History 449

HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA

Radical Changes During the Age of Company Raj

The main emphasis of the course is focused upon processes by which many communities and peoples within the continent of India (South Asia) have come into enduring relationships with each other and into relationships with peoples outside the subcontinent. Of central concern are processes of political integration and disintegration. Underlying issues of political stability or instability are questions about cultural and social discontinuities with special reference to how differing concepts of mankind, concepts of property, concepts of the state, concepts of time, concepts of change, and concepts of destiny.

In other words, how did 'India' we now know come to be what it is? How could so many kinds of people, speaking so many different languages, and holding such conflicting world views ever become incorporated into the one enormous 'commonwealth' or 'universal domain' and, thereby, ever begin to become that enormous political system which is now known as the Republic of India?

The story begins with the Mughals, the Marathas, and various regional kingdoms and principalities. These, in turn, gradually gave way before the rising power of that strange and unique Anglo-Indian conglomeration, that socio-political amalgam now known as "Company Raj". It was the East India Company, after all, which constructed the Indian Empire and, thereby, brought 'India' into being. This early modern empire of "India", in turn, became the bedrock upon which the present Republic of India was erected. (But the process was not without costs and consequences. Divergent forces and movements, sometimes called 'fissiparous tendencies', have always threatened India's unity. Indeed, eventually as it turned out, these kinds of forces have sundered the political unity of the subcontinent.)

Focus here, therefore, will be upon assessments of successive phases of political development and upon weighing different underlying social relations and structures. In broad perspective, the advent of Modern India can be marked as having begun with the arrival of the Portuguese from overseas (1498) and with that of the Mughals from overland (1526). Alberquerque and Akbar, between them, heralded new interminglings of alien and indigenous cultures. Dutch and English overseas commerce brought more radical influences. Then, out of the creative turmoil of the 18th century came one ever growing political system -- Company Raj-- which eventually overshadowed all others. (This, in turn gave rise to the later 'corporate dynasties' of 'Crown Raj' (1858-1947) and 'Congress Raj' (together the breakaway regimes which now rule Pakistan and Bangladesh, not to mention Burma).

India today is an emerging world power. Some even feel that India, as also China, may become another superpower. Americans need to acquaint themselves with the complexities of the manifold cultures and historical contexts out of which India has emerged. The price of not doing so -- the price of uninformed public opinion and of uninformed public policy -- could be high. This course offers an opportunity to meet the challenges and responsibilities in our shrinking world. A deeper historical understanding of one of the world's major civilizations and its
incorporation within one political system is one to meet such responsibilities.

REFERENCE WORKS


Gilbert, W.H. *The Peoples of India*. Washington: 1944. While very dated, it is still a useful introductory sketch.


Works listed here and below are available, on reserve, in various UW Libraries: Memorial Library, College (Helen White) Library, History Library or South Asian Studies Center/Department Library on the 14th Floor of Van Hise Hall.
SYLLABUS: SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

INTRODUCTION

1. General Approaches to India


2. Historiographic Background, Context, and Perspectives


3. Contemporary Perspective/Relevance of Modern India


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2 Books cited [R] or [R/H] are on reserve in the College Library, the History Department Library, the Memorial Library, or South Asian Studies Library.
I. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

1. The Continent: Its Geographic Unity and Diversity

2. The Peoples: Its Demographic and Linguistic Variety

Readings:


or


or


Other Readings:


or

[R] Spear, India, Pakistan, and the West, 1-32

or


or


II. SOCIAL STRUCTURES

1. The Family - Kith, Kin, and Lineage (Vamsha).

2. The Community - Caste (Jāti). Category or Class (Varna).

3. The Village - Place, Space and Locality.

Readings:


Other Readings:

or

or

III. SACRED TRADITIONS

1. Brahmanical, Classical, and 'High' 'Hindu' Cultures
2. Particular, Pluralistic, Popular Local Cults

Readings:

CHI, 39-86: NHI, 24-103: MI, 16-36.

Other Readings:

or
or
or
IV. INDO-ISLAMIC LEGACIES

1. Indo-Arabian Belief: Religion and Sacred Language
2. Indo-Persian Style: Schism and Sophistication in Taste
3. Indo-Turkish Might: Organization, Power and Rulership
   (1) The Delhi Sultanate: Hindustan and Indo-Islamic Hegemony
   (2) The Deccan Sultanates & 'Hindu Sultanate' of Vijayanagar
   (3) The Mughal Expansion & Maratha Reaction (Fitna)

Readings:

CHI, 87-128; NHI, 104-167; IAMH, 1-60; and AHOI:2, 1-50.


Other Readings:


or


or

or


V. EUROPEAN (FARANGI) ENCLAVES

1  The Portuguese Conquests: Goa and Seaborne Empire
2  The Dutch Encroachments: Batavia and Maritime Empire
3  The English Enterprises: Madras and Country Trade
4  The French Competition: Pondicherry and Country Power

Readings:

AHOI-2, 51-79; NHI, 135-185; CHI, 105-125; I:AMI, 146-184; OHMI, 1-20.
MI, 37-43.


Choices from Many Other Readings:


Prakash, Om, The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal (Princeton: PUP, 1985).


VI. COMPANY EXPANSION

A. Struggles for Survival: Local Positions, Profits and Power

B. *Struggles for Succession Within the Shadow of Imperium

1. Commercial Enterprises of the Baniya Company - Mercantile Power

   a) Madras : 1639: - An Emerging City State on the Coromandel

   b) Bombay : 1661: - An Emerging City State and Island Refuge

   c) Calcutta: 1692: - An Emerging City State on the Sundarbans

Readings:


Other Resources:


Karl de Schweintz, Jr., The Rise and Fall of British India: Imperialism as Inequality (New York: Methuen, 1983), 37-117. Abbr.: RFBI.


(2) Political Engagements of the Company Bahadur - Military Power

a) Carnatic Wars: 1745 - 1761, 1763 - 1801
b) Bengal Wars: 1757 - 1765, 1772 - 1801
c) Deccan Wars: 1750 - 1779, 1792 - 1801 - 1818

Readings:

AHOI-2, 81-92; CHI, 125-49; IAMH, 186-214; OHMI, 37-129; RFBI, 86-117; MWRI, 22-75; Judith Brown, Modern India, 44-57.


Other Readings:


(3) Imperial Establishments of the Company's Raj - Paramount Power

a) Field Operations - The Indian Empire and Its Dependencies
   i. Direct Rule - Presidencies of 'British India'
      - The Presidency of Bengal [Fort William]
- The Presidency of Madras [Fort St. George]
- The Presidency of Bombay [Fort.

ii. Indirect Rule - Residencies of 'Princely India'
- Delhi and the Princes of Hindustan
- Deccan Princes of Hyderabad and Mysore
- Poona's Peshwa and the Maratha Warlords
- Forest Chiefs and Frontier Barons

b. Home Operations - The 'Co-Direction' of Company Policy and Patrona

i. Corporate Control of the East India Company

   (i) The Charter: Its Mandate of Incorporation (20 Years)
   (ii) The Court of Directors: Its Chairman and Secretaries
   (iii) The Court of Proprietors: Its Stockholders

ii. Cabinet Control of the Crown-in-Parliament

   (i) The 'Board of Control': Its Chairman, a Cabinet Member
   (ii) The Government: Its Cabinet and Houses of Parliament
   (iii) The State and Society of Britain: Its 'Limited' Public

Readings:

NHI, 139-49; AHOI-2, 93-144; OHMI, 57-150; IAHI, 207-34; CHI, 129-58.

Fay, Eliza, Original Letters from India (London: Hogarth Press, repr.19


Other Readings:

A. Aspinal, Cornwallis in Bengal (London: 1931).
Richard B. Barnett, North India Between the Empires (Berkeley: 1980).


Ainslie T. Embree, Charles Grant and British Rule in India (Columbia: 1


Pamela Nightingale, *Trade and Empire in Western India, 1784-1806* (Cambridge: CUP, 1870).


Lucy Sutherland, *The East India Company in 18th Century Politics* (Oxford: An account of London under the George the III.)

VII. **IMPERIAL SWAY OF COMPANY RAJ OVER THE CONTINENT - THE "INDIAN EMPIRE"**

1. **Consolidation and Reform Within Government and Society**
   
   (1) The Impact of Jamabandi Systems: Land (Revenue) Settlements

   (2) The Impact of Adalat Systems: Courts of Law and Judicial Processes

   (3) The Impact of Modern Education: Cultural Influence and Change

   (4) The Impact of Radical Religion and Social Reform:

2. **Paramountcy Within and Beyond the Frontiers**

   (1) **Pax Indica**: Assam and the Burma Wars of 1826 and 1852

   (2) **Pax Indica**: Aftermath of the Calamity in Afghanistan

   (3) **Pax Indica**: War and Annexations of Sindh and Punjab

   (4) **Pax Indica**: The Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Red Sea

Readings.
Woodruff, I: 344-80; and II, 1-114. Read "The Punjab School".

Eden, Emily, *Up the Country: Letters written to her sister from the Upper Provinces of India* (London: Virago [Pb.], 198?).


[R/H] R. E. Frykenberg, "The Emergence of Modern Hinduism In the Light of Changing Historical Knowledge: A Reappraisal With Special Reference to South India," *Hinduism Reconsidered* (Heidelberg: South Asia Institute). Edited by Gunther Sontheimer and Hermann Kulke. (27pp.)


Other Readings:


Still Further Readings:


Roy, Oliver, Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan (Cambridge: CUP Pb., 1987?). This deals with Russia's current Afghan adventure.

VIII. GRAND CLIMACTERIC OF COMPANY RAJ

(1) High Noon of Imperial Over-Confidence. Ignorance and Arrogance

(2) Insecurity and Unrest Among the Peasant Lords of Hindustan

(3) Sparks Setting off the Great Conflagration: How Inevitable?

(4) Rampage, Recovery and Retribution: The Legacy of Bitterness

(5) The Queen's Proclamation: Succession of Crown over Company Raj

(6) The Victorian Veneer: "Colonialism" and the Indian Empire.

Readings:

MI, 81-89; NHI, 201-39; and readings in AHOI-1, IAMH, OHMI, & CHI.


Other Readings:


Course Requirements

A. Examinations:

May 11th: Take Home Final: One Essay Question

Due by Noon May 17th: 1500 Word Limit

B. Paper:

* Due April 11th: Topics to be Arranged Individually

6000 Word Limit
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:


OPTIONAL TEXTBOOKS:


Eden, Emily, *Up the Country: Letters written to her sister from the Upper Provinces of India* (London: Virago [Pb.], 198?).


