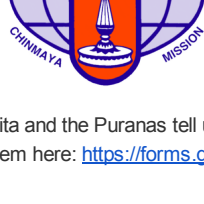




Join us Nov. 3!



This week's presentation will be given by Krishnan Vaideyanathan, a volunteer at the Chinmaya mission and a Balvihar teacher for 10+ years. This week's presentation and discussion will take us back to the Vedas and the Upanishads and help us explore the roots of Hinduism. The presentation will discuss ways in which each of us defines Hinduism as it applies to us and what the ancient texts actually tell us. We will also look into the progression of Hindu ideas over time and how newer texts like the Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas tell us about what it means to be Hindu. Do you have any questions for our speaker? Ask them here: <https://forms.gle/CD46VFCBPC9D7A>.

Zoom link: <https://tufts.zoom.us/j/96496822108>

Password: **hsc#2020**

Weekly Showcase

During this festive season, I have realized that Hinduism has been a core part of my identity for many reasons, the biggest of which is community. Growing up in mostly white Christian neighborhoods, and going to schools with very little religious diversity, the spaces where I felt most comfortable embracing my religion and culture were in spaces with family, family friends and the girls in my dance class. Indian classical dance has a strong connection to Hinduism and storytelling, and through the pieces I learned and the temples we performed at, I was able to learn a lot about Hinduism and feel a profoundly deep connection to those around me. Getting to celebrate holidays, such as Diwali, and experience poojas, with my family and several other aunts, uncles, and friends created a bond through shared experience and shared mindset, which I feel eternally grateful for.

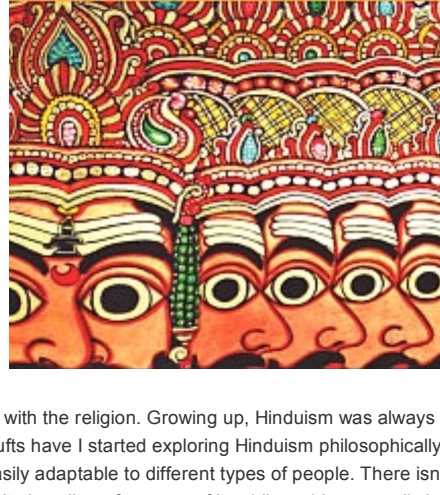
As I continue to educate myself about Hinduism and the history of Hinduism through art, film, literature, and politics, I have been thinking more critically about my own relationship with the religion. Growing up, Hinduism was always solely cultural, and only through HSC and the chaplaincy at Tufts have I started exploring Hinduism philosophically. One of the most beautiful things about Hinduism is that it is easily adaptable to different types of people. There isn't one single text that encompasses all of the religion. However, it also allows for some of its philosophies to easily be misinterpreted and misused. So now, as I continue to learn more about the stories and epics I grew up hearing, I have been forcing myself to dig deeper. For example, I am currently reading *Asura: Tale of the Vanquished* by Anand Neelakantan, which portrays the life of Ravana, a figure that was represented as "bad" or "evil" in a popular Hindu epic, Ramayana. Seeing a version of the story through his perspective, that highlights caste, colorism, and other societal and institutional structures of power, has made me realize that the way Hinduism was portrayed to me growing up doesn't even begin to encompass all of the stories out there that break down the complexities of what is considered right and wrong. One instance from *Asura* that really stood out to me was when Hanuman, a beloved figure in Ramayana, burns down the city of Lanka. When I learned about this through Ramayana when I was younger, this act was seen as a huge victory for the "good side," but now reading about this same instance through the eyes of Ravana and other members of the Asura caste, I realized how tragic the event actually was. Hundreds of businesses and homes went up in flames along with the men, women, children and people of Lanka who didn't possess the same societal and institutional power as the protagonists of the story. My favorite aspect of many Hindu spaces is the openness to questioning and dialogue, so I ask myself and urge others to as well:

What could have Hanuman done differently? Was Hanuman's decision justified? Did the population of Lanka have the (personal, societal, or institutional) power necessary to prevent the actions of Ravana or Hanuman, and did they have a moral responsibility to intervene? Was it necessary for Hanuman to put Lanka in such a perilous position because Ravana injured him personally?

The religion, the stories, and the philosophies are so complex and nuanced, and the learning never stops. I am excited to continue to expand on my knowledge even more!

Feel free to contact me (neha.ratnapuri@tufts.edu) or Preeta (preeta.banerjee@tufts.edu), the new Hindu Chaplain with any questions or to just start dialogue!

Email hsc.tufts@gmail.com to be featured in our next newsletter!



20 Diwali kits!

Sign up to receive one of 20 Diwali kits containing 5, 4-ounce Rangoli colors, a paper stencil and a 7-color changing electronic tealight.

There is a science behind Rangoli art that is considered sacred - the bright colors, the design, symbols, lines and circles all play an important role in creating positive energy. Many chant or sing bhajans while creating the symmetrical patterns. We hope you join in the festivities!

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfZxvblP2JYjMEKENrSS58WQwxCVSFH1CYt6Vw5Tly3XDezQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Diwali Postcards & Goodies

Sign up: bit.ly/AACDiwali2020



Diwali Postcards & Goodies

Missing home this Diwali?

Sign up to celebrate Diwali and send your wishes home with the AAC!

We will be offering grab and go Diwali goodie bags with postcards and some desi treats. Limited quantities available so sign up today!

When: Sign up below for a kit! You will be contacted soon with more

information regarding pick-up.

Where: bit.ly/AACDiwali2020

Our next Reading Group 11/13!

ACK is an Indian publisher of graphic novels based on biographies, religious figures and cultural stories, founded in 1967 by Anant Pai. Largely a response to supporting children in learning about their heritage, the series also has equally engaged older readers in important conversations about their relationship to the content including social equity and gender dynamics. Sign up to attend here <https://forms.gle/ZkHb27HJ3i8oxVCA> or email preeta.banerjee@tufts.edu to RSVP and to get a copy of the comic as available!

- November 11/13/20 6-7pm – Rama
We will meet on Friday Nov 13 to hold a small ceremony, discuss our reading and eat together.
To accompany Diwali as first celebrated to welcome Lord Rama's homecoming to Ajodhya: **Nov 14, 2020.**



Inspiration

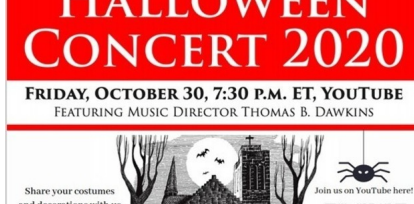
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।
योग-स्थां कुरु कामार्जि सांगारं त्यक्त्वा धनार्जया
siddhy-asiddhyoh samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga uchyaते

Be steadfast in the performance of your duty, abandoning attachment to success and failure.

Such equanimity is called Yoga.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 2, Verse 48

Read the verse commentary by Swami Mukundananda [here!](https://www.swamimukundananda.com/2017/08/28/bhagavad-gita-chapter-2-verse-48/)



Interfaith Offerings and Office Hours

Tuesdays and Fridays 11-1pm ET

Please email me: preeta.banerjee@tufts.edu to set up an appointment



Our Halloween Concert 2020 is tonight Friday, Oct 30 at

7:30pm ET. The video will go live on our YouTube channel!

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8Au2wq2RkoHjEzZdPFbbw?view_as=subscriber

For those on campus, we will be handing out donuts at Goddard from 12-5pm (as supplies last) on 10/30.

Need support Election Week? Please check out offerings here: https://vote.tufts.edu/election-week-events?fbclid=IwAR2jldX3PC-Y4481Dg-3Wf6v6L_Ak6BR468MbdKaZzGb1DHUcljwK01Prodjg

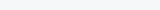
Tufts Hindu Chaplaincy
Goddard Chapel
3 The Green
Medford, MA 02155

Email: preeta.banerjee@tufts.edu
Phone: 617-627-6021
Website: <https://chaplaincy.tufts.edu/hindu-chaplaincy/>



The Tufts University Chaplaincy is a dynamic hub supporting religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life for all members of the Tufts community. We provide pastoral care, support religious and philosophical communities, educate about spiritual and ethical issues in society and the world, and promote multi-faith engagement.

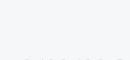
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