

Spring 2014

ANCIENT INDIA

Cynthia Talbot

HIS 346C (#39855) // ANS 346C (#32115) // AHC 330 (#33500)

TTH 2:00pm-3:30pm

GAR 1.126

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the history and culture of South Asia from its protohistoric beginnings in the Indus Valley through the period of the early empires of the Mauryas and Guptas (roughly, 2500 B.C.E. to 500 C.E.). In chronological sequence, we will examine the origins of South Asian civilization, Vedic society, the second urbanization and the emergence of early states as well as Buddhism and Jainism, the significance of the Mauryan empire, the influx of peoples and ideas between 200 B.C.E. and 300 C.E., the growth of brahmin orthodoxy and ideas on political strategy, the spread of historic civilization outside the North Indian heartland, and Gupta culture and polity.

The emphasis will be on understanding the general patterns of socio-cultural change rather than the specifics of political history. Considerable attention will therefore be given to social organization and ideology, religious institutions and patronage, conceptions of kingship, and the evolution of classical culture. Students will read several primary sources in translation and be exposed to the art and architecture of the period, as well. By the end of the semester, they will have a strong understanding of the main historical developments and dominant cultural features of ancient India. The class format is primarily lecture but there will be several discussion sessions as well.

This course carries a Global Cultures flag.

READINGS (available for purchase at University Co-op & on reserve at PCL):

- 1) Romila Thapar, *Early India* [textbook]
- 2) Jonathan Mark Kenoyer, "Around the Indus in 90 Slides"
[Internet essay at <http://www.harappa.com/indus/indus1.html>]
- 3) John S. Strong, *Legend of King Asoka*
- 4) Richard H. Davis, *Global India circa 100 CE*
- 5) Patrick Olivelle, trans., *The Pancatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom*
[not on reserve, but available as e-book through UT Libraries online]
- 6) Kalidasa, *The Recognition of Sakuntala*, trans. W. J. Johnson
[on reserve and also available as e-book through UT Libraries online]
- 7) several essays listed on schedule and available on Blackboard course site

REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Students will read several translations of original sources, in addition to the textbook, and explore a website detailing the archaeology of the Harappan Civilization. These literary and visual texts will be discussed at four discussion sessions, to which attendance is mandatory. Students will prepare for the discussion by writing a reading response (300 words) each time. The assigned readings will also form the basis of two short papers (4-6 pages apiece) on topics provided by the instructor. In addition, there will be two examinations consisting of both short and long essay questions. Attendance and participation will be considered in determining the final grade, as well.

Various aspects of student performance will be weighted as listed below in determining the final grade for the course:

two exams	45%
two papers (1500 words each)	38%
4 reading responses (300 words apiece)	12%
attendance & participation in discussions:	5%

Please note that pluses and minuses will be utilized in assigning the course grade.

COURSE POLICIES

-- Laptops should be used in the classroom only for educational purposes, while texting during class time will NOT be allowed under any circumstance.

-- Regular attendance in class is expected and any gaps in knowledge resulting from lack of attendance are the student's responsibility. However, students are urged to contact the instructor if personal circumstances lead to prolonged absence. Please note that attendance at the discussion sessions is mandatory.

-- Students must be prepared to turn in their written assignments and take examinations on the specified dates. Delays in the submission of assignments will result in a grade penalty equivalent to approximately one letter grade per week. Students will not be allowed to make up exams that are missed without prior approval of the instructor or documented proof of good reason (such as severe illness or death in the family).

-- 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 at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

-- Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Please note that plagiarism means not only the verbatim quoting of another's work without attribution but also the presentation of another's ideas as one's own.

-- Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>Office Hours</u>	Tuesdays 3:30-5 & by appointment
<u>Office</u>	GAR 3.406, tel. no. 475-7229
<u>E-Mail Address</u>	<ctalbot@austin.utexas.edu>

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Wk 1 -- INTRODUCTION

Tues. 1/14 Introduction to Course
Thurs. 1/16 India's Diversity: Physical & Cultural Geography
reading: *Early India* chaps. 1 (skim) & 2.

Wk 2 – ARCHAEOLOGY OF INDIA'S FIRST CIVILIZATION

Tues. 1/21 Rise of Harappan Civilization & Its Urban Centers
Thurs. 1/23 Harappan Material Objects: Deciphering Culture
reading: *Early India* chap. 3 & "Around the Indus in 90 Slides"
<<http://www.harappa.com/indus/indus1.html>>.

Wk 3 – FROM HARAPPAN TO INDO-ARYAN: LANGUAGE & ETHNICITY

Tues. 1/28 Decline of Harappan Civilization & Aftermath
Thurs. 1/30 Harappans & Aryans: Were They the Same?
reading: Thomas R. Trautmann, "Introduction," in *Aryan Debate*.

Wk 4 -- VEDIC RELIGION & ITS LEGACIES

Tues. 2/4 Vedic Religion & Its Legacies
Thurs. 2/6 Discussion: Early Indian Civilization/**reading response**
reading: *Early India* chap. 4 & Laurie L. Patton, "Veda and Upanisad."

Wk. 5 -- THE BUDDHA & SECOND URBANIZATION

Tues. 2/11 Life of the Buddha// **paper 1 due**
Thurs. 2/13 Second Urbanization in North India
reading: *Early India* chap. 5.

Wk. 6 -- ASHOKA & THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

Tues. 2/18 Ashoka & the Mauryas: Overview
Thurs. 2/20 Ashokan Edicts & Their Message
reading: Romila Thapar trans., "Rock and Pillar Edicts of Asoka,"
begin *Legend of King Asoka* (translation only, skim intro)

Wk. 7 -- LEGACIES OF EMPIRE

Tues. 2/25 Significance of Mauryas
Thurs. 2/27 Discussion: Understanding Ashoka// **reading response**
reading: *Early India* chap. 6., finish *Legend of King Asoka*.

Wk. 8 -- OVERVIEW, INDIA TO 200 BCE

Tues. 3/4 Catch-up & Exam Review
Thurs. 3/6 **Midterm Exam**

Wk. 9 – COSMOPOLITAN AGE BETWEEN EMPIRES

Tues. 3/18 Post-Mauryan Polities & Their Coins
Thurs. 3/20 Buddhism in the Post-Mauryan Age

reading: *Early India* chaps. 7 & 8; *Global India circa 100 CE*.

Wk.10 - POLITICAL THEORY & SOCIAL NORMS

Tues. 3/25 The *Pancatantra*: Animal Fables & Statecraft
Thurs. 3/27 Dharmashastra & the *Laws of Manu*

reading: begin *Pancatantra: India's Book of Folk Wisdom*.

Wk. 11 -- HISTORY & CULTURE OF SOUTH INDIA

Tues. 4/1 The Sangam Age in the Far South
Thurs. 4/3 Discussion: Morality in the *Pancatantra*// **reading response**

reading: finish *Pancatantra*.

Wk. 12 -- TWO PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER

Tues. 4/8 Women in *Laws of Manu*
Thurs. 4/10 Introduction to Shakuntala Story// **paper 2 due**

reading: begin *Recognition of Sakuntala*.

Wk. 13 -- EMPIRE REVIVED: CLASSICAL AGE OF THE GUPTAS

Tues. 4/15 Gupta Empire: A Golden Age
Thurs. 4/17 Religion & Culture in the Gupta Era

reading: *Early India* chap. 9; finish *Recognition of Sakuntala*.

Wk. 14 -- CLASSICAL CULTURE & SOCIETY

Tues. 4/22 Discussion: Classicism of *Shakuntala* // **reading response**
Thurs. 4/24 Gupta Decline & End of Classical Period

Wk. 15 -- OVERVIEW, INDIA 1

Tues. 4/29 Catch-up & Exam Review
Thurs. 5/1 **Final Exam**