

Syllabus.

Course: Religious Philosophy

Instructor: A.S. Menshikov

Course Description: This course introduces students to anthropological and sociological approaches to religion that define religion mostly in terms of 'lived religion'; explores theoretical and methodological approaches to religion as everyday practice; and teaches students to apply these approaches to recent religious developments in Russia.

Course Objectives and Format.

General objectives: to provide students with a theoretical foundation that enables them to approach religion in an unbiased and systematic way; to supply students with sufficient erudition to engage in scholarly, rational, and comparative study of religion; to train students in the skills of empirical anthropological research; to suggest a moral attitude of sympathy and appreciation for religious diversity.

Particular objectives: In the course we will learn to identify different scholarly approaches to the study of religion, to uncover and evaluate the underlying assumptions of different approaches, to discover weaknesses in particular approaches and controversial issues they may raise, and to explain these inconsistencies or controversies in terms of the basic assumptions these approaches rely on. Students will compose a research plan/survey, justify the methodology they select for their own research, and perform an empirical study/case-study in the field. Course activities and assignments will be both theoretical and practical; they will include lectures, seminars, in-class reports, written papers, and field studies/trips.

Requirements: Students must be in their fourth year and have specialized in philosophy, religious studies, anthropology, social science, cultural studies. Good command of English language is desirable.

Final evaluation will depend on performance in class discussions through the year, written analysis of a particular anthropological hypothesis on the basis of the individual research in the first semester, and the individual case-study research project in the second semester. Provided these tasks are done well, the final exam will not be obligatory.

Books and readings. In the schedule below only required readings are given. Optional readings for in-class presentations may be chosen from the bibliography that follows. All articles are available in electronic form, either from me or from journal databases the university subscribes to. All Russian books are available in the library; English books are not and may be photocopied, but at the expense of the students or their department.

Timetable. This is a one-year course, split in two semesters with sixteen weeks each.

Course schedule.

The first semester.

Part 1. Methodological module.

week	dates	Topics	Required readings
1		Theme 1. Religious philosophy: twilight zone between religion and philosophy?	Бибихин В. В. <i>Философия и религия.</i> // ВФ 2 1994. Адо П. <i>Духовные упражнения и античная философия.</i> СПб.: Степной ветер, Коло, 2005. (Глава «Я и мир» стр. 299-341).
2		Theme 2. History of the study of religion (survey).	Эванс-Причард Э. <i>История антропологической мысли.</i> М.: Восточная литература, 2003. (Гл. 10 Тайлор (114-119 стр.), гл. 12 Леви-Брюль (148-164 стр.), гл. 13 Фрэзер (164-188 стр.), гл. 14 Дюркгейм (188-207 стр.); Ван Геннеп (226-228 стр.), Мосс (228-232 стр.), Малиновский (240-244 стр.), Рэдклиф-Браун (244-247 стр.), Уайт (244-247 стр.); Социальная антропология: прошлое и настоящее (257-272 стр.), Антропология и история (273-291 стр.)). Morris V. <i>Anthropological Studies of Religion.</i>
3,4,5		Theme 3. Anthropological approaches to religion: individually oriented approaches.	
5,6,7		Theme 4. Anthropological approaches to religion: socially oriented approaches.	
8,9,10		Theme 5. Anthropological approaches to religion: symbolically oriented approaches.	

11,12		Theme 6. “A passage to anthropology”: current methodological controversies and debates in anthropological methodology approaches.	<p><i>An Introductory Text</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.</p> <p>Harris M. <i>The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture</i>. New York: Crowell, 1968. (Chapter 22 Cultural Materialism: General Evolution; Chapter 23 Cultural Materialism: Cultural Ecology pages 643-687).</p> <p>Hastrup K. <i>A Passage to Anthropology. Between Experience and Theory</i>. London, New York: Routledge, 1995.</p> <p>Wilson R. The Trouble with Truth: Anthropology’s Epistemological Hypochondria. In <i>Anthropology Today</i> 20:5 (October 2004), 14-17.</p> <p>Bowie F. <i>The Anthropology of Religion. An Introduction</i>. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002. (Chapter 1 Theories and Controversies pages 1-33).</p>
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Part 2. Theoretical module.

week	dates	Topics	Required readings
13		Theme 7. Definitions of religion: C. Geertz.	Geertz C. <i>The Interpretation of Cultures</i> . New York: Basic Books, 1973. (Chapter 4 Religion as Cultural System pages 87-125).
14		Theme 8. Definitions of religion: critique of C. Geertz.	Asad T. <i>Anthropological Conceptions of</i>

15, 16		<p>Theme 9. Secularization and rational choice theories. 'Theory of pluralism'.</p>	<p>Religion: Reflections on Geertz. In <i>Man (New Series) 18:2 (Jun., 1983)</i>, 237-259.</p> <p>Segal R.A. Clifford Geertz's Interpretive Approach to Religion. In <i>Selected Readings in the Anthropology of Religion. Theoretical and Methodological Essays</i>. Ed. by S.D. Glazier, C.A. Flowerday. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003. (Chapter 1 pages 17-32).</p> <p>Donovan J.M. Defining Religion. In <i>Selected Readings in the Anthropology of Religion. Theoretical and Methodological Essays</i>. Ed. by S.D. Glazier, C.A. Flowerday. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003. (Chapter 4 pages 61-98).</p> <p>Berger P. L. Some Second Thoughts on Substantive versus Functional Definitions of Religion. In <i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 13:2 (Jun., 1974)</i>, 125-133.</p> <p>Berger P. L. A Sociological View of the Secularization of Theology. In <i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 6:1 (Spring, 1967)</i>, 3-16.</p> <p>Hunt S. <i>Religion and Everyday Life</i>. London, New York, Routledge, 2005. (Introduction, Chapter 1 pages 1-27).</p> <p>Русселе К., Агаджанян А. Как и зачем изучать современные религиозные практики? // <i>Религиозные практики в современной России</i>. Под ред. К. Русселе, А. Агаджаняна. М.: Новое издательство, 2006. 11-32 стр.</p>
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The second semester.

Part 3. Historical module.

week	dates	Topics	Required readings
17, 18		<p>Theme 10. Are religion and philosophy the same for the Antiquity?</p>	<p>Адо П. <i>Духовные упражнения и античная философия</i>. СПб.: Степной ветер, Коло, 2005. стр. 19-298.</p>

19		Theme 11. Genealogies of religions.	Фуко М. <i>Забота о себе</i> . М.:РЕФЛ-БУК, 1998.
20		Theme 12. Religion or magic for the Middle Ages?	Asad T. <i>Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam</i> . Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. (Introduction, The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category, Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual pages 1-84). Эванс-Причард Э. Колдовство, оракулы и магия у азанде. // <i>Магический кристалл</i> . Магия глазами ученых и чародеев. М.: Республика, 1994. 30-83 стр. Kieckhefer R. <i>Magic in the Middle Ages</i> . Cambridge: University Press, 2000. (first edition 1989). (Definitions of Magic pages 8-17; Chapter 4. The Common Tradition of Medieval Magic pages 56-94).

Part 4. Anthropology of religion.

week	date	Topics	Required readings
21,22		Theme 13. Religion as 'embodied' religion: body practices and rituals. Religious pace and time.	Bowie F. <i>The Anthropology of Religion. An Introduction</i> . Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002. (Chapter 2 Body as Symbol pages 34-61; Chapter 3 Maintaining and Transforming
23,24		Theme 14. The religious and the sexual: gender definitions, taboo, sacred matrimony, feminine/masculine divinity	Boundaries: The Politics of Religious Identities pages 62-81; Chapter 4 Sex, Gender, Sacred pages 82-106). McGuire M.B. Religion and the Body:
25, 26		Theme 15. The religious and the political: identities, 'religious communities', states and globalization.	Rematerializing the Human Body in the Social Sciences of Religion. In <i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i> 29:3 (Sep., 1990), 283-296.

27,28		Theme 16. The religious and economics: is 'economical ethics of religion' thesis viable? S. Mahmood's discussion of agency.	<p>Hicks D. <i>Ritual and Belief. Readings in the Anthropology of Religion</i>. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002. (Chapter 4 pages 115-155).</p> <p>Douglas M. Sacraments and Society: An Anthropologist Asks, What Women Could Be Doing in the Church? In <i>Anthropology and Theology: God, Icons and God-talk</i>. Ed. by W.R. Adams, F.A. Salomone. New York: University Press of America, 2000. (Chapter 19 pages 391-406).</p> <p>Kinsley D. <i>Health and Religion. Health, Healing, and Religion: A Cross-Cultural Perspective</i>. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996. (Chapter 8. Central Themes in Traditional Healing pages 71-83).</p> <p>Verdery K. <i>The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change</i>. NY: Columbia University Press, 1999.</p> <p>Mahmood S. <i>Politics of Piety. The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject</i>. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005.</p>
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Part 5. Everyday religion in Russia.

week	date	Topics	Required readings
29,30		Theme 17. The venues for religious studies in Russia.	Rogers D. Introductory Essay: The Anthropology of Religion after Socialism. In <i>Religion, State and Society 33:1 (March 2005)</i> , 5 – 18.
31,32		Presentations of students' individual research and case studies.	<i>Религиозные практики в современной России</i> . Под ред. К. Русселе, А. Агаджаняна. М.: Новое издательство, 2006.

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- Ammerman N.T. Organized Religion in a Voluntaristic Society. In *Sociology of Religion* 58:3 (Autumn, 1997), 203-215.
- Asad T. Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz. In *Man (New Series)* 18:2 (Jun., 1983), 237-259.
- Asad T. *Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. (Introduction, The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category, Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual pages 1-84).
- Asad T. Reading a Modern Classic: W. C. Smith's "The Meaning and End of Religion". In *History of Religions* 40:3 (Feb., 2001), 205-222.
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- Balzer M. M. Flights of the Sacred: Symbolism and Theory in Siberian Shamanism. In *American Anthropologist (New Series)* 98:2 (Jun., 1996), 305-318.
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- Balzer M. M. Whose Steeple is Higher? Religious Competition in Siberia. In *Religion, State and Society* 33:1, 57 – 69.
- Baron J. Response to Filatov and Stepina on Lutheranism in Russia. In *Religion, State and Society* 31:4, 385 – 390.
- Basil J.D. Church-State Relations in Russia: Orthodoxy and Federation Law, 1990 – 2004. In *Religion, State and Society* 33:2, 151 – 164.
- Bell C. Paradigms Behind (and Before) the Modern Concept of Religion. In *History and Theory, Theme Issue 45 (December 2006)*, 27-46.
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- Bruce S. Modernization, Religious Diversity and Rational Choice in Eastern Europe. In *Religion, State and Society* 27:3, 265 – 275.
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