

Boğaziçi University
Spring 2020
SOC 482: Religion and Society

Instructor: Dr. Kutluğhan Soyubol – kutlughan.soyubol@boun.edu.tr

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, tradition, piety, atheism, secularism, modernity, textuality, conversion, sincerity; 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: 30%

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. 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 and 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: 20%

3) Final Paper: A literature review paper (12-15 pages, double spaced, including references): 50%

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

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.

Michael Allen Gillespie, "Introduction" and "The Contradictions of Enlightenment and the Crisis of Modernity" *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 1-18; 255-288.

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, John Forrester, Simon Goldhill, "Enlightenment Now: Concluding Reflections on Knowledge and Belief" *Common Knowledge* 13:2-3 (2007), pp. 429-450.

Week III – Invention of Religion(s)

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.

William T. Cavanaugh, "Religious Violence as Modern Myth" *Political Theology* 14:6 (2014), pp. 486-502.

Craig Martin, "What Is Religion?" *Political Theology* 14:6 (2014), pp. 503-508.

Suggested: Tomoko Masuzawa, "Introduction" in *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.

Jason Ānanda Josephson, "Introduction" in *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 1-21; or "The Invention of Japanese Religions" *Religion Compass* 5:10 (2011), pp. 589-597.

Gil Anidjar, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Christianity" *Interventions* 11:3 (2009), pp. 367-393.

Week IV – Religion, Secularism, Tradition

Charles Taylor, "The Meaning of Secularism" *The Hedgehog Review* 12:3 (2010), pp. 23-34.

Talal Asad, "Introduction: Thinking about Secularism" in *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 1-17.

Basit Kareem Iqbal, "Chronopolitics of Tragedy in the Anthropology of Secularism" *Anthropological Theory* (2018 Online version – Forthcoming in print)

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

Suggested: Bertrand Russell, “Why I am not a Christian” in *Why I am not a Christian and Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects* (New York: Touchstone, 1957), pp. 3-23.

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

Aamir R. Mufti, “Why I Am Not a Postsecularist” *boundary 2* 40:1 (2013), pp. 7-19.

Talal Asad, “Thinking About Tradition, Religion, and Politics in Egypt Today” *Critical Inquiry* 42:1 (2015), pp. 166-214.

Samira Haj, “The Islamic Reform Tradition” in *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 1-29.

Alasdair MacIntyre, “The Virtues, the Unity of Human Life and the Concept of a Tradition” in *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), pp. 204-225.

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

Week V – Islam, Rationality, Critique

Souleymane Bachir Diagne, “And How Not to Philosophize?”; “What Does It Mean for a Philosophy to Be Islamic?”; “The Philosophy of Reform”; “Pluralism” in *Open to Reason: Muslim Philosophers in Conversation with the Western Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), pp. 1-13; 23-34; 76-84; 98-101.

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

Suggested: Talal Asad, Wendy Brown, Judith Butler, Saba Mahmood, *Is Critique Secular? Blasphemy, Injury, and Free Speech* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013)

Gil Anidjar, “What Was Enlightenment?” *Critical Studies on Religion* 7:2 (2019), pp. 173-181.

Mayanthi Fernando, “Critique in Translation” *Critical Studies on Religion* 7:2 (2019), pp. 182-188.

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 – Religion, Science, Modernity

Stefania Pandolfo, “Divine Trial and *Experimentum Mentis*: The Psychoanalyst, the Imam, and the Ordeal of Madness” *Psychoanalysis and History* 20:3 (2018), pp. 293-311.

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.

Peter Harrison, “Territories of Science and Religion”; “Science and the Origins of ‘Religion’” in *Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 1-20; 83-116.

Suggested: Stefania Pandolfo, *Knot of the Soul: Madness, Psychoanalysis, Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 1-31; 280-293; 323-330; 331-352.

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

Jason A. Josephson-Storm, "Enchanted (Post) Modernity" in *The Myth of Disenchantment: Magic, Modernity, and the Birth of the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 22-40.

Week VII – Science, Religion, Metaphysics

Bernard Dionysius Geoghegan, "Mind the Gap: Spiritualism and the Infrastructural Uncanny" *Critical Inquiry* 42:4 (2016), pp. 899-922.

Yunus Doğan Telli, "Miraculous Evidence: Scientific Wonders and Religious Reasons" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 39:3 (2019), pp. 528–542.

Kutluğhan Soyubol, "In Search of Perfection: Neo-Spiritualism, Islamic Mysticism, and Secularism in Turkey" *Modern Intellectual History* (2019), pp. 1-25 (First view – Forthcoming in print)

Arthur Shiwa Zárate, "The American Sufis: Self-Help, Sufism, and Metaphysical Religion in Postcolonial Egypt" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 61:4 (2019), pp. 864-893.

Suggested: Graham M. Jones, *Magic's Reason: An Anthropology of Analogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 1-26; 96-114; 159-166.

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

Week VIII – No class

Week IX – Religion, Embodiment, Imagination

Saba Mahmood, "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival" *Cultural Anthropology* 16:2 (2001), pp. 202–236.

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.

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.

Suggested: 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.

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

Brian Silverstein, "Disciplines of Presence in Modern Turkey: Discourse, Companionship, and the Mass Mediation of Islamic Practice" *Cultural Anthropology* 23:1 (2008), pp. 118-153.

Week X – Religion, Nationalism, Colonialism

Judith Butler, "Is Judaism Zionism?" in Judith Butler et al., *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), pp. 70-91.

Faisal Devji, "Introduction" and "The Spirit of Islam" in *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 1-12; 201-240.

Esra Özyürek, "Christian and Turkish: Secularist Fears of a Converted Nation" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29:3 (2009), pp. 398-412.

Suggested: Harry Harootunian, "Memory, Mourning, and National Identity: Yasukuni Shrine and the Reunion of State and Religion in Postwar Japan" in Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.) *Nation and Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 144-160.

Peter van der Veer, "Religious Nationalism" in *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 1-24.

Week XI – Conversion, Sincerity, Postcoloniality

Nathaniel Roberts, "Is Conversion a 'Colonization of Consciousness'?" *Anthropological Theory* 12:3 (2012), pp. 271-294.

Webb Keane, "Sincerity, 'Modernity,' and the Protestants" *Cultural Anthropology* 17:1 (2002), pp. 65-92.

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.

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.

Week XII – Religion, Gender, Sexuality

Joan Wallach Scott, "The Discourse of Secularism" in *Sex & Secularism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), pp. 1-29.

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.

Alev Çınar, "Subversion and Subjugation in the Public Sphere: Secularism and the Islamic Headscarf" *Signs* 33:4 (2008), pp. 891-913.

Suggested: Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women (Still) Need Saving?" in *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 27-53.

Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Verdicts of Science, Rulings of Faith" in *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 163-201.

Jasbir K. Puar, "The Sexuality of Terrorism" in *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 37-78.

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

Week XIII – Theology, Capital, Liberalism

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

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

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

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.

Week XIV – Textuality, Literature, Culture

Hoda El Shakry, "Introduction. 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.

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.

Suggested: Jeanette S. Jouili, "Islam and Culture: Dis/junctures in a Modern Conceptual Terrain" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 61:1 (2019), pp. 207-237.

Extra Week – Freedom, Religion, Politics

Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, "Introduction" and "Free Religion" in *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 1-12; 138-160.

Anne Norton, "Freedom of Speech" in *On the Muslim Question* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 15-44.

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

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