

Reading List
Living Religion in North India
Carleton College Alumni Adventure
October 14-November 5, 2009

Suggested Viewing

Amar, Akbar, Anthony (Bollywood classic of the late 1970's, starring Amitabh Bachchan, that focuses on religious harmony – among many other things.)

Devi (Satyajit Ray drama about a girl whose parents believe she may be the avatar of a goddess.)

Earth (Deepa Mehta's film version of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel, *Cracking India*, about the dislocations of partition in 1947)

Forest of Bliss (Robert Gardner's narrationless documentary on life in Varanasi.)

Gandhi (Richard Attenborough's mid-1980's biopic; a bit hagiographic, but still an interesting overview of Gandhi's life.)

Lagaan (2001 Bollywood film in which feuding communities in a Punjabi town unite to take on their imperial masters in cricket.)

Mahabharata (Three-part, 5-1/2-hour condensation of Peter Brook's 11-hour stage version of the great Indian epic.)

**The Story of India* (Excellent 6-part PBS/BBC series that includes many of the places we will visit on the AA tour.)

Suggested Reading

Aitkin, Molly E. *Meeting the Buddha: On Pilgrimage in Buddhist India*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1995. (Anthology of writings by Buddhist pilgrims over the centuries.)

Anand, Mulkh Raj. *Untouchable*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann Publishers, 1983. (A novel about caste set in Punjab in the 1930's)

Awliya, Nizam ad-Din. *Morals for the Heart*. Trans. Bruce Lawrence. New York: Paulist Press, 1992. (Writings by one of India's great Sufis.)

Basham, A. L. *The Wonder that Was India*. New York: Picador, 2005. (Still the classic account of pre-Muslim India.)

*Fred W. Clothey. *Religion in India: A Historical Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2006. (The best short overview of the range of Indian religions in their historical and contemporary dimensions.)

Dalrymple, William. *City of Djinn: A Year in Delhi*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. (Entertaining and informative exploration of India's capital city.)

Dimock, Edward and Denise Levertov. *In Praise of Krishna: Songs from the Bengali*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981. (A great scholar and a great poet team up to produce versions of Hindu devotional poetry in their erotic power.)

Doniger, Wendy. *Siva: The Erotic Ascetic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981. (Scholarly but well written analysis of the paradoxes on the great Hindu god – which are the paradoxes of Indian culture, as well.)

*Eck, Diana. *Benares: City of Light*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. (Masterful analysis of religious life in Varanasi.)

—. *Darśan: Seeing the Divine in India*. 3rd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. (Brief but incisive examination of a vital principle in Indian religiosity: seeing/being seen by divinity.)

Eliade, Mircea. *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970. (Still-classic account of the range of Indian yogic systems.)

Embree, Ainslee. ed. *Sources of Indian Tradition, vol. 1: The Beginning to 1800*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. (Anthology of classic sources from the pre-modern period; especially strong on Hindu and Muslim material.)

Gandhi, Mohandas K. *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1993. (Long, but endlessly interesting account of Gandhi's life up through the 1910's.)

Haberman, David. *Journey Through the Twelve Forests: An Encounter with Krishna*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. (Set in and around Krishna's abode in the forest of Vrindvana.)

Hamilton, Sue. *Indian Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. (A good primer on the classical schools of Indian philosophy and the issues with which they wrestle.)

Hawley, John Stratton and Mark Juergensmeyer. *Songs of the Saints of India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. (Anthology and analysis of devotional poetry of north Indian medieval saints.)

Hay Stephen. ed. *Sources of Indian Tradition, vol. 2: Modern India and Pakistan*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. (Excellent anthology of materials relating to modern India.)

*Heehs, Peter. *Indian Religions: A Historical Reader of Spiritual Experience and Expression*. New York: NYU Press, 2002. (Good one-volume anthology of Indian religious writings.)

Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. New Delhi : A. Heinemann, 1979. (Novel of Muslim life in Lucknow in the 1930's)

Huyler, Stephen B. *Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotion*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. (Lushly illustrated presentation of aspects of Hindu ritual.)

Jackson, Roger. *Tantric Treasures: Three Collections of Mystical Verse from Buddhist India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. (Translations of songs by countercultural Buddhist saints of the 10th century.)

Kakar, Sudhir. *Shamans, Mystics, and Doctors: A Psychological Inquiry into India and its Healing Traditions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. (A Western-trained psychiatrist confronts a range of Indian healing practices.)

*Kakar, Sudhir, and Katherina Kakar, *The Indians: Portrait of a People*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2007. (Psychologically astute analysis of the Indian national character.)

Kinsley, David. *The Sword and the Flute—Kali and Krsna: Dark Visions of the Terrible and the Sublime in Hindu Mythology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. (Beautifully written and incisive examination of contrasting visions of divinity in Hindu traditions.)

Larson, Gerald James. *India's Agony Over Religion*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1995. (Study of Indian religions that focuses with special intensity on recent religious conflicts.)

Lopez, Jr. Donald S., ed. *Religions of India in Practice*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995. (Anthology of texts from various traditions, with emphasis on ritual and devotion rather than doctrine and philosophy.)

Macdonald, Sara. *Holy Cow: An Indian Adventure*. New York: Broadway, 2004. (Humorous account of an Australian woman's spiritual search in India.)

Mann, Gurunder Singh. *Sikhism*. New York: Prentice Hall, 2003. (Good, readable introduction to the most recent of India's great religions.)

*Mehta, Gita. *A River Sutra*. New York: Vintage, 1994. (Loosely related stories on the religious lives of contemporary Indians.)

Miller, Barbara S. *The Bhagavad Gita*. New York: Bantam, 1991. (The most accessible translation of the “Bible” of Hinduism.)

Mishra, Pankaj, *An End to Suffering: The Buddha in the World*. New York: Picador, 2005. (Fascinating meditation on the Buddha, both in his own time and as a significant thinker for the modern world.)

Mishra, Pankaj, *The Romantics*. Pan Macmillan, 2000. (Novel of Westerners and Indians in Varanasi in the 1980’s.)

Narasimhan, Chakravarti. trans. *Mahabharata*. Columbia University Press; 1997. (The most accurate available rendition of the central narrative of the great epic.)

Narayan, R. K. *The Guide*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2006. (Novel about a huckster turned guru in a small Indian town.)

Narayan, R. K. *The Ramayana*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2006. (Novelistic rendering of the epic, based on a south Indian version.)

Paine, Jeffrey. *Father India: How Encounters with an Ancient Culture Transformed the Modern West*. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. (Analysis of the Western encounter with India.)

Roberts, Paul W. *Empire of the Soul: Some Journeys in India*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1996. (A British writer’s travels in India.)

Sen, Amartya. *The Argumentative India: Writings on Indian Culture, History, and Identity*. New York: Picador, 2006. (Essays by a Nobel Prize-winning economist and culture critic.)

Strong, John. *The Experience of Buddhism: Sources and Interpretations*. 3rd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2007. (Obscenely overpriced, but probably the best anthology of Buddhist — especially Indian Buddhist texts — available.)

Tobias, Michael. *Life Force: The World of Jainism*. Fremont, CA: Asian Humanities Press. 1991. (Accessible introduction to an ancient and austere tradition.)

Wolpert, Stanley. *A New History of India*. 6th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. (Perhaps the best single-volume history available.)

Yogananda, Paramahansa. *Autobiography of a Yogi*. Los Angeles: Self-Realization Fellowship Publishers, 2006. (Classic account, full of marvels, by a yogi who eventually made his way to Los Angeles.)

**Highly recommended*