

ASSIGNMENT No. 1

Q.1 Elaborate cast system of Aryan society. What were the cause of the origin of caste system?

According to one long-held theory about the origins of South Asia's caste system, Aryans from central Asia invaded South Asia and introduced the caste system as a means of controlling the local populations. 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. 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. Regardless of who the Aryans were or where they lived, it is generally agreed that they did not single-handedly create South Asia's caste system. 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: South Asia's caste system has been around for several millennia and, until the second half of the 20th century, has changed very little during all of that time.

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 Harijans, which means "the people of God." Adopted in 1949, the Indian Constitution provided a legal framework for the emancipation of untouchables and for the equality of all citizens.

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."

Q.2 Discuss background history of Slave Dynasty and explain its origin and expansion towards Sub-continent.

Slave dynasty, (1206–90), line of sultans at Delhi, India, that lasted for nearly a century. Their family name was Mui'zzī.

The Slave dynasty was founded by Quṭb al-Dīn Aibak, a favourite slave of the Muslim general and later sultan Muḥammad of Ghūr. Quṭb al-Dīn had been among Muḥammad's most trusted Turkish officers and had overseen his master's Indian conquests. When Muḥammad was assassinated in 1206, Quṭb took power in Lahore. He managed to consolidate his position in a seesawing war with a rival Slave ruler, Tāj al-Dīn Yildoz, during which he captured and lost Ghazna. He was eventually confined to being a purely Indian sovereign. He died in 1210 as a result of a polo accident, and the crown shortly passed to Iltutmish, his son-in-law.

The Indian slave dynasty lasted from 1206 to 1290. The slave dynasty was the first Muslim dynasty to rule India. It was founded by Sultan Qutbuddin Aibak. It is said that Muhammad Ghori did not have a natural heir to the throne and he the habit of treating his slaves like his own children. Thus after the death of Ghori, one of the most able slaves by the name of Qutub-ud-din Aibak descended the throne. The history of the slave dynasty begins with the rule of Qutub-ud-din Aibak. . Qutb-ud-din Aibak, Shams-ud-din Iltutmish and Ghiyas-ud-din Balban were the three great Sultans of the era. The first ruler of the slave dynasty was Qutub-ud-din Aibak who ruled from 1206 to 1210. He established his capital at two places, first at Lahore and then shifted it to Delhi. It was during his reign that the construction of the famous Qutub Minar was started. . He could rule for a very short time as he died in an accident in 1210. He was succeeded by his son Aram Shah but due to his incompetence, he was defeated in just one year by Iltutmish. After Aram Shah, the next able ruler was Iltutmish. He ruled from 1211 to 1236. Under his strong governance, the slave dynasty was able to find a strong footing and establish itself as an important kingdom. The army was organized efficiently under Iltutmish and he also introduced a coin currency known as Tanka. It was in his reign that the construction of Qutub Minar was completed. After ruling successfully for a period of 25 years, he died, but nominated his daughter Raziya Sultan

as the heir to the throne. She was an able ruler, but since she was a woman, she faced stern opposition from nobles who got her murdered. The last effective emperor of the slave dynasty was Ghiyasuddin Balban. He ruled from 1266 to 1286. During his reign, the administration was strengthened and he paid much attention to governance in his empire. The army was trained effectively to use weapons and the production of arms and other war weaponry was at its peak. This is what helped them fight against the Mongols. Balban's court was one of the finest during the Sultanate period, and it was a platform for poets and artists. Balban was very particular about dignity, he would always appear in his full dress even in front of his private attendants. He removed people from humble backgrounds from important posts as he wished to give his court and administration a more polished look. He may not have extended the empire, or made radical improvements in administration, but he made the important contribution of setting the groundwork for a strong king to take the Sultanate to even higher standards. His death marked the end of the Slave Dynasty for his successor was weak and was soon overthrown by Jalal-ud-din Khilji who founded the next dynasty of the Sultanate period, the Khilji dynasty. He died in 1286 and after him the slave dynasty collapsed.

The most important institution that developed under the Slave Dynasty was the institution of Chalgan or the Forty. Chalgan were a corps of highly placed and powerful officers, whom Iltutmush had organized as his personal supporters. They were like the cabinet for the Sultan. However, during the days of civil war between the successors of Iltutmush, the Chalgan started looking for their personal gains and played one prince against the other. During this era they became very strong. Each one of them started considering himself as the deputy of the Sultan. When Balban assumed charge as Sultan, he murdered some of them while others were banished from the kingdom. There is no doubt that by crushing their power, Balban strengthened his rule, but actually he destroyed the real power of the slave dynasty.

Q.3 Write a detail note on Zahir-ud-Din Babur's struggle to lay the foundation of the Mughal Empire.

Babur, the founder of the largest dynasty India has ever seen-- the Mughals, was born on February 14, 1483 . Considered as one of the finest Mughal emperors, Babur succeeded in securing the dynasty's position in Delhi after a series of sultanates failed to consolidate their seats and his empire went on to rule for over 300 years in India. He passed away on December 26 in 1530. He was 48.

1. His actual name was Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur. His name is derived from the Persian word 'Babr', which means Tiger.
2. He was the eldest son of Umar Sheikh Mirza, a direct descendant of Turk-Mongol conqueror Timur, also known as Tamurlane. His mother was a direct descendant of Asia's conqueror Genghis Khan.
3. He ascended the throne of Fergana (now in Uzbekistan) in 1495, at the age of 12. In 1504, he conquered Kabul, which was an important citadel in Central Asia.
4. Babur was invited by Daulat Khan Lodi, a rebel of the Lodi dynasty, in 1524, to invade North India and fight the dynasty and their enemies in Rajputana. Rajputana was ruled by a Hindu Rajput confederacy, led by Mewar king Rana Sanga.

5. In 1526, Babur won the Battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodi, the Lodi king. He captured Delhi and founded the greatest dynasty of North India -- the Mughal Empire.
6. He also defeated Rana Sanga, who considered Babur as a foreign invader, in the Battle of Khanwa. Rajputana became a subjugated ally of the Mughals since then.
7. There is confusion about Babur's ethnicity. Being a descendant of Timur, he considered himself as a Timurid of Turk. However, Uzbek history suggests that Babur was an ethnic Uzbek.
8. Babur claimed to be very strong and physically fit. He also claimed to have swum across every major river he encountered, including twice across the Ganges River. "I swam across the river Ganges for amusement. I counted my strokes, and found that I swam over in thirty-three strokes. I then took breath, and swam back to the other side. I had crossed by swimming every river I had met, except only the Ganges," he noted, according to Medieval India from the Mohammedan Conquest to the Reign of Akbar the Great, written by Stanley Lane-Poole .
9. Babur was well-known for his oratory and literary skills. Although a religious person, Babur indulged in drinking. He once said, quoting a contemporary poet, "I am drunk, officer. Punish me when I am sober."
10. Till date, he is considered a national hero in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. He wrote his autobiography, Baburnama, in Chaghatai Turkic. It was translated to Persian during the reign of his grandson Akbar.

Q.4 Enlist some prominent Sofi saints of Suhrawardia Order and briefly highlight their socio-religious services for the people of the sub-continent.

Sufism represents the inward-looking, mystical dimension of Islam. Often thought erroneously to be its own sect or denomination – such as Sunni Islam – Sufism is better understood as an approach that mixes mainstream religious observances, such as prescribed daily prayers, with a range of supplementary spiritual practices, such as the ritual chanting of God’s attributes (zhikr) or the veneration of saints.

Sufism dates back almost to the time of the Prophet Muhammad, and it has been present in Muslim societies for more than 12 centuries. Historically, Sufis were organized into a number of brotherhoods or mystical orders (tariqat, literally “paths”), each with its own religious rites, saintly lineage and leadership structure. The head of each order, generally a hereditary position known as the shaykh or pir, represented a spiritual genealogy tracing back to the prophet.

The theological orientation of Sufism – with its inward focus on spirituality – is such that its followers tend to shy away from more political forms of Islam. Historically, however, Sufi orders have not always been entirely apolitical. Some Sufi leaders, especially in the Muslim world, have allied themselves with political forces and, in some instances, even with militant causes. Many Sufi orders place a great deal of emphasis on shari’a (Islamic) law and the strict observance of orthodox requirements in the areas of worship and social affairs. Moreover, given the pre-eminent position of the shaykh or leader, the orders can be rather authoritarian

and rigidly hierarchical. For example, the most devoted followers of an order (known as murids) are expected to follow the leader's directives without question.

The emphasis on personal and emotional religious experiences in Sufism made it enormously popular among the masses and led to new forms of religious expression, including singing and dancing (the whirling dervishes of Turkey are a well-known example). Sufism's popular appeal ultimately helped Islam spread across Africa, Asia and Europe. Today, many well-known Sufi orders – such as the Naqshbandis and Qadiris – enjoy a substantial global following. These brotherhoods have become thoroughly integrated into the social structure of many Muslim societies, and it is therefore not surprising that when Muslim immigrants from Asia, Africa and the Middle East began arriving in Europe in significant numbers in the 1960s, many brought their Sufi order affiliations with them.

Not all Sufism in contemporary Europe is the result of recent migrations, however. Some Sufi orders, such as the Bektashis of Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia, have been present in the region since the Middle Ages. Indeed, the religious culture of Muslim communities in the Balkans has largely been shaped by the legacy of Sufism.

Regardless of their origins, Sufi orders in Europe are deeply embedded in the cultures of many Muslim communities – so deeply, in fact, that it is often difficult to distinguish them from particular cultures and ethnic groups. The Tijani and Muridi orders, for example, are thoroughly woven into France's West and North African communities. A slight majority of the U.K.'s predominantly South Asian Muslim community are Barelwis, followers of a broad Sufi-oriented movement that encompasses a variety of orders, including the Chistis, Qadiris and Naqshbandis.

Some large Sufi orders cross multiple ethnic groups. The Naqshbandis, for example, are strongly represented across many Muslim communities in Europe. Today, it is one of the most prominent orders in the U.K. Through annual visits to Britain from his home base in Cyprus, the Naqshbandis' leading shaykh, Nazim al-Qubrusi, has developed a diverse following of Turks, South Asians and white or Afro-Caribbean converts in London and Sheffield, as well as a group of South Asian followers in Birmingham.

Given the pervasiveness of Sufi orders in Europe, and the often informal nature of their influence, it can be difficult to determine their actual size. In addition, while some Muslims choose to formally join a particular order, others may opt for a more informal relationship, treating the heads of Sufi orders as respected spiritual guides (murshids) rather than as formal religious leaders. Nevertheless, Sufism's influence is strong. In Germany, for example, up to 15% of Turkish immigrants and 20% of German-born Turks are thought to be active members of Sufi-based organizations, such as the Sulaymançis.

Some Sufi orders – particularly those with leadership figures who have been educated or are based in the West – have been particularly successful at adapting to European cultures and societies. For example, Fouzi Skali, a Sorbonne-trained anthropologist who oversees a sub-branch of the Qadiri order in France, has succeeded in making Sufism attractive to an urban, modern-educated, middle- and upper-class audience – a departure from

earlier perceptions in France of traditional Sufism as rural and backward. Members of this order today come from all strata of French society. Skali has also managed to generate interest in Sufi culture among a wider European audience by marketing Moroccan Sufism through numerous cultural events and festivals, some of which are broadcast on French television.

Indeed, the leaders of Sufi orders in Europe are frequently involved in a wide range of extra-spiritual activities. For example, Faizul Aqtab Siddiqi, leader of a Naqshbandi order in Britain, practices civil law as a certified barrister and provides shari'a-compliant arbitration for settling conflicts between Muslim commercial disputants. He also helped to organize a large protest in London in 2006 against the now-famous Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad that many Muslims found offensive.

Q.5 Enlist the salient features of Qadaria Chain and describe the prominent principles of this Sufi Order.

The most universally acclaimed saint of all times and the most celebrated in all the aalamin (worlds), among jinn and men as well as among the arwaah (souls), the malaaiika (angels), and the rijaal ul ghayb (men of the unseen), the beloved of Allah Ta'ala who throughout history has been showered the titles of Muhiyuddin (reviver of the faith), Qutb Rabbani (the spiritual axis established by the Lord), and Ghawth al-A'zam (the greatest helper, the greatest saint), Sayyadi wa Imami Abu Muhammad Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) was born in Ramadan 470 A.H/1077 C.E in Jilan, Persia. His father, Abu Salih, was a man of taqwa (piety) and a direct descendant of Sayyidina Imam Hasan ibn Ali (Radi Allahu Anhu). His mother, Ummul Khayr Fatima was a saintly daughter of a saintly father Shaykh Abdullah Sawma'i who was a direct descendant of Sayyad ash-shuhadaa Imam Husayn ibn Ali (Radi Allahu Anhu).

Thus Muhiyiddin Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anha) was both Hasani and Husayni, a descendant of the Beloved Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa Sallam) from his beloved daughter Sayyidatina Fatima az-Zahra (Rady Allahu Anha). For this reason, the Sindhis for example, lovingly call him "putar mithe mahbub jo" (the blessed son of the sweet Beloved Prophet - Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam).

The genealogical roots of Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu Anhu) can be traced to Habib ul-A'zam Sayyaduna Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) as follows:

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|-----------------|--------|--------------|------------|-----|----|
| Gawth | al | A'zam Sayyadina | Shaykh | Abd'al-Qadir | al-Jilani, | son | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Abu | Salih | Musa, | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Abdallah | | al-Jili, | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Yahya | | as-Zahid, | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Muhammad, | | | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Dawud, | | | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Musa, | | | son | | of |
| As-Sayyad | | Abdallah, | | | son | | of |

As-Sayyad Musa al-Jawn, son of
As-Sayyad Abdallah al-Mahd, son of
As-Sayyad al-Hasan al-Muthanna, son of
Sayyadina al-Imam al-Hasan, Radi Allahu Anhu, son of

Imam ul mashariqi wal magharib, Sayyaduna Ali ibn Abi Talib, (Radi Allahu Anhu),
and of Sayyadatina Fatima az-Zahra, (Radi Allahu Anha) the blessed daughter of
Khaatam an-Nabiyyin Habibi Rabbil aalamin Sayyadina wa Mawlana Muhammad ibn Abdillah, Nurin min
Nurillah, Allahumma Salli wa Sallim wa Baarik alayh.

(cited by Shaykh Abdur Rahman ibn Shaykh Umar Ali al-Qadiri, in **Al-Jawhar un Nafis, The Most Precious Pearls**, p. 29).

What better way is there to end this section and indeed all the remaining sections than with this hymn which is full of blessings and mercy of Allah.

Yaa Hayyu Yaa Hayyu Yaa Qayyum

O The Ever-Living, O The Ever-Living, O The Self-Subsisting by whom all subsist

The Beloved Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) is the last Prophet and there is no prophet after him. But people can still aspire to spiritual progress, acquire taqwa (piety) and saintliness and become awliya Allah (friends of Allah). And the highest spiritual state after the anbiya (prophets), belongs to the siddiqin (the truthful). That is why the Beloved Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) taught us to make the supplication: Allahummaj 'alnaa min-as-siddiqin (O Allah make us among the truthful). Well, Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) manifested to the world that he ranked among the siddiqin at the ripe age of 18. At that age, his thirst for knowledge and eagerness for the company of the awliya Allah (friends of Allah) took him to the city of Baghdad.

It is related that as he was about to leave home on this momentous journey, his widowed mother sewed forty gold coins inside his coat as part of his inheritance, and as parting advice told him to be forever truthful. The caravan with which he was travelling had gone as far as Hamadan when it was attacked by a gang of robbers. In the course of their loot, one of the robbers asked him whether he had anything with him and he truthfully replied that he had forty gold coins sewn in his coat. The robber obviously thought he was joking and narrated this incident to his chief who decided to see this young man. When his coat was torn open, sure enough there were forty gold coins. The gang leader was astounded. He asked Shaykh Abd'al Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) as to why he revealed this when he could have kept it secret. Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) told him that his mother had advised him not to lie and he was duty bound to obey his mother, Hearing this, the gang leader was overtaken with remorse, repented, accepted Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala Anhu) as his Shaykh and so did all his followers and they went on to acquire wilayah (sainthood) themselves. This is how Shaykh Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala

Anhu) came to be ranked among the Siddiqin. Allahummaj 'alnaa min-as-Siddiqin, Aameen Yaa Rabbal 'Aalamin.

This incident has been narrated in almost all the biographies of the Shaykh, among them being Qalaid al-Jawahir (Necklaces of Gems, p. 33), one of the earliest and major biographies, by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Yahya at-Tadifi (Rahmatullahi alayh) (passed away 963 A.H, 1556 C.E)

Sayyad Abdur Rahim ibn Muhammad Ismail Shirazi (Rahmatullahi alayh) has captured the essence of this incident most beautifully in the following verse of his Urdu poem on the Ghawth al A'zam:

**Choron pay tum nay kar kay tawajjoh
Abdal banaaya 'aali shaan**

Yaa Ghawth al A'zam ajab tumhaaree shaan

Focusing your spiritual glance at the thieves
You turned them into great saints

O, the great helper, your stature is truly astounding

(Gulzare Tayyiba, The Pleasant Garden, vol. 3, p. 18)

Yaa Hayyu Yaa Hayyu Yaa Qayyum

Yaa Hayyu Yaa Hayyu Yaa Qayyum

In matters of Shari'a (sacred Muslim law), 'Mehbub Subhani' Shaykh 'Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) was an authority in the Hanbali madhhab (school of sacred Muslim law) as well as the Shafi'i madhhab, and a chief exponent of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah (the people who follow the lifestyle of the Beloved Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam) and of his blessed Companions - Radi Allahu ta'ala anhum).

The way to draw nearer to Allah Ta'ala is through the fulfilment of obligatory religious duties, additional voluntary prayers day and night, through constant remembrance (dhikr) of Allah, unceasing salawaat (invocations of blessings) on the Beloved Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), Sunnah fasting, charity, zuhd (abstinence) and juhd (exertion in the way of Allah Ta'ala) as exemplified by the Beloved Prophet Muhammad himself. This then is the tariqah (spiritual path leading to Allah Ta'ala) which is rooted in shari'ah (sacred Muslim Law).

Shaykh 'Abd'al Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) learned about the mysteries of tariqah and imbibed spiritual culture (tasawwuf) at the hands of Shaykh Hammad ibn Muslim al-Dabbas, Rahmatullahi 'alayh. Traditionally, when someone is initiated into a tariqa, he is given a khirqah (sufi robe). Shaykh 'Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani was bestowed the khirqah by Shaykh Qadi Abi Sa'id al-Makhzumi, Rahmatullahi 'alayh, (referred to as Al-Mukharrimi or Al-Makhrimi in some texts).

A Shaykh (spiritual master), musk-scented in shari'ah, tariqah and haqiqi ma'rifa (knowledge of spiritual realities), is able to ascertain the spiritual level of a mureed (spiritual seeker/disciple) and can assign additional awraad and azkaar (regular voluntary invocations) to be performed to attain spiritual progress.

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Shaykh ‘Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) went on to become the epitome of such spiritual masters.

The tariqah followed by Shaykh ‘Abd'al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radi Allahu ta'ala anhu) came to be called after him as the Qadiriyya tariqah and it came to be universally accepted as a divinely-guided path to spiritual progress through dhikr (remembrance) of Allah to cleanse one's heart of all evil, to lead a virtuous life, to attain the love of the Beloved Prophet Muhammad, (Salla Allahu ta'ala alayhi wa Sallam), the love of the Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet's blessed Household), the love of his Sahaba (Companions) and the love of the awliya Allah (friends of Allah); and to follow the shari’ah (sacred Muslim law) according to the teachings of any one of the four Imams of madhhab, that is Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi’i, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, may Allah Ta'ala be pleased with them all.