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SSEA 202X.01A: Introduction to South Asia

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Fall 2012

Introduction to South Asia
LS/SSEA 202X

Dr. Vanita, Professor, Liberal Studies

Fulfills the General Education Global/Indigenous requirement, and also fulfills requirements for the Liberal Studies major, the Asian Studies option, and the South & South-East Asian Studies minor.

Tuesday, Thursday, 12.40-2.00 p.m. Room: LA106. 3 credits.

Office: Liberal Arts 146-A. Office Phone: 243-4894. Mailbox: in Liberal Arts 101.

Office Hours: Tuesday 2.00-3.00, Thursday 8.30-9.30, and by appointment

Email: ruth.vanita@umontana.edu

Texts

1. Coursepack and photocopied materials
2. Stanley Wolpert, *India* (University of Calif. Press, 2009)
3. R.K.Narayan, translated & abridged, *The Ramayana* (Penguin Classics, 2006)

If any text is out of stock at the bookstore, order it from Amazon

Learning Outcomes

- (a) Acquire some basic information about the history, culture, religions, literature, cinema, politics and economy of South Asia, with a primary focus on India
- (b) Develop a basic understanding of the relationship between this part of the world and other parts of the world

Requirements

- (a) attend classes regularly. More than three absences not explained to my satisfaction will result in halving your grade for attendance and class participation, and more than four absences will result in a zero for attendance; leaving early or coming late without explanation will be treated as an absence. Explanations (preferably in advance of the absence) must be backed up with documentation, communicated to me in person and accepted by me.
- (b) keep up with the assigned reading, bring the text to class, and participate in discussion;
- (c) give me a thoughtful **typed** question or comment at the end of every class on the text that is to be discussed in class that day. Handwritten questions will not receive credit. Attendance may sometimes be given on the basis of these questions. **If you are ever unable to hand in a question, it is your responsibility to tell me this and to have yourself marked present.**

(d) take the mid-term exam, all quizzes, and complete all assignments. Quizzes on texts and lectures will be given in class; they may be given according to schedule or unexpectedly. Quizzes can be made up within the week (not more than twice in the semester), but not later.

(e) Check UM email regularly, especially the day before class. I send out notifications and changes by email. UM policy forbids me to write to you on any email address other than the UM one. The best way to communicate with me is by email.

Grades

Class attendance and participation will be worth 20%, typed questions/comments 10%, quizzes 50%, the mid-term exam 20%

Quizzes will be given at the start of class. Therefore, you need to be on time to take them. **In addition to the specified texts, quizzes will also contain questions on information supplied in class lectures.** Quizzes may contain both multiple-choice type questions and short answer questions and are designed to test (a) whether you have read the prescribed texts (b) whether you remember basic facts about the text as well as information communicated in class lectures and movies.

Plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind, in any assignment, will result in your failing the class and may also result in other penalties such as expulsion from the University (for further details, refer to the section on Academic Misconduct in the Student Conduct Code).

If you take this course to fulfill General Education requirements or for the Liberal Studies major, the Asian Studies option or the South and South-East Asian Studies minor, you cannot take it Credit/No Credit, and you must earn a C minus to pass.

If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, that will make it difficult for you to complete the work as I have outlined it, please notify me in the first week of class.

Reading Schedule

This schedule is tentative. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with any changes. Readings indicated for a certain class are to be read in advance of that class, e.g. come to class on August 30, having read Chapter 1 of Wolpert and the indicated photocopies

August 28 Explanation of syllabus, and introduction to the course.

August 30 Read Wolpert, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-23) and course pack, "Geography of South Asia" & "Languages of South Asia"

- September 4 Read Wolpert, pp. 23-38 and course pack, “Hymns from the Rigveda,” “The Hindu Motif” and “The Trimurti.”
Quiz on the readings of August 30
- September 6 Read Wolpert, pp. 38-67 (Westernization and Colonialism), and pp. 75-77 (Mother Goddess Worship).
- September 11 Read Wolpert, pp. 68-75, and course pack, “The Worship of Sri Lakshmi,” and “Saraswati in Later Hinduism”
- September 13 Read Wolpert, pp. 77-93; course pack, “Jainism.”
Quiz on the readings of September 4-11
- September 18 Read Wolpert, pp. 93-100 (Islam in India)
- September 20 Read Wolpert, pp. 100-08 (Sikhism)
Quiz on Islam in India
- September 25 Read Wolpert, 110-125 (Society); course pack, “The Speaking Tree: Introduction” and “The Kayasthas in the Perspective of Early Medieval Society.”
- September 27 Read *The Ramayana*, pp. xxiii-xxv; 3-50.
- October 4 Read *The Ramayana*, pp. 50-105.
- October 9 Read *The Ramayana*, pp. 106-57.
Quiz on the *Ramayana*
- October 11 Movie on Sri Lanka
- October 16 **Mid-term exam**
- October 18 Guest lecture by Prof. Ranjan Shreshtha on Nepal.
- October 23 Read Wolpert, pp. 125-40; course pack, “The Cabuliwallah” from *A Tagore Reader*
- October 25 Cinema
Quiz on the readings of October 18 and 23
- October 30 Read Wolpert, pp. 140-146 (Urban life).
- November 1 Read course pack: “Non-violence” from Mahatma Gandhi’s *Selected Writings*

- November 6 **Election Day**
- November 8 Guest lecture by Prof. Bradley Clough on Tibet. **Quiz on the readings of October 26 and 28**
- November 13 Read Wolpert, 147-56 (art, dance, drama, music), and course pack, "Siddheshwari: A Bird of Paradise"
- November 15 Read Wolpert, 163-80 (architecture and literature); Vijay Dan Detha "Two Lives," Mahadevi Varma, "Lachhma," Poems by Vikram Seth: "The They" and "The Comfortable Classes at Work and Play"
Quiz on the readings of November 13 & 15
- November 20 No class. Am giving a talk in New York
- November 22 **Thanksgiving**
- November 18 Movie: "Tales of the Night Fairies"
- November 27 Movie continues. Discussion of movie.
- November 29 General lecture on food and clothing
- December 4 Read Wolpert, 180-86, "Scientific Contributions."
- December 6 Conclusion **Repeat Quiz**