Please join the Science, Religion, and Lunch Seminars (SRLS) hosted by the Northern Plains Ethics Institute for:

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Towards Hindutva: The Essence of Being a Hindu
12-1pm, September 10, 2019
Meadow Lark, Memorial Union

Abstract: Just before the struggle for India’s independence from the British reached its fruition, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar penned a short book on Hindutva, where he attempted to define the essence of being a Hindu. Hindus have long struggled to articulate their way of life in a clear and consistent manner with a set of beliefs that can help them rally around testing debates and prescribe a way of life that is consistent with their evolved culture. This presentation provides eight beliefs as solid pillars that rival the five pillars of Islam as a foundational system for a people to define their way of life and communicate it clearly to others and to themselves. The eight pillars try and capture the essence of being a Hindu, and what it takes, in terms of beliefs, to define this essence called Hindutva. Hindutva has become a rallying concept for many in modern India, but its proponents are not articulating this Hindutva well-enough for it to be convincing as an essence. My hope is that this presentation will provide a foundational basis to finally anchor Hindutva in a bedrock of beliefs and take the gentle Hindu forward to his or her destiny as a noble crusader in life’s journey. The presentation provides a moderate, compassionate voice that focuses on the essence of being a Hindu and is divested of any notion of nation building.

Bio: An architect by education and training, Ganapathy Mahalingam completed an undergraduate, professional education in Architecture at the School of Architecture and Planning in Chennai, India and became a registered architect in 1984. Ganapathy came to the United States in 1985 to pursue a Master's degree in Architecture, which he earned at Iowa State University in 1986. He taught computer-aided design at Iowa State University for a year before he returned to India to practice Architecture. Ganapathy came back to the United States to complete a Ph.D. in Architecture at the University of Florida, which was awarded in 1995. Having spent half of his life in the culture of India, and half of his life in the culture of the United States, he has that balanced experience in life that spans the Old World and the New World. Currently educating future generations of architects at North Dakota State University, he is seeking to share...in the words of Le Corbusier...les carnets de la recherché patiente... With diverse interests that range from philosophy, architectural design, computational modeling, Poetry, Music and Art, to culinary delights and travel, Ganapathy has that strong curiosity to learn about the world around him, and to wonder about all the things that remain to be discovered and done. As a person who seeks to understand all the traditions that seek to understand, he is on a quest that is comprehensive, integrative and ultimately...enlightening...in the sense of an experience in which all burdens are lifted. Another experience of enlightenment that he yearns for...is being awash in a light...that purifies the mind and rids it of accumulated traces...traces the ancients in India called samskaras...achieving the purity of freedom...
from all that is made! Ganapathy believes that this quest will be fulfilled when we understand our own minds...in a single act of consciousness...foretold in the Advaitic tradition of India as...*tat tvam asi*...which he is bold enough to translate unconventionally as...abide in That!

If you are interested in giving a seminar, then please contact Syed Ahmed at syed.ahmad@ndsu.edu or Dennis Cooley at dennis.cooley@ndsu.edu.