

Religion
The Western Encounter with Hinduism

Location:

Period:

Instructor: Edwin Bryant.

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Office Hours: Loree 108, Douglass Campus.

Course Description and Objectives: This course will attempt an overview of representations of India on the Western Religious Landscape stemming from the earliest interactions between West and East, the subsequent cultural and intellectual exchanges, the eventual colonialization of the subcontinent, and the post-colonial aftermath. While touching on early Greek, Chinese and Muslim depictions of Hindus and Hinduism, the course will especially focus on the Colonial era. Attention will be especially paid to the Orientalist construction of Hinduism during this period. The course will survey a range of representations and stereotypes of Hinduism transmitted back to West, examine a sampling of the subsequent images portrayed about this religion in western popular culture, highlight some examples of Hindu apologetic responses to this encounter, and consider some post-colonial reflections.

Course Prerequisites: None.

Course Requirement: Course requirements: All assigned reading. Students are expected to read whatever material is assigned for each particular week, and be prepared to discuss this in class. A mid-term exam (20% of the total grade), final exam (30%), and term paper (8-10 pgs, 40%) due the last day of class. In addition to this, each student will be assigned class presentations on the secondary reading. Students' attendance record and overall performance in class will factor into the remaining 10% of the grade. **No make-ups for missed exams will be given without valid medical proof or a signed letter from a student dean.**

Required Reading

Available at the Douglass Coop:

Schwab, Raymond, The Oriental Renaissance. Columbia University Press, 1984

Wilhelm Halbfass, India and Europe (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988)

Ronald Inden, Imagining India (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990)

Clarke, J.J. Oriental Enlightenment. New York: Routledge, 1997

Recommended Reading:

- Don Baker, "World Religions and National States: Competing Claims in East Asia," in Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori, eds., *Transnational Religion & Fading States* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).
- Breckenridge, Carol & Van der Veer, Peter. *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*. Philadelphia: University of Penn Press, 1993.
- David Chidester, *Savage Systems* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996), Introduction and first chapter.
- David Chidester, "Colonialism," in Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon, eds., *Guide to the Study of Religion* (New York: Continuum, 2000).
- Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960).
- Nicholas B. Dirks, "Coda: The Burden of the Past: On Colonialism and the Writing of History" in *Castes of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
- John S. Hawley, "Naming Hinduism," *Wilson Quarterly* 15, No. 3 (Summer 1991), 20.
- Marshall Hodgson, "The Great Western Transmutation," in *The Venture of Islam*, Vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).
- Martha Kaplan, *Neither Cargo Nor Cult* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).
- Jack Llewellyn, *Defining Hinduism: A Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).
- Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India, and "the Mystic East"* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*.
- Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby, eds., "Studying Hinduism : Key Concepts and Methods" (London and New York : Routledge, 2008).
- Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism Invented?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Gauri Viswanathan, "Colonialism and the Construction of Hinduism," in Gavin Flood, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003)

Class 1:

Focus: Definitions: The Phenomenon

Readings: Schwab, I-47

Class 2:

Focus: Europe Learns Sanskrit, the Era of Decipherings, the Expansion of the known World.

Readings: Schwab, 51-108.

Class 3:

Focus: The Progress of Oriental Studies, and the Doctrinal Stages.

Readings: Schwab, 109-167.

Class 4:

Focus: The Birth of Linguistics; Repercussions in Literature.

Readings: Schwab, 168-224

Class 5:

Focus: Well-Prepared Ground; The Moving Spirits

Readings: Schwab, 225-289.

Class 6:

Focus: Founders and Intermediaries; Chroniclers and Novelists.

Readings: Schwab, 289-352

Class 7:

Focus: Lamartine, Hugo, Vigny, Michelet.

Readings: Schwab 353-403

Class 8:

Focus: Poetic History and Exoticism

Readings: Schwab, 404-426

Class 9:

Focus: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner and others

Readings: Schwab, 427-486

Class 10:

Focus: The Philosophical View of India in Classical Antiquity; Islamic Encounters With Indian Philosophy; The Missionary Approach to Indian Thought

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 11:

Focus: India and the Romantic Critique of the Present; Hegel; Schelling and Schopenhauer

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 12:

Focus: Deism, the Enlightenment, and the Early History of Indology; Developments in the Interpretation of India Following Hegel and Schopenhauer; On the Exclusion of India from the History of Philosophy

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 13:

Focus: Preliminary Postscript: The Hermeneutic Situation in the Twentieth Century; Traditional Indian Xenology; Rammohan Roy and His Hermeneutic Situation

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 14:

Focus: Neo-Hinduism, Modern Indian Traditionalism, and the Presence of Europe; Supplementary Observations on Modern Indian Thought; Darsana, Anviksiki, Philosophy

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 15:

Focus: The Adoption of the Concept of Philosophy in Modern Hinduism; Dharma in the Self-Understanding of Traditional Hinduism; Reinterpretations of Dharma in Modern Hinduism

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 16:

Focus: The Sanskrit Doxographies and the Structure of Hindu Traditionalism; The Concept of Experience in the Encounter Between India and the West

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 17:

Focus: "Inclusivism" and "Tolerance" in the Encounter Between India and the West; India and the Comparative Method; In Lieu of a Summary and Conclusion: Europe, India, and the "Europeanization of the Earth"

Readings: Halbfass,

Class 18

Focus: Orientalism: the issues

Readings: Clarke, 1-36

Class 19:

Focus: The Making of the Orient, China, India and Buddhism.

Readings: Clarke, 37-94

Class 20:

Focus: Orientalism in the 20th century

Readings: Clarke, 95-180

Class 21:

Focus: Knowledge of India and Human Agency

Readings: Inden, 1-49

Class22:

Focus: India in Asia: the Caste Society

Readings: Inden, 49-84

Class 23:

Focus: Hinduism: The Mind of India

Readings: Inden, 85-131

Class 24:

Focus: Village India: Living Essences of the Ancient

Readings: Inden, 131-161

Class 25:

Focus: Divine Kingship: the Hindu Type of Government

Readings: Inden, 162-212

Class 26:

Focus: Reconstruction

Readings: Inden, 213-270

Class 27:

Focus: Reorientations and post-modernity

Readings: Clarke, 181-225

Class 28:

Focus: Orientalism and the post-colonial predicament

Readings: Selected readings from Breckenridge & Van der Veer