

The Department for the Study of Religions at Masaryk University in Brno, the Czech Republic is a well-recognized and progressive department for the academic study of religions. The department is the seat of the [Czech Association for the Study of Religions](http://www.casr.cz/indexen.php) (<http://www.casr.cz/indexen.php>) and the editorial office of *Religio*, an international journal for the study of religions indexed in Scopus, ERIH, and Brill's Index to the Study of Religions (<http://www.casr.cz/religioen.php>).

Research

The department does not limit its research to one specific method, region or topic, but pursues a variety of research interests. Three approaches are predominant.

- ① The first is the **cognitive science of religion**, developed at the department's **Laboratory for Experimental Research of Religion** (www.levyna.cz), a unique research center exclusively dedicated to the experimental study of religion. Research areas include the pro-sociality of ritual; the cognitive psychological study of emotions; and embodiment and extended cognition.
 - ② The second approach is the **discursive study of religion** inspired by **critical post-colonial scholarship**. Research areas include the symmetrical approach in the study of religions; power and politics in scholarly discourses about religion; classifications and genealogies in the study of religions; unaffiliated spiritualities in contemporary Europe; narrative research into contemporary Jewish identities; multiculturalism and the interplay of religious plurality and repression in contemporary Europe and the USA; and religion and politics in modern Japan.
 - ③ The third approach cultivated at the department is the **historical approach to religion** shaped largely by **historical anthropology**. Research areas include the cognitive historiography of Mithraism and ancient Roman religion; space, time and myth in early Christianities; medieval Christian missions to Asia; the view of "the other" in medieval Europe; heresy, authority and repression in medieval Christianity; the visual arts of Tibetan, Buryat and Japanese Buddhism; Buddhism in Europe; and Chinese cultural studies.
- In these areas, the department has been awarded numerous **research and teaching grants**.



Research of extreme rituals. Photo courtesy Dimitris Xygalatas



Zhandan Zhuu, Buryat wooden statue of Buddha Shakya-muni. Photo courtesy Andrej Fukas



Central library of the Faculty of Arts

Study programs

The department offers a comprehensive program in the study of religions: a four-year **Ph.D. program** (in English or in Czech), a two-year **M.A. program** (in Czech only), and a three-year **B.A. program** (in Czech only). The degrees awarded by the department are recognized internationally.

Our students enjoy a number of **facilities and opportunities**, including extensive opportunities with respect to **international mobility and networking**, various **scholarship opportunities**, an excellent **library** housing several thousand books devoted to the study of religions in English, an award-winning **study information system** allowing students to organize their studies without needless paperwork, queues and extra trips, and a high-quality **student journal** for the study of religions (*Sacra*).

The **Ph.D. program** mostly consists in developing **research and writing skills** in the study of religions. It is organized in either **full-time** or **combined study mode**. The application deadline is 30 April (for September admissions) and 30 October (for February admissions). Prospective students can request more information on the Ph.D. program, on how to apply, on tuition fees, and on possibilities regarding exemption from tuition fees by contacting us at religion@phil.muni.cz.



Annual excursion organized by the department



Contact

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Studying at Masaryk University, Brno

Masaryk University, founded in 1919, is an excellent choice for all who seek **profound academic training** with a **strong research background** and **superb facilities**. It is the second largest university in the Czech Republic, boasting some **40,000 students** and **nine faculties** encompassing the full range of academic disciplines. According to the Webometrics Ranking of World Universities from January 2012, the university ranked 97th out of the world's 20,300 universities and 21st in Europe.



Faculty of Arts, inner yard

International networks

The department is an active member of various **international networks**. Thanks to different agreements (ERASMUS, CEEPUS etc.), it is engaged in **student and teacher exchanges** with departments for the study of religions at several **European universities** (Aarhus, Amsterdam, Bern, Bratislava, Budapest, Cracow, Kaunas, Leipzig, Vienna). Students can apply to spend a part of their studies at any of these universities.

The department is also active in the **International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR)** and the **European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR)**. It has co-organized several important **international conferences** including two special conferences of the IAHR in 1994 and 1999, the annual conference of the EASR in 2008, and a conference of the International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA) in 2010.



The annual conference of the EASR in 2008



Brno lies at the crossroads between Prague, Vienna, Bratislava and Cracow

Brno, in which Masaryk University is situated, is a **dynamic city** boasting several **large university institutions** and pulsating with **student life**. It not only offers a wide assortment of **theatres, galleries, cinemas, music clubs, festivals, and sports facilities** but is also located in a region offering a variety of **natural wonders**. Furthermore, the city lies at the crossroads between Prague, Vienna, Bratislava and Cracow, which makes it an ideal location for exploring the Czech Republic and beyond.



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