

2020 SOS2700 Instructions for the exam committee members

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The students

The committee members should be aware of the fact that the students taking SOS2700 have a very varied background. Some students do not have a background in sociology or any other social science discipline.

This is a take home exam. We should therefore expect extensive use of the syllabus. The students can use additional material, but this should not outweigh the use of the syllabus.

Choose one of the two questions:

1) Define and discuss the concept “religious radicalization” and discuss how fruitful this concept is to understand Jewish settlers in Israel and the Radical Right in Europe and the USA. Four types of theories are often used to analyze radical religious movements, deprivation theory, resource mobilization theory, political process theory and framing theory. Describe these theories and discuss their usefulness in analyses of the two movements mentioned above.

During the lectures (and listed in the powerpoints), we spent some time outlining different definitions of radicalization and criticized them:

- EU Internal Security Strategy in Action: “Radicalisation in this sense is understood as a complex phenomenon of people embracing radical ideology that could lead to the commitment of terrorist acts.”
- PST (Politiets sikkerhetstjeneste): “A process where a person to an increasing degree accepts the use of violence to reach political goals” (Bjørngo and Gjelsvik 2015:15).
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The student should be able to reflect on different definitions of religious radicalization in order to understand Jewish settlers and the Radical Right in Europe and the US. Syllabus that cover Jewish settler are Juergensmyer (2017) and Røislien (2007). The Radical Right is covered in Juergensmeyer (2017), Minkenberg (2017), Gardell (2014) and Blee (2010). Furthermore, the students are expected to describe different social movement theories in order to assess how useful they are to analyze the two movements mentioned above. These theories are deprivation theory (people are radical due to their deprivation and seek compensation in religion), resource mobilization theory (mobilization takes place because movements access different types of resources, money, organization, people, ideology etc.), political process theory (movements experience growth due to political opportunities – i.e. a greater emphasis on context than RMT)), and framing theory (leaders of movements are successful if they are able to frame the thinking of potential joiners). Information about these theories are found in Furseth (2011), Furseth and Repstad (2006, Ch. 6), Wiktorowicz (2002), Blee (2010), Snow et al. (1986), Zald and Ash 1966).

2) Describe similarities and differences among the stereotypical portrayals of “the Muslim” and “the Jew”. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of comparing the negative portrayals of these minorities.

Similarities and differences in stereotypical portrayals of Muslims and Jews are discussed in the syllabus: Døving 2010, Meer 2013 and Werbner 2012. Although warning against absolute analogies, Døving (2010) argues for the relevance of comparative semantic analyses of the negative portrayals and uses Norway as a case. In Meer’s (2013, 3) intro to the special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2013 36), he illustrates the historical and contemporary connectivity between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and argues for the need to apply established concepts within the study of race and racism to understand Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. Werbner (2012) takes a socio-psychological approach to illuminate differences and sameness that constitute racism through three racist social imaginaries.