HUM 2410: ASIAN HUMANITIES
Instructor: John Hardin
LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND STUDY QUESTIONS

SECTION ONE - INDIA

“SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA BEFORE 1200” (CHAPTER 1)

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the art and architecture of the Indus civilization
2. Explain how Buddhist beliefs were reflected in the art and architecture of ancient India and Southeast Asia
3. Explain how Hindu beliefs were reflected in art and architecture in ancient India and Southeast Asia
4. Identify the materials and formal strategies ancient Indian and Southeast Asian artists employed to represent Hindu and Buddhist themes
5. Differentiate between southern and northern style Hindu temples
6. Describe Southeast Asia’s contributions to Hindu and Buddhist art and architecture
7. Discuss the influence trade exerted on art and architecture in ancient India and Southeast Asia
8. Identify examples of intercultural contact within India and Southeast Asia, and between Asian and other ancient civilizations.

Study Questions

- How old are the ruins of the first cities of the Indus Valley?
- Which Western cultures are mentioned in the opening of the chapter? Are these familiar; if so, how?
- Which excavated sites give us the greatest insight into ancient Indus civilization and what do they reveal?
- What important artifacts are discussed in the "Indus civilization" section?
- Who were the Aryans?
- Describe the social structure during the Vedic and Upanishadic periods.
- Define samsara, karma, moksha, chakra, jatakas and dharma.
- What are the Vedas and the Upanishads?
- Who was Chandragupta Maurya?
- Who was Ashoka and what legacy did he leave?
- What are the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path?
- What three sects of Buddhist thought are discussed in this chapter?
- What lakshanas distinguish the Buddha from monks and bodhisattvas?
- What does the Great Stupa at Sanchi symbolize and what purpose/function does it serve?
- What is a chaitya hall?
- What are yakshis and yakshas?
- When were canonical images of the Buddha formulated and what features do they include?
- What significance do the Caves of Ajanta hold for the study of ancient Indian art?
- What are three of the most important Hindu deities discussed and what does each represent?
- How are the Hindu deities typically depicted in visual art?
- What is the garbha griba?
- What architectural features are most recognizable in Nagara and Dravida style temples?
- What are rathas?
- What medieval Hindu temples are discussed in this chapter and where is each located?
- How are Hindu artworks, like the Shiva as Nataraja in the Naltunai Ishvaram Temple, treated; what are they understood to be?
• What Sri Lankan sculpture is illustrated and discussed in this chapter?
• What is Borobudur; what does it represent and what purpose does it serve?
• What is considered to be the most spectacular monument erected by the Khmer kings?

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY: HINDUISM (video – these will also be distributed as an in-class worksheet)

• Where and when did Hinduism originate?
• What does the term *Aryan* signify in an Indian context?
• What did ancient Aryans show great control over – what is “one of their greatest achievements”?
• What is the *Brahman*?
• What is the title of the Vedic sacred texts?
• What did the eighth-century Hindu philosopher and theologian Shankara believe about “reality”? What did he see as the goal of human existence?
• Who was Ramanuja? How did his views differ from Shankara’s?
• What did Ramanuja see as being “the body of God”?

• What are the *Vedas* and what language are they composed in?
• What are *dharma, karma, artha* and *moksha*?
• What is the ultimate, although quite distant, goal/objective in Hinduism?
• What are the three disciplines that Krishna revealed in the *Bhagavad-Gita*?
• Who is the supreme deity in Hinduism?
• What similarities between Hinduism and Christianity are discussed in the video?
• What is an *avatar* in Hinduism?
• What is *yoga*? What has come through in Western practice, and what has largely been left behind?
• What animal is considered to be sacred in Hinduism?
• What is one of the most widely observed and popular celebrations in Hinduism and when is it usually celebrated?
• What great modern practitioner of nonviolent resistance is discussed towards the end of the video and what significant role did he play in the history of India?

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY: BUDDHISM (video – these will also be distributed as an in-class worksheet)

• Who can follow the path towards Buddhahood and who has the potential for enlightenment?
• What is a Bodhisattva?
• Who was Queen Maya?
• What was Siddhartha doing when he achieved enlightenment?
• What sorts of spiritual practices were being practiced in the time of Siddhartha and how did his “way” differ?
• In which countries does Buddhism have the strongest influence?
• What does Buddhist teaching seek to solve?
• What is *dukkha*?
• What is *nirvana*?
• What is the term in Buddhist thought for the natural law that governs the spiritual world?

• What are the primary aims of meditation in Buddhist practice?
• What is possibly the best known meditation is Buddhism – what is the focus of this meditation and what is the goal?
• What are the Five Precepts? Are these familiar; if so, how so?
• What five additional precepts are Buddhist monks and nuns required to follow?
• What is the Pali canon?
• What form of Buddhism developed in Japan and who was its founder?
What is one of the most important practices in this Japanese form of Buddhism?
Who is likely the best known Buddhist living in the world today and what does he represent?
What are some of the most important and fundamental beliefs and principles in Buddhism?

“SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA AFTER 1200” (CHAPTER 2)

Learning Objectives
1. Describe the movement of Islam across the Indian subcontinent
2. Explain Indian architectural conventions and their relationship to religious practice
3. Discuss the impact of the Mughal empire on the art of India
4. Explain the circumstances surrounding the construction of the Taj Mahal
5. Describe the artistic and architectural achievements of the dynasties following the Mughal
6. Explain the role that the British played in Indian politics and artistic endeavors from colonization through Indian independence
7. Discuss Buddhist beliefs and the religion’s impact on art and architecture in Thailand and Burma
8. Describe the relationship between Vietnamese and Chinese ceramic traditions

Study Questions
- Who was Muhammad of Ghor?
- What is the name of Delhi’s first mosque and what significant piece of architecture is located there?
- What significance did the city of Vijayanagara have in the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries?
- Who were Babur, Humayan, and Akbar?
- Who was Bichit?
- What was the original purpose of the Taj Mahal?
- What was one of the most popular subjects for Rajput paintings?
- Some of the largest temple complexes in India emerged during what period?
- When was the East India Company established?
- Which English queen was proclaimed “Empress of India” in the late nineteenth century?
- Which building is seen as being “one of the most enduring monuments of British rule” in India?
- Describe how Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar appears in the portrait included in this chapter.
- Who was Mahatma Gandhi?
- Briefly describe the major demographic changes that occurred in southeast Asia during the second millennium.
- What period is considered “the golden age of Thai art”?
- What is the name of the most important Buddhist monastery in Sukhothai?
- Which two Thai statues of the Buddha are discussed in this chapter?
- What is the Shwedagon Pagoda and where is it located?
- What Vietnamese art form is discussed in the this chapter?