

Political and Cultural Geography of India

Geography 095/Area and International Studies 095Z3

Summer 2007, Session II: June 26-July 26

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30-5:15, Rowell Room 102

Instructor Information:

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India is one of the world's most fascinating and culturally complex countries, home to well over a billion people, several major religions, and one of the world's oldest and most richly diverse civilizations. This course will introduce you to the lay of the land, with a focus on the distinctiveness of its four major regions: Northwest, Northeast, Central, and South. Using these regions as a framework, we will survey India's physical diversity, historical evolution and colonial legacy, religions and languages, democracy, equity and human rights, population and demographic change, economic reforms, agricultural and industrial growth, urbanization, environmental problems, and current challenges facing the country. We will also look at India's relationships with its neighbours, both historically and in the present day, as well as the broader geopolitical context of South Asia and the world. The course takes a broadly chronological approach to its survey of India, tracing relationships between space, place and power in classical, medieval, colonial, and modern times. A further section is devoted to a discussion of the important themes of environment, culture, and globalization.

Texts:

Chapman, Graham. 2003. *The Geopolitics of South Asia: From Early Empires to the Nuclear Age*. 2nd Edition. Burlington: Ashgate.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. 1999. *Interpreter of Maladies*. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Raju, Saraswati, M. Satish Kumar and Stuart Corbridge (eds.) 2006. *Colonial and Post-Colonial Geographies of India*. New Delhi and Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Format:

Classes will be run as a combined lecture-seminar format of approximately four hours in total. The first two hours of class will consist of formal presentations by the instructor on the theme for the day. The second half of the class will consist mainly of small group discussions based on the assigned readings. The instructor will provide some guiding questions for these discussions. Small group activities and audio-visual supplements will also be incorporated into the classroom, including films, music, and various forms of new media. All students must have the reading assigned for each day read PRIOR to class and will be evaluated on their knowledge of the material. The final examination will be given on the last day of classes as an in-class, closed book written test.

Evaluation:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Reading Responses (X 3)	30%
In-class quizzes (X 4)	20%
Final Exam	40%

1. Attendance and Participation

Due to the intensive nature of this course, all students are required to attend all classes and will be penalized for both absences and lateness. Official documentation must be provided for any excusable absences. Participation will be evaluated on the basis of students' knowledge of course readings and lecture material, as well as on engagement with small group discussions and contributions to the learning experience of their peers. A component of the participation mark may include self-evaluation by peers of their small-discussion groups.

2. Weekly Reading Responses

Reading responses are not meant to be summaries of assigned readings but rather an engagement with specific issues and arguments considered in them. Each response is to be 500 words, related to readings from previous weeks, and is to be based on one of the discussion questions distributed by the instructor in the previous class.

3. In-Class Quizzes

Quizzes will be based primarily on readings assigned for that day. They will consist of multiple-choice, reading identification, and short-answer questions. There will be five quizzes in total, of which only the top four scores will be counted towards the final grade.

4. Final Exam

The final examination in this course is based on all material covered in lectures, readings and discussions in the course and will include multiple-choice, short-answer, reading identifications, and essay questions. The examination is closed-book and will be given on the final day of classes, July 26, 2007.

Weekly Schedule of Topics

June 26 Introduction to Course and Landscapes of India

Readings: Chapman, "Foreword" and Chapter 1
 "Brahma and Manu: Of Mountains and Rivers, Gods and Men"
 Raju, Kumar and Corbridge, "Introduction"

June 28 Cradle of Civilizations: Indus Valley to the Moghuls

Readings: Chapman Chapters 2-3
 "Hinduism: The Manifold of Man and God"
 "Islam: Submission to the One True God"

Assignment: Quiz #1

July 3 Jewels and the Crown: Colonialism and the Raj

Readings: Chapman Chapters 4-6
 "The Usurpers: The Life and Death of John Company"
 "Securing the Empire"
 "A New Geography: A New Economy"

Assignment: Reading Response #1

July 5 Before and After Midnight: Resistance, Nationalism, and Partition

Readings: Chapman Chapters 7-9
 "The New Nationalisms and the Politics of Reaction"
 "Divide and Quit"
 "New Lines on the Map"

Assignment: Quiz #2

July 10 New Nations in the Subcontinent

Readings: Chapman Chapters 10-11
 "From Two to Three: The Birth of Bangladesh"
 "Raj and Swaraj: Regionalism and Integration in Successor States"
 Bradnock, "Territoriality, Kashmir and the Evolving Geopolitics of India-Pakistan Relations"

Assignment: Reading Response #2

July 12 Uneasy Neighbours: Global Politics and the South Asian Context

Readings: Chapman Chapter 13 "The Greater Game"
 Corbridge and Simpson, "Militant Cartographies and Traumatic Spaces: Ayodhya, Bhuj and the Contested Geographies of *Hindutva*"

Assignment: Quiz #3

July 17 Green Revolutions: Development, Ecology, and Environmentalisms

Readings: Chapman Chapter 12
"The Power Upstream"
Williams and Mawdsley, "India's Evolving Political Ecologies"
Robbins, "Carbon Colonies: From Local Use Value to Global Exchange in Climate Forestry"

Assignment: Quiz #4

July 19 A Varied Optic: Identity, Culture, and Representation

Readings: Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*

Assignment: Quiz #5

July 24 India Shining? Globalization and the New India

Readings: Raju, "From Local to Global: Gendered Discourses, Skills and Embedded Urban Labour Market in India"
Desai, "Women's Social Transformations, NGOs, and Globalization in Urban India"
Fromhold-Eisebith, "Infotech Industries and Regional Disparities in India"

Assignment: Reading Response #3

July 26 Last Class

Assignment: Final Exam