Wednesday, April 10 at 10:00 a.m. Multi-media Hall, Bunch Library “Manchu Shamanisms: Jumping Spirits and Muttering Mystics”

Shamanism is a spiritualist tradition in Asia in which practitioners intercede between humanity and powerful gods and evil spirits. This talk will be a discussion and description of those beliefs and the rites used to express them.

Dr. Stephen Udry is Chair of the History Department at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. An expert on East Asian history of religion and specifically on Manchu Shamanism, Professor Udry has traveled extensively throughout Asia, and lived in Taiwan for five years.

Wednesday, April 10 at 6:30 p.m. Multi-media Hall, Bunch Library “Nukes in North Korea: Is the DPRK Really Dangerous: Why Americans Should Care about the DPRK?”

North Korea’s fierce nationalism often seems threatening to the outside world. Its communist-led system is also hard to fathom, often tempting outsiders to predict its collapse. North Korea uses its military strength—including a developing nuclear program—to resist international pressure, sometimes acting like a "rogue" state. But North Korea is actually rational, has a working system, and policies that make sense all on North Korea’s own terms. Dr. Clark examines fundamentals of that system, how it manages to survive, and some possibilities for its future.

Thursday, April 11 at 3:30 p.m. Beaman A&B “Christianity in South Korea”

Compared to other Asian countries, Korea has a surprisingly large Christian population—25 percent. Christianity in Korea is the result of many factors that include authentic spiritual hunger, the ordeals of colonialism, war, and dictatorship, plus rapid urbanization and the growth of a strong middle class. Although it was first introduced by foreign missionaries, Christianity long since became a Korean religion, modified in ways by the way Koreans understand spiritual phenomena. Having survived a difficult history, Korean churches now face perhaps their biggest challenge: the tests that come with prosperity and materialism. This presentation provides an overview of Christian faith and practice in South Korea.

Dr. Donald Clark is the Murchison Professor of History and Co-Director of East Asian Studies at Trinity University. Educated in international schools in Colombia, Japan, and Korea, he holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University. His scholarly interest is focused on the Korean peninsula, where he spent his childhood as the son of Presbyterian missionaries. In South Korea he has been a Peace Corps volunteer, Social Science Research Council Fellow, and three-time Fulbright scholar.

Thursday, April 11 at 10:00 a.m. Beaman A&B “Guru Gobind Singh in Nanded: A Talk on Sikh Identity and Community”

Sikhism is a religion founded in northern India in the 16th century by the guru Nanak. It rejects caste distinctions, idolatry, asceticism and a belief in a cycle of reincarnation from which humans can free themselves by living righteous lives. This presentation uses images and conversations with Sikh gurus to introduce this fascinating movement and its ideas.

Dr. James Lochtefeld is Director of Asian Studies and Professor of Religion at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He specializes in Hindu pilgrimage and teaches courses on Indian religion and society, the Buddhist tradition, the Sikh tradition, East Asian religion, Sanskrit and Hindi.