

Final Exam Medium-Length Essay Questions

Two of the questions below will appear, exactly as are, on the final exam. I will choose the two randomly and they will be worth nearly 50% of the exam score. You will be asked to write for approximately 20 minutes on each. Your preparations for the questions that I do not include in the medium-length essay section will help with other parts of the exam.

In your essays, it is thus *very* important that you:

- (a) *be specific about sub-traditions, movements, sects, texts, persons, historical events and periods -- even if the question doesn't specify them. For example, it is too general to refer to "Hinduism" as one tradition;*
- (b) *use terms appropriately and accurately throughout your answers;*
- (c) *clarify concepts whenever you refer to them*

The Questions

1. **Discuss the possible reasons for which Vedanta has contributed to the acceptance of Sufi Islam in India. Then explain how each fits (or does not fit) into its own orthodox tradition.**
2. **Describe the paradoxical nature of Lord Siva and then develop a set of comparisons with the nature of Kali.**
3. **Compare Buddhist and Jain visions of liberation. Then discuss briefly the ways in which these different visions require different means to their attainment.**
4. **Compare Sufism and Krishna devotionalism with respect to the divine-human *relationship*.**
5. **Sikhism has both mystical and worldly aspects. Describe these and, from a scholarly viewpoint, discuss the historical sources of each.**