

Ambedkar University Delhi
Course Outline
Winter Semester (Jan-May 2019)

School:	School of Undergraduate Studies (SUS)			
Programme with title:	BA			
Semester to which offered:	IV semester			
Course Title:	Food and Society			
Credits:	4 Credits			
Course Code (new):	SUS1SC831			
Type of Course:	Compulsory:	No	Cohort	NA
	Elective: Yes		Cohort: BA Programme other than Sociology (H)	

Course Coordinator and Team: Dr Oinam Hemlata Devi (CC) and Ms. Lovitoli Jimo

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

Pre-requisites: None

AIM:

In this course we will understand the emergence of food studies and interest in food as a subject of study in anthropology at the cusp of food and economic anthropology. There will be an attempt to understand the emergence of food studies within the discipline of anthropology and how has food studies contributed to the making of the discipline. What innovative methods and theoretical frameworks do food writings in anthropology and sociology offer to understand socio-political processes that shape food and foodways, both globally and locally?

Objectives: Food plays a ubiquitous role in our everyday lives and the sociality around food reveals a complex relationship who produces and who consumes the food. The primary objective of this course would be to understand how societal norms, customs and manners play an important role in construction of food and foodways. In this context it would be significant to examine what is good to eat? How do caste, religion and gender relations shape the production of what is good to eat and what is not good to eat? How does food become 'symbols' of national and local identity?

Description of Modules:

Module 1: Introduction to food and foodways: In this section the students would be introduced to works to understand how eating and dietary patterns and studies on single food substances were seen as entry point of analysis. A structuralist and materialist readings of food and foodways would be helpful in understanding the semiotic and economies of food production and distribution networks. A special emphasis would be given to understand how food accounts for nutrition.

Module 2: Food biographies and sociality: In this section we will read two ethnographies which follow the making of a commodity and its power networks and an 'unfinished' commodity to

understand how sociality is shaped by production networks, synesthetic reason and microbiopolitics’.

Module 3: Social stratification, food production, and culinary practices: Students acquainted with readings of sociology of India have come across references of rules of commensality, proscription and prohibition. Food becomes an important marker of difference.

Field visit

Module 4: Foodways and globalisation: George Ritzer through his work on Mcdonaldisation builds upon Weber’s idea of rationalisation and shows how global foodways have transformed the foodscape. In this section we try and understand through food and foodways how local meets global and its impacts on food production.

Module 5: Mapping food waste: One of the increasing concerns around issues of food security is about food waste. How do we understand the waste we generate in production of food crops to commercial restaurants? Is there a way to map food waste?

Field visit

References:

1. Mintz, Sidney and Christine M. Du. Bois.2002. ‘The anthropology of food and eating’. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31:99-119.
2. Levi- Strauss, Claude. 2008. ‘The Culinary triangle’. In Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. *Food and culture. A Reader.* 36-43. London: Routledge.
3. Harris, Marvin. 1974. *Cows, Pigs, Wars & Witches. The Riddles of Culture.* New York: Random House. Pp3-35
4. Murcott, Anne. 1988. "Sociological and Social Anthropological Approaches to Food and Eating." *World Review of Nutrition and Dietetics* 55:1-40.
5. Mintz, Sidney. 1985. *Sweetness and power. The place of sugar in modern history.* New York: Penguin. (selected chapters)
6. Paxson, Heather. 2013. *The life of cheese. Crafting food and value in America.* Berkley: University of California Press (Selected chapters)
7. Appadurai, Arjun. ‘Gastro-politics in Hindu South Asia’, *American Ethnologist* 8 (3): 494-511.
8. Harris, Marvin. 1978. ‘India’s sacred cow’ *Human Nature*, Reprint in Darna L. Dufour, Alan H. Goodman and Gretel H. Pelto. *Nutritional Anthropology. Biocultural Perspectives on Food and Nutrition.* Second edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
9. Thorat, Sukhdeo and Joel Lee. 2005. ‘Caste discrimination and food security programmes’. *Economic and Political Weekly* 40(39):4198-4201.
10. Iverson, Vegard and P.S. Raghavendra.2006. ‘What the signboard hides: Food, Caste and employability in small South Indian eating places’, *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 40(3):311-341.
11. Krishnaraj, Maithreyi. 20015. “ Food Security: How and for Whom?” *Economic and Political Weekly* 40 (25): 2508-2512

12. Holtzman, Jon. 2002. "Politics and Gastropolitics: Gender and the Power of Food in Two African Pastoralist Societies" *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2) : 259-278
13. Marte, Lidia. 2007. 'Foodmaps: Tracing Boundaries of 'Home' Through Food Relations', *Food and Foodways*, 15: 3, 261 — 289
14. Cook, Ian and Michelle Harrisson. 2003. 'Cross over Food: Re-Materializing Postcolonial Geographies' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 28(3): 296-317
15. Bestor, Theodore C. 2001. 'Supply-side sushi: Commodity, market and the global city, *American Anthropologist* 103(1) :76-95.
16. <http://www.developmentnews.in/tackling-food-wastage-india/>; Accessed on 1 November 2016
17. <http://www.hindustantimes.com/editorials/food-wastage-is-just-not-food-wastage-it-is-wastage-of-all-that-goes-into-growing-food/story-weYb1NeVczuYi1yldoIS4O.html>; Accessed on 1 November 2016
18. Philips, Sarah Drue. 2002. 'Half-lives and healthy bodies: Discourses on "contaminated" food and healing in post- Chernobyl Ukraine'. *Food & Foodways*, 10:27–53.

Assessment structure

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| 1. Class Test | 30% |
| 2. Group presentation | 30% |
| 3. End semester Exam | 40% |