

PIA2040: HISTORY AND SOCIETY IN ASIA

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

History and Society in Asia

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

2040

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AIS2040 History and Society in Asia

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course is designed to provide students with a foundational overview of the histories of South and Southeast Asia by looking at the circulation of peoples' ideas and objects throughout the region from the pre-modern period to the early

20th century. The lectures and readings are divided into thematic and chronological sections focusing primarily on the movements of traders, religions, and material items between South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe. The course provides students with a contextualized view of Asian History and not simply a collection of dates and names to be memorized.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 Identify and describe major dynamics affecting Asia from pre-modern times to the establishment of nation-states		x	x	
2 Explain the impact of European expansion and colonialism on contemporary Asia		x	x	
3 Compare and contrast Western colonialism, Asian Imperialism, and Inter-Asian relations		x	x	x
4 Analyse the role of religion and ethnicity in shaping Asian societies		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures: the instructor will present concepts, theories and case studies on Asian history, politics, and social change	1	
2	Oral presentations: students will work in groups to lead class discussions and structure question and answer sessions on relevant topics	2	
3	Critical analysis: students will submit individually prepared written assignments	4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Seminar participation and presentations	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
2	Coursework	1, 2, 3, 4	50	-	No
3	Quizzes on lectures	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Attendance and Discussion

Criterion

Active and informed participation in class/class etiquette

Presence and communication

Organization and quality of material presented

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking reflected in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, as well being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good ability to think conceptually reflected in class discussions group participation, written work, and in the quiz. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and have a broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyze material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials as shown in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

Marginal (D)

Evidence of limited comprehension of the lectures or reading materials. The student was marginal in class discussions. Limited participation in discussions, and group work. The course-work was of a low standard and the quiz result was weak. Student has a very limited grasp of key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and the theories used to explain them have not been understood.

Failure (F)

Little or no effort put into the course. The student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyze issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and the related theories. The students has missed a number of classes and participated little,

if at all, in class discussions and group activities. Course-work, if submitted, has been of a poor standard or plagiarized. The quiz result was poor.

Assessment Task

Individual course-work

Criterion

Completion of readings and writing assignments.

Application and demonstrated comprehension of theories and approaches covered in the course.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking reflected in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, as well being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good ability to think conceptually reflected in class discussions group participation, written work, and in the quiz. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and have a broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyze material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials as shown in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

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Evidence of limited comprehension of the lectures or reading materials. The student was marginal in class discussions. Limited participation in discussions, and group work. The course-work was of a low standard and the quiz result was weak. Student has a very limited grasp of key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and the theories used to explain them have not been understood.

Failure (F)

Little or no effort put into the course. The student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyze issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and the related theories. The students has missed a number of classes and participated little, if at all, in class discussions and group activities. Course-work, if submitted, has been of a poor standard or plagiarized. The quiz result was poor.

Assessment Task

Quizzes

Criterion

Quality and demonstration of knowledge gained from readings and lecture notes.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Evidence of excellent conceptual and critical thinking reflected in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Ability to comprehend and critique lectures and reading materials. Student is able to make sophisticated arguments and draw insightful conclusions about the key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, as well being able to extend the different theoretical models in a clear and precise manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of good ability to think conceptually reflected in class discussions group participation, written work, and in the quiz. Major themes of the lectures and readings are understood. Student is able to form plausible arguments and reasonably convincing conclusions about key issues and debates concerning colonialism, post-colonial societies, issues of identity, and other historical and contemporary dynamics discussed during the module, and have a broad understanding of the theories that underpin them.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Evidence of incomplete/marginal ability to analyze material presented in lectures and discussion groups. While the student has regularly attended class, performance has been below class average demonstrating only a general understanding of lectures and reading materials as shown in class discussions, group participation, written work, and the quiz. Student cannot make sustained arguments or reach convincing conclusions.

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Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Asia; history; colonialism;; trade; religion

Indicative Syllabus

- Introduction
- What is History? What is Asia?
- Prehistoric Asia
- Asian Religions and Their Cultures
- The Traditional Societies of Asia
- The Civilization of Ancient India
- Early and Medieval Southeast Asia
- Mughal India and Central Asia
- The West Arrives in Asia
- The Rise of British Power in India
- The Triumph of Imperialism in Asia
- Subjugation, Nationalism, and Revolution in China and India
- South Asia and Southeast Asia in the Modern World

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Andaya, B., 2006. Oceans Unbounded: Traversing Asia across 'Area Studies'. <i>Journal of Asian Studies</i> , 65(4) , pp. 669-690.
2	Anderson, B., 2006. <i>Imagined Communities</i> . London, New York: Verso, Introduction & Chp. 1: Cultural Roots.
3	Anderson B., 1990. Politics of Language and Javanese culture. In: <i>Language and power</i> . Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
4	Battuta, I., translated by Gibb, H. A. R., 1972. <i>The travels of Ibn Battuta</i> . London: Cambridge University Press, excerpts.
5	Dirks, N. B., 2001. <i>Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the making of modern India</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press, Part 1, The 'invention' of Caste.
6	Emmerson, 'D. K., 1984. Southeast Asia' : What' s in a Name?. <i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i> , 15(1), pp.1-21.
7	Federspiel, H. M., 1998. Islam and Muslims in the southern territories of the Philippine Islands during the American colonial period, 1898-1946. <i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i> , 29(2), pp. 340-56.
8	Geertz, C., 1980. <i>Negara: the theatre state in 19th century Bali</i> . Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chp. 1: 'Political definition: The Source of Order' .
9	Hardacre, H., 1989. <i>Shinto and the State, 1868-1988</i> . Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chp. 1 'The Modern history of relations between Shinto and the state' , pp.21-41.
10	Holcombe, C., 2010. <i>A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First century</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press, "Introduction: What is East Asia?" .
11	Juergensmeyer, M., 2008. <i>Global Rebellion</i> . Berkeley: University of California Press, selected sections.
12	Keyes, C., 1971. Buddhism and National Integration in Thailand. <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> , 30(3), pp. 551-567.
13	Kingsbury, D., 2009. <i>East Timor: the price of liberty</i> . New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.
14	Lieberman, V., 1993. Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies: Structuring Southeast Asian History, c. 1350-c.1830. <i>Modern Asian Studies</i> , 27(3), pp. 475-572.
15	McCargo, D., 1965. <i>Tearing apart the land</i> . Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 'Introduction' .
16	Raffles, T. S., 1965. <i>The History of Java</i> . Kuala Lumpur, New York: Oxford University Press, excerpts.
17	Reid, A., 2007. Muslims and Power in a plural Asia. In: <i>Islamic Legitimacy in Asia</i> . New York: Routledge, pp. 1-13.
18	Ruoff, K., 2010. <i>Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire's 2,600th Anniversary</i> . Cornell University Press, "Chapter 3: Imperial Heritage Tourism"
19	SarDesai, D. R., 2010. <i>Southeast Asia: past and present</i> . Boulder, Co: Westview Press.
20	SarDesai, D. R., ed., 2006. <i>Southeast Asian History: essential readings</i> . Boulder, Co: Westview Press, selected chapters.
21	Scott, J., 1985. <i>Weapons of the Weak</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press.
22	Winichakul, T., 1994. <i>Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation</i> . Honolulu University of Hawaii Press, 'Introduction' .
23	Wolters, O. W., 1999. <i>History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian perspectives</i> . Singapore: ISEAS, Chp. 2, 3, and post-script I.
24	Asian Civilization Museum, Singapore. Available at: http://www.acm.org.sg/home/home.asp

25	Asian Reading Room, The Library of Congress with Digital Projects, Databases, and Online Publications). Available at: http://www.loc.gov/rr/asian/
26	KITLV' s Image database (Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies). Available at: http://www.kitlv.pictura-dp.nl
27	Peranakan Museum, Singapore. Available at: http://www.peranakanmuseum.sg/home/home.asp
28	"Selected Maps and Views of Macau from the Collections of the Geography and Map Division," Library of Congress, covering the period from 1665 to 1991. Available at: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/macau/macau.html
29	The Hong Kong Story, Hong Kong Museum of History. Available at: http://hk.history.museum/index.php
30	Early Modern Resources on Asia. Available at: http://earlymodernweb.org/category/regions/asia
31	Macau WWW Virtual Library. Available at: http://newton.uor.edu/Departments&Programs/AsianStudiesDept/macau-hist.html
32	The Silk Road Virtual exhibition. Available at: http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/exhibit/index2.html
33	'Virtual' version of an exhibition of 2002, focusing on trading contacts between European and Asian countries from 1600 (British Library). Available at: http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/features/trading/home.html