

Courses Summer School 2023

Part 1: June 12-June 23, Monday to Thursday, 10am-2pm

Sociology of Religion: International Comparative Perspectives

Dr. Brian Conway, Maynooth University

This module is an introduction to theoretical debates, empirical work, and methodological approaches in the sociology of religion. In the first week, we consider the distinguishing features of the sociological approach to religion and the major debates within the literature about the impact of modernity on religion, focusing on secularisation theories. Framed by this, the second week focuses on topics such as atheist identities and secularity, religiosity in Germany, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on religion. Throughout, the emphasis will be on developing an international comparative approach to understanding religion and society. This will be achieved through mini-lectures, brief reflection papers on readings, and in-class discussions.

Global inequalities and climate change

Prof. Dr. Anja Weiß, University of Duisburg-Essen

Global inequalities far exceed inequalities within countries. Wealth in the Global North is based on expropriation to a significant extent. The political sphere is segmented into states and it is doubtful whether states are able to solve transnational problems. These problems have existed for a long time, but they are exacerbated by climate change, or even causing it. Still, climate change also is a “new” problem. Sociologists are, for example, challenged to reconsider divisions between materiality and the social. The seminar will employ a global and transnational perspective on these problems. We will discuss Wallerstein’s world systems approach, postcolonial studies, and recent integrated proposals for the critique of capitalism (Fraser) or global systems (Walby). We will use these theoretical perspectives to discuss scenarios for potential futures. You will get to know (quantitative) data banks provided by international NGOs and activists. Based on an excursion to the Duisburg harbor, we will study global supply chains and extractivism as well as transnational labor markets.

Part 2, June 26-July 7, Monday to Thursday, 10am-2pm

Anthropology of Migration and Transnationality: An Ethnographic Walk through Marxloh

Dr. Besim Can Zirh, Middle Eastern Technical University

The seminar aims to assist its participants in developing an inter-disciplinary perspective on the transnationalism approach by which they can develop an insight into contemporary social and political phenomena without being trapped by national borders, namely “methodological nationalism”. The seminar will also discuss how scholars from different generations attempted to understand border-crossing phenomena at different historical moments. In doing so, participants could develop a perspective on the nature of paradigmatic shifts in the social sciences at large. By specifically focussing on migration the the case of Marxloh, this seminar attempts to discuss border-crossing engagements and activities from a historical, inter-disciplinary, and case-specific perspective.

Super-Diversity and Institutional Whiteness in (Post-)Migration Society

Prof. Kyoko Shinozaki, Ph.D., Salzburg University

Beginning in the summer 2020, people in many parts of the world have begun to be actively engaged in the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) – more than ever in our recent history. BLM has long repercussions to date. For example, in this summer, Austria has witnessed citizens’ referendum [“Black Voices”](#). In many Western European societies where a quarter of the population has a so-called migration background, mobility related diversity is just a banal everyday reality. In urban spaces some authors have argued that metropolitan cities have become even “super-diverse” (Vertovec 2007: 1024), rendering conventional normative notions, such as “integration” obsolete on the one hand.

But, on other hand: Why is it that migrant and racialized ‘Others’ are the ones to be named and talked about? While it continues to be important to scrutinize structural inequalities based on racialization along with gender, class and religion, scholarship just like political and social discourses often fail to problematize the dominant gaze through which racialized inequalities are looked into.

This seminar invites you to reflexively engage with issues related not only to racism but also to “institutional whiteness” in employment and higher education institutions, discussing both empirical and theoretical works in the European and Asian context.

As a learning/teaching method, we will use a slightly adopted version of “Problem-Based Learning” to ensure lively discussions. We will also have an opportunity to listen to a guest lecture and watch a movie, in order to broaden and deepen our understanding of the seminar topic.