

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & CLASSICS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

HISTORY 427 /627-A1

TOPICS IN INDIAN HISTORY

STATE AND SOCIETY IN INDIA 500 BCE-300 CE

(T 09:00-11:50 at T 2-32)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This Period sees the formation and consolidation of first state and empire and the spread of state formation on the Indian subcontinent. Taking the example of the Mauryan and its contact with other polities this course will address various dimensions of the social basis of early state formation. It will empirically examine the extent to which forces of diversity could be harnessed to make the first experiments of centralization of political power possible both at the pan-Indian and regional levels. Topics for the Seminar will include reading parts of the *Arthasastra*, the first Indian text on state-craft and the first imperial Edicts of emperor Ashoka as symbols of state power.

This is a Seminar Course. It requires bi-weekly readings and written reports based on these readings.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Name: Aloka Parasher-Sen

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appointment

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Preferred form of communication: e-mail

BOOKS – LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE FOR THIS COURSE

GENERAL READING: For those students who need an Introduction to Ancient India

Romila Thapar, *The Penguin History of Early India from Origins up to 1300 AD*, Penguin Books India, Delhi 2003. This book is strongly recommended for *those without much background*. **It may be purchased or available on RESERVE at Rutherford.**

Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India, From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*, Pearson Longman, Pearson Education, Delhi 2008, Paperback edition 2009. **It may be purchased or available on RESERVE at Rutherford.**

A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India: A Survey of the Culture of the Indian Sub-continent before the coming of the Muslims*, Picador Paperback, 2003 [3rd revised edition, New York, Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968. First published London, 1954.

It may be purchase or available on RESERVE at Rutherford

Jha, D. N. *Early India: A Concise History*, Manohar Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 2004. **Available at Rutherford**

BIBLIOGRAPHY for the Course[All of the following Available at RUTHERFORD]

ESSENTIAL READING:

Romila Thapar, *Ashoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, Oxford India Paperbacks, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1998 reprint This provides *an empirical foundation* for this course. **Text book for this course and ordered for purchase in the**

Bookstore. Also on RESERVE at Rutherford

Romila Thapar, *Mauryas Revisited* ([Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar lectures on Indian history. 1984](#)). Published for Centre for Studies in Social Sciences by K.P. Bagchi & Co Calcutta, 1987. Provides *a re-interpretation of the nature of Mauryan state* as empire

Book on Reserve at Rutherford

R. P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra*, (Translated and Edited), Parts I-III, 2nd edition, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi 1986 *Essential reading of select parts of the text.* **Book**

on Reserve at Rutherford

E. Hultzsch, *Inscriptions of Asoka*, (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, vol. 1), New Edition with 55 Plates, Indological Book House, Delhi 1969 *Essential reading of select inscriptions* **Book on Reserve at Rutherford**

RECOMMENDED READING:

B.B.Barua, *Asoka and his Inscriptions*, 3rd edition, New Age Publishers, New Delhi 1968-69

Romila Thapar, *From Lineage to State Social Formations in the mid-first millennium BC in the Ganga Valley*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1984. **Book on Reserve at Rutherford**

R. S. Sharma, *Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, 2nd revised and enlarged edition, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi 1968. **Book on Reserve at Rutherford**

A Comprehensive History of India, Published under the auspices of the Indian History Congress and Bharatiya Itihasa Parishad, Orient Longmans, Bombay 1957- Vol. 2 *The Mauryas and Satavahanas* **Book on Reserve at Rutherford**

Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalnik, Edited *The Study of the State*, Mouton Publisher, The Hague, 1978 and 1981

H. P. Ray *Monastery and Guild Commerce under the Satavahanas*, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1988

Aloka Parasher-Sen, 'Nature of Society and Civilization in Early Deccan', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 29, 4, 1992 **UofA online access to**
<http://www.sagepublication.com>

R. Shamasastri, (Translated) *Kautilya's Arthashastra*, (7th edition) Printing and Publishing House, Mysore, 1961

ADDITIONAL READING:

Roger Boesche, *The first great political realist: Kautilya and his Arthashastra*, Lexington Books, Langham, 2002

D. S. Naidu *Andhra Satavahanas: Origins, Chronology and History and History of the early rulers of the dynasty*, Bharath Publications, Vijayawada, 1970

Aloka Parasher-Sen, "Localities, Coins and the Transition to Early State in the Deccan", *Studies in History*, 23, 2, ns (2007), 231-269 Provides a re-interpretation of the nature of the Satavahana state in a regional context. **UofA online access to**
<http://www.sih.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/23/2/231>

B. P. Sahu *Iron and Social Change in Early India*, Oxford in India Readings. Debates in Indian History and Society, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006

EXAMINATIONS AND GRADING:

Active participation in class (includes bi-weekly reports to be presented electronically before each class or at the time of presentation – **See chart below** for details – 10% per report. See note below on UofA policy on plagiarism which applies to writing reports as well) 40 %

Mini-Paper (about 3 pages; to be submitted **on or before Oct. 27, 2009 by 2 pm** sharp) 10 %

Research Paper (about 10 pages; to be submitted **on or before Nov 24, 2009 by 10 am** sharp) 50 %

LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

There will be NO final examination in this Course

EXPLANATION ON ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

Active participation in class (includes bi-weekly reports to be presented electronically before each class or at the time of presentation) DETAILS AS GIVEN BELOW 40 %

S. No.	Author	Name of Article	Reading between	Report presentation Date
1.	S. Seneviratne	'The Mauryan State' in Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalnik, Edited <i>The Study of the State</i> , 1978	Sept. 8-22	Sept 22
2.	G. Fussman	Central and Provincial Administration in Ancient India: The Problem of the Mauryan Empire in Indian Historical Review, Vol. XIV, NOS. 1-2, 1987-88	Sept. 22- Oct.6	Oct. 6
3.	R. Thapar	State as Empire in Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalnik, Edited <i>The Study of the State</i> , 1981	Oct. 6-20	Oct. 20
4.	A. Parasher-Sen	'Of Tribes Hunters and Barbarians: Forest Dwellers in	Oct. 20-Nov.	Nov. 3

	the Mauryan Period' Studies in History, 14, 2, 1998	3	
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Topic for Mini-Paper is on the theme: "Understanding State Formation"

Mini-Paper (about 3 pages; to be submitted on or before Oct. 27, 2009 by 2 pm sharp) **10**

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Topic for Research Paper on the theme: "Nature of Mauryan State" **50%**

Research Paper (about 10 pages; to be submitted on or before Nov 24, 2009 by 10 am sharp)

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON GRADES:

Grades for all assignments and the final grade will be assigned according to the descriptions of the various grades in the official grading system of the University of Alberta as given below. Any questions about the system may be addressed to the Instructor before the Assignments are submitted

POLICY ABOUT LATE ASSIGNMENTS IN THIS COURSE:

Late Assignments will NOT be accepted.

ON PARTICIPATION IN CLASS:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in a seminar. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.4.2 and 23.4.3 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the "participation" component of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Policy about course outlines can be found at [§ 23.4\(2\) of the University Calendar](#).

2. “The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour, see http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/gfcpolicymanual/content.cfm?ID_page=37633 and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003).
3. Students MUST make themselves aware of the university regulations concerning plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation of facts and participation in an offence. IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE. Students MUST read the section on inappropriate academic behaviour of the code available at <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/gfcpolicymanual/policymanualsection30-3-2.cfm>
4. The instructor will follow to the letter the procedures set in section [30.5.4](#) in respect to Inappropriate Academic Behavior.
5. All students should consult the “Truth-In-Education” handbook or Website (<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>) regarding the definitions of plagiarism and its consequences when detected. Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” Students in languages courses should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, excessive editorial and creative help in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences. An instructor who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. Before unpleasantness occurs consult <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>; also discuss this matter with any tutor(s) and with your instructor.

APPENDIX – U OF A GRADE SYSTEM

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7

Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Poor Minimal Pass	D+	1.3
	D	1.0
Failure	F	0.0

Explanation on Conversion from percentage to Letter Grades:

All assignments are graded out of 100. To arrive at the final grade, the final percentage value is converted to a letter grade as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point Value	
A+	90-100	4.0	
A	85-89	4.0	
A-	80-84	3.7	
B+	76-79	3.3	
B	72-75	3.0	
B-	68-71	2.7	
C+	64-67	2.3	
C	60-63	2.0	
C-	56-59	1.7	
D+	52-55	1.3	
D	50-51	1.0	
<i>Failure</i>	F or F(R)	0-49	0.0

Note: F(R) denotes eligibility of a student to apply for a re-examination of a course.