



ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАН

1000 София
ул. „Сердика“ № 4
<http://edu.bas.bg>

email: tdc-phd@cu.bas.bg
тел.: 02 987 31 67
02 979 52 60

Basic Information:

Course Title: Religious Life and Cult Practices in the Thracian Lands during Antiquity

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivo Topalilov

Phone: +359 89 929 8358

Email: topalilovi@gmail.com

Assistants:

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Irina Shopova

Phone: +359 888929249

Email: irinashopova@balkanstudies.bg

and

Dr. Stamenka Antonova

Phone: +359 896987223

Email: sea20@columbia.edu

Total Teaching Hours: 30 lecture hours

Annotation (up to 150 words)

The course is designed for doctoral students in the humanities who are interested in the study of religious beliefs and practices in Antiquity. It traces the specific features of pagan cults and their dissemination in the Thracian lands, as well as the conditions and prerequisites that led to the emergence of Christianity and its spread throughout Southeastern Europe. Particular emphasis is placed on the sources for religious cults and practices—written testimonies, epigraphic and numismatic evidence, archaeological material, canonical and hagiographic texts—together with the methodological approaches to working with these diverse categories of sources and assessing their reliability in the interpretation of the subject matter. The aim of the course is to provide in depth knowledge of the topic and to develop skills for the critical use and interpretation of source material.

Course content (brief description by topics or modules)

Topic / Module 1: Introduction to the Subject Matter (3 hours)

- Historiography;
- Sources for religious beliefs in the Thracian lands prior to their incorporation into the Roman provinces;
- Sources for religious beliefs in the Thracian lands after their incorporation into the Roman provinces.

Topic / Module 2: Specific Features of Religious Beliefs in the Thracian Lands (3 hours)

- Religious beliefs during the Classical and Hellenistic periods;
- Religious beliefs in the Thracian lands after their incorporation into the Roman Empire.

Topic / Module 3: Organization of Religious Life in Urban Centers (3 hours)

- Official and civic cults;



ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАН

1000 София
ул. „Сердика“ № 4
<http://edu.bas.bg>

email: tdc-phd@cu.bas.bg
тел.: 02 987 31 67
02 979 52 60

-
- Festivals;
 - Temples, priestly offices, and cult associations.

Topic / Module 4: Cults within the Thracian Ethnic Milieu (3 hours)

- Specific characteristics of the deities worshipped;
- Extra-urban sanctuaries;
- Religious cults within the army;
- Eastern cults.

Topic / Module 5: Religious Syncretism in the Thracian Lands (3 hours)

- Manifestations of syncretism;
- Prerequisites for the spread of Christianity.

Topic / Module 6: The Nature of Christianity (3 hours)

- The philosophical system of Christianity;
- Sources for the study of the Christian religion.

Topic / Module 7: Christianity in Southeastern Europe (3 hours)

- The missionary activity of the Apostles Paul and Andrew;
- Persecutions of Christians;
- Hagiographic sources from Thrace.

Topic / Module 8: The Spread of Christianity and Relations among Christians, Jews, and Pagans (3 hours)

- The nature and specific characteristics of the process during the 1st and 2nd centuries;
- Characteristics of interrelations during the 3rd and 4th centuries.

Topic / Module 9: Formation of Ecclesiastical Structure and Hierarchy (3 hours)

- Arianism, Heresies, and Orthodoxy;
- Theological Debates and Ecumenical Councils.

Topic / Module 10: Early Christian Art in the Balkans (3 hours)

Teaching and assessment methods

The course is conducted in person, in the form of a lecture and/or guided discussion. Assessment is based on an oral examination and a written course paper.

Competencies acquired as a result of training (3–5 points)

1. In-depth knowledge of the development of religious life in the Roman provinces of Thrace and Lower Moesia.



ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАН

1000 София
ул. „Сердика“ № 4
<http://edu.bas.bg>

email: tdc-phd@cu.bas.bg
тел.: 02 987 31 67
02 979 52 60

2. Ability to work with a wide range of source materials, including written evidence, archaeological data, numismatic finds, and epigraphic monuments.
3. Understanding of the specific conditions and prerequisites that enabled the emergence of Christianity.

Literature:

Извори за старата история и география на Тракия и Македония (съст. Д. Дечев, Г. Кацаров), София, 1949.

Извори за историята на Тракия и траките. Том I, (съст. Фол, Ал.), София, 1981.

Извори за историята на Тракия и траките. Том II, (съст. Гочева, З.), София, 2002.

Александров, О. *Религията в римската армия в провинция Долна Мизия (I-IV в.)*. Велико Търново, 2010.

Андреева, П. *Празници в римската провинция Тракия (I-III в.)*. (Дисертации, т. 8). София, 2014.

Ботева, Д. Оброчните релефи на Тракийския конник. I: Изображения-образи. – *Проблеми на изкуството* 30, 1997, 3–4, 66–70.

Ботева, Д. Тракийският Херос в системата на тракийския пантеон. – В: *Jubilaeus I. Юбилеен сборник в памет на акад. Димитър Дечев*. София, 1998, 23–27.

Ботева, Д. Изображения-разкази върху оброчните релефи на Тракийския конник: I. Херосът в света на боговете. – В: *Jubilaeus III. Сборник в памет на професор Борис Геров*. София, 2000, 22–43.

Ботева-Боянова, Д. *Проблеми на тракийската история и култура*. София, 2000.

Ботева-Боянова, Д., *Античните текстове и тяхното четене днес: Акценти от осем века фрагментарна история на древна Тракия (IV в. пр.Хр. - IV в. сл.Хр.)*. София, 2014.

Вълчев, И. *Извънградските светилища в римската провинция Тракия (I-IV в.)*. София, 2015.

Вълчев, И. *Култът към Юпитер в Долна Мизия през римската епоха*. София, 2002.

Домарадски, М. Тракийските култови места (втората половина на II – I хилядолетие пр. Хр.). – В: *Studia Archaeologica 2. Сборник изследвания в чест на проф. Атанас Милчев*. София, 2002, 57–85.

Кацаров, Г., *Избрани съчинения*, т. I-II. София, 2001 (Университетска библиотека, 390).

Михайлов, Г., *Траките*. София, 1972.

Попов, Д., *Тракология*. София, 1999.

Тачева-Хитова, М. *История на източните култове в Долна Мизия и Тракия VI в. пр. н. е. – IV в. от. н. е.* София, 1982.

Тракийски паметници. Т. II. Тракийски светилища. София, 1980.

Тодоров, Я., *Паганизъмът в Долна Мизия през първите три века след Христа*. София, 1928.

A Companion to Roman Religion (ed. by Jörg Rüpke). Malden, MA – Oxford. Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007.

Beard, M., J. North, S. Price. *Religions of Rome*. Vol. I. A History. Vol. II. A Sourcebook. Cambridge, 1998.

Kazarow, G. *Die Denkmäler des thrakischen Reitergottes in Bulgarien*. Budapest, 1938.

Koester, H., *History and Literature of Early Christianity*. Second Edition. 2000.

Lavan, L., M. Mulryan (eds). *The Archaeology of Late Antique "Paganism"*. (Late Antique Archaeology 7). Leiden – Boston, 2011.

Scullard, H.H., *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic*. Cornell University Press, 1981.



ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАН

1000 София
ул. „Сердика“ № 4
<http://edu.bas.bg>

email: tdc-phd@cu.bas.bg
тел.: 02 987 31 67
02 979 52 60

Segal. A.F., *Rebecca's Children: Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World*. Harvard University Press, 1986.
Stark. R., *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*. Princeton University Press, 1996.
Swartz. S., *The Ancient Jews from Alexander to Muhammad*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.
Turcan, R., *The Gods of Ancient Rome. Religion in Everyday Life from Archaic to Imperial Times*. Routledge, 2000.
Wilken. R., *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them: Second Edition*. Yale University Press, 2003.

Additional information (optional) (e.g., special requirements, laboratory equipment, prior knowledge)

Knowledge of foreign languages is desirable.