Religious History of South Asia II: Medieval to Modern (REL 276)

Spring 2016
Seelye 208, MW 1:10–2:30

PROFESSOR:	Andy Rotman
OFFICE:	Pierce Hall 203
OFFICE HOURS:	MW 2:40–4:00 or by appointment
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REQUIREMENTS

1. Read attentively. Finish the assignments for each class before class time and think hard about them.

2. Attend class regularly. Being present is an important part of your class participation grade, and more than two unexcused absences will put that grade in jeopardy.

3. Listen actively and speak thoughtfully. Although class is large, this is not just a lecture course. We plan to discuss the materials with you, so be prepared to talk about them. Keep in mind Wittgenstein's aphorism, "Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal."

4. Make regular postings on Moodle, responding to the readings, class discussion, and/or the postings of other students. I expect you to post 250+ words each week. Your postings should demonstrate a *thoughtful* engagement with the material. To that end, I don't care if your posts are informal. Being chatty is fine as long as you're insightful. Ideally, you will post multiple times each week such that conversations develop. Postings made during a particular week should be posted in the folder for that week, and all postings for a particular week should be submitted by Saturday at midnight of that week. At the end of the semester, you will be expected to print out all of your posts and submit them to me. These are due on the last day of classes, Wednesday, April 27th.

5. Complete a take-home exam, involving about 10 pages of writing. The exam questions will be distributed on Wednesday, April 13th, discussed in class on Monday, April 18th, and due in the box outside my office by 6 pm on Wednesday, April 20th. (Electronic versions of the paper are accepted in extenuating circumstances.)

6. Produce a final creative project. These projects are not meant to be involved works of research; instead, they should be imaginative efforts to engage with the materials from the semester. This may involve reading a few poems or a story that you've written and then discussing how you felt producing this writing, what you understand it to mean, or how you would like it to be understood. You may also choose to show the class some images that you've produced or procured and offer similar insights. Performance pieces and collaborative efforts are

also encouraged. This is your chance to produce something in creative conversation with the religious world of South Asia—not just in intellectual conversation, as you will do in your take-home exam—and you may do so through any of the senses.

In summary, your grade will be determined by the quality of your participation in class (30%), your postings on Moodle (30%), your take-home exam (35%), and your final project (5%).

If you have any questions about an assignment or need help or an extension, please let me know. Just send me an email or stop by during my office hours. I will do my best to be accessible, and I'm happy to make special arrangements to meet.

REQUIRED READING

Edward Dimock and Denise Levertov, trans. *In Praise of Krishna: Songs from the Bengali*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

Donald S. Lopez, editor. *Religions of India in Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995. (=RIP)

A. K. Ramanujan, Velcheru Narayana Rao, and David Shulman, trans. *When God is a Customer: Telugu Courtesan Songs by Ksetrayya and Others*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

Source Book. (=SB)

- **texts are available at Grécourt Bookshop, 585–4140**
- **the source book is available at Paradise Copies, 21 Conz Street, (413) 585–0414 http://www.paradisecopies.com/**

WEEK 1 (1/25, 1/27)
i. INTRODUCTION
•various maps of South Asia (SB)
•additional maps of India at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/india.html

ii. RELIGIOUS IDENTITY: WHAT IS IT, WHERE IS IT, AND HOW DO WE DESCRIBE IT?
•Richard Davis, "A Brief History of Religions in India," 3–7 (RIP)
•Harjot Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture*, *Identity*, *and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
"Introduction," 1–30 (handout)

WEEK 2 (2/1, 2/3)
i. JAINISM: RELIGION, CATECHISM, AND NARRATIVE
•Richard Davis, "A Brief History of Religions in India," 16–18 (RIP)
•Kendall W. Folkert, *Scripture and Community: Collected Essays on the Jains*. Edited by John E. Cort. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1993.
"Introduction to Jainism," 1–19 (handout)
•John Cort, "Jain Questions and Answers: Who is God and How is He Worshipped?" 598–608 (RIP)
•Phyllis Granoff, "Jain Stories Inspiring Renunciation," 412–417 (RIP)

ii. A JAIN AUTOBIOGRAPHY: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A TEXT TO BE RELIGIOUS?
•*Ardhakathanaka* of Banarsidass. *Half a Tale: A Study in the Interrelationship between Autobiography and History*. Translated by Mukund Lath. Jaipur: Rajasthan Prakrit Bharati Sansthan, 1981.
1–97 (handout)

WEEK 3 (2/8, 2/10)
i. MUSLIM INDIA, INDIAN MUSLIMS, AND THE MUSE
•Richard Davis, "A Brief History of Religions in India," 31–37 (RIP)
•Carl Ernst, "India as Sacred Islamic Land," 556–563 (RIP)
•Ralph Russell. In *The Pursuit of Urdu Literature: A Select History*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1992.
"Understanding the Urdu *Ghazal*," 26–52 (SB)
•Vikram Seth, *A Suitable Boy*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993.
Excerpt, 2.3–2.5, 79–88 (SB)
•Read the lyrics of "Thare Rahiyo" (Stay A While) (SB):
http://www.hindilyrics.net/translation-Paakeezah/Thare-Rahiyo.html
•Then watch it being performed in the movie *Pakeezah* (Pure of Heart):
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugx2jqK4hmE

ii. WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A TEACHING TO BE RELIGIOUS?
•Nizam ad-din Awliya, *Morals for the Heart*. Translated by Bruce B. Lawrence. Introduction by Khaliq A. Nizami. New York: Paulist Press, 1992.
Excerpts, 3–15, 81–92, 132–144, 173–184, 312–314 (SB)
•Carl Ernst, "Conversations of Sufi Saints," 513–517 (RIP)

WEEK 4 (2/15, ~~2/17~~)
i. BANARAS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A CITY TO BE RELIGIOUS?
•Diana Eck. In *Religion in India*. Edited by T. N. Madan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
"Kashi: City of All India," 138–155 (SB)
•Jonathan Parry, *Death in Banaras*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
"Through 'Divine Eyes,'" 11–32 (SB)
•Lawrence Cohen, *No Aging in India: Alzheimer's*, *the Bad Family*, *and Other Modern Things*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
"Dog Ladies and the Beriya Baba," 263–268 (SB)

ii. RALLY DAY—NO CLASS

WEEK 5 (2/22, 2/24)
i. DEVĪ: MANIFESTATIONS OF THE GODDESS
•Ann Grodzins Gold, "Mother Ten's Stories," 434–448 (RIP)
•Rachel McDermott, "Bengali Songs to Kali," 55–76 (RIP)
•Usha Menon and Richard Schweder. In *Is the Goddess a Feminist? The Politics of South Asian Goddesses.* Edited by Alf Hiltebeitel and Kathleen M. Erndl. New York: New York University Press, 2000.
"Power in its Place: Is the Great Goddess of Hinduism a Feminist?" 151–165 (SB)

Note: Class will begin today at 1 pm.

ii. NO CLASS

SCREENING OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Devi (The Goddess).* Adapted, produced, and directed by Satyajit Rai. In Bengali, with English subtitles, 93 minutes. 1960.
NOTE: The film will be screened on Wednesday (2/24) and Thursday (2/25) at 7:00 pm in Seelye 106.

WEEK 6 (2/29, 3/2)
i. DARŚAN: THOUGHTS ON SEEING AND BEING SEEN
•Diana Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*. Columbia University Press, 1998.
"Seeing the Sacred," 3–31 (SB)
•Lawrence A. Babb, "Glancing: Visual Interaction in Hinduism." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 37 (1981): 387–401 (SB)
OPTIONAL:
•Christopher Pinney. *Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India*. London: Reaktion Books, 2004.
Ch. 8: "What Pictures Want Now: Rural Consumers of Images, 1980–2000," 181–200 (SB)

ii. PŪJĀ: WORSHIPPING THE DIVINE
•Lawrence Babb, *The Divine Hierarchy*. Columbia University Press, 1975.
"The Food of the Gods: Pūjā," 31–67 (SB)
•C. J. Fuller, *The Camphor Flame: Popular Hinduism and Society in India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
"Worship," 57–82 (SB)

WEEK 7 (3/7, 3/9)
i. KṚṢṆA: EROTICS AND DEVOTION
•Edward Dimock and Denise Levertov, *In Praise of Krishna: Songs from the Bengali*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.
entire book
•McKim Marriot. In *Krishna: Myths*, *Rites*, *and Attitudes*. Edited by Milton Singer. Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1966.
"The Feast of Love," 200–212 (SB)

ii. WOMEN AND THEISM: EROTICS AND DEVOTION RECONSIDERED
•A. K. Ramanujan, Velcheru Narayana Rao, and David Shulman, *When God is a Customer: Telugu Courtesan Songs by Ksetrayya and Others*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
Excerpts, 9–40, selections between 63–126

WEEK 8 (~~3/14~~, ~~3/16~~)
RELAX . . . SPRING BREAK

WEEK 9 (3/21, 3/23)
i. Śiva: VĪRAŚAIVISM IN MEDIEVAL SOUTH INDIA
•Wendy Doniger, *Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook Translated from the Sanskrit*. Penguin Books, 1975.
"The Purāṇic myths of *liṅga*-worship," 137–154 (handout)
•Velcheru Narayana Rao, *Siva's Warriors: The Basava Purāṇa of Pālkuriki Somanātha.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
Excerpts, 2–13, 32–38 (skim), 231–266 (handout)

ii. RENUNCIANTS: THE VENERABLE AND THE NOT SO VENERABLE
•Kirin Narayan, *Storytellers*, *Saints*, *and Scoundrels: Folk Narrative in Hindu Religious Teaching*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989.
"Sādhus," 63–73 (SB)
•Patrick Olivelle, *Samnyasa Upanisads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
"The Behavior and Customs of Renouncers," 101–112 (SB)
•Rahul Bonner, *Mattavilāsa*, 1–15 (SB)
•Lee Siegel, *Laughing Matters*: *Comic Tradition in India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989.
"Beyond the Hallowed Ashes: Yogic Yahoos," 220–241 (SB)

WEEK 10 (3/28, 3/30)

i. RĀM: RELIGION AND THE CULTURAL IMAGINATION

•Subha Rao and Pratap Mulick. *Valmiki's Ramayana.* Amar Chitra Katha. Bombay: India Bookhouse Limited, 1998.

entire book (mediocre copy available on Moodle; proper copy available on iTunes)

•Purnima Mankekar. In *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain.* Edited by Faye Ginsburg, Lila Abu-Lughod, and Brian Larkin. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

"Epic Contests: Television and Religious Identity in India," 134–151 (SB)

ii. THE REGIME OF RĀM: RELIGION AND THE POLITICAL IMAGINATION

•Madhu Kishwar. *Manushi* 98 (January-February 1997).

"Yes to Sita, No to Ram! The Continuing Popularity of Sita in India," 20–31 (SB)

•Peter Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

"Religious Nationalism," 1–12 (12–24 is optional) (SB)

WEEK 11 (4/4, 4/6)

i. SATĪ: RELIGION, POLITICS, AND VIOLENCE

•John Stratton Hawley. In *Sati*, *the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. Edited by John Stratton Hawley. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

"Introduction," 3–14 (SB)

•Lindsey Harlan. In *Sati*, *the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. Edited by John Stratton Hawley. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

"Perfection and Devotion: Sati Tradition in Rajasthan," 79–91 (SB)

•Veena Talwar Oldenburg. In *Sati*, *the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. Edited by John Stratton Hawley. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

"The Roop Kanwar Case: Feminist Responses," 101–130 (SB)

•Oldenburg, Veena Talwar, *Dowry Murder: The Imperial Origins of a Cultural Crime*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

"Epilogue," 227–228 (SB)

OPTIONAL:

•Ashis Nandy. In *Sati*, *the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. Edited by John Stratton Hawley. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

"Sati as Profit Versus Sati as a Spectacle:
The Public Debate on Roop Kanwar's Death," 131–149 (SB)

ii. SIKHISM: RELIGION, POLITICS, AND VIOLENCE

•Richard Davis, "A Brief History of Religions in India," 43–44 (RIP)

•Mark Juergensmeyer. In *Religion in India*. Edited by T. N. Madan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

"The Logic of Religious Violence," 382–393 (SB)

•Celia Dugger, "Hostages Recall Times of Terror Amid Boredom." *New York Times*, 2 January 2000, 1–4 (SB)

•Ashis Nandy. In *The Savage Freud and Other Essays on Possible and Retrievable Selves*. Princeton University Press, 1995.

"The Discreet Charms of Indian Terrorism," 1–31 (SB)

SCREENING OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Father*, *Son*, *and Holy War*: *Part 1, Trial by Fire; Part 2, Hero Pharmacy*. Directed by Anand Padwardhan. 133 minutes. 1994.

NOTE: The film will be screened on Wednesday (4/6) and Thursday (4/7) at 7:00 pm in Seelye ***.

WEEK 12 (4/11, 4/13)

i. THE POLITICS OF CASTE, DR. AMBEDKAR, AND THE ONUS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

•In *Everyday Life in South Asia*. Edited by Diane P. Mines and Sarah Lamb. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002.

"Social Distinctions of Caste and Class," 167–172 (SB)

"Seven Prevalent Misconceptions about India's Caste System," 227–228 (SB)

•Eleanor Zelliot. In *The Encyclopedia of Asian History*, vol. 4. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.

"Untouchability," 169–171 (SB)

•Christopher S. Queen. *In Engaged Buddhism.* Edited by Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King. State University of New York Press, 1996.

"Dr. Ambedkar and the Hermeneutics of Buddhist Liberation," 45–71 (SB)

•Shakarrao Kharat. In *Poisoned Bread: Translations from Modern Marathi Dalit Literature*. Edited by Arjun Dangle. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Ltd., 1992.

"A Corpse in the Well," 73–78 (SB)

•Kumud Pawde. In *Poisoned Bread: Translations from Modern Marathi Dalit Literature*. Edited by Arjun Dangle. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Ltd., 1992.

"The Story of My Sanskrit," 96–106 (SB)

ii. ENGAGED BUDDHISM: DALIT BUDDHISTS SPEAK OUT

•Barbara R. Joshi, ed. *Untouchable! Voices of the Dalit Liberation Movement.* Delhi: Selectbook Service Syndicate, 1986.

"The Enemy Within," 77–98 (SB)

•Eleanor Zelliot. In *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*. Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1992.

"India's Ex-Untouchables: New Past, New Future and the New Poetry," 293–316 (SB)

NOTE: take-home exam distributed

WEEK 13 (4/18, 4/20)

i. IN-CLASS DISCUSSION OF EXAM

ii. SCREENING: *Lotan Baba, The Rolling Saint*. Directed by Naresh Bedi. Sadhus: India's Holy Men, part 3. 52 minutes. 1995.

NOTE: take-home exam due in class

WEEK 14 (4/25, 4/27)

i. PRESENTATIONS

•David Knipe, *Hinduism: Experiments in the Sacred*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991. "Epilogue," 152 (SB)

ii. PRESENTATIONS