HARC0227 Poetry, Piety and Power:
Indian Painting 1200-Present
Spring 2015
Professor Cynthia Packert

Class Meetings: T, Th 1:30-2:45, MCA125
Office: MCA 120
Office Hours: Tuesday, 3-4 p.m.; Thursday, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., and by appointment
Getting in touch: x5232 (office); and by e-mail: cpackert@middlebury.edu (*important: see course policies below for my feelings about staying in touch).

Course Description: This course considers the history, context, styles, and significance of a broad spectrum of Indian painting traditions. We will look closely at Buddhist, Jain and Hindu religious illustrations; the extraordinarily refined and naturalistic Mughal imagery; the evocative courtly and religious imagery from the Rajput and other regional kingdoms; the influence of colonialism; and the development of modern and contemporary works. We will also be paying special attention to questions of gender, tradition, artists and their workshops, contemporary artistic expression, and personal, social, and political meaning.
Course Objectives: My aim in this class is to introduce you to the compelling visual imagery of Indian paintings—their saturated materiality, vivid colors, wonderfully diverse subjects, highly distinctive modes of representation, particular approaches to narrative and history, imaginative evocations of power, devotion, emotion, and eroticism. We will immerse ourselves in painted illustrations of real and imagined history, epic battles, gods, goddesses, rulers and subjects, love affairs both human and divine, and the nuances of the seasons and various times of day and night. Through paintings, we will learn about India’s history, mythology, beliefs and culture. We will do this primarily through looking carefully and exhaustively at select paintings from various times and places and through writing about them. Ultimately, my aim is to help you develop a working knowledge and appreciation of this rich body of artistic production, along with the expressive tools to convey your understanding.

Required texts:
- Joan Cummins, Indian Painting: from Cave Temples to the Colonial Period (MFA Publications, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2006) [IP]
- John Guy and Jorrit Britschgi, Wonder of the Age: Master Painters of India (1100-1900) [WOTA]

Additionally, there will be a number of handouts that I will make available in .PDF form on the course site. The study of Indian art can rapidly become very confusing if you do not keep up with the readings and lectures. Readings will play a particularly important part of this course, and I expect you to do the readings before you come to class. You can anticipate my referring to the readings during lectures, and I will frequently be soliciting your contributions for in-class discussion and the occasional in-class response exercise. I also welcome your questions and comments about the readings.

Assignments and Expectations: The format of this class is structured around twice-weekly highly interactive slide lectures. In addition to the formal assignments for the course, there will be structured opportunities for discussion in class. I take attendance for every class.

Slide lectures provide the historical and visual context for the material covered in class. I will always show you much more than you find in your readings and textbook, so coming to class is essential. Slide lectures are critical for making connections, comparisons, and answering questions. Please note that I have built time into the lectures for your questions and observations, and I welcome contributions during class time.

Exams: There will be two (2) exams, one of which is a take-home, during the semester. There will be no final exam. Exams will be generally consist of short essay answers and longer comparisons about material you are familiar with from class and readings. I may also include “unknown” examples to challenge your visual, analytical, and interpretive knowledge.

Reading responses: On a regular basis, you will respond to questions about the readings and particular paintings or concepts discussed in class—either in advance, or during class. These are assessed on a √, √+, or √- basis, and count toward your overall grade. These responses should be clear, coherent, focused, and thoughtful. They are designed to keep you current on the readings and to facilitate in-class discussion. If there is a substantial amount of reading for any particular class, I may divide the responsibility among you to read and present for discussion; that way the readings do not become overly burdensome.
Papers/Research Project: There will be one (1) short paper: a formal analysis of a sculptural work in the College Museum, and a final research project, where you will research and assemble a thematically-organized digital album (muraqqa) and write an accompanying research essay and short catalogue entries, along the lines of Sumathi Ramaswamy’s “Going Global in Mughal India;” see http://sites.duke.edu/globalinmughalindia/.

Grading Breakdown:

Exams (2 @ 20%) = 40%
Reading responses/participation (10%) = 10%
Short paper (formal analysis) (20%) = 20%
Final research project (digital album/muraqqa) (30%) = 30%

100%

Ordinarily, no late papers are accepted, nor will I arrange alternative dates for papers. If you have a lot of other work due the same day, I expect you to plan ahead and work around it. The only excuses accepted are medical or family emergencies, for which I require a Dean’s notice. If you have any sort of disability that requires special arrangements, please be sure I am aware of it ahead of time. Assignments handed in after the deadline will be docked a half-letter grade for each day late.

Late work and problems in general: That being said, if you really are having problems meeting deadlines, speak to me in advance and—depending upon the circumstances—it may be possible to negotiate a deadline that is more workable for your schedule. Every request for a change must be in writing, handed to me in advance. If I do grant you some sort of extension, I will still expect something on the due date—at the very least, an outline or draft. I expect you to be in touch with me if you are having problems; that is what I am here for. Whatever you do, don’t disappear or avoid the issue—delaying dealing with the problems only compounds your difficulties.

Honor code: All work must conform to the Middlebury College honor code guidelines. Please make the pledge and sign all of your written work before submission.

E-mail: E-mail is a great way to keep in touch and it is useful if you have a quick question and can’t find me in person or on the telephone. I also welcome comments about the course and any other kind of feedback, positive or negative (as long as it is relevant and helpful). E-mail, however, is NOT to be used as an avoidance technique or substitute for seeing me (and other human beings!). I expect to see you, or talk to you in person on a regular basis, preferably in class or during my office hours. Also, please be understanding—I’ll do my best to get back to you quickly, but there will be (many) times when I can’t respond to you immediately. I don’t generally answer e-mails over the weekend.

Dumb things I hate: Arriving late to class; using the word “like” unless it is a verb; using “it’s” incorrectly; hiding in the back when there is room in the front; not taking notes; falling asleep in class; leaving class to use the bathroom (unless you are sick) or check your phone.
really, really (did I say really?) hate it when students leave class in the middle of the lecture or discussion—how rude! Please be sure to take care of your personal needs before class starts.

A word about electronics use and technology: Please turn off (not just silence) your cell phones and other devices during class. Believe me, learning about Indian painting is all the multi-tasking your brain needs! If we need to check the Internet for something, I can do it from my computer in the classroom.

Finally, I ask you to be patient with ME and technology. You may not be aware of everything that goes into my class presentations, but do know that I am at least basically functional in what I need for our classes. However, things do go wrong—often, and it is usually due to some sort of issue between my computer and the classroom equipment. Thus, please don’t blame me if technology fails on occasion—it’s usually not a question of my “getting better” at technology, but my having to deal with technical issues out of my control. I am ambitious in the classroom and enthusiastic, and I do my best to bring you a lot of value added information: music, PowerPoint, film clips, YouTube, etc. I bet at least some of your other professors still work strictly with books. So give me a break, okay?

Caveat: This syllabus is designed as a “best case” guide to what I hope to get through in this class. But students bring different abilities and strengths to the class and sometimes things take more or less time to get through than I have ideally planned for. Therefore, I reserve the right to add, delete, or substitute readings on the syllabus once I see your comfort level with the material and gauge how the class is going.
## Course Schedule (subject to change)

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<tr>
<th>WEEK 01</th>
<th>T Feb.10</th>
<th>Introduction to Visual Culture of Art and Religion in India</th>
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<tr>
<td>Th Feb.12</td>
<td>Ancient India: History, Divine Bodies, Telling Tales in early Buddhist art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-IP, 7-9</td>
<td>-WOTA, 17-21</td>
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<tr>
<th>WEEK 02</th>
<th>T Feb.17</th>
<th>Ajanta: Buddhist Cave-Temples, Techniques, Aesthetic Theory</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-IP, 12-13; and map 220</td>
<td>-Spink, <em>Ajanta Guidebook</em></td>
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<td>-excerpts from the <em>Chitrasutra</em> of the <em>Vishnudharmottara Purana</em></td>
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<td><em>Visit to Reiff Gallery, College Museum; discussion of Indian aesthetic theory</em></td>
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<td>Th Feb.19</td>
<td>Professor Packert out of town</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-Hopkins, excerpts from <em>Singing the Body of God</em></td>
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<td>Assignment</td>
<td><em>Long looking assignment with Vishnu sculpture in museum</em></td>
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<th>WEEK 03</th>
<th>T Feb.24</th>
<th>Painted Paradises: Later Buddhist Manuscripts and Temples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-IP, 14-19</td>
<td>-WOTA, 22-28</td>
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<td>Assignment</td>
<td><em>In-class response exercise (human and divine figures in early Buddhist art)</em></td>
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<td>Th Feb.26</td>
<td>Establishing a Foundation: Early Jain, Hindu and Muslim Paintings for Temples and Courts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>-IP, 20-41</td>
<td>-WOTA, 30-33</td>
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<td>Assignment</td>
<td><em>Short paper #1: Formal analysis of Vishnu sculpture due in class</em></td>
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### WEEK 04

**T Mar.03**  
Pre-Mughal paintings and the Introduction of Early Mughal culture

**Reading**  
- *IP*, 34-42; 214-219  
- *WOTA*, 42-49

**Assignment**  
*Visit to Reiff Gallery, College Museum to see Jain painting and *Shah Nama* page

**Th Mar.05**  
Imperial Individuality: The Growth of Mughal Painting under Akbar

**Reading**  
- *IP*, 34-55  
- *WOTA*, selections from 49-94  
- selections from the *Hamza-Nama* and *Abul Fazl’s Akbar-Nama*

**Assignment**  
*Response paper due in class (list of observations about Jain and *Shah Nama* and other early Mughal paintings)*

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### WEEK 05

**T Mar.10**  
Akbar (cont’d): Jahangir, The Seizer of the World

**Reading**  
- *IP*, 55-67  
- *WOTA*, selections from 49-94  
- Thackston, selections from the *Jahangirnama*  
- Lowry, “The Emperor Jahangir and the Iconography of the Divine In Mughal Painting”  
- Skelton, Imperial Symbolism in Mughal Painting”

**Th Mar.12**  
*Exam 1 (in-class):* includes all material up to, and including, Mar.10 lecture

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### WEEK 06

**T Mar.17**  
Shah Jahan, The Ruler of the World

**Reading**  
- *IP*, 68-74  
- *WOTA*, selections from 49-94  
- selections from the *Padshah Nama*

**Th Mar.19**  
Late Mughal/the Deccan Courts

**Reading**  
- *IP*, 74-89  
*in-class response exercise*
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<th>WEEK 07</th>
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<tr>
<td>T Mar.24</td>
<td>NO CLASS—MIDTERM BREAK</td>
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<td>Th. Mar.26</td>
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<th>WEEK 08</th>
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| T Mar.31 | **Rajput Courts of Central India and Rajasthan:** *Rasa, Ragamalas, Romance and the Ramayana*
| Reading  | - *IP, 91-119; 121-138*  
- *WOTA, selections 95-145*  
- *selections from Miller, Love Song of the Dark Lord*  
- *Miller, “Valmiki”*  
| W Apr.01 | **Jahangir and Painting (optional but highly recommended)**  
7:30-10:30 p.m. | Guest visitor Dr. Yael Rice (Amherst College); extra-credit opportunity if you attend the lecture and write a response, due Apr.07 in class (MCA 125)  
| Th Apr.02 | **Mewar: the Proud Kingdom**  
| Reading  | - *Losty, “Sahib-din’s Book of Battles”*  
- *Dehejia, “The Treatment of Narrative in Jagat Singh’s Ramayana”*  
| Assignment | *Response paper (analyze selections and images from Rana Jagat Singh’s Ramayana)*  

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<th>WEEK 09</th>
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| T Apr.07 | **Rajput Courts of Rajasthan:** Bikaner, Kishangar, Bundi, Kota  
| Reading  | - *IP, 146-163*  
| Th Apr.09 | **Rajput Courts of Rajasthan:** Jodhpur  
| Reading  | - *selections from Garden and Cosmos*  
| Assignment | *Proposal due for your muraqqa theme, with annotated bibliography of no fewer than 6-8 current, up-to-date print sources and a minimum of 5 proposed paintings*  


**WEEK 10**

**T Apr.14**  Rajput courts of Punjab: Paintings from the Hills

Reading  
- *IP*, 165-201  
- Aitken, “Spectatorship and Femininity in Kangra Style Painting”  

**Th Apr.16**  Late Mughal and Company Painting: New Patrons, New Forms

Reading  
- *IP*, 203-211  
- WOTA, 186-199  
- P. Pal and V. Dehejia, “Native Artists and Exotic Art”

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**WEEK 11**

**T Apr.21**  Early Indian Photography

Reading  
- Dehejia, “Fixing a Shadow”  
- Harris, “Topography and Memory”

Assignment  
**Exam #2 (Take-home) due in class**

**Th Apr.23**  The Artist as Mythic Hero: Raja Ravi Varma

Reading  
- Kapur, “Representational Dilemmas of a Nineteenth-Century Painter: Raja Ravi Varma”  
- Pinney, “Lithographs and the Camera in Bombay and Delhi, 1890-1925”

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**WEEK 12**

**T Apr.28**  Whose Modernism?: the Struggle for National and Individual Identity

Reading  
- Dalmia, selections from *Contemporary Indian Art: Other Realities*  
- selections from Sinha, *Art and Visual Culture in India (1857-2007)*

**Th Apr.30**  New Modernisms: the Contemporary Artist in India and Beyond: Is a “Global” Art History Meaningful?

Reading  
- Juneja, Global Art History and the Burden of Representation  
- Desai, “Engaging ‘Tradition’ in the Twentieth Century Arts of India and Pakistan”  
- Seattle Art Museum exhibition: [http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/citydwellers](http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/citydwellers)  
**WEEK 13**

**T May 05**  
Presentations of final project (your completed *muraqqa* is due the day you present)

**Th. May 07**  
Presentations of final project/Course Response Forms