VL: The Rise of an Asian Giant? — Introduction to the History of Modern India (c. 1600-2000)

The moment of arrival? — Swiss architect Le Corbusier and India’s Prime Minister Nehru in Chandigarh, 1955

TIME: Monday 15:15-16:45
LOCATION: ML E 12
INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD: Prof. Dr. Harald Fischer-Tiné
Course Description

India is not only one of the rising economic superpowers in the 21st century, it is also a nuclear power and a country of tremendous geo-strategic importance. How did this new “Asian giant” acquire its status? The lecture offers a survey of the historical trajectories taken by the Indian subcontinent from the beginning of the 17th to the end of the 20th century. The thematic foci include, but are not limited, to an examination of the question whether or not there was a pre-European South Asian modernity, the assessment of the impact of colonialism and an analysis of post-colonial nation-building processes. Through this course, students are thus acquainted with the history of one of the most important world regions. The objective is not only to introduce participants to a richly diverse civilization, they are also encouraged to look at interrelations and make comparisons with the West. Through this interactional approach, their knowledge of European history is contextualised in a global framework while simultaneously their intercultural sensitivity is being trained.

Mandatory Readings

- For each session, a carefully selected text providing a survey of the respective topic is available in the Polybox. Additionally, the PowerPoint slides will be made available on the same platform within a week following the session. Polybox link: [https://polybox.ethz.ch/index.php/s/fMWNjlFocexAP6w](https://polybox.ethz.ch/index.php/s/fMWNjlFocexAP6w)
  PW: india2019

For all technical and organisational questions, please contact the teaching assistant Rahel Gutmann, rahel.gutmann@gmw.gess.ethz.ch

Course requirements

- Presence in 80% of the sessions is highly recommended
- A 1,500-word summary of a text marked with a flower symbol (ﷺ) of your own choice, to be submitted to the teaching assistant, Rahel Gutmann, by 1st December 2019, 23:59 CET in a word document containing the authors name.
- and passing of the final exam (> 50% of the maximum marks)
### SESSION OUTLINE
(incl. list of mandatory readings)

**Session 1** (23.09.2019)  
India or South Asia? — Introduction to the Course  

**Session 2** (30.09.2019)  
A Non Western Modernity? — the Mughal Empire and its Successors (ca. 1550-1750)  

**Session 3** (07.10.2019)  
From Trade to Conquest: Local Powers and the Expansion of the East India Company (1750-1818)  

**Session 4** (14.10.2019)  
Reform and Revolt: Apex and Decline of Company Rule (1818-1858)  

**Session 5** (21.10.2019)  
High Noon of the Raj: Restauration, Economic Exploitation and Protest (1858-1885)  

**Session 6** (28.10.2019)  
Urbanisation and Industrialisation: The Social Consequences of Colonial Modernity (c. 1860-1930)  

**Session 7** (04.11.2019)  
Nationalism and Social Reform: Moderates and Radicals in the Age of Elite Nationalism (1885-1918)  

**Session 8** (11.11.2019)  
The Coming of the Mahatma: M.K. Gandhi and the Politics of Mass Nationalism (1919-1939)  

Session 10 (25. 11. 2019)  India in the Zero Hour? — Caesurae and Continuities during the Nehruvian Era (1947-1964)

- ROTHERMUND, Dietmar, Contemporary India: Political, Economic and Social Developments since 1947, Delhi and Chennai 2013, pp. 95-121.


Session 13 (16. 12. 2019)  FINAL EXAM

Hindu-Muslim riots during the infamous 'direct action day' in Calcutta, August 1946
BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Overviews

STEIN, Burton and ARNOLD, David, A History of India (second edition), Malden etc. 2010.

Specific works dealing with thematic foci of the lecture

ARNOLD, David, Colonizing the Body. State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth Century India, Berkeley etc. 1993.
BANNERJEE, Sikata, Make me a Man! Masculinity, Nationalism and Hinduism in India, Albany 2005.
BARUAH, Sanjib, Ethnonationalism in India: A Reader, New Delhi, 2010.
BAYLY, C.A., Rulers Townsmen and Bazaars. North Indian society in the age of British expansion 1770-1870.
BAYLY, C.A., Empire and Information. Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, Cambridge 1996.

BEHAL, R.P. and Van der Linden, M. (eds), India’s Labouring Poor: Historical Studies c. 1600-2000, Delhi etc. 2007.


BIRLA, Ritu, Stages of Capital: Law, Culture and Market Governance in Late Colonial India, Durham and London 2009.

BROWN, Judith and PAREL Anthony (eds), The Cambridge Companion to Gandhi, Cambridge etc. 2011.


GOSWAMI, Manu, Producing India. From colonial economy to national space, Chicago-London 2004.

GOULD, William, Religion and Conflict in Modern South Asia, Cambridge 2011.


HABIB, S. Irfan und RAINA, Dhruv (eds), The Social History of Science in India, New Delhi, 2007.

HAYNES, Douglas et al., Towards a History of Consumption in South Asia, New Delhi, 2010.

INDEN, Ronald, Imagining India, (Repr.) Bloomington 2000.


