

Religion Program
The College of the Humanities

RELI 2515A

Religion and Aesthetics in India
Professor: Harsha V. Dehejia
Lectures: Monday, 2.35 pm to 5.25 pm.
Room ME 4432

Office Hours: 2 hours before and 1 hour after the lecture
room to be announced
Phone: 613-520-2100, 613-233-5629
E-mail: harsha_dehejia@carleton.ca

Learning Objectives

This course is designed so that you will:

1. Develop an understanding of the methods and perspectives proper to the academic study of the Hindu Aesthetic tradition and develop an informed appreciation for the beliefs, values and cultural practices of Hindus.
2. Improve your ability to analyze and interpret culturally unfamiliar materials.
3. Become more aware of your own cultural and personal assumptions, beliefs, and biases about the Hindu tradition.
4. Develop skills to think critically about your own and others' world-views.
5. Develop an appreciation for writing as a way both to clarify for yourself the content of the course and to communicate your understanding to others.

Course Overview

The Hindu tradition is unique in offering multiple paths to the realisation of Ultimate Reality. Termed *brahman*, this realisation is achieved outside of religious rites and rituals. In particular *brahman* is characterised by the twin concepts of *ananda* or bliss and *saundarya* or beauty. This makes aesthetic contemplation of what is beautiful a transcendent experience. In learning this Hindu view point you will understand the meaning of the concept of yoga in its truest metaphysical sense. Objects of beauty do not stand alone in the Hindu tradition and are found within mythic or secular narratives and in trying to discover beauty you came face to face with myth as an alternative source of knowledge.

Required Text

Leaves of a Pipal Tree (Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1980)
available at the Haven Bookstore, Sunnyside Avenue, Ottawa, ON. (Not far from the University)
Lectures and the audio-visual material presented in class are also testable.

Course Description

The course focuses on the concept and representation of Poetic Truth in the Hindu tradition. The emphasis is mainly philosophical and the course investigates Poetic Truth or how aesthetic experience leads to knowledge of ultimate reality. The first half of the course explores aesthetic theories especially those involving *rasa* or aesthetic emotion and *rupa* or aesthetic form. Theories of *artha* or semantics are examined and Indian Idealism is discussed. This half ends with an exploration of the epistemology of aesthetic experience.

The second half of the course, which is more visual, takes up the understanding and enjoyment of mythic images, through the *rasa* that they espouse. These will include Krishna, Shiva, Vishnu, Parvati, Durga, Kali and Buddha and the architecture of the temple. Various popular *akritis* or forms are examined and their relation to Indian culture investigated.

COURSE EVALUATION

There are four ways in which you will be graded.

Term Paper: 30 marks

In-Class Quiz: 20 marks

In-Class Participation: 10 marks

Final Examination: 40 marks

1. TERM PAPER

The essay is compulsory. Here are its specifications:

Read Chapter 1 of the prescribed text, *Leaves of the Pipal Tree*, and write an essay on:

Poetic Truth in the Hindu Tradition

or

Myth as an Alternative Source of Knowledge

The essay should be in proper essay format, about 3000 words long, with 2 Bibliographical references other than from the prescribed text. Internet references are not acceptable.

The essay is worth 30 marks broken down as follows: 5 marks for format, 15 marks for content and 10 marks for citing bibliographical references and using them in the body of the text to buttress your argument. Internet references are not acceptable.

The essay is due in class on Monday October 30, 2017. Submissions by email are not acceptable. You may drop off the essay in the drop box outside the Religion Office, 2A39 Paterson. Late submissions will be penalized at the rate of 1 mark per day.

2. IN-CLASS QUIZ

There will be an in-class quiz on November 6, 2017. In the first part of the quiz you will be shown an image that has been discussed in class and you will be required to answer 2 questions

in the multiple choice format for each image. There will be 10 images. The second part of the quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions drawn from the material presented in class. The answers will be graded in class. Please note that this can be offered only once and if you miss it for any reason it cannot be repeated.

This will be worth 20 marks.

3. IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

You are encouraged to ask questions, seek explanations of ideas presented, ask for textual references, offer alternative views, participate in class discussions, comment on audio-visual material presented in class and request additional reading.

This will be worth 10 marks and the marks will be announced in the last class.

4. FINAL EXAMINATION

The examination as scheduled by the University will have about 200 questions to be answered on the Scantron sheet in three hours. This Exam is worth 40 marks.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Lecture 1, September 11, 2017

Origins of Hindu civilization
Unique features of Hindu thought
Distinction between Hindu philosophy and Hindu religion
Sectarian Hinduism
Yoga
Poetics
Chapter 1

Lecture 2, September 18, 2017

Doctrines of Rasa & Rupa as the foundation of Aesthetics
Chapter 2

Lecture 3, September 25, 2017

Epistemology of Aesthetic Experience
Chapter 1

Lecture 4, October 2, 2017

The Indus Valley Civilization
Folk and Popular Art
Akriti to Sanskriti, The Journey of Indian Forms
Guest Lecture: Dr. Reba Som. Tagore's Concept of *Saundarya* (Beauty)
Chapter 10

October 9, 2017

Thanksgiving. No lecture

Lecture 5. October 16, 2017
Shakuntala, India's Love Story
Objects Of Beauty
Chapter 11

October 23, 2017
October break. No lecture

Lecture 6, October 30, 2017
Shiva and His Consorts
Chapter 6

Lecture 7. November 6, 2017
Aesthetics of Boundaries: The Genesis of Ganesha
The Life and Death of Kama
Hinduism in the Home
Chapter 2

Lecture 8. November 13, 2017
Forms of Vishnu
Chapter 8

Lecture 9. November 20, 2017
The Romantic Emotion: Krishna and Radha
Chapter 4

Lecture 10. November 27, 2017
The Romantic Emotion: Krishna and Radha (continued)
Chapter 4

Lecture 11. December 4, 2017
The Mother Goddess
Chapter 7

Lecture 12. December 8, 2017
Please note that this is a Friday
The Evolution of the Buddha Image
Indian Aesthetic Sensibility
Chapter 3



University Regulations for All Humanities Courses

Copies of Written Work Submitted

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found on <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/#AIatCU>.

Academic Accommodation Policy

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at

613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Grading System at Carleton University

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System Chart](#)

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Statement on Class Conduct

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and

preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

Deferred Exams

Students who do not write/attend a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply to write a deferred examination.

1. be made in writing to the Registrar's Office **no later than three working days after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination;** and
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and in cases of illness by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

The granting of a deferral also requires that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course according to the evaluation scheme established in the Course Outline, excluding the final examination for which deferral privileges are requested. Reasons for denial of a deferral may include, among other conditions, a failure to (i) achieve a minimum score in the course before the final examination; (ii) attend a minimum number of classes; (iii) successfully complete a specific task (e.g. term paper, critical report, group project, computer or other assignment); (iv) complete laboratory work; (v) successfully complete one or more midterms; or (vi) meet other reasonable conditions of successful performance.

More information can be found [in the calendar](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to: [Registrar's Office](#)

Withdrawal From Courses

Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA.

NEW FALL 2017: WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term. Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Dates can be found here: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Department Contact Information

College of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for RELI Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

Registrar's Office 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

Student Resources on Campus

[CUKnowHow Website](#)