

Friday Bulletin, February 28, 2014

Department of Religion, University of Florida

Upcoming Lectures

Professor **Jacob K. Olupona** will be giving the second 2014 Delton Scudder lecture. The talk, "Transnational Migration: America's Emerging African Diaspora," will take place March 19, 2014, from 3:30 - 5:00pm, in Grinter Hall, Room 404, with a reception to follow.

Dr. Olupona is Professor of African Religious Traditions at Harvard Divinity School and Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences. He studied at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Boston University where he received his Ph.D. in Comparative Religion in 1983. He has authored, edited, and co-edited a number of books, including *City of 201 Gods: Ilé-Ifè in Time, Space, and the Imagination*; *Òrìsà Devotion as World Religion: The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture*; *Beyond Primitivism: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Modernity*; and *Kingship, Religion, and Rituals in a Nigerian Community: A Phenomenological Study of Ondo Yoruba Festivals*. This event is co-sponsored by UF's Center for African Studies.

Publications

Professor **Vasudha Narayanan** is an Associate Editor of the volume, *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism, volume 5* (out of 6), *Symbolism, Diaspora, Modern Groups and Teachers* (Brill, 2013, 776 pp.), along with Angelika Malinar, and Helene Basu; the Chief Editor is Knut Jacobsen.

Professor **Vasudha Narayanan** has published several essays in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism, volume 5* (out of 6), *Symbolism, Diaspora, Modern Groups and Teachers*, including "Om," "Hinduism in the United States," "Lotus," "Tilaka and other Forehead Marks," "Cakra," "Salagrama," and "Melmaruvathur Movement."

Professor **Vasudha Narayanan's** article, "Who is the Strong-Armed Monkey who Churns the Ocean of Milk?" appeared in *UDAYA: Journal of Khmer Studies*, vol. 11, 3-28. *UDAYA*, vol. 11, just became an on-line, open-access journal and articles may be read by logging on to <http://yosothor.org/udaya/>

This month saw the publication by Professors **Andrea Sterk** (History) and **Nina Caputo** (History) of their edited volume: *Faithful Narratives: Historians, Religion, and the Challenge of Objectivity* (Cornell University Press). This book presents a rich variety of approaches to the study of religious beliefs, practices, and communities in a historical context. Read more about the volume here: <http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/?GCOI=80140100242420>

News

Professor **Robin Wright** is now the Faculty Advisor for the College, of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Program (NAIS), meaning that the existing Minor in American Indian and Indigenous Studies, formerly housed in the Anthropology Department, is now based in Religion. A core group of faculty and graduate students met last Tuesday to discuss (1) outreach to native students and faculty at UF; (2) consolidation of already existing courses and resources in the University for the purpose of printing a brochure on the Program in the near future; (3) possibilities of support from external funding organizations; (4) preparation of new course proposals to submit to the Curriculum Committee; and (5) groundwork research prior to presenting a proposal for the B.A. Major. The principal objective of the program is to turn the Minor into a B.A. Major, on the same level as most universities around the country, and to make visible what already exists more effectively. Any students interested in either the graduate interdisciplinary concentration of the undergraduate program, or the Major in NAIS Program, please contact Dr. Wright at 392-1625.

Links to Professor **Bron Taylor's** lecture on "Spirituality after Darwin," and to an NPR radio interview, given last week at the University of Tennessee, are available at the David L. Dugan Memorial Lecture Series website, here: <http://religion.utk.edu/news/dungan.php>.

Professor **Zoharah Simmons** will be on a panel at the Ford Foundation in New York on Thursday, March 6, 2014, at their screening of the new PBS documentary, "Freedom Summer," directed by award winning filmmaker, Stanley Nelson. The film examines "an often overlooked but essential chapter in the Civil Rights Movement: the 1964 interracial Freedom Summer campaign where hundreds of volunteers faced death threats and intimidation to register African Americans in Mississippi." Joining Simmons on the panel after the screening will be Stanley Nelson, the film's director, and Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Direct-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF).

March 7-9, 2014, Professor **Zoharah Simmons** will serve as a consultant and travel with a U.S. Congregational Delegation, led by Congressman John Lewis (D. Georgia), on their annual pilgrimage to Selma, Alabama, in memory of "Bloody Sunday" (March 7, 1965), when 600 Civil Rights activists led by the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Council) and SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), including Congressman Lewis, were brutally beaten as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge on their march for voting rights. This year the pilgrimage will visit the Mississippi Delta to learn about Mississippi Freedom summer before traveling by bus to Selma, Alabama.

On March 6, 2014, Professor **Manuel Vásquez** will be giving a presentation entitled "Materiality, Globalization, and the Aesthetics of Latin American and African Pentecostals" at Ohio State University's Center for the Study of Religion.

News from the Job Front

Caleb Simmons (PhD Candidate, Religions of Asia Track) has accepted an offer to become an Assistant Professor of Hinduism in South Asia and the Modern World at the University of Arizona. Congratulations Caleb!

Rose T. Caraway (PhD 2011, Religion in the Americas Track) has accepted a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Iowa State University. The position is in World Religions, with a regional specialization in Latin America and the Caribbean. She will pursue research in the field of religion and environmental ethics, with a focus on sustainable agriculture and food systems in Cuba. Congratulations Rose!