

ONLINE LECTURE SERIES

ON

An Introduction to Cultural Studies

JOINTLY ORGANIZED BY CAESURAE COLLECTIVE SOCIETY AND
ENGLISH & FOREIGN LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY (SHILLONG CAMPUS)

APRIL - JULY 2026



Free Registration Link (Please Register by 17th April 2026)



<https://forms.gle/G2p7Z6mnw3A772idA>

Note - Certificate will be offered to the participants

CONCEPT NOTE

Jonathan Culler, in his *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, writes: “Professors of French writing books about cigarettes or Americans’ obsession with fat; Shakespearians analyzing bisexuality; experts on realism working on serial killers. What is going on?” Probably, Cultural Studies can seldom be given an expression to in a more efficacious manner than the deep essence of interdisciplinarity that Culler has demonstrated here. Cultural Studies, as a discipline, or rather as an “interdiscipline”, has broadened in our current times, like never before, and it draws its interdisciplinary tenor from historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces. Forces such as globalization and commercialization are not unrelated aspects impacting culture in today’s world. We speak of culture, on the contrary, in its broader sense – as a manifestation of the superstructure – which includes religion, education, customs, dress, etc. Edward Burnett Tylor, an anthropologist, defines “culture” in his pioneering study, *Primitive Culture* (1871) thus: “Culture or civilization, taken in its widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” But, viewed in terms of class hegemony, the culture of globalization may seek to divorce people from their actual realities of day-to-day life too. Culture here acts not as an appeal to the aesthetic, but as a mode of distraction and diversion from the pressing problems of today’s living.

Cultural imperialism legitimizes itself on the plea that, in modern times, isolation is neither possible nor desirable. There is no pretext for closed-door policies anymore, as the world moves towards being a “global village”. Cultures, therefore, must necessarily meet to enrich and universalize their values through mutual interaction. What is happening, however, is not an immaculate process of “acculturation”, permitting the acceptance or rejection of cultural elements based on the freedom of choice. On the contrary, the power differential inherent in economic relations is determining the cultural interaction. The contemporary phenomenon of cultural imperialism, thus, tends to deepen the crisis in relation to daily preoccupations, like, leisure and entertainment, food and dress, or in respect of linkages with tradition, knowledge, or art. With the advent of globalization, its impact on mass media has been unprecedented on one hand, with the print media becoming largely negligible, though, to a certain section of the society. On the other hand, the bearing of the phenomenon on the visual media has been revolutionary.

The objective of this Lecture Series on “An Introduction to Cultural Studies” constitutes introducing the participants to these fundamental ideas, concepts, theories, histories, and methodologies of the discipline. But at the same time the Lecture Series will also attempt to challenge some of the tenets of the “Cultural Studies” as practised in the West and reorient the discipline by introducing the Indian understanding of *samskṛti*. The idea of *samskṛti* is semantically different from the Western understanding of culture. It goes back to the ancient times and refers to life, living, value based holistic growth designed for spiritual and social well-being in Bharatvarsha. So, this series of lectures will be delivered from the perspective of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, Indian aesthetics, indigenous studies and translation studies in India relating the concepts and their relevance to contemporary society.

At the end of the Series, participants (graduate, postgraduate scholars and early career teachers) should be able to critically examine cultural texts, practices, and institutions. Since these lectures are going to focus on the primary discourses of culture and society, the participants are also expected to develop the ability to approach this inter-relationship in an interdisciplinary manner. Scholars from diverse academic backgrounds, for instance, humanities, social sciences, education, and communication are expected to participate in this Series, which will equip them with the essential tools to navigate, and make sense, of the complexities of culture in contemporary society. The Series would constitute an integral part of a holistic education since it aims to inculcate critical thinking and an empathetic understanding of cultures, societies, histories and communities in the participants.

SPEAKERS

1. “Cultural Studies: An Introduction” by **Professor Himadri Lahiri**, Department of English, Netaji Subhas Open University, **18th April, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator - Oly Roy
2. “Interdisciplinarity and Theoreticality: The Acme of Cultural Studies”, by **Professor Mousumi Guha Banerjee**, Director, EFLU, Regional Campus, Shillong, **30th April, 6.30 pm.** **Coordinator** - Sagnik Chakraborty
3. “Cultural Pluralism and Accents of Memory: The Indian Context”, by **Professor Jayita Sengupta**, Head, Dept. of English, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, **20th May, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator – Dr. Prajnajyoti Dutta
4. “Beyond Acculturation: Sri Aurobindo’s Vision of *Samskṛti* and the Future of Indian Renaissance”, by **Professor Sampadananda Mishra**, Founding Director, Centre for Human Sciences, Rishihood University, **30th of May, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator - Anup Sharma
5. “Medieval Indian Bhakti Poetry and Cultural Studies”, by **Professor Prakash Joshi**, Dept. of English, Allahabad University, **20th of June, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator - Dr. Prajnajyoti Dutta
6. “Cultural Studies in the Context of Evolving New Anthropology”, by **Professor Sarit Chaudhuri**, Vice Chancellor, Alipurduar University, **27th June, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator- Oly Roy
7. “A Federation of Temperaments: How Bharata Mapped Indian Culture Through *Pravṛttis*”, **Amritanath Bhattacharya**, Independent Scholar, Varanasi, **13th July, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator- Sagnik Chakraborty
8. “Translating Words, Interpreting Worlds”, by **Professor Banibrata Mahanta**, Dept. of English, Banaras Hindu University, **24th July, 6.30 pm.**
Coordinator- Dr. Prajnajyoti Dutta