

School of Human Studies

Ambedkar University Delhi

Course Outline

Time Slot-_____

Course Code: SHS201724

Title: Childhood, Identity and Society

Type of Course: Core course for MA Psychology (Psychosocial Clinical Studies)

Cohort for which it is compulsory: MA Psychology

Cohort for which it is Elective: None

No. of credits: 4

Semester and Year Offered: 3rd Semester (Monsoon Semester 2018)

Course Team: (coordinator, team members etc) : Mamatha Karollil

Brief Description

The course visualizes the family as a primary source of identity. Families are in turn assumed to be the primary location for the transmission of cultural values. This course examines the possibility of a culturally informed and politically inflexed psychoanalytical/psychological understanding of families in India and the possibilities of Indian identity that follow from it. It is expected that the course will prepare the students to comprehend the inner world of Indians and the possibilities of a culturally informed psychoanalysis.

This course draws upon psychoanalytical and cultural psychological//anthropological on India to understand childhood, sexuality, intimacy, family and violence as they are woven into our selves. The course enables students to appreciate the links between the personal and the social. From the point of view of clinical work the course enables students to relate to the psychosocial matrix that will enable a deep listening to personal narratives within their cultural locations. The course will also explore queer, feminist, anti-caste critique of families and may draw from Western theoretical frameworks too where relevant.

Course objectives:

- a) To discuss the possibility of a culturally located, politically informed psychoanalytic understanding of identity
- b) To develop an understanding of an Indian identity and debates around this
- c) To consider theoretical frameworks such as queer theory, feminism and anti-caste politics that enable a rendering of identity as contingent on the

contemporary context.

Course contents:

Family, culture and psychoanalysis: 4 cases. The course begins with readings of cases by Erikson, Winnicott and Kakar to illustrate the coming together of the clinical and the cultural in clinical case studies.

Conceptualizing the Internal family. Families take different forms across history and culture. Nevertheless, all family systems are repositories of cultural meaning which are , albeit imperfectly mirrored in families and somewhat internalized in the process of childhood.

The question of culture. This unit explores the contested meaning of the term culture with reference to India.

Culture and psychoanalysis. The possibility of a culturally located psychoanalysis is discussed. This unit draws upon the Eriksonian idea of a psychosocial framework as essential for this framing

Identity in psychoanalysis. The idea of identity is postulated as a minimum requirement to conceive of a subjectivities that are culturally and historically located.

The ‘inner world’ of Indians. The significance of infancy and early childhood as lived in the traditional joint family is explored from the psychoanalytical and anthropological perspectives. The significance of the mother son relationship is contrasted with the life of the daughter. Some feminist texts are also introduced to understand the patriarchal world of the hindu family. The problems in the formation of a male identity in a culture of relative father absence is discussed.

Other voices in Indian psychoanalysis. Brief readings from the works of Kurtz, Roland and Traviak are introduced as alternative reading culture in India.

Marriage and intimate relations in the Indian family. The psychoanalytical reading of intimate relations in India forms the base . The question of gender and social change is introduced through select readings from a feminist perspective.

Rethinking family, identity and culture. How can issues of cultural difference, gender and power be framed while thinking psychologically about family and identity in the Indian context? The unit aims at leaving students with a methodological framework through which to interrogate these questions as they encounter later course through the remaining semesters of the programme.

Readings:

- Bhabha, H. (2012) *The location of culture*. Introduction. London: Taylor & Francis
- Collier, J., Rosaldo, M., Yanagisako, S. () Is there a family? New Anthropological views. *Rethinking the family*. p.31-48.
- Erikson, E.H. (1950) *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E.H. (1969) *Identity, youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Hollway, W. () *Relationality: The intersubjective foundations of Identity*
Psychic development and its relationship with the structure of the family
- John, M.E. (2000) Globalization, sexuality and the visual field. In Nair, J. and M. John (ed) *A question of silence*. p. 370-390.
- ..
- Kakar, S. (1978) *The Inner World*. Delhi: OUP. Introduction. p.1-14.
- (1989) *Intimate Relations*. Delhi: Viking
- (1996) *Culture and psyche. Selected Essays*. OUP.
- . (2006) Culture in psychoanalysis. A personal journey. *Social Analysis*, vol.50,25-44.
- Kakar, S. and Kakar, K (). *The Indians*. p.7-24.
- Kurtz, S. (1992) *All the mothers are one*. Columbia University Press.
- Nandy, A. (2004). Culture, voice and development. In A. Nandy (ed.) *Bonfire of creeds*. Delhi: OUP. p.304-311.
- Rolland, A. (1988) *In search of self in India and Japan: Toward a cross-cultural Psychology*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Pine, F. (1985) *The psychologies of drive, ego, object relations and self. Developmental theory and clinical process*.
- Rosaldo, R.. On headhunters and soldiers: Separating cultural and ethical relativism. .p.1-3.
- Schlein, S. (1987) . *Erik H. Erikson. A way of looking at things. Selected papers*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company
- Shweder, R. (1991) *The astonishment of anthropology. Thinking through cultures: Expeditions in cultural psychology*. Boston: Harvard University Press. pp.1-23.
- Travick. M. (1990) *Love in a Tamil family*. California University Press.
- Winnicott, D.W. (1971) Psychopathology manifested in the area of transitional phenomenon. In L. Caldwell and A. Joyce (Ed) (2011) *Reading Winnicott*. New York: Routledge. p.116-124.
- Winnicott, D.W. (1989) *The family and individual development*.

1. **Assessment Methodology:** Written examination, group work, film analysis and term paper.

