented above in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. In your evaluation, discuss the following four Gospel passages as well as any other passages you wish to include: Mark 1.9-13 (Jesus in the wilderness); Mark 5.24-34 ("Aware at once that power had gone out from him..."); Luke 22.39-46 (the Agony in the Garden); & John 11.1-44 (Lazarus). b.) Compare the Biblical Jesus with the representations of Jesus in the following texts in light of kenotic Christology: Gnostic texts ("The Second Treatise of the Great Seth" and the "Apocalypse of Peter"); the *Arabic Infancy Gospel*; and the Qur'an (at a minimum, consider Q. 4.157-158, as well as other Qur'anic passages you deem relevant). c.) How does the study of kenotic theology affect your own personal understanding of Jesus and his life in relation to ours?

Questions for classroom discussion: Phil.2.7 ("Christ...emptied himself") refers to what is known as "kenotic" theology. What is the relation of "self-emptying" to Christian concepts of the Incarnation and Crucifixion? Compare John 12.27 and the "Agony in the Garden" with the docetic Christology of Qur'an 4.157-158. Compare the Bible's "Lamb of God" imagery with Abraham's sacrifice as depicted in the Qur'an.

13.) **Tuesday, February 16.**

DUE DATE FOR RESEARCH PAPER PROSPECTUS.

Jesus the Sufi?: a discussion of the Islamic mystical tradition and its relevance to Sufi understandings of Christ. An introduction to Sufi vocabulary and mystical terms that are relevant to an understanding of the "Sufi Christ": *hulul, ittisal, ittihad, ghuluww, dhikr, fana', baqa'*.

Readings: A selection of Sufi poetry: Husain ibn Mansur al-Hallaj & Jalal al-Din al-Rumi (photocopy handouts).

Questions for classroom discussion: What does Isma'il al-Faruqi say about Sufism? As you read these poems, do you note any passages that strike you as illustrative of a bridge between Islamic and Christian concepts, or that might suggest a distinctive Sufi appreciation for the figure of Jesus?

14.) **Thursday, February 18. THIRD ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE.**

Portraits of Jesus in medieval Islamic legend and literature.

Readings: Khalidi, *The Muslim Jesus* (**NB: the following numbers refer to the text's "Sayings and Stories," NOT page numbers**): 5, 6, 10, 11, 13-15, 31, 33-35, 37-42, 47-50, 52, 54, 55, 59-61, 63, 66, 69, 71, 73, 76, 78, 81, 85, 99-100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 113, 115, 119, 120, 136, 145, 150, 159, 161, 163, 186, 189, 192, 205, 220, 222, 238, 248, 282, 284-285. Also read the following pages in Khalidi's introduction: pp.3, 28-29, 41-43. Review Faruqi's comments on Sufism (Islamic mysticism) in his book *Islam*, pp.76-80.

THIRD ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Compare the medieval portrait of Jesus in Khalidi's text with the Qur'anic Jesus and the Jesus of the Christian New Testament and the "Arabic Infancy Gospel". What strikes you as interesting/remarkable/startling as you analyze the portraits of Jesus in Khalidi, the Qur'an, the New Testament, and the Arabic Infancy Gospel (cite examples from Khalidi and the relevant scriptures to illustrate your points)? Does Khalidi's text shed light

on the Jesus of the Qur'an and/or the Bible? Analyze Faruqi's view of Sufism. What would be his likely response to the Jesus portrayed in Khalidi's medieval texts? What is your own personal response to the portraits of Jesus you have encountered in these various Christian and Muslim texts? NB: These questions will also be addressed in today's classroom discussion.

Friday, February 19: Last day to drop this course with a W!

15.) Tuesday, February 23.

Shiism in the context of anti-Christian doctrinal disputes. An introduction to the distinctive features of Ithna-'Ashari ("Twelver") Shia beliefs. Shia-Sunni sectarianism and Sunni polemics linking Shia and Christian teachings. Persecution, suffering, and salvation: a special role for Jesus in the Shia Islamic worldview?

Readings: Mohammad Manzoor Nomani, Khomeini, the Iranian Revolution, and the Shiite Faith (selections; photocopy); D. Pinault, "Sunni-Shia Sectarianism and Competition for the Leadership of Global Islam" (available online); selections from Pinault, The Shiites; Horse of Karbala (photocopies).

NB: The term *Rafidi* (singular)/*Rafidah* (plural)—"rejectionist; renegade"—is a pejorative term for Shias from the pre-modern era that occurs in the readings for today and is still very much in use in 21st-century anti-Shia polemics.

Questions for classroom discussion: M.M. Nomani is a Sunni polemicist who has written extensive critiques of Shiism. What similarities does he attempt to establish between Shia and Christian beliefs? In your opinion, are Shia doctrines and practices in fact closer than Sunnism to Christianity?

16.) Thursday, February 25.

Anti-Christian polemics in medieval Islam: two examples. The use of Christian scripture to demolish Christian doctrine: al-Ghazali's "beautiful refutation." An example of Salafist anti-Christian writings about Jesus from the 14th century: Ibn Taymiyyah's treatise on Jesus and "Nazarene" doctrine.

Readings: Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. AH 505/AD 1111), Al-Radd al-jamil li-ilahiyat 'Isa bi-sarih al-Injil ("The beautiful refutation of Jesus's divinity through explanation of the Gospel"); Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Halim ibn Taymiyyah (d.AH 728/AD 1328), Al-Jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-masih ("The correct response to those who have altered Christ's religion"; photocopy handouts). Recommended: online articles on al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah: Wikipedia and Sunnahonline.com.

A note on al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah: Acclaimed as a *mujaddid* or "renewer" of Islam, al-Ghazali wrote al-Radd al-jamil to show that a Muslim reading of the New Testament could demonstrate the errors in Christians' understandings of Jesus. One of the foremost scholars of the Salafi movement (see Faruqi, p.78), Ibn Taymiyyah is revered today by many Muslim fundamentalists as one of the prime intellectual forefathers of the Wahhabi movement.

Questions for classroom discussion: How does al-Ghazali make use of Christian scripture to try to prove the Islamic understanding of Jesus? Based on your personal reading of the New Testament, and keeping in mind the kenotic theology we've recently studied, what is your own response to al-Ghazali's arguments and his approach to Christian scripture? Analyze the ways in which Ibn Taymiyyah critiques Christian doctrines concerning Jesus, giving attention to how he

links this critique to his views of Shias, Sufis, and jinns. How does he make use of the Bible and both Jewish and Christian scripture to support his polemic? Discuss how he employs the Qur'an to deflate the status of Christians of his own time in the 13th and 14th centuries. Compare Ibn Taymiyyah's approach to Christ with the portrait of Christ that emerges in Khalidi's book The Muslim Jesus. What is your own response to Ibn Taymiyyah's treatise? NB: These questions will also be addressed in today's classroom discussion.

17.) Tuesday, March 1.

20th-century responses to Jesus among Catholics and Muslims: von Balthasar, von Speyr, and the Tammuzi poets.

Readings: D. Pinault, "Images of Christ in Arabic Literature" (Camino); Hans Urs von Balthasar & Adrienne von Speyr on Christ's sufferings (Camino); Gospel of John 20.1-31 ("Doubting Thomas" and the post-Resurrection traces of Christ's wounds).

Questions for classroom discussion: In the "Images of Christ" article, give particular attention to the poems by 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Bayyati and Badr Shakir al-Sayyab. They are 2 of the foremost "Tammuzi" poets (the Arabic Tammuzi literary movement is discussed in the "Images of Christ" article). Keeping in mind these poets' Muslim background, what do you find distinctive about their portraits of Jesus? Hans Urs von Balthasar, one of the foremost Catholic theologians of the 20th century, is known for his explorations of the concept of kenosis. Adrienne von Speyr was a 20th-century Catholic mystic and spiritual companion of von Balthasar. What aspects of Christ's life and after-death experience do von Balthasar and von Speyr emphasize? Are there any similarities between von Balthasar and von Speyr's Christology and that of the Tammuzi poets? John 20.1-31: What are the theological implications of Jesus's still-palpable and still-visible wounds in his post-Resurrection body, and how are they reflected in the writings of the Tammuzi poets, von Balthasar, and von Speyr?

18.) Thursday, March 3. FOURTH ESSAY DUE.

21st-century Muslim authors on the question of the Crucifixion and Christ's identity: recent examples of polemical treatises.

Readings: Muhammad al-Sayyid, *Al-masih bayna al-lahut wa-al-nasut* ("Christ between divine nature and human nature"); Hanan Qarquti Sha'ban, *Hayat al-masih* ("The life of Christ"); Al-Sayyid al-Hashimi, *Al-Masih wa-al-Islam* ("Christ and Islam")—photocopied handouts.

FOURTH ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Analyze and compare what these authors state about Jesus, especially with regard to Christ's sufferings, his expressions of doubt and fear, and the Crucifixion in relation to the question of *al-tashbih*. What use is made here of the imperfections of Christ's disciples? How does Sha'ban employ Allah's Qur'anic designation as *al-Ghani*? Compare al-Hashimi's use of scripture with Faruqi p. 57 and Fazlur Rahman (photocopied handout, p.19). Compare al-Sayyid, Sha'ban, and al-Hashimi with the medieval polemicists al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah. Then compare these 5 polemicists with the ways the Tammuzi poets and Christian writers on kenosis (von Balthasar, von Speyr, Dupuis, Taylor, etc.) approach the question of the Crucifixion and Christ's experience of fear and suffering. Be sure to take into account relevant scriptural passages from our readings throughout this quarter. NB: These questions will also be addressed in today's classroom discussion.

19.) Tuesday, March 8.

Sympathetic engagements with the Cross and Christ's Passion by a 21st-century Muslim: the writings of Mona Siddiqui.

Student presentations of research projects.

Readings: (Camino) Mona Siddiqui/Merad Ali, "Texts on Christ and the Cross", pp.1-3.

Questions for classroom discussion: Compare Mona Siddiqui and Merad Ali in their approaches to Christ's Passion. What insights emerge from the comparative study of the Qur'an and Bible, and from studying portraits of Jesus in the Islamic and Christian faiths? What new perspectives emerge on what it means to be a faithful Muslim or faithful Christian or—more generally—a person who cultivates spiritual interiority?

20.) Thursday, March 10. RESEARCH ESSAY DUE.

Student presentations of research projects.

No new readings.

Required textbooks:

Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an (Amana).

Al-Faruqi, Ismail. Islam (Amana).

Khalidi, Tarif. The Muslim Jesus (Harvard).

Haleem, Muzaffar. The Sun Is Rising in the West: New Muslims Tell About Their Journey to Islam (Amana).

Nabeel Qureshi. Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity (Zondervan).

D. Senior & J. Collins, eds. The Catholic Study Bible (Oxford). (If you already own a different Bible translation, you may use that instead of this edition.)

Material available on Camino (When you go to the Camino site for our course, click on "Files" to find this material. NB: what follows is a provisional list; more material may be added throughout the quarter):

Abu A'la Mawdudi, "The Prophethood," 29-35 (e-res/photocopy, from Mawdudi's book *Towards Understanding Islam*).

D. Pinault. "The Doctrine of Prophetic *'Ismah* in Islam: Readings" (e-res/photocopy).

"The Martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba" from *The Babylonian Talmud* (1-page e-res/photocopy).

Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, 42-47.

James M. Robinson. Ed. *The Nag Hammadi Library*: "The Second Treatise of the Great Seth," 362-371, and "Apocalypse of Peter," 372-378 (e-res).

The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy of the Saviour. (Arabic Infancy Gospel [AIG])

D. Pinault. "Images of Christ in Arabic Literature," *Die Welt des Islams* vol.27 (1987), 103-125.

Ibn Warraq. Leaving Islam: Apostates Speak Out, 16-19. (Prometheus Publ., 2003).

D. Pinault. "Humanistic Islam." Commonweal: A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture, vol.129, nr. 1, January 11, 2002, pp.8-9.

D. Pinault. "Pakistan's Christians Face Sectarian Violence." America: A Jesuit Magazine, Vol.187, no.4, August 12-19, 2002, pp.18-20.

D. Pinault. "Losers' Vengeance: Muslim-Christian Relations and Pakistan's Blasphemy Law." America: A Jesuit Magazine, Vol.194, no.13, April 10, 2006, 8-10.

D. Pinault. "Hidden Prayer in Yemen: Islam and the Problem of Religious Intolerance." America: A Jesuit Magazine, Vol.201, no.17, December 7, 2009, 11-14.

Yahiya Emerick. "How to Make America an Islamic Nation" (4 pages).

David Van Biema. "Missionaries Under Cover," Time Magazine, June 30, 2003, 37-44.

Eric Tiansay. "U.S.-Based Evangelists Report Thousands of Conversions in Iran," Charisma and Christian Life, Vol.30, nr.2, September 2004, p.26.

Mark Gabriel. "Tactics of Terror: Challenging Islam," Charisma and Christian Life, Vol.30, nr.2, September 2004, p.76.

Additional readings:

D. Pinault. "The Sunnah of the Prophet: A Sampling of Exemplary Behavior and Statements" (2 pp.).

D. Pinault. "The Prophet Muhammad and His Interactions With Certain Poets, Singers, and Storytellers" (3 pp.).

D. Pinault, translator. "A selection of mystical poetry by Jalal al-Din Rumi."

Requirements and grading.

The final grade will be assigned on the following basis:

four essays, each worth 15%	Total: 60%
participation	20%
research paper	20%

NB: ONLY STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS ARE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THIS COURSE. NO STUDENT WHO MISSES THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE IN THIS COURSE.

NB: TO HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF EARNING A PASSING GRADE FOR THIS COURSE, YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS. ANYONE WHO NEGLECTS TO ATTEND CLASS ON A REGULAR BASIS OR SUBMIT THE REQUIRED ESSAYS WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR A PASSING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.

Essay assignments. Each essay will be devoted to an assigned topic linked to the required readings. Each essay is to be typed, double-spaced, and is to include brief paginated citations of the texts used in support of each of your arguments. The texts to be analyzed, the questions to be addressed, and the due dates are all listed above in the "Course Syllabus" section.

Suggested length of each essay: 6 to 8 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary).

Those interested in writing successful essays should note the following: I prize writing that is lapidary (note the etymology of this word, with its history in Roman epigraphy, and its connotations of concision and elegance): make every word count! And I expect that if you choose to pursue this course, your writing will demonstrate a desire to use your reflections on each set of readings so as to further a personal program of spiritual and intellectual development.

Please note: Timely submission of these essays is necessary for adequate participation in classroom discussion of the assigned texts. Thus each paper must be handed in on time, at the beginning of class on the day it is due. I will lower the grade for your essay by at least one step (eg, C becomes C-) if you fail to submit your essay at the beginning of class on the due date. I will lower the grade by at least two steps (eg, C becomes D+) for papers submitted the day after they are due. The grade given for a particular essay will be lowered an additional step for each further day late the paper is submitted. Lateness penalties also accrue over weekends; thus the grade for a paper due on a Thursday that is submitted the following Tuesday will be lowered six steps (eg, B becomes D). *The same lateness penalties also apply to your research paper.*

NB: email/on-line submissions are NOT acceptable.

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss your ideas for each essay assignment.

Additionally, please be sure to proof your essays for grammatical mistakes, typographical errors, and infelicities of wording: these can have an adverse effect on the grade you earn.

Note the following: In light of the fact that you will discuss the findings from each of your essays in class, please *bring two copies of each essay on the due date*—one to be submitted to me at the beginning of the period, the other for you to refer to during our discussions.

NB: Each page of every essay should have a header that includes your name, the title of the essay, and the appropriate page number. This requirement also applies to the research paper.

The **research paper** will constitute an original investigation of some aspect of Muslim understandings of Jesus. Your research may involve textual work, analysis of Islamic websites (in which case you are required to print out and attach to your paper pages from each website you investigate), interviews with Bay Area Muslims, and visits to local mosques. **In your paper you are to include a comparison of your research material with at least three of the texts and photocopied materials listed in our syllabus.** Your paper must include adequate citation of sources (whether as footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical notes) and a complete bibliography. Length of research paper: 10-12 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary), typed, double-spaced, including notes and brief bibliography. You will also give a brief oral presentation in class on your research findings.

NB: email/on-line/electronic submissions are NOT acceptable.

Please note these due dates:

Tuesday, February 16: typewritten **1-page research paper prospectus due** (to include: 1.Title of project; 2.One-paragraph description of research topic; 3.Description of research methods to be used; 4.Preliminary bibliography).

Thursday, March 10: research paper due.

NB: The research paper is to be handed in on time. Lateness penalties apply (see above under “Essay Assignments”).

Your **research topic** should focus on one of the following four areas:

1. a **theological investigation of Islamic Christology**, that is, textual analysis involving the Qur’an, hadith, medieval Islamic devotional material, or contemporary Muslim theological writings on Jesus. You may also employ a comparative perspective in which you analyze Muslim and Christian theologies of Jesus.

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2. a **literary analysis** of novels, poetry, and/or plays by Muslim authors relating to the life of Jesus (eg, Naguib Mahfouz's novel Children of Gebelaawi, Kamel Hussein's City of Wrong, etc.).
 3. research (involving textual analysis and interviews) on some aspect of **Muslim-Christian relations**. This may involve an investigation of areas of interfaith dialogue and ecumenical collaboration on issues of shared concerns (eg, the environment, responses to modernity, fundamentalism, etc.). Include a consideration of how understandings of Jesus may affect such collaboration.
 4. ethnographic research on **da'wah/missionary evangelizing and the experience of Christian converts to Islam and of Muslim converts to Christianity**. This will entail a combination of textual research (with particular attention to websites such as DawaNet) and interviews with local Christian and Muslim converts in the Bay Area. Give especial consideration to understandings of Jesus as conveyed by these converts.

Class **participation** is an important part of this course. Thus you should make your best effort to attend class regularly and participate actively in classroom discussions. The assigned readings are to be completed before the class for which they are due. Reading each assignment in advance is essential to your informed and thoughtful participation. ***This is an important point to emphasize: your presence in class will contribute to your participation grade only if you prepare the assigned readings in advance and then actively contribute to classroom discussions.*** Make a point of preparing the study questions listed under each day's readings in the syllabus; this is part of your preparation for classroom participation.

Participation implies that when you are in the classroom, you are not only physically present but also completely engaged, intellectually and spiritually, in classroom lectures and discussions. Participation also means that you take notes in class and meet with me outside of class to discuss the topics addressed by this course.

With regard to issues of participation and grading, please note the following:

Frequent **absence** from class will hurt your final grade for the quarter. "Frequent" here means more than one unexcused absence during the quarter. After the first unexcused absence, your final grade for the course will be lowered one step (eg, C becomes C-) for each unexcused absence.

Of course illness or personal circumstances might arise that necessitate your absence; if this occurs please contact me at once so that we can discuss your situation. (***NB: A note from the Cowell Student Health Center does not automatically excuse your absence.***) You should never be absent without notifying me. If you know in advance you must be away, please notify me of this. If you suddenly and unexpectedly miss class for any reason, you must contact me immediately (via email, voicemail, or a visit to my office) to explain why you missed class. This will not excuse your absence but it will let me know you take your responsibilities seriously and plan to continue in our course. This is a courtesy to me; and I value courtesy.

NB: Whenever you **email** me, be sure to include the following in the subject line: your name; our course title; topic of email. Thus, eg: Basilides Gnostikos/RSOC 154/request for meeting.

NB: **Electronic devices of any kind (laptops, tablets, smart phones/cell phones, pagers, etc.) may not be used during our class time. Please be sure all such devices are turned off and**

out of sight. Students using such devices in class will be considered absent for that day and penalized accordingly. (See above under “absence.”) This means you will need to bring pens/pencils and a paper-notebook with you to class for note-taking. Students with special needs should furnish me the requisite permission forms from the Disabilities Resources Office.

Attendance. Please note also that I take attendance at the beginning of each class. I consider you late if you arrive after I finish taking attendance. Frequent lateness will affect your participation grade adversely. “Frequent” here means more than three unexcused instances of lateness during the quarter. After the third unexcused instance of lateness, your grade will be lowered one step (eg, C becomes C-) for each unexcused instance of lateness. If you arrive late for any class, please let me know at the end of the period that you are here so I can note your tardy presence (as you can see from the above, absence is penalized more heavily than tardiness). Note also that if you arrive more than fifteen minutes late to class, you will be marked as absent for that day. Leaving class early (especially without clearing this with me in advance) may also cause you to be marked as absent.

A note on participation and reading. To be able to participate in classroom discussions, you need to remember clearly the content and significance of the assigned readings. This can be challenging, especially given the large number of Qur’anic and Biblical verses assigned for this quarter. In preparing for each day’s discussion, you are expected to take notes on each set of verses and other assigned texts as you read them. Bring these notes to class along with the texts assigned for that day. This will equip you to enjoy (rather than merely suffer through) each day’s discussion.

Writing assignments and academic honesty. It is your responsibility to ensure that work you submit as your own is in fact your own, and that you acknowledge properly any sources from which you take ideas and phrasing. I comply with University policies regarding plagiarism and academic honesty (consult the discussion entitled “Academic Integrity” in the Undergraduate Bulletin). Should you need clarification concerning this issue, please consult me before submitting your essay.

This is my response when a student engages in plagiarism: the student receives an F for the plagiarized assignment. The student also receives an F for the course and is expelled from my course. Additionally, I send a report of the student’s plagiarism to Santa Clara University’s Office of Student Life and I consult with the Dean of Student Life concerning the possibility of further disciplinary action.

In **grading** your work this quarter I use the following criteria:

F: unacceptable. With regard to essay assignments, this is the only grade for which I permit a rewrite. The highest grade I will award a rewrite, however, is D.

D: acceptable, even if unsatisfactory.

C: adequate; satisfactory.

B: good; impressive work.

A: outstanding. Indicates work that excels in meeting the standards of thoroughness, creativity, and sustained and thoughtful engagement with the assigned subject matter.

Additionally, please note the following **grade scale**:

A = 96-100%

A- = 90-95%

B+ = 86-89%

B = 80-85%

B- = 76-79%

C+ = 70-75%

C = 66-69%

C- = 60-65%

D+ = 56-59%

D = 50-55%

D- = 46-49%

F = 45 or less

Disability accommodation policy: If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, www.scu.edu/disabilities, as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please initiate a conversation with me about your accommodations during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. Students who are pregnant and parenting may also be eligible for accommodations. Accommodations will only be provided after I have verification of your accommodations as approved by Disabilities Resources, and with sufficient lead time for me to arrange testing or other accommodations. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at [408-554-4109](tel:408-554-4109).

QUR'ANIC VERSES RELATING TO THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTE "AL-GHANI"

(verses translated by D. Pinault © 2015)

Surah 4.131: Everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to Allah. And We commanded those who were given the Book before you, and you as well, to fear Allah. And if you become unbelievers: well, then—to Allah belongs everything in the heavens and on earth. And Allah is free of all needs (*ghani*), and worthy of praise.

Surah 6.133: And your Lord is the One who is free of all needs (*wa-rabbuka al-ghani*).

Surah 10.68: They have said: 'Allah has begotten a Son.' May He be glorified! He is the One who is free of all needs; everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to Him (*huwa al-ghani lahu ma fi al-samawati wa-al-ard*).

Surah 14.8: And Moses said, "If you become unbelievers—you, and everyone on earth—well, Allah in truth is free of all needs (*ghani*), and worthy of praise.

Surah 27.40 [One of the djinns through force of magic brings King Solomon what he desired: the throne of Queen Sheba.] Then when he [Solomon] saw it placed before him, he said, "This has come about through the grace of my Lord, in order that He might test me as to whether I am grateful or impiously lack gratitude [alternative translations: or am an unbeliever/or am guilty of impious/blasphemous ingratitude (*li-yabluwani a-askhura am akfur*)]. If someone is grateful, that benefits his own soul, but if someone is guilty of impious ingratitude: well then, in truth, my Lord is free of all needs (*ghani*), and most noble."

Surah 29.6: And as for those who strive and struggle, waging jihad (*wa-man jahada*): well, they strive and struggle for the benefit of their own souls; for in truth Allah is free of all needs and needs nothing from the two worlds (*inna Allah ghani 'an al-'alamayn*).

Surah 31.12: And We gave wisdom to Luqman, [saying] 'Show your thanks to Allah.' And as for those who show gratitude, well, they show gratitude for the benefit of their own souls. And as for those who are impiously ungrateful: well, Allah is free of all needs, and is (simply) to be praised (*wa-man kafara fa-inna Allah ghani hamid*).

Surah 35.15: O you people! You are the ones who are impoverished, in need of Allah. But as for Allah: He is the One who is free of all needs, the One to be praised. (*Ya ayyuha al-nas antum al-fuqara' ila Allah wa-Allah huwa al-ghani al-hamid*)

Surah 39.7: If you are impiously ungrateful: well, Allah has no need of you; but He isn't pleased with impious and unbelieving ingratitude from His slaves (*in takfuru fa-inna Allah ghani 'an-kum wa-la yarda li-'ibadihi al-kufr*). If you show gratitude, He will be pleased with you.

Cf. Q.5.54: O you who believe! As for those of you who become apostates and turn away from your religion: well, Allah will bring forth another people, whom He will love, and they will love him—a people humble with the believers, harsh against the unbelievers, exerting themselves in jihad in the path of Allah.

The Doctrine of Prophetic *'Ismah* in Islam: Readings.

D. Pinault.

From Annemarie Schimmel, *And Muhammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985):

Chapter 3, "Muhammad's Unique Position": "One important chapter in Islamic prophetology concerns the *'isma* of the Prophet. This term means basically "protection or freedom (from moral depravity)" and connotes virtually automatically not only perfect moral integrity but even impeccability [freedom from committing sin]. For, as Islam teaches, God protects His prophets from sin and error lest His Divine Word be polluted by any external stain upon its human bearer." (p.56)

Schimmel, p.59: "[A]s the Spanish Arabic theologian Ibn Hazm said in the eleventh century: 'If disobedience were possible in the prophets, it would be permitted to us all as well, since we have been asked to imitate their actions, and thus we would not know whether our faith were all error and infidelity and perhaps everything that the Prophet did [involved] disobedience.' This argument has remained valid to our day; indeed, the absolute obedience owed to the Prophet is meaningful only if Muhammad was free from any faults and could thus constitute an immaculate model even for the most insignificant details of life."

Schimmel, p.59: "Some remarks, for instance that the light of Muhammad shone brightly through his body, can in a certain way be interpreted as pointing to the materialization of his luminous spiritual qualities: there was nothing grossly material about him, so that sin could [ever possibly] stain him. Here, as in the whole development of the doctrine of the impeccability of the Prophet, Shiite influences have certainly played a role, for the *'isma* of the imams was always maintained, and elaborated in detail, by the Shiite scholars; there could be no question that the imams' great ancestor, the Prophet, had to be exempt from sin and error and to be the pure bearer of the Divine light."

From a Shia source: "The Quran Speaks About Ahlul Bayt ('the People of the [Sacred] Household") <http://islamicbooks.info/H-21-Math'habs/Quran-Ahlul-6.htm>
"Meaning of Ayah [Qur'an verse] of Tat'heer [Purification] {the "Verse of Purification"=Qur'an 33.33}:

"When Ayah of Tat'heer was revealed, Muhammad (pbuh) was informed by Jubra'eel [Gabriel] about who constituted Ahlul Bayt; they were to be the Prophet himself, Fatima, Ali, Al-Hasan, and Al-Husain....The Ayah indicates that *Allah Himself has honored Ahlul Bayt so specifically*, and He promised to keep them "pure, spotless, and sanctified." Allah had taken it upon Himself to safeguard Ahlul Bayt, to keep them unblemished, untainted, upright, virtuous, and chaste. This is the source and basis of the ***Ismah*** (meaning Allah has safeguarded them from: a) sin, b) religious error, and c) forgetfulness)."

RSOC 154 INFORMATION SHEET

Name _____ Year (Fr, Soph, etc.) _____

Local address _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

Academic major & minor _____

Previous coursework in Religious Studies _____

Language competence in addition to English _____

Particular interests in the study of Islam, Christianity, comparative religion, and/or Christology
