



JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

**UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
RELIGION**

1st YEAR 1st SEMESTER 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

MAIN CAMPUS – REGULAR

COURSE CODE: ZRE 4112

COURSE TITLE: THEORIES OF RELIGION

EXAM VENUE:

STREAM: (M.A in Religion)

DATE:

EXAM SESSION:

TIME: 2 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. This paper contains FIVE (5) questions. Answer ANY 3 questions.**
- 2. Candidates are advised not to write on the question paper.**
- 3. Candidates must hand in their answer booklets to the invigilator while in the examination room.**

1. With illustrations, examine Claude Lévi Srauss (1908-2009) assertions that Structuralist approach to religion involves trying to establish the **meaning** of religious phenomena. (20 marks)
2. Discuss the teaching of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) which states that the technique of religion “consists in depressing the value of life and distorting the picture of the real world in a delusional manner – which presupposes an intimidation of the intelligence”. (20 marks)
3. “The totem is before all a symbol, a material expression of something else ... It is evident that it expresses and symbolises two different sorts of things” (**Emile Durkheim** (1858-1917)). Discuss. (20 marks)
4. With practical examples, evaluate **Carl Jung (1875-1961)** assertion that the collective unconscious contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind’s evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual. His conscious mind is an ephemeral phenomenon that accomplishes all provisional adaptations and orientations.
5. Analyse the “Five stages of evolution of religion” as taught by Robert Bellah in his book *Beyond Belief* (1970). (20 marks)

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School of Humanities and Social Sciences: Department of History, Religion and Philosophy

Course Code and Title: ARE 802: THEORIES OF RELIGION

Course Outline

Objectives of the study

To enable the student to understand various theoretical aspects clearly and intelligibly and carry out a critical appraisal of the approaches to the study of religions, especially phenomenology of religion, sociology of religion, philosophy of religion, psychology of religion, history of religion; comparative religions, Inter Faith Dialogue; and, major issues in contemporary debate in religion like secularism, atheism, humanism, marxism.

Teaching Methods

Lectures, Tutorials, Brainstorming Sessions, Group Discussions, Class Presentations, Assignments

Course Evaluation

- Term Paper 20%
- CAT 20%
- End of Semester Exam 60%

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Any student whom for whatever reason may have a disability that may require any special attention to facilitate his/her learning of the course, should kindly make arrangements to meet the course instructor on the same.

COURSE CONTENT

Introduction

1. Sociological and Anthropological Theories

- a. Functionalism
- b. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917): Functionalism
- c. Criticisms of the Functionalist Position
- d. Structuralism
- e. Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908 - 2009): Structuralism
- f. Table 1: Structural Analysis by Lévi-Strauss of Three Myths Regarding the Origin of Tobacco
- g. Criticisms of Structuralism
- h. Historical/Interpretative Sociology
- i. Max Weber (1864-1920): Sociology, History of Religion

- j. Criticisms of Historical Sociology

2. Psychological Theories

- a. Analytical Freudian Psychology
- b. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939): Analytical Psychology
- c. Jungian Psychology
- d. Carl Jung (1875-1961): Jung's Concept of the Collective Unconscious
- e. Criticisms of Jungian Theory

3. Philosophical and Historical Theories

- a. History of Religion
- b. Criticism of the Methodology of History of Religion
- c. Phenomenology of Religion
- d. Criticisms of Phenomenology

4. Theological and Normative Theories

- a. Justificatory or Polemical Theories
- b. Evolutionary Theories
 - 1. Bellah's Five Stages of Evolution:
 - i. Primitive Religion
 - ii. Archaic Religion
 - iii. Historic Religion
 - iv. Early Modern Religion
 - v. Modern Religion
- c. Relativistic Theories

5. Typologies of Religion

- a. Yinger Sub-division of Sects into three Categories
- b. Bryan Wilson Categorization of Sects
- c. Troeltsch's Description of the Division of Church and Sect

6. Approaches to the Study of Religion

- a. The Reductive/Empiricism Paradigm (Analytical/Determinist/Positivist/Etic)
- b. The Synthetic/Relativistic Paradigm (Holistic/Emic)
- c. The Debate

7. The Goal of the Study of Religion

References/Bibliography

1. [Durkheim, Émile, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*](#), English translation by Joseph Swain: (1915) The Free Press, (1912)
2. Eliade, Mircea (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Religion*. 16 vols. New York, Macmillan, 1987.
3. _____ *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London, Sheed & Ward, 1958; 4th impression, 1979.

4. _____ *The Sacred and the Profane*, trans. Willard R. Track. New York, Harper & Row, 1961.
5. [Geertz, Clifford](#), *Islam Observed, Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*, University Of Chicago Press, (1968).
6. Lang, Andrew, *The Making of Religion*. London, Longman, Green & Co., 1898.
7. Mugambi, J. N.K., *A Comparative Study of Religions*. Nairobi: U.O.N. Press, 1990 (2010).
8. Ninian, Smart, *The Religion Experience of Mankind*. New York: Collins, 1969.
9. _____, *The World's Religions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
10. [Otto, Rudolf](#) *The Idea of the Holy* (first published in German in 1917), Oxford University Press.
11. Parrinder, Geoffrey, *Mysticism in the World's Religions*. Oxford, Oneworld, 1995.
12. [Pritchard, E. E.](#), *Theories of Primitive Religion*. Oxford University Press. 1965
13. *The Baha'i World*. vol. 18, 1979-83, vol. 19, 1983-86; 1994-95. Haifa, Baha'i World Centre, 1986, 1994, 1996.
14. Sharpe, Eric J. *Comparative Religions: A History*. London, Dockworth, 1975.
15. Wallis, Roy, 'Ideology Authority and Development of Cultic Movement', *Social Research* 41, 1974, pp. 299-327.

Books for Further Reading

For a historical overview of the development of the study of religion, see:

Sharpe, *Comparative Religion*.

Tylor, Edward Burnett, *Primitive Culture*, 1871.

For a detailed and assessment of different approaches to the study of religion, see: Waardenburg, Jacques, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion*, 2 vols. The Hague, Mouton, 1973.

Whaling, *Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion and The World's Religious Traditions*. 2 vols. Berlin, Mouton, 1984.

_____, *Religion in Today's World: The Religious Situation of the World from 1945 to the Present Day*. Edinburg, T. & T Clark, 1987.

_____, *The World's Religious Traditions: Current Perspectives in Religious Studies*, Edinburg, T. & T Clark, 1984.

Other useful books are:

[Geertz, Clifford](#), *The Religion of Java* (1960), University Of Chicago Press

_____, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), Basic Books 2000 paperback

[James, William](#), *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902)

[Jensen, Tim](#) and [Mikael Rothstein](#) (editors), *Secular Theories on Religion*, Museum Tusulanum press, University of Copenhagen, 2000.

Morris, Brian, *Anthropological Studies of Religion: An Introductory Text*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Course Lecturer: Dr. Naila G. Napoo

Sign:

Date:

Chair/HoD

Dr. Naila G. Napoo Sign:

Date