

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES 185b**  
**MAHABHARATA**  
**SPRING 2009**  
**HUGH M. FLICK, JR.**  
**SILLIMAN COLLEGE DEAN'S OFFICE 432-0701**

**January 14** Introduction. Background and Context of the Mahabharata.

**January 21** Mythological Tales

<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Chandra, "Mahabharat-Echoing the Times."  
Johnson-Sauptikaparvan: Introduction ix-xli; 87-103  
van Buitenen, Vol I: Introduction to Book One xiii-xxxv; 1-16; 36-44  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> M.C. Smith, "The Warrior Code of India's Sacred  
Song" Chapters 1-3.  
Woods, Destiny and Human Initiative in the Mahabharata, 1-14; 153-160.

**January 28** Family Origin Tales

van Buitenen, Vol I: 63-123; 123-171; 210 (§89.1)-238  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Ramanujan, "Repetition in the Mahabharata."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, "Epic Eschatology."  
Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahabharata, 1-91.  
Woods, Destiny, 15-65.

**February 4** Pandavas and Kauravas-Births and Childhoods

van Buitenen, Vol I: 238 (§102.1)-302  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Laine, "Introduction to Visions of God."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Laine, "Initiation Visions of The Pandavas."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, "The Two Krsnas in One Chariot:  
Upanisadic Imagery and Epic Mythology."

**February 11** Draupadi and Prelude to War

van Buitenen, Vol I: 302-324; 344-431  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, The Cult of Draupadi I, Chapter 1  
"Introduction."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, The Cult of Draupadi I, Chapter 7 "The  
Draupadi Cult's Mahabharata."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, The Cult of Draupadi I, Chapter 19  
"When Draupadi Walked on Fire."  
Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahabharata, 177-214.

**February 18** Rajasuya Consecration

van Buitenen, Vol II: Introduction to Book Two 3-30; 33-96.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Suttan, "Asoka and Yudhisthira: An Historical  
Setting for the Ideological Tension of the Mahabharata."  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Leavitt- "Himalayan Variations on an Epic Theme."

**February 25** Friendly Dice game

van Buitenen, Vol II: 96-169.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, "Draupadi's Garments."  
Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahabharata, 240-277.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Sax-"Ritual and Performance in the Pandavalila of  
Garhwal."

- March 4** Gaining of Weapons and Forest Teachings                      MIDTERM PAPER DUE  
van Buitenen, Vol II: Introduction to Book Three 173-215; 244-305; 306-319  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Goldman, “Gods, Priests, and Warriors-Introduction  
and Conclusion.”  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Gitomer, “Raksasa Bhima: Wolfbelly Among Ogres  
and Brahmins.”
- March 25** Ancient tales  
van Buitenen, Vol II: Nala 319-364; Rsyasrnga 431-441; Matsya 582-585; Rama 705-  
760; Savitri 760-778.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> J.D. Smith, “The Hero as Gifted Man: Nala in the  
Mahabharata.”  
Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahabharata, 215-239.
- April 1** End of Exile and Start of War  
Van Buitenen, Vol III 3-21; 25-130.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Hiltebeitel, “Siva, the Goddess, and the Disguises of  
the Pandavas and Draupadi.”  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Matalil, “Krsna: In Defense of a Devious Divinity.”
- April 8** Bhagavad Gita  
Edgerton, The Bhagavad Gita 3-102.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Fitzgerald, “The Great Epic of India as Religious  
Rhetoric: A Fresh Look at the Mahabharata.”  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Deshpande, “The Epic Context of the  
Bhagavadgita.”  
Woods, Destiny, 67-139.
- April 15** Sauptikaparvan  
Johnson, Sauptikaparvan, 5-86 and notes 104-140.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Katz, “The Sauptika Episode in the Structure of the  
Mahabharata.”  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Laine, “War-time Visions.”
- April 22** Conclusion  
Woods, Destiny, 141-152.  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Laine, “Traditions in the Composition of the  
Theophany Narratives of the Mahabharata.”  
<https://classesv2.yale.edu/portal/> Bai and Zydenbos, “The Jaina Mahabharata.”

**Requirements:**

- 1) Seminar attendance and participation.
- 2) Seminar Presentation—Each student must make a class presentation of approximately 15 minutes on the arguments and main points in one of the articles in the syllabus. A written summary of the arguments and main points will be submitted as part of this assignment.
- 3) Midterm paper--3-5 pages. Topics to be handed out. Due in class 4 March.
- 4) Final Paper--12-15 pages. Write a paper on a topic of your choice having to do with some aspect of the Mahabharata. All topics must be approved Dean Flick. Due in the Silliman College Dean's Office, Monday, 4 May.

**NOTE: All footnotes and bibliographies must be done using the Chicago Stylebook Method.**

**Course Books (Available at Labyrinth Bookstore and on reserve in CCL):**

J.A.B. van Buitenen (translator). The Mahabharata I: 1 The Book of the Beginning.

J.A.B. van Buitenen (translator). The Mahabharata II: 2 The book of the Assembly Hall and 3 The book of the Forest.

J.A.B. van Buitenen (translator). The Mahabharata III: 4 The Book of Virata and 5 The Book of the Effort.

F. Edgerton (translator). The Bhagavad Gita.

W.J. Johnson. The Sauptikaparvan of the Mahabharata: The Massacre at Night.

J. Woods. Destiny and Human Initiative in the Mahabharata.

A. Hiltebeitel, Rethinking the Mahabharata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King.

Hinduism Research--<http://www.library.yale.edu/rsc/religion/hindu.htm>