Seeing God and Nation:
Topics in South Asian Visual Culture (REL 280)

Fall 2014
MW 2:40–4:00
Seelye 302

PROFESSOR: Andy Rotman
OFFICE: Pierce Hall 203
OFFICE HOURS: MW 4:30–5:30 or by appointment
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REQUIREMENTS

1. Attend class regularly. If you are unable to attend a class, please tell me in advance, in person or via email. Attendance is a crucial part of your class participation grade, and more than two unexcused absences will significantly hurt your grade.

2. Listen actively and speak thoughtfully. Be prepared to discuss the assignments in depth. Keep in mind Wittgenstein's aphorism, "Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal." To this end, students will be asked to introduce the readings for each class.

3. Make regular postings on Moodle, responding to the assignments as well as to the postings of other students. I expect you to post 250+ words each week, in one post or more, though you can skip two weeks during the semester. Your postings should demonstrate a thoughtful and rigorous engagement with the material. Creativity is encouraged, rambling is not. Although you are welcome to focus on a particular article or passage within a week's assignment, you should try to contextualize that material within the rest of the week's readings. Postings for each week should be submitted by Saturday at midnight of that week. In short, postings made during a particular week should be posted in the folder for that week. At the end of the semester, you will be expected to print out all of your posts and submit them to me along with your final paper.

4. Write a 10-page research paper. You must have your topics approved by me, in person, by November 26th. During the last week of the semester, you will present your research as a work in progress. Final papers are due on December 18th.

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.

In summary, your grade will be determined by the quality of your participation in class (35%), your postings on Moodle (30%), and your research paper (35%).

REQUIRED READING

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.

Christopher Pinney, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*. London: Hurst & Company, 1996.

•Books are available at Grécourt Bookshop in the Campus Center.
•All other readings will be found in the source book or will given to you as handouts. Source books are available at Paradise Copies, 21 Conz Street, (413) 585–0414.

WEEK 1 (9/8, 9/10)
i. INTRODUCTION

ii. VISUALITY AND THE FUNCTION OF OBJECTS IN INDIA
•Davis, Richard H. 1997. *Lives of Indian Images*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
"Living Images," 14–50 (handout)

WEEK 2 (9/15/, 9/17)
i. WAYS OF SEEING 1
•Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.
Selections, 1–81
•Appadurai, Arjun and Carol Breckenridge. In *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*. Edited by Ivan Karp, Chrisitine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.
"Museums are Good to Think: Heritage on View in India," 35–55 (handout)

VIEWING
Look at Indian portraiture at http://www.oldindianphotos.in/search/label/Portrait.

ii. WAYS OF SEEING 2
•Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.
Selections, 83–155

VIEWING
Look at Anna Palakunnathu Matthew's "Bollywood Satirized" at
http://annumatthew.com/PortfolioBollywood_Satirized/index.html.

WEEK 3 (9/22, 9/24)
i. PHOTOGRAPHY: POWER AND POLITICS 1
•Pinney, Christopher. *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
Prologue, 11–16
1. "Stern Fidelity" and "Penetrating Certainty," 17–71

VIEWING
Look at vintage stereographs of India at
http://luna-insight.smith.edu:8180/luna/servlet/ROTMANCOLL~20~1

ii. PHOTOGRAPHY: POWER AND POLITICS 2
•Pinney, Christopher. *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
2. Indian Eyes, 72–107

INDIA THROUGH THE LENS—SELECTIONS AND PRESENTATIONS FROM:
•Dehejia, Vidya, et al. *India through the Lens: Photography 1840–1911*. Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in association with Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2000. (SC/Art TR103.I53)
•Furneaux, J. *Glimpses of India: A Grand Photographic History of the Land of Antiquity*. Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Company, [1895?]. (SC/Neilson 954 F98)
•Gutman, Judith Mara. *Through Indian Eyes*. New York: Oxford University Press: International Center of Photography, 1982. (SC/Art TR103.G87)
•Pelizzari, Maria Antonella, editor. *Traces of India: Photography, Architecture, and the Politics of Representation, 1850–1900.* Montréal: Canadian Centre for Architecture; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. (SC/Art TR103.T72 2003)
•Ryan, James. *Picturing Empire: Photography and Visualization of the British Empire*. Reaktion, 1997. (SC/Neilson DA16.R93)
•Worswick, Clark and Ainslie Embree. *The Last Empire: Photography in British India, 1855–1911*. Millerton, NY: Aperture, 1976. (SC/Neilson & Art DS479.L28)
•http://www.oldindianphotos.in/
•http://Harappa.com/photo3/index.html
•http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/advanced_search.aspx
note: Try "India" for *category* and, say, "tribal photograph" for *free text*.
…and so on

WEEK 4 (9/29, 10/1)
i. PHOTOGRAPHY: POWER AND POLITICS 3
•Pinney, Christopher. *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.
3. Chamber of Dreams, 108–209
Epilogue, 210–213

ii. PHOTOGRAPHY: POWER AND POLITICS 4
City of Photos; 60 minutes. Directed by Nishta Jain. 2005

WEEK 5 (10/6, 10/8)
i. SEEING AND BEING SEEN 1
•Eck, Diana. *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*. Columbia University Press, 1998.
"Seeing the Sacred," 3–31
•Babb, Lawrence A. "Glancing: Visual Interaction in Hinduism." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 37 (1981): 387–401.
•Meister, Michael W. In *Los Discursos sobre el Arte*. Edición a cargo de Juana Gutiérrez Haces. XV Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas), 1995.
"Seeing and Knowing: Semiology, Semiotics and the Art of India," 193–207

VIEWING
•Tour temples at http://www.360spin.co.uk/qtvr/bolton/hindutemple.htm and http://www.360spin.co.uk/qtvr/bolton/hindutemple2.htm.

ii. SEEING AND BEING SEEN 2
•Woodburne, A. Stewart. In *The Evil Eye: A Folklore Casebook*. Edited by Alan Dundes. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981.
"The Evil Eye in South Indian Folklore," 55–65
•Pocock, D. F. In *The Evil Eye: A Folklore Casebook*. Edited by Alan Dundes. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981.
"The Evil Eye—Envy and Greed Among the Patidar of Central Gujerat," 201–210
Show and Tell: Bring an object, or story or anecdote, that helps makes sense of the evil eye in South Asia.

VIEWING
Take online darshan at http://www.ganesh.us/online-darshan.html.

WEEK 6 (~~10/13~~, 10/15)
i. AUTUMN RECESS—NO CLASS

ii. (IN)CORPORATING ART
•Huyler, Stephen P. In *Mud, Mirror and Thread: Folk Traditions of Rural India*. Edited by Nora Fisher. Mapin Publishing Gp Pty Ltd, 1993.
"Creating Sacred Spaces: Women's Wall and Floor Decorations in India Homes," 172–191(handout; images best viewed online)
•Nagarajan, Vijaya Rettakudi. In *Mud, Mirror and Thread: Folk Traditions of Rural India*. Edited by Nora Fisher. Mapin Publishing Gp Pty Ltd, 1993.
"Hosting the Divine: The Kolam in Tamilnadu," 192–203 (handout; images best viewed online)
•Nagarajan, Vijaya Rettakudi. In *Religion/Globalizations: Theories and Cases*. Edited by Dwight N. Hopkins et al. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001.
"(In)Corporating Threshold Art: *Kolam* Competitions, Patronage, and Colgate," 161–186 (handout)

WEEK 7 (10/20, 10/22)
i. LORD RAM AND MEDIATED RELIGION 1
•Pritchett, Fran. In *Media and the Transformation of Religion in South Asia*. Edited by Lawrence A. Babb and Susan S. Wadley. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995.
"The World of *Amar Chitra Katha*," 76–106
•Rao, Subha and Pratap Mulick. *Valmiki's Ramayana.* Amar Chitra Katha. Bombay: India Bookhouse Limited, 1998.
entire book (available on Amazon and iTunes; mediocre copy available on Moodle)

VIEWING
Explore ACK at http://www.amarchitrakatha.com/.

ii. LORD RAM AND MEDIATED RELIGION 2
•Philip Lutgendorf. In *Media and the Transformation of Religion in South Asia*. Edited by Lawrence A. Babb and Susan W. Wadley. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995.
"All in the (Raghu) Family: A Video Epic in Cultural Context," 217–253
•Mankekar, Purnima. *Screening Culture, Viewing Politics: An Ethnography of Television, Womanhood, and Nation in Postcolonial India*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999.
Excerpts from "Mediating Modernities: The *Ramayan* and the Creation of Community and Nation," 166–170, 199–204, 210–217

VIEWING
Watch Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan* (1986), episode 76: "Ram and Sita Meet" and "Sita's Trial By Fire" (39 minutes; http://onlineramayana.blogspot.com/).

WEEK 8 (10/27, 10/29)
i. LORD RAM AND MEDIATED RELIGION 3
•Kapur, Anuradha. In *Hindus and Others: The Question of Identity in India Today*. Edited by Gyanendra Pandey. Delhi: Viking Publishers, 1993.
"Deity to Crusader: The Changing Iconography of Ram," 74–109
•Davis, Richard. In *Contesting the Nation: Religion*, *Community*, *and the Politics of Democracy in India*. Edited by David Ludden. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
"The Iconography of Rama's Chariot," 27–54

VIEWING
Watch "Hey Ram Hey Ram – Lord Rama Prayer" (8 minutes; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0s0anVD104).

ii. BAMIYAN BUDDHAS…ICONS OR IDOLS
•Elias, Jamal. "Un/Making Idolatry: From Mecca to Bamiyan." *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation* 4.2 (2007): 2–29.
•Flood, Finbarr Barry. "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum." *The Art Bulletin* 84.4 (2002): 641–659.

WEEK 9 (11/3, 11/5)
i. PICTURING THE NATION 1
•Frietag, Sandra B. In *Pleasure and the Nation: The History, Politics, and Consumption of Public Culture in India*. Edited by Rachel Dwyer and Christopher Pinney. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.
"Visions of the Nation: Theorizing the Nexus Between Creation, Consumption, and Participation in the Public Sphere," 35–75

VIEWING
•Paley, Nina. *Sita Sings the Blues*. 2008. 82 minutes. http://www.sitasingstheblues.com/

ii. PICTURING THE NATION 2
•Pinney, Christopher. "The Nation (Un)Pictured? Chromolithography and 'Popular' Politics in India, 1878–1995." *Critical Inquiry* 23 (Summer 1997): 834–867.
•Pinney, Christopher. In *Picturing the Nation: Iconographies of Modern India*. Edited by Richard Davis. Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007.
"The Body and the Bomb: Technologies of Modernity in Colonial India," 51–65

VIEWING
View images of Bhagat Singh (http://www.christopherpinney.com/Bhagat_Singh.php) and watch (at least some of) "Animated Movie For Kids - Shaheed Bhagat Singh – English" (40 minutes; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zg3fb_lzFRw).

WEEK 10 (11/10, 11/12)
i. PICTURING THE NATION IN THE YEAR 2006
SCREENING OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Rang de Basanti* (*Color it Saffron*); 157 minutes. In Hindi, Urdu, English, Punjabi, with subtitles. Directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra. 2006.
Sunday, 7 pm (location to be announced)
•Aggarwal, Vidhu. "The Anti-Colonial Revolutionary in Contemporary Bollywood Cinema." *Comparative Literature and Culture* 12.2 (2010): 1–10.

ii. PICTURING THE NATION IN THE YEAR 2006
SCREENING OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Lage Raho Munna Bhai (Carry On, Munna Bhai)*; 144 minutes. In Hindi, with subtitles. Directed by Rajkumar Hirani, 2006.
Tuesday, 7 pm (location to be announced)

WEEK 11 (11/17, 11/19)
i. VISUAL PRESENTATION: DRESSING THE PART 1
•Tarlo, Emma. *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India.* London: Hurst & Company, 1996.
2. Searching for a Solution in the late Nineteenth Century, 23–61
3. Gandhi and the Recreation of Indian Dress, 62–93
4. Is Khadi the Solution? 94–127

ii. VISUAL PRESENTATION: DRESSING THE PART 2
•Tarlo, Emma. *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India.* London: Hurst & Company, 1996.
Preface, xvi–xxi
5. Questions of Dress in a Gujarati Village, 129–167
6. Some Brahman Dilemmas, 168–201

WEEK 12 (11/24, ~~11/26~~)
SCREENING OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Peepli (Live)*; 95 minutes. In Hindi, with subtitles. Directed by Anusha Rizvi and Mahmood Farooqui, 2010.
Sunday, 7 pm (location to be announced)

ii. THANKSGIVING RECESS—NO CLASS

WEEK 13 (12/1, 12/3)

i. MEDIATING RELIGION

•Guha-Thakurta, Tapati. In *Barefoot across the Nation: M F Husain and the Idea of India*. Edited by Sumathi Ramaswamy. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

"Fault-lines in a National Edifice: On the Rights and Offences of Contemporary Indian Art," 172–197 (handout; images best viewed online)

•Zitzewitz, Karin. In *Barefoot across the Nation: M F Husain and the Idea of India*. Edited by Sumathi Ramaswamy. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

"'I am an Indian and a painter, that is all': Intention and the Secular Subject in Contemporary India," 130–148 (handout; images best viewed online)

VIEWING

View images of M F Hussain at www.mfhussain.com/paintings/.

ii. BRANDING INDIA

•Mazzarella, William. "Branding the Mahatma: The Untimely Provocation of Gandhian Publicity." *Cultural Anthropology* 25.1 (2010): 1–39

•Rotman, Andy. In *5 Year Plan: Literary Supplement*. Edited by Aaron Sinift. Jaipur: Krishna Printers, 2010.

"Baba's Got a Brand New Bag: Indian Jute Bags and Exotic Others," 31–55

VIEWING

Explore: Incredible India (http://www.incredibleindia.org/) and watch this Kerala Tourism video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szNPnrrPq9g). FYI: The model is Swedish, the vocals are Senegalese, and the score is composed by a British concept band.

WEEK 14 (12/8, 12/10)

i. PRESENTATIONS

ii. PRESENTATIONS

DELETED

ii. THE CYBER POWER OF IMAGES
•Hawkins, Sophie. In *Image Journeys: Audio-Visual Media and Cultural Change in India*, ed. by Christiane Brosius and Melissa Butcher. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999.
"Bordering Realism: The Aesthetics of Sai Baba's Mediated Universe," 139–162
•Elison, William. 2012. Social Science Research Committee, Grant Proposal.
"Digital Darshan: Experiments in the Ethnography of Hindu Prayer," 1–13

VIEWING
Take online darshan at http://www.ganesh.us/online-darshan.html.

i. THE POWER OF IMAGES
•Gell, Alfred. 1992. In *Anthropology, Art and Aesthetics*. Edited by J. Coote and A. Shelton. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
"The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology," 40–63
•Rotman, Andy. 2003. "The Erotics of Practice: Objects and Agency in Buddhist Avadana Literature." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71 (3): 555–578.

VIEWING
Tour Sanchi at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFrlTL4RB3s and http://www.shunya.net/Pictures/NorthIndia/Sanchi/Sanchi.htm.

WEEK 10 (11/10, 11/12)
i. PICTURING THE NATION 3
•Ramaswamy, Sumathi. *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
Prologue: Yearning for Form, 1–12
1. Formal Concerns, 13–72
4. Enshrining the Map of India, 151–176

ii. PICTURING THE NATION 4
•Ramaswamy, Sumathi. *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
5. Between Men, Map, and Mother 177–236
6. Daughters of India, 237–282

VIEWING
See more images of Mother India! Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Artful Mapping in Bazaar India Cartographic Reflections on the Priya Paul Collection" (http://tasveergharindia.net/cmsdesk/viewgallery.aspx?id=93&EId=116&ImageId=1).

POSSIBILITIES

Will also likes the long piece in Barthes' Mythologies about Paris Match.

Yousuf Saeed, "This is What They Look Like: Stereotypes of Muslim Piety in Calendar Art and Hindi Cinema"

http://www.tasveergharindia.net/cmsdesk/essay/78/index.html

Yousuf Saeed, *Muslim Devotional Art in India*
N7304 .S23 2012

Peepli Live!

•McLain, Karline. *India's Immortal Comic Books: Gods, Kings, and other Heroes*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009
Selections <PN6790.I4 M56 2009>

•Gupta, Sunil. "The New Pre-Raphaelites" (2008–09).
http://www.sunilgupta.net/New%20Pre-Raphaelites/newpre-raphaelit.html

•Freitag, Sandria B. "Consumption and identity: Imagining 'Everyday Life' Through Popular Visual Culture." http://www.tasveergharindia.net/cmsdesk/essay/96/index.html

Ganti, Tejaswini. *Producing Bollywood: Inside the Contemporary Hindi Film Industry,* Duke University Press, 2012

•Cort, John E. *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 15.3 (2012).
"Situating Darśan: Seeing the Digambar Jina Icon in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century North India," 1–56

Replace Eck, Babb, and or Meister with John's piece.

WILL NOTES

Could teach evil eye stuff. The readings aren't particularly good, but they complement materials on advertising.

REMOVED
•Srivatsan, R. In *Conditions of Visibility: Writings on Photography in Contemporary India*. Calcutta: Stree Publishers; Mumbai: Distributed by Popular Prakashan, 2000.
"Looking at Film Hoardings," 59–76 (handout)

•Guha-Thakurta, Tapati. "Visualizing the Nation: The Iconography of a 'National Art' in Modern India." *Journal of Arts and Ideas* 27–28 (1995): 7–40.
•Zitzewitz, Karin. "The Secular icon: Secularist Practice and Indian Visual Culture." *Visual Anthropology Review* 24.1 (2008): 12–28.

i. VISUAL PRESENTATION: DRESSING THE PART 3
•Tarlo, Emma. *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India.* London: Hurst & Company, 1996.
8. Some Pastoralist (Bharwad) and Scheduled Case (Harijan) Dilemmas, 251–283
9. Fashion fables of an Urban Village, 318–336