



Faculties of Humanities and Theology

## **RHIB13, History of Religions: Level 2, 15 credits**

*Religionshistoria: Föreläsning, 15 högskolepoäng*

First Cycle / Grundnivå

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus is an old version, approved by the pro-dean for first-cycle studies at the Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2016-01-12 and was valid from 2016-01-18, spring semester 2016.

### **General Information**

The course is offered as a freestanding course. It can be selected as a specialisation course in the Bachelor's programme in Religious Studies and Theology. It can be included in a first or second cycle degree.

#### *Main field of studies*

History of Religions

Religious Studies and Theology: History of Religions and Religious Behavioural Studies

#### *Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*

G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

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### **Learning outcomes**

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

- account for some key basic theories, methods and phenomena of the anthropology of religion
- account for the role of symbols, cosmologies, myths and rites in both ceremonial and everyday life
- describe how a selected religious text has emerged and gained religious authority, and how it can be used in ideological and ritual contexts
- formulate an issue based on the subject of religion and text with a clear aim and question

- explain the characteristics of an academic paper in contrast to other genres/text types, such as journalistic features or opinion pieces

### **Competence and skills**

- use field studies within the anthropology of religion to describe how religions are embedded within different cultural contexts
- reflect on and present the problem areas of field studies methodology
- produce a minor paper on the subject of religion and text
- select and assess academic texts of relevance to the assignment

### **Judgement and approach**

- review and analyse issues of power, gender or ethnicity within the anthropology of religion
- distinguish between the application of a scholarly and a religious perspective on a religious text
- assess the significance of self-reflection for the study of the history of religions

## **Course content**

The course starts by discussing the theories and methods of the anthropology of religion to address how what is termed religion in different cultural contexts can be studied and analysed. Accordingly, religious practice is considered in global as well as local environments. The study of religious life as it is documented through anthropological field studies is central to the course. Phenomena such as shamanism, witchcraft and possession are discussed with reference to case studies obtained through field studies and are thereby situated in cultural environments. The role of symbols, cosmologies, myths and rituals in both ceremonial and everyday life is also examined. Among the important questions posed are why people practise rites and how rites have been changed in the modern and individualised society.

In the second half of the course, students practise taking on an independent assignment that is to be presented in a minor paper. The aim of the course is to introduce and provide training in academic writing. The assignment is limited to an important oral or written religious text that is to be studied closely. The text can be a thousand years old or produced in the present. Among the topics that can be addressed are the processes of canonisation, mediation, commentaries, scholarly and religious interpretative perspectives or ritual text use.

The course consists of the following modules:

1. Anthropology of Religion- Ritual, Myth, Symbol, 7.5 credits
2. Religion and Text, 7.5 credits

## **Course design**

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars and supervision. Compulsory attendance is required at a seminar in which the students make oral presentations in groups or individually. Absence from this seminar is to be compensated for by a written assignment in accordance with the lecturer's instructions.

## Assessment

Module 1 is assessed on the basis of a final written home assignment.

Module 2 is assessed on the basis of a minor paper of approximately 40 000 characters with spaces, including a cover sheet, table of contents and bibliography, and a final defence seminar.

*Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.*

## Grades

Marking scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction.

For a grade of Pass on the whole course, the student must have been awarded at least this grade on both modules. For a grade of Pass with Distinction on the whole course, the student must have been awarded this grade on at least one of the modules and a grade of Pass on the other.

## Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must have 30 credits within the humanities, social sciences or law.

## Further information

1. The course is offered at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.
2. Module titles in Swedish: 1. Religionsantropologi- ritual, myt, symbol. 2. Religion och text.
3. The modules are also offered as freestanding courses (RHIB36 and RHIB37).
4. The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree. For further details see the current registration information and other relevant documentation.

## Subcourses in RHIB13, History of Religions: Level 2

Applies from V16

- 1601 Anthropology of Religions - Ritual, Myth, Symbol, 7,5 hp  
Grading scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction
- 1602 Religion and Text, 7,5 hp  
Grading scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction