

## DIVINE SHAKTI (HR-4206)

**Sarla A Santwani**

**Text Books:** 1) Hindu Goddesses: Visions of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition

Kinsley David, University of CA Press, 1986, Motilal Banaasidas, New Delhi, 2005

ISBN 9780520063396      Price: \$21.95

2) Devi: Goddesses of India, Hawley & Wulff (eds), Uni. of CA Press, 1996.

ISBN 9780520200586      Price: \$ 27.95

3) Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices, Foulston & Abbot, Sussex Academic Press, 2009 ISBN 9781902210438 Price: \$ 39.95

4) The Goddess in India: The Five Faces of the Eternal Feminine, Devdutt Pattanaik Inner Traditions, 2000. (Optional) ISBN 9780892818075      Price: \$19.95

09/13/10

### **Introduction and Overview of the course**

09/20/10

Brief Historical outline of the Female Divinity in Hinduism, the Philosophical Doctrines, Concepts underlying the Female Divinity, Prakriti, **Maya, S'akti**,

**Readings:**

Foulston & Abbot, *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices* – Introduction (1-8), Part-1-Beliefs (Pages-9-21),

Pintchman: *The Goddess as Fount of Universe: Shared Visions and Negotiated*

*Allegiance in Puranic Accounts of Cosmogonies in Seeking Mahadevi* (76-92).

Santwani, *Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition, Reconstruction*.

Pintchman, *The Feminine Principle in Puranic Cosmogony and Cosmology in The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition* (117-178), (Optional Reading)

09/27/10

### **The Major Goddesses -1, Vedic Goddesses, Sri Laxmi, Durga/Vaishnodevi/ Ambika**

Their iconography, Myths, Temples/Pilgrimages, Worship, Hymns

**Readings**

Kinsley, *Hindu Goddesses*, Sri-Laksmi & Durga (19-32, 95-106)

Kinsley, *The Goddesses' Mirror*, Durga (3-24) & Laksmi (53-70)

Foulston & Abbot, *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices*, Part-1 Sri-Laksmi, Goddess of Fortune, (23-27),

Narayanan, *Sri-Giver of Fortune, Bestower of Grace* (87-108) & *Seranvali: The Mother who Possesses* (173-194), in Hawley & Wulff (eds), *Devi: The Goddesses of India*.

Rohe, *Ambiguous and Definitive: The Greatness of Goddess Vaishno Devi in Pintchman* (ed), *Seeking Mahadevi* (55-76),

10/04/10 **The Major Goddesses: (continued)-2**

**Saraswati, Kali, Kamakhya.** Their iconography, Myths, Temples/Pilgrimages, Worship, Hymns

**Readings:** Kinsley, *Saraswati* (55-57) in *Hindu Goddesses: Visions of Feminine Divine*

Foulston & Abbot, *Saraswati* (27), *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices*,

Pintchman, *The Rise of Goddess in the Hindu Religious Tradition, Part-1* (47-52),

Kinsley, *Vac/Saraswati* (110-122), *Kali* (116-122) in *Hindu Goddesses*

Kinsley, *Kali: Blood and Death Out of Place* (77-86), in Hawley & Wulff, *Devi: Goddesses of India*.

Foulston & Abbot, *Kali: The Black One* (34-40) in *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices*.

Menon, *Mahadevi as Mother: The Oriya Hindu Vision of Reality* (37-54) in *Seeking Mahadevi*.

Dobia Brenda, *Seeking Ma, Seeking Me* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds) *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* 231-236.

10/11/10 The Major Goddesses-3, **Consort Goddesses: Sati/Parvati, Sita, Radha,**

Their iconography, Myths, Temples/Pilgrimages, Worship, Hymns

**Readings:** Kinsley, *Parvati* (35-52), *Sita* (65-78), *Radha* (81-92) in *Hindu Goddesses*.

Foulston & Abbot, *Parvati* (28-31), *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices*.

Kinsley, *Sita: The Ideal Wife* (91-112) in *The Goddesses' Mirror*.

Wulff, *Radha: Consort & Conqueror of Krishna* (109-134) in *Devi: Goddesses of India*.

**The major yearly festival of Goddess falls during 10/08/2010 to 10/16/2010. A trip to Devi Mandir, NAPA or Fremont Hindu Temple/Community center will be organized on either 11th or one of the days during preceding or following weekend to participate in the Worship of Goddesses (Durga/Saraswati/Amba/Ambika).**

10/18/10 **The Minor Goddesses, Cluster Goddesses-Sapta Matrikas (Seven Mothers), Das Mahavidyas (Ten Wisdom Goddesses), Gram Devis (Village Goddesses), Kul Devis, (Clan Goddesses), Satis.**

Their Iconography, Myths, Temples/Pilgrimages, Worship, Hymns

**Readings:** Kinsley, *The Matrakas* (151-155), *Ten MahaVidyas* (61-164), *Village Goddesses* (197-208) in Hindu Goddesses.

Humes, *Local Goddess yet Great Goddess* (31-48) in Hawley & Wulff, *Devi: Goddesses of India*.

Foulston Abbot, *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices* (40-43, 85-93, 107-124)

Sree Padma, *From Village to City: Transforming Goddesses in Urban Andhra Pradesh* (Chap-6, 115-144) in Pintchman (ed), *Seeking Mahadevi*,

Harlan, *Battles, Brides, and Sacrifice* (69-90) in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds), *Is the Goddess a Feminist?*

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11/01/10 **The Classical Goddess: Devi, Maha Devi,**  
Goddess Scriptures: Devi Mahatmya, Devi Geeta

**Readings:** Coburn, *Devi: The Great Goddess* in Hawley & Wulff, *DEVI: The Goddesses of India* (31-48)  
Foulston & Abbot, *Goddesses in Textual Sources* in *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices* (63-76).  
Kinsley, *The Mahadevi* in *Hindu Goddesses: Vision of the Divine Feminine* (132-139),  
Brown, *The Tantric and Vedantic Identity of the Great Goddess in the Devi Gita of the Devi-Bhagvatha Purana* in Tracy Pintchman (ed), *Seeking Mahadevi* (19-36)  
Pintchman, *The Feminine principle in Puranic Cosmogony and Cosmology* in *The Rise of Hindu Goddess in the Hindu Tradition*, Part-3 (117-170). (Optional Reading).

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11/08/10 **Contemporary/Modern Goddesses**

**Bharat Mata, Santoshi Ma, Manushi Swachha Narayani, Aids Amma**

Coburn, *What is a "Goddess" and What Does It Mean to "Construct" One?* in Pintchman, *Seeking Mahadevi* (213-222).

Kishwar, *Emergency Avatar of a Secular Goddess!* *Manushi*, No. 147, March-April, 2005

Foulston & Abbot, *The Goddess in Contemporary Hinduism* in *Hindu Goddesses: Beliefs & Practices*, Part-II (204-226)

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**11/15/10 Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Traditions & Its implications on Hindu Women**

Social Status & Roles, Marriage, Motherhood, Career, Leadership, Customs/Traditions (Sati/Dowry/Female Infanticide/Female Foeticide etc.) with reference to Indian Women.

Gupta, *Hindu Women and Ritual Empowerment* in King (ed), *Women and Goddess Traditions*, (85-110).

Erndl, *The Goddess and Women's Power* in King (ed), *Women and Goddess Traditions* (17-31).

Wulff, *Radha's Audacity in Kirtan Performances and Woman's Status in Greater Bengal* in King (ed),

*Women and Goddess Traditions* in *Antiquity and Today* (64-84). Humes, *Glorifying the Great*

*Goddess or Great Woman?* In King (ed) *Women and Goddess Traditions*

*In Antiquity and Today* (39-63)

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**11/22/10 Divine Feminine & the Feminist/Womanist Issues** such as:

Empowerment of Women, Self-Image, Gender Equality, Women's Equal Rights

DasGupta, '*Sa Ham-I am She*': *Woman as Goddess* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds), *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* (24-51)

Kurtz, *In our Image: The Feminist Vision of the Hindu Goddess* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds), *Is Goddess a Feminist?* (181-186).

Gross, *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds), *Is Goddess a Feminist?* (104-112)

Menon and Shweder, *Power in its Place: Is the Great Goddess of Hinduism a Feminist?* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds), *Is Goddess as Feminist?* (151-165)

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**11/29/10 Hindu Goddesses in the West**

How Western Scholarship perceives Hindu Goddesses (Postcolonial Perspective)

Pintchman, *Is the Hindu Goddess Tradition a Good Resource for Western Feminism?* In Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds) *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* (187-202).

Dobia, *Seeking Ma, Seeking Me* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds) *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* (203-238)

Kripal, *A Garland of Talking Heads for the Goddess: Some Autobiographical and Psychoanalytic Reflections on the Western Kali* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds) *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* (239-268)

Sunder Rajan, *Real and Imagined Goddesses: A Debate* in Hildebeitel & Erndl (eds) *Is the Goddess a Feminist?* (269-284)

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12/06/10 & 12/13/10 Presentations

### **EVALUATION**

- 1) Reflections on the participation in the worship/celebrations during the Goddess festival (Navaratri)

FIVE (05) pages – 30%

Submission Date: 11/01/10

- 2) Term Paper -15 pages – 70% (Brief Presentation & Submission)

Presentation Dates: 12/06/10 & 12/13/10

Submission Date: 12/13/10

#### **Possible Topics:**

- 1) Research paper on any one Hindu Goddess
- 2) Construct your own Goddess to suit modern/contemporary themes, giving her an appropriate Iconography, Symbolism, Worship rituals, hymns.  
Give rationale for this Goddess (What can she contribute from individual/social/religious/spiritual point of View)
- 3) Comparative Study of a Hindu Goddess and any Goddess from your own faith tradition or from other faith tradition such as ancient Greco-Roman, Buddhist, Near Eastern, Egyptian, Hebrew, African Native American or any other.
- 4) Hindu Goddesses from a Feminist/Womanist Perspective.

### **OR**

Any other related topic agreed upon by you and the instructor of the course.

