

# *Asian Civilizations: Traditions, to 1500*

History 1210  
Benjamin Cohen, Professor  
Fall 2017, 3 Credits  
BEH, Rm. 101. 10:45-11:35 (MWF)

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*This course fulfills the Humanities Exploration requirement.*

## *Course Description*

This course offers an introduction to the history of Asia, including South Asia, China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia. The course also touches upon the Silk Road as well as the Indian Ocean. The time period covered varies by region, but can be as early as 2500 BCE to 1500 CE. The course introduces students to some of the major religious and philosophical traditions of Asia including Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism, and Daoist beliefs. Readings are drawn from primary sources whereby students will be expected to do close readings, and from secondary sources (books and articles) that provide broader contexts.

## *Course Objectives*

At the end of the course, the student will be able to identify the major historical outlines of the Asian civilizations described above.

## *Teaching and Learning Methods*

This course is predominantly a lecture course. Some topics lend themselves more to discussion, so students will be expected to come prepared and to participate. Ideas broached in discussion are as likely to be on a quiz as those from the readings or lectures. In addition to lecture and discussion, the course has quizzes and writing assignments. If we do not finish a topic in lecture, regardless, you are responsible for the material – in other words, keep up with the reading.

## *Evaluation Methods and Criteria*

Students will be evaluated through writing assignments, exams, quizzes, and class participation.

## *Course Assignments*

The course has the following assignments:

Quizzes 1-6: each 10.8%

Primary source analysis: 15%

Article review: 15%  
Attendance and participation: 5.2%

Numerical grades have the following letter equivalent. A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-62.

Students may ask to have a grade reconsidered. A typed and signed explanation must be accompanied by the original graded work within three days of when the assignment was returned. Grades are subject to being raised or *lowered*.

### ***Letters, friends, and e-mails***

Students often need letters of recommendation. I will not write a letter unless you have a "B" average or higher in the course, and this is your second course with me, having received a "B" or better in the first course.

Please do not "friend" me through any social media websites - I will not respond. Please do not tweet or blog about the contents of the course - your words could have serious consequences for yourself, the class, and the professor.

E-mail is the best way to reach me. If you do not receive a reply from me within 36 hours, try again! E-mail is good, but never perfect.

### ***Required texts***

*When Asia was the World*. Stewart Gordon. Da Capo Press, 2008.

*Global India circa 100 CE*. Richard Davis. Association for Asian Studies, 2009.

Other readings available through Canvas.

In Canvas, primary source readings are grouped into a single PDF for each region. Articles are listed by title.

### ***Calendar, topics, readings, and assignments***

Week 1:

Introductions.

On "Asia" and "civilization"

Week 2:

The monsoon and "monsoon Asia"?

Early South Asia

*Global India circa 100 CE*. pp. 1-30

Week 3:

Early South Asia

*Global India circa 100 CE*. pp. 31-62.

South Asia readings on Canvas: "Of Human Bondage", "The Four Noble Truths", "The Similie of the Chariot", "The Bodhisattva", "Joy in All Things"

**Quiz 1.**

Week 4:

Early China

China readings on Canvas: "Excerpts from the *Lotus Sutra*", "Selections from the Mencius."

**Primary Source Material Distributed in Class.**

Week 5:

Sui and Tang China

*When Asia was the World.* pp. 1-20.

China readings on Canvas: "Memorial on the bone of Buddha"

**Quiz 2.**

Week 6:

South Asia to the Delhi Sultanate

*When Asia was the World.* pp. 75-95.

*When Asia was the World.* pp. 97-116.

South Asia readings on Canvas: "The Man of Taste and Culture."

**Primary Source Analysis Due**

Week 7:

South Asia continued; Early Korea and Japan

Japan readings on Canvas: all: No. 1-17.

**Week 8: Fall break. No class.**

Week 9:

**Quiz 3 on Wednesday.**

Week 10:

Song China and the Mongols

China readings on Canvas: "Su Shi: Memorial to Emperor Shenzong"

Week 11:

Mughal India

*When Asia was the World.* pp. 137-156.

South Asia readings on Canvas: "Prophets and Kings", "Kingship is Incompatible with Religious Ideals."

**Quiz 4.**

Week 12:

Yuan China and Japan

**Article Review Due.**

Week 13

Korea and Southeast Asia

*When Asia was the World.* pp. 57-74.

Korea readings on Canvas: all: "Royal Preface..." and "Primer for Youth"

Article: "Southeast Asia in World History."

**Quiz 5.**

Week 14:

Korea and Southeast Asia continued.

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Week 15:

Ming China; the Indian Ocean

*When Asia was the World*. pp. 117-136.

Week 16:

The early modern era; conclusions; review.

### **Quiz 6.**

### ***Faculty Responsibilities, ADA Statement, and Accommodation:***

Student Names and Personal Pronouns<sup>11</sup> Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name as well as "Preferred first name" (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account). While CIS refers to this as merely a *preference*, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class, on papers, exams, etc. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes (and update CIS) so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun will be respected.

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. Faculty must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-12.3, B. Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-10, II.

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations."  
([www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/](http://www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/))

"Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience. For more information, please consult the University of Utah's Accommodations Policy, which appears at: [www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf](http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf)."

The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.

[This syllabus was prepared in accordance with the Undergraduate Council Syllabus Guidelines, 2008.]