



## **ELECTIVE COURSE MANUAL**

**Name of the Elective Course: Political Theory**

**Name of the Responsible Faculty Instructor:**

**Prof. Dr. Peerzada Raouf**

**SPRING 2026  
(AY 2025-26)**

*“...to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, [and] criticise after dinner...”*

— Karl Marx, *German Ideology*

*“The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.”*

— Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*

*“The fundamental problem of political philosophy is still precisely the one that Spinoza saw so clearly (and that Wilhelm Reich rediscovered): Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?”*

*Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Anti- Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*

This document is prepared by the course instructor and contains basic information relevant to the execution of the course. It is the official record for all intents and purposes as far the elective course, Political Theory, is concerned.

This course manual can be used as a general guide to the subject. However, the instructor can modify, extend or supplement the course (without tampering its basic framework and objectives) for the effective and efficient delivery of the course. The instructor will provide students with reasons for such changes.

## Part I

Elective Course Title: **Political Theory**

Course Code:

Course Duration: **One Semester (14 Weeks)**

No. of Credit Units: **4 Credits**

Level: **UG or PG or Both (Both)**

Medium of Instruction: **English**

Pre-requisites (if applicable): **No**

Equivalent Courses: **N/A**

## Part II

**1. Acknowledgement of Course Ideators:** This course is being taught as the Political Theory Course for the first year BA (Hons). Law students as well as other BA degree students. I've only made cursory changes to the course.

## **A. Course Description**

This course aims to equip students with conceptual rigour and theoretical insights to navigate the complex political landscape of evolving ideologies, political positions, economic interests and revolutionary desires. Students will be introduced to the foundational ideas of liberty, equality, justice, power (among others) and debates in political theory. We will explore some fundamental political questions, including *who should hold power? what makes a society just? can freedom and equality coexist?* Through classical texts and radical critiques, students will examine competing visions of the good society, changing ways of being human, contested versions of togetherness, battles over legitimacy, freedom and rights, and power's hidden mechanisms. By the end, students will be able to decode how political language shapes reality, debate on questions that include whether "democracy" delivers on its promises, spot whose voices are missing from mainstream politics, develop critiques of ideologies and analyse policy frameworks. Through close reading of classical and contemporary texts we will dissect key debates and confront the enduring question: *what exactly is politics and what parts of our lives are the substance of governance?*

The course begins by interrogating the very nature of the political, exploring how power, governance, and societal organization are theorized across classical and critical traditions. It then shifts to examining the state and sovereignty, challenging static institutional views by analysing how state power is contested through ideological struggles and postcolonial critiques. Next, it probes the social contract tradition, questioning its assumptions about consent, freedom, and legitimacy through Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and their feminist and racial critiques. The focus then turns to power and authority, dismantling top-down models via Foucault and Gramsci to reveal how domination operates through discourse and everyday practices, followed by a critical exploration of democracy and its contradictions, from liberal representation to subaltern exclusions. After mid-terms, the course unpacks paradoxes of liberty, debating whether freedom for some necessitates unfreedom for others, and then confronts justice and equality through Rawlsian liberalism and its challengers—especially the anti-caste thinkers. The later modules trace capitalism's global mutations and neoliberal governance, feminist and queer critiques of universalism, and postcolonialism's enduring tensions around voice, violence, and decolonization.

## **B. Course Aims**

### **1. Understand Core Concepts and Debates**

Students will examine foundational political concepts—such as justice, power, and freedom—while engaging with key debates in political theory. Through close reading of theoretical texts, they will uncover the historical and ideological contexts that shape political thought.

### **2. Develop Critical Thinking and Questioning**

The course will cultivate the ability to ask fundamental questions about politics, authority, and critique, encouraging students to move beyond mere description. By evaluating arguments and identifying underlying patterns, students will sharpen their analytical skills and challenge dominant assumptions.

### **3. Connect Experience with Epistemology**

Students will explore how political theories both emerge from and shape lived experiences. This becomes especially important when political ideas and processes meet diverse context of gender, race, class, caste and sexualities. Thus students will investigate the relationship between knowledge systems (epistemologies) and political structures, considering how power influences what counts as valid knowledge.

### **4. Analyse the State and its Ideological Foundations**

The course will assess the theoretical and ideological justifications for the state, governance, and resistance, paying attention to critiques especially from feminist, decolonial, and queer perspectives. Students will trace the historical evolution of political critique and examine its relevance for contemporary struggles.

### 5. Teaching Methodology:

This methodology for undergraduate political theory elective centers on active learning and accessibility. It moves beyond lecture to foster a dialogic classroom where students engage with complex ideas through structured debates, contemporary case studies, and classic thought experiments. Core concepts are introduced alongside fundamental political problems, building a shared toolkit of terms. Preparatory work is done before class, freeing session time for deep analysis and application, ensuring abstract theory connects to students' lived experiences and current events.

The approach is designed to be inclusive and skills-based. The syllabus intentionally complements canonical thinkers with diverse voices, while assessments prioritize formative feedback and clear rubrics. Through low-stakes writing, varied participation modes, and creative projects, students practice constructing and defending arguments. The ultimate aim is not to promote a specific ideology, but to cultivate critical, theoretically-informed citizens who can thoughtfully engage with profound disagreements about power, democracy etc., and how we should live together.

### C. Course Intended Learning Outcome

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Weightage	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Tasks/ Activities
<b>1.1. Understand core concepts in Political Theory and their historical development.</b> <b>1.2. Engage with contemporary debates around power, identity and state.</b>	40%	<i>Lectures, Class discussion, Engaging with readings, Films, Documentaries</i>	<i>In-class exams, exercises, take-home assignments</i>
<b>2.1. Critically analyse conceptual texts and learn to identify the main arguments.</b> <b>2.2. Articulate their own position on key debates with evidence from theorists and historical cases.</b>	20%	<i>Lectures, Class discussion, Engaging with readings, Films, Documentaries</i>	<i>In-class exams, exercises, take-home assignments</i>
<b>3. Evaluate claims of "universal" political values by interrogating whose</b>	20%	<i>Lectures, Class discussion, Engaging</i>	<i>In-class exams, exercises, take-home assignments</i>

experiences they exclude and/or marginalize.		with readings, Films, Documentaries	
<p><b>4.1. Compare competing theories on foundational political questions—democracy, freedom, and authority—using real-world examples.</b></p> <p>4.2. Engage with contemporary debates around power, identity and state.</p>	20%	Lectures, Class discussion, Engaging with readings, Films, Documentaries	In-class exams, exercises, take-home assignments

#### D. Grading and Assessment of Student Achievements

To pass this course, students must obtain a minimum of 40% in the cumulative aspects of coursework, i.e., internal assessment (including moot, mid-term exam, internal assignment) and end term examination. **End of semester exam will carry 50 marks out of which students have to obtain a minimum of 15 marks to fulfil the requirement of passing the course.**

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
80 and above	O	8	<b>Outstanding</b> – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
75 – 79	A+	7.5	<b>Excellent</b> - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
70 – 74	A	7	<b>Very Good</b> - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
65 – 69	A-	6	<b>Good</b> - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
60 – 64	B+	5	<b>Fair</b> – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills

55 – 59	B	4	<b>Acceptable</b> - Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
50 – 54	B-	3	<b>Marginal</b> - Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
45 – 49	P1	2	<b>Pass 1</b> – Pass with basic understanding of the subject matter
40 – 44	P2	1	<b>Pass 2</b> – Pass with rudimentary understanding of the subject matter
Below 40	F	0	<b>Fail</b> - Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course
<b>Absent</b>	Ab	0	<b>Absent</b> - “Extenuating circumstances” preventing the student from taking the end- semester, or re-sit, examination as the case may be; the Vice Dean (Examinations) at their discretion assign the “Ab” grade. If an “Ab” grade is assigned, the student would appear for the end-semester, or re-sit examination, as the case may be, as and when the subsequent opportunity is provided by the University.

## 7. Criteria for Student Assessments

Assessment of the participants will be based on the following criteria:

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
Type of Assessment	30 Marks	Assignment 1: A response essay on one or more Readings/Cases/Events  1500 words   Due in 6 <sup>th</sup> week   30 marks
Type of Assessment	40 Marks	Assignment 2: Attempt one of the following options:  Option 1: A conceptual essay on a real, fictional or imaginary Carceral Space, or  Option 2: A creative project (sketch/painting/short story/photo-essay/poetry/any other genre) on Carceral Spaces at the edge of the imagination

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
		1800-3000 words   Due in 12 <sup>th</sup> week   40 marks
End Semester Examination (Compulsory)	30 Marks	There will be a compulsory end-semester examination/component for all participants of the course who have successfully met the requisite attendance as per the governing JGU policies.

### Part III

#### Course Policies and Academic Expectations

##### I. Academic Work and Assignments

**Critical Engagement:** All written and oral work must present well-reasoned arguments, grounded in theoretical frameworks, empirical evidence, and classroom discussions. Clarity, coherence and analytical depth are essential.

**Research and Sources:** Students are expected to utilize scholarly resources, including library archives, peer-reviewed journals, and credible online databases. Proper citation and engagement with academic sources are required.

##### II. Classroom Conduct

**Device Policy:** Mobile phones must be switched off, unless explicitly permitted for class activities. Unauthorized use- including calls, messaging, photography, gaming, internet browsing- is prohibited. Laptops must only be used with prior consent of the course instructor. Students are encouraged to use notebooks for taking notes.

##### **Preparation and Participation:**

1. Complete all assigned readings before class.
2. Take thorough notes during lectures and discussions.
3. Actively engage course materials by asking questions, contributing insights, and critically analysing texts.

**Participation Requirement:** A lively, respectful exchange of ideas is integral to this course. Consistent and thoughtful participation is expected.

##### III. Professionalism and Collaboration

Respectful dialogue and intellectual curiosity are fundamental to this course. Disagreements should be approached constructively, with openness to diverse perspectives.

Late submissions of assignments will be penalized unless prior approval is granted.

##### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Learning and knowledge production of any kind is a collaborative process. Collaboration demands an ethical responsibility to acknowledge who we have learnt from, what we have learned, and how reading and learning from others have helped us shape our own ideas. Even our own ideas demand an acknowledgement of the sources and processes through which those ideas have emerged. Thus, all ideas must be supported by citations. All ideas borrowed from articles, books, journals, magazines, case laws, statutes, photographs, films, paintings, etc., in print or online, must be credited with the original source. If the source or inspiration of your idea is a friend, a casual chat, something that you overheard, or heard being discussed at a conference or in class, even they must be duly credited. If you paraphrase or directly quote from a web source in the examination, presentation or essays, the source must be acknowledged. The university has a framework to deal with cases of plagiarism. All form of plagiarism will be taken seriously by the University and prescribed sanctions will be imposed on those who commit plagiarism.

All work submitted for assessment must be your own and all source material should be properly referenced. Inability to correctly cite sources will result in plagiarism, which will be penalized sternly.

### **What constitutes plagiarism?**

- *Definition* - The Cambridge English Dictionary defines plagiarism as passing off another person's ideas or expression of ideas as your own. It is a strict liability wrong, meaning that it entails punishment irrespective of the intention to copy.
- *Forms*- Plagiarism commonly takes the following forms:
  1. Verbatim reproduction of material without proper citation.
  2. Paraphrasing material from elsewhere by modifying a few words or phrases but keeping the overarching structure of arguments intact, without due acknowledgment of the source.
  3. Use of significant portions of your own work that has already been submitted elsewhere, without attribution to the previous publication/assignment. This “recycling” is called self-plagiarism.
  4. Lifting material from the work of another student, whether verbatim or by paraphrasing. This will be considered to be blatant cheating.
  5. Although it is permissible to quote parts of another work using proper citations, these quotations should not outweigh your own contribution to your paper. Substantially reproducing other works, despite acknowledgment, results in the paper no longer being your own work. You are encouraged to present ideas in your own words in the interest of abundant caution.

### **How can plagiarism be avoided?**

1. To avoid plagiarism, enclose quoted matter between quotation marks.
2. Quotations of more than 50 words should be typed in a separate paragraph and indented on both sides by 1 inch of the margin, without quotation marks.
3. Each quotation or paraphrased idea should be supported by a footnote with a reference, the footnote number being placed at the end of the quotation or idea.
4. A series of phrases quoted from several different sources, if not properly attributed to the source at the end of each such quotation in the patchwork, constitutes plagiarism just as much as an uncredited long quotation from a single source.

5. Similar to the previous point, if a sentence has a series of paraphrased ideas, a footnote has to be placed at the end of each idea. Failure to do so would constitute plagiarism.

### **Why does JGU take plagiarism seriously?**

JGU prides itself as a centre of independent critical thinking, where students are encouraged to develop a mind of their own. Apart from this, one cannot be permitted to unduly benefit from the work of another.

### **Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements**

JGU endeavors to make all its courses inclusive and accessible to students with different abilities. In accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016), the JGU Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, mental health conditions and intellectual/learning difficulties e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC) by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee>.

Students who need support may register before the deadline for registration ends, as communicated by the DSC via email each semester. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester, must re-register every semester prior to the deadline for re-registration as communicated by the DSC via email. Last minute registrations and support are discouraged and might not be possible as sufficient time is required to make the arrangements for support.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of the student and the nature of their disability and the same is requested from faculty members and staff as well. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent and disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability. With due respect for confidentiality, faculty and students are encouraged to have honest conversations about the needs of students with disabilities and to discuss how a course may be better tailored to cater to a student with disability.

All general queries are to be addressed to [disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in](mailto:disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in)

### **Safe Space Pledge**

This course may discuss a range of issues and events that might result in distress for some students. Discussions in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel disturbed due to either the content of the course or the conduct of the discussions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. This does not mean that you need to feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say. Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibitions and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students, but also with the instructor.

Note: The course instructor, as part of introducing the course manual, will discuss the scope of the Safe Space Pledge with the class.

## **Part IV**

## **Keywords of the Syllabus**

State, Sovereignty, Political, Power, Democracy, Capitalism, Neoliberalism, Postcolonialism, Feminism.

## **Course Design and Overview (Weekly Plan)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics</b>
1.	What is 'Political' in Political Theory?
2.	The State and Sovereignty
3.	The State and Sovereignty
4.	The State and Sovereignty
5.	Power and Authority
6.	Power and Authority
7.	The Social Contract
8.	Democracy (& its Discontents)
9.	Democracy (& its Discontents)
10.	Capitalism and Neoliberalism
11.	Capitalism and Neoliberalism
12.	Feminist Political Thought and Postcolonialism
13.	Feminist Political Thought and Postcolonialism
14.	<b>REVISION WEEK</b> NOTE: There shall be teaching classes scheduled during the fourteenth week subject to the JGU Academic Calendar circulated by the Office of the Registrar, JGU and any official declaration of non-working days by the JGU Registrar.

## Syllabus and Readings with Weekly Course Outline

### Week 1: What is 'Political' in Political Theory?

*This module introduces students to the idea of the political and the domain of politics. It explores the foundations of political theory, examining how it interrogates power, governance, and societal organization through normative ideals and empirical realities. Drawing on classical and critical traditions, students will learn core debates around freedom, justice, citizenship, and the state—revealing how political dynamics emerge from conflict, cooperation, and shifting power relations rather than static institutions.*

#### Essential Readings

Banerjee, Prathama. *Elementary Aspects of the Political: Histories from the Global South*. Duke University Press, 2020. p.1-23

Bhargava, Rajeev, ed. "What is Political Theory? In *Political Theory: An Introduction*. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2008. p. 3-15

#### Suggested Readings

Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Mouffe, Chantal. *On the Political*. London: Routledge, 2005.

Weber, Max. "Politics as a Vocation." in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford University Press, 1946.

Parekh, Bhikhu. "The Poverty of Indian Political Theory". *History of Indian Political Thought*, 13(3). p. 535-560.

Leftwich, Adrian (2004) "Thinking Politically: On the Politics of Politics", in *What is Politics: The Activity and Its Study*, New York: Wiley, p. 3-13 & 18-21

Wolin, Sheldon. "Political Theory as a Vocation". *The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 63, No. 4. (Dec, 1969) p.1062-1082

Rathore, Singh Aakash. *Indian Political Theory: Laying the Groundwork for Svaraj*. New Delhi: Routledge. 2017.

### Week 2, 3 and 4: The State and Sovereignty

*This module examines the state not as a fixed institution but as a site of struggle and negotiation, where power is contested through social relations, ideological hegemony, and competing claims of political and civil society. Drawing on critical and postcolonial perspectives, this module interrogates how sovereignty operates in practice through both coercion and accommodation in diverse political contexts.*

#### Essential Readings

Hall, Stuart. "The State in Question." In *The Idea of the Modern State*, edited by Gregor McLennan, David Held, and Stuart Hall, 1–28. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1984.

Chatterjee, Partha. "The State", in Neerja Gopal Jayal and Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Ed.) *Oxford Companion to Politics in India*. p. 3-14

### **Suggested Readings**

- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Locke, John. *Second Treatise on Government*. Hackett Publishing, 1980.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract*. Penguin Classics, 2004.
- Hegel, G.W.F. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Monthly Review Press. 1971.
- Chattopadhyay, Partha & Partha Chatterjee. "I Am the People." In *I Am the People: Reflections on Popular Sovereignty Today*, New York: Columbia University Press. 2020. 1-28.

### **Week 5 and 6: Power and Authority**

*This module challenges conventional notions of power and authority by exploring relational, decentralized, and productive frameworks, moving beyond top-down models to examine how power operates diffusely through everyday practices and institutions. Drawing on Foucault's power-knowledge nexus, the module interrogates how authority is enacted, contested, and reproduced in social, political, and cultural spheres.*

### **Essential Readings**

- Menon, Nivedita. "Power." In *Political Theory: An Introduction*, edited by Rajeev Bhargava and Ashok Acharya, Pearson. New Delhi. 2008. p.149-157
- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978. (Part 4, Chapter 2 "Method"). p. 92-97
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Monthly Review Press. 1971.

### **Suggested Readings**

- Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. International Publishers. 1971.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Vintage Books. 1995.
- Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. Harcourt Brace. 1970.

### **Week 7: The Social Contract**

*Why do we submit to governmental authority? What freedoms do we relinquish in exchange for order? And who determines the legitimacy of this arrangement? This module examines the social contract tradition through the foundational works of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, while interrogating its limitations through critical theoretical lenses. The module challenges students to rethink consent, power, and freedom beyond liberal assumptions.*

### **Essential Readings**

- Jha, Shefali. *Western Political Thought: From the Ancient Greeks to Modern Times*. Pearson. 2018. 110-116, 127-135, 148-155.
- Pateman, Carole. "Contracting in" in *The Sexual Contract*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1988. p.1-18

## Suggested Readings

Charles Mills. "The Political Contract is Racial, Moral and Epistemological" in *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press. 1997. p.9-40

C. B. Macpherson. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1962.

Alasdair MacIntyre. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. (3rd ed.). Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 2007.

## Week 8 and 9: Democracy (& its Discontents)

*This module explores democracy beyond its liberal definition, examining it in its most expansive and restrictive meanings: from radical participation to elite-controlled representation. We interrogate the forms that democratic ideas have taken in different political systems (from liberal to totalitarian ones) and historical contexts revealing how their ideological elasticity has been shaped by struggles over inclusion and exclusion. By analysing tensions between formal and substantive democracy, as well as the role of epistemic injustice in marginalizing subaltern voices, the course challenges students to rethink participation and representation through critical, non-Western, and emancipatory lenses. What remains of democracy when markets elect leaders and algorithms shape consent?*

## Essential Readings

Hansen, Russell. "Democracy". In Terence Ball, James Farr, Russell L. Hanson. *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*. Cambridge University Press. 1989. p. 68-86

Guru, Gopal. "Liberal Democracy in India and the Dalit Critique". *Social Research: An International Quarterly*. Vol.78, No.1. 2011. p. 99-122.

## Suggested Readings

Habermas, Jurgen. "Three Normative Models of Democracy". *Constellations*, Vol.1, No.1 (1994) p. 239-252

Schedler, Andreas. "Rethinking Democratic Subversion". In Aurel Croissant and Luca Tomini (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Autocratization*. London and New York: Routledge. P.19-30.

Laclau, Ernesto. *On Populist Reason*. Verso, 2005.

Phillips, Anne. "Dealing with Difference: A Politics of Ideas, or a Politics of Presence?". In Seyla Benhabib (Ed.) *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*. . p.132-152.

Brown, Wendy. *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. Zone Books, 2015.

Dewey, John. *The Public and its Problem: An Essay in Political Inquiry*, Ohio University. 2016.

Ambedkar, B.R. *Memorandum on the Rights of Depressed Classes Submitted to the Southborough Committee*. 1919.

Young, Iris Marion. "Residential Segregation and Regional Democracy." In *Inclusion and Democracy*, 196-235. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Arendt, Hannah. "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man." *Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1951. 267-302.

## **Week 10 & 11: Capitalism and Neoliberalism**

*This module traces the mechanics of global capitalist expansion and links it with local processes of labour, enclosure of commons and erasure of indigenous lifeworlds. Through Marxist, post-Marxist and critical frameworks, students will learn how capital mutates from colonial plantations to digital surveillance empires and connects with state and electoral politics. Moreover, they will learn how indigenous epistemologies from global south, challenge the universalizing claims of capitalist modernity by offering local alternatives to development, property and ecological relations. From 'the revolution will not be televised', to 'your resistance is already trending on twitter'.*

### **Essential Readings**

Wood, Ellen Meiksins (2011) "Capitalism", in Ben Fine and Alfredo Saad Filho (eds.) *The Elgar Companion to Marxist Economics*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. pp. 34-39.

Political Neoliberalism: Order and Rupture Christian Joppke Introduction and First Chapter (Excerpts)

Frankel, Francine R. "The Political Economy of Liberalization." In *India's Political Economy, 1947–2004: The Gradual Revolution*, 2nd ed., . New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005. p. 585-595.

### **Suggested Readings**

Marx, Karl. "Preface to the Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", in D. Wootton (Ed.) *Modern Political Thought*. p.862-864

Zuboff, S. "Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospects of an Information Civilization". *Journal of Information Technology*, 30(1), 2015. p. 75–89.

Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies of the South." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32

Marx, Karl.(1975) "Estranged Labour", In Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels eds. *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. Collected Works, Volume 3*. pp. 270-283.

## **Week 12 and 13: Feminist Political Thought and Postcolonialism**

*This module will navigate the fractured terrain of feminist and anti-colonial thought centering Dalit, black, Muslim, queer and trans critiques to interrogate the universalist claims of western feminism and colonial power. Students will explore how coloniality fractures and reassembles race, caste, gender and desire across the global south, while feminist and queer movements resist these logics through radical solidarities. The module braids feminist and anti-colonial theory with material struggles against extractive capitalism, caste and racial violence. It asks: whose pain counts as political? Can capitalism ever be feminist? Through critical engagement with postcolonial, queer and trans feminist thought, as well as theories emerging from social movements, students will learn about how marginalities are governed and liberation is imagined. Are feminism and decolonization simply metaphors or a material rupture in the order of things?*

### **Essential Readings**

Squires, Judith. "Politics Beyond Boundaries: A Feminist Perspective", in *What is Politics: The Activity and Its Study*, New York: Wiley, 2012. p. 119-134.

Mahmood, Saba. "The Subject of Freedom" in *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton University Press, 2005. p.10-22

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. "We should all be feminists".  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJXEEVh\\_1sQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJXEEVh_1sQ)

Loomba, Ania. "Colonialism/Postcolonialism." In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 3rd ed., London: Routledge, 2015. p. 1-10 & 43-51

### **Suggested Readings**

hooks, bell. "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression." *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, South End Press. 1984. p. 238-240.

Rege, Sharmila. "Dalit women talk differently: A critique of 'difference' and towards a Dalit feminist standpoint position." *Economic and Political Weekly* (1998): WS39-WS46.

Krishna, Sankaran. "Critiques of Postcolonial Theory." In *Globalization and Postcolonialism: hegemony and Resistance in the Twenty-First Century*. United Kingdom: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.2009. p.105-108

Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Vintage Books. 2011.

Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge. 2004.

Zetkin, Clara. "Only in Conjunction with the Proletarian Woman Will Socialism Be Victorious." In *Selected Writings*, International Publishers.

Dworkin, Andrea. *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. Perigee Books, 1981.

Said, Edward. "Introduction", In *Orientalism*. New York: Random House. 1978. p.1-4.

Homi Bhabha. "Dissemination: Time, Narrative and The Margins of the Modern Nation". In Homi Bhabha (ed.) *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge. 1990.

Fanon, Frantz. "On National Culture" In *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press. 1961. p.206-248

Gilroy, Paul. "Introduction" & "Race, Class and Agency" in *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation..* London: Routledge. 1987 [2002]. p.11-14, 15-40

Suleri, Sara. "Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and Postcolonial Condition". *Critical Inquiry*. 18(4) (Summer). 1992.

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### **Week 14: Revision Week**

#### **Supplementary material: Films, Documentaries and Videos**

The Edge of Democracy (2019). Petra Costa. Netflix.

The Shock Doctrine (2009). Naomi Klein. YouTube.

Saving Capitalism (2017). Robert Reich. Amazon Prime.

Once Upon a Time in Gaza (2025). Issaq Elias.

The Factory (2015). Rahul Roy (YouTube)

Judith Butler on Gender Theory (YouTube)

India Untouched (2007). Stalin K.

The World Before Her (2012). Nisha Pahuja.

Writing with Fire (2021). Sushmit Ghosh and Rintu Thomas.

Sugarcane (2024)

13<sup>th</sup> (2016). Ava DuVernay

Requiem for an American Dream (2015).

*“The less you eat, drink, buy books, go to the theatre or to balls, or to the pub, and the less you think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you will be able to save and the greater will become your treasure which neither moth nor rust will corrupt—your capital. The less you are, the less you express your life, the more you have, the greater is your alienated life and the greater is the saving of your alienated being.”*

— Karl Marx, *Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*