

Religious Studies

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES 90B: Introductory Topics in Religious Studies

Topic: Mysticism and the Body

The class will examine mystic literature from the fourth to the seventeenth century. It will explore several strategies of naming developed by mystic authors (writing, voice, silence), which exploit the rhetorical dimension of language (negation, excess of meaning, and so on). In particular, it will look at the ways in which mystic forms of enunciations transform the very existence of the subjects, pushing them toward an experience of the limit of language, of the real. Comparisons will be made among different techniques of contemplation, i.e. between those utilized by the school of Ignatius of Loyola and those practiced by Kabbalist writers. Comparisons will be made in relation to Sufi and Hindu mystics, too. These techniques force the self to detach itself from the attraction of visible objects, and look upon the image of the soul. It is a movement of turning and re-turning that cannot be terminated.

The class will also explore the forms of extreme self-abuse, torture, mutilation, and flagellation to which many mystics submit themselves in order to test their limits and to correspond to the absolute demand of the Other. What is the meaning of the extreme forms of self-punishment and self-mutilation to which mystics subject themselves? What is the relation between enjoyment and extreme pain? Although many contemporaries of the mystics see them as 'mad' or deranged figures, mystic authors claim to have 'tasted' the plenitude of divine presence as the origin of all being, even though they are sometimes unable to fully understand or communicate this experience. The aftereffects of such encounters include radical experiences of melancholia, solitude, and finitude. Hence what are the boundaries between radical asceticism and mysticism?

Writers discussed in the class-whose essays will be available in a class reader-include Christian mystics (Pseudo-Dionysius, Master Eckhart, Marguerite Porete, John of the Cross, Angela of Foligno, Theresa of Avila, Pier Damiani), Jewish Kabbalists (Abulafia, Maimonides, Luis de Leon), Nicholas of Cusa, and others. Students who have completed, or are currently enrolled in, Religious Studies 90A or 90B are eligible to declare the Religious Studies major.

Instructor: Luca D'Isanto, MWF 10-11, 4 units

RELIGIOUS STUDIES C133: Jewish Civilization II: Judaism in Late Antiquity

(Also cross listed with Near Eastern Studies C133 and UGIS C153)

This class will examine the emergence and development of classical Judaism, its piety, institutions, thought, and literature.

Instructor: Sergei Dolgopolski, TuTh 3:30-5, (4 units)

RELIGIOUS STUDIES C163: Religious Identities in South Asia

(Also cross listed as South Asian C128.)

Introduces history of religious movements in modern India. Examines the dissemination and reinterpretation of sacred texts and religious practices. Includes a reading of spiritual experience and religious authority at mid-century in an influential modern novel. Examines religious conversions, transformations of women's roles, and how the concept of a secular state in post-independence India shapes religious policy and practice.

Instructor: Vasudha Dalmia, TuTh 9:30-11, 4 units

RELIGIOUS STUDIES C182: Sociology of Religion

Also cross-listed as Sociology C112.

The course will locate the place of religious consciousness in human action and then survey comparatively and historically the role that religion has played in human society. Will include a general theory of the nature of religious experience, religious symbolism, and the basis of religious community.

Instructor: Paula Nesbitt, MWF 12-1, 4 units

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 190: Topics in Religious Studies**Section 1: The Upanisads**

The Upanisads hold a prominent place in the history of Hindu religious and philosophical ideas. They are the last important section of Vedic ritual literature and are, simultaneously, foundational texts for some of Hinduism's most prominent schools of philosophy and religion. Through a close reading of the main Upanisads in translation, we will look into the major themes dealt with in these texts, and we will acquire experience in approaching a text critically, taking into account elements such as alternative readings and differences in translation. Some previous familiarity with Indian religious ideas is desirable but not required.

Instructor: Luis Gonzalez-Reimann, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 190: Topics in Religious Studies**Section 2: Introduction to Islam**

This class assumes that the students have little or no knowledge of the subject material. The course goals are to introduce the students to the ideas that shaped Islamic history from the earliest periods to the present and to train students on methods of inquiry in the rich Islamic tradition. To accomplish our academic goals the course will trace the early pre-Islamic period in Arabia and the condition prevalent at the time of the inception of Islam. The life of Prophet Muhammad will be explored in depth and various sources of historical record will be examined.

The basic belief system, rituals, mystical traditions and Islamic societal interaction will be examined with ample references from the Qur'an and prophetic statements. In addition, we will explore Qur'anic narratives of earlier Prophets and how the Islamic tradition views earlier revelations. In addition, we will trace the early development of the main schools of law in both the Sunni and Shia communities, their interpretations and differing approaches to addressing theological questions. Modern differences between the schools of law and emerging trends will be likewise examined in view of the textual sources. While this course is not intended to be a discussion of contemporary issues in the Muslim world, however at times it would be the more correct academic approach to begin our investigation through an immediate response to the headlines. Students are welcome to inquire without any inhibition and only through critical examination we can truly come into an understanding of the subject material. Instructor: Hatem Bazian, MWF 12-1, 4 units

Courses approved for the METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENT of the Religious Studies Major:

Native American Studies 151, Native American Philosophy

Instructor: Nimachia Hernandez, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Religious Studies C182: Sociology of Religion

Instructor: Paula Nesbitt, MWF 12-1, 4 units

Religious Studies 190, sec. 1: The Upanisads

Instructor: Luis Gonzalez-Reimann, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Religious Studies 190, sec. 2: Introduction to Islam

Instructor: Hatem Bazian, MWF 12-1, 4 units

Courses approved for the THEMATIC REQUIREMENT of the Religious Studies Major:

Religious Studies 190, sec. 1: The Upanisads

Instructor: Luis Gonzalez-Reimann, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Religious Studies 190, sec. 2: Introduction to Islam

Instructor: Hatem Bazian, MWF 12-1, 4 units

South Asian C142, India's Great Epics: The Mahabharata and the Ramayana

Also cross listed as Religious Studies C166.

Instructor: TBA, MWF 11-12, 4 units

Courses approved for the HINDUISM EMPHASIS of the Religious Studies Major:

History 103F, sec. 2: Religion and Nation in Colonial South Asia

Instructor: Vahid Fozdar, Mon. 4-6, 4 units

History of Art 136B: The Art of India: 500-1350 A.D

Instructor: Joanna Williams, TuTh 12:30-2, 4 units

South Asian C128: Religious Identities in South Asia

Also cross-listed as Religious Studies C163.

Instructor: Vasudha Dalmia, TuTh 9:30-11, 4 units

Courses approved for the BUDDHIST EMPHASIS of the Religious Studies Major:

Buddhism 114: Tibetan Buddhism

Instructor: Bryan Cuevas, TuTh 12:30-2, 4 units

Buddhism 130: Zen Buddhism

Instructor: Robert Scharf, TuTh 2-3:30, 100 GPB, 4 units

South and Southeast Asian Studies C145: Buddhism in Contemporary Society

Also cross-listed as Buddhism C128.

Instructor: Alexander Von Rospatt, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Courses approved for the JUDAISM EMPHASIS of the Religious Studies Major:

Near Eastern Studies C133: Jewish Civilization II: Judaism in Late Antiquity

(Also cross-listed as Religious Studies C 133 and UGIS C155.)

Instructor: Sergei Dolgopolski, TuTh 3:30-5, (4 units)

Near Eastern Studies 190C: Jewish Studies: Gender, Love & Sexuality in the Bible

Instructor: Ron Hendel, Wed. 2-5, 4 units

Courses approved for the ISLAM EMPHASIS of the RELIGIOUS STUDIES Major:

Near Eastern Studies 140: Topics in Islamic Thought and Institutions: Muslim and Non-Muslim Perspectives on the Appearance and Early Development of Islam

Instructor: John Hayes, MWF 1-2, 3 units

Near Eastern Studies 147: The Rise of Islamic Civilization

Instructor: Leslie Pierce, MWF 2-3, 118 Barrows, 3 units

Near Eastern Studies 160: Religions of Ancient Iran

Instructor: Martin Schwartz, TuTh 3:30-5, 3 units

Religious Studies 190, sec. 2: Introduction to Islam

Instructor: Hatem Bazian, MWF 12-1, 4 units

Courses approved for the CHRISTIANITY EMPHASIS of the Religious Studies Major:

History 100, sect. 6: Power and the Holy in Medieval Europe

Instructor: Maureen Miller, TuTh 8-9:30, 4 units

History 100, sect 10: Christianity and Violence in the Medieval West

Instructor: Matthew Gabriele, TuTh 3:30-5, 4 units

History 185B: History of Christianity: 1250 to Present

Instructor: Thomas Brady, MWF 11-12, 4 units

OTHER RELATED COURSES:

African American Studies 131: Caribbean Societies and Cultures

Instructor: Michel Laguerre, Mon. 2-5, 3 units

Anthropology 162: Topics in Folklore

Instructor: TBA, TuTh 9:30-11, 4 units

Asian Studies 150, sect. 2: Indigenous Religions

Instructor: E. Crystal, TuTh 3:30-5, 4 units

Chicano Studies 110: Latina/o Philosophy and Religious Thought

Instructor: Nelson Maldonado, TuTh 12:30-2, 4 units

Chicano Studies 180, sect. 6: Virgins and Goddesses

Instructor: Laura Perez, TuTh 12:30-2, 3 units

Film 140, sect. 2: Religious Imagination in Cinema

Instructor: Jeffrey Skoller, TuTh 11-12:30, 4 units

L&S 140A: Biblical Controversies: Archaeology, History and the Hebrew Bible

Instructor: TBA, TuTh 2-3:30

L&S 160B: Effective Personal Ethics for the 21st Century

Instructor: Jack Phillips, TuTh 12:30-2, 3 units

Native American Studies 151: Native American Philosophy

Instructor: Nimachia Hernandez, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Near Eastern Studies 106B: Art & Archaeology Of Ancient Egypt

Instructor: Cathleen Keller, TuTh 12:30-2, 4 units

Near Eastern Studies 112: Survey of Ancient Egyptian History

Instructor: Carol Redmount, MW 4-5:30, 4 units

Near Eastern Studies 160: Religions of Ancient Iran

Instructor: Martin Schwartz, TuTh 3:30-5, 3 units

Peace and Conflict Studies 100: Peace Theory: Approaches and Analyses

Instructor: Jerry Sanders, TuTh 2-3:30, 3 units

Scandinavian 170: Artic Folklore and Mythology in Nordic Lands

Instructor: John Lindow, MWF 10-11, 4 units

THE FOLLOWING LOWER DIVISION COURSES MAY BE OF GENERAL INTEREST TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJORS:

(THEY WILL NOT COUNT AS UNITS THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES MAJOR OR MINOR.)

American Studies 84, section 1: Islam in America

Instructor: Michel Laguerre, Wed. 10-12, 1 unit

Classics 28: The Classic Myths

Instructor: Anthony Bulloch, TuTh 12:30-2:00, 4 units

Near Eastern Studies 15: Introduction to Near Eastern Art and Archeology

Instructor: Marian Feldman, MWF 1-2, 4 units

Philosophy 6: Existentialism in Literature and Film

Instructor: Hubert Dreyfus, TuTh 3:30-5:00, 4 units

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