

Boğaziçi University

Fall 2018

ATA 584: Selected Topics in Social Theory and History / Religion and Society

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Course Description:

This is an interdisciplinary course designed to introduce recent debates and scholarship on the sociology, anthropology as well as history of religion to advanced undergraduate and graduate students. During the course, we will dwell on specific themes of sociology, anthropology, and philosophy of religion, including but not limited to, the discussions of tradition, piety, atheism, secularism, modernity, and elaborate on the dynamic relationships between religion, science, nationalism, sexuality, 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, such as its attempts to analytically engage with pious discipline and self-cultivation. Finally, we will reflect on the Turkish experience and discuss the predicaments of the Turkish republican case.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Participation: Weekly presentations, attendance, and class participation: 20%
Students must read the required materials in advance of class meetings. Every week a small group of students will be assigned to present one of the required readings assigned for the class. The presentations should be approximately fifteen 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 it?
- 2) Midterm Exam: 40% (Open-book)
- 3) Final Exam: 40% (Open-book)

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 Readings: Edward Burnett Tylor, "Religion in Primitive Culture" in Michael Lambek (ed.) *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 21-33.

Emile Durkheim, "The Elementary Forms of Religious Life" *ibid.*, 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, Tradition, Modernity

Required Readings: Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam" *Qui Parle* 17:2 (Spring/Summer 2009), pp. 1-30. (Originally pub. 1986. Occasional Paper Series. Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies)

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

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

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

Ruth Marshall, "Christianity, Anthropology, Politics" *Current Anthropology* 55:S10 (2014), pp. S344-356

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.

Peter van der Veer, "Spirituality in Modern Society" *Social Research* 76:4 (2009), pp. 1097-1120.

Week III – Piety, Atheism, Secularism

Required Readings: 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.

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

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

Suggested Readings: 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.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, "Lectures on Religious Belief" in *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* C. Barrett (ed.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 53-72.

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

Stathis Gourgouris, "Detranscendentalizing the Secular" in *Lessons in Secular Criticism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), pp. 28-42.

Week IV – The Invention of Religion(s): Historical and Anthropological Approaches

Required Readings: 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.

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

Suggested Readings: Tomoko Masuzawa, "Islam, A Semitic Religion" *The Invention of World Religions*, pp. 179-206.

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.

Week V – Religion and Science

Required Readings: Stefania Pandolfo, "Introduction"; "The Psychiatrist and the Imam"; "The Writing of the Soul: Soul Chocking, Imagination, and Pain" and "Concluding Movement: The Passion of Zulikha, a Dramaturgy of the Soul" in *Knot of the Soul: Madness, Psychoanalysis, Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 1-31; 280-293; 323-330; 331-352.

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

Omnia El Shakry, "The Self and the Soul" in *The Arabic Freud: Psychoanalysis and Islam in Modern Egypt* (Princeton: 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: Princeton University Press, 2018), pp. 112-122; 123-135.

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 VI – Religion, Gender, Sexuality

Required Readings: Joan Wallach Scott, "Sexuality" in *Politics of the Veil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 151-174.

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

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

Suggested Readings: 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.

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

Dagmar Herzog, "Soulgasm" in *Sex in Crisis: The New Sexual Revolution and the Future of American Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), pp. 31-60.

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

Week VII – Religion, Nationalism, Colonialism

Required Readings: 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.

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

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 Readings: 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: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 144-160.

Faisal Devji, “The Spirit of Islam” in *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp. 201-240.

Mayanthi L. Fernando, “Introduction” in *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), pp. 1-28.

Andrew L. Whitehead et al., “Make America Christian Again: Christian Nationalism and Voting for Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election” *Sociology of Religion* 79:2 (2018), pp. 147-171.

Week VIII – Midterm

Week IX – Religion, Embodiment, and the Visceral

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

Sherine F. Hamdy, “Islam, Fatalism, and Medical Intervention: Lessons from Egypt on the Cultivation of Forbearance (*Sabr*) and Reliance on God (*Tawakkul*)” *Anthropological Quarterly* 82:1 (2009), pp. 173-96.

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

Hussein Agrama, “What is a Fatwa?: Authority, Tradition, and the Care of the Self” in *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 160-187.

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, Embodiment, and the Imagination:

Required Readings: 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.

Anand Vivek Taneja, “Jinnealogy: Everyday Life and Islamic Theology in Post-Partition Delhi” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3:3 (2013), pp. 139-165.

Henry Corbin, “*Mundos Imaginalis*: or the Imaginary and the Imaginal” Trans. by Ruth Horine, *Revue Spring* 1972 (Zürich, 1972) pp. 1-13.

Suggested Readings: Ebrahim Moosa, “Hermeneutics of the Self and Subjectivity” in *Ghazali and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 209-236.

Amira Mittermaier, “Seeing the (In)visible” in *Dreams That Matter: Egyptian Landscapes of the Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), pp. 84-111.

Gauri Viswanathan, “In Search of Madame Blavatsky: Reading the Exoteric, Retrieving the Esoteric” *Representations* 141:1 (2018), pp. 67-94.

Week XI – Religion, Secularity, Literature

Required Readings: Saba Mahmood, “Secularity, History, Literature” in *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton: 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 Readings: Orhan Pamuk, “Din” in *İstanbul: Hatıralar ve Şehir* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2003), pp. 169-178.

Ian Almond, “Islam, Melancholy, and Sad, Concrete Minarets: The Futility of Narratives in Orhan Pamuk’s *The Black Book*” *New Literary History* 34:1 (2003), pp. 75-90.

Week XII – Religion, Capitalism, Liberalism

Required Readings: Kathryn Lofton, “Scarifying Britney: Celebrity and Religion in America”; “Corporation as Sect” in *Consuming Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 105-121; 197-219.

Joseph A. Massad, “Psychoanalysis, Islam, and the Other of Liberalism” in *Islam in Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 275-311.

Suggested Readings: Leigh Eric Schmidt, “Preface to the Second Edition” in *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), pp. xi-xx.

Lee Gilmore, “Introduction” and ““Spiritual but not Religious”?” in *Theater in a Crowded Fire: Ritual and Spirituality at Burning Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), pp. 1-16; 45-67.

Yael Navaro-Yashin, “The Market for Identities: Buying and Selling Secularity and Islam” in *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 78-113.

Week XIII – Reflections on Turkey

Required Readings: Brian Silverstein, “Islamist Critique in Modern Turkey: Hermeneutics, Tradition, Genealogy” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47:1 (2005), pp. 134-160.

Christopher Dole, “Secular Histories, Sainly Returns: Death and Devotion in Modern Turkey” in *Living and Dying in the Contemporary World: A Compendium* Veena Das and Clara Han (eds.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), pp. 367-381.

Hikmet Kocamaner, “Strengthening the Family through Television: Islamic Broadcasting, Secularism, and the Politics of Responsibility in Turkey” *Anthropological Quarterly* 90:3 (2017), pp. 675-714.

Suggested Readings: Amit Bein, *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic: Agents of Change and Guardians of Tradition* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 1-10.

M. Brett Wilson, "The Twilight of Ottoman Sufism: Antiquity, Immorality, and Nation in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's *Nur Baba*" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49:2 (2017), pp. 233-253.

Kimberly Hart, "Secular and Spiritual Routes to Knowledge" in *And Then We Work for God: Rural Sunni Islam in Western Turkey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), pp. 172-194.

Aslı İğsız, "The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis and Coexistence after the 1980 Military Coup" in *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), pp. 209-236.

Week XIV – Conclusions