Andrew O. Fort  **RELIGION 30753**  Office Hours

TBH 313 **The Many Faces of Krishna**  M- F 11-11:45

257-6448 **Fall 2015** or by appt.

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**Course Description:** This course considers the many images of the god Krishna in the religious and literary imagination of the people of India. Krishna has been seen as an adorable child, all attractive young man, and wise leader (and savior) as an adult, appearing in each case as a mystifying mix of divine and human. We shall look at selected texts in translation and artistic presentations which illustrate a variety of themes and issues connected with this multifaceted figure. After introducing some background of Hindu thought and practice, we shall look on how Krishna appears in different versions and interpretations of the great Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, including the famous portion of it called the *Bhagavad Gita.* We next examine how Krishna appears in later devotional literature and poetry in the classical Sanskrit tradition, and finally Krishna in popular and regional understandings up to the present day. **Credit cannot be given for both RELI 30773 and 30753.**

**Outcomes:** Through a midterm exam, short papers, eCollege/Learning Studio journal entries, and a final course review and reflection, as well as class participation, you will be assessed on your ability:

To comprehend concepts and ways of understanding from both religious studies and Indian literary theory.

To investigate and analyze continuity and change in the Hindu tradition, and Indian culture more generally, through the study of Krishna’s many manifestations.

To identify and articulate the value of understanding another worldview (“mental migration”), and by so doing, take the opportunity to reflect on your own.

To read critically, think analytically, speak persuasively, and write effectively through the description, analysis and evaluation of an array of ideas, themes and issues in Indian civilization.

**Expectations:** You are expected to attend all classes (come on time, but come even if late), and to read (and think about) the assignments before class. If you miss four or more classes, your grade can be lowered automatically unless you have a legitimate and documented excuse. Bring the relevant books to class; we will go over the readings. During the semester, each student will at some point be responsible for bringing thoughts and questions on the day's class reading. Be ready to listen, think, question, and speak. All topics are open, but civil and respectful discourse is required.

**Assignments:** There will be a mid-term exam (20% of course grade), two short (c. 4 page or 1000 word) papers (each 20%), and a longer (7-8 page) final course review and reflection due during final exam period (30%). Each of these should demonstrate your knowledge of the material, and will also provide an opportunity to share more personal responses. Unless you contact me beforehand, late papers or exam absence will be permitted only for officially excused absences.

You are also required to respond to the readings in class and to make a weekly entry into a computer journal on eCollege/Learning Studio; it is mandatory but individual entries are ungraded. The entries are informal reflections, meant to encourage reflection on course readings and lectures. At course end, the journal, attendance and class participation together are worth 10% of your grade. I will assess both the quantity and quality of these course elements.

A=always present, contributed often (in class and journal) thoughtfully and intelligently; consistently assumed responsibility for keeping discussion going; B= almost always present, contributed mostly thoughtfully and intelligently; aided in keeping discussion moving but did not always assume responsibility; C= usually present, contributed sporadically without taking much responsibility; D=missed a number of classes, contributed occasionally; did not take ownership of class discussion.

You are also required to visit the nearest temple dedicated to Krishna *by class period Nov. 12*: Kalachandji’s Palace, 5430 Gurley Ave., Dallas 75223. Phone: 214-827-6330. <http://www.radhakalachandji.com>, It is both a full fledged temple and a restaurant. You may go alone or with a group (and I will try to arrange a group visit) and see a service. You are expected to write a two page reaction paper about your experience.

***Grades: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60. I use +/-, and use the following grade scale: .0-.3=grade minus, .31-.7=grade, .71-.99=grade plus***

***You may check in with me about your course standing at any time.***

If you have a problem affecting your course participation, or must miss class, let me know. Also, if you have a disability which may affect your class performance, please inform me during the first week of class. Here are some policy statements:

*Disability Statement approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council / Revised Summer 2011*: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities.  Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010.  Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations.  Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.  Guidelines for documentation may be found at <http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp>.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act, such as cheating or plagiarism, that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details; <http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/>).

Finally, feel free to see me after class or in my office.

**RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006); TCU Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022); Writing Center (257-7221, Reed 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), and Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Brown Lupton Health Center).

**Required books**, available in the bookstore, include:

*Krishna: A Sourcebook.* Edwin Bryant, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

*Mahabharata.* William Buck, trans. London: Penguin (Meridian), 1973.

*The Love Song of the Dark Lord.* Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Other texts, which are available in .pdf via eCollege/Learning Studio, will include selections from *The Literatures of India.* E. Dimock et al. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978), *The Hindu Tradition*, Ainslee Embree, ed., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), the *Amar Chitra Katha* comic book version of *Bhagavad Gita,* and *Poems from the Sanskrit,* John Brough, trans. (London: Penguin, 1968). Also, “Doctrine and Practice among the Vaisnavas of Bengal” by Edward Dimock in *Krishna: Myths, Rites, and Attitudes*, Edited by Milton Singer, (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1966). “Surdas” and “Mirabai” in *Songs of the Saints of India,* by John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), introduction to *At Play With Krishna*, by John Stratton Hawley. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), a selection from *Journey Through the Twelve Forests* by David Haberman. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), and *Coming Back: The Science of Reincarnation*. (Los Angeles: The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1982).

We will also view some videos, including Peter Brook's film version of the *Mahabharata*. We will need to schedule a two hour viewing for a portion of it the evening of September 17th or 21st.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Aug. 25: Introduction to course

Aug. 27: Background on Indian civilization and “Hinduism”

Dimock; 1-19, 40-46

Sept. 1: Hinduism: Veda and Vedanta, *karma* and rebirth

Embree: 9-27, 48-65

Sept. 3: *Varnashrama-dharma* (caste and lifestage)

Embree: 74-93

Sept. 8: continue above bring a question to class

Sept. 10: the Hindu epics

Dimock: 47-59, 64-71 Buck: xiii-xxiii, 5-9

Sept. 15: *Mahabharata* Buck: 21-55, 64-80, 86-112

**PAPER DUE:** Respond to the "otherness" of the Indian worldview. What has been particularly striking, positive or negative? What has it taught you about your culture and yourself?

Sept. 17: *Mahabharata* (Brook video) Buck: 167-75, 193-261

**Video viewing evening of Sept. 17 or 21**

Sept. 22: *Mahabharata* (Brook video) Buck: 265-328

Sept. 24: *Mahabharata* (finish Brook video) Buck: 344-69, 397-411

Sept, 29: Discuss *Mahabharata* (bring question to class)

Oct. 1: The *Bhagavad Gita*

Bryant: 77-94; Gita comic book

Oct. 6: **EXAMINATION**

Oct. 8:The *Puranas, puja* and devotion Embree: 208-23

Visit <http://huntingtonarchive.osu.edu/Exhibitions/meetingGodExhibit.php>

Write a one page reaction paper

**FALL BREAK**

Oct. 15 the *Bhagavata Purana*

Bryant: 111-33, Goodall: 373-78, 386-93

Oct. 20 the *Bhagavata Purana* (inc. viewing images of gods)

Schweig (“The Divine Feminine in the Theology of Krishna”) in Bryant, 441-58, 467-72

Oct 22 Sanskrit Literary Theory and Poetics

Dimock: 128-43, 149-52 115-28 optional

Brough 11-23, 30-49

Oct. 27 Poetry Brough: 53-94 pick two favorites and reasons why

Oct. 29 *Love Song of the Dark Lord* Arts of Asia video

Dimock: 157-65, Miller: 3-37, Schweig in Bryant, 458-67

Nov. 3 *Love Song of the Dark Lord*

Miller: 69-125 pick a favorite song and reason why

Nov. 5 Krishna in Bengali Vaisnavism and Hindu Theology

“Doctrine and Practice among the Vaisnavas of Bengal” by Edward Dimock (all)

Nov. 10 Krishna in Bengali Vaisnavism and Hindu Theology

Selections in Bryant by Haberman (“A Selection from the *Bhaktirasamrtasindhu*”), 409-19, also on Vallabha, 477-81, Madhusudana, 314-5, 320-24, and poems, 278-79.

Nov. 12 discussion, inc. of temple visit

**PAPER DUE** What does it mean to “love” Krishna? Which of the forms of devotion to him do you find most compelling? Which is hardest to fathom? How does it compare to your understanding of Abrahamic devotion?

Nov. 17 Krishna in other regional devotional traditions (Surdas, Mirabai):

Selections from Bryant : 223-54 and Hawley/Juergensmeyer*, Songs of the Saints of India:* 91-140 pick a favorite poem and reason why

Nov. 19 modern Krishna devotionalism and pilgrimage, Vrindavan

Selection from John S. Hawley, *At Play with Krishna*, 3-42

Nov. 24 modern Krishna devotionalism and pilgrimage bring a question from reading

Selection from David Haberman’s *Journey Through the Twelve Forests*: 196-223

“A Vallabhite Guide to the Worship of Krishna’s Divine Images” by Paul Arney in Bryant: 505-29.

video: *Loving Krishna*

**THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Dec. 1 Krishna comes to America

Delmonico on “Caitanya and Holy Names,” in Bryant, 549-53, 560-66

Selections from *Coming Back: the Science of Reincarnation,* based on the teachings of A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, introduction, 1-18, 41-59, 87-130

Dec. 3 Visit from ISKCON (Hare Krishna) leader

Dec. 8 Course reflections, final paper ideas

# FINAL PAPER DUE TUESDAY DECEMBER 15 at 3 pm

Review your notes, papers, and readings. Respond to the many manifestations of Krishna. What has been most striking to you? What did you like and dislike most? What was the hardest to understand?

Overall, what has been your most significant learning experience in the course? What have you learned about your own religion (and literature) by studying that of India? What else has the Indian worldview taught you about your own?

**PAPER WRITING SUGGESTIONS**

Papers should be typed and double-spaced. A clean-looking paper will help you. Proper spelling and grammar are important, and will affect your grade.

Your paper should answer the question posed in class (and on the syllabus) using the lectures and readings which address the specified topic. Set aside some time to think about the paper before you write. Make notes of your thoughts. Review the assigned material and look for passages related to your topic. Construct an outline. Do some self-investigation. Why do you have the perspective you do? After writing a first draft, check to see if you clearly state, then address, the main issue(s) or theme(s), and if your paper has an introduction and conclusion.

I am looking for clear self-expression and increased self-understanding in addition to understanding and critical analysis of textual material.

You may rewrite, and at times I will encourage you to rewrite. Remember that there is a library nearby, and that you can consult with me about research resources. If you refer to or quote course books, page numbers may be put in parentheses after references. We also have an excellent Writing Center (Reed 419, 257-7221), if you need help.

Your paper will be graded on:

1) form (presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation).

2) clarity of focus, organization, and expression.

3) utilization of course material.

4) critical reflection and personal insight.