

REL 300 - Research, Writing, Thinking in Religion & Applied Ethics

ASUW – Fall 2011 - W 4:40 PM - 7:30 PM

Martin Beck Matušík, Lincoln Professor of Ethics & Religion <http://www.public.asu.edu/~mmatusti>

Reading assignment for the first class: Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Preface & ch. 1: Absurdity & Suicide
Eliade. *The Sacred and The Profane*, chap. I, Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred



Required books are at the ASU bookstore.
Other texts are on the blackboard for this course.

If the question of finding a good, happy, and meaningful life could be answered exhaustively in terms of social justice and moral life, then would there be a distinct role left for religions to play? Or, if religious life in its great variety has no bearing on striving for a community of human flourishing, then would we be better, happier, and freer without “religious” questions? Yet what if the very human condition is defined by religious questioning? Wouldn't a life dedicated to idols of the ultimate – and great religions agree with critical thinkers that religious and secular idols are equally blinding – be a misspent life? The aim of this course is to dedicate some time to thinking about these questions from the perspectives ranging from the profane to the ethical to spiritual life.

Part A

Albert Camus.

The Myth of Sisyphus.

Vintage Books, 1955, 1991. 978-0679733737

Mircea Eliade.

The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovic, 1987.0-15-679201-x

Film: *Baraka.*

Ron Fricke. Mark Magidson Films Inc., 1992.

Part B

Plato. *Symposium.*

Hackett. 1989. 0-87220-076-0

C.S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold.*

Harvest Books, 1980. 978-0156904360

Blackboard reading selections:

Søren Kierkegaard, “In Vino Veritas,” from *Stages on Life's Way.*

Film: *Antonia's Line.* Marleen Gorris. 1996.

Part C

Sigmund Freud. *The Future of an Illusion.* W. W. Norton & Company. 1989. 978-0393008319

Abraham Joshua Heschel. *The Sabbath.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975. 0374512671

Paul Tillich. *Dynamics of Faith.* The Perennial Classics. 2001. 0.06.0937130.

Film: Ingmar Bergman's *Winter Light.* Svensk Filmindustri. 1962.

