Masters Programme in Asian Studies

CÖSM38: Religion and Society in East and Southeast Asia

Autumn Semester

Credits: 7.5 ECTS

Course Director and Sole Teacher: Paulina Kolata

Description of Course

This course is an elective, in the third semester of the master programme (can also be taken as a free standing course). It is an introduction to religion and society of East and Southeast Asia, including a range of religious traditions: Buddhism, Islam, Shinto, folk traditions, Christianity, new religious movements, and spirituality movements. It is focused on ethnographic writings and audio-visual materials explored through eight main themes (gender, diasporic/ethnoreligious identities, political entangelments – including nationalism, economic structures, religious violence, religion and technology, environmental issues, religion in pop culture and the media) divided into a series of 8 lectures and 3 seminar sessions. The first lecture will provide an introduction to the course and focus on religion as an anthropological category and ethnographic processes of knowledge production. The seminars will centre around documentary film pieces and ethnographic films that will explore further specific aspects of the lecture themes. This course will provide the students wanting to write their dissertations on religion in Asia with the basic toolkit to develop their understanding of the religious transformations in the region.

There are a few female authors on the course (616 pages including co-authors), including all ethnographies that are written by women. While East and Southeast Asia is notorious for gender inequality, I have intentionally prioritised scholarship produced by women, especially non-Eglish native speakers to showacase their excellent work. Several authors of the ethnographies will also join the dedicated lectures to allow students to engage directly with their work. This course analyses topics such as gender, economy, ethnicity, and transnational religion. There are a few prominent and emerging female academics in the field of Religious Studies / Anthropology of Religion working in and from the region. Their rich ethnographic writings on modern and postmodern religious contexts in the region are also sources of rigorous theoretical discussions. My focus on themes, rather than on key anthropological concepts in the study of religion such as ritual and myth, is intentional. Thematic approach allowes for much closer engagement with the lived religious experiences and structures of thereof, while closely exploring and challenging those key anthropological categories of thinking about religion. My intention here is also to move away from the Eurocentric conceptual rigidity around the category of religion by focusing on the complexities of identity formation, sacred technologies, and environmental ethics.

As the recent events surrounding the political coup in Myanmar, the complex religious responses to the global pandemic, and constitutional struggles in Japan reveal, the religious landscape is ever in flux. Therefore part of the reading (250 pages) are decided by the teacher and students together during the course in order to be able to stay up-to-date with current issues, satisfy student interests, and make use of the most recent literature on the topics.

Total number of pages: 1070 (approx.)

Consisting of required reading (820) plus additional readings to account for the ongoing developments in the field and across religious landscape in East and Southeast Asia and new emerging scholarship (250 approx).

Both the seminar and the final papers require that students begin with the course literature, but also find their own articles and books on the topic, which would also account for the additional readings.

Unless otherwise stated (flagged in yellow below), all books and articles are available through the library website. All prices have been provided through Bokus. Some books have been listed twice to account for different chapter readings.

**Course literature:**

Abrahms-Kavunenko, Saskia. 2019. "Introduction." In Enlightenment and the Gasping City: Mongolian Buddhism at a Time of Environmental Disarray, 1-23. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.

23 pages

Cost: 380 SEK (paperback)

Abrahms-Kavunenko, Saskia. 2019. "Karma and Purification." In Enlightenment and the Gasping City: Mongolian Buddhism at a Time of Environmental Disarray, 119-41. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.

23 pages

Cost: 380 SEK (paperback)

Asad, Talal. 2016. ”The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category.” In Michael Lambek (ed.) A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion, 110-26. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

17 pages

Cost: 379 SEK (paperback)

Baffelli, Erica, and Ian Reader. 2012. "Editors' Introduction: Impact and Ramifications: The Aftermath of the Aum Affair in the Japanese Religious Context." Japanese Journal of Religious Studies, 39(1), 1-28.

28 pages

Brox, Trine. 2019. “The Aura of Buddhist Material Objects in the Age of Mass-Production.” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 20: 105–125.

21 pages

Chaplin, Chris. 2018. Salafi Islamic piety as civic activism: Wahdah Islamiyah and differentiated citizenship in Indonesia, *Citizenship Studies*, 22:2, 208-223.

16 pages

DeWitt, Lindsey. 2020. “World Cultural Heritage and Women’s Exclusion from Sacred Sites in Japan.” In Rots, Aike P. and Mark Teeuwen (eds) *Sacred Heritage in Japan*, 65-86. Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

22 pages

Cost: 1809 SEK (hardback) 419 SEK (e-book)

Enders, Kirsten W. 2011. “The (Gendered) World of Mediumship.” In Performing the Divine: Mediums, Markets, and Modernity in Urban Vietnam. 158-87. Copenhagen: NIAS Press

30 pages

Cost: 229 SEK (paperback)

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 2015. “Fieldwork and Ethnography.” In *Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 32-51. London: Pluto Press.

20 pages

Cost: 222 SEK (paperback) or newest edition (2015) 309 SEK (e-book) 1414 SEK (hardcopy)

Falk, Monica Lindberg. 2012. “Gender, Buddhism and Social Resilience in the Aftermath of the Tsunami in Thailand.” *South East Asia Research* 20, no. 2: 175–190.

16 pages

Gajaweera, Nalika. 2020. “The Mothers of the Righteous Society: Lay Buddhist Women as Agents of the Sinhala Nationalist Imaginary.” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 21: 187–204.

18 pages

Giles, Douglas. 2019. Uncovering Neglected Emerging Lived Religious Pluralisms. *Emergent Religious Pluralisms*, 145-166.

22 pages

Gould. Hannah and Holly Walters. 2020. “Bad Buddhists, Good Robots: Techno-Salvationist Designs for Nirvana.” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 21: 277–294.

18 pages

Ikeuchi, Suma. 2019. *Jesus Loves Japan: Return Migration and Global Pentacostalism in a Brazilian Diaspora*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Part I and Part II pp. 3-74.

72 pages

Cost: 249 SEK (paperback)

* To be purchased by the library

Kawahashi, Noriko, and Kobayashi, Naoko. 2017. “Editors’ Introduction: Gendering Religious Practices in Japan Multiple Voices, Multiple Strategies.” Japanese journal of religious studies 44, no. 1: 1–13.

13 pages

Kolata, Paulina. 2020. “The story beyond UNESCO: local Buddhist temples and the heritage of survival in regional Japan.” In Rots, Aike P. and Mark Teeuwen (eds) Sacred Heritage in Japan, 159-181. Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

23 pages

Cost: 1809 SEK (hardback) 419 SEK (e-book)

Lindsey, Tim. 2012. Monopolising Islam: The Indonesian Ulama Council and state regulation of the ‘Islamic economy’, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 48:2, 253-274.

22 pages

McLaughlin, Levi, Aike P. Rots, Jolyon Baraka Thomas, and Chika Watanabe. “Why Scholars of Religion Must Investigate the Corporate Form.” Journal of the American Academy of Religion Vol. 88 Issue 3 (September 2020), 693-725.

33 pages

Roszko, Edyta. 2020. ”Introduction: A Triad of Confrontation,” In *Fishers, Monks and Cadres: Navigating State, Religion and the South China Sea in Central Vietnam*. 1-27. Copenhagen: NIAS Press

27 pages

Cost: 299 SEK (paperback)

Roszko, Edyta. 2020. ”Women and New Gendered Ritual Divisions,” In *Fishers, Monks and Cadres: Navigating State, Religion and the South China Sea in Central Vietnam*. 161-196. Copenhagen: NIAS Press

36 pages

Cost: 299 SEK (paperback)

Rots, Aike P. 2015. “Sacred Forests, Sacred Nation: The Shinto Environmentalist Paradigm and the Rediscovery of ‘Chinju No Mori.’” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 42, no. 2: 205–233.

29 pages

Schedneck, Brooke. 2021. “Introduction: Encountering Buddhism.” In *Religious Tourism in Northern Thailand : Encounters with Buddhist Monks*. 3-16. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

14 pages

Cost: 279 SEK (paperback)

Schedneck, Brooke. 2021. “Chapter 2: The Agency of Buddhist Monks in the Tourism Landscape.” In *Religious Tourism in Northern Thailand: Encounters with Buddhist Monks*. 44-75. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

32 pages

Cost: 279 SEK (paperback)

Simandjuntak, Deasy. 2021. “Disciplining the Accepted and Amputating the Deviants: Religious Nationalism and Segregated Citizenship in Indonesia.” *Asian Journal of Law and Society* 8 (1). Cambridge University Press: 88–107.

20 pages

Soedirgo, Jessica. 2018. Informal networks and religious intolerance: how clientelism incentivizes the discrimination of the Ahmadiyah in Indonesia, *Citizenship Studies*, 22:2, 191-207.

17 pages

Starling, Jessica. 2019. “Introduction.” In *Guardians of the Buddha’s Home: Domestic Religion in Contemporary Jōdo Shinshū*. 1-20. Honolulu: Univerity of Hawaii Press.

20 pages

Cost: 299 SEK (paperback)

Starling, Jessica. 2019. “Chapter Five: Wives in Front of the Altar.” In *Guardians of the Buddha’s Home: Domestic Religion in Contemporary Jōdo Shinshū*. 107-128. Honolulu: Univerity of Hawaii Press.

22 pages

Cost: 299 SEK (paperback)

Swenson. Sara Ann. 2020. “Following Feeling: Karma and the Senses in Buddhist Nuns’ Ordination Narratives.” *Journal of Global Buddhism* 21: 71–86.

16 pages

Tannenbaum, Nicola. 2000. "Protest, Tree Ordination, and the Changing Context of Political Ritual." *Ethnology* 39, no. 2: 109-27.

19 pages

Taylor, Philip. 2007. “Modernity and Re-Enchantment in Post-Revolutionary Vietnam.” In *Modernity and Re-Enchantment: Religion in Post-Revolutionary Vietnam*, edited by Philip Taylor, 1–56. ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute.

56 pages

Cost: 319 SEK (paperback)

Thomas, Jolyon Baraka. 2015. “The Buddhist Virtues of Raging Lust and Crass Materialism in Contemporary Japan.” Material religion 11, no. 4: 485–506.

22 pages

Watanabe, Chika. 2019. “Introduction: The Moral Immaginations of Becoming One.” In *Becoming One: Religion, Development, and Environmentalism in a Japanese NGO in Myanmar*, 1-26. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press

26 pages

Cost: 379 SEK (paperback)

Watanabe, Chika. 2019. “The Politics of “Shinto” Environmentalism.” In *Becoming One: Religion, Development, and Environmentalism in a Japanese NGO in Myanmar*, 60-86. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press

27 pages

Cost: 379 SEK (paperback)