PART I 2018-19

Paper A1a - Elementary Hebrew
Paper A1c - Elementary Sanskrit
Paper A1d - Elementary Qur’anic Arabic
Paper A2 - David: Israel’s Greatest Hero?
Paper A3 - Jesus and the Origins of the Gospels
Paper A4 - Christianity and the Transformation of Culture: English Christianity Before and After the Reformation
Paper A5 - The Question of God [BTh12]
Paper A6 - Understanding Contemporary Religion
* Paper A7 - World Religions in Comparative Perspective
Paper A8 - Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

*All Group A Papers are examined by 3-hour examination except Paper A7.
PAPER A1A – ELEMENTARY HEBREW

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Peter Williams

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will contain:
1. Questions on Hebrew grammar
2. Passages for translation, linguistic comment, and retranslation from a portion or portions of the Old Testament prescribed by the Faculty Board.
3. Questions requiring comparison and comment on different English translations of a portion or portions of the Old Testament prescribed by the Faculty Board.

Prescribed Texts:
Genesis 37; 40-43; 45.

The teaching grammar used in this course is Thomas O. Lambdin, Introduction to Biblical Hebrew (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1973). Students may also wish to purchase H.G.M. Williamson, Annotated Key to Lambdin’s Introduction to Biblical Hebrew (JSOT Press: Sheffield, 1987), which has been reprinted numerous times under the imprints of Sheffield Academic Press, Continuum and T&T Clark. Advice on the Hebrew text of the set texts will be given in the Lent Term.

Course Description
The Elementary Hebrew course falls into two parts, which together are intended to familiarise students with the basic grammatical forms (especially nouns and verbs) and vocabulary of Hebrew and to enable them to read and understand a straightforward prose narrative text from the Bible, with and without vocalisation. To improve their grasp of the language students are given exercises in translation from English into Hebrew, but the main emphasis falls on reading Hebrew text and translating it into English. During the Michaelmas and most of the Lent Term students study Hebrew grammar using the textbook by Thomas O. Lambdin, supplemented with material provided by the class teacher. In the last week or so of the Lent Term work is begun on the Genesis set text and this continues for the first four weeks of the Easter Term. In the Easter term supervision work is needed to practise the exercises that will be tested in the examination.

Form and Conduct of Examination
Candidates will be required to translate two out of three passages from the Hebrew set text, parsing and giving linguistic comment where instructed, to compare different English translations of two passages from the set text, to answer a grammatical question, and to translate three sentences from English into Hebrew (square script not modern cursive). The grammatical question will require candidates to write out certain forms of (a) a verb and (b) a noun. The sentences for
translation will be designed to test knowledge of common grammatical constructions and will be based on the prescribed text. The translation from Hebrew, parsing and comment will carry 60% of the marks, the comparison of translations 20%, the grammatical question 10%, and the translation into Hebrew 10%.

**Supervisions**

Supervisions are recommended in term time to ensure students are keeping up with learning the grammar, amounting to six hours in total. Revision and exam practice in the Easter term are essential.
PAPER A1B – ELEMENTARY NEW TESTAMENT GREEK [BTh4]

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Jane McLarty

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will contain passages for translation, and for grammatical comment, from one or more portions of the New Testament which the Board shall from time to time prescribe. Copies of a Greek lexicon will be available in the examination for those who wish to make use of them.

Prescribed Text:
John 9-12.

Course Description
At the beginning of term, students take a short test to enable them to be grouped into classes according to their experience of language learning and familiarity with grammatical concepts, and are then grouped into three classes according to ability. The classes meet three times a week for an hour.

Broadly speaking, the Michaelmas term is devoted to the study of Greek grammar, while study of the set text is begun during the Lent term.

Aims
The aim of paper A1b is to equip students with a working knowledge of New Testament Greek, that will both support their study of Christian theology, and serve as a foundation for further language work if students choose to continue studying Greek in subsequent years.

Learning Outcomes
The objectives of the course are: to introduce students to the fundamentals of Greek grammar by working through a beginners’ textbook; to teach students how to use this knowledge to translate a text, by reading in class a set text from the New Testament.

Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination for this paper will contain:
1. Several passages for translation and for grammatical comment from the prescribed chapters. Candidates will be required to translate the passages into good English, and comment on the grammatical form and function of the words and phrases underlined;
2. Unseen passages for translation;
3. A question asking candidates to assess alternative translations of several short passages taken from the prescribed chapters.
Candidates will be required to answer all three questions.

**Supervisions:**

Revision and exam practice in the Easter term are essential, but some supervisions can be given in term time to ensure students are keeping up with learning the grammar. A total of four to six hours for the year should be sufficient.
PAPER A1C – ELEMENTARY SANSKRIT

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Eivind Kahrs

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will contain:
1. questions on Sanskrit grammar
2. passages for translation, linguistic and exegetical comment, from a portion or portions of the Hindu and Buddhist scriptures prescribed by the Faculty Board.

Prescribed Texts
Mahābhārata, 2.66-68 (BORI edn., Poona, 1933-66);
Hitopadeśa, extracts 2-11 (C.R.Lanman, A Sanskrit Reader, pp.16-35);

Form and Conduct of Examination
Candidates will be required to translate three passages from the prescribed texts from Sanskrit into English, to answer questions on their language and content, and to translate one unseen passage from Sanskrit to English.

TO FIND OUT ABOUT THIS COURSE CONTACT: DR EIVIND KAHRS (egk1000@cam.ac.uk)
PAPER A1D – ELEMENTARY QUR'ANIC ARABIC

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Timothy Winter

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will contain:
1. questions on Arabic grammar
2. passages for translation, linguistic and exegetical comment

from a portion or portions of the Qur’an, the Hadith, and early Islamic theological literature prescribed by the Faculty Board.

Prescribed Texts

Aims
This paper aims to test knowledge of the Arabic grammatical features and vocabulary most commonly encountered in the Qur’an and other early Islamic religious literature. The paper contains passages for pointing, for translation, and for linguistic and exegetical comment from portions of the Qur’an, the Hadith, and an Ash’ari theological text. Candidates are also required to translate passages from English into Arabic.

Form and Conduct of Examination
Candidates will be required to translate four passages from Arabic, giving linguistic comment where instructed, and to translate four sentences from English into Arabic. The sentences for translation will be designed to test knowledge of common grammatical forms.

Teaching
During the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, teaching is based on the introductory grammar by Haywood and Nahmad as a reference tool, and a collection of graded materials materials from the Qur’an, Hadith and Sira literature, drawing students’ attention to literary features such as cohesion and iltifat. In the four teaching weeks of the Easter Term classes, students are taken through the set texts. Three 1.5 hour classes are held each week.
PAPER A2 – DAVID: ISRAEL’S GREATEST HERO?

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Nathan MacDonald

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will provide an introduction to the critical study of the Old Testament literature, history and religion, focussing on the figure of David. Texts for special study will be prescribed by the Faculty Board.

Prescribed Texts
1 Samuel 16–19; 21–23; 28; 2 Samuel 1–2; 5–7; 9; 11–12; 21–24.

Aims
The set texts and teaching of the course will provide an introduction to the Old Testament and the different ways in which it may be read and analysed. In particular the course aims to:

• introduce students to the genres of narrative and poetry
• orientate students to some of the Old Testament’s historiographical texts, and the issues in interpreting them.
• introduce the main ways in which the Old Testament text may be analysed. Although technical language of methodology will be used rather sparingly, the range of methods which may be introduced in a rudimentary manner include textual criticism, comparison to ANE texts, feminist criticism, historical criticism, narrative criticism, form criticism, archaeology, tradition criticism, and inner-biblical interpretation.
• examine some of the religious and theological ideas in the Old Testament.
• explore some of the challenges in dealing with biblical texts and some of the dynamics of textual change and reinterpretation.

Form and Conduct of Examinations
This paper will be assessed by a three-hour written examination. Candidates will be required to provide an exegesis of two out of five passages from the prescribed texts, and answer three questions from sections A and B with at least one question from each section. Section A will consist of six questions on the literature, sources and themes of the story of David in 1–2 Samuel. Section B will consist of six questions on both the archaeological, historical, social and religious context of the story of David and on the development of the David tradition in the rest of the Old Testament.
Lecture Outline

**Michaelmas Term: David in Story and History**
- Introduction: Who is the Real David? And, How did the Bible come to us: David and Goliath
- David’s Time and Place
- How to Read Biblical Narrative: The Ark Narrative
- David’s Narrators: The History of David’s Rise
- David’s Narrators: The Succession Narrative
- David’s Narrators: The Appendix to David’s Life
- David and Archaeology
- Israelite Religious Practice as portrayed in 1–2 Samuel

**Lent Term: David as Ideal**
- The Rise of Israel’s Monarchy and its Assessment by Biblical Writers
- David’s House: The Election of David and Zion
- The Davidic Ideal in the History of the Divided Kingdoms
- The Chronicler’s David
- How to Read Biblical Poetry: 2 Sam 1; 22–23
- David the Poet
- The Davidic Ideal in Isaiah
- The Davidic Ideal in Later Prophecy

**Easter Term: Controversial David**
- Was There a Historical David?
- Was David a Murdering Usurper?
- Did Elhanan Kill Goliath?
- Was Jonathan David’s Lover?

**Indicative Bibliography**


PAPER A3 – JESUS AND THE ORIGINS OF THE GOSPELS

Paper Coordinator:
Dr James Carleton Paget

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will, until further notice, be entitled 'Jesus and the origins of the Gospel'. It will be concerned with central issues (arising from the primary sources and critical scholarship) in the study of the Gospels and the Historical Jesus. The Board may also prescribe a particular text or texts for special study.

Prescribed Texts
John 1.1–18.

Aims
- To provide an introduction to the study of the New Testament by focusing on its central figure, Jesus, and the texts which most directly concern his life (the Gospels). In the process students will develop exegetical skills and become familiar with a variety of critical approaches to New Testament texts
- To enable students to engage in the close study and critical analysis of relevant primary sources
- To help students understand and evaluate current scholarship and debates about main issues concerning the Gospels and the Historical Jesus within the field of New Testament study.

Learning Outcomes
As a result of taking this course, students should attain the following:
(a) Knowledge of:
- the main issues involved in studying the Gospels and the Historical Jesus
- the major textual evidence for its study, and the conclusions that can be drawn from this
- the principal ideas and theoretical frameworks that underpin current understanding of the examination of the subject
• the methods and tools of critical New Testament scholarship

(b) The Ability to:
• identify major issues and problems inherent in the study of the Gospels and the Historical Jesus
• evaluate the difficult and conflicting nature of the primary sources, and appraise the value of the claims and implications involved
• distinguish and assess critically conflicting interpretations of formative Christianity in secondary literature
• develop generic transferable skills of synthesis, analysis, critical reasoning, and communication

Course Description
The paper will involve detailed investigation of main themes and issues involved in the study of the Gospels and the Historical Jesus. The main topics that will be dealt with are: Evidence for the Historical Jesus: Gospels and Other Sources, with Assessment of their Nature and Value and methods of study; the Context of First-Century Palestine; Jesus and John the Baptist; Jesus’ Proclamation of the Kingdom; Miracles and Exorcism; Parables; Ethical Teaching; Jesus and the Jewish Law; Jesus and the Authorities; Jesus’ Self-Understanding; Trial and Crucifixion; Resurrection.

Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination will take the form of a three hour written paper which will consist of two sections. Candidates will be required to attempt one question in Section A and two further questions from Section B. Section A will consist of two questions. Question one will contain four passages for comment of which candidates will be required to answer three. Question two will consist of two parallel synoptic passages from set texts for comment. Section B will contain at least eight essay-type questions, of which candidates will be required to attempt two.

Teaching
Teaching for the course will be by means of 16 one-hour lectures, and 8 one-hour classes. The classes will be devoted to study of the Set Text.

Supervisions
Suggested supervision essay topics and titles will be made available for the benefit of students and potential supervisors, and specific bibliographies will be provided with each of these.

Bibliography and Reference Works
M Bockmuehl, This Jesus, T & T Clark 1994.

E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, Allen Lane 1993.
PAPER A4 - CHRISTIANITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURE

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Richard Rex

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will introduce students to the history of Christianity by considering key periods and issues in the interaction of Christianity with the culture in which it is set. The topic of the paper will be announced annually by the Faculty Board. The topic is **English Christianity Before and After the Reformation**.

Prescribed Texts
There will be no set texts for this paper. There will be required readings for the classes, and these will be announced by the start of the Michaelmas Term each year.

Aims
This paper aims to introduce students to the study of the history of Christianity and to the methods of historical study through a relatively detailed investigation of Christianity in England before, during, and after the English Reformation; and to illustrate the role religion can play in society and the cultural impact and implications of religious change.

Learning outcomes
On completing this course, students should have acquired knowledge of the religious culture of late medieval English Christianity and of the radical transformations wrought within that culture by the Reformation in the sixteenth century. They should in addition have some understanding of how claims about the past are based on historical sources (including non-written sources), of some of the difficulties met in interpreting sources, and of the differences between the interpretations of the past offered by different historians.

In particular, they should have knowledge of:
- The nature of, and differences between, the beliefs and practices of English Christianity before and after the Reformation
- The key events in the English Reformation until the reign of Elizabeth I
- The variety of sources available for the study of religion in the period
- The main points at issue between historians in interpreting the history of Christianity in England during this period

They should also have the ability to:
- Identify and summarise the essential features of some of the historical events and processes covered in this paper
- Evaluate sources and to assess their strengths and weaknesses
• Assess differing historical interpretations in the light of evidence
• Synthesise and analyse a range of materials in order to produce and present in an ordered and effective way an account of or answer to problems or questions

Form and Conduct of Examination
This paper will be assessed by a three-hour written examination. The examination will be in two sections. Candidates will be expected to spend two hours on Section A and an hour on Section B. The sections are designed respectively to test knowledge of issues, sources, and historiography; and the ability to write an analytical essay on the basis of that knowledge.

Teaching
This course will be taught by 16 hours of lectures (weekly, in Michaelmas and Lent terms), 8 hours of Faculty classes (weekly, through Lent term) in addition to 5 or 6 hours of college group supervisions, besides revision supervisions as Directors of Studies see fit.
PAPER A5 – THE QUESTION OF GOD [BTh12]  
Paper Coordinator: Prof Ian A. McFarland

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will introduce some of the major themes and disciplines of Christian theology through a focus on God, considered both as a theological topic in itself and in relationship to all that is not God, including the world (the doctrine of creation) and evil (the problem of theodicy). The Faculty Board may from time to time prescribe texts for special study.

Prescribed Texts
There are no prescribed texts for this paper but a list of recommended readings will be available on the Faculty website from the end of full Easter Term.

Course Description
As theology means ‘talk about God’, an introduction to the discipline will naturally introduce students to the basic parameters of Christian God-talk. The course accomplishes this end by examining the topic of God from three different perspectives, corresponding to the three sections into which the course is organised. Each section seeks to give clarity to what Christians mean by ‘God’ by juxtaposing God with that which is not God, as follows: 1) the meaning of the claim that there is a God, in dialogue with various objections to this claim (i.e., the defense of talk about God over against the assertion that there is not a God); 2) God’s relationship with the world (i.e., everything that is not God, but is nevertheless from God); and 3) God’s relationship with evil (i.e., everything that is not God and is not from God).


Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination will consist of a three-hour written paper, with questions grouped in three sections, corresponding to the three sections of the course. Candidates will be required to answer three questions from a choice of at least twelve questions, and at least one question from each of the three sections of the exam.

Teaching
As noted above, the course is organised into three sections of lectures, which
take place in the Michaelmas and Lent terms. Please note that in Michaelmas there will be two lectures scheduled per week, and in Lent one lecture per week.

The sequence of three units is bracketed by an introduction and conclusion, each consisting of a single one-hour lecture. The first unit consists of eight one-hour lectures, and the second and third units of seven one-hour lectures. Within each unit, a variety of texts are studied and the contemporary importance for Christian theology of the diverse issues considered is explored.

In 2016-17 the curriculum includes the following units:
Introduction – An Introduction to Theology as a Field of Study
Section 1 – God as a Question
Section 2 – God and the World: The Question of Creation
Section 3 – God and Evil: The Question of Theodicy
Conclusion – Reflections on Theology, Belief, and Disbelief

Aims
The paper is designed to help students consider theological questions through exploration of the concept of God. In particular the paper aims to:
- give students confidence in approaching classical theological texts and questions
- introduce different genres of theological texts: e.g. scriptural, devotional, hagiographical, academic
- help students understand and evaluate critically current scholarship on these texts
- show the interlocking nature of different doctrinal loci in Christian theology
- introduce students to reflection upon the nature of theological method
- show students how theologians engage with objections to traditional Christian claims raised both inside and outside the church

Learning Outcomes
As a result of taking this course, students should attain:
(a) Knowledge of:
- the distinction between apophatic and cataphatic theology
- objections to knowledge of God raised by F. Nietzsche, S. Freud, and D. Hampson
- F. Schleiermacher’s and K. Barth’s accounts of knowledge of God
- the doctrine of creation from nothing
- the doctrine of providence, including theories of divine action in the world
- the relationship between the doctrines of creation and incarnation
- the compatibility of creation from nothing with contemporary scientific cosmology
the compatibility of creation from nothing with contemporary evolutionary biology
theological objections to creation from nothing raised by process thought
the so-called Epicurean trilemma
the understanding of evil as privatio boni and theodicy in the Augustinian tradition
theodicy in process theology
debates over the appropriateness of theodical attempts to ‘justify the ways of God’

(b) The ability to:
evaluate the arguments in classic theological texts
distinguish and assess critically conflicting interpretations of these texts in secondary literature
develop generic transferable skills of synthesis, analysis, critical reasoning, and communication

Texts Prescribed for Special Study

Introduction
Lecture 1: Theology and Accountability

Section 1: God as a Question
Lecture 1: Is God Real?
John Updike, Roger’s Version, chs. 1-3, 5

Lecture 2: Suspicion of God 1 - God as Bad
Science Sigmund Freud, The Future of an Illusion

Lecture 3: Suspicion of God 2 - God as a Means of Social Control
Friedrich Nietzsche, The Genealogy of Morals, First Essay

Lecture 4: Suspicion of God 3 - God and the Problem of Authority
Daphne Hampson, ‘On Autonomy and Heteronomy’, in Swallowing a Fishbone: Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity

Lecture 5: The Difficulty of Knowing God
Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I.3-4
Lecture 6: The Difficulty of Talking About God
Dionysius the Areopagite, The Divine Names, chs. 1, 5-7 and The Mystical Theology
Lecture 7: Encountering God 1: Revelation and Human Experience
Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion, Speeches 1-2

Lecture 8: Encountering God 2: Revelation as Divine Address
Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, Introduction

Section 2 – God and the World: The Question of Creation
Lecture 1: The Challenge of Creation
Genesis 1:1-2:3
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11, 3:1-22
Annie Dillard, Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, chs. 1-2, 10

Lecture 2: Creation from Nothing 1 – God as Transcendent Source
Augustine, Confessions, Book 11.1-16
Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 2.16-19, 21-25, 38

Lecture 3: Creation from Nothing 2 - Providence
Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love, chs. 5-11, 32, 40-41, 86

Lecture 4: Creation and Christology 1 - Chalcedonian
Thought Kathryn Tanner, Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity, ch. 1

Lecture 5: Creation and Christology 2 - Process Thought
Catherine Keller, On the Mystery: Discovering God in Process, chs. 3, 7

Lecture 6: Creation and Science 1 - Cosmology
Wolfhart Pannenberg, An Introduction to Systematic Theology, ch. 3

Lecture 7: Creation and Science 2 - Evolutionary Theory
Daniel Dennett, Darwin’s Dangerous Idea, chs. 1-3

Section 3 – God and Evil: The Question of Theodicy
Lecture 1: The Problem of Evil
Proverbs 1: 1-19
Job 1:6-2:10

Lecture 2: Locating Evil 1 – Personal Sin
Origen, On First Principles, Book 1
Augustine, *The City of God*, Book 14

Lecture 3: Locating Evil 2 – Superhuman Forces  
Walter Rauschenbush, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, chs. 4-9

Lecture 4: Efforts at Theodicy 1 - God Permits Evil  

Lecture 5: Efforts at Theodicy 2 - God Resists Evil  
Karl Barth, ‘God and Nothingness’, in *Church Dogmatics*, III/3, §50 (large print only)

Lecture 6: Efforts at Theodicy 3 - God Maximises the Good  
David Ray Griffin, *God, Power, & Evil: A Process Theodicy*, ch. 18

Lecture 7: Is Theodicy Worth the Effort?  
Rowan Williams, ‘Redeeming Sorrows: Marilyn McCord Adams and the Defeat of Evil’, in *Wrestling with Angels*

**Conclusion**

Lecture 1: Belief and Disbelief: Theological Accountability Revisited  

**Supplementary Reading:**

**Introduction**


**Section 1**


**Section 2**


Drees, Willem B. *Beyond the Big Bang: Quantum Cosmologies and God*.


**Section 3**


Cone, James H. *The Spirituals and the Blues*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1972, ch. 4


PAPER A6 – UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY RELIGION

Paper Coordinator:
TBA

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will introduce students to the ways in which social scientists analyse and account for religion as a social force in the contemporary world, including the interactions of religious life with social, political, familial, national and global structures.

Aims and Learning Outcomes
In particular,

- To enable students to acquire a broad familiarity with key theoretical debates surrounding the social scientific study of religion.
- To develop students’ skills in detailed, analytical reading of case-studies and ethnographies.
- To encourage students to assess and interpret empirical evidence in the light of theoretical scholarship.

This introduction to the the social scientific study of religion will provide a foundation for the study of religion papers in the second (B7) and third years (C7 and D2(e)).

Prescribed Texts
There are no prescribed texts for this paper.

Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination will consist of a three-hour written paper. Candidates will be required to answer four questions from a choice of at least ten.

Schedule of Lectures:
Lectures will be given by Tim Jenkins (TJ), Duncan Dormor (DD), Beth Singler (BS), and Chris Moses (CM)

Term 1 – Introduction to Key Theorists and Debates in the Study of Religion

1. Approaching the Subject (TJ): This lecture will introduce students to the key aims and objectives of the course, emphasizing the importance of case studies and briefly outlining the relation between the content covered in Terms 1 and 2.

2. Sacred and Profane (TJ): Drawing upon the French sociologist Emile Durkheim’s distinction between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘profane’, this lecture will outline a key
distinction in the social scientific study of religion, and discuss a case study in the light of Durkheim’s theory.

3. **Salvation and Work (TJ):** Max Weber’s discussion of ascetic Protestantism and its relation to Western market-driven capitalism has shaped the sociological study of religion. This lecture explores the relationship between ‘salvation’ and ‘work’ in this classic monograph.

4. **Symbol and Ritual in Studying Religion (DD):** An important change in the 1960s saw the introduction of language as a model for human meaning making. This lecture will look in particular at the work of two British anthropologists of religion, Victor Turner and Mary Douglas.

5. **Symbol and Power (DD):** A more recent debate between Clifford Geertz and Talal Asad has challenged the understanding of religion in terms of symbols and looked instead to ideas of power. This lecture will consider this debate and look at some ethnographic studies that adopt either position.

6. **Colonialism and Comparative Religion (CM):** Drawing upon Edward Said’s influential book, Orientalism, this lecture examines theories positing the emergence of religion on colonial frontier, and discusses their relevance for scholarship on religions in the post-colonial period.

7. **The Anthropology of Islam (CM):** This lecture explores how anthropologists have approached and conceptualised Islam, addressing issues such as epistemology, power, tradition, universalism, and context. It discusses some of the major theoretical debates within the discipline, as well as thematic matters in case studies.

8. **The Anthropology of Christianity (CM):** A recent scholarly field, this area aims to give sharper intellectual organization to a spread of empirical enquiries about contemporary Christianity that are both cognate (in that closely related thematic issues keep cropping up within it), and also disparate (in that diverse local concerns, typical of anthropology, clutter the foreground).

**Term 2 – Introduction to Key Topics and Themes in the Study of Religion through some contemporary texts**

9. **Secularisation (DD):** The notion that faith has retreated from the public sphere has shaped the study of contemporary religion; a recent scholarship has called this approach into question by pointing to the continued influence of religious belief, and the variety of ways this interacts with so-called secular thought.

11. Political Religion (CM): How do religious actors become political actors, affecting matters such as lawmaking, policy, and everyday moral norms? This lecture examines the relationships between religion and politics, looking at expressions of political religion in the arenas of the state, political processes, and the public sphere, as well as the forms of and strategies adopted by religious actors.

12. Body and Mind (BS): We will examine examples of a well-established tradition that seeks to integrate mindfulness into understandings of the material world, aiming at healings, communication with other minds, and even travel to other planets.

13. Religious Improvisation (BS): There is a long tradition of new religious movements, both with their own originality and with certain recurrent features and patterns. We will consider examples from the contemporary period.

14. Religion and Technology: Media (BS): Innovative forms media have had a significant impact upon how religion is practiced. This lecture examines contemporary media practices and religious adherence in Egypt, the Congo and Mali.

15. Religion and Technology: Artificial Intelligence (BS): The quest for Artificial Intelligence is stretching our contemporary technological know-how to its very limits. In attempting to develop ‘other’ intelligences technologists are opening up philosophical questions about personhood that they are answering through existing metaphysical lexicons and the creation of new religious forms. This lecture considers the eschatological shapes of these answers and their continuities with other historical movements.

16. Tying it together (TJ): The final lecture of this course will emphasize the shared ideas and concepts that link the theoretical material dealt with in Term 1, to the ethnographic case studies discussed in Term 2.

Bibliography by Topic

1. Approaching the Subject

2. Durkheim

3. Weber

4. Symbol and Ritual

5. Symbol and Power
Clifford Geertz, ‘Religion as a Cultural System’ in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, New York, 1973)

6. Colonialism and Comparative Religion

7. The Anthropology of Islam

8. The Anthropology of Christianity

9. Secularisation

10. Religion and Gender

11. Political Religion
Mathijs Pelkmans, *Defending the border: identity, religion, and modernity in the Republic of Georgia* (Cornell University Press, 2006)
12. Body and Mind
Vita Skultans, *Intimacy and Ritual. A study of Spiritualism, mediums and groups* (RKP, 1974)

13. Religious Improvisations

14. Religion and Technology: Media

15. Religion and Technology: Artificial Intelligence

16. Tying it all together
PAPER A7 - WORLD RELIGIONS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Ankur Barua

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will approach at least two religions through the study of a topic or topics specified annually by the Faculty Board, in the context of the history, beliefs and practices of the main religions of the world. This paper shall be examined by the submission of two essays in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 20.

Prescribed Texts
There are no prescribed texts for this paper.

Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination will consist of the submission of two essays, each of not more than 3,000 words in length, on topics chosen by the candidates from a list approved by the Board, in accordance with the provision of Regulation 20.

Teaching
Sample lecture and class topics include:
1. Introduction
2. The Insider-Outsider Problem
3. Truth and Dialogue
5. The Law
6. The Law of Judaism
7. Topics in Jewish Law
8. Judaism and the Religious Other
9. Yehoshua, Journey to the End of the Millennium
10. Topics in Jewish Law
11. Feldman, ’The Mitzvah of Procreation’
12. The Roots of Muslim Law
13. Selimovic, Dervish and Death
14. The Branches of Muslim Law
15. Muslim theologians on other faiths
16. Neusner, Comparing religions through law
17. Sufis on other faiths
18. Approaches to Hinduism
19. Rahula: What the Buddha Taught (2 classes)
20. Approaches to Buddhism
21. Topics in the Dharma
22. A Story with a Tail
23. Indian Religions and the Other
PAPER A8 - PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND ETHICS

Paper Coordinator:
Dr Douglas Hedley

Supplementary Regulation
This paper will introduce students to the philosophy of religion and to ethics. The Faculty Board may from time to time prescribe texts for special study.

Prescribed Texts
There are no prescribed texts for this paper but a list of recommended readings will be available on the Faculty website from the end of Full Easter Term.

Aims
This course aims to introduce students to the main themes of philosophy of religion and ethics and to provide a foundation for the papers in philosophical theology and meta-ethics in Parts IIa and IIb of the Tripos (specifically papers B10, B11 and C11) and the MPhil. The paper is designed to introduce techniques of engagement in critical analysis of primary sources and to help students in the identification and understanding of fundamental problems associated with the study of philosophy of religion and ethics. The paper’s aims include helping students to understand and evaluate current scholarship and debates about the main issues of philosophy of religion and ethics.

Objectives
As a result of taking this course, students should attain the following objectives: (a) knowledge of central questions in philosophy of religion and ethics; familiarity with primary sources within the canon of philosophy of religion and ethics; and principal ideas and frameworks which underpin current scholarly debates in the field; (b) the ability to identify major problems in the study of philosophy of religion and ethics; evaluate the complex and often abstruse nature of primary sources, and appraise the various implications which arise for the field; distinguish and critically assess conflicting interpretations within secondary literature; develop generic transferable skills of analysis, critical reasoning, synthesis and communication.

Form and Conduct of Examination
The examination will consist of a three-hour written examination. The paper will consist of two sections, A and B. Section A will contain eight questions in the philosophy of religion; Section B will contain eight questions in ethics. Candidates will be required to answer four questions, two from each section.
Teaching

The course is divided into two sections, the first focusing upon philosophy of religion and the second upon ethics. The first section of the paper is aimed to introduce first year undergraduates to major themes and problems for language, knowledge and being which arise at the intersection between philosophy and theology. The second section is designed to introduce students to the main ethical positions, from Joseph Butler, to moral sense theory, deontology and Kierkegaard’s “teleological suspension” of the ethical. Although the two sections of the paper are taught separately, students will be encouraged to draw insights from both sections of the paper to bear upon one another.

The course will be taught by a combination of 16 lectures and about 6 supervisions. The lectures will take place on a weekly basis in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms (times to be announced) at the Faculty of Divinity, West Road.

The lectures are aimed to introduce the major themes of the course and explore their implications, and will refer to the recommended texts and certain additional related texts. Your Director of Studies will organise about six supervisions to take place during the Michaelmas and/or Lent Terms.