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Fall 9-1-2001

### LS 161L.80: Introduction to Asian Humanities

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Fall 2001

**LS 161 Hons, Introduction to Asian Humanities**  
**Dr. Ruth Vanita**

Tuesday, Thursday, 11.10 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

3 credits. Room: DHC 120

Office: Liberal Arts 146A. Office Phone: 243-4894

Email: rvanita@selway.umt.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday 10-11 a.m., and by appointment.

**Required Texts**

1. The Mahabharata translated by C. V. Narasimhan (NY: Columbia University Press, 1997).
2. Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu trans. Victor H. Mair (NY: Bantam, 1990).
3. Photocopied course materials.

**Recommended reading** (on reserve in the Mansfield Library):

4. Rhoads Murphey, A History of Asia (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, NY: Longman, 2000).

**Requirements**

Students are required to

- (a) attend classes regularly. Excessive unexplained absences (more than two) will result in a zero for attendance and class participation;
- (b) keep up with the assigned reading, bring the text to class, participate in discussion, do the assignments, and take the quizzes.
- (c) Two feature films will be shown in the evening. Attendance is required.
- (d) Make a five to ten minute class presentation on any one text. This presentation should be in the nature of a response to the text and should raise questions for discussion.
- (e) Write two papers ( 5-6 pages) due October 30 and December 13 respectively. A title and abstract of each paper is to be given to me, in advance (see below for dates) and approved by me before the paper is written.
- (f) The 2001 Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies is being held at the University of Montana, October 18-20. Programs will be available in the Liberal Studies office. You can attend any panel or the keynote address and write a short response for extra credit.

**Grades**

Class attendance and participation will be worth 20%, the class presentation 10%, quizzes and other assignments 20%, and the two papers 50% of the grade.

If you miss a quiz or test, it can be made up later with my permission but except in the case of proven emergency, such late taking of tests will result in a decreased grade.

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 announced in class.**

- September 4 Introduction
- September 6 Read Hymns from the Rigveda, extracts from the Upanishads and Katha Upanishad.
- September 11 Read "The Hindu Motif" and "Commentary."
- September 13 Read The Speaking Tree: "The Caste System."
- September 18 Read "Buddhism," "Jainism," (pp. 30-33), and "Therigatha."
- September 20 Read extract from Chitrarekha Gupta, The Kayasthas, and extracts from Folktales from India.
- September 25 Read pages xv-xx (in the Introduction) and pages 35-43 of The Mahabharata.
- September 27 Read pages 50-57, 72-75, 91-92, 110-112, 120 of The Mahabharata. Quiz on parts of The Mahabharata covered so far.
- October 2 Read extracts from The Bhagvadgita.
- October 4 Read pages 138-140, 144-145, 156-159, 162-166, 172-175 of The Mahabharata.
- October 9 Read pages 186-189, 205-214 of The Mahabharata. Quiz on remaining portions of the The Mahabharata and Bhagvadgita.
- October 11 Read Tao Te Ching, pages 3-55.
- October 16 Read Tao Te Ching, pages 59-105. **Hand in title of paper, in class.** Short film in class.
- October 18 Read "Hindu Goddesses," pp. 43-61.
- October 23 Read The Ramayana (pp. 141-155). Quiz on The Ramayana. **Hand in one-paragraph abstract of paper, in class.**
- October 25 Read "Vaishnavism" and Shiva Purana: The Birth of Ganesha.
- October 30 Read extracts from Three Chinese Poets. **Paper due, in class.**

November 1 Read extracts from As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams (pp. 156-171).

November 6 Read extracts from Rumi: Poet and Mystic.

November 8 Read “History of Janabai” and Poems by Women Mystics.

November 13 Read Extracts from writings of Mahatma Gandhi.

November 15 Read “The Miracle” and Mahadevi Varma, “Lachhma.” **Hand in title of paper.**

November 20. A film will be shown. Rashomon

Thanksgiving Break

November 27 Read Artha. A film will be shown in the evening. Pather Panchali, in Room LA 202, 6-9 p.m. **Hand in one-paragraph abstract of paper.**

November 29 Hand in short response to any one of the films.

December 4 Read “The Cabuliwallah.”

December 6 Read “Off the Beaten Track.”

December 11 Read Poems by Vikram Seth.

December 13. Conclusion. **Paper due, in class.**