

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Departments of History and  
South Asian Studies  
1989-90: Fall Semester

A.K. Narain  
Course 442 (3/4 credits)  
History of Ancient India

TR 1:00-2:15 p.m.  
Humanities: 1221

1. Course Description:

This course is designed to give a survey of the political and cultural history of the sub-continent of India from the earliest times to circa 12th century A.D. An attempt is made to cover this vast span of time and space by presenting an outline of political history in terms of select personalities and major dynasties (e.g., the Mauryas, the Kushans, the Guptas), of social organization in terms of governing ideas and institutions, of religious systems, and of art and architecture.

2. Lectures: Twice a week. TR

Honors available.

3. Lecture Schedule: See the attached list.

4. Written Assignments and Exams:

Two term papers and a final examination (which could be a take-home). First term paper will be due by October 10. Second term paper by November 16. Term papers need not be more than 6 typed pages. Final (Take-Home) Examination will be due on December 14.

5. Honors and Graduate Students:

Those who opt for Honors as well as the Grad students will be required to do a special essay (not more than 25 typed pages) on an assigned topic.

6. Grading System:

For undergrads the grading will be based on the performances in the two term papers (60%; i.e. 30% for each paper) and the final examination (40%). For the Honors and Grad students on the quality and content of the special essay.

6. Required and Recommended Readings: See the list on the back page.

LIST OF REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED BOOKS

[Note: Books marked \* are Required]

Bridget and Raymond Allchin: The Rise of Civilization in India and Pakistan, Cambridge, 1982.

A. L. Basham: The Wonder that was India, Grove Press, Inc., New York, (or another paperback edition). There are other paperback editions of this also.

A. L. Basham (ed.): The History & Culture of India, Oxford University Press.

G. M. Bongard Levin: Mauryan India, Delhi, 1985.

\* Ainslee T. Embree (ed.): Sources of Indian Tradition, Vol. I (From the Beginning to 1500 A.D.).

Benjamin Rowland: The Art and Architecture of India, Buddhist-Hindu-Jain (Pelican History of Art Series).

K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: A History of South India, Oxford University Press.

Bardwell L. Smith (ed.): Essays on Gupta Culture, Delhi, 1983.

\* Romila Thapar: A History of India, vol. I, (a Pelican original).

NOTE: Some of the books listed above are out-of-print and not available in Madison bookstores. They may be borrowed from the U.W. Library or check with me for alternate readings or for readings on topics of special interest.

FOR REFERENCE:

R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalkar (eds.), The History and Culture of the Indian People, Bombay. First four volumes, selected chapters.

J. E. Schwartzberg (ed.): A Historical Atlas of South Asia, Chicago, 1978.

NOTE: For more bibliographical information use the general bibliography as well as chapter-wise bibliographical notes on sources as given by Thapar, A History of India, vol. I.

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A. K. NARAIN: Course No. 442: HISTORY OF ANCIENT INDIA  
Day & Time: TR - 1:00-2:15 p.m.: Humanities 1221

LECTURE SCHEDULE [PROVISIONAL]

September

- 5: Introduction
- 7: Land, People, and Languages
- 12: Historiography: Sources, Methods, Problems, World Context
- 14: Indus Valley Civilisation/Harappa Culture: First Urban Settlements
- 19: Vedic Civilisation and the Indo-European Problems
- 21: Second Urban Growth: Republics and Monarchies of 6th Century B.C.
- 26: Rise of Magadhan Empire
- 28: Ashoka (3rd century B.C.) and Unification of the Indian Subcontinent

October

- 3: Disintegration of Mauryan Empire: External and Internal Factors
- 5: The Foreign Elements in the Political and Cultural History of India: The Greeks and the Sakas
- 10: The Kushanas and their Empire
- 12: Emergence of Centrifugal Tendencies in the Body-Politic of India
- 17: The Guptas and the "Classical Age" of India (6th-8th Centuries A.D.)
- 19: Growth of Regionalism and "Feudalism"
- 24: Harsha and Pulakesin: North vs. South
- 26: THANKSGIVING
- 31: Deccan and the South: Conflicts

November

- 2: Tripartite Struggles for Supremacy: Pala (Bengal) - Pratihara (North) - Rashtrakuta (Deccan)
- 7: The Great Periods of the South: Pallavas and Cholas
- 9: Regional States in the East, West, and South
- 14: Rise of Islam and Two Phases of Conquest in India: Sind and North West
- 16: Ancient India and Outside World: Cultural Impacts in Central Asia and Southeast Asia
- 21: Society: Ideology and Institutions
- 23: Varna-Jati (caste) and Ashrama Systems
- 28: Family: Women: Education
- 30: Religion: Hinduism

December

- 5: Religion: Buddhism and Jainism  
7: Religion: Folk Elements and Tantra  
12: Art: Iconography, Sculpture and Painting  
14: Architecture - Temples

- NOTE: 1. First Term Paper due on Tuesday, the 10th October.  
2. Second Term Paper due on Thursday, the 16th November.  
3. Honors Paper due on Tuesday, the 7th December.

Final Examination: (Take-home) due on Thursday, the 14th  
December.