

**Spring 2013**

**Discipline:** Anthropology

**ANTH 2320: Anthropology of Religion**

**Lower Division Course (Pre-requisites:** One or two social science and/or philosophy courses)

**Faculty Name:** Monica Frölander-Ulf

**Class time and place:** A-Day 15:40-16:55 Room 3

## **ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces a cross-cultural analysis of religion with a special emphasis on religious systems of indigenous societies. We study symbolic systems, rituals, religious organization, leadership, and religious change through functionalist, structural, and ecological and other materialist theoretical frameworks. The material illuminates the complex relationship between religious beliefs and actual practices and situates religious systems within a variety of social and natural environments. Participants are encouraged to deepen their understanding of philosophies different from their own and to contemplate the role of religious thought and behavior in their own societies and/or personal lives.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the course we will be able to:

- Contrast European and Euro-American philosophical assumptions with other knowledge systems
- Describe major religious beliefs and practices in several different types of religious/spiritual traditions
- Apply specific theoretical perspectives to explain human spiritual/religious behavior and thought
- Use specific data to critically examine many commonly held assumptions about our own and other peoples' religions
- Develop our analytical, observational, listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills
- Apply basic concepts of anthropology to real-life situations
- Thoughtfully reflect on the ethics of social research and our shared responsibilities as human beings

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

**AUTHOR:** Rebecca Stein & Philip Stein

**TITLE:** The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft

**PUBLISHER:** Prentice Hall (December 2010 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)

**ISBN-10:** 0205718116

**ISBN-13:** 978-0205718115

**ASSIGNED ARTICLES** (See Course Outline below). The articles are available on the Intranet.

**LIBRARY RESERVE:** Roger Schmidt, et al., Patterns of Religion and Raymond Scupin, Religion and Culture.

### **FIELD WORK**

#### **FIELD LAB. DAY 1 YOKOHAMA: ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE VISIT AND MEDITATION PRACTICE (TOTAL 20% OF COURSE GRADE)**

In this field lab, we will visit a Zen Buddhist temple, Kencho-ji in the town of Kamakura, one of the main centers of Zen practice in Japan since the 13th century. Kencho-ji is the headquarters of the Rinzai sect and Japan's oldest Zen training monastery. We will receive a short introduction to Zen practice and participate in a session of zazen sitting and walking meditation for approximately three hours. After exploring the exquisite temple complex, we gather to discuss the experience over dinner in a traditional Japanese restaurant. This Field Lab experience gives you ample opportunity to relate your experiences to a variety of course topics.

You will be organized into sets of field research teams and submit a jointly written paper (4-5 pages). [You may choose to work alone in consultation with our instructor.]

The teams may choose to contemplate whether Zen Buddhism is indeed a religion or study, for example, the effects that meditation has on one's consciousness or the purpose of meditation in the Zen tradition. You may choose to investigate the concept of sacred space and sacred place, the relationship between Zen Buddhist beliefs and the 'natural' environment, the gendered aspects of the Zen tradition, the symbols found in Zen temples, and/or the changes that have occurred in Zen Buddhist beliefs and practices. This Field Lab also provides a great opportunity to develop your observational, note-taking, analytical, writing, and speaking skills. **PAPER DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 23. (15% OF THE FIELD LAB GRADE)**

**The paper is to contain:**

- a) A description of the team's observations and interpretations of what you have learned during the lab

b) A discussion of how the lab information relates to other relevant course material, and an analysis of the similarities and differences in the interpretations of the team members' observations and understanding of the relevant course material. Each team or individual student is expected to present their findings in class on **FEBRUARY 23. (5% OF THE FIELD LAB GRADE)**

#### **OTHER FIELD-RELATED ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES:**

##### **Class Preparation, Attendance and Participation (20% OF GRADE)**

The important work of integrating readings, lectures, and field experiences takes place the classroom. Therefore, class preparation, attendance, and general participation will be monitored and highly valued.

**One unexcused absence is allowed.** Any further unexcused absences are penalized by an automatic loss of a full grade for every missed class. You must show a nurse's or doctor's note in order to be excused from class.

**Graded journal: (10% OF GRADE)** The journal allows you to keep track of what you have read, heard, observed and experienced throughout the semester. **The graded journal entries should explicitly address specific Field Assignments (see Course Outline under FIELD ASSIGNMENT), course-related readings, and discussions.** You submit the journals twice during the semester for feedback and finally for grading at the end of the journey. **A RECURRING IN-PORT ASSIGNMENT is to take notes on the religion of your choice in the countries visited.**

#### **OTHER ASSIGNMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION**

**Reading reflections: (15%)** Periodically you will receive questions about specific reading assignments, which you are expected to comment on, sometimes verbally in class, sometimes in writing.

**Midterm exam (15%) & Final exam: (20%)** The exams give you an opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the course materials and their relevance to the field assignments and cultural experiences in the countries visited. Study questions are given ahead of time from which the instructor selects some (you will not know until exam time which ones) for you to answer in class.

#### **SUMMARY OF COURSE EVALUATION PROCEDURES:**

Class attendance and participation: 20%

Field Lab assignments: 20% (15% for paper; 5% for class presentation)

Graded journal: 10%

Reflections on assigned readings: 15%

Midterm exam: 15%

Final exam: 20%

#### **COURSE OUTLINE**

##### **JANUARY 11 (A1)**

**INTRODUCTION. WHAT IS ANTHROPOLOGY? SCIENCE? RELIGION?** Anthropology and the Study of Religion.

Anthropological Perspectives and Methods.

##### **Reading assignments:**

- American Anthropological Association website information
- Stein & Stein, Ch. 1 (pp. 1-17), Ch. 9 (209-210)
- George Cajete, Native Science, Ch. 2. "Philosophy of Native Science" (pp. 57-83)
- Susan Jacoby, "Five Myths about Atheism," Newsweek, February 2, 2010.

##### **JANUARY 13 (A2)**

**ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES OF RELIGION:** Structuralism, Functionalism, Psychological/Cognitive Causation, Cultural Ecology, Karl Marx and Historical Materialism. The ethics of anthropological research.

##### **Reading assignments:**

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 1 (pp. 17-28)
- Manu Aluli Meyer, "Native Hawaiian Epistemology: Sites of Empowerment and Resistance," *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 31:1 (pp. 22-28)
- Teju Cole, "The White Savior Industrial Complex." *The Atlantic*, March 21, 2012.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/2/>
- Erik Eckholm, "Family Battle Offers Look Inside Lavish TV Ministry." New York Times, May 4, 2012.

##### **JANUARY 15-16: HILO, HAWAII**

## JANUARY 17 (A3)

**THE ORGANIZATION OF RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.** Concepts of Power and Leadership in Egalitarian Societies. Shamans and Ceremonial Leaders.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 6 (pp. 119-135, special focus on 119-126), Ch. 9 (pp. 189- 212)
- Tanaka, Sakurako, "Ainu Shamanism: A Forbidden Path to Universal Knowledge." *Cultural Survival Quarterly*. Summer 2003. Vol. 27, (2); p. 44

Documentary: Excerpt on the San (!Kung) healing dance from "The Power of Myth."

## JANUARY 19 (A4)

**ECCLESIASTICAL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION. Case Studies:** The "Great" or "Universal" Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students select a religion/spiritual tradition of their choice to investigate in each part of call (to the extent possible). (JOURNAL ENTRIES.)

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, See Index for references to the above religions.
- Specific assignments for the religion of your choice from Roger Schmidt, et al., Patterns of Religion and Raymond Scupin, Religion and Culture (on reserve)

## JANUARY 21 LOST DAY

## JANUARY 22 STUDY DAY

## JANUARY 23 (A5)

**ECCLESIASTICAL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION. Case Studies:** The "Great" or "Universal" Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Students' reflections on their specific reading assignments.

## JANUARY 25 (A6)

**THE INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOLS AND MYTH.** Sacred Objects, Images, Speech, and Dance.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 2 & 3
- Laurel Kendall, Vũ Thị Thanh Tam & Nguyen Thị Thu Huong, "Three Goddesses in and out of Their Shrine" *Asian Ethnology* Vol. 67, #2, 2008, (pp. 219-236)
- William Barrett, ed. (2006) "Zen Buddhism, Selected Writings of D.T. Suzuki." (Ch. 4: 97-127) Doubleday.
- Nanzhan University, "Shinto Symbols." (Excerpt) *Contemporary Religions in Japan*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Mar., 1966), pp. 3-39

## JANUARY 27-31: YOKOHAMA & KOBE, JAPAN

### **FIELD LAB Day 1: ZEN BUDDHISM. LECTURE, TEMPLE VISITS, AND MEDITATION PRACTICE**

In this field lab, we visit a Zen Buddhist temple, Kencho-ji, in the town of Kamakura, one of the main centers of Zen practice in Japan since the 13th century. Kencho-ji is the headquarters of the Rinzai sect and Japan's oldest Zen training monastery. We will receive a short introduction to Zen practice and participate in a session of zazen sitting and walking meditation for approximately three hours. After exploring the exquisite temple complex, we gather to discuss the experience over dinner in a traditional Japanese restaurant.

Student teams may choose, in consultation with the instructor, specific topics pertaining to the field experience and to issues discussed in class, to be described, analyzed and presented in a 4-5 page paper. The student teams are also expected to give a brief presentation of their findings in class.

**PAPER AND PRESENTATION DUE DATE: FEBRUARY 23** (See more details under **FIELD WORK** above)

## FEBRUARY 1 (A7)

**CALENDARICAL RITUALS AND RITES OF PASSAGE.** A discussion of the variety of ritual functions and the commodification of religious ceremonies for tourist consumption.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 4 (pp. 77-102), Ch. 8 (pp. 161-188).
- "Chinese Funeral Customs," [http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en\\_chinaway/2004-03/03/content\\_46092.htm](http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_chinaway/2004-03/03/content_46092.htm)
- Fan Lizhu, "Popular Religion in Contemporary China," *Social Compass* 50(4), 2003 (pp. 449-457).

Documentary: Excerpt from "Taboo" about Apache women's puberty ceremony.

## FEBRUARY 3-8: SHANGHAI AND HONG KONG

## FIELD ASSIGNMENT:

- Briefly describe the visible aspects of a living religious/ceremonial tradition and the use of 'religious,' 'pilgrimage,' and 'heritage' tourism in China today. **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

## FEBRUARY 9 (A8)

**REFLECTIONS ON READINGS AND PORT EXPERIENCES IN HAWAII, JAPAN AND CHINA.** Student oral presentations on East Asian religions - Buddhism, Shintoism and 'communal' or 'folk' religion.

## FEBRUARY 11 (A9)

**RITUAL AND ALTERED STATES:** Drugs, Prayer, Trance, and Reversals.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 5 (pp. 103-118)
- John Neihardt, "The Dog vision," and "The Heyoka Ceremony," from Black Elk Speaks (pp. 177-193)
- Dai Dao Tam Ky Pho Do (Cao Dai website) <http://caodai.org/web/content.aspx?pageID=1>:
- Raymond Lee, "Dancing with the Gods: A Spirit Medium Festival in Urban Malaysia." *Anthropos*, 78, 1983 (pp. 355-368).

## FEBRUARY 12-17: HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

**FIELD ASSIGNMENT:** Describe the visible expressions (sacred sites, rituals, symbols, dress, functionaries, etc.) of the religion of your choice in Vietnam. **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

## FEBRUARY 19 (A10)

**HEALING AND FAITH.** Religious/spiritual explanations of the causes and cures of disease and misfortune.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 4 (pp. 84-86, 112), Ch. 5 (p. 112), Ch. 6 (pp. 130-132). Ch. 7 (136-142).

## FEBRUARY 20-21: SINGAPORE

## FEBRUARY 23 (A11)

**FIELD LAB PAPER AND PRESENTATIONS.**

**Reading Assignment:** W. McGowen, "Aung San Suu Kyi's Buddhism Problem." *Foreign Policy*, Sept. 17, 2012 and "Aung San Suu Kyi Explains Silence On Rohingyas." *Voice of America*, November 15, 2012; J. Philip & D. Mercer, "Commodification of Buddhism in Contemporary Burma." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 1999, Volume 26, Issue 1, pp. 21 - 54.

## FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 1: RANGOON, BURMA

**FIELD ASSIGNMENT:** What have you learned about Buddhism or any other religious tradition in Burma during your stay in the country? What were your sources for these insights? **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

## MARCH 2 (A12)

**GENDER AND RELIGION:** When gods, spirits, and religious leaders are women and other genders.

### Reading assignments:

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 2 (pp. 37-38), Ch. 9 (pp. 202-206), Ch. 10 (p. 225)
- Alice Walker, excerpt from The Color Purple"
- Gayatri Reddy, Excerpts from "Men Who Would Be Kings: Celibacy, Emasculation, and the Re-Production of *Hijras* in Contemporary Indian Politics." *Social Research*, 70(1) Spring 2003
- "Field Notes. Sakyadhita Pilgrimage in Asia: On the Trail of the Buddhist Women's Network." Review by: Karma Lekshe Tsomo in *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, 10 (3) February 2007, (pp. 102-116).
- Julianne Jennings, "Saint Kateri Tekakwitha: Someone We Can Call Our Own." *Indian Country Today*, October 22, 2012

**Documentary:** Segment on women in "The Power of Myth."

**MARCH 5 (A13) REFLECTIONS ON READINGS AND PORT EXPERIENCES.** Student presentations on Shintoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. **(JOURNAL ENTRIES)**

## MARCH 6-11: KOCHI (COCHIN), INDIA

**FIELD ASSIGNMENT:** Describe a specific aspect (ritual, sacred site, gender symbolism, nature references, etc.) of a religion practiced in India. **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

## MARCH 13 (A14)

## **DIVINATION, MAGIC, WITCHCRAFT, AND SORCERY.**

### **Reading assignments:**

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 4 (p. 86), Ch. 7 (pp. 136-160), Ch. 10 (pp. 213-229).
- Rosalind Hackett, "Discourses of Demonization in Africa and Beyond." *Diogenes*, 50 (199) Fall 2003 (pp. 61-).

## **MARCH 15 STUDY DAY**

## **MARCH 16 (A15) MIDTERM EXAM**

## **MARCH 18: PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS**

## **MARCH 19 (A16)**

**SPIRITUALITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.** Sacred Places, Sacred Spaces. Reflections on lessons learned in ports.

### **Reading assignment:**

- George Cajete, Ch. 6 "A Sense of Place" in *Native Science* (pp. 177-188, 204-213),.

**Documentary:** "In the Light of Reverence" (excerpts)

## **MARCH 21 STUDY DAY**

## **MARCH 22 (A17)**

**RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE:** Colonialism, Syncretism, and Revitalization.

### **Reading assignments:**

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 6 (pp. 132-133), Ch. 11 (pp. 241-252)
- Alice Kehoe, "The Ghost Dance Religion"
- South Africa: "Religion," "Religion and Apartheid," "Zion Christian Church." Library of Congress Country Studies.  
<http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/>

## **MARCH 24 (A18)**

**RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE:** Revolution vs. the Status Quo.

### **Reading assignments:**

- Gustavo Gutierrez, "Liberation, Theology, and Proclamation," in Claude Geffré and Gustavo Gutierrez (eds.). *Theology of Liberation, Concilium* 6(10) June 1974 (pp. 59-)
- James Cone, "Black Theology as Liberation Theology," in Gayraud Wilmore, ed., *African American Religious Studies*. Duke University, 1989.
- Daily Observer, "The Big Read: Desmond Tutu," <http://observer.gm/africa/gambia/article/the-big-read>
- Mercy Oduyoye, "Calling the church to account: African women and liberation," from *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*. <http://www.questia.com/library/1G1-18069979/calling-the-church-to-account-african-women-and-liberation>

**Optional:** Greg Kaufman, "This Week in Poverty: The Soul Sisters" and <http://faithfulbudget.org/>

## **MARCH 25-30: CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

**FIELD ASSIGNMENT:** Reflect, in writing, on what you have learned about the role of religion in the struggle against apartheid and patriarchy. (JOURNAL ENTRY)

## **APRIL 1 (A19)**

**REFLECTIONS ON READINGS AND PORT EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH AFRICA.** Student presentations on Judaism and Christianity.

## **APRIL 3 STUDY DAY**

## **APRIL 4 (A20)**

**RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE:** New and New Age Religions. The "Prosperity Gospel."

### **Reading assignments:**

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 11 (pp. 244-250), Ch. 6 (pp. 124-126)
- Alice Kehoe, "Be Warned - Trespassing on Indian Spirituality," *World and I*, 17(6), 2002. (p. 180)
- Reread Erik Eckholm, "Family Battle Offers Look Inside Lavish TV Ministry." *New York Times*, May 4, 2012.
- Tim Heaton, Spencer James, Yaw Oheneba-Sakyi, "Religion and Socioeconomic Attainment in Ghana." *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Sep., 2009), pp. 71-86.

- Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa: Ghana <http://features.pewforum.org/africa/country.php?c=82>  
**Documentary: White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men**

**APRIL 6-10: TEMA/ACCRA**

**FIELD ASSIGNMENT:** Describe what you have learned about the features (e.g. functions, organizational structure, history, symbolism, rituals, gender constructs and environmental attitudes) of evangelical Christianity in Ghana. **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

**APRIL 11 (A21)**

**RELIGION, NATIONALISM, AND THE STATE.** Religious influences on state policies and states' control over religious life.

**Reading assignments:**

- Stein & Stein, Ch. 11 (pp. 251-258)
- Patricia Chang, "A Foreign Policy for Foreign Religion," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Oct. 2007
- Laurie Goodstein, "Disowning Conservative Politics, Evangelical Pastor Rattles Flock," *New York Times*, July 30, 2006
- Zakia Salime, "Mobilizing Muslim Women: Multiple Voices, the Sharia, and the State." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28(1) 2008 (pp. 200-211)

**APRIL 13: STUDY DAY**

**APRIL 14 (A22): FINAL EXAM**

**APRIL 17 (A23)**

**ISLAM & "THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK."** Interrogating dominant myths and reconsidering perspectives.

**SUMMARY AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS.** What is the relevance of what we have learned? What will we do with our knowledge?

**Reading assignments:**

- Religious Facts, Comparative chart
- Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "The Future of the Global Muslim Population." <http://www.pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>
- Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa: Ghana and South Africa." <http://www.pewforum.org/executive-summary-islam-and-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa.aspx>
- Each student is asked to select one reading assignment or in-port experience that directly or indirectly speaks to the ethics of anthropology and religious studies. **(JOURNAL ENTRY)**

**JOURNAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**APRIL 18-21: CASABLANCA**

**APRIL 24: CONVOCATION**

**APRIL 25: ARRIVE IN BARCELONA**

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**HONOR CODE**

As a Semester at Sea student you are enrolled in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and are thus bound to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. (Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.)

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by you, the student, as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."