

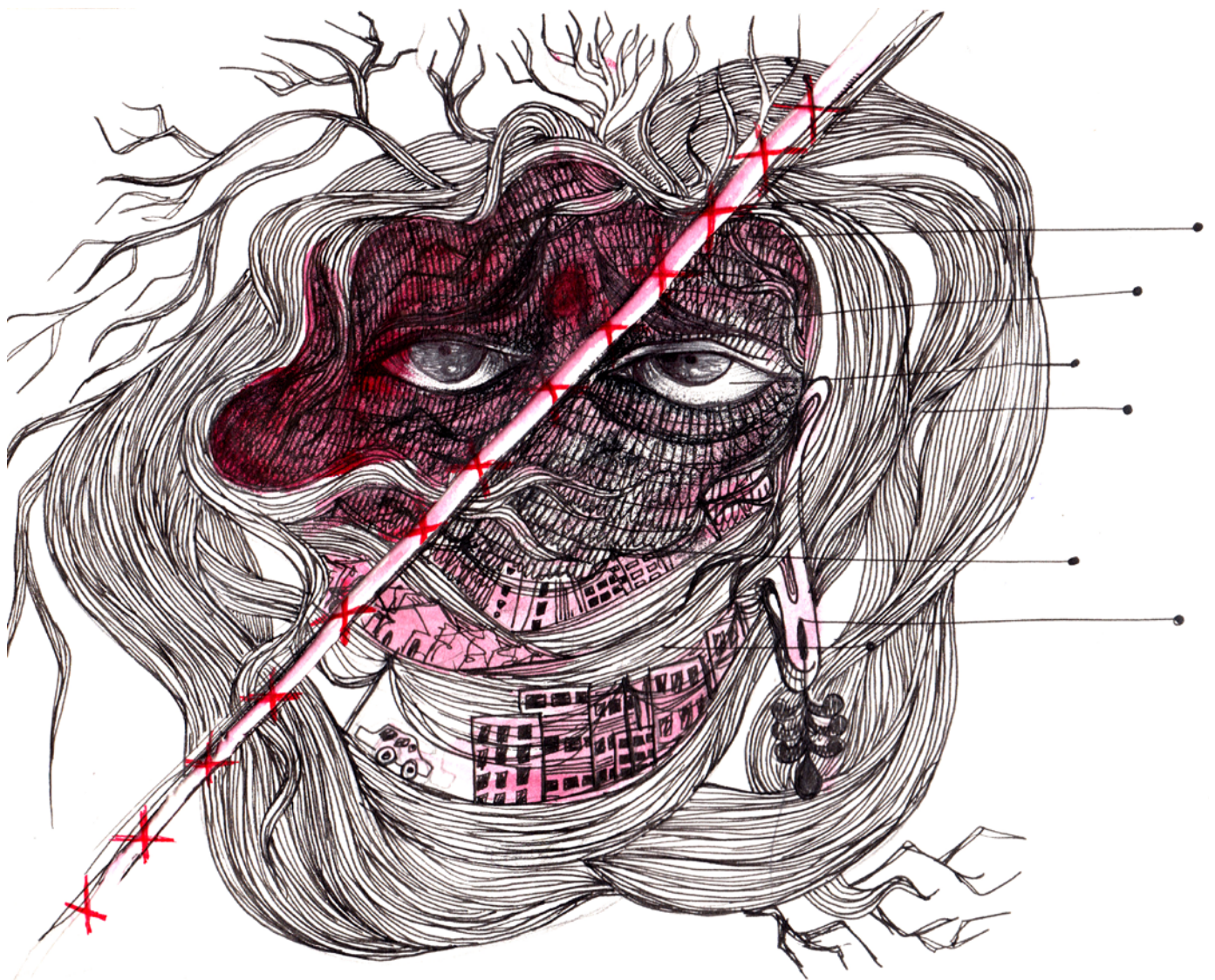
The Brahmin In the Mind

Exploring the nature and dynamics of caste and
constructed hierarchies in oneself, groups and society

A four day exploratory workshop

20th -23rd April 2016

Lucknow, India



Why this Workshop?

Today, more than ever, we ask the questions: Why is the construction of social hierarchies so ingrained and so impenetrable? In what way do ideas of purity and pollution, risk and danger, come into play in the construction of these hierarchies (conscious and unconscious) in individuals as well as societies. At a more macro level, it is even more interesting to critically investigate how the politics of pollution, social risk and national borders interrelate in a modern society.

In Indian society particularly, why is the caste system so pervasive? What kind of processes will lead to the transformation, indeed elimination, of caste? We need to explore the nature of these hierarchies which exist both above and below the line of 'touchability' among other constructed hierarchies, that exists in all caste categories- non Dalit as well as Dalits. What are the implications of such processes at the individual, group and system level and what is its impact on the battle to eliminate caste? How are such discussions and explorations located within the process of asserting a politics of caste, based on identity, dominations, and assertions?

If we examine our own lives we will possibly come in touch with many examples of how deep seated and ingrained constructed hierarchies are and the range of hierarchies we create. We may hold a self image as one who has transcended and abhors such hierarchies. To what extent are these a defence against our abilities to hold differences, manage the 'not like me'. To what extent are they a defence against 'not knowing'.

Apart from destructive and dehumanising manifestations of hierarchy and exclusion such as caste based discrimination, we have other manifestations like colonisation and imperialism, gender discrimination and racial discrimination. Unconscious processes such as projection and shadow indicate that often we end up replicating the very dynamics that we believe we abhor. The victim and the oppressor are not separated as inside-outside but we are both victims and oppressors, and everyone is implicated within a system that is structured on the basis of such hierarchies. The values we think we hold and values we actually hold may not be in the alignment we believe they are in.

It is important that these unconscious processes are examined, and a process of relinquishing past patterns and applying new insights is initiated, if one is to hold on to any hope of transforming individuals and society. Undoubtedly, engaging or opening oneself up to such explorations requires great courage and an acknowledgement of one's vulnerability.

The workshop aims to provide a space to explore these issues – to work on personal insight generation as well as insights about systemic and group phenomena. It is designed as an experiential workshop with a couple of seminars offering some conceptual frameworks. In that sense this is an intensive space relying on individual's authority to explore, invest, share and generate insights and is not a talk shop or a round table. How the participants (members and staff) take forward the insights generated individually and collectively into the systems they are part of, they shape and lead, and the consequences of that cannot be predetermined.

For Whom:

Anyone interested in exploring these issues in **an experiential setting**.

Individuals working on or committed to working on eliminating caste based discrimination and a society structured on hierarchy, and value a method of learning from experience are likely to find this workshop particularly helpful.



Primary Task:

Exploring the way one uses one's personal authority to deal with various forms of hierarchy, and the consequent notions of purity/pollution leading to superiority or inferiority, that are constructed and emerge in the workshop.

Staff

Workshop Director: Rosemary Viswanath
Workshop Administrator: Uma Ravikumar

Consultant staff

Eliat Aram, PhD, CEO, the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; Cpsych (BPS), UKCP registered Gestalt psychotherapist and supervisor; London UK.

Gouranga Chattopadhyay, D.Phil (C.U.), Trustee, GRI; Professional Life Member, ISABS; Spiritual name Sannyasin Tattwarana of Bihar School of Yoga; Renounced religion.

Zahid Hoosein Gangjee, B.Sc. Psych. Hons., M.Sc. Applied & Psych. (Calcutta University); Fellow (IIM, Ahmedabad). Chief Executive, Zahid Gangjee & Associates, (Organisation and HR Consultancy).

Anuradha Prasad, Ph.D (IARI, New Delhi) , Consultant and Coach, Process and Institutional Development; Governing Body Member, HID Forum; Trustee, Group Relations India; Professional Member, Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science; India.

V.A.Ramesh Nathan, Doctorate (Hon). M.A; LLB; Dalit Human Rights Activist from Tamil Nadu, Presently working as General Secretary to National Dalit Movement For Justice- NDMJ a unit of National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights-NCDHR, New Delhi.

Uma Ravikumar, MBA(Master of Business Development, Bharathiar University)Associate Certified Coach, International Coaching Federation; Pursuing Professional Development, Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science, India.

Rosemary Viswanath, PGDM (Post Graduate Diploma in Management, IIM Bangalore)Director, Learning Network; Managing Trustee, Group Relations India; Professional Member, Indian Society for Applied Behavioral Science; India.

Administrative Information

Workshop Fees

This is a residential workshop and the fees for the 4 day workshop is Rs 18000/- plus 14.5% Service Tax per person. Bursaries are available to support those without the financial means to pay the full fee. Do write in to Group Relations India grouprelationsindia@gmail.com for the application form and to register for the workshop.

If you would like a conversation about your participation call Rosemary Viswanath on +919845403773

Dates

20th to 23rd April 2016. The workshop is expected to commence by 0900 hours on 20th morning and end by 5.00 pm on 23rd . Timings will be confirmed on application. Accommodation will be available from 19th evening upto 23rd evening at the venue.

Workshop Language:

English. Use of other languages is up for exploration.

Venue

SAHBHAGI SHIKSHAN KENDRA (Training Centre) Lucknow, UP, India.

