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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - A CASE COMMENTARY

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Abstract

From the fashionable ideological bashings of all shades to descriptive meanderings, the Mandarins of "Social Development" have been short on grounded empirical observations. It is especially noticeable in sociological literature. My article is a modest attempt toward rectifying it. Elsewhere, based on a diachronic case comparative analysis of the eastern region of India, I have reported the social foundational mortars that constructed the institutional homes and the complex syncretistic drama of the storied experience, which evolved over time, population and region. From this investigative field case study (Basu 2003, 2006, in progress), I adduce, reason and comment for this article the manner by which current development insights, objectives and plans might be fashioned. To witness, in selecting private property, which is being targeted as an "Industrial Zone" for state and national schemes, speaks volumes on the socio-historical system of land-tenure and –revenue allocations. In order to locate the current context of turmoil and tension, one must review political economy of state(raj)-subject(ryot) pattern of authority relationship since the early days of the king, the zamindar, and the foreign rulers. I show how social nature of capital—both non-material and material—grew differentiated and became complex by the early reformers of a district town in Bally, in Howrah district. In important ways, both at public and private levels the emerging boundary of town household, that nested between tradition (core) and modernity (change), acted as a sociological laboratory. Above all, I demonstrate the way local reformers – vernacular educators as well as native merchants – might have cooperated in constructing a civil society, the principal building-block of economic and social development.

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I. Situating Social Development

The study of social development began in earnest in the middle of the twentieth century when the colonies in Africa and Asia gained independence from the West. The need to survey and assess socioeconomic scales of wellbeing of these societies and households was urgent because long before the colonists left the occupied lands the level of deprivation, such as illiteracy and poverty were known. For example, nearly a decade before Britain left India in 1947, the rate of literacy was only thirteen per cent. Similar social deprivation and economic underdevelopment were noticed and in cases were accounted for in other colonies of Africa and Asia.

Key social institutions under study were economy, education, family, government and religion. In broad terms, social roles of development in terms of both theoretical and empirical investigations focused on both exogenous (colony) and endogenous (society) factors. Moreover, the base unit of social institutions under such studies included single factor (such as economy) as well as multifactor (both agrarian economy and peasant household) analyses. Not surprisingly, scholars' study scope and methodology also encompassed the full grade of analysis, from microscopic (a case-based approach) to macroscopic (an entire society) levels. Likewise, subject of inquiry, such as, say, anthropology, history etc., included a single disciplinary focus or a multidisciplinary approach, which combined several disciplines.

The final strategy from underdevelopment to development is valuational approach, which evolved as a by-product of the two approaches, namely, institutional and unit. Most prominently, this approach laid explicit emphasis on a set of values.

The development studies on the post-colonial societies since the mid-1900s, which focused on both institution-based and level-based approaches had the same theme in common: although not explicitly stated, both assumed a linear progression of social development from a traditional community to a modern state. For many experts, the concept of development signified both a qualitative and quantitative movement from point "A" to point "B." Furthermore, some argued that each point in this scalar identity constituted a normative convergence of key properties, for example, education, energy, urbanisation etc., that need to converge in order to achieve a smooth

transition to modernity. Others challenged the "convergence thesis," in that they argued that the cause of socioeconomic marginalisation of these erstwhile colonies laid in the monopolisation of "capital" for centuries by the West and the emerging native elites.

By now, considering the three approaches to development – institutional, unit-based, and valuational – scholars, politicians and policy planners joined in discussions regarding what the best type of government should be for a post-colonial society. In a large sense, even after a half-century of freedom, deliberation on factors contributing toward sustainable development continues.

As noteworthy, if not timely, as the approaches are attempts to remedy hunger, provide shelter and jobs, and in general improve physical and material conditions of the households in developing societies, nevertheless most are wanting in a basic way. The base line for development objectives is static, in that most begin from about the time and place when colonialism ended and independence was granted. This reality of understanding a developing society is lacking in that like the European continent, the new nations of the African and Asian continents are rich in local history, language and culture.

The question then is this: can local society and its vernacular memory provide objective insights in fashioning tools and policies for moral as well as material development? This commentary attempts to resolve this question with the help of an in-depth empirical case study, which has been underway by this author during the past five years. Here, my starting point for the current investigation of development grows out of the elementary historical-cultural ingredients that have constituted over time and space. I reason and estimate how they became foundational mortars to the building of institutions in the eastern region of India, prominently the Bengal Ganges valley. I suggest that this diachronic comparative approach, between general and regional can allow insights and understandings into constructing a development policy and agenda.

II. Development Capital - Defined

The sociological understanding of building a new nation is seldom viewed through monochromatic lenses. In reality, ethnic groups, religions and migrations often construct a complex narrative. Far from being idyllic, the social hybridism of cultures and peoples can both

compete and cooperate with one another. In a recent study of a Greek town, Salonica, Mazower (2004) has explored how Greeks, Ottoman Turks, Jews and Sunni Muslims intermingled in terms of culture, faith and trade.

From our perspective, development capital is not only collected in banks. From both an individual and a community point of view, capital is both moral and material, and can interact interdependently over time and place. Capital is both the substantive and the functional worth of individuals, households and groups. This nexus is realised in the social marketplace by patterns of authority, trust and customs. True social development cannot come about unless the institutional context of status (mobility) and class (money) is nearly symmetrical.

Hence, by *development capital* I signify both the structure and the kind of relationships, both potential and real, from which an individual, group or state can access institutions and derive resources from them—such as health, shelter, employment and education. One of the essential objectives of capital is building civic trust in institutions and community in which individuals or households can count upon in enriching, both qualitatively and quantitatively, their lives—notably, in education and income, respectively.

III. The Bengal Project

The rationale for my Bengal project began with challenging Huntington's (1997) exceptionality notion of the "clash of civilisations." His thesis, in brief, is that the spiritual and philosophical advancement of Europe and the United States has separated them from other cultures and religions by enshrining the rule of law, human rights, and the principle of personal liberty and property. This argument piqued my sociological imagination. As I have written elsewhere:

> The time and place in which we live shape our values, relating to religion, morality, and politics is a complex matter. Rather than proclaiming moral purity disguised under the veil of nationalism, we can clarify moral principles to which nearly everyone can subscribe. The sheer boldness of truth, the most important value in shaping all civilisations, is common to all races, nations, and creeds. No religion, culture or society can claim exception (Basu 2006: 18).

I have tested my point in a three-stage analysis of Bengal history and culture from a sociological perspective. In my first essay, "The Bengal Discovery," I theorised that three social categories ordered and cognised the Bengal soul and society: (a) thought and action; (b) humanism and emotionalism; and (c) caste and class. I defined *social category* as "conceptual systems of knowledge that become empirically grounded in social organisations" (Basu 2003: 19). In that essay, I concluded that the outcome of this mix of social categories was that, over centuries, a pluralistic society evolved that took due notice of ideas and values, and learned to tolerate differences of opinion. Even after many foreign invasions, there is not a single idea or source, which dominates the Bengal narrative. Like all material things, life is impermanent. The messiness of life is the pragmatic outcome that self must learn to deal with, not by leaps and bounds, but in incremental steps through trial and error.

In the second segment of my trilogy (Basu 2006), I demonstrated how, in empirical terms, the local village *(loukik)* faith and the creed of pluralism and tolerance led the way to the opening of Bengal hearts to the world. With a case example of the temple of Baidyanath (now in Jharkhand), I concluded that the Bengal identity was socialised through religion, language and commerce. I documented the progress of the pilgrims and the beginning of their early shelter in the town of Deoghar (now in Jharkhand).

In the third and final segment, I explored and analysed how Bengal discovery grew complex in the light of modern town settlements. The time-period was from the early 1700s to the late 1800s—the waning years of rule by the Mughal dynasty and the waxing of the British Empire (Basu in progress).

Before the 1700s, the creation and settlement of a town was a faith-based affair. Often, a prominent Bengal estate owner endowed and erected a temple, typically sect-based, such as a Sufi Islam and Hindu Shaiva, Shakta or Vaishnava temple. In due course, the towns that grew around these temples rose to prominence as pilgrimage centres. For example, in the 1400s, soon after a Mallah king had converted to the ecumenical sect of Vaishnavism, he built several Vaishnava temples in the town of Bankura (Sanyal 2004).

The Mughal military men picked an area for its strategic use. Often, in the case of Bengal, the towns were situated near a navigable river. Once garrisons were fortified, scribes, merchants, artisans, and traders settled nearby. By the 1700s, many of the towns had grown substantially. I described the mercantile ecology of the town of Murshidabad (Murshidabad district).

During the British rule, towns were formally codified as legal units—that is, as seats of civil and criminal courts. However, some of the territories and towns stayed under the jurisdiction of the princely states. For example, although the town of Deoghar began as a pilgrimage site, the British demarcated it as a district in 1850.

IV. Comparative Sociology

Bengal districts are a matrix of themed routes. The uniqueness of the districts' cultures persists to this day, ranging from the culinary arts to local dialects and modes of worship. For example, Bengal families settled in Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri in the upland east; Barisal and Cox Bazar in the steamy southern deltas; Noakhali and Sylhet in the sand banks of the east; and Bankura and Nabadwip in the ethnically mixed west. My ideal typologies of towns were devotion *(bhakti)*, education *(bhasa)*, and trade and economy *(banjya)*.

Following the Appendix in the second segment of my trilogy (Basu 2006: 42-44), I have utilised the comparative method to analyse the association between social achievement and monetary growth. The comparative sociological approach considers human history as contingent upon and influenced by human values and practices. I compared and contrasted the degree to which Bengal's social capital was mobilised and was materialised in the establishment of towns. Hence, using this comparative methodology, I investigated the level of both status (mobility) and economic (class) growth and development in the towns.

I hypothesised that towns with a flexible social structure would have adaptable access to the socioeconomic ladder for the community members at large. Young and Moreno (1965: 439) defined *flexible social structure* as "one in which many ideas compete for a hearing and decisions can be made among them in a peaceful manner.... [Also] one [in] which...economy is flexible [and] can...handle diversity of specialised...talents."

This scientific method allowed me to estimate the social cost of migration from village to town. I asked what role the social structure of origin, such as faith or property, played in settling towns. Was the migration to towns socially selective in terms of caste, class and key socioeconomic indicators? Likewise, did the process of authority formation vary according to social and economic norms of capitalisation? Thus, did patterns of authority, status and power materialise differently in terms of the towns' emerging value systems?

For the most part, the district patrons, who typically were the rich estate owners, and the "new" rich (the native traders and merchants) donated money to construct temples, mosques, schools and colleges. At the same time, the district educators, many of whom were freshly minted from Calcutta University, were recruited to organise and lead the educational programmes. These educated men and women would play a central role in reforming Bengal society. The printing presses that the British administrators shipped from England to Bengal for their own administrative uses and to promote Christian mission-related publications were quickly adapted by the Bengal literati and linguists for vernacular uses. To witness, the first Bengal language dictionary was printed and published using this imported technology. Formal literacy and education, much of it originating from the meeting of East and West, was the chief harbinger of change.

V. Social Development—Case Application and Commentary

I have adduced the following themes on social development from the research on the eastern section of India. My essential insight from this exercise is that historical-institutional morphology of pluralism, namely incremental codification of social structure as well as change in cultural lexicon of interaction is decidedly linked to three social agencies and actors. Via intensive case studies and family-local narratives, all arising from the Ganges valley I find that the fulcrum of development strategy must try to centre on the manner in which three social agencies (and actors) have woven both a comparative and complex web of human relationship. The three agencies and the associated actors are: (1) economy (merchants and traders), (2) knowledge (intellectuals and educators) and (3) religion (clergy, imam, and monks).

The comparative dimension of the social wellbeing is not static but evolutionary in nature. The social fact is that not only general and specific factors have shaped local social history, but also such local histories are the by-product of a progressive syncresy of ideas that have been welcomed and have been freely mixing within the soils and souls. Here, then, complexity and change cannot be seen as binaries but tools. The clue is to locate the social threads that gave rise to heterogeneity by analysing-comparing and contrasting-how and under what conditions the local leaders from economy, education and religion competed as well as collaborated with each other. In this manner, development specialists can learn how tools of core and change were fashioned by each social group in their quest for legitimate authority and power.

The implications for social development from my field research investigation are three fold: First, structural mobility, chiefly educational mobility and economic mobility occurred when both the local merchants and educated reformers collaborated on public forums. The attempt to identify basic elements that covered the common ground by itself was perhaps the decisive moment of social reform. The town of Bally, located in Howrah district, did not favour a wealthy patron, semi-feudal estate owner or native *banian* ('merchant'). Nonetheless, the local upper-caste families of Brahmins and Kayasthas as well as the elite Muslim families who claim their respective lineages to Persia, notably the Ashrafs and the Saiyeds, agreed to unite and modernise their community resources in two principal ways.

The learned Brahmins who had previously taught Sanskritic theology in the *Chatuspathis* and the Islamic liturgy in the *Madrasas,* collaborated with both the colonial administrators and the local vernacular teachers *(mastermosais* and *moulavis* in home-based *pathsalas),* to reform and modernise education. Principally, the reform began with advancing the region's language, Bengali. Later, it included the modern curriculum in English. In addition to reforming education, the educators and merchants joined the administrators in reforming the basic material needs of the local population.

Together, the town of Bally established a public library *(Sadharan Granthaghar)* and a municipal corporation *(Poura Sabha).* From revenue collected by taxing property, the municipal body, the Bally Corporation council members established a free health care

centre, especially for the low-income households. The members (both elected by the Bally households as well as appointed by the Colony's officer) worked in common effort to improve the town's sanitation facilities and roads. In this meaningful way, both the non-material and material developments were initiated.

Second, I define the 'sociology' of social development as a systematic study of the way in which institutions and hierarchies are connected by cultural and historical forces to the wellbeing of individuals, households, and communities. In the West, a set of binary referents squarely centring on social ecology were considered. In his typology of "mechanical solidarity" and "organic solidarity," Emile Durkhiem was concerned with the outcomes of work and labour on community, namely, the manner by which value density would differentiate human institutions and peoples (Lukes 1975). Ferdinand Tonnies underscored the communal passage in terms of ecological bonds of groups. For him, the binary terms, *"Gemeinschaft"* and *"Gesellschaft,"* were normative depositories of cultural ecology of time and memory. Tonnies argued that social interactions and relations would change from small and primitive groups and kinships to heterogeneous voluntary associations and rational market-oriented norms where affective and emotional connections would be diminished, if not absent (Tonnies and Loomis 1957).

Max Weber's approach was interpretative in that he conceptualised the evolution of the capitalist spirit and near inevitable human progress of rationalisation and bureaucratisation. He agreed with his colleague, Georg Simmel (1971) that the process of sociological development was fundamentally transformative in that the patterns of authority, institutional autonomisation, and above all, objectification of caste/class, status and power would change (Bendix 1962). Finally, Karl Marx predicted that the social change from a feudal to industrial economy and the ensuing capitalisation and *embourgeoisement* ('material status ennoblement') of working class would ultimately result in conflict and revolution in the colonies (Marx and Engels 1972).

Nearly a century later, the ecological thesis of social development was differentiated by internal stagnant 'traditional' factors (such as poverty, illiteracy, low economic productivity) and external 'modern' values (modern scientific education, civil society, political democracy). Talcott Parsons delineated pattern dichotomies

between "tradition" and "modernity." In weighing the internal endogenous factors against the external exogenous values, he typified the emergence, called "modernisation" where internal ecological systems demonstrate a high degree of structural as well as functional heterogeneity—viz., diffusion, adoption and adaptation (Parsons and Shils 1951).

Contrasted to Parsons, Andre Gunder Frank (1967) argued that the empirical reality of the internal conditions is otherwise because since the fifteenth century the European traders and colonial governments had crated off material goods. He inferred that they caused "underdevelopment," by depleting resources and neglecting economic development.

VI. Findings

The findings from the case study of the district town of Bally, located in Howrah district show little empirical congruence for a principal reason. Unlike the binary precepts of development as discussed above, I find that the district town folks deliberated within *both* tradition and modernity. Furthermore, the emerging normative boundary of towns, coupled between sacred and secular, acted as a platform where ideas and actions were tested, sorted and applied. In an important sense, Bengal towns can be viewed as a sociological laboratory where classical ethos mixed with liberal ideas and practices imported from abroad.

Through trial and error, the town households modernised social conduct that combined both religion and commerce. The towns allowed the households to experiment with both core and change. For example, social habit of India's syncretistic faiths and religious cultures, that have been adopting other philosophies and adapting some of their values, anchored political context of change.

The historical time evolution of town, especially the manner by which a town became physically located, and then culturally constructed, has important implications for patterns of authority and mobility. Although their cultural roots go back more than a thousand years, today's towns in the modern sense were born in the late eighteenth century, when colonisation, inward migration and geological drift combined to produce vibrant urban cauldrons that were both elegant and debauched, and endlessly alluring.

The rise of modern towns in Bengal (also in India) differed significantly from the rise of medieval urban centres. According to Chattopadhyay (1986: 30), the medieval places may have signified to a certain degree commercial and occupational specificity. However, these "nodal points of local exchange" were without an "epicentre." Furthermore, Chattopadhyay (1986: 30ff.) found from case archives that "aspired mobility" of "commercial elites...did not go beyond validation within the norms of traditional social order."

In India, the term *district town* is an imported and imperial construct. The Mughal Emperors (1526–1717 C.e.) demarcated *Zillah*, 'District,' boundaries as revenue collection divisions (Sarkar 1972). They collected revenue in three ways: (a) *mal*, revenue directly collected from land and salt production; (b) *sair*, revenue collected from customs, tolls, ferries, and so on; and (c) *bazi jama*, assorted receipts from fines, properties, excises, and the like. The record-keeper or *Quanungo*, appointed by the crown, kept copious records of payments and dues (Ramsbotham 1929: 409–431).

The next alien power to trade and occupy the land, the Company and later the Colony (1698–1947 C.e.), gradually legalised territories (Baden-Powell 1892; Misra 1961). The Empire formalised districts as legal units, in which typically both the municipal and the criminal courts, as well as the supporting public bureaus and administrative departments were stationed. On matters of jurisprudence, Misra (1961) claims that the British preserved the Mughal format of the courts of *adalat*—that is, civil as well as criminal divisions. Notably, though, Britain reintroduced the pre-Mughal rule of heredity and allowed certain territories to remain under the domain of the king (Penson 1929).[1]

By the early 1700s, given the region's variegated soils and physical resources, each district town settlement reflected its own distinctive socio-physical characteristics in terms of population composition, institutional history and cultural memory. Nonetheless, emigration from village to town and the ensuing urbanisation was informed locally by the area's distinctive property rules. These included hereditary rights, cultivation types and cultivation methods in the western region, and mineral extractions in the north-western region. Social historians seem to agree that the legal "entitlement" of Bengal by Britain started in earnest when the Company put into administrative

respectively documented such attempts in the districts of Chittagong (1761–1785) and Birbhum (1765–1820).

Sinha (1962: 219) associated civic culture with economic "class" as an a *priori* condition for the development of towns and cities. Class, he contended, is joined with culture when the "middle class" becomes the "dominant force in society." The in-depth study of the ethnology of Baruipur town by Chakrabarti *et al.* (2002) has recently demonstrated my contention. The town of Baruipur, located in the southern wetlands of the 24-Parganas, is an ideal illustration of a town, where trade and education were the determining factors. It is here that the native-born educators and merchants re-evaluated and reformed a vernacular ethos, customs and school curricula. This river settlement was cited in religious literature as early as 1409 C.e. (Chakrabarti *et al.* 2002).

The town of Baruipur also had been a commercial site for a long time. The key crops were indigo and betel leaf. By 1850, the commercial hub was in Puratan Bazar. The goods from the marketplace *(bazar)* were ferried by boats on *Adi Ganga* ('half-Ganges'). In 1862, rail lines connected the southern region of Bengal.

The town's spiritual mission was advanced by the residents' alliances, reforms and faiths. For example, Muslims and Christians settled there early. Baruipur dwellers and people living nearby also accepted indigenous groups and welcomed them to worship freely. Around the turn of the seventeenth century, the Christian Catholic Mission founded Saint Peter's Church in the town. A primary English-language school was established there in 1846, and twelve years later was expanded to include a high school. The Madarat Academy, a Muslim school, followed.

Today, according to Chakravorti *et al.* (2002), about 35 ethnic groups live in the city. In this southern territory of the 24-Parganas, peasants organised cooperative styles of farming indigo. The farmers cooperated economically because most of them owned small plots of land. Moreover, since *neel* (indigo) was bringing in a good sum of money from the world market, the small farmers joined to maximise their profits. Thus, the internal organisation for the production of indigo maximised cooperative methods of crop cultivation.

profits. Thus, the internal organisation for the production of indigo maximised cooperative methods of crop cultivation.

Third and finally, overshadowing the range of developmental potential and growth of the towns in Bengal (see Table 1) was the fact that most rural families continued to live in villages. The economic status of the many landless and marginal farmers changed very little with the entry of Britain into India's (and in our case example Bengal's) rural society. According to the 1911 Census (cited in Dasgupta 2005: 102–105), the number of villages and towns that were located in the five divisions of Bengal were ranked as follows:

Table 1

Villages and Towns in the Five Divisions of Bengal		
Division	Village	Town
Presidency Division	278	48
Burdwan Division	861	28
Rajshahi Division	1,954	20
Dacca Division	1,869	17
Chittagong Division	1,904	6

Nonetheless, by constructing the crude measure of urbanisation, determined as the ratio between town by village, ranged from as high as 17.27 per cent in the Presidency Division to as low as 0.32 per cent in the Chittagong Division, I find that the respective "divisional towns" of Presidency Division (48 towns) and Burdwan Division (28 towns) advanced the most in socioeconomic terms.

Moreover, when examined closely the distinctive context of innovations that may have promoted socioeconomic advancements in towns, I find evidence that the rate of growth of towns between the 1700s and 1800s served as indicator of human welfare and economic wellness.

The rise of towns served as a bridgehead between the cities and the villages. I find that the way comparative scales of cooperation and collaboration were promoted between the vernacular elites from the estate owners and traders, and the local-country teachers and intelligentsia, determined in good measure the scope and degree of

community construction of public civic infrastructure and jobs. I demonstrated this vital connection between the elites in two intensive case studies in the rise of town in Bally and the Cossimbazar merchant family.

Most critically, I find that economy and ecology interacted in the way the *nature* of capital grew institutionally differentiated in terms of both structure and process.[2] I have documented how many of the native traders invested shares of the capital for the common public good. Considering the type of money allocations, transactions, and exchanges during the time-period ending in the nineteenth century, I estimated that there were seven kinds of capital: (1) financial; (2) commercial; (3) working; (4) loan; (5) risk; (6) state or public; and (7) productive and sustainable development.

VII. Envoi

I show evidence in the case commentary that a view of traditional developing societies as singularly "mechanical"— to use Durkheim's designation—is simplistic. By applying an empirical case sociological study in an economically developing region of the world, hopefully I have demonstrated that any discussion on theories of social development must first consider the complex institutional vocabularies, grammars, meanings, and experiences that incrementally evolve over time and region. I analysed the eastern region of India, especially Bengal between the 1700s and the 1800s. My essential thesis is that institutional morphology of pluralism, an important root of commonality, was produced out of three social agencies and actors: local merchants, educators, and priests. I demonstrated this via intensive case documents, histories, censuses, and family oral narratives. I conclude that languages, faiths and economies mobilised formal social structures and resources in terms of status, authority and power at the local level. The agencies also weaved a complex web of informal associations and interpersonal contacts. With the ever increasing rise in local complexity, the vernacular leaders both competed and collaborated in order to establish their own legitimate authority, traditional as well as rational.

The implications from my field research for social development literature are three fold. Structural mobility, chiefly educational mobility and economic mobility occurred when the local merchants

and educators agreed on a common civic structure. They did so by constructing, at times however painfully, the civil language of cooperation. They did so in both formal and less than formal ways. In formal and legal terms, they elected native leaders to the local municipal boards. Informally, these leaders, men and women, worked in tandem to build common space for most of their neighbours by instituting public infrastructures, such as schools, dispensaries, roads, etc. that benefited the many.

From the empirical case studies of local merchant families and educators, I find that district towns between the 1700s and the 1800s, served as an indicator for human welfare and economic wellness. I hypothesised that the rise of towns served as a bridgehead between the city and countryside. I conclude that the manner by which the comparative scales of cooperation between the vernacular elites from the estate land owners and traders (most often the two were joined) and the local country teachers was established, determined in good measure the scope as well as the degree of social community reform and progress.

I also examine the ethical transformation of faiths from suffering and renunciation – Max Weber termed it "theodicy of suffering" – to social welfare services ("theodicy of human welfare"). The educated salaried class, who mostly lived in the urban cities, such as Calcutta (now Kolkata), Dacca (now Dhaka) and Patna, and professionals, who worked and lived in the district settlements, modernised faith—especially Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. Town reformers, too, fashioned their respective social movements after their classical texts and appeals.

Notes

1 By a minute in 1793, Lord Cornwallis instituted *Zilla* ('District') town courts for primary jurisdiction. He also established four provincial Courts of Appeal at Calcutta, Patna, Dhaka (in Bangladesh) and Murshidabad. The City of Calcutta was the venue for the Court of last Appeal, the *Sadr Diwant Adalat*. Also in Calcutta, a Supreme Court of Criminal Justice, called *Nizamat,* was founded (Penson 1929: 453).

2 According to Schimank (2001: 3664-3667) "social differentiation means both a process and a structure. In structural terms, it refers to the fact that a unit of analysis, such as society, consists of a number of distinct

parts. These parts may be of the same kind, such as families as the basic components of tribal societies. Or the parts may be different, such as subsystems – economy, politics, mass media etc.– making up modern society. As a process, social differentiation is the dynamic that brings about.... Four kinds of causal factors can be distinguished, improvement of performance, evolution, cultural ideas, and interests of actors.... [The] consequences [of social differentiation] are neither totally positive nor totally negative but a mixed blessing.... The abundance of options is the result of performance improvements in all social subsystems.... However, meaningful attachments... are eroded [due to] individualisation."

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