

Touro Institute  מכוך טרו
In Conjunction with



Anthropology of Religion



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

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About the Professor

Richley Crapo received his Ph.D. in anthropology in 1970 at the University of Utah. His doctoral dissertation was a study of the roles of the English and Shoshoni languages among the Duckwater Shoshoni Indians of eastern Nevada.

He has published books on the Shoshoni language of Nevada, the Quechua language of Bolivia, and on cross-cultural research in human psychology. He is also the author of the text you will use in this course. Prof. Crapo enjoys gold prospecting as a hobby



RICHLEY CRAPO

Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course presents a theoretical analysis of religion as a cultural phenomenon. It explores the functional relationships between religion, culture, society, and the individual.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS COURSE

This course contains reading assignments, video lectures, and other resources dealing with the anthropology of religion.

Text Book

Crapo, Richley H. 2002, Anthropology of Religion. McGraw-Hill.
ISBN: 0072387238

Video Lectures

Each topic area includes one or more video lectures presented by Prof. Crapo. Through the video lectures, Prof. Crapo shares anecdotes and examples that will enrich your understanding of religious beliefs and practices. In addition to viewing the video lectures, you may also access a PDF version of Prof. Crapo's lecture notes in outline form.

Images

Each chapter contains photographs depicting visual examples of topics discussed.

Other Resources

Each topic area includes a list of additional resources you may find useful in enhancing your understanding of the anthropology of religion.

Schedule

Chapter	Title	Reading	Video Lectures
1	Anthropological Viewpoints about Religion	Ch. 1	Video Lectures
2	Diversity and Unity in the World's Religions	Ch. 2	Video Lectures
3	The Psychology of Religion	Ch. 3	Video Lectures
4	Religious Myths and Symbols	Ch. 4	Video Lectures
5	Religion as Expressive Culture	Ch. 5	Video Lectures
6	Language, Belief, and Religion	Ch. 6	Video Lectures
7	Religious Ritual	Ch. 7	Video Lectures
8	Religious Social Organization	Ch. 8	Video Lectures
9	Religion and Society	Ch. 9	Video Lectures
10	Religious Adaptation and Change	Ch. 10	Video Lectures

Chapter 1

Reading Assignment: Foreword and Chapter 1, Anthropological Viewpoints about Religion

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- What is more central to religion - supernatural beliefs, a sense of the sacred, or values?
- How do religion and science differ in their methods and concepts? Are they complementary or incompatible?

Video Lectures

Introduction to Anthropological Viewpoints about Religion
([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Shoshone Water Baby ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Five Building Blocks of Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

1. Distinctive Beliefs ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))
2. Important Feelings ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))
3. Rituals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Shoshone Trances ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

4. Social Groups ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))
5. Symbolism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

LDS Creation Story ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Definition of Religion - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion#Defining .22religion.22](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion#Defining_.22religion.22)
- Symbolism - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_symbolism
- Religious Symbols Picture Dictionary - <http://altreligion.about.com/library/glossary/blsymbols.htm>
- Cathedrals - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cathedrals
- *Water Baby* a novel by Jack London) - <http://www.classicreader.com/read.php/sid.6/bookid.1053/>
- Chief Washakie Foundation (more information on water babies) - <http://www.windriverhistory.org/exhibits/ARARA/arara6.htm>
- Big Foot - <http://www.bfro.net/>
- Big Foot - <http://www.rense.com/ufo3/bigfootinbc.htm>
- Explanation for UFO's - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paranormal_and_Occult_Hypotheses_About_UFOs
- UFO Reporting (report a sighting) - <http://www.nwlink.com/~ufocntr/>
- Loch Ness Monster (2,800 photographs) - <http://images.google.com/images?q=loch+ness+monster&hl=en&lr=&domains=http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu&sa=N&tab=ii&oi=imagest>
- Religious Trances and Fits - <http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/titles/6724.html>
- LDS Church (Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints) - <http://www.lds.org>
- LDS Church (Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints) - <http://www.mormon.org>

Chapter 1 Lecture Notes

Religion: A Multi-Faceted Phenomenon

Religions have many facets that can be studied by anthropologists.

I. Beliefs

Recognizing if a belief is religious or not is not a simple process.

Most religions treat spiritual things as a part of daily life.

Most religions do not segregate them into a special day that is set apart from the mundane work. The lack of a word "religion" in most languages make it hard for researchers to simply ask, "Is that religion".

Outsider questioning Bigfoot, UFO's, Loch Ness Monster, Tooth Fairy, Santa Claus as beliefs or religious belief

Shoshone Water Baby

Star Wars and Luke Skywalker's "Force"

Mana in Christianity

II. Special Feelings

Religion involves special feelings that religious things evoke – like reverence, awe, and dread.

Connected to strange or unusual parts of natural environment

Deep caves for Maya of Central America.

III. Special Behaviors

Rituals – doing religious things

They are done with careful attention to detail and with important feelings that do not attend mere habitual behavior.

Christian sacrament of the Lord's Supper

IV. Social Bonds

Religion fosters loyalty to one's community, tribe, or nation.

Fourth of July celebrations in U.S. Christian denominations

V. Psychology of the Religious Life

Trance in Shoshone Curing ceremony

Puhakanti performed curing ceremonies by smoking tobacco during ritual to help him enter a trance state and connect with his spiritual partner.

VI. Symbolic Content

Examine "Texts" such as written scriptures, oral stories, symbolism in rituals, symbolism in architecture.

Christian Cathedrals

When seen from above, they take the form of a cross – a symbol of great meaning in their religion.

Jewish Mikvah

Mikvah involves immersion in water – a natural symbol of life and cleansing.

LDS Creation Story

Symbolism of free will versus coercion has center stage and is repeatedly emphasized, thereby communicating the importance of right choice.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

These are examples of "village guards" which traditionally stood outside Korean villages.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Outside the Shrine of the Emerald Buddha, Royal Palace Grounds, Bangkok, Thailand.

A ritual is done with careful attention and with important feelings that do not attend mere habitual behavior. The removal of one's shoes before entering sacred places is a ritual.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Most religions treat spiritual things as a part of daily life. A taxi rushes in front of a local business where a spirit house is believed to bring good fortune to the business owners. Bangkok, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Most religions treat spiritual things as a part of daily life. Wats (religious temples) are scattered throughout communities and are open every day of the week. No particular day of the week is set aside for worship.

Doi Suthep, Thailand.

Chapter 2

Reading Assignment: Chapter 2, Diversity and Unity in the World's Religions

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- The diversity of religious beliefs and practices
- Limitations on the diversity of religious beliefs and practices

Video Lectures

Introduction to Diversity and Unity in the World's Religions ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Supernatural Beliefs ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Anthropomorphic Beliefs ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Human Sexuality ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Pueblo Indians and Anthropomorphism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Anthropomorphism in Western Religions ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Dobuan Anthropomorphism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Feelings in Religious Settings ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Special Places among the Shwaras ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Southern California Natives: Ringing Rocks ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Relief from Distressful Emotions ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

18th Century Frontier New York ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Ritual Practices ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to Chapter 2 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Anthropomorphism - <http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropomorphism>
- Rain Dances - <http://www.britannica.com/ebi/article?tocId=9334115>
- Ringing Rocks in Pennsylvania - <http://www.unexplainedearth.com/ringing.php>
- Healings by Shamans - <http://www.civilization.ca/aborig/tsimsian/shacu01e.html>

Chapter 2 Lecture Notes

Diversity and Unity in Religions

Religions everywhere make use of the same basic building blocks

Supernatural Beliefs

Beliefs that attribute human-like characteristics to non human things

These beliefs do not have immediate practical consequences.

Because these beliefs do not have immediate practical consequences, they can be among the most diverse parts of human cultures.

Deva-Dasi Dancers

Contrast the different ideas about human sexuality in western religions with the treatment of sexuality as a means of experiencing the divine in the 10th – 13th century southern Indian Hinduism..

Pueblo Indians

Survived by gardening in the desert southwest of the U.S. prayed to clouds for rain.

Western Religions Personify God

Although rejecting physical anthropomorphism regarding God, they responds to human languages, feels love and compassion, and make decisions just as humans do.

Dobuans and Yams

Dobuans believe that Yams travel underground at night to visit other gardens much like young men visit neighboring villages at night..

Strong Feelings and Emotions

Feelings are often stronger in religious setting than they are in mundane ones.

Awe, reverence, dread of things because they are strange or unusual.

Ringing Stones

Ringing stone in southern California considered sacred.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

A Buddhist monk recites a prayer on food for the idol. The group then recites the prayer. Wat at Doi Suthep, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Non-human things are attributed with human characteristics.

In Thailand, Buddhists leave food and drink for the idol. Wat Phananchong, Ayutthaya, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

This woman is paying respects in Erawan square surrounded by skyscrapers in downtown Bangkok, Thailand. Interestingly, though most Thais are Buddhist, this shrine is to the Hindu god Brahma. The woman is most likely Buddhist, but like most Thais, finds it no contradiction to pay respects to or ask favors of local spirits.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Individual ritual.

A woman is praying to a Buddhist idol. Wat Phananchong, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Group performing ritual.

Group changing the robes of the Buddha. Wat Phananchong, Ayutthaya, Thailand.

Chapter 3

Reading Assignment: Chapter 3, The Psychology of Religion

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- Stress, emotion, rituals, and catharsis in religion
- Yanomamo Religion as projection of aggression
- The psychological functions of religion: religion and mental health
- Altered states of consciousness: visions and hallucinations--the neuropsychology of religious experiences
- How are religious trance states related to socialization, societal tensions, and personality types?
- What do traditional religious healers and western psychotherapists have in common?

Video Lectures

Introduction to The Psychology of Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Dreams among the Iroquois ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Dreams among the Senoi ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Effect of Religion on Emotions in Day-to-Day Life ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Effect of Religion on Attitudes ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Piety among the Apaches ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Effect of Religion on Mental Health ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Traditional Religious Healing vs. Psychotherapy ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Navajo Curing Ceremony ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religious Trances ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Brain Processes and Religious Experiences ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Near Death Experiences ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to Chapter 3 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Shamanism - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamanism>
- Dream Interpretation - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dream_interpretation
- Senoi of Malaysia: - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senoi>
- Near Death Experiences - <http://www.near-death.com/>
- Gnostic - <http://gnosis.org/gnintro.htm>

Chapter 3 Lecture Notes

Psychology of Religions

Religions influences human psychology in various ways.

I. Intellectual Effects

Explain things that people may have no current secular explanation for.

Explaining dreams, unconsciousness, and death.

In many cultures, dreams have been explained as experiences of the spirit when it travels outside the body during sleep.

Iroquois

Since dreams were sent from the gods, they carried a mandate to carry out the obligations implied by the dreams. The Iroquois held regular ceremonies to divine meanings of dreams and help dreamers fulfill obligations laid on them by their dreams.

Senoi of Malaysia

Treated dreams as matters of great importance. Adults met regularly every morning to discuss and interpret dreams. Developed a skill to consciously influence the course of their dreams. Dreams played a part in cultural change.

II. Affective Effects

Religion has affective effects in human life.

Religious experiences commonly bring peace of mind, especially concerning daily troubles.

Americans: Baptism and Mikvah

In large-scale societies, people worry about their rights being violated by the immoral or illegal behavior of others. Muggings, burglary, etc. These societies have rituals of purification.

III. Attitude Effects

Religion influences people's attitudes about various things.

Religion may influence our feelings about morality, piety, and politics.

IV. Mental Health Effects

The various effects on human psychology have a stabilizing influence and helps people cope more effectively with distressful emotions. Thus, religion tends to be correlated with various measures of positive mental health.

Traditional religious healing practices have many parallels to practices of western psychotherapy.

Ericksonian hypnotherapy

In large-scale societies, people worry about their rights being violated by the immoral or illegal behavior of others. Muggings, burglary, etc. These societies have rituals of purification.

Trance

Common in religious ceremonies. Brings a sense of "numinous" or the subjective sense of being outside one's own body. Researchers have begun to explore the brain processes that occur during trance states.

Near Death Experiences

Eugene D'Aquili and Andrew Newberg have found that the area of the brain responsible for helping us distinguish between external and internal experiences undergo marked changes during such activities as intense prayer or particularly spiritual meditative states.

Waterfalls, Caves

Unusual features of natural environment often treated as places of spiritual power.

Religious settings associated with catharsis-relief from distressful emotions.

18th Century Frontier New York

Religious enthusiasm, swooning, and "bodily exercises at camp revivals.

Holiness Churches of Appalachia

Speaking in tongues, shouting, and swooning remain common today.

Ritual Practices

All religions include both personal rituals and ceremonies performed in group settings.

Personal Rituals

Personal Prayer

Ritual for individual performed by another individual.

Shoshone Shaman

Shaman would perform a curing ritual

Ritual for group performed by an individual.

Priest

Performance of rites for a congregation by a pastor.

Rituals performed as a group.

Singing Hymns



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Religious experiences commonly bring peace of mind, especially concerning daily troubles.

This image of Buddha represents calming the waters. It symbolizes prevention from related altercations. Wat Phanachoeng, Ayutthaya, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Religion is used to explain things that may have no secular explanation such as death.

A shrine guards a graveyard in Thailand. Ayutthaya, Thailand.

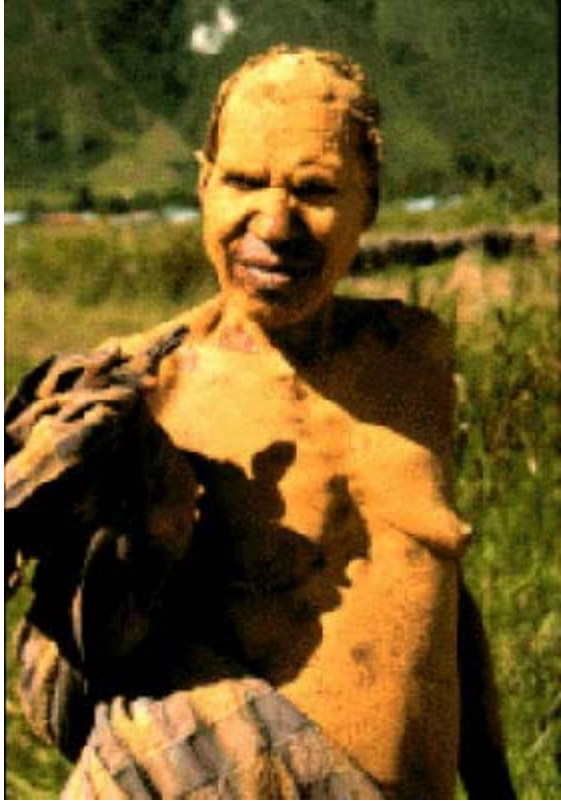


Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

A Dani Woman walking along a road in the Wmena Valley in Irian Jaya (West Papua), Indonesia. She has covered herself in yellow mud as a sign of mourning for a chief who recently died.

Chapter 4

Reading Assignment: Chapter 4, Religious Myths and Symbols

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- What do religious taboos reveal about the values of a society and how do taboos reinforce social stability?
- Is religion merely society's worship of itself?
- The structural analysis of myths--classic examples
- The structural analysis of myths--contemporary examples

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religious Myths and Symbols ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Symbolism in the Christian Baptism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Aztec Symbolism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Cosmology ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Yanomamo Creation Story ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Gnostic Godhead ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Common Elements: Basic Human Concerns and Conflicts ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Shoshone Animals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Fertility Deities ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Mythology ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Myths, Symbols and Star Trek ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Structural Meaning and Star Trek([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Structural Meaning and Cinderella ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Opposites Symbols among the Pueblos and Aztecs ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Legends ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Limits of Variability ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Hierarchical Societies and the Belief in a Supreme Being ([WMV](#))
([MOV](#))

Ancestral Spirits ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Reincarnation ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Personal Soul vs. Great Spirit ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Gods Who Sanction Morality ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sorcery and Witchcraft ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Artifacts Symbols ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to Chapter 4 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Myths - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion#Religion_and_myth
- Nezahualcoyotl's Poems - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nezahualcoyotl>
- Religious Cosmology - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmology#Religious_cosmology

Chapter 4 Lecture Notes

Religious Myths and Symbols

Religion is a realm of symbolism.

I. Multi-Layered symbolism

Most religious symbols have multiple layers of meaning.

Christian Baptism

II. Recurrent Symbolism

A religion's most important meanings are conveyed by recurrent symbolic expressions.

Mormon Creation Story

Freedom of choice becomes a recurring element.

Aztec Religion

The effemerality of existence, interplay of life and death symbolism.

Nezahualcoyotl's Poem

III. Cosmology

Anthropomorphic beings and powers and their relation to humans

Yanomamo

South American. The creation story.

Gnostic Godhead

The effemerality of existence, interplay of life and death symbolism.

The cosmology of many societies share common elements.

Relating to basic human concerns and conflicts such as economic, biological, social and sexual needs.

Foraging Societies

Use animal deities such as Shoshone Coyote

Agricultural Societies

Use fertility deities such as European Ceres and Persephone

IV. Myths

Malinowski: A sacred character that codifies belief. Leviticus: "God is holy, be thou also holy.

Mythic symbols play an important role in interpreting myths.

Star Trek

Bones is like the Id. Spock is the Superego. Kirk is the Ego.

Quetzalcoatl

Structural Meaning vs. Storyline.

Star Trek

Quest into the unknown, discovery of paradise, the god has feet of clay, Kirk overcomes the god, and the quest continues.

Mythemes

Units of meaning conveyed by repetitive symbolism.

Legends

Larger-than-life heroes who embody the values that society should emulate (and their opposites).

V. Limits of Variability

Supreme Being

Makes sense when there is political supremacy.

Polytheism

Specialization in social life.

Ancestral Spirits

When group is descended in a family line from ancestors who controlled the same means of livelihood.

Reincarnation

Identity based on membership in small, continuing local groups

Personal Soul

Versus "great spirit"

Gods who sanction morality

Sorcery and witchcraft

Navajo witchcraft

VI. Artifacts as Symbols

Cathedrals and Temples

Holy Water

Keris Knives

Clerical Collars

Southwest Indian Katchinas

Balanes Masks

Barong (Lord of the Forest) versus Rangda (Queen of Death)



Image courtesy Jennifer Jorgensen

Symbolism.

Different poses of Buddha symbolize different things.

Display in museum, Doi Suthep, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Multi-layered symbolism.

Burning incense has many different symbolic meanings such as carrying a prayer or spirit to heaven and offering a sweet aroma to God.

Buddhists burn incense in front of a large Reclining Buddha. royal Palace Grounds, Bangkok, Thailand.



Image courtesy of
Prof. Richley Crapo

A Koshari Kachina, also called Clown, Glutton, and Hano Clown, is the representation of an important Pueblo deity who is both sacred and profane. The Koshari is expected to violate various norms of acceptable behavior and symbolizes the lack of impulse control of unsocialized youths. This is one of many versions of the Koshari Kachina.



Image courtesy of Prof. Richley Crapo

Artifacts as symbols.

Every adult Malay man is expected to own a keris knife such as this one. Keris are pattern-welded blades that can be any shape or size. The surface contains hundreds of different patterns.



Image courtesy of Prof. Richley Crapo

Artifacts as symbols.

Masks are important to many religions. This mask is used in Bali to reenact Balinese mythology



Image courtesy of Prof. Richley Crapo

Many North American Indians carry medicine bags as a spiritual benefit. "Medicine" here is the common English word that refers to the idea of things that are sacred or endowed with spiritual power. The bags contain a variety of sacred objects that the owner has selected based on their personal spiritual significance.



Image courtesy of Prof. Richley Crapo

Prayer wheels both large and small are used in Nepalese Buddhism. By twirling the weight on the end of the chain, the body of the prayer wheel is rotated, causing prayers to ascend.

Prayer wheel from Nepal.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Multi-layered symbolism and legends.

Kal Bhairav, the Lord of Destruction. This fearsome 10-foot tall stone figure is another of the many aspects of Shiva. Atop his wide-eyed face is a crown decorated with human skulls. On his back is a human skin. The prostrate figure upon which Kal Bhairav is standing represents human ignorance. It is also said that the prone figure is Kal Bhairav's father-in-law, who insulted Shiva and caused his own daughter, Kal Bhairav's wife, to commit suicide. Kal Bhairav has six arms, and in one of his hands he holds a skull cup that worshipers often toss coins into. There are always a few boys around to quickly snatch them up.

Erected in the 17th or 18th century, the statue was supposedly used as a lie detector. People suspected of committing a crime would be brought before the statue, made to touch its feet, and then forced to say whether or not they committed the crime. It was believed that if they lied, they would immediately bleed to death. The mere threat of being brought before Kal Bhairav was often enough to elicit a confession.



Image courtesy of Prof. Richley Crapo

"Dry paintings" are made from a variety of ground minerals. They play an important role in curing ceremonies. The designs represent important symbols from Navajo mythology. There are many different designs, each made up of sacred symbols that relate to a specific curing ceremony. True dry paintings are produced for a single ceremony and then removed and returned to nature at the end of the ceremony. Those produced for sale to tourists never include the full, sacred pattern of a ceremonial dry painting.

Chapter 5

Reading Assignment: Chapter 5, Religion as Expressive Culture

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- Religion, play, art, love, and mental disorders: the fuzzy boundaries
- Natural symbols
- What does a religion reveal about a society's structure and values?

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religion as Expressive Culture ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Feelings in Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Yanomamo Healing Ritual ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Western Rituals and Feelings ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Values, Piety, Morality ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Apache Piety ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Values, Piety, and Morality Continued ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Natural Symbols ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Symbolism in the Christian Baptism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Human Body ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Nature as a Source of Symbols ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to Chapter 5 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Mysticism - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mysticism>
- Definition of Legend - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legends>
- The Holy Grail - <http://historymedren.about.com/od/holygrail/>
- Robin Hood - <http://www.boldoutlaw.com/>
- Witchcraft - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witches>
- Witches (a list of additional readings and websites about witches) - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witches#Additional_Reading
- Kachinas (photos) - <http://www.alltribes.com/catalog/Kachina-Doll-p-1-c-134.html>
- Balinese Masks - <http://www.geocities.com/intrepidberkeleyexplorer/Page21A.html>

Chapter 5 Lecture Notes

Religion as Expressive Culture

I. Expressive Culture

Often difficult to study because of the difference in emotions and diversity of forms within the art.

Characteristics of Expressive Culture

II. Feelings in Religion

Ritual and feelings

The Numinous: Experience of the Holy.

Mysticism

Values

Piety and Morality

III. Natural Symbols

East vs. West

Caves and the underworld

Mountains and the heavens

Stars as Gods

Psychoactive Plants



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Religion as expressive culture.

Religion has affected the architecture of Thailand for hundreds of years. Pictured is detail work on ancient ruins in Sukho Thai, Thailand which was at one time a capital city.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Natural Symbols

This Wat is commonly called "Golden Mountain." Mountains naturally symbolize ascending to heaven. One can climb the many steps to reach the top of the structure to find a Buddhist shrine and therefore, symbolically ascend to heaven. Wat Phuukhawthong, Ayutthaya, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Graceful Buddhas.

Art and religion are both parts of expressive culture, and art often plays a role in religious ritual and in communicating religious messages. These graceful Buddhas decorate the courtyard of a temple in Luang Prabang, Laos

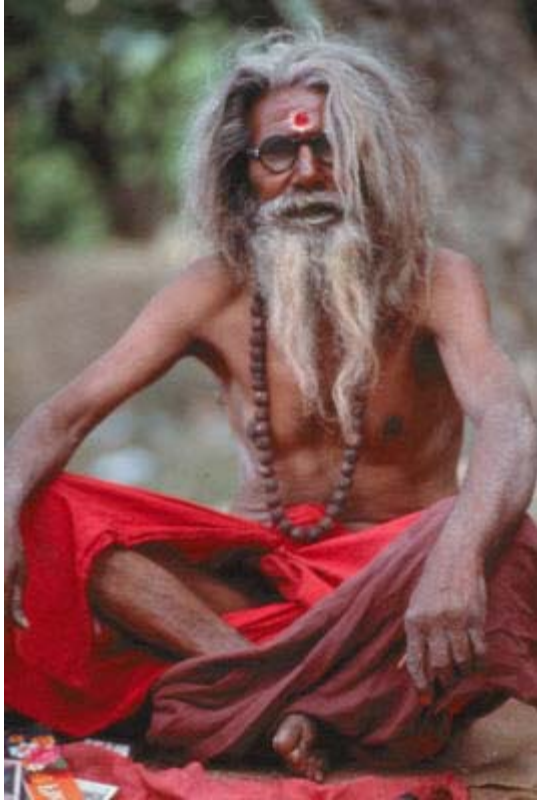


Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

An Ascetic Reuncliate.

This Hindu Sadhu, or wandering ascetic, is sitting at the foot of the steps at Swayambhunath temple, Katmandu, Nepal.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Religion as expressive culture.

Thai dancing tells religious and secular stories and legends. Bangkok, Thailand.

Chapter 6

Reading Assignment: Chapter 6, Language, Belief, and Religion

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- Diversity within religion
- Religious language as a restricted code
- Is it possible to translate the sacred texts without distorting their religious messages?
- How does language influence religious thought?

Video Lectures

Introduction to Language, Belief, and Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Literalism vs. Figurativism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Christian Flood Story ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Diversity and Uniformity within Religious Traditions ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Language in Religious Practice ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Restricted vs. Elaborated Codes and Linguistic Taboos ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Restricted Codes ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Elaborated Codes ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Taboos ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Language in Ritual ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Paradox in Religious Thought ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Paradox of Evil ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sacred Texts ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Written Texts ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Language Change and Religious Meaning ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sacredness of the Texts ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Translating Ancient Texts ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to chapter 6 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Glossolalia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossolalia>
- Noah's Ark and The Flood - <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-abr/abr-a001.html>
- Catholic Liturgies - <http://www.catholicliturgy.com/index.cfm/FuseAction/documentTest/Index/2/SubIndex/40/ContentIndex/390/Start/389>
- Canonical Text - http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/bible_e-tex

Chapter 6 Lecture Notes

Language and Religion

Language and religion are intimately connected. Without language, religion would not be possible

I. Interpretation

Language is used to teach and interpret religious beliefs, many of which are expressed as oral or written texts.

Stories do not interpret themselves.

We humans have to interpret their meaning.

There is no inherent right or wrong interpretation of religious texts; there is only tradition.

The ability to interpret the same texts differently is the basis for new denominations arising even in the same religion.

“And the flood covered the whole land.”

Sharing Interpretations brings unity.

It is the sharing of a traditional set of interpretations that gives a religion unity, but even within a given religion the interpretations may change over time.

Cultural relativistic versus ethnocentric interpretations Original meanings versus interpretations that are meaningful to later peoples.

Language changes bring religious changes.

Since language itself changes with time, religious understandings may change for purely linguistic reasons.

“Avoid the very appearance of evil.”

II. Diversity Within Religion

Geographical Diversity.

Dutch versus other Catholics

Social Diversity

For example the top versus the bottom of social status and their religion.

Theology School and “Sunday School”

Change over time.

Brigham Young and “modesty”

Southern Baptists and Slavery

III. Attitudes Toward Diversity

Hinduism

Judaism (orthopraxis)

“Two Jews, three opinions”

Christianity

Heresy and Orthodoxy

IV. Language in Religious Practice

Liturgical Orders

More or less invariant sequences encoded by persons other than the performers.

Restricted versus elaborated codes

Linguistic taboos (“anti-rituals”)

Sanctity as expression of the unspoken order

The sacred as not to be questioned.

V. Language in Ritual

Prayer

Song and chant

Exhortation

Reciting the code (liturgical responses)

Glossolalia

VI. Paradox in Religious Thought

Origin of humans

Anthropomorphic creators

Christianity and the problem of evil

VII. Sacred Texts

Oral texts

Written texts

Sacredness of the texts

Islam and Arabic

Hebrew burial of worn texts

Translating Ancient texts

Canon (which documents are sacred)

Textual basis (which early version)

Interpretation (meaning of the ancient language)

Style (e.g., literal or idiomatic; formal or informal)

VIII. Language and Ideology

Max Mueller

Religion as disease of language

Linguistic Relativity

Creation itself demands a creator



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Interpretation of stories.

The cabinet engravings tell the story of Buddha becoming enlightened (right) and Buddha in the former existence. Museum, Doi Suthep, Thailand.

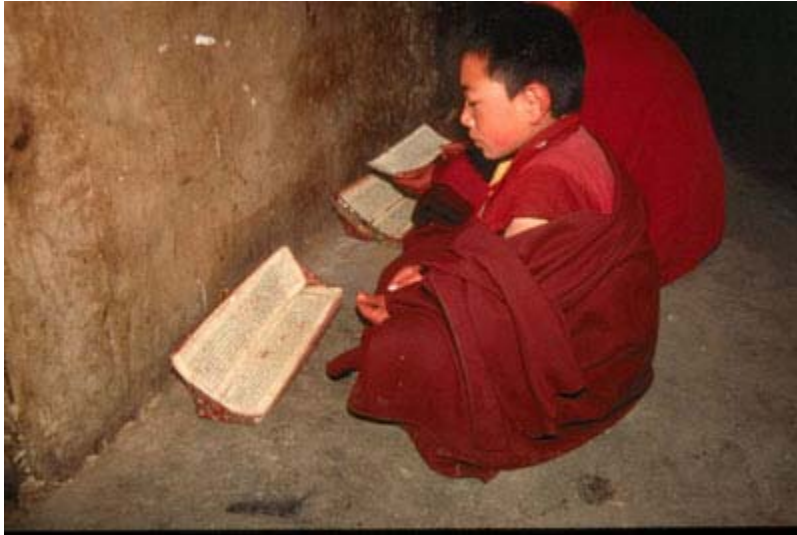


Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Sacred Religious Texts and Commentaries.

Sacred religious texts usually include both scriptures that are regarded as having an inspired origin and later religious commentaries on those texts that are viewed as authoritative interpretations of those scriptures.

These young monks in the Tsurphu Monastery in Tibet are reciting prayers from sacred texts.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Interpretation of stories.

Many Wats are decorated with art on their walls. This art tells important historical stories. Royal Palace Grounds, Bangkok, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Interpretation of stories.

The White Elephant is a legendary character in the Thai tradition. This particular story tells of the king placing religious artifacts on the back of the White Elephant and setting it free. The elephant wandered for a long time and finally stopped on the top of a mountain where it then collapsed from exhaustion. The kings then built a Wat on top of the mountain. Thai tradition interprets the story to mean the elephant sacrificed its life to find a suitable place for the artifacts. Doi Suthep, Thailand.

Chapter 7

Reading Assignment: Chapter 7, Religious Ritual

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- What are the psychological and social functions of ritual?
- Why do people practice rituals?
- How could magic be both "false" and "useful" at the same time?
- How do rituals symbolize the stresses and tensions of social life?

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religious Ritual ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Mormon Sacrament ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Participation in Rituals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Rituals in the Human Lifecycle ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Rituals as Sacred Underwriting of Ideology ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Ritual as Influence ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Technological Rituals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Rituals as Therapy and Anti-Therapy ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Salvation Rituals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Mysticism and Salvation in Rituals ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Manipulation and Petition ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Shoshone Love Magic ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to chapter 7 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Rituals - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ritual>
- Pilgrimages - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pilgrimage>

Chapter 7 Lecture Notes

Religious Ritual

I. Ritual and Meaning

Communication without information.

Reaffirmation through predictability

Rituals communicate status change.

Holy Orders

II. Ritual as Sacred Underwriting of Ideology

Ultimate Sacred Postulates

The most sacred beliefs that define the essential basis of an ideology

Ritual as ground of sanctity

Participation transforms nonconformity into hypocrisy

III. Ritual as Influence

Technology Rituals

Divination, fertility of crops, protection

Therapy and Anti-therapy

Salvation

Spirit possession, mystical experience, becoming a shaman or prophet

Egypt and Mummy

Manipulation and Petition

Magic: Law of Similarity and Law of Contagion

Shoshone love magic

Worship

IV. Ritual and Social Unity

Participation is a religious act and an act of loyalty to the values communicated by the ritual.

Pilgrimage as reenactment

Language change and religious meaning

2 Thessalonians 5:22 “Abstain from the very appearance of evil”



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Pilgrimage as ritual of social unity.

Buddhists of Thailand make pilgrimages from all over to visit the Shrine of the Emerald Buddha located on the Royal Palace Grounds, Bangkok, Thailand. When they kneel in front of any image of the Buddha, they are careful not to point the soles of their feet at the image.



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Technology rituals.

After their first sale of the day, Thai market merchants tap the items in their store with the money from the sale to bring good fortune and increase sales. Bangkok, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Shamanic Divination Ritual.

This shaman is reading the palm of a client at Batu Caves in Malaysia. Divination, like curing, is a common part of the shamanic cult institutions of religions throughout the world.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Expiation Rituals.

This man shows his devotion by having skewered his cheeks at the Hindu Thaipusam festival, Batu Caves, Malaysia.

Chapter 8

Reading Assignment: Chapter 8, Religious Social Organization

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- How do shamans, priests, and prophets differ?
- What causes the professionalization of religious specialists and the declining role of charisma?
- Does growth inevitably change the nature of religious organizations and leadership?
- Is religious ideology best defined by the beliefs of religious specialists or the beliefs of other followers, and how is it possible for the two to differ?

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religious Social Organization: Cult Institutions ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Practitioners ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Shamans ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Five Types of Illnesses Healed by Shamans ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Soul Loss ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Spirit Possession ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Object Intrusion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sorcery and Witchcraft ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Taboo Violation ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sorcerers ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Priests ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Prophets ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Sect, Cult, and Church ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to chapter 8 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Definition of Cult - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cult_%28religion%29
- Definition of Sorcerer - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sorcerers>
- Definition of Priest - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priest>
- Definition of Prophet - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophet>

Chapter 8 Lecture Notes

Religious Social Organization

I. Cult Institutions

Anthony Wallace

II. Practitioners

Shamans

Soul Loss

Spirit Possession

Object Intrusion

Sorcery and Witchcraft

Taboo Violation

Sorcerers

Priests

Prophets

II. Religious Social Organizations

Shamanic Religions

Communal Religions

Ecclesiastical Religions

IV. Denominational Size and Support for Societal Values

Sects and Cults

UFO Church

Churches



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

This woman is paying respects to Buddhist monks, perhaps asking for a blessing during an annual event in northern Thailand when offerings are given to the local monastery.

They give practical things like buckets of food, soap, toothpaste, etc. The givers gain merit and the monks who can not handle money or own property get things they can use.

Chapter 9

Reading Assignment: Chapter 9, Religion and Society

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- Religion, politics, and the social order
- State churches and civil religion
- Religion and economics
- Religion and gender

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religion and Society ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religion and the Social Order - Among the Aboriginal Australians ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religious Ritual in Large Scale Societies ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religion and Politics ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Civil Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Examples of Civil Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religion and Economics ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Hindu Jatis ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Weber's "Protestant Ethic" ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Religion and Gender ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Gender Stratification ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Economics and Gender Stratification ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Women's Cults ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Impact of Socioeconomic Factors on Religious Status ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to chapter 9 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Cults - <http://www.questia.com/Index.jsp?CRID=cults&OFFID=sel&KEY=cults>
- Definition of Theocracy - http://www.cqpress.com/context/articles/epr_theo.html
- Sumer - <http://history-world.org/sumeria.htm>
- Argument for state theocracies in the U.S. - <http://atheism.about.com/b/a/019207.htm>
- Separation of church and state - <http://atheism.about.com/od/churchstate/>
- Medieval theocracies in a modern age - <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/399/op5.htm>
- Hindu Jatis - <http://www.kamakoti.org/hindudharma/part20/chap1.htm>

Chapter 9 Lecture Notes

Religion and Society

I. Religion and Social Order

Religion and Politics

Theocracies: Ancient Sumer

Religion and political loyalty

Politicians and religion

Civil Religion

Religion and Economics

Hindu jatis

Weber's "Protestant Ethic"

Calvinism and work

II. Religion and Gender

Gender in religion

Shamanism

Gender stratification: Melanesia and Australia

Women's Cults (spirit possession)



Image courtesy of Jennifer Jorgensen

Religion and politics.

In Thailand, images of the king are frequently found on huge displays along the roadsides and in homes of the people. He is seen as a political and religious figure. The people have great respect for the king and his leadership. Ayutthaya, Thailand.



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman



Image courtesy of Bryan Spykerman

Buddhist initiation of boys in Mae Hong Song NW Thailand.

Chapter 10

Reading Assignment: Chapter 10, Religious Adaptation and Change

As you read, consider the following questions and/or ideas:

- What role does religion play in the survival of a society?
- The adaptive functions of the Hebrew forbidden pig
- The adaptive functions of the Hindu sacred cow

Video Lectures

Introduction to Religious Adaptation and Change ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Changes in Mormon Modesty ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Adaptation of Religious Symbolism ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Societal Hierarchies and Perceptions of Deity ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Adaptation ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Secularization ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Revitalization Movements ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

The Future of Religion ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Conclusion to chapter 10 ([WMV](#)) ([MOV](#))

Additional Resources

- Biography of Emile Durkheim - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emile_Durkheim
- Durkheim's Theories - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emile_Durkheim#Theories_and_Ideas
- Witch Hunts - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witchhunt>
- Islamic Fundamentalism - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_fundamentalism
- Nativistic Movements - <http://alexm.here.ru/mirrors/www.enteract.com/jwalz/Eliade/195.html>

Chapter 10 Lecture Notes

Religious Adaptation and Change

I. The Conservative Function of Religion

Durkheim's insight

Women as witches during the Inquisition

II. Religious Change

Secularization

Accommodation, Confrontation, and Resistance

Revitalization Movements

Nativistic Movements

Revitalization Process

Fundamentalist Movements: Response to Secularization

Islamic Fundamentalism

The Future of Religion