

**Department of Sociology  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
South Asian University - New Delhi**

***Sociological Theories I***  
*(Compulsory Course for MA)*

**Total Credits: 4**

**Objectives of the course:**

This course aims to provide a critical introduction to the three key classical thinkers of sociology- Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. The course will begin with a historical introduction to the emergence of sociology as a discipline with the rise of modernity. The bulk of the course will consist of three modules which will require close readings of some seminal texts of the three thinkers. Their selected works will also be located in their historical context and their key epistemic categories will be engaged with.

**Unit 1**

This unit will be on the historical conditions and the epistemological revolution leading to the rise of Sociology as a discipline in general and sociological theories in particular. The aim will be to contextualize the emergence of sociology as a discipline in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An account will be provided of how sociological concepts have engaged critically with modernity. In particular, the focus will be on how sociology has historically dealt with the enduring repercussions of the two revolutions: the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution.

Nisbet, R.A.1967. The Sociological Tradition. Heinemann: London

Hall, Stuart et al. 1992. Formations of Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press

Hobsbawm, Eric. 2010. Age of Revolution 1789-1848. Hachette: London

Hobsbawm, Eric. 2010. Age Of Capital 1848-1875. Hachette: London

**Unit 2**

This unit will provide an introduction to some key ideas in the vast corpus of Karl Marx's writings. We will try to cover a broad variety of his writings in terms of style as well as themes, from the so-called 'Young Marx' to Capital Volume 1. The focus will be on central concepts like alienation, class, value, surplus value, division of labour, machinery and primitive accumulation.

Tucker, Robert C. 1978. The Marx-Engels Reader. WW Norton: New York

Karl Marx. 1977. Capital Volume One. Vintage Books. New York

### **Unit 3**

This unit will introduce some key concepts from Max Weber's works. The point of departure will be to understand Weber's work, both methodologically and substantively, as a critical response to the understanding of Marxism prevalent at the time. Some of Weber's key ideas on bureaucracy, rationalization, legitimate authority, charisma, disenchantment etc will be focused on.

Max Weber. 1992. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Routledge: London.

HH Gerth and C Wright Mills. 1946. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Oxford University Press: New York

Max Weber. 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

### **Unit 4**

This unit aims to provide an introduction to some of the principal texts written by Emile Durkheim. His methodological approach as well as key concepts like mechanical and organic solidarity, anomie and collective consciousness will be focused on.

Emile Durkheim. 1982. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. The Free Press: New

York Emile Durkheim. 1984. *The Division of Labour in Society*. Macmillan: London

Emile Durkheim. 2005. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Routledge: London

Emile Durkheim. 1995. *The Elementary forms of the Religious Life*. The Free Press: New York