

Course Outline

KULIS 2019/20

Course title	The Impact of Religions and Value Systems on European Cultures
Date/duration	Autumn Term 2019/20
Lecturer	Dr. Andreas Telser
Teaching language	English
ECTS	3
Contents	
<p>This course is meant to provide some orientation in a question that has become a major public issue, i.e., religion. In media reports, religion is often depicted as a source of social strife and violence that tends to threaten the strongholds of democratic secular states.</p> <p>Nonetheless, religion(s) had, historically speaking, a major impact on European cultures in a variety of ways, not least on its value systems. Yet the specific European history of religion's decline of influence on state, society, and the individual – called secularization – did obviously not prepare Europeans well for dealing with religion once again.</p> <p>Thus, this course takes a second, scientific look at religion by approaching it through sociological, philosophical, anthropological, political, cultural and theological analyses.</p> <p>It will offer basic knowledge of what genuine religious questions are and how they are dealt with in those three World religions (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) that might have some impact on European cultures also in the future.</p>	
Learning outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic knowledge of what genuine <i>religious</i> questions are and how they can be dealt with scientifically; • A basic knowledge of those three World religions (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) that might have some impact on European cultures also in the future. 	
Teaching and learning methods	
<p>Class presentations, short lectures, discussion</p>	

Course preparation
<p>Texts to be read in preparation for each class; Class presentations based on these texts; A final oral exam taken in small group.</p>
Literature
<p>Hans Joas, Faith as an Option. Possible Futures for Christianity Grace Davie, "Religion in Europe in the 21st Century: The Factors to Take into Account," European Journal of Sociology 47 (2006), 271-296 José Casanova, "Cosmopolitanism, the Clash of Civilizations and Multiple Modernities," Current Sociology 59 (2011), 252–267 Peter L. Berger, "Further Thoughts on Religion and Modernity," Society 49 (2012), 313-316 Clifford Geertz, "Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," The Interpretation of Cultures (New York/NY: Basic Books, 1973), 125-141 George Bataille, "Sacrifice, the Festival and the Principles of the Sacred World," The Bataille Reader, ed. by F. Botting & S. Wilson (Malden/MA – Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 210-219 Martin Riesebrodt, "Religious Practice and the Promise of Salvation: Outline of a Theory of Religion," The Promise of Salvation. A Theory of Religion (Chicago/IL – London: Chicago Univ. Press, 2010), 71-89 Louis Dupré, "The Crisis of Enlightenment" Religion and the Rise of Modern Culture (Notre Dame/In: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 29-40 Charles Taylor, The Ethics of Authenticity, (Cambridge/MA – London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997), 1-41 Hans Joas, "Does Secularization Lead to Moral Decline?" Faith as an Option (Stanford/CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2014), 22-36 etc.</p>
Assessment (%) (methods of examination, requirements for awarding credit points)
<p>Reading of all texts & active participation (1/3) Class presentation (1/3) Final exam (1/3)</p>
Contact details (lecturer)
<p>Ass. –Prof. Dr. Andreas Telser a.telser@ku-linz.at Tel (+43) 732 784293 4176</p>