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LAND.... PEOPLE....CULTURE

Volume II



Editors: Principal Dr. M.B.Fernandes

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Editorial

Globalization has led to interconnectedness across many dimensions. The exchange of ideas that take place in seconds has changed the outlook of people. No longer is any custom regarded as different or strange. Every area of life has been impacted.

Inclusion into labour markets irrespective of gender or ethnic/cultural origin enhances, on one hand, equality, and has, on the other hand, a clear economic function. For a capitalist mode of production, the exclusion of well-educated and capable migrants from adequate professions and positions is a waste of human capital. Marx did not foresee having a labour force in the form of informal/irregular labour markets. And this labour force comes at very low costs, as labourers do not have the *political* means to fight for acceptable wages.

It is not only the privileging of culture as a frame for understanding the world which fuels culturalization, but an expansion of the category of culture and its merging with the economic sphere. Culture is drawn into the economic struggle of expansionism and universalism. Culture wars have become (in part) a surrogate for social conflict.

In our journal Land.... People....Culture, Volume II we explore the effects of culture and its impact on the proletariat.

G. Tavares PhD

Stylized Facts and the Labour Market

Errol D'Souza

One of the epochal transitions that has been taking place during the recent globalization is that workers around the world are now competing more directly than in the past. This globalization of labour markets as pointed out by Richard Freeman¹ began with the great doubling of the labour force due to the entry of China, India, and the former Soviet Union into the global system. In the year 1980 the global economy encompassed roughly half of the world's population – the advanced OECD countries, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and some parts of Asia. It did not contain China which was pursuing Mao's Cultural Revolution, the Soviet bloc which functioned behind the Iron Curtain, and India which was pursuing import substituting growth with high tariffs and a highly regulated economy. By the 1990s the Chinese Communist Party seeing the disaster of the Cultural Revolution chose to introduce market forces under the guidance of the Communist Party, the Soviet system collapsed when workers led the opposition to communism in a process begun by Solidarity in Poland, and India had a currency crisis and reoriented the economy from a highly regulated one to a more market friendly economy. As a result if before the year 2000 there were 1400 million workers in the global labour force, after 2000 there were 2930 million. This great doubling of the labour force reduced labour's bargaining power with firms and contributed to a reduction in the share of labour in income across the globe.

About 73 per cent of this labour force is concentrated in poor countries, with China and India accounting for 40 per cent of the world's workers. The advantage that developing countries and India have is that they have a younger labour force. However, this younger labour force is only moderately skilled. About 23 per cent of the world's labour force has no formal education, whilst only 10 per cent have tertiary education. The contrast between developed and

developing and least developed countries is stark. Only 2 per cent of workers in developed countries lack formal education whilst for developing countries it is 26 per cent and 51 per cent for the least developed countries. Thirty-one per cent of workers in the developed world have achieved tertiary education whilst it is just 5 per cent in developing and 2 per cent in the least developed countries. In this global economy India followed a trajectory that is quite different from comparator countries in the developing world. The East Asian countries for instance which had approximately the same level of incomes as did India in the mid 1960s specialized first in unskilled labour intensive activities such as textiles and clothing and then shifted up the value chain. India by contrast specialized in skill intensive activities and emphasized higher education over basic education which created a pool of highly skilled engineers and managers. Myron Weiner of MIT argued that this was because the middle class captured public policy making and directed investment in public services towards higher education. Primary education was woefully neglected and schooling education is largely unavailable to large numbers of children.

About 13 per cent of habitations have no primary school and 20 per cent of children in the school going age are out of school in India. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which began in 2001 has been successful in enrolling almost 100 per cent of children into classes 1 to 8. However, this is not a reliable measure of access of education as attendance is 25 per cent below enrolment and the dropout rate is 56 per cent from class 1 to 10. Only 63 per cent of students who join grade 1 reach the fifth grade. To some extent this is due to economic factors such as schooling costs including the expenditure on books and transport. But to a large extent this is due to poor quality infrastructure and a lack of engagement with students. The average number of classrooms in a school in India is 4.3 and 9 per cent of schools are single class room schools. Thirty per cent of primary schools have leaking roofs and poor sanitation, 13 per cent do not have drinking water facilities and 50 per cent do not have separate toilets for boys and girls. The

quality of instruction is also wanting with the pupil-teacher ratio of 47 being more than two and half times that in China. Teacher absenteeism is about 25 per cent and surveys show that of those teachers present only half are teaching. It is not surprising that Pratham's Annual State of Education Report suggests that 40 per cent of children in the 7 to 14 age group cannot read a small paragraph with short sentences and 66 per cent cannot divide a three digit number with a one digit number. Lant Pritchett of Harvard University puts it succinctly by pointing out that of the global top 10 per cent of students India has a presence with about 100,000 students a year compared to 250,000 in the US and 118,000 in Korea. However, at the same time India turns out millions without basic numeracy and literacy skills.

In the recent period there has been a deceleration in employment growth in the Indian economy. From 1983 to 2010 the growth rate of employment was 1.55 per cent but during the period 1993 to 2010 this decelerated to 1.27 per cent. This was because of a massive decline in employment after 2005. For the first time in history the share of the labour force employed in agriculture has declined to less than 50 per cent. The largest growth in employment has been in construction. This is true also in rural areas where the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme has mainly involved the provision of construction work. Unfortunately the high employment growth in construction has not been accompanied by an increase in productivity. Productivity growth in construction has in fact been negative³ and this restricts the gains that workers may receive from employment. Such growth means that too few jobs are being created in high productivity sectors that pay more decent wages and that large sections of the population are employed in the informal sector⁴. The all India data reveal that 93 per cent of the labour force in India is in the informal sector.

A consequence of the doubling of the global labour force along with liberalization of the economy without an emphasis on skill enhancement in policy making, is that the share of labour in the

national income pie has declined. The declining share of labour is an important cause of the rising inequality of incomes in recent years. It is not just that liberalization has reduced the bargaining power of labour. At the same time firms are facing the heat of global competition which puts restrictions on the mark-up over costs that they may command in the market. This has also reduced the share of output available for bargaining and sharing with workers. The bulk of India's employment is informal and at the same time is of a type that is not the typical image of a worker as one who offers her services for a wage. The bulk of the labour force in India is excluded from the wage labour market due to the paucity of job openings that firms offer. In India accordingly the bulk of employment is self-employment which involves workers engaged on their own account in economic activity, and unpaid family labour. Recent research has shown⁴ unsurprisingly that levels of educational attainment are related to the category of work that may be obtained. For instance casual workers who work part time on average have 1.8 years of education in India. Self-employed workers engaged in activities such as street vending etc. typically have 3.7 years of education and regular workers have 7.8 years of education. This is another indicator that education is key to valuable labour market outcomes.

As globalization proceeds and the state is less able to provide good quality jobs, future job creation will be in the private sector. Firms in the private sector have to upgrade to meet the competition and that means that increasingly they will seek skilled labour that can perform tasks that would earlier be performed by a large number of unskilled labour. A decade ago we never interacted with machines about the status of our bank accounts. Today that is a reality. Increasingly there will be a substitution of casual for regular work as well and workers will be more on temporary and term contracts than on permanent jobs. This requires a labour force that is adapted to performing at high levels of efficiency and able to bear the risk of job loss and reemployment in another establishment. Temporary labour is going to be the fastest growing segment of the labour force.

In the process social norms will be deployed to further the returns from the market. The global garment industry for instance has been using customs in Tamil Nadu to exploit young workers. The Sumangali scheme has been used by garment manufacturers who supply to well known international brands to lure young girls to work for a period of three years with the promise that they will be paid at the end of that time with a bonus that will contribute to their dowry. The girls are designated as apprentices and that allows manufacturers to bypass minimum wage laws that apply to workers. As a consequence the girls are paid less than what they would have received if they had earned minimum wages.

Globalization has also increased the forces of protectionism through demands for labour standards. Even though the incidence of child labour for instance has been rapidly declining the concern for it has been increasing. This is not necessarily due to an increased concern for rights and justice and is often attributable to advanced country firms' protection against the forces of competition. Interestingly the incidence of child labour at 30 per cent in the UK in 1861 (which at that time had a per capita income of \$695 comparable to that of India in 2000 at constant prices) was much higher than in India in 2000. The condition of child labour was so well documented by Charles Dickens in *Oliver Twist*. However, even at that time the rally against child labour in Europe was not only due to the brutal treatment of children. As historians have documented there were two other forces at work. One was the protection of initiatives to mechanise the textile industry from the uncontrolled competition of a labour force composed largely of children. And another force at work was the fear of political instability from a youthful working class that was not disciplined by a school, a church, or an army. Even today the true forces of change in labour markets are hidden.

India is a society that is divided along lines of religion and caste. An interesting issue in labour markets has been whether certain types of workers due to their gender or caste are shut out of jobs. The

prevalence of discrimination is hard to prove as aggregate data do not give us evidence on this as the employee characteristics that employers focus on in hiring decisions are not part of such surveys. Recently economists have come up with a novel way to get around this problem through the use of resume audits. In this experimental approach researchers create identities of fictitious applicants⁶. For instance real resumes by job seekers posted on job sites such as naukri.com are taken and modified by changing the names, addresses and names of educational institutions from where degrees are listed. Researchers take scheduled caste and tribe names from the Election Commission which has a mandate to reserve seats in parliament for SC/ST candidates. From the list of candidates in these reserved seats a list of last names is generated. OBC names are taken from the official list of OBCs for states. These are then paired with common first names such as Amit, Anil, Rajiv, Sangeeta, Sunita, etc. Addresses are added to indicate select neighbourhood socio-economic profiles. For instance an address of Malabar Hill was used to indicate a better socio-economic profile than an address from Dharavi. When these fictitious resumes were submitted to firms in the IT sector it was found that for software jobs upper caste candidates were no more or less likely to be called for an interview indicating that qualifications matter more than markers like caste. However, for call centre jobs upper caste candidates were 60 per cent more likely to be called for an interview than OBC candidates with similar qualifications. Jobs at call centres are concerned about presentability – the use of phone etiquette, unaccented English, etc. – and these become more important than technical knowledge as in software jobs. Hence, discrimination in jobs is a reality and what studies like this indicate once again is that when workers have technical skills (as in software job requirements) then firms seek workers according to their qualifications and do not sort them by social markers such as caste.

It is skills that are the building block of the modern economy. Firms that upgrade technologies and are market leaders require skilled workers. There is thus what we may term as a strategic

complementarity between capital and skills. In the early stages of development capital is scarce and labour is abundant and the augmentation of labour through the acquisition of skills or human capital as it is called by labour economists has a limited effect on the productivity of capital. As development proceeds firms increasingly compete through technological innovations and the demand for skilled labour increases with their investment demand. Human capital becomes increasingly central to sustaining the rate of return to physical capital and owners of capital increasingly become beneficiaries of the accumulation of human capital. The strategic complementarity that emerges is that higher human capital levels increase the productivity of labour and leads to higher investment by the owners of capital. Higher capital stock stemming from this investment in turn increases the demand for skilled labour which induces workers to invest in human capital. This capital skill complementarity has meant that returns to skill have risen in India since liberalization¹. It also means that inequality and a widening gap in wages paid are becoming pervasive. Such inequalities of incomes have far reaching consequences beyond labour markets and give rise to social tensions that have the potential to result in instability for the functioning of the economy. Tempering those socio-political effects requires policy to focus on social investments in education and health. Providing equal opportunities and removing the bottlenecks to the establishment and growth of business will provide the bedrock for a sustainable society.

Endnotes:

- 1 Richard Freeman (2007) – “The Challenge of the Growing Globalization of Labour Markets to Economic and Social Policy”, in Eva Paus (ed.) – “Global Capitalism Unbound”, Palgrave, Macmillan.
- 2 Myron Weiner (1991) – “The Child and the State in India”, Princeton University Press.
- 3 The employment elasticity of growth in construction during 1983 to 2010 was 1.06 whilst productivity growth has been -0.38. At the aggregate level employment elasticity in India is 0.25 which means that 1 per cent of growth of the economy results in a 0.25 per cent increase in employment.
- 4 In India the informal sector is one where enterprises employ less than 20 workers with

power and where the nature of employment is such that workers are not provided benefits such as medical benefits, leave, etc. and they are not on regular contracts.

- 5 See D'Souza, E. (2008) - "Self Employment and Human Capital", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Volume 51, No. 4, October–December, 783–789.
- 6 See Banerjee, A., Bertrand, M., Datta, S. & Mullainathan, S. (2009) – "Labor market discrimination in Delhi: Evidence from a field experiment", *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 37, pages 14–27.
- 7 See Kijima, Y (2006) – "Why did wage inequality increase? Evidence from Urban India 1983–99", *Journal of Development Economics*, 81(1), October, pages 97–117.

Labour Market in the 21st Century Capitalist Manifesto and in Reality

Bernard D'Mello

Capitalist development is based on exploitation – appropriation of part of the product of the labour of others. As a consequence, it generates inequality. Neo-liberalism (the package of policies of free trade, financial openness, privatisation, elimination of government regulations on business, and fiscal conservatism, coupled with an ideological framework that prioritises growth above all other objectives, places blind faith in the dynamism of markets and the private sector, and celebrates inequalities) exacerbates such inequality. One should therefore not be surprised if ultimately the victims of exploitation organise resistance to it. Put simply, we are referring to class struggle, which is all about exploitation and the resistance to it. To keep such a possibility at bay, however, the dominant classes have put in place propaganda-managed democracy. In the 21st century capitalist manifesto, and this is part of the ruling ideas widely propagated by the commercial media, the free labour-market is necessary for human development. Let us then look at the labour market in this manifesto and the reality of it under really-existing capitalism.

Workers in an Integrating World

A manifesto, as we all know, is a public declaration of policy and aims, and a capitalist manifesto, given that capital is money and the means of production in relation to living labour, would naturally address itself to those who make a livelihood principally through work, the majority of adult human beings all over the world. The question the spokespersons of capital pose is about how the workers of the world can be liberated from poverty, misery and degradation. Labour is being told by self-appointed labour catechists about how to conduct itself if it is to attain human development. Neo-liberalism

must be accepted as the only path towards a high rate of economic growth, which will in turn also benefit the workers, and government should create a business climate conducive for capital to flourish. In this light, perhaps the best exposition of the labour market in the 21st century capitalist manifesto is can be found in the World Bank's *World Development Report 1995* titled *Workers in an Integrating World*, with the added advantage that it analyses the labour question in an international framework. Labour is given an honorific designation – human capital. (Of course, if one is to speak the truth, it is this “human capital” that has created and expanded capital as means of production, but then the Bank's neo-classical economists, the drafters of the 1995 WDR would frown at such heretical economic ideas.)'

An overwhelming majority of the working class in what the WDR calls the low-income countries are subject to “labour market flexibility”, that is, these wage workers are not protected by the government regulations that protect a section of the workers in the “formal sector”. The authors of the WDR disapprove of job security, regularised wages and social security provisions in labour law, provisions that the labour movements in many countries have fought for and gained through militant struggles. But this is not the route that global South's unorganised workers, the majority of the world's wage workers, should take in the march towards social progress!

In fact, the Bank's neo-classical economists argue that it is the small section of the workers in the global South who have gained social protection that are the cause of the misery of the majority of the workers there! If only the “privileges” of the former are abolished can the latter be liberated (attain human development)! The WDR argues that it is because of the social protection of the “formal sector” workers that capital's hands are tied in adapting to the rapidly changing global economy and unleashing economic growth. The capitalist manifesto, which the WDR really is, thus explains capital's need for labour market flexibility in terms of the supposed interests of

the workers as a whole – it is in their interest for them to accept casual labour (not press for tenured employment), variable wages and working hours linked to product market demand.

The capitalist manifesto goes on to argue that ILO (International Labour Organisation) conventions have been “set too high”, based on levels of development in the “high-income countries”, and if the “low-income countries” implement them, growth and employment will be retarded over there. Trade unions, those cartels that improve the wages and working conditions of their members at the expense of capital, the consumer and those workers who are not unionised, reduce employment in the “organised sector”, thus increasing the supply of workers in the labour markets of the “unorganised sector”, and, *ceteris paribus*, depressing the wage rates over there. As usual, ignoring Keynesian economic thought, the minimum wage is deemed to lower the level of employment. So the capitalist manifesto in effect argues that it is well and good, for the workers taken as a whole, that in practice the minimum wage is set much below the cost of living and that, by and large, in the relative absence of trade unions and effective ones where they do exist, the capitalists have nothing to be apprehensive about even if they don’t pay that miserable minimum wage.

If trade unions are then bad enough, what could be worse, according to the Bank’s capitalist manifesto? Answer: central trade unions linked to the political parties of the Left, for they oppose the neo-liberalism imposed by the Bank in its structural adjustment programmes, which the Bank argues, is in the best interests of capital *and* labour. Labour, in its own interests, should not be allowed to emerge as a “countervailing power”!

“Flexible labour market” is then the Bank’s public declaration of labour policy on behalf of capital, with the ostensible aim of redeeming the “workers in an integrating world” from misery, and workers need to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains and enhances that flexibility if they are to attain human development.

But what is the reality of the labour market today and to what effect?

In order to answer this question truthfully and in the briefest possible way, we will now highlight two realities – (i) the existence of a massive global ‘reserve army of labour’ or the ‘relative surplus population’ (both are terms coined by Karl Marx in *Capital*, Volume 1) and (ii) ‘global labour arbitrage’.² The reintegration of Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and China into the world capitalist economy was the major event that marked the end of the ‘short 20th century’ (as defined by the British Marxist historian, Eric Hobsbawm). For our purposes over here it is the reintegration of their workforces into the world capitalist economy that is most relevant. The other part is proletarianisation and pauperisation due to the processes of class differentiation of the peasantry, the agribusiness effect on agriculture, and displacement due to ecological degradation in the global South. Both have led to a vast increase in the global labour force.

Massive Global Reserve Army of Labour

The reserve army of labour is the vast pool of the unemployed and the underemployed. Marx categorized it into three components – (i) the floating, (ii) the latent, and (iii) the stagnant. The floating component is composed of workers who are unemployed due to the normal ups and downs of the business cycle, as well as those who have lost their jobs due to the introduction of new capital and technology that makes possible the production of a given level of output with a lesser amount of labour (technological unemployment). The latent component is that part of the reserve army of labour that is augmented from the flow of labour from agriculture and the rural areas due to the proletarianisation and pauperisation of the peasantry as also due to ecological degradation. Included here are who work for subsistence on own-account, including in agriculture itself, as well as the other members of their families who chip in as unpaid workers. The stagnant component is that part of the active labour army that only manages to find extremely irregular employment. What about those

economically inactive persons of working age who are not included in the workforce because they have stopped looking for work? These are the discouraged that have given up the search for a livelihood and are dependent on those who are economically active. When this category is included (because the miserable conditions of their existence may force them to return to actively search for work) in the reserve army of labour, then in 2011, using ILO data, Foster, Mc Chesney and Jonna (2011) estimate the size of the global reserve army of labour as 2.4 billion persons as compared to the active wage-labour army of 1.4 billion persons. The global reserve army of labour is thus 70% higher than the active army of wage labour, and one can imagine the extent to which this vast reserve army of labour restrains the growth of real wages, particularly in the global South.

Basically the reserve army of labour presents capital with a pool of labour available for hire; equally, it also forces ‘discipline’ and ‘efficiency’ on those who are in employment. The threat of unemployment and underemployment hangs like the sword of Democles over the heads of all those who work for a wage under capitalism, and this is the real source of capitalist efficiency, the real means of increasing the rate of exploitation of the active army of labour. As Marx put it in chapter 25, “The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation” in *Capital*, Volume 1:

The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of the reserve, whilst conversely the greater pressure that the latter by its competition exerts on the former, forces these to submit to overwork and to subjugation under the dictates of capital. The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists, and accelerates at the same time the production of the industrial reserve army on a scale corresponding with the advance of social accumulation.

The industrial reserve army, during the periods of stagnation and average prosperity, weighs down the active labour-army; during the periods of over-production and paroxysm, it holds its pretensions in check. *Relative surplus population is therefore the pivot upon which the law of demand and supply of labour works* [my emphasis]. It confines the field of action of this law within the limits absolutely convenient to the activity of exploitation and to the domination of capital.

Global Labour Arbitrage

Clearly, a large section of the 2.4 billion persons in the global reserve army of labour are potential wage labourers, and this is what, in the Marxian view, is the “pivot upon which the law of demand and supply of labour works”, serving to restrain the rise of real wages globally, especially in the global South. And, in the context of the offshoring of a considerable portion of production from the global North to the global South in the competitive race of firms in oligopolistic product markets to attain low-cost positions, the level of real wages has either remained stagnant or has declined. Global labour arbitrage is a means whereby capital earns a higher rate of profit by shifting production to the global South to take advantage of the significant wage difference as between the global North and the global South, given the severe restrictions placed on international migration of labour.

Take the case of Apple’s iPhone, which is designed in California and assembled in Shenzhen in China. The iPhone’s parts and components, manufactured in Germany, Japan, South Korea and the US, are shipped to the plants of Foxconn (the trade name of a Taiwanese multinational corporation) for assembly and export. Needless to say, if Apple had assembled the iPhone in the US, its US-based factory workers would have to be paid \$ 21 per hour, whereas by taking advantage of the much lower wage rate of the Chinese factory worker, 64 cents an hour, even after accounting for additional

transportation costs, and Foxconn's profits, Apple's profit margins are much higher than what they would have been had it relied on US factory workers in the assembly of the iPhone.

Capitalism – To What End?

No doubt capitalism has brought about an unprecedented development of human productivity, but to what end? The polarisation that has come about as a result can be viewed thus – islands of wealth and luxury in a vast sea of poverty and misery, a relatively small number of wealthy owners and their professional managers at the top of a steep social hierarchy with a massive global reserve army of labour at the bottom. This is what Marx foresaw and he articulated a “general law of capitalist accumulation” to that effect. He expected the workers to resist their exploitation, bring about a revolution to create a society where there is freedom from want, where everyone has the freedom to realise his/her potentialities. This has not happened, and in the meanwhile, capitalism has created an environmental quandary which puts a question mark on business-as-usual. Clearly, we are in the midst of great challenges.

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Notes

- 1 Our sardonic comments on the Bank's 1995 WDR draw on Breman (1995).
- 2 Our account is largely based on Foster et al (2011).

Changing Workforce & the Transforming IR Scenario

An Evolving Approach Based on Globalisation & Changing Aspirations of Today's Workforce

N. Vasudevan

Globalisation and foreign direct investment brought to the fore a shining service sector with a new work culture which did not exist till then. High styled work places and glass towers made working hours unlimited slowly and steadily making it a fashion for staff to spend more and more time on a company's project targets which targets got expanded unrealistically. A new generation got sucked into this new culture. For some occupations and jobs wages are higher than others.

Privatisation and greed for super profit led to more and more intensification of labour whether white collar or blue.

Global brands in all fields appeared. IT companies and IT parks came up in many parts of the country. Apart from private banks and insurance, capital was invested in hospital, hotels, automobile, telecommunications, trade, malls and multiplexes. Cities expanded and new townships came up. With the growth of communications and information through 24 X7 channels, mobile and internet a section of youth in the country developed a new life style. All this development was catering to a very small section of country's population.

In the manufacturing/production sector the damage brought about in the name of competition and development under global process is frightening. We find some skilled workers in high technology conveyor belt system production areas and a huge multitude working in sweat shops. Over 90% of the workforce is still in the unorganised/informal sector.

Public anger against the impact of globalisation has manifested in street protests in all countries and continents in different forms. Demands have changed. Deprived people have brought about regime changes in Tunisia and Egypt; Occupy Wall Street agitation in the USA spread to several cities in the world. Marches and protests are taking place in different parts of India against forcible land acquisition, against displacement without rehabilitation and compensation, against corruption, violence against women. Violence erupted in Brazil, strike in South Africa and unrest in Turkey.

Indian workers face hostility from a troika - employer, government and judicial orders. The employer uses his power of capital to frustrate workforce, government frames policies in favour of capital and judges interpret laws favouring investors holding the banner of globalisation high. In this industrial scenario IR becomes the face of capital inviting workers' wrath.

Globalisation has not changed the colonial legacy in India even in modern industry. Like bureaucracy prevailing in the government sector, IR/HR follows a colonial legacy pattern in industry. ILO conventions and international agreements have no relevance in real life. Hence, VRS, outsourcing, employment of contract labour, extracting work through undue means on low wages are assigned to IR/HR. Industrial harmony calls for reversal of this IR image.

Let me quote what Pope Francis said on the eve of 2013 Christmas "The thirst for power and possession knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever fragile, like the environment, is defenceless before the interests of deified market, which becomes the only rule?" Criticising trickledown theory Pope said: "The promise was that when the glass was full, it would overflow, benefitting the poor. But what happens, instead, is that when the glass is full, it magically gets bigger and nothing ever comes out for the poor".

Who does not want organisation? Who is capable of representing himself? Who does not want collective bargaining?

Globalisation has not created a grievance free society, a society based on equality, respect and dignity to humans at work place. Capitalism claims it stands for democracy outside work place. Denial of democracy within industry is tantamount to negation of industrial peace.

Imperialist globalisation, in its over two decade of existence, has proved to be disastrous for the working people. It has created a world with unlimited disparity, while incessantly speaking of creating inclusive growth and sustainable society; globalisation has excelled in exclusion and has demonstrated what inequality can be. Life has been made painful, people have been rendered defenceless.

The new workforce has drawn lessons from globalisation. They have access to information, 24 hour channels are open to them too, plus the tools of mobile phones and internet connections. Workers are resentful of the degree of exploitation, deprivation and the unbelievable level of disparity between the rich and poor. They understand the underhand dealings between the corporate houses, influence of the rich, power of money in purchasing favours from powers that be. They are left to fend for themselves. There is simmering discontent. Corporate social responsibility is seen as a mere eye wash.

In an article in the Economic Times in 2010 R. Gopalakrishnan, Director, Tata Sons, referring to incidents of Noida and Coimbatore warned HR managers to play a role in the creation of balanced society. There was no Maruti Suzuki of Manesar for a quote then. Happenings in Maruti Suzuki takes society back to 19th century when the Luddite movement focussed in destroying machines thinking modern machinery was responsible for low wages and poor employment conditions. In many cases workers perceive present day HR playing the role of 19th century machines.

There is no evidence to reach a conclusion that ‘changing workforce’ has aspirations to remain independent of organisations and collective bargaining has become outdated. Democracy demands that a workforce should be given an opportunity to take a decision on this aspect. Some workers have always remained outside union the fold. That situation would continue to exist.

Dynamics of Labour Market: Case of Labour in Textile Cluster of Mumbai.

Suchita Krishnaprasad

Introduction:

Irrespective of the level of industrialisation achieved by any society, textile production continues to be an important activity since clothing is a primary requirement of human beings. The industrial revolution too finds its symbolic representation in the self-acting mule and spinning jenny. Some interesting features of the industry are:

- i. It is a pioneering industry paving way to economic growth.
- ii. In a pre-industrialised society it needs highly skilled workers trained in the craft, but as industrialisation takes over and the scale expands, the craft turns into job, and requires a huge workforce.
- iii. The industry typically grows in cluster.
- iv. This means there is a great pressure on labour recruitment pulling migrant workers into the clusters.
- v. Working class consciousness is facilitated as millions of workers migrate from near and far. Thus birth of trade union movement is closely associated with textile industry.
- vi. Finally, the industry typically follows what is known as the 'flying geese' model, which means that the cluster declines overtime and finds a new location sooner or later, leaving a mass of workers in a quandary as a result.

The industry thus creates a classic case study for labour market dynamics both on demand and supply sides. On the demand side, there is a transition from workers as 'craftsmen' to workers as labourers. On the supply side, the story begins with situation of tight labour market within the industry cluster which changes into excess supply as a large number of migrants rapidly fill the vacuum.

Institutions emerge to regulate markets, and the labour market is no exception. As workers unite and press for better working conditions, the State intervenes and employment relations transform into formal industrial relations. These receive a rude shock when the cluster begins to decimate in search of a cheaper location. What follows is an era of chaos, dejection and loss of self-esteem for the working class, as millions lose jobs and the bargaining structure collapses beyond recognition.

This paper attempts to unfold the saga in the stages mentioned above, with reference to Mumbai textile cluster. Section I covers the pre-independence period. Section II describes the major changes that occurred in the post-independence period. This takes care of two phases: One till the 1980's when the threat to the industry became palpable particularly after the great strike of 1982-83, and the changes which put the industry through another rollercoaster in the 1990's. followed by events in the decade that followed. Section III briefly revisits the theoretical and real issues related to the labour market dynamics. The next section sums up the situation and makes a few concluding remarks.

SECTION I: Mumbai Textile Cluster: Till Independence.

The Beginning:

The first mill was established by Cowasji Davar in the year of 1854. Soon acres of lands in Central Mumbai were given to the millowners at concessional rates by the Bombay Government to encourage the development of textile industry and promote industrial production. This led to rapid expansion of the industry, and during 1863- 1865, 115 mills were floated in the island city of which 50 were in less than a 3 mile radius. The cluster needed workers in large numbers, and Chandavarkar notes a huge turnover of workers during this period, where workers kept shifting from one mill to another lured by better pay. Thousands of migrants from towns and villages flocked to Mumbai, but like all early migrants, their village connections were very strong. At this stage some mills offered residences to attract good workers and to instil a sense of commitment.

The situation changed by 1990, and excess labour supply became more normal. This reflected in long working hours without a weekly holiday, absence of any kind of security causing a high labour turnover and random methods of wage determination. These miserable conditions brought the migrant workers together irrespective of the differences based on caste, language and region. The result of the 'Class Conscious' working class was that sporadic Strikes became a common feature in 1870's, drawing the attention of the government. The Factories Act was enacted in 1881. Factories Commission was set up in 1884. Weekly holiday was granted. The first trade union in India, the Mill Hands Association, was born in 1890 as a result of this struggle.

World Wars, Swadeshi and the Boom:

Over the two World Wars, British textile clusters declined steadily, and Indian textile industry was called upon to meet the war orders. The call for Swadeshi also boosted the domestic demand. Mills now worked three shifts per day, and earned huge profits. Yet wage cut was proposed for workers to tide over depression in 1925. This led to a mass strike. 22 mills closed down. Textile Labour Enquiry Committee was set up to look into the dispute and they recommended 11.9% rise in wages. Employers' Association (Mill Owners' Association) complained against this and for the first time wages in Mumbai cluster were determined in comparison to Ahmedabad and Sholapur. Also payment of yearly bonus was initiated.

Around this time the Left Union became increasingly powerful. However under the provisions of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, enacted in 1946, Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh was recognised as the sole bargaining agent of the workers. This became an important issue disrupting the industrial peace for a long time.

SECTION II: Post Independence Period

Till the 1980's:

The machinery in the Mumbai textile industry was worn out with excessive use by now. Under the second five year plan, which was

Mumbai took loans for modernisation from IDBI. So yet another milestone was round the corner for the mill sector to move forward. Labour was on the back foot, which meant modernisation could be undertaken with much less resistance than otherwise. But what happened in the 1990's was something else.

The 1990's and Later:

An important event in this decade that would not only change the fate of the cluster, but the skyline of the city too, was change in Development and Control Rules (D.C.Rules) in Mumbai. Till now the land of a sick mill could be used only for textile-related industries³. But the changed DC Rules released 10% of the 'vacant surplus' land to other uses! The attention now shifted to 'creating' that vacant surplus land, which could be done by closing down highly space-consuming processes such as dying printing, etc. This was a clear sign that the geese were in search of a new location! BIR Act required that any change be notified to the registrar of the Act with the consent of the bargaining agent (RMMS in the case). RMMS had no great history of real resistance, and yet this period is replete with several overlapping bargaining agreements about modernisation and rationalisation. Further, they were selectively implemented. In that, machine removal took place without much loss of time; whereas new machines came in only after tiring struggles. The radius of struggling workers was rapidly narrowing, and soon each one fought his own battle. Bargaining agreements reflected this. They were now a compilation of several individual bargains instead of a collective agreement.

As land prices rose⁴, there was a big downward rush, approach BIFR for funds and release more land in the meanwhile in the name of modernisation. Use of hired musclemen to threaten the workers from entering the mill premises introduced criminalisation. Some mill owners were murdered too, and it was apparent that land *per se* would now be more valuable than the running of the mill.

more focussed on industrial development, a major rationalisation and modernisation drive was undertaken. Both workers and old machinery were 'released'. Often these workers were given the machines as they left. Many of them settled down, in groups and the power-loom clusters was born!

Other important changes included: setting up of Wage Board in 1957 to standardise wages, and introduction of dearness allowance. It is interesting to note that wages in the engineering, metal industries in and around Mumbai were comparable to those offered in the textile cluster! This indicates formation of a wage contour with textile industry as a reference point!

Major areas of challenges for the cluster in the post-independence period came paradoxically through provisions under various Textile Policies that made power-looms stronger. Thus began sickness in the Textile cluster and by the late 1960's NTC was created to take care of these mills. Those who survived began subcontracting with the powerloom sector which had the advantage of low cost, but no brand image.

The Great Strike of 1982:

Workers from 55 mills went on strike in January 1982 under MGKS (not recognised as representative union) to get better wages and other benefits, and contest the status of RMMS. The strike went on for a year for some mills and longer for others, and was miserably defeated. After causing immense hardships to 2.5 lakh workers, when the workers finally joined voluntarily, only half of the previous strength was employed. The mill owners got rid of over one lakh workers without retrenchment compensation, which they would be liable to pay by law, had the mills been running! Surprisingly or otherwise, the cloth produced under the mill brand continued to appear in the market in the meantime, thanks to the sub-contracting arrangements.

The year 1984 marked the New Textile Policy. It announced the Textile Modernisation Fund Scheme under which top 10 mills in

After over 4 decades of collective bargaining, the cluster now reached a stage where the bargaining structure had collapsed, workers were defeated and demoralised, and employers kept waiting to realise the worth of the land. 1990's and later saw collective bargaining agreement as a collection of individual bargains in all mills including those run by NTC.

2000 and Later- 'Vision Shanghai'

The 2001 DCR amendment allowed 1/3 of the vacant space to be considered for sharing! However in reality, the land share of the mill owners has been far beyond the planned, while that of the MCGM, and MHADA have been reduced by more than 90%.

SECTION III: Labour Market Dynamics Revisited:

Markets are dynamic and labour market need not be an exception. But the market for labour is different because:

- i. Labour not only produces goods but it also produces itself.
- ii. Ensuring proper wages is necessary to provide livelihood, which is a prerequisite of any civilised society.
- iii. Labour produces and labourer consumes goods. Poor wages will mean poor demand for goods. And that does not take the economy anywhere.
- v. Finally, labour and labourer are inseparable. Poor wages and widespread unemployment cause misery to masses.

Thus though it is possible to view withering of collective bargaining or decimation of labour unions as the inevitable fallout of the dynamics of the market, its serious implications for society can hardly be ignored. Sudden job loss for the main bread winner of the family can helplessly push the next generation into criminal activities and there have been similar stories from the Girangaon (area localising the Mumbai textile cluster) neighbourhood.

SECTION IV: Concluding Remarks:

Textile is known to emerge as a cluster and move to a cheaper destination. Clearly, Mumbai is neither the first nor the last textile cluster to disintegrate. But the moot point is, why should labour be made to bear all the cost of transition? Workers migrate, struggle, settle down and prosper, and within a few decades the cluster begins to look shaky after making the monies, ripping the very fabric of the social life of millions of homes apart!

Having accepted the 'flying geese' nature of the industry, should the land which was anyway offered by the Bombay Government once for running textile mills, be not handed over to the community for the larger good? Does it belong to the Mill owners after the mills are no more? Is it not important to remember that they were all 'mill' owners and not the owners of the land on which the mills were erected?

And as a post script, it would be important to recall that the textile cluster once etched a wage contour for industries in and around Mumbai. When the reference point collapses, the entire contour can be endangered. This can have serious consequences for the economy and society besides impacting labour markets elsewhere.

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Endnotes:

- 1 The inclination of various Industrial Policies towards small scale industries to ‘promote more employment’ is well-known. Power loom industry gained in the process while the Mill sector was kept somewhat on the ‘backfoot’.
- 2 Many attribute the debacle of the industry that followed the disastrous strike, to Dr. Datta Samant, who led it though his union was not recognized under the BIR Act. However it is on record that Dr. Samant had appealed to the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to intervene in the dispute that was causing misery to millions of workers and their families, However, the Bombay Club (Industrialists in and around Mumbai) insisted that the strike be allowed to follow its own course. Obviously, it was expected that the workers would lose in this war of attrition! See Van Versch
- 3 At least till the 1990’s more than 70 % of the ready made garment units were operating in the Mahim-SewriParel triangle.
4. It is worth noting that in 1994-95 land price in Mumbai was higher than in Tokyo!

A New Mediatized Religious Culture: An Intersection of Social Media and Religion

Merlin Joseph

Introduction:

At some unmarked point during the last twenty years we imperceptibly moved out of the Modern Age and into a new as yet nameless era. Our view of the world changed; we acquired a new perception and with it new capacities. There are new frontiers of opportunity, risk and challenge. There is a new spiritual center to human existence. It is often stated that the new information and communication technologies have changed the world. With the development of the Internet, for example, it has become much easier to communicate with loved ones and business colleagues, no matter when or where. Today the world is truly one globalised space, at least for those of us who have access to, and know how to make use of, the new technologies, as well as enjoying the ability to travel all over the world. Together with economic and social changes, it is also clear that the new technologies have changed the world of religion. For example, with the help of a computer with access to the Internet, it is nowadays possible for an individual to explore an almost unlimited number of religious homepages providing both plausible and implausible world views. On the one hand this development can be seen as an opportunity to liberate the individual from his or her social context or cultural bonds.

The historical nexus between religion and science & technology

However, the relations between science and technology and religion were not always very favorable. It would appear that the first recorded conflict between the Church (not religion per se) and science was the condemnation in 1616 and 1623, respectively, of the discovery (through astronomical findings) of Copernicus and Galileo that the universe was heliocentric. The Roman Catholic Inquisition

German word *Entzauberung*; the opposite is *Bezauberung*, which means magic or spell. By using these terms, Weber emphasized a change in our subjective experience of the world rather than (only) a separation of secular society and religious institutions. For Weber, in the modern experience science and technology have replaced the religious experience of mystery and magic by scientific clarity, calculation, rationalization, intellectualization, and control. Bronislaw Szerszynski has argued that contemporary technological ideas and practices remain closely bound up with religious ways of thinking and acting. He argues that the relationship between modern science and religion has not been one solely of conflict; instead, the emergence of modern science in the seventeenth century marked “a spectacular fusion between religious thought and natural philosophy” (2005b, 816). René Descartes, Isaac Newton, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz did not abandon God but did talk about God in a different way. Szerszynski, argues that the founders of modern science such as Francis Bacon had religious ambitions—or, more precisely, their scientific and religious ambitions were fused. They wanted to achieve knowledge of the divine design of nature and ultimately of the mind of the creator.

Jeff Zaleski (1997) has shown that the use of cyberspace changes the meaning of spirituality, religion, and the sacred. A recent study shows that the clergy (ministers, pastors), church leaders, and religious institutions in the United States use the Internet for purposes of spiritual formation and communication. Genevieve Bell has studied what she calls techno spiritual practices: new technologies that also do cultural work and are linked to narratives of progress, change, and revolution (Bell 2006, 146). She suggests that in the United States young people use the World Wide Web more frequently for religious purposes than for pornography and that some of these practices are connected to the agendas of religious organizations.

As we move further into the Twenty-First Century, we can see more clearly the trends that will dominate culture, society and politics for

condemned Galileo to be set ablaze if he did not recant. Yet, academically speaking, rather than generalizing the conflict between science and religion, individual scientist and his/her theory should be referred. As Hawthorne observes: The sixteenth-century pioneers saw science as the study of God's handiwork and encouraged by Francis Bacon, as a proper response to the biblical command to 'subdue the earth.' For Kepler the heavens declared the glory of God and there was no conflict between science and faith. Newton wrote theological as well as scientific works.

But can today's technological culture accommodate spiritual experience and spiritual thinking? Religion is spiritual, technology is material. Religion is going on "in the head," technology is going on "in the world." The world is aspiritual. For some, religion is a barrier to (scientific) progress. Daniel Dennett (2006), for instance, tries to keep religion out of evolutionary biology. For (conservative) others, technology is a threat to older forms of life, which are supposed to be full of meaning— richness, it is assumed, that can never be matched by contemporary technological culture and is even actively threatened by it. And for many, religion is not a problem but is simply viewed as irrelevant to their lives or practices. One may practice engineering without connecting that practice to one's religious ideas or practice (or the absence of such a practice). Technology, then, is seen as either neutral toward religion (and vice versa) or hostile to it. It is assumed that technology and religion belong to different spheres. On the basis of that assumption it is argued either that religion should not be allowed to colonize technology, if it should be granted existence at all, or that technology should not be allowed to damage religion and its associated life forms. The view that we better understand the world in nonreligious terms has been described in terms of *secularization*. One of the founders of sociology, Max Weber, coined the term *disenchantment* to describe the (supposed) shift from a religious understanding of the world to a scientific understanding of the world (Weber [1919] 1946). He used the

the foreseeable future. Among these trends is one that challenges important received ideas of the past: the persistence and resurgence of religion as a national, regional and global force. Seemingly contradicting the long-held prediction that it would fade from modern life, religion has instead gained a new profile and prominence on the global stage. This trend is, in fact, not all that new. Religion gained a new footing in American politics in the latter half of the last century at the same time that religions were achieving new prominence elsewhere in the world. In each of these realms, experts found themselves confronting new realities that defied conventions and traditions, leading to a process of reflection, soul-searching and self-criticism that continues to this day. It had long been accepted that educational, economic and political progress would diminish interest in religion, in part because modern individuals would need less of religion's explanatory and salvific powers. Thus, societies would become increasingly secular. Educators in the U.S. and Europe have taught with this trend in mind, social researchers have assumed that religion is in decline and journalists and other media professionals have addressed the world (and the worldviews of their audiences) as a secular—and secularizing—place. Theories of secularization may yet prove to be correct in the long term. Social and cultural pressures in modernization and education do seem to undermine some of what makes traditional religions legitimate. Trends in religion (such as a decades-long decline in religious attendance among Christians in the West and in participation in the other Abrahamic faiths in many countries) seem to indicate such an overall trend. At the same time, world-changing events in recent years have at least some of their source in religion, and across a broad range of contexts, issues, and historical processes, religion persists and even dominates.

The role of media

The changing nature of religion in contemporary life has received more and more attention in the years since the September 11[®] attacks. In all this talk, however, the critical role of media has been

overlooked. The fact is that the major religious issues and trends that are so important today cannot be fully addressed or understood without attention to technology. Indeed, these trends are rooted in the media in important ways. The media has become an important source of information about religions, religious trends, and religious ideas. In the wake of the September 11, the July 2005 London and the Bali attacks, journalism has paid increasing attention to religion both as a local and domestic story and as an international or global one. Media actually interacts with religion in ways that are changing both the media and religion. The events surrounding September 11 give some examples of such interactions. It is important to remember that the September 11 attacks were and continue to be presented and understood as at least partly rooted in religion, in religious truth claims and in a claimed “clash of civilizations.” The social media was an important source of the experience of the September 11 events for most people across the globe. The fact that these events were about both politics and religion did not escape those viewers in those presentations. There was much coverage and commentary on the religious bases and implications of the attacks. We might say, then, that social media can at the same time be a source of religion and spirituality, an indicator of religious and spiritual change, and articulated into religious and spiritual trends.

Religion and social media

The interaction between media and religion is being made more obvious as both media and religion have undergone significant changes in recent years. In media, there have been trends in technology and in economics which have resulted in an increasingly diverse, decentralized and multi-channel environment. As more and more channels have emerged in the traditional media and in the digital, online and social-media realms, a growing market for a wider range of content has developed, significantly lowering what had been barriers to entry by religion. The media increasingly operate like a marketplace, and as there is more and more demand for religion and

Judaism, to Christian evangelical ministries, attempt to use social media to define rather than transcend boundaries, differences and distinctions.

The media and the “clash of civilizations

The events of September 11th renewed concern about religiously based global conflict. Many religiously-motivated voices and forces actively produce media of various kinds which are then deployed nationally, regionally and globally in the service of certain ideas and commitments. While formal religious bodies are behind some of these, the vast majority are informal. The fact that digitalization has led to increasing diversification of channels and toward a greater role for social media has made it possible for the sources of such media to be radically informal. Anyone who wishes to can now have access to global audiences for their blogs, images and YouTube videos. Younger generations are more active in such productions, and because younger generations are more likely than their elders to question authorities and strong religious claims, these productions tend to move in that direction. But can one be religious or undergo a religious experience online? Technically the answer is yes and some people have tried to do so. The opportunity exists to participate in virtual rituals, services, mediation, sessions, confessional exchanges and intercessory prayer groups. The vastness of digital media has important implications for the revitalization of religion. The very range of such media means that the singular voices representing religious doctrine and tradition now face a plethora of other sources of religious and spiritual insight, meaning and advocacy. To the extent that such voices are discourses within large religious categories (Christian, Muslim, New Age, Wiccan, etc.). They also have the potential to re-make those traditions. It might be too much to suggest that new reformations are underway, but it is almost inevitable that these trends are changing religious traditions. When the internet was first set up in 1969, it was primarily used for educational and military purposes and it could not yet qualify as a

spirituality, media supply has increased. Among other things, this increased supply of mediated religion means that religion and spirituality are increasingly available outside the boundaries of the formal “religions,” a situation that has world-changing implications for those institutions. Their presence and persistence in recent years has been accompanied by important changes in many religions. Foremost among these has been a decline in the authority of religious leaders, institutions and doctrines. For a variety of reasons, people today are taking more responsibility for their own faiths, spiritualities and religious identities. Along with the decline in public confidence in institutions in general, religious institutions have also lost their prominence and their clerical authority is less important in determining what people believe and the way they live their lives. Religion and spirituality today are thus more determined by individuals and processes of individual choice. This trend in religion can be seen to be consistent with secularization. Feelings of individual autonomy are direct effects of modernity, education and media. Religion and the media are converging in popular, entertainment and even news cultures across the range of media from television and film, to publishing, to music, to the new media of the digital realm, including the new social media of Web 2.0 and 3.0. Characteristics of the media make them particularly amenable to such a role. Media provide rich symbolism, visual culture, salient contexts and practices of social participation and identity, and opportunities to make and remake identities and social relationships to fit evolving patterns of ideas and action. The media are, further, the dominant and definitive source of what is socially and culturally important in modernity. These trends in media mean that traditional religious differences are breaking down. The decline in religious authority that has accompanied the increasing mediation of religion does threaten religious institutions and traditions. The response has often been to look to media as a way of reinforcing those boundaries. Religious organizations, from the Vatican, to the Iranian Mullahs, to the Mormon Church, to the Muslim Brotherhood, to Orthodox

public sphere as such. However, as the internet was supplied with a more user-friendly graphical interface, it began to grow significantly in the beginning of the 1990s, the religious usage of the new medium also started escalating. By the end of 1990s there were more than 1.7million web pages covering religion. In comparison there were slightly fewer than 5million web pages containing the word sex on the internet in1999.By 2004, the number of religious web pages had grown considerably worldwide. There were then approximately 51 million pages on religion, 65 million web pages dealing with churches and 83 million web pages containing the word 'God'. Let us start our brief journey into the heart of virtual religiosity with a litany of obvious but important facts. Religion of every kind, big and small, old and new, mainstream and more exotic is present online and in great abundance. There are more religious sites than everyone can seriously hope to catalogue and thousands of these sites are quite sophisticated in their presentation. Religion is being practiced on a daily basis by ever increasing numbers of people, especially young people through electronic bulletin boards, news groups, internet chat sessions and World Wide Web in general. This new forum for religious expression and information is self-organizing. If one is so inclined one can read about religion, talk about religion, download religious texts and documents, buy religious books and artifacts, search scriptures with electronic indexes, take virtual tours of galleries of religious art or the interiors of religious buildings, locate churches and religious centers, vote on organizational propositions ,see images of religious leaders, watch religious services, watch video clips or whole movies, listen to religious music, prayers ,sermons and take virtual pilgrimages.

Yes, societies today are secularizing in important ways, and yet religion persists. Rather than thinking of this situation as an either/or proposition, scholars of religion today focus on the question of how religions are changing. The interaction of media and religion is an important dimension of this. We have seen that religion has changed

the media and that the media have changed and is changing religion. Something new is emerging. Whether we think of it as *a new religious media culture* or *a new mediatized religious culture*, it demands the attention of scholars and leaders in the fields of media and of religion.

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