

CHAPTER 53

SOCIOLOGY

Doctoral Theses

01. DAS (Sandeepan)
Tea Plantation Workers in a Changing Economy: The Case of North Bengal.
Supervisors: Prof. Janaki Abraham and Prof. Abhijit Dasgupta
Th 28819

Abstract

The thesis titled 'Tea Plantation Workers in a Changing Economy: A Case of North Bengal' offers an analysis of the 'crisis' in tea plantations, particularly in the Dooars region of North Bengal, and its impact on the socio-economic conditions of the workers in this sector. An attempt has been made to study the nature of capitalism through the study of the tea plantations, which operate under a capitalist mode of production. The existing literature illustrates how historically, the British exploited their colonies to extract resources through a metropolitan-satellite model, perpetuating exploitative relations between the management and the labourers, and it was continued by the post-colonial state. Additionally, the thesis emphasises the changes in labour relations, especially in the post-globalisation period, and their impact on the women workers. It also seeks to understand the nature of the state through a comparison between the 'crisis' in the colonial period with the present 'crisis'. Through the ethnographic method and use of semi-structured interviews and case study method, the thesis shows how poverty affects the economic life as well as the cultural life of the marginalised tribal workers, especially the marriage practices. It attempts to understand the everyday struggles, the copying mechanism, and how the workers resisted the exploitation of the management, and looks for an alternative model to capitalism.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. The making of 'crisis' 3. Impact of the crisis 4. Surviving the crisis
5. Conclusion 6. Bibliography. Bibliography and questionnaire.

02. HASHMI (Fahad)
Sociological Study of The Ahl-I-Hadith Jamaat in India.
Supervisor: Prof. Nandini Sundar
Th 28514

Abstract

This dissertation studies Ahl-i-Hadith Jamaat, an important Muslim denomination, that took birth in colonial India. It examines piety through an ethnographic study of everyday decisions and practices along three axes. First, the notion of piety is a fiercely contested terrain within the Muslim community. This contestation is not only on the ideological plane but also on the performative one, and both the dimensions of piety are entwined. My analysis demonstrates how orthodoxy permeates not only the teachings but also the practices of Ahl-i Hadith Jamaat. These help it in creating a denominational boundary and a distinctive group identity in contemporary India. Second, the thesis maps the multiple sites, including technology, where ethical self-

fashioning, premised on authoritative texts and practices, takes place. These sites give rise to dispositions and sensibilities, which create a distinctive form of piety. Finally, I examine the social avatar of piety, that is, faith-based activism. I argue that the conception of religious charity and social commitment makes sense only when it is seen in conjunction with the discursive tradition of a group.

Contents

1. Conceptual Framework 2. Locating the Ahl-i Hadith Movement 3. The Spectacle of Sovereignty: Eighteenth-Century Mughal India and Islamic Reform 4. Performativity, Ahl-i Hadithyyat, and Boundary-Making 5. Heterotopia, Ethical Self-fashioning, and Orthodoxy 6. Piety, Performance, and Pious Giving. Conclusion. Bibliography.

03. ISHAQUE PK
Idea of an ‘Authenticated Islam’: Mappila Muslim Traditions in Nadapuram, Kerala.
 Supervisor: Prof. Nandini Sundar
Th 28765

Abstract

My research explores the complex religious landscape of the Mappila Muslim community in Nadapuram, Kerala, focusing on how their worldview has been shaped by historical influences and the impact of colonial modernity. It highlights the emergence of new denominations in the early 20th century and the subsequent ongoing debates and contestations between “traditional” Sunni Muslims and “modernist” Islahi Muslims. The study examines how these disagreements centre on key theological concepts and how these theological discussions have significantly influenced all aspects of Mappila social life in Nadapuram. I intend to use a combination of Islamic theological training and socio-anthropological methods to analyse these debates, drawing inspiration from – but also contextualizing – the work of Lara Deeb on religious practice.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Sunni Islam in Nadapuram 3. The Islahi Islam in Nadapuram 4. Nadapuram Ghandanam and the idea of an ‘authenticated Islam’ 5. Public contestations and the ‘local intellectuals’ 6. Conclusion. Bibliography.