

Department of Religious Studies

Spring 2019 Graduate Courses

RELS 5000-091

Conversion, Deconversion, and Change

T 5:30-8:15/McCloud

(Cross-Listed with RELS 4000, AMST 4050 & MALS 3050)

This course combines a selection of first-person accounts and academic theories to explore the subject of religious change. What does it mean to “convert” to a religion? What are a few of the myriad ways one might understand personal religious narratives? How have social theorists tried to account for both religious change and stasis?

- Cultural or Textual Analysis



RELS 5000-002

Religiosity and (Post) Colonial Encounters in Africa

TR 1:00-2:15/Letha Victor

(Cross-Listed with RELS 4000, ANTH 5090, ANTH 4020, AFRS 4050, AFRS 5000)

This seminar course offers a historically and ethnographically-situated overview of contemporary issues in African religiosity. Topics will include missionization; religion in pan-African

nationalism and decolonization movements; debates over monotheism and Traditional African Religion; the shifting parameters of Christianity and Islam; sorcery, witchcraft, conspiracy; divination and mediumship; human encounters with ghosts and spirits; medicine and healing; and more.

- Historical or Cultural Analysis



A JEW OF COLCHESTER, FROM A FOREST ROLL.
"Record Office."

RELS 5000-003

Devilish Strange: The Figure of the Jew in Western Traditions

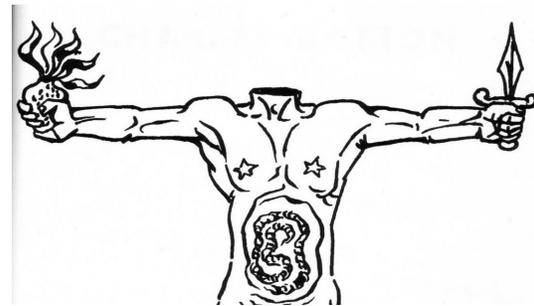
TR 2:30-5:15/Barbara Thiede

(Cross-Listed with RELS 4000)

For philosophers and clergy, playwrights and politicians, the Jew has been a subject serving multiple ideological and polemical purposes. Why did cultures around the world adopt the figure of the Jew to address theological, social, political, and economic concerns that have, in actuality,

little to do with or nothing to do with Jews or Judaism? This course will address how the figure of the Jew took (and takes) shape in the western world.

- Historical Analysis



RELS 6671-090

Georges Bataille's College of Sociology

Monday 5:30-8:15/Kent Brintnall

(Cross-Listed with SOCY 6090, PHIL 6050 & MALS 6000)

Facing the 1930s collapse of capitalist markets, waning legitimacy of democracies in Europe, rise of fascism, limitations of Marxist agitation, and revelation of Stalinist terror, George Bataille's College of Sociology attempted to think politics and the social anew relying on senses of community and the sacred found in the work of French sociologists Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss. Although short-lived, the College has on-going relevance for questions about the appeal of fascism and totalitarianism, the intractability of violence, the cultural operation of religion, the political relevance of art, and the constitution of the self in relation to the social. The seminar will give close attention to primary texts produced by the College's members; all texts will be read in English translation. This seminar should be of interest to students in religious studies, sociology, anthropology, history, literary studies, French studies, ethics, political theory, and art history. - Cultural or Historical Analysis

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