

PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF SOUTH ASIA

ANTHROPOLOGY 317:001, Winter 2007

MWF 12:45 – 1:50, Cramer Hall 258

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Office Hours: MW 11:30 – 12:30
and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will present an anthropological introduction to some of the many peoples and cultures in the geographic region of South Asia, with an emphasis on the countries of India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. We will focus primarily on how people live and what they believe. The class will examine five central topics: 1) gender and family, 2) caste, 3) religion and ritual, 4) Hindu-Muslim communal conflict in India and Bangladesh, and 5) globalization and women's work. Readings and lecture will bring critical theoretical perspectives to bear on a wide selection of ethnographic data. We will investigate how power operates in social structures such as the family, the caste system, and the international economy. We will also explore the cultural construction of identities, including gender, caste, religious, and national affiliations. Through our focus on power and identity, we will examine the structures and practices of inequality.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Many class materials are available on WebCT (see below). You may either read these documents online or print off a copy for personal use.

McGilvray, Dennis

1998 Symbolic Heat: Gender, Health and Worship among the Tamils of South India and Sri Lanka. Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado Museum.

Mines, Diane and Sarah Lamb, eds.

2002 Everyday Life in South Asia. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Roy, Beth

1994 Some Trouble with Cows: Making Sense of Social Conflict. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

NOTE: Roy's book is also available online at <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft629007fg/>.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

Students taking this course pass/no-pass are required to earn at least a 'C-' to pass the class. Grades will be based on the geography quiz (10%), the first term test (30%), the second term test (30%), and the writing assignment (30%).

Geography Quiz (10%) Wednesday 24 January

On this multiple-choice quiz, students will be asked to identify areas and points of major importance in South Asia. A study-guide is posted on WebCT. Please bring a green scantron (882-ES-LOVAS or 882-ES) and a number 2 pencil to the quiz. Scantrons are available at the bookstore and the campus shop in Smith Memorial Student Union.

Term-test #1: Gender, Family, Caste, Religion, and Ritual (30%) Wednesday, 21 February

This in-class test will cover the first four sections of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. A review sheet will be posted on WebCT before the test. Please bring a green scantron (882-ES-LOVAS or 882-ES), a number 2 pencil, a blue book, and a pen to the test.

Term-test #2: Communalism and Conflict, Globalization and Work, (30%) Monday, 19 March, 12:30-2:20, CH 258

This in-class test will cover the last two sections of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. A review sheet will be posted on WebCT before the test. Please bring a green scantron (882-ES-LOVAS or 882-ES), a number 2 pencil, a blue book, and a pen to the test.

Writing assignment (30%) Due EITHER Monday 5 Feb. OR Monday 12 March

Students will turn in one of the two possible 4-page writing assignments. The first assignment, 'Option #1', on gender and family, is due on Monday, 5 February. The second assignment, 'Option #2,' on communal violence, is due on Monday, 12 March. Students may choose which of these two essays they prefer to write. Hardcopies of papers are required; no email submissions accepted.

Policy on plagiarism, grades, illness, emergencies, and extensions:

Late papers and exams will lose one letter grade for each day past due except in the event of severe illness or emergency. Requests for deadline extensions should be made in written or electronic form ahead of the due date. All work must be completed for students to receive a passing grade. Please retain for your own records a copy of all the work you submit. Students with a documented disability needing accommodations in this course should immediately inform the instructor.

Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is a very serious academic offense. Any assignment containing plagiarized material will receive a failing grade. You are responsible for reading and understanding the department handout on plagiarism posted on WebCT. Please ask the instructor if you have any questions.

WebCT

On WebCT you will find many class materials, including the syllabus, study materials for the geography quiz, most class readings, discussion questions for all class readings, instructions for the writing assignment, and review sheets for the term tests.

WebCT is accessible at <http://psuonline.pdx.edu/> and its use will be demonstrated on the first day of class. All students can access WebCT with an Odin username and password. If you do not have an Odin account, you can sign up to get one at <https://www.account.pdx.edu>. Please contact the instructor if you encounter difficulties in accessing this resource.

COURSE OUTLINE

SECTION 1 (Week 1) INTRODUCTION

This section will introduce students to the study of South Asia by exploring facts and figures about the region, as well as some of the ethical issues surrounding the politics of representation. How do anthropologists learn about “others”? How do we express our knowledge to people who have no experience of this other culture?

Ramanujan, A.K.

1994 Annaiah's Anthropology. *Indian Literature* 162:85-92.

Schmidt, Karl J.

1995 Geography of South Asia *and* South Asian Climates *and* Languages of South Asia *In* An Atlas and Survey of South Asian History. Pp. 2-9. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

SECTION 2 (Week 2-3) GENDER & FAMILY

This section of the course examines men's and women's positions in contemporary South Asian society. We will explore the construction of gender roles, kinship, and family units as they affect larger social structures and practices. The film, lectures, and readings focus on issues such as kinship terminology, extended families, arranged marriages, dowry, motherhood, female infanticide, and gender ideologies.

Jeffery, Patricia and Roger Jeffery

2002 Allah Gives Both Boys and Girls. *In* **Everyday Life** in South Asia, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 23-36. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Miller, Barbara D.

2001 Female Infanticide and Child Neglect in Rural North India. *In* Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective, third edition. Brettell and Sargent, eds., pp. 492-505. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Film: “Dadi and Her Family”

Stone, Linda and Caroline James

2001 Dowry, Bride-Burning, and Female Power in India. *In* Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective, third edition. Brettell and Sargent, eds., pp. 307-316. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Gold, Ann Grodzins

2002 New Light in the House: Schooling Girls in Rural North India. *In* **Everyday Life** in South Asia, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 86-99. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Seymour, Susan

2002 Family and Gender Systems in Transition: A Thirty-Five Year Perspective. *In* **Everyday Life** in South Asia, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 100-115. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Seizer, Susan

- 2002 Offstage with Special Drama Actresses in Tamil Nadu, South India: Roadwork. *In **Everyday Life** in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 116-131. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Alter, Joseph S.

- 2002 Nervous Masculinity: Consumption and the Production of Embodied Gender in Indian Wrestling. *In **Everyday Life** in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 132-145. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

SECTION 3 (Week 4) CASTE

This section presents an introduction to the study of caste. What is “caste”? What practices characterize a caste society? What is the relationship between caste and religion? Between caste and class? In what ways is caste fundamental to Indian society?

Elder, Joe

- 1999 Enduring Stereotypes about Asia: India’s Caste System. *In Global Studies: India and South Asia*. James H.K. Norton, ed. Pp. 140-143. Sluice Dock, Guilford, Connecticut: Dushkin/ McGraw-Hill.

Mines, Diane and Sarah Lamb

- 2002 Social Distinctions of Caste and Class. *In **Everyday Life** in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 167-73. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

De Bary, Theodore, ed.

- 1958 The Primal Sacrifice. *In Sources of Indian Tradition, Volume 1*. pp. 13-15. New York: Columbia University Press.
- 1958 Varna-Dharma or Organization of the Four Classes. *In Sources of Indian Tradition, Volume 1*. pp. 219-221. New York: Columbia University Press.
- 1958 The Origin of Mixed Castes. *In Sources of Indian Tradition, Volume 1*. pp. 221-223. New York: Columbia University Press.

Quigley, Declan

- 1994 Is a theory of caste still possible? *In Contextualizing Caste: Post-Dumontian Approaches*. Mary Searle-Chatterjee and Ursula Sharma, eds. pp. 25-48. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Viramma, with Josiane Racine and Jean-Luc Racine

- 2002 High and Low Castes in Karani. *In **Everyday Life** in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 190-198. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Dickey, Sara

- 2002 Anjali’s Prospects: Class Mobility in Urban India. *In **Everyday Life** in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 214-226. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

SECTION 4 (Weeks 5-6) RELIGION AND RITUAL

This section's readings deal with both textual sources of South Asian religions and religious practices as lived tradition and everyday activity.

Hinduism

Kinsley, David R.

- 1993 Selections from Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Pp. 2-25.

Narayan, Kirin

- 1993 Refractions of the Field at Home: American Representations of Hindu Holy Men in the 19th and 20th Centuries. *Cultural Anthropology* 8:476-509.

McGilvray, Dennis

- 1998 Symbolic Heat: Gender, Health and Worship among the Tamils of South India and Sri Lanka. Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado Museum.

Lawrence, Patricia

- 1997 Violence, Suffering, Amman: The Work of Oracles in Sri Lanka's Eastern War Zone. *In Violence and Subjectivity*. Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele, and Pamela Reynolds, eds. Pp. 171-204. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Film: National Geographic Explorer: Sri Lanka

Buddhism

Schmidt, Karl J.

- 1995 Origins of Jainism and Buddhism in South Asia, c. 500 BCE and South Asian Religious and Cultural Sites, c. 400 BCE-320 CE, and Spread of Hindu and Buddhist Culture to Southeast Asia. *In An Atlas and Survey of South Asian History*. Pp. 118-123. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Lopez, Donald S.

- 1995 Introduction *In Buddhism in Practice*. Donald S. Lopez Jr., ed. Pp. 16-35. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Carbine, Jason A.

- 2000 Yaktovil: The Role of the Buddha and Dhamma. *In The Life of Buddhism*. Frank E. Reynolds and Jason A. Carbine, eds. Pp. Berkeley: University of California Press. 160-176.

Islam and Sikhism

De Bary, Theodore, ed.

- 1958 Islam as Revealed in the Qur'an and the Sunna *In Sources of Indian Tradition*, Volume 1. pp. 365-386. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wilce, Jim

- 2002 Tunes Rising from the Soul and Other Narcissistic Prayers: Contested Realms in Bangladesh. *In Everyday Life in South Asia*, Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb, eds. Pp. 289-302. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Leaf, Murray

- 1972 The Sikh Religion as a Conscious Sociological Model *In* Information and Behavior in a Sikh Village. Berkeley: University of California Press. 147-167.

SECTION 5 (Weeks 7-9) COMMUNAL AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

Focusing on religion and territory, this section examines issues of nationalism, communalism, and identity politics in South Asia. We explore the creation of competing and oppositional religious identities, with a focus on past and contemporary Hindu/Muslim conflicts in India and Bangladesh.

Schmidt, Karl J.

- 1995 Partition of India, 1947. *In* An Atlas and Survey of South Asian History. Pp. 82-83. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Gandhi, Rajmohan

- 1999 Why Partition Occurred, and the Wounds of 1947 *In* Revenge and Reconciliation: Understanding South Asian History. Pp. 262-277. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

Ludden, David

- 1996 Introduction. Ayodhya: A Window on the World. *In* Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India. David Ludden, ed. Pp. 1-23. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Roy, Beth

- 1994 Some Trouble with Cows: Making Sense of Social Conflict. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Film: "Father, Son and Holy War," directed by Anand Patwardhan.

SECTION 6 (Weeks 9-10) GLOBALIZATION, GENDER, AND WORK

Readings and lectures for section 6 examine South Asia in transnational perspective, exploring communication and trade between this region and the rest of the world. We will focus on historic, cultural, and economic interconnections, examining the structures and practices of inequality. Several readings examine in detail the connection between gender ideologies and the global economy.

Schmidt, Karl J.

- 1995 South Asians Overseas, 1830-1994. *In* An Atlas and Survey of South Asian History. Pp. 128-129. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Van der Veer, Peter

- 1995 Introduction: The Diasporic Imagination. *In* Nation and Migration: The Politics of Space *In* the South Asian Diaspora, Peter van der Veer, ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Pp. 1-16.

Karliner, Joshua

- 1994 Bhopal-Ten Years Later: To Union Carbide, Life Is Cheap. *The Nation* 259(20): 726-728.

Telegraph Group

2004 Bhopal is still suffering after 20 years. *The Island*. 3 December 2004, p. 8.

Davis, Coralynn

1997 The Politics of Purchasing Power: Feminist Tourism and Women's Development in Nepal. *Michigan Feminist Studies* 12: 26-43.

Lynch, Caitrin

1999 The 'Good Girls' of Sri Lankan Modernity: Moral Orders of Nationalism and Capitalism. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 6(1): 55-89.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week	Day	Date	Month	Readings, assignments, tests, films:
1	M	8	January	Handout: Syllabus
	W	10		Read: Ramanujan, Schmidt
	F	12		Read: <u>Jeffery & Jeffery</u>
2	M	15		PSU Closed: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
	W	17		Read: Miller Film: Dadi's Family
	F	19		Read: Stone & James
3	M	22		Read: <u>Gold, Seymour</u> Review for geography quiz
	W	24		Geography quiz
	F	26		Read: <u>Seizer, Alter</u>
4	M	29		Read: Elder, <u>Mines & Lamb</u>
	W	31		Read: de Bary, Quigley
	F	2	February	Read: <u>Viramma, Dickey</u>
5	M	5		Due: Writing Assignment Option #1 Read: Kinsley
	W	7		Read: Narayan
	F	9		Read: McGilvray, Lawrence Film: National Geographic Explorer: Sri Lanka
6	M	12		Read: Schmidt, Lopez
	W	14		Read: Carbine Slides: Ritual Healing in Sri Lanka
	F	16		Read: DeBary, <u>Wilce</u>
7	M	19		Read: Leaf Review for Term Test #1
	W	21		Term Test #1
	F	23		Read: Schmidt, Gandhi, Ludden
8	M	26		Read: Roy Part I: 'Making Trouble'
	W	28		Film: Father, Son & Holy War
	F	2	March	Film, continued.
9	M	5		Read: Roy Part II: 'Making Sense' chapters 6-7
	W	7		Read: Roy Part II: 'Making Sense' chapters 8-10
	F	9		Read: Schmidt, Van der Veer
10	M	12		Due: Writing Assignment Option #2 Read: Telegraph Group, Karliner
	W	14		Read: Davis, Lynch
	F	16		Review for Term Test #2
11	M	19		Term Test #2, 12:30-2:20, CH 258