

Reli 330

Religion, Identity, and Community: Contested Boundaries and Belonging



<http://goindia.about.com/od/festivalpictures/ig/Kumbh-Mela-Pictures/Kumbh-Mela-Sunrise-Bathing.htm>

**SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Trimester 2, 2012
16 July – 17 November 2012**

RELI 330

Religion, Identity, and Community: Contested Boundaries and Belonging

Course co-ordinator:	Benjamin Schonthal HU 219 Tel: 463 5299 Benjamin.Schonthal@vuw.ac.nz
Tutor:	tba
Where and when:	Lectures EA LT 206 (Easterfield) Thursday 11:00 - 12:50 Tutorials: tba. Information regarding tutorials shall be posted on the notice board outside HU 318
Trimester dates	
Teaching dates for this course:	16 th July – 19 th October 2012
Mid-trimester break:	27 th Aug – 9 th September 2012
Study week:	22 nd – 26 th October 2012
Examination/Assessment period:	26 th October – 17 th November 2012
Withdrawal dates:	Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawals/refunds.aspx

Religious Studies is in the Hunter Building. The programme administrator, Alik Kalliabetsos, is in room HU 318. **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside her office. Notices may also be communicated to students via emails sent from Blackboard. Students who do not use their assigned student.vuw.ac.nz email addresses should ensure that ITS has an up-to-date email address, and that they check this address regularly.**

Office Hours: You can arrange to meet with Benjamin Schonthal by appointment, and he will also answer all emails promptly.

Course outline

1 Course Prescription

This course examines religion as a locus of personal and social identity, inquiring into the force of religion in uniting and dividing communities in our modern world. The course is comparative, reflecting broadly on the ways that religion has served both to bring people together into harmonious societies, but also to antagonise groups in often violent ways. Specific case studies will serve as data for analysis. Topics that the course will cover include fundamentalism, religious conflict, and nationalism and religion.

- 2 **This course** follows two directions of inquiry. The first half of the course explores how aspects of religion (e.g., ritual, myth, bodily discipline) shape individuals' understandings of social sameness and difference in local, national, and transnational settings. The second half of the course examines how influential regulatory rubrics used by modern political communities (e.g., multiculturalism, secularism, religious freedom) shape understandings of religion, religiosity, religious difference and religious harmony. Classes will combine consideration of theory with specific case studies. The course considers a variety of major themes including ritual action, mythic discourse, bodily discipline, religious nationalism, civil religion, globalization, rationalization of religion, law and religion, secularism, religious freedom multiculturalism, religious conversion, religious diversity.

3 Teaching learning summary

The course uses a mixture of lectures and tutorials. The lectures communicate historical and doctrinal materials, while the tutorials allow students the opportunity to develop their communication skills through critical discussion of the readings and lectures. It is essential that students attend lectures and tutorials, as the lecturer and tutor use these to introduce material that is not contained in the readings.

4 The course learning objectives: Students who pass this course should be

- Be familiar with the range of ways in which religious communities are forged, maintained, and defended.
- Familiar with the ways in which scholars have understood religious communities and identities.
- Able to critically and creatively engage with this scholarly literature.
- Have developed skills in reading, research, and writing of academic essays.
- Develop academic autonomy, that is, the capability to develop frameworks for the undertaking of research and the confident presentation of findings.
- Develop their advanced research skills by preparing a project on a chosen topic.

- 5 **The lecture programme** follows. Lectures may be varied from time to time. As much notice as possible will be given when changes occur and, if necessary, a revised programme will be issued at lectures.

6 There are **7 tutorials during the trimester. The dates and details are below.** Tutorials deal with topics that complement the lecture programme and they provide an opportunity to discuss aspects of the course in a small group. Students are encouraged to develop their oral skills in the tutorials, that is, their ability to formulate questions and to present and defend arguments.

7 **The course is internally assessed by means of the following assignments:**

- **tutorial assignments**, to be submitted in the tutorial that they address, are worth **15%** of the final grade. These are to be thoughtful responses of approximately **400-500** words to questions set for the required reading of the week. Students can choose any five tutorials to submit their assignments, but they are strongly encouraged to submit early and regularly in the trimester.
- **A review essay** of approximately **1,500 words**. This essay will involve the review of a scholarly book relevant to the course, to be decided upon in consultation with the lecturer and/or tutor. The book should reflect the student's interest in a particular area of the world or of a particular issue relevant to the course, and should be on a topic that the student will explore in the final research essay. The review essay is worth **20%** of the final grade, and is due on **Thursday, 23rd August**.
- **a research essay** of approximately **3,000 words**, worth **35%** of the final grade, is to be submitted by **Fri, 19th October**
- **a class test** worth **30%** of the final grade held in class on **Thursday, 18th October 18**.

Essays are to be submitted in two ways, both of which are mandatory to receive credit for the essay:

First, students must submit a paper copy of the essay to the assignment box outside the Religious Studies office (**HU 318**). Please make sure you sign and date the sheet to document that you submitted your assignment, and when.

Second, students **must submit an electronic copy** via Blackboard. These electronic copies will be submitted to Turn It In, an electronic plagiarism database, to check for possible plagiarism.

Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.

8 **Mandatory course requirements: To gain a pass in this course, students must** attend a minimum of **5 tutorials**, and submit all assessment (2 essays, 5 tutorial assignments, and 1 class test)

9 **Required text:** The *RELI 330 Course Reader* should be obtained from the Student Notes shop at a cost of approximately \$40.00.

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 9–27 July 2012, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of

the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

10 Work-load (Recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):

For 20 point courses a student should on average spend 13 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials. The total workload for the course, including class time should be approximately 200 hours.

11 Where to find more detailed information

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx>. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the Academic Office website, at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

12 Taping of Lectures: All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use audiotapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form, which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.

13 Class Representative: A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Co-ordinator, the Programme Administrator, the tutors and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

14 Supplementary Materials: A website of materials related to RELI 330 is being maintained in Blackboard. You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>.

15 Evaluation: This course will be evaluated by UTDC.

Lecture programme

Lecture programme and required readings: The required readings are essential background for the lectures / tutorials and should be completed **before each lecture**. The readings will be further discussed in the tutorials. The readings are all found in the *RELI 330 Course Reader*, which can be purchased from Student Notes. All readings marked **(OPT)** are optional readings—not required but encouraged. *Please read the selections in order.*

19 July Lecture 1: Religions, Identities, Religious Identities

Readings: Galanter, M. “A Dissent on Brother Daniel,” *Commentary* Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 10-17 (July, 1963).

Sen, Amartya. *Identity and Violence: the illusion of destiny*. Norton, 2006. Pp. 18-39.

26 July Lecture 2: Ritual, Solidarity and Holi Communitas

Readings: Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press, 1995. Pp 216-225.

Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968. Pp. 94-106, (131-132, 166-168, 183-188, **OPT**).

Marriott, McKimm. “The Feast of Love.” In *Krishna: myths, Rites and Attitudes*. Edited by M. Singer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966. Pp. 200-212

Kelly, John D. “From Holi to Diwali in Fiji: an Essay on Ritual and History.” *Man* (n.s.) 23(1), 1988: 40-55.

2 August Lecture 3: Myth, Discourse and Social Order

Readings: Malinowski, Bronislaw. “Myth in Primitive Psychology.” In *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*. Edited by Michael Lambek. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. Pp. 176-84.

Lincoln, Bruce. *Discourse and the Construction of Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. Pp. 15-37

The New Revised Standard Access Bible. Edited by O’Day and Peterson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Genesis 4-5 and 9:18 to 17:21.

Doniger, Wendy. *Other Scholar’s Myths*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. Pp. 7-24

9 August Lecture 4: Discipline, the Body and Buddhist Monastic Life

Readings: Gethin, Rupert. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. Chapter 4, "The Buddhist Community," Pp.85-110.

Look at: "The Bhikkhu Patimokkha." Available on the Internet at <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/canon/vinaya/bhikkhu-pati.html>

Yalman, Nur. "The Ascetic Buddhist Monks of Ceylon." *Ethnology* 1(3) (1962). Pp. 315-323.

Kemper, Steven "Buddhism Without Bhikkhus: The Sri Lanka Vinaya Vardana Society." In *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Sri Lanka*. Edited by Bardwell L. Smith. Chambersberg, PA: Anima, 1978. Pp. 212-235, Read: 216-230.

Asad, Talal. "Pain and Truth in Medieval Christian Ritual." In *Genealogies of Religion*. Baltimore: JHU Press, 1993. Pp. 105-115

****Asceticism Assignment To Be Discussed In Class****

16 August Lecture 5: Buddhism, Politics and "Ethno-Religious" Nationalism

Readings: Renan, Ernst. "What is a Nation?" *The Nationalism Reader*. Edited by Dabhour and Ishay. Humanity Books, 1995. Pp. 143-155. (**OPT**, but encouraged)

DeVotta, Neil. *Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology*. East-West Center Policy Studies No. 40. Pp. 1-33 Full version available at: <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/handle/10125/3496/ps040.pdf>

Berkwitz, Steven. "Resisting the Global in Buddhist Nationalism: Ven. Soma's Discourse of Decline and Reform." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67(1) 2008: 73-106.

23 August Lecture 6: Confused Communities? Civil Religion in America

Readings: Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract*. Book IV; Ch 8 "Civil Religion." Freely available at <http://www.constitution.org/jjr/socon.htm>

Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press, 1995. Pp. 231-236.

Bellah, Robert. "Civil Religion in America" *Daedalus* 96(1) (Win 1967): Pp. 1-21.

Huntington, Samuel. *Who We Are: Challenges to America's National Identity*. New York: Simon&Schuster, 2004. Pp. 8-33, 98-106.

Suggested but **OPT**:

Read the first parts of Week 11's reading by Kolig, "Coming through the Backdoor? Secularization in New Zealand and Maori Religiosity" (in last section of course reader)

Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, Pp. 148-159. (**OPT**, although I think you'll find it enjoyable.)

Kennedy, John F. 1961 Inaugural Address. Freely available at:

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2011/0120/JFK-s-1961-inaugural-address-The-text>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mid-trimester Break 27 August to 9 September 2012*</i></p>

13 September Lecture 7: Bali and the State 'Rationalization' of Religion

Readings: Weber, Max. *Economy and Society*. Translated and Edited by Guenther Roth and C. Wittich. San Francisco: University of California Press, 1978. Vol I, Pp. 422-439.

Geertz, Clifford. "Internal Conversion in Bali" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books, 1973. Pp. 170-190.

Picard, Michel. "What is in a Name: Agama Hindu Bali" in *Hinduism in Modern Indonesia*. Edited by Martin Ramstedt. London: Routledge, 2003. Pp. 56-72.

20 September Lecture 8: Liberalism, Multiculturalism and the Rule of Law

Readings: Taylor, Charles. "The Politics of Recognition." In *Reexamining the Politics of Recognition*. Edited by Amy Gutmann. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Pp. 25-73

Salomon, Noah. "The Ruse of Law: Legal Equality and the Problem of Citizenship in Multi-Religious Sudan." In *After Secular Law*. Edited by Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Robert A. Yelle and Mateo Taussig-Rubbo. 2011 Pp. 200-220.

27 September Lecture 9: Secularism, Freedom of Religion and Islam

Readings: Mahmood, Saba. "Secularism, Hermeneutics and Empire." *Public Culture* 18(2) (2006). Pp. 323-347.

Fernando, Myanthy. Reconfiguring Freedom: Muslim Piety and the Limits of Secular Law and Public Discourse in France." *American Ethnologist* 37(1) (2010): Pp. 19-35.

Roy, Olivier. Islam in the West or Western Islam? The Disconnect of Religion and Culture. *The Hedgehog Review* (Sum 2006). 127-132. (OPT)

4 October Lecture 10: Religious Conflict and the Politics of Conversion in Sri Lanka

Readings: Hackett, R. "Revisiting Proselytization in the Twenty-First Century" In *Proselytization Revisited : Rights Talk, Free Markets and Culture Wars*. Edited by Rosalind I.J. Hackett. London: Equinox, 2008. Pp. 1-14, 19-24.

Berkwitz, Stephen. "Religious Conflict and the Politics of Conversion in Sri Lanka." In *Proselytizing Revisited*, Pp. 199-229.

11 October Lecture 11: Religious Multiculturalism in New Zealand?

Readings: Human Rights Commission of NZ. *Religious Diversity in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Available online.

Kolig, Eric. "Coming through the Backdoor? Secularization in New Zealand and Maori Religiosity" In *The Future of Christianity*. Edited by Stenhouse and Knowles. Adelaide: ATF Pr, 2004. Pp. 183-204.

Kolig, Eric. "A Gordian Knot of Rights and Duties: New Zealand's Muslims and Multiculturalism." *NZ Journal of Asian Studies* 8(2) (2006): 45-68.

18 October Lecture 12: Class test

Tutorial Programme

The tutorials will cover the readings and lecture for the present week. They provide a forum in which students can debate important scholarly issues, and they also are an opportunity to ask questions about the course. There are **5 tutorial assignments** to be handed in at tutorials worth **15%** of the final grade (3% for each assignment). These are to be short thoughtful responses to questions set for the required reading of the week (as listed below) and are to be approximately two pages each, about 400-500 words. In your response, give examples from the readings, and use proper referencing (footnotes or in-text referencing). Students can choose any five tutorials to submit their assignments, but they are strongly encouraged to submit early and regularly in the trimester.

Week 1 (16 - 20 July) No Tutorial

Week 2 (23 - 27 July) How is religious identity similar to and/or different from other types of identity? What does the case of “Brother Daniel” reveal about religious identity? What is Durkheim’s argument about the links between ritual and group ‘solidarity’ and how does it differ from Turner’s argument about ritual, liminality and communitas? Do either Turner or Durkheim help us to understand ritual change in Fiji? What social effects are produced by Holi according to Turner and how might Durkheim disagree?

Week 3 (30 July - 3 August) In what ways does the work of myth according to Lincoln differ from the work of ritual according to Durkheim? How do Doniger and Lincoln’s approaches to myth contrast? Can you think of alternative readings of the origin myths analyzed?

Week 4 (6 - 10 August) No tutorial

Week 5 (13 - 17 August) In what ways does Buddhist disciplinary practice “make” religious identity? What understandings of religion, the nation and Buddhism are implied in Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka?

Week 6 (20 - 24 August) How does Rousseau’s rendering of civil religion differ from Bellah’s? To what degree does Huntington disagree with Bellah in his assessment of religion and national identity in the USA? Does NZ have a civil religion? In what ways is civil religion different from and similar to religious nationalism?

<i>Mid-trimester Break 27 August to 9 September 2012</i>

Week 7 (10 - 14 September) What is rationalization, and is it helpful as a rubric to understand what happened to religion in Bali? In what ways do states and state processes in Indonesia impact the ways in which Balinese organize and exercise religion? What would Durkheim, Renan, Asad, Lincoln or Doniger say about Weber, Geertz’s or Picard’s interpretations of Hinduism in Bali?

Week 8 (17 - 21 September) No Tutorial

Week 9 (24 - 28 September) What are Taylor’s ‘gripes’ with multiculturalism and would they apply to New Zealand? How does Mahmood understand secularism? How have regulatory

rubrics such as secularism and religious freedom impacted the practice of Islam in France and elsewhere? What dilemmas are created by such rubrics? Do you think religious freedom promotion is a good idea?

Week 10 (1 - 5 October) No Tutorial

Week 11 (8 - 12 October) Why is religious conversion contentious in Sri Lanka and elsewhere? What theories/concepts seem most helpful in understanding state regulation of religion in New Zealand? Is the situation of Muslims in NZ similar to that of Muslims in France according to Fernando and Roy? How have religious and cultural differences been distinguished and merged in modern NZ? How have the concepts 'religion' and 'culture' blended in the logic of the NZ state?

Week 12 (15 - 19 October) No Tutorial

Essays and Assignments

1 Essays and assignments

Essays are to be submitted in two ways, both of which are mandatory to receive credit for the essay:

First, students must submit a paper copy of the essay to the assignment box outside the Religious Studies office (**HU 318**). Please make sure you sign and date the sheet to document that you submitted your assignment, and when.

Second, students **must submit an electronic copy** via Blackboard. These electronic copies will be submitted to Turn It In, an electronic plagiarism database, to check for possible plagiarism. **Please note that students cannot submit work for this class that has been submitted in another course.**

Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.

2 Due dates:

- **The review essay** of approximately **1,500 words** is worth **20%** of the final grade, and is due by **5pm on Thursday, 23rd Aug, 2012**, in the essay box outside of Alikí's office, Hunter 318, and electronically via Blackboard.
- **The research essay** of approximately **3000 words**, worth **35%** of the final grade, is to be submitted by **5pm on Fri 19th Oct, 2012, (with no late penalties accruing until Oct 26)** in the essay box outside of Alikí's office, Hunter 318, and electronically via Blackboard.

3 Penalties for late essays / assignments:

2 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays;

Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's or other appropriate certification.

4 Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material

- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

5 Use of Turnitin: Student work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

6 Essay 1: The Review Essay An essay of approximately **1,500 words**. This essay will involve the review of a **scholarly** book relevant to the course, to be decided upon in consultation with the lecturer and/or tutor. The book should reflect the student's interest in a particular area of the world or of a particular issue relevant to the course, and it should serve as a source in the writing of the research essay. The review essay is worth **20%** of the final grade,
 And is due by **5pm on Thursday, 23rd Aug, 2012**, in the essay box outside Alik'i's office, Hunter 318, and electronically via Blackboard.

This is an exercise in reading, digesting, and critically examining one book. It is rare that we read a scholarly book from cover to cover, but this is precisely what you will do for this essay. This is not a research essay – you have the luxury of choosing your book, then relaxing in a chair and reading it. This is a challenging exercise, as reading scholarly prose can be difficult. It is important, therefore, to choose a book that is of interest to you.

How to write a review:

A book review must contain **two** parts. The **first part** will detail the particular contents and argument of the book, and will serve as a summary for the book. This part will demonstrate that the student has effectively read and understood the book. You may provide some direct quotations from the book, which is good academic practice, but be careful that you don't focus on just a couple of pages of the book – this part of the essay is meant to provide an **overview** of the work. It should answer the following questions:

- (1) What are the **central questions** the book seems to answer and what are the **answers** offered by the author? (2) How does the author think these arguments **intervene** in existing scholarship? What **new concepts/ideas** does s/he introduce? (3) What **methodology** and **source materials** does author use? What main **topics** does he/she address?

In the **second part** of the essay, the student must reflect on the essay's first part in some **critical** way, using analytical skills. For example, you can ask:

Did the author do a good job in relating the content of the particular tradition or issue? Do you agree with the argument that the author is making? What are the book's weaknesses, and what are its strengths? How would you improve the book, or take it further? In sum, what do you **think** about the book?

In this second section, you have the opportunity for critical reflection, to make your own voice and opinions heard. Be bold, be creative, be controversial here.

The library is full of book reviews, which can serve as models for your own review. The best place to look is in the back of journals, which generally contain 10-20 reviews per volume.

Some relevant journals for this course:

History of Religions

Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion

Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion

Numen

Religion

Journal of the American Academy of Religion

Journal of Asian Studies

Selecting a book:

The book you choose must be a **scholarly** book. This means a book that is written by engaging with other scholarly works, evidenced by extensive citations (footnotes, endnotes, or in-text referencing). What I **don't** want are books that are meant for a popular, non-academic audience. If the university library has it, it is likely to be scholarly (though there are many non-scholarly books in our library); if an airport bookstore has it, it is very unlikely that it is scholarly. I want you to read something that is challenging, something that you would not read otherwise. If you have any doubts whether a book is sufficiently scholarly, please show it to the lecturer or tutor. The book also must be focussed on the theme of the course: religious groups/communities and identity (see topics below).

How to select a book:

1. Go to the library!
2. Search the library catalogue (see topics below for keyword search ideas)
3. Go to the shelves, look at some books, choose one that is particularly interesting to you.
4. This process should take 2-3 hours.

Topics:

There are a number of fruitful topics that you might explore that will be relevant to the course. Any of the topics covered in lectures are relevant, and I have listed below a number of other topics that you might decide to write on. You are, of course, welcome and even encouraged to come up with your own topic.

Religion and nationalism (India, Iran, Zionism, etc.)

Legal regulation of religion (domestic or international)

Missionaries/Conversion

A monastic tradition

New Zealand religious groups (Destiny Church, etc.)

Maori prophets and the communities that form around them (Ratana, etc.)

Religious communities in diaspora (e.g., Hindu or Islamic communities in NZ, etc.)

Civil religions (Australia, America, France)

Social hierarchies and religion (caste, etc.)

“Syncretic” or “Creole” religious movements (African Christianity, Falun Gong, Pacific Christianity, etc.)

Religious reform movements

Any religious group with a strong identity that sets itself apart from its surrounding society (Amish, Hasidic Judaism, Western paganism, etc.)

Highly gendered religious groups (monastic groups, particular rituals, etc.)

7 Essay 2: The Research Essay

The research essay of approximately **3000 words**, worth **35%** of the final grade, is to be submitted by **5pm on Fri 19th Oct, 2012, (with no late penalties accruing until Oct 26)** in the essay box outside of Alikī’s office, Hunter 318, and electronically via Blackboard

The essay will consist of a thoughtful investigation of a question or problem relevant to the course and may employ primary sources (scriptures, iconography, field trips, interviews with religious specialists in a given tradition, observation of a ritual, etc.). Secondary sources (scholarly views on the topic or the text/ritual/icon, etc.) should be consulted and discussed in the essay.

As this is a 300-level course, and given the wide variety of topics that can be addressed in an essay of this sort, part of the work of the essay is to devise a good essay topic. Choose something that you find intriguing, something that will sustain your interest over the hours and days of research and writing. No place is too far away, no topic too far out, to make a good research topic. That said, if in doubt you should clear a topic beforehand with the tutor or lecturer.

Choosing a topic for the research essay:

You might do a **fieldwork**-based project, such as a visit to a local monastic community, church, temple, etc.

You can also do library research on a selected topic (see above for a list of potential topics).

While you can use **internet** sources, your sources must extend beyond the internet, either in the form of books, interviews, films, television, manuals from a particular tradition, etc. Anything that addresses religious groups, communities, and identities is fair game.

Focus:

Though description is important, you will need to do more than simply describe a religious group. You will also need to consider your topic in terms of some **central problem or issue**. This is perhaps the most important, and most difficult, part of writing the essay. You need to find a **focus** for the essay that is intriguing and worth addressing, and which can be adequately answered with available sources. One way to do this is to ask a question or **set of questions** at the beginning of your essay. The question that you address should be related to the issues that we discuss in the course.

Use the skills you honed in the review essay assignment to focus your essay: state clearly the **questions** you will answer, the **solution/argument** you offer, the **sources** you consult and the **broader impact** of your argument for understanding religion and society. (**Draw upon some of the theorists** we engaged with over the trimester to address this last topic.)

I've listed some examples of focus questions below, though note that these are meant as helpful examples – you will likely have to alter them, or come up with your own question or set of questions, to better suit your specific topic.

1. What is this group's relationship to the broader society around them? How do they maintain boundaries between themselves and others? What religious techniques do they use? How do certain of these techniques 'make' particular types of identity? How does the group define itself as a distinct group in a larger society?
2. Does this group have a sense of ideal social order? Do they view themselves as saved/liberated/blessed, while other people are doomed/damned/pitiable? How do they justify this blessed status? What do they need to do to maintain this status?
3. What role have particular religious groups played in constructing/ maintaining/ contesting the boundaries of 'the nation' in particular times and places? How do religious nationalism and civil religion interact and contest each other in special cases?
4. In the case of the interaction between two cultures or societies (colonialism, globalisation, diaspora, etc.), how has this interaction affected religious traditions? In the case of disparate power relations between the two cultures, how does religion serve to uphold power disparities? How does it serve as a force of rebellion against social inequity?

5. How has this particular group changed due to shifting historical circumstances? How has modernisation affected the ways in which religious groups maintain their coherence, or define their identities?

6. In a given context, how have particular laws, policies and/or state structures altered the ways in which a specific group practices, conceives or expresses religion? Have certain laws or policies proved more damaging than others?

7. Is gender important in this case? Why is it important to this group to maintain gender differentiation? Are there features of the groups practices or theologies that are related to their ideals of masculinity or femininity?

8. You can devise any other question or a set of questions that 'fits' the material that you are working with, and that addresses issues of religious groups, communities, and identities.

Finding research materials for your essays:

Encyclopaedias such as *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1987) in the Reference Reading Room in the library, can be helpful as each article also contains a bibliography, but **the research for the essay must extend beyond such sources.**

In addition to library books, you can also use journal articles as sources for your essay. You can search for articles on relevant databases:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/library/research/databases/index.aspx>

The most useful for this course are:

ATLA Religion Database

JSTOR

ProQuest

Te Puna (all New Zealand library resources)

Web of Knowledge

8 For guidance in essay writing, referencing, and presentation of bibliographies please refer to Religious Studies guidelines for essays, attached.

How to cite books, articles and internet resources for essays in Religious Studies

It is mandatory to use a correct citation style in academic writing. The Programme standard in Religious Studies at VUW is the version of Chicago Style for the Humanities. The only exceptions to this Programme standard will be the correct and consistent use of an alternative, standard style **when expressly permitted by your course coordinator**.

Chicago Humanities style is defined in *The Chicago Manual of Style 15th ed. rev.* (University of Chicago Press, 2003). The full guide (a hefty volume) is available in the VUW library at Call No. Z253 C532 15ed (ask at the Reference desk). However, the following information should be sufficient for most of your basic needs.

Note that the **citation style differs for a footnote and for the bibliography** at the end of your essay. For each type of source, we have listed each example in both forms. Each example footnote contains a sample page number so you can be sure how to include the number of the page cited in your footnote.

Note also that as with all academic citation style conventions, every detail of the formatting for Chicago style is fixed. You must thus ensure you **follow the examples below in every detail**: order, punctuation, formatting (especially italics), spacing and so on.

Some of the details used in these examples have been modified, and some sources therefore do not really exist in the form given below.

Book – single author

Footnote:

T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

Bibliography:

Madan, T. N. *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Book – two or more authors

Footnote:

Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

Bibliography:

Robinson, Richard H., and Willard L. Johnson. *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997.

Chapter or article in edited multi-author volume

Footnote:

James P. McDermott, "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism," in *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 171.

Bibliography:

McDermott, James P. "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism." In *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, 165-192. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Translated book

Footnote

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, trans. by W. D. Robson-Scott (New York: H. Liveright, 1928), 28.

Bibliography

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott. New York: H. Liveright, 1928.

Journal article – single author

Footnote:

Richard King, "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text," *Numen* 42 (1995): 12.

Bibliography:

King, Richard. "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text." *Numen* 42 (1995): 1-20.

Journal article – two or three authors

Footnote:

Helen Hardacre and Abe Yoshiya, "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5:1 (1978): 18.

Bibliography:

Hardacre, Helen, and Abe Yoshiya. "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5:1 (1978): 5-27.

Web site

Footnote:

Paul Kingsbury, "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon," <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Bibliography:

Kingsbury, Paul. "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon." <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Reference work (e.g. encyclopaedia or dictionary)

Footnote:

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. "Sufism."

Footnote:

Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., s.v. "Apophatic."

The abbreviation "s.v." is for the Latin *sub verbo* ("under the word").

Reference works are usually not included in the bibliography.

Sacred texts

Standard citation convention is set for the sacred texts of each major tradition. You must be sure to cite sacred texts in the correct format. Unless your lecturer for a specific course

states otherwise (e.g. if conformity to a more complex standard is required for courses specialising in a particular tradition), the following conventions will apply.

The Bible

In quoting the Bible, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Bible and the Qur'an are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

The Bible is cited by book, chapter and verse. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (1 Kgs 2:7).

Note that books of the Bible are abbreviated according to standard abbreviations. A list of abbreviations should usually be available in the edition of the Bible you are using.

Note also that the punctuation mark comes *after* the close of the parentheses. This is also the case for the full stop in a direct quote:

". . . Absalom thy brother" (1 Kgs 2:7).

When citing multiple passages, list the abbreviated title of each *new* biblical book followed by the chapter number and colon, with all verses in that chapter separated by a comma and space. A semicolon should separate references to subsequent chapters or books. Do not include the conjunction "and" or an ampersand ("&") before the last citation. List passages in canonical and numerical order. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (Matt 2:3; 3:4–6; 4:3, 7; Luke 3:6, 8; 12:2, 5).

It is preferable, unless you are discussing differences of translation and interpretation, to use a single version of the Bible throughout a piece of work. In this case, you can indicate that fact by a note with your first citation, and thereafter omit mention of the version:

Footnote:

Matt. 20:4-9. In this essay, all biblical quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989).

Where you have to refer to more than one version of the Bible, you can indicate the different versions in footnotes, or by a set of abbreviations that you establish in a footnote early in the essay.

List the versions of the Bible you use in your bibliography. They should appear alphabetically according to title. For example:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible: The Holy Bible. Edited by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "New".

The Qur'an

The name of the text is best written, "Qur'an."

In quoting the Qur'an, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Qur'an and the Bible are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

When quoting the Qur'an, give the abbreviation "Q.", then cite the number of the *sura* (chapter), then the number(s) of the *ayat* (verse). For example:

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...." (Q. 24:35).

"Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; The Compassionate, the Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment" (Q. 1:2-4).

State in the first footnote what "translation" edition is being used for the entire document. For example:

Footnote:

In this essay, all citations from the Qur'an will be taken from *An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition)*, trans. Majid Fakhry (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

If you use more than one source for Qur'anic text in your essay, then you need to provide a separate, footnoted reference to each citation, specifying which version that citation is from.

In your bibliography, list each "translation" edition of the Qur'an you use alphabetically under its title. For example:

Bibliography:

An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition).
Translated by Majid Fakhry. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "Interpretation".

Buddhist and Indian texts

For undergraduate purposes, simply cite the English translation you are using as if it is an ordinary translated book. However, note that many Indian or Buddhist texts you will cite are compilations of multiple texts into a single volume. In such cases, you must also include the name of the text in your footnote citation. The name given to the text in English by the translator will suffice; but include the name in the original language also if it is easily accessible. For example:

Footnote:

"The Buddha's Last Days" (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*), in *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 232.

In your bibliography, list only the whole translated works to which you refer in your essay, according to the usual format. In other words, if you cite more than one *sutta* etc. from a single volume, you need not list every individual text, but just the volume. For example:

Bibliography:

Walshe, Maurice, trans. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.

How to cite in the body of your essay

When you refer to one of your sources in the course of your argument, you should always give your source in a footnote, which is indicated by a superscript number attached to the appropriate part of the sentence.

Note that some other stylistic conventions use what is called “in-text citation”, where references are given in parentheses at the end of the sentence; you will see this method of citation often as you read. **HOWEVER, IN-TEXT CITATION IS NOT PART OF THE CHICAGO STYLE INTRODUCED HERE** (with the sole exceptions of passages from the Bible or the Qur'an), and you should consistently use footnotes indicated by superscript numbers **ONLY**.

Footnote style has been given above. Note that footnote numbers should always come *after* any punctuation mark at the end of the word they attach to; thus, it is correct to write a footnote like this,¹ but wrong to write it like this². One of the advantages of superscript numbered footnoting is that it allows you to make tangential comments, as in this example.³

When you refer to the same source several times in a row, you can use "Ibid." and the page number for all subsequent notes after the first.⁴ If you are referring to the same page number in several successive notes, then "Ibid." alone is sufficient.⁵

If you cite source A, then cite one or more other sources,⁶ and then return to source A,⁷ it is best to repeat only the author's name,⁸ a shortened title, and the page number cited,⁹ rather than to repeat the full citation. See the footnotes attached to this paragraph (notes 6-9) for examples.

In other words, only use abbreviated citations where you are citing the same source more than one time. Avoid old abbreviations like *loc. cit.*, *op. cit.* and so on, which can require the reader to keep track of sources over a number of references and pages, and are thus confusing.

¹ Random correct placed footnote.

² Random incorrectly placed footnote.

³ Constance Prevarication, *The Book of Tangential Comments* (Dargaville: Primrose Path Publications, 2004), 27. It is interesting to note that in this recent work, Prevarication reverses her previous hard-line stance on the literary sidetrack, and not only countenances it in principle, but herself indulges in it extensively in practice.

⁴ Ibid., 36. [This means the reference is to the same source, but with a different page number.]

⁵ Ibid. [This means page 36, exactly like the preceding footnote.]

⁶ T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

⁷ Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

⁸ Madan, *Non-Renunciation*, 38-40.

⁹ Robinson and Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion*, 115.