UE: Introduction to the History of Modern India (c.1800 - 2000): Themes and Debates

En route to modernity? — Indian Postcard (1906)

TIME: Wednesday, 15:15-16:45
LOCATION: HG D 3.3
INSTRUCTOR OF RECORDS: Prof. Dr. Harald Fischer-Tiné
Course description

This course explores various controversial issues of modern South Asian history that have been in the focus of historical debates in recent years. Topics range from the controversy over the beginning of modernity on the subcontinent, the colonial and postcolonial construction of caste, religious and gender identities to the role of ‘Bollywood’, and the effects of the most recent wave of economic globalisation on India and Pakistan.

In this seminar, the participants are not primarily confronted with "the facts" of history, but rather guided towards an analytical approach towards historical problems. The reading skills of complex historiographical texts are being trained, while at the same time students are introduced to the analysis of various kinds of source material.

Course requirements

Presence in 80% of the sessions (an attendance sheet will be circulated), participation in the discussions and group work as well as either

- A presentation of c. 20 mins based on at least three of the listed readings
  
or

- An essay of 3,000 words based on at least four of the listed readings; it has to be submitted until 10 January 2015.

Link to online reader: http://gruppe.elba2.ch/12143/ABgEphBFrc

Contact to the teaching assistant: cornelia.rueegg@gmw.gess.ethz.ch

SESSION OUTLINE & LITERATURE

(✪ = mandatory readings in the course package)

Session 1 (17. 9. 2014)  Introduction to the course; Cultural and Geographical Background


Session 2 (24. 9. 2014)  Bhārat, India, South Asia: Historical Background, 1700-2000


Session 3 (01.10.2014) ‘Age of disruption or age of transition? — State, economy and power in the 18th century


Session 4 (08.10.2014) Liberal experiments: ‘Colonial humanitarianism’ and indigenous involvement (1819-1856)

Who speaks for the nation? — From Elite to Mass nationalism (c. 1880-1930)

Session 6 (22. 10. 2014)  Resistance beyond Nationalism: Subaltern ‘Mutinies’, Revolts and Rebellions in South Asia


Session 7 (29. 10. 2014)  The Reconfiguration of Religion in (Post-) Colonial Times

- Froerer, Peggy, Religious Division and Social Conflict: The Emergence of Hindu Nationalism in Rural India, New Delhi 2007, pp. 40-76.
- Pernau, Margrit, Ashraf into Middle Classes: Muslims in Nineteenth-Century Delhi, New Delhi 2013, pp. 269-295.
Session 8 (05. 11. 2014)  Gender Trouble: Contestations over Masculinity, Femininity and Sexuality


Gendered appropriation of Modernity? A Bengali married couple (c. 1920)
Session 9 (12.11.2014)  
**Categorical Inequality and Change: ‘Caste’ and ‘Tribe’ in Modern South Asia, 1800-2000**

- **Samarendra, Padhmanabh, ‘Classifying Caste: Census Surveys in India in the Late nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries’,** in: *South Asia*, 26 (2), 2003, pp. 141-
Session 10 (19. 11. 2014) Dangerous Mobilities: Circulation, Migration, and Diaspora


**Session 12 (03. 12. 2014)**  
Benchmarks of Civilisation? - Science, Technology and Knowledge on the Indian subcontinent

- **PHALKEY, Jahnavi,** *Atomic State: Big Science in Twentieth Century India,* Ranikhet 2013, pp. 11-51.

**Session 13 (10. 12. 2014)**  
Media, Modernity and Politics: Indian Film as Mirror and Subject of History (1900-2000)

- **LAL, Vinay,** *Deewaar: The Footpath, the City and the Angry Young Man,* New Delhi 2011, pp. 1-37.
- **SINHA, Babli,** *Cinema, Transnationalism, and Colonial India. Entertaining the Raj,* Abingdon 2013, pp. 35-65.


Representing the ‘twittering classes’? Protesters against Kentucky Fried Chicken in New Delhi (2010)