



SIVARAJAVEL IAS ACADEMY
AN IDEAL INSTITUTE FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS

THE **SOCIAL FACT**

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STEPHANIE COONTZ

MARRIAGE, A HISTORY: HOW LOVE CONQUERED MARRIAGE



Sivarajavel IAS Academy 's

THE SOCIAL FACT

is a monthly bulletin for sociology current affairs which tries to give aspirants a new dimensions in their sociology preparations. The Magazine has been designed in such away that the reading experience is enriching and insightful for the readers.

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THE SOCIAL FACT

INSIDE THIS SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN

Connecting the dots :

Sociology is a process in making. Everyday newspapers and weekly have many important news, which have sociological angle in subtle form. This chapter helps you to connect those dots and give a clear picture of the reality.

Sociology Explained :

World is one for sociology. Many authors explains social problems and social changes in length and breath through their research. This chapter collects and compiles those articles which are related to our syllabus.

Perspectives :

Beauty of Sociology, as a social science, is its capacity to offer different perspectives of a same topic. This chapter analyses a current topic with an unique social perspectives.



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CONNECTING THE DOTS

- *Same-sex marriages can rock societal values says center and it adds that any change in human relationship should come from legislature, not court, Centre says in its affidavit in response to a Supreme Court decision to examine petitions on same-sex marriage : **Discourses about same-sex marriage are shaped by the combination of the informant's social imagination of homosexuality with their religious and political ideologies like Young political liberals, Young religious conservatives, Older liberals (detailed explanation is given in our Telegram channel)***
- *Women in Bengaluru can take free rides in city buses on Women's Day. The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTTC), to mark the day, has decided to offer free bus rides in all types of buses. By this move, Bangalore joined the list of cities like Delhi, Chennai, which offers free rides in the city : **this will have Impact on women's mobility, which is also linked to education, employment and access to public spaces. Many Women remain immobile due to lack of money with them. Mobility of many others is restricted by families by imposing financial control upon them.***
- *Former U.S. President Donald Trump dramatically raised the stakes of the 2024 election as he warned he was the only candidate who could save America from "warmonger" Democrats and the "zealots and fools" of the mainstream Republican party, similarly in many countries individuals voices are gaining more weightage than the party as whole : **Among many reasons for the crisis of democracy, the lack of intra party democracy in the prominent political parties is the most dangerous one. One-man ship within a party would affect the larger society, once they capture power through the democratic process.***

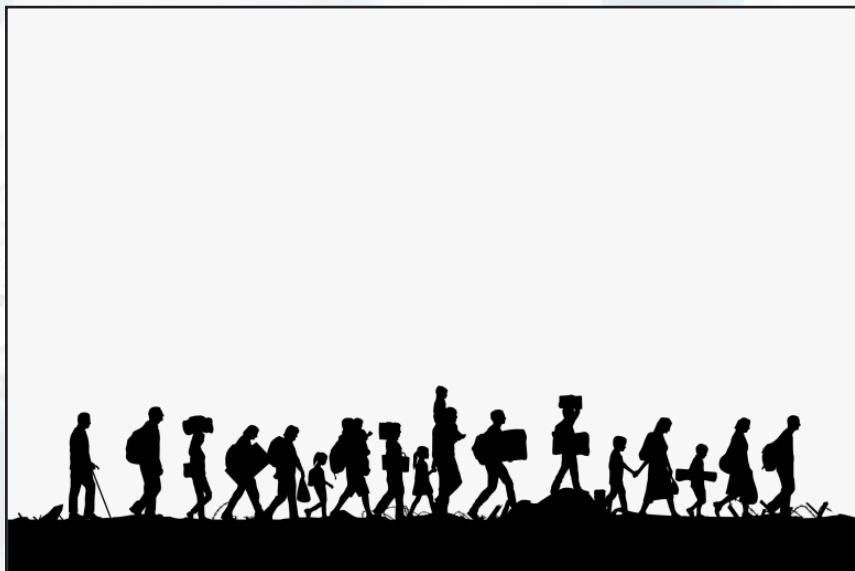
- The sanitation workers of Dharmapuri pick up human excreta daily — an inhuman job that also has administrative corruption and caste bias built into it; workers speak out about how the administration treats them on a daily basis, but still there is no remedy for the people (mostly so called lower caste) who are doing the inhuman job : **Socio-political instrument like Constitution rejected the age-old concept of purity and Pollution in the caste system but in reality political-bureaucratic structure itself act as hindrance to the eradication, over and above the social biases.**
- Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis asked for forgiveness from the kin of the 57 dead in the nation's worst rail disaster and promised to provide relief immediately. Similarly, last year the Indian Prime minister apologized for the inconvenience caused due to the strict lockdowns and informed the government doing everything to relieve the pressure on people : **Tronto argues Care is currently too far removed from the concerns of politics. Caring Democracy traces the reasons for this disconnection and argues for the need to make care, not economics, the central concern of democratic political life. Above incidents are an example of having care at the center of democracy.**
- Over 37% Dalit and Adivasi students were asked their entrance examination ranks by fellow students with the intention of finding out their caste, an internal survey at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay had found last year. The survey also pointed out the institutional discrimination faced by the dalit students are trivialized as individual mental health issues: **Covert casteism is a form of caste discrimination that is disguised and subtle, rather than public or obvious. Concealed in the fabric of society, covert casteism discriminates against individuals through often evasive or seemingly passive methods.**
- Social media is redefining how people grieve, with Twitter in particular widening the conversation around death and mourning which were earlier considered to be private matters, a new study has found. to discuss, debate, and even canonize or condemn" them : **The effect of technology in the societal structure is evident both in tangible and in tangible terms, eventhough the results are in latent form.**

- SS Rajamouli's RRR has created history by becoming the first Indian feature film to win an Oscar. The film's 'Naatu Naatu' soundtrack by MM Keeravani was awarded the Best Original Song Award at the ongoing 95th Academy Awards in USA : **In the Marxist view, The way the win of RRR is branded as the success of India makes to feel that the nomination and win is an attempt to pander to the Indian market. The Academy, like any other organization at this level, needs sponsors and advertising, which in turn needs viewers. Viewership comes from one of the largest countries (India) in the world which, unlike China, does not have any internet restrictions.**
- Half of explicitly aggressive and misogynistic tweets containing abusive words are posted by women in the UK, a new study has found. This study provides a birds-eye snapshot of what is ultimately a very personal and often traumatic experience for women : **Patriarchy, Misogyny, Sexism are the structures which are against women but not necessarily by the men. The above example shows how the women are influenced by the patriarchal structure and in turn cause problems to themselves.**
- Following the rumors about the attacks of North Indian migrants in Tamil Nadu, the state government acted swiftly by conducting 100s of camps to alleviate the fears of the migrants and issued pamphlets in Hindi, which is quite different as the party in the power is known for supporting the concept of sons of soil : **The Sons of soil was a prominent phenomenon in the late 1960s to 1990, where people from other state faced discrimination to social isolation. But once the economical integration happens within the country, the economic interest takes precedence over the identity like ethnicity, race, religion etc. This is the justification of Karl Marx's view that an economic infrastructure would decide the other societal super structure.**
- In recent years, many have embraced hustle culture, believing sustained hard work can turn every dream into reality. However, several studies have shown that overwork can not only lead to early-age burnout but also severely damage people's health : **Marxists argue that hustle culture is the product of exploitative capitalism as it works in favour of economy at the cost of human well being.**

- *A proposed Bill on granting a day's leave to school and college-going girls and women in jobs was not found worthy of discussion in the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly. An MLA said the Assembly was "too holy" a place to discuss a "letera cheez (dirty thing)": **Only 5 out of 60 MLA are women in Arunachal Pradesh assembly so lack of representation of women in the political sphere trivialize the important issues of the women. Women political inclusion is a social, economic, and political good in itself.***
- *Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) leader Salhoutuonuo Kruse, 55, who made history by becoming Nagaland's first woman Minister, said she was thrilled after being sworn in as one of the 12 Ministers. The main challenge was contesting the polls as a woman in the Naga society that has a patriarchal mindset, although accommodative to a considerable extent now : **Women under public patriarchy are allowed roles in the public sphere, but remain oppressed by the gender inequalities in paid employment, education, economic conditions, and positions of power held in society. This can be a step towards removing public patriarchy in Nagaland.***
- *People who do not portray their true self on Facebook may have a greater stress level and feel less socially connected, a new study has warned. Researchers found that people may express their true self more easily on Facebook than in person, and the more one's "Facebook self" differs from their true self, the greater their stress level and the less socially connected they tend to be : **Psychologist Soloman Asch famously investigated how the social pressures of others could cause someone to conform. The need for one to switch from "real self" to "Facebook self" is due to the pressure of conformity and in the process, the people become less connected with the real society.***



A PICTURE TO PONDER



*"Refugees are neither seen nor heard,
but they are everywhere."*



SOCIOLOGY EXPLAINED

MOTHERHOOD IN AN INCREASINGLY “PLANNED” WORLD

Paper 1 : Systems of Kinship - Contemporary trends.

Paper 1: Family, household, marriage.

Whether, when, and even how to have children are increasingly complicated questions facing women today. On the one hand, revived abortion debates and restrictive legislation in many U.S. states may mean forced motherhood for those who become pregnant; on the other, both cultural and financial pressures around motherhood are weakening. For the first time in history there are now more women than men in the college-educated workforce, meaning that fewer women are sticking to stay-at-home parenting, and our culture is increasingly starting to view motherhood as an option rather than as an expectation.

In addition to more financial and cultural freedom, accessible contraception has also made it possible for women to be more intentional about whether and when they want to have children than in the past. In 2018, an estimated 65% of U.S. women of reproductive age (those aged 15 – 49) were using some form of contraceptive method and there were no significant differences based on level of education.

Whether they dropped out of high school or have a Ph.D., these women share one thing in common – most of them are taking active steps to control their fertility. These efforts have been successful, too: the rate of unintended pregnancies has seen a significant decline over the past two decades. As the sociological imagination invites us to explore, these larger social forces are having real-life impacts on the decisions women are making around motherhood. Women have become far less likely to have children before the age of 30 since the mid-2000s and are instead increasingly likely to wait until their 30s or 40s to have their first child. While these trends are positive in that women can make more informed choices about when to start a family, they may also come with some challenges. For example, if more women decide to not have children all together, we could eventually end up with a host of economic issues: without a big enough labor force to support the aging population, social safety nets like Social Security and Medicare could become underfunded.

Another challenge that comes along with women's increased control over their fertility relates to the practicality of getting pregnant once they have decided that they are ready. In an article published last year in Sociological Forum, Eliza Brown interviews women in heterosexual relationships who are trying to conceive about the work they put into getting pregnant. Brown finds that contrary to the “romantic” cultural ideals of what sexual intercourse should be like between partners, women experience having intercourse with their partner for the sole purpose of conceiving as another stressful, full-time job. Because they are unwilling to wait to conceive “spontaneously” or have struggled with fertility, they find themselves having to meticulously plan the perfect time to have intercourse to optimize their chance of getting pregnant.

Women reported feeling emotionally drained and exhausted by this process, particularly because they were trying to keep their partners excited and engaged by performing desire and interest in being intimate outside of just the purpose of conceiving. In this new era of women's increased control over their fertility, planning a pregnancy is another way in which the sociological concept of "emotional labor" manifests for women. Originally coined by Arlie Hochschild, the term refers to the work that "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (20). Hochschild argued that women perform emotional labor at much higher rates than men do— both in their personal and work lives. From a young age, women are taught to set the emotional tone in interpersonal settings and to display caring emotion in acceptable and "thoughtful" ways.

In the case of planning a pregnancy, Brown argues that women are forced not just to monitor their own bodies (constantly checking for signs of ovulation), but also to perform this emotional labor with their partners: they have to perform wanting intercourse, not just needing it to conceive, in order to keep the ideal of a romantic marriage intact. So, while it does seem that women are increasingly able to "have it all" – i.e. a career and a family on their own terms and on their own timeline – this research shows that having it all may also come at an emotional and mental cost.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: SPACE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Paper 1 : Scope of the subject

Paper 1 : Non- positivist methodologies.

Every city has a heart, a rhythm, and a beat. The pace of a modern city's life is characterized by industrial civilization, new information technologies, a settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals, and faster methods of transport. Buses, trams, metros, ferries, and passenger trains, are, for example, all fascinating urban spaces to study what is, can be, or should be public in the city. Every day, those large vehicles steer their way through a network of streets, trying to carry its passengers safely from one part of the city to another. Rushing all day in places filled with people who often seem to avoid interacting with one another, public transport may function as a rational example of modern city design; a form of social control that connects us to our sense of time and place as well as to others.

When waiting for a bus, for instance, we usually gather around a bus stop; a sign or covered shelter that signals us where to get on and off the bus. At first glance, this apparently mundane waiting area might not catch our attention. Joe Moran sees this piece of street furniture as a “kind of prism through which we can read the uneven modernization of everyday life and the changing priorities of society”. In other words, a bus shelter is not just a place to wait for a bus, but also a symbol of social control. First, bus shelters represent a colonization of towns and cities by advert-laden objects. As miniature billboards, bus shelters are, according to Moran, an “adjunct of the advertising industry” With illuminated posters plastered on almost every side and large enough to be seen from the street, a bus shelter is a brilliant place used to strategically direct advertisement campaigns at bus users as well as at passing pedestrians and car drivers.

Another interesting example of the conventionality of public transport lies in the idea of timetables, schedules, waiting, and queuing. While the systems of public transport force their passengers into fixed timetables, schedules, and unchanging routes, those divisions of time and place are important to co-ordinating and maintaining social order. Together, they orchestrate the temporal rhythm of duration, sequence, and movement. With that in mind, do you feel stressed and ruled by the clock while waiting for a bus, metro, tram, train, or ferry? Modern innovative technologies may help turn waiting into a meaningful experience. News screens, newsstands, area maps, apps, videos, and music entertain and distract passengers while waiting. Roofed shelters, benches, plantings and near street vendors provide comfort, safety and goods related to the passengers' needs.

In fact, many cities and transit agencies strategically plan the location and design of bus shelters, metro stations and other waiting areas for passengers, passers-by, and commuters. In following specific guidelines, well-designed urban spaces for public transport offer visibility, comfort and convenience, accessibility and information. The intention is to decrease the boredom and frustration of wasting time by creating the feeling of efficient time use. So, how do you pass time while in transit? The desire to structure, regulate and maximize time can be seen as a reflection of modernity. Social theorist Georg Simmel, for instance, would see the organization of time as a defining feature of the accelerated pace of modern city life. Time has become a precious resource that needs to be saved, well spent, managed, and used carefully. In particular, Simmel observed how clock time rules and schedules every minute in people's life; resulting, however, in more and more fleeting, impersonal encounters.

Have you ever witnessed examples of fleeting sociability in modes of public transport? After hopping on the bus, for instance, we can immediately see and feel the social etiquette surrounding this public space. Unspoken rules dictate how strangers manage their bodies, how close they sit next to each other and where to look. Sociologist Erving Goffman would see those public situations of distancing and ignorance of fellow travellers as a form of face-saving “civil inattention.” Simmel, however, would point to “the mental attitude of the people of the metropolis to one another”. Users of public transport might physically connect to unknown others while at the same time silently withdraw themselves from each other.

Perhaps Simmel’s description of the modern city life allows us to understand the sometimes tense and reserved “metropolitan attitude.” Such situations of polite aloofness experienced when using whatever mode of public transport does not merely reflect the motion of the city, but something a bit more multifarious. As semi-public “non-places,” systems of mass transit represent sites where urban dwellers found themselves intermixed in worlds of strangers to which nobody feels connected. At the same time, those places create new elements of interaction and bound its transient population together by a common if temporary interest: to get things done in time. It is almost impossible to imagine systems of public transport without a temporal dimension. Taking the bus might seem to be a simple and taken-for-granted part of metropolitan life. But have you ever become aware of how our daily activities and mutual relations are put into a stable, (im)personal and (dis)connecting time schedule?

A PICTURE TO PONDER



*"Women and girls today are living the legacy of women's rights
that seven generations of women before us have given
their best to achieve"*

*International women day
March 8th*

AN APPLIED SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DESIGN

Paper 1: Sociology - The Discipline

Paper 1 : Scope of the subject

You ever find yourself feeling frustrated when an airport security line seems to be moving too slowly? How about when restaurant tables are arranged so close to each other that it's hard to navigate the trek to the restroom (let alone have a private conversation)? Or when you can't get work done because the noises coming from a housemate's conversation are pulsing through your walls? It's easy to imagine ways that our built environments (and how objects are arranged in those environments) don't always meet our personal and social needs. Put another way, we often notice that something is poorly designed when our engagement with the design leaves us feeling frustrated, stuck, or even excluded.

Now think about when things go well: the line moves quickly; the dinner goes smoothly; the work gets done without interruption. Have you ever stopped to notice when things work well in the spaces and places you occupy? Sometimes I find I have to make a little more effort to recognize when things are flowing as compared to when things are stuck. For me, it is often easier to notice bad design than it is to notice good design. Why is this? Our everyday lives we pass over many taken-for-granted phenomena. We don't think about how wandering through an airport goes well when the signage is easy to see and the paths are easy to navigate. It doesn't take a lot of time or energy to know how to act when we enter a restaurant and either see a host greeting us or a sign that says "seat yourself." If we've just finished a large project and we were not interrupted by a noisy neighbor, we may not have even noticed the time flying by. We don't see familiar things precisely because they are working well.

Until they're not. Or until we realize – often with the help of someone who struggles to navigate the design – that they're really only working well for some of us. As sociologists we uncover taken-for-granted assumptions, systems, and processes. We notice these elements of our social world even when things are not obviously bad. This noticing is what Peter Berger called the sociological perspective. He said that things in our social world that seem natural or normal are actually “not what they seem.” If you find yourself noticing how something is designed even in moments when it's working well for you (and especially when you consider that it may not work well for everyone), you are entering into Berger's “not what they seem” arena. In my research and teaching, I focus on questions that connect the design of our spaces with our roles, relationships, and social inequalities – including when designs work well and when they seem to create conflict or exacerbated inequalities between groups.

While sociologists can study the ways that designs influence people, as applied sociologists we can also assist in the design process itself. How might this happen? In an ideal (built) world, architects, builders, and designers would create spaces using their expertise alongside ideas from those who'd like to be able to take for granted that the space will work well for them. To do this, an inclusive input-gathering process in the design process is needed, using the kinds of methods that sociologists are good at employing such as interviews, surveys, and observations. For example, designers could convene a focus group for comment on a 3-D design mock-up. Then, they'd review this input and use it to inform a revised design. Often they'd also include a post-occupancy evaluation (perhaps observations or a short survey) to see how the design may (or may not) be working once built.

Whether it's a TSA line, a restaurant, or a home remodel, if builders or designers don't incorporate a way to capture what people may do, want, or believe in the design process, designs will fall flat. Sociologists are able to guide people who are creating designed spaces in the collection and analysis of data from people who may use the designs. I do this kind of "people research" consulting work with design organizations who'd like to employ social scientific data collection to see if their designs will work or are working for end-users. I have also written an accessible and concise guidebook for architects, builders, and designers to be able to inform their designs with inclusive data-gathering processes – something I call socially-informed research in the design process. I define this as "the ethical and intentional incorporation of human-centered data gathering and analysis throughout the design process. It is the iterative and systematic practice of gathering, analyzing, and sharing input from people who occupy and engage with the built environments that architects and interior designers create as the designs are created and built."

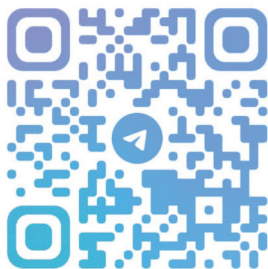
But helping designers employ sound "people research" methods is only half the recipe. Imagine the airport security line signage for someone with low vision. Imagine the restaurant navigation for someone using a walker. Imagine a noisy house for someone with sound sensitivity due to PTSD. This is a community of microhomes designed to meet the needs of people with chronic homelessness. The team of architects and designers asked for my help to create inclusive interview questions for a particularly vulnerable population. I was able to point out how they were already doing a great job of designing inclusive data-gathering techniques; I was also able to add a few tips for how best to choreograph the interviews so that people who were otherwise suspicious of outsiders from formal organizations felt comfortable sharing their stories, and could do so in private.

As an applied sociologist partnering with designers, builders, and architects, my job is to teach them how to use the sociological perspective – to see the strange in the familiar, with particular focus on how cultural values and social locations of people who will inhabit and use the design may impact their experiences. I also aim to teach useful social scientific data-gathering methods, especially how to ask the right kinds of questions to get the most inclusive input possible. Inclusive data-gathering during the design process is needed if we want to create inclusive designs.





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PERSPECTIVES

INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS - CURRENT SITUATION

Paper 2 : Social Classes in India:

Paper 2 : Middle class in India

The Indian middle class is perhaps the most heterogeneous section of our society. While most impacted by common problems, it has also gained the most from incisive yet simple solutions over the past nine years. This has been largely due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's focus on the middle class, through his government's mantra of "ease of living". Its unambiguous focus has been to rationalise the tax burden of the middle class, put more money in their hands, improve healthcare and secure their future, provide state-of-the-art infrastructure, and most importantly, to eradicate corruption.

At the time of Independence, our nation had a pyramid of classes. The wealthy were at the apex, followed by the middle class and the vast base of the deprived and destitute. Today, things are changing at a fast pace. Many sections of society are now inching towards the ballooning phase, where the middle class has a lot more occupants with few at the top and the bottom. Not so long ago, the middle class found themselves between the devil and the deep blue sea, forever trying to make ends meet while aspiring for improving their quality of life. The anger of the middle class was visible in the streets and on social media during the UPA years.

The middle class got a ray of hope with the victory of this government in 2014. At that time, many critics said that the middle class was infatuated with this government and hoped this spell would soon end. However, the Prime Minister has continued to prevail by delivering consistently on expectations, breaking all precedents. On the one hand, he tried reining in inflation, which was frequently touching double digits, and on other hand, he was able to give a clean, corruption-free government. The average inflation between 2006-07 and 2013-14 was 8.7 per cent; that dipped to 4.6 per cent during 2014-15 to 2021-22. Inflation was low in India even during the Covid period, compared to other countries. In January, the International Monetary Fund lauded India for being a bright spot in the world economy.

Most previous governments largely left the middle class in the lurch as they were neither a vote bank nor a money bank for political parties. In contrast, the government has viewed the middle class as an evolving partner and a key enabler of India's path to great power status. In 2017, the government implemented the Goods and Services Tax (GST), which was a long pending reform. GST has ensured tax compliance plugging many systemic leakages, reducing cost of various goods to ensure more savings and disposable income for the middle class. The reforms in the banking sector including better asset quality, recapitalisation of PSBs, enactment of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and the ease of credit flow have aided the banking sector to become "wealth job creators". Lowering the overall interest burden on loans has benefitted the middle class immensely. The Covid pandemic saw the resilience of India's medical sector. Our government was able to vaccinate the highest number of people at lightning speed.

This has been possible thanks to the consistent improvement in access and quality of health care services across India. Jan Aushadi Kendras across India have offered low-cost generic medicines, while medical implants like heart stents and knee implants have seen their costs drop. Similarly, the middle-class dream of home ownership has become a reality. Various schemes of the government like the CLSS scheme for PMAY-Urban or SWAMIH (Special window for affordable and mid-income housing projects) for completion of stalled projects have been encouraging steps in this direction. Owning a car was once a luxury for the middle class. While we see an increase in new car sales, we are also witnessing the market of pre-owned cars increasing at a very high pace, indicating the emergence of the neo-middle class.

The twin mantras of the government — Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat — have all resulted in greater job opportunities. The government has not limited itself to being a job creator but is stimulating the entrepreneurial ecosystem of India to create more jobs, which will have a trickle-down effect. With small towns of the past decades becoming boom towns, the middle class is thriving across the length and breadth of the nation. Impeccable infrastructure ensuring seamless movement has become a source of pride for Indians who can now boast of world-class roads and highways. The focus of the government on high-speed railways, world-class road facilities, and increasing the network of urban transport has benefitted the citizens. There has been a massive increase in spending by the government on infrastructure, be it physical or digital. In the last eight years, the number of airports has gone up from 74 to 148, and the number of cities with operational metros has gone up from five to 20. From the state-of-the-art Vande Bharat trains to the rising number of colleges and universities, the middle class has benefitted the most.

The cost of mobile data has gone down sharply in India. While even in developed countries, the frequency of online payment of bills is low, digital payments have changed India forever. In December 2022, UPI, which forms a major part of the digital payment system, processed a staggering 7.82 billion transactions valued at Rs 125.94 trillion.

The middle class is experiencing flexibility, accessibility, affordability and liberty like never before. The narrative that the middle class was one step away from slipping into poverty is now a thing of the past. The growth achieved is irreversible and its lasting momentum will ensure further upward mobility. With dreams and aspirations coming true, the opportunities for the middle class are limited only by imagination. With a plethora of opportunities knocking on the door, the immense potential of the great Indian Middle Class has finally been unlocked by this government.



CONSTITUTION AND SOCIETY

Paper 1 : Nation, state, citizenship

Paper 2: Constitution, law and social change.

Citizens across the world strive for a workable system with its own preferences. This is enshrined in the Constitution, which becomes a meeting ground for the state and citizens to co-exist as autonomous entities. In most democracies, the constitution is guided by constitutionalism, which is the power to limit the government's absolutism. This idea was propagated by the likes of John Locke, who was an architect of constitutional liberalism, which kept citizens over the elected government. Political theorist and legal philosopher Montesquieu had a different but identical proposition: to divide the government and its powers and limit its centrality. In his opus, *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), Montesquieu provides a detailed overview of the differences between political power and government which were one and the same, though operated differently in philosophy and practice, i.e., policy.

Montesquieu offered what his English translator Thomas Nugent stated as an “art of government” to the sovereigns. This, indeed, was a model that was radical, controversial, methodical, scholarly, and transitional. The division of state power forms a standard template of today's constitutional vision in most states. However, legal scholars have raised the issue of separation of powers as ambiguous. Aileen Kavanagh sees the separation of powers as interdependent, non-facilitatory. This model purports a purist view of how things should be instead of having a constructive view of what is actually happening. The practicality of the separation of power through constitutionalism is meant to preserve the value of the constitution that rests power in the re-public.

Many commentators of the Constitution have relied on the vagueness of the written word and thus emboldened the grammarians of constitutions to interpret. The constitution became a source of thinking and a turf of contestation. The constitution, in theory, is a piece of written code acting as a supreme law of the land. The constitution is the basis of various legislation, treatises, and a model of conducting state affairs. It provides the basis for the distribution of powers, ranks, institutions, bodies, and organs of the state. Is it why the conversation surrounding the prose of the constitution is embedded in state and subjects? To understand this part of history, we must visit the Medieval European age. Medieval England is a source of much of the capitalist history of the modern world. The feature of this period was the reign of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. This was when invading forces across the North Sea and the English Channel were trying to overtake the grey, isolated island that offered refuge and part-prestige to the scions of Normans and Danes. The fishing settlement of England was attractive for trade and location.

The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were a structured hierarchy. The king was on top and had absolute authority. His family members gained special privileges and protection. Beneath them were thegns, the second-rank aristocrats, nobles. This was followed by a provincial polity of freemen, business holders and peasants. The royalty relied on the allegiance between lords and their subordinates. Anglo-Saxons were subdued by the Norman elites, who practically displaced the erstwhile Germanic rulers of England. The English barons started to pay their obeisance and tax to the new ruler. However, the relationship was fraught. It saw rebellion and the rise of a new class willing to confront the king. The monarch, King John, received a big blow when the protesting barons captured the Tower of London. Helpless, King John decided to negotiate. The barons came up with their list of demands that came to be known as the Article of Barons, which eventually formed a sizable portion of the world's first written constitution,

In it(Magna Carta) the King was held responsible under the law, a practice seen as unbecoming of the king, who was usually above the law. Nay, the monarch was the law. We have come a long way from the medieval age. The spirit of a social contract and its relationship with the state and subjects in a capitalist society has undergone profound changes. England, which had seen the birth of modern constitutionalism, did not carry the spirit of the constitution. It does not have a written constitution. Modern legal thinking is credited much to the enlightenment era thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and David Hume (The History of England). The modern parlance of legal maxims and protection of codes and customs through fundamental law, vis a vis constitution, is taken from recent histories of civilization and governance. This European period was marred in controversy and inconsistency, yet the intellectual provenance to guide a state with citizen rule was guaranteed through vote and tax collection.

The idea of an Indian republic established through the written word was first propagated by Samrat Ashok, who wrote down the manifesto and model of his ideal society on the rock edits as a constitutional guide—the law of the Dhamma to his empire. In the history of the constitution of nations, the Magna Carta has a unique position. India's history of the constitution has been confrontational. Indians relate democracy to the constitution. The existence of the constitution does not guarantee democratic ethos as a precondition for society. The Dharmashastra, Sutras, and Smritis acted as a fundamental ethic of sovereigns over multiple millennia, which did not authorize democracy centred on the liberty of individuals. In An Argumentative Indian, Amartya Sen sees this blending of western and Indian ideals as contributing to the making of India's modern constitutional history.

This he notes through the long tradition of dialogue and debates existing in epics that are venerated as the ancient history of India's civilizational output. Yet, the same canon of historical thought is undergirded by immorality and the practice of hierarchy. That is why when it came to talking about the Indian Constitution, the architect emphasized its morality, which he contended was proof of an alive society.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta attributes this doctrine of Ambedkar as “anti-revolutionary” that partly drew upon George Grote's faith in the archetype of constitutional authority. I think Ambedkar was also gesturing to the rebellious class to have faith in the system and not burn down the republic to ashes, as change has some portion of anxiety and patience. Morality meant a commitment to an idea but more to one's discomfort—a premise of benevolence shown to the nation.



SOCIAL CRITICISM AND NATION-BUILDING

Paper 1 : Politics and Society

Paper 2 : Nation, democracy and citizenship.

The current ruling regime does not feel restrained in repeating the rhetoric that it wants to build a strong India. And, to support such a slogan, it comes up with new slogans that feed into a reign of rhetoric. However, its arbitrary, yet aggressive style of imagining a strong India has led to the development of absolute intolerance to social criticism—that expects the government to accept candidly—of ideological politics that suppresses even discussion on caste as social reality. The question that one needs to ask is: Under what political conditions does the imagination of the nation allow for constructive social criticism? The “emergence of a nation” from the clutches of imperialism and a “nation in the making,” both possess moderating thrust and provide an opportunity to negotiate internal differences. This element of moderation, thus, allows for social criticism and its acceptance through an engagement with those who launch such criticism.

It is interesting to keep in mind that the proponents of “reformist Hinduism” such as the Arya Samajist demonstrated some degree of readiness to tolerate social criticism of the caste system by the victims of casteism. This readiness could be understood in terms of the primary need to achieve social solidarity against imperialism. Thus, the acute need for a nation’s independence foregrounded the urgency to tolerate some degree of social criticism which was considered as legitimate by the Arya Samajist, who, however, retained the legislative power to limit the scope of this social criticism. Such proposals, which involved acceptance of mild criticism and rejection of harsh criticism of Hinduism, are evident in B R Ambedkar’s encounter with Jat Pat Todak Mandal.

In 1936, the Mandal invited Ambedkar to deliver a talk on annihilation of caste at Lahore. But the Mandal found some of the views expressed in the address too harsh for Hinduism and hence wanted Ambedkar to drop the harsh part of his speech and downsize it to a mild version. On account of Ambedkar's refusal to comply, the Mandal cancelled the invited talk. What is so significant in terms of reformist Hinduism is that its proponents—for the sake of nationalism—showed readiness to at least publicly discuss some innocuous aspects of the caste system, and to this extent, they, in the interest of the nation, were amenable to the need for social criticism. Although Ambedkar's attempt at social criticism was to make the discourse of nationalism complete.

In the current political dispensation, the proponents of a majority religion have moved from “reformist Hinduism” to political Hindutva which does not seem to tolerate any degree of social criticism of caste. In fact, public institutions—following anti-caste thrust of the Indian Constitution—are supposed to take a lead in encouraging public debate on caste. But the experience of the last few years shows that those at the top of these institutions have been active in suppressing the discussion on caste. This suppression of discussion on caste has been followed by public institutions refusing permission to host caste-related seminars or withdrawing invitations extended to speakers. It seems the ideology of Hindutva, which finds its resonance in the current public institutions, compels the latter to seek deviation from the constitutional ideals. Its complete disregard of a public discussion on caste, annihilates the possibility of even moderately discussing caste problems, as was once attempted at Lahore in 1936. Discussing the caste problem from the platform of public educational institutions will help the younger generation to develop a mind with a capacity to reflect.

However, such forms of discussions, which should otherwise be considered as constitutional responsibility, are ignored by the public institutions. And, unfortunately, the discussion on caste would be reduced to a section of social media run by anti-caste groups. Most of these groups are forced to discuss caste and its tragic manifestation, for example, atrocities against Dalits. Should we be discussing caste only in its tragic manifestation, and only within the groups that are the victims of such atrocities?

Caste faces a complete ban on its discussion through public institutions. The overlap between Hindutva and the current ruling dispensation does not want to resolve the paradox where it claims to accommodate so many Dalits in the cabinet. Like the Arya Samajist, it does not show a pragmatic readiness to engage with anti-caste efforts. Like the Arya Samajist, it does not need social solidarity to fight against imperialism. That moment has passed some 85 years back, where its own conception of nationalism need not entertain social criticism that demands a robust engagement with social issues, which in turn would build a nation with a stronger social foundation.



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 - ◆ *The Way We Never Were - American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*



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