

**School of International Studies
M.A. (PISM) Programme**

Course No. IS 451 N

Course Title Political Thought II

Course Instructor Dr. Mohinder Singh

Credits 04

Semester Winter semester

Instruction Method: The main part of instruction in this course includes teaching how to read the texts of political thought thematically.

Modes of evaluation: Mid-semester and end-semester exam based evaluation.

Course Duration: Entire Winter Semester from mid-January till mid-May.

Contact Hours: Four hours per week.

Course Objective

This course is primarily framed around the contemporary debates in political thought around the themes of political theologies. The frameworks of political theology and biopolitics deal primarily with the questions of power, law sovereignty particularly in relation to the regulation of lives of people and populations within the boundaries of the nation-states and between them. The focus of the course is mainly on the theoretical foundations of the forms of power, law and sovereignty. In addition, political theology's emphasis on understanding the foundations of politics in religious and post-religious or post-theological modern secular context is also important for this course. The course explores these themes in both the Western and Indian traditions of political thought.

Syllabus

Section I.

Main theme in focus: Political Theology and biopolitics in Contemporary Western political thought.

12 classes

This section introduces the themes of biopolitics and political theology in 20th and 21st century Western political thought with reference to the works of Michel Foucault, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, Giorgio Agamben, and Antonio Negri.

Biopolitics and governmentality in Foucault's works – 4 classes

Carl Schmitt on sovereignty and the concept of the political – 1 class

Hannah Arendt on the perplexities of the 'Rights of Man' – 1 class

Agamben on biopolitics and sovereignty 2 classes

Negri and Hardt on biopolitics as an event and the question of affective labour – 2 classes

Esposito biopolitics of immunity 2 class

Section II. 12 classes

Main theme in focus: Political Theology Themes in Indian traditions of political thought.

A.

Theorization of power, law and sovereignty in the Vedic tradition with reference to the following classical texts of political thought: **6 classes**

Kautilya's *Arthashastra*,

the Shantiparva of the *Mahabharata*;

the chapter on kingship in *Manusmriti* and

Kamandaki's *Nitisara*.

B.

Theorization of the origins of political power in the Buddhist political theory. 2 classes

C.

Theorization of power, law, sovereignty and governance in Indian Islamic traditions of political thought with reference to the theories and concepts informing the rule and governance during the Sultanate and Mughal regimes.

3-4 classes

Section III. 8-10 classes

Main theme in focus: political theology themes in Modern Indian political thought (19th and 20th centuries)

Keeping the main theme of the course in focus, this section will limit itself to the introduction to the modern Indian discourses of reformism, nationalism, state sovereignty and power with reference to the relevant works of prominent Indian thinkers such as Vivekananda, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Savarkar, Nehru and Maulana Azad. The overall aim of this section is to understand the way modern Indian thinkers thought about the underlying foundations of political power and authority.

Course Outcomes:

1. In this course, the students will learn about the contemporary analytical tools for understanding national and international politics that have acquired great importance in contemporary academic discourse.
2. The students will learn how the themes of law, sovereignty and power in their interrelation have been theorized in Indian and Western traditions of political thinking.
3. Students will learn how the relation between religion and politics in theorized in different traditions of political thinking.
4. The students will learn to compare concepts and ideas of political thinking in different traditions of political thought.

Readings

Section I.

Michel Foucault “Governmentality” in Graham Burchell et. al. Ed. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Michel Foucault ‘Right of Death and Power over Life’ in Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Vol. I, Pantheon Books, New York, 1978.

Hannah Arendt, ‘Perplexities of the Rights of Man’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader*. Dule University Press, 2013.

Carl Schmitt, ‘Definition of Sovereignty’ in *Political Theology I: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*.

Giorgio Agamben, ‘Biopolitics and the Rights of Man’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader* Dule University Press, 2013.

Giorgio Agamben, ‘What is a Camp’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader* Dule University Press, 2013.

Giorgio Agamben, *The State of Exception*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005.

Negri and Hardt ‘Biopolitics as an Event’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader* Dule University Press, 2013.

Negri and Hardt ‘Affective Labor’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader* Dule University Press, 2013.

Timothy Campbell, ‘Introduction’ in Timothy Campbell (Ed.) *Biopolitics: A Reader* Dule University Press, 2013.

Christoph Menke et. al. “Aporia of Human Rights: Regarding the Coherence of Arendt's Argument” in *Social Research*, Vol. 74, No. 3, 2007.

Jacques Ranciere ‘Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man’ *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103:2/3, Spring/Summer 2004.

Seyla Benhabib, ‘From the “Right to Have Rights” to the “Critique of Humanitarian Reason” in Benhabib, *Exile, Statelessness and Migration*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2018.

Rasmus Ugilt - *Giorgio Agamben's Political Philosophy*, Published by Humanities-Ebooks, 2014; Chapters 2 & 3

John Ransom - *Foucault's Discipline: Politics of Subjectivity*, Duke University Press, 1997; Chapters 1, 2, & 3

Saul Newman - *Political Theology: A Critical Introduction*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2019.

Section II.

Patrick Olivell, King, *Governance and Law in Ancient India: Kautilya Arthashastra* (Translated and Edited by Patrick Olivelle), Oxford University Press, 2013.

Kamandaki, *The Essence of Politics* (Nitisara), Murty Classical Library of India, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2021.

Upinder Singh, *Political Violence in Ancient India*, Harvard University Press, 2017.

Abhishek Kaicker, *The King and the People: Sovereignty and Popular Politics in Mughal India*.

Ibrahim Moosa 'Allegory of the Rule (Hukm): Law as Simulacrum in Islam' in *History of Religions*, Vol. 38, No. 1, (Aug., 1998).

Matthew J. Moore, *Buddhism and Political Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016.

Matthew J. Moore, 'Political Theory in Canonical Buddhism' in *Philosophy East and West*, Volume 65, Number 1, January 2015.

Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*. Princeton University Press: Princeton. 1999. =

Sherine Hafez *An Islam of her Own. Reconsidering Religion and Secularism in Women's Islamic Movements* New York University Press, 2011.

Duncan M. Derrett. "Rajadharma" in *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 35, No. 4. August 1976. PDF

Muzaffar Alam, 'Sharia, Akhlaq and Governance', in *The Languages of Political Islam* Permanent Black, 2004.

Drekmeir, Charles, *Kingship and Community in early India*, California Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1962.

Heesterman, J.C, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship and Society*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1988

Subhramanyam, Sanjay, Muzaffar, Alam (eds.), *Moghul State: 1526-1750*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998.

R. Thapar. *From Lineage to State: Social Formations of the Mid-First Millennium BC*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1984.

Section III.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi "Truth is God" and "The Path of Ahimsa" from Jitendra Thakorbhai Desai ed. *Truth is God* Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1955. Available online at:

<http://www.gandhistudycentre.org/pdf/truth.pdf> PDF

Ajay Skaria, "Gandhi's Politics: Liberalism and the Question of the Ashram" *The South Atlantic Quarterly*. 101: 4. Fall 2002. PDF

BR Ambedkar *The Buddha and his Dhamma* (Available on-line at <http://www.ambedkarintellectuals.in/attachment/4.buddha-and-his-dhamma.pdf>).

Anne M Blackburn "Religion, Kinship and Buddhism: Ambedkar's Vision of a Moral Community" *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* Volume 16, No. 1 1963. PDF

Jalal, Ayesha, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, Routledge, 2001.

Jafferlot C (ed.), *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2005.

Vikram Sampat, *Savarkar: Echoes From a Forgotten Past*, Penguin Viking, New Delhi, 2019.

Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2012.

Vinayak Chaturvedi *Hindutva and Violence: V. D. Savarkar and the Politics of History*, Permanent Black, Ranikhet, 2022.

Ajay Skaria 'Ambedkar, Marx and the Buddhist Question' in *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 38:3, 2015.

Shruti Kapila, *Violent Fraternity: Indian Political Thought in the Global Age*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, 2021.

Karuna Mantena 'Another Realism: The Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence' in *American Political Science Review* Vol. 106, No. 2 May 2012.

Jawaharlal Nehru *The Discovery of India*, Penguin, New Delhi, 2004.

Rabindranath Tagore *Greater India*, S. Ganesan Publishers, Madras, 1921.

Amiya Sen, *The Indispensable Vivekananda*, Permanent Black, Ranikhet, 2006.

Chatterjee Partha, *Nationalist thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?*, Zed Books for United Nations University, London, 1986.

V.R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham,(ed.), *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, New Delhi, Sage, 2006.

Anthony Parel, "From Political Thought in India to Indian Political Thought," in *Western Political Thought in Dialogue with Asia*, edited by Takashi Shogimen and C.J. Nederman, Plymouth, UK, Lexington Books, 2009.

Anthony Parel, *Gandhi's Philosophy and the Quest for Harmony*, Cambridge University Press, 2006