SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

Voyage: Fall 2018
Discipline: Philosophy and Religious Studies
Course Number and Title: PHIL 479 Topics in Comparative Religion (Focus: Sacred Sites & Religious Geography)
Division: Upper
Faculty Name: Dr. Kaiqi Hua
Semester Credit Hours: 3

Meeting: A Days, 1530-1650, Kaisersaal Starboard
Prerequisites: One (1) lower-division philosophy or religion course

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Can someone contract “Jerusalem Syndrome” while standing on the ship deck and watching a sunset? What makes a place holy? What is the different between a manmade and a natural holy place? Why are there markets attached to holy places? Do visitors feel that a place is holy from a distance or up close? How should we behave when we visit sacred sites, and in what ways can we appreciate them? This course introduces the history and function of major sacred sites (past and present) in the countries we will visit on our voyage, such as Sagrada Familia in Barcelona and Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon. We will compare their religious, political, social, and cultural significance, through critical reading of historical primary sources and modern day materials. Students will collect books, religious pamphlets, temple souvenirs, and even tour guidebooks to use for analytical research during their final projects. This project will compare the role of the secular in two sacred sites, or the role of the sacred in two secular sites, from different countries we visited. Our goal is to better understand how people across different traditions make places sacred, and perhaps we can transform our ship into a holy space?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Gain comprehensive knowledge of the history and importance of major sacred sites in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Be able to outline the transformation process of physical spaces into religious spaces, and the roles that social systems, political power, or ethnic identities play within this process.
2. Visit, observe, understand, and appreciate rituals of worship and religious practices that take place inside sacred places, as well as the local communities and daily lives formed around them.
3. Conduct comparative studies of sacred places from different cultures.
4. Be able to interpret literature and artworks describing or depicting sacred places.
5. Identify and explain the political and social functions of sacred places, especially the transformation of sacred space for secular purposes.
6. Obtain basic geographical research skills, such as map reading and spatial analysis. Conduct interdisciplinary studies of religion and geography.
7. Understand the relationship between religion and space. Evaluate religious views on environment and ecology.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Roger W. Stump
TITLE: The Geography of Religion: Faith, Place, and Space
PUBLISHER: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
ISBN #: 9780742510807
DATE/EDITION: 2008

AUTHOR: Ulrich Winkler, Lidia Rodríguez Fernández, and Oddbjørn Birger Leirvik
TITLE: Contested Spaces, Common Ground: Space and Power Structures in Contemporary Multireligious Societies
PUBLISHER: Brill
ISBN #: 9789004325791
DATE/EDITION: 2016

Other readings will be uploaded on the Canvas course website.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Hamburg, Germany — September 9

A1—September 11: Religion and space - Yi Fu Tuan, Religion: From Place to Placelessness.
Stump, Introduction, PP1-32

Winkler, Chapter 16. From Acceptance to Religious Freedom: Considerations for Convivencia in Medieval Spain and Multireligious Coexistence Today - Mariano Delgado

Barcelona, Spain — September 15-16

Valencia, Spain — September 17-18

A3—September 19: Basque country -
Winkler, Chapter 18. Contested Spaces and Religious Minorities: The Basque Experience and the Swiss Pyrenees - Eduardo J Ruiz Viente

Winkler, Chapter 19. Scenarios of Interreligious Dialogue in the Basque Country - José Luis Villacorta Núñez


Stump, “The Semitic Region,” PP49-62

Stump, “Judaism,” PP121-132

Film “Jerusalem” (45 min)

Study Day — September 23: No Class

A5—September 24: Christianity 1 - Winkler, Chapter 6. Sacred Time as Sacred Space: The Spaces of Memory and Anticipation in Christianity and Judaism - Emma O’Donnell

Winkler, Chapter 8. Hagia Sophia and the Third Space. An Enquiry into the Discursive Construction of Religious Sites - Sigrid Rettenbacher


Tema, Ghana — September 27-28

Takoradi, Ghana — September 29-30

Community Programming — October 2: No Class

A7—October 3: Christianity 2 – Stump, “Christianity,” PP159-187


**Cape Town, South Africa — October 7-12**

**A9—October 13:** Islam 1 - Stump, “Islam,” PP188-215

**A10—October 15:** Islam 2 - Winkler, Chapter 9. Reform in a Muslim Context: Contested Interpretations Through Time and Space - Yaser Ellethy

Winkler, Chapter 25. Between Fear, Freedom, and Control: Islam and the Construction of a Modern European Identity - Lucien van Liere

Film “Inside Mecca” (56 min)

**Study Day —October 16:** No Class


**Port Louis, Mauritius — October 19**

**Study Day —October 21:** No Class

**A12—October 22:** Migration and space - Winkler, Chapter 11. Christian Migrants and the Theology of Space and Place - Mechteld Jansen

Stump, “Migration,” PP63-76

**A13—October 24:** India - Stump, “The Indic Region,” PP39-48

Stump, “Hinduism,” PP113-120

**Cochin, India — October 25-30**

**Reflection and Study—October 31:** Global Studies Reflection

**A14—November 2:** Buddhism – Stump, “Buddhism,” PP133-158


Yangon, Myanmar — November 4-8


Community Programming — November 11: No Class


Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — November 14-18


Film “Path of the Soul” (1h55m)

Study Day — November 21: No Class


Shanghai, China — November 24-29


Kobe, Japan — December 2-6

A20—December 7: Film “The Marathon Monks of Mt. Hiei” (57 min)

A21—December 9:
Text and space - Winkler, Chapter 2. Texts as Places of Sacred Meeting: Towards an Ethic for Comparative and Interreligious Readings and Transgressions - Paul Hedges

Gender and space –
Winkler, Chapter 12. Transreligious Critical Hermeneutics and Gender Studies: Contested Gendered Spaces - Anne Hege Grung

Winkler, Chapter 13. Claiming Space for Women: Women Reading Scripture in Critical Dialogue - Gé Speelman


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

A23—December 13: Europe revisited - Winkler, Chapter 23. Europe as a Contested Space and European Cities as Shifting Symbols of Europe throughout History: Historical Changes in the Spatial Orientation of Europe and its Images of ‘Europeanness’ - Lourens Minnema

Winkler, Chapter 24. The Festival as Heterotopia in the City as Shared Religious Space - Jaco Beyers
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 Thursday, November 8 in Yangon, Myanmar.

**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.

Yangon, Myanmar – Thursday, November 8

Title: Sacred sites in Yangon (Rangoon) of Burma (Myanmar)

Description: Have a day trip in Yangon and its neighboring region, visit major religious including the Buddhist Kalaywa Monastery and Shwedagon Pagoda, the Hindu Shri Kali Temple, and the Catholic St. Mary’s Cathedral. Students will have close interactions with worshippers, priests, and other practitioners at these religious sites. They will experience Buddhist meditation and other rituals of Theravada Buddhism. They will analyze the relationship between the environment and religious sites, in particular the urban landscape of Yangon and holy places, and the rice farms of the countryside and embedded temples and shrines. We will watch the documentary “Burma VJ” before the trip, and during the trip, explore the organizational function which Buddhist temples served during the 2007 “Saffron revolution,” as well as the socio-political role in which these temples played in Burmese society today.
Objectives: 1. To become familiar with religious sites in Asia; 2. To witness Buddhist monastic life and their communities; 3. To investigate festivals and events held at religious sites; 4. To understand the role of religious sites in a rural society, and how a temple maintains its social network through villages in the agricultural hinterland. Thus to have a better understanding of the relationship between geography, ecology, and sacred sites.

Assignment due date: November 12

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:

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<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>97-100%</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-96%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>90-92%</td>
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<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>83-86%</td>
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<td>80-82%</td>
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<td>Less than 60%</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 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: John L. Esposito, Susan Tyler Hitchcock
PUBLISHER: National Geographic
ISBN #: 9781435141957
DATE/EDITION: 2012

FILM REQUEST

Title of Film: The Marathon Monks of Mt. Hiei
Distributor: DER Documentary by Christopher J. Hayden, 57 min, 2002

Title of Film: Jerusalem
Distributor: National Geographic 3D documentary by Daniel Ferguson, 45 min, 2013
http://www.jerusalemthemovie.com/

Title of Film: Inside Mecca
Distributor: National Geographic documentary by Anisa Mehdi, 56 min, 2003

Title of Film: Path of the Soul (Kang rinpoche)
Distributor: Yang Zhang, 1h55m, 2017

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

Google Earth offline version

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None