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ABSTRACT

As an introduction to Asian literature, this course guide explores the literatures of Japan, China, and India. Included are (1) a course description with a suggested time schedule of activities; (2) recommendations for necessary student achievement level; (3) course objectives; and (4) listings of materials (e.g., books, records, slides, films, and a teacher bibliography.) (JMC)

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ASIAN LITERATURE

(Level One)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Through a study of Asian literature the student will become more aware of distinctive characteristics of Western civilization through the examination of a foreign culture through poetry, drama, and fiction. By studying another culture, the student can develop a new knowledge about his own cultural heritage. Japanese, Chinese, and Indian literature will be the three strands of the non-Western world which will be woven into the pattern of the course.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL

The student should be reading at or above grade level. In addition to recognizing the author's theme, tone, point of view, and the like, the student should be able to read critically and appraise the literary quality of a work. He should be highly motivated to read and read extensively.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop in the student an awareness that one should be cautious about accepting stereotyped notions about foreign peoples.
2. To guide the student to see the common humanity of man amidst cultural diversities in the world.
3. To help student recognize a different scale of values in a non-Western society.
4. To develop the student's concern and empathy for other peoples.
5. To indicate the inter-relationships between language and culture.
6. To study non-Western cultures for their own sakes and thus see the richness of human thought and life.

CHIEF EMPHASIS

To make the student aware of the rich fabric of non-Western literature in order to better understand and appreciate the Eastern culture.

Materials

The Penguin Book of Japanese Verse
Thousand Cranes—Yasunari Kawabata
Snow Country—Yasunari Kawabata
The Genius of the Oriental Theater
A Treasury of Modern Asian Stories
Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology
Nectar in a Sieve—Markandaya
The Guide—Narayan
The White Pony
The Housewarming and Other Selected Writing—Rabindranath Tagore

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Seven Japanese Tales—Tanizaki
Ukiyo: Stories of Postwar Japan
Bhowani Junction—John Masters
Bugle and a Tiger
Dreams of the Red Chamber—Tsao Hsueh-Chin
After the Banquet—Yukio Mishima
Burmese Days—George Orwell
Golden Casket
Going Home to India—Samtha Roma Rau

Course Description

- Week 1 Just as we must understand Greek gods in order to appreciate Greek mythology so we must acquire some understanding of Oriental religions in order to better appreciate Oriental literature. A few days of lecture and notetaking on the religions of India, China and Japan should be followed by Mr. Ehman's tape on Asian religions.
(The World's Living Religions by Bahm is an excellent resource for the teacher. This is not a theology book but rather a book that provides excellent thumbnail sketches of all the religions of the countries to be studied.)
- Weeks 2-3 Introduce *A Passage to India*. Forster's book is a passage to more than India since it explores the relationships and the dissonance between the ancient and enduring patterns of Indian civilization and the more "advanced" patterns of the west. Students should be assigned a paper during this time. (Some suggestions: "The Indian landscape as an essential force in the novel", "Social and Political elements in "A Passage to India". "With man's limitations, can East and West meet?")
- Weeks 4-7 Continue study of novels, *Nectar in a Sieve*, *The Guide*, *Bhowani Junction*, *Burmese Days*, there will not be time to discuss all of these in class. One or two may be assigned as outside reading at the teacher's discretion.
- Week 8 Some readings from Indian Short Stories and drama, as time allows.
- Weeks 9-15 Beginning with a review of Japanese religions, progress to the poetry, the short story, drama and the novel. It might be expedient to divide the class into groups and assign each group one of three novels for a seminar presentation. Background material for the Japanese Novel should be presented by the teacher as a kick off lecture. An emphasis should be made on the choice of literary form as a reflection of the culture.

Weeks Again, a brief review of Chinese religions would be helpful.
 16-18 Follow this by a close reading of *Dream of the Red Chamber* with a discussion of the sentimental novel of the Maichu dynasty. Short stories and poetry will follow. (Dr. Chov's tape can be used to good advantage here.)

Weeks Although students will have been writing papers all along, these
 19-20 two weeks should be devoted to seminar presentations of assigned term papers. These papers should be comparative studies, either *between* two countries or among three countries, concentrating on a single genre. (Drama, poetry, short story)

Suggested Approaches and Teaching Aids

Use film as a cultural background because this *is* a literature course. The emphasis should, of course, be on literature but clearly as tied to culture.

Records

- The Ragas of Indian
- Chinese Class
- Traditional Folk Songs of Japan

Slides

- Japan: A History in Art (Set 50 slides)

Films

- Ikiru
- Japanese Village Life
- Japan—East is West
- China—The Old and the New
- Ganges River
- Tagore
- Anatahan
- The Good Earth
- Ugetsu
- Pather Panchall
- Munna

Teacher's Bibliography

- The World's Living Religions*—Archie J. Bahm
- Chinese Literature*—Odile Kaltcnmark
- Japanese Literature*—Louis Renou
- Two tapes—Dr. Chow and Dr. Ehinou
- Indian Literature*—Louis Renou

This course, currently taught at Northampton High School, was developed by Ruth Cohen.

SELECTED NATIONAL BOOKS IN ASIAN STUDIES

VIETNAM: History, Documents, and Opinions on a Major World Crisis
Marvin E. Gettleman, ed.

This book provides the historical background on Vietnam and her people.
MJ1059, \$1.95

Shankara's CREST-JEWEL OF DISCRIMINATION

The unique Jnana Yoga teachings of India's beloved Shankara provide the Western reader with an ideal introduction to the mysteries and rewards of Hindu philosophy.

MQ1054, \$.95

THE MENTOR BOOK OF MODERN ASIAN LITERATURE

Dorothy Blair Shimer, ed.

A unique opportunity to become acquainted with the poetry, fiction and essays of India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, Korea, Japan and the Philippines. Bibliography.

MW961, \$1.50

A TREASURY OF ASIAN LITERATURE

Johu D. Youhannan, ed.

A collection of Asian classics spanning 2500 years and encompassing China, India, Arabia, Iran, and Japan. Bibliography. Chronology. (432 pp.)

MY1063, \$1.50

ANATOMY OF CHINA: An Introduction to One Quarter of Mankind
Dick Wilson

A balanced, authoritative report on Red China considering social, cultural, economic and political policies followed by the government. Appendix. Notes. Index. (304 pp.)

MY929, \$1.25

ASIA IN THE MODERN WORLD

Helen Matthew, ed.

Prominent authorities study the people, culture, and political history of Asia and provide the background needed to understand its decisive role in the shaping of world events today. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index. (288 pp.)

MO762, \$.95

THE CHANGING SOCIETY OF CHINA (Rev. 1969)

Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai

A complete revision of the authors' important survey of China from its remote past to the present day including an analysis of the Nationalist Chinese regime on Taiwan. (215 pp.)

MY938, \$1.25

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