

**Centre for Comparative Politics and Political Theory**

**School of International Studies**

**Course** MA (PISM)

**Course Title** Political Thought-I (IS 401N)

**Course Type** Core

**Course Teachers:** **Nivedita Menon and Mollica Dastider**

**Credits** 4 (Four)

**Contact Hours** 4 per week

**Course Objectives**

Indian universities generally make a distinction between Political Thought and Political Theory, in which the former syllabus is structured around individual thinkers, and the latter around concepts. These syllabi are also implicitly or explicitly about western thought/theory, while Indian Thought, if taught at all, is a separate course. Further, conventionally, western thought both at BA and MA level tends to end at Marx.

In this course on Political Thought, the primary concerns are

- a) To introduce students with or without a background in Political Science to key themes in contemporary critical thinking.
- b) to treat both ‘non-western’ and ‘western’ thought as resources in understanding contemporary intellectual and political fields.
- c) to equip students of International Relations in particular, to engage comparatively with the theoretical aspects of issues they would deal with in area studies.
- d) in the current intellectual climate of moves towards interdisciplinarity, to bring together diverse fields both within the discipline of Political Science - such as Political Thought, Political Theory, Indian Thought and Philosophy of the Social Sciences – as well as from outside the discipline, such as Cultural Studies, Anthropology and History.

The approach would be to cover a wider field rather than intensively focusing on a small area. Each topic is centred around a set of readings that are provided to the students in advance.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. This course above all would help students distinguish between political thought from theory; and help them know how ‘non-western’ and ‘western’ intellectual traditions have largely shaped political philosophies of the globe.
2. Students would learn how to read and interpret texts. Apart from lectures, students will engage with several of the readings through a guided reading in class.
3. In learning *why* the norms of western political Concepts/Theories differ in practices when applied in non western countries – students would be able to analyse contemporary politics through the knowledge-traditions of comparative political thought.
4. They would learn to apply theoretical frameworks to their other courses in International Relations.

### **Evaluation Methods: Two mid semester exams and One final examination (in class)**

#### **Course Content**

#### **Course Content and Readings**

The Course content (along with the readings) is given in Two Parts taught by Nivedita Menon and Mollica Dastider respectively

#### **Part I**

#### **THE WORD AND THE WORLD – SOME DEBATES**

**1. Debates around the question of “facts”, the relationship between “language and reality”, and the question of “interpretation”.**

E H Carr “The historian and his facts” from *What is History* (Penguin 2008)

Stuart Hall Sections from “The work of representation” (in *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Sage 1997)

Susan Sontag “In Plato’s cave” (From Susan Sontag *On Photography* Penguin 1977)

Timothy Mitchell “The work of Economics: How a discipline makes its world” *European Journal of Sociology*, Volume 46 Issue 02, August 2005

AK Ramanujan “Is there an Indian way of thinking? An informal essay” (*From India Through Hindu categories* ed McKim Marriott, Sage, 1990)

## **2. Materialism**

### ***a) Classical Indian traditions of materialism***

Ramkrishna Bhattacharya ‘Development of materialism in India: the pre-Carvakas and the Carvakas’, *Esercizi Filosofici*, 8, 2013.

### ***b) Marxist materialism***

Karl Marx ‘Theses on Feuerbach’

Laclau and Mouffe Sections from *Post Marxism without Apologies*

Mao Tse Tung “On Practice” from *Selected Works of Mao Tse Tung Volume 1*. Foreign Languages Press, Beijing 1977

## **3. On the objectivity of natural science**

Emily Martin “The Egg and the Sperm. How Science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles” *Signs. Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 16, No. 3, 1991

Judith Roof Sections from *The Poetics of DNA* University of Minnesota Press, 2007

Evelyn Shaw and Joan Darling Chapters from *Strategies of being Female. Animal Patterns, Human Choices* Harvester Press 1984

### **(iii) Conceptualizing the globe**

Martin Bernal Section from *Black Athena. The Afro-Asiatic roots of Classical Civilization* Volume1 Rutgers University Press, 1991

Antonio Gramsci One page from *Prison Notebooks* Lawrence and Wishart, 1971

Sankaran Krishna “Cartographic Anxiety: Mapping the Body Politic in India”, *Alternatives* 19, 1994

## MODERNITY

**3. The structural transformations brought about in temporal terms by “modernity” (16<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) and debates about culture, identity and the self-representation of modernity.**

Sudipta Kaviraj Sections from “An Outline of a Revisionist theory of Modernity” (*European Journal of Sociology* XLVI, 3, 2005)

Karl Marx *Capital Volume 1* Chapters 26-28 (Penguin Classics)

Anthony Arblaster Section from *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (Basil Blackwell 1984)

Immanuel Kant “What is Enlightenment” (Available on-line)

Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze “The colour of reason: the idea of ‘race’ in Kant’s anthropology” (*Postcolonial African Philosophy. A Reader* Basil Blackwell 1997)

James Scott 2 chapters from *Seeing like a State* (Yale University Press, 1998)

**4. Some responses to modernity in 20<sup>th</sup> century India – Gandhi, Ambedkar, Savarkar, Rokeya Sakhawat Hossein, Deen Dayal Upadhyay, Abul Kalam Azad.**

MK Gandhi Sections from *Hind Swaraj* (Available on-line)

BR Ambedkar “Gandhism” (Valerian Rodrigues ed. *Essential Writings of BR Ambedkar* OUP 2006)

VD Savarkar Sections from *Essentials of Hindutva* (Available on-line)

Ayesha Jalal “Striking a Just Balance: Maulana Azad as a theorist of transnational *jihad*” *Modern Intellectual History* 4, 1 (2007)

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossein *Sultana’s Dream* (Available on-line)

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Sections from *Integral Humanism* (1965)

*Additional readings*

Gopal Guru 'Hinduisation of Ambedkar in Maharashtra' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 26, No. 7 (Feb. 16, 1991)

Suresh Sharma 'Savarkar's Quest for a Modern Hindu Consolidation' *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol II no 2, 1996

Rajeswari Sunder Rajan 'Rokeya's Dream' (Unpublished Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain Memorial Lecture, CWS, JNU, 2013.)

V.M. Ravi Kumar 'Green Democracy: Relevance Of Ambedkar's Ideas For Indian Environmentalism' *Indian Journal of Dalit and Tribal Studies and Action* Vol.2 Issue 1, No.2, June 2014

John S. Moolakkattu 'Gandhi as a Human Ecologist' *Journal of Human Ecology*, 29(3): 151-158 (2010)

## **5. Postmodernity**

David Harvey Chapters from *The condition of postmodernity* (Blackwell 1990)

Lasse Thomassen "Introduction: Between Deconstruction and rational Reconstruction" from *The Derrida-Habermas Reader* (University of Chicago Press 2006)

## **6. Foucault on Power and Subjectivity**

Michel Foucault "Power, Right, Truth" (*Power/Knowledge* ed Colin Gordon, Harvester, 1980)

Michel Foucault "The Subject and Power" (Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow *Michel Foucault. Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* University of Chicago Press, 1983)

Dreyfus and Rabinow "From the repressive Hypothesis to Bio-power" (Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow *Michel Foucault. Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* University of Chicago Press, 1983)

## **INTERROGATING IDENTITY AS NORM**

### **7. Gender and sexuality – Problematizing the sexualized "body"**

Gloria Steinem "If men could menstruate" (Available on-line)

Oyeronke Oyewumi *The Invention of Women. Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, University of Minnesota Press, 1997, Chapter 1.

Judith Butler sections from *Bodies that matter* (Routledge 1993) and *Gender Trouble* (Routledge 1990)

Anne Fausto Sterling “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are not enough” (Michael S. Kimmel, Amy Aronson ed. *The Gendered Society Reader* OUP 2004)

Bronwyn Davies “Becoming Male or female” (*Frogs and Snails and Feminist tales*, Hampton Press, New Jersey, 2003)

Anita Ghai “Moving Towards a More inclusive Feminism: Rethinking Disability” (From Anita Ghai *Disembodied Form. Issues of Disabled Women* (Eastern Book Corporation 2003)

### **8. Caste – destabilizing the “unmarked” savarna identity**

“Denationalizing the Past - Nation in EV Ramasami’s political writings” (*Economic and Political Weekly* October 16, 1993)

Sukhdeo Thorat and Umakant “Introduction” to *Caste, Race and Discrimination. Discourses in the International Context*. (Rawat Publishers, 2010)

Ranganayakamma “Marx on Caste” (Written in the 1970s, available on-line) at [ranganayakamma.org](http://ranganayakamma.org))

Smita M. Patil “Revitalizing Dalit feminism”, *EPW*, May 4, 2013.

### **9. Race – Critical race theory, construction of race identity, construction of whiteness**

Frantz Fanon “The fact of Blackness” (From Linda Martin Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta ed *Identities* Blackwell 2003)

David Macey “Fanon, Phenomenology, Race” (From Philomena Essed and Goldberg ed. *Race Critical Theories* Blackwell 2002)

David Roediger “Whiteness and Ethnicity in the History of ‘white ethnics’ in the United States” (From Philomena Essed and Goldberg ed. *Race Critical Theories* Blackwell 2002)

## **Part II**

**Taught by Dr. Mollica Dastider**

### **I COMPARING POLITICAL THOUGHT**

The universality of western political theory as the model political philosophy for the rest of is a much contested domain today. Claims of universality made by modern western political philosophy are questioned by Non-Western cultures with instances of their own philosophical understanding of the theory and practice of governance. The need for Comparing Political Thoughts also arise from the political reality in non western societies where the actual political practices and functioning differ widely from the normative western political theory.

1. Anthony J. Parel and Ronald C. Keith (Edited), *Comparative Political Philosophy: Studies Under the Upas Tree*, Oxford, Lexington Books. 1992.
2. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Post Colonial Thought and Historical Difference*. New Jersey, Princeton Univ. Press, 2000. (pp 1- 26)
3. Kymlicka, Will, "Citizenship Theory" in *Contemporary Political Philosophy* (Second Edition) by Will Kymlicka, Clarendon, Oxford University Press, 2002.
4. Breckenridge, Carol et.al *Cosmopolitanisms*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2002 (pp 1-14)

### **II POLITICAL DIFFERENCE IN INDIAN THOUGHT**

#### **On Secularism**

1. Ashis Nandy, "The Anti-Secular Manifesto" *IIC Quarterly*, Volume 22 no.1 Spring, 1995, pp. 35-64
2. Rajeev Bhargava, "The Distinctiveness of Indian Secularism" in A.S. Rathore and S. Mohapatra (eds) *Indian Political Thought :A Reader*, Oxon: Routledge. 2010.

#### **On Self Governance**

1. Ronald Terchek, "Gandhian Autonomy in the Late Modern World" in Anthony Parel Ed. *Gandhi, Freedom and Self Rule*. Boston, Lexington Books, 2000. pp. 47-62.
2. M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj, Ahmedabad, Navjivan Publishing House. 1909*
3. Hansen, T.B. and Stepputat, F. "Sovereignty Revisited", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 35, 2006 :295–315
4. J.M. Kujur, "Tribal Self-Rule: A Case Study of a Tribal Village in Jharkhand" in *Social Action*, No. 15, 2002. pp 150-164.

## **B.R. Ambedkar on Ethical Politics**

1. Aishwary Kumar “Responding Justly” in Aishwary Kumar’s *Radical Equality: Ambedkar, Gandhi and Risk of Democracy* New Delhi, Navayana, 2019 (pp. 289-236)
2. B.R. Ambedkar *Buddha and His Dhamma*, Bombay, Siddharth, 1974.
3. Rajeev Kadambi, “Ambedkar’s Framing of the 'Political within Ethical Practice’”, *Studies in Politics* 4(2) October 2016

## **III MODERNITY AND MARGINALITY**

This section looks into the interventions and interruptions that marginal/ minority positions constantly make in western Modernity, or in the universalism of human reason. As the deep-industrialization model of Modernization gets questioned in the contemporary world of Climate crisis, there is an imperative need to engage with the ideas and resistances that shape up the alternative models of modernity.

Readings:

1. Gustavo Esteva, “Developmentalism”, in Wolfgang Sachs (Ed.) *The Development Dictionary*. London, Zed Books 1992 (pp. 6-26)
2. David Hardiman, “An Alternative Modernity” in David Hardiman’s book *Gandhi and His Times and Ours*, Ranikhet, Permanent Black. pp. 66-93.
3. Arjun Appadurai, “Fear of Small Numbers” in *Fear of Small Numbers*, Durham, Duke Univ. Press, 2006. pp. 49-84
4. Etienne Balibar “Ambiguous Universality” in *Politics and the Other Scene* London, Verso, 2002. pp. 146-176
5. Lester R. Brown *Eco-Economy: Building an Economy for the Earth*, Hyderabad, Orient Longman, 2002 (pp3-23)
6. G. N. Devy et al. *Knowing Differently: The Challenge of the Indigenous* Routledge. 2014

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