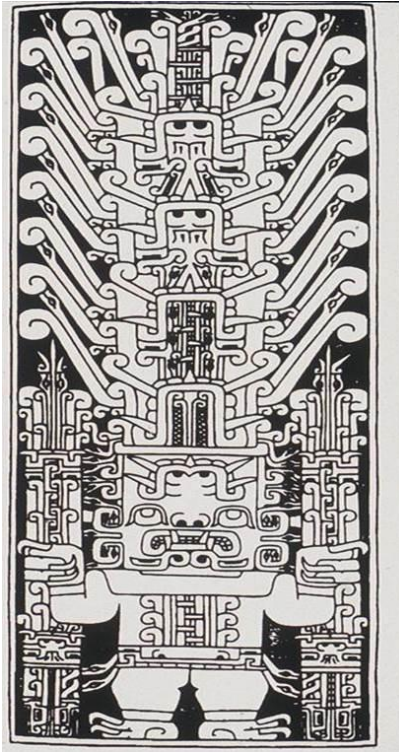


## ANTHROPOLOGY 2RP3: RELIGION AND POWER IN THE PAST

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This course is an introduction to the anthropology and archaeology of ritual and religion. We will explore the traces of specific ancient religions and rituals, and track the analytical and interpretive work that archaeologists do to recognize religious or ritualized practices in the past. We will touch on big issues of the anthropology of religion, and standard and emerging archaeological methodologies through a number of global case studies.



The Raimondi Stela and the “staff god” from Chavín de Huantar, Peru (1200 BC—400 BC)

The course is structured in 4 parts. First, we will begin with a brief overview of anthropological approaches to religion, some key concepts, and how archaeological anthropologists have examined the material traces of religious practice. In our second part we will move to consider very distinct ways of being in the world, specifically exploring animism, shamanism and witches. Here we will consider how the methods of archaeology can reveal such themes in both the recent and deep past. Our third part focuses on bodies, senses and ritual. Here we will spend some time on death, one of the richest areas of the archaeology of ritual and religion, explore the emerging study of the archaeology of the senses, and touch on the ongoing debate over what, exactly, ritual is. The fourth and final component will examine power, landscapes and history. Although this class does not engage with the major world religions, we will consider the relationship between power and religion in complex societies, and the role of monumental religious sites in the present.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

All readings for this class come from the required Anthropology 2RP3 course pack available in the McMaster bookstore.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

Your primary responsibility as a student is to master the material presented in class and in the readings. This is an easily achieved objective. Come to class and do the reading! I will post summaries of the class on-line, but this will not suffice if you want to do well. You need to come to lecture having completed the reading for that lecture ahead of time. I understand all of you come from a variety of backgrounds and have various strengths and weaknesses. If you have any questions or feel unsure about any class material, see me during office hours as soon as you recognize a problem. We will work together to find a solution. DON'T wait until the end of the semester. My goals as an instructor is not just to grade, evaluate, and test, but to help you gain a valuable anthropological perspective to carry outside the class, into whatever discipline you choose.

## **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

20% Short Essay on 1 Film

30% Final Paper (5% annotations, 25% actual paper)

20% In-Class Midterm

30 % Final Exam

\*\*Bonus points available (see below)

### **Short Film Essay /20**

We will show three films in this class (on January 26<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup>, and March 2<sup>nd</sup>). These movies are not optional, and you are encouraged to take careful notes on them: questions concerning their content will appear on both your midterm quiz and final exam. But you will also be asked to write a short essay of 3-4 pages on one of these movies. This essay, due March 10<sup>th</sup>, will 1) briefly summarize the film, 2) discuss the relationship to readings and lecture materials and 3) present three substantive questions that emerged from the film.

### **Research Paper: /30**

By mid February you should start looking out for newspaper and magazine articles (or reputable on-line articles) which deal with the archaeology of ritual and/or religion. This can either relate to a specific archaeological site, or a larger issue that relates to topics covered in the course. You may want to start a file folder (physical or on your computer) of various possibilities that has recently made the news.

Your final paper (5-6 typed, double-spaced pages) will:

- Describe the site and issue pertaining to ritual/religion being discussed. Be sure to include answers to the where/when/why of this research.
- Explain how the evidence has been collected (if this is given) and what particular type of evidence is being emphasized
- Find two peer-reviewed articles (I will explain what this means) either on the site, or

other work on this issue.

- Address what methodology is being used in the peer-reviewed articles. Can you tell how the archaeologist is exploring issues of ritual and religion?
- Explore the differences between the popular article and the professional publications.

The timeline for this paper: On February 23<sup>rd</sup> I will walk you through how you might do this kind of research, and how to write proper annotations. On March 10<sup>th</sup> you will hand in a copy of the reference (and link, if it's on line) and an annotation of the original article. This step will be worth 5% of your final grade. On March 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> we will work on your papers in class. The final paper, worth 25% of your final grade, is due on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Midterm (/20) and Final Exam (/30)**

Exams will cover material from lectures AND material from the text AND in-class films. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer and similar questions. Several questions will come from in-class discussions not included in uploaded class notes - you need to come to class to do well on these exams. Your midterm exam is on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The final exam will focus primarily on the material covered after the midterm. The final exam will include an essay for which you will be given the question in advance. No extensions, deferrals, make-ups, etc. of any kind can be granted without official documentation through university channels.

### **Bonus Points! /5**

Worried about your midterm or final exam grade? Dropped the ball on the film assignment? It's your lucky day! In the course pack are four articles that are not required readings. These articles are a bit difficult, but provide a richer more complex understanding of the lectures. These four chapters are listed below along with their topic in parentheses. If you want to win a maximum of 5 extra, you must provide a 1-page (double-spaced) annotation of this reading. This annotation will not report whether you liked or disliked the article, but rather provide a synopsis of the main issues being explored, and why how this reading contributes to both the broad archaeology of ritual and religion, and the specific theme being explored. Full points will only be given for comprehensive and well-written annotations (yes, grammar counts). You may only complete one such annotation, and the deadline for completing these is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Option 1 (on Animism): *The Social Agency of Things?*

Option 2 (on Shamanism): *A 12,000-year-old Shaman Burial*

Option 3 (on Bodies and Belief): *Wormie Clay and Blessed Sleep.*

Option 4 (on Power and Landscapes): *The Cahokia Mound 72-Sub 1 Burials*

### **Grade Scale:**

Following convention (<http://registrar.mcmaster.com/calendar/current/pg145.html>) this grading system will be used in this course.

90-100% A+	77-79% B+	67-69% C+	57-59% D+	0-49 F
85-89% A	73-76% B	63-66% C	53-56% D	
80-84% A-	70-72% B-	60-62% C-	50-52% D-	

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, [www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac\\_integrity.htm](http://www.mcmaster.ca/senate/academic/ac_integrity.htm)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own for which other credit has been obtained. (Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide)
- Improper collaboration in group work. (Insert specific course information)
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES: E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY|**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

#### **Email Forwarding in MUGSI:**

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

\*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link

(Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Subject to change, but any modification will be done well in advance, and you will be informed ahead of time. *Italics* refers to course readings (available in reading pack).

\*\*Refers to the assignments due on a given date.

### **PART 1: INTRODUCTION: RELIGION AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD**

#### **January 5<sup>th</sup>: Introductions**

#### **January 6<sup>th</sup>: Historical Perspectives**

*Practical Tips for Reading Sociology,*  
*The Anthropological Perspective on Religion*

#### **January 8<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS**

#### **January 12<sup>th</sup>: Historical Perspectives Pt. 2**

*Anthropology and the Study of Religion*

#### **January 13<sup>th</sup>: Key Concepts**

*No readings – review key concepts and historical perspectives*

#### **January 15<sup>th</sup>: Materiality and Archaeological Approaches**

*The Archaeology of the Intangible*

### **PART 2: WAYS OF PERCEIVING: ANINISM, SHAMINISM AND WITCHES**

#### **January 19<sup>th</sup>: What is animism?**

*Animism: A Contemporary Perspective*

#### **January 20<sup>th</sup>: Animism and artifacts in the modern Andes**

*No readings*

#### **January 22<sup>nd</sup>: Animism in the ancient Andes?**

*Inca*

#### **January 26<sup>th</sup>: What is Shamanism?**

*Shamanisms: Past and Present*

#### **January 27<sup>th</sup>: Caves of Forgotten Dreams**

*Dark Caves, Obscure Visions*

#### **January 29<sup>th</sup>: Was s/he a Shaman?**

*No readings*

#### **February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Witches in England**

*Witches of Cornwall: Macabre Evidence of Age-old Spells*

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>: Witches in the Americas**

*Where Are the Witches of Prehistory?*

**February 5<sup>th</sup>: Was s/he a Witch?**

*No readings*

**PART 3: BODIES, SENSES AND RITUAL**

**February 9<sup>th</sup>: Bodies and Belief**

**\*Guest lecture by Dr. Shanti Morell-Hart**

*Extracts from Grave Matters: A Lively History of Death Around the World.*

**February 10<sup>th</sup>: Burials and Belief at Çatalhöyük**

**\*Guest lecture by Dr. Tristan Carter**

*Women and Men, the Old and the Young*

**February 12<sup>th</sup>: Burials on Ice**

*No readings*

**(No Classes February 16, 17, 19: Mid-Semester Break)**

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>: Research Paper Writing in Anthropology (and Mid-Term Prep)**

**\*\*Film Essay Due**

**February 24<sup>th</sup>: A Sense of Religion**

*San Artists in Southern Africa*

**February 26<sup>th</sup>: Hearing the Past?**

*Was Sound the Secret Weapon of the Andean Elites?*

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>: MIDTERM EXAM**

*No readings*

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>: Ritual and African Iron-Working**

*No readings*

**March 5<sup>th</sup>: The Many Dimensions of Ritual**

*The Many Dimensions of Ritual*

*Final paper proposal and annotations due!*

**March 9<sup>th</sup>: “Ritualization” in the Hawaiian Past**

*Life Outside the Temple*

**PART 4: POWER, LANDSCAPES & HISTORY**

**March 10<sup>th</sup>: Religious Landscapes**

*No readings*

**\*\* Film Essays due!**

**March 12<sup>th</sup>: Landscape Archaeology**

*No readings: Work on final papers*

**March 16<sup>th</sup>: The Moundbuilders of Eastern North America**

*The Moundbuilders of Eastern North America*

**March 17<sup>th</sup>: In-class work on rough drafts of final papers**

*No readings: Work on final papers*

\*\*Bring outline of final paper brought to class

**March 19<sup>th</sup>: State Religions**

*No readings: Work on final papers*

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>: State Religion...state violence**

*The Myth of Religious Violence.*

**March 24<sup>th</sup>: Aztec Hearts and Minds**

*Aztec Hearts and Minds*

**March 26<sup>th</sup>: In-class work on rough drafts of final papers**

*No readings: Work on final papers*

\*\*Bring draft of final paper to class

**March 30<sup>th</sup>: Heritage and Religious Landscapes**

*No readings: Work on final papers*

**March 31<sup>st</sup>: The curious case of Stonehenge Pt. 1**

*No readings: Study for Final Exam*

\*\*Final paper due

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>: The curious case of Stonehenge Pt. 2**

*Stonehenge-contested Landscapes (medieval to Present-day)*

**April 6<sup>th</sup>: Catch up-class & Exam Prep**

*No readings: Study for Final Exam*

**April 7<sup>th</sup>: Catch up-class & Exam Prep**

*No readings: Study for Final Exam*