

Department of History Colloquium presents

Dr. Hillary Rodrigues

(Religious Studies, U of Lethbridge)

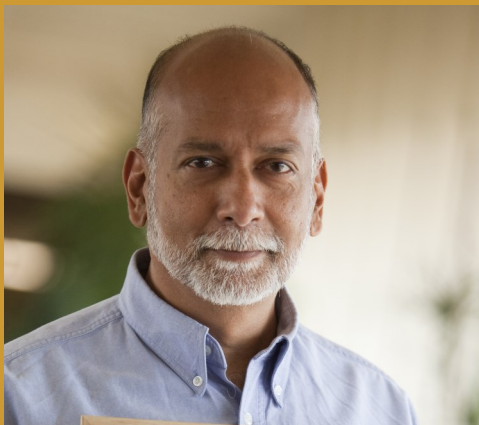


Day/Date:
Friday,
January 20, 2017

Location: B660

3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Everyone is welcome.



Formidable Goddess: Tracing the Rise of Durga, the Buffalo-Demon Crusher

Worship rites of the Great Goddess have been growing in exuberance within the last century throughout the Hindu world, particularly during her nine-night festival known as Navaratra. She is worshipped in temples, with blood sacrifice, in elaborate temporary shrines, and in an assortment of earthen and vegetative forms. Due to the complexities of the Hindu pantheon, there is often much confusion about the persona of the Great Goddess, also known as Durga, and her relationship to other gods and goddesses. Durga is mostly portrayed with many arms, wielding an assortment of weapons, and trampling a buffalo-demon. In this talk, via an examination of scriptural texts, such as the *Devi Mahatmya*, and shifts in iconography, Prof. Hillary Rodrigues traces the rise of Durga, through various eras of Indian history to the contemporary configurations of her worship. The ascendancy of the Great Goddess may be linked to her associations with sovereign and personal empowerment as well as spiritual beneficence.

Hillary Rodrigues is a Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Lethbridge. He specializes in the study of Asian philosophies and religious practices, particularly the Hindu goddess traditions. His books include *Introducing Hinduism*, *Studying Hinduism in Practice*, and *Ritual Worship of the Great Goddess*.