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**ANTH 1102**

**Attendance/Participation Questions for Week 7: Ritual**

**Attendance/Participation:** Your attendance/participation will be determined by your post in the discussion board on Blackboard. Read the entire article before answering the questions. Only answer one option each covering the topic, thesis, and cultural example (aim for 250 words).

Option 1 (Clifford Geertz)

Geertz, Clifford. "[Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight."](https://www.jstor.org/stable/20028014) *Daedalus* 134, no. 4 (2005): 56-86. Accessed March 16, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20028014>.

A.(Topic) What is the main point of Clifford Geertz article? (One Sentence)

B.(Thesis) This article introduces several important ideas and concepts: ethos, culture as text, deep play, webs of significance, and thick description. The main idea, however, looks at the Balinese cockfight as a type of ritual because it reflects Balinese worldview. Geertz says:

“What sets the cockfight apart from the ordinary course of life, lifts it from the realm of everyday practical affairs, and surrounds it with an aura of enlarged importance is not, as functionalist sociology would have it, that it reinforces status discriminations (such reinforcement is hardly necessary in a society where every act proclaims them), but that it provides a meta social commentary upon the whole matter of assorting human beings into fixed hierarchical ranks and organizing the major part of collective existence around that assortment. Its function, if you want to call it that, is interpretive: it is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience; a story they tell themselves about themselves” (Geertz 1972: 26).

Having read the entire article, can you explain what Geertz means by the above quotation and how does it contribute to his overall argument? (Especially the last line: “a story they tell themselves about themselves.”

C.(Cultural example) Geertz uses the gambling game of the cock fight to illustrate his thesis argument. If Geertz suggests a ritual represents a model of the culture’s worldview, but also teaches this worldview as a model for the culture, can you think of a ritual in American society that both is a model of and for American culture. (Explain how your example relates to the Geertz article).

Option 2 (Meng Li)

Li, Meng. 2014. [“Ritual and Social Change: Chinese Rural–Urban Migrant Workers’ Spring Festival Homecoming as Secular Pilgrimage.”](http://citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=95304729&site=ehost-live&scope=site) *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 43 (2): 113–33. doi:10.1080/17475759.2014.892896.

A.(Topic) What is the main point of the Meng Li article? (one sentence)

B.(Thesis) Meng Li use Geertz understanding of ritual as a model of and for a cultures worldview in order to understand the Spring Festival Homecoming. Li states:

“This ritual not only displays symbolically some significant aspects of contemporary Chinese society, such as modernity and mobility, but also produces the collective subjectivity of the ritual participants. Similar to the cockfight for the Balinese, the Spring Festival homecoming can be viewed as a paradigmatic human event for the Chinese, creating a story that they can “tell themselves about themselves” (Meng Li 2014: 128-129).

Having read the entire article can you explain what the above quotations means and how it contributes to the authors’ overall argument? (This should be at least 3 sentences)

C.(Cultural example) Meng Li uses the example of a Spring Festival Homecoming to illustrate his thesis argument. Can you think of another example of something that can be seen as a ritual that tells a story about American worldview? (Explain how your example relates to the Meng Li article)