POLITICAL CHANGE IN SOUTH ASIA

The course considers major political changes in South Asia from a range of analytical perspectives. It examines colonial rule, nationalism, and postcolonial state-formation; democratic and authoritarian tendencies in postcolonial politics; the dynamics of mass politics and social conflict; mobilization along the lines of ethnicity, religion and gender, and its varying consequences; and the determinants and impact of socio-economic change and policy. The literature on South Asian politics is discussed in the context of debates in comparative politics and in other sub-fields and disciplines.

Readings

Extensive readings are drawn from the following texts, which are available for purchase at the bookstore.


Of the other required readings, some will be available on MyCourses (and these are marked with an (M) in front of them), and others in a reader that can also be purchased at the bookstore, or accessed at the reserve desk at Redpath Library. Copies of the few selections which are not part of the reader will also be made available at the reserve desk of the library.

No prior knowledge of South Asian politics is assumed. Those wanting more background information may find it useful to consult:

Neil DeVotta, ed., An Introduction to South Asian Politics (Routledge, 2015)

Course Requirements

Students are required to write a note (four to five pages long, double spaced and typewritten) on a substantial amount of the required readings for any week of their choice; do the readings before the class in which they will be discussed; participate actively in class discussions; make two class presentations - one on some of the required readings for a week of their choice, and another regarding their term papers towards the end of the term; and write a 20 to 25 page research paper concerning an important aspect of South Asian politics. Students should choose the readings about which they plan to make class presentations early in the term. The paper topic may be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The notes on the readings will be due in class the week after we discuss the relevant readings. The paper will be due on December 4, the last day of classes for the term. The recommended readings are meant to help students begin to explore issues relevant to their paper topics in greater depth.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

Grading

The grades will be determined in the following way:

Note on Readings  20%
Presentations & Class Participation  20%
Paper  60%

Aside from being worth 20% of the marks, class participation will influence the grades in cases where students are on the borderline between two letter grades.

Plan of the Course

Sept 6: Introduction

I Communities and Nations Under Colonial Rule


**Recommended:**

M.N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India*: 1-45
Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947*
David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*
Sumit Sarkar, “The Decline of the Subaltern in Subaltern Studies” in *Writing Social History*, p. 82-108.
Lloyd & Susanne H. Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition*: 3-14, 17-293
Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*
D.A. Low, ‘Introduction’ to Low (ed.), *Congress and the Raj*: 1-45
Richard Fox, *Gandhian Utopia: Experiments With Culture*: 1-60, 84-168, 265-277
II Institutions, Political Parties and Democracy


Recommended:

III State Formation, Social Coalitions and Authoritarianism


Ayesha Jalal, Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective: Intro, p. 1-121


Recommended:

Ayesha Jalal, The State of Martial Rule, Chs. 3-5
Francine Frankel, `Compulsion and Social Change: Is Authoritarianism the Solution to India's Economic Development Problems?’ in Atul Kohli (ed.), The State and Development in the Third World: 143-168

IV Determinants and Consequences of Economic Change


(M) Aseema Sinha, `Rethinking the Developmental State Model: Divided Leviathan and Subnational Comparisons in India’, Comparative Politics 35.4 (July 2003): 459-476

(M) Prerna Singh, `Subnationalism and Social Development: A Comparative Analysis of Indian States’, World Politics 67.3 (July 2015): 506-562


Bina Agarwal, A Field of One's Own: Gender and Land Rights in South Asia: 198-259, 276-291 [77]  [p. 1-50, 260-275, 368-378, which were in the earlier reader, have been deleted from the readings; check which other pages can be accommodated in new reader instead]

Recommended:

Pranab Bardhan, The Political Economy of Development in India
Francine Frankel, India's Political Economy: 1947-1977, Chs. II-VI
Ronald Herring, Land to the Tiller: The Political Economy of Agrarian Reform in South Asia
John Echeverri-Gent, The State and the Poor: Public Policy and Political Development in India and the United States
Rehman Sobhan, The Crisis of External Dependence: The Political Economy of Foreign Aid to Bangladesh, Chs. 1-2, 6-7 (p. 1-57, 146-201)

V Religion and Secularism


(M) Christophe Jaffrelot, `India’s Democracy at 70: Toward a Hindu State?’ Journal of Democracy 28.3 (July 2017): 52-63


Recommended:

Peter van der Veer, Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India
Sanjay Ruparelia, “Rethinking Institutional Theories of Political Moderation: The Case of Hindu Nationalism”, Comparative Politics 38.3 (April 2006)


**VI Ethnicity and Pluralism**


(M) Kanchan Chandra, 'Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability', *Perspectives on Politics*, No. 3 (May 2005): 235-252

(M) John D. Huber & Pavithra Suryanarayan, 'Ethnic Inequality and the Ethnification of Political Parties: Evidence from India’, *World Politics* 68.1 (January 2016): 149-188


**Recommended:**

Paul Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Experience*
Myron Weiner, *Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India*: 3-65, 349-371
Sanjib Baruah, *India Against Itself*

**VII Ethnicity, Secession and Collective Violence**


Recommended:


Stanley Tambiah, Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Politics and Collective Violence in South Asia


Paul Brass, The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India

Ashutosh Varshney, Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India

Steven Wilkinson, Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India

Veena Das, ´Our Work to Cry: Your Work to Listen’ in Veena Das (ed.), Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia, p. 69-93


Neil Devotta, Blowback: Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

Jonathan Spencer (ed.), Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict

VIII Structures of Dominance, Emerging Alternatives: Caste and Subordination


(M) Yoginder Sikand, `Islam and Caste Inequality Among Indian Muslims', Qalandar: Islam and Interfaith Relations in South Asia


(M) Narendra Subramanian, `From Bondage to Citizenship: Dalit and African American Mobilization in Two Southern Deltas’

Recommended:

Marc Galanter, Competing Equalities: Law and the Backward Classes in India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984)
Christophe Jaffrelot, India’s Silent Revolution: The Rise of the Lower Castes in North India
Francine Frankel, & M.S.A. Rao (eds.), Dominance and State Power in Modern India, 2 vols.
Subrata Kumar Mitra, “Room to Maneuver in the Middle: Local Elites, Political Action, and the State in India’, World Politics (April 1991): 390-413
IX Structures of Dominance, Emerging Alternatives: Gender


Bina Agarwal, A Field of One's Own: 421-466 [on Reserve; can it be included in reader?] 


Narendra Subramanian, Nation and Family: 236-252


Recommended:

Amrita Basu, Two Faces of Protest: Contrasting Modes of Women's Activism in India, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992)
Ratna Kapur, Subversive Sites: Feminist Engagements with Law in India
Nov 15, 22, 29: Paper Presentations

Papers due: Dec 4