Syllabus: Ritual, Religion and Politics

Paul J. Rich, George Mason University
Syllabus: RI 486 - Ritual, Religion and Politics: Issues in Regime Legitimacy and Rule by Rite.

SPRING TERM, 1999.

DR. PAUL RICH

Tues. 10 am RI seminar room

This syllabus is a contract between Dr. Rich and you as an honors student. You agree that all work you do will be your own, that you will not plagiarize. You further agree that you will keep up with the readings so the class meeting will be discussions, the essence of graduate education, and not just repetition of material covered in the readings. Evaluation: There will be two in-term tests for 1 point each and an end of term test for 3 points, and an end of term paper for 5 points. Any doubts about evaluation will be resolved by reference to the term paper. The three tests may be take-home or in-class, as Dr. Rich announces. You must present your term paper topic for approval at the third class. Dr. Rich is freely available to students. He enjoys contact with students, does not bite, and would like you to drop in on him for a talk about the course, your graduate plans, or anything else. You may visit his office anytime you wish without having an appointment. The teaching assistant is also available to answer questions. Think seriously about developing one of your papers for Dr. Rich into a thesis topic or conference paper.

RI438 is a survey of a vast field, where ceremony and ritual interface with debates about the clash of civilizations and the growth of Islam, to mention just a few of the concerns. NB that a separate list of lectures is in an adjunct handout. Books, articles, disks, videos are on library reserve. Tell course assistant if you have any troubles in accessing materials. As you already know,
there are many attractive web sites that will add to your research papers and general appreciation of this period. Choice sites will be discussed.

I. An Introduction to the World of Ritual, Religion and Politics


Samuel Huntington, et al., The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate, Foreign Affairs, New York, 1993. A title is to be read in its ENTIRETY unless page numbers are given.


"There is No Sin in Symbols", Masonic Information Center, Silver Spring (Maryland), c. 1996.


2. The Range of Ritual Studies.


Alice Kessler-Harris, Social History, American Historical Association, 1990.


Kwanzaa. Video.

4. Monarchy, Heraldry and Awards as Systems


Salazar Monroy, Heraldica Civil y Religiosa del Estado de Puebla, Impresos Lopez, n.d.


5. Religion and Ritual


6. Freemasonry.


7. Derivative and Devisive Movements.

Enigma of the Swastika: Occult History of the Third Reich. Video.


The Klan. Video.

VIII. Summarizing Rule by Ritual.


Catherine Bell, "Constructing Ritual", Grimes, 21-33.