

GOD, MONEY AND TERROR

RELG 5559
Spring 2018

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Description

RELG 5559 is a graduate version of RELG 3559 and as such will have significantly increased requirements. Please read the syllabus carefully as there are a number of requirements that go beyond the ones set for the undergraduate version of this course. Please note that the “Grad Readings” will be on a separate Collab Site for RELG 5559.

RELG 5559 is designed to explore the interrelationship between religious belief and economic practices and how they manifest themselves in society. Money is central to this web of relations: it is a way human communities construct meaning and relationships, deal with power and obligation, and communicate what matters to them. Money has long been taken for granted or ignored in economic theory, and only in the last several decades has attention been devoted to money as a social phenomenon and element of culture. The purpose of our semester-long conversation is to get a sense of the latest research and theories about what money might be, why we use it in human communities, and how we employ it to make sense of our world and ourselves. We will also consider money's relationship to other ways of signaling what we find valuable and worthwhile as human communities, as well as ethical concerns about whether money is a sufficient, neutral, or possibly toxic means of structuring relationships and values.

The course will focus on particular issues that arise in and through the political use of religious charitable giving. Special attention will be paid to the practice of almsgiving and its various laudable, benign, and dangerous uses. In the first part of the course, we seek to understand what money is, how it interacts with moral categories like guilt and human value, and how it surreptitiously infuses meaning into seemingly benign transactions. In the second part, we will turn to the historical practice of religious charitable giving as a way to ground theoretical speculation on God and money in the lived reality of religious communities. In the final part, we will, with the analytic and historical background from parts one and two, investigate some of the controversial aspects of religious charitable giving, surveying how it is used as a means for recruiting financial resources to support violent action.

Class Format

This course combines lecture and seminar style discussion, and is centered on attentive reading of texts and in-depth conversation in a group setting. Generally speaking, the first

hour of class will be dedicated to lecture and the second to discussion. Students should come prepared to engage one another thoughtfully and respectfully. An effort has been made to keep weekly readings to a manageable length to ensure that you are able to read the selections with care in their entirety. We will analyze these texts closely in class, so thorough reading beforehand is essential. The instructor will provide lectures where background information is helpful in assessing the readings. The discussion will also be driven by student presentations, responses, and questions that emerge from the readings and during class.

Graduate students will be expected to meet as a group with the Instructor once a month to discuss the extra readings and any other aspects of the course that are unique to RELG 5559.

Assignments and Evaluation

Participation (10%)

Students should complete the assigned readings prior to class and come prepared to engage actively with one another. This means bringing your questions, comments, and concerns, and sharing them in class. Please arrive on time. Repeated tardiness as well as unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. Participation will be evaluated based on attendance, student questions and comments in class, and interaction with fellow students during group work.

Discussion Leadership and Moderation (10%)

Students will sign up for one class session where they will initiate discussion of a particular reading due that day. This means you will provide a short oral summary of the readings and pose 3-4 questions and/or themes for discussion. This should take approximately 10 minutes. Please provide a handout that includes summary points of the reading and a list of questions.

Graduate students will be expected to moderate one of these discussions. This requirement is in addition to the regular discussion leadership requirement.

Lead Author of Historical Case Study Group Report (20%)

Students will form into groups and report on a historical case or issue where religious charity has either created solidarity or fragmentation in a community. Graduate students will be required to take on the role as lead author of one case study report. This will include organizing, assigning, and guiding undergraduates in their specific research tasks. The graduate student will further be expected to compile, fact-check, and edit the final report that will be submitted to the Instructor. Further information to be distributed in class.

3 Analytic Papers (60%)

Over the course of the term students will develop their skills in written argumentation by writing three short analytic papers, each increasingly weighted in evaluation. Students will

stake out a position on a particular topic and develop an argument that includes a thesis, supporting steps in argument, giving evidence, and overcoming objections to one's position. This is a space to assert your voice in response to a matter and work on articulating it clearly and persuasively in writing. *Please submit in a doc/doc.x format to allow instructor to provide comments in the file.*

Paper 1 (15%, Due Week 5): Grad students will submit a 5-page analytic paper, responding to one sociological theory of money explored in class and the readings. The first page should provide a succinct summary of the theory of money being addressed. The remaining two pages are your critical assessment. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? Is the theory persuasive or not, and why? What evidence can you cite in support of your view? How might one object to your response and how would you respond to their objection to try to persuade them further?

Paper 2 (20%, Due Week 10): Grad students will submit a 7-page analytic paper responding to one of the historical case studies on religious charity. The first page should provide a succinct summary of the view being addressed. The remaining three pages are your critical response. Which sociological theory of money best accounts for the social dynamics of the episode under question? Is the author or speaker attempting to justify a specific view of money? What kinds of uses of money does the author or speaker evince? Is there a specific task or project the recruitment of money is supposed to support? Is this consonant with the author's more general outlook? What other historical data could you cite to complicate the case?

Paper 3 (25%, Due May 4th at 10am): Students will submit a 10-page analytic paper on the topic of their choosing related to the third section of the course that covers terror financing. Typically, this paper will cover either a contemporary or historical episode of which the relevant group(s)'s purpose and method of financial recruitment is identifiable. The first page should provide a succinct summary of the case and why it is a difficult case to analyze. The remaining four pages are your analysis of the case that draws upon relevant economic and religious data. You must have evidence in support of your analysis, and present possible objections and responses to those objections. Students are encouraged to discuss their paper with the instructor.

Electronics Policy

Laptops/tablets are permitted *only* for reading texts in PDF and taking notes in a word processing program. Browsing the internet or using email or messaging platforms is *expressly forbidden*. Please *turn off your wifi* while in class. Abuse of this policy will result in a laptop ban for the entire class. *No smartphone* usage is allowed.

Other Etiquette

Drinks are permitted but please no food in class.

Course Books for Purchase

Gary A. Anderson, *Charity: The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition*

Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*

Nigel Dodd, *The Social Life of Money*

David Graeber, *Debt: The First 5000 Years*

Loretta Napoleoni, *Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks*

Christopher Tyerman, *How to Plan a Crusade: Religious War in the High Middle Ages*

Additional readings made available as PDFs on Collab.

Introduction

Week 1: Introduction to course and overview of syllabus. Lecture on religious and economic theories that will be referenced and discussed over the course of the semester.

Grad Reading: Deirdre N. McCloskey, *The Rhetoric of Economics*, Chapter 1 (pp. 3-19) (on Collab); Kathryn Tanner, *Economy of Grace*, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-29) (on Collab); Robert Shiller, *Finance and the Good Society*, Part II (pp. 131-239)

Social Meaning of Money

Week 2: The Many Sides of Money

Readings: Dodd, Introduction (pp. 1-14); Geoffrey Ingham, "On the Underdevelopment of the 'Sociology of Money'" *Acta Sociologica* 41:1 (1998): 3-18 (on Collab)

Grad Reading: Marcel Hénaff, *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money, and Philosophy*, chapter 3 (pp. 77-99) (on Collab)

Week 3: Money as a Social Relation

Readings: Dodd, chapter 1: "Origins" (pp. 17-50); Carl Menger, "On the Origin of Money," *The Economic Journal* 2:6 (June, 1892): 239-255 (on Collab)

Grad Reading: Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money* (pp. 61-107) (on Collab)

Week 4: Money as Debt

Readings: Graeber, chapter 3: "Primordial Debts" (pp. 43-72); Michael Hudson, "The Archaeology of Money: Debt versus Barter Theories of Money's Origins" in L. Randall Wray, ed., *Credit and State Theories of Money: The Contributions of A. Mitchell Innes* (pp. 99-127) (on Collab)

Grad Reading: Marcel Hénaff, *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money, and Philosophy*, chapter 6 (pp. 202-241) (on Collab)

Week 5: Money as Quantified Guilt

Readings: Dodd, chapter 4: "Guilt" (pp. 136-165); Graeber, chapter 4: "Cruelty and Redemption" (pp. 73-88)

Grad Reading: McCloskey, Chapter 7: "The Unexamined Rhetoric of Economic Quantification" (pp. 100-111) (on Collab)

*****ANALYTIC PAPER #1 DUE*****

Religious Charity in Historical Perspective

Week 6: Biblical Foundations of Charity I

Reading: Anderson, Part One: "Charity as an Expression of Faith in God" (pp. 15-82); Ithamar Gruenwald, "Forms of Ritual Ethos in Ancient Israel: The Case of Sacred Economics" (pp. 207-240) (on Collab)

Grad Reading: Anderson, *Sin: A History*, Chapters 1-3 (3-41) (on Collab)

Week 7: Biblical Foundations of Charity II

Reading: Anderson, Part Two: "Charitable Deeds as Storable Commodities" (pp. 113-148, 182-189); Rodney Wilson, *Economics, Ethics and Religion*, Chapter 4 (pp. 115-131)

Grad Reading: Anderson, *Sin: A History*, Chapters 8-9 (pp. 111-152) (on Collab)

Week 8: Charity and Social Solidarity

Readings: John Chrysostom, "A Sermon on Almsgiving" (pp. 131-133); Augustine, *Sermon 36, Exposition of the Psalms 48(1)*; Tamara Sonn, "Islam and Economic Issues" (pp. 185-197)

Grad Reading: Augustine, *Exposition of the Psalm 51 and 32(3)*; Jonathan Teubner, "Between Pagans and Pelagians: Monetary Almsgiving and the Crisis of Unity in Augustine's Preaching, 410-420" [Draft Article] (on Collab)

Week 9: Charity and Violence

Readings: Pope Urban II, "Speech at Clermont" (on Collab); Bernard of Clairvaux, "Letters Promoting Second Crusade" (on Collab); Tyerman, Chapters 5-8 (pp. 127-227)

Grad Reading: Tyerman, Chapters 2-4 (29-123)

Week 10: Modern Legacies of Religious Charity

Readings: John L. Esposito, "Islamic Economics" (pp. 199-204); Nicole Aschoff, "The Gates Foundation and the Rise of Philanthrocapitalism" (pp. 107-143) (on Collab)

Grad Reading: Ernst A. Lewin, "The Finances of the Vatican Bank," *Contemporary History* 18:2 (1983): 185-204 (on Collab)

*****ANALYTIC PAPER #2 DUE*****

Charity and Violence

Week 11: Economics of Religious Terrorism

Readings: Berman, chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-59); Napoleoni, chapters 2-4 (pp. 13-62)

Grad Reading: COE Mutual Evaluation: Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism. MONEYVAL, July 2, 2012.

Historical Case Study Group Report #1 (Economic/Business Focus)

Week 12: Organization and Promotion of Violence

Readings: Berman, chapter 5: "The Hamas Model" (pp. 121-155); Napoleoni, chapters 7-11 (pp. 89-140)

Grad Reading: Napoleoni, Chapters 12-18 (pp. 143-224)

Historical Case Study Group Report #3 (Organization/Operational Focus)

Week 13: Charity and Sacrifice

Readings: Anderson, chapter 11: "Sacrificial Giving" (pp. 149-161); Berman, chapters 3-4 (pp. 61-119)

Grad Reading: Berman, Chapter 6: "Why Suicide Attacks?" (pp. 157-182)

Historical Case Study Group Report #2 (Religious/Theological Focus)

Week 14: Charity and Violence: A New Framework

Readings: No assigned readings for final class; be prepared to offer a 5-minute description of your final paper in the style of a formal "briefing." Grad Students will be given 10 minutes for presentations.

*****ANALYTIC PAPER #3 DUE ON MAY 4th AT 10AM*****