

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL HINDUISM

RELS-165

Fall Semester 2006

Department of Religious Studies, College of the Holy Cross.

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Description: This course examines the ancient and medieval periods in the development of the Hindu tradition. The emphasis will be on the development of a distinctively Hindu religious vision from the Vedas to the Epics.

Goals: This course has four overall objectives:

- 1) To introduce students to the Vedas and Upanishads
- 2) To introduce students to the epic tradition in Hinduism
- 3) To introduce students to some of the key gods and goddesses of Hinduism.
- 4) To allow students to reflect upon the overarching themes that shape the religious visions of ancient and medieval Hinduism.

Format: Lecture and Discussion.

Evaluation: There are five graded exercises: three (3) essays of 5-7 pages, a midterm examination and a final. All assignments are weighted equally, meaning that each assignment is worth 20 percent of your final grade. Grades will only be rounded up for class participation on the basis given below. Please note that you must reach the level of a particular grade to earn it. Accordingly, a 3.2 is still a “B” because it falls below the 3.3 level for “B+.”

Grading: All assignments will be given a letter grade. When your final grade is calculated, the individual letter grades you have received will be converted into a GPA figure: 4.3 (A+); 4.0 (A); 3.7 (A-); 3.3 (B+); 3.0 (B); 2.7 (B-); 2.3 (C+); 2.0 (C); 1.7 (C-); 1.3 (D +); 1 (D); 0 (F).

In grading papers, I also use “split grades” such as A/A-, A-/B+, etc. The numerical value of these grades is the average of the two grades, so an A-/B+ would be 3.5, for example.

Numerical examination grades will have these equivalents: 98-above (A+); 93-97 (A); 90-92 (A-); 88-89 (B+); 83-87 (B); 80-82 (B-); 78-79 (C+); 73-77 (C); 70-72 (C-); 69-68 (D+); 63-67 (D); 0-62 (F). Examinations do not receive “split grades.”

Class Participation: Class participation will contribute positively to your final grade. For purposes of evaluating class participation, there are the following categories:

Consistent and substantive: Consistently intelligent contributions to class discussions over the course of the semester will automatically raise your final grade one-half letter regardless of how close your average is to a higher grade (i.e. From a 3.0 to a 3.3)

Inconsistent and substantive: Perceptive contributions to class discussions, limited to a particular section of the course or made sporadically throughout the semester, will raise your grade if you are at least half-way to a higher grade (i.e. if your final average is 3.15, which is a B, your grade will be raised to 3.3, a B+--a final average of 3.10 would not merit a raised grade given this level of class participation)

Consistent: Consistent participation in class discussion, whether in the form of questions or comments, will raise your final grade if you are within one-tenth of a point of a higher grade (i.e. if your final average is 3.2, which is ordinarily a "B" would become a 3.3, a "B+").

Inconsistent and No participation: No extra consideration will be given—your final average is your final grade.

Submission of Papers: Each paper must have a centered title with the student's name and class on the lines below. Thus:

FLUIDITY AND STRATIFICATION IN THE HINDU WORLD VIEW

Jane Doe
Class of 2007

Papers must be submitted as an email attachment in a word processing program that can be read by Microsoft Word. **All papers will be archived to deter collusion.**

Class Policies: Students are required to complete the assigned readings before the class period in which they are discussed. Attendance is also required and I will have a sign in sheet available before each class. Students are allowed **three unexcused absences** per semester—an unexcused absence is any absence that is not excused by a written statement from the appropriate Class Dean. **Unexcused absences beyond the limit will adversely affect your final grade by one-half letter grade (i.e. from a B to a B-).** This is a one-time only penalty, so if you have five or six absences, the penalty is still one half-letter.

Since the syllabus is subject to modification and change, students are also responsible for these changes even if they were not able to attend the class in which the changes were announced.

Late work will be penalized one full letter grade per day.

Intellectual Honesty: I advise all students to be aware of the College's policies pertaining to intellectual honesty. All students will be required to testify to the integrity of their work in a written statement. In order to complete the assignments for this class, students will not need to consult any other source beyond the required texts. If a student does rely upon an outside source for an assignment, he or she should simply cite that work in a parenthetical note (see "Citation Rules" below). **Not citing an outside source that you draw upon will constitute a violation of The College's Academic Honesty Policy. I reserve the right to submit all papers to an online source that will check for plagiarism.** Work that violates the College's Academic Honesty Policy will receive the grade of F (0). The student will also then be subject to administrative sanctions ranging from academic probation to expulsion.

To be sure to avoid the possibility of collusion, I would strongly advise all students not to share written work before it is handed in. If you do talk to your fellow students about a particular assignment, be sure to give appropriate acknowledgment to your peers in the final drafts of your written assignments if their help has been particularly useful to you in your writing. If such acknowledgements are not made, it could constitute a case of intellectual dishonesty. If such acknowledgements are not made, it could constitute a case of intellectual dishonesty. **Students are absolutely forbidden from sharing a graded paper with a student who has yet to complete the assignment (i.e. with a student who has an extension). Students who violate this standard will be charged with collusion.**

Citation Rules:

- 1) For interpretative points that come directly from one of the course textbooks, a parenthetical citation such as (Hopkins, 42) will be acceptable. You do not need to cite “facts” such as how many varnas there are in Hinduism.
- 2) For interpretative points that are not your own and instead come from a lecture, a parenthetical citation such as (Schmalz 10/12/06) will be acceptable. Again you do not need to cite “facts.”
- 3) For interpretative points that are not your own and instead come from another student, a parenthetical citation such as (Jane Doe 10/12/06) will be acceptable.
- 4) For all internet sources you must use footnotes and, in the footnote, include the entire address and the date accessed. **You are strongly discouraged from using internet sources.**
- 5) For all other print sources (such as books or journal articles), you must use footnotes that include the author’s full name, article or book title, journal title if applicable, publisher, date and page number. **You are strongly discouraged from using other print sources not identified in the syllabus.**

Examples:

Book: Darius Cooper, *The Cinema of Satyajit Ray: Between Tradition and Modernity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 25.

Article: Mathew N. Schmalz, “Images of the Body in the Life and Death of a North Indian Catholic Catechist, *History of Religions* 39 (November): 177.

ERes: Documents for the course will be available on ERes accessed through the library’s homepage. **The course password is “kali.”** Document names are included in the relevant section of the syllabus.

Extensions: All students are given the opportunity take advantage of a single extension of forty-eight hours (48) for any paper (this does not include the test or the final exam). **You must however e-mail or call me before the paper is due** in order to receive the extension (you do not need to provide reasons for the extension). This extension covers everything from personal emergencies to computer failure. No other extension will be granted without the explicit written permission of the appropriate class Dean.

E-Mail: Class announcements, outlines and assignments will usually be distributed by electronic mail. Please be sure to check your e-mail regularly.

Required Texts for Purchase:

William Buck, *The Mahabharata*
William Buck, *The Ramayana*.
Jean Varenne, *Yoga*.
R. C. Zaehner, *The Hindu Scriptures*.

Required Readings Available on ERES:

Doniger, *The Rig Veda* (selections)
Doniger, *Hindu Myths* (selections)
Doniger, *Tales of Sex and Violence* (selections)
Doniger, *The Laws of Manu* (selections)
Hopkins, *The Hindu Tradition* (selections)
Kinsley, *The Sword and the Flute* (selections)
Miller, *The Gitagovinda* (selections)

PLAN OF THE COURSE

I. INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1: PRELIMINARIES

August 30: *Introduction to Hinduism*

September 1: *Indus Valley Civilization and Vedic Mythology*

READING: Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, pp. 1-16 [Eres "Hopkins1"];
Zaehner (trans.), *The Hindu Scriptures*, pp. 3-10.

II. VEDAS AND BRAHMANAS

WEEK 2: THE VEDAS AND BRAHMANAS

September 4: *The Gods of the Rig Veda*

READING: *Rig Veda*, "I Pray to Agni," "To Protect the Embryo," "The Killing of Vitra,"
The Soma Drinker Praises Himself," "A Hymn to Soma," "If I were Like You, Indra,"
"Dawn and the Asvins." [Eres "RigVeda1"]

September 6: *Vedic Sacrifice*

Reading: Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, 17-35 [Eres "Hopkins2"]; Zaehner
(trans.), *The Hindu Scriptures*, pp. 10-36.

September 8: *Brahmanas: The Fear of Death*

READING: Doniger, *Tales of Sex and Violence* [Eres "Doniger1"]

WEEK 3: BRAHMANAS AND UPANISHADS

September 11: *Brahmanas: The Fear of God*

READING: Doniger, *Tales of Sex and Violence* [Eres "Doniger2"]

September 13: *Introduction to Upanishads*

READING: Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, pp. 36-51. [Eres "Hopkins3"]

September 15: *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*

READING: Reading: Zaehner, *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (book I), pp. 39-50.

III. THE UPANISHADS AND YOGA

WEEK 4: UPANISHADS

September 18: *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*

READING: Zaehner, *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (books IV-VI), pp. 75-103.

September 20: *The Search for the True Self*

READING: Zaehner (trans.), *The Chandogya Upanishad* (books I-IV), pp. 104-123.

September 22: *Brahman*

READING: Zaehner (trans.), *The Chandogya Upanishad* (books V-VI, VII: xxvi; VIII), pp. 124-142; 154-167.

WEEK 5: UPANISHADS

September 25: *The Internal Sacrifice*

Reading: Zaehner (trans.), *Mundaka and Maitri Upanishads* (books I-IV, VI.15- VII), pp. 231-241; 274-284, 290-

September 27: *Renunciation*

Film: *The Fourth Stage*

September 29: *The New Brahmanical Synthesis*

READING: Hopkins, *The Hindu Tradition*, pp. 64-86 (Eres "Hopkins4)

WEEK 6: YOGA

October 2: *"Man" and the Universe*

READING: Varenne, *Yoga*, pp. 15-54

Paper Consultations in Blue Room [7 pm-12 am]

October 3: **First Paper Due Via Email by 10 P.M.**

October 4: *In Search of the Absolute*

READING: Varenne, *Yoga*, pp. 55-92.

October 6: *The Royal Art*

READING: Varenne, *Yoga*, pp. 93-142.

WEEK 7: FROM KUNDALINI TO VEGETARIANISM

October 9: No Class

October 11: *The External Feminine*

READING; Varenne, *Yoga*, pp. 143-177.

October 13: *Vegetarianism*

READING: Doniger, *The Laws of Manu* (Eres “Manu1)

WEEK 8: HINDU LAW

October 16: *Varna*

READING: Doniger, *The Laws of Manu* (Eres “Manu2”)

October 18: *Marriage and Women*

READING: Doniger, *The Laws of Manu* (Eres “Manu3”)

October 20: Midterm Examination

IV. THE EPICS AND THE GITA

WEEK 9: THE RAMAYANA

October 23: *Introduction to the Epics and Puranas*

READING: Hopkins, *The Hindu Tradition*, pp. 87-107 (Eres “Hopkins4)

October 25: *The Ramayana: The Beginning*

READING: William Buck, *The Ramayana*, pp. 4-84.

October 27 *The Ramayana: Ayodhya*

READING: William Buck, *The Ramayana*, pp. 85-193.

WEEK 10: THE RAMAYANA

October 30: *The Ramayana: The Forest*

READING: William Buck, *The Ramayana*, pp. 194-270.

November 1: *The Ramayana: War*

READING: William Buck, *The Ramayana*, pp. 271-353.

November 3: *The Ramayana: Time*

READING: William Buck, *The Ramayana*, pp. 356-432.

WEEK 11: THE MAHABHARATA

November 6: *The Mahabharata; The Beginning*

READING: William Buck, *The Mahabharata*, pp. 3-114.

November 8: *The Mahabharata: Exile*

READING: William Buck, *The Mahabharata*, pp.115-232.

November 10: *The Mahabharata: War*

READING: William Buck, *The Mahabharata*, pp. 233-328.

V. GODS AND THE GODDESS

WEEK 12: THE MAHABHARATA AND THE GITA

November 13: *The Mahabharata: The Wages of Dharma*
READING: William Buck, *The Mahabharata*, pp. 329-412.

November 14: Second Paper Due Via Email by 10 P.M.

November 15: *The Bhagavad Gita*
READING: Zaehner, *The Hindu Scriptures*, (books I-VI) pp. 313-344

November 17: *The Bhagavad Gita*
READING: Zaehner, *The Hindu Scriptures*, (books VIII-XVIII), pp. 350-409.

WEEK 13: SHIVA

November 20: *Shiva*
Film: Manifestations of Shiva

November 22: NO CLASS

November 24: NO CLASS

WEEK 14: SHIVA AND KRISHNA

November 27: *Shiva*
READING: "Puranic Myths of Linga Worship," "The Puranic Myths of Siva and Parvati," "The Sage Mankanaka Dances for Siva." [Eres "Shiva"]

November 29: *Krishna*
Reading: "Krishna and Balarama are Conceived," "Krishna subdues the Serpent Kaliya," "Krishna steals the Clothes of the Girls of the Village," "Abashed Krishna," "Languishing Krishna," "Four Quickening Arms." [Eres "Krishna"]

November 30: Paper Consultations in Blue Room [8 pm-12 am]

December 1: *Kali: The Sword*
READING: David Kinsley, *The Sword and the Flute*, 81-126. [Eres "Kali1"]

Third Paper Due Via Email by 10 PM

WEEK 15: KALI

December 4: *Kali: Mistress of Death*
READING: David Kinsley, *The Sword and the Flute*, 127-159 [Eres "Kali2"]

December 16: Final Examination [2:30 pm]