

South Asian Politics

Professor Avidit Acharya

Spring 2014

About the course

This course covers selected topics in the politics of South Asia, the region of Asia consisting of the original SAARC countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. We will discuss the history of these countries, the structure of their political institutions, and the major political conflicts in the region. We will also discuss the relations between these countries with each other and the rest of the world.

Books

Sugata Bose & Ayesha Jalal. 1998. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. New York: Routledge.

Robert Hardgrave & Stanley Kochanek. 2008. *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation*. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.

Grading

In most weeks, two students will lead the discussion of that week's topic. Each of the two discussion leaders should prepare a written overview of the assigned material, focusing on a particular issue with the purpose of stimulating a debate or discussion on the topic. I will distribute the overview to the other students prior to the start of class, so please email me the document no later than 8pm on the night before we meet. The overview should be 2-3 pages long, and you should be prepared to present it or read it out in class. Leading the discussion requires doing the following:

- (i) Providing a joint 15-20 summary of the readings, and a thoughtful critique in light of the literature.
- (ii) Providing a list of questions and issues for the whole class to discuss.
- (iii) Providing a joint 10-15 minute conclusion of the class discussion.

Students will also write a 10 page reading response (double spaced, 12pt font with standard margins) to the readings for a week of their choice in which they are not leading the discussion. A good reading response summarizes the arguments of the relevant readings on the syllabus, gives a thoughtful critique, raises interesting political science questions and tries to answer them or analyze ways in which they can be answered using rigorous methodology. I recommend that you start working on the reading response early. All reading responses must be submitted before 11:59pm on April 16th, regardless of which week's reading it focuses on.

Students will also write a 25-30 page final paper for the class on a topic of their interest concerning South Asian politics. Before writing the paper, students should do some background research on their topic, referencing at least a few sources not included on the course syllabus. These references should be mostly academic in nature, but may also include newspaper articles from credible media sources specializing in South Asia. The topic of the paper should be chosen in consultation with me. A first draft of the paper, which should be approximately 20 pages, is due at 11:59pm on April 2nd. The final paper is due at 11:59pm on May 9th, 2014. Please email me both the draft and final versions of the paper.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation:	20%
Summary Notes & Discussion:	20%
Reading Response:	20%
Final Paper:	40%

Course Outline

Jan. 21 – The Precolonial Period [0]

- Bose & Jalal. pp. 1-53.

Jan. 28 – Colonialism and Colonial Legacies [1]

- Bose & Jalal. pp. 54-103.
- Banerjee & Iyer. 2005. "History, Institutions and Economic Performance: The Colonial Land Tenure System in India," *American Economic Review*.

Feb. 4 – Nationalism, Independence and the Partition of India and Pakistan [2]

- Bose & Jalal. pp. 103-168.
- Jasmin Khan. 2007. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. Yale University Press. pp. 1-22.

Feb. 11 – Religious Politics in India [1]

- Steven Wilkinson. 2004. *Votes and Violence*. CUP. Ch. 1.
- Thomas Blom Hansen. 1999. *The Saffron Wave*. PUP. Ch. 5.
- Saumitra Jha. 2013. "Trade, Institutions and Ethnic Tolerance: Evidence from South Asia" *American Political Science Review*.

Feb. 18 – Authoritarianism and Democracy in the Post-colonial States [2]

- Bose & Jalal. pp. 169-204.
- Ayesha Jalal. 1995. *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*. CUP. Ch. 3.

Feb. 25 – Contemporary Indian Politics [0]

- Hardgrave & Kochaneck. pp. 259-415.

March 4 – Caste Politics in India [1]

- Robert Deliege. 2001. *The Untouchables of India*. Bloomsbury Academic. Ch. 1.
- Christophe Jaffrelot. 2000. "The Rise of the Other Backward Castes in the Hindi Belt," *Journal of Asian Studies*.
- Avidit Acharya, John Roemer & Rohini Somanathan. 2013. "Caste Politics, Corruption and Distribution in India: The Effect of Voter Preferences on Distribution Policies in Uttar Pradesh," Yale University Working Paper.

March 18 – No Class (to be rescheduled for a special guest lecture by Alexander Lee)

March 25 – National Identities I [2]

- France Bhattacharya. 2002. "East Bengal: Between Islam and Regional Identity" in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.) *A History of Pakistan and its Origins*. Anthem Press.
- Bethany Lacina. 2013. "Nationalism and the Origins of Separatist Civil War in India" University of Rochester Working Paper.
- Sumit Ganguly. 1996. "Explaining the Kashmir Insurgency: Political Mobilization and Institutional Decay," *International Security*.

April 1 – National Identities II [2]

- Michael Hutt. 2005. "The Bhutanese Refugees: Between Verification, Repatriation and Royal Realpolitik" *Peace and Democracy in South Asia*.
- Michael Hutt. 2003. *Unbecoming Citizens: Culture, Nationhood and the Flight of Refugees from Bhutan*. OUP. Ch. 11.
- Deepa M. Ollapally. 2008. *The Politics of Extremism in South Asia*. CUP. Ch. 6.
- *Asian Survey* articles: Sri Lanka in 2008, 09, 10, 11, 12.

April 8 – Maoist Insurgencies [0]

- John Whelpton. 2005. *A History of Nepal*. CUP. Ch. 7.
- Deepak Thapa. 2002. "The Maobadi of Nepal" in Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran (eds.) *State of Nepal*. Himal Books.
- Avidit Acharya. 2010. "The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal and the Political Economy of Violence" in Mahendra Lawoti and Anup Pahari (eds.) *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the 21st Century*. London: Routledge.

April 15 – Constitution Building in Nepal [2]

- *Asian Survey* Articles: Nepal and Bhutan in 2006, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12.
- Sumit Ganguly & Brian Shoup. 2005. "Nepal: Between Dictatorship and Anarchy" *Journal of Democracy*.
- Mahendra Lawoti. 2005. *Toward a Democratic Nepal: Inclusive Political Institutions for a Multicultural Society*. Sage Publications. Ch. 4.

April 22 – Nuclear South Asia [2]

- Vipin Narang. 2010. "Posturing for Peace? Pakistan's Nuclear Postures and South Asian Stability" *International Security*.
- Vipin Narang. 2009. "Pride and Prejudice and Prithvis" in Scott D. Sagan (ed.) *Inside Nuclear South Asia*. Stanford University Press.
- Hardgrave & Kochanek. Ch. 10.

April 29 – Development and the Future of South Asia [2]

- Bose & Jalal. pp. 205-210.
- Hardgrave & Kochanek. pp. 416-473.
- Jagdish Bhagwati & Arvind Panagariya. *Why Growth Matters*. 2013. pp. 1-26.
- Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen. 2013. *An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions*. Ch. 1