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History 2479/Asian 2274
Fall 2015
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Mughal India and the Early Modern World, c. 1500-1800

The Mughal empire, together with the Ottoman and Safavid empires, was one of three large Muslim empires that governed a vast swath of territory, from the Balkans to Bengal, in the early modern period. The Mughal emperors became proverbial for their military power, wealth and artistic patronage, and the Mughal court attracted travelers and merchants from around the world. This course offers an introduction to the history of the Mughal empire, paying attention to the political, economic and cultural aspects of Mughal power. The course situates the Mughal empire within the history of the Indian subcontinent as well as within the global history of the early modern world. Readings include primary sources by both South Asian and European writers, including chronicles and travel accounts. Students will also have a chance to study Mughal painting, architecture and poetry.

This course fulfills both the historical and breadth requirements in Arts & Sciences; it also fulfills the HA requirement. It also counts towards the pre-1800 requirement for History Majors.

Learning Objectives

1. Developing skills necessary for historical research and analysis, including:
   - close reading of primary and secondary sources
   - identifying the argument of a text and summarizing it in your own words
   - thinking critically about historical sources and arguments
   - writing a historical essay with a strong argument

2. Becoming well informed about the history of the Indian subcontinent between 1500-1800, including:
   - the causes of the rise and fall of the Mughal empire
   - India’s place in an early modern global economy
   - the political and cultural legacy of the Mughal empire
   - the rise of European commerce and power in India
Required readings (available at the Cornell Store or on 2-hour reserve at Uris Library)


Other readings marked with an asterisk (*) on the schedule of lectures and readings will be available through the Blackboard website.

Course requirements

**Discussion and attendance:** You are required to attend each class session and discussion section. You are required to do the readings and participate in discussion. Please speak with me if something prevents you from fulfilling this requirement since class and discussion participation comprises 10 % of your final grade.

**Papers:** You are required to hand in two, 5 to 7 page papers. The papers comprise 40 % of your final grade and are due **September 28** and **November 23**, NB. late papers will result in grade penalties.

**Examinations:** The mid-term examination, in class on **October 19**, will count for 20% of your final grade. The final examination will count for 30% of your final grade will be scheduled during the final exam period.

*If you are taking this course on a pass/fail option, you are required to complete all the course requirements and hand in all the written assignments in order to pass the course.

*In this course, we respect university policies pertaining to racial or ethnic discrimination, sexual harassment, assistance available to handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired students, the observance of religious holidays, and plagiarism. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to our attention. I enforce university policy in regard to plagiarism and encourage you to familiarize yourself with what constitutes plagiarism. [http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm](http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm). All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another, and must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.
Schedule of lectures and readings:

Introduction

August 26: Syllabus and class expectations
August 28: no discussion section

August 31: Who were the Mughals?
September 2: The Mughals in early modern global history
September 4:
   https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_world_history/v008/8.2richards.html

Part 1. The Shape of Mughal History

September 7: Labor Day Holiday
September 9: India Before the Mughals
September 11: Discussion
   Asher and Talbot, *India Before Europe*, ch. 2-4, pp. 25-114.

September 14: Origins of Empire
September 16: The Consolidation of Empire
September 18: Discussion
   Asher and Talbot, *India Before Europe*, ch. 5, pp. 115-151

September 21: The Expansion of Empire
September 23: The Limits of Empire
September 25: Discussion

1st assignment due on Monday September 28th, 5.00pm, 5-7 page response paper based on textbook reading.

Part 2. The Mughal State

September 28: The Mughal state in comparative perspective
September 30: Imperial Authority and the Mughal court
October 2: Discussion
*Abul-Fazl, Ain-i Akbari* (Tr. H. Blochmann), preface, pp. i-x.

October 5: Empire and Islam
October 7: Law and Justice
October 9: Discussion
  Schimmel, *Great Mughals*, ch. 4, pp. 107-142.

October 12: FALL BREAK
October 14: The Political Economy of Empire I – money and taxation
October 16:
  Schimmel, *Great Mughals*, ch. 6-7, pp.167-227

October 19: **Midterm Exam in class**
October 21: The Political Economy of Empire II – trade and overseas commerce
October 23:
  Asher and Talbot, *India Before Europe*, ch. 9, pp. 256-287.

**Part 3: Mughal Political Culture**

October 26: Mughal Women
October 28: Mughals and Hindus
October 30:
  Schimmel, *Great Mughals*, ch. 5, pp. 143-166.

November 2: Mughals and Europeans
November 4: Mughal Art
November 6:
  Schimmel, ch. 9, pp. 263-297.

November 9: Mughal Architecture
November 11: Mughal poetry
November 13:
  *In class presentation - independent research on Mughal art and architecture.*

**Part 3. Mughal Legacies**

November 16: Shah Alam II and the rise of the British empire.
November 18: Mughal elites under early British rule.
November 20:

November 23:

2nd assignment due on Monday November 23rd, 5.00pm, 5-7 page paper on a work of Mughal art or architecture.

*Thanksgiving Break*

November 30: The persistence of Mughal culture
December 2: Conclusion: from early modern to modern empires