

Religion and Music: Sacred Sound in Global Perspective

Professor Todd Lewis

MONTSERRAT 112-D 01

Smith 425 Office Hours: Tu-Thurs 1-2 PM



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Course Description

This seminar will examine two universal features of human life: music and religion. It will focus on the phenomenon of religion in comparative and global perspective, exploring the connections between religious doctrines, rituals, and cultural performances. The scope will extend from prehistory and tribal traditions, then move to an examination of the major world religions. Major analytical paradigms from the academic study of religion and music will be introduced, especially those useful for interpreting religious belief and cultural praxis. The seminar will devote special attention to case studies in world music, and draw upon student participation in listening to both recorded music and participation in live performances as expressions of reverence for and connection with the divine.

The first semester will focus on developing a foundation for understanding religion and music; the second semester seminar, directed by Prof. Shirish Korde, will emphasize further themes in the study of music and extend the study of religion and music through the study of several major musical/religious traditions.

Course Design

The course is organized around textbooks that provides a sample of descriptive and analytical approaches to religion and religious music. This is supplemented by short course E-RES readings, an ethnographic text, a novel, readings on Chinese mysticism, and lecture presentations. The term study plan will be to ask you to learn through a series of thematic case studies.

Montserrat is a two-semester experience and the cumulative activities will be important for the entire course. Seminar assignments will ask you to reflect on all your experiences. Thus you need to approach your reading and listening assignments with rigorous preparation before discussion, review after class meetings; we expect you to bring creativity to find connections between the various course elements that we examine over the course of the year.

Lectures complement the readings and video assignments *but do not replace them*. Required Readings and listening assignments indicated in the syllabus should be completed before the designated class. For class, papers, and the final examination, they should be analyzed carefully.

Standard reading assignments and lectures are central to our course of study and exams; slides, films, and listening assignments are integral to developing a visually-informed understanding of religious tradition. Please bring the pertinent books and collective photocopy handouts to class. Informed participation is figured into the term's grading.

Class attendance, participation in discussion, papers as designated in the syllabus completed at designated due dates are mandatory. The syllabus may change to reflect the progress of the class and campus and off-campus events.

Course Requirements:

1. Class Attendance and Participation. Viewing Required Films. Attending outings and Divine Cluster common events.
2. Four papers: (Separate Guidelines will be distributed for each)
 1. Religious/Musical Autobiography. A personal religious life history. Due: 9/12
 2. Reaction Paper: Drumming Experience. Due: 10/16
 3. Prophets and Sages/ Music Paper due: 11/10
 4. Religious Encounter. An account of a religion and musical mode not your own, reported using an analytical perspective from the course. Due: 12/4
3. Final Exam

Schema for Course Grading

1. Papers I/2	10/10	20
2. Paper III		15
3. Paper IV		20
5. Final Exam		35
6. Class Participation		<u>10</u>
		100 points

Course Books

Course books will be used the entire academic year. All have been ordered from the College Bookstore. Students should listen to CD recordings associated with each reading for course textbooks

William Paden, *Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion*, 2nd ed. Boston: Beacon, 1994.

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*. NY: Bantam, 1958

D.H. Smith. *The Wisdom of the Taoists*. NY: New Directions, 1980.

Abraham Maslow. *Religions, Values, & Peak Experiences*. NY: Penguin, 1994

Judith Becker, *Deep Listeners: Music, Emotion, and Trancing*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

Guy Beck, ed. *Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Univ. Press, 2006

Lars Martin Fosse, trans. *The Bhagavad Gita*. Yogavidya.com, 2007

Harold Coward *Mantra* 2nd ed. NY: Columbia University Press, 2004

Susan Schwartz, *Rasa*. NY: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy*. NY: HarperCollins, 2008

John Esposito, Darrell Fasching, Todd Lewis, *World Religions Today*. 2nd ed. NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Diana Eck, *Darshan*, 3rd ed. NY: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Bonnie Wade, *Thinking Musically*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Lisa Gold. *Music in Bali*. NY: Oxford University Press , 2006.

George Ruckert, *Music in North India*. NY: Oxford University Press

Bonnie Wade, *Music in Japan*. NY: Oxford University Press

Bruno Nettl et al., *Excursions in World Music*, 5th ed. NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008.

Readings and Recordings on ERE-s

Schedule of Class and Readings

I. FOUNDATIONS

"All genuine learning is active, not passive. It involves the use of the mind not just the memory. it is a process of discovery in which the student is the main agent, not the teacher." – Mortimer Adler

"Deep down in your soul is where infinity is echoing. Deep down where the backbeat of eternity resounds, is the deep bass line underneath the melody of all things. Soul, nothing but infinity closing in, constantly"— Phil Cousineau

1. 9/4: First Class: Course Overview

The Problem of Ethnocentrism and the Challenge of Global Education

Required Reading:

Religious Worlds, 1-12; 15-33; 35-49; 50-65

Gerald Berreman "A Naive View of Normative Theory" [E-RES]

Lutheran Church "Guidelines for Inclusive Language" [E-RES]

2. 9/9: Introductory Perspectives on the Study of Religion; The Vocabulary and Grammar of Religious Traditions

Required Reading:

World Religions Today, Chapter 1

Religious Worlds, 35-49; 50-65

Peter Berger "Religion as Social Construction of Meaning" [E-RES]


Mircea Eliade "Cosmos and Chaos" [E-RES]

3. 9/11: Perspectives on the Study of Music [Prof. Korde]

Required Reading/Listening:

Thinking Musically, Chapters 1-4 and CD selections

DVD: Ben Zander

 9/12, Noon: PAPER #1 DUE

II. INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

"Humankind for 99% of its existence (300,000 years) has lived as a hunter-gatherer; until 10, 000 years ago, our species was just another animal." - Paul Bohannan

"Primal religion is not so much thought out as sung and danced out" –R.R. Marett

4. 9/16 Prehistory I: Neolithic Evidence; Totemism

Required Reading:

Tom Brown, "Hunting Ethics" [E-RES]

Todd T. Lewis, "Primal Religions" in *World Religions Today*, 2nd ed.

5. 9/18: Religion in Tribal Societies: Animism and the Shaman

Required Reading:

Robert Gardner and Karl Heider "Ghosts" [E-RES]

Daniel Avorgbedor, "Music in World Shamanism" [ERE-s]

Roger Finch, "Drums in Shamanistic Ritual" and "Drums, Shamanic: Form and Structure" [ERE-s]

6. 9/23: Case Study: !Kung Bushmen: Religious Healing

Required Reading:

Richard Katz, "The Kung Approach to Healing" [ERE-s]

DVD on Kung Num Cai

III. PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

"The reader is invited to direct his/her mind to a moment of deeply-felt religious experience...

I speak of a 'numinous' state of mind.... irreducible to any other, that cannot be taught; it can only be evoked, awakened in the mind; as everything that comes of the spirit must be awakened." – Rudolf Otto

"I wanna know, did ye get the feelin'? Did ye get it deep down in your soul?"—Van Morrison

8. 9/25: Religion and the Psyche; "Techniques of the Sacred"

Required Reading:

Abraham Maslow, *Religions, Values, & Peak Experiences*, 1-39; 54-68; 91-102

C.G. Jung "Memories, Dreams, Reflections" and Sigmund Freud "The Future of an Illusion" [E-RES]

9. 9/30: 🗣️ Discussion Forum: Topic: "Reckoning with Trance"

Required Reading/Listening:

Judith Becker, *Deep Listeners: Music, Emotion, and Trancing*.

IV. THE STUDY OF MUSIC-1

"Humans everywhere program their inner senses with the care and genius with which they program their outer environment." -- Edmund Carpenter

"The one who understands the inner meaning of sound ... shall travel without effort on the path to Liberation" – Natya Shastra

10. 10/2: Music, Ancestor Worship, and Trance [Prof. Korde]

Case Studies: The Shona Bira Ceremony (Zimbabwe), Pygmies (Central Africa), Ewe Drumming (West Africa), Tuva (Mongolia), Kecak (Bali)

Required Reading/Listening/Viewing:

Excursions in World Music, Chapter 7 and CD Examples

Tuva and Kecak DVD-s

Tuvan CD [E-RES]

Kecak CD [E-RES]

11. 10/7: Hinduism and Sacred Sound: First Encounter [Prof. Korde] with guest artist Alif Laila, Sitar

Required Reading/Listening:

Harold Coward, *Mantra*, Chapters _____

Guy Beck, ed. *Sacred Sound*, Chapter 4 and CD examples

Excerpt from *Sonic Theology* [E-RES]

Poems of Mira and Kabir [E-RES]

Hinduism CD compilation on [E-RES]

12. 10/9: Workshop on Concepts of Time and Rythm [Prof. Korde] Drumming and Rhythm in African, Indian, and Balinese Music Guest Artist: Bandem

Required Reading:

George Ruckert, *Music in North India* _____

Lisa Gold. *Music in Bali* _____

CD compilation on Rhythm [E-RES]

12.1. EVENING TBA:

West African Drumming Workshop with David Locke and the Agbekor Ensemble

Note: No Class on Tuesday, 10/14

V. PROPHETS AND SAGES

"There is no god in all the earth but in Israel." -- Hebrew Bible, II Kings 5: 15

"Truth is one; the wise define it differently." -- Hindu text

13. 10/16: The Axial Age, Origins of World Religions I: Chinese Sages

Required Reading:

D.H. Smith. *The Wisdom of the Taoists.*

☞ MAP ASSIGNMENT DUE 🌐🌐🌐

14. 10/20: DIVINE CLUSTER PLENARY LECTURE 7:30-9 PM

Prof. Lewis, "Shamans, Prophets, Sages"

15. 10/21: The Axial Age, Origins of World Religions II: Sages of India

Required Reading:

Hermann Hesse *Siddhartha*

SUNDAY EVENING 10/19:

Indian Classical Music Concert, Brooks Concert Hall

16. 10/23: Yoga and Primal Sacred Sound

Required Reading:

Harold Coward *Mantra* 2nd ed.

World Religions Today,

17. 10/28: The Axial Age, Origins of World Religions III: Prophets

Required Reading:

Prophets from the Bible [E-RES]

The Quran [E-RES]

18. 10/30: Varieties of Monotheism: The Abrahamic Faiths

Required Reading:

Religious Worlds, 121-140; 141-158

World Religions Today, 74-82; 140-146; 204-211; 231-233

VI. ISLAM AND SUFI MUSIC

*"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy" -
Shakespeare (Hamlet)*

19. 11/4: Islam: Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy of the Five Pillars

Required Reading:

World Religions Today, Chapter 5

Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions, 85-98

20. 11/6: Sufism: Theory

Required Reading:

Rumi, "Selected Poems" [E-RES]

Al Ghazzali, "Deliverance from Error" [E-RES]

World Religions Today, 226-229

21. 11/11: Music of Sufi Mysticism [Prof. Korde]

Required Reading/Viewing/Listening:

Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions, 98-111 and CD selections

DVD-s: Nusarat Fateh Ali Khan and Abida Parvan

Bruce Lawrence, "The Early Chistti Approach to Sama" [ERE-s]

VII. HINDU TRADITIONS AND DEVOTIONAL MUSIC

"Tersely stated, Religion is preparation to receive Truth." -- Fred Underwood

22. 11/13: Hindu Mysticism: Veda and Upanishads

Required Reading:

World Religions Today, 281-289

"Selections from the Upanishads" [ERE-s]

23. 11/18: Hindu Devotion: Bhakti and Puja

Required Reading:

World Religions Today, Chapter 6, esp. 290-295; 308-319

24. 11/20: Music in India: Raga, Tala, Rasa [Prof. Korde]

Required Reading/Listening:

Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions, Chapter 4

Music in North India, _____

CD on Indian Music

25. 11/25: The Song of the Lord: *The Bhagavad Gita*

Required Reading:

Lars Martin Fosse, trans. *The Bhagavad Gita*. Yogavidya.com, 2007

26. 12/2: Ramayana

Required Reading:

"What Happens When you Listen" [ERE-s]

The Valmiki *Ramayana* [ERE-s]

27. TBA: Ramayana in the Balinese Gamelan Concert, Brooks Hall

28. 12/9 LAST CLASS: Review

Exam Period: Final Examination