Syllabus for the Course of M.Phil. in Comparative Religion
Revised with 2008-2009 academic session

This is a 2 years course with the following scheme:

**M.Phil. Previous:** 4 papers of 100 marks each (25 marks of internal assessment and 75 marks of Annual Examination)

Paper I- Indian Religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism)
Paper II- Semitic Religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)

{Note: For the students who have done M.A. in Comparative Religion from Jamia Millia Islamia, or any other recognised university, there will be another two papers in lieu of the above two, namely:
Paper IA- Contemporary Challenges and Religious Traditions
Paper IIA- World Religions and Visual Arts}

Paper III- Research Methodology
Paper IV - One Classical Language, (Sanskrit/Arabic) part-I
Total M. Phil. Previous year marks 400

**M.Phil. Final:**

Paper V- Dissertation 250 marks
Paper VI- Viva Voce 50 “
Paper VII- (Sanskrit/Arabic) part-II 100 “(25 marks of internal assessment and 75 marks of Annual Examination)

Total M. Phil. Final marks 400

Grand Total maximum marks 800
Centre for the Study of Comparative Religions and Civilisations

M.Phil, Comparative Religions

Paper I: Indian Religions (Revised Syllabus)

Unit I: Hinduism

- Introduction: Defining Hinduism & its general features.
- Ancient origins and forms: proto-historic, vedic, upanishadic, puranic.
- Dharma: notion and meaning.
- Ascetic tradition within Hinduism.
- Differing traditions: epic, raišnavism, šaivism, tāntric and šākta.

Unit II: Jainism

- Historical background: foundations and rise.
- Jaina Canon & literature.
- The Tirthankara tradition & Jaina cosmology.
- Sectarian divergences: Digambara and Svetambara traditions.
- The seven tāttvatas, ābhimśa, and the mechanism of bondage (karma)
- Asceticism in the Jaina tradition.

Unit III: Buddhism

- Historical background: material and cultural milieu.
- Biographical tradition of the Buddha: divergence and exclusivity
- Fundamental Doctrines: Four-Noble Truths, Eight-Fold Path, Chain of Dependent Origination, karma, irvīna, śīla (ethics).
- Mahāyāna: emergence and its basic philosophies (pāramita, śunyata, bodhisattva)

Unit IV: Sikhism

- Introduction background: the foundation of the Sikh tradition & the formation of Guru Granth Sahib.
- Historical development & fundamental belief system.
- Transformation: Khalsa & Guru Gobind.
- Social & religious reforms: Singh Sabhas.
- The Akali Sikhs and the question of Sikh identity.
Suggested References for Paper I – Indian Religions:

Hinduism

- G.D Sontheimer & H. Kulke (Eds.), Hinduism Reconsidered, Manohar, New Delhi.
Jainism


Buddhism


**Sikhism**


Paper-II - Semitic Religions:

a) Judaism

Jewish Religion as Mirror in Old Testament – The Special Meaning of History for Judaism.- Jewish People in Diaspora – Jewish Mysticism

b) Christianity

Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ – The development of Christian Church – The main splits in the Christian Church – The Spread of Christianity and Colonialism in Christian Church.

c) Islam

The Life of Prophet Muhammad and the Basic Teachings of Qur’an – The Development of Islamic
Empire and the Rise of New Civilization – The Contribution of Islam to Fine Arts – The Sufi Tradition

d) Semitic Religions The Challenges of Modernity

Books Recommended for Judaism

(Books in bold are available at central library, Jamia Millia Islamia)

- Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*
- John Bright, *History of Israel*
- Otto J. Baab, *The Theology of the old Testament*
- John Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*
- Arthur Hertzberg, *Judaism*

- Rose, Gillian. *Judaism and Modernity: Philosophical essays.*
- Levin, Ephraime. *Judaism*
- Rabinowicz, Oskar K. *Arnold Toynbee on Judaism and Zionism*
- Renckens, Henry. *The Religion of Israel*
- Wouk, Herman. *This is my God: The Jewish Way of Life*
- Bentwich, N. *Israel*
- Kohler, Kaufmann. *Jewish Theology*
- Moore, G.F. *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*

- Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*
- John Bright, *History of Israel*
- Otto J. Baab, *The Theology of the old Testament*
- John Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*
- Arthur Hertzberg, *Judaism*
- Keith W. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel.*
Books Recommended for Christianity

Punjabi University, Patiala  Christianity

Goddess MacGregor  The Bible in the Making

John Foster  The first Advance Church History AD  29-500

Sigfried Eathorn  The Christian Doctrines of Salvation

Peter May  The Doctrine of Trinity

Gustavo Cutierrez  A Theology of Liberation

Books Recommended for Islam:

Ameer Ali  The Spirit of Islam

Khwaja Kemaluddin  The Ideal Prophet

Mohammed Manzoor Numani  What Islam Is

Philip K. Hitti  History of the Arabs

Punjabi University  Islam

Falur Rahman  Islam

Hossoin Nasr  Ideals and Realities of Islam

Mujeeb  The Indian Muslims
Paper I-A, (M. Phil.) “Contemporary Challenges and Religious Traditions” (Alternative for those who have M.A in Comparative Religion)

Unit 1 – A brief history of the development of Modernity in Europe and America

- A political, social, economic and religious survey of the Medieval European Society
- The Age of Discovery
- The Renaissance
- The Reformation and Counter Reformation
- The Age of Reason
- The Enlightenment
- The Romantic era
- The Industrial Revolution
- The Modern era
- The Postmodern era
- The Globalization of Modern Western Civilization
Some of the important events, aspects and movements during the above mentioned period:

- This worldly emphasis and secularization of society
- Individualism and Humanism
- The role of philosophers, scientists and thinkers
- The American Revolution
- The French Revolution
- The Revolutions of 1848
- The Russian Revolution
- The First World War and the Second World War
- Feminism and movement for Gender Equality
- Movements against Social Exclusion, Apartheid and Racial Discrimination

Unit – 2 The major areas of confrontation between Religious Traditions and the contemporary culture of Modernity

- Spirituality versus Materialism – The Holy versus mundane, individualism versus collectivism – democracy versus authoritarianism, logical versus emotional, reason versus intuitive and direct experience (as the source of supreme knowledge), self-seeking versus self sacrifice, hierarchization versus equality, faith based groupism versus nationalism, Feminism, Gender Equality, Racial Discrimination, Pluralistic Society and the Question of Meaning in Life.

Unit–3 The Varied responses of the process of Modernization by the Religious Traditions

- Four obvious effects of the process of Modernization seem to have taken place in the traditional Western societies and can be expected to manifest on a world level with the process of globalization becoming universal. These are:
  - A- Decline,
  - B- Adaptation and reinterpretation,
  - C- Conservative reaction,
  - D- Innovation,

Select Bibliography:

(The books at the S.Numbs. 21-26 are available at Zakir Husain Libearary JMI)


3. Modern Europe: Sources and Perspectives from History (Paperback) by John C. Swanson (Author), Michael S. Melancon (Author). Paperback: 528 pages Publisher: Longman (June 1, 2002)

4. The History of Europe (Hardcover) by J. M. Roberts (Author). Hardcover: 628 pages Publisher: Viking Adult (December 1, 1997)


8. The Discovery of France: A Historical Geography, from the Revolution to the First World War (Hardcover) by Graham Robb (Author). Hardcover: 352 pages Publisher: W. W. Norton (October 29, 2007)


21- History of Europe 2 volumes Carlton J H Hayes and Marshall Whithed Baldwin

22- Rise of the Modern West Meenaxi Phukan

23- European Society 1500-1700 Henry Kamen

24- The Birth of Modern World 1780-1914 C. A. Bayly

25- Origins of Modern Europe Q. Z. Hasan and Hajira Kumar (ed.)

26- The Reformation-Revival or Revolution W. Stanford Reid (ed.)

Paper II-A, (M. Phil.) World Religions and the Visual Arts (Alternative for those who have M.A in Comparative Religion)

Unit I: Introduction to Religious Art

(a) The Language of Art and the written word; Sacred and Secular Art; Representation Modes: painting, sculpture, architecture and calligraphy; Meaning Systems: Symbol, Imagery and Religious Semantics.
(b) Philosophical basis of Oriental and Western Art

Unit II: Art in Primal Religions

(a) Paleo Art (forms and themes); the significance of artistic data and material culture in reconstructing religious and cultural history.
(b) Religious Imagery in the Art of Primal Cultures. Case Studies - Indian Tribal Cultures, African Art and Australian Aboriginal Art.

Unit III: Religious Art in Buddhism and Jainism

(a) Early Buddhist sites (Sarnath, Bharuat, Sanchi and Amravati); the emergence and development of Buddha Image. The Narrative Tradition in Buddhist art - in Ajanta caves and later Buddhist Tradition. The Mandala in Mahayana Buddhism. Buddhist art in South East Asia.
(b) The Image and Symbolism of Jaina Tirthankaras; Jains Temples, Jaina Painting and Pata Citras, Tantric Jaina Mandalas and the Siddha Cakra.

Unit IV: Religious Art in Hindu Tradition

(a) The beginnings of Theistic Art (Indus Valley Civilization, Maurya, Kushan and Gandhara)
(b) Early and later medieval sculpture and Temple Architecture. Symbolism of the Hindu Temple
(c) Hindu Iconography (Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakta)
(d) Religious Themes in Miniature Paintings
(e) The rise of Aniconicism in Hindu Tantric Traditions

Unit V: Religious Art in Islamic Cultures

Early Symbols; Islamic Calligraphy and the Qur’an; Symbolism of the Mosque and its latent geometry; Islamic architecture across cultures (India, Turkey, Iran).

Unit VI: Religious Art in Christian Traditions

Early Symbols; the images of Christ. The Bible and its representations in Sculpture, Architecture, and Painting (Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance and Neo-Classicism); Icon and Iconoclasts; the symbolism of the Church and the dome.

Unit VII: Critical Issues in Art and Religion:

I The Religious Icon in Non-idolatrous religious traditions

(a) Islamic Popular Art; (b) Imagery and Ritual in Jaina Tradition; and
(c) Sikh representation in Popular Poster Art

II Religious Art and the Politics of Power.


IV.  Review and Critical Readings:


V  Changing Iconographies- Their significance and impact in Contemporary India.


Recommended Reading


Banerjee, Jitendra N. *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta: The University, 1941, (IGNCA 704.9 BAN)


**For Review & Critical Readings**


**Web Sites:**


**M.Phil (Paper III): Research Methodology:**

This course is designed to familiarize students with the wide variety of approaches and methods to the study of religion, and to introduce them to the past and current debates over the key issues in the discipline. By the end of the course, it is hoped that students will be able to frame their research questions and locate them in the wider debates. The emphasis will be on empirical and qualitative methods in the study of religion. The course will proceed by reviewing major ethnographic works on religion conducted from a variety of perspectives.

*Unit One: Classical Approaches to the study of Religion*

1) Tracing the history of Religious Studies
2) Sociological Approaches: Marx, Weber, Durkhiem
3) Phenomenological Approaches: Eliade, Rudolf Otto, Kritstenson
Unit Two: New Trends
1) Writings of Clifford Geertz, Talal Asad, Feminist approaches, Subaltern Approaches
2) Colonialism, Ideology and the study of Religion: Richard King, Russell McCutcheon, Timothy Fitzgerald

Unit Three: Critical Issues
1) The issue of Reductionism
2) Reading the Text: Hermeneutics
3) Emic vs Etic View

Unit Four: Tools and Techniques of research
Qualitative and Quantitative techniques:
1) How to select a sample, prepare interview schedule and questionnaire
2) Fieldwork: Participant observation and ethical questions in ethnography
3) How to use archival sources
4) Descriptive and Analytical constructs
5) Text historical methods
6) Writing a research proposal and dissertation

Readings:
- Asad, Talal. Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons in Christianity and Islam
- Banton, M. Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion
- Castelli, E.A. Ed. Women, Gender and Religion: A Reader
- Durkheim, Emile. Elementary Forms of Religious Life
- Eliade, Mircea. Patterns in Comparative Religion
- Flood, Gavin, Beyond Phenomenology
- Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures
- Graham, William A. Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion
- Krintstenson. Meaning in Religion
- Marx, Karl, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1838.
- Marx, Karl, German Ideology
- Oberoi, Harjot. Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Religion (OUP)
- Obeysekere, G. Medusa’s Hair
- Otto, Rudolf. The Idea of the Holy
Paper IV One of the classical languages (Arabic /Sanskrit)

Course on Sanskrit Language (Part I)

The Introductory course on Sanskrit Language is oriented towards achieving mastery over three skills-listening and speaking, reading and writing. The objective of the course is to make the student capable of achieving proficiently in accessing Sanskrit text in the original.

Course Contents.

Unit I. Sanskrit Conversation

Unit II Basic Sanskrit Grammer (Sandhis, Verb formations, Conjugations Indecnibilables, Compounds and simple Sanskrit exercise)

Unit III Reading from Sanskrit Texts. (Selections from beginner’s texts such as Hitopadesha and Panchatantra)

Unit IV Translation and Compositation

Recommended Readings

2. Deshpande, Madhava, Sanskrit Pravesika, Michigan: Michigan University, 1991
3. Devavaani Pravesika – Robert Goldman and sally Sutherland, University of California, Berkeley
**Paper IV – Course for the Arabic Language:**

**Unit-I:** Arabic Alphabets, Vowels, Vocabulary, Gender, Cases, Subject and Predicate, Prepositions and the Personal Pronouns.

**Unit-II:** Basic Arabic Grammar (the construct State, the Noun Qualified, Adjective, Dual, Plural, Past Tense, Present Tense, Imperative Verb, Negative Imperative Verb)

**Unit-III:** Reading the text from the book “Al-Qiraatul Wadiha Part-I by Wahiduz Zaman Keranwi from the chapter I to V.

**Unit-IV:** the Miscellany: Important Grammatical Terms

**Recommended Books:**

1. Mualimul Insha (Part-I) by Abdul Majid Nadvi
2. Al-Lughato Al-Arabiato lil Mubtadeen by Sayyyed Ali, Madras
3. The Essential Arabic by Rafi el –Imad Faynan
4. Teach Yourself Arabic by Zubair Ahmed Farooqi and Habibullah Khan
5. Al-Lughato Al-Arabiato le Ghairin Nateqeen beha (part I) by Fa Abdur Raheem

**Papers for M.Phil Final year:**

**Paper V - Dissertation (80 to 100 pages) and VivaVoce**

**Paper VI – Viva Voce**
Paper VII - Course Contents for the Arabic Language Part II

Translation:

Unit-I: Simple Sentences from Arabic into English

Unit-II: Simple Sentences from English into Arabic

Text

Unit-III: Reading the text from the book “Al-Qiraatul Wadiha Part-II by Wahiduz Zaman Keranwi from the chapter I to 10.

Unit-IV: Conversation and Comprehension

Recommended Books:

1. Mualimul Insha (Part-I & II) by Abdul Majid Nadvi
2. Al-Lughato Al-Arabiato lil Mubtadeen by Sayyed Ali, Madras
3. The Essential Arabic by Rafi el –Imad Faynan
4. Teach Yourself Arabic by Zubair Ahmed Farooqi and Habibullah Khan
5. Teach Yourself Arabic by S. A. Rahman
6. Al-Lughato Al-Arabiato le Ghairin Nateqeen beha (part I & II) by Fa Abdur Raheem
Paper VII- One of the classical languages  
(Arabic/Persian/Sanskrit)  
Course on Sanskrit Language

The Advanced course on Sanskrit Language is oriented towards achieving mastery over three skills-listening and speaking, reading and writing. The objective of the course is to make the student capable of achieving proficiency in accessing Sanskrit text in the original.

Course Contents

Unit I  Sanskrit Conversation  
Unit II  Sanskrit Grammer  (Verb formations, Conjugations, Compounds and irregular forms)  
Unit III  Reading from Sanskrit Texts.(Selections from Upanishads, Bhagavadgita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, hymns and ritual passages from Sanskrit literature)  
Unit IV  Translation and Composition

Recommended Readings
