

**The Eight Million Divinities of Kyoto:  
Introduction to Japanese Religions  
『八百万の神』  
KCJS Fall 2019  
Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Adam Lyons

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**Course Time:** Tues./Thurs. 1:10-2:40

**Location:** KCJS classroom

**Instructor Office Hour:** After class and by appointment

**Course Description and Goals**

Kyoto is the ancient capital of Japan, and the city served as the center of Japanese culture and religion for more than a millennium. This introductory course offers a survey of Japanese religions by drawing on the resources of Kyoto and its surroundings. In addition to traditional reading assignments and classroom discussion, we will conduct multiple research expeditions to museums and significant religious and cultural sites in and around Kyoto.

The thesis of this class is that religious life of Kyoto is animated by tradition and transformation. Exploring this theme, the aim of the course is to challenge students to deepen their knowledge of Japanese religions and society and to strengthen their understanding of the connections between history and place, and religion and culture. Course units are arranged to introduce the history of major religious traditions (Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity, and new religious movements) and to examine modern religious life with a focus on topics including media, economy, and the Allied Occupation of Japan. There are no prerequisites for this course. Whenever possible, readings are paired with either visits to related religious sites or recommendations for exploring the city independently.

Are there really “eight million divinities of Kyoto?” What is the difference between a temple and a shrine? What is a *matsuri*? Do Japanese people really believe in *kami* and Buddhas? How many religions are there in Japan? How much money is there in Japanese religions? What do members of Japanese new religions believe? Do Japanese religions share features in common with other traditions you may know? If you take this class, we will explore the answers to these questions together in the most fun way possible—by stepping out into one of the most beautiful cities on earth to find the answers.

**Format**

The course will consist of two, ninety-minute meetings each week. In most weeks, there will be an expedition to a museum or a site of interest in the week’s second meeting (Thursdays). Students are expected to attend all meetings and excursions.

This is not a lecture course. Tuesday meetings are primarily discussion based, and each student is expected to lead discussion at least once. **There is one longer outing that will take place on a Saturday—a trip to Nara scheduled for our sixth week [October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019].** Students who must be absent for any reason should contact the instructor in advance. Students are allowed one absence for a reason other than illness. Absences beyond those allowed will result in a grade penalty.

### Course Requirements

*Class Participation:* This class is discussion and activity based. Students are expected to read the week's readings before the weekly meeting, to consider the discussion questions set out in this syllabus for each week, to participate vigorously in class discussion, and to participate constructively in all outings. As part of class participation, students will be expected to introduce and discuss readings. Each week I will ask for volunteers. Each student is expected to fulfill this duty at least twice (possibly more depending on enrollment). Please refer to the section below, An Academic Approach to Religion for guidelines regarding class discussion.  
15 percent.

*Response papers:* Students will be required to prepare two 1-2 page response papers on the readings and/or a field trip. Guidelines for the response papers are included below in Guidelines for Written Assignments. The grades given for the response papers will be  $\sqrt{+}$  (7.5 points),  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$  (7 points), or  $\sqrt{-}$  (6 points or less).  
15 percent

*Midterm Test:* The format of the Midterm Test will be covered in class. The test will include a mixture of objective questions, such as identifying particular figures, sites, and quotations, defining key terms, and short essay questions. (See the questions for each week on the syllabus below—take note of the **bold** terms).  
20 percent

*Midterm paper:* Students will prepare a 4-5 page paper on an assigned topic based on the assigned readings and outings. Please refer to the section below, Grading Rubrics for Written Assignments for the criteria on which papers will be assessed. The possible topics will be covered in class.  
20 percent

*Final Paper:* Students will prepare a 8-10 page research paper on an assigned topic based on the assigned readings and outings. The final paper may be an expansion of the midterm paper. Please refer to the section below, Grading Rubrics for Written Assignments for the criteria on which papers will be assessed.  
30 percent

### Grading

The grading scale adopted in this course is as follows:

A      95-100

A-	90-94
B+	86-89
B	80-85
B-	75-79
C+	70-74
C	65-69
C-	60-64
D	55-59

### Accessibility Issues

Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to present his or her letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

### Course Policies

You will find course policies on “An Academic Approach to Religion,” attendance, late papers, re-submissions, creative assignments, the Honor Code, and others in later sections of this syllabus. Please read the whole syllabus carefully before deciding whether or not to enroll in this course.

### Access to Course Readings:

**All course readings will be available as PDFs on the course website.**

### Course Overview

Week/ Date	Topic	Expeditions	Assignments, etc.
1	Course Introduction. Religions of Japan: Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity, and New Religions.	<b>Visit Shōkokuji Temple and Kitano Tenmangū Shrine.</b> 9/5.	Write a brief self-introduction. What do you hope to learn in this class? Please include your email for access to class dropbox.
2	<b>Buddhism Unit:</b> The Transmission of Buddhism to Japan. Nara Buddhism.	<b>Visit Kyoto National Museum.</b> 9/12.	Find and compare representations of Buddhist and Shinto figures at the museum.
3	Heian Buddhism. Saichō and Kūkai. Original enlightenment thought.	<b>Visit Tōji.</b> 9/19.	<b>Response Paper due on Thursday.</b>
4	Medieval Buddhist Reformers: Dōgen, Hōnen, Shinran, Nichiren.	<b>Visit the West Honganji Temple.</b> 9/26.	If you like, pay a visit to the Ryūkoku Museum of Buddhism across from the temple.

5	<b>Shinto Unit:</b> Ancient Shinto. Imperial Mythology in the <i>Kojiki</i> .	<b>Visit Shimogamo Shrine. 10/3.</b>	Film Clip: <i>Himiko</i> (1974).  Weekend in Okayama!
6	Kami and Buddhas in Medieval Japan.	<b>Weekend Excursion: Visit Nara, Tōdaiji, Kasuga Shrine.</b>	<b>Trip to Nara on Sat. 10/12.</b>  What does the Nara Daibutsu represent?
7	Making Modern Shinto	<b>Visit Heian Shrine. 10/17.</b>  Recommended: visit Yoshida Shrine.	<b>Response Paper due on Thurs.</b> Film Clip: <i>Ee ja nai ka</i> (1981). Heian Shrine is not an example of State Shinto. Why?
8	<b>Christianity Unit.</b> Christianity in Japan. Uchimura Kanzō and Protestant Social Activists.	<b>Visit Dōshisha University Chapel and Clarke Chapel. 10/24.</b>	<b>Midterm Test due by Friday at midnight.</b>
9	<b>Religions and Modernity:</b> New Religions	<b>Visit Konkōkyō Church. 11/7.</b> <i>(Tentative).</i>	Based on your reading, prepare questions for the Konkōkyō priest!
10	The Occupation of Japan and Religious Freedom	<b>Visit Tenrikyō Kawaramachi Church. 11/14.</b> Guest: Rev. Motohiro Fukaya	Based on your reading, prepare questions for the Tenrikyō priest!
11	Religion and economy.	<b>Visit Yasaka Shrine (Gion) on Thursday. 11/21.</b>	<b>Midterm Paper due on Thurs.</b> Survey the wishes written on <i>ema</i> offerings at <i>Gion</i> shrine.
12	Aum Shinrikyō and the Media	<b>No Class Tuesday. Meet in the Classroom on Thursday 11/28.</b>	Aum Shinrikyō was influenced by manga culture. How and why?
13	Religion and Popular Culture.	<b>Visit Fushimi Inari Shrine. 12/5.</b>  <i>We will climb the mountain. Please dress for the hike.</i>	Clip: "Spirited Away" (2001)  Why are there so many <i>torii</i> at Fushimi Inari? What does Inari (the rice kami) have to do with capitalism?
14	Finals Week	No class or excursion this week.	<b>Submit Final Essay by 12/12 (by midnight).</b>

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 Course Introductions

**Reading:** Please read this syllabus carefully.

#### **Visit: Shōkokuji Temple** 相国寺

-Rinzai Sect, founded in 1382 CE by Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (足利義満 1358-1408 CE). Dōshisha University rents land from Shōkokuji.

#### **Kitano Tenmangu Shrine** 北野天満宮

-Founded in 947 CE to appease the vengeful spirit of exiled scholar Sugawara no Michizane (菅原 道真, 845-903 CE). Now he is revered as the kami of learning, Tenjin (天神). For reference, see KCJS Director Matthew Stavros' field note about Kitano Tenmangū: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3-DPfeyEUU&t=2s>

### Week 2 The Transmission of Buddhism to Japan

#### **Visit: Kyoto National Museum**

-Opened in 1897 as the Imperial Museum of Kyoto.

-Relevant Exhibitions: 1st floor: temple and shrine treasures exhibition (sculptures); 2nd floor: magnificent Buddhist painting, sliding door paintings from Kyoto temples, the flowering of Edo painting; 3rd floor: ceramics and archaeological national treasures. Tentative guest speaker: art historian Fabienne Helfenberger.

For information on the exhibitions:

<https://www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/theme/index.html>

#### **Reading:**

Chapter 3 "Prince Shotoku and his Constitution" and chapter 5 "Nara Buddhism" in De Bary, et al, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.

#### **Recommended:**

Como, Michael I. *Shōtoku: ethnicity, ritual, and violence in the Japanese Buddhist tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Read Chapter 1: "Ethnicity and the Founding Legend of Japanese Buddhism" (pdf).

Hall, John Whitney, ed. "The Asuka Enlightenment." In *The Cambridge History of Japan*. Cambridge University, 1988.

Sango, Asuka. *The Halo of Golden Light: Imperial Authority and Buddhist Ritual in Heian Japan*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2015. Read "The Emperor and the Golden Light Sutra" (pdf).

#### **Discussion:**

- 1.) How was Buddhism transmitted to Japan?
- 2.) Who was **Prince Shōtoku** and what was the **Shōtoku Constitution**?
- 3.) What was the **Sutra of Golden Light**, and why was it important to the ruling elite?

- 4.) What is the significance of the **Parable of the Burning House** in the *Lotus Sutra*?
- 5.) How did **Emperor Shōmu** support Buddhism?
- 6.) Who was **Gyōgi** and how did he become famous?
- 7.) Can you detect stylized conventions in the representations of Buddhist and Shinto figures (at the museum)?

### Week 3 Heian Buddhism

#### Visit: Tōji Temple 東寺

-Shingon sect 真言宗

-Founded in 796 CE. Kūkai 空海 (774-835 CE) was appointed abbot of Tōji, and along with Saiji and the Shingon'in inside the imperial palace, Tōji was one of only three Buddhist temples in the Heian capital.

#### Recommended: Visit Enryakuji Temple Complex 延暦寺 on Mt. Hiei.

-Head Temple of the Tendai Sect 天台宗.

- Founded in 788 by Saichō (最澄 767-822 CE), an eminent monk who traveled to China at the same time as Kūkai.

-Alongside Shingon, Tendai thought played a major role in shaping Japanese intellectual history, and many 20th century Japanese scholars argue that Tendai doctrine was the pinnacle of medieval Japanese philosophy, comparable to the elaborate doctrines of European Christian thinkers like St. Thomas Aquinas.

-The founders of major sects including Sōtō Zen, Pure Land, True Pure Land, and Nichiren (the Hokke lineage) all trained at Enryakuji.

-One shorthand term for Tendai doctrine is "original enlightenment thought" (本覚思想 *hongaku shisō*).

#### Reading:

Read "Mahayana Universalism," chapter 6 "Saichō and Mt. Hie," and chapter 7 "Kūkai and esoteric Buddhism" in De Bary, et al, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Columbia UP, 2001. (Read p. 123-175).

#### Recommended:

Abe, Ryūichi. *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Lowe, Bryan D. "The Discipline of Writing: Scribes and Purity in Eighth-Century Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 39.2 (2012): 201-39.

#### Discussion:

- 1.) What is Mahayana Buddhism? What is universal about it?
- 2.) What is the most important sutra for **Saichō**? Why?
- 3.) What did Saichō hope to accomplish when he established his own monastery on **Mt. Hiei**?

- 4.) What is **Tendai**?
- 5.) **Kūkai**'s Buddhism is described as esoteric. What does that mean, and what is the esoteric practice? What is **Shingon**?
- 6.) What was the relationship between Kūkai and Saichō? How did they both learn about Buddhism?
- 7.) What is the historical significance of the **Tōji** temple?

#### **Week 4 Medieval Buddhist Reformers**

##### **Visit West Honganji Temple** 西本願寺

-Headquarters of the Honganji branch of the Jōdo Shinshū sect, one of the largest Buddhist denominations in Japan. This sect was founded by Shinran in the 12th century. In contrast to the aristocratic Buddhism of the Heian period, the Shin sect spread as a new religious movement among the peasantry to become one of the most powerful religious institutions in Japan. Among Shinran's many innovations was the practice of clerical marriage (In Shinran's day, other denominations officially practiced celibacy). For this reason, the head of the Honganji sect today is the head of the Ōtani family—a lineal descendant of Shinran.

##### **Reading:**

Read intro to part 3 "Despair, Deliverance and Destiny," chapter 10 "Amida and the Pure Land," chapter 13 "The Sun and the Lotus," and chapter 14 "Zen Buddhism" in De Bary, et al, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.

##### **Recommended:**

- Dobbins, James. *Jodo Shinshu: Shin Buddhism in Medieval Japan*. Bloomington, Illinois: Indiana University Press, 1989. Chapter 1 and Conclusion.
- Dobbins, James C., and Eshin-ni. *Letters of the Nun Eshinni: Images of Pure Land Buddhism in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i, 2004.
- Heine, Steven, ed. *Dōgen: Textual and Historical Studies*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Kitagawa, Zenchō, and Jacqueline Stone. "The Words of the "Lotus Sutra" in Nichiren's Thought." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 41.1, 2014: 25-43.
- Shinran, and Dennis Hirota. *The Collected Works of Shinran*. Kyoto, Japan: Jōdo shinshū Hongwanji-ha, 1997. Excerpts.
- Stone, Jacqueline. "Medieval Tendai "Hongaku" Thought and the New Kamakura Buddhism: A Reconsideration." in *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 22(1), 1995. pp. 17-48.
- Stone, Jacqueline. "The Atsuhara Affair: The "Lotus Sutra", Persecution, and Religious Identity in the Early Nichiren Tradition." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 41.1, 2014: 153-89.
- Yampolsky, Philip B. *Selected Writings of Nichiren*. New York: Columbia UP, 1990. Excerpts.

**Discussion:**

- 1.) What was the relationship between **Hōnen** and **Shinran**?
- 2.) What did **Hōnen** teach about the nature of salvation? What about **Shinran**?
- 3.) What is **Amida**?
- 4.) According to **Dōgen**, how can a human being achieve enlightenment?
- 5.) According to **Nichiren**, what is the significance of the **Lotus Sutra**?
- 6.) Do you think **Dōgen** and **Nichiren** are similar thinkers or no? Why?
- 7.) Can you detect common themes in the thought of these Kamakura period Buddhist reformers?
- 8.) What is a **koan**? How is one used?

**Week 5 Ancient Shinto****Visit Shimogamo Shrine** 下鴨神社

-founded in the 6th century, predating the city of Heian Kyō (Kyōto).

-This shrine venerates the kami Tamayori Hime and her father Kamo Taketsunomi (thunder kami). The Shrine became the object of imperial patronage in the Heian period. The writer **Kamo no Chōmei** 1155-1216 CE (author of *Hōjōki*) was a second son in the shrine's priestly family. A replica of his hut stands in the Shrine's sacred grove, the *tadasu no mori*. Today the shrine is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Can you find Kamo no Chōmei's hut?

**Reading:**

Read "Ancient Shinto" and "Kami in Myth" In Hardacre, Helen. *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

**Recommended:**

Bock, Felicia. 1990. "The Enthronement Rites: The Text of *Engishiki*, 927." *Monumenta Nipponica*. 45/3: 307-333.

Ebersole, Gary L. 1999. "Tama Belief and Practice in Ancient Japan." In *Religions of Japan in Practice*. Edited by George Tanabe. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 141-152.

Ooms, Herman. *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan: the Tenmu Dynasty, 650-800*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

Philippi, Donald L. 1968. Book I. In *Kojiki. Translated with an Introduction and Notes*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, pp. 37-159, and related notes.

Piggott, Joan. 1997. "Great Kings and Ritsuryō Law." In *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 167-235.

**For background, read the following in *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (optional):**

"The Earliest Records of Japan," "Early Shinto," and "Chinese Thought and Institutions in Early Japan" in De Bary, et al, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.



**Discussion:**

- 1.) How would you characterize the relationship between Japanese and Chinese culture in the ancient period? Think about the *ritsuryō* system.
- 2.) Who was **Himiko**? How do we know about her?
- 3.) What are **kami**? In the ancient period, how were kami understood?
- 4.) What was the *jingikan*?
- 5.) What is the myth of **Izanagi** and **Izanami**?
- 6.) What are the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon Shoki*? Why were these texts commissioned? How are they different?
- 7.) Are these texts compilations of myth or history?

**Week 6 Kami and Buddhas in Medieval Japan.****Visit Nara: Kōfukuji, Tōdaiji, and Kasuga Shrine.**

**Kōfukuji** 興福寺 was founded in 669 as the tutelary temple of the powerful Fujiwara house and moved to its present location in 710. It was one of the Seven Great Temples of Nara, and it is the headquarters of the Hossō school. This temple venerates Shakyamuni Buddha (the historical Buddha).

**Tōdaiji** 東大寺 was founded in 738 by Emperor Shōmu to oversee his planned network of Buddhist temples throughout Japan. It was one of the Seven Great Temples of Nara. It houses the Nara Daibutsu, an enormous statue of Vairocana Buddha (Rushana—the cosmic Buddha). Today this temple is the headquarters of the Kegon sect. In 1994, an enormous rock concert featuring Joni Mitchell and X-Japan was held on the grounds of the temple. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Kasuga Shrine** 春日大社 was established in 768 as the tutelary shrine of the Fujiwara house. It is associated with the Kasuga *daimyōjin* divinity that was an object of popular veneration through the medieval period. The primeval forest surrounding the shrine feature over 3,000 stone lanterns. The deer is thought to be the divine messenger of the Kasuga kami. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Reading:**

Read chapter 15 “Shintō in Medieval Japan” in De Bary, et al, ed. *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.

Read “The Esotericization of Medieval Shinto.” In Hardacre, Helen. In *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

**Recommended**

Grapard, Allan G. *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Kuroda, Toshio. 1981. “Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion.” *Journal of*

- Japanese Studies*. 7/1: 1-21.
- Scheid, Bernhard. 2000. "Reading the *Yuiitsu Shintô Myôbô Yôshû*: A Modern Exegesis of an Esoteric Shinto Text." In *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*, ed. John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 117-143.
- Teeuwen, Mark, and Fabio Rambelli, 2003. "Introduction: Combinatory Religion and the *Honji Suijaku* Paradigm in Pre-Modern Japan." In *Buddhas and Kami and Japan: Honji Suiaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*. Edited by Teeuwen and Rambelli. London: Routledge Curzon. pp. 1-53.
- Teeuwen, Mark and van der Veere, Hendrik, translators. 1998. *Nakatomi Harae Kunge: Purification and Enlightenment in Late-Heian Japan*. Buddhismus-Studien.

### Discussion

- 1.) What was the relationship between Buddhism and kami in medieval Japan? Consider the *honji suiaku* paradigm.
- 2.) What was the significance of the concept of *shinkoku* ("the land of the gods") in medieval Japan?
- 3.) Who was **Kitabatake Chikafusa**, and how did he conceive of the imperial house?
- 4.) What was **Ryôbu Shinto**? What about **Watarai Shintô**?
- 5.) What is **Shûgendô** and how is it related to Shintô and Buddhism?
- 6.) **Yoshida Kanetomo** argued that "Buddhism is the fruit, Confucianism is the leaves, and Shinto is the trunk and the roots." (In de Bary et al, ed. p. 355). What does he mean?

### Week 7 Making Modern Shinto

#### Visit Heian Jingû 平安神宮

Heian Jingû originated as an attempt to build a reconstruction of the Heian period imperial palace in 1895 to mark the 1100th anniversary of the founding of Heian kyô on the occasion of an industrial exposition fair. After the fair, the reconstruction was maintained as a shrine to Emperor Kanmu (735-806 CE), who reigned at the time the capital was transferred from Nara to Kyoto. Heian Jingû hosts the *jidai matsuri* every year on October 22nd. It is one of Kyoto's most popular festivals.

#### Reading:

Read "Shinto and the Meiji State" In Hardacre, Helen. In *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

#### Recommended:

- Breen, John. "Resurrecting the Sacred Land of Japan: The State of Shinto in the Twenty-first Century." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37/2 (2010): pp. 295-315.
- Grapard, Allan G. "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution: The Separation of Shinto and

- Buddhist Divinities in Meiji ("Shinbutsu Bunri") and a Case Study: Tōnomine." *History of Religions* 23.3 (1984): pp. 240-65.
- Hardacre, Helen. In *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017. Read "Shinto and Imperial Japan."
- Jaffe, Richard M. *Neither Monk nor Layman: Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 2001.
- Josephson, Jason Ānanda. *The Invention of Religion in Japan*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Ketelaar, James Edward. *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1990.
- Reader, Ian. "Born Shinto...': Community, Festivals, Production and Change," In *Religion in Contemporary Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991, pp. 55-76.
- Takenaka, Akiko. *Yasukuni Shrine: History, Memory, and Japan's Unending Postwar*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.

### Discussion

- 1.) Why did the Meiji regime separate the Buddhas from the Kami (*shinbutsu bunri*)?
- 2.) How did *haibutsu kishaku* impact Japanese Buddhism?
- 3.) What was the Great Promulgation Campaign (*daikyō senpu undō*)? What doctrine did the campaign teach?
- 3.) What was State Shinto (*kokka shintō*)? What about the ideal of the *kokutai*?
- 4.) What is the difference between Shrine Shintō (*jinja shintō*) and sectarian Shintō (*kyōha shintō*)?

### Week 8 Christianity in Japan

#### Visit Dōshisha University Chapel and Clarke Chapel.

Dōshisha University was the first Christian University to be accredited by the Japanese government. It was founded by Niijima Jō in 1875 as one of Japan's first Protestant academies. Christians remain a small minority in Japan, but since the 19<sup>th</sup> century Japanese Christians have played a major role in public life, particularly in the fields of education, social welfare, and charity work, and Dōshisha has been an important part of this history.

#### Reading:

Mullins, Mark R. *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998. Read Chapters 2, 4, and 7.

#### Recommended:

Howes, John F. "Christian Prophecy in Japan: Uchimura Kanzō." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34.1 (2007): pp. 127-50.

LeFebvre, Jesse R. "Christian Wedding Ceremonies: "Nonreligiousness" in

Contemporary Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2015), pp. 185-203.

Maxey, Trent. *The "Greatest Problem": Religion and State Formation in Meiji Japan*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014.

Mullins, Mark, ed. *Handbook of Christianity in Japan*. Leiden, NL: Brill, 2003.

Paramore, Kiri. *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*. London; New York, Routledge, 2009.

### Discussion

- 1.) What is the United Church of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan*) and how was it started?
- 2.) How does the history of **Dōshisha** reflect the role played by Christianity in Japan?
- 3.) Who was **Uchimura Kanzō**? What was his Non-church movement (*Mukyōkai*)?
- 4.) Christian theology poses a problem for traditional rites of **ancestor worship** that are deeply ingrained in popular culture. What is the nature of the problem, and how do some Japanese Christians get around it?

### Week 9 New Religions of Japan

**Visit a Konkōkyō Church** (*tentative*).

#### Reading:

Hardacre, Helen. *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1986. Print. Chapter 1.

Hardacre, Helen. "Shinto and Revelation." In *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

"New Religious Movements" (introduction and Tenrikyō excerpts) in De Bary, Gluck, Carol, and Tiedemann, Arthur E. *Sources of Japanese Tradition. Vol. 2: 1600 to 2000*. 2nd ed. New York ;: Columbia UP, 2005.

#### Recommended:

Ellwood, Robert. *Tenrikyō: A Pilgrimage Faith*. Tenri, Nara, Japan: Tenri University Press, 1982. "Read Chapter 4: The Life of the Foundress."

Garon, Sheldon M. "State and Religion in Imperial Japan, 1912-1945." *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, 1986, pp. 273-302.

Staemmler, Birgit, and Ulrich M. Dehn. *Establishing the Revolutionary: an Introduction to New Religions in Japan*. Leiden, Brill: 2011.

Stalker, Nancy K. *Prophet Motive: Deguchi Onisaburō, Oomoto, and the Rise of New Religions in Imperial Japan*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i, 2008. Read "Introduction" pp. 1-20 and chapter 3 "Taishō Spiritualism" pp. 76-107

### Discussion

- 1.) What are some examples of Japanese **new religions**? What characteristics do Japanese new religions share with each other? Do they share any features with other religions you might know?
- 2.) How would you characterize the significance of the term *kokoro* in contemporary Japanese religious life?
- 3.) What is the value of doing fieldwork with religious groups? What problems might arise for an anthropologist working with a religious group?
- 4.) Who was **Kurozumi Munetada** and what did he teach?
- 5.) What is a **revelation**? In these readings, who experiences revelations and who is receptive to the revealed teachings?
- 6.) **Nakayama Miki** was a peasant woman who founded a major religious movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. What did she teach? What components of Japanese religious life are incorporated into Miki's teaching? Why might people have found Miki's teaching appealing?
- 7.) Do **Tenrikyō's** teachings appear to fit the worldview model presented by Hardacre? Why or why not?

## Week 10 The Occupation of Japan and Religious Freedom

### Visit Tenrikyō Kawaramachi Grand Church.

Guest speaker Rev. Motohiro Fukaya.

### Reading:

Read Prologue: "The Drums of War," Chapter 5: "State Shintō as a Heretical Secularism," and Chapter 7: "Universal Rights, Unique Circumstances."  
In Thomas, Jolyon. *Faking Liberties: Religious Freedom in American-Occupied Japan*. Chicago: University of Chicago UP, 2019.

### Recommended:

Josephson, Jason Ānanda. *The Invention of Religion in Japan*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2012.

### Discussion

- 1.) What was the **Shinto Directive**? What did **GHQ** seek to achieve by issuing this directive?
- 2.) Who was **William K. Bunce**? How would you characterize his role in the **Allied Occupation of Japan**?
- 3.) How would you describe the role played by religious studies scholarship in the Occupation's religions policies?
- 4.) Thomas argues that the idea of **religious freedom** as a **human right** was "made in Japan then exported for American foreign policy use." (p. 199)  
How do you evaluate this argument?
- 5.) What do **Article 20** and **Article 89** of the **1947 Constitution** do?
- 6.) According to Thomas, what are the limitations of human rights discourse?

## Week 11 Religion and Economy.

**Visit: Yasaka Shrine 八坂神社 (Gion Shrine).**

This shrine was founded in 656, and it was placed under imperial patronage in the Heian period. The shrine is famous for its *mikoshi* (divine palanquins) which are paraded through the streets every year in July as part of the Gion Matsuri, one of Japan's most popular festivals. This festival reenacts a purification ritual staged in 869 to ward off epidemics. The shrine has long been associated with the merchant class and "this-worldly benefits." It venerates the kami Susanoo.

**Reading:**

Read "Shrine Festivals and their Changing Place in the Public Sphere." In Hardacre, Helen. *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

Reader, Ian, and Tanabe, George. *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i, 1998. Chapter 3 (pp.107-139)

**Recommended:**

Covell, Stephen Grover. *Japanese Temple Buddhism: Worldliness in a Religion of Renunciation*. University of Hawaii Press, 2005.

Komatsu, Kayoko. "Mizuko Kuyō and New Age Concepts of Reincarnation." In *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 30/3-4. 2003. Pp. 259-278.

Rowe, Mark. *Bonds of the Dead: Temples, Burial, and the Transformation of Contemporary Japanese Buddhism*. University of Chicago Press, 2011.

**Discussion**

- 1.) What is a *matsuri*? What are its characteristics? Are *matsuri* solemn affairs or carnivalesque or both?
- 2.) Is it possible to have religious practices without beliefs?
- 3.) Are there any "practically religious" features of American culture that resemble the Japanese conventions discussed in the reading?
- 4.) What does capitalism have to do with contemporary expressions of Japanese religion discussed in the reading?
- 5.) Why do some people want to spend money on *omamori* amulets if they themselves claim not to believe in the magic?

**Week 12 Aum Shinrikyō and the Media**

**No Class on Tuesday. No excursion this week.**

**Reading:**

Hardacre, Helen. "Aum Shinrikyō and the Japanese Media: The Pied Piper Meets the Lamb of God." *History of Religions*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2007, pp. 171–204.

Murakami, Haruki. Trans. by Birnbaum, Alfred, and Gabriel, J. Philip. *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*. London: Harvill, 2000. Excerpts.

Susumu, Shimazono. "In the Wake of Aum: The Formation and Transformation of a Universe of Belief." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22.3 (1995).

### Recommended:

Mclaughlin, Levi. "Did Aum Change Everything? What Soka Gakkai Before, During, and After the Aum Shinrikyō Affair Tells Us About the Persistent "Otherness" of New Religions in Japan." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 39.1 (2012): 51-75.

Reader, Ian. *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: the Case of Aum Shinrikyō*. Richmond: Curzon, 2000.

### Discussion

- 1.) Why would successful people from elite universities want to join a religious group like **Aum Shinrikyō**?
- 2.) Does Aum Shinrikyō reflect tensions that were inherent in 1990s Japanese society? How should such a movement be interpreted in relation to the culture that generated it?
- 3.) What was the concept of *poa* in the Aum teaching and how does it relate to the sarin gas attack?
- 4.) If you had a friend who wanted to join a group with doctrinal and structural similarities to Aum, what would you say to them?
- 5.) Who bears responsibility for the crimes committed by Aum Shinrikyō? The blind guru **Asahara Shōkō** (who used words only)? His followers who took action?

### Week 13 Religion and Popular Culture

#### Visit Fushimi Inari Shrine 伏見稲荷大社

The origins of the shrine date to the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It is the head shrine to Inari, the rice deity. Because rice was not merely food but a measure of wealth through most of Japanese history, the shrine is associated with the pursuit of worldly benefits including financial success. There are around 1,000 *torii* gates at this shrine, and they are mostly donations from parties pursuing the benefits associated with the shrine. It has long been a major pilgrimage site. It is one of the most visited tourist attractions in Kyoto, and it is extremely busy.

#### Reading:

Napier, Susan Jolliffe. "Matter Out of Place: Carnival, Containment, and Cultural Recovery in Miyazaki's Spirited Away." *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2006, pp. 287-310.

Thomas, Jolyon. 2012. "Chapter 3: Entertaining Religious Ideas" In *Drawing on Tradition: Manga, Anime, and Religion in Contemporary Japan*. University of Hawaii Press, pp. 1-34 and pp. 103-124.

### Recommended:

- Hardacre, Helen. "Heisei Shinto." In *Shinto: A History*, New York: Oxford UP, 2017.
- Napier, Susan. "An Anorexic in Miyazaki's Land of Cockaigne: Excess and Abnegation in Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*." In Stalker, Nancy ed., *Devouring Japan*, Chapter 16. Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Thomas, Jolyon. 2012. "Chapter 1: Visualizing Religion" In *Drawing on Tradition: Manga, Anime, and Religion in Contemporary Japan*. University of Hawaii Press, pp. 35-56.

### Discussion

- 1.) **Miyazaki Hayao** has repeatedly stated that his films have nothing to do with religion; what understanding of religion does this stance come from, so far as you can tell from what you have read and seen so far?
- 2.) What is the message conveyed by ***Princess Mononoke***, and how does it relate to religion in your opinion, whatever the author's view? What about ***Spirited Away***?
- 3.) Many commentators on Miyazaki's films have pointed out that they do not invoke notions of absolute good and evil. From your own perspective, does either film have a moral stance? If so, what is it?
- 4.) Debate the following proposition: since contemporary Shinto claims to have no doctrines or sacred texts, contemporary creators of popular culture have unlimited scope to take related images and develop them without restriction or fear of contradiction.
- 5.) What does the concept of carnival have to do with *Spirited Away*?

### Week 14 Submit Final Essay



### **Course Policies**

#### *Attendance*

Attendance will be required and recorded at all lectures and discussion sections. Students are allowed one absence without an excuse during the term. Any further absence must be cleared with the student's instructor in advance, and/or accompanied by an explanatory note from student health services. Other excused absences could include a death in the family. Absence to attend an extra-curricular activity will not be recognized as excused. Students anticipating any unavoidable absence should consult with their instructor as soon as possible. For every unexcused absence, one point will be deducted from your final grade.

#### *Late Papers*

Students unable to complete an assignment by the due date should consult their instructor as early as possible to discuss an extension. Extensions are not normally granted for reason of work due in other courses or extra-curricular activities, but may be granted for reasons of illness or a death in the family. Any extension granted must be confirmed by email from the instructor. In no case will an extension of more than one week be granted. Students submitting written assignments late without an extension are penalized at the rate of one grade per day of lateness.

#### *Resubmissions*

Students may elect to rewrite one paper during the semester if the outcome on the first attempt has been unsatisfactory. A resubmission requires advance permission from the instructor and will be due no later than one week after the original due date.

#### *The Honor Code*

This course expects students to be aware of the Honor Code (set out in the next paragraph) and to commit to its principles. In our course, it is encouraged that students would collaborate in various aspects of study, such as discussing readings with fellow students, or participating in a collaborative or creative assignment. However, the written assignments, the midterm and final examinations should be composed individually. While it is fine to discuss the issues with others, once you begin to write, compose your essays on your own. The writing you submit should represent your own, original work.

*Members of the University community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.*

### **An Academic Approach to Religion**

This course adopts a neutral, socio-cultural approach to religion, without endorsing, condemning, or otherwise evaluating the beliefs and practices of any particular religion as true or false. The course does not seek to influence or challenge students' personal stances regarding religion, their beliefs, or decisions not to believe. The fact that the course presents religious material for students' consideration does not mean that the university, the instructor, or the teaching staff recommends, endorses, or condemns any of the beliefs or practices under discussion.

#### *Setting the Tone for Discussion*

Students are expected to inquire deeply into the social and religious basis of beliefs and practices, even when a student may not share those beliefs and practices. Also, students should be aware that their classmates come from a variety of religious backgrounds, including those who follow no religion, who are atheist, or agnostic. It is essential to be respectful of classmates' religious diversity in all aspects of course participation. Any student who finds that impossible is advised not to take this course.

#### *Open Channels of Communication*

The course instructor and other teaching staff are committed to maintaining open channels of communication regarding all students' academic concerns regarding the course and its materials. Students should understand, however, that course staff is not equipped to counsel them regarding personal religious issues.

**Guidelines for Written Assignments:**

The response paper, the midterm paper, and the final paper should each be submitted to the instructor on the due date in both hard copy and digital form. Late papers will be penalized by one-half grade for every day beyond the due date unless prior permission has been obtained from the instructor. Acceptable reasons for requesting an extension on paper deadlines include illness (accompanied by a note from student health services) or a death in the family. Assignments or tests in other courses, extramural appointments or interviews, or commitments to clubs or athletic teams do not constitute grounds for an extension. In no case will papers be accepted more than one week past the original deadline.

The papers should be double-spaced and written in 12-point font.

The papers should include these elements:

1. a distinct introduction setting out the paper's thesis;
2. well-organized paragraphs presenting evidence and arguments to support the thesis;
3. consideration of relevant counter-arguments;
4. a distinct conclusion summarizing the paper's findings;
5. a section for sources cited, in proper citation format.

The papers should use proper citations to refer to readings and films. Any of the standard citation styles (MLA, Chicago, etc.) is acceptable, provided it is used consistently. Students are also welcome to use bibliography software like Refworks, but be advised: the software makes errors, so do proofread your citations.

*Collaborative Work:* Except in cases approved in advance by course teaching staff, it is expected that all student written assignments will be composed solely by the student submitting the work. It is fine for students to discuss their ideas with classmates and others before the actual writing, but the writing itself should be done by the student alone.

### **Grading Rubrics for Written Assignments**

Papers will be graded in accord with the following criteria:

1. Ideas
  - a. Sound, defensible statement of the paper's thesis or purpose;
  - b. Sound arguments;
  - c. Solid, consistent analysis;
  - d. Shows insight and evidence of thought devoted to subject;
  - e. Shows evidence of consideration of counterarguments or counterevidence.
  
2. Use of sources
  - a. Appropriate and sufficient citation of evidence;
  - b. Judicious choice of evidence.
  
3. Organization and coherence
  - a. Uses logical structure;
  - b. Quality of introduction and conclusion;
  - c. Coherent paragraphs and smooth, logical transitions;
  - d. Body paragraphs support thesis with examples and specifics;
  - e. Arguments easy to follow;
  - f. Appropriate length allotted to each argument.
  
4. Style and mechanics
  - a. Appropriate word choice, precision in thought
  - b. Sentences flow nicely, with grace and purpose
  - c. Proper syntax, verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, etc.
  - d. Proper use of footnotes or endnotes
  - e. Bibliography presented in consistent format

## Research Resources

### **A.) Sourcebooks and Encyclopedia**

Students with an interest in the intellectual history of Asia may wish to read about particular figures or texts in more depth. See encyclopedia for an overview of a figure or topic. The sourcebooks, assembled by leading scholars, include biographical introductions to a wide range of authors and translations of important texts drawn from throughout history. The readings represent the range of religious traditions.

- Buswell, Jr., et al, ed. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. 2 vols. New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004.
- De Bary, Theodore, Bodiford, William M., Elisonas, Jurgis, Yampolsky, Philip, Dykstra, Yoshiko Kurata, Gluck, Carol, Tiedemann, Arthur E, Barshay, Andrew E, and Elisonas, J. S. A. *Sources of Japanese Tradition. Vol. 1: From Earliest Times to 1600*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia UP, 2001.
- De Bary, Theodore, Gluck, Carol, and Tiedemann, Arthur E. *Sources of Japanese Tradition. Vol. 2: 1600 to 2000*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia UP, 2005.
- De Bary, Wm. Theodore, et al. *Sources of Chinese Tradition*. 2nd ed., New York, Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Embree, et al. *Sources of Indian Tradition. 2nd ed.*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Heisig, Heisig, James W., Kasulis, Thomas P., & Maraldo, John C. 2011. *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*. Nanzan library of Asian Religion and Culture. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Lee, et al. *Sources of Korean Tradition*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Lopez, et al. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014.
- Schaeffer, et al. *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2013.

### **B.) Bibliography of Scholarship on Japanese Religions**

The *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions* represents the state of the field of Japanese religions today. It includes essays and bibliographies on scholarly trends and problems organized thematically by topic (ancient religions, religion and law, Buddhism and gender, etc.). It also includes an exceptionally detailed timeline of the history of Japanese religions from ancient times to the present. Those who wish to pursue graduate study in Japanese religions should read this book. Note that the bibliographies here include sources in both English and Japanese.

- Swanson, Paul L., & Chilson, Clark. *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006.

### **C.) Journals**

The following journals contain articles related to the study of East Asian religions or Japanese religions specifically. They are available via university libraries or through the digital library JSTOR at [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org).

*Acta Asiatica*

*Asian Folklore Studies*

*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*

*Harvard Journal of Asian Studies*

*History of Religions*

*Japanese Religions*

*Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* (<http://www.ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp/SHUBUNKEN>)

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

*Journal of Asian Studies*

*Journal of Chinese Religions*

*Journal of Japanese Studies*

*Journal of Korean Religions*

*Journal of Korean Studies*

*Journal of the American Oriental Society*

*Monumenta Nipponica*

*Numen*

*Philosophy East and West*

#### **D.) Online Resources**

This list is by no means exhaustive, but these websites are some of the most widely used online resources in the field. The interface for each website is written in English, making them easy to use.

Columbia University Japanese Religions Research Guide

Ed. by Heather Blair and Henry Smith, Columbia University.

<http://www.columbia.edu/%7Ehds2/BIB95/ch15A.html>

Digital Dictionary of Buddhism

Ed. by Charles Mueller, University of Tokyo.

<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/>

East Asian Buddhist Studies: A Reference Guide

Ed. William Bodiford, UCLA.

<http://alc.ucla.edu/refguide/refguide.htm>

Kokugakuin University Encyclopedia of Shintō Online

Ed. by Nobutaka Inoue, Kokugakuin University.

[http://k-amc.kokugakuin.ac.jp/DM/dbTop.do?class\\_name=col\\_eos](http://k-amc.kokugakuin.ac.jp/DM/dbTop.do?class_name=col_eos)

SAT Daizōkyō Text Database 2012 Edition

Maintained by Charles Mueller, University of Tokyo.

[http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index\\_en.html](http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index_en.html)

(This database includes a digitized version of the Chinese Buddhist canon.)