



RL 370 COMPARATIVE RELIGION: TRACING THE PATH OF THE SPANISH SOUL

IES Abroad Salamanca

DESCRIPTION:

The objective of this course is to undertake a historical and phenomenological study of religions and human religiosity, covering the Upper Paleolithic period to current Universalist religions and other contemporary religious movements. In this course we will focus on the development of religion in Europe and especially in Spain. For this analysis we will use the comparative method, applying it to the field of history and the phenomenology of religions.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Spanish

PREREQUISITES: NONE

ADDITIONAL COST: 0 €

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Magisterial presentations, documentaries, readings, group discussions, individual works and exhibitions of activities by students. Most of the materials (presentations, texts, images, etc.) used in the classes will be available to students on the IES Moodle platform <https://moodle.iesabroad.org>

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 25%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Final Exam - 30%
- Research Paper - 25%

Course Participation

With the concept 'participation in the course' we understand three dimensions of the teaching-learning process: diagnostic assessment (to know student's skills and knowledge before instruction), formative assessment (first attempt of developing instruction to provide feedback from student learning) and summative assessment (the extent to which the most important outcomes at the end of the instruction have been reached).

Thus, to evaluate participation in the course, considering these three dimensions, they will be evaluated: exhibition of readings, activities or Power-Point presentations, group work in the classroom, debate based on compulsory readings, participation in Moodle thematic forums ...

Midterm Exam

Written exam consisting of two essay questions

Final Exam

Written exam consisting of three essay questions

Research Paper

The research paper consists in an academic essay, a focused piece of writing that develops an idea or argument using evidence, analysis and interpretation, with the aim to persuade of a particular position or perspective on a topic. The research paper should follow these four step process: 1) develop a topic by understanding the assignment requirements, exploring background information, and forming a working thesis; 2) conduct research using scholarly sources,

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taking critical notes and reading closely; 3) create a thesis statement and outline of arguments that will form the essay; 4) write the essay and integrate research evidence with properly formatted citations and references (the citation form of student's home universities will be respected).

Any topic covered in the course can be the subject of the essay. The perspective of the work can be plural: the student will be able to develop their arguments from the fields of history, religious phenomenology, theology, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, economics, sociology ...

The minimum length of the essay will be 8 pages, and the maximum length will be 10 pages.

Margins and font type/size norms of student's home universities will be respected.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The work carried out individually and collectively by the student, the written tests and the continuous evaluation will serve the teacher to verify the depth and breadth of the knowledge acquired and to specify the degree of use of the subject and, in that sense, the quality of the results of learning. At the end of the course, and as a result of it, the student must be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the beliefs, rituals, texts and figures related to a variety of religious traditions.
- Describe the origins and developments of some of the world's major living religions.
- Explain the basic teachings and practices of major religious traditions and will be able to compare and contrast principle similarities and differences between them.
- Interpret how religion informs and is informed by other dimensions of human experience and knowledge, such as gender, race, politics.
- Articulate how religious symbols and narratives are interpreted and mobilized to construct meaning in human life, by individuals and by communities – and how this changes over time or across different communities.
- Understand the rich cultural interchange between Jews, Christians, and Muslims that took place in Islamic Spain and other places of Europe over centuries.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) - "Salamanca Sensible":

- Know and understand that faith communities are united in accepting the claim for 'justice for all' (leave no one behind), through some of his central doctrines, especially on his interpretation of nature.
- Articulate how the teachings of the great universalist religious traditions defend that every human being has the right to live a life in dignity, free from hunger and disease.
- Know how Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity articulate the right of every human being to develop personally and to live in safety and wellbeing.
- Understand how the great modern religious traditions teach their communities that we have a common responsibility to collaborate so that their creed contributes to a more sustainable development of the entire planet.
- Interpret how religions derive spiritual environmentalism from their respective understandings of the divine origin of reality and of existence in general.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad classes. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. If a student misses more than two classes, the final grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (for example, A- to B+) for every additional unexcused absence.

Punctuality: Students who are late to class on a regular basis will also receive a reduction in their final grade.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Readings
Session 1	Intro Course presentation, introducing instructor and students. Presentation of course syllabus and objectives, including tasks and readings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jacques Waardenburg: <i>Significados religiosos</i> (pages 15-50).
Session 2	Sciences of Religion and the Comparative Method Analysis of the various scientific disciplines that study the religious phenomenon. Explanation of the comparative method in the field of history and anthropology of religion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> José Carlos Bermejo Barrera «El método comparativo y el estudio de la religión» Francisco Díez de Velasco and Francisco García Bazán: <i>El estudio de la religión</i>, pages 259-281.
Session 3	Sources for the Study of Religiosity in Prehistory Presentation of currently used resources and methods for the study of religiosity in prehistory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiorenzo Facchini, «La emergencia del <i>homo religiosus</i>. Paleoantropología y paleolítico», from the book by Julian Ries, <i>Antropología de lo sagrado</i>, Vol. 1, <i>Los orígenes del homo religiosus</i>, pages 151-181.
Session 4	Prehistory in Spain. Course-Related Trip Guided tour to the archaeological site of Atapuerca (Burgos) and its museum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As preparation for our trip and visit to the archaeological site of Atapuerca, students must read the guide by Rolf Quam <i>Los yacimientos de la sierra de Atapuerca</i>, and they must write a summary of the main findings in this excavation. After the visit, students must prepare a report: a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation including pictures taken by themselves during the visit and their comments on each picture.
Session 5	Cave Paintings in Southern France, Northern Spain and the Mediterranean Study of the different forms of artistic expression related to the religious experience of European prehistoric man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «El arte religioso», from the book by André LeroiGourhan, <i>Las religiones de la prehistoria</i>, pages 73-123. Prepare outline of four main ideas for class discussion. Moodle.

Session 6	<p>Religions in European Traditional Societies: the Celts</p> <p>Analysis of the key characteristics of pagan religions in European pre-Christian societies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrico Campanile «El mundo celta», from the book by Julien Ries, <i>Antropología de lo sagrado</i>, Vol. II, pages 195-227.
Session 7	<p>Religion in Iberian Traditional Societies: Tartessos and Iberians</p> <p>Presentation of the main aspects of religiosity among the Iberian people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. M. Blázquez, <i>Tartessos y los orígenes de la colonización fenicia en Occidente</i>, pages 30-65. • Prepare an outline of five main ideas from this reading.
Session 8	<p>Greek Religion: Gods, Heroes and Men</p> <p>Study of Greek mythology and its role in Hellenic culture and society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • «La tradición mitológica. Cómo fue en Grecia», from the book by Carlos García Gual, <i>Introducción a la mitología griega</i>, pages 11-42. • Write a three-page text commentary about this reading
Session 9	<p>Religion and Virtue Ethics</p> <p>Moral Teachings and Sustainable Development: An Overview from the World's Religions →</p> <p>The meaning of virtue ethics and its expression in several major religious and philosophical traditions;</p> <p>The importance of establishing multi-faith consensus to advance sustainable development;</p> <p>The importance of involving faith communities in peace and development work;</p> <p>How ethics motivates the actions of religious and secular leaders, politicians, scientists, civil society, and business;</p> <p>What shared virtue ethics are needed to create a more peaceful and prosperous world for everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and work the document: 'Keeping Faith in 2030: Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals' • Prepare an outline of three main ideas from this reading.
Session 10	<p>European Rabbinic Judaism of the Synagogue</p> <p>Comparative study of European and Spanish Judaism and the Jewish tradition in pre-Christian Palestine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • «El paradigma rabínico-sinagoga de la Edad Media», from the book by Hans Küng, <i>Judaísmo. Pasado, presente, futuro</i>, pages 132-173. • Write a brief personal opinion (half page) to share in class.

Session 11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «El paradigma rabínico-sinagoga de la Edad Media», from the book by Hans Küng, <i>Judaísmo. Pasado, presente, futuro</i>, pages 132-173. Write a brief personal opinion (half page) to share in class.
Session 12	Midterm Exam: Two Essay Questions	
Session 13	Judaism in Spain. Sephardic Tradition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Esther Benbassa – Arón Rodríguez, <i>Historia de los judíos sefardíes: de Toledo a Salónica</i>, pages 114-146.
Session 14	Islam in the Muslim Empire Analysis of the defining characteristics of Islam in the Muslim empire period: fundamentals and artistic expression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «El paradigma del imperio árabe», from the book by Hans Küng, <i>Islam. Historia, presente, futuro</i>, pages 245-274. Write a three-page essay including a critical analysis (text commentary and opinion on some of the main ideas).
Session 15	Islam in the Spanish Kingdom of Andalusia Study of a unique and peculiar case: Islam in the south and center of the Iberian Peninsula.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by T. E. Burman, <i>Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs</i>, pages 21-49.
Session 16	Creation Theologies and Their Relation to Environmental Justice Study and analysis of the foundations of the main religious doctrines on the sense of reality and its necessary ecological consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read, resume and comment: Ulrich Körtner, 'Ecological ethics and creation faith'. In <i>Theological Studies</i> 72 (4) (2016), 1-9.
Session 17	Christianity, Judaism and Islam in the Iberian Peninsula Comparative study of the relationship among the three monotheistic religions in the Iberian Peninsula in the Muslim period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a three-page essay (text commentary) on a chapter from the book by Rosa Menocal, <i>La joya del mundo</i>, pages 63-86.

Session 18	<p>Importance of Theology in 17th Century Salamanca for European Christianity and the Rights of American Indians. Field Study.</p> <p>Visit to the Aula Magna in the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca (Jesuit theologians) and the convent of San Esteban (Dominican theologians) in order to learn about the theological and legal contribution of these two important theological schools in Salamanca.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a graphic report: a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation including pictures taken by students during the visit and their comments on each picture.
Session 19	<p>Hinduism and its Establishment in Europe and Spain</p> <p>Analysis of the general history of Hinduism and its specific development in Europe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W. Harman, «Speaking about Hinduism and speaking against it», from <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>, 68 (4): pages 726-741, 2000.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a personal opinion (half page) of this reading.
Session 20	<p>Buddhism and its Development in Europe and Spain</p> <p>Presentation of the general history of Buddhism and its development in Europe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a three-page essay (summary and response to reading) on the text by Martin Baumann, «Buddhism in Europe: Past, Present, Prospects», from: Charles S. Prebish - Martin Baumann (eds.), <i>Westward Dharma The Blossoming of Buddhism outside Asia</i>, pages 4368.
Session 21	<p>Phenomenology and Sociology of Religious Sects</p> <p>Analysis of the situation of sects in Europe and Spain, and classification of sects according to their social phenomenology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read pages 49 to 63 from the book by Juan Bosch, <i>Las sectas</i>. Prepare an outline of the main ideas.
Session 22	<p>New Religious Movements in Europe and their Relationship with Active Environmentalism</p> <p>Analysis of the evolution of new religious phenomena in Europe and their influence on the culture of sustainable development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christopher Partridge, <i>New Religions: A Guide: New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities</i>, pages 103-132.
Session 23	<p>New Spiritualities in Spain</p> <p>Sociological presentation of the development of new religious movements in Spain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> María del Mar Ramos Lorente, <i>Nuevos movimientos religiosos en España: contexto y análisis del proceso de afiliación y desvinculación de sus miembros</i>, pages 55-72.

Session 24	Final Review Universalist religions in Europe and Spain	
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COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

Guided tour to the archaeological site of Atapuerca (Burgos) and its museum.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- André Leroi-Gourhan, *Las religiones de la prehistoria*, Barcelona 1994.
- Carlos García Gual, *Introducción a la mitología griega*, Madrid 2001.
- Charles S. Prebish - Martin Baumann (eds.), *Westward Dharma The Blossoming of Buddhism outside Asia*, California 2001.
- Christopher Partridge, *New Religions: A Guide: New Religious Movements, Sects and Alternative Spiritualities*, Oxford 2004.
- Francisco Díez de Velasco, *Introducción a la historia de las religiones*, Madrid 2002.
- Id. *La historia de las religiones: métodos y perspectivas*, Madrid 2005.
- Francisco Díez de Velasco – Francisco García Bazán (ed.), *El estudio de la religión*, Madrid 2002.
- Hans Küng, *El judaísmo. Pasado, presente, futuro*, Madrid 2006.
- Id. *El islam. Historia, presente, futuro*, Madrid 2007.
- Jacques Waardenburg, *Significados religiosos. Introducción sistemática a la ciencia de las religiones*, Bilbao 2001.
- José María Blázquez, *Tartessos y los orígenes de la colonización fenicia en Occidente*, Salamanca 1975.
- José María Mardones, *Las nuevas formas de la religión*, Estella (Navarra) 2011.
- Juan Bosch, *Las sectas*, Estella (Navarra) 2001.
- Julien Ries (ed.) *Antropología de lo sagrado*, vols. 1-5, Madrid 1995-2005.
- L. Suárez Fernández, *Los creadores de Europa*, Navarra 2005.
- Manuel Guerra Gómez, *Historia de las religiones*, Madrid 1999.
- Rolf Quam, *Los yacimientos de la sierra de Atapuerca*, Burgos 2007.
- T. E. Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs*, London 1994.
- W. Harman, «Speaking about hinduism and speaking against it», in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 68 (4): p. 726-741, 2000.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Antonio Ávila, *La psicología de la religión*, Estella (Navarra) 2003.
- José Cervera – Juan Luis Arsuaga – José María Bermúdez de Castro - Eduard Carbonell, *Atapuerca. Un millón de años de historia*, Madrid 1999.
- Julian García Hernando (dir.), *Pluralismo religioso*. Vol. II: Sectas y nuevos movimientos religiosos, Madrid 1993.
- Karen Armstrong, *Una historia de Dios. 4000 años de búsqueda en el judaísmo, el cristianismo y el islam*, Barcelona 2006.
- Karl J. Becker – Ilaria Morali, *Catholic engagement with world religions*. A comprehensive study, New York 2010.
- Mircea Eliade, *Tratado de historia de las religiones*, Madrid 2000.
- Id. *Historia de las creencias y las ideas religiosas*, 3 vols., Barcelona 1999.
- Mircea Eliade – Ian P. Couliano, *Diccionario de las religiones*, Barcelona 2007.
- Robert Graves, *Los mitos griegos*, 2 vols., Madrid 2002.
- Xabier Pikaza, *Las grandes religiones*. Historia y actualidad, Madrid 2002.