

Boğaziçi University
Spring 2021
SOC 482: Religion and Society
(Cross-listed as ATA 584: Selected Topics in Social Theory and History)

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Office: Sloane Hall 207 – Office hours by appointment only.

Course Description:

This is an interdisciplinary course designed to introduce recent debates and scholarship on the sociology, anthropology, history as well as philosophy of religion. During the course, we will dwell on specific themes, including but not limited to, the discussions of rationality, enlightenment, modernity, enchantment/disenchantment, secularism, tradition, textuality, conversion, sincerity, animality, and elaborate on the dynamic relationships between religion, science, nationalism, sexuality, capitalism and the arts. We will further delve into the debates within religious studies, focus on hermeneutical approaches to faith and theology, and engage with current trends in the anthropology of religion, including its attempts to analytically engage with pious discipline and self-cultivation.

Course Requirements:

1) Participation: Weekly presentations, attendance, and class participation: 25%

This is a seminar course in which active participation is crucial. Students are thus expected to read the required materials in advance of class meetings and come to the class ready to engage in weekly discussions. Suggested readings might also be discussed during the lecture. Students are not responsible to read them, but are encouraged to do so if they wish to dig more into the literature on some of the weekly themes.

Every week a small group of students will be assigned to briefly present hence start the discussion for one of the required readings. The presentations should be approximately ten minutes, mainly composed of short notes, and ideally address the following questions: What are the author's main arguments? What is the theoretical framework that these arguments are built on? And the evidence used to support them? The group of students, who are responsible for weekly presentations must share their presentation notes online (via Moodle) the day before (i.e., by Sunday, 11:59 pm) the class meeting.

2) Two critical response papers (3-4 pages, double spaced) written on texts presented in class: 15%

3) Final paper: A literature review paper (12-15 pages, double spaced, including references): 60%

Final papers would only be accepted via Turnitin. Necessary information on how to submit your papers via Turnitin will be provided during the semester.

A word about plagiarism: Plagiarism is a criminal offense and will not be tolerated on any levels in this course. Should you wish to learn more on plagiarism and how to avoid it, you may check Boğaziçi University Online Writing Lab's web page on how to avoid plagiarism:

<http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/favoidingplagiarism.htm>

Schedule:

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Necessary announcements will be made in the classroom.

Week I – Introduction to the Course: Early Debates

Suggested: Emile Durkheim, “The Elementary Forms of Religious Life” in Michael Lambek (ed.) *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 34-49.

Max Weber, “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” *Ibid.*, pp. 50-60.

Karl Marx, “From *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law*” in William A. Mirola et al. (eds.) *Sociology of Religion: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 13-14.

Sigmund Freud, “From *The Future of an Illusion*” in Donald Capps (ed.) *Freud and Freudians on Religion: A Reader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 51-57.

Clifford Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 87-125.

Week II – Religion, Enlightenment, Rationality

Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” in Paul Rabinow (ed.) *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), pp. 32-50.

Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi, “*Was ist Aufklärung?* The Iranian Revolution as a Moment of Enlightenment” in *Foucault in Iran: Islamic Revolution and the Enlightenment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), pp. 159-186.

Suggested: Jonathan Sheehan, “Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay” *American Historical Review* 108:4 (2003), pp. 1061-1080.

Mary Baine Campbell, Lorraine Daston, Arnold I. Davidson, et al., “Enlightenment Now: Concluding Reflections on Knowledge and Belief” *Common Knowledge* 13:2-3 (2007), pp. 429-450.

Michael Allen Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 1-18; 255-288.

Week III – Secularism(s) and Religion(s) I

Gil Anidjar, “Secularism” *Critical Inquiry* 33:1 (2006), pp. 52-77.

Janet R. Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini, “Introduction: Times Like There” in Janet R. Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini (eds.), *Secularisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 1-36.

Suggested: William E. Connolly, *Why I am Not a Secularist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 1-18.

Khaled Furani, “Is There a Postsecular?” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83:1 (2015): 1-26.

Basit Kareem Iqbal, “Asad and Benjamin: Chronopolitics of Tragedy in the Anthropology of Secularism” *Anthropological Theory* 20:1 (2020), pp. 77-96.

Week IV– Secularism(s) and Religion(s) II

Saba Mahmood, “Can Secularism Be Other-wise?” in Michael Warner, et al. (eds.), *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 282-299.:

Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 1-33.

Suggested: Talal Asad, “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category” in *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 27-54.

Jason Ā. Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012): 1-21.

Gil Anidjar, “Christianity, Christianities, Christian” *Journal of Religious and Political Practice* 1 (2015), pp. 39-46.

Week V –Religion, Explanation, Critique

Talal Asad, “Thinking about Religion through Wittgenstein” *Critical Times* 3:3 (2020)

Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *Open to Reason: Muslim Philosophers in Conversation with the Western Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), pp. 1-13; 23-34.

Wendy Brown, “Introduction” in *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 7-18.

Suggested: Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Lectures on Religious Belief” in *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 51-72.

Norman Malcolm, “The Limit of Explanation” in *Wittgenstein: A Religious View?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 74-83.

Irfan Ahmad, *Religion as Critique: Islamic Critical Thinking from Mecca to the Marketplace* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), pp. 7-29.

Alasdair MacIntyre, “Rival Justices, Competing Rationalities” in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), pp. 1-11.

Week VI – Enchantment, Disenchantment, Modernity

Joshua Landy and Michael Saler, *The Re-enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 1-14.

Jason Ā. Josephson-Storm, *The Myth of Disenchantment: Magic, Modernity, and the Birth of the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 1-37.

Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Authors of the Impossible: The Paranormal and the Sacred* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), pp. 5-35.

Suggested: Kutluğhan Soyubol, “In Search of Perfection: Neo-Spiritualism, Islamic Mysticism, and Secularism in Turkey” *Modern Intellectual History* 18:1 (2021), pp. 70-94.

Arthur Shiwa Zárate, “Sufi Reformism and the Politics of Enchantment in Nasser’s Egypt (1954–1970)” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 89:1 (2021).

Thomas Lacqueur, “Why the Margins Matter: Occultism and the Making of Modernity” *Modern Intellectual History* 3:1 (2006), pp. 111-135.

Week VII – Science and Religion

Peter Harrison, *Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 1-20.

Stefania Pandolfo, *Knot of the Soul: Madness, Psychoanalysis, Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 1-30; 323-330.

Khairudin Aljunied, "Islam as Therapy: Zakiah Daradjat and the Uses of Religious-oriented Psychology" *Indonesia and the Malay World* 49:1 (2021), pp. 106-125.

Suggested: Omnia El Shakry, *The Arabic Freud: Psychoanalysis and Islam in Modern Egypt* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), pp. 42-60.

Alireza Doostdar, "Empirical Spirits" and "Scientific Virtues" in *The Iranian Metaphysicals: Explorations in Science, Islam, and the Uncanny* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), pp. 112-122; 123-135.

Nouri Gana, "Jihad on the Couch" *Psychoanalysis and History* 20:3 (2018), pp. 371-386.

Week VIII – Religion, Embodiment, Inhospitability

Manuel A. Vasquez, *More Than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 1-20; (optional) pp. 123-148.

Jeanette S. Jouili, "Practicing Islam in Inhospitable Environments" in *Pious Practice and Secular Constraints: Women in the Islamic Revival in Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), pp. 1-26.

Mayanthi Fernando, "Reconfiguring freedom: Muslim Piety and the Limits of Secular Law and Public Discourse in France" *American Ethnologist* 37:1 (2010), pp. 19-35.

Suggested: Charles Hirschkind, "Is There a Secular Body?" *Cultural Anthropology* 26:4 (2011): 633-647.

Amira Mittermaier, "Dreams from Elsewhere: Muslim Subjectivities Beyond the Trope of Self-cultivation" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18:2 (2012), pp. 247-265.

Week IX – Conversion, Modernity, Religion

Peter van der Veer, "Conversion to Indian and Chinese Modernities" in *The Modern Spirit of Asia: The Spiritual and the Secular in China and India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 90-114.

Talal Asad, "Comments on Conversion" in Peter van der Veer (ed.), *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 263–273.

Beth Baron, "Combating Conversion: The Expansion of the Anti-Missionary Movement" in *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), pp. 135-150.

Suggested: Gauri Viswanathan, "Conversion, Theosophy, and Race Theory" in *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 177-207.

Esra Özyürek, "Convert Alert: German Muslims and Turkish Christians as Threats to Security in the New Europe" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51:1 (2009), pp. 91-116.

Week X – Religion, Gender, Sexuality

Linell E. Cady and Tracy Fessenden, "Gendering the Divide: Religion, The Secular, and the Politics of Sexual Difference" in Linell E. Cady and Tracy Fessenden (eds.), *Religion, the Secular, and the Politics of Sexual Difference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 3-24.

Joan Wallach Scott, "Secularism and Gender Inequality" in *Religion, the Secular, and the Politics of Sexual Difference*, pp. 25-46.

Azza Karam, "Must It Be Either Secular or Religious: Reflections on the Contemporary Journeys of Women's Right Activists in Egypt" in *Religion, the Secular and the Politics of Sexual Difference*, pp. 59-68.

Suggested: Nadia Guessous, "Feminist Blind Spots and the Affect of Secularity: Disorienting the Discourse of the Veil in Contemporary Morocco" *Signs* 45:3 (2020), pp. 605-628.

Anne Norton, "Sex and Sexuality" in *On the Muslim Question* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 45-66.

Amy Hollywood, "Sexual Desire, Divine Desire: Or, Queering the Beguines" in *Acute Melancholia and Other Essays: Mysticism, History, and the Study of Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), pp. 149-162.

Week XI – Theology, Capital, Liberalism

Devin Singh, *Divine Currency: The Theological Power of Money in the West* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), pp. 1-26.

Eugene McCarragher, *The Enchantments of Mammon: How Capitalism Became the Religion of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), pp. 1-18.

Walter Benjamin, "Capitalism as Religion" in Eduardo Mendieta (ed.), *The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 259-262.

Suggested: Adam Kotsko, *The Neoliberalism's Demons: On the Political Theology of Late Capital* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), pp. 1-38.

Michael Warner, "Is Liberalism a Religion?" in Hent de Vries (ed.), *Religion: Beyond a Concept* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), pp. 610-17.

Ben Jackson, "Putting Neoliberalism in Its Place" *Modern Intellectual History* (2021), pp. 1-14 (First view, forthcoming in print).

Week XII – Religion, Textuality, Literature

Hoda El Shakry, "The Qu'ran as (Inter)text: Embodiment, Praxis, Critique" *The Literary Qur'an: Narrative Ethics in the Maghreb* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019), p. 1-35.

Saba Mahmood, "Secularity, History, Literature" in *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 181-207.

Suggested: Talal Asad, "Ethnography, Literature, and Politics: Some Readings and Uses of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*" *Cultural Anthropology* 5:3 (1990), pp. 239-269.

Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 1-31.

Week XIII – Religious Freedom, Rationality, Surveillance

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Saba Mahmood, and Peter G. Danchin, "Introduction" in Sullivan et al. (eds.) *Politics of Religious Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 1-9.

Webb Keane, "What Is Religious Freedom Supposed to Free?" in *Politics of Religious Freedom*, pp. 57-65.

Peter G. Danchin, "Religious Freedom in the Panopticon of Enlightenment Rationality" in *Politics of Religious Freedom*, pp. 240-252.

Wendy Brown, "Religious Freedom's Oxymoronic Edge" in *Politics of Religious Freedom*, pp. 324-334.

Suggested: Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 1-12; 138-160.

Devid Sehat, *The Myth of American Religious Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1-12.

Tisa Wenger, *Religious Freedom: The Contested History of an American Ideal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), pp. 1-14.

Jolyon Baraka Thomas, *Faking Liberties: Religious Freedom in American-Occupied Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), pp. 1-16.

Week XIV – Religion, Animals, Affect

Donovan O. Schaefer, “Introduction: Species, Religious Studies, and the Affective Turn”; “Savages: Ideology, Primatology, and Islamophobia” in *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), pp. 1-18; 120-146.

Anand Vivek Taneja, “Saintly Animals: The Shifting Moral and Ecological Landscapes of North India” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 35:2 (2015), pp. 204–221.

Suggested: Sarra Tlili, “All Animals Are Equal, or Are They? The Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’s Animal Epistle and its Unhappy End” *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* 16:2 (2014), pp. 42-88.

Zayn Kassam, “The Case of the Animals Versus Man: Toward an Ecology of Being” in Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton (eds.), *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 160–169.