

**Sociology**  
**Generic Elective (GE) 21**  
**Sociology of Literature**

**GENERIC ELECTIVE COURSE- 21 (GE-21) : Sociology of Literature**

**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		
<b>GE 21: Sociology of Literature</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12th Class Pass</b>	<b>Nil</b>

**Learning Objectives:**

1. To enable students to engage with social reality through a multi-disciplinary lens, by moving beyond the disciplinary boundaries of Science and Art/ Humanities
2. To enable an understanding that both Literature and Sociology are concerned with pursuit of truth, understanding the nature of social reality and ways of seeing and knowing the world.
3. To underline, through the reading of different literary texts, that Literature is an important source of sociological knowledge.
4. To be able to view literary texts not only as shaping us and our approach to social reality, but also providing us with categories to think with.
5. To enhance critical skills required for the pursuit of **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities** and **SDG 4 – Quality Education**.

**Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the course, the students will be able to:

1. See the embeddedness of Sociology and Literature
2. View literature as an important source of sociological knowledge
3. Demonstrate how sociological insights can be drawn from literary texts through short analytical reviews or presentations.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking required for fostering inclusive narratives in pursuit of **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities** and **SDG 4 – Quality Education**.

**SYLLABUS OF GE**

### **Unit I. Literature and the Sociological Imagination (12 Hours)**

*This unit lays down the historical and theoretical framework of Sociology of Literature.*

- a. Defining the Field.**
- b. Literatures: 'Oral', 'Classical' and 'Vernacular'**

### **Unit II. Literature and Society: Reflection and Representations (15 Hours)**

*This unit explores, through readings of different genres of literary texts, literature as reflecting, representing and providing insights into the structures and processes of society.*

- a. Theoretical Framework**
- b. Literatures and Intersectionality**

### **Unit III. Production of literary Texts: Authors, Texts and Readers (9 Hours)**

*This unit enables an understanding of literary texts as produced and reproduced through a dialogue between the individual, culture, and society.*

- a. Authors and Texts**
- b. Readers**

### **Unit IV. Literature and Society in India (9 Hours)**

*This unit explores the issues of tradition, innovation, articulation of identities, nature of literary public sphere and literary movements in Indian context.*

- a. Novel and Society**
- b. Literary Public Sphere**

### **Practical Component: NIL**

### **Essential/Recommended Readings:**

### **Unit I. Literature and the Sociological Imagination**

#### **a. Defining the Field**

Laurenson, Diana T. and Swingwood, Alan. (1972). *The Sociology of Literature*. Paladin, London. Introduction, pp. 11-22.

Escarpit, Robert. (1971). *Sociology of Literature*. Frank Cass & Co., United Kingdom. New Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 1-20.

Longo, Mariano. (2016). *Fiction and Social Reality: Literature and Narrative as Sociological Resources*. Taylor & Francis, United Kingdom. Introduction, pp. 1-11.

**b. Literatures: 'Oral', 'Classical' and 'Vernacular'**

Ong, W.A. (2002). *Orality and Literacy: Technologizing the Word*. Routledge, New York. Introduction, Chapter 1, pp. 1-15.

Goody, Jack. (2010). *Myth, Ritual and the Oral*. Cambridge University Press, New York. Introduction and Chapter 2, pp. 1-12, 41-58.

## **Unit II. Literature and Society: Reflection and Representations**

**a. Theoretical Framework**

Coser, Lewis A. (1963). *Sociology Through Literature: An Introductory Reader*. Prentice Hall, London. Introduction, pp. 2-7.

Albrecht, Milton C. (1954). Relationship between Literature and Society. In *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 59, No. 5, pp. 425-436.

Goldmann, Lucien. (1975). *Towards a Sociology of the Novel*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. Tavistock Publications, New York. Introduction, pp. 1-18.

**b. Literatures and Intersectionality**

Williams, Raymond. (1983). Region and Class in Novel. In *Writing in Society*. Verso, pp. 229-238.

El-Mansi, Z.S. (2021). Blurring the Boundaries between History and Fiction in Khoury's Gate of the Sun and Ashour's the Woman from Tantoura. In *Cairo Studies in English*, 1. pp. 181-195.

## **Unit III. Production of literary Texts: Authors, Texts and Readers**

**a. Authors and Texts**

Benjamin, Walter. (1970). Author as Producer. In *New Left Review*, Vol. 1, No. 62, Paris. pp. 88-96.

Barthes, Roland. (1977). Death of the Author. In *Image, Music, Text*. Flamingo, London. pp. 142-149.

Geertz, Clifford. (1988). *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*. Stanford University Press, California. Introduction. pp. 1-24.

**b. Readers**

Lowenthal, Leo. (1968). *Literature, Popular Culture, and Society*. Pacific Books, United States. Introduction & Chapter 1, pp. xi-xxiv, 1-14.

## Unit IV. Literature and Society in India

### a. Novel and Society

Mukherjee, Meenakshi. (1996). *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India*. OUP, New Delhi. Chapter 1, pp. 3-18.

Rajan, Rajeswari Sunder. "After 'Midnight's Children': Some Notes on the New Indian Novel in English." *Social Research* 78, no. 1 (2011): 203–30.

### b. Literary Public Sphere

Chandra, Uday. (2020). Literary Activism and the Sociology of Literature in India. In *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 55, No. 32. pp. 48-56.

Ciotti, Manuela. (2017). Dalit Literature and the Public Sphere. In *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Vol. 51, No. 2. pp. 144-168.

### Suggested Readings:

**Note: This list of literary texts is not exhaustive. This section is indicative. The aim is for the instructors to link theory with literature. There will be no questions specific to this section in the examinations.**

#### Literary Texts:

Ananthamurthy, U.R. (1989). *Samskara: A Rite for a Dead Man*. OUP, India.

Ismaeel, D.E. (2012). Dates and Bitter Coffee. In Jo Glanville (Ed.), *Qissat: Short Stories by Palestinian Women*. Telegram Books, London.

Kafka, Franz. (2012). A Hunger Artist. In *A Hunger Artist and Other Stories*. OUP, United Kingdom.

Lorde, Audre. (1982). *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Crossing Press, Berkley California.

Razā, Rāhī Māsūm. (2012). *A Village Divided (Aadha Gaon)*. Penguin Books, India.

Renu, Phanishwar Nath. (1986). *Third Vow and Other Stories (Teesri Kasam)*. Chanakya Publishers, New Delhi.

Sobti, Krishna. (1958/2007). *Memory's Daughter (Daar se Bichudi)*. Translated by Meenakshi Bharadwaj and Smita Bharati. Katha, New Delhi.

Spivak Chakravorty, Gayatri. (1981). "Draupadi" by Mahasveta Devi. In *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, No. 2. pp. 381-402.

## Books and Articles

Gajarawala, Toral Jatin. (2013). *Untouchable Fictions: Literary Realism and the Crisis of Caste*. Fordham University Press, New York. pp. 1-16.

Jain, R.K. (1994). Muslim Identity in North India: A Perspective from the Hindi Regional Novel. In *Studies in Humanities and Social Science*. IIAS, Shimla. pp. 19-29.

Adorno, Theodor W. (1974). Lyric Poetry and Society. In *Telos*, 20. pp. 56-71.

Ali, Subhashini. (2019). Decline of a Social Order: The End of Zamindari Rule in Northern India. In *Review of Agrarian Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2. pp. 26-43.

Brecht, Bertolt. (1964). A Short Organum for the Theatre. In *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Methuen, London. pp. 179-205.

Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari. (1986). *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. Chapter 3.

Nisbet, Robert. (1976). *Sociology as an Art Form*. OUP, New York. Chapter 1. pp. 9-26.

Schucking, L.R. (1944). *Sociology of Literary Taste*. Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner & Co, London. Chapter 3, pp. 16-26.

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