

HISTORY 223A
History of South Asia
Whitman College, Spring 2008
Prof. Sebouh Aslanian

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Office Hours: M/W 1:00-2:00 or by appointment

This course provides a survey of South Asian history beginning with the introduction of Islam to the Indian sub-continent during the 8th century and ending with establishment of British colonial rule during the 19th century. We will focus especially on the era of Turkic incursions in the 12th and 13th centuries, the establishment of Timurid or Mughal Empire in the 16th century, and the arrival of the European powers (the Portuguese, Dutch and English) in the century thereafter. Themes covered in the course include social and economic history, state formation and colonialism. Readings will include a range of primary sources as well as secondary works.

COURSE POLICIES

Expectations and Rules of Conduct:

- Students are expected to express themselves openly and participate in creating a non-intimidating classroom environment that contributes to open discussion. They are expected to attempt to think objectively and historically and to listen attentively and respectfully to others' remarks.
- Students are expected and required to be present at every class session and to be prepared for class. Unexcused absences will be penalized. (Excused absences are illness or injury to the student; death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like; religious reasons; jury duty or government obligation; University sanctioned or approved activities. For other possibilities, check with me.) You must inform me of these absences as soon you are aware of them.
- Students may not take part in any activity that disrupts class.
- All cellular phones, pagers, and alarms must be turned off during class.
- Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will not be tolerated. They are violations of university regulations. Students in this class will be held to a high standard of academic integrity, which is defined as "the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception." Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Such actions will be subject to disciplinary action. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please talk with me. A single instance of cheating and plagiarism will result, at the very least, in a failing grade for that assignment.

Depending on the severity of the case, other consequences may include a failing grade for the class, regardless of performance on other assignments, and further disciplinary actions. While all written work must be exclusively your work, you may study and prepare together.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSESSMENT

All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in black ink, and with one-inch margins.

Class attendance and participation in discussions: (25%)

1) This includes coming to every class session on time having read and thought about the week's material and being prepared to discuss it. Knowledge and understanding of readings will enable us to have productive class discussions as well as help you be prepared for other assignments. Attendance without participation will be insufficient and will be reflected in grades. Much of this class is discussion-focused; therefore, preparation is crucial and participation essential. **15%**

2) In addition to regular participation, each student will make a presentation on readings at least once a week. Furthermore, each student will lead and facilitate discussion after the presentation. First, each student will sign up for a particular day of discussion. Second, one week before your selected date, the student reads the articles and comes up with two questions for each reading relevant for discussion. Third, the student will pass questions by me no later than two days before the class discussion. You can do this by e-mail or by meeting with me during office hours. This part is required so that I can give you feedback on the questions and recommend discussion strategies. The purpose of this assignment is to raise important issues on the readings and to get the rest of the class to engage in discussion. **10%**

Book Review (25%):

One book review on *The Baburnama* 10-12 pages in length. Guidelines will be provided.

Two Take-home exams (50%)

In addition students will have two take-home exams, (Mid-term and final) of 10-12 pages each worth 25% of the total grade each. Guidelines and questions to be provided ten days before their due date.

Notes, Cautionary and Otherwise:

- You must start reading from the *first* week.
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day assigned. I will not accept an assignment turned in at my office if the student has not attended class that day.
- Electronic submission and late assignments will not be accepted without prior permission.
- Late assignments will be penalized ½ a grade down per day.
- Unless otherwise advised, most class sessions will consist of some lecture and mostly discussion. Please bring appropriate readings and texts to class with you. Give yourself sufficient time to complete the reading and prepare before coming to class. Moreover, give yourself sufficient time to understand assignment guidelines, complete writing assignments accordingly, and seek help

early if you are having difficulties.

- The schedule below is subject to revision at any time. Changes will be announced in class ahead of time. You are responsible for keeping yourself updated on those changes. Ignorance or absence is not an excuse.

REQUIRED READINGS:

John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*
 Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*
 Thackston Wheeler, *The Baburnama*
 Burton Stein, *A History of India*
 Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe*
 Michael Fisher, *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing*
 Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*

RECOMMENDED READING:

Chris Bayly, *Empire and Information*
 Peter Jackson, *The Dehli Sultanates: A Political and Military History*

Additional readings available on Electronic reserves in Pdf format are marked by an asterisk next to the reading.

SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1: 1/14 & 1/16

Topic: Introduction to the course

Reading: --Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "Introduction: Situating India," *India before Europe*, pp. 1-25.

WEEK 2: 1/21 & 1/23

Topic: The Islamization of South Asia

Reading: --John F. Richards, "The Islamic Frontier in the East: Expansion into South Asia," John F. Richards, *Power, Administration and Finance in Mughal India*, pp. 91-109.*

--Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "The Expansion of Turkic Power, 1180-1350," *India before Europe*, pp. 25-53.

--Burton Stein, *A History of India*, pp. 105-160.

Recommended Reading:

--Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf, "Sultans, Mughals, and Precolonial Indian Society," *A Concise History of Modern India*, pp. 1-29.

--Peter Jackson, *The Dehli Sultanates: A Political and Military History*, pp. 1-99.

WEEK 3: 1/28 & 1/30

Topic: The Coming of the Mughals

Reading: --Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, pp. 1-14.

--Thackston Wheeler, *The Baburnama*, pp. vii-xxv.

--Burton Stein, *A History of India*, pp. 160-201.

--Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "North India between Empires: History Society and Culture, 1450-1550," *India before Europe*, pp. 84-115.

--John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 1-79.

WEEK 4: 2/4 & 2/6

Topic: Memoirs of a Prince

Reading: --Stephen Dale, "Steppe Humanism: The Autobiographical Writings of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, 1483-1530," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Feb., 1990), pp. 37-58.*

--Stephen Dale, "The Poetry and Autobiography of the Babur-nama," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (Aug., 1996), pp. 635-664.*

--Thackston Wheeler, *The Baburnama*, book one.

WEEK 5: 2/11 & 2/13

Topic: Memoirs of a Prince (continued)

Reading: --Thackston Wheeler, *The Baburnama*, book two.

WEEK 6: 2/18 (no class, Presidents' Day) & 2/20

Topic: Memoirs of a Prince (continued)

Reading: --Thackston Wheeler, *The Baburnama*, book three.

WEEK 7: 2/25 & 2/27

Topic: Consolidating the Empire and Persianate influences

Reading: --Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, pp. 14-72.

--Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "Sixteenth century north India, empire reformulated," *India before Europe*, pp. 115-152.

-- Muzaffar Alam, "The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics," *Modern Asian Studies*, 32/2 (1998), pp. 317-349.*

-- Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation." *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 2. (May, 1992), pp. 340-363.*

--Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Mughal Expansion into the Deccan 1570-1605: Contemporary Perspectives," in Jorge Flores and Nuno Vassalo e Silva (eds.) *Goa and the Great Mughal*, pp. 15-44.*

Recommended Reading: John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 79-185.

BOOK REVIEW ON THE BABURNAMA DUE ON 2/27.

WEEK 8: 3/3 & 3/5

Topic: Consolidating the Empire (con't)

Reading: --Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "Expanding political and economic spheres, 1550-1650," *India before Europe*, pp. 152-186.

--John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 205-298.

--Translations of Farmans of Emperor Akbar to the Jesuits and others, in Jorge Flores and António Vasconcelos de Saldanha, *Os Firangis na Chancelaria Mogol/The Firangis in the Mughal Chancellery: Portuguese Copies of Akbar's Documents (1572-1604)*.*

Recommended Reading: Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, pp. 72-176.

SPRING BREAK: March 10 to March 21

WEEK 9: 3/24 & 3/26

Topic: Political authority, administration and legitimacy under Akbar and Jahangir

Reading: --Stephen Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Nov., 1979), pp. 77-94.*

--John F. Richards, "The Formulation of Imperial Authority under Akbar and Jahangir," John F. Richards, *Power, Administration and Finance in Mughal India*, pp. 252-283.*

--Lisa Balabanlilar, "Lords of the Auspicious Conjunction: Turco-Mongol Imperial Identity on the Subcontinent," *Journal of World History*, 18/1, pp. 1-39.*

WEEK 10: 3/31 and 4/2

Topic: Warfare and technology

Reading: --Jos Gommans, *The Mughal Warfare*, pp. 1-67; 133-206.

MID-TERM EXAM DUE ON 4/2.

WEEK 11: 4/7 & 4/9

Topic: European travel literature and visions of the Mughals

Reading: -- Michael Fisher, *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing*, pp. 1-15; 38-76; 101-199. (Travelers/visitors include Monserrate, Hawkins, Manucci, Manrique, Bernier, and Tavernier).

WEEK 12: 4/14 & 4/16 [No class. I will be at a conference at the University of Michigan.]

WEEKS 13: 4/21 & 4/23

Topic: India, the Indian Ocean and the East India Companies

Reading: --John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, pp. 185-205.

--John F. Richards, "Early Modern India and World History," *Journal of World History*, 8/2, Fall 1997, pp. 197-209.*

--Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Company and the Mughals between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris," Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: Mughals and Franks*, pp. 143-173.*

--Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, "Expanding political and economic spheres, 1550-1650," *India before Europe*, pp. 256-292.

--Burton Stein, *A History of India*, pp. 201-228.

--K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in The Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, pp. 63-98.*

--Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, "The East India Company Raj, 1772-1850," pp. 56-91.

WEEKS 14: 4/28 & 4/30

Topic: From Mughals to the Raj to Independence

Reading: --Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, pp. 92-202.

--Burton Stein, *A History of India*, pp. 229-367.

Recommended Reading: Chris Bayly, *Empire and Information*, pp. 1-147; 315-376.

WEEK 15: 5/5 [NO CLASS. I WILL BE AT A CONFERENCE AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY.]

FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE SATURDAY, MAY 10.