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SOME METHODS OF STUDYING SOCIAL CHANGE

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(Paper read at Delhi on 28 March 1967)

Abstract : The author examines several methods of studying social change, and makes a few observations of his own. His principal suggestion is that change can be studied best by one who is actively involved in that process, and is at the same time able, by strenuous scientific discipline, to keep his mind as free from biases as possible.

ONE'S purpose in studying social change is naturally to obtain as objective a view as possible ; something which will fit in with the succession of events as it develops progressively in course of time.

Social anthropologists have realized that one's judgement regarding values, which eventually springs from the world-view to which one subscribes, tends to warp the perception of social facts ; and two ways have consequently been suggested in order to minimize the error thus produced.

One of these views is that a social anthropologist

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should rather study societies of a different kind from one's own. In that case, many things which are taken for granted by those who live in that society would not escape the attention of one who comes from outside. This view, however, appears to be only partially true ; for an outside observer may as well miss some of the more important things which matter in a civilization. For example, many European missionaries in India have tried in the past to understand Indian civilization and the manner in which society and thought have been changing here in recent times. It is not true that their findings were frequently inaccurate merely because they tended to prove the superiority of Christianity over other faiths ; there were other reasons as well why they missed some of the salient features of Hindu civilization.

When we were at school more than fifty years ago, it was usually held on the basis of travellers' and missionaries' accounts that Chinese society was extremely conservative ; and in spite of numerous Western impacts, the reaction of China was, on the whole, unyielding. Similarly, Karl Marx was of the opinion that the proletarian revolution would be ushered in a highly industrialized society rather than in one where the basis of economy was formed by agriculture. But history has had to modify both of these expectations. Of course, when the Russian and Chinese revolutions actually took place, reasons were soon discovered in order to justify what had already happened. But these reasons followed the event ; they proved that the previous generalizations about Russian or Chinese society were not quite correct. So that, when an observation is made by an outsider, i.e. by one who is not involved in the movements simmering in a society, he may or may not observe just the right thing which eventually matters. An observer from outside certainly enjoys certain advantages, but that does not necessarily yield the open-sesame to an understanding of a civilization, or the processes of change to which it is subject.

The second method which has been recommended for the attainment of objectivity is that of the use of mathematics. Mathematical abstractions undoubtedly clear the ground of

much that is laden by value-judgements. They have undoubtedly yielded better results than by the first method described above. But then, the question is, *what* should one count ? The unit to be counted is often hard to define. One should have an extensive acquaintance with the facts of a culture or society ; and only when one has compared it repeatedly with similar and dissimilar societies, is one gradually able to discover what appears to be significant in it, and can be used for counting purposes.

In other words, before the mathematical approach is designed, one must be clear about the purpose of the counting, that is, about the hypothesis involved ; for the result will eventually have to be interpreted in terms of the hypothesis.

If the scientists' observations and resulting hypothesis have been right, counting and the manipulation of numbers will add precision to his findings. And, more than that, this manipulation of figures may open up completely new avenues of enquiry and investigation. Figures are thus helpful ; but one cannot start with figures. He has to make sure if the unit chosen, or the factors into which he resolves a particular phenomenon of social change, have been rightly chosen or not. And in such an endeavour, a social scientist will still have to behave more like an artist than an engineer.

Let us take an example from what is happening in modern India. During the early decades of the present century, a small section of urbanized Indians became deeply involved in the struggle for the political liberation of India. There were many more who shunned the path of revolution, and tried to bring about political changes through the constitutional means of agitation, education and organization. Moreover, they tried hard to bring about reforms in society ; to cut away the strings which held Indian society tied to the past. The British government had enormous resources at its command. They counted the number of revolutionists and of constitutionalists ; compared their caste and social standing ; and also the number of men who remained indifferent to the appeals of the urban elite. The last were in an overwhelming majority. But with changing events, suddenly the masses

also began to stir from their sleep ; and today the India that has come into being belies many of the expectations of the British rulers of yesterday.

Of course, an explanation has also been found for what has already happened. The charismatic leadership of Gandhi has largely been held responsible for the awakening of the masses. Some have even attributed the success of Gandhi's appeal to its essentially religious, obscurantist Hindu character. But this overlooks two important facts, namely, that the Hinduism for which Gandhi stood personally was miles away from the caste-ridden, ritual-oriented forms of Hinduism ; while his political and even educational endeavours were essentially of a secular character, and yet the masses responded to his call. Secondly, when he opposed the partition of India, he was left alone by the masses, and by such political leaders as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the socialist, and Sardar Patel, the nationalist. The masses who are supposed to have responded to him because of his religious appeal woke up, and drowned themselves in an orgy of communal warfare, or in the succeeding phase lapsed into apathy and listlessness. The charism of Gandhi obviously failed to have any appeal to either the masses or their leaders.

The point which is being made out is that many more trends may remain operative in a case of social change than appear readily on the surface. Unless we delve deeply into their intricacies, the secrets may escape us, and leave us satisfied with superficial generalities which do not give us any deep understanding, and are unable to account for many of the events which actually take place afterwards.

This reminds the writer of an incident of long ago. A celebrated Indian literary figure once wrote about European civilization and the hollownesses he had witnessed in it in course of his long stay in Europe. He was conversant with several European languages, and had also established friendly contacts with men like Bertrand Russell, Romain Rolland and others. In reply to his observations, Rolland wrote some time afterwards that the picture drawn by this distinguished Indian artist was one of the market place only. He had wholly missed

the utter dedication of many scientists and artists of Europe to the cause of Truth and Humanity. If all around them, nations had become maddened by fear and had taken up arms in order to defend what they held to be precious, the Indian had missed the inner turmoil of these scientists and artists who suffered, and yet would not give up their sacred trust.

What is implied is that there is no short cut to objectivity and truth in the social sciences by a simple reliance upon either mathematical abstractions, or by limiting oneself to the study of a society which is not one's own. These mechanistic ways of avoiding error keep one at a rather superficial level, unless the open-sesame is furnished by an artistic apperception of what really matters, and what does not, in the object of one's study.

This brings us to the view to which the present writer has been progressively led, namely that one can best study social change in the society in which he lives and works, and which he has also been trying to change.

The question immediately arises. If he himself is committed to a particular world-view, will not his findings be also deeply coloured by it, and yield biassed and selective results of what is happening today ? Undoubtedly the danger is there. But just because one hesitates to dive into the sea-bottom, should one give up deep diving and remain satisfied with the currents which operate only near the surface of the ocean ?

As has already been suggested, it is best for one to study the society in which one lives. He should observe its changes and, for this purpose, (a) ask the right questions ; (b) prepare oneself by constantly examining and re-examining his inarticulate major premises by comparing them with those of other people and of other cultures ; and lastly (c) he should state clearly before his readers what those premises are, so that they can assess for their own sake the reliability of his observations. It is only thus that he can contribute his utmost to the progress of the social sciences.

Let us take the case of the caste system in India and how it has been changing in modern times. One question which

has exercised the mind of many social anthropologists in India has been this : How is it that, in spite of many revolts against it from the days of Buddha, Nanak and Kabir to Raja Rammohan Roy, caste has succeeded in maintaining itself, and even corrupting Moslems and Christians in rural India to a considerable extent ? Several answers have been furnished. One is that Brahmans so successfully indoctrinated the people of India with their ideas of ritual pollution, status, etc. and by their theories of Karma and rebirth, that caste held on in spite of many revolts against its authority. The supplementary explanation has also been suggested that political and economic power was added to those obtained through birth and rank ; and thus caste was reinforced firmly in Indian society.

The historical experiences of India have, however, been of a very varied character in course of the last two thousand years. Brahmans have never formed more than about 4 or 5 per cent of the population on an average ; literacy was restricted and low ; communication and travel difficulty ; and yet the Brahmans seem to have been more successful in indoctrinating people than many political parties of the modern world. North India was for more than seven hundred years under rulers who did not believe in caste ; and tried to wean people from idolatry by doing away with temples and idols. The British may not have interfered with caste, and even reaffirmed it. Castes of comparatively 'low' rank were in enjoyment of economic and even political power from time to time ; and yet the system seems to have endured for more than a millenium ; except in so far as it became more hardened and firmly entrenched as time went on.

These are questions seldom raised ; and even when raised, we eventually arrive at a view of Hindu civilization when it appears to be a monstrosity produced by an astute Brahmanical genius, being surrounded by 90 per cent of people who blindly surrendred to them.

But is that all that the social anthropologist has to offer regarding the caste system ? What are its strengths ? What were the alternatives into which people could have escaped when

caste was found wanting ? Why did they not do so even when alternatives were available ? What were the risks involved ? These are questions which have yet to be answered. And our suggestion is that such questions come naturally to an observer who participates in the social system, and yet does not allow his vision to be clouded by the demands of reform. Such an opportunity usually does not come to one who does not share intimately in the joys and sorrows of a civilization. There are indeed some who, by the supremacy of their intellectual and perhaps spiritual ability, can rise above this limitation and observe and understand a civilization as if it were his own. But such identification cannot be factory-produced.

And here, incidentally, we shall make a passing reference to a case study undertaken five years ago regarding the social situation in the metropolis of Calcutta. Calcutta has a a large percentage of residents whose mother tongue is not the Bengali language, and yet it continues to be the nerve-centre of the culture of the Bengali-speaking people. The city is more than two hundred fifty years old. Many communities have lived in it together and practised common occupations which had nothing to do with caste. And yet their differences in language, custom and even interests have remained more or less separate and discrete.

An enquiry was conducted about how the residents of Calcutta made their living in the first and second ascending generations, and how they do so now. Moreover the question was asked as to how communal voluntary associations are run, and what part they play in comparison with municipal and official organizations which cut across communal boundaries. It was found that different communities in Calcutta have been very unequally affected by the city's economic and political developments. Their social responses have also been of an uneven character. Some have worked hard in order to reform and urbanize themselves; others have clung more firmly to their original rural identities, or even the identity of kingroups.

It appears from a careful historical study that political and social reform among the Bengali residents was looked upon

with suspicion, and even suppressed, by British rulers during the days of their empire. New urban associations did not arise fast enough. Progress was thwarted ; not because Hindus were ritually minded, but political obstruction came from their imperial rulers.

And so when, after 1947, Indians started on a new career of their own, it was soon discovered that society was put under a heavy unequal strain because of the demands of India's planned economy. Under these circumstances, the unevenness of social change has been causing a large amount of internal stress and strain between one section of the population and another, and even between one State and another, even when both of them form parts of the same Republic.

If a villager has no hospital to which he can resort in case of illness, and if he therefore seeks the assistance of a quack, should he be described as a conservative ? If, in a city like Calcutta, there are not enough trade unions, employment agencies or benevolent societies of a voluntary nature ; if sufficient openings are not available to all who wish to work—if employment opportunities are in short supply—then should people be called conservative if they seek the help of their kinsmen, or their caste, or of their language-groups when they are faced by the difficulties in a metropolis where they have come to seek their fortune ?

The fact is that unless we observe phenomena of changing societies in a wide historical perspective, unless we perceive sympathetically the sorrows and travails through which a society is passing, the picture we build up of social change is likely to be superficial ; and it will lead us astray.

One can best study,one's own society by active participation in its process of change, if at the same time he also tries to maintain an objectivity by constant comparison with what is happening in similar and dissimilar societies under the stress of historical forces.

And in course of such a study, the thoughts and feelings which stir the minds and hearts of men are of no less importance than the changes which are apparent at the institutional level.

This brings us to the question of interviews designed to probe into attitudes, motives and feelings of the individuals who are involved in a particular example of social change. It has been the experience of the present writer that one has to clearly distinguish between an interviewee's ideals, and how far he has gone or is prepared to go in order to establish it in actual life. Profession of an attitude or ideal may be both meaningful or empty. And, if that is so, it would not be fair to lump together people, for whom such profession does not mean quite the same thing in terms of responsibility. Differences have to be indicated by somehow placing them in separate classes or categories.

Secondly, the personality of the interviewer, his opinions, sympathies and knowledge of the local situation are also of very great importance in eliciting the correct attitude and feelings of the person interviewed. If the latter feels that the scientist knows practically all about the situation, and is in sympathy with his own difficulties as he works for the fruition of his ideal, then more information is likely to be made available than otherwise.

Depth interviews are thus helpful ; but the preparation of the interviewer must be hard, and as nearly perfect as possible. The more closely can he identify himself with the point of view of the interviewee, the more success will he be able to achieve in course of his work. And this sympathy should be genuine, arising out of respect for the other man's point of view. It should not be of the mechanical type, which spends itself in courtesy and good manners, and tries to avoid all conflicts of opinion.

The last experience of the writer has been that, even when the world-views of the interviewer and interviewee are in opposition to one another, much can be gained, not by suppressing one's inward convictions, but by discussing them openly and honestly, after the latter has become convinced that his views also are equally respected.

These are perhaps difficult attitudes to build up ; but they yield abundant harvest when sufficient pains are taken in their preparation.

CASTE AND OCCUPATION IN A VILLAGE IN BIHAR

K. N. SAHAY

(Received on 5 April 1967)

Abstract: The author describes the position of caste and mobility of occupation and status in a village in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar.

Introduction

CASTE in the Gangetic plains of Bihar is likely to be slightly different from what it is in the uplands of the Chotanagpur plateau. A village with the pseudonym of Kanchanpura was investigated in November-December 1964 by the author with the help of a batch of post-graduate students of anthropology of the Ranchi University and the results are given below. Comparative work with any village in the Ganges plains could not however be carried out.

Kanchanpura is situated in the Ichak police station of Hazaribagh district, about 19 miles from the district headquarters. It is a multicaste village inhabited by Hindus (94.9%) Muslims (1.3%) and Santals (3.8%). The total population is 1178 formed by 202 families.

TABLE 1

Caste or community	Number of families	Persons	Percentage of total
Brahman	8	63	5.3
Rajput	5	39	3.3
Kayastha	1	2	0.2

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Caste or community	Number of families	Persons	Percentage of total
Goala	5	16	1.3
Bania	4	13	1.1
Koeri	72	483	41.0
Lohar	2	14	1.2
Barhi	2	10	0.8
Kumhar	10	54	4.6
Nai	6	45	3.8
Ghatwar	11	30	2.5
Dhobi	8	32	2.7
Dusadh	12	66	5.6
Bhuinya	21	115	9.8
Chamar	19	115	9.8
Turi	4	22	1.9
Muslim	3	15	1.3
Santal	3	22	1.9
Birhor	6	22	1.9
Total	202	1178	100

Notes on castes and communities

The Brahmans are divided into Adi Gaurs (4 familis) and Jyotishis (4 families). Both have land ; but the Jyotishis depend on priesthood primarily, as their land is small. They have it worked by sharecroppers. The Adi Gaurs do all agricultural work except ploughing which is done by hired labour. The Adi Gaurs have plenty of land, and pay less attention to priestcraft. One trades in crops like potatoes.

The Rajput-WARRIORS are mostly cultivators on their own or sharecroppers. Two run sweetmeat shops, one works in the Railway as pointsman. Two Rajputs are prosperous and own nearly half of the village's arable land. They reside outside,

and spend a few weeks during the agricultural season when necessary. Their work is done by sharecroppers or hired labourers. They also run money-lending business in the village.

There is one Kayastha-SCRIBE family, the head of which is a retired police officer ; but now working as a postmaster. He has also land cultivated by sharecroppers.

The Goala-MILKMEN tend cattle for others, or work on their small plots. They also serve others as share croppers.

The four Bania-TRADER families either cultivate their own land or do so through sharecroppers. Two own small grocery shops ; while one widow works as a servant in a Brahman household.

The Koeri-GARDENERS are farmers, generally specializing in vegetable production. The village headman belongs to this caste ; and as they are prosperous and numerically strong, they exercise great influence in the village. A few well-off Koeris are engaged in money-lending, one in tailoring. Almost all work on land, while the poorer ones work in the mines, brick-kilns or serve as cooks, rickshaw-pullers, truck-drivers, wherever there is chance of employment. One educated Koeri serves in the factory, and another educated person serves in the Block as a Village Level Worker.

The Lohar-BLACKSMITHS repair or make iron implements and sell them in weekly markets or fairs. They have no land, and have clients in other villages also.

The Barhi-CARPENTERS have land worked by sharecroppers.

The Kumhar-POTTER families are ten in number. They work on their own land or through sharecroppers. Two are only in their hereditary trade. Two work as factory labourers, while some migrate for four or five months to distant places for work, when there is little work to be done in the fields.

The Nai-BARBERS serve villagers and also assist Brahman priests on some ceremonial occasions. All have land which is worked either personally or through sharecroppers. One does a little carpentry, while three work as labourers in nearby towns.

Five of the Ghatwar-WATCHMEN families have land on which they work. Some serve as sharecroppers or hired labourers. One of the Ghatwar is the village's shaman or Naiya. He propitiates various deities by sacrifice ; fetches the *marwa* pole in a marriage ceremony for which he receives a small payment. One has a betel shop in a nearby town, two others serve elsewhere as labourer and gardener. They also migrate seasonally during the slack agricultural season.

The Dhobi-WASHERMEN do not work regularly, except for an old widow. Others do so on ceremoinal occasions like birth, death and marriage. One runs a laundry in a colliery ; others serve as laundrymen in the nearby mining towns. The Dhobis have some land ; but the poor work as hired labourers.

The Dusadh-WATCHMEN and Gorait-MESSENGERS are 12 in number. Four families have land ; others serve as farm labourers or sharecroppers. Their women collect fuel and fruits from the jungle for sale. One is employed in the police station. Others hire themselves out as labourers in collieries or even in Calcutta. These castes also raise poultry for sale in village markets.

The Bhuinya families have little land, except for who has hardly enough to maintain himself. Generelly they work as farm labourers or sharecroppers. They also catch fish, raise fowl, collect fruits and roots to supplement their meagre earnings. Formerly they served as palanquin-bearers ; now many go for five to six months to Calcutta or neighbouring towns to work in any capacity, which offers itself to them.

Out of 19 Chamar-LEATHER-WORKER families, two only are in their caste profession ; five own farm land. They also play drums during domestic rituals. They are entitled to any dead cattle in the village ; and remove the skin for tanning. In return they supply slippers, leather thongs etc. to their clients on an annual contract. They also raise poultry ; work as seasonal labourers, sweepers, masons in cities like Calcutta. One is a teacher in a neighbouring Middle School.

The Turi-BASKET-MAKERS are also cultivators. They exchange their manufactures for cash or for grain. Some work as labourers in Calcutta.

The 3 Muslim families are Julahas or traditionally WEAVERS. Weaving is hardly paying nowadays, and they serve as sharecroppers or hired farm-labourers. Two members of this group work in Hazaribagh and Giridih colliery as gardeners and labourers. Some income also comes from poultry.

The Santals are agriculturists. A few boys tend the cattle of the Koeris.

The Birhor are a nomadic group manufacturing ropes and selling jungle produce, including small game.

Social Hierarchy

The various Hindu castes of Kanchanpura are graded by criteria like ritual purity or impurity, sense of pollution associated with an occupation or dietary pattern including the types of meat taken and their degrees of pollution, caste stereotypes and marriage regulations, specially bride-price, widow-marriage and divorce, usually associated with low castes. Marriage-age also goes to determine the status of a caste since higher castes tend to marry their girls at an earlier age than the lower ones; though now it has undergone modifications in course of time. On the whole, a caste does not accept *kachcha* food from an inferior caste, but it may be accepted from castes superior to itself. The castes known as 'clean' do not accept water, *kachcha* or *pakka* food from the castes labelled as Harijans, or from communities like the Muslim, Santhal or Birhor. The traditional ranking of Hindu castes of the village and their general status, as recognized by the majority of informants interviewed, is given below.

TABLE 2

Caste with respective social rank	General status
Brahman : (a) Gaur	
(b) Jyotishi	
Rajput	High clean castes
Kayastha	
Bania	

Caste with respective social rank	General status
Koeri	
Goala	
Barhi	Clean castes
Lohar	
Kumhar	
Nai	
Ghatwar	
Dhobi	
Dusadh	Unclean castes or untoucables
Bhuinya	
Chamar	
Turi	

As shown in the above table, the Brahmans stand at the top of the hierarchy by virtue of their ritual purity and traditional profession of priesthood. Among sub-castes, Gaurs, who are more strict adherents to Brahmanic norms, are considered to have a superior rank than the Jyotishi, which is admitted also by the latter. The Jyotishi are often condemned as almost 'Sudra' because of their unclean habits and uncouth manners. They are alleged to demand money and presents from their clients like beggars. However, both types of Brahmans, barring generally the old, or females, take the meat of goats ; and that is why they are often the object of remark by other castemen who say that by doing so they have lowered their traditional social position. Next come the Rajputs. But on a practical level, the three Rajput families excluding that of Sagar Singh and Jagdip Singh, are rather despised for their having a mixed descent. The Kayastha is considered to rank next to the Rajput because of his reputation of learning and knowledge. A few people in the village would like to consider the Kayastha as

equal to the Bania, Goala and Koeri, while some others equate them with the Rajputs. Banias were regarded by the majority as below Kayastha, but some people including a few Banias themselves said that they were 'Bania Brahmans' and therefore should be placed in the category of Brahmans. The above castes do not allow divorce and re-marriage of widows ; and on this ground also they enjoy higher social status than many other castes (or the type of sub-caste found in the village) who practise it and are known as *Dwijanmia* (allowing widow re-marriage).

The majority of the people place the Koeri below or in the same level as the Bania. But some place them above the Bania and even Kayastha, many of them being the castemen themselves. They are regarded as a mannerless people knowing no proper etiquette and having no control over their wives who often run away from them. Cases of divorce and widow-marriage may also be found among them. Goalas have also a similar reputation and are placed next to the Koeri, though a few informants place them in the same level as the Koeri.

There is a similar position of the Barhi and Lohar castes. Though many people regard them as equal, the majority of informants placed the Lohar below the Barhi. One Rajput informant said that since the Barhis of the village were *Ekjanmia* (not allowing widow re-marriage), they were certainly higher in social status than the Lohar, Goala or even the Koeri.

The Kumhar come next in the hierarchy. Some conspicuous reasons put forth for giving them lower position was that, they work with mud and clay, thereby killing the creatures living in it. Similarly, because they cut the pots moulded on the wheel (*chak*) with a thread and since pots are regarded as their children, this act symbolises the act of cutting the umbilical chord, which is usually done by a low caste midwife.

The Nai and Ghatwar have a somewhat controversial position. The majority of the villagers regard the Nai as

superior to the Ghatwar, while a few put them in a reverse position. The Nai were considered to be higher than Ghatwar because of their close association with the Brahman and assistance given to the latter during ritual occasions. Those who placed them in an inferior position said that as they serve all castes, including untouchables, and are an agent of removing birth and death pollution, they should be ranked low. The persons speaking in favour of the Ghatwar, including some higher castes, said that the Ghatwar were a type of Rajput or were once equal to the Rajput ; but now they have left their traditional profession of being in charge of *ghat* (river bank or mountain passes) and collecting taxes on behalf of the rulers and hence have gone down in the caste scale. It may be mentioned that according to the *Hazaribagh District Gazetteer* (1957), Ghatwars were originally a section of the Bhuinya caste, who were originally a tribe.

The castes coming next to Ghatwar i.e. Dhobi, Dusadh, Bhuinya, Chamar and Turi are known as *Harijan, Achchut* (untouchable) or *Nicha Jati* (low caste). Except Dhobis, they are considered as given to drinking, beef-eating and pig-rearing. People say that they have no strength of character and do not mind performing irreligious acts (*adharmic kam*). They are considered to be lower also because they are associated with polluting occupations. They are considered to be ritually impure and nobody from the higher castes will normally accept water or food at their hands. In old days higher castes observed touch pollution, but now due to modern impact untouchability has lost its force. Among the untouchables, the Dhobi is placed in a slightly higher social position than the rest. Other Harijan castes also would not contradict it, since Dhobis never eat beef or pork. Moreover, most of the Dhobis maintain a distance from other Harijans and do not wash their dirty clothes or these polluted during birth or death. The Dhobi is untouchable, as traditionally he washes polluted clothes of others and removes birth and death pollution. Moreover he is also alleged to bring polluted clothes of the dead body from the burial ground.

Next to the Dhobi comes the Dusadh. They are considered to be lower than Dhobi since they eat pork and reared pigs in the past. The prohibition on eating pork was effected about sixteen years ago at a large zonal conference of the Dusadh held at Hazaribagh and Rs. 50 was determined as fine for violating this rule. It has greatly modified their food habit, and now they abstain from taking pork, at least openly, nor do they rear pigs. A few Dusadhs claimed a higher social status than the Ghatwar, Nai and Lohar castes, since they were the only caste which propitiated Rahu (a deity). Moreover, when the children of a higher or any other casteman do not survive, he would call a Dusadh woman who would feed the child with her hand from the plate from which she herself ate, while the child lay on her lap. It is known as a *Totka* (magic) and is believed to save the life of the child. Some of the castemen said that they were the descendants of Arjun, the great mythological hero of *Mahabharata* and regarded themselves as 'Gahlaot Chhatri.' This idea was conveyed to these people by some learned caste leader at the zonal caste conference referred to earlier.

The Bhuinyas are generally given a lower position than the Dusadh, as they are said to wash dirty plates (*jutha thali*) of other castes, and traditionally serve as Kamias or servants on contract. But they refrain from taking beef and hence are given a higher place than the Chamar and Turi.

The Chamar are considered to be low because of their traditional occupation. They are supposed to eat beef, and the meat of dead cattle. Turis are given the lowest status since they are occupationally akin to the Dom who are also basket-makers. Usually they are ridiculed for not having a control over their wives who would even beat them if they get annoyed. However, one thing is significant, namely, that Turis call themselves Bansla Rajput, i.e. a Rajput who works in bamboo, and thus, somehow, they try to equate themselves with the Rajputs.

As regards the Muslims, Santals and Birhors, they form three separate communities and stand outside the Hindu caste

system. However, some of the criteria put forth either by the Hindus or by themselves for being higher or lower from one another, are interesting and deserve a mention here. The Muslims are considered to be lower than the Hindus as 'they practise a different faith, take beef and marry their first cousin'—an idea abhorrent to the Hindus of this region. The Santals are considered inferior as they are 'jungle dwellers' (*Junglee*). Generally, they are given a status below the Muslims, while some give them a higher position on the ground that they have adopted several Hindu practices and also identify themselves with the latter. The Birhors allege that Muslims, Chamar, Dusadh, Bhuinya and Turi are inferior to them because they all take beef. Another reason for this superior feeling of the Birhor is that they consider themselves an independent people moving freely in the jungle, *Jungal ka Raja* (king of the forest) while the others are bound to other castes for their livelihood, and work for them. The Birhor further say that they were originally, Kherwar and take pride in affiliating themselves with the Raja of Ramgarh who also originally belonged to this community, but is now recognized as a Rajput. However, being a migratory group, the Birhors do not constitute an integral part of the village's social structure like the Muslims or even Santals.

Conclusion

The present study leads us to certain significant conclusions. Firstly, the castes once devoted to their specific traditional professions are taking to new occupations as in the case of the Brahman, Rajput, Lohar, Kumhar, Dhobi and Chamar. This has happened because their traditional profession has ceased to be profitable while other jobs give them a better opportunity to earn and fulfill their needs within the growing monetary economy. Secondly, this change of occupation in several cases, has led to temporary or permanent migration outside the village. Thirdly, among the Bania and certain lower caste Hindus like the Dusadh and Turi, a tendency towards *Sanskritization* may be marked since they aspire to go up in the traditional social

hierarchy by somehow following the ways of the higher castes. One of the castes like the Dusadh has also invented a mythological justification for it and has brought puritanical reforms in their community as reflected in their abstinence from rearing pigs and eating pork. Fourthly, communities like the Muslim and the Santal, though falling outside the periphery of the Hindu social system, are given some sort of social status relative to each other (below the Hindus) based on their alleged contrast or similarities with the Hindu way of life.

NOTE

The author is very much thankful to Miss Poornima Verma and Mr. S. R. Chaudhry, his two pupils, for assisting him during field-work. Mr. Chaudhury specially helped the author by collecting statistical figures as used in this paper.

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Errata

P. 181, line 22, insert 'one' after 'for'.

Pp. 182—183, Table 2 ; 'High clean castes' include the first three ; 'Clean castes' are comprised by castes from 'Bania' to 'Ghatwar', and 'Unclean castes' include castes from 'Dhobi' to 'Turi'.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A PNAR VILLAGE.

A. P. SINHA

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Abstract. Pnar are a people living in the Jaintia Hills of the Khasi & Jaintia Hills district of Assam. In the present paper I have attempted to study the Pnar village as a socio-economic unit in a larger field of relations. I have also tried (i) to see it as a unit in itself, internally differentiated, and (ii) to describe the social groups in the village context, like how lineages and families make up the village, how the economic and political organization of the village works. Changes brought about by modern contact have also been indicated.

Introduction

THE present paper is based on data collected mostly in the village of Nartiang, 7 miles from Ummolong, which is 32 miles from Shillong on the Shillong-Jowai road.[1]

Pnar villages, on the basis of their historical age, may be classified under two categories, (i) the long-established villages, i. e. those villages which are more than two or three generations old and have a Lyngdoh (village priest) of their own. Such villages are known locally as· *Shnong-Barim.* (ii) The second type of villages is formed by those which are inhabited by families which have left their natal village recently (say a generation or two ago, at the most) to be nearer their agricultural fields. Such families may have clustered round a common site near their fields and thus formed a habitation. But these families for the performance of their matrilineage level rituals have to return to their (ancestor's) natal village, as there resides their lineage level diety. These villages are known as *Shnong-Brih.* People

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inhabiting *Shnong-Brih* continue to maintain social and economic contacts with members of their matrilineage living in the natal village of their ancestors, though such contacts tend usually to fade with the lapse of time.

As an economic unit, a Pnar village was till recently self-sufficient to a large extent. Agriculture was the main source of subsistence. Land belongs to individuals over which they have proprietory rights. Each cultivator is free to select any place within the village boundary for shifting cultivation. Land rights are inherited from mother to daughter. 98% of land in this area is entered in revenue records in the name of women, who are its *de jure* and *de facto* owners. It is usually within her lifetime that the mother makes a distribution of her property, including land, among her daughters. All daughters, save the youngest, get a nominal share as they get married ; after that they establish their own separate households. It is the youngest daughter, *Iing-khynnah,* who inherits the major share of her mother's property.

Beyond its relation to land tenure, a Pnar village can hardly be viewed as a unit of any considerable importance in the economy of the people. Agricultural activity is carried on almost entirely within the immediate domestic group. There are no village working parties. Each matrilineage segment[2] or nuclear domestic unit[3], which are the prevailing Pnar types of domestic groups, carries on its agricultural activity by itself. In case of any help needed, it may be sought by payment in cash or in the shape of mutual help from fellow cultivators. Those who require any urgent help to cope with sowing, or weeding or harvesting, may invite their friends and relatives for a day, all on one day, and in return treat them with liquor, tea or meals in the evening. Such an operation is known as *Thung* (sow) or *Wer* (weed) or *Aah* (harvest) followed by the word *Shah* (tea) or *Kiad* (liquor), according to whichever is applicable. Such a help a cultivator can expect only once a year and that too for a day only. It is usually asked for and given to persons who need it due to economic reasons or due to exigencies of time, i. e. the appropriate

time for the particular agricultural operation is running out, and it has to be completed at the earliest before considerable loss comes to the person concerned. The election of helpers on such occassions depends now more on one's intimacy, kinship ties being usually secondary. The village as a whole acts as a unit in matters relating to agricultural production, such as when the performance of the annual magico-religious rituals concerning agriculture, beginning with the first ploughing in the village and ending with the thrashing of paddy after harvesting, have to be performed. All such rituals are performed collectively by the villages. As regards consumption, it involves somewhat an equal and similar group as production, but even here the village is of minimal importance.

The tribal unity of the Pnar is the unity of a distinct socio-geographic region having similar economic organization and social structure. Though the members of a village have contacts with persons in neighbouring villages, and even in other sections of their tribe, sometimes even in the adjacent tribes, the greater part of their activities are carried out within their own village community and their strongest ties are generally with other members of it. A village consists of a number of exogamous clans, and is organized around a number of maximal matrilineages, a group of which form the larger unit, i. e. the clan. In Nartiang there are about 64 exogamous clans, each of which again is subdivided into a number of matrilineages. Clans are named groups, like Myria, Symblain, Dhar, Dykhar etc., and all the members of a clan are given the same name. Children adopt the clan name of their mother and not of their father. It is personal difference among clan elders which leads to the formation of new matrilineages. Fission of a clan does not affect the principle of exogamy, which still has to be maintained, but it certainly means separation of all socio-religious interests and performances.

Lineage structure among the Pnar is of immense importance since the groups to be found in the social system are largely organized in terms of it. Lineages are descent

groups also. The rule of matrilineal descent is the key to Pnar social organization. The lineage groups maintain their continuity and unity by not admitting any outside person to the group. Women continue to be members of the matrilineage even after their marriage ; and their children are members of their matrilineage, for reasons quite obvious. Every individual by birth is a member of his *Kur*, matrilineage, and is governed by the rule of matrilineal descent, *Hiar Pateng*. A matrilineage consists of all the descendants of both the sexes by a known genealogy of a single ancestress in the female line. Every matrilineage is headed by a *Tre-Iing* (keeper of house) of the *Iing kur* (ancestral house) in which reside the *Blei-kur* (clan deity). The *Iing-khynnah* (female head of the matrilineage) is the *ipso facto* owner of the ancestral house and deities.

Symblai is one of the many clans residing in Nartiang. It consists of two matrilineages, each headed by Ka Nai Symblai and Ka Tymmen Symblai[4] as the *Iing-khynnah*. Ka Tymmen succeeded her mother Ka Kria Symblai, whose youngest daughter she was, and in turn she will be succeeded by her youngest daughter Ka Songbi Symblai, who is the youngest among the four daughters of Ka Tymmen. As the *Iing-khynnah* of their matrilineage Ka Tymmen, and after her Ka Songbi, with the active support and advice of the older matrikins to guide her, has to look after the socio-religious welfare of the members of the matrilineage. She has to ensure that all the relevant and necessary matrilineage level magico-religious rituals are performed as required and thus avoid any supernatural wrath on the members of the matrilineage. Her other main duties as the *Iing-khynnah* is that she has to arrange for the funeral of all the members of the matrilineage, irrespective of their sex or marital status, and after their cremation, ensure that the bones of the dead are ceremonially placed in the matrilineage repository, *Maw-shieng*, which has a special place outside the village. All matrilineage level socio-religious performances, thus, have to be managed by the *Iing-khynnah*, and she has also to bear the expenses involved. For this duty, she has the right to enjoy the benefit of the land attached to the *Iing-kur*.

Unity of individual matrilineages is a striking feature in a Pnar village. The members of a matrilineage are united by similarity of deities they worship, and their own emotional ties. Matrilineages come together at times of ancestor worship. Religious worship of the Pnar people may be classified under three levels, on the basis of the social group they involve. (i) Village-level rituals are those which have to be performed for the welfare of the village as a whole, the expenditure for which is borne by the Daloi or Lyngdoh (village Chief or Priest, respectively), as the case may be.[5] Every resident of the village is welcome to participate in the ceremony and partake of the sacrificed meat. He/she has to observe the related taboos, the infringement[6] of which is dealt with by the village council. (ii) Lineage-level rituals, i.e. those which are performed by the *Iing-khynnah* for its welfare, and which expects the participation of all members of the matrilineage. Any infringement of the related taboos or observances usually does not entail any effective social punishment; it is the fear of a supernatural wrath, and for the warding off of which a *kina* (sacrifice) has to be offered. (iii) Family-level or personal level rituals, i.e. those rituals which are performed at the family level by the female head, and in case it is for personal welfare, the Gunin (medicine man) is the performer. Such rituals whether at the family level or for personal welfare, are usually to appease some malevolent spirits.

Birth, marriage, death and the propitiation of ancestral spirits, associated as they are with the intimacy of domestic life, are all intra-lineage events. The unity of the clan *Kyntoit*, clan concentrations in the habitation of the village, which is the basis for the different localities in a village, override the individuality of the dwelling groups. Each matrilineage dwelling group stands in its ancestral house, shut in by wooden fencing. The unity of the village overrides the separateness of each clan. The basis of this unity is the economic interdependence; and its perpetuation depends on the maintenance of these economic arrangements. In everyday

life this unity of the village is hidden beneath the separate economic, social and ritual activities of each matrilineage and household ; it is sometimes rent by disputes between kin-groups. Periodically, however, some event, ceremonial or otherwise, related to the whole village occurs at which the unity of the village is affirmed. Other events and festivals involve the village as a whole. Chief of these are community weeding, reaping and paddy collection, all of which are done on the basis of mutual assistance.

The domestic group is the smallest social unit in Pnar society. There are two types of domestic groups (i) The matrilineage segments, consisting of a female (as the head of the group), her unmarried female and married or unmarried male siblings (if married, without spouses and children), unmarried female, and married or unmarried male children (if married, without spouses or their children). No affine is present in this unit. Children of only the female matrikin are permitted. Husband is a mere night visitor to his wife, and his economic activities are performed at the household of his matrikins rather than at that of his wife. This is the traditional type of Pnar domestic group. (ii) The nuclear households, which consists of a female, her husband and her children. In matrilineage segment type of domestic groups, the eldest female member is the owner of all the household property and the custodian of all socio-ritual traditions of the domestic group. She is assisted for the performance of the rituals by her nearest male matrikin, which is usually either her brother or son. Virtually the eldest male member of the matrilineage segment is the manager of the productive activities of the household. It does not, of course, give him the absolute right of taking important decisions regarding policy matters concerning the household, economically or socially, without consulting the female head. But this, on the other hand, does not minimize his say in policy matters, the consequences of which he will have to deal with rather than the female head. Males married in the matrilineage segments have nothing more than their biological importance. As fathers, they are not much attached to their children, of whom

they see very little. They visit their wives only in the night, returning very early in the morning to their own matrilineal house for food and participation in the economic activities of the day. Husbands are least concerned with the social or economic activities of their wife's household. Like his wife's brother in her household, he holds a similar status in the household of his own sister. Children very rarely see their father under such circumstances, and have therefore very little of emotional attachment to him. The husband too does not have much of emotional attachment to his wife, whom he usually meets in the night only. It is only during agriculturally slack seasons or on some ceremonial occasions, that he may visit her in the day also. Such situations have made divorce not very difficult. Divorce is quite common among the Pnar ; but the system of re-marriage by both men and women does not leave anyone without a spouse.

Nuclear domestic units, though not unknown to traditional Pnar custom have of late been gaining in popularity. Contact with 'outer' cultures, most of which are patrilineal, improvement in the means of communication, emergence of private property of males, the spread of education, and above all the spread and the growing influence of Christianity have been some of the main factors responsible for the present drift towards 'patriliny', or, what might be termed as the emancipation of Pnar males. A Pnar male no more likes to be a mere passive partner in domestic affairs, which has been so long managed mainly by the female head. He does not feel contended with only managing the property which in fact belongs to his mother or sister, but he wants to own it and spend as he likes, maybe on his own children as a father. He has begun to pose a problem by saying, 'Why should I spend my earning on the children of my sister, who are the progeny of another man, not living with my sister or sharing her economic pursuits ?' Such situations have lead to conflict-situations necessitating a balance between the traditional emotional ties anong matrikin and the emerging emotional ties between spouses and between parent and children.

The various conflicting domestic arrangements present

different ways of reconciling the conflicting claims and sentiments characteristic of the present Pnar kinship system. On the one hand are the overwhelming bonds of matrilineal kinship which embrace those arising out of motherhood ; on the other hand are the ties of marriage and paternity. The Pnar are very much preoccupied with this problem, and it has added greatly to their mental tension and conflicts. The problem has been aggravated by missionary activity and economic influences. Missionary teaching lays special stress on bonds of marriage and parenthood ; moreover, modern opportunities of accumulation of private property by males work in favour of strengthening the ties between father and children.

Authority role-status in a Pnar village can be identified at three different levels of social integration, i.e. at the village level, at the clan or lineage level, and at the domestic group or household level. It is in the economic, social, religious, and political action-involvement of the people that authority operates in a Pnar village. At the village level, for the people, traditionally, the Daloi is the authority figure. He is elected on the basis of male adult franchise from among the members of a few clans of the village. It is only a few named clans in every *elaka* (jurisdiction) headquarter village which enjoy the privilege of puttiug up candidates for the post of Daloi. The Daloi is the custodian of all village-level socio-religious observances, the contravention of which by any villager is punishable by the Daloi in council, i.e. with his court consisting of the Pator(s), Bhasan(s) etc. The Daloi also hears petty cases of dispute among villagers and may either bring about a reconciliation or fine the guilty. He is also a government appointed commission agent to collect land revenue from the cultivators. This gives him wide revenue powers, as most of the village revenue records are with him. Moreover, the maintenance of sanctity of conjugal relationships between husband and wife, by deciding cases where one of the spouse has deprived the other of her/his just rights, is also looked after by the Daloi. In the case of any disregard of his

decision, which is traditionally taken to be binding, the mechanism with which he has to enforce his decision on the defaulting party is through mobilizing social disapproval of the act of the guilty, and at the most, dissociation from the normal daily life. The role of the Daloi as an authority figure in the life of the people in a Pnar village or even *elaka* was and continues to be more restrictive rather than prescriptive. With Christianity have come up village churches and church elders, who have also assumed the role of preachers, which in other terms means prescribers. This has led to the depletion in the authority status of the Daloi in certain matters and among a section of the villagers, usually the Christian population. Besides the Daloi at the village level, there is no other person who wields authority because of the social position associated with him. There may be a number of functional or opinion leaders, including the church elders ; but their authority status is based more on personal and situational factors than on their social position. The Daloi represents the whole village, and any contravention of the authority status of the Daloi transcends beyond him, because it means contravention of a well-established norm, which in turn is of concern to all the members of the village. We should not confuse between a village level authority-figure and leaders. The latter may or may not be able to command authority over their followers. Moreover, leadership does not imply subordination of the followers, the Daloi as an authority-figure does imply sense of subordination for the villagers.

At the clan level there is practically no authority-figure. This is because the clan, as a social unit, does not have any basis for operation in a Pnar village. Instead of the clan, it is the matrilineage which forms the nexus for social interaction and group identification for the people living in a village. The authority-figure at the matrilineage level is the *Iing-khynnah* (female head) of the *Iing-Blei* (matrilineage ancestral house), who is also the *Tre-iung* (keeper of the house). Her primary role is of the preserver of traditions, which she does, firstly, by herself discharging her socio-religious obligations towards the matrilineage and its members, and, secondly, by

preventing any member of the matrilineage from contravening the established norms and values of matrilineage cleavage and supernatural conformity. The female keeper of the ancestral house wields her authority over, rather it is restricted to, the socio-religious spheres of life of the members of the matrilineage.

At the domestic level, the spheres of authority can be said, for the purpose of our analysis, to be divided into two categories, viz, socio-economic authority and that stemming out of personal loyalty. Like the matrilineage authority structure, socio-religious authority at the domestic group level is with the female head, who is also the keeper of the household deity. She is the custodian of the matrilineage norms and traditions, and ensures that they are maintained at the domestic group level. She derives the sanction for her authority from the powers delegated to her by the matrilineage. This delegation is not deliberate ; rather it is a part of the Pnar social system. The economic authority of the female head of the household is because of the fact that all property is vested in her and she alone has the sole right over it. Her authority over other members of the household in regard to their economic activities is directly correlated with her duty to provide them with economic support.

NOTES

I am deeply indebted to Dr. K. S. Mathur, Head of the Department of Anthropology, Lucknow University, for the pains he took to go through the draft of the paper and also for his useful suggestions.

1. No work has been done on the study of the culture of the Pnar exclusively. All the studies made have been of the Khasi people, living in the neighbouring Khasi Hills, and reference has been made to the Synteng (the name used by the Khasi for the Pnar). The first authentic and detailed study made of the tribes of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills was by Gurdon, followed by Cantlie. Chattopadhyay has also made significant contribution to the study of the social organization and culture change of the Khasi people. Marion Pugh, Hari Blah (both Khasi) and Banerjee (of the Anthropological Survey of India) have also studied some aspects of Khasi culture.

2. It has been defined by Schneider and Gough (1961) as a unit 'whose members, male and female, engage in regular, daily, or near daily economic relationships and who co-reside for the greater part of their time. One

spouse visits the other rather than living mainly in the other's home, and the economic co-operation of each sex with matrilineal kin is more significant and mandatory than that of spouses with each other.'

3. I have preferably made use of the word domestic group rather than family. The Pnar are a matrilineal people and the traditional household pattern is matrilocal rather than conjugal. Thus family in the strict sense of the term, as used by Linton, does not exist in Pnar society.

4. The prefix *Ka* denotes that it is the name of a female, *U* is the prefix used for male names.

5. In case of the *elaka* headquarter villages the Daloi, being the highest official available, is the ritual performer. In other villages of the *elaka* the Lyngdoh, being the highest official available locally, is the ritual performer of the village-level rituals.

6. Village-level rituals may pertain to agriculture. There are a number of such rituals, and it is mandatory for each cultivator to regulate his agricultural operations with the performance of the related rituals. Besides this, the Daloi, as in the case of agricultural rituals, may ask the participation of the whole village in other socio-religious obligations, like cleaning of the village roads, fighting plague in the village, etc. and issue orders like that of *khang-luti*, i.e. 'the roads have been closed' and every villager is expected to report to the Daloi for duty. Any default is punishable.

OCCUPATION CLASS, MIGRATION AND FAMILY STRUCTURE AMONG THE REFUGEES OF WEST BENGAL, 1947-48*

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Abstract. The refugees of West Bengal, 1947-48 have been studied with respect to their affiliation to different occupation classes in highlighting their differential behaviour towards migration and family organization.

THE historical event of partition of undivided Bengal in 1947 was significantly responsible for engendering mass displacement of Hindu households from erstwhile East Bengal (East Pakistan). Of the displaced persons, those who came to take shelter especially in different districts of West Bengal were surveyed by the Indian Statistical Institute in 1947-48. A sample size of 17436 refugee family-units was originally within the purview of this investigation. But due to incomplete recording, not more than 16156 family units were found useful for the study in view. On further scrutiny it was gathered that in only 11880 out of these 16156 units, each and every member had migrated from East Bengal. As such, 11880 units only have been taken into consideration in the context of the present study. The details of the sampling procedure adopted in this survey are obtainable from the Report of the Institute[1].

In earlier studies of these refugees of West Bengal attempts were made to study the modes of migration and family organization among the people concerned in general[2] and also in particular in terms of the caste-groups[3] ascertainable among

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them. An examination of specific characteristics associated with the issues mentioned above has largely helped in understanding some important aspects of social behaviour of an evicted Hindu group, the members of which were thrown out of their regular homeland with abnormal rapidity and had to experience tremendous societal/familial disorganization. In this paper specific study has been undertaken to examine if the central economic ties of the principal family-supporters who were, prior to migration, engaged in different sectors of gainful occupational activities did exercise any discriminating influence on their behaviour after displacement. Again, we have also tried to find out if the refugees belonging to different occupation-classes in East Bengal behaved differently in consolidating disrupted family organizations in rural and urban places of destination within West Bengal. Contextually, special emphasis has been laid on the exposition of the salient features of the family structures that were found to exist among the refugees *immediately* after their migration in the State in 1947-48.

For the purpose of the present study, the refugee family units have first of all been sifted to place them under four broad occupational groups in accordance with the vocation of the principal supporter of the respective unit before migration. Occupations of allied nature give rise thus to the following four groups :—(i) Agriculture and allied vocations, (ii) Trade and Commerce and allied activities, (iii) Service and allied jobs, and (iv) Others, including callings that are not included in any one of the first three groups. These groups conform, in fact, to the major sectors of gainful pursuits (Industry) of the country. It is to be noted that 281 out of 11,880 family-units showed no pre-migrational attachment to any gainful occupation in East Bengal and, as such, these units have been left out of consideration for the present. Before proceeding to discuss the importance of the findings as well as of the conclusions derived from the same in the paper, it is to be pointed out that the present attempt is restricted to the consideration of only seventy-two per cent of the 16,156 refugee family units. Nevertheless, it is expected that the paper would

be of some use in highlighting the trend of occupation-class-wise migration and family formation among the refugees of West Bengal.

From the standpoint of migration from East Bengal, the refugees of the occupation-classes in question presented certain notable features which are as follows (Table 1); (a) The refugee households which were dependent on Agriculture and its related work for subsistence came, as it should be, mostly but not wholly from rural areas of East Bengal (35%). It is interesting that in as many as 16% cases, the constituent-members resided exclusively in urban areas but earned their livelihood from agricultural sources; but their constituent members did not reside exclusively either in urban or in rural areas, but remained partly in villages and partly in urban centres of East Bengal. It is most significant that less than one-third of the total refugee families surveyed were connected prior to migration with agriculture and allied vocations. This means that agriculture-bound families and persons did not form the dominant group among the refugee population in question at the time of the survey. (b) Secondly, it is observed that the migrant families which earned livelihood from trade and commerce and allied activities in East Bengal migrated in equal strength (36%) from rural and urban areas. In relatively lesser strength (24%) were those families whose members lived scattered partly in rural and partly in urban areas before migration but depended on trade and commerce. Though only a little more than one-third of the total refugees dependent on trade and commerce in East Bengal, yet quite significantly, such families and persons constituted the single dominant group among the refugees of West Bengal in 1947-48. (c) Thirdly, the principal earners who were engaged in service or bureaucratic professions were associated most remarkably with those families whose members resided before migration partly in rural and partly in urban areas (48 per cent), whereas the families which migrated with all members from only rural areas depended least on the sources of bureaucratic occupations (18 per cent) in East Bengal. From these facts it appears strongly that the earners of the families belonging especially

to the bureaucratic professions resided very largely in urban areas, while keeping their family dependants in rural areas. At the time of migration, the earners of urban areas together with their rural dependants came away in large numbers. As a result, such singular concentration (proportional) of the families concerned is met with under the category of 'rural-urban areas' of migration. On the other hand, the number of refugee families depending on services but living only in urban areas of East Bengal were, of course, not insignificant among the displaced population of the State. (d) Lastly, the refugees depending on miscellaneous types of occupation other than agricultural, trade and commerce or bureaucratic services were most conspicuously the members of those families which came very dominantly from rural areas (12 per cent) of East Bengal.

On further examination, it is found that the refugee families which migrated exclusively from rural areas of East Bengal were in the majority associated with trade and commerce rather than agriculture, whereas those moving out of urban areas were dependent on bureaucratic services rather than on trade and commerce. On the other hand, the migrant families whose members resided prior to migration partly in rural and partly in urban areas, were dependent exclusively on bureaucratic services of the earners.

In general, it is important that only 30 out of every 100 refugee family units were actually agriculture-bound units to be disturbed in East Bengal by the riotous situation of 1947-48. In that initial phase of mass migration, Hindu families and persons depending particularly upon trade and commerce became the chief victims, and they were next followed by those who were in bureaucratic services in East Bengal. It is significant that the bulk (60 per cent) of the refugees who came to West Bengal in 1947-48 were non-agricultural people.

In contrast to their journey from East Bengal, the movements of the refugees within West Bengal have also been examined in order to gather some facts of sociological significance (Table 2).

(1) Families which were dependent on agricultural occupations had conspicuously concentrated in village areas (37 per cent) of West Bengal ; but the magnitude of such agriculture-bound families and persons in city areas of the State (32 per cent) was, no doubt, of a special interest in any consideration of the refugees under reference. In towns of the State, the displaced persons who belonged to the same occupation-class of agriculture were in comparatively small numbers. Under the circumstances, it is understandable that with their previous intimate attachment to agriculture and allied jobs, the refugee families concerned would feel like seeking in large measure village environs in the receiving country. But when a sizable portion of the migrant people belonging to the same occupation-class prefer to stick to city environs, the social situation becomes doubly infested with many pressing problems.

(2) It is of interest to learn that the displaced family units which were primarily linked with trade and commerce came largely to city areas. Their degree of concentration thinned out from town to village in West Bengal. Refugee families and persons linked with trade and commerce preferred to settle down significantly in the non-rural areas of the State. Actually, 72 out of every 100 families of this occupation-class were found to have concentrated in towns and cities of the State at the time of survey.

(3) Migrant families maintained by bureaucratic professions in East Bengal were found in maximum strength in towns (29 per cent) ; their least concentration being in the villages of West Bengal. On the other hand, though the bureaucratic families migrated in lesser strength than those depending on either agriculture or trade and commerce, yet they gravitated more towards urban areas of the receiving country. As a matter of fact, it has been found that while only 10 out of every 100 family units belonging only to the bureaucratic services had gone to seek shelter in villages of West Bengal, 13 out of 100 family units depending on trade and commerce only went to the same rural areas. In contrast, 20 out of every 100 agricul-

tural family units moved into villages of the State of West Bengal.

(4) Refugees dependent on occupations other than agriculture, trade and commerce and services were present to the extent of 19 per cent in villages and 5 per cent in the cities of West Bengal.

In addition to the above findings, it was also observed that among the refugees surveyed particularly in rural areas of the State, though the single majority was formed by those who came from agricultural families, non-agricultural families and persons actually outnumbered people belonging to the agricultural class. On the other hand, among the displaced population enumerated in town areas only of the State, the majority was formed by those who depended on trade and commerce in East Bengal. Interestingly, in towns, of all the refugee families, agricultural families formed a little more than one-fourth cases only. Again, among the refugees who came to city areas only of West Bengal, were principally men who depended on trade and commerce in East Bengal. It is however equally significant that the agricultural refugee families occupied the second place in the city areas of the State.

Refugees belonging to four distinct occupational groups in East Bengal showed several characteristics in regard to migration in 1947-48. These are:* (1) non-agricultural Hindu families and persons migrated in greater numbers from East Bengal in general. Even from East Bengal villages such non-agricultural Hindus came in greater numbers than Hindus dependent on agriculture. (2) The bulk of the migrant Hindus took shelter in urban areas of West Bengal, and in doing so the agricultural families and persons made a significant appearance among the city-bound refugees from East Bengal.

Under the circumstances, these displaced Hindus were found to have different forms of corporate living in various co-resident and commensal kin-groups. A study of these kin-groups that the refugees maintained immediately after their migration from East Bengal to West Bengal constitutes in the

present context, an important task. Accordingly, analysis has been made to examine how the refugee Hindus belonging to different occupation-classes in question behaved to organize family structures in the State (Table 3). From the examination it is revealed that (i) among the refugees those who were exclusively living alone by themselves in different places of West Bengal were mainly dependent before migration on agriculture (10 per cent) and the fewest were connected with trade and commerce (7 per cent). As the very presence of such non-familial single-member units (males and/or females) testifies significantly to the process of family disintegration, it appears from the above that the agricultural Hindu families of East Bengal suffered relatively greatest disintegration. In general, among the refugee population in 8 out of every 100 units dominance of non-familial single members was quite conspicuous in indicating the extent to which the migrating families in question suffered disorders in kinship integrity.

(ii) On the other hand, it is noted that the refugees who were dependent in East Bengal on miscellaneous non-agricultural vocations showed relatively the strongest disposition (32 per cent) after migration in favour of non-extended family organizations with and without any complex-constituents (patri-and/or matri-kins of unit's head). But, those who were linked with trade and commerce and bureaucratic services in East Bengal organized such non-extended family structures almost in equal strength after migration.

(iii) Again, it is interesting that irrespective of the character of their occupation, the refugee Hindus concerned presented no sharp differentiation among themselves in organizing joint families in the new social environment of West Bengal. The very fact of the existence of joint family units in 47 out of every 100 co-resident and communal units was singularly important in the context of the question of the continuing viability of kinship solidarity among the migrating Hindus under the exceptional situation of West Bengal in 1947-48.

Occupation-class-wise variations in migration and family formation have been separately marked among the refugee population in question and several interesting features have

come to our notice. But to appreciate the result of the combined effect of the three major social attributes, namely, (i) family structures, (ii) pre-migrational identity in occupation class (agriculture/trade and commerce/services) and (iii) mode of migration (from East Bengal to village/town/city areas of West Bengal) on the migrating refugee group as a whole, further observations were made (table 4). Several notable features that have significantly emerged out of this examination are placed below.

(a) Among the refugees those who were primarily dependent on agriculture and allied vocations only in East Bengal maintained the following forms of family living after moving to different places of West Bengal. Single-members living alone in non-familial units concentrated most dominantly in villages, though their occurrence in cities was not negligible. Again, in respect of their movement to village/town/city areas of the State the Hindus of this occupation-class organized conjugal and elementary family units without any complex constituent almost in equal strength ; but those who formed the same non-extended family units together with complex-constituent moved dominantly to villages and least to city areas. On the other hand, those who were living in extended (joint) families without any complex constituent migrated significantly to city and town areas in equal strengths. In general, it is of interest to learn that the refugee Hindus who were particularly required to maintain some patri- and/or matri-kins (complex-constituents) together with all primary family members in joint or non-joint units went mostly to villages of West Bengal in search of settlements.

(b) Secondly, with respect to the displaced Hindus who depended principally on trade and commerce, the undernoted trend in the family formation has been observed to occur in different places of West Bengal. Concentration of the refugees (male and female) who were living alone by themselves was relatively highest in city areas. Again, those who were living in non-extended conjugal and simple units together with and without complex constituents migrated significantly more to

rural than to urban areas. On the other hand, those who lived in joint family units without any complex constituents preferred mostly to settle in city areas and least in village areas. But, those who were in the joint family units along with some complex constituent migrated in maximum strength to towns and not to city areas of the State. In general, joint family units were more maintained in urban areas and especially in city areas of West Bengal by refugees who lived by trade and commerce in East Bengal.

(c) Thirdly, the bureaucratic Hindus from East Bengal maintianed the following forms of family in West Bengal. Among them those who led non-familial single member's life moved to seek shelter in city areas in largest numbers. On the other hand, the refugees who organized non-extended conjugal and elementary units without any complex constituent went more or less in equal strength to villages and towns ; but distinctly in lesser strength to city areas. Further, it is quite interesting that those who formed particularly joint families with and without complex constituent migrated mostly to towns and least to villages. In general, the refugee Hindus of this occupation-class maintained simple (non-joint) families most conspicuously in villages rather than towns or cities after migration, whereas they formed joint families in town areas rather than in city or village areas of West Bengal.

In summing up the important trends of social developments in the life of the displaced Hindus of West Bengal in 1947-48, it may be pointed out significantly that (1) at the time of the present survey (1947-48) among the refugees concerned dominant group was formed by those Hindus who were primarily depending for subsistence on various non-agricultural avocations in East Bengal. This means that in the early stages of communal disturbances, Hindus associated with agriculture and allied activites were prompted in lesser degree to part permanently with their homes and hearths. In general, it appears that with the very start of the social calamity in their places of regular residence, the Hindu families who depended on trade, business and allied commercial activities or

on bureaucratic occupations reacted more quickly and took far-reaching decisions in favour of migration for good from East Bengal.

(2) After reaching the soil of West Bengal, the Hindu refugees behaved distinctly differently in new means of living or in the matter of settlement. The most significant development was with the people belonging to the occupation-class of agriculture. Among them, majority was formed by those who preferred to settle in villages in consonance with their previous tradition but a sizable portion settled down in the cities of the State. The non-agricultural refugee families and persons living by trade and commerce, went to city surroundings for obvious reasons ; only a little more than one-fourth of them selected villages for settlement. But the refugees who lived by bureaucratic services went in a majority to the towns and not the cities of the State, though a fifth managed to stick to Calcutta and Howrah, perhaps in the hope of some form of employment. Such developments are, indeed, of utmost importance in any sociological appraisal of the migrant groups in question.

(3) Notwithstanding their variation in terms of occupation, in overt behaviours affecting pattern of migration beyond East Bengal or within West Bengal the refugee Hindus under study presented in general unquestionably a significant development in maintaining joint families in singular strength (46 per cent) among themselves immediately after migration. That the refugees could maintain kinship integrity of such a high order even after migration to the completely new socio-cultural setting of West Bengal was, indeed, a unique development in the face of the social disruption which had taken place. Sociologically it is of immediate interest to learn that in spite of utter disorder leading to total uprootment from social and economic life in erstwhile East Bengal, the Hindu refugees succeeded thus in resisting the worst effects of family disintegration.

Thus in the final analysis, it emerges that the persistence of the cultural form of the Hindu way of family living was most

likely the essential determinant in preserving ultimately the kinship solidarity in as high as 92 per cent of all the total family units surveyed.

(Thanks are due to Professor R. Mukherjee, Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, for the facility of the present work he accorded kindly to the author).

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TABLE 1

Percentage distribution of the refugees by occupation-classes and areas of migration in East Bengal, 1947-48.

Occupation-class	Area in East Bengal from where migrated			Total
	Rural areas	Urban areas	Rural urban areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture	34.68	16.15	23.30	29.62
Trade and Commerce	36.00	35.74	23.98	35.18
Services	17.60	40.01	48.09	24.78
Others	11.72	8.10	4.63	10.42
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(Number of units)	(8148)	(2717)	(734)	(11599)

Value of chi-square=909.801 with 6 d. f. ; probability=less than .001

TABLE 2

Percentage distribution of the refugees by occupation-classes and areas of migration in West Bengal, 1947-48.

Occupation-class	Area in West Bengal to where migrated			Total
	Village areas	Town areas	City areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture	37.27	26.72	31.84	29.62
Trade and Commerce	27.91	34.57	41.78	35.18
Services	15.42	28.78	20.91	24.78
Others	19.40	9.93	5.47	10.42
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(Number of units)	(1881)	(7011)	(2707)	(11599)

Value of chi-square 463.410 with 6 d. f. ; probability=less than '001

TABLE 3

Percentage distribution of the refugee families and persons by occupation-class in West Bengal, 1947-1948

Family structure	Occupation class				Total
	Agriculture	Trade and commerce	Services	Others	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Non-familial unit (man)	7.94	6.40	7.45	5.62	7.03
Non-familial unit (woman)	2.44	0.51	0.80	3.39	1.46
Conjugal	3.38	4.34	3.24	6.45	4.00
Elementary (simple)	32.07	34.51	35.28	36.64	34.20
Extended (joint)	37.78	39.09	38.41	32.26	37.82
Non-familial (man)-complex*	0.64	0.41	0.31	0.41	0.46
Non-familial (woman)-complex	0.38	0.32	0.24	0.50	0.34
Conjugal-complex	0.87	1.25	0.80	2.40	1.15
Elementary-complex	5.62	5.25	5.29	5.71	5.41
Extended-complex	8.88	7.92	8.18	6.62	8.13
All structures	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
(Number of units)	(3436)	(4080)	(2874)	(1209)	(11599)

Value of chi-square=179.253 with 27 d. f. ; probability=less than .001

* 'Complex'—constituent of a family refers to any female patrikin and/ro matrikins of the head (Ego).

TABLE 4

Percentage distribution of the refugee family structures by the occupation-class of Agriculture/Trade and Commerce/Services and areas of migration from East Bengal to village/city/town areas of West Bengal, 1947-48

Family structures	Refugees migrating from East Bengal to West Bengal into			Total
	Village areas	Town areas	City areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Agriculture-occupation class				
Non-familial units (man and woman)	13.27	9.02	11.25	10.45
Conjugal and elementary units	36.38	34.70	36.54	35.50
Extended (joint) units	28.81	40.04	40.14	37.78
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	10.56	7.00	6.27	7.54
Extended units with complex	10.98	9.24	5.80	8.73
All structures (no. of units)	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	(701)	(1873)	(862)	(3436)
Value of chi-square=53.140 with 8 d. f. ; probability=less than 0.001				
Trade and Commerce occupation-class				
Non-familial units (man and woman)	7.43	5.94	8.75	6.91
Conjugal and elementary units	43.24	38.70	37.67	38.99
Extended (joint) units	33.14	39.15	42.35	39.27
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	8.95	7.38	5.84	7.16
Extended units with complex	7.24	8.83	5.39	7.67
All structures (no. of units)	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	(525)	(2442)	(1131)	(4080)
Value of chi-square =37.123 with 8 d. f. ; probability = less than 0.001				

Family structures	Refugees migrating from East Bengal to West Bengal into			Total
	Village areas	Town areas	City areas	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Services-occupation class			
Non-familial units (man aud woman)	8.62	7.04	12.37	8.25
Conjugal and elementary units	39.66	38.55	36.40	38.24
Extended (joint) units	35.17	38.65	37.98	38.17
Non-extended family and non-familial units with complex	8.62	6.39	6.71	6.68
Extended units with complex	7.93	9.37	6.54	8.66
All structures (no. of units)	100.00 (290)	100.00 (2018)	100.00 (566)	100.00 (2874)

Value of chi-square = 22.971 with 8 d. f. ; probability lies between .01 and .001

THE WORK OF A PANCHAYAT IN MYSORE

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Abstract : Recently panchayats formed under the new Act are replacing the old type of caste panchayats. The author attended three meetings of such a panchayat in Mysore, and records his own observations about how they work.

THE concept of democratic decentralization of power has gained rapid momentum recently, and the village is given scope for development by formulating its own plans and programmes. To achieve this, the statutory panchayats are coming into vogue, thus replacing the traditional village panchayat based on caste and hereditary membership. The new panchayat body is distinguished by its democratic set-up with the representation of duly elected members. One naturally expects a different kind of functioning of the new body as against the old. The present paper intends to examine the panchayat body and its working in a group of villages in Mysore State. The study pertains to a panchayat which comprises four villages, namely, Hariharapura, Kurmenahalli, Ternenohalli and Bommenahalli in Mysore State. The panchayat has been functioning since 1960 after the introduction of Statutory Panchayat Body in the State. The four villages are situated close to each other and Hariharapura is the panchayat headquarters. All the villages are dominated by members belonging to the Vokkaliga caste who form the bulk of the population. The Vokkaligas are the land-owning people of this region, though they are not big landlords. By virtue of their numerical strength, though not of their wealth, they have gained dominance over other castes in the village.

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This panchayat is constituted by 13 members from the four villages. This includes two women, who have been nominated. Of the 13 members, only one member (the Vice-chairman) won the seat through election. The others were unanimously selected, because of their long association with their village affairs; they had been the traditional leaders of their villages.

Among the 13 members, 9 members including the two women belonged to the Vokkaliga caste. Two members belonged to Harijan caste and one each belonged to Nayak caste (FISHERMAN) and Pillay, another low caste (a caste of manual labourers). The Vice-chairman is a Vokkaliga and he was the only candidate to face contest, as mentioned above. He was opposed by another Vokkaliga, who is also a relative of his. Till today these two people do not talk to each other.

The election of office-bearers like Chairman and Vice-chairman was also unanimous. The Chairman is a wealthy, young Vokkaliga. The Vice-chairman is middle-aged and well-to-do. This unanimous selection of office-bearers did not indicate either the ability or enthusiasm of the Chairman and the Vice-chairman in the welfare of the village. Among the members these two people are the only wealthy people and this perhaps facilitated their unanimous selection to office. The Chairman owns a large area of land and a rice-mill in his village. He also advances loans to the villagers, and this has brought him recognition in the village. Further, he has contact with many leaders in the taluk headquarters and gets things done through them. Whereas the other members do not have such contact with leaders or officials outside the village. As a result, the members do not have any up-to-date knowledge about the new panchayat system. Yet they looked upon it as something very familiar to them since a long time.

The panchayat meetings are held regularly, although the quorum is not strictly maintained. The two women members do not attend the meeting at all. One Harijan member died about a year ago and nobody has been elected uptil now, and there is no likelihood of it since the new election is approaching nearer. The Village Level Worker (V.L.W.) was the

Convener and Secretary of the panchayat. However, later a whole-time Secretary was appointed when the author left the field.

Hariharapura does not have any panchayat hall, although it is the panchayat headquarters. Till recently the meetings were held in the school building. But later, the meetings were held in the house of the Chairman at Bommenahalli which is half a mile away from the headquarters. It was said that this was arranged to enable the Chairman to attend and conduct the meeting, as he is single-handed and cannot find time to go elsewhere leaving his work. Practically, the panchayat office is located in his own house due to lack of proper accommodation.

A meeting was held on 6 November 1966 at the house of the Chairman and I attended it with the permission of the Chairman, after briefly explaining my purpose. The notice was sent to all the members and many assembled in the house of the Chairman. The meeting was scheduled to be held at 1 p.m. but actually commenced at 2.45 p.m. as the Chairman was busy with his own work. The Chairman walked in and presided over the meeting without expressing any regret for his delay. Out of 13 members 7 were present and the quorum was complete. Besides these members, about a dozen people from the four villages were also present with several applications and petitions. Among them was the functional leader of Hariharapura. He is a Vokkaliga. He had come there as a casual visitor. But his intention was to plead the case of one of his fellow villagers in connexion with the allotment of a building site.

The business of the meeting went on informally for about 30 minutes. Neither the Chairman formally told the council about the commencement of the meeting nor were the previous resolutions read and confirmed. However, the Chairman was constantly saying that he strictly adhered to rules and procedures. Yet no specific issue was discussed and recorded. It was quite interesting to see the deliberate participation in the discussion and suggestions by the visitors. The functional leader, referred to above, took a leading part in the discussion

and even made suggestions. This almost presented a scene of chatting among members of an informal group. The Chairman scrutinized the applications presented by the villagers. One of the applications caught sight of the Chairman. A villager had been given a house-site two years ago for a sum of Rs. 100, paid to the Chairman who had handed it over to the then Secretary for deposit. This Secretary was also the Shanbogh (hereditary village accountant) of the village. The villager had not paid the revenue tax for his land for two years. The Shanbogh knew this and got a chance to recover the arrears. But had not given the villager any receipt for the amount already paid. The villager also did not mind it. But recently he was asked to pay the value of the site which is overdue. And in reply to this he made an application to the Chairman pleading that the amount was paid to the Chairman long ago, yet he had not been given any receipt.

The Chairman was angry as he was being exposed about irregularities. In a loud voice he asked the petitioner to obtain the receipt from the then Secretary without indulging in speaking against him. At this, the functional leader interfered in order to settle the issue. He said that both the Chairman and the then Secretary were responsible ; and he suggested to the petitioner to bring the former Secretary and settle the issue before the Chairman. On hearing this suggestion the Chairman rose to his feet and told the functional leader, 'I say, shut up, you have no right to interfere in the meeting.' The entire assembly was silent for a few minutes. Then the normal work was resumed and the functional leader left the place with some other observers. Later, the Chairman again took up the case and said, 'I did not touch the money at all but asked the Secretary to take it and issue a receipt when the petitioner paid the amount before us. I am not responsible for the lack of receipt as has been alleged by the petitioner.' Then he asked the Secretary to record that 'legal action will be taken against the petitioner if he does not vacate the site occupied by him without any payment.' After this incident, some two or three subjects were moved by other members and passed unanimously without discussion. The members

present in the meeting did not raise any objection to the proposals put by any one of them. Because the proposals were put forth by the members of the respective villages only in respect of their villages, this did not give any chance for disagreement among others. And the members were satisfied when their proposals for their own village were approved, and did not think it reasonable to raise any objection to others' proposals.

Before the close of the meeting, the Chairman again began a casual talk about the incident that took place with the functional leader. An aged member of the panchayat suggested that stern action should not be taken against the aforesaid petitioner. But the Chairman replied that he does not mind taking the matter to the Court, 'If this is done,' he said, 'people will know what the new panchayat is.' Then the meeting was closed at 4.30 p.m.

News about the incident that took place in the meeting soon spread in Hariharapura. The functional leader left the meeting quietly, and as he reached his village he entered the tea-shop and began to talk about the meeting in a high voice. This created curiosity and there was a small gathering. When the functional leader was asked as to why he had left the meeting in the middle, he said, 'Why should I be present when I was insulted by the Chairman ?' He continued saying, 'I had to swallow the insult because I had gone to his house. Why should the meeting be held in the residence of the Chairman when it is not the panchayat headquarters ?' The people in the tea-shop agreed, although they did not question why the functional leader was present in the meeting when he was not a member of the panchayat.

As evening approached, many people assembled as usual near the tea-shop. The Patel who is regarded as prestige leader of the village (who is also a Vokkaliga) came and joined the functional leader. He is a matriculate, wealthy and has access to many political leaders and officials in the taluk headquarters. Both these two leaders raised the question why the meeting should be conducted in the Chairman's house instead of in the village which is officially the panchayat head-

quarters. The simple issue was thus being complicated by two elements : the manipulation of the prestige leader who had nothing to do with the affair but wanted to tarnish the prestige of the Chairman, and the regional outlook among the supporters of the members involved in the dispute.

After a few days the petitioner received a notice from the panchayat office to pay the cost of the site where he had built the house, or else to vacate the site. This was taken to the prestige leader who asked the petitioner to reply to the notice stating that the value of the site and two years' rent had already been paid by him.

The next meeting was called on 14 November 1966 at 2 p.m. at the residence of the Chairman. The Chairman was absent and the Vice-chairman was to preside over the meeting. It was 3 p. m., yet the quorum was not full. Only four members including the Vice-chairman were present. The V. L. W. who acts as Secretary tried to get members and asked the Vice-chairman to wait for another thirty minutes. The Vice-chairman insisted that the meeting shall be held as it is not possible to expect the required number of members to attend the meeting. To our dismay, he also suggested that the signatures of the other members who were absent would be obtained later. But the V. L. W. dissuaded him and the meeting was adjourned.

The adjourned meeting was held on 21 November 1966 at 3 p. m. On this day 7 members including the Chairman attended the meeting. The meeting was held in the house of the Chairman. The V. L. W. read the proceeding of the last meeting. The Chairman had a pile of applications before him for allotment of building sites. Among them was found the reply of the said petitioner. The petitioner (having been directed by the Patel of his village) had stated that he had paid the value of the site and rent for two years. The Chairman asked the V. L. W. to issue another notice to produce documentary evidence to prove his contention. Afterwards, a few topics about alloting sites at Hariharapura and Kurmenahalli were discussed and decisions were taking unanimously and the meeting ended at 5 p. m.

The third meeting, which was the last one I attended, was held on 25 December 1966 at the residence of the Chairman. There were only 4 members including the Chairman and Vice-chairman. Three more persons were required to form the quorum. However the Chairman did not take much heed of this. As in the last two meetings, there were some villagers with applications in hand. They all placed them before the Chairman who went on scrutinizing them one by one. The applications were for the allotment of house-sites. The Chairman arbitrarily fixed the value of the site and asked the applicants to pay the sum on the spot. This was done by two applicarts.

The Chairman asked the V. L. W. to receive money and issue receipts to the parties concerned. Later the Chairman asked the V. L. W. to record the proceedings. The V. L. W. pleaded that he could not write the resolution in the absence of proper quorum. The Chairman retorted that the signatures of the absent members would be obtained later and he (V. L. W.) need not be afraid of anything. The V. L. W. then acquiesced. Another point which strikes us is that, as already stated, none of the members disagreed with the Chairman's decision and so it is not difficult for him to obtain their signature in the resolution book even if they did not attend the meeting, or even if the memo was not circulated to them. For this meeting the memo was circulated to only 7 members, as it was not possible to meet the rest as they were busy with their harvest.

Apart from the procedural aspect, the business of the meeting was also not systematic. The main work was the distribution of house-sites. The distribution was simple but deliberate. Priority was not considered. When the applications were placed in the hands of the Chairman he stated that sites would be allotted at once to those who paid the cost immediately. Some of the applicants who knew the procedure beforehand, had come prepared and got their allotments. Others were not aware of this, while still others pleaded their inability to pay the cost at once. One of the members of the panchayat said that the sites be allotted first and some time may be given to the parties to pay the cost and take possession.

But the Chairman said that it would not be possible to keep the issue open like this. His view was carried and others including the applicants had no voice against his decision.

The value of the sites was arbitrarily fixed by the Chairman. Some concession was made, however, if the party had the support of a panchayat member. Such concessions were given in this meeting to three Vokkaligas. But no such concession was given to a WEAVER ; and not even a site was given to Vaishnava. In the latter case, the members argued that it is not possible to give more sites to a party than what he actually needs. But two Vokkaligas were given sites although they owned houses in the village. When the WEAVER applicant raised this point the Vice-chairman pulled him down.

Comments & Conclusion

1. The new panchayat body while giving chances for democratic elements is marked by its arbitrary character. We are not sure if this was also the character of traditional panchayats. But in the present one, at least, the voice of an important and wealthy person seems to carry the day.

2. The dominant caste still plays a decisive role in the panchayat affairs.

3. Regional feeling in the panchayat body has lost significance, thanks to the formation of panchayats by bringing together several villages. But regionalism plays its role among members of the village community and this cuts across the boundary of the caste also.

4. The panchayat body tends to become an arena for political activities in villages.

LEADERSHIP IN A TRIBAL SOCIETY

A. C. SINHA

Abstract : The author describes a case in which the traditional type of leadership is giving place to a new type of leadership emerging out of the Constitutional changes which have taken place in the country. He shows how the old and the new act sometimes in conflict and sometimes in co-operation with one another.

TRADITIONALLY, the secular and the religious leadership among the Santals are combined in one person incorporating the functions of legislature, judiciary and executive. The leader of the most important territorial unit, the village, is known as the Dharam Manjhi, who performs his duties with the help of the secondary officials like the Jug Manjhi and Kutum Manjhi. The chief is assisted in the execution of his political performances by a council of village elders. As the situation demands, he may summon a meeting at his residence to consider affairs relating to the village. It is customary among the Santals that the chieftainship is retained in the families of the first settlers of the village. The qualities for the succession to a chief are predominantly ascribed and to some extent achieved. The eldest son succeeds the father in his capacity as the next chief. If he fails due to lunacy, leprosy, murder, migration etc., the next eldest son takes the office. In case the chief dies issueless, his immediate brother or his next brother's eldest son or his next brother's next eldest son may be made the chief. With regards to the achieved qualities in a potential candidate for chieftainship, a wide knowledge of religious functions, a rich store of tales, legends, traditions, lores as well as intelligence and capacity to establish an efficient dialogue between the villagers are largely taken into consideration.

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The Santal village of Pargo-Tillaiya lies six miles west of Parasnath railway station in the district of Hazaribagh (Bihar). The village consists of four hamlets : Tillaiya, Garga, Hunaratarn and Pargo. The first three hamlets are inhabited by Santals, while the last hamlet is inclusive of eight Kurmi (a backward Hindu caste in Bihar) families. There were 52 families and 200 souls in December 1964. There existed a constant conflict for dominating the political activities of the village between the leaders of the two dominant and early settlements, namely, Tillaiya and Pargo. The grandfather of Lepa and Shikari (religious and secular chiefs of Tillaiya respectively) and Haru Mahto (at present unofficial leader of the Kurmis of Pargo) had been the leaders of their respective hamlets in their days. The fathers of the present leaders of both the hamlets succeeded their grandfathers in the leadership after their death. Even in the past, there was struggle between the two hamlet-leaders while representing the entire village outside. The Santals of the other two hamlets, who were comparatively new settlers in the village, sided with the Santal leadership of Tillaiya. Even the Santals of Pargo could not favour the Kurmi leadership of their own hamlet and made a common cause with the rest of the Santals of the village. On the other hand, the Kurmi leadership could muster the support outside their own village among the local Baniyas, low caste Hindus, and officials of the zemindars. The Santal leadership was supported by the entire Santal population of the village.

With the advent of the Government-sponsored Gram Panchayats (village councils) in the rural areas, it became imperative for Pargo-Tillaiya to settle the leadership conflict once for all. The village was to select one representative for the official village council of Tengarakhurd, in which six neighbouring villages were organized together. With the thumping majority of the Santals, it was deemed that non-tribals would lose the battle of leadership. The religious chief of Tillaiya, Lepa, was thought to be too old, lacking contacts with the outside world and not sufficiently familiar with officials. With the new demands of the hour, it was thought

necessary that the Santal leadership should be an effective means of communication between the villagers and officials as well as the village council. Meanwhile a dramatic incident happened. The Raja of Ramgarh (a political leader and powerful zeminder of Ramgarh, 125 miles west of the village) paid a visit to Tillaiya in search of volunteers. Incidentally, Shikari Manjhi (the younger brother of Lepa, who had worked in Assam for years in his youth, a man of commanding personality and wide contacts in and around the village), represented the villagers in his talks with the Raja in lieu of his brother. Traditionally, it was Lepa's privilege to receive some dignitary from outside the village. Perhaps the Raja mistook him for the chief of the village and crowned him with his own turban. Shikari went to Patna to attend the convention of the Rightist opposition leaders, headed by the Swatantra Party. The journey to the state capital, participation in the deliberation in which ex-Lieut. Governor (*Chote lat*) and Ex-Governor General (*Bare lat*) were present, and, moreover, the pomp and splendour of the festivity enriched Shikari's store of tales as a measure of his contacts with the outside world. It enhanced Shikari's prestige tremendously in Tillaiya and its neighbourhood among tribals and non-tribals alike.

In addition to the ascribed potentiality for the leadership, the achieved qualities favoured Shikari to represent the tribal community. His elder brother, yet holding the chair of the Dharam Manjhi (religious chief) did not appreciate Shikari's increasing influence. But Shikari always respected the wishes of his elder brother, which was ultimately reciprocated by the latter. This led to the Shikari's unanimous election to the membership of the judicial bench of the Tengarakhurd village council, and the Kurmi leader Haru Mahto ultimately gave in. A situation soon developed in which the team of these two brothers emerged as a corporate one, supporting the traditional as well as Government-sponsored leadership. For instance, when Shikari proposed that the authorities should be approched for the establishment of an elementary school in the hamlet, which was also advocated by Haru Mahato in favour

of his own hamlet (Pargo), Lepa not only gave his moral support to Shikari but also actively propagated the idea in and round the village. Shikari was wise enough to discuss the problems relating to the village to be put in the meetings with the leaders of the rest of the hamlets. It made him all the more popular among the villagers.

But everything did not go on smoothly in Shikari's favour. Lepa's only son, Naika was rising as a potential threat to Shikari's leadership. For him, his paternal uncle's leadership was obviously not in accordance with Santal traditions. But peculiarly enough, he did not actively oppose Shikari's leadership. Since he counted much on the traditionally ascribed sanctions behind him for the village leadership, he was constantly engaged in enlarging his contacts with the outside political forces and assiduously nursing the hope of one day becoming leader of the villagers. In the meetings of the village council (to which he is not an elected member), his presence would be marked as an audience; he often paid visits to the petty block officials and provided them with small gifts like eggs, chicken, vegetables, ghee etc. The climax was reached when the Communist Party of India launched an agitation against the Government's food policy in August 1964. Naika participated in this agitation as a volunteer at Giridih (about 35 miles north-west of Tillaiya), and suffered imprisonment for about two months. When he came back, his knowledge, his activities and importance already increased. He was obviously a much talked of man in the village during the present investigation. Soon after, he was considered to be number two (only after Shikari), and at times number one, in the village in the eyes of petty officials, especially the Police. He was most active among all the members of the new generation in the village. He had never challenged his uncle's leadership, but he was industriously nourishing the hope of competing successfully against Shikari's son in the future struggle of village leadership, when Shikari would be no more.

To sum up, the present case-study may be understood to present a simultaneous four dimensional continuity. At first,

it appears to be a conflict between the two early settled hamlets, Tillaiya and Pargo. At the root of the support rendered to the Tillaiya leaders by the other three hamlets was the Santal tradition in which the first settlers' families maintained the privilege of leading the village in religious, political and other communal aspects of life. It also involved a conflict of leadership between tribal and non-tribal communities. In this conflict the Santals relied mainly on their majority in the village, and also sought the patronage of the neighbouring Hindu aristocracy. The non-tribals had always maintained a bridge between the majority ethnic group and the minority (themselves) mainly due to their superiority complex. And they tried to seek the support of the neighbouring non-tribal peasantry, which proved to be futile with the advent of majority rule in the village councils.

If we look from another angle, the conflict between the traditional and Government-sponsored leadership will be evident. Here the Government-sponsored leadership has also the backing of the traditionally ascribed qualities, since Shikari is from the same ruling family which had been leading the village in the past. Apart from his ascribed qualities, he (the Government-sponsored leadership) has been also able to achieve the patronage of the Hindu aristrocracy, which added to his popularity. And thirdly, he has got certain personal qualities for a successful leader, like commanding personality, seeking advice from all elderly persons, and raising the voice of his people in meetings with the officials. That is why, we note the traditional as well as Government-sponsored leadership working in collaboration with one another.

Ultimately, it presents a conflict between the old and new generations in the political leadership. The present secular leadership of the village in the hands of the old generation was mainly due to the achieved qualities in the person of Shikari, which was also coupled with ascribed sanctions behind him. The new generation is trying hard to achieve those qualifications by enlarging its area of influence in the secular sphere. It is interesting to note that the new generation hardly thinks it necessary to put emphasis on the religious aspects of

of the leadership. In the changed situation, unlike in the past, the community leadership has become more secular than religious on boosting up of their secular influences ; the old as well as the new generations, both are trying to gain the patronage of secular forces outside. It is a mere coincidence that the old generation has aligned itself with one of the most conservative parties in Indian political life, while the new generation chooses a party which stands for a radical change in the present Indian society. No doubt, the old generation is at the helm of affairs, but the new generation is posing a formidable threat to the former's leadership.

The immediate neighbours of the tribals under the present study are the non-tribal Hindu peasantry, which represents a peculiar blending of the regional little traditional as well as the Indian great traditional dimensions. A minute comparison with the low caste neighbouring Hindus and an analytic study of the ethnic organizations of the Santal under the purview of the present paper reveal that the settled agriculturist Santals are least distinguishable from their immediate neighbouring peasant society. The present case study strongly illustrates that the Santals are fast becoming integrated with the Hindu peasantry of Chotanagpur.

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INDIAN STATES ON SOCIAL DISTANCE SCALE

MAHENDRA NARAIN KARNA

(*Received on 21 January 1967*)

Abstract : The study was undertaken to assess the attitude of 200 students of the Utkal University (Orissa) towards 15 provincial groups of India on the modified form of Bogardus Social Distance Scale. It was found that Oriyas were preferred first and Assamese last for marital relationship. It further revealed that in the form of Bogardus Social Distance Scale it was essential to include one negative category of relationship. Rural and urban students showed preference for different groups in the same order.

Introduction

IN India the problem of national integration has presented in the recent years a serious threat to the very existence of India's unity. Group prejudice accounts for this increasing fissiparous tendencies. Considering that group prejudices affect the very vitals of Indian society a carefully planned study of inter-group relations in general and inter-state relations in particular, which alone can help to find correct remedies, has become an urgent necessity.

The purpose of the present study was : (i) to explore the reactions of University students towards 15 provincial groups of India in respect of 5 categories of relationship on a modified form of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale ; and (ii) to see the difference, if any, between the reactions of rural and urban students toward these groups.

Method

Subjects : 200 students of the Utkal University, Bhubaneshwar (Orissa), constituted the sample for this study. The accidental sampling method was used in the selection of respondents.

The data were collected in Bhubaneshwar (Orissa), in February 1964.

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They were from both postgraduate and undergraduate classes. They were male as well as female. 105 were students from rural areas and 95 from urban areas.

Materials : The Bogardus Social Distance Scale was modified for the present study to suit the conditions of the universe. This scale included the following categories of relationship :

1. Would marry
2. Would be friends with
3. Would work beside in an office
4. Would accept as neighbour
5. Would allow to settle in my state.

Subjects were required to give their reactions for the following 15 provincial groups : people of Andhra, Assamese, Bengali, Bihari, Gujarati, Kashmiri, Keralite, Madrasi, Maharashtri, people of Madhya Pradesh, people of Mysore, Oriya, Punjabi, people of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthani.

Procedure : Each subject was served with a copy of the modified Bogardus Social Distance Scale and was instructed to underline only one category of relationship for one group. Subjects were directed in the following manner : 'Listed below are the people of the different states of India. Against each of them are written five categories of relationship which state the nature of relationship one may want to have with the people of different states. You are requested to underline one of the categories to which you would willingly admit members of each group (people of each state). Remember that you are to consider each group as a whole and not in terms of the individual or individuals whom you might have known.'

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the reactions of students on the social distance scale.

TABLE 1

Preference for social relations in percentage.

N=200

People	Categories of relationship				
	Would marry	Would be friends with	Would work beside in an office	Would accept as neighbour	Would allow to settle in my state
People of Andhra	0.50	43.50	25.00	22.50	8.50
Assamese	0.00	36.00	19.50	24.00	20.50
Bengali	27.00	32.00	11.00	18.50	11.50
Bihari	0.50	40.50	23.50	22.00	13.50
Gujarati	5.00	45.00	19.00	17.50	13.50
Kashmiri	37.00	38.00	5.00	11.50	8.50
Keralite	2.00	37.50	34.50	13.00	13.00
Madrasi	3.50	38.00	30.00	21.00	7.50
Maharashtri	5.00	39.00	23.50	21.50	11.00
People of Madhya Pradesh	2.50	32.00	20.50	31.50	13.50
People of Mysore	4.50	52.00	17.50	15.00	11.00
Oriya	52.50	17.50	5.50	8.50	16.50
Punjabi	12.00	30.50	21.50	19.00	17.00
People of Uttar Pradesh	6.50	48.50	16.00	19.50	9.50
Rajasthani	4.50	39.50	17.00	25.00	14.00

It is evident from the above that as many as 52.50 per cent of the students want to have marital relationship with the people of Orissa. Thus subject's own group occupies the first place in closeness of relationship so far as social distance is concerned according to the present scale. Sinha (1964) also reports a similar finding in the case of Bihari students where

62 per cent of the students were in favour of having marital relationship with the people of Bihar. In the case of the present study, Kashmiri, Bengali and Punjabi get second, third and fourth (37, 27 and 12 per cent respectively) positions.

It is further evident from table 1 that the people of Andhra, Assam and Bihar have been preferred for marital relationship only by 0.50, 0.00 and 0.50 per cent of respondents respectively. Although nothing can be said exactly about the reasons for this, one reason may be suggested. Of these three provinces, Andhra and Bihar are neighbouring states, and the Oriyas have had clashes of interest with these people. Bitter feelings and antagonism were also roused in connexion with boundary disputes. Rath (1957) also found a similar type of attitude in 1957 among Oriya students.

In terms of the last category of relationship, that is, 'would allow to settle in my state', a very interesting point comes into light. In the original Bogardus Social Distance Scale as well as in most of its modified forms, a negative category of relationship was included to measure the extreme negative attitudes of the respondents. In the present study, not a single category was in negative terms. Consequently we do not have a clear idea regarding the students' extreme unfavourable reactions. It was assumed earlier that the last category of relationship would show the most distant nature of relationship which a respondent would like to have with the out-group members under study. But such an assumption did not come true. Respondents thought they would certainly allow Oriyas to settle in their state. As a result the group (Oriya) which has been preferred first on the first point has been preferred on the fifth point also, but with some difference. It is third place in latter case. The first, second, fourth and fifth positions have been assigned to Assamese, Punjabi, the people of Rajasthan and Bihar, Gujarati and people of Madhya Pradesh respectively. The percentages for these states are 20.50, 17.00, 14.00, and 13.50 (for all the three states) respectively. The positions of these provincial groups on the first point are also different. The Punjabis, who have been given fourth place in case of marital relationship, have also been

given second place in case of the last category of relationship. Such ambivalent reaction can be clearly observed from table 1. Although nothing conclusive can be said regarding this phenomenon, still it clearly reveals some methodological points. It seems essential to include one negative category in the Social Distance Scale to be used in any circumstances. But further research in this field is perhaps necessary.

However, the actual distance which Oriya students want to have with state-groups under study in general terms is not clearly evident from the above table. It is because of this that the total scores for all these people were obtained to rank them in terms of preference. The scores of reactions were taken by counting one for check mark in the first column, two points for a check mark in the second column and so on. The total scores thus obtained are presented in table 2.

TABLE 2

People ranked on the basis of Social Distance scores.

Groups
Oriya
Kashmiri
Rajasthani
Gujarati
Bengali
Madrasi
People of Mysore
People of Uttar Pradesh
People of Andhra
Maharastri
Keralite
Punjabi
Bihari
People of Madhya Pradesh
Assamese

It is aparent from table 2 that Oriya gets first rank on the basis of total scores. It is natural that the respondent's own group has been placed first in the list of states under study. Kashmiri, Rajasthani and Gujarati rank second, third and fourth respectively. From the bottom, Bihari, the people of Madhya Pradesh and Assamese have been assigned the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth places respectively. Thus these groups are most distant for Oriyas so far as their reactions on the social distance scale is concerned.

Reactions of 105 rural and 95 urban students have been separately presented in table 3.

TABLE 3

Reactions of Rural and Urban students on the Social Distance Scale.

N=Rural 105
Urban 95

People		Categories of relationship				
		Would marry	Would be friends with	Would work beside in an office	Would accept as neighbour	Would allow to settle in my state
People of Andhra	*R	0.95	36.19	27.63	25.71	9.52
	*U	0.00	52.63	21.05	18.95	7.37
Assamese	R	0.00	37.14	22.76	20.10	20.00
	U	0.00	37.91	13.67	27.37	21.05
Bengali	R	29.52	33.33	9.94	17.69	9.52
	U	26.32	31.54	12.67	20.00	9.47
Bihari	R	0.00	38.10	27.62	19.04	15.24
	U	1.05	43.16	18.95	25.26	11.58
Gujarati	R	7.62	40.00	22.66	17.34	12.38
	U	2.11	50.53	15.79	17.89	13.68

*Rural *Urban

People		Categories of relationship: Would marry	Would be friends with	Would work beside in an office	Would accept as neighbour	Would allow to settle in my state
Kashmiri	R	42.86	31.43	7.62	8.57	9.52
	U	30.53	45.26	2.11	14.73	7.37
Keralite	R	3.81	43.81	29.52	14.29	8.57
	U	0.00	30.53	40.00	11.58	17.89
Madrasi	R	4.76	35.24	29.52	20.00	10.48
	U	2.11	41.05	30.53	22.10	4.21
Maharastri	R	6.67	38.10	22.85	21.90	10.48
	U	3.16	40.00	24.21	21.05	11.58
People of Madhya Pradesh	R	4.76	28.59	21.90	32.37	12.38
	U	0.00	35.79	18.94	30.53	14.74
People of Mysore	R	4.76	45.71	20.00	17.15	12.38
	U	4.21	58.95	14.70	12.67	9.47
Oriya	R	57.14	12.38	7.62	7.62	15.24
	U	47.37	22.11	3.16	9.47	17.89
Punjabi	R	11.43	29.52	18.10	20.00	20.95
	U	12.67	31.54	25.26	17.86	12.67
People of Uttar Pradesh	R	6.67	52.38	16.20	14.27	10.48
	U	6.32	44.21	15.79	25.26	8.42
Rajasthani	R	6.67	34.29	15.21	28.59	15.24
	U	2.11	45.26	18.91	21.05	12.67

Since the social background of individuals usually plays an important role in attitude formation, here it has been treated as a variable. The attitude of these two groups of students

is clear from table 3. On the first point both rural and urban respondents prefer Oriya. As many as 57.14 per cent rural and 47.37 per cent urban students want to have marital relationship with Oriya. This preference shows that there is some difference between rural and urban students. The second and third positions have been given by both these groups to the people of Kashmir (42.86 and 30.53 per cent) and Bengal (29.52 and 26.32 per cent) respectively. Again some difference is evident.

It is further obvious from table 3 that not a single urban student has preferred marital relationship with people of Andhra, Assam, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh whereas 0.95, 3.81, and 4.76 per cent rural students want to enter into marriage with the people of Andhra, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh respectively. Table 3 further reveals that the percentages of urban response are low in comparison with that of rural on the first category of relationship with the exception of Bihar, Mysore, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh when they are either equal or more than the rural. Whether the reactions of rural and urban students are different or not, rank difference coefficient of correlation was calculated. The scores of reactions were taken in the same way as in case of table 2.

TABLE 4

People ranked on the basis of Social Distance scores obtained by Rural and Urban students.

Rural	**Urban**
Kashmiri	Oriya
Oriya	Gujarati
Bengali	People of Mysore
Madrasi	People of Andhra
Keralite	Madrasi

Rural	Urban
People of Uttar Pradesh	People of Uttar Pradesh
People of Mysore	Kashmiri
Gujarati	Punjabi
Maharastri	Bengali
People of Andhra	Rajasthani
Punjabi	Maharastri
Bihari	Bihari
Rajasthani	Keralite
People of Madhya Pradesh	People of Madhya Pradesh
Assamese	Assamese

The scores for the two groups (Table 4) were ranked and the rank difference coefficient of correlation computed, the *rho* coefficient obtained was 5.7 (Table 5) which is significant beyond 0.01 level of confidence.

TABLE 5

Rho coefficient correlation computed between the rankings determined on the basis of Social Distance scores.

Between Groups	Correlation	Df.	Level of significance
Rural and Urban	5.7	13	0.01

It is thus clear that there is no significant difference in the ranking of fifteen provincial groups by both rural and urban students on the basis of their reactions on the modified form of Bogardus Social Distance Scale. Hence the assumption that the social background of respondents may result in the difference of reactions on the Social Distance Scale has not come true in the present case.

Summary and conclusion

The following conclusions have been derived on the basis of above analysis: (i) Oriyas were placed first on the favourable marriage reactions and Assamese last. (ii) It

seemed essential to include one negative category in the Social Distance Scale to measure the extreme unfavourable attitude. (iii) On the total scores, Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar were most distant groups and Orissa, Kashmir and Rajasthan the least distant from other groups. (iv) Rural students showed closeness and distance to the different provincial groups in about the same preferential order as the urban students did. The rank difference coefficient of correlation was significant beyond 0.01 level of confidence.

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TWO PEDIGREES OF INBREEDING FROM NORTH INDIA

S. S. SARKAR

(*Received on 16 May 1967*)

Abstract.—Two pedigrees, one each, from among the Baiga of Madhya Pradesh, and the Kayasthas of West Bengal, are given. The first shows a mating between full third cousins, while the second that between second cousins, once removed. An instance of polygamy among the Māle' of the Rajmahal Hills is also given to show how kinship terms alone may mislead information on inbreeding.

Introduction

THE differences in the mating systems of North and South India are known in general only, in so far as, that cousin marriages are prevalent among the high and low castes of the latter area while such forms of mating are prohibited in the North. This particularly applies to the Hindus and the aboriginal peoples. We will restrict our discussion among these two groups in this paper.

Dronamraju and Khan (1961), and Sanghvi (1965) have found the following inbreeding co-efficients.

Locality	Sample	Co-efficient of Inbreeding	Authors
Andhra Pradesh	Married inpatients of King George Hospital	.028	Dronamraju
Visakhapatnam	Parents of school children	.019	,,

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Locality	Sample	Co-efficiant of Inbreeding	Author
Andhra Pradesh	Rural people	.032 for autosomal genes	Sanghvi
Andhra Pradesh	Rural people	.051 for sex linked genes	,,
Bombay	Brahmin, Kayastha and Pathare Prabbu	.001 – .003	,,
Bombay	Maratha, Agri and Mahars	.005 – .007	,,
Bombay	Muslim, Parsi	.006 – .013	,,
Bombay	Christian	.001	,,

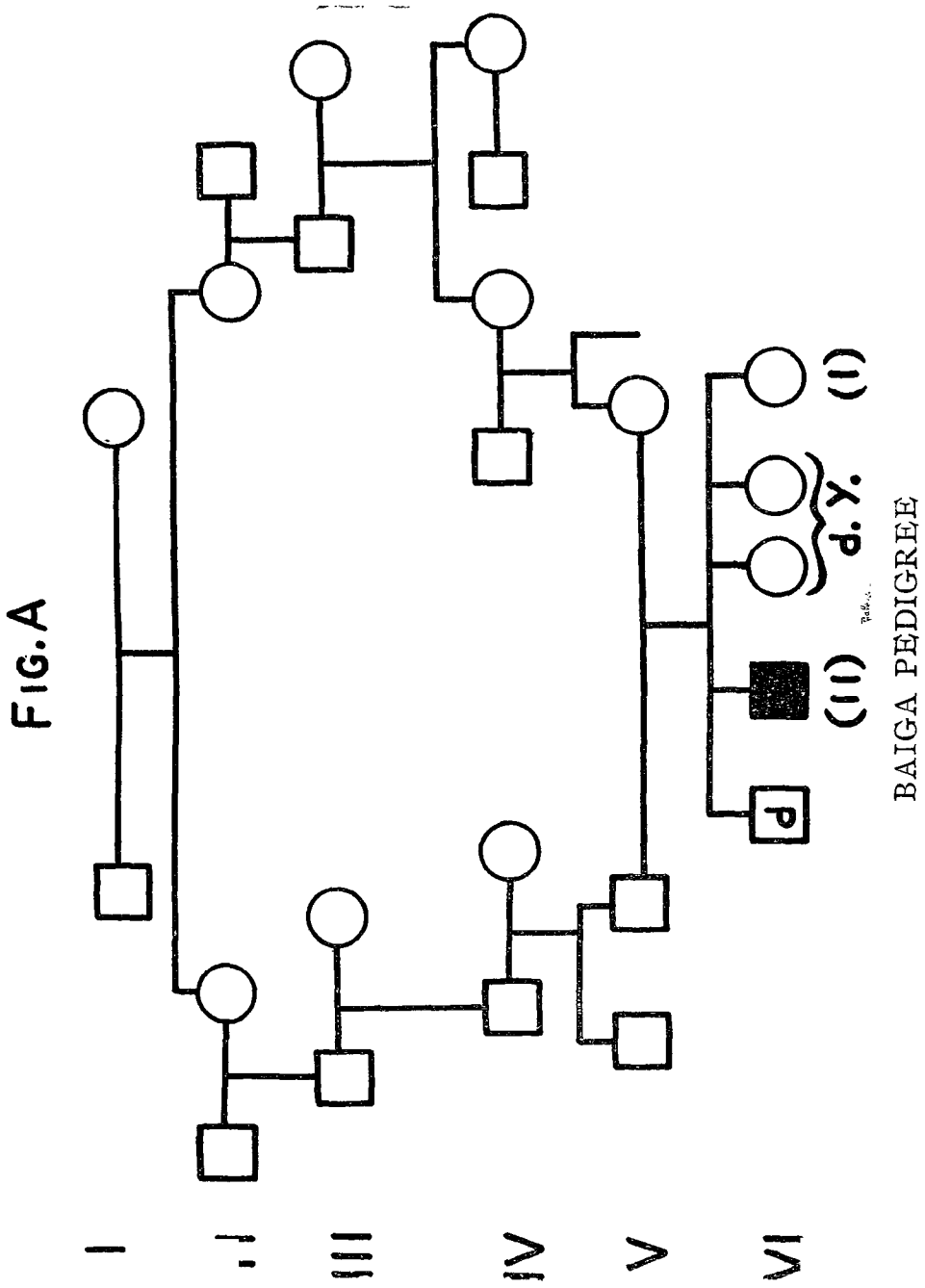
It appears that the closest form of inbreeding would be found among the Ernadans of Malabar (Thurston, 1909; Hutton, 1963), who are reported to practise father – daughter marriage.

The object of the present study is to show two instances of inbreeding practised in North India as will be apparent from the two genealogies (Figs. A and B). They were collected by the present writer in course of his studies from among the various people and do not form part of any specific enquiry.

Present data

Figure A is a Baiga pedigree from the village of Kurdar, Bilaspur, Madhya Pradesh. It shows an intermarriage of full

third cousins in the fifth generation. VI-2 appeared to be afflicted with juvenile amaurotic idiocy. He was always

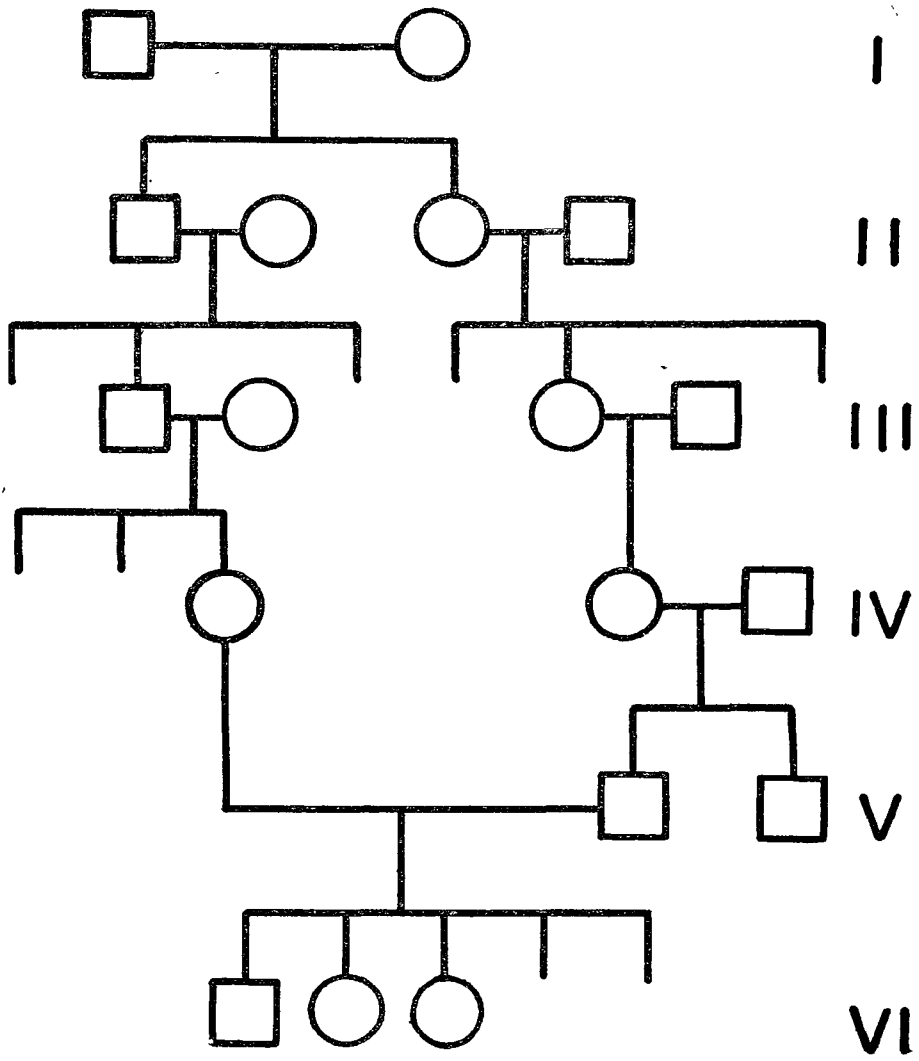


smiling, swinging his head to and fro, and his vision appeared to be defective. He could not walk without the support on a

stick. Detailed examination of the boy could not be done because of the mother's objection. Even a photograph could not be taken. The co-efficient of inbreeding is .00391.

Figure B is a pedigree from the Dakhsin Rarhi Kayasthas from the district of 24 Parganas, West Bengal. The union has

FIG. B

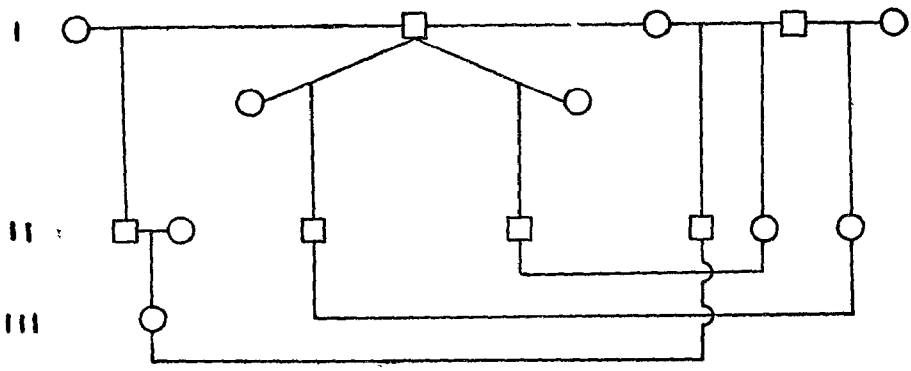


KAYASTHA PEDIGREE

been between two second cousins once removed. The inbreeding co-efficient is .00781.

Figure C shows an instance of polygamy among the Māle' of the Rajmahal Hills, Bihar. The Māle' have no clans. Marriage is controlled by the avoidance of the two paternal cousins and the two maternal cousins. Bainbridge (1907) is

FIG. C



MALE PEDIGREE

of opinion that among the Māle', 'marriage is regulated solely by the prohibition of blood relationship and the termination of the interdict and the appearance of the fourth cousin are simultaneous.' The pedigree does not show any inbreeding but a type of marriage common among the wealthier section. Although there has been marriage between step-brothers and step-sisters none shows any blood relationship. But in case of an intermarriage between the children of III-1 and those of II-3 and II-4, Bainbridge's above statement will be supported. An aboriginal tribe like the Māle' does not always remember his various ancestral relationships. It has not been possible so far, in spite of the present writer's long association with the Māle', to collect any pedigree showing inbreeding. But it has been his suspicion that inbreeding is now probably practised at the level of third generation. The greatest bar has been their lack of memory, and in some cases a certain amount of avoidance in disclosing true genealogical facts has been observed. It appears however that polygamy is to a certain extent a bar against inbreeding, as will be apparent from the Māle' pedigree. Polygamy is still widely practised in North

India and carefully recorded genealogies are necessary to assess the nature of inbreeding in this country. Polygamy does not change the kinship terminologies and verbally recorded data from polygamous families should be carefully checked. This however does not apply to societies practising consanguineous marriages, as in South India.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Indian Muslims. *By M. Mujeeb, pp. 590 ; George Allen & Unwin, London, 1967.*

Twelve years ago, in a Memoir of the American Anthropological Association, Von Grunebaum declared that no Muslim has yet given us a satisfactory 'self-interpretation' of modern Islam. Apologists we have had, he said, and reformers, political polemicists and would-be modernizers. He searches the works of ten prominent Islamic thinkers, including India's Sayid Ameer Ali and Mohammed Iqbal, but he finds nothing to meet the standards of modern scholarship.

M. Mujeeb of New Delhi may not fully meet Von Grunebaum's expectations, but he is a sound historian, faithful to the best canons of his discipline. And, as he makes his selection from the abundant historical records of Indian Islam, he shows some penetrating and profound insights. He does not always make the basis of his selection explicit. He does not attempt an over-all analysis of Islam's social development in India. Indeed, in his 'Conclusion' he confesses that, while he has tried to keep himself free of 'preconceived notions', his materials have required 'an intuitive apprehension of probabilities that defy precise statement.' He successfully avoids being either protagonist or antagonist, and he provides a rich body of materials which every student of society and culture will welcome in his reference library.

Perhaps we may say that his work is like that of the ethnographer ; he leaves the task of making generalizations to the ethnologist.

His introduction, presenting instances of acculturative change in certain Muslim groups in India, seems to promise a study of the effect of the Indian setting upon the Islamic immigrant. But it becomes apparent that his mastery of the culture of pre-Muslim India is not sufficient to permit him to make such a study. His speciality has been the Muslim community and its internal development, and he writes with vigour and confidence when he deals with its history.

He divides the history of Islam in India into three parts, the Mughal period forming the second. He ignores technical questions of chronology and politics and selects significant personalities who reveal, in their lives, the organization and trends of the period. These personalities are of several types : the rigid and powerful defenders of Orthodoxy, the Ethical thinkers, the Mystics (and between these types continuous tensions operate), the Administrators and Statesmen, the Poets and Writers, the Artists and Architects. He selects also individuals of more general social relevance. As he describes their significance he paints a very real and stimulating picture of their times.

Perhaps the secret of the success of this work—and it is remarkably satisfying in its total effect—lies in the author's steadfast determination to avoid over-emphasis on any one aspect or segment of Islamic India. As far as the limits of a single volume permit, he has given a balanced view of the almost infinite variety of social forms and patterns of behaviour developed among the Muslims of India.

Charles L. Swan

Housekeeping Among Malay Peasants. *By Rosemary Firth. London, London School of Economics, Monographs on Social Anthropology, No. 7, 2nd Edn. XV + 242. 1966.*

Housekeeping Among Malay Peasants, in its second edition, has two additional chapters by the author who records therein the results of a short revisit to the field in 1963 after a span of twenty-three years. Already a good piece of ethnography, more precisely home-economics, it is now a useful study of change. Mrs. Firth, however, does not deal as much with the processes of change as with the products of change.

The Malay peasants, a fishing community in the northeast Kelantan coast, continues to be organized around the boat-owning groups and net-owning groups ; however, they now also own motor boats, along with the traditional canoes, which has increased their efficiency in exploiting the sea-resources. Improvement in road communication has extended the market of their perishable commodity. The income of an average household has increased to $600 a year, from about $200 in 1940, which, incidentally, is still the lowest in Malaya. The purchasing power of the dollar has, however, decreased by at least four times. The size of a household has

increased from three to five. Its spending pattern has remained unchanged. New wants of cosmetics and clothes have appeared ; one in every ten households owns a wireless and a sewing machine ; quite a few have tables, chairs, cots and clocks. Many new houses have been built ; an open air movie adds to the traditional entertainment. There has been shift from religious to secular education ; literacy has increased ; and new concepts of social welfare introduced but 'there seemed to be no change in the extent either of divorce or polygyny, nor of social reactions to them.'

The structure of the household and the pattern of housekeeping among the Malays do not seem to have undergone change during the past 23 years. The change has been conspicuous in the material possessions of a household and the general health of the community. Why this has been so among the Malays is not clear. For, in many communities in other parts of the world, economic change has explicitly instrumented social change. Mrs. Firth believes that among the Malays education is the key to social change. This remains to be demonstrated : perhaps, education has not yet taken roots in the community. Yet, it is obvious that the most significant implication of this study is the fact that economic change does not always lend itself to social change.

D. P. Sinha

The Paths of Culture. *By Kaj Birket-Smith. Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, XI + 537. 1965.*

Before the present English edition appeared, *The Paths of Culture*, had been translated into ten different languages, including the original Danish. It was already a classic : blending theory with facts, offering a synthesis of world-wide ethnographic data, and presenting a panoramic view of human culture through time and space.

Kaj Birket-Smith emerges through this volume a culture-historian, at his best. He is as much at home with archaeology as with ethnology ; he is as much a humanist as a scientist. He believes that 'all culture has a common source and we must see our culture not as the sole culture in existence, but as one of many, *a part* of the world wide whole.' In his analysis of the broad trends in the development of ethnology, he is eclectic. He decries conjectural history but indicates that the element of conjecture does not disappear in the history of ten years ago. He endorses

anthropologists' preoccupation with primitive societies, but does not exclude their concern with 'the most highly developed form of culture.'

The Paths of Culture portrays the historical development of human culture around handicraft and economic life, social organization and communication, spiritual life, and the strata and streams of culture. Birket-Smith's is a sweeping view—he realizes, much is uncertain, some incorrect ; but by and large it gives a meaningful view of human culture. If a volume is to be evaluated on how effectively it conveys what it purports to convey, it must be rated as a masterpiece.

D. P. Sinha

Kachhi Shabdavali (*Vocabulary of Kachhi dialect*). *By Shantibhai Acharya, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 94. Rs. 4.00/4.50. September, 1966.*

This is an attempt to provide the basic data an one of the two major dialects of Western Indian Coast (Kachhi and Konkani). Kachhi, an Indo-Aryan dialect spoken by about 350 thousand souls, is more akin to Sindhi in phonetical transcription than that of the Gujarati. It lacks its own script and has a very limited written literature. Mr. Acharya makes certain very pertinent findings : Kachhi has got five accented and three unaccented vowels (p. 6), the occurrences of initial clusters show very clearly that the dialect is not much affected by cultural (Sanskrit) influences (p. 23), etc.

The author's attempt has been to prescribe a definite script for the dialect and to present a vocabulary of 2500 words based on the data of his field work. The vocabulary has been rendered into Gujarati and English. It could have been more useful to present the book in Devnagari script in the larger interests of the country as a whole exposing it to a broader field. Secondly, when the impact of Sanskrit is not pertinent, what is the justification to term the dialect as Indo-Aryan ? Such queries are yet to be answered. No doubt, it deserves the comment by the eminent linguist Dr. S. K. Chatterji-that 'there cannot be any doubt this (the book) will furnish some valuable material both for the study of Kachhi and a comparative study of the New Indo-Aryan languages.' We hope this publication will be welcomed by students of comparative linguistics.

Awadhesh Coomar Sinha

The Fight Against Discrimination ; Towards equality in education. *By Pierre Juvigny. Unesco. Paris. 1962. Pp. 77.*

This is a useful brochure published by the Unesco outlining the measures taken in order to remove discrimination in education which is prevalent in various States of the world. Sometimes the causes of discrimination are based on racial distinctions. Sometimes they are of a concealed nature, arising out of economic inequality.

The author describes the various steps taken by governments in order to implement the aims to which they have already subscribed as members of UN.

N. K. Bose

Abhandlungen Und Berichte Des Staatlichen Museums Fur Volkerkunde Dresen. *Berlin : Akademie-Verlag.—1965.*

This carefully edited anthropological annual contains some interesting reports, mostly in German. Here are the main contents.

Annotations on some juridical Rules of the Bush Negroes, Dutch Guiana. Preliminary Observations on Archaeological Investigations in the Region of the Islands of Lake Titicaca (Bolivia).

Eskimos of Greenland on European Paintings of the 18th Century, Wooden Figures, Masks and other Ethnographical Specimens of the Maprik-Sepik Region (Australian N. Guinea).

The Pan-Pipes of the Pacific Area.

Bronze Lamps of India in the Ferenc-Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts.

Potteries from Chota Nagpur, India.

About the Relations of Ownership among some Cattle-breeding peoples of North-Eastern Africa.

All this is suitably illustrated and printed on art paper.

F. E.