

**HIST 1801**

Fall 2018

Tu&amp;Th 11-12:15, Wood Hall 228

**History of Asia in the World to 1500**

Prof. Peter Zarrow, Wood Hall 327

office hours: Th 3:30-4:30, &amp; by appt.

This course focuses on the formations of the major Asian civilizations in the context of world history, and also on how we construct our knowledge of Asia. Given the scope of this course, we cannot be comprehensive, but we can focus on a few themes.

The first part of the course examines the evolution of different concepts of “Asia” and “Asian race(s)” from outside of Asia. We also examine the similarities and differences among various archaic, ancient, and traditional polities to ask when (or if) Asia became Asia.

The second part of the course introduces the formation of the agrarian polities of the Indic and Sinitic core regions.

The third and final part of the course examines the spread and development of civilizational practices in core and peripheral regions. We note the relationships between agrarian centers of civilization and pastoral-nomadic civilizations, including patterns of trade and cultural exchange with non-Asians. The emphasis here is on religio-philosophical traditions as lived cultures.

### The format of this course

- discussions of readings: discussions will take place in small groups, which will give reports to the whole class.
- lectures: lectures will focus on questions raised by the readings and new material

### The main objectives of this course

- to provide you with a basic familiarity with the major cultural traditions of Asia; and a sense of the complex relationships among those traditions and the interconnections across Eurasia;
- to explore some of the ways in which those traditions evolved over time; and to examine some of the processes of empire-building;
- to introduce some of the analytical tools used in comparing culture and cultural interactions across time and space; to learn techniques for reading “secondary” and “primary” sources; to acquaint you with problematique of Orientalism—how do we know what we know?
- and to improve your reading and writing skills.

We will weave through breadth and depth—that is, covering a lot of material superficially and covering specific, small topics more thoroughly. This course will not proceed chronologically.

You must complete reading assignments before class; reading assignments should be brought to class in hardcopy or electronic forms to refer to during discussions. Electronic devices must be put away during lectures.

Grading will be based on:

- class discussion: 20%
- slow-reading papers: 10%
- three 4-6 page papers (one is the take-home final exam): 60%
- quizzes: 10%

Five points per day are deducted for late papers.

UConn policies on students' obligations and rights can be found here:

<http://provost.uconn.edu/syllabi-references>

Plagiarism results in a 0 for the paper and may result in failing the course.

Arrangements will be made for students with disabilities.

During class discussions, electronics may be used (computers, ipads, iphones) in order to reference the readings and your reading notes. During lectures, electronics may NOT be used.

#### Basic readings (available at the UConn Bookstore)

- ◆ Patricia Ebrey and Anne Walthall, *Pre-Modern East Asia: To 1800* (Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014). This book is also available on 3-hour reserve at Babbage Library.
- ◆ Burjor Avari, *India: The Asian Past: A history of the Indian subcontinent from c. 7000 BCE to CE 1200* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Routledge, 2016).
- ◆◆◆ other assigned readings will be available through HuskyCT

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### ***Unit One: Defining “Asia,” Exploring Asia*** (weeks 1-6)

Aug. 28: course introduction

Aug. 30: Lecture: Geography 1

Discussion: why the ancient/studying the ‘other’; READINGS:

–Ebrey-Walthall: “Connections” pp. 2-7;

–Avari: “Introduction” 1-19

Sept. 4-6: NO CLASSES, *but* prepare a 4-6 page paper (double-spaced), **due via email at 5 p.m., Friday 9/7**. Your paper should try to answer the question: “Is “Asia” a useful concept?” It should be based on the following READINGS (from Husky CT):

–Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*: 1-19 (Introduction) and 47-72 (Orient and Occident); and

–Teemu Ruskola, “Where is Asia? When Is Asia” pp. 879-896 (especially pp. 879-885)

*PAPER ONE DUE*, 5 p.m., Sept. 7

Sept. 11: Languages of Asia

readings/discussion of Lewis-Wigen and Ruskola: the concept of ‘Asia’

Sept. 13: Geography 2: maps

“Afroeurasia”: Empires & communication

–Marshall G.S. Hodgson, “The Interrelations of Societies in History,”

*Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Jan. 1963): 227-250

Sept. 18: Geography 3

Asia in Western minds, the ‘west’ in Chinese minds

–Herodotus, *Histories* [Oxford University Press, 1998]: 211-216, 438-441

(sections 101-105 on Demaratus; sections 98-113 on India and Arabia)

\*\*\* *“slow reading” assignment due* \*\*\*

Sept. 20: The Silk Road

Travelers’ tales

–Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo* [London: Folio Society, 1968]: 163-

203 (From Peking to Amoy)

Sept. 25: Dunhuang

The ‘East’ and despotism in political theory

–Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws* [Cambridge University Press, 1989]:

116-117 (chapter 6), 126-128 (chapters 19-21), 278-281 (chapters 1-4)

Sept. 27: The early modern world: Chinese explorers and Western missionaries  
'Orientalism'  
–Edward Said, "Orientalism (1978)" in *The Edward Said Reader* [Vintage, 2000]: 63-113

Oct.2: Orientalism 1  
19<sup>th</sup> c Orientalism  
–Arthur H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics* [Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1970]: 41-73, 82-89, 266-268

\*\*\* "slow reading" assignment due \*\*\*

Oct. 4: Orientalism 2  
"Asian values" debate  
–Daniel Bell, "Are Human Rights Universal?..."  
–Amartya Sen, "Human Rights and Asian Values"

### ***Unit Two: Empires*** (weeks 7-10)

Oct. 9: Asianism. 'Tribes' and kinship; state-formation and the Axial Age  
ancient India  
–Avari, chaps. 2-3: 20-63

Oct.11: Indian history overview  
India to 300 BCE  
–Avari, chaps. 4-5: 64-121

Oct. 16: ancient Indian thought & "colonial knowledge"  
–Avari, chap. 6: 122-149  
–excerpts from *Sources of Indian Tradition* [Ainslie T. Embree, ed., Columbia University Press, 1988], vol. 1: 7-11 ("Cosmic and Ritual Order")  
\*\*\* "slow reading" assignment due \*\*\*

Oct. 18: Indian religion and politics: to Buddhism  
–Avari, chap. 7: 115-179  
–*Sources of Indian Tradition*: 29-39 ("Ultimate Reality")

Oct. 23: China: overview  
ancient thought 1  
–Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 1-2: 8-35  
–excerpts from *Sources of Chinese Tradition* [Wm. Theodore de Bary et al., eds., Columbia University Press, 1960], pp. 3-16 ("Tradition in Antiquity")

Oct. 25: Chinese thought  
empire and religion in East Asia  
–Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 3-4: 36-74  
–Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*: 14-48 ("Confucius")

- Oct. 30: Buddhism  
 empire versus division  
 –Ebrey-Walthall, chap. 5: 75-96  
 –Avari, chap 9: 209-241
- Nov. 1: NO CLASS: work on paper 2...

***Unit Three: Nations and trans-national traditions*** (weeks 11-14)

\*\*\*PAPER TWO DUE, 5 p.m., Nov. 5\*\*\*

- Nov. 6: Indic civilization and Southeast Asia  
 –Avari, chap 11: 272-301  
 –Carolyn Brown Heinz, “Mainland and Insular Southeast Asia”: 375-409
- Nov. 8: Islam in Asia  
 Religion in Southeast Asia  
 –Casparis and Mabbet [chap. 5 in Nicholas Tarling ed., *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia: Volume 1, Part 1 – From the Earliest Times to 1500*, Cambridge University Press, 2000]: “Religion and Popular Beliefs”: 276-333
- Nov. 13: Confucianism in practice  
 an East Asian civilizational sphere  
 –Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 6-8: 97-147
- Nov.15: Japanese civilization  
 Making Japan Japanese; making Korea Korean  
 –Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 9-11: 148-197
- \*\*\* “slow reading” assignment due \*\*\*  
**November 18-24 Thanksgiving Break**
- Nov. 27: Buddhism East & West  
 Mongol China  
 –Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 12: 198-209
- Nov. 29: Neo-Confucianism and the East Asian ecumene  
 The Ming-Qing world: early modern China  
 –Ebrey-Walthall, chaps. 14-15: 227-269
- Dec. 4: Asian empire/Western empire  
 India in the world  
 –Avari, chap 11: 272-301
- Dec. 6: Conclusions  
 discussion of final paper

FINAL PAPER  
 due the day scheduled for the final exam