

Sherman pgs 49-50  
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from various distinctions of rank even within its own sub-groups and these, in their turn, influenced marriage. As a general rule, among castes whose people were not privileged to be reckoned as "twice-born," the sub-castes had become entirely distinct endogamous groups. In this sense anything like a *Sudra* caste was non-existent. The various artisan and professional castes, loosely termed *Sudra*, by the end of the 18th century had organized themselves into separate endogamous<sup>1</sup> units of society. Their sub-divisions had become distinct castes. So strict was the rule that even sexual connection of the woman with a man outside her caste invariably entailed her excommunication from her own. This rule was rigidly observed even by those castes which were considered "altogether vile."

If matrimony within the group be construed as the fundamental test of caste, then the Kayasthas of Northern India, who might have been one caste before, had ceased to be so by the end of the 18th century. Their various subdivisions like those of Srivastavas, Bhatnagars, Mathurs, Saxenas, Gaur, etc., had formed themselves into separate matrimonial groups and had thus become separate castes. Similarly in South India, the Panchalars, including people of the trades of goldsmiths, black smiths, carpenters, masons, although reckoned as one caste, did not admit of inter-group matrimonial relationship.

The relationship between sub-caste and marriage was, however, not necessarily uniform in the upper castes. In Bengal, the Brahmans, as also the Kayasthas, constituted single castes as distinctions of sub-castes were not material in regulating marriages within the same group. Hence those of higher birth (Kulins) were coveted by all inferior to them. Here Kulinism, although it encouraged a nefarious traffic in women, prevented the formation of rigid endogamous sub-groups. But this was not the case in Northern India or Central India. In Bihar, the Brahmans claiming descent from Kanauj had split into various local sub-divisions like Shukla, Anturvedi, etc., and even among them there were no inter-matrimonial relations. The other Brahman sub-castes, too, were endogamous subgroups. In Central India, also, we find that there was nothing like a uniform Brahman caste. The Brahmans had frittered into endless, strictly endogamous sub-castes. The same was true of the *Vaisya* community in Northern India. It was divided into several sub-divisions which were endogamous. The Rajputs were a solid exception. Their sub-groups arranged on clan basis were exogamous, and marriage was regulated primarily on the basis of "purity of descent." This, too, could be overruled as a serious consideration if the girl of the lower class or family belonged to a rich influential family. Marriage

outside the broad Rajput kin-group was, however, held in odium. Malcolm cites the degradation of the whole clan of Pamaris in the social scale in Central India as their Chief, ruler of Dhar, married his daughter to a Maratha prince with whom "the poorest of the proud Rajput Chiefs" would refrain from eating together.

As such, we may say that caste was necessarily an endogamous group but among the functional castes, the sub-groups were also endogamous everywhere. In the non-functional high castes, the various sub-castes were not necessarily so everywhere, though in Northern India, among the Brahmans, *Vaisyas* and Kayasthas they had become so.

## The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors

*Peter Mansfield*

*The Ottoman Empire grew rapidly during the 15th and 16th centuries, reaching its height during the second half of the 17th century. Nevertheless, there were already signs of decline in the 17th century. In the following excerpt from The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors, Peter Mansfield analyzes some of the causes for this long-term decline, here focusing on economic factors.*

CONSIDER: *The role of new trade routes and Ottoman taxation policies in the decline of the Empire; what the Ottoman Empire might have done to stem the decline.*

... The opening of a new trade route to Asia via the Cape by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and the establishment of Dutch and British power in Asia in the 17th century "deprived Turkey of the greater part of her foreign commerce and left her, together with the countries over which she ruled, in a stagnant backwater through which the life-giving stream of world trade no longer flowed." At the same time the flood of cheap silver from the Spanish colonies in the New World caused a violent inflation, and disastrous devaluation of the currency of the Ottoman Empire. The consequent economic distress was compounded by the government's increasing demands for revenues from the already overtaxed peasantry for the swelling bureaucracy and armed forces. While the economies of the European powers made rapid progress in the 17th and 18th centuries, that of the Ottoman Empire actually declined. Agriculture deteriorated as the peasantry abandoned the countryside for the towns, but there was no compensating development of industry. Turkey's stagnant science and technology lagged increasingly behind the west, and it lacked any independent entrepreneurial class which might have led an industrial revolution. Western economic superiority was

<sup>1</sup>"Endogamous" refers to marriage within a particular caste or group in accordance with set custom or law.

SOURCE: Peter Mansfield, *The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors* (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1973), p. 7.

