COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course is an introduction to the history of South Asia from prehistoric times to the emergence of ‘early modernity’. During these centuries, the subcontinent emerged as one of the most diverse and complex regions of the world, as it continues to be even today. The course will cover the period between the rise of the Indus Valley civilization to the end of the Mughal Empire and will address topics such as the ‘discovery of India’, the coming of the ‘Aryans’, society and culture in the great epics like the *Ramayana*, the beginnings of Jain and Buddhist thought, politics and patronage under Islamic polities, the formation of Mughal imperial authority through art, architecture and literature, among others. Through the study of social processes, the course will focus on the diversity and connectedness that have defined the subcontinent throughout its history. It will also consider the role of history in the region and how a number of events from the past continue to inform its present.

The course has three main objectives: one, to introduce students to key moments in pre-colonial South Asian history; two, to create an understanding of the diversity and complexity of the region’s past; and three, to familiarize students to the wide range of sources available for the study pre-colonial South Asian history.

Welcome to the HIST220 Spring 2020 Reboot!
These are novel and challenging times and our main aim is to get through this semester safe and healthy. But we also do have to *get through* the semester and PASS the class. In order to make that happen as smoothly as possible, made some changes to the syllabus and course requirements.

- You can disregard the earlier syllabus entirely.
- In this new syllabus, you will find weekly readings, and fresh instructions on what you need to do each week, and information about the new assignment structure.
• You are always welcome to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.
• Also, try to stay in touch with all your classmates. It is always nice to check in with one another about how they are doing generally and with regards the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READING MATERIALS

• Asher, Catherine and Cynthia Talbot. India Before Europe (CUP, 2006). If you don’t have a physical copy of this book, it is available as an e-book in the library.
• I have shared the link to the course packet on Google Drive. You will also find it on Glow under announcements. **Course Packet 3 is the most relevant for this segment of the class.**
• The Thapar reading is in the course packet you have of her book.

Note:
- If a particular reading listed on the syllabus is missing from the packet, I will post it on Glow.
- We are all new to this! I will adjust/change/reduce readings if necessary. Please send me feedback on how you are getting on with it all so we can make changes if needed.

HOW WE WILL PROCEED:
- I have retained our weekly course reading schedule as listed on the earlier syllabus as these 6 weeks are a self-contained unit. But please use this syllabus as I have made a few changes as well.
- For each class, I will post two mini-lectures to give you an overview of the particular topic.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:
You had all completed 50% of the course work for this class already. Our aim now is to continue reading the listed course goals as efficiently as possible under the changed circumstances. I have tried to incorporate as much flexibility in this schedule as possible. So, in order to finish the semester and PASS the class you need to do the following:

1. **Discussion boards on Glow:** Each week, I will create two discussion boards on Glow. Each of you must post at least TWO COMMENTS under EACH DISCUSSION by the end of the week.
2. **Primary source discussion on Glow:** Each week I will also create ONE discussion board for one or two of the primary source readings that week. Each of you must post at least ONE COMMENT for each source in the week by the end of the week.
3. **Check-in meeting in week 9:** At the end of week 9, around the 16th or 17th of April, I’d like to schedule an all-class meeting to ‘meet’ and check-in about how things are going for everyone. I’ll send out an availability poll once we have started things off in week 8.
4. **Two short papers OR oral discussion with me:** We no longer have exams for this class. In order to continue engagement with the course materials, however, I will post two prompts on Glow. You can respond to them either by writing a short paper (3-4 pages) OR by scheduling a 20-25-minute discussion with me to talk about your response orally.
   - If you submit a written paper, I will be happy to give you written comments on your work.
   - You can also choose to do one response as a written paper and another orally as long as you have responded to both the prompts.
   - 1st date for paper submission/oral discussion: Friday, April 17.
   - 2nd date for paper submission/oral discussion: Friday, May 1.
   - Aim to submit the written paper by the end of the day in your time zone.
   - For oral discussions, we can schedule a date and time in the following week as per your availability.
   - Either way, let me know which of the options you plan to take beforehand. And even if you decide to write a paper, I am happy to chat about it if you want to do that!
5. **Final overview meeting with me in groups on Zoom/Google Meet:** In the last week of class, week of Monday 11th May, I will schedule a final online meeting for all of us to meet as a group. For this meeting, you should prepare 3 points about what you feel you learnt in this course. This will also be an opportunity for us to conclude the discussions and to say goodbye before the summer. We will schedule a specific time closer to the date. If you think you might have any scheduling clashes that week, do let me know.

6. **Discussion on film OPTIONAL:** I will set up a discussion for this on Glow. It’s a fun Bollywood historical film. You can participate in this optional discussion if you do watch it.

**HONOR CODE:** The rules regarding the Honor Code are the same ([https://dean.williams.edu/academic-misconduct-honor-code/](https://dean.williams.edu/academic-misconduct-honor-code/)) as the regular semester. Make sure that all your written assignments are properly referenced and contain a proper bibliography.

I would also request that you do not circulate or publicly post the video content of the course for privacy and intellectual property concerns.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any concerns about viewing the videos and other course material. Information on the college’s accessibility resources can be found here: [https://academic-resources.williams.edu/disabilities/](https://academic-resources.williams.edu/disabilities/)

**COMMUNICATION, OFFICE HOURS, CONTACTING ME:**
- I have created a sign-up sheet for weekly office hours on Glow. These are on Tuesdays from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm. However, if this is not a slot that works for you, I encourage you to email me if you would like to ‘meet’ and date and time options that work for you. Once we fix a time, I can send you a Google Meet link.
- I also encourage you to stay in touch with one another about the course on your preferred social media or messaging platforms.
## COURSE PLAN AND WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

### Weeks 8 through 13

### Week 8

Week of Apr. 6

1. **Establishment of Turkic rule and culture (700-1200 CE)**
   - **Reading:** Thapar, pp. 405-434
   - **Primary sources:**
     - Alberuni, *Alberuni’s India*, pp. xi-xv, 1-10, 95-108

2. **The Sultans of Delhi (c. 1200-1526 CE)**
   - **Reading:** Asher and Talbot, Chapter 2
   - **Primary sources:**
     - *Sources of Indian Tradition*, vol. 1, second edition, edited and revised by Ainslee T. Embree (University of Columbia Press, 1988), pp. 409-411, 413-416, 419-425 (Selections from Ziā ud-dīn Barnī)

### Week 9

Week of Apr. 13

3. **The History of an Imperial City: Vijayanagara**
   - **Reading:** Asher and Talbot, Chapter 3
   - **Primary sources:**
     - Selections from the account of Domingo Paes’s visit to Vijayanagara (1510)

4. **A Time of Transitions: India in the Fifteenth Century**
   - **Reading:** Asher and Talbot, Chapter 4, up to p. 105
   - **Primary sources:**
     - ‘Narrative of Abd-er-Razzak ambassador from Shah Rokh AD 1442’ in R. H. Major ed. *India in the Fifteenth Century: Being a collection of narratives of voyages to India in the century preceding the Portuguese discovery of the cape of good hope* (Asian Educational Services, 1992 [1858]), pp. 1-9, 13-32

### Week 10

Week of Apr. 20

5. **Bhakti and Sufi Traditions**
### Week 11

**Week of Apr. 27**

- **Consolidating Empire: The Chronicles of Emperor Akbar**
  - Reading:
    - Asher and Talbot, Chapter 6 pp. 123-151
  - Primary sources:
    - *The Akbarnāma of Abul Fazl* translated from the Persian by H. Beveridge, Table of contents of all 3 volumes, from [http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070701020%26ct%3D](http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070701020%26ct%3D)
    - Selections from the *Akbarnama*, vol 2, Chapter 18 and Chapter 39 from [http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070701020%26ct%3D](http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070701020%26ct%3D)
    - Aín I Akbari by Abul Fazl Allámi, Translated from the original Persian, by H. Blochmann, M.A. Colonel H. S. Jarrett (1873-1907), Table of contents of all 3 volumes from [http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070702050%26ct%3D](http://persian.packhum.org/persian/main?url=p%3Ffile%3D0070702050%26ct%3D)
    - Akbar’s religious outlook from *Sources of Indian Tradition*, vol. 1, pp. 425-428, 464-471
  - Watch this week OPTIONAL but fun 😎
    - *Jodhaa Akbar* (2008), 213 mins!

**Wednesday, Apr. 29**

- **The court and elite patronage under the Mughals I**
  - Reading:
    - Asher and Talbot, Chapter 6 pp. 152-163, Chapter 7
  - Primary source:

### Week 12

India and South Asia 5
### Week 13

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<th>Week of May 4</th>
<th>8. <em>Towards the end of Empire – Yes, only one discussion this week!</em></th>
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<td>Reading:</td>
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<td>• Asher and Talbot, Chapter 8</td>
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<td>Primary sources:</td>
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<td>• <em>Sources of Indian Tradition</em>, vol. 1, second edition, edited and revised by Ainslee T. Embree, University of Columbia Press (1988), vol. 1, pp. 493-510</td>
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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>9. <strong>The resurgence of regions and the arrival of a new power</strong></th>
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<td>Readings</td>
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<td>• Asher and Talbot, Chapter 9 and Epilogue</td>
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<td>This week</td>
<td><strong>10. Sum up and final discussion online!</strong></td>
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