

*The University of British Columbia*

ASIAN STUDIES 100  
INTRODUCTION TO TRADITIONAL ASIA

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Asian Centre 409

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T 11-1300

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(put ASIA 100 in subject line)

2016 term 1

section 001

MWF 1100

BUCH D 217

section 002

MWF 1400

MW BUCH B 213

F BUCH A 203

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Asian Studies 100 is an introduction to the history and cultures of Asia from the earliest period to *circa* 1200 CE.

In order to survey the history and culture of several great Asian civilizations, Asian Studies 100 will be organized into seven broad 'topics'. While these topics follow a generally chronological sequence, the objective of each topic is to show the distinct nature of various Asian civilizations while also developing comparative themes that link the study of often very different peoples and cultures. In general, each topic in Asian Studies 100 will see how Asian civilizations responded to generally similar problems: sometimes very differently, but often with surprising similarities.

Asian Studies 100 will in the first instance focus on the core civilizations of India and China. It will show how these two foundation civilizations became linked and how Asia became, over time, one 'system' of economic, social and cultural exchange. In other words, Asian Studies 100 will show how east, south, central and southeast Asia became, to some degree parts of one 'place'. At that point, perhaps, we can say that there really was an *Asia* that is more than a geographical abstraction.

Asian Studies 100 will examine the impact of the core civilizations of India and China on the other peoples of Asia: China on central Asia, Korea, Japan and Vietnam; India on central Asia, Tibet and southeast Asia. The high cultures of India and China were models of civilization that were copied, adapted and ultimately transformed. Hence, Asian Studies will end with the start of the development of the many separate nationalities of Asia. At this point it might be said that we can see the beginnings of the Asia of our era.

Our area of inquiry is far too broad for any kind of complete summary of the academic field that usually constitute Asian Studies (i.e., language, literature, religion, philosophy, history, and the performing arts). Thus, the course will adopt a case study and sampling approach whereby issues and themes in the seven topics will be illustrated with material from varied fields of knowledge.

Asian Studies 100 offers a 'taste' of many aspects of several Asian civilizations. Our task is quite daunting if one considers the breadth and depth of what might be included in an introductory course such as ours. Think of it this way:

*Asian Studies 100 is a starting point.*

## COURSE FORMAT AND COURSE MATERIALS

- Asian Studies 100 is a lecture course in which each lecture will contain considerable content that will be the subject to examination. Attendance is obviously important and strongly encouraged; however, I leave the decision to attend or not entirely to students' mature decision.
- Each lecture will be illustrated with considerable graphic content (maps, extract from sources, art, etc.) in addition to the general structure of the lecture and summary main points. Each lecture (the 'slides') will be available in digital format (.pdf) online on the Asian Studies 100 *UBC Connect* site, to which all registered students have access. Some initial orientation to this site will be provided at the start of term; if students have difficulties please see Fran, your instructor. This digital content will be reasonably self explanatory, but it is *not* the entire content of a lecture.

NOTE: the lecture 'slides' and all other digital content described below can be printed out as students' desire; the entirety of the online material constitutes the textbook for Asian Studies 100. Please note, however, that this content is, for publication and citation purposes, only a draft textbook in the process of creation.

- Asian Studies 100 is organized around a sourcebook for the course, *Converging and Diverging*, prepared by your instructor, and available online by chapter/topic. This sourcebook will provide the essential substantive content for the course and will be discussed in class lectures. The sourcebook will also be essential for the short essay written assignment.
- Each topic, or main section of a topic, will have an online document, *Names, Terms, etc.*, being the key vocabulary for the topic, or main section thereof, and covering all the course content discussed in the class lectures. This will form the basis of the objective (multiple choice) sections of midterm quizzes and the final examination.
- Each topic, or main section of a topic may contain short essays, entitled *At Issue*, discussing main issues and historical/cultural problems relevant to the topic section. *At Issue* discussions will be linked to course lectures. Note that this is an ongoing project by your instructor.
- All other course materials, including the course outline, short essay assignment, study questions and certain technical issues (such as the problems of transliteration of Asian languages) will be available online.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm Quiz #1	20 %	after topic 2 date tba
Midterm Quiz #2	20 %	after topic 4 date tba
Short Essay Assignment	20 %	due last day of class
<i>Final Examination</i>	40 %	date tba

### NOTES ON EXAMINATIONS:

The midterm quizzes will be objective and include multiple choice, short answers and perhaps a map test (in order to fight geographical illiteracy!) in quiz #1.

The final examination will be one quarter objective and three quarters written answers.

## COURSE INFORMATION

- The instructor welcomes students in her office at nearly any time beyond the formal office hours. Come and drop by! If I'm too busy I'll tell you to go away. Don't take offense!
- The instructor will answer reasonably succinct inquiries by email, but not questions that require writing an essay in response. I'd rather see you in person and by that means get to know you individually. Sorry, no telephone consultations.
- If you have particular difficulties that are preventing you from completing the written assignment and/or the course, please see the instructor in her office. Perhaps I can help.
- Papers will be tolerably written in terms of grammar etc. I can't be very generous if I can't understand your writing.
- Papers will have correct and adequate citation. However don't over cite. Keep Web citations to a sensible minimum. Just because you can cut and paste I don't want to see extraordinarily lengthy html addresses. Articles found in electronic copies of print journals can be cited as print journals.
- Although the use of internet sources is one of the features of Asian Studies 100, nevertheless considerable care should be taken in evaluating and using internet sources. The online course materials will contain links to some very useful sites, just click on them. For papers, I do not want to see citations to sites maintained by religious or political enthusiasts or propagandists, rank amateurs who can cut and past and steal from other sites, other Profs' course notes (especially!), and the Wikipedia. While I *do* love the Wikipedia, it is more a guide to 'facts' and their sources than a source to be cited. Use it with caution.
- Plagiarism will result in either failure of the assignment, failure of the course or worse depending on the situation. Don't do it. If I don't catch it, eventually somebody will.



YAKSHI HANGING FROM MANGO TREE; SANCHI GREAT STUPA; 2<sup>ND</sup> C. BCE

## OUTLINE OF COURSE TOPICS

Preface: *'Which Asia?, Where?, When?': Defining our Subject*

- A. Time and Place
- B. Physical Regions vs. Culture Regions
  - 1. mountains and sea
  - 2. 'monsoon Asia'
  - 3. culture regions in time

Topic One: *Antiquity: Myths, Histories and Rituals*

- A. Antiquity: Vedic India
  - 1. Mohenjo-Daro/Harappa civilization
  - 2. The Aryan 'invasion'?: Vedic peoples and literatures
  - 3. The Vedic Gods
- B. China of Antiquity
  - 1. From myth to history: the Shang civilization
  - 2. Chou dynasty and the problems of the Warring States
  - 3. The early Classics

Topic Two: *Seekers, Sages and Philosophers*

- A. Religious and Philosophic Speculation in India
  - 1. Speculations: Upanishads
  - 2. Speculations: Buddhism
    - a. the Buddha
    - b. the Dharma
    - c. the Sangha
  - 3. Morality and law: *dharma*
- B. Chinese Thought
  - 1. The Moral and Ethical World
    - a. Confucius: life and time
    - b. Confucius: teachings
    - c. Mencius and morality
  - 2. Speculations: Taoism
    - a. texts
    - b. Chuang-tzu
  - 3. Legalism

Topic Three: *Early State and Society*

- A. India in Maurya Times
  - 1. Brahmanic society and the state
  - 2. Ashoka and the *Dharmic* state
  - 3 The Science of Statecraft: Kautilya
- B. Unification and Expansion and the Early Chinese State
  - 1. Unification: the First Emperor
  - 2. The Han dynasty
  - 3. Imperial Expansion
  - 4. The Court Society

Topic Four: *Contacts: Towards an Asian World*

- A. China reaches westwards
- B. Trade and Knowledge
  - 1. Asia and Europe
  - 2. the 'Silk Road'
  - 3. China and Japan
- C. The Passage of Buddhism
  - 1. travels: Buddhist pilgrims
  - 2. the great translation: China and Buddhism

Topic Five: *Heroes, Gods and Saviors*

- A. Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism
  - 1. Gods and Goddesses in Hinduism
  - 2. Hindu Synthesis: the *Bhagavad Gita*
  - 3. Mahayana Buddhism
- B. Popular Religions in Central Asia and China
  - 1. Central Asia
  - 2. China: Buddhism and Religious Taoism

Topic Six: *Classical Civilizations*

- A. India of the Gupta Age
  - 1. Political History
  - 2. Literatures
  - 3. Art
- B. China of the T'ang Dynasty
  - 1. Political History
  - 2. Literatures
  - 3. Art

Topic Seven: *Expansions and Transformations*

- A. Tibet and Southeast Asia
  - 1. Tibet
  - 2. Southeast Asia Before Islam
  - 3. The Khmer Civilization
- B. Korea and Japan
  - 1. Early Korea
  - 2. Early Japan: Heian civilization
  - 3. Buddhism in Korea and Japan



EASTERN ZHOU BRONZE RITUAL VESSEL; BEFORE 500 BCE?