

TOPICS IN SOUTH ASIAN RELIGIONS

THE LIFE & TIMES OF MAHATMA

GANDHI RLST 353 Bradley Clough

Class information and contact information:

- TR 2:00-3:20 Social Sciences 340
- Office in Liberal Arts 158
- Office Hours: TR 4:00-6:00 & by appointment Phone: Ext. 2837
- bradley.clough@mso.umt.edu Home Phone: 493-1894

It has been close to seventy years since India gained its independence from the British Empire, and the time seems appropriate to reflect upon the life, ideas, work, and legacy of perhaps the single most important figure in that national freedom movement, and surely one of the most remarkable figures anywhere in the past century, Mohandas K. (“Mahatma”) Gandhi. This course will examine some of Gandhi’s own major writings, as well as different analyses of Gandhianism put forth by various critics inside and outside of India. We will begin with two of Gandhi’s own writings, the autobiographical *Story of My Experiments with Truth*, and his seminal treatise on politics and civilization, *Hind Swaraj*. Then, we will investigate a variety of interpretive approaches to his life and work, ranging from the dramatic (Richard Attenborough’s Academy Award winning film “Gandhi”) and the fictional (Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura*) to the dramatic-documentarial (“The Making of the Mahatma”) and the social-scientific (Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph’s *Gandhi: The Traditional Roots of Charisma*). Gandhi’s spiritual life and its place in his politics will also be examined, as will his social activism. Finally, we will consider aspects of Gandhi’s ongoing influence within and without India, such as the impact of his life and teachings on social activists and reformers like Sunderlal Bahugana in India and Martin Luther King, Jr. in America.

Course Books (all available at the campus bookstore):

- Dalton, Dennis. *Mahatma Gandhi: Nonviolent Power in Action*
- Gandhi, Mohandas K. *Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*
- Gandhi, Mohandas K. *‘Hind Swaraj’ and Other Writings*
- Rao, Raja. *Kanthapura*
- Rudolph, Susanne and Lloyd. *Gandhi: The Traditional Roots of Charisma*

Requirements:

1. **Class attendance, preparation, and participation.** This aspect of the course cannot be emphasized enough. Because this is a discussion-oriented course, each class is a true joint-learning venture, the success of which depends on every member not only having completed the assigned reading for the day, but also having digested and reflected on it, and being prepared for discussion. To facilitate this, for each class each student will prepare a typed list of at least three questions or topics for discussion, which will be handed in, after being used in class. Finally, it should go without saying that you cannot be considered a participant in class if you do not actually attend class! The choice to attend class is of course yours, but missing more than two classes without an excuse will seriously affect your final grade. Any excused absence requires written authorization for Health Services, a doctor, an advisor, a counselor, or administrator. Class participation will count for 25% of your final grade.
2. **Analytic, interpretive writing.** The first paper, 7-8 pages in length, will be a response to one topic from a list of suggested topics distributed by the professor. This paper will count for 25% of your final grade. The second paper will be a 12-15-page research paper, due at the end of the semester. Here, the choice of the topic will be yours, in consultation with the professor. This paper will count for 50% of your final grade

Class Meetings and Assignments:

1. Gandhi on Himself

Tues. 8/30

- Introduction to the Course

Thurs 9/1

- Autobiography: Introduction and Part I, chapters I-XXI

Tues. 9/6

- Autobiography: Part I, chapters xxii-xxv; and Part II (all)

Thurs. 9/8

- Autobiography: Part III (all)

Tues. 9/13

- Autobiography: Part IV (all); and Part V, chapters I-V

Thurs. 9/15

- Autobiography: Part V, chapters VI-XLIII; and Farewell

2. Interpretations of Gandhi: Docu-Drama

Tues. 9/20

- Film: The Making of the Mahatma

3. Gandhi the Politician

Thurs. 9/22

- Gandhi's Earliest Political Manifesto
- *Hind Swaraj*: Editor's Introduction to the 1997 Edition, pp. xxv-xxix, xxxvi-xlv, lxiii-lxx, and pp. 13-55

Tues. 9/27

- *Hind Swaraj*: pp. 56-117

Thurs. 9/29

- The Indian Independence Movement: Historical Background
- Heehs, *India's Freedom Struggle: 1857-1947*: Chapters 1-6

Tues. 10/4

- The Indian Independence Movement (cont.)
- Heehs: Chapters 7-12

Thurs. 10/6

- Gandhi's Political Campaigns

- Dalton: Introduction and chapter 1

Tues. 10/11

- Gandhi's Campaigns (cont.)
- Dalton: Chapters 2 & 3

Thurs. 10/13

- Gandhi's Campaigns (cont.)
- Dalton: Chapter 4

Tues. 10/18

- Gandhi's Campaigns (cont.)
- Dalton: Chapter 5

4. Gandhi's Religion

Thurs. 10/20

- selections from Gandhi's religious writings

Tues. 10/25

- selections from Gandhi's religious writings

5. Interpretations of Gandhi: Cinema

Thurs. 10/27

- Richard Attenborough's "Gandhi," Part I

Tues. 11/1

- "Gandhi," Part II

****Final Paper Bibliography and Proposal Due****

6. Interpretations of Gandhi: Literature

Thurs. 11/3

- Rao's *Kanthapura*, chapters 1-6

****FRI. 11/4:**

- **FIRST PAPER DUE****

Tues 11/8

- No class: Election Day

Thurs 11/10

- Rao, chapters 7-13

Tues. 11/15

- Rao, chapters 14-19

7. Gandhi and Social Activism

Thurs. 11/17

- selections from Gandhi's writing's on nonviolence (*ahimsa*) and "truth force" (*satyagraha*)

Tues. 11/22

- selections from Gandhi's on "village programmes" and the "uplift of all" (*sarvodaya*)

Thurs. 11/24

- No class: Thanksgiving Day

8. Interpretations of Gandhi: Social-Scientific

Tues. 11/29

- The Rudolphs' *Gandhi: The Traditional Roots of Charisma*, Preface and pp. 3-61

Thurs 12/1

- The Rudolphs: pp. 62-95

9. The Legacy of Gandhi

Tues. 12/6

- Writings on and from contemporary Gandhian movements in India

Thurs. 12/8

- Writings on Gandhi by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

****THURS. 12/15: FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE BY 4:30 IN PROFESSOR'S MAILBOX, LA 101****