

FALL 2018

**The Ecology of Religion**  
**ANG 6241 (10563)**

Lecturer: Dr. Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo. Email: [caycedo@ufl.edu](mailto:caycedo@ufl.edu)

Office: T: B131 Phone: 392-2253

Office hours: T 1–3 pm and by appointment. W 10:00 PM - 1:00 PM),

Room: Historical ecology lab (Temporally).

In this course, we will study the relationship of ecology and religion from the perspective of anthropology. The classes are about the structure of shamanism (called the religion of nature) in relation to institutionalized religions and how different ideological perspectives create different forms of action in relation to the dynamics of the ecological environment. The objective of the course is to recognize patterns of these relations of human ideology and the ecological environment.

The course has three parts: First, shamanism and animistic societies; second, priestly or theocratic societies; and the third and last section is on religion in imperial societies. The objective is to examine the variability of religion in terms of its practice and meaning in relation to the environment. The origins of shamanism is a concern of this course and we will attempt to understand what this means in relation to a global situation of variable environments in the past and today. One question is why shamans exist and in what context they are found in the past and the present. We will explore, as well, the significance of the shaman in relation to the development of religious movements and institutionalized religions.

Priestly societies have the characteristics of corresponding to political organizations of agriculturalist peoples or food producers. This creates a new set of problems in relation to the domestication of space (territorial control of the landscape and cultivated space) as well as time (seasonality of food production). These relationships are different from the kinds of relations between humans and the environment observed in shamanistic societies.

The last part of the course examines how such processes of imposing new models, that appear to be secular, hide “cosmological” models about nature. These cosmological models are deeply rooted in religious belief systems and nationalistic ideologies that also “naturalize” human beings’ place in nature. This process of global conservationism affects the daily lives of hunters, gatherers, food producers, and peoples with different cosmologies around the globe. This process creates a new set of problems in relation to space (territorial control of landscapes and cultivated spaces) in terms of who will benefit from their use. These relationships differ from the relationships between humans and the environment observed in shamanistic societies or priestly societies.

## Course Objectives:

- 1) To understand the main theoretical and conceptual approaches to the study of the ecology of religion by looking at shamanism and priestly societies from an archaeological and anthropological perspective.
- 2) To understand the significance of shamanism and theocracies in explaining the evolution of religion and the patterns of environmental appropriation of space and continuity through time.
- 3) To obtain a general comparative understanding of religious practices and the environment.
- 4) To understand the relationship between material culture in shamanism and priestly societies and what this means in terms of the societies themselves in a material world.
- 5) To understand the relationship between religion and ecology in the context of human social evolution.
- 6) To understand the relationship between the diverse forms of religions and political power in the past, through archaeology, as well as in the present and what it means in regards to environmental protection policies.
- 7) To give an anthropological perspective on the understanding of religion, ecology and society in the Anthropocene.

## Require Textbooks:

Salomon, Frank. 2018. *At the Mountains' Altar*. Routledge.

Geertz, Clifford. Any edition. *Negara, the Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali*. Princeton.

**EVALUATION:** A short three paper reviews (60%) class and class participation (40%).

### GRADE SYSTEM:

A= 90-100 %

B= 80-89

C= 70-79

D= 60-69

F= Below 59

*Assignments:* You are expected to do the following:

- 1) Read the assigned material BEFORE coming to class. Many students have difficulty understanding the lectures because they do not familiarize themselves with the material prior

to class. Do NOT be one of these students.

2) Participate actively in the discussion of the articles.

3) Produce a very original review using all the sources of the class.

Disclaimer: Some adjustments may be made in the schedule and class requirements during the course of the semester. All changes will be announced.

**ATTENDANCE** is required. Final grades will be reduced one grade level for two unjustified absences. Students who are unable to come to class on a regular basis due to special circumstances should see the instructor at the beginning of the term to discuss such circumstances. Finally, please avoid at all costs coming in or walking out of the classroom in the middle of lectures. This is most rude and disruptive.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Week 1. August 22. Presentation of the Class**

#### **PART I: shamanism and animistic societies or Natural religions.**

### **Week 2. August 29. Shamanism and animism: theory.**

*Readings:* Hamayon, Roberte. 1994. Shamanism: a Religion of Nature. In Circumpolar Religion and Ecology, an Anthropology of the North. Edited by Takashi Irimoto and Takako Yamada, pp. 109-123. University of Tokyo Press.

Descola, Philip. 1996. Constructing natures: symbolic ecology and social practice. In Nature and society: anthropological perspectives (eds) P. Descola & G. Pálsson, 82-102. London: Routledge

Viveiros de Castro 1998. Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) 4, 469-88.

### **Week 3. September 5. Shamanism, history and present.**

*Readings:* Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. 1990. *Magic, Science, Religion, and the scope of rationality*. Cambridge (Chapter 1 and 2).

Znamenski, Andrei A. 2007. The beauty of the primitive: shamanism and the Western imagination. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 1 and 5).

### **Week 4. September 12. The Archaeology of Shamanism.**

*Readings:* Winkelman, Michael 2002. Shamanism and Cognitive Evolution. Cambridge Archaeological Journal 12(1):71-101.

-Clottes, Jean. 2004. Hallucinations in caves, and other articles of discussion. Cambridge

Archaeological Journal 14(1):81-100.

-Oyuela-Caycedo, Augusto. 2001 The Rise of Religious Routinization. The Study of Changes from Shaman to Priestly Elite. In Mortuary Practices and Ritual Associations: Shamanic Elements in Prehistoric Funerary Context in South America. Edited by John E. Staller and Elizabeth J. Currie, pp. 1-18, Archaeopress Publishers of British Archaeological Reports, Oxford, England.

### **Week 5. September 19. Shamanism in community practice.**

*Readings:* Godelier, Maurice. 1998. Substitute objects for humans and for gods. In The Enigma of the Gift. Pp.108-170. University of Chicago.

-Oyuela-Caycedo, Augusto. 2006. The Ecology of a Masked Dance: Negotiating at the Frontier of Identity in the Northwest Amazonia. Baessler Archiv (2004) 52: 54-74.

-Pitarch, Pedro. 2011. The Two Maya Bodies: An Elementary Model of Tzeltal Personhood. Ethnos, DOI:10.1080/00141844.2011.590217

### **PART II: The environmental institutionalization of religion**

### **Week 6. September 26. Theoretical background on theocratic religions.**

*Readings:* Weber, Max. The sociology of religion. Chapter 1. The rise of religions and chapter 2: Gods, Magicians, and Priests.

-Durkheim, Emile. [1915]. The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. Chapter 1. Definition of Religious Phenomena and of Religion.

Otto, Rudolph. [1923] (1923). The Idea of the Holy. Pp.5-24, 60-71. Oxford University Press.

Rappaport, Roy. 1999. The Idea of the Sacred. In Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity, pp.277-304.

***First review on the ecology of shamanism. 5 pages.***

### **Week 7. October 3. Theoretical background on theocratic religions.**

*Readings:*

Weber, Max. The prophet. In The Sociology of Religion, pp.46-79. Beacon Press.

Assmann, Jan. 2008. Of God and Gods: Egypt, Israel and the Rise of Monotheism. The University of Wisconsin Press. Ch. 1 Understanding Polytheism.

Hugh-Jones, Stephen. 1996. Shamans, Prophets, Priests and Pastors. In Shamanism, History, and the State, edited by Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey, pp.32-75.

University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor.

Gaeber, David. 2011. The divine kingship of the Shilluk On violence, utopia, and the human condition, or, elements for an archaeology of sovereignty. HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory 1 (1): 1–62

**Week 8. October 10. The role of the prophets and spirit possession**

*Readings:* Behrend, Heike. 2000. Alice Lakwena and the Holy Spirits: war in Northern Uganda, 1985-97. James Currey, Oxford (chapter ).

**Week 9. October 17. The formation of pilgrimage places, temples and other features.**

*Readings:* Turner, V. and E. Turner. 1978. Introduction: Pilgrimage as a Liminoid Phenomenon. In

Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture. Pp.1-39. Columbia University Press.

Oyuela-Caycedo, Augusto.1998. Ideology, Temples, and Priests: Change and continuity in House Societies in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. In Recent Advances in the Archaeology of the Northern Andes. Edited by A. Oyuela-Caycedo and Scott Raymond. The Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles

Oyuela-Caycedo, Augusto and Manuela Fischer. 2007. Ritual Paraphernalia and the

Foundation of Religious Temples: The Case of the Tairona-Kágaba/Kogi, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia. Baessler-Archiv 54 (2006):145-162.

Beck, Robin A. and James A. Brown. 2012. Political Economy and the Routinization of Religious Movements: A View from the Eastern Woodlands. Archeological papers of the American Anthropological Association, Vol. 21, Issue 1, pp. 72–88.

**Week 10. October 24. Imperial cosmologies** *Reading:* Ramírez, Susan E. 2005. To feed and be

fed: the cosmological bases of authority and identity in the Andes. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press. (chapter 2 and 3 ).

Tambiah, S. J. 1985. The Galactic Polity in Southeast Asia. In Culture, Thought and Social Action. Pp252-252. Harvard.

***Second review on the ecology of shamanism. 5 pages.***

### **PART III, SOCIAL, IMPERIAL, AND OTHER RELIGIOUS ECOLOGIES TODAY**

**Week 11. October 31. The Social Ecology of Religion:** Reading: Salomon, Frank. 2018. *At the Mountains' Altar*. Routledge.

**Week 12. November 7 The Social Drama of State Religion:** Reading: Geertz, Clifford. Any edition. *Negara, the Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali*. Princeton.

**Week 13. November 14. Ecology of Religion in Imperial societies.** Readings on German Imperialism: Environmental History. In *History*, edited by T. Lekan and T. Zeller. Pp. 17-32. Rutgers University Press.

Imort, Michael. (2005). A Sylvan People, Whilemine Forestry and the Forest as a Symbol of Germandom. In *History*, edited by T. Lekan and T. Zeller. Pp. 55-80. Rutgers University Press.

*Readings on American imperialism:*

Lewis, Michael. 2007. *American Wilderness: A New History*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3.

Deepak Lal. 1995. Eco-Fundamentalism. *International Affairs* 71(3): 515-528.

Chapin, Mac. (2004). A challenge to Conservationist. *World Watch* November/December.

**Week 15. November 21. Holiday**

**Week 16. November 28. Global Religion Ecology Readings:**

*Readings:* Deepak Lal. 1995. Eco-Fundamentalism. *International Affairs* 71(3)515-528.

Chapin, Mac. (2004). A challenge to Conservationist. *World Watch* November/December.

Botero, Carlos A. Beth Gardner, Kathryn R. Kirby, Joseph Bulbulia, Michael C. Gavin, and Russell D. Gray. 2014. The ecology of religious beliefs. *PNAS*, November 25, 111(47): 16784-16789.

**Week 17: December 5. last day of class . *Third review on the ecology of shamanism. 5 pages.***