

Moral Economies: Religion, Politics, and the Marketplace (RL 348)
Spring 2020
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This course examines the intersections of religious, political, and economic life. Students will develop the idea of “moral economies” across different geographic locations and religious traditions. How do religious movements enable, oppose, and integrate economic phenomenon? What religious laws and doctrines are mobilized to make sense of, critique, and address issues of inequality, poverty, and suffering? In order to respond to these challenging questions, we will pay special attention to anthropological insights into our themes, as well as draw from cultural studies and the history of religions. Students will encounter multiple rationalities of, and reactions to living in relation to interconnected social worlds, global markets, and divine orders.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Michael Taussig. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*.

Erica Bornstein. 2012. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*.

Faisal Devji. 2009. *Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics*.

*All other readings will be available as pdf on Canvas.

EVALUATION

Participation & Attendance **15%**

Reading Responses **30%**

Reflection Papers (2) **20%**

Class Facilitation **15%**

Book Review and Conference **20%**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation & Attendance (15%) | Attendance and participation in class discussions are vital to your success in this course. Students are expected to come to class prepared, which means (a) having read the relevant readings thoroughly; and (b) being ready to discuss them thoughtfully. This portion of the grade will be dependent upon both the quality and extent of a students’ contributions to the class. Note: Students may miss up to 2 classes throughout the semester. These are meant for dealing with life’s many and unexpected contingencies. Subsequent absences, however, will adversely affect your grade, unless you can provide acceptable documentation.

Reading Responses (10 responses for 30%, 3% each) | Perhaps the most critical skill that you must employ to do well in this class is close and attentive reading. Read every word and line of assigned readings. A careful and critical reading of the assigned texts before class is crucial. For each reading assignment, take notes. These reading notes will encourage you to read actively, rather than passively, and will serve you well when you

study. I recommend that you underline important arguments, mark passages that confuse you, and look up difficult terms.

In addition to your own notes, you are required to post at least **five** responses over the term on the Canvas forum. Reading responses should be posted to the course Canvas page **by midnight** before class. The response should be about **300 words in length** and show a deep engagement with the assigned readings/podcasts/films. You can only post **once per week*. Some suggestions for your reflections include:

- ✓ Identify and reflect on 3 key terms/concepts in the reading: include a succinct definition/description for each. Note: These terms should be new concepts and categories that relate to religion and Islam, not new English vocabulary words from the readings.
- ✓ Identify the author's main argument
- ✓ Evaluate *how* the author supports their argument (what is their evidence?)
- ✓ Come up with your own questions that emerge from the readings
- ✓ If appropriate, draw connections between the week's topic with another week's theme
- ✓ Ask yourself: how did this reading advance my knowledge of Islam as an ongoing discursive tradition?

4-5: An outstanding response that is well written, shows an excellent grasp over central concepts, and that demonstrates careful analysis. **3:** A satisfactory response that is well-written and that shows a good grasp over the reading. **1-2:** Careless writing that does not meet the minimum standards.

Reflection Papers: (2 papers for 20%, 10% each) | Students will receive essay writing prompts to guide each 1000 word essay. You will be asked to critically reflect on a major topic in our course by drawing on our reading materials, lectures, and discussions to respond to the prompt. You will structure your paper around a central thesis. The writing prompt will be distributed two weeks prior to the due date.

Class Facilitation (15%) | In order to develop your critical reading skills and practice the art of oral presentation and discussion, each student will facilitate a class discussion of a day's assigned reading. This presentation will include a brief summary, your critical assessment, and at least three discussion questions that stimulate seminar conversation. Further details on how to prepare your facilitation, including a rubric, are available on Canvas.

Book Review and Conference (20%) | Students will select a monograph relating to our course themes and write a 2500 word book review. Book reviews are your opportunity to demonstrate your ability to read a text closely and carefully, and place it within a larger context of intellectual debate and discussion. Your review should briefly summarize the book, reflect on its relevance to our course and to a wider audience, describe the themes/arguments of the author, and offer an evaluation of his/her contribution.

A list of suggestions are below; students may also make their own selection and have it approved by me. As a reviewer, you are expected to focus on a single monograph (not an edited volume or reference work). In addition to your close and critical reading of this monograph, you will also demonstrate an engagement with the existing literature, using references to at least two other books on a similar theme. In addition to the written review, you will also create a lively presentation to share your discovery and critical assessment with your classmate. We will host a Book Conference on the penultimate day of class for our evaluation of the literature that makes up this cutting-edge field in the study of religion. Further details on the written review and conference, including a rubric, are available on Canvas.

GRADING SCALE

94-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	Below 60 is an F
90-93 A-	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D	
	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-	

*Grades are rounded up (for example, 89.50-89.99 will be round up to 90)

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance | Students are expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Both attending class and participating in class discussions are *vital* to your success in this course. To reflect the importance of this component of the class, a significant portion of your grade has been reserved for attendance and participation. Students may miss up to two classes throughout the semester. These are meant for dealing with life's many (and often unexpected) contingencies. Subsequent absences, however, will adversely affect your grade, unless you can provide acceptable documentation for *all* your absences.

Religious and Cultural Holidays | It is the student's responsibility to inform instructors of course conflicts resulting from religious observations *at least two weeks in advance of the observance, so that accommodations can be made. Please make all notifications of absence and requests for alternate due dates in writing via email with a proposed alternative due date. I will review your request and respond with either an approval or an alternative. NOTE TO STUDENT ATHLETES: Please follow the same procedure for requests for alternate dates and notifications of absence.

Grading Policy | After you have received a graded assignment, carefully read the comments given alongside the grade. This is the best way to learn from the assignment and improve your future work. If you have further questions you can book an appointment. Note that grades are nonnegotiable.

Lateness Policy | Late work will be penalized by 3 percent per day late, up to one week. At that point, the assignment will receive an F. In case of an emergency such as death in the family, or a severe illness, please get in touch with me as soon as possible to discuss a possible extension. Note that all such cases require medical or other relevant documentation.

E-mail Policy | All students are expected to check their Butler e-mail account daily (when school is in session) for class updates and reminders. I aim to respond to emails within 24 hours.

Student Disability Accommodation | It is the policy and practice of Butler University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Jordan Hall, Room 136 or by phone at 317-940-9308.

Academic Integrity | Students will be expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity as outlined in the Butler University Student Handbook, as well as to the highest standards of honesty, good faith and fair dealing. Students discovered violating those standards will fail the course, and may face additional sanctions which could include expulsion from the University. Violations include (but are not limited to) cheating, collaborating improperly on assignments assigned individually, and plagiarizing (turning in another person's work as one's own, copying text from any source, including the internet, books, articles, or magazines, without acknowledgement, etc.). Students should consult Butler's statement on academic integrity in the student handbook (http://www.butler.edu/media/3536322/handbook_14-15_9.5.14.pdf) pg. 9, for more detailed information on the University's expectations and policies. The library provides a tutorial on plagiarism for those needing more instruction: <http://libguides.butler.edu/plagiarism>.

Technology Etiquette | Please ensure that your time in class is well-spent, and that your behavior is not disruptive to your classmates. *Our classroom is a cellular phone and laptop free zone during class time.* Infractions on this policy will result in that session being recorded as an absence.

Statement on Use of Turnitin | Students agree that by taking this course all assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted to Turnitin become source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, which is used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Additional notifications are found on the Canvas site used in this and other Butler

courses. Additional information is also available on the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Paper Formatting and Citation | Submit all of your written assignments in Times New Roman 12-point, double-spaced, with margins of 1 inch in MLA format. In any paper that draws on an outside source, acknowledge that work using proper citation formatting. For the basics of citation, consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>. I will also give a tutorial in class.

READING SCHEDULE

Week 1: Morality of the Market

January 14

- Introduction to the course: religion, politics, morality, economy

January 16

- Filippo Osella and Daromir Rudnyckj. 2017. *Religion and the Morality of the Market*, "Introduction: Assembling Market and Religious Moralities," 1-28.

Week 2: Commodity, Ritual, Corporation

January 21

- Kathryn Lofton. 2017. *Consuming Religion*, "Introduction," 1-16; "Chapter 1, Binge Religion: Social Life in Extremity," 17-33; "Chapter 4, Purifying America: Rites of Salvation in the Soap Campaign," 82-104.

January 23

- Kathryn Lofton. 2017. "Chapter 9, Corporation as Sect," 197-219; "Chapter 10, On the Origins of Corporate Culture," 220-242.

Week 3: Credit

January 28

- Kathryn Lofton. 2017. "Chapter 11, Do Not Tamper with the Clues: Notes on Goldman Sachs," 243-287.

January 30

- Rebecca C. Bartel. 2016. "Giving Is Believing: Credit and Christmas in Colombia," *Journal for the American Academy of Religion*. 84(4): 1006–1028.

Week 4: Debt

February 4

- David Graeber, 2014. *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, "Chapter 1, On the Experience of Moral Confusion," 1-20.

February 6

- David Graeber, 2014. *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, "Chapter 3, Primordial Debts," 43-72.

Week 5: Empire and Conversion

February 11

- Jean and John Comaroff. 1997. *Of Revelation and Revolution V.2*. "Currencies of Conversion: Of Markets, Money, and Value," 166-216.

February 13

- Atiya Ahmed. 2010. "Explanation Is Not the Point: Domestic Work, Islamic Dawa and Becoming Muslim in Kuwait" *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 11(34): 293-310.

Week 6: Labor

February 18

- Michael Taussig. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Part I: Fetishism: The Master Trope," 1-38.

February 20

- Michael Taussig. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Part II: The Plantations of the Cauca Valley," 39-140.

Week 7: The Devil

February 25

- Michael Taussig. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Part III: The Bolivian Tin Mines," 141-181.

February 27

- Michael Taussig. 1980. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Part III: The Devil in the Mines," 143-234.

Week 8: Humanitarianism I

March 3

- Erica Bornstein. 2012. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*, "Prologue," 1-10; "Introduction," 11-22.

March 5

- Erica Bornstein. 2012. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*, "Chapter 1, Philanthropy," 23-58; "Chapter 2, Trust," 59-86.

Week 9: Humanitarianism II

March 10

- Erica Bornstein, 2012. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*. "Chapter 3, Orphans," 87-112; "Chapter 4, Experience," 113-144.

March 12

- Erica Bornstein. 2012. *Disquieting Gifts: Humanitarianism in New Delhi*, "Chapter 5, Empathy," 145- 170; "Epilogue," 171-175.

Week 10: Militance in Global Politics

March 17

- Faisal Devji. 2009. *Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics*, "Chapter 1, Sleeping Beauty," 1-24

March 19

- Faisal Devji. 2009. *Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics*, "Chapter 2, The Perfect Victim," 25-56; "Chapter 3, Laws of Uncertainty," 57-96.
- Watch: *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (Directed by Mira Nair, 2012).

Week 11: Value and Sensibility

March 24

- Faisal Devji. 2009. *Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics*, "Chapter 4, Arabian Knights 97-136; "Chapter 5, GWOT," 137-164.

March 26

- Faisal Devji. 2009. *Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics*, "Chapter 6, Insulting the Prophet," 165-200; "Chapter 7, In the Bellies of green Birds," 201-223.

Week 12: Giving (Among Catholics)

March 31

- Andrea Muehlebach. 2013. "The Catholicization of Neoliberalism: On Love and Welfare in Lombardy, Italy." *American Anthropologist* 115(3): 452– 465.

April 2

- China Scherz. 2013. "Let Us Make God Our Banker: Ethics, Temporality, and Agency in a Ugandan Charity Home." *American Ethnologist*, 40(4): 624–636.

Week 13: Giving (Among Muslims)

April 7

- Amira Mittermaier. 2013. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Religion*, "Trading with God: Islam, Calculation, Excess," 274-293.
- Watch: PBS "Revolution in Cairo" and "The Brothers"
(<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/revolution-in-cairo/>)

April 9

- Nermeen Mouftah. 2017. *Cultures of Doing Good: Anthropologists and NGOs*, "Faith Development beyond Religion: The NGO as Site of Islamic Reform," 122-141.

Week 14: Prosperity

April 14

- Simon Coleman. 2017. *Religion and the Morality of the Market*, Chapter 2, "Morality, Markets, and the Gospel of Prosperity," 50-71.

April 16

- Nandini Gooptu. 2017. *Religion and the Morality of the Market*, Chapter 3, "Religious Myths Retold: Masters and Servants in India's Corporate Culture," 72-93.

Week 15: Economic Development

April 21

Class Conference

April 23

- Benjamin Soares. 2017. *Religion and the Morality of the Market*, “Chapter 6, ‘Structural Adjustment Islam’ and the Religious Economy in Neoliberal Mali,” 138-159.
- Daromir Rudnycky. 2017. *Religion and the Morality of the Market*, “Chapter 7, Assembling Islam and Liberalism: Market Freedom and the Moral Project of Islamic Finance,” 160-176.

Book Review Assignment: Monograph Suggestions

While you may choose a title from this list, it is meant as a springboard into your own investigation and selection. These selections are mostly recent ethnographies, although they include titles from religion, and the history of religions. The list highlights works on Muslims and Christians related to our topic, but you are not at all limited to these groups. I am happy to discuss your interests with you and guide you in your selection.

Amira Mittermaier. 2019. *Giving to God: Islamic Charity in Revolutionary Times*.

Andrea Jain. 2014. *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture*.

Atalia Omer. 2019. *Days of Awe: Reimagining Jewishness In Solidarity with Palestinians*.

Attiya Ahmad. 2017. *Everyday Conversions: Islam, Domestic Work, and South Asian Migrant Women in Kuwait*.

Britt Halvorson. 2018. *Conversionary Sites: Transforming Medical Aid and Global Christianity from Madagascar to Minnesota*.

China Scherz. 2014. *Having People, Having Heart: Charity, Sustainable Development, and Problems of Dependence in Central Uganda*.

Cihan Tugal. 2017. *Caring for the Poor: Islamic and Christian Benevolence in a Liberal World*.

Darryl Li. 2019. *The Universal Enemy: Jihad, Empire, and the Challenge of Solidarity*.

Elizabeth Bucar. 2017. *Pious Fashion: How Muslim Women Dress*.

Erica Bornstein. 2003. *The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality and Economics in Zimbabwe*.

Faegheh Shirazi. 2016. *Brand Islam: The Marketing and Commodification of Piety*.

James Howard Smith. 2008. *Bewitching Development: Witchcraft and The Reinvention of Development in Neoliberal Kenya*.

Joanna Handlin Smith. 2009. *The Art of Doing Good: Charity in Late Ming China*.

Kate Bowler. 2018. *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel*.

Mona Atia. 2013. *Building a House in Heaven: Pious Neoliberalism and Islamic Charity in Egypt*.

Noah Salomon. 2018. *For Love of the Prophet: An Ethnography of Sudan's Islamic State*.

Omri Elisha. 2011. *Moral Ambition: Mobilization and Social Outreach in Evangelical Megachurches*.

Peter Brown. 2015. *The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity*.

Ruth Marshall. 2009. *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*.

Susan Friend Harding. 2001. *The Book of Jerry Falwell: Fundamentalist Language and Politics*.

Wael Hallaq. 2014. *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics, and Modernity's Moral Predicament*.