

UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

CNC-II/093/1/Misc./2025/35

Dated: 23.01.2026

NOTIFICATION

Sub: Amendment to Ordinance V

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

Add the following:

The syllabus of following two Discipline Specific Electives to be offered in B.A.(H) History Semester VIII under the Faculty of Social Sciences based on Undergraduate Curriculum Framework, are notified for the information of all concerned as per **Annexure-1** :

- (i) Reading Social Relations through Texts and Visuals II
- (ii) History of Labour in Colonial and Postcolonial India

M. K. Chak
23/1/26

REGISTRAR

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE (DSE): Reading Social Relations through Texts and Visuals II

Credit distribution, Eligibility and Pre-requisites of the Course

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
Reading Social Relations through Texts and Visuals II	4	3	0	1		

Learning Objectives

- To explore the interplay between texts and visual arts in shaping social history and cultural memory.
- Students will critically examine autobiographies, historical chronicles, and calligraphy to understand how narratives of power, identity, and resistance are constructed. Simultaneously, they will analyze paintings, architecture, theatre, early cinema, and music as visual mediums that document and challenge historical discourse.
- The course examines the intersections of social hierarchies, cultural identities, and political structures, encouraging students to critically engage with dominant narratives.
- Through experiential research and site documentation, students will develop methodological tools for critical analysis, enhancing their ability to interpret and reframe historical and cultural representations.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students will be able to:

Critically Analyze Textual and Visual Narratives

- Understand the social, cultural, and historical significance of texts and visual arts.

Engage in Interdisciplinary Approaches to History and Culture

- Explore the role of calligraphy, autobiography, and historical texts in shaping perspectives on power and identity.
- Examine theatre, cinema, and music as tools for capturing and expressing social change.

Evaluate the Representation of Social Relations in Different Mediums

- Study how paintings, architecture, and performing arts depict and influence societal structures.

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Evaluate the Representation of Social Relations in Different Mediums

- Study how paintings, architecture, and performing arts depict and influence societal structures. This course explores the intersections of historical structures, cultural frameworks, and political authority, encouraging students to critically analyze dominant narratives.

Apply Research Skills Through Experiential Learning

- Conduct field-based research and document findings in an academic report.
- Develop methodological skills to assess historical and cultural sites critically.

These objectives and outcomes ensure that students develop a multidisciplinary understanding of historical and cultural narratives while strengthening their analytical and research capabilities.

Unit I: Concepts in Text and Visual Arts

Exploring Social Narratives in Textual Sources

Capturing Social History Through Visual Expression

Unit II: Voices and Scripts of History: An Analytical Exploration of Two Chosen Texts

Biography: Harshacharita by Banabhatta

Gulbadan Begum, *Ahval-i Humayun Badshah*

Autobiography: *Amar Jiban* by Rassundari Devi

Classic Hindi Novel: *Sunita* by Jainendra Kumar

Calligraphy: In Early Modern India

Unit III: Visual Narratives: A Critical Examination of Two Artistic Works

Paintings: Rajput /Pahari

Architecture: Taj Mahal/ Red Fort /Jantar Mantar/Chittor Fort

Theatre: *Binodini Dasi* (1863-1941)

Early Cinema: Fearless Nadia

Unit IV: Practical Component:

This component involves a field-based analytical **study**, requiring students to engage directly with a designated heritage or cultural site. Students must produce a critically reflective report that documents their observations, interpretations, and contextual insights. All submissions must be substantiated with geo-tagged photographs to verify on-site engagement and experiential learning.

The student may choose to study and write a report on any of the centrally protected

monuments listed by the government of India given in the link below.

https://www.nma.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=965&lid=1276&nma_type=0

Readings for Unit I:

Text-Based Reading Material:

- Ramaswamy, Vijaya. (2008). 'Introduction', in Vijaya Ramaswamy and Yogesh Sharma (eds), *Biography as History: Indian Perspectives*, New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, pp. 1- 15.
- Busch, Allison. "Portrait of a Raja in a Badshah's World: Amrit Rai's Biography of Man Singh (1585)." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 55, no. 2/3 (2012): 287–328.
- D. Fairchild Ruggles, ed., *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2000, Introduction, pp.1-15.
- Anshu Malhotra & Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, eds., *Speaking of the Self: Gender, Performance and Autobiography in South Asia*, New Delhi: Zubaan, 2017, Introduction, pp. 1-30.
- Sarkar, Sumit, *Writing Social History*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997, Chapter 1, pp. 1-49.

Readings for Visual and Performative Arts:

- Blair, Sheila S., 'Islamic Art as a Source for the Study of Women in Premodern Societies', Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, *Beyond the Exotic; Women's Histories in Islamic Societies*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2005, pp. 336-46.
- Davis, Richard (ed) *Picturing the Nation: Iconographies of Modern India* Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007, Introduction: 1-31.
- Pinny, Christopher, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs Envisioning Asia*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Deshpande, Anirudh. *Class, Power and Consciousness in Indian Cinema and Television*. Delhi: Primus Books, 2009, Introduction and Chapter 1.

Readings for Unit II

- Thapar, Romila. 2013. "Historical Biographies: *The Harshacharita* and *The Ramacharita*" and "Biographies as Histories." In *The Past Before Us: Historical Traditions of Early North India*. New Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Lal, Ruby. *Vagabond Princess: The Great Adventures of Gulbadan*. New Delhi: Juggernaut, 2024.
- Dass, Bruj Ratan, trans. *Gulbadan Begum ka Humāyūnnāma*. Delhi: National Book Trust, 2020.
- Govind, Nikhil. "Jainendra Kumar and the Hindi Novelistic Tradition." In *Between*

Love and Freedom, 82–108. London: Routledge, 2014.

- Roxburgh, David J. “‘The Eye Is Favoured for Seeing the Writing’s Form’: On the Sensual and the Sensuous in Islamic Calligraphy.” *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 275–98.

Readings for Unit III

- Aitken, Molly. “Purdah and Portrayal: Rajput Women as Subjects, Patrons and Collectors.” *Artibus Asiae* 62, no. 2 (2002): 247–80.
- Binodini Dasi. *My Story and My Life as an Actress*. Delhi: Kali for Women, 1998.
- Calabria, Michael D. *The Language of the Taj Mahal*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2022.
- Goswamy, B. N. “A Complex Web: Approaches to Time in Rajput and Mughal Painting.” In *Indian Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, edited by Arindam Chakrabarti, 215–220. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Koch, Ebba. *The Complete Taj Mahal*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2012.
- Mukherji, Anisha Shekhar. *The Red Fort of Shahjahanabad: An Architectural History*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Pandey, Anshuman, trans. *Mera Naam Hai Gauhar Jaan*. New Delhi: Jnanpith Vani Prakashan, 2021.
- Sampat, Vikram. *Gauhar Jaan: The Life and Times of a Musician*. Delhi: Rupa, 2010.
- Sharma, Virendra Nath. *Sawai Jai Singh and His Astronomy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.
- Tillotson, Giles. *Taj Mahal*. Gurgaon: Penguin Random House, 2008.
- Wenner, Dorothee. *Fearless Nadia: The True Story of Bollywood’s Original Stunt Queen*. New Delhi: Penguin India, 2005.

Recommended Readings:

- Khanna, Meenakshi. *Madhyakālīn Bhārat kā Saṃskṛtik Itihās* [Hindi]. Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2012.
- Necipoğlu, Gülru. “Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Palaces.” *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 303–42.
- Roxburgh, David J. “‘The Eye Is Favoured for Seeing the Writing’s Form’: On the Sensual and the Sensuous in Islamic Calligraphy.” *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 275–98.
- Singh, Kavita. *Visibility, Veiling and Voyeurism: The Depiction of Women in Mughal Art*. YouTube video, 2020.
- Shinde, Tarabai. *A Comparison Between Women and Men: Tarabai Shinde and the Critique of Gender Relations in Colonial India*. Translated by Rosalind O’Hanlon. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, from time to time.

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE (DSE): History of Labour in Colonial and Postcolonial India

Credit distribution, Eligibility and Pre-requisites of the Course

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
History of Labour in Colonial and Postcolonial India	4	3	1	0		

Course Objectives:

- This course will trace major themes and issues of labour history from the colonial to the postcolonial period.
- It shall introduce students to important concepts through a broad historiographical survey of labour issues that have emerged.
- It familiarise the students about the major themes and debates in Indian labour history.

Learning outcomes: On completion of the course, students would be able to:

- Trace important historiographical issues informing labour history writing.
- Comprehend the historical as well as contemporary transformations unfolding within the world of labour.
- Examine how workers are positioned in different work settings.
- Trace how labour negotiates and contests different historically produced identities that also shape the work experiences.
- Evaluation of labour's contestation and resistance with respect to work regimes, living conditions and state policies.

Unit-1: Historiographical trends: This Unit familiarizes the students with key conceptual and historiographical contributions in the field of labour history. It introduces the students to broad trends in labour history writing. **(Teaching time: 6 hours)**

Ahuja, Ravi. 2020. "'Produce or Perish': The Crisis of the Late 1940s and the Place of Labour in Post-Colonial India." *Modern Asian Studies* 54, no. 5: 1041–1112.

Behal, Rana Partap, and Marcel van der Linden, eds. 2006. *Coolies, Capital, and Colonialism: Studies in Indian Labour History*. International Review of Social History, Supplement 14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, 7–20.

Breman, Jan. 1999. “The Study of Industrial Labour in Post-Colonial India—The Formal Sector: An Introductory Review.” *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33, no. 1–2: 1–41.

———. 2016. “A Short History of Informal Sector.” In *At Work in the Informal Economy of India: A Perspective from the Bottom Up*, 32–66. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Chandavarkar, Rajnarayan. 1997. “‘The Making of the Working Class’: E. P. Thompson and Indian History.” *History Workshop Journal* 43 (Spring): 177–196.

Gupta, Ranajit Das. 1996. “Indian Working Class and Some Recent Historiographical Issues.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 31, no. 8: L27–L31.

Gupta, Ranajit Das, and Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2019. *Some Aspects of Labour History of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century: Two Views*. Reprint. Social Science Across Disciplines. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Joshi, Chitra. 2008. “Histories of Indian Labour: Predicaments and Possibilities.” *History Compass* 6, no. 2: 439–454.

Joshi, Chitra, Prabhu Mohapatra, and Rana P. Behal. 2010. “India.” In *Histories of Labour: National and International Perspectives*, edited by Joan Allen, Alan Campbell, and John McIlroy, 60–87. Pontypool, Wales: Merlin Press.

Unit-2: Different Labour Regimes and Work Settings: This Unit provides an overview of how different forms of labour have existed under different work settings and systems of control. It will also familiarize the students as to how these labour regimes have changed over time. **(Teaching time: 15 hours)**

I. Labour in agriculture, plantations, domestic services and artisanal work:

- Behal, Rana P., and Prabhu P. Mohapatra. 1992. “‘Tea and Money versus Human Life’: The Rise and Fall of the Indenture System in the Assam Tea Plantations 1840–1908.” In *Plantations, Proletarians and Peasants in Colonial Asia*, edited by E. Valentine Daniel, Henry Bernstein, and Tom Brass, 142–172. London: Routledge.
- Breman, Jan. 2008. *Labour Bondage in West India from Past to Present*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Prakash, Gyan, ed. 1992. “Introduction.” In *The World of the Rural Labourer*, 1–35. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

- Rai, Santosh Kumar. 2021. "Introduction." In *Weaving Hierarchies: Handloom Weavers in Early Twentieth-Century United Provinces*, 1–25. Delhi: Primus Books.
- Roy, Tirthankar. 1999. "Introduction." In *Traditional Industry in the Economy of Colonial India*, 1–18. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sen, Samita, and Nilanjana Sengupta. 2018. "Introduction." In *Domestic Days: Women, Work, and Politics in Contemporary Kolkata*, 1–30. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

II. Labour in factories, workshops and urban informal employment:

- Bandyopadhyay, Ritajyoti. 2016. "Institutionalizing Informality: The Hawkers' Question in Post-Colonial Calcutta." *Modern Asian Studies* 50, no. 2 (March): 675–717.
- Breman, Jan. 1999. "The Study of Industrial Labour in Post-Colonial India—The Informal Sector: A Concluding Review." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 33, no. 1–2: 407–431.
- Chandavarkar, Rajnarayan. 2002. "Problems and Perspectives." In *The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India: Business Strategies and the Working Classes in Bombay, 1900–1940*, 1–28. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- John, M. 2018. "The 'Half-timer': Colonial Indian Regulation of Child Labourers." In *Law and Time*, edited by Siân Beynon-Jones and Emily Grabham, 162–178. Social Justice Book Series. London: Routledge.
- Masselos, J. C. 1982. "Jobs and Jobbery: The Sweeper in Bombay under the Raj." *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 19, no. 2: 101–139.

Unit-3: Labour and Social Identities: This Unit will familiarize the students with the interplay between key social identities and the class position of the labouring masses.
(Teaching time: 12 hours)

I. Caste and labour

- Gooptu, Nandini. 1993. "Caste, Deprivation and Politics: The Untouchables in U.P. Towns in the Early Twentieth Century." In *Dalits and the Meanings of Labour*, edited by Peter Robb, 277–298. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- John, M. 2016. "(De)skilling Caste: Exploring the Relationship between Caste, State Regulations and the Labour Market in Late Colonial India." In *The Vernacularization of Labour Politics*, edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Rana P. Behal, 267–293. New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- Sarkar, Tanika. 2013. "'Dirty Work, Filthy Caste': Calcutta Scavengers in the 1920s." In *Working Lives and Worker Militancy: The Politics of Labour in Colonial India*, edited by Ravi Ahuja, 47–77. New Delhi: Tulika Books.

II. Gender and labour

- Forbes, Geraldine. 1996. "Women's Work in Colonial India." Chapter 4 in *Women in Modern India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Kumar, Radha. 1983. "Family and Factory: Women in the Bombay Cotton Textile Industry, 1919–39." *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 20, no. 1: 81–110.
- Sen, Samita. 1996. "Unsettling the Household: Act VI (of 1901) and the Regulation of Women Migrants in Colonial Bengal." In *"Peripheral" Labour? Studies in the History of Partial Proletarianisation*, edited by Shahid Amin and Marcel van der Linden, 135–156. Supplement 4, *International Review of Social History* 41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ———. 2004. "Women, Work and Household in Industrialising Asia." In *Women Workers in Industrialising Asia: Costed, Not Valued*, edited by Amarjit Kaur, 17–40. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- ———. 2008. "Gender and Class: Women in Indian Industry, 1890–1990." *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 1: 75–116. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X06002333>.

III. Class, Community and Nation

- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi. 1988. "Swaraj and the Kamgar: The Indian National Congress and the Bombay Working Class, 1919–31." In *Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Independence Phase*, edited by Richard Sisson and Stanley Wolpert, 223–249. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 1989. *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal 1890–1940*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- "Labour and Capital." 1966. In *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi: Encyclopedia of Gandhi's Thoughts*, edited by R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.
- Navjot. 2016. "Labour Reforms in India: Lessons from B. R. Ambedkar's Labour Policy." *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 77, no. 3: 325–332.
- Thorat, Sukhadeo, and Aryama, eds. 2007. *Ambedkar in Retrospect: Essays on Economics, Politics, and Society*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications in association with Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.
- Vahed, Goolam. 2019. "'An Evil Thing': Gandhi and Indian Indentured Labour in South Africa, 1893–1914." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 42, no. 4: 654–674.
- Viswanath, Rupa. 2014. "Rethinking Caste and Class: 'Labour', the 'Depressed Classes', and the Politics of Distinctions, Madras 1918–1924." *International Review of Social History* 59, no. 1: 1–37.

Unit-4: Labour resistance and labour reform: This Unit will examine, and familiarize students with, labour resistance and labour reform in the context of work conditions, living conditions and state policy in colonial and post-colonial India. **(Teaching time: 9 hours)**

- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi. 2016. "Introduction." In *The Vernacularization of Labour Politics*, edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Rana P. Behal, 1–24. New Delhi: Tulika Books.
- Bhattacharya, Shahana. 2013. "Rotting Hides and Runaway Labour: Labour Control and Workers' Resistance in the Indian Leather Industry, c. 1860–1960." In *Working Lives and Worker Militancy: The Politics of Labour in Colonial India*, edited by Ravi Ahuja, 78–109. New Delhi: Tulika Books.

- Breman, Jan. 2016. “Resistance to Exclusion and Coping with Insecurity.” In *At Work in the Informal Economy of India: A Perspective from the Bottom Up*, 172–203. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Chandavarkar, Rajnarayan. 2004. “From Neighbourhood to Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Left in Bombay’s Girangaon in the Twentieth Century.” In *One Hundred Years, One Hundred Voices: The Mill Workers of Girangaon: An Oral History*, edited by Meena Menon and Neera Adarkar, 1–29. Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- De Neve, Geert. 2005. “Introduction.” In *The Everyday Politics of Labour: Working Lives in India’s Informal Economy*, 1–38. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Kooiman, Dick. 1981. “Labour Legislation and Working-Class Movement: Case of Bombay Labour Office, 1934–37.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 16, no. 44/46: 1807–1822.
- Mishra, Adwitiya, and Aasheerwad Dwivedi. 2024. “Labour Laws in India: History, Evolution and Critical Analysis.” *Labor History* 65, no. 5: 678–698.
- Sarkar, Aditya. 2018. *Trouble at the Mill: Factory Law and the Emergence of the Labour Question in Late Nineteenth-Century Bombay*. First edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Suggested readings:

- Agarwala, Rina. (2013). *Informal Labor, Formal Politics, and Dignified Discontent in India*. Cambridge University Press. [Chapters 2 & 3]
- Breman, Jan. (1996). *Footloose Labour: Working in India’s Informal Economy*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Dupré, J. and Regenia Gagnier. (1996). A Brief History of Work. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 30 (2), pp.553- 59
- Families,” *Studies in History*, Vol.18(2): 261-27.
- Mohapatra, Prabhu. (2005). “Regulated Informality Legal Constructions of Labour Relations in Colonial India 1814–1926.” In *Workers in the Informal Sector. Studies in Labour History 1800–2000*, edited by Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Jan Lucassen. New Delhi: Macmillan India.
- Ness, I. (2014). “Introduction: New Forms of Worker Organizations”; and Arup K. Sen, “Chapter-4: The Struggle for Independent Unions in India’s Industrial Belts: Domination, Resistance, and the Maruti Suzuki Auto Workers.” In *New Forms of Worker Organization: The Syndicalist and Autonomist Restoration of Class- Struggle Unionism*. PM Press, Oakland, CA.
- Oommen, T.K. (2010). “Indian Labour Movement: Colonial Era to the Global Age,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 26, 2009-January 1, 2010, Vol. 44 (52), pp. 81-89.
- Robb, Peter. (1993). *Dalits and Meanings of Labour*. Delhi: OUP. (Chapters 5, 7, 8 and 12).
- RoyChowdhury, Supriya (2015). “Bringing Class Back In: Informality in Bangalore,” *Socialist Register*
- Vol.51 (Transforming Classes). London: Merlin Press.
- Sinha, Nitin, Nitin Verma and Pankaj Jha. (2019). “Introduction.” *Servants’ Past: Late Eighteenth to Twentieth Century South Asia*. Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

- Joshi, Chitra (1999). “Hope and Despair: Textile Worker in Kanpur in 1937-38 and the 1990s.” In *Lost Worlds*. Delhi
- Joshi, Chitra. (2002). “Notes on the Breadwinner Debate: Gender and Household Strategies in Working-Class

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