

## Mother India: Reading Gender and Nation in South Asia

WAGS 66/ASLC 51/FAMS 30

Fall 2010

Tuesday/Thursday 10:00-11:20am

Chapin 103

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30E Johnson Chapel  
Office hours: Thursday 11:30am-1:30PM

### Course Description

Do you often wonder why some countries are referred to as the “motherland” and others as the “fatherland”? What and who decides how we refer to a country? In this course, we will examine seismic changes over time in gendered imaginings of the Indian subcontinent. As women stepped out of the domestic sphere to participate in the nationalist struggle of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of the nation swayed dramatically between the nation as wife and the nation as mother in the Indian popular imagination. Readings will include novels such as Rabindranath Tagore’s *Home and the World* and Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*. We will also study a range of cinematic texts from the classic *Mother India* to the recent feminist film *Silent Waters*.

The following books are available at Amherst Books (8 Main St., Amherst) and have also been placed on reserve at the Frost Library:

Bose, Sugata & Jalal, Ayesha. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*  
Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. *Anandamath* (1882)  
Rabindranath Tagore, *The Tagore Omnibus* (2005)  
Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain, *Sultana’s Dream* (1905)  
Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* (1991)  
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight’s Children* (1983)  
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (1997)  
Sikata Bannerjee, *Make me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism and the Nation* (2005)  
Mahasweta Devi, *Imaginary Maps* (1995) trans., Gayatri Spivak

These books are marked **(P)** on the syllabus. Readings marked **(E)** are on E-Reserve. If you would like to purchase a hardcopy of the PDF e-reserve readings, please fill out the online form: [https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/womens\\_gender\\_studies/multilithorderform](https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/womens_gender_studies/multilithorderform) by Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. Please note: you will be charged a fee for this service that is separate from the copyright fee for the course.

### Film Screenings

Mehboob Khan, *Mother India* (1957) Thursday, 9/16 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113  
Richard Attenborough, *Gandhi* (1982) Tuesday, 9/21 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113  
Sabiha Sumar, *Silent Waters*(2003) Thursday, 10/14 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113  
Ashutosh Gowariker, *Lagaan* (2001) Tuesday, 11/30 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113  
Anant Patwardhan, *Father, Son and Holy War* (1994) Thursday, 12/02 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113  
Shoaib Mansoor, *Khuda ke Liye* (2007) Tuesday, 12/07 @ 4:00pm, Fayerweather 113

## Course Protocol

1. You are required to attend every class and film screening.
2. Read the readings *before* class, *not* during or after class or right before the papers are due.
3. There will be three papers. The *approximate* weighting is as follows:

Paper 1:	(5-7 pages) 20% of base grade
Paper 2:	(5-7 pages) 25% of base grade
Paper 3:	(8-10 pages) 35% of base grade
Class Attendance:	20%
4. On top of the base grade, your participation in class discussion will result in one of three adjustments, a null grade, a quarter grade increase, or a half a grade increase. You will not be graded down for anything you say (or don't say) in class. However, if you say nothing or almost nothing you will not receive any grade benefit.
5. Due dates for Papers:

Paper 1:	Monday October 4
Paper 2:	Monday November 8
Paper 3:	Friday December 17

### **Week 1**

Tues. Sept. 7: **Introduction**

Thurs. Sept 9: **GENDER AND NATION**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 1-3 (P)

Nira Yuval-Davis, "Theorizing Gender and Nation" from *Gender and Nation* (1997): 1-25 (E)

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. *Anandamath* (1882) (P)

### **Week 2**

Tues. Sept. 14: **THE WIDOW AND THE NATION**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 4-8 (P)

Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India" *Cultural Critique* 7 (1987) (E)

Partha Chatterjee, "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" *Recasting Women* (1990) 233-253 (E)

Thurs. Sept. 16:

Rabindranath Tagore, *Chokher Bali* from *The Tagore Omnibus* (2005) (P)

Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Domestic Cruelty and the Birth of the Subject" *Provincializing Europe* (2000): 117-148 (E)

### **Week 3**

Tues. Sept. 21: **NATION AS MOTHER**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 9-12 (P)

*Mother India* (1957) (film)

Brigitte Schulze, "The Cinematic 'Discovery of India': Mehboob's Re-Invention of the Nation in *Mother India*" *Social Scientist*, Vol. 30, No. 9/10 (Sep. - Oct., 2002): 72-87 (E)

Thurs. Sept. 23: **FATHER OF THE NATION OR MOTHER?: GANDHI AND THE QUESTION OF GENDER**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 13-15 (P)

*Gandhi* (1982) (dir. Richard Attenborough) (film)

**Week 4**

Mon. Sept. 27            FIRST PAPER DUE (5:00 in my box)

Tues. Sept. 28: **HINDU WIFE, HINDU NATION: SWADESHI AND SWARAJ**

Tanika Sarkar, "The Hindu wife and the Hindu nation: Domesticity and nationalism in nineteenth century Bengal" *Studies in History* August 1992 8: 213-235 (E)

Rabindranath Tagore, *Home and the World* (1916) Part I from *The Tagore Omnibus* (P)

Thurs. Sept. 30:

Rabindranath Tagore, *Home and the World* (1916) Part II from *The Tagore Omnibus* (P)

M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* Chapters 4 and 13 (E)

**Week 5**

Tues. Oct. 5: **PURDAH AND THE MUSLIM NATION**

Rokeya Sakhawat Hussain, *Sultana's Dream* (1905) (P)

Mahua Sarkar, "Muslim Women and the Politics of Invisibility in Late Colonial India," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 14.2 (June 2001): 226-250 (E)

Thurs. Oct. 7:

Anne McClintock "No Longer In A Future Heaven": Women and Nationalism in South Africa," *Transition* no. 51 (1991): 104-123 (E)

Sangeeta Ray, "Woman as Nation and a Nation of Women: Tagore's *Home and the World* and Hossain's *Sultana's Dream*" *Engendering India* (2000) 90-125 (P)

**Mid-semester break: Oct. 9-12**

**Week 6**

Thurs. Oct. 14: **GENDERED WARS AND THE CREATION OF NEW NATIONS**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 16-17 (P)

Sadat Hasan Manto, "Open it," *Stories about the Partition of India* (ed.) Alok Bhalla (E)

Sadat Hasan Manto, "Cold Meat," *Stories about the Partition of India* (ed.) Alok Bhalla (E)

Jamila Hashmi, "Exile," *Stories about the Partition of India* (ed.) Alok Bhalla (E)

Rajinder Singh Bedi, "Lajwanti," *Stories about the Partition of India* (ed.) Alok Bhalla (E)

Lalithambika Antharjanam, "A Leaf in the Storm," *Stories about the Partition of India* (ed.) Alok Bhalla (E)

### **Week 7**

Tues. Oct. 19:

Ritu Menon, "Reproducing the Legitimate Community," *Appropriating Gender* (eds.) Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu (1997): 15-32 (E)

Kavita Daiya, "Honourable Resolutions: Gendered Violence, Ethnicity and the Nation," *Alternatives: Global Local Political* vol. 27, no. 2 April-June 2002 (E)

Sabiha Sumar, *Silent Waters* (2003) (film)

Thurs. Oct. 21:

Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* (1991): Chapters 1-13 (P)

### **Week 8**

Tues. Oct. 26:

Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India* (1991): Chapters 14-32 (P)

Jill Didur, "Lifting the Veil?: Reconsidering the Task of Literary Historiography" *Interventions*, Volume 3, Issue 3 November 2001, pp. 446 – 451 (E)

Thurs. Oct. 28: **INDIA AS INDIRA: MOTHER OF THE NATION?**

*Modern South Asia*: Chapters 18-20 (P)

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1983): Book 1 (P)

### **Week 9**

Tues. Nov. 2:

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1983): Book 2 (P)

Thurs. Nov. 4:

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1983): Book 3 (P)

Teresa Heffernan, "Apocalyptic Narratives: The Nation in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*" *Twentieth Century Literature: A Scholarly and Critical Journal* 46, no. 4 (2000 Winter): 470-491 (E)

### **Week 10**

Mon. Nov. 8                    SECOND PAPER DUE (5:00 in my box)

Tues. Nov. 9: **CASTE, BODY, NATION**

Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (1997): Chapters 1-10 (P)

Thurs. Nov. 11:

Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (1997): Chapters 11-14 (P)

Chatterjee, Partha, "Caste and Subaltern Consciousness," *Subaltern Studies* 6, p. 169-209 (E)

### **Week 11**

Tues. Nov. 16:

Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* (1997): Chapters 15-21 (P)

Brinda Bose, "In Desire and in Death: Eroticism as Politics in Arundhati Roy's 'The God of Small Things'" *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 29, no. 2 (1998 Apr): 59-72 (E)

Thurs. Nov. 18:

Mahasweta Devi, "Douloti The Bountiful" *Imaginary Maps* Trans., G. Spivak, (1995): 19-94 (P)  
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Woman in Difference: Mahasweta Devi's "Douloti the Bountiful"" *Cultural Critique*, No. 14, The Construction of Gender and Modes of Social Division II (Winter, 1989-1990): 105-128 (E)

### **Saturday, Nov. 20-Sunday, Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Break**

#### **Week 12**

Tues. Nov. 30:

Ranjit Guha, "Chandra's Death", *Subaltern Studies V* (Delhi: Oxford, 1987), pp. 135-165 (E)  
Anupama Rao, "Understanding Sirasgaon: Notes Towards Conceptualizing the Role of Law, Caste, and Gender in a Case of 'Atrocity', " *Thamyris*, Vol. 4. 1, Spring 1997: 103-136 (E)

Thurs. Dec. 2: **MASCULINITY AND THE NATION: INDIA**

Sikata Bannerjee, *Make me a Man!: Masculinity, Hinduism and the Nation* (2005): Chaps. 1 & 3 (P)

Ashutosh Gowariker, *Lagaan* (2001) (film)

#### **Week 13**

Tues. Dec. 7:

Sikata Bannerjee, *Make me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism and the Nation* (2005): Chaps. 4 & 5 (P)

Anant Patwardhan, *Father, Son and Holy War* (1994) (film)

Rustom Bharchua, "Dismantling Men: Crisis of Male Identity in Father, Son and Holy War", *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 1 (1995): 1610-1616 (E)

Thurs. Dec. 9: **MASCULINITY AND THE NATION: PAKISTAN**

Shoaib Mansoor, *Khuda ke Liye* (2007) (film)

Charles Hirschkind and Saba Mahmood "Feminism, the Taliban, and Politics of Counter-Insurgency" *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (spring, 2002): 339-354 (E)

#### **Week 14**

Tues. Dec. 14: **Conclusion (TBA)**

Fri. Dec. 17 THIRD PAPER DUE (5:00 in my box)