

## Religion And Culture An Anthropological Focus 2nd Edition

This volume brings together key findings of the long-term research project 'Religious Individualisation in Historical Perspective' (Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, Erfurt University). Combining a wide range of disciplinary approaches, methods and theories, the volume assembles over 50 contributions that explore and compare processes of religious individualisation in different religious environments and historical periods, in particular in Asia, the Mediterranean, and Europe from antiquity to the recent past. Contrary to standard theories of modernisation, which tend to regard religious individualisation as a specifically modern or early modern as well as an essentially Western or Christian phenomenon, the chapters reveal processes of religious individualisation in a large variety of non-Western and pre-modern scenarios. Furthermore, the volume challenges prevalent views that regard religions primarily as collective phenomena and provides nuanced perspectives on the appropriation of religious agency, the pluralisation of religious options, dynamics of de-traditionalisation and privatisation, the development of elaborated notions of the self, the facilitation of religious deviance, and on the notion of dividuality.

This book focuses on anthropological questions and methods, and is offered as a supplement to textbooks on the anthropology of religion. It is designed to help students collecting and interpreting their own fieldwork or archival data and relating their findings to the work of others.

This concise introductory textbook emphasizes the major concepts of both anthropology and the anthropology of religion. It is aimed at students encountering anthropology for the first time. Reviewers describe the text as vivid, rich, user-friendly, accessible, and well-organized. The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft examines religious expression from a cross-cultural perspective while incorporating key theoretical concepts. In addition to providing a basic overview of anthropology, including definition of key terms and exposure to ethnographies, the text exposes students to the varying complexity of world religions.

Social scientists and philosophers confronted with religious phenomena have always been challenged to find a proper way to describe the spiritual experiences of the social group they were studying. The influence of the Cartesian dualism of body and mind (or soul) led to a distinction between non-material, spiritual experiences (i.e., related to the soul) and physical, mechanical experiences (i.e., related to the body). However, recent developments in medical science on the one hand and challenges to universalist conceptions of belief and spirituality on the other have resulted in "body" and "soul" losing the reassuring solid contours they had in the past. Yet, in "Western culture," the body-soul duality is alive, not least in academic and media discourses. This volume pursues the ongoing debates and discusses the importance of the body and how it is perceived in contemporary religious faith: what happens when "body" and "soul" are un-separated entities? Is it possible, even for anthropologists and ethnographers, to escape from "natural dualism"? The contributors here present research in novel empirical contexts, the benefits and limits of the old dichotomy are discussed, and new theoretical strategies proposed.

The Friday Masowe apostolics of Zimbabwe refer to themselves as "the Christians who don't read the Bible." They claim they do not need the Bible because they receive the Word of God "live and direct" from the Holy Spirit. In this insightful and sensitive historical ethnography, Matthew Engelke documents how this rejection of scripture speaks to longstanding concerns within Christianity over mediation and authority. The Bible, of course, has been a key medium through which Christians have recognized God's presence. But the apostolics perceive scripture as an unnecessary, even dangerous, mediator. For them, the materiality of the Bible marks a distance from the divine and prohibits the realization of a live and direct faith. Situating the Masowe case within a broad comparative framework, Engelke shows how their rejection of textual authority poses a problem of presence—which is to say, how the religious subject defines, and claims to construct, a relationship with the spiritual world through the semiotic potentials of language, actions, and objects. Written in a lively and accessible style, *A Problem of Presence* makes important contributions to the anthropology of Christianity, the history of religions in Africa, semiotics, and material culture studies.

The classic anthropological analysis of religion from a pioneer in the field From the preface: "Scientific efforts to learn just what are the forms and functions of religion have not been few; it is the purpose of this book to review some of them and to synthesize the suggestions and findings. . . . My own personal feeling is that sociological viewpoints (including much of social anthropology) tend to focus on the scaffolding and milieu of religion rather than on religion itself and that religion can be best understood from a combination of psychological and cultural points of view. . . . This book is not, I think, motivated by a need to destroy, by dissection, a way of thinking and acting that many educated people feel is of little use, or is even disadvantageous, in a world increasingly committed to the search for scientific and technological solutions of human problems. Rather, I aim to preserve a friendly detachment in the asking of fundamental scientific questions about religion."

Examines religious practices from an anthropological perspective *Religions in Practice*, 6/e, offers an issues-oriented perspective on everyday religious behaviors – prayer, sacrifice, initiation, healing, etc. – by focusing on such topics as transnationalism, gender, and religious laws. The text examines a full spectrum of religions, from small-scale societies to major, established religions. The in-depth treatment of Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity is particularly noteworthy and easily supplemented with field projects directly related to the text.

This edited volume deploys digital ethnography in varied contexts to explore the cultural roles of mobile apps that focus on religious practice and communities, as well as those

used for religious purposes (whether or not they were originally developed for that purpose). Combining analyses of local contexts with insights and methods from the global subfield of digital anthropology, the contributors here recognize the complex ways that in-app and on-ground worlds interact in a wide range of communities and traditions. While some of the case studies emphasize the cultural significance of use in local contexts and relationships to pre-existing knowledge networks and/or non-digital relationships of power, others explore the globalizing and democratizing influences of mobile apps as communication technologies. From Catholic confession apps to Jewish Kaddish assistance apps and Muslim halal food apps, readers will see how religious-themed mobile apps create complex sites for potential new forms of religious expression, worship, discussion, and practices.

Drawing from ethnographic examples found throughout the world, this revised and updated text, hailed as the “best general text on religion in anthropology available,” offers an introduction to what anthropologists know or think about religion, how they have studied it, and how they interpret or explain it since the late 19th century.

Cultural diversity and cultural change make it difficult to define and theorize cultural phenomena. This is especially apparent in the case of such cultural areas as religion and popular culture. This book presents ways to understand and explain the diversity and variability of religious and popular culture phenomena. The first part of this book focuses on the cognitive foundations and cultural dimensions of religious phenomena. The cognitive science of religion provides a new theoretical framework for explaining religious diversity and variability. The second part is dedicated to the study of selected phenomena of popular culture from the perspective distinctive to cultural anthropology. It attempts to bring into light this features of popular culture phenomena that have direct impact on cultural subjects.

The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity takes as its subject the beliefs, practices, and institutions of the Christian Church between 400 and 1500AD. It addresses topics ranging from early medieval monasticism to late medieval mysticism, from the material wealth of the Church to the spiritual exercises through which certain believers might attempt to improve their souls. Each chapter tells a story, but seeks also to ask how and why 'Christianity' took particular forms at particular moments in history, paying attention to both the spiritual and otherworldly aspects of religion, and the material and political contexts in which they were often embedded. This Handbook is a landmark academic collection that presents cutting-edge interpretive perspectives on medieval religion for a wide academic audience, drawing together thirty key scholars in the field from the United States, the UK, and Europe. Notably, the Handbook is arranged thematically, and focusses on an analytical, rather than narrative, approach, seeking to demonstrate the variety, change, and complexity of religion throughout this long period, and the numerous different ways in which modern scholarship can approach it. While providing a very wide-ranging view of the subject, it also offers an important agenda for further study in the field.

Throughout its entire history, the discipline of anthropology has been perceived as undermining, or even discrediting, Christian faith. Many of its most prominent theorists have been agnostics who assumed that ethnographic findings and theories had exposed religious beliefs to be untenable. E. B. Tylor, the founder of the discipline in Britain, lost his faith through studying anthropology. James Frazer saw the material that he presented in his highly influential work, *The Golden Bough*, as demonstrating that Christian thought was based on the erroneous thought patterns of 'savages.' On the other hand, some of the most eminent anthropologists have been Christians, including E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Mary Douglas, Victor Turner, and Edith Turner. Moreover, they openly presented articulate reasons for how their religious convictions cohered with their professional work. Despite being a major site of friction between faith and modern thought, the relationship between anthropology and Christianity has never before been the subject of a book-length study. In this groundbreaking work, Timothy Larsen examines the point where doubt and faith collide with anthropological theory and evidence.

*Entheogens and the Development of Culture* makes the radical proposition that mind-altering substances have played a major part not only in cultural development but also in human brain development. Researchers suggest that we have purposely enhanced receptor sites in the brain, especially those for dopamine and serotonin, through the use of plants and fungi over a long period of time. The trade-off for lowered functioning and potential drug abuse has been more creative thinking--or a leap in consciousness. Experiments in entheogen use led to the development of primitive medicine, in which certain mind-altering plants and fungi were imbibed to still fatigue, pain, or depression, while others were taken to promote hunger and libido. Our ancestors selected for our neural hardware, and our propensity for seeking altered forms of consciousness as a survival strategy may be intimately bound to our decision-making processes going back to the dawn of time. Fourteen essays by a wide range of contributors—including founding president of the American Anthropological Association's Anthropology of Religion section Michael Winkelman, PhD; Carl A. P. Ruck, PhD, Boston University professor of classics and an authority on the ecstatic rituals of the god Dionysus; and world-renowned botanist Dr. Gaston Guzman, member of the Colombian National Academy of Sciences and expert on hallucinogenic mushrooms—demonstrate that altering consciousness continues to be an important part of human experience today. Anthropologists, cultural historians, and anyone interested in the effects of mind-altering substances on the human mind and soul will find this book deeply informative and inspiring.

Java is famous for its combination of diverse cultural forms and religious beliefs. In this most comprehensive study of Javanese religion since Clifford Geertz's classic study, Andrew Beatty considers Javanese solutions to problems of cultural difference, and how villagers make sense of their complex, multi-layered culture. Pantheist mystics, supernaturalists, orthodox Muslims and Hindu converts at once construct contrasting faiths and create a common ground through syncretist ritual. Vividly evoking the local religious life, this book probes beyond the surface of ritual and cosmology, revealing the compromise inherent in practical religion.

This lively and readable survey introduces students to key areas of the field and shows how to apply an anthropological approach to the study of contemporary world religions. Written by an experienced teacher, it covers all of the traditional topics of anthropology of religion, including definitions and theories, beliefs, symbols and language, and ritual and myth, and combines analytic and conceptual discussion with up-to-date ethnography and theory. Eller includes copious examples from religions around the world – both familiar and unfamiliar – and two mini-case studies in each chapter. He also explores classic and contemporary anthropological contributions to important but often overlooked issues such as violence and fundamentalism, morality, secularization, religion in America, and new religious movements. *Introducing Anthropology of Religion* demonstrates that anthropology is both relevant and essential for understanding the

world we inhabit today.

As we enter the 21st century, it becomes increasingly difficult to envisage a world detached from religion or an anthropology blind to its study. Yet, how people become religious is still poorly studied. This volume gathers some of the most distinguished scholars in the field to offer a new perspective for the study of religion, one that examines the works of transmission and innovation through the prism of learning. They argue that religious culture is socially and dynamically constructed by agents who are not mere passive recipients but engaged in active learning processes. Finding a middle way between the social and the cognitive, they see learning religions not as a mechanism of "downloading" but also as a social process with its relational dimension.

For sophomore/junior-level courses in World Religions and Anthropology of Religion in departments of Anthropology, Sociology, and Religion. Religion and Culture introduces students to the major World religions and aboriginal religious traditions. This edited volume presents all aspects of the anthropological perspective on religion. Contributing authors provide a unique assembly of various topics and traditions that are researched by contemporary anthropologists

Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion is a collection of 41 readings in religion, magic, and witchcraft. The choice of readings is eclectic: no single anthropological approach or theoretical perspective dominates the text. Theoretical significance, scholarly eminence of the author, and inherent interest provide the principal criteria, and each reading complements its companion chapters, which are pedagogically coherent rather than ad hoc assemblages. Included among the theoretical perspectives are structural-functionalism, structuralism, Malinowskian functionalism, cultural materialism, and cultural evolutionism; also included are the synchronic and diachronic approaches. The book offers a mixture of classic readings and more recent contributions, and the 'world religions' are included along with examples from the religions of traditionally non-literate cultures. As diverse a range of religious traditions as possible has been embraced, from various ethnic groups, traditions, and places.

The Anthropology of Performance is an invaluable guide to this exciting and growing area. This cutting-edge volume on the major advancements in performance studies presents the theories, methods, and practices of performance in cultures around the globe. Leading anthropologists describe the range of human expression through performance and explore its role in constructing identity and community, as well as broader processes such as globalization and transnationalism. Introduces new and advanced students to the task of studying and interpreting complex social, cultural, and political events from a performance perspective Presents performance as a convergent field of inquiry that bridges the humanities and social sciences, with a distinctive cross-cultural perspective in anthropology Demonstrates the range of human expression and meaning through performance in related fields of religious & ritual studies, folkloristics, theatre, language arts, and art & dance Explores the role of performance in constructing identity, community, and the broader processes of globalization and transnationalism Includes fascinating global case studies on a diverse range of phenomena Contributions from leading scholars examine verbal genres, ritual and drama, public spectacle, tourism, and the performances embedded in everyday selves, communities and nations

Through revisiting and challenging what we think we know about the work of Edward Burnett Tylor, a founding figure of anthropology, this volume explores new connections and insights that link Tylor and his work to present concerns in new and important ways. At the publication of Primitive Culture in 1871, Tylor was at the centre of anthropological research on religion and culture, but today Tylor's position in the anthropological canon is rarely acknowledged. Edward Burnett Tylor, Religion and Culture does not claim to present a definitive, new Tylor. The old Tylor - the founder of British anthropology; the definer of religion; the intellectualist; the evolutionist; the liberal; the utilitarian; the avatar of white, Protestant rationalism; the Tylor of the canon - remains. Part I explore debates and contexts of Tylor's lifetime, while the chapters in Part II explore a series of new Tylors, including Tylor the ethnographer and Tylor the Spiritualist, re-writing the legacy of the founder of anthropology in the process. Edward Burnett Tylor, Religion and Culture is essential reading for anyone interested in the study of religion and the anthropology of religion.

"Religion: An Anthropological Perspective" provides a critical view of religion focusing upon important but overlooked topics such as religion, cognition, and prehistory; science, rationality, and religion; altered states of consciousness, entheogens and religious experience; religion and the paranormal; magic and divination; religion and ecology; fundamentalism; and religion and violence. In addition, this book offers a unique and concise coverage of traditional topics of the anthropology of religion such as shamanism and witchcraft (past and present), ritual, myth, religious symbols, and revitalization movements. A vast range of findings from ethnography, ethnology, cultural anthropology, archaeology, prehistory, history, and cognitive science are brought to bear on the subject. Written in clear jargon-free prose, this book provides an accessible and comprehensive yet critical view of the anthropology of religion both for graduate and undergraduate students and general audiences. Its scope and critical scientific orientation sets "Religion: An Anthropological Perspective" apart from all other treatments of the subject.

A comprehensive anthropological study of religion traces the history of the discipline, discusses the archeological discoveries that have shed light on the development of religious consciousness, and examines the various manifestations, functions, and changes of religious customs and beliefs.

In this 2007 volume, eighteen of the world's leading scholars present original essays on various aspects of atheism: its history, both ancient and modern, defense and implications. The topic is examined in terms of its implications for a wide range of disciplines including philosophy, religion, feminism, postmodernism, sociology and psychology. In its defense, both classical and contemporary theistic arguments are criticized, and, the argument from evil, and impossibility arguments, along with a non religious basis for morality are defended. These essays give a broad understanding of atheism and a lucid introduction to this controversial topic.

Key issues in the contemporary debates on culture seem to be accompanied by the problem of meaning and the dynamics of it. Today, the global dimension of culture is a significant factor of the problem, especially when we speak of cultural identity or intercultural communication. This book presents critical points of cultural change that we may observe in many areas of local and global ecumene. The emerging of new currents, processes, and phenomena, as well the transformation of older ones, is evidence of the fact that culture cannot be regarded as a static whole, enclosed in a tangible framework of objectified artifacts. Thus, culture is taken here as a specific narrative on the human condition, with all its imponderables. (Series: Anthropology /

Ethnologie - Vol. 58) [Subject: Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Religious Studies, Education, Politics]

Religion and Culture An Anthropological Focus Prentice Hall

A lucid outline of explanations of religious phenomena offered by such great thinkers as Hegel, Marx, and Weber.

This concise and accessible textbook introduces students to the anthropological study of religion. Stein and Stein examine religious expression from a cross-cultural perspective and expose students to the varying complexity of world religions. The chapters incorporate key theoretical concepts and a rich range of ethnographic material. The fourth edition of *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft* offers: • increased coverage of new religious movements, fundamentalism, and religion and conflict/violence; • fresh case study material with examples drawn from around the globe; • further resources via a comprehensive companion website. This is an essential guide for students encountering anthropology of religion for the first time.

This concise introductory cultural anthropology textbook gives special attention to issues of concern to Christians and features plentiful maps, photos, and sidebars.

Why should the church be concerned about cultures? Louis J. Luzbetak began to answer this question twenty-five years ago with the publication of *The Church and Cultures: An Applied Anthropology for the Religious Worker*. Reprinted six times and translated into five languages, it became an undisputed classic in the field. Now, by popular demand, Luzbetak has thoroughly rewritten his work, completely updating it in light of contemporary anthropological and missiological thought and in face of current world conditions. Serving as a handbook for a culturally sensitive ministry and witness, *The Church and Cultures* introduces the non-anthropologist to a wealth of scientific knowledge directly relevant to pastoral work, religious education social action and liturgy - in fact, to all forms of missionary activity in the church. It focuses on a burning theological issue: that of contextualization, the process by which a local church integrates its understanding of the Gospel (text) with the local culture (context).

Everyday practice of religion is complex in its nature, ambivalent and at times contradictory. The task of an anthropology of religious practice is therefore precisely to see how people navigate and make sense of that complexity, and what the significance of religious beliefs and practices in a given setting can be. Rather than putting everyday practice and normative doctrine on different analytical planes, the authors argue that the articulation of religious doctrine is also an everyday practice and must be understood as such.

*Anthropology of Religion: The Basics* is an accessible and engaging introductory text organized around key issues that all anthropologists of religion face. This book uses a wide range of historical and ethnographic examples to address not only what is studied by anthropologists of religion, but how such studies are approached. It addresses questions such as: How do human agents interact with gods and spirits? What is the nature of doing religious ethnography? Can the immaterial be embodied in the body, language and material objects? What is the role of ritual, time, and place in religion? Why is charisma important for religious movements? How do global processes interact with religions? With international case studies from a range of religious traditions, suggestions for further reading, and inventive reflection boxes, *Anthropology of Religion: The Basics* is an essential read for students approaching the subject for the first time.

A collection of readings designed to accompany the editor's text, *Religions in Practice: An Approach to the Anthropology of Religion*. Articles from leading journals of anthropological research provide a sampler of current concerns and findings regarding religion and ritual throughout the world. The

Originally published: 1978, in series: *Lectures on the history of religions*; new ser., no. 11. With new introd.

*A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion* is a collection of some of the most significant classic and contemporary writings on the anthropology of religion. It includes both material whose theme is 'religion' in a straightforward and obvious sense, as well as material that has expanded how we might look at religion - and the horizons of what we mean by 'religion' - linking it to broader questions of culture and politics.

Welcome to the second edition of *Perspectives and Open Access Anthropology!* An electronic version of this textbook is available free of charge at the Society for Anthropology in Community Colleges' webpage here: <http://perspectives.americananthro.org/>

This collection provides vivid ethnographic explorations of particular, local Christianities as they are experienced by different groups around the world. At the same time, the contributors, all anthropologists, rethink the vexed relationship between anthropology and Christianity. As Fenella Cannell contends in her powerful introduction, Christianity is the critical "repressed" of anthropology. To a great extent, anthropology first defined itself as a rational, empirically based enterprise quite different from theology. The theology it repudiated was, for the most part, Christian. Cannell asserts that anthropological theory carries within it ideas profoundly shaped by this rejection. Because of this, anthropology has been less successful in considering Christianity as an ethnographic object than it has in considering other religions. This collection is designed to advance a more subtle and less self-limiting anthropological study of Christianity. The contributors examine the contours of Christianity among diverse groups: Catholics in India, the Philippines, and Bolivia, and Seventh-Day Adventists in Madagascar; the Swedish branch of Word of Life, a charismatic church based in the United States; and Protestants in Amazonia, Melanesia, and Indonesia. Highlighting the wide variation in what it means to be Christian, the contributors reveal vastly different understandings and valuations of conversion, orthodoxy, Scripture, the inspired word, ritual, gifts, and the concept of heaven. In the process they bring to light how local Christian practices and beliefs are affected by encounters with colonialism and modernity, by the opposition between Catholicism and Protestantism, and by the proximity of other religions and belief systems. Together the contributors show that it not sufficient for anthropologists to assume that they know in advance what the Christian experience is; each local variation must be encountered on its own terms.

Contributors. Cecilia Busby, Fenella Cannell, Simon Coleman, Peter Gow, Olivia Harris, Webb Keane, Eva Keller, David Mosse, Danilyn Rutherford, Christina Toren, Harvey Whitehouse

Kehoe (anthropology, U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) seeks to inoculate her students against the mushy thinking she finds concerning shamans and shamanism. She traces the

misinformation to a sensational mid-20th-century French tome by which expatriate Romanian Mircea Eliade hoped to acquire a reputation and a place in a European or American university. (He succeeded.) Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

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