

A&S 138 ■ Candomblé (Kahn-dohm-BLEH): Afro-Brazilian Spiritism
SYLLABUS

Spring Quarter, 2009 ■ 3:30-4:18 pm ■ Thursdays
Ackerman Library, 600 Ackerman Road, Room 5826 (2nd floor)



St. George

Ogun

Iemanjá

**Our Lady of
the Assumption**

INSTRUCTOR: Edward A. Riedinger

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E-mail: riedinger.4@osu.edu

Office hours: by appointment

ACKERMAN LIBRARY: CLASSROOM LOCATION

The Ackerman Library is served by the campus bus marked "Library/Buckeye Village." The bus leaves riders at the main entrance to the building. To reach the classroom, proceed straight ahead from the entrance to the opposite side of the room. Take the elevator or stairs to the second floor. On entering the floor, proceed straight ahead to the first door on your left. At the entrance on the first floor, there is a lounge with food and beverage machines. The area is also wired so that you can operate a laptop in it and use it as a study hall. The University Village shopping mall is two blocks from the library.

[map of ackerman Library in relation to OSU campus](#)

[map of ackerman Library complex](#)

CLASS E-LIST:

smythe.1@osu.edu, smythe.2@osu.edu,....

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

How does one spiritual culture survive when suppressed by another? One strategy is for the suppressed culture to appear to accept the norms of the dominant one by concealing true beliefs within a guise of conformity. The millions of Africans forced from their home countries to labor as slaves in the Americas confronted such a spiritual dilemma. They enfolded their spiritist view of the world within the Christian worldview of their masters. In Brazil this synthesis produced an integration of animist and Catholic beliefs designated as *candomblé*. While Brazil (population nearly two hundred million) is the largest Catholic country in the world, tens of millions of Brazilians also practice *candomblé*. The purpose of this course is to 1) understand the details of this synthesis, 2) explain the causes of its development, and 3) debate issues related to the phenomenon.

SOURCES FOR CLASS

The principal text for this class is *Sacred Leaves of Candomblé: African Magic, Medicine, and Religion in Brazil (SLC)*, available online at <http://www.netlibrary.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/>. Other documents are stored at the class web site http://library.osu.edu/sites/latinamerica/indxclas_II_geo.htm. There are no materials to buy. All class materials are electronically accessible.

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GRADE

The course is pass/fail. To pass a student must attend and participate in eight of the ten classes (80 percent). Attendance is taken at each class and participation is noted. Participation means that a student makes relevant comments regarding assigned readings or tasks. Moreover, participation includes completing map exercises and giving a short oral presentation (with visuals).

CLASSES (ten class sessions; one hour length, once per week (one credit, S/U grade); course also requires regular outside reading for class preparation).

Class 1

Orientation to Class Procedures.

Use of online class resources. Clarification of terms: spiritism, animism, syncretism, Counter-Reformation Catholicism, *orixás*, saints, Yoruba language, *candomblé*, *macumba*, *umbanda*....

Reading/viewing: Chapter four of *SLC* and comparative Bahia/Benin photographs of Pierre Verger at <http://www.pierreverger.org/en/photos/apresentacao.htm>

Class 2

Who are the African spirits? What are the personalities of the *orixás*?

Assignment: Map exercise of Brazil and West Africa. View of internet images of *orixás*

Class 3

Who are the Catholic saints?

Assignment: Internet images of saints

Class 4

Comparing Practices of Worship

Viewing: *Terreiro* scene from *Black Orpheus* and liturgical rituals in *The Mission*

Class 5

Synthesis in Practice I

Exercise: Short student presentations (with visuals) of *orixá/saint* integration. Selection the preference of each student.

Class 6

Synthesis in Practice II

Exercise: Short student presentations (with visuals) of *orixá/saint* integration. Selection the preference of each student.

Class 7

The Medical/Herbal Aspect of *Candomblé*

Reading: Chapter five of *SLC*

Class 8

The Martial Aspect: *Capoeira*

Viewing/listening: Internet videos of *capoeira* demonstrations/competitions. Class demonstration from OSU School of Dance. Audio clips of *capoeira* musical instruments.

Class 9

Beyond Brazil: *Santaria* in Cuba, *Voodoo* in Haiti

Reading: Chapter eight of *SLC*

Class 10

In Conclusion

Each student comments in creating a synthesis of the main points of the course.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

"Academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, quizzes, reports, term papers, etc. All instances of alleged academic misconduct will be appropriately reported. Further information on misconduct is available in the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

DISABILITY SERVICES

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

BACKGROUND of INSTRUCTOR

Edward A. "Ted" Riedinger, MLIS (Berkeley), MA, PhD (Chicago) is a tenured full professor and head of the Latin America, Hispanic, Spanish, and Portuguese Library Collection at OSU; an adjunct professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Department of History; and was recently a visiting scholar at the Centre for Brazilian Studies of St. Antony's College, Oxford University. Prof. Riedinger lived in Brazil for nearly two decades and is the author of numerous books and articles, in English and Portuguese, on the country. For further background see: <http://library.osu.edu/sites/latinamerica/CVEdwardARiedinger.htm>