

Intensive POL Course (POL 498H/2801H1 (S))

**COMPARATIVE POLITICAL THEORY:
ENGAGING SOUTH ASIAN THOUGHT IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION**

Professor Aakash Singh (contact: aakashsingh.rathore@utoronto.ca – expect reply within 24 hrs)

Office: Department of Political Science (100 St. George St), Room 3105

Office hours: Mondays from 1:00pm-3:00pm (and other days/times by appointment)

Class Location: Social Work building (246 Bloor St W), Room 114

Class Time: 10:00am - 1:00pm

Course Description

Why is it that *'politics'* is routinely taught comparatively but *'political theory'* is not? What is comparative political theory and why might we need it? Starting with these questions, this course will closely examine contemporary South Asian political theory—through readings of Bhikhu Parekh, Neera Chandhoke, Partha Chatterjee, Gayatri Spivak, Rajeev Bhargava, and others—in relation, comparison and contrast to dominant traditions of Anglo-American and European political theory, as represented by John Rawls, Juergen Habermas, Slavoj Zizek, and others.

Course requirements

1. **Active participation** in course discussions (15%)
2. **Presentation** on a relevant subject (20%) – these will occur on February 25 and March 04. We will discuss the nature and grading of these presentations in the first class, and this information will also be posted on Blackboard.
3. **Research essay** (3000 words, not including notes and bibliography) (65%) – this will be due before midnight on Monday April 08 (Penalty for lateness: there will be a reduction of 10% per day of lateness, and no paper shall be accepted after midnight on Thursday April 11). Mode of submission: Since plagiarism is a serious academic offence, normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. In order to submit your papers to me via Turnitin.com, you will first need to set up an account and have access to the class ID number and the enrollment password, which I shall provide to you in class as well as post on Blackboard.

Readings (soft copies of the readings have been uploaded to Blackboard; hard copies of the books – in case you prefer them – have also been placed on course reserve at Robarts library; hard copies of the journal articles may be available at Robarts, or of course you can simply print the soft copies off from Blackboard).

NOTE: Please have the assigned readings completed *before* each class begins. You should read the assigned material *very* carefully. I will present assuming you are already familiar with the readings.

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Required Readings (approximately 200 pages total, or an average of 25 pages per class)

- **Bhargava**, Rajeev (2010). "Is There an Indian Political Theory?" In *What is Political Theory and Why do We Need It?* Oxford University Press, Chapter 3 (only pp. 66-78).
- **Chakrabarty**, Dipesh (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton University Press, pp. 3-11.
- **Chandhoke**, Neera (2012). "Who Owes Whom, Why and to What Effect?" In Aakash Singh Rathore and Sebastiano Maffettone (eds) *Global Justice: Critical Perspectives*. Routledge, pp 143-162.
- **Chatterjee**, Partha (2011). *Lineages of Political Society: Studies in Postcolonial Democracy*. Columbia University Press, Chapter 1.
- **Dallmayr**, Fred (2004). "Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory." *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 2: 249–57.
- **Godrej**, Farah (2011). "Toward a Post-Eurocentric Paradigm." In *Cosmopolitan Political Thought: Method, Practice, Discipline*. Oxford University Press, Chapter 6.
- **March**, Andrew (2009). "What is Comparative Political Theory?" *The Review of Politics* 71: 531–546.
- **Nandy**, Ashis (1992). "An Anti-Secularist Manifesto." *India International Centre Quarterly*, 22, No. 1 (Spring): 35-64.
- **Parekh**, Bhikhu (2010). "The Poverty of Indian Political Theory." In Aakash Singh and S. Mohapatra (eds) *Indian Political Thought*. Routledge, pp. 19-30.
- **Spivak**, Gayatri (2011 [2001]). "Righting Wrongs." In Aakash Singh Rathore and Alex Cistelean (eds) *Wronging Rights?* Routledge, pp. 79-104.

Videos (approximately 33 total minutes of viewing)

- F. Fukuyama: The End of History (only the first 7 minutes)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZWJETpfbzM>
- S. Zizek: Living in the End Times
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIpiXJW3dYE>
- J. Habermas: Secular Foundations of Political Legitimacy
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VoAtF4YnRg>

Suggested Readings

- Habermas, Juergen (2006). "Religion in the Public Sphere." *European Journal of Philosophy* 14:1: 1–25.
- Sajoo, Aryn B. (2002). *Civil Society in the Muslim World*. St. Martin's Press, Chapter 1.
- Sen, Amartya (2012 [2008]). "Global Justice." In Aakash Singh Rathore and Sebastiano Maffettone (eds) *Global Justice: Critical Perspectives*. Routledge, pp 123-142.

Suggested Videos

- Charles W. Mills: Racial Liberalism
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEr-xXHVjKk>
- S. Moyn: The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqtFJZB27M8>

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COURSE SCHEDULE:

[1] Monday, February 04, 2013 – *Introduction to (Comparative) Political Theory*

Readings:

Dallmayr, Fred (2004). “Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory.”

March, Andrew (2009). “What is Comparative Political Theory?” (NOTE: You only need to read up to page 546.)

[2] Monday, February 11, 2013 – *What is Indian Political Theory?*

Readings:

Parekh, Bhikhu (2010). “The Poverty of Indian Political Theory.”

Bhargava, Rajeev (2010). “Is There an Indian Political Theory?” (NOTE: Only pages 66-78.)

[3] Monday, February 25, 2013 – *History and Political Theory in an Era of Globalization*

Reading:

Chakrabarty, Dipesh (2000). *Provincializing Europe*, pp. 3-11.

Watch:

F. Fukuyama: The End of History (only the first 7 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZWJETpfbzM>

S. Zizek: Living in the End Times

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIpiXJW3dYE>

Student Presentations

**[4] Monday, March 04, 2013 – *South Asian Perspectives on Themes in Political Theory:
Civil Society***

Reading:

Chatterjee, Partha (2011). *Lineages of Political Society*, Chapter 1.

If you have time:

Sajoo, Amyn B. (2002). *Civil Society in the Muslim World*, Chapter 1.

Student Presentations (concluded)

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**[5] Monday, March 11, 2013 – *South Asian Perspectives on Themes in Political Theory:
Secularism***

Reading:

Nandy, Ashis (1992). “An Anti-Secularist Manifesto.”

Watch:

J. Habermas: Secular Foundations of Political Legitimacy

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VoAtF4YnRg>

If you have time:

Habermas, Juergen (2006). “Religion in the Public Sphere.”

**[6] Monday, March 18, 2013 – *South Asian Perspectives on Themes in Political Theory:
Human Rights***

Reading:

Spivak, Gayatri (2011 [2001]). “Righting Wrongs.”

If you have time:

S. Moyn: The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqtFJZB27M8>

**[7] Monday, March 25, 2013 – *South Asian Perspectives on Themes in Political Theory:
Global Justice***

Reading:

Chandhoke, Neera (2012). “Who Owes Whom, Why and to What Effect?”

If you have time:

Sen, Amartya (2012 [2008]). “Global Justice.”

[8] Monday, April 01, 2013 – *Conclusion: From Provincial to Global Political Theory*

Reading:

Godrej, Farah (2011). “Toward a Post-Eurocentric Paradigm.”

If you have time:

Charles W. Mills: Racial Liberalism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEr-xXHVjKk>