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 be directly observe a religious community and connect their ethnographic experience with course materials.

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
DATE/EDITION: 2009

AUTHOR: Cory Thomas Pechan Driver
TITLE: Muslim Custodians of Jewish Spaces in Morocco: Drinking the Milk of Trust
PUBLISHER: Palgrave
DATE/EDITION: 2018

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Ensenada, Mexico — January 5

A1—January 7: Introduction: What is the anthropology of religion?
Stein, Rebecca and Philip Stein. The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft. 47-70.


A3—January 11: Introduction: Interpretive and Symbolic Systems
Geertz, Clifford. “Religion as a cultural system.” 87-125.

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA — January 12

A4—January 14: Japan: Buddhism and Shintoism

International Date Line Crossing — January 16 (Lost Day)

A5—January 17: Japan: New Religious Movements (NRM)s

Study Day — January 19 (No Class)

A6—January 20: Japan: Religious Violence and Nationalism

**A7—January 22: Japan: Secularization**

**Kobe, Japan — January 24-28**

**A8—January 29: China: Popular Religion, Ancestor Worship and Ghosts**

**Shanghai, China — January 31 – February 5**

**A9—February 6: Vietnam: Spirit Hauntings, Part I**
Gustafsson, Mai Lan. *War and Shadows.* 1-34.

**A10—February 8: Vietnam: Spirit Hauntings, Part II**

**Ho Chi Minh City — February 10-15**

**A11—February 16: 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**

**A12—February 25: India: Everyday Hinduism: Introduction to the Deities**
Film: *Sita Sings the Blues*

Paper #1 Due

**A13—February 27: India: Tibetan Refugees and Symbolic Prisons**
Shakya, Tsering. “Who are the Prisoners?” 183-189.

**Cochin, India — February 29 – March 5**

**A14—March 6: India: Everyday Hinduism: Possession and Diviner-Healers**

**Community Programming — March 8 (No Class)**

**A15—March 9: Mauritius: Religious Pluralism and Hindu Hegemony**

**Port Louis, Mauritius — March 11**

**A16—March 12: Himalayas: Ritual Healing and Mental Health**

**A17—March 14: India: Anti-Muslim Communalism**
Film: The Name of Ram (*Ram ke Naam*)

**Study Day — March 15 (No Class)**

**A18—March 17: Ritual: An Overview**

**Cape Town, South Africa — March 18-23**

**A19—March 25: Liminality and Communitas**
Paper #2 Due

**A20—March 27: The Body as Religious Symbol**

**A21—March 29: Ghana: Christian Religious Entrepreneurs**

**Takoradi, Ghana — March 30-April 1**
**Tema, Ghana — April 2-3**

**A22—April 5: Sex, Gender, and the Sacred**
Bowie, Fiona. “Sex, Gender, and the Sacred.” 82-106.

**A23—April 7: Morocco: Muslim Authority in Jewish Cemeteries**

**A24—April 9:** 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)

**A25—April 16:** 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 & Assignment**

[Field Class proposals listed below are not finalized. Confirmed ports, dates, and times will be posted to the Spring 2020 Courses and Field Class page when available.]

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.

Proposal Title #1: Religious Interdependence in Morocco: The Monotheistic Traditions  
Country: Morocco  
Idea: This Field Lab includes a talk by a world-renowned Moroccan scholar of religion (Prof. Hassan Rachik), a lunch with local university students, and a visit to several sites associated with the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Specifically, we will visit the Hassan II Mosque, the Cathedrale Sacre-Coeur, and the Museum of Moroccan Judaism. With the help of Professor Rachik, we will deepen our understanding of the complex history of Islam in North Africa. Careful attention will be paid both to the way Islam has helped shape the culture of Casablanca, as well as to the ways Islamic practice has adapted to the cultural landscape of Morocco. This will be an opportunity to study the architecture and worship space of these three faiths as well as the history of how they have interacted over the course of the centuries.
Learning Objectives: 1. Compare art and architecture of multiple religious traditions. 2. Observe multiple religious traditions “in the field.” 3. Observe the similarities and differences between the three Abrahamic traditions. 4. Develop an appreciation for the way in which religious practices and expressions are shaped by the local cultural environment.

Proposal Title #2: Hinduism and Spiritual Health in Kochi
Country: India
Idea: 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 shift to the nearby Vaikom Sree Mahadeva Temple, part of the trinity of Shiva temples in Kochi associated with good fortune. Our guide will be Professor X from Bharata Mata College, who will explain spirit Hindu practices and spirit possession and act as translator.

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.

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

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 (NRM)s
- 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 25
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory/Poor</th>
<th>Failing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97-100%: A+</td>
<td>87-89%: B+</td>
<td>77-79%: C+</td>
<td>Less than 60%: F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-96%: A</td>
<td>83-86%: B</td>
<td>70-76%: C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92%: A-</td>
<td>80-82%: B-</td>
<td>60-69%: D</td>
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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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FILMS
None

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS
None

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
None