CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Foundation, relations, diversity
and innovations

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The name India was, before 1947, a designation of a large part of South Asia, which is now divided into several nation states, one among which is India. ‘Contemporary India’ in the title of this Handbook refers to this nation-state that gained independence in 1947. India is by far the largest country in South Asia both in terms of geographical size (the seventh largest in the world) and in terms of population (the second largest in the world). India is one of the most diverse and pluralistic nations in the world in terms of official languages, cultures, religions and social identities. It has throughout history been a meeting place for a large number of different cultures, languages, religions, traditions of art and ideologies that have continually been transformed and adapted to new circumstances. The geographical landscape of India is very diverse as well and divided into three main parts, the Himalayan mountains in the far north, the Indo-Gangetic plain that includes most of north and east India, and the Deccan in the south. The greatest population concentrations are in the plain in the north and east, and along the coast in the Deccan in the south. The unique weather pattern in India and the rest of South Asia is the annual monsoon, which has enormous environmental and economic as well as cultural significance. The settlement patterns and the largest population concentrations have historically been shaped by the monsoon patterns as well as trade routes. India’s geographical size is only one-third of China’s, a country that India is often, unfairly, compared to (for the India-China relationship see Chapter 8 in this book). Around 1,300 million people live in India, 1,400 million in China. However, India’s population is growing faster and India will within a few years become the most populous country in the world. Around 17.5 per cent of humanity lives in the nation-state of India. Its annual population growth is around 1.2 per cent, an annual increase of around 15 million. India has one of the youngest populations in the world. In 2012, India had the youngest population in terms of the number of people under thirty, around 704 million, and in about five years, the median age in India will be twenty-nine years, ‘making it the youngest country in the world’. The worldwide Indian diaspora is thought to number between 30 and 40 million people and is one of the largest and fastest growing (Rai and Reeves 2008; see Chapter 10). India is the world’s largest receiver of remittances from its diaspora, around US$ 70 billion annually. India is an emerging global power not least because of its geographical and demographic size but in recent years it has in particular been the growth of the Indian economy that has been in focus. The
Indian economy has been growing for several decades (see Chapter 4) and especially during the last two, India has seen strong economic growth compared to earlier decades (see Chapter 13). In contrast to some common Western images, India has been a provider of development assistance to other countries since the early 1950s, soon after independence (see Chapter 9). However, the economic growth is unequal among the Indian states and union territories and among social groups and classes (see Chapter 18). The Indian middle classes have especially benefited (see Chapter 14 and Chapter 15, and also Chapter 30 on new middle-class ‘male ideal type’ body and Chapter 31 on new middle-class food habits). The economic growth has created problems of increasing inequality, particularly within the cities and between urban and rural areas. Agriculture has become a victim of development ideology and economically development has benefited especially the urban bureaucrat elite (see Chapter 6). The green revolution favoured mainly rice and wheat and is partly responsible for the dramatic increase in cases of diabetes in India (see Chapter 32). The economic growth has also created serious environmental problems, especially water pollution, refuse and air pollution.

India gained independence from British colonial rule, the British Raj, on 15 August 1947 and became a sovereign republic when the Constitution came into effect on 26 January 1950. These two dates have thereafter become the most important public celebrations of the Indian nation, remembered as Independence Day and Republic Day. However, these celebrations hide the fact that the birth of India was marked by extreme violence, Punjab and Bengal in particular suffered, and there was a partitioning of people whose prime identifier afterwards became their different religious identities (see Chapter 1). The inability of a post-conflict reconciliation between India and Pakistan (see Chapters 7 and 8) has led to an absence of any form of official recognition of what happened during partition. No memorial or annual ritual has been established for the victims. This lack of closure has added to the suffering.

An important source of pride in India, something that also fuels its ambition of becoming a global power, is that the country is the world’s largest democracy. Democracy is no doubt an enormous achievement. Very few post-colonial nations have had continuous democratic rule from the period of independence until today, as has India (with the exception of the emergency declared by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi from 1975 to 1977; see Chapter 2). India has enjoyed free elections, which have not been easy to organize given the number of candidates and voters, and has developed a well-established democratic culture. However, the state has not always worked well, and there are a number of threats to the democratic system (see Chapter 7). Democracy was tested only six months after independence with the killing of the father (Bapu) of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi (by a Hindu nationalist). Two prime ministers, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, were assassinated, for opposing regional independence movements in South Asia (the Khalistan movement in Indian Punjab in the case of Indira Gandhi and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in northern Sri Lanka in the case of Rajiv Gandhi). Communalism (see Chapters 7 and 27) as well as corruption (see Chapter 17) are considered major problems, but no one is predicting the downfall of the democratic system. Democracy has nevertheless to be considered a success not least because of its stability. The Constitution and India’s federal structure have been important for the survival of democracy (see Chapter 3) and Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, who was the leader of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution and its prime architect, should be recognized for having given Indian democracy a strong foundation (see Chapter 24). The Constitution laid down the fundamental rights of the individual and gave India a federal structure; each state and union territory has its own government, a Governor/Lieutenant and a Chief Minister.
India has a large presence in the world outside of South Asia, not only due to migration of people, but also in terms of cultural influence, India transcends the South Asian geographical space. Indians have exchanged ideas with other cultures globally for centuries and some traditions have been transformed in those transnational and transcultural encounters and become successful innovations with an extraordinary global popularity. Two such examples, Yoga and Ayurveda, are covered in this book (see Chapters 11 and 12). The idea of India as the teacher of spirituality to the West was important for developing modern Yoga traditions. Interestingly, within decades, Yoga became a phenomenon mostly dedicated to the body, with bodily health as its prime focus, probably because of influences from global gymnastics and body-building movements as well as nationalism and the international sports movement. Yoga has been one of the main Indian cultural exports of the last few decades not least because Yoga had blended with new traditions of gymnastics and sports that were popular worldwide. Similarly, Ayurveda has become a global phenomenon, but only after the blending of traditional Ayurveda with elements of Western biomedicine.

In spite of India’s impressive economic growth over the last decades, some of the most serious problems of Indian society persist and do not seem to go away. Some of these problems are poverty, the repression of women (see Chapters 19 and 29), and inequality both in terms of living conditions and of opportunities such as access to education (see Chapter 5), employment and the economic resources of the state (see Chapter 20). Caste in India, although no longer functioning as a social system, has nonetheless not disappeared (see Chapters 16 and 25), and inequalities caused by caste seem to overlap with new forms of inequality. Poverty and uneven access to the resources of the state may become a threat to democracy, a large proportion of the world’s poorest people live in India, which contrasts with the large annual economic growth India has achieved in the last decades as well as with the image of India as an emerging world power.

India has a long and complex history. The dynamic interaction of communities, traditions and technologies is a main feature. India was the home of several ancient and medieval civilizations: the ancient Buddhist civilization of the Mauryans, the early medieval Hindu civilization of the Guptas, the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Islamic culture. The long presence of the British colonial power added further complexity. Buddhism was dominant during the Mauryan empire (322–185 BCE), which was one of several formative periods of Indian civilization, although its institutions gradually disappeared from India. However, in the twentieth century a new Buddhism became re-established by Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar as a religion for social justice (see Chapters 24 and 25). Christianity in India, for several centuries associated with colonial rule, but with a presence in India at least a thousand years before the colonial period, has increasingly become a religion of the poor and repressed in India (see Chapter 28). Muslims are still suffering from the aftermath of partition that deprived them of most of their leadership and they are also victims of discrimination in Hindu-dominated society (see Chapter 26) as well as of religious violence (see Chapter 27). Hinduism is an immensely diverse and pluralistic phenomenon and should not be mistaken for the political movement that uses a homogenized idea of Hindu identity (Hindutva) to mobilize for a hinduization of India and produces fear among the minorities. Hinduism is often, especially from the time of Vivekananda, promoted as spiritual in contrast to the materialism of the West. India was superior to the West in spirituality, while the West was superior in materiality, Vivekananda suggested this, probably because he was looking for funding for his education, health and social improvement projects from Western supporters, but nevertheless hoped that there could be an equal exchange: money in return for spiritual wisdom. This dualism between a postulated spiritual India and materialistic West has no scientific basis, but is still
important for Indian national identity, and a selling point for sections of Indian industry such as tourism and health industries. Hinduism is a quite materialistic religion (as are all religions), and recent research increasingly focuses on the material side of Hinduism. The exchange of material objects between priests and worshippers is a notable, even dominant feature in the rituals, and displaying objects of worship and being physically present at the sacred places are important (see Chapters 22 and 23). In contemporary political Hinduism there is an emphasis on history, but this emphasis is contrary to some of the fundamental philosophical presuppositions of Hinduism (see Chapter 21).

Some of the issues of cultural change dealt with in chapters in this book are the new visibility of women, new ideal male body types, changing food habits and innovations in traditional medicine as response to new diseases. The new visibility of women on the political stage in the last decades has challenged the story of India’s emergence as a modern nation-state by calling attention to the invisibility of women in the construction of that story. The public outrage over the rape of Nirbhaya in December 2012 was also about this right to visibility and in this case, in particular the right of women to inhabit public spaces without endangering themselves (see Chapter 29). Another form of new visibility is the new male lean and muscular bodies in public spaces such as billboards and popular media as well as in the statues of Hindu gods, especially Śiva and Hanumān, which have in the recent years increasingly been portrayed as muscular gods. The statues are getting bigger and bigger, reflecting perhaps the new ideals of masculinity and male socio-economic success as well as Hindu dominance (see Chapter 30). Innovation in the food traditions in India, which typically are thought to change slowly, do happen, but often at the margins of society, but such innovations can potentially lead to new changes such as the emancipation from ethnic, religious or caste rules, since food in India is a marker of a person’s position in society (see Chapter 31). However, food changes in the recent past have led to new diseases, most dramatically those caused in part by the green revolution’s favouring of wheat and white rice, which make medical innovations necessary even among practitioners of traditional medical traditions such as Siddha medicine who have no traditional means to deal with such diseases and have to improvise (see Chapter 32).

This Handbook deals with a number of the important issues for understanding contemporary India. It brings together emerging and leading scholars on various aspects of contemporary India. Many academic disciplines study India and the global Indian presence: History, Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science, Economy, Religious Studies, Literature, South Asian Studies and all these disciplines have increasingly focused on the traditions and transformations of contemporary India. India is rapidly changing, and researchers have wanted to understand these current transformations. The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary India contains essays by the field’s foremost scholars who study the current transformations of Indian culture and society. The volume concentrates on India as it has developed in the twenty-first century. India is perhaps the world’s most complex and intricate society, and this complexity makes the production of knowledge of this nation intellectually challenging but also fascinating and absorbing.

The Handbook has five parts and each part deals with separate themes, though all the themes are related.

Foundation

The first part of this book is called ‘Foundation’ because it deals with some of the fundamental issues of India as a society and nation-state, such as the experience of partition,
the Constitution, India’s political system, economy, agriculture, education and security. Part I starts with Pippa Virdee’s chapter on the violent beginning of the nation-state of India with the division of Pakistan and India during which at least 1 million people were killed and millions displaced. Virdee correctly notes that it was particularly Punjab that bore the brunt of the partition violence and displacement. She argues that the violence of partition has overshadowed the pain of displacement and loss of identity. One consequence of partition was that the shared cultural roots and traditions of the Punjabi identity were replaced with a partitioning of people who now became identified on the basis of religion, as Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. The mix of Muslim–Hindu–Sikh in Punjabi society ceased to exist when Punjab was divided. Other regions in India have often united on linguistic identity, but not so in Punjab; it has shunned its linguistic identity in favour of a national and religious identity. As the poet Balraj Sahni writes in his poem, quoted by Virdee in her article, ‘What of our becoming human beings, We have turned into Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims’ (p. 32). Punjab is now associated with these three ‘unmixed’ religious communities.

The second chapter is about the survival of democracy in India. Subrata Kumar Mitra asks, ‘What makes India’s democracy work?’ Mitra notes ‘elections are necessary but not sufficient to make democracy work’ (p. 45). Compared to many other post-colonial states democracy in India is quite an achievement. India’s democracy, writes Mitra, ‘is the outcome of general variables like path dependency, adroit institutional arrangement, political management and strategic policy reform’ (p. 35). It survives, he argues, in competition with its competitors such as anti-system parties and extremist ideologies, ‘because it delivers, if not for all and all the time, then, at least for most, and most of the time’ (p. 35). Not least does it work because the underprivileged groups at the margins of the hierarchical society of India ‘have learnt to use the ballot for upward mobility’ (p. 36). Mitra explains the successful transition to democracy using a dynamic neo-institutional model and argues that the indigenous elite with social legitimacy was important. The party system was the result of six decades of development prior to independence under British rule, and political representation and social mobilization were present from the start. To answer the question of why Indian democracy works, Mitra elaborates three arguments: one, electoral mobilization and unfettered participation, two, election-reinforcing institutional arrangements and countervailing forces, and three, asymmetric but cooperative federalism.

The chapter on democracy is followed by a chapter on the Constitution and the Supreme Court. The Constitution was a fundamental document, coming into force on 26 January 1950. It describes India as a sovereign, secular, socialist, democratic republic and guarantees a number of civil liberties as well as supporting affirmative action to help groups that are disadvantaged because of past and present injustice. In his chapter Ananth Padmanabhan focuses on three aspects of the Constitution and the Supreme Court’s considerations: first, its guarantee of fundamental rights and its contribution to the rights based on citizen–state interaction. Here Padmanabhan notes that the Court has had success in the rights against the state but that this success has been largely in the realm of language rather than in terms of achieving objectives through actual implementation. Second, its federal structure and its role in accommodating diversity in Indian society. Padmanabhan analyses the federal structure along the multidimensional axis of retaining India’s national unity while at the same time securing its diversity and concludes that the design of the federal structure has not proven very strong in balancing the goals of national unification and diversity. Third, it is in the separation of powers between different branches of government that the Supreme Court has attained remarkable success, both in terms of language and practice, argues Padmanabhan. He concludes that national unity and the self-preservation of the Constitution have
emerged as extremely important normative concerns for the Supreme Court, and that it has especially succeeded with respect to values such as individual freedom, self-development and sustainable growth.

Chapter 4 analyses the economic foundation of India. Kunal Sen notes that in the years before independence India suffered stagnation in living standards caused by ‘deglobalization’, a collapse of world trade volumes, and a marked intensification of poverty because of the stagnation of agricultural production and the collapse of artisanal industry. The gross domestic product started to rise again only in the late 1970s and it has risen steadily since, an achievement, Sen argues, that is paralleled by few countries except China. The growth in the last decade has been strong especially in the service sector, while agriculture since the 1980s has been developing very slowly. The service sector has grown from 19 per cent of GDP in 1955 to 40.7 per cent in 2008, while agriculture has been reduced from 57 per cent of GDP in 1955 to 19.8 per cent in 2008. In the chapter Sen analyses the history and development of the policies of the macroeconomic, trade, industrial and financial sectors, which are of particular importance for understanding the economy since the 1950s and the patterns of development of the core economic sectors, agriculture, industry and services. Finally, he analyses the diversity in economic performance between the regions and argues that here the political and economic institutions have played a key role.

Education makes up the foundation of modern nation states on many levels, not least in creating equality, quality of life and the ability to contribute to society. Chapter 5 deals with the urgent issue of education in India, and the most urgent of all, the quality of primary education. Vimala Ramachandran shows that while access to primary education has improved significantly in the last ten years, close to 97 per cent of children aged between six and eleven are enrolled in primary schools, the number drops to 39.3 per cent in upper-primary level and classes 11 and 12. While large drop-out rates are worrying, the biggest worry, argues Ramachandran, is that many children, especially in the government schools, learn very little. ‘Mere access to schooling, without commensurate focus on quality and learning outcomes is meaningless’ (p. 79), Ramachandran points out. Since the social and economic status of the child’s family is one of the strongest determinants of their educational attainment, the ‘fight for equity is ultimately a struggle for quality education’ (p. 86). In India today, complains Ramachandran, the spatial segregation of the rich from the middle class and from the very poor implies that children go to schools with widely varying levels of quality and have very different schooling experiences. Many from the most deprived communities drop out of school because the schools do not teach them skills or give them confidence. After independence, higher education institutions had priority, and not education for all. And when an increasing number of children started enrolling at school, there was a gradual growth in private schools with people with means taking their children out of government schools. Today the rich and the middle class have more or less moved their children out of the government schools. In a study in which Ramachandran interacted with teachers in eight states, she found that not one of these teachers sent their own children or grandchildren to government schools. The author believes that the lack of quality in primary education is a threat to democracy. India is increasingly becoming more polarized and schools no longer provide a shared space for children of different backgrounds and communities. Ramachandran in the final part of her chapter suggests a number of ways to improve the situation.

The last chapter of Part I, deals with the state of agriculture in India. At the time of independence India was an agricultural society. In 1955, almost ten years after independence, 57 per cent of GDP was from agriculture. Today, key features of Indian agriculture are record food production, increasing industrial investments, booming exports, persistent hunger,
worsening malnutrition, escalating natural resource degradation and unprecedented distress within the farming community. Rajeswari Raina argues that the intermediate regime, or the state, along with its ideological and functional allies, has imposed its own articulation of development on agriculture and in that process the rich diversity, production potential and robustness of India’s agriculture and diverse farming communities have been hindered. Raina divides the history of agriculture after independence into three phases. In the first phase centralized public investment with a wide range of public sector enterprises and policy-making mechanisms for agricultural growth was established. The state was characterized as a benevolent technocratic provider of public goods for agricultural growth, which was seen as the main driver of all development. The second phase (mid-1960s to the late 1990s) started with the green revolution and culminated with the acknowledgement that the green revolution did not reduce hunger or malnutrition, but did add to degradation of soil and water systems and loss of biological diversity. This phase reinforced centralization and added the voice of science and technology for productivity to the legacy inherited from the first phase. The current and third phase, beginning around 1998–2000 is marked by disillusionment with modernization and concern about increasing malnutrition. Raina argues that by ‘legitimising and renaming the reinforcement of the green revolution approach as the alternative’, the intermediate regime ‘forecloses the opportunities for several other decentralised location-specific alternatives’ and that what is needed is a paradigm that celebrates the diversity of agro-ecological and social systems and is based on principles that have ecological and social feedback loops (p. 112). This paradigm sees the connection between agriculture and health on the one hand and between agriculture and the environment on the other.

India and the world

The topic of the first chapter in Part II, is the issue of security and wellbeing in India with a focus on three areas: the ethnic conflicts, the Maoist insurgency and foreign policy. Rajat Ganguly starts this chapter by calling attention to the immense ethnic, religious, linguistic and regional diversity in India. He then analyses the ethnic violence in India that has centred on the creation of new states exemplified by militant nativist movements in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Assam, Mizoram, Punjab and Kashmir. He looks at communal and sectarian conflicts as threats to security and to the secular democracy and notes especially the failure of the justice system to deliver justice to victims of ethnic and communal violence and to arrest and punish those guilty of instigating mass murder. Ganguly then turns to the Maoist insurgency that traces its roots to earlier peasant struggle and is caused by poverty and caste-based exploitation and discrimination. The Maoist insurgency is often named Naxalites after the peasant uprising that took place in Naxalbari in West Bengal in 1967. The movement was crushed in the 1970s but emerged, slowly, in the 1980s and has since spread to the forested tribal areas in West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where it is currently based. Finally, Ganguly looks at the insecurity caused by India’s external powers. India’s military is the fourth largest in the world and India is a nuclear power. India has in the last twenty-five years, after the break-up of the Soviet Union and the loss of a crucial ally, been transformed, writes Ganguly, into ‘a modern fighting machine’ due to changes on regional and global levels and to a reappraisal by political, military and bureaucratic elites who urged India to consolidate ‘its strategic autonomy’ (p. 129). In this process, argues Ganguly, India has moved from a policy of ‘non-alignment’ to ‘poly-alignment’ establishing defence-specific agreements and strategic partnerships with a large number of countries.
While many talk about India as a superpower or emerging superpower, it is notable that India is currently not a regional power in South Asia in spite of its demographic and material advantage. In his chapter Manjeet Pardesi looks at India’s foreign, especially military, relations with South Asia and with the rest of Asia. Pardesi argues that after 1947 India was an Asian power, which was in line with Nehru’s expectations that India would play a leading role in Asia and in interpreting Asia to the wider world. However, this ended with the Sino-Indian war in 1962. After that war, India was reduced to a South Asian power. Due to the China–Pakistan nexus, because of the weapon transfer from the United States to Pakistan in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and because of India’s domestic economic weakness, India was incapable of projecting power outside of South Asia. Pardesi argues that due to the gradual economic rise of India over the past two decades India is in the process of developing into a great power in Asia and has become a significant actor in the emerging balance of power politics in East Asia and especially in Southeast Asia, although it has not managed to emerge as the regional power in South Asia.

Emma Mawdsley writes about how India is challenging the Western-lead norms, modalities and institutions of the international development regime. The chapter first gives an overview of India’s development cooperation history. India was already a provider of development assistance in the 1950s, but the last decade has seen an acceleration in India’s development cooperation flows. Mawdsley analyses the discourse of development cooperation. The discourse typically emphasizes the shared experience of colonial exploitation and solidarity between the nations that have this experience, a win-win outcome of mutual opportunity and equality. The Western development discourse is patronizing, while the Indian development discourse frames the development cooperation in a language of mutual respect. However, the Indian discourse of mutual respect between nations risks inattention to justice within states. Mawdsley points out that as India increasingly becomes a part of development cooperation a number of difficult issues arise and that how these issues are dealt with will have implications in the future.

In the fourth chapter of Part II, Brij V. Lal and Knut A. Jacobsen analyse how the idea of an Indian diaspora developed, the role of the Indian diasporas, and the place of religion and diversity in the Indian diasporas. The authors note that the growth of, as well as the notion of, a large Indian diaspora is a phenomenon of the late twentieth century. The Indian state wanted to tap into the economic resources of the diaspora and attempted an active engagement with the Non-Resident Indian (NRI) community. The government of India set up a High Level Committee to gain a deeper understanding of the aspirations, attitudes, strengths and weaknesses of the Indian diasporas and their expectations of India and to ‘recommend a broad but flexible policy framework and country-specific plans for forging a mutually beneficial relationship with the PIOs and NRIs and for facilitating their interaction with India and their participation in India’s economic development’ (p. 161). Lal and Jacobsen emphasize that the Indian diaspora is an extremely diverse and plural phenomenon. It is divided not only into old and new, once and twice migrant diaspora communities, and a large number of regional and linguistic cultures, but also into a number of different religious identities as well. They argue that religion has been important for the preservation of personal dignity in the diaspora, as well as maintaining identities and traditions, especially for the first-generation migrants. Religion has also been a main resource in the attempts to transfer the diasporic project of the first-generation migrants to their children, the so-called ‘second generation’. While the first generation were eager to transfer their own diaspora consciousness to their children, the second generation, on the other hand, typically have felt at home in the new country. They have thus grown up in-between cultures and experienced
not only the clash of values between generations but also between the Indian (regional) cultures and the cultures of the new country. They were not Indian in the same way as their parents, and from the point of view of the new country they are British, Norwegian, Swedish and so on, and at home in the new country. Finally, the chapter deals with an important part of the religious diversity in the Indian diaspora, the religious institutions of Dalits. Some Dalits do not want to be part of the Indian diaspora but seek to escape from the Indian environment. Significantly, however, the Dalit religious institutions in the diaspora reflect similar efforts in India of Dalits organizing themselves around separate religious symbols in order to attain justice.

In Chapter 11, Mark Singleton takes the transnational and transcultural flows and negotiations that have characterized the development of Yoga in contemporary India and the world. He explores Yoga in a transnational and global context and explores some of the ways in which Yoga has mutated and adapted in the encounter with discourses alien to ‘traditional’ Yoga contexts. The author argues that as a result of a tangled and on-going history of borrowing, addition, exchange and excision, it is not sufficient to identify Yoga’s purported origins in ‘tradition’ in order to understand its modern manifestations. With particular reference to physical culture, it is demonstrated that Yoga as it is popularly practised around the world today owes a debt to discourses of health, fitness, beauty and spirituality that began to permeate new, mainly anglophone modes of Yoga from the late nineteenth century onwards. Singleton shows that transcultural flows and negotiations have characterized the development of modern Yoga. One of the most important strands of the transnational development is the traditions of women’s gymnastics which arose during the nineteenth century in Europe and America, and notes Singleton, ‘the typical transnational Hatha Yoga class of today owes more to these traditions of women’s gymnastics than it does to the haṭhayoga systems handed down in the history of India’ (p. 179).

The last chapter in Part II deals with the status of the Ayurveda system of medical knowledge and practices in contemporary India. In this chapter, Maya Warrier examines the changes undergone by Ayurveda in modern times. She divides the chapter into the development of Ayurveda in the colonial period, in Independent India and Ayurveda as a global health tradition. In the colonial period Ayurveda was heavily influenced by Western biomedicine and the history of modern Ayurveda can be read as a history of gradual biomedicalization. Revivalists wanted to establish Ayurveda as India’s national medicine and Ayurveda became a symbol of nationalist aspirations. Late twentieth-century popular accounts of Ayurveda, writes Warrier, are in essence accounts of ‘Indianness’; they are trenchantly nationalistic and often anti-Western in tone. They depict India as a land of “traditional” wisdom, mystical and esoteric insight, and “spiritual” prowess’ (p. 190). Warrier argues that Ayurveda has become a heritage product. Claims are made for its value as a spiritual tradition – ancient and uniquely Indian – with a basis in science and rationality. In practice, Warrier shows, mainstream Ayurveda has assimilated the methods and paradigms of biomedicine. Ayurveda has gained popularity in the last three decades in the West, and here it is promoted mainly as a holistic spiritual tradition that can enable self-understanding and self-expression. The emphasis is on promoting wellbeing and optimizing human potential, and this form of Ayurveda has a strong self-help dimension. The chapter provides the context for these different developments and provides important insights into the multiple faces of Ayurveda in the modern world. In conclusion, the author asks if the new emphasis on a cosmopolitan and individualistic form of ‘spirituality’ could serve as a corrective to Ayurveda’s excessive preoccupation both with nationalistic chauvinism and with science and biomedicine in postcolonial India’ (p. 197).
Society, class, caste and gender

The chapters in Part III examine Indian society with a focus on class, caste and gender. In the opening chapter of this part, Diego Maiorano gives a detailed analysis of the complex dynamics that prompted the government of India to liberalize its economy in the 1990s and the consequences of these reforms for contemporary Indian society. Maiorano shows that the combination of exceptional circumstances due to a severe balance-of-payment crisis with the ability of politicians’ proponents to implement economic reforms ‘by stealth’ to a large extent explain why liberalization was possible. The chapter then explores the consequences of the economic reforms in terms of their distributional outcomes. Maiorano observes that poverty did decline, ‘but at a frustratingly slow pace, while non-income dimensions of poverty remain among the most severe in the world’ (p. 211). Agriculture is also, as Rajeswari Raina likewise shows in her chapter, one of the losers, ‘witnessed by the very high number of farmers’ suicides’. On the other hand, the big business community, ‘able to colonise highly profitable areas hitherto reserved for the public sector, benefited from substantial tax incentives and received massive amounts of implicit and explicit subsidies’ (p. 211). And likewise the middle classes benefited. Maiorano notes that ‘the economic reforms and the greater role played by the private sector contributed to expand further the middle class that is now the main protagonist of the “new” India’ (p. 212), and, significantly, the elections in India now tend to be determined by issues raised by the middle class(es). Maiorano concludes that India’s economic reforms show the enduring power of elite groups in India’s politics.

In her chapter, Nandini Gooptu analyses the extensive transformation of urban India following economic liberalization. This transformation encompasses the built environment, governance, politics, class relations, lifestyles, and personal and social identities. Gooptu argues that two contradictory trends characterize the changing Indian city. First, the city development is exclusionary and provides an opportunity for private capital accumulation and the fulfillment of middle- and upper-class aspirations in privatized spaces, at the cost of the poor. And second, the city is projected as inclusive in top-down participatory governance discourse, though with limited achievement in actual practice. Gooptu shows that the Indian cities as a result of these contradictions have become increasingly politically contested, spatially unequal, economically stratified and socially divided.

Leela Fernandes in Chapter 15 analyses the middle classes in India. Fernandes notes at the outset that the ‘realities of the lives, identities, and politics of India’s vast middle classes bear little resemblance to the heightened public rhetoric about this group’ (p. 232), and argues that India’s middle classes are characterized by variations based on factors such as socio-economic standing, caste, religion and region, and that this diversity coexists with a distinctive public middle-class identity where various actors make claims about a uniform middle-class identity. Fernandes argues that such claims have been heightened in the post-liberalization period and that the result is a paradoxical relationship between political claims regarding a singular middle class and a differentiated social group that ranges from very elite English urban upper-middle classes to lower-middle classes that struggle to maintain their socio-economic status. Fernandes analyses this paradox and argues that the tensions produced by such fractures within the middle classes play an increasingly central role in shaping contemporary politics in India. Fernandes notes that the middle classes have always engaged in politics aimed at differentiating their socio-cultural identity from subaltern social groups and emphasizes that some of the central trends in contemporary India have been shaped by the politics of the middle classes.

In Chapter 16, Surinder S. Jodhka analyses a traditional aspect of inequality, caste, which tend to overlap with newer forms of inequality caused by liberalization of the economy. He
first shows that the practice of caste ‘on the ground’ has always been diverse and very different from the ‘book-view’ of caste. In addition, the mainstream social science perspectives on Indian society have tended to look at caste as an institution, which would disintegrate and disappear with secularization and modernization. Indeed, as Jodhka argues, many in middle-class urban India would emphatically argue that caste would and should have disappeared from public life by now had it not been kept alive by the actors in India’s electoral politics. Jodhka, however, argues that despite considerable changes in social and economic life, caste continues to overlap with the newer forms of inequalities and that besides its persistence as a system of social inequality, it also survives as a value that ranks people on a scale of honour and humiliation.

Corruption has been an enduring phenomenon in India, but in Chapter 17 Gould argues that the rise of large-scale anti-corruption movements in India reveals more than simply public dissatisfaction with apparently ever increasing corruption scandals. Instead, he argues, public debate on corruption in India is related to two long-term political concerns since the 1940s. The first concern is a popular critique of the (post)colonial state derived from the moral politics of anti-colonialism. The second is the survival of a practical politics of anti-corruption in forms of patronage politics in Indian parties. Gould explores these ideas by examining the relationship between large-scale scandals and routine practices through three phases of political critique of corruption, the 1930s–1950s, the 1980s–1990s and the post-2006 period. Corruption and anti-corruption in Indian politics have not been static, but Gould suggests that it is the specific experience and history of the colonial state that is key to the particular characteristics of the role of corruption in Indian politics. Gould writes that the ‘modern anti-colonial critique of corruption sets up the notion of the “ordinary” citizen’s struggle against autocracy and the state, which has become a key feature of post-colonial anti-corruption movements’ (p. 257). Gould shows that anti-corruption movements happen when the political system is unable to contain the working of certain kinds of capital or resource accumulation. He suggests viewing corruption as an alternative political economy that maintains its own forms of social and administrative stability. When that stability is threatened, ‘social and political competition produces anti-corruption protest’ (p. 257).

In Chapter 18, Harald Tambs-Lyche and Nikita Sud explore a regional perspective of the current social and cultural development by investigating Gujarat. Gujarat is the home state of the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and a state that for two decades has been dominated politically by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Since 1995, when the party gained power in Gujarat, the state has been promoted as the ‘showcase’ of the Hindu right-wing party. Gujarat is characterized by the economic liberalism of the BJP government that favours local and foreign investment while its illiberal politics inspired by Hindutva and the ideal of the Hindu nation severely limit political opposition and minority rights. Tambs-Lyche and Sud note that the situation of the Muslims has worsened under the BJP regime. This pattern is partly explained by historical reasons. Gujarat has a long tradition of trade, partly due to its coastal location. Merchants have had a strong social, cultural and political influence in the area. In the colonial period, indigenous capital built a competitive textile industry, and Gujarat was among the most advanced states in India at the time of independence. The dominance of the bourgeoisie largely explains the present situation, argue Tambs-Lyche and Sud. With the 2014 national election Modi became the prime minister, and it remains to be seen whether this pattern of economic liberalism and illiberal politics inspired by Hindutva, which increases social inequality and severely limits minority rights, will become an all-India model.

Mallarika Sinha Roy notes in her chapter that the fascinatingly diverse sources of family studies, ranging from religious tracts and printed domestic manuals from the nineteenth century to ethnography of kinship systems and literary texts, unveil the complexity in discourses
of family and marriage in India. Her chapter builds on Rajeswari Sunder Rajan’s observation that feminist interventions in exploring questions of conjugality, widowhood, sexual labour and nationalism have expanded the horizon of the women’s movement. The chapter takes up these issues to understand the significance of the link between feminist scholarship and the women’s movement in contemporary India. Instead of evaluating the success and failure of legal reforms concerning family and marriage initiated by the women’s movement, she argues that reforms and backlashes, often in cyclical regularity, exist in the life of every movement and that the women’s movement is no exception to this pattern. But she argues that newer thoughts and writings on these intimate spaces of struggle have helped the women’s movement to address the legal gridlock from new angles. Feminist scholarship continues to work on the kinship networks formed through marriage, inter-caste and inter-religion marriages, violence inside familial and marital relations, access to education and health, but in addition has brought in questions of lesbianism and disability and these have considerably expanded the orders and borders of family studies. The enormous significance accorded to family and marriage in contemporary India contains subversion, and her chapter revisits the contested fields of intimacy from subversive locations by exploring the margins of family studies.

In the last chapter of Part III, Uday Chandra first asks what it means to be ‘adivasi’ (a category used to unite groups who are characterized as ‘tribes’ or ‘scheduled tribes’) in contemporary India. He thereafter examines the ‘adivasi’ interactions with the modern state, non-state actors such as missionaries, extreme right- and left-wing organizations, indigeneity activists and the capitalist economy. Chandra questions the stereotypical image of the adivasi as a hapless victim of modern political and economic processes, and offers instead nuanced, down-to-earth empirical accounts of different aspects of contemporary adivasi life. Chandra notes that the politics of land and forests, work and livelihoods, and migration to cities create opportunities as well as challenges for adivasis. There are differences between adivasi elders and youth, dominant and subordinate lineages, and men and women in adivasi villages, and the capitalist economic processes sharpen these differences. Chandra argues that these differences call the notion of an adivasi ‘community’ into question, and he emphasizes that the adivasi communities are part and parcel of modern life without a possibility of a return to a state of innocence in which ‘all were equal and nature’s abundance ensured plenty for all’ (p. 305). Instead, argues Chandra, adivasis are subaltern individuals and ‘communities’ embedded in and grappling with modernity at large.

**Religion and diversity**

Diversity is a main characteristic of contemporary India, not only in terms of class, caste, gender, regions and languages but also in terms of religious traditions, practices and communities. Several religious traditions, some with a worldwide presence, have originated in India. In the first chapter of Part IV, Gerald James Larson notes that layers of cultural development in the South Asian region going all the way back to the second millennium BCE have left significant cultural residues and valuations even in twenty-first-century India. Larson argues that what is crucial to understand in order to appreciate Indic notions of ‘history’ and ‘myth’ is that Indic traditions themselves appear to exhibit as ‘myth’ what modern scholars attempt to construe as ‘history’. This in turn makes possible an interesting mirror reversal, namely, that what modern scholars appear to construe as ‘history’ is what Indic traditions themselves would for the most part consider to be ‘myth’. According to Larson this reversal of myth and history is due to different understandings of the unfolding of time, or different mindsets: ‘The mind-set is one of falling backwards, of “precessing”, and, hence, at least in the classic
Indic formulation, of the present and future always becoming the past (or, in other words, karma and rebirth) (p. 326). The current Hindu nationalist attempts of turning myths into history will consequently run into a number of contradictions.

The religious traditions called Hinduism have manifested themselves in massive prestigious temples all over the world, and their divinities in their material form as statues are worshipped with elaborate material exchanges of food, liquids, flowers and money, in great festivals and on a daily basis. According to Hinduism, spirituality is expressed in materiality. In her chapter Vasudha Narayanan explores this material aspect of Hinduism. Narayanan investigates the multiple connections between ‘material’ substances, ‘spirit’ and liberation from the cycle of rebirth, and asks if ‘matter’ is opposed to the categories of ‘spirit/soul/God’. In Hinduism, it is not. Matter, she argues, is fluid. It is sometimes concrete and sometimes hypermaterial. She uses the Sarasvati statue outside the Indonesian Embassy in Washington DC to enter into a discussion on material religion in the Hindu traditions. A tall statue, she argues, may be a symbol of political clout, cultural capital, a deity who grants desires, a manifestation of ultimate reality, and moves between the states. She argues that Sarasvati’s attributes suggest networks of affordances connected with materiality and performativity, and paths to liberation through them and transcending them. Narayanan concludes that the significance of the materialities arises in part from their affordances to give, on the one hand, learning, happiness and prosperity on this earth, and on the other, detachment and liberation from the cycle of life and death, and that according to most Hindu schools our bodies are pervaded with souls, and both bodies and souls are pervaded by brahman.

Religion is grounded not only in myth and materiality, but also in geography and so too the religious traditions in India. A central feature of the Hindu traditions is the conceptions of salvific space and the institutions of pilgrimage travel to these places. The last hundred years has seen an enormous increase in pilgrimage travel in India, and this is the topic of the chapter by Knut A. Jacobsen. After dealing with the historical origin and growth of Hindu pilgrimage in India, the chapter delineates changes in infrastructure and technology that have led to changes in pilgrimage patterns. The chapter thereafter analyses the close relationship between pilgrimage and economy, and argues that Hindu pilgrimage has expanded not least because of successful marketing. One reason for the current peak in pilgrimage travel is that the religious and economic institutions have a shared interest in the growth of pilgrims and both participate in the marketing of the places. Finally, the chapter discusses the contemporary concern of religious and political powers with places of pilgrimage. This concern illustrates the way establishment and expansion of pilgrimage spaces can be a means to secure land for one’s own religion. The practice of connecting mythology and geography is an efficient promotion device, and indicates the connection of pilgrimage space to the desire of political dominance. However, Hindu sacred narratives are often presented as describing events of previous yugas involving ideas that are removed from contemporary conceptions of history.

In Chapter 24 Eleanor Zelliot presents one of the most influential persons of modern India, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, the leader of the untouchables, who together with Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru is considered one of the three makers of modern India. The chapter focuses in particular on Ambedkar’s Navayana Buddhism. Zelliot points out that there was in the period before Ambedkar an increasing interest in Buddhism among Indian intellectuals. She shows how Ambedkar was able to build on an earlier revival of Buddhism in southern India associated with Lakshmi Narasu and Iyothee Trass, on the Maha Bodhi Society in India founded by Dharmapala, and on previous leadership in the Marathi-speaking area such as the two Mahars, Kisan Fagoji Bansode and Shivram Janba Kamble, as well as the high caste Vital Ramji Shinde and Jyotirao Phule. The chapter further
analyses Ambedkar’s satyagrahas and his relationship to Mahatma Gandhi. While Gandhi focused on changes of the heart, Ambedkar maintained that political and legal rights were essential. Ambedkar argued that the untouchables were treated as they were because they had the misfortune of calling themselves Hindus. He thought that if the untouchables had been members of another religion the caste Hindus would have treated them better, and he declared that he would not die a Hindu. He chose to convert to Buddhism. The chapter presents some of the contradictions Ambedkar saw in Buddhism and which he struggled to resolve when developing his own interpretations of the teaching of the Buddha. The final part presents the flourishing of Navayana Buddhism in contemporary India, and the author concludes that there is a need for the Buddhist conversions in India to be recognized in the larger Buddhist world outside of India.

While Zelliot focuses on Ambedkar and Buddhism in the Marathi-speaking areas, in Chapter 25 Ronki Ram concentrates on Punjab and the Ad Dharma and Ravidassia traditions. Ram explains that the Dalits in the state of Punjab have long been struggling hard to escape from the social exclusion that is grounded in the discriminatory social structures of Punjab’s agrarian society. After experimenting with conversion and sanskritization as agencies of upward social mobility and as means to improve their situation, they now attempt to establish their separate Dalit identity based on a distinct Dalit religion. In Punjab, the Ad Dharm movement was the originator of the idea of a separate Dalit religion. However, argues Ram, Dalit religion has attained its current shape in Punjab through the agency of numerous Ravidassia Deras (‘centres’). Ravidassia is founded on the popular sayings and teachings of Guru Ravidass, a Sant from an untouchable caste and his poems are included in the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred book of the Sikhs. Ronki Ram explains that the Ravidassias hope that their religion will help them to become differentiated from the well-established religions in the region and to demonstrate a unique and separate Dalit identity.

In Chapter 26 R. Santhosh provides a broad overview of Muslim communities in contemporary India. India is the third largest Muslim country in the world. Much of the research on Muslims in India has focused on the encounter with modernity in the geopolitical landscape during colonial and post-colonial contexts. Santhosh highlights the enormous diversity among Muslims in India by focusing on the diverse theological and organizational schools representing reformist and traditionalist orientations, forms of social stratification and recent mobilization based on caste. He points out the fallacy of treating Muslims in India ‘as a “community” with given socio-political dispositions due to their shared religious identity’ (p. 394). The chapter also discusses the socio-economic conditions of Muslims and examines the Sachar Committee report, which demonstrated their backwardness in terms of economic development, but Santhosh also notes that the emergence of new middle classes is redefining the character of the Indian Muslims. The final part of the chapter looks at the question of Muslim citizenship in the context of increasing religious polarization, communal violence and the advent of a Hindu nationalist government in 2014. Santhosh concludes that Muslims in India are currently passing through some of the most momentous phases of their recent history.

Marika Vicziany, in Chapter 27, investigates religious violence in the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, the two largest religious communities in India, a conflict that in South Asia is called ‘communalism’. She argues that the contours of the Hindus’ fears need to be understood as a starting point for any discussion of religious violence in India. Hindu nationalism (Hindutva) is based on perceived threats to Hindu demographic, cultural and political dominance, and she therefore first asks, ‘Who is a Hindu?’ In the second part of the chapter, she examines the nature of the violence and the extent to which the official crime statistics of India can be relied on as a way of understanding the position of India’s
Muslim minority. The author argues that the under-representation of Indian Muslims in India’s administrative and security institutions contributes to religious violence and to the unreliability of Indian crime statistics, and that ‘the police form part of a wider governance structure that under-represents the interests of India’s Muslim citizens’ (p. 411).

In Chapter 28, John C. B. Webster focuses upon Christians as immersed in Indian culture and civil society. The author shows that while diverse in their social origins and geographical distribution, the Christians in India have been drawn mostly from low caste and tribal groups with which they continue to identify. He explains how this is reflected in their patterns of conversion, their varied relations to the caste system, their commitments to both Christ and modernity, their brands of political and cultural nationalism, their struggles for recognition as well as in claiming and safeguarding their constitutional rights, and in the kinds of opposition they have had to face, particularly from proponents of Hindutva. As Webster notes: ‘The ancestors of the vast majority of Christians converted in order to escape from the experienced consequences of the kind of religio-cultural homogenization that the Sangh Parivar seeks to impose’ (pp. 422–423).

Cultural change and innovations

Part V focuses on the cultural changes and innovations relating to the body in a number of contexts in contemporary India. In the first chapter, Nandita Ghosh writes about the gendered body and especially sexual violence against women in contemporary India. Ghosh notes at the outset that ‘women’s bodies are central to any understanding of unequal gender relations’ (p. 430). The author further argues that the 1970s and 1980s marked a period of crises of the state with a proliferation of women’s groups, interlinked regionally, locally and nationally, that battled discriminatory practices in domestic and public domains’ grassroots movements. From the 1990s, these groups focused on the gendered impact of free market capitalism, religious fundamentalism, changes in democratic culture and problems of the national economy. The visibility of women on the political stage in these decades challenged the story of India’s emergence as a modern nation-state by calling attention to the invisibility of women in the construction of that story. She analyses four works of fiction (In Custody, Days of the Turban, English August and Imaginary Maps), which present differing female experiences of oppression. Ghosh shows that the authors of the works explore constructions of femininity through a variety of female characters that modify or subvert the roles they are required to play. Finally she argues that literature has the power to unsettle dominant narratives and expose new possibilities, and she sees evidence of such new possibilities in the public outrage over the rape of Nirbhaya in December 2012 when various sections of civil society united to assert the right of women to safely and freely inhabit public spaces.

In Chapter 30 Michiel Baas analyses new images of the Indian male body. These images focus on muscles and masculinity. The author asks how we can understand this ostensibly new Indian male. Invoking Weberian typology the chapter analyses what the arrival of this ‘ideal type’ (lean, muscular) male body articulates about contemporary India in relation to socio-economic developments. He tries to show that recent Indian economic growth has come with new and specific ideas on the ‘ideal’ male body. Baas argues that the dramatic increase in visibility of men with lean, muscular bodies in public spaces (billboards) and popular media (Bollywood, TV series) in India indicates that increasingly the physical appearance of the male body is imagined to be an indicator of, and facilitator towards, socio-economic success. As a result, the number of gyms specifically targeting the Indian middle class has increased dramatically. The author builds his chapter upon various fields of scholarly research as well as his own ethnographic
work and argues that the male body has become a new site of contestation and meaning-making in the context of increasing globalization and middle-class formation.

The body is dependent on food as nutrition, but food is also embedded in systems of meaning, and in India, notes Michaël Bruckert in Chapter 31, ‘food patterns differ according to region, religion, caste, financial means, habitat (rural or urban) and also to the age and gender of the individuals’ (p. 458). Portraying changes on the national scale within such a fragmented mosaic is an impossible task. The author therefore addresses the changing food habits in contemporary India through the specific case of Chennai in Tamil Nadu, and in particular the discourses and practices of the middle classes. Bruckert shows that food consumption patterns renew and recast the links between diet, identity, hierarchy, purity and morality. In India, he argues, food change does not follow the alleged pattern of ‘food transition’ theorized by nutritionists. Bruckert suggests that one main factor that makes India an exception to this pattern is moral values: ‘Incomes not only pertain to purchasing power, but to ways of life as well. Moral values matter as food is always socially and symbolically constructed’ (p. 460). An expanding economy, mass consumption, a globalized way of life and the habit of eating out have diversified both offer and demand of food for the urban middle classes, but the author observes that many people nevertheless still face restrictions in terms of accessibility and availability, and concludes that food change mostly occurs at the margins of contemporary Indian society. In particular, food eaten out is often the frontrunner of transformations and ‘paves the way for new patterns of sociability as it potentially emancipates from ethnic, religious or caste rules’ (p. 468).

In Chapter 32 Brigitte Sébastia looks at the use of Siddha medical knowledge and practices to treat diabetes, perhaps the number one disease of modernity in India. There has been a tenfold increase of this disease in India in the last four decades, and in 2014 around 25 per cent of the population in the cities of Delhi and Chennai over twenty years of age are diabetics. In Chennai, 38 per cent of persons over forty are diabetics. Sébastia observes that type 2 diabetes has emerged in India since the 1980s as the result of rapid changes in diet and lifestyle. Unchecked consumption of white rice and lack of physical activity have been identified as two major reasons for this increase. In her fieldwork with practitioners of Siddha medicine Sébastia discovered that Siddha practitioners are increasingly consulted for the treatment of patients with this disease. While college-trained Siddha doctors are equipped to treat diabetes as their training incorporates biomedical disciplines and the study of emerging diseases, traditional Siddha practitioners have to juggle with their own methods and medication, as they did not inherit the knowledge to treat this disease, which was rare in the past. Based on the ethnography of two traditional Siddha practitioners, opposite in many aspects, her chapter demonstrates their ability in dealing with different aspects of diabetes care which qualifies them to contribute to the fight against a disease considered as a major public health issue.

Finally, a note on transliteration from Indian languages; I have chosen to include diacritics in a few chapters that deal with Indological topics (Chapters 11, 21, 22, 23 and 32, and in the reviews of these chapters in this introduction). However, in these chapters I have not used diacritics on geographical names [Varanasi and not Vāraṇāsī) and modern names [Vivekananda and not Vivekānanda). Apart from those chapters, the simplified transliteration system of Indian languages is used, allowing for some differences between chapters. To avoid confusion of words with similar spelling, Brahman refers to the caste, brahman to the supreme deity.

This is a single-volume collection of essays and although a number of the most important issues and themes have been included, there are nevertheless significant issues that I have not been able to incorporate because of size limitations of the volume and other restraints. I nevertheless believe that the volume will be helpful to those seeking academic knowledge about contemporary India.
Notes

1 The other South Asian countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
5 The diaspora has in the last decades been actively engaged by the Indian state and, partly because of that effort, an awareness of a larger global Indian community, the Indian diaspora, was created. The categories Non-Resident Indian (NRI) and People of Indian Origin (PIO) are now well known and somehow included in thoughts about India, as the diaspora has become an important aspect of the current globalization development. Indians, in fact, live in almost every country in the world.
6 ‘Bridging the gulf: bilateral remittance estimates for 2012’, Times of India, 1.12.2014. The largest amount of remittances, about half, came from Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.
7 Vivekananda probably saw this as an opportunity to build national confidence in the face of British colonialist humiliation.
9 AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and naturopathy, unani, Siddha and homeopathy), which was previously a department in the Ministry of Health, was assigned a separate ministry under Narendra Modi’s government in 2014 (Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and naturopathy, unani, Siddha and homeopathy).
10 See Note 8.
11 ‘Diabetes cases increase tenfold in Chennai, Delhi in four decades’, Times of India, 12.11.2014.

References
