

SYLLABUS – MUSE Fall 2007
DANCING ON HEAVEN'S DOORSTEP:
A CROSS-CULTURAL APPROACH TO RELIGION AND RITUAL

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer L. Anderson
Meeting Time: TTH 1:30-2:45

Office: Clark 461

Office hours: TTH 9-10:30, 12-1 and by
arrangement

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Course URL: http://stage.sjsu.edu/faculty_and_staff/course_detail.jsp?id=1813

The password to open is "pandora." The password to print is "chado."

Course Description

In the 1960's, the cover of Time Magazine proclaimed "God is Dead." Scientific rationalism seemed to be triumphing over religion. Today, however, differences in religion and ritual are front page news—they rock our world. In this class, we will investigate the way religion works from a cross-cultural perspective and how ritual serves to bridge the gap between everyday life and the world of the spirit. We will also explore the way rituals mark transitions in life such as weddings and funerals, the correlation between belief and healing, the tension between science and religion, and the function of magic. In addition, we will probe the relationship between spirituality and the nation, study the idea of sacred space, and learn how concepts of ritual purity and pollution affect our everyday lives.

Introduction to MUSE

University-level study is different from what you experienced in high school. The Metropolitan University Scholars' Experience (MUSE) is designed to help make your transition into college a success by helping you to develop the skills and attitude needed for the intellectual engagement and challenge of in-depth university-level study. Discovery, research, critical thinking, written work, attention to the rich cultural diversity of the campus, and active discussion will be key parts of this MUSE course. Enrollment in MUSE courses is limited to a small number of students because these courses are intended to be highly interactive and allow you to easily interact with your professor and fellow students. MUSE courses explore topics and issues from an interdisciplinary focus to show how interesting and important ideas can be viewed from different perspectives.

Learning Objectives and Activities for this Course

This course qualifies as an Area D1 (Social Sciences-Human Behavior) course in your General Education requirements. It is designed to enable you to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- To identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation. [GE]
- To:
 1. Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts;
 2. Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them; and
 3. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. [GE]
- To recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals. [GE]
- To understand the learning process and their responsibility and role in it. [MUSE]
- To know what it means to be a member of a metropolitan university community. [MUSE]

The following content and activities will be incorporated into the course as you engage in the subject matter of the course:

- Diversity: Issues of diversity shall be incorporated in an appropriate manner. [GE and MUSE]
- Writing: The minimum writing requirement is 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline. [GE]
- Social sciences: Content to promote all of the above GE competencies. [GE]
- University scholar: Course activities should be designed to enable students to improve critical thinking skills, information competencies, critical writing and reading skills, and group interactions. [MUSE]
- University life: Students should attend workshops and participate in group activities to help them learn about university resources and activities and to improve in areas they have identified. [MUSE]

In the context of learning about religion and ritual in a cross-cultural perspective, the student is will be encouraged to:

- Obtain an overview of the processes and events which have shaped concepts of religion and ritual;
- Learn to identify and analyze key cultural concepts related to religion and ritual and to recognize the manner in which they impact the processes of change and continuity;
- Learn to analyze specific changes in the practice of religion and ritual in the context of universal trends in the development of complex societies and cultural themes;
- Learn how selected ideas about religion and ritual have changed throughout history and how they have impacted society and the environment;
- Investigate the manner in which key ideas about religion and ritual developed centuries ago impact modern life;

—Investigate the manner in which key religious concepts have contributed to perceptions of ethnic identity both locally and globally.

Course Requirements

Required Text

- **Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion**
by David Hicks Publisher: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages (Second Edition, 2002)
- ISBN: 00702414989-8

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by your grades on weekly in-class quizzes, a midterm, one writing assignment (8-10 pages), an open-note final, and by class participation. Writing will be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness. **You will be required to participate in two MUSE workshops (see <http://misweb.cob.sjsu.edu/muse2007/allworkshops.asp> for a list) and one library orientation (Date #). Plan your time accordingly. It is advisable to take MUSE workshops early in the term so you can apply the skills you have learned to the required work in this class.**

Quizzes: There will be a short factual quiz each class period (less than ten minutes) designed to encourage you to do assigned reading on a timely basis.

Writing Assignments: The assignment is designed to encourage the student to research a topic of personal interest in religion and ritual in a scholarly manner. Emphasis will be placed on clear and effective communication. We will also focus on the concept of presenting a hypothesis supported by information from academic sources. Students are encouraged to use both library and on-line resources for research; however, plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Final: The mid-term and the final will include both factual material and more analytical essay questions. Participation in the final is required. Class and reading notes may be used.

Grading on Written Material: Quizzes (20%), Mid-term (25%), Research paper (30%), Final (25%) Your lowest quiz score will be dropped in computing the final grade. **Participation in class discussion will also be considered in determining your final grade.**

Grading Scale: A+ = 97–100%, A = 93–96%, A– = 90–92%, B+ = 87–89%, B = 83–86%, B– = 80–82%, C+ = 77–79%, C = 73–76%, C– = 70–72%, D+ = 67–69%, D = 63–66%, D– = 60–62%, F = 59% and below.

Class Policies

Academic dishonesty will be dealt with following San José State University Academic Integrity Policy: “Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University’s Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs.” (From the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy) See this website for a complete statement: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>

Plagiarism: “At SJSU plagiarism is the act of representing the work of another as one's own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and/or submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism at SJSU includes but is not limited to:

1. The act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts of, and/or the specific substance of another's work, without giving appropriate credit, and/or representing the product as one's own work;
2. Representing another’s artistic/scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawing, sculptures, or similar works as one's own.” (From the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy) If you would like to include in your paper any material you have submitted, or plan to submit, for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Integrity policy S04-12 requires approval by instructors.” See this website for a complete statement: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.htm>.

Adds/Drops/Incompletes, etc.: You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at: <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-2271.html>

Late Papers: No late papers will be accepted without a legal or medical excuse or unless you have made prior arrangements with the instructor. **No late submissions of the research paper will be accepted.**

Disabilities: If you require accommodation, please advise me. I will be happy to help. “Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act: “If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with Disability Resource Center to establish a record of their disability.”

Cell phones: **Please turn off all cell phones at the beginning of the class and keep them off. If you have a family emergency that may require you to keep the cell phone on, inform me at the beginning of class. Text messaging in class will not be tolerated.**

Computer Use: In the classroom, I permit students to use computers **only** for class-related activities. These include activities such as taking notes on the lecture and finding

web sites to which I direct the students at the time of the lecture. You may not use computers during examinations. Please bring hard copy of your notes.

MP3 Players: Students must shut down portable music players and remove ear-buds or earphones when class begins.

Schedule

(The schedule may be changed on one week's notice)

Thursday, August 23

- Lecture: "Course Overview" and "Introduction to Anthropology"
- *Learning Focus*: What does it mean to be a MUSE scholar? Your role and responsibility. (MUSE 1)

Tuesday, August 28

- Lecture: "What is Religion?"
- *Text*: Hicks: xvii-xxv, "Animism" by Edward B. Tylor in Hicks: pp. 5-8, "The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life" by Emile Durkheim in Hicks: pp. 11-15, and "Magic and Religion" by James G. Frazer in Hicks: 62-66.
- *Quiz Clues*: What is animism? What are the two domains into which Durkheim divides the world?
- *Learning focus*: Time Management (MUSE 2)

Thursday, August 30

- Lecture: "Religion as a Cultural System"
- *Download*: Hicks: xiii-xvi, Geertz, Clifford, "Religion as a Cultural System" (Abridged by Jennifer L. Anderson) pp 1-7.
- *Quiz Clues*: Know how Geertz defines religion.
- *Learning focus*: Teachers and Professors (MUSE 3)

Tuesday, September 4

- Lecture: "The Role of Myth in Life"
- *Text*: Hicks: xvi-xvii, 27-29, "The Role of Myth in Life" by Bronislaw Malinowski in Hicks: 29-37, "The Virgin of Guadalupe" in Hicks: 354-359
- *Quiz Clue*: Know how the Virgin of Guadalupe performs a social function in Mexican culture. Know how myths differ from stories and legends.
- How to Read Scholarly Articles (MUSE 4)

Thursday, September 6

- Lecture: "Peopling the Myths"
- *Text*: "The Universality of Ancestor Worship" by Lyle B. Steadman, Craig T. Palmer, and Christopher E. Tilley in Hicks: 99-109.
- Know how world religions differ from ancestor worship.
- *Learning focus*: Getting the Most Out of Lectures (MUSE 6)

Tuesday, September 11

- Lecture: "The Meaning and Function of Ritual"
- *Text*: Hicks: 113-114 and "Ritual" by Edmund R. Leach in Hicks: 114-121.

- *Quiz Clues:* Be able to name a ritual and describe both a symbol and function related to it.
- *Learning focus:* Taking Lecture Notes (MUSE 7)

Thursday, September 13

- **Library research orientation with _____.** We will meet in the library classroom, Room _____.

Tuesday, September 18

- Discussion of the concept of a thesis and student's research interests
- *Quiz clues:* Know the name of the search engines recommended by the librarian.
- *Learning focus:* Writing a Research Paper (MUSE 10)

Thursday, September 20

- Lecture: "Ritual Purity and Pollution"
- *Text:* "Pollution" by Mary Douglas in Hicks: 49-56.
- *Quiz Clues:* Be able to tell me about the relationship between social structure and pollution beliefs.
- *Learning Focus:* Research Paper Notes (MUSE 12)

Tuesday, September 25

- **Submit your research thesis and preliminary bibliography. Preliminary Outlines Due October 16**
- Lecture: "Rites of Passage"
- *Text:* "Conclusions" by Arnold van Gennep in Hicks: 129-133
- *Quiz Clues:* Know the three stages Gennep proposes for transition ritual.
- *Learning focus:* Plagiarism (MUSE 11)

Thursday, September 27

- Lecture: "The Role of the Ritual Practitioner"
- *Text:* "Religious Specialists" by Victor Turner in Hicks: 161-170
- *Quiz Clues:* Know how a priest differs from a shaman.
- *Learning focus:* Grades in High School and College (MUSE 8)

Tuesday, October 2

- **Review for Mid-term**
- *Learning focus:* Tests in High School and College (MUSE 9)

Thursday, October 4

- **Mid-term**

Tuesday October 9

- Lecture: "Sacred Spaces"
- *Download:* Excerpt from "The Sacred Path and the Place in *Spiritual Path, Sacred Place: Myth Ritual, and Meaning in Architecture* by Thomas Barrie, pp.56-78. Boston: Shambala, 1996.
- *Quiz clue:* Know what a "temenos" is and why it is important.
- *Learning focus:* Using Primary Sources (MUSE 13)

Thursday, October 11

- Lecture: "Religion in Practice"
- *Download:* Japanese Tea Ritual: Religion in Practice. *Man: Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 22: 475-498, 1987. (Abridged)
- *Quiz Clues:* Know how Girardot's definition of religion differs from Geertz's definition.
- *Learning focus:* Identifying a Scholarly Source (MUSE 14)

Tuesday, October 16

- **Special Session with Peer Mentors on outline development**
- **Revised Outlines Due October 18**

Thursday, October 18

- **First draft of paper due Tuesday, November 6**
- **Special class- Tea Ceremony Lecture - Required**

Tuesday, October 23

- Lecture: "The Function of Magic"
- *Text:* "Sympathetic Magic" by James G. Frazer in Hicks: 265-267
- *Quiz Clue:* Frazer divides "sympathetic magic" into two categories. What are they?
- *Learning focus:* Citations (MUSE 15)

Thursday, October 25

- Lecture: "Witchcraft: The Power of the Mind"
- *Text:* "Men Bewitch Others When They Hate Them" by E.E. Evans Pritchard in Hicks: 267-274 and "Witchcraft and Social Identity" by Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum in Hicks: 274-279.

- *Quiz Clues:* How do the Azande find out for sure if someone is bewitching them?
- *Learning focus:* Punctuation (MUSE 16)

Tuesday, October 30

- *Video:* "The Burning Times" (XS1173)

Thursday, November 1

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- *Lecture:* "Belief and Healing"
- *Text:* "The Sweat Lodge: Inside" by William K. Powers in Hicks: 251-259.
- *Quiz Clues:* What were the problems that led Wayne to seek out Plenty Wolf?
- *Learning Focus:* Bibliographic Form (MUSE 17)

Tuesday, November 6

- **First draft of paper due**
- *Lecture:* "Making It Personal: Funerals"
- *Text:* Hicks: 303-304 and "The Contemporary American Funeral" by Walter W. Whitaker III in Hicks: 304-310.
- *Quiz Clues:* Why do people need to socialize after a funeral?

Final Paper Due November 27 (No late submissions accepted)

Thursday, November 8

Movie with Lunch – "The Devil's Playground"

Tuesday, November 13

- *Lecture:* "Religion and Society"
- *Download:* "Salat in Indonesia: The Social Meaning of an Islamic Ritual" in *Man* (New Series), Vol. 24, No. 4 (December 1989), pp. 600-619.
- *Quiz Clues:* What is *salat*?
- *Learning focus:* Discussion of paper drafts. Return of corrected drafts.

Thursday, November 15

- *Video:* "Inside Islam"

Tuesday, November 20

- *Lecture:* "Gods, Man and Nature"
- *Text:* "Cosmology as Ecological Analysis: A View from the Rain Forest" By G. Reichel-Dolmatoff in Hicks: 400-410.

- *Quiz Clues:* How do the Tukano prevent each other from exploiting the environment?

Thursday November 22- Thanksgiving – No Class

Tuesday, November 27

- **Final Paper Due (No late submissions accepted)**
- Lecture: “Seeing the Future: Revitalization Movements”
- *Text:* “Revitalization Movements” by Anthony Wallace in Hicks: 455-468
- *Quiz Clues:* Name three kinds of revitalization movements. Describe a charismatic leader.

Thursday, November 29

- Lecture: “Religion and Science”
- *Downloads:* “Magic, Religion, Science, and Secularization” by Stephen Sharot from *Religion, Science, and Magic: In Concert and In Conflict.* Edited by Jacob Neusner, Ernest S. Frerichs, and Paul Virgil McCracken Fleshner. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- *Quiz Clues:* What is “secularization”? Does Sharot think science leads to the end of magic?
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Tuesday, December 4

- Discussion of Individual Papers

Thursday, December 6

- Review for Final Exam
- Final to be Given Out

TAKE HOME FINAL DUE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18,
2:30 PM

No Late Submissions Permitted Under Any Circumstances