

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
MONSOON SEMESTER 2021

M.A. COMPULSORY COURSE: PO 410

COURSE TITLE: **INDIAN POLITICS I: POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN INDIA**

INSTRUCTOR: DR MANINDRA THAKUR & DR RINKU LAMBA

Credits 4

Scheme of Evaluation: Class participation; Assignments; Mid semester (50%); End semester exam (50%)

**Background Note:** There are different ways of imagining India. These different imaginations are available to us through political ideas and concepts that emerged in modern India against the backdrop of colonialism. These ideas and frameworks involved among other things, a reassessment of traditional inheritances as well as an encounter with and specific modes of appropriation of modernity. Thinkers belonging to diverse intellectual persuasions opened up refreshingly new ways of envisaging the self, public life and the possibilities of crafting a new world, and these endeavours offer a window to understand the complex tapestry of political life in India. This paper approaches this body of thought by identifying certain key issues and concerns without shelving the contestations they are embroiled in. The perspective framework proposed here is dovetailed to a nonlinear reading of ideas, particularly those belonging to the same kindred class.

## 1. The Context

- (i) Colonialism
- (ii) Modernity
- (iii) Imagination of Nation

## 2. Political Ideas

**(a) Invocation of Tradition:** (With special reference to Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay, Tilak, Gandhi, M.S. Golwalkar)

- (i) Assessment of Inheritance
- (ii) Designation of Past
- iii) Religion, Caste and Culture

**(b) Engagement with Modernity:** (With special reference to Ranade, Tilak, Tagore, Nehru, Ambedkar, Pandita Ramabai, M.N Roy and Iqbal)

- (i) Social Reforms
- (ii) Reconfiguration of space: sacred/polluted, private/public
- (iii) Conceptions of Self

### 3. Imagination of the Democratic Ideal

- (i) Concerns of Equality
- (ii) Dignity and Swaraj
- (iii) Representation and Diversity
- (iv) Caste, Community and Nation

### 4. Methodological Debates on Studying India

Derivative, 'Deshi' and Beyond

The reading list below is indicative of the materials to be covered in the course. It is not exhaustive, and some other relevant readings may be added during the course of the semester. Please note that the course content is intended for a regular one-semester course (four months). If there are changes in the duration of the semester, corresponding modifications will be applied with reference to the topics, class lectures and readings.

#### PRIMARY TEXTS

Ambedkar, Bhimrao Ramji. Texts accessible at

<https://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/ambedkar/web/index.html>

“Annihilation of Caste,” “Ranade, Gandhi & Jinnah:” Address Delivered on the 101st Birthday Celebration of Mahadev Govind Ranade Held on the 18th January 1943 in the Gokhale Memorial Hall, Poona. Thacker, 1943.

Also, selections from the speeches and writings of B R Ambedkar, on the themes of democracy and representation

Gandhi, Mohandas K. *Hind Swaraj*. Ahmedabad. India: Navajivan (1938).

Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore · The Mahatma and the Poet: Letters and Debates Between Gandhi and Tagore, 1915-1941 Edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, 1997.

Gandhi, M. K., and U. R. Rao. *The way to communal harmony*. Ahmadabad, India: Navajivan Publishing House, 1963. Selections from this text

Iqbal, Muhammad. 1930 Presidential Address

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[http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt\\_iqbal\\_1930.html](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_iqbal_1930.html)

Marcuse, Herbert, 1969. *An Essay on Liberation*, Beacon Press, Boston.

O'Hanlon, Rosalind, and Tārābāī Śinde. *A comparison between women and men: Tarabai Shinde and the critique of gender relations in colonial India*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1994.

Parel, Anthony M.K Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and Other Writings, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Phule, Jotīrāva Govindarāva, and Govind P. Deshpande. *Selected Writings of Jotirao Phule*. Leftword books, 2002. Selections from this text

Rāmabāī, Pandita. *The high caste Hindu woman*. Inter-India Publications, 1984.

Ranade, Mahadev Govind. *The Miscellaneous Writings of the Late Hon'ble Mr. Justice MG Ranade; with an Introd. by DE Wacha*. Ramabai Ranade, 1915. Selections from this text

Ranade, Mahadev Govind. *Rise of the Maratha power*. Vol. 1. Punalekar & Company, 1900. Selections from this text

Roy, Arundhati, *The Doctor and the Saint*, Illinois Haymarket Books, 1997.

Tagore, Rabindranath. "Nationalism." Introduction by Ramachandra Guha. New Delhi: Penguin, 2014. Nationalism essays of Tagore are also accessible at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/40766/40766-h/40766-h.htm>

Tagore, Rabindranath. "Swadeshi Samaj." (text will be circulated)

## ARTICLES/BOOK CHAPTERS

Bhargava, R., 2001. Are there alternative modernities. *Culture, Democracy, and Development in South Asia*, pp.9-26.

Bilgrami, Akeel. "Gandhi, the philosopher." *Economic and Political Weekly* (2003): 4159-4165.

Chatterjee, Partha. *The nation and its fragments: Colonial and postcolonial histories*. Vol. 11. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993. Selections from this text

Dalmia, Vasudha, and Heinrich von Stietencron, eds. *Representing Hinduism: The construction of religious traditions and national identity*. SAGE Publications Pvt. Limited, 1995. Selections from this text

Guru, Gopal, 2011. The Idea of India: 'Derivative, Desi and Beyond', *Economic and Political Weekly*, SEPTEMBER 10-16, Vol. 46, No. 37 pp. 36-42

Guru, Gopal, 2017. "Ethics in Ambedkar's Critique of Gandhi" *Economic & Political Weekly*, APRIL 15, vol lil no 15, 95-100.

Hegde, Sasheej, 2007. The 'Modern' of Modern Indian Political Thought: Outline of a Framework of Appraisal" *Social Scientist*, May - Jun., Vol. 35, No. 5/6, pp. 19-38

Heredia, C. Rudolf 2009 Gandhi's Hinduism and Savarkar's Hindutva, EPW, July 18, 2009 vol xlv no 29, 62-67.

Hawley, John Stratton. *Three Bhakti Voices: Mirabai, Surdas, and Kabir in Their Time and Ours*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005. Selections from this text

Kaviraj, Sudipta. "An outline of a revisionist theory of modernity." *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 46, no. 3 (2005): 497-526.

Kaviraj, Sudipta. "On the enchantment of the state: Indian thought on the role of the state in the narrative of modernity." *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 46, no. 2 (2005): 263-296.

Kaviraj, Sudipta. *The Enchantment of Democracy in India*, Ranikhet, Permanent Black, 2011. Essay on "Ideas of Freedom in Modern India" from this text

Mahajan, Gurpreet, ed. *Accommodating Diversity: Ideas and Institutional Practices*. Oxford University Press, 2011. Selections from this text

Mantena, Karuna. "Another realism: The politics of Gandhian nonviolence." *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 455-470.

Mukherjee, Gangeya 2016 *In Argument: Considering of the Political in Gandhi Tagore: Politics, Truth and Conscience*, Routledge

Palshikar, Suhas, 1996. "Gandhi-Ambedkar Interface ...when shall the twain meet?" EPW, August 3, pp. 2070-2072.

Puri, Bindu, 2015. "The Tagore-Gandhi Debate: An Account of the Central Issues", in *The Tagore-Gandhi Debate on Matters of Truth and Untruth*, Springer

Raghuramraju, A. 2007. "Savarkar and Gandhi: From Politicising Religion to Spiritualising Politics" in *Debates in Indian Philosophy: Classical, Colonial, and Contemporary*, Oxford University Press.

Rodrigues, Valerian. 2011. "Reading Texts and Traditions: The Ambedkar-Gandhi Debate" January 8, vol xlv no 2 EPW Economic & Political Weekly, 56-66.

Stepan, Alfred, and Charles Taylor, eds. *Boundaries of toleration*. Columbia University Press, 2014. Selections from this text

Taylor, C., 2002. Modern social imaginaries. *Public Culture*, 14(1), pp.91-124.

Taylor, C., 1995. Two theories of modernity. *Hastings Center Report*, 25(2), pp.24-33.