



REL 600 "SPIRITUALITY, COMMUNITY, AND COSMOPOLITANISM"

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Spring 2010
M 3:45 to 6:15 HL 504

This seminar is an experiment in placing two conversations in dialogue: (1) the debate and long discussion of communitarian and cosmopolitan in political philosophy, political theory, and cultural studies circles and (2) the continuing discussion of the rise of spirituality (often in contrast to "religion") in the contemporary world. The purpose of this exercise is to find new ways to rethink the enduring problem of universals/particulars, universalism/pluralism, and community/individual in contemporary theory on religion.

The seminar will begin by with a consideration of the use of the term "spirituality" in contrast to "religion" in both academic and popular discussions of the contemporary religiosity in the United States, and worldwide. Increasingly this term populates nonfiction reading with *the Newsweek special report on "Spituality 2005" titled "In Search of the Spiritual"* and books like *Occult America: The Secret History of How Mysticism Shaped Our Nation (2009)* and numerous travel and biographic books (often as the newer genre of what could be called *biotravelogs*). Academic works now hail the *Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality (2005)* while articles in JAAR (March 2006), decry the recent trends of "—that is sensation hungry and the counterpart to extreme sports—a collection of religious people will emerge (are already emerging) who are unable to tell the difference between orgasm, an adrenalin rush and an encounter with God" (Ward, 185).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



FINDING YOUR PSYCHIC SELF
This overview course will introduce you to the mysterious world of the psychic sciences. Develop your intuitive abilities using meditation, hypnosis, and dream interpretation. Learn New Age methods and age-old divination techniques, such as numerology, color analysis, card reading, palmistry, and dowsing (pendulum reading). You will also discover the psychic connection between sun-sign astrology, Chinese astrology, and Native American dreams. You will learn about auras (energy field around your body) and chakras (energy points in your body) and how to balance mind, body, and spirit. A textbook fee of \$10 is collected by instructor at the first class.
MS1720 - 1/21/10-2/4/10, 3 sessions
7:00 PM-9:00 PM, Thurs.
Ene Cox, instructor
Career Training Center, \$49

A SHAMANIC JOURNEY
Over tens of thousands of years, our ancient ancestors all over the world discovered how to maximize human abilities of mind and spirit for healing and problem-solving. The remarkable system of methods they developed is today known as "shamanism," a term that comes from a Siberian tribal word for its practitioners: "shaman" (pronounced SHAH-mahn). Shamans are a type of medicine man or woman especially distinguished by the use of journeys to hidden worlds otherwise mainly known through myth, dream, and near-death experiences. Begin to learn bits and pieces of the Shamanic Ways as we explore the rites of Passage, Vision Quest, Töten Animals, Feng Shui and the Medicine Wheel. Learn to connect with your soul and explore this ancient theory of life and happiness.
FAM1659 - 1/21/10-2/18/10, 3 sessions
7:00 PM-9:00 PM, Thurs.
Deborah Dorasba, instructor
Career Training Center, \$79

INTRODUCTION TO CHIROMANCY
Chiromancy is the art of characterization and forecasting the future through the study of the palm. It is commonly called palmistry, palm reading, chiromancy or hand analysis. Palmistry can trace its roots back to Hindu Astrology and then a spread to China, Tibet, Egypt, Persia and other countries in Europe. Spend an evening learning about the ancient art of reading the hands. Learn about the lines and mounts in the hand and their relationship to early astrology. Locate the Life Line, The Head Line and the Heart Line and what they tell about subconscious and super conscious energies within. Track a few lines that we all have and learn what they reveal about personality. With a little practice, you can amaze your family and friends with what you can learn from their palms.
FAM1703 - 1/21/10-1/25/10, 2 sessions
6:30 PM-9:00 PM, Thurs.
Georgia Cunningham, PhD, instructor
Career Training Center, \$39

METAPHYSICS OF LOVE: THE JOURNEY TO MEET SELF
In this inspirational and empowering course, based on his CD and forthcoming book, through lecture and Q & A, we will shine Light upon the deeper meaning behind our Life, Love and Relating experiences. In this weaving together from the best of spiritually-channeled information with Transpersonal Astrology and Psychology, we will create a symposium that can serve anyone who desires spiritual growth, understanding of Life's purpose, Joy and Love, as a useful guide for this "Onward into Forever" Adventure We All share.
FAM1701 - 1/14/10-1/28/10, 3 sessions
7:00 PM-9:00 PM, Thurs.
Dennis Cole, instructor
Career Training Center, \$59

WEIGHT LOSS FOR THE WILLING
It is all a matter of choice and mind-set. Once you make the decision to choose health and happiness over self-indulgence and emotional eating patterns, you can take off weight and keep it off! Learn how to use hypnosis and suggestions to reset your mind-set to reach your goal weight. Please bring pen and notepad to class.
FAM1812 - 2/22/10-3/1/10, 2 sessions
6:30 PM-8:30 PM, Mon.
Martin Krub, instructor
Career Training Center, \$49

MODERN ASTROLOGY AND SELF DISCOVERY
Modern Transpersonal Astrology can serve as a tool for Self and spiritual knowledge. It can help us to better understand and accept self and others; thus, to attract and create more enjoyable relationships. Our natal planets symbolize psychological driving forces. In this interactive program you will be empowered through lecture, Q & A, and volunteer situations. Please bring your birth data to first class so instructor can prepare your personal chart for next class. (Don't worry if time of birth is unknown.)
FAM1700 - 2/23/10-3/13/10, 3 sessions
7:00 PM-9:00 PM, Thurs.
Dennis Cole, instructor
Career Training Center, \$39

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING
Life CAN BE a joy and stress CAN BE less and less. Learn how to recognize those negative thoughts and messages in order to cancel them out and reframe them to enjoy every day. Let the sun shine into your life and bring happiness to yourself and those who love you. You'll be glad you did and so will they! Please bring paper and pen to class.
FAM1814 - 1/25/10, 1 session
6:30 PM-8:30 PM, Mon.
Martin Krub, instructor
Career Training Center, \$29

TIME MANAGEMENT
If you have made a resolution to "GET ORGANIZED" this is the place to get started. Get hold of your priorities and watch how effectively you can accomplish all the necessary tasks of day to day business as well as reaching short and long term goals. Effective time management involves numerous ways of organizing time, optimization tips and techniques, and management systems. Managing time is no longer an option, but a MUST! Begin here and learn how easily you can accomplish everything you've set out to do.
FAM1716 - 1/23/10-2/10/10, 3 sessions
6:30 PM-9:30 PM, Mon.
Leonard Calista, instructor
Career Training Center, \$69

32 "Committed to Your Success"

Exhibit A: Notice the listing for these courses in the same catalogue with various technology classes in the BOCES catalogue (Onondaga County Board of Cooperative Services). This is a

government run organization that does not consider these courses "religion" and lists them neatly under "personal development"!

Usually the term "spiritual" applies to newer movements that purposely blend and sometimes bend earlier modes of religiosity into newer forms that center on the person and the

AAR Plenary Session in Montreal Sunday - 11:45 am-12:45 pm
Mark Juergensmeyer, University of California, Santa Barbara, Presiding
Theme: *Tariq Ramadan: Contemporary Islam: The Meaning and the Need of a Radical Reform*
Named by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most important innovators of the twenty-first century, Tariq Ramadan occupies a unique place among leading Islamic thinkers. A Swiss national, he is a professor of theology at the University of Oxford. Ramadan has explored the difficult issues of reinterpretation and reform within Islam itself and between the Islamic world and its neighbors around the globe. Ramadan serves as an expert in various commissions linked to the Brussels Parliament, and is a member of several working parties concerned with Islam in the world and on the continent.

"mind." However, while in Singapore, I heard the widely influential Muslim public intellectual Tariq Ramadan (still banned from entering in the United States so invited when the AAR met in Montreal) present Islam as "spirituality." He spoke from his then new book, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*, which contains chapters with titles like "Encounter with the Sacred" and "Personality and Spiritual Quest." Clearly his use of this term was deftly aimed at fundamentalists and their sense of Islam as a "Religion." Understanding the subtleties of the new terminology of Religion and Spirituality will be central for the seminar.

Closely related to the rhetoric of spirituality/religion is a discussion at the heart of our field: the argument over how we organize and categorize the material of study. Almost a decade ago, Steven Wasserstrom published a strong indictment of Gershom Scholem, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin for their false turn toward the mystical element of Hindu, Jewish, and Islamic texts and their dehistoricized and depoliticized picture of religion that, in fact, disguised an insidious politic bordering on or outright supporting Fascism. He accused the field of neglecting the traditions as Traditions—works of community wholeness not personal quests. But his argument could be taken further back than the mid twentieth century. Again while in Chennai at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, I was told that the library contained copies of correspondence between F. Max Müller, widely held to be the "father" of comparative religious studies, and Henry Steel Olcott, one of the founders of this quintessential spiritual organization. (I would love to see these letters--someday soon.) How central was this connection of comparative religion with spirituality, with undertones of esotericism, mysticism, and the occult for the genesis and growth of what would become Religious Studies?



Much was happening at the same time in the decades between 1892 (World Parliament of Religions) and 1930 (publication of Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*) with some interesting currents.

The correspondence between Romain Rolland (1866- 1944), the French intellectual and biographer of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, and Sigmund Freud reveals the sources of Freud consideration of the "Oceanic Feeling" in his later *Civilization and Its Discontent* and began the long discussion of mysticism and psychoanalysis,¹ now revived with the publication of Jung's *Red Book*. How deep and widespread was our tendency—prior to the postmodern critique—to privilege those aspects of religious life that transcended the Tradition, i.e. the community-based formation of religiosity, for "experience" and direct encounters with "sacrality"?

¹ See William B. Parsons, *The Enigma of the Oceanic Feeling: Revisioning the Psychoanalytic Theory of Mysticism*; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998

But where are we now after decades of re-emphasizing community, decentering the individual for situatedness within the social world, in the face of this rising "spirituality"? How do we now manage the new turn to "the person" and the "personal"? I see new books like Taves's *Religious Experience Reconsidered* and her earlier *Fits, Trances, and Visions*, as signs of the times in our field. Ann M. Taves is currently President of the American Academy of Religion and was recently interviewed in connection with a research project of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) on "Spirituality, Political Engagement, and Public Life" (<http://www.ssrc.org/programs/spirituality-political-engagement-and-public-life/>) and (<http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2010/01/04/the-study-of-special-experiences-an-interview-with-ann-taves/>).

The careful rhetorical setting of the SSRC project, places the discussion of spirituality within another important theoretical context. The website declares, "The project's work focuses centrally on assessing the social and political engagements of Americans who consider themselves 'spiritual but not religious.'" Terms like "spiritual identity," "social engagement", and "public sphere" on the website associate the project with another interestingly parallel debate occurring in political philosophy and cultural studies/sociology circles. The critique of the Enlightenment opened debate on the fate of liberalism and with it the nature both of person and of community. The emerging but loosely formed schools of "cosmopolitanism" and "communitarianism" continue to debate the freedom of the person, the nature of identity, obligations to and definitions of community in the contemporary world. The terms "Religion" and "spirituality" often slips between and among these debates. The SSRC project appears to aim at including religiosity more specifically within this dialogical framework.

Turning toward the cosmopolitan/communitarian debate also moves the conversation out of an American context and more squarely into Europe and well beyond. Although the supposed genesis of cosmopolitanism is continental Europe with its adopted heritage in Greece and Rome, the more recent influence of postcolonial theory and the increasingly potent voice of those in diaspora has reoriented the issues toward Asia and Africa. Popular nonfiction now includes cosmopolitan apologia such as *Global Soul* by Pico Iyer and *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* by Anthony Kwame Appiah. The language of communitarianism has infiltrated the debates over democracy and personhood in Asia with old stalwarts like William Theodore De Bary now publishing books on "Asia values" and "Confucian communitarianism."

The crisscrossed dialogue of both conversation circles (spirituality/religion; cosmopolitan/communitarian) the once again asks us to consider a series of key issues in this seminar:

- The turn toward both spirituality and cosmopolitanism include a refocusing on the person, but how is this defined now? What becomes of the language of the "individual," and of the "self"?
- What does "community" come to mean now, especially in a religious sense?
- What has happened to the once-central issues of race, ethnicity, and gender?

- Within both the cosmopolitan and the communitarian circles, the stress is on imminence and embodied life (this is also sometime true of spirituality). Is there room for what was once called the Transcendent, and how are the extra-temporal and extra-spatial elements of religion now defined?
- Note that with every change in our theoretical orientations, the history of the field, its genealogy is reformulated. How do and will these debates alter the writing or re-writing of the history of our field?

As usual, I will set the first ten weeks of the seminar and then we roll.



Major readings (i.e. books we will swallow whole) in order of appearance:

- Schmidt, Leigh Eric. 2005. *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality From Emerson to Oprah*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco (Harper-Collins).
- Kakar, Sudhir. 2009. *Mad and Divine: Spirit and Psyche in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Ramadan, Tariq. 2008. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*. New York: Oxford University Press
- _____. 2009. *What I Believe*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Taves, Ann. 2009. *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building-Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, Eds. 2002. *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Breckenridge, Carol A., Homi K. Bhabha and Sheldon Pollock. 2002. *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham: Duke University Press. (First published in *Public Culture, Millennial Quartet, Cosmopolitanism*)

Below this line: wait to order

- Elizabeth Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia*. New York: Penguin Books 2007
- Pollock, Sheldon. 2006. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. Berkeley: University of California
- Simpson, Edward and Kai Kresse, 2008. *Struggling with History: Islam and Cosmopolitanism in the Western Indian Ocean*. New York: Columbia University Press

Requirements:

1. Each week **SUNDAY MORNING 10 AM** prior to the seminar on **MONDAY**, each member must send their reflections to everyone.

ON THE ISSUE OF BLACKBOARD: While I will use Blackboard to post readings and other documents, I do not like the discussion board only and prefer creating a weekly compendium with my comments. I will post the compendium on Blackboard as well as print this out for you each week. Please:

Respond to the email template, which I will create by using "reply all" and copy your response directly into the email.

THEN: Send the response as an attachment in MSW either as a DOC file to me at jpwaghor@syr.edu. Create the response in whatever program but save as Word file— PLEASE otherwise I go nuts trying to do the compendium!

We can reconsider the use of Blackboard at our first session.

Format for the responses and some hints:

- ∪ The reflections should be between one and two pages single-spaced BUT NO LONGER.
- ∪ Each member of this seminar has their own research interests, let your response reflect these interests and begin to add the readings into your own theoretical toolbox (to borrow Wendy Doniger's term). Some may become useful foils, others major conversation partners.
- ∪ Each week consider how the reading intersects with previous readings AND what each adds or challenges in our discussions.
- ∪ Be critical but not simply for critique's sake. It is actually perfectly fine to like something and even more important to consider how a reading might be useful.
- ∪ Avoid the formulaic critiques about essentialisms or universalism or lack of gender concerns. Remember we are trying to look again at the dominance of certain issues at the expense of others. All of the reading will be fully aware of the last decades of theory.

2. In addition each seminar member should develop a project that interest you and that is relevant for your current or future work in the context of the issue that we are discussing together. Begin building this interest in your reflections. You will report on your own projects in the seminar. The project should result in paper of 20-25 pages, which along with the weeks of reflections will constitute the written work for the seminar.

Evaluation: (For a graduate seminar, this is only approximate)

Written weekly responses 40%

Participation in the seminar each week 20%

Final paper 40%

Seminar schedule:

1. Jan 25: Introduction of the seminar issues and beginning the debates.

Reading:

Ward, Graham. 2006. "The Future of Religion." *Journal of The American Academy of Religion* 74, 1:179-186.

Waldron, Jeremy 1992. "Minority Culture and the Cosmopolitan Alternative." *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25 (3): 751-93

The American Spiritual Scene: An Alternate History?

2. Feb 1: Spirituality, the American Character, and the Study of Religion.

Major reading: Schmidt, Leigh Eric. 2005. *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality From Emerson to Oprah*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco (Harper-Collins).

This book is currently out of print but used copies are available el cheapo from Barnes&Noble.

I will also provide PDF selections from: Robert Wuthnow, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s*, Robert Bellah, *Habits of the Heart*, and Mitch Horowitz. *Occult America*

3. Feb 8: A Moment in History, a Bridge to Asia, a Beginning for the Study of Religion, and a Current Controversy over Psychoanalysis: Shri Ramakrishna/Swami Vivekananda



Reading: Waghorne, "Global Gurus and the Third Stream of American Religiosity: Between Hindu Nationalism and Liberal Pluralism." In *Political Hinduism* edited by Vinay Lal. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp 90-117.

Parsons, William B. 1998. "The Oceanic Feeling Revisited." *Journal of Religion*, 78, 4: 501-523
+Selections from: Müller, Friedrich Max. 1899. *Râmakrishna: His Life and Sayings*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; Sudhir Kakar 1991, *The Analyst and the Mystic: Psychoanalytic Reflections on Religion and Mysticism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Stepping in and out of Europe and America

4. Feb 15: Focus on Freud from Goa

Reading: Kakar, Sudhir. 2009. *Mad and Divine: Spirit and Psyche in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Also see his website <http://www.sudhirkakar.com/>

5. Feb 22: Spirituality in a Mainline Tradition: Reinterpreting Islam and the Prophet

Reading: Ramadan, Tariq. 2008. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*. New York: Oxford University Press

_____. 2009. *What I Believe*. New York: Oxford University Press

A Theoretical Interlude

6. Mar 1: The Return of Religious Experience:

Reading: Taves, Ann. 2009. *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building-Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cosmopolitan/Communitarian

7. Mar 8: Cosmopolitan in the context of Communitarianism--defined.

Reading: Chapters from:

Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, Eds. 2002. *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Breckenridge, Carol A., Homi K. Bhabha and Sheldon Pollock. 2002. *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham: Duke University Press. (First published in *Public Culture*, *Millennial Quartet*, *Cosmopolitanism*)

Spring break

Interlude: Stepping out of America, Europe and Academics

8. Mar 22: Wandering the World: New Cosmopolitan Seekers (not in as in Quidditch)

Reading: Elizabeth Gilbert, *Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia*. New York: Penguin Books 2007

Other Times, Other Places, Other Cosmopolitan Worlds

9. Mar 29: Ancient India in the Time of the Roman Empire

Reading: Pollock, Sheldon. 2006. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. Berkeley: University of California

10. April 5: The Indian Ocean and the Meetings on the Seas

Reading: Simpson, Edward and Kai Kresse, 2008. *Struggling with History: Islam and Cosmopolitanism in the Western Indian Ocean*. New York: Columbia University Press. And selections from: Roel (Nb) Meijer, *Cosmopolitanism, Identity And Authenticity In The Middle East*. London: Taylor & Francis, 1999.

NOW WE ROLL....



11. April 12

12. April 19

13. April 26

14. May 3

Bibliography: (partial list to)

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