



Fall 2007
HIST 3800: South Asia to 1757
Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30-7:10
Kell Hall, Room 101

Ghulam A. Nadri

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Office Hours: Thursday-Friday 11am-12:30 (and by appointment)

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Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide a broad understanding of the political, social, economic and cultural dimensions of South Asian history from ancient times to the beginning of the English colonialism in 1757. We will explore some major issues and themes that have shaped the politico-economic cultures of the subcontinent and, in one way or the other, continue to influence the present-day life. The development of political and social institutions over the major divisions of time spanning the pre-historic and historic periods will be discussed.

Required Text:

1. Burjor Avari, India: *The Ancient Past, a history of the Indian sub-continent from 7000 BC to AD 1200*, (Routledge, 2007). ISBN 0415356164.
2. Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Additional Reading:

3. Romila Thapar, 'Imagined Religious Communities', in David N. Lorenzen ed., *Religious Movements in South Asia, 600-1800*, ISBN-10: 0195678761 (chapter 11: pp. 333-59).
4. M.G.S. Narayanan and Keshavan Veluthat, 'Bhakti Movement in South India', in D.N. Jha, *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India* ISBN 8173044732
5. R.S. Sharma, 'The Feudal Mind', in D.N. Jha, *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India* ISBN 8173044732

If necessary, other articles and papers will be notified or made available later.

Course Format and class policies: a combination of short lectures and discussions. Students are expected to read the assigned text, attend all classes and be actively engaged in in-class discussions. No show up will affect your grade.

Drops and Withdrawals:

The last date of withdrawal with a possible 'w' is October 15, 2007.

Grading:

Participation	15 %
Quizzes	15 %
Short essays	45 %
Term paper	25 %

Total	100 %

15 percent of your grade will be determined on the basis of your attendance and participation in classroom discussions.

You will earn **15 percent** of your grade by taking part in three quizzes in the course of the semester. The quiz will consist of questions with multiple answers and short answers based on the text you have read so far and the lectures.

You will be required to write three short essays (worth **45 percent** of your grade). Each essay (of 15 % of your grade) must be **three-page** long, typed and double-spaced. Do write your name and essay number. The essay question will be given to you in advance.

You will be required to write a term essay (**25 percent** of your grade) in about 2,000 words. You can select a theme from the list of topics that I will hand out in October or any other topic with my approval. The essay (typed and double spaced) must reflect your analytical skill, critical thinking and a clear understanding of the theme. The arguments should be properly articulated inserting factual details only to substantiate your views. **The essay must be handed in on December 4** in the scheduled class. Late submission will not be allowed.

Schedule of classes (tentative as changes may be necessary)

Week 1	Reading assignment: Burjor Avari, <i>India: the Ancient Past</i> (Introduction and first two chapters: pp. 1-59).
Aug. 21:	Course introduction
Aug. 23:	Pre- and proto-historic South Asia.
Week 2	Reading assignment: Avari, <i>India: the Ancient Past</i> , Chapter 4, pp. 60-85.
Aug. 28:	Vedic civilization I: material culture, development of political institutions.
Aug. 30	Vedic civilization II: religion and society, the caste system, non-Brahmanical religions. Essay question
Week 3	Reading assignment: Avari, <i>India: the Ancient Past</i> , Chapters 5-6, pp. 86-127
Sept. 4:	Quiz 1
Sept. 6:	No class, prepare for the first essay (due on Sept. 13).

- Week 4 Reading assignment: Avari, *India: the Ancient Past*, Chapters 7, pp. 128-54.
 Sept. 11: Emergence of empires: the Mauryas, Ashoka and his dhamma.
 Sept. 13: Art and literature: discussion on Kautilya's *Arthashastra*; **first essay due.**
- Week 5 Reading assignment: Avari, *India: the Ancient Past*, Chapter 8, pp. 155-80 and
 R.S. Sharma, 'The Feudal Mind'.
 Sept. 18: The imperial Guptas: the feudalism debate.
 Sept. 20: **Quiz II**
- Week 6 Reading assignment: Avari, *India: the Ancient Past*, Chapters 10-11, pp. 203-54.
 Sept. 25: Southern India: the Cholas.
 Sept. 27: State formation in southern India: the segmentary state (discussion)
- Week 7 Reading assignment: C.B. Asher and C. Talbot, *India before Europe*, Chapter 2.
 Oct. 2: State formation under the Delhi Sultans.
 Oct. 4: Administrative institutions. **Essay question**
- Week 8 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 3 and R.S. Sharma's
 'Imagined Communities'.
 Oct. 9 Discussion on Sharma's paper
 Oct. 11 Vijaynagar and Bahmani kingdoms
- Week 9 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 4
 Oct. 16 **Topics to be assigned for the term paper; second essay due**
 Oct. 18 Regional polities in north India
- Week 10 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 5 and 6 (up to page 163)
 Oct. 23 The Afghans and the Mughals: state formation
 Oct. 25 From Akbar to Aurangzeb: the assignment system; **Quiz III**
- Week 11 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 7 and Narayanan and
 Veluthat, 'Bhakti Movement in South India'.
 Oct. 30 Culture in Mughal India; **essay question**
 Nov. 1 Discussion on sufi and bhakti ideas and their influence on society
- Week 12 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 8
 Nov. 6 Mughal decline: explanations
 Nov. 8 Marathas
- Week 13 Reading Assignment: *India before Europe*, Chapter 9
 Nov. 13 Mughal economy and the beginning of English colonialism
 Nov. 15 Discussion on religious trends in Mughal India; **third essay due**
- Week 14
 Nov. 20 Thanksgiving day, no class
 Nov. 22 Thanksgiving day, no class

Week 15

Nov. 27

Art and material culture; technology

Nov. 29

Overview and discussion

Week 16

Dec. 4

Quiz IV (extra); Submission of term essay