

Shamans, Healers, and Diviners

ARHM 3342
Monday 4-6:45
Fall 2021
PHY 1.201

Thomas Riccio, Professor, Visual and Performing Arts
Thomas.riccio.utdallas.edu
www.thomasriccio.com
Office # 972.883.2016 (Office/voice)
Office hours: By appointment
Office: JO 5.614

DESCRIPTION and LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce the animistic spiritual belief systems that include shamans, healers, and diviners. The first part of the course will examine, from a cross-cultural and multidisciplinary perspective, the form and function of shamans, healers and diviners from a cultural, social, historical, and performance perspective to provide an overview of concepts, contexts, and range of practices. A comparative and structural examination of shamanism, and its ancillary functions of healing and divination, will identify origins, processes and evolution as a spiritual practice and its central function of defining and maintaining spiritual, social and cultural order and continuity.

The second part will examine how shamans function and perform as intermediaries or messengers between the human world and the spirit worlds. Within this role, Shamans function as healers of both physical and spiritual illnesses. Case studies in varied cultural settings will examine the various processes and methods of shamanism as a technology to restore balance and wholeness for the individual, community, and human-spiritual worlds.

Using specific examples from the instructor's fieldwork in Siberia, Africa, Alaska, China, and Korea, the course will identify and explore the common attributes of shamanism, healing, and divination, and how various expressions have been shaped by practical need, place, deep ecology, and the imagination. The course will explore how shamanism—its expressions, techniques, symbols, and mythologies—has been transformed and thrives and is variously expressed in the contemporary world.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, the student will have a foundational knowledge of the concepts, process, terminology, and contexts of shamanism, spiritual healing and divination historically and in a modern context.

At the end of the semester, each student will be required to present a ten-minute presentation of their research. This presentation will

be in the style of a conference paper presentation and serve to improve the student's presentational and public speaking skills.

- Course Requirements
- Completion of reading assignments before class discussion
- Three @ 3 to 5-page response/analysis papers (Topics to be assigned)
- One 15-20 page (15-page minimum) final research project on an approved subject
- Final research project presentation.
- Class participation & Attendance

Class Policy

- Late or incomplete work is not accepted
- Incomplete Grades will not be given in this class
- Plagiarism and cheating is unacceptable and will result in failure
- All dates and assignments are subject to change
- Assignments will be made with ample time for completion given; please be alert to alterations or corrections in the schedule.

Grading

1000 pt grading scale

3@3-5 Page Analysis/Research Papers	@10 % each 30%
Research Project Proposal	05%
Research Project	45%
Research Presentation/Outline	10%
Class Attendance & Participation	10%

900 + = A 800 + = B 700 + = C 600 + = D 600 and below = F

Required text

- Spell of the Sensuous, David Abram, Pantheon
- The Archaic Revival: Speculations on Psychedelic Mushrooms, the Amazon, Virtual Reality, UFOs, Evolution, Shamanism, the Rebirth of the Goddess, and the End of History, Terence Mckenna
- Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession by I.M Lewis, Routledge
- Ritual: Power, Healing, and Community, by Malidoma Patrice Some, Penguin
- African Divination Systems: Ways of Knowing, Phillip Peek (ed.), Indiana Univ. Press

Additional Material available via eLearning.

Recommended Text

- The Way of the Shaman, by Michael Harner, HarperOne
- Shamans, Housewives, and Other Restless Spirits: Women in Korean Ritual Life, Laurel Kendall, Hawaii Univ. Press

- Where the Spirits Ride the Wind: Trance Journeys and Other Ecstatic Experiences, by Felicitas D. Goodman, University of Indiana Press
- Animism: Respecting the Living World, Graham Harvey, Columbia Univ. Press
- Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn, Karen McCarty Brown, Univ. California Press
- Shamans Through Time: 500 Years of the Path of Knowledge, Jeremy Narby (ed.), Tarcger-Putnam
- Magic, Faith, and Healing, Ari Kiev (ed.), Free Press

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Each week will focus on general topics noted below.
Assignments and reading for the week are found in the right column.

Week 1	Introductions & expectations Animism and the Indigenous Worldview	Read: Abram
Week 2	Animism and Ritual	Read: Abram
Week 3	Shamanism Overview	Read: Lewis
Week 4	Calling and Initiation Recruiting Methods Shamanism and Mystical Vocation Initiatory Sickness and Dreams	Read: Lewis 1st Paper Due
Week 5	Powers and Helping Spirits Obtaining Shamanic Powers Shamanic Initiation: Miao	Read: <i>Han NuoYuan</i>
Week 6	Shamanism and Mythology Shamanism and Cosmology Celestial Ascents Descents to the Underworld	Read: TBA 2nd Paper Due

Week 7	Techniques and Functions of Ritual	Read: TBA
Week 8	Magic, Faith, and Healing: Psychiatry	Read: <i>Kiviq: Eagle Wolf Messenger Feast</i>
Week 9	Magical Cures Power, Healing, and Community	Read: <i>Today We Sing: !Xuu and Khwe Bushmen Healers See the Sickness and Alaskan Eskimo Theatre: Performing the Spirits of the Earth</i>
		3rd Paper Due
Week 10	Ecstatic States and Trance	Read: Peek
Week 11	Divination: Ways of Knowing I Ching	Read: Peek
Week 12	Mediumistic Divination in Africa	Read: Some
		Final Project Proposal Due
Week 13	Case Studies: Shamanism, Healing, Divination New Age Shamanism	Read: McKenna
Week 14	Winter Break	
Week 15	New Age Shamanism	Read: McKenna
		Research Presentations
Week 16	Summing Up	<u>Research Presentations</u>

Final Research Paper Due

Student Conduct & Discipline

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

<https://conduct.utdallas.edu/>