Dr. Thomas Myladil
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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday: 12.30 - 1:00pm, Loree 112, Douglas Campus

Description
The course looks at the beliefs and practices on the topic of death and afterlife in major religious traditions of the world.

Requirements
Exams (90% of final grade):
Test #1: Monday, February 18, in class
Test #2: Monday, April 1, in class
Test #3: Monday, May 6 in class
No make-ups will be given on these three tests already scheduled as above, unless arrangements are made prior to the scheduled dates with documentation for the reasons for requesting make-ups.

Class Attendance and Participation (10% of the final grade):
You are expected to attend every class meeting. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to you. Every session missed, without proper explanation provided through the dean’s office, will result in 1 point reduction of your final grade.

Textbook (required reading)
H. Obayashi, ed., Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions, Praeger.

Course Schedule
1. Death and Reincarnation among the Early Races and Non-Literate Cultures
   Primitive Pan-vitalism and Death
   Animism and Death
   Totemism and Death
   Required reading: Text, Intro. and Chap. 1

2. Death and Afterlife in Ancient Egypt and Near East
   Mesopotamian (Babylonian) Concept of the Underworld
   Mummification
   Egyptian Notions of the Soul
   Zoroastrian Funeral Rites
   Required Reading: Text, Chaps. 2&3

3. Death and Immortality in Greek Thought
   Greek Mythology and Tragedy
   Socrates
   Plato
   Required reading: Text, Chap. 4
4. The Biblical Understanding of Death and Resurrection – The Hebrew Outlook
Pre-Exilic concept of Death and the Underworld
Eschatology
Apocalypticism
Messianic Kingdom
Individual and Corporate Resurrection
   Required reading: Text, Chaps. 5 & 7

5. The Christian Answer to Death
Crucifixion and Resurrection
The Kingdom of God
The Eternality of Human Personhood
Immortality or Resurrection
   Required reading: Text, Chaps. 6 & 8

6. Islamic Images of the Afterlife
Seven Levels of Heaven
Seven Levels of Hell
   Required reading: Text, Chap. 9

7. Death and Reincarnation in India
The Land of the Fathers
Karma Reincarnation
The Ultimate Fate of the Soul
   Required reading: Text, chap. 10

8. Death in Buddhist Thought
Buddhist Interpretation of “Reincarnation”
“Nothingness” and “Extinction”
   Required reading: Text, Chaps. 11 & 12

9. Death and Afterlife in China and Japan
Ancient Chinese Concepts of the Soul—Hun and P’o
Taoist Cult of Immortality
Shintoism and Deification
   Required reading: Text, Chap. 13