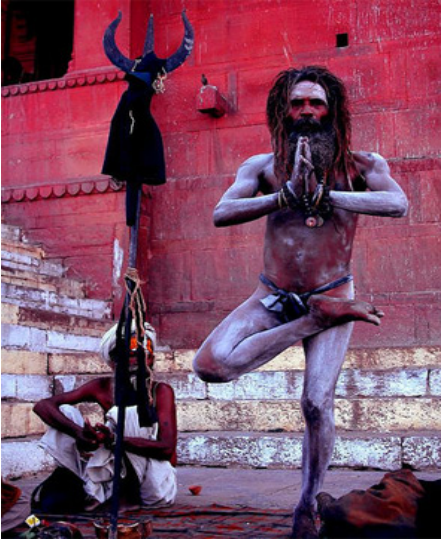


EVERYDAY LIFE IN SOUTH ASIA



Course Description

In this course, we will explore how people in South Asia live on a day-to-day basis, while also attending to how major historical events, such as colonialism and the Partition of India and Pakistan, continue to shape contemporary life and politics. We will draw, primarily, on the work of anthropologists. One of the strengths of anthropology's methodology—ethnography—is that it captures the complexities of everyday life. Although most of our course readings will be about India, we will also draw on scholarly work from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, to develop a transnational perspective on the region.

While this course offers an in-depth engagement with a specific region of the world, South Asia has also been a key site from which scholars have thought through major themes, including social organization, everyday life, religion, nationalism, violence/conflict, and globalization. As such, this course also offers an engagement with anthropological theory, which will allow you to question and deconstruct clichés about South Asia.

Course Objectives

By the completion of the course, students will have developed:

- A working knowledge with historical and contemporary examples of how caste, gender, political violence, and religious practices shape everyday life in South Asia

- A basic understanding of key concepts, theoretical approaches, and issues of concern in the anthropology and historiography of South Asia
- Critical writing and thinking skills, including engaging and synthesizing multiple perspectives (both scholarly and popular), offering cogent and clear argumentation in written work, and putting class discussions and readings into a broader intellectual context

Assignments and Course work

Writing Assignments: One of the goals of this course is to further develop your critical writing skills, including engaging the work of others by putting scholarly texts and films in conversation with each other; articulating a clear and cogent argument that is well-supported using evidence; situating your writing within specific contexts; and, transferring the knowledge from this course into other courses that you will take at F&M. To this end, you will do a significant amount of writing in this course, in the form of two short response papers that will synthesize the reading and discussions from two units of your choosing (4-5 pages each) and leading one class discussion.

Assignment breakdown: The following is an overview of your assignments:

90% 3 Short response papers (30% each)

- Short analytical paper on a topic of your choice from Part I (4-5 pages)
- Short analytical paper on either Part II **or** Part III (4-5 pages) – see deadlines on course schedule below

10% Leading class discussion (you will lead our class discussion once this semester on a day of your choosing. A lesson plan must be emailed to me by noon the day before class).

Submitting your work: All essays should be word-processed, double-spaced, have 1” margins, and be written in 11-point font. All essays should be submitted as hard copies in class or in my mailbox [please see course schedule for specifics]. You are responsible for following the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation in all written work.

Comments and grades: For each major writing assignment, I will read your work and offer comments on it. Please take time to read and reflect on these comments, which are designed to help you improve in future drafts and assignments. Your writing assignments will be evaluated for their thoughtfulness, originality,

complexity, and use of evidence. I will use the following approximate scale to calculate your grades in the course (all numbers are percentage points):

A+ 97-100	A 93-96	A- 90-92
B+ 87-89	B 83-86	B- 80-82
C+ 77-79	C 73-76	C- 70-72
D+ 67-69	D 63-66	D- 60-62
F 0-59		

Class Policies

Preparing for class: Please bring all readings with you to class, either in paper form (preferable), on a tablet, or on your computer. A smartphone is not an acceptable reading device. You should take notes on each assigned reading, keep track of keywords, points of clarification or questions, or vocabulary words that you may be unfamiliar with. These notes will help you prepare for our discussions in class and the two quizzes during the semester. Also, asking questions about the reading and concepts is essential for us to learn together and will count towards your participation grade.

Attendance and Participation: No unexcused absences are permitted, as your absence not only disrupts your own participation but also impedes the activities scheduled for the class period. In cases of incapacitating illness and religious observances, please inform me **in advance of class**.

Classroom conduct: The classroom is a space for learning. This class will be primarily discussion-based; as such, participating in class exercises and discussions is crucial to the learning process and counts towards your final grade. To facilitate a vibrant and respectful classroom environment, I ask that you refrain from all unnecessary use of electronics, side conversations, and multi-tasking. Computer use in the classroom should be strictly limited to consultation of course materials and composition of class notes. Please put away your cell phones before entering the classroom, even if class is not yet in session. Anyone found texting, browsing the internet, or talking on the phone while class is in session will be asked to leave and recorded as absent. You are invited to participate in creating an environment of mutual respect and intellectual productivity by listening and speaking with an open mind. However, please feel free to approach me if you feel anyone's participation in the course, including your own, is being impeded.

Accommodations: Anyone in need of classroom or exam accommodations for a disability should inform me as soon as possible.

Late work: Please carefully note all assignment due dates in your calendars. Unless I have approved a deadline extension in advance, half a letter grade will be taken off (for example, from a B to a B-) for each additional day that your assignment is late (this includes later the same day). If technical problems arise, please email me so I can investigate. You will not be penalized for technological failures.

Communication: The best way to communicate with me outside of class is via email. However, before you email me, please check the syllabus to make sure that the answer to your question cannot be found there. I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Email is also the best way to set up an appointment with me. Since emails are one of the most common forms of everyday writing we do, it is also important to know how to write emails in a work or professional context. All emails should have: a specific subject line that indicates the purpose and context of the email; a salutation, such as “Dear Professor X”; proper grammar and spelling; emoticons – sad faces, smiley faces, etc. – are not appropriate in professional contexts; a signature, such as “sincerely” or “thank you.”

Readings

The required readings for this course are listed below. All other readings will be available electronically.

Butalia, Urvashi. 2000. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Chua, Jocelyn L. 2014. *In Pursuit of the Good Life: Aspiration and Suicide in Globalizing South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Course Schedule

PART I: BUILDING BLOCKS OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SOUTH ASIA

Week 1: Introduction

Bose, Sugata and Ayesha Jalal

2011 South Asian History: An Introduction. In *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-12.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh

1992 Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for “Indian” Pasts?
Representations 37: 1-26.

Spivak, Gayatri C.

1988 Can the Subaltern Speak? In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Macmillan
Education: Basingstoke, pp. 271-313.

Week 2: Caste

Dirks, Nicholas B.

1992 Castes of Mind. *Representations* 37: 56-78.

Mines, Diane and Sarah Lamb

2010 Seven Prevalent Misconceptions about India’s Caste System. *Everyday Life in
South Asia*, pp. 153-4.

Raheja, Gloria Goodwin

1996 Caste, Colonialism and the Speech of the Colonized: Entextualization and
Disciplinary Control in India. *American Ethnologist* 23(3): 494-513.

In-class film viewing: *Ankur* (the Seedling), Shyam Benegal, 1974

Week 3: Gender and the Nation State

Mani, Lata

1998 Introduction and The Female Subject, the Colonial Gaze: Eyewitness
Accounts of *Sati* (Chapter 5). In *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in
Colonial India*. University of California Press: Berkeley, pp. 1-11, 158-191

The New York Times

2013 India’s New Focus on Rape Shows only the Surface of Women’s Perils.
[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/13/world/asia/in-rapes-aftermath-
india-debates-violence-against-women.html? r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/13/world/asia/in-rapes-aftermath-india-debates-violence-against-women.html? r=0)

Chaudhuri, Maitrayee

2014 National and Global Media Discourse after the savage death of ‘Nirbhaya’:
Instant Access and Unequal Knowledge. In *Studying Youth, Media and Gender in
Post-Liberalization India*. Berlin: Frank and Timme GmbH, pp. 19-45.

Mohanty, Chandra T.

1988 Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Feminist Review* 30: 61-88.

PART II: POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND ITS AFTERMATH

Week 4: Partition and its Aftermath

Butalia, Urvashi

2000 *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press (entire book).

In class film viewing: *1947 Earth*, Deepa Mehta, 1998

Short response paper #1 due

Week 5: the Sri Lankan Civil War

Daniel, Valentine E.

1996 Introduction and Chapter 3 (Violent Measures, Measured Violence). *Charred Lullabies: Chapters in an Anthropography of Violence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week 6: Remaking Life after Violence

Das, Veena

1990 'Our Work to Cry: Your Work to Listen', in Veena Das (ed.) *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*, pp. 345-399.

Perera, Sasanka

2001 Spirit Possessions and Avenging Ghosts: Stories of Supernatural Activity as Narratives of Terror and Mechanisms of Coping and Remembering. *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery*. Veena Das and Arthur Kleinman, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 157-200.

PART III: Religion, Medicine and Healing

Week 7: Vernacular Religion

Flueckiger, Joyce B.

2006 Setting the Stage: the Healing Room, Its Actors, and its Rhythms (Chapter One). In *Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Gold, Ann G.

2013 Sweetness and Light: The Bright Side of Pluralism in a North Indian Town. In *Religious Pluralism, State, and Society in Asia*. Chiara Formichi, ed. London: Routledge.

Short response paper #2 due

Week 8: Spirit Possession

Callan, Alyson

2007 'What else do we Bengalis do?' Sorcery, overseas migration, and the new inequalities in Sylhet, Bangladesh. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13: 331-343.

Ramberg, Lucinda

2009 Magical Hair as Dirt: Ecstatic Bodies and Postcolonial Reform in South India. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 33: 501-502.

In class film viewing: *Bhool Bhulaiyaa* (Priyadarshan, 2007)

Week 9: Development and Medicine in South Asia

Cohen, Lawrence

2010 Ethical Publicity: On Transplant Victims, Wounded Communities, and the Moral Demands of Dreaming. In *Ethical Life in South Asia*. Anand Pandian and Daud Ali, eds. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 253-274.

Pinto, Sarah

2004 Development without Institutions: Ersatz Medicine and the Politics of Everyday Life in Rural North India. *Cultural Anthropology* 19(3): 337-364.

PART IV: Globalization, Modernity, and the "New" Middle Class

Week 10: Aspiration and Globalization

Chua, Jocelyn L.

2014 *In Pursuit of the Good Life: Aspiration and Suicide in Globalizing South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Short response paper #3 due