

**BA (H) Sociology**  
**Core Course 09**  
**Sociology of Kinship**

**Course Objectives**

1. Impart a comprehensive study of the concepts relevant for understanding kinship, marriage and family.
2. Evolve a better understanding of family, marriage and kinship both in historical and evolutionary perspective.
3. Look beyond the surface of issues to discover the "why" and "how" of kinship.
4. Explores the new possibilities and critical insights offered by reproductive technologies in revisiting kinship.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Grasp the historical evolution of kinship theories from a biological deterministic approach to culture of relatedness
2. Develop an analytical perspectives on concepts relevant for understanding kinship
3. Comprehend the coexistence of multiple perspectives in the study of family, marriage and kinship
4. Acknowledge the significance of the emergence of new reproductive technologies on recasting kinship

**Course Outline:**

**Unit 1. Introduction:**

**1.1 Key Terms: Descent, Consanguinity, Filiations, Incest Taboo, Affinity, Family, Residence**

**1.2 Approaches**

**1.2.1 Descent**

**1.2.2 Alliance**

**1.2.3 Cultural**

**Unit 2. Family, Household and Marriage**

**Unit 3. Re-casting Kinship**

**3.1 Relatedness**

**3.2 Kinship and Gender**

### 3.3 Re-imagining Families

### 3.4 New Reproductive Technologies

### 3.5. Surrogacy

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#### Course Content:

#### Unit 1. Key terms and approaches (Weeks 1-5)

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. and D. Forde (eds.), 1950, *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 R. Parkin and L. Stone (eds.), *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, Pp. 64-78

Fortes, M., 1970, *Time and Social Structure and Other Essays*, University of London: The Athlone Press, Chapter 3, 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, Chapters 1 & 2, Pp. 3-25

Dumont, L., 1968, 'Marriage Alliance', in D. Shills (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, U.S.A.: Macmillan and Free Press, Pp. 19- 23

Schneider, D., 2004, 'What is Kinship All About?' in R. Parkin and L. Stone (eds.) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, Pp. 257-274

Das, V., 1994, 'Masks and Faces: An Essay on Punjabi Kinship', in Patricia Uberoi (ed.), *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, Pp.198-222

\* Shah A.M., 1964, 'Basic Terms and Concepts in the study of family in India', *The Indian Economy and Social History Review*, vol. 1(3), pp 1-36

\* Vatuk Sylvia, *Household Form and Formation: Variability and Social Change among South Indian Muslims* In Great, John N. & David J. Mearns (1989). *Society from the Inside Out: Anthropological Perspectives on the South Asian Household*. New Delhi: Sage. (Pp. 107-137).

\*Freeman, J. D., 1958, 'The Family Systems of the Iban of Borneo', in J. Goody (ed.), *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Pp. 15-52

[Readings marked \* are repeated in Unit 2]

## **Unit 2. Family, Household and Marriage (Weeks 6-10)**

Vatuk, Sylvia, Household Form and Formation: Variability and Social Change among South Indian Muslims In Great, John N. & David J. Mearns (1989). *Society from the Inside Out: Anthropological Perspectives on the South Asian Household*. New Delhi: Sage. (Pp. 107-137).

Freeman, J. D., 1958, 'The Family Systems of the Iban of Borneo', in J. Goody (ed.), *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Pp. 15-52

Leach, E.R., 1961, 'Polyandry, Inheritance and the Definition of Marriage with Particular Reference to Sinhalese Customary Law', in E. R. Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Anthropology*, London: The Athlone Press, Pp. 105-113

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

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

## **Unit 3. Re-casting Kinship (Weeks 11-14)**

### **3.1 Relatedness**

Carsten, Janet, 1995, 'The Substance of Kinship and the Heat of the Hearth: Feeding, Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi' *American Ethnologist*, 22 (2): 223-24.1

### **3.2 Kinship and Gender**

Gold, Ann Grodzins, 1994, 'Sexuality, Fertility, and Erotic Imagination in Rajasthani Women's Songs', in *Listen to the Heron's Words: Re-imagining Gender and Kinship in North India* by Gloria Goodwin Raheja and Ann Grodzins Gold, Delhi: OUP, Pp 30-72

### **3.3 Re-imagining Families**

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

### **3.4 New Reproductive Technologies**

Kahn, Susan Martha, 2004, 'Eggs and Wombs: The Origins of Jewishness', in R. Parkin and L. Stone (eds.), *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, Pp. 362-77

### **3.5 Surrogacy**

Ragone Helena (2004). Surrogate Motherhood and American Kinship in R. Parkin and L. Stone(ed) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, (pp. 342-361).

## References:

### Compulsory Readings:

\* Vatuk Sylvia, Household Form and Formation: Variability and Social Change among South Indian Muslims In Great, John N. & David J. Mearns (1989). *Society from the Inside Out: Anthropological Perspectives on the South Asian Household*. New Delhi: Sage. (Pp. 107-137).

\*Freeman, J. D., 1958, 'The Family Systems of the Iban of Borneo', in J. Goody (ed.), *The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Pp. 15-52

Carsten, Janet, 1995, 'The Substance of Kinship and the Heat of the Hearth: Feeding, Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi' *American Ethnologist*, 22 (2): 223-24.1

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Fortes, M., 1970, *Time and Social Structure and Other Essays*, University of London: The Athlone Press, Chapter 3, Pp. 67-95

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Gold, Ann Grodzins, 1994, 'Sexuality, Fertility, and Erotic Imagination in Rajasthani Women's Songs', in *Listen to the Heron's Words: Re-imagining Gender and Kinship in North India* by Gloria Goodwin Raheja and Ann Grodzins Gold, Delhi: OUP, Pp 30-72

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

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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, Chapters 1 & 2, Pp. 3-25

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Ragone Helena (2004). Surrogate Motherhood and American Kinship in R. Parkin and L. Stone(ed) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, (pp. 342-361).

Schneider, D., 2004, 'What is Kinship All About?' in R. Parkin and L. Stone (eds.) *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, U.S.A.: Blackwell, Pp. 257-274

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

### **Teaching Learning Process**

1. Interactive session with students to enable them to broaden their understanding of family, marriage and kinship.
2. Reading classical theories and ethnographies and apply them to understand what's happening around.
3. Movie screening on issues related to reproductive technologies, surrogacy, divorce etc.
4. Project work in which students get a chance to use their understanding of theories and approaches to their surroundings.

### **Assessment Methods**

1. Internal assessment through regular assignments and class test
2. Project assessment through field work, writing report and presentation
3. Final end term assessment through external examination

### **Key Words:**

Kinship, Family, Marriage, Biology, Culture, Relatedness, Assisted Reproduction, Maternity And Motherhood.