



RELI 305

DEATH, DYING AND RELIGION

The Orchestra of the Dead, Hermann Schedel, Liber Chronicorum, 1493

**SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON**

Trimester 1

1 March – 4 July 2010

RELI 305

DEATH, DYING AND RELIGION

Course co-ordinator: Professor Paul Morris
HU 316; Tel: 463 5037;
paul.morris@vuw.ac.nz

Tutor: Dan Dowling
dan.dowling@vuw.ac.nz

Where and when: Lectures: HU 119
Thursday 14:10 – 16:00
Tutorials: tba

Trimester dates

Teaching dates for this course: 1st March – 4th June 2010
Mid-trimester break: 5th April – 18th April 2010
Examination/Assessment period: 11th June – 4th July 2010

Withdrawal dates: Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Religious Studies is in the Hunter Building. The programme administrator, Alik Kalliabetsos, is in room HU 318. **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside her office. Notices will also be communicated to students via emails sent from Blackboard. Students who do not use their assigned student.vuw.ac.nz email addresses should ensure that ITS has an up-to-date email address, and that they check this address regularly.**

Office Hours: The office is open Monday - Friday, 9.30 – 12:00 and 2:30 - 3.30pm. You can arrange to meet with Paul Morris by appointment, and he will also answer all emails promptly.

Course outline

- 1 The first section of the course will examine a number of the legal, social demographic, religious, cultural and medical aspects of death in contemporary New Zealand, including grief, mourning, burial and cremation procedures, funerals, and beliefs about life after death. The second part of the course will focus on the belief systems and practices relating to death and dying in selected religious and secular traditions.

Course delivery

The course uses a mixture of lectures and tutorials. The lectures communicate theoretical and descriptive case study materials, while the tutorials allow students the opportunity to develop their own communication skills through critical discussion of the readings and lectures.

- 2 **The course has six learning objectives:**
- To familiarise students with the changes in institutions, agencies, practices and procedures involved with death and dying in New Zealand;
 - To introduce students to the ways in which these developments, and their overseas parallels, have been understood by scholars;
 - To offer students the opportunity to learn about and discuss the meaning and significance of death in a number of religious traditions;
 - To encourage students to critically engage with the issues and debates found in the scholarly literature on death and dying;
 - To develop student skills in research and the writing of academic presentations on death and its interpretations;
 - To develop student's academic autonomy, that is, the capability to develop frameworks for the undertaking of research and the confident presentation of findings orally and in writing.
 - To allow students to develop their advanced research skills by preparing a project on a chosen topic.
- 3 The **lecture programme** follows. Lectures may be varied from time to time. As much notice as possible will be given when changes occur and, if necessary, a revised programme will be issued at lectures.
- 4 There are **7 tutorials during the trimester. The dates and details are below.** Tutorials deal with topics that complement the lecture programme and they provide an opportunity to discuss aspects of the course in a small group and develop your ability to contribute to discussions.
- 5 **The course is internally assessed by means of the following assignments:**
- One **oral presentation** of 10-15 minutes in a chosen tutorial session based on a written **short essay** of up to 1,500 words, in total worth **40%** of the final grade. (**10%** for the presentation and **30%** for the written essay, to be submitted by noon on 1 April 2010.
 - A **research project** of a maximum of **4,500 words** to be submitted by noon on 28 May 2010 worth **60%** of the final grade;

Mandatory course requirements: To gain a pass in this course students must

- a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).
- b) Attend 80% of tutorials.

- 6 Required text:** The *RELI 305 Course Reader* should be obtained from the Student Notes shop at a cost of approximately \$40.00.
- 7 Work-load (Recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):** For 300-level 20 points one trimester courses, 13 hours per week are recommended. An average student should spend 10 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials.
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|-------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| 300 – level | 1 trimester | 20 points | 13 hours |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
- 8 General University policies and statutes** Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:
- <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>
- The AVC (Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:
- <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic/Publications.aspx>
- 9 Taping of Lectures:** All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use audiotapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form, which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.
- 10 Supplementary Materials:** A website of materials related to RELI 305 is being maintained in Blackboard. You can find it by visiting <http://blackboard@vuw.ac.nz>.
- 11 Evaluation:** This course will be evaluated by **UTDC**.

Lecture programme

Lecture programme and required readings: The required readings are essential background for the lectures / tutorials and should be completed **before each lecture**. The readings will be further discussed in the tutorials. The readings are all found in the *RELI 305 Course Reader*, which can be purchased from Student Notes.

4 March	Lecture 1	The New Zealand Death Machine
11 March	Lecture 2	Suicide in New Zealand
18 March	Lecture 3	Euthanasia - A Good Death?
25 March	Lecture 4	Burial or Cremation?
1 April	Lecture 5	Life After Death

Mid Term Break 5 – 18 April 2010

22 April	Lecture 6	Death in Maori Traditions
29 April	Lecture 7	Heavens & Hells
6 May	Lecture 8	Theologies of Death
13 May	Lecture 9	Death in Asian Traditions
20 May	Lecture 10	Mass Death
27 May	Lecture 11	Contemporary Death
3 June	Lecture 12	The Wake

Tutorial Programme

Week 1	1 – 5 March
<u>No Tutorial</u>	Is Ivan right?
Week 2	8 – 12 March
<u>Tutorial 1</u>	Why does New Zealand have such high suicide rates?
Week 3	15 – 19 March
<u>Tutorial 2</u>	Is euthanasia justified? What are the arguments for and against?
Week 4	22 – 26 March
<u>No tutorial</u>	Why are NZ cremation rates so high?
Week 5	29 March – 1 April
<u>Tutorial 3</u>	What evidence is there for life after death?
	5 – 18 April 2010 Mid Term Break
Week 6	19 – 23 April
<u>No Tutorial</u>	What is distinctive about the <i>Tangi</i>? How has it changed over time?
Week 7	26 – 30 April
<u>Tutorial 5</u>	What the differences between Jewish beliefs about death and those of Muslims and Christians?
Week 8	3 – 7 May
<u>Tutorial 6</u>	What motivates suicide bombers?
Week 9	10 – 14 May
<u>No Tutorial</u>	How is death related to the Hindu cycle of rebirth?

Week 10 **17 – 21 May**

Tutorial 6 **Is mass death uniquely a feature of modernity?**

Week 11 **24 – 28 May**

Tutorial 7 **What is the evidence on near death experiences (NDEs) and what might it prove?**

Week 12 **31 May – 4 June**

No Tutorial **Final Readings**

Essays and Assignments

1 Essays and assignments must be placed in the locked assignment box located near the programme administrator's office, HU 318, and students must date and sign the essay register to indicate they have submitted an essay. **Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.**

2 Due dates:

The essay is to be submitted and the corresponding oral presentation is to be made at the designated tutorial for each student no later than noon on 1 April 2010. The project is to be submitted by noon on 28 May 2010.

3 Penalties for late essays / assignments:

- 2 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays up to a maximum of 14 days, after that essays may not count towards course requirements but will receive 0%;
- essays submitted more than two weeks late will not be accepted for assessment unless prior written arrangement has been made with the course coordinator;
- Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's or other appropriate certification.

4 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

Use of Turnitin: Student work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

5 The essay:

One oral presentation of 10-15 minutes in a chosen tutorial session based on a written short essay of up to 1,500 words. The presentation/essay are must respond to the weekly tutorial question, and the student must then lead a discussion on the topic (approx 10 minutes). The essay must be submitted one week after the time of presentation for assessment. The presentation is worth **10%** of the final grade. The essay is worth **30%** of the final grade.

6 The project:

The project assignment of 4,500 words on an agreed topic, is to be submitted no later than 28 May 2010 and is worth **60%** of the final grade.

Students will have the opportunity to do one research project on a chosen topic (see below, or their own proposal) culminating in the submission of an essay of not more than 4,500 words. Students should work on the project starting immediately and working through the whole course. Any problems can be discussed with the tutor.

Requirements:

- A project proposal and brief outline with stated questions, sources and methodology must be submitted in written form to the tutor, (not more than 2 pages), by 3 May 2010.
- Submission of the project assignment by 28 May 2010.

The project is designed to allow students to work in-depth on a chosen topic relating to the themes and topics of the course.

7 For guidance in essay writing and presentation of bibliographies please refer to Religious Studies guidelines for essays, attached.

How to cite books, articles and internet resources for essays in Religious Studies

It is mandatory to use a correct citation style in academic writing. The Programme standard in Religious Studies at VUW is the version of Chicago Style for the Humanities. The only exceptions to this Programme standard will be the correct and consistent use of an alternative, standard style **when expressly permitted by your course coordinator**.

Chicago Humanities style is defined in *The Chicago Manual of Style 15th ed. rev.* (University of Chicago Press, 2003). The full guide (a hefty volume) is available in the VUW library at Call No. Z253 C532 15ed (ask at the Reference desk). However, the following information should be sufficient for most of your basic needs.

Note that the **citation style differs for a footnote and for the bibliography** at the end of your essay. For each type of source, we have listed each example in both forms. Each example footnote contains a sample page number so you can be sure how to include the number of the page cited in your footnote.

Note also that as with all academic citation style conventions, every detail of the formatting for Chicago style is fixed. You must thus ensure you **follow the examples below in every detail**: order, punctuation, formatting (especially italics), spacing and so on.

Some of the details used in these examples have been modified, and some sources therefore do not really exist in the form given below.

Book – single author

Footnote:

T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

Bibliography:

Madan, T. N. *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Book – two or more authors

Footnote:

Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

Bibliography:

Robinson, Richard H., and Willard L. Johnson. *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997.

Chapter or article in edited multi-author volume

Footnote:

James P. McDermott, "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism," in *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 171.

Bibliography:

McDermott, James P. "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism." In *Karma and Rebirth in Indian Classical Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, 165-192. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Translated book

Footnote

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, trans. by W. D. Robson-Scott (New York: H. Liveright, 1928), 28.

Bibliography

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott. New York: H. Liveright, 1928.

Journal article – single author

Footnote:

Richard King, "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text," *Numen* 42 (1995): 12.

Bibliography:

King, Richard. "Is 'Buddha-Nature' Buddhist? Doctrinal Tensions in the *Śrīmālā Sūtra* – An Early Tathāgatagarbha Text." *Numen* 42 (1995): 1-20.

Journal article – two or three authors

Footnote:

Helen Hardacre and Abe Yoshiya, "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5:1 (1978): 18.

Bibliography:

Hardacre, Helen, and Abe Yoshiya. "Some Observations on the Sociology of Religion in Japan: Trends and Methods." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 5:1 (1978): 5-27.

Web site

Footnote:

Paul Kingsbury, "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon," <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Bibliography:

Kingsbury, Paul. "Inducing a Chronology of the Pali Canon." <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kingsbur/inducing.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2008).

Reference work (e.g. encyclopaedia or dictionary)

Footnote:

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed., s.v. "Sufism."

Footnote:

Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed., s.v. "Apophatic."

The abbreviation "s.v." is for the Latin *sub verbo* ("under the word").

Reference works are usually not included in the bibliography.

Sacred texts

Standard citation convention is set for the sacred texts of each major tradition. You must be sure to cite sacred texts in the correct format. Unless your lecturer for a specific course states otherwise (e.g. if conformity to a more complex standard is required for courses specialising in a particular tradition), the following conventions will apply.

The Bible

In quoting the Bible, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Bible and the Qur'an

are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

The Bible is cited by book, chapter and verse. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (1 Kgs 2:7).

Note that books of the Bible are abbreviated according to standard abbreviations. A list of abbreviations should usually be available in the edition of the Bible you are using.

Note also that the punctuation mark comes *after* the close of the parentheses. This is also the case for the full stop in a direct quote:

". . . Absolom thy brother" (1 Kgs 2:7).

When citing multiple passages, list the abbreviated title of each *new* biblical book followed by the chapter number and colon, with all verses in that chapter separated by a comma and space. A semicolon should separate references to subsequent chapters or books. Do not include the conjunction "and" or an ampersand ("&") before the last citation. List passages in canonical and numerical order. For example:

. . . as it says in the Bible (Matt 2:3; 3:4–6; 4:3, 7; Luke 3:6, 8; 12:2, 5).

It is preferable, unless you are discussing differences of translation and interpretation, to use a single version of the Bible throughout a piece of work. In this case, you can indicate that fact by a note with your first citation, and thereafter omit mention of the version:

Footnote:

Matt. 20:4-9. In this essay, all biblical quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989).

Where you have to refer to more than one version of the Bible, you can indicate the different versions in footnotes, or by a set of abbreviations that you establish in a footnote early in the essay.

List the versions of the Bible you use in your bibliography. They should appear alphabetically according to title. For example:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible: The Holy Bible. Edited by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "New".

The Qur'an

The name of the text is best written, "Qur'an."

In quoting the Qur'an, you should use in-text citation (i.e. give your source in brackets in the body of your text, rather than using a footnote). NOTE that the Qur'an and the Bible are the only exceptions to the general rule AGAINST in-text citation in this Chicago Humanities style. (You should otherwise ALWAYS use footnotes, not in-text citation.)

When quoting the Qur'an, give the abbreviation "Q.", then cite the number of the *sura* (chapter), then the number(s) of the *ayat* (verse). For example:

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth...." (Q. 24:35).

"Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; The Compassionate, the Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment" (Q. 1:2-4).

State in the first footnote what "translation" edition is being used for the entire document. For example:

Footnote:

In this essay, all citations from the Qur'an will be taken from *An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition)*, trans. Majid Fakhry (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

If you use more than one source for Qur'anic text in your essay, then you need to provide a separate, footnoted reference to each citation, specifying which version that citation is from.

In your bibliography, list each "translation" edition of the Qur'an you use alphabetically under its title. For example:

Bibliography:

An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translations of the Meaning (Bilingual Edition). Translated by Majid Fakhry. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

This item would be listed alphabetically under "Interpretation".

Buddhist and Indian texts

For undergraduate purposes, simply cite the English translation you are using as if it is an ordinary translated book. However, note that many Indian or Buddhist texts you will cite are compilations of multiple texts into a single volume. In such cases, you must also include the name of the text in your footnote citation. The name given to the text in English by the translator will suffice; but include the name in the original language also if it is easily accessible. For example:

Footnote:

"The Buddha's Last Days" (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*), in *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 232.

In your bibliography, list only the whole translated works to which you refer in your essay, according to the usual format. In other words, if you cite more than one *sutta* etc. from a single volume, you need not list every individual text, but just the volume. For example:

Bibliography:

Walshe, Maurice, trans. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.

How to cite in the body of your essay

When you refer to one of your sources in the course of your argument, you should always give your source in a footnote, which is indicated by a superscript number attached to the appropriate part of the sentence.

Note that some other stylistic conventions use what is called “in-text citation”, where references are given in parentheses at the end of the sentence; you will see this method of citation often as you read. **HOWEVER, IN-TEXT CITATION IS NOT PART OF THE CHICAGO STYLE INTRODUCED HERE** (with the sole exceptions of passages from the Bible or the Qur'an), and you should consistently use footnotes indicated by superscript numbers **ONLY**.

Footnote style has been given above. Note that footnote numbers should always come *after* any punctuation mark at the end of the word they attach to; thus, it is correct to write a footnote like this,¹ but wrong to write it like this². One of the advantages of superscript numbered footnoting is that it allows you to make tangential comments, as in this example.³

When you refer to the same source several times in a row, you can use "Ibid." and the page number for all subsequent notes after the first.⁴ If you are referring to the same page number in several successive notes, then "Ibid." alone is sufficient.⁵

If you cite source A, then cite one or more other sources,⁶ and then return to source A,⁷ it is best to repeat only the author's name,⁸ a shortened title, and the page number cited,⁹ rather than to repeat the full citation. See the footnotes attached to this paragraph (notes 6-9) for examples.

In other words, only use abbreviated citations where you are citing the same source more than one time. Avoid old abbreviations like *loc. cit.*, *op. cit.* and so on, which can require the reader to keep track of sources over a number of references and pages, and are thus confusing.

¹ Random correct placed footnote.

² Random incorrectly placed footnote.

³ Constance Prevarication, *The Book of Tangential Comments* (Dargaville: Primrose Path Publications, 2004), 27. It is interesting to note that in this recent work, Prevarication reverses her previous hard-line stance on the literary sidetrack, and not only countenances it in principle, but herself indulges in it extensively in practice.

⁴ Ibid., 36. [This means the reference is to the same source, but with a different page number.]

⁵ Ibid. [This means page 36, exactly like the preceding footnote.]

⁶ T. N. Madan, *Non-Renunciation: Themes and Interpretations of Hindu Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 38.

⁷ Richard H. Robinson and Willard L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion: An Historical Introduction* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1997), 113.

⁸ Madan, *Non-Renunciation*, 38-40.

⁹ Robinson and Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion*, 115.