

INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

SPRING SEMESTER 2017

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DEPARTMENTS OF RELIGION & ANTHROPOLOGY

REL3938 SECT. 1255;

ANT3930 SECT. 2H15

ANG6930 SECT. 2H20

MWF 10:40-11:30 AND 101

Office Hours: MWF 11:35 - 1:30

Anderson Hall 107C

Objectives of the course: This course seeks to understand comparatively the religious traditions of indigenous peoples from selected areas of the globe: the cultures of the Pacific, including Polynesia and Melanesia. The central objectives of our studies of these religious traditions are to comprehend the principles by which cosmogonies (the creation) are founded, cosmologies (worldviews) are constructed, the variety of beings that populate the cosmos are inter-related, and eschatologies (views on the end-of-times) are envisaged. The course will begin with readings on the ways in which scholars have approached the study of traditional religions. Then, we will discuss the ways in which native peoples understand the cosmos, their place in it and the moral responsibilities humans have in relation to each other and to all other living entities. We will also discuss how religious traditions have actively shaped their histories of relations with non-indigenous peoples (the West), which can often be seen in religious movements, for example, prophetism.

Following this introduction, the course enters into a reading and discussion of ethnographies and comparisons among the religious traditions of native Hawaiians; native peoples of Fiji; the Maori of New Zealand; peoples of Papua New Guinea.

A series of central themes and questions will guide our readings, discussions and paper-writing:

- Cosmogony, or, the beginning of the cosmos;

- Systems and properties of inter-related temporal and spatial structures of the cosmos;
- Sacred geography (and especially, sacred sites) and astronomy in traditional cosmologies;
- How do indigenous religious traditions actively incorporate notions of history and change into their spiritualities ?
- How do different peoples understand their “place” and moral responsibilities in the cosmos and relations to other beings ?
- Understandings of illness and health, the process of healing, within the wider context of beliefs about spiritual power in the cosmos;
- The influences of Christianity and the nature of conversion from the perspectives of native peoples;
- Ideas of an imminent end-time, both in the traditional and the post-Christian context;
- How Western views of indigenous religious traditions have denigrated and misrepresented them in the history of colonialism. How has the Christian understanding of history prevented the West from respecting indigenous religious traditions ?

Besides the Readings, an important part of this course will be a series of films mixed of ethnography, history, and issues related to sacred lands and indigenous spiritualities.

Reading List

The books to purchase for the course are:

1. Richard Katz, *The Straight Path of the Spirit. Ancestral Wisdom and Healing Traditions in Fiji*. (Park Street Press: Vermont, 1999). Kindle edition.
2. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second Edition. Zed Books. London & N.Y., 2012 (also in Kindle e-book)
3. G.W. Trompf, *Melanesian Religions*. 2004. Cambridge.

All books are available on Smathers Reserve; Tuhiwai Smith and Katz are available as Kindle e-books through Amazon.com. All other Readings on Hawaiian, Maori, and Melanesian religious traditions are posted as PDFs on the Canvas course website. The films are available either directly through the UF Library Proxy server, or the Professor. We will watch and critically discuss the films, together with the Readings.

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

01/04: Course Syllabus, Lecture Schedule, Requirements, etc.

I. Indigenous Religious Traditions

01/06: Introduction

Readings:

UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), 2008, 18 pp. (pdf on website)

01/09: Introduction (cont.)

Readings:

John Mohawk, "Tribal Religious Traditions are constantly devalued in Western discourse on Religion" in: Olupona, J., *Beyond Primitivism*, Chapter 6, pp. 111-17 (pdf on website);

01/11: Introduction (cont.)

Readings:

Robin Wright, "Indigenous Religious Traditions," in: Sullivan, L., *Religions of the World*, 2012, Chapter 1, pp. 31-60 (pdf on website).

01/13: Introduction (cont.)

Gary Trompf, "Pacific Islands" (pp. 1229-31) in: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, Bron Taylor (editor-in-chief), Continuum, London, 2006. "Polynesian Traditional Religions" (pp. 1287-8); Polynesia – New Religious Movements" (pp. 1288-90. (all pdfs on website)

01/18: Introduction (cont.)

Readings: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second Edition. Zed Books. London & N.Y., 2012 (also in Kindle e-book)

01/20: Introduction (cont.)

Readings: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second Edition. Zed Books. London & N.Y., 2012 (also in Kindle e-book)

01/23: Introduction (concl.)

Readings: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies. Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Second Edition. Zed Books. London & N.Y., 2012 (also in Kindle e-book)

II. *Kanaka Maoli* Traditions of Hawai'i

01/25: Presentation of the *Kanaka Maoli* people

Readings:

Davianna McGregor, *Na Kua'aina. [Living Hawaiian Culture](#)*. University of Hawai'i Press. 2007. Chapter 1, pp. 11-48.[PDF in Modules tab, single chapter in two files.

Film:

“Act of War - The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation” 1993, Length: 58 minutes;

Also recommended: <http://oiwi.tv/oiwity/aloha-quest/> (Parts 1 & 2);

01/27: Discussion of Film

01/30: Foundational concepts in Hawaiian belief system: Cosmogony

Readings:

Brown, M. Alohalani (2015), pp. 11-18 (pdf on website);

Kanahele, *Ka Honua Ola. The Living Earth. Descend, Deepen the Revelation*. Preface (xii-xvi), Foreword (ix-xii), and Afterword (169), pp. 1-11 (pdf on website);

02/01: The Deities, origins of the Islands, Food, and the system of Sacred Eating

Readings:

“*Kumulipo*”, “*Akua*” (deities), “*Hina* and *Haumea*”:

Kame‘eleihiwa, *Kumulipo*, 1999;

Kame‘eleihiwa, “*Na Wahine Kapu*”, pp. 1-16, 28-40;

02/03: The Deities

Readings:

Manu on “*Hina*”, pp. 20-21, Brown, 2015 (pdfs on website)

“Origins of the Hawaiian Islands”, and ‘*Ai Kapu* (Sacred Eating):

Fornander, “*Mele a Paku ‘i*”, and Joseph Kukahi, ‘*Ai Kapu* (translated by Marie Alohalani Brown) pp. 1-5 (pdfs on website);

02/06: The Deities

Readings:

“How *Māui* got fire for Hawaiians, Snares the Sun, and Fishes up the Hawaiian Islands”, “*Kāne* and *Kanaloa*”:

Ka Nupepa Kuokoa. (Translation by Marie Alohalani Brown),

“*Ke Au Kanaloa, Ke Akua*”, pp. 27-38, reprinted in Brown, 2015, pdf on website;

Lono and *Kū*: all in Brown, 2015, pp. 22-26, 39-50 all pdfs on website);

02/08: Ancestral deities and lands

Readings:

“Aumakua” (ancestor gods), sacred geography and landscapes, pp. 51-73, in Brown, 2015 (pdf on website);

02/10: The Sacred Temple of *Mauna Kea*

Reading:

Alohalani Brown, “*Mauna Kea: Ho‘omana Hawai‘i* and Protecting the Sacred”, JSSRNC, special issue on “Indigenous Knowledge, Indigenous Spiritualities, and the Future of Humans in Nature” (pdf on website);

Film:

“*Mauna Kea – Temple Under Siege*”

<http://oiwi.tv/oiwiv/mauna-kea-temple-under-siege/>

02/13: Discussion of Film

02/15: Land Issues

Readings:

Ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui, “From Captain Cook to Captain Kirk, or, From Colonial Exploration to Indigenous Exploitation. Issues of Hawaiian Land, Ethnicity, and Nationhood in a ‘Post-ethnic’ World”, Ch. 8 of *Transnational Crossroads. Remapping the Americas and the Pacific*, edited By Camilla Fojas & Rudy P. Guevarra Jr. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London, 2012, pp. 229-68. (pdf on website)

Video clips:

Kaho'olawe Documentary - "Mai Ka Piko Mai a Ho'i: Return to Kanaloa"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fJZHYzcaoA>

“*Islands of Sanctuary*”, <http://standingonsacredground.org> Sacred Lands Film Project. 2014.

“Pohakuloa: Now that you know, do you care?” by Kamakako'i on Vimeo. <https://vimeo.com/94598875>

02/17: Health issues

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/avoyagetohealth/education/higher-education.html>

- Class 1. Hawaiian Health and Well-Being: Balancing Essential Elements
- Class 2. Natural Elements: Healing Places
- Class 3. Physical Elements: Traditional Foods, Diet and Physical Activity
- Class 4. Spiritual Elements: Healing Hands
- Class 5. Kanaloa Kaho' olawe: Land, Identity, and Health
- Class 6. Using History to Glorify and Defend the Past

III. Indigenous Religious Traditions of Fiji

02/20: Fijians 1

Readings:

Richard Katz, *The Straight Path of the Spirit. Ancestral Wisdom and Healing Traditions in Fiji*. Rochester, Vt.: Park Street Press, 1999. (Also In Kindle E-Book) "COMING IN: EXCHANGE AND RESPONSIBILITY" & "PART ONE: HEALING IN FIJIAN CULTURE"

02/22: Fijians 2 (cont.)

Readings:

Katz, *Straight Path*, "PART TWO: THE STORY", chapters 3-17;

02/24: Fijians 3 (cont.)

Readings:

Katz, *Straight Path*, "PART TWO: THE STORY", chapters 18-30;

02/27: Fijians 4(concl.)

Readings:

Katz, *Straight Path*, "PART THREE: THE STRAIGHT PATH", "GOING OUT: RESPONSIBILITY AND EXCHANGE", Appendix A & B;

03/01: Review for Take-home Midterm Exams

03/03: Take-home Midterm Exams Published on Course Website

Due on 03/11 by Midnight

March 06 - 10 SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

IV. Maori Religious Traditions of *Aotearoa* (New Zealand)

03/13: Maori 1 -

Readings:

Peter Mataira, “*Mana and tapu: Sacred knowledge, sacred boundaries*”, in: Harvey, Graham, (ed.) *Indigenous Religions. A Companion*. Cassell: London, 2000, pp. 99-112 (pdf on website);

Maori Marsden, “*Kaitiakitanga: A Definitive Introduction to the Holistic Worldview of the Maori*”; and “*God, Man and Universe: A Maori View*”, in: *The Woven Universe. Selected Writings of Rev. Maori Marsden*, edited by Te Auhukaramu, Charles Royal. 2003. Pp. 54-72 & 2-23 (pdfs on website);

Ken Chitwood. *A Sacred Duty: A Christian’s Friendly Study of the World’s Religions*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Lutheran Support Ministries Resources, February 2009. 14 pp. (pdf on course website);

03/15: Maori 2 – Art, Ritual, and Cosmology

Readings:

Graham Harvey, “*Art works in Aotearoa*”, in: Harvey, G. (ed.) *Indigenous Religions. A Companion*. Cassell: London, 2000, pp. 155-72 (pdf on website);

“*Closure and Multiplication: An Essay on Polynesian Cosmology and Ritual*”, by Alfred Gell. Ch. 21 of M. Lambek, *Readings in the Anthropology of Religion*. Pp. 290-305. (pdf on website)

03/17: Maori 3 – Christianity and Prophet Movements

Readings:

Wayne Te Kaawa, “*A Gifted People: Maori and Pakeha Covenants within the Presbyterian Church*”, in: Hugh Morrison (ed.) *Mana Maori and Christianity*, Hula: Wellington, 2012, pp. 14-37 (Google e-books);

Simon Moetara, “*Maori and Pentecostal Christianity in Aotearoa New Zealand*”, in Morrison (ed.), *Mana Maori and Christianity*, pp. 100-21;

Murray Rae, “*The Subversive Theology of Rua Kenana*”, in Morrison (ed.), *Mana Maori and Christianity*, pp. 276-99;

Keith Newman, “*Ratana, the Prophet: Ma te wa – the sign of the broken watch*”, in Morrison (ed.), *Mana Maori and Christianity*, pp. 300-25;

03/20: Maori 4 – Textual Analysis

Readings:

Elsdon Best, *Some Aspects of Maori Myth and Religion*, Dominion Museum Monograph No. 1, Skinner: Wellington, 1922 (pdf. on website, pages tbd);

V. Indigenous Religious Traditions of Melanesia: Papua New Guinea

03/22: Chronicles of Contact and Transformation

Films:

[First Contact](#) directed by Bob Connolly, 1945- and Robin Anderson, 1948-2002; produced by Robin Anderson, 1948-2002 and Bob Connolly, 1945-, in Highlands Trilogy, 1 (*New York, NY: Filmmakers Library, 1983*), 51 mins. <http://anth.alexanderstreet.com.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/View/764432/>

03/24: Discussion of Film

03/27: Melanesian Film Ethnography 1

Reading:

Gary Trompf, "Melanesian Traditional Religions", Ch. 1 in: *Melanesian Religion* (Cambridge, 1991) pdf in Module

Film: Fertility

"The Red Bowmen", written by Alfred Gell, 1945-1997 and Chris Owen; directed by Chris Owen; produced by Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies (Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources (DER), 1983), 58 mins. <http://search.alexanderstreet.com.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/view/work/765438>.

(Procedure: Log in to Library EZ Proxy; Smathers Library - Catalog; Enter "The Red Bowmen" in the appropriate space; click on DVDs and videos; enter 'any format'; watch.)

03/29: Discussion of Film

03/31: Melanesia Film Ethnography 2

Film: Death and After-Life

Malagan Labadama: A Tribute to Buk-Buk, written by Chris Owen; directed by Chris Owen (Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources (DER), 1982), 58 mins

Readings:

Trompf, Ch. 2, *Melanesian Religion*, "Death and After-Life", pp. 34-48;

04/03: Discussion of Film and Readings

04/05: Exchange and Retribution in Melanesian Religion

Readings:

Trompf, Ch. 3, *Melanesian Religion*, "Logic of Retribution", pp. 51-74;

04/07: Melanesian Film Ethnography 3

Readings:

Trompf, Ch. 6, *Melanesian Religion*, "Coming and Consequences of Missionaries", pp. 141-59;

Film: Bridewealth

"Bridewealth for a Goddess", written by Andrew J. Strathern; directed by Chris Owen; produced by Chris Owen, Institute of *Papua New Guinea Studies* (Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources (DER), 2000), 72 mins <http://anth.alexanderstreet.com/view/764540/play/true/>

04/10: Discussion of Film and Readings

04/12: Melanesian 'cargo cults' and conversion

Readings:

Trompf, Ch. 8, *Melanesian Religion*, "Interpretation of Cargo Cults", pp. 188-205.

04/14: Ceremonial Revival - Film Ethnography 4

Film: "Gogodala: A Cultural Revival ?", written by Chris Owen; directed by Chris Owen; produced by Chris Owen (Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources (DER), 1983), 57 mins.

<http://search.alexanderstreet.com.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/view/work/764730>

04/17: Discussion of Film and Readings

04/19: **Last Class: Turn In Final Papers & Wrap-up**

Course Requirements

The course requirements are:

- Do **Readings** on time, according to course schedule; any changes in the readings will be announced in advance on the course Canvas e-learning website; pop-quizzes may be given to determine whether students are keeping up with the Readings (10%);
- A **mid-term take-home exam**, worth 35% of the final grade;
- **Two (2) short Reflection Papers** (750 words apiece) on films viewed in the course, worth 20% of final grade. Questions for reflection will be distributed prior to screening;
- A **final paper**, 8-10 pp. in length, worth 35% of the final grade; topics to be announced shortly after the mid-terms have been returned.

Course Regulations

1. Plagiarism or cheating: Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive a grade of zero on the assignment in question and will fail the course. In addition, they will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else's material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action. See <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm><http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm> for more information on UF policies.
2. Incompletes are strongly discouraged and will be given only when students who have finished most of the assignments satisfactorily cannot complete the final requirements due to unforeseen events. If this is the case, students must arrange for the incomplete before the end of the semester.
3. Make-up exams and quizzes will be given only under very special circumstances, such as a medical emergency. In that case, students must bring a doctor's note.
4. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom. **Please turn phones and pagers off during class. Texting and non-class related web activities during class will not be tolerated.**
5. Students with Disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodation or special consideration must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation or special consideration.
6. Attendance will be taken every class and discussion session; more than three unjustified absences will result in points taken off final grade. All absences should be justified with appropriate documentation. Consistent, late arrivals to class or consistent, early departures from class will also mean points deducted