

## RE 330: Goddesses and Other Powerful Women

Dr. Eliza Kent  
Office: Ladd 212  
Office phone: 580-5405  
Office hours: Mon. 1-3 pm  
and by appt.

Fall 2017  
WF 12:20-2:10 pm  
Ladd 107  
ekent@skidmore.edu

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: An examination of the feminine divine as it finds expression in cultures across space and time. As a comparative investigation of goddesses in selected societies, we will read myths, ethnographies and scholarly studies that explore the theological and political possibilities of female divinity. We will also explore how people in particular socio-historical contexts – scholars, people of faith, men, women and transgendered individuals - have drawn on goddess mythology, symbolism and ritual in order to challenge, or justify, established norms surrounding gender, race, religion and power.

### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- to acquire a specialized vocabulary that will allow you to speak in a precise and informed way about feminist approaches to the study of religion, and about gods and goddesses in the religious traditions that we examine in the course: ancient Greek, Haitian Vodou, Christianity and Hinduism;
- to gain a familiarity with religious hermeneutics, that is, the interpretation of received religious texts and traditions to meet the needs of a changed socio-historical situation;
- to develop an understanding of major debates among feminist scholars of religion and the confidence to enter into those debates, as well as the intellectual humility to recognize the limits of one's own understanding and knowledge.
- to develop a richly nuanced conception of religion that recognizes both the social and the personal dimensions of religious belief and practice;
- to examine, challenge and clarify one's own self-understanding, worldview and fundamental values.

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Attendance and participation
- B. Reading
- C. Writing

A. Attendance and Class Participation: Regular attendance and active participation are essential to your learning experience and success in this course. Because of this, no more than three unexcused absences will be tolerated without a direct impact on your course grade. Missing class more than five times will constitute grounds for failing the course.

These are the baseline classroom etiquette rules necessary for creating a positive, respectful intellectual community during the limited time we have together:

- Plan to arrive on time and to stay in class the entire time.
- Feel free to bring a beverage or a light snack but not an entire meal.
- Be sure your cell phone is off and stowed out of sight the whole class period.
- Use of a laptop is prohibited, unless you can document a medical reason.

Beyond these, your regular, active participation is expected. Please come to class having read the assignments so that you are prepared to offer your thoughtful questions, comments, comparisons and suggestions for further areas of exploration. This kind of participation benefits the class enormously, as does your attentive listening to the comments and questions of others. Your class participation grade will depend not only on the consistency of attendance and basic classroom etiquette (which is the bare minimum expected), but also on how well you contribute positively to the overall class dynamic through your comments, questions, attentive listening, prompt arrival, leadership and cooperation in small group work, etc. Generally speaking, when an imbalance occurs in terms of who is speaking and how frequently, those who are shy need to exercise the virtue of courage and those who are loquacious need to exercise the virtue of restraint. I reserve the prerogative to call on students in order to even out the class dynamic.

In addition, at least twice during the semester, you will be asked to lead discussion for at least fifteen minutes. A good launching point for this will be the reading journal entries that you will be writing throughout the semester (see below).

Class participation will count for 15% of your course grade.

B. Reading: Nothing is more central to a course in the humanities than the careful, thorough, critical reading of texts, and that will certainly be the case here. I encourage you to take notes in the margins of your books or in a notebook designated for that purpose. To enhance your vocabulary, maintain word lists of new words or concepts and look up their definitions in a dictionary. Such active engagement with the reading will enhance your retention of the material and help you to think through the issues and questions raised by the texts.

Required books to purchase:

- Karen McCarthy Brown and Claudine Michel, *Mama Lola: A Voodoo Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
- Rachel Fell McDermott and Jeffrey Kripal, *Encountering Kali: in the Margins, at the Center, in the West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
- Lucinda Ramberg, *Given to the Goddess: South Asian Devadasis and the Sexuality of Religion* (Duke University Press, 2014).

Additional readings will be distributed via Blackboard electronic reserve, in class or via email.

### C. Writing

Formal essays (midterm essay, final essay and research paper)

Daily reading journal, with some directed writing

Short-answer or multiple-choice-question based quizzes

1. Formal essays: These are called “formal” because they will be evaluated for style--grammar, spelling, punctuation--as well as content. Even the most accomplished writer may benefit from having a second pair of eyes look over their paper. I encourage you to make the most of the support provided by the Writing Center. <https://www.skidmore.edu/writingcenter/>

See Appendix B for the citation guidelines for this class.

See Appendix C for the working guidelines for the research paper (subject to revision)

Note well: Late formal papers will not be accepted unless you have explained AHEAD OF TIME the reason for submitting work late. If you and I agree that you may turn a paper in late, we will negotiate whether points will be taken off for tardiness.

2. Reading Journal: Studies have shown that any written reflection on an assigned reading aids in comprehension. Therefore, I'm asking that for each reading for each class, you identify two key quotes from the reading, and write two or three sentences explaining each quote (that is, what do you understand the main point of the quote to be, in your own words). In addition, what further questions were raised by the quote? What do you find illuminating/perplexing/thought-provoking/personally moving, etc. about each quote? Occasionally, I will provide you with questions for your journal entry for the day, along the lines of a response paper prompt.

Your journals should be typed according to the format I provide, and be brought to class each day. I will collect them periodically throughout the semester and respond to your reflections.

Rationale: This exercise will help you be more organized in your daily preparation for class, will help to foster a useful habit that can aid you in all your classes and will foster comprehension especially for some of our more difficult readings. In addition, the journal is essential to quickly identifying a good place to begin on those days when you are asked to facilitate discussion of the reading.

3. Short-answer or multiple-choice question-based quizzes: Learning the words that people use to describe their beliefs and practices is a crucial component of learning about diverse cultures and religions. Periodically we will conduct in-class quizzes to test your comprehension of key-terms introduced throughout the semester. Quizzes will not be rescheduled unless you are able to provide a documented reason AHEAD OF TIME for why you cannot be present for the quiz.

#### IV. Evaluation:

##### A. Grading Summary

Assignment	Percentage
Midterm Paper	15%
Reading journal	17%
Quizzes (2)	10%
Final paper	18%
Research paper and presentation	25%
Attendance and Participation	15%

B. Grading Standards: The following is designed to help you think about the level of participation you're prepared to give to this course, and the final grade you would like to shoot for. (Obviously, there are finer gradations for each of the grades discussed below, e.g. A-, B+, C+)

1. "A" signifies outstanding. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and demonstrate excellence in discussion; (b) lead the class discussion ably on the day you are picked to do so (e.g. be prepared with a question and quote to get us started, be familiar enough with the reading to navigate gracefully the questions and comments that other students raise)); (c) keep up with your reading journal outside of class, demonstrating consistent care and thoughtfulness in your reflections on the issues and questions raised by the class; (d) demonstrate in the quizzes a thorough understanding of the key terms, historical background and basic structural features of the

religious traditions we are examining; (e) do a thorough, analytically acute job on the formal papers and get them in on time.

In addition, to merit an “A” your writing in the formal essays must reflect the following: a statement in the first paragraph of what you intend to accomplish; correct grammar and accurate spelling; depth and complexity in your engagement with the materials (readings, lectures, films, etc.); and an exceptionally creative original contribution--a new idea, a different way of thinking about the issue(s) you’re discussing--that takes you beyond the accurate presentation of someone else’s ideas.

2. “B” signifies good; it is a solid, good grade. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and participation in discussion; (b) lead the class discussion ably on the day you are picked to do so (e.g. be prepared with a question and quote to get us started, be familiar enough with the reading to navigate the questions and comments that other students raise); (c) keep up with your reading journal outside of class, demonstrating care and thoughtfulness in your reflections on the issues and questions raised by the class, though you may skip a day or so, or be less consistently excellent in your entries; (d) demonstrate in the quizzes a firm grasp of the key terms, historical background and basic structural features of the religions we are examining; (e) do a thorough job on the formal papers and get them in on time.

In addition, a “B” grade essay typically contains: a statement in the first paragraph of what you intend to accomplish; correct grammar and accurate spelling; solid engagement with the materials (readings, lectures, films, etc.); and an original contribution that takes you beyond the accurate presentation of someone else’s ideas.

3. “C” stands for satisfactory. To earn that, you need to (a) maintain regular attendance and participation in discussion; (b) lead the class discussion ably on the day you are picked to do so (e.g. be prepared with a question and quote to get us started, be familiar enough with the reading to navigate the questions and comments that other students raise); (c) mostly keep up with your reading journal outside of class, but miss several days of the journal; (d) do a satisfactory job on the formal essays and quizzes that meets the requirements of the assignment, and get them in on time.

In addition, “C” level essays contain no statement of intent, or a confused one; occasionally lapse into bad grammar or incorrect spelling; replace full sentences with fragments; misconstrue or distort key ideas; display no clear development leading to a supportable conclusion.

4. To fall below satisfactory (i.e. C-, D), you could fall way behind in your reading journal and response papers, be consistently unable to lead the class discussion when picked due to lack of preparation, skip several response papers, turn in one of the formal papers several days past the deadline, and/or be very irregular in attendance and discussion.

In addition, below “C” level essays do not adequately meet the requirements of the assignment. They typically also contain no statement of intent, or a confused one; frequently lapse into bad grammar or incorrect spelling; replace full sentences with fragments; misconstrue or distort key ideas; display no clear development leading to a supportable conclusion.

### C. Guide to Instructor’s Abbreviations in Marking Papers

Vertical line with check-mark = useful point, important idea, “yep”

Double vertical line = good, strong idea or sentence

Exclamation point = yes! excellent point

Wavy underline = something is wrong with these words (e.g. syntax, logic, diction)

Circle = error (typo, spelling, punctuation)

WW = wrong word

SF = sentence fragment – sentence lacks a subject or verb

RO = run-on sentence

Double-lined P = start a new paragraph

D. Students with documented disabilities: I strive to create an inclusive classroom that respects the fact that our eyes, ears, brains and bodies all work a little bit differently. If you have, or think you may have a learning disability, please work with Meg Hegener with the Office of Student Academic Services to determine what strategies and accommodations are appropriate for your situation. If together you determine that you need academic accommodation, you must formally request that from her, and provide me with the documentation from her office which verifies the existence of a disability and supports your request.

[http://cmsauthor.skidmore.edu/academic\\_services/accessibility/](http://cmsauthor.skidmore.edu/academic_services/accessibility/)

E. Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Information and Resources. According to both NY State Law and Skidmore Policy, I am, like all faculty and staff at Skidmore, a mandated reporter of any sexual or gender-based misconduct. What this means is that if in the unlikely event that you share with me information that indicates that you or someone else has been the victim of sexual assault or misconduct, I'm required to pass on that information (i.e. your names) to the Title IX officer.

*Skidmore College considers sexual and gender-based misconduct to be one of the most serious violations of the values and standards of the College. Unwelcome sexual contact of any form is a violation of students' personal integrity and their right to a safe environment and therefore violates Skidmore's values. Sexual and gender-based misconduct is also prohibited by federal regulations. Skidmore College faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. If a student chooses to confide in a member of Skidmore's faculty or staff regarding an issue of sexual or gender-based misconduct, that faculty or staff member is obligated to tell Skidmore's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator will assist the student in connecting with all possible resources for support and reporting both on and off campus. Identities and details will be shared only with those who need to know to support the student and to address the situation through the college's processes. If the student wishes to confide in a confidential resource, The Counseling Center Staff, Health Services, and Victim Advocates are all options available.*

E. Academic Honesty: Making references to the work of others strengthens your own work by granting you greater authority and by showing that you are part of a discussion located within a community. When you make references (by quotation or paraphrase) to the work of others, it is essential to provide proper attribution and citation. Failing to do so is considered academically dishonest, as is copying or paraphrasing someone else's work. Please consult Appendix B for the citation format I recommend for your work in this class.

Any confirmed instances of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication or facilitating academic dishonesty) in this course will result in the work in question receiving a zero. Assignments that receive a zero for this reason may not be rewritten or redone. As per the Skidmore College Honor Code, documentation of the infraction will be kept on file with Dean's office and may impair eligibility for honor societies, study abroad, etc.

**Schedule of Assignments and Readings**  
(subject to change as the course progresses)

*Readings and other assignments are due by class-time on the date assigned*

**Week One – The Prehistoric Goddesses Across Cultures**

W – Sept. 6 - Introduction

**Watch on your own before school starts:** *Wonder Woman: Rise of the Warrior* (Dir. Patty Jenkins, 2017, 2 hr 21 min).

**Write:** An entry in your reading journal in response to at least ONE (but possibly more) of the following questions:

- Why is the figure of Diana so appealing now, at this historical moment, and to whom?
- What longings or visions of female empowerment does she embody?
- Is Diana a goddess? Why or why not?
- How are men and masculinity portrayed in *Wonder Woman* (Steve Trevor, Sir Patrick/Ares, Dr. Lupin)?
- What do you make of the juxtaposition of Diana/Wonder Woman and Dr. Poison/Dr. Isabel Maru?

F – Sept. 8 – Prehistoric Goddesses

**Read:** Merlin Stone, “The Great Goddess: Who Was She?” and Marija Gimbutas, “Women and Culture in Goddess-Oriented Old Europe,” from *The Politics of Women’s Spirituality*, ed. by Charlene Spretnak (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1982): 7-31. (Blackboard, henceforth BB).

**Read:** Ian Hodde, “Women and Men at Catal Huyuk [Turkey, aka Anatolia],” in *Scientific American* Jan. 1, 2005: 1-13. (BB)

**Recommended:** Liane Gabora, “Introduction: What Can Archaeology Tell Us about the Mind?” in R. A. Bentley, et al, Eds. *Handbook of Theories and Methods in Archaeology*, (Walnut Creek CA: Altamira Press, 2007). (pp. 283-296). Available at: <http://www.vub.ac.be/CLEA/liane/papers/htma-mind.htm>

**Week Two – The Politics of the Women’s Spirituality Movement**

W – Sept. 13 - Goddess Feminists

**Read:** Carol Christ, “Why Women Need the Goddess,” from *The Great Goddess*, ed. by the Heresies Collective, Vol 2, 1 (Winter 1978), [self published feminist zine produced in New York City]. Also skim the front matter, preface by Merlin Stone and poems. (BB)

**Watch in class:** Selections from *The Goddess Trilogy, vol. 3: Full Circle* (dir. Donna Read, 1992, 57 min.)

F – Sept. 15 – The Politics of Women’s Spirituality: A Debate

**Read:** Sally Binford, “Are Goddesses and Matriarchies Merely Figments of Feminist Imagination?” and all responses, no matter how long or short, in *The Politics of Women’s Spirituality*, pp. 541-561. (BB)

**Read:** Marsha Eileen Hewitt, “Do Women Really Need a God/Goddess to Save Them?” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 10, 2 (1998): 149-156. (BB)

**Write:** In your journal for today, identify and explain what you regard as the strongest, most persuasive critique of the Women’s Spirituality Movement, and the most persuasive argument of its adherents?

**Recommended:** Cynthia Eller, *The Myth of Patriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Will Not Give Women a Future* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

### Week Three: Goddesses of Ancient Greece: Demeter

W – Sept 20 – Feminist Archeology and Goddess Spirituality; Introduction to Ancient Greek Religion

**Read:** Kathryn Rountree, “The Past is a Foreigner’s Country: Goddess Feminists, Archeologists and the Appropriation of Prehistory,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 16, 1 (2001): 5-27.

**Read:** Jean-Pierre Vernant, “Greek Religion,” in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. by Mircea Eliade and Lindsay Jones Vol 6, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), pp. 3659-3676 (LONG AND DENSE – BE PREPARED TO READ IN CHUNKS)

**Lecture on Greek pantheon:** The Twelve Olympians

F – Sept 21 – Demeter and Kore/Persephone

**Read:** Lillian Doherty, “Myth and Gender Systems,” in *Gender and the Interpretation of Classical Myth*, (London: Duckworth, 2001), pp. 15-45. (BB)

**Read:** “Hymn to Demeter,” in *The Homeric Hymns*, trans. By Diane J. Rayor (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 17-34. (BB)

**Lecture on:** Carl G. Jung and the Archetypes

### Week Four – Demeter/Kore and the Eleusinian Mysteries

W – Sept. 27 – Jungian Archetypes

**Read:** Carl G. Jung, selection from “On the Concept of the Archetype,” Trans. R.F.C. Hull. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (New York: Bollingen, 1959), pp. 75-80. (BB)

**Read:** Sara Corbett, “The Holy Grail of the Unconscious,” *The New York Times Magazine* 9/30/2009: 34-41, 49-50, 60-61. (BB)

**Read:** Persephone: Queen of Individuation, in *Mythic Thinking* (blog), by Priscilla [Priscilla Hobbs]. Available at: <https://mythicthinking.org/2011/07/28/persephone-queen-of-individuation/>

**Write:** In your journal for today, find a version of a Greek or Roman goddess or god, or myth, and discuss how that variant reinforces or challenges the gender system out of which it was produced.

F. Sept. 29 – The Eleusinian Mysteries

**Read:** Bruce Lincoln, “The Rape of Persephone,” *Emerging from the Chrysalis: Rituals of Women’s Initiation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 71-90 (BB)

**Read:** Mircea Eliade, “The Eleusinian Mysteries,” in *A History of Religious Ideas, Vol 1*, trans. by William Trask (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) (BB)

**Recommended:** Froma Zeitlin, “Cultic Models of the Female: Rites of Dionysus and Demeter,” *Arethusa* 15, 1 (1982): 129-57. (BB)

**Write:** Write a 1 page project proposal identifying a goddess you would like to research for the research project for this class, and the question(s) surrounding Her worship, iconography, history, mythology, etc. that you would like to explore.

### Week Five – The Virgin Mary

W - Oct. 4 – Mary Mother of God – Goddess?

**Read:** David Kinsley, “Mary: Virgin, Mother and Queen” in *The Goddesses’ Mirror: Visions of the Divine from East and West* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), pp. 215-260 (BB)

**Read:** Luke 1 and 2, Genesis 1 and 2 (to be handed out in class)

F – Oct. 6 - Mary Mother of God – Goddess?

**Read:** Selections from Warner, Marina. *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary*. London, 2000 (first published in 1976)

S – Oct. 7 – Class field trip to the Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, MA.

**Depart from Case at 9 AM and be back at Case at about 6pm, with Prof. Kate Graney and her Scribner Seminar.**

### **Weeks Six - Haitian Vodou and Gendered Images of the Divine**

W – Oct. 11 – Feminist Ethnography

**Read:** Karen McCarthy Brown and Claudine Michel, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), prefaces and introduction, pp. xv – xviii, 1-20.

**Write:** Midterm paper due today on the theme of “Of Women Born: The Power of Mother Goddesses and Motherhood.” (5-6 pages)

F – Oct. 13 – Azaka - Haitian History and Experience

**Read:** Brown, *Mama Lola*, chs. 1 and 2, pp. 22-78.

Watch in class: *Divine Horseman: The Living Gods of Haiti* (Dir. Maya Deren and Chérel Ito, 1985, 52 min).

### **Week Seven – Haitian Vodou and Gendered Images of the Divine**

W - Oct. 18 - Kouzinn – The Dance of Reciprocity

**Read:** Brown, *Mama Lola*, chs. 5 and 6, pp. 142 - 20

F – Oct. 20 – Two Ezilis – The Many Faces of Femininity

**Read:** Brown, *Mama Lola*, chs. 7 and 8, pp. 204-257

**Watch:** Beyoncé’s 2017 Grammy Performance - available at <https://vimeo.com/203941448>

### **Week Eight – Haitian Vodou and Gendered Images of the Divine**

W – Oct. 25 – Gede – Gender play in Vodou and the politics of ethnography

**Read:** Brown, *Mama Lola*, chs 11 and 12 (can skim), and Afterword (read carefully), pp. 312 – 401

F – Oct. 27 – Vodou Epistemologies of (Trans)gender

**Read:** Omise’eke Natasha Tinsley, “Songs for Ezili: Vodou Epistemologies of (Trans)gender,” *Feminist Studies* 37, 2 (Summer 2011): 417-436.

**Watch at Home:** *Des Hommes et des Dieux* (Of Men and Gods) [2002]

<http://lucy2.skidmore.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=372&recCount=50&recPointer=1&bibId=857110>

### **Week Nine – Kali**

W – Nov. 1 – Kali: The Dark Mother

**Read:** David Kinsley, “Kali,” in *Encountering Kali: In the margins, at the center, in the West*, ed. by Rachel Fell McDermott and Jeffrey Kripal (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 23-38.

**Lecture and slide show** on Hinduism, Tantra and the Hindu pantheon

F – Nov. 3 – Kali: The Dark Mother

**Read:** Patricia Dold, “Kali the terrific and her tests,” *Encountering Kali*, pp. 39 - 59.



**Write:** Bibliography and First Paragraph of Research paper due today

### **Week Ten – Visions of Kali East and West**

W – Nov. 8 – Kali in the West

**Read:** Urban, “Kali in the Colonial Imagination,” pp. 169 – 195, and McDermott, “Kali’s New Frontiers,” pp. 273 – 296 in *Encountering Kali*

F – Nov. 10 – Kali in India

**Read:** Menon and Shweder, “Hindu Family Values and Tantric Power,” and Caldwell, “Tracing Kali through Time, Space and Culture,” pp. 80 – 99, and 249-272.

### **Week Eleven – Hindu Feminist Goddess Theology**

W – Nov. 15

**Read:** Neela Bhattacharya Saxon “Gynocentric theology of Tantric Hinduism : a meditation upon the Devi,” in *The Oxford handbook of feminist theology*, ed. by Mary McClintock Fulkerson and Sheila Briggs

F - Nov. 17

**Read:** Kristin Bloomer, “Mary Speaks Back” – unpublished chapter from forthcoming book on devotion to Mother Mary in contemporary Tamil Nadu

### **Week Twelve – Thanksgiving Break**

### **Week Thirteen - Married to the Goddess/ Presentations**

W – Nov. 29

**Read:** Lucinda Ramberg, *Given to the Goddess: South Asian Devadasis and the Sexuality of Religion* (Duke University Press, 2014).

F – Dec. 1

**Read:** Ramberg, *Given to the Goddess* OR Vera Shevzov, “The Message of Mary,” from *Russian Orthodoxy on the Eve of Revolution*, pp. 214-257 (possible guest speaker).

**Student Presentations**

**Write:** Complete draft of final research paper due today

### **Week Thirteen – Married to the Goddess/Presentations**

W – Dec. 6

**Read:** Ramberg, *Given to the Goddess*

**Student Presentations**

F – Dec. 8

**Read:** Ramberg, *Given to the Goddess*

**Student Presentations**

**Write:** Final Copy of Research project due today

**Write: Final exam paper (4-5 pages) due on Dec. 12 by 6 pm**

## Appendix A: Citation Format

For this class, please use the MLA in-text citation system for citing quotations and ideas that you have arrived at from reading other authors. See Purdue University's OWL guide to citations, for a complete discussion of this system [<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>].

Briefly, in this method of citation, one introduces the source in a signal phrase that gives the author's name (first and last at first mention, last name only thereafter). Parenthetical references following the cited material supply the page number or numbers. No abbreviations like p. or pp. precede the page number, unless the absence of them would cause confusion for the reader. These parenthetical references are keyed to a list of works cited, which is placed at the end of the paper. This list is arranged alphabetically and may bear the title "Works Cited," or "Bibliography."

If you want to comment on a citation but do not want to do so in the body of the paper, you may add a footnote, which is easily done with the footnote function of your word processing software.

### CITATION EXAMPLE

In *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, Sudhir Kakar argues that Indian medical systems depend on a distinctive sense of "freedom." He writes, "Human freedom in the traditional Indian context, then, seems to imply an increase in the potential to experience different inner states while limiting action in the outer world" (272).<sup>1</sup> This notion of freedom inhering in mental states rather than external conditions is corroborated by the philosophy of Yoga. Barbara Stoler Miller emphasizes this by titling the fourth section of Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras, "Absolute Freedom" (74). This is not to say that India lacks this-worldly thinkers who have worked hard to win political and social freedom by changing external conditions; rather, it is to emphasize the role that ascetic other-worldly thinkers have had in defining and shaping core Indian values.

### Works Cited

Dinnage, Rosemary. Review of *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, by Sudhir Kakar. *The New York Review of Books* 17 February 1983, p. 15.

Heesterman, J.C. *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship and Society*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

"Hinduism." Encyclopædia Britannica. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010. Web. 25 Aug. 2010. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/266312/Hinduism>>.

Kakar, Sudhir. *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors: A Psychological Inquiry into India and Its Healing Traditions*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Psychoanalysis and Religious Healing: Siblings or Strangers?" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* Vol 53, 1985, pp. 841-53.

Miller, Barbara Stoler. *Yoga: Discipline of Freedom*. New York: Bantam Books, 1986.

Smart, Ninian. "Soteriology: An Overview." *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. by Mircea Eliade. New York: McMillan, 1987.

---

<sup>1</sup> It seems odd at first, but the concluding period or other punctuation mark must go outside the final quotation mark, and *after* the closing parenthesis.