

**Mount Allison University Summer Program in India -2018**

**At**

**Vivekananda Institute of Indian Studies**

**Course: Culture & Civilization**

**Course Coordinator: Dr. Prithvi Datta Chandra Shobhi**

This course seeks to introduce historical, religious, cultural and political trajectories of Indian civilization. It outlines the vast diversity of Indian languages and literary traditions, classical and folk traditions of India. Since the instruction takes place in Karnataka, the history, literature and architecture of the region will be the specific focus of the course.

The distinctiveness of this course is the hands on, onsite immersion experience students shall receive in all aspects of the curriculum. Thus the course will combine personal experience and classroom teaching, field visits to historical places as well as representative sample of contemporary Indian society. Classroom readings include selections from the teachings of the Buddha and Mahavira; Ramayana and Mahabharata; Bhagavadgita, Bhakti and Sufi poetry. In addition to this, students will also read selected scholarship on the themes of the course.

Each session theme will be paired with a cultural performance or an audio-visual resource or selections from primary readings and 1-2 pieces of scholarship. Each theme will be supplemented by several field trips to architectural and cultural heritage sites. Additionally, students will also witness cultural performances, both at VIIS and in institutions like Rangayana, Mysore.

This course will have 15 class sessions of 90 minutes duration.

**Expectations and requirement**

1. Term papers: each participant is expected to write an essay of 3000 words on a subject of his/her choice. The subject shall be chosen in consultation with the faculty.
2. Final Written Examination: Date to be specified. The format will be a take home exam, in which students will have to write 400-500 word answers to 3 questions.
3. Students are expected to do readings for each session and actively participate in the classroom deliberations.

**Unit-1 Diversity in Indian Culture and Civilization**

Session 1	Themes in Indian Civilization Introductory Lecture
Session 2	Pre-modern India
Session 3	Colonial and Modern India

## **Unit -2 Religion, Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions**

Session 4	Vedas, Upanishads and Darshanas
Session 5	Epics Bhagavadgita and Indian Culture
Session 6	Buddhism and Jainism
Session 7	Bhakti or Devotion
Session 8	Popular Hinduism - in history and today
Session 9	Islam in India and Sufism

## **Unit 3 Karnataka History, Art and Architecture**

Session 10	Karnataka A Historical Outline
Session 11	Art and Architecture
Session 12	Two South Indian cities - Vijayanagara and Mysore

## **Unit 4 Literature, Arts and Performative Traditions**

Session 13	Indian Literary Expression - Classical and Modern (Kannada and Sanskrit and Kannada as case studies)
Session 14	Indian Performative Traditions
Session 15	Indian Cinema

### Readings

#### **Unit -1 Diversity in Indian Culture**

Introductory lecture – Themes in Indian Culture

Session 2 Pre-modern India

Thomas Trautmann 'India: Brief History of a Civilization' Chapters 1-9 (See General History folder)

Session 3 Colonial and Modern India –  
Trautmann, Chapters 10-12

Also watch this lecture by Prof. Jonathan Mark Kenoyer entitled - Meluhha: the Indus Civilization and Its Contacts with Mesopotamia

<http://youtu.be/8zcGLLEbml>

## **Unit 2 – indian Religions, Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions**

Session 4 – Vedas, Upanishads and Darshanas

Selections from The Hindu Scriptures - pdf file 'Vedas'; and selections from Patrick Olivelle eds 'Upanishads' – pdf file 'Upanishad 1'; Introduction from Bina Gupta, 'An Introduction to Indian Philosophy' (see the Hinduism, Islam and Philosophy readings folder)

Session 5 – Epics and Indian Culture

Recommended reading: R K Narayan The Indian Epics Retold (in the VIIS library)

Session 6 – Buddha and his teachings

Selections from Peter Heehs; pdf file 'Buddhism' (see the Hinduism, Islam and Philosophy readings folder)

Also watch the PBS documentary – The Buddha, which is a two hour documentary and perhaps the most useful resource on the Buddha, his life and teachings:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCdKg5DzMaQ>

Jainism

Selections from Peter Heehs; pdf file 'Jainism' (see the Hinduism, Islam and Philosophy readings folder)

Session 7 – Bhakti or Devotion

Selections of Vacanas from A K Ramanujan's Speaking of Siva and Vinay Dharwadkar's Kabir.

Session 8 - Popular Hinduism

Peter Heehs Selections

Session 9 – Islam in India and Sufism

Barbara Metcalf Selections from Barbara Metcalf eds 'Islam in South Asia in Practice'; pdf files Islam in India 1 and Islam in India 2 (See the Hinduism, Islam and Philosophy readings folder)

## **Unit 3 Karnataka History, Art and Architecture**

Session 10 Karnataka History

SuryanathKamat A Concise History of Karnataka Bangalore: Archana Prakashana, 1980.

Session 11 Art and Architecture of Karnataka

Selections from Adam Hardy's Indian Temple Architecture: Form and Transformation

Session 12 Two South Indian Cities - Vijayanagara and Mysore

Burton Stein Vijayanagara (Cambridge University Press, 1989) (to be provided)

Selections from Kathleen Morrison Daroji Valley (Delhi: Manohar, 2012) (to be provided)

Selections from Janaki Nair Mysore Modern (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011) (to be provided)

#### **Unit 4 Literature, Arts and Performative Traditions**

Lecture 13 Indian Literary Expression - Classical and Modern  
Sheldon Pollock (eds) Literary Cultures in History. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) (to be provided)

D.R.Nagaraj “Critical Tensions in the History of Kannada Literary Culture” from Listening to the Loom (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2012) (to be provided)

#### Session 13 Indian Performative Traditions

See the entries on Hindustani Music, Karnatak Music, Bharatanatyam, Kuchupudi, Yakshagana, Indian aesthetics in Stanley Wolpert edited Encyclopedia of India (General History folder)

#### Session 14 Indian Theatre

Farley P. Richmond “Characteristics of Sanskrit Theatre and Drama” from Farley Richmond et al (ed) Indian Theatre: Traditions of Performance (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990) (to be provided)

#### Session 15 Indian Cinema

#### **Online resources (check iLearn for a detailed, annotated list of online resources):**

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/southasia/>

<http://www.history.upenn.edu/coursepages/hist086/material/mapframset.htm>

<http://www.history.upenn.edu/coursepages/hist086/material/slideshowframeset.htm>

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00fwp/#fwp>

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/india/indiasbook.html>

<http://www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/ashoka.html>

<http://www.penn.museum/research-asian-section/640-vijayanagara-research-project.html>

#### **Recommended Readings:**

- Clothey, Fred. Religion in India: A Historical Introduction (Routledge, 2007)
- Eck, Diana. Darshan: Seeing the Divine image in India (Columbia University Press 1998)
- Gupta, Bina. An Introduction to Indian Philosophy Perspectives on Reality, Knowledge and Freedom (Routledge, 2012)
- Heehs, Peter eds Indian Religions: The Spiritual traditions of South Asia
- Key, John. India: A History (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2000)
- Keith, A. B. History of Sanskrit Literature. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers)
- Ludden, David. India and South Asia: A Short History.  
<http://www.history.upenn.edu/coursepages/hist086/material/ShortHistFrameset.htm>
- Metcalf, Barbara D (eds) Islam in South Asia in Practice (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009)
- Miller, Barbara Stoler. Bhagavadgita (New York: Bantam Books, 1986)
- Mittal, Sushil. The Hindu World.
- Mittal, Sushil. Religions of South Asia An Introduction
- Narayan, R. K. The Indian Epics Retold. The Ramayana, the Mahabharatha: Gods, Demons and others (Delhi: Penguin Books, 1995)
- Ramanujan, A. K. Folktales from India (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991)
- Smith, Houston. The World's Religions: Our great wisdom traditions (Harper Collins Publishers)
- Stein, Burton. A History of India (Blackwell, 2010)
- Wolpert, Stanley. An Introduction to India (University of California, 1991)

