

## HINDU NOTES OVERALL PROGRAM GOAL

*For the Spiritual Director-in-training to become...*

**COMPETENT  
COMMITTED  
COMPASSIONATE**

### HINDU TRADITION TALK

Spiritual Marriage: East and West through Spiritual Direction

Theology: The art of telling stories about the Divine.

Mysticism: The art of tasting and feeling in your heart the inner meaning of such stories to the point that they transform you.

In west - SD realm of monks in monasteries [optional]

In east - necessary - ashram, monk for period of life, guru center

World Religions: 1 Billion Catholics

1 Billion Hindus

1 Billion Muslims [Sunni+Shiite]

### ORIGINS

-Hinduism - 19<sup>th</sup> cent. Name [Persian] Sindhu [Sanskrit]for religious conglomerate

-People of the Indus River Valley

-2500 BCE [500 years before Abraham]

-Sanskrit Language [mother of languages]

-1500 BCE Aryan invasion into NW India [brought Vedas]  
based on oral texts [meaning Eternal Truths]

### VEDAS

-Different kinds

Braminands

Upanishads

Sutras [that which is heard]

Epics [Bhagavad Gita] - supreme expression of Hinduism

Elaborate tales of elemental gods and demigods

Rig Veda- liturgical hymns and poems

Age of Degeneration- things need to be written down

Historical Periods:

No history - cyclical but...

Feudal structure [Bramin priest 'caste' vs. Warriors, Traders and Farmers and Outcasts]  
Most foul and menial jobs [current government, Gandhi, etc. reform]  
Scourge of the East

Pre Vedic

Vedic

Upanashadic

Medieval

Modern

VOCABULARY

Caste system seems 'worse than is'

Within the human is the eternal Atman which may be born millions of times  
through various kinds of heavens and hells due to KARMA [impersonal moral law -  
not reward and punishment- but like gravity.

Release MOKSHA is reason for spiritual practice

Paths MARGAS are ways

Way of Knowledge/Spiritual Direction: release from ignorance Illusion that all are not one]

Way of Right Action and Good Works

Way of Devotion to God

Way of Yoga [body]

4 Stages [for all Hindus] Ashramas [stages] Student/Householder/Withdraw for Reflect./Renunci of world  
Tanatric Traditions [sensual]

Dharma - 'appropriateness' God manifests MAYA [power to make manifest]

Dharma= map of proper behavior to MOKSHA

HINDUISM = SANATANA DHARMA [everlasting way] Like the Tao/Way of Christianity

Relationship of HINDU, BUDDHIST, ZEN RELIGIONS

JEW CATHOLIC PROTESTANT

Monotheism vs. Polytheism

Practical monotheism - Moses 12<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE

CREED

The Atman is [always has been] One[Tat tvam asi] and the Atman is Braman

[the soul [Self] is one... the soul is [totally created from and will be absorbed in] God]

Paradox: About God... "nethi, nethi..." [all is illusion/ can't say anything]

Gandhi.... Judaism is the only religion that dared to take this seriously [no name/image]

Various gods and goddesses but...

Trinity [Trimurti]

Brahma [creates the universe]

Vishnu [sustains the universe] 'Savior'

Shiva [destroyer of...] God of Time [string of beads]

10 Avitars of Vishnu [e.g. Krishna]

appearing at different times in history when people need guidance

Ram [legendary epic Ramayana - on Gandhis lips]

Instead of different gods - different names for God

People have devotions to individual 'deities'

Mother Goddess: Consorts - female [back to Pre-Vedic earth mother worship]

Parvati - first consort of Shiva [woman from the mountains- Himalayas]  
'Because you the dark burning ground have made a burning ground of my heart, we shall dance the  
Eternal Dance in Love's Holy Light'

Kali - terrifying but great devotion [destroys evil and also creates new life]

Ganga - water goddess of River Ganges

No fear of sexuality and intimacy... see way to Bede Griffiths

Iconography- Animals/Sexual [show Creation/Brahman = Obscene in West]

Sex is sacramental - [the Shakti] generative- manifestation of divine power [male impotent without]

## JUDEO-CHRISTIAN STORY AND HINDUISM

God in the Vedas almost identical to St. Thomas Aquinas

Atman- soul uniting God and man [Israel/Christ]

All language about God is symbolic... [Brahmin expression: neti, neti [not this, not this]]

Only thing we can say about God is what He is not - Augustine

Process of Unknowing

Bede Interfaith Prophet - Edwardian childhood [non-religious]

Influenced by CS Lewis/ Blake/ TH Lawrence

Fear of syncretism... faced ahead of his time

[Current Vatican statements]

Conversion - through nature

Classical education/ Marcus Aurelius: Holistic notion of the Universe

Bhagavad Gita

Dhamapada of Buddha

Tao Te Ching [Way to Heaven]

He felt they were expressing the same truths he found in [Augustine/Dante] Christianity

Monastic vocation - problem - Contemplation does not necessarily mean spending long periods of time in total silence and quiet but rather is a habit of mind, a state of being continuously in the presence of God.

Along side with his disillusionment with Western Christianity came an interest in Eastern Religion

Christianity should have a bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other

He felt that his contact with the East would lead to a new, much needed, liberation of Christianity from its own historical shackles thereby releasing its real moral power

Set sail for India at age 49

Shrine of the universal man Figure of Purusha- Vedantic Thought- the Primal Being - Adam Kadmon of Hebrew/ Universal Man of Islam/ Son of Man/ Jesus

Bede became 'reckless' but no more than the Buddha, Christ, St. Francis or even Albert Schweitzer

In India- everything is regarded as sacred

In West- every trace of the sacred has been removed and our vision of the universes through the scientific lense has been reduced to something mechanical, tangible, visible, controllable... so that both man and nature have been deprived of meaning

Hinduism does not deny reality of the material world but rather sees the whole created world as pervaded by one eternal spirit.- a spirit that creates and sustains the world and is both transcendent and imminent.  
ASHRAM THEOLOGY

Search for perennial philosophy [eternal philosophy or traditional order]

We are on the eve of a breakthrough for civilization

I feel that this ashram should be open to the world, not closed. Not a flight from the world but a withdrawal to find new creative energy

ADVAITA - neither God alone nor the creature alone nor God plus the creature but an indefinable non-dualith that transcends at once all separation and confusion... It is simply the mystery that God and the world are not two.

Only meditation can take us there [enter into the cave of the heart]

I cannot conceive of Christ now except in Vedanta.

West - linear

East- cyclic

Together = spiral

OM SACCINDANDAYA [understanding/bliss/existence] NAMAHA [quest for God]

“From the earliest times I can remember having the conviction that what I was experiencing was being given not for me alone but for others, in a sense all humanity.

Definition of Spiritual Direction-

Classic Hinduism- He doesn't advise or give direction, he just walks with you, follows you with an understanding heart and encourages you.

Never be judgmental - and always quick to congratulate- especially during periods of aridity.

Your gift as a counsellor lays not in what you say but in you are.

Of Bede: Here was someone who was being what other were trying to be.

I am called to be a Hindu, Buddhist, a Jain, a Parsee, a Sikh, a Muslim, a Jew as well as a Christian if I am to know the Truth and find a point of reconcillisation...

Ashram provides an oportunity for anybody man, woman, religious, lay, Christian, non-Christian, Hindu, Muslim, believer or atheist can find a spiritual haven of rest and reconcilliation

Hinduism is less a religion than a social order

Fewer than 2% of Asia is Christain- because it was founded in Greek Theology, hardened by Roman structrue and packaged with European culture

Newman- something true in all religions-

Like Paul and Augustine

‘something true and divinely revealed in all religions on earth’

Ghandi - Sarvodaya- service for all

read from Hindu Vedas and Christians Scriptures

We have to recognize that eventually there must be one religion for all mankind, but we cannot reach that one religion by ignoring the essential differences that exist. We must strive to understand them and work towards reconciliation.

Just as I have come to India seeking the other half of my soul. So too India looks to America for its other half as well

I scarcely find any real contemplation in India any more...

Our task is not to bring Christ to India [as though he could be absent] as to discover how Christ is already present and active in the Hindu soul [M.Theresa]

There is nothing in my Catholic theology that will not receive light in relationship to the Vedanta.

I find modern Roman Catholicism an extremely decadent religion which has become totally inadequate at expressing the essence of Christianity for today. It is sadly... a fossilization of what once had been a great tradition....Mainly because it has lost great contemplative tradition

Of all the young people who come [15-25 yr old... given up on Catholicism] because it has been identified with a formalistic, dogmatic, moralistic obstacle to interior spiritual growth

But he ultimately sent people back to their roots

The control of the Curia under JP II is as rigid and oppressive as in the days of the Inquisition.  
Scandalous pessimism

Jesus was a lay preacher - rabble rouser  
There will not be a stone left upon a stone [Church]

The world is entering a new age- which is no longer able to adequately express its ancient roots- we need to return to the primitive roots of religion

Discovery of the feminine [cf. tape]

My God, my God... prayer of cross- losing all images of God - feeling completely abandoned-  
into the darkness - the Woman Clothed with the Sun

I know that Great Person  
Of the brightness of the Sun  
Beyond Darkness  
Only by knowing him  
One goes there by Death  
There is no other way to go.  
[Purusadic Hymn]