PUNJABI PEASANT SOCIETY: A STUDY IN SUMMARY STRUCTURE

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
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1970

ABSTRACT

PUNJABI PEASANT SOCIETY: A STUDY IN SUMMARY STRUCTURE

Punjabi peasant society cannot be conceptually demarcated into different structures and still give an accurate analysis of this society. Consequently, economic activities are so intertwined with political and religious functions that to delimit a political or economic structure gives a false explanation of Punjabi peasant society. Following Nadel's concept of summary structure, this thesis explains the summary structure of Punjabi peasant society showing the functional interdependence of the jajmani institution with the caste system, and the criteria used to determine the social positions of people in Punjabi peasant society. Punjab's geographical and historical context is dealt with first, in order to help understand the principles of interaction of these forces in the society. Next, the caste system is studied because most institutions are structured around it. I go on to show that the economic core is both intertwined with the caste structure and interacts with political, religious, and other forces to form a summary structure.

Bailey's structural definition of the caste system combined with Dumont and Pocock's concept of purity and impurity provide the best definition of caste society. The caste system in Punjab is then discussed to show that Hindu ideas dominate in the east, while Moslem and tribal influences are stronger in the west.

The distinction between caste and caste system is clarified to further help in understanding the relationship between the caste system and other institutions, such as the jajmani system. The caste systems of the east, central, and western districts of Punjab are discussed and variations within Punjab as well as with Hindu India are shown.

The jajmani system is defined as an aspect of the caste system which maintains a traditionally fixed functional relationship of castes for the production of goods and services in a local society. All types of services, duties, remunerations (which are in kind), gifts, and exchanges are determined by tradition so that lower castes absorb pollution leaving the higher castes relatively pure. This thesis shows the distinction between landlord-tenant and jajman-purjan ties so as to further understand the effects of changes within the system, for often writers have included all kinds of economic relationships within the jajmani system.

Finally, the summary structure is discussed. This thesis shows that except for the priests and moneylenders economic and political power correlates with social status. Thus, within the institutions considered, a summary structure does exist in Punjab.

In this thesis, I have shown that although Punjabi society is changing, economic and other institutions are structured around the caste system, and that there is a complete functional interdependence of economic and political institutions. Although Punjabi society varies from that of the traditional models of Hindu India, the same models generally apply, except that ritual purity follows economic and political power, and Punjabi society is more egalitarian and mutable than the traditional models set forth.

PUNJABI PEASANT SOCIETY: A STUDY IN SUMMARY STRUCTURE

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A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Anthropology

1970

G - 6561
1-27-71

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INTRODUCTION

Punjabi peasant society cannot neatly be conceptually demarcated into different structures. "Institutional structures for economic action, political power, and social status are undifferentiated" (Raulet and Uppal 1970:339); thus, economic activities are so intertwined with political and religious functions that to delimit a political or economic structure gives a false explanation of Punjabi peasant society. Consequently, this thesis will first deal with Punjab's geographical and historical context to help understand the principles of interaction of these forces in the society. The caste system will be studied next as most institutions are structured around it. I will go on to show how the economic core is intertwined with the caste structure and also interacts with political, religious, and other forces to form a summary structure.

In Chapter I, a study of the history and geography of Punjab show that its society lacks continuity, since it has perpetually been disrupted by external invasions and civil strife. The Greeks, Turks, Moghals, Afghans, and finally the British have all ruled Punjab at one time or another. It was only during the brief reign of Maharaja

Ranjit Singh that Punjab was united under one Sikh ruler. The partition of 1947 caused considerable sunderance as thousands of people were uprooted from their homes and transported to different regions. In spite of the lack of continuity, we discover that Punjab being in the Indus Valley has one of the oldest civilizations in the world. Presently, Punjab is one of the highest yielding agricultural areas in South Asia, which is partly due to its fine canal system. There is considerable social variation within Punjab's borders. The west is dominated by tribal people whereas in east Punjab, Hindu ideas are prominent.

In the second chapter, I discuss the caste system in Punjab. Several definitions of the caste system are considered before concluding that the best definition is the one set forth by Bailey. He structurally defines the caste system as being: (a) exclusive, (b) exhaustive, (c) ranked, (d) closed, (e) a summation of roles, and (f) cooperative, not competitive. This definition, however, leaves out the important aspect that purity flows downward from the upper castes and is absorbed by the lower castes. In my estimation, Bailey's six structural characteristics, combined with Dumont and Pocock's concepts of purity and impurity, make the best definition of the caste system in South Asia.

To aid in clarity, a distinction should be made between caste and the caste system. I will show that

Bailey distinguishes between the two. According to him, caste is a closed endogamous group with membership ascribed by birth whereas the caste system, defined above, is exemplified in rigid ranked order of castes. This is very important in evaluating the relationship between caste society and jajmani institutions.

The data of Punjabi caste society is compared with the traditional caste system of India. Of course, throughout South Asia, and even Hindu India, there is considerable variation within the general model of caste society. Sometimes the Brahmans are dominant, as is the case in the traditional model, and sometimes it is a tribe or jati group. When Punjabi data is compared with the system of Hindu India, I have used the traditional model as a basis, that is, the fixed relationship of varna categories with the Brahmans at the top followed by Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. In Punjab, variation with the Hindu model will be shown. In Punjab, the caste system is a relatively loose institution, where dominant land-owning tribes, rather than the traditional varna categories, usually occupy the higher social positions. Although ritual status is present, it is not emphasized as much in Punjabi society as in Hindu India. In the east, the system is more rigid and linked to Hinduism whereas it is more mutable and egalitarian in the west. Due to the

migration of westerners to the canal colonies, the degree of variation is not on a continuum across the region.

The third chapter discussed the jajmani system of Punjab. The general model shows a balanced system with all caste members occuping a place within the total framework. Of course different interpretations reveal the basis for the system. Wiser maintains it is based on Hindu tradition and Brahman dominance. According to Opler and Singh, it is maintained because the panchayat looks after the interest of its own members. Others like Beidelman and Lewis view the system as an exploitive institution where the rich landowning castes dominate and exploit the tenants and workers. In examining the data, part of the problem lies in defining the jajmani system. It must be made clear that landlord-tenant relations are not jajmani agreements, consequently, the two should not be evaluated together. This thesis defines the jajmani system as an aspect of the caste system which maintains a traditionally fixed functional relationship of castes for the production of goods and services in a local society. All types of services, duties, remunerations (which are in kind), gifts, and exchanges are determined by tradition so that lower castes absorb pollution leaving the higher castes relatively pure.

In the analysis I show how economic institutions are built around the caste system in the form of jajmani

relationships. In Punjab, due to administrative policies, market conditions, and land systems, the jajmani system is breaking down. In the analysis of Rampur, Lewis has shown that caste remains, but it is not clear from his data whether the caste system is still present or not. In considering the data from the Indian census on Mahsa Tibba in Ambala, the caste system seems to be breaking down, with a decrease in the summation of roles.

In Chapter IV, the summary structure of Punjabi society is discussed. Except for the role of moneylenders and the priestly class, the high caste and the politically and economically powerful are combined in the same social roles. In east Punjab, however, the shift from caste to class society seems to be taking place. Although an imposed type of class political structure is imposed on the Pakistani sections of west and central Punjab, the traditional institutions seem to maintain the involute summary structure of Pakistani Punjab. Although a summary structure exists in Punjab, change is definitely taking place in the eastern districts and is likely to follow in the central and western districts also.

Unlike Hindu India, the Brahman is relegated an inferior position in the summary structure of Punjab. Economic power and political dominance are followed by ritual status. In Hindu India, ritual purity seems to be given greater emphasis in the summary structure.

In this thesis, I will show that: (1) although Punjabi society is changing, economic and other institutions are structured around the caste system, and (2) that there is a complete functional interdependence of economic and political institutions, by showing the summary structure of Punjabi society. Consequently, although Punjabi society varies from that of the traditional models of Hindu India, the same models generally apply. The main differences are that: (1) ritual purity follows economic and political power, and (2) Punjabi society is generally more egalitarian and mutable than the traditional models set forth for Hindu India.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

This chapter will geographically describe and delimit the area of Punjab. A historical exposition will aid in understanding the social structure of the Punjabi peasant.

Geographical Area

This thesis is based on Punjab's geographical boundaries (Punjab 1908:1-17; Baden-Powell 1892 ii:633-697) and not on its political boundaries (Spate and Learmonth 1967:513-541). Punjab is the land of the five tributaries of the river Indus: the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej (Punjab 1908:1; Singh 1963:3). The 133,741 square mile area lies between 27°39' and 34°2' North; and 69°23' and 79°2' East.

Boundaries

In the north, Punjab is separated from Kashmir, the Northern Provinces, and the North-west Frontier by the Himalayan range. Except for the Isa Khel *tahsil* of

of Mianwali district on the west, the Indus forms its main boundary with the North-west Frontier. The south-western extremity of Punjab lies west of the Indus forming the large district of Dera Ghazi Khan. Punjab's frontier extends to the Sulaiman range, which divides it from Baluchistan. On the extreme south-west the province adjoins Sind while the Rajputana desert froms its southern border (Punjab 1908:1 and 2). Its eastern border, located near Karnal, is a jagged line which goes up to Panhnad (Singh 1963:3).

Divisions

Punjab's five main physical divisions are: the Himalayan regions, the Himalayan Submontane region, the Arid plateaus, the arid Southwestern plain, the Indo-Gangetic plain. The former three are most fertile whereas the latter two are not (Punjab 1908:1 and 2). This thesis will modify Baden-Powell's (1892 ii:653-697), divisions of Punjab. The divisions include Western Districts, Southern River tract, Central Districts, cis-Sutlej Districts, Delhi Division or Sourth-east Frontier, and the Himalayan states or Hill districts.

The Western Districts include the districts of Multan, Bahawalpur, Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Mianwali, Attock, and Rawalpindi (Marriott 1965:63). Most of these districts are inhabited by tribes of diverse origins, most of which are Moslem. The districts of Dera Ghazi

Khan, Muzaffargarh, Multan, Jhang, and Montgomery make up the Southern River tract where cultivation depends on wells and canals from the Indus and Sutlej. As can be seen, part of the Southern River tract is included in the Western Districts. The desert beyond, however, is not fully cultivated, and tribes with their own political and economic structures can still be found here. These will be discussed later in this thesis.

The Central Districts are influenced both by the Western Districts and the Delhi Division. The Central Districts include: Jhelum, Shahpur, Lyallpur, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar Doab, and Hushyarpur. The tribal people, i.e., Jats and Rajputs, have been here for a long time and are more established than transitory and localized Gandapurs of Dera Ismail Khan. Although they are very similar to Punjab proper, the cis-Sutlej Districts of Firozepur, Ludhiana, and Ambala are treated as a separate division by Baden-Powell. Unlike the districts to the west, the Delhi Division has a more rigid caste and jajmani system which will be discussed later. The Delhi Division includes Karnal, Delhi, Gurgaon, Rohtak, and Hissar (Baden-Powell 1892 ii:633-697). Many of the districts from Delhi Division were placed in the state of Haryana at the culmination of Punjabi Subha in 1966. The Hill region includes the districts of Kangra, Kulu, Chamba, and Simla.

Reference in this paper will be made to the canal colonies, which were developed through the farsightedness of the Lieutenant Governor, Sir James Lyall. By his leadership, the entire desert between the Jhelum and Sutlej was transformed into a prosperous area. The canal colonies include the districts of Shahpur, Montgomery, Multan, Gujrat, Sialkot, and Lyallpur, a region that was set up after Baden-Powell's divisions (Darling 1947:111-113).

Comparisons in this thesis will be between structures within societies of the Western Districts, Central Districts, and Delhi Division.

Crops

Wheat, gram, and barley are the principal spring crops, Maize, spiked millet, great millet, rice, cotton, oilseed, hemp, spices, and sugar cane are prominent autumn crops. Mustard and cotton are seen on the landscape in the summer. Other crops include poppy, tea, tobacco, indigo, vegetables, mangoes, date palms, melons, and potatoes (Punjab 1908:58-63; Singh 1963:5-9).

Climate

Punjab has four seasons: spring, summer, monsoon, and winter. The year-round climate of this area ranges from the bitter winter cold to the scorching heat of the summer. The spring is ushered early in the month of February. From the end of April to the end of June high

temperatures soar, sand and dust cover everything. The monsoon season comes quickly and cools off the summer heat. When monsoons fail, rain water is supplemented by canals and wells. October to November is festival time of which Divali is chief. Harvest festivals and other fairs are celebrated before winter cold and frost set in.

Landscape

Punjab is a vast alluvial plain which is divided into five sections by river valleys (Baden-Powell 1892: 534). Irrigation is crucial in land cultivation. In the Himalayan region land is fairly secure for growing crops and does not require irrigation (Punjab 1908:53-58). Punjab is essentially a rural state made up of mud and brick villages built on the ruins of older villages. Most of them have been fortified at one time or another.

The only important cities up to the 15th century were the government seat of Lahore, and the busy market town of Multan in the south. Since then, towns like Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Wazirabad, Gujrat, Amritsar, and Ambala have come into prominence. Prior to the 16th century extensive forest covered large parts of Punjab where tigers and rhinoceros were found. It turned into desert but due to irrigation became a prosperous agricultural area (Singh 1963:8 and 9).

The Name 'Punjab'

> When the Aryans came to India there were seven rivers in the Punjab, so they named it Sapta Sindhva, the land of the seven seas. The Persians took the name from the Aryans and called it Hafta Rindva. Sometime later, after the seventh river, the Sarasvati, had dried up, people began to exclude the Indus from the count (since it marked only the Western boundary of the province) and renamed it after the remaining five rivers as Pentopotamia or the 'Panj-ab,' the land of the five waters (Singh 1963:5).

History

Indologists disagree about the age of the Indian civilization but agree that it is one of the oldest civilizations with organized rural communities and dates back as far as 2,000 to 2,500 B.C. (Singh 1963: 9 and 10). The archeological sights of Harappa and Mohenjodaro are among the best known from which archeologists have derived that the Indus valley civilization was highly developed. Streets were meticulously planned, there were sewage systems and running water. Extensive trade was carried from Mohenjodaro and Harappa to all parts of the world, thus coins from Greece and pottery parts from the Gangetic plains are found among their ruins. Both cities had large grain storage bends, marble baths, brick buildings, beautiful artistry, and artisan work. Carved figures and beautiful pottery are found everywhere. It is generally accepted that these cities existed between 2,500 B.C. to 1,500 B.C. (Wheeler 1966).

With the infiltration of the Aryans, the indigenous Dravidian population was killed or incorporated into the Aryan society. The Aryans, a pastoral race, occupied most of northern Hindustan. It was probably in these earliest Aryan settlements of Punjab that the Rg Veda was composed. Other races followed the Aryans. Under Darius (521-485 B.C.) and his successors, the Persians conquered northern Punjab, Peshawar, Taxila, and Rawalpindi. Alexander the Great's Greek armies invaded in 326 B.C. and swept as far as the Beas. As a result, Greek artistry and architecture can be found near Peshawar and Tacila. After Alexander's death, the Greek invaders continually fought among themselves enabling the Indian Mauryas to oust them. The Bactrian invaders extinguished Mauryan power and were followed by many Scythian tribes. It was the Guptas who were finally able to spread their rule throughout the region and successfully keep out invaders.

By 500 A.D., the Mongolian Huns of Central Asia over-powered the Guptas and conquered the area. The Huns were expelled by Vardhana whose son Harsha was the last Indian ruler of Punjab. After Harsha's death in 647 A.D., the Vardhana empire disintegrated, and races and tribes came from across the Sulaiman and Hindu Kush mountains and poured into Hindustan. Although Muhammad bin Kasim was unsuccessful, he began the Mohammedan infiltration into India. By 979 A.D., the Turks, under Mahmud of Ghazni

controlled most of Punjab, but Turkish conquest was forced to be confined to Punjab as indigenous tribes harrassed the Moslem invaders. Waves of Afghan invaders: the Ghoris, Tughlaks, Surs, and Lodhis, followed the Ghaznies.

The Mongols under the leadership of Taimur the Lame, invaded and plundered India in 1398. It was almost a hundred years before the country recovered from this invasion. A descendent of Taimur, Babur, dreamt of a Moghal empire and established the most powerful and long-lived dynasty in the history of India. It was during the reign of his grandson Akbar (in 1556) that Moghal rule spread to Punjab and a good revenue system was established. Relative peace and prosperity reigned throughout India during the Moghals. In the first half of his reign, Aurangzeb, the last strong Moghal emperor, had to contend with external campaigns against the Afghans. Internal insurrection began in the second half of his rule. Although part of his imperial army defected and the insurgents advanced to Delhi, Aurangzeb's superb leadership kept them from winning. Signs of distintegration, however, were visible by the end of his rule in 1707. After his death, the Moghal empire gradually weakened and ended.

The birth of Guru Nanak in 1469, marks the beginning of Sikhism and its influence in Punjab. Nanak was a very inquisitive ascetic child who became a mystic. In

his first divine experience he was charged with the following instructions:

> Nanak, I am with thee. Through thee will my name be magnified. Whoever follows thee, him will I save. Go into the world to pray and teach mankind how to pray. Be not sullied by the ways of the world. Let your life be one of praise of the Word (nam), charity (dan), ablution (isnan), service (seva) and prayer (simran). Nanak I give thee my pledge. Let this be thy life's mission (Singh 1963:31).

According to the Sikhs, there is only one God for both Hindus and Moslems. They tried to bring Hinduism and Islam under one religion, which was natural in a land such as Punjab where people of the two great religious were intermixed.

Nanak's teachings were handed down by a succession of Gurus. Guru Ram Das received a grant from Akbar and built the Sikh Golden Temple and the Sacred Tank in Amritsar. When a jealous Moghal ruler executed Ram Das's son Arjan, the religion of love and conciliation was transformed into a sect of fanatical warriors. Arjan's son, Har Govind Singh, led the Sikh armies and tried to make this religious group into a military commonwealth. The Moslems were very severe on the Sikhs, thus making them more fanatical. The religious ascetic Banda Singh, succeeded Govind, put the Sikhs on the offensive, and over-ran east Punjab with considerable massacring. With his superior Moghal army, Bahadur Shah attempted to tame the Sikhs. He died, however, and the Sikhs escaped to

the mountains and reinforced their strength, a tactic they used repeatedly.

In 1738, Nadir Shah invaded Punjab and advnaced to Delhi. Although he did not stay long, he ransacked the city and dealt a death blow to the Moghals. The Sikhs rose once again, plundering and conquering. They were unable to set up a unified government due to loose federations and control by separate principalities. In 1762 Ahmed Shah Durriani from Afghanistan invaded and completely destroyed Amritsar. He blew up the Golden Temple and filled the Sacred Tank with mud. He also defiled holy places by slaughtering cows. This atrocity began a fierce hatred between Afghans and Sikhs, which continued through the time of Ranjit Singh. After the Afghans withdrew, the Sikhs rose again and established their independence.

1786 marked the birth of Ranjit Singh, the man who at the age of eighteen was able to command a following from the Sikh princes. He united the Sikh princes and Punjab under one ruler. I consider Ranjit Singh one of the greatest men, not only of Punjab but of the sub-continent. He was a self-made man with little formal education. He was progressive, wise, and a shrewd diplomat. It was under him that the Punjabi armies were Europeanized. Probably the Sikhs would have been able to keep their independence if an able leader had succeeded Ranjit Singh. Ironically, on the day of his funeral, the heirs to his

kingdom were killed by a falling arch. After this, the Sikhs were unable to unite themselves, thus beginning the decline of an empire which never rose again.

According to the Gazetteer, the First Sikh War was fought because the Sikhs encroached on British territory and went east of the Sutlej, a boundary established in a treaty between Ranjit Singh and the British. Kushwant Singh maintains that the war was provoked by the British (Singh 1966:40-54). In either case, the Sikhs lost. They were unable to meet the terms of the treaty and eventually slipped under British control.

After the First Sikh War, the disbanded Sikh army was distributed throughout Punjab, waiting for a leader and a signal to unite and rise again. The rebellion by an ex-Diwan at Multan and the murder of two British officers brought the Sikh army back into existence and ignited the Second Sikh War. The Sikhs were suppressed and the entire Punjab came under British rule in 1848. The British skillfully won the confidence of the Punjabi leaders. This diplomacy paid off when the British Raj was challenged by the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, for it was the loyalty of the Punjabi chiefs which maintained their subjects' confidence in the British rule. The Sikh princes were, therefore, richly rewarded with land grants and the British instituted many valuable public works for Punjab. Since then, Punjab has expanded its irrigation, communications, and economy (Punjab 1908:17-37; Singh 1963 and 1966).

Even after the mutiny, the Sikhs were instrumental in the success of British rule in India. They were loyal, supplied leadership, and provided excellent soldiers during both world wars. It was no surprise that even though they comprised only 10% of Punjab's population they expected to acquire their own homeland when India was divided. Needless to say, their disappointment was great when their desires were not considered. The Sikh dream was partially fulfilled in 1966, when East Punjab was politically divided and their Punjabi Subha became a reality. In spite of Punjab's political divisions, it is one of the most progressive areas in South Asia.

As can be seen from the historical account, Punjab was considerably influenced, not only by invading armies, but also by tribal groups who left their imprint.

Canal Colonies

Canalization was no new idea in Punjab for the Moghals had used canals and had irrigated southern Punjab 300 years ago. The Moghals, however, had irrigated the area, not for the good of the indigenous population but for their own benefits. Punjab was annexed by the British in 1848. The Upper Bari Doab Canal (1860-61), about 100 miles long, took water from the Ravi to Lahore and Amritsar. Ten years later, the river Jumna was cut into the canal system to irrigate southern Punjab. Colonization was

started around 1886-88 when one hundred and seventy-seven thousand acres of waste-land in Multan district was irrigated from the Sutlej. This was only a qualified success, however, as the perennial supply of water could not be guaranteed. The opening of the Lower Chenab Canal in 1892 and the colonization of that area proved extremely successful and was considered the turning point in the economic history of Punjab.

In 1897, the Jhelum was used and five years later the second great canal colony, the Lower Jhelum appeared around Shahpur. The famous triple project (1905-17) followed. This project was a remarkable feat because it brought water 200 miles from the Jhelum by the Chenab and Ravi (the water resources of these rivers had already been tapped) to make the desert or waste-land of Montgomery bloom. The first canal of the triple project took the spare water from the Jhelum and poured it into the Chenab irrigating 350,000 acres. The Upper Chenab canal linked the Chenab and Ravi rivers, thus irrigating 650,000 acres in Gujranwala and Sheikhupura. The third canal, the Lower Bari Doab, took water through Montgomery and into the heart of Multan. The result was the founding of the Lower Bari Doab Canal Colony. After the First World War, another colony was established on the southern boundaries of Montgomery and Multan called the Nili Bar or Blue Fairy canal. The first three canal colonies, covering 5 million

acres, were Lyallpur. Shahpur, and Montgomery. The canal colonies were very beneficial to the settlers who were volunteer immigrants from nearby places. They received prime land and good money for their crops. The Provincial government also benefited by the revenues from taxation.

The founding of the canal colonies was not devoid of problems, especially in the initial stage of development. Communications were bad, it was difficult to encourage immigrants to settle, and the facilities for transporting crops to market were inadequate. Also things were not always ready for the individuals when they came, and the indigenous population was hostile to these "outsiders" who took over their land. These problems, coupled with the lack of sufficient labor at harvest time, left many crops unharvested.

Choosing colonists was a very rigorous task. Only the best volunteers from each village and the best agricultural tribes of central Punjab were selected. The inspector would look at the hands of volunteers to see if they were hard working, then he would check their skin color and physique to make sure they were physically capable of working and not addicted to opium. Backgrounds and land records were thoroughly checked. Ex-army men who had not worked upon release, were not allowed to go. Wealthy men were not allowed to increase their wealth by getting land in the canal colonies, and the numbers per

family were limited so one family could not gain a monopoly on the holdings. Consequently, the inhabitants of these colonies were the best hand-picked Punjabis. The results have been the creation of very prosperous colonies which are a great boon to the agricultural economy of Punjab (Darling 1947:111-121).

CHAPTER II

THE CASTE SYSTEM

Introduction

As this thesis progresses, it will become clear that an understanding of the caste system is essential to explain most institutions in Punjabi society. This chapter will first evaluate the various definitions of caste society and then discuss Punjab's caste system. This will set forth the basis for a study of the economic core and the interaction of political, religious, and other forces to form a summary structure.

Defining Caste Society

Introduction

Defining caste society has been a subject of much debate among South Asian scholars. There are three main types of definitions: cultural, attributional, and structural.

Cultural Definition

According to Weber (Gerth and Mills 1968:188-190, 396-415) the caste system is a type of social structure

where status distinctions are guaranteed by conventions, laws, and rituals. Regulations are such that physical contact with an individual of lower status results in ritual impurity which is only expiated by religious acts. According to Weber, stratification is so rigid that in a caste system, social composition is ethnic groups living side by side, functionally interwoven in a super and subordinate segregated groups, intertwined with the religious beliefs of the people (Gerth and Mills 1968:188-190).

In the case of India, the caste society is a fundamental institution of Hinduism. The status of the Brahman is determined by the religious ritual system while the position of everyone else is determined by the degree of closeness to the Brahman. Rank or degree of closeness to the Brahman is determined by things like food transactions, varna categories, and ritual purity (Gerth and Mills 1968: 396-415).

Sometimes Weber maintains that the caste system is not unique to South Asia. Briefly, he maintains that caste society is composed of ethnic groups, functionally integrated with little or no social mobility. He also states that social rank is determined by religious or ritual institutions (Gerth and Mills 1968:188-190). In another place, Weber states that Hinduism is functionally interwoven with the caste system, thus, without Hinduism there is no caste system and without the caste system,

there is no Hinduism (Gerth and Mills 1968:396-397). As a result, Leach justifiably criticizes Weber for contradicting himself (Leach 1969:2). Although Weber maintains that caste society is a cultural concept of Hinduism, he also states that castes are found among Mohammedans and Buddhists. Also, Weber's position keeps shifting for he does not state what aspects of the caste system are specifically Hindu.

More recently, Dumont and Pocock (1958) have set forth a cultural definition, tying the caste system with a set of religious ideas concerning purity and impurity. They maintain that:

> the caste system can only be understood when we realise that it is permeated by essentially religious conceptions and further that these religious conceptions are based upon a social apprehension of the pure and impure (Dumont and Pocock 1968:47).

Dumont and Pocock go on to maintain that to understand occupational distribution and social ranking in a caste society, it is essential to take the religious system into account (Dumont and Pocock 1968:35-36). Bailey criticizes Dumont and Pocock's definition as a "hindrance in that it obscures the political and economic tasks performed by the Indian system of social stratification" (Bailey 1963:114-116).

Attributional Definition

The most popular attributional definition of caste structure is set forth by Hutton (1946:49, Chapter VI) in the first edition of his book Caste in India. In the fourth edition, however (1969:47-51), he discusses various attributional definitions. Due to the variety of caste structures, Hutton realizes that it is difficult to discover a concise definition. In spite of these difficulties, however, Hutton exposits a concise definition maintaining that the caste system is:

> one whereby a society is divided up into a number of self-contained and completely segregated units (castes), the mutual relations between which are ritually determined in a graded scale (Hutton 1969:50).

Although Hutton rightly attempts to combine cultural and social concepts in his definition, he does not adequately define the caste system.

Evidently Hutton's view has changed since the first edition of his book. The main point of criticism for his attributional definition was that it did not apply to all caste societies (Leach 1969:3 and 4). Since Hutton does not presently insist on an attributional definition for caste society, I shall not "flog a dead horse any further."

Structural Definition

Structural definitions can be classed into two types: those classifying caste society as a rigid

stratification system and those using more structural criteria in their definition. Some anthropologists (Berreman 1963:243-254; Barth 1969:113-146) classify caste society in the same category as a system of rigid social stratification. Berreman parallels caste structure with the low rigidly stratified position of the southern United States negro. He maintains that, like the Indian Sudra, the southern negro is kept in a subservient position for the economic gain of the white upper class.

To distinguish between caste and class, Berreman defines class as the status determined by economic position and gains while caste position is maintained by other criteria (Berreman 1963:217-219). Thus, class position does not have to be correlated with caste status. As a result, Berreman would argue that like the caste system where position is determined by birth, the high position of the southern white is also determined by birth. He thus classifies the caste system of South Asia and the rigid social structure of the southern United States in the same category.

In his study of caste in the Swat area, Fredrik Barth (1969) also argues that the caste system is a rigidly stratified society. In applying the concept of status summation, he argues that:

> despite the highly complex system of differentiated statuses and divisions of labour within the society

> all members may be placed in one or another of a limited set of positions. This is possible because the incumbency of one status also necessarily implies incumbency of a series of other statuses forming the cluster characterizing that "caste position" (Barth 1969:144).

Barth has broadened the definition of the caste system, contending that this expansion of the definition is necessary if the principles learned in South Asian society are to be applied to other societies. He classifies societies under three types, one of which is the caste system.

Leach (1969:5-10) agrees with Barth to the extent that caste system is a structural phenomena, but states that it is unique to South Asia. To distinguish between class and caste oriented societies, Leach defines a class organized society where the elite have the right to exploit the minority groups or the lower classes. In a caste oriented society, however, the lower strata have certain rights. It is even possible for the upper strata to compete for the services of the lower strata. Leach stipulates that in a caste system, the lower strata has as much economic security as the upper strata. Once a group acts as a corporation and competes against like groups of different castes, it acts in defiance of caste principles. According to Leach, then, the caste system does not isolate the elite like a class society, but defines the role of every member of the society. Leach

thus concludes that the caste system is a structural phenomena unique to South Asia.

In his brilliant study, Hutton does an exhaustive comparison of many societies with seemingly analogous social structures. He also convincingly comes to the conclusion that the caste system is uniquely South Asian (Hutton 1969:46, 133-148).

Bailey (1963:112-114) evaluates the rigid stratification definition set forth by Berreman and Barth arguing that it is not wrong, but inadequate. He also points out that Leach's alternative definition does not rule out the rigid definition. Thus, Bailey surmises that the concept of rigid classification needs further study.

Bailey (1963:117-121), however, goes on to set forth a structural definition of caste society. He summarizes his argument by saying that for:

> a given society to exhibit a caste system it must be divided into groups which
> a) are exclusive (no one belongs simultaneously to more than one group),
> b) which are exhaustive (everyone belongs to some group), and
> c) which are ranked.
>
> The above are defining criteria for a system of social stratification. To define "caste" we need to say, in addition, groups
> d) which are closed (recruitment is by birth only)
> e) relations between which are organized by summation of roles, and
> f) which co-operate and do not compete.
>
> Finally I have said that all these characteristics are found together only in small-scale societies. The reverse, of course is not true, since not all small-scale

> societies are stratified. Therefore small-scale relations are not part of the definition of a caste system, but are a condition of the existence of caste systems (Bailey 1963:121).

It must be kept in mind that with Bailey's definition, a caste does not have to be a varna category. In fact, in some areas of Punjab, tribes such as the Jats and Rajputs have become castes (Ibbetson 1916:97-163).

Like Bailey criticizes Dumont and Pocock because their definition "obscures the political and economic tasks" of the caste system (Bailey 1963:114-116), a structural definition ignores the ritual element in caste society. The concept of pollution seems to be universally present in caste structures from Swat (Barth 1969:139-140) to Ceylon (Yalman 1969:79). Pollution is present in interaction and social behavior regardless of economic dominance (Lewis 1958a:84). Consequently, I must agree with Dumont and Pocock (1959) that the concept of purity (either ritual or actual) is present, especially among lower castes, to distingusih them from clean castes. The concept of purity is usually of a ritual nature.

To aid in the understanding of the next chapter, the distinction between caste and caste system should be emphasized. As Lewis states:

> A caste is an endogamous social unit, membership in which is determined by birth; it is often associated with a particular occupation and with restrictions about the acceptance of food and water from other caste groups. Castes tend to be ranked, with the

> Brahmans being traditionally assigned the highest status and "untouchables" castes like the Bhangi (sweeper) the lowest (Lewis 1958a:55).

Bailey, however, clarifies matters by distinguishing between "caste" and "caste system." He defines caste as "an endogamous group dispersed over several villages" (Bailey 1957:xv) but explains that the caste system is a "system of rank, highly ritualized, and of a rigidity which strikes every observer" (Bailey 1957:265). His concept of caste system is further elaborated in the structural characteristic, already set forth. When the jajmani system is discussed, the data will show that even though the jajmani system breaks down, castes remain. Although the present data indicates the caste system breaks down with the jajmani system, more study needs to be done to adequately explain the causes and correlations.

To conclude, structural and cultural concepts must be combined to exposite a good definition of the caste system. Thus, incorporating the concepts of purity and impurity into Bailey's definition will constitute a good and valid definition of caste society.

The Caste System, Some General Considerations

Although the system is thought to be extremely rigid, in actuality it has been flexible at least as far back as the 6th century B.C. and possibly farther (Thaper

1966:40; Ibbetson 1916:6-10; Srinivas 1969). Originally, the ranking order was Kshatriyas (warriors), Brahmans (priests), followed by Vaishyas (land owners and traders), and Sudras (cultivators) (Thaper 1966:37-41). However, the system has evolved so that presently the Brahmans (priests) are generally ranked highest followed by Kshatriyas and so forth. Ibbetson (1916:3-5) attributes the rise of the Brahmans to their priestly advantage. As priests, they were in a good position to degrade all other classes, institute the caste system, and acquire and maintain their dominant position.

The Kshatriya (warrior) caste is virtually non-existent; however, the position has been acquired by dominant tribes like Jats and Rajputs. In Punjab especially, these Kshatriya castes claim a higher status than the Brahmans (Tandon 1961:76-77). The Vaishya category includes merchants and shopkeepers. These above three are the twice born castes and are socially ranked higher than the Sudras and untouchables discussed below.

The once born or Sudras serve the twice born, doing skilled and unskilled work. Occupations in this category range from farmers and artisans, to moneylenders and unskilled fieldhands. The untouchables or schedules castes are socially considered the lowest. This group contains individuals who work with contaminating substances

like leather, excrement, and extreme filth (Welty 1962: 82-83).

Each of the above varna categories are divided into sub-castes, termed jatis. Jatis are specialists within a varna category, thus, carpenters and blacksmiths are jati groups of the Sudra caste. Jatis also are divided along family lines called gotras. Most of the time, these jatis and gotras are considered castes (Srinivas 1969: 3 and 4).

Traditionally, the main features of the caste system are that:

> (1) There is a single all-India hierarchy without any variations between one region and another; (2) there are only four varnas, or, if the Harijans, who are literally "beyond the pale" of caste, are included, five, (3) the hierarchy is clear; and (4) it is immutable (Srinivas 1969:3).

(5) It must be added that the caste system is considered an institution of the Hindu religion (Chhabra 1962:117-121). Although caste hierarchy is expressed in terms of purity and impurity (Srinivas 1969:3), Marriott (1968) has shown that ranking is more accurately determined by transactional analysis. With his concepts of "sanskritization" and "westernization," Srinivas (1969) has shown the mutability and variation within the caste system. I shall now examine caste structure in Punjab.

Caste in Punjab

Introduction

There have been many studies of the functional relationship of caste within a particular South Asian society (Opler and Singh 1964:464-496; Lewis 1958a; Wiser 1958 etc.). Here I will show the variation of the Punjabi caste system, using material from the western, central, and eastern districts of the region. It is not the purpose of this section to list all the Punjabi castes and elucidate their hierarchical position and social function as this can be derived elsewhere (Ibbetson 1916). I shall, however, explain and compare the structural system of the regions studied, deducing the variations of Punjabi caste society.

Punjabi Caste System

Generally speaking, Punjab's caste system is a relatively loose institution, but is still important in the rural villages. Cultivating castes such as Jats, Rajputs, and Arains, usually dominate a village and regard themselves as "owners of the village." The traditional caste model, however, does not do justice to the realities of Punjabi rural life.

> Caste ties and particular patron-client relationships associated with membership in different castes became less determinative of action than formerly. Economic position, power and social status have become more

> independent from caste membership. Today the idiom of castes is often applied by the villagers in describing their own society has a partially fictional character (Raulet and Uppal 1970:339).

Although land and caste status is associated with power, the role of state representatives, similar to Habib's concept of zamindar (Habib 1963), is now a separate means of social mobility (Raulet and Uppal 1970:338-340).

Punjabi caste society differs from the traditional concept of caste system in that it is: 1) a social more than a religious institution with no necessary connection with the Hindu religion; 2) classification and ranking of caste under the varna categories lacks consensus or is practically non-existent, for Brahmans can be outcastes in Punjab; 3) descendence from an ancestor creates a presumption, nothing more (Chhabra 1962:117-121). In addition, castes are far less important in Punjabi social life than in other parts of India. Generally, rigid endogamous caste bonds are stronger in the east than the west. Bonds are also stronger in the towns than in the villages. In the rural areas, tribal, ethnic, and family loyalties dominate over caste allegiance (Punjab 1908:48). The Gazetteer does not specify the size of a town, thus I cannot determine whether it would be considered a large scale society. In either case, Punjabi towns are composed of small scale societies such as pattis (Smith 1952:45-46) and biradaris (Tandon 1961:75-87). Thus, Bailey's criteria of caste

system only being present in small scale societies seems to be applicable here.

As a rule, the landed castes are ranked high in Punjabi society. Depending on the location, Jats are usually the highest, followed by Rajputs. Although the Rajputs consider themselves of higher rank, their income and authority seldom confirm their self-image. Next come numerous land-owning tribes with different ones dominating in different areas. The Ahirs dominate in the south-east, Kenets and Ghirts in the north-east, while Gakhars, Khokhars, and Awans control the south-west.

In the village, trading castes occupy lower positions than the land-owning castes, while in the towns traders have greater prestige. As far as trading is concerned, Banias dominate in the south-east, Khatris in the central and north-west, while Aroras are dominant in the south-west. Most traders are Hindus, seldom Sikhs. Sheikhs and Khojas are the dominant Moslem trading castes.

Caste status is generally determined by factors such as ancestry, position, occupation, religious pre-eminence, comparative purity, observance of social laws, prohibition of widow remarriage, and proximity to the original home of the tribe. Land-owning or ruling castes, however, are generally ranked highest with tenants following. The other criteria such as purity and social observations are not as important in the ranking of the higher

castes as they are in ordering the lower castes. It must be kept in mind, however, that whatever the status of a caste is, it can be changed. Especially in the lower castes, status can be lost by accepting such practices as widow remarriage, while effectively practicing hypergamy may raise a group's status. Each caste has exogamous divisions or sections as determined by the above criteria (Chhabra 1962:117-121).

Caste in West Punjab

Although occupation is primarily determined by birth, such variations as tribal and lineage allegiance dominate over caste authority. There is no general agreement on ranking order because of such factors as: varna categories not practicing their traditional occupations, Brahmans being replaced by Sayyads in religious leadership, and Brahmans practicing moneylending (Punjab 1907: 92-99). The social structure of west Punjab seems to be a class not caste system. Upon closer examination, however, the social organization meets the criteria set forth in this thesis for the existence of a caste society (Punjab 1907:45-110).

Mohammedanism dominates the western sector, consequently, ranking is not as elaborate as among the Hindus. In the west, all castes have a common ritual and supposedly equal access to spiritual benefits. Although ritual purity

influences caste ranking, there is a sharp contrast between Punjabi caste ranking and that of Hindu areas where Brahmans hold a position of high social and spiritual rank. This is in contrast to Hindu areas where social rank is determined by social distance to the Brahman.

In west Punjab, social rank depends on the dominance of a tribe, its nearness to their homeland, and primarily occupation, with agriculturalists ranked highest. Marriage, claims of descent, and ritual position are secondary criteria for caste ranking (Marriott 1965:65-67). Thus the Arians are socially ranked highest in some areas while Jats may dominate elsewhere. Generally speaking, however, west Punjab society is divided into two hierarchical blocks. The agriculturalists comprise the higher strata and artisans the lower. The distinction between these two groups, however, is not clear. Supporting artisans can share the same tribal name as the caste he serves, and agricultural laborers can be recruited from artisans. Due to this tribal occupational mobility, groups can be absorbed into the agricultural block, consequently raising their caste status. This results in making the ranking of ethnic groups unstable since they are neither universal nor clearly distinguished by collective opinion (Punjab 1907).

According to Marriott (1965:62-65) a typical village is composed of two ranked ethnic groups with

divergence of opinion as to which one occupies the upper position. There is usually agreement as to the group which occupies the lower social position. Since tribes usually own land in blocks, mixture or sharing of land by more than one tribe is rare. As a result, one ethnic group tends to dominate in an area with subservient castes forming to provide services to the stronger tribe (Punjab 1930: 75ff). Although a village may contain one or two ethnic groups they seldom exceed four (Marriott 1965:62-69). Most of the settlements in this area are small; thus, equality tends to dominate over stratified interaction.

The main local distinction among tribes is between agricultural and non-agricultural castes. The agricultural tribes are usually of two types, the aristocratic and non-aristocratic (Punjab 1930:120). The aristocratic groups vary from area to area and there is no consistent stratified sequence over the whole area (Marriott 1965: 67). Aristocratic groups strongly emphasize kinship ties and tribal organization. They have their own political structure with a family or chief which is very important among the aristocratic tribes. Without this centralized control, an aristocratic group is likely to lose its organization and position (Punjab 1930:118-125).

Kinship ties unite many groups that are mutually inconsistent in their hierarchical position. Marriages are frequently endogamous within their own agnatic

lineages, tribes, or villages. Yet, kinship ties are extensive throughout the region. For example, the Boloches, a tribe related by kin ties, are scattered throughout the region but occupy various positions in different local social ties. Hypothetically speaking, then the Jats may be on a high social plane in the east, and on a lower social position in the north-west. Yet, they are related to each other by kinship ties. Thus, the Attock tribe may use their kinship relations to the eastern group to raise their social standing. It is these extensive kin ties that contribute to the unsettled consensus of rank within an area contributing to greater social mobility (Marriott 1965:68-69). Also, in west Punjab, there are no untouchable castes for these services are performed by the Moslems who are not considered untouchables (Tandon 1961:79). Usually cultivated land is dominated by a tribe which has become an agricultural caste. Consequently, a community composed of subordinate tribes that have taken on caste status, and Hinduized castes such as Lohars and Nais gradually surround the dominant tribe (Punjab 1907:63-100, and 1908:202 ff. and Vol. II).

It can be summarized that in east Punjab, the caste system is present, but it is influenced more by tribal organization than by Hindu ideals. There seems to be mainly two strata, the agricultural tribal groups composed of aristocratic and non-aristocratic groups, and

the artisans and menial castes. The traditional varna categories do not occupy the same positions in this part of Punjab as they do in Hindu India. Social ranking is not elaborate, and the extensive kinship links, real or fictive, add to the social mobility of groups in the regions. Each village is usually dominated by one ethnic group and is supported by castes or minor ethnic groups who become castes. There is a common ritual among the people and stratification is not as marked as in other caste dominated areas.

Although this area is definitely a caste society, it borders more on being a tribal or class type of society. According to the most recent census (Pakistan 1961a:I-19) the rural areas are still dominantly agricultural while skilled labor is more generally concentrated in towns. There may be a shift within the rural sector concentrating mainly on agriculture, animal breeding (cattle, sheep, goats, and camels) and supplemental occupations like basket-weaving and mat-making.

Caste in Central Punjab

Using data from Shahpur, Gujrat, and Lahore districts as representative (Ahmad 1967:81-106; Eglar 1960: 28-41; Slocum, Akhtar, and Sahi n.d.:27-30), we discover that the society of central Punjab is divided into two or three broad hierarchical categories (the division varies from one area to another). The landlords are ranked

highest, followed by the tenants with kammis (craftsmen) ranked lowest. The influential members of the village are drawn exclusively from the zamindari or landlord group and secondarily from their employees and managers.

According to Ahmad, a village in Shahpur divides itself into Quoms (a term comparable to caste). The zamindari quom is also divided hierarchically into sub-quoms or aals. Many quoms are partilineal kin groups which tract their lineage to a common ancestor. The zamindari quoms can either be landlords or tenants, membership is primarily determined by occupation. It is hard to determine the hierarchical structure because when economic circumstances so warrant, ethnic groups change from one occupation to another, and movement of families from one quom or tribe to another seems to be common. Thus, if agricultural laborers are needed while barbers and blacksmiths are in excess, surplus people will fill needed occupations and shift their hierarchical status within a generation.

Among the kammi quoms, status is also determined by occupation. Many times the traditional occupation does not correlate with the name of the quom. Thus there may be Nais present with only a third practicing in the barber profession. Occupations, like well cleaners, have become extinct with the appearance of canals. Others who take up government service claim higher status recognition

than a zamindari quom. Such claims are not necessarily recognized by the indigenous population, however. Ahmad thus hypothesizes that position on the hierarchical scale can be altered with a change in occupation. If the occupation is familiar to the village structure its ranking can be easily recognized. If the new occupation is not a part of the village occupational framework, problems of nomenclature and ranking result. Also, if a lower quom tries to adopt the position or title of a higher quom, recognition is withheld for a long period of time. The kammi quoms claiming that their real caste is that of the zamindari, maintain that their occupational title is a misnomer.

Although in Shahpur district quoms are divided into three main categories, in Gujrat (Eglar 1960:28-41) they are divided into two divisions: the zamindar and kammi. The former are the landowners while the latter are village artisans and craftsmen (Eglar 1960:28). Sometimes those in the zamindar group may not own land but still are classed with that caste because they have agricultural occupations (Eglar 1960:28-29). The kammis are also divided according to caste although strict ritual pollution like in Hindu areas is non-existent. Zamindars and kammis sit and eat together as well as accept food from each other, thus the concept of caste pollution is neither dominant here (Eglar 1960:29, Tandon 1961:78) nor in Shahpur district (Ahmad 1967:87).

The authors are not clear as to whether the pollution concept is dominant or absent, but I would guess it is the former. In Gujrat, caste membership as determined by birth and marriage is endogamous rather than hypergamous. Like in the west where Islam dominates, many caste distinctions are bypassed in favor of the concept of brotherhood. The caste is seen as a custom or division of labor borrowed from the Hindus. In Gujrat when a person is asked about his zat (caste) his loyalty is more to the Moslem faith as a child of God rather than caste loyalty (Eglar 1960:29).

The common kammi castes in a Gujrat village are: barbers, bakers, cobblers, carpenters, potters, blacksmiths, musallis (laborers), weavers, and tailors. Most villages have a village bard, called a mirasi, and a caste of Kashmiris and Arains who are vegetable growers. Although the Arains own their land, they are not considered zamindars (Eglar 1957).

In Lahore district (Slocum, Akhtar, and Sahi n.d.: 27-30) caste is a regular feature of the social structure and represents relatively fixed prestige levels. Unlike the eastern sector where Brahman is usually ranked highest, the Syed, who claims descent from the Holy Prophet, is considered highest on the social hierarchy. Ranked next are the land-owning castes like the Arains, Rajputs, and Jats. Low caste positions are occupied by the

specialist castes: like the Julaha (weaver) and Mochi (cobbler) castes, while the lowest on the social scale are occupied by the Musali (converted sweeper), and Mirasi (village bard) castes. The caste names are different but occupational rankings are generally the same as in other areas, which also helps to account for the different ranking of tribal people linked by kin ties.

In this area, there are hundreds of castes and sub-castes. Each constitutes a separate "we-group." In marriage practices, caste endogamy is practised (Slocum, Akhtar and Sahi n.d.:28) while in Gujrat hypergamy is practices (Tandon 1961:73). Relations among members of the same caste are not close like those of the sub-caste but give the individual a wider circle of approved affiliations. Caste separation in Lahore district is strongly maintained (Slocum, Akhtar, and Sahi n.d.:28).

Like other areas of central Punjab, occupation primarily determines social rank, with the agriculturalist ranked highest. Within the agricultural group, social rank is determined by tenure status and size of holdings: landlords constitute the village elite, owners and cultivators come next, followed by non-land-owning cultivators. Government servants are ranked lower but have more prestige in the villages than in the cities. Businessmen are ranked the lowest (Slocum, Akhtar, and Sahi n.d.:43).

The occupational castes like the Tali (oil crusher), Nai (barber) and Dhobi (washerman) are called moeens. Occupations are passed down from father to son, one generation after another. These castes frequently have to do other work, i.e., agricultural labor, to supplement the income from their traditional occupations. A moeen may acquire land and become a cultivator. Because he is a moeen, however, his traditional status is a barrier to his climbing up on the hierarchical scale which is only possible by moving to another village. This movement seldom happens, however (Slocum, Akhtar, and Sahi n.d.:44-45).

With the building of the canals, strict selection was practiced to obtain the best people for migration to the canal colonies (Darling 1947:115-116). The original inhabitants of the area were pastoral tribes while the colonists consisted mainly of Rajputs, Arians, Pathans, and Gujars. Numerous Sikhs and Hindus were present but have migrated to India since partition. Artisans and Ancillary castes are also present, of which the most important are the Sheikhs (Pakistan 1961b:I-13, I-14).

Communities containing both Moslem and Hindu castes working in a functional relationship were quite common before partition. As Tandon (1961:75-87) explains, caste organization was present in spite of Moslem emphasis on equality. The Khatris (Kahatriyas) were dominant while the Aroras (merchants and traders) ranked next. It was

around these two main castes that the service caste (Sudras) was organized in a jajmani relationship. Brahmans were considered underprivileged and exercised little or no influence although there was an exchange relationship with them and other castes.

There are numerous Hindu castes: the Tarkhans (wood workers), Sonars (goldsmiths), Jhewars or Mehras (cooks), and Talals (liquor sellers). There are also Moslem castes such as the Mirasis (entertainers), Kanjars (partly prostitutes) and Bazigars (acrobats), traders, weavers, tailors, potters, and washermen, to name a few. This society is not multi-layered but multi-unit. Each caste has its own functional place in the society and is united in biradaris (brotherhoods) which are caste groups that enhance their own interest (Tandon 1961:75-87).

Evaluation and summary of the data indicate that the caste system is present in the Central districts. Stratification is between the zamindars, tenants, and kammis (depending on the respective region). Except for "mixed communities," all groups are divided into these divisions. In contrast with the Hindu caste systems, differences lie mainly in that: 1) there is less emphasis on ritual pollution. 2) Status is determined by the criteria of occupation and group membership instead of ritual purity. Although transactional analysis determines the hierarchy, ritual gifts or services do not have as

high a value as economic or political benefits. A chief or king who provides physical security or a zamindar who gives economic benefits is likely to be ranked higher than the priest who bestows ritual blessings. After all, a Kshatriya would argue, blessings without physical security are of no value. 3) Although the society is rigid in some areas, mobility can be achieved within one generation by changing occupation. 4) Varna categories do not have the same rank in the central provinces as they do in other Hindu-dominated areas. 5) Finally, hypergamy has aided in social mobility. In spite of these variations, however, a caste system is present in the central districts.

Caste in East Punjab

Taking a representative village in Ambala district (India 1961:8-10), I shall explain the caste system in the eastern section of Punjab. This village is dominated by Chamars, a caste of leather workers, whose priests are called Sadhs. The Chamars eat meat and do polluting work while the Sadhs neither drink wine nor eat non-vegetarian food. These two broad categories, or castes, are divided into gots. Marriage is exogamous from the gotra but caste endogamous. Thus, in the eastern section, which is predominently Hindu, marriage is caste endogamous rather than hypergamous as in other sections previously discussed. Traditionally, the Chamars have been considered

untouchables. Due to the influence of Sikhism and the change of social values, a change in their social status is indicated.

In this section of Punjab, ranking according to polluting behavior is dominant. Low or polluting castes cannot even draw water from the same well as the unpolluted castes. In the past, Chamars were not allowed to touch a member of the clean caste. When they went to a "clean house," food would be thrown to them. This rigid segregation is of the past and Harijans are beginning to be accepted as fellow citizens. They work with other castes in the fields and social interaction is not so rigid. In the matter of eating together, however, strict segregation is still observed. No clean-caste will smoke with or take food cooked by a Chamar. Social mobility is improbable without economic uplift. Due to the scarcity of land, economic gain is rare. When Chamars obtain land, they enhance themselves socially and mingle more freely with the upper castes.

Position in the social hierarchy is shown by caste transactions. The Charmars do not lift dead cattle, a job done by castes inferior to them. Their dining and smoking associates are restricted. Regardless of their social ranks, numerous castes now influence democratic panchayats. At present, change is common. People are

forced to adopt new occupations, consequently, many shift to casual labor frequently causing a shift in social status.

Conclusion

As can be seen from the above data, we have a suitable structural definition of the caste system that applies to all areas of Punjab. Variations within Punjab as well as variations within South Asia have been pointed out in the first part of this chapter. There are factors affecting variation that are not readily apparent. The dominant caste influences the local caste structure. If in a particular village the Brahmans dominate, they will maintain their higher status whereas a Jat-dominated village will serve Jats and Jat interests. If a village is dominated by Moslems or Sikhs, stratification according to ritual purity is not as strong as that dominated by Hindus, even though stratification is affected by ritual purity. The data also indicates a correlation between tribal and Moslem influences with less rigid stratification while urban and Hindu dominated areas, like east Punjab and Lahore have rigid stratification. Other major differences were set forth at the conclusion of the section on Central Provinces. At present, it is

sufficient to conclude that whether they are called castes, quoms, or zats, the caste system does exist throughout the Punjab, although considerable variation is present.

CHAPTER III

THE JAJMANI SYSTEM

Introduction

In his description of peasant economies, Eric Wolf (1966:37-42, 49-56) classifies two means of providing goods and services to the peasant population. The simplest situation is the household producing most of the goods and services for itself, with minimal outside ties. The second type is the exchange relationship within a community, of which Punjab is an example. Although Wolf uses data from Rampur, a village in west Punjab, the jajmani model applies to the entire region. In Punjab, village land is held by a group of cultivators with specialists performing supporting services for the agriculturalists. Thus, according to Wolf, each specialist caste is attached to a cultivating household in a jajmani relationship.

Wolf shows many similarities between the jajmani system and the economy of medieval peasant community. Both work with specialists. In Medieval Europe, peasants worked with specialists, like millers, herdsmen, and priests, whereas in Punjab, specialized castes support

the peasants. Both have voluntary and required social obligations. Distribution in Punjab is also similar to Medieval Europe because land is controlled by cultivator-landlords who redistribute goods and services according to tradition. Each landed group forms part of a political overlord, with peasants being sufficiently taxed to support a whole pyramid of claims from the highest to the lowest social position. Like in India, Medieval European society tended to make positions hereditary.

Like Medieval Europe, Indian villages operate in what Wolf terms the sectional market. In the "sectional market," communities are socially isolated, perform part-time specialities (i.e., making pots, weaving cloth, etc.) and go to a market to exchange goods. In Punjab, the interdependent sections, however, are in the same community, linked by jajmani patron-client ties. Unlike the sectional market where individuals come to the market briefly, to buy and sell goods, in the Indian village there are customary "obligations" for each participating section. Since all sections are interdependent, occupational mobility is limited, thus it is difficult for an individual to maximize his profits.

India also practices what Wolf classes the "prebendal domain," where land is granted to officials who draw tribute from the peasantry. However, in this variation, officials were only given rights to the land revenue,

and not to the land itself. Grants were given to rulers to tax certain areas while land ownership continued to remain on the local level. The jajman has a personalized relationship with his client. Ritual and ceremony are used in their relationship to emphasize and symbolize reciprocity and kin-nature ties in the jajman-kamin relationship.

Although the jajmani and feudal systems contain many similarities, there are differences. Briefly, as this chapter will show, major differences lie in that: (1) the caste system is a necessary prerequisite for the existence of the jajmani system. Although feudal Europe had a rigid society, it was not a caste system. Ritual purity is emphasized in the hierarchy, hence pollution is transferred from the higher to the lower castes. The higher a group is socially, the more ritually pure it is considered. (2) As Opler and Singh (1964) point out, the jajmani relationship is not dependent on a landlord-tenant agreement. A Lohar can have a jajmani relationship with a Thaker, whereas in a feudal society, all relations are centered around the "lord of the manor." (3) Although occupational mobility is rigid in both feudal and jajmani systems, division of labor in Punjabi peasant society is generally much more elaborate. (4) Jajmani relationships contain a "mutuality" that was lacking in the feudal system (Wiser 1958:vii). (5) Unlike feudal

society where all specialists worked for a landowner, in the jajmani relationship a kammi can have several jajmans (Wiser 1958:33).

Since the jajmani system is the core of the economic field in Punjabi peasant society, I shall focus on it in this chapter. As I have indicated earlier, specific structures cannot be isolated so as to give an accurate description of Punjabi society. Thus, in the following chapter I shall show how forces act on the economic field to form a summary structure.

Jajmani System

Introduction

The study of the functional relationship of castes in the production of goods and services has been a popular topic among South Asian scholars. In this section, I shall define and explain the jajmani system, telling how it works and then discuss its variations in Punjab.

Definition

Defining and explaining the jajmani system has received considerable attention among scholars. Wiser (1958) defined the jajmani system as:

> These service relationships reveal that the priest, bard, accountant, goldsmith, florist, vegetable grower, etc. are the jajmans of these other castes. In turn each of these castes has a form of service to perform for the others. In this manner, the various castes

> of a Hindu village in North India are interrelated in a service capacity. Each serves the others. Each in turn is a master. Each in turn is servant, each has his own clientele comprising members of different castes which is his "jajmani" or "birth." This system of interrelatedness is service within the Hindu community is called the Hindu "jajmani system" (Wiser 1958:10).

He explains the system as a means by which the castes of a village are integrated into an orderly functional relationship for the production of goods and services, while providing economic security to all social members. It is a system of inequality, but it functions to make the village community self-sufficient. High castes do not perform services for low castes, and a few castes are considered socially equal. Wiser's main divergence from other descriptions of the jajmani system is his maintaining that the system is based on the Laws of Manu. Thus, it is Hindu tradition and Brahman dominance which keeps the system in tact. Wiser explains that the caste system is necessary for the existence of the jajmani system.

Gould (1958) also describes the jajmani system but differs from Wiser on two important points. He maintains that the relationship between jajman and purjan (client) is of a kinship quality, where the jajman, like a benevolent family head, paternalistically looks after the needs of his purjans. To Gould, the kin type of relationship is necessary because of the structural dilemma in the system. According to him there are two opposing

principles in jajmani institutions, the centripetal principles of family and caste, and the centrifugal principles of intercaste and intervillage relationships. Lower castes are defiling, and yet upper castes must contact them for services they render. To Gould, the predicament is resolved by projecting kinship values into jajmani relationships.

In his second point of difference Gould, like Beidelman (1959) and Lewis (1956) supports the thesis that the basis for power lies in land ownership and wealth whereas Wiser shows power stemming from Brahman authority and Hindu ideals. Gould also makes the fine distinction between jajmani labor organization and other peasant villages by pointing out that in India:

> although all villages are primarily dependent upon subsistence agricultural production, all families do not practice agriculture directly. Only a certain proportion do so while the rest specialize in various craft and menial occupations. In exchange for these various services, the cultivators pay a systematically determined share for their produce to those providing them (Gould 1958:428).

Beidelman (1959) studies the jajmani system in order to understand the economic aspect of the caste system. Thus, unlike Wiser and Gould who argue that the jajmani system is there to help the village survive, Beidelman states that it is just one aspect of the caste system. He places greater emphasis on the relative power of two major groups, the jajmans and the kamins. The

landowners are classed as jajmans and the caste serving them are kamins. Beidelman analyzes the system as the dyadic relationship between these two major groups. Consequently, he defines the system as a feudalistic relationship of:

> hereditary obligations of payment and of occupational ceremonial duties between two or more specific families of different castes in the same locality (Beidelman 1959:6).

In the same manner as Gould, Beidelman maintains that the basis for power is the control of land. Since land ownership is in the hands of dominant castes, and the coercive power is available to the jajmani groups, caste integration is possible.

Opler and Singh (1964) describe jajmani institutions as a hereditary relationship between a family and its servants. The support of the jajman-purjan tie comes from caste assemblies, thus, if a purjan thinks that he is wronged, he complains to his caste assembly. The assembly will act like a labor union and boycott the offending family. Ritual sanctions permit a particular group to perform certain tasks which makes the threat of boycott a very effective weapon. To Opler and Singh then, the jajmani system is different and apart from the landlord-tenant relationship. It is kept in tact by power groups insuring their interest and customs, instead of by economic coercion as Beidelman hypothesizes.

All writers seem to agree that the jajmani system is a means of functionally integrating castes for the production of goods and services within a village. This does not mean that the jajmani system is present wherever the castes dominate for this is not the case (Marriott 1965: 50; Kolenda 1967:288; Harper 1959). The caste system, however, seems to be a necessary prerequisite for the jajmani system to exist (Lewis 1958a:83).

By examining and comparing these different descriptions and explanations of the jajmani system, Pauline Kolenda (1967) defines the jajmani system as a:

> system of distribution in Indian villages whereby high-caste landowning families called jajmans are provided services and products by various lower castes such as carpenters, potters, blacksmiths, watercarriers, sweepers, and laundrymen. Purely ritual services may be provided by Brahman priests and various sectarian castes, and almost all serving castes have ceremonial and ritual duties at their jajman's birth, marriages, funerals, and at some of the religious festivals. Important in the latter duties is the lower castes capacity to absorb pollution by handling clothing and other things defiling by birth and death pollution, gathering up banquet dishes after the feast, and administering various bodily attentions to mother, bride, or groom.
>
> The landowning "jajmans" pay the serving castes in kind, with grain, clothing, sugar, fodder, and animal products like butter and milk. Payment may account to a little of everything produced on the land, in the pastures, and in the kitchen. Sometimes land is granted to servants, the middle and lower castes either subscribe to each other's services in return for compensations and payments, or exchange services with one another (Kolenda 1967:287).

In spite of Kolenda's attempt to delimit a general definition, certain glaring inconsistencies still exist in

the observer's analysis. Lewis (1958:xv) distinguishes between tenants and kamins. The distinction between the landlord-tenant and jajman-purjan ties, however, is not clear. Beidelman (1959:1-30), Wiser (1958), and Lewis (1958b), describe the jajmani system as a similar institution to the feudal manor of Medieval Europe where power was held by large landowners who had specialists and peasants working for them on a subordinate basis. Opler and Singh (1964), on the other hand, describe it as a hereditary relationship between families. Wiser's data (1958:14) also supports Opler and Singh (1964) for in his study, Kshatriyas, Bhats, and Brahmans are also jajmans. Thus, the question arises as to whether a jajman has to be a large landowner, or is he just a patron who has a patro-client relationship with families of different castes. The data presented later on will support Opler's and Singh's interpretation.

Wiser (1958:44, 46-48) also maintains that wage labor drawn from outside the village is not part of the jajmani system whereas piece-work done for wages within the village is a part of the jajmani system. The situation is further confused by Beidelman (1959:10) who explains that landlord-tenant relations are of a jajmani nature, but makes a distinction between kamin (agricultural laborer), and khangi-kamin (occupational or artisan labor) who works on a piece-meal basis. According to

him, hereditary indentured labor is not a part of the jajmani system. Gould (1958:429) maintains that it is a relationship between land-owning cultivating castes, and the subordinate landless craft and menial castes, which includes tenants and agricultural laborers.

It must be kept in mind, however, that landlord-tenant relationships are of an economic nature where rent is paid in either cash or kind. Although there may be some benefits, like free home sites or use of common land for renting, the relationship is purely on a contract, not a paternalistic hereditary basis. Thus, "the tenant is not a moeen or kamin in relation to dominant caste members" (Raulet and Uppal 1970:342). Ahmad (1967:19-22) clearly distinguishes between the two types of relationship. Although Lewis, Wiser, and Beidelman describe the jajmani system as centering around a landlord, their data (Lewis 1958a:59, 65; Wiser 1958:14) is more in agreement with Opler and Singh's interpretation, that the jajmani relationship is a hereditary relationship between families; is usually, not necessarily, between agriculturalists and supporting artisan families. Thus, the jajmani system is defined as an aspect of the caste system which maintains a traditionally fixed functional relationship of castes for the production of goods and services in a local society. All types of services, duties, remunerations (which are in kind), gifts, and exchanges are determined by tradition

so that lower castes absorb pollution leaving the higher castes relatively pure. Although this definition is of an ideal type, it must be kept in mind that like the caste system there is change in the supposedly rigid jajmani relations.

Jajmani System, Some Further Considerations

I have defined the jajmani system with its variations. This section will elaborate some general features of the structure.

Gould (1958:432-435) outlines the structural features of the system stating that basically, an individual worker receives "considerations" such as free residence site, free food for animals, rent-free land, credit facilities, free hides, casual leave, aid in litigation and many others. In addition to these "considerations," jajmans establish formal sites for their kam karnewalas, with specific payments at set periods of time. Thus, every six months, a washerman (Dhobi) may get 8 pounds of grain per month per woman in the household; the blacksmith (Lohar) gets 16 pounds of grain per plow owned by the jajman every six months, and so on down the line for each caste group or person that has a relationship with a jajman. Distribution can also take place at other times. At weddings and other ceremonies high caste

families distribute extra food and sweets to their purjans. Food and caste-off clothes are also given to the needy.

The jajmans and their purjans tend to comprise a closed system of socio-economic interaction. Many of the castes only perform services for their particular patrons and in exchange are remunerated in kind and benefits. Thus, the jajman-purjan relationship becomes close, especially during factional strife within the village. It is not always a closed system because a purjan can have several patrons and even work for wages at different places. According to Gould, although there are these centripetal tendencies, a jajman-purjan relationship is somewhat analogous to kinship relations for it projects kin values into the economic relationship of the village. The "professional" relationship is mistrusted and hard for the villagers to understand. The system is not completely self-contained; however, services are often rendered to outsiders or castes from other villages and redistribution within the village community is considerable.

Jajmans tend to be upper castes. They normally rank high in the political, economic, and ritual structure while the kammis or purjans are of lower castes. It must be remembered, however, that although social roles are usually determined by land-holdings, other factors

are also given equal weight in determining the social hierarchy. As a result, a powerful jajman may have a lower social rank than a non-landowning caste such as the Brahmans (Beidelman 1959:74). Thus Beidelman correctly concludes that although ritual rank and economic power may be related, they are not synonomous. Beidelman (1959:74) views the jajman as a receiver of services who gives nothing in return. Gould's analysis (1958) and the consideration of economic security, loans, and gifts given at harvest time and during ceremonies by the jajman definitely refute this interpretation.

Beidelman classes both landlord-tenant and patron-client agreements as jajman relationships. He classes the jajman with a landlord while the kammi is analogous to a tenant laborer. The jajman desires cheap labor while the kamin aims for land, produce, and security. To maintain his superiority, the jajman has certain means of coercion at his disposal. He controls land, farm implements, draft animals, seed, food, pastures, forage, and maybe house-sites and wells. His superior funds give him the capital for loans, bribes, and litigation. His high economic and social position coupled with his caste membership enable him to influence the local panchayat to decide disputes in his favor. More likely, he is linked with the panchayat members by kin, caste, economic, or social ties. The jajman is usually well-educated, or at

least he has contact with government officials and court bureaucrats whom he can manipulate to his advantage. The jajman uses this coercive power to command the obedience of the kammi groups. Besides the above, he uses ritual and ceremonial occasions to reinforce the inequal relationship in the society. Thus, tradition usually implies and reveals the social power of the jajman over the purjan (Beidelman 1959:74-75).

Beidelman's analysis is valid in Punjab where the jajman's power lies in his monopoly of providing services and restrictive power. If the jajman decides to dispense with certain services, (i.e., shave himself rather than hire a barber), a caste boycott will be ineffective. When a kammi caste, which is usually in minority, threatens, the dominant caste closes ranks against it, and counters with a superior force. Therefore, Leach's analysis (1969: 6) of the higher caste competing for the services of the lower caste is somewhat misleading.

Caste rules and tradition are enforced by caste and village panchayats which keep their members "in line." In a kammi caste panchayat, power extends only over its own members. Except for the power to withdraw services it does not have any other means of coercion over outsiders. Sometimes, due to ritual prohibitions, particular upper castes are unable to perform certain occupations. As a result, castes like the Lohars may be economically

better off than the high-ranking Brahmans. Once, however, a kammi acquires land, he is free from the traditional occupational dependence upon a jajman, resulting in less commitment to caste economic-roles. Both Beidelman (1959:51-73) and Wiser (1958:108-121) deal with social change and conflict between kammis and jajmans. Previously villages were more isolated, hence all caste services were needed, money was not valued, alliances were cut across caste lines, and possibly the paternalistic character of the jajman was more predominant. Nowadays, external factors have disrupted jajmani relations. The jajman markets his produce outside the village, getting a higher and better price. The value of money has increased, thus the kammi is given less for his services. Manufactured goods, e.g., shoes have replaced the need for the shoemaker. At the same time jajmani ties can be broken and a kammi can seek employment elsewhere which frees him from upper caste coercion and interference. Since population increases has decreased the resources available per kammi, the same resources have to support more people. The jajman is also hurt due to land division. Neither his resources are sufficient to hire many kammis nor can he continue to provide services and gifts in the traditional manner. As a result, both groups are becoming poor, although the kammis are becoming poorer faster.

Political movements and education have changed values. Traditional values and rituals have brought out the importance of ritual sanctions in the system. Conflicts were resolved because there was need for the supporting occupations and yet a sufficient locus of power lay in the dominant caste of jajman group. However, due to increased education, democratic panchayats and other external changes, the locus of power is shifting and causing tension in the system. The equilibrium has been upset by groups enhancing their status, or valuing cash remuneration over kind. The kammis are not sufficiently provided for which tends to break down the system.

It must be kept in mind that the jajmani system is not merely an economic arrangement. It contributes to festivals and rituals. It also has a strong influence on power relationships within the community. It supports and reinforces the prestige of the higher castes and yet allies jajmans and kammis in factional strife. Although our analysis is concerned with the economic field of Punjabi society, it must be kept in mind that the jajmani system is functionally related to other fields in South Asian society.

The Jajmani System in Punjab

Introduction

Although the caste system and jajmani relationships still exist in Punjab, the "classical model of Indian village society does not do justice to the realities of rural life today as it has done for many decades" (Raulet and Uppal 1970:339). Due to land revenue system, intensified market economy, and the introduction of different administrative measures, caste ties and patron-client relationships are now less determinative of action. Thus, economic position and social status have become more independent of caste membership than they formerly were. Consequently, Uppal and Raulet describe the role of a village broker developing to act as a go-between between outsiders and villagers. By absorbing this role, they obtain a separate avenue of upward mobility (Raulet and Uppal 1970: 339-340). Although a jajmani system is described for Punjab, it must be kept in mind that due to rapid change traditional models do not always apply here.

Jajmani System in East Punjab

In east Punjab, ideally each caste group in a village gives certain standardized services to other castes (Tables 1, 2 and 3).

Generally, services are not performed for inferior castes. Each man or family works for another family or

Table 1. Jajmani Relationships among Different Castes: Rampur.[1]

Number	Caste	Serves	Is Served By
1	Brahman	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3 4 6 7 8 10 11 12
2	Jat		1 3 4 6 7 8 10 11 12
3	Baniya	all	1 4 8 10 11 12
4	Nai	1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 3 8 10 11 12
5	Chipi	1 4 10	1 3 4 8 10 11 12
6	Khati	1 2 3 4	1 3 4 8 10 11 12
7	Lohar	1 2 3 4	1 3 4 8 10 11 12
8	Kumhar	all	1 4 10 11 12
9	Jhinvar	cash relationships	cash relationships
10	Dhobi	all	1 3 4 8 11 12
11	Chamar	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8 12
12	Bhangi	all	8 10

[1]Lewis 1958:620.

Table 2. Services Rendered and Payments Received by Camars: Rampur.[1]

Occasion	Services Rendered	Payment Received
Boy's marriage	1. Felling trees, cutting wood for fuel.	1. Meals given when cutting wood.
	2. Providing a watch at the house after the wedding party has left.	2. One rupee at the departure of the wedding party.
	3. Accompanying the wedding party; attending to the bullocks at the bride's home.	3. One rupee at the departure of the wedding party from the bride's home.
Girl's marriage	1. Cutting wood for fuel.	1. Meals given to the whole family four times during the 3-day stay.
	2. Assistance in reception of wedding party.	2. One rupee at wedding party's departure.
	3. Feeding their bullocks.	3. One rupee, wheat (usually 5 to 10 sirs), and clothes after the wedding.
	4. Keeping watch where party camps.	
	5. Making repairs in the house.	

Table 2. Continued.

Occasion	Services Rendered	Payment Received
Ordinary service	1. Work without payment for officials (begar).	1. Meals on days of work for jajman.
	2. Repairs of jajman's shoes.	2. One sir of grain at harvest time.
	3. Work in extraordinary situations (illness or death, etc.).	3. Grain leftover on the threshing floor.
	4. Help in harvesting.	4. Animal carcasses taken.
	5. Removal of dead cattle.	5. One-fortieth of the grain produced (minimum 2 to 5 maunds).
Extraordinary service	1. Full-time work in harvesting rabi crop.	1. One-twentieth of the produce.
	2. Full-time work in harvesting kharif crops.	2. One-tenth of the produce if 100 maunds or over; more if the kharif crop is less. Meals given on workdays.

[1]Lewis 1958:73.

Table 3. Rules of Service: Rampur.[1]

Caste	Type of Service	Rights earned through service
Khati (carpenter)	To repair agricultural tools.	One maund of grain per year along with ori rights (2 1/2 seers of grain twice a year at each sowing season).
Lohar (blacksmith)	As above	As above
Kumhar (potter)	To supply earthenware vessels and to render services of light nature at weddings.	Grain to the value of the vessels. Additional grain at the son's or daughter's marriage, according to status and capacity.
Hajam or Nai (barber)	To shave and cut hair; to attend to guests on their arrival and to render other services of light nature at weddings.	At each harvest as much grain as the man can lift by himself. Additional grain at the son's or daughter's marriage, according to status and capacity.

Table 3. Continued.

Caste	Type of Service	Rights earned through service
Khakrul or Bhangi (sweeper)	To prepare cow-dung cakes, to gather sweepings, to remove dead mules and donkeys, to collect cots for extraordinary needs, and to render services at weddings.	Meals and rabri twice a day; at each harvest as much grain as the man can lift by himself and also at the son's or daughter's marriage according to status and capacity.
Camar (leather-worker)	If a man assists in agriculture and gives all kinds of light services,	he gets one-twentieth of the produce.
	If he does 'begar' (compulsory labor), renders ordinary service, and removes dead cattle,	he gets one-fourth of the produce and the skins of dead cattle.

[1]Lewis 1958:61.

families called jajmans, while the person doing the work is called a kamin or kam karne'wala. Normally the system is supposed to operate without monetary exchange, thus compensation is according to periodic payment in kind (i.e., grains) and services (i.e., weddings and free residence sites). In spite of the increasing use of money, kamins prefer remuneration in grain since the price of grain has risen enormously. In east Punjab, the main function of the jajmani system is to insure a stable labor supply for the dominant agricultural caste. If a kamin moves, he can give his rights to someone else, usually to a member of his own family. Because of the security of the village, kamins hesitate to move. The community sometimes pressures a person to stay if there is a shortage of his type of services. Conversely, however, a jajman cannot shift from one kamin to another. If he does, he is likely to be boycotted and not rendered any services at all by that particular caste. It must be kept in mind that not every village has a caste member for all needed services. As a result, a kamin may have jajmans in several villages. A potter living in a small village may not have enough jajmans to give him sufficient income so he serves clients in other villages also. A Dhobi may also serve several villages.

The relationship of a kamin to a jajman is a link between families. It is passed down from father to son,

and is like private property. At the death of a kamin, his jajmans are divided among his sons. Thus, after several generations, the apportionment of jajmans to families of the same occupation may be unequal. One family may serve twelve jajmans while another may serve as many as thirty-four. On the whole, the system in Punjab is supposed to integrate and provide security-giving aspects to the social system and provide "peace and contentment for the village society." Lewis states, however (1958a:82), that tenants and kamins are not synonomous; thus, the two terms should not be confused as Beidelman seems to have done.

In the village of Rampur (Lewis 1958a:60-84) the divergence from the ideal is quite marked. According to traditional caste ranking, the Brahmans should have the dominant position in the village, but in Punjab, tribes tend to dominate over Hindu caste categories. In Rampur the Jats are jajmans and Brahmans are their tenants. The customary jajmani relationships were codified and called the wajib-ul-arz. It was recognized under the British law courts. Interestingly enough, the wajib-ul-arz only codified the service payment of the low-castes (i.e., Sudra and untouchables). Low castes can act as jajmans for other lower castes, e.g., a Khati (carpenter) may act as a jajman for a Chamar (leatherworker) and Bhangi (sweeper). There is also inter-service between castes, a

Khati, Nai, Dhobi, and Kumhar may have inter-service relationships with each other.

Presently, however, the system does not operate smoothly. Changes continue to take place. A present-day jajman is better off paying cash rather than relying on traditional relationships. Natural catastrophies have contributed towards change. During the famine of 1944-45, because of grain scarcity, the jajmans decided to reduce their customary dues. The Khatis disagreed and broke off their jajmani relationships and left their traditional profession for other services. Some Jat families began to practice full-time carpentry. Technological development and innovation have also hurt the Khatis. With the institution of iron wheels for bullock carts, the Khati's work load was reduced causing many to shift occupations. Those who leave, tend to give their jajmani relationships to other persons, usually a family member. Although emphasis is on the system as a relationship between the agriculturalists and supporting specialists, there can be a "mixed system" within a village. A tailor may charge certain groups a fixed rate, but with other castes he may have a jajmani agreement. The Chipi (tailor) may have a miniature jajmani relationship with a member of a lower caste. He may have a Bhangi (sweeper) do his sweeping in return for a daily loaf of bread. When such arrangements exist, gifts and services are rendered at weddings and

funerals. At a Chipi wedding, for example, the Kumhar may receive five rupees whereas the Dhobi and Bhangi receive one rupee each.

Traditionally, the Nai (barber) shaved and cut hair and nails of his jajman. During harvest, he would get paid in the fields. He also played the important intermediary in helping to arrange marriages. Although of low caste, the Nai was indispensable to the jajman. The Nai devoted his time solely to his jajman and had a very close relationship with him. In Rampur, the Nai's position has changed. A Jat panchayat decided to give smaller remunerations for Nai services. The Nais refused to accept this; consequently, the Jats dispensed with their services. Jats now shave themselves and arrange their own marriages. All Nais now have outside jobs; only a few continue on a part-time basis to perform their traditional occupation.

The Rampur-Kumhars (potters) are also experiencing difficulty. They need cow dung to fire their kelins. A village panchayat ruled that cow dung was to be left in the fields, thus forbidding clandestine collection. As a result, Kumhars have to pay for their kelin fuel, an expense which they cannot afford. Consequently, they are going heavily into debt. Traditionally the Bhangi (sweeper) received such payments as: a chapati a day, grain periodically, food at weddings, and remunerations

at the birth of a jajman's son. Now, however, only a limited number of Jats maintain their jajmani relationship, and even these are not adhered to regularly. Bhangis are deep in debt. Previously they borrowed money, interest free from their jajmans, but did not have to pay 12 to 18 per cent interest. At present, there is animosity between Jats and Bhangis. The Bhangis tried to supplement their income by raising pigs and chickens. As this was polluting, the Jats readily disapproved causing considerable friction between the two groups.

The Chamars (leather workers) did leather work, removed dead cattle and helped in agricultural labor. The introduction of tanning and leather factories in some villages have replaced the Chamar so he does coolie work and other similar tasks. The anti-caste Arya Samaj preaching gave the Chamars the idea that they could enhance their status, but this met with Jat resistence. At considerable expense, some cases were taken to court. When the Chamars won, they were encouraged to push their claims further. Unfortunately, jobs were scarce, and they were forced to humble themselves to Jat domination. In their attempt to raise their caste standing, the Chamars have also refused to deal with hides. Rampur is, therefore, experiencing considerable economic loss for all hides are being wasted as no one will remove and process them. Also, due to the increasing division of

land, the Jats are unable to afford Chamar labor, resulting in both groups getting poorer, but the Chamars being lower caste, are getting poorer faster.

Even Brahmans have been released from their jajmani relationships. Originally, Brahmans were patronized by Jats. Now that the Jats are accepting the Arya Samaj teachings, they refuse to give Brahmans the position of superiority. According to Wiser, the Baniya (merchant) has never been a part of the jajmani system. In Rampur, however, he does have a jajmani-like relationship with the Brahmans and is served by low castes such as Nais, Dhobis, Kumhars, Chamars, and Bhangis. He keeps records for people, loans money, and weighs grain (Lewis 1958a:55-70).

Lewis best summarizes the present situation of the jajmani system when he states:

> The system is still functioning in Rampur, a village close to Delhi, the nation's capital. Despite modern improvement, technological changes, India's five-year plans, the influence of reformist movements and political ideologies, the system is not yet dead. However, changes are taking place. The Chamars have stopped fulfilling some of their jajmani obligations towards the Jats, who have reciprocated in turn. There are also indications of tension between the Jats and the Bhangis, although the latter continue to serve their jajmans, the Brahmans have lost their priestly functions. The Dhobis, who formerly depended completely upon their local jajmans, now have customers in Delhi as well. The Khatis and the Lohars are abandoning their traditional trades. The Nais have lost their roles as marriage go-betweens as well as some of their opportunities as barbers. Some of their former jajmans shave themselves; their wives shampoo their own hairs.

> Most of the lower-caste villages--and men of the Jats--are in debt. Some have been led to change their occupations and have gone to Delhi to look for work. Technological changes and the increasing land fragmentation have reduced the need for help in agriculture among the Jat families. Meanwhile, the Arya Samaj and some of the political parties have preached, with some effect, against caste restrictions. All these factors have led to a loosening of jajmani ties and obligations (Lewis 1958a:79).

The above quote shows that the benevolent type of relationship described by Gould does not apply to east Punjab. Lewis has clearly shown that in this relationship the powerful exploit their inferiors, an observation which Darling made almost forty years ago (Darling 1934:272). The power of the dominant caste is not due to ritual status but economic power. Since the Jats own the land, even the Brahmans are subservient to them. When there is conflict, the Jats usually unite against the challenging caste. The retaliatory weapon of boycott used by the lower castes, has not only been unsuccessful, it has been self-defeating for the Jats perform these services themselves.

As the jajmani system alters, tension between groups increases. The Jats may still dominate, but are gradually losing control over the other castes because of their decreasing economic power. Despite the weakening of the jajmani system, Lewis states that the social aspects of the caste system have not decreased. Caste members still observe dining, and marriage restrictions.

In spite of the influence of the Arya Samaj, they practice endogamy, maintain caste grouping, and keep up their social place in crowds. Thus, it might be concluded that the existence of the caste system is not dependent upon a jajmani type of economic structure. In fact, principle caste loyalties have increased because of changes, for each caste unites against the external threat to enhance their own interest (Lewis 1958a:79-84). Here I tend to disagree with Lewis and argue that although castes remain strong, the caste system is disintegrating.

It must be remembered that the members of a jajmani relationship do not have to live in the same village as their patron. In fact, there can be clusters of villages with members of each village being of a specific caste and having jajmani relations with outsiders (India 1961:44). According to the Indian census (India 1961), people are trying to shift to agricultural work or government service as opposed to remaining in their hereditary profession. The younger generation prefers to move into urban areas where there are greater opportunities. Others are shifting to agricultural labor, trying to buy their own land, thus enhancing their social position by economic means. Although the jajmani system continues to be present in east Punjab, it is rapidly changing, while its basis, the caste system, is less mutable.

Jajmani System in Central Punjab

Although it may be called seip or seipi relationships, the jajmani system exists in the central districts. I shall use data from Shahpur (Ahmad 1967:19-36; Honigmann 1958:77, 80, and 82-84) and Gujrat (Eglar 1957: 64-67; 1960:32-41; Tandon 1961:76-83) as representative of the area. Jalpana, a village in Shahpur (Ahmad 1967:19-36), is owned and controlled by absentee landlords. They deal with the villagers through agents or emissaries. Most landlords practice tenancy where a peasant lives on the land and makes major decisions concerning land management.

Limited change is taking place however. Cash crops are being emphasized over food crops. The landlords are converting to "farms" where wage labor is paid on a daily basis and they are no longer responsible for tenant welfare, or providing living quarters for tenants. On the farms, the landlord makes the major decisions concerning irrigation, use of land, and overall management. Thus, by converting to farms, landlords can earn more cash and be relieved of tenant responsibilities. Tenancy agreements are regulated by customary laws written in the first settlement report, called a muza.

All tenants are on a "non-occupancy" basis, that is, they cannot acquire the land. Occupancy tenants can keep the land after twelve years of residency.

In Jalpana, the traditional economic relationships are called seipi, not jajmani. The tenants, not the landlords, have certain kammis and a kammi has seipi relations with certain tenants. A seipi is either a tenant or a kammi. Kammis are divided into two categories: agricultural laborers and artisans. Artisans include such occupations as potters and carpenters. Thus, a kammi is anyone who serves the village. The kammi is paid from the joint produce of the landlord and the tenant. He lives in rent-free lodging provided by the landlord. In return, the landlord gets begar services such as free labor when required. If begar services are required for a couple of days, then kammis get free meals although these obligations are not always met with by the landlords.

There are two forms of cooperative labor: vangar and laver. A drummer goes about beating his drum and proclaiming that a certain tenant will sponsor a vangar. Those interested perform a day's work for the tenant. In return, they receive a good meal. The better the meal the greater the tenant's prestige. If another tenant who has helped later holds a vangar, it is the obligation of the original tenant-host to return the favor.

The laver is the hiring of migrant laborers by a tenant who needs manpower at harvest time. These migrants are usually agriculturalists from rain-irrigated areas. They travel from village to village looking for work. The laver (laborer-hired) is provided a sleeping place and cooking utensils, while wages are traditionally determined. The laver stays with the tenant until the harvest is completed. He may also be paid in grain, according to the quality of his work.

Since winnowing is considered degrading, only mehnati mussalis do it. Many a tenant would rather let his crops perish in the fields than winnow himself. Thus, winnowing and other comparable jobs require specialists and are performed only by particular castes. During wheat harvesting all kinds of claimants come for their share. Beggers and hawkers are also present, the latter sell vegetables, sweets, and other edible commodities. The distribution ritual is performed by a representative of the landlord who equally divides the harvest between the landlord and tenant, leaving enough for each seipi-kammi. After proper payments have been made (see Table 4) the others can collect the left-overs. Divergence in the handling of different crops varies with each landlord. A landlord may not give the customary meal for begar service, fodder may be sold rather than having a cooperative relationship, and cotton which is picked by women only,

Table 4. Rules of Services and Payment. (Those who Render Service to Their Seipis Only and Those who Recieve Payment from Tenant and Landlord.)[1]

Agricultural Kammis	Services to the Tenant	Payment
Blacksmith	Maintenance of agricultural implements.	1. 1 paropi of all grain 2. 4 topas of wheat in addition to (1) 3. 3 seers of cotton per plough 4. Rs 2 for sugar cane per plough (recently instituted) 5. Money payment for making new implements
Carpenter	As above	As above
Barber	Shaves, massages, acts as messenger at time of births, marriages of deaths, performs important functions on special occasions.	1. As above, except (5) 2. Paid cash at marriages, births and other occasions. Amount varies according to his status.
Kumhar (as potter)	Used to provide bowls for Persian wheel. Few specific functions now.	As above
General Kammis	Services	Payment

Table 4. Continued.

Agricultural Kammis	Services to the Tenant	Payment
Kumhar (as teamster)	Carries loads of wheat, sugar cane or fodder.	1. 1 topa per pukka maund for carrying load. 2. 1 topa for having come to carry load.
Mehnati Mussali	Winnower	1. 1 topa from each pukka maund.
Mochi	Repairs shoes	1. While wheat is still in field collects 4 gaddis. 2. Collects from each house a minimum of 8 topas (payment by tenants only).
Mirasi	Genealogist and bard (only 4 heads of the household qualify).	1. 4 topas of wheat.
Wazan Kash	Employed by each head of the Patti (landlord) to distribute wheat and cotton to landlord, tenant and others. One person in each patti.	1. 1/2 paropi per pukka maund.
Mussali	Employed by the two landlords to keep the dera clean, wait on guests, keep hooka ready, etc.	1. 1 topa from each tenant of landlord's patti.

Table 4. Continued.

Agricultural Kammis	Services to the Tenant	Payment
Other Kammis (who serve the whole village and recieve payment from all the tenants).		
Pir	No specific function. Full time religious devotee.	1. 1 marla of any one crop. 2. 1 topa of wheat. 3. 1 seer of cotton.
Faqir	Caretaker of village saint's tomb. Acts as host in the annual fair.	1. 3 topas of wheat. 2. Anything left on tomb (cash, oil, food).
Drummer	Announces special occasions. Wakes people for Sehri during Ramazan. Acts as chief drummer at marriages.	1. 4 gaddis of wheat. 2. Receives cash at marriages
Maulvi	Previously, both Maulvis got from all tenants. Now two mosques identifies with each patti. Leads prayer, performs marriages.	1. 1 marla of any crop. 2. 1 topa of wheat. 3. 1 seer of cotton. 4. Cash at marriage or death.

[1]Ahmad 1967:35-36.

may be divided equally between landlord and tenant. Even in Shahpur, there is considerable variation in the working of seipi relations. Due to the increased value on cash crops the system is undergoing change.

Some villages were settled by migration. In the case of Chak 41 B, partition brought about migration from Ludhiana and Lyallpur. These refugees were later resettled in Chak, a village in the Thal Desert of Shahpur (Honigmann 1958:70). Many menial workers came from scattered localities, some of whom were strangers to farms and farmers. In spite of resettlement and partition, Honigmann maintains that their life ways have been unaffected by partition and social change has not been drastic. Cultivation is by family labor. A man's son aids him in plowing, threshing, and sowing, while his wife threshes, harvests cotton, shells corn, and brings food to the men in the fields. If a man is advanced in years and his sons live around him, he may "retire" and become an administrator while his sons work in the fields.

Outside trade is limited and prices are determined by the markets in Mithatiawa, a major nearby town. Harvested crops are sold to merchants who visit Chak at harvest time, while fodder is sold to camel herders. Cash from these transactions is used to pay taxes and buy other necessary items from stores. Much local store business is on a credit basis. Menial and non-resident

low caste services in the village, like shoe repairmen, do not work for cash. They receive gifts at marriages, births, bethrothals, and holidays. Menials also get a share at harvest time, thus every farmer customarily pays each menial a half a maund of wheat. A faqir, who performs religious services, looks after the cemetary, and prepares the bodies for burial, only receives five seers of grain and lives by begging. A blacksmith, however, receives 100 maunds of grain annually.

Several families who have large landholdings use tenant labor. Thus, 85% of the population is engaged in agriculture with the tenant usually receiving 50% of the produce. Honigmann maintains that the menials do have a strong position in the village and if they used the boycott, would be able to enhance their interest. But, he explains, that since they have no realization of their own worth, they do not push their demands. The landlord of Chak has one other important function, that is to provide periodic recreation and evening entertainment. In his batok, all castes sit and listen to stories and music from all over Punjab. They freely interchange love and religious stories and songs. Men also play cards, and discuss village problems (Honigmann 1958:83-84).

The Shahpur landlord is an agricultural businessman, who has few jajmani or seipi relationships. Most mutual cooperative agreements are between tenants and

kammis. The relationship between landlord and tenant is primarily economic with minimal customary obligations. The landlord is generally a businessman with complete control of his holdings.

In Gujrat (Eglar 1957:63-70; 1960:32-41) the kammis also meet the basic needs of the community. Every zamindari family has agreement with kammis for necessary services. The kammis include such castes as barbers, bakers, cobblers, and carpenters. The agreement is called a seyp, the agreer is called seypi, and the kammi agreed with is termed ghar da kammi. These kammis have specific functions for their zamindars; both for regular daily work and ceremonial occasions. Kammis also have agreements among themselves. A potter can have a seyp with a barber, carpenter, baker, and/or Musalli (general laborer). Required work and its remunerations are not by contract but defined by custom and useage.

Unlike east Punjab, the barber also cooks. He acts as a confidant in family problems and helps make decisions since he knows area gossip. He also helps to arrange marriages, acts as a messenger, is a receptionist, and serves food and hooka in the house of his seyp. His wife is a womens' hairdresser, attends them on shopping trips, performs errands, carries food, cooks, entertains, and brings the ladies news and gossip. In Gujrat, the barber is ranked highest among the kammis although his

caste status is no higher than that of the other kammis. He travels around, meets people of high status and is a "man of the world." The services of the barber, the carpenter, and the cobbler are considered essential for a village. There are other castes like the Kashmiri weavers who tend goats, does general labor, and are tradesmen. They work on a contract basis.

In kammi castes, women help their men with their jobs while higher caste women are in purdah. The Musalli (general laborer) works in the fields of his seypi while his wife works in the courtyards making dung cakes and doing other services for her seyp. The baker fishes, hunts, and supplies fuel for the oven while his wife bakes bread and parches the grain. Thus, the kammi's wife is just as essential to fulfill traditional services as the kammi himself; consequently, marriages are caste endogamous.

A seyp can be made by either husband or wife but the whole agreement is between families, not individuals. Although the relationship can be entered into at any time, it usually has been established for many generations. Since the agreement is long-standing it cannot be broken by a zamindar, even if an individual of a certain generation does not fulfill his or her obligations. The relationships between seypis is a matter of pride, honor, and dignity. It is understood that the agreement is not

purely an economic one, but is a social and moral relationship similar to that described by Gould in his kinship analogy. As stated previously, kammis also enter into relationship with other kammis: a potter provides pots for barbers, bakers and carpenters, as well as zamindars and in turn receives services from these castes.

Although a zamindar or kammi may have a seyp relationship with several families of the same caste, throughout the year he only requires the services of one family from each: barber, baker, and potter castes. By custom, both parties know what is required and expected; hence, the topics of work-required and wages to be received are not discussed. Even if a seypi's services are not fully used by a zamindar, he is still given minimum remuneration. Between kammis, however, payment is not made if minimum work is not done.

During weddings and special ceremonies, all services are required of kammis and they get special payment in money, clothes, food, and sweets. Unlike Shahpur district, in Gujrat the kammi gets a share in all crops at harvest; this includes wheat, maize, rice, sugar cane, and fodder. Generally, kammis get a certain percentage of the harvest, and more, if the harvest is abundant. Kammis who have a seyp among themselves pay in grain according to the work done. On ceremonial occasions, however, gifts like cotton blankets, clothing, sweets, grain,

and money are given, especially to the barber. The need for more income, or maybe because of free time, kammis accept secondary occupations. Although it is not a general rule, seyps outside one's traditional caste occupation may be arranged; thus, a potter may transport bricks and a baker may sell fish.

Collective work is also done. At harvest or ploughing time, the zamindar sponsors a mang inviting friends, neighbors and other villagers to work for one day only. Whatever work is left over is done by hired help. The workers in a mang are not paid, but work as a favor to the host. The host in turn feeds them twice with plenty of good quality food. A mang can be called for any type of collective labor such as sinking a well or building a barn. Collective labor in a mang is not permanent, but a relationship of good will. A zamindar who is able to command a large following when a mang is called has the greatest prestige.

Even in villages with both Moslem and Hindu castes, a jajmani relationship exists. Muslim castes include weavers, tailors, washermen, blacksmiths, potters, oil pressers and vegetable growers; Mirasis (musicians and comedians) and Bazigars (acrobats), are hereditary professions which do not have jajmani relationships but move from one place to another. Sonars (goldsmiths), Tarkhans (wood workers), Jhewars or Mehras (cooks), Chars (water

carriers), and Kalals (liquor and opium sellers) are Hindu castes. All castes do not enter jajmani relationships. In one village goldsmiths and carpenters work on a piecemeal basis. Barbers, who are Muslims, have jajmani agreements, and hold a place of honor and respect, even among the jajmani's children. Although their occupation was hereditary, the few who did not maintain their jajmani relationship, received remuneration on a piecemeal basis (Tandon 1961:76-83).

Jajmani System in West Punjab

In west Punjab, the jajmani system is also present but less formalized. In this area, land is held by a dominant tribe or family. Certain tribes do not intermingle in an area; if the Gheba or Janjua tribe is dominant, Pathans or Jats are not likely to be present. Thus, tribes settling an area are likely to be kinsmen working on a cooperative basis.

The family or tribal unit is generally self-sufficient. Authority for economic production is concentrated in the family head, village headman, or tribal chief. When tribal or family holdings increase, however, tenants from different tribes are hired. As a result, subordinate tribes often become kammi castes to the dominant group. Also, shortly after a settlement is founded, castes like the: Kumhars, Nais, Brahmans, Aroras, Muhials

(traders), Musallis (scavengers) and others come in to perform their traditional occupations; consequently, tribes often become supporting castes. Most of the western castes are Moslems or Hindus. There are some Sikhs who are money lenders or traders and seldom perform traditional occupations.

Jajmani relationships are with tenants and agricultural laborers, while work with artisan castes is on a piecemeal basis. Workers are paid in both kind and cash. Tenant rents and wages are determined by custom. One main divergence, however, is that the hereditary relationships of service castes is not enforced. Agricultural tribes like Pathans trade and defend. They are good and fearless soldiers. There is little discrimination on sex lines, and women work side by side with men.

Tribes are very selective about allowing outsiders to settle in their areas. A group will be considered members only after several generations have served a dominant tribe. The agreement between landlord and tenant is somewhat similar to the feudalistic system with the landlord being powerful. The powerful landlord will accept and protect a tenant only if he becomes completely submissive to him and relinquishes all his rights. In due time, a bond of mutual support is established. The system is dissimilar to the feudal relationship because the tenant can opt to leave, although this is an unwise choice

since he would lose his security. Zamindars or landlords without prestige and power are unable to control their tenants; thus, their tenants continually jockey to get a better price and try to cheat their landlord. Consequently, this landlord does not maintain a benevolent attitude towards his tenants.

At harvest time, menial and migrant laborers add to the labor force. Cooperative labor is also common for such jobs as digging wells and erecting buildings (Punjab 1907, 1908).

Conclusions

I defined the jajmani system as an aspect of the caste system which maintains a traditionally fixed functional relationship of castes for the production of goods and services in a local society. All types of services, duties, remunerations (which are in kind), gifts, and exchanges are determined by tradition so that lower castes absorb pollution and higher castes remain relatively pure. The presence of the caste system seems to be correlated with institutions having jajmani relationships. Caste, however, exists regardless of the jajmani system. Both caste society and jajmani relations are strong and rigid in the east and flexible and egalitarian in the west. In east Punjab the system is breaking down. This, however, is likely to follow in the central and western districts.

With the exception of religious priests, economic status seems to correlate with ritual and social position. Religious heads such as Brahmans, Sayyads, and Faqirs, although of high ritual status, in many instances are regarded as parasites and relegated a subordinate position in the society. Generally, in Punjab status is determined by occupation: agriculturalists rank high and there is a wide gap between them and their supporting artisans. Unless a kammi group can gain economic power, usually by obtaining land, there social standing is rigidly maintained. Even when Chamars (India 1961) are a dominant caste in a village, they will not have high social status.

There is flexibility in the system, if a group can change its occupation and gain economic dominance its status can be altered. This is unlikely in the lower castes, as there is greater rigidity than in the agricultural tribes. A tribe can maintain a lowly position in one region but be dominant with a high status in another. This is especially true in the western areas. Only Eglar's and Tandon's explanations of Gujrati structure exposits the paternalistic kinship type of relationship between kammi and jajman, as described by Gould. Others maintain that the jajman and landlord are agricultural businessmen who exploit their laborers to the fullest.

Jajmani agreements vary in the three areas of Punjab. In the east and Gujrat, a landlord has an

agreement with all castes; in Shahpur, tenants and artisans have jajmani arrangements with the landlord who acts as a businessman. In the west, the jajmani system is composed of tenants and landlords with artisans working on a piecemeal basis. In general, the jajmani system in Punjab is more of an economic exploitive nature than the paternalistic cooperative system set forth by Gould.

Money Lending

Introduction

The economic structure of Punjab cannot be understood without an explanation of the institution of money lending. I shall give a brief description of the money lender's role in Punjabi economic structure.

The Moneylender

Sir Malcolm Darling (1947) maintains that in Punjab, the moneylender is a necessary evil and must be incorporated for the community to survive. He shows how the moneylender has been a source of capital for expensive social ceremonies like weddings, deaths, and haircutting ceremonies. More important, however, is his value in time of drought when a harvest fails and the farmer needs capital. Due to high interest rates, once such a loan is made, the debtor becomes hopelessly entangled in the moneylender's clutches.

Before the institution of the British law system, the moneylender did not have as strong a position as he enjoyed during the British Raj. Previously, the moneylender did not have any backing for debt collection; thus, he had to rely on his own ingenuity. On the other hand, the village elders and inhabitants knew that survival would be hard without the moneylender, since a bad harvest could "wipe them out." He was the only one who could help them survive. Consequently, there was a balanced relationship between the moneylender and the people. Both realized they needed each other which allowed for greater flexibility. With the initiation of the British law system, the moneylender was backed by courts and the balanced relationship shifted in his favor. The moneylender is now able to use his position to exploit society (Darling 1947:164-206). Darling also goes on to show that the moneylender only lends money where there is sufficient security and high odds for receiving a good return on his investment. Darling's study shows that in areas like western sections of Punjab, where the land is poor, rain-fall is sparse, and agriculture is not very profitable, debt among the peasantry is almost non-existent. In the canal colonies and more fertile areas, however, debt is much greater, sometimes even several times the value of the land.

In spite of governmental credit institutions, the moneylender has flourished. He loans money for anything, including weddings and ceremonies, while the banks and cooperatives only laon for capital improvement. The moneylender can give money to the peasant quickly, easily, and on the spot, while the bureaucratic procedures of the banks and cooperatives makes it a long drawn out procedure which is emotionally taxing on the debtor. A peasant goes to a bank to get a loan to buy seed whereas he goes to the moneylender to get capital to marry his daughter. The peasant leaves himself wide open for exploitation since he does not understand legal matters. He will sign contracts for amounts far in excess of his loan and consequently, becomes hopelessly in debt. Banks and cooperatives are not always available or willing to finance a peasant. In spite of the exploitive position of the moneylender, I agree with Darling, that he is a necessary evil for the survival of the Punjabi peasant.

CHAPTER IV

PUNJABI SUMMARY STRUCTURE

Summary Structure

Introduction

The basis for the concept of summary structure was set forth by Nadel (1951:174-179) in his discussion of social stratification. He explains the summary structure as the total social hierarchy of the society determined by the summation of roles played by an individual, rather than solely specific criteria like economic wealth or political power. In a society, an individual belongs to different groups. In some groups he may rank high in prestige, whereas, in others he may not. A village headman may dominate in political affairs while being subservient in religious rituals. An elderly man may be the head of a family but his son may lead a labor union. An individual's prestige in one area may "overflow" and help give him influence in another. The summation of roles played by individuals in a society will give the observer the total structure of the society.

It is doubtful if the overall status of individuals can be determined in complex and differential societies.

In South Asian society, however, there is "uniform status in each stratum . . . rigidly ascribed on the grounds of descent" (Nadel 1951:174) which are termed castes. In South Asian society, the total social structure can be determined by this summation of roles.

Nadel (1957:67-72) further elaborates these concepts by explaining that:

> a society differentiating between four pairs of roles, say family head and dependent, manager and worker, elder and common citizen, priest and worshipper, is undoubtedly more complex or complicated than one acknowledging two only, e.g., having no managers (because each man works on his own) and no "priest" (because all worship is strictly communal). Needless to say the relationships involved are reduced in number, the "simpler" society lacking two relationships present in the more "complex" one (manager-workers, priest-congregation). But think now of a society which, while exhibiting the same fourfold (or eightfold) differentiation of roles and relationships, combines the actors in one of these ways:
>
> (a) Family head = manager
> dependent = worker
> elder = priest
> common citizen = worshipper
>
> (b) Family citizen = manager = elder = priest
> Dependent = worker = common citizen = worshipper.
>
> This is clearly an altogether different type of non-complexity. The possible relationships, like the roles on which they hinge, are not reduced in number, but as it were, in their scatter through the population. Thus, the social system is not simply less "complicated" (indeed, the component relationship manifolds might be said to make it more so): perhaps it might be called more highly <u>combinative</u> or <u>involute</u> (Nadel 1957:67-68).

Both Bailey (1963:108-109) and Barth (1969:144-146) rely on Nadel's concept of role summation to understand caste society.

Summary Structure in Punjab

Introduction

In Punjab, the data will show that economic power, caste position and ritual rank are combined in the same roles. The only exceptions are the priest and moneylender who dominate in their own fields but are "outside the total system." For these two roles, ritual position does not necessarily correlate with economic and political power.

In Punjab, landowners, who are mostly drawn from cultivating castes, refer to themselves as "owners of the village." These castes emphasize kinship ties, real and putative. Economically and politically, the kamins or moeens are subordinate to the peasant-proprieter. Exchange is mostly in kind, and obligations are observed between specialist castes.

> All of this might suggest a closed social order organized by caste and by the patterning of relations among people of different castes through patron-client ties derived from the "jajmani" system. Theoretically, in such a society, status, power, and economic class are usually combined into the same status sets. Institutional structures for economic action, political power, and social status are differentiated (Raulet and Uppal 1970:339).

As stated previously, however, the classical model of Indian village life does not apply to rural Punjab due to changes brought about by new revenue systems, market economy, and different administrative measures. Consequently, in Punjabi society, a "notable feature is the

separation of power from the nexus of dominant caste status and land ownership" (Raulet and Uppal 1970:339).

Summary Structure in East Punjab

As already shown, in east Punjab caste status and economic power are combined in the same roles. The dominant caste in a Punjabi village is usually the cultivating caste which by its control of land, often has patron-client relationships with the subordinate specialist castes. The same caste also has political dominance. Its members are leaders of *dhars* and factions. Their caste *panchayat* is the most powerful and they often are the sole determinants of *panchayati* justice. They are also able to swing the judicial system in their favor. The landowner castes have superior knowledge of government bureaucracy and usually have kin and quasi-kin ties to help them in manipulating the bureaucracy to suit their own ends.

In the ritual sphere, the dominant landowning castes are considered more ritually pure than the *kamin* castes. According to Lewis's Rampur study, Brahmans who are traditionally ranked highest in caste society, are ranked below the Jats (Lewis 1958a:55-64, 113-154). In other areas, like Ambala, where villages are composed of one dominant caste each, economic and patron-client relationships are between members of different villages. All specialists may be in the same village and of a low

caste. The Chamars may be the dominant caste in a village but are not ranked ritually highest as they are subordinate to the Brahmans and the other high castes (India 1961:65-70).

The census data (India 1961) and Lewis's study (1958a) both support the changes alluded to by Raulet and Uppal (1970:339). In Ambala, in spite of their low ritual rank but because of numerical superiority, the Chamars were able to get better representation in the statutory panchayat. Low castes are attempting to raise their social position. Lewis has shown that economic dominance is crucial in the political realm, thus, ritual position is increasingly growing insignificant. Consequently, although a summary structure was and partly still is present in east Punjab, this involute system is in the process of changing to a class society.

Summary Structure in Central Punjab

The summary structure is also present in central Punjab. As I have shown, economic power and caste status are combined in the same roles. Although the dominant caste or caste hierarchy varies from region to region, the same model applies to all areas like that of western Punjab. In Gujrat (Eglar 1957:64-68), a village headman who occupies a hereditary position, must have good land-holdings to symbolize his wealth, power, and status. The

chaudhari (village headman) appoints the parea (village council). Although some of the lower castes may be represented, the membership is made up primarily of zamindars (Eglar 1960:30-33).

Like the eastern section, the Brahman has high ritual status, but is considered an "underprivileged class and exercises little or no influence on the community" (Tandon 1961:76). Ritual purity correlates with caste hierarchy, except in the case of the moneylenders and "religious specialists." Again, it is the dominant landowning caste which has frequent contacts with government officials and can manipulate the bureaucracy to suit its goals and maintain its social position.

In a refugee village in Shahpur district, the chaudhari and his council are men of high caste with economic power and high ritual status (Honnigmann 1958: 85-90). In more recent data, Ahmad (1967:37-80) shows the rich landlords competing for elected offices and leading factions, while their tenants or representatives run local village affairs. Even with the institution of the Basic Democracies Program, the economic and political power is combined in the same roles of social and ritual rank. Pakistan has instituted the Basic Democracies program to bring the national government closer to the people. However, the traditional means of holding political power on the local level continues to exist side by side

with the imposed structure. Although this may change, there does not seem to be the breakdown of the summary structure as is happening in east Punjab.

Summary Structure in West Punjab

Here, the joint type of village (Punjab 1907, 1908), that is, a village controlled by a joint body of people who claim common descent dominates (Baden-Powell 1892 i:107). Economic and political power are concentrated in the hands of the socially and ritually high ranked castes. However, the religious specialists like the Sayyids and Faqirs who, although ranked high ritually, are "outsiders" and relegated to a position of begging and low summary status.

Conclusion

Although it seems to be changing to a class society, I have shown that a summary structure does exist in Punjab, especially in the east and Shahpur district. Punjabi society seems to be in a transitional state from a caste to a class society. Economic and political power generally go hand in hand with high ritual and social status. In other institutions, status could be analyzed in order to see the degree in which the summary structure is present in Punjabi society, but that is beyond the scope of this essay. The priests and moneylenders seem to be

"outsiders" with high ritual status or economic power, but lower summary status.

The data has shown the existence of a summary structure in Punjabi society. Political, economic, and ritual institutions are completely interrelated so that to try to conceptually isolate them will not give a true understanding of Punjabi society.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Three main goals have been achieved in this study. First, by defining and explaining the caste and jajmani systems, I have shown how institutions are structured around the caste system. By elucidating the summary structure, I accomplished my second objective of showing the complete functional interdependence of economic and political institutions, and how these form the basis for social and ritual status. The existence of the summary structure can be seen as status and power in different fields combined in the same roles. Thirdly, I have indicated a need for a more complete definition of concepts. The jajmani system must not be confused with landlord-tenant or contract agreements. Also, a distinction should be made between caste and caste system when analyzing the interrelationships of institutions.

I have accomplished the above tasks by first giving a geographical and historical context of Punjab. Next, I defined and described the caste system, following it with a definition and analysis of the jajmani system in Punjab. A description of the summary

structure of Punjab with an analysis of how economic, political, and ritual positions are combined in the same roles of Punjabi society concluded the study.

In the first chapter, I discussed the geographical and historical context of Punjab. As was shown, Punjab has tremendous agricultural potential. Her society, however, has lacked continuity for it has continually been disrupted by invasions. The Greeks, Turks, Moghals, Afghans, and British have ruled the region, except for the breif reign of Ranjit Singh when the region was united under one ruler. It was during his reign that prosperity abounded. Partition in 1947 once again uprooted the people, but presently, the region is becoming the "bread basket" of South Asia.

In Chapter II, the caste system was defined and discussed. The best definition was achieved by combining Bailey's six structural characteristics of the caste system with Dumont and Pocock's concept of purity and impurity. Using the traditional model of Hindu India as a basis, it was seen that Punjab seemed to be different in several respects. In Punjab, the ritual rank of Brahmans is not combined in their economic and political positions. Here ritual status is usually based on economic and political power. Also, Punjabi society is generally more egalitarian and there is no consensus of ranking order throughout the region. Consequently,

descent from an ancester creates nothing more than a presumption. Generally, rigid endogamous bonds are stronger in east Punjab than in west, and also stronger in urban rather than in rural areas. In Punjab, the dominant tribe of an area usually has the ritual status with economic and political power summed into their roles.

In discussing the relationship between the caste system and other institutions, I emphasized that a distinction between caste and caste system is extremely important. Caste can be present without there being a caste system. Consequently, following Bailey's example, I define caste as a closed endogamous group with membership ascribed by birth. On the other hand, the caste system is the rigid ranked order of these castes, as elaborated in the definition set forth in this thesis.

Because of migration to canal colonies, "pockets" of eastern society have been found in central districts as far west as Shahpur. Consequently, the distinction between the eastern and western extremes in Punjabi society does not seem to change like a continuum as one moves from the eastern to the western portions of the region.

The third chapter discusses the jajmani system in Punjab. Some proponents interpret the system as a balanced paternalistic kin type of relationship between the jajmans and their kamins. Others maintain that the jajman is an

exploitive businessman attempting to get as much work from his clients as possible. I have shown that this confusion was partly due to the interpretation of what was and was not the jajmani system. Some writers, like Beidelman, include landlord-tenants and contract-type agreements in jajmani relations, which confuses the understanding of the data. Consequently, the term jajmani system should apply only to the system which is an aspect of the caste system and which maintains a traditionally fixed functional relationship of castes for the production of goods and services in a local society. All types of services, duties, remunerations (which are in kind), gifts, and exchanges are determined by tradition so that lower castes absorb pollution leaving the higher castes relatively pure.

Due to administrative policies, market conditions, and land systems, the jajmani system in Punjab is breaking down. Lewis maintains that in spite of the above, the caste system remained and did not deteriorate with the breakdown of the jajmani system. I have shown that Lewis was correct only in the fact that caste did not breakdown, but there was some doubt as to whether the caste system remained or not. Although our evidence is inconclusive, by considering data from Mahsa Tibba (India 1961), we see that the caste system seems to be breaking down along with the jajmani system. A great

deal more investigation is required to determine the relationship between the caste system and the introduction of a capitalistic type of market economy.

In Chapter IV, I discussed Punjab's summary structure. The data showed that economic and political power were of primary importance and ritual status depended on a group's position in the economic and political fields. Once political and economic power were obtained by a group, ritual status seemed to follow. This observation correlated with the findings of Bailey's study in Orissa (1957:185). As the data indicated, the Brahmans or priestly classes, as well as the moneylenders were "outside the system." The high ritual position of the religious heads was not correlated with their economic and political power. The economic power of the moneylender was not shown in his ritual status or necessarily in his political influence. Aside from these two roles, however, there seemed to be a summation of roles in Punjab with economic, and political power being correlated with ritual status. As the data showed, the summary structure is breaking down in the east, and is also likely to break down in the central and western districts. The Pakistani government in their basic democracies program has attempted to institute a democratic form of government to bring the people closer to and participate in national policies. Presently, however, this imposed institution exists

alongside the traditional institutions. Consequently, a summary structure continues to be present in the central and western sections of Punjab.

In Punjab, many institutions exist which apply to the models of Hindu India. However, it must be remembered that considerable variation exists, not only with the South Asian continent, but within Punjab itself.

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