MAN IN INDIA

THE CONCEPT OF DIKU AMONG THE TRIBES OF CHOTANAGPUR

S. C. SINHA

JYOTI SEN

SUDHIR PANCHBHAI

(*Received on 22 January 1969*)

Abstract : The term *Diku* is widely prevalent among the different tribal communities of Chotanagpur and adjacent areas for defining the non-tribal out-groups. A field-enquiry was made in Chotanagpur during February-May, 1967, with a view to studying the social and cultural context of the term *Diku* which stands out in contrast to the term 'Hor', 'Horo' or 'Ho' meaning 'man' used to designate one's own tribal group. It appears that the term *Diku* does not include all the Hindu castes of the region but only those who are considered to be 'exploiters'. The tribals do consider the symbiotically-related local artisan groups and also the Hindu rajas of those areas as *Diku* because they have been attuned to the regional moral order through long association. In the more Hinduized areas, such as Tamar and Barabhum, the Munda or the Bhumij, specially their aristocratic strata, include even the sacerdotal castes like the Brahman and the Vaishnava within the social sphere of intimacy.

THE term *Diku, Dikku* or *Deko* seems to be widely prevalent among the different tribal communities of the Chotanagpur plateau and its adjacent areas for defining the non-tribal out-groups. One comes across this term in the

anthropological literature dealing with the tribes of this area as well as in other official reports, such as, District Gazetteers, Linguistic Survey, Census Reports, etc. The term is closely associated with the tribal rebellions in this region, such as Santal Rebellion (1855), Birsa Movement among the Munda (1895-1900) and so on and, also, with the recent political movement for establishing the tribal state of Jharkhand covering Chotanagpur plateau and the surrounding tribal areas.

In the course of a short field-enquiry during February and May, 1967, among the Munda, Oraon and the Ho in Ranchi and Singhbhum districts in connexion with the study of inter-tribal solidarity movements, it was observed that the tribal respondents were not always very clear or unanimous about who the *Dikus* were and what the term meant. An attempt will be made in this paper to present the views of various writers on this term, along with the opinion of the people interviewed by us. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the social and psychological context of this term. It may be mentioned here that the concept of out-group in the contrastive field-situation of the Munda-derived Hinduized Bhumij of Purulia and Singhbhum district has also been utilized in writing this paper on the basis of Sinha's field-work in the region during 1950 to 1960 (see Sinha 1957, 1962, 1965).

Hoffmann, in his *Encyclopaedia Mundarica*, gives the following meanings for the term *diku*...'1. a Hindu, 2. a Hindu land-lord, 3. Hindi or Sadani' (1950 : 1062-63). According to the same author, *diku-n* means ; to make oneself the landlord of a village ; and *diku-n* means 'to become the landlord of a village' (*ibid.*). Bödding in his *Santal Dictionary* translates *Deko* as : 'a Hindu or Bengali (of the better class, not low-caste Hindus, e.g. Doms, Bauris, Hadis. Mohammedans are not called *deko*. Any Indian in good clothing, seen at a distance, so that class or race is not recognized will be styled *deko*). *Deko hopon*, the Hindus as a race (i.e. those mentioned above ; a Dom or Bauri will not be counted as *Deko hopon*) (1934 : 69).

In Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, the

Korku, whose language and culture are believed to have affinities with Kherwari or Mundari groups have a term *di*— meaning 'that' and *diku* denoting 'those' (1906 : 167). In connexion with this, Russel, in his Chhindwara District Gazetteer, has said, 'They generally go by the name "Korku" or tribesmen, "Koru" being their translation for a man, the term "ku" forming the plural, as di—that, diku—those' (1907 : 72). But there is no evidence to show that the Korkus use the term *Diku* in the sense in which the Chotanagpur tribes use it.

In the official reports and anthropological literature mentioned above, the terms *Diku, Dikku* or *Deko* have been used to mean 'foreigners' or non-autochthones. In the Bengal District Gazetteers of Singhbhum and the Santal Parganas (1910), *Diku* has been explained as 'foreigners such as *goalas*', and 'foreigners or non-Santal immigrants who flocked in to carry on trades and money lending among the Santals'. Majumdar (1950) has used it as a synonym of foreigner and so also has Dutta-Majumder (1956).

The term as understood by the different educated Adivasis ('the indigenous people' or 'original inhabitants', namely, Munda, Oraon and Ho) interviewed by us may be summed up as follows :

1. The term *diku* is derived from Sadani *'dik dik karna'*, i.e. to trouble or to vex. It means non-Adibasis in general and zemindars and their servants in particular.

2. *Dikus* are non-Adibasis, e.g. Biharis, Marwaris, Muslims etc.

3. *Diku* means a foreigner and it includes Europeans and Mohammedans in its general meaning. It was used specifically for landlords, rajas and their servants who were outsiders.

4. *Diku* means *'dik dik karne-wale'* (those who trouble). It usually means outsiders, capitalists and money-lenders.

5. This term is used to refer to the non-Adibasis in general and includes zemindars, Rautia, Brahmins etc., Hindi-speakers, the Biharis.

6. During British regime when the zemindars were powerful they were called *Dikus* ; but after the abolition of the zemindary system they have lost their hold and now the other influential persons in the village, whether tribal or non-tribal, are designated as *Dikus*. But the Munda, Pahan or Mahto, i.e. the traditional leaders are never considered as *Diku*.

The uneducated tribal informants interviewed by us have a similar, though less articulate, notion of *Diku* in their mind. A few representative examples are quoted below :—

1. *Diku* means zemindars and their Hindu servants.
2. It means outsiders and refers to those who are from North Bihar in particular.
3. Outsiders (*Bihar ke log*) who are not Adibasis, e g. Baniyas, Biharis, Bengalis.
4. People like you are *Dikus* ; those who have come from outside.
5. People from the bazaar ; Biharis and Baniyas who are not Adibasis.
6. All non-Adibasis who speak languages other than Adibasi dialects, and so on.

A very interesting way of demarcating the *Dikus* and the local people came from a tribal political leader in Chaibasa. According to him, those who earn and send their earnings outside to their homes are *Dikus*. The supporters of this line of thinking put more emphasis on the criterion of domicile, and argue that the old inhabitants of Chotanagpur, irrespective of language, religion or race are not *Dikus*.

Though the term *Diku* seems to include the Hindus in general, yet a closer view reveals that it excludes such caste-groups as the Lohar (blacksmiths), Dom (basket-makers and drummers), Swansi (weavers), Chamar (leather-workers), Teli (dealers in oil), Tanti (weavers), Kumhar (potters) and other artisan castes who are in the lower range of the Hindu hierarchy. These are castes which have lived side by side with them in the same village for generations, and with whom they have developed a symbiotic relationship to such an extent that

they have become a part and parcel of the broader tribal society. Therefore they are not categorized as *Dikus* generally. Besides the Pahan and Mahto, the other village officials in an Oraon village are the Ahir, Lohra, the Gorait and the Kumhar (See Roy 1915 : 116).

On this point, there is a slight difference of opinion between some of the educated respondents and the uneducated tribals. According to the former, in the literal sense of the term, these people are also *Dikus* since they are non-Adibasis, but actually they are not looked upon as *Dikus*. To some of these educated respondents they are 'detribalized Adibasis' and to others, they are 'tribalized Hindus'. The general feeling expressed by them was—'They are not Adibasis but they are not *Dikus* either', or 'In between *Diku* and Adibasi there are the low castes among the Hindus who are inter-dependent with the Adibasis. They are the non-*Dikus*.'

The uneducated common village people show a slight variation in their notions about these groups. To them they are not *Dikus*, but just Doms, Lohars, Swansis or such other castes. In some cases it was also observed that they are considered as Adibasis.

Though the low castes occupy the bottom of the economic and social pyramid and the high castes are generally on the top, in certain areas such as Tamar, the former are further divided on the basis of their socio-economic status. For example, the Hajam and the Dhobi of this area who are economically well off and form numerically as well as politically a dominant group, are looked upon by the uneducated tribal folk as *Dikus* whereas the same caste-groups in the adjacent Khunti area, where their economic or social status is comparatively lower, are not regarded as *Dikus*

The degree of '*diku*-ness' thus appears to be closely associated with economic prosperity and socio-political standing. This is further supported by the fact that while talking of the Lohar, Ahir, Chikbaraik, Ghasi and the Dom the Munda state that these people are neither Adivasis ('aboriginals', 'tribals') nor *Dikus* but they are 'servants' of the Mundas. Where the above opinion prevailed, it was observed that the

above-mentioned castes occupied a lower rank than the Adivasis in the village hierarchy, both socially as well as economically. Thus, in their opinion, some are more *Dikus*, such as the Bihari, Marwari etc. Some are less, e.g. Dhobi, Hajam etc. while certain others are non-*Dikus*, e.g. Lohar, Dom, Ghasi etc. In short, those who are economically higher than the tribal communities are looked upon as *Dikus*, the degree of '*diku*-ness' increasing in proportion to the rise in the above scale. Those who are on a par with the tribals or below them in the above scale are considered 'less *Diku*' or 'non-*Diku*'. There are, however, some exceptions to the above rule. The Hinduized Munda chiefs of Tamar Pargana, for example, are not regarded as *Dikus* but as Munda. Similarly, the Rajput Raja of Tamar and Maharaja of Chotanagpur, although not regarded as Munda, are not regarded as outsiders or *Diku*. It should be emphasized at this point that although the educated tribals, and even some of the illiterates among them, used the category 'Adivasi' meaning thereby 'autochthones' and the officially designated 'tribal' groups, the term 'Adivasi' is not an endogenous native term of these tribal groups. The Munda, for example, call their own people as *Horo* ('men'), but the neighbouring Oraon and the Ho by their respective tribal names. None of these tribal groups have a generic name for 'tribe' as a category *vis-a-vis* the castes, except by the negative character of 'non-*Dikus*'. The tribals do not regard the Christian converts as *Dikus*. A Christian Munda is *Horo* but he is also *Isai* only in religion.

It is interesting to note that while these tribes are very specific about regarding the Hindu upper castes as *Dikus*, they label the Moslems as *Turks*. It seems that the tribals, in terms of their past historical experience, are less threatened by the numerically scanty Moslem immigrants who are not particularly well off in contrast to the economically dominant and numerous Hindu immigrants. The tribals also do not have much prejudice against the very few Europeans (*Pundi Horo* = white men) who are around in the area, for they do not threaten the tribals either or in terms of economic deprivation.

Image of a Diku in the Tribal Mind

Certain attributes, mostly unfavourable, are ascribed to a *Diku* as a stereotype. This becomes clear when its different meanings (overt or implicit) are analysed in different contexts. This also gives an insight into the inner world of their attitude towards the out-group. For example, it is generally thought that the *Dikus* are looters (*re re ko menakoa*), trouble-makers (*sigid ko menakoa*), deceivers (*chakad ko menakoa*), exploiters, cheats, unreliable, and those who have a sense of superiority and inspire fear. The dread of the *Diku* appears to be so deep-rooted in the tribal mind that it has even penetrated into their ritual world. It was reported by an informant in a Ho area that during *Oteili* (a ceremony connected with the land) the Diuri or the Ho priest chants, 'We will kill the witches, the snakes and the *Dikus*.'

Hoffmann has elucidated the term by citing a Mundari proverb in which the word *diku med,* a Hindu's eyes, has been used. '*Dikumed ci setamed* (the eye of a Hindu is the eye of of a dog. Understand, a dog fawns on those from whom it gets food and snarls and barks at all others ; so the Hindus and other non-aborigines fawn on those from whom they expect some profit and snarl at all others' (Hoffmann 1950 : 1062). The other term he uses as illustration is *Dekumed-o* which means to get Hindu's eyes, i.e. eyes which do not want to recognize one's fellows : '*amdohale okoreni helahalem diku medjana ci ? amen din modkoregelan taikena* (from where art thou ? Oh ! I say ! It is impossible that thou should not recognize me, we have been neighbours for so long' (*ibid.*).

Bödding, too, mentions a Santal idiom in which a similar unfavourable image of *diku* is conveyed. *Deko pusi* means 'a Hindu cat, a term of contempt, (said to be due to the Hindus, like cats, being particularly fond of milk and fish)' (1934 : 69). The proverb is 'you may pass with a Santal, you will never pass with a Deko-cat, (i.e. you may deceive a Santal but not a Hindu)'. Similarly, 'a Deko friend a thorn tree, they prick' (*ibid.*).

Even when a tribal acts or behaves like a *Diku* he is looked upon as such. For instance, a Munda who owned a village and extracted rent like a zemindar was said to have become a *Diku*...*'diku hobajana'* (has become a *Diku*). If one adopts the mode of living, i.e. food, dress etc. like a *diku* he is said to be *'dikuleka'* *diku*-like. Even when one of their own tribesmen oppresses another, he is supposed to be *'dikuing'* him, e.g. *Aingam dikujainga* ; I am being *'dikud'* (oppressed) by you. He is, however, not permanently categorized as *Diku*.

It should not, however, be surmised on the basis of the negative stereotypes (the like of which are also there among the Hindu castes) that a visitor to these tribal areas will observe the social relations between the tribal and the upper-caste Hindus steeped in overt hatred. There is only an undercurrent of prejudice which comes to the surface in critical phases of history under the guidance of charismatic leaders like Birsa Munda or of modern political leaders.

It is also observed that the religious or ritual aspects of tribal life are a determinant of social distance. The groups which can share with them their religion or ritual life as equals are their own people, those belonging to their ethnic group ; non-tribals are not allowed to participate in rituals. A certain degree of distance is always maintained with them. Those who have been living with them for generations, speaking their language, sharing their joys and sorrows in village life, have access to their social polity. They, however, observe the same cycle of festivals or even perform the same rituals, but it is done separately and not together with the tribals.

These two aspects of ritual and social participation are amply illustrated in the Maghey and the Sarhul festivals. It was observed in the adjacent regions of Khunti that in the above two festivals the local Hindu castes performed the rituals, but in a 'socially sanctioned segregated' manner. In the festive part they came together in drinking, dancing and merry-making and shared the common mood. The barrier, however, came up when the question of mixed dancing arose. In a village in Singhbhum during the Maghe Parab, some of

the Tanti, Tamaria and Gope boys told us that they felt handicapped in not being allowed to dance with tribal women. 'They say, how can we allow you to touch our women ?'

Though the socio-cultural difference between these caste-groups and the tribes is almost insignificant, still one notices a certain degree of social distance which is maintained by the tribes towards these castes. The caste-groups seem apparently desirous of removing the stigma of this social distance and resent being assigned a lower rank in the village hierarchy. In Singhbhum, one comes across originally Oriya-speaking castes such as Gopes, Lohars, Kumhars and Tantis who have adopted Ho as their mother tongue and have forgotten the Oriya language altogether. Their mode of living also seems to have undergone transformation to a great extent in conformity with the tribal pattern. They represent a typical marginal group in being both a tribe and a caste, but truly belonging to neither psychologically. On the one hand, they have a tendency to diffuse their identity with the tribes and to be one of them by emulating their way of life, and, at the same time, they aspire to be identified with the larger Hindu society which seems to be their dominant reference group. It is due to this reason that at least to a non-tribal outsider they emphasize their distinctness from the tribes. Some of them rather proudly admit that they are also *Dikus* in the eyes of the tribals, while there are others who modify this notion by saying that they are not real *Dikus* like the Brahmins and the Baniyas but are Harijans. Sinha's observations on Lohra, Mahli and Gaur among the Hos also confirm that these castes are not considered *Dikus* (Sinha 1957 : 105). The case of the basket-maker caste cited by Hunter also testifies to this peculiar intermediate position of these castes (Hunter 1868 : 218).

The attitude of the tribal leaders towards these marginal groups and the high castes is, however, divided. There are three shades of opinion representing their sentiment towards the two categories mentioned above. One group thinks that it is unwise to make the Jharkhand Movement, a tribal movement only and exclude all the non-tribals. It is their

2

contention that all the people of Jharkhand, irrespective of their ethnic group and economic class, should join hands to make it a common cause. To them the Jharkhand Movement is a regional political struggle and cannot score high on a communal issue.

The other group is of opinion that the non-Adivasis, whether belonging to the high or low castes or economic class, cannot be trusted and if taken into their fold will betray the cause of Jharkhand. They express their unfavourable feelings towards both high and low castes. Some even go to the length of saying that the low-caste people have low morals and are parasites on the Adivasis. 'They are liars and thieves and hence they were not taken in as members of the co-operative grain-*golas* organized by the Unnati Samaj in the past.' In relation to the high-caste Hindus they advance a totally different argument, harping on the theme of economic class distinction. These Hindus, according to them, constitute the rich class and are in the true sense, exploiter *Dikus* who have captured not only the trade and commerce but almost every aspect of the economy of their land. 'How can the exploiter participate in the same struggle whose main objective is to get rid of exploitation ?' They ask. In support of this argument they point out that since the inclusion of non-Adivasis as office-bearers of the Jharkhand Party, the unity of Adivasis has been shattered and the movement has suffered a severe set-back almost to the point of failure. It was by a section of these extremist tribal leaders that, during the recent General Election, the old slogan '*Jharkhand Abua, Daku Diku Senoa*' (Jharkand is ours, the dacoit Dikus will go) was revived and made much of.

The third group of leaders consisting of moderates suggests a compromise-formula, going half-way with both the other groups in setting aside this controversy. They warn against the grave mistake of equating the non-Adivasis with the moneyed class. A great number of them, they point out, are poor and are common sufferers with the Adivasis. They will join the movement out of their own interest, they feel. 'We may be socially divided but must remain politically united.

In village life we live together. If we keep them (the non-Adivasis) out, we will create discontent. It will lead to separatism and make us weaker.'

This line of thinking seems to get support from the majority, probably because of the following considerations. Firstly, living together for generations, these non-tribals, because of their useful occupations, have become an inseparable part of the village life and so their fate is automatically tied up up with that of the Adivasis in Jharkhand. Secondly, as they are economically, numerically, as well as politically weak, their inclusion will not adversely affect the power structure of the tribal leadership. And, lastly, as in the present democratic set-up, power and numerical strength are often directly related, the non-tribal 'eternal followers' are considered an asset.

IV

The Attitude of the Diku towards the Adivasis

So far we have tried to give the meaning of the term *Diku*, the attributes and feelings associated with it. At this stage, perhaps it will not be irrelevant to discuss in brief the reactions of the Dikus and their attitude towards the tribals to get a more comprehensive picture.

The non-tribals very often use terms, such as, *Jangli, Jangal jhar ke log, Jangli hat, Vanyajati, Banjati,* meaning 'jungie dwellers' to designate the tribals. They also use the generic terms Kol Adibasi (original inhabitants) and Aboriginals (primitive people). It is interesting to note that while the non-tribals are not much affected by being called *Dikus, Sadans* and so on by the tribals, the latter feel insulted and resent being called *jangli.* They prefer to be called Adivasi, as this term means 'original inhabitants' or autochthones and gives them a feeling of pride that they are the true sons of the soil. Jaipal Singh's statement in one of the meetings of the Constituent Assembly brings out this sentiment to the fore : 'The word Adivasi has grace. I do not understand why this old, abusive epithet of *Banjati* is being used in regard to them for, till recently, it meant an uncivilised barbarian' (Ghurye 1963 : 352).

The terms used by the *Dikus* in respect of the tribals are of a derogatory nature, meaning either 'less civilised barbarian' or 'dwellers of jungles'. The term *jangli,* in particular, conveys both these meanings. The air of superiority in the *Diku* mind is implict in one of their proverbs, *'Na ol sijhe ke, na kol bujhe ke'* (Neither will arum be softened by boiling nor will the Kol understand). Thinking of the tribals as inferior in every respect perhaps serves to soothe the conscience of the *Diku,* and similarly, in the same reciprocal vein, considering the *Diku* responsible for all his sorrows helps the tribal rationalize and justify his own weakness.

V

Discussion

The concept of out-group implied in the term *Diku* with all its unfavourable notions and feelings towards the in-group is universal : 'Every tribe and nationality, in some part of the world, every valley or cluster of hamlets, refer to itself in favourable terms and to others unfavourably' (Redfield 1961 : 70). This universal sentiment towards the in-group has been elaborated in detail by Cooley in his concept of the 'primary group' (Cooley 1923) and by Sumner in the definition of ethnocentrism—'that view of things in which one's group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it' (Sumner 1907 : 12-15).

Apart from the general category of out-group, the notion of *Diku* is of special significance in the Indian context in that the concept sets particular tribes virtually apart from the totality of the Hindu-dominated Indian civilization. This special feature stands out in qualitative contrast to the situation of the Hindu peasantry. The Hindu peasants of Assam Valley, for example, in a particular phase of social tension, may feel themselves apart from the Bengali neighbours or intruders, but these same peasants are connected with the totality of Indian civilization is so many varied ways that they cannot afford to feel alienated from the totality of the Hindu world. In the Chotanagpur tribal context, the entire Hindu world outside

Chotanagpur appears to sections of the tribals to be the world of the *Diku*, of the 'foreigners'.

Apart from sharing the general universal notion of nega‑ tively stereotyped out‑group, the Mundari‑speaking tribes of Chotanagpur also preserve an essentially primitive trait of referring to their own people as 'human being'—Munda (Horo), Santal (Hor), Hos (Ho)*. 'Many primitive tribes reserve the term for 'people' or 'human beings' to themselves alone while everywhere the term used to refer to neighbouring peoples are contemptuous, derogatory' (Redfield 1961 : 70). But referring to their own people as 'human beings','men' or 'tribesmen' does not necessarily mean, as Gillin and Gillin suggest, that 'all other human beings are something else than human' (Gillin and Gillin 1948 : 213, Sinha 1957 : 35 ; 1959 : 306). Although the terminology gives some indications in this direction, the concept of 'non‑men' or 'something less than human' does not get support from our field‑data in Chotanagpur. The term *Diku* does not seem to deny 'humanness' of the out‑group, for he is occasionally referred as '*Diku‑Horo*'. The *Diku* is basically an exogenous group, the foreigners, who threaten the socio‑economic and cultural security of the tribal in‑group.

From the historical perspective it appears that whereas the persistence of the term *Horo* is a case of linguistic lag from an archaic primitive historic phase, the concept of *Diku* is clearly associated with the mediaeval and later phase of historic experience of these tribal groups. The term *Diku* is associated with a Hindu landlord ; that is, with the introduction of the Jagirdary system in Chotanagpur around 1676 A.D. (Roy 1912 : 165). The new class of landlords and their servants who immigrated into Chotanagpur did not understand the language of the tribals, looked down upon them as barbarous jungle‑ dwellers, extracted rent and free labour, dispossessed many of them of their lands and exploited them in many other ways. It is not unlikely that these people were taken as a type by the

---

* Similar features are marked among tribes of other regions in India and abroad : Korku (Korku), Onge (Onge), Garo (Mande), Chang (Matmei), Gond (Koitur), Caribs (Karinye), Eskimos (In‑nu), etc,

tribals and the whole range of upper-class Hindus were branded as belonging to this type, possessing these attributes and were labelled as *Dikus*.

The intensity of 'potential' fear and hatred against these outsiders is depicted in their various expressions in which the aliens, jagirdars or money-lenders are sometimes identified with a snake (*bing*), a witch (*najom*) or a man-eater (*kula*) (Singh 1965 : 190). However, as has already been pointed out, it should not be implied that a field-observer in Chotanagpur, taking his cue from the above stereotyped lexicons, will find the tribals seething in hatred against the *Dikus*. He will rather find local Hindu traders and land-holders mentioned as *Diku* as a mere 'nominational' category without much negative affect. It is also to be noted that all the Mundari tribes or all sections of these tribes, are not equally involved in the negative stereotype implied in the term *Diku*.

The Hinduized Munda of Tamar, for example, do not regard the local Brahmans or Vaishnavas as *Dikus* with negative connotation. This is specially so for the aristrocratic strata of the tribe, such as the Munda Thakur of Mardhan, who have been seeking not only Hindu identification but also recognition as Rajput Kshatriya. For such status-striving the association of the critically significant upper castes, such as the Brahman and the Vaishnava are essential. If one moves farther to the east of this region into the former Manbhum District where the Munda-derived Bhumij have completely lost the Mundari language in favour of Bengali and are virtually regarded as a Hindu caste, even the term *Diku* or its equivalent is absent in their vocabulary (Sinha 1957, 1962, 1965). Like the Munda of Ranchi the Bhumij do regard themselves as the autochthones whose ancestors had cleared primaeval forests of the region, but they do not label themselves as 'men' as against other ethnic groups. As in the case of the Munda, the Bhumij too regard certain other tribal groups and numerically small and poor artisan castes, who have been residents of the region for many generations, as their close associates. But the entire range of the world of the Hindu

upper castes are not *Diku* to them. They employ the upper-caste Brahman and Vaishnavas in their social rites and, as such, do not regard these groups beyond their circle of social intimacy.

Another direction of social and cultural emulation for the Bhumij is the Rajput-Kshatriya, ideally represented by the Raja of the Pargana. The rest of the upper-caste Hindus, however, are lumped under the category 'Bengali', whom the Bhumij wish to emulate but about whom they are also suspicious and bear some negative stereotypes. The various Hindi-speaking castes (labelled as Biharis) and the Moslems (except the weaver Jolha) and the few Europeans are regarded as even more remote from the world of the Bhumij than the 'Bengali'. It will thus be apparent that the Bhumij do mantain a distinction between the indigens and the outsiders (Bengali, Bihari etc.) but they do not label the in-group as *'Horo'* (men) nor is the entire Hindu social system lumped as a single category of *Diku* or foreigners. The Bhumij clearly represent an evolved phase of expansion of the tribal experience in Middle India in which the tribe has been virtually converted into Hindu peasantry and social and cultural identification has been broadened beyond their own tribal group to the multi-caste *pargana* and even beyond, to the Hindu universe (Sinha 1965).

Taking into account the various notions of the *Diku*, one gets the impression that the Chotanagpur tribals have an ambivalent attitude about the *Diku*. The *Diku* is hated and feared as well as admired. Writing about the Santal, Martin Orans states : 'The Santal themselves say that "the *diku* are big and knowing people" and their demeanour as they interact with Hindus, particularly of high caste, confirms acceptance in fair measure of their inferior status. Even today, in a period of renewed solidarity, the Santal are striving to "raise themselves" to the level of the *"diku"*, as they say. The term *"diku"* is, of course, evidence enough of the ambivalence of the concession, and the history of Santal-Hindu relations has provided the Santals with sufficient reason to hate and fear as well as admire their Hindu neighbours' (Orans 1963 : 124).

It has been pointed out before that the castes over which the tribals have social and economic control are not *Dikus* to them. The low castes, because of their socio-economic position, have conceded rank to the locally dominant tribes, at least socially, if not psychologically, and have, to a great extent, done away with their cultural distinctiveness. Commenting on the Mundas' attitude towards these castes during the Birsa Movement, Singh says : 'a major factor of the movement was the absence of an attack on or any bitterness of feelings against certain non-tribal elements socially and economically sub-ordinate to the Munda. The Munda did not look upon the communities performing economically and socially necessary functions within their socio-political control as Dikus' (Singh 1965 : 195).

As the antagonism implied in the term *Diku* is directed towards the high castes who form an economic stratum, it is hard to distinguish ethnic conflict from the class conflict. But it can be said that as the conflict is not directed towards low castes who are also of different ethnic origin its seems more to be a class conflict. The Raja, with all his socio-economic power and recognition as a Hindu Rajput Kshtriya, is an exception. His ancestry is mythologically associated with Munda parents (Roy 1912 : 136-140). He is neither considered *Diku* nor of the tribal stock, but simply as Raja. His role is so deeply interwoven into the tribal fabric and moral order that none can think of him as a *Diku*. The same holds true about the Raja of Tamar, as also about the Hinduized Munda chieftains, the Mankis and Thakurs, of Tamar Pargana.

It has been observed that during an absence of conflict or tensions the *Diku's* image is not so much loaded with emotional prejudices as it is during the time of stress such as Santal Rebellion, Birsa Movement, or during the modern election campaign on behalf of the Jharkhand Party. From our interview of the educated tribals it appears that, apart from the spontaneous prejuduce of the tribal masses implied in the concept of *Diku*, there is a self-conscious effort at rationalizing and crystalizing the negative image of the *Diku* in support of the Jharkhand Movement. In their new solidarity-drive these

leaders have a vested interest not only in emphasizing the separateness of the *Diku* but also in the archaic intra-tribal identity as men (*Horo, Ho* etc.), in favour of a generic *Adivasi.*

Our observations stretching over the Munda, Ho, Bhumij and the Santal tribes provide evidences of two phases of historic experience of these tribes.

In one, the tribes have been slowly drawn into a regional identification as peasants of a pargana through economic symbiosis with the Hindu castes and the emergence of local tribal-derived or Hindu-initiated chieftaincies and kingdoms (*e.g.* Ratu, Tamar, Barabhum etc.). Identification with the Hindu world has been achieved through these stable regional capsules, with their own upper strata forming the link with the larger Hindu society beyond the region. The other model refers to a different ecological situation and historic phase in which relatively isolated tribes have been rapidly exposed to powerful immigrants who are not morally attuned to the region. This has often led to rapid economic and socio-cultural deprivation of the indigens and generated overt conflict or latent prejudice. It is not for nothing that these prejudices gained momentum precisely during British rule, when immigrants started coming in in large numbers, often dispossessing the tribals of their ancestral land, taking advantage of the contractual law introduced by the British Government.

It is thus important to note that when we look into the meaning of the term *Diku* in Hoffmann's and Bödding's dictionaries mentioned above, they mainly refer to a relatively recent (post-mediaeval ?) phase of historical experience of the tribals of Chotanagpur. Unlike the more Hinduized Bhumij of Manbhum, the tribals of Chotanagpur uplands and plateaux have been exposed to modern economic, legal and political processes without completing the phase of integration with the regional capsule of Indian civilization.

Acknowledgement

3

REFERENCES

Bodding, P. O.   1934 : *A Santal Dictionary*, Vol. II. Oslo.

Cooley, C. H.   1923 : *Social Organization*, New York.

Datta-Majumder, N.   1955 : *The Santal*, Calcutta.

Ghurye, G. S.   1963 : *The Scheduled Tribes*, Bombay.

Gillin, J. L. and J. P. Gillin   1948 : *Cultural Sociology*, New York.

Grierson, G. A.   1906 : *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, Calcutta.

Hoffmann, Rev. J.   1950 : *Encyclopaedia Mundarica*, Vol. IV, Patna.

Hunter, W. W.   1868 : *The Annals of Rural Bengal*, London.

Majumdar, D. N.   1950 : *Affairs of a Tribe*, Lucknow.

O'Malley, L. S. S.   1910 : *Bengal District Gazetteers* : Vols. 20 and 21, Calcutta.

Orans, Martin   1965 : *The Santal : a Tribe in search of a Great Tradition*. Detroit.

Redfield, R.   1961 : 'How Human Society Operates' in *Society Today and Tomorrow*. New York.

      1912 : *Mundas and their Country*, Calcutta.

Roy, S. C.   1915 : *The Oraons of Chota Nagpur*. Ranchi.

Russel, R. V.   1907 : *Central Provinces District Gazetteer*, Chhindwara. Bombay.

Singh, S.   1966 : *The Dust Storm and Hanging Mist*, Calcutta.

Sinha, S. C.   1957 : 'The Media and Nature of Hindu-Bhumij Interaction', *Journal of The Asiatic Society, Letters and Science*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1957, pp. 23-37.

      1958 : 'Tribal Cultures of Peninsular India as a Dimension of Little Tradition in the Study of Indian Civilization : a Preliminary Statement', *Jour. of Am. Folklore*, Vol. 71, No. 281, pp. 504-518.

      1962 : 'State Formation and Rajput Myth in Tribal Central India', *Man in India*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 35-80.

      1965 : 'Tribe-Caste and tribe-peasant continua in Central India,' *Man in India*, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 57-83.

Sumner, W. G.   1940 : *Folkways ; a Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Custom, Mores and Moral*, New York.
(1907)

'PROFESSIONAL PRIMITIVES': HUNTERS AND GATHERERS OF NUCLEAR SOUTH ASIA

Richard G. Fox

THE anthropological treatment of tribal India[1] has often been in terms of long-standing ethnological concepts about primitive society in general. This viewpoint is especially noticeable in much of the research on South Asian hunters-and-gatherers. Many such studies contain the intrinsic assumption that these Indian groups are basically similar to primitive hunting and gathering societies in other parts of the world. Sometimes, this assumption is made within the framework of antique cultural evolutionism. Thus, South Asian hunters-and-gatherers have been used as examples of a stage of human social evolution at only short remove from savagery (Ehrenfels : 4). Sometimes, this assumption is phrased in the more modern style of cultural ecology. In this vein, Majumdar regards South Asian hunters-and-gatherers as examples of the

---

* The author is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 27706 U.S.A.

The author has very ably shown that the 'economic specialization of several hunting and gathering tribes of India' is probably a comparatively recent development. This apparently followed their contact with neighbouring peasants, and should not be treated as a 'survival' from the past.

The idea that nomadic communities like the Birhor became specialists in some industries based on jungle-produce *after* their contact with peasants of the neighbouring villages, and thus became *something like a caste*, was hinted at by the present Editor in 'Some observations on nomadic castes of India', *Man in India*, 1956, Vol. 36, No. 1. The article has been reprinted in his *Culture and Society in India* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1967, pp. 169-173.)

The same opinion has been expressed by Surajit Sinha in 'Urgent Problems for Research in Social and Cultural Anthropology in India : Perspective and Suggestions', *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, September, 1968, p. 125.

articulation of a primitive technology and food quest with the environment (Majumdar : 123 ff.). However, both viewpoints share a belief in the 'primitiveness' of these social groups and their economic and social life-ways.

A most forceful recent statement of this point of view comes from D. D. Kosambi. He writes in *Scientific American* :

> ...there exist in India today many tribal peoples whose customs go back to preliterate times. Representing some 30 million...of India's total population of 440 million, these people preserve many features—in fossilized form as it were—of Indian prehistory (Kosambi : 105).[2]

Yet is there justification for seeing Indian hunters-and-gatherers as cultural left-overs or fossils from pre-literate times ? Or, to set aside the evolutionary perspective for an ecologically functionalist one : are Indian hunting and gathering groups similar in economic and social structure to primitive societies in Australia or the New World ? It is the hypothesis of this paper that in important facets of economic and social organization, they are *not*—and that a re-interpretation of their position *vis-a-vis* the larger Indian society will clarify the reasons for their existence and persistence on the Indian scene. This paper aims at a wider significance as well : the data to be presented will hopefully clarify the way in which marginal geographical locales and their populations become enclaved in and exploited by a pre-industrial high civilization.

I

As a preliminary to the re-evaluation of South Asian hunting-and-gathering groups, one of the primary stumbling blocks found in earlier studies must be removed. Where research on Indian hunters-and-gatherers has been faulty is in ignoring the sociological environment of these groups. By 'sociological environment' is meant the total of social or cultural forces impinging on a group or community. Studies of Indian hunters-and-gatherers often have much detail on the physical ecology of these societies. But it is not enough to

know the natural terrain or the flora and fauna surrounding such a 'tribe'. One must also know the social terrain—who are its neighbours, what is their level of social complexity, and what is the connexion or interaction between the groups (cf. Sahlins : 323).

Several important re-interpretations of hunters-and-gatherers in South Asia emerge from this theoretical perspective. I state them in preliminary fashion directly below. The ethnographic data which have led to these conclusions are presented in part II of this paper.

1. Indian hunting-and-gathering groups live in supposedly remote hill or forest areas. In fact, however, their location is usually close to the villages of agricultural tribes or Hindu castes. The spatial separation of hunters-and-gatherers from Hindu culture and society has been exaggerated, perhaps as a reflection of the ethnographers' desire to find truly primitive peoples in the sub-continent.

2. Rather than being independent, primitive fossils, Indian hunters-and-gatherers represent occupationally specialized productive units similar to caste groups such as Carpenters, Shepherds, or Leather-workers. Their economic regimen is geared to trade and exchange with the more complex agricultural and caste communities within whose orbit they live. Hunting and gathering in the Indian context is not an economic response to a total, undifferentiated environment. Rather, it is a highly specialized and selective orientation to the natural situation : where forest goods are collected and valued primarily for external barter or trade, and where necessary subsistence or ceremonial items—such as iron tools, rice, arrow-heads, etc.—are only obtainable in this way. Far from depending wholly on the forest for their own direct subsistence, the Indian hunters-and-gatherers are highly specialized exploiters of a marginal terrain from which they supply the larger society with desirable, but otherwise unobtainable, forest items such as honey, wax, rope and twine, baskets, and monkey and deer meat. Unlike the Australian aborigines or the Paiutes, their economic process and well-being are dependent on the barter of these items for the crops and crafts of

their more complexly organized plainsmen neighbours. The economic activity of Indian hunting-and-gathering groups is more akin to the specialization of caste hereditary occupation, than it is to the generalized—environmental response of the Australian or Paiute.

As a corollary, when such specialized collection of forest produce is no longer economically rewarding, the group will revert to some other form of less specialized economic activity, such as agriculture or herding, They will not revert, be it noted, to *pure* hunting and gathering, which only 'pays' to maintain as an occupational specialization when it produces goods valued by the larger society.

3. The collection of forest products for external barter or exchange has various effects on the internal social organization of South Asian hunters-and-gatherers. In such groups it is commonly observed that the single (nuclear) family functions as the prime economic unit. This situation seems to be a product of the individually competitive economic system where each family tries to maximize the amount of forest goods collected for external transactions. Further, the equally prevalent pattern of highly migratory individuals, the lack of any formal kin pattern to the composition of settlements, and the lack of extensive reciprocity and sharing among family groups (a basic form of social cohesion among other *primitive* hunters and gatherers) are also consonant with the fragmentation of the society into individually competitive economic units, each geared to external trade or exchange.[8]

This presentation, I believe, makes better sense of the peculiar position of hunters-and-gatherers in South Asia. From this perspective, Indian hunting-and-gathering groups are viewed as marginal economic specialists for traditional Indian civilization. As a result of this role, their external interaction must be seen as economic enclavement within the larger society. This same enclavement mandates important internal social modifications. That is, the social organization of these groups is transformed to meet the expectation of collection and exchange with the outside world. This view-point fits Indian hunters-and-gatherers into a general social

framework identifiable as the type process of Indian civilization : the localization within bounded kinship or 'ethnic' groups of occupational and craft specializations (cf. Weber : 66, concept of 'guest' tribes).

In part II of this paper, five hunting and gathering groups are used to substantiate the above argument. They are : the Kadar, Birhor, Chenchu, Vedda, and Nayadi. Many other hunting and gathering 'tribes' are reported in the literature, but data on them tend to be spotty or fragmented, and more concerned with exotic rituals and beliefs than economic institutions or social structure. Even the re-interpretation of the five groups named above is made more difficult by the general assumption of 'primitiveness' on the part of their ethnographers, and the lack of historical depth in their presentations. Nevertheless, a detailed inspection of the material casts in grave doubt any conception of these groups as primitive tribal hunting and gathering societies.

II

KADAR

Social ecology : The Kadar are found in the jungly hills of the Western Ghats in the former State of Cochin (now part of Kerala). At the present, Ehrenfels reports the Kadar as being clamorous for plains rice and ornaments to the perversion, for him at least, of their former 'aboriginality'. He maintains that previous exchange between the Kadar and the plains was limited to trade in jungle knives, salt, and pottery, and that it was infrequent. However, since his belief is that 'Kadan life . was still a tangible survival of an early, food-gathering civilization in India' (Ehrenfels : 4), his historical reconstruction is certainly not unbiased. Undoubtedly, the frequency of contact between Kadar and the outside has increased greatly since exploitation of the forests was leased to outside contractors. The latter built mechanized tram lines running into the hills about 1900, and employed Kadars as wage-labourers. However, the changes of the last century should not be allowed to obscure the other

evidence which indicates a long history of patterned economic and political interaction between Kadars and the State of Cochin.

Early reports on the Kadar, as quoted by Ehrenfels, note their periodic visits to Tripura in order to exchange their jungle products for goods from the plains : '...trapped elephants, "wild honey", cardamom, and other jungle products were occasionally brought down to the court of the Maharaja of Cochin...which the Kadar, along with others among their aboriginal neighbours, seem to have acknowledged as the centre of the world...' (Ehrenfels : 17). The Kadar are said to be vassals of the Raja, who gave them clothing and other presents when they acted as his guides through the jungle (Ehrenfels : 11). Ehrenfels documents the extent of Kadar dependency on the outside, their desire for rice, chillies, and opium which they can only obtain from the plains. He feels, however, that this situation is recent, a result of the forest contractors and of Kadar abandonment of various jungle roots as their food staple. Yet the Kadar have for many centuries depended on the plains for iron implements —a technological item not produced by themselves, and without which they cannot effectively exploit their forest environment. Why then should iron have been known for many years, and yet a taste for rice and chillies develop only in the last half-century ? The forest contractors had indeed broken down traditional Kadar society—but not from a level of aboriginality of the sort Ehrenfels imagines. The forest contractors merely replaced the Kadar labour-intensive and 'tribally'-defined exploitation of the forest with a mechanized and capitalist forest exploitation system.

Social organization : Ehrenfels reports that individual ownership of communally collected goods is not acknowledged. However, forest produce which is collected singly gives an individual a right of ownership and profit over such goods (Ehrenfels : 49). This individualization of externally-destined commodities extends into concepts of land tenure : 'The forests around a village are, by the villagers themselves, divided for the collection of the minor forest produce, and

any encroachment of a member of the tribe upon the division allotted to another is never met with on the belief that the offended man will bring about the complete ruin of the offender through the intervention of his ancestors' (Iyer : 36).

Few institutions exist in Kadar society which merge the individual into larger social groups. Individual mobility is rampant, and the population of a locality changes constantly. Even within what Ehrenfels designates the 'family', membership is in constant flux. Larger kin groupings perform few if any economic or behavioural functions, and there are not even clan or family names (Ehrenfels : 127-128). Just as the individualistic ethic of the Kadar is reflected in their concepts of land tenure and commodity ownership, so too is it in the absence of important social institutions beyond the single person. Both conditions, it is hypothesized, reflect the internal fragmentation of the social unit brought on by the adaptation to external trade and an external social system.

BIRHOR*

Social ecology :   The Birhors live in the hills and jungles of the eastern and north-eastern Chotanagpur plateau. This 'tribe' resides in close proximity to agricultural villages, and the ethnographer, Roy, clearly documents the nature of Birhor acculturation to their neighbours. These agricultural villages lie in the open valleys near to the Birhor hills and are 'sparsely inhabited by...tribes and castes on a higher level of culture' (Roy : 40). The Birhors are heavily dependent on the exchange of forest products with the outside. Dalton writes :

> The Birhors...subsist on wild animals, honey, and what they can obtain by the exchange of jungle produce with people of the plains...They sell Chob, a strong fibre of which ropes and strings for various

---

* Editor's note : Three more accounts of the Birhor may be referred to in this connexion. Sen. B. K. Notes on the Birhor. *Man in India*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1955 ; Sen, B. K. and Jyoti Sen, Notes on the Birhors. *Man in India*, Vol. 35. No. 3, 1955 ; Sen, Jyoti, Ethnographic Notes on the Birhor, *Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India*, Vol. XIV, Nos. 1-2. Pp. 45—58.

> purposes are made, honey, wax, and sikas, the sticks
> like bows for carrying loads... (Dalton quoted in
> Roy : 25).

The Birhors also sell or barter monkey skins which are made into drum-heads. In turn, they depend on the plains for rice, salt, and oil as well as cattle, goats and other animals when they are needed for sacrifice (Roy : 25).

Roy clearly documents the extent of Birhor external contact and dependency :

> ...in order to sell their humble manufactures of
> wood and rope-fibres, and to buy their scanty clothing
> and tinsel ornaments, their iron tools and weapons,
> their earthen pots and such humble condiments as
> salt and pepper, all Birhors...necessarily come in
> contact with other tribes and castes...And in the rainy
> months their women often work in the neighbouring
> villages as field-labourers (Roy : 57).

Some of the more settled Birhors have ceremonial friendship with men of other castes, and Roy believes that the influence of this contact on Birhor 'manners, customs, beliefs and practices' is profound (Roy : 57).

Roy observed that the specialized economic pattern of this 'tribe', particularly *chop*-fibre collection as a main industry, was something more than a purely environmentally determined response. He explained it as in part the result of a hereditary, innate predilection (Roy : 543). However, might it not better be seen as an elaborated occupational specialization similar to the artisan specialities performed by Indian castes ?

Social organization : The Birhors move about in groups of 3 to 10 families called *tandas*. The collection of *chop* and its manufacture into rope, string, and nettings as well as the gathering of herbs, tubers, honey, and bees-wax are not activities of the whole *tanda*. Instead, these are matters for individual families—for their own use or 'for sale or barter for their [own] benefit' (Roy : 69). It is interesting that the only economic activity undertaken by the whole *tanda* as a

unit is that of monkey hunting. Monkey meat is a main subsistence good derived directly from the forest, which need not be converted into a usable commodity through barter or trade (Roy : 69). Thus, the absence of large-scale co-operative social units only occurs with regard to externally-destined commodities, not subsistence ones. The 'subsistence' economy here is socially bifurcated from the 'market' economy.

In the same pattern, Birhor clans have little or no functions other than marriage regulation, and *tanda* membership is not necessarily kin-based and is in a state of flux (Roy : 90, 546).

In the above two 'tribes', sections of them have recently taken to various forms of slash-and-burn agriculture or agricultural wage labour. Although the circumstances are poorly reported, these groups are evidently reacting to the British leasing of the forest and their exploitation to outside contractors. The economic basis of tribal forest trade is taken away ; the hunters-and-gatherers are forced to give up their former specialization for a more generalized agricultural one. They thus move closer to a purely subsistence-directed economy than they had previously. This point will be brought out further in the following consideration of the Chenchus.

CHENCHU

Social ecology : The Chenchus live on the Amrabad plateau in the Nallamalai Hills of the former princely state of Hyderabad and in adjoining areas of the former Madras Presidency. Furer-Haimendorf's study of these people is much superior to the ethnographies previously discussed and permits a more detailed validation of this paper's hypothesis (despite the fact that Furer-Haimendorf himself sees the Chenchus as primitive hunters-and-gatherers).

That the Chenchus have been in long-standing interaction with the plains is pointed to by much evidence. The Chenchus have clearly not been isolated from such contact by inaccessibility or lack of communications. The inferior quality of the soil on the plateau has kept cultivators out, and left the area a residential refuge for specialized hunting and gathering.

Yet from about the 7th century A.D. the presence of a famous Shiva temple (Sri Sailam) in these hills counteracted isolation and brought the area into constant interaction with plains Hindu society. Furer-Haimendorf writes, 'From these early times, pilgrims from the whole of the northern Deccan passed through the forest of the Amrabad plateau on their way to the annual festivals at the famous temple' (Furer-Haimendorf: 15). Various other ancient ruins atop the plateau attest to the linkage with a larger world throughout the past.

Chenchu economic behaviour was in good measure geared to the exchange of forest produce with the plains. This 'tribe' collected honey, wax, fruit, *mohua* flowers (for liquor distillation), and made baskets—all for external trade. In return, they received rice, ax-heads, clothing and arrow-heads. Furer-Haimendorf notes the necessity of the bazaar or trader as a supplier of essential goods for Chenchu society (Furer-Haimendorf: 79-81). Chenchus also act as guides and coolies for pilgrims to the Shiva temple, and in recent years, have sold them milk from their own livestock.

In the twentieth century, the Hyderabad State enacted forest legislation and leased forest exploitation to outside contractors. The Chenchus, their occupational monopoly broken, did not have as lucrative a trade as formerly. Indeed they complained that in their grandfathers' time prices and conditions were much better. The situation is worsened because the forest contractors introduced new consumption ideas into the Chenchu population at the very time they cut away the old source of money income through external trade. As a result, the Chenchus have turned to agriculture and livestock-raising as alternative economic pursuits (Furer-Haimendorf: 79). This change in livelihood pattern as well as their valuation of the trade of the past reflect the former Chenchu orientation to an external consumption market.

Social organization : The Chenchus illustrate very well the fragmentation of internal social solidarity and co-operation brought on by externally directed economic behaviour. Furer-Haimendorf notes,

> The absence of concerted action is another impor-
> tant characteristic of Chenchu economics······in
> collecting roots or fruits, individuals working side by
> side, do not co-operate ; each fills a separate basket and
> each carries his basket back to his own house to be
> consumed by his own family (Furer-Haimendorf : 58).

This same lack of co-operation is also true of hunting.
Furer-Haimendorf sees this individualism as characterizing
not only the collection of economic goods but also their internal
distribution :

> Although a certain measure of barter and trade
> must have been maintained with outsiders for some
> considerable time······Chenchus never barter among
> themselves. Economically perhaps more than socially,
> the family is a self-contained unit······(Furer-
> Haimendorf : 59).

Furer-Haimendorf notes how this picture of Chenchu
economics differs from the usual pattern among primitive
hunters-and-gatherers, although he does not suggest why this
might be so.

The concept of private ownership of subsistence and trade
commodities is highly developed among the Chenchus. Any
item obtained by the individual through his own actions
becomes his private property, to be disposed of as he alone
decides. Proprietorship of this sort is enjoyed by women and
children too (Furer-Haimendorf : 163).

The same elasticity of community organization found in
Kadar and Birhor society exists among the Chenchus :
'······the economic independence of the individual family is
correlated to its status as a self-contained social entity, free
at any time to sever its connections with the village group'
(Furer-Haimendorf : 59). Individuals also enjoy great
mobility. Correspondingly, larger social groupings within
Chenchu society are either weak or non-existent. Clan
membership determines little beyond marriage regulation, and
Chenchu clans lack any feelings of collective responsibility,
lack clan elders or councils, have no ceremonial occasions or
co-operation to strengthen their solidarity (Furer-Haimendorf :

94). Furer-Haimendorf was struck by how great a departure this was from the norm of hunting-and-gathering societies :

> ...the Chenchu is really not very interested in his clan...Clan-prestige, so strong a motive to social behaviour of many primitive races, is an empty conception to the Chenchu who does not consider himself in any way linked with the welfare or the strength of his clan (Furer-Haimendorf : 94).

Again, Furer-Haimendorf offers no explanation for this anomaly. However, we can recognize here the fissioning of the important social units of the society into independent familial groups geared to external trade or barter.

VEDDA

Social ecology : The Veddas are found along the eastern slopes of the central mountain chain of Ceylon. The Vedda hills have been an important religious migration point for many centuries, and this locale has never been closed off to influences emanating from the major centres of Sinhalese culture. The Veddas display the same sort of economic specialization in marketable forest-produce collection as the other groups discussed above. However, the historical sources available for this 'tribe' indicate that the economic interaction between Vedda and neighbouring agriculturalist is of long standing and is not a recent phenomenon (as Ehrenfels argues for the Kadar). There is seemingly no reason why the historical depth of the Vedda situation need not also apply to the Birhors, Chenchus, and Kadar.

Robert Knox, who was held in captivity in Ceylon for 20 years, wrote in 1681 of two types of Veddas—'wild' and 'tame.' Of the wild Veddas, he notes that 'They kill *deer* ...and the people of the countrey come and buy it of them' (quoted in Seligmann and Seligmann : 6). They also traded elephant teeth, honey, and wax to the king's officers in return for arrows and cloth (similar to the clientship of the Kadar with the Maharaja of Cochin ?). There is mention in Knox's book of a 'silent trade' with smiths, wherein deer meat was traded for arrow-heads. Knox reported that the tamer Veddas

came to buy and sell among the people (Seligmann and Seligmann : 7). Many centuries before, a Theban traveller of the 4th century A.D. wrote of Veddas from whom he obtained pepper (Seligmann and Seligmann : 420). It seems clear then that Vedda trade with the outside is not of recent origin, but rather represents a traditional aspect of their social life.

However, by the time the Seligmanns studied them, most of the Veddas had given up their hunting and gathering specialization for agricultural pursuits. Few families remained who persisted in their supposed 'aboriginal' manner. But the Veddas had not completely lost their 'commercial' orientation to an external market. They no longer transacted in jungle produce ; instead they dealt in their own supposed 'primitiveness' which they displayed as they might any other jungle commodity, that is, for a price :

> The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon...hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Danigala Veddas brought to them...The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him ? The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome...These folk, who when we saw them wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose...their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be (Seligmann and Seligmann : 39).

The Veddas seem to have engaged in this profit from being primitive as early as 1863 when an earlier investigator noted

that they were often brought before visitors and that they showed no contempt for money thus earned (Seligmann and Seligmann : 40).

The Seligmanns were good enough observers to see that many Veddas had 'learnt to play the part of professional primitive man'. Yet they still believed that some time in the uncorrupted past, Veddas were aborginal hunters-and-gatherers at a very low level of culture. However, Knox's account indicates that three centuries before, the Veddas were tied in important ways to an external economy and external political institutions. In this sense, then, the Veddas have always been 'professional' primitives, and have always been tuned into the social and economic demands of the larger society. It is only a strange compounding of the anthropologists' desire to find truly primitive peoples in the sub-continent with the studied 'aboriginality' of the hunters-and-gatherers themselves which has obscured this fact.[4]

NAYADI

Social ecology : The Nayadis live in the southern sections of the former Malabar district and in the north of Cochin State (both presently parts of Kerala). They indicate how thin a line separates plains outcaste from jungle hunting-and-gathering tribe. The Nayadis are commonly regarded as a caste, mainly because they reside within the non-nucleated multi-caste settlements along the Malabar coast. Yet in physical type and actual ancestry, they are closely related to the Paniyans and other hunting and gathering hill peoples found in the Western Ghats. It is only recently that the Nayadis have come down from the hill jungles, and their mode of existence still reflects a dependency on the produce of the forest for sale or barter. Their change from so-called primitive hunting and gathering tribe to pariah caste was brought about merely by a change in residence, not a change in occupation or subsistence technique. This is because the specialized, externally-oriented hunting and gathering of the 'tribe' serves just as well as an occupational specialization for the caste.

Several hundred years ago, when the Nayadis still inhabited

the jungle hills, they seem to have been employed as game beaters (Aiyappan : 10-12). Traditionally such hunting was organized by the local Nayar chieftain as a favourite sport. The customary distribution of game allocates a hindquarter to such a local chief (Aiyappan : 47, 49). In the ethnographic present, most Nayadis were reduced to begging as the primary subsistence technique, and most of them carried this activity on in the coastal plain. But certain special Nayadi industries remained which were derived from forest products, and which were probably involved in a traditional system of exchange with the plains before these people were forced out of the hills. Nayadis make draw-ropes for wells, collar-ropes for cattle, slings, knitted ball toys, rope-net bags, and rope-leashes for hunting dogs. They also collect medicinal plants from the jungle for sale, and make incense from resin. They supply the plains villagers with various tree-barks used as soaps (Aiyappan : 26). This latter commodity reflects not only the very long duration of Nayadi-plains exchange, but also under-lines the necessity of Nayadi products for the coastal people.

In the last several centuries, the Nayadis have been pushed out of the jungles by the encroachment of cultivators. Aiyappan writes :

> The rise in prices of agricultural produce since the introduction of India into the world market, after the coming of the British, led to every inch of land being brought under cultivation for commercial crops, and the very rapid growth of population made people encroach more and more on the forests...More and more men from the plains moved eastward to the newly cleared areas displacing the original population. Thus came the Nayadis to live among the plains castes (Aiyappan : 3).

The Nayadis were not dislodged by capitalist competitors who more efficiently and in more mechanized fashion exploited the forest. They could not therefore turn to agriculture as the profits from the jungle dried up—as had Chenchus, Veddas, and Birhors. The good agricultural land had already been occupied by higher castes ; the Nayadis

5

could only turn to the plains and begging, and what little could be gained from increasingly marginal forest collection. They became a caste in terms of residence by retaining as far as possible the forest-occupational specialization which had served them when they were a hill 'tribe'.

Social organization : The Nayadis display the same individual proprietary mentality characteristic of the other groups discussed above. That this syndrome and institution should exist both among people called an inferior caste and others called primitive tribes indicates how little difference exists between such tribes and castes in the Indian context. Among the Nayadi, each family has its own circumscribed area for begging which is clearly delimited territorially. Such locality rights may be sold or mortgaged. Aiyappan remarks the similarity of Nayadi proprietary practices with those of 'beggar tribes' in Mysore. He makes it clear that in this respect, the Nayadi caste differs little from 'primitive' hunting-and-gathering tribes :

> The development of some degree of private owner-ship among the jungle tribes begins with the division of hunting and collecting areas, and...such division characterizes even the most primitive of the tribes. (Aiyappan : 29).

Conclusion

This paper has re-interpreted Indian hunters-and-gatherers as marginal economic specialists for traditional Indian civilization. The particular kind of hunting and gathering they do is not a complete utilization of all resources for subsistence provided by the environment, but rather a selective exploitation aimed at the gathering of materials which are exchangeable or saleable to their agricultural neighbours. Indian hunters-and-gatherers generally live in close proximity to plains plough-agriculturalists and caste villages, and they depend heavily on the latter's crafts and produce for survival. In many ways these so-called 'tribes' resemble the castes of artisans such as Carpenter or Blacksmith resident in Hindu villages. Although they are not residentially enclaved as are

these castes, Indian hunters-and-gatherers are economically, and therefore to a large extent socially, enclaved within the stratified society of plains villages and Hindu civilization. This enclavement is also mirrored in particular aspects of their internal social structure, such as family and kin organization.

This study hopefully illustrates an important aspect of traditional Indian civilization which may be true of other pre-industrial agrarian societies : that is, the enclavement of groups which exploit a marginal environment by techniques and a style of life radically different from the general pattern of the society. Such marginal enclaves seemingly persist because the larger society does not have the technology to exploit this environment in a more direct fashion.[5]

Anthropologists have traditionally been interested in the reaction of non-industrial tribal peoples to contact with an industrialized world. They have intensively surveyed the way in which tribal groups have accomodated themselves to the new economic, political, and ideological modifications brought on by colonialism and modernization.   However, little attention has been given to a similar acculturative process which must have occurred often in the past : that is, the manner in which geographically marginal tribal peoples were absorbed, altered, and harnessed to the economy and society of technologically advanced pre-industrial civilizations.   Acculturative pressures in a pre-industrial contact situation clearly lead to different results than similar pressures in an industrial contact situation. In the Indian case, such pressures lead to peripheral enclavement of populations exploiting a marginal terrain by marginal techniques (hunting and gathering).   Historically, this situation may arise from the acculturation of formerly independent hunting and gathering tribes,[6] or by groups moving out from the larger society and occupying this niche.   In the former case, foreign groups are acculturated into a limited symbiotic relationship with the larger society ; in the latter, groups are reconstituted so as to appear on the surface like primitive tribal societies.

Several anthropologists have tried to define these social situations more distinctly. Lehman has proposed the term 'subnuclear' (following Steward) to refer to a multitude of hill tribes in Southeastern Asia. By 'subnuclear', Lehman refers to 'cultures and societies that abut on a civilization... but are distinct from that nuclear culture and its society. They are not civilized, but neither are they primitive. The subnuclear society's adaptation to civilization is so complete that it is necessary to propose a categorical relationship between the two' (Lehman : 225). Lehman shows how the necessity of having to deal with plains Burman society importantly moulded the social structure of the northern Chin hill people. This interaction led to a ranked lineage system among the Chin in the north which reflected as well as intermediated the important trade contacts with lowland Burman society. The southern Chin, geographically closer to the plains, did not develop the same sophisticated social institutions because their trade connexions with Burman society were more direct (Lehman : 44).

Helms has attacked the theoretical issues of this problem more directly. She proposes a category of 'purchase' societies, which are neither peasant nor tribal, and which are heavily dependent on external social systems. She writes,

> Purchase society is articulated with the outside world through particular economic ties in such a way that definitive adaptations to the larger system result. Unlike peasantry, 'purchasers' are not enmeshed in state political controls, but operate instead on the economic frontiers that lie beyond such controls...In order to participate successfully in this wider economic network, all aspects of purchase society organization adapt in any number of ways so as to facilitate the formation of outside economic ties (Helms : 24).

Clearly Indian hunting-and-gathering societies must be seen from within the sort of theoretical framework proposed by Lehman and significantly advanced by Helms. However, the extent of their enclavement and dependency on Hindu agrarian society is much greater than that of the hill peoples

of Southeast Asia or other 'purchase' societies. Perhaps the difference lies in the greater territorial segregation of these groups completely within the Indian sub-continent, and the lack of any exit from the larger society's influences. The Southeast Asian hill peoples have always had barriers, both geographical and sociological, behind which to retreat. Indian hunters-and-gatherers, totally surrounded by plains agrarian society, had no further hills—either sociologically or geographically—to climb. Perhaps too, this difference reflects the nature of the agrarian civilizations themselves. It has often been remarked that Indian civilization throughout its history has been able to harness social units to itself without necessarily fully absorbing them.

Undoubtedly, the nature of tribal enclavement reflects both the organization of the agrarian society as well as the condition of the marginal groups. Here, Lattimore's concept of a 'frontier' cultural sphere would probably prove valuable (Lattimore ; 1662a : 238-242). For instance, a distinction might be drawn between an 'external' frontier (such as the nomadic periphery of traditional China) and an 'internal' frontier (such as the camel herders of the Near East).[7] The nature and impact of tribal enclavement under these differing frontier ecological situations would surely be dissimilar. An external frontier permits a choice between adaptation or moving away (from the civilized sphere) ; an internal frontier allows a more restricted choice between adaptation or complete absorption (into the civilized sphere). The hill tribes of Southeast Asia have always existed on an external frontier in terms of geography and the impact of agrarian society. The hunters-and-gatherers of nuclear South Asia have always been restricted territorially, have been more vulnerable to being economically stripped by the outside, and have more easily altered their subsistence and social patterns to fit the definitions of the larger society. Although they also exist on a 'frontier', it is highly circumscribed, surrounded and internal, and one which allows fewer escape routes from the penetration of plains agrarian society. Space does not permit a fuller exploration of this topic. At this point it is enough to insist

on a re-interpretation of Indian hunters-and-gatherers in terms of their enclavement in the larger society.

Because they remain unabsorbed, Indian hunters-and-gatherers can mistakenly be regarded as primitive tribes or 'fossils' when in fact they are intimately and irrevocably dependent on an advanced civilization. This lack of absorption cannot be explained either by historical accident or remoteness. Indian hunters-and-gatherers persisted until relatively recent times not because of their removal from Hindu society or their occupation of difficult terrain.[8] They persisted precisely because of their patterned interaction with the larger society ; their continued existence in their niche depended on the maintenance of this interaction (and the survival of the pre-industrial civilization). In one sense, then, Indian hunters-and-gatherers are fossilized—not as examples of the pre-literate past, but as marginal, non-tribal, occupationally specialized social adjuncts of an agrarian state.

NOTES

[1]   'India' in this paper refers to the whole of the South Asia sub-continent. 'Nuclear' South Asia refers to areas in direct and long-standing interaction with Indian civilization. Thus, the hunters-and-gatheres of the Andaman Islands are excluded from this discussion.

[2]   Kosambi goes on to suggest that much of traditional Hindu civilization such as caste originates from the expansion of northern iron-using peoples into southern India, inhabited by herders and hunters. That the recent archaeology on neolithic and chalcolithic times in the Deccan completely denies his fanciful idea does not seem to bother Kosambi. However, he does recognize that the so-called primitive tribes of India have for many centuries been in close contact with agrarian society. He does not explain why these 'tribes' remained unabsorbed except to say that there was plenty of food to go around (Kosambi 1967 : 105).

[8]   Some of the above characteristics (absence of formal kin patterning to settlements, great internal mobility of persons, lack

of definite exogamic rule) have been noted by Service as characteriz-ing a category of hunting and gathering societies he calls 'composite bands'. Service explains these institutions in such composite bands as brought about through depopulation from European colonialism and disease (Service : 108). However, populations of hunters-and-gatherers in nuclear South Asia do not seem to have suffered this sort of depopulation. The institutional similarity to composite bands must come from the equally fissiparous effects of their long-standing economic interaction with plains society.

⁴   No section is provided on the social organization of the Veddas. The combination of their almost complete absorption into Sinhalese society and the deficiencies of the ethnography itself make the comprehension of Vedda social organization extremely difficult (cf. Leach, *passim*).

⁵   It is only with the introduction of a new technology after British domination that the forest becomes exploitable by plains people. Traditionally, the poorness of soil and difficulty of access kept cultivators out. Again, it is only with the entry of India into a world economy as a result of British colonialism that the Nayadis' hills are taken over by cultivators.

⁶   This may explain the supposed racial distinctiveness of these populations.

⁷   My use of the concept 'internal' and 'external' frontiers stems from Lattimore's distinction between 'frontiers of exclusion' (such as the northern Chinese-nomadic border) and 'frontiers of inclusion' (such as the marginal hill tribes of southern China) (Lattimore, 1962b : 475-477).

⁸   Ghurye long ago recognized the important interaction between hill tribes and Indian civilization. He notes,

'...the proper description of [so-called aboriginals] must refer itself to their place in or near Hindu society...the only proper description of these people is that they are the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society. Though for the sake of convenience they may be designated the tribal classes of Hindu society, suggesting thereby the social fact that they have retained much more of the tribal creeds and organization than many of the castes of Hindu society, yet they are in reality backward Hindus' (Ghurye : 19).

However, Ghurye's explanation for why these groups are still

imperfectly integrated is historical anachronism : they just have
not yet caught up. At least for hunters-and-gatherers this explana-
tion misses the essential point that their non-absorption indicates
an essential, albeit marginal, economic symbiosis with the plains.
Furthermore, to accept the absence or presence of Hinduism as the
most important diagnostic is to ignore the fact that economic
interaction predominates.

CITATIONS

Aiyappan, A. 'Social and Physical Anthropology of the Nayadis of
            Malabar.' *Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum*,
            new series, general section vol. II, 1930-1937.

Ehrenfels, U. R. *Kadar of Cochin*. University of Madras. Madras, 1952.

Furer-Haimendorf, Christophe von. *The Aboriginal Tribes of Hyderabad,
            vol. I — Chenchu*. Macmillan. London, 1943.

Ghurye, G. S. *The Aborigines so-called and their future*. Popular Book
            Depot, Bombay. 1943.

Helms, Mary W. 'The Purchase Society : Adaptations to Economic Fron-
            tiers' (unpublished manuscript, 1968).

Iyer, L. K. Anantha Krishna. *The Cochin Tribes and Castes*. Higginbotham,
            London. 1909-1912.

Kosambi, D. D. 'Living Prehistory in India.' *Scientific American*, vol. 216
            no. 22, 1967 : 105-114.

Lattimore, Owen. *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*. Beacon Press. Boston.
            1962a.
            Studies in Frontier History, Collected Papers 1928-1958.
            Mouton. Paris. 1962b.

Leach, E. R. 'Did the Wild Veddahs Have Matrilineal Clans?' *Studies
            in Kinship and Marriage presented to Brenda Seligman.*
            Ed.I. Schapera. Royal Anthropological Instit. London,
            1963.

Lehman, Frederick K. *The Structure of Chin Society*. Illinois Studies
            in Anthropology, no. 3. Urbana, 1963.

Majumdar, D. N. *Races and Cultures of India*. Asia Publishing House.
            Bombay, 1961.

Roy, Sarat Chandra. *The Birhors*. Publ. by the author. Ranchi, 1925.

Sahlins, Marshall. 'The Segmentery Lineage : An Organization of Pre-
            datory Expansion.' *American Anthropologist*, vol. 63,
            1961 : 322-345.

Seligmann, C. G. and Brenda Z. Seligmann. *The Veddas*. Cambridge
            University Press. Cambridge, 1911.

Service, Elman R. *Primitive Social Organization : An Evolutionary Pers-
            pective*. Random House. New York, 1962.

Weber, Max. *From Max Weber : Essays in Sociology*. Ed. and Tr. H. H.
            Gerth and C. W. Mille. Oxford. New York, 1958.

FACTIONAL POLITICS IN VILLAGE INDIA

Nityananda Patnaik

H. D. Lakshminarayana

(*Received on 6 November 1968*)

Abstract : Faction is a part of social structure and emerges due to several factors. Studies conducted in different parts of India show that the transition from the feudal order to democratic decentralization has given rise to factions. The authors' hypothesis is that, consequent upon the introduction of adult franchise and Panchayati Raj, factions have been sharpened and the most populous non-dominant castes are emerging as rival groups in competition with the erstwhile 'dominant' minority castes for political power. The detailed morphology of factions in the villages can be known by making studies in different parts of the country.

POLITICAL Anthropology was pre-occupied with the taxonomy, structure and function of political systems. Recently there has been a shift from static and synchronic analysis of morphological types to dynamic and diachronic studies of political change in small-scale political arenas. The processual dimension of political dynamics include studies of (1) political change, (2) the processes of decision making and conflict resolution and (3) factional politics.

This paper deals with a comparative analysis of factionalism, one kind of political process, as found in 6 peasant villages, 3 in Mysore and 3 in Orissa. Faction is a special kind of political organization and the study of factionalism was found necessary to understand politics of these peasant villages. Before proceeding to give an analysis of the factional organization and the relationship between factionalism and

6

socio-political change as noticed in these 6 villages, it is necessary to say what exactly is meant by such terms as political activity, political power and faction and correlated concepts such as vertical and horizontal cleavages which find mention frequently in the text of the paper. As has been pointed out above, factionalism is a kind of political activity, which in turn means 'organized conflict over public power'. Rival groups engaged in political activity make efforts to exercise control over resources and also expand their control over it. Nicholas has said 'Participants in political activity attempt to expand their control over resources (which he calls power), or if they do not, they are not engaged in political action' (1966 : 52).

Factionalism, its Part in Social Structure

Factionalism pertains to a species of social conflict, and refers to a form of interaction concerning a class of unstable groups called 'factions'. Faction is generally a group of a larger unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or policies. It arises in the struggle for power and represents a division on details of application and not on principles. Factions also signify a state of polarization with respect to an anterior group in which they have their being. Factionalism has its locus within the orbit of intra-group dissension.

Factionalism occurs when large changes occur in the life-situations of members of the group. For instance, when the opportunities open to the group with which the individual has identified himself are limited, the person may direct some of his aggressiveness against other members of the group.

Faction is a part of the social structure. The idea of equilibrium in the social structure is no longer true. And the dynamic picture demands recognition of the possibility that the operation of a social system, however simple, involves continual tendencies to change (Firth 1952 : 82). In such change, basic relations in a system get altered and in extreme cases lead to factions. In fact, factions are the predecessors of modern political parties. When

authority was in a few hands and politics was a private affair, factional cleavages occurred over the advisers of the sovereign. As rivalry for power widened, the proportion of the community which actively participated in political life and electoral practices developed, self-conscious groups undertook to maintain their organization from one electoral crisis to the next and to present candidates in their own names for the available posts. Under such conditions factions become parties.

Nature and Organization of Factional Politics

Factional politics emerges out of conflict or competition for public power. In every social structure there are occasions for conflict, since individuals and sub-groups are likely to make claims to scarce resources, prestige or power positions (Coser 1967 : 308). In small groups, such conflicts are more intense and pervasive. For instance, in a tribal community the entire society may be regarded as a political arena. Individual villages may have significant political power and so constitute arenas in their own right. Factional political systems are never found in large-scale arenas. The tie between leader and follower in a faction is based on a personal transaction between them. As arenas grow larger, leader-follower ties dissolve into quasi-group networks.

Membership in Factions

Factions may be exhaustive, involving all members of a society who are eligible to participate in politics. It may be exclusive, in that only people who are in complete agreement with and have deference to its leaders are eligible to be its members. Factions have a leader and followers, and the membership is not spontaneous or automatic as in the case of caste. Members are recruited to factions chiefly for mutual benefit. The leader bestows some favour on his followers who support him in return. Faction-leaders are ordinarily competitors and mostly well-to-do and have great control over resources. Where resources are dispersed there the chances are more for emerging factions. In such a situation the leaders of the

several factions vie with one another to bag resources, support etc., from their counterparts. The loss of one is the gain of the other.

In factional organizations the recruitment of followers is diverse. It is based on kinship groups, friends, patron-client, master-servant, borrower-lender relationships. In short, factional supporters are tied to their leaders by very diverse transactions.

Faction and Political Party

The political parties are composed by individuals who have become urbanized, have received the appropriate forms of education, and have demonstrated skill in establishing the necessary personal relations, and who are admitted to the ranks of the elite. The path by which they are recruited into their political roles, is essentially an acculturation process and is not dependent upon ascriptive process (Pye 1966 : 520). In contrast to political parties, factions are localized cliques organized on kinship, friendship and patronage, and are ascriptive in character. In villages where factions prevail, it is difficult to distinguish a distinct political sphere. The social status of the individual and his personal ties largely determine his political behaviour and the range of his influence. Their success depends upon the manner in which they relate themselves to the social structure of the community than on the substance of their political views.

In villages political activities are not part of any single general process. There are several distinct and nearly unrelated political processes. But those who participate in the political life of the village are not an integral part of the national politics, because of the localized and diverse factions, which have their own separate and autonomous political techniques.

Factionalism and National Politics

In the process of political development, a new elite tends to come up at the local level and slowly even at the State level. In India, for instance, such development takes its

roots in the peasantry and in the countryside. The peasant community, as we have already pointed out, has factions, due to conflict occurring as a result of limited goods. And, as a result of democratic change, an army of rural elites has emerged. These elites have a close connexion with the factions at the village level. Because the adult franchise has given a right to everyone to vote for a candidate, a political leader has to win the favour of the electorate by extending patronage to them in various ways. Where factions prevail, the political leader becomes more cautious to keep his followers subservient to him and resorts to many irregularities by showing favours, lest they align with another faction and thus jeopardise his position. Thus the political leader acts as a link between the faction at the village level and political activity at a higher level. In India, for instance, the periodical elections to various organizations have made a sound ground for factions, which though not reflecting any policy matter at the national level maintain their support to the leader who ultimately takes part in national politics. For some time, at least, he may forget his local factions when dealing with matters of national importance. But when local issues crop up he has to show considerations to his local interests. In this way factions are related with national politics. They may be latent, nevertheless they run as under-currents.

External Political Influence of Village Politics

Adult franchise and democratic decentralization have gone a long way in India, for instance, to link up local politics with external politics. Due to suffrage, people who belong to economic and numerically dominant castes tend to take new roles in politics. The various political activities provide them with an opportunity to associate themselves with the political elites, for whom the village leaders belonging to the dominant caste act as political agents. These agents give support to their leaders above and in return get some favour from them. This can be called as a sort of 'political patron-client' relationship. The patron is the political leader above, may be at the taluk, district, state or national level, and the client is

the village-political leader. This leader in turn distributes favours among his followers in the village. Such a type of leadership is also a sort of 'brain trust' to the leaders above.

The impact of external politics on villages may be either positive or negative. By positive means the external political influence creates an awareness among the villagers about national problems and villagers respond to a greater extent. This will enable them to identify themselves with the wider community and develop a cosmopolitan outlook. The negative aspect of external political influence will be division of the village into factions by political elites who play the role of mediocres and try to keep this up for their political advantage. This gives rise to dissensions among villagers and perpetuates rivalry in the village. In such cases, factions remain as barriers to development. Each faction, instead of co-operating with the other, tries to brow-beat and enjoy the adversity of its opponent. In villages, as in India, factions have increased due to this negative contribution of external influence. This has been accentuated by adult franchise and Panchayati Raj. The growing political consciousness and disappearence of charismatic leadership have also escalated factions.

Vertical and Horizontal Cleavages

Faction, so to say, is a kind of cleavage in conflict with another cleavage for political power. Cleavages are of two kinds : vertical and horizontal. Vertical political cleavages are characteristic of the ideal unstratified society like any ideal tribal community, while horizontal political cleavages are characteristic of an ideal stratified society like caste.

Vertical political cleavages may appear within a caste between segments of patrilineal descent groups and is generally called segmentary factional political cleavage. Segmentary lineage conflict is normally met with in structurally equal societies like tribal communities. But the persistence of this kind of cleavage in structually unequal societies like caste may be due to legal rights enjoyed by lineage members to hold certain property jointly in perpetuity.

For instance, to strengthen the lineage organization among the proprietory castes, British settlement of land revenue under Mahalvari in 1820 gave the lineages among the Jats legally recorded rights in perpetuity.

Horizontal political cleavages are found most frequently between different castes. Here, political conflicts are between high and low social classes, not between super-ordinate and subordinate social strata. Caste system, which is a system of social stratification, does not ideally allow of competition between castes as they are intrinsically tied with one another by patron-client social and economic relationships. No caste appears to have any characteristic of a corporate political group. A dominant caste may have autonomous political power. It acts as a field for political competition but not as a corporate political group.

Dominant Caste

The concept of dominant caste, which is thoroughly analysed by Srinivas, is based on the following characteristics, (1) economic dominance, (2) political dominance, (3) numerical preponderance and (4) high rank in social strata. A caste is said to be dominant in a village where it possesses all these characters. But it is not necessary for a caste to have all these qualities to become dominant. Dominance may derive from political power alone. However, universal adult franchise has vested an element of power on many low castes who form the bulk of the population. This has created cleavages between the wealtheir dominant minority and the humbler majority. The former are reluctant to loosen their grip on power, while the latter question their power and attempt to snatch it away from them.

Mysore Villages

Three villages, namely Hariharapura, Hirikalale and Hiralahalli in Mandya District of Mysore State were studied. These villages are about 40 miles from Mandya and are situated at a distance of 6 miles from the Block headquarters. Each of the three villages is at a distance of 12 miles from

the other and are in three different directions from the Block office.

HARIHARAPURA

Location : Hariharapura is a good communication village. It is situated on a plain by the side of the main road at a distance of 6 miles to the west of the Block office. The nearest station is about 5 miles. The village is the panchayat headquarters, the VLW lives in the village. There is a primary school, a Branch Post Office and a co-operative society. It is a terminal village and is exposed to the external world through communication.

Structure of the village : The village is heterogeneous, having 13 castes and a population of 1,111. The castes are stratified. The Vokkaligas—the traditional agriculturists—are dominant in number and hold more than three-fourths of the land. The Harijans are next to the Vokkaligas in number, but are poor in land-holding. The other castes are both numerically and economically insignificant. The following table shows the castes in social hierarchy and the land held by each caste.

TABLE 1

Distribution of castes and land held by them in the village

Caste	Population		% of land held
	No.	%	
Brahmin	20	1.8	3.00
Lingayat	13	1.2	0.75
Srivaishnava	10	0.9	1.00
Vokkaliga	395	35.5	77.00
Krizuhina Setty	11	1.0	0.25
Barber	13	1.2	—
Viswakarma	16	1.4	—
Fisherman	56	5.0	4.50
Bovi	9	0.8	—
Pillay	89	8.0	4.00
Harijan	373	33.6	8.25
Christian	27	2.5	1.25
Muslim	79	7.1	—
	1,111	100.0	100.0

In the social hierarchy, the Brahmin enjoys the highest position as in other parts of the country. All the castes are governed by traditional customs of endogamy and commensal restrictions. In the village social structure, the castes are integrated both socially and economically. Socially every caste, except Bovi, Pillay, Christian and Muslim, is dependent upon others. Economically all castes are interdependent through patron-client, borrower-lender and master-servant relations.

Economic aspect : The village is agrarian and paddy is the major crop grown. However, except for the agricultural Vokkaligas and Harijans, the other castes have their traditional occupations. The Brahmins were engaged as priests and were also schoolteachers. They supervised their lands and the lands bestowed on the temples. Likewise, the Srivaishnava family also supervised some land and worked as temple-priest. The Lingayats mainly did business in grocery. Among Vokkaligas, out of 56 heads of households, 50 followed only agriculture, 2 were engaged in contract work and 3 did petty business of running *beedi* shops, besides agriculture. Kuruhina Setty (Weaver) followed besides weaving, tailoring and selling ready-made garments in weekly shandies. The Barbers and Viswakarma followed their traditional occupations. Viswakarmas were in petty business in addition to carpentry and smithy. The Fishermen cultivated lands and were water-patrollers. Fishing was only occasional. The Bovi (Vodda) worked as stone-cutters. Pillays followed agriculture and manual labour. The Harijans worked as tenants and labourers. The Christians were cultivators. The Muslims, being landless, followed different vocations. Four of them did business in grocery, two worked as blacksmiths and six were manual labourers.

Political Aspect : The village had the traditional panchayat where the village headman and other important persons of the dominant Vokkaliga caste acted as arbitrators in the village disputes. The headman moreoever looked after law and order and acted as a representative of the Government to collect

land-tax. Statutory Panchayati Raj was introduced in 1960. Election to one of the seats was held between two Vokkaliga candidates and there has been faction among Vokkaligas which becomes active during elections. The village is represented by formal leaders in the new panchayat set-up. But they are not effective in the village. Two of the three members from this village belong to Harijan and Pillay castes who are subservient to the Vokkaligas and cannot act as leaders of the Vokkaligas. The other candidate belonging to the Vokkaliga caste is not very influential. The panchayat was not effective as the village was divided into two factions, both led by Vokkaligas and followed by members of different castes. The recruitment was based on patron-client, borrower-lender and master-servant relationships.

HIRIKALALE

Location : Hirikalale is an average-communication village, situated in a low depression, half-a-mile away from the main road. It is about 6 miles to the north of the Block office and is surrounded on all sides by cultivated lands. The village is the panchayat headquarters, has a primary school, a co-operative society and a branch post-office.

Structure of the village : This is a heterogeneous and stratified village having castes and a population of 1,109. Here also the Vokkaligas are dominant both numerically and economically, and are followed by the Kurubas (Shepherd). The other castes are small in number and hold little land, as shown below.

TABLE 2

Distribution of castes and land held by them in the village

| Caste | Population | | % of land held |
	No.	%	
Vokkaliga	423	38.2	42.0
Kuruba (Shepherd)	384	34.6	34.0
Viswakarma	91	8.2	5.5
Potter	29	2.6	1.5
Oil-presser	27	2.5	2.3
Washerman	20	1.8	2.5
Barber	12	1.0	0.2
Harijan	120	10.8	12.0
Christian	3	0.3	—
	1,109	100.0	100.0

This village does not have any castes who are superior to Vokkaligas in the social hierarchy. The Kurubas and Vokkaligas have interdining only. Both are distinctly endogamous groups. The other castes take food from these castes only. They are all endogamous and interdining is prohibited among them. Nevertheless, each caste is dependent upon other castes.

Economic aspect : The village is comparatively poor. All the lands are rain-fed and there is no guarantee of having good harvest every year. Yet, villagers accept the limited goods without trying to venture into some new fields of earning. The occupational pattern still identifies itself with caste. The Vokkaligas do agriculture in the same traditional manner. The Kurubas, who are shepherds, mostly live by agriculture. Other service-castes, besides , following their traditional occupation, follow agriculture also. But they have more obligation to serve their patrons and cannot neglect the traditional occupation however impoverished they may be. The patron-client bondage has bound the community into an integrated whole.

Political aspect : Traditionally the political activity of the village was settling village disputes and maintaining law and order. These were looked after by the village headman, who was supported by the village leaders, belonging to Vokkaliga and Kuruba castes. The village has a statutory panchayat since 1960. The members were unanimously elected to the body. Yet, the decisions in the panchayat were arrived at mostly by voting on crucial matters.

Though the elections to the panchayats were unaninous, it was only the prerogative of the two dominant castes, namely Vokkaliga and Kuruba, to occupy those positions. The village had some fissiparous tendency, as the leaders of both the dominant castes had encroached upon common land near the village tank. But there was no overt resentment among the members of the village.

HIRALAHALLI

Location : Hiralahalli, the poor-communication village is situated 3 miles away from the main road and is 6 miles to the east of the Block office. The village is small and is located in a plain with cultivated lands on all sides. The village has a stream nearby, which irrigates a portion of the land. The major area of the land is rain-fed and *ragi* and sugarcane are grown. The village has a single-teacher primary school.

Structure of the village : The village is a small but hetero-geneous one, having 6 castes with a population of 368. As in the other two villages, here also the Vokkaligas are numerically dominant and hold large amounts of land. The other castes are very insignificant both in size and landholding. In the following table the size of each caste and amount of land held is given in the hierarchical order.

TABLE 3

Distribution of castes and land held by them in the village

| Castes | Population | | % of land held |
	No.	%	
Brahmin	18	4.9	2.6
Vokkaliga	255	69.2	83.0
Viswakarma	28	7.6	5.2
Oil-presser	6	1.6	0.9
Basket-maker	13	3.5	1.3
Harijan	48	13.2	7.0
	368	100.0	100.0

As the above table shows, though the Brahmins are a minority, they are on the top in the village social structure. As in other villages, here also every caste is dependent upon one another and are non-competitive. The system is maintained through patron-client relationship.

Economic aspect : This village is basically agricultural as the other villages. Since most of the lands are rain-fed, only one crop is grown in the year. All the castes adhere to their occupations, in addition to cultivating their lands. The occupation pattern of the various castes is similar to that of the other two villages, and needs no elaboration.

Political aspect : The village, having a small population with a powerful dominant caste, has no factions. The traditional village headman is still important and is unanimously selected by the villagers as their representative in the group panchayat. Since the village is small and all castes accept the Vokkaliga as their leader there is no conflict in village matters and people are not very much interested in political activity, thanks to the unity of the village.

Orissan Villages

MANIKPUR

Manikpur is a poor-communication village, heterogeneous in caste composition, situated 9 miles and 3 furlongs to the south of Berhampur town. A fair-weather road connects this village with the Calcutta-Madras National Highway at Tatadapalli which is situated at a distance of 9 miles to the south of Berhampur. The village is surrounded on all sides by rain-fed paddy fields and uplands. In the vicinity of the village to its south are hill ranges which provide pasture for the cattle.

As there is no good road to the village, it is cut off from bus-service which touches its boundary at Kotharsingh, a place about one furlong from Manikpur where the people board the bus for Berhampur town. But during the wet season, when this bus-service is closed, people walk up to Tatadapalli where they take a bus for the town.

The total population of Manikpur is 521 of which 243 are male and 278 female. They belong to 12 different castes. In the hierarchical order they are presented below with population of each in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Castes of Manikpur in hiearchical order with population

Sl. No.	Caste (Native term)	Caste (English equivalent)	Male	Female	Total population	Total family	% of land possessed
1.	Karana	(Scribe)	4	2	6	1	—
2.	Mali	(Gardener)	9	13	22	2	—
3.	Badhei	(Carpenter)	7	7	14	4	0.25
4.	Dora	(Cultivating caste)	62	71	133	27 ⎫	37.47
5.	Telenga	(Bangle-seller)	6	5	11	3 ⎭	
6.	Gola	(Buffalo-herder)	88	90	178	40	40.64
7.	Reddi	(Cultivator)	42	60	102	30	20.71
8.	Liary	(Fisherman)	2	2	4	1	—
9.	Patsalia	(Weaver)	1	3	4	1	—
10.	Dhoba	(Washerman)	8	9	17	3	—
11.	Damba	(An untouchable caste)	8	9	17	5	0.93
12.	Dandasi	(Watchman)	6	7	13	3	—
			243	278	521	120	100%

According to the definition of the concept of dominant caste given by Srinivas (1955 : 86), the Golas may be said to be the dominant caste in Manikpur.   They preponderate numerically over all other castes and own the major portion of land in the village.   But they are the sixth in caste-ranking and do not have 'decisive' political authority in the village. Nicholas thinks, 'In the ideal model of a village caste system, dominance   derives   from a superior power alone, numbers play no necessary part in the establishment of a dominant caste' (1968 : 273).   These   considerations   create   some difficulty in designating Golas as the dominant caste.   In matters of political preponderance no caste in the village has exclusive power.   But by virtue of their traditional leadership-position, the Doras have a superior political recognition in the village.   The traditional headman of the village hails from this caste and the post continues to be chosen by adelphic succession in the headman's family.   No village assembly carries on its business without the presence of the traditional chief of the village.   The gram-panchayat representative comes from the traditional headman's lineage.

Though the traditional leadership and the membership of the statutory village council rest in the Dora caste, this caste

does not in fact exercise 'decisive' dominance in political or social matters. They occupy the fourth position in caste-ranking, but they are one rung higher than the Golas who are more populous and have more control over wealth than any other caste in the village.

No caste has 'absolute' dominance in the village. The leader-ship of the village is recruited from mainly three castes—three from Bora, two from Gola and one from Reddy caste. These six leaders have to be present in the village assembly at the time of taking any decision on matters of common concern. The village assembly which generally is held at the recreation centre is sometimes held in front of the traditional headman's house or of one of the Gola leaders. Sometimes it is also held in the carpenter's workshop.

In the ideal village social structure absolute dominance of a caste does not foster competition between castes within the system. Does the absence of it suggest possibilities of such competition ? In Manikpur no caste wields absolute domi-nance and there is absolutely no inter-caste competition and segmentary factional conflict. Consensus is the chief characteristic of the decision-making process and the unanimous decision achieved by the leaders and the villagers is whole-heartedly followed by all of the village. In no matter have they as yet resorted to any tension-generating system like voting to arrive at any decision. In short, the Golas have numerical preponderance, and preponderant economic power. But they seem to be lacking in preponderant political power. In the case of the Doras they are higher in caste-ranking than the Golas but they do not occupy the highest rung in the caste-constellation. Though they enjoy superior political power. that power and position are neither divisive nor absolute. In this situation obtaining in Manikpur, no caste can be said to have decisive dominance. On the contrary, each of these important castes exercises relative dominance in its own right.

BADAPUR

Badapur is a medium-communication village located in the midst of paddy fields at a distance of 4 miles from Gopalpur-on-

sea on its south and 4 miles from the Madras-Calcutta Highway
on the north. It is connected by a fair weather 3-mile long
approach road which starts from the Village Level Worker's
training centre at the Rangubunda village on the hard surfaced
road leading to Gopalpur. The village is about 4 miles from
the National Highway. Its location approximates the tip of a
triangle, of which the other two points are occupied by
Berhampur on one side at a distance of 9 miles and Chatrapur
on the other at a distance of 8 miles.

There is no direct bus service to the village and compared
with Manikpur which is only 3 furlongs from the National High-
way, Badapur is 3 miles as the crow flies from this highway.
In spite of its situation at a greater distance from the bus route,
the people of this village are in fact more mobile than those of
Manikpur. The factors contributing to the greater mobility
which will be dealt with in greater detail later on seem to be its
situation and easier accessiblity.

Caste and population : Badapur has a population approaching
724 souls distributed among 11 different castes, arranged in a
hierarchical order with male/female population of each caste as
shown in the table given below.

TABLE   5

Sl. No.	Castes mentioned in the hierarchical order	English equivalent	Male	Female	Total population	No. of families	% of land possessed
1.	Brahmin			1	1	1	0.21
2.	Gauda	Milkman	150	160	310	66	71.28
3.	Badhei	Carpenter	24	31	55	11	16.62
4.	Gudia	Confectioner	18	16	34	7	1.12
5.	Pandara or (Pandari)	Vegetable-grower	3	6	9	1	0.35
6.	Teli	Oilman	15	12	27	6	4.91
7.	Bhandari	Barber	3	4	7	1	0.14
8.	Sunari	Goldsmith	17	22	39	5	4.24
9.	Dhoba	Washerman	3	1	4	1	—
10.	Bauri	Harijan	97	108	205	41	1.18
11.	Dandasi	Harijan	17	16	33	6	—
			348	376	724	146	100.0%

As the table shows the Gaudas are more populous and owners of a larger percentage of land than any other caste in the village. They are next to Brahmins and above all other castes in social rank. In the pre-Panchayati Raj days the Gaudas were not considered as a dominant caste. The real dominant caste was Badhei (Carpenter), numerically insignificant and economically much inferior to the Gaudas in aggregate. The dominance which was vested on the Badhei caste was due to the ascribed political chieftainship of a well-to-do family of this caste. He is the richest man in the village and the *de facto* political supremacy was held by his family in the line of primogeniture.

The traditional political order in the village has recently undergone considerable change. Universal adult franchise has given the most populous caste (Gauda) an element of power and political rights which were originally in the hands of the dominant large land-owning caste. The direction of influence of political change is the weakening on the one hand of the authority and position of the ascribed traditional leader and strengthening on the other hand of the position of the populous caste (Gauda), which has now, become the dominant caste in the village. An elite of this caste has been elected President of the Village Council and has thus eclipsed whatever authority and position the Badhei leader had in the village.

In the pre-Panchayati Raj days dominance derived from a superior power alone and number played no necessary part in the establishment of dominance. But the effect of universal adult suffrage and PanchayatiRaj has helped the most populous castes to consolidate their numerical strength for dominance, political authority and power.

Caste organization : A revivalistic tendency seems to emerge among certain castes, particularly among populous castes. This is with particular reference to reorganization of traditional internal social organization, i.e. caste panchayat. The motive force behind the growing sense of revivalism is to maintain the *status quo* in regard to caste unity and solidarity which was once in existence among them but later on became disorganized for one reason or another. The central idea is that each caste

through its new cohesion and esprit-de-corps hopes to be in a better position to exercise its right and fight for political power. For example, the Milkmen of Badapur are found to have reinforced their caste solidarity by resuscitating their caste organization, and the direct benefit of such restoration of caste solidarity is their ascendancy to power in the local democratic political organization. (Jaganath Gauda of Badapur has been elected to the position of Sarpanch and his success in the election is attributed to the numerical strength of his caste in his constituency.)

Universal adult franchise seems to have given an element of power to the numerically preponderant caste who, as a result, seem to be showing a great interest in revitalizing their moribund caste organization. One of the direct consequences of revivalism of caste organization in the villages is the emergence of horizontal cleavages which divide high-ranking dominant castes and populous low-ranking castes. Where competition for rank-position achieved through the processes of sanskritization and westernization was the special feature of village life, direct conflict between super- and subordinate groups for political and economic supremacy seems to be the important feature of the new order.

SASANPADAR

Location : Sasanpadar is situated at a distance of 10 miles to the south of Berhampur town, 5 miles on the Calcutta-Madras Highway from Berhampur and 5 miles on the approach road from Randha on the highway to the village. There is no bus service to the village. People of Sasanpadar avail of of bus at Randha only.

The cluster of villages within Sasanpadar Gram Panchayat constitutes three villages—Randha, headquarters of the panchayat, Chikarda and Sasanpadar. Randha is at one end of the approach road and Sasanpadar is at the other. Chikarada is between these two villages in the middle on the side of the approach road.

From Chikarada one can get a view of Sasanpadar. The pucca structure of Vishnu temple in the outskrits of the village

makes its appearance different from the other two villages. As one approaches nearer, one can hear the sound of an electric motor and on reaching the outskrit one sees a rice-huller using the motor run by the electricity, installed recently in the village. On the whole, Sasanpadar is physically and culturally different from the other two villages for its combination of two opposites—sacred, represented on one side by the Vishnu temple and secular, represented on the other by the rice mill and electricity.

TABLE 6

Caste composition of Sasanpadar
(Castes arranged in hierarchical order)

Caste	Population			Total Families	% of land possessed
	Male	Female	Total population		
1. Brahmin	97	82	179 (11.30)	27 (8.92)	39.12
2. Sunari	1	3	4 (0.25)	1 (0.33)	—
3. Mali	18	11	29 (1.85)	5 (1.65)	0.80
4. Gauda	4	6	10 (0.64)	2 (0.66)	—
5. Gudia	9	11	20 (1.26)	2 (0.66)	—
6. Badhei	24	28	52 (3.28)	8 (2.64)	1.70
7. Liari	22	25	47 (3.00)	8 (2.64)	—
8. Kumbhar	60	50	110 (6.95)	19 (6.27)	3.55
9. Barika	12	11	23 (1.45)	5 (1.65)	0.53
10. Kenta	88	88	176 (11.12)	32 (10.65)	4.18
11. Arua	437	419	856 (54.10)	179 (59.06)	50.12
12. Dhoba	5	6	11 (0.70)	3 (0.99)	—
13. Bauri	21	17	38(2·40)	6(1.98)	—
14. Dandasi	16	11	27 (1.70)	6 (1.98)	—
	814	768	1582	303	

Caste and population :   Sasanpadar has a population of 1582 (814 males and 768 females) belonging to 14 different castes. The ranking of each caste and population is given in the above table.

Brahmin was decisively the dominant caste in the village. Their dominance derived from their political power, in that one of this caste was the traditional headman of the village. Political power of this man was coupled with economic power represented in his largest land-ownership. Besides, in caste-ranking Brahmin occupies the highest social position.

The Brahmins are not numerically preponderant in the village. They are next to the Aruas who preponderate over all other castes inhabiting the village. In the traditional village social system, number was not considered as a necessary condition for dominance. What was most important was political power, high caste-ranking and economic power, which together brought about dominance.

In fact, the Aruas, who are considered to be one of the subordinate castes, possess more land (50.12) than the Brahmins (39.12), if each of these groups is considered in totality. But individually considered, the headman of the Brahmin caste and a few agnates of his lineage are big landlords having about 1/3 of the land of the village under their possession.

The Brahmin headman was not only the chief in the political field, he was also president of economic and religious institutions. He occupied the presidentship of the co-operative society of betel-leaf growers in the village and was the president of the regional assembly of his caste. Thus the Brahmin headman was the arbitrator, mediator and councillor in all matters, social, political and economic. He was the *de facto* leader of the village. Every matter of the village was settled by consensual procedure in which decisions were arrived at by unanimity. Of course, the autocratic headman had the major voice, which was responded to favourably by all of the village. He was feared for his economic power and respected for his high ritual p osition.

Caste after Panchayati Raj :   When Panchayati Raj was introduced in 1959, the leaders of the village had no idea about

the status and role, powers and privileges of its office-bearers. Therefore they were not interested in it. But when they found in subsequent years that the panchayat is a powerful political organization and its office-bearers enjoy authority and privileges which are tempting, they tried to occupy positions in the panchayat. Membership of the statutory village councils is not by birth or by unanimity as was the case in traditional chieftainship or other leadership-positions in the village. Membership in the democratic decentralized bodies is decided by majority voting which was not essential in the traditional order.

In pre-Independence times, when power was centralized in the hands of a few favoured persons of economic power and of houses of nobility and rank, the order of rule was that 'might is right'. But this order changed in the post-Independence period. Universal adult franchise gave an element of power to the more populous communities who were at one time subordinate to the minority super-ordinate community. 'Majority is right' became the order of the day.

Universal adult suffrage which replaced the consensual procedure or autocratic rule for making public decisions is only one aspect of the social change which has gained momentum after Independence. The other major aspect is the economic diversification resulting from increased mobility and employment opportunities. Control over resources was, in earlier times, centralized and the village was more or less a closed society. With the development of communication facilities, the countryside was opened up and with the dispersal of control over resources the single centres of power became multiple. All these changes tended to bring communal harmony to an end and give rise to competing centres of power and factional conflicts in the villages.

This is exactly what has happened in Sasanpadar. As has been pointed out earlier Brahmins in this village were dominant and one of the Brahmin families was the head of the village, president of the co-operative society of the betel-leaf growers and was the president of the elected village council.

The Aruas, who were numerically preponderant, were politically, economically and socially a subordinate caste.

One of the members of this caste, by dint of labour, improved his economic condition. He installed a rice mill after electricity was available in the village and earned sufficient money which he invested in the purchase of good cultivable land. With the increased economic power he became a new leader. Where leadership was at one time concentrated in the hands of a Brahmin family, it was dispersed with the emergence of a new leader. Leadership was dichotomized as land-holding became more or less equitably distributed between the leaders. Partition of property among co-sharers of the Brahmin family also contributed to the dispersal and equitable distribution of property.

The progressive Arua leader tried to subvert the centralized authority of the Brahmin leader. His first attempt in this direction was to take hold of the presidentship of the betel-leaf co-operative society, the majority of members of which belonged to his caste. He applied the rule that the majority is right and was chosen as the president of the society. All his caste people unanimously supported his case. Number was, for the first time, applied for obtaining political and economic rewards.

This alteration in the political organization of the village gave rise to factional conflict between the two leaders, a large majority following the traditional Brahmin leader and another group following the emerging Arua leader. The castemen and his friends rallied round the Arua leader who was the core of his faction, while the Brahmin leader formed the rival core of his castemen and other followers belonging to his faction. Factional conflict constitutes now the dominant mode of political organization in the village.

It would be interesting to examine whether people of two different social strata compete with one another when one is high and one low even in the economic sphere. Bailey has said that the element of competition is absent in the caste system and there is mutual relationship in the form of patron-client

relationship or other forms of relationship which run up and down the caste system. It is this economic and ritual interdependence that does not allow competition between the castes. If any conflict or competition arises ever in a peasant village, it is either within the dominant caste or between high and low social groups, not between different social strata.

In Bisipara, a highland village in Phulbani district, Orissa, which Bailey studied, he observed that conflict was originally existing within the dominant Warrior caste. Nicholas has described this type of conflict as 'segmentary lineage conflict' which operates in a vertical direction. But the new economic opportunities, legislative favours, and increasing population have recently created conditions for Baud outcastes to act as a corporate political unit and now the cleavage in the village is between the low outcaste and high Warrior caste. The dominant Warrior caste earlier provided a field for political competition, but in recent times the cleavages across which the conflict passes are along the horizontal direction between the low outcaste and high Warrior caste. Not that the two social strata have come into conflict with one another. But of the two social groups, the low group strives to grab powers and privileges granted to it by the Constitution and the high group, unwilling to loosen its grip over the powers and privileges which it considers its birthright, resists it.

Something different from what is observed in Bisipara has happened in Sasanpadar. First there was no cleavage worth mentioning within the Brahmin community. Whatever sporadic conflict was present was at the time of partition, but as matters were settled conflict subsided. Conflict had no function as a leeway for any political reward, because the headmanship was customarily handed down in the line of primogeniture and the tax-collecting authority was elsewhere and there was no other power in a Rayatwari village worth competing for.

Besides, the dominant personality of the Brahmin headman who was pious and noble did not encourage any kind of segmentary lineage conflict within the Brahmin community.

Conclusion

The discussion of six villages in the preceding pages has shown that some of them had some factions. It has been shown that factionalism occurred when some changes took place in the villages. These changes are many, like competition over economic resources, where members fight with one another to snatch away as much as possible ; competition for political power, which has grown due to adult franchise and Panchayati Raj. In our study of six villages, faction has emerged in three villages—Hariharapura in Mysore, and Badapur and Sasanpadar in Orissa—due to the introduction of adult franchise and Panchayati Raj. There was no faction in the other three villages. The study of the three villages having factions reveals that Hariharapura in Mysore had factions among Vokkaliga, where the cleavage was vertical. The two Orissan villages had factions and the nature of cleavage was horizontal. Whatever the nature of cleavages, they arose for political power, and were sharpened by franchise. Similar illustrations from other places can be given here. For, instance, in Ratnagiri of Andhra Pradesh, we can see the cleavages among the Velama caste, due to political activity in the elections (Rangarao). Similarly, among the Rajputs of Ramkheri in Central India, factions were due to political activity, which started from 1946 and gained impetus after the introduction of statutory panchayats (Mayer). These factions were among members of the same dominant caste like Vokkaligas in Mysore, Velama in Andhra Pradesh and Rajputs in Central India, and are vertical cleavages.

In contrast to vertical cleavages, political activity has given rise to horizontal cleavages in Badapur and Sasanpadar in Orissa. Castes which were dominant politically and economically, like the Brahmins and Gaudas, are being challenged by weaker and more numerous castes like Arua and Bauri, who are consolidating their numerical strength due to franchise. Similarly, the Bagdi caste, which is numerically dominant in Ranjana in West Bengal, has become a political rival to the erstwhile dominant Sadgope caste (Chattopadhyay).

Our study and the studies of others reveal that adult franchise has brought cleavages, both horizontal and vertical, in villages. But we cannot attribute factions only to political activity, which implies that they are of recent origin. Factions, as already pointed out, are a part of social structure. And they were prevalent even before adult franchise, though the six villages we have studied do not show any such evidence. Factions are due to several causes. New economic opportunities give rise to competition and are followed by factions, because everyone wants to exploit the limited resources of the village. For instance, in Haripura (P. E. O.) of Mysore, the introduction of canal irrigation increased the number of factions from two to six. 'Soon after the coming of canal irrigation, some lands became marshy and malaria became a problem. The government acquired land for shifting the habitation area of the village and auctioned house plots to the villagers. This issue of land acquisition and shift to the new site caused a serious quarrel which involved the entire village' (p. 89). Similarly, economic expansion due to canal irrigation caused imbalance between the economic, political and ritual status of individual households, which created cleavage between 'progressive' and 'conservative' factions. These factions based on kinship and mobility, get translated into political mobility (Epstein). In both the cases the faction was among dominant Vokkaligas and the cleavage was vertical. So also was the case in Sasanpadar in Orissa. Similar economic opportunity can also bring about conflict between the haves and the havenots, as can be seen between the dominant Rajputs and poor Marathas of Goan Maharashtra (Orenstein).

Thus, while political activity and new economic opportunity bring factions, having horizontal and vertical cleavages, they are not the only decisive factors. Studies conducted in different parts of the country reveal that the transition from a feudal system has invariably given rise to factions between rich and poor. For instance, in Madras the backward caste movement became vigorous and the Harijans formed a rival group and challeged the supremacy of the Brahmins who enjoyed the feudal benefits (Kathleen Gough). Legislative

9

reforms about landholding also play an important role in creating cleavages between the landholding and landless classes (Beteille). In a country with so much diversity, it is not easy to relate factions to any particular factors. Factions emerge out of several forces like population pressure, economic mobility, increased education and adult franchise, and the breaking down of joint families, for instance, among Jats (Lewis). Factions which emerge out of economic mobility and administrative changes always give rise to fission among different castes, which align themselves with the group akin to them. For instance, because of these changes in Bisipara in Orissa, factions started among dominant Baud Warriors who were a corporate political unit. Later it extended to other castes (Bailey).

The review of these studies shows that factions as a part of social structure emerge due to several factors, economic, political and legislative. From a perusal of several studies and our own study the following observations can be made.

Where the dominant caste is more populous, the cleavages are vertical, among members of the same caste and same lineage ; where the dominant caste is not numerically preponderant (below 40%), the cleavages are likely to be horizontal, where faction cuts across caste. Factions perpetuate in vertical cleavages within the dominant caste, for instance, among Vokkaligas is Haripura, Dalena and Wangala in Mysore, among Velamas in Andhra Pradesh and Jats in North India. The few studies referred to above were conducted mostly during the pre-Panchayati Raj period and reflect some of the above observations. But the three villages, out of six studies by us, show that political activity has sharpened factions. If more studies are conducted in different parts of the country we may find the exact nature of factions in the village.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bailey, F. G.   1958 : *Caste and the Economic Frontier*, Bombay, Oxford University Press.

Beals, Alan R.   1962 : *Gopalpur : A South Indian Village*, New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Beteille, Andre   1965 : *Caste, Class and Power*, Bombay,
                                 Oxford University Press.

Chattopadhyay, Gouranga   1964 : *Ranjana : A Village in West Bengal*,
                                 Calcutta : Bookland Private Limited.

Coser, Lewis   1967 : 'The Functions of Conflict'. In N. J.
                                 Demerath-III and Richard A. Peterson
                                 (Eds.), *Systems, Change and Conflict*.
                                 New York ; Free Press.

Epstein, T. Scarlett   1962 : *Economic   development and   social
                                 change   in   South   India*, Bombay :
                                 Oxford University Press.

Firth, Raymond   1952 : *Elements   of   Social   Organisation*,
                                 London : Watts.

Gough, E. Kathleen   1955 : 'The Social structure of a   Tanjore
                                 Village'. In McKim Marriott (Ed)
                                 Village India, Bombay : Asia Publi-
                                 shing House.

Govt. of India   1955 : Planning Commission, P. E. O.,
                                 *Leadership and groups in a South
                                 Indian Village*, Delhi : Manager of
                                 Publications.

Lewis, Oscar   1958 : *Village   life   in   Northern   India*,
                                 Urbana : University of Illinois Press.

Mayer, Adrian C.   1960 : *Caste and Kinship in Central India :
                                 A Village and its region*. London :
                                 Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Nicholas, Ralph W.   1966 : 'Segmentary Factional Political Sys-
                                 tems'. In Mare J. Swartz, Victor W.
                                 Turner and Arthur Tuden (Eds.)
                                 Political   Anthropology.   Chicago :
                                 Abdin Publishing Co.

Orenstein, Henry   1965 : *GAON : Conflict and Cohesion in an
                                 Village*. Princeton, N. J. ; Princeton
                                 University Press.

Pye, L. W.   1966 : 'The nature of transitional   politics'.
                                 In Jason L. Finkle and Richard W.
                                 Gable (Eds.), *Political Development
                                 and Social Change*, New York, Wiley.

Rangarao, K.   1965 : 'Leadership in a community develop-
                                 ment   village'.   *Economic   Weekly*,
                                 17 : 1375-79.

Srinivas, M. N.   1955 : 'The social syssem of a Mysore
                                 village'. In McKim Marriott (Ed.).
                                 Village India, Bombay : Asia Publi-
                                 shing House.

GROUPS AND PROCESSES OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN NORTH INDIAN GOPALPUR

R. S. KHARE

Introduction

THIS paper discusses the changing patterns of political behaviour in a North Indian village. It supplements the earlier studies (Kare 1962 a, b ; 1964), and focuses attention on the 1960-1965 period. In order to place certain recent developments—the continuities and discontinuities of social change—in a proper perspective, the main discussion is prefaced by a summary statement about the conditions that existed between 1935 and 1959. For this study the diachronic perspective helps present the central theme of this paper : that the political organization of an Indian village is getting increasingly more differentiated from within to 'open' itself for the regional and national requirements of democratic politics.

Historically, it is a change prompted and promoted by a series of local and national events over the last thirty years. Sociologically, it is a shift of emphasis from the political groups that were primarily 'closed' (i.e., the ascriptive criteria controlled political interactions), homogeneous, microlevel, and with static resources to those that are increasingly more 'open' (i.e., they offer greater choice of affiliation and inter-action), heterogeneous, interlinked (to the wider political network), and with dynamic resources. Politically, it means that now there are no 'given' leaders and followers, no 'automatic' member of any ruling or ruled group, and no 'naturally' unanimous decisions. Opposition dissent, strategy,

The author is Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, The University of Wisconsin – Green Bay, His address is Manitowoc Country Campus, 705 Viebahn Street, Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54220 U.S.

and augment of political resource are constantly characteristic of the 'new' politics.

In the following discussion, therefore, we will seek to identify and understand those groups and processes that are found responsible for bringing about such a change. How are such processes—for example, decompression and deparo-chialization of political groups—operating on the political arena in and around the village under study ? We will investigate what different organizational forms (e.g. factions, power and pressure groups, and political parties and regional cliques) are existent and how are they interrelated among themselves, and to those outside, as effective communicaton structures of what is called here the 'power management system'. The concept of faction will be examined in relation to, and as a part of, this wider political system.   All along, through suitable case material, we will attempt to find out how and why (or what for) such changes are occurring at the village level, especially as in Gopalpur.

Gopalpur, the primary source of the data for this study[1], is a medium-sized (650), multi-caste (16), North Indian village, situated 23 miles due east of Lucknow, the capital city of Uttar Pradesh. (It is constituted of three hamlets : Gopalpur, Thakurpur and Rampur.) Regional information is provided by the neighbouring villages of Mohammadpur, Rahmatnagar, Salimpur, and the city of Sultanpur. The diachronic account (See also Khare 1962 a, b) is based on the data obtained with the help of the older informants, the *vāzibul-arz,* and the regional political and party leaders.

The following account begins with a brief summary of the relevant aspects of the 1935-47 political situation, continues to describe comparatively the 1959-60 pattern, and finally deals in detail with the 1962-65 power management situations. The discussion of the influence of party politics takes us to an assessment of the processual changes in terms of political structures found in Gopalpur.

Factional Village Politics

(a) **Pre-Independence Period (1935-1947) :   The Zemindary Period**

During the early thirties, Gopalpur was divided into the two *pattis* (stretches of land) running north to south and belonging to two related Kayastha zemindars, one holding the north end and the other the south.   The population of the village (then about 500) was divided into two pyramidal groups at the tops of which sat the two zemindars, jealous and quarreling between themselves   The pyramid was composed of several caste groups, but at the base were those who either had annoyed their landlord or had been caught flirting with the group of the other zemindar.   Hierarchy and insulations of the caste system were not infringed upon frequently.   The man with land was the zemindar, and he was considered powerful   He was socially unsurmountable.   The most common mode of social control was to afflict the non-conformist tenants with economic sanctions over land, wages, or agricultural produce.   Political resources concentrated in the hands of these zemindars.   Dissent meant revolt, which, in turn, led to tyranny.   In this connexion the tyrannical zemindar of the north is remembered even today.   Whatever factional 'fights' were staged at that time, they were led and decided either by the zemindars themselves or by some of their influential kin.   There was no organized lower caste influence.

During this period, the 'choice' of objectives, the nature of individual activities (with regard to the objectives), and the dynamics of interaction and affiliation (and thus the political arena itself) were all limited.   Intercaste contacts and occupational structure were highly ascriptive and they curtailed any effort to seek dynamic affiliations, change of leadership, or diversification of motives.   The economic resources were static, limited, and unevenly distributed along the bases of ascriptive hierarchy.

(b) **Post-Independence Period (1958-60) : Reorganization of leadership**

In 1958 when the village of Gopalpur was being studied intensively by me, it had come a long way from the 1935 situation.   The zemindary system was abolished, meaning

redistribution of land among the landless, mostly lower-caste people. Zemindars were replaced by the elected panchayats. After the formation of the Indian Republic, the regular adult franchise on an all-India basis was introduced, and the village had been exposed to the general elections of 1952 and 1957 ; and through them the villagers had known of the 'new' system of gaining political power and prestige under which each and every individual, irrespective of his social rank, counted. Village panchayats and the regional panchayat *adalats* further brought home the concepts of individual votes, vote-winning propaganda and the resultant 'chosen' leadership. The avowed Congress policy of establishing a 'casteless' society was significant for the lower caste people of the village who were numerically dominant and had so far remained maltreated.

As a result of all these changes, the two power pyramids described for the thirties were almost completely reorganized by 1960. Actually, the northern pyramid led by the northern Kayastha zemindar (KAN) collapsed completely due to the static and unadaptive leadership provided by its erstwhile zemindar. The southern counterpart fared better, though its zemindar leader (KAS) had to join hands with a powerful Kurmi group (KUI) and other smaller multicaste cliques, for example, the Pasi *bhakta* (PS)—Pasi *shakta* (PS)—Brahmin (B)—Kumhar (K)—group, and the Mallah (M)—Mali (ma)—Dhobi (D)—Chamar (C) group. Being Arya-samajist and educated in the University he could disown, at least partly, the traditional rules of caste distance in order to win the good will of those whom he had mercilessly governed in the preceding decade. This Kurmi-Kayastha (KUI-KAS) alliance had its basis in economic resources. The lands of its leaders were side by side. Their mango-groves were adjacent, and they had common irrigational sources and drainage systems They had survived consolidation of land-holding operations of the Government. They held influential positions in the panchayat.

Immediately after the Zemindary Abolition, the lower caste people of Gopalpur organized their caste groups *against* the

ex-zemindars. The Kurmis of the North and certain Pasi families of the South actively participated. However, it was a temporary sequel to the zemindar's tyrannies. Yet, from the point of view of studying the formation of new leadership, this 'exercise' of the lower caste people was most important. It had a salutary effect on the ex-zemindars ; it was indicative of the 'new' times. Some individuals, so far insignificant in the eyes of the villagers, began to emerge as 'men of power'. In the interest of their followers, these leaders took up the task of solving conflicts through common and unified action. They organized around and across ascriptive groups. Even in this early stage, some people showed up as better judges in regard to the decisions about action (and emerged as 'policy makers') and some others as better organizers. What I was observing in 1958 in Gopalpur was of course the result of those decompression processes that intensified and continued all along the decade of 1947-57. In 1962, the village again found itself in the fanfare of the general election ; this time it was neither politically uneducated nor uninitiated. It confronted 'party politics' and its campaigns at its doorstep.

Entering Extra-village Party Politics (1962)

The term 'party-politics', as used here, refers to those political activities, interactions and ideologies which find expression in different political parties, especially during the general elections, and which maintain a regular political organization, expressing opinions on public issues and getting place among representative bodies. Such parties are formally recognized by the Election Commission of the Government of India. 'Party in this sense of the "party-in-the-electorate" is an amorphous group, yet it has social reality' (Key 1964 : 164). Party politics, as in any other formal and complex organization, demands extensive, rather than face-to-face, activities. The interaction is diffused, dispersed, and impersonal, motivated and channelized by political exigencies but rooted in an abstract body of ideology. There is greater unpredictability between the expected and the actual effect of a political action. Since the arena is so wide and the resources so diverse and

dispersed, political acumen remains the only guide for assessing and interpreting a constituency. Experience is found as a great educator.

Many such factors came to the attention of Gopalpur political elites when they had occasions to visit their party leaders' camps in Gosainganj, Haidergarh, and even in the town of Sultanpur.

In the beginning of 1962, ten important Gopalpur leaders of five different castes had initiated a month-long contact with 27 'party' workers of the region. By the end of 1962, when the village was revisited the village leaders showed more sensitization towards party politics, while the general configuration of different factional groups remained largely unaltered. Two significant events were held to be responsible for such a change : the general elections of 1962, and the Chinese aggression of October 1962 (Khare 1964). As will be clear from the account given below, the intensive political contacts of the Gopalpur leadership, during the 1962 general elections probably set the stage for the political responses that attended the aggression crisis. The single most important shift noted in 1962 was towards an ever-increasing readiness to establish extra-village, extra-caste, and indirect political relationships with the regional politicians. I shall only briefly describe how it came about.

This trend was initiated through the 'good offices' of the leaders of another village (Rahmatnagar), who wielded power in the *Panchayat Adalat* of the area and who were more experienced in the regional politics. (During 1960, however, as I reported in 1962, Gopalpur leaders were not pleased with Rahmatnagar. Its politicians had reportedly discriminated them in the face of Mohammadpur, a neighbouring village, in seating their members to the *adalat*. In the intervening time, however, they came together again because of their common aspirations to establish contacts with other 'higher level' politicians, and to campaign for the same candidates for the provincial assembly.)

Rahmatnagar leaders were approached in October, 1961, through the Kurmi leader R and a Barahi leader S of the

10

Gopalpur factions.   Once the Rahmatnagar leaders introduced R and S to the political party workers campaigning on behalf of a candidate, the Gopalpur leaders acted on their own, disregarding the importance of Rahmatnagar politicians.   As a result, the leaders of these two villages once again fell out. During the same period, R and S fell out among themselves because R, representing the powerful southern faction of the hamlet of Gopalpur, and S, representing another faction of another constituent hamlet of Thakurpur, differed on how to handle their respective caste loyalties.   R belonged to a multicaste faction of Kayastha (ka)—Kurmi (ku)—Pasi (PB and PS)—Brahmin (B), and S belonged to the one predo- minantly Barahi (Ba)—Kahar (Ka)—Kurmi group of Thakur- pur, a hamlet of Gopalpur.   Precisely, the faction of S disliked the idea of including and giving prominence to a handful of higher caste people (Brahmin and Kayastha) in Gopalpur politics.   R, on the other hand, thought of it as the only pragmatic way to exploit their modern education and political know-how for entering into 'a wider arena of political power'. Kayasthas, as will be noted in the following discussion, looked at this situation in their own way.   They found a subtle way to exert their influence and to manœuvre the erstwhile powerful lower caste leadership in favour of their own aims. The Kayasthas and the Brahmins, therefore, actually came closer than ever before for increasing their actual influence potential.

  However, more   important was the way these bickerings were conceived and handled by the leaders.   The Rahmatnagar break-off was done, according to the leader R, 'to gain   direct and undivided attention of the party politicians and their workers, and to exploit the crucial election work for our own political ambitious.'   Along with some fifteen selected young men of his faction, R made direct contacts with the party workers of the region and after two months (January 1962) of apprenticeship under the Rahmatnagar leaders, which was thought to be a 'sufficient period to get acquainted with some party workers and their ways,' he broke off.   However, the Kayastha leader (KAS) of R's faction was against such a hasty

step, but he was not heeded for the general distrust against him as an ex-zemindar.   The Rahmatnagar leaders were   naturally not happy over this sudden, though not unexpected, break-off ; but they   remained   silent 'for their own   tactical reasons'. When asked, one Rahmatnagar leader said, 'There was nothing better to do for several reasons'.   His argument was that if they quarreled among themselves (i.e., the leaders of Gopalpur and Rahmatnagar), the party workers would discredit both of them as immature and unfit for higher politics as they kept their affiliations changing so frequently.   Moreover, such an antagonism could affect the regional political strategy of the party with which the Rahmatnagar politicians had firmly affiliated themselves ; and   finally they had recommended Gopalpur leaders at their own initiative.

As a consequence, the split was incomplete and the leaders of Gopalpur and Rahmatnagar *separately* launched an inten- sive election campaign for the *same* political candidate.   It was unlike the local factional politics, under which either one was united or disunited with a particular person or a group.

During the campaign Gopalpur leaders became . involved in a complex range of organizational and political activities for the first time.

R recollected them intelligently and in some detail :

> 'We organized big processions, sometimes of 1000
> persons, and visited villages far and   near.   Our
> campaign was spread over some   twenty   villages,
> located within a radius of seven to ten miles from
> Gopalpur. We started at daybreak for our political
> headquarters near Gosainganj and had our briefing
> then.   As I am uneducated and illiterate, I kept a
> bunch of educated youths with me.   They all belonged
> to our faction and were generally of the Kurmi, the
> Kayastha, and the Pasi caste groups.   They helped me
> in understanding the written word—the pamphlets, the
> posters, the slogans, etc.   But I held the ground when
> it came to speaking to counteract the propaganda of
> other party groups.   We, however, had to talk of our
> successes and reverses in terms of the ideas that my

party workers told me. As the campaign became intensive, it was essentially the shouting of slogans and counter-slogans, parading streets and fields with colourful banners in our hands and party-badges on our caps, or on arms, or on chest. The slogans mostly came from the party office in Lucknow ; sometimes we coined our own. *Prajatantra* (democracy) and *Samajvad* (socialism) were the popular phrases, but largely foreign to us. However, my impression was that more work could be done by meeting and talking to the members of our own caste in different villages or to those who were our acquaintances. As the Kurmi and the Ahir dominate here, we were more confident in our efforts—a point also emphasized during our meetings in Gosainganj. Sometimes to satisfy the leaders, we had to exaggerate our successes, or had to assure them of our eventual success. Originally suspicious, the members of the other factions of Gopalpur also began to participate at a later stage.'

The above 'recollection' of a political elite of Gopalpur is a good indicator of local naivete as well as of the acquisition of a political conception.

In March 1962, I counted some twenty leaders who had directly participated in the campaign. They belonged to ten out of sixteen different caste groups that Gopalpur had. The six caste groups that did not participate directly were numerically small, and were following the lead given by the first group. Of ten leaders who actively participated, only seven had any schooling. One was a university graduate who was residing temporarily with his parents, as he was then unemployed. KAS, the old Kayastha leader of the southern faction, was a close consultant, although he preferred to remain in the background.

These leaders were followed by thirty young men of twelve caste groups. They regularly participated in the campaign and learned what they called the strategies (*chalen*) of the powerful. Later on, when the elections were over, these youths created an active group of 'power-seekers' (for an

enunciation of the concept, see Dahl 1963 : 63—64) within Gopalpur. They saw for the first time a 'different order of politics,' involving stabler political relations around long-term aims. Prestige and diverse effectivity of political influence attracted them, although its complexity and slow gains discouraged them. The exuberant village leadership, however, helped them not only from dropping out of the political arena, but in even spreading the 'contagion' to other ambitious youths of the village.

Against this background must be judged the response that the villagers[8] of Gopalpur had towards the Chinese aggression of October 1962. First of all, crisis was politicized around the conceptions of the political parties. The ruling Congress party was considered as inefficient. Secondly, the villages' reaction (see Khare 1964) was more 'open' to and inter-connected with the wider levels of democratic politics. Initially the aggression created the sentiment of national unity ; after the military phase, the same event was parochialized and politicized around party politics. The village politicians and their versions of the regional leaders' 'calls' accelerated the on-going process of deparochialization of the local political arena. Actually, Gopalpur's response lends empirical support to a hypothesis put forward by certain group dynamicists : 'high influencers have more influence during periods of crisis than during periods of noncrisis' (Hamblin 1962).

During the crisis itself, the village leaders acted as 'task leaders' and 'socio-emotional leaders' (see Bales 1952). Such a functional division of leadership during the crisis helped in forging social solidarity and surfacing the conception of nationalism. As a result, all internal factional quibbles receded into the background, and the task leaders, who would normally be high on both substantive and procedural influence, undertook the task of comprehending and learning the politics of a nation with the help of their extra-village political contacts.

Politicization and Stabilization of Political Groups (1963-65)

As the political heat generated over the Chinese aggression gradually subsided, and the political parties thought in terms

of a coming *Zila parished* or a *panchayat* (regional and local), or a bye-election, Gopalpur's politicians settled down to the demands of the local disputes. But it was with a difference. The leaders kept up a flair for exploring the regional politics. However, this 'higher politics' (a popular word with the Gopalpur leaders) and its allurements demanded from the village leaders that they acquire added organizational stability within the village, that they increase their following, and that they introduce long-range aims for political action.

In May 1963, when the factions were again studied, they still showed the cleavage between the Kurmis and the Kayasthas, the Kurmis and the Pasis, the Kayasthas and the Kumhars, and the Kumhar-Pasi-Brahmin clique and the Kurmis and the Ahirs. However, we must hasten to add that the reasons of these cleavages were not entirely the local disputes. Rather, they also conspicuously involved the idea of competition to acquire favours of, or to deal directly with extra-village political leaders, and to enlarge and consolidate one's following. This was, at least partially, acquired by emphasizing the enlarged sphere of (a) the reward power and (b) the referent power (for concepts, see French and Rowen 1962 : 612ff) of the political administrative leadership. In general terms, these mean (a) the promise or ability of leaders to reward, and (b) the ability of the participants to conform to or identify themselves with the group aspirations. Each of these reinforces the other and they form valid basis of any kind of political power. Accordingly, the Gopalpur leaders also promised rewards. Some of these actually rewarded those who helped them in keeping up factional unity. For example, they helped several members in getting their children admitted to city schools, and also in having patients hospitalized in Gosainganj or in Lucknow. Such acts, and more promises for future, attracted some of the ambiguous to join their camps. Their factional followers had thus different kinds of motives than only a temporary attraction for getting a conflict resolved.

Between 1960-63, there had been three noticeable changes in the organization of factions : (a) in affiliations of the

Kayastha and the Brahmin (the only representatives of high caste groups in the village), (b) in their independent contacts with external political sources, and (c) in reorganization of untouchable caste groups like the Chamar and the Dom. KAS group still maintained close contacts with all those with which it had contacts in 1960. But it now received more intensive support from the other smaller Kayastha groupings, including KAN, the long-standing rival ex-zemindar group of the north. The Kayasthas now lent their support only to the main KUI group. It had also bilateral support from the Brahmins, though not from the Pasis and the Kumhars. The latter had now only weak support of clientele, and had receded into the background (though it was this group which built the first masonry well in 1961 after a lapse of three decades). The Ahirs had strengthened as a caste group, and as active supporters of the Kurmis—probably as a sequel to the Kayastha (high caste) strategy.

Extra-village caste support was still available to the Kurmi, and lately also to the Ahirs, but not to the Pasis (though the Lucknow district has a preponderance of the Pasis as well). However, extra-village political affiliations (which normally means greater interaction with party leaders and participation in their political activities) were handled only by the leaders of KUI and KAS groups. Occasionally, they might distrust each other, but mostly they acted united.

Intensification of the above kind of intercaste alliances for achieving the diversified (politically achievable) goals set the stage for proliferating pressure-groups (for enunciation of the concept, see Key 1964). The emergence of these groups is mainly owing to the swollen rank of power-seekers (that is those who either were within the sight of getting power or were thinking of benefiting from their particular social position), which, in turn, is chiefly because of the enhanced instrumental value of the politics to them. Each power-seeker in these groups has some political resources to rely on, and has some valid basis to exercise pressure on those who are actually powerful. Power-seekers are active, ambitious 'go-betweens'. They communicate with effect on both the sides of hierarchy,

namely, the leaders and the groups to which they belong or owe allegiance to. They help vindicate those grievances which are bypassed by the leaders ; in turn, as power-seekers themselves, they help mould group opinions on certain issues so as to appease the leadership. These functions enhance their potential power, although their actual power is kept in balance insofar as they keep in check the power of their actual leaders.

Though the pressure-groups are organzied by the power-seekers, they give an additional, dynamic 'tool' to the leadership through which to channelize and resolve the factional conflicts. These pressure-groups take the steam off the disputes which could ordinarily dislocate the major power-groupings of the village.

Let me give an example. During the summer of 1965, the groups of the Kurmi, the Brahmin, and the Pasi as against that of the Kurmi and the Ahir fought over a grove of mangoes. The dispute was about the distribution of the two types of mangoes, one being costlier and tastier than the other type. One night certain Ahir youths climbed the trees and stole the costlier variety. The issue was hotly discussed in the factions of the village next day. It aroused strong feelings of the Brahmins and the Pasis, who took the matter to KAS. The Kurmis of this faction, however, preferred to remain silent, and this act was soon taken as an indication of their caste loyalties. The latter sentiment, argued KAS, if allowed to develop, could disrupt the multicaste power groupings of the Kayasthas and the Kurmis, surviving for the last seven years. Conscious of the 'unauthorized' stealing done by the Ahirs of their faction, the Kurmis were embarassed, especially those who were close to KUI. On the other hand, the Brahmins were pressing KAS either to bring this issue with KUI directly, or to withdraw his indirect support to the Ahir youths who were among the power-seekers of his group through the 'good offices' of KUI. The Ahirs came to know of the move and tried to ascertain the attitude of KUI through KU II, who were their closest relatives in the village. KUI was reported as displeased over the stealing of the mangoes. He wanted that the Ahir power-seekers of

his camp should persuade those who stole the mangoes to divide them equally between the two factions in the presence of KAS and the Brahmins. However, the stolen mangoes were not brought forth and tension mounted. As a sequel, two pressure-groups of PB and B and PB and PS emerged. They organized because of their own grievances and gains. For example, the Brahmins came forward because they were 'long aggrieved by the insolent behaviour of the Ahirs' (for another earlier example, see Khare 1962). Similarly, PB as close political associates of B also volunteered but they became divided in their opinion—one sub-group favoured pushing the matter, as the Brahmins wanted ; the other rallied around KAS and were against too much pressure on KUI on the 'petty' issue.

On the other side of the same faction, the Ahir power-seekers rallied around KUI, *underplaying* their caste and kinship bonds to those Ahirs who conspired to commit the stealing.

In order to resolve the situation, these power-seekers rallied more support among the members of their own caste group in order to put pressure on those who had committed the theft to at least go to KUI (who was their well-wisher) and privately accept the responsibility for the act. But again the Ahirs did not relent, because this would lower their prestige in the eyes of other groups as PB and PS and B. They reasoned, 'after all our Ahir bretheren are power-hungry and want to oblige KUI-KAS-B group by asking us to stoop before those who look down upon us'. At this stage, KUI with Ah I formed another pressure-group (stablilizer) to bring home the worthlessness of the 'wisdom' of making mango-theft a point of prestige primarily between the Ahir and Brahmin groups. The initiative for this group was provided by KUI, and along with it came a threat of not serving the social or political needs of Ah II, who were silently supporting the 'thieves'. This weakened the Ah II group significantly. For example, those individuals who were asking through KUI-dominated *panchayat* for a development subsidy for a well or a drain in their neighbourhood, and

11

those needing recommendation from KAS to see a city physician in Lucknow dropped out. Moreover, the older age-group did not want to offend those who had been helpful in the past. Although, initially different, it then came to be looked upon as a dispute of the youth groups. All of these pressures and counter-pressures had greatly weakened the Ah II group, and finally on the fourth day of the stealing, it was decided that some elders of Ah II should go to KAS's *chaupal* and return a portion of the stolen mangoes (more as a token of amity than anything else). The matter thus came to an end ; though behind the scene, Brahmins were 'jubilant' over defeating the designs of the Ahir, and the Ahir youths were proud of practically 'getting away' with the theft—a reminder of their political supremacy in village affairs.

The above conflict, though insignificant in terms of the material involved, is analytically important. It tells us about (a) the complex and indirect channels for the expression of factional power, (b) the caste-inspired, but interest-oriented motivational structure of the village political power, and (c) the rapid and effective communication along and across the traditional caste, kin and age structures. Within the major constellations of power, small groups exerting pressure on the leaders as well as on the common factional members, were formed to emerge, organize, and reorganize in terms of the task they were temporarily engaged in. It was done until they had 'taken off the steam of the issue' by their small-scale but intensive and effective communication network.

Factions and the Power Management System

Let us now see how the factions and the power-seekers and their pressure-groups compare in some of their organizational properties. Factional leadership and its power is legitimized largely in terms of the items in dispute and is expressed as such. Factional leaders may show greater bases of acquiring and exercising social power at one moment, but may lose much of it as soon as either a particular dispute is resolved or mishandled. Even the formal leaders as factional

leaders may exhibit this characteristic. Interaction within and between factions is task-oriented, limited in terms of the immediate conflict or its antecedents. Retaining, accumulation, and stabilizing power is *not* much of a pre-occupation of the factional leadership. The expression of power is incidental to the main aim of resolving community disputes. The main reason for such a state seems to stem from the interactional properties of the faction as a social group ; it is highly unstable as its motivations and activities are kept in constant flux, keeping individual and group interactions equally unstable.

However, the power-seekers, as has been exemplified above, organize, disband and reorganize pressure-groups in terms of (1) their own interest, (2) their leaders' interest, and (3) their group's interest (reaching even up to the village and regional level). By virtue of their structural position, the power-seekers contribute towards organization of conflicts and management of political power. Once, however, a power-seeker is able to legitimize his political influence or social power in terms of some popularly recognized bases (such as a bureaucratic position or a stabler group referent authority), he becomes powerful. When the latter consolidates his influence again and brings it to bear on internal as well as external political resources of the village, and has thereby acquired political acumen in the eyes of his village, he becomes a political elite. The latter manages the available political resources in such a manner that he is able to transform most efficiently the potential influence into actual influence.

As an example of the multifarious functions being performed by the southern group of Gopalpur (KAS—KUI—P/B P/S—B —K) in 1965 : Its members were quarreling over a mango grove, a pond, a brick kiln, and a *panchayat* radio ; its Kurmi and Ahir members were proceeding against a trans-river (Loni) village over some joint-family holdings of the past ; its power-seekers were organizing to snatch the remaining 'bureaucratic' (*panchayat*) positions from the weakened northern KAN group ; and its formal leaders and political elites, as already indicated, were trying to develop stable bonds with the party politicians at Gosainganj.

These groups, while discharging such diverse functions, may at one moment be organized across caste lines, but at another moment they may exhibit strong caste sentiment. This makes the situation more elusive, if one were to examine such groups only or even predominantly in terms of fixed caste and kin lines. The case of stolen mangoes, described above, illustrates this point with respect to caste. The latter is more viewed as an element of political expediency. It is not a universalistic basis of these political structures. It may be a necessary referent, but it is now no more a sufficient condition for the village politics of modern India. In the village, people do know who, though belonging to their own caste group, belongs to a different or opposed power-grouping. They know who are those who belong to more than one power-group, and for what apparent purpose. They also tend to identify a group member in terms of the scope or scopes within which he is supposed to be a most powerful, a moderately powerful, or a weak individual. Some others, who are politicians themselves, not only differentiate between different degrees and scopes of power, but also the degree to which a particular member can potentially and actually influence decisions, and can get influenced himself by others' decisions. All these considerations, in an actual situation, break down the variable caste of dominance (Srinivas 1959) in an increasingly complex manner.

The above-noted political groups of Gopalpur, along with their specific properties, interrelate so as to produce what we may call a 'power management system.' Sociologically, it behaves much like that of what students of modern organizations call 'tension management system' (cf. Moore and Feldman 1962). Thus, as we have seen above, tensions in one rank of factional organization are managed by the integrative devices set in motion by another intersecting political group.[4] Integration is acquired within the factions, the highly dynamic groups, by means of greater differentiation of the ranks and the roles of the participants, and thereby fostering among them functional interdependence. This, in turn, brings organizational stability among such political groups (cf. Parsons 1964 : 94 ff.). Thus, as in the case of stolen

mangoes, while the conflicting groups produce fission and press it upwards through the existing pressure groups, the political leaders use the power-seekers of these groups as communication structures to generate integrative devices to resolve the dispute without a major change in the existing inter-group affiliations. As an evidence, the multicaste alliances have survived in Gopalpur for a decade.

Under the power management system, factions appear only as an interrelated device for political actions. They are only one of the several other types of political groups now existing in modern village India. While factions have been interpreted as vehicles of rapid social and economic change (Epstein 1962, Berreman 1962), as a phenomenon of socio-cultural change adapting to accommodate the impact of external economic change (Siegel and Beals 1960), and as a socio-political process for organizing conflict (Bailey 1960, 1963 ; Nicholas 1965), they are found here as a type of communication structure for transvaluing the democratic politics for the village and for opening the local political groups for the regional complexities. Factions, like any other social group, respond to the external as well as the internal stimuli of change ; but they are themselves neither a 'dead-end' nor only a 'receiving end.' They are two-way communication units interwoven with various other political organizations.

This power management system is dynamic (as compared to a political party, for example). It is characterized by organizational plurality and motivational complexity.[5] It simultaneously explains the extra- and intra-village dimensions of the political arena, and it emphasizes *interlevular* social influence, interaction, and decision-making.

Conclusion

The political changes that are described above relate to both the organization and function of individuals and groups. These are found to be closely influenced by historical events, especially the political independence, the establishment of the democratic party—election system, and the abolition of zemindary system. By now it is a commonplace statement, except if we begin looking closely to examine how varied and

how far-reaching changes have been brought about by them in every village—a 'microcosm' of Indian democracy. For example, the presence and distribution of land, the available educational and economic resources, the political participation in the struggle for Indian freedom, and the antecedents of zemindary rule in the village and the region, among others, initially conditioned or catalyzed the entry and transvaluation of democratic politics in Gopalpur. Today, these villagers are comprehending the ever-widening instrumental value of political groups and their elites 'in order to be in step with the times'.

Related to the above political changes appear those that occurred in Gopalpur factional politics between 1952, when zemindary system was abolished and the first general election took place, and 1962, when the third general election was conducted, followed by the crisis of Chinese aggression in October of the same year. Multicaste factions were already operating in Gopalpur in 1960 (reported in Khare 1962), along with the extra-village political contacts. These and the ambitious political elites and their power-seekers opened up the village to the regional party politics. Such contacts were strengthened by the exigencies created by the political impact of the Chinese aggression. Still, in 1963, the organizational set-up of the political bodies of Gopalpur was unsuitable for any specialized and prolonged participation. The political contacts available to the village politicians as the regional party workers, and the KAS and KUI leadership's enduring intercaste alliance (by creating power-seeker's and pressure-group's communication structures) were the two outstanding factors that promoted the stabilization of factional group dynamics and the politicization of the factional leaders' activities within and outside the village. Gopalpur of 1965 illustrates this stage of transition only as a phase in the process of the opening up of the village's political microcosm. Obviously, this process involves the two-way tendency : the villages reaching out to understand and emulate the regional and national democratic politics, and the network of the latter approaching the villages and adjusting themselves to their political conceptions.

The preceding discussion also suggests how frequently and effectively the political groups now organize across the traditional structures. They emphasize as well as de-emphasize caste and other ascriptive loyalties, depending upon the strategy required for resolving a dispute or for pursuing a long-range political motive. Long political involvement is being tried out by the leaders of the village for the first time.

The above developments suggest how a political system of the modern Indian village is getting more suited for the complexity of democratic politics, especially by creating a multi-functional, stabler, broad-based, and better-differentiated power management system, of which the factions are only one organizational dimension. Consensus at one level now tends to balance conflict at another, without upsetting the overall political alliances. Now for the political leadership, strategy is more important than open dissent, and political prudence is regarded as more useful than factional bickerings.

NOTE

1. This paper is based on several field-trips made to Gopalpur since 1958 when it was chosen for a year-long study for my Ph.D. dissertation. The last trip was made in the summer of 1965. The major part of field-data for this study was collected during 1962 and 1963. It was first written during my post-doctoral stay at the University of Chicago, in 1963-64, as a part of the project that was partly financed by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Later on during 1965-66, while teaching in Lucknow, additional field-material was included. The paper was rewritten in its present form with the help of the support provided by the Faculty Research Committee of the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

2. The term 'power' is used in a generalized manner. It does not differentiate between authority and rule, unless it is specifically required. Thus a *Sarpanch* (headman of the village council) is simply noted as a village leader.

3. Epitomizing the political consequence of aggression crises a Kurmi leader noted : 'It was for the first time that these extra-village political relationships were eagerly understood and sincerely explored'. Further, 'the village leaders expected to benefit by being initiated into a wider political arena...' One of the Gopalpur leaders even expressed an interest in becoming a candidate for the State Legislative Assembly in the next general election (which, according to the latest information, did not come about), using his newly established political connexions as the basis of his candidacy' (Khare 1964 : 1159-60).

4. Sociologists (e.g. Dahrendorf, and Eisenstadt 1964) and political scientists (e.g. Laswell 1948, Dahl 1950, 1961, 1963) are well aware of such a dynamics.

5. The determination of motives which make one join an existing political group in an Indian village is even more difficult. No single explanation is obviously adequate, whether it is termed as 'hostility' by Siegel and Beals, or 'self-interest' by Nicholas. I have alluded to this difficulty above. If the term 'hostility' refers to only one of the body of motivations or sentiments that social psychologists consider to be responsible for organizing a group, the term 'self-interest' creates problems with the interpretation of 'self', a problem apparent even to Plato. The notion of 'self-interest' is very complex (see Lasswell 1948). On 'self', Murphy (1954 : 625), a noted psychologist, observes : '...the self comprises all the precious things and persons who are relevant to an individual's life ...and the proposition that man is selfish resolves into the circular statement that people are concerned with the things they are concerned with'. In the foregoing discussion I have used the word 'interest' in a non-technical manner referring mostly to a configuration of motives ranging from the egoistic to 'collective' (clearly specified or only a generalized entity) gains, and from the expression of inter-caste or personal hostility and revenge to inter-group competition for gaining social prestige, reverence, fame, and security. The motivations underlying a political action would become more complex with the increasing emphasis on and the expanding scope of the instrumental value of politics for the common villager.

REFERENCES

Bailey, F. G.
    1960   *Tribe, Caste and Nation* : *A Study of Political Activity and Political Change in Highland Orissa.*
        Manchester : Manchester University Press.
    1963   *Politics and Social Change* : *Orissa 1959.*
        Berkeley : University of California Press.

Bales, R. F.
    1953   The Equilibrium Problem in Small Groups. In *Working Papers in the Theory of Action.* T. Parsons, R. Bales and E. Shils, eds. Glencoe, III, Free Press.

Berreman, G. D.
    1963   *Hindus of the Himalayas*, Berkeley : University of California Press.

Dahl, Robert A.
    1958   A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model.
        American Political Science Review 58 : 463 – 469.
    1961   *Who Governs ?* New Haven : Yale University Press.
    1963   *Modern Political Analysis.* New Jersey : Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Dahrendorf, Ralf
    1964   Toward a Theory of Social Conflict. In *Social Change* : *Sources, Patterns, and Consequences.* Amitai Etzioni and Eva Etzioni, eds. New York : Basic Books, Inc.

Eisenstadt, S. N.
    1964   Political Development. In *Social Change* : *Sources, Patterns, and Consequences.* Amitai Etzioni and Eva Etzioni, eds. New York : Basic Books, Inc.

Epstein, T. S.
    1962   *Economic Development and Social Change in South India.* Manchester : Manchester University Press.

French, Jr., J. R. P.
    1962   The Bases of Social Power. In *Group Dynamics* : *Research and Theory.* Darwin, Cartwright and Alvin Zander, eds. Ill., Row, Peterson, and Co.

Hamblin, R. L.
    1962   Leadership and Crises. In *Group Dynamics* : *Research and Theory.* Darwin, Cartwright and Alvin Zander eds., Ill., Row, Peterson and Co.

Key. Jr., V. O.
    1964   *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups,* New York : Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

Khare, R. S.
    1962a Domestic Sanitation in a North Indian Village : An Anthropological Study. Lucknow, University of Lucknow. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.

    1962b Group Dynamics in a North Indian Village. *Human Organization* 21 : 201 – 213.

    1964 An Indian Village's Reaction to Chinese Aggression. *Asian Survey* 4 : 1153 – 1160.

Lasswell, H. D.

    1948 *Power and Personality.* New York ; W. W. Norton & Company.

Moore, Wilbert E. and Arnold S. Feldman

    1962 Society as a Tension-Management System. In *Behavioral Science and Civil Defence Disaster Research Group, Study No. 16.* George Backer and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., eds. Washington : National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council.

Murphy, Gardner

    1954 Social Motivation. In *Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. 2,* G. Lindzey, eds. Cambridge, Mass : Addison – Wesley.

Nicholas, Ralph W.

    1965 Factions : A comparative analysis. In *Political Systems and The Distribution of Power.* Michael Banton, ed., A. S. A. Monographs 2. London : Tavistock Publications.

Parsons, Talcott

    1964 A Functional Theory of Change. In *Social Change : Sources, Patterns, and Consequences.* Amitai Etzioni and Eva Etzioni, eds., New York : Basic Books, Inc.

Siegel, B. J. and Alan Beals

    1960 Pervasive Factionalism. *American Anthropologist* 62 : 394 – 417.

Srinivas, M. N.

    1959 The Dominant Caste in Rampura. *American Anthropologist* 61 : 1 – 16.

BOOK REVIEWS

This is a refreshingly written book on some of the problems relating to the caste system of India. The author has carefully gone through a large mass of literature on caste, but has been chiefly concerned with the problem of status, and how far it is related to racial or physical differences, wealth, birth, etc. His main conclusion is that the correlation between status and the factors enumerated above is not neat and uniform. He comes to the conclusion that the high status enjoyed by Brahmins, in disregard of racial differences or economic and political power, is more or less, due to the idea-system to which the Brahminical people of India subscribed. Within this idea-system, he identifies the Pollution Concept as being of significant operational value. This is very nearly similar to the thesis propounded by Prof. M. N. Srinivas. But, even here, the author is of opinion that 'a number of dominant castes violated these rules', yet apparently did not lose their ascribed status ; so that the concept of pollution cannot wholly explain the status enjoyed by a particular caste.

One point has apparently not been sufficiently taken care of in the present book, namely, the fact that caste-based economy (which, in intention, encourages the suppression of the competitive tendency in the productive system) still sustains the life of a large fraction of the people of India. Our modernized industries engage no more than 4% and household industries no more than 6% of the working population. This may possibly be one of the reasons why the ideological super-structure of caste has survived the ravages of time. Caste's economic organization actually held together the rural folk of India and helped them to survive (even if it were at a low level of comforts) through numerous political vicissitudes The question might legitimately be taken up for investigation if the loyalty to the idea-system (including the supremacy of Brahmins and the Pollution Concept) was itself not the result of the continuous allegiance to caste's productive organization.

But, of course, this may not have had direct bearings upon the question of *status*, as such. And therefore the economic elements in the social structure *may* have been disregarded by the author.

But there is another element which is directly related to status to which the author has drawn our attention, but has not done so to an adequate extent.

He has referred, particularly on pages 135 to 137, to the fact that the secular authority was somehow directly responsible for raising or lowering the status of some castes in various parts of India where an ancient form of kingship survived. In contrast, in the present phase of Indian history, many castes have been trying, on their own, to raise themselves by adopting various items of culture by which the upper or dominant castes are distinguished. The king's authorization of claims to superior status is no longer available. Many castes have have thus been described as involved in such an attempt. This has also been shown by authors like Marriott, Srinivas, and others. And on the basis of these contemporary observations, a picture has been drawn of the ideal character of the caste system, which, the present reviewer thinks, is somewhat off the mark.

To the present reviewer it appears that caste is thus being studied after several centuries during which Hindu society has continued to operate in a state of political anaemia. This would yield a picture of even the *ideal system* of caste under distinctly pathological conditions. It would hardly yield a picture of how caste grew up under more youthful conditions when the Brahminical people had political power to help them in their work of social expansion.

The reason why this digression is being made is that, in the book under review, there are chapters (4, 5 and 6) where a historical reconstruction has actually been attempted. This has been well done ; but the role played by the secular, political authority in the regulation of society has apparently not been given its due importance. The Brahminical concepts of purity or otherwise, which became more firmly entrenched when Brahminism was in retreat, have gained more importance than is due to them.

But these are observations made, not in disparagement, but in appreciation of the refreshingly objective quality of the author's enterprise.

N. K. Bose

Studies in the Society and Administration of Ancient and Medieval India. Vol. I : Society. By *D. C. Sircar. ix + 321. 1967. Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 6/1A, Banchharam Akrur Lane, Calcutta—12.* Rs. 25.00.

Professor D. C. Sircar has collected together thirteen of his essays relating to various aspects of society in India during ancient and mediaeval times. The subjects are of a varied nature, ranging from 'Aryanism in Bengal', 'Foreigners and Non-Aryans' to 'Bride, Wife and Slave' and 'Some Great Women'.

Professor Sircar depends strictly upon unassailable evidence, largely derived from inscriptions, and partly also from literature, of which the date can be determined with reasonable accuracy. The author's description of how various non-Aryan communities were absorbed into the Brahminical system will be highly appreciated by students of anthropology. He shows how various *Jatis* were given a place in the *Varna* System by hypothetical, often fanciful, accounts of their origin.

N K. Bose

Paschimbange Puja-Parban O Mela, Dwitiya Khanda. *Collection of data and Ms. by Arun Kumar Ray. Revision by Sukumar Sinha. Editor Asoka Mitra. Census of India. 1961 : West Bengal, Volume 16. Part 7-B. 1968. Pp. 732 + Introduction, maps, plates etc.*

This book in Bengali forms a welcome addition to the series originally designed by Shri A. Mitra when he was in charge of census operations in West Bengal in 1951. It contains an account of the temples, shrines and fairs in the districts of Murshidabad, Nadia, Howrah and Hooghly. While presenting a description of sites located in each Police Station, the authors have also given us much of the associated folklore. Historical evidences have also been furnished from authentic sources in various cases.

It is obvious that numerous local inhabitants interested in the history of their own region have co-operated in this undertaking. It is perhaps only by encouraging local enquiry in this manner that a full descriptive account of life in rural Bengal can be eventually built up.

As a pioneering work, the present publication deserves adequate appreciation. There are a few small errors which, we are sure, would be removed in a future edition. This can be done more

easily if scholars take more interest in such publications, and help
the editors by sending in there suggestions.

N. K. Bose

Needed Social Science Research in Population and Family Planning.
*By Reuben Hill, Edwin D. Driver, Moni Nag. The Ford Foundation,
New Delhi, 1968.*

This is a highly organized academic report on the needs of
sociological research on population problems with which birth
control, camouflaged under the term family planning, has been tagged
on. The authors probably desire that researches on birth control or
family planning should also be carried out in the sociology depart-
ments of Indian Universities. Professor Srinivas is right in pointing
out that there are no 'major concepts in the field'. He is perfectly
justified in saying, 'Intellectually, this does not interest me at all
and unless such research is related to my main intellectual concern I
cannot take any interest in family planning research.'

The trend of the first session centred round Dr. Som Nath Roy's
concern on the lack of 'basic knowledge of the Indian family' of our
administrators or policy-makers. It is however extremely unfortunate
that there was not a biologist or a gynaecologist in the conference,
who could have suggested that human mating system, at least in
some North European countries, is gradually taking the form of
seasonal breeding from that of continuous breeding (not of statistic-
ally significant difference, of course) and that natural selection is
playing its role in population control. The gradual early maturity of
city girls may thwart all attempts of birth control, just as in U.S.A.,
illegitimate births have increased in 1962 nearly three times above
the 1940 number and that syphilis has doubled between the years
1956 and 1963. The reviewer wonders why in a highly literate
country the above frequencies have not decreased in spite of the
many contraceptive devices. It will be of interest to record here that
during the visit of the three consultants in Calcutta, the girls of a
Home Science College in the city, who have long been protesting
against having a family planning centre in their campus, succeeded
in getting it removed.

A gynaecologist at the symposium would have given valuable
information (just as Dr. John Rock did at the Massachusetts
symposium on Human Fertility and Population Problems in 1963) on
evaluation on which there has been so much discussion at the
conference.

Family planning is an unscientific term. With an average of only 12-24 hours of fertile period in a menstrual cycle, it is not easy to plan a conception. It camouflages the rather explicit term *Family Limitation* so efficiently used by the British Royal Commission on Population in their report by Lewis-Faning (1949). How does family planning in its present form help families to get rid of hereditary defectives, malformations, etc. ? A gynaecologist would have been helpful to inform how birth control practises at the early age of the mother is raising the frequency of caesarean operations, uterine fibroids, etc,

Drs. Hill, Driver and Nag did not probably seek for such experts because of their psycho-social leanings, but they are certainly aware of Lorimer's work on fertility.

On page 20 they have sought for an answer to the question :

'Does the postponement of marriage until the age of 25, for example, decrease fertility or merely increase the span of reproduction ?' Lorimer (1954, p. 56) is of opinion that 'postponement of marriages until women are 24 or 25 years of age...tends to reduce the level of fertility by 25 per cent, more or less, below that expected....'

On the same page 'additional factors' for differential fertility have been sought for. The role of congenital diseases, malformations, etc. affecting the fertility of both sexes has not been taken into account. And unless such biological approaches are made, family planning in its true sense will not succeed as a science. As it is being followed in this country, it is nothing short of coercion or monetary incentives to the illiterate, while the literate probably gain a better insight from Bertrand Russells's *Marriage and Morals.* Is it not fair to have a sperm count of the man before he is sterilized ? Does he possess the actual sperm concentration favourable for fertility ?

The present reviewer does not deny the need for a sociological approach, and here again Lorimer has offered the key. Dr. Nag in one of his studies pointed out that in all societies women are always more prone to adopt limitation of children than men, and in this the present reviewer agrees with him. Why then so much coercion to induce the illiterate woman ? If they could be induced to go in for abortion, and it is well known that older mothers go in for it more than the younger ones, why not for birth control ? The present

reviewer is of opinion that all such practices should have the secrecy of coitus. Much of the lure of birth control has been lost through mass propaganda as is being done in this country. The quacks, openly advertising abortificients in spite of the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Act, 1954, have long gained their foothold.

The three consultants of the Ford Foundation have rightly stressed upon Research into consequences of family-planning practices. Nothing so far has been done by the Government of India. They say : 'In their haste to solve the world population problem the proponents of family planning have chosen sides on this issue of the consequences of family planning methods without asking for much documentation. Some surprises may be in store for these advocates when the studies of the social psychological consequences which are here suggested have been concluded.'

Professor Notestein has elsewhere pointed out that '50% of women are happy and successful' with the present methods of birth control in spite of their being 'less than perfect'. But as already mentioned the rise of illegitimate births and syphilis do not support more use of contraceptive devices. Birth control, as it is being preached in this country, is harmful to the nation's body and soul. We must stop for a while and evaluate what has already been done during the past two decades.

S. S. Sarkar

An Omission

The paper entitled 'A Note on the Sociology of Buddhist Tantrism' by Malati Shendge, published in *Man in India*, Vol. 49, No. 1, pp. 24-29, was originally presented at the seminar on 'Urgent, Research in Social Anthropology' held at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, on 15-20 July, 1968. It was printed with the kind permission of the Director of the Institute, Professor Niharranjan Ray, to whom our thanks are due.

—Editor—
Man in India