

School of Undergraduate Studies

Ambedkar University Delhi

Course Outline

School:	Undergraduate Studies		
Programme with title:	BA (Honours)		
Semester to which offered: (I/ III/ V)	IV semester		
Course Title:	Marriage, Kinship and Family norms		
Credits:	4 Credits		
Course Code (new):			
Course Code (old):	SC 804		
Type of Course:	Compulsory yes	Cohort	BA (H) Sociology
	Elective	Cohort	

For SUS only (Mark an X for as many as appropriate):

- 1. Foundation (Compulsory)**
- 2. Foundation (Elective)**
- 3. Discipline (Compulsory)** **X**
- 4. Discipline (Elective)**
- 5. Elective**

Course Coordinator and Team: **Ishita Dey**

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Aim: The objective of this course is to introduce the general principles of kinship and marriage. The institution of marriage needs to be understood against the changing 'kin' ship structure of societies. Anthropologically, kinship has played a central role in understanding a society, particularly in study of households and understanding marriage patterns. This course aims to demystify the term 'kin' through a close reading of kin terms and the three approaches - structural, functionalist and cultural perspective. Each of these perspectives are important to understand patterns of descent and alliance two key ideas that shape kinship and political systems. An understanding of kinship structures is important to understand and examine the polity of society. The roles assigned to different members and groups based on age and sex, production and reproduction in different societies will be examined to understand how does kin-ties impact on the making of the family and familial relations? This course draws upon readings across geographical regions to show the complexities of notion of residence with particular reference to

patrilineal and matrilineal societies. However, late twentieth century work on kinship studies showed that there needs to be a recasting of kinship if we to unify the fields of gender and kinship. One of the significant new areas has been to unify gender and kinship studies and it has led to some fascinating work on revisiting what is a family? There is a significant body of work that reflects on families we choose (Weston 1991) and on new reproductive technologies that re-shape our readings of family and kinship. Does these works reproduce conventional ideas of family or do assisted technology help in creating a new idiom of family beyond the biogenetic?

Module 1 : Introduction (Week 1-Week 5)

1.1 Key terms : Descent , Consanguinity, Filiation, Incest taboo, Affinity, Family Residence

1.2 Approaches : Descent, Alliance and Cultural

In this section, the students will be introduced to the key ideas of kinship through the key approaches (functionalist and cultural) that shape studies on kinship and family till 1970s and how there is a shift post 1970s.

Essential Reading

Radcliffe- Brown,A.R. and Daryll Forde. 1950. "Introduction" in Radcliffe –Brown and Daryll Forde (eds) *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*. London: Oxford University Press. Introduction pp 1-39

Evans- Pritchard, E.E., 2004(1940), "The Nuer of Southern Sudan", in Robert Parkin and Linda Stone (eds.), *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, pp. 64- 78.

Fortes, Meyer, 1970, "The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups" in Meyer Fortes, *Time and Social Structure and Other Essays*, University of London: The Athlone Press, pp. 67- 95.

Leach, Edmund, 1962, "On Certain Unconsidered Aspects of Double Descent Systems", *Man*, Vol. 62, pp. 130- 134.

Lévi- Strauss, Claude, 1969, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, Chaps. 1 & 2, pp. 3- 25.

Dumont, Louis, 1968, "Marriage Alliance", in David Shills (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, U.S.A.: Macmillan and Free Press, pp. 19- 23.

Schneider, David, 2004(1972), "What is Kinship All About?", in Robert Parkin and Linda Stone (eds.) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, pp. 257- 274.

Carsten, Janet. 1995. "The Substance of Kinship and the Heat of the Hearth: Feeding, Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi", *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (May, 1995), pp. 223-241.

Peletz, Michael G. 1995. 'Kinship Studies in Late Twentieth-Century Anthropology', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol 24, pp 343-372

2. Family, marriage and relationships

How do we understand kin-relations? In this module we try and make an attempt to understand familial relations, forms of marriage and marital relationships drawing upon kinship map of India, and different kinds of marriage forms in Indian society. Any understanding of familial space needs a gendered reading and revisit some of the attempts to unify gender and kinship. One of the areas that demand a close reading

is that forms of kin-ties are not universal, it requires a close reading of kin terms, genealogical terms, cultures of relatedness specific to each society. The concluding section of this unit introduces the students to kinship in Qatar, Srilankan Tamil Muslim community and Poland to introduce diverse meanings of kin and kin-ties.

2.1 Family and forms of marriage : Reflections from India (Week 6-10)

Shah, A.M. 1998. "Changes in the Indian Family : An examination of some assumptions" in AM Shah, *The Family in India : Critical Essays*, New Delhi : Orient Longman, pp52-63.

Karve, Iravati (1993). 'The Kinship Map of India' in Patricia Uberoi (ed.) *Family, Marriage and Kinship in India*. New Delhi: OUP.

Gough, Kathleen. E. 1959. "The Nayars and the Definition of Marriage" in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 89: 23-34.

Uberoi, Patricia. 1995. "When is marriage not a marriage? Sex, Sacrament and Contract in Hindu Marriage", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, n.s. 29 1 and 2 :319-45

Chowdhry, Prem. 2004. "Caste panchayats and the policing of marriage in Haryana: Enforcing kinship and territorial exogamy", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* n.s. 38, 1 &2 :1-42.

Hussain Khan, C.G. 2003. "Muslim Kinship in Dravidian Milieu". *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 38, No. 46, Pp 4902-4904

2.2 Gender and kinship (Week 11&12)

Rao, Nitya. 2005. "Kinship Matters: Women's Land Claims in the Santal Parganas, Jharkhand" *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp.725-746

Dube, Leela. 2000. "Doing Kinship and Gender: An Autobiographical Account" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35, No. 46 pp. 4037-4047

Brunson, Jan. 2010. "Son Preference in the Context of Fertility Decline: Limits to New Constructions of Gender and Kinship" *Studies in Family Planning*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 89-98

2.3 Becoming a kin (Week 13 &14)

El Guindi, Fadwa. 2012. "Milk and Blood: Kinship among Muslim Arabs in Qatar". *Anthropos*, Bd. 107, H. 2., pp. 545-555

Munck, Victor C. Del. 1996. "Love and Marriage in a Sri Lankan Muslim Community: Toward a Reevaluation of Dravidian Marriage Practices", *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 698-716

Pine, Frances. 2007. "Memories of Movement and the Stillness of Place: Kinship Memory in the Polish Highlands" In *Ghosts of Memory. Essays on Remembrance and Relatedness*. Edited by Janet Carsten. Malden M.A. : Blackwell Publishing , Pp 104-125.

Module 3. New trajectories in Kinship studies (Week 15 &16)

In this module we explore new developments in kinship studies, particularly the role of technology and closely examine if it redraws ideas of kinship or draws upon 'biogenetic connections' (Levine 2008).

Levine, Nancy. 2008. "Alternative Kinship, Marriage, and Reproduction". *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 37 (2008), pp. 375-389

Weston, Kath. 1991, *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*, New York: Columbia University Press, pp 103-136

Additional Reading

Hayden, Corinne. 1995. "Gender, Genetics, and Generation: Reformulating Biology in Lesbian Kinship" *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 41-63

Assessment Details with weights:

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| 1. Class Test | 30% |
| 2. Group presentation | 30% |
| 3. End semester Exam | 40% |