

Course Outline KULIS

Course title	The Impact of Religions and Value Systems on European Cultures
Date/duration	Fall 2021/22 Dates tba
Lecturer	Assistant Prof. Dr. Andreas Telser, MDiv.
Teaching language	English
ECTS	3
Contents	
<p>This course attempts to provide orientation in a question that has become a major <i>public issue</i>, i.e., religion (meaning the plurality of religions and religious and/ or spiritual worldviews). In media reports, religion is frequently 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 their actual value systems. The specific European history of religion's decline of influence on state, society, and the individual – known as secularization – did not prepare Europeans well for dealing with religion as a <i>public issue</i>.</p> <p>Consequently, this course takes a second, scientific and multi-disciplinary look at religion: Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology, Political Science, Cultural Studies and Theology will provide theoretical approaches to one of the most ambiguous phenomena, religion.</p> <p>It will offer basic knowledge of what genuine religious questions are and how they are formulated in some of the so-called World religions (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) that might generate some impact on European cultures in the future as well.</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 analyzed scientifically; • A basic knowledge of those three World religions (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) that might have some impact on European cultures in the future. 	

Teaching and learning methods	
Short presentations & class discussion	

Course preparation

Texts to be read in preparation for each class;
Short presentations based on these texts.

Literature/ Selected Bibliography

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

Assessment (%)

(methods of examination, requirements for awarding credit points)

Reading of all texts & active participation in class discussion (2/3)
Short presentations (1/3)

Contact details (lecturer)

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