

HIS 307C • Intro To The History Of India

39595 • Fall 2013

Meets MW 300pm-430pm CLA 0.112

(also listed as ANS 307C)

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Aims and methods

This course provides a brief overview of the long history of the Indian subcontinent. It has two goals. The *first* that you understand the major phases of South Asian history from the appearance of its first civilization five thousand years ago, up to the development of modern self-governing states after the end of the British empire. The *second* is to help you to think about how humans came to live in the mega-societies (“civilizations”), that occupy the world today. India created one of the earliest such societies on the planet.

The format will be a mix of lectures with discussion, as well as discussion meetings devoted to specific readings. We will draw extensively on visual sources in addition to texts. Exams will require map IDs and explanations of images in addition to the usual short questions. You need therefore to be present and attentive in class.

Expectations and evaluation

This course is designed to accommodate students with no previous knowledge of the region. It does require students to attend regularly, contribute to a collective learning process, keep up with weekly readings and participate constructively in discussions. Reading and discussing complex sources will enable you to reason from evidence, just as historians do. Participation will account for 20% of final

grade. There will be three in-class examinations for 60% and a book review addressing **one** of two allotted texts (20%). Exams will require short answers that demonstrate an understanding of arguments, maps, visual images and quotations. I do not expect you to memorize large amounts of information.

Students must complete all assignments and exams to pass this course. More than **two** unauthorized absences or late arrivals after September 9 will result in a deduction of 2% for each occasion. Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. It is the policy of UT-Austin that you must notify each of your instructors of such absences at least fourteen days prior to the class' scheduled date.

Policy on special accommodations. At the beginning of the semester, students who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities (SDD) Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

Read more at: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Medical absences especially at exams, need a doctor's note stating that the patient was physically unable to attend.

Academic integrity is the heart of this great university. It is part of the honor code.

<http://www.utexas.edu/about-ut/mission-core-purpose-honor-code>

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are therefore subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

Blackboard and laptop/messaging device policy. The course web site on Blackboard will be used to post assignments and make announcements relating to the course – check the site regularly for new information. It is your responsibility to maintain a functioning email account linked to Blackboard.

Read university policy at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify/html>

All students have the right to learn in a supportive environment: The use of a laptop/tablet should not distract others and is acceptable during lectures or class discussions only for note-taking or instructor-directed web-surfing. All mobile messaging devices must be turned off and stored away during class.

I hope the need will not arise, but please do visit:

<http://www.utexas.edu/safety/preparedness/communication> and acquaint yourself with safety rules and procedures.

My obligations to you

I will do my best to help you understand a history that has fascinated me for more than thirty years. Do not hesitate to bring your questions or disagreements up with me. I like to know my students and their interests. I will *always* (barring emergencies) be in my office during my office hours. No appointment is needed. You can also come at other times, by appointment.

Numerical scores will be converted to letter grades at the end of the semester as follows:

19 or below	= F	60-85	= B
20-39	= D	86-100	= A
40-59	= C		

Plagiarism:

Passing off the work of others as your own is a serious offense. You *must* properly attribute quotations and information taken from other sources, whether written or digital. *In general*, do *not* take information from the web unless you are going via a University Library database (such as J-STOR). If in doubt, visit my office, email or contact me via Blackboard.

Book required for purchase:

Thomas Trautmann *India: Brief History of a Civilization* Oxford University Press, 2011 pbback, ISBN 978-0-19-973632-4. Available at the Co-op.

All other readings will be available on the course website or freely downloadable.

List of other required readings

Colin Renfrew *Archaeology and Language*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1987, 178-210

Maurice Walshe trans. *Aggana Sutta* excerpt at

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/religion/f2001/edit/docs/aggannasutta.pdf>

Fredrik Barth “The System of Social Stratification in Swat, Pakistan”, in E.R. Leach ed. *Aspects of Caste* Cambridge University Press, 1960

Ashoka “The fourteen rock edicts”

<http://www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/ashoka.html>

Arthashastra of Chanakya 1916 ed. free download at www.archive.org, pp.218-238

David Pingree “Hellenophilia versus the History of Science” *Isis* vol. 83 (1992) 554-563

Rammohan Roy “Settlement in India by Europeans” in *English Works of Ram Mohun Roy* vol. 2 pp.113-19 (free Google e-book)

A.B. Keith, ed. *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, 1750-1921*. Vol. I. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1922. A) Extracts from Macaulay on India pp.1-8 (B) Queen Victoria’s Proclamation

For book review: **either** E.M. Forster *A Passage to India* available via the Library catalog as a free e-book **or** “Little Clay Cart” in J.A. B. van Buitenen *Two Plays of Ancient India* New York: Columbia University Press, 1968, pp.50-180 via Blackboard.

Week 1

August

8/28 Introduction to the course and region – Geography – ‘Monsoons’

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8E-s5QTQOg>

September

9/4 Some key concepts – *civilization, India, Indians*; linguistic and cultural regions of the Indian subcontinent; the histories of India before the discovery of the Harappans

Week 2 Neolithic revolution and beginnings of Indian Civilization; social structure and civilized society. Harappan civilization: its geography, economy, technology and writing system; The end of Harappan civilization; its legacies in India

Week 3 The Indo-Aryans and the Vedic age. Oral sources and transmission. Video-clip.

Religion, economy and society as illustrated in Vedic literature. Indo-European origins debate: Renfrew (pdf)

Week 4 Sacrifices, social complexity and the rise of kingship; a Buddhist Sutta (pdf); Discussion of caste and social structure: Barth 'Social Stratification'(pdf)

Week 6 Renunciation – a new moment in religious life. The Mauryas; Ashoka - read the fourteen rock inscriptions (link above)

October

Week 7 The classical age - family, gender, caste and law. The *Arthashastra* on marriage & family duties (pdf); Exchanges and migrations across Old World civilizations

Week 8 10/14 Mathematics and the sciences. *Discussion*: Pingree on ancient astronomy (pdf)

Week 8: Mid-Term I on 10/16

Week 9 Arrival of Islam in South Asia, by sea and land; Cavalry-based empires, north and south India

Week 10 Conversion and acculturation in India; New imperial synthesis: Mughal empire

Week 11 Culture, society and governance under the Mughal empire

Week 12 Mughal decline, Company ascendancy 1750-1858. Macaulay and Rammohan Roy (pdf). The coming of the great revolt of 1857 and the end of the Mughal empire

Week 13: 11/11 Mid-term II.

11/13 British Empire in India – The impact of the modern West on India

Week 14 Class discussion of two alternative texts for review essay: either *Passage to India* **or** “Little Clay Cart”; Four leaders and their projects for India:

Ambedkar, Gandhi, Jinnah and Nehru

Week 15 Continued; decolonization and the new republics of India and Pakistan

12/2 Mid-Term III.

12/4 In-class discussion of draft of final review essay. **Essay due before 12 noon, December 6.**