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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS - HISTORY

SEMESTER-IV

THEMES IN INDIAN HISTORY (MODERN)

CORE 401

BLOCK-2

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self-Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.

THEMES IN INDIAN HISTORY (MODERN)

BLOCK-1

Unit 1: The Colonial Economy and State- Introduction

Unit 2: History from Bellow

Unit 3: Migrant labour: Calcutta, Bombay, Burma, Fiji and Trinidad

Unit 4: Nationalist Approach

Unit 5: Tribes and Other Communities

Unit 6: Gender and environment

Unit 7: Science and technology

BLOCK-2

Unit 8: Economic And Power Relations In Colonial India.....6

Unit 9: Invisible Role Of Women In Economy33

Unit 10: Caste Identities: Colonial Knowledge.....55

Unit 11: Religion And Culture94

Unit 12: Peasant, Labour And Working Classes..... 125

Unit 13: Varna, JATI, Janajati146

Unit 14: Debates In History175

BLOCK-2 THEMES IN INDIAN HISTORY (MODERN)

Introduction to the Block

Unit 8 deals with Economic and power relations in colonial India. The emergence of economics as a discipline in the eighteenth century led in due course to the development of a new branch in history called economic history.

Unit 9 deals with Invisible Role of Women in economy. In this Unit of the 'Women in the Economy', you will get a holistic understanding of what constitutes work for women both in public and private spaces

Unit 10 deals with Caste identities: Colonial knowledge. Caste is the most contentious issue that has fascinated and divided scholars who have wished to study this system of stratified social-hierarchy in India.

Unit 11 deals with Religion and Culture. The nationalist movement in colonial India led to an important reconstruction of the concept of history.

Unit 12 deals with Peasant, labour and working classes. The Leftist movement in twentieth century Indian politics brought the focus to bear upon peasants, workers and their movements during the freedom struggle.

Unit 13 deals with Varna, jati, janajati. When modern anthropological and historical writings on Indian society began, the close relationship between caste, tribe and gender became evident. Colonial historians and anthropologists saw that the peculiarity of Indian society lay in caste.

Unit 14 deals with Debates in History. Representative study of at least four major debates on the social, cultural and economic history of the world

UNIT 8: ECONOMIC AND POWER RELATIONS IN COLONIAL INDIA

STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Colonial and Nationalistic Writings
- 8.3 Pre-colonial Economy and Colonial Trends
- 8.4 Statistical Inquiries
- 8.5 Town and Country
- 8.6 Industrialisation
- 8.7 Power Relation in Colonial India
- 8.8 Let us sum up
- 8.9 Key Words
- 8.10 Questions for Review
- 8.11 Suggested readings and references
- 8.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- Colonial and Nationalistic Writings
- Pre-colonial Economy and Colonial Trends
- Statistical Inquiries
- Town and Country
- Industrialisation
- Power Relation in Colonial India

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of economics as a discipline in the eighteenth century led in due course to the development of a new branch in history called economic history. The progenitors of economics were Adam Smith and other classical economists. India was very much in the vision of the classical economists, a group of thinkers in England during the Industrial

Revolution. They advocated laissez faire and minimising of state intervention in the economy. Adam Smith, the foremost classical economist, condemned the East India Company in its new role as the ruling power in India. In his view, the Company's trading monopoly ran counter to the principle of the freedom of the market. In the classic work entitled *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), he said, 'The government of an exclusive company of merchants is perhaps the worst of all governments for any country whatever.' Economics underwent a theoretical transformation in the early twentieth century under the influence of John Maynard Keynes, who advocated strategic economic intervention by the government for promoting welfare and employment. Keynes, too, thought deeply about India while developing his new economic theories, and his earliest major work, *Indian Currency and Finance* (London 1913), illustrated his notions of good monetary management of the economy. It is also noteworthy that the early classical economists, such as Ricardo, influenced the thinking of a group of Utilitarian administrators who set about reforming the administration of India in the nineteenth century. Above all, the influence of Adam Smith is noticeable in the end of the Company's monopoly by the Charter Acts of 1813 and 1833. Not surprisingly, therefore, historians have paid close attention to the connection between the evolution of economic thought in England and the question of reform of the colonial administration in India. This is evident in such works as Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India* (Oxford 1959); S. Ambirajan, *Classical Political Economy and British Policy in India*; and A. Chandavarkar *Keynes and India: a Study in Economics and Biography* (London 1989). Classical political economy in England laid the foundations for the laissez faire economics of the Raj in the nineteenth century. Keynesian economics, on the other hand, contained the germs of the development economics of the mid-twentieth century. Both types of economics affected the state and the economy in India, and stimulated debates in the economic history of India.

8.2 COLONIAL AND NATIONALISTIC WRITINGS

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Early colonial writers about the economy of India did not have to reckon with a critical Indian public and nationalistic opinion. Some of them were free and frank in their criticisms of the effect of the British rule upon the indigenous economy and they were sometimes critical of what they admitted to be a drain of wealth from India to Britain. They did not deny what a contemporary Persian chronicler named Saiyid Ghulam Hussain Khan observed in *The Seir Mutaqherin* (1789) with regard to the English habit of ‘scraping together as much money’ in this country as they can, and carrying it ‘in immense sums to the kingdom of England’. A manuscript official report, entitled ‘Historical Review of the External Commerce of Calcutta from 1750 until 1830’, commented freely on ‘the plunder of the country’. After conquering Bengal, the East India Company ceased to import silver for their purchases of Indian goods for export to Europe, and deployed the revenues of Bengal for the purpose. According to the report, the unrequited exports became the vehicle for the remittance of the fortunes made by individual Englishmen in the country. As critical Indian opinion emerged in the later nineteenth century, the colonial administration became more concerned to show that economic progress was happening in the country. The Madras administration commissioned a voluminous statistical work by S. Srinivasa Raghavaianagar, entitled *Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of the British Administration* (Madras, Govt. Press, 1893), which constituted a well-documented apology for foreign rule in the country. The second century of British rule in India was marked by an ongoing controversy between the critics and apologists of empire. Indian nationalists, sympathetic Britishers and, at a later state, Marxists intellectuals blamed the drain for the impoverishment of India. Colonial officials, at the instance of Lord Curzon, contended that there was no impoverishment at all, and rival estimates of national income were produced on both sides. Among the works of the period may be mentioned, on the one side, Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (London, 1901), an earlier version 1873), and William Digby, “Prosperous” *British India: a Revelation from the Official Records* (1901); and on the opposite side, F.T. Atkinson, ‘A Statistical Review of the Income and wealth of British

India', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, June 1902. Atkinson, an official under Lord Curzon, sought to show that the national income of India was rising over the years, though somewhat slowly. Naoroji who entertained contrary views, computed the annual drain from India at around £30,000,000 in his own day, and estimated that earlier, around 1800, the figure had stood at about £5,000,000. The debate generated the first general work on the economic history of India. To Curzon's annoyance, a retired ICS officer who became President of the Indian National Congress, Romesh Chunder Dutt, drew up a formidable critique of the economic effect of British rule upon India in *The Economic History of India under Early British Rule (1757–1837)* (London, 1902) and *The Economic History of India under the Victorian Age* (London, 1904). Dutt dwelt on the heavy land tax upon the peasants, the destruction of the handicrafts, the recurrence of famines, and the annual drain to Britain in his economic critique of British rule. The British, he said, had given India peace, but not prosperity. Colonial administration did not accept his nationalist contentions, but one claim he made is indisputable: 'No study is more interesting and instructive in the history of nations than the study of the material condition of the people from age to age.' Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, before he became the Mahatma, wept as he read Dutt's *Economic History* and, in the next generation, the doctrine that the most fundamental impact of British rule upon India was a destructive economic impact, became axiomatic with Marxist intellectuals, such as R.P. Dutt. A member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, he wrote a radical critique of colonial rule entitled *India Today*. Published by the Left Book Club from London in 1940, it was promptly banned in India. In this book, R.P. Dutt sought to show that the industrial imperialism which R.C. Dutt had criticised in his day had since then made a transition to financial imperialism, and that the drain had become more enervating for the economy in the latest phase of imperialism in India.

8.3 PRE-COLONIAL ECONOMY AND COLONIAL TRENDS

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The debate on the colonial impact on the economy and the question of impoverishment under British rule brought forth a new issue : what was the state of the economy before British rule? Was India more prosperous then, and had she already embarked on an endogenous path of development that was cut off by the British ascendancy? Was national income higher at the time? Valuable official reports on the state and structure of the indigenous economy had been written in early colonial times, the most notable among these being the reports on eastern and southern India by Francis BuchananHamilton. His voluminous and statistical surveys of agriculture, manufactures and inland trade were partially printed in Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* 1801 (2nd ed. Madras 1870); and Francis Buchanan, *An Account of the Districts of Bihar and Patna* in 1811 – 1812, 2 vols. (Bihar and Orissa Research Society, n.d.). Later on, historians directed their curiosity to the economic conditions in Mughal Times, some early studies being Edward Thomas, *The Revenue Resources of the Mughal Empire in India* (1871) and Jadunath Sarkar, *The India of Aurengzeb: Topography, Statistics and Roads* (1901). It was, however, a British revenue official of UP, W.H. Moreland, who first ventured into a general economic history of pre-colonial India in *India at the Death of Akbar* (1920), *From Akbar to Aurangzeb* (1922), and the *Agrarian System of Moslem India* (1929). In Moreland's estimate the national income of India at the time of Todar Mal's survey in Akbar's reign was not perceptibly higher than what it was at the beginning of the twentieth century. Moreland concluded that a parasitic agrarian despotism had driven India to an economic dead end, despite the considerable expansion of foreign trade that the Dutch and English East India Companies brought about in the seventeenth century. The conclusion that the foreign companies operating in Mughal India brought in a lot of silver and stimulated textile exports was later confirmed by K.N. Chaudhuri's econometric study, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company 1660-1760* (Cambridge, 1978). A soviet author named A. I. Chicherov presented an argument in *Indian Economic Development in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Moscow, 1971) which Moreland would not have supported: that Mughal India was

undergoing an endogenous capitalist development which was cut off by the ascendancy of foreign monopoly capital under the English East India Company. That this is unlikely to have been the case is shown by the reputed Marxist historian Irfan Habib in 'The Potentialities of Capitalist Development in the Economy of Mughal India', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. XXIX, 1969. Habib demonstrated the sophistication of the Mughal urban economy, but like Moreland he emphasized its parasitic relationship with the heavily taxed rural economy. For the colonial period, R.C. Dutt's *Economic History* was followed by a series of works: D.R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times* (1924); Vera Anstey, *The Economic Development of India* (1929); and D.H. Buchanan, *The Development of Capitalistic Enterprise in India* (New York 1934). More recently, there has been a collective two-volume survey; Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol 1, C.1200 – C.1750* (Cambridge 1982); and Dharma Kumar (ed), *The Cambridge Economic History of India, vol. 2 C.1757 – C.1970* (Cambridge, 1983). Daniel Houston Buchanan, an American author, was of the opinion that other-worldly values and the caste system inhibited economic development in India. D.R. Gadgil, who updated his near classic work several times, emphasised, on the contrary, more strictly economic factors: the difficulties of capital mobilisation on account of the absolute smallness of capital resources in respect to the size of the population, the late development of organised banking, and the seasonal fluctuations of a monsoon economy. A dispassionate economist, he did not blame either foreign rule or the Indian social structure for the absence of an industrial revolution in India; some of the Western contributors to the second volume of *The Cambridge Economic History*, on the other hand, showed a disposition to challenge R.C. Dutt's vision of the negative impact of colonialism, and they dwelt instead on the technological backwardness of the Indian economy. This, in their view, inhibited industrial development and capitalist enterprise during the colonial period.

8.4 STATISTICAL INQUIRIES

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The colonial administration had produced vast body of annual official statistics. After independence, economic historians utilized these statistics to interpret long-term trends in national income and agricultural and industrial production. The two seminal works in this respect were by George Blyn on agricultural production and by S. Sivasubramonian on national income. Both authors based their conclusions on detailed statistical information set out in tabular form, so that other historians might draw their own conclusions from the tables. George Blyn's work was entitled *Agricultural Trends in India 1891-1947: Output, Availability and Productivity* (Philadelphia, 1966). S. Sivasubramonian's thesis at the Delhi School of Economics. 'National Income of India 1900-01 to 1946-47, (1965) was later published in expanded form, including the post-independence period, as *The National Income of India in the Twentieth Century*, (New Delhi, 2000). Blyn discovered that agricultural production in India showed adverse trends after 1920. The negative trends were especially pronounced in what he called the Greater Bengal region, which included Bihar and Orissa. There was declining per capita food availability in the late colonial period. S. Sivasubramonian demonstrated that the national income of India grew slowly in the period between 1900-1947, since agriculture, which was the principal sector in the economy, did not perform well. Industrial production expanded more perceptibly, especially because of the rapid growth of factory industry. On S. Sivasubramonian's evidence, there is no question of any 'deindustrialisation' having occurred in India between 1900-1947. There is no comparable statistical series for the nineteenth century. The issue of deindustrialisation is therefore very much alive as regards the nineteenth century. Since factory industry did not account for an appreciable part of industrial production at the time, the issue boils down to the question whether cottage industries declined in that century. In a well-publicized controversy during the 1960's, Morris David Morris argued, against his opponents, that the cotton weavers benefited from the cheaper threads from Britain, but since neither side could produce any statistical series, the controversy, embodied in M.D. Morris et al, *Indian Economy in the Nineteenth Century: a Symposium* (Delhi, 1969), produced more heat than light. In yet another controversy, later on, Amiya Kumar Bagchi, in

an article entitled ‘Deindustrialization in Gangetic Bihar 1809 – 1901’, produced statistical evidence from Buchanan Hamilton’s survey that the proportion of people employed in cottage industries went down drastically in the nineteenth century. The article, published in Barun De (ed.), *Essays in Honour of Professor Susobhan Chandra Sarkar* (New Delhi, 1976), provoked a critique by Marika Vicziany, who doubted the reliability of the statistical data from Buchanan Hamilton. Her critique, entitled ‘The Deindustrialization of India in Nineteenth Century: A Methodological critique of Amiya Kumar Bagchi’, along with ‘A Reply’ by Amiya Kumar Bachi, came out in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol 16,1979. Subsequently, J. Krishnamurty, in ‘Deindustrialization in Gangetic Bihar during the nineteenth Century: Another Look at the Evidence’, *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 22, 1985, argued that the qualitative evidence was in favour of Bagchi’s decline thesis. More recently, Tirthankar Roy, in *Traditional Industry in the Economy of Colonial India* (Cambridge, 1999), has once again argued against any decline in the nineteenth century, but except for Bagchi, nobody else in this controversy has been able to adduce any statistical data from contemporary sources. As regards the eighteenth century, when the East India Company imposed a monopoly on textile exports, the Bangladeshi scholar Hameeda Hossein has produced evidence of terrible coercion upon the weavers in *The Company Weavers of Bengal: The East India Company and the Organisation of Textile Production in Bengal 1750 – 1813* (Delhi, 1988).

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. What do you know about the Colonial and Nationalistic Writings?

.....
.....
.....

2. Discuss about the Pre-colonial Economy and Colonial Trends.

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.....
3. What is Statistical Inquiries?
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8.5 TOWN AND COUNTRY

The beginnings of modern Indian business enterprise in the early 19th century have been traced by Blair B. Kling in *Partnership in Empire: Dwarkanath Tagore and the Age of Enterprise in Eastern India* (Berkeley, 1976), and by Asiya Siddiqui in ‘The Business World of Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy’ (*Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol 21, 1982). Private European enterprise in the colonial port cities of the nineteenth century has been sketched in *Amales Tripahi, Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency 1793-1833* (Calcutta, 1979) and, for the subsequent period, when managing agency houses became dominant, in *Radhe Shyam Rungta, The Rise of Business Corporations in India 1851-1900* (Cambridge, 1970). Big Indian enterprise on the model of Dwarkanath Tagore and Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy suffered a setback in the colonial port cities as European capital became gradually monopolistic, but as C.A. Bayly has shown in an influential work entitled *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion 1770 – 1870* (Cambridge, 1983), Indian traders fared better in the inland markets by adjusting to colonial rule. Essays by several historians regarding the colonial impact upon the Indian economy are collected together in *K.N. Chaudhuri and C.J. Dewey (eds.), Economy and Society* (New Delhi, 1979), and *C.J. Dewey and A.G. Hopkins (eds.) The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of India and Africa* (London, 1978). Some of these essays presented new conclusions, especially on markets, industrial policy, and agrarian society. Many regional economic histories have appeared over time, two well-known works being *N.K. Sinha, The Economic History of Bengal*, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1965, 1970) and *C.J. Baker, An Indian Rural Economy: the*

Tamil Nad Countryside 1880 – 1950 (New Delhi, 1984). There is also one micro–history of economic and social change in a single Punjab Village over time by Tom Kessinger, entitled *Vilayatpur 1848 – 1968: Social and Economic Change in a North Indian Village* (Berkeley, 1974). The biggest British investments in the Indian economy, designed for imperial rather than national benefit, were in railways and canals. These investments did not bring about the sort of industrial growth witnessed in Germany, Russia and Japan in the nineteenth century, and hardly improved per acre agricultural productivity over the land as a whole. There were harmful ecological side effects, and famines continued to visit the rural population time and again. These themes are explored in Danial Thorner, *Investment in Empire* (Philadelphia, 1950); Daniel Thorner. ‘Great Britain and the Economic Development of India’s Railways’, *Journal of Economic History*, vol XI, 1951; Elizabeth Whitcombe, *Agrarian Conditions in Northern India: the United Provinces under British Rule, 1660 – 1900* (Berkeley, 1972); and Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: an Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (International Labour Organisation, 1981), a brilliant essay by the Nobel Laureate economist showing that famines could occur because of adverse movements in prices and wages even when the food stocks were available.

8.6 INDUSTRIALISATION

The twentieth century in its first half witnessed a certain degree of industrialisation, but there was no industrial revolution, nor any economic break-through despite an appreciable growth of large-scale industry before 1947. Historians have differed on why there was no ‘take-off’. The Marxist economist Amiya Kumar Bagchi, in *Private Investment in India 1900 – 1939* (Cambridge, 1972), and the non-Marxist historian, Rajat K. Ray, in *Industrialization in India: Growth and Conflict in the Private Corporate Sector 1914 – 1947* (New Delhi, 1979) both argued that colonial policies were responsible for this. Morris D. Morris, an American economic historian of note, argues, on the contrary, in his contribution to the second volume of the *Cambridge Economic History of India* (1983), that the technological backwardness of the

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Indian economic structure blocked the sustained growth of investment in large-scale industry. Subsequently B.R. Tomlinson, a historian who hardly took a side in the dispute, nevertheless observed, in his *The Economy of Modern India 1860 – 1970* (New Cambridge History of India, Vol III, Cambridge, 1993), that ‘a ruthless insistence by government on strategic priorities limited the expansion’ of Indian industry during the Second World War, when there were new opportunities. By then, there was a large Indian capitalist class locked in a struggle with European capital in India. Its growth, and internal tensions, is studied in Claude Markovitz, *Indian Business and Nationalist Politics 1931-1939. The Indigenous Capitalist Class and the Rise of the Congress Party* (Cambridge, 1985). By common consent, the explanation of backwardness is no longer sought in social values and customs. The political factor in economic backwardness or growth is still, however, a matter of dispute.

8.7 POWER RELATION IN COLONIAL INDIA

The decisive transition India embarked upon nearly two decades ago has developed through an interplay of perceptions that has created the intellectual conditions needed, both in India and abroad, for change to materialize. At the end of the 1980s, India was stuck in a paradox. On the one hand, it was the direct heir of a brilliant civilization anchored in 3,000 years of intellectual and material accomplishments, and it was also on the verge of becoming, after China, the second country on Earth whose population exceeded 1 billion – which occurred in 2000. On the other hand, its historical depth and demographic expanse were not matched by the country’s economic and diplomatic status. Though it had 15% of the world’s population, India was contributing less than 1% of global trade. And on the geopolitical front, the glory days of the Non-Aligned Movement were over. India was not seated at the high table of global politics, alongside the five permanent members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council.

Today India is still outside the UN’s sanctum sanctorum, and its relative contribution to global trade has increased only marginally. Yet India’s

perception of itself has changed dramatically, as has its image of the world and, just as important, the new image the world has of India. “India Everywhere” was the motto chosen by the large Indian delegation to the Davos Summit of 2006. Matters of concern, old and new, remain to be addressed, but India has clearly entered a new historical phase. From 1947 to the 1980s, it was a post-colonial country, cast in the mould thoughtfully crafted by Jawaharlal Nehru and set on its way, though in slow motion. Today, India is a post-post-colonial country, whose decision-makers believe that the Nehruvian paradigm has to be adjusted to new realities. They have not forgotten the past or its legacy, but they have begun to look with a renewed confidence to the future of a “resurgent India.” They believe that globalization is more of an opportunity than a challenge.

However, India’s status today is ambiguous. It is, by all accounts, the dominant power in South Asia, but it has been unable to achieve fully normalized relations with its largest neighbors, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Indian media and noted analysts celebrate Indian Unbound (Das, 2002), and publish volumes entitled India Empowered (Gupta, 2006) and India: The Next Global Superpower? (Bhandare, 2007). Yet there is a clear difference between “global reach” and “global power.” While top political leaders may sometimes recall that “the emergence of India as a major global power [is] an idea whose time [has] come,” they usually prefer to define India as “a self-confident and united nation moving forward to gain its rightful place in the comity of nations” – a somewhat less enthusiastic formulation (Singh, 2008).

By definition, “emerging India” is still in the process of transition. A regional power expanding its circle of influence beyond the confines of South Asia, emerging India is becoming a global player as well, though still without being a full-fledged global power.

As prime minister from 1947 to 1964, Jawaharlal Nehru defined the paradigm according to which post-colonial India was to be built. It had three decisive components: on the political front, a strong parliamentary democracy; on the economic front, a mixed system in which the state played a strong role, albeit the private sector remained active under protectionist barriers; on the diplomatic front, the principle

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of non-alignment. By the 1980s, however, the Nehruvian paradigm had shown its limitations. The polity was strained under Indira Gandhi, and the Congress Party had to cope with defeat in general elections. Overly bureaucratized, the economy was growing too slowly to make a decisive dent in the massive poverty that prevailed. On the international front, the economic success of the “Asian Tigers,” the spectacular rise of China and the weakening of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), were testing India’s established lines. A young prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, was keen to prepare the “entry of India into the 21st century” – a leitmotiv of his discourse – but the half-baked reforms he introduced after 1985 plunged the fragile government that succeeded him into an acute financial crisis in 1991.

Soon after, the two main competing political forces made two major decisions that paved the way for the emergence of India. In 1991, the Congress Party, now voted back into power, set about implementing a policy of controlled economic reforms. From an annual average of +3.9% in 1984–1988, the growth rate rose to +6.2% in 1992–1996 and to +8.7% in 2003–2007. In 1998, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the political wing of the Hindu nationalist family, decided to openly test nuclear weapons, breaking what Indian analysts had termed a “nuclear apartheid” that, through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), protected the nuclear monopoly of five powers, which just so happened also to be the sole permanent members of the UN Security Council. Sanctions were imposed on India, but the country had been subject to a strict technology denial regime in any case since its first and lone “peaceful nuclear explosion” in 1974; it seemed more important to the BJP to assert India’s strategic autonomy than worry about penalties. The new paths embarked upon during the 1990s have met with broad political consensus: neither the Congress Party’s careful liberalization nor the BJP’s nuclear option have been modified, regardless of whatever coalition has since been in power.

7The dynamics of change were not set rolling by the state power alone. Increasingly, Indian civil society made its voice heard. Dominated castes fought to expand positive discrimination in their quest for empowerment. The ruling classes had to adjust. Higher education, the successes of the

Indian diaspora and the lure of new jobs in the private sector raised expectations and favored initiatives.

All in all, a new mindset emerged during the 1990s and continued to assert itself after 2000. The country's leadership started to feel "a new sense of hope and purpose, a new sense of self-confidence" shaping India's worldview (Singh, 2005). But India still had to tackle a troubled legacy of mistrust and conflict with its neighbors, and to address socio-economic challenges at home, for the economic boom was not benefiting everyone. Indian leaders decided not to wait for regional normalization before embarking on an ambitious programme of global diplomacy, just as, more classically, they decided not to wait to eradicate poverty before encouraging dynamic Indian companies to enter global competition.

Conflicting Perceptions in South Asia: Hegemony and Connectivity

The syndrome of the 1947 Partition, which left two nations after the British Raj departed, has been so strong that even today the regional power India enjoys due to the mere fact of its size and weight is somehow blurred. The long history of wars, tensions, and mistrust between Pakistan and India, particularly regarding Kashmir, has prevented the entire region from developing truly positive relations. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was initiated in 1985 by India's neighbors as a way to engage New Delhi collectively, beyond unbalanced bilateral frameworks. It remains uncertain whether SAARC's decision to implement a South Asia Free Trade Area by 2016 will materialize. Bangladesh is still reluctant to sell gas to India, and has not given Delhi transit rights to India's northeastern states and Burma, just as Pakistan has not given India transit rights to Afghanistan. South Asia is an odd case, where neighbors trade much more with distant countries than among themselves.

Many of India's neighbors have long maintained that India is a regional hegemon, capitalizing on striking asymmetries to promote its own interests: India accounts for 60% of the land area, 75% of the population and 80% of the GDP of South Asia. Pakistanis refer to the situation in Kashmir, and the secession of Bangladesh with the help of the Indian Army in 1971. Others point to the dubious record of the Indian Peace

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Keeping Force in Sri Lanka in 1987, the intervention in the Maldives in 1988 (at the request of President Gayoom), and the blockade of sorts of Nepal in 1989. However, India's supremacy has not prevented Pakistan from controlling half of Kashmir, raising a strong army, using Jihadist militias to engage in asymmetrical warfare, and conducting nuclear tests in 1998, a mere two weeks after India's own tests.

India's officials tell a different story. They insist that India – and not just Kashmir – has been subjected to “cross-border terrorism,” which has struck deep within its major cities. In 1998, the prime minister sought to justify India's nuclear tests on the grounds that the China-Pakistan nexus was causing a “deteriorating security environment” (Vajpayee, 1998). Faced with “armed aggression,” India prefers to define itself as a “benign power,” whose geopolitical philosophy derives from a millenary tradition of soft power. The influence it had gained in Asia over the centuries was said to be the result from trade and the spread of its ideas (e.g., Buddhism), not military conquest.

Indeed, Indian hawks lament that their leadership lacks a real strategic tradition, and feel that talk of a “benevolent India” is just a formula masking the nation's weakness. The Indian leadership does not care, however, and follows a double path. On the one hand, it is modernizing the arsenal of one of the largest military forces in the world. On the other hand, trade, economy, and cooperation have been upgraded to key instruments in the Indian toolbox for regional diplomacy. In 1997, the “Gujral Doctrine” claimed that, when dealing with its smaller neighbors, India “does not ask for reciprocity, but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust” (Gujral, 1997). Today, New Delhi's diplomats call for “connectivity” and consider that “what can best secure India's interests in the region would be building a web of ‘dense interdependencies’ with our neighbours. We must give our neighbours a stake in our own economic prosperity” (Saran, 2006).

Atal Behari Vajpayee, the BJP prime minister, had these points in mind when he decided to “extend a hand of friendship” to Pakistan (Bukhari, 2003), after months of intense military mobilization following a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament. The “composite dialogue” opened between India and Pakistan in 2004 and progressed slowly but

continuously, as never before. Kashmir remains an unresolved issue, but it is not the hot spot it had been for the previous 18 years. Nuclear deterrence has played a positive role: the acute tensions in 1999–2002 have shown all that limited war under a nuclear umbrella is too risky an option.

A Rising Asian Power

The Look East Policy

In 1992, one year after redefining its economic policy, New Delhi initiated its “Look East Policy” towards Southeast Asian countries. In 1996, India became a “full dialogue partner” of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and joined the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). China objected to India’s joining the ASEAN+3 structure, but in 2005 New Delhi scored points when India became a founding member of the new annual East Asia Summit. For Southeast Asian countries, the rise of India is good news. Economically, it provides opportunities. Strategically, India is now able to offset somewhat China’s dominant influence in the region, despite the asymmetry between China and India. On the diplomatic and economic fronts, New Delhi is promoting new regional cooperation. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for MultiSectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), launched in 1997, has provided a new framework for the rim countries of the Bay of Bengal: Bangladesh, India, Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Nepal and Bhutan joined the organization in 2003. It is not as structured as SAARC, nor is the Ganga Mekong Cooperation, launched in 2000 with Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Burma – a pale competitor to the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) project linking the latter countries to the Chinese province of Yunnan – but these initiatives enable India to build more links with neighboring countries. On the security front, India is multiplying bilateral and multilateral initiatives, particularly at sea. The Indian Navy is not only bound to be a part of India’s “nuclear triad,” but it also expects to become a “blue water” force, protecting the strategic oil route linking the Gulf of Ormuz to the Malacca Straits, as well as east of Singapore.

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After the success of its “Look East Policy,” India is now paying more attention to the other side of its extended neighborhood: West Asia. Since 1992, it has cultivated strong relations with Israel – its second largest provider of military equipment after Russia – while building on its older ties with Arab countries, particularly with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members, which provide India with 66% of its ever increasing oil imports. An important diaspora, energy security, trade, investments, and joint concerns about terrorist networks define a common agenda. With Iran, the stakes are more complex. Opposed to Iran’s military nuclear program, India has twice voted with the US to place the issue on the UN Security Council’s agenda, but India opposes any use of force against a country it recognizes as a natural regional power, and with whom it is in the process of negotiating, along with Pakistan, the construction of an innovative gas pipeline. Furthermore, India and Iran have joint interests regarding Afghanistan, where New Delhi deploys an active cooperation policy.

The regional “great game” with Pakistan and China is expanding as well to Central Asia. India now has an observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the body by means of which China and Russia keep most Central Asian republics in their respective orbits. In Tajikistan, India has opened a small air base (its only one abroad) close to Afghanistan – and not far from Pakistan.

In South Asia and in its extended neighborhood, emerging India has scores to settle with China. The memory of the Indo-China War of 1962 has not faded, nor of China’s support for Pakistan’s nuclear program. Certainly, India’s increased spending on defense – particularly its missile program – has much to do with China, but this policy of deterrence is not motivated by a rationale of open confrontation. Competition and cooperation between Beijing and New Delhi are more the order of the day, for China now takes India seriously. Talks on their disputed boundary are not progressing much, but state visits have multiplied, and bilateral trade is booming: in 2007 China overtook the US as India’s second largest trade partner after the European Union. The two countries may compete for energy the world over, but they have also shared

interests – such as in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and concerning environmental issues.

The rise of India is therefore transforming the geopolitics of Asia, and Japan has not missed the point. The “strategic and global partnership” between Tokyo and New Delhi was upgraded in 2006, for Japan, like other East Asian countries, is not averse to a more powerful India to counterbalance the rise of China. This new geometry of the three major Asian powers, however unequal they may be, is not just an Asian affair: it is the Asian facet of the global chessboard on which a key power is at play: America.

India as a Global Player

The New Relationship with America

For India the current rapprochement between New Delhi and Washington is the most significant diplomatic change in a decade. Less than two years after imposing sanctions against nuclearized India, President Clinton made a state visit to India, celebrating the common values between the world’s “oldest” and “largest” democracies. The Bush administration went further, encouraging “India’s emergence as a positive force on the world scene,” for “a strong democratic India is an important partner for the United States. We anticipate that India will play an increasingly important leadership role in 21st century Asia, working with us to promote democracy, economic growth, stability and peace in that vital region” (Burns and Joseph, 2005). In 2004, the US and India signed the “Next Steps in Strategic Partnership” (NSSP) initiative as the basis for expanded dialogues on civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-tech trade, and missile defense. The next year, President Bush began negotiations with Prime Minister Singh on an agreement to supply equipment and fuel for India’s civilian nuclear energy program, making a clear exception for India, which would normally not be eligible for such a deal as a non-signatory of the NPT. In 2006, the US Congress amended the US Atomic Energy Act of 1954, and India also entered into negotiations with the IAEA over the latter’s surveillance of India’s civilian nuclear energy facilities; following the IAEA’s recommendation, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) will have finally to approve such a

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deal, supported by Moscow, Paris, and London. The left and the BJP have accused the government of weakening India's strategic autonomy by making a deal that is suspected of having strings attached. Manmohan Singh narrowly won a vote of confidence in Parliament in August 2008, saving perhaps the possibility of concluding the deal before George W. Bush leaves office.

In fact Singh's policy does not promote a full-fledged alliance with the US, but rather a partnership based on two objectives: first, the normalization of relations between two countries that have long been "estranged democracies" because of non-alignment; second, the cultivation of its relationship with Washington for India's own benefit – for India has enough room to maneuver and need not put all its eggs in one basket. There is certainly a temptation to jump on the US bandwagon in order to approach the high table, and Delhi and Washington share a number of strategic interests in Asia and in the Indian Ocean. But that does not mean that India would join a US-sponsored "League of Democracies," which would draw the country into sphere in which Australia and Japan are already firmly established.

Playing All Cards: A Global Diplomacy

New Delhi finds its ties with Washington and Tokyo useful to offset China's rise, but at the same time India is also trying to normalize its relations with Beijing. In 2005, both countries entered into a "strategic partnership for peace and security" – one of a dozen "strategic dialogues" that India has launched with major countries over the past decade. New Delhi is cultivating old ties with Russia as well. The annual Russia-China-India summit, which began in 2005, does not prefigure an Eurasia bloc opposed to the West, but helps to keep options open. Moreover, US interest in India does not preclude significant points of divergence, beyond the use of force in international relations (Iraq, and eventually Iran). Regarding both the reform of the UN Security Council and the failed negotiations of the Doha Round at the WTO, India has yet to receive the support or the concessions expected from Washington. European countries are more positive about UN reform but less about

agriculture; and beyond the WTO disagreements, India has not neglected the European Union, its principal trade partner.

In 2004 India joined a North-South group with Germany, Japan, and Brazil and called for permanent membership in the UN Security Council. But India has also been a key player in the South-South cooperation, which caused the 2003 WTO Summit in Cancun to end in failure. Among the Group of 20, which was established to pressure the US and the EU to reduce subsidies to their farmers, India and Brazil remain the key countries battling to protect their poor farmers. In this context, the Non-Aligned Movement is seen as a useful platform for exchanging views and trading influence: a tool that may help India in its global multilateral negotiations, whether in the UN or the WTO. In addition to global trade regulations, India is expanding its economic stakes in the South. New Delhi has sought to cultivate a new image of India, as is evidenced by the first India-Africa Forum Summit held in India in March 2008. More focused, the IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) annual summits have been encouraging since 2006 cooperation in all fields among three key emerging countries on three continents.

In short, today India is systematically deploying a multi-directional diplomacy, which the government itself calls “a proactive and vigorous foreign policy, seeking to develop strategic partnerships with all the major powers in the world” (Mukherjee, 2007b).

Hard Power, Soft Power, and Challenges to Power

The Rise of Hard Power

With a 10% increase in its defense budget, India has allocated \$26 billion for its 1.3-million-man military force for 2008–2009 (at 2.5% of GDP) and plans to spend some \$40 billion over the next five years to upgrade its equipment, tapping foreign expertise as well as its own resources. India’s missile program is constantly upgraded, and its deterrence capacity against China will certainly improve after the success of the IRBM Agni III tests in 2007 and 2008. At home, New Delhi redefined in 2004 its strategy against Pakistan (the “cold start doctrine”) and is building what could become Asia’s largest navy base at Karwar, on its West Coast. Nevertheless, India is still not a major global military power.

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Its force projection capacity is still extremely limited, and its only global reach has been through its long contribution to UN peace-keeping forces. In this field, as in many others, India's transitional status is clear: on the one hand, the limitations are many; on the other hand, its desire to progress and its trust in the future are in play. The same could be said of its space program: India is clearly an emerging power in the field.

Soft Power

The soft power of emerging India is multifaceted. Long a major recipient of foreign aid, India is now a donor – though a modest one. Indian intellectuals and artists are contributing to India's new global reach. Contemporary novelists – not only diaspora prize-winners such as Salman Rushdie – are more and more translated, and Bollywood films have become fashionable abroad. In addition to being Silicon Valley engineers or NASA scientists, Indian academics have joined the faculties of Ivy League universities. Activists struggling in India but well-connected abroad should not be forgotten: the world over, the fight against large dams or against multinationals such as Monsanto owes much to emblematic figures, such as Medha Patkar, Vandana Shiva, or Arundhati Roy, the Booker Prize-winning novelist.

The Indian diaspora in the US (2 million people) greatly contributes to India's soft power. Beyond investments and the reverse brain drain of highly qualified professionals, it has developed a lobbying capacity with the executive and the Congress, which has played a considerable role in changing India's image – and US policy. Cultivating the members of the diaspora, the Indian government has now set up a Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs, which organizes an annual gathering to celebrate their achievements, be they “Non-resident Indians” or “People of Indian Origin,” who are no longer Indian citizens.

The New Global Economic Dimension

Between hard and soft power, today the economic field, along with New Delhi geopolitical choices, is at the heart of India's rising status. Again, although India is not yet a major global player, it is well on its way to becoming one; indeed, “if things go right,” the BRIC Report suggests,

“India’s economy . . . could be larger than Japan’s by 2032” (Wilson and Purushothaman, 2003: 3). India’s external trade has greatly developed. It doubled between 1990 and 2000, and trebled between 2000–2001 and 2006–2007, at \$312 billion (trade deficit: \$59 billion).

Today “India Incorporated” is going global. Major Indian IT players, such as Infosys and Wipro, have paved the way, but enterprises with multinational ambitions are not confined to the service sector or to generic drug companies, such as Ranbaxy or Cipla. The industry sector is now looking to become competitive abroad and cultivate markets. India has increased its share of Foreign Direct Investments and portfolio investments (\$35 billion in 2007) – though it is still behind China. It has also become a noted investor abroad, having invested more than \$20 billion in 2006, ahead of China. The Tata Group offers a perfect example of the vibrancy of the advanced private sector: in 2000, Tata Tea bought Tetley (UK) for \$437 million; in 2007, Tata Steel bought Corus, an Anglo-Dutch Company, for \$11 billion; and in 2008, Tata Motors bought Jaguar and Land Rover for \$2.65 billion. Indian companies invest more in Great Britain today than British companies do in India.

For all its new dynamism, however, India’s economic clout is limited. The GDP crossed the \$1 trillion line in 2007, but India still ranks 12th, far behind China, whose GDP is three times larger. On the purchasing power parity (PPP) index, India now ranks 4th behind the US, China, and Japan, but by GDP (on PPP) per capita, India shows poorly at 114th, a rank close to its low status on the Human Development Index, where it is 128th, the last again among the BRIC countries.

Challenges to Power

Other challenges have to be addressed. India will enjoy a demographic “window of opportunity” around 2020, when it will have the world’s largest working-aged population. This is promising, provided that these young workers find employment. However, jobs are uncertain; economists suggest that the remarkable rise of India’s GDP has brought more growth and inequalities than real development. Besides investment in infrastructure, massive investment in education and health is imperative, for the large rural population needs to be better trained so as

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to improve productivity or to enable movement to other jobs. Energy security is another issue: India imports two-thirds of its oil requirements, and neither alternative energies nor nuclear energy will meet the demands in the medium term. Last but not least, the agricultural crisis, the growth of urban metropolises, and the need for energy will accentuate challenges regarding the environment, particularly climate change. This is a field where India and China assert their “right to grow” against calls from the West for restraint and observance of the Kyoto Protocol.

“Resurgent India”: What Power to Be?

Emerging countries, China and India particularly, raise very challenging questions about the new world order redrawn by the “reawakening” of Asia. Could this be a prelude to an “Asian century”?

From a long-term historical perspective, the sequence opened by the European Renaissance and its legacy – the Great Discoveries, the Enlightenment, and Asian subjugation – is coming to an end. Today, neither China nor India is a bystander of history. They have become global players, but the debate on their future status is ongoing. They face some structural challenges regarding tensions within or the consolidation of the nation unity. Other challenges bear on their capacity for sustained growth. Yet they definitely have shown themselves to be economic powerhouses, both in the knowledge and services economy and through their rejuvenation of their industrial capacities. Will China and India therefore be able to dominate the world tomorrow? Diana Hochraich (2007), and others, answer in the negative for two reasons: the financial clout and the innovation capacity of established powers – first and foremost, the US, as well as the European Union and Japan – will remain much larger for a long while yet. Despite its emphasis on science and technology, India (like China) still invests little in research and development: less than 1% of the global expenditure, and there is much hype in claims that there are now 3 billion new capitalists in emerging countries (Prestowitz, 2005). In *The World Is Flat*, Thomas Friedman (2005) celebrated the promise of globalization. Prestowitz, by contrast, predicts for America “an economic 9/11” at the hands of China, India,

and Russia. There is certainly “a great shift” in the works, but its precise extent and its possible consequences are still far from clear.

From a geopolitical perspective, what does India’s resurgence imply? New Delhi has called for a reformed and equitable multilateral system, one more open to emerging countries. India will probably become a member of the G13 (the present G8 enlarged to include India, China, Brazil, South Africa, and Mexico) before the UN Security Council is reformed. In fact, the real goal of Indian leaders is a mix of multipolarity and multilateralism – multipolarity so as to enter the circle of states that count; multilateralism so as to balance relations between these leading but unequal powers.

Is this mere realpolitik? India has sought to invent its own way to be a democracy by adjusting caste to competitive politics. It also has its own way to be capitalist and market-oriented. It might as well invent its own way to be a rising power and perhaps, tomorrow, a global power – one among many. When India’s Foreign Minister, Pranab Mukherjee (2007a), noted that “Today, there is unprecedented engagement and cooperation among major powers,” and suggested that “what the world needs, then, is not old style balance of power but a well-crafted system to promote a ‘balance of interests’ among the major powers,” when he said that regional security arrangements also need to ensure “a balance of interest among states,” he expressed India’s expectations in its present phase of emergence as a global player: the pursuit of its interests, but also the pursuit of balance among actors. That does not preclude competition or even rivalries, but it does require negotiation. If the Indian dream materializes in this way, the legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru would have survived, in a world far different from the one that existed when colonized India first became a free country.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. Discuss about the Town and Country.

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2. What is meant by Industrialisation?
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3. Discuss the Power Relation in Colonial India.
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8.8 LET US SUM UP

The economic policies of the colonial rulers were at the centre of a controversy in the late 19th century India. Whereas the colonial administration sought to project its policies as beneficial to the country, the nationalist writers and sympathetic British commentators attacked these policies as exploitative and oppressive. Dadabhai Naoroji, R.C. Dutt and William Digby were some of the famous critics of government policies. The economic history of India, as we know it, may be said to have begun during this period. D.R. Gadgil, Vera Anstey and D.H. Buchanan followed in their footsteps in taking up the economic history of the colonial period. Jaduanth Sarkar and W.H. Moreland wrote about the Mughal economy. In the post-independence period, economic history became an established field of study and several studies were undertaken on various periods of Indian history covering several aspects of economy

8.9 KEY WORDS

Pre-Colonial Era: The pre-colonial period broadly refers to the span of time prior to the introduction of European colonialism in areas across the world.

Industrialisation: Industrialisation is the period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an

industrial society. This involves an extensive re-organisation of an economy for the purpose of manufacturing.

8.10 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1) Discuss the views of various authors on the economic history of pre-colonial India.
- 2) What are the differences between colonialist and nationalist works on Indian economic history? Answer with examples.
- 3) Write short notes on the following with reference to the economic history of India :
 - a) Industrialisation
 - b) Town and country.

8.11 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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8.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 8.2
2. See Section 8.3
3. See Section 8.4

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 8.5
2. See Section 8.6
3. See Section 8.7

UNIT 9: INVISIBLE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMY

STRUCTURE

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Concept of work
- 9.3 Gender Roles: Sexual Division of Labour
- 9.4 Types of Work Women Perform
- 9.5 Enumeration of Women's Work
- 9.6 Importance of Visibility of Women's Work
- 9.7 Feminist Debates
- 9.8 Redefining Work
- 9.9 Let us sum up
- 9.10 Key Words
- 9.11 Questions for Review
- 9.12 Suggested readings and references
- 9.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the concept and meaning of work;
- Analyse the type of work women perform at home and at the place of work; and
- Discuss the implications of under enumeration of women's work.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In this Unit of the 'Women in the Economy', you will get a holistic understanding of what constitutes work for women both in public and private spaces and how do the two interface in the lives of women. In the beginning you will read about how the concept of 'work' has been defined by international agencies and what have been the definitions of work in Indian system of accounting, what kind of changes the concept has undergone to reach its present understanding. The next section

focuses on facets of work women perform in society, how it is always undervalued, remains under- enumerated in national economy and by women themselves. In the last section of the Unit you will read about why it is important for work done by women to be duly valued and made visible in national economy by redefining the whole concept of work vis-a-vis women. The unit also discusses on feminist debates on the issue of women and work.

9.2 CONCEPT OF WORK

Women's lives are unavoidably connected to their households. There are two dimensions within which they work – within households and outside them. Therefore, women's work cannot be understood in isolation from the larger social and economic structures within which households and economies are located. We must first of all define what constitutes 'work'. Does it cover only those activities which are undertaken outside the home, and is paid for, and fall under the purview of 'economic activity'?

Box. No. 1 When one looks at work from a gender perspective, the very definition of what constitutes work becomes a contested domain. It is now widely accepted that realm of work is not a 'gender neutral' sphere where only qualifications, skills, performance determines a person's entry or progression in any occupation/profession. Gender is a valid determining factor with regards to available options and choices a person makes, wages earned and availing opportunities or upward mobility.

United Nations Organisation estimates that women constitute half of the world's population, perform two-third of the world's work, earn one-tenth of the world's income and own one-hundredth of world's property. This UN statistics make it very evident that gender inequality with respect to women's work and its valuation is grossly under enumerated.

Box. No 2 International Labour Organisation (ILO) data on labour force participation for persons aged 15 years and above in India was 55.6% in 2011, while it was 69.9% in Brazil and 74.1% in China. In the same year, the worker (15 years and above) to population ratio was 53.6% in India, while it was 64.8% in Brazil and 70.9% in China.(Shaw, 2013, p.25)

Let us review the situation of Indian workforce according to the latest available estimates (NSSO, 68th Round, 2011-12)

- In 2011-12, 36.4% of the Indian population was active in the labour force, that is, either working or actively seeking work according to the UPS.
- Of the total population, 35.4% were employed and 2.7% were unemployed. • In terms of type of employment, 50% of Indian workers were selfemployed, 20% were employed on a regular wage or salary and 29% were on a casual wage.
- In terms of participation in the labour force, the proportion of males in both rural and urban areas was much higher than that of females.
- Further, rural female participation in the labour force fell in 2011-2012, just as it had after 2004-2005 and 2009-10. The trend for rural female participation, saw a drastic fall after an increase in 2004-05. Urban female participation, which also increased in 2004-05, fell in 2009-10 and then increased marginally in 2011-12, but to a level lower than that in 2004-05.
- In general, female participation in the labour force has been low and is falling. This decline in participation of females in the labour force, especially in rural areas, has been dubbed 'de-feminisation' (Abraham 2013). Further, no significant increase in the proportion of female workers was in either secondary sector or tertiary sector employment in rural areas. This is in keeping with the trend of fewer women in work, especially in rural India.
- Urban female workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors have grown as a proportion of total workers in the last decade or so, but this increase is meager, relative to the number of women leaving the labour force in rural areas.(Shaw, 2013)

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In the following paragraphs, let us reflect on some of the ways by which 'work' and 'worker' has been defined by different Indian agencies and also by international ones. Census was the primary source of data on employment in the country till National Sample Survey Organisation(NSSO) started carrying out nation wide surveys in 1990's. In 1951, Census classified 'worker' on the basis of income as 'self supporting persons' with sufficient income for maintenance and 'earning dependents' with income 'not sufficient for maintenance'. In 1961 census, the definition of worker was changed and it was based on duration of work with/ without remuneration. This 'duration of work' was considered more than one hour per day throughout the greater part of the working season for seasonal agricultural and household industry workers. For, 'other workers', the bench mark was, the duration of employment during any of the 15 days preceding the enumeration. In 1971 census, 'worker' was defined as someone whose main activity was participation in productive work. All those whose main activity was domestic work were categorized as 'non-workers', even if these people were engaged in some productive work. From 1981 census, enumeration of 'marginal workers' were also recorded. Thus, as a result of changes in definition of work/ worker, we see change in work scenario of the country. In 1961 census there was a surge in number of women workers which nose dived in 1971 census as it under reported women workers due to conceptual bias in definition of work that did not include unpaid family worker's as workers. Census in 1981 again plumated as a much larger and more variable number of marginal women workers could be incorporated in WPR. (Mazumdar and Neetha, 2011). 'Work' is defined as participation, which can be physical or mental in nature, in any economically productive activity, with or without receiving any kind of compensation/ wage in cash or kind. Any person engaged in 'work' as stated above is categorized as a 'worker' but mainly undertaken by women, can comprise of any of activity like unpaid work on farm, family enterprise, cultivation, milk production even for domestic consumption or some kind of part time work, all fall under the purview of work. Work also includes effective supervision and providing direction of work.

Census of India categorises 'workers' as main workers, marginal workers, cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industry workers, and other workers. These categories are defined as follows:

Main Worker: Those who worked for major part (six months or more) of the year preceding the date of enumeration (referred to as reference period). **Marginal Worker:** Persons who worked for less than six months of the reference period are termed as marginal workers.

Cultivator: A person who is engaged in cultivation of land owned by government, private institutions or persons as landlords for wages or payment in cash or kind, will fall under the category of 'cultivator'. For a person to fall under this category, the person should be involved in activities like ploughing, sowing, harvesting and post harvesting activities of crops other than plantation crops.

Agriculture Labourer: A person working on somebody's land for wages in money or kind, share basis and has no risk sharing in cultivation. This category of worker share no right in leasing, owning of the land on which s/he works.

Household Industry Worker: A worker who is working for an industry at home and within the precincts of the house where the household lives, in urban areas or within the village. The industry is not run at the scale of registered factory under the Indian Factories Act.

Other Workers: All workers who have been engaged in some economic activity during the last one year but do not fall under any of the above mentioned categories are called 'other workers'. Other workers may be employed as government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those engaged in trade/ commerce/ business, mining, construction, political or social work, priest; all fall under the category of 'other worker'.

Box. No. 3 Before issues of women's work and contribution were discussed internationally, women in India deliberated on the role of

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women in a planned economy. The congress party had constituted a National Planning Committee in 1939-40 and as part of this a sub-committee was set up which was supposed to advise on women. This sub-committee was chaired by Laxmibai Rajwade and had Mridula Sarabhai as member secretary. The report that was submitted by this sub-committee documents that a woman worker should have full control of her earnings; a ban should not be imposed on night work for women since it only excludes them, rather the hazardous nature of those occupations should be lessened; the family should not be seen as the economic unit since that assigns a secondary role to the women earners. The most significant contribution of the sub-committee was to suggest that the economic value of housework should be recognized and that women should get all the facilities and rights that workers do for domestic work. This document unfortunately did not receive the importance it should have. (Krishnaraj, 2000).

Let us now look at how NSSO categorises Indian workforce while carrying out nation wide surveys. The NSS categorises workers into three categories of employment and/ or activity status as (1) self employed (2) regular salaried and (3) casual labour. A higher proportion of the female workforce is always found to be concentrated in the 'self employed' category. Within the category of self employed, there are three sub categories namely, 'own account worker', 'employer' and people who are working as 'helpers' in household enterprise and are not paid. NSSO's definition of own account workers include a whole range of workers, especially women, who are engaged in 'piece wage' work at home. So, to according the status of self employment to this category of work, looks a misnomer as these worker and work for some entrepreneur/ traders or other kind of employers and receive wages for work completed on the basis of piece rate.(Mazumdar and Neetha, 2011). NSSO in its 68th Round on Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) report presents four categories of workers: usual principal status (UPS), usual principal subsidiary status (UPSS), current weekly status (CWS), and current daily status (CDS). (Krishnamurty and Raveendran, 2008, pp.6-9)

- **Usual Principal Status (UPS):** The labour force is typically measured through the usual principal activity status (UPS) which reflects working of an individual over a reference period of one year. A person is classified as belonging to labour force, if s/he had been either working or looking for work during longer part of the 365 days preceding the survey. In case, the total period of being within the labour force is equal to the total period out of it, priority is given to labour force participation. The UPS measure excludes from the labour force all those who are employed and/ or unemployed for a total of less than six months. Thus, persons who work intermittently, either because of the pattern of work in the household firm or enterprise or due to economic compulsions or other reasons, would not be included in the labour force unless their days of work and unemployment totaled over half the reference year.

- **Usual Principal and Subsidiary Status (UPSS):** The Usual principal and Subsidiary Status (UPSS) category was introduced to widen the UPS concept to include even those who were outside the labour force on the basis of the ‘majority time criterion’ but had been employed during some part of the year on a usual basis. In NSS 61st Round Survey, all those who were either unemployed or out of labour force but had worked for at least 30 days over the reference year were treated as subsidiary status workers. UPSS is thus a hybrid concept incorporating both the major time criterion and priority to work status.

- **Current Weekly Status (CWS):** The concept of Current Weekly Status (CWS) has been in use in labour surveys in India even before 1970, when the recommendations of the Dantwala Committee became available. It was primarily because the agencies like International Labour Organisation(ILO) use estimates of employment and unemployment rates based on weekly reference period for international comparisons. Under CWS, a person is classified to be in labour force, if s/he has either worked or is seeking and/ or available for work atleast, one hour during the reference period of one week preceding the date of survey. The classification under CWS is based on the status of each person during the last seven days. Priority is assigned to ‘working’ over ‘not working but

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seeking or available for work’, and to both ‘working’ and ‘not working but seeking or available for work’, over ‘neither working nor available for work’. The advantage of CWS is that it uses a shorter reference period of seven days and as such recall lapses are expected to be comparatively lower. Further, it facilitates easy classification and analysis by sub-rounds to identify seasonal patterns. The major disadvantage of CWS is that it classifies persons with very nominal work of even one hour during the reference week into work force and labour force.

- **Current Daily Status (CDS):** The Dantwala Committee proposed the use of Current Daily Status (CDS) rates for studying intensity of work. These are computed on the basis of the information on employment and unemployment recorded for the 14 half days of the reference week. The employment statuses during the seven days are recorded in terms of half or full intensities. An hour or more but less than four hours is taken as ‘half intensity’ and four hours or more is taken as ‘full intensity’. An advantage of this approach is that it is based on more complete information; it embodies the time utilisation, and does not accord priority to labour force over outside the labour force or work over unemployment, except in marginal cases. A disadvantage is that it related to person-days, not persons. Let us now read how International Labour Organisation (ILO) looks at ‘work’. The ILO has developed the concept of ‘decent work’. Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. Decent work has been defined by the ILO and endorsed by the international community as being productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers better prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all. ‘Decent Work Agenda’ is a balanced and integrated programmatic approach to pursuing the objective of full and

productive employment and decent work for all, at the global, regional, national, sectoral and local levels. It comprises of four pillars, namely:

- Employment creation and enterprise development;
- Social protection;
- Standards and rights at work;
- Governance and social dialogue (Source: ILO FAO Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work)

Women all around the world have been doing paid, underpaid and unpaid work in homes, factories, field, forests, mines and offices. Over and above, cooking, cleaning and caring, a large majority of women perform tasks such as collection of fuel, fodder, water, animal husbandry, kitchen gardening, raising poultry. All these activities augment family resources. If women would not do this work, these good/ services would have to be purchased. Moreover, women also produce babies thus provide future labour power for the economy. (Patel, 2014).

Box No. 4 The committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) was constituted by a resolution of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Government of India, on 22 September 1971 with Dr. Phulrenu Guha, then Union Minister for Social Welfare as Chairperson. The Committee was set up to review the changes in Indian women's status that were expected to result from constitutional equality, governmental policies and social reforms since independence. It was appointed at a time of increasing disillusionment with the development paradigm which was increasingly being questioned by women's movements in many countries. Pressure from these movements led to the adoption of the Declaration of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women by the UN General Assembly (1967). This was followed by a UN decision, requesting member states to submit reports on the status of women in their countries, in time for the International Women's Year (1975). The

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Report entitled “Towards Equality” was submitted to the Minister for Education and Social Welfare on 1st January 1975 and was tabled before the Parliament on 18th February 1975. Following a protracted discussion of the Committee’s findings, the Indian Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution authorizing the government to mount comprehensive legislative and administrative measures to remove the disabilities and discrimination that Indian women continued to suffer from. This report was a landmark in many respects and resulted in the initiation of several mechanisms with a focus on women’s development. Some of the major policy initiatives that followed the report were the setting up of Women’s Welfare and Development division in the Ministry of Social Welfare, formulation of a National Plan of Action for Women and enactment of important legislations for the protection of women’s rights. But beyond these, the major influence of the Report of the CSWI has been in reworking the perceptions of the government, women’s organizations, academics, the media and concerned individuals on the role and status of women.

It is time to assess your learning from the last few sections that you have finished reading in this Unit.

Check Your Progress 1

1) How do Census, NSSO and ILO define work?

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2) Write a few lines about

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- i) Main, Marginal and Other workers
- ii) UPS, UPSS, CWS and CDS.

Let us now read how sexual division of labour in patriarchal society has affected the status and position of women workers.

9.3 GENDER ROLES: SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

Different societies and cultures assign different roles and responsibilities to men and women. However, in the developed nations, today the boundary between these perceived roles and responsibilities for men and women is becoming thinner and faint. But, in not so developed and developing nations, men have more visible and recognized roles because of their association with productive and paid work than women who are engaged more in invisible work and therefore, not economically accounted for. Men's roles are located in public sphere whereas women's roles relegate them to the private space of household. However, household is the centre of the production of human resources. It is within the household that human resources are primarily reproduced and maintained. By and large, human beings are 'privately' produced within the household. Further, the women play an important role in production. Due to biological reasons, the onus of reproduction lies with the woman. And, due to a sexual division of household labour along gender lines, the maintenance of human resources also becomes their prime responsibility. Women work and they have always worked. However, the larger and common understanding of work which relates it to the labour market and to remuneration, excludes both women and their contribution to society. It is the conceptualization of what constitutes 'work' that determines the value and worth attributed to women. Issues related to women's work relate to women's activities both within and outside the household. However, several issues originate from structures that are set within households. Hence, it becomes imminent to begin with analysis of women's role in the household, that closely shapes the discrimination they face in the labour market at home. The ideology of patriarchy, determines a sexual division of labour which assigns to women the prime responsibility of care of all the members of the household – men, children, the aged and the ill. In an extended family, hierarchy allocates a different status to each member and the work-burden is determined accordingly. There is also a hierarchical placing among women of extended families. This placing operates at levels different from those that are found in the world of only men and those of all the members,

men and women together. The extent to which women's work will extend to geographical locations outside the household is determined by caste, class, ethnicity, age and religion. Let us now study the kind of work women perform and how these are categorized.

9.4 TYPES OF WORK WOMEN PERFORM

Women have always contributed to a nation's social-economic development, both in direct manner by taking up work outside of home and indirectly by facilitating supply of labour and its maintenance. But, both in developed and developing nations, women are laden with cumulative inequalities that result from discriminatory cultural and socio-economic practices that regulate the status of women in society. The chores and activities that women generally carry out do not fetch any income to the family. These tasks, perceived as their natural roles, are related to their reproductive and community resource management roles which are not economically productive, thus, not recognized and valued. In many societies women also carry out productive work but are not paid for it remain confined to family activities. Therefore, women's contributions to national economies do not qualify for accounting, making it invisible. Work performed by women can be placed under the following categories;

- Productive/unproductive work

- Visible/invisible work

- Paid/unpaid work

- Economically/socially productive work Unpaid work can be defined as work that does not receive any direct remuneration. It can be of two categories:
 - Unpaid work falling within the production boundary of UN System of National Accounting (SNA). That is to say, unpaid work that is covered

under the purview of national income accounts. It is also referred to as unpaid SNA work' which includes subsistence production, work performed by unpaid family workers employed in family enterprise and work such as collection of fuel and fodder.

- Unpaid work lying outside the production boundary but falling within the general production boundary is referred to as unpaid non-SNA work that includes household management, care related activities and unpaid community services.

Box. No. 5 Beijing Platform for Action, UN-SNA 1993, Human Development Report 1995 and several other global documents have underlined the need to collect data on 'all forms of work' which include remunerated and un remunerated, SNA and non -SNA work. They have recommended time use surveys as a tool to capture this data. Government of India conducted its first national Time Use Survey covering six states in 1998-99 to collect these data. It has also undertaken valuation of unpaid non-SNA work for these six states.

Feminists question women's association with housework as oppressing as it remains unpaid and thus, invisible. But, debate on household labour hang on the precincts of drawing a line between 'work' and 'nature', where roles and activities like rearing children, house keeping, educating children when performed by women in the family are called her 'nurturing roles' and not 'work'. Since, non-market activity does not have a clear criterion to distinguish work from non-work, nor 'necessary' from 'non-necessary' social labour, an arbitrary element seems to creep in that makes standards of fairness difficult to apply to gendered bargains between men and women dividing up waged and non waged work. (Barret, 1980, c.f.MGSE-009, Book 1, p.39)

Activity : Write examples of hidden work that is performed by women and not usually seen as work.

9.5 ENUMERATION OF WOMEN'S WORK

As per ILO's (2008) estimation, world wide, there are only 66.9 economically active women for every 100 economically active men. The report further indicates that a large share of work (excluding house work) undertaken by women throughout the world, does not directly contribute to family income.

Box No. 6 The rate of economically active women is highest in Europe and the developed world, where there are 82 women working for every 100 men. Northern Africa and the Middle East present some of the lowest rates with 35 and 39 economically active women for every 100 men, respectively. (Ryle, 2012, p. 370) It has been seen that while sexual division of labour was a basic feature within the home, it also extend outside into the market as well. When women move into the market for employment, they face discrimination on three accounts:

- income differentials for the same work done as men;
- overcrowding into certain jobs that are seen as suited to women; and
- innate biases of employers against hiring women as employees.

In India, housework came into focus as a problem first with studies that drew attention to the 'double burden' that women face in housework and market-related work. The care of the aged, the disabled and the sick is also the responsibility of women within households. In economies which are governed by the market, social security being minimal or even non existent, women's contribution in the care economy becomes critical. The connection between the care economy and the market economy is the missing link and since this is not recognized, it hides from view the contribution of women's work. Attempts were made to capture empirically what exactly women's work is and how it contributes to the economy. Gaps in data, data gathering processes and data presentation, reflect the inherent male bias in viewing women's work as supplementary and secondary. In a pioneering work, in 1976-77, Devaki Jain and Malini Chand discussed the implications of domestic work for the enumeration of workers in data collection processes. Micro time-use studies were conducted to ascertain

women's domestic work. You have read in the earlier section that at the national level, the two major sources of data for employment figures are the Census surveys carried out every ten years and the National Sample Surveys (NSS). Over the period of time, definitions, reference periods and procedures for counting 'workers' has differed. Hence, the employment rate of women has been found to be highly sensitive to the definition and method of data collection. The major cause for underenumeration has been located in the ideology of the 'man' as the breadwinner and 'head of the household' with the implication that women's work is secondary and supplementary. In particular, attention has been drawn to the role of women in the informal sector of the economy. You will read more about women's role in informal sector of the economy in units of Block 3 of this course.

Box No. 7 The censuses and the NSS Rounds do not map the same workforce because both use different sets of definitions for 'work' and a 'worker'. Questions have been raised and doubts expressed about the authenticity of the estimates thrown up by the NSS and the Census. It is said that there is a gross underestimation of the number of women working in the informal sector.

The process of strengthening the information base on women is however far from complete. Gaps result from various sources, decisions taken at the stage of planning and designing the data collection effort, as also from decisions taken at the stage of processing, tabulation and enumeration. Census provides profile of whole population while NSSO provides exhaustive data set on large samples. Let us now read why it is important to make women's work more visible. But before reading further, attempt the following exercise to assess your understanding of the last couple of sections

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

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ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. Discuss the Gender Roles: Sexual Division of Labour.

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2. Types of Work Women Perform

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3. Discuss about the Enumeration of Women's Work

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9.6 IMPORTANCE OF VISIBILITY OF WOMEN'S WORK

To account for visibility of women's work is important from the perspective of their rights and also for actuality and correctness of estimation. The invisibility, unproductivity and unpaid nature of women's work push them to a marginalized position in a capitalist society and accord lower status. Thus, on one hand, invisibility of women's work leads to lapse in policy implications where their contribution is marginalized, making her a 'dependent' economic entity. On the other hand, women face oppression as a result of performing work that is not directly adding to family income. Thus, women face 'double whammy' as a consequence of her invisibility of work due to conceptual as well as operational biases. Even when they take up work outside of the private space, they are abundantly absorbed in those sectors/ services where the benefit of economic activity is not accrued to women employees. Let us discuss the situation in context of India. In India, to understand why and where women get employment, one has to account for the growth pattern of the Indian economy. In India, planning emerged soon after Independence and the model adopted was that of a mixed economy. The state and the market emerged as the two strongest institutions against which the household was pitted. Over time, the

trajectory of planning led to growth that did not absorb women into mainstream employment channels. They were instead crowded into the informal sector, into household-based traditional sectors and into subsistence agricultural activities. Ironically, all these sectors of our economy remain marginalized in our national accounting system. Reasons of 'statistical invisibility' of women in labour force, can be listed as:

- Cultural bias of a respondent who is generally the male head of the household and regarding women working outside of home a shame for the formerly, resulting in under reporting.
- Biased data collection where interviewer's bias creeps in or it can be faulty construction of the questionnaire.
- Dominance of domestic work leading to under reporting of other types of work.
- Invisibility of women's contribution in income generating activities at pre-marketing and non monetized stage as in case of agriculture, poultry, animal husbandry, weaving cottage industry and other such activities.
- Merger of production for self consumption and production for sale. In the following section you will read how feminists have questioned devaluing and lack of worth societal with women's work and consequently their contribution to economic growth of the nation.

9.7 FEMINIST DEBATES

Feminists, over time, have made attempts through several paradigms to attribute worth to the work that women do. Various methods have been tried to measure this value. Data systems have been challenged and data collection processes have been altered to incorporate women's work.

Beginning with the classical economists, one finds that both political economists and their critiques shared a deep prejudice against the labour performed by women. Both schools of thoughts tend to consider wage

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labour as the only true yardstick of all labour performed under capitalism. Karl Marx went beyond the classical political economists but he also did not realize the other unpaid component of labour which was in housework. Marxian analysis of women's work closely linked it to the capitalistic mode of production. Some of the questions raised were:

- Is housework productive or unproductive?
- How should we understand the production of labour, both biological and social?
- Do women produce a surplus through housework? Feminists connected this ideology to the Marxian framework and showed how sexual division of labour extended from within the house to outside it.

They showed that when women began working outside the house, there were income differentials for the same work, there was overcrowding of women within certain low paying sectors, women often found themselves doing jobs akin to those they did within the house and employers were biased against women labour. Heidi Hartman and Ann R. Marusen (1980) provide a feminist critique of contemporary Marxist theory and practice. Such critique produces a model of power, production and exchange within the family, with consequences for capitalist social relations, contributing towards an understanding of patriarchy. Reformist feminism brought out a number of situational analyses of the working conditions of rural women, whereas socialist feminists focused upon the conditions of women's wage labour, decentralization of production and informalisation of the labour market. There have also been alternative framework's to analyse women's work. Amartya Sen (1990) presented the bargaining and entitlement theses and concept of 'cooperative conflict'. With a theory of entitlements, Sen shows a woman's opportunity to get employment outside the home as one of the crucial variables that give her a better fall back position, a better ability to use and deal with threats and a higher 'perceived contribution' to the family's economics position.

9.8 REDEFINING WORK

The foregoing discussion on women and work makes it imperative to review how work is defined and projected in accounting system of a nation's economy. Should the concept of work be confined to the trapping of 'done outside of the home' and fetching income/ payment/ wage/ monetary remuneration. It is a well-established fact that by not recognizing women's multiple activities and contribution to a nation's economy, women's status and thereby, gender equality gets institutionalized and perpetuated. The situation leads to their further exploitation and oppression in other spheres of life as well. Thus, women fall prey to a vicious circle where their labour is devalued thereby, they are pushed to the margins in all matters and spheres of development and empowerment, be it political processes, policy and legislations or any sphere of nation building. As a result of vociferous feminist debates and intervention by UN agencies, there is a wider acceptance of the scope and significance of women's work. Absence of gender analysis and unavailability of sex disaggregated statistics of female participation in labour at micro level highlights the inadequacy in tackling the question of redefining 'work' vis'-s-vis' women. The concept of work has to account for the following aspects to construct a 'holistic definition' of work:

- Broadening the definition of work to include occupational categories specific to women;
- Economic activity to cover cultural, regional and seasonal nature of work; and
- Mechanism to estimate women's unpaid work in terms of time and remuneration. Let us now have a look at some of the measures that have been introduced at national and international level to redefine work. At national level, the definition of a 'work' has been rectified from time to time to increase base of working women. Some steps undertaken at international level are

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- International Labour Organisation (ILO) held a convention in 1985 to revisit International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO)
- Efforts by United Nations, Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) led to change the guidelines for the World Programme of Agricultural Censuses. (Bullock, 1994, c.f.MGSE-009, Book 1, p.16)

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. What is the Importance of Visibility of Women's Work?

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2. Discuss the Feminist Debates

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3. Discuss about Redefining Work

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9.9 LET US SUM UP

Women's work may be for the market or for the consumption of members of the household. Work for the market may be located within the premises of the household or outside of it. Their work may receive economic remuneration or else it may generate goods and services which would otherwise have had to be bought from the market. Their work contributes towards the production and maintenance of human beings within the household in immense measure. It is important to recognize and value not only the economic contributions of women, but also their social contributions like care of children, sick and elderly people and other activities women undertake for the family and the community.

9.10 KEY WORDS

Participation: To take part in a true way

9.11 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1) Discuss the notion of income and work as per the understanding gathered from censuses and NSSO? Give examples to support your argument.
- 2) Discuss how enumeration of work carried out by national and international agencies in its present form is biased against women.
- 3) Explain feminists' perspective on women's work.
- 4) What types of work women perform within and outside of home?
- 5) What is the difference between SNA and non - SNA?

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9.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 9.2
2. See Section 9.3
3. See Section 9.4

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 9.5
2. See Section 9.6
3. See Section 9.7

UNIT 10: CASTE IDENTITIES: COLONIAL KNOWLEDGE

STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Caste identities: Colonial knowledge
- 10.3 Caste and Census
- 10.4 Emerging Caste associations: Debates around Sanskritisation
- 10.5 Migration and disease and health services
- 10.6 Let us sum up
- 10.7 Key Words
- 10.8 Questions for Review
- 10.9 Suggested readings and references
- 10.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit we can able to know:

- To discuss about the Caste identities: Colonial knowledge
- To know about the Caste and Census
- To discuss about the Emerging Caste associations: Debates around Sanskritisation
- To know about the Migration and disease and health services

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Caste is the most contentious issue that has fascinated and divided scholars who have wished to study this system of stratified social-hierarchy in India. There is an enormous body of academic writing and political polemic on the issue. These are basically the part of debate on the transformation of Indian society under the impact of colonialism and its administrative mechanisms. Some argue for the continuities of pre-colonial social-structures including caste. Others stress the basic qualitative changes introduced by the colonial rulers. Louis Dumont (1970), the French scholar and writer of a famous book on caste, Homo-

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Hierarchicists, constructed an image of caste based on certain texts. In this image, two opposing conceptual categories of purity and pollution are the core elements of caste structure. These unique core principles of caste-hierarchy, according to Dumont, are observed in scriptural formulation as well as the every-day life of all the Hindus. In other words, these values separate Indians culturally from the Western civilization, making India a land of static, unchangeable, 'oriental' Brahmanical values. Nicholas Dirks and others have challenged this notion of caste. They cite ethnographic and textual evidence to demonstrate that Brahmins and their texts were not so central to the social fabric of Indian life. According to this view power-relations and command over men and resources were more important. Brahmins were merely ritual specialists, often subordinate to powerful ruling families. The caste-based scriptural or Brahmanical model of traditional India was an invention of the British Orientalists and ethnographers, according to this view. However, caste played a very critical role in the Indian social-reformers and nationalists' perception of caste. It was certainly not a mere product of British imagination (Jones: 2004). As we hinted above, two opposing viewpoints see caste differently. Some view it as an unchanged survival of Brahmanical traditions of India. According to this view, Brahminism represents a core civilizational value and caste is the central symbol of this value. It is the basic expression of the pre-colonial traditions of India. Contrary to this view, Nicolas Dirks, in his *Castes of Mind* (2001), argues that caste is a product of colonial modernity. By this he does not mean that caste did not exist before the advent of British. He is simply suggesting that caste became a single, unique category under the British rule that expressed and provided the sole index of understanding India. Earlier there were diverse forms of social-identity and community in India. The British reduced everything to a single explanatory category of caste. It was the colonial state and its administrators who made caste into a uniform, all-encompassing and ideologically consistent organism. They made caste as a measure of all things and the most important emblem of traditions. Colonialism reconstructed cultural forms and social-institutions like caste to create a line of difference and demarcation between themselves as European modern and the colonized

Asian traditional subjects (Pimply and Shanna: 1990). In other words, British colonialism played a critical role in both the identification and production of Indian 'tradition'. The colonial modernity devalued the so-called Indian traditions. Simultaneously, it also transformed them. Caste was recast as the spiritual essence of India that regulated and mediated the private domain. Caste-ridden Indian society was different from the European civil society because caste was opposed to the basic premises of individualism as well as the collective identity of a nation. The salience of this pre-colonial identity and sense of loyalty could easily be used to justify the rule by the colonial modern administrators. So, according to Dirks, it was the colonial rule of India that organized the 'social difference and deference' solely in terms of caste. The attempts to downplay or dismiss the significance of Brahmins and Brahmanical order is not in accordance with much familiar historical records and persistence of caste identities even in contemporary Indian social life. Caste-terms and principles were certainly not in universal use in pre-colonial periods. Caste in its various manifestations and forms was also not an immutable entity. However, starting from the Vedas and the Great Epics, from Manu and other dharmasastras, from puranas texts, from ritual practices, the penal system of Peshwa rulers who punished culprits according to caste-principles, to the denunciations of anti-Brahmanical 'reformers' of all ages; everything points towards the legacy of pre-colonial times. It is true that there were also non-caste affiliations and identities such as networks of settlements connected by matrimonial alliances, trade, commerce and state service in the precolonial times. However, caste was also a characteristic marker of identity and a prevailing social metaphor. Caste was not merely a fabrication of British rulers designed to demean and subjugate Indians. It did serve the colonial interests as by condemning the 'Brahmanical tyranny' colonial administration could easily justify their codes to 'civilize' and 'improve' the 'fallen people'. Moreover, strengthening of caste-hierarchy could also act as a bulwark against anarchy (Pimply: 1990).

10.2 CASTE IDENTITIES: COLONIAL KNOWLEDGE

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David Washbrook was an early and very important contributor to studies of the history of caste under colonialism. When he embarked on his study of Madras Presidency, caste was almost universally perceived as an unchanging inheritance of the pre-colonial tradition. One of the signal achievements of his work has been to locate the caste institutions of South India within their different agrarian as well as urban contexts, and to trace the ways in which both colonial economic impacts and initiatives of the state reshaped these institutions. 1 With Christopher Baker, Washbrook was also one of the earliest scholars to draw attention to the impact of the Indian government's decennial census reports, new methods of public communication, and policies of reservation in stimulating the rise of caste associations, bringing together sub-castes which had hitherto emphasized their separation into larger and often supra-regional collectives. 2 Along with the work of his contemporaries, Eugene Irschick, Marguerite Ross Barnett, and Christopher Baker, Washbrook's study posed new and provocative questions, and provided some, at least, of the answers. Since then, his work has ranged very widely. He has explored fundamental aspects of colonial law and property rights and traced the place of South India in the global economy from the early modern period to the present. He has looked back to the eighteenth-century formation of many South Indian institutions, and forward to explain the forces that have made present-day South India into India's economic and educational powerhouse.

his article returns to two of the perspectives that have particularly marked Washbrook's work: his concern with colonial caste and his interest in uncovering the early modern antecedents of some key nineteenth-century Indian social and political institutions. It does so both because his contribution here was so significant, and because caste in its many forms has remained such a continuing challenge and conundrum in India's present society. Washbrook brought out his first monograph and essays in the mid-1970s, just a few years after the publication of Louis Dumont's *Homo Hierarchicus*. 4 Washbrook's work on caste in South India was very much a study of local social and political history, rather than an attempt at a larger social theory. Both, of course, entered a field already rich in studies of caste from a variety of different perspectives,

including those of anthropology, Indology, sociology, and Marxist history. Although widely influential, Dumont's work was also the subject of significant scholarly reservation. Critics objected particularly to his depiction of the all-pervasive and 'encompassing' nature of the values of purity and pollution within Hindu Indian society, and the apparent absence of solid contextual evidence for his model. 5 In this setting, social historical studies of caste such as that of Washbrook, and the model of Dumontian sociology, seemed to emerge out of entirely different intellectual frameworks.

From the mid-1980s, the two moved more closely together. Drawing on the perspectives opened up by Edward Said's analysis of the intellectual heritage of Indology and of colonial knowledge-gathering, Appadurai, Inden, Cohn, Dirks, and others from the Chicago School argued that Dumont's was a quintessentially 'Orientalist' view, which understood Indian society to be derived from caste as a single unchanging essence, itself described in the works of classical Indology. What Dumont was seeing was actually caste after its transformation in the era of colonialism. Here, Brahmans had been recruited as authoritative guides to the Hindu social order, other axes of power such as that of kingship had been emptied of real meaning, and initiatives of the colonial state such as its census operations and its schemes of positive discrimination in favour of 'backward' communities impelled colonial subjects to identify, and to organize themselves, principally in terms of caste. 6 In this context, the prescience of Washbrook's work on the role of the colonial state in shaping caste political organization became sharply apparent. These developments moved the debate very much towards the colonial shaping of caste, and away from its eighteenth century and older histories. If anything, the very success of these 'post-colonial' critiques reinforced the turn away from the pre-colonial, in their suggestion that our understandings of older historical periods were likely to be the tainted legacies of colonial knowledge.

Scholarship since the 1990s has focused even more firmly on more recent changes in the form and significance of caste. The market liberalization of the 1990s helped bring new and aspirant middle classes into being, opened avenues of social mobility out of 'traditional'

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occupations for many, and gradually reduced the significance of the village as a social focus. The affirmative action programme of the Mandal Commission, progressively implemented from 1990, identified 'Other Backward Classes' as a new caste category in need of their own quota of reservations in government employment and education. The 'Mandalization' of Indian politics has brought new caste solidarities and political alliances into being under the 'Other Backward Classes' label, some of which have made common cause with Dalit parties. Regional parties across India have in turn drawn strength from these new collectives. The rising power of Hindu nationalist parties from the 1990s likewise deeply affected caste in political discourse and social life. Although the Bharatiya Janata Party and its affiliates provided an outlet for upper-caste resentments against Mandal, the Party nonetheless lent its support in principle to affirmative action.

As many observers have now noted, therefore, caste in contemporary India has continued to develop away from its 'traditional' form as ritual, hierarchy, and daily observance. It finds public legitimacy and visibility instead in the political and judicial fields of public life. It is visible in India's very widespread state-sponsored programmes of positive discrimination, and in the development of what are now termed 'ethnicized' regional caste communities through which 'Other Backward Classes' and Dalits have found new means of political mobilization. 8 Caste in this new setting has continued to attract close scholarly scrutiny. At the local level, caste and class disadvantage deeply affect everyday contact with agents of the state. A fresh class of political entrepreneurs—'naya netas', often men of Other Backward Class or Dalit backgrounds—have emerged as intermediaries between the village and the state, replacing older patron-client dependencies. 9 At broader levels, as Christophe Jaffrelot and many others have suggested, the large Other Backward Classes political combines of the 1990s are now—in many Indian states—giving way to individual castes or jatis, and state-level parties now rest increasingly on the political mobilization of a single caste. This makes the coalition-building of the all-India parties infinitely more challenging, reinforcing the drift of power away from central government and towards India's states. 10 Dalit parties have likewise

transformed the potential of caste as a vehicle for mobilization, combining the assertion of new political identities with attempts to build broad anti-caste alliances within and across India's states. Once deemed an immovable part of India's political architecture since the linguistic reorganization of states in 1956, state boundaries are now once again open to successful campaigns for their redrawing, in part as a consequence of state-level movements of caste assertion. Many scholars have described the force and pride with which large and small caste communities throughout India now assert their histories, identities, and legitimate political rights and expectations. Puranic texts, oral traditions, sectarian histories, colonial ethnographies, archaeological records, and sacred geographies furnish the political energy for these modern caste identities, providing a remarkably effective basis for political cohesion, the mobilization of community resources, and adaptability to the varying circumstances of state-level political competition.

Family, gender, and the reproduction of caste in liberal India

This striking energization of caste in politics and public life has brought not only new confidence but new political leverage, most often to communities who had earlier struggled for political influence and resources. Yet these developments have in turn brought their own problems, particularly in the context of liberalized India. The contraction of the state, the move of middle-income groups increasingly to private provision in education and health, and the emergence of a small 'creamy' layer of Other Backward Classes and Dalit middle classes has deepened social inequality. In turn this has created political tensions between Other Backward Classes and Dalits as often as political solidarities. Even in the form of larger regional combines, caste continues to be more significant in accentuating social and economic deprivation than in offering tools for combating them. This is so for three principle reasons. First, and most obviously, the practice of caste endogamy remains the norm rather than the exception. As very many historians and social anthropologists have noted, this gives caste a close connection with the reproduction of class difference. Material wealth, educational advantage, occupational experience, and social connections are passed on within family and caste

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community, enabling new generations to make the transition from older forms of landed privilege to urban professional competencies.

Second, caste retains enormous social force in the realm of belief and affect. Family, community, and many areas of religious practice are home not only to caste as apprehended cultural difference, but to caste as hierarchy, disowned in public while assiduously maintained in private. M.S. Pandian, Ramesh Bairy, and Adheesh Sathaye have all described Brahman private life as a domain where a sense of Brahman uniqueness is preserved, arising out of long-established personal and spiritual disciplines, which are readily translatable into success in the world of bureaucracy and the professions, while defended at home as intimate practices of personal life which are part of cultural heritage. James Manor and many others have noted that it is much more difficult for powerful rural castes to exert control in many mundane social relationships. At the same time, however, as Diana P. Mines and many others have noted, purity and prestige on public religious occasions such as temple festivals are still intimately tied up with dominant caste status.

Third, caste as hierarchy is also reproduced in the domain of gender. While the persistence of gender inequalities in India has long been a focus of attention, their essential link with the maintenance of caste hierarchies has not always been sufficiently appreciated. Hypergamous or anuloma—‘with the hair’—marriage, in which women marry men who are their social equals or superiors, has historically been a core principle of dharmic Hinduism. It is connected with the belief that at marriage, a wife takes on her husband's identity and substance. From this perspective, an anuloma marriage preserved or enhanced the worth of a woman and consequently that of her family. A pratiloma—‘against the hair’—marriage, in which a woman married a man of lesser status, simply degraded the woman and her family, while doing nothing to raise the status of the man. Hypergamy was also connected with the belief in dharmic Hinduism that the most virtuous form of marriage was that of kanyādān, a father's ‘gift’ of a suitably decked and ornamented girl to her husband's family and, among the least virtuous, a marriage in which a father took money or bride-price in exchange for the woman. The gradual displacement of bridewealth at marriage by demands for dowry

has been a very long-term historical process in India, pre-dating the coming of colonialism and reflecting the spread of the values of dharmic Hinduism both to new regions and social classes, and the status of hypergamous marriage as a route to upward social mobility within the framework of those values.

These dimensions of gender hierarchy in Hindu marriage have given gender its key and continuing role in the maintenance of caste as hierarchy, helping shape what Tambiah has called 'the general Indian aspiration for maintaining and increasing status and honour through the institution of marriage'. The setting for hypergamous marriage in securing the hierarchy of caste has worked most often at the fluid margins of large dominant landed castes, whose permeable boundaries could often absorb wife-givers from a range of smaller peasant and pastoralist communities, and where women marrying upwards reinforced other relationships of power and dependency. There is a rather different interplay between hypergamy and caste in the larger conglomerates of 'modern' ethnicized caste. In these settings, as Osella and others have argued, the erosion of sub-caste barriers and the increasing use of socio-economic factors to measure status effectively opens up a caste-wide marriage market, in which hypergamous competition for desirable alliances has escalated, and with it, demands for dowry. While in some ways, therefore, ethnicization weakens caste as hierarchy, in others it strengthens the wider social framework which sustains caste. The development of wider caste identities gives fresh impetus to the place of hypergamous marriage as a key element in family strategy. This in turn reinforces the Hindu understanding that women are 'gifted' in marriage, so becoming the bearers of the relationship between their own and their husband's families, and the subordinate partners in the marriage relationship itself. These trends are reversed only at the level of India's most affluent and educated middle classes. As Fuller and Narasimhan have noted in their study of Tamil elites, in these social settings it is the outward expression of gender equality, rather than the older 'Sanskritic' premium placed on asymmetric valuations of men's and women's independent social worth, that has come to be the stronger index of social status.

Regional difference in the transition to colonial caste

All of these arguments point to significant elements of continuity, both direct and indirect, in caste as a form of privileged hierarchy in present-day India. Modern institutions of the state have certainly fostered new caste collectivities, which figure prominently in the public realms of politics and the law. Yet caste in these new guises continues to be sustained through complex patterns of personal, family, and religious life, many of them with much longer histories. It is certainly true that few scholars today posit a straightforward ‘colonial invention’ of caste. Yet many continue to assume that the links between caste and state power are a distinctive feature of the colonial state and the consequence of its legal and administrative interventions, which drew on Sanskrit texts and varna categories to order the caste status of its subjects. Similarly, many scholars continue to believe that ‘non-Brahman’ critiques of Brahman hegemony are very much the outcome of colonial rule. As I suggest below, however, neither the use of Brahman expertise in Hindu textual law, nor the idea of an oppressive Brahman minority bent on depriving others of a dignified ritual and religious life, originated—in Maharashtra at least—with the colonial state.

At one level, of course, it is the different longer term histories of caste across the subcontinent that is most striking. Historically, Kshatriya and Vaishya varna identities were less strongly represented in southern India. 23 However, Sudra status embraced a wide range of meanings. Sudras could be kings, expressing their royal power not so much through the Vedic ritual associated with twice-born status, but rather in their role as first worshippers of the temple goddess. Likewise, dominant rural castes demonstrated their prestige in the order of precedence in temple honours. 24 Real social marginality lay not in Sudra status, but in the unfree labour of Paraiyans, although even here labour shortages and the flourishing maritime economies of pre-colonial South India offered many possibilities for social mobility. 25 The coalitions of ‘Right’- and ‘Left’-hand castes in South India also cut across the conventional Sanskritic model of the varna order, with its emphasis on Vedic ritual as the distinctive marker of the dignities of the first three ‘twice-born’ varnas.

In many parts of North India, on the other hand, a number of factors bolstered this model. Mughal imperial power created new idioms of centralized royal authority, which were in turn emulated by North India's most successful Rajput elites, who sought to transform Rajput identity from an open-ended status group into a closed royal lineage linked to India's ancient Kshatriya dynasties. 27 The 'military labour market' from which North Indian states drew their armies meant that the prestige of martial identity continued nonetheless to be available to agrarian communities right across the Gangetic plains, and many of these articulated their own claims to Rajput and Kshatriya identity. North Indian traditions of military monasticism reinforced these developments. The flourishing of Sanskrit literature and learning that took place all over India during the Mughal period itself contributed to the resilience of the conventional varna order, both by offering new defences against the levelling appeals of North Indian devotionalist movements, and by supplying new idioms of specifically Hindu kingship.

As Jaffrelot has suggested, the colonial state accentuated the differences. The coming of European ideas in particular shaped the formation of new caste identities in the South and West. The Aryan racial theory of Orientalist scholars found a ready audience among those who were beginning to think of themselves as members of a broad lower caste collective. Out of these processes emerged a range of non-Brahman movements in the South and West, including Ambedkar's campaign in the Maratha regions and Dravidian movements in the South. New ethnicized caste identities went hand in hand with the emergence of caste associations, as British policies of reservation in education and local government further stimulated the emergence of a caste-based associational culture. In North India, on the other hand, these processes developed very much within the framework of Sanskritization. The Arya Samaj was able to garner very wide influence, drawing castes from Yadavas to Chamars. There were anti-caste movements in North India, but they tended to draw their ideas principally from the other-worldly forms of religious devotion. Consequently, North India's lower castes directed their energies principally to caste associations rather than to the formation of large non-Brahman groupings, or the assertion of rights on

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the basis of broad ethnic identities. The latter emerged only very recently, as successive governments expanded their schemes of caste reservation in the wake of the Mandal Commission.

Vernacular critiques of caste in colonial India: a derivative discourse?

This formulation is very much in line with the work of historians who have emphasized the colonial ‘invention’ of caste. As noted above, however, this perspective may be worth re-examining, in that it underestimates the degree of continuity into the colonial period, and portrays the vernacular critiques of caste developed in colonial India as essentially derivatives of colonial discourse. Yet many colonial intellectuals and activists were actually engaged in caste contests with much longer histories. They were deeply familiar with the complexities of these histories and with the issues at stake in them. Nor was the importance they ascribed to texts merely a second-hand reflection of Orientalist scholarship. They were aware that written texts of dharmaśāstra, caste purānas, the rulings of local judicial institutions, and local vernacular histories had been deeply consequential in past struggles, and in many cases continued to be so. Pre-colonial states as well as local caste communities took texts seriously as part of the apparatus of justice. The settings in which texts circulated, and the performance of the ritual dignities they confirmed or withheld, were often close to the muscular politics of the street and temple precinct. In some respects at least, the category of ‘non-Brahman’ was not just a catch-all absurdity of colonial caste discourse, but reflected deeper social histories and older contests, which continued to be significant well into the colonial period.

The history of caste in the Marathi-speaking regions of western India illustrates many of these characteristics. The states of the Deccan Sultanate inherited from the medieval Yadava kingdom a layer of conservative Brahman administrators in the countryside. Their scribal skills, religious prestige, and access to cash enabled them to amass extensive landed rights and rights over labour, which they enjoyed alongside the local Maratha gentry and military servants of the Deccan

states. Caste identities in this setting were fluid. Their early pastoral origins gave Marathi-speaking peasant communities strong horizontal solidarities.

‘Maratha’ was an open-ended social category, associated with martial honours, and therefore open in principle to a wide range of socially aspirant rural communities who supplied military labour to local states during the campaigning season. 31 Maratha domestic culture was also shaped by long traditions of service to the Sultanate states, creating Islamicized models for elite identity such as the seclusion of women and the practice of eating from a common dish. 32 Other dimensions of Deccani culture also made for social cohesion. The region's great bhakti devotional traditions developed very much in the interplay between textual cultures, oral performance, and the routines of pilgrimage and worship associated with the tradition's major temples. As the Deccan Sultanate states pioneered the use of vernacular language for local justice and state administration, Marathi helped forge a new discursive community and new kinds of local familiarity with these states' documentary regimes. All of these processes strengthened the region's sense of a distinctive historical identity, sometimes encapsulated in the idea that there existed a ‘dharma’ of Maharashtra.

At the same time, there were many strains. The emergence of the Deccan Sultanate states strengthened links with the Sufi devotional traditions of Islamic North India already forged under the Bahmanis, and opened the region more directly to the economies and cultures of the Indian ocean. Many heterodox sects flourished in this milieu. The social critique of bhakti poets, transmitted through hagiographies and collections of hymns as well as through oral tradition, gained a new and sharper edge. The literate skills of bhakti poets from humble backgrounds often formed a flashpoint of contest with conservative Brahman scholars. There were further frictions. Other newcomers to the Deccan, such as Kayastha scribal people from North India, found themselves in direct competition with Brahmans for administrative employment, sparking a fierce contest over Kayastha ritual entitlements. 36 Brahman identity itself appeared less secure in this milieu, as expanding agrarian opportunities sharpened

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social divisions within Brahman. 37 In turn, Brahman scholars mounted a vigorous defence of conventional caste and varna hierarchies.

Vernacular sociologies of caste in early modern India

One of the most successful of these was Gopīnātha, from a Saivite scholar family living in the Nizam Shahi town of Paranda. He wrote his Sanskrit *Jātiviveka*, ('Discernment of Jātis') somewhere between the middle of the fourteenth and the later fifteenth centuries. He took as his model the caste classification sections of the ancient founding text of Hindu dharmaśāstra, the *Manusmṛiti*. 38 However, he modified it to reflect the local caste communities of his own region, their occupations, their ritual entitlements, their proper place in the hierarchy of varna and the Marathi as well as the Sanskrit names by which they were known. He presented it as a handy local compendium in a convenient abbreviated form: 'This book of *Jātiviveka* was expounded by the wise Gopīśvara in the world, extracting [the subject] from a great corpus of texts, including *Manu* and other *smṛitis* and *śāstras*.' Gopīnātha laid emphasis on the 'mixed' character of the world he observed.

Here, only Brahmans and Sudras stood out as having maintained a purity of varna descent. Most of the jatis he described—which included every community and occupation he observed in the world around him—he listed as having come from fallen and hybrid parentages, often the result of transgressive *pratiloma* marriages. In other ways, too, Gopīnātha's treatise expressed his own very doctrinaire observations on the world around him. He assigned Kayastha scribes and many communities of skilled craftsmen to the category of Sudra or even lower in rank. He was sharply aware of the challenge of *bhakti*, criticizing those he called 'Vaiṣṇavas'. Citing the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, he asserted: 'Those who abandon their karma and just recite "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa!" are sinners in the eyes of Hari. The birth of Hari is for the sake of Dharma. If you follow your varṇa, āśrama, and the prescribed conduct, you actually worship Viṣṇu, the Highest Man.' He was sharply aware of the local presence of 'Turuṣka' rulers in the Deccan, rulers who supported themselves by their cruelties, and whose 'Mleccha language' good men should not learn or speak.

What Gopīnātha offered, in effect, was a vernacular sociology of caste of a new kind. The *Jātiviveka* reflected his sense of the important role that Brahman scholars such as himself, armed with his handy compendium, should play in maintaining the proper orders of caste in the fallen era of the Kaliyuga, where people mixed and mingled promiscuously with one another, and Mleccha kings could not be counted on to protect dharma in the world. It was a consciously traditional treatment, reflecting on one level the views of a provincial Brahman scholar who found himself on the margins of the expansive and cosmopolitan new societies of the Deccan Sultanate states.

For all its uncompromising approach, however, many of Gopīnātha's contemporaries and successors appear to have found his treatise extremely useful. Communities of scholars and intellectuals—many of them of Maratha origin—flourished in sixteenth and seventeenth century Banaras. They came to exercise a subcontinent-wide role in matters of religious law, their authority enhanced by their prestigious place of meeting in the city's great temple to Siva. 41 They drew on Gopīnātha's social classifications, but modified them to suit their own local purposes. Perhaps more sharply aware of the competing popular appeal of North Indian bhakti, scholars such as Śeṣa Kṛṣṇa and Kamalākarabhaṭṭa, famous son of the Banaras Bhaṭṭa pandit dynasty, composed manuals such as the latter's *Śūdrakamalākara*, which offered a comprehensive ritual life for virtuous Sudras. 42 Kamalākarabhaṭṭa and his father, Rāmakṛṣṇabhaṭṭa, likewise took a more accommodating attitude to the question of whether, in the modern fallen era of the Kaliyuga, there could still be said to be intermediate varnas in the world, between Brahman and Sudra. From the vantage point of Banaras, it was difficult to overlook the power and status of North India's Kayastha, Khattri, and other scribal communities. Seventeenth-century Rajput courts, with their own emerging new discourse and rituals of kingship, were key sources of patronage for Sanskrit intellectuals. These concerns were reflected in the ways in which leading Banaras scholars adapted Gopīnātha's basic template of caste classification. They suggested that there were such varnas, and among them some Kayasthas of pure descent, as well as

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Kshatriya kings who had fallen away from their proper Vedic rituals but could still be purified and redeemed. Scholars from the Bhaṭṭa family, as well as others, composed Vedic consecration texts for Kshatriya kings from the early part of the seventeenth century.

By this time, Gopīnātha's treatise had been reproduced, in part or in whole, in a further range of authoritative texts of dharmasastra. The Brahman Dalāpatirāyā served Ahmad Nizam Shah (1490–1510) as chief minister and record keeper, and he commissioned a compendium of religious law—the Nṛsiṃhaprasāda—which referred to 'the Jātiviveka' as one of its sources. The Brahman military officer, Pratāp Rai, served his successor, Burhan Nizam Shah (r. 1510–1533), and commissioned in his honour a much more substantial compendium of religious law—the Paraśurāmapratāpa—which incorporated almost the whole of the Jātiviveka in its pages. Written in the late sixteenth century, and part caste purana, part sectarian polemic, the Śataprasnakalpalatā or 'Wishing Tree of 100 Questions' of Mādhava, offered both 'condensed' and 'expanded' versions of Gopīnātha's text. Sometime in the later seventeenth century, one Rāmacandra Bāpat wrote a Bṛhajjātiviveka ('Expanded Jātiviveka'), which reworked many of Gopīnātha's classifications. His text also circulated in Banaras as part of another genre entirely, that of the Sanskrit genre of Vāstuśāstra, reflecting the importance of occupation in the construction of different wards and quarters in the early modern city.

It was against this background of disagreement about what orders of varna could be said to exist in the modern age of the Kaliyuga that Gāgābhaṭṭa, nephew of Kamalākarabhaṭṭa and himself equally persuaded of the legitimate existence of Kshatriyas, came to the Maratha court of Raigad in 1673 for the consecration of the Maratha warrior ruler, Sivaji. This now famous occasion entailed many days of complex ritual, in which the Bhosle family's early lapses from Vedic observance were repaired, and the way opened for Sivaji's 'rebirth' as a royal Kshatriya and a dharmic king. During Gāgābhaṭṭa's visit, he also drew on Gopīnātha's text to compose a ritual manual for Kayasthas at the court. It was a disappointment to them, because it prescribed only a lesser form of quasi-Vedic ritual for them, which left their varna status open to doubt.

The issues continued to provoke sharp debate early in the following century, particularly with the rise of Rajput demands for their own new forms of royal and Vedic ritual. The Rajput ruler, Savai Jai Singh of Jaipur (1688–1743), hosted a debate at his court specifically to determine the question of whether lapsed Kshatriyas could recover their Vedic ritual dignities by suitable penances. Most local pandits followed the older position of Gāgābhaṭṭa and agreed that they could. But the conservative position still found its supporters, notably in Gāgābhaṭṭa's junior contemporary, the leading grammarian of Banaras, Nāgeśabhaṭṭa, who refused to appear at the debate, but set out his objections to any presence of pure Kshatriyas in the Kaliyuga in a lengthy treatise, the *Vrātyatāprāyaścittanirṇaya* ('Judgement of penances by those who have fallen from caste').

Caste and elite violence in the Maratha state

These arguments about the structure of varna took on new dimensions in the eighteenth-century Maratha state. Many developments reinforced the older Sultanate-inflected model of elite Maratha status. North Indian cultural influences were strengthened with the rise of new Maratha lordly families under the leadership of the peshwas. The new Maratha families based themselves in their military estates in North and central India, and their heterogeneous armies came to include many North Indian troopers. By the 1730s, these Islamicate models were affecting even the women of elite Maratha Brahman families. Radhabai, matriarch of the peshwa's own family, found herself asked to don purdah for the marriage of her daughter, Anubai, to the Brahman, Sardar Venkatrao Ghorpade of Ichchalkaranji.

In other respects, however, the older arguments about Vedic ritual and Kshatriya status acquired new salience in the eighteenth-century Maratha state, particularly as power passed from the Satara court of the Maratha ruler, Shahu I (1688–1749), into the hands of his Chitpavan Brahman peshwa ministers in Pune. As Pune city expanded and its ranks of state servants, skilled artisans, and gentry flourished with the inward flow of wealth from the new Maratha domains in central and northern India, the peshwas sought to enhance their authority and their powers of social

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regulation by emphasizing their role as guardians of dharmic propriety. They imposed tighter social disabilities on those judged to be Sudras, explicitly denying them entry to important temples and in some cases issuing detailed orders for their permitted social and bodily comportment. The question of Maratha rights to Vedic ritual continued to have some political traction. The peshwa, Nanasaheb, ensured that the descendants of Sivaji at the Satara court had their life-stage rituals performed with puranic, rather than Vedic, ritual. In her drive to recruit political support after Shahu's death, the veteran Maratha queen, Tarabai Shinde of Kolhapur, raised the royal Kshatriya status of Sivaji and his descendants—Maratha kings now deprived of their authority by upstart Brahmans. 50 Older established Brahman subcastes in turn resented this new Chitpavan role as arbiters of religious rectitude, particularly when it extended, as it sometimes did, into local disputes between different Brahman communities over priestly rights.

It was in these factional settings and struggles for political advantage that the politics of caste took on new significance. One important arena lay at the Satara court. Following a long-established principle of Maratha statecraft, the Maratha raja, Shahu, maintained a powerful constituency of Kayastha administrators at court, to offset the influence of Brahman state officials and to ensure that neither achieved a dominating influence. As the raja's health worsened during the late 1740s, leaders within the two communities manoeuvred more intently for advantage. In this setting, it became a key Brahman tactic to attack the varna status of the Kayasthas, and have them declared to be menial Sudras, without rights to the dignity of Vedic ritual and, by implication, unfit to be the confidential servants and advisers of the king. By early 1749, this produced a crisis. A party of Kayasthas journeyed to Banaras and then on to Prayag, where they persuaded local Brahman priests to perform the Atirudra ritual for them, a great Vedic sacrifice that would publicly confirm their twice-born status. To keep the ritual from being disrupted, the party also employed a posse of Muslim foot-soldiers belonging to the Muslim governor of Prayag around the fire-pit. But the Brahman leaders in Pune and Satara had their own allies among the long-established Maratha scholar families in North India. As soon as news of the rite

leaked out, they rallied these supporters, and the priests who had agreed to perform the Kayastha ritual were declared to have transgressed so gravely as to be banished from the caste.

Under these pressures, the raja and his advisers convened a great gathering of pandits from different parts of the Deccan to determine the real identity of Satara's Kayasthas. Tension in the city grew as some 10,000 Brahmans gathered in the streets around the court to await the verdict. Among the textual authorities produced at the debate were Gopīnātha's *Jātiviveka* and the manual that Gāgābhaṭṭa had written for the Kayasthas, both conveying the same vision of a world containing no pure varnas between Brahman and Sudra. On the strength of these and other authorities, the pandit assembly found against the Kayasthas, as 'the offspring of mere Sudras'. The pandits drove home the point in relation to the Maratha ruler, Sivaji himself, invested as Kshatriya by the priest, Gāgābhaṭṭa, some 80 years earlier: 'The late Gāgābhaṭṭa, learned in the Vedas and Śāstras, performed the King's sacred thread ceremony as a Kshatriyas, with the Gāyatri mantra. That rite did not succeed in its aims. The lineages of both died out. This is the consequence of bad behaviour.' Shahu's death in November 1749 and the transfer of political authority to the peshwa's court in Pune represented a further blow to the Kayastha position. Nonetheless, they remained powerful rivals, and the dispute impelled at least one of their leaders, Sakharam Bapu Gupte, to conspire in the murder of the peshwa, Narayanrao, in 1773. Their varna status, with all its symbolism, continued to be the focus of struggle. Further assaults followed in 1789–90, when many dozens of Kayastha leaders were forcibly confined to their houses until they agreed to an order accepting a long list of ritual disabilities, which was then sent out to state officials to enforce. By the end of the century, many Kayasthas left to serve as administrators in Maratha states elsewhere in India.

Varna standing and other forms of ritual entitlement continued to be the touchstones in other elite political and factional struggles. Ritual standing, social dignity, and material interest blended together in these struggles. Some communities of Sonar goldsmiths had prospered very substantially under the peshwas. They were aided by the flourishing of Pune as a financial centre and the proliferation of state-licensed private

Notes

mints, often in the hands of Sonars. Elite Sonars sought the dignity of Vedic ritual and twice-born status, claiming to be lineal descendants of Viśvākarma the divine artificer, entitled as ‘minor Brahmanas’ to Vedic ritual, and to employ priests of their own caste. Their transgressions attracted severe corporal punishments. The Bombay government was drawn in to prevent the Sonars from using the dignified ‘Namaskār’ mode of salutation appropriate to the twice-born. A 28 July 1779 Resolution recorded that ‘the exercise of such ceremony by the Goldsmiths is a great breach of the Gentoo Religion, and repeated complaints have been made to us by the Brahmins and the Peishwa also several times having written to the President requesting [that] the use of the Namascar might be prohibited to the Goldsmiths’. The head of the community was instructed to desist accordingly, the resolution went on, ‘as a compliment to the Peishwa’. Contests continued among smaller regional Brahman communities such as the Shenvis and the White Yajurvedis, very often when more dominant Brahmans challenged their status as ‘pure’ Brahmans and, with it, their entitlement to the livings attached to priestly work. These conflicts sometimes degenerated into violence, as when a pair of Chitpavan Brahmans broke into a White Yajurvedi temple and forcibly removed the deities which, they said, the Yajurvedis had no right to serve.

Here, then, older conflicts over the nature of the varna order received fresh impetus as the peshwa governments sought to extend the central reach of the state into matters of caste regulation, and to weaken other powerful groups in the state by depriving them of the public dignities of Vedic ritual. Local caste leaders also exploited the nexus between caste and politics by using their connections in Pune to pursue local ambitions and grievances.

Texts, both in the form of sastric treatises such as that of Gopīnātha, and the written judgements of pandit assemblies, mattered deeply to the outcome of these struggles. They informed judgements of the state, which state officials as well as community leaders frequently enforced, and they were taken seriously as one of the indices of a community's social rights and standing. So too, however, did the ability to field muscular supporters on the street, to protect a disputed ritual, to focus the

mind of a pandit assembly, or to manhandle deities out of a contested temple. Social dignity, political leverage, and material livelihoods were all at issue in these conflicts over the Vedic dignities allowed to the twice-born, and the fundamental question as to whether any but Brahmans and Sudras remained in the fallen era of the Kaliyuga.

Brahmans and Sudras: Gopīnātha in the colonial archive

The social world that the colonial state inherited in western India was not, therefore, simply a geographical region in which ‘intermediate’ castes were poorly represented. Rather, the question itself was a bitterly contested one, in which the ascent of Brahman power during the eighteenth century had enabled the orthodox advocates of a society polarized between Brahmans and Sudras to entrench their views. Although the move to the ethnicization of caste identities was to come later in the nineteenth century, the Brahman/non-Brahman divide itself lay already implicit in those contests. When, therefore, Marathas, Kayasthas, Sonars, and other elite ‘non-Brahmans’ turned to social campaigning during the 1820s and 1830s, the issue of Vedic dignities continued to lie at the heart of their programmes. Pandit assemblies were convened to debate what had now become the ‘Vedokta’ issue in Satara, Bombay, Pune, and Baroda. The Bombay government was drawn in: in April 1824, the Bombay Sonars, led by the influential banker, Jagannath Shankarseth, petitioned the Bombay government for help in securing their rights. 59 The campaigns culminated in a major debate about Vedic rights sponsored at his court by the Satara raja, Pratapsinh (1793–1847). Again, sastric texts and religious judgements figured prominently in the proceedings. The Kayastha scholar, Ābā Sāheb Pārasnīs, led the case for the raja, compiling a large digest of relevant documents, the *Siddhāntavijaya*, which contained many of the texts of dharmasastra and legal judgements from the eighteenth century and earlier. 60 Led by Nilakaṇṭha Śāstri Thaṭṭe, the Brahman party likewise drew for its arguments on its own deep intellectual roots. Thaṭṭe belonged directly to the scholarly lineage of the Banaras grammarian, Nāgeśabhaṭṭa, who, as we have seen, had championed the conservative position against the arguments of Savai Jai Singh of Jaipur in the early decades of the

Notes

eighteenth century. Again, the debates took place in an atmosphere of barely suppressed violence, the chamber guarded by soldiers, and the raja himself armed.

There were long textual continuities in other ways too. To the consternation of the Kayasthas, Sonars, and others, the *Jātiviveka* was beginning to appear in the colonial apparatus of government as a book of authority. H.H. Wilson, then secretary to the Committee of Public Instruction, and soon to emerge as a distinguished Indologist in the East India Company service, examined the Sonars' entitlements in 1824. He had before him a range of texts of religious law, including the *Jātiviveka* and the later *Śūdrakamalākara*, through which parts of the *Jātiviveka* had circulated during the seventeenth century. Handwritten Sanskrit quotations from these and other texts appear in the margins of his work, revealing active guidance from local Brahman scholars anxious to ensure that Wilson came to the right conclusions. Arthur Steele, charged in the early 1820s with compiling an accurate account of the 'law and custom' of Hindu communities in the Company's new Deccan provinces for use in the Bombay courts, cited 'the 'Jatiwivek' and other texts particularly recommended for their accurate account of caste classification. Dissemination of the *Jātiviveka* may actually have increased in these early years of the Company's state. James Molesworth first published his English-Marathi dictionary in 1831, ably assisted by a team of learned pandits. The entry for Kayasthas simply recorded that they were a community of writers. By the time Molesworth came to publish the second edition in Bombay in 1857, however, the entry for Kayasthas was much fuller. 'See the book *Jātiviveka*,' the entry read, and quoted at some length from the *Jātiviveka*'s account of the degraded origins of Kayasthas in transgressive marriages and degraded forms of sexual contact.

'To refute my opponents with their own weapons': Tukārām Tātyā Paḍvaḷ and the conservative tradition of the *Jātiviveka*

If continuities marked these elite concerns—and, indeed, the process of knowledge-gathering itself during these first years of the East India Company state—what of those early colonial intellectuals who went on to a more radical intervention in the long-standing debate about varna

hierarchies? The dominant figure in the non-Brahman politics of nineteenth-century western India is that of Jotirao Phule (1827–1890). As is well known, Phule founded western India's first non-Brahman political organization, the Satyashodhak Samaj, in 1873. During the 1870s, he also developed what was to become a key plank in non-Brahman ideologies in many parts of India. This was the theory that Brahmans were the descendants of the early Aryan invaders of India, and caste the instrument of their subsequent social domination of India's indigenous peoples, its bahun samāj or 'community of the majority of people', which included Kshatriya warriors denied their true identities as well as Sudra toilers and labourers. This attempt to forge a broad jati collectivity represented the moment of 'ethnicization' in western India. However, its vision of a society polarized between Brahmans and others, and its assimilation of older concerns with ritual dignities to a new identity in which social worth lay with those who protected the land and those who laboured to make it fruitful, were very much a reflection of the older debates described above.

Yet the earliest work of what might be called 'non-Brahman' critique in the Maratha country, and an even more direct link with the earlier debates around the Jātiviveka, came from the pen of a young Bombay man, Tukārām Tātyā Paḍvaḷ (1838–1898). Paḍvaḷ came from a successful Bhandari family in Bombay, and was to go on to work closely with other moderately prosperous merchant and small business people in the movement for municipal reform in the 1870s. With the help of Phule, who was named as publisher of the book, Paḍvaḷ published his Jātibheda Vivekasāra ('Essence of the discernment of distinctions between jatis') in 1861, and republished it in 1865 in a more extended edition.⁶⁸ While Paḍvaḷ did not mention the Jātiviveka itself, the very title of his work identified it consciously as a voice of opposition within the larger genre. Moreover, his central polemical tactic was to take the Jātiviveka's vision of a social world irredeemably mixed, and turn it against the long tradition of argumentation as it had developed historically and into his own time. The whole notion of purity of descent anywhere in Hindu society was a fiction. All communities, from Brahmans to the humblest of Untouchables, were in reality irretrievably mixed in their origins and

Notes

in the motley professions and modes of life they pursued. What gave Paḍvaḷ's work additional force was his detailed knowledge of the history of conflict over caste in the Maratha country, and the key role of ritual and of texts in that history. His was another astute and historically aware vernacular sociology, but this time one that aimed at undoing the whole regional discourse of varna and caste, using its own very instruments. As he explained in his introduction, 'I have thought it was a good stratagem to refute my opponents with their own weapons.'

Paḍvaḷ's analysis proceeded in three broad stages. India's caste system, he argued, had at first been a practical division of labour in which people were able to move flexibly according to their talents and aptitudes. It had hardened into a rigid hierarchy from the time of the late classical philosopher monk, Shankaracharya, who had destroyed the influence of India's Buddhist communities, entrenched the varna order as the basis of all religion, and represented Brahmans at its head as gods on earth, fit to be worshipped no matter what their conduct. After extensive quotations from the Manusmṛti and other epic and puranic texts, he moved on to look at the real history of caste identities and relations in the Maratha country. He quoted extensively from the insulting puranic texts through which Maharashtra's Brahman communities had historically pursued their mutual rivalries, in which each described menial and transgressive origins for their opponents. The Maratha community considered themselves Kshatriyas. But this dated only to the time when the Marathas had acquired an empire in the time of Sivaji. 'At that time, Gāgābhāṭṭa wrote the book that determined him to be a Kshatriya. He invested him with the sacred thread using the Gāyatrī mantra, thus establishing his entitlement to Vedic rituals. It is from that time that Marathas have worn the sacred thread. But once Brahmans saw that their empire was gone, they reverted to using puranic ritual only for them.' Not only that, but the Marathas had adopted many Muslim social customs, such as the veiling of women, from their overlords in those days. Likewise, the claims of Kayasthas, Sonars, and many other castes to be pure Kshatriyas were simply impossible to prove, and belied by the visible evidence of social mixing and merging of livelihoods and modes of life. In support of his contention that all castes, not just those between Brahman and Sudra,

were mixed in the modern era, Paḍvaḷ actually cited verses from the *Jātiviveka*, but as these in turn had been reproduced in the work on Sudra ritual life of the Banaras pandit, Kamalākarabhaṭṭa, referred to above.

Paḍvaḷ followed this upending of the inherited discourse of caste in western India with a remarkably clear-eyed critique of the adverse sociological consequences of caste in his own times, arranged under a series of headings. Intellectually, caste limited educational opportunities for all but a few, leaving the minds of the majority cramped ‘like the bound feet of Chinese girls’. Brahmans who did have access to education closed their minds to the knowledge of science, such that many would tell you ‘that the earth was as flat as the leaf of a Pipal tree, and rested on the head of the great snake, Shesha’. Many felt they could make a good living with little effort, and so themselves were in many cases poorly educated, limiting themselves to rudimentary clerical knowledge. In ethical terms, pride of caste made people immune to the sufferings of the poor and the starving. It led to crimes against women, such as the killing of girl babies, practised by Rajputs, and the custom of Kulin Brahman polygamy in Bengal. Manu and other ancient texts of religious law laid down savage punishments for the lower castes and the greatest leniency for high caste transgressors, such that the latter often felt that they were above the law. India's trades and craftsmen possessed only poor levels of skill, in many cases because caste limited mobility and forced people simply to practise their hereditary family professions. Caste also prevented Hindus from travelling abroad, trading, learning, and mixing comfortably with outsiders. The political disadvantages of caste were equally severe. India's warrior classes of Kshatriyas and Rajputs were too divided by caste to resist the waves of conquerors from the northwest who followed Mahmud of Ghazni. In more recent times, caste had prevented Brahmans and Marathas from joining forces to resist the forces of the English. Paḍvaḷ concluded this part of his treatise by listing the spiritual disadvantages of caste, quoting extensively from Hindu devotionalist, Buddhist, and Jain writers from different parts of India who had themselves protested against its false values.

In the last part of his text, Paḍvaḷ returned to the specific history of caste struggles in western India. He assembled a range of eighteenth-century

Notes

judicial documents through which various castes had contested their identities. There was a Banaras pandit assembly's judgement from 1788, dismissing the claims of the Bombay Palashe community to Brahman status and priestly livelihoods. There were two judgements from the Shankaracharya of Sringeri matha in Karnataka, one of the South India's great authorities in matters of Hindu religious law, about the rights of Palashes to work as priests to Kayasthas, and the claims of Shenvi communities in Bombay to full Brahman status. There was a copy of the 1779 ruling from the governor of Bombay referred to above, in the matter of disputed Sonar claims. He included a very interesting order dating from 1743, from the Maratha peshwa to the Brahman religious leaders of the town of Cheul outside Bombay. The order described how many eminent Brahman pandits had been assembled in Pune to rule on the claims of the Kayastha community of Pattane Prabhus, who had been observed commissioning priests to carry out Vedic rituals to which they were not entitled. The assembly had judged them to be mere Sudras. The peshwa's letter ordered that in future the community were to be allowed puranic ritual only for their domestic ceremonies, and were to permit widows of the caste to remarry in conformity with the dharma proper to Sudras. 78 To these evidences of the hybrid identities of Brahman and Kayastha communities, Paḍvaḷ added information about India's Rajputs and lordly Maratha families drawn from British sources. James Tod, the great authority on Rajput history, had traced Turkish origins in many Rajput families. The historian, Grant Duff, had described the humble origins of Sivaji's own family. The old Maratha clans who claimed purity of Rajput descent were in fact socially mixed, as was clear from their recent intermarriages with the lowly families of Shinde and Holkar, 'so it is clear how much purity remains amongst the Maratha people'. Paḍvaḷ concluded his text with a lengthy classification, very much in the style of the Jātiviveka, of 'the jatis which are found in the country of Maharashtra'. As Gopīnātha had done, Paḍvaḷ included a brief description of each community's place of origin, their occupation, mode of life, and, in some cases, their claimed or attributed varna identity. The first edition of Paḍvaḷ's book caused quite a stir in Bombay, with reviews in the Marathi and the English language press, and appeared in a

second, expanded edition in 1865. The book was promoted in Pune by the missionary, Adam White, part of the Pune missionary circle that included Jotirao Phule. It made a strong impression on the Marathi writer and social observer, Govind Nārāyaṇ, who noted it in his *Mumbaice Varṇan* ('Description of Bombay'), published in 1863. Describing the intense social competitiveness of caste communities in the city, and caste fissions occasioned by minute disagreements over ritual observance, Nārāyaṇ reported that, 'In 1861, an enquiring gentleman prepared and published a book called the *Jatibhed Viveksaar* for the welfare of the people.' The book 'contains numerous examples from the Vedānta and other books regarding the futility of caste. People should certainly read this book.'

Paḍvaḷ therefore displayed a remarkably detailed knowledge of caste struggles dating back two centuries and more, and a sharp awareness of the role that texts of many different kinds could play in those struggles, from seventeenth-century texts of dharmasastra, to the judgements of pandit assemblies in Pune and Banaras, to orders of the peshwa government in Pune or the government of Bombay. What was also striking in his position was that it contained no suggestion of any new kind of ethnicized caste collective. He engaged closely with Maharashtra's long-established tradition of debate as to whether there were any intermediate castes in the modern world. However, he used that tradition not to suggest a new combination, but rather to attack and undo all social unities that were built on the basis of caste, itself a corrupting principle of social life. In this, of course, his approach differed from that of Phule, who shortly after was helping Paḍvaḷ with his treatise and beginning to develop his thesis of the essential unity of all non-Brahman castes against their Brahman oppressors. In this, Paḍvaḷ stands as an important and little-recognized intellectual predecessor of Ambedkar, who began to develop his own assault on caste some 60 years later in the 1920s.

Throughout these years, Gopīnātha's *Jātiviveka* and the tradition it had come to represent remained at the centre of argumentation about caste, shaping 'colonial knowledge' and continuing to draw attention from communities who found themselves classified in its terms. It entered the

Notes

literature of colonial anthropology through the work of the missionary, John Wilson, the first volume of whose *Indian Caste* was published in Bombay in 1857. It described ‘the Jati-Viveka, the Brahajjati-Viveka, the Madhava-Kalpalita, and the Parashurama Pratapa’ as ‘works of authority among the Maratha Brahmans’. 84 In his 1877 account of his community's history and customs, the Bombay Kayastha, Shamrao Moroji Nayak, included the Jātiviveka, the Paraśurāmapratāpa, the Śatapraśnakalpalatā, and the Brhājātiviveka within a list of Sanskrit works that gave no proper account of his community of Pattane Prabhus, ‘for the reason that they are written by the Shastris and not by the sages of ancient times’. In 1880 the essayist and social reformer, V.N. Mandlik, cited the ‘Jativiveka, large and small’ in his list of authoritative works of dharmaśāstra in the Maratha country. These pressures continued to provoke Kayasthas and others in the new context of competitive history writing that gathered pace from the 1870s. 87 As late as 1919, the writer and non-Brahman activist, K.T. Gupte, inveighed against the Jātiviveka, as a text that ‘determined everyone other than Brahmans to be inferior and Sudras. In its opinion, goldsmiths, carpenters, weavers, gardeners, braziers and coppersmiths are all inferior and Sudras.’

Afterword

By this time, of course, caste was firmly established as a dominant force in the public spheres of law, politics, and education. Caste associations everywhere sought to extend their memberships, and looked to the colonial state as well as their own histories for affirmation of their identity. Non-Brahmans in western and southern India challenged assumptions that they could be easily assimilated into Congress-led nationalism, and early Dalit leaders, including Ambedkar, were beginning to demand organizations and a voice of their own. As is well known, the political and social strategies of the late colonial government offered many points of purchase for these pervasive forms of caste assertion, and the latter constituted one of the major social legacies of the colonial state to independent India's first governments.

These are now very familiar forces. Yet there is a danger that the very salience of ‘ethnicized’ caste and identity politics in the public life of our modern era will lead us to overlook the longer term continuities described above, and the sometimes obscure colonial intellectuals who wrestled with them. Intellectuals such as Paḍval, and his predecessors in the eighteenth century and before, were sharply aware of this long history. They worried about texts and their very material influence, understood the dignities of Vedic ritual, identified varna status as a key part of social prestige, and appreciated—and sometimes deeply deplored—the power of stigmatization that might follow if these dignities were withheld.

Their critiques certainly drew on the intellectual resources that became available under colonialism, but were no mere by-products of colonial knowledge. What is valuable about their engagement with western India's long tradition of argumentation about caste is that it reminds us that caste, as explicit or implicit hierarchy, is—and has always been—very much more than an epiphenomenon of the state, and sustained strongly in the domains of family and personal life, bodily comportment, and religious practice.

10.3 CASTE AND CENSUS

The share of the Scheduled Tribe population in urban areas is a meager 2.4%. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Karnataka are the State having larger number of Scheduled Tribes. These states account for 83.2% of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the country. Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, Mizoram, Bihar, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, account for another 15.3% of the total Scheduled Tribe population. The share of the remaining states / Uts is negligible.

As per the Census 2001, total population of the Scheduled Castes in the country (excluding the population of Mao Maram, Paomata and Purul sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur) is 166,635,700 which constitute 16.2% of the total population. Uttar Pradesh (35,148,377) has the largest Scheduled Caste population, followed by West Bengal

Notes

(18,452,555) and Bihar (13,048,608). These states, along with Andhra Pradesh Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Punjab comprise the group of ‘top ten’ states in terms of large Scheduled Caste population in the country. In Nagaland, Lakshdweep, and A & N Islands, no Scheduled Caste is notified.

Total population of Scheduled Tribes is 84,326,240 as per the Census 2001 which accounts for 8.2% of the total population of country. Majority of the Scheduled tribe population live in rural areas and their population is 10.4 % of the total rural population of the country.

TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION IN DISTRICTS, VILLAGES, AND UAs / TOWNS – INDIA.

Proportion of SC/ST population (%)	Scheduled caste			Scheduled tribes		
	No. of Districts	No. of villages	No. of UAs/towns	No. of Districts	No. of villages	No. of UAs/towns
Nil	13*	152,796	62	50**	323,487	1,090
Upto 4.9%	92	71,479	506	278	68,189	2,420
5.0%-9.9	68	61,275	1,055	56	23,742	387
10.0%-19.9%	271	110,590	1,876	69	28,662	264
20.0%-49.9%	148	153,481	856	65	44,240	160
50.0%-74.9%	1	28,672	20	35	26,788	15
75.0% or above	0	15,322	3	40	78,507	42
Total	593	593,615	4,378	593	593,615	4,378
* No SC list applicable in 11 districts.						
** No ST list applicable.						
Source : Primary Census Abstract, Census of India 2001.						

The share of the Scheduled Tribe population in urban areas is a meager 2.4%. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Karnataka are the State having larger number of Scheduled Tribes. These states account for 83.2% of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the country. Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, Mizoram, Bihar, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, account for another 15.3% of the total Scheduled Tribe population. The share of the remaining states / Uts is negligible.

Lakshdweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, are predominantly tribal States /Union territories where Scheduled Tribes population constitutes more than 60% of their total population. No Scheduled Tribes is notified in Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Delhi, and Pondicherry.

At the village level out of the total 5.94 lakh villages in the country 1.53 lakh or 1\4 of the villages, do not have any Scheduled Caste population. In 171,865 villages and 2,931 UAs / Towns, the proportion of the Scheduled Caste population is less than 20 % while in more than 20% while in 154,481 villages and 856 UAs/Towns it is more than 20% but less than 50%.

On the other hand, there are 105,295 villages and 57 UAs/Towns which have more than 50% Scheduled tribes population in the country while 3.23 lakh or half of the villages do not have any Scheduled Tribes population. It is due the fact that, while the Scheduled Castes population is more widely spread over both in rural and urban areas, the scheduled tribe population prefers to live in groups in the rural surroundings.

10.4 EMERGING CASTE ASSOCIATIONS: DEBATES AROUND SANSKRITISATION

Meaning

The concept ‘Sanskritization’ was first introduced by Prof. M.N. Srinivas the famous Indian sociologist. He explained the concept of sanskritization in his book “Religion and society among the coorgs of South India” to describe the cultural mobility in the traditional caste structure of Indian society. In his study of the coorgs of Mysore, he came

Notes

to know that the lower castes were trying to raise their status in their caste hierarchy by adopting some cultural ideals of the Brahmins. As a result they left some of their ideals which are considered to be impure by the Brahmins. To explain this process of mobility, Srinivas used the term 'Brahminization'. Later on he called it 'Sanskritization' in a broad sense. Defining Sanskritization Srinivas writes, "Sanskritization is a process by which a lower caste or tribe or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a higher or more often twice-born caste."

Characteristics of Sanskritization:

1. Sanskritization is a process of imitation in Indian society, the social status of an individual is fixed on the basis of caste hierarchy. There are many lower castes who suffer from economic, religious or social disabilities. So in order to improve the status, the lower castes people imitate the life style of the upper caste people.

2. Sanskritization is a process of cultural change towards twice-born castes. Sanskritization is a process in which the lower castes adopt the cultural patterns of the higher castes, to raise their status in the caste hierarchical order. In some societies the lower caste people followed not only the customs of the Brahmins but also the customs of the locally dominant castes like Kshatriyas and Vaisyas to raise their status.

3. Sanskritization is helpful in the social mobility of lower caste:

In this process a caste is only trying to change the status and not the social structure.

4. Sanskritization process also followed by the tribal: Sanskritization process is not only confined to the caste people of Hindu society, it is also found among the tribal society.

5. The concept of Sanskritization has also given rise to De-sanskritization. There are some instances in modern times, some of the

higher castes are imitating the behaviour pattern of lower caste, and for example Brahmins have started taking meat and liquor. This process is called De-sanskritization.

Models of Sanskritization:

Sanskritization may follow any of the following models such as:

2. Varna Model,

3. Local Model.

1. Cultural Model:

Castes have been assigned high or low status according to cultural characteristics of Hindus. The wearing of sacred thread, denying the use of meat and liquor, observing endogamy, prohibition of widow remarriage, observing the restriction in caste system, worship according to the modes and methods described in the religious text books, giving respect to the religious and mythological stories etc. have been given sanctity in traditional culture. They are considered to be the measuring standards of sacredness and purity. Accepting these behaviour and code of highness and purity as described in religious texts in a form of Sanskritization.

2. Varna Model:

In the Varna system the highest status is given to that of a Brahmin followed by Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. Antyaj or the lowest is the fifth Varna that is the lowest and untouchable one in the Varna system. The lower castes copying the ideals and life style of the superior castes. Where the Kshatriyas enjoy superiority, the lower castes followed their life style and ideals. Simultaneously where the vaishyas enjoy superiority, the lower castes followed their life style and ideals. Only the Antyaj or lower caste copy the Sudras. That is to say emulating the life style or ideals of a Varna on the basis of honour and superiority enjoyed by that class is called Varna model or sanskritization.

Notes

3. Local Model

In every country, some castes are considered to be more respectful than others on account of their economic power. This caste may be called the “master caste” or the “dominant caste”. So the lower caste copies the life style of the local dominant caste in order to improve their status.

Effects of Sanskritization:

1. Sanskritization in social field:

The social aspect of sanskritization is much more important from the view point of change. The low caste individuals are inclined towards sanskritization because in that way they can elevate their social status and get higher status in caste hierarchy.

2. Sanskritization in economic field:

Economic betterment and sanskritization is another related issue. The lower caste people have given up un-cleaned occupation to raise their economic status because clean trades are a symbol of social light.

3. Sanskritization in religious field:

Sanskritization also can be observed in the religious field. Like Brahmins many of the lower castes people put on sacred thread. They also go to their temple regularly and perform Arti and Bhajan. They have left prohibited food and un-cleaned occupation. Even they have specialised in performing ceremonies like Brahmins.

4. Sanskritization in living patterns:

The living patterns of lower castes have also Sanskritized. Like higher caste they also get Pucca houses built for them. Now they sit along with the higher caste on the cots without any fear or hesitation. They also keep their houses clean and put on dresses like higher castes.

10.5 MIGRATION AND DISEASE AND HEALTH SERVICES

Migration and health are increasingly recognized as a global public health priority. Incorporating mixed flows of economic, forced, and

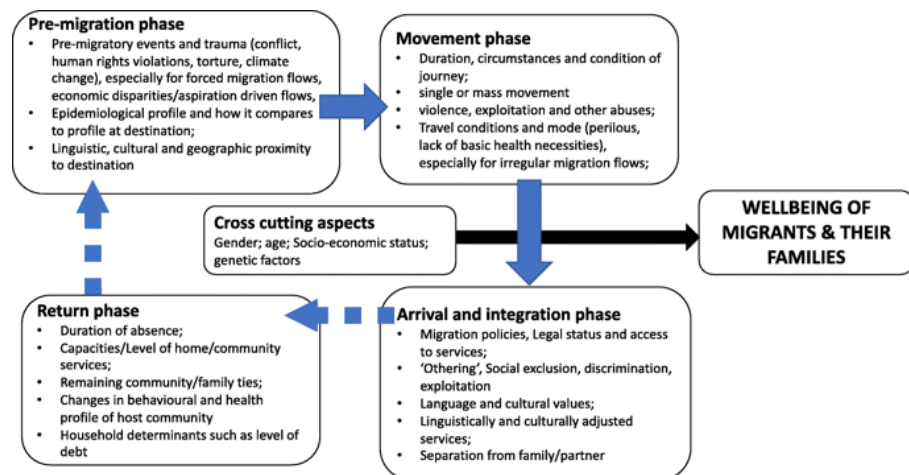
irregular migration, migration has increased in extent and complexity. Globally, it is estimated that there are 244 million international migrants and significantly more internal migrants – people moving within their country of birth. Whilst the majority of international migrants move between countries of the ‘global south’, these movements between low and middle-income countries remain a “blind spot” for policymakers, researchers and the media, with disproportionate political and policy attention focused on irregular migration to high-income countries. Migration is increasingly recognized as a determinant of health. However, the bidirectional relationship between migration and health remains poorly understood, and action on migration and health remains limited, negatively impacting not only those who migrate but also sending, receiving, and ‘left-behind’ communities.

In February 2017, an international group of researchers participated in the 2nd Global Consultation on Migration and Health held in Colombo, Sri Lanka with the objectives of sharing lessons learned, good practices, and research in addressing the relationship between migration and health. Hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Sri Lankan government, the Global Consultation brought together governments, civil society, international organizations, and academic representatives in order to address migration and health. The Consultation facilitated engagement with the health needs of migrants, reconciling the focus on long-term economic and structural migration - both within and across international borders - with that of acute, large-scale displacement flows that may include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and undocumented migrants.

The Consultation was organised around inputs on three thematic areas: Global Health; Vulnerability and Resilience; and, Development. These inputs guided working group discussions exploring either policy, research, or monitoring in relation to migration and health. This paper reports on the outcomes of the research group after an extensive period of debate at the Consultation and over the subsequent 9 months. We identify key issues that should guide research practice in the field of migration and health, and outline strategies to support the development

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of evidence-informed policies and practices at global, regional, national, and local levels. Debate and discussion at the Consultation, and below, were guided by two key questions:



What are the opportunities and challenges, and the essential components associated with developing a research agenda on migration and health?

What values and approaches should guide the development of a national research agenda and data collection system on migration and health?

Our discussions emphasized that international targets, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Universal Health Coverage (UHC; Health target 3.8 of the SDGs), are unlikely to be achieved if the dynamics of migration are not better understood and incorporated in policy and programming. To address this, and in order to improve policy and programming, a renewed focus on enhancing our understanding of the linkages between both international and internal migration and health, as well as the outcomes and impacts arising from them, is urgently needed.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. Discuss about the Caste identities: Colonial knowledge.

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2. What do you know about the Caste and Census?

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3. Discuss about the Emerging Caste associations: Debates around Sanskritisation.

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4. What do you know about the Migration and disease and health services?

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10.6 LET US SUM UP

In addition to international and internal migration, the health concerns associated with labour migration require attention; migrant workers are estimated to account for 150.3 million of the 244 million international migrants. While labour migration leads to significant economic gains for countries of origin and destination, true developmental benefits are only realised with access to safe, orderly and humane migration practice. Many migrant labourers work in conditions of precarious employment, within ‘difficult, degrading and dangerous’ jobs yet little is known about the health status, health outcomes, and resilience/vulnerability trajectories of these migrant workers and their ‘left behind’ families. Many undergo health assessments as a pre-condition for travel and migration, yet many such programs remain unlinked to national public health systems .

Our discussions highlighted the complex and heterogeneous nature of research on migration and health, with particular concerns raised around the emphasis on international rather than internal migration, in view of

the greater volume of the latter. The need for a multilevel research agenda to guide appropriate action on international and internal migration, health, and development was highlighted. In order to account for immediate, long-term and inter-generational impacts on health outcomes, migration and health research should: (1) incorporate the different phases of migration (2) adopt a life-course approach; and, (3) integrate a social determinants of health (SDH) approach.

10.7 KEY WORDS

Migration: Human migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily at a new location.

10.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss about the Migration and Health issue in India.
2. Discuss about the Caste identification.

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10.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 10.2
2. See Section 10.2
3. See Section 10.3
4. See Section 10.4

UNIT 11: RELIGION AND CULTURE

STRUCTURE

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Pre-colonial and Colonial Historiography
- 11.3 Post-colonial Research in Religion
- 11.4 The Study of Indian Culture
- 11.5 Culture Studies and Religious Identities
- 11.6 Mentality and History of Culture
- 11.7 Let us sum up
- 11.8 Key Words
- 11.9 Questions for Review
- 11.10 Suggested readings and references
- 11.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know about the Pre-colonial and Colonial Historiography
- To discuss the Post-colonial Research in Religion
- To know about the Study of Indian Culture
- To discuss the Culture Studies and Religious Identities
- To know about the Mentality and History of Culture

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The nationalist movement in colonial India led to an important reconstruction of the concept of history. History at the time was understood to be a history of the British state in India. The history of the pre-colonial period was understood to be a political narrative of the dynasties and their wars and alliances. For Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, this was a history of violence. There was no history of ‘soul-force’, or nonviolence. He put the matter quite explicitly in *Hind Swaraj* (1909). Rabindranath Tagore made the same point somewhat differently. In his view, the true history of India was not a catalogue of its dynasties, warfare and the resultant bloodshed, but rather its inner history. It lay in

the quest for the accommodation of differences, and in the synthesis of diverse elements, including clashing religious beliefs. The history of India's unique culture, in his view, was evolution of harmony out of variety. Religious history was on this analysis central to the inner history of the country's culture. It was a history of syncretism. British Orientalism had also regarded religious history as the most important part of India's cultural history. Nor was this a colonial view alone, for there was an earlier recognition of the importance of religion in the cultural heritage of the country. Badauni's *Muntakha-ut-Tawarikh*, bearing upon the reign of Akbar, devoted considerable space to religious matters and Sufi doctrines. There was also a recognition, however, that not all of India's culture was religious culture. British Orientalism had a keen appreciation of secular Sanskrit poetry, and earlier, Badauni had devoted many pages of his history to Persian poetry in India, not all of which was religious. However, Indian historiography was quick to recognise that there was no hard and fast distinction between the religious and the secular in the history of India. Even in the modern period, it was recognised that the Indian awakening had an important component of religious reform / revival.

11.2 PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

What P.J. Marshall calls 'the British discovery of Hinduism' was preceded long ago by the Muslim discovery of Hindu sacred and secular learning. As early as C.1030, the Muslim scholar of Ghazni, Al Biruni, had written extensively and sufficiently on Hindu 51 beliefs in *Kitab -ul-Hind*. The Tibetan lama, Taranatha, wrote a history of the Buddhist faith in India, *rGya - gar - chos - 'Gyun* (The History of Buddhism in India), around 1608, by which time Hinduism had already triumphed over Buddhism. In the same century, the Mughal Prince, Dara Shikoh, sought to show that the monotheistic fundamentals of both Hinduism and Islam were capable of mingling together. His work, entitled *Majma - ul - Bahrain* (Mingling of Two Oceans), was based on inquiries into authoritative texts much as the Upanishads and the Sufi work *Gulshan Raz*. It was written in a philosophical vein, but yet another important

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work of the seventeenth century, the *Dabistan - I Mazahib* of Mushin Fani, clearly exhibited the historical and comparative method. This work, translated as *The Dabistan or School of Manners. The Religious Beliefs, Observances, Philosophical Opinions and Social Customs of the East* by David Shea and Anthony Troyer (Washington, 1901) treated the major faiths and sects of India comprehensively. The work of the British Orientalists on the 'great traditions' of Hinduism and Islam resulted in the codification of 'Hindoo law' and 'Anglo Muhammadan law', but at least one major Orientalist, H.H. Wilson, pushed his researches into areas beyond the orthodox religious traditions. His 'Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus', published in *Asiatic Researches* (Vol. 16, 1828, Vol.17, 1832), recorded the history of various bhakti sects, including obscure ones. Following Wilson, the Brahmo reformer Akshay Kumar Datta wrote in greater historical detail on a large number of unorthodox popular sects in his Bengali work, *Bharatbarshiya Upasak Sampraday* (2 parts, 1870 and 1883). It is the same popular cults, such as the Bauls, that Rabindranath Tagore brought into the limelight in his Hibbert lectures at Oxford, published as *The Religion of Man* (London, 1931). He drew upon the historical work of a colleague at Santiniketan whom he had asked to research the subject. The Santiniketan teacher, Kshitimohan Sen, wrote an important work in Bengali, entitled *Bharatiya Madhya Yuge Sadhanar Dhara* (1930), which he translated subsequently as *Medieval Mysticism in India* (London, c. 1935). Later on, Sashi Bhushan Dasgupta dwelt on the unorthodox sects of early colonial Bengal in *Obscure Religious Cults* (Calcutta, 1946). The development of the Sufi cult in Bengal was treated in a thesis of the 1930s by Muhammad Enamul Huq, who subsequently published it in independent Bangladesh as *A History of Sufiism in Bengal* (Dacca, 1975). Yet another important work of the colonial period covering the history of an important sect was George Weston Briggs, *Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis* (Calcutta, 1838). The Jogis were an unorthodox sect and were found from Bengal right up to the Punjab. The works of Wilson, Datta, Tagore and other established that there was, at the popular level, a number of heterodox sects, both Hindu and Muslim, which represented a radical syncretistic religious tradition going back to late antiquity. In other words conflict

between antagonistic religions was not all there was to the religious tradition of the subcontinent. Even as research into the obscure aspects of Indian religion made important advances in the colonial period, religious and social reform was changing the tradition in several aspects. This was a new area of investigation, and a pioneer in this field was J.N. Farquhar. A sympathetic Christian Missionary, he wrote a work entitled *Modern Religious Movements in India*. First published in 1919, it still remains an important reference work with first hand information. After 1947, the subject would become a major topic of research, but Farquhar's sympathetic account still retains its fresh quality.

11.3 POST-COLONIAL RESEARCH IN RELIGION

Research in both the orthodox and unorthodox aspects of the religions of the subcontinent made major advances after Partition, and there was a new focus on Islam in its specific South Asian context. Comprehensive surveys of Islam in India emerged from different perspectives: S.M. Ikram's *History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961) and Muhammad Mujeeb's *The Indian Muslims* (London, 1967) presented the Pakistani and Indian perspectives respectively, while Anne-Marie Schimmel's *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent* (London, 1980) presented an external perspective on the subject. On the Sikh community, W.H. McLeod, a sympathetic historian from New Zealand, wrote the widely accepted and objective work, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community* (Delhi, 1975). The southern peninsula was the focus of new community studies such as Stephen Frederic Dale, *The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922: Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier* (Oxford, 1980) and Susan Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society 1700-1900* (Cambridge, 1989). These works showed the distinctive regional forms of Islam and Christianity. The syncretic local forms imported to Islam by popular Fakirs were imaginatively explored by Richard M. Eaton in *The Sufis of Bijapur: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton, 1978), and by Asim Roy in *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal* (Princeton, 1983). The Research in the esoteric and popular forms of

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Hinduism made a major advance with Mircea Eliade's classic study for Yoga in French : *Le Yoga: Immortalité et Liberté* (Paris, 1954). Other important books that explored forms of Hinduism outside the orthodox Brahmanical mould included : Edward C. Dimock, *The Place of Hidden Moon : Erotic Mysticism in the Sahajiya Vaishnva Cult of Bengal* (Chicago, 1966); Wendy Doniger O'Flahery, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Siva* (Oxford, 1973); Sanjukta Gupta, Dirk Jan Hoens and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantrism* (Leiden, 1979); and Charlotte Vaudeville, *A Weaver Named Kabir: Selected Verses with a Detailed Biographical and Historical Introduction* (Delhi, 1993). The religious and social movements of reform in colonial India emerged as an important focus of research after independence. The movement of Islamic revival went back to the eighteenth century and was studied by S.A.A. Rizvi in *Shah Wali-allah and His Times* (Canberra, 1980). The Brahmo movement in Bengal, one of the most important reform movements in the nineteenth century, was treated by David Kopf in *The Brahmo Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind* (Princeton, 1979). The movement of reform in Islam in the nineteenth century was treated by Christian W. Trall in *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: a Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (New Delhi, 1978). More generally, themes of religious reform were treated in synthetic general works such as Charles H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1966), and Kenneth W. Jones *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India: The New Cambridge History of India 3.1.* (Cambridge, 1994). The movements of revival and reform fostered a new kind of politics of religious identity. In Pakistan, Ishtiaq Husain Qureishi claimed, in *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent 610-1947: A Brief Analysis* (The Hague, 1962), that the Muslims had always constituted a separate nation in the subcontinent. Religion tended to become a matter of politics in the twentieth century historiography.

11.4 THE STUDY OF INDIAN CULTURE

The colonial period produced important studies of Indian culture, beginning with the Orientalists. Sir William Jones discovered the Indo-

European language group and thus transformed notions of Indian culture. There was a keen Orientalist interest in Indian art, evident in such works as James Ferguson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876). The Orientalists were sometimes unjustly critical of early Indian historiographical efforts in this direction, as is evident in Ferguson's criticisms of Rajendralal Mitra's highly original study of the temples of Orissa in *The Antiquities of Orissa* (1868-69). This did not stop Indian intellectuals and in due course Ghulam Yazdani wrote a wonderful account of Ajanta paintings entitled *Ajanta* (1930). Around this time Indian historians exhibited an interest in the culture of people as distinct from the chronicles of the Kings. Muhammad Habib wrote *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi* in 1927, and K.M. Ashraf wrote an account of popular culture during the Delhi Sultanate in *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan* (1935). By this time English education had brought about an important change in the mentality of the middle class, a theme explored by the American intellectual B.T. McCully in *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism* (1940). Indian intellectuals themselves studied the impact of the West on the new vernacular literatures, for instance, Sushil Kumar De, *Bengali Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (1919), and Sayyid Abdul Latif, *The Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature* (1924). One of the intellectual achievements of this time was Surendranath Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, 5 vols. (1922). Independence and Partition brought a renewed interest in the subcontinent. The synthetic surveys of the time deserve mention: A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India: A Survey of the History and Culture of the Indian Subcontinent before the Coming of the Muslims* (1954), and S.M. Ikram, *History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan* (Lahore, 1961). In recent years, the Western cultural impact has been studied in new and sophisticated ways, for instance, Meenakshi Mukherjee, *Realism and Reality: The Novel and Society in India* (New Delhi, 1985), and Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India* (Cambridge, 1994). Such works explore the emergence of modern Indian culture from fresh perspectives and have broadened our understanding of the process dubbed the Indian Awakening. The phenomenon is now

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studied from a more critical angle of vision and culture is now more closely related to the emerging forms of consciousness and society.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. What do you know about the Pre-colonial and Colonial Historiography?

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2. Discuss the Post-colonial Research in Religion.

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3. What do you know about the Study of Indian Culture?

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11.5 CULTURE STUDIES AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES

Post-modernism, colonial discourse analysis and culture studies have focused attention on the question of religious and cultural identities in Indian history. Post-colonial theory questions such identities and argues that they are ‘constructed’ by colonialism, nationalism and other motivated forces. The validity of religious identities, especially Hinduism, has been doubted by the post-colonial deconstructionists. Poststructuralist literary criticism, deriving from such intellectuals as Jacques Derrida and Edward Said, has been a key factor in such deconstructionism. The deconstructionists contend that the British Orientalists constructed Hinduism out of diverse religious practices, and that even Islam in British India was too diverse to be the basis of one Muslim community across the subcontinent. As an instance of

Orientalism and the fictitious identities it created, the post-colonial critics point to such works as Sir Monier Monier-Williams's *Hinduism* (1877). He spoke of Hinduism as one religion despite its many sects because of the fact that there was 'only one sacred language and only one sacred literature, accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike.' Indian nationalists, too, as for instance K.M. Sen, who wrote the standard work *Hinduism* (Penguin, 1961), are thought to have followed in the footsteps of the Orientalists in relating the history of a non-existent single religion.

In a typically post-modernist vein, Brian Smith contended in *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual and Religion* (New York, 1989): 'Just who invented "Hinduism" first is a matter of scholarly debate. Almost everyone agrees that it was not the Hindus.' In his opinion it was the British who did this in the early part of the nineteenth century, 'to create and control' a diverse body of people. This made it possible to speak of 'a religion when before there was none or, at best, many.' Among other works which have dwelt on the constructed nature of religious boundaries in India may be mentioned Harjot S. Oberoi, *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition* (Chicago, 1994); and Vasudha Dalmia and Heinrich von Stietencron (eds.), *Representing Hinduism: the Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity* (New Delhi, 1995). Barbara Metcalf has argued, for her part, that identities such as the 'Indian Muslims' are neither primary, nor of long standing, and are, in fact, the products of colonial history (Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Perfecting Women: Maulana Ashraf Ali Jhanawi's Bihishti Zewar* (Delhi, 1992). In an article entitled 'Imagining Community: Polemical Debates in Colonial India', she goes so far as to say that 'India', 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' are not just imagined communities, they are, in her view, 'imaginary communities' (in Kenneth W. Jones, ed., *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, Albany, NY, 1992). Not all historians accept these arguments, and they have continued to write religious, cultural and social history in terms that imply the real existence of such communities from pre-colonial times. As instances of this contrary view may be cited: C.A. Bayly, 'The Pre-history of

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“Communalism”? Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860' (Modern Asian Studies, Vol.19, 1985); Cynthia Talbot, 'Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-colonial India' (Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 37, 1995); Rafiuddin Ahmed, The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: a Quest for Identity (Oxford, 1981); Stephen Dale, The Mappilas of Malabar 1498- 1922: Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier (Oxford, 1986); Richard M. Eaton, The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier 1204-1706 (Delhi, 1994); David Lorenzon (ed.), Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action (Albany, NY, 1995). Not surprisingly, the disagreements among the scholars have given rise to a wide-ranging controversy on the nature of identities in colonial and pre-colonial India, and on the question whether patriotism and communalism have deep roots in Indian history. The development of the controversy may be followed through the following works: Gyanendra Pandey, The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India (Delhi, 1990); C.A. Bayly, The Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India (Delhi, 1998); Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, Representing the Other? Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims (New Delhi, 1998); Rajat Kanta Ray, The Felt Community: Commonalty and Mentality before the Emergence of Indian Nationalism (New Delhi, 1003). Whereas Pandey and Chattopadhyaya have emphasised the construed nature of the identities in Indian Society, Bayly and Ray have seen religious and patriotic loyalties in old India as more real. A solid body of research in religious and cultural history has emphasised that identities and loyalties in Indian society must not be seen as hostile and monolithic blocs. Richard Eaton's work on the Sufis of Bijapur and Asim Roy's work on the Islamic syncretistic tradition in medieval Bengal, referred to earlier, have brought out the very large extent to which Islam in the subcontinent was shaped by syncretic interaction with the Hindu religion. The Bhakti movement, which also made an extremely significant contribution to the syncretic tradition, has been studied, among other works, in Karine Schoemer and W.H. McLeod (eds.), The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India (Delhi, 1987) and Friedhelm Hardy, Viraha-Bhakti: the Early Hisotry of

Krishna Devotion in South India (Delhi, 1983). Apart from the spiritual Sufi and Bhakti movements, there was a persistent Lokayata tradition, with a materialistic and popular orientation, which worked against the hardening of religious identities into antagonistic blocs. This significant tradition is explored in D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Lokayata: a Study in Ancient Indian Materialism* (New Delhi, 1959). The continuation of this materialistic tradition among the Bauls of Bengal, who set aside the Hindu-Muslim divide as false spiritualism, has been traced to recent times by Jeanne Openshaw in *Seeking Bauls of Bengal* (Cambridge, 2002). Such movements were more radical in nature than the Sufi and Bhakti movements and they undermined gender, religious, caste and class distinctions even more thoroughly. Miranda Shaw, in her *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism* (Princeton, 1994), has dwelt on this radical strand, too. The atheistic strand in the Indian religious tradition, it has been demonstrated, has tended to subvert the existing distinctions in Indian society. Notwithstanding all this, modern India has experienced a distinct tendency towards religious polarisation. Peter van der Veer has dwelt on this theme in *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, 1994). The public life of the emerging nation(s) has been influenced to a large extent by religious controversy.

Religion and culture seem like complex ideas to study from the perspective of International Relations. After all, scholars and philosophers have long debated the meaning of these terms and the impact they have had on our comprehension of the social world around us. So is it an impossibly complicated task to study religion and culture at the global level? Fortunately, the answer is 'no', for we can recognise and respect complexity without being confused about what we mean by each term. In this chapter, which completes the first section of the book, we will explore why thinking about religious and cultural factors in global affairs is as integral as the other issues we have covered thus far.

Promotional Content



What do we mean by the terms ‘religion’ and ‘culture’? Where can we see examples of religion and culture at work in the domains of world politics? How do religious and cultural factors impact on our ability to live together? Our investigation will begin to address these questions. As we do so, we shall keep in mind the encouragement of rabbi and political philosopher Jonathan Sacks, who wrote that ‘sometimes it is helpful to simplify, to draw a diagram rather than a map in order to understand what may be at stake in a social transition’ (1997, 55). There has indeed been a transition in IR thinking about the value of religion and culture.

How can we define religion and culture in a way that is useful to the study of world politics? It is important to sketch each term separately before bringing them back together to form a composite picture. We begin with religion, a category that scholars and policymakers once considered irrelevant to the study of IR because it was not believed to be important for the economic and security interests of modern states and their citizens. Yet, many scholars now hold that religion cannot be ignored. While the idea of culture has equally been underplayed in IR, its inclusion in analyses of world affairs predates that of religion and is considered less controversial. We shall consider four elements of each category and then make important linkages between them so that religion and culture make sense as whole, rather than fragmented, ideas.

Elements of religion

Following the Al Qaeda attacks on the US on 11 September 2001 (often called 9/11), studies of religion in world politics increased sixfold. In the words of Robert Keohane, the events of 9/11 provoked the realisation that ‘world-shaking political movements have so often been fuelled by religious fervour’ (2002, 29). Indeed, whether it is the disruptions of religion-led revolution, the work of religious development agencies responding to natural disasters, peace-making efforts of religious diplomats or a myriad of other examples, even a glance at global affairs over recent decades seems to support the comment of sociologist Peter Berger that ‘the world today ... is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever’ (1999, 2).

Such a view also seems supported by the numbers as ‘worldwide, more than eight-in-ten people identify with a religious group’ (Pew 2012, 9). Are you numbered among the 20 or 80 per cent? Do you think religious influence on global affairs is a welcome inclusion or a significant problem? Regardless of where we stand, it appears a closer look at the ‘religion question’ is in order if we are to establish a fuller picture of IR. The following four elements of religion may provide a useful introduction.

1. God(s) and forces in the public square

The first element of religion is the belief that divine beings and/or forces hold relevance to the meaning and practice of politics today and throughout history. These beings are sometimes understood as a knowable God or gods, sometimes as mythical and symbolic figures from our ancient past and sometimes as impersonal forces beyond the physical realm.

Different religious traditions understand the influence of religion upon politics in different ways. Traditions that we might call ‘fundamental’ propose that politics is a matter of organising society according to divine commands. In Iran, for example, the highest court in the land is a religious one, drawing its principles from the Shia branch of Islam – the second largest Islamic tradition worldwide after the majority Sunni tradition. This court has the power to veto laws of parliament and decide who can hold power. Likewise, in Myanmar (formerly Burma) an

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influential group of religious monks has started a movement intent on imposing Buddhist principles on the whole country, including non-Buddhist minorities. Thus, some religious politics is based on 'fundamentals' that, in the view of adherents, cannot be changed without the standards of society also being compromised.

By contrast, traditions that adopt a 'contextual' approach hold that politics is a matter of influencing society according to divine principles but as part of a wider tapestry of influences. For example, religious development organisations such as the Aga Khan Development Network (also from the Shia branch of Islam) work in areas of health care and education in countries of Africa and Asia without seeking to control entire political systems. Likewise, in Myanmar, the so-called Saffron Revolution of 2007 saw Buddhist monks stand with the poor against the ruling military dictatorship and support the beginnings of multi-party democracy. In these examples, religious politics is adapted to changing circumstances and takes into account diverse interests and beliefs across society.

What is common to both fundamental and contextual religious traditions is an understanding that politics is in some sort of interactive relationship with the intentions of, or traditions shaped by, gods (or God) and spiritual forces. This contrasts strongly with secular approaches that demote, and sometimes deny altogether, a role for religion in political affairs.

Do you believe that religion has a role to play in public debates or should it be confined to private spirituality only? From an individual point of view, we could address this question by asking what it would be like to live in societies that are either entirely controlled by religion, or entirely without religion. What would the benefits and losses be in each situation? It can be strongly argued that neither scenario exists in pure form. When religion has been used to dominate the public square, a diversity of groups (non-religious and religious) have risen in opposition. Likewise, when religion has been expelled from the public domain, religious actors and interests go underground waiting for a chance to re-emerge.

2. Sacred symbols (re)defining what is real

The second element of religion are rituals that re-order the world according to religious principle. Although the word ‘faith’ can be associated with belief in unseen realities, humans throughout time have needed to see, touch and smell the sacred. Our senses are portals to the spirit. Therefore, rituals function as tangible symbols of the intangible realm. For examples of different studies that consider the public rituals of Judaism, Islam and Hinduism respectively see Beck (2012), Bronner (2011) and Haider (2011). While some religious rituals are private or hidden, many are performed in public spaces or in ways that are openly accessible to wider society. As such, they are a part of public life – which is one of the original definitions of the word politics.

For religious adherents, rituals symbolise spiritual truths but they can also redefine how power can be understood in the material world. Thomas Merton once described his experience of watching Trappist monks perform the rituals of the Catholic Mass in very political terms. He wrote:

The eloquence of this liturgy [communicated] one, simple, cogent, tremendous truth: this church, the court of the Queen of Heaven, is the real capital of the country in which we are living. These men, hidden in the anonymity of their choir and their white cowls, are doing for their land what no army, no congress, no president could ever do as such: they are winning for it the grace and the protection and the friendship of God. (Merton 1948, 325)

Merton’s experience of redefining power and influence through sacred symbols is true for millions of people practising thousands of different religious rituals each day. Beyond the experience of individuals, states also seek divine blessing. For example, over one-fifth of states today have a monarch (such as a king, queen or emperor). Although monarchs differ in the extent of their powers – from figureheads controlled by parliaments to absolute rulers to variations of these – they all draw their power from some form of religious or spiritual authority. The elaborate rituals of monarchies worldwide are understood by their subjects to symbolise divine blessing for the realm and its citizens, redefining where the real power lies.

3. Sacred stories connecting past, present and future

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The third element of religion is teaching traditions based on stories of significant figures, events and ideas from the past and beliefs about the future of time itself – like a spoiler alert about the end of the world. For some religions, however, time itself is an illusion and the main focus is living in the now according to sacred ideas rather than the connection of past–present–future. These elements – interpreting the past, projecting the future, living now – are basic to the development of political ideologies also. Therefore, sometimes religious and political groups can appeal to the same stories or ideas even though the interpretation or intent may differ significantly.

For example, both Jews and Christians uphold the idea of ‘Jubilee’ as central to understanding the story and/or future promise of a Messiah who would usher in a new era of justice with peace (or ‘shalom’). In the 1990s members of both communities appealed to one aspect of Jubilee – a tradition of debt cancellation found in the Hebrew Bible – as the basis for addressing the debt crisis facing developing nations. Only a few years later, this sacred story was used for very different purposes by US president George W. Bush, who celebrated the 2003 invasion of Iraq by quoting a Jubilee text from the Book of Isaiah: ‘To the captives come out, and to those in darkness be free’ (Monbiot 2003). Sacred stories, ideas and teachings from the past have a richness and power that can influence political affairs today and the aspirations we hold for tomorrow. It is no wonder that the anthropologist Talal Asad once observed that what we today call religion has ‘always been involved in the world of power’ (2003, 200).

4. A community worshiping and acting together

The fourth element common to most religions is the need for believers to belong to a faith community in order to practice sacred rituals and reinforce the truth of sacred stories. Some religious traditions could be described as high demand, requiring strict adherence to rules and standards in order to maintain membership of the faith community. Other traditions are low demand, adopting a more flexible approach to the requirements for belonging faithfully to the community. Both forms of faith commitment are expressions of religion as ‘identity politics’

connected to who we are (that is, who we understand ourselves to be) and how we live.

The connection between religion and identity politics can have individual and international significance. For instance, empowered by belonging to a faith community, individuals can act in ways that they might not otherwise have done in isolation. Rosa Parks, an African American woman who famously refused to obey American racial segregation laws and sparked a nation-wide civil rights movement in the 1960s, is often lauded as a heroic individual. This may be true, but as a member of a religious community that affirmed human dignity and the divine principles of racial equality, Rosa Parks was never acting in isolation (Thomas 2005, 230–240). This can be understood internationally also, as many (if not most) faith communities have a transnational membership, and some of these exert significant influence on political issues varying from religion-inspired terrorist action against ‘Western’ values (after all, not all religious politics is peace-orientated) to faith coalitions for environmental sustainability.

The four elements of religion described above – the significance of gods and spirits, the power of holy rituals, the telling of sacred stories and belonging to faith communities – seem in their own ways to be a core aspect of the human condition in the twenty-first century. Although many dimensions of the religious experience can be ‘politics-free’, both history and contemporary events remind us that these combined elements of religion can have a political impact on individuals, nations and international society.

Elements of culture

We can approach the term culture in the same way we have considered religion. There are many proposed meanings of culture, and these vary from the simple to the complex. While each approach has real value for understanding the social world around us, we will opt for a simple version that still gives us plenty to work with. As such, we begin with an understanding of culture as the combined effect of humanly constructed social elements that help people live together. We will explore four elements of culture, illustrating each element through individual and international political experience.

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1. Common life practised in society

The first element of culture has to do with common or shared life. While media reporting seems to constantly prioritise stories of war, conflict and controversy, it is equally the case that local, national and international society requires a remarkable degree of cooperation. How do we live together? Common bonds can sometimes be forged through family ties (as the saying goes, ‘you can choose your friends but you are stuck with your relatives’), economic interests (‘what matters most is the colour of your money’) or security concerns (‘the enemy of my enemy is my friend’). Yet, there are other bonds that are forged at the social level as peoples of difference find ways to live together in the same space by forging common beliefs, habits and values. It is from this practice of common life that culture often emerges.

Sport provides good examples of culture as common life. Let us think about football (also known as soccer). Local football clubs can be founded on distinct community identity. For example, local Australian players from a Greek background can play for a team sponsored by the Hellenic Association. Clubs can equally represent a locality rather than a particular group. For example, the Smithfield Stallions of Sydney might have individual players from Greek, Ethiopian, British and Turkish background. Regardless of background, at the international level all players in these clubs have a loyalty to the Australian football team. Football is the common bond – a sporting pastime but also cultural practice. Think about the way entire nations can be said to embody the activities of its national sporting heroes. Supporters from different countries will identify their team as playing in a certain style, even if these are stereotypes and not entirely accurate: do all Eastern European teams play with structure and discipline? Do all South American sides use flamboyance and spontaneity? The larger point, for both individuals and nations, is the tangible power of a sporting pastime to generate common bonds from the local to the international (Rees 2016, 179–182). That bond is an expression of culture.

2. Symbols of group identity

The second element of culture are symbols of identity. Constructing and interpreting ‘signs’ is a basic activity in any society. The kinds of sign I

am referring to are tangible reminders in modern societies of who we are as a people. They include styles of architecture (such as bridges or religious buildings), land or waterscapes that influence the activity of life (such as in harbour cities), monuments, flags and other identity banners, styles of clothing and habits of dress, distinctive food and drink – and so on. These signs are more than a tourist attraction, they are symbols that inform members about who they are as a group and that help the group live together cohesively.

Consider, for example, the individual and international significance of national flags as cultural symbols. For individuals, a flag can be so powerful that citizens are prepared to die on the fields of battle fighting for its honour, representing as it does the ‘way of life’ of the nation. The Star-Spangled Banner as the anthem of the United States of America describes the power of a national flag to inspire individual and national devotion. Written by Francis Scott Key in 1814 after he spotted the symbol of America still flying following a night of fierce British bombardment, Scott’s moving ode to freedom includes the famous words, ‘O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave; O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?’. The answer for Key was yes, the flag symbolising defiance and the promise of victory.

Equally, persecuted communities within a country might see a national or regional flag as a symbol of oppression rather than freedom, symbolising a dominant way of life that excludes them. In all regions of the world nationalist groups fight for autonomy or independence from a country or countries that surround them, and do so under alternative flags that represent their own cultural identity. The flag of the Canadian province of Quebec, for example, employs religious and cultural symbols reflecting its origins as a French colony in the new world. Quebec nationalists campaigning for independence from Canada have employed the flag in the promotion of French language, cultural preservation and Quebecois identity. National separatist groups worldwide are similarly inspired by symbols of culture they are trying to preserve.

3. Stories of our place in the world

The third element of culture is the power of story. Like the cultural use of symbols, societies need to tell stories. These may be about individuals

Notes

and groups, of events in the distant and recent past, of tales of victory and defeat involving enemies and friends – and so on. Such stories are told to reaffirm, or even recreate, ideas of where that society belongs in relation to the wider world. As such, stories are performances designed to influence what we understand to be real (Walter 2016, 72–73). Sometimes cultural difference can be most starkly understood by the different stories societies tell about themselves. It is no surprise, therefore, that ‘culture change’ often involves a society accepting a different story about itself (or struggling to do so) in order to embrace a new social reality or accept a new view about its own history. Likewise, what is sometimes referred to as a ‘culture war’ occurs when different stories clash and compete for public acceptance (Chapman and Ciment 2013).

For example, indigenous (or ‘First Nations’) peoples readily, and with significant justification, contest the stories of settlement in countries like the United States, Australia, Canada and elsewhere. In such places, national holidays can be mourned as commemorating invasion and dispossession. New Zealand offers somewhat of a contrast, with the story of the nation including the drawing up of the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 between the British colonisers and the indigenous Maori tribes. Although the terms of the treaty are still debated, particularly in relation to ‘the lack of Maori contribution’ to those terms (Toki 2010, 400), they did grant Maori peoples rights of ownership of their lands, forests, fisheries and other possessions. Such ownership, as an attempt to uphold the sovereignty of the Maori nation(s), was central to the preservation of their cultural story. Sadly, this is not the history recounted by Australian indigenous nations or most Native American tribes in the United States and Canada. Taken together, these depictions of preservation and loss illustrate the importance of language, ritual, place and tradition in the cultural story at the individual and international level.

4. Agreement on what is ‘good’

The fourth element of culture is the way a society decides what it means to have ‘a good life’. Like living organs, societies experience growth and decline, health and decay, fitness and injury. Extending the analogy, we could say that culture is a way to measure the psychological and

emotional health of society. The United Nations Development Programme regards ‘wellbeing’ and the ‘pursuit of happiness’ as fundamental to the sustainable health of a society. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization regards ‘building intercultural understanding’ via the ‘protection of heritage and support for cultural diversity’ to be a priority for international peace and stability. These descriptors reflect what individuals and international societies believe is a healthy culture. As such, culture involves agreement on the kind of things that are good for society and can make it flourish. ‘Culture clash’ occurs when different societies prioritise different understandings of what those ‘good’ things are.

One of the leading frontiers of culture clash worldwide involves the campaign for gender equality in areas such as education, employment, reproductive and marital rights. The story of Malala Yousafzai from northwest Pakistan reminds us of the power of one individual to inspire an international response on the vital issue of education for girls. When Malala was 12, and inspired by her teacher father, she began to speak out for the right to education, something that was becoming increasingly restricted due to the influence of the Taliban in Pakistan. In 2012, although critically wounded, Malala survived an assassination attempt at the hands of the Taliban and, on her recovery, became a brave advocate for the many millions who were being denied education due to certain cultural perceptions about girls and their place in society. In 2014 she was co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and dedicated her prize money to the building of a secondary school for girls in Pakistan. Malala’s story reminds us that culture is about the way individuals and societies define what the ideal ‘good’ is and the extent to which individual citizens like Malala, the global networks inspired by her story, and even those like the Taliban who oppose this vision are willing to campaign for what they consider to be cultural rights.

Religion and culture: difference and similarity

We have explored elements of religion and culture and offered various brief examples from an individual, national and international perspective. While it has been important to consider each concept separately, highlighting the particular ways that religion and culture influence

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international relations, there are clear interlinkages between them. Theorists have long drawn such links and these are useful for our consideration here. For example, the anthropologist Clifford Geertz famously described religion as a ‘cultural system’ composed of myths, rituals, symbols and beliefs created by humans as a way of giving our individual and collective lives a sense of meaning (Woodhead 2011, 124). Consider the similarities between the elements of religion and culture described in this chapter such as the role of symbols and stories in both accounts, and the pursuit of life according to what either faith or culture determine to be the higher standards of living.

An important question to ask is whether ‘culture’ should be necessarily understood as the larger more significant category in international relations, always casting ‘religion’ as a subset within it. Such a view makes sense because no one religion encompasses an entire society in the world today, and no society lives entirely according to one set of sacred rules and practices. On the other hand, in some contexts religious authority and identity can be more significant than any other cultural element. For example, when American soldiers moved into the Iraqi city of Najaf in 2003 to negotiate security arrangements, it was not the town mayor or the police chief that had most influence. Rather, it was the reclusive religious leader Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, whose authority influenced not only the city but much of the fracturing nation itself. Taking another example, when Communist authorities confronted striking dock workers in Poland in the 1980s, it was not only unions that opposed them but also the Catholic Church, whose priests performed sacred rituals and stood in solidarity with strikers in open defiance of the government. In both these examples, the elements of religion are equally – if not more – prominent than the elements of culture. Perhaps the most useful approach, therefore, is to see the elements of religion and the elements of culture in constant interaction with one another.

We have explored just four elements for each category. What might some other elements be and what are the impacts of these elements on individual and international life? There are some excellent resources to assist us in exploring such questions. These include an introduction to religion in IR by Toft, Philpott and Shah (2011), an examination of

religion in a globalised world by Haynes (2012), a large compendium of essential readings on religion and foreign affairs edited by Hoover and Johnston (2012), and E-International Relations' edited collection Nations Under God (Herrington, McKay and Haynes 2015). However, the simple outline we have provided so far will enable us to begin answering the 'what' and 'how' questions about religion and culture in global affairs and draw some connections between them.

Can we all live together?

One of the most pressing questions related to our study is whether religious and cultural actors and agendas have more of a positive or negative effect on global affairs. As we have seen above, these elements relate to some of the deepest levels of human experience, both individually and internationally. Should policymakers try to release the powerful energy of religio-cultural identity for the sake of a better world, or should they try to 'keep a lid on it' for fear of unleashing forces that might damage our capacity to get along with others?

The value of a 'both/and' approach

The study of international relations shows that the answer may be to draw on both strategies, since religio-cultural identity inhabits a space somewhere between the problems of conflict and the possibilities of cooperation. This approach can be seen as an adaptation of Appleby's influential idea of the 'ambivalence of the sacred' (2000) in which the elements of religio-cultural politics we have explored above carry simultaneously the potential for both violence and peace. The usefulness of this approach is that it helps us to break free from the restrictions of an 'either/or' logic about religion and culture (i.e. either conflict or cooperation). Instead, we can focus on a 'both/and' analysis which allows individual and international examples of each (i.e. both conflict and cooperation) to inform us about the politics of religion and culture at the global level. The influential scholar Martin E. Marty (2003) would add that such an approach helps us to deepen our understanding of world politics as it really is.

Therefore, with a 'both/and' logic in mind, we consider comparative examples of religio-cultural identity in world politics that emphasise conflict and cooperation respectively. The number of alternative

Notes

examples in IR is potentially unlimited – so as you read on, keep in mind other instances where the elements of religion and culture contribute to violence and peacemaking.

Religion and culture create a ‘clash of civilisations’

When Soviet Communism finally collapsed in 1991, US president George H. W. Bush heralded the beginning of a ‘new world order’. In many ways this was an accurate description because the conflict between the Soviet Union and the West had shaped the dynamics of global affairs for half a century. But, what would this new order look like? One answer was offered by Samuel P. Huntington (1993), who suggested that world politics would no longer be shaped by a clash of ideologies (e.g. capitalism and communism) but rather by a ‘clash of civilizations’. With this hypothesis, Huntington still assumed that global politics would be shaped by conflict as much as the Cold War before it had been. The significant shift in thinking was the prominence that religious and cultural identity would play in shaping the conflict. For Huntington, a civilisation was understood as ‘a cultural entity ... defined both by common objective elements such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people’ (1993, 23–24). Significantly, the descriptors Huntington gives to the major civilisations have a cultural or religious link: ‘Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu and Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African’ (1993, 25).

Thus, the central tenet to Huntington’s controversial idea is that those elements of culture and religion that we have studied in this chapter contribute to fundamental differences across the globe. This creates fault lines between individuals and peoples who will inevitably fall into serious conflict over these deep and abiding differences. Not surprisingly, Huntington’s ideas have been both criticised and embraced. The phrase ‘clash of civilisations’ came to popular prominence in 2001 as a way to interpret the 9/11 attacks as a conflict between Islam and the West. Although it is worth noting that the administration of George W. Bush did not apply the notion in the way Huntington proposed, scholars were using the phrase well prior to 9/11 and today its applications vary considerably, from commentary on Turkish politics to describing the

tension of multicultural policy in Western regional cities. Whatever the merits of these examples (and hundreds like them) they illustrate how Huntington's thesis has become a way for politicians, commentators and academics to frame conflicts in a changing global landscape. Religion and culture are central to this framing.

Religion and culture create a dialogue of civilisations

At the end of the Cold War, rather than assuming the continuation of a conflict-driven world as Huntington did, some saw the new world order as an opportunity to redesign the way international affairs was conducted. What would such a politics look like? Some policymakers imagined a world where multiple actors – not just powerful states – could contribute to a collective process of stability and accountability. Religio-cultural voices were increasingly considered an important part of this conversation.

Accordingly, an alternative approach to that of Huntington came from a United Nations consultative group known as the World Public Forum, which began an initiative in 2002 called the Dialogue of Civilizations. Influenced by a 1997 proposal from Iranian president Mohammed Khatami, the objective of the Dialogue is to 'combine the efforts of the international community in protecting humanity's spiritual and cultural values ... bringing the spirit of cooperation and understanding into the daily lives of people from different cultures'. Thus, in stark contrast to the clash of civilisations assumption that religion and culture are causes of conflict, the Dialogue of Civilizations deploys the same broad elements as resources for building bridges between individuals and peoples in the development of sustainable peace and cooperation.

What is the value of such a change? The 'clash' emphasises religion and culture as an extension of politics based on power, and one of the abiding problems of world politics is that some states are (much) more powerful than others. The Dialogue of Civilizations potentially offers a more equalising approach, whereby religion and culture become an extension of politics based on shared interests. Noting that religio-cultural communities are often transnational rather than state-based, the Dialogue's emphasis on 'spiritual and cultural values' helps to create an

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open-ended space for international cooperation beyond the defensive power interests of states.

The importance of precise thinking

Which framework makes more sense to you? Does the rise of religion and culture in international affairs encourage clash or a dialogue? Do religious and cultural elements of politics enable us to live together in cooperation or do they disconnect us in ways that lead to conflict? Applying the logic that we introduced at the start of this section, one answer is that elements of religion and culture contribute to both clash and dialogue, to both conflict and cooperation.

The benefit of this approach is twofold. First, it encourages us to look closely at specific elements of religion and culture – as we have done in this chapter – instead of forcing such complex phenomena into a singular assumption about conflict or cooperation. As Reza Aslan once commented, ‘Islam is not a religion of peace and it is not a religion of war. It is just a religion’ (PBS, 2009). This kind of ambivalent outlook allows us to consider how the precise elements of religion and culture are used in violent and peaceful ways.

Second, applying a ‘both/and’ logic requires us to consider specific examples of international relations – as we have attempted throughout the chapter – without stereotyping religious and cultural traditions by pinning them to singular events. When the shortcomings of religion were once brought to the attention of the Hindu mystic Ramakrishna, he remarked that ‘Religion is like a cow. It kicks, but it also gives milk’ (Tyndale 2006, xiv). For every cultural symbol of hate, we see as many cultural symbols of healing and peace. For every religious movement of violence, we see as many religious movements for reconciliation.

This ‘both/and’ understanding of religion and culture has become influential among policymakers working with individuals, local communities, and national, regional and international organisations, marking a significant shift in our understanding of world politics as a whole. Beyond the issue of peace versus violence, it has also helped us understand the need for particular consideration about the extent of religious and cultural influence on politics throughout the world. For example, on religion, Jonathan Fox (2008, 7) writes:

A fuller picture of the world's religious economy would show secularisation – the reduction of religion's influence in society – occurring in some parts of the religious economy, and sacralisation – the increase of religion's influence in society – occurring in other parts.

Cultural factors are similarly dynamic, both in influence and in the forms they take. As James Clifford wrote, “cultures” do not hold still for their portraits’ (1986, 10), and as such the influence of culture on individual and global politics requires precise thinking.

11.6 MENTALITY AND HISTORY OF CULTURE

Cultural history has been enriched by the study of mentalite or mentality, a term coined by the Annales School of Historians in France. This goes beyond conventional intellectual history and explores the popular attitudes and subconscious categories of thought. A related area of research, also exploring the mind, is psycho-history, which seeks to uncover the unconscious level of the mind with the help of Sigmund Freud's technique of psycho-analysis. This kind of history is not concerned with the conscious emotions of the individual or the group. Psycho-history probes repressed impulses rather than open sentiments. The study of emotion in cultural history, including conscious sentiment, is a wider field that may be called emotional history. Historical studies of mentality in India's culture and civilisation have come to embrace these different strands of history. They include popular attitudes and symbols of thought, unconscious mental processes, and the history of culturally shaped sentiments and emotions. At the same time, intellectual history continues to flourish. An important study of the interaction of European and Indian thought from the pre-colonial period onwards is Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe : an Essay in Understanding* (Albany, New York, 1988). There is also a huge literature on how the West affected the mind and thought of India in the colonial period. This keen interest among scholars is reflected in such works as Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Delhi, 1986). This is a Subalternist work by a political scientist. Another work is Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Europe Reconsidered: Perceptions of the*

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West in Nineteenth-Century Bengal (New Delhi, 1988). This is a study of the thought of Bhudev Mukhopadhyay, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and Swami Vivekananda by an eminent liberal historian. Studies of mentality going beyond strict intellectual history began to appear from around the 1970s. The wide range of works include: David Kopf, *The Brahma Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind* (Princeton, 1979); Kenneth Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj* (New York, 1980); Judith Walsh, *Growing up in British India* (New York 1983); Carol Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (eds), *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia* (Philadelphia, 1983); Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: the 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, 1995); Rajat Kanta Ray (ed.), *Mind, Body and Society: Life and Mentality in Colonial Bengal* (Calcutta, 1996); Sumit Sarkar, *Writing Social History* (Delhi, 1997); and Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness: Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and the Formation of a Nationalist Discourse in India* (Delhi, 1998). What these works have done is to bring out some of the tensions embedded in the emerging mental formation during the colonial period. Psycho-history, with its use of insights from Freudian psycho-analysis, is a more technical and closely focused exercise. In relation to India, it may be said to have started off with the famous psycho-analyst Erik Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Non-violence* (New York, 1968). In India, Sudhir Kakkar, a practising psycho-analyst, has specialised in this kind of history, and has written such works as *Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality* (Chicago, 1989). Another writer who has made psycho-history his field and has demonstrated its relevance to Indian culture is Ashis Nandy. He has explored the colonial impact on the unconscious mind in *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi, 1983). The discipline of psycho-history, established by Erikson, is now applied to specific subjects by non-specialists. This is especially notable in the subjects of religion, eros and sexuality. For instance, here are two highly controversial psycho-analytical studies of Ramakrishna Paramhansa's mind and life: Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Kali's Child: The Mystical and the Erotic*

in the Life and Teachings of Ramakrishna (Chicago, 1995); and Narasingha P. Sil, Ramakrishna Revisited: A New Biography (Lanham, Md, USA, 1998). In their studies of religion and culture, they have focused on the psychosexuality of the saint. Psycho-analysis is so well-established in India from the time of Freud himself that there are now histories of it. The Austrian author Christiane Hartnack has written Psychoanalysis in Colonial India (New Delhi, 2001), where she examines the birth and growth of psycho-analysis in India from the angle of culture theory. As opposed to the psycho-analysts and psycho-historians, there is a group who call themselves 'social constructionists' (of post-modernist persuasion), who approach emotion from the angle of poststructural anthropology, critical theory and culture studies. They hold that emotion is totally relative to culture and have rejected Freud. In relation to Indian society, we may mention here Owen M. Lynch (ed.), Divine Passions: the Social Construction of Emotion in India (Delhi, 1990). Lynch argues that in India the conception of emotions and emotional life itself differ so radically from what prevails in the West that Westerners may never understand 'an Other, such as India.' This position has been rejected by some historians who, while locating emotion in primary impulses, trace its impact on culture as a real factor. Their treatment of emotion in history is broader than that of the psycho-historians in the sense that they explore not merely unconscious emotion, but also conscious sentiment. This newly emerging emotional history may be seen in Tapan Raychaudhuri, Perceptions, Emotions, Sensibilities: Essays on India's Colonial and Post-Colonial Experiences (New Delhi, 1999); and Rajat Kanta Ray, Exploring Emotional History: Gender, Mentality and Literature in the Indian Awakening (New Delhi, 2001).

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. Discuss the Culture Studies and Religious Identities.

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2. What do you know about the Mentality and History of Culture?
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11.7 LET US SUM UP

Contending schools, such as psycho-history, social constructionism, history of mentalite, emotional history, and so on, have added many strands to the historical explorations of religion, culture and mentality in India. The history of the mind is no longer simply the old intellectual history. The study of culture, religion and the mind, relating them to their broader contemporaneous societal context, has enriched Indian history. This has broadened it out beyond the sort of historiography that at one time equated general history with the history of the state alone. In the process, intellectual history itself has been transformed. It is no longer confined simply to the ideas of the elite. The perceived identities and unconscious symbols of the mass of the population, and the emotional drives in whole societies, are being taken into consideration by historians.

In this unit we set out to draw a diagram of religion and culture in world affairs. The aim was to show that religious and cultural factors matter if we want to deepen our understanding of international relations. The method has been to define elements of each concept and consider the impact of these elements on aspects of our individual, national and international experience. Hopefully, you are convinced that understanding religious and cultural issues is necessary if you want to join some of the most important discussions about world politics today. There is little that concerns IR today that does not involve elements of religion or culture, or both. Equally, it is important to recognise as a final thought that we have only just begun to explore these issues and we need to go deeper in our consideration of the importance of religious and

cultural actors and interests. Understanding them will help us better understand an ever more complex and divided world.

11.8 KEY WORDS

IR: International Relation

Culture: Culture is an umbrella term which encompasses the social behavior and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities and habits of the individuals in these groups.

Identity: the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.

11.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1) Discuss recent trend of using the history of mentality for the study of Indian culture.
- 2) Write a detailed note on the historical writings on Indian religion and culture.

11.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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11.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 11.2
2. See Section 11.3
3. See Section 11.4

Check Your Progress 2

1. See Section 11.5
2. See Section 11.6

UNIT 12: PEASANT, LABOUR AND WORKING CLASSES

STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Historiography before 1947
- 12.3 The Left Paradigm and its Critics
- 12.4 The Longer Term Perspective
- 12.5 Peasant Movements
- 12.6 Labour History
- 12.7 Let us sum up
- 12.8 Key Words
- 12.9 Questions for Review
- 12.10 Suggested readings and references
- 12.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know about the Historiography before 1947
- To discuss about the Left Paradigm and its Critics
- To know about The Longer Term Perspective
- To discuss about Peasant Movements
- To know the Labour History

12.1 INTRODUCTION

The Leftist movement in twentieth century Indian politics brought the focus to bear upon peasants, workers and their movements during the freedom struggle. Attempts to write the histories of these movements involved a closer study of class relations in Indian society, especially peasant-landlord relations and worker-capitalist relations. There had been earlier studies of related aspects, especially a voluminous historical literature on industry. The aim of radical historiography, however, was to treat the peasants and workers as historical subjects in their own right. Soon, it became evident that the history of workers and peasants might

Notes

not be grasped fully without taking their evolving relationship with the superior classes into account. As these realisations dawned, the new labour historians emphasised the importance of treating labour and capital together. By the very nature of the subject, moreover, the older colonial historiography had tended to treat agrarian relations as a whole, keeping in view the mutual relations of tenants and landlords in any investigation of the condition of peasants. The terms 'peasant' and 'worker, it may be noted in this context, were somewhat novel terms in Indian history. Colonial historiography had usually used the terms 'tenant' and 'ryot' rather than the 'peasant'. The term 'ryot' was a distortion of the Persian term 'raiyyat', which meant, literally, 'subject'. In Mughal times, all subordinate classes of villagers, including the tillers of the land who were liable to pay the land tax, were referred to as 'ri'aya' (plural of raiyyat) or subjects. While the peasants were very much there in the pre-colonial period, the class of industrial workers did not exist then. The people who did exist were the artisans, farms servants, field labourers, tanners, distillers, and the miscellaneous class of the labouring poor including sweepers, scavengers, palanquin bearers and so on. The industrial proletariat was a new class that emerged along with the rise of large-scale industry in the later nineteenth century. Worker's history, in the stricter sense of the term, could not have existed before then. The conceptualisation of the peasant as a separate class and the emergence of the workers as a distinct new class led to the emergence of peasants' and workers' history in the course of the twentieth century. The Marxist concept of the class and the spread of the communist ideology in India constituted a factor in the emergence of the radical historiography relating to workers and peasants.

The leftist historiography of workers and peasants grew especially in the period after independence. A. R. Desai, a Marxist intellectual, edited *Peasant Struggles in India* (Bombay, 1979). Sunil Kumar Sen, a CPI historian and himself an active participant in the Tebhaga or Sharecropper Movement in late colonial Bengal, wrote an eye-witness historical account entitled *Agrarian Struggle in Bengal 1946-47* (Calcutta, 1972), and later produced *Working Class Movements in India 1885-1975* (Delhi, 1994). Another straightforward Marxist account was

by Sukomal Sen, *Working Class of India: History of Emergence and Movement 1830-1970* (Calcutta, 1977).

12.2 HISTORIOGRAPHY BEFORE 1947

It would be a mistake to think that peasant and workers constituted an entirely new subject, nor would it be right to say that there was no interest in the subject before the emergence of socialism. That there was an early interest in the conditions of the poor is shown by Revered Lal Behari Day's English language fictional work, *Govinda Samanta* (2 vols., 1874). It was brought out in a new edition entitled *Bengal Peasant Life* (1878), which contained important material on the peasantry of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the Brahmo social reformer, Sasipada Banerjee, launched the Bengali magazine *Bharat Sharmajibi* (*The Indian Worker*) as early as 1874, and this magazine contained important historical material. One may, indeed, go back to the eighteenth century, and find English and Persian accounts of agriculture and the agriculturist. H.T. Colebrooke, a senior East India Company servant, wrote his *Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal* in 1794 (new ed. Calcutta 1804). Recently, historians have traced an important Persian manuscript entitled *Risala-i Zirat* (*Treatise on Agriculture*), written by a late Mughal official of Bengal for a company servant in 1785, in which he set out four distinct categories of cultivators; (1) *muqarrari* cultivator, a tenant with a permanent deed (2) *khudkasht* cultivator, a tenant with understood rights in his own village, (3) *paikasht* cultivator, a tenant residing in a village other than the one in which his field was located, and (4) *kaljanah*, or 'one who tilled land as the subordinate of another cultivator', (see Harbanb Mukhia, 'The *Risala-i Zirat* [a *Treatise on Agriculture*]', included in *Harbanb Mukhia, Perspectives on Medieval History* (New Delhi, 1993). From later records, it becomes clear that the fourth type of agriculturist might be an under-tenant, a sharecropper or a plain farm servant. The distinction between the resident (*khudkasht*) peasant and the migrant (*Paikasht*) peasant slowly disappeared during the colonial period due to increasing population pressure, but the same factor kept alive the more fundamental distinction between the peasant and the agricultural servant. The latter

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was entered in the censuses of colonial India as farm servant or field labourer, and he was a man even below the sharecropper, who still had the status of a peasant. Because of the British authorities' dependence on the land revenue, the colonial administration kept the ryot constantly in its view and therefore in its records. The same cannot be said of the agricultural labourer, for he was not a tenant and was not liable to pay land revenue from any tenancy. Only the ryot, therefore, is treated along with the zamindar in B. H. Barden-Powell's *Manual of Land Revenue System and Land Tenures of India* (Calcutta, 1882), later republished in the well-known three-volume *Land Systems of British India* (Oxford, 1892). Another official, W.H. Moreland, drew up the *Notes on the Agricultural Conditions and Problems of the United Provinces, Revised up to 1911* (Allahabad, 1913), and later on he produced the classic *Agrarian System of Moslem India* (Cambridge, 1929). From the works of Baden Powell and W.H. Moreland, it emerged clearly that the land revenue of the state and the rent of the landlord had been the traditional mechanisms of the appropriation of the peasant surplus, not only in the colonial period but also in precolonial times. Yet another traditional mechanism of surplus appropriation, indebtedness and the charges upon it, assumed a novel importance in the colonial period, and drew the attention of the British officials in due course. As the ryot began to lose land, and riots broke out against the money-lender, two Punjab officers wrote important works on the ryot's indebtedness, and on the social tensions generated by money lending operations: S.S. Thorburn, *Musalmans and Money-lenders in the Punjab* (1866) and Malcom Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (London, 1932). The colonial administration also generated works on labour employed in cottage and small-scale industries. Two important official works relating to Uttar Pradesh were William Hoey, *A Monograph on Trade and Manufactures in Northern India* (Lucknow, 1880), and A.C. Chatterjee, *Notes on the Industries of the United Provinces* (Allahabad, 1908). Logically, a mid-day point in the transition from the cottage to the factory was the workshop employing several artisans, and this important development was touched on in an unofficial work: N.M. Joshi, *Urban Handicrafts of the Bombay Deccan* (Poona, 1936). The emergence of

large-scale industry produced two new social forces: labour and capital. Among the works of the colonial period relating to these new developments may be mentioned S.M. Rutnagar, *Bombay Industries: the Cotton Mills* (Bombay, 1927); D.H. Buchanan, *The Development of Capitalistic Enterprise in India* (New York, 1934); and Radhakamal Mukherjee, *The Indian Working Class* (Bombay, 1945). It will be evident that by the late colonial period the worker had found his place beside the peasant as a force to reckon with in the economic life of the country. The involvement of these types of people in the growing political unrest included the UK Government to dispatch two royal commissions that generated important reports on their conditions: *The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India, Report* (1928) and *The Royal Commission on Labour in India, Report* (1931). The colonial period generated great body of evidence on the peasant and the worker for research after independence.

The peasants in India had to undergo great struggle in all the states to get rid of exploitation by the Jagirdars and Zamindars. The top ten peasant movements in pre-independent India are:

1. Santhal Insurrection
2. The Blue Mutiny
3. The Pabna and Boora Uprisings
4. The Mappilla/Moplah Rebellions
5. The Deccan Riots and Others.

Peasant Movement # 1. Santhal Insurrection (1855-56):

This is the first peasant movement took place in India. The Santhals are a group of tribals largely concentrated in Bihar.

They are mainly agriculturalists. Due to the establishment of the permanent land settlement of 1793 by the Britishers, lands were taken away by them which the Santhals had cultivated for centuries.

The Zamindars took land on auction from the British Government and gave it to the peasants for cultivation. They increased the land tax and the common peasantry was oppressed them. This was unbearable for the santhals and they took to insurrection. They go against the Zamindars,

Notes

moneylenders and traders. The santhal insurrection was very strong but due to various reasons it was suppressed.

Peasant Movement # 2. The Blue Mutiny (1859-1862):

Poor peasants and small landlords opposed indigo planters in Bengal. In this they were helped by moneylenders whose own credit resources stood threatened by the structure of the monopsonistic rights of the planters.

Peasant Movement # 3. The Pabna and Boora Uprisings (1872-1875):

Rich cultivators, benefiting from the commercialization of agriculture and producing cash crops, protested to secure further their occupancy rights granted nominally in 1859. In this they succeeded by 1885 when the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed. Later, by the middle twentieth century, inch tenants were transformed into rent-receivers.

Peasant Movement # 4. The Mappilla/Moplah Rebellions (1836-1921):

The Moplali present movement was engineered in 1921 among the peasants of Malabar district in Kerala. The Moplah tenants were Muslims. They moved on agitation against the Hindu Landlords and the British government. The land tenure system in Malabar was quite unfavorable to the Moplah tenants. They protested for security of tenure. This was granted in 1887 and 1929. But only a rich tenantry benefited from these movements.

1921 Moplah agitation was the khilafat movement which constituted a wider part of national struggle for independence. The Moplahs took active part in khilafat movement. The bonds between the khilafat movement and Moplali tenants became so much mixed that the government issued prohibitory notices on all khilafat meeting on 5th February, 1921.

This displeased the Moplahs and ended up with the agitation of the Moplah peasantry.

The movement of Moplah is a failure story:

(1) Much of its defeat lies in the fact that it took to communal swing.

(2) When the khilafat movement stood for non-violence and also the struggle for Independence, the Moplah took to violence as a method of agitation.

(3) The movement did not motivate the peasantry of the neighbourhood in stand in arms against the landlords.

Peasant Movement # 5. The Deccan Riots (1875):

Up against a heavy land revenue demand of the state, (1840-1870), cultivators lost their lands to moneylenders from the town. The symbiosis of peasants with rural moneylenders was upset as the dependence of these latter on the moneylenders of the towns developed. The protest against the structure of legal authority which allowed such land transfer, took the form of anti moneylender riots.

The state intervened to legislate in favour of the “agriculturists” in 1879. The state’s pro-landlord stance therefore could also become pro-peasant as long as the framework within which it realised its land revenue did not alter to its disadvantage.

Peasant Movement # 6. Punjab Agrarian Riots (1907):

The state intervened to prevent alienation of land from peasants to moneylenders in 1900 but urban middle classes protested, in nationalist idiom, against government interventions. Riots broke out against moneylenders. The government appeared pro-peasant, as the peasants rioted against “agriculturalist” moneylenders, who were landlords. Landlords were over the long term supported by British rule.

Peasant Movement # 7. Peasant Movement in Oudha (1918-1922):

The peasants of eastern Uttar Pradesh defied large landlords through a tenant’s movement for security of tenure. Oppressive traditions of forced labour were attacked through fierce agrarian riots. Small landlords and the rural poor supported and led the movement. Statutory rights of occupancy were secured in 1921. The movement marked a phase of retreat for landlordism.

Peasant Movement # 8. The Champaran Movement (1917-18):

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It is a part of our national independence struggle. This movement was led by Mahatma Gandhi in Champaran (Bihar). This movement was considered as a reformist movement. Its objective was to create awakening among the peasants against the European planters.

These planters resorted to illegal and inhuman methods of indigo cultivation. The peasants opposed to the European planters as well as the Zamindars. Gandhiji visited Champaran and became displeased by the abject poverty of the peasants.

He expressed his feelings in the following words:

“The peasants in Champaran are leading their lives like animals, suffering from all kinds of miseries”. After coming from South Africa, at Champaran Gandhiji started his Satyagraha. Some other prominent leaders of the country also participated in the Champaran satyagraha led by Gandhi. They were Rajendra Prasad, Brajkishore Prasad and Muzharul Haq etc. This provided strength and direction to the movement.

The struggle of the Champaran peasants took place in April 1917. The British Government adopted very serious methods to oppress the peasants. They were tortured because of not paying the excessive revenues. The Champaran movement is described to be a successful movement in the history of peasant movement. One of the most important result of this movement was the enactment of Champaran Agrarian Act assented by the Governor General of India on 1st May 1918.

According to Namboodripad, the leader of the left movement in India considered Champaran movement as a contribution to the development of nationalism.

According to some of the scholars, this movement did not succeed to strike against the exploitation and discrimination with which the peasants suffered.

Peasant Movement # 9. Peasant Agitation in Kheda (1918):

It was a satyagraha launched under the leadership of Gandhiji, Sardar Ballavbhai Patel etc. It was also like the Champaran satyagraha based on

non-violence. The Kheda (Gujrat) peasantry was mainly consisted of the Patidar peasants. The land of Kheda in Gujrat was a quite fertile land for the cultivation of Tobacco and Cotton crops.

The important causes for Kheda struggle are:

The peasants had suffered from a famine and in a large scale failure of crops. But the government did not accept it and insisted on the full realisation of land tax.

The government reassessed the Kheda land and the cultivated crops. On the basis of the collected data, the revenue was increased on land. This was unbearable for the peasants.

In some cases, the government removed the opium crop by alleging that it was without permission. This was considered to be a mischievous technique adopted by the government.

There are also some achievements of this struggle.

They are:

1. This movement has created an awakening, consciousness among the peasants about their demands. On the other hand, they sought their involvement in the struggle of independence.

2. It was settled that the well-to-do Patidar peasants would pay up the land rent and the poorer ones would be granted remissions. The bulk of the peasant mass who constituted the small farmers were by and large satisfied.

Peasant Movement # 10. The Bardoli Satyagraha (1928):

Bardoli (in Surat of Gujarat) movement was also a no-tax movement like Kheda movement. It Was launched in February 1928. The movement became serious during the of April and May.

The causes of Bardoli Satyagraha are:

1. An antagonism between rich and big Patidar peasants (Ulla Paraj) and the poor and slave like small, marginal peasants and agricultural labourers (Kali Paraj).

2. The leadership of Gandhi regarding the initiation of some constructive work started in the entire Bardoli taluka created an awakening among the peasant masses to get mobilised for fulfilling their demands. The constructive programmes also trained the youths to prepare for non-violence and satyagraha movement.

The important point is that the organisation of movement was MI very well executed that the peasants of the whole taluka demonstrated their strength through rallies and strikes to the government. The Bardoli movement became a national issue. The national leaders linked this movement with the movement of freedom struggle. Sardar Ballavbhai Patel's effort was very much noteworthy. Gandhiji was very much pleased with the success of Bardoli satyagraha.

He observed very rightly:

“Whatever the Bardoli struggle may be, it clearly is not a struggle for the direct attainment of Swaraj. That every such awakening, every such effort as that of Bardoli will bring swaraj nearer and may bring it nearer even then any direct effort is undoubtedly true”.

But this Bardoli movement has been criticised from various perspectives. Bardoli movement is an experiment of satyagraha than to pay proper attention to the basic problems of the peasants. This movement also pleaded the cause of the rich and middle class peasants. But in spite of the above criticisms, the Bardoli movement provided a strength, a boost to the national freedom struggle.

12.3 THE LEFT PARADIGM AND ITS CRITICS

The left identified the working class as the vanguard of the class struggle and the most progressive political force in Indian society. The overwhelming mass of the population still lived off agriculture, and the leftist historians were therefore induced to pay some attention to the peasantry. They came up with a paradigm, or framework of understanding, in order to make sense of change in agrarian society during the colonial period. The paradigm was worked out soon after independence in such works as S.J. Patel, *Agricultural Workers in Modern India and Pakistan* (Bombay, 1952) and Ramkrishna Mukherjee,

The Dynamics of a Rural Society (Berlin, 1957). On this view of the matter, colonial rule in India produced a series of related changes in agrarian society: the creation of landed property by law; forced commercialisation of crops; land brought to the market as a commodity; the spread of peasant indebtedness and land alienation; the disintegration of the peasantry into rich peasants and poor peasants; depeasantisation, landlessness and the emergence of a pauperised class of landless labourers; the collapse of the village community of self-sufficient peasants and a far reaching process of social stratification in the countryside. Subsequent research revealed that these notions were misinformed, and based on an inadequate acquaintance with the vast documentation in the colonial archives. The work of serious historical investigation and revision began with Dharma Kumar's pioneering work, *Land and Caste in South India, Agricultural Labour in Madras Presidency during the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1965). She proved with rich documentation that pre-colonial and early-colonial India already possessed a vast agrarian under-class of bonded labourers who traditionally belonged to the untouchable castes. Landlessness here was function of caste and not of the market. Rajat and Ratna Ray followed with an article in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* (vol. 10, 1973), entitled 'The Dynamics of Continuity in Rural Bengal under the British Imperium: a study of Quasi-Stable Subsistence Equilibrium in Underdeveloped Societies in a Changing World', in which they contended that a group of rich peasants who had their lands cultivated by sharecroppers and bonded labourers existed even at the beginning of colonial rule, and were beneficiaries of economic change in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Yet another attack on the Marxist paradigm of polarisation between rich and poor peasants during the colonial period came from a contrary direction. There had earlier been a debate in Russia between V.I. Lenin and A.V. Chayanov on stratification with the peasantry. As against Lenin's thesis that growth of agrarian capitalism and the emergence of a class of kulaks (rich peasants) had permanently stratified the Russian peasantry into rich and poor, Chayanov contended that the Russian peasantry remained a homogeneous and subsistence-oriented community of small-holders

Notes

among whom differences of farm size were cyclical and not consolidated into permanent distinctions. Eric Stokes, in his contribution to *The Cambridge Economic History of India, vol.2, C.1757-c.1970*, edited by Dharma Kumar (Cambridge, 1983), expressed the opinion that there was no agrarian polarisation. If divisions did occur in the countryside, it was 'more because of the slow impoverishment of the mass than the enrichment of the few' (contribution entitled 'Agrarian Relations: Northern and Central India'). Opinion on this complex issue has remained divided. Did the peasants remain an undifferentiated class of poor small holders? Neil Chalesworth, in *Peasants and Imperial Rule: Agriculture and Agrarian Society in the Bombay Presidency, 1850 – 1935* (Cambridge, 1985) contended that a certain degree of commercialisation of agriculture in colonial India had the effect of pushing up a number of peasants. Sugata Bose, on the other hand, maintained, in *Agrarian Bengal: Economy, Social Structure and Politics 1919-1947* (Cambridge, 1986), that rich farmers were to be seen only among reclaimers of land in a few frontier areas. In the more settled districts of East Bengal, the egalitarian peasant small holding system remained intact for most of the colonial period. More recently, Nariaki Nukazato, in *Agrarian System in Eastern Bengal C. 1870-1910* (Calcutta, 1994), has found that even there, at least a quarter of the land had come under the unequal relationship of cultivating employers and sharecropping under-tenants.

He lends support to an earlier thesis to this effect in Binay Bhushan Chudhuri, 'The Process of Depeasantization in Bengal and Bihar, 1885-1947,' *Indian Historical Review*, Vol. 2, 1975. Chaudhuri's article made the important point that the growing number of sharecroppers among the peasants indicated an incipient process of depeasantisation even while outwardly the small-holding system appeared to be intact. Historians, moreover, came to concede that class was not the only factor in differentiation among the peasantry. Studies such as M.C.Pradhan, *The Political System of the Jats of Northern India*, David Pocock, *Kanbi and Patidar: a study of the Patidar Community of Gujarat*, and Stephen F. Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922* (1980) showed that caste and community were

capable of producing important rural solidarities among the members, setting them apart from other peasants.

12.4 THE LONGER TERM PERSPECTIVE

W.H. Moreland had set the agenda for a long-term visualisation of the role of the state in the life of the rural population. Marxist historians at Aligarh, following in his footsteps set about exploring aspects of agrarian life and the state formation in both the precolonial and colonial periods. In the early 1960s, Irfan Habib, a formidable Aligarh historian, demonstrated the overwhelming presence of the Mughal state in the life of the heavily taxed peasantry in *The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707* (Bombay, 1963). He depicted several peasant rebellions that occurred in the reign of Aurangzeb. The two ends of the spectrum, the state and the village, were also portrayed with the help of rich Marathi documentation by the Japanese historian Hiroshi Fukazawa, whose essays were collected together in *The Medieval Deccan; Peasants, Social Systems and States, Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (New Delhi, 1991). The American historian, Burton Stein, maintained that the state, rooted in the life of the peasant community, had a weaker and more segmented character than Irfan Habib had allowed, at least in the south. This non-Marxist perspective was set forth in Stein's *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (New Delhi, 1980). Another American historian, David Ludden, undertook a long-term study of local rulers and villagers in Tirunelveli district in the deep south. The micro-study spanned the pre-colonial and colonial periods and was entitled *Peasant History in South India* (Princeton, 1985). The history of peasants now had a broader perspective than the initial Marxist studies of peasant movements.

12.5 PEASANT MOVEMENTS

The above perspective lent a growing sophistication to the study of peasant struggles. A growing band of non-Marxist historians entered the field with new concepts. The pioneer in this sophisticated new variety of history was Eric Stokes, whose essays on the conditions and movements

Notes

of peasants paid due attention to caste, markets, tax burden and a variety of other factors. His essays were collected together in *The Peasant and The Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India* (Cambridge, 1978). The sociologist D. N. Dhangare's *Peasant Movements in India* (Delhi, 1983) represented another breakaway from the older one-dimensional Marxist perspective. Ranjit Guha, at the same time, brought a subalternist perspective to bear on the subject in *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (New Delhi, 1983). He showed that peasant actions were typically circumscribed by the locality, based on caste or communal ties, and oriented towards an inversion of existing hierarchy rather than a revolutionary breakthrough on the Marxist model.

12.6 LABOUR HISTORY

The older leftist history of the trade union movement in India assumed, uncritically, that the working class in India was practically the same, in its social constitution and outlook, as the European working class. Closer examination of the sources by the historians threw doubt on the revolutionary potential and socialist outlook of the so-called 'proletariat'. It was demonstrated by the new labour historians that the mentality and the consciousness of the industrial workers did not differ all that much from the outlook of the poor who depended on the casual labour market in town and country. Among the works that revised labour history substantially may be mentioned Morris David Morris, *The Emergence of an Industrial Labour Force India: A Study of the Bombay Cotton Mills 1845-1947* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965); R.K. Newman, *Workers and Unions in Bombay 1919-29: a Study of Organisation in the Cotton Mills* (Canberra, 1981); Sujata Patel, *The Making of Industrial Relations. The Ahmedabad Textile Industry 1918-1939* (Delhi, 1987), a study of the Gandhian model of trade unionism based on the cooperation of capital and labour; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working Class History: Bengal 1890-1940* (Princeton, 1989), a study of jute mill labour from the Subalternist point of view; and Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India: Business Strategies and the Working Classes in Bombay 1900-1940* (Cambridge, 1994). Dipesh Chakrabarty

noted that the 'hierarchical precapitalist culture' of the workers made them prone to communal violence and inclined them to dependence on the 'Sardars' who recruited them. Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, in his wide ranging study, noted the dependence of the workers on the 'Dadas' in the neighbourhood. Instead of organising themselves into effective modern trade unions, the rural migrants to the mill towns depended on jobbers and on communal solidarities. They were prone to unorganised easily-suppressed violence. Communal riots displaced prolonged, successful strikes all too often in labour unrest. In a book entitled *Village Communities in the East and West* (London, 1871), Sir Henry Maine conceived old Indian society in terms of status and community, as against contract and class. The picture of isolated, self sufficient village communities might have been overdrawn even then. As colonial rule progressed, so did the understanding of Indian society, and this is reflected in the title of a recent work: Kapil Kumar (ed.), *Congress and Classes: Nationalism, Workers and Peasants* (New Delhi, 1988). The long-term effect of colonial rule was to bring the classes into play in a new national area.

Labor history or labour history is a sub-discipline of social history which specialises on the history of the working classes and the labor movement. Labor historians may concern themselves with issues of gender, race, ethnicity and other factors besides class but chiefly focus on urban or industrial societies which distinguishes it from rural history.

The central concerns of labor historians include industrial relations and forms of labor protest (strikes, lock-outs), the rise of mass politics (especially the rise of socialism) and the social and cultural history of the industrial working classes.

Labor history developed in tandem with the growth of a self-conscious working-class political movement in many Western countries in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Whilst early labor historians were drawn to protest movements such as Luddism and Chartism, the focus of labor history was often on institutions: chiefly the labor unions and political parties. Exponents of this institutional approach included Sidney and Beatrice Webb. The work of the Webbs, and other pioneers of the discipline, was marked by

Notes

optimism about the capacity of the labor movement to effect fundamental social change and a tendency to see its development as a process of steady, inevitable and unstoppable progress.

As two contemporary labor historians have noted, early work in the field was "designed to service and celebrate the Labour movement.

In the 1950s to 1970s, labor history was redefined and expanded in focus by a number of historians, amongst whom the most prominent and influential figures were E. P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm. The motivation came from current left-wing politics in Britain and the United States and reached red-hot intensity. Kenneth O. Morgan, a more traditional liberal historian, explains the dynamic:

the ferocity of argument owed more to current politics, the unions' winter of discontent [in 1979], and rise of a hard-left militant tendency within the world of academic history as well as within the Labour Party. The new history was often strongly Marxist, which fed through the work of brilliant evangelists like Raphael Samuel into the New Left Review, a famous journal like Past and Present, the Society of Labour History and the work of a large number of younger scholars engaged in the field. Non-scholars like Tony Benn joined in. The new influence of Marxism upon Labour studies came to affect the study of history as a whole.

Morgan sees benefits:

In many ways, this was highly beneficial: it encouraged the study of the dynamics of social history rather than a narrow formal institutional view of labour and the history of the Labour Party; it sought to place the experience of working people within a wider technical and ideological context; it encouraged a more adventurous range of sources, 'history from below' so-called, and rescued them from what Thompson memorably called the 'condescension of posterity'; it brought the idea of class centre-stage in the treatment of working-class history, where I had always felt it belonged; it shed new light on the poor and dispossessed for whom the source materials were far more scrappy than those for the bourgeoisie, and made original use of popular evidence like oral history, not much used before.

Morgan tells of the downside as well:

But the Marxist – or sometimes Trotskyist – emphasis in Labour studies was too often doctrinaire and intolerant of non-Marxist dissent—it was also too often plain wrong, distorting the evidence within a narrow doctrinaire framework. I felt it incumbent upon me to help rescue it. But this was not always fun. I recall addressing a history meeting in Cardiff...when, for the only time in my life, I was subjected to an incoherent series of attacks of a highly personal kind, playing the man not the ball, focusing on my accent, my being at Oxford and the supposedly reactionary tendencies of my empiricist colleagues.

Thompson and Hobsbawm were Marxists who were critical of the existing labour movement in Britain. They were concerned to approach history "from below" and to explore the agency and activity of working people at the workplace, in protest movements and in social and cultural activities. Thompson's seminal study *The Making of the English Working Class* was particularly influential in setting a new agenda for labor historians and locating the importance of the study of labor for social history in general. Also in the 1950s and 1960s, historians began to give serious attention to groups who had previously been largely neglected, such as women and non-caucasian ethnic groups. Some historians situated their studies of gender and race within a class analysis: for example, C. L. R. James, a Marxist who wrote about the struggles of blacks in the Haitian Revolution. Others questioned whether class was a more important social category than gender or race and pointed to racism, patriarchy and other examples of division and oppression within the working class.

Labor history remains centered on two fundamental sets of interest: institutional histories of workers' organizations, and the "history from below" approach of the Marxist historians.

Despite the influence of the Marxists, many labor historians rejected the revolutionary implications implicit in the work of Thompson, Hobsbawm et al. In the 1980s, the importance of class itself, as an historical social relationship and explanatory concept, began to be widely challenged. Some notable labor historians turned from Marxism to embrace a postmodernist approach, emphasizing the importance of language and questioning whether classes could be so considered if they did not use a

Notes

"language of class". Other historians emphasized the weaknesses and moderation of the historic labor movement, arguing that social development had been characterized more by accommodation, acceptance of the social order and cross-class collaboration than by conflict and dramatic change.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. What do you know about the Historiography before 1947?

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2. Discuss about the Left Paradigm and its Critics.

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3. What do you know about The Longer Term Perspective?

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4. Discuss about Peasant Movements.

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5. What do you know the Labour History?

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.....

12.7 LET US SUM UP

The land and the peasantry had been an object of attention by the colonial officials since the early days of colonial rule. Land revenue was the most important source of government's income and the peasants were the people who worked the land and occasionally rose in rebellion

against the landlords and the government. The dependence of the colonial government on land revenue necessitated that the peasantry was kept under close scrutiny. Several early works, therefore, focused on the land-revenue systems. However, in the course of time, academically oriented and impartial studies about the land settlement and the peasantry, both for the colonial and pre-colonial periods, began to appear. The industrial working classes were of more recent origins. The establishment of modern factories and their ancillaries, the railways, ports and construction activities were the source of the new working class. Studies related to the themes of the modern industries and the modern working class began to appear since the early 20th century. The evidences generated by the colonial government on various aspects of labour in different regions of the country helped the scholars in this field. Although many of these studies and done by the leftist scholars, there were several other scholars who differ with them on various issues, such as the increasing polarisation within the peasantry, the non-existence of a significant number of agricultural workers during pre-colonial period and on the revolutionary potential of the modern working class.

12.8 KEY WORDS

Peasants: A peasant is a pre-industrial agricultural laborer or farmer with limited land ownership, especially one living in the Middle Ages under feudalism and paying rent, tax, fees, or services to a landlord. In Europe, three classes of peasants existed: slave, serf, and free tenant.

12.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

- 1) How did the peasant and working class histories begin? Discuss the histories related to these classes before independence.

- 2) Give an account of the histories of peasants and working classes after independence.

12.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

Notes

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12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 12.2
2. See Section 12.3
3. See Section 12.4
4. See Section 12.5
5. See Section 12.6

UNIT 13: VARNA, JATI, JANAJATI

STRUCTURE

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Varna System
- 13.3 The Discovery of Caste (Jati)
- 13.4 Colonial Ethnology and the Tribes (Janajati)
- 13.5 Low Caste and Tribal Protests
- 13.6 Are Caste and Tribe Real?
- 13.7 Let us sum up
- 13.8 Key Words
- 13.9 Questions for Review
- 13.10 Suggested readings and references
- 13.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know about the Varna System
- To discuss the The Discovery of Caste (Jati)
- To know about the Colonial Ethnology and the Tribes (Janajati)
- To discuss about the Low Caste and Tribal Protests
- Are Caste and Tribe Real?

13.1 INTRODUCTION

When modern anthropological and historical writings on Indian society began, the close relationship between caste, tribe and gender became evident. Colonial historians and anthropologists saw that the peculiarity of Indian society lay in caste. They also saw that there was a section in Indian society, namely the aboriginal tribes, which had not been brought into caste society. The constitution of caste society differed from tribal society in many respects. Gender was one important respect in which the organisation of a tribe differed from that of a caste. It is not merely that the tribal economy differed from that of castes. It is also true that the

marriage systems differed radically in the two types of society. Outwardly, it was the sexual organisation of society which made it easy to set caste apart from tribe. The polarity of purity and pollution, which characterised caste society, was absent among the tribes. The tribes were no part of ritual hierarchy. And in a related way, the gender system of the tribes also differed from the marriage structure of caste society. In fact, a unique organisation of gender lay at the heart of the caste system. In general, it may be said that there is a hidden connection between gender, caste and tribe which must be kept in view when studying Indian's society and history. The historical and anthropological literature on caste is voluminous and of long standing. There is also a new and burgeoning literature on gender studies and women's history. The tribes do not figure so importantly in Indian historical writing. There is, however, a considerable body of anthropological literature on the tribes which includes some historical material. The dalits or untouchables have become an important force in Indian politics. It is not a matter of surprise, therefore, that historical inquiries into their condition have attracted several researchers. The adivasis or aboriginal tribes do not have that sort of importance in politics, except in the north-eastern hill states. There are, consequently, fewer researchers in tribal history. Women, on the other hand, have attracted a growing number of historians. This is because of the feminist movement. The movement has had the effect of focusing public attention upon the subject.

13.2 VARNA SYSTEM

Varna system is the social stratification based on the Varna, caste. Four basic categories are defined under this system - **Brahmins** (priests, teachers, intellectuals), **Kshatriyas** (warriors, kings, administrators), **Vaishyas** (agriculturalists, traders, farmers) and **Shudras** (workers, labourers, artisans).

What is Varna?

Varna is a Sanskrit term, derived from 'vr'-to cover, to envelop, count, classify, consider, describe or choose.

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The term is used to describe the social class divisions made in the Vedic period in the Brahminical books like the Manusmriti.

Origin of Varna system

The first mention of the Varna system was found in Purusha Suktam verse of the ancient Sanskrit Rig Veda.

Purusha is believed to be the first being constituted by a combination of the four Varnas.

Classification

- Brahmins represent its mouth
- Kshatriyas its arms
- Vaishyas its thighs
- Shudras its feet.

The society is constituted to follow the varna rules in order to sustain prosperity and order.

Purpose of the Varna system

The division of the varna is to distribute the responsibilities among various people and to maintain the purity of caste and establish eternal order.

This system is believed to avoid conflicts within business and encroachment on respective duties.

Specific tasks were assigned to every particular varna citizen:

Brahmins: They provide education and spiritual leadership. They are ought to determine the vision and values of any society.

Kshatriyas: Their responsibility is to protect society and is expected to portray considerable strength of body and character.

Vaishyas: They are the productive class. Their duty is to protect animals and the land, create wealth and prosperity.

Shudras: They are the only class who are allowed to accept another employment. Their duty is to render service to others and to maintain loyalty.

The Vedas

The earliest application to the formal division into four social classes (without using the term varna) appears in the late Rigvedic Purusha Sukta (RV 10.90.11–12), which has the Brahman, Rajanya (instead of Kshatriya), Vaishya and Shudra classes forming the mouth, arms, thighs and feet at the sacrifice of the primordial Purusha, respectively:

11. When they divided Purusha how many portions did they make? What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?
12. The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms was the Rajanya made. His thighs became the Vaishya, from his feet the Shudra was produced.

Some modern indologists believe the Purusha Suktam to be a later addition, possibly as a charter myth.^[16] However, others believe it to be a genuine hymn. Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton, a professor of Sanskrit and Religious studies, state, "there is no evidence in the Rigveda for an elaborate, much-subdivided and overarching caste system", and "the varna system seems to be embryonic in the Rigveda and, both then and later, a social ideal rather than a social reality".

Traditional commentators of the Vedas like Sayanacharya do not hint at the Purusha Suktam being a fabrication

Ram Sharan Sharma states that "the Rig Vedic society was neither organized on the basis of social division of labour nor on that of differences in wealth ... [it] was primarily organised on the basis of kin, tribe and lineage."

In the post-Vedic period, the varna division is described in the Dharmashastra literature, the Mahabharata and in the Puranas.

The Dharmasastras

Varna system is extensively discussed in Dharma-shastras. The Varna system in Dharma-shastras divides society into four varnas (Brahmins,

Notes

Kshatriyas, Vaishya and Shudras). Those who fall out of this system because of their grievous sins are ostracised as outcastes (untouchables) and considered outside the varna system. Barbarians and those who are unrighteous or unethical are also considered outcastes.

Recent scholarship suggests that the discussion of varna as well as untouchable outcastes in these texts does not resemble the modern era caste system in India. Patrick Olivelle, a professor of Sanskrit and Indian Religions and credited with modern translations of Vedic literature, Dharma-sutras and Dharma-shastras, states that ancient and medieval Indian texts do not support the ritual pollution, purity-impurity as the basis for varna system.^[25] According to Olivelle, purity-impurity is discussed in the Dharma-shastra texts, but only in the context of the individual's moral, ritual and biological pollution (eating certain kinds of food such as meat, urination and defecation). In his review of Dharma-shastras, Olivelle writes, "we see no instance when a term of pure/impure is used with reference to a group of individuals or a varna or caste". The only mention of impurity in the Shastra texts from the 1st millennium is about people who commit grievous sins and thereby fall out of their varna. These, writes Olivelle, are called "fallen people" and impure, declaring that they be ostracised. Olivelle adds that the overwhelming focus in matters relating to purity/impurity in the Dharma-sastra texts concerns "individuals irrespective of their varna affiliation" and all four varnas could attain purity or impurity by the content of their character, ethical intent, actions, innocence or ignorance, stipulations, and ritualistic behaviours.

Olivelle states:

Dumont is correct in his assessment that the ideology of varna is not based on purity. If it were we should expect to find at least some comment on the relative purity and impurity of the different varnas. What is even more important is that the ideology of purity and impurity that emerges from the Dharma literature is concerned with the individual and not with groups, with purification and not with purity, and lends little support to a theory which makes relative purity the foundation of social stratification.

The first three varnas are described in the Dharmashastras as "twice born" and they are allowed to study the Vedas. Such a restriction of who can study Vedas is not found in the Vedic era literature.

Manusmriti assigns cattle rearing as Vaishya occupation but historical evidence shows that Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Shudras also owned and reared cattle and that cattle-wealth was mainstay of their households. Ramnarayan Rawat, a professor of History and specialising in social exclusion in the Indian subcontinent, states that 19th century British records show that Chamars, listed as untouchables, also owned land and cattle and were active agriculturalists. The emperors of Kosala and the prince of Kasi are other examples.

Tim Ingold, an anthropologist, writes that the Manusmriti is a highly schematic commentary on the varna system, but it too provides "models rather than descriptions". Susan Bayly states that Manusmriti and other scriptures helped elevate Brahmin in the social hierarchy and these were a factor in the making of the varna system, but the ancient texts did not in some way "create the phenomenon of caste" in India.

The Epics

The Mahabharata, estimated to have been completed by about the 4th century CE, discusses the Varna system in section 12.181.

The Epic offers two models on Varna. The first model describes Varna as colour-coded system, through a sage named Bhrigu, "Brahmins Varna was white, Kshatriyas was red, Vaishyas was yellow, and the Shudras' black".^[20] This description is questioned by another prominent sage Bharadvaja who says that colours are seen among all the Varnas, that desire, anger, fear, greed, grief, anxiety, hunger and toil prevails over all human beings, that bile and blood flow from all human bodies, so what distinguishes the Varnas, he asks? The Mahabharata then declares, according to Alf Hiltebeitel, a professor of religion, "There is no distinction of Varnas. This whole universe is Brahman. It was created formerly by Brahma, came to be classified by acts."

The Mahabharata thereafter recites a behavioural model for Varna, that those who were inclined to anger, pleasures and boldness attained the Kshatriya Varna; those who were inclined to cattle rearing and living off

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the plough attained the Vaishyas; those who were fond of violence, covetousness and impurity attained the Shudras. The Brahmin class is modelled in the epic, as the archetype default state of man dedicated to truth, austerity and pure conduct. Indeed, it goes on to assert that all men are children of Brahmins, which does not make sense, unless understood this way. In the Mahabharata and pre-medieval era Hindu texts, according to Hildebrandt, "it is important to recognize, in theory, Varna is nongenealogical. The four Varnas are not lineages, but categories."

The Bhagavad Gita describe the professions, duties and qualities of members of different varnas.

There is no entity on earth, or again in heaven among the Devas, that is devoid of these three Gunas, born of Prakriti.

Of Brâhmanas and Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, as also of Sudras, O scorcher of foes, the duties are distributed according to the Gunas born of their own nature.

The control of the mind and the senses, austerity, purity, forbearance, and also uprightness, knowledge, realisation, belief in a hereafter— these are the duties of the Brâhmanas, born of (their own) nature.

Prowess, boldness, fortitude, dexterity, and also not flying from battle, generosity and sovereignty are the duties of the Kshatriyas, born of (their own) nature.

Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaishyas, born of (their own) nature; and action consisting of service is the duty of the Sudras, born of (their own) nature.

Varna in Buddhist texts

Ancient Buddhist texts mention Varna system in South Asia, but the details suggest that it was a non-rigid, flexible and with characteristics devoid of features of a social stratification system.

Digha Nikaya provides a discussion between Gotama Buddha and a Hindu Brahmin named Sonadanda who was very learned in the Vedas. Gotama Buddha asks, "By how many qualities do Brahmins recognize another Brahmin? How would one declare truthfully and without falling into falsehood, "I am a Brahmin?" Sonadanda initially lists five qualities as, "he is of pure descent on both the mother's and the

father's side, he is well versed in mantras, he is of fair color handsome and pleasing, he is virtuous learned and wise, and he is the first or second to hold the sacrificial ladle". Buddha then asks the Brahmin, "If we omit one of these qualities you just listed, could not one be still a true Brahmin?" Sonadanda, one by one, eliminates fair colour and looks, then eliminates Varna in which one was born, and then eliminates the ability to recite mantra and do sacrifices as a requirement of being a Brahmin. Sonadanda asserts that just two qualities are necessary to truthfully and without falling into falsehood identify a Brahmin; these two qualities are "being virtuous and being learned and wise". Sonadanda adds that it is impossible to reduce the requirement for being a Brahmin any further, because "for wisdom is purified by morality, and morality is purified by wisdom; where one is, the other is, the moral man has wisdom and the wise man has morality, and the combination of morality and wisdom is called the highest thing in the world". Brian Black and Dean Patton state Sonadanda admits after this, "we [Brahmins] only know this much Gotama; it would be well if Reverend Gotama would explain meaning of the two [morality, wisdom]".

Peter Masefield, a Buddhism scholar and ancient Pali texts translator, states that during the Nikāya texts period of Buddhism (3rd century BC to 5th century AD), Varna as a class system is attested, but the described Varna was not a caste system. The Pali texts enumerate the four Varnas Brahmin, "Kshatriya", Vessa (Vaishya) and Sudda (Shudra). Masefield notes that people in any Varna could in principle perform any profession. The early Buddhist texts, for instance, identify some Brahmins to be farmers and in other professions. The text state that anyone, of any birth, could perform the priestly function,^[36] and that the Brahmin took food from anyone, suggesting that strictures of commensality were as yet unknown. The Nikaya texts also imply that endogamy was not mandated in ancient India. Masefield concludes, "if any form of caste system was known during the Nikaya period - and it is doubtful that it was - this was in all probability restricted to certain non-Aryan groups".

Varna in Jaina texts

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Ādi purāṇa, an 8th-century text of Jainism by Jinasena, is the earliest mention of Varna and Jati in Jainism literature.^[40] Jinasena does not trace the origin of Varna system to Rigveda or to Purusha Sukta, instead traces varna to the Bharata legend. According to this legend, Bharata performed an "ahimsa-test" (test of non-violence), and those members of his community who refused to harm or hurt any living being were called as the priestly varna in ancient India, and Bharata called them dvija, twice born. Jinasena states that those who are committed to ahimsa are deva-Brāhmaṇas, divine Brahmins.

The text *Adi purana* also discusses the relationship between varna and jati. According to Padmanabh Jaini, a professor of Indic studies, Jainism and Buddhism, the *Adi purana* text states "there is only one jati called manusyajati or the human caste, but divisions arise account of their different professions".^[43] The varna of Kshatriya arose when Rishabh procured weapons to serve the society and assumed the powers of a king, while Vaishya and Shudra varna arose from different means of livelihood in which they specialised.

Varna in Sikh texts

Sikhism is a late 15th-century religion that originated in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent. Sikh texts mention Varna as Varan, and Jati as Zat or Zat-biradari. Eleanor Nesbitt, a professor of Religion and specialising in Christian, Hindu and Sikh studies, states that the Varan is described as a class system in 18th- to 20th-century Sikh literature, while Zat reflected the endogamous occupational groups (caste).

The Sikh texts authored by the Sikh Gurus and by non-Sikh Bhagats such as the Namdev, Ravidas and Kabir, states Nesbitt, declared the irrelevance of varan or zat of one's birth to one's spiritual destiny. They taught that "all of humanity had a single refuge" and that the divine teaching is for everyone. Sikhism teaches a society without any varan.^[47] In practice, states Harjot Oberoi, secondary Sikh texts such as the *Khalsa Dharam Sastar* in 1914 argued that the entry of certain Sikh castes into major Sikh shrines should be barred. Similarly, in practice and its texts, the Gurus of Sikhism did not condemn or break with the

convention of marrying (and marrying their children) within the jati, and all the Sikh Gurus were Khatri, had Khatri wives and practiced arranged marriages within their zat. According to Dhavan, the Rahit-namas and other prescriptive Sikh texts from mid-18th century onwards accommodate and affirm the "natal and marriage traditions of different caste groups within the Sikh community".

Ravidassi Sikhs and Ramgarhia Sikhs follow their own textual and festive traditions, gather in their own places of worship. These are varan-based (caste-based) religious congregations that emerged from Sikhism, states Nesbitt. The Ravidassia group, for example, emphasizes the teachings of Bhagat Ravidas – a poet-saint born in a family whose traditional untouchable occupation related to dead animals and leather. They consider the teachings of living Gurus and the texts of Ravidass Dera as sacred and spiritually as important as the historic Sikh Gurus. This is rejected by Khalsa Sikhs. The disagreements have led the Ravidassia Sikhs to launch the Ravidassia religion movement which, amongst other things seeks to replace the Guru Granth Sahib in their Gurdwaras with the texts of Ravidas.

Varna and jāti

The terms varna (theoretical classification based on occupation) and jāti (caste) are two distinct concepts. Jāti (community) refers to the thousands of endogamous groups prevalent across the subcontinent. A jati may be divided into exogamous groups based on the same gotras. The classical authors scarcely speak of anything other than the varnas; even Indologists sometimes confuse the two.

Ancient India in the Vedic Period (c. 1500-1000 BCE) did not have social stratification based on socio-economic indicators; rather, citizens were classified according to their Varna or castes. 'Varna' defines the hereditary roots of a newborn, it indicates the colour, type, order or class of people. Four principal categories are defined: Brahmins (priests, gurus, etc.), Kshatriyas (warriors, kings, administrators, etc.), Vaishyas (agriculturalists, traders, etc., also called Vysyas), and Shudras (labourers). Each Varna propounds specific life principles to follow;

Notes

newborns are required to follow the customs, rules, conduct, and beliefs fundamental to their respective Varnas.

Bhagavata Purana

The first mention of Varna is found in the Purusha Suktam verse of the ancient Sanskrit Rig Veda. Purusha is the primordial being, constituted by the combination of the four Varnas. Brahmins constitute its mouth, Kshatriyas its arms, Vaishyas its thighs, and Shudras its feet. Likewise, a society, too, is constituted by these four Varnas, who, through their obedience to the Varna rules, are provisioned to sustain prosperity and order. A newborn in a specific Varna is not mandatorily required to obey its life principles; individual interests and personal inclinations are attended upon with equal solemnity, so as to uproot the conflict between personal choice and customary rules. Given this liberty, a deviated choice is always assessed for its cascading impact on others. The rights of each Varna citizen are always equated with their individual responsibilities. An elaborated Varna system with insights and reasoning is found in the Manu Smriti (an ancient legal text from the Vedic Period), and later in various Dharma Shastras. Varnas, in principle, are not lineages, considered as pure and indisputable, but categories, thus inferring the precedence of conduct in determining a Varna instead of birth.

Purpose of the VARNA System

The caste system in ancient India had been executed and acknowledged during, and ever since, the Vedic period that thrived around 1500-1000 BCE. The segregation of people based on their Varna was intended to decongest the responsibilities of one's life, preserve the purity of a caste, and establish eternal order. This would pre-resolve and avoid all forms of disputes originating from conflicts within business and encroachment on respective duties. In this system, specific tasks are designated to each Varna citizen. A Brahmin behaving as a Kshatriya or a Vaishya debases himself, becoming unworthy of seeking liberation or moksha. For a Brahmin (having become one by deed, in addition to the one by birth) is considered the society's mouth, and is the purest life form as per the

Vedas, because he personifies renunciation, austerity, piousness, striving only for wisdom and cultivated intellect. A Kshatriya, too, is required to remain loyal to his Varna duty; if he fails, he could be outcast. The same applies to Vaishyas and Shudras. Shudras, far from left out or irrelevant, are the base of an economy, a strong support system of a prosperous economic system, provided they remain confined to their life duties and not give in to greed, immoral conduct, and excess self-indulgence.

THE UNDERLYING REASON FOR ADHERING TO VARNA DUTIES IS THE BELIEF IN THE ATTAINMENT OF MOKSHA ON BEING DUTIFUL.

The main idea is that such order in a society would lead to contentment, perpetual peace, wilful adherence to law, wilful deterrence from all misconduct, responsible exercise of liberty and freedom, and keeping the fundamental societal trait of 'shared prosperity' above all others. Practical and moral education of all Varnas and such order seemed justified in ancient Indian society owing to different Varnas living together and the possibility of disunity among them. Hence, Brahmins were entrusted with the duty of educating pupils of all Varnas to understand and practice order and mutual harmony, regardless of distressed circumstances. Justice, moral, and righteous behaviour were primary teachings in Brahmins' ashrams (spiritual retreats, places to seek knowledge). Equipping pupils with a pure conscience to lead a noble life was considered essential and so was practical education to all Varnas, which provided students with their life purposes and knowledge of right conduct, which would manifest later into an orderly society.

The underlying reason for adhering to Varna duties is the belief in the attainment of moksha on being dutiful. Belief in the concept of Karma reinforces the belief in the Varna life principles. As per the Vedas, it is the ideal duty of a human to seek freedom from subsequent birth and death and rid oneself of the transmigration of the soul, and this is possible when one follows the duties and principles of one's respective Varna. According to the Vedas, consistent encroachment on others' life responsibilities engenders an unstable society. Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras form the fourfold nature of society, each assigned

Notes

appropriate life duties and ideal disposition. Men of the first three hierarchical castes are called the twice-born; first, born of their parents, and second, of their guru after the sacred thread initiation they wear over their shoulders. The Varna system is seemingly embryonic in the Vedas, later elaborated and amended in the Upanishads and Dharma Shastras.

Brahmins

Brahmins were revered as an incarnation of knowledge itself, endowed with the precepts and sermons to be discharged to all Varnas of society. They were not just revered because of their Brahmin birth but also their renunciation of worldly life and cultivation of divine qualities, assumed to be always engrossed in the contemplation of Brahman, hence called Brahmins. Priests, gurus, rishis, teachers, and scholars constituted the Brahmin community. They would always live through the Brahmacharya (celibacy) vow ordained for them. Even married Brahmins were called Brahmachari (celibate) by virtue of having intercourse only for reproducing and remaining mentally detached from the act. However, anyone from other Varnas could also become a Brahmin after extensive acquisition of knowledge and cultivation of one's intellect.

Brahmins were the foremost choice as tutors for the newborn because they represent the link between sublime knowledge of the gods and the four Varnas. This way, since the ancestral wisdom is sustained through guru-disciple practice, all citizens born in each Varna would remain rooted to the requirements of their lives. Normally, Brahmins were the personification of contentment and dispellers of ignorance, leading all seekers to the zenith of supreme knowledge, however, under exceptions, they lived as warriors, traders, or agriculturists in severe adversity. The ones bestowed with the titles of Brahma Rishi or Maha Rishi were requested to counsel kings and their kingdoms' administration. All Brahmin men were allowed to marry women of the first three Varnas, whereas marrying a Shudra woman would, marginally, bereft the Brahmin of his priestly status. Nevertheless, a Shudra woman would not be rejected if the Brahmin consented.

The Vedas (Rig-veda)

The Vedas (Rig-veda)

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Brahmin women, contrary to the popular belief of their subordination to their husbands, were, in fact, more revered for their chastity and treated with unequalled respect. As per Manu Smriti, a Brahmin woman must only marry a Brahmin and no other, but she remains free to choose the man. She, under rare circumstances, is allowed to marry a Kshatriya or a Vaishya, but marrying a Shudra man is restricted. The restrictions in inter-caste marriages are to avoid subsequent impurity of progeny born of the matches. A man of a particular caste marrying a woman of a higher caste is considered an imperfect match, culminating in ignoble offspring.

Kshatriyas

Kshatriyas constituted the warrior clan, the kings, rulers of territories, administrators, etc. It was paramount for a Kshatriya to be learned in weaponry, warfare, penance, austerity, administration, moral conduct, justice, and ruling. All Kshatriyas would be sent to a Brahmin's ashram from an early age until they became wholly equipped with requisite knowledge. Besides austerities like the Brahmins, they would gain additional knowledge of administration. Their fundamental duty was to protect their territory, defend against attacks, deliver justice, govern virtuously, and extend peace and happiness to all their subjects, and they would take counsel in matters of territorial sovereignty and ethical dilemmas from their Brahmin gurus. They were allowed to marry a woman of all Varnas with mutual consent. Although a Kshatriya or a Brahmin woman would be the first choice, Shudra women were not barred from marrying a Kshatriya.

Kshatriya women, like their male counterparts, were equipped with masculine disciplines, fully acquainted with warfare, rights to discharge duties in the king's absence, and versed in the affairs of the kingdom. Contrary to popular belief, a Kshatriya woman was equally capable of defending a kingdom in times of distress and imparting warfare skills to her descendants. The lineage of a Kshatriya king was kept pure to ensure continuity on the throne and claim sovereignty over territories.

Vaishyas

Vaishya is the third Varna represented by agriculturalists, traders, money lenders, and those involved in commerce. Vaishyas are also the twice-born and go to the Brahmins' ashram to learn the rules of a virtuous life and to refrain from intentional or accidental misconduct. Cattle rearing was one of the most esteemed occupations of the Vaishyas, as the possession and quality of a kingdom's cows, elephants, horses, and their upkeep affected the quality of life and the associated prosperity of the citizens. Vaishyas would work in close coordination with the administrators of the kingdom to discuss, implement, and constantly upgrade the living standards by providing profitable economic prospects. Because their life conduct exposes them to objects of immediate gratification, their tendency to overlook the law and despise the weak is perceived as probable. Hence, the Kshatriya king would be most busy with resolving disputes originating of conflicts among Vaishyas.

Two Traders in Discussion, Ajanta

by Prashanth Gopalan (CC BY-NC-SA)

Vaishya women, too, supported their husbands in business, cattle rearing, and agriculture, and shared the burden of work. They were equally free to choose a spouse of their choice from the four Varnas, albeit selecting a Shudra was earnestly resisted. Vaishya women enjoyed protection under the law, and remarriage was undoubtedly normal, just as in the other three Varnas. A Vaishya woman had equal rights over ancestral properties in case of the untimely death of her husband, and she would be equally liable for the upbringing of her children with support from her husband.

Shudras

The last Varna represents the backbone of a prosperous economy, in which they are revered for their dutiful conduct toward life duties set out for them. Scholarly views on Shudras are the most varied since there seemingly are more restrictions on their conduct. However, Atharva Veda allows Shudras to hear and learn the Vedas by heart, and the

Mahabharata, too, supports the inclusion of Shudras in ashrams and their learning the Vedas. Becoming officiating priests in sacrifices organised by kings was, however, to a large extent restricted. Shudras are not the twice-born, hence not required to wear the sacred thread like the other Varnas. A Shudra man was only allowed to marry a Shudra woman, but a Shudra woman was allowed to marry from any of the four Varnas.

Shudras would serve the Brahmins in their ashrams, Kshatriyas in their palaces and princely camps, and Vaishyas in their commercial activities. Although they are the feet of the primordial being, learned citizens of higher Varnas would always regard them as a crucial segment of society, for an orderly society would be easily compromised if the feet are weak. Shudras, on the other hand, obeyed the orders of their masters, because their knowledge of attaining moksha by embracing their prescribed duties encouraged them to remain loyal. Shudra women, too, worked as attendants and close companions of the queen and would go with her after marriage to other kingdoms. Many Shudras were also allowed to be agriculturalists, traders, and enter occupations of Vaishyas. These detours of life duties would, however, be under special circumstances, on perceiving deteriorating economic situations. The Shudras' selflessness makes them worthy of unprecedented regard and respect.

Gradual withdrawal from the ancient Varna duties

Despite the life order being arranged for all kinds of people, by the end of the Vedic period, many began to deflect and disobey their primary duties. Brahmins started to feel the authoritarian nature of their occupation and status, because of which arrogance seeped in. Many gurus, citing their advice-imparting position to Kshatriya kings, became unholy and deceitful by practising Shudra qualities. Although Brahmins are required only to live on alms and not seek more than their minimal subsistence, capitalising on their superior status and unquestioned hierarchical outreach, they began to demand more for conducting sacrifices.

Kshatriyas contested with other kings often to display their prowess and possessions. Many kings found it acceptable to reject their Brahmin guru's advice and hence became self-regulating, taking unrighteous

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decisions, leading to loss of kingship, territory, and the confidence of the Vaishyas and Shudras. Vaishyas started to see themselves as powerful in their ownership of land and subjection of Shudras. Infighting, deceit, cheating influenced the conduct of Vaishyas. Shudras were repeatedly oppressed by the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas at will, which made them disown their duties and instead opt for stealing, lying, avariciousness, and spreading misinformation.

INDIA IS NOW HOME TO A REPOSITORY OF THE PRIMARY FOUR VARNAS & HUNDREDS OF SUB-VARNAS, MAKING THE ORIGINAL FOUR VARNAS MERELY ‘UMBRELLA TERMS’ & PERPETUALLY AMBIGUOUS.

Thus, all Varnas fell from their virtuosity, and unrighteous acts of one continued to inspire and justify similar acts of others. Mixing of castes was also considered a part of the declining interest in Varna system. Most of these changes took place between 1000 BCE and 500 BCE when constant social and economic complexities emerged as new challenges for Varna-based allocation of duties. Population increased, and so did the disunity of citizens in their collective belief in the sanctity of the original Varna system. Religious conversions played a significant part in subsuming large societies into the tenets of humanism and a single large society.

The period between 300 CE to 700 CE marked the intersection of multiple religions. As a large Varna populace became difficult to handle, the emergence of Jainism propounded the ideology of one single human Varna and nothing besides. Many followed the original Varna rules, but many others, disapproving opposing beliefs, formed modified sub-Varnas within the primary four Varnas. This process, occurring between 700 CE and 1500 CE, continues to this day, as India is now home to a repository of the primary four Varnas and hundreds of sub-Varnas, making the original four Varnas merely ‘umbrella terms’ and perpetually ambiguous.

The subsequent rise of Islam, Christianity, and other religions also left their mark on the original Varna system in India. Converted generations reformed their notion of Hinduism in ways that were compatible with the

conditions of those times. The rise of Buddhism, too, left its significant footprint on the Varna system's legitimate continuance in renewed conditions of life. Thus, soulful adherence to Varna duties from the peak of Vedic period eventually diminished to subjective makeshift adherence, owing partly to the discomfort in practising Varna duties and partly to external influence.

While the above impacts were gradual, expeditious withdrawal from Varna rules was made possible by the large-scale influence of western notions of liberty, equality, and freedom. These changes can be observed from 1500 CE right through the present. For Western nations, rooted in their own cultural background, it made little sense to approve of this in their eyes antiquated Varna system. Intercepting the Moghul invasion and the near-end sovereignty of multiple Hindu dynasties, British invasion brought with it a fresh worldview based on equality and freedom, incompatible with the Varna system. Massive colonisation, impact of 'cultural imperialism' enforced significant alterations on Varna duties. Trade and liberalisation, exchange of culture dented the tiny bit of belief left in continuing the Varna system.

Despite this perpetual decline, the descendants of all four Varnas in contemporary India are trying to reinvent their roots in search of ancestral wisdom. Although the four Varnas have encroached upon each other's life duties, a sense of order and peace is sought and recalled in discourses, community gatherings, and engagement between different generations. Varna system in contemporary terms is followed either with earnest commitment without reservations and doubt or with ambiguity and resistance arising out of unprecedented external influence and issues of subjective incompatibility. While many citizens practice a diluted version of Varna system, extending its limitations and rigidity to a broader context of Hindu religion, staunch believers still strive and promote the importance of reclaiming the system.

13.3 THE DISCOVERY OF CASTE (JATI)

The colonial British administration in India used the concept of caste in a principal way to understand the society it administered. The British derived the term 'caste' from the Portuguese word *casta*. The Portuguese

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observation of a social institution called *casta* during early maritime voyages led in due course to the elaboration of the concept of 'caste system'. This happened in the nineteenth century, in course of which the colonial administration came to understand the entire social formation (minus the tribes) in terms of the caste system. Colonial administrators commented on the existence of the institution of caste, in an imperfect form, even among the Muslims and Christians. The Portuguese travelogue, *The Book of Duarte Barbosa An Account of the Countries Bordering on the Indian Ocean and their Inhabitants*. Written by Durate Barbosa and completed about the year 1518 A.D., trans M.L. Dames (London, 1916) was among the first works to touch upon the institution. But the first to conceive 'the caste system' was the French Missionary, Abbe Dubois. In a work of 1816, entitled 'Description of the Character, Manners and Customs of the People of India, and of their Institutions, Religious and Civil', (translated by Henry K. Beauchamp subsequently as *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (Oxford, 1906)), he referred to the caste system of India. He said, 'I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism and that she preserved the arts and sciences of civilization whilst most other nations of the earth remained in the state of barbarism.' Other Christian missionaries did not share his favourable view of the civilisational value of caste and the Madras Missionary Conference of 1850 held caste to be 'one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of the gospel in India.' Indian social reformers, while unwilling as yet to condemn the caste system as a whole, also dwelt on some of the harmful social consequences of the institution. Colonial social ethnology debated the origin and function of caste extensively in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the basis of the census of 1881, two colonial administrators speculated in their reports from the Punjab and North-Western Provinces and Oudh that caste was basically a frozen occupational system. These early official reports are Denzil Ibbetson, *Report on the Census of the Punjab* (1883), subsequently re-published as *Punjab Castes* (Lahore, 1916), and John C. Nesfield, *Brief View of the Caste System of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, together with an Examination of Names and*

Figures Shown in the Census Report (Allahabad, 1885). A brilliant Bengal official named H.H. Risley disagreed with this view and put forth the influential contention that caste had a racial origin, to be found in the Aryan conquest of India's darker original inhabitants. Not all colonial officials agreed with this view which was set forth in Risley's *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1892), and *The People of India* (Calcutta, 1908). William Crooke, an official in sympathy with Ibbetson and Nesfield in his matter, argued against Risley's race theory, and emphasised occupational criteria for understanding caste in *The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh*, 4 vols. (Calcutta, 1896). Risley and Crooke based their official reports on the census of 1891. Whatever their difference on the origin of caste, the colonial census had by then officially established caste as the principal concept for analysing Indian society. Risley's attempt to establish the social ranking of caste through the census set off a keen competition among various caste groups about matters of rank. In due course the colonial administration fostered political rivalries among the various castes and the proposal for separate legislative representation of 'the depressed classes' led to Mahatma Gandhi's fast unto death and a compromise between the caste Hindus and the untouchable leader B.R. Ambedkar. The keen interest regarding caste at this time is reflected in works by both Indians and foreigners: Nripendra Kumar Dutt, *Origin and Growth of Caste in India* (London, 1931); J.H. Hutton, *Caste in India: Its Nature, Function and Origins* (Cambridge, 1946); and G.S. Ghurye, *Caste and Class in India* (Bombay, 1950). Though none were professional historians, all three speculated about the origin and meaning of caste. Hutton, who was the Census Commissioner of 1931, was dissatisfied with the race and occupation theories of caste. He speculated: 'The fact is, many roads of migration have led to India - and have ended there. This has resulted in the accumulation of a large number of societies of very different levels of culture and very varying customs in an area in which they have neither been mutually inaccessible nor without some measure of individual isolation. The mere inescapable necessity of finding a modus vivendi on the part of a number of different cultures has probably played a not unimportant part among the various factors that

have combined to cause the caste system to develop.’ Speculation about the nature of caste continued in the period after independence. Louis Dumont’s modern sociological classic, *Homo Hierarchicus: Essai sur les systèmes des castes* (1967, English translation 1970) argued that the purity-pollution hierarchy, by which all castes are placed in relation to each other, was the central feature of the caste system. Morton Klass, in his *Caste, The Emergence of the South Asian Social System* (1980), argued on the other hand that a caste, in its irreducible essence, was a marriage circle, common occupation or other features being secondary to the system.

13.4 COLONIAL ETHNOLOGY AND THE TRIBES (JANAJATI)

Colonial speculation about the origins of the caste system included the assumption that various tribes had at different times been given a specific caste ranking and had thus been absorbed into the caste system. The colonial administration also discovered, however, that several aboriginal tribes had not been so absorbed and had maintained a separate existence of their own. These tribes, which had remained apart from the rest of society, were thought to be dependent on forest produce and shifting cultivation, and were supposed to be simple, backward people prone to violence. Closer acquaintance with the tribes showed, however, that their conditions varied, and that many had taken to settled agriculture. Early colonial ethnology included speculations about the origins and history of the tribes. Colonel E.T. Dalton, who was Chota Nagpur Commissioner and had close acquaintance with that wild country which today constitutes, along with the Santhal Parganas, the new state of Jharkhand, was among the first to venture into the history and present condition of the tribes. His work was entitled *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1872). It was a pioneering work. After Colonel Dalton, an amateur Bengali ethnologist who lived in Bihar became interested in the tribes of the same area where Dalton had served as Commissioner. His name was Sarat Chandra Roy. His inquiries were more detailed and he showed a remarkable academic grasp of the new discipline of anthropology. He wrote a number of works on the tribes of Chota

Nagpur. It may be noted that the area, along with the Santhal Parganas, was included in his time in the province of Bihar and Orissa. In Colonel Dalton's time, the whole area, today the state of Jharkhand, had been part of the huge Bengal Presidency. In whatever administration the area might be included at different times, it had a distinctive habitat. It was a wild plateau, and the caste system had not developed there into a predominant social system. Some of the wild tribes had their own Rajas, some lived under their local chiefs. The Santhals of the Santhal Parganans and the Mundas of the Chota Nagpur division were numerically large population blocs. In a famous work on agrarian history, *The Annals of Rural Bengal* (1868), W.W. Hunter had earlier touched on the Santhal insurrection of 1855. Sarat Chandra Roy turned his attention to the Mundas, and produced an anthropological work on them entitled *The Mundas and their Country* (Calcutta, 1912). He went on with his detailed researches and produced two more works: *The Oraons of Chota Nagpur: Their History; Economic Life and Social Organisation* (Ranchi, 1915); and *The Birhors: a Little – known Jungle Tribe of Chota Nagpur* (Ranchi, 1925). Dalton had commented on the joyous life of the tribals. Roy added that every bachelor had his sweetheart among the maidens. It was clear by this time that the sexual organisation of society was very different among the tribals compared to the more familiar caste society. A missionary named Verrier Elwin who had developed empathy with the tribals of Central India turned his attention to the matter. He touched on an institution called the ghotul which permitted free mixing. 'Throughout tribal India', he said, 'divorce is easy and generally the wife has the same rights as her husband'. Among his works may be mentioned *The Baiga* (1939), *The Muria and their Ghotul* (Bombay, 1947) and *the Bondo Highlander* (London, 1950). A novel feature of his work was the use of tribal songs as primary material for depicting their condition and mentality. A Baiga song which he collected runs as follows: In some houses there is food In other houses there is money But in every house there is youth and desire. There is a hint here that the material condition of the tribals might not be easy, but their social organisation left scope for the natural joys of life. Some of the early colonial anthropologists speculated about the history of the tribes, but actual historical materials were not forthcoming from a

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non-literate society. A.R. Radcliffe Brown, in his influential anthropological work entitled *The Andaman Islanders* (1922), disapproved of such speculative history and urged that tribal society should be studied as it appeared in the present before the anthropologist. The inherent difficulties in constructing the history of the tribals meant that the main body of research work regarding them was anthropological. The work of the Anthropological Survey of India accentuated this tendency. However, these same anthropological reports on current conditions among the tribals became valuable historical documents when, as it happened in independent India, their condition changed beyond recognition, and for the worse.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. Write about the Varna System.

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2. Discuss about Discovery of Caste (Jati).

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3. Write about the Colonial Ethnology and the Tribes (Janajati)

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13.5 LOW CASTE AND TRIBAL PROTESTS

When historians turned to studying the conditions of low castes and tribals, they devoted a good deal of attention to the question of oppression and protest during the colonial period. Both groups were marginal, and were discriminated against. Yet from time to time

ideological leadership emerged from amongst them and there were movements of protest which figured in the colonial archives. Among the low castes at least, statements of their own point of view were also sometimes available. Two recent works which have made interesting use of such material, telling the story from the point of view of the group concerned, are: Rosalind O' Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth Century Western India* (Cambridge, 1985); and Shekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Caste, Protest and Identity in Colonial India: the Namasudras of Bengal 1872-1947* (Richmond, 1997). The gender mores of the low castes and the tribals differed from the high caste ethic, and in their studies of protest. O'Hanlon and Bandyopadhyay did not forget the gender factor. They also showed how the Non-Brahman movement in Maharashtra and the Namasudra movement in Bengal negotiated terms with the broader issues of social reform and political nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It should be noted that the Non-Brahman movement in the peninsula of India, especially as it developed in the Maharashtra region and the Tamil country, did not necessarily represent the lowest of the low. The distinction between the Non-Brahman movement and the Dalit movement has become clearer in the historical literature relating to the matter. Eugene F. Irschik, an American historian, who suggested that caste played an important role in colonial Indian politics, dealt with the Non-Brahman castes, as distinct from the untouchable Adi Dravidas, in *Politics and Social Conflict in South India: the Non-Brahman Movement and Tamil Separatism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969). He showed that the Non-Brahman movement in Tamil country was a protest movement of the middling castes against the Brahman-dominated nationalist movement of the Congress. Below the middling Non-Brahman castes, which suffered from a sense of discrimination, there were untouchable castes that were even more oppressed. It is from this section of society that the Dalit movement emerged in late colonial India under the leadership of B.R. Ambedkar. The Maharashtra region witnessed both the Non-Brahman movement and the Dalit movement and the distinction stands clear in two separate works, both by Gail Omvedt, *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: The Non-Brahman Movement in*

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Western India, 1873-1930 (Bombay, 1976); and Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India (New Delhi, 1994). Another work dealing with the Dalit movement is Eleanor Zelliot, *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambedkar Movement* (New Delhi, 1992). Movements of protest turned violent more readily among the tribals, at least among those tribes living in the remoter jungle regions. The tribals were not integrated with the rest of the society, and they did not fully comprehend the might of the colonial state. Invariably their rebellions were drowned in blood. We have seen that W.W. Hunter left an account of the Santhal rebellion in his *Annals of Rural Bengal*, written not long after the event happened. Tribal movements of protest did not draw much attention afterwards. The focus was upon the more organised politics of nationalist and low caste protest. The focus upon history from below has resulted in greater attention to tribal revolts in more recent years. Among such studies may be mentioned K.S. Singh, *Dust Storm and Hanging Mist: The Story of Birsa Munda and His Movement* (Calcutta, 1966); and J.C. Jha, *Tribal Revolt of Chota Nagpur, 1831-32* (Patna, 1987). Dealing with the Munda and Kol rebellions respectively, both works related to the Chota Nagpur plateau. Historians of India have paid little attention to the tribes of the north-eastern hill states. Many years ago, the anthropologist Christophe von FurerHaimendorf wrote the well-known work, *The Naked Nagas: Head Hunters of Assam in Peace and War* (Calcutta, 1946). Recently research in the history of the northeastern hills has begun in the north-east itself, and in pace with the trends in current research, social factors such as gender have begun to figure in this research. For instance, there is Frederick S. Downs, *The Christian Impact on the Status of Women in North East India* (Shillong, 1996).

13.6 ARE CASTE AND TRIBE REAL?

Post-modernist historians have recently questioned whether categories such as 'caste' and 'tribe' are real. In their opinion, colonial administrators invented these categories in their discourses upon India and Africa. The argument that 'tribe' is a figment of the colonial imagination appeared in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The*

Invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 1983). Terence Ranger, a historian of Africa, argued this in relation to the Dark Continent, but there were resonance of 'the invention of tribalism' in the Indian subcontinent, too. That caste, too, was a product of colonial discourse and not a natural growth of pre-colonial history, was argued by Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford, 1990), and by Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind : Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, 2001). These arguments have not found general acceptance outside post-modernist circles. Historians are aware of the dangers of 'essentializing' categories such as tribe, caste and religious community, and are also conscious of the constructed element in the colonial ethnology regarding these groups. Nevertheless, they have not been able to dispense with 'tribalism' or 'casteism' in interpreting Indian history. That tribal society is a real social category has been reasserted by Binay Bhushan Chaudhuri in his essay, 'Tribal Society in Transition: Eastern India, 1757-1920', in Mushirul Hasan and Narayani Gupta (eds.), *India's Colonial Encounter : Essays in Memory of Eric Stokes* (New Delhi, 1993). That caste assumed new forms in colonial India was recognised several years ago by Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susan H. Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India* (Chicago, 1967). Thus there was recognition that caste might have 're-invented' itself in colonial India. That it was often a smoke-screen for others interests in the politics of the colonial period is an argument that figures in John Gallagher, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal (eds.), *Locality, Province and Nation: Essays in Indian Politics, 1870 to 1940* (Cambridge, 1970). But that caste became a real factor in politics, at least in the colonial period, is not denied even by post-modernist historians such as Dirks. The point is not to essentialise these categories too readily. Dirks observes, 'Caste as we know it today is not in fact some unchanged survival of ancient India...Rather...Caste... is a modern phenomenon, that is specifically the product of an historical encounter between India and Western Colonial rule'. However, feminist historians, in their studies of pre-colonial Indian society, have found caste to be very much an oppressive presence in the lives of women even them. Uma Chakravarti in *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai* (New Delhi, 1998) found this to be the case with regard

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to Maharashtra in the age of Peshwas, as well as in the time of Pandita Ramabai in the late nineteenth century. This takes us to the question of gender.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) See the end of the unit for tips for your answer.

1. What is the means for Low Caste and Tribal Protests?

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2. Are Caste and Tribe Real?

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13.7 LET US SUM UP

Caste was probably the most important category used by the colonial administration to understand the Indian society. The entire Indian society, including the Muslims and Christians, though barring the tribes, was viewed in terms of the caste system. While some of the early writers viewed caste as the occupational system, H.H. Risley, a colonial official posted in Bengal, put forward a radically different view which contended that the caste system had a racial origin, dating since the Aryan conquests of the early inhabitants of India. 49 In the early days of colonial rule, the tribes were also considered as part of the caste system by the colonial administrators. However, they later realised that the social organisation of the tribes was quite different from that of the caste society. The academic exploration of the tribes initiated the new discipline of anthropology in India. Several anthropological studies were undertaken by both the Indian and foreign scholars on the Indian tribes. The non-Brahman and Dalit movements have also attracted the attention of the historians and many important books, particularly by Rosalind

O'Hanlon, Eugene Irschik, Gail Omvedt and Eleanor Zelliott, have been published on them.

13.8 KEY WORDS

Vedas: The Vedas are a large body of religious texts originating in ancient India.

Varna: Varṇa, a Sanskrit word with several meanings including type, order, colour or class, was used to refer to social classes in Hindu texts like the Manusmriti. These and other Hindu texts classified the society in principle into four varnas: Brahmins: priests, scholars and teachers.

13.9 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. How will you define caste? Discuss the writings of various scholars on caste.
2. Give an account of the colonial understanding of tribe.

13.10 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

- Bayly, Susan (2001), *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*, Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-0-521-26434-1
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13.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 13.2
2. See Section 13.3
3. See Section 13.4

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 13.4
2. See Section 13.5

UNIT 14: DEBATES IN HISTORY

STRUCTURE

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.2 Representative study of at least four major debates on the social, cultural and economic history of the world

14.3 Social Representation

14.4 Cultural Representation

14.5 Economic History of the World

14.6 Let us sum up

14.7 Key Words

14.8 Questions for Review

14.9 Suggested readings and references

14.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.0 OBJECTIVES

After this unit, we can able to know:

- To know about the Representative study of at least four major debates on the social, cultural and economic history of the world
- To discuss about the Social Representation
- To describe Cultural Representation
- To discuss the Economic History of the World

14.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of representation is of crucial importance in all academic fields in which cultural objects are studied (visual arts, design, architecture, film, literature). Paintings, written and visual texts, material objects, films, buildings, but also institutes like museums, are pervaded by (explicit or implicit) ideologies and meanings. These cultural objects and institutions represent and reflect society and culture. This holds true for the early Modern period, as much as for the Modern and Contemporary period, and for European as much as for non-European cultures.

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In this course we will look at questions such as: What does representation mean and do? What or who is represented, by whom, and for whom? Who is being represented, in written or visual media, and who isn't? Which representations confirm what (we think) we know, and which representations undermine hegemonic knowledge? What is meant by the politics of representation? The concept of representation will be the critical focal point throughout the course, helping us raise questions about everything we see, read or experience.

Studying elections in the largest democracy in the world is bound to be a challenge: given the size of the country and of its population, Indian national elections have been the largest electoral exercise in the world ever since the first national elections in 1952. Moreover the cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity of the Indian society, as well as the federal nature of the Indian state, make this event a particularly complex one. What, then, have been the methodologies and approaches deployed to study this major political event? What have been the disciplines and foci of election studies? Who have been the main authors? In what form have these studies been publicized, and what type of readership have they targeted? Reading the available literature with these questions in mind, I have tried to identify some major shifts over time, and to grasp their meaning and implications; a few interviews with specialists of the field have allowed me to test some of the interpretations suggested by the readings. Through a review of the literature on Indian elections since the 1980s, this paper aims at mapping the scientific and political debates around election studies.

Most works considered here deal with national elections, but some of them also focus on state elect (...)

I owe this formulation to Amit Prakash, whose comments on a previous version of this paper were ver (...)

Election studies are here defined as scholarly work focusing on the major phases of the electoral process, i.e. the campaign, the vote, the announcement of results and subsequent government formation.¹ This is a restrictive definition: elections are obviously a central institution of representative democracy, and as such they are connected to every aspect of the polity. Yet election studies constitute a distinct sub-genre of

studies on democracy, which focuses, so to speak, on the ‘mechanics’ more than on the ‘substance’ of representative democracy.² This sub-genre, being relatively more visible than other studies of representative democracy, has specific implications, in the academic but also in the political arena, which will be the focus of this critical review. This paper will argue that election studies are really in between science and politics, and that it is important, therefore, to contextualize them.

The unit starts with a quick overview of the different types of election studies which have been produced on India, and goes on to analyze a series of dilemmas and debates attached to election studies, which highlight the intricate nature of the political and scientific issues at stake. At least three previous reviews of election studies have been realized, by Narain (1978), Brass (1985), and Kondo (2007). Both Narain and Kondo provide a fairly exhaustive list of publications in this field, and discuss their relevance and quality. Brass’ review also offers a detailed discussion of the advantages and limitations of ecological approaches, to which I will later return.

There is no need to repeat this exercise here. But in view of situating the debates described in the next section of the paper, I simply want to sketch a broad typology of election studies published since the late 1980s—a moment which can be considered as the emergence of the new configuration of the Indian political scene, characterized by (i) the importance of regional parties and regional politics; (ii) the formation of ruling coalitions at the national and regional levels; and (iii) the polarization of national politics around the Congress, the BJP, and the ‘third space’.

All three reviews of the literature highlight the diversity of disciplines, methods, authors, institutions, and publication support of studies of Indian elections. But a major dividing line appears today between case studies and survey research (which largely match a distinction between qualitative and quantitative studies), with a number of publications, however, combining elements of both.

14.2 REPRESENTATIVE STUDY OF AT LEAST FOUR MAJOR DEBATES ON THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE WORLD

During the Revolution all of the American states established republican forms of government in which the people chose representatives to attend state legislatures. Eleven states had bicameral legislatures in which the lower houses were more numerous and exercised more power. (Pennsylvania and Georgia had unicameral legislatures.)

The Constitution called for a bicameral Congress composed of a House of Representatives and a Senate. Representation in the House was proportionately based on population, including 3/5s of all slaves, while the states were equally represented in the Senate. Small-state Antifederalists opposed proportional representation in the House. They maintained that the states had always been distinct and sovereign political units, as such, they should be represented equally. Large-state Antifederalists favored the proportional representation in the House but opposed the equal state representation in the Senate. Antifederalists also maintained that the House of Representatives was too small to adequately represent all segments of American society because (according to Article I of the Constitution) the first U.S. House of Representatives would be composed of only 65 members (if all 13 states ratified). Critics cited the fact that many of the lower houses of the state legislatures had more members than would serve in the U.S. House under the proposed Constitution. Antifederalists also attacked the biennial elections of representatives. Under the Articles of Confederation, delegates to Congress had one-year terms, were subject to recall, and could only serve three years within a six-year period. The Constitution did not have recall or rotation in office provisions. The Constitution was also criticized for neglecting to grant treaty-making powers to the House of Representatives even though treaties would be the law of the land. Although they liked the requirement that money bills would originate in the lower house, Antifederalists criticized the Senate's power to amend money bills. In Parliament, the House of Lords could only accept or reject money bills. Antifederalists belittled the House's power to

impeach government officials, saying no convictions and removals would take place in trials held in the Senate.

Federalists countered these criticisms forcefully. Under the Articles of Confederation, state legislatures determined how their delegates to Congress were elected. All but Rhode Island and Connecticut opted that the state legislatures did the electing. Under the Constitution, voters qualified to vote for members of their state assemblies could vote for U.S. Representatives. Federalists argued that this meant the House of Representatives was more democratic than the Confederation Congress.

In countering Antifederalist qualms about representation, *An American Citizen III* noted that proportional representation in the proposed Constitution “accords with reason and the true principles of liberty... and is one more great step towards the perfection of equal liberty and genuine republicanism in America.” Federalists also countered concerns that the House was too small by pointing out that it would enlarge as the nation’s population increased. Federalists argued that the two-year term would create some degree of continuity. Representatives from distant states would find a one-year term difficult simply because much of their time would be spent in transit or running for office, distracting them from pressing national affairs. Federalists also argued that although the House of Representatives had no direct involvement in treaty-making, it still had influence through its control over the appropriation of funds. In addition, its impeachment powers gave it considerable powers in all governmental affairs.

14.3 SOCIAL REPRESENTATION

The theory of social representations, first formulated by Serge Moscovici, has influenced researchers from varying disciplines, but is still quite unknown to media researchers. The aim with this article is to introduce the theory and its communicative concepts and make them useful for media studies. The theory offers a new approach for studying how the media and citizens construct societal and political issues colouring our age, or some specific time period. Examples will be given from studies of climate change and the media (Berglez, Olausson & Höjjer 2009; Höjjer 2010; Olausson 2010). Shortly speaking, social

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representations are about processes of collective meaningmaking resulting in common cognitions which produce social bonds uniting societies, organisations and groups. It sets focus on phenomena that becomes subjected to debate, strong feelings, conflicts and ideological struggle, and changes the collective thinking in society. As a theory of communication it links society and individual, media and public. The theory is relevant for media-and communication research in several ways. It specifies a number of communicative mechanisms explaining how ideas are communicated and transformed into what is perceived of as common sense. This touches the very heart of mediated communication – how the media naturalizes social thinking and generates collective cognition. The theory offers the possibility to develop a theoretically based model of analysis. This is exactly the aim with the present article.

Historical Origin of the Concept There is a link between the concept of social representations and Durkheim's concept "collective representations" which refers to common ways of conceiving, thinking about and evaluate social reality. According to Moscovici (2000) this concept by Durkheim is, however, too static in relation to how we should understand contemporary society. It does neither catch the dynamics of and changeable character, nor the variability and plurality of social cognitions of the age in which we now live, he claims. To include all this he therefore suggests the new concept "social representation". As noted by Markova (2003: 121) social representations may even be considered as "thoughts in movement" developing through communication. Moscovici studied the spread of psychoanalytic thinking by the media in the French society and the transformation into common sensical social representations (Moscovici 2007/1961). Such representations of health and unhealthy are typical areas in which scientific knowledge has an important role. A contemporary issue of great significant is climate change in which we can observe how science, politics, mass media and everyday knowledge meet and new social representations emerge. According to Moscovici (2000) also individuals contribute to the formation of social representations in the interplay between social structure and individual. In modern societies the individual has some

autonomy and assimilating social representations may simultaneously modify them. Individuals are “set free” from traditional binding social structures such as family, social class, and religion, which earlier guided thinking and behaviour (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2001; Giddens 1994). There is a greater degree of choice concerning alternative ways of living and of strategies for how to get there. As put by Moscovici: [...] individuals are confronted with a great variety of specialized knowledge on the part of groups to which they belong. Each individual must make his selection at a veritable open market of representations. (Moscovici 1984a: 963) By giving the individual some room the theory of social representations avoids social determinism and opens for processes of transformation. But still the individual is mainly embedded in and formed by social structures. With the epithet “social” Moscovici wants to emphasize how representations arise through social interaction and communication between individuals and groups. “Social” also marks that the contents of representations are social. They reflect, in different ways, historical, cultural and economic contexts, circumstances and practices.

What are Social Representations? Social representations are about different types of collective cognitions, common sense or thought systems of societies or groups of people. They are always related to social, cultural and/or symbolic objects, they are representations of something. There is no clearcut definition used by the advocates, and Moscovici himself gives a number of definitions: Social representations [...] concern the contents of everyday thinking and the stock of ideas that give coherence to our religious beliefs, political ideas and the connections we create as spontaneously as we breathe. They make it possible for us to classify persons and objects, to compare and explain behaviours and to objectify them as part of our social setting. While representations are often to be located in the minds of men and women, they can just as often be found “in the world”, and as such examined separately. (Moscovici 1988: 214) A social representation is a system of values, ideas and practices with a twofold function: first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orientate themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly to enable communication to take place among members of a community by

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providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual group history. (Moscovici 1973: xiii) [...] from the dynamic point of view social representations appear as a “network” of ideas, metaphors and images, more or less loosely tied together. (Moscovici 2000: 153) Social representations are not to be seen as logical and coherent thought patterns. They may instead be full of thought fragments and contradictory ideas. With the concept cognitive polyfasia social representations theory refers to the fact that everyday thinking about something may be characterized by different, sometimes opposite, forms of thinking. To deal with the tricky question of how collectively shared social cognitions must be to qualify as social representations, Moscovici makes a distinction between hegemonic representations, emancipated representations and polemic representations. Hegemonic representations are shared by most of the members of a political party, a nation, or other structured macro unit. They are uniform and ‘prevail in all symbolic or affective practices’ (Moscovici 1988: 221). In contemporary society climate change conceived of as a threat towards human life and society may be an example of hegemonic social representations. Politicians generally agree that it is a severe problem, the media reporting is dominated by certainty about the existence of anthropogenic climate change (Olausson 2009, 2010), and the public at large has adopted the same view (Berglez, Höijer & Olausson 2009). Emancipated representations relates to subgroups that create their own versions with “a certain degree of autonomy with respect to the interacting segments of society” (Moscovici 1988: 221). One example could be representations of health and illness in traditional and alternative medicine. These representations may partly be complementary and the public may pick up ideas of both and combine with their own experiences of health and illness. Polemic representations, at last, are related to social conflicts, struggles between groups, and controversies in a society. They are determined by “antagonistic relations” and “intended to be mutually exclusive” (Moscovici 1988: 221), such as political ideas of liberalism and communism. The classification of social representations into these three categories is

however, as much classification, somewhat vague, not least because ideas and social thinking is complex and often heterogeneous. As mentioned above social representations are multifaceted and may even be intrinsically contradictory. What kind of collective cognitions does the theory of social representations have in mind? The following remarks may be made:

1. Social representations refer to cognitions stamping the collective thinking of society. Of special interest are phenomena that in different ways diverge from traditional views, create tensions in society and challenge everyday life of citizens, groups and institutions. Such phenomena are especially well suited for studying how old ideas are modified and transformed and new social representations are produced by public debate. We easily find examples in today's society, which go through many quick changes related to, for example, new communication technology, biotechnology, environmental risks, global market, terrorism and violence.

2. As put by Moscovici (2000: 160) social representations “participate each time in the global vision a society establishes for itself”, and operates at different levels, including large communities like the nation and small subgroups of people. We may here, as noted by Olausson (2010), see a connection to the concept of ideology, especially current theories concentrating on ideologies in the plural form, and as sense making practices of society and everyday life (Fairclough 1992; Hall 1986; 1995).

3. Social representations are complex and holistic. They may be seen as “theories”, “network of ideas”, metaphors and images that include emotions, attitudes and judgements. They are, further, embedded in communicative practices, such as dialogues, debates, media discourses and scientific discourses (Marková 2003).

4. Social representations refer to cognitions in communication, not least in public debate. Moscovici (2007/1961) early on here emphasized the

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role of the media in the growth of new social representations, while Marková (2003) especially emphasizes dialogical communication in groups and between individuals.

Communicative Mechanisms Social representations theory specifies how collective cognitions are produced and transformed through communication with a focus on the socio-cognitive processes or mechanisms involved. On one hand all human interaction presupposes collective cognitions, that is, social representations. On the other hand individuals and groups produce social representations through social interaction and communication. According to Moscovici (1984b: 7-10) there are two functions of representations. They conventionalize objects, persons and events we are meeting by giving them a specific form, localize them to a given category, and gradually establish them as distinct and shared cognitions. They are also prescriptive in the sense that they through social structures and traditions are forced upon us. Although we incorporate them into our individual minds, as individuals we rethink collective cognitions. It is important, however, to note that individuals and groups can rework and transform collective cognitions. The idea about a basic link between the collective and the individual, between the present and the past, and between the known and the unknown permeates the theory of social representations. As Moscovici puts it about the relationship between the present and the past: In many respects, the past is more real than the present. The peculiar power and clarity of representations – that is of social representations – derives from the success with which they control the reality of today through that of yesterday. (Moscovici 1984b: 10)

All representations aim to “make something unfamiliar, or unfamiliarity itself, familiar” (Moscovici 1984b: 24). The theory proclaims two basic socio-cognitive communicative mechanisms that generate social representations: anchoring and objectifying. The first mechanism, anchoring, makes the unknown known by bringing it into a well-known sphere of earlier social representations so that we may compare and interpret it. The second mechanism, objectifying, makes the unknown known by transforming it into something concrete we may perceive and

touch and thus control. These mechanisms will be presented more thoroughly below.

Anchoring By communication social representations are anchored again and again in other social representations. This is a kind of cultural assimilation by which new social representations are incorporated into the well-known ones simultaneously as the latter ones are transformed by the new ones. Gradually then the unfamiliar ideas become well-known ideas and part of the collective frames of references of a society. In short anchoring means that new ideas or phenomenon are related to a well-known phenomenon or context. Stuart Hall is touching upon such a mechanism in his classical work “Encoding and decoding in the television discourse”. New, problematic or troubling events, which breach our expectancies and run counter to our “common-sense constructs”, to our “taken-for-granted” knowledge of social structures, must be assigned to their discursive domains before they can be said to “make sense”. The most common way of “mapping” them is to assign the new within some domain or other of the existing “maps of problematic social reality”. (Hall 1973/1999: 57) Hall’s “common-sense construct” and “taken-for-granted knowledge” in the quote above are close to the concept of social representation, and the “mapping” mechanism he describes is basically an anchoring mechanism by which something new is attached to something already known. He however does not dwell any further into this as done within social representations theory. We may here differentiate between a number of anchoring mechanisms: naming, emotional anchoring, thematic anchoring, metaphoric anchoring and anchoring via basic antinomies.

Naming A most common way of giving the foreign or unknown phenomenon a more well-known face is to name it. By naming something, “we extricate it from a disturbing anonymity to endow it with a genealogy and to include it in a complex of specific words, to locate it, in fact, in the identity matrix of our culture” (Moscovici 2000: 46). In this way the phenomenon is liberated from secrecy and incomprehensibility. A new political group may be named as terrorists, a new ill-health is called the Black Death of our age, the complex scientific phenomenon climate change may shortly be labelled as the weather, and

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so on. Naming often appears in headlines and introductions in the media, and even a vague naming may liberate the unknown from total incomprehensibility. In a series of articles about climate change of a Swedish tabloid the complex phenomenon simply was named as “climate threat”, “weather”, “weather alarm”, or “the catastrophe” (Aftonbladet 061101-061130). A British newspaper named a pro-vegan campaign focusing meat eaters’ role in causing global warming as “hot campaign” (headline: “Heather Mills launches HOT! Campaign” Guardian.co.uk, November 19, 2007). These acts of namings forge the abstract issue of climate change into recognizable frames of references, or as Moscovici (2000: 46) puts it, locate it in the identity matrix of our culture. Weather is a most common topic of everyday small talk, a lot of people are documenting their own weather observations in diaries, and the weather inevitably affects everyday life. It is everybody’s concern. And we do not want the weather to be too hot, or too cold, or too stormy, etc. Words as “threat”, “alarm”, “hot” or “catastrophe” brings in a dramatic dimension and anchors the issue in well-known media discourses of threat, catastrophe and alarm reports. A number of studies have confirmed that the media increasingly supply their audiences with such reports (Altheide 2002; Robertson 2001). With his special interest in science and everyday thinking, Moscovici argues that naming is necessary to as well thinking and communication as to social cooperation in a society, and he insists that naming neither should be seen as biasing or diminishing of the original object or phenomenon. Instead he points out that naming may enrich the object and give it new dimensions and qualities (Moscovici 2000). Classifying and naming sometimes may, however, as Lippman (1998/1922) once noted be strongly connected to processes of stereotyping. Naming someone as a foreigner, a deviant or a fundamentalist, or naming a behaviour an act of madness or a terror attack are not neutral classifications. To put it in the wordings of Lippman (1998/1922: 119) such namings rather are “loaded with preferences, suffused with affection or dislike”. Stereotyping is specifically related to the naming of social groups and to questions of inclusion and exclusion, discrimination, power and domination (Pickering 2001). Stereotyping “creates the illusion of precision in

defining and evaluating other people”, and “they are then fixed into marginal positions or subordinate status and judged accordingly” (Pickering 2001: 5). Stereotypical naming is doubly fraudulent. Firstly, the “Other” is attributed taken for granted negative characteristics, which we conceive as naturalized. The naming therefore give an illusion of being realistic, that is, we do not see them as social constructions. It is so. Secondly, stereotypical namings confirm themselves when, as they are, used over and over again. It really is so.

Emotional Anchoring Emotional anchoring is an attachment mechanism that is not specifically pointed out in the theory of social representations although Moscovici now and then addresses emotions. For example in his writings about social representations of money he brings in emotions of passions and desire (Moscovici 1993). Also in Jodelet’s (1991) work on madness emotional aspects are discussed, and Joffe (2002: 568-569) argues for that social representations theory “keeps a space for symbols, infused with an emotional valence. It is emotion that motivates the formation of particular SRs [social representations]”. Explicitly, however, very little has been written about the role of emotions. This fact ha also been noted by Joffe (2002: 569): “the role of emotion has received surpris ingly little attention “. I will here argue for the need to more explicitly take emotions into consideration in social representations theory. Emotional anchoring then refers to a communicative process by which a new phenomenon is fastened to well-known emotions. By this the unknown gets recognizable as, for example, a threat or a danger to fear, something to worry for, or as something nice and pleasurable. As shown by psychological research emotions may help us to interpret and judge social situations and objects (Bless, Fiedler & Struck 2004). The mass media willingly exploit this, often maybe in superficial and speculative ways. Social phenomena, events or courses of events are anchored in feelings of fear or an approaching threat, or in feelings of anger, pity or compassion. According to Furedi (2006: xiii) the increasing stream of scare stories in the media are even transforming Western culture into a culture of fear in which “fear feeds on itself and creates the disposition to speculate about other hazards lurking around the corner”. Climate change has found to be anchored by the media in a

Notes

mixture of wellknown emotions of fear, hope, guilt, compassion and nostalgia (Höijer 2010). By this is the scientific phenomenon of climate change turned into a social representation we can compare with other current social phenomena attached to similar emotions such as terrorism or a number of environmental risks. The study concluded: “in short we may regard climate change as something to collectively fear, but there is hope if we behave in a climate friendly fashion. If we do not, we should feel guilt. Media further invites us to feel compassion for endangered species and nostalgia for the idyllic past we are about to lose” (Höijer 2010). Emotional anchoring may be embedded in the language used, and/or in the photographic pictures or illustrations. The example below illustrates how a tabloid news paper by explicitly putting blame on the individual who does not behave climate friendly anchored climate change in emotions of individual and collective guilt. Guilt is a socially constructed emotion and concerns violations of social codes and norms (Giddens 1991), in this case an implicitly proclaimed code of avoiding Brazilian meat, cacao and soap. You are eating up the forest ... Have you bought Brazilian meat or cocoa? There is a large risk that you are contributing to climate change. ... Swedish consumers could be supporting the destruction of the rain forest when they buy popular Brazilian meat, cocoa or soap. (Aftonbladet 061110) Emotionally anchoring may be related to other forms of anchoring or to processes of objectifications (see below). For example, naming climate change as “climate threat”, or talking about biotechnology in terms of pollution metaphors (Levidow 2000) anchor these phenomena in emotions of fear and anxiety.

Thematic Anchoring Anchoring may also take place at more basic thematic levels by the use of underlying categories of meaning, antinomies such as life/death or culture/nature etc., or by the use of metaphors. Moscovici (2000; 2001) uses the concept of theme to catch the structural in-depth levels of social representations. He argues that underlying collective, general patterns of thinking or primary ideas in interplay with specific contexts generates and structures new social representations. These so called themes, or themata in plural (Markova 2003; Moscovici 2000), are in themselves socially and culturally

constructed and maintained by social processes. According to Moscovici (2000: 163) they “have been created by society and remained preserved by society”. Since themes “never reveal themselves clearly” (Moscovici 2000: 182) the analysis of talk, interviews, or media products often must move beyond the specific language and visuals used. Themes may be conceived of in ways that come close to the concept of ideology regarded as common sense thinking or taken-for-granted ideas in a society or among groups (cf., Billig 1991; van Dijk 1998) for example democracy, human rights or equality (Moscovici 2001). A number of such underlying themes may be identified in analyses of the media. Continuing with examples from climate change a study found that individualization and nationalization were two prominent themes, (in the referred study also labelled ideological horizons), in Swedish news media (Berglez, Höijer & Olausson 2009). The following example shows how the theme of self-glorification nationalism takes place in the reporting on climate change. The glorification is present in wordings such as “the one country in the world” and “if we cannot make it, nobody else probably will”: Sweden is perhaps the one country in the world that most easily can get rid of its oil dependency. ... If we cannot make it, nobody else probably will! We have the chance to prove that it is possible. (Aftonbladet 061102) Themes may also be assigned to more universal ideas inscribed into language (Moscovici 2000). Taking this as her starting point Markova (2003) has developed the concept of theme from the ontological position of a dialectical or dialogical human consciousness based on the ability to imagine and communicate with the Other.

Anchoring in Antinomies Dialogicality means, according to Markova (2003), that sense making is founded on a capacity to make distinctions, to think in oppositions, polarities, or antinomies. Similar to this Billig (1993) claims that human thinking is based on capacity to negate: accept versus turn away, justify versus criticize, etc. This creates tensions and dynamics in society, which may lead to change and development. In all societies antinomies such as life/death, human being/nature, we/them, fear/hope, freedom/oppression, and so on exists. In specific socio-historical contexts antinomies related to a social phenomenon may become a source of tension, conflict or problem and the phenomenon

Notes

part of public debate. It is in such situations that new social representations are developed, according to Markova (2003). Analysing oppositional distinctions or antinomies thus turns focus to intrinsic tensions, which may be especially marked in periods when new social representations develop. Taking social representations of climate change as a case, antinomies such as certainty/uncertainty, threat/hope, guilty/not guilty, nature/culture, global/local may organize the discourse (Höijer 2008; Olausson 2010). For example the distinction guilty/ not guilty was reflected over and over again in the reporting on climate change of a Swedish tabloid newspaper (Höijer 2010). The grown-up world was presented as guilty, in principle all adults in the West: “If everyone lived as we do in the West it would take five planets to maintain our consumption of natural resources” (Aftonbladet 061116), while the innocent ones were children and animals: “What do you tell your sons, three and five years old, about the climate threat?” (Aftonbladet, 061110); “The baby walrus draws its final breath ... a victim of climate change in the Arctic Ocean” (Aftonbladet, 061108). Olausson (2010) found that underlying Swedish media further was an antinomy or oppositional distinction between us/them. In her discussion of how a European identity is constructed in news media on climate change she suggests that this is established: by means of the depiction of a conflictual relationship between “Us”, the EU, who acknowledge climate change as a serious threat and want to take action against it, and “Them”, the USA, who refuse to even discuss regulations. (Olausson 2010) The relationship between themes and antinomies is somewhat unclear in the theory. Moscovici (2000) considers themes as “basic ideas”, “pre-existing thought”, or “primary ideas” while according to Markova (2003) antinomies are more basic also underlying themes. This makes sense if we for example think about ideological themes such as nationalism or individualism, which are hard to conceive of without the counterparts of internationalism or collectivism. In analysing a specific discourse, however, anchoring a social issue in a specific theme (e.g. individualism) may dominate the discourse and its counterpart (collectivism) may be discursively absent. If we emphasize the concrete communication practices thematic anchoring may occur without anchoring in antinomies.

It is worth noting also that anchoring in antinomies may appear without thematic anchoring since “not all antinomies of thinking become themata” (Markova 2003: 184).

Anchoring by Metaphors Metaphors make things and phenomena comprehensible by imagining them as something else, for example “life is a journey” or “time is money”. A study on social representations of the EU found that people used metaphors such as “milk lakes” and “butter mountains”, originating from the media, when referring to food surpluses within the EU (Wagner & Hayes 2005). The media reports on “human shields” in wars and conflicts, “war” and “sport” metaphors are common in news reporting on many topics, etc. Some metaphors are universal while many others reflect cultural variations (Kövecses 2005), and there may also exist even more specifically situated metaphors. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003) everyday language is permeated with metaphors. They even claim that all thinking and communicating basically is metaphoric. There is great variety of metaphors and many attempts to classifications have been made. According to Ritchie (2006) some metaphors are more everyday-like (busy as a bee), other poetical (life is a dream), some complex with various meanings (life is a struggle), still others more one-dimensional (the party got out of hand). Root metaphors are those long-lived metaphors permeating cultures, for example conduit, contain and war metaphors (Kövecses 2005). St.Clair (2002) notes that growth-metaphors, playmetaphors, drama-metaphors, machine-metaphor, and time- and room-metaphors for a long time have stamped European thinking. Anchoring social phenomena in metaphors may serve ideological and legitimating functions. Stibbe (2001) found that metaphors of war and of forest fire dominated British media reporting on the mad-cow disease and that this justified drastic measures to be taken. Illness and death were two close metaphors in the media reporting on climate change (Höijer 2008). The planet was repeatedly described as “sick” on its way to “die” and a number of animals were about to be “killed” by the climate change. These metaphors not only underline the seriousness of the issue but also relate to our own existential anxiety and, in the specific media context studied, legitimated individual acting to mitigate carbon dioxide.

14.4 CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Cultural representation is a concept cultivated by Stuart Hall within cultural studies, a discipline originating in Great Britain during the 1960s. Hall is recognized as a major contributor to the field, particularly in expanding its focus on cultural representations of race and ethnicity, as well as gender. Culture can be understood as a set of common beliefs that hold people together. These common beliefs give rise to social practices, and social practices are imbued with meaning.

Theories of Cultural Representation

Many faculty and students in our graduate program focus upon the intersections among bodies, minds, and cultural representations, both as part of historical, textual, and rhetorical scholarship and as programs of study within their own right. We are particularly interested in how cultures and individuals represent themselves to themselves and to others, how cultures appropriate language and literatures, and how language can construct personhood. Professors regularly teach feminist theory courses that are also informed by critical race studies, as well as theory courses that explore the intersections of biography, nationhood, and religion, and that historicize and contextualize the human body, considering health, disability, gender, sexuality, race and other identity categories. Recent seminars in the department that foreground critical and cultural theories in these contexts include “Triangulating Transatlanticism,” “Disability, Health, and the Early Modern Body,” “Issues in Feminist Theory,” “Critical Theory,” “The Posthuman: Rhetorics of the UnDead,” “Postcolonial Literature and Theory,” “Rewritten Shakespeare,” and “Media Theory.”

Theory and Criticism

The UGA graduate program in English offers various means of developing expertise in theory and criticism alongside the study of literature and other areas of concentration, such as rhetoric and composition and humanities computing. While individual members of the faculty are affiliated with several different theories and disciplines, the department has particular strengths in feminism and gender studies,

historicism, poststructuralism, theories of the construction of race, and theories of literary innovation. These strengths are reflected in our course offerings, such as recent seminars on specific critical movements (e.g. surrealism; media theory) and on individual theorists (e.g. Benjamin; Barthes). Students may also study theory and criticism in the context of a body of literature, as in courses on “The Early Modern Body,” “Victorian Femininity, Nationhood, and the Black Atlantic,” “Constructions of Race in the American Novel,” “Museums, Modernism, Memory,” “Urban Modernity,” and “Literature, Media, and Information in the Nineteenth Century.” Students interested in pursuing theory and criticism may also take courses in other departments with strong offerings in theory (e.g. Philosophy, Comparative Literature, and Romance Languages).

The English Department provides additional support for this area of study by sponsoring reading groups and by hosting lectures by eminent theorists including, in the last few years, Johanna Drucker, Stanley Fish, Michael Hardt, Linda Hutcheon, Fredric Jameson, and Rei Terada.

14.5 ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE WORLD

Economic Participation refers to the labor rate of participation. This means that it measures the total active population participating in the labor force. Another way of saying this is that it pertains to the numbers of individuals which are actively seeking out work or who are already employed. The two categories are important to consider, as in economic recessions a number of active labor force workers will despair of finding a job and simply give up the search for employment. This means that the Economic Participation rate will decrease as this happens.

Such an Economic Participation rate is a key measurement to utilize when considering a body of unemployment statistics. This is because it reveals the numbers of those individuals who show interest in being a part of the active work force. Such people either have a job or are actively looking for one. They usually must be considered from 16 to 18 years of age or older to be eligible for inclusion in the category. Those individuals who are not physically capable of working or who lack the

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interest in working will not comprise the participation rate. This includes retirees, imprisoned people, students, and homemakers or stay at home moms.

This is an important metric to consider alongside the official unemployment rates. The reason is that many individuals who are called unemployed might not really be true participants in the active work force. If analysts only contemplate the unemployment rate by itself, they might arrive at the conclusion that a greater number of individuals are not bringing home income.

This does not mean that they are not actively contributing to the level of the economy. It might be that such individuals choose not to work for a variety of reasons. They could be spending retirement savings, building their skills as college or university students, or spending their spouse's earnings as stay at home moms. It explains why both unemployment statistics and the Economic Participation rate should be reviewed together to fully appreciate the true employment picture of an economy and country.

This Economic Participation rate becomes even more critical to understand when recessions bite. As an economy goes from reasonably good to particularly bad, many workers will simply give up looking for work after many months unemployed. At this point, they could simply abandon the workforce. The labor participation rate would then decline. The reason is that these individuals would no longer be classified as actively looking for employment. This explains why in recessions, sudden plunges in the labor participation rate would be carefully considered and evaluated.

A case in point is the effects of the Great Recession on the ongoing Economic Participation rate. The labor force impact from this worst economic collapse since the Great Depression of the 1930's proved to be absolutely devastating. The recession officially began in December of 2007. Per the NBER National Bureau of Economic Research, the unemployment rate stood at 5 percent that month. When the recession officially ended in June of 2009, this unemployment rate reached 9.5 percent and then climbed on to peak out at 10 percent by October of 2009.

In the eight years since then, the unemployment rate has nearly touched five percent again. Yet the labor participation rate has never recovered from the Great Recession. Many economists believe that this devastating recession and global financial collapse caused the acceleration of structural changes in the labor force participation rate. The rate has ranged from 67 percent back in 2006 to today's near 62 percent in 2017. The decrease in the economic participation rate has been broad based and consistent since 2009 in fact. Many baby boomers decided to retire early as their job opportunities suddenly evaporated. Many individuals used government grants and loans to go back to university or college. Some women stopped working to be stay at home moms as the job opportunities were so scarce.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. What do you know about the Representative study of at least four major debates on the social, cultural and economic history of the world?

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2. Discuss about the Social Representation

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3. Describe Cultural Representation

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4. Discuss the Economic History of the World

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14.6 LET US SUM UP

The focus on representations of [new] societal phenomena and communication makes the theory of social representations highly relevant for media studies. This article has presented, and partly also developed, the basic ideas of the theory, more precisely the communicative mechanisms of anchoring and objectification. It could be noted that a theory here is understood in its deeper sense, that is as “both an approach, a way of looking at social phenomena, and a system describing and explaining them” (Moscovici 1988: 212-213). It could also be noted that in the literature on social representations there are “relatively little guidance on the implications of the theory for the design of empirical research” (Bauer & Gaskell 1999: 163). Empirically a wide range of methods – both quantitative and qualitative – have been used in social representations research. The point here has not been, however, to discuss specific choices of methods but rather to emphasize the conceptual analytical level and link it to empirical application, in this case by concrete examples from studies of the media and climate change. One of the advantages certainly is that the theory offers the possibility to develop a tight relationship between the theoretical and empirical levels. Another advantage is the comprehensiveness of the theory including a number of communicative mechanisms at different levels of meaning making. For example, the conceptual richness of the concepts of anchoring and objectification in the theory makes it possible to analyze also more hidden levels of the social construction of meaning. In one study Olausson (2010) by focusing on antinomies, emotional anchoring and objectification in a detailed analysis uncovered a concealed but emerging European identity in the media reporting on climate change. The theory of social representations directs attention to social and cultural thinking of society, how new social cognitions or representations of reality are pushed forward and old ones transformed through communication. The theory benevolently demystifies the question of where the representations come from. They are on one hand related to real changes in the material and symbolic world (technological changes, scientific achievements, courses of events, etc.) and on the other hand to the already existing bodies of social representations in social life, in the

media and elsewhere in society. As with other theories there are, of course also shortcomings with this theoretical approach. Vorlklein and Howarth (2005) have, for example pointed out that questions of power relations are absent in the theory: “We need to analyse how representations may be infused with ideological power to justify status quo and so maintain systems of inequality and exclusion” (ibid: 446). Moscovici does, however, in general terms write about the power of ideas: “it is a proven truth that an idea, no matter what form it assumes, has the power of making us come together, of making us modify our feelings and modes of behaviour and of exercising a constraint over us just as much as any external condition” (Moscovici 1993: 115). Theoretically though the power and ideology aspects certainly need to be developed, for example by combining social representations theory and critical discourse theory. Another shortcoming, which has been put forth, is that the theory does not address the practices and activities of people or groups of people when they are producing social representations (Potter & Edwards 1999). Whether or not this is a serious limitation is open for discussion but a theory can of natural reasons not include everything. Furthermore, Voelklein and Howarth (2005) point out that this critique is based on a view that characterizes cognition and action as oppositional but that social representations theorists see no such dichotomy. The social and the individual, the cognitive and the cultural, mind and society constitute functional units and social representations are manifested in any social practice. Notwithstanding these shortcomings the theory of social representations can give valuable contributions to media research. By studying how the media and the public anchor and objectify “new” scientific, political and social issues we obtain knowledge about vital transformations in the thought-systems or collective meaning-making of societies. Ongoing changes are not only structural material processes but also deeply emotional and socio-cognitive.

14.7 KEY WORDS

Representation: Representation is the use of signs that stand in for and take the place of something else. It is through representation that people organize the world and reality through the act of naming its elements.

Signs are arranged in order to form semantic constructions and express relations

14.8 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the participation and Representation theory of Social and Economic understanding.

14.9 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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14.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1. See Section 14.2
2. See Section 14.3
3. See Section 14.4
4. See Section 14.5