Ambedkar University Delhi

Course Outline

Winter Semester (January to May 2017)

School: School of Liberal Studies

Programme with title: Post-Graduation in Historical Studies

Semester to which offered: Winter Semester

Course Title: Comparative Studies in Labour Relations and Wellbeing

Credits: 4 Credits

Course Code (new): (SLS2HS204)

Course Code (old): MHE12

Type of Course:

Compulsory No

Elective yes

Course Coordinator and Team: Dr Dhiraj Kumar Nite

Email of course coordinator: dhiraj@aud.ac.in

Pre-requisites: None

Aim: It equips the student with the tools of analysis of everyday life, society and economy in terms of labour, land, capital and the wellbeing. It engages them in a discussion on the significance of comparative historical perspectives. It moves away from the approach in which the working people occupy a place of significance in the modern industrial world either because of their capacity to disturb the economic rhythm or because they epitomise the social problems of industrialisation. Opposed to the approach which regards the working people merely one of the factors of production and a site of development’s impact, the course discusses how the working people performed a constitutive role in the progression of civilisation. It delves into their experiences with a view towards grasping the nature of ‘real labour’ vis a vis ‘abstract labour’. With the same intent, it analyses the relations of work as well as other aspects of social relations in which the working people were enmeshed. These social relations provided the context in which transactions among workers, the employer/management and the rest of society
occurred. The course comments upon various approaches, such as behaviourist, structuralist, Marxian, postmodernist, and post-structuralist, as these are, applied to the study of workers and labour relations. The working people participated in a transaction of labour power in order to secure their wellbeing as also confronted its contested definitions. In contradistinction to the ahistorical approach of capability and entitlement to the question of wellbeing, the course dwells on the politics of wellbeing and freedom. Other issues of discussion include wage and efficiency, work-time, workplace risk and safety; children, family and gender in the world of work; leisure; alienation and religious beliefs; migration; and labour laws and the state.

It delves into the debates, and reveals to the student the strength, the limitation, and the gaps, as these are, found in the available literature. It encourages the participant to reflect upon both the historical literature and other secondary reference materials.

A brief description of modules/ Main modules:

Module 1: The categories of abstract labour, real labour, wellbeing and human life, forms of Labour/ work and Relations in Production (Work Relations)

Module 2, Of Alienation/Estrangement, and de-alienation

Module 3, Of Wages, Income, and Efficiency, Of Wage Funds, Relative Surplus-value, and reproduction relations

Module 4, Of Work Time,

Module 5, Of Work Hazards and Safety

Module 6, Of Family, Community, Gender and Children

Module 7, Of Wellbeing: its Contours and Foundations?

Module 8, Of Ideas, Religion, Theatre and Leisure

Module 9, Of Labour Migration and Recruitment, and Of the Expression of Social Forces

Module 10, Of Labour Laws and the State-power

References/Readings

1. Week One: Introductory discussion over the categories of abstract labour, real labour, wellbeing and human life:-
   Chakrabarty, Dipesh, 2001/07, *Provincialising Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference* (Chapters: Two Histories of Capital; Translating Life-worlds into Labour and History).

1. Week One: Forms of Labour/work and Relations in Production (Work Relations)
A Maritime work
B, Proto-capitalist regimes of work
C, Construction and Earth-workers
D. Artisan and HouseholdWorks


**E. Plantation work**


**F. Agrarian work**


Guha, Sumit, 1985, *Agrarian Economy of the Bombay Deccan*, CUP.

**G, Industrial work**


**H, Mining Labour**

**I, Overseas [Indentured] Labourers**

**Informal Sector Labour**

**2, Week Two: Of Wages, Income, and Efficiency: What are its constituent and determinant?**
Breman, Jan, Cooly Beast, 1989.

**Three: Of Wage Funds, Relative Surplus-value, and reproduction relations:**

**Four: Of Work Time: What are its basis and determinant?**

**Five: Of Work Hazards and Safety: What are its source and resolution?**


Harrison, B. *Not only the dangerous trades: women’s work and health in Britain 1880-1914* (London, 1996).


**Six: Of Family, Community, Gender and Children: What are its foundation and function?**


Seven: Of Family, Community, Gender and Children:


Kuntla Lahiri-Dutt and Martha Macintyre (eds), Women Miners in Developing Countries: Pit Women and others, 2006, England: Ashgate.


Eight: Alienation and De-alienation: Terms of debate


Mukherjee, RK. 1948. The Working Class in India, Bombay.


Moodie, Dunbar, Going For Gold, 1994

Moodie, 2010. ‘A Positive Class Compromise’

Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital


Nine: Wellbeing: its Contours and Foundations?
Ahmad, Entisham, et al., (ed.), Social Security in Developing Countries. New Delhi: OUP.

Ten: Of Ideas, Religion, Theatre and Leisure: What are its substance, form and function?
Joshi, C., 2006, Lost Worlds (chapter on community and religion)

Eleven: Of Labour Migration and Recruitment: its nature and form?


Twelve: Of the Expression of Social Forces: Its contours, foundation, and nature?


Breman, Jan 2010, Outcast Labour in Asia: Circulation and Informalisation of the Workforce at the Bottom of the Economy, New Delhi: OUP.

Prakash, Gyan, 1992, The World of Agrarian Labour in Colonial India, Delhi: OUP.

Robb, Peter. 2207. Peasants, Political Economy, and Law. New Delhi: OUP.

Myers, CA, 1958. Industrial Relations in India, Bombay.


### Tentative Assessment schedule with details of weightage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Date/period in which Assessment will take place</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Written Assignment (WA1)</td>
<td>31 January</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Presentation of WA1</td>
<td>1 -8 February</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Written Assignment (WAII)</td>
<td>28 February</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Presentation of WAII</td>
<td>1-8 March</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td>10%</td>
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