Chapter 3 - The Consciousness of Caste

One of the most significant features of the stratified Haryanvi society has been "caste". In folk narratives too, it represents its nucleus. It has been deciphered as an institution as well as an ideology. Institutionally, 'caste' provided a framework for arranging and organizing social groups in terms of their status and positions in the social and economic system. It fixed individuals into the structure of social hierarchy on the basis of their birth. As an ideology, caste was a system of values and ideas that legitimized and reinforced the existing structure of social inequity.

Caste has been seen as an extreme form of social stratification. Caste can be seen as an epitome of traditional societies of folk narratives, a "closed system" where generations after generations individuals aid similar kinds of work and lived more or less similar kinds of lives.

Caste is "a hereditary, endogamous, usually localized group, having a traditional association with an occupation, and a particular position in the hierarchy of castes. Relations between castes are governed, among other things, by the concepts of pollution and purity, and generally, maximum commensality occurs within the caste".144

The following features become evident from this definition. First, membership in a caste is by birth. Second, a caste is an endogamous unit. Third, members of each caste traditionally had an occupation or trade to pursue. Fourth, castes are graded in a local hierarchy. Fifth, notions of pollution and purity govern the nature and extent of the relationships between castes.

Interestingly the term caste is not of Indian origin. Its origin has been located in the Portuguese word 'casta' meaning 'race' or pure 'stock'. Also it were the outsiders who came from the west who first used the term caste to make sense of the social organization of the

Indian Society. It is currently used to refer to two different systems of social relations viz varna and jati.

Varna System

In the Rig-Veda the word ‘varna’ is never applied to any one of these classes - Brahman, Kshatriya, etc. It is only the ‘Arya’ varna or the Aryan people that is contrasted with the ‘Dasa’ varna. The Satapatha Brahamana on the other hand describes the four classes as the four varanas. Varna means colour and it was in this sense that the word seems to have been employed in contrasting the Arya and the Dasa referring to their fair and dark colours respectively. The colour connotation of the word was so strong that later on when the classes came to be regularly described as varnas, four different colours were supposed to be distinguished.

It is commonly believed that Lord Brahma has created this universe. To give stability to the world, ancient rishis created many arrangements and systems. Class system is the first system to keep society organized whose reference is found in Yajur Veda. According to this, there are four classes- Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaish and Shudra. Brahmins are born from the Brahma’s mouth, the kshatriyas are born from his arms, the Vaish from his thighs and the Shudra from his feet. According to the Upanishads, the Brahmins were born in the beginning. The Kshatriya were born for the protection of the Brahmins. The Vaishyas were born for Kshatriyas. For their service, the Shudras were born. Bhagvat Gita also describes these classes.

The division of the class is according to their qualities and actions. The varna system is a broad framework that applies, more or less, to the entire society. In the tales, the four kinds of varnas have been mentioned viz. the Brahmins, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra in a decreasing order of their importance in the social hierarchy. There is a fifth category of the “Untouchables” who are considered outside the Varna system and are considered at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

In the folktales of Haryana, these classes have been defined, according to their specific qualities and actions.

Brahmins

They occupy foremost place in the class system. The reading of the Vedas, the performance of Yajna and accepting donations are their prime task. In BhagwatGita, generosity, performance of knowledge etc. are said to be Brahmin’s qualities. A Brahmin who does not follow/perform his complete duties is not considered a complete Brahmin.

In Haryanvi folktales, the word ‘Brahmin’ is used as a class. He is addressed as a “Purohit” or a “Kasi’s Pandit”. In folktales, he is shown as a poor and helpless man whose nature is characterised by peace, humility, tranquility, simplicity and knowledge. He is also made butt of ridicule by other classes because of his inflated sense of being a learned person.

In folk narratives like The Lion and the Brahmin, the poverty of this varna is depicted. The lion accepts the Brahmin as his guru worthy of being revered and gives him enormous amount of wealth. Instead of eating him, lion pays tribute to him.

The brahmin’s duty of studying Vedas is represented in The Brahmin and Jat story. But he is made the butt of amusement. In this story, a jat of vaish varna challenges the Brahmin if he can answer his question. The question that he puts is:

Damchar damchar dhua duoo
Phatkar phatkar kuan phoo
Khadbadh khadbadh khua khoo

To this, the Brahmin had no answer. The jat asks for 100 rupees, a strand of hair from his ‘choti’ and all his vedic books. After being dejected at his insufficient knowledge, he meets a farmer who promises to help him. This farmer tells the jat that he had asked an incomplete question to the Brahmin and he will now tell him what is the remaining part of his question:

Damchar damchar dhua duoo
Phatkar phatkar kuan phoo

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146 Recorded in cassette
147 ibid
Khadbadh khadbadh khua khoo

Saer sarapar sarpar soo

After this, gives an amusing retort to the jat:

Dhaan hosaye bhai

Pola ukhal mein kutaye jya

Pher chan kei pachurey jya

Pher handi mein randhayey jya

Pher sapar kei khayey jya

In the story, A Lucky Girl, he is engaged in the task of accomplishing marriage of Raja’s daughter. When raja asks his seventh daughter to whom do you owe everything? She replies, “I owe everything to my destiny”. Raja gets furious calls for the Brahmin and asks him for search of groom who doesn’t have even a morsel of food to eat—“Do jyoon dana bhi khan ne na mile”.

In the story of The Old Brahmin the snake transforms into a neckless worth nine crores as mark of homage to the Brahmin.

He has been depicted accepting gifts and offerings in the story, “The Fast On Monday”.

Kshatriya:

According to the class system, Kshatriya are born to protect Gods. According to Mahabharata and Manusmriti, a person who is brave, skilled to fight, kind and protector of people, killer of thieves and dacoits and performs rituals qualify to be a Kshatriya. Instead of then word Kshatriya, the word King has been used in the folktales. According to the Upanishads, the Khatriyas performs the duties of the King.

148 ibid
149 ibid
150 ibid
In the story "Suraj Narayan"\textsuperscript{151} Suraj Narayan is the king of the Surajlok. He is kind and protector of his subjects. He provides people with food.

In the story "King Vikramaditya"\textsuperscript{152} Vikramaditya performs yajna gives donations, gems and jewellery to poor people.

In the same way, "Dhruv Bhagat"\textsuperscript{153}, "Hoi Mata"\textsuperscript{154}, "Kartik story", "Mahalaxmi Fast" story, the Kshatriya performs the duties of a King.

In "King Bhoja"\textsuperscript{155} king Bhoja also provides food and money to the poor people.

Vaishyas

The third varna in hierarchical order is Vaishya who are agriculturist and do animal husbandry. Haryana, being an agrarian state, the basis of subsistence has always been agriculture. The vaishya help in progress of the state through animal protection, agriculture and other business avenues. They also do trade and commerce. In folktales, the jats perform the role of agriculturist.

In Gita and Manusmriti, the duties of the Vaishyas are described as the protection of the animals, giving of the donations, help in performing yajnas, reading of Vedas, trade and agriculture.

In the tale of ‘The Jat and Constable’\textsuperscript{156} the Jat does the farming chores and domesticates animals. The Jat is shown as a man of keen intellect in the story. The Jat and Sepoy had a quarrel on trivial issue. They took the matters to court. The judge said though it is a mistake of the Constable yet Jat has to pay fine because he has physically assaulted the constable. Judge slapped a monetary fine of eight aanas on Jat. On hearing the judgement the Jat took out his boots and gave constable more beating and told the judge that he had no change of eight aanas so he gave beating amounting to one rupee.

\textsuperscript{151} ibid
\textsuperscript{152} ibid
\textsuperscript{153} ibid
\textsuperscript{154} ibid
\textsuperscript{155} ibid
\textsuperscript{156} ibid
In another story “The Ox of Two and a Half Rupees”\textsuperscript{157} Jat is outdone by four thugs. Sardar fo the thugs told him that his Ox is worth just two and half rupees but when he realizes that he had been fooled he fleeced the four thugs in turn and got back his fifteen hundred rupees which was the real worth of his Ox.

In another amusing story “The Quaint Buffalo”\textsuperscript{158}, buffalo of the jat used to allow only jat’s wife to milk her. The Jat faced the problem of milking the buffalo when his wife went for a pilgrimage. To overcome the problem he attired himself in his wives clothes and veiled his face to hide his moustaches and tricked the buffalo and milked her.

But the Jat also has been outsmart in “The Story of Brahmin and the Jat”\textsuperscript{159}. He looses out on a challenge out to the brahmin and has to pay hundred rupees and one strand hair.

In “The King and the Jat”\textsuperscript{160} the jat helps king out of a very humiliating situation. The jat has gained the favour of the king by his witty answers on three occasion in the story. King is impressed with his sharp and fertile brain. Once the King invites the prostitute to add to the festivities. But as it turns out that the prostitute is bribed to humiliate the King. After the dance performance the King following the traditional custom asks the dancer, “What do you want”? The dancer replies, “I want to shit on your throne”. Emperor finding himself in an embarrassing situation and calls for the jat immediately. The jat, inorder to teach her a lesson of her life, asks her to shit on the throne of king without releasing even a single drop of urine. The dancer is embarrassed and realizes her mistake.

In “The Jat and the Jackal”\textsuperscript{161} story, the jackal use to regularly eat away the corns from jat’s field. To teach him a lesson, the jat hides himself in the corn field. Taking the opportunity, he beats up the jackal and pokes fun at the she-jackal, “Shyamsundari! go away. Your Ramphal has hurt his chin while eating the corn.” And he enjoys the last laugh.

Trade and commerce is generally carried by the baniya in the folk narratives as he is believed to be endowed with a sharp acumen for it. In the story “The Thief and the

\textsuperscript{157} ibid
\textsuperscript{158} ibid
\textsuperscript{159} ibid
\textsuperscript{160} ibid
\textsuperscript{161} ibid
Baniya", the baniya tricks the thief who had come to trick them. The thief himself gets caught and hurt in the process. In order to teach the thief a lesson, the baniya hides a scorpion under the glass and declares that under it is a ring worth lakhs a rupees. The thief attempts to steal the ring and instead of the ring is stung by the scorpion kept under it. The thief cries with pain and calls for help. The baniya repiles, “This ring is new, my brother! Apply saliva on your figure and then put it on”. This way there are many stories of Jat and Baniya that defines their duties and actions.

In “The Brahmin and the Jat”163, the jat ploughs the fields and is shown making preparations for the invited purohit in his house.

In the story “The Baniya and the Teji Jat”164, the jat outsmarts the baniya. He wishes to accompany baniya to his in-laws place. The baniya agrees to it. He carries a packed lunch box of sweets and an oil bottle for use during the journey. But when the jat asks him about it, he lies so that the jat doesn’t eat away the sweets. He says the box is full of snakes kept for our protection during the journey and the bottle is full of bees. When the baniya goes to answer nature’s call, the jat eats away all the sweets. The baniya is shocked to see the box empty. The jat replies that all the snakes broke the box and went away!

Shudras

In Upanishads and Manusmriti, this varna is also mentioned. It is considered the religious duty of shudras to serve other castes. Shudras, and other lower castes were not allowed to read or learn the sacred scriptures.

In the folktales such as The Chamar and the khichri ,The Chamar and the Jat ,The Son of a Chamar, The Moustached Fear, The Story of the Seed of Brinjal, the simple, naïve, forgetful and fearing nature of a chamar is represented.

In the story, “The Moustached Fear”165 the police arrives to the house of a Chamar to bring him to court in view of the arrest warrants issued against him. The Chamar gets very afraid of the police. Then in order to prevent his arrest he wore the apparels of his wife and
came out and told the police in an effeminate tone, "Sir, my husband is not in the house. He has gone out somewhere." As it happens, the Chamar forgets to hide his moustaches properly. The police is quite amazed and shocked after seeing moustaches on the face of a chamari. When questioned by the police as to how she has grown these moustaches on her face, Chamar, in the guise of a Chamari answered, "Sir, these moustaches have grown out of fear of the police.

In "The Story of a Son of Chamar" the Chamar's son is unwell. He takes him to a pandit for treatment. The pandit tells him that he has offer something to the Nagarkot Wali Mata, only then his son will get well. The pandit takes huge amount of money from him.

In another story "The Story of the Seed of Brinjal", the police looks for the Chamar. The Chamar rushes to his fields where he has sown brinjals. By chance, the police also comes to the same field looking for him. One of the policemen pushed against the Chamar lying bundled up like a brinjal. He asks, "Who's that?". The chammar answers, "Sir, It's the brinjal". The policeman is surprised at the size of the brinjal and asks, "How can a brinjal be so big in size?". The chammar answered, "Actually, I'm a seeded brinjal, therefore my size is overgrown".

In Haryanvi folknarratives, one comes across narratives where main characters are from either from same caste or different castes. There is a great deal of harmonious interaction amidst witty repartee among themselves. The stories are full of mirth and laughter.

The casteist features exhibited by these narratives are features of Hindu society, in general. G.S. Ghurye, a famous sociologist, identified six different features of the Hindu caste system which are reflected in Haryanvi folknarratives as well.

In folknarratives, there is segmental division of society. Caste are groups with well developed life styles of their own. The membership of the groups is determined by birth and not by choice. The status of a person depends not on the amount of wealth he possesses but on the rank that the persons caste enjoy in the Hindu society.

\[166^{\text{ibid}}\]
\[167^{\text{ibid}}\]
\[168^{\text{ibid}}\]
Another feature in Haryanvi folk narratives is hierarchy where there is a definite scheme of social precedence amongst castes. Each group is given a specific status in the overall framework of hierarchy. Brahmins have been considered at the highest pedestal in the society. Chandgyo Upanishad,\textsuperscript{169} in the third chapter, states that the purity of the intake of food by Gods through mouth is comparable to the purity which a Brahmin represents. In Bhagvat Gita\textsuperscript{170} too, the Brahmins enjoy the highest rank. This status of sheer respect and storehouse of wisdom for the Brahmins is no more. Their importance remains only to the extent they are required for carrying out religious ceremonies and rituals.

The Other Backward Classes refers to a constitutional category and comprise socially disadvantaged Shudra Castes. Castes located in the middle of the traditional stratification system are the constituents of this section of the population. It is thus a social layer intermediate between the twice born and the untouchable. If put in other words, it is a stratum of non-untouchable Hindu. Castes located low in the traditional stratification system. Comprising a heterogeneous category, these include some of the dominant castes of agriculturists as well as many socially and economically deprived groups who are at least as deprived as SC and ST's. These sections are educationally and occupationally inferior to the traditionally privileged castes. Untouchability and isolation were never their problem, their inferiority to the upper castes however used to be traditionally legitimised. Status disabilities afflicting them used to be inherited restricting their progress and prosperity. In a limited number of cases a few non-Hindu communities are also included under this category. In the folk narratives, these include top stratum-owner cultivators, landless tenant cultivators, artisans and service castes who remain under the economic and political control of the landowning caste. In past such marginalized sections among the other backward classes worked as forced labourer, domestic servant and palanquin bearers for whom they were dependent for their survival. Landlords used to receive customary payment from them on festive occasions. Liberalization, and not the backward class movement, represents the march towards a ‘bourgeois revolution’ which presents the only possibility of ‘annihilating caste’ as Ambedkar\textsuperscript{171} envisaged. The backward class movement, since it strengthens caste identities

\textsuperscript{169} Pt. Shri Ram Sharma, \textit{Chandgyo Upanishad} (Bareilly: Sanskrit Sansthan).

\textsuperscript{170} Pt. Shri Ram Sharma, \textit{Bhagvat Gita} (Bareilly: Sanskrit Sansthan).

and keeps economic growth in the thrall of caste, ought to be regarded as a manifestation of 'bourgeoisification', Indian style.

The Jatis, connect social groupings of people, differ considerably from region to region. Each linguistic region has a large no of jatis. Jatis are relatively small endogamous groups with a distinctive style of life and a specific traditional occupation. Each Jati has a name and tends to locate its status by referring to the varna scheme of hierarchy. The different jatis in a region are arranged in a vertical order. However, unlike the varna scheme, the mutual position of jatis has been less clear and subject to contestations. Many jatis have claimed higher status than assigned to them by others. This ambiguity has been observed particularly in the middle level caste groupings. I came across many jatis mentioned in various folktales:

In Dhruv Bhagat story—Kahar Jati is mentioned (Water carriers).

In Raja Uttanpad story, his second wife Suruchi, asks a Kahar, “Brother, kahar, you stop the water carrier service and call Raja.” as she wants that Raja should fulfill his third promise now. Apart from Kahars, other jatis like Carpenter, potter, Barber, Teli others all who serve other Jatis owing to their nature of profession have also been mentioned.

In “Bhaiya Dooj” Story a brother while going to his sister-in-law’s place to invite her for his marriage, meets carpenter’s son on his way who is cutting the wood. The carpenter’s son says, “The brahmin’s son has died, so I’m gathering woods for his son’s funeral.” Further, he meets a potter making the pots.

Other folktales like the Karva Chauth, The Story of Ganesha, Tapka, Raja Teli mention various jatis. The Ahir Jati has been the butt of laughter in various folktales.

The untouchable castes are confined to the the lower rings of ritual hierarchy and perform degrading occupations like disposing of the dead animals, processing of skins, leather works, scavenging and work at the cremation grounds. These castes act as menial workers, labourers, servants, watchmen and wardmen in folktales. Their housing

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172 Recorded in cassette

173 ibid

174 ibid

175 ibid
settlements are excluded from the centre of the village. Generally, they are also lowest in income, health, education and culture resources. The low caste groups varies from place to place in terms of being labeled untouchable. A caste such as dhobi (washerman) or teli (oil presser) in ‘Qazi and teli’ ¹⁷⁶ may be considered untouchable in one part of Haryana but not in the other.

There is restriction of feeding and social intercourse. There are minute rules as to what sort of food or drink could be accepted by a person and from what particular caste. In the folktales there are various instances where various characters follow instructions in matters relating to their interaction with low castes. The description of scheduled castes as a marginalized group in folknarratives focusses on a series of disabilities that are imposed on them. They face a denial or restriction of access to public facilities, such as wells, schools, roads, post offices and courts, to temples where their presence might pollute the dirty as well as the higher-caste worshippers, and from rest-houses, tanks and shrines connected to temples. Untouchables and Shudras are shown ineligible to become sanyasis (holy men) and forbidden to learn the Vedas (the earliest and most sacred books of orthodox Hinduism) in folknarratives, from engaging into some profitable employment, requirements of reverence in forms of address, language, sitting and standing in presence of higher castes, liabilities of unremunerated labour for the higher castes and to the performance of menial services for them etc.

Dalits are at the bottom in the social hierarchy. In Haryanvi folknarratives, they are referred to as ‘churas’. I could not come across any folknarrative where they are made the topic of the tales by villagers. The restrictions are more extreme in their case as compared to other scheduled castes. In addition, every kind of social and economic alternatives are denied to these Dalit groups so that they are structurally held together to provide the substratum. The proof of this argument lies in the fact that whenever there is some kind of questioning and signs of revolt among the Dalits, all the other caste groups combine and would not mind using overt violence to put them back in their old place.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Recorded in Cassette

There are various civil and religious disabilities to one caste and privileges to different sections. Segregation of individual castes or groups of castes in the village is the most obvious mark of civil priviliges and disabilities. Certain sacraments could not be performed by any caste other than the Brahmins. In “khand ka Batau”\textsuperscript{178}, a Brahmin advises a person on a religious matter and solves his dilemma. In the story, the person had to have his meals only after offering the food to the guest first. But finding a guest every day became a problem for him. So, the brahmin advise him to form figures symbolic of guest, made of finely powered sugar and keep them in the almirah. Whenever any guest do not turn up, invoke these figures before having the food.

In an revealing article, Vrinda Sharma\textsuperscript{179} states that Dalit women in Ambala lead unhygienic lives for wages of Rs 15 a month.”I was not used to doing this work before I was married but my mother-in-law forced me. I donot blame her; it was the only way we could feed our families. We were told that our ancestors did this and this was the only work we could do as dalits”, saya Kusum, who left scavenging ten months ago to work as a sweeper.

Caste hierarchy and untouchability prevented women from rising to any other job.”We don’t chose to do this. We are born into it because we are at the absolute bottom of society. The job came as a legacy but I made sure that my children never touched these baskets,” says Manju whose eldest son is in college.

“To keep us from coming into the house, we were made to use a rickety wooden staircase against an exterior wall. When I was eight months pregnant, I slipped. Instead of having pity, they abused me for polluting the house.” recalls Saroj

Generally in folktales, there is restricted choice of occupation. Each caste considers a particular occupation as its legitimate calling. To abandon the hereditary occupation in preference of another, even it is more lucrative, is not considered right. But I had been pleasantly surprised to come across a folktale of a son of a chamar\textsuperscript{180} who impresses a baniya

\textsuperscript{178} Recorded in cassette.


\textsuperscript{180} Recorded in cassette.
and the latter decides to teach him the tricks of his trade and also marries off his daughter to him.

There is a severe restriction on marriage alliances. Caste groups observe strict endogamy. Members of a caste group marry only within their caste. Gotra is a term applied to a clan, a group of families, or a lineage-exogamous and patrilineal, whose members trace their descent from a common male ancestor, usually a sage of ancient times. Believed to have begun to consolidate around 10-8th century B.C., the present day gotra classification is supposed to have been created from a core of eight rishis. Scholar and activist Jagmati Sangwan points that not all honor killings even within Haryana involve same-gotra couples. According to her, the majority of the marriages condemned by Khap panchayat are of couples who donot share a same gotra.\(^1\)

In the system of marriage, gotra is of utmost importance. It needs to be considered very seriously. It is the synonym of English word ‘clan’. Gotra means caste, heredity, group etc. Gotra is a bigger group than vansh. It is always not possible to trace the pedigree, through one’s name but through common ancestors, relations can be detected. In simple words, gotra can be considered as a group of vanshs.

It is decided either through the maternal’s side or the patenal’s side. If the persons belong to the same gotra, they consider themselves kith and kins due to common ancestry. These people belonging to same gotra cannot get married in the same gotra due to the concept of ‘sanskaras’ they consider themselves as brothers and Sisters. So, the gotra of mother, grandmother and father should not match in each of the two families, if the marriage has to consummated.

But these restrictions have taken a ghastly form in the form of honour killings. It is a misleading term pointing to ritualized form of murder precipitated by the aggressor’s perceived loss of honour. The perpetrators are generally male and the victims most often female.

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Let us look at the given table:

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</table>
Emerging Trends

Social Mobility

It is termed as the evidence of social mobility in the caste system with the increasing discrepancy between caste and occupations, withering away of Jajmani obligations, the rigidity regarding purity and pollution and acceptance of secular lifestyle by adopting the style of life of a higher caste. A lower caste could change its position in the caste hierarchy and move upward. However, as has been pointed out by Andre Beteille, "it was not merely by adopting the rituals and life styles of the upper castes that lower caste could move upwards. Such a process was invariably accompanied by some real improvement in the material condition of a group. However, those who sanskritised their style of life did not question the system of caste hierarchy or its ideology. They merely tried to change their position in the system. While individual castes moved up or down, the structure remained same."\(^{182}\)

In older days, Srinivas points out, there were two major sources of mobility. First was the fluidity of the political system, which made it feasible for new castes to assume the status of knowledge and exercise power. Second was the availability of marginal land which could be brought under cultivation.\(^{183}\) In Haryanvi folktales, we do find instances of caste and class mobility. Over all each Varna lives in harmony with another varna as can be seen in the occasional exchange of comic jokes among people from different castes.

It is quite obvious that a change of position may take place either along a horizontal axis called horizontal mobility or along vertical axis called vertical mobility.

\[^{182}\text{Andre Beteille, } Caste, Class and Power. (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1965).\]

\[^{183}\text{M.N Srinivas, } A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization. (Far Eastern Quarterly, 1956) 15-481-96.\]
Horizontal Social Mobility can be defined as the move of individuals or groups from one position to another in society. According to Sorokin, horizontal social mobility means transition of an individual or social object from one social group to another situated on the same level, shifting of religions, shifting from one factory to another in the same occupational status, from one family or another by divorce and remarriage are all instances of it. Anthony Giddens considers, “there is a great deal of mobility along the lateral direction in modern societies”.

There are Inter-Professional Marriages also. There is no mention of such stories in social sciences. Although it can be included in inter-varna marriages, but in inter-varna marriages also, varna is considered the most important. In the inter-professional marriages, problems can arise due to different professions as in the story of “The Old Lady and Her Daughters”:

The old lady has two daughters. One daughter is married to a farmer and the other is married to a potter. After some time, the father goes to meet the farmer’s wife. He asks about her welfare. She informs that if it rains well, things will be fine but if it does not things will go bad. Then he visits his another daughter, who is a potter’s wife. She says, ‘father, if it does not rain, things will be good but if it rains, we will be ruined. The old man gets confused and tensed because if it rains the potter’s wife and if it does not rain, the farmer’s wife will be ruined.

The second kind of mobility is the vertical mobility where there is an upward or downward change in the rank of an individual or group. There are various instances like promotion or demotion, a change in income, marriage to a person of higher or lower status, or even a move to a better or worse neighbourhood. According to direction of transition, there are two types of vertical social mobility: ascending and descending or “social climbing” and “social sinking”- respectively. Anthony Giddens refers to vertical mobility as, “movement up or down the socio economic scale. According to him, those who gain in property, income or

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186 ibid
status are said to be upwardly mobile, while those who move in the opposite direction are downwardly mobile. 187

In Haryana, there are areas that permit intra-village and intra-gotra marriages and donot have caste or Khap Panchayat. 188 In some regions of the state, the upper caste man could marry a lower caste woman. This kind of marriage alliance is known as hypergamy. There are marriages, where a man from upper caste has the right to marry a woman from lower caste and the marriages, when a lower caste man is allowed to marry a woman from upper caste.

I came across another interesting folknarrative titled Raja Vikramaditya. 189 His father Dharamsen gets him married to girls from all four varnas-Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra and all the four wives give birth to six children.

In inter-caste marriages, a man marries a girl of another caste or religion or creed. In the Manusmriti, there been a mention of inter-creed marriages. According to Manu, "generally for marriages, girl of same caste is preferred. But if the marriage is born out of love, it can be made in any other caste also. It means, a Brahmin can marry in any of the other castes. A kshatriya can marry in the other two varnas such as vaish and shudra. Vaish can marry in Shudra but Shudra can marry among themselves." 190

According to above mentioned, the inter-caste marriages can be of two types. In the folktales, both types are mentioned:

In Anulome Marriages, a man of high caste can marry a girl of low caste. In ‘King Vikramaditya’ the Brahmin king Dharamesh marries girls belonging to other castes. 191 In the story of ‘Saturday Fast’, the kshatriya king Vikramaditya marries the daughter of a vaish. 192

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189 ibid
190 ibid
191 ibid
192 ibid
In Pratilome Marriages, a person of low caste marries a girl of high caste. In the ‘Monday Fast’ the son of vaish marries a girl of kshatriya. In the ‘Saturday Story’, such marriages are mentioned. In the same way, in the story of ‘Samya Mata’ the son of a gardener marries the girl of a king.

Sanskritization

M.N. Srinivas formulated and contributed immensely to the concept of Sanskritization as a process of mobility in caste. He refers to Sanskritization as a, “process by which a now Hindu caste or tribal or other groups, changes its customs, mutual ideology and way of life in direction of high and frequently ‘twice born’ caste.” Sanskritization has been prevalent throughout history and has assumed various forms. It has been used in folknarratives as mechanism to bridge the gap between secular and ritual rank. Whenever a caste achieves secular power it tries to legitimize its status by acquiring traditional symbols of high castes by adopting their customs, rituals, benefits and ideas such as vegetarianism and teetotalism. Besides, they try to obtain the services of Brahmin priests, visited pilgrimage centers and acquired knowledge of sacred texts.

In the folktale,” Khand ka Batau” the services of the Brahmin are availed by the Jat for getting out of his dilemma.

The census recording was considered excellent source of making claim to higher status. This claim according to Srinivas was upgraded in subsequent operations. For example, if in one census the caste claimed to by Vaishya, in the subsequent operations it would lay claim to Brahmin or Kshatriya. This attempt was followed by attempts made by the castes to emulate the lifestyle of the respective caste they laid claim to. The status attributes of highly ranked warrior ruler category i.e. Kshatriya and the Brahmin served as model for most upwardly mobile groups.
The relative position of different castes in the local hierarchy is difficult to pinpoint particularly with respect to the middle range castes. Each caste lays claim to a position which is frequently not conceded by the others. Further, over generations, some of the low castes have tried to Sanskritize their customs and lifestyle in order to improve their rank in the hierarchy, with varying degrees of success. Sanskritization continues to be an important and many-sided process of cultural and social change in rural areas. In naming children, names indicative of caste are now being given up in favour of Sanskrit names. Also, the names of the high gods and goddesses of Hinduism are added on to the worship of local deities. The influence of radio and television, and especially popular television serials like Mahabharat and Ramayan is considerable in this regard. The net effect has been to strengthen what may be called ‘Sanskritic values’. The influence of the electronic media has often run counter to the spread of secular and modern values.

The politicization of the communal situation in the country has also contributed to strengthening religious fundamentalism in Haryana and consequently of Sanskritic values among Hindus.

De-Sanskritization

Another very significant pattern of Sanskritization involves increasing Puritanism on the part of the castes who reject superiority of the twice born.

In Haryanvi folktale, “The Jat and Brahmin”, a jat takes a dig at the Brahmin by a retort challenging the hierarchy of knowledge constructed by them. Such a process of de-sanskritization contributes to crystallization of new groups and great political mobilization.

In the folktale, “The Baniya and the Jat” there is a custom mentioned that a new groom is not allowed to go alone to his in-laws place. He must be accompanied by a barber. The latter belongs to a lower jati. But in the story, as a barber is not available at that time, his friend, a jat agrees to go in place of the barber. A jat belongs to the high caste.

The eagerness of lower caste to sanskritise themselves has been declining and is loosing its sheen. This can be attributed to the fact that govt. through policy change and regulation has been continuously increasing the reservation quota for deprived classes. As a result of which even the upper caste is toiling hard to desanskritize themselves to avail the reservation quota. More and more upper caste are wishing their inclusion into the deprived sections.
Re-sanskritization

Re-sanskritization is another process in the endeavour to attain mobility. In this case formerly westernized or modernized groups discard many symbols of modernization and revert to traditional sanskritic life styles.

Westernization

Westernization is a vast, multidimensional and a complex process which impinges upon various domains through a member of institutions and hence has a significant bearing on caste mobility. It not only alters the existing set up but also opens fresh avenues and doors for social mobility. A large number of inter-related factors are responsible for this.

Srinivas defines "Westernization as the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels technology, institutions, ideology and values." 197

Under the British rule, land became a saleable commodity and this had far reaching consequences for mobility. The members of low caste who could afford to buy land could now become upwardly mobile and those who lost their rights to lands suffered downward mobility.

The introduction of new means of communication served to dilute the restrictions and inhibitions associated with caste.

The British rule provided fresh avenues for social mobility altering the nature of pre-existing institutions such as schools and colleges which opened their doors to all castes and establishing new ones such as army, bureaucracy and law courts which recruited members on the basis of merit and hence provide ample source of mobility. Most of the new economic opportunities generated under the British rule were taken advantage of by the upper castes who availed of the educational facilities. "Westernization accelerated the mobility process in more ways than one. On one hand it was a desirable mechanism of attaining mobility, on the other, it generated mobility also because the 'westernized' become a model for emulation for the others." 198

198 ibid
Secularization

The term “secularization” implies that what was previously regarded as religious ceases to be such and it also implies a process of differentiation in the various aspect of society, economy, polity, laws and morality becoming increasingly discrete in relation to each other. In the traditional set up the principle of purity and pollution was the prime determinant of the status, ranking, occupation and the general lifestyle. With increasing emphasis on rationality and education the notion of purity pollution weakened and today it is common to see people of different castes work together in factories or rub shoulders against each other and even dine together. The new law based on universalism and the constitutional recognition of equality for all citizens and the declaration of India as a secular state has served to abolish discrimination based on caste.

Education was the prerogative of the Brahmins and ‘twice born’ castes in the traditional set up. During the British rule educational institutions were opened to all the knowledge had a secular and rational basis. Besides this education instilled the minds of people with new principles of the justice, liberty and equality. The educated elite fought against discriminations on the basis of caste.

Education had such a deep impact on the pace and patter of mobility that it created a new middle class. After independence, in an effort to uplift the SC, ST and OBC’s through education, seats have been reserved for them in educational institutions. Since then these benefits have been appropriated by a small section. It has resulted in new cleavages among these sections. The cleavages are aspect of mobility patterns based on those who have and do not have access to education.

Bose has identified two main mobility courses “movement for consolidation and movements for assertion. In the former the caste associations tried to raise their status through census operations and petitioning the rulers. These moves were legitimzed through Sanskritization and maintaining distance from equivalent castes. In the other mobility course represented economic grievances and deprivation. These castes formed associations to alter the existing political land economic relations.”

The backward sections have found opportunities for upward mobility on account of 'protective discrimination' policies which involves reservation of seats in educational institutions, freeship and scholarships. Besides, there are reservations in jobs and legislative bodies. These welfare measures have benefited only a small section who have claims to much higher status than counterparts of the same caste resulting in further divisions in the castes.

Industrialization

Industrialization accelerate the rate of social mobility in various ways. It provides employment opportunities which emphasize on achievement and qualifications rather than caste. In the factories jobs are hierarchically graded according to qualifications and experience rather that ritual ranking. These employment opportunities are open to all and prove a source of upward mobility for the landless laborers.

In the story of 'A Poor Boy', the boy hails from a low caste. He is eagerly searching for a job. The father of the boy sends him to work on ships. This folktale seems to belong to the 18th century when the sea trade flourished owing to the beginning of industrial revolution in England. The owner, from a high caste, is very impressed with the skills and dedication with which the boy works. He decides to marry his daughter to the boy.

Industrialization has brought with it a new work set up and work culture based on technical division of labour and uniform standards. In the factories workers from different castes work together on same machines irrespective of considerations regarding purity and pollution.

The Contemporary Scene

The mobility in cities is largely on account of achievement through education and new occupational avenues. Class as system of stratification is replacing caste. But caste divisions are also simultaneously crystallizing in the form of caste associations, federations etc. Urbanization has create greater avenues for both vertical and horizontal mobility. Horizontal mobility characterizes both caste and class in cities. Formation of caste associations is an example of former and job transfers is an illustration of the latter.

The social mobility among scheduled castes can be understood better in the light of some empirical data as the tables shows. For example, the literacy rate of the scheduled
castes have increased. The number of scheduled caste employees in the government offices and administration have increased. The number of scheduled castes employed in public sector organizations have increased. In rural areas, the percentage of the poor among the scheduled castes has declined.

Another indication of social change and social mobility among the scheduled castes in the rural and urban societies can be inferred from the incidents of caste tensions and caste conflicts. Most of the violence against the scheduled castes took place due to their occupations. Some of the jobs prescribed by the discriminatory caste customs have been to perform the age-old degraded occupation such as disposing off dead cattle, midwifery and begging or forced labour without wage. Increasingly, the scheduled castes have refused to obey the authority of the non scheduled castes regarding restrictions on the use of public places such as village tanks, wells, streets, temples, etc. The provision of adult franchise has also brought about political awakening and self respect among the scheduled castes. In economic matters, a scheduled castes person cannot be easily made bonded labour on nominal or no wage. Similarly, it is no longer easy to dispossess them of their land and houses. These refusals and non-conformities have created situations of caste conflicts and caste tensions.

The dominant castes that have traditionally thrived on the exploitative relationship with the scheduled castes are provoked into violence when the scheduled castes questions the existing relationship as mentioned before. The violence against scheduled castes may be seen in the incidents of forcible snatching of properties, rape and selling of scheduled caste women, burning and killing of the scheduled casted people as seen in Mirchpur and Jhajjar episodes.

The caste conflict as an expression of social mobility among the scheduled castes can easily be observed in rural areas. This is less so in urban areas due to greater degree of modernization and social development through education, secular employment, and economic and technological change.

In present scenario in Haryana the condition of SC appears to improve a little but still far from being promising as the statistical datas show. Table 12 and table 13 state the total population of SC, as percentage to total population in 2001 is 19.35% which is not less and can prove to be a good manpower if utilized well. Table 12 shows the percentage of literate SC which is 55.45%. As percentage to total SC, so almost half of the SC population is still
illiterate. Enrolment ratio of students belonging to SC in recognized schools is also not very encouraging as can be inferred from the data. Agriculture still is not a preferred option for SCs. But they are beneficiaries of government loans and grants for industrial purposes, other agricultural purposes, for trade and business, self employment, for purchase of vehicles. The statistics show that number of government employees belonging to SCs and OBCs are very less and most of the reserved seats for them remain vacant due to non-availability of required qualified candidates.

In a very general sense, when a group of people is divided on any issue or approach or characteristics, the difference usually produces a bigger sub-group and a smaller sub-group. The smaller sub-group is called minority whereas the bigger sub-group is called the majority. It is also possible that the two groups could be of equal strength or the smaller group may have control over power and other resources. So it is not always the numerical strength or non-strength which is the deciding factor for a group to be called a minority. In contemporary scenario, this issue is becoming more pronounced and pointed with each passing day.

In Haryanvi folknarrative, the Jats have been dominating the tales. They belong to vaisah varna and are numerically less conspicuous in the Haryanvi society. For instance, 'The Jat and the Brahmin', 'The Chamar and the Jat', The Jat and the Constable',The King and the Jat', 'The Jat and the Wolf 'etc.

The wish to preserve distinctive features of one's social and cultural life in an essential feature of these minority communities. Continuance of domination, seclusion, migration have made it difficult to make political boundaries which coincide racial, linguistic, ethnic or religious divisions. As a consequence there are always groups which are different from other group in terms of language, religion etc. the dominant group tries to assimilate the minority groups. The non-conformist very often are likely to be persecuted. This attitude of the majority group generates a greater consciousness among the members of the minority community for preserving their separate identity. The wish to have separate identity often gives rise to political demands. The demands are for either special treatment, recognition of the used for preserving minority identity or in extreme cases for autonomy or secession from the area. For instance, in Haryana, these demands led to the formation of the district of Mewat.

A minority group very often organizes into a coherent group drawing on the shared values culture, language or religion. For example, the Muslims, Buddhists, Jains are a
minority group on the basis of their religion in comparison to the majority of Hindus in Haryana. If one refers to the statistical data of population by religion in Haryana-2001, one can see Hindus forming majority with 88.23% followed by Muslims 5.78%, Sikhs 5.54%, Jains 0.27% Christians 0.13% , Buddhists 0.03 and other religions not stated in the data in Table-12. Besides having an identity on the basis of religion, a group may also identify itself on the ethnic basis. Thus, a Muslim may identify not only on the religious basis but also on the ethnic basis. He or she could consider himself or herself a Haryanvi or resident of any other state. A great deal depends on the politics of the situation. Thus, many minority groups are also ethnic groups with shared values and culture.

Haryana has always adopted the policy of tolerance and fair treatment dealing with minority community. A great deal of leeway is given for the preservation and pursuance of the minority social and cultural life. Though the state may have in mind the assimilation of various minority groups as the final goal it will nevertheless adopt a tolerant attitude towards minority groups as long as the minority communities do not cause any destabilising effects on the state. In any case, a great deal seems to depend on the bargaining power a particular disadvantaged group has. Some are at disadvantage in their effort to bring to state’s notice that certain of their socio-cultural rights need protection. Many groups in Haryana claiming to be minorities hold protest demonstrations to get more state favors. In such situations, the task of the state becomes quite challenging.

Haryanvi Society as a Cybernetic System

The cybernetic model operates as a kind of self regulating set of devices, gathering information of the status of its activities and using it as feedback to maintain the system in a homeostatic position.\textsuperscript{200} The same model is chosen as a tentative one to explain the dynamics of Haryanvi society. The brahmanical group as intelligence and information controlling agency regulates the rest of the social activities so that the social order created by them does not go out of control and status quo is maintained, despite the stresses and strains that it is subjected to, both from inside and outside. The energy needed to run a cybernetic model is equated to the productive contributions of dalit groups which have to be kept in a servile position through structural and other means so that they do not threaten the rest of the society

\textsuperscript{200} Norbert Wiener, \textit{The Systems Approach} (1950).
nor tend to destroy it by trying to liberate themselves from their subordinate position. Violence becomes an integral and crucial part of such a system wherein dalits have to be regulated and conditioned so that the value system they follow does not permit them to raise a voice of protest against other groups. Even the argument of Gramsci\textsuperscript{201} that, "in the struggle between the haves and have-nots in the society, the “War of Position” is crucial in deciding the outcome of the issues" is relevant in the context of the social order here. This is more so in the case of brahmins who are always highly conscious group in the whole Hindu social order and who manage and manipulate the consciousness of other groups in order to sustain their own social standing as well as decision-making on crucial aspects of society.

The facade of modernity that the educated section and mass media project to the outside world and to certain sections within itself is only a thin veneer of which Dr. Ambedkar gave the final warning in the third reading of the constitutional bill itself.

"On 26\textsuperscript{th} January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality. In politics, we will be recognizing the principle of one man – one vote and one vote – one value. In our social and economic life, we shall by reason of our social and economic structure, continue to deny the principle of one man – one value.

How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril. We must remove this contradiction at the earliest possible moment or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this Assembly has so laboriously built up".\textsuperscript{202}

To rephrase the same idea, modernity in Haryana has failed to penetrate to the basic levels creating social democracy but on the other hand gave a new lease of life to the caste order by producing a socio-political segregation of groups, like caste groups


emerging as power blocks vying with one another to capture the resources. There is no need to dilate on this point as several sociologists and anthropologists have pointed out to the nexus between caste and power politics.

The failure of modernity has another dimension. It has not changed the relationships between the agrarian groups and the dominant, traditionally land-holding castes who are the political leaders in the contemporary scenario and keep the traditionally working classes in subordination by using the state machinery of oppression like police and other forces. Of late, even the bureaucracy is playing a low-key role in serving the traditionally dominant groups for their own betterment and material benefits. This is sometimes elegantly interpreted as tradition and modernity, or that the Haryanvi society has the in-built flexibility to withstand any kind of changes, obscuring the fact that the rate of adaptation is faster in the dominant groups than in the subordinate ones and seeing that these benefits do not reach the latter. In other words, the traditionally oppressed and exploited groups still exist as the underdogs of the Haryanvi society despite claims of modernity.