MA Semester I – New Course
Core Course: Histories of Modern Masculinities and Sexualities

This course will focus on diverse themes and concepts in the historical constructions of masculinities and sexualities in the modern world. The course will be thematic rather than chronological, and will examine broad debates and theoretical formulations around masculinities and sexualities. It will focus on some pioneering works, which have moulded the ways in which we examine these issues in broad historical contexts.

**Topics**

1. Sexual Identities and History: Reading Foundational Texts
2. Regulation of Sexualities since 1800
3. Understanding Masculinities: Crisis of Male Identities
4. Gender, Urban Cultures and Gay Male World
5. Colonialism, Empire and Sexuality: Sex, Love and Race
6. Forbidden Friendships: Female and Male Cultures in Modern Europe
7. Heterosexuality, Homosexuality and Bisexuality: Historical Meanings
8. Historical Debates on Prostitution and Pornography

**Readings**

MA Semester 1 – New Course
Core Course -- Religion and Ritual Practices in Ancient Societies: Select Themes and Perspectives

The course has an interdisciplinary perspective on studies on religion and the socio-cultural politico-context of religious beliefs and ritual practices in ancient societies of Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and parts of Asia and Europe. It will begin with tracing the context and the manner in which studies on religion have emerged and then explore the manner in which historians of early societies have worked with different types of archaeological, material, epigraphical and textual evidence to construct various perspectives on the beliefs and religious practices of ancient societies. Moving across a broad canvas from prehistoric practices in the Eastern Mediterranean and regions of West Asia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Classical Greece and Rome, the course will culminate with an exploration of the milieu in which sects within Judaism and early Christian communities existed in close geographical proximity- and yet with sharply defined contours.

1. Historiographical backdrop- Studies on society, religion and ritual practices.
2. Prehistoric Beliefs, Rites and Funerary Practices-specific case studies from Anatolia (Turkey) and Levant (Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and West Asia).
3. Myths, cults and religious practices in City states of early Mesopotamia.
4. Religious beliefs, conceptualizations relating to death and afterlife in Early Egyptian Society.
5. Religion, mythology, culture and society in Classical Greece.
6. Religious cults and ritual practices in Rome, strategies of inclusion and exclusion.
7. Judaism and the emergence of Christianity, early monasticism, the Christian community (upto 400 C.E.).

Select Book List

MA Semester 2 – New Course
Core Course -- Visual Cultures Beyond Borders: Premodern South and Southeast Asia

This course emphasizes the importance of moving beyond insular histories by investigating networks of interaction between South and Southeast Asia through the lens of its visual and material remains. It focuses on the motivations and modes of communication across the Indian Ocean, highlighting early cross-cultural relationships in intra-Asian contexts. Its importance rests on three methodological objectives—the use of visual sources in historical interpretation, moving from insular to connected histories of art, and moving away from Euro-centric legacies by examining the deep histories of intra-Asian contacts.

1. History and historiography of interactions between South and Southeast Asia.
3. Modes of contact: the migration of people, ideas and objects.
5. Connected histories of South and Southeast Asian art: Key issues.
6. Art & architecture of the mainland kingdoms: Champa & Angkor.

Select Readings

MA Semester 2 – New Course
Core Course -- Autobiography as History

This course explores autobiography, biography, memoir and life writing as a form of history. It focuses on modern autobiographies to delineate compelling intellectual narratives of the modern world through individual life stories that capture the intersections between individual and society, local and national, past and present, public and private. The course discusses how historians should approach autobiographies and other forms of life writings as a genre to write social histories, and the role of individual for larger social changes.

Topics

1. Interpreting Autobiographies and Life Narratives as History
2. Importance of Individual Perspectives
3. Political Biographies
4. Collective Biographies
5. Oral Histories, Representations and Life Narratives
6. Life Writing and Intimate Publics
7. Reading Women’s Autobiographies
8. Race and Life Narratives

Readings


MA Semester 3 – New Course
Elective/Open Elective Course

Gender and Social Categorization in Ancient Indian Traditions (from earliest times to 450 C.E.)

The course involves an exploration of diverse material from the subcontinent—texts, epigraphs and artefacts— to understand ancient Indian conceptualizations on varied social categories with special emphasis on gender and the relationships/hierarchies that existed between men and women (and within them). The course will begin with discussions of the representation of women in varied traditions and will move on to an exploration of production and reproduction activities, households, kinship and social linkages and unravel how notions of varna, jati and gender are linked to birth, marriage and work in early traditions.

2. Prehistoric and protohistoric societies: Debates relating to gender and archaeology.
3. Representations of women in normative traditions: Tracing multiple voices in varied texts.
4. Ritual inclusion and exclusion of women and other social categories.
5. Kinship, marriage and households.
6. Women, work and ‘agency’: The contributions of women towards production.
7. The female protagonist: ‘Deconstructing’ the portrayal of women - in myths, epics and literary works.

Select Bibliography

--------- 2018 (3rd reprint ) Every day Lives, Everyday Histories : Beyond the Kings and Brahmanas of 'Ancient India'. New Delhi: Tulika Books

Wright, Rita P. 1996. *Gender and Archaeology*, University of Pennsylvania Press.
The period of the early modern world (1600+), witnessed the rise of complex merchant networks and trade relations. The world of merchants was not subject to the idea of political frontiers but transcended geographical and imperial boundaries. The examination of the forms of commercial interconnections offers a means to relate local developments to global movements. Merchants were important actors in these processes of intense circulation and exchange of the economic, political, social, and even cultural life of early modern Asia. The extraordinary rise of powerful merchant communities inaugurated a series of sustained interactions that brought the societies around the world into interdependent relationships. They patronized cultural pluralism, the rise of regional societies and languages and literatures alongside the spread of cosmopolitanism also infusing a variety of developments in religious and sectarian traditions.

1. Imagining the Early Modern Merchants and Traders.
2. Communities and Networks: Banjaras, Baniyas, Bohras, Chettiar, Jain, Marwari and European Merchant Groups.
5. Merchant Communities and Literary Cultures – Language Literature and the Arts
6. Merchants, Urbanism and Urbanization.
8. Merchants and State.

Select Readings

Sanjay Subhramanyam, The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700 A Political and Economic History, 2nd

थॉमस ए. टिम्बर्ग, मारवाड़ी समाज व्यवसाय से उद्योग में, नई दिल्ली: राधाकृष्ण प्रकाशन, 1978.
The manufacture and trade in crafted goods and the men and women who were involved in this industry – artisans including metalworkers, tanners, shoemakers, dyer, spinners, dyers, weavers, embroidery-workers, blacksmiths and even carpenters etc.- lay at the social as well as the economic heart of society. A historical overview of craft traditions from the early modern to contemporary periods would be required in order to situate them in the cultures that produced them within a material culture of ingrained hierarchies. The associations between living practices and ritualistic forms, ceremonial occasions, customary beliefs and fashions, gendered work cultures becomes a part of the complex study of artisan culture. To illustrate and complicate the more general processes discussed in the course, we will also take up the history of a particular artisanal tradition as a case study -- its geographical distribution, internal organization, patterns of patronage, myths and legends associated with different influences on the artisan and so on.

1. The meaning of work and the artisanal economy.
2. Histories of crafts from Pre-colonial to Early-colonial India, regional perspectives.
3. Local Knowledge system, the artisanal workplace and production methods.
5. Networks of distribution, consumption and fashion.
6. Authority and resistance: artisans in the economy, polity and culture and social hierarchies of work.
7. Marginalization of Work and Forms of identities among Artisanal groups.
8. Artisans in the era of industrial capitalism.

Select Readings:

13. कमलादेवी चट्टोपाध्याय, भारतीय हस्तशिल्प, बॉम्बे: एलाइड पब्लिशर्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, 1963.
MA SEMESTER 4 – New Course
Elective/Open Elective Course
Caste and Life Narratives in Modern India

This course foregrounds “caste” and “life narratives” as reciprocally generative sites of serious study for a history of Modern India. The conjunction of a social phenomenon called “caste” with a genre of representation called “life narratives” deserves special historical attention. The course brings discussions of caste to the scholarly study of life narratives and, reciprocally, foregrounds a nuanced and critical awareness of life narratives in explorations of caste.

Topics

1. Autobiographical Forms, Testimonios and Caste Oppression
2. Dalit Writings in Marathi, Hindi and Tamil
3. Life Narratives of Gandhi and Ambedkar
4. Visual Representations, Caste and Life Narratives
5. Biopics and Caste: Periyar and Ambedkar
6. Caste, Gender, Sexuality and Life Narratives
7. Christianity, Islam, Caste and Life Writing
8. Individual Case Studies: Om Prakash Valmiki, Phoolan Devi and Viramma

Readings

