

Political Economy of South Asia

Winter Semester 2016-17

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Aims

South Asia comprises of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka. India dominates the region comprising more than 70% of the geography and 80% of the economy. The region remains mired in poverty. Many countries in this region are growing rapidly, and India has recently emerged as a rapidly growing emerging economy. India is the fastest growing major economy in the world. This phenomenon has shifted the attention of the world towards South Asia and India.

This class will explore what political economy is. First, in order to understand the political realm, we will think deeply about social power. Political relations are driven by the quest for power. The economy deals more with issues such as the creation and redistribution of wealth. Political economy, therefore, invites us to think about the economy in terms of social relations based on power. We would invite students to focus on concepts such as class, caste and gender relations, while thinking about social power and the economy of South Asia.

We will also concern ourselves with economic ideas that influence policy. First, whose economic policy ideas matter? Second, do the dominant economic ideas within the state matter for South Asia's development? Third, what is class and how does class interest make an impact on the politics of development? Finally, what is caste? Does caste as a source of social power make an impact on development? We will study development as a social process that deals with phenomena such as industrialization, agricultural development, gender equality and human development.

This class is concerned with South Asia. All South Asian country do not find the same place in the readings. Some countries are better researched than others. Students are encouraged to use the tools discussed in this class for understanding countries that have not been discussed at length.

Calendar & Syllabus

1. 26.10.2016

Social Power: First and the Second Face

This presentation will introduce the department and the class. It will explore two forms of social domination. We have to keep our eyes and ears open for exploring how they apply to South Asia.

Steven Lukes (2005). 'Power a Radical View,' in *Power: A Radical View*, Britain: Palgrave MacMillan, pp 14-25.

Supplementary

Robert A Dahl, *Who Governs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

2. 02.11.2016

Social Power: The Third Face

This presentation will introduce a third dimension of exercising power. How are these three dimensions different? Can we see their manifestations in social and political life in South Asia?

Steven Lukes (2005). 'The Three-Dimensional View,' in *Power: A Radical View*, Britain: Palgrave MacMillan, pp 25-59.

Supplementary

Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

3. 09.11.2016

Class and the State in Pakistan

How is class in post-colonial Pakistan different from the traditional Marxist understanding of class? We take a look at the class composition of the state in Pakistan.

Hamza Alavi, "The State and Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," *New Left Review* 1, 74 (July-August 1972), pp. 64-74.

Supplementary

Ayesha Siddiqi, *Military Inc: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy* (London: Pluto Press, 2007): 151-73.

Omar Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan: 1947-85* (London and New York: KPI, 1988).

4. 16.11.2016

Class and the state in India

Does the Indian state and its policies conform with traditional class analysis?

Pranab Bardhan, *The Political Economy of Development in India* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984): 40-53.

Supplementary

John Harriss (2010). 'Class and Politics', in Niraja Gopal Jayal and Pratap Bhanu Mehta (ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*, New Delhi: OUP pp. 139-153.

Manjusha Nair. 'Differences in Workers' Narratives of Contention in Two Central Indian Towns', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, No. 79 (2011), pp 175–194.

S Radhakrishnan (2011). "Gender, IT Revolution and the Making of a Middle-class India," in Amita Baviskar and Raka Ray, eds., *Elite and Everyman: The Cultural Politics of the Indian Middle Classes*, New Delhi: Routledge, pp. 193-219.

5. 23.11.2016

Policy Ideas and the State

Do we need to understand policy paradigms that come to dominate specialists within the state in South Asia? To what extent does class analysis need to be completed by looking more deeply at the state as a variable in policy analysis?

Rahul Mukherji, *Political Economy of Reforms in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), chapter 1.

Supplementary

Rahul Mukherji, *Globalization, and De-regulation: Ideas, Interests and Institutional Change in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), Chapter 1-3.

6. 30.11.2016

India's Industrialization

Arvind Panagariya, *India: The Emerging Giant* (New Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 94-109.

Sumit Majumdar, *India's late, Late Industrialization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 186-216.

Supplementary

I G Patel, *Glimpses of Indian Economic Policy: An Insider's View* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 38-48.

Nirmallya Kumar, *India's Global Powerhouses: How They Are Taking On the World?* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), pp. 157-76.

7. 07.12.2016

Industrialization in Bangladesh & Sri Lanka

India is not the only country in South Asia that has benefited from globalization. Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have important export oriented sectors and have benefited from economic growth. This makes South Asia a dynamic region.

David Lewis, *Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2011: 137-57.

Saman Kelegama, "Ready-made Garment Exports from Sri Lanka," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 39:4 (2009): 579-96.

Supplementary

D Michael Shafer, *Winners and Losers: How Sectors The Developmental Prospects Of States* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994): 143-83.

Mick Moore, "Leading the Left to the Right: Populist Coalitions and Economic Reform," *World Development* 25, 7 (1997): 1339-28.

8. 14.12.2016

Green Revolution

Majority of Indians live in the villages. The country experienced a draught that could have transformed itself into a full-blown famine in 1966. This possibility led to technological and agricultural investments, which have inspired the green revolution and made the country self-sufficient in food grains. Did farmer's politics play a role in the promotion of agriculture? What was the role of economists and foreign funding in this story? Agricultural growth had declined in the new millennium, and the government has increased investments in that sector. While this lecture is focused on India, it would be good to think comparatively about South Asia.

Ashutosh Varshney, *Democracy, Development and the Countryside: Urban-Rural Struggles in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 80-112.

Gail Omvedt, “Farmer’s Movements and the Debate on Poverty and Economic Reforms in India,” in Raka Ray and Mary F Katzenstien, eds., *Social Movements in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 183-198.

Supplementary

S Akbar Zaidi, *Issues in Pakistan Economy* (Karachi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005): 24-31.

Arvind Panagariya, *India: The Emerging Giant* (New Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008): 311-25.

9. 21.12.2016

Information Technology – Back-Office of the World

If China is the “workshop” of the world, India is its “back office.” India’s globalization became evident when it became a major provider for information technology services for the major fortune 500 companies of the world. Over time, much of this work could be carried out in India using the Internet. How did this transformation occur? Was it driven by a certain class or by the state that wanted to become competitive?

AnnaLee Saxenian, “Bangalore: The Silicon Valley of Asia?” in Rahul Mukherji, ed., *India’s Economic Transition* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 359-382.

Supplementary

Dinesh C Sharma, *The Long Revolution: The Birth and Growth of India’s IT Industry* (New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2009): chapter 7-8.

Nirmalya Kumar, *India’s Global Powerhouses: How They Are Taking on the World* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2009): 65-82.

Vibha Pingle, *Rethinking the Developmental State* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999).

10. 11.01.2017

Caste

How does the social institution of caste lead to the projection of power in South Asian society? Is the village a site of exploitation? How is migration contributing to the distribution of social power in the village? What is the impact of the corporate sector and economic reforms on lower caste groups?

Surinder S. Jodhka (2012). 'Caste as Power', in *Caste: Oxford India Short Introductions* (New Delhi: OUP, 2012), pp. 33-67.

Supplementary

Sumit Ganguly and Rahul Mukherji (2011). 'Political Mobilization in India' in *India Since 1980*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 109-40.

Kanchan Chandra (2000). "The Transformation of Ethnic Politics in India: The Decline of Congress and the Rise of the Bahujan Samaj Party in Hoshiarpur", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 59,1 (2000): 26-61.

Lakshmi Iyengar, Tarun Khanna and Ashutosh Varshney (2011). Caste and Entrepreneurship in India, Working Paper 12-028, Harvard Business School.

11.18.01.2017

Gender

Gender has been a source of power and discrimination in South Asia. Can we think systematically about why this has been the case? Are middle class women any better off in South Asia?

Bina Agarwal, "Gender and Land Rights Revisited," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 3, 1-2 (2003): 184-224.

Supplementary

Naila Kabeer (2011). "Between affiliation and autonomy: navigating pathways of women's empowerment and gender justice in rural Bangladesh." *Development and Change*, 42.2: 499-

Bina Agarwal (1997). "Bargaining" and Gender Relations: Within AND Beyond the Household, *Feminist Economics* 3(1), 1997, 1–51.

C Lynch (2007). *Juki Girls, Good Girls: Gender and Cultural Politics in Sri Lanka's Global Garment Industry*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007, pp. 20-49.

A Sen. 'Many Faces of Gender Inequality.' *Frontline*, Vol. 18, Issue 22 (Oct. 27 - Nov. 09. 2001). <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl1822/18220040.htm> .

Nazli Kibria. 2009. "Culture, Social Class, and Income Control in the Lives of Women Garment Workers in Bangladesh," in Louise Edwards and Mina Roses, eds., *Women in Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 265-82.

12.25.01.2016

Human Development

This lecture will describe India's lack of progress in creating a literate population. Are there any social reasons for it? Is India overcoming some of these problems? This poses a challenge both for economic growth and human development in India. India's situation is quite characteristic of all South Asian countries other than Sri Lanka.

Myron Weiner, *The Child and the State in India* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991), 3-18.

Rahul Mukherji, *Political Economy of Reforms in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Supplementary

Jean Dreze and Reetika Khera, "The Battle for Employment Guarantee," in Reetika Khera, ed., *The Battle for Employment Guarantee* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 43- 80.

Sanjay Ruparelia 2013. India's New Rights Agenda: Genesis, Promises, Risks. *Pacific Affairs* 86,3 (2013): 569-590.

Nandan Nilekani, *Imagining India: Ideas for the New Century* (New Delhi: Allen Lane, 2008), pp. 185-208.

13.01.02.2017

India and China

This lecture will assess the strengths and weaknesses of India's economic policies initiated after 1991 in relation to China's. This is a comparative class where India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh's trajectories will be assessed in relation to class, state, industrialization, agricultural development and gender relations. Further comparative reflections on India and China will help us understand the South Asian context more comparatively.

Yasheng Huang, *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 266-298.

Supplementary

Pranab Bardhan, *Awakening Giants, Feet of Clay: Assessing the Economic Rise of India and China* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010): Chapter 10.

14. 08.02.2017

Exam: The question paper will be given out on February 1, 2017, after class. The exam on February 8 will be a closed book exam. MA students will answer three questions, and BA students will answer two questions.

Prior Requirements

This class does not require any prior knowledge of South Asia. What is required is a commitment to South Asia and to social theory. The instructor and the lecturers are happy to work with students. Students are required to go through the readings mentioned just below the titles. This is essential for taking the exam. The supplementary materials are further readings for students who want to learn more about a particular topic.

Organization

The Vorlesung will be a 90-minute lecture with discussions wherever possible. I encourage students to ask questions, even though lecturing will be the main component of the class. Questions and comments make for a lively class both for the lecturer and the pupils. Otherwise, the class becomes boring. I will use slides, which will come with lecture notes.

The lecture slides and essential readings will be uploaded on Moodle. The supplementary material will be available in the library reserves. Following the lecture and essential readings will earn you a good grade. If you go into the supplementary material as well, that will be impressive. There is no limit to how much you can learn from this class. I have pointed to additional resources in the following section titled: Scholarly Resources.

Students who desire a “Schein” must register on Moodle by the second week after the lecture begins (9 November 2016).

Assessment

Attendance in the Vorlesung is voluntary for those who do not wish to get a ‘Schein’ at the semester’s end. For others, attendance is compulsory. BA students will take a 90-minute exam on February 8, and MA students will take a 120-minute exam on the same day. The exam paper will be given out on February 1. The week between

February 1 – February 8 can be used for preparation. There will be a closed book exam on February 8.

Students who do not attend the exam will receive no grade, unless they have a good excuse. Such students are required to submit a paper within a week. MA students will have to write a 4500 to 5000 - word paper. BA students should turn in a 3000 to 3500 - word paper. The right to turn in such a paper is not automatic. I will need to be convinced that circumstances beyond the student's control led to the student's absence at the time of the exam.

Scholarly Resources

These resources are not required for taking the exam. However, if you are deeply interested in politics, political economy and South Asia, these journals will allow you to go deeper.

Journals: The journals given below are scholarly in nature. They often carry papers on the political economy of South Asia. You can go to their web sites if you are keen to learn more about this class.

Economic and Political Weekly: <http://www.epw.in/>

Journal of Development Studies

World Development

Pacific Affairs

Asian Survey

Contemporary South Asia

India Review

Seminar: <http://www.india-seminar.com/>

Himal: <http://himalmag.com/>

Contemporary South Asia

Journal of South Asian Development

Journal of Asian Studies

Leading newspapers: Economic Times (India), The Hindu (India), Dawn (Pakistan), Indian Express (India), Daily Star (Bangladesh), Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka), Ceylon Today (Sri Lanka), Daily News (Sri Lanka), The Himalayan Times (Nepal).