

Anthropology of Christianity

Instructor: Adam Dunstan

(newly hired lecturer in Anthropology!)



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Register Today!
Summer 2015
5WK 2
July 13 – Aug 13

ANTH 4701.034

Course Description

In this course, we will question our understanding of Christianity as simply a religion, and discover its tremendous impact as a social and cultural force throughout history and in the world today. Though Christianity is the largest organized religious movement in the world, anthropology has given it little direct attention. Recent decades however have seen an explosion of anthropological studies of the culture, social practices, and discourse of Christianity. In the first part of this course we explore anthropological concepts such as social power, ritual, cosmology, and prayer within the diverse religion(s) known as Christianity. We will also consider the ethnographic paradox of Christianity, which sees itself as a global, universal force and yet has been radically re-envisioned and localized by specific cultures around the world, several of which we will read about. Within this course we will also examine the intersections of Christianity with other facets of societies, such as U.S. politics, medieval European monarchies, and anthropology itself.