



Mahidol University
International College

ICIR 234 Perspectives on South Asia

Course Description & Aims:

This course will help students to understand the basic concept of economic development, social movements, democracy and political economy of South Asia. It also guides the students to understand contemporary history that shaped the South Asian region particularly after the Partition. The course assesses the relationship between South Asia and other major powers and role of India in the South Asian continent. It outlines the major transformations with Hindu nationalist party serving in the government. The course discusses the major current issues in the region with particular reference to the Indo-Pacific geopolitical issues.

The rise and fall of the Mughal Empire. Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs; the rise of European influence; the British raj; social and economic transformations; movements of religious reform and protest; the independence movement; economic and political developments since 1947. Students will understand; analyze; assess the importance of the Indian Sub-Continent in the world.

Lecturer: Dr. Ruchi Agarwal

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Assessment

Class attendance/participation	20%
Midterm exam paper	20%
Presentations of case studies	30%
Final paper & presentation	30%

Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Obtain understanding of basic concepts of economic development, social movements, democracy and political economy of South Asia
2. Understand contemporary history that shaped South Asian region especially after the Partition
3. Assess the relationship between South Asia and other major powers and role of India in the South Asian continent
4. Reinstated the major transformations with Hindu nationalist party serving in the government
5. Discuss the major current issues in the region with particular reference to the Indo-Pacific geopolitical issues

Topic No.	Topics
1	Introduction: What is India?
	The geo-body of India
2	Origins of Indian nationalism
	From Bengali Renaissance to Bengali radicalism. Case Study
3	Freedom Movement
	Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, S.C. Bose and M.A. Jinnah
4	Partition and the creation of two Pakistans
	Origins of Pakistan and Bangladesh
5	Post-Partition economic and social policies
	Gandhi's legacy and Nehrus' ideas
6	India is Indira
	Foreign policies of PM Indira Gandhi
7	Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian involvement in Sri Lanka
	The beginning of economic liberalizations
8	Hindu nationalists coming into power
	Deobandi madrasas and global Muslim networks. Case study
9	Non-Resident Indians and South Asia Diasporas
	Economic developments – problems and prospects
10	SAARC and attempts to South Asian regional integration
	Ongoing ethno-religious confrontations in South Asia
11	Contemporary issues in South Asia
	Case studies
12	Creation of “Indo-Pacific” geopolitical space
	Final exams

Assessment Methods & Criteria

1. Class attendance/participation 20%

Students will be assessed on their active participation in class discussions, doing peer reviews, and engaging in different class activities.

2. Midterm exam paper 20%

The Midterm exam will be short answer questions based on the knowledge gained during the first half of the trimester.

3. Case studies/ student presentations 30%

The class is a seminar based class requiring students to do short assignment with a purpose of keeping one's self updated with the current events. Students will also be required to prepare one position paper summarizing and commenting on the content of the assigned reading for the particular week. The purpose is to present the understanding of the readings and guide further class discussions. Presentations are expected to be either critically analyzing an argument or applying it to a certain case study.

4. Final exam paper & Presentation 30%

The final research report is where the students need to write a report based on a topic chosen earlier during the term. The research topics should be related to the contents discussed in the class. Potential topics will be suggested by the instructor during the term. A prior approval of the topic for the final research report is required. Students need to research the topic, explore and analyze the different perspectives related to the selected issue. Students can then formulate their own recommended solutions for the issue. The length of the report is expected to be between 10-12 pages with proper referencing. A draft copy of the report (at least 75% complete) has to be submitted by week 10. During week 11 and 12 (depending on the number of groups), the reports will be presented by each group in class.

Introduction: What is India? The geo-body of India.

Topic description: This week students will be introduced to the course outline, course requirements, and their expected input. It also introduces the concept, the geo-body and the diversity of India in the wider concept of South Asia.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to obtain an understanding of basic concepts of economic development, social movements, democracy and political economy of South Asia as well as an understanding of contemporary history that shaped South Asian region especially after the Partition.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Chapter 2. Modernity and antiquity: interpretations of ancient India pp. 1-17.

In-class discussion about the diversity in India and the study of its map.

Origins of Indian nationalism/ From Bengali Renaissance to Bengali Radicalism

Topic description: This week the central narratives on the origins of Indian nationalism and Bengali Renaissance and radicalism will be explored.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to understand the origin of nationalism in India, the Bengali Renaissance, Bengali radicalism and how that shaped the sense of Nationalism in India.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 11. A nation in making? 'Rational' reform, 'religious' revival and swadeshi nationalism 1885 to 1914 pp. 89-103.
- Tharoor, Shashi (2017) *Inglorious Empire. What the British Did to India*. Hurst & Company. London. Chapter 1, The Looting of India pp. 1-35.

Activities: Students will be divided into a group of 3-4 people and will be asked to work together on the activity document provided in class to the students. The students will have to present their analysis of the situation based on the activity document in class.

Freedom Movement/ Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, S.C. Bose, and M.A. Jinnah

Topic description: This week the central narratives on the origins of freedom movement and roles of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, S.C. Bose and M.A. Jinnah in it will be explored.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to assess the role of historical figures in the struggle for independence.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 13, Gandhian nationalism and mass politics of the 1920s.
- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Chapter 15, Nationalism and colonialism during World War II and its aftermath: crisis and political confrontation.

In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on India.

Partition and the creation of two Pakistans/ Origins of Pakistan and Bangladesh

Topic description: This week the central narratives on the origins and policies of the Partition and the creation of two Pakistan's will be explored as well as the birth and historical origins of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to understand the struggles and issues related to partition and further issues related to the creation of two Pakistan's. Students will be able to assess the origins of conflicts between two Pakistan's that led to the creation of Bangladesh.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 16. Partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, pp. 137-158.
- Schendel, Willem van (2009) *A History of Bangladesh*. Chapter 18, Imagining a new society, pp 183-190.
- Talbot, Ian (2000) *Inventing the Nation: India & Pakistan*. OUP. Oxford.

In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on India and Pakistan.

Post-Partition Economic and Social Policies/ Gandhi's legacy and Nehru's' ideas

Topic description: This week the central narratives on post-Partition economic and social policies in the light of Gandhi's legacy and Nehru's ideas will be explored. The major changes in social and economic policies after 1947 under Nehru and the impact on the social and economic development of India and South Asia will be explored.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to review the Nehruvian and Gandhian model of social and economic development post partition period.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 18. Post-colonial South Asia: state and economy, society and politics, pp. 169-183.
- Metcalf, Barbara D & Thomas R. Metcalf (2012) *A Concise History of Modern India*. Cambridge.
- Talbot, Ian (2000) *Inventing the Nation: India & Pakistan*. OUP. Oxford.

India is Indira/ Foreign policies of PM Indira Gandhi

Topic description: This week the central narratives on Indira Gandhi's premiership and her foreign policies will be explored.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to classify the foreign policies of India during the time of the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 18. Post-colonial South Asia: state and economy, society and politics, pp. 169-183.
- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Chapter 19. Post-colonial South Asia: state and economy, society and politics 1971-2010, pp. 184-204.
- Metcalf, Barbara D & Thomas R. Metcalf (2012) *A Concise History of Modern India*. Cambridge.
- Wolpert, Stanley (2009) *India*. University of California Press. Chapter 6, Polity and Foreign Policy pp. 187-234.

Activities: In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on India, Indira Gandhi and her foreign policies.

Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian involvement in Sri Lanka/Beginning of Economic Liberalizations

Topic description: This week the central narratives Rajiv Gandhi's domestic and foreign policies will be explored as well as his involvement in Sri Lankan politics. The beginning of economic liberalizations will be in the focus as well.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to assess and understand the involvement of India in the political issues of neighbouring countries and the process of economic liberalization in South Asia and the aftermath.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 19. Post-colonial South Asia: state and economy, society and politics 1971-2010, pp. 184-204.
- Metcalf, Barbara D & Thomas R. Metcalf (2012) *A Concise History of Modern India*. Cambridge.
- Wolpert, Stanley (2009) *India*. University of California Press. Chapter 6, Polity and Foreign Policy pp. 187-234.

In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on India, Sri Lanka and Rajiv Gandhi's policies.

Hindu nationalists coming into power/Deobandi madrasas and global Muslim networks

Topic description: This week the central narratives on Hindu nationalists coming into power and their emergence of the Deobandi madrasas in South Asia will be explored in the context of the global Muslim networks.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to explain the politics and issues related to the emergence of nationalist parties and religious networks in South Asia.

Readings and activities:

- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge, London. Chapter 19. Post-colonial South Asia: state and economy, society and politics 1971-2010, pp. 184-204.
- Savarkar V.D. Extracts from *Hindutva: Who is Hindu?* Jaffrelot, Christoph (ed) (2007) *Hindu nationalism. A reader*. Princeton, pp. 87-96.

- Talbot, Ian (2000) *Inventing the Nation: India & Pakistan*. OUP. Oxford. Chapter 10, Ethno-nationalist insurgency and secession in India and Pakistan, pp. 252-282.
- Wolpert, Stanley (2009) *India*. University of California Press. Chapter 6, Polity and Foreign Policy pp. 187-234.

Activities: Students will be divided into groups of 3-4 and asked to research on a particular radical groups in the region. Students will have to present their findings in class for further discussion.

Non-Resident Indians and South Asia Diasporas/Economic developments – problems and prospects

Topic description: This week the central narratives on the economic role if the NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) and other South Asian Diasporas will be explored as well as other economic developments, problems and prospects.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to assess the relationship between South Asia and other major powers and role of India in the South Asian continent and to outline the major transformations with Hindu nationalist party serving in the government

Readings and activities:

- Amrith, Sunil (2011) *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia*. Cambridge.

Activities: In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on NRIs and their role in the economic development in India and other parts of South Asia.

SAARC and attempts to South Asian regional integration/Ongoing ethno-religious confrontations in South Asia

Topic description: This week looks into the emergence of SAARC and attempts to South Asian regional integration. It also focuses on the ongoing ethno-religious/communal confrontations in South Asia.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to understand the reasons for the formation of SAARC and what it means to South Asian countries.

Readings and activities:

- Dash, Kishore C. (2008) *Regionalism in South-Asia – negotiating cooperation, institutional structures*. Routledge. London.
- Talbot, Ian (2000) *Inventing the Nation: India & Pakistan*. OUP. Oxford.
- Tambiah, Stanley (1996) *Leveling the Crowds. Ethnonationalist conflicts and collective violence in South Asia*. University of California Press.
- Wolpert, Stanley (2009) *India*. University of California Press. Chapter 6, Polity and Foreign Policy pp. 187-234.

Activities: In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on the regional integration of South Asia.

Contemporary issues in South Asia

Topic description: This week the students can choose any topic they wish to present in detail as a part of current and contemporary issues in South Asia.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to self-study and research on contemporary issues evident in the region and also assess the relationship between South Asia and other major powers.

Readings and activities:

- Bayly, Susan (2001) *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*. Cambridge, Chapter 8, Caste in the everyday life of independent India pp. 306-341
- Bayly, Susan (2001) *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*. Cambridge, Chapter 9, 'Caste wars' and the mandate of violence, pp. 342-364
- Ganguly, Sumit and Neil DeVotta (2003) *Understanding Contemporary India*. Lynne Rienner. Boulder.
- Metcalf, Barbara D & Thomas R. Metcalf (2012) *A Concise History of Modern India*. Cambridge. Chapter 9. Democratic India at the turn of the millennium: Prosperity, poverty, power, pp. 265-294.

Activities: Students will be divided into groups of 3-4 students and they will be asked to choose a contemporary issue in South Asia they seem relevant in discussion with the instructor. Students will then present their findings in the class for further discussion.

Creation of "Indo-Pacific" geopolitical space

Topic description: This week the students further explore current issues and particularly the new concept of "Indo-Pacific" as a geopolitical strategic space on the global stage.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to understand and explore the creation of the new geopolitical space and the geopolitical issues related to this new concept of Indo-Pacific region.

Readings and activities:

- Amrith, Sunil (2011) *Migration and Diaspora in Modern Asia*. Cambridge.
- Bayly, Susan (1999) *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*. Cambridge.
- Bose, Sugata & Ayesha Jalal (2011) *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy*. Routledge. London.
- Dash, Kishore C. (2008) *Regionalism in South Asia-Negotiating Cooperation, institutional structures*, Routledge. London
- Ganguly, Sumit and Neil DeVotta (eds) (2003) *Understanding Contemporary India*. Lynne Rienner, Boulder.
- Metcalf, Barbara D & Thomas R. Metcalf (2012) *A Concise History of Modern India*. Cambridge.

Activities: In-class discussion about the central ideas and narratives on the emergence of the "Indo-Pacific" space and its strategic role in the global politics.

