

## **(Re)Reading Rites: Rituals in Literature, Media and Culture (53-544)**

<b>Art der Veranstaltung:</b>	<b>Seminar II</b> (AA-V3ab, ENG-12, AA-10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA1, AA-MA2, AA-MA6, AA-W, AA-WB)
<b>Veranstalter:</b>	<b>Verena Keidel, M.A.</b>
<b>Ort/Zeit:</b>	<b>Die, 12-14</b>
<b>Raum:</b>	<b>Phil 1250</b>
<b>Beginn:</b>	<b>13.10.2105</b>

This seminar introduces you to the interdisciplinary field of ritual studies. We will explore different types of rituals as well as seminal theories on ritual; we will discuss possible functions of rituals, their stabilizing and/or transformative potential, the interrelationship between ritualistic practices and concepts of performativity, theatricality, and liminality.

After a thorough discussion of various theoretical texts (i.e. excerpts taken from early and more recent ritual theories) we will turn to different representations of ritual in literature and audio-visual media of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. We will, for instance, discuss the problematic relationship of myth and ritual in prose texts by modernist writer D. H. Lawrence; we will also engage with Seamus Heaney's famous *Bog Poems* in order to explore the nexus of communal scapegoating in times of sectarian violence.

With regard to ritual and ritualistic behaviour in (British) culture, we will, e.g., take a look at the so-called "Wootton Bassett phenomenon", a repatriation ritual which some praised as 'a service to the nation', while others condemned it as 'a Diana-style tear-fest'. We will round our discussion off by analysing the representations (and political implications) of commemorative and mourning rituals in contemporary British video artwork and media. We might also investigate as to what extent ritual theories, which acknowledge the transformative effects of communal gatherings, are applicable to English football culture.

The primary and secondary texts will be made available via AGORA. Students are obliged to print out all material! If you must purchase additional reading material, the instructor will inform you in class (in session one)!

### **Course Requirements:**

- thorough preparation of ALL reading material/audiovisual media
- oral presentation or other assignment
- homework (independent study and research)
- research paper, 12-15 pages