

ASLC-31: Asian Studies Colloquium - Locating the Sacred in Asia

MW 2:00-3:20 pm
Fayerweather 113

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THE COURSE

Every culture holds something to be sacred, but cultures differ, often dramatically, in the ways in which they distribute sacredness in the world. These differences, moreover, can tell us a great deal about the world views and value systems of the cultures in question. This course focuses on the ways in which Asian civilizations have constructed and projected concepts of the sacred, with special reference to Japan and India. In Asia, as elsewhere, places, objects, and persons can be considered sacred, and these domains will be central to the course. Course readings will include theoretical speculation about the sacred as a human response to the cosmos, as well as material on pilgrimage, iconography, and charismatic leadership in Asian cultures.

REQUIREMENTS

- Regular attendance and completion of the readings before class meetings is expected.
- A paper five pages in length, **Due February 21**
- A paper five pages in length, **Due March 12**
- A paper of three pages in length, **Due April 18**
- A final paper ten pages in length, **Due May 10**

BOOKS

The following titles are available at Amherst Books:

Diana Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*.

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. *In Praise of Shadows*.

Lecture Schedule

1/24 (Mon) Introduction to the Course (1)

1/26 (Wed.) Sacred Symbols and Social Context (2)

Read:

A. Danto, "Artifact and Art"

E. Durkheim, Selections from *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*.

William Paden, *Interpreting the Sacred*, pp. 28-47.

THE SACRED IN SOCIAL CONTEXT

1/31 (Mon.) Image and Tradition: India (3)

Read:

D. Eck, *Darśan*, entire

2/2 (Wed.) Image and Tradition: *Kami* and Buddhas in Early Japan—Kōfukuji (4)

Read:

H. Byron Earhart, "Early Japanese Buddhism"

A. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, pp. 15-31, 44-64

N. Inoue, "Introduction: What is Shintō?"

S.C. Morse, "Jingūji—Sacred Sites of Religious Mediation in Early Japan"

R. Tyler, "Religion and the Honji Suijaku Mandara"

2/7 (Mon.) India: Caste (5)

Read:

Rig Veda: 10.90

P. Olivelle, trans., *The Law Code of Manu*, pp. 19-20.

S. Wadley, *Struggling with Destiny in Karimpur, 1925-1984*, pp. 8-16, 77-105.

2/9 (Wed.) India: A Caste and a Goddess (6)

Read:

Michael Meister, "Light on the Lotus."

L. A. Babb, "Cleaving to the Goddess."

2/14 (Mon.) Japan: Icon and Syncretism (7)

Read:

B. Faure, "Iconic Imagination"

A. Grapard, "'Ritual and Ideology"

N. McMullin, "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace"

S.C. Morse, "The Jingo-ji Yakushi and the Rise of the Plain-wood Style"

2/16 (Wed.) Japan: Portrait and Syncretism (8)

Read:

H. Brinker, "Facing the Unseen"

C. Guth, "Kaikai's Statue of Hachiman at Tōdai-ji"

S.C. Morse, "Animating the Image"

S. Nodelman, "How to Read a Roman Portrait"

SACRED PLACES

2/21(Mon.) India: City of Light (9)

Read:

Alan Morinis, "Introduction" to Morinis, ed., *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, pp. 1-28.

Diana Eck, *Banaras*, selections.

Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Hindu Myths*, pp. 141-49, 162-68.

2/23 (Wed.) India: City of Death (10)

Read:

Jonathan Parry, *Death in Banaras*, selections

2/28 (Mon.) India: Jains (11)

Read:

L. A. Babb, *Absent Lord*, 1-8, 38-63.

Suketu Mehta, "Good-bye World," in *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found*, pp. 497-540.

3/2 (Wed.) India: A Sacred Cosmography (12)

Read:

John Cort, *Framing the Jina*, pp. 67-111.

3/7 (Mon.) Japan: Pilgrimage and Sacred Cosmography (13)

Read:

James Foard, "Boundaries of Compassion: Buddhism and National Tradition in Japanese Pilgrimage"

L. Kaufman, "Nature, Courtly Imagery and Sacred Meaning in the *Ippen Hijiri-e*"

S.C. Morse, "Pilgrimage for Pleasure"

Sarah Thal, "Kompira: Site of the Gods"

3/9 (Wed.) Japan: Mt. Fuji—Sacred Mountain, Cultural Symbol (14)

Read:

T. Clark, *100 Views of Mt. Fuji*, pp. 8-25

A. Grapard, Allan G. "Flying Mountains and Walkers of Emptiness: Sacred Space in Japanese Religions"

I. Hori, "Mountains and Their Importance for the Idea of the Other World"

B. Moeran and L. Skov, "Mount Fuji and the Cherry Blossoms"

H. Byron Earhart, "Mount Fuji and Shugendō"

3/21 (Mon.) Japan: Sacred Sites in Contemporary Japan—Hiroshima (15)

Read:

James Foard, "The Universal and the Particular in the Rites of Hiroshima."

Carola Hein, "Hiroshima: The Atomic Bomb and Kenzō Tange's Hiroshima Peace Center"

SACRED PERSONS

3/23 (Wed.) Charisma and an Indian Example (16)

Read:

Daniel Pals, *Eight Theories of Religion*, pp. 153-71, 177-79.

Max Weber, "The Prophet," in *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff, pp. 46-59).

Max Weber, Max Weber, "The Sociology of Charismatic Authority," in H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber*, pp. 294-99.

L. A Babb, *Redemptive Encounters*, pp, 159-201.

3/28 (Mon.) Japan: Prince Shōtoku--From Statesman to Buddhist Exemplar (17)

Read:

William Deal, "Hagiography and History: The Image of Prince Shōtoku

Kimio Itō, "The Invention of *Wa*"

Alexander Soper, "A Pictorial Biography of Prince Shōtoku"

3/30 (Wed.) Japan: Shinran—Bridging the Sacred and Secular Divide (18)

Read:

James Dobbins, "The Biography of Shinran"

James Dobbins, "Portraits of Shinran in Medieval Pure land Buddhism"

Masao Fujii, "Founder Worship in Kamakura Buddhism

K. Lee, "Shōtoku and Shinran's Buddhism"

4/4 (Mon.) India: the Independence Movement (19)

Read:

Barbara and Thomas Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, pp.167-230. (print reserve).

Homer Jack, *The Gandhi Reader*, pp. 104-121, 235-242, 248-253, 473-475, 487-489.

4/6 (Wed.) India: Gandhi (20)

Read:

Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, "The Traditional Roots of Gandhi's Charisma," pp. 157-183, 192-240

4/11 (Mon.) India: Charisma Routinized (21)

In-class film and discussion: Sadhus: India's Holy Men, part 2

4/13 (Wed.) Japan: New Religious Movements (22)

Read:

Ken Arai, "New Religious Movements"

S. Shimazono, "In the Wake of Aum"

Nancy Stalker, "Deguchi Onisaburō"

NATION, STATE AND THE SACRED

4/18 (Mon.) Nations (23)

Read:

B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 5-19, 37-46.

J. Breuill, "Approaches to Nationalism," in *Formen des nationalien Bewusstseins im Lichte zeitgenössischer Nationalismustheorien*, ed. Eva Schmidt-Hartmann, pp. 15-38.

Uri Ra'anan, "Nation and State, Order out of Chaos," in *State and Nation in Multi-ethnic Societies: The Breakup of Multinational States*, eds. Uri Ra'anan et al., pp. 3-19.

David Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics and Power*, pp. 5-8, 15-29

4/20 (Wed.) India's National Identity (24)

Read:

Pankaj Mishra, "The Invention of the Hindu," *Axess*, 2004, No. 2.

Jawaharalal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, pp. 63-66, 237-242, 262-268.

Stephen Hay, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition*, pp. 228-231, 289-295.

4/25 (Mon.) The Politics of Ramrajya (25)

Read:

Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civil Life*, pp. 55-86.

Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, pp. 107-109.

Mark Tully, "The Rewriting of the Ramayan." In Mark Tully, *No Full Stops in India*, pp. 127-152

Pankaj Mishra, "Ayodhya: The Modernity of Hinduism."

[in class showings of Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan*]

4/27 (Wed.) Japan's Imperial Cult—Emperor Meiji (26)

Read:

T. Fujitani, "Fabricating Imperial Ceremonies"

Carol Gluck, "The Modern Monarch"

A. Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution."

S. Shimazono, "State Shinto in the Lives of the People"

5/2 (Mon.) The Aesthetics of Japanese Nationalism (27)

Read:

"Fundamentals of Japanese Polity"

K. Kamei, *Return to the East*

K. Okakura, "The Cup of Humanity"

K. Okakura, "The Range of Ideas," and "The Vista"

Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*

5/4 (Wed.) Concluding Discussion