

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

Voyage:	Spring 2020
Discipline:	Anthropology
Course Number and Title:	ANTH 322 The Anthropology of Religion
Division:	Upper
Faculty Name:	Stephen Christopher Johnson
Semester Credit Hours:	3

Prerequisites: One (1) introductory anthropology or cultures course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores cultural variations of religious experience. Throughout the semester, we will survey key themes: religion as a cultural system, the social foundations of sacred experience, the ritual process, mythic enactments, spirit possession, religious violence and ghost hauntings. We will circle back to central questions: What does it mean to act religiously? How are social inequalities naturalized or challenged through rituals and beliefs? How are religious systems changing through globalization and modernization? Answering such questions requires an open-minded anthropological curiosity and a willingness to rethink what it means to be religious in a global context.

The bulk of the course will be ethnographic selections that parallel our voyage. Among other subjects, we will study religious violence and secularization in Japan, ghost hauntings after the American war in Vietnam, exotic stereotypes 'imprisoning' Tibetan refugees, Hinduism and ritual healing in India, Christian entrepreneurs in Ghana, and Muslim stewardship of Jewish cemeteries in Morocco. These readings will complement our travel experiences and deepen our empirical understanding of religion. We will approach these sensitive issues with both critical distance and sympathy for the personal nature of religious belief. The course will include an in-country field class, in which students will visit Hindu sites in Kochi connected to course material on spirit possession.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Develop a critical understanding of variations in religious practice
- Establish a theory toolkit for understanding religious phenomena
- Reflect on the taken-for-granted nature of our own beliefs and practices
- Consider methodological issues in the anthropology of religion
- Connect theoretical/ethnographic material to experiences in port stops

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Mai Lan Gustafsson
TITLE: War and Shadows: The Haunting of Vietnam
PUBLISHER: Cornell University Press
ISBN #13: 978-0801475016 / ISBN #10: 0801475015
DATE/EDITION: 2009

AUTHOR: Cory Thomas Pechan Driver
TITLE: Muslim Custodians of Jewish Spaces in Morocco: Drinking the Milk of Trust
PUBLISHER: Palgrave
ISBN #13: 978-3-319-78785-5 / ISBN #10: 978-3-319-78786-2
DATE/EDITION: 2018

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada, Mexico – January 5

B1–January 8: Introduction: What is the anthropology of religion?

Stein, Rebecca and Philip Stein. *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 47-70.
Bowie, Fiona. *The Anthropology of Religion: An Introduction*. 18-26.

B2–January 10: Introduction: Insider/Outsider: What to do with belief?

Engelke, Matthew. “The Problem of Belief: Evans-Pritchard and Victor Turner on ‘The Inner Life.’” 3-8.

Turner, Edith. “A Visible Spirit Form in Zambia.” 9-12.

McCutcheon, Russell. *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion*. 15-22.

B3–January 13: Introduction: Interpretive and Symbolic Systems

Geertz, Clifford. “Religion as a cultural system.” 87-125.

Ortner, Sherry. “On Key Symbols.” 1338-46.

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA – January 12

B4–January 15: Japan: Buddhism and Shintoism

Reader, Ian. “Turning to the Gods in Times of Trouble: The Place, Time and Structure of Japanese Religion.” 1-23.

International Date Line Crossing – January 16 (Lost Day)

B5–January 18: Japan: New Religious Movements (NRMs)

Reader, Ian. “Japanese New Religions: An Overview.” 1-49.

Study Day – January 19 (No Class)

B6–January 21: Japan: Religious Violence and Nationalism

Metraux, Danie. "Religious Terrorism in Japan: The Fatal Appeal of Aum Shinrikyo." 1140-54.

Pye, Michael. "Religion and Conflict in Japan with Special Reference to Shinto and Yasukuni Shrine." 45-59.

B7—January 23: Japan: Secularization

Reader, Ian. "Secularisation, R.I.P.? Nonsense! The 'Rush Hour Away from the Gods' and the Decline of Religion in Contemporary Japan." 7-34.

Kobe, Japan — January 24-28

B8—January 30: China: Popular Religion, Ancestor Worship and Ghosts

Palmer, David. "Is Chinese (Lack of) Religion Exceptional?" 17-34.

Stein, Rebecca and Philip Stein. *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 282-327.

Shanghai, China — January 31 – February 5

B9—February 7: Vietnam: Spirit Hauntings, Part I

Gustafsson, Mai Lan. *War and Shadows*. 1-34.

B10—February 9: Vietnam: Spirit Hauntings, Part II

Gustafsson, Mai Lan. *War and Shadows*. 35-72.

Ho Chi Minh City — February 10-15

B11—February 18: Vietnam: Spirit Hauntings, Part III

Gustafsson, Mai Lan. *War and Shadows*. 73-106; 123-137.

Community Programming — February 17 (No Class)

Port Klang, Malaysia — February 19-24

B12—February 26: India: Witchcraft, Sorcery and Magic

Flueckiger, Joyce. *Everyday Hinduism*. 193-219.

Moro, Pamela. "Witchcraft, Sorcery and Magic." 1-11.

Paper #1 Due

B13—February 28: India: Health and Healing

Sax, William. "Ritual healing and mental health in India." 829-49.

Miller, Barbara. *Cultural Anthropology in a Globalizing World*. 90-98.

Cochin, India — February 29 – March 5

FIELD CLASS: Feb 29 – Temple Possession and Healing

B14—March 7: India: Everyday Hinduism: Introduction to the Deities

Flueckiger, Joyce. *Everyday Hinduism*. 1-45.

Film: Sita Sings the Blues

Community Programming – March 8 (No Class)

B15—March 10: Mauritius: Religious Pluralism and Hindu Hegemony

Kasenally, Roukaya. “Mauritius: Paradise Reconsidered.” 160-69.

Mathur, Hansraj. “Mauritius: Cultural Accommodation in a Diverse Island Polity.” 72-102.

Field Class Paper Due

Port Louis, Mauritius – March 11

B16—March 13: India: Tibetan Refugees and Symbolic Prisons

Lopez, Donald. *Prisoners of Shangri-La*. 1-13.

Shakya, Tsering. “Who are the Prisoners?” 183-189.

Thurman, Robert. “Critical Reflections on Donald S. Lopez Jr.'s ‘Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West.’” 191-201.

B17—March 16: India: Ethnoreligious Communalism

Stratton Hawley, John. “Militant Hinduism: Ayodhya and the Momentum of Hindu Nationalism.” 257-65.

Film: The Name of Ram (*Ram ke Naam*)

Study Day – March 15 (No Class)

B18—March 17: The Body as Religious Symbol

Bowie, Fiona. “The Body as Symbol.” 34-61.

Mauss, Marcel. “Techniques of the Body.” 70-87.

Stein, Rebecca and Philip Stein. *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 147-186.

Paper #2 Due

Cape Town, South Africa – March 18-23

B19—March 26: Liminality and Communitas

Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. 94-130.

B20—March 28: Ghana: GSS: Religion and Gender in Africa

Soothill, Jane. *Gender, Social Power and Spirituality: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*. 9-35; 43-53.

B21—April 4: Ghana: GSS: Defining Womanhood

Soothill, Jane. *Gender, Social Power and Spirituality: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*. 71-86; 103-136.

Takoradi, Ghana – March 30-April 1

Tema, Ghana – April 2-3

B22—April 6: Sex, Gender, and the Sacred

Bowie, Fiona. "Sex, Gender, and the Sacred." 82-106.

Nanda, Serena. *Neither Man nor Woman: The Hijras of India*. 24-37.

B23—April 8: Morocco: Muslim Authority in Jewish Cemeteries

Driver, Cory Thomas Pechan. *Muslim Custodians of Jewish Spaces in Morocco: Drinking the Milk of Trust*. 1-9; 55-71.

B24—April 10: Morocco: Performing Hybrid Authenticity in Jewish Cemeteries

Driver, Cory Thomas Pechan. *Muslim Custodians of Jewish Spaces in Morocco: Drinking the Milk of Trust*. 115-50; 183-87.

Final Exam Review

Casablanca, Morocco — April 11-14

Study Day — April 15 (No Class)

B25—April 17: Final Exam

Arrive Amsterdam, The Netherlands — April 20

FIELD WORK

Semester at Sea® field experiences allow for an unparalleled opportunity to compare, contrast, and synthesize the different cultures and countries encountered over the course of the voyage. In addition to the one field class, students will complete independent field assignments that span multiple countries.

Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class. Field Classes constitute at least 20% of the contact hours for each course, and are developed and led by the instructor.

Field Class & Assignment

The field class for this course is on **Saturday, 29 February 2020 in Cochin, India.**

Title: Religious Diversity in Kochi

Description: We will tour the religious diversity in Kochi. We will visit the Chottanikkara Hindu Goddess Temple in Kochi. The presiding goddess is worshipped in three forms throughout the day. The temple is famous for curing mental illness associated with spirit possession. We will speak with a temple priest about the process of spirit exorcism and maybe observe exorcisms while there. After that, we will visit several other religious sites: the Paradesi Synagogue (the oldest synagogue in the Commonwealth), St. Francis Church (the oldest European-built church in India), the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha (a Sikh temple), the

Dharmanath Jain Temple, and the Cheraman mosque (believed to be the first mosque in India).

Objectives: The primary objective is to ethnographically experience faith healing and the intersection of mental health and Hindu spirituality. We will focus on Hinduism as a lived, everyday practice. We will compare the art and architecture of the two temples and place our observations in conversation with the course materials on spirit possession and everyday Hinduism. In addition, we will analyze the overall religious diversity of India by touring several places of worship from different religious traditions. This will allow us to compare different modes of religiosity.

Evaluation: Students will write a 4-page paper incorporating their observations and relating them to course readings and discussions. Deadline: March 9th.

Independent Field Assignments

Students will write two (2) analytic papers of (5) pages each over the course of the semester linking the course material to observations and experiences in port countries. Each paper should be properly referenced, 12-inch font, Times New Roman, double spaced, 1-inch margins. Each paper must address a different theme and port – and cannot overlap with our Field Class. Each paper must address a different theme and different port, not including the port where the Field Class takes place.

Subjects include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- New Religious Movements (NRMs)
- Refugee and minority religious systems
- Globalizing religion
- Gender and religion
- Religious body modification
- Supernatural
- Spirit healing
- Specific traditions (Buddhism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam)
- Communalism
- Pluralism

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Attendance and Participation: 10%
Field class paper: 20%
2 papers: 20% each = 40%: A12–February 25; A19–March 17
A written, comprehensive final exam: 30% A25–April 16

GRADING SCALE

The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea® coursework. Note that C-, D+ and D- grades are also not assigned on Semester at Sea® in accordance with the grading system at Colorado State University (the SAS partner institution).

Pluses and minuses are awarded as follows on a 100% scale:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory/Poor</u>	<u>Failing</u>
97-100%: A+	87-89%: B+	77-79%: C+	Less than 60%: F
93-96%: A	83-86%: B	70-76%: C	
90-92%: A-	80-82%: B-	60-69%: D	

ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea® classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion. Instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable students to make up work which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a conflict in regard to this policy, individuals may appeal using established CSU procedures.

LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea® provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation.

A letter from students' home institutions verifying the accommodations received on their home campuses (dated within the last three years) is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit verification of accommodations to academic@isevoyages.org as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage. More details can be found within the **Course Registration Packet**, as posted to the [Courses and Field Classes page](#) no later than one month prior to registration.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea® courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature of the assignment or exam, the faculty member may require a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

RESERVE BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY

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DATE/EDITION: 2018

FILMS

None

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

None

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None