

5YYD0009 Development issues in South Asia (2019-20)

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South Asia is home to the world's largest democracy and also where most of the world's poor live. Its rapidly growing economies diverge across and within states and the experiments and experiences of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with 'development' provide ample irritation to received wisdom across the social sciences. This regional module aims to introduce students to some of the key issues of political and economic transformation in the region. It reconstructs the project of 'development', uncovers how it works in practice, analyses how it is embedded in society and history and asks how its dysfunctionalities play out as South Asia rises to global prominence.

The module runs through weekly 2h lectures and 1h seminar groups. Four 'foundational' lectures give way to four 'irritations' to enable students to think critically about both the South Asian experience and 'development' more broadly. Each lecture contains one embedded in-depth case study and is accompanied by an (optional) movie suggestion as well as a short (1-2 pages usually) 'keyword' article that introduces relevant 'desi english' terms in a fun and accessible way. Inevitably, the reading load will be high, especially for those yet unfamiliar with the region: usually one book as core reading plus one text for the case study per week; 'additional readings' are meant as pointers for those who want to write their essays on the topic. To ease the burden, seminar groups before reading week will teach a number of reading skills. Seminar groups after reading week run as 'writing labs', emulating a constant formative process towards the final summative essay of 3k words.

Educational aims

- Introduce students to the general histories of development, economic and political transformation in the South Asian region
- Familiarise students with the different contexts, experiences and outcomes of the development agenda in modern India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- Introduce students to contemporary debates in South Asian development, including on majoritarianism, climate emergency and transnational ties
- Enable students to think about critically about economic and political development in developing countries such as South Asia

Learning outcomes

- At the end of this module students are expected to:
- Developed an understanding of key issues in South Asian development
- Acquired an understanding of the key structural characteristics of South Asian countries and their significance for economic development
- Consolidated their understanding of key theories that we apply to problems of development in the context of South Asia

- Gained confidence in critically analysing development policies and initiatives, with specific focus on South Asia

Employability skills

- The first set of lectures hones critical and interdisciplinary thinking
- The second set of lectures fosters creativity / out-of-the-box thinking
- The first set of seminars focuses teamwork and reading skills
- The second set of seminars improves writing and editing skills

Core course readings

- Asher, Meera, Trent Brown, Assa Doron and Craig Jeffrey, 2017: Keywords. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies 40 (2).
- Baxter, Craig, Yogendra K Malik, Charles H Kennedy and Robert C Oberst: Government and politics in South Asia. Boulder: Westview.
- Dreze, Jean, 2017: Sense and solidarity. Jholawala economics for everyone. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.
- Dwyer, Rachel, 2014: Bollywood's India. Hindi cinema as a guide to contemporary India. London: Reaktion.
- Harriss-White, Barbara, 2003: India working. Essays on society and economy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jayal, Niraja Gopal, ed, 2001: Democracy in India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
- McCartney, Matthew, The Indian Economy. Newcastle, Agenda, 2019.
- Roy, Tirthankar, 2012: India and the world economy. From Antiquity to the present. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wadley, Susan S, 1994: Struggling with destiny in Karimpur, 1925-1984. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Zamindar, Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali, 2007: The long partition and the making of modern South Asia. Refugees, boundaries, histories. New York: Columbia University Press.

Week 1: Rollercoaster overview

This lecture provides a broad sweep historical overview of South Asian development since colonial times and schematic characteristics of the political system and macro-economic trends of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It also introduces the teaching team, module format, assessment pattern, etc.

Core readings:

- Baxter, Craig, Yogendra K Malik, Charles H Kennedy and Robert C Oberst, 2001: Government and politics in South Asia. Boulder: Westview.
- Jeffrey, Craig, 2017, Introduction, *South Asia* 40(2), 272-273.
- Roy, Tirthankar, 2012: India and the world economy. From Antiquity to the present. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keyword:

- Jeffrey, Craig, 2017: Introduction. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 272-273.

Movie suggestion:

- Gandhi by David Attenborough, 1982: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0083987/>

FOUNDATIONS

The aim of this first block of the module is to provide a solid foundational understanding of South Asian development, both substantively and in terms of conceptual tools. It moves from structural political economy via development policy and state-citizen interactions towards electoral politics.

Week 2: Political Economy and social structure

This lecture introduces a general model of thinking about South Asia's socially embedded political economy. It introduces key intersecting social cleavages (class, caste, religion, gender, urbanity) and discussed how they structure labor relations and patterns of accumulation. The case study demonstrates this general model at the example of the socially determined price of corruption in real estate.

Core reading:

- Harriss-White, Barbara, 2003: *India working. Essays on society and economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Case study:

- Susewind, Raphael, 2015: Spatial segregation, real estate markets and the political economy of corruption in Lucknow, India. *Journal of South Asian Development* 10 (3), 267-291.

Additional readings:

- Damodaran, Harish, 2008: *India's new capitalists. Caste, business and industry in a modern nation*. Ranikhet: Permanent black.
- Javed, Umair, 2017: Profit, protest and power. Bazaar politics in urban Pakistan. In Aparna Pande (ed): *Routledge handbook of contemporary Pakistan*. London: Routledge.
- Kohli, Atul, 2012: *Poverty amid plenty in the New India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sharma, Ursula, 1999: *Caste*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Keyword:

- Sinha, Mishka, 2017: Godown. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 316-319.

Movie suggestion:

- Aarakshan by Prakash Jha, 2011: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1848771/>

Week 3: Poverty and jholawala economics

This lecture focuses on the subcontinent's poor and marginalised, on the economics of poverty but also on experiments in applied development policy. The case study looks at the marginalisation of one of the most economically and politically disadvantaged groups on the subcontinent, the Muslims in India.

Core reading:

- Dreze, Jean, 2017: Sense and solidarity. Jholawala economics for everyone. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

Case study:

- Sachar Committee Report: <http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/reports/sachar-committee-report>

Additional readings:

- Banerjee, Abhijit V. and Esther Duflo, 2007: The economic lives of the poor. Journal of Economic Perspectives, 21 (1), 141-168.
- Dreze, Jean and Amartya Sen, 2002: India. Development and participation. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Kunnath, George, 2012: Rebels from the mud houses. Dalits and the making of the Maoist revolution in Bihar. Social Science Press
- Rizvi, Mubbashir A, 2019: The ethics of staying: Social movements and land rights politics in Pakistan. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Keyword:

- Srinivas, Lakshmi, 2017: One-by-Two. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies 40 (2), 370-372.

Movie suggestion:

- Matru ki Bijlee ka Mandola by Vishal Bhardwaj, 2013: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2106537/>

Week 4: States in real life

This lecture unpacks in greater detail the key actor of 'development' in South Asia: the state. It asks how the state operates, how citizens engage with it, and why it might seem unresponsive or corrupt. The case study looks at claim making in one of the most unequal parts of rural Pakistan.

Core reading:

- Gupta, Akhil, 2012: Red tape. Bureaucracy, structural violence, and poverty in India. Durham: Duke University Press

Case study:

- Mohmand, Shandana Khan, 2019: Crafty oligarchs, savvy voters. Democracy under inequality in Pakistan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Additional readings:

- Auerbach, Michael, 2019: Demanding development. The politics of public goods provision in India's urban slums. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Björkman, Lisa, 2015: Pipe politics, contested waters. Embedded infrastructure of millennial Mumbai. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hossain, Naomi, 2010: Rude Accountability. Informal Pressures on Frontline Bureaucrats in Bangladesh 41(5): 907928.
- Kruks-Wisner, Gabrielle, 2018: Claiming the state. Active citizenship & social welfare in rural India. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keyword:

- Sen, Ronojoy, 2017: Peon. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies 40 (2), 379-381.

Movie suggestion:

- Jolly LLB by Subhash Kapoor, 2013: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2621000/>

Week 5: Electoral politics, democracy and majoritarianism

This lecture extends the discussion of politics to the electoral arena and asks how India, Bangladesh and Pakistan experienced elections under both democratic and authoritarian or military rule. It also asks how majoritarian populism threatens democracy across the region.

Core reading:

- Tudor, Maya, 2013: The promise of power. The origins of democracy in India and autocracy in Pakistan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Case study:

- Banerjee, Mukulika, 2014: Why India votes? London: Routledge.

Additional readings:

- Chowdhury, Nusrat Sabina, 2019: Paradoxes of the popular. Crowd politics in Bangladesh. Stanford, Stanford University Press.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe, 2003: India's silent revolution. The rise of the lower castes in North India. London: Hurst.
- Jayal, Niraja Gopal, ed, 2001: Democracy in India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
- Jha, Prashant, 2017: How the BJP wins. Inside India's greatest election machine. New Delhi: Juggernaut.

Keyword:

- Banerjee, Mukulika, 2017: Vote. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 410-412.

Movie suggestion:

- Newton by Amit Masurkar, 2017: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6484982/>

IRRITATIONS

The aim of this second block of the module is to trouble and complicate the understanding students developed so far, introducing quite different ways of knowing 'development' in South Asia.

Week 6: Masculinity

This week asks how all we have learned so far is gendered. It doesn't take patriarchal assumptions for granted but unpacks South Asian masculinities, asks how they intersect with developmental aspirations, and how then the experience of men contrasts with the experience of women.

Core reading:

- Jeffrey, Craig; Jeffery, Patricia & Jeffery, Roger, 2010: *Degrees without freedom? Education, masculinities and unemployment in North India*. Stanford University Press

Case study:

- Osella, Caroline and Filippo Osella: Friendship and flirting. *Micro-politics in Kerala, South India*. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 4(2), 189-206.

Additional readings:

- Cross, Jamie, 2014: *Dream zones. Anticipating capitalism and development in India*. London: Pluto.
- Jeffrey, Craig, 2010: Timepass. Youth, class, and time among unemployed young men in India. *American Ethnologist*. 37(3): 465-481.
- Kumar, Nilotpal, 2016: *Unraveling farmer suicides in India. Egoism and masculinity in peasant life*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Poonam, Snigdha, 2018: *Dreamers. How young Indians are changing the world*. London: Hurst.

Keyword:

- Krishnan, Sneha and Nandini Gooptu, 2017: Tension. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 404-406.

Movie suggestion:

- Pink by Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, 2016: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5571734/>

Week 7: Crime

This week's lecture asks what would happen to our understanding of both economic and political development if we transcend the legal/illegal binary and seriously consider the impact of (organised) crime, muscle politics and violence in South Asia.

Core reading:

- Michelutti, Lucia, Ashraf Hoque, Nicolas Martin, David Picherit, Paul Rollier, Arild E Ruud and Clarinda Still, 2019: *Mafia Raj. The rule of bosses in South Asia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Case study:

- Bedi, Tarini, 2016: *The dashing ladies of Shiv Sena. Political matronage in urbanizing India*. New York: SUNY Press.

Additional readings:

- Brass, Paul, 2003: *The production of Hindu-Muslim violence in contemporary India*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Harriss-White, Barbara and Lucia Michelutti, eds, 2019: *The wild east. Criminal political economies in South Asia*. London: UCL Press.
- Vaishnav, Milan, 2017: *When crime pays. Money and muscle in Indian politics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Verkaaik, Oskar, 2004: *Migrants and militants. Fun and urban violence in Pakistan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Keyword:

- Sreenath, Shreyas, 2017: Rowdy. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 392-394.

Movie suggestion:

- *Anaarkali of Aarah* by Avinash Das, 2017: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6058394/>

Week 8: Climate emergency

Global heating already has a profound impact on development in South Asia and will decidedly shape the coming decades. This week we thus reconsider all the above from the perspective of environmental politics, policy and economics both in terms of mitigation and adaptation.

Core reading:

- Dubash, Navroz K, ed, 2019: *India in a warming world. Integrating climate change and development*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Case study:

- Paprocki, K, 2018: Threatening dystopias. Development and adaptation regimes in Bangladesh. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 108 (4), 955-973.

Additional readings:

- Chatterjee, Elizabeth, 2017: Reinventing state capitalism in India. A view from the energy sector. *Contemporary South Asia* 25 (1), 85-100.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh, 2014: Climate and capital. On conjoined histories. *Critical Inquiry* 41 (1), 1-23.
- Dubash, Navroz K, Sunila S Kale and Ranjit Bhavirkar, eds, 2018: Mapping power. The political economy of electricity in India's states. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Kikon, Dolly, 2019: Living with oil and coal: Resource politics and militarization in Northeast India. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Keyword:

- Cross, Jamie, 2017: Current. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40 (2), 291-293.

Movie suggestion:

- *Katiyabaaz* by Deepti Kakkar and Fahad Mustafa, 2013:
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2466678/>

Week 9: Ruins

This final irritation considers the material and ideational remains of previous iterations of 'development' in South Asia. What are overlooked but potent undercurrents of all we have discussed so far in this module? We particularly look at Empire, Partition and the Emergency in India. The case study considers a ghost in Lucknow and what it tells about changing publics.

Core reading:

- Nandy, Ashis, 2003: *The romance of the state and the fate of dissent in the tropics*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Case Study:

- Susewind, Raphael, forthcoming: *Rifah-e Aam Club, Lucknow: Public sphere and public space in urban North India*. Geoforum.

Additional readings:

- Taneja, Anand Vivek, 2017: *Jinnealogy. Time, Islam and ecological thought in the medieval ruins of Delhi*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Tarlo, Emma, 2003: *Unsettling memories. Narratives of the emergency in Delhi*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wadley, Susan S, 1994: *Struggling with destiny in Karimpur, 1925-1984*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Zamindar, Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali, 2007: The long partition and the making of modern South Asia. Refugees, boundaries, histories. New York: Columbia University Press.

Keyword:

- Masselos, Jim, 2017: Bombay Time / Standard Time. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies 40 (2), 281-284.

Movie suggestion:

- Khamosh Pani by Sabiha Sumar, 2003: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0357283/>

CONCLUSION

Week 10: Global South Asia

The final week of the module considers how all we learned about the politics and economics of development its foundations as well as irritations can shed light on the global role of South Asia, with rising material as well as cultural influence of the region on the world stage.

Core readings:

- Radhakrishnan, Smitha, 2011: Appropriately Indian. Gender and culture in a new transnational class. Durham: Duke University Press.

Case study:

- Thobani, Sitara, 2018: Alt-right with the Hindu-right. Long distance nationalism and the perfection of Hindutva. Ethnic and Racial Studies 42 (5): 745-762.

Additional readings:

- Bhandari, Parul, 2019: Money, culture, class. Elite women as modern subjects. London: Routledge.
- Hoque, Ashraf, 2019: Being young, male and Muslim in Luton. London: UCL Press.
- Punathambekar, Aswin and Sriram Mohan, eds, 2019: Global digital cultures. Perspectives from South Asia. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Ray, Krishnendu and Tulasi Srinivas, eds, 2012: Curried cultures. Globalization, food, and South Asia. Oakland: University of California Press.

Keyword:

- Baas, Michiel, 2017: Only (in) India. South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies 40 (2), 373-375.

Movie suggestion:

- English Vinglish by Gauri Shinde, 2012: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2181931/>