INDIAN CULTURE

Course Description

This course covers the history of south Asia, from early Vedic Ages, and through classical time, and the rise of various empires. It also explores the rise of different religions and convergences of them, and then the transition from colonial control to independence.

About the Professor

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Architecture
Sculpture
Print, Radio and TV
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Required Texts: These books are available in paperback.

- Basham, A.L. *The wonder that was India*, 3rd ed. Sidgwick and Jackson, 1982.
- Clark-Decès, Isabella (ed.). *A companion to the anthropology of India*. Blackwell, 201.
- Dalmia, Vasudha and Rashmi Sadana (eds.). *The Cambridge companion to modern Indian culture.* Cambridge, 2012.
- Flueckiger, Joyce Burkhalter. *In Amma's room: Gender and vernacular Islam in south India*. Indiana, 2006.
- Fuller, Christopher. *The camphor flame*: *Popular Hinduism and society in India*. 2nd ed. Princeton, 2004
- Kachru, Braj B., Yamuna Kachru, S. N. Sridhar (eds.). *Language in South Asia*. Cambridge, 2008.
- Mines, Diane and Sarah Lamb (eds.). *Everyday life in South Asia.* 2nd ed. Indiana, 2010.
- Mitter, Partha. *Indian art*. Oxford, 2001.
- Richmond, Farley, Darius Swann and Philip Zarrilli. *Indian theatre: Traditions of performance*. Hawaii, 1990.
- Weidman, Amanda. *Singing the classical, voicing the modern. The post-colonial politics of music in south India.* Duke, 2006.

Writing Assignments: Students will write four 1,250-word essays (at the end of weeks 3, 8, 13 and 15) and a research essay of 5,000 words at the end of the course.

Guidelines for essays

1. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, with a 12-point font and the pages must be numbered.
2. Essays should include a bibliography. The 1,250-word essays need only contain references to the books discussed in the essay. However, the research essay should also include a minimum of three other references (see 'Reading List' at the end of this Study Guide).
3. Essays must use either footnotes or endnotes to cite sources of a quotation, an idea, a fact or a narrative passage.
4. Footnotes and endnotes may use Harvard, MLA or Chicago styles. It is acceptable to cite a source in a note in the following way, if that same source is fully cited in the bibliography:

> author's surname, short title of book or article, page   number(s). e.g., Stein, *A History*, p. 34.

Unit I **People and Identity**

The purpose of this unit is to build up an understanding of the key components of identity for the people of India. These include religion (discussed in detail in later weeks), race, place, caste, tribe, kinship, family, life-cycle rituals, language and script.

Week 1 **Castes and Tribes**

Outline

   A. Demography
   B. Ethnology
       1. race
       2. ethnic identity
           a. ethnonym
           b. autonym
   C. Castes
       1. endogamous, hereditary, ranked occupational groups
       2. four main caste groups (*varna*)
           Brahmins: priests and scholars
           Kshatriyas: rulers and warriors including property owners
           Vaishyas: merchants and traders
           Sudras: labourers and servants
       3. 'untouchables' added later
       4. j*ati*s ('caste')
   D. Tribes
       1. spread and heterogeneity
       2. definitional problem
           a. political or social organisation
           b. relation to state

Lecture

A.   Demography

We can begin with some basic demographic facts.

   •   India's total population (2011 Census) is approximately 1.2 billion.
   •   Rural population is about 72% and urban is about 28%
   •   Bombay has more than 12.5 million people, New Delhi just over 11
   •   An approximate breakdown of this total by religions is:

       Hinduism – 80%
       Islam -13%
       Christianity - 2.3%
       Sikhism – 1.9%
       Buddhism - 0.7%
       Other (mostly tribal) - 0.7%
       Jainism - 0.5%
       Zoroastrianism - 0.01%
       Judaism - 0.0005%

   •   Life expectancy is approximately 70 years (67 for men and 74 for women).

- Literacy rate is about 74% (82% for men and 64% for women).
- There are 921 women for every 1000 men
- Infant mortality rate is about 50 per 1000 (down from 72 in 1998)
- See section on languages in week 3

B.   Ethnology

Race

The diversity of peoples in India (the modern nation-state of India) has defeated all attempts to classify them into scientific categories.   Nineteenth-century ideologies of race drew heavily on India, with its apparently clear categories of Aryan and Dravidian. Other categories, such as Australoid, Mongoloid, Negrito and martial races, have also been suggested. Although these 'racial types' are now largely (but not entirely) discredited, this does not mean that categories based on visible features, notably skin colour, is irrelevant in Indian culture. On the contrary, such differences underpin many local and pan-Indian systems of group classification. The Aryan and Dravidian divide has deep roots in the historiography of India, both western and Indian, and continues to influence popular perceptions.

While in general usage 'race' is a cultural creation, it is also a biological category defined as a shared genetic profile. Humans across the globe are genetically 99% similar, but the miniscule differences are significant. In India, recent research has mapped the geographical distribution of genetic populations across the subcontinent and, in some cases, demonstrated that these populations overlap with language groups.

Ethnic identity

Unlike race, ethnic identity does not pretend to be a scientific category. Rather it is based on observable features, physical as well as others, such as dress, language and religious practices. However, as with 'race,' ethnic identity is a scholarly, bureaucratic and popular concept. A great deal of academic and governmental effort has been expended on defining ethnic groups in India—into castes, tribes and races—but certainly not as much as is spent on these same tasks by people themselves. An ethnonym is the name given to an ethnic group by outsiders ('Eskimo,' for example), whereas an autonym is the label used by the group itself ('Inuit'). Often a group's ethnonym is also its autonym— 'Indian' is an example—and many groups use multiple names, like language codes, switching between them according to context.   Castes and tribes, and some religious populations, may then be considered as ethnic groups.

C.   Castes

The Indian caste system (there are/were similar systems in South Africa, the southern USA and Japan) is a classification of hereditary, ranked and endogamous (in-marrying) groups largely based on occupation.

The textual model provided in the Rig Veda (c. 1,200 BCE) included four main divisions called *varna*s ('colours'):

1. Brahmins: priests and scholars
2. Kshatriyas: rulers and warriors including property owners
3. Vaishyas: merchants and traders
4. Sudras: labourers and servants

A fifth division of Untouchables, later named 'Harijan' ('Children of God') by Gandhi, and now widely referred to as Dalits ('ground-down'), was not included in the ancient texts. The concept of 'untouchability' was, however.

The five main divisions are found all over India, with some qualification. The Tamil-speaking south, for example, has virtually no *kshatriya* castes, although several *sudra* castes invented mythologies that ascribed a warrior ancestry to them. Brahmins are found in most but not all regions; *kshatriya*s are the dominant group in the northwest; *vaishya*s are numerous in the west. Untouchables (Dalits or Harijans) make up about 16% of India's total population and nearly 30% in some states.

Each of these five main divisions contains a thousand or more specific groups known as *jati*s ('birth'). *Jati*s are, in most contexts, what we refer to as 'castes,' although they are also often sub-divided into smaller groups. These *jati*s or castes are highly regional and exist in localised versions of the pan-Indian caste system. In addition, not all *jati*s in a given region are found in every village or town of that region. A typical south Indian village, for example, contains 20-30 castes, whereas in north India the number is lower. Thus, while there are Untouchable castes in every region in India, the names of those castes vary by region or even small localities, and each will have a distinct identity, history and culture. The state of Kerala, for example, has about 60 different Untouchable castes, which constitute approximately 10% of the state's population.

Finally, it is important to note that many people do not follow occupations historically associated with their caste and that caste exists not just among Hindus but also among Indian Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Muslims.

D.   Tribes

There are approximately 500 distinct tribal groups in India, and together they represent about 8% of India's total population. These nearly 100 million people are found in every region of the country but not in equal concentrations. The southern state of Tamil Nadu, for example, is only about 1% tribal, while the northeastern state of Mizoram is about 95% tribal. The northeast is one of two regions with a high density of tribal populations; the other is the central and eastern region, especially the states of Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Substantial numbers are also found in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Jharkhand.

The study of tribes in India was central to the emergence of anthropology in the late 19th and early 20th century, and several (now disputed) theories drew support from major studies of the Nagas, the Andaman Islanders and the Gonds. More recent ethnographies have advanced our knowledge, yet what we know about these groups is far outweighed by what remains unknown.

The diversity of ritual practices, social institutions, languages, material culture and oral traditions among the tribes of India is remarkable.
That diversity, plus the incomplete ethnographic record, the politics of racial ideologies and the fact that 'tribal' is a convenient contrast with 'modernity', has meant that the label 'tribe' is imprecise and hotly disputed. Among anthropologists, the most widely accepted definition of a 'tribe' places it on a spectrum of increasingly complex political systems (bands, tribes, chiefdoms and states). Some anthropologists highlight a distinctive type of social organization (non-hierarchical), descent system (segmentary and traced to a single ancestor) or religious belief (animism). In the end, most definitions collapse in the face of ethnographic realities, and in many cases the lines between a caste and a tribe in the same region are blurred.

This confusion over 'tribes' is evident in the shifting terminology used to describe them in India. Early reports used topographical references, such as 'hill tribes', 'forest tribes' and 'frontier tribes.' From the early 20th century, however, new terms, emphasising historical primacy, have become popular: 'Adivasi ' ('first-inhabitant') and 'indigenous peoples'.

In the face of this ideological and semantic dust storm, it seems unwise to 'define' tribe by any allegedly intrinsic features of society, politics or religion. Instead, it is best to characterise tribal populations by their historical and current status in relation to dominant populations. Despite the vast variety of tribal groups, many (perhaps most) share a similar standing vis à vis other groups in their region and the nation as a whole.

The earliest surviving written evidence of tribes in India (a 17th century Mughal history) describes warfare against them by the state. And violence has been their legacy ever since. British records from the early 19th century onward demonstrate that no tribe escaped some level of armed violence, and many tribes were attacked by British troops or mercenaries on several occasions. Major military expeditions were conducted by the British in both the northeast and the central regions, where the tribal populations are most numerous, and even today (2012) the Indian state continues 'anti-insurgency' campaigns against tribes in tese areas.

When not at war with the state, tribes have faced conflict with local dominant castes, who use intimidation, taxation and manipulation of the law to wrest control of land rights. And even when these

forms of expropriation have been ineffective, the more benign forces of assimilation—cultural borrowing, intermarriage, language shift and religious conversion and keeping up with the Kumars— have taken their toll. As a result, more than one tribe, such as the Chutiya (in Assam), have disappeared.

Low-status castes stand in a similar relation to dominant populations, who consider their eating, drinking and religious habits to be polluted. The difference for tribes, however, is that they are not even considered part of the local social system. This local isolation is reflected at the national level, too, where tribal populations are virtually invisible in Indian public life.

Reading

Required
  Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 137-155
  Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 167-228
  Dalmia and Sadana, *Modern Indian culture*, pp. 80-98
  Clark-Decès, *Anthropology of India*, pp. 45-61

Recommended
  Bayly, *Caste, society and politics,* pp. 233-382
  Robb, *The concept of race*, pp. 1-76
  Dirks, *Castes of mind*, pp.127-303

Discussion topics/questions

1. Give examples of an ethnonym and an autonym and explain the distinction between them.
2. What is the difference between a *varna* and a *jati*?
3. List the essential features of the Indian caste system.
4. Some writers in the required reading emphasise that caste identities can change. Explain and then evaluate their arguments.
5. Describe the contrast between a caste and a tribe in the Indian context.

Week 2 **Kinship and Family**

Outline

A. Kinship
  1. overview
      a. larger than most western kin groups
      b. importance of kin terminology
      c. cultural substratum
  2. Dravidian system
      a. cross-cousin marriage
      b. kin terms relatively few
  3. Indo-Aryan system
      a. village exogamy
      b. wife-giver and wife-taker symmetry
      c. lack of reciprocity, *kanya dana*
  4. Munda system
      a. small sample, mostly tribal groups
      b. in between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan systems
          i.   cross-cousin marriage not permitted
          ii. separate affinal terminology
B. Family
  1. most families are patrilineal and patrilocal

   2. many are joint and extended
   3. family as economic unit
  C. Place
   1. geographical spread and density of castes varied
   2. place contributes to identity
    a. natal village important for most (70% of population)
    b. state also important because it is a linguistic region
    c. urban neighbourhoods function as localitiy
  D. Life cycle
   1. classical system of 16 rituals (*samskaras*), 11 for birth and infancy
   2. marriage most important
   3. funeral also a key ritual

<u>Lecture</u>

A. Kinship

Overview
Although caste does not govern life in India, it is fundamental to the identity of most people (many have a caste-based name) and there is little that it does not influence. Perhaps its most visible and significant influence is on kinship and the family.

A person belongs permanently to a caste, but he or she is also decisively shaped by the kinship group within that larger category. And kinship begins with the family. Most Indians live and interact with a kin network that is far greater than most western networks: an adult would probably know 40 or 50 relatives by face. The language of kinship, which typically includes separate terms for paternal and maternal uncles and aunts, older and younger cousins, illustrates the complexity of the system. While many castes have their own distinct kinship system, scholars recognise three large types, associated with the three major language groups, within India: the Dravidian (south India), the Indo-Aryan (in the north) and Munda (central and eastern, affiliated with the larger Austro-Asiatic language family). Indian kinship systems are extremely durable and have survived major social changes over centuries and millennia. For many anthropologists, they represent the substratum of culture that cannot be reached by studying only the ethnographic present.

Dravidian kinship
Dravidian kinship has been important in the anthropological study of kinship largely because of its clear terminological structure and its symmetrical 'cross-cousin marriage.' This bilateral marriage system is still present even in the case of the matrilineal Nayars of Kerala, who abandoned the terminology long ago. For a male, all female kin are classified as either as 'sister' (non-marriageable) or a cross-'cousin' (marriageable), and the most favoured bride is one's mother's brother's daughter. Kin terms are relatively few (compared to Indo-Aryan); for example, there is a single term for wife's father, mother's brother and the father of any cross-cousin.

Indo-Aryan kinship
In contrast to the Dravidian system, this north Indian system rests on village exogamy and does not combine affinal and consanguineal kin or permit cross-cousin marriage. Rather this system is organised by the symmetry of wife-givers and wife-takers, which then distinguishes affinal groups on both sides. This means, in turn, that marriage requires nonrelatedness of bride and groom, and that the gifts go from the bride's to the groom's family without reciprocity. This principle is expressed in the Sanskrit texts as the 'gift of a maiden/virgin' (*kanya dana*).

Munda kinship
The Munda system of kinship is the least well-known simply because the speakers of Munda languages are small and the body of research is limited. The minority status of their cultures-languages has meant that they are more likely to assimilate the kinship systems of their more dominant neighbours. Nevertheless, we can say that the Munda system

is similar to the Dravidian in that it distinguishes cross from parallel kin and encourages cyclical marriage alliances between groups.

Cross-cousin marriage, however, is not permitted. All consanguines of ego's generation are called 'brothers' and' sisters' (the cross/parallel contrast is absent in this generation) and there is a separate affinal terminology, as in the Indo-Aryan system. Thus in terminology and marriage rules, the Munda system lies in between the Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian systems.

B.   Family
Patrilineality (in which status and inheritance is passed down through the male line) is the organising principle of society in India, although it is generally stronger in the north than south. Matrilineality is found in Kerala and coastal Karnataka (and also in the foothills of the Himalayas). Most Indian families are also patrilocal (resident with the husband's family), extended (including two or three generations) and often joint (the wives and children of brothers living together). The average Indian household is still about 5.0, only slightly down from an average 5.3 over the previous four decades.

Patterns of human interaction are established within the family and reinforced in contact with kin and others. These patterns are generally hierarchical, with the highest status reserved for older men. Gender inequality is demonstrated by the current (2012) birth ratio of 921 females to 1000 males.

The family acts not only as a place of residence but also as an economic unit, in which loyalty and solidarity are highly prized. Assets (chiefly land and money) are divided only as a last resort and deep distress.

C.   Place
Castes, tribes and kinship networks, including families, live in a specific place, which also contributes to ethnic and individual identity. The geographical size of these places and the distribution of social groups within them vary greatly. Some castes are found in only a handful of neighbouring villages; other, often merchant, castes are spread over several thousand square miles. Some tribes live in mono-ethnic regions; others in a region of high ethnic diversity.

However, for most people, in most groups, place is an important maker of identity. If one is born in a village (and nearly 70% of the population is), that 'native place' will be used to identify that person for the rest of his or her life. The phrase 'sons of the soil' has an equivalent in virtually all Indian languages. If not the village, then the region or town often becomes central to a person's identity, and recent anthropological research has demonstrated that even urban neighbourhoods function as localities for its inhabitants. Territory also informs identity at the level of the regional states if only because most Indian states are dominated by a single language.   People will identify themselves as a Bengali' or a 'Malayali' meaning that they come from Bengal or Kerala.

D.   Life-cycle
The lives of most Hindus are structured by a series of rituals called *samskara*s 'marks'). The classical model includes 16 such life-cycle rituals, 11 of which mark stages of development of a baby and young child. The first is the naming ceremony, 12 days after birth, when singing and dancing accompany the preparation of the child's astrological chart. Other rituals include those to protect against the evil eye, first hair cut, first solid food and (for high castes) wearing the sacred thread.

As in most societies, marriage is the most important life-cycle ritual.
Overwhelmingly, people marry within their own caste, although the number of cross-caste marriages is steadily rising and especially in urban settings. These are often called 'love-marriages' because the typical marriage is actually between two families or kin groups and is only the final step in a long, complex process of negotiation, including either dowry (gifts and/or cash given by the bride's family to the groom's family) or the less common bride-price (gifts and/or cash going the other way). This process often begins with an advertisement in a newspaper or (now) on a website, specifying, for example, that a '28-year old, tall, dark male university graduate of the Syrian Christian community is seeking an attractive, educated girl, aged 18-25 and from a similar background.'

The second most important ritual is the last, the funeral, when Hindus believe that their soul must be released in order to continue its cycle of rebirths. Although cremation on an open pyre is normative for Hindus, many castes bury their dead because they cannot afford the high cost of firewood required for a funeral pyre. Indian Muslim life-cycle rituals include circumcision and burial.

Reading

Required
        Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 155-188
        Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 1-36, 56-68
        Clark-Decès, *Anthropology of India*, pp. 62-79, 500-535

Recommended
        Mandelbaum, *Society in India*
        Oberoi, *Family, kinship and marriage in India*
        Trawick*, Notes on love in a Tamil family*

Discussion topics/questions

1. Briefly explain the significance of kinship and kinship systems to Indian culture.
2. Describe Indian attitudes toward youth and toward ageing, as found in the required reading.
3. What are structural tensions in a joint family, as described in the essay in Mines and Lamb?
4. Compare the typical series of life-cycle rituals for a Hindu with those for yourself (or someone you know).

Week 3 **Languages and Scripts**

Outline

   A. Languages
      1. total number unknown, perhaps 500
      2. language families
         a. Indo-Aryan-speakers approx. 74% of population
         b. Dravidian-speakers approx. 24%
         c. Austro-Asiatic approx. 1.2%, Tibeto-Burman approx. 0.6%
      3. languages of status: Sanskrit, Persian, Tamil, Arabic, English
   B. Language politics
      1. north-south split, Sanskrit/Hindi v. Tamil/Dravidian
      2. Bengali vs. Panjabi led to formation of Bangladesh
      3. most states are language communities
   C. Scripts
      1. origin of all Indic scripts from 3rd c. BCE Brahmi
      2. types of scripts
         a. nagari in north, also Bengali, Gujarati, Assamese
         b. dravidian in south, four major scripts
         c. Gurmukhi for Sikhs
      3. Urdu/Hindi = 'one language, two scripts' controversy
   D. Tribal languages and scripts
      1. approx. 100, but only two are official national languages
      2. few are official state languages
      3. almost all are 'unscripted', lack their own script
      4. 'lost script' stories
   E. Conclusion

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Languages
Language, which often overlaps with ethnicity and sometimes religion and always region, is also an important element of identity for people in India.   No accurate figure exists for the total number of languages in India, largely due to poor field research and the inability to distinguish between languages and dialects, although a consensus figure would be about 500. We do know, on the other hand, that languages/dialects fall into two large families, one in the north and one in the south:
1) Indo-Aryan, including Hindi and most north Indian languages, is spoken by about 74% of the population
2) Dravidian, mostly in south India, spoken by about 24%

Other people speak Austro-Asiatic languages (1.2% of the population) and Tibeto-Burman languages (0.6%). Most people are bi-lingual and many are trilingual.

There are 23 officially recognised languages, which means that speakers of about 500 other languages are second-class linguistic citizens.

Sanskrit (an Indo-Aryan language) has been the language of culture and learning since ancient times and retains considerable prestige today. Many Hindu rituals are still conducted by chanting Sanskrit verses, and Sanskrit texts are usually perceived as normative.

Arabic (not one of the 23 official languages) occupies a similar position in some Muslim communities (although, or because, few Muslims speak Arabic). Persian became a court language during the Delhi Sultanate (from 11th c. CE) and gained even greater status during the Mughal empire (16th-18th c. CE) and remained an official language even during the early period of British rule. Since the demise of the Mughals in the 18th century, English (one of the 23 official languages) has become another status language.

In south India, and especially in the far south, Tamil (a Dravidian language) has been the language of culture and status since the early centuries of the Common Era. Although it often co-existed with Sanskrit in courts and intermingled with it to form Malayalam (spoken in Kerala), Tamil remains a distinct tongue and a potent sign of cultural identity.

2.   Language politics
This territorial cleavage between Indo-Aryan languages in the north and
Dravidian languages in the south runs deep in Indian culture and politics.
The now-discredited 'Aryan invasion theory' holds that light-skinned, Sanskrit-speakers invaded and conquered an India inhabited by dark-skinned Dravidian-speakers. This idea, which has only been discarded by scholars in the past few decades, is still present in popular thinking and continues to influence political and cultural life, particularly in the south. During most of the twentieth century, an anti-Sanskrit (and anti- Hindi/Brahmin) movement dominated politics in Tamil-speaking areas.

Tamil-speakers felt that their culture and language was treated as second-best to a Sanskritic culture dominated by Brahmins. The political campaign focused on the increased representation of non-Brahmins in government employment, especially in the courts and legislature, as well as the use of Tamil in schools and universities. After Independence in 1947, one faction called for a separate state of 'Dravidistan.'

Since Hindi was the most prominent modern descendent of Sanskrit, Tamil campaigners also fought to prevent Hindi from being adopted as the sole official national language. The Constitution of1950, called for Hindi to replace English as the official language of the new nation by the year 1965. When that date came, however, English was in fact retained along with Hindi as the official languages.

A similar language dispute led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1972. After Independence in 1947, Pakistan consisted of two chunks of territory on either side of India: a (largely) Panjabi-speaking West Pakistan and a Bengali-speaking East Pakistan. When the demands of Bengali speakers that their language be given equal status were not satisfied, tensions grew and led to war.

Even when language disputes remain peaceful they shape the lives of many Indians. Most states established since Independence have been created as a result of a language community demanding greater control of government. Today, many states are in effect language communities: Malayalam in Kerala, Bengali in West Bengal, and so forth. Significant minority language communities exist everywhere, but most states are dominated by a single language.

3.   Scripts
The potency of language as marker of culture identity is underlined by the fact that most major languages have their own distinct script. This diversity of writing systems within a single country is unique and probably results from the intense regionalism of India. All Indian scripts derive from the Brahmi script (first recorded in the 3rd c. BCE), itself probably derived from a Sumerian script.

Nevertheless, once again, this diversity breaks down into two geographical groups, the nagari scripts in the north and the Dravidian scripts in the south. Among the northern scripts, we should note that Gurmukhi was used to write Sikh scriptures and remains an important cultural symbol of Sikhs, while the merchants of Gujarat developed a free-running script for commercial transactions. The four southern scripts, one for each of the four major Dravidian languages, apparently developed as a result of the techniques required for writing on palm-leaves.

The best example of cultural identity inscribed in scripts is the so-called 'one language/two scripts' controversy. Persian became the court language in north India in the 11th century CE and continued to grow in status under the Mughals. In the 18th century, as the Mughal empire declined, the language of Urdu emerged as the prime vehicle for this Indo-Persian culture and literature. Indeed, until the middle of the 19th century, first Persian and then Urdu were the 'court' languages of British colonial rule.

Urdu is essentially Hindi, with only differences in vocabulary that reflect its Islamic heritage. However, Hindi is written in the nagari script and Urdu in the Perso-Arabic script. The result was 'one language but two scripts.' And two scripts with different statuses. Urdu in Perso-Arabic was the court language/script, whereas Hindi/nagari was used in the market and home.

As the 19th century progressed, Hindi-speaking Hindus began to assert their voice in nationalist politics and demand that Hindi in the nagari script be adopted to replace Urdu in the Perso-Arabic script. The issue was only finalised resolved with the creation of Pakistan and India in 1947. Both Hindi and Urdu are among the 23 officially recognised languages of India.

4.   Tribal languages and scripts
The power of languages and scripts as markers of cultural identity is vividly demonstrated in the case of India's tribal populations. India has more than a hundred different tribal languages, mostly Tibeto-Burman but also Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic and Indo-Aryan. Of these, only two (Santali, an Austro-Asiatic language, and Bodo, a Tibeto-Burman language) are included among the nation's 23 official languages.

At the state level, too, tribal languages have little status. Each state has one or more official languages, but again only a few (Santali in Jharkhand, Bodo in Assam, Khasi and Garo in Meghalaya, Kokborok in Tripura and Mizo in Mizoram) are tribal languages.   Each of these state official languages, and especially Santali and Bodo at the national level, required sustained political struggle and sometimes armed conflict to win recognition.

The political weakness of tribal languages is also apparent in the curious fact that whereas in the 1950s new states were established on the basis of language (Madras/Tamil, Andhra Pradesh/Telugu, Maharashtra/Marathi, Gujarat/Gujarati,, Mysore/Kannada, Kerala/Malayalam), recent new states have been organised on the basis of tribal ethnicity (Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand).   Current demands for the future

states of Bodoland and Gorkhaland also focus on ethnicity rather than language. A tribal language, even when elevated to a state official language, lacks the political capital of the regional languages.

Tribal languages are also marginalised in the market place of speech. Most of them are endangered, dozens are on the brink of extinction and a few (such as Tolcha, Paite, Sengmai and Rangkas) are no longer spoken. An alarming statistic is that only 50% of tribal people speak a tribal language as their first language; the other 50% have acquired a dominant regional language (Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, etc.) as their mother tongue. Similarly, while most Indians speak two or three languages, very few speak a tribal language as their second or third tongue.

With one or two exceptions in central India, these tribal languages are further weakened by the fact that they are unscripted. 'Unscripted' is the best word because many are written in the orthography of a dominant language (usually Hindi, Tamil, English or Bengali); and a few groups in the northeast who practice a form of Buddhism write their language in scripts derived from Tibetan or Burmese scripts. Only two of the 100 tribal languages, however, are written in their own (recently invented) script. The others are unscripted.

Lacking a script in a highly literate and heavily scripted culture, such as India, is a sure mark of inferiority. It is thus not surprising that nearly all these tribal groups have stories that explain how they once had but then 'lost' their script. Many tribes have also attempted to invent or retrieve lost scripts, usually a form of nagari or roman. But these experiments in self-appointed literacy have failed. While academics continue to debate the accuracy of the term 'tribe,' the tribal groups themselves continue to live on the linguistic margins of a great civilisation.

5.   Conclusion
To conclude this unit, we can look at how cultural identity is imprinted in a person's name. For this purpose, consider a typical south Indian male name: E.V. Ramaswami Naicker.

- E stands for 'Erode', the birth place of the father or grandfather (kinship, family)
- V. stand for the father's or grandfather's first initial (kinship, family)
- Ramaswami is the personal Hindu name (religion)
- Naicker is the caste name

This name, with its four separate components, will be spoken in a specific language and written in that language's script. Identity (based on kinship, place, family, religion and caste) is thus articulated and inscribed for millions of people every day.

Reading

Required
        Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 386-399
        Dalmia and Sadana, *Modern Indian culture,* pp. 30-48
        Kachru et al. *Languages of South Asia,* pp. 31-48, 79-174

Recommended
        Brass, *Language, religion and politics in north India*
        Alam, *The languages of political Islam*
        Emeneau, *Language and linguistic areas*
        King**,** *One language, two scripts*

Essay #1 (select one of the following and write a 1,250-word essay)

1. Briefly describe the various elements of identity in India—caste, kinship, family, place, language, script, religion—select the one you believe is most salient and then explain your selection.

2. Outline the main features of the caste system and then suggest reasons why it is has endured for millennia, despite major political and social change.
3. In what ways does a typical family in a north Indian village both differ from and resemble your family?
4. Why is the lack of a script important in Indian culture?

Unit II **Religion**

It is altogether too easy to conflate Indian culture with religion. Such an equation downplays the significance of many other aspects of life, including those described in Unit 1 and others, such as economics and science. Conflating India with religion also ignores the many who are not religious and the few who are explicitly atheists. Nonetheless, religion is probably the single most prominent dimension of Indian culture, one that touches on and in some cases dominates other fields. Nothing else is quite so complex, sophisticated, and far-reaching as the systems of ideas, institutions and practices that constitute the array of Indian religions.

Two qualifications. First, the literary and narrative aspects of religious texts are described in more detail in the course 'The Literature of India'. Second, the emphasis in this course on modern culture means that Buddhism is considered only briefly; a more in-depth discussion of Buddhism (and Hinduism) would be appropriate for a course on Indian religions.

Week 4 Hinduism: Ancient

Outline

A. Introduction
B. Pre-Aryan elements
    1. seals and figurines in Harappa
    2. possible mother goddess cult, proto-Siva, fertility cult
C. Four Vedas
    1. Rig Veda, c. 1,500-1,200 BCE
        a. oldest religious text still in use
        b. themes:
            i.   origin and structure of cosmos
            ii. charms and curses
            iii. cattle wealth and cattle raids
            iv. power of speech, mantras
            v.   origin of four castes
        c. pantheon, similar to Indo-European pantheon
    2. Yajur, Sama and Atharva Vedas
        a. c. 1,200-800 BCE
        b. commentary on rituals, esp. fire sacrifice
    3. key principle of correspondence: sacrifice = creation
D. Upanishads
    1. part of later Vedic literature (Brahmanas and Aranyakas)
    2. new emphasis on internal contemplation
    3. knowledge of self more important than of sacrifice
    4. freedom from rebirth comes from knowledge that personal soul is same as underlying reality of world (*atman* = *brahman*)
E. Conclusion

1. Introduction

One of the reasons that religion is so deeply imbued in Indian culture must be its attested antiquity. When speakers of Sanskrit (or related Prakrit languages) migrated from the west, through the Khyber Pass and into the Indian subcontinent in the first half of the second millennium BCE, these Aryans brought with them a religious system, which over the centuries evolved into modern-day Hinduism. This ancient form of Hinduism, usually called Brahmanism or Vedic Hinduism, is known to us through the oral tradition of Sanskrit chants that accompanied it and is still alive today.

Ancient Sanskrit literature has two main divisions: 1) the four Vedas (the oldest surviving religious texts still in use anywhere in the world) and their commentaries; and 2) the Upanishads, which were composed (not written, but orally composed) in the period from 800 to 600 BCE. Later, beginning about 300 BCE and continuing until about 300 CE, a new kind of religious text appeared in the form of mythologies called *puranas*. The massive Hindu epics were compiled concurrently with these mythologies and drew from them. First, however, we have to consider what kind of religious ideas, practices and institutions might have been in India already, when the Aryans arrived.

2. Pre-Aryan elements

Clay seals and figurines from the Harappan culture or Indus Valley Civilisation (c. 2,500-1,500 BCE) show evidence of a possible mother goddess cult. There are also figures and scenes that are reminiscent of Siva in his association with the bull and other animals, phallus and yoga. Whether or not this represents a proto-Siva, we are more certain that other images are connected with fertility, and that the pipal tree (under which the Buddha found enlightenment) is also represented on seals. Finally, a bust of a bearded man has been identified as that of a priest, but this is far from convincing. In the end, since the writing of this civilisation remains undeciphered, scholars are left to an examination of this intriguing visual culture.

3. Four Vedas

The Rig Veda, orally composed in Sanskrit in approximately 1,500-1,200 BCE, is the oldest surviving religious text still in use. Its 1,028 verses contain pantheistic and poetic speculation about the cosmos, its origins and order, its guardians and enemies. Chief male deities include Varuna (guardian of *rita*, or cosmic order), Agni (fire), Indra (a sky warrior), Yama (lord of the underworld) the Sun and Moon. Vac (goddess of speech) and Ushas (Dawn) are the only prominent female deities. The Rig Veda also includes charms and curses, intended to protect the cattle-keeping Aryans from disease, accident and misfortune and demons. The Vedic pantheon is closely related to other Indo-European pantheons (Dyaus, the sky-father, for example, is cognate with Zeus).

A famous hymn describes how a primeval man was sacrificed to create the four social classes: Brahmins from the head, Kshatriyas (warriors) from the arms, Vaishyas (merchants) from the thighs and Sudras workers, servants) from the feet.

The three other, slightly later Vedas (Yajur, Sama and Atharva) also contain similar imprecations but focus primarily on rituals, especially the fire sacrifice which is the centre of Vedic religion. These texts describe and explain the complex techniques necessary for conducting the ceremonies. Here emphasis is upon the power of breath, the spoken words, and the one who speaks them, the Brahmin priests. Specific form of words, or mantras, are said to be imbued with magical power.

These mytho-poetic-philosophical Vedic texts reflect the world and the imagination of ancient pastoralists. Recurring topics include the wealth of cows, the heroism of cow-raids, the use of horses and horse-chariots in war, the vast night sky, the value of sons and the intoxicating juice of the *soma* plant.

These materialist concerns are woven into a sophisticated contemplation of reality, particularly a series of correspondences that early Indians saw underlying visible surfaces (performance of sacrifice = creation of cosmos, e.g.). The Vedic world was also an optimistic one, filled with wonder and brilliance, expansion and growth, gambling and drinking. It all culminated, in the eschatological view that successful sacrifices would secure one a permanent place in heaven. Only toward the end of the Vedic period, about 800-600 BCE, did doubt creep in with the awful prospect of 'redeath,' the return to earth when one's merit was exhausted in the afterlife.

4.	Upanishads

In the first millennium BCE, Aryans also composed prose texts in Sanskrit: commentaries (Brahmanas), explanations (Aranyakas) and mystical interpretations (Upanishads) of the 4 Vedas. In these texts, speculation turned away from the largely external, sanguine outlook of the Vedas and toward internal contemplation. In broad terms, the early emphasis on ritual as action was replaced by an examination of ritual as symbol. Knowledge of the sacrifice became more important than the doing of the sacrifice. And the greatest knowledge was knowledge of the self or soul (*atman*).

In earlier Vedic texts, the *atman* appeared distinct from the *brahman* (the underlying reality of the universe). The grand conclusion of the Upanishads it that the *atman* and the *brahman* are one, that there is no difference between individual selves/souls and the ultimate reality. This realisation is possibly only when a person understands, through meditation, that the *atman* is pure consciousness and that the body is a mere manifestation of that consciousness. The flux of fleeting impressions that make up the material world is unreal because it is impermanent and therefore subject to death. We can escape this endless wheel of birth and death only if we achieve the pure consciousness of *atman* = *brahman*.   Then we do not die because we are not born. While most of these ideas are not original with the Upanishads, they receive full exposition only in these later texts.

5.	Conclusion

The continuing significance of the Vedas and Upanishads illustrates a general point about Indian culture. The first thing to be said is that (with very few exceptions) Hindus today do not follow the practices and ideas found in these ancient texts. The gods and goddesses are virtually unknown, the sacrifices have long been abandoned and few people understand what the Upanishads teach.   Only the fire sacrifice remains, in a much diminished form in Hindu wedding ceremonies.

Although ignored in practice, the Vedas are a powerful marker of identity for today's Hindus because they are ancient, oral and the preserve of specialists. They thus represent the authority of antiquity, the sacred word, the security of tradition, the mystique of the original. They were orally composed, memorised through complex techniques and then transmitted from generation to generation of Brahmins for over three thousand years. Written texts (from the 11th c. CE) and printed texts (19th c. CE) are incidental to the authority of the Vedas. Their restricted orality has (until recently) protected them from the messy controversies of scholarly and public examination. Their antiquity ensures that they represent the powerful category of 'tradition', which can be manipulated to accommodate new needs. Whereas other groups work hard to invent or retrieve a tradition upon which to pin their identity, Hindus have the gift of the Vedas.

Reading

Required
	Basham, *Wonder that was India,* pp. 1-43, 232-256
	Fuller, *Camphor Flame*, pp. 1-28

Recommended
	Doniger, *The Hindus,* pp. 85-198
	Embree, *Sources of Indian tradition*, vol. 1, pp. 3-39
	Staal, *Discovering the Vedas,* pp, 3-138

Discussion topics/questions

1.	Provide a summary description of Vedic literature, giving approximate dates and types of texts.
2.	Draw an historical outline of Indian culture, as studied thus far (and add to this as the course progresses).
3.	Briefly list the major Vedic deities and their characteristics.

4. In what ways do the Upanishads differ from earlier texts?

Week 5 **Buddhism and Jainism**

<u>Outline</u>

A. Introduction
    1. new religions (c. 500 BCE) but continuity with Upanishads
    2. doubts over efficacy of Vedic sacrifice and authority of Brahmins
    3. ethical concerns appeal to new urban groups
B. Buddhism
    1. Siddharata Gautama and 4 Noble Truths
    2. differences from Hinduism
        a. rejects authority of Vedas and Brahmins
        b. rejects concept of atman; no soul exists
        c. focused on life of a human being
    3. early history
        a. patronage in 3rd c. BCE
        b. Theravada school: Sri Lanka, Burma, SE Asia
        c. Mahayana school: Tibet, China, Japan
    4. later history
        a. decline from c. 1200 CE, from Islamic invasions
        b. lay Buddhists return to Hindu roots
        c. continues to be vehicle for social change
C. Jainism
    1. founded by Mahavira, last of *tirtankara*s
    2. principles
        a. extreme asceticism
        b. all life has an indestructible soul (*jiva*)
        c. non-harm (*ahimsa)*
    3. history
        a. spread in west, Deccan and south
        b. declined in face of Hindu devotionalism
        c. today a small but thriving religion, esp. in western India

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction
The new speculation expressed in the Upanishads was part of a rich philosophical culture that developed during the first millennium BCE and continued through early centuries of the Common Era. Teachers, sages, sects and doctrines of all persuasions sprung up and spread in the form of sceptics, materialists, idealists, monists, dualists, ethicists and ascetics. Most were bright but brief flames, but two led to the founding of new 'religions.' Siddhartha Gautama and Mahavira were near contemporaries in the fifth and sixth centuries BCE and both drew patronage largely from new urban communities that arose in the wake of the disintegration of the old political system. Rulers, merchants and artisans were particularly keen to understand the laws of karma and how to escape it; for them, ethical action and its rewards were a goal worth pursuing. Doubts about the efficacy of the Vedic sacrifice to bring wealth, and of the infallibility of the Brahmins who conducted them, came easily to people who no longer herded cattle but ruled cities and sold commodities in settled towns. They were ready to accept new forms of authority.

2.   Buddhism

The traditional dates of Siddhartha Gautama (the historical Buddha, or 'Enlightened One') are 563-483 BCE. Over the eight decades of his life in north India, mostly in modern Bihar, he built up a following based on his 'Four Noble Truths':

1. Life is suffering (*dukkha*).
2. The cause of suffering is desire
3. The cessation of suffering is *nirvana.*
4. The eightfold path leads to the cessation of suffering.

The 8-fold path then elaborates the forms of right action and thought, including the absolute necessity of meditation. These steps evolved into the Buddhist ideals of detachment, non-violence and compassion.

Gautama's religion grew out of the same philosophical tradition as the Upanishads but with significant differences. He accepted the principle of karma, as a process of reward or punishment for one's deeds. However, he extended the speculations of the Upanishadic sages about the nature of reality and argued that the only way to escape the pain of rebirth is to rid oneself of desire, including the desire to be reborn. More significantly, he rejected the scriptural authority of the Vedas and of Brahmins (Buddhism, as well as Jainism, is thus often called a 'heterodox' religion).

The most explicit philosophical difference is Buddhism's rejection of the central Hindu concept of *atman*, the transmigrating individual soul that endures the cycle of life and death. That idea of a solid soul was dissolved in the Buddha's meditation on the impermanence of all matter. He declared that there is no soul, a concept known as *anatman*. Only pure consciousness exists.

Another significant difference is that the Buddha provided lay Buddhists with a model life and a narrative illustration of religious tenets. Born a prince, Gautama left the luxury of the palace and undertook the task of gaining knowledge and then enlightenment. Buddhism, like Christianity and Islam, but unlike Hinduism and Judaism, is thus centred on an individual, his life, his trials and his ultimate triumph. Unlike Christ, however, the Buddha was merely a human being, although he was soon deified and worshipped after his death.

More than two hundred years after the death of Gautama, Buddhism became an all-India institution under the patronage of the Mauryan king Ashoka (3rd c. BCE). Ashoka became a lay Buddhist and went on a year-long pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the new religion, which included the places of the Buddha's birth, first teaching and death. Ashoka also propagated Buddhist ideas through his 33 stone edicts and by sending messengers to regions in the northwest; his own son went to Sri Lanka and introduced the new religion there.

By the advent of the Common Era, Buddhism had spread all over India and developed sophisticated philosophical traditions and elaborate visual arts, including sculpture and painting. Buddhist communities supported monasteries and built large reliquary mounds (stupas) and magnificent rock-cut halls with wall-paintings. Soon Buddhism had divided into two schools. Theravada Buddhism flourished in Sri Lanka, Burma and much of Southeast Asia, where it remains a central part of cultural and political life. Mahayana Buddhism, with its greater elaboration of devotionalism, iconography and philosophy, made its way over the Himalayas into Tibet, China and Japan.

Within India, however, Buddhism ceased to be a major religion from the 12th c. CE onward. It had grown out of Hinduism and, in large measure, it returned to Hinduism. When patronage was cut off by Islamic invasions, lay Buddhist communities turned back to the Hindu priests and practices that they had, in fact, never fully abandoned. Popular Buddhism, as opposed to the abstruse traditions of ascetics and thinkers, retained many Hindu gods and goddesses. Since Buddhism scorned the ritual obsession of Hinduism it never developed a set of life-cycle rituals to replace those of its predecessor. And so, lay Buddhists continued to employ Hindu priests to celebrate their births, marriages and deaths.

Today Buddhism is practiced by only about 2% of India's vast population. However, despite a massive decline since medieval times, it continues to symbolise 'Indian-ness' as an ancient religion, as a doctrine of non-violence and as the source of great art and architecture that represents the 'past.' Moreover, its rejection of Brahmins as authority figures has equipped it to become a vehicle for social change. During the mid-twentieth century, for example, it emerged in western India as a powerful political movement against the domination of high-caste Hindus. It is also worth noting that the national emblem of India, which appears on passports and many official insignia, is an image of three lions on a Buddhist pillar.

3.   Jainism

Jainism, by contrast, never left India but remains a thriving, albeit small, religious community within it. Like Buddhism, the doctrines of its founder Mahavira ('Great Hero', c. 599-527 BCE) are elaborations of the Upanishads. Mahavira is considered to be the last of 24 *tirtankara*s ('ford-crossers) or enlightened beings who provide spiritual authority for Jains.

Jains take the idea of asceticism to the extreme and practice forms of bodily purification that might strike even the ordinary Hindu as puritanical. Jains, in fact, were largely responsible for developing vegetarianism, and it is no surprise that Mahatma Gandhi came from a Jain background.

The central tenet of Jainism is the indestructible and immortal individual soul (*jiva*), which differentiates it from both Hinduism and Buddhism. Buddhism rejects the concept of a solid soul (*atman*), and Hinduism argues that the soul is the same as the underlying reality of the universe (*atman = brahman*).   Philosophical Hinduism is thus a form of monism, while Jains believe in the plurality of souls.

 Because all life has a soul, Jains practice a daily life of non-harming (*ahimsa*), including avoiding breathing in and killing insects. Here again Jain influence on Gandhi is obvious. Like Buddhists, they practice detachment from the material world because attachment leads to desire and then to harm, to oneself and others. One sect has abandoned clothes and follows a life of wandering naked.

Again like Buddhists, Jains dispensed with Brahmins as a hereditary priestly caste and put emphasis on monks and nuns to seek their own salvation. Concessions to popular religion meant the maintenance of temples and rituals, but the ceremonies are usually conducted by lay people or a specialist who is not a Jain. However, in contrast to Buddhism, Jainism retained many Hindu rituals practices and ideas.

In the centuries after Mahavira's death, Jainism spread mainly in the west, the Deccan and the south. Some of the earliest inscriptions in any Indian language are the Tamil letters carved in caves by Jains in the 2nd c. BCE. Tamil kings patronised Jainism for centuries until the Hindu bhakti movement turned its fierce energy against them.

Today Jainism is concentrated in the west, particularly Gujarat, and particularly among merchants and businessmen. While the number of Jains in India (.05% of the population) is less than that of Buddhists (2.0%), they have remained a distinct religious community probably because of their extreme views which has made them exclusive. In their emphasis on vegetarianism and bodily purity they occupy a high status in the social caste system.

Reading

Required
        Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 256-297
        Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 261-274

Recommended
        Ainslie, *Sources of Indian tradition,* vol. 1, pp. 43-199
        Laidlaw, *Riches and renunciation*

Babb, *The Absent lord*

1. Write a brief biography of the historical Buddha.
2. Describe the key contrasts and continuities between Buddhism and Jainism.
3. Outline the primary differences between Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism.
4. Was Buddhism mainly a theological or a social movement?

Week 6 Hinduism: Medieval

Outline

A.   Introduction
B.   Devotionalism (*bhakti*)
    1. intense personal relation with deity
    2. *Bhagavad Gita,* in Sanskrit, Krishna's advice to Arjuna
    3. poet-saints, in regional languages
    4. Guru Nanak and Sikhism
C.   Epics
    1. *Mahabharata*
        a. story of brothers and war, loyalty and morality
        b. contains *Bhagavad Gita*
    2. 4 Ends of Man
        a.   dharma: right conduct
        b.   artha: material prosperity
        c.   kāma: sensual pleasure
       d. mokṣa: spiritual liberation
 3. *Ramayana*
        a. story focused on hero
        b. crossed boundaries to southeast and east Asia   D. Myths (*purana*s)
    1. 18 major Sanskrit *purana*s
    2. regional *purana*s

Lecture

1.   Introduction
During the early centuries of the Common Era, new ideas and texts emerged that gave Hinduism the shape we recognise today. This week's lecture focuses on four central elements of Hinduism that emerged during this period: devotionalism, epics, the '4 Ends of Man' and myths. Indians also produced a dazzling array of other texts at this time, mostly in Sanskrit, on government, grammar, dramaturgy and law. The 'law books' in particular are important because they are a manual of a Hindu's life.

2.   Devotionalism (*bhakti*)
The second great shift in Indian religions (after the turn to contemplation in the Upanishads) was the development of a devotionalism known as *bhakti* ('to share in', 'to belong to'). Characterised by an intense and personal attachment to a particular god or goddess, saint or guru, bhakti is the life-blood of Hinduism. As noted in last week's lecture, in the period from about 800 BCE to the early centuries of the Common Era India was a ferment of religious and philosophical ideas. While the bodily severity

of asceticism, the conceptual purity of monism and the rigours of morality engendered some of the greatest thinkers of ancient India, millions of others sought religious experience through an emotional, sometimes ecstatic connection to anthropomorphic divine beings.

In this respect, the bhakti movement was not an innovation but rather a return to religious scenes represented on the clay seals of the Indus Valley. Until the bhakti movement, however, religious thought had been expressed only in Sanskrit, the preserve of ritual specialists, and not in the languages spoken by ordinary people. It was not until poets sang their religious songs in the languages of the market place that we have expressions of Hinduism as understood by common people.

Bhagavad Gita
This shift in religious expression and literary genre was hinted at in the Upanishads but first finds explicit articulation in the *Bhagavad Gita (*c. 100-300 CE), which is a late addition to the *Mahabharata* epic.   In it the god Krishna tells his devotee Arjuna to think only of him, as he is the totality of the world, both known and unknown. In the epic story, Krishna, a manifestation (*avatar*) of the Vedic god Visnu, is a charioteer who counsels the warrior Arjuna on the importance of following one's appointed role in life. Arjuna does not want to kill his brothers, whom he faces across the battlefield, but Krishna explains to him 1) that souls do not die; 2) that, as a warrior, he is duty-bound (*dharma)* to kill; 3) that work/action (*karma*) is required for world order; 4) that he must act without desire (*kama*) for the fruits of his action; and 5) that he can gain detachment through devotion (*bhakti*) to him, Krishna.

poet-saints
The *Bhagavad Gita* was composed in Sanskrit, but the bhakti movement spread through the breadth and depth of India by the songs of poet-saints in regional languages, especially Tamil, Marathi, Kannada, Hindi and Bengali. As early as the 4th c. CE, and continuing until the 10th c., Tamil poets (called Nayanars) composed songs in praise of Siva, usually a specific form of Siva associated with a place or mythic story. During the same period, another group of Tamil poets (Alvars) sang devotional songs to Visnu. These thousands of songs, which were compiled in manuscripts and performed by singers attached to temples, record the intense emotions of the devotee, who assumes the role of lover or beloved toward the god. Tamil bhakti songs soon inspired others, tracing a geographical itinerary across India, beginning in Kannada and ending up in Assamese. In some cases, the bhakti poets were part of a social reform movement, railing against caste inequality or the folly of sectarianism.

Guru Nanak and Sikhism
The role of bhakti in Indian culture is well illustrated by the fifteenth-century saint Guru Nanak, who founded a reform movement that developed into Sikhism. His Panjabi songs reveal a search for a god beyond categories: 'There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim.' An iconoclastic dimension in Sikhism explicitly rejected the authority of a priestly class, although authority is vested in a series of 'gurus' and their songs and sayings. Sikhism is also shaped by place, the Panjab, and its history. The warrior ethic of Sikhism was forged through opposition to Muslim armies in the 17th century and reinvigorated in wars against the British in the 19th. While Sikhism is a minority religion in an all-India perspective (less than 2% of the total population), it is the dominant religion in the populous Panjab.

3.	Epics
The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are, unlike the bhakti songs, pan-Indian texts originally composed in Sanskrit. Like the devotionalist poems, however, they have generated versions in every major Indian language and express the ideas that form modern Hinduism.

Mahabharata
The vast, sprawling epic of the *Mahabharata* was composed in Sanskrit over a number of centuries. When completed about 400 CE it had amassed 100,000 verses (more than 8 times the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* put together). 'If it's not in the Mahabharata,' a saying goes, 'it doesn't exist.' It is a dramatic story of brothers engaged in a destructive war, including dilemmas of loyalty and morality, the sorrow of loss and death, subterfuge and humiliation, and the final folly of victory over slain kin. Deep and nuanced, like the Greek epics and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, the encyclopaedic

Mahabharata is now told, sung, danced, enacted and dramatised in shadow puppetry and shown on TV.

4.   Ends of Man

As mentioned above, it also contains the *Bhagavad Gita*, with its early expression of bhakti. In addition, and one reason that it remains a wellspring of Hinduism, it articulates the 'Four Ends of Man.'

1.   dharma: right conduct
2.   artha: material prosperity
3.   kāma: sensual pleasure
4.   mokṣa: spiritual liberation

These four goals, which appear in a variety of early Sanskrit texts, notably the *Bhagavad Gita* and the law book of Manu, provide Hindus with a guide to life. Nearly every difficult decision, question or problem is answered with reference to these four goals, each of which has its proper place in the course of a normal life.

Ramayana

India's other great epic is the *Ramayana*, also composed originally in Sanskrit, about the same period of time as the *Mahabharata* and also focused on a manifestation of Visnu (Rama), is also now found in hundreds of versions in regional languages because it dramatises both bhakti and the Four Ends of Man. The chief differences are that this epic is shorter and more tightly focused on a central hero, Rama the prince who is also Vishnu, and that the story crossed cultural boundaries and found audiences in Tibet and Southeast Asia.

Even within India, the number of versions and forms, in performing arts, folktales, field songs and temple sculpture, is countless. More than 25 versions are known in Sanskrit alone, with many hundreds more in the regional languages, including several by Buddhist and Jain authors. The Hindi version of Tulsi Das (15th c. CE) and the Tamil version by Kampan (?11th c. CE) stand out as jewels of literary perfection in these two important languages.

What could be more interesting than the story of a prince having to seek out and free his wife held captive by a demon king on an island? When one adds court intrigues, jealous step-mothers, brothers who choose loyalty over morality, flying monkeys and boulder-throwing giants, one begins to understand why this story is a masterpiece of world literature.

For many Indians, it is a story of good against evil, a moral tale that is often invoked as part of social and political discourse. For this reason, the Rama story provides a pan-Indian language of characters and dispositions that everyone understands.

4. Myths (*puranas*)

Bhakti devotionalism and the Four Ends of Man were also expressed in another genre known as *purana*s ('old texts'). Composed about the same time as the epics, these vast compilations of mythology, cosmogony, astrology, genealogy and philosophy, helped Hinduism to make the transition from the Vedas to its modern practices. Tradition lists 18 'great' Sanskrit *purana*s, but there are many more, including hundreds composed in the regional languages.   The 275 Tamil temple *purana*s, or *sthalapuranas*, for example, narrate the mythologies associated with major Siva temples in the south.

Resembling the *Mahabharata* in their scope, one can say that the *puranas* are more a tradition than a text. And as a traditional explanation, of everything from the creation of the world to the details of a particular ritual, they are the reference books of Hinduism. If one has a question about the myths of Siva, Visnu or Durga, these wide-ranging *puranas* provide the answer.

Reading

Required
> Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 297-342, 407-415
> Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 400-424
> Fuller, *Camphor flame*, pp. 3-154

Recommended
> Doniger, *The Hindus,* pp. 338-472
> Ainslie, *Sources of Indian tradition,* vol. 1, pp. 203-378

<u>Discussion topics/questions</u>

1. List and describe the *avatar*s of Visnu.
2. What are the chief characteristic of Devi, the Hindu goddess?
3. Provide a plot summary of the *Ramayana*.
4. Why is the *Mahabharata* so central to Indian culture?
5. What is the role of the sacrifice in both early and later (popular) Hinduism?

Week 7 **Hinduism: Local**

<u>Outline</u>

A. Introduction
    1. localised practices and ideas
    2. continuity with ancient Hinduism
B. Pantheon
    1. layered: Sanskrit deity; warrior deity; 'devil'
    2. 'devil' = deified dead person
    3. formation of cult of deified dead
C. Place
    1. specific location, events, people
    2. localised temple or shrine
    3. localised topography, pilgrimage
D. Practices
    1. animal sacrifice
    2. non-Brahmin ritual specialists
    3. spirit possession (= communication with deities)
E. Conclusions
    1. formative processes of local Hinduism
        a. elevation of humans to deities
        b. descent of deities to humans
    2. symmetrical, cyclical movement from earth to sky

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction
The final piece of the Hinduism puzzle is what we might call local religion. This refers to the myriad of practices, beliefs, god, goddesses, demons, spirits, specialists and iconography found in specific localities all over India. And while the terminology is typically Hindu, the practices and ideas and forms are often found among Muslims, Jains, Buddhists and Christians. Indeed, in some north Indian contexts, local Hinduism is barely distinguishable from local Islam; often only the names differ.

This layer of Hinduism has been labelled 'folk', 'popular' and 'village.' I prefer the term 'local' because it points to the specificity of place that characterises many of the elements of this type of Hinduism: the history of the deities, and the localised nature of the participants, performers and patrons.

Local Hinduism is not apart from Vedic Hinduism or classical Hinduism of the great Sanskrit texts, nor less from the devotional movement of bhakti. Instead, the local level exists in a variety of relations with the other levels of this inclusive religious tradition. In some places there is continuity, in others there is divergence. But, even in the latter case, local tradition presents a contrasting and not a conflicting perspective.

2.	Pantheons

A typical local pantheon might have a form of Siva or Visnu at the top, followed by local figures, usually goddesses, said to be a form of Parvati, Kali or Sakti. Next come guardian or warrior gods, with local histories only, and finally a category of 'spirits' or 'ghosts' or 'devils' (*pey*, picasu, *pir*, *bhut*, *jinn*). This last group is the most instructive because they illustrate the process by which human beings, who die an unnatural, premature or violent death, are transformed into figures of superhuman powers. A man, perhaps a man with a striking personality or charisma, is killed in a local caste dispute; his kin tell his story; a bard composes a song; a woman claims that she was attacked by a 'ghost'; and someone identifies the ghost as the dead man. A small shrine is built, not by the dead man's kin, but by those who fear his retribution, and rituals are performed to neutralise or counteract his punitive powers. A god and his cult have been born.

3.	Place

That cult is located in a specific place, with particular events and persons. Many of these are cults of the deified dead, which are usually limited in geographical spread—perhaps a few villages—and confined to middle and low castes. Other cults may achieve a wider following, sometimes covering an entire state. The deity at the heart of regional cults is invariably a form or manifestation of Siva. Whether in a handful of villages or covering an entire district, these local cults are always closely associated with topography. A shrine, perhaps only a single stone, may stand where a woman threw herself down a well. A temple is placed on a hill where the local form of Siva danced all night. This physical localisation is also a prominent feature of the devotional songs, which described the god of the meeting rivers and the goddess of the black mountain. The temple or shrine is the focal point of an annual festival, where hundreds of thousands of people converge for days of celebration. Pilgrimage, the movement of people to a place, is a vital dimension of local Hinduism.

4.	Practices

Local Hindu cults and festival often sacrifice animals, such as bulls, water buffaloes, goats and chickens. While this practice shows continuity with Vedic Hinduism, it represents a break with later Sanskritic, Brahminical levels. Brahmins and high-caste Hindus consider sacrifice, and death in general, as polluting. Death is also seen as powerful, and possibly dangerous, in local Hinduism, but it is a power that local people wish to harness for protection and prosperity.

Even in non-sacrificial ceremonies, the ritual specialists of local Hinduism are invariably non-Brahmin and typically middle or low-caste. Similarly, they do not chant in Sanskrit but rather in regional languages. There is typically no institutionalisation of this local priesthood, no training or investiture, only a learning by observation and practice.

Another major contrast between local Hinduism and more classical, textual levels is the prominence of spirit possession in the former. In the epics and *purana*s, and even in most bhakti texts (although there are important exceptions), Siva, Visnu or Devi does not actually enter the body of his devotees. Rather he or she dispenses grace, bestows protection or grants knowledge to the worshipper. In local cults, by contrast, and especially in those of the deified dead, the gods, goddesses and ghosts are induced to possess worshippers.

Possession facilitates communication with these powerful figures. When a local god, wrathful or benign, is dancing in front of you in the form of your neighbour, he can be spoken to and pleaded with. Predictions about the weather and the health of one's animals are more forthcoming and precise. Promises spoken to a living god, rather than murmured to a stone statue, are more likely to be kept. This accessibility to gods and goddesses is a powerful driver of local Hinduism.

5.   Conclusion

Local Hindu cults are shaped by three processes: 1) deification of humans; 2) the identification of these deified figures with more regional or even pan-Indian deities; and 3) the descent of regional or pan-Indian deities who take local forms. The first two processes are stages of a single movement from humans on earth to deities in heaven. A human, usually the victim of a terrible death, is elevated, given powers and approaches perfection. The third and last process is the reverse movement, the descent of a deity to take human form on earth (the *avatar* phenomenon). Now, the great gods of Siva, Visnu and the goddess play human roles, live in families, make mistakes and suffer loss.

In conclusion, these symmetrical movements form a continuous circulation of figures from earth to heaven and back again. In this way, the deification of local figures is balanced by the localisation, even domestication, of distant Sanskrit deities. This fluid dynamic does not produce a uniform system but rather a coherent whole known as Hinduism.

Reading

Required

        Fuller, *Camphor Flame*, pp. 155-262
        Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 229-260

Recommended

        Eck, *India*
        Blackburn, 'Death and deification'
        Gold, *Fruitful journeys*
        Babb, *Divine hierarchy*

Discussion topics/questions

    1. How does the village-based Hinduism described in Mines and Lamb and/or in Fuller differ from the Hinduism found in Sanskrit texts?
    2. What is the role of pilgrimage in modern Hinduism?
    3. List the major goddesses in Vedic, medieval and modern Hinduism.
    4. What are the key features of bhakti, or Hindu devotionalism?

Week 8**: Islam and Christianity**

Outline

A. Islam
    1. historical overview
        a.   little theological contrast with Islam elsewhere
        b.   8th c. CE onward, Muslims move into India
        c.   C. 1200-1850 Muslim rule over most of India
    2. Sufism
        a.   part of Persian culture brought by Muslims
        b.   centred on saint, saints' tombs
        c.   comparable to bhakti
            i.   intense longing for God
            ii.   songs sung in local languages
            iii. key role in regional literatures
    3. local Islam
        a.   cults of mystic saints

          b.   festivals at tombs, large and small
      4. legacy
          a.   Muslims often viewed as 'other'; war and violence
          b.   Islam facilitated cultural exchange
          c.   Persian cultural forms in architecture, poetry, music
B.   Christianity
      1. Colonial history
          a. followed missionary and colonial bases on southwest and southeast coasts
          b. 19th c. evangelists in tribal areas, northeast
      2. force for social change
      3. positive contribution in education, medicine, literature

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Islam

Historical overview
No major theological differences separate Indian Muslims from Muslims in the Arab or Persian world. However, the practice of Islam in India has been influenced by its cultural context, including Hinduism. The significance of Islam in Indian culture is varied and broad, but also historically and geographically defined. From the 8th century CE onward Muslim armies moved into northwest and western India, not in large numbers but in sufficient military force to eventually defeat Hindu rulers.

For more than 600 years (c. 1200-1850), Muslim rulers controlled most of India, either directly or indirectly. Only the far south escaped Muslim rule; indeed, some Muslim communities in Tamil Nadu and Kerala descend from sea-faring traders who landed on the west coast at about the same time as the Muslim armies moved into the northwest land route. Therefore, and unlike their northern and central counterparts, these southern Muslim communities were not linked to court cultures. Instead they assimilated into local cultures, where they speak the regional language instead of Urdu.   The Muslim-dominated court culture of central and north India brought major forms of Persian culture to India. The apogee of Muslim rule was the Mughal Empire (1526- 1857 CE), the fabled, opulent and internally violent dynasty that left not only the Taj Mahal but a whole treasure trove of images and stereotypes of India for both Indians and the outside world.

Sufism
One of the most important Persian imports was a mystical form of Islam known as Sufism. During the early period, from about 1200 to 1500 CE, Muslims brought with them many of the major Sufi orders from Iraq and Persia. Once transplanted in north India, these orders flourished, with courtly patronage and popular acceptance. The tombs of mystic saints (*pir*) became centres of pilgrimage, worship and learning. Then, as now, these monuments are revered by Muslims and Hindus alike. Sufism also shaped the thinking of Akbar, the famous 16th-century Mughal emperor, who fashioned an eclectic religion, combining Islam, Hindu and western ideas.

Sufism may be regarded as an Islamic form of bhakti (described in week 6). Like the bhakti poet-saints, Sufi saints composed and sang songs of intense personal longing, including agony and pleasure, for God and for spiritual release. Sufi songs differ somewhat in that many are focused on a Sufi saint as a conduit to God, rather than on Allah himself. The songs of the Sufi saints also contributed greatly to the development of regional literatures, shaping the speech of common people as oral genres that evolved into literary ones. These songs reached Hindu audiences and played a major role in blurring the religious lines that so firmly separate Muslims and Hindus in other spheres. Sufism certainly inspired many conversions to Islam, although it is impossible to disentangle spiritual from material motivations.

Local Islam
At the local level, all over north and central India, Sufi Islam is often indistinguishable from Hinduism. This is especially true of the cults of mystic saints, which are a Muslim version of the cults of the deified dead described in the previous week's lecture. The large tombs of the mystic saints, seen in Delhi, Lucknow and other major Muslim centres, have their counterparts on the local level in a small

shrine, often simply a stone or a tree. Both are sites of major pilgrimages to celebrate the death of the master. It is significant that the mystic-saint patronised in a large courtly context, such as Delhi, and the local mystic-saint, known only in a few villages, are both called *pir*. The festivals held at these tombs are similar to those conducted at local Hindu sites. Music, ecstatic dancing, possession by the deity and the use of amulets and charms are all employed as ways of communicating with the deified dead.

Legacy
From its initial presence in India as 'the invader,' through the nationalist politics of the late 19th century to Independence and beyond, Islam has often been seen by Hindus as the 'other.' While most Hindus (and Sikhs) and Muslims lived in harmony and, as Sufism demonstrates, in some areas forged common practices, the invader image has been reinforced in recent history by war and violence between Muslims and Hindus in the subcontinent. The slaughter of Partition (1947-1948) was followed by wars with Pakistan in 1948, 1965 and 1971-72. Communal killings on a large scale have recurred in the 1990s and first decade of the 21st century.

As the outsider, however, Islam has also facilitated cultural exchange between India and the Muslim world. From about 1200 CE onward, successive Muslim courts (of Turkish, Afghan, Mongol and Persian lineage) became the conduit that brought Arabic thought and learning to the subcontinent. Equally important, these Muslim courts patronised Persian literary genres and aesthetics, which went on to exercise a deep influence on Indian culture. Everyday realities such as local administrative divisions (*taluk*) and Indian film music are part of this living legacy of Islam in India.

The more obvious monumental buildings, the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, the magnificent tombs and massive forts scattered all across north and central India, are now viewed through the forgiving eyes of nostalgia as reminders of a glorious past.

2.   Christianity
Christianity has a long history in India, but (even more than Islam) is geographically restricted and limited in its pan-Indian impact. Christians are an influential part of local culture in the places where they first arrived in India, largely as an adjunct to colonialism. The only exception to this colonial pattern are the Syrian Christians, who have lived in Kerala, on the southwest coast since the 7th c. CE.

Significant Christian influence in India began with the arrival of the Portuguese, on the same coast, in 1498. These Portuguese Jesuits were followed by German, Danish and Swedish Lutherans, French Catholics, English and Welsh Baptists, English Protestants and, finally, American Baptists. All tended to work on the southeast and southwest coasts, including the colonial cities of Goa, Cochin, Madras and Calcutta. From the mid-19th century onward, Baptists pushed into the isolated tribal regions of northeast India. Today, Goa and Kerala on the southwest coast, parts of the southeast coast of Tamil Nadu and the northeastern states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya have thriving and culturally dominant Christian communities.

Christianity, like Buddhism, has been a catalyst for social change in India. Most converts, especially to Protestant churches, come from low and Untouchable castes. Converts have been attracted not only by a promise of equality but also the quality of education and medical care associated with Christian missions throughout the country. Indeed, these institutions, including colleges and medical schools, are admired by all communities and have created a largely favourable stereotype of the religion. In broad cultural terms, Christians have also played a prominent role in the history of Malayalam and Tamil literatures, particularly in the development of the novel.

Again, like Islam (the other outsider religion), the doctrine of Christianity has not changed in India but its practices have. The low castes who converted from Hinduism two or three centuries ago did not abandon all their religious ideas and practices. Spirit possession ('devil dancing') and animal sacrifices were banned for Protestant converts, but many other ritual practices continued, albeit in modified form. A Christian marriage, for example, is often little different from a Hindu one.

The largely positive view of Christianity has begun to shift in recent decades, largely due to the foreign-funded evangelism that has sought converts in new parts of the country. Christianity has

spread like wildfire through the mountainous state of Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast, provoking protest and some destruction of property. Churches have also been attacked, on a larger scale, in the eastern state of Orissa.

Reading

Required
>   Clark-Decès, *Anthropology of India*, pp. 241-294
>   Flueckiger, *In Amma's room*, pp. 36-105, 168-234

Recommended
>   Mosse, *The saint in the banyan tree*
>   Frykenberg, *Christianity in India*

Essay #2 (select one of the following and write a 1,250-word essay)

1. Islam and Christianity are 'outsider' religions (or at least religions that arrived much later than the Sanskrit-speaking Aryans).   Which of them has adapted more fully in the context of Indian culture?
2. Local (popular) Hinduism obviously exhibits continuities with earlier practices and ideas. Are those continuities more or less significant than the equally obvious contrasts?
3. Explain the central idea of the Upanishads that *atman* is *brahman*.
4. Many adherents claim that Buddhism is summed up in the 4 Noble Truths. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this argument?
5. There is a fundamental tension in Buddhism between annihilation of the self/soul (*anatman*) and the ethical demands of non-violence and compassion. How can a non-existent soul/person show compassion to others? First describe the alleged tension and then answer the question.

Unit III **Performing Arts**

India's performing arts, not less than its religions, are recognised as among the world's most complex and enduring cultural forms. Music, painting, dance, drama and theatre have both ancient textual authority and a bewildering array of local practices.   And again, while we might want to identify 'classical' and 'local/folk' types, we should also emphasise the historical continuities between them.

Week 9   Music

Outline

A. Introduction
B. Classical music
    1. history
        a. textual sources in Sanskrit and Tamil
        b. Persian forms (c. 12thc. CE) precipitate split into two major traditions
    2. divergence of common tradition
        a. both traditions draw on epics and myths
        b. both based on *raga*s and tala
        c. Carnatic emphasis on song
        d. Hindusthani emphasis on improvisation
        e. wide differences in instruments
        f. history of violin illustrates multiple sources
    2 Hindustani music

                a.   begins with Muslim courts, c. 12th c. CE

                b.   Amir Khusrau (1253-1325 CE) is key figure

                c.   Tansen (16th c. CE) is putative source of lineages

       3 Carnatic music

                a. Purandara Dasa (1484-1564 CE) legendary founder

                b. three historical figures in 17-18th c. are source of today's
tradition

                c.   rare tradition that unifies all four southern states

    C. Folk Music

                a. role of percussive instruments in Hindu and Islamic cults

                b. collective singing common

                c.   songs often lampoon status figures

Lecture

1.   Introduction

The significance of sound in Indian culture is evident in the ancient Vedic tradition, in which chanting and singing are highly cultivated arts. Speech is even deified in the form of the goddess Vac. Correct sound production was considered essential for cosmic order as well as capable of creating good and evil for individuals. Today that belief still underlies thousands of rituals and ceremonies; a single misplaced syllable in a particular prayer, it is said, can result in an unintended death. Although India is far from unique in this belief in the power of sound, the sheer number of musical traditions, instrumental and vocal, their cultural power and their continuity (whether real or imagined) with the past is remarkable.

2.   Classical music

History

Our understanding of ancient and medieval music is derived from several Sanskrit texts(Vedas; *Natyasastra*, 3rd-4th c. CE; *Brihaddesi*, 8th-9th c. CE; *Sangitaratnakara*, 13[th c.] CE), Tamil texts (*Cilappadikaram*, 5-6th c. CE; *Tevaram*, 7th c. CE) and temple sculpture.

Due to Persian and Turkish influences in Muslim courts of north India, from the 12th century CE Indian classical music diverged to form two geographically based traditions: Hindustani in the north and Carnatic (Karnatic) in the four southern states. As far as we can tell, differences reached their present form about the 16th or 17th century, when the southern kingdom of Vijayanagar achieved its pinnacle of power and the Maratha kings of Thanjavur patronised southern musicians.

Divergence of common tradition

Despite the Islamic musical influences, Hindustani is similar to Carnatic music in that the lyrics draw largely on Hindu mythology and the two great Hindu epics. Both Hindustani and Carnatic music traditions are also based on two key features: *ragas* (melodies or melodic formulae) and *tala* (rhythmic cycle). In the Carnatic tradition, however, the emphasis is on vocal music and most compositions, even with instrumentation, are written to be sung. Further, while both traditions use scales to define a *raga*, Carnatic musicians employ semi-tones (*sruti*) that enable them to produce many more *ragas*. Finally, while improvisation is integral to both schools, it is probably fair to say that Hindustani musicians improvise to a greater extent.

The instruments also vary. The major instruments of the Hindustani tradition are the plucked string sitar, sarod and tanpura; the oboe-like shanai, a flute and two drums, the tabla and the pakhavaj. In the southern tradition, the sitar is replaced by the vina, and the 6-hole flute becomes an 8-holed one. The tanpura was popular but has given way to the harmonium (sruti box). In the south, the oboe becomes the *nagasvaram*. More significant contrasts are that Carnatic music includes a pot drum (*ghatam*), two barrel drums (*mridangam* and *tavil*), a set of small tambourines (*kanjira*) and a violin.

The history of the violin—introduced by French and/or British colonialists in the 18th century, taken up as a folk instrument in south Indian cities and courts, and now an integral part of south Indian classical music—is one of those examples of cross-cultural borrowing that defies the categories of 'tradition' and 'indigenous.'

Hindustani music

Although the origins of Hindustani music, or rather its divergence from the pan-Indian classical music tradition, are usually traced to the courts of the Delhi Sultanate (12th-14th c. CE), little is in fact certain of its early history. One historical figure, however, is Amir Khusrau (1253-1325 CE), who is credited with inventing the sitar and tabla as well as several genres of music. What we do know is that he was pivotal in legitimising music in the Islamic courts and of persuading Hindu patrons and audiences to accept 'foreign' musical forms.

Most Hindustani musicians trace descent from Tansen, the celebrated vocalist and instrumentalist at the Mughal court of Akbar in the late 16th century. Modern practices, including the popular *khyal* vocal genre, however, actually date from the 18th century. In the late 20th century, Ravi Shankar and the Beatles brought Hindustani music to a world-wide audience.

Carnatic Music

As with Hindustani music, the evolution of Carnatic music from a commonly shared tradition is difficult to trace. Purandara Dasa (1484-1564 CE) is considered the founder of Carnatic music, but he is more legend than history. Born in the Kannada-speaking region of the Deccan, he was an itinerant musician who composed songs in Kannada and Sanskrit that had an influence on Hindustani music also.

The modern practice of Carnatic music has a clear trajectory from the Maratha court at Thanjavur in the 17th and 18th centuries. Three musicians at that court, most famously Tyagaraja (1759? - 1847), composed the repertoire that still defines Carnatic music today. Since that time, the major centres of music have been Thanjavur, Madras (Cennai), Madurai and Bangalore, where the winter concert season attracts large audiences. In cultural terms, Carnatic music is significant also because it is an emblem of a south Indian identity, with songs in all four major Dravidian languages (Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam).

3.   Folk Music

Indian music, like Indian culture at large, consists of many genres and traditions, including folk/ local, regional, court and the two classical traditions. Songs, instruments, singing and instrumental styles have criss-crossed these artificial divisions. Nevertheless, there are certain cultural characteristics of folk or local music that stand out.

Heavily percussive music is used to stimulate spirit possession in cults of folk Hinduism and folk Islam. Group music-making is not characteristic of the classical traditions or many of the regional and court traditions, where individual virtuosity is the ideal. Collective singing and instrumentation, however, is common in folk traditions for both Hindus and Muslims. Groups of women grind grain with heavy stones or shuffle around in a circle at a funeral, for example, while men play barrel drums at a shrine or sing devotional songs.

Some of the most complex and popular traditions are narrative-based, including hereditary, itinerant bards in Rajasthan and central India, who sing epic tales to the accompaniment of string instruments.

While most music traditions have some devotional and/or ritual element, others accompany manual labour, legitimise genealogies or lampoon unfaithful husbands. The diversity is immeasurable, and perhaps the only safe generalisation is that in India song is as widespread, varied and common as speech.

Reading

Required
    Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 382-384
    Weidman, *Singing the classical,* pp. 25-191

Recommended
    Neuman, *The life of music.*
    Bakhle, *Two men and music.*

Discussion topics/questions

1. Briefly list the key features of south Indian (Carnatic) music.
2. What changes took place in that tradition during the late 19th/early 20th century?
3. Why is the violin an anomaly in Carnatic music?

Week 10 **Dance, Dance-Drama and Theatre**

Outline

A. Introduction
    1. spectrum from' pure' dance to theatre, from body to speech
    2. regionalism rather than north-south division of forms
B. Classical, 'pure' dance
    1. *Natyasastra* as textual authority
        a. description of dance forms, gestures
        b. aesthetics based on *bhava* and *rasa*
    2. six major classical dance forms in six regions
        a. several emerge from temple-based female dance tradition
        b. case-study of Bharata Natyam in Madras
C. Folk dance
    1. hundreds of local forms, contribute to local identities
    2. group, often circular movements
D. Dance-drama
    1. storytelling as important as body movement
    2. Kathakali in Kerala is good example
        a.   elaborate costumes, headdresses, make-up
        b. no speech, rather stylised facial and hand gestures
        c. all-night performances now reduced to few hours
E. Theatre, in which narrative dominates
    1. Ram Lila in north
        a. dramatisation of 16th c. Hindi *Ramayana*
        b. various forms from procession to 30-night cycle
    2. Teru Kuttu in south
        a. enactment of *Mahabharata* story (and others)
        b. staged in local temples of Draupadi, female character in epic
    3. shadow puppetry
    4. modern theatre

Lecture

1.   Introduction

Several musical traditions discussed in the previous lecture involve an element of dance and/or theatre, and most traditions to be described in this lecture include music. However, there is usually a dominant element, which places a tradition in either the music or dance-drama category.

Further categorisation—classical dance, dance-drama and theatre—also seems useful, especially if we think of a spectrum of performing arts. At one end is pure dance (*natya*) or 'classical' dance, and at the other is 'theatre', in which the spoken narrative is paramount. In between lies 'dance-drama' in which bodily movement and verbal art have a more or less equal importance. Again, the division into classical and folk forms is not always clear-cut and usually represents more a contrast in socio-economic status of performers and patrons than intrinsic features of the art forms themselves.

Beneath these somewhat artificial categories, Indian dance and theatre forms have a 'family resemblance' based on shared key features—ritual performance, devotional intent and mythic content. Like the music traditions, all the classical dance forms and many theatre forms borrow narrative content from Hindu mythology, epics and sculpture. Siva's form as the 'king of dance' and Krishna's dance among the cowherds supplies dance with rich symbolism, while ecstatic dancing in folk cults is often a sign that person has been (benignly) possessed by a god.

Like music culture, but even more so, many dance and theatre traditions share a common repertoire of gesture, movement and storytelling. This commonality derives, mostly, from a normative Sanskrit text, the *Natyasastra*. A final contrast with music traditions, is that the dance and drama ones do not divide neatly into northern and a southern groups. Rather, there are several dominant regional forms; the reason for this is a topic for further research.

2.   Classical dance

At the 'pure dance' end of our spectrum are the classical dance traditions of India, whose authoritative source is the *Natyasastra.* This Sanskrit text, compiled sometime between 200 BCE and 200 CE, is a remarkably thorough description of 15 different types of dance-drama, a language of hand-gestures and a sophisticated exposition of aesthetics. Two key terms are *bhava*, the mood or emotion of the dancer, and *rasa*, the distillation of that mood that is evoked in a (discerning) audience. The eight different rasas (love, pity, anger, disgust, heroism, awe, terror and comedy) were also later used to describe music and poetry.

Six major classical forms of dance-drama have developed in six different regions of India: Bharata Natyam in Tamil Nadu; Kuchipudi in Andhra Pradesh; Kudiyattam in Kerala, Orissi in Orissa, Kathak in the Hindi heartland and Manipuri, in the northeast state of Manipur. One of the few common features is that Krishna mythology is prominent in most of these classical forms. Otherwise, each of these traditions has a distinct history, instrumental accompaniment and choreography, but all evolved through a centuries-long interchange with other (less than 'classical') forms, and all have undergone considerable change since the colonial period.

Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Orissi and Kathak emerged out of traditions of female dancers attached to courts, temples and houses of wealthy patrons (the 'nautch' girls in British sources). With the disappearance of traditional patronage in the 18th and 19th centuries, these traditions also declined until they were revived (or reinvented) by new elites in the colonial metropolitan centres as symbols of a 'timeless' Indian tradition. Kudiyattam, however, never recovered and is now a 'museum' piece.

The case of Bharata Natyam is perhaps the best-documented. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, influential elites in Madras set out to 'purify' the tradition of temple female dancers. Allegedly erotic elements were expunged, performances were taken out of temples and put on the urban stage in front of ticket-buying audiences, often as part of a festival of music and dance. Soon a school was set up that taught young girls this 'ancient' form of Indian dance. Today, taking classes in Bharata Natyam and then performing for a few minutes in a 'debut' has become a rite of passage for many Indian girls, not only in south India, but all over the country and in the diaspora as well.

3.   Folk dance

In contrast to the handful of classical dance traditions, India's folk dances number in the hundreds. Although many are similar, they are usually known only in their specific region, and for this reason, these dances play a role in the construction of local cultural identity. Like a local dialect, or slang, they are a means by which local people can recognise themselves and be recognised by outsiders. To risk a generalisation, whereas classical dance forms centre on individual virtuosity, folk dances are a group activity which encourages cooperation. This is perhaps more true of women's dances, from the Assamese spring harvest dance (*bihu*) to the Tamil funeral dance. Men's folk dances include several with a martial arts dimension or with the striking of sticks. The choreography of most types of folk dance is dominated by circular movements. An interesting historical footnote is that Bhangra, a world-wide popular form of music and dance, began as a Panjabi harvest dance.

4. Dance-drama

Dance-dramas are traditions in which story enactment is as central as the dance itself. The best-known dance-drama is Kathakali, whose very name ('story-play') indicates its dual aesthetic. This tradition, in Kerala on the southwest coast, dramatises stories from the myths and epics in an elaborate spectacle of colour and music. The all-male actors use stylised costumes, magnificent headdresses and make-up as distinct as masks to portray stereotyped characters. They do not speak, however, but rather communicate through a highly sophisticated vocabulary of gestures, eye movements and facial expressions. Kathakali's once-traditional overnight, open-air and free performances have now been telescoped into a two or three-hour, ticketed affair in a large hall.

Two closely related dance-dramas, sharing many of Kathakali's features, are found in the same general region of the southwest. Yakshagana performers in Karnataka are heavily costumed and wear large headdresses, while the Teyyam performers on the northern Kerala/southern Karnataka border also have elaborate costumes and face-paint. Together, these three dance-dramas form a regional tradition of kinetic storytelling with face-paint or masks.

5. Theatre

Ram Lila

At the far end of the dance-theatre spectrum are dramas in which the storytelling dominates, although visual elements are also important. Most famous among these is the Ram Lila ('Play of Rama'), a spectacular annual enactment of the Rama story as written in Hindi by Tulsi Das in the 16th century. Pandav Lila is a similar tradition that enacts the *Mahabharata* story in the Himalayan foothills of Garhwal. *Lila* has the range of meanings of the English 'play' and connotes not only theatre but also amusement, spontaneity and frivolity.

Ram Lila is a tradition that embraces a number of performance types, from a day-long procession of the main characters to a month-long series of overnight performances that dramatise the complex story of the Rama epic. Here, too, as with many dance-dramas, masks are worn to indicate specific characters and the poetic lines of the story are memorised and declaimed by local, non-professional actors.

Teru Kuttu

Another dance-drama, chosen from dozens of other as a contrast to Ram Lila, is the Teru Kuttu ('street play') in Tamil Nadu. Whereas Ram Lila has been elevated to something like a courtly tradition by the patronage of a lineage of rajas in the famous pilgrimage city of Varnasi, Teru Kuttu is performed by itinerant troupes patronised by small temple or village communities. The actors' costumes resemble those of Kathakali and Yakshagana, but the plays are dominated by the story of the *Mahabharata*, which is spoken in verse and prose.

The main female character in the epic, Draupadi, is a local goddess in many temples in northern Tamil Nadu. A week-long festival at these temples will often include a series of Teru Kuttu performances, particularly those in which Draupadi is disrobed and then gambled away in a dice game. As with other ritual performance at the local level, Teru Kuttu induces spirit possession in the actors and audience.

shadow puppetry

A form of Indian folk theatre without human actors is shadow puppetry. Found in six traditions in south and central India, shadow puppet performances are dominated by complex narratives, typically based on Rama story. The origin of Indian shadow puppetry is still a mystery, although some connection with Greek and Turkish traditions seems probable; whether Indian forms directly inspired the more famous ones in Java and Bali is also unknown.

Modern theatre
Modern theatre, on the western model with a proscenium arch, was introduced during the 19th century. *Othello* was staged in Calcutta in the 1840s and that city has been the centre for modern theatre ever since. During the middle decades of the 20th century, political parties, especially the communist parties, used modern theatre (and folk theatre) to communicate with large crowds. However, modern theatre has never been a major art form in India, perhaps because entertainment as a combination of speech, story and movement has been supplied by cinema.

Reading

Required
       Richmond, *Indian theatre*
       Dalmia and Sadana, *Modern Indian culture*, pp. 206-225

Recommended
       Hansen, *Grounds for play*
       Lutgendorf, *The life of a text*
       Blackburn, *Inside the drama-house*
       Frasca, *Terukuttu*

Discussion topics/questions

1. Identify at least three primary features of Indian theatre.
2. How would you distinguish between' folk' and 'classical' theatre in India?
3. How did Indian playwrights use folk theatre in the 1960s and 1970s?

UNIT IV **Visual Arts**

Painting (in its various forms), sculpture and architecture have a cultural history inseparably intertwined with each other, and often with music and dance, especially in the ancient period. Today they have become differentiated skills and traditions, and all three are heavily influenced by European traditions.

Week 11 **Painting**

Outline

A. Introduction
   1. religious motives and imagery
   2. ancient forms not well integrated in modern ones
B. Early painting
   1. wall-paintings at Bhimbetka and figures in Indus Valley
   2. wall-paintings in caves at Ajanta, 2nd c. BCE- 5th c. CE
   3. wall-paintings at Ellora, 8th-9th c. CE
   4. frescoes on temples and palaces in south India, 11th-17th c. CE

C. Illustrated manuscripts
    1. Buddhist and Jain traditions, 11th-12th c. CE
    2. Persian traditions imported, 13th-15th c. CE
        a. new styles of painting
        b. Introduction of paper enables larger manuscripts
    3. Hindu tradition flourished with bhakti movement
        a. manuscripts of *Bhagavata Purana*
        b. new genre of *ragamala*
D. Mughal miniatures
    1. patronised by Akbar, 16th c. CE
    2. miniature becomes an art object in its own right
    3. decline in 19th c., but local forms (scrolls, etc.) flourish
E. Modern painting
    1. European influence from 18th c., 'company' artists
    2. Raja Ravi Varma, late 19th c.
    3. Sher-Gil, Husain, Khakhar, 20th c.

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction
Painting, or the art of combining colour and line to produce a picture, is a long-established tradition in India. Like most cultural forms in the subcontinent, it has traditionally served religious ends and employed religious iconography. Again, as with other aspects of Indian culture, painting has an 'ancient' tradition, which provides a legitimising heritage and yet also erects barriers that must be surmounted for painting to acquire a cultural identity in today's India. Modern painting has sought to synthesise a two-thousand old tradition of wall-painting, a five-hundred year old tradition of miniature and trends from 20th century Europe and America.

2.   Early painting
The earliest surviving examples of painting are the cave wall-paintings at the stone-age site of Bhimbetka (c. 30,000 BCE) and pottery from the farming settlements of the Indus Valley Civilisation (c. 2,500 BCE).
More sophisticated paintings are those painted in the Buddhist rock-cut caves of Ajanta (2nd c. BCE-5th c. CE) in Maharashtra. The walls and ceilings of monasteries and halls, cut inside the caves, were covered with images taken from Buddhist texts, especially the Jataka stories. And even in their damaged condition today, they are stunning and unforgettable. Ajanta is probably one regional variant of a more widespread tradition since examples of a similar style, dated a few centuries later, are found in various sites in the Deccan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Among these, the wall-paintings in Buddhist, Hindu and Jain caves at Ellora (8th-9th c. CE) are perhaps the finest.

Painting for religious instruction, meditation and pleasure entered a new phase when free-standing Hindu temples were decorated with frescoes. Temples at Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu (11th c.) at Hampi, Karnataka (16th CE onward), and palaces at Madurai, Tamil Nadu and Padmanabhapuram, Kerala (both 17th c.) show a development from the linearity and angularity at Ajanta to a more decorative, two-dimensional treatment.

3.   Illustrated Manuscripts
Painting on palm-leaf manuscripts and their wooden covers forms an important transition from the early wall-paintings to miniature painting. The earliest surviving examples, which come from the 11th-12th c. CE, show tiny Buddhist images, intended to protect the words inscribed in the manuscript and/or enable the viewer to visualise the deity in meditation. Jain manuscripts, with images of their ancient lineage of sages (*tirtankara*s), from about the same period, were produced in large numbers by merchant communities in western India.

Turkic and Afghan Muslim rulers during the Delhi Sultanate (c. 1200-1500 CE) introduced Persian culture, which included not only new styles of painting but also paper, which enabled a new kind of

book. Painted books now had a larger space, which encouraged more complex scenes and rich decorative schemes.

The Hindu tradition of illustrated manuscripts flourished as part of the bhakti movement that emerged in north India from the 15th century CE onward. Krishna and Radha, in particular, are wonderfully rendered on versions of the *Bhagavata Purana*, and a whole new genre of painting (*ragamala*) appeared, in which a series of images symbolised musical modes.

4.   Mughal Miniatures
The Mughal court of Akbar (1556-1605 CE) brought a significant change to painting. From this date forward, book-painting superseded wall-painting as the favoured form and eventually developed into a visual art altogether separate from a manuscript. The names of individual artists were recorded, and by the 19th century, if not before, the Mughal miniature was appreciated as an aesthetic object in its own right, hung on the walls of connoisseurs in London, Paris and New York.

These changes were largely engineered by the eclectic genius of Akbar himself, who assembled a large contingent of artists from all over his empire and put them under the instruction of a Persian master-painter, supervised by himself. Later Mughal emperors continued to patronise 'miniature' painting, as did regional courts in the Deccan and Rajasthan.

While court painting declined from the mid-19th century onward, painting forms at the local level maintained their vitality. Painted cloth scrolls used as a backdrop to storytelling traditions are still found in Rajasthan, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, while wall-painting on houses and shrines continues in many areas. On the other hand, the tradition of painting on walls, cloth and paper by women in the Mithila region of Bihar has been coarsened by commercial marketing to urban Indian and western buyers.

5.   Modern Painting
In the 18th and 19th centuries, local painters were commissioned by British officers and visitors to produce scenes of local life known as 'Company paintings.' Most of the results were mediocre, but some were outstanding. By the end of the 19th century, art schools had been established in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, and at least one Maharaja (Raja Ravi Varma of Travancore) developed his own synthesis of western and Indian painting.

In the 20th century, painting sought to find a place within the politics of cultural nationalism. The oil paintings of the half-Hungarian and Paris-trained Amrita Sher-Gil (1913-1941), inspired by the Ajanta and Ellora cave works but rendered in a modernist idiom, were hailed as a 'new artistic awakening.'

M.F Husain (1915-2011) was an eccentric and controversial artist, who never maintained a studio, painted Hindu deities in the nude and owned a collection of vintage sports cars. He borrowed the techniques of Cezanne and Matisse to paint scenes from the Hindu epics and myths.

Bhupen Khakhar (1934-2004) drew on a variety of modern western figures, especially pop artists and David Hockney, but also studied colonial Indian painting and Raja Ravi Varma.   His flat surfaces and calendar-style paintings explore subjects outside the mainstream, in both modern and folk painting, and celebrate everyday life.

All these modern painters attempted to negotiate the perceived gulf between an Indian decorative impulse and a western naturalism.   Overall, however, and unlike Indian music and dance, it must be said that modern Indian painting has not integrated earlier forms into a successful synthesis

Reading

Required
          Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 376-381
          Mitter, *Indian art*, pp. 83-168

Recommended
　　Cummins, *Indian painting*
　　Beach, *Mughal and Rajput painting*

Discussion topics/questions
　　1. Are paintings in India primarily religious or aesthetic works?
　　2. Describe the influence of Persian forms on Indian painting.
　　3. How does the Mughal miniature differ from other forms of Indian
　　　painting?
　　4. What was the purpose of illustrated manuscripts?

Week 12 **Architecture**

Outline

A. Introduction
　　1. diversity yet recognisable Indian style, normative text
　　2. external influences contribute to evolving tradition
B. Ancient
　　1. Mehrgarh and Indus Valley civilisation
　　2. Buddhist architecture
　　　　a. Mauryan capital at Pataliputra (3rd c. BCE)
　　　　b. Ashokan pillars and columns
　　　　c. stupa at Sanchi, elsewhere, first stone monuments
　　　　d. monasteries (Nalanda) and halls (Bodh Gaya)
C. Hindu and Jain temples
　　1. linked to devotionalism, c. 500 CE onward
　　2. stone is now favoured material
　　3. temples laid out according to textual model of cosmos
　　4. Hindu rock-cut temples show continuity with earlier Buddhist architecture
　　5. elaboration of temples, large spaces, quasi-communities
　　6. regional styles: southern, eastern, Bengal, Kerala
D. Islamic mosque and tombs
　　1.   1200 CE, new forms: mosque, mausoleum and smaller tomb
　　2. Qutab minar tower in Delhi
　　　　a. earliest major building still standing
　　　　b. complex includes mosque
　　3. later Deccan styles, Gulbarga mosque and Golconda tombs
　　4. Mughal empire
　　　　a. Jami Masqid in major cities
　　　b. Taj Mahal
E. Royal architecture
　　1. forts, Muslim and Hindu forts on hills and plains
　　2. palaces, Mughal, Vijayanagar and Rajasthan
F. Colonial and Modern buildings
　　1. Portuguese churches, west and southeast coasts, 16th c. CE

　　2. British churches, buildings, in colonial cities,18th c. CE onward
　　3. New Delhi designed by English architect, Lutyens, early 20th c.
　　4. Chandigarh designed by French architect, Le Corbusier in 1960s
G. Conclusion

1. buildings of past not replicated but continue to attract millions of visitors
2. new 'temples' on Bombay waterfront

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction

The variety of architectural forms in India is in part due to a wide diversity of climate and materials, but also to religious convention as well as the regionalism that shapes most cultural fields. Nevertheless, there is a layer of uniformity to many buildings, both religious and royal, which is attributable to the manuals (*sastra*s) that codified standard designs and techniques. In addition, architectural styles from outside India, from Persia and the Arab world, from Britain and the western world, entered the subcontinent and changed pre-existing styles. Hinduised mosques, Islamised palaces and Indianised colonial homes illustrate the general point that architecture in India is an evolving tradition but one that produces buildings that are recognisably Indian.

2.   Ancient period

Mehrgarh and Indus Valley civilisation

Mud-brick houses dating from about 7,000 BCE at Mehrgarh (in Baluchistan, Pakistan) are the earliest surviving examples of architecture in the subcontinent. More sophisticated techniques and larger buildings have been excavated in the cities of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa in the Indus River valley (Pakistan) and date from about 2,500 BCE. Standardized bricks and recurring patterns in the houses, baths and granaries suggest a homogeneous society, although nearly different 100 sites have been found in a thousand-square mile area. Houses had several rooms and opened on to an inner courtyard. The only monumental building, the focus of later architecture, is what looks like a citadel on top of a metre-high mound and a large tank, perhaps for public bathing.

Buddhist architecture

A gap of several hundred years separates these buildings in the Indus Valley from the next phase of monument-building in the subcontinent. In the 3rd c. BCE, the Mauryan emperor Ashoka commissioned new kinds of buildings and monuments. The remains of his capital at Pataliputra, as well as pillars and columns inscribed with his edicts, suggest that they were influenced by Persian models of the Achaemenid empire.

The chief architectural monument of this period and later (3rd - 1st c. BCE) was the Buddhist *stupa*. Essentially funeral mounds housing the relics of the Buddha, these *stupa*s were also the first examples of religious structures built with stone in India. The oldest and most elaborate stupa at Sanchi, which has a stone exterior, rises up to a height of 16 metres and is 37 metres in diameter. Four gateways were added about 100 CE and decorated with fine sculptures of the Buddha's life.

Other buildings that emerged under the Buddhist patronage of this period are halls and monasteries. The halls (*chaitya*s) were large spaces, either rock-cut or free-standing, in which Buddhist monks and lay people could congregate. Although some were built with wood, evidenced by a vault supported by horseshoe-shaped ribs, only the rock examples survive. The monasteries (*viraha*s), where monks lived, were both rock-cut and brick-built, although the rock-cut examples survive in greater number. The great monastery at Nalanda (c. 9th c. CE) and the hall at Bodh Gaya (6th-7th c. CE) are two of the best-known buildings of this early period.

3.   Hindu and Jain Temples

Hindu devotionalism that developed from the middle of the first millennium CE led to new religious structures for the worship and display of the anthropomorphised divinities. These buildings were now also largely built with stone, although brick and mortar continued to be used in areas where stone was not readily available (eastern India, parts of central India and the Himalayan foothills). Hindu and Jain temples were built according to conventions and principles laid down in special texts, the most important being that the overall design was a symbolic representation of the universe. This central idea of correspondence exemplifies continuity from the Vedic-Upanishadic period, in which the sacrifice was said to replicate the creation of the world.

Continuity with Buddhist architecture is illustrated by the early Hindu temples excavated from rock, such as those at Elephanta, near Bombay. Over time, temples appeared as free-standing structures centred on one or more sanctuaries, surrounded by enclosed passageways. By the medieval period massive temples were built as large spaces surrounded by fortress-like walls with high, sculpted towers. Greater elaboration of porches, columns, doorways, ceilings and passageways culminated in the baroque temples of south India in the 16th-18th c. CE.

These temples, in fact, became small villages, with hundreds of resident employees, specialists, devotees and their families, plus kitchens and sleeping quarters. A large bathing tank, for worshippers to use before any religious act, was standard and suggests another continuity, this time with the large tank at Harappa in the 2nd millennium BCE.

By about 1000 CE several regional styles had developed. The southern style is illustrated by the Brihadeshvara (Siva) temple at Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu with its single pyramidal tower that rises high above paddy fields. Those in eastern India at Bhubaneshvar and in central India at Khajuraho were built with a number of curved and rounded towers. In Kerala on the southwest coast, temples have low, sloping roofs, often stacked up in tiers, probably a concession to the heavy rainfall in the area. In Bengal, the lack of stone necessitated the use of brick and terracotta for temples whose shape resembles a hut with a curved roof.

4.   Islamic mosque and tombs
From about 1000 CE onward Muslim rulers in north India patronised Islamic architectural forms, of which the mosque, mausoleum and smaller tomb (*dargah*) are the primary types. Common features include domes, archs, vaults and a limited range of imagery (calligraphy, geometric designs and foliation), which derive from Islamic architecture in central Asia, especially the Timurid empire.

The earliest significant Islamic architecture in India still stands in Delhi. The Qutab Minar there is an array of monuments first constructed in 1192 CE to celebrate the victory of a Muslim ruler over a Hindu ruler. Now standing at 73 metres, the Tower of Victory is the tallest brick minaret in the world. It was built in stages by successive Muslim rulers, who also added other buildings to the site, including the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque. The mosque has a typical layout of a large courtyard surrounded by colonnades. Later regional styles developed, particularly in the independent Muslim kingdoms in the Deccan. An impressive mosque at Gulbarga is entirely covered with a dome and vaulted bays, while the tombs at Golconda are equally spectacular. Built by the Qutub Shahi rulers in the 16th-17th c. CE and once furnished with carpets and chandeliers, these domed mausoleums now stand abandoned in a bleak, dry landscape.

Islamic architecture flourished during the Mughal Empire, leaving behind several examples that still excite specialists and tourists alike. Friday mosques (Jami Masquid) were built in red sandstone and white marble at the Mughal capitals in Delhi, Lucknow, Lahore, Fatehpur Sikri and Agra. These monumental buildings, with large enclosed spaces, and elaborately decorated, stand as symbols of the grandeur of the Mughals.   The best-known is the Taj Mahal, built as a tomb garden for the wife of the emperor Shah Jahan. Artisans, drafted in from the far corners of the empire, from Persia to Kashmir, created this masterpiece entirely in white marble.

5.   Forts and Palaces
Fortified cities, often quite small cities with massive walls, began to appear all over India from the end of the first millennium CE. Nearly constant warfare, between Muslim and Hindu and later European armies, in ever-changing alliances, led to these still impressive citadels. Many were built on hilltops, although others, especially the Mughal capitals and the Vijayanagar capital, were laid out on flat ground.

Palace architecture predates the arrival of Islam, but only a few examples survive. The latter palaces at Vijayanagar are the best-preserved in south India, while grand palaces, which now function mainly as expensive hotels, are found in many places in Rajasthan.   Here and in the equally elaborate Mughal palaces, public halls and private apartments displayed the opulence of the ruler.

6.   Colonial and modern architecture

The first Europeans to arrive in India, the Portuguese, build a number of baroque churches in Goa, on the coast near Bombay. They also built less elaborate but still impressive churches, with tall spires, all along the southeast coast. The British, who came in large numbers beginning in the 18th century, built not only churches but also civic buildings for the colonial government and homes for its officials. The Bombay Taj Hotel, which opened in 1903, is a good example of European architects using Indian architectural traditions.

In the early twentieth century, New Delhi was built by Lutyens, an English architect, as the new capital of British India. It was laid out in a symmetrical design with large roundabouts and wide avenues leading to a complex of government buildings. These buildings synthesise Hindu, Muslim and European features, which add up to a new imperial subcontinental style. In the 1960s, the French architect Le Corbusier was commissioned to build a new state capital at Chandigarh, and he produced a modernist city that fascinated and enraged critics in equal measure. Indian architects took inspiration from Le Corbusier (and Louis Khan who worked in Dhakka) and experimented with modernist forms and indigenous forms, favouring brick and concrete.

7.   Conclusion

These contemporary developments might suggest that the tradition of monumental architecture is losing ground in today's India. Certainly no one is attempting to replicate the magnificent temples and palaces of the past, many of which are no longer in use but nevertheless continue to fulfil the purpose of their original patrons to fascinate and impress. The Qutab Minar complex, for example, is now the venue for an annual three-day festival of dance and music. In 2006, it drew 3.9 million visitors, while theTaj Mahal drew about 2.5 million.

Still, many of the ancient temples remain living sites of culture and worship. The 1000-year old Visnu temple at Tirupathi in Andhra Pradesh, for example, had 23 million visitors in 2010. And even if the massive temples, palaces and forts are not being built today, Bombay's waterfront is dominated by dozens of skyscrapers. A new hotel, scheduled to open there in 2015, will have a 'namaste tower' nearly 1000 feet tall.

Reading

Required
        Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 346-364
        Mitter, *Indian art*, pp. 13-82

Recommended
        Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*
        Burton-Page, *Indian Islamic architecture*
        Metcalf, *An imperial vision*

Discussion topics/questions

1. Describe the ancient and modern political significance of the Ashokan pillar.
2. The Great stupa at Sanchi is a religious monument; it was also an important social and economic centre. Briefly describe these three dimensions of this remarkable building.
3. What are the designs and principles that underlie the Hindu temple?
4. Select one of the temples described in Mitter and explain its architectural significance.

Week 13 **Sculpture**

<u>Outline</u>

A.   Introduction
       1.   religious, but sculpted stone not intrinsically spiritual
       2.   plasticity a key feature
B.   Ancient sculpture
       1.   Indus Valley civilisation, early example of plasticity
       2.   Ashokan pillars and capitals, 3rd c. BCE, Persian influence possible
       3. Post-Ashokan Buddhist art, c. 200 BCE-300 CE, stupas,
              monasteries, halls
           a.   key sites in west and south: Sanchi, Ellora, Ajanta, Amaravati
           b.   key features: ornaments, lotus, water, gestures and poses of the Buddha depict his
                life; tree and wheel symbolise enlightenment
           c.   northern style: shift from narrative to person of Buddha
           d.   Greco-Buddhist (Gandhara) school in northwest
               i.   Buddhist content and Greek form
               ii.   large, physical images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas
C.   Medieval sculpture
       1.   Gupta Empire (4th-6th c. CE)
           a.   'Classical sculpture'
           b.   ethereal yet sensual images inspire art in East Asia
       2.   South India
           a.   Pallava and Pandya art (7th-9th c. CE)
               i.   rock-cut temples at Mahabalipuram
               ii.   Siva temple at Kanchipuram
           b.   Chola bronzes (9-13th c. CE)
               i.   lost wax method
               ii.   dancing Siva masterpieces
       3.   local forms made of wood and clay
D.   Modern sculpture
       1.   academic art from late 19th c., European influences
       2.   public art, statues of figures from politics and popular culture

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction

Sculpture is a sophisticated and highly regarded art form in India, largely because of its association with religious architecture. While some iconography is distinctively Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, many features are common to all these religious groups. Moreover, scholars have argued that beneath these iconographic differences, there is an Indian sculptural style, notably a plasticity and an earthbound sensuality.

It is also important to point out that despite the spirituality often attributed to physical images of the Hindu gods and goddesses, they are seen by most people as representations rather than intrinsically divine. They are stones which are infused with spirit by specialist techniques. And when these images are transformed by chants, music and ritual into embodied supernatural powers, they are the means by which ordinary people can communicate with their gods and goddesses.

2.   Ancient sculpture

The sculpted figures of the Indus Valley civilisation provide very early examples of the so-called Indian style. Their graceful and naturalistic modeling contrast with contemporaneous sculpture in the West. A thousand years elapsed before other sculpture of comparable quality was produced, this time the elaborately carved monolithic columns and capitals erected all over India by Ashoka in the 3rd c. BCE. Their highly polished sandstone surfaces, and the historical distance from the Indus Valley figures, has given rise to a debate about the possible origin of this virtuosic art. Persian influence is likely, as is the contribution by indigenous styles, but the extent and nature of these factors remains unknown.

After Ashoka, a Buddhist-inspired school of sculpture emerged to decorate the rock-cut and free-standing stupas, monasteries and halls that were built over much of the subcontinent from the 2nd c. BCE to the 3rd c. CE. Their characteristic features include specific ornamentation, the lotus flower, water symbols and the gestures and physical poses of the historical Buddha used to depict the story of the Buddha's life. Here, too, though regional styles are evident. Outstanding examples are found in north and central India at Sanchi, Ellora and Ajanta, but perhaps the most spectacular is found in south India at Amaravati. These exquisitely carved figures, often in narrative scenes and often in small niches, display a skill, dynamism and imagination unseen in other contemporaneous sculpture.

In north India, sculpture in the early centuries after Christ saw an interesting shift from narrative scenes toward the individual object. Earlier iconography, consistent with the Buddhist idea of impermanence and the absence of a soul (*anatman*), used aniconic symbols (an empty throne, Bodhi tree, wheel of life and death) to represent the Buddha as a focus for worship and meditation. Now, however, the Buddha began to appear in anthropomorphic form as a powerful presence alongside other figures, such as folk deities and protective water nymphs.

At roughly the same time, another school of Indian sculpture developed in the northwest. The Gandhara school of Greco-Buddhist art is named after the region of Gandhara, where Persian, Greek, Scythian and Chinese cultures intermingle. Artisans here were inspired by Mahayana Buddhism, patronised by King Kanisha (1st- 2nd c. CE) and influenced by Greek models. They produced large, muscular representations of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas (particularly Maitreya), who resemble Greek figures wearing a Roman toga.

3.   Medieval sculpture
The Gupta Empire (4th-6th c. CE) in north India produced what is normally regarded as the classical school of sculpture, characterised by supreme plasticity, graceful lines and sensual yet serene surfaces. A good illustration is the red sandstone standing image of the Buddha from Mathura, who wears a diaphanous robe with delicately carved folds. Similar softly moulded figures of the Indian pantheon were the inspiration for Hindu and Buddhist art produced in Southeast Asia, China and Japan. In particular, these images of the ethereal Buddha, displaying both a physical presence and disembodied wisdom, became the ideal for Mahayana Buddhism across the world.

About a century later, a parallel classical school of sculpture emerged in south India. Concurrent with the devotional poetry of the Tamil poet-saints, figures of gods and saints first appeared under patronage from the Pallava and Pandya kings. The most spectacular examples are seen on the rock-cut and free-standing temples at Mahabalipuram, on the southeast coast near Madras, which are similar to earlier ones at Ajanta and Ellora. Further developments in stone sculpting of Hindu gods and goddesses are seen on the Kailasanatha (Siva) temple at Kanchipuram, the Pallava capital.

More unique, however, are the bronze sculptures cast during the Chola Empire (9th-13th c. CE). Artisans used the 'lost wax' method, which is still used by a small number of an unusual Brahmin caste (*stapathi*) today. Beeswax and camphor are mixed together with a little oil and kneaded to form the wax original. This model is then coated with clay until the mould is sufficiently thick, after which the model is heated in an oven using cow-dung cakes for fuel. When the wax melts and flows out, the hollow clay model remains. Then bronze, an alloy with a large proportion of copper, is heated and poured into the empty mould. When the metal has filled all spaces and cooled, the mould is broken off. Blemishes are removed, the surfaces smoothed and the image is then 'awakened' by rituals before it can be used.

The resulting bronzes are exquisite and supple representations of the gods and goddesses described in the songs of the poet-saints. Most observers comment on the assured skill on display, the simple perfection of the bodies, their life-like poses and gestures and yet their other-worldly detachment . One well-known masterpiece is the image of Siva as 'Lord of the Dance.' Enclosed by a ring of fire, he is a balance of energy—destroying ignorance and darkness, creating the world through human desire—and repose.

Less durable materials than stone and bronze have also been used to make figures in many local traditions throughout the country. Large clay warriors, wooden effigies of horse-riders and wooden

masks of deities are only a few examples of sculpture traditions that have a long and continuing history but do not leave traces.

4. Modern sculpture

As with painting, from the late 19th century onward, Indian sculptors came under the influence of European traditions. However, and unlike painting, most sculpting traditions were not supplanted but only supplemented by modern trends. Druva Mistry (b. 1957) is a well-known artist with many projects in major cities of India, while the Bombay-born, UK-resident and world-famous artist Anish Kapoor has sited only a few works in his native country.

More popular and culturally significant than academic or museum sculptures are the statues of leading political and other public figures. A statue of Lord Cornwallis, Governor of Madras, was erected in Fort St. George in 1800. This and the nearly 200 other statues of Europeans and at least one Indian (High Court Judge, Muttusami Aiyar) put up in the subcontinent in later years were commissioned from artists in Europe, and mostly in Britain. Since Independence, however, almost every city and town has public statues created by Indians. Gandhi is the most common choice, but film stars, legendary heroines and 'heroes of labour' also stand up for public viewing. Without religious inspiration or intention, these sculptures reflect a modern India, looking back to tradition.

Reading

Required

Basham, *Wonder that was India*, pp. 364-376
Mitter, *Indian art*, pp. 168-239
Clark-Decès, *Anthroplogy of India*, pp. 186-201

Recommended

Chandra, *The sculpture of India*
Huyler, *Gifts of earth*

Essay #3 (select one of the following and write a 1,250-word essay)

1. Chose one cultural field (music, dance-theatre, painting, architecture or sculpture) and analyse its success in negotiating the transition from ancient forms to modern forms.
2. 'Indo-Islamic architecture' is the term used to describe the monuments built by Muslim rulers in India. Select three buildings and explain why this compound term is either appropriate or misleading.
3. What is the difference between an 'artist' and an 'artisan'? Are there formal, intrinsic distinctions or only socio-economic ones?
4. The visual representation of Hindu deities has a long history in India, beginning with the Indus Valley civilisation (3rd millennium BCE). Various media and techniques have been employed, but is there an underlying continuity to these representations?

UNIT V Modern Media

New technologies of production and communication have been a part of Indian culture for a long time. Writing came in the 3rd millennium BCE, paper arrived in the 13th century CE and a new kind of palmyra that changed writing in south India was imported from east Africa in the 16th c. CE. Printing came in the same century, and radio, television and cinema followed in the 20th century. Printed books and periodicals, which introduced mass production, plus visual and audio broadcasting have had a lasting impact on the way Indians produce and transfer knowledge and opinions. Just as significant, they have provided more than a billion people with new means of entertaining themselves.

These modern media are transregional, and some are global, in their reach, but the deep-seated regionalism of Indian cultural content survives. And the dynamic interaction of modern media with older, even ancient forms, also continues to animate content.

Week 14 **Print, Radio and TV**

<u>Outline</u>

    A. Print media
       1. Books
         a. 1556 first printed book in India
         b. 17-18th c. print follows missionaries and colonialists
         c. literacy, compulsory education, desire for information drive
            industry: 60,000 titles now published each year
       d. early content is traditional texts
         e. role of print in politics
            i. Gandhi's books
            ii. Hindi/nagari vs. Urdu/Perso-Arabic
            iii. Dravidian movement in south India
         f. new genres
            i. popularity of Indian-language material, novels
            ii. comic books, autobiography, translated fiction
       2. Periodicals
         a. new form, more influential than books
         b. first newspaper in 1780
         c. Indian-owned papers from early 18th c.
         d. today newspaper and periodical titles number 65,000
         e. major cultural force, esp. weekly magazines
    B. Mass production
       1. bazaar art: calendars, posters, etc
       2. everyday items: diaries, address books
    C. Radio
       1. private beginnings in 1920s
       2. state control in 1930s
       3. liberalisation in 1990s
    D. Television
       1. state broadcasting since 1959
       2. today hundreds of channels
       3. Rama story programme in 1987-88 creates national audience
       4. new genres but old content

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Print media

Books
The first book printed in India appeared in1556 in Goa, and the first in an Indian language and Indian script was printed there in Tamil the following year. In the 17th century, printing presses followed missionary and then colonial activity further down the southwest coast at Ambalakad (near Cochin), and in the 18th century it shifted to Tranqeubar on the southwest coast and by 1800 to Madras. By that year, fully 266 Tamil books had been printed by a handful of presses in south India. Throughout the 19th century, the new technology spread to major cities all over India, supported by colonial or traditional patronage or both. With the growth of education and literacy, the desire for knowledge of European and Indian (especially ancient Indian) history, science, literature and languages, printing

became a vibrant industry in 20th century India. By the early 21st century more than 60,000 titles, a third of them new titles, were being published each year.

For the first 300 years, this print revolution in India, however, did not create new works but only more of what was already in manuscript form. From the late 16th to the late 19th centuries, most printed books were traditional Sanskrit and Tamil texts, versions or episodes from the epics and mythologies, grammars and dictionaries, medieval poems, folktales, plays, histories, geographies, government notices and school primers. These items were printed in most of the regional languages of India, and in hundreds of thousands of copies. With the increase in compulsory public education, publishing school books soon became a lucrative business.

Printed books have also played a role in national politics. In north India, leading publishers in the 19th century steadily increased the number of Hindi books over those in Urdu, promoting a Hindu as opposed to a Muslim view of culture and history. In the early 20th century, Gandhi's first book, *Swaraj* in Gujarati, laid out a blueprint for independence. In south India, British and Tamil public figures used newly printed books as evidence to construct histories with a political and social agenda. These figures argued that the now-available ancient Tamil poems and folktales were evidence of a 'pure,' pre-Sanskrit Tamil culture, an argument that led to the Dravidian movement and continues to shape politics in south Indian today

Print led to the new genre of the novel in Indian languages. Throughout the 19th century and into the 20th, British Victorian fiction was popular with elites in the colonial capitals. Indian-language fiction, however, was even more popular. One private library Calcutta, for example, held about 1,000 English novels and a similar number of Bengali novels, but the rate of books issued (and read) was 10 to 1 in favour of Bengali fiction.

Other new genres to appear in print in the late 19th or early 20th century include comic books, short stories, biography, autobiography and translated fiction, mostly from English and Russian. Translations between Indian languages (a Hindi novel rendered in Tamil, for example) are notably few.

Periodicals
Whatever the effect of printed books on Indian society, the impact of periodicals has surely been deeper and more widespread. Certainly the periodical was a new cultural form since no equivalent of the daily or weekly newspaper, or magazine or journal, existed in India before the *Bengal Gazette* appeared in 1780. Similar English-language newspapers, owned and written by and for the British in the colonial capitals, were printed by the end of the 18th century. Indian-language newspapers, with local ownership and content, began to appear in the first half of the 19th century and their number rose to about 200 by 1950.
It is worth noting that Gandhi's ideas were publicised in Gujarati- and English-language newspapers.

Today (2012) newspapers are printed in 101 languages, with a total of more than 100 million copies each day. Of the roughly 35,000 newspaper titles, about 20,000 are in Hindi and 7,000 in English. When we add magazines and journals, the total annual number of periodical titles reaches nearly 65,000. Add printed books, and the total is 125,000 print titles.

This mass of print, in a country of 74% literacy, is a major cultural force. Most people do not buy or read novels, but newspapers and magazines, especially film magazines and middle-brow weeklies (with a short story, gossip and advice columns) are everywhere. Libraries are found in virtually every town, and one newspaper can be read by a dozen people at a tea-stall. Even many small towns have a press, where local books, wedding announcements and local government notices are printed. When we consider the number of people writing, printing and publishing all these publications, it is obvious that India has a thriving, diverse and regionalised print culture.

2.   Mass production
As a technology of mass production, printing has influenced not just literature and public affairs, but also most other areas of life. A category of cultural forms called 'bazaar art', for instance, was heavily affected by mass reproduction. These visual forms include calendars, usually with pictures of gods; posters of gods and goddesses; photographs of priests at a temple; advertisements; cinema posters;

election posters and so on. When offset printing became affordable in the 1970s, and concentrated in the Tamil town of Sivakasi, many of these visual forms were bought by millions of people. Village huts sometimes had a brightly-coloured calendar, and nothing else. Mass production has also made other items—such as diaries, astrological calendars and address books—affordable for the common man and woman.

3.   Radio

The first broadcasting license was granted in 1926, but the private company failed when too few people had radios and/or bought licenses. The state took over and All-India Radio was set up in 1936. Today AIR it is heard in all the regional languages and in many smaller, tribal ones as well. Programming is varied, but best-known for its reliable news, topical documentaries and dramas. For decades, most people could not afford a radio and listened via loud speakers to a set owned by the local government or private shop or householder. This communal listening changed when transistors became affordable in the late 1970s. Until the 1980s, AIR had a monopoly on radio broadcasting, shared only with the BBC and Radio Moscow. Since the liberalisation in the 1990s, hundreds of other stations are now available,

4.   Television

Like radio, television has only recently left state monopoly and diversified into hundreds of channels via new technologies. Set up first in 1959 as Doordarshan, television developed national programming and colour in the1980s. That decade also saw the broadcast of the Rama epic, which became the first programme to create a national viewing audience. During a period of 18 months in 1987-1988, a large proportion of the population did nothing but watch TV between 9:30 and 10:00 every Sunday morning. The *Ramayana* programme broke all viewing records, until a similar dramatisation of the *Mahabharata* epic was screened a few years later and a remake of the original Rama story was shown in 2008. Dubbing into regional languages, plus video, DVD, and other reproductions, make the *Ramayana* the most watched story in Indian history.

From the 1990s onward, as in radio, new kinds of shows, mostly imported and adapted from the west, have been appearing on television. Reality shows, game shows and sit coms are the most popular. One reality shows illustrates a general point. 'Rakhi chooses a husband' features a controversial, overtly sensual film actress Rakhi, who selects her mate from a series of candidates. This selection process is explicitly modelled on the selection of a husband in one of the most popular episodes of the *Ramayana.* The show also draws heavily on film songs and music. As with printing, then, the new visual medium did not create new content as much as adapt old content and make it available to larger audiences.

5.   Conclusion

From palm-leaf to printed book, from illustrated manuscript to calendar art, despite the diversification of the means by which textual and visual culture is produced, the content of these media has changed little. This general observation is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that one of the most eagerly read sections of Indian newspapers is the list of marriage advertisements.

<u>Reading</u>

Required
      Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 308-325
      Dalmia and Sadana, *Modern Indian culture*, pp. 184-205, 264-282
      Clark-Decès, *Anthropology of India*, pp. 225-240

Recommended
      Jain, *Gods in the bazaar*
      Pinney, *Photos of the gods*
      Jeffrey, *India's newspaper revolution*

<u>Discussion topics/questions</u>

1. Describe the concept of 'mass production' and its relevance to an understanding of 'bazaar' culture in India.
2. The show 'Rakhi chooses a husband' illustrates an interesting paradox about Indian television (and culture more generally). What is that paradox?
3. Tamil newspapers, according to the essay in Mines and Lamb, praise public figures, which is part of 'an ancient Indian logic.' Is this argument persuasive?

Week 15 **Cinema**

<u>Outline</u>

A. Introduction
    1. most influential of modern media
    2. continuity with older cultural forms
B. Origins and colonial history
    1. origins
        a. 1896, industry thrives, tours country
        b. 1913, first feature is mythic story
        c. Hindu concept of *darsan* (viewing)
    2. 1920s
        a. majority films British-made; support for 'Empire' films
        b. taboo on sex and kissing
    3. 1930s
        a. talkies bring songs
        b. Telugu and Tamil films begin
C. Golden Age (1940s-1960s)
    1. Indian-made films dominate
    2. Bengali art cinema (Ray, Sen, Roy and Ghatak)
    3. stardom, fan magazines
    4. main genres of Hindi commercial cinema: 'masala',
        mythological, devotional, social, incl. Muslim social.
D. Bollywood
    1. 1970s Hollywood influence brings 'action' films
    2. example of global exchange of culture
    3. spread of Indian cinema to Arab world, Soviet Union, diaspora
E. Social and political impact
    1. Colonial ban on pro-Independence films
    2. 'Mother India' (1957) as nationalist vision
    3. stars become chief ministers of states
F. Cinema today
    1. 1,200 films per year
    2. industry hit by scandals
    3. remains staple entertainment for most people

<u>Lecture</u>

1.   Introduction
Cinema, of all modern media, has arguably made the deepest and most widespread impression on Indian culture. While printed books and newspapers have changed the production and transmission of ideas and opinions, and affected national politics, film has done all this but also held up a large and glittering mirror to the entire country. The spectacular dramas on screen have reflected and reshaped values and behaviour at all levels of Indian society.

Like other modern cultural forms studied in this course, cinema represents more cultural continuity with existing traditions than invention of new ones. Its principal sources have been the Parsi theatre

in Bombay and other popular theatre forms, Hindu mythology and epics, Muslim court culture and, much later, Hollywood. While the cultural impact of cinema is due to the large number of Hindi films produced in Bombay, Tamil and Telugu in Madras (Chennai) and Bengali films in Calcutta also play a considerable role. The Bengali films of Satyajit Ray have won international acclaim and contribute to a positive image of India across the world. Finally, although many people will think of Indian cinema as 'Bollywood', that term appeared only in the 1970s after decades of colonial and post-Independence history of film.

2.   Origins and colonial history

Indian cinema began in 1896, when the Lumiere films were shown in Bombay (only a year after their debut in London). A film industry soon emerged and became profitable business. Money poured in to finance studios, build cinemas and support tours that took reels to towns, large and small, across the country. British-owned and run, these touring companies showed mainly sports, news, travel and topical documentaries.

The first Indian feature, and perhaps the first blockbuster, was 'Raja Harischandra' in 1913. Based on a well-known mythological story, it started a genre that has never lost its appeal. Other mythological features followed in quick succession, including 'The Burning of Lanka' (1917) and 'The Birth of Krishna' (1918). It is said that viewers prostrated themselves when actors playing Krishna or Rama appeared on the screen (similar reports circulated when the *Ramayana* was shown on television).

This act of prostration does not occur because viewers cannot distinguish between screen and reality. It is explained by the concept of *darsan*, which is the power of a deity (or other powerful figure) to bestow privilege and fortune on a viewer. In the hierarchical society of India, *darsan* thus also assigns status to those who are permitted to look at an authoritative icon or image.

By the 1920s, only 15% of the hundred or so films made each year were produced by Indians. The majority were not British-produced, however, but came from the USA. The colonial government then instituted censorship, banning overt sexual and violent pictures, a move supported by Gandhi and the Independence movement. In a clever act of classification, British-made films were included with Indian-made films in the category of 'Empire' films that was given priority over 'foreign' films. Thus began the absence of the kiss, a taboo that lasted until the 1980s; nudity and overt sex on screen is still highly controversial.

The advent of sound in the 1930s was significant. It brought not just the 'talkies' but also the songs that are central to the success of Indian film. Regional cinema also developed in this decade. Tamil and Telugu films were followed by those in Marathi and Bengali, but the southern ones, made in Madras, were the more numerous. Indeed, cinemas in south India soon accounted for almost half of all cinemas in the whole country.

3.   Golden Age

The period from the late 1940s to the end of the 1960s is regarded as the 'Golden Age' of Indian cinema. By the 1940s, Indian-made films began to dominate the industry. The classics of film were made in this period; Bengali art cinema (Ray, Sen, Roy and Ghatak) emerged; films were subtitled in three or four regional languages; fan magazines flourished.

Most of all, the stars were born. Raj Kapoor, Rajesh Khanna and Sharmila Tagore became India's first celebrities, while in Tamil cinema Shivaji Ganesan dominated the screen. In 1960 in Cairo, Ganesan also became the first Indian actor to win a "Best Actor" award in an International film festival. Almost as popular were the play-back singers, who sang the songs that these stars could not. Those songs were mainly the *qavvali* and *ghazal* from Muslim court culture.

The productions of song-dance-story, fabulous sets, high melodrama, affordable tickets and three-hours in a cool cinema proved irresistible to many people. While it is easy to dismiss Hindi commercial cinema as 'all song and dance,' many of the greatest hits were social dramas that focused on conditions of the urban poor and working classes. In 'Shree 420' (1955), for example, Raj Kapoor plays a poor orphan who comes to Bombay. Similarly, 'Rickshaw Driver' (1970) was the most

popular Tamil film for many decades. Even Ray's foreign award-winning 'Apu Trilogy' depicts village and urban life for ordinary families.

Hindi commercial cinema has several genres. The 'masala' (or 'mixture') combines romance, crime and comedy, while the 'historical' is equally self-explanatory. The 'mythological' (such as the pioneering 'Raja Harischandra') adapts traditional stories, while the 'devotional' focuses more on the power of religious feeling, either in an historical or contemporary setting. The 'social' highlights real-life problems and dilemmas, often within a family or kin group. A sub-genre of 'Muslim social' was popular but has virtually disappeared since the 1990s. 'Parallel' cinema refers to films made for an international audience.

4.   Bollywood

During the 1970s, Hindi commercial cinema began to draw heavily on Hollywood, especially the action film. The term 'Bollywood' derives from this fact but is now used to refer to Hindi commercial film in general, which continues to borrow themes and techniques from American cinema. While some decry this exchange as a decline in quality, Indian cinema has always existed in a global market. The early Lumiere films and British colonial films illustrate cultural flows in one direction, but the success of Ray as well as the popularity Hindi cinema in the Arab world, the former Soviet Union and now the Indian diaspora indicate a more complex network of worldwide influences.

5.   Social and Political impact

The social and political impact of cinema is immense. Before Independence in 1947, during the years of Gandhi's campaign, the British colonial government refused to allow the showing of any film with a pro-Independence message. Following Independence, 'Mother India' (1957) became part of the national narrative, and other popular films have been overtly anti-colonial, anti-Pakistan, anti-caste system and anti-corruption.   The path from screen to political power began when the female star of 'Mother India' was elected as a member of Parliament in New Delhi. More recently, stars of Tamil cinema (MGR) and Telugu cinema (Rao) have been elected chief ministers of states.

6.   Cinema today

Today (2012) India produces about 1,200 films per year, mostly in Hindi (206) but with substantial numbers in Telugu (192) and Tamil (185), followed by Kannada (138) and Bengali (132). Video, TV, DVD and other technologies have changed the viewing of cinema in India, and in recent years the industry has been dogged by financial and crime scandals.

Globalisation has influenced content and distribution, but the staple offering of drama, song and dance continues to draw large audiences. With the resurgence of religion in India (and across the world), cinema's historical focus on gods and goddesses, ritual and devotion, means that it remains a major source of entertainment and self-reflection for millions of Indians.

Reading

Required
        Mines and Lamb, *Everyday life*, pp. 146-158
        Dalmia and Sadana, *Modern Indian culture,* pp. 226-246
        Clark-Decès, *Anthropology of India*, pp.137-153

Recommended
        Kabir, *Bollywood*
        Velayutham, *Tamil cinema*

Essay #4 (select one of the following and write a 1,250-word essay)

1. Mass culture in the form of bazaar art, cinema and television has been criticised for eroding the foundations of Indian culture. Evaluate this argument with reference to three specific examples.
2. Explain how the Hindu concept of *darsan* helps us to understand the power of Indian cinema. Can we equate viewing a film with viewing a god/powerful figure?
3. Bollywood is a global phenomenon, yet its lifeblood continues to be localised cultural forms. Describe these two aspects of commercial Hindi cinema and then analyse their interaction. Are they pulling in different directions or are they parts of a whole?

Unit VI Research Paper

Week 16 Research Paper

Guidelines

Be sure to focus your research paper on a specific question. Your paper should set out the question to be addressed, exploring its possibilities, then present evidence and analysis, which should lead logically to a conclusion.

Research paper topics/questions

1. Modern Indian culture rests largely on nostalgia for the past. Today's Indians see themselves and their country as the culmination of ancient religions, abandoned ruins and forgotten texts. Assess the validity of this statement. First you must determine if the statement is itself contradictory—can modern culture rest on the past? Then evaluate it with reference to at least three examples.

2. Hinduism, many would say, is the bedrock of Indian culture. However, the religious ideas and practices of Hindus have changed substantially over the three millennia for which we have historical records. Do those changes amount to a radical transformation or a long-term continuity? First identify the main changes and their significance. Then identify the enduring features of Hinduism. Lastly, having weighed the one against the other, decide which is the more salient. Is Hinduism best described as an ever-shifting kaleidoscope or a coherent system?

3. Throughout this course, we have noted the influence of Persian culture on Indian culture—in architecture, language and scripts, painting and music. Describe these various influences and then assess their collective impact on Indian culture. Do they represent an identifiable Persian element within India? Or have they been so thoroughly absorbed that they are invisible?

4. A Hindu temple is a place of worship, a display of power, a network of economic transactions and a source of aesthetic pleasure. With reference to three temples, explain how these seemingly disparate functions cohere in a single building.

5. Indian culture is composed of many traditions (music, dance, cinema, etc.), each of which seems to adapt and evolve. As mentioned more than once in the lectures, the advent of new techniques and materials apparently results only in the production of more old content. Evaluate the validity of this statement by carefully considering three fields or traditions.

6. Cinema is perhaps India's best-known cultural export in a globalising world. But to what extent is it Indian? The technology and the early films themselves were borrowed from the

west, and Bollywood continues to take inspiration from Hollywood. Explain these two seemingly contradictory dimensions of Indian cinema: its international scope and its local content.

Reading List (required, recommended; * = required)

Alam, Muzaffar. *The languages of political Islam: India 1200-1800.* Hurst (London), 2004

Babb, Alan. *The Absent Lord: Ascetics and kings in a Jain ritual culture.* California, 1996.

Babb, Lawrence (Alan). *The divine hierarchy: popular Hinduism in central India.* Columbia, 1975.

Bakhle, Janaki*. Two men and music: Nationalism in the making of an Indian classical tradition.* Oxford, 2005.

Bayly, Susan. *Caste, society and politics in India from the eighteenth century to the modern age.* Cambridge, 2001.

Beach, Cleveland Milo. *Mughal and Rajput painting. Cambridge history of India,* Part 1, Vol. 3. Cambridge, 1992 (2002).

Blackburn, Stuart. *Inside the drama-house: Rama stories and shadow puppets in south India.* California, 1996.

Blackburn, Stuart. 'Death and deification.' *History of Religions*, 24: 255-274, 1985.

Burton-Page and George Michell (eds.). *Indian Islamic architecture*: *forms and typologies, sites and monuments.* Brill, 2008.

Chandra, P. *The sculpture of India 3000 B.C. – 1300 A.D.* Harvard, 1985.

*Clark-Decès, Isabella (ed.). *A companion to the anthropology of India*. Blackwell, 2011.

Cummins, Joan. *Indian painting: from cave temples to the colonial period.* Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 2006.

*Dalmia, Vasudha and Rashmi Sadana (eds.). *The Cambridge companion to modern Indian culture.* Cambridge, 2012.

Dirks, Nicholas. *Castes of Mind. Colonialism and the making of modern India*. Princeton, 2011.

Eck, Diana. *India: A sacred geography*. Harmony Books, 2012.

Embree, Ainslie T. (ed.). *Sources of Indian tradition.* 2 vols. Columbia, 1988 (rev. ed.)

Emeneau, Murray. *Language and Linguistic Areas: Essays* . Stanford,1980.

*Flueckiger, Joyce Burkhalter. *In Amma's room: Gender and vernacular Islam in south India*. Indiana, 2006.

Frasca, Richard. *Terukuttu: The ritual theatre of Tamilnadu*. California, 1984.

Frykenberg, Robert. *Christianity in India: From beginnings to the present.* Oxford, 2008.

*Fuller, Christopher. *The camphor flame*: *Popular Hinduism and society in India.* 2nd ed. Princeton, 2004

Gold, Ann Grozdins. *Fruitful journeys. Ways of Rajasthani pilgrims.* California, 1988.

Hansen, Kathryn. *Grounds for play: The Nautanki theatre of North India.* California, 1991.

Huyler, Stephen. *Gifts of earth: Terracotta and clay sculptures of India.* Mapin,1996.

Jeffrey, Robin. *India's newspaper revolution: capitalism, politics and the Indian-language press, 1977-1999.* St. Martins, 2000.

Kabir, Nasreen Munni. *Bollywood: the Indian cinema story.* Channel 4, 2001.

*Kachru, Braj B., Yamuna Kachru, S. N. Sridhar (eds.). *Language in South Asia.* Cambridge, 2008

King, Christopher. *One language, two scripts: the Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India.* Oxford, 1994.

Kramrisch, Stella. *The Hindu Temple.* 2 vols. (various editions)

Laidlaw, James, *Riches and renunciation: religion, economy and society among the Jains.* Oxford, 1995.

Lutgendorf, Philip. *The life of a text: Performing the* Ramcaritmanas *of Tulsidas.* California, 1991.

Mandelbaum, David. *Society in India: Continuity and change.* 2 vols. California, 1970.

Metcalf, Thomas. *An imperial vision: Indian architecture and Britain's Raj.* California, 1989 (Oxford, Delhi, 2002).

Michell, George. *The Hindu temple: an introduction to its meaning and forms.* Chicago, 1977 (1998).

*Mines, Diane and Sarah Lamb (eds.). *Everyday life in South Asia.* 2nd ed. Indiana, 2010.

*Mitter, Partha. *Indian art.* Oxford, 2001.

Mosse, David. *The saint in the banyan tree: Christianity and caste in India.* California, 2012.

Neuman, Daniel. *The life of music in north India: the organization of an artistic tradition.* Chicago, 1990.

*Richmond, Farley, Darius Swann and Philip Zarrilli. *Indian theatre: Traditions of performance.* Hawaii, 1990.

Oberoi, Patricia. *Family, kinship and marriage in India.* Oxford (Delhi), 1994.

Pinney, Christopher. *Photos of the gods: the printed image and political struggle in India.* Reaktion, 2004.

Robb, Peter (ed.). *The concept of race in South Asia.* Oxford (Delhi), 1995.

Staal, Fritz. *Discovering the Vedas: Origins, mantras, rituals, insights.* Penguin, 2008.

Trawick, Margaret. *Notes on love in a Tamil family.* California, 1990.

Velayutham, Selvaraj. *Tamil cinema: The cultural politics of India's other film industry.* Routledge, 2009.

*Weidman, Amanda. *Singing the classical, voicing the modern: the post-colonial politics of music in South India.* Duke, 2006.

Syllabus

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the meanings and manifestations of culture found in the subject of the course.
2. Identify unique theoretical underpinnings and influential thinkers in the course topic.
3. Analyze the relationship between the various aspects of cultural texts and the particular social, cultural, and biographical contexts of their production.
4. Research and critically evaluate cultural productions.
5. Use secondary sources and close reading skills to produce a substantive critical essay relating one or more specific cultural productions to the economic, social, cultural, or biographical contexts of its production.
6. Demonstrate a balanced perspective and a deepened understanding of the cultures, times, people, and situations that produce these works.
7. Write coherent historical arguments that explore the relationships of various concepts and texts, and which provide a clear synthesis.

Course Goals:

1. To provide students with a broad perspective of approaches to world culture and an understanding of the various ways in which they manifest themselves and to assess students' ability to express their perspectives through exams and essays.
2. To provide students with a deeper understanding of diverse cultural and interdisciplinary traditions the course focus and to express this deepened understanding in written tests and a critical essay.
3. To provide an overview of cultural analysis and interpretation methods and help students apply these skills in writing essay examinations and a critical essay.
4. To read widely and critically in a variety of cultural texts in order to explore potential meanings and to demonstrate the depth and breadth of this reading in essay examinations and a critical essay.
5. To do library research on a particular trend, event, concept, an individual theorist, or an issue in the area of comparative culture and to write a critical essay which incorporates this research.

Course Content:

1. Cultural developments and texts that have been designated as being produced within the category of the course topic.
2. Discussion of the theoretical, social, philosophical and biographical contexts in which those works were produced.
3. Historical movements in various periods.
4. Discussion of the cultural issues and questions related to theoretical, social, philosophical, and biographical approaches to the study of the course topic.
5. Key ideas about how to evaluate and interpret cultural events, texts, and approaches.
6. Criticism and reflection upon political and economic systems as reflected in culture.
7. Discussion of the relevance of course readings to the understanding of contemporary cultural issues.
8. Critical analysis and interpretation of culture.
9. Conducting scholarly research on and off-line.

Course Outline:

For the detailed course outline, please see the study guide.

Course Readings:

The course readings for this course will be available through the Online Library, which will provide students access to selected journal articles, book chapters, and reference materials.

Course Preparedness:

This course is a history course which requires analysis, research, and writing. It assumes the mastery of prerequisite college-level skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation, paragraphing, and essay writing. It also assumes the ability to read and analyze literary texts. This course provides instruction in history and does not address remedial writing issues at the sentence, paragraph, or essay level. The California Department of Education "English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools" offers context for understanding the standard for writing at the college level. Students who do not meet the standards outlined in the "English-Language Arts Content Standards" will not pass this course.

In short, this course assumes that students already "write with a command of standard English conventions, write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument, and use clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies" (California Standards, Grades Nine and Ten). This course focuses on texts and analysis and requires college-level writing skills that exceed those required at the secondary level.

Course Workload:

In accordance with accreditation standards,   requires approximately two hours of outside work for every contact hour. For a 3-hour course, there are 48 contact hours, plus a minimum of 96 hours outside work. For a sixteen-week course, students can expect to devote a minimum of 6 hours of independent study per week in order to complete the coursework.

Grading Factors:

Discussion Board   (20%)

The Discussion Board provides the learner a place to respond to questions on the topic and to exchange ideas, reactions and analyses of the texts. Discussion questions concentrate on ideas, themes, and characters in literary works. There will be one question per week. Discussion Board questions will be responded to by all learners in the course and will be evaluated by the instructor.   The Discussion Board is not available for OCW courses.

Journal   (20%)

Your journal consists of your responses to questions in the Study Guide. These questions require you to reflect on the material and to write a one to two-paragraph response. At the end of the course, you will gather together all of your Study Guide responses and will turn them in as a final portfolio.

Essay   (20%)

You will write an essay on one of the topics provided to you by your instructor in which you apply a critical paradigm from theorists or issues raised by the Study Guide questions.   You should start your paper with a succinct thesis statement, describe the critical paradigm and the text(s) being analyzed. Be sure to cite critical passages to demonstrate support for your argument.

Length: 1,000—1,500 words. Essay topics will be assigned by the instructor and will reflect material covered in the Study Guide and the readings.

Exam   (40%)

Students must complete the assignments, submit them, and take the proctored exam.

Definition of Grades:

Graduate Courses

A   Outstanding Achievement

B   Commendable Achievement

C   Marginal Achievement

D   Unsatisfactory *

F   Failing *

* Students receiving this grade in a course that is required for his/her degree program must repeat the course.

I   **Incomplete** A grade given at the discretion of the instructor when a student who has completed **at least two-thirds of the course class sessions** and is unable to complete the requirements of the course because of uncontrollable and unforeseen circumstances. The student must convey these circumstances (preferably in writing) to the instructor prior to the final day of the course. If an instructor decides that an "Incomplete" is warranted, the instructor must convey the conditions for removal of the "Incomplete" to the student in writing. A copy must also be placed on file with the Office of the Registrar until the "Incomplete" is removed or the time limit for removal has passed. An "Incomplete" is not assigned when the only way the student could make up the work would be to attend a major portion of the class when next offered.

An "I" that is not removed within the stipulated time becomes an "F." No grade points are assigned. The "F" is calculated in the grade point average.

W   **Withdrawal** Signifies that a student has withdrawn from a course after beginning the third class session. **Students who wish to withdraw must notify their admissions advisor before the beginning of the sixth class session in the case of graduate courses, or before the seventh class session in the case of undergraduate courses.** Instructors are not authorized to issue a "W" grade.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as one's own. Students must give credit for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge. If a student borrows ideas or information from another author, he/she must acknowledge the author in the body of the text and on the reference page. Students found plagiarizing are subject to the penalties outlined in the Policies and

Procedures section of the Catalog, which may include a failing grade for the work in question or for the entire course. The following is one of many websites that provide helpful information concerning plagiarism for both students and faculty: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

Ethics:

Ethical behavior in the classroom is required of every student. The course will identify ethical policies and practices relevant to course topics.

Technology:

Students are expected to be competent in using current technology appropriate for this discipline. Such technology may include word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software. Use of the internet and e-mail may also be required.

Diversity:

Learning to work with and value diversity is essential in every class. Students are expected to exhibit an appreciation for multinational and gender diversity in the classroom.

Civility:

As a diverse community of learners, students must strive to work together in a setting of civility, tolerance, and respect for each other and for the instructor. Rules of classroom behavior (which apply to online as well as onsite courses) include but are not limited to the following:

- Conflicting opinions among members of a class are to be respected and responded to in a professional manner.
- Side conversations or other distracting behaviors are not to be engaged in during lectures, class discussions or presentations
- There are to be no offensive comments, language, or gestures

Students with Disabilities:

Students seeking special accommodations due to a disability must submit an application with supporting documentation, as explained under this subject heading in the General Catalog. Instructors are required to provide such accommodations if they receive written notification from the University.

Writing Across the Curriculum:

Students are expected to demonstrate writing skills in describing, analyzing and evaluating ideas and experiences. Written reports and research papers must follow specific standards regarding citations of an author's work within the text and references at the end of the paper. Students are encouraged to use the services of the University's Writing Center when preparing materials.
The following website provides information on APA, MLA, and other writing and citation styles that may be required for term papers.

Online Library:

Our Online Library supports academic rigor and student academic success by providing access to scholarly books and journals electronically.