



RSOC 007. South & Southeast Asian Religious Traditions.

Spring 2016.

Professor D. Pinault

Section #35654.

**Tuesday & Thursday,
8.30-10.10am, Kenna 310.**

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2.00- 3.40 pm, Kenna 310.**

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Office hours: Tues. & Thurs. 4.15-5.15pm; and by appointment.

NB: For Camino readings, click on "Files" on our course Camino site.

Course description.

This is an introduction to the major religious traditions of South & Southeast Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism. The geographic range of this course includes not only India but also other regions in the South Asian cultural continuum such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Burma, as well as diaspora South Asian ethnic communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. Additionally, consideration will be given to the ways in which Indian religions—most notably Buddhism—have been articulated in Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam & Thailand. We will analyze the historical development of each faith, noting what is distinctive in each tradition's doctrines and worship but giving particular attention to the ways in which these religions have interacted and influenced each other.

For each tradition examined in this course, we will begin with classroom study of scriptural texts and ritual practices, as preparation for our study of South & Southeast Asian traditions as they are lived & experienced today. Each section of the course will include a fieldwork component, in which students attend religious services & interview members of the given congregation. This

will permit us to learn how adherents of these faiths are making use of their traditions to respond to the challenges associated with modernity in the 21st century. The journal that is required of you will comprise your field observations as well as reflections on how immigrant communities in the Bay Area make use of their faith traditions to respond to life in the United States.

The general learning goals and objectives associated with RTC (Religion, Theology, and Culture) Level 1 courses are as follows:

“1.a: Students will be able to describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices from several traditions or within one, and from at least two globally distinct regions. 1.b: Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence. Goals: Knowledge (Global Cultures); Habits of Mind and Heart (Complexity; Critical Thinking; Religious Reflection).”

The above categories are linked to our course requirements as follows:

Tests—Learning Objective 1.a

Essays—Learning Objectives 1.a, 1.b

Field Journal—Learning Objectives 1.a, 1.b

Class Participation—Learning Objectives 1.a, 1.b

Specific learning goals and objectives associated with RSOC 007:

--to become aware of basic categories and the conceptual vocabulary for understanding religion as a field of intellectual inquiry in relation to human society. This vocabulary will involve consideration of conceptual categories such as myth, ritual, symbol, and scripture.

--to help you develop your ability to analyze, compare, and evaluate a range of primary sources—scripture, folktales, devotional literature, etc.—and to collate such analysis with insights derived from first-hand ethnographic experience in witnessing ritual practices and interviewing members of faith traditions.

--to be able to describe & compare the central religious ideas & practices from five traditions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism—with regard to several globally distinct regions: the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and diaspora South Asian and Southeast Asian communities in North America.

--to enable you to use critical approaches—drawing on the disciplines of comparative religion, anthropology, theology, and literary criticism—to reflect on your own beliefs and the religious dimension of human existence.

Course syllabus.

(Please note: readings are to be completed in time for the class under which they are listed. Be sure to bring with you to class the texts assigned for the given day.)

1.) Tuesday, March 29.

Introduction to the course. Definitions of religion in the South/Southeast Asian context: ritual & creed as ways of framing communal identity. Methodological issues & the question of shared characteristics in South Asian religious traditions. An introduction to the Indian subcontinent.

General considerations, geographic, linguistic, cultural. **Discussion of initial ungraded writing exercise (to be submitted in hard-copy/paper format; no on-line submissions allowed).**

Topics to be addressed in your ungraded writing exercise: a.) A brief description of your previous experience, impressions, and/or knowledge of the religious traditions to be studied this quarter: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Sikhism. b.) A statement in which you identify and briefly reflect on your own personal worldview, however you define this for yourself (whether in terms of denominational religious affiliation, unaffiliated spirituality, self-identification as an agnostic, skeptic, atheist, freethinker, etc.). c.) A response to the assigned readings for Thursday (specifically, Nielsen, “The Pattern of the Shrauta Sacrifice”; the Vedic myth of “Indra and the Dragon”; & the selected readings from Van Voorst [all of which are attached to the syllabus]), in which you describe and analyze the connections between myth/storytelling and ritual as reflected in these readings on Vedic Hinduism. Keeping in mind the textual excerpts in our “Definitions of Religion” sheet, what “ultimate concerns” are suggested or implicit in this Vedic material? **What is your own response to this literature?** Use brief citations from these sources in support of your argument.

Minimum length of assignment: 500 words/2 pages, typed, double-spaced. Suggested maximum length: 1,000 words/4 pages.

NB: This is an ungraded assignment. ***But failure to submit this assignment at the beginning of class this Thursday, March 31, will result in the lowering of your final grade for this course by at least one step (eg, from C to C-).*** Your final course grade will be lowered an additional step for each day late this assignment is submitted (eg, if your assignment is submitted on Friday, April 1, your final grade will be lowered two steps—eg, from C to D+). I’ll offer written comments on what you submit, which you’ll find useful for other assignments you submit this quarter.

2.) Thursday, March 31. **UNGRADED WRITING EXERCISE DUE.**

Early forms of Hinduism and the Vedic tradition. Indus Valley civilization and the interaction of Dravidian and Aryan cultures. Caste, Hindu society, and the Vedas.

Readings: Review course syllabus. Smith, *The World’s Religions*, 12-41; Nielsen, “The Pattern of the Shrauta Sacrifice”; “Indra and the Dragon”; Van Voorst, “The Creation of the Caste System”; “Charms and Spells” (attached to syllabus).

3.) Tuesday, April 5. **FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNED.**

Upanishadic scripture & reinterpretations of Vedic tradition. Salvation & lifestyle in the Upanishads. Uses of poetic imagery to discuss reincarnation, the soul, & the divine.

Readings: Smith, 41-75; Mascaro, Upanishads, 49-66, 75-84, 133-143; Eck, Darsan, 1-31.

4.) Thursday, April 7.

Popular Hinduism. Ritual practices, the concept of darshan (darsan), and the iconic and aniconic traditions in India.

Readings: Review Upanishads; Eck, Darsan, 32-75.

5.) Tuesday, April 12.

The Bhagavad-Gita: dharma and the reconciliation of the life of renunciation and the life of action in the world. **Slide presentation: myth and ritual in Hindu iconography.**

Readings: Darsan, 77-92; Bhagavad-Gita, intro, 1-14, & text of Gita, 23-57 (1st-4th Teachings).

6.) Thursday, April 14. **FIRST ESSAY DUE; SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNED.**

Bhagavad-Gita (cont'd.). **Film: 330 Million Gods.**

Readings: Gita, 59-162 (5th-18th Teachings; Afterword; “Key Words in the Bhagavad-Gita”).

7.) Tuesday, April 19.

Bhagavad-Gita (concluded). An introduction to Buddhism. The life of Siddhartha. The Theravada and Mahayana traditions in Buddhism.

Readings: Smith, 82-127, 139-149.

8.) Thursday, April 21.

Buddhist popular piety and the Jataka Tales. Bodhisattva and Arhat ideals.

Readings: “The Bodhisattva and the Hungry Tigress” and “The Bodhisattva as the Preacher of Patience,” 24-30 (Camino).

Friday, April 22: Last day to drop classes without a W!

First Field Trip. Sunday, April 24, 7.45am-12.30pm: Shiva-Vishnu Temple, 1232 Arrowhead Ave, Livermore 94550; tel.: 925-449-6255. (confirmed) Contact person: Mr. Krishna Kumar Kunnath, Manager, Hindu Community & Cultural Center; email: krishnahccc@gmail.com tel: 925-321-4727; Mr. Mohan R. Soma; email: mohanrsoma@gmail.com; tel.: 925-819-0830; Mr. Leela Koneru; email: leela.koneru@ymail.com . Rendezvous point: in front of Mission Church on SCU campus; bring notebook & camera/smartphone.

9.) Tuesday, April 26.

Monasticism, traditional piety, and agricultural society in relation to Buddhist ideals: an example from Sri Lanka. **Film: Footprint of the Buddha.**

Readings: Review “Hungry Tigress” and “Patience” Jatakas(Camino); Van Voorst (Camino), 74-75 (“The Past Lives of Gotama Buddha”), 99-101 (“The Merit of Making Images”); Thich Nhat Hanh, 1-55.

10.) Thursday, April 28. **SECOND ESSAY DUE; THIRD ESSAY ASSIGNED.**
“Engaged Buddhism” and the interaction of traditional and activist forms of Buddhism today. Popular devotion, pilgrimage, and Buddhist artwork: examples from Ajanta (India) and Polonnaruwa (Sri Lanka). An introduction to the Jain tradition in India.
Readings: Review Thich Nhat Hanh, 1-55; Van Voorst, 107-117 (“Jainism”); N. Smart, “The Jain Tradition,” 81-90 (Camino).

Second Field Trip. Saturday, April 30, 9am-12.30pm: Jain Bhawan, 722 South Main St, Milpitas 95035. (tentative). tel.: 408 262 6242; website: www.jcnc.org Contact persons: Mr. Girish Shah (email: girish.shah@sivicouncil.org tel: 408-373-3564; 408-372-2691); Mr. Yogesh Bapna (yogesh.bapna@gmail.com); Mr. Vipul Kothari (email: vipulkothari@hotmail.com & pr@jcnc.org), tel.: 510-300-4243; Mr. Kiran Shah (kiran_shah@hotmail.com), tel.: 408-892-9912; Mr. Kamlesh Mehta (kmehta@aspirecom.com), tel.: 408-839-8996; Mr. Bipin Shah (bshah@kovair.com), tel.: 408-823-8276. Rendezvous point: in front of Mission Church, SCU campus; bring notebook & camera/smartphone.

11.) Tuesday, May 3. **Slide presentation: Buddhist and Jain iconography.**
Environmental dimensions of “engaged Buddhism” in the work of Thich Nhat Hanh. Asceticism and nonviolence in the Jain tradition.
Readings: Yocum, “ ‘On the Ground’ Jainism in South India,” p.5 (Camino); “Shravana Belgola” (Jain Devotional Pamphlet), pp.1-4 (Camino); Smith, 221-248 (chapter on Islam).

12.) Thursday, May 5. **First test: Hinduism; Buddhism; Jainism.**
An introduction to Islam. Islamic doctrine: monotheism, human nature, and the need for prophecy. Islam in the Indian subcontinent. An introduction to Qur’anic scripture.
No new readings.

13.) Tuesday, May 10.
The Qur’an: creedal/scriptural revelation in a non-creedal environment. Sufi forms of Islam in Pakistan and India: the dialectic between ecstatic mysticism and Islamic law.
Readings: Van Voorst (Camino), 283-293 (“Islam”).

Third Field Trip. Wednesday, May 11 (confirmed date), 7.15pm-9.30pm. Buddhi Vihara, 402 Knowles Avenue, Santa Clara 95050. Website: www.buddhivihara.org Tel.: 408-246-9921; 408-315-3284. Contact person: The Venerable Kahanda Amarabuddhi (“Bhante Buddhi”). Email: pansala@yahoo.com Rendezvous point: in front of Mission Church, SCU campus; bring notebook & camera/smartphone.

14.) Thursday, May 12. **THIRD ESSAY DUE.** **Film: The Sufi Way.**
 The Qur'an (cont'd). Pilgrimage to the tombs of Sufi saints in Pakistan and India: the dialectic between scripturalist Islam and popular piety.
 Readings: Van Voorst (Camino), 293-319 (Islam); Smith, 248-268.

Friday, May 13: Last day to drop classes with a W!

Fourth Field Trip. Friday, May 13, 12.30pm-3pm: South Bay Islamic Association, 325 N. 3rd St, San Jose 95112; website: www.sbia.info (confirmed date). Contact person: Mr. Adnan Rasheed tel.: 408 876 8901; adrash15@sbcglobal.net (NB: First adhan: 1.15pm). Rendezvous: in front of Mission Church on SCU campus; bring notebook & camera.

15.) Tuesday, May 17.
 An introduction to the Sikh tradition. Guru Nanak's response to Hinduism and Islam. The role of scripture in Sikh ritual practices.
 Readings: Smith, 75-77; Van Voorst (Camino), 118-133 ("Sikhism").

16.) Thursday, May 19.
Slide presentation: Pilgrimage sites as places of interreligious contact in Southeast Asia: Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, & Christian shrines on the Indonesian island of Java.
 World Sikhism today: the Punjab, the Golden Temple, and the Sikh diaspora. Issues of practice and identity among Sikhs in America. The pre-Islamic legacy in Indonesia today at temples and pilgrimage-shrines frequented by Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and practitioners of "agama Jawa primitif" ("Java's primordial religion"): Borobudur, Candi Panataran, Sendang Duwur, and Garuda eagle-wings at an Islamic Sufi mosque.
 Readings: N. Smart, "The Sikh Tradition," 159-168; D. Pinault, "Primordial Faith Embraces Coexistence in Indonesia," *National Catholic Reporter*, November 14, 2015; D. Pinault, "'Pray Only to Allah!': Indonesia's Threatened Religious Pluralism," *Commonweal*, September 17, 2012 (Camino).

Fifth Field Trip. Sunday, May 22, 9.30am-1.30pm: Sikh Gurdwara, 3636 Murillo Ave, San Jose 95148. website: www.sikhgurudwarasj.org (tentative date) tel.: 408 274 9373; contact persons: Dr. Gurinderpal Singh; email: gpsahib@aol.com Tel.: 408-679-9302; Mr. Bhupindar Singh Dhillon (email: bobdhillon@bobdhillon.com). Rendezvous: Mission Church on SCU campus; bring camera/smartphone & notebook.

17.) Tuesday, May 24. **FIELD JOURNAL DUE. Slide presentation: Shia rituals in India.**
 An introduction to the Shia tradition in Islam. Shia Islam in the South Asian setting.
 Readings: Pinault, "Shiism: An Overview," 3-10, "Essentials of Islam," 11-26 (chapters 1 & 2, The Shiites).

18.) Thursday, May 26. **Slide presentation: Shia iconography.**

History, salvation, and sacred history in South Asian Shiism. The use of iconography and ritual to foster communal identity among Shia Muslims in Pakistan and India.

Readings: Pinault, “Shiite Ta’wil,” 27-46, “Shiism in India,” 59-62, “Shiite Shrines,” 79-82, “Lamentation Rituals,” 99-124, and “Glossary,” 177-182 (all these sections are found in The Shiites).

19.) Tuesday, May 31. **Second test: Islam (Sunni/Shia); Sikhism.**

Conclusion: Ritual, scripture, and communal identity in the religions of South Asia.

No new readings.

Required Texts.

Diana Eck. Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India. Columbia. 3rd edition.

Juan Mascaro, transl. The Upanishads. Penguin (**NB: You are required to use only this translation—and no other edition—for this course.**)

Barbara Miller, transl. The Bhagavad-Gita. Bantam. (**NB: You are required to use only this translation—and no other edition—for this course.**)

Thich Nhat Hanh. Our Appointment with Life: Sutra on Knowing the Better Way to Live Alone. Parallax.

D. Pinault. The Shiites: Ritual and Popular Piety in a Muslim Community. St. Martin’s.

Huston Smith. The World’s Religions. Harper Collins.

Additional text (portions have been posted on Camino).

Robert Van Voorst. Anthology of World Scriptures. Wadsworth. 5th edition.

Other required material available on Camino.

- i.) “The Bodhisattva and the Hungry Tigris” and “The Bodhisattva as the Preacher of Patience.” Source: Edward Conze, Buddhist Scriptures (London/NY: Penguin Books, 1959), pp.24-30.
- ii.) “The Jain Tradition.” Source: Ninian Smart, Religions of Asia (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), pp.81-90.
- iii.) “‘On the Ground’ Jainism in South India.” Source: Glenn Yocum, Religious Studies News, (Atlanta, GA: American Academy of Religion), September 1997, p.5.
- iv.) “Shravana Belgola (Jain Devotional Pamphlet).” Source: Anonymous (Jain Community of Southern India, no date), pp.1-4.
- v.) “The Sikh Tradition.” Source: Ninian Smart, Religions of Asia (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), pp.159-168.
- vi.) D. Pinault. “Primordial Faith Embraces Coexistence in Indonesia.” *National Catholic Reporter*, November 14, 2015.
- vii.) D. Pinault. “‘Pray Only to Allah!’: Indonesia’s Threatened Religious Pluralism.” *Commonweal*, September 17, 2012.

Requirements and grading.

The final grade will be assigned on the following basis.

2 tests, each worth 10%:	Total: 20%
3 essays, each worth 10%:	Total: 30%
Field journal:	30%
Class participation:	20%

NB: ONLY STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS ARE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE THIS COURSE. NO STUDENT WHO MISSES THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE IN THIS COURSE.

NB: TO HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF RECEIVING A PASSING GRADE FOR THIS COURSE, YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS. ANYONE WHO NEGLECTS TO TAKE THE TESTS OR SUBMIT THE REQUIRED ESSAYS AND JOURNAL WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR A PASSING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.

The **tests** will be based on the assigned readings and classroom lectures, discussions, and films. The questions will involve brief essays, definitions, and/or identifications. Dates for the tests are indicated above in the course syllabus. Preparation for each test will entail a comprehensive review on your part of all assigned readings, lectures, and discussions up to the date of the test.

Essay assignments. Each essay will be devoted to an assigned topic linked to the required readings. Each essay is to be typed, double-spaced, and is to include brief paginated citations of the texts used in support of each of your arguments. Length of each essay: 5-8 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary.) Due dates will be listed on the assignment sheet distributed for each essay (see also the “course syllabus” section).

Please note: each paper must be handed in on time, at the beginning of class on the day it is due. I will lower the grade for your essay by at least one step (eg, C becomes C-) if you fail to submit your essay at the beginning of class on the due date. I will lower the grade by at least two steps (eg, C becomes D+) for papers submitted the day after they are due. The grade given for a particular essay will be lowered an additional step for each further day late the paper is submitted. Lateness penalties also accrue over weekends; thus the grade for a paper due on a Thursday that is submitted the following Tuesday will be lowered six steps (eg, B becomes D).

The same lateness penalties also apply to your field journal.

NB: Email/on-line submissions are NOT acceptable.

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss your ideas, outlines, and first drafts for each essay assignment. Additionally, please be sure to proof your essays for grammatical mistakes, typographical errors, and infelicities of wording: these can have an adverse effect on the grade you earn.

NB: Each page of every essay should have a header that includes your name, the title of the essay, and the page number.

Field journal. I will arrange a number of field trips this quarter, to religious services at various sites in the Bay Area associated with each of the faiths to be studied in this course. The confirmed date for each trip will be announced once our hosts have finalized plans. You are required to participate in at least **two** of these group visits. Two constitutes the **minimum** in order for you to have the possibility of completing the course with a passing grade. Throughout the quarter, keep a journal in which you record your notes from each field trip and evaluate your field experiences in light of your readings and classroom discussions and the interviews you conduct. On **TUESDAY, MAY 24**, you are to submit to me in class a final typewritten version of your journal. Length of journal: **15-25 pages** (you may exceed this length if necessary), typed, double-spaced, with footnotes and bibliography for any textual citations you make. **The journal should incorporate the following data:**

1.) **Top Sheet.** This should include your name followed by a table of contents. The table of contents will list which field trips you undertook (the list should identify both the site you visited and the date of the trip), as well as any extra-credit projects you've included. The top sheet will also indicate the page on which each entry is to be found (this should also serve you as a reminder that your term project must be paginated).

2.) **Field trips. Your discussion of each field trip should include the following:**

- : your impressions of each shrine you visit and a description of its physical setting.
- : a description of the rituals/religious practices that you witness.
- : a description of the participants (dress, age, gender, etc., as well as their interactions with each other and with the celebrants).
- : a brief summary of any sermon or other discourse presented by individuals at the site, together with your own response to and interpretation of such speeches.
- : your own *personal response* to what you experience, together with your own analysis and interpretation of what you witness at the site. Did certain things you witnessed make you uncomfortable? Why? Were certain things attractive? Again, why? Your analysis should include consideration of the following questions: How do members of each faith-community present their religion to us when we visit their place of worship? To what extent, if at all, do they attempt to "package" their faith or offer a particular image of their religion and community? Do they seem to disregard our presence, or do they try to explain what they're doing or otherwise interact with us? Compare their goals, in their presentation of the faith to which they belong, with our goals, as scholars and students of South/Southeast Asian Traditions. To what extent do their goals and ours converge and/or diverge?
- : whenever possible, a summary of interviews/conversations with at least two members of the congregation from each site (I encourage you to develop follow-up interviews with congregation members via e-mail, telephone, etc. You are also encouraged to do additional interviews with fellow students, members of South/Southeast Asian faith communities in the Bay Area, etc. See me for more details).
- : photos from each site you visit (that's why you should bring a camera/smartphone on each field trip). NB: Be sure to check in advance with me and with members of each congregation concerning whom and what you're allowed to photograph. This pertains especially to photographing worshippers.
- : an analysis in which you compare your experiences at the different sites.
- : a discussion of links between your fieldwork and your assigned classroom readings (eg, the Bhagavad-Gita, Smith's World's Religions, etc.).

3.) Midnight jottings. Throughout the quarter your journal should be an **ongoing record** of your reflections on what you read for this course (to include free-form “*midnight jottings*” as an immediate response to what you’ve read for a given day, whether news items or assigned course readings), and your personal responses to what we discuss in class. Since your journal will be an ongoing record on which you work throughout the quarter, you should not wait until the end of the quarter to begin making journal entries. (NB: For each jotting, indicate the date on which you write each individual entry, and provide a brief title to identify the subject matter.) At any point throughout the quarter you are welcome to show me your journal entries for evaluation and criticism.

4.) Conclusion. Finally, your journal is to offer **concluding reflections**, in which you include your own personal responses to the readings, fieldwork, and interviews you undertake this quarter. *This section should also include reflections on your own worldview/personal outlook/religious tradition in light of our field trips and readings this quarter.*

Please note: The journal is to be handed in on time. Lateness penalties apply (see above under “Essays”). **NB: Email/on-line submissions are NOT acceptable.**

An important note: This journal is **both personal and characterized by informed opinion**. This means it is subjective (you’ll make use of the first person) and opinionated. You are expected and encouraged to voice your personal responses to what you experienced in our expeditions and what you learned in the classroom from our readings and discussions; but these opinions should be characterized by thoughtful reflection and supported by arguments derived from your eyewitness fieldwork and your textual work throughout the quarter.

NB: Each page of your journal should have a header that includes your name, the title “RSOC 007 Field Journal,” and the page number.

NB: You are required to participate in at least two group visits with the class. This is a minimum. For enhanced credit, I encourage you to undertake as many field trips as possible. You may also choose to do follow-up visits on your own initiative, which will further your learning opportunities and add to the quality of your journal. You are to consult with both me and the designated contact persons at the given site before engaging in any independent visits.

Please give special attention to the following point: We will be car-pooling to reach our destinations for the field trips. Before each trip I will circulate a sign-up sheet to match students who have the use of a car with students who need a ride. Although I will do my best to match drivers and passengers, ***ultimately it is your responsibility to get to each field site.*** **This means that as a student registered in this course, you are expected to exert your best effort to secure the use of a car if you possibly can.** Keep in mind the possibility of using Uber or other ride-sharing services.

A further NB concerning the field journal: You have the option of substituting for one of your two required field trips a **book report/evaluation** of one of the texts listed below.

The **book report** is an analytical discussion that must include the following components:

A.) **Summary.** In a few pages, summarize the most important topics addressed in the book you've chosen. If your book is a novel, summarize the plot, the most important characters and their actions, and the social/religious/political topics addressed in the story. If your work is non-fiction, identify what is most distinctive in the author's approach to South/Southeast Asian religious/social traditions. What particular points does the author emphasize?

B.) **Links between your chosen book and our course readings.** Compare the vision of South/Southeast Asian religious/social traditions presented in your book with the perspectives presented in the readings assigned for RSOC 007. What similarities and/or differences do you notice?

C.) **Critique.** Identify and evaluate the strong points of your book. Select a favorite passage, and explain why it's your favorite. What insights does it offer? Identify and evaluate the book's weakest points. Has the author failed to address points that you've learned about from your other readings?

List of titles for book report. NB: It is your responsibility to locate and obtain a copy of the book you decide to read. Choose one of the following:

Charles Allen. The Search for the Buddha: The Men Who Discovered India's Lost Religion.

Maitreyi Devi. It Does Not Die: A Romance.

Mircea Eliade. Bengal Nights.

Hemacandra. Lives of the Jain Elders.

Eugen Herrigel. Zen in the Art of Archery.

James Hilton. Lost Horizon.

Sarah Lloyd. An Indian Attachment: An Englishwoman's Unforgettable Two-Year Encounter with Indian Village Life Among the Sikhs.

Thich Nhat Hanh. Living Buddha, Living Christ.

Michael Ondaatje. Anil's Ghost (a novel about Sri Lanka).

Nancy Wilson Ross. Three Ways of Asian Wisdom: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Zen, and Their Significance for the West.

Sara Suleri. Meatless Days (a memoir of family life in Pakistan).

Manil Suri. The Death of Vishnu: A Novel.

Michael Tobias. Life Force: The World of Jainism.

Francis Yeats-Brown. Lives of a Bengal Lancer (a memoir of a British soldier's encounter with Indian Yoga).

Length of book report: 5 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary).

Further NB: You also have the option of doing the book report in addition to the minimum 2 or more field trips. This will give you the opportunity to earn enhanced credit on the grade you obtain for the journal.

A further NB concerning the field journal: You have the option of substituting for one of your two required group field trips a **visit to the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. Please note the following guidelines concerning this option:**

You must pay your own admission fee. Be sure to bring: 1.) your SCU Access card (for the student discount on admission); 2.) a camera/smartphone (see below); 3.) a notebook & pen/pencil. Be sure to check online for updates on when the Museum is open.

Your journal entry for the Asian Art Museum trip should include an analysis involving comparisons of various artworks. **NB: Be sure to bring a camera on this fieldtrip; you are required to photograph the artifacts you plan to discuss (remember to turn off the flash-setting). You are also required to include in your museum journal entry at least one photograph of each artifact you discuss, with close-ups whenever possible of particular iconographic details you wish to emphasize. The photos you submit must be clearly enough delineated and sharply enough focused so that the artifact's details are easily discernible.**

Your discussion should first of all address the following assignment: Identify an artwork that you particularly like from the museum collection (whether Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Muslim, or Sikh), and discuss why it's your favorite.

Additionally, you should address at least two of the following assignments (you are also welcome to supplement the following questions with your own comparisons and analyses):

- 1.) Identify, describe, and compare artifacts depicting the various avatars of Vishnu.
- 2.) Describe and compare artifacts depicting scenes from the life of Siddhartha.
- 3.) Compare depictions of Ganesha from India (Hindu) and Tibet (Buddhist).
- 4.) Identify various artifacts depicting Shiva (note especially Shiva Bhairava, from India, and the Shiva linga, from Nepal). What functions/aspects of this god are emphasized in each artwork?
- 5.) Compare incidents from the life of the Buddha as represented in Indian art with Jataka depictions and other art linked to the Buddha in art from Thailand (Thai art is located in the Southeast Asian gallery).
- 6.) The Jain section of the South Asian gallery depicts a scene from the life of Parshvanatha (the 23rd Tirthankara). Compare this artifact with a Cambodian sculpture depicting a seated Buddha with a naga. Note the differences and similarities in these two works.
- 7.) Nagas (snakes/cobras/serpent-gods) proliferate in these galleries. Analyze the representations and functions of nagas in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain works from these galleries.
- 8.) Compare artworks showing the various shaktis of Shiva: Parvati (from Cambodia); Durga; Kali.
- 9.) Analyze the ways in which ceramics and other artifacts from the Islamic art gallery combine aniconic motifs (geometry & calligraphy) with iconic representations (animals, flowers, etc.). Compare the representations of animals in Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu artworks in the Asian Art Museum.
- 10.) Compare the art on display in the Sikh gallery with motifs from the Moghul and Islamic artifacts at the Asian Art Museum.

Another option: You also have the choice of substituting for one of the two required group field trips an independent visit to the Cantor Arts Center (located on the campus of Stanford University). **Further NB:** You also have the option of visiting the Asian Art Museum or the Cantor Arts Center in addition to the minimum 2 or more field trips. This will give you the opportunity to earn enhanced credit on the grade you obtain for the journal.

Be sure to check online for updates on when the Museum is open.

NB: The photography requirement described above for the Asian Art Museum applies also to your report on the Cantor Arts Center.

Your visit should focus on the Hindu and Buddhist artwork on display in the Asian art galleries at Stanford's Cantor Arts Center. At a minimum your report should address all three of the following points:

- 1.) Identify, describe, and discuss the museum's artworks representing the following Hindu deities: Vishnu, Lakhshmi, the "dancing" Shiva, and Krishna. Discuss these statues' use of the following motifs and concepts: bhakti, lila, mudra, naga (the display cards accompanying the artworks will be helpful to you).
- 2.) Compare at least three Buddha/Bodhisattva figures from different regions (for example, West Bengal/Bihar, Kashmir, Gandhara, China, and Thailand), discussing similarities and differences of emphasis in the artists' representations of the Buddha/Bodhisattva.
- 3.) Identify an artwork that you particularly like from the museum's Hindu and Buddhist collection, and discuss why it's your favorite.

Length of art museum report: 5 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary).

A further option: Creative Literary Composition. You have the choice of substituting for one of the two required group field trips a creative literary composition. (You may also earn extra credit for your journal grade by writing the Creative Literary Composition in addition to our 2 or more fieldtrips.)

Requirements for the Creative Literary Composition option: Create a short story, science fiction/fantasy tale, poem, or myth that responds to and incorporates aspects of the South/Southeast Asian religious traditions we study this quarter. Your inspiration may be derived from the realms of ritual, doctrine, mythology, symbolism, art, etc. **Your fictional work must be accompanied by a rationale commenting on your literary creation.** This commentary/rationale must identify the principal textual/artistic sources from our syllabus & coursework that inspired you and indicate how you made use of these sources.

Suggested length of creative literary composition: 5 to 10 pages (you may exceed this length if necessary). For two examples of short fiction with South Asian religious themes, go to the following websites: www.verdadmagazine.org/vol7/contents.html and click on the story by D. Pinault entitled "Patti Smith Gets Me Busted in Peshawar"; and: www.conteonline.net/issue0502/princemystic01.shtml, for the story by D. Pinault entitled "Murder of a Prince-Mystic." (Alternatively, just google the title of each story.)

NB: You may earn additional credit for your journal by undertaking more than one extra credit option in addition to our required group field trips: eg, creative literary composition + book report + 2 or more field trips (thereby submitting a longer journal). But note that undertaking 2 or more book report/museum visit/literary composition options DOES NOT relieve you of the obligation to participate in at least one of our group field trips to places of worship!

On **Tuesday, May 24**, you are to submit to me in class a final typewritten version of your journal. **Total length of Journal: 15-25 pages** (you may exceed this length if necessary), typed, double-spaced, with footnotes and bibliography for any textual citations you make.

The journal is to be handed in on time. Lateness penalties apply (see above under “Essays”). **As is the case with the essays, email submissions are NOT accepted.**

NB: At any point in the quarter before the journal is due, you are welcome to submit for my critique a rough draft of some portion of your field trip report, book report, literary/fictional work, etc. I will not assign a grade for rough drafts but will gladly meet with you individually in my office to offer suggestions for improving your final product.

Class **participation** is an important part of this course. Thus you should make your best effort to attend class regularly and participate actively in classroom discussions. The assigned readings are to be completed before the class for which they are due. Reading each assignment in advance is essential to your informed and thoughtful participation. This is an important point to emphasize: your presence in class will contribute to your participation grade only if you prepare in advance and then actively contribute to classroom discussions. **Each day you should prepare one or two questions and/or observations related to the assigned readings; this is part of your preparation for classroom participation.**

With regard to participation and grading, please note the following: frequent **absence** from class will hurt your final grade. **“Frequent” here means more than one unexcused absence during the quarter. After the first unexcused absence, your final grade for the course will be lowered one step (eg, C becomes C-) for each unexcused absence.**

Of course illness or personal circumstances might arise that necessitate your absence; if this occurs please contact me at once so that we can discuss your situation and I can decide whether to excuse your absence. (NB: A note from the Cowell Student Health Center does not automatically excuse your absence.) Absence without explanation automatically becomes an unexcused absence.

You should never be absent without notifying me. If you know in advance you must be away, please notify me of this. If you suddenly and unexpectedly miss class for any reason, you must contact me immediately (via email, voicemail, or a visit to my office) to explain why you missed class. This won’t excuse your absence but it will let me know you take your responsibilities seriously and plan to continue in our course. Such notification is an act of courtesy; and courtesy is something I value. **NB: Notifying me of your absence does NOT excuse your absence; but it does signal your active engagement with our course.**

NB: **Whenever you email me**, be sure to include the following in the subject line: **your name; our course title; topic of email**. Thus, eg: Arjuna Kurukshetra/RSOC 007/request for meeting.

NB: **Electronic devices of any kind (laptops, tablets, smart phones/cell phones, pagers, etc.) may not be used during our class time. Please be sure all such devices are turned off and out of sight. Students using such devices in class will be considered absent for that day and penalized accordingly.** (See above under “absence.”) This means you will need to bring pens/pencils and a paper-notebook with you to class for note-taking. Students with special needs should furnish me the requisite permission forms from the Disabilities Resources Office.

Attendance. Please note also that I take attendance at the beginning of each class. I consider you late if you arrive after I finish taking attendance. Frequent lateness will affect your participation grade adversely. “Frequent” here means more than three instances of lateness during the quarter. After the third instance of lateness, your participation grade will be lowered one step (eg, C becomes C-) for each instance of lateness. If you arrive late for any class, please let me know at the end of the period that you are here so I can note your tardy presence (as you can see from the above, absence is penalized more heavily than tardiness). Note also that if you arrive more than twenty minutes late to class, you will be marked as absent for that day. Early departure from class (especially without notifying me first) may also cause you to be marked as absent.

Writing assignments and academic honesty. It is your responsibility to ensure that work you submit as your own is in fact your own, and that you acknowledge properly any sources from which you take ideas and phrasing. I comply with University policies regarding plagiarism and academic honesty (consult the discussion entitled “Academic Integrity” in the Undergraduate Bulletin). Should you need clarification concerning this issue, please consult me before submitting any written work.

This is my response when a student engages in plagiarism: the student receives an F for the plagiarized assignment. The student also receives an F for the course and is expelled from my course. Additionally, I send a report of the student’s plagiarism to Santa Clara University’s Office of Student Life and I consult with the Dean of Student Life concerning the possibility of further disciplinary action.

A suggestion on reading assignments. Students often ask me how to read so as to be prepared for class. I suggest the following steps:

- 1.) First, leaf through the assigned pages. Skim section-headings to preview the topics.
 - 2.) Then read through the assigned material from the beginning, taking notes as you go to keep track of the progression of ideas and of your own reaction to the material.
 - 3.) When you’re finished, write a brief summary of what you’ve just read. This is for your own benefit and reference, not to hand in to me.
 - 4.) Critique the material. Note ideas with which you disagree. Don’t be passive: wrestle with the concepts.
 - 5.) If something is unclear, note it down, and bring the question to class.
 - 6.) Bring the text, your notes and summary, and your questions to class. You’re now in a position to contribute to class discussion on the basis of your reading.
- Remember: skimming isn’t enough. Read to retain; read to discuss.

In **grading** your work this quarter I use the following criteria:

F: unacceptable. With regard to essay assignments, this is the only grade for which I permit a rewrite. The highest grade I will award a rewrite, however, is D.

D: acceptable, even if unsatisfactory.

C: adequate; satisfactory.

B: good; impressive work.

A: outstanding. Indicates work that excels in meeting the standards of thoroughness, creativity, and sustained and thoughtful engagement with the assigned subject matter.

Additionally, please note the following **grade scale:**

A = 96-100%

A- = 90-95%

B+ = 86-89%

B = 80-85%

B- = 76-79%

C+ = 70-75%

C = 66-69%

C- = 60-65%

D+ = 56-59%

D = 50-55%

D- = 46-49%

F = 45 or less

Disabilities Accommodations. To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disabilities Resources, 408-554-4109. Students must register with Disabilities Resources and provide appropriate documentation to that office prior to receiving accommodation for a disability

READINGS RELATED TO THE VEDIC HINDU TRADITION (NB: The term ‘Vedic’ refers to scriptures and traditions that are related to the oldest stratum of Hinduism [dating back to the 2nd millennium BC]; certain aspects of Vedic ritual and worldview are still influential in the Hindu tradition today):

“The Pattern of the Shrauta Sacrifice,” in Niels C. Nielsen, Jr. et al, *Religions of the World* (NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 94-95.

“Shrauta/srauta: an outdoor sacrificial ritual of the Aryas [Aryans, dominant class in India of the Vedic Hindu era], performed by one, four, or sometimes a great number of priests and accompanied by the hymns of the Rig Veda.”

“Adhvaryu: A priest in the Vedic sacrificial ritual who performed manual jobs in the ceremony, including the offering and pouring of oblations.”

The time: shortly after 800 BCE...The place is the Punjab. A cattleman has herds numbering in the hundreds, but he is ill at ease. For reasons that are not quite clear, his animals are not increasing and are not in good health...Perhaps, the rancher believes, his fortunes may be suffering by reason of poor relations with the supernatural powers that affect his profession. He has heard of a priest of good reputation who is just now moving from ranch to ranch in the next district. He has invited the brahmin and his staff, and a day has been set.

On the day before the scheduled sacrifice, the adhvaryu had arrived to prepare a site for the performance, bringing in his cart all the necessary materials and implements: a goat to be sacrificed, a hand drill for kindling a fire, cooking pots, barley meal for making offering cakes, bowls and strainers for preparing soma, a sacred inebriating drink, and some sacred grass for seating gods and humans.

In the open air...the adhvaryu selected an area for the rite and dug in it...shallow fire pits...With the excavated soil he raised an earthen altar...to hold the offerings...On the ground he arranged the sacred grass...The next morning, the adhvaryu’s first duty was to kindle the sacrificial fires...With much sweat he accomplished this task with a fire drill...The adhvaryu poured on the fire a libation of melted butter. As the flames shot up, the hotar [reciter of ritual invocations and hymns from the Rig Veda] began the rite by reciting an invocatory hymn:

“Agni I praise, the household priest, the god and priest of sacrifice, chief priest and bestower of great gifts. May Agni, worthy to be praised by sages ancient and of present times, may Agni bring the other gods to this place. Through Agni may we gain treasure and wellbeing every day, together with honor and many sons.” (Rig Veda 1.1.1-3)

The fire god, Agni, who can move in all three spheres of the universe, was now presumed to rise from the fire and carry an invitation to the appropriate gods in their heavenly abodes. The divine guests were believed to descend unseen to the seats reserved for them on the fragrant grass. There they were entertained with lofty and flattering poetry, such as the following hymn to Indra in honor of his great victory over Vritra:

“I will proclaim the heroic deeds of Indra, the first that he performed, the lightning-wielder. He slew the serpent, then discharged the waters and cleft the caverns of the lofty mountains.” (Rig Veda 1.32.1) (Usually sacrificers praised the gods for deeds they wanted the gods to repeat, such as the release of rain by Indra.)

The singing priest then intoned his distinctive and religiously powerful songs, the samans, while the adhvaryu moved around and offered food and drink as refreshments to the gods...To quench the deities' thirst, the adhvaryu periodically poured into the fire libations of milk or the heavenly soma. (The soma plant is said to have been transplanted from heaven to certain high mountains. Its gathered stems were pounded, and the juice was then strained to make a golden inebriating drink.) Cups of soma were given to the priests also, who then sensed a divine presence within themselves: “We have drunk Soma and become immortal; we have attained the light the gods discovered. What can hostility now do against us? And what, immortal god, the spite of mortals?” (Rig Veda 8.48.3)

The adhvaryu offered food to the gods by dropping it into the fire. Butter, curds, and cakes were among these offerings. Portions were handed to the patron and the performing priests...The sacrificial goat was untied from its post, strangled, and cut up. Portions of its flesh were offered in the fire, but most of it was boiled or roasted and eaten by the participants. Every part had to be consumed, either by the sacrificers or by the fire. As the gods were being praised and entertained..., they were often reminded, pointedly, of the needs and hopes of the rancher.

The ritual completed, the satisfied gods returned to their abodes. The fee for priestly service was now presented. The priests' expected reward was high—the gift of a cow, perhaps...The adhvaryu gathered up the implements of the sacrifice, throwing some into the fire and others into water. He picked up the strewn grass, tossing it into the fire. The sacrifice was over.

“Indra and the Dragon,” from *World Mythology: An Anthology*, pp.330-333.

(NB: In some texts, the “dragon” is referred to by the term “Naga” or “serpent.”)

From the introduction:

When the Aryans invaded India from the northwest in about 1500 BC, they brought their religious ideas into the land they conquered. This included a group of gods who personified the forces of nature—among them fire, rain, and wind. The conquest of India produced heroic leaders, such as Indra, whose accomplishments gave rise to a body of oral legend that was based partly on fact. Indra gradually became one of the great gods of ancient India, acquiring both the divine attributes of older gods and the heroic exploits of mythic characters.

Indra was the king of the gods and the defender of gods and humans before the Brahmins and the later Hindus elevated Vishnu to his supreme position. He was also associated with rain and the fertility of the soil. With his great weapon, the thunderbolt, he destroyed demons who lived in darkness and created drought. Such heroic feats were necessary because India's soil was often very dry. Indra's role as a fertility god is evident in this myth, where he successfully fights the dragon and releases the seven rivers that make the earth fertile.

The earliest heroic exploits of Indra are celebrated in the Rig Veda, a collection of more than 1,000 mythic hymns, rituals, and treatises dedicated to the pre-Hindu group of gods. For hundreds of years following the period from 1500-1200 BC, the Vedas were preserved through

an oral tradition. Finally the myths were written down in Sanskrit, an Indo-European language that is closely related to Greek and Latin.

The Hindus revered the Vedas, but they also changed the roles of the gods to reflect their own developing religious tradition. They created the idea of reincarnation in about 700 BC, and as their myths reveal, any god or hero could be an incarnation of any other god or hero. This concept united their new gods with the older tradition by making the later gods reincarnations of the earlier ones....

Soma, the intoxicating beverage that gives Indra his great strength in the Rig Veda, had a very important role in...Hindu religious ritual. Priests sacrificed soma to preserve the strength of the gods. Hindus came to believe that without soma their gods would not have the strength to direct the cyclical progress of the world from one age to the next.

Vedic text of the myth of "Indra and the Dragon":

Indra, who carries the mighty thunderbolt in his hand, rules all that moves and all that rests, all that is aggressive and all that is peaceful. He alone rules the people of the earth as their king, enclosing them as the rim of a wheel encloses the spokes. Whenever they need him, he comes to their aid. I will speak of the god Indra's first heroic deed.

Long ago, a mighty dragon named Vritra lived upon the earth. This demon was the enemy of gods and humans alike. One day he swallowed the seven rivers of the earth and imprisoned them within his great mountain. Then he lay down on the mountaintop to guard the waters he had captured. Day and night he lay awake, prepared to defend his conquest against any being who challenged him.

The fiery sun rose each day as always. It burned the earth with its blazing rays. Trees, grass, and all forms of plant life gradually shriveled and died, for river water no longer supplied the moisture necessary for them to thrive upon the earth. People prayed to the gods for help, but none of the gods was strong enough to combat the great dragon-demon. As days passed, the gaunt and greedy figure of Famine began to stalk the land. More and more people were starving. At first they tried to buy food. Then they begged for food. Finally, in desperation, they cried for food. Their cries fell upon a great silence, for even the storehouses of the rich were empty, and scarcely a trace of food remained upon the earth.

Weak with hunger, the people fell upon the dry and barren earth and pleaded with the gods to heed their prayers. The gods gazed upon the earth with sorrow in their hearts, knowing that they were powerless against such a deadly foe as Vritra. But Indra was determined to help the dying humans. He was the youngest of the gods, but he intended to prove himself the bravest and strongest.

One by one, he picked up three bowls of soma, a sweet, intoxicating drink, and he drank them down. With each drink he became stronger and stronger. Finally Indra knew that he had become the mightiest of the gods. He took his great weapon, the deadly thunderbolt, in his right hand and set out to fight Vritra. He knew that he would find the dragon-demon reclining upon his mountaintop, watching and waiting for a god who would be courageous enough to attack him.

As Indra approached, the dragon prepared for battle. Unlike the gods, Vritra had neither hands nor feet to defend himself, but his mouth terrified gods and humans alike. Inflamed with anger, the demon exhaled a foggy mist, shutting out the rays of the sun and shrouding the earth in blackness. Then he spewed forth blinding lightning, deafening thunder, and a cutting storm of hailstones.

To Vritra's surprise, Indra showed no fear of the dark. The lightning did not blind his eyes, the thunder did not threaten his ears, and the hailstones did not slash his skin. The young god calmly raised his deadly weapon, and when the dragon's next bolt of lightning illuminated the scene, Indra hurled his great thunderbolt at Vritra. The missile flew straight as an arrow and lodged firmly in the dragon's flesh.

The blow crushed the demon's spirit and shattered his body with one stroke. The dragon tottered upon the mountain peak and then fell to the base far below, where he lay like the severed branches of a tree chopped from the trunk.

Vritra's mother came forth to avenge her son, but Indra was undaunted by the sight of another fearsome demon. He summoned his strength and hurled his thunderbolt at her also, killing her as he had killed Vritra. She fell to the ground near her son, lying near him in death as a cow rests near her calf.

Indra now freed the imprisoned waters. With his weapon he split apart the mountainside, opening the sealed outlet and releasing the seven rivers. The waters rushed straight down the mountainside and swept across the land to the sea, roaring as noisily as a herd of cows.

When the seven rivers once again flowed across the earth, moisture soaked through the parched soil of every land. Parched roots drank their fill and sent renewed life coursing through the trunks of dying trees. Greedy seeds sprouted, quickly growing into nourishing grasses. Thirsty humans drank their fill and lived to eat a new crop of life-sustaining plants. Famine retreated from the sight of plenty as a lion backs away from a pack of hungry wolves.

Indra, the brave god, confronted the great dragon Vritra in battle and won. Indra, the mighty bringer of rain, relieved the drought and restored the fertility of the earth. Indra, the supreme god, rescued those who walk the earth from certain death. Indra, who carries the mighty thunderbolt in his hand, rules all that moves and all that rests, all that is aggressive and all that is peaceful. He alone rules the people of the earth as their king, enclosing them as the rim of a wheel encloses the spokes. Whenever they need him, he comes to their aid.

Rig-Veda 10.90, "The Creation of the Caste System," adapted from Robert E. Van Voorst, *Anthology of World Scriptures*, 5th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2006), p.37:

[Editor's preface to this Vedic hymn]: One of the many creation hymns of the Rig-Veda, this poem presents the cosmic Man (Purusha) as the one through whose sacrifice the gods fashioned the universe. The making of humanity is presented in terms of the caste system, [which in this text makes] its first appearance in Hindu literature...[This ancient Vedic text concerning the caste system is] the foundation of [the caste system's] later authority.

Text of the hymn:

Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He pervaded the earth on all sides and extended beyond it as far as ten fingers. It is Purusha who is all this, whatever has been and whatever is to be. He is the ruler of immortality, when he grows beyond everything through food. This is his greatness, and Purusha is yet more than this. All creatures are a quarter of him; three quarters are what is immortal in heaven...

From this he spread out in all directions...From him, Viraj [his female counterpart] was born, and from Viraj came Purusha...When the gods laid out the sacrifice with Purusha as the offering, the season of Spring was the clarified butter, Summer was the fuel, Autumn was the oblation. They anointed Purusha—the sacrifice born at the beginning of time—upon the sacred grass. It was by means of Purusha that the gods, the sages, and the divine saints and heroes performed the sacrifice.

From that first sacrifice in which everything was offered, the melted fat was collected. From that first sacrifice was made the beasts that live in the air, in the forest, and in villages. From that first sacrifice in which everything was offered, the Vedic verses and chants were born, the Vedic poetic meters were born, and the Vedic formulas of prayer were born. Horses were born from that first sacrifice of Purusha...as well as cows, goats, and sheep.

When the gods divided Purusha and cut him sacrificially into pieces, into how many parts did they cut him up? What do they call his mouth, his two arms and two thighs and two feet? His mouth became the Brahmin; his arms became the Warrior; his thighs became the merchants, artisans, and herdsmen; and from Purusha's feet were born the menial Servants. The moon was born from his mind; from his eye the sun was born. Indra and Agni came from his mouth, and from his vital breath the Wind was born. From his navel the middle realm of space arose; from his head the sky evolved. From his feet came the earth, and the quarters of the sky from his ear. Thus they set the worlds in order. The gods used kindling-wood as fuel when they laid out the sacrifice and tied up Purusha as the sacrificial beast. With this sacrifice, the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice. These were the first ritual laws. These very powers reached the dome of the sky where dwell the Sadhyas, the ancient gods.

Vedic “Charms and Spells,” Van Voorst, p.50.

[Editor's introduction]: The first of these incantations is a charm against fever, the 2nd a spell to frustrate the sacrifice of an enemy, the 3rd a charm to induce the sexual passion of a woman..., the 4th a spell for success in business.

[To ward off a fever]: As if from this Agni [fire], that burns and flashes, the fever comes. Let him [the Fever] pass away like a babbling drunkard! Let him, the impious one, search out another person, not me! Reverence be to the Fever with the burning weapon! Reverence be to Rudra [a god of destruction—linked with Shiva—who could also heal the sick], reverence to the Fever, reverence to the luminous king Varuna [a celestial god associated with cosmic order]!...To you that burns through, and turns all bodies yellow...to the Fever..., I render honor.

[A Vedic spell to frustrate another person's sacrifice]: Whenever that person over there in his thought and with his speech offers sacrifice accompanied by offerings and benedictions, may Nirriti, the goddess of destruction, ally herself with Death and strike his offering before it takes

effect! May the sorcerers Nirriti and Rakshas mar his work with error! May the gods, dispatched by Indra, churn up his sacrificial butter! May that which he offers not succeed! I tie back both your arms; I shut your mouth. With the fury of Agni, I've destroyed your sacrifice.

[A Vedic love-charm]: Desire my body, my feet, my eyes, my thighs! As you lust after me, your eyes and your hair shall be hot with love! I make you cling to my arm, cling to my heart, so that you shall be in my power and shall come to my wish! The cows, the mothers of the sacrificial butter who lick their young, in whose heart love is planted, shall make this woman love me!

[A Vedic spell for success in business]: I urge Indra the merchant, come to me... Ward off the unpaying one, the cutting beast, and let masterful Indra be a bringer of wealth to me. O Gods! That money with which, desiring more money, I conduct my business, let that multiply and never decrease. O Agni, with this sacrifice, frustrate those who would ruin my profit.

Name _____ Academic quarter _____

Year (Fr, Soph, Jr, Senior) _____ Course title & no. _____

Local address _____

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Telephone/Cellphone _____

Email address _____

Major (also indicate any Minor concentrations/Pathway) _____

Previous coursework in Religious Studies _____

Previous study/travel related to South Asia/Southeast Asia _____

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Competence in languages besides English (speaking, reading, and/or writing) _____

Particular interests in the field of Religious Studies/South Asian/Southeast Asian religions _____

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