

Syllabus *Religion, Identity and Power in Modern South Asia*
21:510:397, Spring 2017
Rutgers University-Newark
Tuesdays 2:30 pm – 5:20 pm, HIL-204

INSTRUCTOR

Audrey Truschke
Department of History
Office in 310 Conklin Hall
audrey.truschke@gmail.com *e-mail is preferred method of contact
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30 am – 12:30 pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the diverse ways that religious traditions have intersected with the brokering of power in modern South Asia. We investigate the intersection of religion and power in different arenas, including historical memory, religious festivals, political upheavals, and violent actions. We cover both the British colonial period and post-independence India and, to a lesser degree, neighboring nations. We necessarily interrogate the history of the term “religion” as used in South Asia as an idea whose contours were formed during the colonial encounter with the West. At the core of our inquiry are how specific religious traditions have been invoked in political contexts (and vice-versa), public displays of religiosity, and the complex dynamics of religion and the state. We employ case studies involving numerous traditions, including Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, and Buddhism. Among other issues, we engage with questions of religious identity, networks of knowledge, and violence.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All readings are available on Blackboard.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade is based on three components:

Class Attendance and Preparation	35%
Blog Posts	35%
Papers	30%

Class Attendance: You are required to attend all classes. Your grade will suffer with any unexcused absence.

- *Excused Absences:* Recognized grounds for absence include illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, and recognized religious holidays. You must contact the professor or absences will be counted as unexcused.

- *Extended Absences:* Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Class Preparation: You should come to class having carefully read all listed readings for that day. In addition, students are responsible for presenting their blog posts in class (5 minute presentations).

Please note that there are three distinct types of readings: secondary sources (unmarked), primary sources, and modern flashpoints. You should approach each type of reading differently. The bulk of our readings are secondary sources, i.e., analytical works written by scholars. These works provide information about a set of historical or current events and also argue for a particular interpretation of those events on the basis of scholarly arguments. As we move closer to events in our own time, select news items and opinion pieces are also loosely included in this category. In contrast, primary sources are the raw materials of history, typically created by people who were directly involved in the historical events in question. Modern flashpoints are contemporary works that fall outside the discipline of history; you should read modern flashpoints as primary (rather than secondary) sources, meaning as raw materials for our subject of study, namely the construction of religion and power in modern India.

Blog Posts: Students are responsible for contributing to a private class blog weekly during weeks 2-13. Your grade for the blog posts is apportioned as follows:

- Four blog posts per student (5% each)
- Eight comments per student (remaining 15% of grade)

Students will be divided into three groups that will provide 3-5 paragraph blog posts (per individual) every three weeks. On weeks when a student does not write a blog post, she will comment on at least one post. All blog posts will focus on current events and will be more fully explained on the blog. Blog posts are due on Sundays by 12 pm (noon) on the class blog; comments are due by 12 pm (noon) on Monday. Everybody is expected to read all blog posts and comments for the week before class on Tuesday.

Papers: Each student is responsible for two 5-page papers, due right before spring break and at the end of class. All papers should use 12-point, Times New Roman font, and contain 1 inch margins. Papers must be submitted in a hard copy and electronically, via Blackboard.

CLASS POLICIES

Absences: If you miss class or arrive late, you are absent. For extenuating circumstances, get in touch with the instructor at least 48 hours before the missed class. Do not contact the instructor about the content of missed classes. It is your responsibility to find out from classmates about subjects discussed in your absence.

Electronics in Class: Laptops are permitted for note-taking only in class; phones should be silenced. No recordings are permitted. If at any point electronics prove distracting, all electronics will be banned.

Late Work: All late work incurs a penalty of one letter grade for every 24 hours late.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, cheating, and other academic dishonesty of *any sort* will not be tolerated. Please familiarize yourself with the Rutgers Code of Student Conduct and resources about academic dishonesty: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. All students are required to include the Rutgers honor pledge on all major course assignments submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Week 1: January 17

Grounding: Religious Identity and Where We Stand Today

Gottschalk, *Beyond Hindu and Muslim*, 11-40
“The Invention of the Hindu” (Mishra)

Recommended Reading for historical background: Vinay Lal, “British India” and “Independent India”

Section 1: Colonial India

Week 2: January 24

Defining and Counting Hindus and Muslims

*January 22 Group 1, Blog Post 1: I am a ____

Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, 132-159
Gottschalk, *Religion, Science, and Empire*, chapter 5, 182-224
Primary Source: proclamations by Queen Victoria in 1858 and King Edward in 1908
Modern Flashpoint: “Census 2011”

Week 3: January 31

Reforming and Presenting Hinduism

*January 29 Group 2, Blog Post 1: I am a ____

Sunil Khilnani, *Incarnations*, 158-164 and Vivekananda chapter
Introduction to *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (ed. Jaffrelot), 3-24
Primary Source: Swami Dayananada Saraswati excerpts from *Hindu Nationalism*, 29-37
Primary Source: Vivekananda’s 1893 speech before the World Parliament of Religion
Modern Flashpoint: 10 Things I Wish Everyone Knew About Hinduism

Week 4: February 7

Partition

*February 5 Group 3, Blog Post 1: I am a _____

Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence*, 55-73 and 235-271

Primary Source: Jinnah's Speech to the Muslim League in Lahore in 1940

Primary Source (short story): Rajinder Singh Bedi, "Lajwanti"

Primary Source (short story): Manto, "Toba Tek Singh"

Section 2: Powerful Narratives

Week 5: February 14

The Kumbh Mela

*February 12 Group 1, Blog Post 2: Religion in the Past and the Present

Maclean, *Pilgrimage and Power*, 11-14, 145-217

Modern Flashpoint: Peruse images and stats of 2013 Kumbh Mela

Modern Flashpoint: Malhotra, "Why the Kumbh Mela is at Risk" (<note> you may want to watch the Harvard video that Malhotra cites, link on Blackboard)

Week 6: February 21

Caste and Ambedkar

*February 19 Group 2, Blog Post 2: Religion in the Past and the Present

Ananya Vajpeyi, *Righteous Republic*, chapter 5 on Ambedkar and appendices D and E

Primary Source: Ambedkar, "Away from the Hindus"

Praveen Donthi, "From Shadows to the Stars"

Modern Flashpoint: Raja Vemula's statement on converting to Buddhism

Week 7: February 28

Sikh Nationalism

*February 26 Group 3, Blog Post 2: Religion in the Past and the Present

Cynthia Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation*, 107-134

Ashutosh Kumar, "Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal" 1515-20

Primary Source: Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973

Week 8: March 7

Hindu Nationalism 1: Beginnings through Babri Masjid

<note> No Blog Post
*Paper 1 due in class

Revisit Introduction to *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (ed. Jaffrelot), 3-24 (from Week 3)
Primary Source: Savarkar excerpts from *Hindu Nationalism*, 85-96
Primary Source: Advani excerpts from *Hindu Nationalism*, 280-298
BBC Babri Masjid timeline

March 14: Spring Break, No Class

Section 3: Conflict, Violence, and the State

Week 9: March 21

Hindu Nationalism 2: Modi's India

*March 19 Group 1, Blog Post 3: The Politics of Religion and Religious-based Conflict

Christophe Jaffrelot, "2002 Pogrom in Gujarat"
Primary Source (sort of): "Timeline of the Riots in Modi's Gujarat"
Benjamin Siegel, "The Multiple Ideas of India"
Siddhartha Deb, "Unmasking Modi"
Primary Source and Modern Flashpoint: USCIRF Report on India

Week 10: March 28

Two Conversion Movements: *Ghar Wapsi* and Naga Christianity

*March 26 Group 2, Blog Post 3: The Politics of Religion and Religious-based Conflict

Richard Eaton, "Conversion to Christianity among the Nagas, 1876-1971," 1-44
Leena Gita Reghunath, "The Believer"
Neha Dixit, "Operation #BetiUthao"
Christophe Jaffrelot, "'Reconversion' Paradoxes"

Week 11: April 4

Kashmir

*April 2 Group 3, Blog Post 3: The Politics of Religion and Religious-based Conflict

Pankaj Mishra's 3 part set of articles on Kashmir (link on Blackboard)
Modern Flashpoint: Basharat Peer, *Curfewed Night*, 165-183

Section 4: Challenges of Today

Week 12: April 11

Pakistani Islams

*April 9 Groups 1 and 2, Blog Post 4: Who Gets a Voice?

Talbot, "Religion and Violence," 147-160

Primary Source and Modern Flashpoint: USCIRF Reports on Pakistan and Bangladesh
Rozehnal, *Islamic Sufism Unbound*, 1-19

Primary Source: Imran Khan, "In Pakistan We Have Selective Islam"

<note> Vinay Lal's Pakistan timeline may be useful for reference (link on coursework)

Week 13: April 18

Teaching about Hinduism: Laine, Doniger, and California Textbook Controversies

*April 17 Group 3, Blog Post 4: Who Gets a Voice?

William Dalrymple, "India: The War over History"

Christian Novetzke, "The Laine Controversy and the Study of Hinduism"

Wendy Doniger, "India: Censorship by the Batra Brigade"

Ananya Vajpeyi, "Triumph of the Hindu Right"

Primary Source: *Hindu Nationalism*, excerpts on California textbook controversy

Aria Thaker, "Denials of Caste"

Week 14: April 25

Debating Indianness and Final Discussion

<note> No Blog Post

*Paper 2 due in class

Gyanendra Pandey, "Can a Muslim be an Indian?"

Modern Flashpoint: Anam Zakariya, "Perceiving the 'Other' in Pakistan"