

## **INDIA STUDIES PROGRAMME**

The "India Studies Programme" is a two week programme offered by St Xavier's College – Autonomous, on its campus, for international students. The tentative dates of the programme are from 15th June to 30th June and from 5th Jan to 16th Jan.

Accommodation is facilitated at hostels in South Mumbai.

For information and registration, please write to: [cip@xaviers.edu](mailto:cip@xaviers.edu)

The programme consists of the following modules as tentative schedule:

### **1) A CINEMATIC VIEW OF POPULAR CULTURE IN INDIA TODAY**

**Dr. Narendra Punjwani**

**Visiting Faculty,**

**Mass Media**

A nation's popular culture is a revealing window-cum-mirror in which you see the nation at play, so to speak. It isn't meant for visitors/outsideers, so you get to watch the people (and the society) with their guards off.

Being the arena par excellence of a nation's diversity of artistic expressions, pop culture often takes you right into the heart of things. If you are clued in as a visitor to the local idiom even partially, you will see what makes us dance and sing, as well as what Indians love, and hate.

This class will introduce you to India's Popular Culture in a very abbreviated fashion by combining a power-point presentation with excerpts from three landmark Bollywood films. A sociological interpretation of these film excerpts will be offered, interspersed with a discussion of the basic themes of the films.

Your questions about the local culture will be the highlight of this discussion of India's popular culture.

### **2) INDIA AND THE WORLD – A SHARED PAST**

**Dr. Fleur D'Souza**

**Assoc. Professor and Head,**

**Dept. of History**

The 21st century globalised world views history through the lens of "Our shared past" bringing together scholars who draw out just how many cultural, scientific, political, botanical and other aspects of our lives are common to the people of the world. Through the centuries, India has her

doors open, or opened to, political forces, ideas and institutions and a sharing of cultures that often sprang from trade links, spread of religious ideas and cultural exchanges. In this section we put the spotlight on India's links with those in the "neighborhood" Central Asia, West Asia, East Africa and South East Asia as also her ties with the west be it Roman trade or the colonial past. The influence of Gandhian non-violence on leaders and movements beyond her borders will bring the session to a close.

### **3) A CRITICAL REVIEW OF GLOBALIZING INDIA**

**Dr. Agnelo Menezes**  
**Associate Professor,**  
**Dept. of Economics**

With India entrenched in the globalization bandwagon, it has become an academic imperative to take stock of the pace and direction of the economy's trajectory. This calls for not only an examination of the sectoral contributions and changes but also for a discourse on the consequent fall-outs on India's demography, ecology and international economic stature. Against this backdrop, the session would grapple with:

1. India's tryst with globalization (from economic coercion to economic co-option).
2. India's changing employment scenario (from labor-absorbing to labor-saving. technologies)
3. India's poverty status (from direct-attack policies to trickle-down policies)
4. India's way forward (from economic liberalization to holistic liberation)

The interactive session's lecture input would concomitantly discuss, debate and deliberate on issues raised by contemporary Indian thinkers (= economists) like Amartya Sen, Jean Dreze, Prabhat and Utsa Patnaik... on one hand and Jagdish Bhagwati, Raghuram Rajan, Kaushik Basu, Montek Singh Ahluwalia ... on the other.

### **4) CULTURAL HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS IN INDIAN ART**

**Dr. Anita Rane-Kothare**  
**Assoc. Professor and Head,**  
**Dept. of Ancient Indian Culture**

- a) Introduction to Religious traditions symbolism and suggestion in Indian art
- b) Introduction to Iconography: - Hindu, Buddhist and Jain
- c) Cave and Temple Architecture
- d) Field Visit if possible to Elephanta/Kondivite/Kanheri Caves.

The ultimate end to life is Moksha or Salvation and Indian Art is one way of attaining it. Indian art is basically religious in nature and is expressed through universal and individual symbolism

and suggestion. Representation of various gods and their teachings are portrayed through various icons, and so also representations can be observed in Stupas and temples. The progression in the development can be seen because of cosmopolitan interactions between contemporary civilizations. Growth in symbolism and iconography and religious ideals also led to the advent of Tantricism and Eroticism in Indian art restraining it to a few cults. With the advent of Islam new concepts emerged in Indian art and architecture.

## **5) THE ESSENCE OF HOLISTIC PHILOSOPHY IN INDIAN CULTURE**

**Dr. Radha Kumar**

**Assoc. Professor**

**Dept. of Ancient Indian Culture**

The hall mark of our culture was to portray a certain attitude to life and its problems, a certain character and ways of responding to outside influences, a stability of aim and steadfastness of purpose. Literature and Art served as vehicles of culture to develop a critical faculty and a religious sense, in shaming the passions and refining them to emotions and strengthening the will so as to not to surrender meek to superficial temptations. This could happen only due to the deep aesthetic engagement of the human spirit. In Indian culture there has been a consistent endeavor to synthesize character and vision. Material wealth was undoubtedly given importance but it had to definitely take there a process of character. The social scientist knew very clearly that if there was no satisfaction in his inner life it would lead to complete disintegration of society at large. The constant endeavor of the seer scientists in Ancient India was to establish a practical base of integrating life to a foundation of integrated philosophy based on sensitivity and a universal acceptance. Indian philosophy is called the Darshana Shastra which implies direct perception of reality. There has been a very consistent engagement of the seekersto find out the root cause of existence and the basic essence of life. This resulted in a democracy of thought and acceptance of diverse points of view. Indian culture definitely presents a very kaleidoscopic view and the diversity is reflected in every aspect of life. Nevertheless, there is a link which is innate and common and this emanates due to the holistic approach bestowed by the all encompassing thought process. The reflection of this is seen in literature, art, architecture. The attempt is to blend in a sensitive way the actions that reflects a judicious confluence of 1) Mental stage2) Bodily stage 3) External stage of consequences. It integrates the process between the thoughts, speech and actions.

Through a study of the socio, political, economic and religious sources reflected through Archaeology, Literature and Performing arts I will construct the innate link between structures and societies.

## **6) PIONEERS & PATRONS: PARSIS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO BUILDING THE CITY OF BOMBAY**

**Meher Marfatia**

Explaining the Parsi community's socio-ethnic origins and its arrival in India: The Parsis, descended from Iranians of Zoroastrian faith, emigrated to India between the 8th and 10th centuries to escape religious persecution in their homeland. A description of their first docking on Gujarat shores in Sanjan. A retelling of the sugar in the milk story portraying how these early immigrants successfully integrated with the local population without losing their identity..

How and when the Parsis came to the neighboring port city of Bombay: The first Parsi to arrive in Bombay was Dorabji Nanbhoy Patel in 1640. An account of the community's easy association with the British rulers, following help from traders like Rustomji Dorabji Patel who warded off attacks on the seven Bombay islands from marauders like the Siuddi Chief of Janjira, with the support of the 'Kolis', the original fisher folk inhabitants of these islands. A segment on the later Irani legacy to Bombay after these hardworking people entered the city.

The Parsis' intimate connection with the history and subsequent flourishing growth of the city: Every step of Bombay's progress and development was largely fuelled by the Parsis -- from the cotton and mercantile boom to the shipbuilding and hotel industry and banking, from the newspaper revolution to the growth of theatre and the other performing and literary arts. Even the very physical contours shaping the city were drawn based on donations to construct causeways, roads and buildings by illustrious members of families like the Jeejeebhoy and Readymoneys. Philanthropists and statesmen were at the forefront of introducing the country's premier education and health institutions in Bombay as well.

(Examples and brief histories of each of the above contributory areas followed by an appreciation of the pivotal role eminent Bombay Parsi men and women played in the freedom struggle leading up to Independence. Plus instances of still standing Parsi-introduced welfare institutions that touch millions of lives till date.

## **7) DISSONANCE IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN LITERATURE AND CINEMA**

**Dr. Shefali Balsari-Shah**  
**Assoc. Professor and Head**  
**Dept. of English**

With the spread of globalization during the last twenty-five years, there has been a corresponding emergence of identity politics in several countries around the world. In India, the process of economic liberalization and the disparate rates of development in different parts of the country have been additional factors in the wide-spread questioning of traditional identities and social formations. Consequently there have been increasing factions, fractures and fissions in the national consciousness and many of these are reflected in literature and cinema as varying notes of dissonance.

In contemporary Indian writing, gender and class issues continue to be dominant themes. However, some of the most compelling voices today come from the far corners of the country like Kashmir and the Northeast rather than the urban centres or the Hindi heartland. These are

troubled areas, rife with conflict, and the writing seems to urge a fundamental re-examination of the role of the state.

Popular Indian cinema is an entertainment juggernaut whose chief function is to cater to the fantasies and desires of its audience and, in the process, to “manufacture consent’ and create a homogenous pan-Indian mass. Murmurs of dissidence have admittedly appeared, though to a relatively small extent, in mainstream cinema. However the most exciting engagements have been in the low-budget independent films by young film-makers, as well as in films in regional languages, for these challenge tradition and authority in bold and innovative ways.

This module will begin with a brief overview of the political and social forces which have caused the ‘discontents’ of contemporary India, and proceed to discuss some representative literary and cinematic texts.

## **8) DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM: CHALLENGES FOR INDIAN SOCIETY**

**Dr. Gita Chadha**  
**Dept. of Sociology**  
**University of Mumbai**

Indian society is known to be diverse in every manner: in customs, language and religion, food and fashion. Not only is it diverse, it is also stratified. The Indian nation has to navigate its way through this immense diversity and retain its commitment to democracy, social justice and, importantly, to the idea of pluralism. Using the case study method, the workshop aims to discuss these challenges that Indian society faces especially in the context of globalization. The workshop hopes to draw and discuss similarities and contrasts between the two largest democracies of the world, India and the U.S.A.

## **9) PROCESS AND POLITICS IN INDIA’S PUBLIC POLICY**

**Dr. Marie-Lou Fernandes**

Since Independence, India has witnessed tremendous challenges to the framing of its public policy. The executive, judiciary, legislature and media – the four pillars of India’s democracy - along with public opinion and civil society, have had to respond to macro political shifts, technological changes, globalization, regionalization of domestic policy, communalism, sectarianism, extremism etc. This course will offer an overview of the structures and processes of public policy in India today, and then use select case studies to critically analyze the working of these structures and processes, and their outcomes, within the political context of India today.