

SOCIOLOGY AND HISTORY: RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

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Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4pm.

INTRODUCTION

This is a course about doing research in history and sociology and applying such research to an important question in the contemporary world. The substantive part of the course will deal with the question of religious pluralism and toleration. In a world of increasing diversity and increasing divisions along all kinds of cleavages from religious to class, race and ethnicity, how do we build the possibility of coexistence between different groups? This course will focus on religious diversity and religious coexistence.

We watch the response of western governments to the Syrian crisis; the images of the Cross at the Hungarian border to signify “this is a Christian country,” ; the new citizenship and inclusion laws that the government of Modi is passing in India and the revolts of citizens reacting to the exclusion of Muslims in the reconstruction of a Hindu nationhood; or yet again, the Trumpian discourse against Muslims, Mexicans and his building of a wall to keep people defined by difference out. Everywhere around the world, there are governments working against pluralism, fighting minorities, and fighting diversity and often countries are divided between those forces of pluralism and those who believe in homogeneity.

I would like this course to reflect on these questions from a theoretical as well as empirical view. We will read a couple of general works on pluralism—but then we will dive into cases and try to assess what makes them plural and whether their pluralism can be defined as successful.

CLASS PROCEDURE:

This course will work best if you do most of the required reading before the lectures, as each week I will devote at least thirty minutes for questions and/or student presentations.

We will not have class the week of April 6th because you will attend (on Monday the 6th of April) a *Lecture on Tolerance* by Professor Denis Lacorne, a wonderful historian and political scientist whose last book, *The Limits of Tolerance: Enlightenment Values and Religious Fanaticism*, is an important statement on the issues we are covering in the course.

Paper

The requirement for the course is a 15-page paper on a topic you and I have agreed upon, ideally after a discussion, by **March 2nd**. By this date, I will have met with each one of you to discuss a paper topic that you are comfortable with. So that you get a good start on your paper a **five page discussion** of your proposed paper is **due on Monday, March 30th**-- the first class after the Spring Break. This preliminary paper should include a clear and concise presentation of the question,

puzzle or topic you will explore, some discussion of what you think you might find, based on your preliminary readings, the sources you have looked at and found most useful, and a statement of why you personally chose this topic. When you come to class on March 30th, we will talk about your papers and have student input into the topics.

The **final version of your paper must be handed in the last day of class, Monday, April 27.**

Grading

Roughly 70 % of your grade will be based on your final paper; 30% will be based on the quality of the draft ideas you showed me for your paper immediately after the Spring Break, your class participation, and our meetings.

Books and Articles

I did not order the books we are using, though they are all easily available and relatively inexpensive. Instead, I have put everything online. You can, if you want order books and own them.

WEEKLY READINGS

Introduction: February 3

This week we will start by reading a few articles on what is going on in the world today that threatens religious pluralism. Then I will have you watch a few short documentaries about religious pluralism that works.

Read the following articles from newspapers:

Modi's project to make a Hindu India, by Ramesh Thakur

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2020/01/13/commentary/world-commentary/modis-project-make-hindu-india/#.Xh6vyC3MxBw>

Rescued at Sea: how did refugees' lives turn out in Europe, by Harriet Grant

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/oct/27/refugees-rescued-at-sea-how-lives-turned-out-nicolo-lanfranchi>

Hungary's Migrant Abuse is a Matter of Urgency, European Agency finds, by Marc Santora and Benjamin Novak

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/21/world/europe/hungary-migrant-abuse-report.html>

Watch # 1, 7, 10 and 11 of the short documentaries (4-5 minutes each)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9KWujKVteboKZme6r5bYchvEBdRb5XoV>

Religious Pluralism: February 10

Peter Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity*, All chapters except responses to him. (Boston and Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014).

Religious Pluralism and Democracy: February 24

Thomas Banchoff, *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (Oxford UP, 2007).

T. Banchoff, "Introduction," in *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism*.

Jose Casanova, "Immigration and the New Religious Pluralism: A European Union/United States Comparison," in *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism*.

Diana Eck, "American Religious Pluralism: Civic and Theological Discourse," in *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism*.

Toleration and Empires March 2

Sudipta Kaviraj, "Modernity, State and Toleration in Indian History: Exploring Accommodations and Partitions" in *Boundaries of Tolerance*, pp.233-266.

Aron Rodrigue, "Difference and Tolerance in the Ottoman Empire," *Stanford Humanities Review* 1995.

Karen Barkey, "Empire and Toleration: A Comparative Sociology of Toleration Within Empire", in *Boundaries of Tolerance*, pp.203-232.

Religious Pluralism and Medieval Spain-- March 9.

Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in medieval Spain* (Little, Brown and Company, 2002).

Religious Pluralism in Shared Sacred Sites March 16

Elizabeth Key Fowden, "Sharing Holy Places," *Common Knowledge*, Volume 8 (Winter 2002).

Robert Hayden, "Antagonistic Tolerance: Competitive Sharing of Religious Sites in South Asia and the Balkans," *Current Anthropology*, Volume 43 (2002).

Mete Hatay, "Three Ways of Sharing the Sacred: Choreographies of Coexistence in Cyprus," in Barkan and Barkey, *Choreographies of Shared Sacred Sites: Religion, Politics and Conflict* (Columbia UP, 2015)

Week of March 23 –Spring Recess

Week of March 30—Individual Paper discussions

Week of April 6—NO Class: Attend Tolerance Lecture April 6

Religious Pluralism and Cities 1 April 13

Prof J. Christopher Soper & Prof Joel S. Fetzer (2007) "Religious Institutions, Church–State History and Muslim Mobilisation in Britain, France and Germany," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33:6, 933-944.

Katharyne Mitchell, "Marseille's Not for Burning: Comparative Networks of Integration and Exclusion in Two French Cities," Department of Geography, University of Washington.

Cesare Mattina, "Changes in Clientelism and Urban Government: A Comparative Case Study of Naples and Marseilles," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Volume 31.1 March 2007 73–90.

Anna Grzegorzczuk, "Socio-spatial diversity of Marseille at the turn of the 21st century ," *Bulletin of geography. Socio–economic Series*, No. 17 (2012): 45-55.

Religious Pluralism and Cities 2 April 20

Elisabeth Becker, "Good Mosque, Bad Mosque: Boundaries to Belonging in Contemporary Germany," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, (2017).

Elisabeth Becker, "Reconstructing the Muslim Self in Diaspora: Socio-Spatial Practices in Urban European Mosques," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture*, (2019).

Richard Gale, "The Place of Islam in the Geography of Religion: Trends and Intersections," *Geography Compass*, (2007).

Final Class April 27

John D. Inazu, *Confident Pluralism: Surviving and Thriving through Deep Difference*. Selected Chapters.