

UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

CNC-II/093/1/EC-1276/25/10 (ii)

Dated: 13.11.2025

NOTIFICATION

Sub: Amendment to Ordinance V

(ECR 24-14/ dated 12.07.2025)

Following addition be made to Annexure-II-A to the Ordinance V (2-A) of the Ordinances of the University;

**Add the following:**

The syllabus of Discipline Specific Elective (DSEs) paper titled "Agrarian Sociology" offered by the Department of Sociology in MA Sociology, under the Faculty of Social Science based on Post Graduate Curriculum Framework, is notified for the information of all concerned as per Annexure-1.

*Handwritten signature*  
14/11/25  
REGISTRAR

## MA SOCIOLOGY (PGCF-NEP)

## DSE-3: Agrarian Sociology

Course Title and Code	Credits	Credit Distribution for the Course			Eligibility Criteria	Pre-requisite of the course if any
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/Practice		
DSE-3: Agrarian Sociology	4	3	1	0	Bachelor's Degree in any course	None

**Course Objectives:****This course aims to:**

1. Introduce students to the agrarian world and acquaint them with key themes in agrarian sociology.
2. Examine the origins and histories of food cultures.
3. Show how food provides a lens to examine ecology, culture, identity, power, and global connections.
4. Examine the making of the agrarian landscape (fields, forests, rivers) through human habitation and by the imperatives of different states, and look at how law, custom, and moral economies map land.
5. Introduce students to debates on agrarian transitions, the impact of technology, agrarian crises, and food sovereignty.
6. Show how India's agricultural sector has developed indigenously and in relation to global developments.

**Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, students will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the evolution of agrarian societies in terms of cultural and political forces that shape agricultural practices and rural life.
- Critically analyze agrarian landscapes through the interrelations of law, custom, technology, and moral economies, with a focus on India's agrarian development within global contexts.
- Apply interdisciplinary perspectives to evaluate agrarian transitions and food sovereignty, assessing the links between ecology, identity, power, and globalization in shaping contemporary agrarian realities.

**Syllabus of the Course:****Unit I: Cultural and Political Economy Perspectives (12 Hours)**

This section introduces students to agrarian sociology through the medium of food. It will look at the origins and histories of food cultures; how food provides a lens to examine ecology, culture, identity, power and global connections. It will also look at questions of food security, sovereignty and inequality. It will examine how agriculture is culturally embedded.

- a. Through the Lens of Food: Trade, Culture, Power
- b. Food Security and Sovereignty
- c. Food and Inequality
- d. Cultural Understandings of the Landscape

### **Unit II: Classifying the 'Agrarian' and Diverse Agrarian Tenures (9 Hours)**

This section examines how the 'agrarian' encompasses fields, forests, rivers, human and non-human activities. This section also looks at how law, custom and moral economies map land. We will examine how the idea of property varies under different regimes, understand the historical evolution of different tenurial systems, and look at how land relates to familial and social relations.

- a. Land and Resource Uses: Fields, Commons, Forests, Water
- b. Diverse Inhabitants: Hunter-Gatherers, Pastoralists, Agriculturalists, Traders
- c. Land, Custom, Law, and Tenure
- d. Humans and Animals in Agriculture

### **Unit III: Agrarian Transitions, Commercialisation and Struggle (12 Hours)**

This section examines the transition debate in agriculture from feudalism to capitalism, the characteristics of peasant agriculture, the transformation in agrarian structure and the forms of peasant struggle and farmers movements.

- a. Relations and Transition Debates
- b. From Peasants to Farmers?
- c. Peasant and Farmer Movements

### **Unit IV: State, Markets, Technology, and Government Intervention (12 Hours)**

This section looks at recent developments in the agriculture sector, the role of technology including fertilisers and seeds, the organic turn, the agrarian crises and state intervention.

- a. Modernist Projects in Agriculture
- b. Agrarian Markets and Technology
- c. Land Dispossession, Agrarian Crises and steps taken by state to resolve them.

### **Examination Scheme:**

Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.

### **Tutorial Activities:**

Students will write an essay on their own food cultures and culinary practices, tracing the origins of the ingredients in the agrarian landscape. They will conduct a site visit to a nearby farm (maybe urban farm or rural area in a neighbouring state) and understand farming practices, land use, animal husbandry and other concerns. They will write a report on this.

Further tutorial activities for the course will be decided by the course teacher every year and may consist of discussions and reviews of books, articles, and movies; research activities and projects; presentations and discussions; poster making and exhibitions; problem-solving exercises, essays, and other writing tasks relevant to the course. Students will be evaluated on the basis of assigned tasks.

### **Unit-Wise Reading List:**

#### **Unit I: Cultural and Political Economy Perspectives**

Spengler, R. 2019. *Fruit from the Sands. The Silk Road Origins of the Food we Eat*, University of California Press. (Introduction & Conclusion).

Achaya, K.T. 1994. *Indian Food: A Historical Companion*. Oxford University Press. (Selections)

Pollan, M. 2001. *The Botany of Desire*. Random House. (Introduction and Chapter 4)

Mintz, S. 1996. *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*. Beacon Press. (Chapter 3)

Shostack, S. 2023 Food and Inequality. *Annual Review of Sociology* 49: 359–78.

Carlyle, Rachel, Matthew Kessler and Tara Garnett. 2021. *What is Food Sovereignty?* Table Explainer Series. (University of Oxford, SLU, Wageningen University).

Virgil. 1916. *Georgics. Aeneid: Books 1-6*. Translated by H.R. Fairclough. Harvard University Press. (Book I: Poem on Agriculture)

Majumdar, G.P and Banerji, S.C. (edited and translated from Sanskrit). 1960. *Krsi-Parasara*. Calcutta: Asiatic Society

#### **Unit II: Classifying the Agrarian and Diverse Agrarian Tenures**

Ellis, E.C. 2021. Land Use and Ecological Change: A 12,000-Year History. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 46: 1-43

Bhattacharya, N. 2019. *The Great Agrarian Conquest: The Colonial Reshaping of a Rural World*. Introduction and Chapter 2. SUNY Press.

Malik, B. 2003. The 'Problem' of Shifting Cultivation in the Garo Hills of North-East India, 1860–1970. *Conservation & Society* 1(2): 287-315.

- Mosse, D. 2006. Rule and Representation: Transformations in the Governance of the Water Commons in British South India. *Journal of Asian Studies* 65(1): 61-90.
- Kalof, L. and C. T. Whitley. 2021. Animals in Environmental Sociology. In Caniglia et al. (ed.) *Handbook of Environmental Sociology*. Springer.
- Thompson, E.P. 1993. Custom, Law and Common Right. In *Customs in Common*. New Press.
- Murray Li, T. 2014. *Land's End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*. Durham: Duke University Press. (Chapter 3: Enclosures).
- Peter Sutton. 2003. *Native Title in Australia: An Ethnographic Perspective*. Cambridge University Press.
- Verdery, K. 1996. The Elasticity of Land: Problems of Property Restitution in Transylvania. In K. Verdery. *What was Socialism and what comes next?* pp. 133-167. Princeton University Press.
- Neale, W. 2021. Land is to Rule. In R.E. Frykenberg (ed.). *Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed), pp. 3-16, Primus Books.
- Agarwal, B. 2003. Gender and Land Rights Revisited. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 3(1& 2): 184-224.
- Munster, D. 2017 Zero Budget Natural Farming and Bovine Entanglements in South India. *RCC Perspectives, No. 1, Troubling Species: Care and Belonging in a Relational World* (2017), pp. 25-32

### **Unit III: Agrarian Transitions, Commercialisation and Resistance**

- Bernstein, H. and T. Byres 2001. From Peasant Studies to Agrarian Change. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 1(1): 1-56. Shattuck, A. et.al. 2023. Life on the land: new lives for agrarian questions. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 50(2): 490-518.
- Breman, J. 2019. The Political Economy of Boundless Dispossession (Part III) in *Capitalism, Inequality and Labour in India*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chakravarti, A. 2001. *Social Power and Everyday Class Relations*. Sage Publications (Introduction, chapter 6, 7).
- Beckert, S. 2014. *Empire of Cotton*. Alfred Knopf. (Selected Chapters)
- Jodha, N.S et al. 2012. The Commons, Communities and Climate Change. *Economic and Political Weekly*, March 31, 2012: 49-56
- Desai, A.R. 1979. *Agrarian Struggles in India*. Oxford University Press. (Chapter 8).
- Wolf, E. 1999. *Peasant Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. University of Oklahoma Press (Chapter 4).

Singh, S. & S. Siddiqui (eds.) 2024. *A People's History of the Farmers Movements, 2020-21*. Routledge. (Selected Chapters).

#### **Unit IV: State, Markets, Technology, Crises, and Resistance**

Scott, J. C. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. Yale University Press. (Part 3, pp 183-306)

Patel, R. 2013. The Long Green Revolution, *Journal of Peasant Studies* 40(1): 1-63.

White, Ben et.al. 2012. The New Enclosures: Critical Perspectives on Corporate Land Deals. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(3-4): 619-647.

Hall, Ruth et. al. 2015. Resistance, Acquiescence or Incorporation? An Introduction to Land Grabbing and Political Reactions 'from below'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4): 467-488.

Siegel, B. 2018. *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine and the Making of Modern India*. Cambridge University Press. (Introduction, conclusion, chapters 5 & 6)

Lidia Cabral & Kojo S. Amanor (2022) Tractors, states, markets and agrarian change in Africa, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 49:1, 129-136 (Forum special issue, see also article by Amanor and Iddrisu on Ghana)

Stone, G. D. 2021. *The Agricultural Dilemma*. Routledge.

Guthman, J. 2004. *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California*. University of California Press. (Introduction)

Krishnamurthy, M. 2022. States of Wheat: The Changing Dynamics of Public Procurement in Madhya Pradesh. In S.S. Jodhka, ed. *Agrarian Change in India*. Orient BlackSwan.

Vasavi, A.R. 2009. Suicides and the Making of India's Agrarian Distress. *South African Journal of Sociology* 40(1): 94-108.

#### **Suggested Readings:**

Adve, N. 2022. *Global Warming in India: Science, Impacts and Politics*. Eklavya Books.

Amrith, S. 2024 *The Burning Earth: An Environmental History of the last 500 years*. Allen Lane.

Mohanty, B. B. 2016. Agrarian Transition: From Classic to Current Debates. B.B.Mohanty (ed.) *Critical Perspectives on Agrarian Transition: India in the Global Debate*, pp. 1-40. Routledge.

- Reich, D. 2018. *Who We Are and How We Got Here: Ancient DNA and the New Science of the Human Past*. Pantheon Books.
- Scoones, I. 2021. Pastoralists and Peasants: Perspectives on Agrarian Change. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 48(1): 1-47.
- Gliessman, S. R. 2015. *Agro-Ecology: The Ecology of Sustainable Food Systems*. CRC Press.
- Vitebsky, P. 2011 *The Reindeer People: Living with Animals and Spirits in Siberia*. Harper Perennial.
- Wallace, R. G. 2016. *Big Farms Make Big Flu: Dispatches on Infectious Disease, Agribusiness, and the Nature of Science*. New York: Monthly Review Press
- Yugandhar, B.N. and G. Iyer. 1992 *Land Reforms in India*. Sage Publications.