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Chapter 1 : Traditional Brahmanical Society - Oxford Handbooks

About the Book. This book traces the evolution of a process of interaction between brahmanism and the indigenous social groups of Bengal during the early medieval period. Followin.

The 6th to 4th centuries BCE had witnessed, in the plains around the Ganges and Jumna rivers, the emergence of the first urban centers in South Asia since the Indus Valley Civilization. While the precise reasons and mechanisms for this development are not fully understood, it has long been taken for granted that it is not mere coincidence that it was accompanied by equally dramatic changes in the sphere of religion – especially the rise to prominence of ascetical movements. Although the precise origins of such movements are unknown, they appear on the scene in two species: Earlier versions of part of this material were presented in a workshop at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford University in , and at the 31st Conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin in . The comments of Himanshu Ray on the former occasion, and of Tom Trautmann and David Lorenzen on the latter, were of great help. Peripatetic mendicants Buddhist, Jain, or other , having renounced the settled life of the village, rubbed shoulders with the traders and soldiers with whom they shared the highways. Their doctrines, dismissive of Brahmanical caste strictures and home- and caste-centered ceremonial obligations that would have been impractical for people who traveled frequently and who had to mix with strangers and transients in the towns, offered an alternative set of ideals vividly exemplified in the person of the mendicant himself. Veneration of mendicants, and by extension of their legendary models, Buddhas and Jinas, seemed to be a mode of piety congenial to the new cosmopolitan world. Accordingly, Buddhized traders have been credited with carrying Indian culture beyond the Subcontinent, into Central and Southeast Asia. Yet the Brahmanical tradition did not wither away. Sanskrit learning, the province of the traditional brahmin, entered an innovative phase. By the early centuries of the Common Era, Sanskrit ceased simply to be a liturgical language of the Brahmin priest; it came to be widely accepted as the most impressive vehicle of refined discourse in the court and in the academy, the language of belles-lettres as well as of formal state pronouncements and legal records at least those important enough to merit engraving on copper or stone. This essay examines the mechanisms by which Brahmanical tradition reproduced itself,³ especially the regimens of discipline 1 The broad outlines of this process have been sketched by Aklujkar ; Pollock ; Discourse, Conditions and Dynamics of Tradition in South Asia 79 vratas undertaken in tandem with text-study, and their role in establishing the knowledge of Sanskrit religious texts and the use of Sanskrit more broadly as an important criterion of piety and high social status. At the same time, disciplinary regimens provided a traditionally recognized framework for mendicant movements and new deity cults, which helped carry Brahmanical texts, ideals, and practices, via royal patronage, into new regions in India beyond the Ganges Valley and on into Southeast Asia. The second part of this essay will consider what early inscriptions can show us about how Brahmanical doctrine and practice were projected in the public sphere, noting instances in which particular subjects, texts, and especially disciplinary practices are cited, and observing that the grants and foundations recorded in these inscriptions helped spread the tradition and enhance its prestige. My remarks, intended only as a point of departure, will focus mainly on early grants from Orissa. Modes of Transmission The Brahmanical tradition, although it produced a mendicant ideology and practice, remained rooted in the rural setting. Moreover, there may have been a conscious impulse to appropriate the prestige of the brahmins by representing them as converts to Buddhism a theme found throughout the literature. The Vedic literature, a vast canon of liturgical and exegetical texts scrupulously preserved through rote memorization, is the earliest extant product of Brahmanical culture. Although these texts hardly ever contain references to datable historical events, a fairly persuasive relative chronology at least for certain classes of texts, and within such classes, for some exemplars has been proposed. They are always mentioned in the same breath, and in either order indiscriminately, so that one has the impression that he did not make much distinction between them. We cannot even know for sure to whom these labels applied: But

when particular acts of patronage are mentioned, it is almost always the Buddhists who are the beneficiaries. The priests conferred power and prestige on their patrons, through their ritual deployment of mantras believed to invoke divine aid and other benefits. Yet even Brahmanical texts acknowledge that, although it was conventionally so recognized, the hereditary connection alone was not really sufficient: This rule of conduct, to be adhered to scrupulously until the end of the period of study, is both a transforming rite de passage and an apprenticeship in priestcraft or scholarship. If we contrast the institutional structures of the brahmins and the Buddhists, we must begin with the fundamental differences between the professional representative of each tradition. The highest Buddhist ideal was embodied in the monk, the imitator of the Buddha. Considerations of family and place of origin were devalued in principle at least. As far as the lay community was concerned, one monk was basically like any other except perhaps in the case of charismatic eremites. Ray Buddhist ideals were spread far and wide in the exemplary person of the monks themselves, while a canon of texts was compiled "according to traditional accounts, it was established in great synods" and in perhaps the last couple of centuries BCE began to circulate physically in the form of manuscripts. By contrast, Brahmanical institutions were diffuse and intensely localized, at least prior to the early dharma-texts. Initiation into study meant a virtual adoption by an individual teacher. The diffusion of textual knowledge was dependent upon teacher-to-pupil lineages and texts themselves were treated as belonging to individual descent groups until Mauryan times at least. The brahmin graduate could become a professional priest or scholar. But the development of durable, large-scale Brahmanical institutions lagged behind that of Buddhist monasteries. At the same time, the ritual modes for transmitting Vedic knowledge were adapted for use by sectarian movements that helped spread Brahmanical religious culture throughout South Asia and deep into Southeast Asia. Discourse, Conditions and Dynamics of Tradition in South Asia 83

shape during the preceding two or more centuries, that is, to the 5th or 6th? In this period, Sanskrit texts were apparently being produced mainly in the north, and therefore in the urbanizing sphere. Let us first consider what little we know about the historical context. Meanwhile, the Brahmanical system was dependent upon the stable caste society of the village, and may have had difficulty adapting to the urban setting, where people of different regions mixed. It may well be that the composition of rules for domestic rites began before the socio-economic changes had made a great impact on village life. Still, there are signs that the genre came to embody the *Zeitgeist* of the period. A student must be accepted by a master whom he will serve obediently and with whom he will reside for it is said up to twelve years or more. But the formal codification II. Hence a series of regular distinctions is introduced, often in a virtually parenthetical way. In most of these cases, the brahmin option is the one that in other contexts is the single standard. Variations in the rules on the appropriate age for initiation indicate one of the developments in this process. Brahmins are thus expected to begin at the earliest age, which for a class of future priests and teachers may seem sensible enough. See Lubin forthcoming for more details, including a table. A monograph-length treatment of the question is in preparation. For this purpose a peculiar accounting device was invoked to help smooth over the disruption caused by the new age-eight standard. In this manner, one could technically fulfill the age-eight requirement while continuing to initiate brahmin boys seven years after birth. The metrically inspired age differentiation, like all the other differentiations by caste, seems to have been introduced in tandem with the notion that initiation should be standard for all three of the higher classes, an idea nowhere asserted in earlier strata of the literature. The implications of this rule are profound: However, a chicken-or-egg dilemma arises here: Or does it begin with the start of Veda-study? In the new standard scheme, initiation into Veda study was set apart from childhood rites and marked the start of the process, becoming the prerequisite for marriage; the subject of the initiation shifted from being the child of the ritual agent to being the nascent ritual agent himself. Prior to this time, it was used when it was used at all to refer to a brahmin. To sum up, the trends discernable in this ritual literature are the following. Discourse, Conditions and Dynamics of Tradition in South Asia 89 were at least sometimes elicited by direct requests made by brahmins, who justified their petition by citing the Vedic rites that the grant would support. Study or text-recitation is a part of some of

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these, but in others, the rules of ascetical discipline become the chief feature. A particularly rich source for early treatments of such practices was the Yajurveda tradition, which was in the vanguard in shaping late-Vedic piety. Space does not permit anything approaching a complete overview of these practices; a few examples will suffice. The text suggests a remedy for this sorry condition: During this period he also must not eat meat, sleep with a woman, or sit on an elevated seat, and he should take care to avoid untruth. The text makes the parallel explicit: Discourse, Conditions and Dynamics of Tradition in South Asia 91 or the routine use of professional ascetics, who would become, especially after the Guptas, some of the most prominent exponents of Brahmanical knowledge. The Vedic vrata also was adapted for use by the new deity cults that sprang up from within or on the periphery of Vedic Brahmanism. The immediate effect may have been to divide the territory. Buddhism initially won out in the urban zones, where traditional social and cultural structures were fragmentary and diluted. Another version of this stanza is also given This encouraged a degree of standardization across the ever wider and more ethnically diverse territory inhabited by brahmins. The reproductive mechanism of this tradition was the regimen of brahmacharya, which sanctified the teacher-pupil relation as a spiritual filiation, and ensured the preservation and expansion of the texts and practices of the various subtraditions. Although it was apparently not administered or regulated by any central seat of authority, this system created a strong, trans-regional web of individual teacher-to-student bonds that worked well in low-population-density areas with a relatively stable caste society. At the same time, certain new religious movements adapted some of the structural features of the old Brahmanism to their own purposes, and in so doing, helped broaden the scope of what Brahmanical culture might include. Similarly, the use of the term *deya-dharma* the duty of giving, charity, which is common in the Buddhist literature, and appears in epigraphs recording Buddhist grants. Thereafter, grants to Buddhists become common in a slightly less Sanskritized Prakrit than is generally found in Brahmanical grants. This self-conscious claim to sustaining the legacy of the Mauryas is obvious, but there is a crucial difference: Such linguistic developments were part of the broader trends in state formation and royal policy that are in full swing by the 4th century, with the rise of the Gupta dynasty. Once introduced by arrivistes, this policy was fully established as the royal standard by the imperial Guptas. These land-grants were usually reinforced by the quotation of stanzas that praised the giving of land as the best of gifts and threatened punishment in hell for those who interfered with such an endowment or took away the land from those endowed. These stanzas were identified in the 40 This notion appears elsewhere in Gupta epigraphs, even where the donation is to Buddhists, as in the Sanchi stone inscription of Candragupta II, of the year 93 CII The authority of the brahmin was thus explicitly justified, in principle anyway, by his mastery of sacred knowledge. The regions corresponding to modern Orissa provide an interesting case of the phenomenon described here. The local rulers, under Gupta influence and suzerainty, began to record a long series of grants of villages to brahmins, using the Sanskrit language and a very consistent format. This is evident from the fact that from one inscription to the next, even over a short period of time and in inscriptions of a single donor, the stanzas were recorded in varying forms and sequences. For an alphabetical list of most of these stanzas, see Sircar, app. Inscriptions are cited in the present article by their number in Rajaguru In some cases, the scholarly credentials are spelled out at length. But it was not necessarily enough simply to be a brahmin to merit such patronage. At least until the Guptas, grants to Buddhist and Jain monks and institutions were more common. Thus far, we have seen no evidence of members of other high castes engaging in study of the Veda or of other subjects, despite the injunctions in the codes that they could and should do so. This may in part be due to a lack of occasion for recording such practice in inscriptions: But this silence surely also reflects the fact that actual study by non-brahmins 48 In two records from north Orissa: Political Factors in the Spread of Brahmin Communities The migration and resettlement of brahmins all over South Asia and into much of Southeast Asia from the early historic period onward is a subject that is far from being well documented or understood. However it has also been argued that such settlements would only be possible in regions already agriculturally productive enough to support a village of non-agriculturalists Stein See, also, Eschmann

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Chapter 2 : Āśramaá¹ṭa - Wikipedia

This book traces the evolution of a process of interaction between Brahmanism and the indigenous social groups of Bengal during the early medieval period. Following the logic of cultural negotiation implicit in the Puranas composed in Bengal, the book unravels a pattern that governed this relationship of reciprocity, contestation and domination.

Kavi Panth Shrimad Rajacandra wrote some eight hundred letters which follow his spiritual development. A collection of these letters is the one sacred text of the Kavipanthis. For him the spiritual goal was the experience of the self, and once this was achieved, then so was spiritual deliverance. In he wrote in one night a short verse treatise on his view of Jainism to his friend Sobhagbhai. In one of his letters, written in , Shrimad Rajacandra defined his religion as being completely free from attachment and hatred. He emphasised that he did not belong to any gaccha, sect, but only to his soul. To him the nineteenth century decline of Jainism was due to excessive sectarianism and ritual. However, later in his short life, Shrimad Rajacandra accepted that image-worship was an aid to spiritual growth. To the Jains, Shrimad Rajacandra is seen as a great saint. One of the main reasons for this is the teacher-pupil relationship he had with Gandhi. His spiritual influence on Gandhi, and consequently on India and the world through the dissemination of ahimsa non-violence and other Jain principles, is incalculable. Survival Of Jainism In Difficult Time After 12th century, there was significant impact of Vedic and Muslim religions and all non-vedic religions except Jainism essentially disappeared from India. Even being in a minority, Jains continued their existence and practice during this difficult time. The main reason for this is the interdependency between Jain monks and Jain householders. Based on the needs of Jain householders they compiled many rules while not compromising with the basis of Jainism. Essentially, Jain monks gave a significant priority to Jain householders. In addition, Jains were financially well to do. They helped the rulers as well as non-Jain community. Jain monks increased the practical form of Jainism by including rites and rituals without compromising the essence of Jainism. The emphasis on rites and rituals was added since 5th century when Jains were attracted to the nature of simplicity of practicing Hindu religion by rites and rituals. Jains were being converted to Hinduism. Jain monks added more rites and rituals to stop the outflux of Jains to Hinduism, and also make Jain practice similar to Hindu practice. That is why when we see a Hindu and a Jain together, it is hard to differentiate who is who unless you get to know more details. In 12th and 13th centuries, it became difficult to protect Jain temples, Jain properties, Jain canonical books. This helped to serve the purpose. The real purpose of Jain monks is to practice and guide others the Jain path of liberation. However, the Bhattarak tradition, in some part of Digambar section has even today continued. It should not be noted that majority of Jains in Maharashtra are in Mumbai and most of them are of Gujarat origin. Nanda dynasty was replaced by mostly pro-Jain Maurya dynasty. He became the chief disciple of Bhadrabahu, by entering the ascetic order of Jain monks and died in a Jain way. Emperor Ashok was responsible for introducing Jainism into Kashmir. Emperor, Samprati, the grand son and successor of Ashok, is regarded the Jain Ashok for his eminent patronage, and efforts in spreading Jain religion in east India. Like Magadha, the kingdom of Kalinga or Orissa had been a Jain stronghold from the very beginning. Jainism made its way to south India through Kalinga. In the second century B. Kalinga was the center of a powerful empire ruled over by Kharavela and that he was one of the greatest royal patrons of Jain faith. Jainism had its influence in Bengal also. Even now Jain relics, inscriptions, idols, etc. The influence of Jain religion on the customs, manners and religions of Bengal is very much visible even at present. Jainism In South India Jainism entered into Karnataka and south India during the days of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya when Bhadrabahu, the distinguished leader of Jains and the last of the Jain saints known as shruta-kevalis, after predicting twelve years famine in the north India, led the migration of the Jain Sangha to the South. Thus it is stated that the Jain history in the South commences from the 3rd Century B. Bhadrabahu was in fact the rejuvenator of Jainism in south India. It is asserted that Jainism had reached south India long before Shruta-kevali Bhadrabahu. In any

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case Jainism prevailed in south India in 3rd Century B. Jainism played an important role in the history of south India. Eventually Jain religion became a popular religion in the Kadamba Empire. The Ganga Rulers to A. Chalukya Rulers of Badami in Karnataka to A. From the 10th to the 12th century A. The Hoyasala rulers during their reign from to A. In addition to these major dynasties and their rulers it has been emphasized that the Kalachuri rulers from to A. There were several minor rulers also professed and promoted Jainism. There are also traces of Jain domination in Andhra and Tamilnadu. The whole of south India comprising the Deccan, Karnataka, Andhra and Tamilnadu was a great stronghold of Jains, especially Digambara Jains, for more than one thousand years. Apart from the provincial capitals, Shravanabelagola in Karnataka was the center of their activities and it occupies the same position even up to the present day. Jainism, however, began to decline in south India from the 12th century due to the growing importance of Srivaisnavism and Virasaivism. Jainism In West India Jainism had very close relations with western India, that is, Gujarat and Kathiawar, where we find the largest concentration of the Jains at present. Regarding the migration of Jains to these parts of India, it is thought that the migrations must have taken place by B.

Chapter 3 : Sanskritization Bibliography

Beginning with the gr̥hyas̥tras, and continuing in the dharmas̥tras, the earliest formulations of a Brahmanical 'dharma' ostensibly based on the Veda, we find a progressive effort to establish Vedic knowledge and a simplified Vedic practice as the basis of a unified trans-regional Ārya culture.

Buddhist Cosmology and Astral Science – Wed. However, within the pan-Indian cultural and religious milieu, similar but often subtly varied cosmological concepts are embedded within a vast body of literature belonging to the Brahmanical, Jaina, or other heterodox traditions. Even amongst the Buddhist sources, there is an array of differing cosmological concepts from Abhidharma to the Tantric tradition. In some cases, cosmological notions may bear features of a particular cultural group or substratum. In other cases, hybridized notions may result from the contact among different traditions and cultures. How do all these converging and diverging concepts relate to each other? To what degree, if any, have they influenced each other? In this panel, specialists from different regions, traditions and periods, examine and compare cosmological concepts in Buddhist literature with similar, and sometimes competing ideas from other contemporaneous traditions. By adopting a multifaceted, interdisciplinary approach, we hope to turn a new chapter in understanding the rich sources of Buddhist cosmological thinking and the multivocality within the Buddhist tradition which continues to impact our world and societies. In this paper, I problematize the scholarly use of such sources to represent broader traditions on two fronts. First, I analyze certain key cosmological texts from Buddhism and Hinduism to show that each is adapted to the specific purposes of its context and authorship, resulting in notable modifications to the cosmic model for particular goals, along with restrictions in broader applicability. The end result is an alternative to viewing a particular cosmological model as a shared backdrop for varied aspects of a religious tradition, rather seeing it as an open framework around which central features of a religion can be constructed and expressed. These textual portrayals, viewed in context, present remarkably varied ways of thinking about the role of cosmology in religion, as well as ways in which cosmic models can be suited to particular purposes. Beyond these commonly cited sources are vastly numerous other expressions of the Buddhist cosmos in text, artwork, and material culture. Viewing them collectively provides new ways of thinking about the role of cosmology in religion more broadly as well as the particular relationships between individual cosmic models. Satinsky, Ruth University of Lausanne Untangling the historical relationship between the concepts of Mount Meru in early Buddhist, Jaina, and Brahmanical literature There is a long-standing bias amongst scholars that early Brahmanical cosmology forms the basis of Buddhist and Jaina cosmology, including the important concept of Mount Meru, which all three traditions share. Philosophy and Origins, claims: Hiyama-Karino, Satomi Ryukoku University Iconography of Sumeru in the Buddhist Art in Central Asia A strong interest in visualizing the Buddhist cosmology can be observed in the mural paintings that decorated the inner space of the Buddhist monasteries in the oasis kingdoms alongside the Northern Silk Road. Especially remarkable are the Indo-Iranian style mural paintings of the Kucha Kingdom ca. All of these depictions contain illustrations of the X-shaped Sumeru, which became a popular iconography in Chinese Buddhist art of the medieval period. Remarkably, earlier representations of this type of Sumeru have not been known so far; the representations in Kucha are the earliest material witnessing the presence of this type of iconography. Then how did this intriguing image of the X-shaped Sumeru originate? This paper casts light on the following questions about early Sumeru images in Central Asia, which had been less studied in the field: To seek for answers, the early Sumeru representations, recorded in documentations of several Central Asian expeditions at the beginning of the 20th century, are analyzed both from the philological and art-historical points of view. By the middle of the first millennium C. While the old and new astral materials continued to interact with each other, they remained largely discernible in terms of both how the cosmos was envisioned, as well as the techniques and jargons employed. Lastly, I discuss the transmission of this text within the context of the eastward transmission of Greco-Babylonian astral science. Okada, Masahiko Tenri University The

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emergence of Buddhist astronomy and Buddhist science in nineteenth century Japan The Jesuit priests who visited Japan in the sixteenth century attacked the flat world system of the Buddhists, and insisted upon the supremacy of the theory of spherical earth. However, they never tried to compare the celestial systems and astronomical knowledge in the Christian tradition with those in the Buddhist tradition, for they did not possess sufficient knowledge of astronomy to employ the principles of physics in order to ascertain the nature of the heavenly bodies yet. Their debate was a religious debate based on the conflict between teleological interpretations of the world in each tradition. This debate between the Jesuit priests and the Japanese Buddhists scholar-monks on cosmology gradually due to the closed-door policy of Tokugawa government. However, after the eighth Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune, relaxed the closed-door policy in , new Western knowledge started to be introduced and became popular in Japan. The new scientific knowledge included astronomy after the Galileo trial in Even within the Western intellectual traditions, cosmology and astronomical knowledge were already separated from the Christian theological and teleological worldview, and mechanistic explanations of the universe were sought after in this period. Under such new intellectual conditions, Japanese intellectuals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries started to reconfigure their traditional worldview within their respective intellectual traditions. Since the period of Abhidharma, the astronomical knowledge in the Buddhist scriptures had never been combined with the Buddhist worldview directly, just as the teleological interpretation of the world had nothing to do with a mechanistic explanation of universe in the Christian tradition. The existence of Mount Sumeru was not an objective fact that should be verified by a scientific research and observation. Only after the Copernican revolution, a mechanistic explanation of universe started to challenge a teleological interpretation of the world. They published books to propagate their theories, organized public lectures using miniature mechanical models of the flat world system, ran local science classes, and circulated Buddhist calendars and medicine widely. In essence, they established a Buddhist science following the intellectual framework of nineteenth century Japan. In this paper, I would like to introduce the history of this unique intellectual movement and consider the meaning of their activities in the history of Japanese religion and science.

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Chapter 4 : Madhu Khanna, Reclaiming women's indigenous heritage

Cultural Interaction and Religious Process IV. The Diffusion of Brahmanism and the Transformation of Buddhism V. Appropriation as a Historical Process: The Cult of the Goddess VI. Vratas: The Transmission of Brahmanical Culture VII.

The Authority of the Brahmins Part I: Dharma and Discipline in the Formation of Classical Brahmanism. A study of the "inner dynamics" of early Brahmanism: Patronage of Brahmins and the Influence of Brahmanical Norms. A study of the "outer dynamics" of Brahmanism: Historical Study, Critical Edition, and Translation. Late Vedic Thought, Ritual and Philosophy. Papers in Honor of Dr. Oxford History of Hinduism. Oxford University Press, , pp. National Archives, Nepal, , pp. Motilal Banarsidass, , pp. Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora. Harvard University, , pp. Sage Publications, , pp. Hinduism in the Modern World, edited by Brian A. Routledge, , pp. Bilingual Discourse and Cross-cultural Fertilisation: Brahmanical Virtue as a Qualification for Public Office," in: Religion and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Lindquist New York, London, Delhi: Anthem Press, , pp. Toward a Semiotics of Ritual Indices," in: Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual: Harrassowitz, , pp. Shaker Verlag, , pp. I, Scienze delle religioni 3 Firenze: Firenze University Press, , pp. International Review for the History of Religions Critical Concepts in Religious Studies, vol. Routledge, , €” Consecration and Ascetical Regimen: Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University Ann Arbor: Hinduism, edited by Alf Hiltebeitel Oxford Online, Brill, , pp. God, Meaning and Morality, 2nd ed. Harcourt, ; 3rd edition, Thomson, , pp. Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion, edited by S. Macmillan, , pp. Classical Indian Law Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies Brief review of Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton, trs. Mondes juifs et indiens anciens. International Review for the History of Religion A Comparative Study of Sacrifice , Numen: International Review for the History of Religions 57 , pp. Review of Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Review of Mark S. Review of Brian K. Numerous entries on music and intellectual history in American Studies: An Annotated Bibliography, edited by Jack Salzman, 3 vols. Cambridge University Press, , and in American Studies: Cambridge University Press, Review of "Woman Rebel," a film by Kiran Deol. Problems and Perspectives," Heidelberg University, 4€”6 October University of South Carolina School of Law, , published on-line in video format: Trans-regional creation of societies and cultures, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford University, September Invited participant presenting the theme of Sanskritization as a premodern transregional phenomenon , Conference on Religion and Transnationalism, Washington and Lee University, April Contemporary Trends in Religious Practice in India.

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Chapter 5 : Lubin | Curriculum Vitae

Texts and traditions: the Bengal Puranas --Cultural interaction and religious process --The diffusion of Brahmanism and the transformation of Buddhism --Appropriation as a historical process: the cult of the goddess --Vratas: the transmission of Brahmanical culture --The making of regional tradition of Bengal. Responsibility: Kunal Chakrabarti.

Pre-aryan roots[edit] Almost all the scholars agree that Jainism has Pre-Aryan roots in the cultural history of India. Upadhye remarked - "The origins of Jainism go back to the pre-historic times. They are to be sought in the fertile valley of Ganga, where they flourished in the past, even before the advent of Aryans with their priestly religion, a society of recluses who laid much stress on individual exertion, on practice of a code of morality and devotion to austerities, as means of attaining religious Summum Bonum. He also psychologically demonstrated that Jain Yoga originated in pre-Aryan India, and has nothing to do with orthodox Brahmanism which simply appropriated it in later centuries. Noel Retting, another Indologist, writes, "only in Jainism, of all the living religions, do we see a fusion of the primitive with the profound. It affirms the separateness of spirit from matter, even though our modern philosophers and religionists regard neither form of dualism as untenable. Despite the opinion of these men, Jainism is fundamentally scientific. And, it may very well be, contrary to the opinions of many anthropologists and students of comparative religion, the oldest living faith. Tessitory is of opinion that "Jainism is of a very high order. Its important teachings are based upon science. The more the scientific knowledge advances the more the Jain teachings will be proven". In fact, the Jain system of thought is so wonderfully consistent with modern realism and science that one may easily be tempted to question its antiquity, about which, however, there is now no doubt. Walthur Schubring observes, "He who has a thorough knowledge of the structure of the world cannot but admire the inward logic and harmony of Jain ideas. Hand in hand with the refined cosmographical ideas goes a high standard of astronomy and mathematics. Jacobi, Hermann also believes that "Jainism goes back to a very early period, and to primitive currents of religious and metaphysical speculation, which gave rise to the oldest Indian philosophies. They the Jains seem to have worked out their system from the most primitive notions about matter. He says, "Thus far, SariPutta, did I go in my penance. I went without clothes. I licked my food from my hands. I took no food that was brought or meant especially for me. I accepted no invitation to a meal. Rhys Davis has observed that Buddha found his two teachers Alara and Uddaka at Vaisali and started his religious life as a Jain. Attakatha of Anguttara Nikaya has reference to Boppa Sakya a resident of Kapilvastu who was the uncle of Buddha and who followed the religion of the Nigganathas i. Critical and comparative study has brought to light several words like Asrava, Samvara etc. On the basis of these words Dr. Jacobi has concluded that Jainism is much older than the religion of Buddha and therefore it is incorrect to imagine Jainism as the offshoot of Buddhism. Misleading stereotypes about Jainism[edit] Yet histories and encyclopaedias of world religions with a few exceptions fail to mention Jainism as a religion. There are pervasive misconceptions about the origin of Jainism, its relation with the Brahmanic, Vedic so-called- Hinduism, about Mahavira being the founder of Jainism, about its being an offshoot of Buddhism or Hinduism or its being a reformist sect of Hinduism. There are misrepresentations galore. It is overshadowed by Hinduism and Buddhism or if noticed at all it is mentioned in passing as one of the ancient IndiaN religious movements subsidiary to Buddhism. Such is the context of the pervasive impact of the misleading Indian historiography from the deleterious effects of which even the most eminent historians, both right and left are not immune. As noted pertinently by the Aims of the Conference "One of the consequences of this failure is the continuing hold of misleading stereotypes of the nature of Indic religious thought and practice. This misinterpretation of history is compounded by what the doyen of Indian Indologists , Dr. Bhandarkar noted as to how "India has no written history. Nothing was known till within recent times of the political condition of the country, the dynasties that ruled over the different provisions which composed it, and the great religious and social revolutions it went through. The historical curiosity of the people was satiated by legends. What we find of a historical nature in

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the literature of the country before the arrival of the Mahomedans comes to very little. Even Buddha or Buddhism is no exception for such misrepresentations. It is incredible but true that S. Radhakrishnan in his Foreword to the volume brought out on the occasion of the Anniversary of the Mahaparinirvana of the Buddha in He was born, grew up, and died a Hindu. He was re-stating with a new emphasis the ancient ideals of the Indo-Aryan civilization. Issues are obscured by introducing irrelevancies and thus an attitude of contemptuous prejudice is provoked by exciting ridicule. Chandragupta Maurya and Jainism[edit] But such distortions are not confined to Orientalist interpreters of ancient Indian history. Chandragupta is said to have accepted Jainism in his later years, and in fact to have abdicated the throne and become a wandering ascetic dying through slow starvation in the orthodox Jain manner. Considering the difficulties that he faced in making himself king and building an empire it is hardly likely that he would have abdicated at the end of his reign in order to become a wandering ascetic. It is possible though that he accepted the teachings of Mahavira and became a Jaina. This interest may be excused as originating in the fact that he was of low origin, a vaishya, and by accepting Jainism he eluded the contempt of the higher caste nobility. Since the teachings of Mahavira were at this period, regarded more as an offshoot of Hinduism, an extreme discipline, and the Jainas themselves as a sub-sect of the earlier religion, we can discountenance the above idea. The interest it would seem was largely intellectual. I am aware that this is an earlier historical reading by the eminent, liberal, progressive historian Romila Thapar. I am also aware that that her readings of Indian ancient history have progressed from her *A History of India Pelican* to *Early India: From the Origins to A. I Thapar* has perceptively noted that "much of the early history of India was reconstructed almost entirely from Sanskrit sources i. That is why one is concerned to question her cavalier and even presumptuous remarks-so unhistorical in character regarding Chandragupta. I am quoting once again the particular sentence: But since the issue has been raised it must be dealt with in a rational historical manner. I cannot do better here than quote Dr. Mookerji has commented at length on the theory of the base birth of Chandragupta in his *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times* The commentator was more interested in finding a mother than in grammar! The only redeeming feature of the commentator is that not merely is he innocent of grammar and history; he is also innocent of any libel against Chandragupta. For he has not stated that Mura, the supposed mother of Chandragupta was a Sudra woman or a courtesan of the Nanda king Further to press home the conclusion from Jain and Buddhist sources Dr. Even more monumental evidence, according to Dr. Mookerji, is derived from the Buddhist as well Jain tradition connecting the peacock, Mayura, with the Moriya or Maurya dynasty. Thus the Ashoka pillar at Nandangarh has been found to bear at its bottom below the surface of the ground the figure of a peacock while the same figure is repeated in several sculptures on the Great Stupa at Sanchi associated with Ashoka. Mookerji concludes that the "Buddhist and Jain tradition are at one in declaring for him Chandragupta a noble birth. As noted above the date of the foundation of the Maurya dynasty by Chandragupta has been determined to be about B. Thomas states re; Jaina Sramanic faith of Chandragupta: The testimony of Megasthenes would likewise seem to imply that Chandragupta submitted to the devotional teachings of the sermanas as opposed to the doctrine of the Brahmans. The passage in Strabo runs as follows: The documentary evidence to this effect is of comparatively early date, and apparently absolved from all suspicion When Bhadrabahu,, the last of the Sruta Kevali Jain Acharyas met Chandragupta Maurya in his court at Pataliputra and foretold him of the impending terrible twelve years famine Chandragupta abdicated his throne and joined Bhadrabahu who, collecting a body of twelve thousand disciples, started a grand exodus towards the south. As stated by Ramaswami Ayyangar and B. That Chandragupta, the Mauryan king, was a Jain and attended on Bhadrabahu during his last days and died twelve years after, doing penance on Chandragiri hill may be taken as historical facts. Evidence in favour of such a theory is overwhelming To discredit the Sravana Belgola inscriptions discovered by Lewis Rice is to discredit the whole tradition and the legendary account of the Jains enshrined in Rajavalikathe, and it is highly hazardous for the historian to go so far. To revert to the enduring Sramanic and Jain influence in the Chandragupta Maurya dynasty and especially on Ashoka I would refer once again to Edward Thomas in this

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quest for historically credible Jainism. I would begin by taking the case of Ashoka and Buddhism. Thapar and historical sources in Puranas and Vedas[edit] I think in any historical analysis it would be sobering to recall what E. Carr said about historical facts in his classic *What Is History?* It follows that when we take up a work of history, our first concern should be not with the facts it contains but the historian who wrote it. The historian before he begins to write history, is the product of history. Belief in the duty of the historian to pronounce moral judgments on his dramatis personae has a long pedigree. It is in this context one can be critical of R. Carr as the classic "summation of the role of historian " that "the function of historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to understanding the of the present. The function of the history is to promote a profounder understanding of both past and present through the inter-relation between the two. Notwithstanding her slip on Chandragupta Maurya Thapar acknowledges in *Interpreting Early India* that "the picture which emerges of the indigenous view of religion from historical sources of the early period is rather different. The prevalent religious groups referred to are two, Brahmanism and Sramanism with a clear distinction between them. They are organizationally separate, had different sets of beliefs and rituals and often disagreed on social norms. That this distinction was recognized is evident from the edicts of the Mauryan king Asoka, as well as by those who visited India and left accounts of what they had observed, as, for example, Megasthenes, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Fa Hsien and Hsuan Tsang, and Alberuni. Both the Buddhists and the Jainas had shown a sense of centering their sects in avowedly historical events which imparted a certain historicity and added to the intellectual strength of their institutions " p. That "ahimsa as an absolute value is characteristic of certain Sramanic sects and less so of Brahmanism. The notion appears in the Upanishads but it was the Buddhists and the Jains emphasis supplied who first made it foundational to their teaching. That Brahmanism and Sramanism were recognized as distinct after the period of the Upanishads further underlines the significance of ahimsa to Sramanic thinking. However, Thapar makes a pertinent observation regarding the fundamental differences between Brahmanic and Sramanic systems and makes a historically welcome suggestion that "It might in fact be a worthwhile exercise to reconstruct Brahmanism from the reference to it in Sramanic and other non-Brahmanical sources. Borrowing the historically challenging clue provided by Thapar I would rephrase her suggestion regarding the reconstruction of Brahmanism with reference to Sramanic and other non-Brahmanic sources I would propose the theme of my paper as a reconstruction of Sramanic Jain culture from references to it in Vedic, Puranic as well as non-Brahmanical sources. But before doing that it would be necessary to refer and discuss certain academic questions raised by Michael Witzel in his paper *On Indian Historical Writing* presented to the *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies* 2, , Majumdar that "India has no sense of history" and that, "indigenous historical writing has been almost completely absent until fairly recent times" except in Rajatarangini *History of Kashmir* and summarily rejects these contentions as "somewhat rash statements".

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Chapter 6 : Indian culture is consisted of two main trends: Sramanic and Brahmanic

"The Transmission, Patronage, and Prestige of Brahmanical Piety from the Mauryas to the Guptas," in: Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Traditions in South Asia, edited by Federico Squarcini (KykÅ©ion studi e testi. I, Scienze delle religioni 3) (Firenze: Firenze University Press,), pp.

Antiquity is the chief characteristic of the Puranas, since its age cannot be defined properly. Age of Puranas contains various valuable materials for the sociological study of ancient India. No definite date can be suggested for the Puranas. In some cases, different chapters of a single Purana appear to have been composed or assembled in different periods. By and large the early Puranas came into being approximately between the 2nd century and the 6th century AD. The researches of the scholars have revealed that the Puranas are antique in its character and composition. The references of the Puranas in the ancient texts reveal that the Puranas existed even before the advent of the Vedic texts, though not as a form of literary genre. Modern scholarship has varied its attitude towards the Puranas at different times. In the last decades of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, the Puranas were not provided enough importance for depicting history. This is so because the Puranas represent a confused accumulation of their legendary and historical events, thereby depicts a weird idea of age. Hence the confused and disintegrated idea of age reduces the historical importance of the Puranas. In the early decades of the 19th century, H. H Wilson made a systematic study of the Puranas and brought out an English translation of the Vishnu Purana. The English translation of Vishnu Purana made by Wilson opens with an exhaustive introduction and critical and comparative notes which attracted the attention of European scholars to this important branch of Sanskrit literature. One of the objects of the Puranas was to give freedom to women and Sudras in certain religious rites and practices. They were denied the right to Vedic rites, and had been groaning under the grinding weight of repression and feeling an urge for liberation in this field. The result was that a large number of them embraced Buddhism which allowed the same privileges to all irrespective of any discrimination. This caused an erosion of the Brahmanical society, and the sacerdotal class, which depended on the people for their maintenance, felt the need for works like the Puranas. During some centuries preceding and following the birth of Christ, three unorthodox faiths exerted wide and deep influence on the populace. These were Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivakism. The Vaisnavas were broadly divided into two sects, namely Pancaratra and Bhagavata. Bhagavatism was very popular among the non-Brahmanical and foreign tribes. The rights and privileges in religious matters, denied to women and Sudras in the traditional Brahmanical Shastras, have been given to them by the Vaishnava; women and Sudras were allowed directly to worship Lord Vishnu. The Puranas tell that the political sway of the Nandas, Mauryas, Andhras etc. Sudra kings are known to have themselves performed Asvamedha sacrifice. They extended very liberal support to Buddhists and Jains. The Buddhists advocated mendicancy and the Jains severe asceticism. The privileges in religious performances, given by them to women and Sudras, considerably undermined the Brahmanical society. There were other reasons also for the weakening of this society. One was the invasions by foreigners from the north-west and the other the spread of Tantricism among the masses. Onslaughts on the Brahmanical religion and society continued till the first quarter of the 4th century A. D when the Guptas came to power. The Gupta kings revived the Brahmanical religion battered by hostile forces for a long time. Tantric religion spread through Vaishnavism and Saivism. The Buddhists also had many Tantras. Tantric influence is noticeable roughly from the fifth century onward. In course of time, Tantras influenced Indian Puranas and Smriti. The embracing of Buddhism and the adoption of Tantric practices led to the decadence of the traditional Brahmanical religion and society in the Puranic age. It was at this stage that the Brahmanas tried, in various ways, to restore their lost glory through the Puranas. Among the revivalist tactics was the introduction of a network of Vratas designed to secure various kinds of material welfare. Gift to Brahmanas in Vratas was declared to be conducive to happiness. Gift to one having a large family to maintain was considered to be particularly useful. Among the articles of gift were such daily necessities as oil,

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salt, umbrella, sandals etc. Dishonest economy has been condemned. In the early decades of the 20th century the methodical research of F. E Pargiter placed before the world a critical survey of the historical material of the age of Puranas. Before the advent of the detailed study of F. E Pargiter the Puranas were in the darkest oblivion as a literary genre. The modern scholars have opined that the present view is to accept the Puranas as one of the important sources of traditional history of ancient India. Nowadays the Puranas are being critically studied in order to extract the traditional historical data stored in it. Modern historians also depend on the Puranic materials for their own works. Being the ancient existing literary genre, the Puranas are significant to throw light to the comprehensive history of Indian culture. The age of Puranas embody the vastness of the rich Indian culture and civilisation. It has sections dealing with polity, sociology, administrative institutions, fine arts, architecture, etc. The function of a modern historian should be to disentangle legendary, fictitious or mythological material from the purely historical or cultural data. However the Puranas stand unique as the literary genre in its antiquity of age.

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Chapter 7 : Timothy Lubin | Washington and Lee University - calendrierdelascience.com

The rise, decline and renewals of Sramanic religious traditions within the Indic civilisation with particular reference to the evolution of Jain sramanic culture and its impact on the Indic civilisation.

Folk culture thus forms the bedrock of Indic civilization. India is a vast subcontinent of strongly contrasting ecological features. The Himalayan mountain ranges stretch from the West to the East separating the southernmost tip of India intersected by the great rivers. The South is divided by mountain ranges, flanked by coastal strips. The great land mass has distinctive regions and provinces, each with its respective folk traditions, languages, and cultural regions. Folk art, culture and lifestyle of the peasant village and tribal communities in India, bears a signature that is not only ancient and indigenous but also highly imaginative and creative. In this respect, it is comparable to the highest form of aesthetic expression anywhere in the world. The scale and horizons of folk culture in the subcontinent are also gigantic. The most common and widely known term is adivasi, the first settlers or the primal communities that inhabit India. The tribals do not form a homogeneous group. There are about tribal groups which have been recognized by the Indian government and are distributed unevenly over different regions of the country, composed of different races and cultures. There is considerable biological, linguistic and cultural diversity among them. On the other hand, the Dravidians are represented by the Oraons, Gonds and Khonds. The tribal communities exist at two different levels. Over the centuries, almost all states of India have retained their importance as centres of folk culture with deep indigenous roots. Within a village there are distinctive groups of people, perhaps the largest consists of professional craftsmen whose skill is linked to a particular caste and is handed down from father to sons, who produce hand-crafted objects for local consumption. The next largest group consists of women, who are engaged in agricultural activity and may be described as non-professional natural artists. What is significant here is that the artistic activity of women is inextricably bound to the home and family and around domestic concerns. Their creativity is seldom of a commercial nature, and more likely linked to their religion and piety. They often work with perishable materials and what they produce has a limited life. The artistic productions of women relate largely to rituals performed during festive occasions, where women create artistic images, as well as perform rituals designed to obtaining blessings and well-being for the family from the gods they adore. We must remember that women are also the guardians of the community and the builders of our great heritage. They were the inventors of the most fundamental aspect of our life and culture. Women are credited with the invention of the culinary arts, and recognized as the first inventors of all traditional knowledge systems of our culture, ranging from aesthetic systems of art and crafts; representations of collective memory, oral narratives, songs and legends; rituals and ceremonies in the domestic and public spheres; traditional environment management systems; traditional healing systems and preservers of food diversity and agrarian knowledge. It is a tragic fact that despite the great contribution made by women to sustain the planet they have been eclipsed and overshadowed. The knowledge accumulated over centuries has made them increasingly invisible. The overwhelmingly one-sided view of civilization as being a male preserve has undermined their sovereign position in all spheres of our culture. These range from cultivation, cattle rearing, preservation of seeds, and trade and market activity of the produce, apart from the day-to-day activity of rearing the family. As the sole custodians of traditional knowledge systems, they have acquired an uncanny intuitive sense about the protection of their immediate environment. Their awareness, by and large deeply rooted in faith and religious belief, is reflected in several forms of reverence to the Earth as Goddess. The experiential knowledge gained through centuries of accumulated collective wisdom is grounded in deep faith and inborn love for Mother Nature. The inextricable bond that rural women share with nature has two profound implications. First, it almost spontaneously creates a moral vocabulary and a gynocentric ethos in favour of the Earth as Mother Goddess. Second, women effortlessly assume the responsibility of playing leadership roles at the grassroots level in saving the environment. The ethno-model of the earth as mother has been instrumental in mobilizing

support in various contexts. While reflecting upon the folk traditions of India it is necessary to understand the complex but inextricable relationship between the classical and the popular, and the written and the oral heritage as they form two faces of a culture and its multidimensional expressions. The domain of the written constitutes texts, scriptures, community documents of our heritage – visual, aural and performative, together with expressions of collective consciousness that preserve the legendary lore of a community. It is in the obscure, under-researched parallel sub-stream of culture that one can discern a radical and liberating construction of gender. These traditions consciously or unconsciously have abandoned almost all orthodox concepts of caste, class and subordination of the female. It has been pointed out by several scholars that normative mythical figures like Sita in the Ramayana, may undergo substantial reinventions in the oral folk traditions. The process of reinvention involves selection of passages from the Ramayana which reflect their own situation as women who are easy victims of patriarchal values. In such situations, the women singers who chant are concerned with themselves; not with the epic out there, somewhere beyond themselves. The main singers are privileged to transform the context in accordance with their own ethos and value system. In recent years, most explorations in the field of gender and culture in India have been viewed from a Marxist, Socialist, Liberal or Modern perspective in the context of the sociopolitical reality of our society. These approaches have consigned cultural resources, such as religious scriptures and texts, symbols, powerful feminine icons in oral and written tradition, myths, and legends, knowledge systems of primal communities and grassroots traditions to the dust heap of history. In most cases, the cultural researches have suffered from the onslaught of reductive theoretical positions that modernity adopts to view ancient cultures. Its main aims are: There are numerous domains in which women have maintained substantial degrees of autonomy, agency, and community, and from which men have been excluded, or to which they have had only limited or recent access. Most obviously this has long been true in areas of rituals and the arts, especially painting, song, and dance, but also in organizing, shaping, and controlling the social life of families and communities. Madhubani in Bihar, eastern India, has emerged as one of the foremost areas where rural women have been found to possess remarkable skills in painting and crafts that is passed down from generation to generation. Women in the villages have been painting the walls and floors of their homes for centuries, but gained prominence and recognition as artists only during the last thirty years. The Mithila region, historically known as Videha or Tirabhukti, has been a great hub of Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain learning. Between the 11th and 16th centuries, the rulers of the Karnata and Oinawara dynasties introduced observances of religious ceremonies to all the upper caste communities. The discovery of Madhubani art is traced to W. Archer, a sub-divisional officer in Madhubani, who documented the artworks. Between , the government initiated income generating opportunities for the rural poor by providing them with paper and art materials to reproduce the ritual art forms for sale. The project brought together fifty women artists belonging to different social classes – Brahman, Kayastha, Dusadh and varying age-groups living in Delhi on the occasion of the Madhu-Shravani Parva 15 July-7 August , a festival dedicated to snake deities during the monsoon season. An integrated documentation on the fifteen narratives, songs and rituals associated with the festival were recorded at the workshop. An astounding aspect of this project was that all the women who participated were illiterate, non-professional and had no formal training in visual, aural or performative arts. They had been socialized and tutored by their grandmothers, mothers, older sisters, aunts or girl friends on some baseline skills of painting to adorn the walls and floors of their homes. These women were not only documenting their folk cultural history and sacred worldview; the project also created a site for their empowerment. We carried out an integrated documentation on vratakathas, narratives, their corresponding paintings that mirrored each story, along with the songs, mantra-chants and rituals. We also recorded the responses of women. The more vratas women perform, the more devoted she is seen by her family. It was mind-boggling for us to hear women from Mithila redefine and subvert the traditional meaning attributed to the concept of saubhagya. This type of statement not only subverts the conventional meaning of saubhagya, but reflects a posture of confidence in an intuitively recognized empowered state. The common understanding of the subordinate wife was set aside in favour of an empowered individual. They also depicted

mythical and historical role models of women who they revere as exemplars. The most pertinent question that we need to raise and understand is: What is the source of this form of creativity? Where are these outstanding creations emerging from? I view it as a cultural document which arises from the vast collective consciousness of the genetic heritage of the women of Mithila which gets unselfconsciously scripted in their works. The latter expose cultural artefacts by women for presenting them as cultural commodities, as museum pieces, as emblems of social decorum, as remnants of primitive representations. The folk communities, on the other hand, hark back to their ancestral heritage for survival and to gain self-respect and dignity. The state tourist industries use their artefacts as marketable cultural goods for commercial exploitation. We are, today, confronted with epistemological challenges staged by different groups. In the modern view, all that is modern is superior and therefore progressive. In contrast, all that is traditional is inferior and regressive. Hence, tradition must be replaced by modernity. The dichotomy hierarchizes and ranks the two, in that the modern worldview becomes the privileged worldview ; the other is the subversive, inferior and negative counterpart. Thus the primary concept of modernity defines itself by expelling and uprooting the traditional and the primal. Methodological reflections and creation of a new hermeneutics should also form an important part of our gender discourse. It has been argued by many sensitive feminist writers that epistemologies and theories of knowledge that dominate our discourse are based on distorted notions of objectivity. Women scholars² have skilfully outlined the problems associated with quantitative theorizing based on the methods of natural science. New feminist methods have emerged out of consciousness-raising sessions organized at the grassroots level. In these sessions, the oral histories of women define their own construction of gender. This kind of research emerges from human experience and lived realities of women rather than the value-laden abstractions of male bias. In the past, women scholars have shown distrust in the ancient ethnographical sources. However, there has been an overemphasis of Brahmanical sources and underrepresentation of our oral heritage, rooted in regional cultures of India. Although there are many programmes generated by NGOs, ethnic, regional and community-based groups, they lack an academic interdisciplinary base. They have contributed to descriptive studies and do not use terminologies and narrative representations that authenticate value categories developed by grassroot cultures and advocacy groups. The difference between the modern West and the East is that our traditional social frames are rooted in a community-based solidarity. There is a way in which community solidarity continues to frame our social arrangements. Modern feminists by and large work within the existing social frames in urban, rural and primal communities in the tribal belt of India. This is based on the understanding that the social frameworks in the given Indian context with the exception of isolated pockets in urban areas are different from the modernist western notion of high ranking, self-centred and self-sufficient individualism. Our social frames are based on community participation, social privileges and responsibility centred social ethics. This basic frame is the foundation of community-centred sister networks in India, which need to be tapped for future research. The conceptual thrust of Narivada comes closer to the philosophy of sexual difference put forward by the French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray. In other words, Irigaray celebrates the irreducibility of the feminine.

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Chapter 8 : Religious Process - Kunal Chakrabarti - Oxford University Press

Religious Process: The Puranas and the Making of a Regional Tradition (OIP) 2nd Revised edition - Kunal Chakrabarti - ISBN: This book traces the evolution of a process of interaction between Brahmanism and the indigenous social groups of Bengal during the early medieval period.

The term was originally popularized by M. Srinivas in his dissertation, where he used it to characterize the gradual upward movement in the social status of a caste by means of the deliberate adoption of social and religious practices such as vegetarianism, employment of brahmin priests, use of meatless offerings, Sanskrit mantras, and other elements of Brahmanical cultic practice that are associated with brahmins or deemed prestigious because they are approved or promulgated in Brahmanical literature or by brahmin authorities in other fora, regardless of whether the Sanskrit language is used to express those ideals. The spread of the use of Sanskrit as a language of high-cultural expression is one of the important and characteristic features of this process, but not an indispensable one. Process A might be seen generally as a "bottom-up" process in which the assimilative initiative comes from outside brahmin or other high-caste circles while Process B more often has a "top-down" character. In fact, I think the term and the concept[s] that it denotes still has great utility, provided that we remain fully cognizant of the many ways in which the "other" traditions have through history and still today left their imprint upon Brahmanical Hinduism. In fact, in spite of many broad continuities over time, it is this reciprocal give-and-take between what are considered established Sanskritic elements at any given time. All of these are particular large-scale cases of syncretism or syncretization, another potentially useful but hotly contested model. Since the two processes as I describe them here are always intertwined, the sources below are not sorted into corresponding groups. Be aware that the sources for Process A are not up-to-date, and in any case this list is not comprehensive. Cambridge University Press, Dumont, Louis and D. Diehl, *Instrument and Purpose* Lund: Contributions to Indian Sociology 3: Asia Institute, Heidelberg University. *Forming and Transforming Identity in Nepal*. Columbia University Press [esp. *Some Dimensions of Sanskritization*. *Criminal Gods and Demon Devotees: Essays on the Guardians of Popular Hinduism*. *Ideology and status of Sanskrit*. *Changing Identities and Caste Politics before Mandal*. *Studies in Honour of Prof. Firenze* University Press, Marriott, McKim, and Bernard Cohn. *Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts*. *Transculturation, vernacularization, and the question of ideology*. *Literary Culture and Polity* – The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India. *Peasant Society and Culture*. *Pastoral Deities in Western India*, transl. *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*. *Social Change in Modern India*. *Modern Asian Studies* 1. *Origins and Development of the Kuru State*.

Chapter 9 : Historical Vedic religion - Wikipedia

the dynamically creative role of the ascetic and mystic within Hinduism.