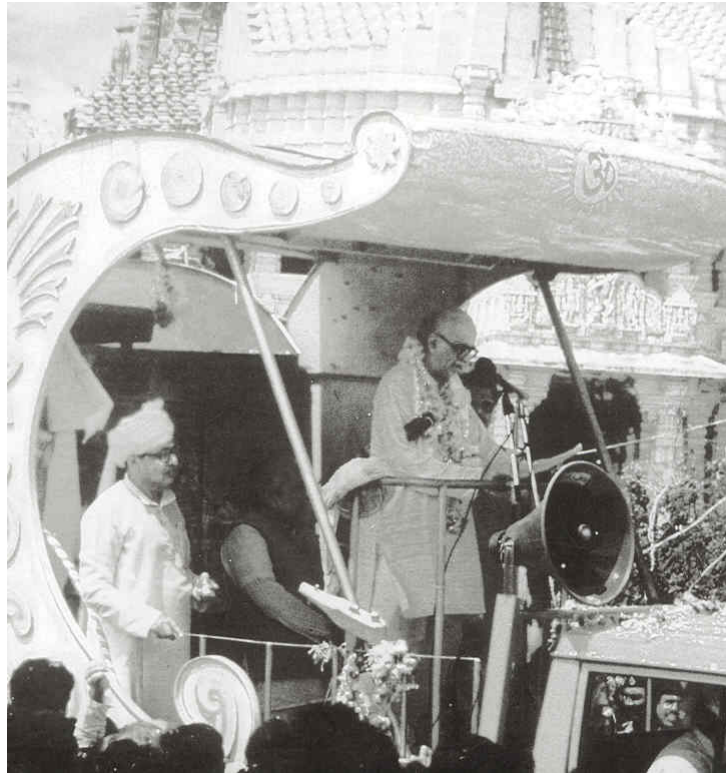


Rel. 295



Religion, Community, and Conflict in South Asia

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Course Description

Why does religion so often become a source of conflict in society? How can doctrines that emphasize harmony and peace become the justification for rioting, war, and terrorism? Why is conversion from one religion so controversial? What should be the proper role of religion in public life and in politics? This course approaches these questions in the cultural context of South Asia, drawing examples from India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Nepal. Topics include the place of religious ideas and practices in defining social identity and shaping actual communities, and roles of religion in politics. These examples serve as a running comparison with similar issues confronting contemporary America.

Course Requirements

Students should carefully read and reflect on the assignments for each class, and be prepared to talk about them. Formal work for the course will be: a 5-page take-home midterm essay question (25%); a 15-page term paper (50%) [[Please click here for general advice on paper writing.](#)]; and two presentations in class (one of

which will concern the topic of the term paper) (together, 25%). Participation in class discussions can raise (and lack thereof may lower) the final grade. The aim is for the students to develop good analytical and expressive skills while exploring the subject.

Books for Purchase

Octavio Paz, In Light of India

Stephen Hay, ed. Sources of Indian Tradition, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (SIT 2)

Vasudha Dalmia and H. von Stietencron, eds., Representing Hinduism (RH)

Ainslie T. Embree, Utopias in Conflict: Religion and Nationalism in Modern India

Richard Gombrich, Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo

Stanley Tambiah, Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective Violence in South Asia

Course Reader (CR)

Recommended:

Francis Robinson, ed., The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives [Will be used as a core background source, abbr. CEI below]

Schedule of Readings

Week I: Overview

Octavio Paz, In Light of India, pp. 3-133.

Religion and Society in Premodern South Asia

Week II: Caste Order and Other Visions of the "Noble" Society"

Tu CEI, 39-77; Gombrich, pp. 1-81.

CR: RV 10.90, BAU 1.4, Laws of Manu 2

Gita Dharampal-Frick, "Shifting Categories in the Discourse on Caste," in RH.

Th CEI, 77-93; Gombrich, pp. 81-136.

CR: Edicts of Ashoka; Manu; Ramayana

Week III: Hindus and Muslims / *Hindutva* (Hindu-ness) as Identity

Tu CEI, 93-147.

CR: SIT, vol 1, pp. 382-392, 399-411, 425-450, 463-489.

Th N. K. Wagle, "Hindu-Muslim Interactions in Medieval Maharashtra," in HR.

SIT 2, pp. 243-296 (Gandhi, Tagore, Savarkar).

Religion and Society in Modern South Asia

Week IV: Indian Muslim or Muslim Indian?

Tu SIT, vol. 2, ch. 5.

J. Alam, "Composite Culture and Communal Consciousness: The Ittehadud Muslimeen in Hyderabad," in RH.

Th Embree, ch. 5: "Muslims in a Secular Society"
Tambiah, ch. 6: "Ethnic Conflict in Pakistan"

Week V: Religious Definitions of Social Identity

Tu SIT, vol.1, ch. 16.
V. Das, "Counter-Concepts and the Creation of Cultural Identity: Hindus in the Militant Sikh Discourse," in RH.
Tambiah, ch. 5: "Sikh Identity, Separation and Ethnic Conflict"

Th SIT 2, pp. 324-348 (B. R. Ambedkar and Conversion to Buddhism for Untouchables).
CR: Neera Burra, "Buddhism, Conversion and Identity: A Case Study of Village Mahars," in Caste: Its Twentieth Century Avatar.

Week VI: What is Hinduism? / Confrontation with Christianity

Tu CEI, 155-158, 229-231
Robert E. Frykenberg, "The Emergence of Modern 'Hinduism' as a Concept and as an Institution," in RH.
Monika Horstmann, "Towards a Universal Dharma: Kalyan and the Tracts of the Gita Press" in RH, 294-305.
Richard Burghart, "The Category 'Hindu' in the Political Discourse of Nepal" in RH.

Th Vasudha Dalmia, "'The Only Real Religion of the Hindus'" in RH, pp. 176-210.
Ram Bapat, "Pandita Ramabai," in RH.
J. Tharamangalam, "Caste Among Christians in India," in Caste: Its Twentieth Century Avatar.

Week VII: Religious Revival and Reform, and Nationalism

Tu Embree, ch. 1: "Religion, Nationalism, and Conflict."
Embree, ch. 2: "The Question of Hindu Tolerance."
Embree, ch. 3: "The Politics of Religion in Contemporary India."

Th CR: Richard Cashman, The Myth of the Lokamanya, pp. 1-16, 75-97.
Anncharlott Eschmann, "Religion, Reaction and Change: The Role of Sects in Hinduism," in HR.
Anncharlott Eschmann, "Mahima Dharma: An Autochthonous Hindu Reform Movement," ch. XX in CJ, 375-410.

Week VIII: Language, Ritual, and the Media / The Uses of History

Tu CR: Christopher R. King, "Forging a New Linguistic Identity: The Hindi Movement in Banaras, 1868-1914," ch. 6 in
Culture and Power in Banaras, ed. Sandria Freitag (U. Calif. Press, 1989), pp. 179-202.
Embree, ch. 4: "Religious Pluralism, National Integration, and Scholarship"
Tambiah, ch. 9: "Hindu Nationalism, the Ayodhya Campaign, and the Babri Masjid"

Th Partha Chatterjee, "History and the Nationalization of Hinduism" in RH, pp. 103-128.
G. Pandey, "The Appeal of Hindu History" in RH, pp. 369-388.

Week IX: Religious Status and the Law

Tu CR: Marc Galanter, "Hinduism, Secularism, and the Indian Judiciary," ch. 10 in Law and Society in Modern India.

Dieter Conrad, "The Personal Law Question and Hindu Nationalism," in RH.

Th Sudhir Chandra, "Whose Laws? -- Notes on a Nineteenth Century Hindu Case of Conjugal Rights," in RH.

Jürgen Lütt, "From Krishnalila to Ramarajya: A Court Case and Its Consequences for the Reformulation of Hinduism," in
RH, 142-153.

Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Sri Lanka

Week X: The Monks' History of Ceylon

Tu CEI, 147-155; 222-228.
Gombrich, chs. 6-8.

Week XI: Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

Tu Tambiah, ch. 3: "The 1915 Sinhala Buddhist-Muslim Riots in Ceylon."

Th Tambiah, ch. 4: "Riots in Sri Lanka."

The Dynamics of Religious and Ethnic Violence

Week XII: Religion, Politics, and Collective Violence

Tu Tambiah, ch. 7: "Some General Features of Ethnic Riots and Riot Crowds"
Tambiah, ch. 8: "The Routinization and Ritualization of Violence"
Tambiah, ch. 10: "Entering a Dark Continent: The Political Psychology of Crowds"

Th Tambiah, ch. 11: "Reconfiguring Le Bon and Durkheim on Crowds as Collectives"
Tambiah, ch. 12: "The Moral Economy of Collective Violence"

Seed Bibliography for Research Papers

Critical Perspectives on Nationalism

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, rev. ed. London:

Verso [first edition 1983].

Armstrong, John. 1982. Nations Before Nationalism. Chapel Hill: Univ. of N. Carolina Press.

Gellner, Ernest. 1983. Nations and Nationalism. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hobsbawn, Eric. 1990. Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Hobsbawn, Eric, and Terence Ranger, eds. 1983. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Juergensmeyer, Mark. 1993. The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Smith, Anthony D., ed. 1992. Ethnicity and Nationalism. Leiden: Brill.

van der Veer, Peter. 1994. Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India. Berkeley: University of

California Press.

Religious and Ethnic Identities, Political Action, and Communalism

Ludden, David, ed. 1996. Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India. Philadelphia:

Univ. of Penn. Press; pub'd in India as: Making India Hindu (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press).

Lorenzen, David N., ed. 1994. Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action. Albany: SUNY Press.

Malik, Yogendra K., and V. B. Singh. 1994. Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party. New Delhi:

Vistar Publications.

McLeod, W. H. 1989. Who Is a Sikh? The Problem of Sikh Identity. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Oberoi, Harjot. 1994. The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition. Oxford:

Oxford University Press.

Pandey, Gyanendra. 1990. The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India. Oxford University Press.

Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. 1992. Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lanka.

Chicago: Univ. of

Chicago Press.

van der Veer, Peter. 1988. Gods on Earth: Religious Experience and Identity in Ayodhya. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Ethnicity and Race in South Asia

Robb, Peter, ed. 1997. The Concept of Race in South Asia. Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press.

Bronkhorst, Johannes, and Madhav M. Deshpande, eds. 1999. Aryan and Non-Aryan in South Asia: Evidence, Interpretation

and Ideology. Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora, vol. 3. Cambridge, Mass.: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies,

Harvard University.

Indian Law

Derrett, J. Duncan M. 1968. Religion, Law and the State in India. New York; Faber & Faber.

_____. "The Definition of a Hindu," Supreme Court Journal 2: 67-74.

Galanter, Marc. 1989. Law and Society in Modern India. London: Oxford University Press.

Rocher, Ludo. 1972. "Schools of Hindu Law," in J. Ensink and P. Caeffke, ed., India Major (Leiden: Brill), pp. 167-176.

Lingat, Robert. 1973. The Classical Law of India, trans. by J. D. M. Derrett. Berkeley: U. Cal. Press.

Revival and Reform Movements / Defining and Redefining the 'Hindu'

Cashman, Richard. 1975. The Myth of the Lokamanya: Tilak and Mass Politics in Maharashtra. Berkeley: Univ. of California

Press.

Heimsath, Charles H. 1964. Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform. Princeton: P. Univ. Pr.

Jones, Kenneth W. 1976. Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Lorenzen, David N., ed. 1994. Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action.

Albany: SUNY Press.

Sontheimer, Günther-Dietz, and Hermann Kulke, eds. 1997. Hinduism Reconsidered, rev. ed. New Delhi: Manohar.

Williams, Raymond Brady. 1984. A New Face of Hinduism: The Swaminarayan Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Sikhism

McLeod, W. H. 1968. Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

_____. 1976. The Evolution of the Sikh Community. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

_____. 1989. Who Is a Sikh? The Problem of Sikh Identity. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Oberoi, Harjot. 1994. The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition. Oxford:

Oxford University Press.

South Asian Muslims

Iqbal, Sir Muhammad. 1934. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. London. [A modernist statement of the

meaning of being a Muslim by a leading intellectual of colonial India.]

Nita Kumar. 1989. "Work and Leisure in the Formation of Identity: Muslim Weavers in a Hindu City," ch. 5 in Culture and

Power in Banaras, ed. Sandria Freitag (U. Calif. Pr., 1989), pp. 147-170.

Minault, Gail. 1982. The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India. New York: Columbia

Univ. Press. [Examines an important, Indian Islamic movement of the early 1920s that supported and looked for inspiration

to the Turkish sultanate up until its destruction by the British.]

Mujeeb, M. 1967. The Indian Muslims. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Forms of Religious Practice and Authority in Hindu Traditions

van der Veer, Peter. 1988. Gods on Earth: Religious Experience and Identity in Ayodhya. London: Athlone Press.

Gold, Daniel. 1987. The Lord as Guru: Hindi Sants in North Indian Tradition. New York: Oxford.

<More to come>

Conversion, Religious Mission, and Counter-Mission

Copley, Antony. 1997. Religions in Conflict: Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late-Colonial India. Delhi: Oxford

University Press.

Mallison, Françoise. 1997. "Hinduism as Seen by the Nizari Isma'ili Missionaries of Western India: The Evidence of the Ginan." In

Sontheimer & Kulke 1997, pp. 189-201.

Sharma, Arvind. 1992. "Ancient Hinduism as a Missionary Religion." Numen 39(2): 175-192.

Young, Richard Fox. 1981. Resistant Hinduism: Sanskrit Sources on Anti-Christian Apologetics in Early Nineteenth-Century

India. Pubs. of the De Nobili Research Library, vol. 8. Vienna.

Web Resources

The Kashmir Dispute

[Kashmir as Disputed Territory](#)

An annotated list of web sites related to the Kashmir dispute

[A New Beginning In South Asia](#)

A policy briefing issued by the Brookings Institution on South Asia

[US President Clinton's visit to India](#)

A briefing by the Indian Embassy on the occasion of Pres.Clinton's visit.

[South Asia Citizen's Web](#)

"The South Asia Citizen's Web is an independent space on the net to promote dialogue and information exchange between and about South Asian citizens initiatives. The main rubrics on this site are - Civil Society, Peace, Democracy, Secularism, social movements, the women's movement, Environmental Campaigns, labour movement activism, human rights groups and campaigns, citizens action against communalism and religious fundamentalism, news, films, journals contents pages, research projects and book catalogues."

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