Political and Economic Development in Post-Colonial Societies

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Course description: This course examines colonial legacies in post-colonial societies, with a focus on Latin America, Africa, and South Asia. Some of the central questions we will explore are: How have colonial ethnic censuses affected political stability in contemporary India? Is Africa’s “growth tragedy” related to the arbitrary borders created by colonial powers in the late nineteenth century? Are countries in which ex-colonizers have settled in large numbers more likely to be richer today than countries with insignificant settler populations? By examining these questions in depth, we will develop a rigorous understanding of the role of history in political and economic life.

Attendance: This class is structured as a seminar course. Although I will occasionally lecture on some topics, much of our class time will be spent on discussing and critiquing the assigned readings. Regular attendance is thus expected. More than 2 unexcused absences might affect your attendance grade by half a letter grade. More than 5 accumulated absences will result in 0 % for the attendance portion of your overall grade. Note, an absence is considered excused when you have provided me a letter from your advisor attesting that your absence is on valid grounds.

Writing assignments: The writing assignments for the course will include 5 short papers (4-5 pages) and a cumulative final exam. Beyond these writing assignments, you will also participate in 2 group presentations. Please note, a written summary of the presentation should be circulated to the class a day in advance of the scheduled presentation date. No late assignment will be accepted unless you and I have mutually agreed upon an extension. LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE GIVEN A LOWER GRADE: one/third letter grade per day late. Example: An “A” paper two days late will drop to a “B+”.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism: “As members of an academic community, students and faculty assume certain responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to engage in honest
communication. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of the trust upon which an academic community depends.

A common form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. This is the use, whether deliberate or unintentional, of an idea or phrase from a source without proper acknowledgment of that source. The risk of plagiarism can be avoided in written work by clearly indicating, either in footnotes or in the paper itself, the source of any major or unique idea or wording that you did not arrive at on your own. Sources must be given regardless of whether the material is quoted directly or paraphrased. Another form of plagiarism is copying or obtaining information from another student. Submission of written work, such as laboratory reports, computer programs, or papers, which have been copied from the work of other students, with or without their knowledge and consent, also is plagiarism."

http://www.rochester.edu/College/CCAS/AdviserHandbook/AcadHonesty.html

Plagiarized papers will not receive any points. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course and sanctions determined by the University’s Academic Honesty board.

Grading:
Attendance – 10 %
Participation – 10 %
Group presentation – 5 %
Short papers – 35 %
Final Exam – 40 %

Note: All reading materials for this class will be available electronically through Blackboard. Copies of the readings will also be on reserve at the library front desk. You are expected to have done the readings before coming to class. Laptops will NOT be allowed in class. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, but you will be notified of any changes well in advance.

Course Calendar:

January 12: Introduction

January 17: Martin Luther King Day
No classes.

January 19: Concepts
Read:
January 24: Caste Conflict in India
Group Presentation
Skim:
Marc Galanter, Competing Equalities: Law and the Backward Classes in India, University of California Press, 1984, Ch. 1 & Ch. 2.

January 26: The Ethnographic State
Read:
Nicholas B. Dirks, Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India, Princeton University Press, 2001, Ch. 3.

January 31: Nationalism and Caste
Read:

Feb 2: The Legacies of the Caste Census
Read:
Laura Dudley Jenkins, Identity and Identification in India: Defining the Disadvantaged, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, Ch. 5 & Ch. 6.

Feb 7: State Failure in Africa
Group Presentation
Skim:

Feb 9: The Scramble for Africa
Read:

Feb 14: Weak States
Read:

Feb 16: Do Arbitrary Boundaries Really Matter?
Read:
February 21: Long-run Economic Growth in Latin America
Group Presentation
Skim

February 23: Searching for the Heart of Gold
Read:
James Lockart and Stewart B. Schwartz, Early Latin America, Cambridge University Press, 1983, Ch. 3.

February 28: Institutional Persistence
Read:

March 2: Institutions or Factor Endowments?
Read:

March 5-March 13: Spring Break
No classes

March 14: Long-run Economic Growth in Africa
Group Presentation

March 16: Cocoa and the Damage Done
Read:

March 21: Institutional Persistence
Read:
William Reno, Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone, Cambridge University Press, 1995, Ch. 2 & Ch. 3.

March 23: Institutions or Germs?
Read:
March 28: The Partition Violence in South Asia
Group Presentation
Skim:

March 30: Looking Inside the Violence
Read:

April 4: The Consociational State
Read:

April 6: Imposing Democracy
Read:

April 11: Civil-Military Relations in Africa and South Asia
Group Presentation
Skim:

April 13: The “Martial Race” Doctrine
Read:
Timothy Parsons, ““Wakamba Warriors are Soldiers of the Queen”: The Evolution of the Kamba as a Martial Race, 1890-1970,” Ethnohistory, 46(4), 1999, 671-701.

April 18: Persistence of the “Martial Race” Doctrine
Read:

April 20: The Warrior’s Curse
Read:
Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, University of California Press, 1985, Ch. 11.

April 25: Does the Culture of the Colonizer Matter for Economic Growth?
Read:
April 27: Does the Culture of the Colonizer Matter for Ethnic Conflict?