

**Indian Institute of Technology Mandi
School of Humanities and Social Sciences**

Course Proposal

Course Name: Sociology of Religion

Course Number: HS 636

Credit: 3-0-0-3

Pre-requisite: None

Intended For: PhD students, SHSS

Distribution: Elective

Semester: Odd/Even

Preamble:

This course on religion equips students with necessary theoretical and empirical insights to understand religion in a historical perspective. After having built the much-needed theoretical and empirical base upon which the contemporary debates of religion, in various social science disciplines, would be thoroughly examined in the light of prominent and compelling scholarly works of recent past. Given the standard of this course, it is meant for PG students, preferably PhD students, in the school of humanities and social sciences.

Module - I (6 Hours)

Introduction

- a) Berger, Peter. *The Sacred Canopy* chapters 1-4 (pp. 3-101).
- b) Swidler, Ann. "Culture in Action," *ASR* 1986.
- c) Weber, Max. "The Social Psychology of the World Religions"
- d) Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
- e)

Geertz Clifford, "Religion as a Cultural System" in *Interpretation of Cultures*.

Module – II (8 Hours)

Rituals and Practices

- a) Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, selections
- b) Douglas, "Preface," "A Rule of Method," "The Two Bodies" in *Natural Symbols*
- c) Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 26 (1988):1, 126-66.
- d) McNally, Michael. "The Uses of Ojibwa Hymn Singing at White Earth: Toward a History of Practice" in *Lived Religion in America*.
- e) Rosaldo, Renato. "Grief and the Headhunter's Rage" Introduction to *Culture and Truth*.
- f) Forbes, Cheryl. "Coffee, Mrs. Cowman, and the Devotional Life of Women Reading in the Desert" pp. 116-132 in *Lived Religion in America*
- g) Radway, Janice. "Interpretive Communities and Variable Literacies: The Functions of Romance Reading" pp. 465-486. in *Rethinking Popular Culture*

Module – III (10 Hours)

Authority and Legitimation

- a) Weber, Max *The Sociology of Religion*, chs.
- b) Berger, Peter *The Sacred Canopy* chs. 5-7
- c) Casanova, Jose, *Public Religions in the Modern World*, chs.1, 2, 6, 7.
- d) Stark, Rodney. "Secularization RIP" *Sociology of Religion* 1999.

Module – IV (10 Hours)

Approaches to the study of religion:

- a) Classical approach: Durkheim, Marx, and Weber
- b) Contemporary approach: Phenomenological, Neo Marxist, Freudian, New Functional, Anthropological
- c) The insiders view: theologians and religious believers
- d) Religions of the World: organized and non-organized
- e) Religious, economic, social, Cultural movements

Module – V (8 Hours)

Religion and Contemporary Debates:

- a) Religion and Modernity: Secularization Approaches to the Study of Religion
- b) Methods of Studying Religion
- c) Issues of Power and Control in Religious Organizations
- d) In Indian context: Communalism and Religious Mobilizations- Broadly Religion and Politics
- e) Globalization and Religion

Essential Readings

- Peter van der Veer, *Gods on Earth: The management of Religious Experience and Identity in a North Indian Pilgrimage Centre*, Oxford, Delhi, 1989.
- Mark Jurgensmeyer, *Religion Nationalism confronts a Secular State*, OUP, Delhi, 1993.
- A. Nandy, Trivedy, Mayaram and Yagnik, *Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhoomi Movement and the Fear of the Self*, OUP, Delhi, 1987
- N. K. Bose. 1994. *The Structure of Hindu Society*. Delhi: Orient BlackSwan.
- T. N. Madan, *Religion in India*, OUP, New Delhi, 1991.
- Davie, Grace. (2007). *The Sociology of Religion*, London/New Delhi/Los Angeles/Singapore: Sage Publications.
- Fenn, Richard K. (2003). *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, Malden/Oxford/Melbourne/Berlin: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Beckford, James A. and Demerath III, N. J. *The SAGE Handbook of the Sociology of*

Religion, London/New Delhi/Los Angeles/Singapore: Sage Publications.

- Robert Bellah. 1991. *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditionalist World*. University of California Press.
- Robert Bellah. 1992. *The Broken Covenant*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Robert Bellah. 1986. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*
- Geertz Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. Basic Books
- Jose Casanova. 1994. *Public Religion in the Modern World*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.