IMMIGRANT INDIANS IN SOUTH-AFRICA AND MAURITIUS: A SOCIO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS

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Submitted by

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DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation, entitled "IMMIGRANT INDIANS IN S.AFRICA and MAURITIUS - A SOCIO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS", which is being submitted by **Ms.SWATI MITRA** for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is her own work based on secondary sources and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this University or elsewhere.

PROF.K.L.SHARMA
(CHAIRPERSON)

PROF/R.K.JAIN
(SUPERVISOR)

DEDICATED TO MY

GRANDMOTHER

AND

FATHER

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The present topic holds great interest to me as, migration being a dynamic and universal concept was a curious enough topic for me to find out, as to what led people to migrate. On reading articles about them from newspapers, magazines etc. I was very keen to know a detailed aspect of migration. In other words, I wanted to know, what and how were the Indians being able to adapt into a completely new socio-economic and political set-up? How far was it true as regards the inhuman-problems faced by indentured labourers.

At the very outset, I must thank my supervisor Prof. Dr. R.K. Jain. I am humbly in gratitude to his tremendous sense of discipline and able guidance, which enabled me, not only to generate a great interest and curiosity but, also helped me to do my work with a sense of committment and devotion, which only a supervisor, like him can inspire. I am extremely indebted to him.

I must express my indebtedness humbly and fondly to Dr.Anand Kumar, Dr.Ashwini Ray,and Mrs.Kakkar, who made my M.Phil dissertation finally come to a reality.

I, must thank the entire library staff of NEHRU MEMORIAL MUSEUM and LIBRARY, whose eagerness to help me in every possible way gave my dissertation the final shape. I specially express my gratitude to Mr.Rajesh Chopra, Asst.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This is a study focussed on the most demographic universal feature called 'migration'. Migration, as a phenomenon, has held great interest among the social-researchers right from the earliest days upto this day. Curiosity, which led man to reach the moon, has similarly led social researchers from the earlier days upto this date to find out more about migration, which is felt to be a major influence in the social-reality. It is to be noted that, even American Anthropology had always had a strong tradition of research into migration and urbanisation. British Anthropology too developed it's interest towards labour migration, which was widespread. Therefore, as researchers moved into towns and cities, migration, developed as a field of research in it's own right. It is to be noted that it's centrality resulted from the fact that, mobility like birth and death is a demographic universal.

The study of migration was, already well-established by the end of the 19th century. Overseas migration started in India as early as in the 1830's to the colonies of Mauritius and the Caribbeans.

However, the present study is particularly focussed on the immigrant Indians in South-Africa and Mauritius alongwith a Socio-Political analysis. Though, there was

internal migration overseas-migration started gaining tremendous momentum from the 1830's onwards. Though, the Indian migration was to a number of countries, but, as, mentioned earlier the above two countries have been the major focus in this present study from secondary sources.

The entire study has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter begins with the historical factors of migration. In other words, both the countries have been taken into account, as regards; the historical sequences from when Indian migration as a whole started all over the world, with gradually narrowing down on South-Africa and Mauritius in particular. Then, with a self-sufficient country like India, efforts were made to find out the causes of migration.

Chapter II, deals with basically the economic position of the immigrant Indians. In other words, alongwith occupational - mobility of the migrants in a foreign soil, how far they have actually achieved economic success? and have they also achieved a high or low social status, alongwith their economic rise or fall.

Chapter III, examines the political processes attached to the immigrant Indians. In other words, there relationship amongst each other, and, their relationship with the other local people. How far were they able to get their rights, justice, citizenship and other constitutional facilities in par with the locals. Most important is how

much active role did they play in the political process of the migrant country.

Chapter IV, looks at the social aspects of the Indian communities. Here, the institutions like, caste, family, Social-Control and Religion which play an important role among the people in India, are, to be examined to find out, how far, these institutions remain the same as they were in India? Whether the immigrant Indians attach importance to them; and, how does it affect their general life-pattern.

Finally, in the conclusion, efforts are made to draw similarities and contracts based on the above findings, among both the groups of Indians in both the countries, which is rather to get an objective analysis. Besides, how far they have gained or there has been tremendous problems among the Indians in both the countries is also been taken care of.

CHAPTER I

HISTORY & CAUSES OF MIGRATION

CHAPTER I

HISTORY & CAUSES OF MIGRATION

The study of migration has been of great interest right from the earliest days. Researchers found migration to be a major influence on the social - reality they were observing. It is to be noted, that migration or mobility like birth and death is a demographic universal.

Migration generally takes place, when people move are not satisfied with the place they live, and when they hope that the place, they are going to promises to be better, then what they currently have. It is believed, that a place is considered better, it seems to provide for an improved quality of life. Therefore migration is considered to be one possitive step in that direction. To put it, differently, the main assumption in migration is that the individual has all the capabilities of leading a high-quality life, but, it is the environment, the social-system around him, that restricts his efforts to reach the high goals of life. Therefore it there is a change in the environmental system, there would be no hindrances in achieving their goals.

Before going in to the details of Indian immigration to South Africa & Mauritius, it is necessary to know a little more about the reasons leading to migration. Indian emigration is as old as Indian maritime enterprise. There were instances available of Indian settlement in the Eastern

Archipelago and the Far East long before the 2nd century A.D. There are evidences of 50 A.D, which shows extensive expansion of Indian colonization and, commerce from Burma and Malaysia to Indonesia and Indo-China.[1]

It has been found that these Indian immigrants led to the development of a flourishing cultural contact in the settlement of Angkor Vat , and the Indian colonization of Sumatra, Java & Bali and the encouragement of emigration to kadaram (Lower Burma) by the Andhras & Cholas. The Indian colonists founded in their Far Eastern homes, the great Indian centres of learning - Ayodhya, Kausambhi, Sriksetra, Mathura, Kalinga, Kambhoja, Gandhara etc. which were the centres of Indian - culture and civilization through out the centuries. In 400 A.D., when, Fa-hein visited Indian to write his book on travels, Indian cultural colonies had been well Founded in khotan, Turfan, Kucha, Tuen Huang and Honan in China. While, during 700-1200 A.D. (of the Palasena Empire), Bengali Scholars and artists made Tibet and the neighbouring countries centres of Buddhist art and culture [2]. Again contacts with Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt and Phoenecia also existed from ancient times.

Despite the flourishing Indian culture, subsequently, there were successive political upheavals and owing to which,

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[1].   KONDAPI, C. 'INDIANS OVERSEAS', OXFORD UNIV. PRESS, 1951, P.1

[2]. Ibid., P.2

the stream of emigration, became less frequent. Further, alongwith this, social changes like the growing rigidity of caste, growth of prejudice against crossing the seas and the purdah system discouraged emigration. Unlike, the west, there was no problem like over-population and religious persecution.

In the earlier times, Indian emigration was largely cultural and commercial. The emigrants were the ambassadors of a great civilization and religion or traders in rare commodities. Contrary to this, the modern Indian immigrant is an unlettered labourer, setting out purely due to economic reasons. The main reason for emigration remains economic. In the first place.

- There was a demand for plantation labour, which was due to the industrial revolution and the development of large-scale production in Europe had their repercussions an the existing social economy. It was in 1833, there was the <u>abolition of slavery,</u>[3] and this led to the problem or shortage of labour. Attempts were made, but in rain to secure free native labour for the developing plantations, that's the Africans, Creoles, Maltese's, Polynesians etc. But, the native could not be give up his age-long commercial life and his wants were also limited, which in the process led him not to reconcile himself from the hard work of the plantations. Apart,

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[3]. Ibid. P.3

from this, he also did not have the requisite skill for estate work. The white labourers could not be substituted due to climatic conditions. So, the British settlers wanted to adopt the indenture system under which the planters in South-America and Cuba, were obtaining Chinese & Portugese settlement of Macao. So, in this connection the planters and the colonial governments were impelled to explore other avenues of labour supply such as India

In India, there was a strange revolution going on due to the Industrial Revolution in England. The industrial needs of England had it's fateful - effects, wherein the Indian economy was transformed from a manufacturing unit to that of a market for the supply of raw materials and the consumption of British manufacturers. It is to be noted here, that in the 17th and 18th century, India supplied the markets of Asia and Europe with a number of manufactured goods. In India, almost all the industries were domestic occupations and simple crafts of the hamlets. Spinning and weaving, constituted a great national industry, which gave employment to millions of people irrespective of caste considerations. There were repeated petitions in British parliament to stop the import of Indian goods, and the year 1720 has seen the absolute prohibition of the consumption of Indian cloth and the intention and effect this policy

on India was to "change the whole face of that industrial country in order to render it a field of the produce of crude materials subservient to the manufacturers of Great Britain". [4] Thus, in short, they were preventing a potential competitor to be at par with them.

- In 1765, there was a severe, economic distress on account of excessive land tax, which led to a poverty-stricken plight of the Indian agriculturists.

- India was massively hit by famines, in 1770, 1784, 1804, 1837 and in 1861. The Bengal famine and also the famine in North-India added to the already existing miserable economic condition. Besides, the Nepal war the Pindari war and the Maratha war also led to severe poverty.

Apart from the above factors. Caste rigidity or exclusiveness and prejudices prevented people from taking any occupation, they would like to opt for. As mentioned earlier, a large chunk of the population depended upon agriculture, which depend on violent seasonal fluctuations, and thus provided work to only 1/3rd of the year. They were not able to take other occupations due to mass illiteracy, which rendered them unfit for any office-work.

Thus, owing to the above factors, and in the absence of large-scale industries in the country, they were compelled

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[4] KONDAPPI, C, 'INDIANS OVERSEAS' INDIAN COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS. OXFORD UNIV. PRESS, ENGLAND.

to seek sustenance abroad. It was in this socio-economic situation that the foreign planters approached the Indian government for a steady supply of Indian labour. The colonial Governments were shrewd enough to appoint professional recruiters who were supposed to visit Indian villages stricken with failure of crops, hit by famine etc. and also visited the huge, crowded pilgrim centres and entrapped poor Indians for a prospective future[5]

Coming to the overseas migration, in contrast to the medieval emigration pattern, the 19th century migration was the creation of British colonialism. The emigration from India began in the 1830's to the colonies of Mauritius and the Caribbean. In the new situation the emigrant Indian population co-existed with other ethnic groups and under the political state. At the same time, among these migrants, there was a sense of being diaspora from India. There were three broad patterns of this migration in terms of history and political economy.

a. Emigration that started in the 19th Century.

b. 20th Century migration to industrially developed countries and,

c. Recent emigration to West-Asia.

In 1987, South-Asian people living outside Pakistan,

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[5]. Ibid., P.4
6. Ibid., P.5

India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Srilanka totalled 8.6 million.[6]

Overseas Emigration in the 19th Century

The social situation of the Indian communities overseas is complex and varied : the only constant feature among them, is their initial emigration from India and the contemporary settlement in the countries of their adoption alongwith other ethnic groups. The fact that, they belong to the integrated political system of the countries of their adoption makes for unity, but ethnically, culturally, and also to a larger or smaller extent socially there is diversity. Now, geographically speaking, these immigrant Indian communities are spread out along three oceans:

- The Indian ocean (Mauritius, Uganda South-Africa, Malaysia & Srilanka)

- The pacific ocean (Fiji)

- The Caribbean sea (Trinidad, Guyana, Surinam etc.)[7]

It was the European imperialist expansion in the 19th century, which created the milieu for large-scale emigration through its 'push' and 'pull' factors as mentioned earlier.

It is to be noted here, that broadly speaking, there are two ways of looking at the overseas - communities from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. One way is that, which Tagore adopts in the letter which he addressed to C.F. Andrews, when

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[6]. JAIN, R.K ; "INDIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD", MANOHAR PUBLISHER 1993. P.4.

[7]Ibid.,P.4

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contemplating a visit to Java. Tagore, perceived the Indians going overseas as taking their India with them, and recreating now Indian colonies in the lands of their adoption. This view is probably the most widely held ; both in the sub-continent and among foreign observers. The other approach is to see the Indians as always victims of circumstance in the lands where they settle, are required to perform economic roles dictated by the structure of the colonial or metropolitan system. According to this view, the capacity of the Indians to work out their own identity beyond the seas always yields to the pressures exerted upon them, which turn them into a 'Helot' or 'Satellite' group.

Again, there are some societies for which emigration is a necessity. In, Europe it is difficult to imagine how, either Ireland or Italy could have survived during the last hundred years without the safety-valve of mass emigration. Without emigration, these countries would have been overwhelmed by an excess of population. A hopeless decline in living standards, together with revolution, must have ensued. In the British commonwealth, there are small societies like, Malta, and Barbados, which have also been compelled to rely upon emigration to keep them in some kind of equilibrium.[8]

For India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, emigration is almost

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[8] TINKER, HUGH.," THE BANYAN TREE" OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1977, P.I.

an irrelevance in the struggle for economic survival and betterment. There are five or six million people throughout the world who came originally from South-Asia : the combined population of the three South Asian countries in the mid-1970's is about 700 million.

In their own perception of emigration from South Asia, Indian Scholars like to dwell upon the, Buddhist pilgrims of ancient times, who travelled into remote corners of central and eastern Asia. Early emigrations, seem to have involved only temporary visits overseas. The kingdoms of the eastern seaboard of South India - the Coromondel - built up strong connections with the islands of South-East Asia. The palas of Bengal were in contact with the Sailendra kings of Indonesia. Then, in the alongwith century the cholas (Tamil princes) organized expeditions which vanquished the great Indonesian empire or Sri-vijaya. Yet, none of these contacts led to a distinctive Indian population overseas. Indian priests and officials married local women, and within a few generations*[9] were indistinguishable from local people. Even Bali, the most complete Hindu cultural colony, is no little India. Hindu Culture has been translated into something authentically Balinese.

*Trade with East Africa did lead to permanent Indian settlement. Indians were only one group among the many

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[9] Ibid., p.1

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immigrants or invaders, who created colonies along the coastlines. The dominant elements were the Arabs or Shirazi, who developed Mogadishu and Mombasa as great trading centres. Their dominance was challenged by the portuguese who seized Mombasa and created the massive Fort Jesus, importing masons from western India to build the stone-work. Their ascendancy did not last ; the Arabs counter-attacked and the Omani dynasty, dominated the coastal ports, challenged by rival Arab rulers from Muscat Slavery became the main East African Commerce and Zanzibar was it's centre.[10] Amid these adventures, the, Indians laboured unobtrusively, in trade, manufacture and the growth of 'cloves' on Zanzibar islands. They came from all along the western Indian seaboard from the Indus down to Gujarat. Most belonged to small trading communities. Some were Muslims, like, the Ismailies, followers of the Aga Khan, and, also the 'Bhoras', a Hinduized Muslim caste, others equal in numbers, were Hindus mainly of the 'banya' caste. There were also seafarers, for the Indian sailing vessel, the 'khatia', is as well-built for sea voyages as the Arab 'dhow'[11]

How for the Indians penetrated into the interior of East Africa is a question, which still awaits fuller research. What is certain is that, when the 19th century European

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[10] Ibid., P.2

[11] Ibid., P.2

explorers like Burton, first ventured into the interior they

were guided on their way by Indian merchants Even, when a

British official presence was established in the mid-19th

century, it relied upon support from, British India. These

Indian activities in East-Africa had persisted for hundreds

of years, but, they were still mainly limited to the trader

communities and these communities led a secluded existence

they were observed only in the market place and the counting

house. Some maintained their wives and children back in

India, journeying to see them evenly few years.[12] Even,

those who brought their families with them, like the

Ismailis, regarded India as their home, where all the

important decisions affecting their community were made.

Latterly, the traders of the East African coastline whose

activities extended down as far as South Africa, were

referred to as, 'Passenger Indians". The meaning was that,

they came to Africa on their own initiative as passengers

paying their own fares ; and, yet, the nickname seemed to

have an implication, that, they were travellers, sojourners,

not settlers or immigrants.

The 19th century also witnessed the arrival in lands

overseas of millions of Indians, who were not passengers or

independent travellers : the indentured labourers and others

were press- ganged into leaving their homes. At first they

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[12] I bid., P.3

were recruited from among the floating labour-force of the Indian Ports, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. This supply soon proved inadequate, and more systematic recruiting was developed in certain areas, where there was a surplus of labour. An important early source of supply was that of the aboriginal tribal people of Chota Nagpur, who had already begun to drift down to Bengal to sell their labour to landlords, planters and industrialists. There folks still relied upon a form of agriculture, whereby they shifted their fields every two or three years as the unwatered soil of their hillsides became barren. The system, <u>Jhoom</u>" (Sometimes described as 'Slash and Burn') was exhausting the soil & driving the tribal people farther a field. The tribes of Chota Nagpur were described by the Name of 'Dhangars' in 19th century, but are not identified separately as santhals, Mundas, Oraons etc. Willing, lively, unencumbered by caste taboos they were readily enlisted by employers and recruiters.[13]

In the early export of labourers to Mauritius and British Guiana in the 1840's and 1850's, a larger proportion, were from Chota Nagpur. However there was appalling mortality upon the emigrant ships, while a new field for employment opened-up nearer home in the tea gardens of Assam, which, began to develop in the 1860s and 1870. The recruiter had to turn elsewhere, and they concentrated upon

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[13]. Ibid., P.3

the rural districts of Bihar and the eastern united provinces (now Uttar Pradesh). The recruits were mainly folk, who had fallen on hard times, or who had never risen far from poverty and starvation Most spoke a form of Hindi; many the dialect called Bhojpuri. They came from most of the agricultural castes.[14] In terms of hierarchy, they were about equally made up of lower and upper castes ; there were even a few Brahmins among the recruiter's haul. Where there was an enormous disparity was among the number of men and of women induced to emigrate.

Most of the labourers signed up as single men : if they were married, they left wives and children in the care of the elders and children in the care of the elders of their joint family. Very few emigrated as a family unit, father, mother, children. The rules laid down by the Government required the colonial recruiting agencies to send out forty woman with every hundred men. The colonial agencies constantly found excuses for not filling the female quota, but, they had to demonstrate some kind of inadequate compliance with the regulations.[15] In the conditions laid down by Indian custom, the woman had only one legitimate role, that of a wife. If the real wives were kept from emigrating who would go instead![16]

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14. Ibid., P.4

15. Ibid., P.4

16. Ibid., P.5

The recruiters tried to induce widows to go ; the lot
of the widow - especially of the women whose husband had died
before she attained the dignity of motherhood are of neglect
and loneliness. Many widows saw emigration as something
better. The wife, who had been unfaithful, was even more of
an outcaste, she would be glad to go, if her lover had
deserted her. Then, there were the prostitutes and dancers
who had fallen on bad times ; they were outcastes already,
and the voyage overseas could not be worse than their present
lot. And, so the recruiter made up his female quota,
supplemented by wives, who were kidnapped, and women on
pilgrimage to far away shrines or otherwise vulnerable to the
blandishments of the recruiters clout.[17] It was a sorry
sisterhood who were assembled at the depot in Calcutta or
Madras for embarkation. The luckier one encountered a man
in the depot, who induced them to undergo a hasty marriage
and embark under some kind of protection the others set out
to a life of drudgery and exploitation.

Among immigrants arriving as families, the normal
process of reproduction will create a second generation, and
a third generation who replace the immigrants and become,
inhabitants or "belongers". The conditions of Indian labour
emigration delayed that transformation of immigrants into
"belongers" for two generations or more. It was necessary
to supply more recruits from India to fill the wastage.

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[17]. Ibid.,

Also, a society without a normal pattern of marriage in which women were a scarce commodity, devised crude and cruel substitutes for the cannubial pattern. Indian plantation life was demoralized and debilitated for many years.

Indentured emigration ended in 1916, and thereafter the Gangetic plains no longer sent emigrants overseas. Several thousand went to work in the conurbation of Calcutta and in other urban industrial centres, but the sixty or seventy years of induced emigration left no impulse to follow the routes to lands overseas.[18]

The experience of South-India was very different. Inland from Madras city to the South, there are six enormous districts, where the population has long outgrown the natural resources among these Trichinopolly (or Tiruchirappally), was the most congested district. In, South-India, a great social gulf stretched between the caste people and those below and beyond caste, the untouchable.[19] Their lot was pitiful, and, when a demand for labour opened up in nearby, Ceylon in the 1840s, they were ready to embark upon the hazardous journey to the estates. Once, the emigration cycle had commenced, they, responded to demands from Burma. Ceylon, South-Africa, and Fiji. when indentured emigration closed down (in 1911 in South Africa) it did not terminate the outward movement, emigration, had become a necessity to the

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18. Ibid., P.5

19. Ibid., P.r

impoverished and the depressed of Tamilnadu.[20]

As the 1931 Census Report declared, Ceylon is no more
foreign to the Trichinopolly labourer than Madras".
'Trichinopolly district contributes to every main flow of
emigration, Ceylon, Malaysia, Burma, and, the places in the
west. "This emigration reached it's peak in the late 1920s
; between 150,000 & 160,000 were, departing from Madras every
year, of whom about half came from the depressed classes, the
untouchable. However, the world slump first halted, and, then
reversed the flow. Mass emigration was resumed in the Mid-
1930s, but, by now political objections were being voiced,
both in India and in the receiving countries. The Govt. of
India placed a ban upon labour emigration to Malaysia in 1938
and to Ceylon in 1940. As the Japanese invasion struck
Burma, Indian immigration was replaced by a massive outward
movement : between 400,000 and 500,000. Indians fled before
the invader and struggled back to their motherland. Indian
labour emigration was never resumed to those countries.
However, as a consequence of the half - century or more of
labour emigration, Ceylon, Burma, and Malaysia all had a
large labouring population of Indian Tamils[21].

In East Africa, the Uganda Railway had been built
largely by indentured labourers. Yet, many of these men were
artisans, not, mere 'coolies', and about half the labour

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20. Ibid., PP.6

21. Ibid., P.20

force was recruited in the Punjab. The Punjabis, had already shown themselves, enterprising people, ready to adapt to a new environment towards the end of the 19th century vast new areas of their own land previously semi-desert, were opened up by large scale irrigation. These canal colonies were a frontier society, where the old constrictions of village life were less irksome. Many of the canal colonists and most of those enlisted for the Uganda Railway - were Punjabi Muslims. But, the community, which responded most eagerly to the adventure of travel and migration, were the Sikhs. Although, only a relatively small community (2% of the population of India, and 14% in the Punjab), the Sikhs were splendid soldiers and provided about 20% of the Indian army. Army service took them overseas, and in far away fields their martial bearing and physical toughness were much admired. British administrators, in colonies in Africa and Asia asked for Sikhs in their local police and militia, they even appeared as policemen in the international settlement of Shanghai.[22]

The Sikhs were not worried by caste exclusiveness : at home they were peasant farmers and artisans ; they could pick up new trades and occupations, where a demand appeared. In, Calcutta they drove taxis ; in East Africa, they were carpenters and electricians ; in Bangkok, a special sect of Sikhs obtained a monopoly of the hardware business. One of

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[22]. Ibid., P.67

the most remarkable of these instances of adaptation, was that of the Sikhs on the Pacific coast of North America.[23] A contigent sent to England for Queen victoria's jubilee Celebrations were returned home via Canada. They noticed there were opportunities for hard work in British Columbia, where Chinese and Japanese workers were already coming in. Some Sikhs returned, and were employed in the felling of timber. Many were recruited to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Others moved off South of the 49th Parallel and took up fruit farming in California. At first the Sikhs migrated as single men, farming in California. But when, they had established a pioneer community, they tried to bring across thier wives and children to create a family life. Where they were accepted, the process of adaptation went forward. Some, among the next generation acquired education, and became businessmen, engineers, contractors, transport operators.[24]

However, the overseas Indians are often regarded in terms of "images" or 'stereo-types'. The 'white stereotype' is usually that of the impoverished labourer, the 'coolie'. The Indian self-image is that of a middle class or professional person, and over the space of time the reality tends to move from a proletarian to a bourgeois level.

Thus, from the above, brief historical background of

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[23]. Ibid., P.7

[24]. Ibid., P.8

emigration. It is clear that, "emigration to the various countries was organized in different ways and the two main types of emigration and settlement may be distinguished. These two types are represented in their extreme forms by emigration to the Caribbean (i.e. to the British, Dutch and French, West Indies and the Guianas) on the one hand, and to Ceylon and Malaysia on the other.[25]

It is to be noted, that migration into the West Indies, was organized by the Indentured System, that was introduced in different countries at various periods in the 19th Century, but was discontinued in 1917, when the Govt. of India, placed an embargo on indentured emigration. In Mauritius, it started in 1873 and to Fiji in 1878. The great majority of these emigrants did not return home. In almost all these countries, the immigration of "Free Passengers" was concurrent, but, took place to any considerable extent after 1917.[26]

However, Indenture was a contract, by which the emigrant agreed to work for a given employer for five years performing the tasks assigned to for a high specified wage. At the end of five years, the emigrant was free to reindenture or to work elsewhere in the colony, at the end of ten years, he was entitled to a subsidised return passage.

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[25]. JAIN, R.K ; "INDIAN COMMUNITIES ABROAD", MANOHAR PUBLISHERS. 1993. P. 6.

[26]. Ibid., P.76

The fulfillment of the contract was governed by an Immigration ordinance enacted in the country of destination.[27]

It is to be noted here that, on their arrival in the colony the, immigrants were assigned to the plantations to which they were "bound" for 5 years. Here, they lived an isolated and insulated life. Contacts with the outside world were mediated by the plantation manager, the magistrate, the police & the immigration department. The immigration ordinance that regulated many aspects of their lives, from family rights to political rights stamped the emigrants as a category distinct from other residents of the country. Desertion laws limited their freedom of movement, and the plantation met most of their needs.[28]

A marked contrast to migration to the West Indies was the organiation of emigration to Ceylon (1834-1950). Whereas, the great majority of emigrants to the West Indies were, from North-Western India, all the emigrants to Ceylon were from the South. The passage to the West Indies took on an average, ninety days, and two to three days only to Ceylon. The, Migrants were recruited by headmen Known as the Kangani. Each, Kangani recruited a score or more of men belonging mainly to his own caste and kin group, and from about the turn of the century, migration by families was the

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[27]. Ibid.,

[28]. Ibid., P.7

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predominant form. It is to be noted, that, in Ceylon the Indian labourers were not brought into supplement the working population in general but only as labourers for the tea and rubber plantations on which the Sinhalese peasantry was reluctant to work.[29]

Emigration to East Africa Presents a third pattern. The free emigration of traders and skilled artisans, who did not settle on the land as farmer or labourers. Indentured labourers were brought to East Africa to build the Mombasa railway but, few of them remained. This emigration was not entirely unorganized. Those who established themselves brought over their fellow villagers, kinsmen and castemen.[30] Now, the question arises who are the Indians overseas! There are Indian communities in almost all the continents, and especially on the Tropic of Capricorn and the Tropic of Cancer. Within India, these communites are seen as an extension of Indian influence, a Further India, a Greater India, which in ancient times emerged from the culture and civilization of the Indian subcontinent. The lands which boarder the Indian Ocean, the Peninsula, and islands of South East Asia, Central Asia and even China and Japan beyond are conceived as members of a family of nations, which first acquired knowledge and enlightenment through the efforts of Indian pilgrims, travelling far and wide to take the Lord
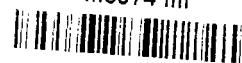
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[29]. Ibid., P.8

[30]. Ibid., P.10

Buddha's message of the Noble Eight fold path to peoples who knew only devilry and demon-worship. Alongwith teachers and priests, according to Indian belief, there went out scholars, officials and princes to establish law and government in South East Asia, Ceylon and other places. All this, it is said was transacted without conflict or violence. The role of the Indian overseas in ancient times was that of <u>peacemaker</u>.[31]

In modern times, in reply to European dominance over Asia and Africa, Indians stirred to take up their, ancient role again and act as harbingers of liberation and national rebirth. The Indian Freedom movement, and Gandhi's example of sacrifice and moral confrontation is seen as the foundation for independence movements every where in the Third World. Indians in Burma, Malaysia, Kenya, Guyana, are honoured as organizers of trade unions, pioneers of political journalism, resistance workers, and comrades of the Afro-Asians who emerged as the national leaders. Finally, Indians feel that, the ancient legacy of universal brotherhood, which flowed from the Buddhist message can be recreated today. Burton Benedict, had conducted a field study on the Indian community in Mauritius from 1956-1957. He says, that the Indian Immigrants were all of the lowest caste. This is in part an expression of hostility towards the Indian but, it

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[31]. TINKER. HUGH ; "A NEW SYSTEM OF SLAVERY". OXFORD UNIV. PRESS 1974, P. xi (PREFACE)

is also believed to be a fact. It, may be due to confusion
of caste with economic class. The vast majority of
immigrants were very poor, but, they were not necessarily all
of low caste.[32] "Now, the 108 castes listed in Benedicts
sample cover the whole range of castes from the Brahmin,
Rajput and the clean castes, through the functional castes,
to the very lowest castes and outcastes. In his sample of
1,378 immigrants 228 are listed as 'Malabars,' 80 as
'Gentoos', 44 as 'Marathas', and 14 as 'Telugus'. These terms
give no clue as to caste. In addition, there are 235
Muslims, and 21 Christions in the sample, who, ofcourse, do
not fit into the Hindu caste system. This leaves 756
immigrants about whom there is specific caste information.
There are only 4 Brahmins, the highest caste. There are,
however 41 Rajputs, the great military and land owning caste
of Northern-India. There are 55 Kurmis (an agricultural
caste), which ranks ritually as a "clean" caste. Atleast
another 77 might be put into the "clean" caste category.
Only slightly lower among the "clean" occupational castes,
another 44 may be listed.[33] Among the Low castes may be
placed the Bhuiya (48 individuals), a large - heterogeneous
group of landless workers, whose status varies in different
parts of India. However, at the lower extreme of the caste
hierarchy came the 'chamars', a caste of tanners and menial

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[32]. Ibid ; P.20

[33]. Ibid ; P. 21

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labourers traditionally despised throughout India. There are 161 chamars in Benedict's sample. The largest number for any single caste. Only a little higher were the 'Dussads', a cultivating caste of Bihar & Chota Nagpur.[34]

However, without putting too much weight on the sample it can be seen that a very large number of immigrants were found to be from lower castes and that, although a large proportion of them came from the lowest castes, by no means all of them did so. It is to be noted here, that, it is not safe to assume that, immigrants followed the occupations with which their castes were traditionally associated, but, it is certain, that a great many were not labourers or used to agricultural work.

It is important, to note here, that in the 1931 census report in "Mauritius" it was recorded that, "Emigration is a great teacher of Self-respect". It is probably the existence of the emigration current that has contributed most to the growth of consciousness among the depressed classes.[35]

Indian immigration to South-Africa was a selective process in which certain individuals and categories of people were induced to migrate owing to specific pressures in their homeland and for future rewards ad well. In South-Africa, the immigrant Indian has a long history. The Indians had

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[34]. Ibid ; P.22

[35]. Ibid ; P.60

started coming as early as 500 B.C till the 19th century. Migration of all Hindus, came to a temporary standstill in the 11th century, when the rapid and forceful advance of Islam threatened to overwhelm Hindu-India :   In the 19th century it again got intensified during the British rule.

The first batch of indentured labourers arrived in 1860 on contracts of service for a period of three years after which they automatically become 'free', and had the option to either remain in Natal or receive a free return to India.[36] So, as mentioned earlier, the Indians first came to Natal basically due to cheap and reliable labour. Recruitment was initially in the sugar plantations, and later on it diversified to railways, dockyards, coalmines, municipal service and domestic employment.   The supply of Indian labours went on for 25 years.   It should be noted here that, distinct from the indentured, was a second stream of immigrants, generally described as, "passenger Indians", who entered the country under the ordinary immigration laws and at their own expense.   They basically had come for trade or to serve commerce.   But, the European colonists gradually started opposing the immigration of 'passenger' Indians.   In 1956, finally this category of Indians could not enter the country with their family except where special permission is,

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[36]. KUPER, HILDA ; "INDIAN PEOPLE IN NATAL".   UNIV. OF NATAL PRESS 1960, P. 11

obtained from the minister.[37]

The indentured Indians were of different religions, localities and cultures. The majority were Hindus and analysis of records of passengers on two ships chosen at random, indicate the diversity of the indentured immigrants, most of whom were strangers to each other. Some were higher, some lower in the caste ladder. Hindus with the same functionary caste names, that's Chamar (tanner), Lohar (blacksmith), Barhai (Carpenter), Sonar (Goldsmith), Nao (Barber), were faced with the problem that the same occupation did not necessarily carry the same position in the hierarchy of a different locality. Even religious affiliations like Parsee, Mohammedan etc. were also listed as castes.[38] It is to be noted here, that the occupations for which the indentured were required led to an emphasis on certain castes and also a deliberate, exclusion of others. It was found out, that, less than 20% were non-Hindus, and of the Hindu, roughly 60% were of the Sudra and Scheduled caste, about 25% to 30% were vaishya, and the remaining 10% to 15% mainly kshatriya's with a small percentage of, Brahmins. Among the 3,200 indentured labourers, coming on eight boat loads, randomly, there were 2% Brahmin 9% Kshatriya, 21% vaishya, 31% Sudra, 27% Scheduled castes, of the remaining 10%, 3% were Christian, 4% were Muslims, and

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[37]. Ibid ; P.3.

[38]. Ibid ; P.6

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remainder were unclassified.[39]

The passenger Indians were culturally heterogeneous, and were mainly Gujarati speaking Moslems & Hindus from Kathiawar, Surat, & Porbandar, and Urdu speaking Moslems and Marathis from the Northern provinces. The other passengers from the North included a few Parsees from Bombay, and a few Jains from Gujarat, and all of them went into small business.

It is to be noted here that, Indians did not emigrate to South Africa to escape any specific brand of persecution, political or religious nor did they come to create any new kind of a society. They had come purely for economic reasons and were driven to leave India owing to poverty, famines, ambitions, domestic tensions etc.

Apart from the above factors, as mentioned earlier, in India, there are a numerous, social strictures of which caste remains the most important factor. By emigrating, an individual can also circumvent these strictures imposed by the Indian society, and gain a second chance at success.

Thus, finally to conclude, from the historical background of this chapter on migration and it's causes, it has been found that migration as a phenomenon did exist in some form or the other, that is, be it within the country or overseas, but, nevertheless, causes do vary. In other words, the above findings indicate that the two most important factor of emigration are - 'caste' and ofcourse 'money'.

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[39]. Ibid ; P.7

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That's, it is generally the lower - caste who migrate, and, on the other hand, people wanting to earn more, migrate. But, then in the case of emigrant Indians, apart from the above two factors, other factors, as mentioned above, like, family - considerations, educational opportunities, social - strictures etc. also play an important role for migration.

Finally, with the world merging to become an unipolar society, and in this day of rapid technology and communication, the reasons or causes of migration is primarily getting based on the satisfaction of the individual needs to the maximum, subject to the availability of opportunities.

CHAPTER II

OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS & MOBILITY AMONG IMMIGRANTS

CHAPTTER II

OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS & MOBILITY AMONG IMMIGRANTS

The social situation of Indian communities is generally believed to be complex and varied. Before, examining the occupational pattern & mobility among immigrant Indians, it is necessary to know a bit about the caste-system and occupational pattern and mobility in the traditional social structure, wherein different castes were so-related to each other, that, the system encouraged mutual inter-dependence and co-operation, which is often called as "Jajmani System.

The Indian caste-system based on cooperation, did not encourage competitive tendencies leading to changes in social system. The traditional Indian world look out consisted in adherence to one's own traditional occupation . In such a system, status was ascribed and a man born in a particular family automatically inherited the status & occupation of his father. But in practice, the individual, it is to be noted, had full freedom to change his occupation. For example : a Brahman was fully within his rights to adopt farming, and in the same way, an untouchable also was allowed to adopt farming. However, there are two conflicting views about the relationship between the caste-system and occupational choice. One group of writers say the caste system not only assigns a definite occupation to each individual, but, imposes certain restrictions also on the change of

occupation. On the other hand, the main stress of the opposite view point is that, the caste system has been dynamic in nature, and as Ghurye has tried to show, during the middle ages, after certain castes participated, in a number of occupations.

MAURITIUS

Caste-Occupational Nexus Among Indians:

As mentioned earlier Indian migration overseas began with the export of indentured, contract or "Coolie" labour in the 1830's. There were ofcourse, other forms of migration like – Kangani/Mistry labour emigration, free or passage, brain-drain or voluntary emigration and ofcourse labour emigration. Benedict says, that it is often heard among non-Indians in Mauritius for instance, that the Indian immigrants were all of the lowest castes.[40] This is, ofcourse in part an expression of hostility towards the Indian, but, it is also believed to be a fact, which may be due to confusion of caste with economic class. Again the vast majority of immigrants were very poor, but, they were not necessarily all of the low-caste. Nevertheless, keeping in view the important part still played by caste in marriage, in ritual, in the political system and ofcourse in the occupational system, it is worth examining the caste origins of immigrants. In a sample of 1,378 individuals drawn from the immigrants

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[40]. BURTON, BENEDICT ; "INDIANS IN A PLURAL SOCIETY". LONDON: HMS STATIONARY. 1961. P.20

records, including 305 from the marriage registers, 108 different castes are listed. There were 22 castes represented, among 337 immigrants arriving from Calcutta in the "Calliope" on 2nd August 1861. The "Shaw Allum", arriving from Calcutta on Christmas eve the same year carried 283 immigrants from 31 different castes. In June 1861, yet a third ship from Calcutta arrived carrying representatives of 16 castes among 413 passengers. By, 1903, towards the end of immigration the specific caste is listed for, immigrants arriving from Madras. Immigrants arriving from Bombay are, usually simply listed as Maratha, Muslim or Christian, but, occasionally specific castes are mentioned[41]

There can be little doubt, that, the Indian immigrants to Mauritius came from a great many castes : Now, the 108 castes listed in Benedicts sample, cover the whole range of castes from the Brahmin, Kshatriyas and the clean castes, through the functional castes (herdsmen, metal - workers, potters etc.) to the very lowest castes & out castes. In his sample of 1,378 immigrants 228 are listed as Malabar, 80 as Gentoos, (is used in many of the early ship list to refer to Hindus by the colonial officials as a caste category) 44 as Marathas & 14 as Telegus. These terms give no clue as to caste. In addition, there are 235 Muslims, & 21 Christians in this sample. This leaves 756 immigrants about whom there is specific caste information. There are only 4 Brahmins,

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[41] Ibid.,P. 20

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the highest caste. There are however, 41 Rajputs, the great military & land-owning caste of Northern India, who claim to be the modern representatives of the Kshatriya (the varna which ranks just below the Brahmin). There are 55 Kurmis an agricultural caste, which ranks ritually as a "clean" caste. Atleast another 77 might be put into the clean caste category. Only slightly lower among the "clean" occupational castes, another 44 may be listed. Among the low castes may be placed the Bhaiya (48 individuals), a large heterogenous group of landless workers, whose, status varies in different parts of India.[42]

From a very small sample of 756 drawn from immigrants arriving between 1847 & 1903, about 30% came from the very lowest castes & about 6% from the highest. Now, from the sample, it can be seen that very large number of immigrants were found to be from varied castes and that, although a large proportion of them came from the lowest castes, by no means all of them did so. The highest castes were also represented.[43]

However, it is not safe to assume that, immigrants followed the occupations with which their castes were traditionally associated, but it, is certain that a great many were not labourers or used to agricultural work. Planters and estate managers frequently complained that the

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[42]. Ibid ; P.21

[43]. Ibid ; P.22

recruits they received were not labourers and the Royal -
commissioners of 1872 investigated a number of cases of
immigrants who would not work as labourers. On one ship,
which reached Mauritius, on 18th March 1873. They discovered
that, only 153 out of the 207 on board had been agricultural
labourers in India. In addition there were 3 gardeners. The
previous occupation of others was as follows :

4 Herdsmen	1 Cook
2 Shepherds	1 Milkman
3 Coachmen	3 Carpenters
3 Carters	2 Tailors
3 Grooms	1 Shoemaker
8 Domestic servants	2 Potters
1 Jeweller	4 Barbers
1 Clerk	8 Constables & Peons
1 Sepoy	3 Washermen.

Some of the above had come to Mauritius with the idea
of continuing their former occupations. Brahmins, often
refused to work in the fields. It is apparent that, the
Indian immigrants to Mauritius were heterogeneous as to
origin, language, religion, caste and occupational skills.[44]

SOUTH AFRICA :

Caste-Occupational Nexus Among Indians :

Compared to Mauritius, Indians in South-Africa emigrated

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[44]. Ibid ; P.22

purely on economic mission in search of the means of living. Infact, India, was officially approached by the Natal colonial government for the importation of `Coolies' from India. However, Indians, who emigrated to South Africa, came as indentured labourers and free passengers. They came from Orthodox Hindu families, caste-conscious, and also knew that, the work for which they were indentured, and the life they would lead during indenture, were prohibited by their caste status, and, by breaking through the prohibition they would become out-castes.[45] Infact, the majority of indentured were from South India, where caste restrictions were most vigorous and elaborate & where the Shudra & scheduled caste were most numerous. The majority of both groups of immigrants chose to live out the rest of their lives in South Africa their descendants were second, third, fourth & fifth generation born South-Africans.[46] They form a society very different from that of their forbears in India, a society in which caste operates to a limited extent & in which new elite structures are developing based on western criteria.

Many of the Indians maintained their caste-occupation even in South-Africa. Among 3,200 indentured labourers coming on eight boat loads selected at random, approximately only 2% were Brahmins, 9% Kshatriya, 21% Vaishya's, 31% Sudra &

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[45]. KURER, HILDA ; "INDIAN PEOPLE IN NATAL ; UNIV. OF NATAL PRESS 1960. P.9

[46]. Ibid ; P.17

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27% scheduled castes and of the remaining 10%, 3% were Christians, 4% Moslem & the remainder were not classified. It is to be noted here, that, the occupations for which the indentured were required led to an emphasis of certain castes & also a deliberate exclusion of others.

As mentioned earlier, many of the Indians maintained their caste-occupations in South Africa for instance, one village on the North coast, was, built entirely by Hindi speaking Hindu, from different parts of Bihar. They included a nucleus, of Singhs (kshatriya varna) who built houses close to each other. They established a local panchayat (council), with a chowdhrree (headman) & Pradhan (Vice-head) & the Panchayat controlled the village activities. A special Brahmin was used as village Purohit (Priest), a Nao family acted as Barbers, a Kumhar made the clay pots & lamps required for the festivals, a Dhobi family did all the laundry, Barhai built the homes & made the furniture & sonars made the jewellery & they all cultivated cane & other crops.[47]

But, inevitably the above system broke down. Traditionally those members of any caste who could not operate their specific caste occupations were able to enter agricultural services and in this way excess persons from non-agricultural castes were absorbed while occupational caste specialisation was stabilised. With difficulties in

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[47]. Ibid ; P.18

the acquisition of land & limited opportunities for developing the land inside the village boundaries, the younger people sought new avenues of employment, in outside areas. Infact, the majority of the ex-indentured became peri-urban dwellers, or, more recently, drifted into urban barracks or sub-economic housing schemes.[48] Indian areas could be analysed on the basis of particular caste names, but, such analysis, bear little relationship to the kind of present social-interaction, at the present time.

It is noticed, that, after the arrival of the first indentured labourers, there is a recognised tendency, for people of the same linguistic cultural group to live together in the same area.

Thus, apart from conditions of indenture, and subsequent residence, which contributed to weaken caste ties there were deliberate acts by a few individuals to improve their caste status, by changing their caste name or dropping a caste name altogether.

In South - Africa, it is believed that, the 'high' caste people are in "clean jobs", (upper-status occupations) the professions & white collar jobs and 'low' caste people are mainly in jobs considered physically and spiritually dirty - leather working, hair-cutting, handling dead-bodies etc. This is definitely a bit ambiguious, but it is clear that though caste and occupations no longer hold any rigid

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[48]. Ibid ; p.26

significant correlation except in a few specialised crafts like goldsmiths, or pot-making. Infact, occupational openings in South-Africa operate, irrespective of caste, and the occupational interdependence of castes which maintains the caste structure has virtually disappeared. In a random sample of 84 men, 64 had taken on occupations different from their fathers. Parents accept that they may direct their children into a particular profession, but, not force them.[49]

SOUTH AFRICA :

Occupational - Mobility Among Indians In South Africa & Mauritius :

Infact, the number of Indian farmers in 1913 was 2,324 Gardening & small farming continued to attract Indians. They were principally engaged in growing sugarcane, tobacco millets, fruits and vegetables. In 1925, 2,546 farms and holdings were, occupied by Indians. They owned 89,841 acres of land cut of a total of 11,299,360 acres of land in Natal.[50] The chief occupations of Indians engaged in agriculture in Natal are set out in the following table.

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[49]. Ibid ; P.26

[50]. Rai, K ; INDIANS & BRITISH COLONIALISM IN S. AFRICA (1899 - 1939) P. 35

	Male	Female	Total
Farmers	3,624	87	3711
Agricultural Labourers	9,245	883	10128
Market Gardeners	2,163	73	2236
Gardners	734	9	743
	15,766	1,052	16,818

Indian gardeners & small farmers, wherever they were displaced, migrated in groups from one place to another. Infact, this process of compulsory transfer helped to induce a considerable proportion of Indian gardeners to give up farming and to enter industrial or commercial service. By far the largest area of the land occupied by Indians was under, sugarcane production mostly situated in the coastal districts of lower Tugela, Inando, Umzinto & Port Shepstone. Most of the small cane farmers originally grew tobacco, maize, beans, fruit & vegetables.[51] Later, they were encouraged to grow sugarcane for the local mills by sugar millers. The well-to-do Indians, whose term of service expired, were engaged in profitable vocations.

While the majority of the Indians were indentured

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[51]. Ibid ; P.36

labourers, but once 'free' from the term of indenture, they wanted to go from one place to another. Now, those indentured labourers who were lucky enough to secure land took to market gardening and as there was a good demand for fruits & vegetables they made a good living. As the price of vegetables fell in consequence, the Europeans, (who were colonising at that time) began to resent the infraction of what had been their monopoly.[52]

At the same time, Indian traders or free Indians had, entered the country and were doing good business not only in Natal, but, also in South Africa. They bought land in good localities and as the number of their countrymen rose, the demand for such articles as rice and textiles increased, and al these in the process led to their political attainment as well.

While in Mauritius on the other hand as the Indian population became stabilized, a generation of Mauritian-born Indians grew up. By 1898 Mauritian born Indians outnumbered those born in India. The economically successful, began to educate their children for the professions and employment in the government civil service. In 1851, Indians, constituted 43% of the population but only 4% of professionals & 27% of the Civil service. By 1901, 70% of the population was, Indian, & Indians constituted 23% of professionals & 28% & in the

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[52]. APPASAMY, B ; "INDIANS OF S. AFRICA". PADMA PUBLICATIONS, 1943. P.17

civil service. In 1952, Indians constituted 67% of the population. The Indian percentage of the profession had risen to 27% & in the civil service to 53%. In the following table, the rise, of the Indians in the Medical, legal and teaching professions over the past 100 years is noted.[53]

Percentage of Indian in the Medical, Legal &

Teaching Professions, 1851 - 1952.

Year	Medical		Legal		Teaching	
	% of Indian	% of Non-Indian	% of Indian	% of Non-Indian	% of Indian	%of Non-India:
1851	3	97	-	100	1	99
1861	2	98	-	100	10	90
1871	-	100	-	100	17	83
1881	2	98	-	100	18	82
1901	2	98	1	99	18	82
1944	14	86	15	85	26	74
1952	29	712	25	75	26	74[54]

Therefore, from the above datas of the economic situation of the immigrant Indian's in both the countries

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[53]. BENEDICT, BURTON ; "INDIANS IN A PLURAL SOCIETY", LONDON HMS STATIONERY. 1961. P. 28

[54]. Ibid ; P.28

i.e. South-Africa & Mauritius, is concerned, though they had gone as indentured labourers initially, eventually, they did rise up in the economic ladder of that country.

Brief History on the Economic Rise of Indians in Mauritius:

To elaborate, most of the immigrant indentured labourers who reached Mauritius were penniless. Whatever, little savings or advances on their wages they received were usually spent on the voyage or paid to unscrupulous agents against promises of good position in Mauritius (Frere & Williamson pg. 87-8). There were, however, several ways by which immigrants could rise in the economic scale.

One was by becoming a 'Sirdar" (Overseer). Sirdars were appointed by estate managers & received higher wages & double rations. They did no manual labour. They achieved their positions either by recruiting labourers on to estates or by being elected by the labourers themselves. (Frere & Williamson, Pg. 403) Sirdars sought to bind a group of men to themselves, by making loans to them and by protecting them against the planters. Many planters testified before the "Royal commission" that, they could not get on without Sirdars and it is evident that, the Sirdar system, which persists today, was already firmly established in 1872. Opinions vary as to whether the Sirdar changed interest on the loans he made to labourers, but, the possibility was there & cases are reported of interest rates from 25% - 75%, being changed for small loans (Frere & Williamson, Pg. 403).

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Labourers pledged cows & other goods as security (ibid pg. 404). The 'Sirdar' was in a good position to report or fail to report absences.[55] He was and, is a mediator between labourer & planter.

Slightly higher in the economic and occupational scales were the job - contractors. These were old immigrants, with white connections and a knowledge of French (ibid. p.408.). They were settled on estates and have from 30 or under to over 300 men contractors to them. They were paid by planters for work done & directly controlled their men. They could hire men out on a daily basis and transfer them from one estate to another, although both of these practices were illegal. Planters used them, when extra labour was essential, notably, during the crop-season, or, when a particularly difficult piece of land had to be cleared (Frere & Williamson, Pg 403-420). Although the planter had to pay nearly twice as much for job - contract labour it was still cheaper and more practicable, than maintaining an over large labour force on a permanent basis. The job - contractor was, well - placed to acquire considerable wealth and often became a small planter. Even today, job contractors and the system of job - contracting persist in Mauritius.[56]

Another way in which Indians could rise in the economic scale was, through concessions granted to them by estate

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[55]. Ibid ; 24

[56]. Ibid. P.24

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owners or managers. Many estates, permitted their labourers
to keep, livestock and provide free pasturage. The estate
owners also loaned their labourers small plots of wasteland
for market gardens. The plots were usually given free of any
charge or share of the produce (Frere & Williamson, Pg. 478).
These concessions gave, labourers the opportunity of making
money by trading livestock & from the sale of garden produce.
Old immigrants often became hawkers or market gardeners.
More important than these small concessions were the
opportunities for Indians to acquire cane land. Estate
owners often loaned trusted-employees small plots of cane
land on the estate to cultivate.Besides, through odd jobs,
dealing in livestock, market - gardening,the employment of
their wives & children usury sometimes with interest as high
as 300% (Frere & Williamson Pg. 482) & the sale of their
rations, immigrants were able to amass small amounts. Thus,
one labourer, whose yearly wage was £ 5105 was able to
deposit £ 28 in the Government savings Bank and two Sirdar
had £ 93165 & £ 63 respectively in addition to cows, goats
and Pigs.[57]

With this capital and by borrowing, Indians were able
to acquire land. The fortunes of the big-planters fluctuated
with the world-sugar price, but, there was a chronic shortage
of cash. A Royal commission investigated this situation in
1909). Less desirable portions of large estates were from

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[57]. Ibid ; P.25

time to time sold to immigrants on long-term purchase agreements, payments being deducted from the proceeds of the cane sent to the will (Coombes, Pg 37). This process was known as "Morcellement" and became widespread particularly after 1880. Between 1860 & 1871, £ 87.568, was, invested by some 3,100 immigrant in real property. Individual purchases ranged from £ 10 & under to £ 600. During the period, 1864-1871, 2,583 Indians leased land from others. The total value of land leased from & by Indians during this period was, estimated at £ 122,000 (Frere & Williamson Pg 483). Infact, large number of Indians purchased what must have been on the whole, small plots of land. By 1935 Indian small planters owned 54,300 arpents or about 39% of the cane land in the island (Coombes Pg 420). In 1957, Indians owned 25% roughly (Report an Mauritius, 1957, Pg. 40).

Infact, a number of Indians became proprietors of large estates with factories. As early as 1835, 2 South Indians one of whom had reputedly been a clerk in Governor Farquhar's suite, possessed such an estate and owned 143 slaves (Frere & Williamson, Pg. 16). Later, other Indians acquired large estates and at one time the largest estate in the island was Indian owned. Today, in Mauritius, though no Indian owns a controlling interest in an estate with a factory, but there are Indians who are shareholders in large - estates without factories.[58]

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[58]. Ibid ; P.26

Despite, moving up the economic ladder, and thereby with a change in the occupational pattern which led in the process of mobility among immigrants from indentured - labourers to prosperous businessmen & professionals, they, nevertheless faced segregation in both the countries.

There were Indians in Mauritius during the French period, and it was alleged that Indian artisans had been imported for the building of Port-Louis. Early French travellers mention the presence of Indian slaves and indentured labourers. In 1806, there were 6,162 Indian slaves in the island, about 10% of the slaves.

Throughout the years of Indian immigration, the systems under which labourers contracted to work varied greately and were subject to varying degree of government control. Between 1834 and 1839, there was free introduction of labourers of planters, who paid their passages and Rs. 10 per month (Rs. 5 in wages and the rest in clothing, food etc.) Labourers were engaged in India on five year contracts. During this period, there was virtually no government interference. The unsatisfactory conditions of passage, and the deceptions and abuses of emigrants led the Govt. of India to prohibit emigration from 1839-1842.[59]

Between 1843 and 1852 immigration came more under government control. During this period, there were complaints from planters about the poor quality of

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[59]. Ibid : P.22

immigrants, objections to their being allowed to choose their employers and objections to the payment of return passage,caused increasing trouble with indentured labourers who deserted, and were employed illegally by others.

In 1867, the pass-system for old immigrants was introduced repeatedly to control vagrancy and crime, but, also in an effort to compel old immigrants to re-engage. This was coupled with drastic police control leading to mass arrests. In one year 12,000 coolies were imprisoned for desertion or illegal absence out of an Indian population of about 250,000 while, 9,000 - 10,000 were convicted of vagrancy. (Gordon, Pg. 126). It became hazardous for an Indian to attempt to visit a friend or relative in another district of the island. In an island as small as Mauritius, this represented a severe restriction of movement.[60]

Working conditions on the estates were far from satisfactory, wages were often many months in arrears; there were severe penalties for absences, housing was extremely poor. Hospital-care was entirely inadequate. The labourer had little chance of redress before his employer, the police or the protector of immigrants.

Infact, in 1871-72, a police enquiry commission exposed many of the abuses of the police & in 1872, a Royal commission arrived to enquire into the treatment of immigrants. The full report of the commission was presented

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[60]. Ibid ; P.23

to the legislative council in 1876 and led to a new labour law three years later. The new law, provided for improved estate hospitals, new dwellings, the payment of wages and rations on time, supervision of estates, freedom of engagement for immigrants and a reform of the courts. Yet, many of the regulations were, insufficiently enforced or evaded. Labourers were not really free to engage where they wished till 1922. Estate owners exerted their considerable influence to maintain a controlled cheap labour market.[61]

One lasting result of the system of indenture, as it operated in Mauritius has been a bitter legacy of distrust and dislike between Franco-Mauritians and Indians. Though, conditions in Mauritius today differ vastly from those of 1872, Benedict found that, there was a persistence of these attitudes. Statements of Franco-Mauritian planters and Indians made before the Royal commissions of 1872 & 1909 might also be contemporary.[62]

Yet, the two groups were and are strongly inter-dependent. The planter must have labour to bring in his crop. The labourer must earn cash & this means working on sugar estates. Since the 18th century, the planters have been Franco-Mauritians and since the early 19th century, the labourers have been Indians. "The two groups are in a mutually dependent economic relationship. The rules and

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[61]. Ibid ; P.23

[62]. Ibid ; P.23

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[61]. Ibid ; P.23

[62]. Ibid ; P.23

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regulation governing that relationship have changed but it's basic structure remains unaltered.[63]

Brief-History On The Economic Rise of Indians In South-Africa:

On the other hand, the British government imposed several economic disabilities on Indian immigrants in South Africa during the colonial period. The principal fields of economic activity where discrimination was practiced against Indians were ownership and occupation of land and trading rights.[64] Nearly 80% of Indians in South Africa were in Natal, and the bulk of them were agriculturists.[65] Yet, during a period of 60 years commencing from 1860 the sum total of real estates apart from leasehold properties held on monthly or yearly tenancies acquired by all Indians in rural areas was 57,914 acres out of a total area of 11,299,360. Similarly in respect of cultivable lands in the districts situated in the coastal belt out of an average of 3,568,640 only 73,873 acres were owned by Indians.

The Indian labourers in Natal were recruited from the agricultural class and were initially devoted to agricultural pursuits. Land was obviously a valuable asset to them. Under the Natal Immigration Ordinance of 1859, after ten

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[63]. Ibid ; P.24

[64]. APPASAMMY, B ; "INDIANS OF S. AFRICA "PADMA PUBLICATIONS. 1943, P. 10

[65]. Ibid ; P.11

years stay in the colony, Indian labourers were entitled to a plot of crown land for their agricultural and residential purposes. Many Indian labourers preferred land to a free return passage and stayed back, striking their roots into the soil of Natal as cultivators. By 1885, whether by grant or by purchase or lease about, 2,000 Indians were in occupation of land in Durban. In 1891, the Natal government passed an Act, repealing the former provision of the commutation of return passage for a free grant of crown land. Land, thus became a bone of contention and discord between the Indian community and the European settlers, and this in the process raised the value of land. By 1904, Indians brought under cultivation 50,000 acres of land of which 10,000 were owned by them. Subsequently, they often occupied waste land and developed it, with a view to selling it to the European Sugar planters with a profit. In, Durban, the valuation of land in Indian hands increased from £ 28,840 to £ 856,218 between 1888-89 & 1918-19.

Now the Durban Borough Lands Alienation Ordinance of 1922 and Natal Borough & Township Lands ordinance of 1923 were passed. It limited the unlimited rights of Indians to acquire landed property anywhere in Natal. Ordinance of 1923, gave wide powers to local authorities of Natal to insert anti-Indian clauses in sales of unalienated lands. These powers were widely used, in such sales of lands. For example, at Pietemaritzburg such powers were utilised to

displace a number of Indian traders from some provinces which the town council had acquired. Land, was sold with an anti-Indian clause to a certain European corporation which, ejected them. This step was taken merely, because the shops were too near the European trading quarters. It is to be noted that, long before the creation of the union of South-Africa, extensive legislation imposed restrictions of various purposes was recognized. Yet, during 22 years the Durban city council built 175 houses for a population of 90,000 Indian, at a cost of 73,547 as constructed with 655 houses for 96,000 Europeans at a cost of 787,085. It was done inspite of the fact, that the European community in Durban was far more prosperous & wealthy than the Indians & Africans. It was also proposed to expropriate over a thousand acres of Indian owned land in the city & allocate it for the use of Europeans. Again, on the pretext of slum clearance, nearly 10,000 Indians were deprived of their houses, many of which were houses of good structure.

It is to be noted, that, long before the creation of the union of South Africa, extensive legislation imposed restrictions of various forms on the right of the Indians to own immovable property, specially in the Orange Free State & the Transvaal. However, a subsequent legislation of 1894, permitted coloured persons to have buildings in towns registered provided they produced certificates of good civil & moral conduct. In Transvaal Law 111, of 1885 prohibited

Indians from acquiring land outside the locations set apart for Indians, and formed the basis of all subsequent legislation affecting Indians in regard to their rights to occupation and ownership of land.

Thus, many other legislations were made & passed prohibiting Indians to have a free and normal life. The reason for this may be, that, the European settlers had grown jealous of the Indian commercial enterprises in South-Africa, especially in the Transvaal. Their rapidly growing economic success alarmed their European competitors ; which in the result led to an unfriendly attitude among the Europeans towards the Indian traders and proved to be a serious hindrance to their economic activities.

Conclusion:

Thus, to finally conclude this chapter, Indians starting as indentured labourers or coolies from basically lower-castes, in both the above mentioned countries, were in a couple of years, in a better economic-situation from what they were in their home-place. But,they had to face numerous hindrances to be in the top of economic ladder of the migrant country. In other words, though there was occupational mobility as has been mentioned earlier, it was basically their rising economic standards incourse of time which led to the process of social-mobility, which later on came to be a serious threat to the European settlers. Even today,

migrants are always faced with such type of problems in some way or the other.

CHAPTER III

INTER & INTRA ETHNICTY IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL PROCESSES

CHAPTTER III :

INTER & INTRA ETHNICTY IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL

PROCESSES

What is Ethnicity ?

Ethnicity, an eternal fountain of a sense of belongingness and an assurance of continuity, was their only, treasure with which the indentured coolies, mostly men, left the Indian shores in the early mid - 19th century for unknown destinations with their optimistic determination to make their economic future better, making something great out of zero, and at the same time they were confident of the uphill task which lay in front of them.

No doubt, it had become hard, painful and uncertain, because they had to surrender their individual sovereighty to the so-called civilized colonialists, who, to their utter amazement lacked sensitivity to even bare basic human needs of their servants, which exhibited a feudal streak of mentality. It is to be noted that, though their behaviours and attitudes, were barbaric, they were nevertheless condoned norms of the time and so, colonialism and feudalism were the economic systems of the time.[66]

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[66] MOTWANI, J., GOSINE, M, MOTWANI, BAROJ, JYOTI; (ed.) "GLOBAL INDIAN DIAPORA" (Yesterday, Today & Tommorrow) The Indians S. Africa Global Organisation of people 1993.p.50

The society of that time attached no moral stigma to this trade in human-beings, and it was openly engaged in by individuals,of the highest rank and renown.However, as regards the migrants they move into a strange cultural milieu in which he finds himself in a micro - minority, confronting unfriendly, dominant majority,and a few other hostile ethnic groups. He finds that, his religion, culture, music, literature, fine-arts, language, accent, home, decor, dress, food, table manners, recreational preferences, sports etc. are different from those of the rest of other ethnic groups. More knowledge, leave the question of experience of such a varied multifaceted ethnic differences, produces stress. Migration, irrespective, of nationality, is a significant source of psychological stress. It, generates profound anxiety, fear of rejection and uncertanity of ethnic survival.[67]

However, ethnicity in its real sense, is too abstract and too broad to define . Members of an ethnic group are recognised by commonalities of it's basic characteristic, ancestry and of several other ingredients such as customs, social moves, physical - features, language, dress, food, music etc. An ethnic group is composed of those who conceive of themselves, as alike by virtue of their common ancestry, real or fictitous and who are so regarded by other.[68]

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[67]   Ibid; p.51

[68]   Ibid; p.51

"Ethnicity describes a sense of commonality transmitted over generations by the family and reinforced by the surrounding community. Infact, ethnicity patterns our thinking, feeling and behaviour in both obvious and subtle ways. It plays a major role in determining what people should work, how they should work, relax, celebrate holidays and rituals and how they also feel about life, death and illness. In brief, it involves both conscious and unconscious processes that, fulfill a deep psychological need for identity and historical continuity.[69]

Infact, wherever there was an external invasion, on India there was a conscious planned attempt on the part of the alien rulers, Arabs, Afghans, Moghuls, and the British to disfigure, mutilate and disintegrate the Hindu identity by distorting the Indian history. It is to be noted, that the British injected in the psyche of those westernized elite that, they were inferior to the whites.[70] During, the British colonialisation, in India, the Indians were given an inferiority complex through education, but to the indentured labourers through deprivation of education. The indentured labourers condition is not much different from slavery as far as the attitude of the masters are concerned. The system of indentured labour started in the thirties of the 19th century immediately after the slavery system was

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[69] Ibid; p.52

[70] Ibid; p.52

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abolished. But, after this, the system nevertheless continued in a camouflaged form, and the slaves were converted into bondaged labourers. They had to face brutal conditions of living. They were subject to the worst, brutal physical as well as mental abuse and stress. The reason being quite apparent that, the colonialists wanted to systematically strip them of their ethnic and religious identities and reduce their ego to that of a lesser human being. Every bid was made even to fragment their families into pieces.[71]

But, nevertheless, their ethnicity survived or rather managed to retain certain roots, despite large-scale immigration of Indians into South Africa and Mauritius and their persistence in settling there permanently.

R/L OF INDIAN GROUP WITH OTHER GROUP -

South Africa : It is, this persistance in settling there permanently, which caused much alarm and irritation to the European settlers. They thought, that the permanent settlement of the Indian immigrants in South - Africa, for instance, would not only limit South-Africa's capacity to absorb a larger European population in the long run, but, would also prove prejudicial to their other interests in the near future. It, was therefore, due to this pertinent reason, that right from the onset of the Indian immigration, the European settlers harboured feelings of resentment

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[71]   Ibid; p.53

against the Indians, and with the passage of time became more voiceferous as regards their opposition towards them was concerned.[72]

It is to be noted that the African, the Malay, Burmese or Sinhalese saw the Indian as the man in authority, they confronted an Indian booking clerk at the railway-station or an Indian tally-clerk weighing their produce. Unfortunately, they could not see the European manager who was really controlling their affairs. So, the Indian was feared and envied as the man in authority. He was also despised as the "Pariah", for it, was the Indian, who performed many a menial jobs inorder to keep the towns and cities clean.[73] In South Africa, the European settlers complained that, the Indians had, insanitary habits of life, and were their rivals in trade, commerce, and agriculture. Now, basically the Indian settlers, indigent conditions, and the union governments indifference to their living standards forced them to remain divorced from a descent mode of life and comfortable habitation.[74]

Basically, European complaints, against Indians as their rivals in trade and commerce, were more pronounced in Transvaal, as, it was in this place, that, Indians belonging to the trading community of Gujarat and Bombay, immigrated

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[72]   CHATTOPADHYAYA, H; "INDIANS IN AFRICA" p. 98.

[73]   TINKER, HUGH; "SEPERATE & UNEQUAL' p. 9.

[74]   Ibid; p.98

in large numbers and settled there permanently and followed trade and commerce right from the beginning.This anti - Indian attitude was again more evident in Pretoria & Johannesberg wherein, the majority of Indian traders came to settle there.[75] In a petition, submitted, in 1895 to Lord Ripon, the then principal Secretary of State for the British Colonies, the Indians in Pretoria and Johannesberg stated, that among the Indian traders of Johannesburg and Pretoria nearly two hundred had, then assets about £ 100,000, & 3 Indian firms imported goods from England, Durban, Pt. Elizabeth, India and other countries and there were, then about, 2000 Indian hawkers in the Transvaal Republic, buying goods and hawking them about. In the same petetion, the Indians in Pretoria and Johannesberg further stated - "The real and only reason for putting every obstacle in the way of, Indians earning a decent livelihood, is the trade-jealousy. The Indian traders have, by their competition and owing to their temperate and thrifty habits been able to reduce the prices of the necessaries of life. This doesn't suit the European traders who would make very large profits. It is a notorious fact, that the Indian traders are almost without exception tee-totallers. Their habits are simple and thus content to make small profits. This, and this only is the reason of opposition to them. A newspaper called the "Natal Advertiser" of 15th September 1983 contemptuously

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[75]   Ibid; p.98

referred to the Indian problem as "the coolie question" and pleaded that, the sooner steps were taken to suppress the Indian traders, the better, as they were "the real canker eating into the very vital part of the European community".[76]

After the outbreak of world war, a remarkable demonstration of solidarity with the Imperial cause, was seen, not only from the "Rajas" and those traditionally considered loyal to the British empire but, also from the urban middle classes in India. Infact, on 29th April, 1918, Gandhi was writing to Lord Chelmsford that, "It is clear to me that we should give the Empire every available man for its defence".[77]

But, unfortunately, after the world war, the 'White community' returned to policies of racial discrimination, and this move was, first felt in South-Africa. Measures were taken to restrict and prevent the acquisition of property by Indians, was passed through the union Parliament early in 1919. Unfortunately the Indians were not well organised to protest against these measures, as the Natal Congress (Indian) had sunk into oblivion after Gandhi's departure, and it was left to the little Cape British Indian council to take the lead,Lord Buxton the Liberal Governor - General of South-Africa made it quite clear that, with the development

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[76]   Ibid; p.99

[77]   TINKER HUGH; " SEPERATE & UNEQUAL" P.31

of Dominion Status there could be no question of withholding assent.[78]

Meanwhile, Smuts returned to South-Africa, after his long service with the British war cabinet, to become Prime - MInister on the death of Botha in August 1919. He was required to face to a multitude of domestic problems, he tried to bring about a balanced legislation. The legislation already in being was accepted, but, no further restrictions were recommended, volunatry segregation was advocated, as a means of keeping down the temperature of white racism, and voluntary repatriation was considered to be a valuable means of resolving the Indian problem.[79]

But, pressure mounted on the Indians, by the South-African extremists. Sir Abe Bailey, the mining magnate and defender of white privelege described the large statement as "the weakest product of any commission that, had ever gone forth". The government of India, and friends such as Polak, were concerned to ensure, that any repatriation was, genuinely voluntary, and not under disguised coercion.[80]

Montagu, initiated, an official of the India Office, John Walton, to draft a memorandum on "possible means of retaliation against countries (foreign or British) which impose disabilities on Indian. Walton accepted, that the

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[78]   Ibid; p.32

[79]   Ibid; p.33

[80]   Ibid; p.33

evolution of Dominion status had made South Africa it's own master internally and internationally. This, precedent also applied to the evolution of India, everything that has been said above as to the new international status (including the Treaty - Power) of the dominions, applies also to India. Anomalaously, she may be said to have more independence in her external, than in her internal affairs. So, if India's assent had been required to the recent peace treaties, then her government was manifestly competent to deal with another British State. All this indicated that, South - Africa might need India's permission for the movement of troops, and thereby, it is possible, that the anti - Indian campaign might be checked by a threat of retaliation. South -Africa should be made to realise that, India is at liberty to retaliate.[81]

However, Walton's analysis of the openings for retaliation was not drafted merely with South-Africa. He noted the possibility of, "prohibition of emigration to colonies" which desire to introduce free Indian colonists such as Fiji and British Guiana and such retaliation would be used also as a means of bringing pressure in other colonies like Kenya.[82]

Most draconian of all, was the law of South-Africa, an act of 1913, empowered, the Minister of the Interior to

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[81]   Ibid; p. 33

[82]   Ibid; p.34

declare any person or class of persons "unsuited to the requirements of the union". This measure was used to impose a ban on the entry of all Indians, so that, the existence of other requirements wasn't called into use. Though, the admission of the dependents of Indians, was severely controlled, Indians nevertheless 'domiciled' in the union.

So, the above account is a dimension of the dominant inter - ethnic relation basically, between the whites Vs Indians and others of course. Thus, Indians in South-Africa, economically were very much able competitors with the European Colonialists, owing to which, they were not tolerated by the latter, which in the process led the problems with other groups as a whole and politically, as well.

MAURITIUS:

In Mauritius, the Indians had come during the early years of French rule either as slaves or free workers. When, the first elections were held in 1886, an Indo - Mauritian was appointed to the electoral - commission. 129 Hindus and 124 Muslims, voted in that election out of a total electorate of 41061 (Government Gazette 1880). In 1891, 298 Hindus and 103 Muslims, voted out as a total electorate of 5,164. The first Indian member of the legislative council was, nominated by the Governor in 1886, but, Indians by and large continued without effective representation because the minority who could vote could not elect a candidate against

a majority of electors belonging tothe general population.

There was, considerable opposition of Indian representation in the government, both from the Franco - Mauritians and the coloured community. Sir. Charles Bruce (Governor, 1897-1902) nominated Indians to the council of government and to the Board of commissions of a township.[83]

The Indian candiates contested unsuccessfully in the election of 1906 and 1911. It was not until 1926 that, the Indians were elected from rural districts to the council of government. Both, were defeated in 1931 and it was not until a by-election of 1944 that an Indian was once again elected. The restricted franchise operated effectively against the election of members of the majority community of the island.[84]

This, restriction, was swept away by the constitution of 1948. The franchise was extended to both sexes, with a simple literacy or property, holding qualification. Under the previous constitution, the electorate was never greater than, 12,000. In the elections of 1948, it was 71,723 and by the end of 1956, there was 91,243 registered elections out of the 10 elected members of the pre-1948 legislative council, only one was an Indian. Again, of the 19 elected members in the council, 11 were Indians. Now, they

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[83]   BENEDICT, BURTON; "INDIANS IN A PLURAL SOCIETY" LONDON HMS STATIONARY. 1961 P.29

[84]   Ibid; p.29

(Indians) no longer had to look for nominated seats to secure representation on the legislative council. Now, it was rather the Franco - Mauritians and other minorities, who had to rely on nominations.[85]

However, on the other hand, the extension of the franchise brought, "racialism" into politics in a way, which was unknown to Mauritian politics earlier. Earlier political - struggles had been largely between Franco - Mauritians and Creoles. They had this, even before the abolition of slavery. In the years that followed Creoles, played a leading part in the municipal politics of Port Louis and later in the town council of Rose Hill and Quatre Bornes. Thus, the Creoles had a long and active political tradition before the Indians became a factor in Mauritian politics. Moreover, the Creoles political tradition was one of opposition sometimes to the British officials and sometimes to the Franco - Mauritian planters. It was, Creoles who agitated for labour legislation, old-age pensions and other social-welfare acts in the legislature and who began the labour movement and workers on estates. It is to be noted that, the labour party from it's inception included both Creoles and Indians. After the 1948 elections, Indians and Creoles of the Labour party cooperated in the legislative council, and this cooperation has been maintained,

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[85]   Ibid; p.30

subsequently.[86]

Finally, the enfranchisement of thousands of Indians in 1948, not only over-threw the electoral dominance of the Franco-Mauritian, but, caused other - minotiry groups to fear for their representation. Some Creoles turned from being chiefly concerned with political opposition to Franco - Mauritians and British officials, to the danger of being swamped by an Indian electorate. While some of them joined ranks with the Indians in the Labour party, Others sought alliances with the Franco - Mauritians in the opposition, "Party - Mauricien". The allies among other minority groups in the island and the Muslims showed signs of political self, - awareness and began to fear for their own minority status vis-a-vis the Hindus.[87]

It is however, important to note that, one lasting result of the system of indenture as it had operated in Mauritius has been a bitter legacy of distrust and dislike between Franco - Mauritians and Indians. Though, ofcourse, conditions in Mauritius today differ vastly from those of 1872, Benedict found that, there was a persistence of these attitudes. Statements of Franco - Mauritian planters and Indians made before the Royal Commissions of 1872 & 1909, might also be, contemporary. Many Indians have not forgotten the treatment their fathers and grandfathers recieved. Many

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[86]   Ibid; p.30

[87]   Ibid; p.31

Franco - Mauritians have not concealed that it was unjust. Such attitudes have a continuing effect on the social, political and economic life of the island.[88]

But, nevertheless, the two groups were and are strongly interdependent. The planter must have labour to bring in his crop. The labourers must earn cash and, this means working on Sugar estates. Since the 18th century, the planters have been Franco - Mauritians, and since, the early 19th century the labourers have been Indians. Despite their antagonisms, the two groups are in a mutually dependent, economic relationship.

SUB - ETHNICITY AMONG INDIAN GROUPS

SOUTH AFRICA :

Type of Religon :

In, **Natal** the first batch of Indian coolies arrived in 1860, and paved the way for the gradually increasing flow into South-Africa of streams of Indian immigrants professing different religious faiths such as Hinduism, Islam, Christanity, Buddhism & Parseeism, and hailed from the diverse parts of India, and who incourse of time, came to compose a respectable portion of South - Africa's total

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[88]   Ibid; p.23

population.

Indians in South - Africa, came from varied religion, places of origin and patterns of economic life. They were quite a hetrogeneous group. The majority of them, in the four provinces of South - Africa profess, Hinduism & Islam. Hindus, hailing mainly from the Madras Presidency and Northern India, and Muslims from Bombay and Gujarat. The HIndus constitute nearly 3/4th of South - Africa's Indian population who have descended mostly from the original indentured labourers, came to reside primarily in Natal, where the majority of them were originally employed in Sugar and tea plantations.[89]

Type of Caste :

According to V. Sirkari Naidoo, very few of the Hindu immigrants in South Africa belong to the Brahmin and Kshatriya Castes, and about 2/5th of them being Vaisyas and the rest being, Sudras. Next to Hinduism, Islam commands the largest following among the Indian immigrants in South-Africa. Muslims, chiefly from Bombay turned to be very competent business-men, even against their tough European competitors. Besides, these two faiths the other religious faiths of the minority, Christanity, commands the largest number of followers. The census report on the Durban population in 1951, records the following religious affiliations of the Durban Indians in the year :

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[89]   chattopadhyaya, H; INDIANS IN AFRICA p.60

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Hindus.................78.37%

Muslims................16.03%

Christians.............6.68%

Buddhists..............0.13%

Parsees................0.02%

Unspecified............3.25%[90]
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It follows that Hinduism commands the largest following among the Natal Indians. While Islam is professed by the majority of the Indian settlers in the transvaal and the Cape province.

Language :

In South - Africa, the Indians are as diverse in language and place of origin as in religion. Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Hindi and Urdu are the principal vernacular tongues spoken by them. In, Natal and the Cape, Tamil is spoken by the largest number of Indian immigrants the majority of the Tamil - Speaking Indian in Natal and the Cape being Hindus, whereas, in the Transvaal, Gujarati is the language of most of the Indians while Tamil and Telugu are spoken by the immigrants from the Madras Presidency, Gujarati and Urdu are the mother-tongue of those from Gujarat and Bombay,and Hindi, is the language of the emigrants from upper India.[91]

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[90]   Ibid; p.61

[91]   Ibid; p.62

Food Habits:

However though the Indians migrated, they have kept up the social-tradition, in which their ancestors grew up in India. The manners and customs of the caste-ridden Indian society, followed the immigrants to their new home and determined their social behaviour, after the pattern of the Indian social-life, as is evident from their food-habits, dress, caste-prejudices and marriage-practices. For instance, the food of the South-African Indians, is essentially of Indian species like rice, milk, vegetables including beans and lentils, oil, betel-leaves, nuts, curry-powder, spices, fruits, herbs and many other kinds of food of Indian taste & liking. All these stuff is available in the "Indian markets" of South-Africa. They abstain from beef and pork. A few of them are strict vegetarians, while the majority are non-vegetarians. Tea is also popular.[92]

Marriage Practice :

Again, the Hindus of South Africa belong to the traditional Indian-castes; Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya & Shudra, and also to Chamars, (tanners) Lohars (blacksmith) Naos (Barbers) etc. which in the process has created caste-consciousness on the part of the upper class Hindus in South-Africa which is the same in India. They do practice Caste-restrictions. Even, marriage customs are same as in India. But, the characteristic feature of the

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[92]   Ibid; p.62

marriage-celebration in the Hindu - society of South-Africa is the raising of a bamboo-pole symbolising the building up of a new family. Joint - family system is found more among Muslims than, Hindus. The family life in general in South - Africa, has a religious basis and is interwoven with rites and rituals, as found in India.[93]

MAURITIUS :

On the other hand, in Mauritius too, there is a diversity of many races, religions, languages and culture. The Dutch had, introduced slaves largely from the regions over, which they ruled. But, there was no trace of them, at the time of the French colonisation. The French, introduced artisans from Pondicherry and slaves from several parts of Africa and Madagascar.[94] These became, partly intermixed among themselves and with the Europeans. Then came the Indian immigrants largely from Bihar, U.P., Bengal, Orissa, Madras and Bombay. Some merchants, came from Pondichery Kutch, Surat, etc. Boatman came from Konkan & prison wardens from the Punjab, after which the English officer's came. Therefore, one can see all shades of people in Mauritius.[95]

Religion :

Broadly speaking, the population is composed of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists. Besides, a number of

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[93]   Ibid; p.83

[94]   ROY, NARAIN, JOY; "MAURITIV IN TRANSITION", p. 259

[95]   Ibid; p.260

Hindus, Muslims and Chinese have embraced Christanity. Among the Christians are the Roman Catholics, the church of England, the Church of Scotland etc. Among the Muslims there were Sunnis, Shia's, Bohras and Aga Khanists. While, among the Hindus are, Sanatanis, Arya-Samajists, Kabirpunthis, Sheonarain's. All the religions have their religious and cultural organisations.

Languages :

The, languages spoken are, English, French, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Punjabi, Oriya etc. While the bulk of the people converse in Creole but, the bulk of the Hindus & Muslims converse in Hindustani or the Bihari dialect.

Traditional Practices

The Hindu women wear, sarees and blouses, Muslim women long gowns with dainty salwar showing out at the ankles. Although, orthodox Hindu and Muslim women like to wear and dress up very traditionally, the younger women of all classes are less orthodox and fashionable.[96]

In accordance to the 1952 census, the population of Mauritius was at 501,515. It was constituted.

General Population : 148,238

Indo – Mauritian : 335,327

Sino – Mauritian : 17,850

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[96] Ibid; p. 262

The General population includes about 10,000 Franco - Mauritians apart from this, the Indo-Mauritian constitutes.

Christians   -   34%

Hindus   -   49%

Muslims   -   14%

Buddhists   -   3%

It is clearly seen, that Hindus constitute 50% of the total population. although, they were among the poor peasants from villages, there were people of all castes and of several religions. They brought with them, their religious books and generally kept to their habits of having their societies, their village will, and daily bath and discourse. They worked very hard throughout the day, and in the evening would put on a milk-white dress, and assemble in the hall. Ever since the Hindus landed, many temples started being seen everywhere. However due to the influence of Arya Samaj, old prejudices of castes and even of some ceremonies have greatly changed in the Hindu Soceity of Mauritius.[97]

On the other hand, the Indian Muslims have a population of 14%. Just as the Hindus, have the Gujarati traders and the Kathiawari jewellers the Muslims have the `Cutchi' memons `Sunni Soortees' as traders. All these four classes come from the old state of Bombay. It is to be noted that, feelings between Hindus and Muslims were very cordial in the

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[97]   Ibid; p.420

beginning, but with trouble brewing between India and Pakistan, local tremors could be felt, even, in politics, both the communities took diffeent paths, while the Hindus joined the labour party, the Muslims fought the party alongside the conservatives.[98]

However, as mentioned earlier the Muslims follow their customs. They have a large mosque in Port Louis and also other Mosque's and Urdu schools in many localities. Infact they form the third section in the numerical strength after the Hindu and the coloured.[99]

So, despite staying away, from their mother-land, neither the Indian immigrants in South-Africa nor in Mauritius have completely got divorced from their roots, rather from the above discussion it is seen that, they scrupulously try to maintain every aspect of Indian culture, social-practices etc. and of course maintain cordial relationship amongst each other.

Political Processes Attached To Inter & Intra - Ethnic, Which Will Explain the Different Patterns of Mobility

In modern days, it is extremely important, that in order to enable a sort of mobility in society, there has to be a political-process attached to it, whether, it is inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic. For instance, in Mauritius, the

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[98]   Ibid; p.424

[99]   Ibid; p.426

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economic rise of the Indians, which is a gradual process brought about by various political processes. In other words, Indians had come to Mauritius as indentured labourers, and throughout the years of Indian immigration the systems, under which labourers contracted to work varied greatly and were subject to varying degrees of governemnt control. Between 1843 and 1852, immigration came more under government control.[100]

However, working conditions on the estates were, far from satisfactory. Wages were often many months in arrears, there were severe, penalties for absences, housing was, extremely poor, hospital care was entirely inadequate. The labourers had little chance of redress either before his employer, the police, or the protector of immigrants.

Due to the above reasons, in 1871-72, a police Enquiry Commission, exposed many of the abuses of the police and in 1872, a Royal Commision arrived to enquire into the treatment of immigrants. The full report of the commission was, presented to the legislative council in 1876 and led to a new labour law, three years later. The new law provided for improved estate hospitals, new dwellings, payment of wages and rations on time, supervision of estates, freedom of engagement from immigrants and a reform of the

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[100] BURTON, B; "INDIANS IN A PLURAL SOCIETY" HER MAJESTY'S STATIONARY OFFICE. 1961. P.22

courts.[101] In 1872, the commissioners found housing unsatisfactory on many estates. As late as 1943, estate housing was still unsatisfactory. It was, only since the end of world War-II, that any considerable progress has been made in estate housing.

Now, all these political intervention, which led to the formation of laws, enquiry's and legislations, between 1829 and 1865, a number of Indian merchants and traders arrived in Mauritius. These were not, indentured labourers, but, voluntary immigrants.

Therefore, alongwith the economic rise of the Indians, there came about the political indispensibility of the Indians in the Mauritian political process. There was considerable opposition to Indian representation in government both from the Franco - Mauritian and the coloured community.[102] Sir Charles Bruce (Governor, 1897-1902) nominated Indians to the council of government and the Board of Commissioner of a township. In the 1906 & 1911 elections, Indian candidates stood unsuccessfully and it was not until, 1926 that, two Indians were elected from rural districts to the council of government, and finally in the 1944 by-election, an Indian was once again elected.

In South-Africa too, the Indians had come as indentured labourers. In 1860, after the indenture system was

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[101] Ibid; p.23

[102] Ibid; p.29

introduced, there was a flow of Indian immigrants. But, unfortunately, when Natal obtained a responsible governemnt, a campaign was launched against the Indian worker culminating in the demand that, ex-indentured workers should take out a license costing £ 25, and requiring that, all immigrants should pass a test in a European language.[103]

Besides, even those labourers free from the indenture period were spared from harrassement. While, the Gujrati bussinessman, was doing well in business, when they wanted their voting-right for the Natal legislative council, it irritated the European politicians of Natal.[104] Further, the Natal assembly introduced a Bill in 1894, dis-enfranchising all Asiatics, except those few who were on the voter's list. The fight against this racial bill, was led by a young lawyer, who had come to South-Africa on a purely professional visit and he was, Mahatma Gandhi, and discovered the existence of the Bill, purely by accident. Gandhi put up a fight against the deprivation of their basic right. A petition was to be presented in the legislative council. Meetings were held every day. The, requisite funds were soon over-subscribed. There were, 10,000 signatures within a month, which was forwarded to Lord Ripon. The representation was successful. Lord, Ripon, not only

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[103]   APPASAMY, B; INDIANS IN S. AFRIC ' PADMA PUBLICATIONS P. 16.

[104]   Ibid; p.17

disallowed the Bill, but declared, that the British empire could not agree to the establishment of a colour bar in it's legislation. But, nevertheless another Bill by the Natal government without any mention of racial distinction dis-enfranchised the Indians in South-Africa.[105]

A few years later, the smouldering hatred between the British and the Boers broke out into open war. In this war, the Europeans of Natal, expected no help from the despised "coolies", but Gandhiji astonished them, by going into the heat of the battle to give relief to the wounded.

After the war, the Indians expected a better deal from the colonialists, but unfortunately, it was found that the treatment of Indians had worsened all the more.[106]

So, in resistance of all the discriminatory process, the first political process of a Satyagraha movement was launched by Gandhiji in which Indians crossed the border between Natal and the Transvaal. There were arrests, imprisonments, harsh treatment etc. For the first time the Asiatics, has defied their white oppressor.

In 1912, Gopal Krishna Gokhale visited South Africa and after addressing a services of meetings he met Generals Botha and Smuts after which he was confident, that, the £ 3 tax would be abolished within a year and the racial objective removed from the immigration law. But, unfortunately, a

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[105]   Ibid, p.20

[106]   Ibid; p. 22

judgement was delivered in the Supreme court in 1913, treating all Hindu and Muslim marriages as illegal. This created a massive uproar, even in the international arena.

Finally, the result was the usual face-saving procedure a commission of enquiry was to be appointed, to enquire into the issue. A Relief Act was passed, conceeding the major demands of the Indians. Indian marriages were validated, annual license of £ 3 to be taken out by every indentured worker settling in the country to be abolished and tax - payers domicile certificates issued to Indians, were recognised evidences of the right to entry to the state.[107]

Thus, to conclude this chapter, in South Africa, the system of "apartheid" has kept the ethnicities and even sub-ethnicities in the Indian community alive. Seperate cultural existence for each group and, therefore for each sub-group as well had the sanction of the state. Even today, because sub-ethnicity is built into the pattern of inter and intra-ethnic socio-economic stratification the sub-ethnic divisions in the Indian community are still alive.

While, in Mauritius, cultural rationalism, of the Indo-Mauritian people is a source for their inferior economic condition (compared to the Franco-Marutitians) despite numerical dominance furthermore, the cultural rationslism of the Indo-Mauritians has taken the form of sub-ethnic (Hindi speakers) dominance and propaganda. This has had the effect

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[107]   Ibid; p.26

of - (a) keeping the economic position of Indo-Mauritians secondary and, inferior to the Franco-Mauritians. The Indo-Mauritians compare their economic lot favourably with Hindi speaking North Indians & consent to live in economic and even political sub-ordination to the Franco-Mauritians and, (b). The Indian community lives divided into sub-ethnicities as Hindi speakers, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati-speakers etc. So any migratary group be it the Indians or any one face ethnicity problems in the new social set-up of another country. But, to handle these basic problems in society, political process is essential to enable them (the immigrants) not only to strengthen the economy of that country, but also to have harmonious relationship with other communities failing which neither the immigrants nor the country they migrate to, can prosper. Therefore, a balanced political - process is required to have a healthy and smooth running of society and it's various problems.

CHAPTER IV

SELECTED SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AMONG INDIANS: CASTE, FAMILY, SOCIAL CONTROL & RELIGION

CHAPTER - IV

SELECTED SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AMONG INDIANS :

CASTE, FAMILY, SOCIAL CONTROL & RELIGION

This chapter would deal with certain basic-background against which social control is based. Caste, family social-control and religion, formed an important role such in the human society itself.

Before, examining, the role these institutions played among the immigrant Indians in South-Africa and Mauritius, it is important to have a genral idea about them. To begin with, Family - seems to be the basic unit of social organization, and it is somewhat difficult to visualize human society being able to function, without it. Although, the composition of family varies, in different societies, but, such differences can be seen as minor variations. The family is the primary group in the society. The family, is 'generally a group defined by a sex-relationship, sufficiently precise, and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children." The basic characteristic of family is its - a) universaliity. that is it can be found in all societies, and at all stages of social development. It exists among certain animal-species and at all stages of social development. It exists among certain animal species and also every human being has been or is a member of some family.

b)   Formative influence- it is the earliest social environment of all the higher forms of life, including man and has the profoundest formative influence in the individual, which determines the personality structure of the individual.

c)   Limited size - It is a group of very limited size. It is the smallest group in the social structure.

e)   It is the nucleus of other social organizations. In other words, in both the simpler as well as advanced societies, the whole social structure is built of family units.

f)   Family, is the only organization, which makes continuous and greater demands on its members, then any other associations.

g)   Social regulations - It is guarded by social-taboos, legal regulations etc. which rigidly prescribe it's form.   For instance marriage contract is strictly defined, then any other contracts.[108]

h)   Finally, the family is basically a permanent and universal institution.

Infact, George Murdock, in a study entitled, "social structure" examined the institution of family from a sample of 250 societies and found it to be the most universal social institution. There are two different types of family

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[108]   Maciver & Page ; "Society (Ann Introductory Analysis)
S.G. WASANI for MACMILLAN COMPANY OF INDIA LTD. p.240

like, the Patriarchal and the maternal or a combination of both. However, family is an indispensable factor for society.

Social Control and Religion :

Religion is basically, the belief in the supernatural which incidently is present in every known society. Religion, implies a relationship. not only between human-beings, but between human beings and some higher power, which normally invokes a sanction called `Supersocial' (which may be fear on the `Wrath of God' or penalties of an afterlife etc.[109] If laws are disobeyed. It is religion also which prescribes the relationship of man to man, religion incorporates elements derived from social and moral reflections. Religion, is an, instrument for people in particularly simple societies , who rely on it, when they are at the mercy of the natural environment. For example deep sea fishing requires great skill to yield results but, then if they have the skill, some, natural `calamity like a storm, might bring disaster. But, with the advancement of science and technology the importance of religion as explanations of and instruments to control natural forces has declined. So, now religion gets concerned with other-worldly affairs that's the meaning of life. Kingslay Davis, had commented on this aspect and said, that as religion looses its battle with science, it retreats to higher-level.

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[109]   Ibid; p.168

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However, the importance of religion, as a means of social-control, can hardly be exaggerated. It is religion, which generally includes definitions of socially acceptable behaviour, and also provided support for the moral standards of the society. It also sets ideals for behaviour. Therefore, in this sense, religion may be regarded as a type of social-control. It acts as an agent of social control, by providing rewards for good conduct & punishment for bad conduct. It is to be noted, that religion supports certain types of social behavior, the folkways and moneys of a society, by placing the powerful sanction of the supernatural behind them; by making certain forms of behaviour not only offences against society but, against God as well.[110]

Apart from this, social control is exercised through the, family, neighborhood, educational institutions, Church, State etc. The family exercises maximum control over its members to bring about the desired action, through the mechanism of praise and blame. The local neighborhood, reinforces the individual family as an agency of social-control. Similarly, the educational institutions like, the schools are also powerful agencies of social-control. Formal education in modern societies communicate ideas, values etc. which play a larger part in regulating behaviour. While, the

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[110]   BATTACHARYA, D.C., " Sociology (A Comprehensive Study of Concepts Principles theories of Sociology) Vijoya Publishing House. 1976. p.572

state, is the society's, over-all regulative system. It exercises control over it's members through formal legislation, Police, Armed-forces, Prisons etc. It protects all those laws and binds the behavior of men living in that territory. Thus, the state, is the most important agency of social-control, as it functions not only by means of law, but, also backed by physical-coercion.[111]

Caste

Finally, caste, which happens to be found only among the Indian society, is a universal phenomena among the Hindus in India. In other words, the Hindu society has been stratified by the caste-system. Caste may be defined as a hereditary endogamous group, having a traditional association with an occupation, and a particular position in the caste-hierarchy.[112]

The caste is like a pyramid, broad at the base and narrowing at the top. It has the four 'varnas' in descending order of ranking, that's the, 'Brahmin' are at the top, followed, by 'Kshatriyas' the 'Vaishyas' and 'Shudras'. Outside the 'Varna' scheme are the untouchables or 'Harijans'. The first three castes are 'twice-born' as their members are entitled to wear a sacred thread at a vedic rite.[113] There exists distinctions between the different

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[111]   Ibid; p. 576

[112]   Ibid; p.431

[113]   Ibid; p. 431.

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caste on the basis of relative ritual purity. The Brahmins are the most ritually pure, and all the others are measured more and less pure than one another, in terms of the types of contact, they may have with the Brahmins. The 'Shudras' are the ritually 'unclean' castes.

The caste-system is generally charaterised by lack of mobility, as a person is born with an occupation and remains in it throughout his life. A caste is an endogamous unit. Rules of commensality, is another feature of the caste-system. It refers, to the rules and prescriptions about, inter-caste relations, particularly in regards to eating and, drinking of water. Castes are also required to observe certain 'taboos' like the prohibition of Brahmins in Bengal to drink water from the lower castes.[114] There are also 'commensality taboo', which perscribes with whom food is to be taken and from whom to accept cooked food as well.

Though, the caste system has a number of drawbacks, but, till now in India, it doesn't show signs of completely withering away.

Thus, from the above account of various social institutions, except caste, which is found only among the Indians, the rest are universally found.

To examine the role of these institutions among the immigrant Indians in South Africa and Mauritius, the Indians who had arrived in South Africa as indentured laborers did

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[114] Ibid; p.434

attach tremendous significance to the above mentioned social-institutions and also the Indians living in Mauritius did the same.

Infact among all the above-mentioned social-institutions, it should be noted, that, family is the most primary institution which, distinguishes it from all other associations, that, grow out of the needs of the individual organism so as to fulfill them. Family is the only association which is not only related to reproduction and care of the offspring, but it is also primarily involved with the survival of the species. Society, is basically a conglomeration of families. For every change in society the family is directly and indirectly responsible.

However to elaborate each of them in each of the above mentioned countries it was found out that in -

Mauritius

As regards the social institutions of family, social control and religion in Mauritius are concerned. To start with -

Family

The House-hold is a domestic unit whose members share

some common domestic arrangements, such as, co-residence, common-kitchen and sharing of household tasks. Though the various forms of family like single-individual household, elementary family, joint-family and house group are found in Mauritius, it was found out that, the joint family system is of high incidence in Mauritius, and particularly among North-Indian Hindus and Muslims.[115] While, among the South-Indian, the joint family system is not as strong among them, as among the North-Indians. Again, joint families are found more in villages then in, towns. For instance, in Mauritius as compared to the villages like Beaumont and Lavallee, and an the other hand a town, the incidence of joint families were 12% and 5% respectively, while in the town it is 12%. The joint-family system, is an ideal form not only among the Hindus but, the Muslims too. Among the Hindus, the tradition of the joint family finds sanction in the laws of Manu, and in many of the epics as well, and also ofcourse among the popular traditions of family form in villages of India. Joint-family systems are ideal forms, often overriding the economic considerations. The traditional Hindu system, which includes the priests and traditional leaders may like to maintain joint-families as part of the complex which includes, vegetarianism and performance of the Hindu ritualistic rites. The joint-family carries prestige for those adhering to traditional Hindu

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[115]   Ibid; p.62

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values. Infact, the leading Brahmin families (in both the above mentioned Mauritian villages, Beamount and Lavallee) maintain joint-families, while in the town, a number of leading Brahmin and Kshatriya households are of the joint -family type. The members are western educated, hold government jobs and are economically well-off. But the joint-family system is maintained as a symbol of prestige and pride in their traditions.[116]

Social Control

To cite an example of a Hindu joint-family in Mauritius, wherein, not only the joint-family traditions are maintained alongwith the caste-rules but also, social-control are strictly observed. Narain Rajput Singh, lives in a joint-family alongwith his brother Gokul and his wife. Narain's parents also live with them. He also has an unmarried sister. The Rajput Singhs are Kshatriya's, (the warrior and aristocratic caste) which is just below the Brahmins. They do not allow their women to go to work, as it is a sign of low status for high caste women of the house to go out to work. They do not consume fowls or eggs, though they keep them and sell them, neither do they take beef, pork, except for meat of male goats, sheep or deer may be eaten.

Narain addresses his father as "Pitaji" a respectful term for father and, mother as "Ma". Both of them call him

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[116]   Ibid; p.67

as "Beta" (son) or his name.[117] He calls his sister as "didi" (an affectionate, dimminutive) and to his brother Gokul's wife as "Bhaiji". They are very protective towards their sister, who is constantly with her mother, helping her in all households chores. The whole family seeks to guard her reputation as a chaste maiden. She almost never leaves the house unaccompanied. Gokul's wife has a formal distant relations with his father they do not remain alone together and rarely speak. Communications are through the mother, Gokul's wife is under the formal charge of her mother-in-law and does all the domestic duties alongwith her. Though, there is restraint, and formality characterising some of the inter-relationship of the members of the joint-family with each other, there is none at all in their attitude towards their two-year old grand-daughter, who is petted by every member of the joint-family.[118] Though the joint-family is gradually breaking down due to economic stresses as had in this family which finally broke down to elementary forms of family, but the traditions are still maintained at large.

Religion

The principal religions of Mauritius are Hinduism, Islam and Christanty. To the Indo-Mauritian Hindu, the super natural is all-pervasive. It is the matrix in which all

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117   Ibid; p.89

118   Ibid; p.89

events of the past, present and future are embedded.[119]
Thus, the movement of animals, growth and position of plants
and stones, behavior of other human-beings whom one meets,
and various other happenings are important indications. This
attitude exists very much among the Muslims and Christians
as well.

As most of the immigrants were Hindu's the attitude
towards the supernatural is an 'ecletism'[120] of types of
explanations. Any given event is subject to different kinds
of explanations. For example, much religious activity is
concerned with illness. The infant daughter of a western
educated Brahmin had a slight eye infection. He consulted
several doctors and also obtained certain medicines. He also
went to the temple and made offerings to a number of
deities. After the infant daughter recovered, the father not
only paid the doctor the bills, but also donated two small
gold eyes to "Shiva"[121] at the temple and a pair of silver
eyes to each of the village shrine's deities.[122] Now,
perhaps in such a situation, it is difficult to point out
which of the precautions cured his daughter, and perhaps all
worked together.

In Mauritius, the Hindu believe in the theory of pre-

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[119] Ibid; p.120

[120] ECLETISM - Combination of different faiths.

[121] SHIVA - Name of the Hindu God

[122] Ibid; p.120

destination. Everything in human - destiny is already fixed and destined to happen. Since, the emphasis is more on the supernatural, the signs and dreams are to man's advantage to be able to interpret them correctly and for this he needs the expert assistance of religious pandits, who interpret the sacred writings and consult the "Pancham" (a religious book). There can be another expert, who is the "Bhagat" or "Caste priest" and becomes possessed by a deity and can answer questions about the future. The other sources can be the sacred writings and ofcourse prayers to the deity.

It is to be noted, that among the Hindus in Mauritius religious specialists, fall into two categories, the "erudite" priest typified by the Brahmin Pandit, and the "ecstatic" priest of the Bhagat or low caste. Here, the Brahmin priest is an expert on sacred texts, astrological interpretation, performance of ceremonies at important dates, the conducting of rites of passage at birth, maturity, marriage and death. While, the low-caste priest communicates, directly with the supernatural by becoming possessed by the deity.[123]

It is generally seen that, Hindu religious ceremonies in Mauritius can be classified into ecstatic and non- ecstatic types. Ecstatic ceremonies are particularly associated with the Tamils but the religious specialists, who direct these

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[123] Ibid; p.123

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ceremonies are usually of the erudite type.[124]

There is also a difference between the Northern Hindu's and southern Hindus, religious rites. Usually it is the Southern Hindus and particularly the Tamils whose religious ceremonies are of the ecstatic type, while only low-caste Norther- Hindus involve an ecstatic priest. But, the vast majority of Northern Hindu religious rites are of the non-ecstatic type presided over by erudite priests. However, Northern- Hindu Brahmin Pandit never preside at ecstatic ceremonies. While among the Indian Muslims in Mauritius, the vast majority of ceremonies are non-ecstatic with erudite priests presiding over.

In Mauritius, the Hindus, build their temple each having a distinctive style, that's the Northern Hindus, Tamils, Telugus and Marathi's have a distinctive style of temple. The most striking feature of the. Mauritian-Hindu temples is that a temple is open to all the people. While, a 'baitaka' is open only to it's members. Again, 'baitaka's' tend to disappear in towns, as the social need for it is replaced by the club and other forums. On the other hand, Muslims have more closely organised religious associations than Hindus both at the local as well as on the island-wide basis. Besides, the marriage ceremonies of the Hindus are precisely based on the traditional religious lines as well.

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[124]   Ibid; p.129

South Africa

In South-Africa, the social institutions like, caste. Family, social control and Religion also play on important role among the immigrant Indians and are followed scrupulously by them as in their native place. To elaborate each of them -

Family -

'Family' system in south Africa did not conform to any particular type. As mentioned earlier, the Indian family. System is distinct from other racial groups. The most conspicuous aspect of the South-African Indian families is that like in Mauritius, they too have quite a high incidence of joint family. Besides, the joint family developed in an agricultural caste society in which, each member contributed labour and was restricted in occupational mobility. But, in due course of time, owing to shortage of land and the rise of towns and industries the economic foundation of joint living gradually weakened. Further, the problem of accommodation was slowly cropping up. Again, not all the families are only joint-families, there are individual families as well. In the joint families, segmentation takes place in stages, which often begins with a separate 'hearth', which in the process brings about a distance among the family members.

Besides a few westernised Indians encourage the young couple to settle in a separate dwelling place or rather a separate house. In a survey undertaken in 1953 in the Suburbs of Merebank and Springfield, it was found out that, 42% of all the house-families consist of a nucleus of elementary groups of husband, wife and unmarried children. 481 are joint households, 6% are single parent units 2% approximated, are isolated male individuals, about 2% of them are without children.[125]

Thus from the above data representation, it indicates that even under, the South-African urban conditions, the number of joint-families are definitely, more than the elementary families. Again separate living does not necessarily mean independence from "Kutum" obligations, though kinship ties get weakened but still major social and religious activities keep them bounded towards each other.

Social Control and Religion -

As regards the institutions of social-control and religion are concerned, though the Indian immigrants consisted of the Hindus, Muslims and Christians, majority of them were Hindus basically. Though many of the Indian families in South Africa have adopted many liberal western attitudes but, nevertheless social control is exercised through direct and indirect manners, for instance, though the

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[125] KUPER, ILDA; INDIAN PEOPLE IN NATAL "THE UNIVERSITY PRESS ,1960, P. 107

separate identity of each elementary family is permitted and emphasised, but individualism, the personal desire for success is considered to be anti-social, unless accompanied by an equivalent acceptance of kinship responsibility. In other words, it is customary in the Indian situation that, despite personal economic problems, one should be prepared to bear the burden of helping distant Kinsmen and close ones as well. Besides, marriage across the colour line is disapproved owing to the differences in language, religion, culture, rather than race. No unmarried Hindu girl is allowed to live alone. It is generally observed that, though in the early years brothers and sisters play together eat and sleep in the same room, but as they attain puberty, they are separated and the girl is kept in strict jurisdiction. The brother is, taught to protect and look after his sister and should see, she doesn't associate with "loose companions". She is basically not allowed to choose her own mate. Again, seniority regulates the relationship between siblings at the same sex.

The Indian Hindu community began building its faith and practice from a long time. The 'Indentured Indians' and the "Passenger Indians" felt a lacking in the teachings of their religious traditions. Whatever the early Indian settlers remembered and practiced, was not enough for them. So, as a result many religious leaders arrived from India. The Arya Samajists, established the, "Hindu Young Men's Association"

to achieve, ramification of all the different linguistic and denominational groups of Hindus. Similarly, in course of time numerous spiritual leaders came from India and there grew a strong faith among the Indians (Hindus).

Again, one of the striking feature among the South-African Hindu temples is the existence of the Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic dieties. The Brahmanical, and non-brahmanical temples are combined in one complex, with the Brahmanical temples taking the central position, and the non-Brahmanical peripheral places.[126] In South-Africa, Hinduism is retained and has strong roots among the migrants. South-African Hindus may call themselves 'Saivists', "Vaishnavas", but, the difference between the two is not quite clear as images of deities of all groups are frequently enshrined in the same temple. For instance in one of the temples in Durban, the main section is devoted to Vishnu, Rama and Sita and Krishna, while there are separate shrines for other deities like Durga, Siva and Subrahmanya.

Generally, the public temples built are more colourful with distinctive architectures derived from the traditional Indian styles of temple. Every Hindu temple is adorned with Kavali (guards) mythological sons or brothers in stone. Floors are of cement and surmounted by domes or towers (sigilum) of different size and shapes elaborately corved. At the top is the 'Kalsa' (a ritual urn of brass and gold).

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[126] Ibid; p.25

The 'Kalsa' is used in every auspicious occasion and interpreted as the symbol of life. Besides, there is a "Jhunda" (ritual flag sticks) atop every public or private temple. Most of these public temples are built by contributions collected mainly from people in the area.

It is to be noted that, the majority of the Hindu temples ritualise more then they philosophise based on the justification that they are age-old traditions and practices. But, through the influence of westernised intellectuals and of sanskrit scholars of Reform groups, there arose a tendency among the Indians to simplify the rituals.[127] However, differences between the orthodox and the reformed remain, while there are certain "modern" Hindus, who perform rituals (that's a selected few) and also decide which rites may be included or ommitted.

However, the persistence of Hinduism in South-Africa, which is partly due to the cultural heritage and also due to the discriminations imposed by the whites has led to stronger feelings and also developed a liberal attitude by being less traditional. Apart from this the role the rituals have played most is that, it has promoted the unity of the family, the local areas, various sects and to an extent in the overall unity of all Hindus. Rarely, Hindus convert to any other religion, but incases, where young people wanting to marry across traditional barriers, people low in the

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[127]   Ibid; p.183

social scale with ambitions to move upwards find that embracing of Christianity, provides with an escape from their own identity. But, cases such as these are rare.

FOR CASTE IN SOUTH- AFRICA (See Page 30-33)

Thus, to finally conclude this chapter, the Indian immigrants in both the countries, though had migrated to a foreign soil, had kept many of the customs, practices, rituals intact. Another similarity was the migrants were basically of lower castes. But, as mentioned earlier it doesn't necessarily mean all of them to be of the lower castes, as many high-caste migrants were also there. Though there were many rituals and customs kept intact but they had also developed certain liberal attitude which was seen in Mauritius, where the temples was opened to all the caste-people. Again, the older generation were strictly adhering to many of the traditional Indian customes, but, the younger generation with their complete socialisation with the migrant country had a different outlook, as was seen in South-Africa, in Mrs. Maharaja's daughter Latchmi's case, who insisted that caste and other rituals of an arranged marriage are not important criteria for a happy marriage, but, rather 'love' is a more important factor, though she thought that couples should be from the same religion.

Thus, same was the case in social control and religion,

they were followed in the same manner as in their native place in both the countries, women were subjected to high degree of suppression, though educated, they had to obey the instructions of their family, generally not allowed to be financially independent, choose their own mate (this was applicable to both the sexes) and they were constantly guarded by the male-members of the family. So in brief there was by and large a strict adherence to the traditional customs by the older generation, but among the younger people, there was a blend of traditional and modern views. But, it is as the Indian migrants put it with pride that, it is due to the rich cultural heritage of India, that the institution of caste, religion, social control and family ofcourse still strive to remain intact even, away from home.

CONCLUSION

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From the preceeding chapters, it is extremely relevant and important to give a comparative analysis of the study conducted. In other words, by getting to compare as regards, the overall aspects of the immigrant Indians in both the countries, the study or analysis becomes more objective.

However, emigration as such by the Indians in both the countries, is basically due to economic reasons. Besides, 'caste', which plays an important factor for determining an individuals occupational status and, ofcourse social status was another detriment to emigrate abroad. Thus, in both the countries, (that's South-Africa and Mauritius) it was found out that, it is generally the lower-castes, who had migrated enmasse. But, again this does not hold true absolutely. Here, a slight difference exists between emigrant Indians in South-Africa and Mauritius. While in South-Africa there were quite a number of "Passenger Indians", but in Mauritius they were more of 'indentured' labourers.

Again, in both the countries they faced numerous hindrances to be on the top of the economic ladder of the migrant country. Unlike, India, where occupational mobility is strictly based on one's caste position. But, though in these countries, there was occupational mobility, it was mainly due to their rising economic standards, incourse of time, which led to the process of social-mobility, and,

which   later on came to be a serious threat to the European settlers in South-Afric and the Creoles in Mauritius.

Though, the Indians were facing tremendous ethnicity problems in the new social set-up of another country, but, in both the countries it has been noticed that, the Indian community scruplously follows the Indian traditions. They follow the caste rules, marriage-rituals, family-pattern etc. However, there is a difference in attitude between the generations. In, other words, the older generations wanted to follow the Indian customs rigidly, but, younger generation, due to their mingling with the western culture were not ready to accept all the traditional views of the Indian Society. This has been cited in Mrs.Maharaja and her daughter's case in Chapter IV.

Both the countries, had more or less identical mode of temples, that's there was the North-indian and South-Indian temples. Then there was the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical deities. But, it is to be noted here, that, in Mauritius, the temples were open to all caste-people. Women were, subjected to a great degree of Social-Control in both the countries. In South-Africa the Indians seem to be less conservative then in Mauritius. It was found out that the South-African Indians were a little more liberal in there attitudes then the Mauritian-Indians.

Politically, though there was initial objections as to their enfranchisement but, later on, again with initial

failure to succeed in the election-process, they later on played an important role in the country's political process.

Though the Indians had migrated to a foreign social set-up, they tried to retain many of their social-customs. The Indians or any emigrant group in that case, face tremendous stress in a foreign-soil. It is extremely difficult to adapt in a absolutely new social-setting. The younger generations in particular, who have been entirely socialised in a completely different society then their own, are actually caught in the cross-fire of what to follow and what not to follow.

But, nevertheless, though from above findings it clearly reveals that, as immigrant Indians, they faced tremendous problems in every aspect of life. Another, primary reason of their subservient position was owing largely to the fact, that those countries were colonised at that time. Hence, as has been mentioned in Chapter-III, there was tremendous opposition to the en-franchisement of the Indian indentured labourers or the Indians as such. Though, in the long political struggle, they eventually did succeed in getting some of their rights, the relationship between the Indians and respective governments were not of ease.

The more persistent the Indians were to stay back in the respective countries, the more the hindrances were set-up in their paths. They were basically seen as threats to the European competitors.

Further, those Indians who had migrated were generally believed to be of the lower-castes. They were economically in a lower stratum, owing to which, they thought, that migration to a new place and environment, would bring about certain changes in their lives. Thus, keeping this factor in view, there has definitely been an upward occupational mobility of particularly the low-caste Indians, though with much difficulty, but, even then, they have not been basically treated on equal balance with their European counter-parts. Neither, the European colonialists nor the locals were treating Indians as part of their own countrymen. It is a different aspect as regards their gradual economic rise is concerned, but, the attitude towards the Indians is generally one of hostility and jealousy.

The emigrant Indians who had gone abroad, had, linkages with their motherland. Many of them, used to earn and send their money back home to support their families, who were generally poor. Again, there was a time, when the recruiters wanted to import only single men, which was a preventive measure for large-scale migration. But, though they had maintained certain links with their motherland, many of them, incourse of time had brought their families alongwith them, and, few opted to go back to their country, which is again purely a socio-economic factor.

From the above analysis of economic and political

aspect, it is found that, though there position was better from the socio-economic aspect as compared to what they had in their own motherland, they were nevertheless, to put it straight, treated as outsiders. Infact, there was a situation, wherein the Indian government put a ban on the indenture system, as reports of massive inhuman treatment meted out to the Indians started pouring in. It was only after, the National government approached the Indian Government for indentured labourers, did they raise the ban after lots of negotiations and agreements.

Thus, finally to conclude from the above study based on secondary sources, one gets a fairly rough picture of the immigrant Indians socio-political-economic, and also historical aspect. The Indians (particularly the low-caste people) stigmatised due to their birth ascription and thus prevented from rising up, in the economic ladder were in a way compelled to migrate owing to the social circumstances. But, the picture of an isolated Indian community is also not the absolute or actual fact. It is true , that they have been treated basically as outsiders, but, incourse of time they have been internalised in the migrant countries society. But, with such diverse cultural habits, it naturally creates problems of accomodation, with the local people.

In this modern age, with racism being gradually and eventually curbed, problems arising out of ethnic relations tend to have come down in a much lesser intensity. As

compared to the earlier days, where, the position of the Indians was not only relegated to the bottom of the class-hierarchy but also many societies used to practice institutionalised racism against Indians, as was seen in Trinidad, Guyana, Malaysia and South Africa and ofcourse Mauritius. However, the growing inter-dependence of one human-being with another, irrespective of their caste, colour, creed, sex, nationality etc. is gradually being given more weightage, to the extent of forming an unipolar society with no boundaries.

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INDIAN OCEAN

Ile Plate

Coin de Mire

Grand Baie
Triolet
Goodlands
Pamplemousses
Rivière du Rempart
Baie du Tonneau
Ile des Tonneliers
PORT LOUIS
Beau Bassin
Moka 823
Centre de Flacq
Rose Hill
Quartier Militaire
Quatre Bornes
Phoenix
Grande Rivière Sud-Est
Vacoas
Tamarin
Curepipe
Ile aux Benitiers 828 Piton de la Rivière Noire
Rose Belle
Mahébourg
Chamin Grenier
Saxxanah
Bel Ombre
Benares
Souillac

57°   57°30