The proposed course constitutes a general introduction to the religious, social, and political history of Ethiopia. The course will address the relationship between the country and its churches, between religion and society, from the time of the Aksumite period until the Marxist revolution at the end of the 20th century.

The course will provide an overview of the history of the Ethiopian state, the reception of Christianity by the empire in the middle of the 4th century and the expansion of the new faith in the country. The course will focus on the characteristics of the various streams within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and their historical struggles, as well as their social consequences.

It will also deal with Muslim conquest of Ethiopia, and the external influences on the country's religious system, such as Portuguese involvement in Ethiopia in the 16th century, the attempt of Jesuit missionaries to convert Ethiopia to Catholicism in the 17th century, Protestant missions of the 19th and 20th centuries, and the Italian conquest in the 20th century.

Throughout the course, students will engage with methodological questions related to the sources available to us for writing the history of Ethiopia, such as the lives of saints, theological texts, chronicles of kings, and external sources.

Moreover, the course will focus on questions related to the relationship between beliefs and rites and processes of social, political, and religious change.

Women and men are required to read assigned texts from meeting to meeting and participate actively.

During the semester, students are required to submit one assignment (52% of the final grade) and to sit for an exam at the end of the semester (52% of the final grade). Attendance is mandatory.

Regarding bibliography, there may be changes.

1. Introduction to Ethiopian Studies, by Baruch Arlozoroff, Ethiopia: Kingdom and Revolution in the Horn of Africa (1972), vol. 7, pp. 9-51.

2. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church: A Brief History, by Taddesse Tamrat, Church and State in Ethiopia (1270-1527) (Oxford 1972), pp. 21-68.


Ernst Hammerschmidt, “Jewish Elements in the Cult of the Ethiopian Church”, *JES*, 3, 2 (1965), pp. 1–12.


