

Religion, Ideologies and Nationalism in South Asia

Overview

The importance of religion on contemporary debates ranging from nationalism to its place in the public sphere is exceedingly being felt. Nations -- referred to as imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) -- speak to the profound need for both legitimacy and belonging(ness), often articulated through one's religious vis-a-vis ethnic identities in the modern world. This course will address this issue by focusing on the relationships between religion, geo-politics and the emergence and proliferation of nationalism in the context of South Asia. While examining the manner in which religion and nationalism interact, this course will reflect on a series of pressing questions: how do religious nationalism and spatialization of the nation-state, both as an idea and polity, enable the territorialization of religion? How do people envision their nation in terms of religious identities and symbolic sacralization? How do discourses on religion, more so in the curious case of South Asia, (re)invent and (re)configure 'traditions' that feed into the ethos of nationalism? How did religious categories originating from the Western frameworks of references travel and were domesticated in South Asia to give rise to, as Edward Said (2000) insists, a diverse range of discursive meanings, contingencies and implications? How does this religious interact with the secular, also taken to be a 'Western' concept adopted and adapted in South Asia? To illustrate the complexity and richness of the topic, this course will touch upon a diverse range of issues – proselytization, Orientalism, nationalist historiography, cartography, scientization, secularism, the Partition, multiculturalism, caste, gender, and postcoloniality, among others -- in the context of South Asia.

Dates	23-28 October, 2017
You Should Attend if You're	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a student (undergraduate, graduate, research) interested in, broadly speaking, cultures and practices of religiosity, issues of nationalism, secularism and postcolonialism.▪ a faculty from reputed academic institutions; having similar interests.▪ from the industry, with similar interests.
Fees for Participants from	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Abroad: US \$500▪ Industry-Research Organizations: Rs. 10000▪ Academic Institutions: Rs.5000(Faculty) Rs.1000 (Students)▪ NIT Silchar: Rs. 500 (PhD & PG) NIL (UG) <p>Registration fee does not cover food or accommodation. Outstation participants may be provided with twin sharing accommodation on payment basis in the Institute Guest House, if available.</p>

Number of participants for the course will be limited to fifty.

The Faculty



Ishita Banerjee-Dube is Professor of History at the Center for Asian and African Studies, El Colegio de México, and holds the highest Rank (level 3) in the National Scheme of Researchers (SNI), Conacyt, Mexico. She is the editor of the series “Hinduism” with De Gruyter

Open. Banerjee-Dube has been a Visiting Professor at the Department of History, University of Syracuse; the School of Women’s Studies, Jadavpur University; Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla; visiting scholar at the South Asia program, Cornell University; Süd-Asien Institut, University of Heidelberg; and Junior Research Fellow at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta.

Her research explores issues of religion, law and power, time and temporality, language and identity, gender and nation, food and emotion, and democracy and social justice. She has authored 4 books: *A History of Modern India* (Cambridge University Press 2015); *Religion, Law, and Power* (Anthem Press, 2007), *Divine Affairs* (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 2001), and in Spanish, *Fronteras del Hinduismo* (El Colegio de México, 2007). Among her ten edited volumes feature *Cooking Cultures: Convergent Histories of Food and Feeling* (Cambridge University Press 2016); *Ancient to Modern* (Oxford University Press, 2009); *Caste in History* (Oxford University Press, 2008); and *Unbecoming Modern* (Social Science Press, 2006).

Course Co-ordinator

Dr. Avishek Ray

Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
National Institute of Technology Silchar
Phone: 94356 25744
E-mail: avishek.avishek@gmail.com

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<http://www.gjan.iitkgp.ac.in>



Course Outline

- Proselytization & the Logic of Conquest
- (Anti-)Orientalism & Relativism: Religious Diversity Reexamined
- Nationalist Historiography: Engendering Religious Tradition
- Cartography and Religious Imagination
- Modern Science & Religion: A Derivative Discourse
- Domesticating Modernity: (Un)becoming Modern
- Secularism and its Discontents
- The Partition and the Question of Muslim Zion
- Ethnicization of Religion: the Politics of Caste
- Religion & Gender: Disciplining the Body
- Political Ideologies: Sacralization of Politics and Politicization of Religion

Registration Guidelines (Step-by-Step):

1. First, 'web register' at GIAN 'Courses Registration Portal': <https://goo.gl/AhcCyS>. If you're already registered, skip this step.
2. Then, log in, click 'Course Registration' tab on the GIAN Portal, and 'check box' to select this course (#171031F01) from the list. Click 'save' to register, and 'Confirm Course(s)' to confirm.
3. Now, pay the requisite Course Fee online in favour of the Director, NIT Silchar, **A/C No: 10521277057, IFSC Code: SBIN0007061, MICR Code: 788002004**. Keep the payment info (transaction # & date) handy. You'll need this during the next step. Also, please retain the receipt for on-spot submission.
4. Next, fill out the form here: <https://goo.gl/forms/8q7FFAJOHxq5UZCg2>, and click 'submit'. This is for the Course Coordinator's record. Now, await the Course Coordinator's confirmation.

P.S. Registering on the GIAN portal does not guarantee participation in the course. Please do not confuse with web registration with course registration. You might have been 'shortlisted' after paying the 500/-, but your selection is subject to paying the requisite course fee to NIT. For successful enrolment, make sure you've made both the payments. Number of participants for the course is limited to 50, and the registration will be open till the seats are filled. For queries and clarifications, write to the Course Coordinator at: avishek.avishek@gmail.com; avishekray@hum.nits.ac.in.

MRHD: Scheme on Global Initiative on Academic Network (GIAN)



Religion, Ideologies and Nationalism in South Asia

Faculty:

Ishita Banerjee-Dube

Professor, Centre for Asian and African Studies, El Colegio de México (Mexico)

Email: ibanerje@colmex.mx

Course Overview:

The importance of religion on contemporary debates ranging from nationalism to its place in the public sphere is exceedingly being felt. Nations -- referred to as imagined communities (Anderson, 1991) -- speak to the profound need for both legitimacy and belonging(ness), often articulated through one's religious vis-a-vis ethnic identities in the modern world. This course will address this issue by focusing on the relationships between religion, geo-politics and the emergence and proliferation of nationalism in the context of South Asia. While examining the manner in which religion and nationalism interact, this course will reflect on a series of pressing questions: how do religious nationalism and spatialization of the nation-state, both as an idea and polity, enable the territorialization of religion? How do people envision their nation in terms of religious identities and symbolic sacralization? How do discourses on religion, more so in the curious case of South Asia, (re)invent and (re)configure 'traditions' that feed into the ethos of nationalism? How did religious categories originating from the Western frameworks of references travel and were domesticated in South Asia to give rise to, as Edward Said (2000) insists, a diverse range of discursive meanings, contingencies and implications? How does this religious interact with the secular, also taken to be a 'Western' concept adopted and adapted in South Asia? To illustrate the complexity and richness of the topic, this course will touch upon a diverse range of issues -- proselytization, Orientalism, nationalist historiography, cartography, scientization, secularism, the Partition, multiculturalism, caste, gender, and postcoloniality, among others -- in the context of South Asia, and will demonstrate how one's religious allegiance (or lack thereof) functions as a symbolic site upon which a territorially fantasized, but highly contestable, imagination of the nation-state can be mounted.

Course Details:

Duration: 23-28 October 2017 | 12 lectures

Venue: Virtual Classroom, Central Computer Centre, Computer Science Building

Schedule & Reading List: [* Core Reading; ❖ Suggested Reading]

23 October, Monday

Inaugural Session: 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Lecture 1 | 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Proselytization & the Logic of Conquest

* Edward Said, 'Connecting Empire to Secular Interpretation', in *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), pp. 43-61. [link](#)

* Gauri Viswanathan, 'Literacy & Conversion in the Discourse of Hindu Nationalism', in *Race and Class*, Vol. 42: 1 (2000), pp. 1-20. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Limits of Liberalism: Religious Diversity Reexamined

* Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought*, (University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 46-76. [link](#)

❖ Gauri Viswanathan, 'Secularism in the Framework of Heterodoxy' in *PMLA*, Vol 123: 2 (2008), pp. 466-76. [link](#)

24 October, Tuesday

Lecture 1 | 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Nationalist Historiography: Engendering Religious Tradition

* John Zavos, 'Searching for Hindu Nationalism in Modern Indian History: Analysis of Some Early Ideological Developments' in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 34: 32 (1999), pp. 2269-76. [link](#)

❖ Gyanendra Pandey, 'In Defence of the Fragment: Writing about Hindu-Muslim Riots in India Today', in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 26: 11/12 (1991), pp. 559-72. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 2:00 p.m - 3:00 p.m.

The Partition and the Question of Muslim Zion

* Faisal Devji, 'A People without History', in *Muslim Zion: The Idea of Pakistan*, (London: Hurst Publishers, 2013), pp. 49-88. [Link](#)

❖ Sugato Bose, 'Reason and Religion: India's Independence in International Perspective', in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 33: 31 (1998), pp. 2090-2097. [link](#)

25 October, Wednesday

Lecture 1 | 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Cartography and Religious Imagination

* Christopher Pinney, 'The Possibility of a Visual History', in *Photos of the Gods: The Printed Image & Political Struggle in India*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 7-12. [link](#)

* Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Maps and Mother Goddesses in Modern India', *Imago Mundi*, Vol 53: 1 (2001), pp. 97-114. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Gender, Nation and Religion

* Veena Das, 'Communities as Political Actors: the Question of Cultural Rights', in *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 84-117. [link](#)

* Flavia Agnes, 'The Supreme Court, the Media and the Uniform Civil Code Debate in India', in Needham & Sunder Rajan (ed.), *The Crisis of Secularism in India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 294-315. [link](#)

❖ Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Daughters of India', in *The Goddess and the Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 237-281.

❖ Amrita Basu, 'Women and Religious Nationalism In India: An Introduction', and 'Feminism Inverted: The Real Women and Gendered Imagery of Hindu Nationalism', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 25: 4 (1993), pp. 3-4; 25-37. [link](#)

26 October, Thursday

Lecture 1 | 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Modern Science & Religion: A Derivative Discourse

* J.P.S. Uberoi, 'The Body of Christ and the Origin of Modernity' in *The European Modernity: Science, Truth & Method*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Ch: 1, pp. 25-45. [link](#)

* David Arnold, 'Nehruvian Science and Postcolonial India', *Isis*, Vol. 104: 2 (2013), pp. 360-370. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Religion in Perspective

* Talal Asad, 'The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category', in *Genealogies of Religion: Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 27-54. [link](#)

❖ Ashis Nandy, 'The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance', in R. Bhargava (ed.), *Secularism and its Critics* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 321-344. [link](#)

27 October, Friday

Lecture 1 | 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Secularism, Nationalism & Modernity

* Akeel Bilgrami, 'Secularism, Nationalism, Modernity', in R. Bhargava (ed.), *Secularism and its Critics* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 380-417. [link](#)

* Ashis Nandy, 'The Twilight of Certitudes: Secularism, Hindu Nationalism and Other Masks of Deculturation', in *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, Vol. 22: 2 (1997), pp. 157-176. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Caste & Politics and Caste in Politics

* Rajni Kothari, 'Rise of the *Dalits* and the renewed debate on caste', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 29: 26 (1994), 1589-94. [link](#)

* Ishita Banerjee-Dube, Introduction, 'Questions of Caste', in I. Banerjee-Dube (ed.), *Caste in Politics* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. xv-lxiv. [link](#)

❖ Nivedita Menon, 'Sexuality, Caste, Governmentality: the Contest over 'Gender' in India', *Feminist Review*, 91 (2009), pp. 94-112.

28 October, Saturday

Lecture 1 | 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Secularism under Scrutiny

* Charles Taylor, 'Why We Need a Radical Redefinition of Secularism' in *The power of religion in the public sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), pp. 34-59. [link](#)

* Talal Asad, 'Secularism, Nation-State, Religion', in *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 181-201. [link](#)

❖ Ashis Nandy, 'An Anti-secularist Manifesto', in *India International Centre Quarterly*, Vol 22: 1 (1995), pp. 35-64. [link](#)

❖ Rajeev Bhargava, 'States, Religious Diversity, and the Crisis of Secularism', in *Open Democracy*, Dated 22 Mar 2011. [link](#)

Lecture 2 | 2:00 p.m - 3:00 p.m.

Difference and the Limits of Liberal Multiculturalism

* Etienne Balibar, 'Cosmopolitanism and Secularism: Controversial Legacies and Prospective Interrogations' in *Grey Room*, Vol. Sep 1: 44 (2011), pp. 6-25. [link](#)

❖ Slavoj Zizek, 'Multiculturalism, Or, the Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism', *New Left Review*, Vol. Sep 1: 225 (1997), pp. 28-51. [link](#)

Valedictory Session & Certificate Distribution: 4:00 p.m - 4:30 p.m.