

# South Asian University

## Department of Sociology

### MEDIA AND SOCIETY IN SOUTH ASIA

**Objectives of the course:** This course is designed to develop a meaningful and informed understanding of the complex ways in which media and society are related to each other. In addition to unfolding the complexity of the relationship, through a range of credible writings, the course also tries to familiarise the students with specificities of the same in the context of South Asia. Moreover, through a combination of meticulously assorted range of core and additional readings (majorly geared towards media in South Asia), the course will also facilitate the future academic trajectory of those interested in looking at media-society interface as part of their subsequent research inquiry.

#### UNIT I: Theorising Media

**This unit aims at introducing students to some of the core theoretical vantage points vis-à-vis understanding media-society interface. It is more of a foundational unit wherein ground work for subsequent units will be done.**

- 1.1 Marxist and Political Economy Perspective (Louis Althusser, Herbert Marcuse, and Chomsky & Herman)
- 1.2 Functionalist Theory of Media (Niklas Luhmann)
- 1.3 Mass Society Theory of Media (The Power Elite – C. Wright Mills)
- 1.4 Social Constructionist Perspective (Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, Stuart Hall)
- 1.5 Technological Determinism Approach (Marshall McLuhan, Raymond Williams)

#### Core readings:

- Althusser, Louis, [1968] 2006, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus” in *Lenin and Philosophy and other essays*, New Delhi: Aakar Books, pp. 85-126.
- Marcuse, Herbert, [1964] 2002, “The New Forms of Control” in *One-Dimensional Man*, London: Routledge, pp. 3-20.
- Herman, Edward S. and Noam Chomsky, [1988] 2002, “A Propaganda Model” in *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 1-37.
- Luhmann, Niklas, 2000, “The Function of the Mass Media” in *The Reality of the Mass Media*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 95-103.
- Mills, C. Wright, [1956] (2000), “The Mass Society” in *The Power Elite*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 298-325.
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann, [1966] (1991), “The Foundations of Knowledge in Everyday Life” in *The Social Construction of Reality*, London: Penguin Books, pp. 31-62.

- Hall, Stuart (1997) “The Work of Representation” in Stuart Hall (ed.) *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*, London: London, pp. 15-30.
- McLuhan, Marshall, [1964] (2001), “The Medium is the Message” in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, London: Routledge, pp. 7-23.
- Raymond Williams, 2003 “The Technology and the Society” in *Television: Technology and Cultural Forum*, London: Routledge, pp. 1-25.

### **Additional Readings:**

- Gurevitch, Michael, Tony Bennett, James Curran & Janet Woollacott (eds.) (1982): *Culture, Society and the Media*, London: Methuen.
- Bertolt Brecht, 1932, “Radio as an Apparatus of Communication”, available at [http://sodacity.net/system/files/Bertolt\\_Brecht\\_The\\_Radio\\_as\\_an\\_Apparatus\\_of\\_Communication.pdf](http://sodacity.net/system/files/Bertolt_Brecht_The_Radio_as_an_Apparatus_of_Communication.pdf)
- Dayan, D. and Katz, E. (1992) *Media Events*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Moores, Shaun (2000), *Media and Everyday Life in Modern Society*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Kellner, Douglas (2003), *Media Spectacle*, London: Routledge.

## **UNIT II: Nation, Nationalism and Media**

**This unit looks at how media, especially cinema, sustains a specific kind of narrative of the nation. Alongside informing the students of this narrative of nation and nationalism, to further inform the reading of the theme, it also looks at the portrayal of those at the margins of the nation and the myriad ways in which newsrooms become a prey to narrow and jingoistic nationalism.**

- 2.1 Media and the Nation: An Overview
- 2.2 Imagining the nation through cinema
- 2.3 Media and the portrayal of hyphenated nationalities
- 2.4 Everyday plebiscite in Newsrooms

### **Core Readings:**

- Schlesinger, Philip, 2000, “The sociological scope of ‘national cinema’” in Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie (eds.) *Cinema & Nation*, London: Routledge, pp. 17-28.
- Pintak, Lawrence, Brian J Bowe, and Syed Javed Nazir, 2016, “Mediatization in Pakistan: Perceptions of media influence on a fragile democracy”, *Journalism*, 19 (7): 934 – 958.
- Farmer, Victoria L. (1996), “Mass Media: Images, Mobilization, and Communalism”, in David Ludden (ed.) *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 98-118.

- Ahmad, Akbar S., 1992, “Bombay Films: The Cinema as Metaphor for Indian Society and Politics”, *Modern Asian Studies*, 26 (2): 289-320.
- Viswanath, Gita and Salma Malik, 2009, “Revisiting 1947 through Popular Cinema: A Comparative Study of India and Pakistan, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44 (36): 61-69.
- Uyangoda, Jayadeva (1989), “Cinema in Cultural and Political Debates in Sri Lanka, *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 37 (1): 37-43.
- Dyer, Richard (2006), “Stereotyping” in Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas Kellner (eds.) *Media and Cultural Studies KeyWorks* (revised edition), Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 353-362.
- Greenland, Natalie and Michael Wilmore (2017), “Media and minority ethnic political identity in Nepal” in Udupa, Sahana and Stephen D. McDowell (eds.) *Media as Politics in South Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 46-60.
- Qureshi, Irna (2010) “Destigmatising Star Texts – Honour and Shame among Muslim Women in Pakistani Cinema” in Shakuntala Banaji (ed.) *South Asian Media Cultures: Audiences, Representations, Contexts*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 181-198.
- Bose, Dwaipayan, 2011, “Journalism Caught in Narrow Nationalism: The India-Pakistan Media War”, Reuters Institute Fellowship Paper, University of Oxford, available at: [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-10/Journalism\\_Caught\\_in\\_Narrow\\_Nationalism\\_The\\_India-Pakistan\\_Media\\_War.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-10/Journalism_Caught_in_Narrow_Nationalism_The_India-Pakistan_Media_War.pdf)

#### **Additional Readings:**

- Anderson, Benedict, (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso Editions.
- Smith, Anthony, (2010), *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology and History*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Ludden, David (1996), “Introduction” in David Ludden (ed.) *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 1-26.
- Rajagopal, Arvind (2001), *Politics After Television: Religious Nationalism and the Reshaping of the Indian Public*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Higson, Andrew, 2000, “The limiting imagination of national cinema” in Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie (eds.) *Cinema & Nation*, London: Routledge, pp. 57-68.
- Deshpande, Anirudh, 2007, “Indian Cinema and the Bourgeois Nation State”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, (42) 50: 95-101, 103.
- Derne, Steve (1997), “Market Forces at Work: Religious Themes in Commercial Hindi Films”, in Lawrence A. Babb and Susan S. Wadley (eds.) (1997), *Media and the Transformation of Religion in South Asia*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited: Delhi, pp. 191-216.

- Hoek, Lotte (2010) “Urdu for Image: Understanding Bangladeshi Cinema through its Theatres” in Shakuntala Banaji (ed.) *South Asian Media Cultures: Audiences, Representations, Contexts*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 73-90.
- Silva, Neluka, “A Peace of Soap: Representations of Peace and Conflict in Popular Teledramas in Sri Lanka” in Shakuntala Banaji (ed.) *South Asian Media Cultures: Audiences, Representations, Contexts*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 163-180.

### **UNIT III: Gender and Media in South Asia**

**This unit looks at the aspect of gender with reference to media in South Asia strictly with respect to the politics of representation. The unit also looks at masculinity in South Asia through few readings and acclaimed cinematic endeavours in that direction.**

- 3.1 Gender in South Asia
- 3.2 The politics of representation of women in media
- 3.3 Toxic masculinity in South Asian Mediascape
- 3.4 Film analysis (Father, Son, and Holy War by Anand Patwardhan, Darmiyaan: In Between by Kalpana Lajmi)

#### **Compulsory Readings:**

- Chaudhuri, Maitrayee, 2014, “Gender, media and popular culture in a global India” in Leela Fernandes (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 145-159.
- Shehabuddin, Elora, 2014, “Gender and democratic politics in Bangladesh” in Leela Fernandes (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 70-83.
- Thiranagama, Sharika, 2014, “Female militancy: Reflections from Sri Lanka” in Leela Fernandes (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 115-128.
- Toor, Sadia, 2014, “The political economy of moral regulation in Pakistan: religion, gender and class in a postcolonial context” in Leela Fernandes (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*, London: Routledge, pp. 129-142.
- Mackie, Vera, 2012, “The ‘Afghan Girls’: Media representations and frames of war”, *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 26 (1): 115-131.
- Begum, Hasna 1986, “Mass media and women in Bangladesh”, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 9 (1): 15-23.
- Das, Mallika, 2007, “Men and Women in Indian Magazine Advertisements: A Preliminary Report” in Rehana Ghadijally (ed.) *Urban Women in Contemporary India: A Reader*, London: Sage, pp. 139-153.
- Osella, Caroline and Filippo Osella, 2006, “Introduction”, *Men and Masculinities in South India*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 1-28.

- Aslam, M. (2014). Islamism and Masculinity: Case Study of Pakistan. *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 39(3): 135-149.
- Ahmad-Ghosh, Huma, 2009, “Widows in India: Issues of Masculinity and Women's Sexuality”, *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 15 (1): 26-53.

### **Additional Readings**

- Plakoyiannaki, E., Mathioudaki, K., Dimitratos, P., & Zotos, Y. (2008), “Images of Women in Online Advertisements of Global Products: Does Sexism Exist?”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(1): 101-112.
- Kasana, M. 2014, “Feminisms and the Social Media Sphere”, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 42(3/4): 236-249.
- Marsden, M. (2007). All-Male Sonic Gatherings, Islamic Reform, and Masculinity in Northern Pakistan. *American Ethnologist*, 34(3), 473-490.
- Kevin J. Ayotte, & Mary E. Husain. (2005). Securing Afghan Women: Neocolonialism, Epistemic Violence, and the Rhetoric of the Veil. *NWSA Journal*, 17(3), 112-133.
- Chopra, Radhika, Caroline Osella, Filippo Osella, 2004, *South Asian Masculinities: Context of Change, Sites of Continuity*, New Delhi: Women Unlimited an associate of Kali for Women.
- Centre for Advocacy and Research, 2003, “Contemporary Woman in Television Fiction: Deconstructing Role of ‘Commerce’ and ‘Tradition’”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38 (17): 1684-1690.
- Berry, K. (2003). The symbolic use of afghan women in the war on terror. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 27(2), 137-160.

### **UNIT IV: Media Trends in South Asia**

**This unit looks at some of the trends in various South Asian countries through a set of interesting field-based write ups that look at questions around censorship, ownership, media production and alternative media platforms.**

- I** Alternative Media in India
- II** New Media in Pakistan
- III** Media Censorship in Sri Lanka
- IV** Media and Politics in Afghanistan
- V** TV Trends in Nepal
- VI** Media Ownership in Bangladesh and Maldives

### **Compulsory Readings:**

- Kumar, C. Suresh and R. Subramani, 2014, “Internet as an alternative media for Dalits in India: Prospects and challenges”, *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social*

*Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 19 (2), Available at <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol19-issue2/Version-5/R01925125129.pdf>

- Yusuf, H. (2015). New Media in Naya Pakistan: Technologies of Transformation or Control? In Fair C. & Watson S. (Eds.), *Pakistan's Enduring Challenges* (pp. 156-177). PHILADELPHIA: University of Pennsylvania Press. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13x1pcc.9>
- Tissainayagam, J. S. 2017, "Fear of Ethnic Reconciliation: The Reason for Post-War Media Censorship in Sri Lanka", *South Asian Review*, 33 (3): 257-274.
- Skuse, Andrew, 2002, "Radio, Politics and Trust in Afghanistan: A Social History of Broadcasting", *International Communication Gazette*, 64 (3): 267-279.
- Ostrowski, Ally, 2007, "The Framing of Religion: Nepal TV explored", *South Asian Popular Culture*, 4 (1): 3-18.
- Ahsan, Syed Badrul, 2016, "Impact of Media Ownership on Reporting: When Journalism is Prey to Predatory Instincts" in Priyanka Singh (ed.) *The Role of Media in Promoting Regional Understanding in South Asia*, New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and Pentagon Press, pp. 44-51.
- Waheed, Ibrahim, 2016, "Maldivian Media: Ownership, Orientation and Trends" in Priyanka Singh (ed.) *The Role of Media in Promoting Regional Understanding in South Asia*, New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and Pentagon Press, pp. 84-91.
- Khalid, Md. Saifuddin and Md. Saiful Alam Chowdhury, 2018, "Representation of intangible cultural heritage of Bangladesh through social media", *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 29 (2): 194-203.

#### **Additional Readings:**

- Ravikiran Shinde, "An Open Letter to Ravish Kumar", July 16, 2016, <https://countercurrents.org/2016/07/16/an-open-letter-to-ravish-kumar/>
- Bhandari, Kiran, Dipak Bhattarai and James Deane, 2016, "Accountability, nation and society: the role of media in remaking Nepal", BBC Media Action Policy Briefing #17, available at <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/policybriefing/role-of-media-in-remaking-nepal-report1.pdf>
- Wilmore, Michael, 2006, "Gatekeepers of cultural memory: Televising religious rituals in Tansen, Nepal", *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*, 71 (3): 317-342.
- Ahsan, Syed Badrul, 2018, "Bangladesh's Media: The Hurdles to Free Expression", *The Round Table*, 107 (2): 233-235.
- Payne, J. (2012). "Feminist Media as Alternative Media?: Theorising Feminist Media from the Perspective of Alternative Media Studies" in Zobl E. & Drüeke R. (Eds.), *Feminist Media: Participatory Spaces, Networks and Cultural Citizenship* (pp. 55-72). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1wxr2f.6>