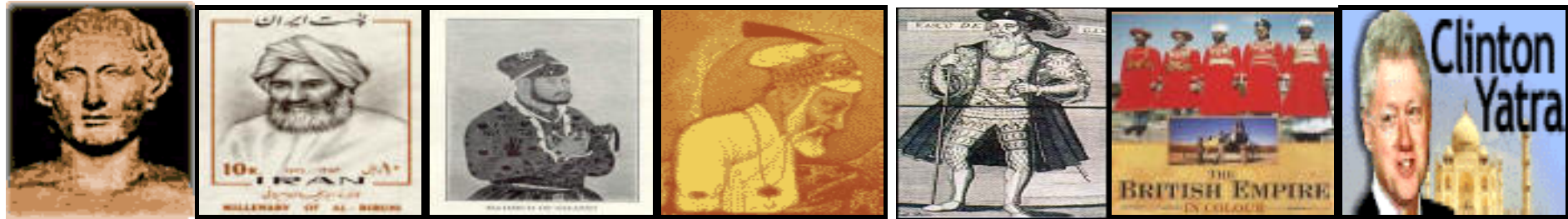


## Exploring India: From Alex to Bill



### **Class meetings:**

Xyzdays 00:00-00:00pm, classAddress

### **Instructor:**

Pankaj Jain, [Pankaj-Jain@UIowa.edu](mailto:Pankaj-Jain@UIowa.edu), 402, Gilmore Hall  
Office hours: 10:00-12:00pm, Wednesdays or by appointment

## ***Course Description***

Journey into India's "discovery" by the western world from the times of Alexander to the recent visits by Bill Clinton and Bill Gates. We will study how Indic traditions received and in turn influenced the non-Indic cultures of various culture. Our first milestone in this journey will be Alexander's arrival in western India before the Common Era. Next in our time line will be the encounters of Indians with Middle-Easterners in the medieval periods, followed by European missionaries and other colonial powers. Our final destination will be contemporary western scholarship about India and Hinduism. Bon Voyage!

## ***Goals and Objectives***

Today, we live in a global economy. But economic interdependence is not by themselves sufficient to create a universal human community. For this we require a human consciousness of community, a sense of inter-cultural relationship. One of the ancient countries India has interacted with many different cultures over its history and this course traces some such examples. The objective is to develop an understanding of how cultural exchanges occurred in the past and what we can learn from such examples.

## ***Course Requirements***

### **Weekly postings**

Students will post to the course bulletin board (accessible through [WebCT](#)) a response to the weekly readings. Responses should be about one page in length. These submissions are a required part of the coursework. Content is more important than form; you should try to avoid spelling and grammar mistakes, but your postings are not expected to be polished essays. In referring to source material of any kind, you should make specific references using appropriate forms of citation.

## **Final Papers**

A term paper of about fifteen pages is due at the final day of the course. Students are encouraged to collaborate with each other in developing topics and exploring resources, although the final papers must of course be written by individual students. Class participants will develop different broad areas ranging from any of the historic cultural encounters covered in the course. Each student will post to the course bulletin board a paper topic by the fourth week of the course, including an indication of the topic area in which it belongs, and will then post the first draft of the paper by the mid-term. These postings are in addition to the required weekly postings to the bulletin board.

## **Grades**

Grades will be assigned as follows: Weekly 1-page reading responses (due before each class) and class participation (together, 20% of grade); mid-term examination (25% of grade); term-long paper (first draft due in week 7, 10%; final draft due week 14, 20% of grade); final examination (25% of grade).

## **Course Readings**

### **• Texts**

The following books are required for the course, and are available for purchase at University Book Store. Copies are also available on reserve at the Main Library.

### **• Other Required Readings**

Certain materials will be handed out in class. These are indicated on the course syllabus with an asterisk (\*)

### **• Additional Resources**

Readings that may be helpful but are not required are listed with other readings for the weeks to which they most closely pertain, and are indicated with a triple asterisk (\*\*\*)

## **Schedule of Meetings**

Tuesday, September 3

- Introduction

Tuesday, September 10

- Greek encounters: Megasthenese records, who visited the Court of Chandragupta Maurya (B.C.322-297)

Links: [Ancient world contacts](#)

Readings:

1. Eastern Religions and Western Thought by S Radhakrishnan (OUP), Chap. 4
2. Plato and the Upanishads by Vitsaxis, Basile, published by New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1977 (\*\*\*)

Tuesday, September 17

- Middle-eastern encounters

Readings:

1. Al-Beruni's India by Arvind Sharma

2. The history of India, as told by its own historians; the Muhammadan period; the posthumous papers of H. M. Elliot by John Dowson (\*\*\*)

Tuesday, September 24

- European missionary encounters

Links: [Vasco Voyage](#)

Readings:

1. Much Maligned Monsters by Partha Mitter, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1977
2. Empires of the Monsoon: A History of the Indian Ocean and Its Invaders by Richard Seymour Hall, HarperCollins Publishers; Jan 1998 (\*\*\*)

Tuesday, October 1

- Orientalist Accounts

Reading:

1. Orientalism and Religion by Richard King
2. Heathen in his blindness by S Balagangadhara, Leiden ; New York : E.J. Brill, 1994 (\*\*\*)

Tuesday, October 8

- Colonizing India

Readings:

1. India discovered: the achievement of the British Raj By John Keay Leicester: Windward, 1981

Tuesday, October 15

- Indology of late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century

Readings:

1. The Study of Hinduism (Studies in Comparative Religion, University of South Carolina) by Arvind Sharma

Tuesday, October 22

- India and USA

Readings:

1. [American Thinkers and India](#)