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Basic caste is called varn. Sometimes "caste" is avoided as a word for varn. Whether or not that is done, it is common for "caste" to be used for the subcastes. The Bhagavad Gita says this about the varn. And the work of the Shudra is service. Sometimes it is denied that the varn. This is no more than a rationalization: The urge to deny that varn. Given the eternity of the Vedas, it should be, strictly speaking, perplexing why and impossible that they need to be "reformed. Thus, the theory of varn. And, since, indeed, things like Untouchability are not even mentioned in sacred texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita, their illegitimacy is self-evident. All of this may not seem entirely honest as history; but as a strategy for reform, its point may be sympathetically well taken. The habit of such creative interpretation, however, elicits less sympathy when it merely serves a nationalistic mythology, as discussed elsewhere. Associated with each varn. These sound suspiciously like skin colors; and, indeed, there is an expectation in India that higher caste people will have lighter skin -- although there are plenty of exceptions especially in the South of India. This all probably goes back to the original invasion of the Arya , who came from Central Asia and so were undoubtedly light skinned. The people already in India were quite dark, even as today many people in India seem positively black. Apart from skin color, Indians otherwise have "Caucasian" features -- narrow noses, thin lips, etc. Because Untouchables are not a varn. I have supplied blue, since this is otherwise not found, and it is traditionally used for the skin color of Vis. Chief among those is Kr. The first three varn. This has nothing to do with reincarnation. Being "twice born" means that you come of age religiously, making you a member of the Vedic religion, eligible to learn Sanskrit, study the Vedas , and perform Vedic rituals. The "second birth" is thus like Confirmation or a Bar Mitzvah. Unborn, indeed, is a man so long as he does not sacrifice. It is through the sacrifice that he is born, just as an egg first burst. But if we compare this to the four stages of life, there is a curious parallel. The student is born again but actually labors in preparation to become a householder, who is characterized by sacrifice which cannot be done without marriage. This parallels the stage of the wandering ascetic, who ritually dies at the moment of renunciation but then labors in preparation for actual death and cremation. So, if cremation is a form of rebirth, then renunciation is the rehearsal for this as studenthood is for sacrifice. I am not aware, however, that much is ever really made of this comparison. According to the Laws of Manu whose requirements may not always be observed in modern life , boys are "born again" at specific ages: A thread is bestowed at the coming of age to be worn around the waist as the symbol of being twice born. Nevertheless, the bestowal of the thread is part of the wedding ceremony. That part of the wedding ritual is even preserved in Jainism. Ancient Iran also had a coming of age ceremony that involved a thread. Even the distant Celts believed in three social classes. Although there must have been a great deal of early intermarriage in India, nowhere did such an Indo-European social system become as rigid a system of birth as there. The rigidity may well be due to the influence of the idea of karma , that poor birth is morally deserved. But there is no doubt, from the Laws of Manu and from the history, that all they apply to all the twice born. Nevertheless, various anomalous constructions of the system occur. These provisions apparently result from the kind of systematizing beloved of the tradition, i. An element of that may reflect the actual debate that, since marriage defines householdership, and since Shudras do legitimately marry, then they legitimately become householders. This excludes Shudras and provides studenthood for Vaishyas, but it limits or abolishes the ascetic stages outside the Brahmin varn. Less systematized was how long the stages should each last, and various versions can be found. Adding the 8 years of childhood for a Brahmin, this adds up to 70 years -- coincidentally the Biblical "three score and ten. I suspect that it would have been unusual, however, for a Ks. For boys, the student is supposed to go live with a teacher guru, , who is a Brahmin, to learn about Sanskrit, the Vedas, rituals, etc. The dharma, , of a student includes being obedient, respectful, celibate, and non-violent. A comparable status of the teacher, without quite the same religious dimension or obligation, can be found in China. For girls, the

stage of studenthood coincides with that of the householder, and the husband stands in the place of the teacher. This is one of the points in the tradition that conflicts with another proposition in Manu, that "if a twice-born seeks renunciation without studying the Vedas, without fathering sons, and without offering sacrifices [i. These ritual separations are also consistent with the practice of disfavored alternatives, such as continuing as a student for life or renouncing ordinary life as a forest dweller or wandering ascetic. This distinction, however, did not catch on. Being a householder is the stage where the principal dharma of the person is performed, whether as priest, warrior, etc. Besides specific duties, there are general duties that pay off the three R.

## 2: Caste - Wikipedia

[pdf, txt, ebook] Download book *Caste and primary occupations: a geographical analysis* / Noor Mohammad. online for free.

The Caste System Photo courtesy of Carolyn Brown Heinz These girls, who belong to the Untouchable caste, make dung patties which are used for fuel and heat by members of all the castes. This job was considered so unclean that other castes did not associate with the members of society that performed it. If a Hindu person were asked to explain the nature of the caste system, he or she might start to tell the story of Brahma – the four-headed, four-handed deity worshipped as the creator of the universe. Priests and teachers were cast from his mouth, rulers and warriors from his arms, merchants and traders from his thighs, and workers and peasants from his feet. What does "Caste" Mean? Even today, most Indian languages use the term "jati" for the system of hereditary social structures in South Asia. When Portuguese travelers to 16th-century India first encountered what appeared to them to be race-based social stratification, they used the Portuguese term "casta" – which means "race" – to describe what they saw. Today, the term "caste" is used to describe stratified societies based on hereditary groups not only in South Asia but throughout the world. Although born into the Kshatriya caste, Mahatma Gandhi spent much of his life working to bring the Untouchables equality. It was Gandhi who first named the Untouchables "Harijans," meaning "children of God. Some inherit wisdom and intelligence, some get pride and passion, and others are stuck with less fortunate traits. The Aryans defined key roles in society, then assigned groups of people to them. Individuals were born into, worked, married, ate, and died within those groups. There was no social mobility. This Indian immigrant is still conscious of his Brahman heritage. Here he is shown standing in front of an altar in his home in the United States. The Aryan Myth The idea of an "Aryan" group of people was not proposed until the 19th century. After identifying a language called Aryan from which Indo-European languages are descended, several European linguists claimed that the speakers of this language named Aryans by the linguists had come from the north – from Europe. Thus, according to this theory, European languages and cultures came first and were therefore superior to others. This idea was later widely promoted by Adolf Hitler in his attempts to assert the "racial superiority" of so-called light-skinned people from Europe over so-called dark-skinned people from the rest of the world – and thus provide justification for genocide. But 20th-century scholarship has thoroughly disproved this theory. Most scholars believe that there was no Aryan invasion from the north. In fact, some even believe that the Aryans – if they did exist – actually originated in South Asia and spread from there to Europe. Thus, it has been impossible to determine the exact origins of the caste system in South Asia. In the midst of the debate, only one thing is certain: Time for Class In ancient India, the ranked occupational groups were referred to as varnas, and the hereditary occupational groups within the varnas were known as jatis. Many have immediately assumed that ascribed social groups and rules prohibiting intermarriage among the groups signify the existence of a racist culture. But this assumption is false. Varnas are not racial groups but rather classes. Four varna categories were constructed to organize society along economic and occupational lines. Spiritual leaders and teachers were called Brahmins. Warriors and nobility were called Kshatriyas. Merchants and producers were called Vaishyas. Laborers were called Sudras. The Untouchables In addition to the varnas, there is a fifth class in Hinduism. It encompassed outcasts who, literally, did all the dirty work. They were referred to as "untouchables" because they carried out the miserable tasks associated with disease and pollution, such as cleaning up after funerals, dealing with sewage, and working with animal skin. Brahmins were considered the embodiment of purity, and untouchables the embodiment of pollution. Physical contact between the two groups was absolutely prohibited. Brahmins adhered so strongly to this rule that they felt obliged to bathe if even the shadow of an untouchable fell across them. Struggling against Tradition Although the political and social force of the caste system has not disappeared completely, the Indian government has officially outlawed caste discrimination and made widespread reforms. Particularly through the efforts of Indian nationalists such as Mohandas Gandhi, rules preventing social mobility and cross-caste mingling have been loosened. Gandhi renamed the untouchables

## CASTE AND PRIMARY OCCUPATIONS pdf

Harijans, which means "the people of God. In recent years, the Untouchables have become a politically active group and have adopted for themselves the name Dalits, which means "those who have been broken.

### 3: CASTE DISCRIMINATION:

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Within each of these classes there were further sub divisions. Megasthenes identified two distinct divisions within the philosophers group, the priests and the ascetics. In the Satavahana empire, society was organized into four classes. The first class consisted of high ranking officials and feudatory chieftains such as Maharathis, Mahabhojas and Mahasenapatis. The second class consisted of officials such as ministers and treasurers Amatyas, Mahamatras and Bhandagarikas and non-officials such as merchants, traders and heads of guilds Naigama, Sarthvaha and Sreshtin. The third class consisted of professionals such as scribes lekhakas, physicians vaidyas, cultivators halakiyas, goldsmiths suvarnakaras and chemists gandhikas. The fourth class consisted of carpenters vardhaki, gardeners malakaras, blacksmiths lohavanija and fishermen dasakas. The Guptas patronized Hinduism and revived many ancient Vedic traditions. They enforced the caste system throughout their empire with religious zeal. The Brahmins, who enjoyed many privileges under their patronage, were known for their austere lives. There were many groups within the priestly class, each performing specific duties. They studied the scriptures, practiced contemplation, devotional worship and observed austerities such as tapas and penance. They received lavish gifts and land grants from kings, often entire villages in return for their services. People venerated the saints and regarded the places where they lived as sacred places. The kings employed royal priests whom they consulted frequently. Brahmins of this period belonged to many lineages or gotras. The Guptas brought peace and prosperity to the Indian subcontinent and contributed to the emergence of new classes of aristocracy. Their period witnessed the development of new elite groups, as in the Roman empire, in the form of urban bourgeoisie consisting of wealthy traders and merchants and landed gentry owning vast tracts of agricultural lands, which precipitated a new power struggle requiring compromises within the social structure. While the priestly classes had their religious authority over the sudras or the landless peasants, the landed gentry assumed feudal and administrative authority over them. The assimilation of foreign groups such as the Hunas in the declining phase of the Gupta rule resulted in some social unrest and imbalances within society. According to Havell, the infusion of Huna blood lowered the high ethical standards of Indo-Aryan traditions and caused the growth of many vulgar superstitions which were never contradicted by the great teachers of India. The intolerance of the Hunans only added to the rigidity of the caste system in the subsequent period as a defensive reaction, just as the intolerant attitude of Muslim rulers contributed to rigid caste system during the medieval period. Hiuen Tsang who visited India during the reign of Harshavardhana noticed that the caste system dominated the Hindu society. He described the four distinct classes as described in the Hindu law books. The Brahmins and the Kshatriyas observed decency and decorum in their dress and eating habits. The higher castes were very particular about cleanliness. After eating food they destroyed the wooden and stone vessels in which they ate food and cleaned the metal ones thoroughly. They lived upright and honest lives and dreaded the retribution of bad karma. There were no inter-caste marriages and marriages within the same caste among close relations. The caste distinctions and restrictions in food and marriage, however, did not prevent various castes from interacting socially with people from different castes. Despite its universal appeal and emphasis on Muslim brotherhood, Islam could neither destroy the caste system nor the Vedic religion nor the related beliefs and practices. Caste system actually helped Hinduism to maintain its integrity and inner strength during this turbulent period. Some Muslim rulers made attempts to humiliate higher caste Hindus by forcing them to work in Muslim households as servants after reducing them to penury through unjust taxation. They also managed to convert to Islam some low caste and a few high caste Hindus. Some Muslim rulers made it a policy to kill a certain number of Hindus each year to humiliate and destroy followers of native faiths. These developments made the caste system even more rigid and uncompromising. Those who switched their loyalties to the new religion usually the lower castes became despicable and loathsome in the eyes of those who suffered silently. Interestingly the newly converted Muslims maintained some sort of caste system among themselves based on their old caste affiliations and

added a new social dimension to the community of Muslims in the country. The British respected the Indian caste system in formulating their civil and criminal laws and in enforcing their military and government policies regarding governance, military administration, civil services, trade and commerce, education and employment. They did not attempt to abolish the caste system as they saw in it a great opportunity to maintain their hold upon people by keeping them divided on caste and religious lines. The Christian missionaries who enjoyed their covert patronage found in it a convenient means to convert people to Christianity and keep the Hindu organizations on the defensive. Educated Indian middle classes sensed the threat the missionaries posed to the integrity of Hinduism and felt the need to reform the caste system and some outdated practices in the interests of preserving and safeguarding Hinduism and Hindu community. Indian scholars used religious themes and ancient legends to instill feelings of pride and nationalism in people. Leaders like Baba Saheb Ambedkar demanded equal status for the low castes, while Gandhi advocated complete abolition of untouchability and equal rights to all Indians. The practice of untouchability was officially declared as a serious crime, punishable with severe penalties. Provisions were made to identify and protect the lower castes from exploitation and ill treatment. A reservation policy was created to establish a level playing field in matters of employment and education and protect them from unfair competition from higher castes. Today, due to these efforts the lower castes are able to occupy positions of authority and leadership and assert themselves in every profession. By granting constitutional guarantees to the lower castes and protecting them from unfair competition, the Indian government averted a major disaster for independent India by minimizing the possibility of a civil war or civil strife or the mass conversion of lower caste Hindus to other religions.

**Justification of Caste System** Caste system was rationalized in ancient India on various grounds. Some of them are discussed below.

**Justification in the Vedas:** No Vedic tradition is valid unless it is found in the Vedas. The caste system would not have found approval among the Vedic people unless there was some reference to it in the Vedas. The Purusha Sukta in the 10th Mandala of the Rigveda describes how the castes came into existence, from different parts of Purusha, the Cosmic Soul, at the time of a grand sacrifice performed by the gods. The brahmins came out of his mouth, the kshatriyas from his arms, the Vaisyas from his thighs and the sudras from his feet. Many scholars believe that concepts and the imagery of Purusha Sukta 11 belong to later Vedic period rather than the Rigvedic period and so it was probably a later day interpolation. It is interesting that this hymn is quoted even today by many orthodox brahmins to justify the system, despite the inconsistencies in the logic employed. Firstly the one indivisible and unchanging Brahman does not have a body like humans. Secondly even if he has, his feet cannot be unclean compared to his mouth. Judging by the human physic, the mouth should more unclean than the feet unless God has a tendency to wallow in mud. Thirdly, among the bodily parts, it is the feet of God that is usually worshipped in the temples and rituals rather than any other part of His body.

**Justification in the theory of Karma:** The concept of karma perfectly justifies the caste system based on birth. It favors the argument that people of lower castes have to blame themselves for their plight because of their bad karma in their past lives. Their pitiable plight is a stern warning to the rest of the humanity that the wheel of dharma operates inexorably, sparing none and favoring none. This line of argument is found in many scriptures, including the Bhagavadgita, according to which people of good merit and those who had developed detachment or dispassion were born in pious families. In the fourth chapter of the book, Lord Krishna declared that the fourfold varna system was created by him based on the triple gunas and mechanism of karma. By combining the belief in karma with the caste system, the ancient law makers prescribed different vocational and occupational duties for each caste and expected people to follow them sincerely as an integral part of their religious duty. Observing these duties without questioning them was an act of merit, which entitled them to progress on the path of dharma and obtain a better life in the next birth.

**Justification by the theory of Gunas:** According to many schools of Hindu philosophy, all beings and objects in the world contain the triple gunas or qualities of Prakriti. Their dominance or suppression cause people to act and behave differently and make them fit for certain types of occupations. These three qualities are sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva is characterized by purity and spirituality and manifests in men in the form of knowledge, intelligence, faith, sincerity, devotion, piousness and so on. Sattva is believed to be the predominant quality among the men of knowledge, in other worlds, brahmins. Rajas is characterized by

egoism and materialism and manifests in men as ambition, pride, desire for wealth and personal power, lust, hypocrisy, attachment and so on. Rajas is believed to be the predominant quality in case of men of action, in other words, in kshatriyas and Vaisyas. Tamas is characterized by lethargy and manifests in men in the form of ignorance, lack of ambition, extreme austerities, demonical resolve, uncleanliness, negative attitude, unhealthy habits and other forms of undesirable behavior. Tamas is believed to be the predominant quality in men who are unclean and ignorant, in other words, sudras. Justification by the religious laws. The caste system was justified by most of the smriti literature, Manusmriti being the most notorious among them and by such religious scriptures as the Puranas, the Sutra literature and scriptures such as the Bhagavadgita and some later day Upanishads. The law books not only justified rigid caste system but prescribed severe punishments in case of violation. The very purpose for which the law books were composed and the manner in which the information was organized in them on caste lines suggest that in ancient and medieval India they were meant to perpetuate and justify the caste system and provide clear guidelines to the administrative machinery to enforce the laws concerning social divisions with little confusion. Critical Analysis of Caste System The Hindu caste system had its own merits and demerits and should not be judged purely based on the social values of today. Inequalities and social divisions based on economic and family status were not unknown in other parts of the world. The Nordic races followed some form of caste system. The Greeks and Romans had freemen and slaves. The British, the French and the Russians had their landed gentry and nobility in contrast to the commoners and peasants who were subject to unjust taxes and unequal treatment. The new world had its own slave system practiced for nearly two centuries. Compared so some of these systems and practices, the Hindu caste system was more humane and gentle. Although the chandalas were excluded from social interaction, they were free men within their own world. So were the sudras. The Romans had their slave revolts. The French had their revolution. The injustices of American slave system produced deep rooted aggression, resentment and frustration in the USA. But the low castes in India never launched large scale organized revolts or violence against the upper castes because there was no physical suppression of castes but only limitations of opportunities imposed by tradition and religious beliefs. There were rigid walls among the communities but within the walls life went on as usually independent of how others lived. It is in this context one should examine the advantages and disadvantages of Hindu caste system which are listed below.

## 4: Occupational Structure in India: An Overview

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A defining feature of Hinduism, caste encompasses a complex ordering of social groups on the basis of ritual purity. A person is considered a member of the caste into which he or she is born and remains within that caste until death, although the particular ranking of that caste may vary among regions and over time. Traditional scholarship has described this more than 2,000-year-old system within the context of the four principal varnas, or large caste categories. In order of precedence these are the Brahmins priests and teachers, the Kshatriyas rulers and soldiers, the Vaishyas merchants and traders, and the Shudras laborers and artisans. A fifth category falls outside the varna system and consists of those known as "untouchables" or Dalits; they are often assigned tasks too ritually polluting to merit inclusion within the traditional varna system. They may not use the same wells, visit the same temples, or drink from the same cups in tea stalls. Dalit children are frequently made to sit at the back of classrooms. Dalits often receive the poorer of the two, if they receive any at all. In many villages, the state administration installs electricity, sanitation facilities, and water pumps in the upper-caste section, but neglects to do the same in the neighboring, segregated Dalit area. Basic amenities such as water taps and wells are also segregated, and medical facilities and the better, thatched-roof houses exist exclusively in the upper-caste colony. As revealed by the case study below on the earthquake in Gujarat, these same practices hold true even in times of great natural disaster. In the months since the earthquake, residents of the state of Gujarat have been besieged by a man-made disaster: This was apparent in several cities near Bhuj, including Anjar and Bhachchau, where the government had provided far superior shelter and basic amenities to upper-caste populations. The attention is now shifting to the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction of homes. As of this writing, it remained to be seen whether the government would construct integrated housing and give effect to its constitutional abolition of "untouchability. Within the Dalit community of Nepal, there are eight major caste groups and twenty-five identified sub-castes. However, an exception was created for Hindu religious practices. As a result, Dalits can and most often are legally excluded from Hindu temples and rituals. Only after protests and the intervention of NGOs and human rights organizations were Dalits allowed to sell their milk to the cooperative. In India, the Independent Downtrodden and Oppressed Community Council was formed with the objective of coordinating policies and supervising programs to benefit Dalits. At this writing, specific legislation had yet to be proposed. In its fourteenth periodic report under ICERD, the government frankly acknowledged that, "for an overwhelming majority of people the caste system continues to be an extremely salient feature of personal identity and social relationships and, to some extent, determines access to social opportunities. So-called untouchables cannot even enter the houses of the people of so-called higher and middle-class castes. On one hand, they are socially suppressed by the upper classes and, on the other hand, they suffer from poverty; the intensity of poverty seems to be higher in socially backward people. Moreover, Dalits could only wear caste-specific attire; were restricted from schools and public facilities; segregated at gravesites; and made to drink out of disposable coconut shells from local teashops so as not to contaminate the glasses of others. In Sri Lanka there are two caste systems, one for the Sinhalese and the other for the Tamils. Although they both have their origin in India, the Sinhalese caste system is not linked to the Hindu varna. It was an aspect of a feudal society which divided people "according to Descent and Blood" or according to their hereditary roles and functions. The caste system was a secular hierarchy. Social distance was practised but the notion of pollution hardly existed. As an American scholar concluded, "The absence of the Hindu concept had rendered the Sinhalese caste system mild and humanitarian when judged by Indian standards. Many legends surround their origin, all agreeing that they were banished for a heinous crime and condemned to a life of begging or, more accurately, soliciting for alms. They were denied land and work and subjected to many disadvantages and degrading treatment. Marriage bars persist, as do other social bans. Caste-based discrimination is sometimes applied to non-Hindus-including Tamil Christian and Muslim converts, and members of other minority groups. These tensions are exacerbated by conflict-driven

displacement, which can place groups of varying caste backgrounds in closer proximity to another. Higher-caste workers will often refuse to touch food offered to them by "untouchables. Outside of West Africa, caste in Burundi and Mauritius has also been noted. In July , a coalition of Senegalese nongovernmental organizations held a national workshop on problems faced by caste communities in the country. The one-day meeting was in preparation for the World Conference Against Racism. Among the participants was well-known sociologist Abdoulaye Bara Diop, who has written extensively on caste systems among the Wolof of Senegal. Sub-Saharan African also knows castes, among which the griot are the most well-known. All such characteristics can be found among the Wolof who are principally divided between the geer and the neeno. Despite these constitutional protections, the extent to which neeno castes approach the courts for legal redress on discrimination claims is negligible. Within the Igbo communities of southeastern Nigeria, the marginalization of those that have been categorized as Osu reportedly remains largely unchecked. Osus cannot be distinguished from others on the basis of their physical appearance or their speech. These occupations included leather-making, a task shunned by Shintoists and Buddhists who felt that anything which involved the taking of life was unclean. The then-government codified such discrimination against Buraku when it explicitly deemed certain groups distinguished by their occupations to be eta and hinin "nonperson". These newly formed lower castes were then further forced into specific occupations. The etas were forced to dispose of dead cattle or take work as hide tanners and other leather-related crafts, while the hinin became security guards and executioners. Beginning in the early s, the Japanese government established specific rules limiting the types of clothes and hairstyles that Buraku could wear, rendering them easily identifiable. Buraku were often prohibited from entering towns at night or frequenting certain religious sites. Following the edict, peasants rioted in protest at being ranked as equals to Buraku, setting fire to Buraku villages in western Japan and demanding that the edict be revoked. They are even said to be of a different descent than the majority of Japanese people even though they are racially indistinguishable from the rest of the population. While economic and social indicators other than caste have gained in significance, allowing intermarriage among upper castes, in many countries strong social barriers remain in place against marriage between lower and higher castes. In India the condemnation can be quite severe, ranging from social ostracism to punitive violence. On August 6, , in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, an upper-caste Brahmin boy and a lower-caste Jat girl were dragged to the roof of a house and publicly hanged by members of their own families as hundreds of spectators looked on. The public lynching was punishment for refusing to end an inter-caste relationship. Dalits are often forbidden from performing marriage or funeral rites in public areas or, in some areas, from speaking to members of upper castes. In Japan marriage remains a primary source of discrimination for Buraku people today. These background checks are easy to conduct because family registries are easily obtainable, and Buraku names are distinct and recognizable. Upon discovering that the intended bride or groom is of Buraku descent, the marriage plans are often reportedly cancelled or condemned. In parts of southeastern Nigeria, marriage to an Osu by a non-Osu is highly discouraged and even condemned by society, while children of such a union are likely to be ostracized and mistreated. Among the Wolof of Senegal, the concept of caste is founded on occupational groups, and accordingly divides Wolof Senegalese into one of four categories, each of which are either hereditary or assumed upon marriage. They traditionally can only marry within the group, and are not allowed to practice the traditional professions of the lower castes. Although the lower-caste professions are divided among three distinct castes, they are collectively termed neeno and are thus distinguished from the geer. The neeno are further divided into subcastes: A third category of the noole, who are relatively few in number, make up the servants and courtesans. The artisans are further divided into four sub-castes, namely blacksmiths or jewelers, shoemakers, woodcutters, and weavers. Beneath the neeno is the category of jaam or slaves—they are deemed to be outside the caste system. They live in small, squalid quarters provided by the city corporation with no gas or electricity and are paid a little over U. To this day, the traditional division of labor continues to be perpetuated. While Pallas and Nalavas can work on upper-caste land for wages, Paraiyars are predominantly engaged in "unclean" sanitation work. A recent allegation of discrimination based on descent is that made by Tamils of Indian origin employed mainly as tea estate workers in the hill country. With regard to wages, housing, sanitation, health and educational facilities,

they were an oppressed group. Improvements have slowly been made as a result of government policies and powerful trade union action. Integration with the rest of society is more difficult owing to prejudice, but this is breaking down. There are signs of upward mobility through education and non-discriminatory laws. Caste distinctions exist among themselves and complaints have been made that workers mostly Dalits are kept out of trade union office by high caste supervisors. Dalit children make up the majority of children sold into bondage to pay off debts to upper-caste creditors. According to government statistics, an estimated one million Dalits in India are "manual scavengers" a majority of them women who clear feces from public and private latrines and dispose of dead animals; unofficial estimates are much higher. Handling of human waste is a caste-based occupation, deemed too "polluting and filthy" for anyone but Dalits. Manual scavengers exist under different caste names throughout the country, such as the Bhangis in Gujarat, the Pakhis in Andhra Pradesh, and the Sikkaliars in Tamil Nadu. Members of these communities are invariably placed at the very bottom of the caste hierarchy, and even the hierarchy of Dalit sub-castes. Using little more than a broom, a tin plate, and a basket, they are made to clear feces from public and private latrines and carry waste to dumping grounds and disposal sites. Though long outlawed, the practice of manual scavenging continues in most states. Government officials had reportedly offered local upper-caste residents more than the daily minimum wage for each animal burned but they refused, citing the decayed conditions of the carcasses and the fact that the task was beneath them: Also compiled by investigative companies, these lists included information on the names and locations of Buraku households and were marketed to private companies for the purposes of screening job applicants and to families seeking to arrange and approve marriages. A lack of enforcement of relevant legislation prohibiting debt bondage in most of the countries concerned allows for the practice to continue unabated. An estimated forty million people in India, among them some fifteen million children, are working in slave-like conditions in order to pay off debts as bonded laborers. The Bonded Labour System Abolition Act, abolishes all agreements and obligations arising out of the bonded labor system. It aims to release all laborers from bondage, cancel any outstanding debt, prohibit the creation of new bondage agreements, and order the economic rehabilitation of freed bonded laborers by the state. It also punishes attempts to compel persons into bondage with a maximum of three years in prison and a Rs. However, relatively few bonded laborers have been identified, released, and rehabilitated in the country. In Pakistan the debt bondage system is most prevalent in the agricultural provinces of southern Punjab and Sindh. Most laborers in these areas are minority Hindus from lower castes. While the loan agreement is often made between the landowner and the male head of the peasant household, the work to pay off the loan is performed by the entire family, including women and children. Of the 7, bonded laborers reported to have escaped or been released since in the southern Sindh province, human rights organizations report that "several hundred" of them were found "tied up or in chains. Most were only given flour and chili peppers as food and had no access to plumbing facilities or medical care.

## 5: The Caste System and Stages of Life in Hinduism

*The caste system in India is the paradigmatic ethnographic example of caste. It has origins in ancient India, and was transformed by various ruling elites in medieval, early-modern, and modern India, especially the Mughal Empire and the British Raj.*

Varna Hinduism Varna literally means type, order, colour or class [17] [18] and was a framework for grouping people into classes, first used in Vedic Indian society. It is referred to frequently in the ancient Indian texts. There are four varnas but thousands of jatis. This view has been disputed by other scholars, who believe it to be a secular social phenomenon driven by the necessities of economics, politics, and sometimes also geography. Caste The term caste is not originally an Indian word, though it is now widely used, both in English and in Indian languages. Ghurye wrote in that, despite much study by many people, we do not possess a real general definition of caste. It appears to me that any attempt at definition is bound to fail because of the complexity of the phenomenon. On the other hand, much literature on the subject is marred by lack of precision about the use of the term. His model definition for caste included the following six characteristics, [32] Segmentation of society into groups whose membership was determined by birth [33] A hierarchical system wherein generally the Brahmins were at the head of the hierarchy, but this hierarchy was disputed in some cases. In various linguistic areas, hundreds of castes had a gradation generally acknowledged by everyone [34] Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse, with minute rules on the kind of food and drink that upper castes could accept from lower castes. There was a great diversity in these rules, and lower castes generally accepted food from upper castes [35] Segregation, where individual castes lived together, the dominant caste living in the center and other castes living on the periphery. This characteristic of caste was missing from large parts of India, stated Ghurye, and in these regions all four castes Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras did agriculture labour or became warriors in large numbers [39] Endogamy , restrictions on marrying a person outside caste, but in some situations hypergamy allowed. Risley , [45] and for fitting his definition to then prevalent colonial orientalist perspectives on caste. For example, for some early European documenters it was thought to correspond with the endogamous varnas referred to in ancient Indian scripts, and its meaning corresponds in the sense of estates. To later Europeans of the Raj era it was endogamous jatis, rather than varnas, that represented caste, such as the jatis that colonial administrators classified by occupation in the early 20th century. The name stuck and became the usual word for the Hindu social group. This is a false terminology; castes rise and fall in the social scale, and old castes die out and new ones are formed, but the four great classes are stable. There are never more or less than four and for over 2, years their order of precedence has not altered. Varna represents a closed collection of social orders whereas jati is entirely open-ended, thought of as a "natural kind whose members share a common substance. Thus, "Caste" is not an accurate representation of jati in English. Better terms would be ethnicity, ethnic identity and ethnic group. Flexibility Sociologist Anne Waldrop observes that while outsiders view the term caste as a static phenomenon of stereotypical tradition-bound India, empirical facts suggest caste has been a radically changing feature. The term means different things to different Indians. In the context of politically active modern India, where job and school quotas are reserved for affirmative action based on castes, the term has become a sensitive and controversial subject. Srinivas and Damle have debated the question of rigidity in caste and believe that there is considerable flexibility and mobility in the caste hierarchies. Perspectives There are at least two perspectives for the origins of the caste system in ancient and medieval India, which focus on either ideological factors or on socio-economic factors. The first school focuses on the ideological factors which are claimed to drive the caste system and holds that caste is rooted in the four varnas. This perspective was particularly common among scholars of the British colonial era and was articulated by Dumont, who concluded that the system was ideologically perfected several thousand years ago and has remained the primary social reality ever since. This school justifies its theory primarily by citing the ancient law book Manusmriti and disregards economic, political or historical evidence. It believes caste to be rooted in the economic, political and material history of India. Hart , central aspects of the later Indian caste system may

originate from the ritual kingship system prior to the arrival of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism in India. The system is seen in the South Indian Tamil literature from the Sangam period, dated to the third to sixth centuries CE. According to Hart, it may be this model that provided the concerns with "pollution" of the members of low status groups. The Hart model for caste origin, writes Samuel, envisions "the ancient Indian society consisting of a majority without internal caste divisions and a minority consisting of a number of small occupationally polluted groups". The first three groups, Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishya have parallels with other Indo-European societies, while the addition of the Shudras is probably a Brahmanical invention from northern India. The Purusha Sukta verse is now generally considered to have been inserted at a later date into the Rigveda, probably as a charter myth. Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton, professors of Sanskrit and Religious studies, state, "there is no evidence in the Rigveda for an elaborate, much-subdivided and overarching caste system", and "the varna system seems to be embryonic in the Rigveda and, both then and later, a social ideal rather than a social reality". Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf, both professors of History, write, "One of the surprising arguments of fresh scholarship, based on inscriptional and other contemporaneous evidence, is that until relatively recent centuries, social organisation in much of the subcontinent was little touched by the four varnas. Nor were jati the building blocks of society. He concludes that "If caste is defined as a system of group within the class, which are normally endogamous, commensal and craft-exclusive, we have no real evidence of its existence until comparatively late times. The rituals in the Vedas ask the noble or king to eat with the commoner from the same vessel. Later Vedic texts ridicule some professions, but the concept of untouchability is not found in them. Patrick Olivelle, a professor of Sanskrit and Indian Religions and credited with modern translations of Vedic literature, Dharma-sutras and Dharma-sastras, states that ancient and medieval Indian texts do not support the ritual pollution, purity-impurity premise implicit in the Dumont theory. The only mention of impurity in the Shastra texts from the 1st millennium is about people who commit grievous sins and thereby fall out of their varna. These, writes Olivelle, are called "fallen people" and considered impure in the medieval Indian texts. The texts declare that these sinful, fallen people be ostracised. The distinction originally arose from tribal divisions. The Vedic tribes regarded themselves as arya the noble ones and the rival tribes were called dasa, dasyu and pani. The dasas were frequent allies of the Aryan tribes, and they were probably assimilated into the Aryan society, giving rise to a class distinction. Many husbandmen and artisans practised a number of crafts. The chariot-maker rathakara and metal worker karmara enjoyed positions of importance and no stigma was attached to them. Similar observations hold for carpenters, tanners, weavers and others. The erstwhile dasas are renamed Shudras, probably to distinguish them from the new meaning of dasa as slave. The aryas are renamed vis or Vaishya meaning the members of the tribe and the new elite classes of Brahmins priests and Kshatriyas warriors are designated as new varnas. The Shudras were not only the erstwhile dasas but also included the aboriginal tribes that were assimilated into the Aryan society as it expanded into Gangetic settlements. Whereas the Brahmanical texts speak of the four-fold varna system, the Buddhist texts present an alternative picture of the society, stratified along the lines of jati, kula and occupation. It is likely that the varna system, while being a part of the Brahmanical ideology, was not practically operative in the society. They were in fact the jatis of high rank. The jatis of low rank were mentioned as chandala and occupational classes like bamboo weavers, hunters, chariot-makers and sweepers. The concept of kulas was broadly similar. Along with Brahmins and Kshatriyas, a class called gahapatis literally householders, but effectively propertied classes was also included among high kulas. The gahapatis were an economic class of land-holding agriculturists, who employed dasa-kammakaras slaves and hired labourers to work on the land. The gahapatis were the primary taxpayers of the state. This class was apparently not defined by birth, but by individual economic growth. Many occupations listed such as accounting and writing were not linked to jatis. The texts state that the Brahmin took food from anyone, suggesting that strictures of commensality were as yet unknown. The Brahmins maintain their divinely ordained superiority and assert their right to draw service from the lower orders. Buddha responds by pointing out the basic facts of biological birth common to all men and asserts that the ability to draw service is obtained economically, not by divine right. Using the example of the northwest of the subcontinent, Buddha points out that aryas could become dasas and vice versa. This form of social

mobility was endorsed by Buddha. This description is questioned by Bharadvaja who says that colors are seen among all the varnas, that desire, anger, fear, greed, grief, anxiety, hunger and toil prevails over all human beings, that bile and blood flow from all human bodies, so what distinguishes the varnas, he asks. The Mahabharata then declares, "There is no distinction of varnas. This whole universe is Brahman. It was created formerly by Brahma, came to be classified by acts. The Brahmin class is modeled in the epic as the archetype default state of man dedicated to truth, austerity and pure conduct. The four varnas are not lineages, but categories". According to this legend, Bharata performed an "ahimsa-test" test of non-violence, and during that test all those who refused to harm any living beings were called as the priestly varna in ancient India, and Bharata called them dvija, twice born. According to Padmanabh Jaini, a professor of Indic studies, in Jainism and Buddhism, the Adi Purana text states "there is only one jati called manusyajati or the human caste, but divisions arise on account of their different professions". Supporting evidence for the existence of varna and jati systems in medieval India has been elusive, and contradicting evidence has emerged. This has led Cynthia Talbot, a professor of History and Asian Studies, to question whether varna was socially significant in the daily lives of this region. The mention of jati is even rarer, through the 13th century. Two rare temple donor records from warrior families of the 14th century claim to be Shudras. One states that Shudras are the bravest, the other states that Shudras are the purest. In contrast to what Brahmanical legal texts may lead us to expect, we do not find that caste is the organising principle of society or that boundaries between different social groups is sharply demarcated. He states, "The omnipresence of cognatic kinship and caste in North India is a relatively new phenomenon that only became dominant in the early Mughal and British periods respectively. Historically speaking, the alliance and the open status group, whether war band or religious sect, dominated medieval and early modern Indian history in a way descent and caste did not. This theory is now widely believed to be baseless and false. These occupationally diverse members from one caste served each other, writes Habib, either because of their reaction to taxation pressure of Muslim rulers or because they belonged to the same caste. Three sets of value played an important role in this development: In addition, in this fluid stateless environment, some of the previously casteless segments of society grouped themselves into caste groups. Communities teamed in different regions of India, into "collective classing" to mold the social stratification in order to maximise assets and protect themselves from loss. The British Company officials adopted constitutional laws segregated by religion and caste. In this transitory phase, Brahmins together with scribes, ascetics and merchants who accepted Hindu social and spiritual codes, became the deferred-to-authority on Hindu texts, law and administration of Hindu matters. In the census and thereafter, colonial ethnographers used caste jati headings, to count and classify people in what was then British India now India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Burma. While bureaucratic British officials completed reports on their zoological classification of Indian people, some British officials criticised these exercises as being little more than a caricature of the reality of caste system in India. The British colonial officials used the census-determined jatis to decide which group of people were qualified for which jobs in the colonial government, and people of which jatis were to be excluded as unreliable. This ideological scheme was theoretically composed of around 3, castes, which in turn was claimed to be composed of 90, local endogamous sub-groups. Included in this collection were Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist Sinhalese people classified by castes. Jobs for upper castes The role of the British Raj on the caste system in India is controversial.

### 6: Caste system in India - Wikipedia

*India and the Caste System study guide by agupta includes 27 questions covering vocabulary, terms and more. Quizlet flashcards, activities and games help you improve your grades.*

Al-Akhdam In Yemen there exists a hereditary caste, the African -descended Al-Akhdam who are kept as perennial manual workers. Estimates put their number at over 3. Caste system in Africa Various sociologists have reported caste systems in Africa. In other cases, such as the Nupe of Nigeria, the Beni Amer of East Africa, and the Tira of Sudan, the exclusionary principle has been driven by evolving social factors. They have been also referred to as the bard caste. Once born into Osu caste, this Nigerian person is an outcast, shunned and ostracized, with limited opportunities or acceptance, regardless of his or her ability or merit. Obinna discusses how this caste system-related identity and power is deployed within government, Church and indigenous communities. The Songhai economy was based on a caste system. The most common were metalworkers, fishermen, and carpenters. Lower caste participants consisted of mostly non-farm working immigrants, who at times were provided special privileges and held high positions in society. At the top were noblemen and direct descendants of the original Songhai people, followed by freemen and traders. These groups have been described as inferior, deprived of all political power, have a specific occupation, are hereditary and sometimes despised by others. Richter illustrates caste system in Ivory Coast , with six sub-caste categories. Unlike other parts of the world, mobility is sometimes possible within sub-castes, but not across caste lines. Farmers and artisans have been, claims Richter, distinct castes. Certain sub-castes are shunned more than others. For example, exogamy is rare for women born into families of woodcarvers. The Mande class system regards the jonow slaves as inferior. In various parts of West Africa, Fulani societies also have class divisions. Other castes include Griots, Forgerons, and Cordonniers. Castes appeared among the Malinke people no later than 14th century, and was present among the Wolof and Soninke, as well as some Songhay and Fulani populations, no later than 16th century. Tamari claims that wars, such as the Sosso-Malinke war described in the Sunjata epic, led to the formation of blacksmith and bard castes among the people that ultimately became the Mali empire. As West Africa evolved over time, sub-castes emerged that acquired secondary specializations or changed occupations. Endogamy was prevalent within a caste or among a limited number of castes, yet castes did not form demographic isolates according to Tamari. Social status according to caste was inherited by off-springs automatically; but this inheritance was paternal. That is, children of higher caste men and lower caste or slave concubines would have the caste status of the father. Albert in claimed that the societies in Central Africa were caste-like social stratification systems. These groups were largely endogamous, exclusionary and with limited mobility. Along with the Tumul and Yibir, they are collectively known as sab. Examples of such caste systems, he claims, are to be found in Ethiopia in communities such as the Gurage and Konso. He then presents the Dime of Southwestern Ethiopia, amongst whom there operates a system which Todd claims can be unequivocally labelled as caste system. The Dime have seven castes whose size varies considerably. Each broad caste level is a hierarchical order that is based on notions of purity, non-purity and impurity. It uses the concepts of defilement to limit contacts between caste categories and to preserve the purity of the upper castes. These caste categories have been exclusionary, endogamous and the social identity inherited. At the top of this hierarchy were the Kafa, followed by occupational groups including blacksmiths Qemmo , weavers Shammano , bards Shatto , potters, and tanners Manno. In this hierarchy, the Manjo were commonly referred to as hunters, given the lowest status equal only to slaves. Though the Wata today speak the Oromo language , they have traditions of having previously spoken another language before adopting Oromo. While they had the same skin color and religion as the majority, in the churches they had to use segregated doors, drink from segregated fonts, and receive communion on the end of long wooden spoons. It was a closed social system. The socially isolated Cagots were endogamous, and chances of social mobility non-existent. Lloyd Warner relationship between Blacks and Whites in USA historically showed many features of caste like residential segregation, marriage restrictions.

## 7: Hinduism and Caste System

*The caste system also returns certain practical benefits to the individual. Being a member of a jati gives each person a sense of identity and of belonging to a well-defined group within society.*

Occupational Structure in India: The below mentioned article provides an overview on Occupational Structure in India. After reading this article you will learn about: Economic Development of Occupational Structure 2. Occupational Distribution of Population 3. Factors Responsible for Failure. Economic Development of Occupational Structure: Economic development creates various types of occupations in an economy. All these various occupations can be broadly classified into three categories, viz. The primary occupations include all those essential activities such as agriculture and allied activities like animal husbandry, forestry, fishery, poultry farming etc. Secondary activities include manufacturing industries composed of both large and small scale and mining. Tertiary activities include all other activities like transport, communication, banking, insurance, trade etc. The occupational structure indicated the distribution as well as absorption of population into these various types of occupations. In underdeveloped countries, majority of the population are still engaged in agriculture and other primary activities. Even in some developed countries like Japan, England, Norway fishing continues to be an important occupation, providing employment to a substantial number of populations. Development experience shows that with the gradual development of a backward economy, the importance of primary occupations gradually declines with the growth of industries and tertiary activities. In the secondary sector, large scale industries, being more capital-intensive cannot provide much employment opportunities. But it is the development of small scale and cottage industries, mining activities etc. Again the tertiary occupations are also considered very important as these have a huge employment potential. In developed countries, the absorption capacity of this sector is very high. According to World Development Report, , whereas about 45 to 66 per cent of the work force of developed countries was employed in the tertiary sector but India could absorb only 18 per cent of total force in this sector. Changes in occupational structure are very much associated with economic development. The rate of economic development and the level of per capita income increase as more and more work force shifts from primary sector to secondary and tertiary sector. This would be possible only when productivity of agriculture increases due to introduction of improved technology in it. The increase in productivity in agriculture transfers surplus work force from agriculture to other sectors. The extent and pace of inter-sectoral transfer of work force depend very much on the rate of increase in productivity in the primary sector in relation to other sectors. Occupational Distribution of Population in India: Occupational distribution of population reflects on the degree of development and the diversification achieved in an economy. Let us now turn our discussion on the occupational structure of India. The occupational structure of India clearly reflects a high degree of backwardness prevailing in Indian economy. Since the turn of the present century the occupational structure in India was tilted towards the primary sector. Over the last 80 years , the proportion of working force engaged in primary occupations remained very steady, i. Let us now make a detailed study on the occupation structure of India during this long years period. Occupational Structure during During the first half of the present century, occupational distribution of population in India did not report any appreciable change. Agriculture occupied the dominant position and its absorption capacity had increased marginally from The commercial policy of the British had paved the way for the introduction of British machine-made goods in Indian market leading to destruction of traditional Indian handicrafts. This forced the labourers of this household industry to engage themselves in agricultural operations for earning their livelihood. All these led to a marked increase in the proportion of landless agricultural labourers to total labour force from 17 per cent in to nearly 20 per cent in The percentage of population engaged in other allied activities like forestry, livestock, fishery etc. During this period, industrial activity was very much restricted to plantation and textile industry and was also supported by imported machinery resulting limited backward linkage effects and lack of diffusion of spread effect of industrialisation. Thus this process of industrialisation had created a very little impact on the generation of employment opportunities. While the share of transport, storage and communications rose, for the other

branches of services trends are unclear. Many services associated with modernisation under colonial rule expanded, in particular, public, educational, medical and legal services. After independence and especially after the introduction of planning in India, attempt was made by the planning to accelerate the process of industrialisation and also to change the occupational structure by transferring a section of working force from agriculture to secondary and tertiary sectors. But for this to happen something like a fourfold increase in the numbers engaged in mining and factory establishment has to be brought about, and the investment pattern in the plans has to be adjusted to these requirements. It was also necessary to reduce the dependence on agriculture by generating alternative employment opportunities in the rural areas. All these technological changes in agriculture along-with land reforms measures were introduced in India in order to increase agricultural production and productivity and to transfer surplus labour force from agricultural sector to secondary and tertiary sector. On the other hand, to change the occupational structure in India, importance of designing a suitable employment policy was felt. With the introduction of planning, a considerable increase in employment opportunities was expected. The planned economic development anticipated a rapid progress in the expansion of irrigation, power, basic industries, other manufacturing and household industries and the expansion of tertiary activities in the service sector like expansion of trade, banking, insurance, transportation and communication etc. But after two decades of planning occupational structure in India could not show any remarkable change. Although both secondary and tertiary sector expanded and their absorption capacity also increased substantially but the rate of increase in employment opportunities fell far short of rate of increase in the labour force. Moreover, another important condition for realising the change in occupational structure, viz. Again the allied activities of the primary sector and development of village industries could not make much headway in engaging the surplus population from the agricultural sector. The growing labour force in agriculture has to be provided with fuller employment within agriculture. In spite of heavy investment made on manufacturing and service sector during these two decades of planning the absorption capacity of secondary and tertiary sectors jointly remained the same at 28 per cent of the total work force. Again during the next period, the proportion of work force engaged in the primary sector declined marginally to Another noticeable change that was recorded was that the proportion of cultivators declined from 50 per cent in to This shows the growing concentration of land in the hands of rich and well-to-do farmers and the transformation of small and marginal farmers into landless agricultural labourers. Moreover, the proportion of work force engaged in the secondary sector increased marginally from The absorption capacity of both the secondary and tertiary sector jointly increased from 28 per cent to Again the World Development Report, shows that in , the percentages of work force, both wages and non-wages engaged in agriculture, industry and services were to the extent of Considering the earlier mentioned position we can conclude that there was virtually no clear shift of working population from primary sector to secondary and tertiary sectors. Thus the planning process in India has totally failed to bring any change in its occupational structure. Factors Responsible for Failure of Occupational Structure: Indian planners failed to make any serious attempt for the development of rural economy for utilizing the vast idle labour force and also to raise the productivity of labourers. Due to poor organisation, the programmes of reducing unemployment and under-employment problem in the rural areas failed miserably. Moreover, planners did not make any serious attempt to enlarge the scope of non-agricultural rural employment. Land reforms in India failed miserably to realise its goal and to create small owner holding. These reforms could not diffuse the ownership of land among a large number of marginal cultivators. Various other facilities provided by the Government such as cheaper credit, marketing, subsidy on fertilizer price etc. Efforts of the planners to develop industries helped the large scale capital goods sector and the plans could not create much response to the development of small scale and cottage industries. This development of large scale highly capital-intensive industries could not create much employment potential and thus created no impact on the occupational structure of the country. The high rate of growth of labour force is also an important factor which has been creating serious drags on the path of changing the occupational structure in India. This fast growing labour force without getting any subsidiary occupation open to them in the rural areas stated to eke out their living from agricultural sector alone. This led to a huge dependence as well as a high degree of disguised unemployment in the agricultural sectors. Thus under this present situation occupational

structure in India can be amended suitable only when the country will start to develop its labour-intensive sectors that include small scale and cottage industries, allied activities in the primary sector such as animal husbandry, fishing, poultry farming etc. Development of this huge labour-intensive sector will raise the level of employment and income both in the rural and urban areas leading to an enlargement of aggregate demand for various goods and services produced by large scale industries. Thus the development of this labour intensive sector will be able to bring changes in the occupational distribution of population from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations and will also be able to support the large scale manufacturing sector by enlarging the demand for their products and while doing so they can save these large scale industries from recession.

### 8: Formats and Editions of Caste and primary occupations : a geographical analysis [www.enganchecuban

*Caste in India therefore is the primary source of stratification and responsible for a host of outcomes even after controlling for other factors. Thus, poverty rates, educational endowments.*

Varna s It is essential to distinguish between large-scale and small-scale views of caste society, which may respectively be said to represent theory and practice, or ideology and the existing social reality. On the large scale, contemporary students of Hindu society recall an ancient fourfold arrangement of socioeconomic categories called the varnas, which is traced back to an oral tradition preserved in the Rigveda dating perhaps from between 3000 and 1500 bce. The Sanskrit word varna has many connotations, including colour, description, selection, and classification. Indo-European-speaking peoples migrated probably about 3000 bce to northwestern India the Indus valley and the Punjab Plain. Since the 19th century, however, some scholars have pointed to textual evidence that the distinction referred to ritual practices and not to skin colour; further, the term *arya* may have been a term for nobility rather than an ethnic self-identification. In addition, it is also likely that the *daha* included earlier immigrants from Iran. Therefore, the tendency of some 20th-century writers to reduce the ancient bipolar classification to racial differences on the basis of skin colour is misleading and rightly no longer in vogue. Whatever the relations between the so-called *arya* and *daha*, it is likely that they gradually became integrated into an internally plural social order reflecting a threefold division of society into priests, warriors, and commoners. In an early period, membership in a varna appears to have been based mainly on personal skills rather than birth, status, or wealth. By the end of the Rigvedic period, however, the hereditary principle of social rank had taken root. Thus the hymn of the Rigveda probably a late addition to the text in which the creation of humanity in the form of varnas emerges from a self-sacrificial rite of the primeval person *purusha*: Brahmins were the mouth of *purusha*, from his arms were made the *Rajanyas Kshatriyas*, from his two thighs, the *Vaishyas*, and the *Shudras* were born from his feet. The highest-ranked among the varnas, the Brahmins, were priests and the masters and teachers of sacred knowledge *veda*. Next in rank but hardly socially inferior was the ruling class of *Rajanya* kinsmen of the king, later renamed *Kshatriya*, those endowed with sovereignty and, as warriors, responsible for the protection of the dominion *kshatra*. A complex, mutually reinforcing relationship of sacerdotal authority and temporal power was obviously shaped over a long period of time. This second birth entitled them to participate in specified sacraments and gave them access to sacred knowledge. They were also entitled alongside their social superiors to demand and receive menial services from the *Shudras*, the fourth and lowest-ranked varna. In the varna framework, the Brahmins have everything, directly or indirectly: This is not surprising, for the ancient Brahmins were the authors of the ideology. The four varnas, together with the notional division of the individual life cycle into four stages, or *ashramas* *brahmacharya*, the years of learning and extreme discipline; *garhasthya*, householdership; *vanaprastha*, retirement; and *sannyasa*, renunciation of all worldly bonds may at best be considered an archetypical blueprint for the good, moral life. The varna order remains relevant to the understanding of the system of *jatis*, as it provides the ideological setting for the patterns of interaction that are continuously under negotiation. *Jatis* and relations among them have been accessible to observers from ancient times to the present. Hereafter *jati* and caste will be used synonymously. Empirically, the caste system is one of regional or local *jatis*, each with a history of its own, whether this be Kashmir or Tamil Nadu, Bengal or Gujarat. History may differ, but the form of social organization does not. Everywhere castes have traditionally been endogamous. Each *jati* was associated with one or more hereditary occupations, but certain occupations for example, agriculture or nontraditional civil service were caste-neutral, and there were *jati*-specific restrictions on what and with whom one could eat and drink. Everywhere castes were ranked vertically, with the Brahmins at the top by virtue of their inherent condition of ritual purity and the *Shudras* at the bottom. Those among the *Shudras* who disposed of impure substances body emissions, dead animals, etc. It is reasonable to assume that the caste system, contrary to the popular images of its changelessness, has always been characterized by the efforts of various *jatis* to raise themselves in the social order. Such efforts have been more successful in the case of low but ritually pure castes than in the case of those living below the line of pollution.

Two routes have been available to castes seeking upward mobility. The traditional route consists of the adoption of certain critical elements of the way of life of clean upper castes, such as the ritual of initiation into the status of a clean jati, wearing of the sacred thread a loop of thread worn next to the skin over the left shoulder and across the right hip symbolic of such status, vegetarianism, teetotalism, abstention from work that is considered polluting or demeaning, and prohibition of the remarriage of widows. The process is gradual and not always successful. The critical test of success lies in the willingness, first, of higher castes to accept cooked food from members of the upwardly mobile jati and, second, of equivalent-status castes to provide them services that are deemed demeaning. Within the framework of traditional values, socially ambitious castes have also been known, when possible, to supplement the criterion of ritual purity by the secular criteria of numerical strength, economic well-being notably in the form of land ownership, and the ability to mobilize physical force to emerge as the wielders of power in village affairs and in local politics. An important aspect of social change today is the dissociation of ritual status from secular economic and political power. Although a great many spheres of life in modern India are little influenced by caste, most marriages are nevertheless arranged within the caste. This is in part because most people live in rural communities and because the arrangement of marriages is a family activity carried out through existing networks of kinship and caste.

### 9: Census of India: Economic Activity

*The origins of the caste system in India and Nepal are shrouded, but it seems to have originated more than two thousand years ago. Under this system, which is associated with Hinduism, people were categorized by their occupations. Although originally caste depended upon a person's work, it soon.*

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