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.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>week</th>
<th>dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,6,7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 4. Anthropological approaches to religion: socially oriented approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8,9,10</td>
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<td>Theme 5. Anthropological approaches to religion: symbolically oriented approaches.</td>
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Part 2. Theoretical module.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 8. Definitions of religion: critique of C. Geertz.</td>
<td>Asad T. Anthropological Conceptions of</td>
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**The second semester.**

**Part 3. Historical module.**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17, 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme 10. Are religion and philosophy the same for the Antiquity?</td>
<td>Адо П. Духовные упражнения и античная философия. СПб.: Степной ветер, Коло, 2005. стр. 19-298.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>week</td>
<td>date</td>
<td>Topics</td>
<td>Required readings</td>
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Part 5. Everyday religion in Russia.

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<th>date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required readings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31,32</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentations of students’ individual research and case studies.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

REFERENCES.


Agadjanian A. Revising Pandora's Gifts: Religious and National Identity in the Post-Soviet Societal


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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Caldwell M.L. A New Role for Religion in Russia's New Consumer Age: the Case of Moscow. In
Casanova J. Religion, the New Millennium, and Globalization. In Sociology of Religion 62:4 (Special Issue: Religion and Globalization at the Turn of the Millennium; Winter, 2001), 415-441.
Evans A. Forced Miracles: The Russian Orthodox Church and Postsoviet International Relations. In Religion, State and Society 30:1, 33 – 43.


Tchepournaya O. The Hidden Sphere of Religious Searches in the Soviet Union: Independent Religious Communities in Leningrad from the 1960s to the 1970s. In *Sociology of Religion* 64:3 (Special
Zweerde Van Der E. ‘Civil Society’ and ‘Orthodox Christianity’ in Russia: a Double Test-Case. In Religion, State and Society 27:1, 23 – 45.

Bibliography in Russian.
Адо П. Духовные упражнения и античная философия. СПб.: Степной ветер, Коло, 2005.
Клакхон К.К.М. Зеркало для человека. Введение в антропологию. СПб.: Евразия, 1998ю
Мосс М. Общество, обмен, личность. М.: Восточная литература, 1996.
Эванс-Причард Э. История антропологической мысли. 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.), Рэдклифф-Браун (244-247 стр.), Уайт (244-247 стр.);
Социальная антропология: прошлое и настоящее (257-272 стр.), Антропология и история (273-291 стр.)).