

African religion and ritual

Centre of West African Studies, School of History and Cultures

College of Arts and Law

Details

Code 21049

Level of study Second Year

Credit value 20

Semester 1 and/or 2 depending on staff availability

Module description

This module compares different anthropological approaches to African traditional religion and explores a number of key case studies of divination, witchcraft and rites of passage. Religion is considered both as a complex of ideas and as a form of social action. It can be a medium of political resistance, the focus of artistic activity, and a site in which ideas about the self, the person, the past and future are crystallised. African thought systems are further explored through a study of oral literary genres such as epic, praise poetry and divination verses. Finally we look at modern popular representations of 'traditional religion', and the survival and transformation of African religious ideas in the African diaspora.

Teaching and learning methods

Lectures and classes