



## Martyrdom (7,5 ECTS credits)

Level: 1st cycle

Discipline: THEOLOGY (historical theology, systematic theology)

Course ID: 0333

### Admission requirements

General admission requirements for university studies. Students taking part in the course as a part of their Bachelor's degree program must have completed Course A, Introduction in Philosophy and Theology (30 ECTS credits). Students taking part in the course as a freestanding course are expected to have corresponding prior knowledge.

### Educational goals

After having completed this course the students are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the issues involved in the definition and practice of martyrdom
- Articulate arguments in favour or against different concepts of martyrdom
- Explain the Christian meaning of martyrdom through reading and discussing examples of Christian martyrs and martyrs' accounts throughout history
- Recognize how martyrs are embedded in the Communion of saints
- Critically evaluate the intercultural and interreligious meaning of martyrdom and its place in wider conceptions of life and death

### Course content

The idea of martyrdom and its interpretations in history are best described through the example of martyrs from different faith traditions and time periods. From this concrete basis, more speculative questions can be addressed, such as the following: is there a common idea of martyrdom? Does the example of Christ put Christian martyrdom in a special category? Can there be a concept of martyrdom outside a religious world-view? Does martyrdom inspire awe or condemnation? What is the danger of an unbridled martyr ideology? These questions are very relevant to understanding today's world and living one's faith in the midst of its conflicts. Examples from the past are considered not only for their historical value, but also in their role as markers of community belonging and shapers of ethical and philosophical positions in societies where martyrs were remembered and celebrated.

## **Teaching and examination**

Teaching is conducted through obligatory meetings and through instruction assignments on the online teaching platform. The course is examined through continuous assessment of class participation, oral presentations and shorter written essays (50 % of the final grade) as well as through a final take-home written exam (50 % of the final grade).

## **Bibliography**

In the order treated in the course:

Sean McDowell, *The Fate of the Apostles. Examining the Martyrdom Accounts of the Closest Followers of Jesus* (London, 2018).

Christian Sahner, *Christian Martyrs under Islam: Religious Violence and the Making of the Muslim World* (Princeton, 2018).

S. Moskalenko and C. R. MacCauley, *The Marvel of Martyrdom: the Power of Self-Sacrifice in a Selfish World* (Oxford, 2019).

### *Filmography*

*Of Gods and Men* (French title: *Des hommes et des dieux*), Xavier Beauvois (director), Why Not Productions, 2010.

See also "Kursplaner: allmänna bestämmelser" (Course plans: General rules)

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Valid as 2021-01-15