

DME 946

Religious Presuppositions

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DME 946: RELIGIOUS PRESUPPOSITIONS

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Summer, 1996: August 13 - 22 (TWR~~F~~/TWR~~F~~) 8:15 - 12:00 noon**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this course is to examine the presuppositions underlying various theories of religion. This requires an examination of the nature of worldviews that underlie these theories. Current models of religion will be examined to see how they have influenced Christian thought, and what they can contribute to the field of missiology. The course will focus particularly on the theories of religion that have emerged in the social sciences.

The central questions in the course are:

1. What is the nature of religion, and how can we best understand it?
2. How does religion relate to other areas of culture - specifically to magic and science?
3. What are some of the current theories of religion, and what contributions have/can they make to missiology?

READINGS

The major texts are:

- Morris, Brian. 1987. Anthropological Studies of Religion: An Introductory Text. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. (textbook for the course). pp. 1-90.
- Malefijt, Annemarie de Waal. 1974. Images of Man: A History of Anthropological Thought. N.Y.: Alfred Knopf. (out of print: copies on reserve in main library).

Supplementary reference works on reserve in the library:

- Voget, Fred W. A History of Ethnography.
- Harris, Marvin. The Rise of Anthropological Theory.
- Lessa, W. A. and E. Z. Vogt. 1979. Reader in Comparative Religion. 4th ed.
- Sharpe, Eric J. 1975. Comparative Religion: A History.
- Stott, J. R. W. and Robert Coote, 1980. Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Choose one major contemporary social science theory from those listed below. **Check with the Ph.D. I.C.S. office in selecting your theory and person(s) so that we get a good coverage of different theories in class.** If two or three wish to work on the same theory, do so as a team.

Do a literature search on the theory, and on one or two of the key proponents of that theory, Using the computer data files, library indexes, citation index and other search mechanisms. Bring

to class at least sixty bibliographical references on the theory/persons, together with brief abstracts if possible. Xerox what you find to be the ten most important of these references for discussion in class. Examine the theoretical presuppositions underlying this theory and persons. Then evaluate the impact this theory has made or can make on missiological thought and praxis, both good and bad.

Before class time, complete reading the texts and a major part of the literature on the theory/persons to be used in the major class. Be ready to make a summary report of your findings in class. Prepare a 1-2 page outline of the theory and person(s) and a short bibliography for distribution in class.

Submit a finished research paper on the theory and persons you have selected, noting in particular their past or potential impact, good or bad, on missiology. Please follow the standard research paper style as outlined in Turabian.

SELECT FROM THE FOLLOWING THEORIES AND AUTHORS:

British Structural Functionalism: Bronislaw Malinowski, Evans Pritchard

American Historicism: A. L. Kroeber, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict

Hermeneutical Anthropology and Thick Description: Clifford Geertz

Symbolic Anthropology: Victor Turner, Mary Douglas

Phenomenology and Comparative Religions: Mircea Eliade

Substantivism: Robin Horton, Levi-Bruhl, Paul Gossman

Cognitive Structuralism: Claude Levi-Strauss

Psychological Realism: William James

Religious Presuppositions

The purpose of this course is to examine how the social sciences, anthropology in particular, has looked at 'religion'. The focus of research will be on contemporary social scientists working in the area of the religion in order to understand their theories and learn from them what we find useful in Christian mission.

Course Outline

1. Introduction to the course:

- definitions of 'religion'
- epistemological foundations of science

2. Theories of anthropology regarding religion: 1850-1980:

- 2.1 Early history of anthropology and missions.
- 2.2 Paradigm of Cultural Evolution.
- 2.3 American Historical Particularism..
- 2.4 Acculturation Theory.
- 2.5 British Structural Functionalism.
- 2.6 Psychology of Religion.
- 2.7 Ethnoscience and Bible translation.

3. Class reports: Contemporary anthropologists:

Class reports on contemporary social scientists working in the field of religion.

Introductory Readings

Attached are some preliminary readings you should examine before class begins. They lay some of the foundations of the first days of class discussion.

Reining, Conrad C.	"A lost period of applied anthropology."
Hiebert, Paul G.	"Epistemological foundations for science and theology."
	"The missiological implications of an epistemological shift."
Hsu, Francis L.K.	"Christianity and the anthropologist."
Ferre, Frederick	"Explanation in science and theology."
Wiebe, Donald	"Explanation and the scientific study of religion."

Readings on Religious Presuppositions

The course centers around the following central questions:

1. What is the nature of religion, and what 'drives' it?
2. How does religion relate to other areas of culture - specifically to magic and science?
3. How can we integrate religious and scientific methodologies in the study of religion?
4. How are theories of religion affected by the epistemological foundations of the era?

General Foundations:

Reading in the following for the general foundations of the course.

Hiebert, P. 1985. Epistemological foundations for science and theology, and The missiological implications of an epistemological shift. TSF Bulletin.

_____. 1978. Missions and anthropology: A love/hate relationship. Missiology. 6:165-180.

_____. 1987. Critical contextualization. International Bulletin. 11:104-111.

Kuhn, Thomas. 1970. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. 2nd ed. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press. 222

Barbour, I. Myths, Models and Paradigms.

Morris, Brian. 1987. Anthropological Studies of Religion: An Introductory Text. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. (textbook for the course). pp. 1-90.

Sharpe, Eric J. 1975. Comparative Religion: A History. N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Laudin, Lary. Progress and its Problems.

Ferre, Frederick. 1972. Explanation in science and theology. Earth Might be Fair: Reflections on Ethics, Religion and Ecology. I. C. Barbour, ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hospers, John. 1968. On explanation. Theory of Anthropology. R. A. Manners and D. Kaplan, eds. Chicago: Aldine.

Wiebe, Donald. 1976. Explanation and the scientific study of religion. Zygon. 11:35-49.

Reining, C. 1972. A lost period of applied anthropology. Applied Anthropology. J. A. Clifton, ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Hiebert, P. G. 1978. Mission and anthropology: a love/hate relationship. Missiology. 6:165-180.

2. Evolutionary Theory:

Key Focus: The history of the development of human cultures in all their diversity.

Key Theoreticians: James Frazer, E. B. Tylor, Lewis Henry Morgan, William Robertson Smith, Andrew Lang, and R. R. Marett.

Readings: Morris, 1-90; Malefijt, 116 - 159, 256-292, Voget, 1 - 359; Bee, 27-66, 141-171; Harris, 142-216. (on reserve)

Godelier, Maurice. 1977. Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology.

James, W. 1973. The anthropologist as reluctant imperialist. Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. T. Asad, ed.

Terray, E. 1972. Marxism and "Primitive" Societies. NY: Moutly Rev. Press.

O'Laughlin, Bridget. "Marxist approaches to anthropology. Annual Reviews. 4:341-370.

3. American Historical Particularism and Acculturation Studies:

Key Focus: The history of specific cultures in limited time frames with a particular emphasis on culture change and the diffusion of ideas.

Key Theoreticians: Franz Boas, A. L. Kroeber, Clyde Kluckhohn, E.A. Hoebel, Robert Lowie, Ralph Linton.

Readings: Morris, pp. 182-263. Malefijt, 160-180, 215-255; Voget, 360-432, 721-785; Bee, 67-119; Harris, 250-373.

Lowie, Robert. 1952. Primitive Religion. Enl. ed. N.Y.: Grosset and Dunlap.

Wallace, A.F.C. 1956. Revitalization movements. American Anthropologist. 58:264-281.

Kluckhohn, Clyde and Florence. 1944. Navaho Witchcraft., Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum Papers. No. 22.

LaBarr, Weston. 1970. The Ghost Dance: The Origins of Religion. N.Y.: Doubleday.

4. British Structural Functionalism:

Key Focus: the structure and integration of a society, and the functioning of its parts.

Key Theoreticians: A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Bronislaw Malinowski, Max Gluckman, Meyer Fortes, Evans-Pritchard, Raymond Firth.

Readings: Morris, pp. 91-140; Malefijt, 181-214; Voget, 480 - 540; and Harris, 514-604. (on reserve)

Durkheim, Emile. 1915. The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1948. Magic, Science, Religion and Other Essays. N.Y.: The Free Press.

Kuper, Adam. Anthropologists and Anthropology: The British School. N.Y.: Pica Press, 1973. (on reserve)

Evans-Pritchard. 1937. Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande. N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press.

_____. 1956. Nuer Religion. N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press.

Jarvie, I. C. Functionalism.

Banton, M. ed. The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies. A.S.A. Monographs 4.

McGavran, Donald. 1955. Bridges of God.
_____. 1990. Understanding Church Growth.
Berger, Peter. 1967. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

5. Psychological Anthropology:

Key Focus: The relationship between human personality and culture - are there cultural differences in personality types, what is the effect of child rearing practices on personality, and what is the nature of psychological pathologies in different cultures?

Key Theoreticians: Ruth Benedict, G. Devereaux, G. Roheim, J. W. M. Whiting, Mel Spiro, Clara DuBois, Robert LeVine, Victor Barnouw.

Readings: Brian, pp. 141-181.

James, William. 1902. The Varieties of Religious Experience.

Benedict, Ruth. 1934. Patterns of Culture. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

6. Linguistics, Communication Theory and Ethnoscience:

Key Focus: The nature of language, communication and emic belief systems, and how these shape our view of the world.

Key Theoreticians: Edward Sapir, Benjamin Whorf, Ward Goodenough, James Spradley, Paul Kay, Brent Berlin, C. Fraake, Stephen Tyler,.

Readings: Malefijt, 315-348; Harris, 464-513.

Nida, E. 1960. Mission and Message. N.Y.: Harpers.

Kraft, C. 1979. Christianity in Culture. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Hesselgrave, D. 1978. Communicating Christ Cross Culturally. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Nida, E. and W. Reyerburn. Meaning Across Cultures.

_____. 1960. Mission and Message. N.Y.: Harpers

Loewen, J. 1976. Culture and Human Values. Pasadena, CA: William Carey.

7. Marxist Anthropology:

Key Focus: The nature of oppression in human systems, and ways to gain justice and freedom.

Key Theoreticians: Maurice Godelier, E. Terray, Sugundo, Boff, liberation theologians.

Readings: Brian, pp. 51-90.

Godelier, Maurice. 1977. Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology.

James, W. The anthropologist as reluctant imperialist. 1973. In Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. T. Asad, ed.

O'Laughlin, Brigit. Marxist approaches to anthropology. Annual Reviews of Anthropology. 4:341-370.

Terray, E. 1972. Marxism and "Primitive" Societies. N.Y.: Moutley Rev. Press.

Gough, J. 1971. New proposals for anthropologists. Current Anthropology. 9:403-407.

See also Liberation theology and Minjung theology.

8. Symbolic Anthropology, Worldview Theory and Semiotics:

Key Focus: The underlying nature of symbols, rituals, myths and worldviews, and the way these shape our perceptual worlds.

Key Theoreticians: Van Gennep, Edmund Leach, Victor Turner, Mary Douglas, Darrell Forde, Levi-Strauss, and Charles Peirce.

Readings: Brian, pp. 182 - 318.

Van Gennep, Arnold. 1960. The Rites of Passage. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

Douglas, Mary. 1973. Natural Symbols. N.Y.: Random House.

_____. 1975. Implicit Meanings. London: Routledge and Egan Paul

_____. 1967. The meaning of myth. In E. R. Leachn [ed.], The Structure of Myth and Totemism. London: Tavistock.

Turner, Victor. 1967. The Forest of Symbols. Ithica: Cornell U. Press.

_____. 1969. The Ritual Process. Chicago: Aldine.

_____. 1974. Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. The Intrepretation of Cultures. N.Y.: Basic Books.

_____. 1966. Religion as a cultural system. In Lessa. W.A. and E. Z. Vogt, 1979. Reader in Comparative Religion, 4th ed. N.Y.: Harper and Row.

_____. 1968. Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia. Chicago: Univ. of Chciago Press.

Forde, Darrell. 1954. African Worlds. London: Oxford Univ. Press.

Dreegers, A. 19##. The Africanization of Christianity, an anthropologist's view. Missiology. 5:443-456.

9. Cognitive Structuralism:

Key Focus: The fundamental structure of the cognitive process of the mind.

Key Theoretician: Levi-Strauss, Ino Rossi, J. Piaget, Brenda Beck.

Readings:

Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1969. The Raw and the Cooked. N.Y.: Harper and Row.

gRossi, Ino. 1975. The Unconscious in Culture. N.Y.: Dutton.

10. Phenomenology and Comparative Religions:

Key Focus: A description and comparison of various religions to look for commonalities and fundamental differences.

Key Theoreticians: Mircea Eliade, Rudolf Otto

Readings:

Eliade, Mircea. 1968. Myths, Dreams and Mysteries.

_____. 1959. The Sacred and the Profane. N.Y.: HBarcourt Brace Jovanovich.

_____. See Eliade, ed. Encyclopedia of Religion. 7 volumes.

Otto, Rudolf. 1923. The Idea of the Holy.

11. Substantivists:

Key Focus: Substantivists take religion seriously as systems of belief that govern people's behavior. They go beyond description to deep understanding of different religions.

Key Theoreticians: Darrell Forde, Robin Horton

Levi-Bruhl, Lucien. 1926. How Natives Think. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Forde, Darrell, African Worlds.

Horton, Robin. 1962. The Kalabari world view: An outline and interpretation. Africa.
32:197-220.

_____. 1964. Ritual man in Africa. Africa. 34:85-104.

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. The Age of Positivism:

- beliefs about the nature of science.
- biological and cultural evolutionism in anthropology, and their views on the nature of religion.
- beliefs about the nature of theology and Christian missions.

2. The Age of Instrumentalism:

- changes in the understanding of the nature of science (T. Kuhn)
- British structural Functionalism, American Historicism, culture change, psychological anthropology, ethnoscience, and other theories in anthropology, and their views on the nature of religions.
- sociological and psychological theories of religion.
- changes in the understanding of the nature of Christian theology and mission.

3. The Emergence of the Era of Critical-Realism:

- changes in the understanding of the nature of science (I. Barbour)
- cognitive structuralism, symbolic anthropology, semiotics, applied anthropology neo-evolutionism and other theories in anthropology, and their views on the nature of religion.
- changes in our understanding of the nature of Christian theology and mission.
- the emergence of the study of folk science and folk religion, and their place in our understanding of human religious systems.
- the integration science and Christian theology in a biblical worldview.
- implications for the relationship of Christianity to nonChristian religions.

4. Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion:

KEY AUTHORS:

- 1. Clifford Geertz:** [Ethnographic Anthropology--'thick description']
1968. Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
1965 Religion as a cultural system. In Michael Banton [ed.] Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion. London: Tavistock. Reprinted in reader in Comparative Religion. 4th ed. William Less and Evon Vogt eds.
*1971. Myths, Symbols and Culture. NY: W. W. Norton.
1973. The Interpretation of Cultures. NY: Basic Books.
1976. The Religion of Java. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- 2. Victor W. Turner:** [Symbolic Anthropology]
1967 The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual. Ithica: Cornell Univ. Press.

- 1968 The Drums of Affliction: A Study of Religious Processes among the Ndembu of Zimbabwe. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- *1969 The Ritual Process: Structure and Antistructure. Ithica, NY: Cornell Univ. Press.
- 1974 Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Ithica, NY: Cornell Univ. Press.
- 1978 Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
[to understand Victor Turner read . **Arnold Van Gennep**. 1960. The Rites of Passage. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.]

3. **Mary Douglas**: [Social and Symbolic Anthropology]

- *1966. Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
1967. The meaning of myth. In E. R. Leach [ed.], The Structure of Myth and Totemism. London: Tavistock.
- *1970. Natural Symbols. N.Y.: Random House.
1970. Witchcraft, Confession and Accusations. London: Tavistock.
1975. Implicit Meanings. London: Routledge and Egan Paul.
- 1979 Passive voice theories in religious sociology. Review of Religious Research. 21:50-61.
1983. Religion and America: Spiritual Life in a Secular Age. Boston: Beacon Press.
1985. Anthropology and comparative Religion. Theology Today. 41:410-427.
1993. In the Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers. Scheffield, England: ISOT Press.
- 1993 The forbidden animals in Leviticus. Journal of the Study of the Old Testament. 59:3-23.

4. **William James**: [Psychological Analysis of Religion]

1897. The Will to Believe. New York: Longmans.
- * 1961. The Variety of Religious Experience. Orig. 1902. New York: Collier.
1971. The Meaning of Truth. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
[also look at Rudolf Otto. 1923. The Idea of the Holy.; and Ruth Benedict. 1934. Patterns of Culture. Boston: Houghton Mifflin].
[also see Rockefeller, Steven, John Dewey: Religion, Faith and Democratic Humanism. N.Y.: Columbia Univ.

5. **Bronislaw Malinowski**: [British Structural Functionalism]

1954. Magic, Science and Religion. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books.

6. **Mircea Eliade**: [Phenomenology and Comparative Religions]

1958. Rites and symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth. N.Y.: Harper and Row.
1959. The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion. The Significance of Religious Myth, Symbolism and Ritual within Life and Culture. N.Y.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
1968. Myths, Dreams and Mysteries.

7. Robin Horton: [Substantivism]

1962. The Kalabari world view: An outline and interpretation. Africa. 32:197-220.
1964. Ritual man in Africa. Africa. 34:85-104.

8. Marxist Anthropology:

Liberation theology and Minjung Theology