

Course Title: Religion and Politics in India (Seminar Course)
Course Teacher: Pralay Kanungo
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Winter 2019/20
Monday: 9-11am (CATS/010.00.01)
Key for Moodle: RPI 9708

Religion and politics are increasingly getting intertwined worldwide. In South Asia, religion is deeply rooted in everyday life and intersects every other sphere - social, economic, cultural and political. Hence, it is common to witness an interplay of politics and religion in public sphere. Despite being religious and overwhelmingly Hindu, India consciously made a choice to adopt secularism as a foundational principle of its Constitution in order to give politics an autonomous space and minimize the role of religion in politics and governance. But this experiment faced continuous challenge from the ideologues and practitioners of Hindu nationalism. As Hindu nationalism gradually came from periphery to the centre stage of Indian politics, and became hegemonic, the secular India received a severe jolt as the Indian state became overtly Hindu in many ways. In this context, this seminar course will engage with the following topics:

- Religion and Politics in contemporary times
- Religion and Politics in South Asia
- Colonialism, Communities and Identities
- Secularism in postcolonial India
- Evolution and ascendancy of Hindu nationalism
- Majoritarian discourses and Practices
- Hindutva redefines India

Class 1: 21 October 2019

Introduction

Class 2: 28 October 2019

Religion and Politics in Contemporary Times

Essential Readings:

Jeffrey Haynes, *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, London [etc.] : Routledge, 2009.

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

Supplementary Readings:

Jeffrey Haynes, *Religion in Global Politics*, London: Longman, 1998.

Francois Foret, *Religion and Politics in the European Union: The Secular Canopy*, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Étienne Balibar, G. M. Goshgarian, *Secularism and Cosmopolitanism: Critical Hypotheses on Religion and Politics*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2018

Daniel Nilsson DeHanas and Marat Shterin, 'Religion and the Rise of Populism,' *Religion, State and Society*, no. 3, 2018: 177–185.

Ben Raderstorf and Missy Reif, 'A New Trend of Religious Populism in Latin America?', *Dialogue*, April 9, 2018.

Class 3: 04 November 2019

Religion and Politics in South Asia: Colonial and Postcolonial

Readings:

Ali Riaz, *Religion and Politics in South Asia*, London [etc.]: Routledge, 2010

Rita Manchanda (ed.), *States in Conflict with Their Minorities: Challenges to Minority Rights in South Asia*, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2010.

Supplementary Readings:

Radhakumud Mookerji, *Nationalism in Hindu Culture*, Bibliolife, 2009.

Jacqueline Hirst and John Zavos, *Religious traditions in modern South Asia*, Taylor & Francis, 2011 (Select Chapters).

Ishtiaq Ahmed, *The Politics of Religion in South and Southeast Asia*, London [etc.]: Routledge, 2011 (Chapters on South Asia).

Class 4: 11 November 2019

Religion and Politics in India I: Colonialism, Communal Identities and Partition

Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in North India*, OUP, Third Edition, 2012 (Introduction).

Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. California University Press, 1994 (Select Chapters).

Supplementary Readings:

Gerald Larson, *India's Agony over Religion*, SUNY Press, 1995.

Ian Talbot and Gurharpal Singh, *The Partition of India* (New Approaches to Indian History), Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Class 5: 18 November 2019

Indian Secularism: Discourses and Practices

Essential Readings:

Rajeev Bhargava, "What Is Indian Secularism and What Is It For?," *India Review*, 1, no. 1 (January 2002)

Ian Copland, 'What's in a name? India's tryst with secularism', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 48:2, 2010: 123-147

Supplementary Readings:

Omar Khalidi, Hinduising India: Secularism in Practice, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.29(8), 01 December 2008: 1545-1562

Class 6: 25 November 2019

Emergence of Hindu Nationalism: Ideology, Organization and Mobilization

Readings:

Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths*, Berg, 2001 (Select Chapters).

Pralay Kanungo, *RSS's Tryst with Politics: From Hedgewar to Sudarshan*, New Delhi, Manohar, 2002.

Ravinder Kaur, *Religion, Violence and Political Mobilisation in South Asia*, New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Publications, 2005 (Select Chapters)

Supplementary Readings:

Christiane Brosius, *Empowering Visions: The Politics of Representation in Hindu Nationalism*, Anthem Press, 2004.

Irfan Ahmed and Pralay Kanungo (eds.), *The Algebra of Warfare-Welfare: A Long View of India's 2014 Election*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2019 (Introduction).

Class 7: 09 December 2019**Hindutva Hegemony**

Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, Oxford University Press, 2005 (Introduction).

Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D Damle, *The R.S.S. A View to the Inside*, Penguin, 2018(Chap 1 and 2).

Supplementary Readings:

Daniela Berti, Nicolas Jaoul and Pralay Kanungo, *Cultural Entrenchment of Hindutva: Local Mediations and Forms of Convergence*, Delhi: Routledge (Introduction).

David Ludden, *Making India Hindu: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Oxford University Press, 2006.

Tanika Sarkar, 'Hindutva's Hinduism', in John Zavos, Pralay Kanungo, Deepa S. Reddy, Maya Warrier and R.B. Williams (eds), *Public Hinduisms*, Delhi: Sage, 2012.

Class 8: 16 December 2019**Majoritarian Discourses and Practices**

Essential Readings:

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

Angana P. Chatterji, Thomas Blom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot (eds.), *Majoritarian State. How Hindu Nationalism in Changing India*, London: Hurst & Company, 2019(Select Chapters)

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

Supplementary Readings:

Ashutosh Varshney, 'Hindu Nationalism in Power?', *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 25, Number 4, October 2014, pp. 34-45.

P. Rollier, K. Frøystad and A.E. Ruud. (eds.), *Outrage: The Rise of Religious Offence in Contemporary South Asia*. London: UCL Press, 2019 (Select Chapters).

Class 9: 13 January 2019**The Indian Context: Hindutva and the Idea of India**

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)

Achin Vanaik, *The Rise of Hindu Authoritarianism: Secular Claims, Communal Realities*, Verso, 2017 (Select Chapters).

Supplementary Readings:

Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017.

Michael Gottlob, 'India's Unity in Diversity as a Question of Historical Perspective,' *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 9, 2007: 779–789.

**Class 10 – January 20
Presentation****Class 11 – January 27
Presentation****Class 12 –February 03
Presentation****Assessment**

Assessment will be on the basis of three criteria:

1. Final Term Paper
2. Class Presentation
3. Attendance and Participation

Term papers are to be 5000-6000 words in length (3000- 4000 words for BA students) including footnotes and references. Term papers are due by 15 March 2020.

Each student will give a presentation on a topic for 15 minutes to be followed by Q&A.

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.