

GENERIC ELECTIVE I: FEMINISM: THEORY AND PRACTICE

Course Objective: The aim of the course is to explain contemporary debates on feminism and the history of feminist struggles. The course begins with a discussion on construction of gender and an understanding of complexity of patriarchy and goes on to analyze theoretical debates within feminism. Part II of the paper covers history of feminism in the west, socialist societies and in anti-colonial struggles. Part III focuses a gendered analysis of Indian society, economy and polity with a view to understanding the structures of gender inequalities. And the last section aims to understand the issues with which contemporary Indian women's movements are engaged with.

I. Approaches to understanding Patriarchy (22 Lectures)

- Feminist theorising of the sex/gender distinction. Biologism versus social constructivism
 - Understanding Patriarchy and Feminism
 - Liberal, Socialist, Marxist, Radical feminism, New Feminist Schools/Traditions

II. History of Feminism (22 Lectures)

- Origins of Feminism in the West: France, Britain and United States of America
- Feminism in the Socialist Countries: China, Cuba and erstwhile USSR
- Feminist issues and women's participation in anti-colonial and national liberation movements with special focus on India

III. The Indian Experience (16 Lectures)

- Traditional Historiography and Feminist critiques. Social Reforms Movement and position of women in India. History of Women's struggle in India
- Family in contemporary India - patrilineal and matrilineal practices. Gender Relations in the Family, Patterns of Consumption: Intra Household Divisions, entitlements and bargaining, Property Rights
- Understanding Woman's Work and Labour – Sexual Division of Labour, Productive and Reproductive labour, Visible - invisible work – Unpaid (reproductive and care), Underpaid and Paid work,- Methods of computing women's work , Female headed households

Essential Readings

I. Approaches to understanding Patriarchy

Geetha, V. (2002) *Gender*. Calcutta: Stree.

Geetha, V. (2007) *Patriarchy*. Calcutta: Stree.

Jagger, Alison. (1983) *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. U.K.: Harvester Press, pp. 25-350.

Supplementary Readings:

Ray, Suranjita. *Understanding Patriarchy*. Available at:

http://www.du.ac.in/fileadmin/DU/Academics/course_material/hrge_06.pdf

Lerner, Gerda. (1986) *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

II. History of Feminism

Rowbotham, Shiela. (1993) *Women in Movements*. New York and London: Routledge, Section I, pp. 27-74 and 178-218.

Jayawardene, Kumari. (1986) *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*. London: Zed Books, pp. 1-24, 71-108, and Conclusion.

Forbes, Geraldine (1998) *Women in Modern India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-150.

Supplementary Readings:

Eisentein, Zillah. (1979) *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 271-353.

Funk, Nanette & Mueller, Magda. (1993) *Gender, Politics and Post-Communism*. New York and London: Routledge, Introduction and Chapter 28.

Chaudhuri, Maiyatri. (2003) 'Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation State', in Rege, Sharmila. (ed.) *The Sociology of Gender: The Challenge of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*. New Delhi: Sage.

Banarjee, Sikata. (2007) 'Gender and Nationalism: The Masculinisation of Hinduism and Female Political Participation', in Ghadially, Rehana. (ed.) *Urban Women in Contemporary India: A Reader*. New Delhi: Sage.

III. Feminist Perspectives on Indian Politics

Roy, Kumkum. (1995) 'Where Women are Worshipped, There Gods Rejoice: The Mirage of the Ancestress of the Hindu Women', in Sarkar, Tanika & Butalia, Urvashi. (eds.) *Women and the Hindu Right*. Delhi: Kali for Women, pp. 10-28.

Chakravarti, Uma. (1988) 'Beyond the Altekarian Paradigm: Towards a New Understanding of Gender Relations in Early Indian History', *Social Scientist*, Volume 16, No. 8.

Banerjee, Nirmala. (1999) 'Analysing Women's work under Patriarchy' in Sangari, Kumkum & Chakravarty, Uma. (eds.) *From Myths to Markets: Essays on Gender*. Delhi: Manohar.

Additional Readings

Gandhi, Nandita & Shah, Nandita. (1991) *The Issues at Stake – Theory and Practice in Contemporary Women's Movement in India*. Delhi: Zubaan, pp. 7-72.

Shinde, Tarabai (1993) 'Stri-Purush Tulna', in Tharu, Susie & Lalita, K. (eds.) *Women Writing in India, 600 BC to the Present. Vol. I*. New York: Feminist Press.

Desai, Neera & Thakkar, Usha. (2001) *Women in Indian Society*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

