

Literature Institute

Study Guide

LIT 533 Indian Literature

Instructions for the Study Guide: Please use the questions to develop a deeper understanding of the text and to review the concepts. As you read, consider the questions. Keeping careful notes or a journal will help you prepare to write the essays at the end of each section as well as the final essay. Your required and supplemental readings can be found in the "Readings" file.

Instructions for Essays: Please write a 1,250 – 1,500 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

Instructions for Final Essay: Please write a 5,000 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

Required Texts

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

UNIT/ WEEKS	AUTHOR / WORK	INTRODUCTION
I		Ancient Literature
1-3		
Overview	Ancient Indian Literature	
Scripture	Vedic Literature	<p>Vedic literature refers to the earliest texts found in India, four books written in the Sanskrit language. Together they contain the basis for the Hindu religion. The four books are the Rig Veda (or Rgveda), Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. The earliest of the four was the Rig Veda, probably first composed about 1500 BC, and codified between about 1200 and 800 BC, based on linguistic examination of the Sanskrit.</p> <p>Some scholars such as Stephan Levitt, however, believe the Rig Veda may be even older, with some hymns written as early as the fourth millennium BC. Levitt bases this on comparative similarities between the veda and documents from Mesopotamia. http://archaeology.about.com/od/vterms/g/vedic.htm</p>
	Comparative Literature: Sun deities	<p>Egyptian Hymns It should not be too surprising that the sun figures prominently in ancient religions and literature. After all, it was not just the source of light, but also the fundamental measure of time, which gave humans the ability to organize experience, and to form a sense of history. Both the Rig Veda and Egyptian Hymns incorporate the sun and sun deities. What do they say about the nature of time and life? How does time as a cycle compare with time as linear?</p>
	Comparative Literature: Creation	<p>Hebrew Scriptures. Breathing and breath are central to Indian beliefs and spiritual practice. They form the cornerstone of meditation, and the idea of breath is considered to be generative and necessary to maintain balance. How do Hebrew scriptures resonate with the ideas contained in the Rig Veda? How are the characteristics of breath related to creation, justice, and the divine?</p>
	Comparative Literature:	<p>Homer <i>The Odyssey</i></p>

	Gods and Storms	Gods in Homer and in the Rig Veda have the power to influence human behavior, even history. Their role is that of intervention, but not through direct control of thought. Instead, the gods often control the environment, and thus influence the behaviors of mortals. One of the most striking and dramatic ways that the gods influenced the context and conditions of human existence (and decision-making) is through the weather. How does weather function in the Rig Veda and what are the consequences of the decisions that people make? How is the notion of karma expressed and how does it differ from fate (as in Homer)?
	Theme:	Creation, justice, breath.
Epic Poetry	The Ramayana	<p>The Ramayana is one of the two great Indian epics, the other being the Mahabharata. The Ramayana tells about life in India around 1000 BCE and offers models in dharma. The hero, Rama, lived his whole life by the rules of dharma; in fact, that was why Indians consider him heroic. When Rama was a young boy, he was the perfect son. Later he was an ideal husband to his faithful wife, Sita, and a responsible ruler of Ayodhya. "Be as Rama," young Indians have been taught for 2,000 years; "Be as Sita."</p> <p>The original Ramayana was a 24,000 couplet-long epic poem attributed to the Sanskrit poet Valmiki. Oral versions of Rama's story circulated for centuries, and the epic was probably first written down sometime around the start of the Common Era. It has since been told, retold, translated and transcended throughout South and Southeast Asia, and the Ramayana continues to be performed in dance, drama, puppet shows, songs and movies all across Asia.</p>
	Comparative Literature: The epic hero	<p>Homer <i>The Odyssey</i></p> <p>Both the Odyssey of Homer and the Ramayana contain epic heroes who travel far from home. However, the reasons for their wandering are quite different. For Rama, the quest or ultimate goal is to follow the rules of dharma. In the Odyssey, the mortals are often tricked by gods and/or forced to act in certain ways in order to return home. How does heroism differ?</p>
	Comparative Literature: Piety vs. dharma	<p>Virgil <i>The Aeneid</i></p> <p>In Roman society, "pietas" (piety) denoted a respect for the responsibilities to other people, gods and entities (such as the state) and he understood his place in society with respect to others. In some ways pietas might be perceived as similar to dharma, or sacred duty. However, there are subtle differences -- in many ways, dharma transcends the sense of place or contexts. What are the core differences between Rama and Aeneas</p>
	Comparative Literature: Power of the weather and elements	<p>Shakespeare <i>The Tempest</i></p> <p>Prospero has power over the elements thanks to his books of spells, which are considered profane (or secular) vs. the religious and sacred. In contrast, in other works of literature and in wisdom texts, only the gods had mastery over the elements. What are the differences?</p>
	Idea:	Dharma and fate.
Epic Poetry	The Mahabharata	A Sanskrit epic principally concerning the dynastic struggle and civil war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas in the kingdom of Kurukshetra about the 9th century b.c., and containing the text of the Bhagavad-Gita, numerous subplots, and interpolations on theology, morals, and statecraft.
	Comparative Literature: The ideal warrior	<p>Homer <i>The Iliad</i></p> <p>Both <i>The Iliad</i> and <i>The Mahabharata</i> contain scenes and stories of heroes and heroic sacrifice. However, the stakes are somewhat different because the view of life and the individual varies so much, due to a foundational difference in beliefs about the nature of the human being. In the view of reality presented in <i>The Mahabharata</i>, all beings are considered to be reincarnations from a previous incarnation. Their fate in this life has been</p>

determined by behaviors in previous lifetimes. Thus, there is an attenuated sense of individual will and freedom of choice. In the case of Greek philosophy, individual behavior and choice does matter because it determines one's fate in the here and now, as well as in the afterlife. Further, in ancient Greek lives, there is no karmic holdover from previous lives – although there is active meddling by the gods. How do the two views of life and existence shape your response to the narratives?

Comparative Literature: Aeschylus
The Oresteia. Early civilizations used literature to depict a history and evolution of their society and the mores and cultural values that accompanied them. In the case of the ancient Greeks, loyalties were to the group and to family alliances. When the lines were so clearly defined, it was very easy to envision how and why revenge became a necessary requisite of honor and honor codes. In Indian literature, the allegiance is to the present situation and people, but there is also a sense of time past and time future – the functioning of karma and the obligation to dharma, which effectively supercede the issues surrounding family honor and alliance.

Theme: Epic; dynastic struggle.

Scripture ***Bhagavad-Gita*** A sacred Hindu text that is incorporated into the Mahabharata and takes the form of a philosophical dialogue in which Krishna instructs the prince Arjuna in ethical matters and the nature of God.

Comparative Literature: Ethical and spiritual issues relating to suffering Hebrew Scriptures
 The Hebrew Scriptures often lead to uncomfortable reading. The ethical and spiritual issues relating to suffering, as well as the deep questioning of the relationship between God and humanity can be difficult reading. If you read the Hebrew scriptures and then move to reading the Bhagavad-Gita, a few questions may come to mind. How is the relationship of God (or the gods) different if you believe in reincarnation? What is the role of the Hebrew God if you do not believe in reincarnation? If you believe in reincarnation, what is the role of Krishna in your life? What do you ask Krishna to do? Reality is not an absolute, thanks to interpenetrating time and the presence of echoes of karma.

Comparative Literature: The concept of the warrior-hero Homer
The Iliad
 Homer is a hero for his group / tribe. Arjuna, in contrast, is a kind of time-warrior. What are the implications of reincarnation / karma / dharma? The behaviors are inflected by previous lives (karma) and duty for the future (dharma) not just for yourself, but for all other sentient beings, who are assumed to be connected to you.

Comparative Literature: Chikamatsu Monzaemon
The Love Suicides at Amijima
 The pursuit of a higher set of values complicates allegiances to kin and obligations to the rule of law. Star-crossed lovers are not unusual in literature. The suicide of the jilted or betrayed lover is not unusual, either. However, the ways in which suicide and love are depicted in literature can vary. For example, the lovers in Monzaemon's story crave dying together. Is that a concept that would be found in the Bhagavad-Gita? How or why? Why not? Essentially the idea of self and sacrifice are heightened when individuals prefer suicide to doing things that would destabilize the order of things – the structure of their society / culture.

Unit Essay E1. Identify three works that illustrate the values of the warrior-hero.

II Middle Period

4-6

Overview Middle Period

Lyric ***Tamil Anthologies*** A selection of almost three hundred poems from five of the earliest poetic

Poetry		anthologies of classical Tamil literature. Dating from the first three centuries A.D., the poems are of two types: <i>akam</i> , or interior, poems that view life from inside the family and concern the love between man and woman, and <i>puram</i> , or exterior, poems that view life from outside the family and concern such topics as kings, heroism in battle, ethics, and the life of wandering bards and poets.
	Comparative Literature: Chivalry and other concerns	Courtly Love Lyrics deal with the external expression of love, while the Tamil verses are intimate, and they express a fundamental resignation to one's fate. How are the two stances or approaches to self-expression indicative of how individualism is either encouraged or suppressed?
	Comparative Literature: Depictions of warrior culture	Beowulf is a narrative riddled with monsters, internal as well as external. It is a story that concerns itself with the boundary between chaos and order, absolute "churn" and smooth, organized transition. It is clear that the mindset of the authors reflects a civilization that perceives itself to live on the very edge of a precipice; consciousness perched on the edge of an abyss. Do the poems in the Tamil anthology reflect such a sense of imminent danger or menace (both from external and from internal sources)?
Author	Kalidasa	An Indian poet and dramatist, Kalidasa lived sometime between the reign of Agnimitra, the second Shunga king (c. 170 BC) who was the hero of one of his dramas, and the Aihole inscription of AD 634 which praises Kalidasa's poetic skills. Most scholars now associate him with the reign of Candra Gupta II (reigned c. 380-c. 415). Little is known about Kalidasa's life. According to legend, the poet was known for his beauty which brought him to the attention of a princess who married him. However, as legend has it, Kalidasa had grown up without much education, and the princess was ashamed of his ignorance and coarseness. A devoted worshipper of the goddess Kali (his name means literally Kali's slave), Kalidasa is said to have called upon his goddess for help and was rewarded with a sudden and extraordinary gift of wit. He is then said to have become the most brilliant of the "nine gems" at the court of the fabulous king Vikramaditya of Ujjain. Legend also has it that he was murdered by a courtesan in Sri Lanka during the reign of Kumaradasa.
Drama	Shakuntala	Kalidasa's <i>Sakuntala</i> is the best-known Sanskrit drama, and widely considered a masterpiece. It is based on an episode from the <i>Mahabharata</i> (book 1, ch. 62-69), though Kalidasa takes significant liberties in his version.
	Comparative Literature:	Euripides <i>Medea</i> Explorations of "the woman scorned"
	Comparative Literature:	Sophocles <i>Oedipus Rex</i> Machiavelli <i>The Prince</i> The study of a king whose power makes him deny his human weaknesses
	Unit Essay	E2. Discuss warrior-culture and the chivalry in the works in this unit.

III

Early Modern India

7-9

Overview	Early Mughal Empire	In 1526 Delhi was conquered by the Mughals (Muslims of Mongol-Turkish heritage from central Asia). The Mughals were led by Babur (1483-1530), a Turkish descendent of Tamerlane and Genghis Khan who declared himself Sultan. Although the Mughal forces were considerably smaller than the Sultan of Delhi's forces, their victory was attained through a strategic use of firearms and heavy artillery, with which they were later able to conquer and unify most of the subcontinent under one government. A total of four generations of Babur's family would rule during the Mughal period. Babur's grandson, Akbar (r. 1556-1605), who was considered India's greatest imperial ruler (badshah),
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commanded one of the most significant gunpowder empires of the early modern period. Akbar expanded the empire to include the Deccan Plateau and the Northern independent states, reorganized its political structure (including taxes) with individualized ministries, built new cities, and provided generous patronage for the arts. At its height in the sixteenth century, the Mughal empire had a population of 100 to 150 million. Enormous wealth, made possible by a growing international trade in textiles, led to the flowering of Mughal art (especially architecture and miniature painting) under the influence of Persian culture. Akbar's grandson Shah Jahan (r. 1628-1658) commissioned magnificent palaces, mosques, and garden tombs, including one of the most beautiful buildings in the world, the Taj Mahal. Throughout the Mughal period, conflicts erupted between the various religious and ethnic groups, but Akbar encouraged social and religious tolerance and incorporated Hindus (the majority population) into his administration. The traditional Islamic social structure was maintained at court but the Hindu populace followed its traditional caste system. However, the Mughal empire began to decline as the last emperor, Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707), a doctrinaire Muslim, exacerbated religious tensions by taxing the Hindu populace, destroying Hindu temples, and depleting the empire's resources through his extensive military campaigns. The significance of the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498 would only be felt fully in the seventeenth century when India began to fall under the domination of Europeans (the British Raj).
<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/worldlit/default.asp?b=3&c=cultureandcontext&r=India>

Religious Poetry ***Indian Devotional Poetry***

Comparative Literature: St. Augustine
The Confessions
 Demonstration the supremacy of the deity, discussing grace

Comparative Literature: Ibn Hazm
 The Dove's Necklace
 Different types of love

Comparative Literature: Fantasy John Donne
 Poems
 Andrew Marvell
 "To His Coy Mistress"
 Intense for the divine within the self

Theme Love and deities

Overview Late Mughal Empire The Mughal Empire in India lasted from 1526 to 1858. The Mughal dynasty was established by able Muslim rulers who came from the present day Uzbekistan. The Mughal rule in India saw the country being united as one single unit and being administered under one single powerful ruler. During the Mughal period, art and architecture flourished and many beautiful monuments were constructed. The rulers were skillful warriors and admirers of art as well.

Author ***Ramprasad Sen*** "Ramprasad Sen (raamaprasaad sen) Kabira~njan belonged to Kumarhatta, a place about 25 miles from Calcutta up the Hooghly. His Vidyasundar was written some time in the sixth or seventh decade of the [eighteenth] century. The influence of Bharatchandra (bhaaratachandra) is clearly noticeable. In style and characterization Ramprasad is inferior to his predecessor but in poetic fancy he is undoubtedly superior. Ramprasad's humour is less objectionable. His other works include Kalikirttan and the fragmentary Krishnakirttan. These poems were written in the form of the 'Pancali' style that was developing from the older 'Kirttan'.

There are a number of very popular devotional songs of the Mother Goddess [Kali] bearing the signature of Ramprasad. The simple and appealing melody associated with the songs is also attributed to the poet who is looked upon as a saint. But this melody and the songs pertaining to it may have been the work of another Ramprasad (a Brahman) belonging to Calcutta who was reputed as a composer of 'Kabi' songs. This Ramprasad was a younger

contemporary of the first (who was a Vaidya). The songs are purely devotional, being appeals to God the Mother, couched in the words of a wayward but repentant child. ... The sentiments evoked by the songs are a combination of homely affection and pure devotion and therefore their appeal is irresistible." (excerpted from History of Bengali Literature; Sukumar Sen; Sahitya Akademi; 1960, Pp.155-156)

http://www.parabaas.com/translation/database/authors/texts/ramprasad_sen.html

Lyric Poetry	Poems	The mystical tradition / devotion
	Comparative Literature:	Rabindranath Tagore "The Hungry Stones" Authors turned to folklore found in rural areas in order to establish a connection to traditional cultural values and beliefs.
	Comparative Literature:	William Blake. "Songs of Experience" Blake and Sen both focus on the ways in which appearances deceive, and that the way that one perceives shapes one's approach to the divine.
	Comparative Literature:	Adrienne Rich. "Diving Into the Wreck" Rich's poem parallels Sen's "Now Cry Kali and Take the Plunge" in which the individual is urged to dive into the collective unconscious and discover elements about oneself and the whole of existence.
	Idea:	Appearances deceive; transcendent knowledge; the quest for truth

IV 10-15 Modern Indian Literature

10-12

Overview Nineteen Century

Author Ghalib
Mirza Asadullah Khan (the pseudonym Ghalib means superior) was court poet to the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, and also the last great classical and the first modern poet of India. Urdu literature enjoyed a great flowering after Aurangzeb's death, but the Muslim conquest was undone by foreign invasion, religious intolerance, British imperialism, ineffective Mughal rulers and the 1857 Mutiny. Ghalib was born in 1797 at Agra, son a high-ranking army officer and descendent of the ancient Seljuq kings. At 13 he married a daughter of a Mughal nobleman and moved to Delhi. He enjoyed titles and annuities from the Moghul court, but was never far from poverty. On personal matters, Ghalib maintained an aristocratic reserve, and his life is not well known. Though now a household name on the subcontinent, he died in Delhi in 1869, stone-deaf and with achievements largely unrecognized.
<http://www.poetry-portal.com/poets16.html>

Lyric Poetry Poems
Ghalib's poetry is full of intense grief and yearning — for an earlier love affair, death of an adopted son, for the disappearance of court life and a world of beauty and reflection. His period was one of political, religious and intellectual controversy, when oriental concepts were invaded by western rationalism, and the poetry is not primarily one of feeling but of sensuous expression of an uniquely perceptive, original and synthesizing mind. In this sense, Ghalib is a contemporary, and he employed many of the techniques of western modernism. In their different ways, Mir, Nazir and Ghalib are the masters of Urdu poetry, and if Ghalib's life was not a happy one, the same was largely true of other Urdu poets: Atish, Siraj, Daud, Mir, Insha, Bahadur Shah, and Zauq. <http://www.poetry-portal.com/poets16.html>

Comparative Literature:
Dante.
The Divine Comedy.
Terza rima
Alexander Pope.

		<p><i>Essay on Man.</i> Heroic Couplet Basho <i>Narrow Road through the Backcountry</i> Haiku The structure of Ghalib's poetry is the <i>ghazal</i>, which is a form of lyric poetry composed of three to seven couplets following a strict metrical pattern and rhyme scheme of aa ba ca. The other authors listed also followed a strict metrical pattern and rhyme scheme. Compare and contrast them.</p>
	Comparative Literature:	<p>John Keats. <i>Ode to a Nightingale.</i> Rilke. <i>Duino Elegies.</i> The works of Keats, Rilke, and Ghalib deal with the intensity of desire and longing.</p>
	Theme:	Ghazal: Poetry of grief / longing
Author	Tagore	<p>Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was the youngest son of Debendranath Tagore, a leader of the Brahmo Samaj, which was a new religious sect in nineteenth-century Bengal and which attempted a revival of the ultimate monistic basis of Hinduism as laid down in the Upanishads. He was educated at home; and although at seventeen he was sent to England for formal schooling, he did not finish his studies there. In his mature years, in addition to his many-sided literary activities, he managed the family estates, a project which brought him into close touch with common humanity and increased his interest in social reforms. He also started an experimental school at Shantiniketan where he tried his Upanishadic ideals of education. From time to time he participated in the Indian nationalist movement, though in his own non-sentimental and visionary way; and Gandhi, the political father of modern India, was his devoted friend. Tagore was knighted by the ruling British Government in 1915, but within a few years he resigned the honour as a protest against British policies in India. http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1913/tagore-bio.html</p>
Lyric Poetry	Poems	<p>Tagore's poetry stems from his love of nature, and commitment to a universalist philosophy which seeks to see God through personal service. Tagore was also influenced by The Upanishads, India's ancient scriptures.</p>
	Comparative Literature:	<p>E.T.A. Hoffmann "The Mines of Falun" Both Tagore and Hoffmann describe dangerous attractions – one to the night palace, and another to the mine. They reflect the presence of destructive psychological forces.</p>
	Comparative Literature:	<p>Goethe <i>Faust</i> In Tagore's story, Satish is divided psychologically. His conflict is between Western intellectualism and Eastern spirituality. There is a parallel with Goethe's Faust. What are the outcomes?</p>
	Comparative Literature:	<p>Joseph Conrad <i>Heart of Darkness.</i> Like Kurtz in <i>Heart of Darkness</i>, Satish is an unusual character. There are parallels between his behavior and that of Kurtz in Conrad's work. What are the similarities and the differences?</p>
	Theme:	Psychological depths / spiritual darkness
13-15		
Overview	Twentieth Century	
Author	Rokeye Sakhawat Hossain	Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain was born into a Bengali Muslim upper-class family

in the small village of Pairaband in the district of Rangpur, north of present day Bangladesh, then a part of the colonial British province of Bengal Presidency. Her date of birth is not known. However, a nephew of hers posits Dec. 9, 1880.

Her mother was Rahatunnessa Sabera Chowdhurani, the first of four wives. Not much is known of her except that she strictly followed purdah as Rokeya mentioned in dedicating to her *The Secluded Ones*, some humorous essays that expose some ridiculous consequences of the practice of Purdah. Her father was Zahiruddin Mohammad Abu Ali Saber, a well-educated, influential landowner whose massive estate was a stronghold for the traditional way of life. Rokeya had two brothers (Abul Asad Ibrahim Saber and Khalilur Rahman Abu Jaigam Saber) and two sisters (Karimunessa and Humaira). Being boys, her brothers were first educated at home (as was the tradition) then sent to St. Xavier's, one of Calcutta's most prestigious colleges. Rokeya and her sisters only received traditional education at home. As it was the tradition in high-class Muslim families, girls learned to read Arabic (so as to be able to read the Koran) and Urdu (in order to read the popular books on "feminine" conduct). They were kept from learning Bengali and English precisely because they were spoken by non-Muslims as well. This was one way of keeping these women from being "contaminated" by the radical ideas from outside their religio-economic group. Going against the grain, Rokeya's oldest brother, who was exposed to Western education, was in favor of educating women. He secretly taught Rokeya English and Bengali at home. She was a Bengali Muslim writer and feminist activist who founded the first Muslim girls' school in Calcutta in 1911. <http://english.emory.edu/Bahri/Hossain.html>

Fiction	<i>Sultana's Dream</i>	<p>"Sultana's Dream" was originally published in English in The Indian Ladies Magazine of Madras, and is considered part of Bengali literature. It depicts a feminist utopia in which women run everything and men are secluded, in a mirror-image of the traditional practice of purdah. The women are aided by science fictionesque "electrical" technology which enables labourless farming and flying cars. This results in a place where the roles are reversed and the men are locked away in a technologically advanced future. Crime is eliminated, since men were responsible for all of it. The workday is only two hours long, since men used to waste six hours of each day in smoking. The religion is one of love and truth, rather than any traditional faith with a history of denying the rights of women.</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sultana%27s_Dream</p>
	Comparative Literature: Women's lives	<p>Virginia Woolf <i>A Room of One's Own</i> How would life be different if women had their own space? Hossain does not focus on women writers, but she does look at the way that women's lives might be different if they had freedom, autonomy, and a sense of identity. What does each author say about the ideal world for a woman? What are the problems that each identifies? According to the authors, how does the world restrict / constrict women?</p>
	Comparative Literature: Social Critique	<p>Francis Bacon <i>The New Atlantis</i> Utopian literature is used to criticize social institutions. Science is held out as the great opportunity to open doors and to facilitate positive change. However, Bacon and Hossain lived in very different times, and their ideas about how to accomplish an ideal world were quite different. Bacon looked a education and "merchants of light" who would spread the news / word. In contast, Hossain looks at fundamental changes in the social order. Which one makes more sense to you? Why? How?</p>
	Theme:	Women's lives; utopian visions. Satirical visions of society.
	Idea:	Education has been at the center of ideas about socialist reform
Author	<i>R. K. Narayan</i>	<p>R. K. Narayan (Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan) , 1906-2001, Indian novelist, b. Madras (now Chennai). Narayan, who wrote in English, published his first novel, Swami and Friends, in 1935. While he wrote hundreds of short stories for the Madras newspaper Hindu, he first came to international</p>

attention when his works were hailed in England by Graham Greene. His humorous novel *The Financial Expert* (1952) was the first of his works published in the United States. Frequently set in the fictional town of Malgudi, many of Narayan's 14 novels and numerous stories provide exquisitely crafted, witty, vital, and perceptive descriptions of everyday village life in S India. His fiction often deals with the protagonist's search for identity. Narayan's major works, usually centering around a modest hero and containing portraits of a variety of eccentrics, include *The English Teacher*, also known as *Grateful to Life and Death* (1945), *The Printer of Malgudi* (1949), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* (1961), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), *The Painter of Signs* (1976), and *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983). Among his short-story collections are *Malgudi Days* (1982) and *The Grandmother's Tale and Selected Stories* (1994).
http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/R_K_Narayan.aspx

Fiction ***A Horse and Two Goats*** First published in the Madras, India, newspaper *The Hindu* in 1960, "A Horse and Two Goats" did not achieve a wide international audience until 1970 when it became the title story of R. K. Narayan's seventh collection of short stories, *A Horse and Two Goats and Other Stories*. It reached an even wider audience in 1985 when it was included in *Under the Banyan Tree*, Narayan's tenth and best-selling collection. By this time Narayan was well established as one of the most prominent Indian authors writing in English in the twentieth century. The story presents a comic dialogue between Muni, a poor Tamil-speaking villager, and a wealthy English-speaking businessman from New York. They are engaged in a conversation in which neither can understand the other's language. With gentle humor, Narayan explores the conflicts between rich and poor, and between Indian and Western culture. <http://www.enotes.com/a-horse-and-two-goats>

Comparative Literature: Cross-cultural misunderstandings Chinua Achebe
Things Fall Apart
 Achebe, in his essay "An Image of Africa," argues that the critical factor in stories is the point of view. In "A Horse and Two Goats," it is clear that there are very different views and perspectives, to the point that reality for one person is completely different than for the other. How does the narrative reveal assumptions made on each side of the misunderstanding? How does language play a role? What are the core issues?

Comparative Literature: Travel Narratives and colonialism Jonathan Swift
Gulliver's Travels
 William Shakespeare
The Tempest
 We might consider "A Horse and Two Goats" to be an illustrative travel novel; it illustrates the collision of cultures and the way that travel brings different worldviews in contact with each other, often with humorous consequences. For Swift, the travel narrative functions as an extended allegory that criticizes the political situation. For Shakespeare, the encounters of Caliban and Prospero bring to mind the notion of a "noble savage." In the case of Narayan, there is no possibility of a "noble savage" because the savage in the story is the one that is mercenary and motivated by self-interest. What are other observations that you can make about the nature of the collision?

Theme: Cultural encounters

Author ***Anita Desai*** Indian novelist and short story writer, especially noted for her sensitive portrayal of the inner life of her female characters. Several of Desai's novels explore tensions between family members and the alienation of middle-class women. In her later novels Desai has dealt with such themes as German anti-Semitism, the demise of traditions, and Western stereotypical views of India.

Anita Desai was born in Mussoorie, a hill station north of Delhi, as the daughter of a D.N. Mazumdar, a Bengali businessman, and the former Toni Nime, of German origin. She began to write in English at the age of seven, and published her first story at the age of nine. Desai was educated in Delhi at Queen Mary's Higher Secondary School and Miranda House, Delhi University, where she received in 1957 a B.A. in English literature. In the following year

she married Ashvin Desai, a businessman; they had four children.
<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/desai.htm>

The Farewell Party

She is drawn to postcolonial themes, including the role of women within the larger social and cultural changes occurring in her country. Her fiction often centers on women from urban and somewhat Westernized middle-class Indian families who are troubled by conflicts between the cultures, the generations, and the sexes.

Comparative Literature:
Changes in the role of women

Rabindranath Tagore
"Broken Ties"
Rokeya Hossain
"Sultana's Dream"
Desai uses Bina's situation as a way to comment on the place of women in middle-class Indian culture. Her view is different than that of Tagore and Hossain, who depict women in very different circumstances. In "The Farewell Party," there is an essential human tragedy at the core of the narrative; it is made all the more poignant by the fact that Bina has lived in isolation. In Tagore and Hossain, the women are also isolated, but it is in a different manner. How? Do the works suggest significant changes in the role of women? When and where?

Comparative Literature:
Satire

Petronius
The Satyricon
Desai take a very cynical approach to the situation of Bina and her child. However, somewhere in the middle of the story, the cynicism moves into a kind-hearted empathy, which generates true pathos. She is satirical, but the satire is used to penetrate the false fronts that people construct to make themselves seem invulnerable. Petronius takes a different approach to satire. How is it different?

Theme:

Clash of cultures; alienation

Overview

Crossing Cultures,
The Example of India

Cultural hybridity: cross-cultural literature takes many forms.

Mohandas K. Gandhi

Autobiography

R.K. Narayan
A Horse and Two Goats:
Cross-cultural encounters

What made Gandhi unique is that he approached cultural misunderstandings with a philosophy of non-violence. It was impressive; yet, one may criticize the attitude of victimhood that Gandhi seemed to posit as the only viable response to racist or "groupist" policies. However, if one looks closely at Narayan, there is an amazing insight into the nature of human relations. The perspective of "win-win" and cheerful self-interest effectively nullifies any impulse toward martyrdom or a sensibility of victimhood. It is refreshing – describe the differences.

Salman Rushdie
Imaginary Homelands
Identity in a changing world

It is not easy to leave one's homeland. It's even more difficult to be a part of a diaspora, which is to say a part of a mass exodus from a homeland, when the need to leave is not motivated by simple business opportunity, but by the sense that one is existentially threatened in the place where they're living. How does one's motivation or reason for leaving one's homeland have an effect on their sense of self and/or identity? Discuss / compare / contrast Rushdie and Gandhi.

Bharati Mukherjee
A Wife's Story
Culture Clash

How does "The Wife's Story" shape itself in terms of a constructivist notion of self and identity? In other words, how does Mukherjee suggest through her writing that it's possible to look at change / a new country as a platform upon which one allows one to metamorphose – not once, not twice, but as many times as it takes to become the kind of person one wants to be. Dreams are attainable. At least, this is the hope / promise that Mukherjee holds out. Does Gandhi's viewpoint align with this approach? What are the limits / limitations of each approach to life? Which is more attractive to you – Gandhi? Mukherjee? Explain.

Unit Essay

E4. Find examples in the works in this course of cultural encounters and cross-cultural clashes and discuss them.

V

Finals

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Review, Annotated Bibliography, Research Paper

Final Essay

FE1. In the works in this course, the tenets of different religious traditions often figure into the actions and the attitudes of the protagonists. Identify three or four works of literature written in different eras and discuss the similarities and differences you find there. What do the works suggest about the human condition and the best way to deal with one's own humanity?

FE 2. Identify works in Indian literature that incorporate heroic narratives and the epic, and discuss the way that the author uses the warrior culture to explore the human condition and the nature of reality.

FE 3. Discuss the role of women in Indian society, love, and amorous relationships. Include a discussion of marriage and the role of families.