

1PSCI 0101: COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF DEVELOPING AREAS*(Note: satisfies requirement for Society sector)*

Prof. RUDRA SIL
University of Pennsylvania

FALL 2023

Lectures: MW 5:15-6:14

Location: TBA

Office hours: MW 3-4 pm, or by appt (zoom)

Teaching Assistants:

*Griffin Brewer, Tanya Vaidya,
& Pedro Vincent de Castro*

Course Description:

This course examines processes of political and socio-economic change in post-colonial developing areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The course adopts a comparative-historical approach. It is not as concerned with keeping up with current events as with analyzing the relationships between historical legacies, the initial challenges of post-colonial political and socioeconomic development, and how these interact with contemporary problems and trends. Although nominally focused on "political change," the course will also devote substantial attention to economic, sociocultural, and international factors. Part One of the course examines the common and distinctive features of colonial rule in different regions as well as the heightened challenges of political and economic development facing newly independent nations. We will consider how these post-colonial nation-states, once referred to as members of the "Third World," have understood their roles in a changing international order, and how they have sought to build new nations, maintain political order and engineer economic growth. Part Two of the course is designed to give you an appreciation of the diverse experiences of several individual countries within a broader comparative perspective (such as Brazil, India, and Nigeria), with passing references to other countries as comparative referents. The countries have been chosen not for their intrinsic importance but for their usefulness in capturing broader regional patterns and highlighting general theoretical concepts and arguments introduced in Part One. The third part of the course focuses on trends and issues that have emerged over the last two decades from the perspective of the South. These include the challenges faced by efforts to promote democracy and economic reform, as well as issues related to gender and the environment as seen from the vantage point of states and social groups in the South.

Readings:

Required readings are posted on Canvas, linked to the relevant lecture modules. They are an integral part of the course, and you should plan to have the readings for any given week completed before recitations that week (since TA's will be raising discussion issues partly based on readings). You are also expected to engage with at least some of the readings in exams and papers.

Requirements:

There will be an in-class midterm for Part I of the course (20% of the grade); a take-home paper covering material in Part II (30% of the grade); and a 2-hour final exam (40% of the grade). The remaining 10% is at your T.A's discretion, mainly reflecting attendance & engagement at recitations. Note: the final exam is tentatively scheduled for [date TBA]. *Please plan any winter travel accordingly; it is not easy to arrange alternative exams for such a large class.*

SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS
(assigned readings posted in canvas modules)

PART ONE
COLONIAL LEGACIES AND POST-COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT

Aug 30 (W)

1) Is There Such a Thing as “Developing Areas”? And Does it Matter What We Call It?

<< Mon Sep 4 (M): Labor Day, No Class >>

Sep 6 (W)

2) Before Colonialism: Uncertainty, Risk-Sharing and the Subsistence Ethic

Sept 11 (M)

3) The Encounter with Colonialism: Economic, Political & Social-Psychological Aspects

Sept 13 (W)

4) Nationalism and National Liberation: Invented Tradition or Imagined Modernity?

Sept 18 (M)

5) The Challenges of Building Post-Colonial Nation-States

Sept 20 (W)

6) Political Disorder in Newly Independent States: Why So Much Corruption & Violence?

Sept 25 (M) – Yom Kippur (lecture)

7) The Challenge of Post-Colonial Economic Development in the Periphery

Sept 27 (W)

8) After Protectionism: Economic Liberalization and the Washington Consensus

Oct 2 (M)

9) Democracy & Markets in Post-Colonial Nations: The Dilemma of Simultaneous Transitions

**** note: not included in Midterm 1, but relevant for Midterm 2 Paper & Final Exam**

Oct 4 (W)

***** Part One Assignment: IN-CLASS MIDTERM *****

PART TWO

POST-COLONIAL COUNTRIES IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Oct 9 (M)

10) INDIA (Part One)

Oct 11 (W)

11) Clips from "GANDHI" (1982, Oscar for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor: Ben Kingsley)

*** Note: clips considered part of course materials*

*[** Oct 12-13: Fall Break – NO recitations; India to be discussed following week]*

Oct 16 (M)

12) INDIA (Part Two)

Oct 18 (W)

13) ALGERIA: From Anti-Colonial "Terrorism" to the Challenge of Islamism

Oct 23 (M)

14) OPEN DATE: wrap up unfinished topics; discussion on India & Algeria

Oct 25 (W)

15) Clips from "BATTLE OF ALGIERS" (1966, several Oscar nominations & major awards)

*** Note: clips considered part of course materials*

Oct 30 (M) & Nov 1 (W)

16-17) BRAZIL

Nov 6 (M) & Nov 8 (W)

18-19) IRAN

Nov 13 (M) & Nov 15 (W)

20-21) NIGERIA

Nov 20 (M)

22) SOUTH KOREA: A Model for Post-Colonial Development?

***** Part Two Assignment: TAKE-HOME PAPER *****

-- Assignment handed out Fri, NOV. 17, due before class Mon, NOV. 27

Nov 21-22 (Tue-Wed): University follows Thu-Fri schedule – but NO recitations

<< instead of recitations: TA's will hold extra office hours on Mon or Tue >>

<< Nov 23-26: Thanksgiving Weekend >>

PART THREE

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES ACROSS THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Nov 27 (M)

23) Democracy & Human Rights in the Global South: The Limits of Liberalism?

Nov 29 (W)

24) Women in the Global South: Different Challenges, Different Prospects

Dec 4 (M)

25) The South in a Global Economy: New Challenges, Familiar Debates

Dec 6 (W)

26) The South and Climate Change: Towards Environmental Sustainability?

Dec 11 (W)

27) The Global South in the 21st Century: The End of History?

***** FINAL EXAMINATION (in-class, week of December 14-21; date/location TBA) *****