

GE I

Delhi through the Ages: The Making of its Early Modern History

Course Objective:

The objective of the paper is to teach students about the changes in the city of Delhi from its early inception to the eighteenth century. The course teaches how the city grew into one of the largest cities in the world and was the capital of some of the great empires of its time. As the capital of these empires, Delhi profited from continuous immigration, state patronage and a vibrant cultural life. But the course also wants students to learn that the city was not merely dependent upon its rulers for cultural and political sustenance. It focuses on Sufis, litterateurs and merchants who also gave the city its unique character and resilience in the face of political turbulence. Other than recourse to readings the course tries to acquaint students with Delhi through project work and introspection of Delhi's presence and its uneasy relationship with its past.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course the student shall be able to:

- Analyse different kinds of sources -- archaeological, architectural and a variety of textual materials.
- Use these materials and correlate their sometimes discordant information.
- Analyse processes of urbanization and state formation.
- Describe the difficulties in appropriating narratives of the state with the history of particular localities.

Course Content:

Unit I: Between Myth and History -- Delhi's Early Pasts: Indraprastha, Lalkot

Unit II: From settlements to cityscape – Understanding the Many cities of Delhi

Unit III: Delhi's 13th and 14th Century settlements

Case study of **any two**: 1) Dehli-ikuhna's *masjid-ijami* (old Delhi/Mehrauli), 2)

Siri, 3) Ghiyaspur-Kilukhri, 4) Tughluqabad, 5) Jahanpanah, and 6) Firuzabad

Unit IV: Shajahanabad: Qila Mubarak (Red Fort) as a site of power and the morphology of the city.

Unit V: 18th century Delhi: political upheaval and social empowerment – complicated understandings of 'decline'.

ESSENTIAL READINGS AND UNIT WISE TEACHING OUTCOMES:

Unit 1: This unit will introduce students to the early history of Delhi, focusing on Indraprastha and the Tomara and Chauhan constructions. **(Teaching Time: 2 weeks Approx.)**

- Richard J. Cohen, “An Early Attestation of the Toponym Ḍhillī”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 109 (1989), pp. 513-519.
- Singh, Upinder. (2006). *Ancient Delhi*, Delhi: Oxford University Press

Unit 2: This unit will study the proverbial ‘seven cities of Delhi’, focusing primarily on Sultanate settlements. It will discuss the possible reasons for the shift of capitals, how settlements of the 13th century gradually appeared as conjoined cities under the Tughluqs, and the differences between these urban spaces.**(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Ali, Athar. (1985). “Capital of the Sultans: Delhi through the 13th and 14th Centuries”, in R.E. Frykenberg, ed., *Delhi Through the Age: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 34-44
- Habib, Irfan. (1978). ‘Economic History of the Delhi Sultanate -- an Essay in Interpretation’, *Indian Historical Review* vol. 4, pp. 287-303.
- Kumar, Sunil. (2011). “Courts, Capitals and Kingship: Delhi and its Sultans in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries CE” in Albrecht Fuess and Jan Peter Hartung.(eds.).*Court Cultures in the Muslim World: Seventh to Nineteenth Centuries*, London: Routledge, pp. 123-148
- Kumar, Sunil. (2019) ”The Tyranny of Meta-Narratives; Re-reading a History of Sultanate Delhi”, in Kumkum Roy and NainaDayal.(Ed.).*Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories: A Festschrift for Romila Thapar*, Aleph Book Company, pp 222-235.

Unit 3: This unit will study any two of the six sites in Delhi in detail. Students will be encouraged to use the readings mentioned below and correlated to the teaching units in the course content to plan field trips.**(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Flood, Finbarr B. (2008). “Introduction” in Finbarr B. Flood, *Piety and Politics in the Early Indian Mosque*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. xi-lxxviii

- Jackson, Peter. (1986). 'Delhi: The Problem of a Vast Military Encampment', in: R.E. Frykenberg (ed.). *Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture, and Society*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.18-33.
- Haidar, Najaf. (2014). 'Persian Histories and a Lost City of Delhi', *Studies in People's History*, vol. 1, pp. 163–171
- Pinto, Desiderios.j.. (1989). "The Mystery of the Nizamuddin Dargah: the Account of Pilgrims", in Christian W. Troll, ed., *Muslim Shrines in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 112-124.
- Kumar, Sunil. (2019) "The Tyranny of Meta-Narratives; Re-reading a History of Sultanate Delhi", in Kumkum Roy and NainaDayal ed, *Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories: A Festschrift for Romila Thapar*, Aleph Book Company, pp 222-235.
- Aquil, R. (2008). "Hazrat-i-Dehli: The Making of the Chishti Sufi Centre and the Stronghold of Islam." *South Asia Research* 28: 23–48.
- Welch, Anthony and Howard Crane. (1983). "The Tughluqs: Master Builders of the Delhi Sultanate": *Muqarnas*, vol. 1 pp. 123-166.
- Flood, Finbarr B. (2003). "Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the past in Sultanate Delhi" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, No. 43, Islamic Arts, pp. 95-116.
- Anand Taneja, 'Saintly Visions: Other histories and history's others in the medieval ruins of Delhi' *IESHR*, 49 (2012).

Unit 4: This unit will study the Qila Mubarak (Red Fort) in detail as the site of power under Shah Jahan. It will also focus on Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) as a mercantile and cultural centre.**(Teaching Time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Chandra, Satish. (1991). "Cultural and Political Role of Delhi, 1675-1725", in R.E. Frykenberg, *Delhi through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 106-116.
- Gupta. Narayani. (1993). "The Indomitable City," in Eckart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft, eds., *Shahjahanabad / Old Delhi: Tradition and Change*. Delhi: Manohar, pp. 29-44.
- Koch, Ebba. (1994). "Diwan-i' Amm and ChihilSutun: The Audience Halls of Shah Jahan". *Muqarnas*, vol. 11, pp. 143-165.
- Rezavi, Syed Ali Nadeem, (2010). "'The Mighty Defensive Fort': Red Fort At Delhi Under Shahjahan -- Its Plan And Structures As Described By Muhammad Waris." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 71, pp. 1108–1121.

Unit 5 This unit will discuss the complicated developments in Shahjahanabad in the 18th century. The 'decline' in the authority meant turbulence, perhaps, in the city, but it

also empowered new groups of people and created a cultural and social dynamism that was embraced and seen as a challenge by different types of people. **(Teaching Time: 4 weeks Approx.)**

- Alam, Muzaffar. (2013) “Introduction to the second edition: Revisiting the Mughal Eighteenth Century” in *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab 1707-1748*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp.xiii-lxiv
- Atallah. (2006-2007). “Mapping 18th Century Delhi: the cityscape of a pre-Modern sovereign city” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 67 pp. 1042-1057.
- Chenoy, Shama Mitra. (1998). *Shahjahanabad, a City of Delhi, 1638-1857*. New Delhi: MunshiramManoharlal Publishers.
- RaziuddinAquil, (2017) “Violating Norms of Conduct” in *The Muslim Question: understanding Islam and Indian History*, Delhi: Penguin Random House, pp. 133-156.

SUGGESTED READINGS:

- Anthony Welch, ‘A Medieval Center of Learning in India: the Hauz Khas Madrasa in Delhi’, *Muqarnas*, 13 (1996): 165-90;
- Anthony Welch, ‘The Shrine of the Holy Footprint in Delhi’, *Muqarnas*, 14 (1997): 116-178;
- Asher, Catherine B. (2000). “Delhi Walled: Changing Boundaries” in James D. Tracy, *City Walls: the Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 247-281.
- Bayly, Christopher Alan. (1986). “Delhi and Other Cities of North India during the ‘Twilight’”, in *Delhi through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture, and Society*, edited by Robert Eric Frykenberg, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 221–36.
- Blake, Stephen Blake. (1985). “Cityscape of an Imperial City: Shahjahanabad in 1739”, in R.E. Frykenberg, *Delhi through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 66-99.
- Blake, Stephen P. (1991). *Shahjahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Chandra, Satish. (1991). “Cultural and Political Role of Delhi, 1675-1725”, in R.E. Frykenberg, *Delhi through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 106-116.
- Hasan, S. Nurul. (1991). “The Morphology of a Medieval Indian City: A Case study of Shahjahanabad”, in Indus Banga, (Ed.). *The City in Indian History*, Delhi: Manohar, pp. 87-98.

- Hasan, Zafar. (1922). *A Guide to Nizamu-d Din*. New Delhi: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India #10
- Matsuo, Ara. (1982). “The Lodi Rulers and the Construction of Tomb-Buildings in Delhi”. *Acta Asiatica*, vol. 43, pp. 61-80.
- Moosvi, Shireen. (1985) “Expenditure on Buildings under Shahjahan—A Chapter of Imperial Financial History.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 46 pp. 285–99.
- Page, J.A. (1926). *An Historical Memoir on the Qutb*. New Delhi: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India #22
- Page, J.A. (1937). *An Memoir on Kotla Firoz Shah, Delhi*. New Delhi: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India #52
- Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, (2001). “A True Beginning in the North” and “A Phenomenon called ‘Vali’” in *Early Urdu Literary Culture and History*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 109-126, 129-142.
- Shokoohy, Mehrdad. (2007). *Tughluqabad: a paradigm for Indo-Islamic Urban planning and its architectural components*. London: Araxus Books.
- Singh, Upinder. ed., (2006) *Delhi: Ancient History*, Delhi: Social Science Press

Teaching Learning Process:

Classroom teaching supported by group discussions or group presentations on specific themes/readings. Given that the students enrolled in the course are from a non-history background, adequate emphasis shall be given during the lectures to what is broadly meant by the historical approach and the importance of historicising various macro and micro-level developments/phenomena. Interactive sessions through group discussions or group presentations shall be used to enable un-learning of prevailing misconceptions about historical developments and time periods, as well as to facilitate revision of issues outlined in the lectures. Supporting audio-visual aids like documentaries and power point presentations, and an appropriate field-visit will be used where necessary.

Assessment Methods:

Students will be regularly assessed for their grasp on debates and discussions covered in class. Two written submissions; one of which could be a short project, will be used for final grading of the students. Students will be assessed on their ability to explain important historical trends and thereby engage with the historical approach.

Internal Assessment: 25 Marks

Written Exam: 75 Marks

Total: 100 Marks

Keywords:

Myth, history, settlements, cityscape, morphology, social empowerment, Delhi, urbanisation