

Course Title: Nation, Religion and Secularism in India (Seminar Course)

Course Teacher: Pralay Kanungo

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Winter 2020/21

Monday: 11am (CATS/010.00.01)

Enrolment Key for Moodle: secu20K

India, despite being overwhelmingly Hindu, is a multireligious, multicultural, multiracial and multilingual nation. Hence, soon after independence, it has consciously and wisely decided not to make India a Hindu State and adopted secularism as one of the foundational principles of its Constitution and governance. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, has been instrumental in defining the secular contours of the Indian state with his strong proclivity towards modernity, rationality, scientific temper and composite culture. However, as religion has been deeply rooted in everyday life and intersected every sphere of life - social, economic, cultural and political - the Indian state could not completely stay away from religion; thus, its secularism guaranteed equal treatment to all religions (*Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava*). Hindu Nationalism, which claims India as a Hindu Nation, has been a strong critic of Nehruvian secularism. With its ascendancy to hegemonic position in Indian politics, the secular India has received a severe jolt as the Indian state became overtly Hindu in many ways.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be on the basis of three criteria:

- a) Attendance and Participation
- b) Class Discussion
- c) Final Term Paper (Presentation and Submission)

Each student is expected to attend classes regularly and proactively participate in discussion and Q&A, besides going through the recommended readings before each class.

Term papers are to be 5000-6000 words in length (3000- 4000 words for BA students) including footnotes and references.

Each student will be given 20 minutes to present the term paper which will be followed by Q&A.

The deadline for submission of the term paper is **February 22, 2021**. Please send an email to A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman mostafiz@uni-heidelberg.de if you want to join this class.

Course Schedule

Class 1: 02 November 2020

Introduction

Readings:

Pippa Norris, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, Cambridge University Press, 2011(Introduction).

Marc Galanter, 'Secularism, East and west. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol 7, Issue 2, January 1965, pp. 133-159.

Supplementary Reading:

Michael Warner, Jonathan Van Antwerpen, and Craig J. Calhoun. 2010. *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (Introduction).

Class 2: 09 November 2020

Nation, Religion and Secularism

Readings:

Mark Juergensmeyer, 2008. *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to al-Qaeda*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (Introduction).

Peter van der Veer (2008) 'Religion, Secularism, and the Nation', *India Review*, 7:4, 378-396.

Rajeev Bhargava. 2007. "The Distinctiveness of Indian Secularism." In *The Future of Secularism*, ed. T. N. Srinivasan, 20–53. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Supplementary Reading:

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd and Cady Linell. 2010. *Comparative Secularism in a Global Age*. Basingtoke: Palgrave (introduction)

Class 3: 16 November 2020

Religion, Secularism and the Indian State

Readings:

Gurpreet Mahajan. 2002. "Secularism as Religious Non-Discrimination: The Universal and the Particular in the Indian Context." *India Review* 1 (1): 33–51.

Ralph Buultjens, India: 'Political Legitimacy, and the Secular State', *ANNALS, AAPSS*, 483, January 1986, pp. 93-109

Class 4: 23 November 2020

Secularism in India: Discourses and Practices - I

Essential Readings:

Ashis Nandy,. 1995. "An Anti-secularist Manifesto." *India International Centre Quarterly* 22 (1): 35–64.

T. N. Madan. 1998. "Secularism in Its Place." In Rajeev Bhargava, ed., *Secularism and Its Critics* (Delhi: Oxford University Press)

Arun Shourie. 1993. *A Secular Agenda*, Delhi, ASA Publication (Introduction).

Class 5: 30 November 2020

Secularism in India: Discourses and Practices - II

Essential Readings:

Rajeev Bhargava, ed., *Secularism and Its Critics* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), Section IV, "Secularism in India: The Recent Debate," (Select Chapters)

Christophe Jaffrelot, 'The Fate of Secularism in India' Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019.

Class 6: 07 December 2020

Class Discussion

Class 7: 14 December 2020

Class Discussion

Class 8: 11 January 2021

Secularism and the Indian Judiciary

Essential Readings:

Ronojoy Sen. 2010. *Articles of Faith: Religion, Secularism, and the Indian Supreme Court*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press (Introduction).

Saumya Saxena (2018) 'Court'ing Hindu nationalism: law and the rise of modern Hindutva, *Contemporary South Asia*, 26:4, 378-399

Flavia Agnes. 2019. "Aggressive Hindu Nationalism: Contextualising the Triple Talaq Controversy." In *Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism Is Changing India*, eds. Angana P. Chatterji, Thomas Blom Hansen, and Christophe Jaffrelot, 335–51. London: Hurst & Company.

Class 9: 18 January 2021

Secularism and Hindu Nationalism

Essential Readings:

Brenda Cossman and Ratna Kapur. 1996. "Secularism: Bench- Marked by Hindu Right." *Economic and Political Weekly* 31 (38): 2613–30.

John Harriss, Craig Jeffrey, and Stuart Corbridge, "Is India Becoming the 'Hindu Rashtra' Sought by Hindu Nationalists?" *Simons Papers in Security and Development* no. 60, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University (December 2017)

Gyan Prakash. 2007. "Secular Nationalism, Hindutva and the Minority." *In The Crisis of Secularism in India*, eds. Anuradha Dingwaney Needham and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, 177–89. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Class 10: 25 January 2021

Hindu Majoritarianism

Essential Readings:

Christophe Jaffrelot, 'India's Democracy at 70: Toward a Hindu State?,' *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 28, Number 3, July 2017, pp. 52-63

Kanchan Chandra, 'The Triumph of Hindu Majoritarianism,' *Foreign Affairs*, November 23, 2018.

Amrita Basu, 'Whither Democracy, Secularism, and Minority Rights in India?', *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 16:4, 2018: 34-46

Supplementary Readings:

Class 11 01 February 2021
Presentation of Term Paper

Class 12 08 February 2021
Presentation of Term Paper

Class 13 15 February 2021

Concluding Class

Class 14 – February 22 – Submission of the Term Paper