

Gardens and Religious Traditions

The Cultivation of Spiritual Experience

Professor Todd T. Lewis

Religious Studies Department, SMITH 425

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 1-2 and by appointment

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Course Description:

A survey of the historical and cultural backgrounds of the major garden traditions of world associated with religions. This seminar moves from considerations of human aesthetic and spiritual experience in the natural world, to a survey of the major garden traditions associated with the western Mediterranean and Europe: in classical Greece and Rome, Christianity, and Islam. The course then moves to East Asia and the classical traditions of China and Japan. Special focus will be given to elements of the campus Japanese Garden Initiative: teahouse gardens and monastic viewing gardens.

<http://sterling.holycross.edu/departments/religiousstudies/tlewis/garden-teahouse/tea-garden.htm>).

Fieldtrips to regional gardens will be made. For the final project, students will design small contemplative gardens for possible construction at specific sites on the Holy cross campus.

Course Textbooks:

Tom Turner, *Garden History Philosophy and Design*. NY: Spon Press, 2005

Marc P. Keane, *Japanese Garden Design*. Boston: Tuttle, 2000

Joseph Cho Wang, *The Chinese Garden*, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998. [ERE-S]

Martin Mosko, et al. *Landscape as Spirit: Creating a Contemplative Garden*. Trumbull, CT.: Weatherhill, 2001.

Sylvia Landsberg, *The Medieval Garden*, University of Toronto Press 2003

Christopher McIntosh, *Gardens of the Gods: Myth, Magic, Meaning*. NY: Tauris, 2004

Course Reader [ERE-S]

Course Design and Grading:

Term Paper.....	25
Final Project.....	30
Participation.....	15
Oral Final.....	30
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	100 pts.



Schedule of Seminars and Readings

"There are few real boundaries in nature." -- Rebecca Solnit

"My own experience is that the more we study art, the less we care about nature. What art really reveals to us is nature's lack of design, her curious crudities, her extraordinary monotony, her absolutely unfinished condition. Nature has good intentions, of course, but as Aristotle once said, she cannot carry them out." -- Oscar Wilde

Foundations

Friday 1/25

Seminars 1-2. Organizational Matters and Course Overview

Topics: Defining Culture and Cultured Spaces

What is a Garden ? Categories of Garden Design

Readings:

Tom Turner, *Garden History Philosophy and Design*, Chapter 1

Christopher McIntosh, *Gardens of the Gods: Myth, Magic, and Meaning*, 1-17; 136-164

Anthony Flew, "Theology and Falsification"; Tim Richardson, "Psychotopia";

Marc Keane, "Boundaries"; Anna-Theresa Tymieniecka, "Gardens and the Passion for the Infinite"; Gaston Bachelard, excerpts from *The Poetics of Space [ERE-s]*

Gardens and the Abrahamic Faiths

Friday 2/1

Seminar 3. Gardens in Mediterranean Antiquity: Egypt, Greece, Rome

Guest Scholar: Prof. David Karmon

Readings:

Garden History Philosophy and Design, Chapters 2

Friday 2/8:

Seminar 4. Medieval Christian Gardens

Guest Scholar: Prof. Joanne Pierce

Readings:

Sylvia Landsberg, *The Medieval Garden*

Garden History Philosophy and Design, 109-185

Friday 2/15

Seminar 5. Islamic Gardens: Cultural Foundations

Readings:

Emma Clark, “History, Symbolism, and the Quran” [ERE-s]

Friday 2/22

Seminar 6 Islamic Gardens [II]

GUEST SCHOLAR: Dr. Amanda Luyster

Readings:

Emma Clark, “Introduction”; “Design and Layout”; “Geometry, Hard-Landscaping and Architectural Ornament” [ERE-s]

Gardens in the Modern World

Friday 2/29

Seminar 7. Modern Gardens I: Enlightenment Traditions

Reading:

Garden History Philosophy and Design, 186-224

Gardens of the Gods: Myth, Magic, and Meaning, 84-112

3/7 春 SPRING BREAK, no class

Friday 3/14

Seminar 8. Modern Gardens II. “Defiant” and “Extreme” Gardens

Reading:

Garden History Philosophy and Design, 225-284

Gardens of the Gods: Myth, Magic, and Meaning, 113-135

Diana Balmori and Margaret Morton, excerpts from “Transitory Gardens, Uprooted Lives” and Kenneth I. Helphand, “Defiant Gardens: Making Gardens in Wartime,” [ERE-s]

3/21 EASTER BREAK, no class

Friday 3/28

Seminar 9 Modern Gardens III: Romantic Traditions... From English Estates and Fletcher Steele, to Andy Goldsworthy

Reading:

Andy Goldsworthy, "Introduction" in *Andy Goldsworthy: Collaboration with Nature* [ERE-S]

EAST Asian Garden TRADITIONS

**Sunday 3/30: TRIP TO STATEN ISLAND BOTANICAL GARDEN
and STORM KING PARK**

Seminar 10 Chinese Gardens

TRIP TO STATEN ISLAND BOTANICAL GARDEN; STORM KING PARK

Readings:

Joseph Cho Wang, *The Chinese Garden*, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998. [ERES]
Gardens of the Gods: Myth, Magic, and Meaning, 18-34

Friday 4/4: No CLASS

Friday 4/11

Seminar 11 Japanese Garden Design

Guest Scholar: Marc Keane, Instructor, Kyoto University of Art and Design

Readings:

Marc P. Keane, *Japanese Garden Design*, Boston: Tuttle, 2000

Marc Keane, *Sakuteiki* [ERES]

Friday 4/18

Seminar 12 Tea Gardens and Tea Ceremony

Jennifer Anderson, Urasenke School of Tea,, San Francisco and Kyoto

Readings:

Kakuzo Okakura *The Book of Tea*. NY: Dover, 1964.

Friday 4/25

Seminar 13 Japanese Gardens: Principles of Design

TRIP TO JAPANESE GARDEN, WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

EXAM PERIOD/TBA

Final Seminar Meeting: Presentation of Garden Designs by Seminar Groups

Exam Period: Oral Final Exam