

Myths, Rituals, & the Sacred
WES 100
(Fall 2020)

Prompt for Final Paper

The question: What does your myth/ ritual reveal about you or your world?

All semester we have been talking about myths and rituals as ciphers, containing within them elements of significance to the people who retold / re-enacted them. Sometimes the stories retold an origin myth, sometimes a ritual affirmed power relationships with a community. It should be clear by now that myths and rituals function on many levels, construct (or maintain) the world of their audience while conveying to them many messages about how the world is, and how it should be.

The assignment: In a full-length paper, examine your myth / ritual in a way similar to the way we have done so with other myths and rituals all semester.

The structure: While you are free to structure your paper in the way you think is best, you might consider the following as a possible template:

1. Introduction: a general statement of what you will describe in the following paper
2. Discussion of your myth
 - Feel free to draw from materials in the first assignment
 - Compare it to materials in the readings and our discussions
3. Discussion of your ritual
 - Feel free to draw from materials in the second assignment
 - Compare it to materials in the readings and our discussions
4. Discussion of your myth / ritual dynamic (see “The question,” above)
 - Feel free to draw from materials we have read / discussed
 - Pay special attention to the Lawrence & Jewett reading / method
5. Conclusion: What do this myth and ritual say about me / my world?
 - a. Reconsideration of myth / ritual in terms of your analysis

The specifics:

Double space; standard margins (1” top / bottom; 1” left / right); standard font.
No fewer than 4 pages (but likely no more than 12).

Submit in WORD, either by email (emazur@vwu.edu) or through Google Docs.

Submit by 11:59 pm Thursday, 10 December.