Essays on South Asian Society, Culture and Politics

■ Edited by Annemarie Hafner

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Contents

An Introductory Remark

The contributions combined in this volume appear to constitute a "mixed bag". They actually grew out of papers submitted to the 13th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, held from 31st August to 3rd September 1994 in Toulouse (France). They were presented to Panel No 1 "South Asia and the New International Order", to Panel No 2 "Nation and Religion in South Asia", to Panel No 5 "Urban Environment", and to Panel No 10 "Marriage Prestations", respectively.

The positive response which the papers evoked from the participants in the panel discussions encouraged the authors to revise and extend their contributions and to prepare them for publication in the Occasional Papers of the Center for Modern Oriental Studies. They, thereby, hope to make their research findings known to a wider circle of interested scholars. They also consider it a good opportunity to offer an insight into the variety of research projects dealing with modern and contemporary South Asia which are currently conducted at the Center of Modern Oriental Studies. All the authors are associated with the Center. Despite the obvious diversity of the subjects dealt with the authors share a common interest in developments and events pertaining to "their" region. This facilitated the present publication.

As the titles indicate, the contributions cover a wide spectrum of topics ranging from customary behaviour and institutions through the analysis of themes from modern history to the study of current political trends and conflicts in the South Asian region. Yet, the essays are not merely interconnected by the common South Asian focus. The authors endeavour to trace historical conditions and cultural manifestations of changes in the society within the wider context of the process of globalisation.

Annemarie Hafner

Marriage Prestations in Nomad-Farmer Relations in West Afghanistan[*]

Bernt Glatzer

Introduction

The amount of bride wealth among western Pashtun nomads is exceedingly high compared with that of their ethnic neighbours. There is a gross imbalance of marriage prestations, wife givers receive usually half of the productive capital average households own. This leads to considerable economic activities, and large amounts of cash and livestock are transferred within nomadic and farming groups and between the two. In this paper marriage prestations are described and analysed in the context of social and economic relations among and between nomadic and farming families in West Afghanistan.[1]

Marriage prestations

Among the Durrani Pashtun nomads of Jawand, Badghis province (Northwest Afghanistan), and the nomads of the same ethnic group in Shindand, Farah Province (West Afghanistan), marriages are contracted officially by the fathers of bride and groom after lengthy and complicated discussions between all family members a generation older than the prospective couple. The latter have almost no say in the matter. Mothers and aunts on both sides are particularly active in match making but the fathers have the last word and will publicly lead the negotiations in their last phase and announce the results. They are the ones to take responsibility later if the marriage proves successful, the women will be blamed if something goes wrong.[2] Prestations, the bride price in particular, are the important subject of marriage negotiations.

The officially announced bride prices (*wəlwər*) in Jawand in 1970 and those in Shindand six years later varied from 100,000 to 250,000 Afghani (= DM 4,000 - 10,000 in 1970).[3] Bride prices are calculated on the basis of breeding sheep *(mezhi)*. Two thirds of the bride price have to be paid in cash, one third in breeding sheep. One breeding sheep fetched a market price of 2000 Afs.

When the market price of sheep changes the cash value will fluctuate accordingly.

It is interesting to compare the average bride price with the productive capital an average household owns: The bride price counted in breeding sheep mirrors the productive household wealth.[4]

So far I spoke of the bride price as announced in public. The actual bride price paid is usually only half of it. The bride givers have an interest in inflating the bride prices in public as a matter of prestige because it reflects the value of one's womenfolk, their working and procreative capabilities and more important, their virtue and chastity which in turn affects their (the women's) male agnates' virtue and honour. The bride takers will not argue too much for they have an interest to show in public that they take only women from respectable families and that they can afford high bride prices and have strong lineage links to collectively raise any amount asked for.

In fact there are private negotiations between the two sides when the actual bride price is bargained; the economic capabilities of the bride takers are here taken into consideration as well as the desire of the bride givers to create affinal ties to this particular family. An inofficial reduction of the bride price will be achieved by paying a higher proportion in kind (livestock) and substituting lambs or goats for expensive ewes. To give back a substantial portion of bride price in the form of trousseau is even a publicly praised form of saving the bride takers from economic ruin. In one case I observed the transfer of the livestock portion of the bride price at night when nobody could (or nobody wanted to) count the actual value.

However, in spite of all these manipulations, the actual bride prices are still substantial and usually amount to half of the capital wealth of the wife takers' households.

Only in a simultaneous marriage exchange *(məkhəy)* (10 per cent of all marriages in N. Tapper's and in my sample) bride price is totally omitted, but trousseau is given.

In patrilineal parallel first cousin marriages (FBD marriages) (12 per cent of my sample) bride price is between zero and 50 per cent of a full bride price. It is zero in the case when the bride's and groom's fathers (who are brothers in FBD marriages) have not yet separated their herds, but in such a case the bride's brothers will expect either a free bride at a later time or a substantial help from their uncle and sister's father while raising their own bride price.

The second kind of prestations is the trousseau. No manipulation is possible here because all items of the trousseau are publicly displayed at the wedding and their value is openly calculated by the guests. The trousseau consists (1) of home produced items such as carpets, blankets, bags, embroideries, and (2) of purchased items such as cooking utensils and fancy cloth, garments for bride and groom, and jewelry.

Whereas the bride price is pocketed by the bride's father the trousseau belongs to the young couple and is meant to be the basis of their new household. If the couple stays in the husband's father's tent the items of the trousseau, except for the garments, will be used by the whole household. But one day when the couple sets up its own tent they will demand equipment of the same value as they got as trousseau.

The third kind of prestation is the contribution of the bride groom's family for the wedding feast. The main part of the wedding takes place at the bride's household. The bride's family's task is to cook and to serve the guests (*khəzmat*), whereas the groom's side has to provide the fuel and the animals for slaughter (*khōshéy*). *Khōshéy* can amount to 10 per cent on top of the bride price.

After the wedding no more prestations are given, even not at *rites* de passage of the couple or its offspring. Affines and matrilaterals expect from each other occasional gifts and support but this is unstructured. However, within the family of the wife takers the raising of bride prices may have long after-effects, debts have to be repaid and future marriages are delayed if the family is stripped of too much of its assets.

For most families to raise the substantial bride price is a serious problem; only very rarely can they pay it from their own pocket or herd. For demographic reasons suitable partners for marriage exchange are rarely available, the same is true for FBD marriages and even if available there are also good reasons as I shall explain further down, why a FBD marriage may not be desirable.

The simplest way to raise a bride price is to marry off girls first, but it rarely works out like this. There are two strategies which are usually combined: (1) the bride groom works as shepherd for which he gets annually one tenth of the new born lambs and kids. If no catastrophes occur he has a realistic chance to earn a full bride price in only five years; (2) the bride groom and his father ask their agnates for loans. If earlier a relative had benefitted from a loan given by the groom's father he is obliged to pay it back at this occasion. Otherwise there are no norms regulating contributions to the bride price, but close agnates feel a moral obligation to contribute according to their means. All those contributions are considered as loans and must be paid back at the latest when the loan giver is busy raising a bride price for himself or his son. The groom's father's close affines are expected to contribute a gift, not loans. In this way a part of the bride price formerly given for the groom's mother may come back, but this is by no means an obligation and can thus not be considered a continued prestation. Following a Pashtun stereotype the motherbrother (*mama*) is the good, dear and loving uncle, accordingly he will contribute a substantial portion to his sister's son's bride price or wedding. But in practice much depends on

the friendly relations between the father and his wife's brother, in some cases young men didn't even know the whereabouts of their *mama*.

In Afghanistan I noticed the interpretation that high bride prices have a stabilizing effect on marriages: A man will think twice before he divorces or mistreats his wife when that means loosing the bride price he and his family had raised. In reality, divorces are unheard of among Pashtun nomads because they invariably bring shame on the husband and his family. The local under-standing of divorce is: A man is too weak to control his wife and to keep her from committing adultery. Instead of stabilizing marriages high bride prices may have rather a negative effect: They frequently cause gross imbalances in marriage age of women and men, the bride groom may be 30 until the bride price is completed, and only then can the wedding take place.

Before going into further detail I have to present some informations on the geographic and ethnographic background.

Ethnographic background

I deal with two different groups of Durrani Pashtun nomads and their relations to the sedentary world through affinal ties. The first group, here called "Jawand nomads" lives for the larger part of the year in the Jawand district of Badghis in Northwest Afghanistan (35°0' N. lat., 64°0' E. long.) on a grassy loess plain (ca. 1000 m alt.) north of the Paropamisus Mountains (Safed Koh). They spent the summer in Chaghcharan in Central Afghanistan. The other group, the "Shindand nomads", lives in winter and spring time in the Shindand district of Farah province, West Afghanistan, more precisely in the Dasht-e Shoraw (33°06' N. lat., 62°25'E. long., 1260 m alt.) some 15 km to the southeast of Shindand town. The Dasht-e Shoraw is an arid plain with *Artemisia siberi* (sage brush) as the characteristic plant.[5]

The Shindand nomads breed fat-tailed sheep and goats, and use camels for transportation. The main source of income is selling live animals (61 per cent of the total income), the second source is production of wool and dairy prod-ucts for the market (28.5 per cent); 5.9 per cent of the total income derives from selling steppe plants as fuel to villagers. From these sales they buy cereals from the villagers and clothes and household utensils from the bazaar. About two thirds of the total amount of pastoral production are sold and one third is consumed directly (measured by market value). This indicates a high depend-ence on economic exchange with the non-pastoral sector.[6] The Jawand nomads engage in some dry land agriculture as a secondary source of income if time and weather permit. As a result they are less dependent on trade with the sedentary farmers. Agricultural yields in Jawand are erratic, thus for security reasons the nomads have to maintain regular links with the villages too.[7]

Pasture rights can be summarized as follows: (a) In the lowlands (winter area) there is neither individual nor corporate ownership of pasture, except in the immediate vicinity of villages. Pastures are free for all as long as those who claim usufruct rights for a defined area do not appear with their animals on the scene. Reservation *in absentia* is not permitted. Usufruct rights can be obtained simply by using an area for several consecutive years. (b) In the highlands (summer area) the best pastures are under the control of the nearest villages who own the pastures corporately and rent them out to nomads on a seasonal basis. Nomads can acquire firm grazing rights by purchasing farm land, canals or wells in or adjacent to the pasture. This option is rarely used because the quality of a given pasture in the western Central Afghan highland may change from year to year and cannot be depended upon.[8]

The Pashtuns see themselves subdivided into a number of clans or tribes with an intricate pattern of subtribal ramifications. This system does not correspond to any territorial or political order in the steppes of West Afghanistan. Reviewing the results of the 1978 nomad census of Afghanistan Balland notes "l'absence absoluement générale chez les nomades d'Afghanistan de toute correspondance entre organisation tribale et organisation territoriale"[9].

One of the major genealogical branches are the Durrani-Pashtuns who formed a powerful tribal confederacy in the 17th and 18th century and established the Afghan kingdom which lasted till 1973, or till 1978 if one includes the "republican" rule of the Durrani prince Daud after he had dethroned his paternal cousin and father-in-law Zaher Shah.

Durrani constitute the majority of sedentary farmers and pastoral nomads in southwestern and western Afghanistan, and are significant minority groups in northwestern and northern Afghanistan. The Durrani subdivide themselves in innumerable named patrilineal descent groups, from the major Durrani tribes as the Alizay, Atsakzay, Barakzay, Is'haqzay, Nurzay, Popalzay etc. down to shallow lineages whose founders lived only a few generations ago. None of these descent units live together as socially and politically coherent groups. As social categories for orientation in an ever fluid society with little other structural elements they help to classify any other person in a huge area as relatively near or distant. They help to organize groups of solidarity in times of crisis and not least they provide one criterion for suitable marriages in a culture where social closeness and sameness (arab. *kuf*, *kafāʿ*) is considered a desirable prerequisite for good marriage relations.[10]

The Jawand nomads belong to the Durrani tribes Atsakzay[11] and Es'haqzay with a minority of Nurzay and non-Pashtun Timuri of the Kalasar tribe.[12] The Shindand nomads of this study belong exclusively to the Nurzay tribe, Badrzay and Milarzay subtribes. In 1815 Elphinstone described the Nurzay already as the dominant nomadic tribe in West Afghanistan.[13]

N. Tapper refers to the Durrani as an ethnic group separate from non-Durrani Pashtuns due to a feeling of superiority among the Durrani versus other Pashtuns. In the area of Tapper's research Durrani consider it shameful to marry off daughters to non-Durrani Pashtuns.[14] Further west in the areas of my field work the Durrani do not feel that way. They rather stress ethnic unity (*qawmi*) with other Pashtuns, even with the Ghilzay, their arch-rivals since centuries. Although Durrani-endogamy is preferred there is no norm against Durrani girls being married to other Pashtuns.[15]

Making groups

The nomads' active approach to their social environment is often stated in anthropological literature on nomads, perhaps it is no coincidence that Fredrik Barth developed his "*Models*" of people actively generating their social forms (Barth 1966) after studying the Basseri Nomads of Iran.[16]

Nomads spend a great deal of their time and energy in actively planning and creating the immediate groups they live in as well as in organizing the wider interacting circle of nomads *and* sedentaries. This became obvious to me during one of the first evenings I spent with Afghan nomads, when the greater part of the talks were about rearranging the composition of the camp, whom to accept as new camp mates, about the upper limits of camp size with respect to overgrazing and the lower limits with respects to security, whether the group should split and join other camps separately, how links with farmers could be improved when the spring rains had failed and a drought was imminent. Throughout my stay in Jawand as well as in Shindand there were almost daily talks about using, making and (re)arranging social ties within the nomads and links to the sedentary world.[17] Even the anthropologists' presence was seen within this frame: We had the approval of the Government for our research and once the Governor of Ghor visited us. Thus in hosting us the nomads saw a chance of improving their own relation to the state. At least as long as we were present the Government would not let them down, and relations with the world outside Afghanistan may also prove advantageous one day. In Jawand I was even offered a bride provided I would convert to Islam and I should even be exempted from paying bride price. At that time I interpreted this offer as a sort of verbal kindness or as a joke, but considering the nomads' preoccupation with establishing links with the outside world I am not that sure any-more.[18]

Nomad-sedentary relations

The literature on nomad-sedentary relations is abundant, therefore I shall only mention what is specific to the western Afghan nomads: They are not ethnically or tribally separated from a considerable and politically dominant sedentary population in the region. The state of Afghanistan adopted an explicitly positive attitude towards nomadism.[19] Among the Durrani to whom the majority of western Afghan nomads belong there are neither purely sedentary nor purely nomadic tribes. Movements between the nomadic and the sedentary spheres can thus take place neatly within the tribal framework.

Nomads consider close relations with farmers as a precondition for their own survival. As mentioned above pastoral nomadism is a specialized occupation and nomads need a market for their products (and consumers, viz. the villagers). Security is as important: they need protection from economic hazards as well as from violence. Nomadic economy is extremely risky. In good years when rains are plentiful, temperatures mild, the pastures lush, and nor diseases nor wolves decimate the animals, then pastoral economy can be extremely profitable, their income can grow beyond an agriculturalist's dreams, but if these favourable conditions fail pastoralists can loose their productive capital within a period of months and turn to beggars. During the severe draught between 1970 and 1972 thousands of people died and up to 70 per cent of West Afghanistan's livestock were lost.[20]

1976 was considered a "good" year by the nomads who had survived the catastrophe or who had recently taken up nomadism. But the possibility of a new disaster is never forgotten and precautions were to be taken. The precautions consist in a constant and active maintenance of close relations to sedentary farmers. Farmers can provide nomads with bread and their animals with fodder if something goes wrong in the steppes. They can protect their nomad friends in their villages if fighting breaks out, and most important, villages are a save haven for survival if nomads loose their animals and have to quit nomadism. Their farmer friends or relatives would provide them with a piece of land or offer them a modest income for labour until the impoverished nomads can rebuild their herds. As Ferdinand has pointed out, farmers are less dependent on these relations, they can do without nomads also.[21] They raise their own animals and often complain that they could raise more if the nomads would not occupy the best pastures. As a consequence nomads have to play the more active part in maintaining relations with farmers, they offer them services such as harvesting, transporting the farmers' crops on their camels to the market, fertilizing the fields by grazing the animals on the stubble fields, buying wheat and other agricultural products for cash, particularly straw which nobody else would buy. Thus in ordinary years farmers do appreciate good relations with nomads. The villagers around Shindand Town even arrange a feast for

"their" nomads (*ringéy*) once a year, but in times of crisis, when nomads have
no money and no goods to offer, nomad-farmer relations come under strain.
Then the nomads can only expect help from farmers if they share more than
economic interest. The best basis is always kinship *plus* marriage, or more
precisely: Only patrilineal, matrilateral and affinal relations in combination are
strong enough to secure assistance from villagers in times of severe need.

The ambiguities of patrilineal and of affinal relations

Patrilineal ties are considered the basis of all kinship relations. They provide
the reference system in which every Pashtun finds his place and which he uses
for acknowledging someone as close or near, even if they never met before.
The strength of the Pashtun patrilineal descent system, i.e. the Pashtun national
genealogy, is to give its 20 million members a guideline of social orientation.
The disadvantage of the system is, if everybody can claim patrilineal solidarity
from everybody the claim becomes rather weak. E.g. the Afghan-Soviet war
revealed that the Pashtuns were not able to form large military units on a tribal
basis and were generally less well organized than the Tajiks who lack unilineal
descent groups wider than a few villages.

Another weakness of Pashtun patrilineality is what eastern Pashtuns call
"*tarbúrwalí*" ("the way of male patrilateral parallel cousins"), an expression of
the ambivalence of patrilineal ties. It means that fatherbrothers' sons (FBS) on
the one hand are obliged by tribal law to exercise solidarity whenever threa-
tened from the outside, but on the other hand they tend to split and move away
considering each other as rivals and even "enemies" which is the second conno-
tation of *tarbur* ("patrilateral parallel cousin"). The Pashtun ideal is a large
patriarchal extended family forming one household. Such a household
invariably splits and falls apart when the grandsons of the founder are grown
up and plan to set-up their own households. These grandsons, FBS (*tarbur*) to
each other, are considered the culprits when separation and disunity occur.
Young men under one tent roof may extend and prolong any quarrel among
them on purpose to such an extent that even the old guardians of unity will
agree to their separation for the benefit of peace in the community. In Pashtu
separation has a strong semantic affinity to enmity, hence *tarbur* = "enemy".
There is a second reason of strained relations between FBS: Quarrels about
inheritance and authority among Ego's father and father's brothers are often
not solved and passed on to Ego's generation and may grow then to open con-
flicts when the common grandfather is too old to hold the group together
through his authority.[22]

A person present would never be addressed or referred to as *tarbur* because
this would be offending. Instead the analytical term *akázuy* ("son of paternal

uncle") is used. Among the nomads of my study the term *tarbur* is more often used in its plural form *tarbrúna* referring to the group of tribal relatives to whom one is attached and bound and to whom one has responsibilities, but who may not be fully trusted, who may misuse one's solidarity for their own benefit, in short, people who one prefers to stay at a distance. But any agnates or tribal relatives to whom one wishes to express closeness and affection are called *akázamun* (plural of *akazuy*).[23] This is corroborated by the terms of address for people who are patrilateral as well as matrilateral kin. Due to frequent lineage endogamy this is quite common. Relatives of the older generation are addressed by patrilineal terms (e.g. *aka* "paternal uncle") in order to express respect, while for relatives of the same generation matrilateral or cognatic terms are preferred (e.g. *mamázuy* "son of maternal uncle" or *bache-khalá* "son of maternal aunt").

In times of need the Pashtun patrilineal descent system does not create solidarity bonds strong and dependable enough to hold and protect nomad households from falling out of their pastoral existence.[24] As a consequence, to enhance one's social network means to concentrate on strengthening non-agnatic relations. In this respect arranging marriages plays a central role in the social activities and strategies of the groups under study.

Another feature of Pashtun social relations has to be outlined here. Whereas patrilineal ties are lasting and stable (even if a man acts hostile towards his agnates), affinal and matrilateral ties have a tendency to weaken and to fade out over time. Affinal ties that prove to be advantageous and successful have to be maintained and supported actively by both sides, e.g. through regular visits and economic transactions. When both affines produce different types of goods they will barter their products. Nomads will invite each other to join camps and herding units, offer each other grazing opportunities and surplus animals. However, if the relationship is to continue effectively successive marriages have to be arranged. Such consecutive marriages will lead only to harmonious relations if reciprocity is observed, i.e. if the balance of bride-giving and bride-taking between the two affinal sides is roughly balanced. Synchronous exchange marriages (*makhay*) may best serve the purpose but for obvious demographic reasons they are rare. Exchanges are rather protracted over the years and repeated.

Most authors on Middle Eastern and Muslim South Asian marriages state that the wife givers are considered to be in a weaker position and are in danger of loosing status versus the wife takers. The Pashtun nomads under study do not feel that one marriage can cause a serious imbalance in status for it may be a start or part of a protracted marriage exchange. Only if a tendency becomes visible over a long period of time that family A gives more wives to B than it receives from B, people will interpret this as a sign of A's weakness and lower status. Neighbours will comment that A is not strong enough to demand women

from B who received their daughters and that B does not recognize A as their equals.

In short, affinal relations, and (in the next generation) matrilateral relations need *active* and *repeated* inputs from the actors whereas patrilineal relations are considered as given, whether maintained or neglected.

Marriage choices and bride price

Under these circumstances Durrani nomads make full use of the Islamic freedom of marriage choices, i.e. there is no rule of exogamy. Pashtuns observe a strong taboo only on ethnic hypogamy.[25] The absence of rules of lineage exogamy, which is rare among non-Muslims, leads to a preference of patrilateral parallel cousin marriages in many Muslim societies. As literature on this topic is abundant[26] it is sufficient to state here that patrilateral parallel cousin marriage among Durranis is just one of many choices parents have to find suitable spouses for their children. Although 7 out of 51 marriages among Pashtun nomads in Jawand, and 5 out of 48 marriages among Shindand nomads were FBD marriages my informants did express no clear and unanimous preference for this type of marriage and considered all four types of cousin marriages as equally "good". Only when fathers think of marrying off their daughters their first choice can be their brother's son because a paternal uncle is supposed to have control over his son-in-law and thus over the well-being of his daughter. At least a paternal uncle would not loose contact with his brothers' sons and their families. The disadvantage for the bride's father is that he will get only half of a full bride price. Although the bride groom's side has an economic advantage the prospective groom's father, and most outspoken, the young men, expressed a dislike for FBD marriage, as my own opinion poll among Jawand and Shindand nomads revealed.

Mothers have an important say in marriage arrangements and prefer their own kin as spouses for their children. Fathers of future bride grooms have more often strategic considerations in mind (improving ties with such and such) than fathers of prospective brides who are more concerned about their daughter's fate and their own honour and prestige.

During this opinion poll respondents frequently critisized the institution of bride price, even when on the receiver's side. I often noticed sentences like this:" It's a shame, we nomads sell our daughters as we sell our livestock". When asked why they do so, the answer was like this: "What can we do? I would like to give my daughter for free to a family and a boy I like, but people would ridicule at me. They would say my daughter and my house isn't worth anything, everybody can take away my belongings for nothing."[27]

Conclusion

As elsewhere, the well-being of a future couple and personal likes or dislikes are not the sole and not even the main point in establishing marriages. In West Afghanistan marriages are rather wide ranging contracts between families and groups comprising a whole bundle of mutual social bonds and obligations. Not only brides are transferred and new nuclear families set up, but legal rights and moral obligations concerning human and material resources are transferred too, and matters of honour and social status of the families involved and of local peace are at stake.

Marriage ties do not create new relations where no previous ties existed.[28] Nobody would give his daughter to a stranger, but affinal links, if successful, will alter qualitatively the social network on which they are founded: friendships and economic relations between nomads and farmers will turn into structured and committing bonds; mutual obligations and solidarity will be added to clientships; the legal skeleton of Pashtun patrilineal structure will be turned into a dependable social network. Among Pashtun nomads the transfer of brides and the setting up of new nuclear families alone does not give new affinal relations weight enough to change the quality of pre-existing social relations. Transactions of substantial material weight and economic significance have to be added in order to transform friendships, economic relations, and patrilineal structures into bonds of *Gemeinschaft*.

Notes

1   Nancy Tapper's comprehensive monograph on marriage relations of the same ethnic group is one of the bases of this article: N. Tapper, Bartered Brides: Politics, Gender, and Marriage in an Afghan Tribal Society, Cambridge 1991. While Nancy and Richard Tapper conducted field work in 1970-72 among formerly nomadic Durrani Pashtuns in the Sar-e Pul region of North Afghanistan, I stayed at the same time in Badghis, a few 100 km further west with Durrani Pashtun nomads who were engaged in agriculture only to a small extent. In 1975-77 I continued field work, together with Michael Casimir, among fully nomadic Durrani in Farah/West Afghanistan. The forefathers and -mothers of the Tappers' and my informants immigrated as nomads at the end of the last century from the area around Kandahar to their present homes (cf. Nancy Tapper, The Advent of Pashtūn *Māldārs* in Northwestern Afghanistan. In: Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 36 (1973) 1, pp. 55-79). A comparison of N. Tapper's book and my field data shows that within three generations without communication the different positions on the nomad-sedentary scale led to a remarkable difference in political structure and marriage relations.

2   Cf. Nancy Tapper, Bartered Brides: Politics, Gender, and Marriage in an Afghan
       Tribal Society, Cambridge 1991.
3   The figures of Jawand and Shindand are comparable because there was no substantial
       inflation. The prices for sheep in early 1970 and in 1976 were equal, although N.
       Tapper gives different figures (Bartered Brides..., loc. cit., p. 142). The discrepancy
       between her and my figures derives from the big drought of 1970-72 the effects of
       which set in during the second half of 1970 and led to a sharp fall in sheep prices. In
       summer 1971 in Jawand meat was cheaper than the same weight of wheat.
4   Cf. Bernt Glatzer/M.J. Casimir, Herds and Households among Pashtun Pastoral
       Nomads: Limits of Growth. In: Ethnology, 22 (1983) 4, pp. 307-325.
5   For more on the ecology of this area see M. J. Casimir/R. P. Winter/B. Glatzer,
       Nomads and Remote Sensing: Animal Husbandry and the Sage-Brush Community in
       a Winter Area of Nomads in Western Afghanistan. In: Journal of Arid Environment,
       3 (1980) 1, pp. 231-254.
6   For a detailed description and analysis of the household economy of this group see B.
       Glatzer/M. J. Casimir, Herds and Households Among Pashtun Pastoral Nomads:
       Limits of Growth. In: Ethnology, 22 (1983) 4, pp. 307-325.
7   More ethnographic details on the Jawand nomads in: B. Glatzer, Nomaden von
       Gharjistan: Aspekte der wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und politischen Organisation
       nomadischer Durrani-Paschtunen in Nordwestafghanistan, Wiesbaden 1977.
8   Territoriality and pasture rights of this nomad group are dealt with in detail in
       B. Glatzer, Pastoral Territoriality in West Afghanistan: An Organization of
       Flexibility. In: Michael J. Casimir/Aparna Rao (eds.), Mobility and Territoriality:
       Social and Spacial Boundaries among Fishers, Pastoralists and Peripatetics, New York-
       Oxford 1992, pp. 293-306.
9   M. Daniel Balland, Contraintes écologiques et fluctuations historiques dans
       l'organisation territoriale des nomades d'Afghanistan. In: Production Pastorale et
       Société, 11 (1982), p. 63.
10   This explains neither the existence nor the form of the very elaborate Durrani tribal
       system. In former times its significance might have been quite different as it is today
       among Pashtuns in other areas. Cf. Jon W. Anderson, Tribe and Community Among
       the Ghilzai Pashtun. In: Anthropos, 70 (1975) 1-2, pp. 575-601; J. W. Anderson, Doing
       Pakhtu: Social Organization of the Ghilzay Pakhtun, unpubl. Diss., Chapel Hill 1979
       (mimeo); Asger Christensen, The Pashtuns of Kunar: Tribe, Class, and Community
       Organization. In: Afghanistan Journal, 7 (1980) 3, pp. 79-91; Asger Christensen,
       Organization, Variation, and Transformation in Pukhtun Society. Review Article
       [about A. S. Ahmed: Pukhtun Economy and Society, London 1980]. In: Ethnos,
       46 (1981) 1, pp. 96-108; Jeffrey H. P. Evans-von Krbek, The Social Structure and
       Organization of a Pakhtu Speaking Community in Afghanistan, Ph. D. thesis,
       Durham 1977.
11   In the literature they are often named Achikzai which is alien to western Pashtu
       phonetics.
12   The Timuri are a Persian speaking predominantly nomadic ethnic group along both
       sides of the Iranian-Afghan border. Their political centres in Afghanistan are in
       Gulran and Herat. They use the same tent type as the Durrani nomads and show a
       marked cultural and social assimilation towards Durrani nomads.
13   Mountstuart Elphinstone, An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul, London 1815.
14   N. Tapper, Bartered Brides..., loc. cit.

15   For more on the ethnography, geography and history of Durrani Pashtun nomads and
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      Tavakolian, Women and Socioeconomic Change Among Sheikhanzai Nomads of
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      Tavakolian, Sheikhanzai Women: Sisters, Mothers and Wives. In: Ethnos, 52 (1987) 1-
      2, pp. 180-199; B. Glatzer, Nomden von Gharjistan..., loc. cit.
16   Fredrik Barth, Models of Social Organization (= Roy. Anthrop. Inst. of Gr. Britain
      and Ireland, Occ. Papers 23), London 1966.
17   Elsewhere I have dealt in detail with the formation and rearrangements of camp
      groups: B. Glatzer, Dynamics of Camp Formation among Pashtun Nomads in West
      Afghanistan. In: D. Balland/J-R. Pitte (eds.), Mélanges offerts au Professeur X. de
      Planhol (forthcoming).
18   During the first period of field work I was accompanied by Ute Glatzer and the
      Afghan counterpart Bayazid Atsak, during the second I worked in a team with
      Michael Casimir and four consecutive Afghan counterparts: M. Saber, H. Hedaya-
      tullah, M. Asadullah, M. Azim Safi.
19   In 1970 Afghanistan promulgated a pasture law for all the steppe areas in the country
      (ca. 60 per cent of Afghanistan's surface) which was totally in favour of the nomads.
      (a German translation of the Persian text in B. Glatzer, Nomaden von Gharjistan...,
      loc. cit.).
20   Mir Aga et al., The Effect of the Last Two Consecutive Years' Drought on Livestock
      Growers in the Seven Drought Stricken Provinces of Afghanistan. Paper of Kabul
      University Research Foundation and USAID, Kabul 1973; Michael Barry, Western
      Afghanistan's Outback. Report, USAID/Afghanistan, Kabul 1972.
21   K. Ferdinand, Aspects..., loc. cit.
22   Cf. Asger Christensen, Agnates, Affines and Allies: Patterns of Marriage Among
      Pakhtuns in Kunar (Northeast Afghanistan). In: Folk, 24 (1982), pp. 29-63.

23   N. Tapper mentions only the term *akazuy* and states that the hostile aspect of FBS is
      not a feature of the groups she studied (N. Tapper, Bartered Brides..., loc. cit, p. 93).
      Among the nomadic Durrani I found *tarbúrwali* weaker than among Eastern Pashtuns
      but the ambivalence of agnatic cousin relations and the difference of the terms *tarbúr*
      and *akázuy* were noticeable.

24   The worst fate my informants could think of is to be forced to beg from a landed
      khan support and charity. The *khan* would allow the desperate household to squat in
      the shade of his castle and would use the menfolk as serfs and the women for
      whatever he pleases. This would mean to give up all self-respect and Pashtunness
      (Pashtu).

25   Pashtuns believe of themselves to occupy the highest rank among all other ethnic
      groups with the only exceptions of descendants of the Prophet's family and clan, even
      Hazara Sayyids do not qualify as equals. Exceptions are noticeable but lead either to
      social disruptions (cf. N. Tapper, Bartered Brides..., loc. cit.) or need lengthy
      justifications. The ban on ethnic hypogamy must not be confused with ethnic
      endogamy because marrying non-Pashtun women is accepted. In contrast to this,
      Kunar is an example of frequent bilateral ethnic exogamy (A. Christensen, Agnates...,
      loc. cit.).

26   I tried an interpretation myself (Glatzer, Nomaden von Gharjistan..., loc. cit., pp. 145-
      154).

27   During the time of my field research a new law abolishing bride price and limiting
      expenses for wedding feasts was promulgated in Kabul. My informants knew about
      it and commented it positively, but presumed that the Government would not be
      strong enough to do away with the powerful institution of bride price.

28   "Pakhtun marriage does not create alliance, it is alliance that creates marriage..." (A.
      Christensen, Agnates..., loc. cit., p. 37; cf. also R. Murphy/L. Kasdan, The Structure
      of Parallel Cousin Marriage. In: P. Bohannan/J. Middleton (eds.), Marriage, Family,
      and Residence (American Sourcebook in Anthropology), Garden City 1969.

Workers' Misery - Workers' Culture. Approaches to the Study of the Way of Life of Industrial Workers in Colonial India

Annemarie Hafner

According to a bon mot authored by the British historian Erik Stokes, the 1970s witnessed "the return of the peasant to South Asian history"[1]. If one draws a parallel to the position occupied by the urban labouring classes in Indian historiography it would be justifiable to state that they have remained largely in exile.[2]

Presently there is a strong trend among social scientists dealing with India to include aspects of culture into their research. This trend has become relevant also for labour history. Until now, however, the issue of "workers' culture" in colonial Indian society has hardly been taken up. Sumit Sarkar stated about a decade ago that "an area of silence relates to the vast and virtually unexplored terrain of forms of popular consciousness and culture" and he deplored "the absence of genuine social history" in India.[3] The same author a short while ago reiterated his earlier statement by remarking that in recent years the most impressive kind of historical scholarship abroad "has focused precisely on the realms neglected earlier: the study of forms of consciousness, 'culture' or 'mentalities'." And he added: "'Social history' in this sense is just beginning in India..."[4]

A remark on methodology and the subject of research

In fact, in the more recent past several branches of historical research have to some extent taken up cultural aspects while investigating the society of colonial India. Credit is due in this respect for instance to urban history which experienced a remarkable upsurge in India during the last decade. At the same time, the culture of the "lower classes" has been identified as a hitherto neglected field of research and a call was made to fill the lacunae.[5] Since quite some time the so-called Subaltern Studies demanded and initiated a new approach to the history of the labour movement which hitherto largely focused on its organisa-tions. Instead, they turned towards the labourers themselves in order to find out the causes and conditions for the emergence of social movements in an urban-industrial milieu. Dipesh Chakravarty provided an excellent example with his monograph "Rethinking Working-Class History. Bengal 1890-1940" (Delhi 1989), which simultaneously initiated a new trend and provoked

counter-arguments. Last but not least, the newly emerging but because of its results already rather impressive branch of the "gender history" has highlighted the cultural context.

All these specialized fields of historical research subscribe to a broad perception of culture which has also widely been accepted by the German historiography especially in the literature on the working class.[6] Whether the respective author draws from the tradition of the British social history or attempts to emulate the French Annales-School in each case culture is perceived as "a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour"[7].

The present paper also takes as its point of departure the above described socially determined and anthropologically influenced conception of culture. That means, "workers' culture" is perceived as the totality of the way of life of workers. The subject of research comprises primarily the life-style of workers, the norms of behaviour characteristic of this particular group, values and institutions which influence both their own social life as well as their relations with other classes and strata. This theoretical approach includes "workers' culture" in a specific sense, that is the creative contributions by workers themselves to areas of the arts, like poetry, theatre, etc.

I am conscious of the critical arguments raised against the construct "workers' culture as way of life" as a means and high ideal to comprehend the totality of the lives of workers. The concept has been blamed to be arbitrary, to interlink indiscriminately elements of diverse nature. According to this critical approach, history of everyday life consists only in an endless diversity of colourful details. It has further been pointed out that such history is only descriptive and would be unable to reflect contradictory interests. The history of daily life is being blamed of neglecting economic development and political power configurations - the major subjects of historiography. Alf Lüdtke has argued convincingly against such a reductionist view. Elaborating the interrelationship between daily-life studies and the objectives of historiography, he rejected the blame of depolitisation of social history by reconstructing the everyday reality. According to him the particular profile of everyday history consists in the attempt "to reveal - to explain and to demonstrate - the contradictory nature and asynchronic occurrence of modes of production as well as production relations in the way of life of those concerned." In this way, everyday life is interpreted against the background of economic development. Secondly, he contends that politics penetrates daily life, that there is an "everyday policy" (alltägliche Politik) which is part of life at home and in the workplace.[8]

Let us address the labour history of India. What has been achieved in this field and where are still "blank spots"? This field of research can doubtlessly

boast of a considerable number of original and ingenious investigations. Indian scholars working on the subject contributed substantially to a deeper under-standing of the history of modern India. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya emphasized this aspect already in 1982 in his presidential address to the Modern History section of the Indian History Congress.[9]

There is a considerable body of literature on the trade union movement from the angle of organisational history. Questions relating to the colonial labour market like migration and recruitment of the labour force including their impact on the composition of the working class have attracted the atten-tion of researchers. Finally, several publications are available which deal with the specificities of labour and its movement in particular branches of industry or in particular regions of the country. They contributed to a better understand-ing of the structure as well as of the socioeconomic conditions of wage labour and they analysed the complex interrelationship between the local protest of workers and the overarching national politics.

Naturally, issues pertaining to the relations between class and culture have been touched upon in the publications mentioned, and more recently to an increasing degree. I do not wish to create the impression that this paper is meant to inaugurate an entirely new phase of historical research. Its purpose is more modest: I intend to single out a particular and central issue of class formation and class manifestation which has been a booming subject of re-search in the historiography of European countries in recent years but which has hitherto been largely neglected in regard to South Asia.

To point out one example. Urban identity and mentality of the colonial industrial proletariat has so far not been recognized as a problem in its own right but received scanty treatment only within the wider scope of the above mentioned themes. In this context the focus was mainly on the role and degree of the continuing links to caste or to a religious, respectively an ethno-national community, and how the specific features attributed to these social institutions influenced the evolution of the class consciousness or the sociopolitical beha-viour of the workers. The results achieved by such investigations contributed significantly to overcoming prevailing stereotypes in the field of labour history. Scrupulously documented research papers testified to the co-existence of so-called class determined consciousness on the one hand, and of so-called ethnic sentiments or community consciousness[10] among in-dustrial workers. Accord-ing to older views such attitudes should have excluded each other. In this context also the idea of so-called false consciousness was rejected. Today there is hardly any questioning the fact that "the teleological notion of a 'working class' consciousness that negates all other forms of consciousness for the worker is not observable in history"[11].

The socioeconomic profile of the industrial proletariat in colonial India

The emergence of the workers' culture in India took place within the perimeters of a society which underwent changes of its traditional features caused by the implantation of capitalist forms of production by the metropolitan country, as well as by the colonial superstructure. In the course of about a century a stable proletariat came into being. It contributed but a small share to the total size of the working population: about 1.5 per cent in 1910, and 3.1 per cent in 1941, with an increasing number of factory workers from 316,000 in 1891 to 1,751,000 in 1939.[12]

The rise of industrial labour to permanency can be convincingly proved. Apart from contemporary enquiries made into the duration of working life in various branches of industry also subsequent reports of commissions and committees enquiring into labour questions provide conclusive evidence.

Two major reports are of particular relevance. First, the assessment made by the Indian Factory Labour Commission in 1908, and second, the statement by the Labour Investigation Committee in 1946. The first-mentioned report said:

> "The habits of the Indian factory operative are determined by the fact that he is primarily an agriculturist, or a labourer on the land ... his home is in the village from which he comes, not in the city in which he labours... There is yet practically no factory population, such as exists in European countries, consisting of a large number of operatives trained from their youth to one particular class of work, and dependent upon employment at that work for their livelihood."

But at that time already a trend toward permanency became discernible. The report stated:

> "...there are some indications that a class of factory operatives, detached from agriculture and village life, and depending largely or solely upon industrial employment, is beginning to be formed."[13]

The trend got stabilised during the subsequent decades. Although that strata of labourers who had severed their relations with the village and considered the urban environment as their home still constituted only a small section of the entire workforce it made up a comparatively numerous group in the centres of textile industry. The assessment given by the above mentioned Committee of 1946 differs substantially from the one made by its predecessor. It stated:

> "In recent years ... there has been a greater concentration of the working-class population in industrial areas and this has led to a rise of an industrial proletariat in most cities, which is prepared to stick to the town to a greater extent than before, to fight for its legitimate rights, and to seek its livelihood in urban rather than rural areas."[14]

The industrial workers to be were drawn mainly from three layers of the rural population: The largest share was contributed by members of the lower strata of the peasantry, mostly tenants, who were unable to bear the increasing economic pressure resulting from the expanding commercialisation of agriculture. A second and numerically smaller group consisted of members of lower service castes and Untouchables who were traditionally excluded from landed property. Thirdly, there were the successors of urban artisans who had been pushed out of the towns already under the rule of the East-India Company, as well as rural artisans who could not stand the competition of cheaper industrially made goods and got ruined.

Among the aspects of the proletarian way of life in colonial India the peculiar and close links of the industrial workers to the village have been the most disputed phenomenon. Government officials as well as social scientists offered different interpretations, stressing socioeconomic as well as sociopsychological features. Some observers singled out the unbearable working and living conditions in the towns as the main reason. Low wages and insecure jobs were the main causes which compelled most of the migrants to maintain their relations with the village as a second source of securing their livelihood. Others stressed psychological factors. The Indian worker was said to be fond of change, or - as the contrary view had it - he was conservative and a peasant at heart.

It makes, no doubt, sense to assume that villagers who accepted a job in industry continued to nourish the hope that they would be able one day to leave the urban environment for good and to become proprietor of a piece of land of their own.[15] Could an individual living in a predominantly agrarian society feel otherwise? What was the dream dreamt by a labourer who did not know any job security, who could not have his family with him and could not afford to get his children educated, and who was himself denied the chance of any professional promotion in the factory?[16] The actual cause of history does, however, not support an interpretation which points out the rural links of the industrial labourer as a characteristic of the early stage of industrial evolution and reads it as a gradually advancing introduction of the former peasant into modern working conditions.

The complaints made by managers and colonial officials about the frequent absence of workers led to a wrong interpretation of the latters ties to the village and resulted in an idyllic notion of a worker-cum-peasant existence whose parts were easily interchangeable. Investigations, however, proved that only a few of the urban workers drew an income from agriculture. The majority of them were themselves no longer owners of land but maintained merely an indirect relationship to the soil through their relatives in the villages who either owned the land or cultivated it.[17] The periodical return of the urban labourer to the countryside or, respectively, his permanent links to the village, provided a handy argument for the colonial administration as well as for the foreign and

local entrepreneurs to defend their low wage policy. Pointing out the role of
the village as a "social security net" the authors of the reports gave a positive
assessment of the continued ties of the industrial proletariat to the land. They
recommended not to undermine these links but to reinforce and possibly to
regulate them.[18]

Today it has become commonly accepted that the persisting relations of the
industrial workers with the village constituted a mechanism for survival which
grew out of the colonial capitalist production relations. On the one hand, the
wages received by the workers did not guarantee the perpetuation of the labour
force, that is the replacement of worn-out labour by a new generation. It was
just sufficient to maintain them as individuals. That is, why their families
usually stayed back in the village. On the other hand, the village was burdened
with a share in the reproduction of the labour force employed in industry, that
is the labourer was forced to return to the village when he grew old, was unfit
to work, fell sick or became unemployed. Commuting between village and city
was a characteristic feature of a proletarian's life in colonial India, irrespective
of the frequency of such journeys to the native village. The visits were mainly
made during the harvest season. But work in the field did not constitute the
main reason. Their visit to the village was primarily meant to meet relatives
and friends, to participate in marriages and festivals.[19] Because of such reasons
the periodic stays in the village also reflected "a strong emotional attachment
and sense of belonging to the kin group back home", as Chitra Joshi argued
while describing the social milieu of the textile workers in colonial Kanpur.[20]
The participation in religious practices on occasion of birth, marriages or death
rituals kept the age-old outlook and world-view in the minds of the urban
workers alive and thereby simultaneously supported the perpetuation of so-
called primordial loyalties.

Work Culture

What about the so-called "love for work" attributed to the labouring classes of
the industrially advanced countries? Obviously, this is not an inherent quality.
More than a century ago the Creole physician Paul Lafargue diagnosed it as
"strange madness"[21].

One approach to the implications of the evolution of the capacity for indus-
trial work and of industrial work culture advances from the premise that the
development of work capacity can not be reduced merely to the process of
industrial production. The issue should be comprehended as a component of
the complex transformatory process of the ways of life. Viewed in this context
the emergence of an industrial work culture manifests itself as a multidimen-
sional subject. It can not be narrowed down to the common notion of a disci-

plining entrepreneur who enjoys support from the state machinery. The submission of individuals to industrial work cannot be separated from the restructuring of the entire life-world of the wage labourers. The emergence of a work culture can be perceived only as a result of the active response of the individuals to their given societal preconditions, through the analysis of the conditions of reproduction but also of the forms of organisation, of the intellectual and emotional attitudes under the constraints of industrial work.

We come across a recurring theme on many studies on labour in India. It is the topic of how India differs from the West. Such studies emphasize the persistence of pre-industrial work values, social institutions, community and rural ties in India. The West, in contrast, as is stated, represents a different picture: Here a rapid cultural transformation produced an industrial work culture. Recent studies conducted in America and Europe, however, undermined the widespread opinion accord-ing to which in those regions work habits and work discipline would have emerged in a lineal fashion and irreversibly. The actual picture is a much more complex one.

The study of industrial work experience in colonial India permits to identify three major determinants: 1. the disciplinary norms which managers sought to impose; 2. the agencies of control which organised the routine of work processes; 3. the redefinition of rules by workers, the behaviour of the workers themselves which reflected their perception of time and discipline.

There has always been a large and many-voiced chorus of those who complained the inefficiency or even sluggishness of Indian workers. It comprised both colonial administrators as well as managers of industrial enterprises. Lacking economic efficiency has been primarily traced to missing work motivation. This, in turn was attributed to unwillingness or incompetence of the toiling people. Such ideas circumvented the fact that industrial work capacity presupposes the capability to satisfy the new requirements - that is qualities which may appear natural after several generations of industrial development.

The issues of productivity, discipline and the general attitude of workers in industrial enterprises were publicly debated from various points of view. From the very beginning the Indian industrial worker was labelled as inefficient or as one who carelessly accomplished his tasks. He was said to be incapable of prolonged and intense effort, taking his meals during the working hours, going to sleep during the midday recess and frequently deserting his place of work in order to smoke, to wash himself, etc. The Report of the Factory Commission of 1908 stated:

> "His natural inclination is to spread the work he has to do over a long period of time, working in a leisurely manner throughout, and taking intervals of rest whenever he feels disinclined for further exertion."[22]

As late as 1930, the Royal Commission on Labour in India claimed that the Indian worker "prefers a long working day with lax discipline to a shorter day with strict discipline"[23]. Against such assertions it may be argued that since the late nineteenth century workers demanded shorter working hours with strictly regulated breaks and granting of free days in meetings, through petitions and strikes.[24]

Discipline was a topic which attracted the main attention of the managers. They introduced rules ment to secure the presence and punctuality of the workers. Such rules constituted part of their strategy to create a so-called committed workforce. Fines imposed for lateness and absence served as means to teach workers punctuality and reliability. Two-days pay was deducted for a day's absence.[25]

Such was the practice particularly in the early years of industrial development. Later, with an increase in the influx of labour to the city, warning notes, dismissals, and "forced leave" became more common. Holding back of wages which were, as a rule, paid only 4 to 6 weeks after the job was done, was meant to prevent the workers from staying away from work or from deserting the work place.

Fines were also a mode of regulating the quality of work. Faulty produce, spoilt material or an output lower than the minimum specified were punished by wage deductions.[26] The categories "bad work" and "improper behaviour" were rather arbitrary and permitted all kinds of interpretations. They should help to suppress any form of resistance by the workers against insults, beatings, etc. During the thirties there were frequent instances when strike leaders were charged of "bad work". This could lead to dismissals.[27]

The rules regarding the behaviour inside the factories were much more comprehensive than indicated above. Of comparable significance for the organisation of the work process and the implementation of work discipline was the role played by the foreman, or the jobber, as he was called in colonial India.

His authoritarian function deserves a more detailed analyses.[28] Finally the question has to be raised how far the management policy affected the traditional behaviour of the workers. To what extent, for instance, were caste differences intentionally used in order to separate groups of workers from each other or to antagonise them?[29] More details would be beyond the scope of this paper.

How did the labourers respond to the requirements of factory work? By entering the factory the labourer was compelled to suddenly and radically change his cycle of work and leisure time which was adapted to agricultural requirements. Now he was ruled by the sound of the factory sirene and the machine.

For decades the conditions in Indian industries were characterised by excessive working hours and low wages. It was an accepted principle "to substitute

labor for capital wherever possible"[30]. During the last decades of the nine-teenth century work in Indian factories lasted from dawn to dusk. When electric lightening was introduced after the turn of the century the working day frequently extended upto 14 or even 16 hours. No doubt, there were some causal connections between the duration of working hours and the work discipline. The question of efficiency evoked interest only when the colonial regime introduced legislation in 1911 to limit the hours of work of operatives to 11 a day, with a half-hour rest. Although this step can be seen partly as a response to the Lancashire mill-owners' anxiety to curb the seemingly advantages of their Indian competitors, the further shortening of the working day in the subsequent decades was also at least partly due to the increasing number of strikes.

Put in between coercion and resistance the industrial workers developed their work behaviour. They reacted on the issue of wages, when the management im-posed unjustifiable fines or they voiced their annoyance regarding the long working day. New recruits who found work intolerable sometimes left in the course of the first six months. They shifted to other branches or regions, hoping to find better working conditions.

From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, short-term work stoppages of labourers' gangs or factory departments were forms of protest.[31] On frequent occasions no complaints or definite demands were formulated, no grievances stated and no indications of misgivings became visible, until suddenly the operatives left work in a body, or more commonly individual workers left their place without giving an explanation.[32] The forms of protest very much depended on how the individual adjusted himself and his work capacity to the requirements of the 12 to 15 hours working day. He took some time off from work for a smoke or to drink water. The predominant form of resistance against the disciplinary rules imposed by the management consisted in the so-called absenteeism. This included short-time illegal absence from the work place, for instance visit to the toilet or a chat with the co-workers, but also the long-term absence because of the participation in family or religious festivals. Also loitering during the working hours or the intentional production of low quality goods were means of resistance of the workers against the continuous attempts of the manager to increase the work load. Such manifestations of protest have recently been selected as topics by social historians in connection with investigations into everyday forms of resistance. New interpretations have been offered.[33]

Everyday life

Some urban settlements developed a new socioecological profile during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in connection with their economic

role. They emerged as modern industrial and trade centres and became the habitat for the larger part of the Indian industrial proletariat which sold its labour to the ports, the railways or the factories. Bombay, Calcutta and a few other cities experienced the emergence of industrial and labour quarters, equipped with a specific urban-proletarian milieu and an accompanying life-style, on comparatively distinct geographical areas. These were the cradles of the Indian workers' culture. Although there was no uniform workers' culture in colonial India - considering the job differences of factory- and port-workers, of miners and railwaymen as well as the ethno-national diversity of the country - the task consists in identifying elements of a group culture which overarch the professional, religious and regional peculiarities.

There is good reason to underline the assessment that "the nature of sociali-sation in a society is a crucial element in the making of cultural perspectives and identities"[34]. In pre-colonial India socialisation occurred primarily within the family, which was chiefly responsible for transmitting religious and caste traditions from one generation to the next. In colonial India this situation did not change fundamentally but only sporadically, in spite of the introduction of a secular school education and the increased possibilities for participation in public life. "Even in the 'emergent' culture of the English educated middle class, forms of 'residual' culture were quite prominently present," K.N. Panikkar stated while referring to the theory of culture established by Raymond Willi-ams.[35] The overwhelming majority of the toiling classes remained confined to the traditional cultural milieu although the process of socialisation of the workers in an urban-industrial climate modified the nature of their social relations as also their behaviour in public life.

The emerging matrix of interrelations in the cities which comprised both the sphere of work as well as the private sphere was determined by circumstances which tended to preserve the traditional structures and modes of behaviour. This is no new discovery. But again and again endeavours are made to find out the reasons. The question has been posed why the industrial development did not bring about a "modernizing effect" which caused a comprehensive trans-formation of society. Doubts have also been expressed on whether social scientists attached exaggerated expectations to modernity and to its potential to homogenize erstwhile traditional societies at the national as well as the global level.[36]

The contemporary historiographic literature usually explains the persistence of the so-called ethnic or community consciousness by referring to the peculia-rities of the labour market in colonial India. The crucial aspects obviously consisted in the mode of recruitment of labour and in the continuing close relations of the urban industrial workers with their native village. Most of the labour historians put the responsibility on the jobber[37] - the middleman bet-ween worker and manager - who recruited and treated the workers according

to their ethnic origin and, thereby, created a basis for the continuation of the so-called primordial loyalties. They selected the labourers according to their regional, caste or kinship affiliation. As a result, comparatively homogeneous social structures emerged at the lowest level of production. At the same time, the social and family net-work as well as the caste solidarity which was instrumental in providing access to industrial jobs played a strategic role, and, thereby, perpetuated the traditional segregation.[38]

The industrial centres did not become the big "melting pots" of cultures. But the constraints of joint work in the factories and of urban living modified the rigid caste boundaries and minimized the worst forms of discrimination to which the Untouchables were exposed in the villages.[39] And yet: The trend to segregate the different communities in the private sphere remained. The spatial arrangement of the living quarters followed a general pattern: There was a separation of Hindus and Muslims, and there was a separation of Hindus from higher and from lower castes. There is another aspect. The behaviour of the workers on the shop floor which to some extent deviated from the stipulated caste or religious norms was not the result of their own free will but was conditioned by the compulsions of the production process. As a consequence, there were different norms which regulated the behaviour in public and in private life. The rules of ritual purity which could not be observed outside were meticulously practised at the level of family and individual relations. Caste prejudices survived most persistently at the level of private and social relations. Particularly strict was the adherence to the rules of commensality. As a rule, the members of different communities spent their leisure time separately.

Labour historians were able to gather a lot of evidences which testify to the continuous reproduction of loyalties of the workers to their caste, religion, the mother tongue and, last but not least, their links to the native village. The indications encompass the palpable accumulation of members of a particular caste in particular jobs or shop floors, peculiarities in the composition of living quarters and the individual life-style. Whenever the Indian factory labourer perceived himself as an individuum he was bound to respect the so-called particular ties.

The vast problem of everyday culture of industrial workers in colonial India has so far hardly been selected as a topic of research. There are no comprehensive investigations into their leisure time and social behaviour, into their living, eating and drinking habits, how they celebrated festivals or how they looked at gender and family relations. There is only a sporadic mentioning of hobbies of factory workers like kite flying[40] or wrestling and a kind of lathi fighting in gymkhanas. Until now we know next to nothing about how and to which degree the so-called European influences like cinema, radio or strolling in public gardens affected their leisure time habits. In this context the issue of popular culture could be raised. Industrial workers participated in the same religious

festivals as other urban citizens according to their affiliation to Hinduism, Islam or any other religion.[41] It is as yet undecided whether such habits acquired specific features in the proletarian milieu.[42] The industrial workers doubtlessly co-determined the outward appearance and the fluidum of Indian big cities. They added a specific colouring to the theatre of the streets. This assessment has been supported by recent investigations.[43]

The manifestations of everyday culture were doubtlessly conditioned also by the standard of living. It is a known fact that industrial workers in colonial India were unable to satisfy their basic material needs. Most prominent among their miseries were the living conditions. But there were also serious deficiencies in regard to feeding and clothing. Basing his assessment on personal experience, the Indian economist Ahmad Mukhtar has summarized the conditions: "The Indian factory-labourer lives in an atmosphere which stinks destitution, disease and ignorance. He is under-fed, under-clothed and badly housed."[44] No wonder, there were hardly any means left for books or other cultural activities.

The misery of the colonial proletariat became most palpable in their housing conditions. There is a large number of publications authored by colonial officials, social scientists and trade unionists which offer facts and descriptions of misery regarding the situation which prevailed in *chawls* as well as *bustees*. They mirror the living of workers in congested, dark and badly ventilated quarters lacking adequate electricity, water supply and hygienic facilities. Most of the workers' families could afford only a single room in which they lived, dined, slept, regenerated themselves and died. The delegation of the British Trades Union Congress which visited India in 1928 summarised the impressions gained as follows: "We visited the workers' quarters wherever we stayed, and had we not seen them we could not have believed that such evil places existed."[45]

In spite of all this, the everyday life of the Indian industrial workers cannot be subsumed under the concept of "culture of poverty". Many of the aspects of the urban-proletarian milieu which have so far been interpreted by foreign or indigenous observers either as a result of poverty and backwardness or were labelled as merely "exotic" hide cultural values which are yet to be disclosed or should be explored as a component of the workers' culture. One example may point to the problem: Who does not know the seeming inexplicable paradoxon that even the poorest living quarter of a worker is kept surprisingly neat and clean inside, whereas outside in the staircases or courtyards which are used in common there are heaps of rubbish and garbage.[46] Only quite recently attempts have been made to study such phenomena of behaviour.[47]

Sometimes objections are raised against the use of the term culture in view of the miserable living conditions of the colonial proletarians who were mostly also illiterate. I would opt for the use of the term, because it is the peculiar configuration of the life-style of the urban poor emerging in the period of

transformation from tradition to modernity which is to be focused upon. In this context it appears to be unavoidable also to reassess the economy of everyday life.

Insights into proletarian behaviour can be obtained for instance by analysing the proportion of income and debt. It is not enough to state that the meagre income of the worker hardly left him any room for manoeuvre and any extra expenditure could immediately push him into the debt trap.[48]

We learned from investigations into European conditions that plebeian producers not only invested an "enormous emotional capital" into their socio-cultural reproduction but also a considerable proportion of their generally meagre monetary income.[49] Similarly, certain "economic" priorities like the comparatively high expenditure on occasion of rituals and festivals are typical features of the behaviour of large sections of the Indian industrial proletariat. Reference may be made to the considerable expenses usually incurred through marriages in India. It is equally known that workers handed over money or gifts to their jobbers in order to safeguard their job. Chitra Joshi describes the ritualization of the respect accorded by the workers to their jobbers:

> "On *Basant Panchmi* day workers paid homage or presented them gar-lands and turbans after a *pooja* held within factory premises. In return the *mistris* presented the workers with *topis* (caps) and vests."[50]

The Indian factory workers could hardly evolve the idea of economizing so far as this habit was concerned because this mutual exchange of gifts created a certain degree of security for the workers in otherwise extremely vulnerable circumstances. The "social exchange" which constituted a typical feature of plebeian culture in Europe equally contributed to strengthening the bonds of friendship and neighbourhood in the Indian proletarian milieu.[51] Thus, it produced or reproduced just that solidarity on which workers in distress could mostly rely upon. In this regard individual savings could not have provided him with more security. From the same angle also the other items of a worker's budget, as for instance, expenses for medicine, drinks, smoking and other consumer goods - even though they were small in terms of money - have to be analysed since they will help us to understand the attitudes to and expressions of everyday life as it emerged within the framework of colonial capitalist market and class relations.

The analysis of urban identity and mentality of Indian factory workers depends on the available source material. Census data, labour commission reports, administration reports, district gazetteers, publications and reports of commercial organisations as well as of trade unions and other records kept in archives offer valuable primary sources to answer our questions. Unfortunately scholars who deal with those topics in the Indian context do not have access to an essential category of material which is amply available to historians in

European countries, that is, workers' autobiographies. In Western Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century roughly two thirds of the workers could read and write whereas the proportion of illiterates among Indian factory workers in the middle of the twentieth century amounted to about 63 per cent.[52] Therefore, we come only rarely across evidences which directly permit insights into the thinking and feeling of workers. This obvious difficulty should, however, not deter labour historians from attempting to make the workers' voice audible as clearly as possible through their studies.

Political culture

While fighting for economic and political rights the Indian industrial workers evolved their own forms of protest and organisations for the purpose of representing their joint interests. Historical research has already shed a good deal of light on the origins of the organised Indian labour movement.

Such studies focused on the production unit dominated by the jobber. Nowadays hardly anybody will contradict the statement made by Richard Newman, that "the jobbers' gang forms a crucial link between the new institutional expressions of workforce solidarity and the primordial relationships that the millhands brought with them into industry"[53].

Demands for higher wages were mostly the causes for strikes. Work stoppages occurred also because of other reasons, for instance, since the twenties increasingly as a reaction to rationalisation measures on the part of entrepreneurs. Most of the strikes were spontaneous, and yet they were characterised by a certain amount of coordinated actions. In most cases the workers decided to rise against their opponents because of a particular reason. They struck work, but were mostly not in a position to negotiate themselves the solution of their problems because of inadequate knowledge. They turned to representatives of the national and democratic intelligentsia who signalled their readiness to plead the social grievances of the workers.

Immediately after the First World War the labour movement in India assumed a more organised shape. Socioeconomic factors and political events at the national and the international level mobilised the toiling sections. Work stoppages by the Indian industrial labourers as a rule, now embraced whole enterprises and, to an increasing extend, affected others and even engulfed entire branches in the cities or regions. In 1931, the Royal Commission on Labour published the following assessment of the strike movement during the twentieth:

> "The world-wide uprising of labour consciousness extended to India, where for the first time the mass of industrial workers awoke to their disabilities, particularly in the matter of wages and hours and of the possibility of combination. The effect of this surge was enhanced by political turmoil which added to the prevailing feeling of unrest and assisted to provide willing leaders of a trade union movement."[54]

The organisation of strikes occasioned endeavours to establish trade unions. Rather frequently workers' associations were established not prior but during and in the aftermath of work stoppages. Many of them simply acted as strike committees which dispersed soon after the labourers returned to work. In spite of such circumstances, the trade unions as organisations representing industrial labour gained a foothold in India. They generally endeavoured to improve the working and living conditions of industrial workers and to effectively articulate and represent their democratic rights in public life. The organisational level of industrial workers in colonial India, however, remained low and the workers' associations could create only a limited impact. They faced many obstacles. Among them were the ignorance and poverty of those whom they represented. The report of a delegation of the International Federation of Textile Workers' Associations published in 1928 mentioned the following factors obstructing the spread of trade unions: inadequate education, traditional prejudices vis-a-vis co-workers with different caste or religious affiliation, and financial constraints.[55] The fact that a considerable chunk of industrial labour consisted of migrants and generally links to the village were maintained, added to the obstacles.

In contrast to the assessment given in the late twentieth recent studies high-lighted the particular militancy and tenacity of those workers who could fall back upon material resources in villages. One should also not overlook the repressive activities of the entrepreneurs as well as the policy of the colonial government which seriously affected the growth of the workers' associations during the first half of the twentieth century. Rajnarayan Chandavarkar correctly points out:

> "The vagaries and weaknesses of trade unions, as the Indian case suggests, should not be interpreted as a reflex of the values, aspirations and consciousness of the workers; rather, it is more consistently explained in terms of the hostility and the politics of employers and the state."[56]

As a consequence of all this, organised forms of class solidarity surfaced only sporadically and remained highly vulnerable.

One important aspect in the assessment of the political culture of the industrial proletariat in colonial India consists in the relationship between leaders and members.

The industrial labourers were hardly in a position to acquire leading positions in their associations because of their lack of education, and the lack of

knowledge of the English language which was the medium of negotiations at the higher economic or administrative levels. As a rule, patriotic intellectuals - frequently termed outsiders[57] - occupied leading positions. But in regard to the relations between leaders and members opinions also differ. Some historians explain the relations between the leader and the member as a continuation of the pre-capitalist patron-client-relationship. Others stress the compelling circumstances under colonial-capitalist conditions as the major reason why only a tiny stratum of leaders emerged from among the workers themselves and why their organisations, especially trade unions, evolved a particular style of work.

The way of life, social protest and the political culture of the Indian industrial worker demonstrate vividly the co-existence and interaction of modes of intellectual attitudes and behaviour which originated from different types of social organisation. While caste, religion, and the norms of rural life still determined the feeling and acting of the individuals to a large extent, the colonial capitalist conditions in the industrial centres along with democratic institutions like political parties and trade unions established new values in the life-world of the urban wage-labourer. For quite some years historians examine the interrelationship between the rural, feudal-dominated background and the actual living conditions of the Indian industrial proletariat in all its manifestations. In this context the question has been raised about the validity of the theory of an ascending line established at the instance of the European labour movement for Asia and Africa, or whether the specific conditions brought about by colonial hegemony necessitates a typology of its own.[58] A tentative conclusion seems to be possible: In India elementary social protest and complex forms of actions which combined both economic as well as political issues co-existed for many decades and determined the character of her labour movement.

Notes

1   Erik Stokes, The Return of the Peasant to South Asian History. In: Erik Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India, Cambridge 1978, p. 265.

2   Cf. Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India. Business strategies and the working classes in Bombay, 1900-1940, New Delhi 1994, p. 2.

3   Sumit Sarkar, Social History: Predicaments and Possibilities. In: Iqbal Khan (ed.), Fresh Perspectives on India and Pakistan. Essays on economics, politics and culture, Oxford 1985, p. 260.

4   Id., Marxian Approaches to the History of Indian Nationalism. In: Presidency College Historical Pamphlets No. 1, Calcutta-New Delhi 1990, p. 13.

5   Nita Kumar, Urban Culture in Modern India - World of the Lower Classes. In: Indu Banga (ed.), The City in Indian History. Urban Demography, Society, and Politics, New Delhi 1991, p. 191.

6   Cf. Vernon Lidtke, Recent Literature on Workers' Culture in Germany and England. In: Klaus Tenfelde (ed.), Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung im Vergleich. Berichte zur internationalen historischen Forschung, München 1986, p. 338.

7   Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution, Harmondsworth 1984, p. 57.

8   Alf Lüdtke, Rekonstruktion von Alltagswirklichkeit - Entpolitisierung der Sozialgeschichte? In: Berdahl u.a., Klassen und Kultur. Sozialanthropologische Perspektiven in der Geschichtsschreibung, Frankfurt/M. 1982, p. 321 sq.

9   Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, Presidential Address. Modern Indian History. Indian History Congress, New Delhi 1982, p. 16.

10   My usage of the term "community consciousness" corresponds to that of Chitra Joshi's who defined it as follows: "'Community consciousness' refers to the internalisation of specific values and system of meanings of a particular community, and the expression of their sense of identification with them." Cf. Chitra Joshi, Bonds of community, ties of religion: Kanpur textile workers in the early twentieth century. In: The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 22 (1985) 3, p. 252.

11   Ibid., pp. 251 sqq.

12   Labour Investigation Committee. Report on Labour Conditions (RLC), Main Report, Delhi 1946, pp. 13 sqq; P.P. Pillai (ed.), Labour in South East Asia. A Symposium, New Delhi 1947, p. 7.

13   Report of the Indian Factory Labour Commission (RIFLC), 1908. Vol. I - Report and Appendices, London 1908, p. 18, 23.

14   RLC, loc. cit., p. 8.

15   Cf. Gardner Murphy, In the Minds of Men. The study of human behavior and social tensions in India, New York 1953, p. 202.

16   Cf. Amiya Kumar Bagchi, The Ambiguity of Progress: Indian Society in Transition. In: Social Scientist 142, 13 (1985) 3, p. 11.

17   Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India (RRCLI), London 1931, p. 12.

18   Ibid., p. 18 sq.; RLC, loc. cit., p. 69.

19   RLC, loc. cit., p. 71.

20   Chitra Joshi, Bonds of community..., loc. cit., p. 252.

21   Paul Lafargue, Le droit à la paresse. Présentation nouvelle de Maurice Dommanget, Paris 1982, p. 121.

22   RIFLC, loc. cit., p. 20.

23   RRCLI, loc. cit., p. 41.

24   Cf. Shashi Bhushan Upadhyay, Cotton Mill Workers in Bombay, 1875 to 1918. Conditions of Work and Life. In: Economic and Political Weekly, 25 (1990) 30, pp. PE-87 sqq.

25   RRCLI, loc. cit., p. 217.

26   Ibid.

27   Cf. Chitra Joshi, The Formation of Work Culture: Industrial Labour in a North Indian City (1890s-1940s). In: Gérard Héuzé (ed.), Travailler en Inde, Paris 1992, p. 156.

28   Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, The Origins of Industrial Capitalism..., loc. cit., pp. 298 sqq.

29   Ibid., p. 325.

30   Morris David Morris, The Emergence of an Industrial Labor Force in India. A Study of the Bombay Cotton Mills, 1854 to 1947, Bombay 1965, p. 32.

31   Cf. Daniel Houston Buchanan, The Development of Capitalistic Enterprise in India, New York 1934, pp. 416 sqq.

32   RIFLC, loc. cit., p. 20.

33   Cf. Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, Workers' Resistance and the Rationalization of Work
      in Bombay between the Wars. In: Douglas Haynes/Gyan Prakash (eds.), Contesting
      Power. Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia, Delhi 1991, p. 135 sq.;
      Chitra Joshi, The Formation of Work Culture..., loc. cit., p. 163.
34   K.N. Panikkar, Culture and Consciousness in Modern India: A Historical Perspective.
      In: Social Scientist 203, **18** (1990) 4, p. 18.
35   Ibid., p. 20.
36   Dipesh Chakrabarty, Of 'communal' workers and 'secular' historians. In: Seminar 374,
      October 1990, p. 23.
37   "The jobber, known in different parts of India and in different industries by different
      names such as *sardar, mistry, mukadam, tindal, chowdhry, kangany*, etc. is almost a
      ubiquitous feature of recruitment and labour administration in India, and usually
      combines in himself a formidable array of functions. Thus he is not only a recruiting
      agent, but very often a supervisor or foreman, or even a sub-employer, or a gangman
      who is both a sub-employer and a worker sharing the income with other workers."
      RLC, loc. cit., p. 80.
38   Cf. Richard Newman, Workers and Unions in Bombay 1918-1929. A study of organi-
      sation in the cotton mills, Canberra 1981, p. 54 sq.
39   Cf. Gardner Murphy, In the Minds of Men..., loc. cit., pp. 98 sqq.
40   Claude Batley, Bombay's Houses and Homes, Bombay 1949, p. 38.
41   Jim Masselos, Appropriating Urban Space: Social constructs of Bombay in the times
      of the Raj. In: South Asia, N.S. **14** (1991) 1, pp. 33 sqq.
42   Cf. Nita Kumar, Urban Culture in Modern India..., loc. cit., p. 197 sq.
43   Cf. Sandria B. Freitag, Introduction. In: South Asia, **14** (1991) 1, pp. 1-13.
44   Ahmad Mukhtar, Factory Labour in India, Madras 1930, p. 5 sq.
45   A.A. Purcell/J. Hallsworth, Report on Labour Conditions in India, London 1928, p. 8.
46   Cf. Claude Batley, Bombay's Houses..., loc. cit., p. 37 sq.
47   Cf. Dipesh Chakrabarty, Open Space/Public Place: Garbage, Modernity and India. In:
      South Asia, N.S. **14** (1991) 1, pp. 15 sqq.
48   Shashi Bhushan Upadhyay, Cotton Mill Workers in Bombay, 1875 to 1918..., loc. cit.,
      p. PE-92.
49   Cf. Hans Medick, Plebeian Culture in the Transition to Capitalism. In: Raphael
      Samuel/Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.), Culture, Ideology and Politics. Essays for Eric
      Hobsbawm, London 1982, p. 89.
50   Chitra Joshi, Bonds of community..., loc. cit., p. 253.
51   Cf. Hans Medick, Plebeian Culture..., loc. cit., p. 92.
52   Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, 'History from Below'. In: Social Scientist, 119 **11** (1983) 4, p.
      13.
53   Richard Newman, Workers and Unions in Bombay ..., loc. cit., p. 5.
54   RRCLI, loc. cit., p. 317.
55   Report of the Delegation of the International Federation of Textile Workers' Associa-
      tions Regarding Conditions of Labour in Textile Works in India. In: National Ar-
      chives of India, Department of Industries and Labour, File No. L-835/1928, p. 5, 9.
56   Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, Workers' Resistance and the Rationalization of Work...,
      loc. cit., p. 317.
57   Cf. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, The Outsiders: A Historical Note. In: Ashok Mitra (ed.),
      The Truth Unites. Essays in Tribute to Samar Sen, Calcutta 1985, pp. 90 sqq.
58   Cf. id., Capital and Labour in Bombay City, 1928-29. In: Economic and Political
      Weekly, **16** (1981) 42-43, p. PE-42.

Globalisation and Changing Implications for the Developmental State. The Indian Case

Joachim Heidrich

Introduction

The years between 1989 and 1992 witnessed the disintegration of an international system which emerged during the decades since World War Two. The event signified the end of the all-embracing Cold War and the East-West confrontation which, till that moment, constituted the dominant global conflict formation. The bipolar configuration began to be replaced by a shift towards a multipolar set-up. The new trends, in essence, reflected the elimination of a comparatively static international security system supported by the existence of two rival power centres, to which other conflict formations were largely subordinated. As a corollary, the Third World[1] as a political category suffered a decline. A different strategic and security environment ensued both for regions and individual countries in the "South". This added another dimension to the situation of post-colonial countries without, however, eliminating a pre-existing continuity. By the middle of the 20th century, decolonisation had resulted in the fall of European colonial empires and of colonialism as an organising principle. Yet the newly achieved political independence did not bring about economic emancipation for the people of the emerging states. Even now at the close of the century, "the Third World still remains separate and unequal in international society in many respects"[2]. The simultaneous rise of new growth centres and the rapidly intensifying global economic interdependence necessitated a reorientation of their national economic strategies as well as security perceptions. The ongoing changes thus set in motion encompass a wide spectrum of issues. Globalisation, a new world order, regional arrangements, global and national development and the interaction of such major factors constitute focal points in the contemporary debate. The present paper intends to discuss some aspects of the complex subject in the South Asian and, more particular, the Indian context.

Globalisation

Globalisation has been identified as crucial to the understanding of the fundamental changes in the post-Cold War era. Though primarily directed at the level of international political economy, the concept refers equally to interre-

lated phenomena which manifest themselves in a variety of spheres, like econ-
omics, politics, culture and ideology. Globalisation can "be defined as the
intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such
a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away
and vice versa. This is a dialectic process because such local happenings may
move in an obverse direction from the very distanciated relations that shape
them. *Local transformation* is as much a part of globalisation as the lateral
extension of social connections across time and space"[3]. According to Mittel-
man, the "manifestations of globalisation include the spatial reorganisation of
production, the interpenetration of industries across borders, the spread of
financial markets, the diffusion of identical consumer goods to distant coun-
tries, massive transfers of population within South as well as from the South
and the East to the West, resultant conflicts between immigrant and established
communities in formerly tight-knit neighbourhoods, and an emerging worldwide
preference for democracy"[4].

Significant issues thrown up during recent years await the attention of
analysts. They call for urgent solution and have already surfaced at the level of
practical politics. Recent international gatherings addressed some of the rel-
evant issues. The UN Conference on Environment and Development held in
Rio de Janeiro in 1992, or the UN World Human Rights Conference which
took place in Vienna a year later established a clear concordance between
sustainable development and global environment protection; between develop-
ment, democracy, the respect for all human rights - civil, political, social,
economic and cultural - and fundamental freedoms as interdependent as well
as interrelated, indivisible and universal concepts.[5] While the Declarations
adopted at the Conferences set certain standards and chalked out methods to
achieve international accountability, the Vienna Declaration, for instance, "also
wisely and discreetly recognises the significance of national and regional par-
ticularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds without
accepting that States may pick and choose certain rights and disregard others"[6].
But such occasions also revealed a North-South divide in regard to the percep-
tion of issues and they tended to separate the discussants into different "camps."
Parallel meetings of NGO's held on both the occasions received a strong
support from Third World representatives and supplemented the "official"
gatherings by a more radical agenda.

Initially there was hope that the changing international climate in the post-
Cold War era would provide fresh options for Third World countries, particu-
larly after they were able to "unlock" themselves from the constraints of previ-
ous alliances or spheres of political influence. Third World countries hoped for
the opportunity that uncurbed agency in respect to their own affairs would be
restored to them. Third World analysts pledged a "peace dividend" and they
visualised even chances for a kinder and gentler development in those regions.[7]

The expectations regarding a substantial improvement of the preconditions for developing countries soon proved wrong. In fact, most of the countries found themselves condemned to continue in a subordinate and dependent position. At the same time, new leaders and forces emerged on the international scene and claimed global status for themselves and their preferred ideologies. Moreover, the feeble trends towards a multipolar set-up were pushed into the background. They were superseded by a strong tendency towards establishing a unilateral hegemony on the part of the sole remaining superpower, at least so far as the military and strategic level of international relations is concerned, accompanied by clear indications of the danger to convert the UN system into an instrument for implementing hegemonial aspirations by those who wield power. But "the difficulty in determining the shape of the so-called 'new order' is complicated by the fact that only in military affairs can we speak of unipolarity. In economic affairs, at least three global centers exist, and in political affairs, influence is even more diffuse"[8].

The actual developments exposed the anticipated bright future within the framework of a new world order as premature. This relates particularly to Third World countries. Interestingly, the response to the concept of a new order in that part of the world has been almost absent from the discourse conducted in the West. It was generally overlooked that the version of a new global order held out as a promise did not receive a warm welcome from the people and many governments in Third World countries, because they suspected it to harbour a neocolonial bias. "Indeed, the new unipolar world is fraught with dangers of a return to the old dominance of the powerful over the weak", cautioned Malaysia's Prime Minister in his speech at Caracas as early as November 1991.[9] The subsequent course of events substantiated the assessment contained in the earlier Report of the South Commission about the rough deal meted out to the countries of the South:

> "The widening disparity between south and north are attributable not merely to differences in economic progress, but also to an enlargement of the north's power vis-a-vis the rest of the world. The leading countries of the north now readily use that power in pursuit of their objectives. The 'gunboat' diplomacy of the nineteenth century still has its economic and political counterpart in the closing years of the twentieth. The fate of the south is increasingly dictated by the perceptions and policies of the governments in the north, of the multilateral institutions which a few of those governments control, and of the network of private institutions that are increasingly prominent."[10]

Such implications cannot simply be isolated from the idea of a new world order which has meanwhile gained wide currency. The viewpoints of the South demand recognition because they carry weight. The theme is likewise insepar-

able from the issue of national development or from the preeminent task of simultaneously tackling internal socio-economic conflicts in the countries and of releasing them from their peripheral position in the global network.

Signs of an awareness of this dimension are not entirely absent "on the other side", as the ongoing debate about the nature and scope of the development policy so far practised by developed countries demonstrates. Forceful criticism has been voiced by many NGO's in this regard. The authors in the West who raised the issue emphasise the common responsibility of governments and people of all continents for the fate and future of this "one world". Efforts made in this context equally focus attention on the changed preconditions and on the task to find new avenues for approaching the subject in order to overcome the present theoretical impasse.[11]

World order: differing conceptualizations

The theme was thrust upon the scholars by the dramatic changes in recent years and is certainly not of a mere "academic" origin. Many authors who interpreted the events in the early nineties built their theoretical edifice on a simple reasoning. They stated the disappearance of one of the two hitherto existing political and military superpowers and singled out the collapse of the Socialist system as the central axis and frame of reference for visualising the subsequent world order. This line of thinking imagines a quasi linear expansion across the globe of the structures, institutions and accepted values of the one contending system which emerged victorious from the Cold War. Supporters of the view were rather euphoric about the ushering in of a new era, which, they felt, would equally engulf Asia.[12] I am unable to share such a reductionist and simplistic attitude, the more so, since the interpretation can hardly be substantiated by the experiences of Third World countries at large, most of which like the South Asian states, were not immediately involved in the earlier contest. The attitude described does also not satisfy the test of historical analysis.

It will, perhaps, not be out of place to take a look at the historical ramifications of the subject. Observations made on events that occurred in the past contributed to the present change of perception of the world order. Of course, only recently note has been consciously taken of the loss of a sense of equilibrium that was taken for granted ever since the making of an international society in the 16th century and the subsequent growth and expansion of the European system of nation-states since the 17th century. But the scepticism which emanated from this experience is closely related to the eclipse of the Eurocentric world view which partly accompanied and more palpably followed the decline of Western Europe's domination of the world which was deemed "natural" for several centuries. In fact, the specific Western (or European)

project of history came to its final conclusion in the early nineties, after it had already received a serious blow in the wake of the anticolonial revolutions some decades earlier. Towards the closing decade of the 20th century, the process got accelerated and resulted in the final exhaustion of the specific Western (or European-centred) perception of history. The events were instrumental, inter alia, in fostering the concept of the "end of history", and they manifested themselves in the search for alternative explanations.[13] Again, this calls for a closer look at the antecedents of the world order project which entered the stage of real life only in recent times.

Many years ago, Robert A. Scalapino expressed his doubts about whether Euro-pean rule ever constituted a genuine world order and whether anything resembling such an order would have been conceivable at all prior to the 20th century. He felt it to "be more accurate to assert that the European era laid foundations for a world order by universalizing certain values and institutions that had previously been parochial manifestations of European political-economic culture"[14]. At any rate, the post-colonial societies did not, as a rule, adopt or recognise the world-order model of the contemporary "West" unreservedly or in toto. This is evident from the recent conceptualizations of global developments, subsequent to the termination of the East-West conflict.

Third World countries resent almost unanimously the newly evolved concepts in the West which suggest to visualise mankind's future in terms of a global competition and struggle between cultures, now that the competition between sociopolitical systems has ended and the world got rid of acute political conflicts and destructive military confrontations on a global scale. They further question the belief that conflicts arising from economic and social contradictions will henceforth be relegated to a secondary position in relation to culturally-informed conflicts.

The counter-arguments point into two directions. First, at the present stage mankind faces a tremendous historical challenge jointly and fundamental issues which confront humanity or threaten its very existence are not divisible along so-called civilizational fault-lines. Civilizational conflicts are soluble provided a congenial climate can be created by the societies involved.[15] And secondly, conflicts between cultures or civilizations are unlikely to gain priority over the continuing more basic challenges to individual societies and their political systems and to national polities in the foreseeable future, at least not in Third World countries. As India's Prime Minister put it at Davos in February 1994:

> "My realistic assumption indicates to me quite clearly that poverty will continue to be the most serious challenge to mankind during the greater part of the 21st century, if not longer."[16]

The "clash of civilization"-thesis treats civilizations or cultures as given and constructs stereotypes which exist outside the historical process. Such ideas help

to create new frontiers and belittle the significance of the continuing inequality in international relations, thereby obstructing the efforts to establish a more humane order which is to be based on a non-exclusive universalism, while simultaneously recognising equality as well as cultural diversity. Built on the formula, "the west versus the rest"[17], the concept has aptly been criticised as providing a new cloak for the old dichotomic pattern of thinking which served hegemonic aspirations of the dominant powers during the entire post-war period. In its present shape the concept vaguely covers up the image of the continuation of the previous order, despite tall claims regarding the resolve to establish a new one.[18]

We are now probably witnesses to a transitional stage of long duration which will extend far into the next century and which surfaces at the political, economic and cultural levels. It manifests itself in the interaction of peoples, non-governmental organisations and non-state (economic, cultural, religious,etc.) institutions, as well as of states. In this context, structural changes and adjustments are becoming topics of public debate. The new developments already caused an extension of the agenda as well as a shift of focus in the realm of foreign and security policy. The urge for democratization of international relations turns attention away from concentrating on military and power configurations. As practice shows, increasing emphasis is placed on environmental problems, fight against drug abuse and crime. But certainly also negotiations over reform conditionalities in the context of globalising and regionalising processes will deserve adequate attention. An attempt to forecast the possible outcome would be premature. Several options seem to be open. But while long-term trends are yet difficult to delineate, the ongoing transformations make their presence felt and already exercise a discernible impact on regions and individual countries. This, again, is a disputed subject.

The changing scenario

Globalisation, or internationalisation, no doubt, constitutes one of the major tendencies which currently engulf societies of different structures and levels of development. But this is no equivalent to homogenization. It has rightly been pointed out that the contemporary global economy grew out of the older international economy which consisted chiefly of the national economies of more advanced capitalist countries, plus the more recent transnational corporations. Together they form a collection of variably interacting but heterogeneous entities with different agendas.[19] In these circumstances, the mere integration of a comparatively less developed country's economy into the emerging global economy will certainly by itself not raise the status of the hitherto underprivileged to that of equal partners. According to indications available, the disparity

is on the increase and the economic preponderance of the industrially more advanced states, especially the G 7, or of the transnational economic and financial institutions established or dominated by them, is strengthening. The already marginalised countries are likely to be further kept aloof from the centres of economic and technological advance which would be tantamount to their lagging behind the leading countries in terms of efficiency and productivity despite the progress achieved by them individually. Such tendencies transgress the traditional levels of national economies embedded in political entities and increasingly operate outside the control of established authorities manifested in the national state. As the Report of the South Commission put it:

> "A new network of relationships has been built up among private entities - banks, investment houses, transnational companies - in the leading developed countries. This has served to strengthen the influence of decisions made by private bodies on world economic activity, and to that extent to limit the effectiveness of governmental policy decisions. For the south the result is even further marginalisation and greater powerlessness."[20]

At a first look, the elimination of the bipolar constellation frozen into two power blocks and surrounded by respective areas of influence seemed to have tendentiously enhanced the political manoeuvrability of the more peripheral Third World states. After all, recent studies revealed how even states at the periphery of world politics had previously been affected in their decisions by external interests and how big countries like India and Pakistan came to be drawn into the Cold War vortex.[21] Pursuing the earlier argument, the capacity of Third World countries to steer an independent course in consonance with the desire for an authentic development should have improved. The countries now seemed to be better placed to resist hegemonic aspirations in international affairs if they were only able to join hands among themselves. This would have meant a greater possibility as well as a more powerful urge for establishing non-hegemonial regional arrangements of multilateral cooperation, free from outside interference. The return to more humane, long-term and sustainable development policies then seemed to stand a better chance.

In reality, however, Third World countries face the unfavourable constraints of present-day international power equations which prevent them from qualitatively reinforcing their bargaining power.

> "An increasingly heterogeneous Third World will have to confront a North composed of three regional groupings of continental capitalist economies, the United States with Canada..., Japan with the newly industrializing countries of East and Southeast Asia, and United Europe..."[22]

This is not yet the complete picture. A considerable impact on the international scene emanates at the same time from other sources - from the sharpening

rivalry between the new power centres as well as from new developments within the Third World, parts of which are being drawn into the range of influence of the centres. It is a whole complex of factors which causes the policy-makers in Third World countries to reconsider and to revise their strategies.

One of the remarkable features among recent events is the strengthening of Europe's political position. Europe is now about to regain a centrality in world affairs which it had lost through the wars in the 20th century. Relying on its enhanced economic might, the newly-founded Union demonstrated its resolve to meet the challenge posed by other centres. In this context, the European Union announced a "proactive" policy vis-a-vis Asia where, as the relevant programmatic document states, new developments of global significance are taking place which need to be recognised and responded to. "The rise of Asia is dramatically changing the world balance of economic power", and it calls for a radical rethinking of the European Union's strategy, says the Asia Concept of the European Union, adopted in July 1994, which, at the same time, underlines the urgency for the Union to stake its claims.[23]

The presently discernible global economic as well as political trends will in all probability not contribute to creating a favourable climate for the endeavours of the Third World to enhance its weight in world affairs. While this can be anticipated with some certainty, the foundations of the existing matrix of relations remain fragile. Elsenhans concludes realistically that long term instabilities are built in the new international system as it shapes today.[24]

The regionalistic perspective

The experiences gathered by the countries of the South have nourished serious doubts about the validity of the hitherto prevalent "North-centred" view on global trends. In the second half of the 20th century and from the angle of the highly industrialised "liberal" societies in the North (or North-West), the future became increasingly equated with the present by projecting the existing Western civilizational achievements as the manifestation of an ultimate stage to be reached by humankind as a whole. The very perception, after all, informed the above-mentioned idea of the "end of history". On the other side, the post-colonial societies in the South continue to insist - as did the latest Non-aligned Summit in Jakarta in 1992 - on a fundamental right to development. The concept has now been recast to make sure that the immediate objective is a sustainable development to be accomplished in consonance with the genius or cultural traditions of the people concerned, and not by merely emulating a Western model. By implication, the attitude looks ahead and necessitates a search for future alternatives which are capable of providing appropriate

guidelines to achieve the desired goal. In other words, the perception of human society and its future is grounded in an optimistic perspective, it envisages the unavoidability of change, and it harbours considerable intellectual potential.

The endeavours to chalk out a "Third World perspective" on development received considerable impetus from the failure in the eyes of the developing countries of that idea of transformation in the post-colonial period which has been rather contemptuously called the "neoliberal counter-revolution"[25], and more so from the continuation of the injustices on which the old order was built. Recent events rather heightened the fears, as the dangerous portents of the upcoming new order were revealed.[26] Would the countries of the South be able to recapture the issue of sustainable development from the dominant neoliberal approach and put it back on the global agenda? After all, as one opinion has it, sustainable development "presents itself not simply as one of the major challenges of the late 20th century but as a focal point for debate over many of the problems that contribute to the current era of global disorder"[27].

The trends identified as detrimental to the interests of the countries in the South cannot be fought by denying the facts of global interdependence and the rapidly intensifying internationalisation. Facing the task to formulate policies which could meet the challenge of the unjust international economic relations and to overcome internal structural inadequacies, the newly-independent countries have since long found regional cooperation to be the most suitable strategy. Such considerations became even more urgent after the long drawn-out dialogue on a new international economic order almost subsided in the late eighties.

Regional groupings may serve a dual purpose. They could provide protection against unwelcome outside coercion in the form of economic sanctions or political and military pressures which pose a potential threat because of the globalist attitude prevailing in the existing power centres. It was in this context that Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, assuming the continued existence of shared interests among Third World countries, argued in favour of a closer South-South cooperation: "It is an important prerequisite that we build linkages which will make the South both a political and economic reality in the international arena."[28] Regional groupings could, at the same time, provide a useful tool for the "peripheral" countries in their struggle for equal status within the network of intensifying global relations and to ward off a tendency to segregate the less advanced or to keep them out of the mainstream.

In actual practice, attempts to foster and formalise cooperation between heterogenous partners within a more geographically defined region which were primarily guided by the objective to releasing potential for development, have been more pronounced in recent decades, and they obviously achieved more palpable results. The emphasis, particularly on the part of involved developing countries, has been on the establishment of non-hegemonial arrangements.

The proliferation of regional organisations of varied shape and nature is a characteristic of the entire post-Second World War period.[29] Today the focus is on the larger Asia-Pacific region as probably the most dynamic part of the globe in the 21st century. South Asia will not remain outside the scope and impact of the emerging gravitational centre. But on the South Asian subcontinent itself the climate for immediate cooperation of the more populous states located there still looks singularly unfavourable, when compared to other regions or subregions. In matters of interstate cooperation, South Asia has been traditionally lagging behind, despite the efforts made to build up SAARC for the last one and a half decades.[30] The South Asian states are likely to face the dual task of simultaneously balancing their attitude towards the larger region and to their immediate neighbours which are again variously placed in that wider context. For the time being at least, the efforts of individual countries to expand bilateral relations with countries outside the subcontinent seem to carry home better results. The contemporary emphasis is certainly not merely a matter of convenience or due only to pragmatic considerations. The issue of promoting regionalism in South Asia equally requires a shift in perception. India's foreign policy found itself conceptually unprepared to tackle the situation as it shaped in the post-colonial decades. Its decision-makers have long tended to take the immediate neighbourhood for granted while following the Neh-ruvian model which "envisaged regionalism on the subcontinent as an integral part of the building up of co-operative relationships in the large Asian-Africa region"[31].

Situated strategically between East and West Asia, with close historical links to Central Asia and bound by cultural ties to each of those areas, India is likely to play an important role in the future Asian-Pacific configuration, especially as a rising middle and potential big power. This entails the potential to compete with other regional powers, but may easily nourish hegemonic aspirations. For a country which occupies a position of primacy on the subcontinent, priority needs to be accorded to a policy which is directed at reaching a mutual under-standing or, preferably, at establishing good-neighbourly relations between the unequal partners in the South Asian subregion, and which is accompanied by convincing moves to dispel deep-seated suspicions about Indian intentions to dominate. The emphasis on age-old historical ties and shared cultural values with her Asian neighbours will not automatically eliminate the elements of competition in the economic field and the subjects of disagreement and conflict at the political and security level. Such factors have seriously marred the interstate relations throughout the post-colonial period in South Asia and constitute obstacles to building up even economic ties.

The end of the antagonistic bipolar world constellation made conflicts fought by proxy obsolete. Instead, local and subregional issues as primary reasons for acute conflicts have won priority. As a consequence, the earlier preference

accorded to external factors from the globalist angle has been replaced by a trend to deemphasise the role of external powers or reasons and to examine the roots of internal social conflicts and the causes of interstate conflicts in their own right. So far as intra-societal conflicts are concerned, a positive fall-out of the shift in perception consists in stressing the responsibility of the government and the political system of the respective countries to resolve contradictions through internal reforms. Hence, the issue of societal transform-ation is being posed again in a changing environment.

India: economic strategy and the developmental state

Among the South Asian states, India has formulated her so-called New Econ-omic Policy (in 1991) in response to the changing circumstances in which the country found itself placed at the turn to the nineties. The programme is targeted at overcoming the marginalisation or meant to step out of the periph-eral situation into which the country was forced under colonialism, by linking its economy and particularly its manufacturing sector to the international centres of growth. One of the peculiarities which distinguishes India (or, for that matter, the bigger part of South Asia) from the majority of African and even Arab countries is the fact that the former largest and by far most popu-lous colonial territory of the British Empire was drawn into the commercial and financial global network of capitalism already in the second half of the 19th century. In addition, it could make use of its now decades-old experience of close cooperation with an institution like the European Community.

While advocating liberalisation and a reform package as a means of estab-lishing a closer linkage between the Indian and the global economy, the present Indian leadership did not intend to go any length in opening up its economy to international capital and to expose its manufacturing industry to global compe-tition unconditionally. Prime Minister Rao argued in favour of a "middle path" that seeks to avoid negative consequences of the expansion of free market capitalism.[32] The strategy intends to neither loose sight of the social objectives, nor to allow any impediment of national sovereignty. The latter aspect emerged also clearly from the statements made and bilateral agreements concluded during the Indian Prime Minister's visits to major Western states in the first half of 1994, inter alia to Germany. The German government, in turn, acknowl-edged the economic challenge posed by the remarkable changes in the greater Asia-Pacific region. A specific policy document which outlined the future strategy of the Federal Republic towards Asia identified the major states in South Asia, India and Pakistan, next to the East Asian and newly-industrializing South-East Asian countries, as the major partners.[33] A certain mutuality of interests provides a meeting ground although the interests of the partners may

not always run parallel to each other and are unlikely to converge on all major issues.

Efforts to strengthen India's ties with the economy of the industrially advanced capitalist countries in the West were conceived in consonance with Indian interests - an attitude which enjoys the strong backing of various political forces and different social strata including a considerable section of the local bourgeoisie. It remains to be seen whether the intentions will materialise. The retrograde steps which Indian government was compelled to take in late 1994 in view of stiff resistance to the programme of liberalisation and its detrimental impact on the living conditions of the people are a pointer to the existing limitations. This raises the issue of the responsibilities of the developmental state and its role in fighting deprivation.[34] At the conceptual level, the prerequisites of "national development" in Third World countries obviously clash with the premises outlined in a "new orthodoxy for developmental strategies" which is gaining ground in the West after the failure of the older modernisation theory. Its supporters link the refurbished liberalisation drive with the old perception of the Western pattern as the universally valid path of development.[35]

Countries of India's or China's size and status which according to some observers are armed with the potential to become major powers may stand a good chance of accomplishing their international objectives. They are certainly more favourably placed than smaller and weaker states in preventing the proliferation of unilateral conditionalities to their disadvantage. But even they are bound to operate within a frame set by the major international trends and forces of capitalism. The IMF programme, at least, denies India or any other country the possibilities of an autonomous national capitalist development[36], which is tantamount to obstructing the desired escape from a subordinated position within an asymmetric relationship. A fundamental contradiction emerges directly from the nature of the capital involved. As finance, it demands unhindered international mobility, but as productivity-raising agent it is bound to be committed to a firm, an industry and it has to be embedded in a country's productive system.[37] This is a situation which national policy makers and governments will have to tackle. The demand for a radically deregulated, competitive global economy presupposes extensive intervention in the affairs of previously sovereign states.

So far as India is concerned, certain crucial and weak points of strategic importance have been identified. Among them is the immaturity of the home market, its "incompleteness", and the vulnerability of Indian companies who may be unable to stand the competition and then face the danger of being squeezed out by the powerful multinationals.[38] Further, there is the conflict between the old-fashioned economic nationalism which has been rendered obsolete at the global level and the continuing necessity to pursue a policy of

economic nationalism at home in order to achieve sustainable development. The capacity to solve the issues will be considerably impaired by the intrinsic limitations of the state as an agency for economic intervention, more particularly so, since state dirigism is considered to be outdated. The limitations mentioned are an unavoidable consequence of the strategy of liberalisation.[39]

Economic liberalisation is thus fraught with the danger of reducing "the ability of political processes to respond effectively to peoples' declared social and ethical preferences"[40]. In addition, the strategy adopted by the Indian government appears to include some unrealistic propositions, particularly while trying to emulate the East Asian economic miracle. One author pointed out as "fundamentally flawed" the "pervasive belief that the secret of the East Asian miracle was (and is) their market-oriented development strategy ... because it fails to take account of the role of the interventionist state in guiding economic development"[41]. The lesson to be drawn for countries which attempt economic reform both from the history of capitalist modernization, especially the "latecomers", as well as from the East Asian experience should be, according to the same author, that "market-oriented development and state intervention must be viewed as complementary rather than competing or contradictory"[42]. Concluding from his comparative study of the experiences of Third World countries, Dorraj criticised the market dogmatism preached by many conservative economists and reminds us of a simple yet crucial fact of history:

> "Let us not forget that the wave of nationalization and state control of the economy which swept the Third World after the Second World War emerged in response to dislocation and structural flaws of the market economy."[43]

State and civil society

It is a truism that democracy without development cannot persist and large-scale deprivation will prevent the establishment or effective functioning of democratic institutions. South Asia has been grappling with the problem for many years. Development, however, also requires "good governance" in order to develop human capability and enhance human resources. The dialectical interrelation of the factors constitutes an issue in the general development debate at the close of the 20th century.[44]

The much-heralded transition to democracy in different parts of the world since the late eighties signifies, as a rule, the introduction in a good number of countries of Western-style *electoral* democracy. Through the process legitimacy was sought of the new state which manifested the national sovereignty. In this respect, South Asian countries like India, Sri Lanka, also Bangladesh during her earlier years, could boast of an impressive record when compared to many

other developing countries. In the case of India this has been a tradition of particularly long standing which proved its resilience almost exceptionally during the post-Independence period when multiple problems arising out of a composite culture and plural society in transition, culminating even in series of violent conflicts, shook the country and yet, the democratic system survived.[45] In a restricted sense, also Pakistan experienced a few spells of a functioning electoral democracy, and it has more recently taken roots also in Nepal.[46] Authoritarian rule, no doubt, became outdated and is, hopefully, on the wane. But this is no testimony of a functioning *social* democracy, the first priority of which would be to ensure the extension of full democratic rights to the marginalised in society and the socially underprivileged. The steps implemented should not stop at merely guaranteeing individuals the formal right to vote in their capacity as legally equal citizens. The necessary second step would consist in providing basic amenities or securing a decent way of life for all members of society or abolishing deprivation. There is an awareness of the task among ruling circles. They are, after all, imbibed with the living legacy of the nationalism from the colonial period which "was an assertion not only against foreign colonial exploitation but also simultaneously for a new democratic identity"[47]. In India the need to pay special attention to the downtrodden in society has been highlighted through the traditionally-coached Gandhian concept of daridra-narayanan ("worshipping" the lowest). The goal to fight poverty and to uplift the masses constituted a major element in the programme of the national movement in India since the first quarter of the 20th century. The preamble of the Indian constitution contains directive principles to that effect. Designs of alternative concepts of development have been available. Yet the task still stands largely unaccomplished. The aspect is usually singled out as constituting a latent danger to the established system of democracy.

The state of affairs cannot be attributed merely to the lack of realistic economic policies of governments, to the failure of plans, or - as it has become fashionable nowadays - to the absence of prerequisites for a free play of market forces. It would be highly unrealistic to expect that a higher standard of living or even affluence, if achieved, could by itself guarantee legitimacy or democracy. The issue is obviously much more complex. It is not uncommon to link it to what has frequently been called the unaccomplished task of building politically and economically coherent nation-states. But this again seems to be disputable as it is based on a untenable preconceived notion. Historical evidences suggest that to envisage for the post-colonial societies in the latter part of the 20th century and beyond a sequence of evolution which was typical of northwestern Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries cannot be maintained. A rather determined view in this regard has recently been ventured from Bangladesh. The author disputes in toto the propriety of having attempted nation-building in the South Asian circumstances along the lines of the Euro-

pean example. He goes even further and, in consonance with the criticism raised against the "Orientalism" concept, the author argues that the very idea of the nation of the West "has brought divisions among the South Asian people", and therefore, a replication of the West should be out of question.[48] The interrelationship between power and people in post-colonial societies is indeed intricate. When the South Asian countries gained independence, they had inherited from the colonial past a bureaucratic state which was by its very origin and nature "alien" to South Asia. It had hardly any organic links to the society, its main function was to govern and to keep people subordinate. With the arrival of independence, the purpose changed but the structure of the power-wielding administrative machinery continued basically unaltered. Henceforth legitimacy of governance was sought through elections. The adult franchise instituted was considered the main plank for evolving full-fledged representative democracy. But the alienation of the "sarkar" (state, administration) from the people - or vice versa - could not be overcome. Neither did the state apparatus prove capable of providing the necessary impetus to development activities, nor could the political system bring about the desired degree of involvement of the people and arouse them to rally unitedly around "national" objectives. The kind of democracy introduced did not at once also make sense to the people. On the contrary, diversities existing in society surfaced more and more at the level of politics, sub-identities of various nature got strengthened and gained weight and deeply affected the polity of the new state. This is no short-term issue. As a heritage of history and geography, the existing pluralism in society "has areas of accommodation and tension... Pluralism is not necessarily fissiparous, dichotomous, and divisive. It could and ought to be a condition of toleration, accommodation and mutual appreciation"[49]. The situation to be tackled adequately at the level of the state necessitates a genuine federal policy.

In the larger states like India and Pakistan, the dispute about how to govern the country concentrated mainly on the issue of power distribution between the centre and provinces (or subregions), which in constitutional terms meant a debate on the federal set-up. The argument was brought forward that a constitutional government to deal successfully with pressures for democratization, must accommodate local and district-based demands within the existing system of centre-province relations. The accommodation under the parliamentary system of interests voiced by diverse groups, did in itself not contribute much to strengthening national unity and polity.

Efforts at establishing elements of a basic democracy by utilizing traditional institutions (for instance, panchayats) have been initiated, though executed half-heartedly. But the "pre-modern" institutions of society were soon more or less absorbed by the competitive system through which representatives of political parties competed for power. In the process, the institutions lost or changed

much of their original meaning or sense of purpose. Political parties and politicians tended to establish control over them, lending them the appearance of tools for pursuing sectional interests.

This leads to the final question about the scope for establishing a democratic civil society. Leaving aside the differences which distinguish the South Asian countries from each other, the issue will, according to the indications available at the moment, probably require an investigation into the preconditions of setting up popular associations or platforms of social action which can inter-mediate between traditional institutions and the state. After all, India can boast of innumerable social movements of scale during and after the colonial period.[50] At a first stage, this may mean supplementing the socio-political set-up. The increase in number and scale of activities of non-government organisa-tions and the unfolding of so-called new social movements may be taken as a pointer. To a certain extent, such likely precursors of a civil society are acting in opposition to the state. But this aspect which is usually singled out as a major function of civil society in Western industrially advanced and demo-cratically structured states will hardly occupy a similar role within the frame-work of less developed and colonially-predetermined societies, in which the structures are to be built upon a different foundation and the responsibilities of the developmental state by far exceed the scope accorded to the modern Western welfare state. "The intersection between state and civil society consti-tutes a critical space for public action."[51] In practice, the persisting large-scale deprivation and mass poverty curtail individual liberty - a fundamental pre-requisite of individual self-determination and of the capacity to exercise civil rights in a community. The factors mentioned seriously obstruct the establish-ment of a modern democratic civil society. Hence, the search is on for "a pertinent paradigm for democracy and nation-building in the Third World"[52].

Notes

1   The term Third World is used in this paper for convenience sake and without discuss-
        ing its validity as a political category in view of the "disappearance" of the former
        Second World or the polarisation that has meanwhile occurred within the group of
        countries to whom the term applies.
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5   Cf. L. M. Singhvi, A Tale of Three Cities. In: India International Centre Quarterly, 21 (1994) 4, p. 68 sq.
6   Ibid., p. 69.
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11   Cf. Frans J. Schuurman (ed.), Beyond the Impasse: new directions in development theory, London 1993.
12   Cf. Kai M. Schellhorn, Asien nach dem Ende des Kalten Krieges. In: Asien, (1994) 46, pp. 5 sqq.
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19   C.T. Kurien, Indian Economic Reforms in the Context of Emerging Global Economy. In: Economic and Political Weekly, 28 (1994) 15, p. 655 sq.
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24   Hartmut Elsenhans, Global Change..., loc. cit., p. 40.
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30   Cf. ibid.
31   S.D. Muni, India and Regionalism in South Asia: A Political Perspective. In: Inter-
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33   Cf. Asien-Konzept der Bundesregierung. In: Asien, (1994) 50, pp. 142 sqq.
34   Cf. Sudipto Mundle, Deprivation and Public Policy. Redefining the Developmental
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Ochre Robe and Tricolour. Samnyasis and Sadhus in Social Movements in the First Half of 20th Century

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The non-cooperation movement between 1920 and 1922 shook the foundations of British rule over India for the first time. The movement spread beyond its traditional supporters - the educated urban and middle strata - and embraced the rural masses. It led, simultaneously, to at least a temporary understanding between Hindus and Muslims. The electrifying impact of the movement which united all classes, strata and religious communities was to a large extent due to the charismatic personality of Gandhi. Gandhi succeeded in 1920 in convincing the Indian National Congress (INC) to adopt his new method of non-violent resistance which he had tested successfully in South Africa. Under Gandhi's influence the mainly elite nationalism of the Indian upper strata was superseded by an almost religious enthusiasm which engulfed the entire country. According to Nehru the non-cooperation movement "took on a revivalist character so far as the masses were concerned"[1]. He felt to have come nearer to "a religious frame of mind" than at any other time since his early boyhood.[2]

Several factors contributed to creating an emotion-ridden atmosphere. At that time the goal of the movement was still hazy and did not yet cause any serious dispute. Attention focused on the new method and its surprisingly destabilising effect on the colonial power. Gandhi's personal behaviour, his genuine though unorthodox religiousness impressed the Hindus tremendously. It made the masses respect him like a holy man - a Mahatma. In addition, the boycott of public educational institutions, the resignations from public offices, the simplification of the lifestyle of national leaders appealed to the religious sentiments of the Hindus. Even those among the national leadership who were motivated by rational arguments rather than religious ones like the members of the Nehru family, felt attracted by the high moral quality of a political strategy which clearly subordinated the end to the means and, moreover, achieved astonishing results. Through his unconditional support for the religiously motivated Khilafat movement Gandhi also drew the Indian Muslims into the non-cooperation movement.

Gandhi clearly represented that reform trend which was established both among Hindus as well as Muslims since the second half of nineteenth century and which envisaged the revival of their particular cultural identities. Among Hindus the trend was promoted in the socio-cultural field by revivalist aspirations like those of the religious reform movement of the Arya Samaj. At the political level in early twentieth century the so-called extremists around Tilak

in their struggle with the moderates attempted to make cultural revival the basis of the anti-colonial movement. At that time even Gandhi called himself a *sanatani*, i.e., an orthodox Hindu.[3] But contrary to the attitude of Hindu politicians, he advocated absolute religious tolerance. His main objective was national unity of all communities, classes and strata of the Indian people.

The efforts to achieve national unity based on cultural revival, however, achieved only a temporary success. On the one hand religion as an essential element of cultural revival played a significant role in mobilising the masses to anti-colonial actions, but on the other hand it encouraged centrifugal tendencies. Muslims felt antagonised by the support which Congress leaders rendered to Hindu religious and cultural organisations for the promotion of Hindi literature and its Devanagari script (Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Nagri Prácharini Sabha), or to the society for cow protection (Gaurakshini Sabha). They watched with suspicion the considerable influence which followers of the Arya Samaj and representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha, like Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Balakrishna Shivaram Moonje, Narasinha Chintaman Kelkar, und M.R.Jayakar commanded within the Indian National Congress. For a certain period of time Gandhi was able to win over the representative of the conservative stream within the Arya Samaj, Swami Shraddhanand, as an ambassador of the Hindus among the Muslims, which included his participation in Khilafát conferences. But in the long run even Gandhi failed in preventing the rise of militant Hinduism.

Research upto now focused mainly on the attempts of Hindu organisations to influence the policy of the INC. Little attention has been paid so far to those representatives of the Hindu tradition who joined the national liberation movement as individuals. Yet also Samnyasis and Sadhus of different persuasions who occupied various ranks were drawn into the vortex of non-cooperation. Joining the national movement for them meant to abandon their attitude of detachment from worldly affairs, which also presupposed political indifference. Entering politics included the risk of being sent to jail and violating the rules of ritual purity. It was, therefore, the result of a strictly individual decision and constituted rather an exception from the rule. While some of those Hindu ascetics strayed into politics only temporarily, others got deeply involved in the struggle for independence. They sometimes experienced dramatic changes in their own biography and emerged as completely changed individuals. Apart from the transformations which Samnyasis and Sadhus experienced in the course of their active political engagement, their special contribution to the national and social movements also deserves to be examined. This paper intends to study a few typical examples.

There were various entry-points to the non-cooperation movement in the twenties for religious reformers as well as for those orthodox personalities who defended traditional Hinduism as *sanatana dharma*, as "eternal religion".

Educational efforts have to be mentioned in the first place. The boycott of government-run or government-supported educational establishments created, inter alia, a sudden demand for alternative national educational institutions - schools, colleges and universities - and also for teaching personnel. The urge to establish an "other" or indigenous education in opposition to the colonial educational policy shifted the emphasis to the teaching of indigenous religious and cultural values in addition to the transmission of knowledge including that of Western origin. While recruiting teachers, therefore, not only Western educated intellectuals were approached but also religious reformers. In this context the *gurukul* movement of the Arya Samaj gained increased significance. This movement based itself on Vedic ideals of education. Apart from the Arya Samajists individuals with a traditional Hindu background were also welcome.

Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha, born in 1884, was one among those educated high-ranking Hindu personalities who joined the national movement, even though only for a short time.[4] He was born as Venkatarama Shastri into a family of civil servants. He received his higher education at Madras university and obtained several M.A. degrees. In 1908, V. Shastri joined the Sringeri *math* in Mysore. This was one of the religious centres of the influential Shivaite Dasnami order founded by Shankara in the 8th century. During the early wave of establishing national educational institutions which occurred as a corollary of the Swadeshi movement between 1905 and 1908, he followed the call of national leaders and left the *math* for three years (1908-1911) to become principal of the newly established National College at Rajamahendri. When he rejoined the order in 1911, he devoted his energies to a thorough study of the Vedanta philosophy. In 1919 he was initiated as a Samnyasi and received the name Bharati Krishna Tirtha. This was the beginning of a steep career. In 1921 he already claimed the rank of a Shankaracharya as the head of a second centre of the order in Dwarka on the Kathiawar coast in Gujarat.[5] Since he failed in enforcing his claim, he got himself installed in 1925 as Shankaracharya of the Govardhan Math at Puri on the East coast, a third centre of the order.

Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha attracted public attention as a somewhat unique figure in 1921. His anti-British attitude distinguished him from most of the leading *sanatana dharmis*.[6] This attitude led him to participate in the annual session of the Congress in 1920 held at Nagpur, where he expressed his dissatisfaction with the newly adopted objective of the Congress to achieve home rule for India within the Empire.[7] His opposition to any cooperation with the colonial power which he derived from his orthodox religious conviction made the representative of Hindu priesthood during the non-cooperation campaign to temporarily support the Muslim *ulama*. He approved the support which the All-India Khilafat Conference held at Karachi in 1921 gave to the *fatwa* of the *ulama* asking Muslim soldiers to refuse service in the British-

Indian army. The colonial government decided to make an example and in
September 1921 arrested not only six Muslims in their capacity as participants
of the Karachi conference, namely the brothers Muhammad and Shaukat Ali,
Dr. Kitchlew and three Maulanas, but also the Shankaracharya as the only
Hindu.[8] When the "Karachi Seven" were put on trial Swami Bharati Krishna
Tirtha was the only one acquitted in the case, while jail sentences were passed
on the Muslim co-accused. After his release the Shankaracharya reiterated his
support for the Khilafat movement but soon retired from national politics. For
the orthodox Hindu the stay in jail meant ritual pollution and necessitated
purification. Later on Bharati Krishna Tirtha restricted his activities to Hindu
organisations and distinguished himself as an ardent defender of orthodox
Hinduism and as a resolute adversary of religious reform.[9]

The news about the arrest of a Shankaracharya had a considerable symbolic
effect. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati who was also a member of the Dasnami
order and like the Shankaracharya a Danda Samnyasi, a Samnyasi carrying a
bamboo stick as a symbol of a particular sect, felt himself encouraged to join
the national movement because of the presence of the Shankaracharya at the
Nagpur session of the INC in 1920. He commented on the latter's role in the
Khilafat movement:

> "This was good news for the country, that a god-fearing Shankaracharya
> of the Hindus was prepared to go to jail in order to protect the religion
> of the Muslims."[10]

Educational activities were instrumental also in making *Swami Ramananda
Tirtha* join the national movement. Ramananda Tirtha was one of the founders
of the INC in the princely state of Hyderabad. In course of the tough fight for
democratisation of the feudal system he went to jail several times. He occupied
a leading position in the INC organisation of Hyderabad when the rule of the
Nizam was finally abolished and the princely state was integrated into the
Indian Union.[11] Born in 1903 in Gulbarga district in Hyderabad state as
Venkatesh Rao Khedikar and brought up in poor middle class family, he
attended a government school at Sholapur in Bombay province. He admired
Tilak and the so-called extremists and was guided by patriotic sentiments. In
1920 Ramananda Tirtha was the only one from among his co-students who not
only supported but actually followed the boycott call of the INC. He publicly
committed himself to serve the national movement. Since that date he con-
tinued his education despite many difficulties exclusively at alternative national
educational institutions. He joined the National College at Amalner and after
its closure subsequent to the termination of the non-cooperation movement, he
continued his studies at the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith in Poona. He was
also impressed by the Shankaracharya's role in the Khilafat movement. He

later on recalled the almost religious mood which surrounded the non-cooperation movement in 1921:

"Sedition was the supreme duty... We felt a sort of sanctity about the whole affair... Our patriotism was gradually changing into spiritualism."[12]

After a short spell of activities in the Bombay trade union movement, which acquainted him with the problems faced by the industrial proletariat, he decided to devote himself to national education. Between 1929 and 1935 he headed the National High School at Hipparge in Hyderabad state. The school functioned according to the *gurukul* principle. The students lived together with their teachers in the traditional way. They led a simple, industrious and moderate life as a community. Apart from transmitting knowledge and imbibing patriotism the emphasis was on strengthening a religious attitude. In accordance with the intentions of the founders of the school the aim was to train dedicated political activists and social workers, "good selfless *sevaks* i.e. servants of the people, workers...full of devotion to the cause of the poor, serving the underdog in a spirit of dedication"[13].

Venkatesh Rao Khedikar derived his religious and philosophical views basically from the reformed Hinduism of Vivekananda and he accepted Tilak's interpretation of the Bhagavadgita. In the solitary way of life at the school his religious sentiments became so prominent that in 1932 he joined a brotherhood of *bhakta-sevaks* who were followers of a Ram Tirtha cult. He became Ramananda Tirtha, an ochre-clad Samnyasi who lived on alms. But Ramananda Tirtha considered himself a *karma-yogi* who worshipped God in the spirit of Vivekananda and the Bhagavadgita by untiring selfless work in the service of the people. This included educational work as well as political activities. After the closure of the school at Hipparge he established and successfully guided a middle school at Mominabad and continued to work for the Indian National Congress.

The social movement which emerged within the national movement provided another arena for activities of Samnyasis and Sadhus. In this connection the non-cooperation campaign again prepared the ground. The campaign promoted to a larger extent the establishment of direct links between national leaders and the mainly rural masses. A development was set in motion which followed its own dynamism. The mostly young Congress activists who spread the idea of non-cooperation in the countryside were for the first time compelled to concern themselves with the grievances of the rural population and to tackle the conflicting interests in the village. Although the majority of Congress workers returned to the towns after the dying down of the national campaigns, the links once established were not completely severed. In connection with Gandhi's constructive programme some of the Congress activists even stayed on in the villages. The urban elites of different political persuasions who were

separated from the popular masses by a deep cleavage in culture and consciousness were forced to rely upon these intermediaries in order to gain influence on the masses.

Samnyasis and Sadhus were much better prepared for the work among the masses than the members of the urban elite. They had abandoned all worldly linkages and properties, they were accustomed to strenuous journeys in the countryside as well as to a spartanic way of life. The extended journeys throughout the country equipped them with ample experiences. They had a profound knowledge of rural life, they were well acquainted with the grievances faced by the villagers and they enjoyed considerable respect from among the Hindu population. The detachment of Samnyasis and Sadhus from worldly concerns, however, obstructed their active participation in the national movement.

For a Hindu several paths were available to finally escape from the worldly existence *(moksha)*. Samnyasis and Sadhus rejected the longer path of worldly activities *(karmamarga)* prescribed for householders and instead, chose either the path towards ultimate knowledge *(jnanamarga)* or the path of utter devotion to God *(bhaktimarga)*. The contemplative attitude of an ascetic could not easily be combined with social activity. In addition, and in distinction from Christianity, charity and service to the sick and poor were not considered rewarding ideals in Hinduism. Yet, in the new atmosphere of an almost religious-informed enthusiastic nationalism the ideas propagated by Hindu religious reformers since the early 19th century created a considerable impact on public opinion. The Arya Samaj gave a fresh interpretation of the ancient scriptures, particularly the Vedas, Vivekananda revalued the Vedanta and, finally, politicians like Tilak and Gandhi made the Bhagavadgita the "bible" of Hinduism. The most significant aspect was the revaluation of *karma-yoga,* of human action, of devotion through selfless service for the country and the people. This also affected some Samnyasis and Sadhus.

During the non-cooperation campaign in the beginning of the twenties the political commitment of the nationalists took precedence over the social. A few references are available in regard to Samnyasis who were active among labourers. Sumit Sarkar referred to "political *sanyasis*" in West Bengal like Swami Darsha-nand at Ranigunj and Swami Viswanand, the leader of the miners of Jharia.[14] The above mentioned Swami Ramananda Tirtha took for some time an active part in the trade union movement, although prior to his becoming a Samnyasi. In 1929 he organised a big strike of 20,000 textile workers in Sholapur (Maharashtra). The establishment of connections with the social movement in the countryside, however, was a difficult task. Hindu and Muslim ascetics were frequently the first in establishing a relationship between the peasants and national leaders. Such was the case when social unrest from below spread among peasants, particularly among tenants-at-will in the United Provinces after the First World War. Baba Ramchandra, the leader of the tenants' move-

ment in Oudh in 1920 is an example.[15] He actually aroused Jawaharlal Nehrus interest in peasant questions.

Swami Vidyanand maintained a closer, though at times strained relationship to the INC. He attracted attention already during the non-cooperation days through his activities on the estates of one of the biggest landlords of British India, the Maharaja of Darbhanga in Bihar. He was born as Bishn Bharan Prasad into the family of a well-to-do tenant in Bihar. Only little is known about the life of Swami Vidyanand. The scanty information has mainly been drawn from the "Reply to the Open Letter" authored by the District manager of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, Babu Badrinath Upadhyay, to a pamphlet of the Swami entitled "Open Letter".[16] Swami Vidyanand received some educa- tion and is said to have lived in the Aparnath Math of the Dasnami order in Benares as a Samnyasi. The colonial administration attributed the emergence of Kisan Sabha literature in the Darbhanga district to his appearance in North Bihar in the middle of 1919.[17] Swami Vidyanand had probably some connec- tions with the Kisan Sabha of the United Provinces (U.P.) which was founded by nationalists in 1917/18. Inspired by the national movement he went to Bihar with the intention to spread education in the countryside.[18] In his speeches before peasants he propagated the non-cooperation message of the INC. He not only advocated the unity of Hindus and Muslims but even appealed to the peasants to look upon Untouchables as brothers in the conflict with British planters and Indian landlords, the zamindars. In doing so, he as a Samnyasi, questioned traditional Hindu values.

Swami Vidyanand obviously considered himself a Congress worker. In 1919 he participated in the annual Congress session held at Amritsar along with 200 peasant delegates. He always sought the help of the local Congress organisation for redressing the peasants' grievances. But soon he came into conflict with the office-bearers of the INC. Swami Vidyanand faced the same dilemma as peas- ant leaders later on. Acting as mediator between national and specific peasant interests he only wanted to focus attention on the excesses of the zamindari system, particularly the arbitrary use of power by the managers (amlas) of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, or the efforts of the Darbhanga Raj to curb legal or customary rights of the tenants.[19] The Swami did not yet question the exist- ence of the zamindari system as such. His demands raised through petitions appear rather moderate in hindsight, but INC politicians refused to support him. He, for instance, in April 1920 moved a resolution at the Bihar Provincial Congress Conference in Patna, asking the British administration to set up a committee of enquiry to look into the grievances of the tenants of the Darbhanga Raj. Yet Rajendra Prasad succeeded in getting the resolution dismissed. He vilified Vidyanand as a charlatan who was just out to make a career for himself.[20] So-called national interests, but also personal links to the

zamindari system motivated the INC politicians in Bihar to take a seemingly neutral stance vis-à-vis the social conflicts between landlords and tenants. The experiences encountered by Swami Vidyanand in the early twenties were similar to those made by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati a decade later.

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati was born in 1889 in the backward Ghazipur district of U.P. into a family of Jujhautiya Brahmins who owned a small zamindari and had no tradition of education. Since his childhood days he was an ardent admirer of Shiva and - according to his own words - remained throughout his life a *sanatani,* an orthodox Hindu. His adamant faith became only gradually moderated and modified through his life's experiences.[21] Although he was successful at school, he left the German Mission High English School at Ghazipur just before completing his matriculation. At the age of seventeen he joined the Aparnath Math of the Dasnami order at Benares and became a bamboo stick-carrying Danda Samnyasi. He roamed about as a mendicant and finally decided to seek redemption (*moksha*) through ultimate knowledge. After one and a half years of an itinerant life he rejoined the Aparnath Math. From about 1909 to 1915 he studied the Sanskrit scriptures at different traditional Sanskrit schools and with teachers chosen by himself. Later on he published the oral commentaries of his best teachers on the scriptures. In course of time he earned for himself the reputation of a Sanskrit scholar. Incidentally, the "Comprehensive History of Bihar", published in 1976, refers to Swami Sahajanand Saraswati only as the author of his textbook for Bhumihar Brahmins, called "Karmakalap", but not in his capacity as a peasant leader.[22]

The Swami's interest in worldly affairs was aroused by the caste movement of the Bhumihar Brahmins. As a Jujhautia Brahmin he felt deeply hurt at the news that Saryupari and Kanyakubja Brahmins discriminated the Bhumihars which were related to his own caste. They denied them the recognition as Brahmins because Bhumihars practised agriculture, had no educational tradition and did not function as priests. In 1914 the Swami began working for the Bhumihar Brahmin Sabha. With the help of this caste organisation a well-to-do agricultural elite which nourished political ambitions fought for social upgrading through recognition of its Brahmin status. The Swami as a Sanskrit scholar was approached by the Sabha to take up the cause of the Bhumihars. He started an ambitious project in order, inter alia, to prove kinship relations between the Bhumihars and high-ranking Brahmin groups. In the middle of the twenties, he initiated the *purohit* movement. The movement aimed at winning and training Bhumihars for priesthood in order to enable them to fulfil their traditional Brahmin *dharma.* For the Bhumihars who were generally ignorant of Sanskrit he wrote the "Karmakalap", a manual on rituals and astrology in Hindi, in which only the *mantras* were quoted in Sanskrit. In 1927 the Swami was appointed head of the Sitaram Ashram at Bihta near Patna. The institution

was founded to provide sons of Bhumihars facilities for the study of the scriptures, particularly the Vedas, free of cost. The Ashram which continued as a Sanskrit Mahavidyalay became the centre of the Bihar peasant movement in the thirties.

The Swami's association with the caste movement of the Bhumihar Brahmins aroused his interest in worldly affairs. It was again the non-cooperation movement which caused a turn in his life. Being an orthodox Hindu he felt fascinated by the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. Subsequent to a conversation with Gandhi in 1920 he engaged himself in the political movement as a Congress volunteer. He attended the annual Congress session at Nagpur in 1920, where he met the above mentioned Shankaracharya. He fully committed himself to the non-cooperation movement in the countryside and received his first jail sentence in 1922. His entry into the national movement signified a decisive step in the biography of the Swami. He got in touch with people from different social strata. Travels to various regions of the country widened his national outlook and the exchange of views with Maulanas during his prison days contributed to dismantling a deep-rooted prejudice against Islam.[23]

During his stay in jail the Swami also acquired political knowledge. The political prisoners exchanged political literature and discussed its contents.

The impact of the national movement transformed Swami Sahajanand Saraswati from a detached Samnyasi through the ideologue of a caste organisation to a committed peasant leader. In the late twenties he began to voice the grievances of peasants and tenants in the neighbourhood of the Bihta Ashram. Initially he worked among the peasants on behalf of the INC. But soon his partisanship for the peasants' cause provoked adverse reactions from propertied Bhumihar zamindars and also from INC politicians of Bihar. In the later thirties the provincial INC organisation refused to support his peasant movement and he was even prohibited from public speaking in some districts when Congress ruled in Bihar between 1937 and 1939. By that time the Swami had risen to become one of the outstanding peasant leaders in India. The treatment meted out by zamindars to tenants who were ruined by the fall-out of the world economic crisis and by an earthquake in North Bihar in 1934 had turned the Swami into a fierce opponent of the zamindari system. In the middle of the thirties he distanced himself from Gandhis policy of mediation. He began to listen to the arguments of the Congress Socialists who at that time began establishing links to the peasant movement. In the following years he studied socialist and communist literature while in jail. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati took a leading part in the work of the All-India Kisan Sabha founded in 1936. This peasant organisation was for some time capable of successfully competing with the INC as representative of peasant interests. Through its work the Sabha prepared the ground for agrarian reforms in independent India.

The Swami's evolution from a detached Samnyasi to a socially committed peasant leader was unusual but not unique in the context of the national movement. A few religious figures in Bihar followed the example set by the Swami in the thirties. The *mahant* Shia Ram Das, head of an *ashram*, became president of the District Kisan Council of Monghyr and got involved in the tenant movement of Barhiya tal between 1937 and 1939.[24] Another *mahant*, Dhanraj Puri, presided over Kisan meetings in the Champaran district in 1938 which were addressed by the Swami as the main speaker.[25]

Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayan was for some time a fellow traveller of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati in the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha. The biographies of both personalities resembled each other in several respects. Rahul Sankrityayan was born in 1893 as Kedarnath Pande into a peasant family of Saryupari Brahmins. His place of birth in the backward Azamgarh district of eastern U.P. was located not far from the native village of Sahajanand Saraswati.[26] Rahul also left his village while in his teens and joined the Sadhus at Benares. His vagrant life was interspersed with periods of intense studies of Sanskrit scriptures at traditional religious centres. At the age of twenty he joined a Vaishnavite order and became a detached Vairagi (a Vaishnavite Sadhu) with the name Ram Udar Das. The head of the Parasa Math in Bihar even selected him as his successor. But Rahul went again on a pilgrimage throughout India.

His life took a new turn in 1914 when the Vairagi associated himself with the religious reform movement of the Arya Samaj. He combined his work on behalf of the Arya Samaj with extensive travelling and with studies at various educational institutions of the society in Northern India. During this period he became a critic of the caste system and gradually dissociated himself from the Sadhus. He simultaneously evinced a keen interest in political events like the October revolution in Russia and the non-cooperation campaign in India. Dressed in the ochre robe he offered his services as a Congress volunteer in 1921. He took an active part in Gandhis constructive programme in the Saran district of Bihar and conducted political work. He was jailed several times. The stay in jail enabled him to educate himself politically and to devote his energy to restless writing. During the twenties Rahul Sankrityayan began taking interest in Buddhism in all its cultural, scientific and religious manifestations, and he travelled to Nepal and Ceylon. In 1927 and 1928 he studied Buddhist literature at the famous Buddhist College Vidyalankar Parivena in Ceylon. For this purpose he learned Pali. Shortly afterwards he undertook an adventurous journey to Tibet where he searched for Buddhist literature of Indian origin. Towards the end of the twenties the Sadhu turned into a Buddhist monk. His name finally changed to Rahul Sankrityayan. On behalf of Buddhist institutions he subsequently travelled to Europe, Japan, Korea, Manchuria and the then Soviet Union. Repeatedly he set out on dangerous trips to Tibet with the

intention to trace Buddhist manuscripts and literature and he managed to carry valuable collections back to India.

Rahul Sankrityayan's first visit to the Soviet Union had converted him to an ardent supporter of socialism. In 1937 he was invited to join the Oriental Institute of Leningrad University as a Sanskrit professor. There he got acquainted with professor Shcherbatsky, he became the father of a son and married later on. After his return to India in 1938 he plunged into the work of the Bihar Kisan Sabha, led the non-violent Satyagraha of tenants in Amvari and was again sent to prison. Only now he discarded his ochre robe. He became a member of the Communist Party of India in 1939 and maintained his association with this organisation despite temporary disagreements until the end of his life in 1963. Although he never received any formal university education, Rahul Sankrityayan was highly respected in India as an outstanding expert - Mahapandit - on Buddhist culture, literature, and philosophy, and he is well-known as a versatile author of a large number of books which deal with different subjects.

During his restless and adventurous life Rahul Sankrityayan got entangled in various cultural, intellectual and ideological streams which fed the national movement in India in the first half of the twentieth century. He studied all of them thoroughly, appropriated what he found worthwhile and built up his own world view. While he was still a detached Sadhu, Rahul felt the need for religious reform. The committed Gandhian of the non-cooperation days turned to a critic of the latent social contradictions of his own society. The Sadhu became a Buddhist monk and finally, in course of time the Buddhist monk was attracted to communism and converted to atheism without ever giving up his attachment to Buddhism.

Rahuls intellectual development was somewhat exceptional. But also other Swamis who got involved in the social movement did not stop at accepting ideas of national democratic self-determination and incorporated - to a varying degree - visions of social justice into their world view. In the early twenties Swami Vidyanand pointed out the social tensions which emerged from the conditions under the Darbhanga Raj. When the INC distanced itself from him and when the tenants' movement subsided he got himself elected by the peasants into the Provincial Council. At the same time he withdrew from social activities. We know about the probable reasons of his behaviour only from statements made by his fierce adversaries. Ramananda Tirtha from Hyderabad was an admirer of Gandhi. Gandhi him-self chose him as an individual Satyagrahi and Ramananda obeyed the strict rules imposed on the Satyagrahis. He went to jail several times. At the same time, his experiences in the trade union movement as well as his intimate acquaintance with the conditions which prevailed in the villages of feudal Hyderabad caused him to sympathise with the socialist ideas of Nehru and to establish links with the Congress Socialists. He called himself "a Nehruite from the ideological point of view"[27] and he

expressed his conviction: "Democracy to be real must generate forces of free-
dom, peace and social justice."[28] Sardar Patel, a prominent leader of the Con-
gress in those days who was also at logger-heads with the All-India Kisan Sabha
rated Swami Tirtha and his followers as "dangerously left wing"[29]. Swami Saha-
janand Saraswati, on the other hand, considered himself a "radical"[30]. As a
result of his controversies with the big zamindars and their managers he lost
the Gandhian faith in the possibility to make them change their attitude. He
"began to think seriously in terms of class struggles as the only means to libera-
te the oppressed masses from the many-folded slavery and subjugation"[31]. The
everyday experiences gained through the work in the villages and the links
established to left intellectuals within the national movement can be identified
as the main reasons why the Swamis and Sadhus felt inclined to socialist and
even communist ideas. In addition, it would not be out of place to presume that
their ascetic way of life and the renunciation of worldly riches provided a
favourable climate for this tendency.

Rahul Sankrityayan was not alone in discarding the ochre robe. Swami
Vidyanand did the same. Towards the end of the 1920s when the latter entered
the election battle, the colonial authorities observed: "He has ceased dressing
as a Swami and has begun dressing as an Indian gentleman."[32] Although the
robe of the monk doubtlessly helped its bearer in winning the confidence and
respect of the peasants, it lost its significance whenever the Swamis established
themselves as peasant leaders. The respect which Rahul Sankrityayan enjoyed
from the peasants in his area of work did not diminish when it became known
that he had given up the life of a monk. From "Rahul-Baba" the peasants no
longer expected religious guidance but practical support in their struggle to
retain the fields.[33] Swami Ramananda Tirtha remained a convinced Samnyasi.
Similar to Swami Sahajanand's attitude he considered politics an obligation,
"accepted in a spirit of prayerful service"[34]. He was among those who in 1962
voluntarily retired from politics when the so-called Kamaraj plan requested
Congress members not to stick to office for more than ten years. Swami Sahaja-
nand Saraswati continued to adhere to his profound religious sentiments, to the
way of life of a monk until his death in 1950. He stuck to the ritual prescrip-
tions which Brahmins were obliged to observe but explained them as rules
based on hygienic considerations. The Swami was not prepared to change his
life-style. And yet, religion became a private affair for him when social que-
stions gained priority. In accordance with the predominant trend he chose the
Bhagavadgita as his main source of spiritual inspiration. Since his first stay in
jail he always carried a printed copy of the Gita with him.[35] From the Gita he
derived his conviction that serving the people meant worshipping God.

The personalities dealt with in this paper played their own distinct roles in
the national and the social movements of India in their different capacities as
Samnyasi, Sadhu or Buddhist monk. All of them were tireless workers and

outstanding intermediaries between the urban elites and the popular masses. They contributed largely to translating political and social ideas into a language which could be understood by the peasants. As holy men who enjoyed the respect of the people they were in a much better position to convincingly propagate new ideas than local leaders or speakers with an urban background. Already at the beginning of the twenties Swami Vidyanand sometimes addressed crowds numbering 10 to 20,000 individuals.[36] In the thirties when the peasant movement reached its peak Swami Sahajanand Saraswati attracted even larger audiences. Various political forces became interested to win over the influential holy men for their cause. In contrast to politicians with worldly obligations the mendicants were generally less committed to political consider-ations than to follow their own principles and convictions. They, therefore, tended to be troublesome partners and did not easily fit into the framework of narrow party politics.

The message spread by Samnyasis and Sadhus who took an active part in social movements differed to some extent but it was seldom directed towards the past. Even when Swami Vidyanand compared the glorious Indian past under Moghul and Hindu rulers like Akbar and Shivaji with the distressing colonial present[37], he gave preference to new ideas. His message was that tenants had rights which they must defend jointly. The golden age which Swami Sahajanand Saraswati promised the peasants in almost messianic words visualised a new pattern of society. In order to encourage them to change the existing conditions he painted the picture of an almost mythical Soviet Rus-sia.[38]

The Samnyasis and Sadhus neither represented a homogeneous trend nor a group of their own within the national and social movements in India during the first half of the twentieth century. They acted as individuals, frequently as impressive, even charismatic and usually obstinate personalities. Their biogra-phies deserve to be examined because they vividly reflect particular aspects of the social and intellectual transformation over half a century in India, the interaction of local traditions and external influences as well as the conflict of different intellectual, ideological and political tendencies, and finally the re-sponses to them. At the same time, the study of the attitudes and approaches of the political ascetics sheds light on the multi-facetted nature of the national movement. The movement for independence not only unleashed forces which challenged colonial rule but, simultaneously, questioned the validity of traditio-nal values and patterns of behaviour which governed the way of life of the majority of the population.

Notes

1   Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography. With Musings on Recent Events in India,
     Bombay 1962, p. 72.
2   Ibid., p. 73.
3   The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 21 (Aug.-Dec. 1921), Ahmedabad 1966,
     p. 245.
4   Cf. Manjuladevi, My Beloved Gurudeva. In: Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha, Sanatana
     Dharma, Bombay 1985 (2nd ed.), p. XI.
5   Cf. Jürgen Lütt, The Sankaracarya of Puri. In: A. Eschmann/H. Kulke/G.C. Tripathi
     (eds.), The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa, Delhi 1978.
6   Cf. ibid., p. 416.
7   Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan Sangharsh, Bihta (Patna) 1952, p. 188.
8   Cf. Gail Minault, The Khilafat Movement. Religious Symbolism and Political Mobiliz-
     ation in India, New York 1982, pp. 169 sqq.
9   The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, an institution devoted to the dissemination of traditional
     Hindu views and values, considers Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha as an authority on
     sanatana dharma and till today distributes his book on the subject. See Swami Bharati
     Krishna Tirtha, Sanatana Dharma, Bombay 1985 (2nd ed.).
10   Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan..., loc. cit., p. 189 sq.
11   Cf. Swami Ramananda Tirtha, Memoirs of Hyderabad Freedom Struggle, Bombay
     1967.
12   Ibid., p. 29.
13   Ibid., p. 47.
14   Cf. Sumit Sarkar, Modern India, 1885-1947, Delhi etc. 1983, p. 200.
15   Cf. Kapil Kumar, Peasants in Revolt. Tenants, Landlords, Congress and the Raj in
     Oudh, 1886-1922, New Delhi 1984.
16   Cf. Activities of Swami Bidyanand. In: Bihar State Central Records Office (SCRO),
     Patna, Govt. of Bihar and Orissa, Pol. Dept. (Special), File No. 333/1920, p. 11; cf. also
     Stephen Henningham, Agrarian Relations in North Bihar: Peasant Protest and the
     Darbhanga Raj, 1919-20. In: The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 16
     (1979) 1, p. 59.
17   Activities of Swami Bidyanand, loc. cit., p. 9.
18   Ibid., p. 21.
19   Cf. Stephen Henningham, Agrarian Relations..., loc. cit., p. 62.
20   Ibid., p. 74.
21   Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan..., loc. cit., p. 17.
22   Cf. A. L. Thakur, Sanskrit Literature in Bihar (1757-1974). In: Kali Kinkar
     Datta/Jatashankar Jha (eds.), The Comprehensive History of Bihar, Vol. III, Pt. II,
     Chap. XXI, A., p. 464.
23   Cf. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan..., loc. cit., pp. 243-244.
24   Bihar SCRO, Patna, Govt. of Bihar and Orissa, Pol. Dept. (Special), File No. 29/39
     (II), Agrarian Trouble, Barhaiya Tal (1936 to 1939), pp. 4, 7.
25   Bihar SCRO, Patna, Govt. of Bihar and Orissa, Pol. Dept. (Special), File No. 33/1938
     (C), Kisan Sabha Meetings.
26   Cf. Rahul Sankrityayan, Meri Jivan Yatra, 5 vols., New Delhi 1994; Prabhakar Mach-
     we, Rahul Sankrityayan, Delhi 1978.

27   Swami Ramananda Tirtha, Memoirs..., loc. cit., p. 206.
28   Ibid., p. 223.
29   Quoted in: Hugh Gray/Konda Lakshman Bapuji, A Backward Classes Leader of the
      Telengana (Andhra Pradesh). In: W. H. Morris-Jones (ed.), The Making of Politi-
      cians: Studies from Africa and Asia, London 1976, p. 160.
30   Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan..., loc. cit., p. 427.
31   Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, The Origin and Growth of the Kisan Movement in
      India (manuscript), p. 10 sq. In: Private Papers of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, reel
      no. 1, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.
32   Activities of Swami Bidyanand, loc. cit., p. 22.
33   Rahul Sankrityayan, Meri Jivan Yatra, vol. 2, Allahabad 1950, p. 528.
34   Swami Ramananda Tirtha, Memoirs..., loc. cit., p. 240.
35   Cf. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Mera Jivan..., pp. 167-168, 232.
36   .Cf. Stephen Henningham, Agrarian Relations in North Bihar..., loc. cit., p. 63.
37   Activities of Swami Bidyanand, loc. cit., p. 3.
38   Referring to the situation in Indian villages, he argued: "Similar conditions existed in
      other countries. The kisans and labourers were in distress. The earners were in dis-
      tress. But they had their organisation. The kisans there, are comfortable. They cou-
      rageously stood up. The people are happy. The kisans of Russia are happy. There are
      beautiful houses for their children. There are good schools for their education. There
      are hospitals for them, there are books and newspapers. All the means of enjoyment
      are there. All the arrangement is made by the Govt. The reason is that the Govt. there
      is in the hands of the kisans and muzdoors. Those kisans have not 4 hands and 4 feet,
      they have 2 hands and 2 legs like you." English translation of the verbatim speech of
      Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, delivered on 25.3.35, at the Kisan Sabha, held at Punsia-
      Hat, p.s. Rajaun, District Bhagalpur, p. 9. In: Bihar SCRO, Patna, Govt. of Bihar and
      Orissa, Pol. Dept. (Special), File No. 16/1935 I, Activities of Kisan Sabhas. Swami
      Sahajanand.

Religion and Group Identity: Comparing Three Regional Movements in Colonial India

Dietrich Reetz

The process of redefining national and ethnic identities often relies on a close relationship between cultural and linguistic traditions, political movements and religious communities. This manuscript seeks to understand how the religious aspect influenced regional identity-building under conditions of colonial rule in India. The paper draws on a project concerning itself with the political implications of regional identities during the twenties and thirties of this century. The project compares the movements of the Sikhs, the Tamil "Non-Brahmans" and the Pakhtuns.

It is intended to outline the evolution of the religious aspect in these movements through three major stages of political mobilisation: revivalism, loyalism and radicalism. The issue seems to be of particular interest in the Indian case for two reasons:
- Was there any common pattern behind the influence of religion on group identity? What were the similarities and the differences in the role of religion in the three movements?
- Was there any peculiarity in the Indian case under colonial rule as compared to the time of independence?

Group identity in colonial India

Modern political identity is no doubt a function of mobilisation. Groups of like-minded and interested activists, the famous élite, are as much involved in this process as the masses with their demands and expectations. In the early nineteenth century and prior to that, political group identity had few opportunities to manifest itself in India, except in religion, in tribal, or clan affairs. Even the famous mutiny or uprising of 1857/58 was a largely spontaneous event which then was pushed in certain directions and utilised by local political and military leaders. It is true that there was a way of ascertaining the will of local village populations through councils, the traditional *panchayat* system. The hallmark of religious, tribal, caste or clan identity, however, was structural, largely indisputable authority which did not need to be verified since it was either inherited or God-given. The very process of the transition from individual or local to group identity was one inseparable from the nationalist movement and the introduc-

tion of democratic political institutions, even if they were only partially or very minimally representative.

What was distinctive about Indian nationalism? Though it was inspired by Western concepts of territorial and political nationalism it was not identical with it. The cultural and religious factor was much stronger in India. More precisely, it was the system of intellectual and social norms within a particular religion rather than the belief in God that became the bedrock of infant nationalism. Influential Congress leaders like M. K. Gandhi (1869-1948) and, more pronounced, Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950), Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) and Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946) used Hindu religious rhetoric, symbols and practices to reach the broad, illiterate masses. Nationalism was wedded to religion right from the very beginning whereas in Europe nationalism had been dissociated from religion, had after the Enlightenment and the French Revolution grown out of a negation of belief and the affirmation of reason. The Indian experiment was to reconcile reason with God. As Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), a staunchly pro-British Muslim reformer, most radically speculated, God could not have given reason to man without wanting him to use it.[1] And Ramakrishna (1836-1886), when asked if God cannot be realised without giving up the world, answered:

> "By living in the world you are enjoying the taste of both the pure crystallised sugar and of the molasses with all its impurities... Work with one hand and hold the Feet of the Lord with the other."[2]

Religion and regional identity

If All-India nationalism was moulded by religion from its inception, so was sub-nationalism, or regional politics. Communities were equated with particular sub-divisions of religious communities. All the three cases under review here bear witness to this trend in one way or the other.

The Sikh movement was a religious movement by definition. Its regional approach was diffuse when it started. It ventured to represent the whole Sikh Panth, i.e. the whole Sikh community living more or less dispersed all over India. But it soon began to realise that it could not marshal its forces effectively without some kind of a home base. The districts of the Punjab in which the Sikhs constituted a majority or at least a sizable minority were to serve as the territorial basis for their ambitions.

The Sikhs consolidated into a community of their own with clearly defined boundaries only in the course of the nineteenth century. The rule of a Sikh King over large parts of the Punjab and Pakhtun territories from 1799 to 1839 by Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) had stimulated the consolidation of the Sikhs.

After the British occupied the Punjab in 1849, their repressive policies against the Sikhs led many former adherents of the Sikh faith to give up Sikhism or to return to orthodox Hinduism. In the first 1855 census of the Punjab, Sikhs were not counted separately, except for Lahore district.[3] Many considered themselves as Hindu or didn't think it was important to get registered separately from the Hindus with whom they had many things in common.[4] The 1881 census counted 1.706 million Sikhs in the Punjab. This was 92 percent of all Sikhs in India who constituted 0.73 percent of all Indians.[5]

The Pakhtuns regarded themselves as a distinct sub-group of the Muslim *ummah*. Tribal custom had it that, as a group of tribes, they believed in a common ancestor, *Qais*, who lived at the time of the Prophet. He allegedly sought the Prophet out in Medina, embraced the faith, and was given the name of Abdur-Rashid. "Thus, Pakhtuns have no infidel past, nor do they carry in their history the blemish of defeat and forcible conversion."[6] In this sense they constituted a religious sub-community within Islam, a distinct people of Muslim Pakhtuns or Pakhtun Muslims. The Pakhtuns were almost equally divided between the north-west frontier territories of British India and Afghanistan. This area became the focus of their regional identity. The 1891 census recorded 1,080,931 Pakhtu-speakers, which amounted to 0.41 percent of all Indians speaking Pakhtu. They lived mostly in the frontier districts of the then-Punjab and the independent frontier territories.[7]

The Tamil "non-Brahman" movement fed on two separate intellectual traditions, Tamil self-consciousness and the "non-Brahman" movement. Tamil identity was helped along by local religious reformers of the dominating Hindu creed, mainly in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. They, in turn, were inspired by Christian missionaries like Rev. Robert Caldwell (1819-1891) and G. U. Pope (1829-1907) of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who through their studies encouraged a re-evaluation of Tamil culture and religious tradition.

The "non-Brahman" movement which started in 1916 was born in the same area. It also extended to the neighbouring Mahratta and Telugu-speaking territories. Its more prominent leaders and the political party which came to represent the "non-Brahman" cause, the "Justice Party", mainly focused on Tamil territory. The avowed object of the "non-Brahman" movement was to fight social and political discrimination of the South Indian castes below the rank of the Brahmans who occupied the highest position in the caste hierarchy. Thus, the Tamil and the "non-Brahman" concepts shared the inimical attitude towards the Brahmans and North Indian, what they called Aryan dominance of Hinduism, representing the Drawidian South of India to which Tamil culture belonged. The concept of a distinct South Indian, or Tamil Hinduism, remained the strongest intellectual reference in Tamil nationalism to this day. The 1891 census counted 15,229 million Tamil-speakers, accounting for 5.8 percent of all

Indians, living in an area, "covering the whole of Southern India up to Mysore and the Ghats on the west, and the Ceded Districts, as they are called, on the north". It is also widely disseminated throughout India by wandering labourers and domestic servants hailing from this area.[8]

Stages of mobilisation in colonial India

Though religion was a constituting factor in shaping the regional identities of the Sikhs, the Pakhtuns and the Tamils, it could never have become a potent force on its own. The justification for comparing the three movements here lies in their surprisingly analogous evolution and maturation as political movements.

All three of them, and here they shared in with the nationalist movement on the all-India level, experienced three major stages.

The first stage was usually taken by religious or cultural *awakening* and *revival* giving an unprecedented fillip to concepts and activities aimed at carving out a separate group identity. The second stage was dominated by the forces of *loyalism* which wanted to participate in the "goodies" of administrative, constitutional and economic reform under colonial rule. The third one was political *radicalism* in which the attainment of political power with the exclusion of the British was the hot issue.

The revivalist movements bore the first traces of indigenous nationalism. Religious and ethnic community élites tried to redefine themselves against the alien influences of British authority and Christianity which had so successfully challenged their traditional hold over Indian society. The spiritual ancestor of Indian nationalism, Rammohan Roy (1772-1833), wrote the polemical pamphlet "The Precepts of Jesus" in 1820 and the forebear of Muslim politics, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, joined in with the first Muslim commentary on the Bible, *Tabin al-Kalam*, in 1862. The "Indian Renaissance" and the movement for better education of Muslims followed closely on their heels.

Revivalism also led to a renewed interest in the vernacular as an authentic medium of expression and instruction. At the same time, this was a response to the domination of English print and culture. I here refer to Benedict Anderson's exposition of the influence of print capitalism on nationalist reflexes.[9] Printing provided the vernacular languages with new avenues for dissemination of linguistic material and with the means for creating an indigenous intellectual élite. The vernaculars gained rising significance with the foundation of vernacular colleges and universities which became another hallmark of these movements.

The loyalist parties were trying to plead the cause of the community they represented with the authorities along the lines of constitutional reforms and political representation. Loyalism was the well-known characteristic of the

initial phase of Congress politics. And, when the Muslim League came into being in 1906, who could rival its loyalism before the authorities?

Radical politics pursued political goals of representation and power. While forces supporting the loyalist organisations often co-operated with the British because they owed their status to their patronage, they were now challenged by up-and-coming social classes connected with the general commercialisation of society. The new strata resorted to mass actions of pronounced militancy along with the non-co-operation movement. They positioned themselves for independence which, since the end of the First World War, was believed to be imminent in one form or another. For radical action the Congress, the League and other parties founded volunteers' corps which exemplified the political culture of radicalism at this stage. Through this period Congress and the Muslim League emerged as the major contenders for power in the whole of India. They were similar in the extent of their reach beyond a certain territorial region and their non-regional, non-ethnic concepts of legitimacy and power.

For the Congress Party and the Muslim League the stages of revival, loyalism and radicalism are fairly easy to distinguish. For the smaller regional movements it is not so easy to tell one stage from the other. Where with Congress and the Muslim movements different parties, organisations and leaders followed each other at the various stages, regional movements often had to make do with the same party, or leader dominating all stages of political mobilisation. But the concepts and characteristics of every stage were easily discernable.

What was particularly noteworthy was that for every stage there were characteristic slogans for mobilisation which were strikingly similar among the various regional movements.[10] Another feature was the evolution of territorial references which were progressing through the stages in clearly defined terms.

The revived ideal

At the *reform and revival* stage, the return to a mythical Golden Age was sought. The community was perceived to be in danger of decline or dissolution. Since it was difficult for contemporaries to understand the dynamics of social change, responsibility for the fall of the community from its mythical status of eminence was laid on the downfall of religion. Their imagined or real plight was exacerbated by the status of minority within the dominating Hinduist context. Since new generations no longer followed the principles of religion of the minority but had turned to both British values and mainstream Hinduism, the restoration of religious principle was thought to be a remedy. Fighting *decay* and *degradation* was the battle cry at this stage.

In Sikhism, the first wide-spread reforming movements gained ground a few years after the British conquered Punjab. The *Nirankaris* were started by Baba Dayal (1783-1855) who was a contemporary of Ranjit Singh. His main target of criticism was the worship of images against which he re-emphasised the belief in *Nirankar* - the Formless One. The *Namdharis*, or *Kukas*, were founded by Bhai Balak Singh (1799-1862) who laid the main emphasis on a pious and simple living in contrast to the pomp of the Sikh royal court and noblemen.[11] In response to British dominance and Christian influences Sikh revivalism gained a new meaning with the *Singh Sabhas* from 1873 onwards. The first well-known *Sabha* meeting gathered in Amritsar to protest derogatory remarks by some Hindus on the Sikh faith and the life of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. The *Singh Sabha* movement was driven by the desire to counteract conversions to Hinduism and Christianity. The Sikh ritual was to be restored and alien religious practices to be eliminated.[12]

The south Indian "non-Brahman" movement started with the *Satyashodhak Samaj* by Jyotiba Phule (1827-1890) which for the first time raised the issue of the discrimination of the castes standing below the Brahman priests.[13] Tamil Hinduist revivalism was embodied in the concept of *Śaiva siddhanta*[14] which highlighted the *Agamas*. The latter were medieval Tamil Hindu scriptures, which allegedly had been falsified by the *Aryans* and had to be restored to their original influence and meaning.[15] This reforming concept focused on the worship of Shiva, one of the major incarnations of the Supreme Being in Hinduism. It was derived from the religious hymns of the medieval Tamil siddhi teachers who questioned the religious orthodoxies of their time.

In the case of the Pakhtuns, religious reform efforts were carried by local activists like the mujahidin, who set up model communities in the Buner area,[16] and the Haji of Turangzai (1885-1937) who propagated independent education with an emphasis on religion. A major objective of these activists was to see Islam play its due role again which they believed would help eradicate the negative effects of British rule.

To further these aims, institutions were started for the privileged education of community members. The Sikhs founded their Khalsa College in 1893. The "Justice Party" on behalf of the mainly Tamil Vellalas actively supported Tamil-language education culminating in the foundation of Annamalai University in 1929. The Islamia College in the Frontier Province started functioning in 1913 and turned out many a number of Pakhtun activists.

At this stage, territorial references were fairly unspecific. Officially, the emphasis was on the non-territorial body of believers or adherents to the faith of this or that particular community, though the territorial connotation of the Punjab in the case of the Sikhs, of South India in the case of the "non-Brahmans", and of the Pakhtun-speaking areas in North-West India, was implied.

What was characteristic for the religious aspect of community-building at this stage was that religion was not taken at face value. In the course of the revival movements, religious concepts were reconstituted and the boundaries of the religious community redefined. In the Sikh case, the debate raged between two major traditions. One was the Tat Khalsa, embodied in the Singh Sabhas which stood for a new and more strictly defined Sikhism devoid of any references to Hinduism, rejecting the veneration of saints, idols and the services of other holy men. Reconstituting the membership of the Sikh community, they rejected caste regulations in favour of egalitarian treatment of all Sikhs. This favoured the untouchable Sikhs, commonly known as *Mazhabis*, who were forbidden to enter the inner precincts of the Golden Temple and bathe in the sacred tank.[17] On the other hand, the Tat Khalsa's insistence on uniform initiatory rites excluded those Sikh groups who only partly followed Sikh customs like the *Sahajdari, Nirmala* or *Udasi*.[18] The other one was the Sanatan tradition, linked with the holy shrines which reflected customary caste culture and peasant religious belief. It attached no stigma to the worshipping before many deities, visiting the shrine of a holy *Pir*, etc. They regarded Sikhs to be part of the Hindu community - though in a larger "ethno-territorial"[19] sense and not in the narrow ritual meaning of today. The hearings of the Public Service Commission of 1913 gave ample proof of these cleavages. While the so-called Old Party, represented by Gurbaksh Singh Bedi, who combined the function of a magistrate and the position of a land-owner and a *jagirdar*, was in favour of regarding the Sikhs as part of the Hindus, the Young Party, for which the Secretary of the *Khalsa Diwan*, Sirdar Bahadur Sundar Singh stood, was anxious to press for a clear delineation.[20] The motive behind the demand for administrative separation of the Sikhs was social status. While the older generation was well established, the up-and coming middle classes wanted to use the device of communal representation to secure for themselves a share in the management of resources and in the administration. Since the 1860s, the Tat Khalsa tradition slowly but steadily took the upper hand over the Sanatan tradition, although the difference could not be resolved before the bloody clashes of the 1920s during the Akali movement.

For the "non-Brahman" activists of the young "Justice Party" the very definition of a "non-Brahman" community was at issue. Again, aspiring local leaders were attempting to reconstitute ritual to suit their needs. To begin with, a "non-Brahman" community as such had never existed before. There was little if any self-consciousness among its members who qualified for inclusion. Here, it was the deliberations of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill of 1917 which exposed the issue in full through the representations of the South-Indian Liberal Federation demanding special quotas for the "non-Brahmans". In the case of the "non-Brahmans", the Young Party was embodied in the Tamil sub-caste of the *Vellalas* who had started dominating the Justice

Party and the "non-Brahman" movement. Being second only to the Brahmans and yet belonging to the despised *Śūdra* caste group they wished to elevate their group status and replace the Brahmans in the social hierarchy, particularly in regions such as Tinnevelly district, where they dominated the social structure.[21] In South India all local castes were entered into the category of *Śūdras,* with no intermediate castes between them and the Brahmans who dominated religious authority and ritual. If the religious group was reconstituted so was ritual. Practically, the *Vellalas* aimed at replacing the Brahmans in their function as guardian and dispenser of the Hindu ritual. First they had to discredit the Brahman-led ceremonies like marriages. Self-Respect marriages took their place were Brahmans were not wanted. But in some cases *Vellala* representatives took over functions of performing religious rites clearly aiming at snatching the mantle of religious authority from the Brahmans. It, therefore, seems important to emphasise that the religious aspect was not used on its own terms but was put to specific social and political uses, and hereby undergoing significant changes itself.

In the case of the Pakhtuns, the issue was a common sense of Pakhtun identity fostered on the basis of a return to true Islamic injunctions. The Pakhtuns had to rise above tribal factionalism which they apparently could only do with reference to Islam and its traditional institutions. The latter allowed them to sink their differences and turn against the common enemy, British rule over the Pakhtuns in India.

As compared to the Sikh and the Tamil movements, the Pakhtun *mullah,* through his religious and political activism, in a way played the role of the Young Party. Religious men were regularly thrust into prominence at the head of unified resistance of the Pakhtuns throughout their checkered history. Though often of non-Pakhtun origin, they acted as their spokesmen in times of acute crisis. Stephen Rittenberg suggested that they played a more active role after the decline of the Afghan dynasty of the Durranis. Forthwith, the Pakhtun faced a Christian power, the British, which gave the mullahs and other saintly men a greater say in tribal affairs, especially in times of conflict and tension with the British. Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi had united a number of Pakhtun tribes with his Indian *mujahidin* in his fight against the Sikhs in the 1820s. The same happened during the Ambala campaign in the 1860s, during the 1897 uprisings.[22]

Fazl-i Wahid, called the *Haji* of Turangzai, was one of the first to extend this leading role in resistance to new political and cultural issues. Between 1908 and 1915 and throughout the 1920s he combined his role as a intermediary for the Mohmand tribe with reforming activities. He founded *madrassas* to impart a purified Islam to Pakhtun children. His activities were continued by Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890-1988), the coming nationalist leader of the Pakhtuns and one of the *Haji's* disciples, who, after his release from jail in 1924, founded the

Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghania, a Society for the Reform of the Afghans. It established a number of independent non-government schools, so-called *Azad* (Free) schools. They sought to offer instruction in Islam and foster Pashtu culture. Even though the Haji's movement and the *anjuman* were mainly restricted to the Charsadda area, they were fairly successful in promoting a new grassroot leadership of Pakhtuns activists. Ghaffar Khan stood at the head of the Pakhtun nationalist movement from 1930 onwards. One of the *Haji's* disciples, or *murids*, Fazl Mahmud Makhfi, was considered the founder of Pakhtun nationalist poetry.[23] Among the other movements of the 1920s which helped redefining the Islamic content of a common Pakhtun identity was the campaign for *Hijrat* in 1920. Pakhtun peasants from several districts mainly of the Frontier Province migrated in large numbers to Afghanistan, reaching a total of roughly 30,000. They had decided to move there because India had become to them the land of infidel rule, *dar-ul-harb*, where exercising religious ritual seemed no longer free. During the *Hijrat* campaign and during the Third Afghan War in 1919, the Amir of Afghanistan was the focus of their religious fervour as the main spiritual and worldly authority for Muslim Pakhtuns. Also here, the local *mullah* was particularly active. He was often acting as a go-between for the Afghans and the tribes on British-Indian territory.[24]

Distinguished Pakhtun administrators like the Khan of Zaida, Khan Abdul Ghaffur Khan, (not identical with his above-mentioned namesake) represented the Old Party. They did not oppose a separate Pakhtun identity but they preferred defining it within the limits of the social system sanctioned by the British. When interviewed by the Public Service Commission in 1913, he demanded that due weight be given to the members of the local aristocracy, the Khans. At the same time he suggested that the Provincial Service be more largely recruited from the agricultural classes while "the land-owning classes should not suffer"[25]. He defended Pakhtun special interests when he opposed the recruitment of officers from other provinces because of the lack of knowledge of the local language and customs.[26]

The place of religion within political mobilisation then and later on continued to depend on who was regarded as the religious adversary, i.e. the *infidel*. For the Sikhs it was the British and to a lesser extent the Hindus, hence their greater inclination to join in the non-co-operation movement. For the "non-Brahmans" it was the Brahman, hence their main opposition was directed against mainstream orthodox Hinduism and the Congress which was equated with Brahman rule being on the ascent. For the Pakhtun it was the *firangi*, the fair-headed Englishman who had "emasculated" them by increasingly controlling tribal life, including its military aspects.

The established community

At the second stage of *loyalism*, it was the *Chief Khalsa Diwan* which mainly acted for Sikh political interests, while the "Justice Party" as a governing party in Madras Presidency was the very embodiment of loyalism. Reform-minded Pakhtun politicians were not organised in the 1920s. But an "Advanced Mohammadan Party" for the first time publicly demanded full constitutional reforms for the Pakhtuns at the hearings of the Simon Commission in 1928.[27]

The catchwords which dominated this stage were *disabilities* and *deprivation*. It was communal representation which was meant to remove these disabilities, that is, to increase the share of the "non-Brahmans", the Sikhs and other minority communities in the administration, the services, and, most of all, in the new legislative assemblies which were to be elected under the Government of India Act of 1919, and later of 1935. Fired by the advances made by the Muslims in their dealings with Congress in Lucknow 1916 they demanded similar advantages for themselves. This path became sort of a model for regional and communal mobilisation.

At this stage, territorial differentiation of their geographically amorphous group references also deepened. The rough borders of a homeland for their community became recognizable. The Sikhs established a sort of community government through the Gurdwara Act of 1925. The hearings of the 1919 Joint Select Committee on communal representation in the new legislatures made it clear that the Justice Party if it looked after "non-Brahman" interests in general was specifically interested only in the Madras Presidency which it regarded as its home territory for "non-Brahman" political emancipation discarding more or less the fate of·"non-Brahmans" in the Bombay Presidency. And, for Pakhtun politicians both in the administration and in the political parties of influence like the Congress and the Muslim League, the Frontier Province became the focus of their ethnic mobilisation.

The religious aspect at this stage was becoming *formalised*. This found expression in several related developments. One was the focus on formal quotas for communal representation. Loyalist groups saw one of their main objective in securing special rights for their community. This community was often, but not exclusively defined in religious terms. For the Sikhs, the Chief Khalsa Diwan was anxious to obtain guarantees for communal representation in parliament and in the services. The "non-Brahman" "Justice Party" proceeded likewise. To pursue this aim the latter was in a much more advantageous position than the Diwan since it succeeded in dominating the provincial parliament and government of Madras Presidency under the reformed constitution in the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s.

Pakhtun members of the services equally demanded increased employment for natives from the Frontier Province. Since the hearings of the Bray Commit-

tee in 1922 members of the Pakhtun elite increasingly formulated their demands in a way where the special character of the Pakhtuns was linked with their Muslim religion. The Bray Committee was called upon to make recommendations whether or not the Frontier Province, created in 1900, was to be re-amalgamated with the Punjab. This demand was primarily supported by Hindu parliamentarians and members of the services. The dominant Muslim character of the Frontier Province inhabited by a majority of Pakhtuns was one of the major arguments influencing the position of the Muslim members of the committee. When the committee opposed the reamalgamation, a dissenting minority opinion was passed by the Hindu members of the committee.[28] Also, those who demanded full reforms for the Frontier Province in their interviews with the Simon Commission in 1928, did so with reference to the Muslim character of the Pakhtun province like the "Advanced Mohammedan Party".[29]

Another development through which the formalised character of religion became evident was the increasing shift to institution-building deriving its legitimacy from religious authority. This was not limited to the loyalist stage but pervaded the whole period of regional activism in the 1920 and 1930s. The most prominent example of this tendency was the creation and the role of the *Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee* in the Sikh movement. It played a central role in Sikh community-building. Created as an authority for administration of the Sikh shrines in 1920 it practically served as a community government and parliament. Elections were held to its membership based on adult franchise among the Sikhs. This was more democratic than elections to the Provincial Assemblies under the 1919 Government of India Act where franchise stood at 2.8 percent in 1926.[30] The Pakhtun Muslims and the "non-Brahman" Tamils never created this kind of unified or centralised community institutions. But there were other institutions which derived their authority from their religious connotation. Educational institutions created in the name of the community played an important role for all three movements. These included the Khalsa College for the Sikhs, the vernacular Annamalai University for the "non-Brahman" Tamil-speakers and the Islamia College in the Frontier Province which turned out many a number of community activists during those years.

The attempted crusade

At the third stage of *political radicalism*, religion served in yet another capacity. It provided the groups bent on using pressure and force with the moral rigour and emphasis needed to induce followers to risk their own lives not for some abstract cause of an unknown nationality but for the righteousness of their faith. It was the motivation of *religious war* that came into play, the determina-

tion to defend one's faith and to conquer and defeat the infidels. This was no small factor in rousing the militants to action and ferocity in their deeds. The militant groups themselves were organised in a way where they resembled the *army of God*. They were considered volunteers in the service of the faith.

It was the *Akalis* who acted as the major spokesman of Sikh political interest, though diversity in Sikh political ranks grew visibly and internal cleavages increased significantly. The Akalis and their leader, Master Tara Singh (1885-1967), remained wedded to the idea of radical communalism, calling time and again for a religious war.[31] The main form of Akali protest against the British and the *mahants*, the former keepers of the shrines who were aligned with the British, took the form of *jathas*. In the spirit of Sikh beliefs groups of volunteers went on a mission to confront and defy the state authorities peacefully even if it involved risking their own lives.

Tamil extremism started after the "non-Brahman" concept lost its potential for community mobilisation. This was partly due to the collaboration of the "Justice Party" with the British. Political radicalism required a new, mass-oriented philosophy. This was undertaken by Ramaswamy Naicker (1897-1973) and his Self-Respect movement in 1926. He took control of the Justice Party in 1938 and converted it to a narrower identity of Tamilism in 1944 - by renaming the party *Drawida Kazhagam*. While he emphasised the secular nature of the Self-Respect movement he increasingly used specific Hindu symbols with a Tamil and "non-Brahman" background in the Tamil movement.[32] The idea of war with a religious connotation was still present, the war of the South, of the Drawidian and Tamilian races against the Aryans, the North, a militant concept serving the anti-Hindi campaign of 1938 and later Tamilian movements well after independence was achieved.[33]

The volunteers who went into action for the Red Shirt movement of the Pakhtuns displayed a similar zeal in their operations. The Red Shirt volunteers of the Pakhtuns were also called the Army of God.[34] They founded village committees and set up a fairly rigid structure of command. Ghaffar Khan, the Red Shirt leader, displayed an ambiguous attitude towards violence. On the one hand, he alleged that his party was the only guarantee that Pakhtun participation in the nationalist movement remained non-violent. On the other hand, he was not averse to threatening the British with the perspective of a religious war to make them more accommodating. Calling on his compatriots not to fear the English, Ghaffar Khan invokes the belief in God to give them courage against the foreign rulers:

> "One who fears God does not fear anybody else. We require a group of men who can work, and who are not afraid of machine guns and the British armies. I say that there will be revolution even if you join us or

not... God wants to distinguish those who obey His orders and those who
are the followers of the 'Satan'."[35]

By the end of the thirties territorial referencing reached its clearest expression
yet. In the process of bargaining over the fate of their communities all three of
them demanded separate homelands, the *Azad Punjab* for the Sikhs,
Drawidanadu for the Tamils or Drawidians and *Pakhtunistan* for the Pakhtuns.

But their dreams did not come true. Between 1944 and 1947, in the hour of
the approaching independence, radical regionalism which aimed at further
fragmentation of both India and Pakistan was not successful. National
mobilisation on the lines of the Congress and the Muslim League movements
had been more effective.

Résumé: The politics of religion

The religious aspect of the regional movements underwent considerable
change. It started out as an ideal and ended in conflict and bloodshed.
During the 1940s the Sikh, the Pakhtun and the Tamil "non-Brahman" move-
ments had defined for themselves variants of religious nationalism which
contained little of the purity and chastity of religious ideals. Where the interests
of the local religious community had at least significantly inspired and moved
forward the political campaigns in their initial stages, religious belief and ethics
were more and more relegated to the background when independence ap-
proached. Crude power politics had eclipsed the moral claim and ethical aims
connected with the revival of religious concepts. Politics had sawn the seed of
greed and dissent among the faithful. At the same time, regional identity-
building had not been dissociated from religion. If the religious dimension of
the movements grew more muted, the hold of mythical cultural and religious
concepts over politics had become much stronger. If anything, the understand-
ing of religion had shifted. Religion, in the course of the nationalist movement
and regional sub-movements, became less associated with ritual and belief and
more with the ways and means to defend it, to guard it, to organise adherents
and to fend off heretics. The nationalist movement and its sub-streams had not
secularised the Indian polity so much as it had established and legitimised a
firm linkage between politics and religion.

From this an automatic aggravation of cleavages between political identities
and religion should not be assumed. Periods of rapid exacerbation usually
interchanged with times of relaxation depending on social trends and the
vacillating political fortunes of community leaders. In the Sikh and the Tamil
case, the nexus between political conflict and religion continued to operate,
while the Pakhtun movement was practically finished off with its defeat in 1947.

It was succeeded by the National Awami Party which retained some influence in the Frontier Province of Pakistan but never regained the clout and militancy of the Red Shirt movement.

When local elites were jockeying for a cosy place in the social and political set-up of the coming independent states, radical politics in the name of religion had become very intense. Yet, even with hindsight it is difficult to say whether or not a more steady and meaningful process of political participation for local and regional groups could have ensured against undue exploitation of the more sinister emotional potential of religious ideal for political ends.

The political use of religion seems to have had a certain advantage under conditions of colonial rule as compared to the present day. Religious references were ideally suited to pass for nationalism at a time when local ethnic tradition were not fully developed. And, the files of the colonial administration show that the British authorities felt constrained by the potential explosiveness of religious issues and would tolerate religious movements more easily. Religious discontent would not immediately be qualified as sedition unless proved otherwise, fearing widespread public disturbances if religious demands or rituals were interfered with. Religious discontent was considered to be difficult to control with its proponents going to any length of personal suffering to achieve their goals. The British would therefore go out of their way to accommodate religious movements, at least locally, since they saw in them an element of instability often not subject to comprehension and reasoning. As far as customs like child marriage, widow burning etc. were concerned, the British feared the social conservatism of religious movements which they did not understand and did not share.

In that sense, activists of the Sikh, Tamil and Pakhtun movements, who were inspired by religion, could at least plead to have a genuine case to argue under colonial conditions, where their demands were often aimed at social, political or economic emancipation of communities vis-a-vis the British and/or the majority community of Hindus. This air of innocence and genuineness was largely lost with independence. The selfishness of the religious politics of their leaders became more obvious and public. The legitimacy which had been accorded to a political struggle in a religious garb under conditions of colonial rule could not be upheld in the context of independent development. The manipulative aspect became much more difficult to conceal. It is, therefore, no coincidence that the religious content of regional politics of the Sikhs, the Tamils and the Pathans apparently declined or underwent considerable mutation. In the Sikh case, the Akali Party aimed at real power over the Indian state of Punjab in the 1980s more than at control over the religious allegiance of the Sikhs. The Tamil parties in the Indian state of Tamilnad, although using images of Hindu Gods in their election propaganda, concentrated on provincial issues and the rivalry of personalities throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In the

Pakhtun politics of Pakistan's Frontier Province the role of the mullah was considerably reduced. Incidents where he acted as the spokesman of the tribes became few and far between. Instead, the politics of religion continued to consolidate in the religious movements of both India and Pakistan, turning them into established political parties. In contrast to the colonial period, where legitimacy of religious politics was derived from the resistance to the British, it is now the alleged failure of the secular political system to dispense the political and social fruits of participation more justly which has bestowed a new legitimacy on the religious reference in the politics of South Asia.

Notes

1　　Cf. D. Reetz, Enlightenment and Islam: Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Plea to Indian Muslims for Reason. In: The Indian Historical Review, **XIV** (1987/1988) 1-2, pp. 206-218.
2　　From the Gospel of Ramakrishna, pp. 158-60, quoted in Steven Hay (ed), Sources of Indian Tradition, Second edition, Vol 2: Modern India and Pakistan, New York 1988, pp. 66-67.
3　　Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol. II, Princeton, N.J. 1966, pp. 95 sqq.
4　　Richard Temple, a secretary to the government of the Punjab had forecast in 1853 that "the Sikh faith and ecclesiastical polity is rapidly going". Quoted in: Report on the Census of the Punjab, 1881, Vol. 1, Calcutta 1883, p. 140.
5　　Gurmit Singh, History of Sikh Struggles, Vol. 1, Delhi 1989, App., p. 179. The 1891 census quotes the number of Sikhs as to 1.908 million, making up 0.66 percent of Indians. The changes over previous census reports are mainly attributed to variations in the definition. Cf. Census of India 1891, General Report, Delhi 1985 (London 1893), pp. 164, 171, 176.
6　　F. Barth, Pathan identity and its maintenance. In: Ibid.; Features of Person and Society in Swat: Collected Essays on Pathans. Selected Essays of Frederik Barth, vol. II, London 1981, p. 105.
7　　Census of India 1891, ibid., pp. 136, 153.
8　　Census of India 1891, pp. 136, 144.
9　　Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, London-New York 1991 (rev. & ext. ed.), pp. 33-36 and chapter 3, pp. 37-46.
10　　Slogans, dominating the campaigns for shaping the group identity of the Sikhs, the "non-Brahman" Tamils, and the Pathans have been traced in: D. Reetz, Community Concepts and Community-Building: Exploring Ethnic Political Identity in Colonial India. In: Joachim Heidrich (ed), Changing Identities: The transformation of Asian and African societies under colonialism, Berlin 1994, pp. 123-148.
11　　Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, Delhi 1994, pp. 190-202.
12　　For a detailed exposition of the evolution of Sikh identity in the nineteenth century, including the Singh Sabha movement, cf. H. Oberoi, The Construction of Religious Boundaries - Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition, Delhi 1994.

13   Cf. Rosalind O'Hanlon, Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and
      Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India, Cambridge 1985; Gail
      Omvedt, Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: The Non-Brahman Movement in
      Western India: 1873-1930, Bombay 1976, pp. 107 sqq.
14   Cf. John H. Piet, A Logical Presentation of the Śaiva Siddhānta Philosophy, Madras
      1952, pp. 3-4142216.
15   The re-evaluation of Tamil religious classical texts started with the publication of a
      Dravidian Grammar in 1856 by Caldwell, a Christian missionary. For references, see
      the second revised and enlarged edition, Robert Caldwell, A Comparative Grammar
      of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, London 1875.
16   Cf. Lal Baha, The Activities of the Mujahideen 1900-1936. In: Islamic Studies, 18
      (1979), pp. 97-168.
17   H. Oberoi, The Construction of Religious Boundaries..., loc. cit., p. 385.
18   For a thorough account of the shaping of Sikh ritual in the nineteenth century, see
      ibid., p. 387.
19   Ibid., p. 395.
20   Cf. United Kingdom, Parliamentary Papers, Royal Commission on the Public Services
      in India: Appendix Vol X, London 1914, Cd. 7582, pp. 71-75.
21   Eugene Irschick, Politics and Social Conflict in South India. The Non-Brahman
      Movement and Tamil Separatism 1916-1929, Berkeley 1969, p. 295.
22   Stephen Rittenberg, Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns: The Independence
      Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province, Durham, NC 1988, pp. 40-41.
23   Ibid., pp. 66-71.
24   Akbar S. Ahmed, Social and Economic Change in the Tribal Areas, Karachi 1977,
      pp. 49-50.
25   United Kingdom, Parliamentary Papers, Royal Commission on the Public Services in
      India: Appendix Vol X, Minutes of evidence relating to the Indian and Provincial
      Civil Services taken at Lahore from the 9th to the 15th April 1913, with appendices.
      London 1914, Cd. 7582, p. 312.
26   Ibid., p. 308.
27   Khan Bahadur Saaduddin Khan of the Advanced Muhammadan Party from the
      Frontier told the commission on 19th November 1928: "We say that we are educa-
      tionally, socially, and in every respect just as good as the rest of India. Why should we
      be left?" Indian Statutory Commission [I.S.C.], Selections from the Memoranda and
      Oral Evidence by Non-Officials, (Part I), London 1930, p. 268.
28   Cf. Government of India, Report of the North-West Frontier Enquiry Committee and
      Minutes of Dissent by Mr. T. Rangachariar and Mr. N. M. Samarth, Delhi 1924
      [Frontier (Bray) Enquiry Committee 1922].
29   Cf. Great Britain. Indian Statutory Commission. Report of the Indian Statutory
      Commission. Selections from memoranda & oral evidence by non-officials, Pt 1, Vol.
      XVI, London 1930, pp. 248-272.
30   Indian Statutory Commission (I.S.C.), Survey, (London, 1930), Part III, Working of the
      reformed constitution, p. 197.
31   The Akalis and Master Tara Singh were particularly embittered at the enunciation of
      the Pakistan scheme which they feared would permanently relegate the Sikhs in their
      home province Punjab, which also was a Muslim majority province, to the back seat
      of Punjab politics. To this, he replied at the Uttar Pradesh Sikh Conference in 1940
      that the Muslim League demand might mean "a declaration of civil war"; to achieve
      it the Muslims would have to "cross an ocean of Sikh blood." Tribune, 18 April, 1940.

32   "The Tamil Mother in the form of a goddess was depicted as mourning the incarcer-
      ation of Mr Ramaswami Naicker" at the fourteenth confederation of the South Indian
      Liberal Federation in Madras on 28 December, 1938, when Naicker was made presi-
      dent of the "Justice Party" in absentia. Madras Mail, 29 December 1938.
33   A collection of Tamil poetry by Bharati Dasan, who was close to the Self-Respect
      movement, was published in January 1938, in the middle of the anti-Hindi campaign.
      There again he picked up the Tamil interpretation of the Hindu epos Ramayana.
      Ravana, the usually villainous demon, was depicted as the embodiment of Tamilnad,
      resisting the Aryan hero Rama and his northern army. This theme was propagated by
      C. N. Annadurai (1909-1969), a Tamil activist and future leader of the Drawida
      Munetra Kazhagam. Cf. Eugene Irschick, Tamil Revivalism in the 1930s, Madras 1986,
      pp. 223-225.
34   Cf., for instance, Ghaffar Khan in his addresses at public meetings on the Frontier in
      1931. P. S. Ramu (ed.), Momentous Speeches of Badshah Khan: Khudai Khidmatgar
      and National Movement, Delhi 1992, p. 24 and passim.
35   On November 8, 1931, at the Government Pare near Khaki. Ibid., p. 41.

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Regional Cooperation in South Asia: The Case of SAARC

Christian Wagner

Introduction

For the last few years, an increasing interest in regional cooperation has been observed all over the world. The accession of the Scandinavian States to the European Union (EU) and the discussion whether South American countries can enter the *North American Free Trade Arrangement* (NAFTA), clearly demonstrate this tendency. Especially the Asia-Pacific region has seen a rapid growth of new organizations concerned with economic and political collaboration. Apart from the *Association of South-East Asian Nations* (ASEAN), founded already in 1967, the *South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation* (SAARC), the *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation* (APEC), the *East-Asia Economic Caucus* (EAEC), the *Economic Cooperation Organization* (ECO), and the *South Pacific Forum* (SPF) were established. At the same time, many international observers regard these organizations and their economic core states as pillars of a new international order. Hence, Japan, the United States, and the European Union are regarded as the new centres of a multi-centric world order, which will be dominated rather by economic competition than by ideological rifts.[1] But not only changes in the international system necessitate collaboration across the borders. The nation-state is challenged by more and more problems, such as migration and environmental pollution. These problems can no longer be usefully addressed by one state alone, but make collaboration across the borders indispensable.

Even South Asia, regarded as "region without regionalism"[2] for many years, and being one of the least developed regions in the world according to international economic statistics and the *Human Development Index*, appears to face these new challenges. In 1985 SAARC was founded in order to promote regional cooperation between its member countries. In regard to the growing international liberalization and regionalization of trade, the former SAARC Secretary-General Zaki regarded regionalism as "the instrument of economic growth and development in the world of ever increasing cut-throat competition"[3]. In 1993 the *SAARC Preferential Trade Arrangement* (SAPTA) was signed in Dhaka in order to foster regional trade. Many authors share the view that closer economic collaboration will foster the progress of SAARC in the region, but also in regard to its future international role. "Only when SAARC emerges as a powerful economic grouping can it play its role in the world economy."[4]

Considering the low rate of regional trade, which ranges below three percent, one can expect SAPTA to facilitate the increase of this rate. But on the other hand, one has to be careful. This functional approach, postulating that economic and technological collaboration should precede political cooperation, seems to follow the course taken by the European Union. But this strategy has its limits not only because of the fundamental differences between the EU and SAARC.[5] Examples from Africa and Latin America show that economic cooperation and integration "has more or less failed"[6]. Economic collaboration appears to have been advantageous for developed countries, but has so far failed to be an alternative development strategy for developing countries. For this reason, economic cooperation should be regarded with scepticism.

Two more points will underline these objections. First, Gilpin, among other authors, pointed to the close interaction of "state" and "market", their conflicting logic of development, and their far-reaching consequences for international relations.[7] In addition to that, Keohane argued, that the "greatest dangers for world economy [...] have their sources in political conflicts among nations"[8]. Therefore, following this argument, political decisions act as a framework for economic activities, although the latter have a strong tendency to undermine the political system. In addition, economic collaboration under market conditions tends to produce uneven results. Hence, the core question of cooperation - how the benefits can be distributed among the members in a fair and equitable manner - must be solved politically, because otherwise economic cooperation can turn itself into an area of conflict.[9]

Secondly, global changes, especially the emphasis on economic liberalization and the establishment of new states in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, have initiated a strong competition for development aid and foreign capital. Because of this new situation, it becomes necessary to offer domestic stability and reliable bilateral and regional relations in exchange for foreign investment and technology.

In view of South Asia, it is, therefore, doubtful whether economic forces can overcome the underlying political constraints in the region. Therefore, cooperation can only be successful, first, if the limits of economic collaboration are taken into account, and second, if political cooperation can be achieved with institutionalized mechanisms aimed at providing domestic stability and peaceful bilateral relations. In order to illustrate this argument in what follows this paper will mainly focus on the constraints of political and economic cooperation within SAARC, ten years after its inauguration. First, the preconditions of cooperation will be examined. Secondly, the difficulties of political and economic collaboration will be dealt with. Thirdly, problems and prospects of SAARC will be analyzed.

The preconditions of cooperation in South Asia

The countries of South Asia share many historical, cultural, and religious common grounds, also greatly vary in political and economic matters. Because of the various conflicts and the low rate of regional trade, the subcontinent is often regarded in political terms as region of "chronic instability"[10] and, economically as region of "desintegration"[11]. This situation causes problems for any form of collaboration. Normally, similar political and economic systems, common foreign policy orientations with a common threat perception, and a consensus regarding the role of the pivotal power within the regional grouping are considered as the main constituents of regional organizations.[12] But South Asia appears to resist these theoretical assumptions.

First, the great asymmetry between India and her neighbours is apparent, not only in a geopolitical sense, but also for her economic strength and military power. India is nearly eight times bigger than Bangladesh, the second most populous state, and four times larger than Pakistan, the second largest state in the region. In 1990 India had a share of 78.7 percent of the total Gross Domestic Product of all SAARC countries, whereas Pakistan's share was only 10.9 percent.[13]

Secondly, when SAARC was established in 1985, the member countries had different forms of government. Democratic countries like India and Sri Lanka were thus linked together with military authoritarian regimes like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Maledives and with monarchies like Nepal and Bhutan. The countries also differ in state ideologies. "Secular" states like India and Sri Lanka tried to cooperate with "religious"-oriented states like Pakistan and Bangladesh.[14] Moreover, the member-states followed different economic policies and there has always been great dissent on foreign policy perspectives. India has always regarded the region as part of her national security and has tried to reduce the influence of external powers in the region. The smaller states have feared Indian dominance and interference in their internal affairs. Therefore, they have tried to internationalize their bilateral conflicts with India and have looked for outside economic, political, and military support.

Thirdly, the notion of "chronic instability", mentioned above, is created by the various conflicts between India and her neighbours. Even after three wars since 1947 the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan is still unresolved. Moreover, it has sparked off a conventional and nuclear arms race between both countries which threatens the whole region. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka between the Singhalese and the minority of the Sri Lanka Tamils has also strained this country's relations with India. Nepal's attempts to obtain better relations with China were always opposed by India. Conflicts exist between India and Bangladesh on the question of the distribution of the Ganges water and the immigration of Bangladeshis into India.[15]

To sum up, South Asia provides the rare setting of cooperation among countries which do not fulfil the common political and economic criteria for collaboration. These unfavourable preconditions raise the question on the very reasons for the establishment of SAARC.

The evolution of SAARC

The creation of SAARC was mainly the result of Bangladesh's President Zia-ur Rahman's endeavours[16], although some authors have tried to emphasize foreign influences, especially the role of the USA in this process[17]. From 1977 to 1980, a period of tensions between India and Bangladesh, Zia-ur Rahman visited several countries in the region and discussed the idea of cooperation. He reasoned, that a regional organization would allow the smaller states to gain more strength vis-à-vis India. Then in 1980 he made an official proposal for regional cooperation. Subsequently, since 1981, the foreign ministers have met regularly in order to discuss the principles and the areas of possible collaboration. In 1983 they passed the *Delhi-Declaration* which laid down the basic principles of future collaboration: sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in internal affairs of other states, and mutual benefit. Finally, in 1985 SAARC was inaugurated when the Heads of State met at their first summit in Dhaka.

Nevertheless it is not easy to understand the motivations and reasons which led the South Asian countries to agree to such an organization. On the one hand, it was quite clear that the smaller countries could use such an organization as a means to restrain India's hegemonistic aspirations towards them. But there were also fears, especially from Pakistan, that this new organization, once established, could easily be dominated by India. On the other hand, India has always emphasized that regional conflicts can only be solved on a bilateral basis. Collaboration between the smaller states, therefore, posed the threat that these states could use regional collaboration for moulding regional alliances against India which could become isolated within the region if she did not take part in the organization. Such participation was also a safeguard for India against a *regionalization* of bilateral disputes. Moreover, she has always supported the idea of a closer South-South-cooperation in international forums.[18]

Structures and activities of SAARC

The principles of regional cooperation were already agreed upon in 1983. In 1985, SAARC's charter was passed at the summit in Dhaka which laid down the objectives of the new organization:

- to promote the welfare of the population of the member countries;
- to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development;
- to strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries;
- to contribute to mutual trust and understanding;
- to promote active collaboration in various fields;
- to strengthen cooperation with other developing countries and among the countries of South Asia in international arenas on matters of common interest.

Contentious issues were excluded from the agenda and decisions have to be taken with unanimity.[19] The *Integrated Programme of Action* (IPA) encompassed the various areas of cooperation which include nowadays: agriculture; prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse; education; health and population; meteorology; postal services; rural development; science and technology; sports, arts, and culture; telecommunication; transport; women in development.

The decision-making hierarchy of SAARC consists of four levels. The *Heads of State* are supposed to meet annually and constitute the highest decision-making body. The *Council of Ministers*, comprising the Foreign Ministers of the member states, meets twice a year. It is responsible for the formulation of policies, for reviewing progress, and deciding on new areas of collaboration. The *Standing Committee* (SC) is charged with monitoring and coordination, approval of projects, mobilization of resources and identifying new areas for cooperation. *Technical Committees* (TC) are responsible for implementation, coordination and monitoring of programmes in the areas of cooperation.[20] There are also *Action Committees* whose task it is to implement projects which comprise more than two, but not all member states. Apart from these bodies, there are also a *Committee on Economic Cooperation* (CEC) and a *Committee on Environment* to promote collaboration in these respective fields.

In the beginning there was a lack of adequate financial resources which restricted the implementation of programmes. In the meantime, several funds could be created. The *SAARC Fund for Regional Projects* was established by contributions of the member states. The Japanese government sponsors the *SAARC-Japan Special Fund*, which started with a budget of 300,000 US-Dollars in 1993, in order to finance projects and to deepen the relations between Japan and South Asia. The *SAARC Regional Fund* was created for grants and financial contributions by donor countries, private agencies, and international organizations.[21] In order to strengthen the process of collaboration institutions have been founded, such as the *SAARC Secretariat* in 1987 in Kathmandu. It is headed by the Secretary-General on a two-yearly term. Its main task is to coordinate and to monitor SAARC activities, service the meetings of SAARC, and to communicate with other international organizations. Other SAARC-

institutions are the *Agricultural Information Centre* in Dhaka and the *Tuberculosis Centre* in Kathmandu.

Apart from several declarations, the creation of both the *SAARC Food Security Reserve* and the passing of the *SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism*[22] in 1987, can probably be regarded as its most important achievements. But the most far-reaching agreement was the *SAARC Preferential Trade Arrangement* (SAPTA), signed at the Dhaka Summit in 1993, in order to encourage regional trade. With SAPTA the member states demonstrated that they were willing to face the international challenges. But to give a realistic assessment of SAPTA, it is necessary to take a separate look at both the political and economic constraints and prospects of collaboration.

Political cooperation

SAARC has so far avoided to deal with conflicts arising from tense bilateral relations between its member countries. Therefore, SAARC seems to be a non-political institution. Looking at the different summits, however, it appears that SAARC does have an important political function. Although officially banned from the agenda, the Heads of State used the opportunity not only to discuss future areas of collaboration, but also bilateral conflicts. Especially the second day is normally reserved for the informal talks which often receive more public attention than the agenda of the meeting itself.[23] The discussions at the first summit in Dhaka between Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and Bangladesh President Ershad who reached an understanding on the distribution of the Ganges water and the intensive negotiations between prime minister Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Junius R. Jayawardene in Bangalore on a solution of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, proved this assumption. In 1988, the SAARC-summit in Islamabad saw the first encounter between Gandhi and the new prime minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto, who signed an agreement not to attack their nuclear facilities in case of war.[24] In a region like South Asia, where bilateral relations are shaped by conflict, distrust, and suspicion such confidence building measures on the highest political level cannot be underestimated.[25]

At the same time, the political importance of regional cooperation has be to seen in connection with new international challenges and their repercussions on foreign policy. After the end of the East-West-conflict, new issues are dominating international relations, like questions of non-proliferation, protection of human rights and intellectual property, democratization, and economic liberalization. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union India lost her most important international ally but has been able to establish closer links with China and the USA for the last few years.[26] Pakistan lost its role as a frontline-state of US

foreign policy after Soviet troops left Afghanistan and is now looking for closer links with the new Central Asian countries. Sanctions imposed against India and Pakistan aimed against their nuclear programmes and human rights violations in domestic conflicts, and the treaties between the EU and South Asian states on economic cooperation which now include a section on human rights, demonstrate both changes in international norms and at the same time the willingness of external powers to interfere in domestic developments. Although it will be possible for some states to escape this pressure, these points will remain on the agenda of the international community.

Secondly, with the transformation of Eastern Europe and the growing importance of Central and East Asia, more countries will look for foreign investment and development aid. If South Asia remains the region of chronic instability in the eyes of the international community, then the countries have to ensure that they are not placed on the bottom of the agenda in this respect. To put it simply, the flows of development aid, investment, and technology do not need South Asia, but South Asia does certainly need them.

At this point, the close connection and interdependence between domestic, regional, and international developments becomes obvious. Nearly all SAARC-countries have to cope with conflicts between religious, language, and ethnic groups which, first, have aimed at employment and education opportunities and, secondly, at questions of decentralization, autonomy, and at times self-determination. Examples from the past show, that these frictions have had the capacity to create bilateral, regional, and even international tensions. At present, the most serious of these conflicts is the tense relationship between Hindus and Muslims in Northern India. This conflict is stirred up by nationalistic Hindu parties and organizations and has escalated with the destruction of the Babri-Mosque in Ayodhya. This event sparked off riots against Hindus and Indian property in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Such conflicts which charge bilateral relations will always be counterproductive to activities encouraging collaboration.

The new international environment with its contradictory tendencies of economic liberalization, new political alliances, and growing interference in domestic affairs, will leave the SAARC-countries no option but to seek closer political collaboration. In addition to that, several advantages can be expected by creating a stable and reliable political framework within the region. First, national governments could manage internal conflicts more easily, if these did not escalate into bilateral tensions. Secondly, reducing regional strains will make the region economically more attractive for foreign investment. This will facilitate a more permanent process of economic and social transformation in South Asia. Thirdly, a stable and reliable political framework will be the first step to reduce military expenditure. According to international statistics, India and Pakistan spend considerable parts of their budgets on military armament,

instead of investments in economic and social sectors.[27] Fourthly, close collab-
oration will help to increase the international importance of the region not only
in multilateral forums but also in regard to special economic concessions, like,
for example, ASEAN which made special agreements with the EU.[28]

Nevertheless, these examples illustrate at the same time the limits of politi-
cal cooperation which SAARC faces compared to other regional organizations.
European Political Cooperation (EPC) and the *Regional Forum of ASEAN* are
used to increase their international importance whereas the SAARC-countries
have still to deal with their bilateral problems. Moreover, offers of the EU and
ASEAN to support SAARC which would have led to a closer cooperation
between these organizations were refused at the beginning. It was only in
October 1993 that a SAARC-delegation visited Brussels in order to seek ways
for a closer cooperation with the EU. The example of ASEAN clearly shows
the benefits of political cooperation. Until today the conflicts within the region
are not solved, but they have been successfully subordinated to more important
political interests.[29] Therefore the member states were able to build up the
image of South-East Asia as a region of great political stability. This, in turn,
attracted foreign investors and trade agreements were signed on a bilateral and
multilateral basis which supported the national economic development.

Economic cooperation

The world economy is characterized by tendencies towards liberalization and
regionalization at the same time. Regional trade in western Europe, including
the EU, increased from 56 per cent in 1960 to more than 70 per cent in 1988.
During the same period, regional trade in the Pacific region doubled from 25
per cent to 51 per cent.[30] This development brought the issue of economic
cooperation on top of the SAARC agenda. The *Committee for Economic
Cooperation,* installed after the SAARC-Summit in Colombo 1991, prepared the
SAARC Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA) in order to promote regional
trade. It was already mentioned that regional trade among the SAARC-coun-
tries was very low. The percentage of regional trade was only 2.9 per cent of
total trade in 1989, a rate marginal to the EU or even ASEAN (about 18 per
cent).[31]

On the one hand, up to now numerous political and economic obstacles have
hampered economic collaboration. Tense bilateral relations offered no incen-
tive to trade. Subsequently, many tariff and non-tariff barriers restricted the
exchange of goods[32] and adequate infrastructure and communication networks
were and still are missing[33]. But there are also economic constraints. The
national economies concerned do not have many complementarities, but
compete with their major export goods in the world market. In addition to that,

the region is dominated by the Indian economy in nearly every aspect and all countries, except Pakistan, have a negative trade balance with India.

On the other hand, the extension of regional trade is supported by the argument that there are many imports from outside the region at higher prices and transportation costs, than regional trade requires. An intensification of the latter could reverse this trend as products of comparable quality could be available at much lower prices within the region.[34] SAPTA aims, therefore, at a lowering of tariffs for certain products, which should be specified in bilateral negotiations. This procedure works in a similar way like the ASEAN *Preferential Trade Arrangement* (PTA). But the results of this PTA were regarded as unsuccessful, especially in regard to the promotion of regional trade. After time-consuming negotiations, tariff concessions were, for example, finally granted for products whose tariffs were already low. In addition to that, changing lists of tariffs caused confusion among trading partners and the national exclusion of sensitive products also limited the potential of the entire approach. Economists conclude, therefore, that the economic growth rates of the ASEAN countries were not the result of the increase of regional trade which did not rise at a higher rate than the foreign trade in the 1980s.[35]

SAPTA can be expected to face similar problems. Especially the asymmetry and dominance in favour of the Indian economy entail the danger that the benefits of these agreements will not be distributed equally.[36] Pakistan hesitates to enter this procedure, and there are reservations by the smaller countries fearing that their economies might become dominated by the Indian economy. The EU faced similar problems and solved them by creating financial mechanisms in order to redistribute benefits to neglected regions. India has already conceded this point and a discussion has started "to introduce concrete preferential measures favouring the Least Developed Countries"[37]. Another problem are the high expectations connected with economic cooperation. The increase of regional trade can only support, but cannot "be a substitute for appropriate domestic economic policies"[38]. The negative experiences of economic collaboration in other parts of the world should make the limited character of SAPTA clear. Nevertheless, given the very low rate of present economic exchange, it will help to increase trade relations even though SAPTA will rapidly reach its limits.

Prospects and problems

This paper tries to underline the argument that the extension of economic cooperation will not be sufficient to overcome the political constraints of the SAARC-region. Economic collaboration will only be successful if political conflicts can be dealt with at the same time. The costs of internal conflicts and

their bilateral tensions in connection with the pressing problems of underdevelopment and the growing external interference in domestic affairs will raise the costs of non-cooperation to a point where collaboration will become the only political choice.

Any assessment of SAARC has to keep in mind its unfavourable preconditions. Although contradicting theoretical assumptions on regional institutions, cooperation in South Asia has to some extent been successful. If we keep in mind how difficult it has been for the EU and ASEAN - two organizations with many common interests - to reach binding agreements, how difficult must be such a process in a region where bilateral relations have been shaped by conflict, fear, and suspicion. The constraints of political and economical collaboration provide a number of obstacles which SAARC has to face and to overcome in the future. The mere existence of SAARC as the only institution for even modest confidence building measures on the highest political level has, therefore, to be regarded as success.

Notwithstanding, SAARC faces various problems. Despite numerous committees, meetings, workshops, declarations and conferences of politicians and high-level bureaucrats, few tangible results have been achieved. Even SAARC officials regret that the *Integrated Programme of Action* is only producing "reports, not results"[39]. Since the second summit officials have been calling for "action-oriented programmes and activities which can bring perceptible benefits for the common people"[40]. In connection with this the problem of identifying target-groups for collaboration has arisen. While politicians and bureaucrats are discussing subjects of general interest, programmes, institutional frameworks, and guidelines, including the provision of funds, for collaboration are lacking. Hence, professional groups like employers, farmers, and scientists can be encouraged to collaborate beyond the borders. The *SAARC Chamber of Commerce* and *SAARCLAW* are already established to work in this direction. In addition to that, the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should be encouraged in order to extend collaboration to a greater number of societal groups. The promotion and diffusion of cooperation at different levels - national, regional, local - will at the same time create new actors with their own interests in the opportunities deriving from cooperation. This will be an important step to strengthen interests in favour of cooperation which can be articulated and aggregated within the national political systems by pressure groups.

A realistic assessment has to admit that SAARC's success so far has been only limited. But there is no reason to be over-pessimistic. Regional organizations which are regarded as successful, like EU and ASEAN, developed over a prolonged period. The EU took more than thirty years to become a successful institution. ASEAN needed nine years after its establishment in 1967 until it started its first activities only after the *Bali-Declaration* in 1976. In compari-

son to that and despite of its modest success, SAARC can be regarded at least as a good starting point for cooperation. One should not forget that SAARC-meetings provide unique opportunities for high-level diplomats and politicians from India and Pakistan to meet. If we regard the establishment of networks of personal communication as crucial for the prevention of another war between both countries, SAARC has already proved its case.

Notes

1   An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the 13th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies in Toulouse from 31th August to 3rd September 1994. The author is very grateful to the participants for their comments. He also wants to thank Heike Schmidt and Jan-Georg Deutsch, Center for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin, for their comments. See Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, Princeton 1987; Jeffrey E. Garten, Der Kalte Frieden. Amerika, Japan und Deutschland im Wettstreit um die Hegemonie, Frankfurt a.M.-New York 1993; Wilfried von Bredow/Thomas Jäger (eds.), Regionale Großmächte. Internationale Beziehungen zwischen Globalisierung und Zersplitterung, Opladen 1994.

2   Peter Lyon, quoted in Norman D. Palmer, The New Regionalism in Asia and the Pacific, Lexington 1991, p. 75. South Asia includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maledives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

3   Cf. Ibrahim H. Zaki, Recent Developments in SAARC and Prospects for the Future. In: South Asian Survey, 1 (1994) 1, p. 7.

4   Nancy Jetly, India and SAARC: The Political Imperatives. In: K. Ahuja/H. Coppens/ H. van der Husten (eds.), Regime Transformations and Global Realignments, New Delhi 1993, p. 331.

5   Cf. Christian Wagner, Regional Cooperation in Europe and South Asia: Can the European Union serve as a Model for SAARC? Kathmandu 1994 (Nepal Foundation for Advanced Studies, Nepal Foundation Paper No 4), pp. 22-24.

6   Cf. Rolf J. Langhammer/Ulrich Hiemenz, Regional Integration among Developing Countries. Opportunities, Obstacles and Options, Tübingen 1990, p. 73.

7   Cf. Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, Princeton 1987, pp. 8-24.

8   Robert D. Keohane, After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton 1984, p. 5.

9   Cf. Sridhar K. Khatri, A Decade of South Asian Regionalism: Retrospect and Prospect. In: Contemporary South Asia, 1 (1992) 1, pp. 14-15.

10   Cf. Sandy Gordon, Resources and Instability in South Asia. In: Survival, 35 (1993) 2, pp. 66-87.

11   Cf. Ashfaque H. Khan/Annice Mahmood, Complementarities, Comparative Advantages, and Benefits and Costs of Regional Cooperation in Land Transport and Communication, Islamabad 1993 (Coordinating Group for Studies on South Asian Perspectives), p. 91.

12   Mohammed Ayoob, The Primacy of the Political. South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) in Comparative Perspective. In: Asian Survey, 25 (1985) 4, p. 444.

13   Cf. Mahmood Khan, Complementarities..., loc. cit., p. 17.
14   Especially in India and Sri Lanka there has been a strong tendency towards a more
      politicized Hinduism and Buddhism in the last few years, see also Mark Juergensmey-
      er, The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State, Berkeley
      1993.
15   For an overview of the bilateral relations and the various conflicts, see Partha
      S. Ghosh, Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia, New Delhi 1989.
16   Cf. Ross M. Hussain, SAARC: Evolution and Prospects. A View from Pakistan,
      Islamabad 1991, pp. 1-3.
17   Cf. S. D. Muni, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation: Evolution and
      Prospects. In: Internationales Asienforum, 18 (1987) 3/4, pp. 240/241, 251.
18   Different reasons for the establishment of SAARC were related to the author by a
      senior Bangladeshi scientist. He mentioned that after the long period of preparing the
      first meetings, no government wanted to face the embarrassment of cancelling the
      whole project. Although nobody was satisfied with the new institution, there was no
      one who really wanted to stop it. Personal communication, Kathmandu, May 1994.
19   For the charter of SAARC, see F. Ashraf, South Asian Association for Regional
      Cooperation, Islamabad 1988, pp. 58-63.
20   Cf. Girish Kumar, SAARC and its Relationship with the European Community. In:
      European Institute for South and South East Asian Studies (ed.), Regional Cooper-
      ation among Asian Countries: A Role for the European Community, Brussels 1992,
      pp. 7-9.
21   Cf. Ibrahim H. Zaki, Recent Developments..., loc. cit., pp. 3-4.
22   Cf. Partha S. Ghosh, Terrorism and SAARC. In: India Quarterly, 43 (1987) 2,
      pp. 121-137.
23   Personal Communication, Kathmandu, May 1994.
24   Cf. S. D. Muni, Regional Conflicts in South Asia and the Role of SAARC in Their
      Management. In: K. B. Lall/H. S. Chopra/Thomas Meyer (eds.), The European Com-
      munity and SAARC, New Delhi 1993, pp. 64-65; M. A. Bhatty, The Future of
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25   Cf. Christian Wagner, Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Review of the SAARC.
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26   Cf. T. P. Thornton, India Adrift. The Search for Moorings in a New World Order. In:
      Asian Survey, 32 (1992) 12, p. 1063; Ross H. Munro, The Loser. India in the Nineties.
      In: The National Interest, (Summer 1993), p. 62.
27   Cf. World Bank, World Development Report 1993, Washington 1993, p. 310.
28   Cf. Manfred Mols, Cooperation with ASEAN: A Success Story. In: G. Edwards/
      E. Regelsberger (eds.), Europe's Global Links, London 1990, pp. 66-83.
29   Cf. Jacques Pelkmans, ASEAN and Its Cooperation (Merits, Disappointments and
      Lessons). In: European Institute for South and South East Asian Studies (ed.),
      Regional Cooperation among Asian Countries: A Role for the European Community,
      Brussels 1992, pp. 37-38.
30   Cf. Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, Globale Trends..., loc. cit., pp. 212-213.
31   Cf. Mahmood Khan, Complementarities..., loc. cit., p. 87.
32   Cf. V. R. Panchamukhi/N. Kumar/V. L. Rao et al., Economic cooperation in the
      SAARC Region, New Delhi 1990, pp. 234-255; P.C. Mohapatra, South Asian Economic
      Co-Operation: Problems and Prospects. In: Debendra K. Das (ed.), SAARC: Regional
      Co-Operation and Development. Perspectives, Problems, Policies, New Delhi 1993, pp.

132-146; S. V. Hariharan, Problems of Trade Co-Operation among SAARC countries. In: Debendra K. Das (ed.), SAARC: Regional Co-Operation ..., loc. cit., pp. 143-148.

33   Cf. Mahmood Khan, Complementarities..., loc. cit., pp. 121-133.
34   Cf. Ibrahim H. Zaki, Recent Developments..., loc. cit., p. 5.
35   For the negative assessment of the PTA see J. Pelkmans, ASEAN and..., loc. cit., pp. 36-38.
36   A number of authors have already pointed out that economic cooperation can increase the existing gaps between countries, especially under conditions of underdevelopment, see R. D. Hansen, Regional Integration: Reflections on a Decade of Theoretical Efforts. In: World Politics, 21 (1969) 2, pp. 242-271; Rolf J. Langhammer/Ulrich Hiemenz, Regional Integration..., loc. cit., pp. 59-72.
37   Nancy Jetly, India and SAARC..., loc. cit., p. 327.
38   Rolf J. Langhammer/Ulrich Hiemenz, Regional Integration..., loc. cit., p. 73.
39   H. Herath, quoted in V. Kanesalingam, SAARC: The Colombo Summit and the Tasks Ahead. In: V. Kanesalingam (ed.), European Community and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (EC and SAARC), Colombo 1993, p. 43.
40   Cf. Ibrahim H. Zaki, Recent Developments..., loc. cit., p. 6.

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