

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

Voyage:	Fall 2018
Discipline:	Philosophy and Religious Studies
Course Number and Title:	PHIL 372 Meaning and Truth in Religion (Focus: Media and Material Culture)
Division:	Upper
Faculty Name:	Dr. Kaiqi Hua
Semester Credit Hours:	3

Meeting: B Days, 12:30-13:50, Kaisersaal Port

Prerequisites: One (1) lower division religion or philosophy course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

There is *no* standard meaning or absolute truth in religions. Rather, individuals and communities apprehend, appreciate, adjust, and advance religious ideas, symbols, doctrines, and practices in a variety of ways. This course closely examines religious methods of communication, including language, text, and behavior, which made religions transformable and understandable. We will read religious literature that matches up with the cruise itinerary, including scriptures, annotations, hermeneutics, pilgrimage diaries, miracle witness accounts, and other genres. From traditional monotheism to modern day New Age movements, we will develop a better understanding of religious meanings, as demonstrated in speeches, words, writings, rituals, and behaviors. Students will learn the history of foundation, revision, denunciation, and challenging of religious meanings. Therefore, they will form a changing picture of religion's many truths, which underwent constant construction and alteration, as reflected in religious places students will visit and observe.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Be able to explain why ideas of "truth" changed through different times and traditions, and some of the methods through which they changed, such as communication, comprehension, expression, and material application.
2. Identify and interpret different types of media for religious expression and knowledge transmission.
3. Summarize some of the most important ways of transmitting religious meanings, such as sermons, architecture, literature, and practices.
4. Categorize and compare different religious scripture and literature.
5. Understand the relationship between (individual and collective) memory, material, and religious truth. Understand the social and cultural aspects of religion.
6. Use theories of material culture to analyze religious objects and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between text, image, time, space, and religion.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: David Morgan
TITLE: Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief
PUBLISHER: Routledge
ISBN #: 9780415481168
DATE/EDITION: 2010

Other readings will be uploaded on the Canvas course website.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Hamburg, Germany – September 9

B1–September 12: Morgan, Chapter 1. Body and Mind

B2– September 14: Morgan, Chapter 2. Object Theory

Barcelona, Spain – September 15-16

Valencia, Spain – September 17-18

B3–September 20: Morgan, Chapter 3. Materiality and Social Analysis

Geary, Patrick. "Sacred Commodities: The Circulation of Medieval Relics," in Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things*. PP169-91

B4– September 22: Film: *The Enigma of the Dead Sea Scrolls*

Study Day – September 23: No Class

B5–September 25: Morgan, Chapter 4. Tactility and Transcendence: Epistemologies of Touch in African Arts and Spiritualities

Tema, Ghana – September 27-28

Takoradi, Ghana – September 29-30

B6–October 1: Morgan, Chapter 6. Tempering 'the Tyranny of the Already': Re-Signification and the Migration of Images

Community Programming–October 2: No Class

B7–October 4: Geurts, Kathryn Linn. "Consciousness as 'Feeling in the Body': A West African Theory of Embodiment, Emotion and the Making of Mind," in Howe, *Empire of the Senses*

B8– October 6: Morgan, Chapter 7. Out of This World: The Materiality of the Beyond

Cape Town, South Africa — October 7-12

B9—October 14: Film: Losing Our Religion

Study Day—October 16: No Class

B10—October 17: Morgan, Chapter 12. Clothing as Embodied Experience of Belief

Port Louis, Mauritius — October 19

B11—October 20: Film: Kumaré

Study Day—October 21: No Class

B12—October 23: Morgan, Chapter 13. Dressing the Ka'ba from Cairo: The Aesthetics of Pilgrimage to Mecca

Cochin, India — October 25-30

Reflection and Study—October 31: Global Studies Reflection

B13— November 1: Technology: Alfred Gell, "Technology and Magic," *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 4, No.2, 1988

S. Romi Mukherjee, "RFID Chipping in the Bible Belt and Saudi Arabia: When Religion and Technology Collide," from *UNESCO Report Ethical and Societal Challenges of the Information Society*, 2012

B14—November 3: Religious Images and Artifacts: Diana L. Eck, *Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*, Columbia, 1998, Chapters 1 and 2

Morgan, Chapter 14. Performing Statues

Yangon, Myanmar — November 4-8

B15—November 10: Morgan, Chapter 5. The Feeling of Buddhahood, or Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? Body, Belief and the Practice of Chod

Community Programming—November 11: No Class

B16—November 13: Religion and food:

Penny Van Esterik - "Feeding Their Faith: Recipe Knowledge among Thai Buddhist Women"

David Shuldner - "The Celebration of Passover Among Jewish Radicals"

Conrad Kottak - "Ritual at McDonald's"

Anne Allison - "Japanese Mothers and Obentos"

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — November 14-18

B17—November 20: Review of research methods for visual and material cultures: Schlereth, Thomas J. "Material Culture and Cultural Research," in Thomas J. Schlereth, ed. *Material Culture: A Research Guide*. Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1985. pp. 1-34

"Visual Culture and Material Culture: Paradigms for the Study of Religion," *Material Religion* 5, no. 3 (2009): 355-65

Study Day — November 21: No Class

B18— November 23: John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*. Princeton, 2003, Introduction.

Mayfair Mei-hui Yang. "Using the Past to Negate the Present: Ritual Ethics and State Rationality in Ancient China." In *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*, 2008.

Shanghai, China — November 24-29

B19—December 1: Morgan, Chapter 11. Materializing Ancestor Spirits: Name Tablets, Portraits, and Tombs in Korea

Kobe, Japan — December 2-6

B20— December 8: Kondo, "The Way of Tea," in David Howes. *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*. Oxford: Berg, 2005.

Drobnick, Jim. "Volatile Effects: Olfactory Dimensions of Art and Architecture," in Howes, ed. *Empire of the Senses*

B21—December 10: Film: Dancing for the Dead: Funeral Strippers in Taiwan

B22—December 12: (International Date Line Crossing (2 days))

Alton L. Becker. "Text-Building, Epistemology, and Aesthetics in Javanese Shadow Theatre." In *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*, 2008.

Study Day — December 12: No Class (International Date Line Crossing (2 days))

B23—December 14: Morgan, Chapter 8. The Material Culture of Japanese Domesticity

Honolulu, Hawaii — December 16

B24— December 17 Ocean and Arctic: Alfred Gell. "Closure and Multiplication: An Essay on Polynesian Cosmology and Ritual," in *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*, 2008.

Ovsyannikov, O.V., and N.M. Terebikhin. "Sacred Space in the Culture of the Arctic Regions," in David L. Carmichael ed., *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*. London: Routledge, 1994, pp44-81.

Study Day – December 18: No Class

B25 Exam Day – December 20

Arrive San Diego, California – December 23

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 & Assignment

The field class for this course is on Monday, December 3 in Kobe, Japan.

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.

Kobe/Kyoto, Japan – Monday, December 3

Title: Religion in Post-Modern Japan: Tradition and Innovation

Description: Post-war Japan experienced great change in its religious landscape and population of believers. As a majority atheist country, religions in Japan, especially Buddhism, face new challenges and opportunities. On the other hand, Western religions such as Christianity also encountered difficulty while establishing their ministries in Japan. In this one day class trip, we will visit both 1000 year old temples and innovated Buddhist business in Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, about a hour travel from Osaka. First we will visit three major Buddhist temples, including Kinkakuji, Kiyomizu-dera (lunch at Sannenzaka), and Sanjūsangen-dō. Students will gain knowledge of the history of Kyoto and ancient Japan. We will witness how tourism impacts religious practice and monastic life. We will then go to Saiho-ji Temple, the famous moss temple, to compare the real landscape with the literary depiction we read about this temple in western books and media. We will also discuss peace, meditation, and sustainability during this temple visit. We will taste Kyoto-style tofu soup and dango dessert at Ryōan-ji Temple and visit its famous *karesansui* (dry landscape) rock garden. Afterwards, we go on a light hike to Fushimi Inari Shrine, to experience the relationship between pilgrimage and religious landscape. Around 3 pm, we will go to a local temple with numerous small Jizo statues from Mizuko kuyō (“fetus memorial service”), a new religious ceremony in Japan for post-abortion care. we will discuss the business crisis of Japanese Buddhist temples and new social issues in Japan such as gender inequality and low childbirth rates. Before dinner we will visit a Buddhist bar and a Buddhist Karaoke place, to witness new forms of Buddhist economy and secular life of

Buddhists. We will have dinner at a temple market. Students will have street food there and collect religious objects for a post-field class report.

Objectives: 1. To understand the modernization of religion and issues within the process; 2. To look closer at Mahayana Buddhism in Japan and its influence on Japanese culture, past and present; 3. To think critically about the relationship between business and religious meaning; 4. To analyze new forms of religious practices and extended activities for the survival struggle of old traditions in a secular peaceful society of developed country.

Assignment due date: December 8

Independent Field Assignments

You will write one short paper (two pages) of reflection and analysis after your field class. It includes one page “trip report” for summary, and one page “trip highlights and thoughts” for analysis.

More details will be posted on the Canvas course website.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Attendance and participation (10%): You are required to attend every class on time and finish the assigned readings before coming to class. There is an attendance sheet to sign before you leave the class. Missing one class will deduct 1%. The grade will also be affected based on your participation in class discussion.

Four quizzes (20%): You will complete four quizzes (each 5%) taking place at the beginning of class but after presentation. The quizzes are 5 minutes, consisting of 5 simple multiple choice questions (ABCD), which will test your comprehension of the readings up to the day of the quiz.

One in-class presentation (20%): You will conduct one individual presentation on a topic assigned by the instructor. Students can sign up for presentation timeslots available in the beginning of each class. You will have at least one week to prepare for the task. The presentation is approximately 5 to 7 minutes, must use Powerpoint slides, and include one analytical question for class discussion. Grading is based on the Powerpoint (5%), presentation content (5%), presentation delivery (5%), and class discussion following the presentation (5%).

Field Assignments (20%): You will write one short paper of reflection and analysis after your field class. It includes one page “trip report” for summary (10%) and one page “trip highlights and thoughts” for analysis (10%).

Final paper (30%): You will write one long paper (6 pages including bibliography). The paper topic will be given three weeks before the paper due date (Exam Day). The paper will rely on academic sources, especially the course readings. You will conduct a close reading of the

texts and conduct further research into the assigned topic. You must present a clear thesis or position on an issue and support it with citations. Grading will be based on your paper's structure (5%), argumentation (5%), vocabulary (5%), grammar (5%), writing style (5%), and format including reference and citation (5%).

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 the student's home institution verifying the accommodations received on their home campus (dated within the last three years) is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit this verification of accommodations to academic@isevoyages.org as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage.

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

AUTHOR: David Howes.
TITLE: Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader
PUBLISHER: Bloomsbury Publishing
ISBN #: 9781859738634
DATE/EDITION: 2004

AUTHOR: Michael Lambek
TITLE: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion
PUBLISHER: Wiley-Blackwell
ISBN #: 9781405136143
DATE/EDITION: 2008/2nd edition

FILM REQUEST

Title of Film: The Enigma of the Dead Sea Scrolls
Distributor: Evangelische Omroep by Catherine Mossek, 58 min, 1993
<https://vimeo.com/101373415>

Title of Film: Kumaré
Distributor: Vikram Gandhi, 84 min, 2012

Title of Film: Dancing for the Dead: Funeral Strippers in Taiwan
Distributor: Marc Moskowitz, 37 min, 2011

Title of Film: Losing Our Religion
Distributor: Zoot Pictures, 1h26m, 2017
<http://www.losingourreligion.ca/>

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

None

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None