

## 7. Women, Power and Politics

**Course objective:** This course opens up the question of women's agency, taking it beyond 'women's empowerment' and focusing on women as radical social agents. It attempts to question the complicity of social structures and relations in gender inequality. This is extended to cover new forms of precarious work and labour under the new economy. Special attention will be paid to feminism as an approach and outlook. The course is divided into broad units, each of which is divided into three sub-units.

### **I. Groundings (6 weeks)**

#### 1. Patriarchy (2

weeks) a. Sex-Gender Debates b. Public and Private c. Power

#### 2. Feminism (2 weeks)

#### 3. Family, Community, State (2

weeks) a. Family b. Community c. State

### **II. Movements and Issues (6 weeks)**

#### 1. History of the Women's Movement in India (2 weeks)

#### 2. Violence against women (2 weeks)

#### 3. Work and Labour (2 weeks)

a. Visible and Invisible work  
b. Reproductive and care work  
c. Sex work

### Reading List

#### **I. Groundings**

##### **1. Patriarchy**

Essential Readings:

T. Shinde, (1993) 'Stree Purusha Tulna', in K. Lalitha and Susie Tharu (eds), *Women Writing in India*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, pp. 221-234

U. Chakravarti, (2001) 'Pitrasatta Par ek Note', in S. Arya, N. Menon & J. Lokneeta (eds.) *Naarivaadi Rajneeti: Sangharsh evam Muddey*, University of Delhi: Hindi Medium Implementation Board, pp.1-7

##### **a. Sex Gender Debates**

Essential Reading:

V Geetha, (2002) *Gender*, Kolkata, Stree, pp. 1-

20 **b. Public and Private**

Essential Reading:

M. Kosambi, (2007) *Crossing the Threshold*, New Delhi, Permanent Black, pp. 3-10; 40-46 **c. Power**

Essential Reading:

N. Menon, (2008) 'Power', in R. Bhargava and A. Acharya (eds), *Political Theory: An Introduction*, Delhi: Pearson, pp.148-157

## **2. Feminism**

Essential Readings:

B. Hooks, (2010) 'Feminism: A Movement to End Sexism', in C. Mc Cann and S. Kim (eds), *The Feminist Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, pp. 51-57

R. Delmar, (2005) 'What is Feminism?', in W. Kolmar & F. Bartkowski (eds) *Feminist Theory: A Reader*, pp. 27-37

## **3. Family, Community and**

### **State a. Family**

Essential Readings:

R. Palriwala, (2008) 'Economics and Patriliney: Consumption and Authority within the Household' in M. John. (ed) *Women's Studies in India*, New Delhi: Penguin, pp. 414-423

### **b. Community**

Essential Reading:

U. Chakravarti, (2003) *Gendering Caste through a Feminist Lens*, Kolkata, Stree, pp. 139-159. **c. State**

Essential Reading:

C. MacKinnon, 'The Liberal State' from *Towards a Feminist Theory of State*, Available at <http://fair-use.org/catharine-mackinnon/toward-a-feminist-theory-of-the-state/chapter-8>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

Additional Readings:

K. Millet, (1968) *Sexual Politics*, Available at <http://www.marxists.org/subject/women/authors/millett-kate/sexual-politics.htm>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

N. Menon (2008) 'Gender', in R. Bhargava and A. Acharya (eds), *Political Theory: An Introduction*, New Delhi: Pearson, pp. 224-233

R. Hussain, (1988) 'Sultana's Dream', in *Sultana's Dream and Selections from the Secluded Ones – translated by Roushan Jahan*, New York: The Feminist Press

S. Ray 'Understanding Patriarchy', Available at [http://www.du.ac.in/fileadmin/DU/Academics/course\\_material/hrge\\_06.pdf](http://www.du.ac.in/fileadmin/DU/Academics/course_material/hrge_06.pdf), Accessed: 19.04.2013.

S. de Beauvoir (1997) *Second Sex*, London: Vintage.

Saheli Women's Centre, (2007) *Talking Marriage, Caste and Community: Women's Voices from Within*, New Delhi: monograph

## **II. Movements and Issues**

### **1. History of Women's Movement in India**

Essential Readings:

I. Agnihotri and V. Mazumdar, (1997) 'Changing the Terms of Political Discourse: Women's Movement in India, 1970s-1990s', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30 (29), pp. 1869-1878.

R. Kapur, (2012) 'Hecklers to Power? The Waning of Liberal Rights and Challenges to Feminism in India', in A. Loomba *South Asian Feminisms*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 333-355

### **2. Violence against Women**

Essential Readings:

N. Menon, (2004) 'Sexual Violence: Escaping the Body', in *Recovering Subversion*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, pp. 106-165

### **3. Work and Labour**

#### **a. Visible and Invisible work**

Essential Reading:

P. Swaminathan, (2012) 'Introduction', in *Women and Work*, Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, pp.1-17

#### **b. Reproductive and care work**

Essential Reading:

J. Tronto, (1996) 'Care as a Political Concept', in N. Hirschmann and C. Stephano, *Revisioning the Political*, Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 139-156

#### **c. Sex work**

Essential Readings:

Darbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, Kolkata (2011) 'Why the so-called Immoral Traffic (Preventive) Act of India Should be Repealed', in P. Kotiswaran, *Sex Work*, New Delhi, Women Unlimited, pp. 259-262

N. Jameela, (2011) 'Autobiography of a Sex Worker', in P. Kotiswaran, *Sex Work*, New Delhi: Women Unlimited, pp. 225-241

Additional Readings:

C. Zetkin, 'Proletarian Woman', Available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/zetkin/1896/10/women.htm>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

F. Engels, *Family, Private Property and State*, Available at <http://readingfromtheleft.com/PDF/EngelsOrigin.pdf>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

J. Ghosh, (2009) *Never Done and Poorly Paid: Women's Work in Globalising India*, Delhi: Women Unlimited

*Justice Verma Committee Report*, Available at <http://nlrd.org/womens-rights-initiative/justice-verma-committee-report-download-full-report>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

N. Gandhi and N. Shah, (1992) *Issues at Stake – Theory and Practice in the Women’s Movement*, New Delhi: Kali for Women.

V. Bryson, (1992) *Feminist Political Theory*, London: Palgrave-MacMillan, pp. 175-180; 196-200

M. Mies, (1986) ‘Colonisation and Housewifisation’, in *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* London: Zed, pp. 74-111, Available at

<http://caringlabor.wordpress.com/2010/12/29/maria-mies-colonization-and-housewifization/>, Accessed: 19.04.2013.

R. Ghadially, (2007) *Urban Women in Contemporary India*, Delhi: Sage Publications.

S. Brownmiller, (1975) *Against our Wills*, New York: Ballantine.

Saheli Women’s Centre (2001) ‘Reproductive Health and Women’s Rights, Sex Selection and feminist response’ in S Arya, N. Menon, J. Lokneeta (eds), *Nariwadi Rajneeti*, Delhi, pp. 284-306

V. Bryson (2007) *Gender and the Politics of Time*, Bristol: Polity Press

Readings in Hindi:

D. Mehrotra, (2001) *Bhartiya Mahila Andolan: Kal, Aaj aur Kal*, Delhi: Books for Change

G. Joshi, (2004) *Bharat Mein Stree Asmaanta: Ek Vimarsh*, University of Delhi: Hindi Medium Implementation Board

N. Menon (2008) ‘Power’, in R. Bhargava and A. Acharya (eds) *Political Theory: An Introduction*, New Delhi: Pearson

N. Menon (2008) ‘Gender’, in R. Bhargava and A. Acharya (eds) *Political Theory: An Introduction*, New Delhi, Pearson

R. Upadhyay and S. Upadhyay (eds.) (2004) *Aaj ka Stree Andolan*, Delhi: Shabd Sandhan.

S. Arya, N. Menon and J. Lokneeta (eds.) (2001) *Naarivaadi Rajneeti: Sangharsh evam Muddey*, University of Delhi: Hindi Medium Implementation Board.