

840:112 DEATH & AFTERLIFE

Spring 2010

Professor H. Obayashi

Phone: (732) 932-9641

Office Hours: Tuesday 12 pm – 2 pm
Thursday 10 am - 11 am

REQUIREMENTS:

There will be three tests during the semester. **Test #1 (Friday, Feb. 19th - in class). Test #2 (Friday, April 2nd - in class). Test #3 (Tuesday, May 11th, 8am – during the final exam period).** 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, such as schedule conflicts or doctor appointments. Students must take attendance seriously because it counts toward your semester grade.

The weight of the exams and attendance are as follows: (Test #1) 25%; (Test #2) 25%; (Test #3) 25%; (Attendance) 25%.

TEXTBOOK:

Required Reading: H. Obayashi, ed., Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions, is available at both the Rutgers Bookstore, a Barnes & Noble College Bookstore – One Ferren Mall and Rutgers Bookstore – Livingston, a Barnes & Noble College Bookstore – Livingston Campus. **Recommended readings** listed for each topic below are on the electronic reserve. For the recommended readings you must go to the university library website.

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. & Chap. 1

Recommended Reading: B. Malinowski, Magic, Science and Religion, pp. 36-53
Jan deVries, The Study of Religion, Chap. 15

Reading 1
Reading 2

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

Recommended Reading: J.H. Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt,
Lecture II

H. Frankfort, Before Philosophy, Chap. VII

R. Masani, Zoroastrianism, pp. 35-38, 64-69

Reading 3
Reading 4
Reading 5

3. *Death and Immortality in Greek Thought*

- * Greek Mythology and Tragedy
- * Socrates
- * Plato

Required Reading: Text, Chap. 4

Recommended Reading: Cornford, From Religion to Philosophy, pp. 242-249

Reading 6

4. *The Biblical Understanding of Death 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

Recommended Reading: Selections from the Old Testament

C.K. Barrett, The New Testament Background: Selected Documents, pp. 227-55

Reading 7

Reading 8

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

Recommended Reading: Selections from the New Testament

Reading 9

6. *Islamic Images of the Afterlife*

- * Seven Levels of Heaven
- * Seven Levels of Hell

Required Reading: Text, Chap. 9

Recommended Reading: Selections from the Qur'an

Reading 10

7. *Death and Reincarnation in India*

- * The Land of the Fathers
- * Karma and Reincarnation
- * The Ultimate Fate of the Soul

Required Reading: Text, Chap. 10

Recommended Reading: Swami Nikhilananda, Hinduism, Chap III

Reading 11

8. *Death in Buddhist Thought*

- * Buddhist Interpretation of "Reincarnation"
- * "Nothingness" and "Extinction"

Required Reading: Text, Chap. 11&12

Recommended Reading: Trevor Ling, The Buddha pp. 130-148

Reading 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 of Man

Required Reading: Text, Chap. 13

Recommended Reading: H.G. Creel,

Chinese Thought From Confucius to Mao Tse-tung, pp. 29- 44

Witter Bynner, The Way of Life According to LAO TZU

Reading 13

Reading 14