Global History of War and Society in India/ South Asia

HIST 2220-001  Professor: Sanjay Gautam
Spring 2017  Office Hours: TTH-1:50 pm-2:50 pm
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This course focuses on history of war and society in India/ South Asia from a global perspective. It approaches South Asian history, society, and culture from the perspective of the changing nature and role of warfare. This course is intended for students with little or no prior knowledge of the region. Starting with a discussion of the nature of Alexander’s invasion of India in 321 BCE, the course shifts its focus to Islamic invasions and conquests in India. It then goes on to deal with the nature and origin of India’s colonization under the East India Company. This course also discusses Gandhi’s “nonviolent war” against the British Empire. The course concludes with a discussion of the Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, and the idea of war as fate. While focusing on history, one of the aims is to understand our current global world in historical perspective.

Course Requirements

There will be one midterm and one final examination in this course. The writing requirement is two 5 page papers on assigned topics which will be handed out a week in advance. In addition, everyone is expected to attend regularly and contribute actively to class discussions. Grades will be determined in the following manner:

1. Midterm examination (March 6)  20%
2. Final Examination (May 8)  40%
3. Two paper assignments (Feb. 10, Apr. 3) (15% each)  30%
4. Class Attendance and participation (attendance will be taken regularly)  10%

Required Texts


These books will be available at CU Bookstore on campus. Copies of the required books and readings are also on reserve in Norlin Library. All other articles and excerpts of books on the syllabus will be placed on e-reserve.

Please note: Only ONE 2000-level HIST course can be applied to History major requirements. Students who think they may want to major in History should not take more than one 2000-level HIST course.

Disability Statement: If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Services Office in Willard 322 (phone 303-492-8671).

Procedures about Absences due to Religious Observances: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students, who, because of religious observances, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or require attendance. Please let me know of any conflicts in advance so that your needs may be accommodated.
Honor Code: All Students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). For further information, see http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

Decorum Statement: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity, and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Additional information may be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html.

Sexual Harassment: The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff, and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Further information can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment/

Writing Assistance: If you want assistance or pointers on your writing, contact the Writing Center. For information, see http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/wctext.html

WEEK ONE
January 18-20
Introduction: Geography
Kulke and Rothermund, History of India, xii-xxiii.

WEEK TWO
Jan. 23-27
Introduction: Demography, Society, and Religions

WEEK THREE
Jan. 30-Feb. 3
Alexander’s Invasion of India: Emergence of the Idea of Universal Empire I
Select Readings

PAPER TOPIC WILL BE HANDED OUT ON FEBRUARY 10 AND THE PAPER WILL BE DUE ON FEBRUARY 17 IN CLASS

WEEK FOUR
February 6-10
Turkish Invasions and the Emergence of Islamic Empires in India: The Idea of Universal Empire II
J. F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, 1-150.

WEEK FIVE
Feb. 13-17
The Maratha Insurgency, Hindu Nationalism, and the End of the Turkish-Islamic Empire: The Idea of Universal Empire III
J. F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, 205-252.

WEEK SIX
Feb. 20-24
Toward Colonialism: Vasco da Gama and the Discovery of the Sea Route to India: The Idea of Universal Empire IV
Nigel Cliff, Holy War: How Vasco da Gama’s Epic Voyages Turned the Tide in Centuries-Old Clash of Civilizations

WEEK SEVEN
Feb. 27-Mar. 3
International Trade and the Empire of Cotton

**MIDTERM EXAM ON MARCH 6**

**WEEK EIGHT**
March 6-10

East India Company and the Colonization of India: The Idea of Universal Empire V  
John Keay, *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company*

**WEEK NINE**
Mar. 13-17

Industrial Revolution as a Strategic Phenomenon and the World Economy: The Idea of Universal Empire VI  

**WEEK TEN**
Mar. 20-24

Cultural Empire under the British Raj: The Idea of Universal Empire VII  
James Mill, *History of British India*. Selections

**WEEK ELEVEN**
Mar. 27-31

Spring Break: No Classes

**SECOND PAPER TOPIC WILL BE HANDED OUT ON APRIL 3 AND THE PAPER WILL BE DUE ON APRIL 10 IN CLASS**

**WEEK TWELVE**
April 3-7

Anglo-Afghan War and the Geopolitics of the British Empire  
William Dalrymple, *The Return of a King: The Battle for Afghanistan, 1839-1842*

**WEEK THIRTEEN**
Apr. 10-14

Nonviolent War?: Gandhi and the Anticolonial Resistance Movement against the British Empire  
Select Readings; Select scenes from the film, *Gandhi*

**WEEK FOURTEEN**
Apr. 17-21

Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the British Imperial Legacy: Geopolitics of Eurasia  
Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban, Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*

**WEEK FIFTEEN**
Apr. 24-28

The *Mahabharata* and the Idea of War as Fate  
R K Narayan, *The Mahabharata*

**WEEK SIXTEEN**
May 1-5

STUDY WEEK

**FINAL EXAM:**
DATE: MONDAY, MAY 8  
TIME: 7:30PM-10:00PM
South Asia: A General Introduction

Nations in South Asia
India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives

Nations of South Asia: Population; Religions; Ethnicities; Languages; conflicts

South Asia and Southeast Asia as Two Different Parts of Asia

Is South Asia the same as India?
Origin of the names India and Hindu
End of the British Empire and the Birth of the major nations of South Asia

Main Geographical Features and their Significance
Geological origins of South Asian/ Indian landmass
Much of North India flat to rolling plains
Agricultural advantages and strategic disadvantages of the vast North Indian plains
One of the most fertile soils in the world
Major rivers and their significance
Monsoon rains

Two Main International Trading Routes
Silk-road: origin and significance
Silk-road and the rise of the Middle East
Sea route: origin and significance
Sear route and the rise of Europe/ West

Borders and Frontiers of South Asia
Desert border with Iran/ Persia: Difficulties of engaging in warfare through this border
The Himalayan mountain range as the border to the east: Impossibility of invasions
Afghan frontier in the West and central Asia: the most important strategic and economic frontier of South Asia
Coastal India and the Indian Ocean: Economic and strategic significance

Religious and Ethnic Break up of Population in South Asian Countries

India: 1.2 billion; Hindu 81%, Muslim 13%, Christians 2%, Sikhs 2%; Indo-Aryans 75%, Dravidians 25%; Hindi 41%

Pakistan: 193 m; Muslims 97% (Sunni 85%, Shia 15%); Panjabi 45%, Pashtun 16%, Sindhi 14%, Muhajirs 8%; Urdu (official language), Punjabi 48%
Bangladesh: 164 m; Muslims 90%, Hindus 10%; Bengalis 98%; Bangla

Afghanistan: 31 m; Sunni 80%, Shia 19%; Pashtuns 42%, Tajiks 27%, Hazaras 9%, Uzbeks 9%; Pashto and Dari

Sri Lanka: 21 m; Buddhist 69%, Muslims 8%, Hindus 7%; Sinhalese 74%, Muslims 7, Tamils 9; Sinhala, Tamil

Nepal: 30 m; Hindus 81%, Buddhist 11% ; a number of smaller ethnic groups; Nepali 48% and various other languages

Bhutan: less than a million (725000); Buddhist 75%, Hindus 25%; Bhote 50%, Neapalese 35%; several languages

Maldives: less than a million (about 400000); Sunni Muslims (no significant minority); South Indians, Sinhalese, and Arabs; Dhivehi, a dialect of Sinhala

Indus Valley Civilization and the Aryan Question

Significance of the Indus Civilization
Origin of Indian Civilization: Indus or Aryan?
Indus Civilization: A Society without War?

Discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization: An Historical Context
India was a British colony at the time of the discovery of the Indus valley civilization in 1920s
Encounter with Sanskrit and the discovery of Indo-European family of languages
The puzzle: shared language but racial difference
The solution to the puzzle: Aryans came from Central Asia and Conquered India
Aryans from Central Asia as the Founders of Indian Civilization
Max Mueller and the Dating of the Arrival of Aryans in India in the 15th century BCE

British Empire and the Politics of Aryan Identity
East India Company and the colonization of India
Need for an Ideology to Rule over India and the idea of the British Empire as a civilizing mission
The British fear of the rise of anticolonial nationalism in India based on cultural identity
Two major forms of war: military and intellectual
Intellectual war for the conquest of the minds and hearts
British claim that Aryan civilization not native to India a blow to Indian nationalism
The theory of the Aryan origin of Indian civilization left no ground for Indian nationalism
It made colonialism appear natural and permanent to India

Discovery of Indus Civilization and the Fear of the British Empire
No archaeological or linguistic evidence that Aryans came from outside
The fear of the loss of the theory that Aryans as outsiders brought civilization to India
The fear that Indian nationalism would find a political-cultural ground in the Indus civilization
Imperial scholars claimed that Indus civilization was an isolated phenomenon that left no legacy
That was the reason they named it Indus civilization, not Indian civilization

Discovery of the River Sarasvati and the Theory of the Aryan Conquest of India
The River Sarasvati and its Significance
The Sarasvati as the most important river in the Vedas of the people who claimed to be Aryans
The Sarasvati was regarded as the mythical river because no such river existed on the ground
Discovery of the dried up riverbed of the Sarasvati
The Sarasvati began to dry up in the middle of the third millennium BCE
The Sarasvati as important as the Indus for the Indus valley civilization
Were the Aryans in already in India when Indus Civilization was at its Peak?
Were the Aryans the real founders of the Indus valley civilization?
The Nature of Indus Valley Society and Culture: A Culture without War?

Geographical spread
Centered in Western India/ South Asia
Spread over 1600 x 1600 Kilometers, or about 2.5 Million Square Kilometers

Antiquity and Chronology
Nuclear Agricultural Villages: 8000 BCE-6000 BCE
From Village to Towns with Short distance Trade: 5000 BCE-3500 BCE
From Towns to Large Cities: Indus Civilization at its Height: 3500 BCE-1900 BCE
Indus Civilization in Decline: 1900 BCE-1400 BCE

Indus City
Port Cities and Cities on the Indus and the Sarasvati
Main Divisions of the City: Public and Residential
Architecture of the City
Sanitation system in the City
Hydraulic System in the City

Economy
Common Standards in Weights and Measures
Manufacturing and Commerce at the Heart of the City
Domestic Trade: Rivers as the Highway of Trade
International Trade: Sea Trade with Egypt and Mesopotamia
Items of Domestic and International Trade

Society, Culture, and Religion
No significant class division in the Indus urban society
Religious Structures in the City
Funeral Practices and its Significance: presence of both burial and cremation
Yoga in the Indus Valley Civilization?
Yoga/ Meditation as the Central Feature of Indic Culture: continuity between Indus and

Absence of Warfare and the State in Indus Valley
No Signs of Weapons, Army, or Warfare: Was Indus Valley a Society without Warfare
No Signs of Kings or his Palaces: Was Indus Valley a Society without State?
Was there Civic Governance in the City: Civic/ Corporate versus Political Governance
How was the Uniformity of Culture, Religion, and Commerce established?
Culture, Religion, and Commerce as Self-propagating Phenomena
Indus Valley and the other Ancient Civilizations

Decline of the Indus Valley and its Legacies

India on the Eve of Alexander’s Invasion (6th-4th BCE): Conflict between Tribal Republics and Territorial Monarchies

Intro: War and Society in Post-Indus South Asia/ India
Significance of Alexander’s invasion of India in 326 BCE
Emergence of war as a central feature of post-Indus society
Tribal Republics versus Territorial Monarchies
Dharma or Ethics versus Artha or Power
Emergence of Eastern India as the Religious, Intellectual, and Political Center of India
Second Urbanization and the Emergence of Major Cities (8th-4th BCE)
Nature of agriculture: fertile land, Himalayan river system, rainfall, three crops annually
Use of iron and its impact on agriculture and the economy in general
Growth of short and long distance trade
Explosion of a new wave of urbanization and the emergence of major cities

**Tribal Republics and Tribal Oligarchies (8th-6th BCE)**
- Tribal republics: King as a tribal chief or primacy of the tribe over the king
- No clear division between civil society and state: primacy of civil society over state
- Gifts to the king, not taxes
- Absence of standing army in tribal republics
- Tribal kinship values, not law, as the foundation of tribal society and state
- Primacy of dharma or kinship morality over artha or power
- Vedic royal rituals in the tribal republics: asvamedha or horse sacrifice

**Urbanization and the Emergence of Territorial Monarchies/ States (6th-4th BCE)**
- Impact of urbanization on the state
- Urbanization and the emergence of standing army: implications
- Impact of iron weapons on the military, warfare, and state
- Impact of urbanization on the society: weakening of kinship values
- Territorial monarchies/ states as ruthless pursuit of artha/ power without dharma/ ethics Series of parricides to capture power

**From the Kshatriya/ Warrior Caste Kings to the Shudra/ Lower Caste Monarchs**
- Urbanization and the end of Kshatriya monopoly over state
- Rise of the Shudra kings: Bimbisara (544-493 BCE) and the Nandas (364-324 BCE)
- Vedic royal ritual like the asvamedha/ horse sacrifice not at the center of state anymore
- Patronage to Buddhism and Jainism (not Vedic religion) by the territorial monarchies
- Rise of Magadha in the east under the Nandas as the most powerful territorial state
- The Nanda Empire: infantry, 200,000; cavalry, 20,000; war chariots, 2000; war elephants: 3000

**Tribal Republics versus Territorial Monarchies: Dharma or Ethics versus Artha or Power**
- Conflict between dharma and artha as the driving force behind political and intellectual evolution in ancient India
- Dharma and artha as the Indic version of good and evil
- Dharma and artha as civil society versus state
- Dharma and artha as civic morality versus law