

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES, SSS
MPHIL OPTIONAL COURSE

AGRARIAN POLITICS AND MOVEMENTS IN INDIA
PO622

Credits: 4

Contact hours: Four lecture hours in a week

Method of evaluation: Assignment (25%), Review Essay (25%), End-semester exam (50%)

Introduction

This course aims at making the research students familiar with the changing nature of politics around agrarian question in India since independence. Agrarian politics has witnessed significant change in terms of nature of peasant political mobilization, strategies of mobilization by various political parties and groups, and rise and decline of various political actors. This change determines and also gets determined by the nature of Indian political process at large. Unlike the organized, left leaning agrarian unionism of the early decades after independence, India has seen emergence of a more scattered, discrete and non-partisan agrarian politics. Green revolution and opening of Indian agriculture sector for global trade have reshaped the political economy of the agrarian question in the countryside. Besides, the processes of historical change in the nature of rural society and economy are also seen as crucial benchmarks to understand agrarian movements in the post-colonial India. Academic discourse of 1970s and 1980s largely focused on the sociological factors. After a brief interval, in which the emphasis was on the 'new farmers movement's, agrarian politics gradually became a marginalized field of enquiry during the 1990s. This course is an attempt to bring the agrarian discourse back in the mainstream political studies discourse.

Objectives of the course

This course makes an attempt to understand agrarian politics in the historical context. Besides, it also attempts to explain the recent nature of political mobilization, and protests by groups associated with the agrarian sector. It also attempts to explain the role of youth, women and marginalized groups in the emerging forms of agrarian politics. The course will also engage with the global agrarian politics and it's linkages with Indian agrarian scenario.

Methodology

Methodologically, the course will engage with empirical as well as theoretical studies available on the subject. One section of the course will be dedicated to methodological challenges in conducting research in agrarian politics.

The course is divided into four units.

Scheme of the course

1. History of Agrarian Politics in India

Dhanagare, D N. 1983. Peasant Movement in India, 1920-50. Sage

-----, 2017. Populism and Power: Farmers' Movements in Western India. Routledge

Barrington Moore. 1993. Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. Beacon Press, Reprint 1993

Shanin, Theodor. 1971. Peasants and Peasant Societies. Ed. Penguin Books

Guha, Ranjit. 1999. Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India. Duke University Press

2. Agrarian Politics after Independence (1950-1980)

Varshney, Ashutosh. 1998. Democracy, Development and the Countryside: Urban-Rural Struggles in India. Cambridge University Press

Frankel, Francine. India's Political Economy. 1947-2004: The Gradual revolution. Oxford University Press.

-----, India's Green Revolution: Economic Gains and Political Costs. Princeton University Press

Jodhka, Surinder and James Manor. 2017. Contested Hierarchies, Persisting Influence: Caste and Power in Twenty First Century India. Orient Blackswan

Parnaik, Utsa. 2007. The Republic of Hunger and Other Essays. The Merlin Press Ltd.

3. New Farmers Movements

Brass, Tom. 1995. New Farmers' Movements in India. Routledge

Gupta, Dipankar. 1999. Rivalry and Brotherhood: Politics in the Life of Farmers in Northern India. Oxford University Press

Suthar S K. 2018. Contemporary Farmers' Protests and the 'New Rural-Agrarian' In India. Economic and Political Weekly. Vol 53, Issue 26-27.

4 Methodological Concerns

Scott, James. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*

Lerche, Jens, Alpa Shah and Barbara Harris-White. 2013. Introduction: Agrarian Question and Left Politics in India. *Journal of Agrarian Change*. Vol. 13. No 13. Pp 337-350

Aggarwal, Bina. 1994. *A Field of One's Own: Gender and Land Rights in South Asia*. Cambridge University Press

Additional readings

Edelman, Marc and Saturnino M. Borras, Jr. 2016. *Political Dynamics of Transnational Agrarian Movements*. Practical Action Publishing

Vasavi, A R. 2012. *Shadow Space: Suicide and the Predicament of Rural India*. Three Essays Collective

Kumar, Richa. 2016. *Rethinking Revolutions: Soyabeans, Chaupals and the Changing Countryside in Central India*. Oxford University Press