LESSON PLAN

SOCIOLOGY – UG SYLLABUS

SEMESTER : 1
SOCL : 0101

SOCIOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Course description:

When mundane spaces of everyday life become subject matter of academic enquiry, it requires learning to see the same everyday differently, that challenges familiar spaces and familiar ways of looking at them. The course aims to develop in students this critical sociological eye to look anew. It introduces students to the basic tools, grammar and concepts required to grasp and read the ‘social’ in everyday spaces, to think sociologically and critique common sense perceptions, to develop a sociological imagination in order to link the personal with the social. The course focuses on the ways in which even the most informal of verbal and non-verbal interactions are, in fact, socially ordered and culturally mediated. It illustrates and problematises the processes of socialisation, and brings out the cultural production and reproduction of social inequalities in the most mundane spaces of our existence. The everyday structure of role, status, community, association and their institutionalisation is examined in the context. The course outlines a brief history of everyday life and emphasises its analytical departure in the study of social relations within sociology itself. It introduces sociological perspectives of looking at the trivial as extraordinary, the ordinary man as the hero and the anonymous heroes as the voices of societies. Dramaturgy, ethnomethodology, phenomenology and critical theory, as theoretical approaches to studying the everyday, are introduced. Having established the subject matter of everyday sociology, of ‘what’ to study, the course focusses on ‘how’ to study the everyday, the methodological tools of analysing the everyday. Methods of narratives and storytelling are introduced in the context. The course emphasises links between the self and the social, the personal and the political, structure and agency and illustrates everyday processes of negotiating structures through compliance, subversion, resistance, circumvention and interrogation. It finally aims to bring together the tools, concepts, grammar and theories of everyday in order to apply them to analyse a very familiar space of ordinary life such as friendship, of the structures of inequality it generates and is embedded within, its class and gender character and the everyday spaces of narrating and performing it through the cultural discourse of adda.

Modules: Course duration is 16 weeks. Each module will extend for up to 4 weeks approximately.
1. **The basic grammar of everyday life**

Readings:


2. **The ‘what’ and ‘how’ of everyday**

Readings:


3. **Everyday as processes of negotiation:**

Readings:


4. **Everyday Friendships**

Readings:


**Internal Assignment (15 marks):** A term paper of (2500) words has to be submitted and presented in class based on the field study of any chosen aspect of everyday life in contemporary Bengal.

**SOCL : 0102**

**GENELOGIES OF THE SOCIAL**

**Course description:**

This course intends to track genealogies, or philosophical lineages, of the object of study of the social sciences, namely, the ‘social’. It leads us to interrogate the thoughts with which we make sense of the complex form of collective existence of human beings on earth today. We identify the eighteenth century in Europe as the moment where these thoughts, through a great range of diversity took shape, and the nineteenth century as the time when they elaborated themselves by generating world-historical processes. As we move from Europe to the world, mainly through a critical scrutiny of the phenomenon of imperialism, we examine the linkage between these thoughts and the establishment of a variety of institutions. Ideas about the modern society, we argue, were produced out of these linkages. In the final section of the course, we study briefly the parallel formations of concepts of society in non-European parts of the world. We examine what kind of changes these ideas underwent, as many of these societies came under the control of European powers.

The course begins with Enlightenment ideas of the centrality of the human being in the world, and pursues some influential explanations of the basis of ‘society’, or collective human life. In the process it dwells on the idea of ‘science’, and the way it informed thoughts about society. It then focuses on conceptualizations of the wide-spread socio-economic transformations that take place in nineteenth century Europe, which changes the understanding of the nature of human society. This takes us to an explanation of the intellectual basis of imperialism, which was the imagination of the ‘social’ of non-European populations in and through European ideas. Finally, multiple careers of ideas of society are tracked in these parts of the world, before and after colonization.

**Modules**

1. Enlightenment ideas of ‘science’, ‘man’, and ‘society’ (3-4 weeks)
Readings:


Bertrand Russell, The History of Western Philosophy,

(Chapters: Hobbes’s Leviathan, Descartes, Locke’s theory of knowledge, Hume, Rousseau)


2. Utilitarianism and political economy

Readings


3. Empire and the ‘social’

Readings:


Uday Mehta, Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth Century British Liberal Thought (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1999) (Select chapters)

4. Other ideas of society

Sheldon Pollock (ed.) Forms of Knowledge in Early Modern South Asia, (Duke University Press: 2011) (Select chapters)

Internal Assessment (15 marks): Students will be asked to write a term paper (2000 words), and present it in class as their internal assignment. The topic for the I.A. will be announced in class at the beginning of the course.

SEMESTER 2

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY 1: CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

SOCL : 0201

A theory course in second semester BA Sociology would primarily introduce the western sociological thinkers. Sociology in India came as a western import and western sociological thought is specifically relevant in terms of intellectual history. Classical thought in the ideas of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel paved way for later development in functionalism, structuralism and conflict school of theoretical orientation. The course tries to initiate students to the ideas of these thinkers, allows them to connect to later theory building and also gives them the academic liberty to contextualize these concepts to Indian situation and thus critically assess them.

Week wise distribution of lesson plan according to module: (Classes per week 4) Total week 16

Introduction: 1week

Module 1

Karl Marx:

Historical Materialism: 1week

Dialectical Materialism: 1 week

Class and class struggle: 1 week

Overview: 1 week

Readings:


Module 2
Emile Durkheim:

Rules of Sociological Method : 1 week
Suicide : 1 week
Overview of other works and summary: 1 week

Readings:

Module 3
Simmel:

Formal Sociology : 1 week
Money: 1 week
Culture: 1 week

Readings:

Module 4
Weber:

Verstehen and Ideal Type : 1 week
Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism : 1 week
Bureaucracy : 1 week

Readings:


Internal assessment : 2 weeks

Individual class presentations by students.

SOCL : 0202

SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY 2 : STRUCTURALISM AND FUNCTIONALISM

Credit: 4 (50 Marks)

Internal Assessment: 15 Marks

End Semester Exam: 35 Marks

Sociological theory part 2 will introduce two major theoretical perspectives applied for sociological and anthropological understanding social phenomena. These two perspectives are structuralism and functionalism which uncovers the relationship between structural and functional dimensions of various social institutions. Functionalist theory looks at society from its utilitarian point and borrows heavily from biological and natural scientific understanding of an organism where each organ has a functional role to preserve the whole. This theory looks at society as a body with institutions as its organs which function to maintain order and thereby sustain normativity. An understanding of the functionalist school of theory would not only trace its genealogy in positivism of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Emile Durkheim but will look at fallacies and limitations of the theory from within. In order to strive from a comprehensive analysis of this theory Radcliff Brown’s text Structure and Function in Primitive Societies would be discussed in detail as this text is seminal in terms of the application of functionalist theory.

Structuralism emerged as an intellectual movement and approach to understand society in the 20th century. Its effect is quite profound in linguistics, sociology and anthropology. Basic premise of this theoretical paradigm is that social action and its consequences including thought and perception are constructed and they cannot be taken as naturally given. Any phenomena in society entails a deep structure which is within the reach of comprehension. It is this structure which determines the position of each element in the social whole and structures are real things that lie beneath the surface or the appearance of meaning. Structuralism is considered to bring a major turn in the way society was understood till 19th century. Structuralism brought back individual in strong opposition to society. Various aspects of this theory would be discussed which would include its development as theory in the works of Ferdinand De Saussure and Claude Levi Strauss.
Modules

1. Foundation of functionalist theory and its critique
2. Reading Radcliffe Brown’s text Structure and Function in Primitive Societies
3. Foundation of Structuralist movement
4. Reading Levi Strauss’s text The Savage Mind

Core Readings


SEMESTER – 3

SOCL : 0301

CRITICAL SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY

This is an undergraduate course which introduces students to some of the basic debates within Critical Social Theory, particularly those which emerged within what is called the Frankfurt School. The course charts out the historical and political impulses behind the development of critical social theory and introduces students to some of the key theoretical debates of the Frankfurt School eg. Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory of the culture industry, Marcuse’s conceptualisation of liberation in contemporary society. The course has also been designed to encourage students to critically look at art and popular culture and their relationship to human freedom by exploring the works of Adorno, Horkheimer, Benjamin and Marcuse.

Module 1

Critical Theory before and after the Frankfurt School (Week 1-4)

Readings:


Module 2

Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer’s theory of the Culture Industry (Week 5-8)

Readings:

**Module 3**

Walter Benjamin and the debate about Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (Week 9-12)

Readings:


**Module 4**

Herbert Marcuse: One Dimensional Society; Art and Liberation (Week 13-16)

Readings:


Internal Assessment: Midterm Presentation on two Frankfurt School Thinkers and End semester examination.

**SOCL : 0302**

**STRUCTURALISM AND AFTER: DISCOURSE, EMBODIMENT & AFFECT**

This course aims at introducing students to critical theoretical developments in the social sciences, primarily pertaining to the structuralist school of thought, and critiques that followed. It rethinks key everyday sociological concepts such as structure, individual, meaning, agency, body, and creativity, through ideational trajectories of critical concepts like the human mind, semiology, signification, language, surface, depth, langue, parole, suspension, synchronicity, diachronicity, origin, change, genealogy, essence, sign, identity, difference, deference, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, proto-mathematical approach, bricoleur, engineer, reality, representation, operation, metaphor, metonym, repetition, inversion, analogy, homology, binary, form, content, code, the conscious, unconscious, transformation, convertibility, myth, primitive, civilized, logic, possibility, analytical thinking, habitus, practice, resistance, subject, ethics, and truth.

**Modules:** each extending for approximately four weeks

1: **The problem of the sign**: Ferdinand De Saussure.
Key Reading:

2: **Structuralism in anthropology**: Claude Levi-Strauss

Key Reading:

3: **Debates on the idea of the structure**:

Select Readings:


4. **Discursive Practice**: Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu

Select Readings:


**Assessment**: A 15 mark presentation on any text related to the course.

**SOCL : 0303**

**GENDER AND SOCIETY**

**Course description:**

The module will introduce students to the basic concepts of sex, gender, sexuality and their interconnections from feminist perspectives and theories of gender relations. The discourses of naturalising the normal will be continuously interrogated in this context. The history, tenets, contexts
and critiques of liberal, radical, Marxist and socialist feminist thoughts will be emphasised upon. Postcolonial feminism, ecofeminism and post-modern third wave feminism will also be introduced. Gender difference and the translation of difference into inequality will be addressed. Theory will be applied to a range of substantive areas within the private and the public domain such as education, economy, politics, culture, home and the household in order to bring out the relationship between gender and power in everyday interactions and institutional arrangements. A critical appreciation of the processes of being and becoming a man or a woman and the cultural mandates of femininity and masculinity will be undertaken. The course will draw upon theories of power and body to illustrate how female and masculine bodies come to be normatively disciplined. It will also invoke perspectives from masculinity studies in order to bring out tensions associated with the construction of masculinities amidst various gender movements. Feminist critique of the public private dichotomy will be invoked throughout the course in order to help students critique a related binary of the personal and the political. In this context, feminist methodological tools of researching gender that critique mainstream male-stream sociological methods of exploring social relations, will be taught. The significance of intersectional analysis will be emphasised to show how gender operates not single handedly but in conjunction with class, caste, race and ethnicity. In this regard the course will use examples from the south Asian and African context in order to critically appreciate the feminist theories that originated in the western part of the world, sprang from and contributed to interlocking sources of gender oppression but fell short of addressing multicultural politics of gendering and gendered spaces. While the course's disciplinary focus is sociology, it will draw substantially from gender studies, feminist theory and cultural studies.

Modules

Select readings

1. Conceptualising sex and gender: feminist theories and epistemology

Readings:


2. Gendered society: Gendering the private and the public domain

Select readings:


3. Gendered identities and relations: femininities and masculinities

Select readings:


4. Intersections and challenges: gender, class, caste, race, religion, ethnicity and sexuality

Select readings:


Rege, S (2013) Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women’s Testimonies, Zubaan Publisher.

**Internal Assignment (15 marks):** A term paper of (2500) words has to be submitted and presented in class based on the application of feminist theory/theories of their choice to any gendered aspect within the field of contemporary Bengal.

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**SEMESTER 4**

**SOCL : 0401**

**SOCIETY IN INDIA : THE LONG 19th CENTURY**

This course aims to prepare students for the study of Indian society through historical sociology. We propose that social structures all over the world are produced out of layers of sedimentation of critical transformations over time of the ways in which complex collectives of human beings build relationships between themselves, and strive to represent them in specific abstractions. In this course we will make sense of Indian society by revisiting, along some directions, one such profound moment of its re-structuring—namely, the nineteenth century, or the advent and crystallization of European rule in this part of the world. Our choice of this period is informed by the argument that the specific interrelationship we witness and inhabit today, between both the keywords in the title of this course, i.e., ‘society’ and ‘India’, was irreversibly shaped during this period through intricate processes. In a certain sense, therefore, the ‘long’ nineteenth century is contemporaneous with our present existence. We must, therefore, scrutinize it, if we are to know ourselves better, and the latter is essentially what we will call, **critique**.

The course is ostensibly divided into four sections which do not claim to offer a summary of all that happened over the nineteenth century in people’s lives in India. Instead, they try to document crystallizations of different forms of relationships between people, and their own with themselves. To put it loosely, these sections talk about the formation of complex collective identities, all the while re-telling them as part of a general process of the emergence of ‘society’. This general process, in turn, will be analysed as an ensemble of European ideas, modes of representation, and techniques of governance being introduced to life-worlds very different from European societies, thereby generating dynamic fields of encounters. Empirically, we are going to focus on some of these fields, while conceptually we will try to reflect on the nature of the encounter. We wish to begin with the different waves of ‘socio-religious’ reform movements, which developed in different parts of the country amongst different groups of people right from the beginning of the nineteenth century. These movements continued, changing their vocabulary and agenda throughout the century, determining in the process the self-characterization of several communities, and forging durable relationships between them. For traditional ways of living, they put together newly-defined codes of conduct and defined new ways of relating to, and acting in, the world. They enabled the formation of new communities. This process was,
however, not a simple story of change from tradition to modernity. All these movements, even when they were re-casting, or breaking away from pre-existing forms of collective living, heavily used different languages of indigenous tradition to identify themselves. Ideas and practices of community-formation were, moreover, always structured by discursive forms of European liberalism. From the complexity of these movements, we shall move towards the India’s rural interiors, where European governance had possibly its greatest impact. Here we will examine methods of revenue-extraction, regimes of commodity-cultivation, acts of insurrection, and formation of multiple subjectivities, like ‘ryots’, ‘zemindars’, ‘mahajans’, and ‘jotedars’, and others. We will look at intellectual frameworks which framed governance strategies, and generated a layered and conflict-ridden topography of social relations on land.

Following the same trail, we will now turn towards that critical moment in imperial intervention where, informed by the anthropological imperative, massive projects of enumeration, classification, and fixation of identities were unleashed across India. These created preconditions for the forms in which we find identities like ‘caste’, ‘linguistic groups’, and ‘tribe’ acting in the present. As these processes went on inside the country, huge armies of labourers were sent to different parts of the globe, as part of the indenture system. We will therefore, try to locate the dynamics of both global discourses of political economy, anthropology, and social theory, and local practices of governance in this moment of colonialism. Finally, moving towards an analysis of the formations of the ‘society’ in ‘India’ over the ‘long nineteenth century’, we will ask questions about modernity, colonialism, identity, and violence. As a theoretical afterword to the course, we will briefly explore critiques of colonialism, embracing, if possible, critical engagements with European thought and philosophy.

Modules:

1. Liberalism, Religion and Reform
   Readings:
   Tanika Sarkar and Sumit Sarkar (ed.) Women and Social Reform in Modern India: A Reader (Two volumes), Permanent Black, New Delhi: 2010 (select articles)
   Bernard Cohn, Colonialism and its forms of Knowledge: The British in India, Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1996 (select chapters)
   Francis Robinson, ‘Religious Change and the self in Muslim South Asia since 1800’ (pp 13-27)

2. Agrarian Formations
   Readings:
   Eric Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, OUP, 1989 (Select chapters)
   Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, Ouponibeshik Bhoroter Arthaniti, Ananda Publishers (select chapters)
   Andrew Sartori, ‘A Liberal Discourse of Custom in Colonial Bengal’, Past and Present, 212, 1, 2011, pp 163-197
   Ranajit Guha, ‘Chandra’s Death’, in Ranajit Guha (ed.) Subaltern Studies V, OUP, 1988
   Vinay Gidwani, Capital Interrupted: Agrarian Development and the Politics of Work in India, University of Minnesota Press, 2008 (chapter on ‘Waste’)

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3. The Ethnographic State

Readings:
Prathama Banerjee, Politics of Time: ‘Primitives’ and History-Writing in a colonial Society, OUP, 2006 (chapter on money)
Karuna Mantena, Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism, Princeton University Press, 2010 (select chapters)
Nicholas Dirks, Castes of Minds: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India, Princeton University Press, 2001 (Introduction)
Gyan Prakash, Bonded Histories: Genealogies of Labor Servitude in Modern India, CUP, 2003 (select chapters)

4. (Colonial) Modernity: a theoretical afterword

Readings:
Ania Loomba, Colonialism/Postcolonialism, Routledge, 1998 (select chapters)
Dipesh Chakrabarti, Provincialising Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference, Princeton University Press, 2000 ('The Two Histories of Capital')
Aijaz Ahmad, In Theory: Classes, Nations and Literatures, Verso, 1992 ('Orientalism and After')

Internal Assignment (15 marks): Students are asked to write a term paper (2500 words) focusing on any document from the nineteenth century—novels, memoirs, government reports, a set of photographs, newspapers, or any other form of text.

SOCL : 0402

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative method mainly focuses upon the survey research method and its application part. The first module is coined as Competing Epistemologies, Positivism, Constructionism, Critical Turn which intends to focus upon the methodological history and thereby open the course with a debate on quantitative versus qualitative research methodology. In the following modules (module 2 and 3) the course intends to concentrate on the basic concepts of social statistics, and learn about the relationship between the constructs. It also attempts to equip the students with data collection and organization, analysis and dissertation. One final module (module 4) is very important for it focuses upon the internal and external validity of the data. It would teach them the basics of quantitative research design and about the variables that are used to test theories and hypotheses, about multivariate/regression and descriptive statistics.
The course also intends to teach the students the risk of misreporting and make them capable to avoid any bias in their research work. The course has been developed with the aim of letting the students substantiate their research works with valid facts that they would learn to extract at the end of the course, and present it in a way so that it can help future research works as well.

This course is offered at the UG level and its primary objective is to develop the methodological skills of the students. The aim is to equip the students so much so that they are able to assess the research projects of others for example in the field of media, education, etc. The main idea of the course is to enable the students with quantitative methodological concepts so that they can use them in their sessional papers and dissertation and other research works.

**Credit:** 4

**A. Competing Epistemologies: Positivism, Constructionism, Critical Turn**

Bryman, Alan (2015), Social Research Methods, Oxford University Press.


The 'Cultural Turn' In Social Theory: Towards A Theory Of Cultural PoliticsKate Nash Sociology, Vol. 35, No. 1 (February 2001), Pp. 77-92.

**Time taken to cover: 3 weeks**

**B. Introduction To Statistics: Basic Concepts, Terminologies, Types (Descriptive And Inferential); Measurement; Place Of Statistics In Social Research.**


**C. Computation Techniques: Sampling, Frequency Distribution, Central Tendency, Concept Of Skewness And Dispersion, Graphical Techniques**


Blaock, H (1979), Social Statistics, Ny, Mcgraw-Hill Publishing Company

Das, G N (2008), Statistical Methods, Tata McGraw-Hill Education.


**D. Statistics And Politics: Politicization Of Data, Authenticity Of Research Findings And The Question Of Ethics.**


SOCL : 0403
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

This course has been designed to teach students the use of qualitative research methods and their various utilities. In addition to teaching methods of qualitative research like interviews and participant observation, the course acquaints students with the theoretical and political premises of the usage of various research methods. Students are also trained to use various qualitative research methods in Sociology during the course as well as the ways of transcribing verbal interactions. In order to bring to the fore questions of subjective disposition, prejudice, representation as well as the implications of the fieldworker’s own identity for the research and writing – students are also taught excerpts from certain key ethnographies like M.N.Srinivas’ The Remembered Village, as well as commentaries discussing the political intellectual contexts of these works.

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<th>Topics Covered</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
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<tr>
<td>An Introduction to Qualitative Research:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Basic Concepts and terminologies : Developing a research question,</td>
<td>Week</td>
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<td>Operationalising, Sampling, Roles in the “Field”</td>
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<td>II. Historical background of various Qualitative research Methods</td>
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<td>Methods of Qualitative Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Field Research Ethnography and its relation with Phenomenology</td>
<td>Week</td>
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<td>II. Roles and Representations in Fieldwork</td>
<td>5-8</td>
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<td>BabbieEarl(1979), The Practice of Social Research, USA, Wadsworth Cengage Learning.</td>
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<td>I. Dialogue as a method</td>
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<td>I. Transcription and Fieldnotes</td>
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<td>I. The Native and Outsider Debate</td>
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**Internal Assessment:** Research projects using qualitative research methods and End semester examination
This is the second course on Society in India. From the historical moorings this course facilitates the students to move to the social bearings in the society. First of all it discusses all the major events and processes in the nationalist milieu namely colonialism, nationalism and emergence of formal sociology as a response to both colonial and nationalist history writing. Social imagining of the nation by Indian intellectual thinkers, defining the Indian body social on the basis of caste trajectories as in the writings of Dumont, Srinivas, Ghurye, etc forms the basis of this paper. Finally the paper initiates students into the debate of nation building by comparing the main ideas and policy formulations of Gandhi and Ambedkar. This paper is a gradual and nuanced journey from the realm of ideas to the arena of real politik, both equally contested.

Week wise Lesson Plan: 16 weeks (4 classes per week)

Module 1

Events and Processes

L. Dumont & D. Pocock, ‘For a sociology of India’, Contributions to Indian Sociology, 1957, 1
N. Dirks, Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the making of modern India, Princeton University Press, 2001
S. Patel, Doing Sociology in India: Locations, Genealogies & Practices, OUP, Delhi, 2011

Module 2

Imagining India:

D P Mukherjee: 1 week
Benoy Kumar Sarkar: 1 week
Radha Kamal Mukherjee: 1 week
N K Bose: 1 week

Readings
S. Patel, Doing Sociology in India: Locations, Genealogies & Practices, OUP, Delhi, 2011
N.K. Bose, The Structure of Hindu Society, 1976 (1949), New Delhi, Sangam Books

Module 3
Defining India:
Dumont: 1 week
Ghurye: 1 week
Srinivas: 1 week
Redfield: 1 week

Readings:
Veena Das (ed.) The Oxford India companion to sociology and social anthropology (2 vols.), New Delhi, OUP, 2003
M.N. Srinivas, ‘The Indian village: myth and reality’ in The Dominant Caste & other essays, OUP, Delhi, 1994

Module 4
Nation Building:
Gandhi: 1 week
Ambedkar: 1 week

Readings:

Overview: 1 week
Internal Assessment: 2 weeks
Individual Paper presentations by students.

SOCL : 0502
SOCIAL STRATIFICATION
This course aims at introducing students to the various theoretical approaches to the area of social stratification. It critically engages them into the various theoretical paradigms. The course extensively deals with numerous and diverse theories that deal with social stratification and discusses its applicability in the contemporary scenario. It furthermore critically engages the students with the bases of stratification that is Caste, Class, Status, Race, Ethnicity and Tribe and how they have transformed in contemporary times.

Modules: Each extending for approximately four weeks

1: Approaches to the Study of Social Stratification: Theories, Concepts (4 weeks)
Key Readings:

2: Caste: Features, Varna, Mobility. (4 Weeks)
Key Readings:
Srinivas, M.N., ‘Caste in Modern India’
Dube, S.C., ‘Indian Society’


3: Class, Status, Power: Contemporary Representations (4 weeks)

Key Readings:


Singh, Yogendra ( ), ‘Social Stratification’

4: Race, Ethnicity, Tribe: Questions of Minority, Prejudice, Antagonism, Discrimination (4 weeks)

Key Readings:


Robb, Peter (1997), ‘The Concept of Race in South Asia’, New Delhi: OUP

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT: Individual students are asked to present an article in the class and write a critical appreciation of a book based on the area of social stratification.
This course tries to explore the ways in which each of us is both a user of and is used by popular culture. Popular culture which is all around us, influence our cognition, thoughts, opinions, values, moralities, how we vote, our religiosity, idea of leisure, concept of pain and how we live our lives in countless ways. This course uses our own know-how as consumers of popular culture products as a launching pad to study the various roles played by mass-mediated popular culture in constructing our world view. This course takes a multidisciplinary approach as popular culture analysis follows a numeral different fields, including Cultural Studies, Media studies, Sociology, Mass communications, Anthropology, History, Language studies, Gender studies, Ethnic studies, and many other related fields. One essential task of this course is to enable the aptitude to study, analyse, and synthesize texts from these diverse fields of specialisation into a comprehensive interdisciplinary analyses. Texts from folktales, lore, literature, television, film, advertising, music, and online cyber culture, and other types of pop culture are analysed using theoretical and analytical tools from all these related disciplines. For example, we examine how such critical elements as age, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, race are shaped by and reshaped by those texts in popular culture.

Modules

Module 1: Introduction to Popular Culture: What is Popular Culture? (4 weeks)

Reading List:


Module 2: Theorising Popular Culture (4 weeks)

Reading List:


Module 3: The Production of Popular Culture: The Media, News, Sports, Mass Marketing, Infotainment, Street Literature (4 weeks)

Reading List:


Module 4: The Consumption of Popular Culture: Seeing vs. Looking, Global consumerism, Entertainment as Art and Commerce, Social media and social change (4 weeks)

Reading List:


Banash, David. 2013. Collage culture: readymades, meaning, and the age of consumption. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi


Internal Assessment:

1 Presentations: One after the second module.

1 Article: Students are asked to write a well-researched article (8-12 pages) on an existing popular culture topic of their choice. They will be encouraged to theorise their findings from the readings.
In this course, students are taken through a quick tour of the various complex processes which shaped contemporary Indian society since the time of the formal independence of the nation-state. We begin with the ideas and practices of planned development, looking into the ways in which they shaped social identities. At the level of political changes, we track the course of rise and fall of the Congress, and the emergence of the region. In terms of economic shifts, we examine the early focus on heavy industrialization, and its relationship to the formation of the laboring classes. From here we move to agrarian relations, to understand the workings of class, caste, and gender in rural India, as they changed from the times of planning to those of liberalization. Simultaneously, we try to map the emergence of multiple questionings of an unified ‘national society’, in the form of social movements rooted in caste, and ethnicity. These are analysed in the context of the resurgence of a new Hindu nationalism, and the debates on secularism they give rise to. The women’s movement is studied as a critique of the essentially patriarchal forms that nationalism, regionalism, and dalit struggles remain rooted in. The changing forms of popular culture are studied in the light of new economic policies and their impact on political expression, a paradigmatic case being that of political change in south India. Questions of sovereignty, law, violence, and their relationship with changing forms of governance are looked into keeping in mind the conflict at the frontiers of India. While studying these particular issues, and forms of identity-formation, the various scholarly assessments of the nature of ‘modernity’ in India are debated and discussed. The course aims at providing students with a holistic conceptual and empirical understanding of the nature of the social in contemporary India.

**Modules**

1. **Planning ‘development’**

Readings:

Partha Chatterjee (ed.), *State and Politics in India* (OUP: New Delhi, 1999) (select chapters)


2. **Laboring groups**

Readings:


3. **New ‘social’ questions**

Readings:

Maitrayee Chaudhuri, *Feminism in India* (Zed books: London, 2005) (select chapters)

S. Deshpande (ed.) *The Problem of Caste*, (Orient Blackswan: Delhi, 2014) (select chapters)

David Ludden (ed.) *Making India Hindu* (OUP: New Delhi, 1996) (select chapters)


Rajeev Bhargava (ed.) *Secularism and its critics*, (OUP: Delhi, 1999) (select chapters)

4. **India ‘liberalised’**

Readings:

M.S.S. Pandian, *The Image Trap: M.G. Ramachandran in Film and Politics* (Sage: London, 2015) (select chapters)


Internal Assignment (15 marks): Students will write a term paper (2000 words), and present it in class, on the basis of field study of any local aspect of contemporary Indian society.

SOCL : 0602

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

"The people united will never be defeated” is a famous composition which globally finds its way in many political and social rallies. The pertinent questions here are what influences people to act as a collective? And what motivates them to decide on a common purpose irrespective of their individual aspirations? And, how they become collectively assure that their struggles are believed to be effective? And how we can theorise these collective actions politically, economically, culturally? These collective actions or specifically these social movements need to be analysed through classification, theorization, their conceptual overlaps. For example, agrarian movements require to be theorised through the conceptual overlapping of both the peasant movement and tribal movement. Profit-driven capitalist society gives rise to industrial working class movements which would be studied using the conceptual categories like labour or trade unions. Along with these, some new categories of social movements, i.e. the environmental and ecological movement, civil rights movement for political identity would also be discussed from cross-cultural perspectives. A special discussion would also be focused on the issues of gender, and associated movement like feminist movements, LGBT movement would be part of this course.

Modules

Module 1: Issues and Theoretical Framework in the Analysis of Social Movements: categorization, Theorization, Conceptual Overlaps. (4 weeks)

Reading List:


Singh, R (2001), Social Movements, Old and New: A Post-Modernist Critique, New Delhi: Sage

Module 2: Agrarian Movements: Peasant, Tribal (4 weeks)

Reading List:


**Module 3:** Industrial Working Class Movements: Labour, Trade Unions. (4 weeks)

Reading List:


**Module 4:** New Social Movements: Environment, LGBT, Civil Society and Political Identity, Women (4 weeks)

Reading List:

Singh, R (2001), Social Movements, Old and New: A Post-Modernist Critique, New Delhi: Sage


**Internal Assessment:**

1. Presentations: One after the second module.

1. Article: Students are asked to write a well-researched article (8-12 pages) on an existing popular culture topic of their choice. They will be encouraged to theorise their findings from the readings.
This course seeks to understand urban spaces in its entirety. Urbanism is a widespread phenomenon, all kinds of societies have a history of the development of urban spaces which are more commonly referred to as city space. In this regard it is observed that western societies exhibit a far more rapid construction of city spaces in comparison to the eastern counterpart. It is also notable that in both contexts trajectory of development or production of urban architecture and spaces is very distinct and nuanced which needs to be analysed in its specificity. Many urban sociologists have come to agree ‘that modernity and development split which western urban theory has build upon has led to a representation of the western metropolis as creative, dynamic and modern places whereas developmentalism has functioned to make the experience of cities in developing, underdeveloping and developed countries appear incommensurable.’ (Srivastava, Sanjay: 2015). Urban spaces are not a natural given rather it is a space which is produced and reproduced in the modern capitalist society. This course entails a thorough investigation and understanding of the nature of this peculiar production and sustenance of urban spaces.

Module 1
The city in classical sociological theory
3 weeks
This module introduces the works of two classical sociologists Max Weber and Georg Simmel to understand how has sociological imagination has informed the idea of city and its life conditions.

Module 2
Critical geography and city space
4 weeks
Urban space is not a harmonious and homogeneous space but it is embedded with multiple layers of social hierarchies. Thus development or expansion of urban space is uneven in nature. Works of Henry Lefebvre, Manuel Castells and David Harvey are discussed to understand broad concept of production of space, ghettoisation, gentrification, politics over space in this module.

Module 3
Cross cultural perspectives
4 weeks

This module will look at different ways in which urban spaces are defined in different spatio-temporal context. Nature of urban spaces differ in significant ways in varied contexts depending on the level of development a society has reached. Cities are made through the act of collective imagination hence we need to look for the city in such media of the collective imagination as literary texts, popular media in daily discursive reality of inhabitants and numerous other forms of the public culture of daily life.

Module 4

Indian cities

3 weeks

In this module Indian Cities are centre of investigation. The process of urbanisation in India is intricately linked with country town nexus, theory of tradition and modernity, and rural urban divide. All these factors would be point of discussion in this module.

Reading Material

4. Weber, Max. (1924). The City (non-Legitimate Domination) in Economy and Society Chapter XVI.
6. Tonkiss, Fran


15. Lefebvre, Henry. The Production of Space

Internal Assessment: 15 Marks

Students have to appear for a mid term internal assessment examination.
WHY STUDY SOCIETY?

Nature and Nurture

In the present module, the students are introduced to the debate of nature and nurture and thereby critically discuss the importance of nurture. Various sociological concepts like culture, socialization, interaction, sex and gender etc and various sociological approaches are made aware of so that one can understand the importance of nurture that shapes the individual and the social world and thereby shapes one another.

Readings:


Giddens, A Sociology


Sociological Imagination

C. Wright Mills explains sociological imagination as “the vivid awareness of the relationship between personal experience and the wider society”, and this module provides a basic idea of this awareness through various example from our surrounding.

Reading:


Social Stratification

No society can be understood fully without comprehending its multilayered social structure. These layers are significant in dilineating the root of various kinds of differences and hierarchies that are characteristics of any society. The strive towards equality and egalitarianism often gets embroiled in debates which surround inequalites based on race, caste, class gender, religion, linguistic and ethnicities. Social stratification module will introduce students to the concept and theory of stratification and its significance to understand society. It will examine why and how people are allocated into different strata which in turn determine their life chances and ability to share valued goods and services in society. It will also explore how certain institutions become agents of distribution of resources which reproduces inequalities from time to time.

Gupta, Dipankar. 1991. Social Stratification. OUP, New Delhi. (Selected Chapters)


**Structure and Agency**

Readings:


**SEMESTER : 2**

**LOVE**

**Love: An Unromantic Discussion**

The present module deals with the idea of love sociologically by isolating it from the popular discourse of romance.

**Select Readings:**


**Romantic Love: Interrogating the Popular**

The present module deals with the portrayal and representation of Love in Popular culture.

**Select Readings:**


**Transcendental and Transgressive Love in Religion**

The main aim of the module is to understand how notions of love have been thoroughly infused with religious discourses. In this module the course introduces students to critical debates on questions of immanence and transcendence in understandings of religious love, with an emphasis on Asian contexts. The religious history of love unsettles divisions between otherworldly religion and this-worldly secularism. Alongside theoretical discussions along these themes, specific discussions of bhakti and sufi contexts, notions of penance and catharsis, and renunciation and relationality are analysed.

**Select Readings:**


**Feminist Critiques**

In this module we discuss a feminist critique of love, which identifies the heteronormative investments in love, as tied to the essentialist construction of women as reproductive beings. It is suggested in this form of critique that freeing women of such reproductive roles can change such patriarchal frameworks. We discuss the limits of this critique, moving towards a more complex analysis of heteronormative love, which problematises the universality of the category of women by showing its entanglements with caste, ethnicity, religion, and other social forms.

**Readings:**


Arvind Narayan and Gautam Bhan (eds.) *Because I Have a Voice: Queer Politics in India* (Yoda, 2006) (select essays)
SEMESTER : 3

MECHANICS OF THE MIND

What is cognitive science?

Cognitive science as a discipline is not much old and developed only three decades back as a distinctly defined discipline. It developed as a result of common research objective which was to find out the representational capacities of mind and discover its computational abilities and then see how it is represented structurally and functionally in the brain.

It is a cross disciplinary science and aim of the course is to see that contributions sociology can make in this discipline. It seeks to bring together different disciplines like anthropology, semiotics, sociology, etc. Mead initiated the approach of Socio-psychological analysis and Goffman’s interactionism led to the view that individuals are tied to society. It has helped us to view society from Goffman’s dramaturgical perspective. The total paper which is Mechanism of mind intends to focus upon this particular perspective of Goffman and equip the students to find out how human cognition operates at different levels. His frame analysis will let the students know that the presence of basic cognitive structures would help them develop their perception of the reality by building frames which does not depend on conscious efforts, in fact are depended on situations and circumstances. This frame analysis is nothing but the study of organization of cognitive structures which are built around the social experiences.

**Theorizing The Mind:**

In this section we try to engage the students with the ideas of Hegel and Freud, the concepts of Geist, pre conscious, unconscious and conscious. The focal points of mind and consciousness according to the thinkers are discussed.

Hegel

S.Freud

**Linguistic Structure:**

An introduction to linguistic structuralism through Ferdinand de Saussure: In this section the course analyses how the ‘mind’ and its ‘mechanics’ were addressed in the field of linguistics during the 20th century. This critical juncture of structuralism would usher new debates and argue that language constructs all of the social and mental world of humans.

Select Reading:


**The linguistic turn:**

In this model, we discuss Ferdinand De Saussure’s ideas of language, to understand how the traditional opposition between representation and reality in conceptualizing ‘mind’ was critically transformed, and rejected by this work. Saussure, by explaining language as a system of negative differences, rejected the essentialist investments of older philosophical explanations of mind.

F. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (select chapters)

J. Culler, *Saussure* (select chapters)

IA: Mid Term Evaluation 20 marks

End Sem 30 Marks.
History of Science

This module aims at philosophising and historicising science. It talks of the science and non-science binaries, good science bad science debate, science and insularity. What does laboratory mean for social sciences?

T.Kuhn
K.Popper
P.Feyeraband

Science studies

In this module we discuss the tradition of critically analyzing science as a cluster of practices implicated, and constituted by cultural forms, social practices, and political strategies. The seeming value-neutrality and epistemological purity of the category of science is questioned through a discussion of seminal works using this perspective.


Bruno Latour and Steven Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The construction of scientific facts* (Sage, 1979) (select chapters)

Statistical Application and Social Sciences

This module deals with the application of statistics in social science. The reliability and validity as well as limitation of statistical use in Sociology. It also opens up the debate between qualitative data and quantitative data.

The mathematical laboratory: Numbers

The course on laboratory life intends to focus upon the methodological practices of social sciences. The module coined as Mathematical Number will equip the students with tools and technologies of survey research method so that they can try to use them in conducting their original research work. It will also help them know about the statistical tools and importance of numbers in social sciences. This course also aims to make the students learn about the various sampling methods- probability sampling and non-probability sampling. It also aims at enabling the students to know about data analysis, ethics of research and strengths and weaknesses of
various methods and about SPSS software. The main is to let the students design their own research projects through use of these concepts and develop their own research design.


Evaluation Mid sem exam 20 marks

End sem Exam 30 marks