ART, RITUAL, AND CULTURE

Fr. Morris Contacts:
Office Hours: Tuesday: TBA and by appointment
Phone: 510-883-2075 or email Mmorrisop@aol.com

Fr. Thompson Contacts:
Office Hours (DSPT 116 East): Mon./Thu. 11:00 12:00
Phone: 510-883-2055 (at home: 510-596-1800)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the ways in which the use of art and ritual are formed by and inform and create culture, with a special emphasis on the religious aspects of all three. Each aspect of the relationship considered will have focus on two test cases, one from the "deeper past" (ancient and medieval) presented by Fr. Thompson; the second more recent period (modern or contemporary). The week’s meeting will be broken into two parts, a lecture by one of the instructors and a period of class discussion. There will be readings from written witnesses to the events considered and from modern scholarly interpretations of them. Students will, in consultation with the suitable instruction, will write a paper or prepare a project on a topic in the relation of art, ritual, and culture for presentation to the seminar.

Required Reading

Packets of Readings will be provided by the instructors.

Suggestions for Further Reading and Viewing

A list of titles, mentioned in the syllabus as suggested, with ordering information is attached to this syllabus. This will interest students working on particular topics might want to own copies. BUT remember: these are not required books.

Other Requirements of Course

1. Weekly quizzes on lectures and readings (30% of grade).
2. A 20-25 page research paper or project to be presented in class (70% of grade)
3. Active participation in discussions (has large effect on grade).
SYLLABUS

Note: In the assignments that the “suggested further reading” is the best place to start when you are looking for a paper or project topic and bibliography related to that material. The instructors will announce dates and times for viewings of the required videos, but students may view on their own if they wish.

Feb. 3: Introduction (short session)

1) RELIGIOUS CULTURE CLASH

Feb. 10: ENCOUNTERING THE GODS: Ancient Pagans and Christians Contest the Divine
(Thompson)
Read: Plato, The Timaeus; Cicero, “Scipio’s Dream” (Packet)
Suggestion for further reading: Robin Lane-Fox, Pagans and Christians

Feb. 17: No class: Presidents’ Day

Feb. 24: EMPIRE: Imperialism and the Religious Hegemony of Spain (Morris)
Read: Christopher Columbus, The Book of Prophecies (packet)
John Pohl and Clare Lyons, The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire (packet)
View: Semana Santa in Seville (VHS, room 1)
Suggestion for further reading: Hugh Thomas, Conquest; Eloise Keber (ed), Representing
Aztec Ritual: Performance, Text, and Image in the Work of Sahagun

2) ENVISIONING A PERFECT SOCIETY

Mar. 3: EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY JERUSALEM: The Community Imagined (Thompson)
Read: TBA
Suggestion for further reading: Keith D. Lilley City and Cosmos: the Medieval World in
Urban Form; Augustine Thompson, Cities of God.

Mar. 10: REVOLUTION! The Collapse of the Ancien Regime and the Foundations of Modern Myth
(Morris)
Read: Jean Starobinski, “1789: The Emblems of Reason” (packet)
Suggested Viewing: Marie Antoinette (MGM, 1938, with Norma Shearer, Tyrone Power,
and John Barrymore)

3) ROMANTICISMS RECONSIDERED

Mar. 17: PAST INTO PRESENT: Carolingian Romanticism and Restoration (Thompson)
Read: The Monk of St. Gall, Life of Charlemagne
Suggestion for further reading: Geoffrey Koziol, Begging Pardon and Favor

Mar. 24: No class, Spring Break
Mar. 31: BACK TO THE FUTURE: Catholic Revivalism in the 19th Century and reactions to it (Morris)
Read: Augustus Welby Pugin, “Contrasts” (packet)
       Michael Morris, “A Painter’s Magnificat” (packet)

4) THE STATE DIVINE

Apr. 7: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK: Ancient Christian Experience of Martyrdom (Thompson)
Read: “The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity” (Packet)
       Suggestion for further reading: Peter Brown, The Cult of the Saints

Apr. 14: MYTH GONE BAD: State Religion and the Nazi Paradigm (Morris)
Read: Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich (packet)
View: The Prologue to Leni Riefenstahl, Olympia (Film 1936) (VHS, Room 1)
       Suggested for further Reading: Sidney D. Kirkpatrick, Hitler’s Holy Relics
       Suggested for further Viewing: the BBC, The Occult History of the Third Reich (4 part series, DVD)

5) SEEKING TRANSCENDENCE

Apr. 21: FEELING THE POWER: Medieval Relics and Saints Shrines (Thompson)
Read: “Miracles of San Giovanni Cacciaforte” “Life of Raymond Palmer of Piacenza” “Life of Umiliana de’ Cerchi.” “Civic Veneration of the Saints” (Packet, from Janson, MITT)
       Suggestion for further reading: Diana Webb, Patrons and Defenders

Apr. 28: LOOKING FOR REEL RELIGION: A Search for the Sublime in Contemporary Art, Religion, and Culture (Morris)
Read: Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful (packet)

6) STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

May 5 and 12
Or May 12 and 19
Suggestions for Further Reading
Ordering Information

Prices are from Amazon.com (August 2010)

Keith D. Lilley *City and Cosmos*. ISBN 978-1861894410 – $49.00
*Marie Antoinette* (MGM, 1938). ASIN: 6301973437 – $18.95
*The Occult History of the Third Reich* (BBC DVD). ASIN: B00020HC72 – $9.99