

HS355 India Through its Epics

Credit : 3-0-0-3

Approval: Approved in 2nd Senate

Students intended for: B. Tech.

Elective or Compulsory : Elective

Prerequisite: Consent of the faculty member

Semester: Even/Odd

Course objective: This course offers an introduction to India as represented in its epics. While it aspires to cover a wide range of epics from different languages and periods, the focus in the present semester shall be largely on the *Ramayana*. The course intends to look afresh at the diverse traditions of India through the *Ramayana*, and to understand what indeed constitutes these traditions and in what ways they are relevant for life today. In other words, it seeks to comprehend the myths, legends, symbols, motifs and ideas from the *Ramayana* which inform Indian polity over the ages and constitute its self understanding.

Course Content:

- A brief overview of Indian history, The Ramayana and its age (**6 hours**)
- Kingship and statecraft, Territorial consciousness, the economy (**7 hours**)
- The individual, Family, Community (**7 hours**)
- The ideal man and the ideal woman, Devas and asuras, Good and evil (**6 hours**)
- Love and hatred, Ethics and morality, Learning and teaching (**6 hours**)
- The city, the country and the forest, Humans and animals, Technology (**6 hours**)

Prescribed Texts:

Ramesh Menon, *The Ramayana*, Harper Collins, New Delhi, 2010.

Additional Readings:

The Ramayana

C Rajagopalachari, *The Ramayana*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Mumbai, 2009

Robert Goldman et. Al. (eds. and tr.), *The Ramayana of Valmiki – An Epic of Ancient India*, Vols. 1-7, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2007.

William Buck, *Mahabharata*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2006

The Bhagavata

A Board of Scholars (eds), *Bhagavata Purana*, Vols. 7-11, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1997-2011.

Kamala Subramanian, *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Mumbai, 2010.

Recommended Readings:

A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, with an introduction by Thomas R Trautmann, Picador, London, 2004

Romila Thapar, *Early India*, Penguin, New Delhi, 2002.

R. S. Sharma, *India's Ancient Past*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005