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


Week II – Religion, Enlightenment, Rationality


Week III – Invention of Religion(s)


Week IV – Religion, Secularism, Tradition


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


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


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.


**Week V – Islam, Rationality, Critique**


**Week VI – Religion, Science, Modernity**


Week VII – Science, Religion, Metaphysics


Week VIII – No class

Week IX – Religion, Embodiment, Imagination


Week X – Religion, Nationalism, Colonialism


**Week XI – Conversion, Sincerity, Postcoloniality**


**Week XII – Religion, Gender, Sexuality**


Week XIII – Theology, Capital, Liberalism


Week XIV – Textuality, Literature, Culture


Extra Week – Freedom, Religion, Politics


