

University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies
Fall 2005

05/08/16

Religious Studies 325 L01 – Female Saints & Sacred Figures in Eastern Religions

Instructor Yumi Onozawa
Class Time T/R 9:30-10:45
Office / Hours SS 1323 / TR 11:00-12:00 or by appointment
Email onozaway@ucalgary.ca (N.B. E-mails will be read and replied to during T/R 1:00-4:30 pm only.)

Required Text Books

1. Pintchman, Tracy, ed. *Seeking Mahadevi: Constructing the Identities of the Hindu Great Goddess*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. (Available at University Bookstore)
2. RELS 325 Course Pack – containing six individual articles (available at Bound and Copied at Student Centre)

Course Description

This course will focus on female saints and sacred figures in Eastern Religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism. Additionally, it focuses on religious traditions of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese people. Through individual articles and visual presentations (films and photos) that discuss the saints and figures, we will investigate and evaluate their importance within each religious and cultural setting. Often saintly figures have strong spiritual connections with female sacred figures (i.e. goddesses) through being possessed by them. In this role, they may also often be referred to as shamans and because of their possessed divine nature they are sometimes worshipped as the goddess herself. Therefore, we will examine the religious phenomenon called “possession” as a bridge between living beings and divinity and study female saints in this aspect.

Core Competencies

Students will learn to

- obtain comprehensive knowledge about female saints and sacred figures in Eastern religious traditions.
- examine these by employing various academic perspectives such as textual, philosophical, doctrinal, historical, anthropological, sociological, etc.
- cultivate critical thinking through class discussions and assignments.
- develop the skills and techniques appropriate for academic writing through written assignments.

Course Requirements (Total 100%)

1. Quiz

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| a. Quiz #1, October 18th | 15 % |
| b. Quiz #2, November 24th | 15 % |

The first two quizzes will contain knowledge-based questions. Students are required to be familiar with contents of weekly reading materials, films, lectures, and class discussions.

Requests to re-schedule exams will not be considered except for the following reasons: 1) severe medical condition of students or their close relatives and 2) attending funerals of family or relatives. The student must provide a doctor’s note, a death certification, or newspaper obituary.

2. Research Paper

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| a. Proposal, due on October 25th | 5 % |
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Research paper proposal should contain a statement of the topic of his/her research paper, method, and bibliography (approx. 2 pages, double-spaced and printed). The topic should be related to the content of the course. Any proposals that are handed in after the due date will obtain 0 for the grade.

b. Research paper, due on **November 29th** 40 %

The paper should consist of 10-12 typed pages (double spaced: approx. 3000 words). Although a research paper is ideally composed in accordance with the contents of the proposal, students may change the topic for their research paper. Students should consult the instructor in this case.

The research paper must be handed in together with the original proposal. Submissions by e-mail will not be accepted. Late submission of papers will result in the deduction of one letter grade for each day (e.g. A → A- for one day late submission). If students cannot hand in the essay during the class hour of the due date, they should bring it to the Department of Religious Studies (SS 1301) and have it date-stamped, before 4:30 pm on that day.

Research papers will be evaluated on three components:

- mechanics (an introduction with clearly stated topic and method, properly constructed sentences and paragraphs, footnotes or endnotes, citations, and bibliography),
- organization (use of appropriate sources, both direct and indirect references, and logical development of arguments), and
- comprehensive and critical analysis (presentation of comprehensive understanding of the topic, critical evaluation, and original thinking).

c. Paper presentation 5 %

Each student will give a 10 min. oral presentation based on his/her research paper at the end of the term (the last two weeks). This assignment is designed to share knowledge with classmates. Students **MUST** attend at least two presentation classes. If you miss more than two classes, you will lose half of the grade for your paper presentation as penalty.

3. Article Review, **to be handed in anytime by November 24th**, 20 %

Students are required to compose an article review (4-5 pages, double spaced). The list of the articles will be given during the first class of the course (note: all articles can be viewed and downloaded through JSTOR, a digital archive of scholarly journals.) All articles are related to the contents of the course. Students are strongly recommended to use weekly reading(s) and visual presentations for reference and/or counter-arguments.

A review should include

- a brief summary of the article
- an assessment of the author's research (e.g. How deep is the research on the topic? Did the author make insightful points on the topic?),
- an analysis of a method that the author used (e.g. What kind of approach does the author use? Is it appropriate for interpreting his/her topic? How is it different from and/or similar to the one that is employed for weekly readings?),
- the strengths and weaknesses of the article, and
- an over-all evaluation (e.g. Would you recommend the article to others? Why or why not?).

Consider the following guidelines: University of Waterloo, *Writing a Book Review*,

<http://library.uwaterloo.ca/libguides/1-12.html>;

Dalhousie University, *How to Write a Book Review*,

<http://www.library.dal.ca/how/bookrev.html>

University of Toronto, *The Book Review or Article Critique*,

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/bkrev.html>

Please note: students have to choose two or more religious traditions for the two written assignments. For example, you may write their research paper about Guan-in in the Chinese religious tradition and write a review on Sati in Hinduism. However, you cannot write about Kali and Durga (both belong to Hinduism).

N.B. There will be no registrar scheduled exam.

Grading

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

A+	100 - 96	A	95 - 90	A-	89 - 85
B+	84 - 80	B	79 - 75	B-	74 - 70
C+	69 - 65	C	64 - 60	C-	59 - 55
D+	54 - 53	D	52-50	F	Under 50

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the current University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation:

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor **two weeks** before the scheduled date.

Withdrawing from courses:

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar.

Recording of lectures:

Recording any part of any lectures in any form must be first approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

Safewalk Programme:

"You don't have to walk alone...." Call 220-5333 and a member of the Safewalk Team will walk you to your car, the LRT, or any destination on campus. Safewalk is available to all students, staff and faculty any time of the day or night. Look for the Campus Security Help Phones located throughout the University. Please don't hesitate to call!

Gnosis:

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

Weekly Subjects and Readings

Keep up with the assigned readings in order to understand lectures and films and to contribute to the class discussions. You can arrange to view any films (except *Devi: the Goddess*) that you missed by contacting the Media Library (MacKimmie Library Tower, Lower Level, 220-3087).

(P: Pintchman, F: Film, CP: Course Pack)

Date	Major Topic(s)	Reading(s)	Film	Quiz/Assignment
Week 1 Sep13/15	Introduction and Preview of Hindu Goddesses		<i>Sectarian Hinduism: Goddess and Her Worship</i>	
Week 2 Sep20/22	“Goddesses and the Goddess in Hinduism”	P. Ch. 9		
Week 3 Sep27/29	“Mahadevi as Mother” and “The Goddess as Fount of the Universe”	P. Ch. 2 & 4		
Week 4 Oct 4/6	“Waves of Beauty, Rivers of Blood”	P. Ch. 5	<i>Ball of Fire: Angry Goddess</i>	
Week 5 Oct11/13	“From Village to City” and “Perfecting the Mother’s Silence”	P. Ch. 6 & 8		
Week 6 Oct18/20	Possession: Socially Constructed?	P. Ch. 10	<i>Devi: the Goddess</i>	Quiz #1 (Oct 18)
Week 7 Oct25/27	Korean Shaman “Initiating Performance”	CP	<i>Initiation ‘Kut’ for a Korean Shaman</i>	Research Paper Outline Due (Oct 25)
Week 8 Nov.1/3	Divinity in Tibetan Buddhism <i>Dakini’s Warm Breath</i> , Ch.2	CP		
Week 9 Nov 8	Female Bodhisattva “Kuan-yin, the Chinese Goddess of Mercy”	CP		
Week 10 Nov15/17	Sun Goddess in Japan “The Significance of Amaterasu in Japanese Religious History”	CP		Final Due for Article Review (Nov. 17)
Week 11 Nov22/24	Goddess of Chinese Folk Religion: Mazu “Becoming the Empress of Heaven”	CP		Quiz #2 (Nov. 24)
Week 12 Nov.29/ Dec. 1	Paper presentation			Research Paper Due (Nov. 29)
Week 13 Dec. 6/8	Paper presentation			