

# A French Prophet of India's Resurgence in the Nineteenth Century: Saint Yves d'Alveydre and His 'Mission de l'Inde'

At the time when the West's colonial sway over the rest of the world reached its acme, India had a hallowed place in the imagination of Europeans, and the study of the country's culture and history was coloured by the romantic or rather 'Romanesque' fascination with the exotic Indies.

Much of the 'Victorian' glamour that surrounded India has since faded, and modern Indological studies strive to be scientifically dry and almost clinical. Contemporary scholars tend to pride themselves in the high degree of their specialization and they generally ignore all references to what is broadly and rather contemptuously described as theosophical occultism. Marxism, Structuralism and Deconstructionism, among other schools of thought have led to the 'normalization' of Indian religion and history, starting from the 'objective' viewpoint that India is a country like any other and Hinduism just another socio-religious anthropological phenomenon.

Marxism,  
Structuralism  
and Deconstruc-  
tionism, among  
other schools  
of thought  
have led to the  
'normalization'  
of Indian religion  
and history

---

\* Lecture delivered at the IIC on November 2, 2010 by Dr. Come Carpentier de Gourdon