

Cultures of Political Protest in Modern South Asia 1860-Present HIST 410/ HIST 510

Mon./Wed. 2:00p-3:20p, 175 Lillis

Prof. Arafaat A. Valiani

Office hours: Monday 11:30-1:30p, Wednesday 3p-4p, or by appointment.

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Twentieth century India was the center of popular movements that were not only significant in the region but also had connections to forms of popular resistance in the United States, parts of Asia and Europe. In addition to Mohandas Gandhi's celebrated non-violent movement, this period was marked by various revolutionary, anticolonial and nationalist movements that embraced political violence in novel manners. Taking the emergence of popular and non-violent movements, such as the Occupy Movement, the Arab Spring and the *India Against Corruption* agitation, as a provocation to study popular resistance, this course will explore the cultures, tactics and effects of popular protest in colonial and postcolonial South Asia. While tracing the histories of mass protest in South Asia we will also compare them to movements outside the region in cases when the movements shared a connection. Course participants will gain an understanding of the manner in which discourses of popular movements in South Asia produced cultural visions and practices of activism and social transformation. Among other things, we will trace how these movements and their leaders envisioned the role of political activists, the tactics of popular resistance and mobilization, and the significance of performative rituals during mass protest. We will reflect on the meanings of 'political community', resistance and agency, freedom, caste and alterity, religion, class, sexuality and gender, and political violence that were at the heart of the discourses and practices of political resistance in South Asia. Included in our examination will be religious reform movements, revolutionary nationalism (i.e. "terrorist societies") in India, connections between Indian, Japanese and European revolutionaries, peasant insurgency, the non-violent movement led by Mohandas Gandhi, ideas of non-violent resistance and its relationship to the civil rights movement in the United States, the Dalit/ex-Untouchable movement, connections between the Black Panther Movement and the Dalit Panthers in India, Hindu nationalism in India, the Pakistan Movement, and the experience of civil war in postcolonial Sri Lanka. Course materials include primary sources, secondary source readings, novels and personal accounts, and films.

Summary of Requirements

Requirements: Full participation and regular attendance in class; two oral presentations; two short papers; one peer review; in place of the two short papers, graduate students may pursue a research paper that brings together a theme or concept from the class with their own area of inquiry. Graduate students should focus on the class themes since each class is designed to offer a conceptual or comparative perspective that might be of use in your own research and area of interest.

With some exceptions, class on Monday will be mostly a lecture and the Wednesday class will be dedicated to a presentation on the reading, discussion and a mini wrap-up

lecture at the end.

On Participation: Since this course depends on your active and informed participation, I expect you to attend class regularly, read the assigned scholarly texts and primary source documents before coming to class, be prepared to discuss and critique the readings in class, pose questions and converse with your classmates and me. This means bringing class readings to class with you: be prepared to refer to specific passages when making historical sense of the documents, and to contribute when we work to pinpoint or to “walk through” the arguments of scholarly essays, documents, novels and films. Your success and experience in this course is dependent upon each person joining in an ongoing conversation on the themes and competing views of popular protest, the writing of history and the role of the past in contemporary South Asia and its global linkages today.

Short Papers:

1. Historical Biography of an activist, leader or political thinker in South Asian history. I will upload a list of figures on which you can write. You can sign up on a first come first serve basis. One figure per student. Steps: 1) Submit a bibliography to me (worth 10%); 2) Write a draft of your paper and submit it for peer review; 3) Review the draft paper of your classmate; 4) Revise your paper and turn it in.

2. Write an essay responding to a question from a list that I will provide. You will be graded on the quality of your writing, your ability to articulate an argument clearly, and your use of the available evidence and concepts from the course. I expect you to draw on the course materials to make your arguments.

Both papers should be 10 pages in length, double-spaced, Times Roman font 12-point, one-inch margins on all sides.

General class rules: No loud food in class (i.e. food that makes a lot of noise as it is consumed). Cell/smartphones OFF. Wi-Fi on laptops OFF. Absences or late assignments will only be excused in the event of documented illness. For late assignments I will subtract one-third of a letter grade from the grade that it otherwise would have earned (e.g., a B paper will become a B- paper). The paper will continue to lose one third of a letter grade per day however after a week an automatic 0 is assigned. All work that you turn in must be your own. Any work submitted for credit that includes the words or ideas of anyone else must fully and accurately identify your source in a complete citation. If you are confused about this or do not understand the consequences of academic dishonesty at the UO—or the ethical issues behind these university policies—please read the UO plagiarism policy: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/> .

Grade Distribution

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|---------------------------|------|---|
| 1. Participation | 15 % | (evaluation throughout the semester) |
| 2. Map Assignment | 5 % | |
| 2. Short Papers | 60 % | (for both) |
| 3. In class presentations | 20 % | (for both, performed throughout the semester) |

Required texts:

1. Sharika Thiranagama, Chapters 1-3, *In My Mother's House: Civil War in Sri Lanka*
2. Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Intellectuals Who Remade Asia*
3. Mohandas Gandhi, *Non-Violent Resistance*
4. Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love*

Several Primary Source Documents assigned for the course are available at:

<https://blackboard.uoregon.edu>

Some primary sources are available via a link from the Library Guide at: *coming soon*.

Reading Schedule and Class Reading/Themes (may be adjusted as we progress):

Mon Jan 7

Introduction: Power and Resistance, Social Movements Today, Popular Protest in South Asia

-Syllabus Review and Discussion

CONCEPTUALIZING POLITICAL PROTEST AND RESISTANCE

Wed, Jan 9 Map Assignment Distributed Today

What is Resistance?

Saba Mahmood, 'The Subject of Freedom', in *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*, pp. 1-39

Arenas of Protest, Performativity and 'Fun': the Muhajir Movement in Pakistan

Chapter 4 by Oskar Verkaaik's book, *Migrants And Militants: Fun And Urban Violence In Pakistan*, pp. 111-136

Mon Jan 14 Map Assignment Due Today

Affect and Community

Ram Dhooria's biography: *I Was a Swayamsevak*, p 9-47

RELIGIOUS REFORM MOVEMENTS AND REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Wed Jan 16 Bibliography for 1st Short Paper Due Today

Transforming the Body: Religious Reform, Gender and Masculinity

Article by Rosselli, 'The Self-Image of Effeteness', pp. 121-148

Read selection from *Life and Teachings of Swami Dayananda Saraswati* (intellectual founder of the Arya Samaj), p 8-29

Mon, Jan 21 **No Class, Martin Luther King Day**

Wed Jan 23 First Short Paper Submitted/Received for Peer Review Today

Cosmopolitan Revolutionaries

Read the selection from *M.N. Roy, Radical Humanist*, p 7-60 (Roy was a Swadeshi revolutionary, co-founder of the Mexican Communist Party, member of the Communist International Presidium, and a major force in the rise of Indian communism)

Mon, Jan 28

Revolutionary Nationalism Between Colonial India and East Asia

Mishra, 'Rabindranath Tagore in East Asia, the Man from the Lost Country', 'Liang Quichao's China and the Fate of Asia in *From the Ruins of Empire*, pp. 216-241, 124-155

Wed, Jan 30

Resistance as Moral Transformation

Mohandas Gandhi, Section One: 'What Satyagraha Is'; Section Two: 'Discipline for Satyagraha', in *Non-Violent Resistance* pp. 3-59

Read M.S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, pp. 392-409

THE POLITICAL SPHERE AND THE GANDHIAN WATERSHED (1900-1930)

Mon Feb 4

Strategy and Ethics: Satyagraha, Self-Mastery and Civic Politics

Chapter 1 from *Militant Publics in India*, pp. 35-64

Douglas Haynes, Chapters 10, 'The Rise of the Gandhians' in *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India*, pp. 203-237

Wed Feb 6 (Double) Final Draft of First Short Paper Due Today

Subversion on the Margins: Satyagraha and Female Satyagrahis

Mridula Sarabhai: Rebel With A Cause, pp. 11-60

Mon Feb 11

Discipline, Non-Violence and Popular Protest: Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)

Mahadev Desai, *The Story of Bardoli* (eye witness account of this famous anti-colonial agitation), pp. 18-33

Chapter 2, *Militant Publics in India*, pp. 65-106

Wed Feb 13

Transnational Connections: Non-Violence in the United States

Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love*, pp. 1-64

POPULAR VIOLENCE

Mon Feb 18

Subaltern Resistance: Peasant Insurgency

Ranjit Guha, Chapters 2-5 from *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency In Colonial India*, pp. 109-166

Wed, Feb 20, **Intermingling of Non-violence and Violence** *Quit India Movement: British Secret Documents* (report), pp. 1-30

Mon Feb 25

'Publics' and Resistance: Hindu Nationalism Among Men and Women

Tanika Sarkar, 'Heroic Women, Mother Goddesses: Family and Organisation in Hindutva Politics', *Women and the Hindu Right*, pp. 1-28

Read report: *Home Department [Special], Activities of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, File No. 822, part III, Ban on the Drill of a Military Nature, report from W. N. Bakhtiyar, District Magistrate, Sholapur to Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Home Department [Political], Bombay, September 2, 1941*, pp. 1-28

Physical Culture and Hindu nationalism, Lalit Vachani (director): *The Men in the Tree* (Film on reserve in Sawyer Library)

Wed Feb 27

'Transnational' Hindu Nationalism

'Far and Wide': the Sangh Parivar's Global Network', 'The Vishva Hindu Parishad Abroad', in *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, pp. 411-455

DECOLONIZATION AND POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN THE POSTCOLONIAL PERIOD (1940-1980)

Mon March 4

Militias as Political Constituencies

Sunil Chander, 'Congress-Raj Conflict and the Rise of the Muslim League in the Ministry Period, 1937-39', pp. 303-328.

Read selected speeches and statements, *Quaid-I-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah: Speeches, Statements, Writings, Letters*, pp. 1-15

Wed March 6 ****Second Short Paper due today.**

Resistance as a Practice of Human Rights: Dalits as a Minority in Postcolonial India

Chapter 1 and 5, Anu Puma Rao, *The Caste Question*, pp. 39-80, 182-216

Mon March 11

Gender, Violence and Counter-violence: Dalit Panthers and the Black Panthers

'Dalit Panther Manifesto', in *Untouchable!: Voices of the Dalit Liberation Movement* by Barbara R. Joshi and Minority Rights Group., pp. 141-146

Elaine Brown, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story*, pp. 17-82

Wed March 13

Ethnicity and the Spaces of Civil War in Sri Lanka

Sharika Thiranagama, Chapters 1 and 3, *In My Mother's House: Civil War in Sri Lanka*, pp. 41-76, 106-144

Knowledge, Writing, and Academic Honesty

Your work in this class is subject to the University plagiarism policy. Presenting the work of other authors without citing them—or as your own—is a form of plagiarism and is unacceptable and in violation of the policy. This means that copying or paraphrasing any portion of a text or image from a printed or electronic source without citing the author and/or site is also a form of plagiarism. If you are confused about this or do not understand the consequences of academic dishonesty at the UO—or the ethical issues

behind these university policies—please read the UO plagiarism policy:
<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/> If you are uncertain how the policy applies to your work in this course, please ask me.