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:


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

Recommended Reading:
Martha Kaplan, Neither Cargo Nor Cult (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

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.

Class 3:
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

Class 22:
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