

SHANTI NAGAR: THE EFFECTS  
OF URBANIZATION IN A VILLAGE  
IN NORTH INDIA

1. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

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STANLEY A. FREED AND RUTH S. FREED

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## ABSTRACT

In the year 1958 to 1959, Shanti Nagar was a traditional Indian village in the initial stages of response to strong urban influences then emanating from Delhi, a city that was experiencing rapid modernization and westernization. The present report describes and analyzes the social organization of Shanti Nagar, emphasizing those changes that were apparently effects of urbanization. Because the village represented at the same time a traditional village and one in the initial stages of modernization, both aspects of village life are

described. The village was not overwhelmed by urban influences. It was a well-integrated social unit whose people had the capacity to adopt selectively those innovations considered to be useful and to reject those perceived as disruptive even when the latter were buttressed by the force of law. Change was greater in some aspects of village life, such as economic relationships and education, than in others, such as religion and family life.

## INTRODUCTION

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Urbanization is said to occur when the proportion of a population living in areas classified as urban increases—a demographic process caused chiefly by migration from rural areas to towns and cities (Bogue and Zachariah, 1962, pp. 27-28). Historically, urbanization accompanies industrialization. No nation has made the economic transformation of industrialization in the absence of a comparable rate of urbanization. Since India's political independence, the government of India has been pursuing industrialization with all possible speed. Consequently, in the next few decades, there will undoubtedly be a considerable shift of population from rural areas to cities barring a national or international catastrophe.

This demographic process has been gradual but clear: the proportion of the population that lived in towns and cities of 20,000 or more had increased from 5.6 percent in 1901 to an estimated 13.3 percent in 1961 (Davis, 1962, p. 9, table 2). This rate of urbanization, compared with that of England, Wales, Japan, and the United States, was relatively slow, a phenomenon, suggested Davis (1962, pp. 5-8), that might have been the result of the slow pace of Indian industrialization. However, the pace of urbanization increased in the 1930s. Davis (1962, p. 12, tables 4, 6) calculated several projections of Indian urbanization rates. He estimated that from 1975 to 2000 there will be a net shift from coun-

try to town and city (i.e., places with populations of 20,000 or more) of between 56.9 and 188.3 million people and that 19.3 percent of the Indian population will live in such towns and cities in 1975. In 1970, 16.3 percent of the population lived in such places (Lambert, 1974, p. 19). That Davis's estimates of Indian urbanization rates may be too high is indicated by his projections of the estimated sizes in 1970 of the 10 major Indian cities in comparison with the 1970 census figures; for eight of the 10 cities, his low estimate exceeds the census figure (Lambert, 1974, p. 19). Nevertheless, the proportion of India's population living in towns and cities increased from 1961 to 1970; there has been no reversal in the trend of increasing urbanization.

Urbanization affects villages as well as cities. The population influx into cities implies a loss of rural population, the significance of which might lie less in the reduction of the absolute number of village inhabitants, because natural increase might compensate for emigration, than in the potentially selective nature of migration from village to city. For example, were the educated villagers to depart, the villages would then be deprived of people with skills and training of value to them. Other and perhaps greater effects of urbanization on village life stem from the fact that migration between village and city does not occur in only one direction. Although the result of such migration is an increase in the population living in urban areas, many migrants return home

to their villages after a period of urban residence to become potential agents of social and cultural change. Furthermore, the growth of cities is accompanied by an increase in the number and variety of available urban jobs that often attract commuters from surrounding villages. Commuters serve as another potential conduit of urban influences into villages.

The effects upon village life of these features of population movement, as well as of other concomitants of urbanization, are not yet well understood. Although one might assume that the effects of urban centers on villages would be considerable, the meager evidence so far available indicates that they are not very substantial or, at least, that the rate of social and cultural change is rather slow (Lambert, 1962, pp. 131-133, 140). In fact, it could be argued that urban centers help to stabilize village life, because they remove behaviorally deviant individuals and serve to absorb surplus labor. Furthermore, villagers who live in cities and send money to the village subsidize, temporarily at least, traditional village life (Opler, 1959, p. 132) and render the village less dependent upon agriculture and related crafts for its livelihood. Consequently, economic pressure to change, for example, an inefficient, traditional agricultural practice would be minimized.

Our field research in India, which is partially reported on in this monograph, was devoted to the investigation of the effects of cities, principally Delhi, upon the traditional life of a village, Shanti Nagar (a pseudonym), situated about 11 miles from Delhi. We selected a village far enough from Delhi to retain its village character, yet close enough to provide employment for about half of its male population. After we had spent 13 months in the selected village, sufficient time to become familiar with its traditional life and the changes brought about by urban influences, we moved to Delhi to study the adaptation of the villagers who had permanently migrated to that city.

Our research plan raised a number of questions. First, how to define urban community and village? Characteristics potentially useful for purposes of definition (e.g., population size) form a continuum that must be divided at an arbitrary point. If one seeks combinations of characteristics that would serve to differentiate village from

city, it is difficult to find several traits that consistently occur simultaneously. For example, if we assume that a specific population consisting of, for example, 2500 persons and the presence of social classes characterize an urban center, one can also point to communities of a few hundred persons with clearly defined social classes.

Many people, as Gulick (1973, p. 984) noted, believe that a relatively large population serves to define an urban community. He cited authorities who proposed figures from 2500 to 100,000 as the minimum population size for an urban community. Until 1951, Indian census authorities mainly applied the criterion of size, i.e., 5000 persons, to mark an urban community, but in 1961, the Indian census developed a more complex formula. If a community exhibited the following characteristics, it was defined as urban: a population of 5000 or more, a population density of not less than 1000 per square mile, and at least 75 percent of the adult male population engaged in nonagricultural activities (India, 1961a, pp. 51-52). As Sheth (1970, p. 19) commented, the third criterion marked a departure from a purely physical definition to one concerned, in part, with "urbanism as a way of life."

Early in the modern anthropological study of urbanism, attempts were made to discover pairs of polar qualities that would serve to distinguish "urbanism as a way of life" from village life, the opposite pole of the rural-urban continuum (e.g., Redfield, 1941). Gulick (1973, p. 984) has compiled a roster of these qualities, many of which we list to give the general idea. For example the village is primitive as compared with the civilized city. Other pairs of characteristics, the village quality listed first, are natural-spurious, simple-sophisticated, constrained-free, integrated-disintegrated, moral-corrupt, conformist-nonconformist, stable-changing, human-dehumanized, homogeneous-heterogeneous, personal-impersonal, sacred-secular, and superstitious-rational. Gulick called these pairs of characteristics the bipolar moralistic model. He considered it to be, on balance, anti-urban because many of these qualities have been employed in pejorative contexts (e.g., corrupt, spurious, dehumanized) to degrade urbanism. In India, as in western countries, the village is regarded as a repository of moral values that tend to decay in an urban set-

ting (Chaudhuri, 1962, p. 216; Foster, 1967, p. 14). Writers concerned with modernization, however, may reverse this moral judgment. For example, Sheth (1970, pp. 18, 21) regarded urbanites as "... much more adaptable ... than the ruralites who are often believed to be obsessed by their traditionalism and hence to resist change," and he also said, "Villages symbolized all that was traditional—peasant economy, rigid stratification, ignorance, superstition, etc."

Several years after Robert Redfield completed the research in Mexico that led to his publication of the definitive anthropological treatment of the bipolar model (Redfield, 1941), Horace Miner, one of his students, undertook research in the city of Timbuctoo in 1940, which he published more than a decade later. Miner (1953) demonstrated that Timbuctoo conformed only in some respects to the urban polar model; in others, it resembled the rural (folk) model. In succeeding decades, a considerable body of research and criticism was accumulated that apparently discredited the bipolar moralistic model, and yet, as Gulick (1973, p. 985) remarked, its appeal is still strong, primarily because its critics have not developed a sufficiently comprehensive substitute model. Aware of the difficulties involved in the characterization of an urban as opposed to a rural environment, Gulick attempted to provide a substitute for the bipolar moralistic model. He listed seven characteristics of urban communities: (1) the urban settlement has residents and institutions that serve as brokers between it and the villages in its hinterland; (2) strangers regularly visit it to take advantage of these functions; (3) it is oriented toward change, often imposed from beyond its borders; (4) it is culturally heterogeneous; (5) it has a system of social classes; (6) the uppermost class, especially, has personal connections in other cities; and (7) impersonal, rationalistic, goal-oriented interpersonal relationships characterize interaction with strangers, members of other classes, and associates in other cities.

Although we were influenced, to some extent, by the bipolar, moralistic model during our research, we did not select either the city or village in terms of any presumed polar qualities, but rather, on objective grounds somewhat similar to those adopted by the *Census of India, 1961*,

namely, population size, patterns of land use, and the economic basis. By whatever definition one chooses, Delhi is a city. It had a population in 1956 of about 1.8 million (Rao and Desai, 1965, table 4-4), a population density in 1951 of 18,556 per square mile (Rao and Desai, 1965, table 3-2), and so few of its residents engaged in agriculture that it is not mentioned in lists of occupations that record even those followed by only 1 or 2 percent of the population (Rao and Desai, 1965, table 16-2; Bharat Sevak Samaj, 1958, table 33). Undeniably, Shanti Nagar is a village. It had a population of 799 in 1958 and a population density of 477 per square mile. About 97 percent of the land was devoted to agriculture and grazing. The villagers earned about 75 percent of their income from the value of the crops they grew; most men and women and a good many children engaged in some phase of agricultural activity at some time during the year. Although Gulick's seven criteria fit Delhi very well, Shanti Nagar failed to exhibit clearly the opposite characteristics, particularly of classlessness and resistance to change. One could argue that the villagers readily adopted technological changes that were useful in the village context although they resisted specific social innovations that they believed to be severely disruptive. The problem of classes was troublesome. Shanti Nagar had castes. It also had landowners and landless agricultural laborers, groups that in countries other than India might be considered classes.

Although the problem of distinguishing between urban and rural communities in general terms is interesting, it is important to note specific major differences between Delhi and Shanti Nagar regardless of whether or not they can be generalized, because they had considerable impact upon the lives of the villagers. First, Delhi was the seat of two institutions everywhere typical of modern life, factories and bureaucracies, that were nonexistent in Shanti Nagar. Villagers looked to Delhi for jobs and many obtained them in factories or in governmental organizations. Furthermore, they had to learn to deal effectively with bureaucracies in order to achieve individual goals as well as to obtain governmental services for the village. Second, Delhi had large bazaars in which a variety of consumer goods

were obtainable, whereas Shanti Nagar, had a single small shop. Consequently, the villagers bought many articles in Delhi. Third, Delhi had cinemas, restaurants, coffee houses, circuses, and a variety of similar commercial entertainment establishments that were not available in Shanti Nagar and that attracted men who had the time and money to patronize them. Fourth, Delhi was the locale of colleges and universities where a few of the villagers were enrolled. Finally, there was a phenomenon of sheer scale. A villager could walk through Shanti Nagar and know everyone he met; in Delhi, he might recognize few, if any, of the thousands of persons he encountered on the street. In Delhi, the villager was more or less anonymous and could, if he so desired, experiment with behavioral patterns that would be frowned on in Shanti Nagar.

Although the bipolar moralistic model was not a factor in our own definition of city and village, it did generate some hypotheses that we chose to explore. For example, the belief that village society is "sacred" and urban society "secular" led us to try to determine whether urban-influenced villagers were less traditional in their religious and ceremonial lives than those who had been less exposed to urban influences. The hypothesis that village society is "integrated" and urban society "disintegrated" suggested that the larger, structurally more complex joint family might become less common and the simpler nuclear family, more common, or that one might discover indications that the caste system was in the process of disintegration as has so often been stated (e.g., Srinivas and B  teille, 1965). Thus, our definitions of city and village were independent of the qualities of rural as opposed to urban life. These qualities were treated as dependent variables. Whether the urban-influenced villagers were more "secular" than other villagers, and similar related questions were regarded as hypotheses.

Our method of investigating change in the village was both historical and comparative. Older villagers were able to describe changes, some of which could be traced in part to urban influences, that had occurred during their lifetimes. Oral history noted the introduction of new agricultural implements, seeds, roads, and bus service. In our consideration of urbanism as consisting of a set of attitudes, values, and behavioral

patterns, implied in such characterizations as "rational" and "impersonal," that contrasted with a rural set, we compared villagers defined as urban-oriented with those designated as village-oriented. We defined an urban-oriented person as one who had worked and/or lived in an urban community; a village-oriented person lacked such experiences. We found that 49 percent of the adult males (20 years of age or older, or those in their late teens who were married and had completed their schooling) had lived or worked in urban areas. In classifying women, we took into consideration not only their own experiences but also those of their husbands. The wife of a man classified as having had urban experience was classified in the same category. Because relatively few women had urban experience like that common for men, we found this the only way to isolate a group of women corresponding to the men with urban experience. However, we did not expect the indirect influence of husbands on wives to have as strong effects as those resulting from direct individual urban experience.

A third group, people who had originally lived in Shanti Nagar but had migrated to the city, entered into our comparisons. Thus, it was feasible to compare village-oriented people, urban-oriented people, and emigrants, the three groups possibly forming a gradient with regard to urbanism. However, because the group of emigrants that we were able to contact was relatively small, we often combined information obtained from them with that obtained from the urban-oriented villagers for purposes of statistical analysis.

Such a comparative approach results in a statistically based description of the values, attitudes, and behavioral patterns of the village-oriented, urban-oriented, and emigrant groups. Differences in many aspects of behavior are expressed as modal tendencies rather than in terms of pure polar types. For example, one might question a number of male respondents as to whom they most often sat with to pass their leisure time and learn that a significantly greater proportion of village-oriented men confined such visiting behavior to their own families and castemates than did urban-oriented and emigrant men. This information would support the idea that the interpersonal interaction of urbanized men was less constrained by traditional social structure than that of village-oriented men. How-



ever, among the group defined as village-oriented, some individuals acted like urbanites and some of the urbanized men behaved like the nonurbanized. Furthermore, some men reported that specific aspects of their behavior differed depending on whether they were in the city or in the village. Thus, heterogeneity of behavior was characteristic of all groups.

While it may be possible to find proportional differences in the attitudes and behavior of urban-oriented and village-oriented groups, the interpretation of these differences presents difficulties. It is impossible to determine whether these differences resulted from the urban experience or whether the urban environment functioned as a selective factor and lured to the city a specific type of man who had always been present in the village. We assume that both of these interpretations have validity: that some men initially found city life congenial and that exposure to urban living reinforced the personality traits and modes of behavior that had first led them to the city; that others, who worked in the city due almost entirely to fortuitous circumstances rather than to any preference for city as compared with village life, assimilated something of city manners, values, and attitudes. The urbanization of women differed. Whether women lived in the city or the village depended almost entirely upon the will of their male relatives. Thus, if differences did exist between women who had lived in cities and those who had not, these differences can be viewed as having been influenced chiefly by the urban environment. The preferences of women for either city or village life would have been a secondary factor in determining where they lived.

The study of the effects of urbanization upon a village near Delhi raises the problem of the baseline against which changes should be measured, especially because there have been cities in the Delhi region for millennia. The oldest, *Indraprastha*, is said to have been founded in the fifteenth century B.C. For the past thousand years, Delhi has been, except for relatively short periods, the capital city of northern India (India, 1912, p. 20). *Shahjahanabad*, founded by *Shah Jahan* between 1638 and 1658, is the present Old Delhi, the capital of British India from 1912 to 1929. New Delhi, constructed by the British adjacent to Old Delhi, became the capital of British

India in 1929 and is now the capital of the modern Republic of India. Consequently, village life in the vicinity of Delhi has been affected for centuries, to some degree, by the nearby city. In what sense and to what degree, then, may we regard Shanti Nagar in the decade preceding 1958 as typical of Indian rural life relatively unaffected by cities and the influences emanating from their governing, business, and industrial elites.

Although oral history had made us aware of the changes in village life that occurred in the three or four decades before our arrival, we believe, for a number of reasons, that life in Shanti Nagar just prior to our visit could be taken as a more or less stable base representing rural conditions as they existed at the advent of strong urban influences. First, two developments just prior to the 1950s were the basis for an increasing rate of change during that decade: the Second World War that ended in 1945 and the political independence of India that was achieved a few years later. In the study of the urbanization of another village 8 km. from Delhi, *Yadava* (1970) took the period of World War II as the baseline, remarking that prior to this time the village economy had not been significantly influenced by the markets of Delhi. A scarcity of food and fodder resulted in a sharp rise in prices and benefitted the farmers. "This extra cash in villager's [*sic*] hands and frequent visits to the city," said *Yadava* (1970, p. 302), "tended to modify the pattern of social interaction in the village and marked the beginning of urbanization of rural life." The political partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, the independence of India, the flood of refugees into the capital, the growth and modernization of Delhi and the concern of the government of India with the modernization of the countryside, all these factors made themselves felt in the 1950s. The slow diffusion of urban traits into rural areas that characterized pre-independence India was augmented by governmental programs and legislation aimed at changing, even revolutionizing, village life. The rate of change in the first half of the twentieth century was slow in comparison to the transformation that began in the 1950s.

Second, Shanti Nagar was so situated that urban influences were largely avoided until the development of modern transportation and com-

munication. Even as late as the 1950s, its location served to protect its traditional character and yet, at the same time, opened the door to substantial urban influence. To understand this seeming paradox, one must consider the characteristics of the area around an Indian city, the hinterland, in which urban influences are manifest. Ellefsen (1962) studied the hinterlands of five cities, Delhi among them, based on village data available in the 1951 census. He used five demographic factors as indicators of urban influence. Among his findings, he noted that the areas of the hinterlands extended only an average of 11 miles outward from the borders of the city (Ellefsen, 1962, p. 99). Accordingly, Shanti Nagar was within the hinterland of Delhi but close to its boundary. He also found that within these hinterlands, it was necessary to distinguish sectors according to their accessibility to the city, because his indicators of urbanization varied by sector. He distinguished five sectors here listed in descending order of accessibility to urban areas: the city divided into inner wards and suburban wards; villages in a belt 2 miles wide around the city; villages situated within a ribbon 1 mile wide on both sides of major roads and/or lying within 1 mile of a railway station; all villages touching secondary, all-season roads; and interstitial villages that fell in none of the preceding categories. The rural area was outside of the hinterland. He found that the numerical value of all his indicators of urban influence generally declined from the inner wards of the city to the interstitial villages; the latter differed only slightly from rural villages. The greatest decline, especially for Delhi, was between the suburban wards and the belts, a phenomenon that corresponds to the absence of urban amenities (electricity, telephones, etc.) in villages contiguous to urban areas. This sharp break between city and village has often prompted observers to remark that urbanism stops at the edge of the city (Ellefsen, 1962, pp. 98, 110).

Shanti Nagar was an interstitial village in 1958. Ellefsen noted the backwardness of such villages in terms of his indicators, but commented that they still received a slight amount of urban impact. Thus, Shanti Nagar was so situated as to experience the minimum of urban influence when compared with other types of villages in

the hinterland. Prior to the 1950s, the effects of urbanization would have been even weaker, because Delhi was then a much smaller city; Shanti Nagar was situated about 3 miles from a paved road, a distance reduced to about a mile in the 1950s with the construction of a paved secondary road; and regular bus service between Delhi and Shanti Nagar had not yet been inaugurated. Because of its location and the important events that immediately preceded the decade of the 1950s, we believe that Shanti Nagar at the time of our residence could be characterized as a traditional village in the process of undergoing the initial stages of influence from an urban center that was itself experiencing modernization and westernization.

As a result of our study, we expected village life to change more in the 10 or 15 years subsequent to our visit than it had changed in the preceding five or six decades. Although we have not visited Shanti Nagar since 1959, we have received some information that leads us to believe that we were not mistaken. One of our village friends recently wrote that his daughter had earned a B.A. and was a school teacher. When we were in Shanti Nagar, only a handful of girls had studied beyond the fifth grade and no woman had other than a menial job outside her home. Dr. Indera Pal Singh, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Delhi, told us during his recent visit to New York that in the Delhi village of Rampur (see Lewis, 1958), mud houses had almost disappeared and that a few villagers even had air conditioners. Yadava reported (1970, p. 303) that in the Delhi village he studied, there were, in the middle 1960s, 51 radios and one television set. In 1959 in Shanti Nagar there was only one broken radio, no television, and no electricity, for that matter.

This monograph on social organization is the first in a series devoted to a study of the effects of urbanization in Shanti Nagar. Because Shanti Nagar represents not only a traditional village but also one still in the initial stages of modernization, we will treat both these aspects of village life in this and succeeding reports. Subsequent monographs will be devoted to the village economy and its religious and ceremonial life. Various special topics that would be somewhat out of place in the proposed series of monographs have

been dealt with in a number of shorter papers, all of which are listed in the literature cited. The principal value of our reports should be to document the life of a single village strategically located in space and time to reflect the beginnings of modernization.

### FIELDWORK, OUR ADJUSTMENT TO SHANTI NAGAR

Although the village of Shanti Nagar proved to be an ideal choice in which to study the effects of urbanization, we were not aware when we arrived in Delhi early in November, 1957, of the extent of the hinterland of Delhi or of the geographical sectors within it that might be important from the point of view of urbanization. However, in searching for a village, we had several criteria, two of which led us to make a fortunate choice. We wanted to study a village close enough to Delhi to provide employment opportunities for the villagers and distant enough to retain its village character. We also preferred a village at some distance from a main road, because we did not want to contend with the complication of roadside shops. Other characteristics that we considered important were caste composition and population size. We sought a village with a roster of castes fairly typical of the region, because we hoped that the importance of our findings would be enhanced if our village could be regarded as representative of many Delhi villages. As for population size, we looked for a place of about 750. One much smaller might not have been suitable principally because the number of men employed in the city might have been small; on the other hand a larger one of 1000 or more persons, would have been too large for us to study adequately.

The first two months in Delhi we spent searching for such a village and making the necessary arrangements with government officials. The selection of the village and our entrance into it were greatly facilitated by the Department of Community Development of the Union Territory of Delhi then headed by Dr. J. C. Ramchandani. With our needs in mind, officials of the Department of Community Development contacted the leading men in potentially suitable villages to determine if our presence would be acceptable.

Several villages apparently agreed to accept us. Some of the younger officers took us to see these villages so we could make a final selection. At least we thought we were making a selection. What actually happened we later learned was that the Community Development people, while tactfully maintaining the illusion that we were making the choice, had settled on one village as the most suitable and had arranged matters in such a way that we would almost certainly "select" the village.

In the first village we visited, the house made available to us was rather depressing by the standards of well-to-do villagers. Also the village itself was not particularly attractive. The available housing in the second village was similarly poor. The third and last village we were shown, here called Shanti Nagar, was not only attractive, with pleasant lanes and a fair number of shade trees, but also permitted us the choice of three houses that were especially well built and comfortable. Although the people in the first two villages we visited had paid relatively little attention to us, the people of Shanti Nagar swarmed to greet us, showed us the three available houses, and offered us warm milk, the token of village hospitality. We expressed our preference for the third village and the Community Development people congratulated us on the wisdom of our choice.

Several months later, one of the men of Shanti Nagar told us that the Community Development officials had held a meeting of leading men from a number of surrounding villages to ask them if they would be willing to have an American couple living in their village to study its daily life. The village of Shanti Nagar was interested in us, and that is how we came "to select" it.

Our accommodations in Shanti Nagar were on the second floor of a solidly constructed brick house belonging to a member of the Brahman Priest caste. For our purposes the house was ideally situated: it was almost in the center of the village, directly on the dividing line between the separate residential areas of the high and low castes. Because our apartment was on the second story, we could see much of the village when standing on the roof outside our door and, most significantly, see the courtyard of the Jat Farmer community house where important meetings were usually held; we could also hear village

background noises. Thus, we could observe crowds gathering for meetings and ceremonies and overhear major disputes when they erupted, and could then hurry to the action. We could also see the bus connecting Shanti Nagar and Delhi arriving and departing. To have been even 100 yards away from the village would have meant missing many events.

Our landlord, who became our friend and principal sponsor, made all of our living arrangements in Shanti Nagar. He knew that a bathing room and latrine would add greatly to our comfort and convenience and went to the expense of constructing two outside rooms for these purposes. He arranged for a water-carrier and sweeper, both of whom were essential, and also found accommodations for our male interpreter. Our landlord received us into his family as fictive relatives at no little inconvenience, for we occupied half of his house, and his large family was crowded into the rooms on the lower floor.

Our apartment had three rooms exclusive of bath and latrine. We used a large central room for cooking, eating, and receiving guests. On either side of this central room were two smaller rooms. One was our bedroom and office. The other was where our female interpreter lived; later this room was used for experimental doll play sessions with children. At that time, Shanti Nagar lacked electricity and running water. In one way this was an advantage. Because the walls of our house had no openings for pipes or wires, we were able to keep out rats, as well as mosquitoes and flies, simply by putting screens on the doors and windows (there was no glass in them) and plugging the holes left at the bottom of the walls to drain off water. From the point of view of unwelcome animal life, we were better off than we have sometimes been in American houses. The arrangement of our rooms was definitely not Indian. The better-off villagers, into whose ranks we fell, generally separated the quarters of men and women, and their cooking was not done in the sitting room.

Our style of life was a mixture of Indian and American practices. We cooked on kerosene stoves using western-style utensils, including pressure cookers. All the villagers cooked over fires of cowdung cakes with traditional griddles and brass pots. For breakfast we generally made pan-

cakes with wheat flour, sugar, and buttermilk fried in vegetable oil. This approximated the Indian pancake *malpura*; it was the only dish we cooked that the villagers liked. A few traditional Brahmans even enjoyed our *malpuras* covered with jam. The rest of our diet consisted of local vegetables, rice, and lentils cooked in oil with spices, milk, curd, and a variety of western-style commodities, all obtained in Delhi: leavened bread, tinned biscuits, coffee, tea, jam, and peanut butter. The only advantage of this diet was that we could quickly prepare meals. Indian cooking is time-consuming, requiring skills that cannot be learned overnight. To hire a cook involved two problems: first, because of the large number of foreigners connected with the various embassies, cooks were expensive in the Delhi region and it would have been difficult to lure a good one away from the comforts of the city; second, we did not want to bring into the village any more people than were necessary. We believed that the two of us and our interpreters would be enough disruption without the added worry of a cook who would be out of our sight most of the day.

Out of respect for our landlord and the villagers, our diet in the village was vegetarian. In this part of India, this meant a menu consisting of grains, vegetables, lentils, fruits, and milk products. Some lower-caste villagers ate meat and a few upper-caste men also ate meat on visits to Delhi; but most villagers were vegetarians and the upper castes were generally quite strict about it. We ate three meals a day the year round, rather than three meals during summer and two in winter, as did most villagers. We ate at a table, and sat on chairs, rather than on a cot or on the floor; we ate with flatware instead of our fingers; and we ate together, not separately as did village husbands and wives. Eating together attracted a good deal of attention and amused comment, and we found it unnerving to have people visit us just to watch us eat. After a few months, we asked people to sit outside until we had finished our meal, and they cheerfully complied.

Our clothing became more Indian as the months passed and our American clothes wore out and had to be replaced. Ruth Freed found that the pajama-like trousers and the long shirt or the dresslike upper garment that the younger vil-



lage women wore were satisfactory for all seasons (see fig. 1). This costume was reasonably cool in summer, left little exposed skin for flies to settle on, and was comfortable in winter, for long underwear could be worn inconspicuously under it. Stanley Freed wore Indian-style trousers and bush-shirts the year round, clothing that was

comfortable in winter but rather warm in summer. Although the dhoti (loincloth) was preferable as a warm weather garment, properly tying and wearing it with ease required practice. We both wore city sandals rather than village-style shoes, which we found very uncomfortable. Ruth Freed's feet were considerably longer and



FIG. 1. Ruth Freed taking notes at a religious ceremony. Brahman Priest woman with bag has just made a food offering (white spot near lower right-hand corner) to Cross Roads Mother Goddess to insure welfare of one of her married daughters who was about to return to her husband after visiting her parents' home.

broadier than those of most Indian women. She, therefore, wore men's sandals. The women noticed this and commented on it. They also felt sorry for her because she wore no ankle or arm bracelets of gold or silver. On a few special occasions, she donned the traditional skirt, shirt, and headcloth of which the villagers approved. These garments, however, were far less comfortable than the trousers and shirt costume.

Our bathing facilities were not too dissimilar from village arrangements but our latrine arrangements could be duplicated only in cities and not in Shanti Nagar or other surrounding villages. Our latrine attracted a fair amount of adverse comment. We used the commode-and-sweeper system. In Shanti Nagar there was a caste called Chuhra Sweeper, whose traditional occupation was removing night soil; hence, the use of commodes was feasible, especially so, since some of the Chuhras in Shanti Nagar were accustomed to the system from working for the British. Villagers believed that it was much healthier and more sanitary to use the fields. Westerners did not like the commode-and-sweeper system either, even those who used it, but on different grounds from those of the villagers. Westerners thought that the system degraded the Sweeper caste and preferred to dig proper latrines. Because we lived on the second floor, we did not have this option. The principal disadvantages in using the fields, apart from whatever contribution such use made to the spread of communicable diseases, occurred when one was ill and too weak to move far from one's bed. In the rainy season it was not pleasant to use the fields; moreover, it took a great deal more time and, for foreigners, could be both difficult and dangerous at night.

We lived in Shanti Nagar for 13 months from January 1, 1958, to early February, 1959. For the first two months we were principally occupied with becoming accustomed to the village, recording everything we observed, and, perhaps most importantly, giving the villagers a chance to get used to us. We were a great curiosity; the villagers spent much more time questioning us than we did them. There were people in our house from sunrise until late evening. Although being constantly with strangers is difficult for westerners who are accustomed to considerable

privacy in their homes, we were delighted with the attention, for it indicated a real interest in us and, as it turned out, the acceptance of our activities in the village.

The circumstances of our entry into Shanti Nagar, under government auspices and at the invitation of the leading men of the village, greatly eased our way. We did not have to go through a difficult period of penetrating a wall of indifference, suspicion, and hostility. We sometimes did encounter such attitudes but generally people were friendly and cooperative. In fact, the villagers acted as if it were a matter of village honor that we be properly treated. We were protected from exploitation and overcharging, and nothing of value was stolen from us. Once, a boy took an almost valueless piece of soap from our bathroom; this small theft greatly disturbed our landlord, and he went to some trouble to recover the soap. When we attended ceremonies, especially those out of the village, the people of Shanti Nagar made sure we were well treated and prevented us from doing anything gauche. We know that there were some occasions when we offended village sensibilities and undoubtedly other instances of which we were unaware. Once, for example early in our residence, when we were just getting the feel of village life, Stanley Freed participated in a funeral and his sandal touched a cowdung cake that was to be used in the cremation, an improper act.

We found, at times, that some people quietly and intelligently worked behind our backs to assist us. One extremely perceptive young man, noting after a few weeks of our residence that we were spending almost all of our time with people of high caste, decided to break this pattern. Although a member of a high caste, he arranged for us to be invited to a low-caste wedding, where we were offered and accepted food, something a high-caste person does not do in the village. Our act caused a sensation. Some high-caste individuals told us that their relations with us could never again be the same; a few people altered their behavior toward us. However, everything returned to normal in a few days. The man who instigated the affair remained calm throughout, simply remarking that, "Formerly you were people of the high castes; now you are people of the whole

village." After a while, we stopped worrying about foreseeing and coping with difficulties in interpersonal relations. In this area, the villagers were expert and usually could be trusted to do what was necessary, and indirectly to instruct us.

Although we eventually came to know all the families of the village, we inevitably spent a disproportionate amount of time with a restricted, yet fairly large and somewhat changing group of people. We were better acquainted with people of the Brahman Priest and Jat Farmer castes than those of other castes. Since we were living in a Brahman household, we were customarily informed of events among them. The Jats, who were politically and economically dominant in Shanti Nagar, were therefore constantly in touch with us. We had a number of good friends among the members of both castes, principally men younger than 40 years of age, some of whom spoke English, and their wives. Also we got to know well a number of senior women either because they were senior women in households where we had younger friends or because they were close to senior woman in our own household. In addition, we had close relationships with two or three families of the Chamar Leatherworker caste, the family of the Chuhra Sweeper caste who worked for us, two families of the Gola and Mahar Potter castes, one of the older Nai Barber men, the single Lohar Blacksmith family, and a family of Bairagi Beggars. These people were sufficiently interested in us to visit frequently and to spend a considerable amount of time in our apartment. That we were Americans, and therefore different, interested them; consequently they were less critical than some others about our peculiarities of eating, dress, and similar activities. They were, in brief, our friends in the village. They generously aided us in our work; it was in their company that we could relax and just talk, joke, and gossip. We usually tested some of our projects, such as questionnaires, by trying them first on this group. The people of this core group were quite willing to tell us what they thought and often offered helpful criticisms. They were particularly important to us in both the initial period of our fieldwork and at the end. After the first two or three months of getting acquainted, we began to inter-

view systematically throughout the village, and the group's importance as a source of information declined somewhat as the time spent with other informants increased.

In addition to this core group, another, smaller group was especially important in our fieldwork. These people seldom or never visited our apartment but were invariably hospitable when we called on them and were well informed about village affairs, and exceptionally intelligent informants. We became aware of their capabilities in the course of our general interviewing. Consequently, they were of particular importance at the middle and end of our fieldwork.

In the initial period of adjustment and to a lesser extent throughout the fieldwork, we and the villagers became alternately teachers and students (cf. Wax, 1957, pp. 136-137, 140-141). Among the villagers, those most closely associated with us were concerned with teaching us proper behavior in the village, or if this effort did not appear practical, with trying to avoid the development of a situation where we would depart too far from village standards. Thus, when it looked as if both of us might try to attend a meeting in the Jat community house, one of our good friends explained very politely that women were not supposed to attend such meetings. (However, some time later during the illness of Stanley Freed, the men were quite willing to let Ruth Freed attend a meeting of an all-village panchayat, thus demonstrating flexibility and understanding of our problems.) When Stanley Freed was walking to a funeral, a young Jat Farmer quietly told him what to do: to carry a piece of wood for the funeral pyre, to wash his hands after the funeral, and similar instructions. During the low-caste marriage mentioned above, when we took food from the second lowest caste in the village, the senior lady of the house where we lived afterward went to the lowest village caste, the Chuhra Sweepers, and asked them not to offer us food because she was afraid we would accept it. She knew that we could not promise to refuse their food, and she tried to arrange things so that the occasion would not arise.

In addition to teaching us village etiquette, some villagers had another problem. They worried about the "true nature" of our role. To

some it seemed likely that we were government spies working either for the American or the Indian government or both. This suspicion raised the question of how much effort should be made to conceal certain matters from us. In all villages, events occur that by legal definition of the state and national governments are crimes and would be so treated were they brought to the attention of the authorities; but the villagers regard some such matters differently and settle them entirely within the village so that the authorities never hear of them. As residents of the village, we were in a position to learn a great deal; and this situation caused some nervousness on the part of the villagers.

We believe (although we can never know) that attempts to conceal from us matters that were both sensational and general knowledge were usually ineffective. Individual and family matters could no doubt be successfully hidden, but not events that were widely known. We knew of a few attempts at concealment. One, in particular, illustrated why we think conspiracies of silence that involved a large part of the village were usually not maintained for any length of time. Once the village council was about to discuss a matter that they would have preferred to keep entirely within the village. One man called attention to our presence and suggested that we be asked to leave. This suggestion was immediately dismissed when another villager said that there was no point in doing so because 10 minutes after the meeting was over everybody would be in our apartment telling us all about it anyway. Villagers were very good at keeping their affairs secret from outsiders, such as the police; but foreigners like us who lived in the village and became quasi-villagers, inevitably would hear a good deal of gossip, especially since the people involved in factional disputes and personal hostilities liked to air their grievances to sympathetic listeners. The events that we never heard of were more likely to be ordinary, rather than sensational occurrences that people would not tell us about simply because it did not occur to them that we would be interested. For example, spirit possession was apparently fairly common, but the villagers never called such an episode to our attention until after we had chanced to be present when a young girl

was so possessed and had shown considerable interest in the event. Afterward, villagers told us about other such happenings because they had learned that we were interested.

Although we were most often in the learning role, we also functioned as teachers. We taught the villagers how to be studied; for if one is to study a village, the villagers themselves must learn how to cooperate. It was imperative that the people of Shanti Nagar gain some appreciation of what we wanted to see and hear, because lacking this understanding, they could not help us most effectively; and, without the intelligent help of the villagers, we could not make a satisfactory study. The education of the villagers was a slow process. We really could not explain what was wanted, and so we taught by our actions and questions. We encouraged certain kinds of conversations by a show of interest and discouraged others by disinterest. When the villagers wanted to talk, for the twentieth time, about American marriage customs, the care of aged relatives, or the care of cows in America, their questions were answered politely, because supplying information about oneself and one's country is part of the reciprocity that is basic to successful fieldwork, but whenever possible we tactfully tried to change the subject of conversation to other matters. We made much of what the villagers regarded as common, routine, or trivial and tried to convey our interest and enthusiasm to them in order to get them interested enough in these matters to give rather lengthy explanations about what was going on.

Fortunately, the members of the household in which we lived soon became quite accustomed to our presence. The senior lady of the household visited us a number of times each day, as did all the children. She, in time, made it her business to see that we were regularly informed in advance of all ceremonies and festivals. She soon realized that we were interested, as was she, in births, deaths, and marriages and she usually reported these events to us. In addition, she knew all the gossip and news not only in Shanti Nagar, but also in surrounding villages, for the postman regularly visited with her and brought her the news. Her son, the head of the household, was active in village and city affairs and kept us in-

formed of every meeting in the community house and explained the intricacies of these affairs.

Almost from the beginning, some villagers appreciated what we were doing, but others, even some very intelligent people, did not. One rather well-educated man who was very close to us remarked late in our fieldwork, after we had completed a highly satisfactory and revealing interview with him, "I never realized that you wanted to go into things so deeply." This informant had progressed from an early view that his principal role was to entertain us to a realization that we wanted him to engage in an intellectual task involving his highest powers of description and analysis. Our interview with him represented the best of our fieldwork interviewing: we were knowledgeable enough to ask good questions and our informant accepted the obligation of cooperating with us to the best of his ability.

After the initial two- or three-month period of adjustment, the villagers' curiosity concerning us gradually diminished and we were able to move about without attracting too much attention. We then began systematic interviewing. During this period, which lasted six or seven months, we took a village census and recorded information for the ethnography of the village. This part of our fieldwork fell mainly in the hot season, officially from May 15 until the beginning of the monsoon early in July, and in the monsoon season itself which lasts into September. The area around Delhi is uncomfortably hot early in May and by the fifteenth an unrelieved wall of fire settles over the region. Villagers find the hot season uncomfortable; westerners find it murderous. Some of the villagers thought we would surely go to Kashmir or to Nanital, a hill station, in this season as was the British custom in colonial days and still is the custom for anyone with enough time and money. They were rather pleased that we did not. The rains are a great relief. During the monsoon season, the temperatures fall into the high nineties, the ground and buildings are cooled by the rains, the fields are green, and the sky is filled with beautiful clouds. The major difficulty is that unpaved roads become impassable to motor vehicles and consequently mobility in the rural areas is substantially restricted.

During the last four or five months of fieldwork in Shanti Nagar, we continued to add ethnographic information, but our major emphasis shifted to questionnaires and surveys to gather qualitative and quantitative data on a variety of topics. We administered an attitude questionnaire to a random sample of 89 villagers and to 34 people from Shanti Nagar then living in Delhi and other cities (S. Freed, 1974); interviewed a random sample of 25 villagers about caste ranking (S. Freed, 1963a) and fictive kinship (S. Freed, 1963b); questioned another randomly selected group on religion (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1962, 1964, 1966); systematically surveyed the village with regard to houses, land, animals, shrines, hand pumps, fodder cutters, bullock carts, and cost of crops; collected complete household inventories from four families; gathered essays from school children for a project on the occupational goals of rural and urban school children (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1968); conducted doll play sessions with children, and recorded the literal texts of songs sung at festivals and life cycle events. This part of our fieldwork was carried on in the most pleasant time of the year, the fall and winter; about half of it coincided with the best time for fieldwork in North Indian villages, the season when the sugarcane is being harvested and crushed. The sugarcane was crushed at a number of presses situated only a few steps from the village. There men could be found who had plenty of time to talk, for in sugarcane crushing, periods of rather intense activity alternated with periods of leisure.

Early in February, 1959, we shifted our primary residence to Delhi where for four months we interviewed people from Shanti Nagar who had moved to Delhi either permanently or temporarily. We collected essays from school children to provide the urban data for our comparative study of the occupational goals of rural and urban children. We also systematically read over our field notes looking for gaps, weaknesses, and ambiguities in our information. This task was best accomplished in Delhi where we had relatively few visitors during the day rather than in the village where we had little time to ourselves. Although we spent most of our time in Delhi during these months, we continued to maintain our village

residence and made frequent trips there chiefly to attend ceremonies and to gather information on subjects that were not clear in our notes. People from Shanti Nagar often visited our Delhi apartment. Some of our most fruitful interviews with villagers took place in Delhi where we were removed from the distractions of relatives and bystanders that almost always accompanied interviewing in the village.

While we were living in Delhi one of our research assistants, Mr. Satish Saberwal, remained in Shanti Nagar. We regularly supplied him with lists of questions together with the names of people from whom he should seek answers. By that time, he had been with us almost a year. He also finished a number of our surveys that had not been completed when we left the village. It is possible to obtain an almost 100 percent response on surveys with random samples in Indian villages if one is well known in the village and willing to make the extra effort needed to run to ground the last few elusive respondents. However, this extra effort is time-consuming, and, with a good assistant, work of this kind can be delegated and the principal investigators can use their own time more profitably for other things.

Our interviews were carried on through interpreters except when talking to the 14 or so men of the village who spoke English reasonably well. A few years before going to India, we had taken an eight-week course in Hindi, and during the first few months of residence in Shanti Nagar, we attempted to improve our facility. However, we did not progress rapidly enough, so it became clear that further investment of time and effort in language-learning would be inefficient. Since we already had extremely able interpreters, we believed that we could use our time most effectively by working through them.

Dependence on interpreters has disadvantages. Precise communication between two people is difficult to achieve in the best of circumstances. Every utterance of any complexity has at least three aspects: what the speaker thinks he says, what he actually says, and what his listener thinks he says. An interpreter introduces additional variables into this process. Another disadvantage is that the inability to understand what is being said all around one is somewhat nerve-

wracking. Also, when interpreters are not available because of illness or for other reasons, research time is lost, and even normal living activities can become difficult. However, we did know enough Hindi to give and receive essential information, slowly and painfully, to be sure; and English-speaking villagers helped us when our interpreters were absent.

Situations sometimes arose outside the village when the ability to respond quickly and fluently in Hindi would have been most helpful. For example, on the bus from Shanti Nagar to Delhi we once were engaged in a conversation by a man from a neighboring village. He asked the usual questions about the drinking of liquor and the eating of meat in America. These are sensitive matters to Hindus. We answered to the best of our ability in Hindi. He seemed satisfied, but our answers lacked the grace, completeness, and forcefulness that our interpreters could have provided. On another occasion, again on the bus, a prominent man from a neighboring village, in answer to a query about us, stood up and announced to the busload of people that our purpose was to see if Indians liked America or Russia better. (Many of the educated villagers were well informed and fascinated by the intricacies of the cold war.) Actually, it was probably best in this situation to say nothing, although we wanted to defend our lack of political involvement.

The foregoing difficulties were not particularly bothersome. The major loss, from the point of view of fieldwork, in not having a sound grasp of the local language was that casual conversation among villagers was sometimes quite revealing. It would have been interesting had we understood all of it. Our interpreters were only human; they liked to relax at times when not much seemed to be going on, such as when we were waiting for the bus. Often, we chatted among ourselves in English. However, we know we missed a good deal on these occasions. We traveled on the bus two or three times in the company of an English-speaking villager who, although we rarely saw him as he was usually away in the army, had an uncanny feeling for which of the casual comments of villagers would interest us. He would interrupt his conversation with us to interpret this or that conversation going on around us. As

for formal interviewing, we believe that whether or not one uses interpreters makes little difference in the information that is obtained, provided the interpreters are competent.

The question of the competence of interpreters is critical. We have worked with both competent and incompetent interpreters. Gross incompetence and unusual competence are both easily recognized. In working with American Indians, for example, we have once or twice had to use interpreters whose translations, because of their brevity as compared with the verbosity of the informant, obviously omitted a great deal. Such situations are unsatisfactory. But in India, we were fortunate to have unusually competent interpreters. They carefully followed our instructions: to give accurate and complete translations of what was said rather than to summarize their interpretation of it; to try to stay as much in the background as possible, that is, not to inject their personalities into the situation any more than necessary; and, if they wanted to add their own comments in order to clarify an informant's statement, they could do so, but had to be careful to identify such comments as their own. Furthermore, we could check their performance in three ways. First, unquestionably, they all spoke excellent English. Second, our slight knowledge of Hindi enabled us to follow an occasional translation well enough to become aware eventually of any substantial decline in standards. But by far the best check was the presence of English-speaking villagers. Occasionally, these men tired of speaking English and would ask the interpreter to translate for a while to give them a rest; however, they listened very carefully to the translation, occasionally corrected it, and sometimes commented on the quality of the translation when the interpreter had finished. Most such comments were to the effect that the translation had been excellent. Not only did these English-speaking men listen closely to translations when their own words were being translated, but one or another was often present when we were talking to someone else; and on these occasions they expressed the same concern with the quality of the translation.

Aside from their competence, there were the questions of the degree to which our interpreters might try to influence the course of the research

as well as the effects of their social positions upon respondents. We tried to minimize the first by not engaging people who, owing to their training and backgrounds, might have felt that they could improve on our instructions. We also tried to exercise some measure of control over interpreter bias by trading interpreters with each other. We employed two interpreters in Shanti Nagar: a man and a woman. Ordinarily, each of us worked with the interpreter of the same sex. Occasionally, however, we used each other's interpreter to see if the responses of the villagers would differ significantly. Since the responses did not vary appreciably despite the change of interpreters, we assumed that the translations were accurate and relatively unbiased. For various reasons interpreters left our service and had to be replaced, a circumstance that served as an additional check on interpreter bias.

We minimized the second problem by engaging interpreters who had originally lived at some distance from Shanti Nagar and were not members of any of the castes of the village. Three of our interpreters were Punjabis whose caste affiliations posed no threat to anyone, either of high or low caste. Another interpreter was a member of the Kayastha caste from Delhi. She was accepted in the village at almost the level of the Brahman caste, a situation that apparently did not bother the lower castes, probably for three reasons: there were no Kayasthas in Shanti Nagar; the woman was from Delhi; and she was a strong follower of Mahatma Gandhi with regard to caste, which is to say, that she was opposed to caste-based discrimination. The only interpreter who caused difficulty was a young man of the Jat Farmer caste from a neighboring village. The Jat Farmers were dominant in Shanti Nagar; and in the presence of our Jat interpreter, members of the lower castes froze. In addition, he seemed to consider it beneath him to phrase questions to women and to translate their answers in full. After a week, we had to dismiss him simply because continuing his employment would have rendered unproductive any work among the lower castes and the women. Other investigators who have worked in India (e.g., Berreman, 1968, pp. 359-360) have reported similar experiences.

Using interpreters offers advantages; one can begin effective fieldwork without delay; and a



dependable and intelligent interpreter can also be trained to be a research assistant. He or she can then be freed to interview without the presence of the investigator and an additional interpreter hired. Such a procedure is especially efficient if one uses surveys and questionnaires. It may seem to those who have never experienced it, that not only is speaking through interpreters clumsy but that they may become barriers to communication. We did not find this surmise to be true. After a brief period of adjustment, both we and the villagers of Shanti Nagar were scarcely aware of the presence of the interpreter. A skillful interpreter can efface himself so completely that those he is assisting feel that they are talking directly to each other. In addition, it is possible for the investigator to record notes much more completely using the time the interpreter is translating the question and listening to the answer.

Inaccurate information may enter an ethnographer's notebook from several sources. Misunderstandings, arising from faulty communication, contribute inaccuracies. Deliberate, sometimes malicious, lying is another source of misinformation. Exaggeration, to produce favorable or reduce unfavorable impressions, is also a fact of ethnographic life. Lying and exaggeration on the part of the informant can be controlled to some extent by checking information with a number of people. Lies, because they are quantitatively greater and qualitatively more outrageous than exaggerations, can much more easily be discovered. As one learns more and more about the people of one's village, it becomes easier to recognize lies and the people who lie habitually. The best defense against exaggeration is a degree of skepticism, some prudent checking, and, perhaps most importantly, to give informants the feeling that the investigator values all his respondents and, in fact, all villagers equally and is not silently passing judgment or making invidious comparisons. The interviewer tries to convey the impression that all topics under discussion are emotionally neutral and that it makes no difference if the informant is literate or illiterate, rich or poor, of high or low caste. This approach tends to reduce the informant's desire to exaggerate. If the interviewer's manner and attitude indicate that some subjects are sensitive, the informant may be more likely to exaggerate.

Two other circumstances may contribute misinformation. First, from the informant's point of view, there is sometimes a certain abruptness about being interviewed that may lead to incomplete information. For example, we once approached a man who was sitting quietly. We began an ordinary conversation that quickly led to questions about his history of many urban jobs, when and for how long he had worked at each. Although he tried to recall the details, he could not do so at a moment's notice, for the subject was one about which he rarely thought. Second, we often had to ask people about subjects of which they had incomplete or inaccurate knowledge simply because no one else in the village was better informed. They answered as well as they could, and we had to be content with their information. For example, the genealogical knowledge of our best informants was not complete. The genealogies in the government records were somewhat different from those that the villagers supplied, containing some ancestral names that the villagers did not mention.

Information that could be checked against independent and presumably reasonably accurate data gave some idea of the amount of error that could be expected in informant testimony. The amount of cultivable land in Shanti Nagar was a good example of a discrepancy between informant testimony and independent data. Various governmental records contained the total of the area of cultivable land or provided figures from which it could be calculated. We compared these totals with that obtained by asking every landowner in Shanti Nagar how much land he owned and found that the villagers claimed about 12 percent more land than they were credited with in the official records. We largely discount deliberate lying as the cause of this difference. Some of our most reliable informants were quite surprised when we told them how much land was credited to them in the records. They simply shrugged their shoulders saying that the government records were the final authority.

We believe that one reason for the difference between government records and informant testimony may have been the tendency of some villagers to exaggerate, but another reason was that some people really did not know exactly how much land they owned. They had never had

occasion to measure it exactly nor the means to do so. They appeared to calculate the amount of land they owned as shares of an ancestral holding the size of which was probably somewhat mythical. Thus, if the ancestor was credited by the villagers with 400 acres, and he had four sons, one of whom had two sons, each of these grandsons of the ancestor would calculate his holding as a genealogically determined share of the original 400 acres, or, in this case, 50 acres, rather than surveying his landholding precisely. Land records in this part of India were quite complicated and somewhat inexact. We would not be surprised if the true area of farm land in Shanti Nagar was as close to the villagers' estimate as to the official figure. It is, therefore, impossible for us to give absolutely accurate figures on landholdings either by consulting government records or by questioning villagers.<sup>1</sup>

Discrepancies of the kind we encountered in trying to determine the amount of farmland in Shanti Nagar occurred in many other areas of inquiry: for example, years of schooling, salaries, age, years of employment, expenditures on weddings and other ceremonies, the sale prices of crops, and income from farming. One must accept modest inaccuracies in ethnographic data, even when such data can be checked and partially corrected, principally because checking would be enormously time-consuming and expensive. Theoretically, one could for example, check salaries, years of employment, and years of schooling, by consulting employers and examining school records. However, in so doing, the investigator would soon be spending much more time studying records than observing and interviewing villagers. Therefore, it is expedient to recognize that limits of time, money, and energy make it necessary to accept the inherent inaccuracies in informant testimony. If such discrepancies amount to the approximately 12 percent that we encountered in inquiring about landownership, the fieldworker can be reasonably satisfied with the accuracy of the information. We are not discussing substantial errors here; these can usually be identified and corrected, or disre-

garded. Neither are we suggesting that fieldworkers adopt a casual attitude toward checking their data. However, under some circumstances, the effort needed to insure relatively minor additional precision far outweighs the importance of such precision to the overall research.

We have mentioned that we did not at the beginning of our fieldwork experience a period of severe suspicion and hostility, principally because we entered with governmental assistance and at the invitation of the villagers. However, two additional important factors contributed to our acceptability: first, the traditional courtesy and hospitality of the North Indian villager, and second, the fact that we were husband and wife. A husband-wife team is more readily accepted in Indian villages than a single person of either sex, probably because the married state is the normal one for adults. The villagers regarded unmarried adults, especially young ones, as potentially disruptive.

A married couple has other advantages over a single fieldworker. A husband and wife can divide the housekeeping chores that are so time-consuming in an Indian village in ways that are not very different from those to which they have been accustomed. This improves efficiency, boosts morale, and provides entertainment for villagers who, in the early days of our fieldwork, for example, crowded our house to watch us cook as well as eat. Another advantage of a husband-wife team is that morale is easier to maintain. At times, fieldwork can be discouraging. Two individuals, both professionals, are better able to withstand such situations than a person working alone; for, if one has had a bad day, the other may have had a rather good one.

The principal advantage a professional husband and wife enjoy in fieldwork is that they can divide the research and achieve considerably more coverage than either can achieve alone. Mead (1970, p. 253) commented that when a husband-and-wife team work together successfully, "the adequacy of the material is multiplied not by a factor of two but something more like a factor of five. . ." Berreman (1968, p. 348) has noted that most ethnography is heavily male-centered since most ethnographers and most informants are men. A husband and wife can minimize this bias because the latter will be able to

<sup>1</sup>See the discussions of government land records by Lewis (1958, pp. 329-347) and of the difficulties of determining land holdings by the field investigator by Bailey (1957, pp. 279-284).

work with women and her presence will make it easier for her husband to do so. Although we both regularly interviewed villagers of the opposite sex and found that each of us could work equally well with either men or women, we believe that this was because we were a trusted husband-and-wife team. Until we had established ourselves as such in the early weeks of our residence, it was somewhat easier to work with people of our own sex, or, if we went to a gathering of people, to attend together. However, on some occasions and with some people, one of us could work more effectively than the other. At all-village festivals it was especially helpful to have more than one observer. Different castes had slightly different practices and it was important to survey as widely as possible.

Another advantage of a husband and wife in the field is that when one is interviewing the other can try to establish a sort of shield about him. Sometimes visitors arrived during a good interview that one of us had begun when no other villagers were about. Occasionally the arrival of other villagers would end the interview, but sometimes it was possible for the one not conducting the interview to extend the proper hospitality to the guests and converse with them without the necessity of terminating the interview in progress. Finally, we found it most useful to read and comment upon each other's notes daily.

We differed from many other fieldworkers in Indian villages in not providing medical aid to the villagers. Such assistance has often been a conspicuous part of the reciprocity between ethnographer and villagers. We kept aspirin and gave tablets to people who asked for them. However, we did this reluctantly when parents wanted aspirin for their children and cautioned the parents to use only a half or quarter of a tablet. One of our interpreters dispensed penicillin eye ointment from a tube that we had given him. Occasionally, we also lent our fever thermometer; but beyond this minor assistance we did nothing medically. Our reluctance to provide medicines was based on the obvious fact that a person who is medically uninformed can do damage by prescribing the wrong remedy. Furthermore, considerable medical aid was readily available locally. A number of ayurvedic physi-

cians were close by in another village, and western style medical facilities were available in Delhi both privately as well as under India's national program of medical care.

Reciprocity in our case consisted mainly, we believe, in the novelty provided by our presence. Most villagers were curious about Americans: the United States was much in the news; relations between India and the United States were good; we had established our residence in the village where the villagers could observe most of our activities; and there was no serious communication barrier. Possibly also there was some enhancement of prestige because foreigners were resident in the village. In summary, we were in the right place at the right time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For general discussions of the practical and emotional problems of fieldwork, see Wax (1971) and S. Freed (1972).

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Finally, we thank the people of Shanti Nagar for admitting us to their village and for treating us with unfailing kindness and hospitality. We have protected them by using pseudonyms for their village and for any individuals whom we have occasion to mention. Villagers who know English may have occasion to read this report and others that we have published. Foreigners inevitably see things from a different perspective than the people of a given country. In addition, anthropologists bring a specialized conceptual apparatus to their work. Both factors can result in descriptions and interpretations that may strike the people under scrutiny as strange. Yet this very strangeness is one of the values of anthropological fieldwork. To see oneself through the eyes of others can be simultaneously irritating, unsettling, and enlightening. We hope that the last quality will dominate the feelings of the people of Shanti Nagar should they read what we have written about them. If occasionally they become irritated with us, we hope that they will understand that our goal has been not only to present and interpret our scientific data but also to express our sympathy, understanding, respect, and affection.

#### A NOTE ON THE TRANSCRIPTION OF HINDI WORDS AND NOMENCLATURE

Proper names of persons, castes, organizations, places, major yearly festivals, and geographical features, and of all words contained in Webster's "Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged" have been reproduced in Roman script. Other Hindi words, the Romanized spellings of many of which have become more or less standardized, because they frequently appear in English publications, have been italicized and spelled in their customary forms without diacritics. English plurals and possessives have been used (except when Webster's gives the Hindi plural), for example, *kunba*, *kunbas* (pl.). Diacritics have been used only in

transcribing the Hindi version of the questionnaire given in the Appendix. For transcribing Hindi, we have followed Sharma (1956, p. 19) whose system relies on standard conventions. Long vowels are presented with a bar above ( $\bar{a}$ ,  $\bar{i}$ ,  $\bar{u}$ ), retroflex consonants with a dot below ( $\dot{r}$ ,  $\dot{t}$ ,  $\dot{d}$ ), and aspirated consonants with an  $h$  following the consonant ( $kh$ ,  $ph$ ,  $th$ , etc.). Interconsonantal  $r$ , pronounced "ri," as in "rich," is a vocalic  $r$ , but the same symbol may also represent the retroflex consonant  $\dot{r}$ , when followed or preceded by a vowel. A  $c$  represents the English "ch," as in "choke." The sibilants  $\acute{s}$  and  $\grave{s}$  are pronounced "sh," as in "show." A tilde over a vowel indicates nasalization.

We have used binomial names for castes. The first word is the usual Hindi designation for the caste; the second, an English word that denotes the traditional occupation of the caste and/or translates the Hindi term. For example, the English translation of Nai is barber, the traditional occupation of the caste: hence, the caste designation, Nai Barber. Jat does not mean farmer in English, but the Jats are traditionally farmers: hence, the caste designation, Jat Farmer. There were two castes of potters (Kumhars) in Shanti Nagar, the Gola Kumhars and the Mahar Kumhars. Rather than use a cumbersome three-term name, we designate the castes, Gola Potter and Mahar Potter. When the same caste is mentioned several times in succession, we often shorten the name after its first use either to the Hindi or the English component. In such use, the English word is capitalized. Words such as potter, farmer, and priest when not capitalized refer to occupations and not to castes; for example, "Ram Kishan, a Brahman Priest, was a farmer" means that the foregoing member of the Brahman caste worked as a farmer.

### MONEY, WEIGHTS, AND MEASURES

We have generally used Indian units to designate money, weights, and measures frequently giving the equivalents in dollars, pounds, and acres so that non-Indians, especially Americans, can understand the quantities involved. Such an understanding is most easily developed for weights and measures, because the pound, the acre, and the corresponding Indian measures have

not varied through time. With respect to money, the several devaluations of the dollar since 1959 and the steady attrition of its purchasing power may mislead the reader into underestimating the purchasing power of the sums of Indian money that we report. Monetary conversions were made on the basis of the rate of exchange that was 4.76 rupees to one dollar in 1958; at that time, the Indian rupee was worth more in terms of the dollar than it is now. Moreover, to keep in mind that the dollar to which we refer was more valuable in 1957-1959 still fails to convey adequately a realization of the value of the Indian rupee. Perhaps the best appreciation of its value can be obtained from the estimate that Meier has made of the cost for an individual of a minimum adequate standard of living in New Delhi in April, 1960, "... a level of living well above subsistence and one which permitted cultural activity as sophisticated as any that has been achieved up to the present day—so long as such cultural activity renounced conspicuous consumption of material goods or energy" (Meier, 1962, p. 304). The total annual cost was Rs. 1030, a figure that included prorated sums for essential urban services, such as police, schools, and public health that amount to a total of Rs. 365 (Meier, 1962, table 1).

There were two monetary systems: one, the ancient traditional system; the second, the decimal system. The government of India had decided to convert its currency to the decimal system, but in 1957-1959, both systems were in use. In the traditional system, the rupee, abbreviated Re., Rs. (pl.), is divided into 16 annas. An anna is divided into 12 pie, three of which equal a pice. In the decimal system, the rupee is divided into 100 naye paise, abbreviated nP. We will give sums of a rupee or more in the decimal form, reserving annas for sums of less than a rupee: for example, Rs. 8.25 (8 rupees and 4 annas). Because the rupee was worth 21 cents, one can quickly obtain an approximate value in dollars of a sum of rupees by dividing by five.

An approximation in acres of the usual Indian measure of area in the Shanti Nagar region, the bigha, can also be readily obtained by dividing by five, for one acre is equivalent to 4.75 bighas. (In all cases, we refer to the kachcha bigha; the pukka bigha, also in use, is three times the size of

the former.) A bigha is divided into 20 *biswas*. We have rendered bighas and *biswas* in decimal notation, for example 8.75 bighas (8 bighas and 15 *biswas*).

The unit of weight in the Shanti Nagar region is the seer, approximately equivalent to 2.05 pounds. Consequently, one can easily convert

seers to pounds by dividing by 2. The seer is divided into 16 *chhataks*. A maund, equal to 40 seers, is approximately equivalent to 82 pounds. In Shanti Nagar, agricultural yield was usually given as maunds per bigha; the price of agricultural commodities was usually quoted as rupees per maund.

## THE SETTING AND THE PEOPLE

### LOCATION AND CLIMATE

Shanti Nagar was about 11 miles northwest by road from Shakti Nagar, the northernmost of the small named communities that constituted the City of Delhi. Several villages lay between Shanti Nagar and Shakti Nagar. In the late 1950s, the city was beginning to extend beyond Shakti Nagar; and the area from Shakti Nagar to Azadpur, a village some 2 miles to the northwest along the Grand Trunk Road, would probably soon be occupied by populous communities that were part of Delhi.

Travel between Shanti Nagar and Delhi was relatively easy. The road to Delhi was paved except for about one mile. A bus made four round trips daily and usually took about an hour and a quarter between Shanti Nagar and the Old Delhi bus station. During the rainy season, the bus traveled only to the end of the paved road in a village near Shanti Nagar and passengers had to walk the rest of the way. A railway station was situated about 2 or 3 miles from Shanti Nagar; and trains provided cheaper, if less convenient, transportation between Shanti Nagar and Delhi than did the bus. When traveling by bus or train, men commonly took their bicycles and used them for transportation in Delhi. All buses had racks on their roofs for bicycles and other baggage. The combination of bus and bicycle was an efficient and economical way to travel. By bicycle alone, Delhi could be reached in an hour. A loaded bullock cart took about five hours for the trip.

Narela, a town with a population of 10,699 (Rao and Desai, 1965, table 1-1), was about 4 miles from Shanti Nagar. With regard to Narela, Shanti Nagar was an interstitial village, as was the case with regard to Delhi. The direct road be-

tween Shanti Nagar and Narela was unpaved but was suitable for bullock carts and bicycles in dry weather. Narela could be reached by rail on the same line that connected Shanti Nagar and Delhi. Formerly, Narela had served as the principal market for Shanti Nagar, but its importance had declined since improved transportation had made Delhi more accessible. Although for employment, education, entertainment, shopping, religious observances, and legal matters Delhi was much more important to the people of Shanti Nagar than Narela, Narela had an important market where the villagers sold most of the grain and considerable gur (a brown sugar) they did not keep for their own use. Narela was more convenient than Delhi for these transactions because it required a shorter trip by bullock cart. The villagers still bought some household items in the bazaars of Narela and rented sugarcane crushers from a company in the town. The police station for the district was in Narela, and occasionally people had business there. The few men in Shanti Nagar who took an active interest in the affairs of the Congress Party, then the most important political party of India, traveled to Narela from time to time to consult with district leaders. However, Narela was much too small to be a serious rival to Delhi as the principal urban center for the people of Shanti Nagar.

The people of Shanti Nagar had relationships not only with urbanites but also with people of other villages. There were many villages in the Union Territory of Delhi and the adjacent parts of the Punjab and Uttar Pradesh; most of them were no more than 2 miles distant from one other village. Within a 2-mile radius of Shanti Nagar, there were six villages. Villages were not socially isolated from one another; they were

closely bound in a network of relationships that derived in large part from marital alliances. Shanti Nagar, for example, had contracted marital alliances with people living in more than 100 villages, towns, and cities, the most remote situated about 38 miles away. In addition to the traveling generated by marriage, people journeyed to other villages for religious purposes, to consult medical specialists, to attend school, and for economic reasons (cf. Opler, 1956). Because we were primarily interested in the effects of urbanization on village life, we have emphasized the relationships of Shanti Nagar with urban centers, principally Delhi. However, it would be a mistake to visualize the extra-village interaction in the Shanti Nagar region as being almost entirely between village and urban center. Although a particular village might have greater relationships with a nearby urban center than with any other single village, the total of the relationships with other villages would be as important as those with the urban center.

The present Union Territory of Delhi was once part of the Delhi District of the Punjab. In 1912, a separate Delhi Province was created from part of the Delhi District. Thereafter, despite political changes, the land area of this unit has undergone only minor changes. Delhi Province became a Part "C" State in 1952 and a Union Territory in 1956. Shanti Nagar is in a part of the Union Territory of Delhi that forms part of the Haryana region (*prant*) that included an area of the Punjab. The Haryana *Prant* was both a cultural and linguistic area where the language was Haryana, a dialect of Western Hindi influenced by Punjabi and Ahirwati, a dialect of Rajasthani (Rao, 1970, pp. 18-19). The dialect spoken in Delhi differed from that of Shanti Nagar; many villagers, especially those who worked in Delhi, were adept in both dialects.

Shanti Nagar was situated on relatively level land (called *bangar*) high enough above the Jumna River so that the land was not subject to flooding. Part of Shanti Nagar was irrigated by the Delhi Branch of the Western Jumna Canal. From Shanti Nagar one gazed in all directions upon a flat plain, everywhere cultivated except to the northeast where considerable village land had been damaged by salts and could not be farmed. Three other villages could be seen about a mile distant.

During the monsoon season from early July until the middle of September, large ponds formed on the outskirts of the village (fig. 2). More than half of the annual rainfall occurs during July and August. Rainfall varies greatly from year to year; the yearly amounts recorded at nearby Narela from 1951 to 1960 (India, 1961b, table 9.1) ranged from approximately 8 to 36 inches. The rains continue into September and are followed by a brief warm spell. The winter begins in October and lasts until March. We noted that as the weather became warmer and the third of the three seasons of the region, the hot season, began in March, the village ponds gradually became smaller and some vanished entirely. The hot season reaches its peak in May and June. During that period, daily maximum temperatures average 104.8° F. (May) and 102.4° F. (June), and temperatures of more than 110° F. are not uncommon (Bopegamage, 1957, table 2). Although the temperature does not fall to the freezing point during the winter and daytime temperatures are usually pleasant, the evenings and early mornings are sometimes cold. We wore sweaters, heavy jackets, and long underwear. Villagers wrapped themselves in heavy quilts; a few wore coats. In the unheated houses, temperatures in the forties and fifties can be quite uncomfortable, especially for the poorer villagers who might lack adequate clothing.

The aspect of the landscape varied constantly through the year as the seasons changed and crops ripened and were harvested. The fields were especially beautiful when the sugarcane was high and before the wheat harvest. After the wheat was harvested, the fields were brown and empty, but the monsoon brought them to life again and grass sprouted everywhere, even on the roofs of the mud houses in the village. Because of the density of the rural population, there was no feeling of isolation in the Delhi countryside like that one often experiences in the rural areas of the United States. During the daylight hours, a sort of soft hubbub in the fields around Shanti Nagar arose from the talk and the occasional shouts of people working there.

#### HABITATION SITE AND HOUSES

Shanti Nagar was a type of village, common in northern India, often described as nucleated; the





FIG. 2. Pond that formed on village outskirts during rainy season dried up completely during hot season.

houses were crowded together, usually sharing one or more walls with other houses. The compact habitation site was surrounded by the undivided village common land that was used for grazing and other purposes, and beyond it lay the cultivated fields. As the population of the village had grown, the habitation site of Shanti Nagar had gradually expanded at the expense of the village common land. Also, the relative prosperity of several families had led them to move from their mud houses near the center of the village and to build larger, more expensive brick houses on its outskirts. Their old uninhabited houses then received little attention and eventually collapsed, resulting, on a tiny scale, in a phenomenon well known to urban Americans: blight in the central section. Two lots near the center of Shanti Nagar, in what was otherwise an area of fine brick houses, were occupied by old uninhabited mud houses.

Figure 3 is a plan of the habitation site of Shanti Nagar showing lots containing buildings,

lanes, and a few other features. Some lots were entirely covered by buildings, but others contained courtyards as well. Almost all the buildings in Shanti Nagar were private houses; the two principal exceptions were the meeting houses of the Jat Farmer and the Brahman Priest castes. Houses could be classified in two ways: by their functions, and by the principal materials from which they were constructed. Three kinds of houses classified by function were the men's house and sitting room where male guests were entertained (*baithak*), the women's house (*ghar*) where food was prepared, and the cattle shed (*gher*). Combinations of these functions were normal: a single building could serve as a house for men and women, for men and cattle, for women and cattle (relatively rare), or for all three together as well as for men, women, and cattle separately. Thus, seven types of houses could be distinguished on the basis of function. Families often owned two or more buildings, sometimes located at a distance from each other.



For example, a family might have one building for men and cattle and another for women across the lane. At mealtimes, women could sometimes be observed carrying food to the men who ate in their sitting room. Approximately half of the families of Shanti Nagar had more than a single building, a situation more common among the high castes than among the low castes.

With regard to the materials used in their construction, there were three kinds of houses: the kachcha (mud) house, the pukka (brick) house, and a house that was part kachcha and part pukka. The walls of kachcha houses were made of hard pieces of mud dug from dry ponds. The use of unbaked mud bricks has been reported in other Delhi villages (India, 1961a, p. 21), but we did not observe their use in the few mud houses that we saw under construction. Mud mixed with straw was used as mortar and to plaster the inside and outside of walls so that they were smooth and shed rain. The door, windows, and the columns and heavy beams supporting the flat roof

were made of wood. Rafters were wooden poles over which were laid reeds or sticks and, on top, a thick covering of mud (fig. 4). The walls of pukka houses were made of kiln-baked bricks. Stone columns supported the beams of the flat roof. The beams were usually made of wood, but, at least in one case, of steel rails. Boards were laid over the beams; bricks, laid on the boards, were covered with cement. Pukka houses often had ornamental carvings, impressive arches, and heavy wooden doors; some had a second story. Although pukka houses varied considerably in size, they were on the average much larger than kachcha houses. The solid impressive pukka houses of Shanti Nagar, more frequently owned by high-caste than low-caste families, were built to last for generations (fig. 5).

The buildings of the different castes of Shanti Nagar tended to form clusters within the village, although the residential separation of castes was by no means absolute (fig. 6). Furthermore, the buildings of the high landowning castes and those

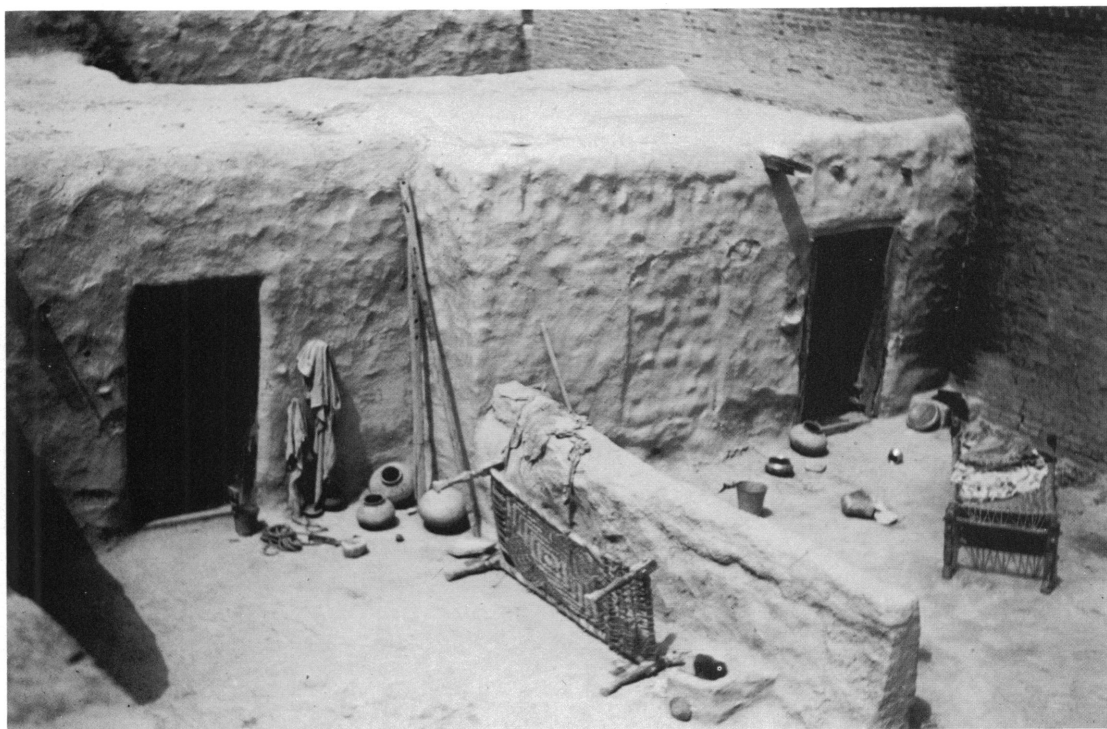


FIG. 4. Kachcha houses belonging to families of Bairagi Beggar caste.



FIG. 5. Front view of a large pukka house.

of the low landless castes were so situated that one side of the village was inhabited predominately by the former and the other by the latter. The principal residential divisions on the high-caste side of the village reflected the history of landownership in Shanti Nagar. The agricultural land of Shanti Nagar comprised three ancestral estates. The present landowners held shares in one or another of these estates, generally by virtue of patrilineal descent from the ancestor. These divisions of the cultivable land of the village were called *pattis*. In the village habitation site, the houses of each of the various *pattis* tended to be together. The area of the habitation site, most of whose inhabitants were members of the same *patti*, was known as a *pana*. Thus, a *patti* was a part of the agricultural land of the village in which the people who shared in its ownership were mainly agnatically related males although other persons that had acquired land in other ways, by purchase or gift, for example,

were also members. The *pana* was a division of the village habitation site, the membership of which largely coincided with *patti* membership but that also contained other families, landless as well as landowning. A *tholla* was a division of a *pana*. Because *patti* and *pana* were similar in their membership, there has been a tendency to equate the terms (e.g., Lewis, 1958, p. 354; Narain and Narain, 1932, pp. 296-297), and we did so in our questioning until one of our best informants corrected us. The *patti*, he said, was related to the collection of land revenue; the *pana* was a division of the village habitation site. The clearest discussion of the matter that we have found is by Yadava (1969, pp. 498, 500). Two of the three *panas* of Shanti Nagar were composed mainly of Jat Farmers; the other, principally of Brahman Priests. The houses of the two Jat *panas* were generally on opposite sides of Shanti Nagar; those of the Brahman *pana* were generally between the Jat *panas*.



FIG. 6. View of a section of Gola Potter quarter. Two-story pukka house in background was owned by a Jat Farmer.

### POPULATION

Shanti Nagar had a population of 799 divided among 13 castes. All were Hindus. The population by caste and sex is given in table 1. The Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests, by far the two most populous castes, accounted for 56 percent of the village population. The low castes (Chuhra Sweeper, Chamar Leatherworker, Gola Potter, Mahar Potter, and Nai Barber) accounted for 35 percent of the village population; the high castes comprised 65 percent. The most populous caste, the Jat Farmer, was also the wealthiest. Fifty-one percent of the population was male; 49 percent, female.

Table 2 gives the village population by age and sex. The villagers had a definite tendency to report ages ending in the digits five and zero. For both men and women, 38 percent reported ages ending in these two digits as compared with the

TABLE 1  
Population of Shanti Nagar by Caste and Sex  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Caste	Male	Female	Total
Bairagi Beggar	11 (03)	16 (04)	27 (03)
Baniya Merchant	3 (01)	3 (01)	6 (01)
Brahman Priest	100 (25)	87 (22)	187 (23)
Chamar	56 (14)	42 (11)	98 (12)
Leatherworker			
Chhipi Dyer	2 (00.5)	3 (01)	5 (01)
Chuhra Sweeper	41 (10)	55 (14)	96 (12)
Gola Potter	35 (09)	23 (06)	58 (07)
Jat Farmer	128 (31)	132 (34)	260 (33)
Jhinvar Waterman	6 (01)	7 (02)	13 (02)
Lohar Blacksmith	6 (01)	5 (01)	11 (01)
Mahar Potter	1 (00.2)	2 (00.5)	3 (00.4)
Mali Gardener	3 (01)	7 (02)	10 (01)
Nai Barber	15 (04)	10 (03)	25 (03)
Total	407	392	799

**TABLE 2**  
Population of Shanti Nagar by Age and Sex<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Age (Years)	Male	Female	Total
0-5	96 (24)	88 (23)	184 (24)
6-15	105 (26)	107 (28)	212 (27)
16-25	72 (18)	64 (17)	136 (17)
26-35	43 (11)	47 (12)	90 (12)
36-45	28 (07)	30 (08)	58 (07)
46-55	21 (05)	21 (06)	42 (05)
56-65	19 (05)	16 (04)	35 (04)
66-75	8 (02)	4 (01)	12 (02)
76-85	4 (01)	3 (01)	7 (01)
86-95	3 (01)	0	3 (00.4)
Total	399	380	779

Mean (male), 21.6

Mean (female), 20.7

Mean (total), 21.2

Median (both male and female), 15

<sup>a</sup>Eight male servants and 12 females whose ages are unknown are omitted here.

20 percent we would expect if ages were known and reported exactly. Of the two digits, zero occurred more often than five. We therefore selected age intervals in table 2 so that the maximum number of people fell near the center of the interval rather than near the extremes. Shanti Nagar had a youthful population with a median age of 15 and an average age of about 21. If the village women were correct when they said that families were larger than formerly because more food was available and famine did not occur, Shanti Nagar might be on the verge of a substantial population increase.<sup>1</sup> If such an increase occurs, the additional population will be forced to earn the bulk of its livelihood in the city, for there is no way to expand village lands beyond the current 5090 bighas (1072 acres).

Table 3 gives the adult men of Shanti Nagar by their urban experience and age. Adult men were defined as males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who were married and had completed their schooling. Forty-nine percent of the adult men had urban experience.

<sup>1</sup>The census of 1961 reports a village population of 843, an increase of 44 since 1958.

**TABLE 3**  
Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Age and Urban Experience  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Age (Years)	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	Total
16-25	29 (64)	16 (36)	45
26-35	23 (53)	20 (46)	43
36-45	12 (43)	16 (57)	28
46-55	9 (43)	12 (57)	21
56-65	8 (42)	11 (58)	19
66-75	1 (12)	7 (88)	8
76-85	1 (25)	3 (75)	4
86-95	1 (33)	2 (67)	3
Total	84 (49)	87 (51)	171

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who are married and have finished school. Eight servants are omitted.

**TABLE 4**  
Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Caste and Urban Experience  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	Total
High	53 (47)	59 (53)	112
Low	31 (53)	28 (47)	59
Total	84	87	171

Chi-square, .24

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .50 < p < .70

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who are married and have completed school. Eight servants are omitted.

**TABLE 5**  
Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Landownership and Urban Experience  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Landownership	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	Total
Owens land	51 (49)	53 (51)	104
Landless	33 (49)	34 (51)	67
Total	84	87	171

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who are married and have completed school. Eight servants are omitted.

A random sample of 28 urban-oriented men showed that the average length of urban employment or residence was 7.8 years. Such experience was much more common among the younger men than among the older. Only 17 of 50 men (34%) 50 years of age and over had urban experience; but 67 of 121 men (55%) younger than 50 years of age had such experience. In the youngest age interval (16-25) of table 3, 64 percent of the men had urban experience. These differences can reasonably be interpreted as indicating a trend. In the near future, adult men who had not lived or worked in cities would be a decided minority in the village. Table 4 presents the adult males by caste and urban experience. A greater proportion of low-caste than of high-caste men had urban experience, but the difference was moderate and not significant statistically.<sup>1</sup> Table 5 shows that the proportions of landowning and landless men with urban experience were equal.

### IMMIGRATION

Most of the men of Shanti Nagar were born in the village. About half of the women of Shanti Nagar were born outside of the village, principally because villages were exogamous and residence at marriage was usually virilocal and patrilocal. Village women could be divided into three groups: daughters of the village, daughters-in-law of the village, and mothers-in-law of the village. A daughter-in-law in turn became a mother-in-law when her son took a wife. There were 202 daughters, 136 daughters-in-law, and 54 mothers-in-law. The 190 women of the last two groups

<sup>1</sup>We have made a test of significance even though such tests are appropriately applied to samples to test inferences about a larger population. Our Shanti Nagar data include the entire relevant population and do not represent just a relatively small sample. However, since the urban experience was constantly changing, we may regard our data as a sample of conditions in Shanti Nagar over a period of approximately two decades beginning about 1950. The data may also be regarded as a sample drawn from a population of the villages of the Union Territory of Delhi that were similar to Shanti Nagar.

In the following pages, we occasionally make tests of significance under similar circumstances, that is, the tests are applied not to a sample but to the entire relevant population of Shanti Nagar. In such cases, the justification for so doing is similar to that presented here.

were from outside the village and entered it through marriage to men of Shanti Nagar. Members of each of the three groups of women tended to form small clusters on ceremonial occasions involving women, such as a "sing" held by women to celebrate the birth of a son. At these all-female affairs, women exchanged news and gossip; and the common interests of each of the three groups of women led to the observable clustering.

The migration of single men or whole families to and from Shanti Nagar occurred only occasionally. The rate of immigration in any one year was low. The rate of emigration was comparable but figures cannot be presented as succinctly because of the difficulties involved in distinguishing between permanent and temporary emigrants. According to our census, only 10 males had been born outside of Shanti Nagar and had come to the village as individuals unaccompanied by family members. Seven families moved into Shanti Nagar as units. One of these families was temporarily resident and left during the course of our fieldwork. Four other families came to the village as an indirect consequence of the displacements resulting from the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. While our census was taken during a single year, the immigration data are based on the lifetimes of the men then living in the village and sometimes have a time depth of over 50 years. If we disregard the unknown number of male immigrants whose residence was temporary or who died without leaving children, the census data give us a rough approximation of the rate of immigration over the 50 years preceding our residence which probably was about one man or family per year. This figure accords with our observations during our 13 months of residence in Shanti Nagar during which period two families moved into the village.

In discussing immigration and emigration, we disregard male servants who had come from outside Shanti Nagar. Eight such men lived in the village; all were attached to Jat Farmer families. These men were relatively unimportant in village life, for they were unmarried, had no close relatives in the village, and owned no land. Some male servants remained with their employers for a considerable time while others drifted on after a short residence.



Immigration can be divided into two categories: permanent and temporary. Temporary immigrants are those who live in a village for a few years for a specific purpose and then leave. One such reason for the temporary residence of children with relatives who lived in another village was to be close to their school. Two such children, a boy and a girl, were related to permanent residents: the boy was a sister's son; the girl was a mother's sister's son's daughter. A second reason for such temporary residence was to be close to one's place of employment. One family of Jat Farmers lived in Shanti Nagar for this reason. The man was the government accountant (*patwari*) for Shanti Nagar and surrounding villages, and the family temporarily occupied the second story of the house owned by the husband of his wife's brother's daughter. A third motive for the temporary residence of a man in an alien village was to protect and help raise the son of a female relative. Villagers said that a young child who owned land might be in danger from male agnates who would inherit the land should the child die. No man was living in Shanti Nagar for this reason while we were there but this had happened in the past. At least one man of Shanti Nagar had lived for some years in his sister's village to provide protection for her husband who was young.

Permanent immigration was of three general types. The first concerned the immigration of individual males. Nine such immigrants lived in Shanti Nagar. The following circumstances brought them to the village. Four of these nine men were the brothers of wives of Shanti Nagar. They immigrated into their sisters' village of marriage because of deaths in their families or other family problems in their natal villages. Two men, when their parents died, came as children to live with their sisters. Another, an elderly widower with neither sons nor daughters, came to his sister, leaving his land in his own village to his brothers and their descendants. The fourth, a man in his twenties, was said to have lost his land in his own village and to have divorced his wife. He came to live with his sister in Shanti Nagar where his position resembled that of a servant. These four men and two others who were the sons of daughters of the village had two things in common: they were related by blood either to

wives or daughters of Shanti Nagar, and their reasons for living there appeared to derive, in part, from a personal situation such as the loss of relatives.

One woman immigrated to Shanti Nagar under similar circumstances. She was the mother of one of the village wives. Her husband was dead, she had no sons, and her only daughter lived in Shanti Nagar. Said to be about 80 years of age, she had no one to take care of her in her husband's village.

A second kind of individual male immigrant was one who was married to a woman of the village. The motivation for the immigration of such men, two of whom resided in Shanti Nagar, was primarily economic. In one case, a Chuhra Sweeper died without sons, and his daughter and her husband came to Shanti Nagar to take over the house and other property and to serve the family's patrons. In the second case, the potter of Shanti Nagar died leaving a widow. (This man was not the only member of the Potter caste living in Shanti Nagar, but he was the only one who knew how to make pottery.) The village needed such a craftsman. Therefore, a brother of the deceased potter (actually a father's sister's son who is called "brother" in Hindi) was summoned from another village to marry the widow and serve the patrons of the dead man. It should be noted that the motivation for immigration on the part of the potter was primarily economic and only secondarily to find a husband for the widow, for suitable brothers of the husband already lived in Shanti Nagar. None of these, however, knew how to make pots.

Sometimes a married daughter and her husband came to Shanti Nagar, and subsequently the husband died or left the village for employment elsewhere. This kind of situation could result in a family effectively headed by a woman, if her family was not part of an extended family with a male head. The Mahar Potter family was one such family. All the Mahar Potter males lived in Delhi but they retained a large and valuable house in Shanti Nagar. The father called a daughter and her husband to come to Shanti Nagar to maintain the family's property. The daughter's husband later also went to Delhi leaving his wife and the wife of one of her sons alone in the house, except for occasional visits by other mem-

bers of the family who worked and lived elsewhere.

Three daughters of the Sweeper caste lived in Shanti Nagar with their children. The husband of one had died. The widow headed her family which was known by the name of the widow's father and not by that of her husband. The husband of a second daughter worked near Bombay. We never asked her why she lived in Shanti Nagar but suspect that she might have found it more pleasant (cf. Eames, 1967, pp. 172-174). Women, especially younger ones, traditionally preferred their villages of birth to their husbands' villages. When a woman and her husband were not part of an extended family, the husband was absent for years at a time, and the wife and her children were supported almost entirely by the husband's wages, there was little to prevent her from living in her village of birth if she so wished. A third daughter of the sweeper caste lived with her children in a joint household with her brother. Her husband was dead. Widows had the choice of living in their husbands' or parents' village.

A third kind of individual male immigration was through adoption. Only one man then living in Shanti Nagar had been adopted into the village. He was the son of a wife's brother. Always the motive for adoption was the lack of sons. An adopted child was invariably a male relative, preferably either a brother's or sister's son. Girls were not adopted because they went to their husband's village when they married. When a boy was adopted, he became a member of the patrilineal clan of his adopting father; nevertheless he could not marry a woman from his original patrilineal clan.

The second general type of permanent immigration was that of families of artisans from neighboring villages that were considered to be related to Shanti Nagar. Villages were believed to be related if they had a common ancestor. One effect of this belief was that all the people of related villages were considered to be fictively related (S. Freed, 1963b). Consequently, people could move among such related villages with relative ease. This freedom of movement seemed to be especially applicable to artisan families.

Two families had come from related villages: the Chhipi Dyer and the Lohar Blacksmith. The villagers invited the Chhipi Dyer family to come

to Shanti Nagar because they needed a tailor. The Chhipis' principal motive for moving was a shortage of land for building houses in their own village. Since many of their patrons lived in Shanti Nagar, the shift of residence created no inconvenience. In return for a house site given them by a Jat landlord, the Chhipis provided him free tailoring. The Lohar Blacksmiths came from a neighboring related village when the family of Blacksmiths in Shanti Nagar died out. In the latter case, the two families of Lohar Blacksmiths were related by blood and not merely fictively. The incoming Blacksmith was the brother's son of the last male of the original Shanti Nagar Lohar Blacksmiths. The landowners invited him to Shanti Nagar because a blacksmith was an essential artisan in a farming village.

The third general type of permanent immigration was that of families that did not come from related villages and had no kinship ties with anyone in Shanti Nagar. Our census records four such families, all Jat Farmers. The circumstances of their entry into Shanti Nagar were rather unusual. One of the landowners of Shanti Nagar with a large holding had fallen into debt and mortgaged his land. When he died, his son inherited the land but found the financial position of the family to be so precarious that he was in danger of losing all the land. In order to pay off the mortgage on half of his land, he sold part of it to four families of Jats who then lived in Delhi. The sale took place before India attained her independence. At that time, Delhi was a relatively small city and the four families of Delhi Jats owned and farmed land close to the city. After the independence of India, Delhi began to grow at a tremendous rate and additional land for its expansion was needed for government buildings and housing. The government expropriated the land belonging to these four families; as a result, they moved to Shanti Nagar. At the time we lived in Shanti Nagar, these Jats had been there only 10 years and most villagers did not consider them part of the village. In Shanti Nagar, they were known as the *Delhiwalas* (people of Delhi).

By restricting the analysis of immigration to our census data, we can present a good idea of the kinds, motives, and rates of immigration; but we tend to obscure its cumulative effect. If we extend the discussion to historical data, well

known to the villagers, we find that a considerable number of villagers were descendants of immigrants; that is, people who came to Shanti Nagar long after its founding. Five families of Jat Farmers were descendants of the husband of a daughter of the village. Well over 100 years ago, a Jat landlord found that he owned much more land than he was able to farm himself. He therefore invited his daughter's husband to Shanti Nagar and gave him half his land. Thus, 10 of 31 Jat families were immigrants or their descendants. One Brahman Priest family was descended from a daughter's son whom the family members adopted. The reason for the adoption was the usual one, lack of a son. All the Nai Barbers of Shanti Nagar came originally from a related village. The Mali Gardener family came from an unrelated village, as did all the Gola Potters. The Gola Potters came to Shanti Nagar because the original family of potters, the Mahar Potters, stopped making pots and the village was without a potter. The Bairagi Beggars also came from a related village.

The villagers said that until about 20 years earlier, Shanti Nagar was short of people, and efforts were made to attract immigrants. Although the village was no longer underpopulated, in fact, there may have been too many people, these efforts still continued. If Delhi were not close enough to absorb excess labor and so provide substantial additional income, the standard of living in Shanti Nagar would have been far lower than it then was. The single instance of recruitment of an unrelated person into the village occurred during the final days of our field work. A Brahman persuaded a Baniya Merchant to move to Shanti Nagar and open a shop. The villagers did not object. They seemed to believe that another shopkeeper would supply competition for the local Baniya and thus serve to reduce prices. It was rather doubtful whether Shanti Nagar could support two shopkeepers; and if this surmise was correct, we can assume that the new Baniya would move elsewhere. Other people had come into Shanti Nagar and left when they found themselves unable to make a living. A goldsmith was once invited to Shanti Nagar, but he had to leave for want of business. A carpenter also formerly lived in Shanti Nagar.

Individuals unrelated to anyone in Shanti

Nagar, who did not come from a related village, or who were not invited, found it difficult to settle there. Newcomers required permission from the landowners to settle. With the habitation area becoming crowded and with no real need for additional population, the landowners carefully scrutinized the people who might want to become residents of the village. We observed only one such incident, but the circumstances surrounding it were probably fairly typical. A man of a Muslim caste approached one of the landowners in the village for permission to settle. The villager suggested that the newcomer have the village watchman call together several prominent landowners to consider the application. This stage of negotiation was never reached, however; in informal discussions an attitude against the man developed. The landowners felt that house sites should be available to good men. However, someone commented that the Muslim had a bad character. Whether this was true or not, it indicated a negative feeling on the part of the landowners. Also, the man may have been rejected partly because he was a Muslim. The communal fighting that attended the partition of India and Pakistan had left a residue of ill-will toward Muslims, and people took pride in the all-Hindu character of the village.

## EMIGRATION

As with immigration, emigration is divisible into the categories of permanent and temporary. We classified as temporary emigrants all men who, without wives, moved to cities or other villages for employment or schooling and visited Shanti Nagar less than once a month. The emigrants might be either unmarried or married men whose wives remained in Shanti Nagar. We classified as commuters those men who might live away from the village, but who visited it at least once a month. Most commuters were daily commuters, that is, they were men who lived in Shanti Nagar and left the village daily for work elsewhere. Of the 33 men classified as commuters, 24 commuted daily. Thus, although it may seem arbitrary to divide males employed outside of the village into commuters and temporary emigrants on the basis of a criterion of less than one visit a month, the distinction is primarily

between that of daily commuters and less than once-a-month visitors and is, therefore, rather clear-cut.

Twenty-five men were temporary emigrants. Six worked in Delhi or Narela; the others worked in more distant places. On the other hand, all the commuters worked in Delhi or Narela. Thus the distinction between temporary emigrant and commuter was probably based largely on place of employment. This surmise was in accord with the expressed sentiments of villagers when they were asked whether they would prefer to live in Delhi or Shanti Nagar. Most villagers chose Shanti Nagar, pointing out that they were born there, that village climate and food were better than in the city, that one was healthier in the village, and, most importantly, that economic considerations favored village residence (see questions 41 and 43, Appendix). That villagers usually preferred to commute daily, whenever possible, was further indicated by the fact that, prior to the establishment of regular bus service to Shanti Nagar, several current commuters had lived in Delhi, often in small groups, and had visited Shanti Nagar about once a month. Special considerations were involved for some of the men who apparently could commute but had become temporary city residents. One was a member of the city police force and had to live in the police barracks. His duties did not permit regular commuting. Another man built a large house in Delhi as an investment and lived there to care for his property. One of his sons who was employed in Delhi lived with him. The other three men probably preferred city to village life. One of the three confirmed this supposition. However, the data with regard to males who worked or lived in urban areas and, if married, left their wives in Shanti Nagar, showed an overwhelming preference for commuting as against temporary emigration.

Nineteen temporary emigrants were employed or attended school at some distance from Shanti Nagar. Three of these were students. The others were employed in Bombay, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Bhilai, and Bhatinda. Five of the temporary emigrants, members of two joint families of Shanti Nagar, lived in other villages where they owned farmland. These men, at least, could easily have kept their wives permanently with

them, but they did not. The members of one family had a small landholding in Shanti Nagar and a much larger one in another village that they farmed with tractors. The women were more useful working on the small holding in Shanti Nagar. However, the young wives were periodically sent back and forth between the two villages. In the second family, the wife of the man who tended the farm in another village was mentally retarded and needed the assistance of another woman. She, therefore, stayed in Shanti Nagar where her husband's brother's wife could help her. Also, two of her sisters were married into Shanti Nagar. Another consideration that operated to keep these wives in Shanti Nagar was the strong attachment that a young woman felt for her relatives in her natal village. A young wife expected to visit her parents' home for an extended period at least once a year. She also looked forward to various ceremonial exchanges of gifts between her natal family and her husband's house which often involved a visit with one of her brothers. Such visits and exchanges were easy because the natal villages of the wives of Shanti Nagar were located at an average distance of only 11.3 miles from Shanti Nagar (S. Freed and R. Freed, 1973, table 5). If a woman emigrated with her husband to a distant city or village, her opportunities for visiting her natal village would be reduced, as would her chances of receiving gifts from her parental home for festivals and events of the life cycle. It was also true that some women preferred to live in a family with other women who could not only help with the work but provide companionship. Therefore, although the wives of temporary emigrants often complained because they missed their husbands, they generally preferred to live with the husband's family. Furthermore, the families could make good use of the wives in farm work, either on their own land, if they owned some, or as laborers on the land of others.

Permanent emigrants were defined as those men who lived outside of Shanti Nagar with their wives and families. Thus, a temporary emigrant could become a permanent emigrant by taking his family with him to the city; conversely, a permanent emigrant could become a temporary emigrant by sending his family back to the village. There existed a good deal of this kind of

movement between village and city, so that the classification of a man as a permanent or temporary emigrant depended upon when the information concerning him was gathered. There was no one-way process by which a man was first a temporary and then a permanent emigrant, thus leaving the village forever. The emigration process might be reversed at any time; the wife might be sent back to Shanti Nagar; and should his urban employment end, the husband would then follow. For this reason, our classification, permanent emigrant, is something of a misnomer. It is true that a family so classified had left Shanti Nagar; but, in fact, it had every intention of returning when the family head was unemployed, became old, or for some other reason (Opler, 1956, p. 9). Emigration became truly permanent only when a generation that had been reared as city dwellers no longer knew the village or had close ties with it.

Twenty-one families belonged in the category of permanent emigrant. To this group might be added one man who had left Shanti Nagar because he had no relatives there and went to live with a sister in another village. We made a special effort to discover families who had left Shanti Nagar because we wanted to interview as many of them as were accessible. However, we probably missed several such families because they were not included in the census data and they might not always have been mentioned in genealogical interviews. We are fairly confident that we found most of the people who had emigrated to Delhi, but those who had moved to other villages were more liable to have been overlooked.

Only seven of the 21 families of permanent emigrants were certain not to return to Shanti Nagar. Two of these families were of the Bairagi Beggar caste. Each family owned less than half an acre of land in Shanti Nagar and consequently could not derive an adequate income from farming. They heard of a village that had a shortage of people and moved there, hoping to obtain more land. They were successful and were reported to have plenty of land in their new village. Although they would never return, their farmland in Shanti Nagar was still considered to belong to them. It was farmed by other related Bairagis. Eventually, because of the normal workings of the tenancy law the land would pass from the ownership of the emigrants.

Two families of Mali Gardeners also would never return to Shanti Nagar. They had no means of earning a living there. Neither family owned land there and the heads of both families felt that they were too old for agricultural labor. The children of these families were born in Delhi and had no village experience. The Malis moved to Delhi for greater employment opportunities. One was in the produce business; the other was a driver for the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Finally, three Chamar Leatherworker families would definitely remain in Delhi. These families had been in Delhi so long that a generation born in the city had reached adulthood. Only one of the original migrants, an old man, was alive. According to the reason given by these people, they went to Delhi to escape pressure from the high-caste landlords and moneylenders. These low-caste migrants stated that the landlords used to throw their weight around or flaunt their superiority a good deal more 30 or 40 years earlier. This seemed to suggest that moneylenders were excessively oppressive and that when borrowing from a landlord one was obligated to work for that landlord when called upon (see questions 41 and 42, Appendix). At the time these Chamars left Shanti Nagar, the Leatherworkers and other low-caste people were also obligated to work for the high castes under a system, known as *begar*, that verged on forced labor. One of the Chamar families attempted to return to Shanti Nagar before finally settling in Delhi. At the age of five, the man who was to head this family lost his parents and, with a nephew, went to Delhi to live with a cousin who had previously settled there. After some years, a dispute occurred in the settlement where they were living and all three moved to Shanti Nagar. The nephew and cousin stayed in the village, but the third man felt that he would not be able to work as an agricultural laborer and returned to Delhi. He had learned the trade of shoemaker and had no trouble earning a living in the city. It was a common complaint among those who left agricultural work for an extended period that it was difficult to become reaccustomed to it. The work was physically exhausting and the necessary skills became rusty.

Seven of the 21 families of permanent emigrants were almost certain to return to Shanti Nagar. All of these were high-caste landowners,

some with rather large holdings. Five of these seven belonged to joint families whose other members were in Shanti Nagar. Ownership of land was a particularly effective factor in influencing emigrants to return to Shanti Nagar. Many men with histories of urban employment commented that they had returned to Shanti Nagar because a brother or other relative who had been farming their land had died or had become too old to do the work; therefore, they had returned to care for their land.

The prospects of the other seven families of permanent emigrants were uncertain: they might or might not eventually return to Shanti Nagar. Two of these families were Mahar Potters. They owned no land in Shanti Nagar, nor did they have any share in the large house belonging to the Mahar Potters. They might be permitted to live in this house when they became old and retired; otherwise, they would probably stay permanently in the city. Five of the seven families were Chuhra Sweepers. All were nuclear families and none owned land in Shanti Nagar. However, all owned houses there. Periodically, usually before and after the rainy season, a member of each of these families would visit the village to replaster the house. One house had collapsed for lack of repairs. The owner's caste-fellows stored the wooden door and beams of the house for use should the migrant want to return to the village and rebuild it. While these emigrants had homes waiting for them in Shanti Nagar and might return there upon retirement or if they lost their jobs, their children were much less likely ever to return to the village.

In summary, we found that only seven emigrant families had definitely severed ties with Shanti Nagar. Just as economic considerations were the major motive in emigration, so also were they the principal influence for villagers to maintain their village ties. This conclusion applied to both landowning and landless people. Landowners rarely severed ties with Shanti Nagar; land was too valuable and its ownership had powerful emotional connotations. The only examples of the abandonment of land were furnished by two families who owned tiny pieces and were able to get considerably more in another village. The other five families of permanent emigrants were landless as were the seven families of uncertain status who might eventually

choose the city for permanent residence. However, landless people also derived economic advantages from village life that were not available in the city. The village provided a free house site, free fuel, free fodder for animals, some free food, free cremation, and periodic opportunities for work, especially at harvest time. In one's own village, one could usually be sure of a minimal existence. Although economic motives were powerful in influencing emigration, the desire to escape some of the disadvantages of low-caste status was also a factor. Compared with the village, the anonymity and impersonality of life in the city provided considerable social equality. As one Nai Barber commented, "Here [Delhi] a sweeper can slap a millionaire in the face; in the village, you have to walk in a certain way."

The fact that Shanti Nagar (and other North Indian villages) was strongly kin-oriented and effectively closed to casual settlement by outsiders is apparent from the data on immigration and emigration. No matter what their reasons for coming to live in Shanti Nagar, immigrants were generally related in some way to people already living in the village. Occasionally, some unrelated person might settle in Shanti Nagar but only at the invitation of a villager. The purchase of land in a village conferred the right to settle there, but sales of land to outsiders did not occur frequently. Only 261 bighas (about 5%) of the land of Shanti Nagar were owned by outsiders. Emigrants retained their residence rights throughout their lives. Their descendants could, no doubt, claim such rights and have the claim honored although we knew of no such claim.

The stranger had no place in Shanti Nagar. It did not necessarily follow that the villagers failed to extend hospitality. They were extraordinarily hospitable and would provide respectable travelers with free food and lodging on an informal, individual basis; but there was neither hotel nor restaurant to provide services for strangers. A stranger could not reside in the village at his own initiative. There was no housing market as we understand it in the United States: houses and apartments were neither bought, sold, nor rented.

Landownership helped to stabilize the village population. Land was by far the most important economic resource of Shanti Nagar, and its ownership conferred prestige. Good farmland was costly because of the substantial income that

could be realized in agriculture. Land was rarely sold. It changed hands chiefly through inheritance, although recent land reform legislation had resulted in the transfer of a few acres to formerly landless persons. There was no inheritance tax and the yearly tax on land was quite low. These circumstances put little pressure to sell land upon men with tiny, economically marginal holdings or upon inefficient producers with large holdings. Therefore, landowners rarely left the village and immigrants seldom entered it by purchasing land.

Derived from its history of landownership, the kin-orientation of the village was expressed in its fictive kinship system and in many details of ceremonial, for example, a cattle-curing rite in which the village was closed to outsiders (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966). Americans are socially and geographically mobile; many expect to leave their natal towns, never to return, except for sentimental pilgrimages. Many of us speak with pride of having come a long way from our origins, which are often specified by naming a hometown. Not the Indian villager. He may wander, but he expects to return to his village to die and be cremated; and when he returns, it will be to kinsmen, not to strangers.

### EDUCATION

Educational data for males are given in table 6. Slightly more than half of the male population was literate and/or attending school. However, if we subtract the 79 male children four years of age or less who were too young to attend school, we find that 64 percent of the males were literate. As might be expected, the percentage of literate males was highest among the young. In the group of males 10 to 19 years of age, none of whom were too young to be in school, 89 of 94 (95%) were literate or in school. A majority of the men in the two succeeding age groups were literate; but the majority of the men 40 years of age and older were illiterate. Considering only the adult men, that is, males 20 years of age or older or those in their late teens who were married and had completed school, we find that 88 of 171 (51%) were literate.

The group that could be considered the elite of Shanti Nagar with regard to education consisted of 17 men who had taken, but not neces-

sarily passed, the matriculation examination (10 grades completed), 11 men who had completed higher secondary school (11 grades), and six who had studied in college or in teachers' training courses beyond the higher secondary level. One of these men had an M.A.; two had B.A.s; and one, a B.A.B.T. (teacher's degree). Knowledge of English among the educated elite was, we think, fairly good. About 14 men could speak with us in English for at least half an hour without too much difficulty or without obvious fatigue. A knowledge of English was an important qualification for finding employment in cities and for dealing with government officials.

Table 7 gives the educational data for females. Only 16 percent of the females claimed any education; and even when the 72 female children who were too young for school were subtracted from the total, we found that only 21 percent were literate. As was true with the males, education was more common among the younger females. In the group of females 10 to 19 years of age, 42 percent were literate or attending school. Considering only adult women, that is, women 16 years of age and older, we found that only 17 of 148 (11%) were literate. Although no female in Shanti Nagar had yet appeared in the matriculation examination, six were studying beyond the level of the village school, and soon Shanti Nagar might have women who would have completed higher secondary school and gone to college.

We collected most of our data on education while taking the village census when we interviewed one or more members of each family. We accepted our informants' information at face value; that is, if an informant claimed to be literate, we did not ask him to demonstrate his ability to read and write. Informants claimed literacy on the basis of having read "one book," that is, having taken a year of schooling either as a child or in adult education classes that had been recently held in the village. We believe that in the information given on education, there was a tendency to exaggerate, not so much at the higher grade levels where educational attainments were grounds for considerable prestige and were generally known in the village, but when claiming literacy for oneself or the adult members of one's family and the status of school attendance for one's children. Informants claimed that 106 of

the literate males of Shanti Nagar were in school. A check of enrollment figures and observations at the village school led us to believe that this figure was too high, reflecting, to some extent, wishful thinking and the tendency to report quite sporadic school attendance as being "in school." We believe that a figure of approximately 60 would come closer than 106 to the number of boys regularly attending school both within and outside the village.

School attendance figures for girls were also somewhat exaggerated. Twenty-five girls were said to be in school. Although exaggerated, we do not think that this figure was inflated so much as the corresponding figure for boys. Considerable prestige stemmed from educating a boy because of the practical advantages in securing jobs; but in the village the feeling about educating girls was ambivalent. Some families did not like to send their daughters to school and may even have thought that such a practice was slightly disreputable. This attitude was partly the result of the influence of the custom of purdah (seclusion of women), especially since in coeducational schools males taught the higher grades. The principal advantage that villagers saw in education for girls was that this might help them find a good husband. Only six girls had studied

beyond the level of the village school. Villagers were very reluctant to permit girls to leave the village for study, even to attend a school restricted to girls and one staffed entirely by female teachers.

Tables 8 to 10 are concerned with the relationship of education and urban experience among males. Table 8 shows that, for men, education and urban experience tended to be positively related. Seventy-two percent of village-oriented adult men were illiterate as compared with only 33 percent of urban-oriented men. If the data of table 8 are treated as a sample and chi-square is calculated to test the null hypothesis that urban experience and education are independent of each other, we find that we can reject the null hypothesis at the .001 level of significance; that is, for adult men, education and urban experience are highly correlated. Table 9 is similar to table 8, except that one of the variables is the urban experience of the head of an individual's family rather than the individual's own urban experience. However, this change appears to make little difference; the proportions of men in the corresponding cells of the two tables are quite similar.

When we consider the entire male population (less the children too young to be in school), we

TABLE 6  
Males<sup>a</sup> by Age and Education  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Age	Illiterate or Not in School	Literate or in School	Matriculate <sup>b</sup>	Higher Secondary <sup>c</sup>	College	Total
0-4	79 (100)	—	—	—	—	79
5-9	24 (39)	37 (61)	—	—	—	61
10-19	5 (05)	75 (80)	7 (07)	6 (06)	1 (01)	94
20-29	19 (41)	16 (35)	3 (06)	5 (11)	3 (06)	46
30-39	17 (46)	15 (40)	3 (08)	0	2 (05)	37
40-49	18 (67)	5 (18)	4 (15)	0	0	27
50-59	13 (72)	5 (28)	0	0	0	18
60-69	9 (60)	6 (40)	0	0	0	15
70 and older	7 (78)	2 (22)	0	0	0	9
Total	191 (49)	161 (42)	17 (04)	11 (03)	6 (02)	386

<sup>a</sup>Eight servants and 13 others whose education is unknown are omitted.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

<sup>c</sup>Males who have completed 11 grades.



TABLE 7  
Females<sup>a</sup> by Age and Education  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Age	Illiterate or Not in School	Literate or in School	Beyond Village School	Total
0-4	72 (99)	1 (01)	—	73
5-9	47 (78)	13 (22)	—	60
10-19	40 (58)	24 (35)	5 (07)	69
20-29	36 (80)	8 (18)	1 (02)	45
30-39	35 (92)	3 (08)	0	38
40-49	25 (100)	0	0	25
50-59	20 (100)	0	0	20
60-69	6 (100)	0	0	6
70 and older	3 (100)	0	0	3
Total	284 (84)	49 (14)	6 (02)	339

<sup>a</sup>Forty-one whose education is unknown, nine whose age and education are unknown, and three illiterates whose ages are unknown are omitted.

again find that the education of men is correlated with the urban experience of their family heads. It is noteworthy that the percentage of illiterate men in families headed by village-oriented men diminishes as younger men are included in the tabulations. In table 9, which includes only adult men, 69 percent of men in families with village-oriented heads were illiterate; the comparable figure in table 10, where all males are considered, is 44 percent. This comparison indicates that village-oriented men, even though they themselves might be illiterate, recognized the value of education and were educating their sons. Consequently, many of these boys would probably find city employment so that both illiteracy and village orientation among men would decrease substantially in the next few decades. The replies to the question, "How do you want your son to earn his bread?" (question 10, Appendix), show that large majorities of both urban-oriented and village-oriented men selected "service," that is, employment that usually required education and was almost invariably in cities.

Tables 11 and 12 deal with the relationship of the education of females to the urban experience of their family heads. Table 11 shows that, for adult women, their education and the urban ex-

perience of their family heads are not related. If we treat the data in table 11 as a sample and calculate chi-square to test the null hypothesis of independence, we find that we are unable to reject the null hypothesis that the education of women is unrelated to the urban experience of their family heads. When we consider the entire female population (less the female children too young to be in school), we again find no correlation between a female's education and the urban experience of her family head. When we compare the corresponding cells of tables 11 and 12, we find the percentage of illiterates to be smaller when younger females are included in the tabulations.

Tables 13 and 14 present the relationship between caste position and education among males. Caste and education were positively related. We can reject the null hypothesis of independence at the .05 level of significance for adult men and at the .001 level for all males. Low-caste men (Chuhra Sweeper, Chamar Leatherworker, Mahar Potter, Gola Potter, and Nai Barber) were more often illiterate than high-caste men. At the ad-

TABLE 8  
Education of Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Urban  
and Village Orientation  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Urban- Oriented	Village- Oriented	Total
Illiterate	26 (33)	57 (72)	83 (53)
Literate	33 (42)	18 (23)	51 (32)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	20 (25)	4 (5)	24 (15)
Total	79	79	158

Chi-square, 26.66

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability,  $p < .001$

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who are married and have completed school. Thirteen men whose education is unknown and eight servants are omitted.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 9**  
**Education of Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Urban Experience**  
**of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	
Illiterate	22 (31)	61 (69)	83 (53)
Literate	30 (43)	21 (24)	51 (32)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	18 (26)	6 (7)	24 (15)
Total	70	88	158

Chi-square, 24.18

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability,  $p < .001$

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years of age and older and those in their late teens who are married and have completed school. Thirteen men whose education is unknown and 8 male servants are omitted.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 10**  
**Education of Males<sup>a</sup> by Urban Experience**  
**of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	
Illiterate	34 (26)	76 (44)	110 (36)
Literate	71 (55)	88 (50)	159 (53)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	24 (19)	10 (6)	34 (11)
Total	129	174	303

Chi-square, 17.32

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability,  $p < .001$

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 79 children four years old and younger (too young to attend school), 13 whose education is unknown, eight servants, and four for whom the urban experience of family head is unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

vanced levels of education, matriculation and higher, we find a much higher percentage of high-caste than low-caste men. These differences between the educational attainments of high-caste and low-caste men are somewhat more pronounced when all males are taken into account than when only the adult men are considered as can be observed in the percentages and the values of chi-square in tables 13 and 14, indicating that the differences between castes with respect to education were becoming greater. Not only does the percentage of high-caste men who were literate appear to be growing somewhat faster than that of low-caste men, but high-caste men were also attaining advanced educational levels at a faster rate than low-caste men.

Among females the situation with regard to caste and education was generally similar to that among males. The data for females are given in tables 15 and 16. Caste and education were positively related. The relationship is not statistically significant when only adult women are considered; we are able to reject the null hypothesis of independence at only the .10 level. However, when all females are considered (table 16), the probability that caste and education are independent of each other is less than .001. High-caste females were more frequently literate than low-caste females. The relationship is stronger when the younger females are included than when only adult women are considered as can be seen from the percentages and the values of chi-square in tables 15 and 16. As was true for males, high-caste females more often attained higher educational levels than did low-caste females. The most educationally advanced females in the village were six who had advanced beyond the level of the village school (grades one through five). Of these six females who had studied or were studying in the sixth and seventh grades, five were high-caste.

The data for both males and females lead us to conclude that the members of high castes were profiting more from education than low-caste people and that the discrepancy would increase in the immediate future. However, although the low castes were losing ground relative to the high castes, they were improving their position in absolute terms; that is, the percentage of illiterates among them was decreasing. Thus, the trend

**TABLE 11**  
**Education of Adult Women<sup>a</sup> by Urban**  
**Experience of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	
Illiterate	66 (87)	65 (90)	131 (89)
Literate	10 (13)	7 (10)	17 (11)
Total	76	72	148

Chi-square, .16

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .50 < p < .70

<sup>a</sup>Sixteen years old and older. Omitted are 33 whose education is unknown, 12 whose age is unknown, three whose family heads' urban experience is unknown, and one for whom we lack information as to education and family head's urban experience.

toward a greater difference between high and low castes in literacy would eventually be reversed. The currently substantial differences in literacy between the two groups would be eliminated if both groups eventually arrived at the national goal of virtually universal literacy. However, the differences in educational attainment as regards the number of grades completed would probably endure a good deal longer. Literacy is a relatively modest goal that could often be achieved in little time and at little expense. However, study in higher secondary schools and colleges required substantial investments of time and family resources that were beyond the reach of most low-caste families.

The relation between education and landownership was generally similar to that between education and caste, for low-caste families were almost always landless (45 out of 46), and high-caste families generally owned land (58 out of 64). The data regarding education and landownership for males are given in tables 17 and 18. We observe the same relationship, at similar levels of significance, between education and landownership as between education and caste. Landless men were more often illiterate than those owning land; and, at the advanced educational level of matriculation and higher, there was a much higher percentage of landowning

than of landless men. These differences become more pronounced when all males are taken into account rather than only adult men. Thus, the landowners were better educated than the landless and the gap appeared to be widening, or, since the landowners were generally wealthier than the landless, we can say that the well-to-do were taking greater advantage of education than the poorer people.

The data for family landownership and the education of females are given in tables 19 and 20. Family ownership of land and the education of females were related as can be seen from the values of chi-square (tables 19 and 20). Females from landowning families were more frequently literate than females from landless families. The relationship of landownership and female literacy is greater when all females, rather than just adult women, are taken into account. Thus, as was the situation for males, females of landowning families were better educated than landless females, and this educational gap appeared to be widening. However, landless families were gradually educating more of their girls so that the literacy rate of 8 percent would be correspondingly increased.

When only adults are considered, there is no statistically significant relationship between the

**TABLE 12**  
**Education of Females<sup>a</sup> by Urban Experience**  
**of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Urban-Oriented	Village-Oriented	
Illiterate	108 (77)	104 (83)	212 (79)
Literate	33 (23)	22 (17)	55 (21)
Total	141	126	267

Chi-square, 1.10

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .20 < p < .30

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 72 children four years old and younger (too young for school), 48 females whose education is unknown, three for whom the urban experience of their family heads is unknown, and two for whom we have information neither as to their education nor the urban experience of their family heads.

**TABLE 13**  
**Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Caste and Education**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	High Caste	Low Caste	Total
Illiterate	49 (47)	34 (63)	83 (53)
Literate	34 (33)	17 (31)	51 (32)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	21 (20)	3 ( 6)	24 (15)
Total	104	54	158

Chi-square, 6.73

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .02 < p < .05

<sup>a</sup>Males 20 years old and older and those in their late teens who are married and have finished school. Thirteen whose education is unknown and eight servants are omitted.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

education of individuals and the literacy status of their family heads (tables 21 and 23). However, when both the younger people and the adults are taken into account, there is such a relationship: an individual was more likely to be educated if the head of his family was literate (tables 22 and 24). This relationship was probably a temporary phenomenon; undoubtedly, in a few decades most family heads would become literate. However, we suspect that it might still be possible to demonstrate a positive relationship between the education of family heads and their children's education by taking into account the number of grades completed by both groups.

An individual in Shanti Nagar was most likely to be educated if his family head was high-caste, landowning, and literate. In the case of males, but not of females, urban experience was correlated with education. Males who were urban-oriented and/or whose family heads were urban-oriented were more likely to be educated than males who were village-oriented and/or whose family heads were so oriented. Since education usually preceded employment, we can say that education led to urban employment. This is not to say that educated men necessarily left the village, for most urban-employed men were commuters, or that educated men were not farmers,

for many combined farming with city employment. But there was no doubt that education opened a new world to the villager, the world of urban employment. This urban world, however, usually supplemented rather than supplanted the village in a person's life. Shanti Nagar did not send forth substantial numbers of the geographically and socially mobile urbanites that the small towns and villages in America routinely produce.

## ORIGIN OF SHANTI NAGAR

Most informants said that Shanti Nagar was founded by a group of Jat Farmers of the Man patriclan who had moved to the new site from a neighboring village between 550 and 900 years previously. Shortly after the founding of the village, these Jats offered land to some Brahman Priests of their ancestral village to settle in Shanti Nagar to provide them with religious services. Subsequently, the founding Jats gave land to other Jats of the Man patriclan who lived in a nearby related village to settle in Shanti Nagar.

A few informants gave versions of this account that varied in some details. One informant said that both groups of Jats had come directly from the ancestral village rather than from different villages. The Brahman Priests generally

**TABLE 14**  
**Males<sup>a</sup> by Caste and Education**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	High Caste	Low Caste	Total
Illiterate	59 (30)	53 (49)	112 (37)
Literate	109 (55)	52 (48)	161 (52)
Matriculation <sup>b</sup> and higher	31 (15)	3 ( 3)	34 (11)
Total	199	108	307

Chi-square, 18.18

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, p < .001

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 79 children four years old and younger (too young for school), eight servants, and 13 whose education is unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 15**  
**Adult Women<sup>a</sup> by Caste and Education**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	High Caste	Low Caste	Total
Illiterate	83 (85)	51 (96)	134 (89)
Literate	15 (15)	2 ( 4)	17 (11)
Total	98	53	151

Chi-square, 3.50

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .05 < p < .10

<sup>a</sup>Sixteen years old and older. Omitted are 34 whose education is unknown and 12 whose age is unknown.

**TABLE 16**  
**Females<sup>a</sup> by Caste and Education**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	High Caste	Low Caste	Total
Illiterate	130 (73)	85 (93)	215 (80)
Literate	49 (27)	6 ( 7)	55 (20)
Total	179	91	270

Chi-square, 14.80

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, p < .001

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 50 whose education is unknown and 72 children four years old and younger (too young for school).

**TABLE 17**  
**Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Education and Landownership**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Owns Land	Landless	Total
Illiterate	47 (48)	36 (59)	83 (53)
Literate	30 (31)	21 (34)	51 (32)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	20 (21)	4 ( 7)	24 (15)
Total	97	61	158

Chi-square, 5.81

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .05 < p < .10

<sup>a</sup>Twenty years old and over and those in late teens who are married and have finished school. Omitted are 13 whose education is unknown and eight servants.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 18**  
**Males<sup>a</sup> by Education and Landownership**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Owns Land	Landless	Total
Illiterate	57 (30)	55 (46)	112 (37)
Literate	101 (54)	60 (51)	161 (52)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	30 (16)	4 ( 3)	34 (11)
Total	188	119	307

Chi-square, 15.64

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, p < .001

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 79 children four years old and younger (too young for school), eight servants, and 13 whose education is unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 19**  
**Adult Women<sup>a</sup> by Education and Landownership of their Families**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Family Owns Land	Family Landless	Total
Illiterate	79 (84)	55 (96)	134 (89)
Literate	15 (16)	2 ( 4)	17 (11)
Total	94	57	151

Chi-square, 4.33

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .02 < p < .05

<sup>a</sup>Sixteen years old and older. Omitted are 34 whose education is unknown and 12 whose age is unknown.

**TABLE 20**  
**Females<sup>a</sup> by Education and Landownership of their Families**  
(Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Family Owns Land	Family Landless	Total
Illiterate	124 (73)	91 (92)	215 (80)
Literate	47 (27)	8 ( 8)	55 (20)
Total	171	99	270

Chi-square, 13.38

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, p < .001

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 50 whose education is unknown and 72 children four years old and younger (too young for school).

**TABLE 21**  
**Adult Men<sup>a</sup> by Their Education and Education**  
**of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Illiterate	21 (54)	6 (27)	27 (44)
Literate	11 (28)	11 (50)	22 (36)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	7 (18)	5 (23)	12 (20)
Total	39	22	61

Chi-square, 4.26

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .10 < p < .20

<sup>a</sup>Twenty years old and over and those in their late teens who are married and have finished school. Omitted are eight servants, family heads, and those whose own education or that of their family heads is unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

claimed that their ancestors had come to Shanti Nagar at the same time as the Jat founders. A man from the ancestral village who happened to be present one day when we were asking about village history said that Shanti Nagar was 250 years old. This informant might be inclined to minimize the age of the village just as the people of Shanti Nagar might tend to maximize it. Age lent prestige.

The Brahmans were inclined to emphasize the belief that the Jat Farmers entered India long after the Aryan immigration, a view of Jat history that influenced the accounts that some Brahmans gave of the history of Shanti Nagar. The Brahman Priests, according to an account supplied by one of them, were the original owners of the village. One Jat became a servant to a Brahman family, who eventually gave him some land. He then gave a feast, killed all the Brahmans, and took the land. However, one Brahman girl escaped, for she was pregnant and was visiting her parents in another village. Some time later, the Jats were afflicted with leprosy. They were told that in order to be cured, they would have to return the land to one of its original

owners. So they called the girl back to the village and gave her some land. All the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar were descended from this woman's son.

The differing accounts of the founding of Shanti Nagar given by the Jats and some Brahmans were an aspect of the generally low-level unobtrusive tension between these two castes (cf. Pradhan, 1966, pp. 40-42). Although we never heard a discussion of it while we were in Shanti Nagar, the question of the Aryan status of the Jats is an emotionally charged issue among them. The Jats are greatly concerned with establishing the fact that they are true Aryans of the same ethnic stock as the prestigious Rajputs (Pradhan, 1966, p. 3). In any case, the Jats were firmly established in the Punjab (of which Delhi was once a part) at the beginning of the eleventh century (Ibbetson, 1916, p. 97). Thus, the age of Shanti Nagar could have been as old as the maximum age (900 years) claimed by the villagers. At one time, the land revenue of Shanti Nagar was assigned to a Muslim nobleman by the then Moghul ruler. The nobleman's family died out and the right to receive the revenue then reverted to the government.

**TABLE 22**  
**Males<sup>a</sup> by Their Education and Education of**  
**Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Illiterate	46 (35)	10 (15)	56 (28)
Literate	75 (57)	46 (69)	121 (61)
Matriculate <sup>b</sup> and higher	11 (08)	11 (16)	22 (11)
Total	132	67	199

Chi-square, 9.92

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .001 < p < .01

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are children four years old and younger, family heads, eight servants, and those whose own education or that of their family heads is unknown.

<sup>b</sup>Includes males who have completed 10 grades and have taken, but not necessarily passed, the matriculation examination.

**TABLE 23**  
**Adult Women<sup>a</sup> by Their Education and Education**  
**of Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Illiterate	70 (91)	55 (85)	125 (88)
Literate	7 (9)	10 (15)	17 (12)
Total	77	65	142

Chi-square, .79

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .30 < p < .50

<sup>a</sup>Sixteen years old and older. Omitted are those whose own education or that of their family heads is unknown.

All the varying accounts of our informants, if we disregard the obvious mythical elements, reduced to little more than the fact that Shanti Nagar was founded by settlers from a neighboring village that was known as the ancestral village of Shanti Nagar as well as of six other nearby villages. Whether the Jats all came directly from the ancestral village or whether one group came by way of another related village was a minor point, as was the question of whether the Brahmans arrived at the same time as the Jats or shortly thereafter. The events related to the founding of Shanti Nagar were of interest principally because they had important consequences in current village life. The village land was originally divided into three estates. The heirs of these ancestral holdings formed groups of related patrilineages (*pattis*). Since the houses of each *patti* tended to cluster together in the village habitation site, a noteworthy feature of the pattern of residence in Shanti Nagar derived from the circumstances of its founding.

#### RECENT CHANGES

Such has been the pace of change in Shanti Nagar that the villagers were aware of it and frequently commented on it. Women mentioned the increased size of their families. They claimed that fewer children died since independence. They attributed this decline in infant and child deaths

to greater prosperity, more particularly to the absence of famines and the relative abundance of food. The oldest men, those over 70, seemed most impressed by the population growth, the increase in the amount of land brought under the plow, and the general increase in the prosperity of farmers.

The influx of immigrants from Pakistan following the partition of India and Pakistan had not directly affected Shanti Nagar but had had an impact on Delhi which had grown enormously. Older men remembered Delhi as a small city; in 1956, it had a population of about 1.8 million and was spreading in all directions. According to the oldest man in the village, when he was a boy, the village was small and the surrounding area was all wild growth. Rain used to accumulate in ponds and considerable land was water-logged. The people were poor. Then the government dug drainage canals. Land was reclaimed for agriculture, population increased, and farmers became more prosperous.

No one mentioned inflation as a cause of the farmer's prosperity but it certainly was a factor. Since 1911, the prices of the crops had increased several fold. The price of wheat in 1958, for example, was about five or six times what it had been 47 years earlier. Although farm wages and the cost of the commodities that farmers bought had also increased, taxes on land, known as land revenue, had not, according to an assistant reve-

**TABLE 24**  
**Females<sup>a</sup> by Their Education and Education of**  
**Their Family Heads**  
 (Figures in parentheses are column percentages.)

Education	Head of Family		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Illiterate	115 (85)	84 (73)	199 (79)
Literate	21 (15)	31 (27)	52 (21)
Total	136	115	251

Chi-square, 4.35

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .02 < p < .05

<sup>a</sup>Omitted are 72 children four years old and younger (too young for school) and those whose own education or that of their family heads is unknown.

nue officer, increased proportionally. Land revenue was levied as a fixed amount of rupees on a particular piece of land. The basic rates of land revenue had been established in the land settlement that began in 1906. British policy was to have a new land settlement every 40 years and to re-evaluate the land revenue on the basis of new conditions. The new settlement should have taken place in 1947, but the riots accompanying partition and other pressing problems prevented the new land settlement. Land revenue had increased somewhat since 1906, but the rates were essentially those of 1906. Thus the farmers were receiving the inflated prices of the 1950s for their crops and paying land taxes generally based on the conditions of 50 years earlier. The government seemed to have had little share in the increased value of land. These facts should not be interpreted to mean that the farmers of Shanti Nagar were rich. Far from it. Many farmers had small holdings and were quite poor. However, under current conditions, a healthy man with 100 bighas (21.25 acres) could be well off by Indian standards. Seventeen men in Shanti Nagar had at least this much land.

Younger men, if they were farmers, were more likely to emphasize other changes. They pointed to improvements in housing, education, transportation, sanitation, and the new implements and seeds that had been introduced into the area in the preceding 10 or 20 years. Although the oldest men were aware of these changes, apparently they included some of them under the general category of increased prosperity and regarded others as of secondary importance. Everyone, however, commented on the change in housing. Brick (pukka) houses were gradually replacing mud (kachcha) houses. In 1959, 54 percent of the buildings (N=177) in Shanti Nagar were built all or partially of brick. The first brick building was said to have been built about 1927. Brick buildings were, of course, considerably more expensive than those of mud; and so the high-caste landowners were the first to build with brick. Their poverty prevented the low-caste laborers from building brick houses. Before 1958, the two lowest castes in the village, the Chamar Leatherworkers, and Chuhra Sweepers, owned only four brick structures. Then, in 1958, the Harijan Welfare Board in

Delhi began to offer subsidies to Leatherworkers and Sweepers (these were the only two castes of Shanti Nagar classified as Harijans) for building brick houses. Many took advantage of the offer; and in April of 1959, the Leatherworkers and Sweepers had some 18 buildings classified as pukka and three, as partly pukka (fig. 7).

The number of literate villagers had increased greatly in recent years. More children attended school, and adult education classes for both men and women had been held in the village. Boys were more frequently educated than girls; and high-caste children, more often than those of low caste. A school (classes one to five) had been opened in Shanti Nagar and several special and higher secondary schools were functioning in nearby villages. It was possible for both boys and girls to complete 11 years of schooling without going more than three or four miles from Shanti Nagar. Perhaps the most significant educational advance was the school in the village because it permitted the education of girls. As mentioned earlier, villagers were reluctant to allow girls to leave the village to attend school. When we were in Shanti Nagar, there was talk of building a higher secondary school for girls in the village; and we later heard that the school had been completed. Thus there were no substantial practical barriers to female education, although the economic advantages of educating girls were less than for boys.

Poverty and the lack of a tradition of education among the lower castes were the main reasons for the differences in education between high- and low-caste families. Landless laborers were generally so poor that they could not afford either the small cash outlays involved in education or the loss of income from the child's labor. The government helped the lower castes by giving them small monthly sums for a school child beginning with the third grade; but these subsidies were apparently not enough to defray all expenses. A tradition of education in a family or caste was important for a child's success in school (cf. Saberwal, 1972, p. 171). Villagers believed that it took more than one generation to advance by means of education. An educated father could help his children with their studies and was able to provide intelligent encouragement. When a child entered the fifth grade, and





FIG. 7. Pukka and kachcha houses in Chamar Leatherworker quarter. The man is churning milk. Photograph taken from roof of authors' house early in the morning.

particularly if he continued into higher secondary school, educated men in the family could be especially helpful because of the importance of English in the curriculum. Most village boys found that learning English was difficult. If several men in the family had some knowledge of English, a student would not only have available tutors but also would hear it spoken occasionally. Men who knew English often inserted English words, phrases, and sentences into their Hindi conversation with one another.

Considerable improvement in transportation occurred in the 1950s. A paved road was built from the Grand Trunk Road to within about a mile of Shanti Nagar and regular bus service was inaugurated. This service made a considerable difference in the ease by which Delhi and Narela could be reached from Shanti Nagar. Several of

the village lanes were paved with bricks to provide a drain down the center of the street. This pavement made it easier to get about, especially during the rainy season, and also improved village sanitation.

Various programs of the Sanitation Department of the Union Territory of Delhi had improved conditions in Shanti Nagar. From time to time, a team of sweepers came to the village to clean the streets. A campaign to reduce the number of rats was undertaken. Householders were encouraged to dig soak pits under frequently used drains to prevent water from running into the street. Manure pits were dug on the outskirts of the village. Vaccinators periodically came to inoculate people against smallpox. Cattle were also inoculated. Occasionally potassium permanganate was thrown into the wells as a pro-

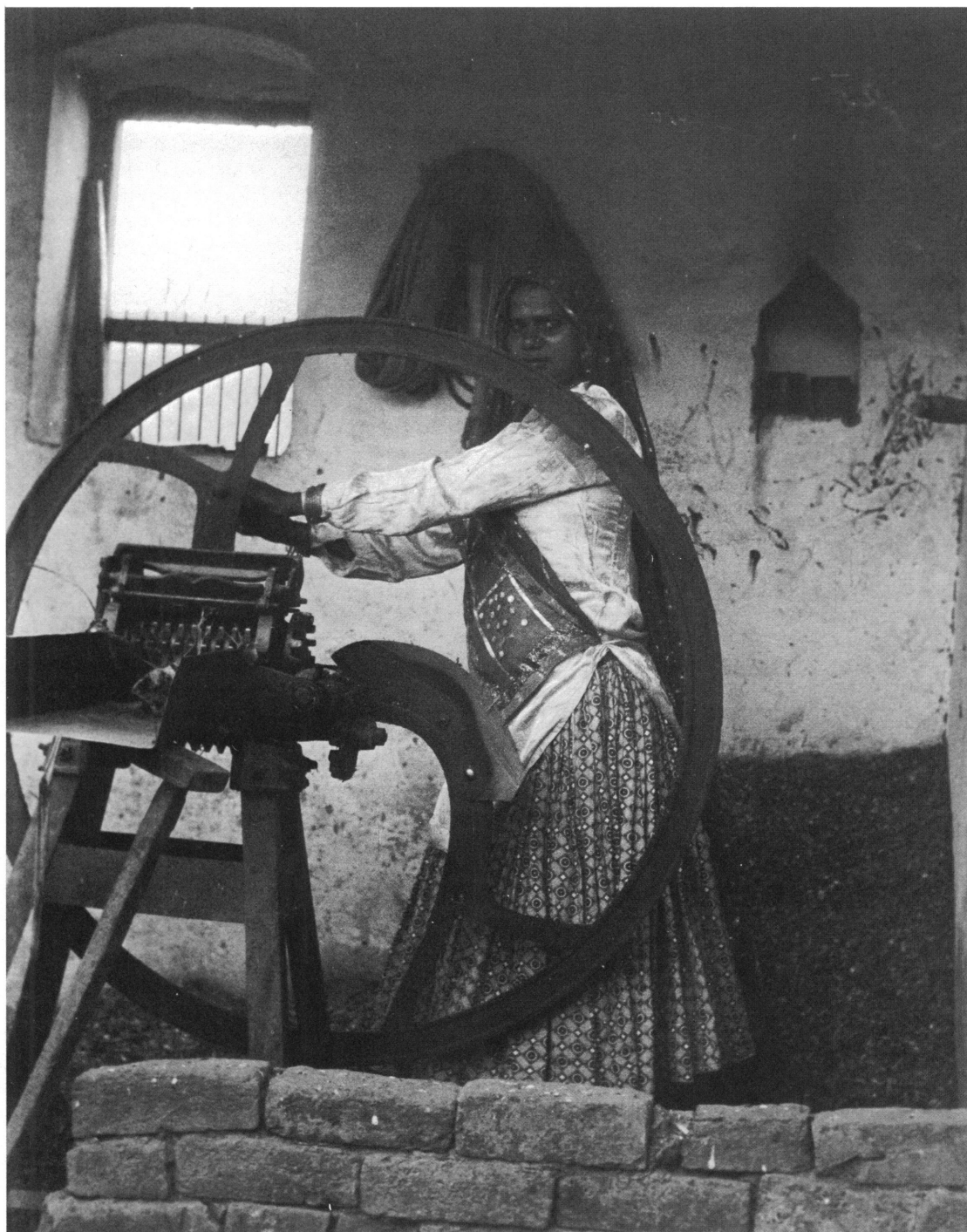


FIG. 8. Village woman demonstrates mechanical fodder cutter.

phylactic, a practice which the villagers regarded as inconvenient and of dubious effect. However, since Indian independence the people felt that sanitation and cleanliness had definitely improved.

Some new tools, utensils, and clothing introduced in the two or three decades preceding our arrival became noticeably more popular and widespread even during the relatively short time that we lived in Shanti Nagar. These were the mechanical hand-operated fodder cutter (fig. 8), the hand-operated pump for raising water, sewing machines, bicycles, and western-style clothing and other objects such as wristwatches, fountain pens, and safety razors. The plow had changed in the preceding 30 or so years. The *lotan* plow had generally been replaced by the *nai* plow. Both plows were simple wooden implements, each with an iron share, but the *nai* plow was designed somewhat differently and was said to be easier to use. The farmer could turn the *nai* plow around at the end of a furrow with one hand, whereas the *lotan* plow required two hands. Some of the wealthier landlords owned cylindrical stone rollers. Metal wheels had replaced wooden wheels on bullock carts. One radio and a few kerosene-burning pressure lanterns were in the village. The latter were used only at weddings.

Improved seeds and new crops were of great interest to the farmers of Shanti Nagar. The Village Level Worker of the Department of Community Development was very able and kept the farmers informed about improved seeds. Because of inter-village marriages, the farmers themselves traveled a good deal thus learning of new varieties of seeds. Once the farmers were convinced of their worth they seemed ready to adopt improved plant varieties. However, the farmers usually waited until one of the wealthier farmers who could spare some land for an experimental crop had tried the variety first, under the conditions of village agriculture. A recommendation by the government representative did not suffice. The farmers thought that what was successful once or twice at a government research institute might not necessarily work well under village conditions. The wheat, cotton, and sugarcane grown in Shanti Nagar were improved varieties introduced in the recent past. A noteworthy agricultural development was the increase in growing

vegetables. Jats traditionally concentrated on grains. However, the burgeoning population of Delhi greatly increased the demand for vegetables. A successful crop of vegetables could be quite profitable.

Changes in social relationships had occurred. Such changes were prominent in the testimony of the low-caste landless people who seemed much less concerned with improvements in technology than with the changed social relationships that resulted from recent legislation and partly from technological change. The most important change was that landowners would rarely allow others to cultivate their land on shares as had once been the common practice. The Delhi Land Reforms Act of 1954 established the principle that the man who cultivated the land should own it. With certain exceptions, the person who was entered in the government records as the cultivator of a field since 1952 or before could claim ownership of the land. This legislation caused a sensation in Shanti Nagar because large landlords had customarily given part of their land to others to farm on shares. The landlords immediately asked their tenants to go to court to swear that the government records were in error and that they had not cultivated the land during the period in question. Almost all tenants did as requested, partly voluntarily and partly because of community pressure. They felt that they really had no legitimate claim to the land; they had clearly agreed to be tenants. Also, many landlords and tenants had close, personal ties. This was especially true where Brahmans leased land from Jats. Finally, the tenants knew that if they tried to claim ownership of the land, they would become involved in a court action with the owner; they believed too, that in a lawsuit the richer person, who in these actions was the landlord, would probably win. Fewer than five acres changed hands as a result of the land reform legislation. From the point of view of the landless, the really important result of the legislation was that the leasing of land effectively ended. The Chamar Leatherworkers commented that it was currently more difficult to earn a living unless one had a city job.

When upper caste informants discussed social change, they often complained that "the lower castes are rising." These informants complained

specifically of government actions, such as providing subsidies for Harijans to build brick houses, scholarships for Harijan school children, and establishing quotas for jobs in government service especially for low-caste people. High-caste villagers attributed the weakening of traditional relationships with landless laborers to the increase in urban employment. According to them, the landless valued the traditional relationship less than the steady income derived from a city job. This was a factor, of course, as was land reform legislation, which made the farmers reluctant to lease land under traditional arrangements,

and improved technology such as fodder cutters, which had reduced the need for laborers. The landowners also complained about recent social legislation; the principal provision causing concern was that daughters were to inherit equally with sons. No village woman would dare assert her rights of inheritance as outlined in this legislation. If women ever do inherit equally with men, village life in this part of India will undergo very substantial changes. The low castes were not particularly concerned about daughters' inheriting, for these castes had little property and almost no agricultural land.

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: FAMILY, LINEAGE AND CLAN

Family and caste were the principal elements of village social organization, for the greater part of an individual's daily behavior was influenced by his family and caste membership. Two other elements of social organization were the lineage and the patrilineal clan. The lineage could become particularly prominent as a factor in politics or during disputes; but its influence on most daily activities of an individual was much less than that of the family. The clan was important principally for regulating the choice of marriage partners. The village was the setting for interaction among individuals, families, lineages, and castes, and some of its characteristics, such as its size, compactness, and feeling of autonomy, affected this interaction. Beyond these factors the village in its own right formed an element of social organization as part of the larger society. All villagers considered themselves fictively related; the village was an exogamous unit, and, for centuries, the various governments of India had dealt with the village as a political unit. Thus, family, caste, and village have often been designated as the three main elements of Indian social

organization (Mandelbaum, 1968). It is worth noting, however, that it is possible for an individual to change his village but, ordinarily, neither his caste nor his natal family.

In discussing the social organization of Shanti Nagar, we are concerned not only with description and analysis but also with discerning the effects of urban contact on village social organization. In the preceding discussions of immigration and emigration, we have presented data concerning one possible effect of urban employment and residence on village life: namely, an increase in the rate of migration to the point where the village might cease to be a kin-oriented group and begin to approach a more open type of community in which strangers might easily settle. Such a development could have considerable consequences: for example, the basis of caste rank could shift from the corporate, interactional ranking characteristic of villages to the noncorporate, attributional ranking that characterizes cities (Marriott, 1968a). However, as indicated by our data on migration and supported by additional data given below or reported elsewhere

(e.g., S. Freed, 1963b), Shanti Nagar remained kin-oriented and relatively closed to settlement by strangers.

We had under consideration during our field research a number of additional possible effects of urbanization on the social organization of Shanti Nagar. For example, urban influences were believed at that time to be inimical to the joint family and to have a weakening effect upon the caste system. Our data can be analyzed from several points of view to throw some light on such influences. The effects of urban influences on the joint family can be analyzed from our census data by comparing the proportions of the types of families headed by village-oriented men with those led by urban-oriented men (S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969). These effects can also be investigated at the attitudinal level: we may inquire as to the preferences of individuals regarding family arrangements despite their actual family type (Appendix, questions 31 and 32). Although these subjects are discussed more fully below, we note little discernible change in the structure of village families that was traceable to urban contacts. The institution of caste appeared to be holding its own rather well except that disadvantages connected with low-caste status were somewhat fewer than had been prevalent a generation earlier and economic relations between low-caste landless people and high-caste landowners had undergone some changes.

### FAMILY TYPES

Following Kolenda (1968) and others, we take the hearth-group as defining the family. Related individuals who share their food supplies and cook on the same hearth constitute a single family. We have used Kolenda's system of classifying families, because her categories (Kolenda, 1968, pp. 346-348, 356) fit the Shanti Nagar data quite well and it is easy to visualize the structure of a family with considerable precision from its type in her scheme. She defined the nuclear family as consisting of a married couple with or without unmarried children, the subnuclear family as a fragment of a former nuclear family (e.g., a widow and her unmarried children), and a joint family as composed of at least two married couples related either lineally (e.g., a father, mother, and their married son) or collat-

erally (e.g., two married brothers). Any unmarried family members who are not children of any of the married couples constituting a family, supplement the family. The three basic family types—subnuclear, nuclear, and joint, qualified by the adjectives, lineal, collateral, and supplemented—yield the following 10 family types: nuclear family, supplemented nuclear family, subnuclear family, supplemented subnuclear family, collateral joint family, supplemented collateral joint family, lineal joint family, supplemented lineal joint family, lineal-collateral joint family, and supplemented lineal-collateral joint family.

We define a family as being joint if the component nuclear families share, at least, their food supplies and, when living in the same house, their cooking. If the component nuclear families are separated, as when one lives in Shanti Nagar and the other in Delhi, they naturally cook separately, but are still one family. Their cohesiveness can be observed on occasions when the city dwellers visit the village. They cook with the others in the family and, when returning to the city, often take a supply of grain and, especially, ghee (clarified butter) from the common larder.

Wives were sometimes absent from the village. Young wives, especially, moved back and forth between their parents' and their husbands' villages (villages were exogamous, and marriage was virilocal and patrilocal); and, in the early years of marriage, they spent a good deal of time with their parents. For the purpose of defining family types, we consider an absent wife to be a member of her husband's family. Thus, a family consisting of a man, his wife, and a married 14-year-old son whose wife lives with her parents in another village is classed as a joint family. An absent husband is also considered a family member for purposes of classification, as for example, in the case of a man, his wife, and a married son who lives in a city, the son's wife living with his parents in Shanti Nagar: this is a joint family. Note that we do not regard these absent family members as residents of Shanti Nagar for census purposes; rather, we classify them as temporary or permanent emigrants. However, they must be considered in defining family types.

Kolenda also recognized single-person families and a residual category that she called "other." We did not require the "other" category, and, as Shanti Nagar had only one single-person family,



FIG. 9. Two wives and a daughter (center) of a Brahman Priest joint family. One wife is spinning; the other making bread.

we made no use of the single-person category, classifying the one such family (a widow) as sub-nuclear.

In a similar fashion, another set of family types can be formed based upon the polygynous family composed of a man and more than one wife. Thus a supplemented polygynous family is a polygynous family with an unmarried relative who is not a child of the husband and one of his wives; and a polygynous lineal-collateral joint family is a lineal-collateral joint family in which at least one of the component families is composed of a man and his two or more wives. Shanti Nagar had six polygynous families of various types.

Eight servants from outside Shanti Nagar who resided with various families of Shanti Nagar were not counted in defining family types. They were not related to their employers, nor were they members of their families, although their employers fed and gave them shelter; and because they lived with their employers, they had not established families of their own. They received their sustenance as payment rather than through the rights inherent in family membership. In short, they were not members of any of the families of Shanti Nagar. In the matter of servants we differ from Kolenda who included them in defining family types.

The 110 families of Shanti Nagar were dis-



tributed among the various types as follows: nuclear families 34 (31%), supplemented nuclear families 27 (24%), subnuclear families 3 (3%), supplemented subnuclear families 2 (2%), collateral joint families 3 (3%), supplemented collateral joint families 8 (7%), lineal joint families 9 (8%), supplemented lineal joint families 2 (2%), lineal-collateral joint families 8 (7%), supplemented lineal-collateral joint families 8 (7%), polygynous families 2 (2%), supplemented polygynous families 1 (1%), polygynous supplemented collateral joint families 1 (1%), and polygynous lineal-collateral joint families 2 (2%).

Polygynous families usually resulted from two circumstances: a man died and left a widow who then married one of his surviving brothers who already had a wife; or, a man might marry a second wife, if his wife failed to bear children. Of the six polygynous families, two fell into that category because a man had a childless wife, and three resulted from marriage to a brother's widow. In one of the latter examples, the widow married her husband's unmarried brother. She was about 10 years older than her new husband. Later he wanted and married a younger wife. The sixth polygynous family was formed because, according to the husband, he wanted another wife.

Because of the small number of families, it was necessary, for purposes of discussion and analysis, to combine these 14 types into fewer categories. These combined family types are as follows: "nuclear" includes nuclear families, all types of subnuclear families, and polygynous families; "supplemented nuclear" includes supplemented nuclear families and supplemented polygynous families; and "joint" includes all forms of joint and polygynous joint families.

The families of Shanti Nagar are given by combined type and caste in table 25. Thirty-seven percent of the families are joint; the rest are nuclear (37%) and supplemented nuclear (26%). Although only 37 percent of the families of Shanti Nagar were joint, 52 percent of the people lived in joint families. This was possible because joint families were, on the average, larger than nuclear and supplemented nuclear families. The average size (counting only family members resident in Shanti Nagar) of a nuclear family was 4.6 members; of a supplemented nuclear family, 6.9 members; and of a joint family, 10 mem-

TABLE 25<sup>a</sup>  
Families by Type and Caste  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Sup- plemented			Total
	Nuclear	Nuclear	Joint	
Bairagi Beggar	2 (40)	2 (40)	1 (20)	5
Baniya Merchant	0	1 (100)	0	1
Brahman Priest	7 (32)	6 (27)	9 (41)	22
Chamar	3 (23)	5 (38)	5 (38)	13
Leatherworker				
Chhipi Dyer	1 (100)	0	0	1
Chuhra Sweeper	12 (70)	2 (12)	3 (18)	17
Gola Potter	8 (67)	3 (25)	1 (8)	12
Jat Farmer	7 (23)	6 (19)	18 (58)	31
Jhinvar Waterman	0	1 (50)	1 (50)	2
Lohar Blacksmith	0	0	1 (100)	1
Mahar Potter	0	0	1 (100)	1
Mali Gardener	0	1 (100)	0	1
Nai Barber	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (33)	3
Total	41 (37)	28 (26)	41 (37)	110

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 1.

bers. When family members currently living away from Shanti Nagar are included, nuclear families had an average of 4.8 members; supplemented nuclear families, 6.9 members; and joint families, 11.5 members. These figures can be used to support either side of the question of whether or not the joint family is typical of India. In Shanti Nagar, at least, there were more nuclear and supplemented nuclear families than joint families; but more individuals lived in joint families than in the other two combined types.

If, instead of considering actual family types, we turn our attention to ideal types, we find that a large majority of individuals favored joint family living. Eighty-two percent of a stratified random sample of 82 adult villagers, when asked whether they preferred to live in joint or nuclear households, replied that they preferred joint family living (Appendix, question 31).<sup>1</sup> Thus, the joint family appeared to be the ideal type in Shanti Nagar although its occurrence was less frequent than it presumably would have been if in-

<sup>1</sup>In a study of family life in and around Delhi, Gore (1968, p. 112) found that 79 percent of 1274 respondents to a questionnaire said that, if they had a choice, they would prefer to live in a joint family.

dividuals could have realized their expressed preferences.

### FAMILY: PERSONNEL AND ROLES

A man was almost always the head of a family (only three families of Shanti Nagar were headed by women, all widows), almost always a husband and/or a father. Exceptions, although rare, did occur. Two families were headed by celibate men. The family of one man consisted of his deceased brother's widow, her sons, and their wives and children; the family of the other celibate man was composed of his brother and his wife and children. Another family was led by a divorced, childless man. Usually, the family head was the oldest man in the family, unless mentally incapacitated in which situation leadership fell to a younger brother or son. Occasionally, the younger of two brothers would be noticeably more capable than his elder brother who was the family head. This situation might lead to tensions that could best be resolved by a division of the family.

The head of a family exercised considerable power over its members. He managed the family property and controlled its other financial affairs. Family members with income from city jobs gave him their wages, minus their living expenses; or, gave him their entire earnings, receiving their expenses in return. The family head either educated his children or not, as he wished. Neither the village panchayat (council), nor his caste fellows, nor the government of the Union Territory of Delhi intervened to force a family head to send his children to school if he did not wish to do so. The family head might punish family members as he saw fit. He might beat his wife and children, sometimes severely. Even if a person died as a result of such punishment, no one interfered. As the villagers said, children and wives were a family's business.

This power centered in the family head was balanced by responsibility. He fed his family, provided shelter, clothing, and other essentials and had to arrange marriages for his children. Just as other individuals rarely interfered with him in the exercise of his power, so too, no one, except a few specific relatives on particular occasions, assisted him in carrying out his basic re-

sponsibilities (except to offer advice and criticism which were always freely given). If he could not provide enough food for his family, all ate less, and a small (usually female) child might even starve. There was no available village agency to turn to for relief. In the first few days of our residence in Shanti Nagar, a low-caste man with 10 children asked us to adopt his infant twin daughters (less than one year old); he was unable to feed them adequately and they were in danger of starving. It never occurred to him that the village (or nation) should take responsibility for maintaining his family. The village had no institutions for providing such help even if there were a feeling that aid should be rendered, a sentiment that definitely did not exist. This is not to say that villagers were unsympathetic—they were—but individual misfortune was generally a family matter.

Although a family head had absolute authority, as might be observed in situations of great stress when he might go so far as to kill a family member without interference from the other villagers, in ordinary day-to-day life, subordinate family members did have considerable influence in family affairs (cf. Gore, 1968, chap. VIII). This influence varied considerably, depending upon the personalities, ages, and sexes of the individuals involved. Adults could have more influence on a family head than could children. The mother of a family head, if she was intelligent and forceful, could be quite influential in family affairs, as could a wife, although a wife's influence might be reduced if her mother-in-law was alive. A wife, even one who was middle-aged, was generally under the control of her mother-in-law. Grown sons also had considerable influence upon a family head. Ideally and in practice, sons were obedient and submissive, but they could influence their fathers in a variety of ways: by suggestion, by sulking if their suggestions were not accepted, by living with another relative temporarily, by threatening to adopt disapproved practices, such as drinking, or by going on mild hunger strikes. Young children and daughters of any age carried almost no weight in family councils.

Community pressure also was a factor in the way a man treated the members of his family. However, the village did little but gossip and crit-



icize. The village acted only when a man's actions toward his family were of such a nature that they could have adverse community consequences. In our experience, such a situation usually resulted from a man's loss of effective control in his family (cf. R. Freed, 1971) rather than because he was too strong and arbitrary. When the village acted it was usually through an *ad hoc* council (panchayat) of prominent landowners, Jat Farmers, and Brahman Priests, regardless of the caste of the disputants.

Only death or mental incapacity terminated the status of a family head. A reduction in physical capacity to fill the demands of agricultural work and other village activities did not weaken a man's authority in his family; age lent prestige, and the performance of physical labor, no matter how skilled, did not. We sometimes mildly embarrassed ourselves and the heads of rather well-to-do families by asking them at the end of a day if they had been, say, plowing. They always looked a little hurt. Also, when we encountered such a family head engaged in an undemanding agricultural task, such as stripping the fibers from hemp, he would explain that he usually did not do this kind of work but that he just happened to be sitting and felt like undertaking some minor task.

If he had grown sons, the head of a reasonably well-to-do landowning family did not expect to work hard. If he continued to work hard, his family tended to lose prestige. A father would complain, "I have six sons but none are of any use to me," meaning that he had to continue to work. This traditional view had been somewhat modified by the available opportunities for urban employment. A son with a city job could greatly enhance the economic strength of a family, a situation that might keep a father economically active longer than under other circumstances. Furthermore, only in relatively wealthy families, with several grown sons, could an able-bodied family head discontinue physical labor and restrict himself principally to management. Usually he would continue to perform less demanding tasks and only avoid heavy work, such as plowing. In poor families, family heads continued to work as long as they were able; in those with few members, elderly people could not always restrict themselves to the lighter, more pleasant tasks because workers were scarce.

In addition to the role of family head, an adult man also filled the roles of husband and father. A husband was considered to be superior to his wife. Ideally, she was expected to regard him as a god, a traditional view which reflected Hindu sacred literature. As a counterbalance, a husband was expected to treat his wife as a goddess. This latter tradition was generally ignored, just as the wives' tradition was generally observed. Relations between husbands and wives ranged from being very warm and tender to open hostility and mutual detestation. Husbands beat their wives, an event that might happen even in more congenial marriages; but in these circumstances, a beating was treated as something of a joke. Some husbands and wives smiled fondly at each other as they discussed the subject with us. In more difficult marriages, wife-beating might be frequent and relatively severe. We asked one woman about the custom of wife-beating, and she said, "It's not a custom; it's a bad habit." Wives valued even-tempered husbands. Husbands boasted of the loyalty and devotion of their wives, even when they were provoked. One villager who had a mistress reported with pride that his wife had told him that if he brought his mistress to the house she would serve her because of her respect for her husband. As was the case with wife-beating, women did not like their husbands to have mistresses, but, because of their subordinate role, they accepted the situation and adjusted psychologically as best they could.

Divorce was a rare solution to the problems of the husbands and wives of Shanti Nagar. We know of only two cases. One man of Shanti Nagar divorced his wife because she would not have sexual relations with him. She was quoted as saying that she wanted to become a holy woman and so would not have sexual relations with her husband in order to obtain a divorce. (Sexual intercourse was regarded as polluting.) In the second instance, a father of Shanti Nagar arranged a divorce for his daughter when it became apparent that her husband was mentally unbalanced. He was said to have killed a previous wife. He was known to fly into uncontrollable rages and to badly beat his wife. She appeared to accept the situation as the lot of a married woman, but her father, recognizing that the behavior of his son-in-law exceeded permissible limits, wisely refused to allow his daughter to return to her

husband's family. Both of these divorced individuals remarried. The man, young and well-to-do, had no difficulty finding another woman and expected to marry her in a matter of months. A once-married woman, however, lost value in the marriage market. The fact that the divorced girl from Shanti Nagar found another husband was a tribute to her father's ability. As far as we know, a divorced woman was maintained by her natal family; at least this was what happened with the Shanti Nagar divorcee; but according to one villager, she would have been entitled to maintenance by her ex-husband if she had wished to make an issue of it with the District Commissioner or in the courts.

As a solution to marital problems, the death of a wife, either by suicide or murder by her husband, was more common than divorce, although still relatively rare. Tales of wives murdered by their husbands, often by being thrown into wells, circulated endlessly in the village. Actually these stories involved the same rare occurrences, indicating that such drastic measures were infrequent. Some wives were said to have committed suicide by jumping into wells. Suicide of a wife might be due to loneliness, to excessive household work, or to the continual criticism of a husband and his family, who would make her life miserable in general, and who would repeatedly suggest that the best solution for her would be to jump into a well. Criticisms were usually prompted by a woman's childlessness and because the husband had scant liking for her. When the number of reported suicides and murders of women were combined, it appeared that over the years a moderate number of women had died by drowning in wells. In order to avoid questions and trouble from outsiders, the villagers preferred to regard as suicides all drownings in wells. However, they themselves believed that most such deaths were suspect, and some were known to be murders. One such death, definitely a suicide, occurred while we were in Shanti Nagar. In despair over the death of the only grandson of the family, an elderly woman jumped into a well. This suicide resulted in a police investigation to which the villagers willingly submitted as they had nothing to fear. Their ultimate clearance of any suspicion improved the image of the village in the eyes of the police.

Another rare solution to marital problems was the murder, usually by poisoning, of a husband by a wife or a wife's relatives (cf. Tandon, 1968, p. 55). One high-caste man was said to have been poisoned by his wife's relatives. The man was said to have become impotent after a brief period of marriage, and his wife complained to her parents who allegedly tried to do away with him. Despite having swallowed poison, he did not die; but he suffered from a chronic disease attributed to the poison. However, it was difficult to verify the facts in such cases. Another version of this incident was that the husband had contracted venereal disease, that his parents-in-law had tried to cure him, and that his currently visible symptoms were the result of the attempted cure.

A low-caste woman was said to have attempted to murder her husband by putting mercury in his food. As in the above case, the motive appeared to have been partly the lack of sexual satisfaction. The husband was attending school and told his wife that he would not "talk" to her for as long as he was studying. The murder attempt was unsuccessful; the husband left his wife and remarried. His brother, who recounted the story, commented that the first wife had been from a town and that his family did not like to marry girls from towns. However, the second wife was from Delhi.

A high-caste woman was said to have succeeded in murdering her husband by poisoning. We elicited no details as to the motive. The victim's relatives took no revenge on the woman other than to treat her without respect. The victim's brother married her as a second wife. He refused to live with her at the instigation of his first wife, who, we were told, was afraid that the alleged murderess would make an attempt on her life. The alleged murderess was largely ostracized by her husband's relatives and by the other villagers, although we cannot say whether it was because of her difficult personality, which was probably the result of partial deafness, or because of the suspected murder.

When a husband and/or father was not a family head, but was a subordinate member of a joint family, his behavior as a husband and father was somewhat modified. Principally, his authority over his wife and children was curtailed because ultimately they were under the control of the family head, who directed the work of all

the wives and decided on the education of the children. In a joint family, a man and wife were more constrained with one another. Men said that they "felt shy" when they lived with fathers and older brothers after marriage. This was especially true among low-caste people whose houses were generally smaller than those of the high castes. In some large houses, each married man might have a separate room where he could be alone with his wife, or there might be sufficient space to provide occasional privacy. Sometimes, the desire for marital privacy was cited as a reason for dividing a joint family.

Some fathers, when living in a joint family, might make another adjustment in their behavior toward their brothers' children. On one occasion, two brothers of a joint family were sitting together and one was kissing the son of the other, a customary form of behavior. We paid no particular attention to it until the head of the family, who was also present, explained, "It is always like this: a man loves his brother's children more than his own." Our informant's statement was supported by the greater overt affection that fathers often displayed toward their brothers' children. Other villagers told us that unless the children of several brothers in a joint family were equally beloved it adversely affected the general family situation. Whether or not men did love their brothers' children as much or more than their own offspring, statements and beliefs such as these, often reinforced by actions would tend to reduce some of the potential friction sparked by life in a joint family. In another north Indian village an increase during the past several decades in the affection and concern that fathers displayed toward their own children had been noted as one of several factors that caused increasing tension in joint families and created some uncertainty as to their future (Opler and Singh, 1952, p. 11; Opler, 1960, p. 97).

Fathers concerned themselves more with sons than daughters, a concern rooted in the greater importance of sons, who, as members of a joint family, stayed at home and supported their parents in their old age; daughters married into another family and another village. The greater concern for sons could be observed in the much greater despair felt and expressed over the death of a son than a daughter. We also observed that sons were more frequently criticized than daughters,

especially with regard to the establishment of the groundwork for a successful adult life. Sons were urged to study and earn good grades; only a few parents were concerned with the school records of daughters. The behavior of elderly women also served to emphasize the greater importance of sons as compared with daughters. For example, the suicide described above (p. 65) was caused by the death of a grandson; it was not unusual for villagers to attribute the death of an elderly woman to sorrow over the death of a son or grandson.

Although children were primarily the concern of their family, adult villagers were far from indifferent to the actions of young unrelated children. Adults were also apparently invested with specific prerogatives of criticism and punishment with regard to unrelated children up to seven or eight years of age. We believe that because these prerogatives were recognized, they were only rarely displayed. That they were known to exist made it unnecessary to exercise them often. The children of Shanti Nagar were very well-behaved by American standards. Although they were often present when adults were talking among themselves, they did not interrupt or make any disturbance. Characteristically, they stood or sat very quietly close to an adult, occasionally leaning against him, watched everything that was happening, and listened carefully to the conversation. We have little doubt that this behavior was maintained by the prerogatives that permitted an adult to discipline any child. (Although we can present no relevant evidence, we suspect that these prerogatives were modifiable by caste considerations to the extent that the activities of low-caste adults might be restrained with regard to high-caste children.) Early during our stay in Shanti Nagar, a number of children often visited in our house. At first, they were typically well behaved; gradually, however, they became more and more unruly. A woman villager one day commented on this unruliness; we agreed and asked her to propose a remedy. The woman suggested that we beat the children. We told her that we could do nothing since the children were not ours. Utterly astounded, she exclaimed, "But you are adults!" A great light dawned. Immediately every child that we could catch received two or three slaps. Thenceforward, the children were beautifully behaved; on only one other oc-

casion during our 13 months of residence did we find it necessary to slap a child. Such measures did not often have to be employed by villagers; a glance or a word, especially from an adult man, was sufficient to restrain misbehavior.

The physical discipline of older children was not a prerogative of unrelated adults. Teenagers were tantamount to adults with regard to punishment for misbehavior; nonfamily members had to present complaints against teenagers to the head of the family. An informant described one occasion when a Jat Farmer boy 12 years old was observed sitting on a 14-year-old Brahman Priest girl in the fields. About a dozen women working in the area witnessed the incident. There were two possible interpretations: either the two youngsters were fighting or they were about to engage in sexual intercourse. However interpreted, the behavior was improper. The Brahman reported the incident to a senior Jat man requesting that he approach the family head of the boy and ask him to discipline the boy. According to our informant, the father did as requested and beat him.

Older children were less easily controlled than younger ones by a glance or a scolding. We once observed a 12-year-old Chamar Leatherworker boy hold his own against a scolding by an elderly Brahman woman. The boy was sitting in a chair in our sitting room; the Brahman woman reproved him and asked him to move. He stayed in the chair. However, had an older Brahman man asked the boy to move, he would have moved; in fact, speech would probably have been unnecessary, for we observed that the same boy quickly yielded his chair unasked to a senior Brahman man.

Occasionally, criticism of a child by an unrelated adult could take on the atmosphere of a public shaming. Such a situation reflected, to some extent, on the head of the child's family. We were present once when a Chamar Leatherworker man scathingly criticized the 13-year-old son of another Chamar man: the boy, he said, did not know how to sit, stand, talk, or live despite the fact that he was in the ninth grade in school. Soon the boy was close to tears; he got up and left. We asked the opinion of his father, who was present but had made no protest and had silently agreed with the criticism of his son. He said that it was true; his son passed at school

every year, but he still had not learned how to live. A few minutes later, the father, obviously disturbed, struck another of his sons on the back rather hard. The boy smiled and left.

The criticism of the Chamar boy in the presence of onlookers amounted to a public shaming of a child. Although we never witnessed another occurrence like it, we observed a few similar events which involved a 30-year-old man as critic and several younger men in their late teens or early twenties as recipients of the criticism. Because villagers, especially caste-fellows, often knew one another intimately, such criticisms could be devastating. We would rate all the critics we saw in action as possessing personalities considerably more aggressive than average. However, that this kind of criticism was generally considered to be proper behavior was indicated by the fact that neither the recipients nor their relatives protested or offered a defense. To correct the faults of others was generally thought to be a virtue (cf. R. Freed and S. Freed, 1968, pp. 9-10).

Husbands publicly displayed emotional indifference to wives. Any public demonstration of affection between husbands and wives, especially an episode involving physical contact, would be severely frowned upon. One of our informants regarded the public sorrowing of a man for his deceased wife as ludicrous. Another man whom we knew well lost his wife while we were in Shanti Nagar. He made absolutely no public display of grief. He told us that he had his brothers, with whom he would continue his social life as usual, and that in a few days he would forget his wife. A few days after her death, one of his friends returned to the village after an absence. The two men had a lengthy discussion of village news; our friend did not mention the death of his wife, an event one would assume would qualify as news when talking to an old friend. However, we think that it would be an incorrect interpretation to accept public unconcern for wives as denoting private indifference. In India, as elsewhere, the emotional ties of husband and wife can be very strong. As one happily married couple told us, the only true companionship was between husbands and wives.

The loss of a wife was a serious matter; women clearly did more of the work necessary for the successful functioning of a village family

than did men, and some of these duties were ordinarily never carried out by men. Women cooked, drew water, cared for their children, gathered fodder and cared for the animals, collected dung to make dung-cakes for fuel, cleaned the house, washed clothing, and did a great deal of agricultural work. If a man, a member of a joint family, lost his wife the other women in the family cooked for him and cared for his children. However, such arrangements were not feasible in a nuclear family where the wife was the only adult woman; under such circumstances, a related adult woman, such as a sister or a daughter, had to join the family. Thus, when the young man of Shanti Nagar was divorced by his wife, his father's sister came to live with him until he could remarry. Two married daughters alternately returned home temporarily to cook and care for the house of the widower mentioned in the preceding paragraph. He said that he planned to marry off his son a little earlier than usual so that the son's wife could take care of the household.

No man in Shanti Nagar lived without a woman in the house. Such a situation would be possible only if a man were willing to cook for himself, but none did, except in emergencies. In Shanti Nagar there were no hotels or restaurants where a man could take his meals. If they were young or in early middle-age, widowers usually remarried; older men often did not remarry, preferring to live in a joint family with a married son. The villagers often cited two disadvantages of remarriage for a man with children: the new wife would not treat her stepchildren well, and she would treat her stepson's wife even worse than mothers-in-law were traditionally said to do. Village values, which in many respects closely reflected traditional Hindu thought, accorded considerable prestige to the older widower or to the celibate male. A man's status within his family did not deteriorate when his wife died.

While the loss of a wife was serious, the death of a husband could be even more serious. A woman lost not only an economic mainstay but her status changed adversely as well. A widow was believed to have engaged in misdeeds during previous lives for such a tragedy to have befallen her. Her change of status was marked immediately at the death of her husband when the

widow's glass bracelets, a symbol of a woman's married status, were smashed. This act precipitated a combination of uncontrollable weeping (in contrast to the indifference displayed by widowers) and the ritualized wailing that was expected of the widow. She was not allowed to attend the cremation; the villagers said that the ordeal would be too much for a female. For a few days after the death of her husband, village women, her friends and relatives, sat with the widow to commiserate.

Unlike men, women could cope with living without an adult man in the household. Three widows were living comfortably without men. One received economic assistance from two of her sons who lived separately, but the other two women managed without economic aid from adult male relatives. One, a landowner, had a man of another caste farm her land on shares; the other, a landless Chuhra Sweeper, earned an adequate living by serving her family's traditional patrons, by occasional agricultural labor, and by raising a water buffalo for its owner. Several other women whose husbands were temporary emigrants employed outside of Shanti Nagar managed their households unassisted by a resident adult male. These women received financial assistance from their husbands. In joint families widows continued to be supported by their families. A childless widow in a joint family usually had very little status; a widow with sons was in a preferable position.

Village opinion accorded greater prestige to a celibate widow than to one who remarried; but, nonetheless, widows did remarry. Usually, a brother of the deceased husband married the widow in a simple rite known as "giving a head covering (*orhna*).<sup>1</sup>" The brother might be older or younger than the husband and might be married or unmarried. Occasionally such an arrangement resulted in the formation of a polygynous family. The marriage of a widow to any relative of her husband other than a brother or a first cousin (husband's father's brother's son) was rare. Remarriage of a widow was routine among the Jat Farmers.

The Brahman Priests regarded the remarriage of widows with disfavor; they expected them to remain celibate. However, we knew of two Brahman widows who did not adhere to the rule of

celibacy. The husband of one woman became insane, disappeared, and was presumed to be dead; his brother, a widower, then took care of her and was the father of her subsequent children although no marriage ceremony took place. Although the couple continued to live in the village and he participated in social activities with the men, she was never seen at any gathering of females. The second widow married a classificatory brother of her deceased husband, but one more distantly related than a first cousin. The couple did not live in the village; he returned about once a year to visit his family. Brahman women of the village said that they might have forgiven the widow if she had married one of her husband's brothers; this was doubtful, however, because widow remarriage among Brahmans was tabooed. Most of the women found it difficult to understand that this widow had surrendered her rights to support from her husband's estate to live with a man who was blind in one eye and therefore regarded as inauspicious. However, had the widow not remarried her lot would have been difficult if not dangerous because she had no sons and her husband's relatives who would inherit the estate after her death were known to be eager for the property.

Widow remarriage occurred among the Chamar Leatherworkers, Chuhra Sweepers, Gola Potters, and Lohar Blacksmiths. We learned of no remarriages of widows among the other castes of the village. We believe, however, that our observations reflected the fact that these castes were numerically small rather than the prohibition of such remarriages. We doubt that any of these castes would forbid the practice, with the possible exception of the Baniya Merchants.

The traditional roles of family head, father, husband, and wife had been little affected by urban influences. The authority of the family head, father, and husband continued to be unchallenged either by any family member or by any village or national institution. No matter how well a young man was educated or how much potential independence he had acquired through his salaried city job, he submitted to his father's authority as long as he was a member of the joint family. We observed or learned of no instances of a father's authority challenged by a son. However we knew of one situation in which,

upon the death of their father, an intelligent urbanized younger brother ignored the authority of his more traditional older brother. The younger brother rather than his older brother, for example, spoke at panchayat meetings. The villagers commented critically on these actions, but they recognized, that because of the differences in personality and intelligence of the two brothers, the younger would inevitably be the dominant figure in the family. Undoubtedly, it was assumed that this situation would be resolved in the not-too-distant future by a division of the family. And so it happened, within a few months of their father's death, the brothers had taken a few tentative steps toward partition. Senior males who were dominant in family situations were equally dominant in lineage, caste, and, ultimately, village affairs. Although casual observation of the village scene suggests that young urbanized men had assumed the direction of village affairs, because several such men between 30 and 45 years of age served on the village council and tended to dominate deliberations, in reality, they acted as representatives of their family, lineage, and caste elders.

The custom of purdah (seclusion of women) was one aspect of a wife's relationship with her husband's family and the senior men of her husband's village that might be facing some pressure for change because of a less traditional model provided by city life. In Shanti Nagar, married women covered their faces in the presence of men senior to their husbands and, ordinarily, did not address such men unless spoken to first. Young wives tended to stay away from the men in their own part of the house. Young men of different families and their wives did not gather for social occasions. We believe that at least some young urbanized husbands were probably dissatisfied with some aspects of purdah. We observed two occasions on which young men involved their wives in social situations in unconventional ways. Once a young man invited us to tea in the village. His young wife was present at his request. This was the traditional behavior of a wife's obedience to her husband; she never would have taken such an unconventional step on her own volition. She was ill at ease. The situation became rather tense, and she left after a short interval. (A similar social affair hosted by a man of Shanti

Nagar at his house in Delhi was, however, quite successful.) On another occasion, a man visited us with his wife who entered the room, unveiled, even though she was aware that a number of senior village men were present. These men left the room immediately and sat outside; after a brief interval, they sent word asking the young man's wife to leave the room so that they could return. We hesitate to place too much emphasis on these rare observations; our presence clearly provided the opportunities for these departures from normal village custom. Nevertheless, we suspect that some younger men might seek some relaxation of purdah. Such a trend, if we are correct in our surmise, will probably be more pronounced as women become better educated (cf. Opler and Singh, 1952, p. 11; Opler, 1960, pp. 95-96).

As husbands eventually become fathers, fathers-in-law, and family heads, young wives become mothers, mothers-in-law, and senior women in their households. The necessary adjustments for men as they changed roles were less than those with which women had to contend. A man remained with his family and lived in his village of birth. A woman married outside of her natal village and went to live in her husband's village with his natal family. In her village of birth she was a daughter of the village, and all men were her fictive relatives. She did not have to cover her face in the presence of anyone; she could move freely about the village. In her natal house, her relations were with blood kin whom she had known all her life. Her older brothers pampered her, for the brother-sister tie was very close; her sisters were her friends; her mother, ordinarily, was warm and loving; and, although her father ignored her to some extent, he was affectionate when he had the time.

The situation was different in the house of her relatives-in-law. She had to cover her face before her husband's older brothers and otherwise avoid them. She behaved in a similar fashion with her father-in-law, who exercised authority over her if she and her husband were members of his joint family. When a young wife moved to her husband's village, she left behind her consanguineal relatives; she became a low-ranking affinal relative among her husband's kin. In a joint household, her sisters were replaced by her husband's sisters and his

brothers' wives; the latter, to some extent, competed with her for the family resources. Instead of her mother, she was subordinate to her mother-in-law, stepmother-in-law, or the wife of her husband's father's brother. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was often tense and difficult and contrasted sharply with the relationship between mother and daughter. Initially, all her husband's relatives were strangers to her, as was her husband; the period of adjustment was often long and trying. The freedom of movement enjoyed by a woman in her natal village was denied her in the village of her husband. When she left the house, she had to observe the custom of purdah and cover her face. If she lived in a joint family, she was often chaperoned by a relative when outside of the home.

A young wife living with her husband in a nuclear family not only did all the normal household work of women but also worked in the fields or otherwise assisted in the family occupation when it was customary for women to help. Wives of the Chuhra Sweeper caste, for example, worked as sweepers outside the home; and a potter's wife assisted him in some aspects of his craft. In joint landowning families that included several adult women, the tasks were divided. Mothers-in-law worked in the house, cooking and milking the buffalo; the younger wives worked in the fields and devoted less of their time to cooking and housework. However, we observed that physically taxing housework, such as grinding grain, ordinarily fell to a younger wife rather than to the mother-in-law. If there were several young wives in a family, they shared the work customarily assigned to wives.

The most difficult position for a young wife was to marry into a rather large family where she was the only adult woman. Then she was responsible for all the work, and, even more seriously, she might not be permitted to visit her parents as often as she would like because her family could not spare her labor. A young wife looked forward to visiting her parents, and, in the early years of marriage, she might spend half of her time in her parents' house. One villager attributed the suicide of a young wife to circumstances such as these: she was the only adult woman in a rather large family and she could not

leave for extended visits with her parents. We doubt that this was the only reason for her suicide, but the fact that the villagers suggested it indicated how difficult such situations could be for a young wife.

A young wife hoped to become a mother as soon as possible. With luck, she would have a son. The birth of a son enhanced her prestige considerably. As one villager told us, "Marriage is not for comfort. The duty of a wife is to have children." As a woman bore her children, especially sons, and grew older, her relations with her husband and other members of the household might change. If, before the birth of her child, she slept with her husband almost every night, she might later sleep apart with her child, going to her husband only when he called her. If she lived in a joint family with her husband's brothers, she might become more concerned with the interests of her husband and children and might press for a separation of the family property. She might also grow restive under the control of her mother-in-law.

In our observations, we found that overt conflicts between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were more likely to occur when the latter was about 30 years of age or older. Younger daughters-in-law tended to be submissive even when unhappy. However, the relationship could be warm, especially in the early years following the arrival of the daughter-in-law. We know a few such relationships where the two women appeared to be very congenial, and villagers sometimes commented that one would not take her meals without the other.

When disputes occurred between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, the entire family was affected. A family head caught in a dispute between his mother and his wife found himself in a most unpleasant situation. He was obliged to take the side of his mother; she was the senior woman in the household and had to be obeyed. In fulfilling this obligation, however, he ran the risk of antagonizing his wife; and an unhappy wife could make life just as unpleasant for a husband in India as elsewhere, despite the subordination of women to men. By and large, in disputes with his wife, a man supported his mother, for a woman was expected "to live at the feet of her mother-in-law." As we had occasion to observe, a

woman's children did not necessarily support her in battles with her mother-in-law. A mother-in-law, as grandmother, competed, to some extent, with her son's wife for the affection of the children. Because the mother-in-law was in charge of the family's supply of food and determined the share of each family member, she controlled an effective weapon for winning the affection of children. Consequently, a woman in open conflict with a mother-in-law could often expect little support from the family. That such battles did take place was a tribute to the toughness of the Indian woman and her frustration as an adult living under the supervision and domination of another woman. Beyond these causes for conflict, we have reason to suspect that disputes between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law might be rooted, at least partially, in tension between husband and wife. A wife might be unwilling to attack her husband directly, but she could achieve the same ends indirectly by quarreling with his mother. In one sense the result was the same: the husband suffered. As one man, bedeviled by an ongoing quarrel between his mother and his wife, told us, "All these fights make my heart pound and I feel as if I am going to die."

A mother-in-law eventually became the senior woman in her household. When her daughter-in-law arrived, she watched over her, supervised her work, and instructed her in the details that were vital for her to know about the village. She showed her daughter-in-law the family's fields and pointed out the men in whose presence she had to cover her face. A daughter-in-law was expected to learn these details quickly. She showed respect for her husband's family and village in various ways: by covering her face before senior men and when walking by a community meeting house; by rising, when her father-in-law entered a room where she was sitting; by pressing and stroking the legs above the ankles of her mother-in-law; and by yielding the right of way on the narrow paths that separated fields when a senior man approached from the opposite direction (this regulation did not apply to a daughter of the village). As a woman grew older, she did not have to cover her face before so many men. Her relations with men generally also became freer. Older women might be more frequently observed joking and talking with men than younger



married women. If there were two young daughters-in-law in a family, the senior woman had to be tactful and not favor one over the other. Like a family head, a senior woman in a family maintained her position as long as she was mentally capable.

When a baby was born, its care and raising were added to her numerous other duties: cooking, cleaning, working in the fields, carrying water, cutting fodder, feeding and milking the cattle, and grinding grain. Because she had to nurse the infant during the night, she did not get so much rest as formerly. Villagers recognized that women might become irritable under such circumstances. One understanding husband told us that he really could not blame his wife when she became irritable, so he never beat her. Many of our observations of the care of a baby were of a mother with a 21-month-old daughter. In addition to the mother of the infant there were two adult women in this family. The mother had three older daughters, three and a-half, five and a-half, and eleven and a-half years old. The care of the baby was principally in the hands of the mother. However, when she was occupied, one of her older daughters usually took charge. The mother had very little assistance with her baby from the other adult women in the household, but then they were equally busy.

The normal arrangements were well illustrated one morning when the mother, her baby, her five and a half-year-old daughter, and one of the other adult women of the family (her married daughter at home on a visit) went to the fields to gather fodder. Before beginning work, the mother nursed the infant and then picked some gram and peas and gave them to her to play with and to eat. The child sat quietly, playing, while the women worked; she did not ask for milk again. When the fodder had been gathered, the mother held the baby in position for defecating. The two adult women then picked up the bundles of fodder to carry them back to the village, walking at a fast pace. The five and a half-year-old girl carried the baby. Because the infant had not defecated adequately, her sister had to drop behind while the baby relieved herself. The adult women did not stop; and the little girl with the baby was left alone to make her own way back to the village, which she was able to do without difficulty.

The care of infants varied from family to family. Most of our observations were of the family with which we lived, but we also saw a good deal of a neighboring family. Of the two, our own family was much more typical of what we observed elsewhere in the village. In our family the baby was usually indulged and neither scolded nor punished. If she cried for her mother, usually to be nursed, she was taken to her and fed. If the mother was busy, one of the older children picked her up and tried to quiet her. Generally, the five and a-half and 11 and a-half-year-old girls were most involved with the baby after the mother. The third sister was too young to be helpful. An older brother appeared to have no responsibilities for the child, although he was quite affectionate. If the baby struck her two older sisters, they did not hit back; they simply moved away. She ate freely from the plates of all her siblings. No one ever seemed to say no to her. Once or twice when we told her not to do something, she pouted and sulked. We noticed that the only occasions in which the baby's needs of the moment were not met were (1) when the mother woke her from her afternoon nap so that she would sleep through the night and (2) so that the mother could nurse her before she left the house for work.

The neighboring family had seven children, the youngest a boy 18 months old. The older children of the family were two girls eight and 10 years old and four boys four, five, six, and 16 years old. The older children often struck the baby quite hard, but in the next moment kissed him, then they might beat him again, almost as if they had no emotional control. Although members of the same caste, this neighboring family differed from our own in two important ways: it was less affluent and the mother was the only adult woman in the family. Both the father and mother worked hard, and the children were neglected and poorly clothed. These factors might account in part for the behavior of their children. In our family, there were three adult women and only five children.

Babies continued to receive considerable attention until the arrival of the next infant; then the new baby became the center of attention. In our family, the three and a half-year-old girl was treated much as her elder siblings. A child was usually weaned when its mother had another

baby. Village women said that a child might continue to be nursed up to the age of five or so provided its mother did not have another baby. Although considerable attention was paid to toilet training, it was apparently not a difficult experience for a child. Mothers and older sisters were skilled at anticipating a child's need to defecate. The baby was not hurried and afterward was carefully cleaned. At the age of 20 months, the baby in our family was being taught to clean herself after defecating. One day we watched her mother and five and a half-year-old sister teach her hygiene. The baby was pouring water from a basin over the buttocks of her older sister and cleaning her. Then the mother poured some more water into the basin, which the baby emptied over the hands of her older sister. The older sister was grinning, but the baby was very serious about the whole episode.

When the baby was 20 months old, we noticed that she was being trained to do simple household chores. One day we watched the mother give her some mustard seeds that the mother had picked out of some wheat; she indicated that the child was expected to carry the seeds to a pot that contained cotton seeds for fodder. The child became confused; she thought that she was expected to take the fodder to the shop of the Baniya Merchant and buy something. Quietly the mother corrected the little girl. The teaching atmosphere was very matter of fact, unaccompanied by praise or undue excitement. A little later the mother gave the child some scraps of vegetables to discard; this time she accomplished the simple task.

Babies were generally cherished and pampered to the extent permitted by the family situation. In well-to-do families that included several adult women and many children, a baby was given considerable attention. In less favorable circumstances, a child might be relatively neglected. In poverty-stricken families that included many children, a female infant might starve, not because the family was indifferent but simply because food was scarce. We also noticed that little effort was made to keep deformed babies alive; the ordinary villager was never rich enough to willingly accept the burden of a handicapped baby. The routine tragedies of life produced enough disabled people in later life. A child's first major adjustment was to the arrival of a new

sibling. The child was then weaned, the family became less permissive, and he no longer received the attention he once did. For the youngest child in the family, this adjustment obviously need not be abrupt or even occur at all, except for weaning. If the youngest child was a boy, weaning might not occur until four years of age.

At about four or five years of age, children began to wear clothes for modesty, not merely for warmth. Modesty training was more carefully enforced for girls than for boys so that by eight years a girl was customarily modest. For boys, modesty training was strictly enforced between the ages of eight and 10. The 10-year-old daughter in our house was always careful to keep her head covered, a symbol of modesty among women; the five and a half-year-old covered her head when in school and would be expected to cover in the home in another two years. A woman who went about with her head uncovered was thought to be shameless; once when our landlord's wife was in our house with her head uncovered for some reason, she apologized to us. Well before they were 10 years old, children were taught all the forms of polite behavior when in the presence of their elders, such as pressing their legs to show respect and where to sit or stand.

From an early age, children, especially girls were not only instructed in adult skills but also might have important duties while quite young. Girls learned to do the general household tasks and the part of the agricultural work, such as gathering fodder and caring for animals, that usually fell to women. An important duty of a young daughter of the family was to go through the village streets early every morning to collect dung that fell from the cattle when they were driven to the pond for use, principally, as fuel and fertilizer. Girls between six and 11 years old usually had this duty.

Although boys assisted in agricultural work, they had less duties than girls around the home, an arrangement that reflected the division of labor between adult men and women. Boys were trained in the family business, whatever it might be, and by their mid-teens were usually adequate in all its technical aspects. While we were in the village, a Nai Barber boy 10 to 12 years old was learning to shave his family's patrons. Since he was too young to shave himself, he learned the technique by shaving others. The badly hacked,

bleeding faces of his stoical patrons made us marvel at the patience of the villagers, who, amused by our reaction, recited a couplet to the effect that when a Jat Farmer is cut, the Nai Barber knows how to shave. Village men claimed, however, that this was the youngest Nai that they had ever observed shaving patrons. The boy's father worked in Delhi; so the son had to begin serving the family's patrons. The son of a farmer was taught to plow in his early or middle teens. Once he had acquired this skill, a boy was ready to farm on his own.

Instruction in the home where one learned from one's relatives was not only free of pressure but also not particularly intense. Children had plenty of time either for play with other children or to sit quietly observing the activities of adults. At the age of five or older, children began to go to school. For the first five grades, they attended the village school and consequently remained in the familiar environment of home and village, except for the low-caste boys who attended a craft oriented school in a nearby village. However, if they progressed beyond the village school, they entered a different atmosphere of greater pressure and competition. Few girls attended school beyond the fifth grade so that, in general, they were not usually affected by the pressures of advanced education. For boys, however, the pressure to make good in higher secondary school could be relatively intense. This pressure reached its peak before the examinations at the end of higher secondary school. The successful boy could go on to college and prepare for a good career outside the village. Even an unsuccessful boy could work in the city but probably in a less well-paid job. The boy who failed early in his school career would probably remain in the village. Two generations earlier, when education in schools was uncommon, the transition from boyhood to adult status must have been easier because, for most males, the pressures and competition of school in the higher grades were absent.

The relations between brothers depended to a large extent upon whether they lived in the same family or separately. In the same family, in many ways their relationship resembled that of father and son. An older brother had some authority over the younger, and, if the older brother was also a family head, the authoritarian aspects of

the relationship would be given greater emphasis than if the father was still alive and the head of the household. Younger brothers were expected to show respect for their older brothers by deferring publicly to them in many ways.<sup>1</sup> For example, a younger brother sat at the foot of a cot, the inferior position, while his older brother sat at the head; in formal social situations, such as panchayat meetings, the older brother spoke and the younger was silent. In ceremonial situations, such as marriages, the older brother acted on behalf of the family (when the father was not present). Sometimes, younger brothers were rather pointed in their displays of respect. We once noticed that at a panchayat meeting a younger brother arose and departed when his older brother arrived; and at a wedding, when his older brother entered the room, one man switched to the same side of the room as his older brother and sat behind him.

Departures from normal practice caused considerable adverse comment. One aggressive younger brother tended to usurp his older brother's role; he spoke at meetings and accepted gifts at marriages in the presence of the older brother who should have been the one to act for the family. The villagers were critical of the usurper as a man who did not care for his older brother. The obvious solution to such a conflict of personalities and the disregard of social norms would be for the brothers to divide the family.

When brothers divided a joint family, their relationship changed, since the older brother no longer controlled the activities of the younger. They might continue to cooperate economically, either on the basis of affection or because their landholdings necessarily adjoined and cooperation in some specific tasks made the practice of agriculture more convenient; or, they might cease working together. Economic assistance was not a

<sup>1</sup>The Amritraj brothers furnish a noteworthy example of the deference of a younger to an older brother. In 1974, Vijay Amritraj, 20 years old, was ranked the number one male tennis player in India; his brother, Anand, 22, was ranked number two. Vijay had been more successful than Anand in international competition. The two brothers had met 16 times, all in tournaments in India, and Anand had won all the matches (Janoff, 1974, p. 63). A victory of Vijay over Anand would be more likely, we believe, in a foreign country.

requirement between brothers who lived in separate families. A common complaint of widows was that their husbands' brothers who lived in separate families behaved like unrelated neighbors and rendered no aid. However, within his patrilineage a man could borrow money at more favorable terms than from strangers, and some borrowing of money did take place with land-owning lineages. Usually the sums were relatively small for specific emergencies and were quickly repaid.

A man depended on his brothers not so much for economic aid as for companionship and for political assistance. Provided that he was not clearly in the wrong, a man could usually expect strong support from his brothers and other members of his patrilineage in any dispute in which he became involved. The number of adult men that one could depend upon was important, because disputes were sometimes resolved by a physical confrontation, or the threat of one, between the disputants who were supported by their relatives and other allies.

The relationships between a man and his brother's wife varied, depending upon the relative ages of the brothers. A husband's older brother and a younger brother's wife avoided each other. The sister-in-law covered her face in his presence and did not address him directly. A husband's younger brother and an older brother's wife had a warm joking relationship. In the early years of a woman's marriage, the support and friendship of her husband's younger brother could mean a great deal because the senior members of her husband's family were generally formal and authoritative in their relations with her. The relationship of husband's younger brother and older brother's wife was quite delicate; it was said that, occasionally, this friendship could lead to sexual relations, especially when the husband was absent from the village. We believe that such a development would be unusual in Shanti Nagar, but we have no evidence to prove or disprove such an occurrence, since it would not become public knowledge. We do know, however, that a husband's younger brother occasionally became quite attached to his older brother's wife. In a western context, one would say that they had fallen in love. One young unmarried man, obviously in love with his

older brother's wife, told us that he often dreamed of snakes and that his brother's head had been cut off. A special aspect of the relationship of husband's younger brother and older brother's wife was that she often verbally instructed her husband's brother about how to behave on his wedding night. Although a woman's relations with her husband's older and younger brothers differed while her husband was alive, either one was a potential spouse if she became a widow. The levirate might be practiced even if the husband's brother already had a wife.

Of the relationships among siblings, those between sisters were less important than those between brothers or between brother and sister. Sisters usually had an affectionate relationship, but, ordinarily, were together only during their early years. When they married, they left their parents' home for their husbands' villages, and returned only for visits that diminished in duration and frequency with the years. Sisters had few obligations to each other. There was relatively little gift-giving among them; but a woman might visit and bring a gift to her sister who had just given birth to a child. Younger sisters were expected to respect their older sisters. In India, a general principle of social interaction is that younger people practice deference and respect toward their elders. In Shanti Nagar, a desired and fairly frequent type of marriage was the mating of two sisters and two brothers. Such marriages were favored for two reasons: first, the expenses, both in time and money, were reduced, and, second, sisters were presumably affectionate and therefore would be less inclined to fight if they lived in the same joint family.

Perhaps the closest tie among relatives, with the exception of that between mother and child, was that between brother and sister. In casual conversations, villagers often tried to impress upon us the love of brothers and sisters. Once one of our closest friends asked Ruth Freed a hypothetical question: Suppose your husband, brother, and son were all in prison and a magistrate allowed you to choose one to be released. Which would you choose? For westerners the choice is difficult, but she answered "son" and gave her reasons. According to our informant, an Indian woman would want her brother to be free because she would have the most love for him.

Villagers emphasized the importance of the sister as compared with the wife by referring to the Ramayana. They liked to argue that Ravan (the villain) was actually in the right and Ram (the hero) was wrong, because Ram insulted the sister of Ravan, whereas all that Ravan did in return was to kidnap Ram's wife. "You can say 20 bad things to my wife," said one villager, "and I'll not do anything, but if you insult my sister I'll take action." A sister, he continued, is more important than a wife, and a mother is the most important of all.

This ideal picture of undeviating affection could be modified somewhat by observing the give-and-take of daily family life where brothers were not above roughly teasing their sisters to the point of making them angry. For example, we once watched a young boy teasing his older sister, asserting that she was married into a very small house where everyone lived in a single room, that she fought with her mother-in-law, and that she did not clean her buttocks. The sister retaliated by throwing clods of dirt, telling him that he should be ashamed of himself, and that he should act like a young man and work in the fields.

The brother and sister relationship was an integral part of a broader relationship between a wife's natal family and her husband's family that underlay a good proportion of economic and ceremonial activity. The consanguineal relatives of a wife had low status with respect to her affinal relatives to whom they had to give gifts. Obligatory gift-giving was frequent: at marriages, on numerous ceremonial occasions throughout the year, and when sisters (or daughters) returned to visit their natal homes. Men might borrow money from their wives' relatives. The relationship between brothers and sisters was not reciprocal: sisters did not give gifts (except for tokens, such as a charm on Raksha Bandhan) to their brothers. The feeling that sisters should not give gifts to brothers was quite strong. Once a young man, somewhat inclined to exaggerate, told us that his wife had given sweets to her brother and that he therefore hated her.

The required gift-giving and etiquette between families united by marriage were, for the most part, meticulously observed. The relations of any two families were generally extended throughout

their respective villages, for villagers considered themselves fictively related (S. Freed, 1963b). Thus, all the people of a village that had taken a few wives from the same village were senior (superior) to the people of the latter village; the relationship was not confined to the few families united by marriage. A man who was concerned with meeting his obligations to superior affines might give gifts to people who bore this relationship to him due to somewhat unusual circumstances. Once the husband of a sister of one of our female interpreters visited Shanti Nagar, and, when he left, our landlord insisted that he accept a rupee on the grounds that our assistant was our landlord's fictive daughter.

The superior status of a son-in-law in his wife's village was demonstrated in all his actions: he walked about like a king; his opinions were listened to respectfully. On the other hand, the high status of a son-in-law might result in a corresponding vulnerability to the routine foibles of life and could transform a trivial happening into a very funny event. Once, at a wedding, someone (possibly on purpose) emptied water from a hookah onto the cot of a son-in-law. The man was furious: he was, after all, a son-in-law. He told everyone not to bother him, that he would teach them all lessons, and so on. Everyone present thought the incident was hilarious and no one took him seriously.

Marital status sometimes conflicted with other determinants of social status. We once observed some delicate maneuvering, between a Jat Farmer and a man of a lower caste who was a son-in-law of Shanti Nagar, over seating arrangements on a cot. As a general rule, high-caste people sat toward the head of a cot and low-caste people, toward the foot. The conflict, in this case, was between caste status and marital status. Politely each man tried to defer to the other. They finally resolved the problem by fetching a chair so that one man could sit on the cot and the other separately on the chair.

We observed only one instance of the failure of a man to show proper respect to a sister's husband. One late afternoon, a young Jat Farmer was at our house drinking with us and a few other urbanized villagers. (Drinking was decidedly rare in Shanti Nagar. It was confined mainly to young urbanized men of the higher

castes and to low-caste people during festivals, such as Diwali and Holi.) The young Jat was supposed to be at home entertaining his wife's brother; his mother came to call him saying that his wife's brother was waiting for him so that he could take his meal. While the mother was still there, one of his sisters arrived to add her pleas to those of the mother. The women were unsuccessful. Finally, his very angry older brother arrived. He too was unsuccessful. Our friend left when he was good and ready. It is worth noting that this disrespectful man was the same one who had a reputation of not caring for his older brother, or for his wife. Unquestionably, he was extremely forceful and aggressive; only such a man would deliberately violate the strongly held values about showing proper respect.

Gift-giving between families related by marriage was extended beyond the basic father-daughter or brother-sister relationship. A man gave presents not only to his sister but to her children. Thus, the mother's brother became an important relative, and, when he died, his obligations would be assumed by his sons. In addition to giving gifts at marriages to his sister's children, the mother's brother rendered other kinds of aid. He might help his sister's son find a husband for the latter's daughter or sister. He also might help find employment for his sister's sons. Men could borrow money from their mother's brothers; males and females could live with them if such an arrangement was more convenient from the point of view of employment or schooling. At least once during our stay, a mother's brother came to Shanti Nagar to assist in building a house.

The relationship with the mother's brother was sometimes extended to more distant relatives. We made no attempt to investigate systematically its limits, but two informants described a typical mother's brother-sister's son relationship with their father's mother's brother. One of these informants attempted to extend the relationship to the father's mother's brother's son whom he invited to the marriage of his daughter, but the man did not come. Our informant said that relations between them had deteriorated; he attributed this change to the fact that his father's mother's brother's son was rich and he was not. In any case, the genealogical connection was apparently sufficiently distant

that the father's mother's brother's son could ignore his obligation to act in the capacity of a mother's brother. On the other hand, the same informant himself presented substantial gifts to his father's sister's son's children when they were married. He said that if a father's sister survived her brother, then the brother's son was responsible for the gifts that had to be sent to her family.

The basic brother-sister relationship sometimes resulted in a close tie between a man and his father's sister and her husband. Such a situation might arise, for example, when a boy lived temporarily with his father's sister and her husband. The father's sister might be childless and want a child in the house. Such an arrangement could be considered a form of gift-giving by the brother to his sister. Regardless of the specific reason for the special relationship, a man sometimes depended on his father's sister and her husband for aid. We have recorded a number of situations demonstrating this relationship: a father's sister's husband provided employment, taught a boy a trade, helped a man to find a husband for his daughter, and rendered other kinds of aid. We recorded no occasions in which a man borrowed money from his father's sister's husband, but we did not specifically ask about this form of aid. Borrowing money among relatives seemed mainly to be from one's wife's kinsmen, mother's brother, and members of one's lineage.

Villagers often explained the presentation of gifts to sisters and daughters in economic terms. Under the law in effect until 1956, a man's female descendants did not inherit a share of his property. The villagers considered the gifts that a daughter and a sister received every year throughout their lives to be, in a sense, their share of the property of their natal family. Villagers said that through gifts, brothers and parents paid a significant share of a female's expenses and that she therefore had no desire for a share in the family property. The value of the gifts that a female received generally declined as she grew older and increasingly identified with her husband's rather than her natal family. The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 fundamentally changed the system of inheritance. The provisions affecting the offspring of a male Hindu dying intestate specified that both his sons and his daughters were entitled

to equal shares of his property. At the time of our residence, no female had pressed a claim under this act; but villagers were aware of the possibility. Inevitably, some females (or their husbands on their behalf) would act under the new law; we would anticipate that the value of presents such females would receive from their natal families would substantially diminish.

### FAMILY: FORMATION AND CHANGE

New families were formed and old families changed in type when family members adopted new arrangements. Almost always, this change involved the division of a joint family into two or more separate families when its members decided that the difficulties of many individuals living together outweighed the advantages. New families organized for reasons such as these usually included a husband and wife. Other arrangements might occur, such as a family composed of a widow and her son. One type of family division did not occur in Shanti Nagar: that is, the common western practice of young single people, in their late teens or early twenties, leaving their parental home to live by themselves, then to search for husbands or wives and to establish new families. Nothing could be more foreign to Shanti Nagar with its close supervision of youngsters, its emphasis on the family, the authority of the family head, and the almost universal custom of early arranged marriages.

Families also changed in type through demographic changes. The gain or loss of family members as the result of births, marriages, and deaths would often necessarily change a family type: for example, when a nuclear family became a subnuclear family on the death of a husband. Demographic change could stimulate further change through the process of family division; for example, when married sons divided their family on the death of their parents. When viewed over a fairly long period of time, a family might appear to pass through a cycle of types because of demographic changes and the voluntary adoption of new structural arrangements. As a simple example, let us consider a nuclear family composed of a couple with two sons. One son marries and the family becomes a lineal joint family; the other son marries and the family becomes a lin-

ear-collateral joint family; the parents die and the family becomes a collateral joint family; then the brothers decide to separate and the family becomes two nuclear families. It is important to note that all families do not pass through a single cycle of family types but rather through a number of possible cycles involving combinations of various types of joint and nuclear families.

Family division was by far the most complex of all the demographic and structural changes that a family might experience. This disruption was not so much caused by the restructuring of relationships among family members, because these were often simplified and eased by such a division, but rather by the necessity to divide the family property. All males were entitled legally to an equal share of the family property. Consequently, to divide a family ultimately involved dividing all of its property, a process that might take months or years. However, one point in this process clearly marked the separation of a family: according to the villagers, families had separated when they divided their cooking, that is, when they separated their supplies of food and cooked on separate hearths. The families might continue to live in the same house, farm their land together (although they divided the produce), and own most of the remainder of their property jointly; but at this point they regarded themselves as separate families, and so did the other villagers.

For purposes of division, some types of family property might be assigned a monetary value. The ownership of large pieces of equipment, of which there might be only one in a family, such as mechanical fodder cutters, were decided by having each family value the object. The family that placed the higher value on it retained it and paid half of its value to the other family. For example, if one of two families valued a fodder cutter at Rs. 80 and the other at Rs. 70, the first kept the machine and paid Rs. 40 to the other family. Ownership of houses was sometimes decided in the same way: the family that placed the higher value on the house paid half of its value to the other family who then built its own house. Houses might also be divided by building a new interior wall that partitioned it into separate quarters. Other kinds of property were generally divided without an assignment of monetary

value. Property, such as pots, that could be separated into lots of equal value was so divided.

The villagers distinguished personal property and family property. Personal property was not divided when families separated. For example, a wife usually kept all the brass vessels, household implements, jewelry, and other articles that formed part of the dowry she had brought from her natal family. The presents, such as clothing, that she regularly received from her parents also belonged to her. However, presents sent by her parents to her parents-in-law belonged to them. These would be considered family property to be divided among the sons after the parents' death and the division of the family.

Land was divided so that each son received an equal area. A family's landholding was usually distributed among several small fields, often widely separated. Although equal areas could be achieved, in some cases, by assigning half the fields to each family, this was usually not done; instead, each plot was divided. For example, if the original undivided family had 10 plots of land, each new family also had 10 plots of land rather than five each. This form of property division made an obvious contribution to land fragmentation. Not infrequently, most of a family's land would be divided soon after the families separated, but a few plots, such as those that were unfit for cultivation due to an accumulation of salts, might be held jointly for years.

In Shanti Nagar, the system of traditional economic relationships between a worker (client) and his patrons (jajmans), known as the jajmani system was still practiced. The jajmani system had a number of characteristic features, among them, the fact that a patron had little control over the client family that served him. If he was unhappy with the service that one of his clients rendered, he could terminate the relationship, or complain, or purchase the service in another village, or in a city. For example, if a patron was dissatisfied with his village barber, he could have his hair cut in Delhi, but he could not ordinarily dismiss his village barber and replace him with another in Shanti Nagar. A worker, then, could be considered as having a permanent arrangement with his patron. This traditional permanent relationship was considered to be a form of property. Consequently, when it divided, a client

family divided its patron families like any other form of property. For example if a client family that served four families of patrons divided into two parts, each of the new families would retain two patrons.

Joint families might choose at any time to separate into nuclear families. Joint landowning families often separated when the father died or became too old to act as family head. If a family separated during the lifetime of the father, the family property was partitioned equally among the sons and the father. After the joint family was broken up, the father ordinarily lived with one of his sons, usually the youngest, and that son farmed his father's land. Upon the death of the father, his share was divided among all his sons.

If a father did not want to divide his land and property, his sons could not force him to. A father's unwillingness to divide the family-owned land and other property was not enough to deter a son from establishing a separate household, provided he was determined to do so and was willing and able to support himself. However, it was unusual for a young man from a landowning family to separate from his father and establish a separate household in the village without a division of the family property. We were aware of only one such case in the village, that of a young man who had a permanent factory job in Delhi. Ordinarily, he would have depended on a division of the family property to establish a separate residence; but, in this situation, he had to borrow money to build and furnish a house. He was able to do this because he had a job in the city and could repay the loan out of his wages. Ultimately, when his father died, this man would share in the family estate. Although income from city employment made urban-oriented sons less economically dependent on their families and therefore provided such young men with the capability to separate from their fathers in advance of a division of the family land and other property, such a separation happened infrequently.

Among the landless, the timing for the division of joint families differed. Landless joint families often divided shortly after the wife of a married son came to live permanently with her husband's family. The division of landless families was not inhibited by the ownership of land,



an inconvenient form of property to divide; also, they had relatively little other property. We knew three landless Chuhra Sweeper families who separated without a concurrent division of the patrons. One man whose father was dead and who had a city job separated from his widowed mother, leaving her all the family's patrons. This separation occurred just as we began to take our census; several months later, he returned to live with his mother again. Another man who did not have a city job was recently separated from his elderly father without a division of the family's patrons. Possibly the patrons were not divided because the son could earn a living without them and his old and feeble father could not. The third situation involved a man who lived and worked outside of Shanti Nagar, although his wife was still in the village. The patrons to which he would eventually be entitled were currently served by his brother. The foregoing three cases were comparable with that of a man of a landowning family separating from his family without receiving his share of the family's land, and they indicated that such behavior was more common among the landless than among the landowners.

The relatively longer period that landowning families continued as joint families, as compared with landless ones, should have been reflected in a larger proportion of joint families among the landowning than among the landless families. The probability that a family has one of several possible structures at the moment of observation depends on the length of time it maintains that structure. Table 26 gives the families of Shanti Nagar by type and ownership of land. We find that, as surmised, landowning families were more likely to be joint than landless families, and that the difference is significant at the .02 level.

Villagers usually gave the reasons for abandoning the joint family as tense interpersonal relations and intrafamily quarreling, especially among the wives who, unlike the male members of the family, were usually not related by blood. The villagers often cited several causes for the breakup of a joint family: intrafamily disputes; the members of one family spent more, ate more, or worked harder than others in the joint family; one man with a number of daughters would require expensive wedding ceremonies, whereas his brother had no daughters; or a shortage of wom-

TABLE 26<sup>a</sup>  
Families by Type and Landownership  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Landownership	Supplemented			Total
	Nuclear	Nuclear	Joint	
Owens land	15 (25)	16 (27)	28 (48)	59
Landless	26 (51)	12 (24)	13 (25)	51
Total	41 (37)	28 (26)	41 (37)	110

Chi-square, 8.47

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .01 < p < .02

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 11.

en in the joint family so that the wife of one of the brothers was responsible for too heavy a share of the household work. Low-caste families, who often lived in one-room mud huts, said that families might divide because a young man "felt shy" when he lived with his father after he was married.

Our data with regard to the breakup of specific joint families into their component nuclear families confirm the general statements of informants. In almost every case, family members told us that tense interpersonal relations existed. In one family, for example, tense relations between a woman and her husband's younger brother led to a decision to divide the family as soon as a 13-year-old boy, who would be the only male in one of the nuclear families resulting from the division, became old enough to plow. As this example demonstrates, the division of a family depended not only on the desires of its members but also on the selection of the appropriate moment (cf. Gore, 1968, pp. 22,38). Thus, another woman, in discussing the pending division of her joint family, said that it would not take place until all the children were married and the parents were old. Her family owned land; in such families, in the usual course of events, the joint family divided when the parents were old or after their death.

In dealing with the reasons for the division of joint families, one must look beyond the explanations given by villagers. Interpersonal relations were seldom continually smooth. An even correspondence between the work contributed to the

**TABLE 27**  
**Landowning Families by Type and Size**  
**of Landholding**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Landholding (bighas) <sup>a</sup>	Nuclear	Supplemented Nuclear	Joint	Total
Less than 20	9 (45)	6 (30)	5 (25)	20
21-100	2 (9)	8 (36)	12 (55)	22
101-312	4 (23)	2 (12)	11 (65)	17
Total	15 (25)	16 (27)	28 (48)	59

<sup>a</sup>These intervals were selected so that they all would contain approximately the same number of families.

joint family by the component nuclear families and the benefits each derived from the joint family was unlikely to be achieved. But why should such difficulties lead to division in some families and not in others? These factors tended to be constants in the family situation just as were the reasons advanced by villagers for maintaining the joint family: the absence of loneliness, the sharing of griefs and pleasures, and economic reasons, such as cooperation in work and greater financial strength (Appendix, question 32)(cf. Gore, 1968, pp. 121-123). The question is why in one family, a quarrel between wives should have been advanced as a reason for dividing a joint family, and, in another case, a family cited cooperation in work or emotional support as reasons for staying together.

The ownership of land is one factor that seems clearly related to the occurrence of joint families. We have already noted the high correlation between joint families and landownership (table 26). In addition, the proportion of joint families increases directly with the size of landholdings (table 27). One can readily understand the reasons for a relationship between landownership and family type. The separation of a joint family into its component nuclear families involved a division of property, and it was inconvenient to divide land because a family's landholding usually consisted of a number of scattered plots. The division of these plots, as was customary when a joint family separated, increased the labor and expense of cultivation; and the trading of plots in order to achieve a signifi-

cant degree of land consolidation involved difficult decisions that the individual farmer would prefer to avoid. Recent land-reform legislation had effectively eliminated the possibility that a family lease its land to a tenant and divide the income. The option to sell land and divide the money did not really exist in Shanti Nagar and in most Indian villages. Land was too valuable. It was the preferred investment in rural India: it was inflation-proof and taxes were low; its ownership provided social standing that could be attained in no other way; and, lastly, the emotional implications of the ownership of land to the Indian farmer were powerful.

### FAMILY TYPE AND URBAN INFLUENCES

The Shanti Nagar data can be used to investigate the relationship between family type and urban experience. If urbanization results in the breakdown of the joint family and its replacement by the nuclear family, we might expect to find a higher proportion of joint families among those headed by village-oriented men than among those headed by urban-oriented men. Table 28 presents the relevant data. Joint families were slightly more frequent among those headed by village-oriented men, but the difference is not statistically significant. Thus, family type appears

**TABLE 28<sup>a</sup>**  
**Families by Type and Urban Experience**  
**of Family Head<sup>b</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Family Head	Nuclear	Supplemented Nuclear	Joint	Total
Village-oriented	16 (30)	15 (28)	22 (42)	53
Urban-oriented	22 (41)	13 (24)	19 (35)	54
Total	38 (36)	28 (26)	41 (38)	107

Chi-square, 1.30  
 Degrees of freedom, 2  
 Probability, .50 < p < .70

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 2.

<sup>b</sup>Omitted are three families headed by women whose urban experience is unknown.

to bear no relationship to the urban experience of the head of a family.

The possibility that a relationship between urban experience and family type exists but that it is masked by the effects of other variables can be explored by investigating the relation of family type and the urban experience of family heads while holding other variables relatively constant. For example, by dividing the families of Shanti Nagar into high- and low-caste groups and comparing the families headed by urban-oriented men with those headed by village-oriented men within each group of castes, one can analyze the relation of urban influences and type of family with caste position held relatively constant. We have made such a comparison, and we have also, by following a similar procedure, studied the relationship of urban experience and family type while controlling, to some extent, the effects of landownership and literacy. These comparisons were reported by S. Freed and R. Freed (1969) and are not repeated here. The general conclusion that family type is independent of the urban experience of family heads continues to hold when the variables of caste position, the ownership of land, and literacy are held relatively constant.

This conclusion should be viewed with some caution, for the essential difference between urban-oriented and village-oriented men in Shanti Nagar was an average of 7.8 years of urban employment and/or residence (based on a random sample of 28 urban-oriented men). In Shanti Nagar we found no correlation of family type and urban experience; however, a comparison in which the contrast between urban and nonurban is stronger than in Shanti Nagar could well show such a correlation. Furthermore, a survey of Shanti Nagar in, for example, 1978, 20 years after we made this study, might show a significantly greater amount of urbanization both in numbers of men exposed to city life and employment and the extent of such exposure. Thus, the relation between urban experience and family type could be given an additional test in Shanti Nagar because an increase in urbanization, should it occur, might possibly be correlated with a significantly higher proportion of nuclear families.

Apparently there had been no change in

actual family types as a result of urban influence, nor did attitudes toward family arrangements appear to have been significantly different in urban-oriented and village-oriented people. Analysis of the answers to question 31, Appendix, (Do you prefer living in joint houses or separately?) showed no significant difference between village-oriented and urban-oriented men although it is noteworthy that the proportion of men who selected the joint family declined in direct proportion to the intensity of their urban experience: 89 percent of the village-oriented men selected the joint family as compared to 82 percent of the commuters and only 61 percent of emigrants. The situation among women was comparable with 85 percent of the village-oriented women who selected the joint family as compared with 73 percent of the commuters and 75 percent of the emigrants.

We can present no quantitative data with respect to the relation of urban experience and role behavior among family members, such as we can for the relation of family type and urban influences. However, we observed considerable interaction and, as we gradually learned who among those we observed was urban-oriented and who was village-oriented, we were able to arrive at some estimates of variations in role behavior between the two groups of individuals. On the whole, we were able to discern only minor differences between the two groups. The tension between urban-oriented sons and their family heads seemed to be somewhat greater than between village-oriented sons and their family heads. Urban-oriented men seemed more inclined to violate village norms with regard to the correct behavior toward relatives, although it must be emphasized that such improper behavior was very infrequent. Similar deviations from customary behavior were also true of other village norms: the few village men whom we knew to have mistresses were all urban-oriented; most of the high-caste men who indulged in alcohol were also urban-oriented; and urban-oriented men seemed less concerned than village-oriented men with caste restrictions (S. Freed, 1963a, p. 890; 1970, p. 6). In short, urban-oriented men, as a group, seemed somewhat more critical, aggressive, and generally dissatisfied than village-oriented men. These personality

characteristics were expressed in various ways including behavior toward family members and other relatives.

### FAMILY TYPE AND SELECTED VARIABLES

The Shanti Nagar data can be used to analyze the relationship between family type and a number of variables. We have demonstrated above (p.81) that family type and urbanization were apparently independent variables. However, the urbanized group of men included some who had retired and no longer lived and worked in cities. One might suspect that if these retired men were removed from the urbanized group and we compared families headed by men who followed traditional occupations and those headed by men who currently held a nontraditional job that paid a cash income and provided relative economic independence, we might find a correlation between current occupation and family type. Yadava (1966) who studied this problem in a village of the Union Territory of Delhi has presented data demonstrating that family heads who followed traditional occupations were much more likely to head joint families than those who held nontraditional jobs paying a cash income. We have calculated a value of chi-square from Yadava's data, and the difference between the two groups is highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). For the Shanti Nagar data, we find a correlation between current employment and family type that is significant at the .05 level; family heads with traditional occupations were more likely to head joint families than those with nontraditional jobs.

We believe, however, that this apparent relationship between current employment and family type actually represents a relationship between the age of a family head and family type. Men aged 40 or older were more likely to head joint families than younger men, principally because a younger man might rarely have a son of marriageable age. The very high correlation ( $p < .001$ ) between family type and the age of the family head can be observed by examining the data given in table 29. Since family heads less than 40 years of age were more likely to be em-

ployed for cash at nontraditional occupations than older men (table 30), it is difficult to separate the effects of age from the effects of type of employment. The Shanti Nagar data we found most suitable for testing the relationship of type of current employment and family type are derived from the families headed by men under 40 years old. When age is held relatively constant in this fashion, we find no difference in family type between those families headed by men with nontraditional cash-paying jobs and those families whose heads followed traditional occupations (table 31).

Literacy, caste, and type of house are other variables that may possibly influence family type. We have dealt elsewhere (S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969) in some detail with the relationship between family type and these variables and need present only a summary here. Neither literacy nor type of house, be it of brick or mud, is correlated with family type. Caste, however, does appear to be correlated with family type. When the high-caste family types are compared with those of the low castes, we find joint families more common among the high castes in contrast with nuclear families that predominate among the low castes. The difference is significant at the .02 level.

We believe that the correlation between caste and family type actually represents a correlation between landownership and family type. It is im-

TABLE 29<sup>a</sup>  
Families by Type and Age of Family Head<sup>b</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Family Head	Nuclear	Supplemented Nuclear	Joint	Total
39 years and younger	25 (61)	10 (24)	6 (15)	41
40 years and older	13 (20)	18 (27)	35 (53)	66
Total	38 (36)	28 (26)	41 (38)	107

Chi-square, 21.94  
Degrees of freedom, 2  
Probability,  $p < .001$

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 6.

<sup>b</sup>Omitted are three families headed by women.

TABLE 30<sup>a</sup>  
Family Heads by Age and Occupation<sup>b</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Family Head	Nontraditional Job Cash Income	Traditional Job	Total
39 years and younger	15 (37)	26 (63)	41
40 years and older	7 (11)	59 (89)	66
Total	22 (21)	85 (79)	107

Chi-square, 8.92

Degrees of freedom, 1

Probability, .001 < p < .01

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 7.

<sup>b</sup>Omitted are three families headed by women.

possible to separate the effects of caste and landownership in Shanti Nagar, because 58 of 64 high-caste families owned land and 45 of 46 low-caste families did not. Thus, one cannot determine whether what seems to be an effect of caste is based on landownership or an apparent effect of landownership is actually based on caste. That the effective variable is landownership and not caste position seems reasonable to us because we know of no reason why caste position, by itself, should influence family type, but we can easily see a relation between landownership and family type, especially if a family itself cultivates the

TABLE 31<sup>a</sup>  
Families by Type and Occupation of Family  
Head 20 to 39 Years Old  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Family Head	Nuclear	Sup- plemented		Total
		Nuclear	Joint	
Nontraditional job, cash income	9 (60)	4 (27)	2 (13)	15
Traditional job	16 (62)	6 (23)	4 (15)	26
Total	25 (61)	10 (24)	6 (15)	41

Chi-square, .08

Degrees of freedom, 2

Probability, .95 < p < .98

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1969, table 8.

land. The probable inefficiencies and inconveniences associated with land division and fragmentation could easily be one influential factor that inhibited the division of joint families.

In summary, the variables correlated with family type are age of family head and landownership. We could detect no relationship of urbanization or of current employment with family type.

## LINEAGE

A family or household (*ghar*) was almost invariably a member of a patrilineage. The villagers usually called a patrilineage a *kunba*, sometimes a *khandan*, and rarely, a *kutumb*. Villagers called a group of kinsmen a *kunba* or *khandan* even if they could no longer remember the genealogical links among the constituting families. Usually, however, when villagers spoke of a *kunba*, they referred to a group of families among whom the genealogical links were known, at least by older informants. When villagers used both terms, *kunba* and *khandan*, in the same discussion, the latter referred to the more encompassing patrilineal group. Thus, on one occasion, two men representing different Jat Farmer *kunbas* were arguing a matter that was a source of dispute between their *kunbas*. One man said that his *kunba* feared his opponent's, to which remark the second man replied, "Why should you be afraid; we are all one *khandan*." We had, in this case, been unable to elicit a genealogical link between the two *kunbas*, although our informants knew that the two *kunbas* were ultimately related and that the relationship appeared in the government records, a fact that we verified. The common ancestor was in the sixth generation, counting the generation of the most senior family head as the first.

Although some villagers said that *kunba* and *khandan* had the same meaning and that the two terms were used interchangeably, *khandan* generally referred to a patrilineage of greater genealogical age than *kunba* (Yadava, 1969, p. 496). Yadava (1969) discussed in detail the connotations of the various terms applied to groups of patrilineal kinsmen in a village very similar to Shanti Nagar. He emphasized that although the usage of terms is seemingly imprecise and inter-

changeable, villagers themselves are never confused; to them, the context makes the meaning clear.

In general, we equate lineage or patrilineage with *kunba*, except that we do not use lineage to refer to kinsmen among whom well-informed individuals could not trace genealogical connections. On the basis of this definition, we find that the largest *kunba* of Shanti Nagar had 10 families and that the genealogically oldest was five generations beginning the count with the most senior family head of the lineage. The question as to when patrilineally related families ceased constituting a *kunba* depended as much on sentiment as on genealogical age. We believe that the *khandan* mentioned above, with an age of six generations, could have continued to be a *kunba* except for a bitter lawsuit over land that was fought several decades earlier leaving a residue of considerable tension and animosity. Families involved in a dispute of great intensity would probably feel uncomfortable if they tried to function together in the normal social, ceremonial, and economic activities of a *kunba*. The mere fact of patrilineal descent did not make a *kunba*; the history of interfamilial interaction and sentiment was also important.

The houses and fields of the members of a patrilineage were generally situated close to one another. Proximity as much as lineality was basic to much of the interaction among lineage members. This was especially applicable to the major recreation indulged in by adult men: smoking the hookah and gossiping. A good deal of this occurred within the lineage. But proximity, caste, and friendship were, we believe, as important as lineage membership in these activities because these recreational groups often included friends who were unrelated caste fellows and, sometimes, friends from other castes of comparable standing in the caste hierarchy who lived in the immediate vicinity. A man who was a member of a small lineage apparently did not lack companionship, especially if his house was surrounded by the houses of his caste fellows.

Women had no social recourse quite comparable with these evening male hookah-smoking groups. Their social life was more centered within the family, partly because the women were busy and, generally, were unrelated to other

women of the patrilineage. However, one did frequently see groups of gossiping women at odd moments during the day, and they had many opportunities for chatting during the course of their normal work. For example, the twice daily trip to the well to draw water had some aspects of a social occasion for women. Many of the village wives dressed up for the late afternoon visit to the well, and they presented a most attractive picture as they paraded by the groups of men smoking their hookahs. The women were veiled, so we were unable to identify most wives on these occasions but the men of the village were expert in identifying all the females. When sings (*gits*) were held on the occasion of birth and marriage ceremonies, of which there were many, the older married women chatted about their children and grandchildren and other family matters. The arrival of a new bride in the village might also be an occasion for a social gathering.

Social relations within the lineage were not always amiable; there could be a good deal of quarreling. The houses of brothers or cousins might be adjacent to each other, their fields usually adjoined, and specific economic activities might be done in partnership. Circumstances such as these could easily lead to misunderstandings and disputes. We observed more trivial squabbling between neighbors who were members of the same lineage than between unrelated neighbors. For example, a daughter of one of the families (Family A) we knew well once picked up a hoe that belonged to her father's father's brother's son who lived next door to her family, but the owner's wife retrieved it before it was used. Shortly thereafter, the father's cousin complained to the girl's father that she had broken the hoe. Her father denied the accusation, saying that his daughter had not used the hoe, and the argument went no further. This sort of dispute between these two families went on constantly. On the other hand, Family A had once had a serious dispute with an unrelated family who lived next door to them, after which the two families generally ignored each other, a condition easy to continue because their only connection was proximity. Lineage members were, on the one hand, drawn together by common ceremonial, social, and political interests deriving from their relationship and, on the other, were

often separated by different economic interests. Most of the disputes between Family A and the cousin's family living next door involved property; the women were the principal antagonists: for example, the incident of the broken hoe described above, charges of stealing fodder, and the theft of a piece of clothing by a child.

Disputes within the lineage were considered to be "family" matters. They were not the concern of outsiders or even close friends of the disputants. For example, a minor argument once erupted in the fields between a boy and his father's father's brother's son's wife. The woman's husband went to the fields to intervene, taking with him a close friend (Friend A) of another caste. The boy's father then complained to another friend (Friend B) of his cousin that it was improper to bring an outsider into a lineage dispute, and this friend said as much to the cousin. The dispute did not end at this point, especially because Friend B enjoyed disputes and he went to Friend A and told him that he should not have become involved. Friend A denied having done so and bet Friend B five beatings with shoes that the accusation was false. They checked with the boy's father who said that Friend A had indeed intervened. Friend A cross-examined the boy's father who admitted he had not seen Friend A go to the fields, but that he had only heard that he had done so. Then everyone good-naturedly lectured the boy's father telling him that he should not report on events that he had not actually observed. This series of minor confrontations illustrated one of the basic principles of social interaction in Shanti Nagar: family matters should be settled in the family, and lineage affairs, within the lineage. The incident and its outcome also illustrated the difficulty of learning the facts in any dispute. One was never sure.

Often intralineage disputes of some seriousness could not be handled within the lineage. Under these circumstances, outsiders had to intervene. Sometimes, they were summoned by the disputants; sometimes, they acted on their own initiative, apparently believing that it was their duty or possibly that this kind of activity would enhance their prestige. Various nonmembers of the lineage might try to settle a dispute: relatives

other than lineage members, caste fellows, or influential men from other castes (usually Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests).

The case of two Chamar Leatherworker brothers who fell into a dispute over land was an example of how proximity and the concern with property could lead to quarrels, even among lineage members, and how such disputes could involve efforts by lineage nonmembers to effect a settlement. The men's sitting house belonging to Chamar A was at the corner of a lane and one of the main village streets (see fig. 10). The drain at the center of the lane curved as it approached the street and passed diagonally over a corner of his land. He wanted to straighten the drain to square off his land. If this were done, Chamar B would have to find a new location for his cattle. Chamar A offered Chamar B an alternate site. Chamar B accepted, but said that he would build a house on that site with the door facing a *nim* tree owned by Chamar A; furthermore, he intended to put his cots under the tree. Chamar A would not accept this, complaining, "What did I plant that tree for, if you're going to put your cots under it?" Chamar A wanted Chamar B to construct his house so that the door would open to the main street. Chamar B asked, "Whoever heard of a door on a main street?"

Although we heard about the dispute when it first broke out, we did not get to the Chamar section of the village until the following day when we went there to learn what had happened. The dispute had not yet been settled; our questioning got the Chamars excited and they began arguing again. At this stage, the disputants and their lineage were clearly unable to resolve the quarrel. Other Chamar Leatherworkers, led by a mother's brother's son of the disputants, tried to make peace, but they were unsuccessful. Some time later, we noticed that a leading Jat man was trying to settle the dispute unaided. Some of the Chamars said that the Jat had come of his own volition when he heard the shouting, but others said that he had been asked to intervene. He, too, was unsuccessful and more Jat men entered the dispute. A month later, the dispute was still unsettled. At this point, a formal panchayat consisting of three Brahman men and eight Jat men met to consider the issue. They hammered out a writ-

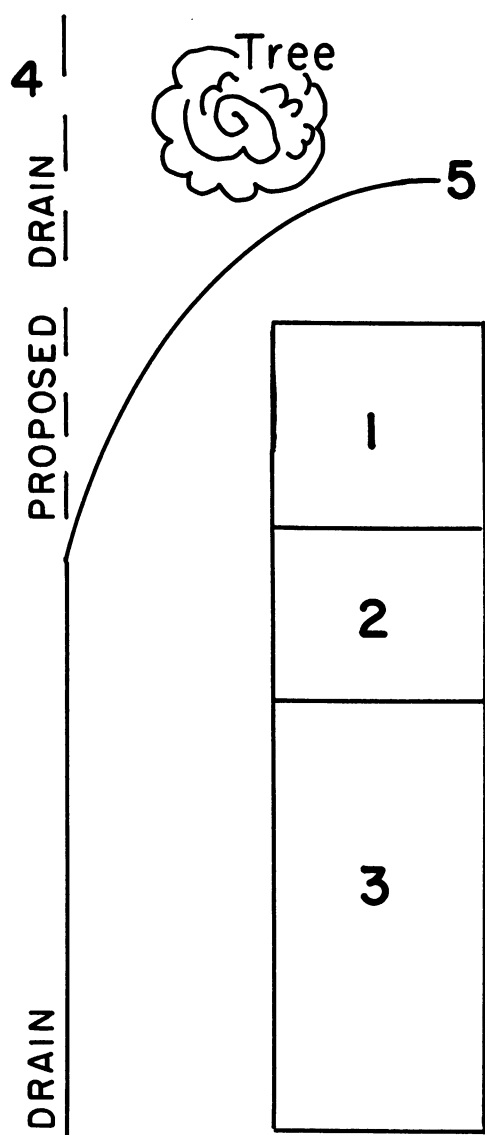


FIG. 10. Site of Chamar Leatherworker dispute. 1, sitting house of Chamar A; 2, house for cattle belonging to Chamar A; 3, house of Chamar B; 4, area used by Chamar B for cattle; and 5, suggested new location for cattle belonging to Chamar B.

ten agreement to which the disputants affixed their thumb prints. The dispute had progressed from lineage to caste to village. The panchayat

was the highest village authority; the next step in effecting a solution would have been either to summon a multivillage panchayat or go to the courts.

Lineages had ceremonial functions. Some of the ceremonies involved in marriage were obligatory for lineage members. One informant defined a *kunba* as that group of families in which a marriage in any constituent family required the participation of all the other families. This impressed us as a good definition of a *kunba*. One might profitably compare groups defined according to this criterion with the lineages that could be defined by genealogical questioning. However, the lineage had no relation to offering or accepting invitations to weddings of families outside of one's own lineage. One participated in accordance with one's affections. One might invite a single family from another lineage or several; and there was no obligation to accept an invitation to a wedding outside one's lineage even though other families of the lineage might do so.

Other ceremonies, or parts thereof, might take place in one of the houses of the *kunba* that represented the entire lineage. Thus, during the festival of Sanjhi, gay attractive clay figures of the goddess were constructed in many houses. However, in our survey of the village on this holiday, we discovered houses with no figures of Sanjhi. When we asked a woman why no figure of Sanjhi had been made in her house, she replied that no figure was necessary because another family in her lineage had constructed one for all the members of the lineage.

Other ceremonies involved all or many families of a lineage, not so much because of lineage membership itself but rather because the houses of a lineage were situated in proximity. Some ceremonies involved processions by groups of women and girls through the village. For example, in one event of Sanjhi, a group of women and girls visited all the houses of its lineage to collect grain which was then traded for sweets at the shop of the Baniya Merchant. These sweets were, in turn, distributed in the lineage. However, the group that we accompanied on Sanjhi included women of a Brahman Priest lineage as a nucleus, as well as women from the Baniya Merchant family and two Jhinvar Waterman families



who lived nearby. Thus, both lineality and proximity were involved in this ceremonial group, a situation true of most similar ceremonial groups. Public worship by women was usually done in a group. Because there were only two families of Jhinvar Watermen and one of Baniya Merchants, the women of these families were almost compelled to join with the women of other castes. Moreover, they were on the most friendly terms with the Brahman women with whom they participated.

Because the family was the independent economic unit, the economic functions of lineages were minimal. However, in some activities, during which the cooperation of several families was almost mandatory, lineage membership appeared clearly to underlie the cooperating groups. The most outstanding of these cooperative activities was the operation of the eight sugarcane crushers of Shanti Nagar. Sugarcane, one of the principal crops of Shanti Nagar, was the most important cash crop. There was no sugarcane mill in the region, so the farmers crushed their own cane and made a kind of brown sugar known as gur. A quantity of gur adequate for family use was retained and the rest was sold.

The facilities necessary to crush sugarcane and process the juice were relatively expensive, for example, the rental fee for the crusher and the purchase price of the large iron pans in which the juice was boiled; no single family in Shanti Nagar grew enough sugarcane to operate a press economically. Consequently, at least two families, but usually several, combined to share the expense of operating a crusher. Some of these cooperative groups were composed entirely of families belonging to a single lineage; the rest, except for two, were so organized that more than half of the families were from a single lineage. Although the demeanor of the people working at the sugarcane crushers was usually relaxed and congenial, we noticed considerable tension in the air among the proprietors at one of the crushers that was not solidly based on lineage connections. We have already stated that a good deal of squabbling occurred within lineages, often over economic matters, but this might have been partly because certain economic arrangements were more often made within the lineage than

with outsiders. The risk of tension and trouble might have been even greater if such arrangements were made with families outside the lineage.

Reciprocal exchange of labor was another aspect of economic cooperation, a practice known as *dangwara* when applied to agricultural labor. The reciprocal exchange of labor was not so widely based upon the lineage as was that of the cooperative sugarcane crushers. We observed that the exchange of labor was practiced at least as often with families belonging to other lineages as with families of one's own lineage. Our questionnaire (Appendix, question 29) included an inquiry on the reciprocal exchange of labor. Of the 43 men resident in Shanti Nagar who replied to the question, only eight (19%) told us that they shared labor only within the family and lineage; the comparable figures for women were 14 out of 32 (44%). Once again, we note a somewhat stronger family orientation among women than among men. If the replies of men and women are combined, we find that 22 of 75 respondents (29%) reported that the exchange of labor was restricted to the limits of the family or lineage. Thus, we conclude that although it was a significant factor in the exchange of labor, especially for women, the lineage was not dominant.

A variety of other economic activities took place within the lineages. According to one of our informants, one could arrange loans on more favorable terms from families of one's lineage than from outsiders; he claimed to have borrowed as much as Rs. 1000 on which he had not been required to pay interest. Also, other informants said that when land was mortgaged within the lineage, the transaction was informal and was not always recorded in the government records. Because adjoining fields were often owned by brothers, cooperation was highly desirable in some agricultural activities. For example, while we lived in the village, two brothers with adjoining fields shared the considerable costs of digging a well at a location where it would serve to irrigate the fields belonging to both of them.

One must bear in mind that when a family cooperated economically with other families belonging to its lineage, such cooperation was based on affection, convenience, or efficiency; but no

jural obligations were involved. The lineage was not an economic unit. Thus, even when families were members of the same lineage, the family heads negotiated arrangements just as they would with nonrelatives. This was true even when property was owned in common. For example, an empty mud house in the middle of Shanti Nagar that was owned in common by three Jat Farmer families of the same lineage was deteriorating badly. (The three families lived in a fine brick house on the outskirts of the village.) During the rainy season, the mud house was in danger of collapsing. Once, during a heavy rainfall when another house had just collapsed with a loud crash, a man from one of these three families was sitting in our house with another Jat Farmer man. The Jat Farmer criticized the householder for not taking care of his old house. He pointed out that material worth Rs. 1000 was still left in the house; the door alone, he claimed, was worth Rs. 300. If the house collapsed, the door would be damaged. The householder listened quietly and then said that his critic failed to recognize the difficulty of organizing the three owner families to take care of the old house. One family lived most of the time in Delhi and although members contributed whatever money was required, this still left something to be desired; and although the other family lived in Shanti Nagar, they did not care about the old house. The householder concluded by observing that a true friend would never speak softly to you when your property was being damaged. No sooner had he disposed of his Jat Farmer critic than a Brahman Priest woman entered the room and began to berate him about the house.

Lengthy and bitter disputes and lawsuits sometimes erupted over landownership and/or occupancy. When families of different lineages were the disputants, they were often supported by the other members of their respective lineages. Major disputes might spread beyond these contenders to involve not only other lineages of the same caste, and villagers of different castes, but also some individuals who lived in other villages. Villagers referred to these groups of allied lineages and families as *dhars* or parties. The English word, party, was often used. In anthropological publications about Indian villages, parties have often been designated as factions. In any

case, the nuclei of the prominent parties of Shanti Nagar consisted of one or two landowning lineages. Once formed, parties might continue to function beyond the limits of the original dispute from which they had stemmed, in which case they might seize upon any dispute or election that occurred in the village as an opportunity to renew the battle with their opponents. Thus, much of the political and legal life of Shanti Nagar was organized around the more powerful landowning lineages, whose component families generally acted as a unit in such activities. To some extent this unity depended upon one member of the lineage, usually a senior man sufficiently respected to dominate the other heads of families. Although one favored political strategy was to attempt to split a lineage over a particular issue, lineages ordinarily presented a united front to outsiders.

During our stay in Shanti Nagar, village political life was dominated by two parties that grew out of a protracted land dispute among Jat Farmer lineages some four decades preceding our arrival. After the death of a childless widow with a large landholding, a dispute developed among her heirs. The point at issue was that some of them had farmed part of her land for years as tenants, and they argued that they were entitled to the right of permanent occupancy. Under the land laws then in effect, the continuous occupation of a piece of land under specific conditions and for a specific extended period of time conferred the right of permanent occupancy. The opposing families argued that the widow's land should be divided according to the genealogically determined shares to which each family would be entitled on the basis of relationship to the widow's husband. The right of occupancy versus the right of ownership was a common cause of disputes over land. In this case, those who argued in favor of occupancy rights were members of one lineage while the members of two other lineages favored the rights of ownership.

The opposing lineages in this land dispute added various allies and developed into parties. One of the parties was solidly based on a single lineage; the other party was based on an alliance of two lineages. One of the two allied lineages was more closely related to the opposing lineage than to its ally. Occasionally villagers commented

that if things were being done strictly according to lineage connection, then these two antagonistic lineages would be natural allies.

A characteristic feature of village life, often noted in northern India, is the antagonism of lineages (factionalism). This situation was almost inevitable, we believe, because of certain laws, attitudes, and demographic facts of life. First, the land laws provided various rights in land, apart from the right of inheritance from relatives, that often offered legal grounds for disputing the occupancy of, or title to, land. Second, all male descendants had an equal share in their father's property. Third, although a widow did not inherit her husband's land, she controlled it until her death, if she had no son. Fourth, land was very valuable; even the mildest man would fight very hard for land. Fifth, records of landownership and occupancy were not entirely reliable and could be altered. Rumors that wealthy men had bribed a government official to change land records were common. Finally, a substantial number of landowning men died without leaving male descendants. This was not apparent if genealogical investigations were confined only to questioning informants because they often forgot, or failed to mention, men who had died without leaving male descendants. However, an examination of government records for Shanti Nagar revealed many such men and at least two once populous lineages that had become extinct. Thus, if a widow who had no sons outlived her husband for many years and related families occupied her land, as tenants, for a number of years, the stage was set for a battle after her death between those who would profit from a division of the land according to occupancy and those who favored a division according to hereditary ownership. These quarrels often pitted lineage against lineage.

It would be hazardous to attempt to forecast the effects of recent developments external to the village upon the functions of lineages. As long as land is inherited almost exclusively by males and residence is patrilocal and virilocal, lineages will exist as structural features of village life, and their social, recreational, and ceremonial functions will continue essentially unmodified. However, there is now a legal basis for widows and daughters to inherit land if they so choose.

This newly enacted legal provision was ignored by the villagers; but if this situation should change, village life would probably have to undergo rather drastic changes, among which would be a weakening of the patrilineage.

The economic and political functions of lineages are susceptible to influence by changes much less drastic than the abandonment of the inheritance of land solely by men. For example, the construction of a sugarcane mill close to Shanti Nagar would provide an option to the current practice of farmers cooperating in the operation of sugarcane crushers, one of the principal forms of economic cooperation among lineage members. During recent decades, a very gradual modernization of agriculture has been one of the developments affecting Shanti Nagar. Technological innovation can become a factor in changes in social relations: for example, the introduction of the mechanical fodder cutter was a factor in the breakdown of traditional economic relations between landowners and Chamar Leatherworkers. Additional technological improvements in agriculture will doubtless continue to be introduced in the immediate future. A general feature of modern technological advancement is the reduction of the need for labor. How such a reduction, if it occurs, would affect various types of labor, that is, wage labor, traditional employment that involves payment in kind, and the reciprocal exchange of labor among farmers, cannot be foreseen in any detail. However, an increasing mechanization of agriculture would necessarily affect the quantity and kinds of farm labor, among them the reciprocal exchange of labor between the families of landholding lineages.

The political functions of lineages and the parties that are based on them may lend themselves to influences external to the village more than do other functions. Such influences, however, can as easily strengthen these political functions as weaken them. The legislation that established village government by an elected panchayat (the Delhi Panchayat Raj Act, passed in 1954 and implemented in 1959) is an example of such influence. The panchayat in office when we were in Shanti Nagar anticipated, to some extent, the implementation of the new legislation. Instead of weakening the importance of lineages in

village life, the panchayat provided a new area of political activity which, at the village level, was expressed in traditional village style since each important lineage received proper representation in the panchayat. It is difficult to foresee any development in modern India that would lead to a reduction of political activity. In Shanti Nagar, where the majority of the population consists of high-caste landowners, such political activity will be dominated by the powerful landowning lineages. Village parties will probably have relatively little influence in those political activities, such as the election of regional panchayats, that transcend the village.

### CLAN

Most of the castes of Shanti Nagar recognized large categories of castemates united by a myth that they were related by patrilineal descent from a common ancestor. Each of these categories was denoted by its own name, and its members were found in hundreds of villages in addition to Shanti Nagar. The villagers tended to refer to these diffuse groups as *gotras*. We have adopted the term clan as the English equivalent of *gotra*. We are aware that the *gotras* of a specific caste of Shanti Nagar most probably differed in some of their characteristics from the *gotras* of other castes, and that there are grounds for denying that the Brahmanic *gotra*, at least, can be properly termed a clan (Madan, 1962, p. 75). Nonetheless, because of its myth of unilineal descent from a common ancestor and the fact that it is generally exogamous, the *gotra* resembles a clan. Four of the castes of Shanti Nagar did not report *gotras*: the Mali Gardener, Mahar Potter, Chhipi Dyer, and Lohar Blacksmith. Although castes without *gotras* exist in Hindu society (Gould, 1960, p. 489), we are not certain that the above castes lacked *gotras*. Each of these castes was represented by a single family; and in such a situation, we might have overlooked the existence of a *gotra*.

By far the most important function of the patrilineal clan was the regulation of marriage. Villagers did not marry into their own clans, and the members of most castes also avoided the clans of the mother and the father's mother. Some villagers claimed that they also avoided the

clan of the mother's mother. Villagers sometimes spoke of avoiding one "milk," two "milks," and so on. The order of avoidance was one's own clan, then mother's, father's mother's, and finally, mother's mother's. The larger the number of clans one excluded as sources of husbands or wives, the greater one's prestige; and so it followed that people might therefore exaggerate the number of clans within which they refused to marry. It was uncommon for people to avoid all four *gotras*, for such avoidance substantially increased the problem of finding husbands and wives, an undertaking that was sufficiently complicated by considerations such as the wealth and importance of the two families to be involved, the educational levels of the potential bride and groom, and the negotiations over the amount of dowry and the size of the wedding party.

The males of the segment of a specific caste resident in Shanti Nagar were usually members of a single *gotra*, because most castes were numerically small and the present families of Shanti Nagar were descendants of one or only a few founding families. More *gotras* were represented among the wives of Shanti Nagar than among the males and their children because the wives were generally unrelated to one another and came from many different villages. A wife could be a member of any clan of her caste other than those into which her husband was forbidden to marry. Among the Jat Farmers, for example, the men represented two *gotras*, and their wives, at least 14.

If we consider the *gotra* affiliations of families, that is, of family heads, we find that four castes had families representing more than a single *gotra*. In two cases, this was because some women of Shanti Nagar had settled there with their husbands after marriage. The circumstances surrounding such atypical residential arrangements have been discussed in the section on immigration. Among the Chuhra Sweepers, such residential arrangements had resulted in families representing two *gotras* (possibly more); and, among the Gola Potters, three *gotras*. More than one *gotra* was represented among the Chamar Leatherworkers, but we are uncertain of the details, because some Chamars did not seem to know their *gotra* affiliation. The concept did not appear to be strongly established among them.

Of the 31 Jat Farmer families, 27 represented one *gotra* and four, another. The latter four families had purchased land in Shanti Nagar where they moved from Delhi. Villages can be designated by the dominant *gotra* of the dominant caste. Thus, Shanti Nagar was a "Man" village because the Jat Farmers were the dominant caste, that is, the most numerous, wealthiest, and most powerful, and most Jat families belonged to the Man *gotra*.

When two clans of the same caste are represented in a village, there is a possibility of a conflict of roles because of clan exogamy, village exogamy, and the village fictive kinship system. Consider the situation in which there are two *gotras*, A and B, of Jat Farmers in a single village. A man of *gotra* A marries a woman from another village who is a member of *gotra* B. From his point of view, the marriage is entirely proper, because he has observed both village and clan exogamy. However, his co-villagers of *gotra* B are confronted by a dilemma, for the new wife is both a sister (by *gotra* affiliation) and a wife (by village fictive kinship). The two roles are incompatible; a woman cannot be both a sister and a wife. From the point of view of *gotra* B, it is almost as if *gotra* exogamy were violated.

We heard of a case that dramatically illustrated this kind of situation. While we were in Shanti Nagar, news came to the village of a murder in another village over just this point. Two *gotras* were involved, one consisting of 16 families and the other, of four. According to our informants, the larger *gotra* was trying to suppress the smaller one. A man from the smaller *gotra* took a wife from another village; she was a member of the larger *gotra*. After taking up residence with her husband, the girl was murdered by a stranger, presumably at the instigation of the larger *gotra*. Members of the more populous *gotra* were reported to have said, "What shall we call her, sister or wife?"

This case stimulated considerable discussion in Shanti Nagar. The villagers pointed out that, in large villages, many castes include representatives of several *gotras* but that the problem of role conflict infrequently becomes an issue. The villagers concluded that role conflict would become a problem only when ill feelings or political

struggles already existed between clans. Nevertheless, a small *gotra* would ordinarily avoid marrying women from a dominant *gotra*. Thus, the small Jat Farmer *gotra* in Shanti Nagar would most probably not take wives from the Man *gotra*. In fact, one member of the Man *gotra* was of the opinion that the smaller Jat clan would eventually consider themselves to be members of the Man *gotra* because it would be rude to continue their separateness by maintaining a different *gotra*. At first, he predicted that they would avoid their original clan in marriage, but eventually they would forget their original clan.

In Shanti Nagar, we recorded one possible breach of *gotra* exogamy that occurred among the Brahman Priests. The Brahmans of Shanti Nagar are Gor Brahmans (priests) and are members of the Bhardwaj *gotra*. However, according to our informant who was the son of the woman who had apparently married in violation of *gotra* exogamy, the Bhardwaj *gotra* was very large and had divided into two parts between which marriage was, at one time, permitted. His mother was a member of one part of the Bhardwaj *gotra* and his father of the other part. Each part claimed descent from a different ancestor. Although the marriage in question was accepted by the village, our informant, supported by another Brahman, said that such a marriage would not be permitted again because such marriages would weaken the offspring.

This case and its interpretation by our informants accords rather well with Madan's analysis of the Brahmanic *gotra*. Madan said that the *gotra* tie does not necessarily indicate agnatic kinship. It points to the possibility of kinship, but does not create or prove it (Madan, 1962, p. 73). However, all agnatic kinsmen are members of the same *gotra*. *Gotra* exogamy is, therefore, designed to avoid any possibility of a breach of the rule that prohibits marriage among agnates; but marriage within a *gotra* would be permissible if the individuals were not agnates. Thus, among Brahmans, the basic proscription is marriage among agnates, and *gotra* exogamy is derived from this proscription on the grounds that members of the same *gotra* may be agnates and one can be certain of avoiding marriage to agnates if he observes *gotra* exogamy.

Although the regulation of marriage was the principal function of the clan, political and legal action outside of the village appeared, to some extent, to be based on the *gotra*, at least among the Jat Farmers (cf. Pradhan, 1966). Shanti Nagar was a member of an eight-village unit (*athgama*), whose members were said to be descended from a single ancestral village and were therefore agnatically related. These were all "Man" villages, and occasionally the elders met to try to agree on a common course of action, for example, to decide on a unified position with

regard to the support of candidates in elections in the Union Territory of Delhi. We have also recorded the occurrence of meetings that the eight Man villages held jointly with a unit of another eight villages in which, as in Shanti Nagar, a single Jat *gotra* was dominant in all eight villages. This latter clan was not the Man *gotra*. The two eight-village units were considered to be related; the unit of which Shanti Nagar was a member had the relationship of sister's son to the other unit.

### SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: CASTE

The population of Shanti Nagar included representatives of 13 castes. Castes are named endogamous social groups in which membership is acquired by birth. The castes of a village form a hierarchy based on social esteem and precedence. In Shanti Nagar, we recorded no violations of the rule of caste endogamy nor did we learn about any person who entered a caste except through birth. A caste has a combination of attributes, prominent among them, a traditional occupation. The castes that were represented in Shanti Nagar had large memberships; their members were found in hundreds of other villages in the general region.

The term caste has been used for variously defined groups, and its meaning is, therefore, ambiguous. Caste has been used to designate not only the endogamous group but also social categories that are composed of two or more endogamous groups. For example, the Kumhars (potters) are often designated as a caste; they are, however, divided into several endogamous groups, two of which were represented in Shanti Nagar. Mandelbaum (1970, pp. 14-15) has attempted to resolve the confusion by introducing the term *jati* to designate the endogamous group. He has introduced another term *jati-group* to refer to the members of a *jati* who live in a single village (Mandelbaum, 1970, p. 15).

The villagers used a term, *biradari*, the meaning of which was very close to that of *jati-group* but that could occasionally be given a broader meaning. As was true with many terms used in

village social organization (e.g., *kunba*, *khandan*), the meaning of *biradari* was somewhat ambiguous, but in a specific discussion, the villagers were rarely confused because the context generally made the meaning clear. *Biradari* usually designated the members of a specific caste who were resident in a single village but it could also refer to these individuals and their castemates who lived in nearby villages, all of whom interacted rather frequently. Pending a generally accepted standardization of nomenclature, we prefer to be somewhat eclectic. We generally use the more familiar term caste to designate both the endogamous group and the locally resident caste segment, adopting the villagers' strategy of depending upon the context to make the meaning clear. We will use *jati* whenever its usage would facilitate distinguishing between an endogamous group and a category of more than one such group.

The *jati* to which the Baniya Merchants of Shanti Nagar belonged was the Aggarwal Baniya, the most populous by far of the various *jatis* of Baniyas inhabiting the Punjab (of which the Shanti Nagar region once formed a district). Ibbetson (1916, p. 243) commented, "The great sections [*jatis*] do not intermarry . . . But the great divisions of the Banya caste occupy identical social and religious positions, and recognize each other . . . as of common distinct origin . . ." Our Bairagi Beggar informants mentioned no *jati* name, although Ibbetson (1916, p. 227) said they are divided into several sections. The Brah-

man Priests of Shanti Nagar were all members of the Gor (Gore, Gaur) Brahman *jati*. The great sections of Brahmans are, according to Ibbetson (1916, pp. 18-19), known by geographical designations, such as the Gaur Brahmans of the ancient Gaur. He noted, however, that the present distinctions among them are based upon differences of social and religious custom with the result that the various *jati* refuse to intermarry or to interdine.

The Chamar Leatherworkers of Shanti Nagar were Jatiya Chamars. The Chuhra Sweepers did not mention any of the numerous sections listed by Ibbetson; they called themselves instead Balmiki (Valmiki) Chuhars, thus identifying themselves as descendants of the poet Bal Mik (Valmiki), author of the great Indian epic, the Ramayana. We elicited no *jati* designation from the Chhipi Dyers, although Ibbetson listed several sections for the caste. Representatives of two *jatis* of Kumhars resided in Shanti Nagar, the Mahar Kumhars and the Gola Kumhars.

Ibbetson reported a number of "tribes" of Jat Farmers, some of which did not intermarry. The Man, whom Ibbetson designated as a tribe, are a clan, because the group is exogamous. The Jats of Shanti Nagar reported only that they were Jats of the Man *gotra*. The Jats were greatly respected by the British. In this regard, Ibbetson's remarks are worthy of note. Describing the Jats as honest, industrious, sturdy, and manly he observed (1916, p. 102), "The Jat is in every respect the most important of the Panjab peoples . . . [H]e is the husbandman, the peasant, the revenue-payer *par excellence* of the Province. . . Sturdy independence indeed and patient vigorous labour are his strongest characteristics. . ."

The Jhinvar Watermen designated themselves as Rajput Jhinvars. This section is not one of those listed by Ibbetson, but he listed only the most numerous sections. We elicited no *jati* designation from the Lohar Blacksmiths, although Ibbetson reported a few "tribes" among them. The Nai Barbers called their *jati*, Gola Nai. The Nais are renowned for their astuteness; Ibbetson (1916, p. 231) quoted the proverb, "the jackal is the sharpest among beasts, the crow among birds, and the Nai among men." The Mali Gardeners reported no *jati* other than Mali.

## TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION

A traditional occupation or cluster of occupations was associated with each caste. Sometimes the caste name designated an occupation; for example, Nai and Mali can be translated as barber and gardener. Not all members of a caste followed its traditional occupation, and even those caste members who did so might derive most of their income from other activities. When members of a caste pursued occupations other than their traditional one, usually these were farming or farm labor and a variety of urban occupations, such as factory and office work. Moneylending provided additional income for a few of the wealthier families. It would be unusual for one of the crafts, such as pottery making, to be practiced by an individual who was not a member of the caste traditionally associated with that craft. The economic importance of the traditional occupation varied from caste to caste; the members of some castes derived almost their total income from their traditional occupation; for the members of other castes, the income from the traditional occupation was trivial.

## BAIRAGI BEGGAR

We have recorded the Bairagis as beggars, but only one old man was said to continue to beg; he did so infrequently in another village. No Bairagi begged in Shanti Nagar. The Bairagis did not like to be known as beggars; they admitted that perhaps they did beg in the past, but claimed that they no longer did so. They preferred to be known as farmers or temple servants, but no Bairagi in Shanti Nagar was a temple servant. All the Bairagis owned small landholdings, were farmers, and engaged in animal husbandry. One Bairagi cultivated considerable additional land on shares. Two Bairagis worked as orderlies in the courts of Delhi; one was the village watchman for which service he received an annual fee; and one woman sold vegetables and engaged in part-time wage work. Ibbetson (1916, p. 227) described the Bairagis as members of a most respectable Hindu order who were, for the most part, collected in monasteries; but many wandering mendicants also called themselves Bairagis. He said that there were Bairagis who lived in villages who were the descendants of the Bairagi monks

and their disciples, all of whom were known as Bairagis, although they no longer had any connection with the order.

#### BANIYA MERCHANT

The Baniyas traditionally were merchants. When we were in Shanti Nagar, the Baniya family derived its entire income from its shop, the only one in the village. This had not always been the situation of the Baniyas. One of them had worked in Delhi for about 12 years because the income from the shop was inadequate to maintain the family during that period. He left his job there principally because business in their village shop increased to the extent that his brother could no longer manage the shop alone.

#### BRAHMAN PRIEST

The Brahmins were the priestly caste. In Shanti Nagar, only one Brahmin who was very old, partially blind, and effectively retired was learned enough to serve as a priest in a complex ceremony, such as a wedding, but other members of the caste were capable of officiating at brief, more simple rites. Although more learned priests from other villages were relied upon for the weddings of Shanti Nagar, the local Brahmins also had duties to perform at their patrons' (jajmans') weddings, chief among which was to guard the sweets to be served to guests. In payment for this service, they were fed and given small sums of money. Brahmins might also be fed by their patrons on special occasions: on the birth of a child, especially a son, on the birth of a calf, and during the annual mourning ceremony. Thus, many of the Brahmin families of Shanti Nagar derived a small income because of their status as family priests (*purohits*). However, this source of income had become of little importance in recent years because of the anti-Brahmanical influence of Arya Samaj, a Hindu reform movement (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966). As one Brahmin explained to us, in the past, the Brahmins received relatively large gifts from their patrons at marriages that occurred both in the Brahmin's and the patron's family; but the relationship in more recent times had changed to one of mutuality and brotherhood and exchanges were made on the basis of equality and reciprocity. A rather

ardent Arya Samaji commented that, because of Arya Samaj teachings, he no longer fed his Brahmin occasionally nor did he send him presents on Makara Sankranti as he did in the past. However, he continued to use the services of Brahmins to celebrate weddings and births.

From the point of view of the proportion of the Brahmins of Shanti Nagar who occasionally served as priests, the traditional Brahmanical role was still noteworthy in the village. Furthermore, the fact that Brahmins continued to be summoned by their patrons reinforced the traditional social order of the village, for the concepts of caste rank, pollution, and dharma were all involved in as simple an act as guarding the sweets during a wedding. However, from the point of view of proportion of total income, the priestly functions of the Brahmins were relatively unimportant. Brahmins earned most of their income in agriculture and animal husbandry because they owned and farmed a substantial amount of land or from jobs in Delhi.

#### CHAMAR LEATHERWORKER

Traditionally the Chamars were leatherworkers, but only a small proportion of their income was derived from working with leather. One Chamar was a shoemaker from which trade he earned most of his income. The other Chamars were involved with leather only when a cow, bullock, or water buffalo died at which time they removed the dead animal to the outskirts of the village beyond the Chamar compound, as was their traditional duty, and skinned it (see fig. 11). The Chamars received the skin as a fee for removing the carcass and they sold it to a buyer who regularly visited the village. After the village dogs and vultures had picked the carcass clean, its bones were sold to itinerant buyers. From this activity the Chamars earned a few hundred rupees a year. By far the largest part of their income was derived from agricultural labor; in practice, agricultural labor was as traditional as was leatherwork for the Chamars. Four Chamar men had jobs in Delhi.

#### CHHIPI DYER

Members of the Chhipi caste were traditionally dyers and printers of cotton cloth, but the





FIG. 11. Chamar Leatherworker men removing a dead water buffalo from house of a Jat Farmer. Dead animal became property of Chamars in payment for their labor in removing it.

single family of Chhipis in Shanti Nagar made its living by tailoring, a closely related occupation. The families whom the Chhipis served were situated both in Shanti Nagar and the neighboring village where the Chhipi's originally had lived. Both husband and wife sewed. Well supplied with customers, the Chhipis derived all of their income from tailoring and did not need occasional work in agriculture.

#### CHUHRA SWEEPER

Traditionally the Chuhra were sweepers. In the village, the Chuhra Sweeper women removed

night soil, carried the dung dropped by the cattle of their patrons to the area where dung cakes were made, and swept the courtyards of their patrons. Three of the five Chuhra men who worked in the city were employed by the Delhi Municipal Corporation as street sweepers. Chuhra also traditionally raised pigs and chickens, the only caste in Shanti Nagar to do so. Although Chuhra, both men and women, also worked as agricultural laborers, we estimate that the greater proportion of their income was from their principal traditional occupation, sweeping. The fact that it was a vital service and was not likely to be

threatened by new technology in the immediate future gave the Chuhars greater economic security than was enjoyed by some other castes such as the Chamars. Shoemaking, one of the traditional economic activities of the Chamars, was threatened by competition from shoe factories; their other traditional occupation, agricultural labor, could be substantially curtailed by modern farm machinery.

#### GOLA POTTER AND MAHAR POTTER

Pottery was the traditional occupation of the Gola Potters, but transporting goods on the backs of donkeys and mules was of equal or greater economic importance to them. Just as the two occupations of leatherworker and agricultural laborer could be considered traditional occupations of the Chamar Leatherworkers, so too could the transportation of goods on donkeys be regarded as traditional work of the Kumhars, even though the English translation of kumhar is potter. Almost all the income of the Gola Kumhars was derived from their traditional occupations; only two Gola Kumhars made pottery

and they were easily able to supply the needs of Shanti Nagar. Although the Mahar Potters had the same traditional occupations as the Gola Potters, no Mahar Potter engaged in them. The sole Mahar Potter man who lived in Shanti Nagar had a job in Delhi.

#### JAT FARMER

The Jats were one of the important cultivating castes of the Union Territory of Delhi and adjoining regions. As the dominant caste of Shanti Nagar, economically, politically, and numerically they owned most of the village land. All but one of the Jat families of Shanti Nagar owned land in the village. The exception was a government official, the patwari, who resided there because he was affinally related to a man of Shanti Nagar in whose house he lived. They derived most of their income from agriculture and animal husbandry. Nine Jats had city jobs, but most of these men were also actively involved in agriculture. The combination of agriculture and another job, usually in Delhi, was rather common among landowners of all castes.



FIG. 12. Jat Farmer brothers plowing in preparation for planting spring (rabi) crop.

## JHINVAR WATERMAN

The Jhinvars listed their traditional occupations as carrying water, making baskets, and working at the sugarcane presses of the village. In addition, they rented a small quantity of land and worked as agricultural laborers during the harvests. Their traditional occupations of basket weaving, cane crushing, and gur making continued to be important, but they claimed that they had not carried water for the preceding three years. Drawing water from the village well and carrying it to the homes of patrons was not a daily occupation because each family drew its own water; however, when large numbers of guests came to the village to attend weddings, the Jhinvars would be summoned to carry water for the wedding party. They supplied only drinking water for the wedding guests; for bathing, the members of the wedding party went to the village well and bathed beside it. This practice had been customary until a few years earlier when the villagers decided that it was unsanitary to bathe beside the village well and banned it. Patrons then asked the Jhinvars to carry bathing as well as drinking water for wedding guests. The Jhinvars decided that this practice made too much work, at least without an appropriate increase in their fee, and so they stopped working for weddings. It is difficult to judge the proportion of the Jhinvar income that came from their traditional occupations as compared with that from agriculture and animal husbandry, but it is reasonable to estimate that a substantial part, possibly about 40 or 50 percent, came from their traditional occupations. None of the Jhinvars had city jobs.

## LOHAR BLACKSMITH

The Lohar family of Shanti Nagar derived its income from its traditional occupation of iron-working, which included the necessary carpentry associated with it, for example, the making of sickle handles. If more elaborate carpentry was required, a carpenter was called from another village. The single family of Lohars not only supplied the needs of Shanti Nagar but had additional time to make implements for sale in sur-

rounding villages. For a time, one of the Lohar men worked as a peon in Delhi, and the Lohars also had a shop in Narela, but they were nonetheless able to provide all the normal services to their patrons in Shanti Nagar. Although a village ironworker might appear to be vulnerable to competition from factory-made implements, we observed no sign of such a situation in Shanti Nagar.

## MALI GARDENER

Most of the income of the Mali family was earned from its traditional occupation of gardening. The Malis leased two gardens, one in Shanti Nagar, the second, at a school in a neighboring village. They grew flowers and fruit, selling the fruit in the village and the flowers at the flower market in Delhi to which they went every few days. In the recent past, they had cultivated a substantial area of land on shares; however, they lost this source of income, as had most other sharecroppers, because the landowners were reluctant to permit others to cultivate their land.

## NAI BARBER

The traditional work of barbering was the source of most of the income of the three Nai families of Shanti Nagar. However, the activities of an Indian barber cannot be compared with those of a western one; his traditional obligations involved much more than shaving patrons and cutting their hair. Barbers were also obligated to perform many ceremonial duties. Like those of the Chuhra Sweepers, some activities of village Nais could be readily transferred to an urban setting. Thus, two Nai Barbers of Shanti Nagar worked in shops in Delhi in addition to caring for their patrons in the village. On the other hand, some village men did not have their hair cut in Shanti Nagar; a few shaved themselves. The ceremonial functions of the village Barbers were confined to their village patrons. Both men and women of the Barber caste had grooming and ceremonial duties. Men served men; women dressed the hair of women. Both sexes had ceremonial duties. The Nais also engaged in agricultural work, which provided a less important

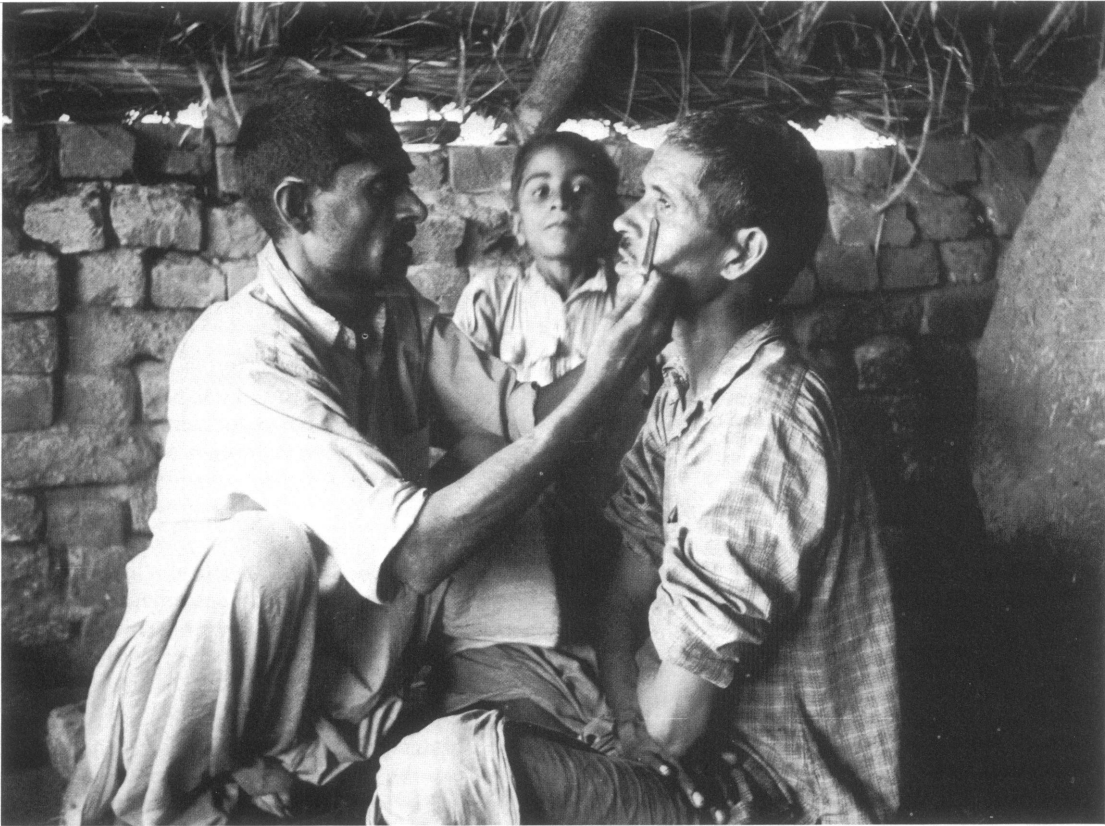


FIG. 13. Nai Barber shaving a Brahman Priest at a sugarcane crusher.

source of income than their traditional occupation.

#### CASTE AND TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION: SUMMARY

For most of the castes of Shanti Nagar, the connection between caste and traditional occupation was strong. Two castes, the Bairagi Beggars and the Mahar Potters, had effectively abandoned their traditional work. Although still fulfilling some aspects of their priestly role, the Brahman Priests earned the bulk of their income in other occupations. The people who ceased to pursue their traditional occupations either became farmers, agricultural laborers, earned money in animal husbandry, or found city jobs.

It is noteworthy that, except for agriculture, people made no effort to invade the traditional occupations of other castes: no one except members of the appropriate castes became a blacksmith, carpenter, potter, leatherworker, or sweeper. Factory and office jobs, teaching school, military service, and other occupations far removed from traditional village pursuits were, like agriculture and animal husbandry, adopted by villagers when they could not earn an adequate income in the traditional occupational role of their caste (cf. Sharma, 1961, p. 163). Combinations of occupations were common in Shanti Nagar: a clerk farmed; a barber worked part time during the harvest; a leatherworker peddled vegetables.

## CASTE HIERARCHY

The castes of a village form a hierarchy. There are two largely distinct theories of how the rank of a caste is determined. The attributional theory states that the rank of a caste is determined by the behavior or attributes of its members. If the occupation, diet, and other customs of the members of a caste are judged to be ritually pure, villagers assign a high rank to the caste; if such customs are judged to be impure, the caste receives a low rank in the opinion of villagers. The interactional theory of caste rank holds that castes are ranked, not on the basis of their attributes, but on the basis of the intercaste interaction of their members. This interaction involves primarily the giving and taking of food. In general, the higher of two castes gives food to the lower but does not accept food in return; or, because food consists of higher and lower types, the higher of two castes gives less prestigious food to the lower and accepts only more prestigious food. Marriott (1959, 1968a) has discussed at length the characteristics of the two theories and demonstrated that the interactional theory of caste rank explains much more fully and parsimoniously than does the attributional theory the ranks of castes in a particular village hierarchy. Marriott did not, however, entirely disregard attributional ranking. He noted that interactional ranking would predominate in situations, such as the village, of relative cultural homogeneity and the intimate acquaintance and interaction among the members of different castes; attributional ranking, on the other hand, would be favored in situations, such as the city, of cultural heterogeneity and a relative lack of intimate social interaction among castes.

Our approach to the caste hierarchy of Shanti Nagar was basically interactional. We believed that the rank of a caste consisted of two components: the village consensus as to its rank, and the interaction of its members with those of other castes that reinforced this opinion and by which it was given observable expression. It is pointless to ask whether opinion gave rise to characteristic interaction or stemmed from it. The two components of caste rank existed simultaneously and reinforced each other. Because a caste hierarchy is based principally upon two fac-

tors, the consensus and the interaction among castes, especially with regard to the offering and acceptance of food, the problem of determining the caste hierarchy of a particular village can be approached either by eliciting opinions from individuals as to the ranking of castes or by studying the intercaste interaction of the members of different castes. We used both approaches.

It is not a simple matter, however, to determine the caste hierarchy of a village even as small as Shanti Nagar. The caste hierarchy of Shanti Nagar had not been established by law nor had it been officially defined in government records or in religious tracts. It existed only in the minds and the actions of the villagers who differed among themselves regarding both their opinions and their behavior. Although villagers were in general agreement about caste ranking to the extent that a given caste might be overwhelmingly ranked as high, medium, or low, characteristically, they disagreed about the relative ranking of some castes that occupied the same general area of the hierarchy. The problem of the investigator was to determine which single hierarchy best expressed the collective opinion and the behavior of villagers.

### CASTE HIERARCHY BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF OPINIONS

In order to determine the caste hierarchy of Shanti Nagar from an analysis of the opinions of villagers, it was necessary to elicit systematically from a sample of informants their opinions as to the rank of each caste in the village. The procedure may be described as follows: we used a set of cards with the name of a village caste written on each. An informant was asked to arrange the cards in a column, with the highest ranking caste at the top, the second highest under it, and so on to the lowest ranking caste. The caste names were read to nonliterate informants. In this way, judgments were collected from a sample of informants. The collective caste hierarchy was derived by examining the opinions about every possible pair of castes and applying a test of significance. For example, 19 of 25 informants in

Shanti Nagar rated the Baniya Merchant caste higher than the Bairagi Beggar. If we assume (the null hypothesis) that there was no difference between the ranks of the two castes, then half of the respondents should have ranked one caste higher and half, the other. The alternate hypothesis is that if one caste ranked higher than the other in village opinion, then a significantly greater number of respondents would have so ranked it. The null hypothesis can be tested with the binomial probability distribution. In the example cited above, we may conclude that the Baniya Merchant caste ranked higher than the Bairagi Beggar, because an evaluation of informant responses by the binomial probability distribution demonstrates that the null hypothesis may be rejected ( $p < .01$ ). The case of the Lohar Blacksmith and Mali Gardener provides an example of two castes tied for rank; of 22 respondents, half ranked the Lohars higher and half, the Malis. The method is described in detail in S. Freed (1963a) and Marriott (1968b).

Using the technique of movable cards with caste names, we interviewed 26 male respondents 25 years of age or older who were randomly selected from our census of the village population. The responses of one respondent, the Lohar Blacksmith, were not usable. He was an old man and extremely upset at the time of the interview because of personal and family problems; he either did not understand the questions or could not concentrate on them. We interrogated men only, because men generally were born, lived, and died in the same village, whereas women shifted their residence after marriage. The wives of Shanti Nagar had come to their husbands' village from more than 100 surrounding villages. Since caste rankings varied from village to village, the wives of Shanti Nagar might have provided caste rankings that were influenced by the diverse situations in their natal villages rather than providing those that reflected the situation in Shanti Nagar. We believed that rankings obtained from men would reflect the situation in Shanti Nagar more faithfully than those obtained from women, especially the wives who had recently become residents of the village. We randomly selected four informants from each of the five larger castes (Brahman Priest, Chamar Leatherworker, Chuhra Sweeper, Gola Potter, and Jat Farmer) and one from each of six of the smaller

castes (Bairagi Beggar, Baniya Merchant, Jhinvar Waterman, Lohar Blacksmith, Mali Gardener, and Nai Barber). No Mahar Potter was selected because none was of the proper age.

Analysis of the responses of our informants revealed a caste hierarchy of seven ranks, given below, that we designate as the collective caste hierarchy.

- A. Brahman Priest
- B. Baniya Merchant
- C. Jat Farmer and Bairagi Beggar
- D. Lohar Blacksmith, Mali Gardener, and Jhinvar Waterman
- E. Mahar Potter, Gola Potter, and Nai Barber
- F. Chamar Leatherworker
- G. Chuhra Sweeper

In village opinion, the castes belonging to different ranks differed significantly from one another with regard to their hierarchical positions. There were no significant hierarchical distinctions among those castes listed in the same rank. We designate a group of castes among which there are no significant distinctions in rank as a caste bloc.

The Chhipi Dyers, represented in Shanti Nagar by a single family, were excluded from the analysis of the collective caste hierarchy because they moved into Shanti Nagar shortly after we started our fieldwork and were new to the village. We believed that any opinions about their rank would be much less firm than those concerning castes long resident in Shanti Nagar and that, in this respect, the Chhipi Dyers were not comparable with the other castes. However, we did collect data about them and found that they were ranked below blocs A, B, C, and the Jhinvar Waterman and above blocs F, G, and the Nai Barber. They were tied in rank to the Mahar and Gola Potters of bloc E, and the Lohar Blacksmith and Mali Gardener of bloc D. In short, the Chhipi Dyer caste was best thought of as ranking between blocs D and E, because it was tied in rank with two of the three castes in each bloc and was significantly different from the third.

#### CASTE MEMBERSHIP—A DETERMINANT OF OPINION ON HIERARCHY

The effect of an individual's caste membership on his opinion about the position of his own caste within the hierarchy can be investigated by

comparing his own ranking with that assigned to his caste by collective village opinion. To make this comparison, we relied on what we have designated as the preliminary caste hierarchy, which is simply the collective caste hierarchy prior to the application of a statistical test of significance to determine which castes are significantly different and which are tied in rank. The preliminary caste hierarchy is constructed, using the method of paired comparisons, as follows. The majority of informants ranked the Brahman Priests higher than each of the other castes; therefore they rank highest in the preliminary hierarchy. Of the remaining 11 castes, the majority of informants rated the Baniya Merchants higher in all paired comparisons, hence they rank second. The remainder of the preliminary hierarchy was derived from similar comparisons. The preliminary hierarchy is characterized by a lack of ties. For example, in the preliminary caste hierarchy, the Jat Farmers are rated above the Bairagi Beggars because 13 of 23 respondents so rated them. However, this difference in rank is not statistically significant as determined from the binomial probability distribution, and the two castes are considered tied in rank in the collective caste hierarchy. The preliminary caste hierarchy is, from highest to lowest: Brahman Priest, Baniya Merchant, Jat Farmer, Bairagi Beggar, Lohar Blacksmith, Mali Gardener, Jhinvar Waterman, Mahar Potter, Gola Potter, Nai Barber, Chamar Leatherworker, and Chuhra Sweeper. To understand the effect of the caste membership of an individual upon the rank he assigned to his own caste, we preferred to use the preliminary caste hierarchy rather than the collective caste hierarchy because the former assigns a separate rank to each caste as do most informants and its use consequently simplifies comparison.

The rankings of each informant are given in S. Freed (1963a). Most informants ranked their own castes close to the ranks accorded them by others. If we compare the rankings of each respondent with the preliminary caste hierarchy, we learn that all the Brahman Priest, Baniya Merchant, Chamar Leatherworker, and Chuhra Sweeper informants ranked their castes exactly as they are ranked in the preliminary caste hierarchy; the Jat Farmer and Jhinvar Waterman respondents ranked their own castes no more dis-

tant than one rank from theirs as given in the preliminary hierarchy. While one might expect that even an informant who tried to be as objective as possible would rank his caste higher than other castes in the same caste bloc, for such castes are tied in collective village opinion, we did not find this to be true for the foregoing respondents. The Jats and Bairagis are tied in rank in the collective caste hierarchy, but, of the four Jat informants, two considered the Jats and Bairagis to be tied, one ranked the Jats higher, and the other ranked the Bairagis higher. The Jhinvar Waterman, a member of the same caste bloc as the Malis and Lohars, ranked his own caste above the latter but below the former.

The foregoing informants who ranked their castes in close agreement with collective village opinion were principally from castes that rank at or near the extremes of the hierarchy. However, respondents from some of the castes generally in the middle of the hierarchy (Bairagi Beggar, Mali Gardener, Gola Potter, and Nai Barber) rated their own castes two or more ranks higher than their rank in the preliminary caste hierarchy.

The Bairagi informant ranked his caste second; its rank in the preliminary hierarchy is fourth.

The Mali ranked his caste fourth; its rank in the preliminary hierarchy is sixth.

The Gola Potters ranked their caste variously from first to sixth; its rank in the preliminary hierarchy is ninth.

The Nai ranked his caste fifth; its rank in the preliminary hierarchy is tenth.

The greater tendency of respondents from castes in the middle ranges of the hierarchy to rank their castes higher than did collective village opinion may be taken to indicate a greater striving for higher caste status among them than exists among the castes at the extremes of the hierarchy. The middle ranking castes conformed with greater strictness than others to the restrictions against accepting food and water from other castes, which is another way of expressing concern about caste status and a fact that supports this interpretation. Our data concerning the exchange of food and water between castes are given below.

To learn whether an informant's view of the overall hierarchy, rather than only his judgment



of the position of his own caste within it, was appreciably influenced by his own caste membership, we constructed 10 hierarchies from the median ranks assigned to all the castes by the informants from one particular caste. These hierarchies were compared with those derived from the median ranks assigned to all castes by those informants who were not members of the specific caste involved in the comparison. For example, a hierarchy, constructed on the basis of the responses of the four Brahman Priest informants, was compared with that derived from the rest of the informants. This procedure was followed for each of the 10 castes from which there were respondents. Median ranks were used because the small number of informants from each caste rendered it impossible to construct hierarchies based on majority opinion in paired comparisons. Hierarchies were compared by using the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient, a statistic that ranges in value from  $-1$  to  $+1$ . Values close to  $+1$  indicate a high positive correlation of two sets of ranks. The Spearman rank-correlation coefficients have been published by S. Freed (1963a, p. 889). All 10 coefficients are very high; only two fall below  $+.94$ . The lower figures for the Gola Potter ( $+.86$ ) and Nai Barber ( $+.85$ ) primarily reflect the tendency of the informants from those castes to rank their own castes considerably higher than the rank assigned by other respondents. In short, the caste membership of an individual apparently had little effect upon his overall view of the hierarchy.

#### CASTE RANK AND URBAN CONTACT

The question of the effects of urban contact on statements of caste rank was investigated following a method similar to that detailed above. Two hierarchies were constructed from median ranks, one from the responses of the 10 urban-oriented informants in our sample and the second from those of the 15 village-oriented informants. The two hierarchies were compared with the Spearman rank-correlation coefficient which in this comparison was  $+.98$ . Thus, we found little difference between urban- and village-oriented informants with regard to their views of the caste hierarchy. We were aware that, as a group, high-caste urban-oriented men appeared to be less concerned with ritual pollution from

contacts with low-caste people than were high-caste village-oriented men. Some of the former told us that when visiting or living in cities they had eaten and smoked with low-caste men, activities that involve ritual pollution, and stated their willingness to continue to do so in the future. However, this somewhat more liberal attitude of urban-oriented men and their greater freedom of caste interaction when living in cities appeared to have little effect upon their perception of the caste hierarchy of Shanti Nagar.

#### CASTE HIERARCHY BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF FOOD AND WATER EXCHANGE

The second method to determine caste hierarchy in a village is to analyze the exchange of food and water between members of different castes. The same informants who were asked to rank the castes of Shanti Nagar by the technique of movable cards were also questioned about the castes from which they would accept food and water. We asked each informant from which castes he would accept pukka food, kachcha food, water from a brass vessel, and water from an earthen vessel. Underlying the surmise that analysis of the responses to these questions would yield a caste hierarchy was the knowledge that, in general, people would accept food and water from members of all equal and higher castes, but not from those of all lower castes. We asked about the acceptance of both the inferior kachcha food that is cooked in water and the superior pukka food that is cooked in clarified butter (ghee). The distinction was necessary because pukka food may be accepted from castes further below one's own caste in the hierarchy than may be kachcha food. A similar distinction obtains for the containers of water. Water from a brass pitcher is superior to water from an earthen pitcher and may be accepted from castes further below one's own caste than may the latter. From the answers to these questions, a hierarchy can be derived simply by totaling, by caste, the positive responses, that is, the responses indicating a willingness to accept food and water from a specific caste. The highest caste has the most positive responses and so on in descending order down to the lowest caste. The method is described in detail and the responses



of each informant are tabulated in S. Freed (1970). A generally similar approach has been used by Kolenda (1959, 1960).

The caste hierarchy from highest to lowest caste, with the total of positive responses for each caste in parentheses, is the following: Brahman Priest (86), Baniya Merchant (81), Jat Farmer (78), Bairagi Beggar (71), Mali Gardener (69), Jhinvar Waterman (62), Lohar Blacksmith (60), Nai Barber (49), Gola Potter (48), Mahar Potter (46), Chamar Leatherworker (31), and Chuhra Sweeper (24). A comparison of this hierarchy based on food and water transactions with the collective caste hierarchy based on opinions demonstrates that the two hierarchies are very similar. They differ only in that the collective caste hierarchy has blocs of castes tied for rank and the hierarchy derived from food transfers does not (table 32).

In our analysis of opinions concerned with caste ranking, we noted the tendency of castes from the middle ranges of the hierarchy to rank their own castes higher than the rank accorded them by collective village opinion; we suggested that this tendency may indicate greater competition for caste status among middle-ranking castes than among those closer to the extremes of the

**TABLE 32<sup>a</sup>**  
**Comparison of Caste Ranks in the Collective Caste Hierarchy and the Hierarchy Based on Food and Water Exchanges**

Caste	Rank in Collective Caste Hierarchy	Rank from Food and Water Exchanges
Brahman Priest	1	1
Baniya Merchant	2	2
Jat Farmer	3.5	3
Bairagi Beggar	3.5	4
Mali Gardener	6	5
Jhinvar Waterman	6	6
Lohar Blacksmith	6	7
Nai Barber	9	8
Gola Potter	9	9
Mahar Potter	9	10
Chamar Leatherworker	11	11
Chuhra Sweeper	12	12

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed, 1970, table 4.

**TABLE 33<sup>a</sup>**  
**Responses by Caste Bloc Regarding Taking of Food and Water from Higher and Lower Castes**

Caste Bloc	Total Responses	Takes from All Equal or Higher Castes	Takes from Castes Lower by One Rank	Takes from Castes Lower by Two or More Ranks
A	15	15	10	10
B	4	4	2	1
C	19	19	15	6
D	6	2	1	0
E	15	11	0	0
F	11	11	4	—
G	16	16	—	—

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed, 1970, table 5.

hierarchy. This interpretation is supported by the greater strictness with regard to the acceptance of food and water from other castes that was shown by informants from castes in the middle ranges of the hierarchy than by those at the extremes. If we tabulate the responses of informants according to whether or not they took food and water from equal and higher castes, from castes lower by one rank, and from castes lower by two or more ranks (table 33), we find that the castes in the middle of the hierarchy (blocs D and E) were the most reluctant to accept food and water from lower castes and sometimes refused such offerings even from equal and higher castes. This behavior contrasted with that of all other castes whose members invariably accepted food and water from all equal and higher castes and were fairly liberal in this regard with slightly lower castes.

#### URBANIZATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF FOOD AND WATER

Stanley Freed (1970) discussed the effect of urbanization upon informants' statements concerning their interaction with other castes, and tabulated the responses of informants on the basis of their urban experience. The urban-oriented men had a slight tendency to be more liberal in interacting with other castes, as may be seen in their questionnaire responses; this verbal tendency was in accord with our observations in

Shanti Nagar and in Delhi. However, these more liberal tendencies, both in verbal and in observable behavior, were relatively weak. It is of interest that verbal reports of behavior agreed rather well with our observations; this agreement bears favorably on the validity of the questionnaire data.

The differences between urban-oriented and village-oriented men with regard to the caste system appeared principally in the greater frequency of critical comments among the former (see Appendix, questions 33 and 34). The reasons why critical attitudes did not lead readily to behavioral changes can be sought in a lifetime of conditioning to certain modes of behavior and in the severe sanctions from his caste fellows that an individual might incur by violating caste norms with respect to accepting food or water from lower castes. As one liberal, high-caste, well-educated urban-oriented man remarked after some Chamar Leatherworkers had departed from his sitting room, "The day has come when there is no untouchability, but I am older and am still bound by my caste rules. In the past, these Chamars could never come in and sit, but now I allow it. But it is beyond my ability to eat with them. I do not believe in caste, but it is beyond my capacity to break [caste] customs within the family. If I ate with them, I would be outcaste tomorrow."

#### CASTE EXPRESSED IN DAILY ACTIVITIES

In addition to caste interaction with respect to the exchange of food and water, other expressions of caste exclusiveness and the caste hierarchy occurred in a variety of daily activities, notably smoking, pipe-bowl filling, cot sitting, and touching. Smoking the hookah, or water-pipe, in Shanti Nagar was often a communal activity: a group of men sat in a circle, the pipe was rotated, and each man, in turn, took a puff or two. We asked our sample of respondents with whom they would smoke the hookah. Of 24 respondents, 15 said that they would smoke only with members of their own caste and eight more were willing to smoke with other castes of the same or an adjacent caste bloc. Thus, hookah smoking was generally an activity that was restricted to caste fellows.

The clay bowl (*chilam*) of the hookah may be detached from the rest of the pipe and smoked separately. The rules governing smoking with the pipe bowl were more lenient than those for smoking the hookah. Of 23 informants, only one stated that he would smoke exclusively with members of his own caste; 16 said that they would smoke with all castes, except the Chuhra Sweepers or the Chuhra and the Chamar Leatherworkers. Thus pipe-bowl smoking was concerned principally with the sharpest distinction in the caste hierarchy of Shanti Nagar, that between the Chamar Leatherworkers and the higher ranking castes.

Filling the pipe bowl with tobacco and bits of burning cow-dung cakes also involved considerations of caste. In general, the pipe bowl was not filled for a member of a lower ranking caste nor would one allow him to fill one's own. However, this principle seemed to be applied mainly to the lowest ranking castes. Only three of 14 informants told us that they maintained caste exclusiveness with regard to the filling of the pipe bowl, and our informants most commonly stated that they would bar only the Chuhra Sweepers or the Chuhra and the Chamar Leatherworkers. Like pipe-bowl smoking, bowl-filling emphasized the distinction between the two lowest castes, Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers, and the rest of the castes. Women also smoked the pipe bowl among themselves; the same considerations appeared to apply among them as among men, with one additional rule: a woman did not share the use of a pipe bowl with her mother-in-law.

Men generally were quite liberal about sitting on cots with members of other castes. Of 25 informants, eight would sit with all castes and another 13 would bar only the Chuhra Sweepers or the Chuhra and the Chamar Leatherworkers. As with pipe-bowl smoking and filling, the principal distinction was between the two lowest castes and all the rest. High-caste men, that is, Jats and Brahmans, apparently did not require that Chamars and Chuhra vacate cots when they sat down, to the extent of making an overt gesture or giving a verbal command; rather, low-caste men seemed automatically to vacate cots at the approach of a high-caste man, especially if he was economically powerful. Clearly, high-caste men

were pleased when low-caste men vacated cots so that they could be seated. Occasionally, high-caste men called our attention to such behavior as a demonstration of the respect that the low-castes had for them. Once we were present when a Chamar Leatherworker came to visit a prominent Jat Farmer landlord. Not only did the visitor avoid sitting on the cot of his Jat host, but he also refused to sit on an adjacent stool. Instead, he sat on the floor, although the Jat remonstrated with him for several minutes to persuade him to sit on the stool. Afterward, the Jat told us that the Chamar insisted on sitting on the floor because his visitor respected him.

Occasionally, when high-caste men sat on the cots of low-caste men, they called attention to this occurrence as an indication of changing times. Once in the fields, we were talking to some Chuhra Sweepers who were resting on cots under a tree. A Brahman Priest approached; immediately all the Chuhras moved off the cots and sat on the ground so that the Brahman could be seated. The Brahman remarked that he had not only sat on the cot of a Chuhra, but also that he had rested his arm on some bedding. He continued with the comment that he supposed the new order was good and that one must move with the times.

We observed a number of occasions when Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests sat on cots with Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers. This deviation from custom was more likely to happen, we believe, when an upper-caste man visited a lower-caste man or when such an encounter was on neutral territory rather than in the sitting room of the high-caste man. Thus, we observed a Jat sitting with a Chamar Leatherworker in the village shoemaker's shop (Chamar territory), and a Brahman sitting with a Chamar at the Lohar Blacksmith's shop that would be essentially neutral ground for both of them. At the festival of Holi, the Chamars danced and sang in their compound to entertain the entire village, and at these celebrations Chamars and Chuhras might be observed sitting with the upper castes. Despite these observations, it was clearly not the custom for the Chamars and Chuhras to sit with the higher castes.

The caste hierarchy was demonstrated in the

relative positioning of members of different castes when they sat on cots as well as whether or not castes would share cots at all. The latter behavior principally involved the relationships of the Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers with the higher castes, especially the Brahman Priests, Baniya Merchants, and Jat Farmers, and might be observed relatively infrequently because of both the spatial separation and the social distinction between the low and high castes. The former behavior was observed much more frequently because castes near one another in the hierarchy often lived in close proximity and frequently interacted socially. Thus, Jats, Brahmans, and Bairagi Beggars often shared the same cot in our sitting room. The hierarchical distinctions among these castes were expressed in seating arrangements. Members of higher ranking castes sat near the head of a cot and those of lower rank sat near its foot. This rule permitted fine gradations in expressing caste status. If members of three castes sat on a cot, the sequence of their positions, from the head to the foot, precisely reflected their relative caste rank. If a member of a fourth caste approached, he would move unhesitatingly to his proper position and the men already seated would make way for him. He would not attempt to sit in an inappropriate position simply to avoid forcing everyone else to move.

Considerations of status based on factors other than caste also influenced the order of sitting on a cot. A senior man was more honored than a junior man; a guest, more than a member of the village; a sister's or daughter's husband, more than a wife's brother or father; a man, more than a woman. It follows that some rather delicate balancing of considerations had to be executed in order to arrive at a proper arrangement. A Brahman teenager would probably not expect to displace a senior Jat from the head of a cot. An aggressive senior Chamar Leatherworker might not yield the superior position to a much younger Brahman, who was not a family head, if the two chanced to sit on the same cot. We mentioned previously an occasion when a Jat Farmer tried to yield the more honored position to a Lohar Blacksmith on the ground that the latter was a sister's husband of the village, and the

Lohar wanted to defer to the higher-caste Jat. Finally, they compromised when one of them sat on a chair.

#### CASTE AND RITUAL POLLUTION

High-caste people ordinarily avoided the touch of low-caste people who were considered less pure. The pollution that resided in a low-caste person, by virtue of his caste status, could be transferred by touch to higher caste people and to specific objects, principally to food, water, cooking and eating utensils, pipes, and pipe bowls. The village people were concerned principally about pollution from the touch of only two castes, the Chamar Leatherworkers and the Chuhra Sweepers, who were believed to be especially polluted. Persons and some objects that had been polluted by the touch of a low-caste person could be returned to their normal state of purity by undergoing a purificatory ritual. Other objects so contaminated had to be discarded. Following pollution by the touch of a low-caste individual, a high-caste person could purify himself by bathing and changing his clothing. Brass pots could be purified by heating them in a fire and scrubbing them with ashes. The individuals who were more strict with regard to ritual purity might exchange the polluted pot for another obtained from one of the vendors who visited the village from time to time. A pot purchased from a vendor was regarded as pure. Polluted earthen pots and earthen pipe bowls were simply broken and discarded. Neither cooked food nor water could be purified after defilement; both were, therefore, not consumed. Raw food, such as fruit and grain, was acceptable from anyone. Distinctions between those foods that could be polluted and those that could not were sometimes quite subtle. For example, villagers processed sugarcane juice into large cakes of brown sugar (gur). A low-caste man could carry these to the house of a high-caste family and the cakes were not considered to have been polluted by his touch. However, if the low-caste man broke a piece of sugar from a cake and offered it to a high-caste man, he would not accept it.

In conversations with villagers, the idea of pollution was more prominent when touching was

discussed than in other aspects of caste relations, such as food transfers. Perhaps this emphasis existed because touching could be inadvertent or could be forced upon a high-caste person by circumstances, such as riding in a crowded bus. Some villagers told us they liked to bathe immediately after a visit to Delhi because of the potential pollution from contact with people of unknown caste. The acceptance of food, however, was almost entirely under the control of the individual. Neither food nor water had to be accepted from a low-caste individual if a high-caste person did not wish to do so; hence, pollution from this source was rare. We obtained no description of a rite for removing the pollution resulting from eating or drinking an offering from a low-caste man. Doubtless such rites existed, but no one spontaneously described one to us, probably because illustrative examples occurred rarely. We learned of no such occurrences during our residence in Shanti Nagar.

Although our observations of intercaste behavior regarding eating, drinking, and smoking conformed with our expectations, we were rather frequently surprised in our observations of touching, at least between women. For example, a Brahman Priest woman who might carefully avoid touching the hand of a Chamar Leatherworker boy when passing cigarettes and matches back and forth might be observed later in the day wrestling playfully with a Chuhra Sweeper woman. We never observed men wrestling, but teenagers and boys played a contact sport called *kabaddi* in which players of all castes participated. Nevertheless, high-caste people ordinarily preferred not to be touched by low-caste people; the only departures from this reluctance occurred generally in special circumstances, such as games. Another circumstance that might lead to intercaste touching occurred when a low-caste person wished to express displeasure to a high-caste person; he might touch him. We once observed a quarrel that involved a Brahman and a Chamar Leatherworker. The Brahman was clearly in the wrong; his cousin entered the affair in an effort to placate the Chamar. The aggrieved Chamar complained at length to the cousin and simultaneously placed his hand on the Brahman's shoulder. The Brahman patiently suffered the

touch; however, we had noticed, in the past, how carefully he had avoided touching Chamar Leatherworkers. We believe that he allowed himself to be touched as a concession that he was willing to make in the interest of settling the quarrel.

#### EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF CASTE AND CASTE MOBILITY

Caste engendered emotional responses. Some people resented the caste system, their position in it, or specific concomitants of their caste status. Low economic status was frequently associated with low-caste status, and, as most people did not like to be poor, they also resented their low-caste affiliation. Apart from considerations of poverty, some respondents, not surprisingly, reacted against the hierarchical feature of the caste system because they disliked the low social esteem in which they were held and from which they could never entirely escape, even though they ultimately gained wealth, education, and honor. The fact that respondents knew the village caste hierarchy and, when asked, could produce a ranking in close agreement with the collective caste hierarchy did not signify that they were emotionally neutral about the hierarchy or that they accepted their position in it with equanimity. The comments made by some of the villagers during the caste-ranking interviews illuminated the emotional side of the caste hierarchy.

A Chuhra Sweeper made the following comments in his interview. "They say that the Chuhra are at the bottom but I belong to that caste and might not want to put it at the bottom. But I will give [the caste hierarchy] as is the custom in the village . . . We wash our hands and we are as good as anyone. . . . They say that the Brahmans are at the top but I think they might be at the bottom . . . We respect the Brahmans. That is in the Shastras [sacred books]. Nehru [a Brahman] is there and everyone respects him . . . This is the Indian Government now and all this does not matter. I am telling what happens in the village. In town you wear good clothes and everyone accepts you. In town I smoke the hookah with everyone and people know that I am a Harijan [low-caste person] and

no one cares. That is why I like the city better than the village."

Another Chuhra commented, "According to the Shastras and Vedas, the Chuhra are the highest, for they clean everyone's night soil. Nehru [actually Gandhi], after looking through the books, has given them the name Harijan. However, in the village, Brahmans are considered holiest." A man of the Gola Potter caste said, "The Golas are highest; you can arrange the rest as you like."

Comments that, in effect, rejected the hierarchical aspect of caste occurred among high-caste men. Naturally enough, these men did not want to shift the position of their own caste in the hierarchy because they were high and would not want to be low, but they rejected the notion of hierarchy. Critical high-caste men were often educated and urban-oriented. Thus, a Jat Farmer, who was a college graduate and worked in Delhi, asked if we wanted his own ranking or the village ranking. We told him that we wanted his opinion. He replied that all castes were one to him. We then asked for the village ranking which he provided quickly and accurately. Religious or political doctrine sometimes appeared to be a factor in an individual's view of the caste hierarchy. One respondent was an Arya Samaji and also a member of the Congress Party. Both groups were opposed to disabilities inherent in the caste system. He said that because of his affiliations with these groups he no longer believed in untouchability. He gave the impression that a discussion of caste made him somewhat uncomfortable because of his Arya Samaj beliefs and his Congress Party membership.

The foregoing were the only spontaneous comments that indicated dissatisfaction with the caste system that were made by any of the 25 informants during the caste ranking interviews. Of course, we heard many more similar remarks during the course of our fieldwork. Not all the comments were hostile to the caste hierarchy. Some respondents bemoaned the weakening of the hierarchy, or, at least, the disruption of traditional caste relationships. One Gola Potter said, "I sit on cots with all castes. Cots now are just like chairs and benches. It is Kal Yug [a period of falsehood and of moral decline, the fourth and

final age of a Hindu world cycle] now and there are no differences left. After [Indian political] independence, no one cares for anyone any more." We interpret this somewhat cryptic remark as an expression of regret that castes no longer showed respect to one another by observing traditional customs as much as in the past. We knew this man fairly well and think that he would have liked the castes lower than his own to show him a little more respect. A Brahman said, "Formerly the Jat Farmers let the Chamar Leatherworkers fill their hookah, but no more. Everything is falling apart. Nothing is left." His observation referred to a breakdown in the traditional economic and ritual relationships of the Jats and Chamars.

When considerations of poverty were combined with low-caste status, criticism of the system became really bitter, but it was focused almost entirely on the economics of the situation. One Chamar Leatherworker, the head of a family that consisted of his adult son, his daughter-in-law, and seven grandchildren, the eldest 15 years old, described his situation in a rarely encountered intensely emotional manner. Angry, frustrated, and seemingly close to tears, he said that his son worked for a Jat Farmer for Rs. 400 per year (\$84.00), a rate that had been established some 15 years earlier when prices were lower, and that he was also allowed to cultivate approximately one acre of the Jat's land and keep the produce. He owed his employer Rs. 2000 (\$420.00) on which he claimed the interest was 2 percent per month.

Although the Chamar may have somewhat exaggerated the size of the debt and the interest, these figures were probably essentially correct; they were independently corroborated by other informants. Thus, the interest on the debt approximately equaled the monthly cash income. Even allowing for the income derived from two buffalos and the earnings of the other members of the family, it is difficult to see how they could exist. His son had to work whenever his employer called. "When you owe Rs. 2000," said the Chamar, "the lender can make you do anything. We are very unhappy. Our Jat employer tries to be helpful. He lets us farm extra land so that we can help ourselves. But we just don't

have any luck. I pray to God that this poor community [the Chamar Leatherworkers] should just be lifted away. We don't have clothes; we don't have land; we don't have anything."

Improved economic circumstances did not necessarily eliminate the unhappiness of low-caste people with their status. Their dissatisfaction then focused on the social and psychological humiliation of identification as a member of a low-status group. Some problems that developed during an interview with an educated, urban-employed young man from a very well-to-do low-caste family illustrate this point. He was much concerned with being accepted by high-caste men; when he was in the village, he was, almost invariably, with young men of higher caste. Our assistant, Mr. Saberwal, had problems with him when he was answering our questionnaire (Appendix). We had prepared a list of respondents written in English, in which he was literate, and each informant was identified by caste. At the beginning of the interview, he had caught a glimpse of his name on the list and apparently tension immediately began building within him. After answering about one-third of the questions, he told Saberwal that there was no caste system in India, that no one identified people by their castes, and that the investigators should not act against the interests of the people of India. He went on to say that he did not understand what our whole study was about. He noted that because Saberwal was receiving a salary from the Americans he should, therefore, work in their interests; but he should not completely abandon the interests of Indians. Saberwal explained the purpose of the study and showed him a copy of Honigsmann's "Culture and Personality" that he happened to have with him to prove that many people were studying communities all over the world and that we were engaged in only one more such study.

Our informant then asked how his name was selected; Saberwal told him that he had been chosen in a random sample. He then asked to see the list, a request that really disturbed Saberwal because the informant was listed with the group of respondents that we had classified as lower caste. Saberwal showed him the list, adding that since the respondent did not believe in the caste

system, he should not worry that his name was listed with the lower castes. Finally, our informant requested that his name be erased and that he be dropped from the sample. All these objections were very politely phrased; our respondent assured Saberwal that he bore him no animosity personally and regarded him highly as a friend. Saberwal agreed and put on his very best smile. Our informant then said that he did not object to answering general questions, but answering personal questions was improper. Saberwal then asked him if he would answer general questions and skip those that seemed personal. He agreed. It so happened that nearly all the remaining questions were general.

Although this episode was unique in our experience with interviewing in Shanti Nagar, we report it in detail because the young informant was a member of the only low-caste family that could be described as upwardly mobile. The problems of social mobility are difficult; its tensions can be severe, as illustrated, we believe, by the reactions of our young informant. He and his family provided other illustrations. For example, we were visiting in their sitting room when several Jat Farmer men and women were also present. It was late afternoon; the senior woman of the family decided to serve everyone tea and commercial cookies. Finding that she had no milk, she abandoned the idea of serving tea, but decided to serve the cookies without it. We then watched as this low-caste woman approached each Jat to try to persuade him or her to accept a cookie. Some accepted; but some refused, offering a variety of excuses. The episode was accompanied by considerable joking and laughing, but the atmosphere seemed to us exceedingly tense. We thought that the low-caste woman was quite perceptive in selecting that particular occasion to try to induce high-caste people to accept food from her. We were present and she knew that we would eat her food. She hoped that the Jats might also do so as a gesture of politeness to us. Furthermore, since commercially baked cookies were not exactly traditional village food (cf. Tandon, 1968, p. 78), the Jats might possibly have accepted them but would have refused other food offerings. We considered the episode to be a social gain for the family achieved at some psychological cost to the woman. The rejection

of one's advances in such a situation must certainly be unpleasant.

Of interest in the foregoing two episodes that involved members of an upwardly mobile low-caste family were the different strategies of social advancement adopted by the young informant and his mother. The latter sought enhanced prestige, in accordance with interactional theory, by attempting to persuade members of a higher caste to accept food from her, and she was partially successful. Her area of reference was the village; her strategy was traditional. Her son, an educated urban worker, looked beyond the village to the modern nation; evoking national values of democratic India, he denied the importance of caste. In his view, prestige should accord with individual attributes, in his case, education, comfortable economic circumstances, and an urban style of dress and life. His strategy was to some extent successful. He was a good friend of a young urbanized Jat who was universally respected for his education, excellence as a farmer, and other personal qualities. Basic to the attempts of both mother and son was the wealth of the family. The actions of our young informant possibly foreshadow eventual change in the basis of caste ranking. As urban influences with their overtones of individualism and equality derived from the West increasingly penetrate the life of Shanti Nagar, the urban model of individual and caste prestige will inevitably become more prominent (cf. Damle, 1968; Marriott, 1968a).

Although emotional reactions to caste were more common among the lowest castes, they also occurred among the higher castes; but, as one might expect, they usually took a different form. The low-caste person resented being held in low esteem by higher caste people. "We wash our hands," he protested, "and we are as good as anyone." The high-caste person reacted emotionally to the pollution and "dirtiness" of the low-caste person. "We hate them," said a high-caste informant, "because they eat meat and touch dead bodies." We were returning one day from a visit to some low-caste families when a high-caste person called to us, as we walked down the street, "You have been with the dirty people." Economic status, another emotionally charged aspect of caste, was as much an issue with the high as with the low castes. The low-caste person

resented his own economic status. The high-caste person, wishing to preserve his relative economic advantage, often reacted strongly to evidence that the low castes were improving their lot. Government assistance to the lowest castes was often viewed with suspicion and sometimes resentment ("The surest way to ruin a man is to feed him and not make him work," said the high castes). Any hint of an upward revision in the wages for day labor could assume the proportions of a crisis in the eyes of the higher caste landowners.

#### CASTE HIERARCHY, SELECTED VARIABLES, AND CASTE MOBILITY

We have remarked that there was a close correlation between the collective caste hierarchy and the caste hierarchy derived from food transfers. The two hierarchies agreed so closely that, in effect, a single caste hierarchy in Shanti Nagar was revealed through an analysis of either opinion or food transfers. Were there additional social and cultural variables closely correlated to this hierarchy? Size of population did not correlate well with the caste hierarchy. The Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests, the two most numerous castes, were at the top of the hierarchy; but the three next most populous castes were, in order, the Chamar Leatherworkers, Chuhra Sweepers, and Gola Potters, all of which ranked low in the hierarchy based on opinion and/or food transfers. Wealth and power were, of course, concentrated near the top of the caste hierarchy, a general feature of social hierarchies. These two factors might account, in part, for the high rank of one or two castes, but they could not explain the reason, for example, for the ranking of the Lohar Blacksmiths above the Nai Barbers. In short, size of population, wealth, and power did not closely correlate with the caste hierarchy throughout its entire range.

Few of those characteristics of diet, occupation, ritual practices, or general cleanliness so often cited by anthropologists and villagers as determinants of caste rank correlated well with the caste hierarchy. Some Jat Farmers ate meat, practiced widow remarriage, were liberal in their interaction with low castes, and were said to have taken wives from lower castes in the past, attributes that theoretically should have resulted in a

low rank. Yet, the Jat Farmers ranked high in the caste hierarchy, according to informants, because of their wealth and power. When asked about the Mahar Potter family, reputed to be the wealthiest in the village, respondents replied that wealth was not important and that rank depended on other factors. So-called dirty occupations might partially account for the position of the two lowest ranking castes, but this criterion did not help to account for the different ranks of the Jat Farmer and Mali Gardener or the Baniya Merchant and the Jat Farmer. Respondents sometimes cited general cleanliness as an important criterion in their judgments of caste rank, but we found the houses of the Chuhra Sweepers, the lowest caste, among the neatest and cleanest in the village. Among some of the conflicting attributional explanations of caste rank offered by our informants, one man ranked the Mahar Potters above the Gola Potters on the grounds that the Mahar used only cow dung to fire their pots, whereas the Gola also used donkey dung; another respondent ranked the Gola Potters above the Mahar Potters because the former were said to avoid three (or four) clans in marriage and the latter only one. We believe that Marriott (1968b, p. 137) summarized the situation very well when he commented, "My impression grew that much of the patchwork of explanatory talk which one could elicit from high-caste persons [by questions about details of diet and occupation as they relate to caste rank] represented *ex post facto* ingenuity rather than any actual, local process of judgments arising from systematically applied criteria."

The caste hierarchy, then, endures through the combination of opinion and interaction with regard to the exchange of food and water. These two factors reinforce one another. Interaction reflects and reinforces opinion; and opinion influences interaction because people are probably reluctant to begin to accept food and water from a caste stereotyped as "low." This mutual reinforcement and the sanctions that a caste can bring to bear upon a member who becomes too liberal in his relations with lower castes account, we believe, for the conservatism of the caste hierarchy in specific villages.

Although the relative positions of castes in a village hierarchy are stable, they can be changed.



Such changes, however, usually take place slowly and often encounter resistance for the simple reason that for every successful upward move of a caste another caste must lose ground. When we refer to caste mobility, we mean a change in caste rank; a lower ranking caste either ties or surpasses the caste directly above it or it may move above a caste with which it had been tied without necessarily tying or surpassing a higher caste. Castes may possibly improve their position in village esteem by abandoning disapproved customs, such as meat eating; but a caste, to be successfully mobile, must translate such efforts into advances in rank. Wealth seems to be the most dominant factor in caste mobility, because the economic power of a wealthy caste can be used to change the pattern of food transfers; and the possession of wealth can favorably affect village opinion so that a change in the pattern of food transfers becomes relatively easy. Marriott (1968b, pp. 164-166) has presented a revealing case study from the village of Kishan Garhi in Uttar Pradesh that supports this interpretation.

When we were in Shanti Nagar, only one caste, represented by a single family, appeared to have the potential for upward mobility. The family was wealthy; it had a large house in a high-caste area of the village; its members associated generally with upper caste people; and the young men were educated and had city jobs. Apparently, they were liked and respected by other villagers, especially by the higher castes. We were unaware that this family was making particularly forceful efforts to advance its caste rank, but its relations with higher castes sometimes offered opportune occasions to establish equality in food transfers. We observed one such occasion as described above (p. 110). Although this attempt was only moderately successful and rebuffs did occur, cracks were nonetheless appearing in the unanimity with which Jat Farmers, at least, refused the family's food.

#### CASTE GOVERNMENT: THE PANCHAYAT

The internal governmental organization of a caste centered around a relatively informal, *ad hoc* council of men known as a panchayat. Literally a group of five (*panch*=five), a panchayat

could consist of as few as two to scores of men. In Shanti Nagar, a caste panchayat formed when an issue arose that could not be solved by either family or lineage. The panchayat might be formed more or less spontaneously and might consist of the adult male members of the caste who happened to be on the scene; in other cases, its formation might be delayed until respected men who were absent could be summoned. These men discussed the problem, endeavored to arrive at a decision, and then, if the problem under discussion centered on a dispute between two caste fellows as often happened, they tried to persuade the disputants to accept the decision of the panchayat.

Panchayats might have judicial and/or administrative functions. The judicial functions were concerned with disputes between individuals or with offenses against caste customs. The administrative functions involved the supervision of necessary community work or decisions that concerned the establishment of caste policy. Administrative panchayats were common at the next most inclusive social level, the village, at which level they dealt with such problems as those connected with digging drainage ditches, cleaning the village well, and establishing village policy with regard to throwing water into the streets. While we were in Shanti Nagar, all the caste panchayats that occurred there were judicial. We heard of administrative caste panchayats that functioned in other villages or that involved caste members from several villages. For example, at a wedding in Shanti Nagar, when the visiting wedding party was about to leave, it asked for a substantial donation for a school from the bride's family. People from Shanti Nagar and guests from two neighboring villages explained that a panchayat of Jat Farmers from the three villages had decided to discontinue that practice. However, we were not made aware of any such panchayats that involved only caste members of the village while we were in Shanti Nagar. A possible explanation may be found in the fact that the membership of most castes in the village was so small that formal administration was rarely necessary. At the village level, problems often involved more people and formal governmental machinery was required.

## OUTCASTING

The principal sanction available to a caste panchayat was outcasting; we recorded no occasion when a caste panchayat levied a fine. On the other hand, although panchayats at the village level frequently levied fines, they did not have the power of outcasting. The villagers defined outcasting as the refusal of a man's caste fellows to offer him the hookah or water, to attend his ceremonies, to invite him to theirs, or to render him any kind of aid. In one of the two examples of outcasting that came to our attention during our residence in Shanti Nagar, the sanctions seemed to have been rather casually enforced; in the second, they were strictly applied to the offender. Although caste panchayats were often confined to those members of the caste who were resident in Shanti Nagar (that is, the *biradari*, or brotherhood), caste members from other villages might also be involved when the problem to be adjudicated was serious.

We recorded one instance of outcasting among the Chuhra Sweepers. The matter was revealed while we were attending a wedding. A Chuhra man had not been invited because he had been outcasted some three years earlier. He had lent one of his cots to the Chuhra of another village to help them accommodate wedding guests. Later, he went to that village and, while the wedding guests were still using it, asked for his cot. This action constituted a grave insult, and he was reportedly expelled from the caste. However, apparently no sanctions had been applied to him with regard to activities such as smoking the hookah. This marriage, the first in three years, was the first time that the Chuhra man was made aware of his status of outcaste. He protested on the grounds that he had been invited into the village (he had married a woman of Shanti Nagar), that a ceremony of acceptance by the *biradari* had been performed (a lump of salt was put into water and the newcomer's caste fellows said that if they ever were to abandon him might they melt away like salt in water), and that he was, in effect, being outcaste three years after his offense. Members of other castes who were present sided with the offender. A noteworthy feature of this situation was the fact that for three

years outcasting apparently produced no problems for the man. It was not until a ceremony occurred in which his status was dramatized that he felt the sting of caste sanctions. At the time, the actions of the members of other castes were typical: they were interested in resolving the problem and re-establishing normal relations in the Chuhra caste. Clearly, the Chuhra who had refused to tender the wedding invitation did not appreciate the intervention of other castes. Losing patience, he denounced a Chamar Leatherworker who had forcefully counseled moderation as a "raper of his daughter," to which the Chamar replied that one should not say such things about daughters, for all people were not like the Chuhra Sweepers.

While the effects of being excluded from participating in the ceremonies of others could be painful, the refusal of expected participants to attend one's own ceremonies was even worse, because the humiliation was supplemented by the practical difficulty of properly managing these complicated affairs unaided. Normally, a family expected some aid from lineage and caste fellows. An outcasting that occurred among the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar while we were living in the village well illustrated this problem. Some members of a Brahman family had offended other members of the caste and the guilty family was outcasted. We were not aware of any formal panchayat meeting at which the outcasting had taken place; rather, the problem seemed to have been under widespread informal discussion until a consensus for action was reached. The offending family had been outcasted only a few months prior to the marriage of a son, its offense was fresh in everyone's memory, and the Brahmans were not in a forgiving mood. Accordingly, the ceremonies connected with the wedding were completely boycotted by the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar.

The ceremonies were attended by the Brahmans from a neighboring related (and senior) village and by other castes of Shanti Nagar, all of whom tried to induce the Shanti Nagar Brahmans to attend the marriage ceremonies. An especially forceful effort was made at the ceremony during which the letter from the bride's family announcing the time of marriage

was delivered to the groom's family and read aloud. First, the Nai Barber was dispatched to summon the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar. He was unsuccessful; then the father of the bridegroom tried. He, too, was rebuffed. At this point, the out-of-village Brahmans decided to intervene. As one of these Brahmans explained to us, it was correct practice for his group to intervene; if the Shanti Nagar Brahmans then did not attend the ceremony, their absence would be considered an insult, especially in view of the fact that the outsiders were senior to the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar. On their way to call the local Brahmans, the outside Brahmans passed the house of a prominent Jat Farmer in front of which eight or 10 Jats were sitting. The Brahmans asked the Jats to delegate one of their number to accompany them. The Jats answered that since this was a problem of the Brahmans, they should be excused. The Brahmans first called at the house of an important local Brahman; they were told that he had gone to his threshing ground. At the second house, they received the same excuse. At the third house, the Brahman said that although the marriage was taking place in a different lineage, he was prepared to attend if other Brahmans would participate. At still another house, the family head said, with great firmness, that he would never go. He intended no disrespect to the visitors and would gladly offer them meals, water, and the hookah. Although he declined the invitation, another man said that the marriage should take place, that the outside Brahmans should substitute for those of Shanti Nagar, and that it might be possible to attempt a reconciliation after the wedding.

By this time, the leader of the out-of-village Brahmans, well aware of the intensity of the antagonism of the Shanti Nagar Brahmans toward the offender, had stopped talking about being insulted by a refusal of the local Brahmans to attend the ceremony. Although he reiterated that people from neighboring villages were traditionally enjoined to patch up quarrels, he said that had he known there was a quarrel in Shanti Nagar, he would not have come. The ceremony began with the out-of-village Brahmans and members of other castes of Shanti Nagar in attendance. The Jat Farmers were well represented. After the ceremony, the Jats impressed on the

outside Brahmans the desirability of their eating at the house of their host before returning to their village. This interdining would serve to emphasize to the local Brahmans that they, on their part, did not regard the man from Shanti Nagar as being outcaste.

A subsequent ceremony in the sequence of rites constituting a Hindu wedding, the feast at the house of the bridegroom before the departure of the wedding party for the village of the bride, was poorly attended. Some Jat Farmers and a Jhinvar Waterman were present, but none of the local Brahmans. Because the family received no assistance from other Brahmans and was not particularly adept, the ceremony was badly managed. The food was poorly prepared; the house had not been cleaned. The family began to clean it in the presence of the guests while the tailor was still sewing clothes for the bridegroom. Only the mother's brother of the head of the family seemed to have any idea of the correct procedure, but, without assistance, it was almost impossible to accomplish what was necessary. The entire episode struck us as pathetic. We later heard that out-of-village Brahmans (the men from the neighboring village and those who had come with the mother's brother) did accompany the wedding party, but the Shanti Nagar boycott was maintained.

Noteworthy in this episode, we believe, is the fact that the outcasting of the offender was honored only in Shanti Nagar, but not in a neighboring related village, or by relatives (mother's brother) of the offender. Two inferences can be drawn from the fact that the boycott was not observed outside of Shanti Nagar. First, it could mean that the offense was not considered particularly grave and that, consequently, there would be some pressure from fellow caste members in other villages to effect a reconciliation. Second, it could indicate that some castes, at least, did not have an administrative and judicial structure capable of imposing and enforcing outcasting.

The two episodes here presented demonstrate that outcasting was observed with varying degrees of severity; it might be manifested more frequently at ceremonies than in daily life and did not necessarily involve all the members of a caste. An offense of such gravity that it resulted in an outcasting honored by everyone to the ex-

tent that a man could not even find husbands and wives for his children would be intolerable; a man finding himself in such a position would be forced to beg the forgiveness of his caste. We never observed so drastic a punishment nor did the villagers tell us about any that had recently taken place in Shanti Nagar.

#### INFORMAL COUNSELING

There was a continuum from panchayats to informal counseling by a respected and/or powerful caste elder. Although the extremes of the continuum could readily be distinguished, it was not especially useful to attempt to establish the point at which counseling ended and panchayats began; rather, all such processes should be regarded as constituting the internal government of a caste.

An example of informal counseling that apparently proved to be adequate concerned two Jat Farmer families living in adjoining houses. Underlying tension erupted into a fight when a child of one family broke a dung cake belonging to the other family. In itself this was a trivial incident; the basic cause of the dispute was more serious. Both families had built a part of each of their houses over what had once been a convenient lane. In order to use the still-existing parts of the lane, one of the families constructed a new door that opened into the courtyard belonging to the second family, so that members of both families were accustomed to pass through each others' homes when using the lane. One family had daughters; the family that had opened the new doorway had sons. The father of the daughters asked the Jat with sons to seal the doorway with bricks because the girls and boys were mingling and there was the possibility of mischief. The father of the boys replied that since the area was really a lane, he had a right to have a doorway there. The complainant pointed out that his opponent had also taken over part of the lane, reminding him of the fact that he was on tenuous legal ground himself and that it would therefore be to the advantage of all concerned to avoid continuing the dispute.

Each man went separately to a respected Jat of a lineage different from either of theirs. The complainant asked for aid in settling the dispute.

The other man said that he too would like to have the dispute settled; but, lest he appear to be surrendering, he asked that the respected Jat arrange to have the door sealed. The Jat refused and advised the disputants to settle the quarrel themselves. Apparently, this counsel provided sufficient grounds for the disputants to resolve their differences with no loss of face. A few months later we saw them sitting together peacefully. This was a relatively simple dispute. Everyone, including both antagonists, recognized as valid the basic grievance: the mingling of young people of opposite sex.

An interesting aspect of this dispute was that it was one of the few occasions that *pana* membership was invoked as an explanation of social events. We asked one of the leading Jat Farmers why people in the village had not interfered when the two Jats closed the lane by building their houses on it; he explained that because it had happened in the other Jat *pana*, no one in his or the Brahman *pana* had paid any particular attention. The *pana* in question was small and one of the offenders was by far its most powerful member. He had no rivals; consequently, there was no one who could restrain him.

#### LEADERS

Although we frequently mention "leading" men when describing the internal functioning of castes, it is important to note that leadership in caste affairs was not a role formally bestowed on a man, as in an election. If, however, a man had personal qualities that commanded respect and if, especially among Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests, he was a senior man of his lineage and was also economically powerful, villagers might begin to turn to him for advice in settling quarrels and in handling other problems, such as dealing with extra-village educational and governmental institutions. If he accepted these demands, he then could be regarded as a leader. He controlled no bureaucracy to carry out his decisions, so that his counsel could, to some extent, be ignored. Such men were necessary to maintain order in the internal relations of castes. They controlled not only caste affairs but also those of the village. Because the village had to deal with governmental agencies, it might be represented

by younger men who were competent in English and could deal with government officials in that language. However, these younger men merely represented their caste elders and did not take extensive action on their own.

### CASTE INTERACTION

Most of the interaction between castes occurred in an economic or ceremonial context. For example, the relations of a village artisan with members of castes other than his own involved principally the fact that he provided special services and products; in addition, members of other castes might attend the ceremonies of his family, and he might attend theirs. In less formal contexts, caste interaction was relatively infrequent. Although intercaste friendships were formed, most of a person's informal social interaction fell within his or her caste. Gossiping while smoking the hookah, one of the principal recreations of the men, was largely intracaste. Considerations of ritual purity and pollution, spatial proximity, and mutual interests deriving from the same occupations, generally similar levels of education, and comparable styles of life all effectively minimized casual intercaste contacts and friendships.

### INFORMAL INTERACTION: GAMES AND CONVERSATIONAL GROUPS

Despite numerous influences that tended to inhibit informal social interaction between members of different castes, it did occur; individuals might develop affection for one another regardless of caste or might find that they had interests in common. Games, sports, and aimless play drew together both youngsters and adults of many castes. We frequently observed boys and men playing games together. The players of *kabaddi*, a rough sport involving bodily contact, often represented several castes, not only those close to one another, but also some that were widely separated in the caste hierarchy. Thus we observed Chamar Leatherworker boys playing *kabaddi* with Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests. We witnessed boys of the Brahman, Jat, Nai Barber, and Gola Potter castes engaged in a tug-of-war as well as youngsters of various castes simply

playing together at no special game. Older men were also brought together by games and, as with boys, the participants might represent castes widely separated in the caste hierarchy. We observed Jats, Brahmans, and Chamars playing pachisi (fig. 14). We noted less intercaste playing among girls and women than among men and boys. We never saw either girls or women playing pachisi or *kabaddi* or participating in other games and sports, but we did see Brahman and Chuhra Sweeper women wrestling playfully together. That this kind of intercaste interaction seemed less frequent among women than among men reflected the fact that females tended to stay closer to home than males.

Although most of the groups sitting and talking that could be observed as one walked through the village were composed of members of the same caste, multicaste groups of both men and women were not unusual. Such groups were quite likely to be found at the Lohar Blacksmith's shop where many men had business. While waiting for the Blacksmith to do their work, they sat on the cots and gossiped with anyone present. For women, a comparable situation occurred at the village well. Twice a day women went to fetch water; while at the well they had a few moments for visiting. Multicaste groups sitting at someone's house were less frequently observed. Such groups tended to be chiefly of one caste with a single member of another caste present. Thus, a single Brahman man might be sitting with five or six Jats in front of a Jat house; or a Jat woman might stop for a few moments and sit with a group of Brahman women on the steps of a Brahman house.

Our interview data regarding informal sitting groups recorded more intercaste activity than did our observational data. Item 27 of our questionnaire (Appendix) asked, "Whom do you sit with the most?" Seventy-one percent of the men and 54 percent of the women said they sat with people from castes other than their own. We do not regard these percentages as a contradiction of our observations that most sitting groups were composed of caste fellows. We believe that the responses to the questionnaire were concerned more with incidence than with frequency whereas the reverse was true of our observational data.

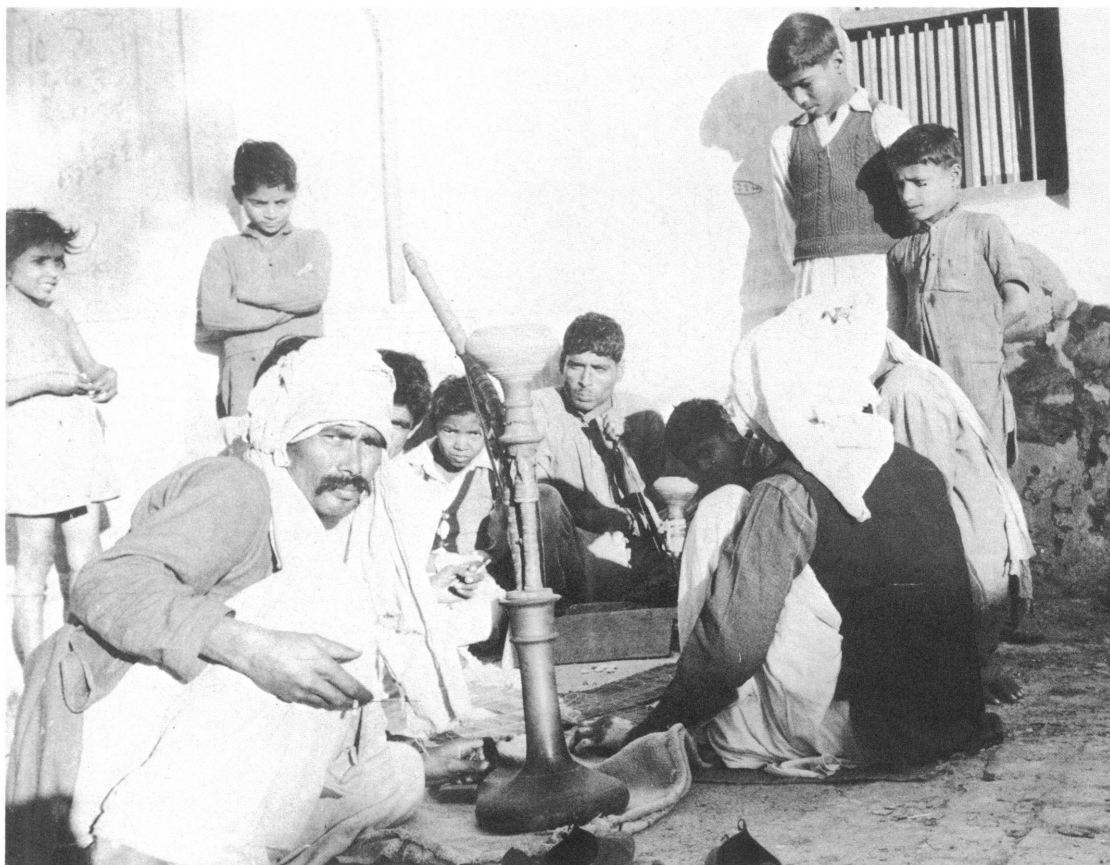


FIG. 14. Representatives of the Brahman Priest, Jat Farmer, and Chamar Leatherworker castes playing pachisi.

When an informant said that he sat with anyone, he meant that he was willing to do so when an occasion presented itself and that he had occasionally done so. However, Shanti Nagar offered many more occasions for sitting with caste fellows than with members of other castes. From the point of view of incidence, the informant apparently sat with everyone; but if he spent most of his time in the village, he probably sat most often with his castemates.

The importance of circumstances in determining the composition of sitting groups can be understood when we compare the responses of urban-oriented and village-oriented men. Only 18 percent of the urban-oriented men replied that

they sat mostly with castemates in contrast to 58 percent of the village-oriented men who did so. Conditions of life in Shanti Nagar tended to channel most informal social interaction for men within the caste. Women confined their informal social interaction to family and caste (46%,  $N=48$ ) more than did men (29%,  $N=68$ ). The results of our interviews accorded with our general observation that women stayed close to home more than did men. However, the responses of the village-oriented women were still surprising: 71 percent replied that they sat mostly with people of other castes. We can offer no explanation for this apparent departure from the general rule that those most likely to confine their in-

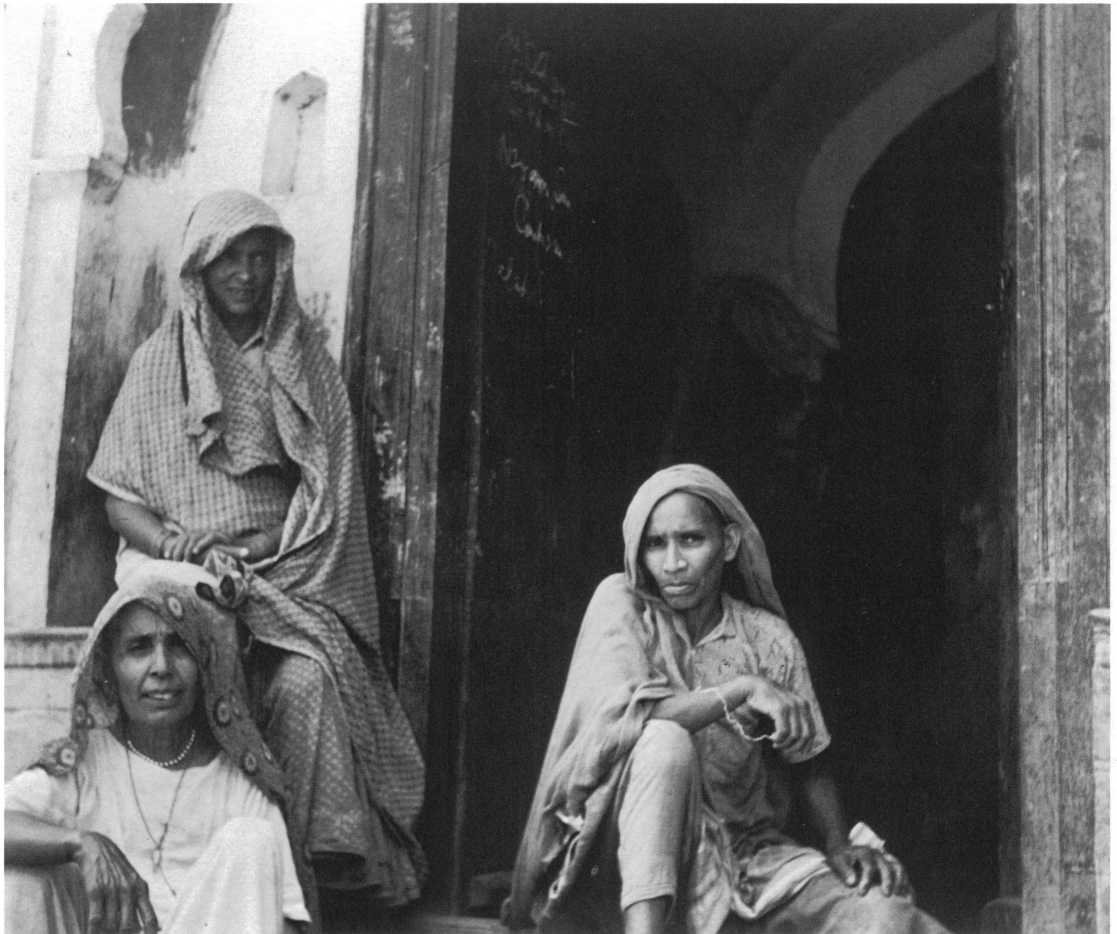


FIG. 15. Intercaste group of women (two Brahman Priests and a Lohar Blacksmith) chatting on steps of a Brahman house.

formal interaction to caste fellows were females and village-oriented villagers other than to note that our sample was small ( $N=14$ ) and that sampling error is more probable when samples are small.

#### INTERCASTE FRIENDSHIPS

We have few observational data on intercaste friendships. Part of the problem is the definition of "friends." The concept is as difficult to define in an Indian as in a western context. We adopted frequency of visiting as a criterion for determining friendship by observation. On the basis of frequency of interaction considerably in excess

of the observed average between members of two given castes and not occasioned by economic or ceremonial considerations, we recorded only six intercaste friendships among men. The most noteworthy was that between a Jat and a Chamar both 40 years of age, because the two castes were widely separated in the caste hierarchy. Their friendship probably began when they were boys. The Chamar's father worked for the father of the Jat and, as a result, the boys often played together. As adults, they had common political interests that involved the Congress Party. They were both quite reticent, asserting only that they had been friends for years and visited each other frequently, as we had occasion to observe.



We were aware of two other friendships between men of widely separate castes. One involved a Jat Farmer and Mahar Potter, each 25 years of age. Each man had a salaried job and was well educated, factors that probably had led to mutual interests and were the basis of their friendship. The other friendship was between a Brahman Priest and a Nai Barber, both men in their late fifties. As far as we could determine, the basis of the friendship was simply congeniality. However, the friendship had a practical aspect for the Nai because the Brahman permitted him to farm a small piece of his land on terms that the Nai regarded as favorable.

The other intercaste friendships that we observed involved a single Brahman man, 42 years old, and three Jats, all about 30 years old. The basis of one of the friendships appeared to differ from the others. A friendship had first developed between the Brahman and the father of his current friend partly because the Jat was powerful in the village and the Brahman skillful in the courts. The combination of these qualities made them an efficient team when they chose to work together. The Brahman said that he and his Jat friend were like brothers. When the Jat died, his son inherited much of his power and the friendly relations between the two families were maintained. The Brahman, on his part, felt a responsibility to the son of his deceased friend. In addition, the friend's son, the Brahman, and the two other young Jats had much in common; they were urban-oriented, enjoyed attending the cinema occasionally, and drank together. The latter two friendships maintained by the Brahman were apparently based almost entirely on mutual interests. The three Jats and the Brahman formed the nucleus of an informal group that, from time to time, included other young Jat men with city jobs. The fact that drinking was important to this group separated them from other young Jats and Brahmans who also worked at city jobs, were well educated, shared their basic outlook to some extent, but did not drink. In Shanti Nagar, as elsewhere, nondrinkers were not especially comfortable in a group, one of whose principal interests was drinking; and those who drank preferred to do so unobserved because drinking was considered a vice in the village value system.

We observed a number of intercaste friendships among women. Two women of a Brahman

family had formed a friendship with the women of two Jhinvar Waterman families who lived opposite their house. They often fed one another on festive occasions. When the Jhinvars gave a feast for the Brahmans, one of the Brahman women cooked the raw food that the Jhinvars supplied. The women of a large Brahman family were friends with the Lohar Blacksmith women who lived nearby. The basis of all the foregoing friendships was congeniality and proximity. Two elderly women, one a Brahman and the other a Jat, were very dear friends because they had both come as wives to Shanti Nagar at about the same time and through the years their affection had grown. The houses of these two women were not close together. We noted a friendship between a Chuhra Sweeper and a Gola Potter that also could not have developed due to the proximity of their houses, a factor in many intercaste friendships.

Our interview data with regard to friendship emphasized such relationships within family and caste more than did the data regarding informal sitting groups which were more frequently intercaste. We would expect this result because friendship is a more intimate relationship than simply sitting and talking. Item 28 of the questionnaire (Appendix) asked, "Of the people you sit with most, who is your best friend?" If we ignore the answers of those who said that they had no friend or who gave the rather stylized response that all people were the same to them, we find twice as many women who selected their best friend from within their own caste as from outside it, and 15 of 34 men (44%) who made the same choice. Among the men, again the influence of urban experience was noteworthy: eight of 10 village-oriented men selected their best friend from within their caste as compared with only seven of 24 urban-oriented men. In the village setting, friendship between males appeared to be largely confined to family and caste members; in the larger context of city life, the importance of family and caste diminished. A similar difference did not occur among women among whom a somewhat higher proportion of the urban-oriented found their best friends among their castemates than did the village-oriented (again ignoring the "no friend" and "all are the same to me" responses). Like our interview data on sitting groups, the information on friendship dem-



onstrated greater intercaste activity than was observationally apparent; however, the importance of caste, at least in the village setting, was nonetheless clear.

Because friendship involves emotions, it is obviously difficult to determine by observation; thus our interview data probably present a more accurate summary of the general situation than do those derived solely from observation. According to the interview data, the best friends of women were twice as likely to come from within their own caste as from without and urbanization, as defined in this paper, had little influence. Men generally were as likely to choose their best friends from outside their own castes as from within; but, for them, urbanization had a considerable influence. On the latter point, our observational data support our interview data: eight of the 10 men involved in the six intercaste friendships described above were urban-oriented. Additional data confirmed the effect of urbanization in the promotion of intercaste contact. A group of men of Shanti Nagar who had lived in Delhi to be close to their jobs included Brahman Priests and a Bairagi Beggar; intercaste groups of men attended urban entertainments such as circuses; social events held by men from Shanti Nagar who lived in Delhi were often intercaste; and men working at city jobs sometimes became friends with fellow workers from other castes and might even bring them to visit in Shanti Nagar, as we observed when men brought their city friends to our house to meet us.

#### ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

In contrast to informal visiting and friendship, much of which was intracaste, economic relationships in Shanti Nagar were largely between members of different castes. This stemmed from the fact that each caste had a traditional occupation. When a Jat Farmer, for example, needed iron tools, pots, a haircut, or agricultural labor, he had to call upon members of other castes for the necessary services; no Jat was trained to provide the technical services of another caste, nor would a Jat ordinarily consider adopting an occupation that characterized a socially inferior group except on a large enough scale so that the enterprise could be considered a relatively big busi-

ness. When a Jat performed agricultural labor for another Jat or Brahman farmer, as occasionally happened, it was on an exchange rather than a cash basis. The few Jats who worked as agricultural laborers in Shanti Nagar were unmarried men from outside the village who lived with their employers as servants.

*Jajmani System.* The jajmani system was one of the principal kinds of economic interaction among castes. Jajmani relationships were established between two families, one of which provided the traditional services of its caste for the other. The patron family made a traditional payment, principally in kind. Part of the payment might be made at the time when services were rendered, part was paid in grain at the harvest (almost always the spring harvest) and part was in the form of gifts at ceremonies. The client family usually had a monopoly in providing services to its patrons; a patron ordinarily could not discharge its client and hire another family of the same caste within the village; he might, however, break off relations and do the work himself or obtain the needed goods or services in impersonal urban markets. This monopoly was enforced by the serving caste whose members usually refused to work for their colleague's patron without permission.

In Shanti Nagar, the term for patron, jajman from which jajmani is derived, was ordinarily reserved for the patrons of a Brahman Priest; in this respect, usage was close to the literal meaning of jajman, he who causes the sacrifice to be performed (Beidelman, 1959, p. 2, n 3). The villagers recognized only the priest-patron connection as a jajmani relationship. This practice was comparable to the usage reported from other villages (Gould, 1964, p. 16). Sociologists and anthropologists have expanded the meaning of the term jajmani to include similar relationships that involve traditional payment in kind for traditional services between families whose relationship, once established, is recognized as permanent by everyone. Nevertheless, many informants in Shanti Nagar denied that relationships other than those between Brahmans and their patrons could be called jajmani. A Chuhra Sweeper family, for example, would call their patrons simply their zamindars (farmers), and the latter would refer to their client as their Sweeper;

a worker might also be called a *kamin* or a *kam karnewala*.

The relationship of a client and patron was inherited from generation to generation and was transferable by sale or mortgage. Transfer by other means than inheritance was apparently rare: informants reported only a single instance of the right to work for a patron that had been mortgaged and was lost to the mortgagee when repayment was not made. When a joint serving family divided to form two independent families, its patrons were apportioned between the two new families. If a single patron family was to be allotted, we were told that the older brother would inherit the patron. New residents in the village contracted relationships with the client families of the landlord on whose land they settled. Thus, the Chhipi family engaged the clients of the Jat Farmer who provided them a place to live; we were served by the Chuhra Sweeper family who served our Brahman landlord.

When a patron family divided, each branch continued to employ the same client family, but each had to pay the traditional fee thus increasing the income of the client. We became personally involved in such a situation when a village woman who carried water for us and cleaned our apartment invoked this custom to argue for a doubling of her wages when our woman interpreter, who lived with us, found that she could not stomach our American-Indian diet and began preparing her own meals. Our domestic argued that because the cooking had been divided, it followed that the families had divided; consequently, she was entitled to the same wages from each. We argued that the food for both our interpreter and for us was coming from a common larder, even though separate dishes were prepared with it and that the cooking therefore had not really been divided. Our point of view was accepted without prolonged argument, perhaps not so much because our basic legal argument was reasonably sound, but because the woman was well paid in any case.

We have recorded a number of disputes between clients and patrons that led to at least a temporary rupture of the relationship. A dispute between a Brahman patron and a Nai Barber was typical. The Brahman who had insufficient grain to pay the Nai asked him to accept what he had

and promised to give him the balance at a later date. The Nai wanted his grain immediately; so this led to a break in the relationship. In recounting the episode, the Brahman at first said that he went to the Nai's brother for his shaves and haircuts, but later he admitted that the brother shaved him very rarely and that he usually shaved himself with a safety razor. He also noted that the Nai's wife no longer washed his wife's hair and that, for want of a Nai as messenger, his wife had not received the presents that she would normally have received on a particular festival. Such a situation could have several outcomes. It could become permanent, if the patron were to discover that he could make other satisfactory arrangements; they could be reconciled after a period of time; or, rarely, the client could arrange the transfer of his patron to someone else. As one of our Chuhra Sweeper informants said, the jajmani who was considered not quite fair would be the one that a client might be tempted to sell.

In Shanti Nagar, jajmani relationships were never contracted between families of the same caste. Of the 12 Gola Potter families, only two made pots. The nonpotters did not enter into a jajmani relationship with the potters, nor did they pay cash for pots; rather, according to our informants, the potters supplied their caste fellows free of charge. The artisan castes did not establish jajmani relationships with one another; instead, they exchanged services or paid cash. For example, the Lohar Blacksmith exchanged services with the Nai Barber and the Chhipi Dyer. If the exchange was unequal, it was balanced by a cash payment. This contrasted with the fact that neither the Brahman Priests nor the Chuhra Sweepers entered into such exchange relationships with their patrons. One might exchange labor with near equals, but exchange was not substituted for a jajmani relationship with a caste that ranked much higher or lower than one's own. Jajmani relationships were a means of caste interaction through which the hierarchical nature of caste as well as its occupational specialization was emphasized; the relationship should not be understood solely as one of economic exchange.

Most of the jajmani relationships in Shanti Nagar were between the serving and artisan castes on the one hand and the landowners on the

other, or between Brahmans in their role of family priests (*purohit*) and other high and middle ranked castes, especially the Jat Farmers. The Brahman Priest, Chuhra Sweeper, Gola Potter, Lohar Blacksmith, and Nai Barber castes were most prominent as purveyors of goods and services in the jajmani system. The Bairagi Beggar, Baniya Merchant, Jhinvar Waterman, and especially the Brahman Priest and Jat Farmer were the prominent consumer castes. However, one must keep in mind that jajmani relationships were between families; therefore, a caste could be a prominent purveyor of services, and at the same time most of its constituent families might be outside the jajmani system. The Gola Potters with only two of 12 families making pots were a good example. On the other hand, all the Nai Barbers and the single Lohar Blacksmith family participated in the system as vendors of services.

A caste-by-caste survey of jajmani relationships showed that, despite the vitality of this traditional form of exchange for many families, at least one numerous caste, the Chamar, had generally abandoned such relationships. Another, the Gola Potter, seemed to have relationships with patrons that were largely on a fee-for-service basis; consequently, one typical feature of the jajmani system, partial payment in grain at the harvest, was not so prominent as it was for other castes. Another typical feature, the exclusive right to serve a specific patron, was also being eroded because some patrons patronized either of the two Potters who had the pot needed at the moment. A third caste, the Nai Barber, found it economically attractive to practice its profession in Delhi, although the Nais continued to maintain their jajmani relations in Shanti Nagar. Because on-the-spot payment for goods and services has probably been a feature of the jajmani system for a considerable period of time, it is wise not to jump to the conclusion that such payments indicated a weakening of the system. However, the fact that because of changing conditions many families could drop out of the system without seriously inconveniencing either themselves or their patrons would suggest its vulnerability in a milieu where urban employment has become a viable alternative for the client and new machinery and/or hired wage labor, for the patron.

If economic benefits to be derived from the

jajmani system are competitive with those of urban employment or if family members can both serve their village patrons and work in the city, the system will probably survive even among castes for which the opportunities for urban employment are good. The Chuhra Sweepers provided a pertinent illustration. A Chuhra woman carried dung from her patron's cattle house to the place where the women of his household made dung cakes. She also swept his courtyard and removed the rubbish. During the season when the grain was vulnerable to human theft or depredations by wandering animals, the Chuhras furnished watchmen for the fields. These duties were similar to those listed in the records of the village in the days of British rule: the Sweeper "... disposes of the rubbish, makes cow dung cakes, and also looks after the safety of the village." The only difference between the village records that date to the first decade of the twentieth century and our observations was that Sweepers did not ordinarily make dung cakes for their patrons; only one woman reported that she performed this service. The women of each family of the village usually made their own dung cakes.

As compensation from each patron, an average Sweeper received two pieces of bread (*roti*) a day, buttermilk on the days her patron made butter, and 20 seers (41 pounds) of wheat in the harvest. This compensation might vary: informants reported a range of payment from one to seven pieces of bread and from 10 seers to one maund (82 pounds) of wheat. However, most Sweepers reported that they received two pieces of bread and approximately 20 seers of wheat. Variation in payment was apparently not closely related to the economic circumstances of the patron because wealthy families, the moderately well-to-do, and even a few of very modest means were said to give two pieces of bread. The fact that two quite well-to-do families were reported to give as many as seven pieces of bread a day reflected their generosity as much as their wealth. In addition to these payments, the Chuhras were entitled to the skin of a horse, donkey, or camel as compensation for removing the dead animal. Although of the same kind, these payments slightly exceeded those to be found in the village records. Thus, the Sweeper was re-

corded as annually entitled to five seers of grain per plough plus daily bread and buttermilk and the skins of horses, donkeys, and camels.

The foregoing payments to the Chuhra were supplemented by their patrons. A Sweeper might receive a bucket of sugarcane juice once a year and some fodder at the harvest; if there was enough wheat for the patron, she was entitled to glean his fields and sometimes she might be given old clothes. A Sweeper received payment at weddings, at those in her own family as well as those of her jajman's children. At the marriage of a patron's daughter, a Sweeper ordinarily received one rupee and meals for herself and her husband for three days; at the marriage of a patron's son, she received a rupee and meals for herself and her husband for a day. The Sweepers also were given the leavings from the wedding feasts. When a Sweeper's child was married, a jajman would be expected to give one rupee, some grain, a woman's head-cloth, and possibly some additional clothing. Of the two Chuhra Sweeper weddings that took place while we were in Shanti Nagar, one was that of two sisters. One patron fed the professional cooks who came to Shanti Nagar for the wedding and in addition gave the Sweeper one rupee, one woman's costume (head-covering, blouse, and skirt), and five seers of grain; the second patron gave two rupees, a head-cloth, and grain. The patrons were also expected to make additional gifts of clothing at the ceremony (gauna) that marked the departure of the bride to her husband's house and ordinarily took place some time after the wedding. Sweepers also received payment at other ceremonies: when a son was born in the house of a patron, they were paid a rupee for beating a drum; at eclipses, patrons gave them grain and possibly a head-covering; and one Sweeper reported that occasionally she was given a bit of the ceremonial food that her clients cooked on the festivals of Holi and Diwali.

The second traditional function of the Chuhra Sweepers, their service as watchmen in the fields, was not handled like the sweeping at the houses of patrons. The latter was a permanent and exclusive relationship between Sweeper and patron, but watchmen had no such relationship. According to the villagers, the landowners selected one man to be responsible for guarding all the fields,

and he in turn selected associates to help him. Landowners paid the guardians at the rate of one sheaf of grain per bigha at the harvest plus one-quarter seer of wheat per bigha at the beginning of the season, all of which was equally divided. It was not necessary to select the same guardian every year; and if his work was unsatisfactory, he would not be chosen again. Neither was the guardian necessarily a Chuhra. However, during the year that we were in Shanti Nagar the guardian and his associates were all Chuhra; this fact, together with village testimony and the village records, suggested that Chuhra Sweepers were traditionally given this duty.

Sweeper women had another traditional function, that of midwife. However, it did not follow that every Sweeper served as midwife for her patrons; in practice, one or two experienced older women acted as midwives and served whoever called them. The relationship of midwife and client had no connection with the daily relationship between a Sweeper and her patron with regard to carrying dung and associated duties. The midwife assisted at childbirth, washed the mother's clothes, bathed the mother and newborn infant for 10 days, and cleaned and plastered the room when the mother's cot was changed. For women of the Chamar Leatherworker and Chuhra castes, the midwife might come on the sixth day after birth and make a dung figure of a goddess (Bemata) on the wall beside the head of the new mother. Other castes had similar figures of the goddess or other auspicious symbols at childbirth, but we did not learn whether the midwife made them for the higher castes. As compensation, the midwife received one piece of bread for giving a bath and, when her services were over after 10 days, one or two rupees, five seers of wheat, a small amount of brown sugar, and possibly some clothes. She might also receive four annas (five cents) for making the figure of the goddess.

Although the Chuhra Sweepers were willing to serve all the other castes of the village, all the castes did not avail themselves of their services. The Lohar Blacksmith family did their own work; the Sweepers did not serve any of the Gola Potters; although the Mali Gardener claimed a relationship with a Sweeper, no Sweeper family reported that they worked for him; and none of



FIG. 16. Chuhra Sweeper (center) holds a tray of gifts she has received at conclusion of rites of Sili Sat. Gifts from her patrons were traditionally part of her jajmani payment.

the Sweepers reported that she worked for any of the Bairagi Beggars. However, our list of patrons is probably incomplete. Although we knew that the Gola Potters and the Lohar definitely were not using the services of Sweepers, when we made our survey, we were not so sure

that this was true of the Bairagis and the Mali. Many families of a large caste like the Jat Farmer or Brahman Priest did maintain jajmani relationships with Sweepers, but not all the families did so. On the other hand, all the Chuhra families had patrons and participated in the jajmani sys-

tem, or, if at a particular time they served no patron, they would undoubtedly inherit one later. Thus, three Sweeper families denied having patrons; however, they had all recently separated from the household of either a father or a brother and the patrons had not yet been apportioned. Among the Chuhra families, the number of patrons varied from two to seven families.

Jajmani relationships were important to the Chuhra Sweepers. In a discussion related to the sale of patrons, informants emphatically stated that this was not the current practice because patrons were too important to a family's livelihood. Urban employment posed no special threat to the relationship between Sweeper and patron because most of the work in the village was done by women and urban jobs were held by men. Thus, it was possible for a man to work in the city while his wife served the family's patrons in the village. For example, one Sweeper commuted daily to Delhi where he was employed as a sweeper by the Delhi Municipal Corporation at a salary of 80 rupees per month, and his wife served four families in the village. Such an arrangement placed a family in a relatively strong economic position. In addition, the maintenance of jajmani relationships provided security against the loss of a man's urban job. The traditional work of the Chuhra families was generally immune to erosion by modern technology. Even some of the present functions of the midwife would probably continue to be practiced after modern medicine became important in the village and trained nurses or doctors attended childbirths because the cleaning, bathing, and ceremonial functions of the midwife would not be usurped by modern medical practitioners.

The Nai Barbers were also deeply involved in the jajmani system. The three Barber families of Shanti Nagar provided traditional services for their patrons. They served all the castes except the Chamar Leatherworker and the Chuhra Sweeper. They did not serve all the families that were potential patrons because, as in the case of the Sweepers, some families preferred not to avail themselves of their services either to economize or possibly because a dispute had led to a rupture in the relationship. The families that did not employ the village Barbers did the work themselves or purchased the services outside of

Shanti Nagar. In the village records, the duties of the Barbers were listed as shaving people, carrying messages to the relatives of their patrons, and serving their patrons' out-of-town guests. This was essentially what Barbers did currently, although their duties were much more elaborate than this sparse statement indicates. With regard to grooming, male Barbers served men, and women served women. (Women Barbers groomed men at specific ceremonies.) Men cut the hair of their patrons and shaved them; women washed and braided their patron's hair. Both men and women Barbers went through the village to call people to attend ceremonies, and men (never women) carried messages and gifts to their patrons' relatives living in other villages.

The principal ceremonial duties of Nais occurred at marriages and births. At marriages, a Barber woman helped to bathe the bride and groom, braided the bride's hair, ground flour, mixed dough, removed leaf plates after feasts, cleaned pots, and helped to call villagers to various ceremonies. A man helped to mix dough and clean pots, called people, carried messages, and assisted at various rites. One traditional function that involved marriages, no longer performed by Nais, was to find husbands for daughters of the village. They might suggest suitable boys but such functions were no longer left to the Barbers as had been often done in the past. The amount of work performed by Nais at a wedding celebrated with average pomp in the family of a moderately prosperous landowner was enough to require the assistance of other Nais. One Shanti Nagar Barber family and a Barber family from a neighboring village had an arrangement to assist each other. A woman Barber bathed a new mother from the tenth day after childbirth until the fortieth day (the Chuhra midwife performed this service during the first 10 days) and also assisted at the ceremony of worshipping the well that terminated the series of rites attendant upon childbirth.

For haircuts and shaves and to some extent as compensation for other services, a Nai received wheat and fodder at the harvest. The Barbers said that the payment depended on the amount of work done and the economic circumstances of the patron. However, payments seemed to be fairly standard; we recorded more than a dozen;

the majority were on the order of one maund (82 pounds) of wheat and a head load of fodder. Landowners made these payments in grain and fodder. Patrons who owned no land might exchange services if they were artisans, make increased payments at weddings, contribute gifts at other festivals, or pay in cash. For example, the Nai shaved his Potter in return for pots, he exchanged labor with the Lohar Blacksmith, and he accepted vegetables from the Mali Gardener and either brown sugar or baskets from the Jhinvar Waterman. A Nai informant said that the Gola Potters, who were not wealthy, paid one rupee a year for service, a bargain when compared with the 16 times as much paid by the landlords. On the other hand, the Nai doubtless gave the Gola Potters much less service than they did the landlords. When the woman Barber washed and braided the hair of her patrons, she was paid immediately either in grain (usually one seer) or in cash.

Nais received fairly substantial payment for their work at weddings: for example, they reported that they received 32 rupees for their services at the marriage of the son of a well-to-do Brahman. Informants reported that payments at marriages generally ranged from 20 to 60 rupees. It would be impossible for castes traditionally served by the Nais to do without their services at weddings. For her services at a childbirth, a woman Barber expected to receive a woman's costume (head-cloth, blouse, and skirt) or its equivalent in cash as well as some grain; one woman said she charged two pieces of bread per bath. For carrying a message to another village, a Barber was fed by the family to whom he delivered. The payments reported by our informants were more detailed than those listed in the government records of the village but they were the same general kind: 15 seers of grain per plough; his meals, when he shaved rich people; and, at the marriage of a son or daughter, payment according to the status and position of the parents.

Delhi offered attractive employment opportunities for Barbers, and the heads of two of the three families of Nais worked in the city. However, both men and their families continued to serve their village patrons. This was possible largely because a son in each family was old enough to work at the trade. The third Barber,

considerably older than the other two, confined his services to his village patrons, but in the past he had been in military service and he had also worked in Delhi.

Because the Nais had the economic advantages of being able to maintain their village practice while working in the city, Barbers were not tempted to abandon their traditional jajmani relationships. Patrons too seemed reasonably content. However, one man discontinued getting shaves and haircuts from the village Barber because he thought the service too costly. His wife, however, continued to engage the services of the Barber's wife on the normal fee-for-service basis.

The only services of Barbers that were not immediately compensated by a fee were shaves and haircuts for men and, occasionally, children. Payment consisted of an annual traditional measure of grain and fodder given at the harvest. From the point of view of a patron, the problem posed by a traditional yearly payment was that he might continue to pay the same amount even when the service deteriorated somewhat in frequency, convenience, and quality. Although, theoretically, a patron could reduce his annual payment to correspond to a reduction in services, such an action could initiate unpleasant disputes. Consequently a patron might prefer to sever this aspect of the jajmani relationship. Safety razors and haircuts in Delhi or neighboring towns and large villages offered a patron an alternative to the village Barber, especially to one who was absent from the village much of the time and whose services might not be available when needed. The situation appeared to be generally conducive to a shift to a fee-for-service system except for the fact that, in Shanti Nagar, both Barbers who worked in the city had young sons and so were able to serve their patrons reasonably well for the foreseeable future, provided the sons did not decide to seek employment in Delhi.

Like the Nai Barbers and the Chuhra Sweepers, the Lohar Blacksmiths were involved in jajmani relationships with many families, so that a substantial part of their annual income derived from these relationships. The Blacksmiths made many of the agricultural implements used in Shanti Nagar, such as sickles for harvesting grain, hatchets for cutting sugarcane, and the iron parts of the plow; they also repaired these

implements. The Blacksmith was an indispensable adjunct to the practice of agriculture in Shanti Nagar. Like the Barber, the Blacksmith received both on-the-spot cash payments and yearly payments in grain. He sold new implements to his patrons for cash. The repair of old tools, the making of new implements for a patron who furnished his own iron, and specific work on a patron's new house under construction were compensated for yearly with grain and fodder at the harvest, generally 45 seers of wheat and a headload of fodder that weighed approximately as much as the wheat.

This was essentially the yearly payment mentioned in the village records, except that in these documents it was stated that a patron was expected to pay this amount for each plow. Two of our informants mentioned payment by the plow, but the rest (about 10) did not; and a Lohar, himself, discussing his yearly receipts said that all his patrons paid basically the same amount. One informant who operated two plows, said that he made only the usual payment and not double as he would have, had the number of plows been a consideration. It should be noted that in village idiom "plows" in this context actually meant bullocks, that is, two bullocks were a "plow," four were two plows, and one bullock was half a plow. A few informants mentioned additional compensation: gur at the sugarcane harvest and a few sheaves of millet at the kharif (end of summer) harvest. In addition to the yearly payment, a patron might give his Lohar one rupee for a marriage in either family. One informant said that when a son was born in a patron's family, a Blacksmith could give the patron a small cot in exchange for which he would receive a costume for his wife.

All the patrons who had the foregoing jajmani relationship with the Blacksmiths were farmers. However, the Blacksmith dealt with all or most of the families of Shanti Nagar. The nonfarming families paid the Lohar in cash or exchanged labor with him. The Blacksmith exchanged work with the Barber; with the Chhipi Dyer, he exchanged repairs for mending, but they paid each other in cash for new tools or new clothes; and with the Jhinvar Waterman, he exchanged repairs for baskets and the Waterman bought new implements for cash. Nonfarming families, who were

not artisans and, therefore, had neither comparable goods nor services to exchange, paid the Lohar for his services when they were rendered. Since there was only one Blacksmith family in Shanti Nagar, it necessarily served the entire village and, consequently, had a wider network of intravillage relationships than any other family, except the Baniya Merchant who operated the only shop in Shanti Nagar. In addition to serving the people of Shanti Nagar, the Blacksmith sold tools for cash in neighboring villages, and blacksmiths from other villages were free to come to Shanti Nagar to sell implements for cash. These cash transactions were not considered an infringement on the traditional jajmani relationship.

Both the Blacksmith and his patrons were apparently content with the current system. Without curtailing his service to his village patrons, the Blacksmith had time to make and sell implements in neighboring villages and towns. Although for a brief period one of the Blacksmith men worked in Delhi as a peon, the family had enough men to maintain its jajmani relationships. In any case, income from their village patrons was sufficient so that there was no strong temptation for members of the Blacksmith family to become itinerant peddlars or seek urban employment. Although patrons might purchase implements outside of Shanti Nagar, they had to rely on the village Blacksmith for repairs. It would be difficult to convert the Blacksmith's business completely to a fee-for-service arrangement because much of it consisted of repairing plows and other implements. Since repairs varied in difficulty and in the time required to make them, the setting of fees could become complicated. The practice of charging a fee for small units of time (less than half a day) was not followed in Shanti Nagar. Therefore, an annual payment was perhaps the most efficient method of paying for all the little jobs that a Blacksmith performed for a patron throughout the year.

In discussing the jajmani relationships of the Brahman Priests of Shanti Nagar, we refer to the relationship of a *purohit* (family priest) with his jajmans. It should be noted that, in addition to the *purohit*, a jajman family might also require the services of another Brahman, a learned pro-



fessional priest. The more well-to-do families, especially the Jats and Brahmans, engaged professional priests from another village to conduct their major ceremonies; poorer families might engage for this purpose one of the Brahmans of Shanti Nagar who was more learned than most of his caste fellows, although he lacked sufficient erudition to be considered a professional priest. The *jajman-purohit* relationship was not particularly affected either by the professional priests from outside of Shanti Nagar or the activities of the few local Brahmans of more than average erudition.

So slight was the involvement of the Brahman Priest in *jajmani* relationships that Brahmans and others frequently commented that there were no *jajmans* any more or that the system had changed from a relationship between *jajman* and *purohit*, where the former gave presents to the latter, to one of reciprocal exchange between equals. Villagers often said that this situation stemmed from the Brahmans' ownership of land and, consequently, their desire to be treated as equals; thus, *jajmani* relationships were going out of fashion. Some *jajmans* once permitted their *purohits* to farm land on shares as part of the relationship between the families. This practice had almost disappeared in recent years because of land reform legislation. A landowner ran the risk of losing his land if he permitted others to cultivate it. In addition, Brahmans were fed less frequently and received fewer gifts on special occasions than formerly. However, several functions of the *purohit* were still extant: he guarded the sweets and watched the cooking during weddings to make sure that ritual purity was maintained; he still received modest gifts or was fed on special occasions, especially *Shraddha* (the annual ceremony to commemorate ancestors), the birth of a calf, and the birth of a son; and he might officiate at simple ceremonies. Brahmans acted as family priests for all the castes of Shanti Nagar except the Chamar Leatherworkers and the Chuhra Sweepers.

The Brahman Priest did not receive a payment of grain at the harvest although one informant said that this was the custom at one time. He was paid Rs. 1.25 at weddings in addition to meals for his family and was fed or sent small gifts at *Shraddha* and other occasions. One informant

mentioned that he had given three cows to his Brahman in recent years, and this statement was confirmed by the recipient. Only this *jajman*, a notably generous person, had recently given a cow to his *purohit*. Although a Brahman performed specific services at weddings and other ceremonies, it is noteworthy that he received some gifts only because he was a Brahman. He was rewarded for his caste status. As we have previously stated, the *jajmani* system cannot be understood simply in terms of economics; it is a social system in which considerations of religion, economics, caste hierarchy, and village solidarity are intermingled.

Urban influences did not appear to interpose any threat to the relationship between a *purohit* and his patron. The family priest was summoned, at most, a few times during the year; either he or a member of his family was usually available even if he held a city job. If urban employment were to enhance village prosperity to the extent that villagers would demand more elaborate ceremonies and more learned priests, the status of family priest would not, even under these conditions, be particularly affected because the conducting of ceremonies had already generally been turned over to specialists and the remaining ritual functions of *purohits* were undemanding as far as sacred erudition was concerned. For these functions there would be no reason to seek Brahmans from outside the village. Moreover, the presence of the *purohit* was essential for the practice of village Hinduism. For example, the Chhipi Dyer commented that he had found it necessary, when he moved to Shanti Nagar, to establish relations with four castes: A Chuhra Sweeper, a Nai Barber, a Gola Potter, and a Brahman. The first three performed labor in return for compensation; the Chhipi's only relations with his Brahman Priest were feeding him (and a few other Brahmans) when he arrived in the village, when a calf was born, and on *Makara Sankranti* (the winter solstice). Although it had greatly diminished in prior decades because of the anti-Brahmanical influence of the Arya Samaj reform movement, there was still a feeling among villagers that it was good practice to feed Brahmans and to give them gifts.

Although the Baniya Merchant did not provide services for patrons under an arrangement

that entirely fit the definition of a jajmani relationship, he did furnish one traditional service that in some ways resembled it. At weddings he was often summoned to record *neota* (literally, invitation), money loaned by friends to the family holding the wedding. The *neota* relationship between two families began with the loan of a specific sum of money. At a future wedding in the house of the original lender, the original recipient had to repay the accumulated *neota* and add an amount equal to the original sum in order to maintain the relationship. For example, the head of Family A gave Rs. 5 to the head of Family B at a wedding in the latter's family. Family B had another wedding and received another Rs. 5 from Family A. Then Family A had a wedding. Family B had to pay Rs. 15. Of this sum, Rs. 10 represented repayment of the *neota* given by Family A, and Rs. 5, equal to the original sum, was for the purpose of maintaining the relationship. Had Family B wished to end the relationship, they would have paid only Rs. 10 to Family A. The many transactions of a family were complicated and required a record to be kept. *Neota* was recorded in the books of the donor, the recipient, and the village.

The Baniya, who was traditionally summoned to write *neota*, served all the castes of the village. For his services, he received one or two rupees and a meal (only from those castes from which he accepted food), regardless of how much money changed hands or the number of entries. This function of the Baniya resembled a jajmani relationship in that he traditionally performed it and received a traditional payment for his services; it differed principally in that the Baniya did not have a monopoly and theoretically any other literate man could serve. Also, like the Brahman Priest, the Baniya received no recompense at the harvest. Urbanization would offer no threat to the Baniya's writing *neota*, but increasing literacy might, because any literate man would qualify. The current Baniya, however, was a highly respected man, recognized as skilled in business affairs; his services were considered worth the cost. Were the Baniya less able, the demand for his services would probably decline. However, we suspect that many villagers would nonetheless continue to call him to write *neota* because the force of tradition was strong.

The two village Potters had jajmani relationships with patrons, but their arrangements appeared to be more variable than those between other artisan or serving castes and their patrons. For this reason, the relationship between patron and Potter did not fit the definition of a jajmani relationship as well as that between, for example, a Barber and his patrons. Some landowners gave grain to the Potters at the harvest, but others did not. Some patrons used either of the two village Potters depending upon which one had the pots they needed; others were faithful to one Potter. Thus, two of the major characteristics of jajmani relationships, partial payment in grain at the harvest and the exclusive right to serve a patron, were less prominent for the Potters than for other artisan and serving castes. This situation was apparently not recent. The village records dating from the first decade of this century noted specific payments to the Chuhra Sweeper, Lohar Blacksmith, Chamar Leatherworker, and Nai Barber; but, according to the records, the Potters received no fixed recompense and were paid according to the status of their patrons.

Potters furnished their patrons of all castes with a variety of pots, lids for pots, lamps for Diwali (a festival), and hookah bowls. Most or all of these were paid for on delivery. Those who made a payment in grain at the harvest, usually 20 seers of grain or less, received some pots without paying for them when received. However, the value of these pots furnished without immediate charge was always substantially less than the value of the yearly grain payment.

The Potters were also paid for their services at weddings. One of the rites of the wedding ceremony of all castes was the worship of the potter's wheel (Chak Puja). A procession of women went to the Potter's house where they performed the ceremony and received a number of new pots. For the ceremony, the Potter was usually paid four or five pounds of grain plus some meals; and some informants reported that they gave cash and gur (brown sugar) in addition. The pots were paid for in grain or cash after the wedding, although they were furnished during the ritual of worshiping the wheel. One village Potter would accept meals even at weddings of the Chuhra Sweeper caste, but the other Potter would not; Gola Potter informants generally

denied they would take food from Sweepers (S. Freed, 1970, table 1).

The current jajmani relationships between Potters and their patrons appeared to favor the Potters. This was especially true when the relationship involved a yearly payment of grain, because the few articles that the Potter furnished without receiving immediate payment were worth less than the annual grain payment; in addition, some other traditional payments, for example, the measure of grain paid for Diwali lamps, also appeared to be more than the value of the articles received. The Potters would benefit by maintaining the system in its present form and possibly increasing the number of families who made an annual payment in grain. On the other hand, patrons would benefit economically by completely converting to a fee-for-service system, because they were already paying for almost everything at the time of delivery and the few articles not so compensated were worth less than the traditional annual payment. Yet, many patrons continued to make a yearly grain payment and expressed little dissatisfaction with the practice. Thus, the Potters made a profit in the sense that some aspects of the traditional payment for their services added greater benefits than such services commanded in the market place. Orenstein (1962, p. 310) clearly documented this feature of the jajmani system in his detailed study of a district in western India.

Urbanization posed little threat to the jajmani relationships of Potter and patron. The Potter did well economically and was, therefore, not tempted to abandon his village practice; and a patron would gain little by purchasing his pots elsewhere, although at least one woman in the village did so, not to save money, but because she thought that a Potter in a neighboring village made a particular kind of pot that was superior to the comparable article made by the local Potter. Metal vessels purchased outside the village or from traveling peddlers were in common use, but earthenware held its own, for earthen pots were considered to be superior for some purposes.

The Chamar Leatherworkers had dropped almost entirely from the jajmani system as purveyors of services, although once they apparently were as deeply involved as the Chuhra Sweepers or the Nai Barbers were currently. The govern-

ment records described a Chamar's traditional duties as mending the shoes of his jajman, plowing, harvesting, removing dead cattle and, in addition, rendering a variety of free services to the village as a whole, a kind of service that was known as *begar*. For these services, he was to receive one-fortieth of the crop yield of his jajman and the skin of dead cattle. All the jajmans of the Chamars were landowners. If the Chamar performed additional farm work, made leather articles that were used with bullocks, and furnished his jajman a pair of shoes every six months, he was entitled to receive one-thirtieth of the crop yield.

Leatherworkers no longer performed *begar*, but they remembered the system: the high castes would send the village watchman to call perhaps two men. Someone had to go. These men might, for example, then be required to carry letters or objects to a neighboring village or to assist a visiting government official. They received no pay. Informants of the Chuhra Sweeper and Gola Potter castes said that they also participated in *begar* at one time but that they no longer did so. A Chamar informant said that in the past the Chamars feared the high castes, but about 15 years previously they had decided that they would no longer work without pay. They had also stopped working at the weddings of their patrons. Formerly, they provided extensive services: they collected cots for the use of the wedding party, brought large kettles from neighboring villages, plastered the house walls, chopped wood, ground grain, and provided watchmen for the wedding. For all these labors, the Leatherworkers claimed that they were paid one rupee (a landowner, on the other hand, said that they were paid from two to five rupees). Because the value of their services greatly exceeded one or two rupees, the Chamars decided not to continue working at weddings.

Only two Chamars had maintained permanent relationships with a jajman that bore any resemblance to the jajmani relationships described in the government records. According to one Jat Farmer, he had a relationship with a Leatherworker family by which the Chamar annually furnished a pair of shoes and specific parts for each plow and provided one family member for daily work in the fields and cutting one headload

of fodder every day. As compensation, the Chamar received 5 percent of the farm produce and presents at weddings in the jajmani's family. He also had a separate sharecropping arrangement with his patron involving 11 bighas of land. The second Chamar worked full-time for his Jat patron, and other members of his family helped when needed. He received his meals, 400 rupees a year, and about an acre of land to farm.

In addition to these two jajmani relationships, one Jat landlord claimed to give the Chamar traditionally associated with his family one maund of grain and some fodder at the harvest despite the fact that the Chamar rarely did any work for him. The landlord described the payment as useless. In discussing traditional arrangements between landowners and Chamars, some informants referred to sharecropping rather than to the jajmani system. Several Leatherworkers once cultivated large areas of land on shares, but this practice had been almost entirely discontinued as a result of land reform legislation.

Relationships between Chamars and their jajmans apparently began to change so long ago that some informants tended not only to have forgotten the traditional relationships but to confuse them with sharecropping. Currently, both the jajmani system and sharecropping had generally ceased to be practiced by the Chamars. The landowners blamed the attrition of the jajmani system on the changing attitudes of the Chamars, who, they said, preferred city jobs to work in the fields. On their part, the Chamars claimed that the jajmani system was economically unfavorable to them, and cited specifically *begar* and their service at weddings. In any case, the system had been abandoned, resulting in no excessive hardship to either the landowners or the Leatherworkers. The introduction of the mechanical fodder cutter had lightened the tedious chore of cutting fodder by hand and thereby decreased the need of the landowners for daily labor. Landowners seemed to be content with wage labor derived from the low castes or exchange labor with other farmers. Chamars appeared to be as well (or as poorly) off working for wages as they would have been under the traditional jajmani system. A Chamar who could average 22 working days per month at the current rate of Rs. 1.50 per day received close to the Rs. 400 per year of

the Chamar with a jajman; and if other members of his family worked, they were also paid. In one sense, the jajmani system had simply been converted to a system of wage labor. Urbanization had a definite influence on this transformation. The availability of urban jobs made it possible for the Chamars to refuse what they regarded as unfavorable economic arrangements. The landowners were under no compulsion to make concessions, because they could hire wage laborers at a cost comparable with that of the jajmani system. Landowners were no longer interested in sharecropping. The transformation had left a residue of ill will, but, we believe, much less than would have continued to generate under the old system with its economically unfavorable aspects, that, with regard to *begar*, verged on forced labor.

*Wage Labor.* Wage labor replaced many of the economic functions of abandoned jajmani relationships. A landowner could obtain the necessary help to plow or weed his fields; a laborer could earn roughly as much as he might have in the jajmani system. However, the quality of the relationship between employer and laborer was different. Their relations were less personal than those between a jajman and his traditional workers. A landowner might hire anyone who was available in the village and he might, and did, seek workers from outside the village. Workers, on the other hand, were free to seek jobs wherever they were available. Under such arrangements, there was no necessary continuity in the relationships and therefore less personal and emotional involvement. Furthermore, a jajmani relationship involved payments at specific ceremonies, thus broadening an economic relationship so that the rites at births, weddings, and similar events in one family became occasions for participation by the other family.

Close ties such as these did not exist in the system of wage labor, which resulted in less involvement and concern between high- and low-caste families and ultimately diminished village cohesiveness. This was most evident among the Gola Potters of the village. Most of their families had experienced only the slightest involvement in the jajmani system, either as jajmans or workers. Their interest and involvement in village affairs were noticeably less than those of any other caste.

During one panchayat meeting, an irritated landlord complained that when it was necessary to assist in projects designed for the welfare of the village, the Gola Potters ranked lowest of all the castes in their interest and contribution of labor. This charge was not entirely justified, because the Potters, when called upon, did their allotted free labor for the village to the same extent as all other castes. But, we believe, the landowner's comments did accurately reflect the greater detachment of the Potters. However, this attitude should not be overemphasized, for lacking comparative data on the Gola Potters in other villages and in other circumstances, we cannot be sure that they may not have a characteristic caste attitude differing from that of other castes, and that this attitude rather than their economic situation underlay their relative indifference to the rest of the village. Nonetheless, any weakening in an institution, such as the *jajmani* system, that reinforced village cohesion would enhance the divisive tendencies inherent in the caste system. The degree to which such divisive tendencies might expand would be affected by developments in other aspects of village life. For example, an effective village panchayat including representatives of all castes could counteract to some extent a reduced social cohesion that stemmed from a weakening of the *jajmani* system. In a socially complex setting like Shanti Nagar, it would be difficult to isolate the effects of a single development.

*Moneylending.* In addition to work for wages and *jajmani* relationships, moneylending was a third mode of economic interaction that crossed village caste lines. One borrowed money where it could be obtained, often from relatives or caste fellows and, sometimes, from moneylenders in other villages; but considerable money was borrowed from moneylenders in Shanti Nagar. Typically, the lender was a wealthy Jat landlord and the borrower a Chuhra Sweeper or Chamar Leatherworker. Only five Jat Farmers regularly lent money. As one of our informants commented, it took a hard man to be a moneylender. A soft man, as he claimed to be, would never be repaid. The lending of money established more than a temporary economic bond between lender and borrower. The relationship often became an enduring one. The borrower approached his moneylender repeatedly: when he was in need of

money for a wedding, to build a house, to buy a buffalo, or simply to buy food. Under such circumstances, a borrower might repay his creditor by working for him. Such an arrangement tended to become permanent, because usually the debtor never earned enough to repay the debt. The customary monthly interest rate was about 1.6 percent (one pice per rupee); thus, a debt of 2000 rupees, for example (not a particularly large amount to have borrowed, for a wedding might cost a low-caste man between 800 and 1500 rupees, and a house, 750 to 2000 rupees), would require a monthly interest payment of about 31 rupees. The rate for day labor was Rs. 1.50. Consequently, a man could find that his interest payment was about equal to his monthly cash income. In such a situation, a borrower was strongly obligated to his creditor who, on his part, felt free to call upon his debtor or upon other members of his family for payment in labor. "When you owe 2000 rupees," said one of our Chamar informants, "your creditor can make you do anything." Loans were sometimes made on the understanding that the borrower would work for the lender.

Our Chuhra Sweeper informants listed 10 Chuhra families, some of whom currently lived outside of Shanti Nagar, as being in debt for amounts ranging from 200 to 2000 rupees with an average of 960 rupees. Borrowing was for the usual reasons: to build a house, for the expenses of a wedding, to buy a buffalo, or because of illness. Eight of the 10 Chuhra families borrowed money from Jat landlords of Shanti Nagar; one borrowed from Chuhra Sweepers living outside of Shanti Nagar; our informants could not name the creditor of the tenth family. Most of these debtors had city jobs and were repaying from salaries earned there; but one man, who had the largest debt (2000 rupees), sent his son to work for his creditor at 30 rupees per month in addition to meals and clothes. Since the rate of interest for this loan was said to be only 1 percent a month, the principal could be repaid by this method at an initial rate of 10 rupees per month. However, repayment would require many years of service assuming that the debtor neither had money from other sources with which to repay the loan nor borrowed additional sums from this moneylender.

A woman member of the same family gave us

a somewhat different account. She said that the loan had been for 1000 rupees at 2 percent interest and that the son of the borrower worked for only 20 rupees per month and meals, the 20 rupees being retained by the landlord to pay the monthly interest. This arrangement would, of course, keep the debt from growing but would do nothing to reduce the principal. The woman said that after seven years the family had managed to reduce the debt to 700 rupees by paying small sums whenever they had a few spare rupees. Whatever the details concerning this loan might be (discrepancies of this nature were common in the testimony of different informants), one effect would not change: the Chuhra family would be obligated to the Jat moneylender for many years. To lend a substantial sum of money was one way for a landlord to establish an almost permanent tie with a low-caste landless family, thus assuring himself of labor whenever needed.

Six Chamar Leatherworker families had rather large debts ranging from 1000 to 4000 rupees, for an average of approximately 2650 rupees, and several others had small debts of a few hundred rupees. One of the large debts, said to be between 3000 and 4000 rupees, concerned a complex series of business dealings between a Chamar and a Jat landlord. The two individuals had been involved in the milk business. The Jat had also financed some of the Chamar's legal efforts, both successful and unsuccessful, to claim land under the new land reform legislation. Both of these individuals had extremely strong personalities; their relationship was stormy because each tried to maximize his advantage. A typical dispute flared up when one wife of the Chamar refused to work for the Jat when he asked her. The husband was present and the Jat, who recounted the episode, appealed to him. The Chamar replied that if his wife refused to work, he could not do anything about it. The Jat said that one thing could be done; if he were the Chamar, he would slap her. The Chamar replied, "You are a big man and so you'll soon be slapping us all." Then the Jat sent for the Baniya Merchant to total the account, which amounted to between 3000 and 4000 rupees. The Jat told the Chamar that he could pay his debt and then do as he wished. Furthermore, he would lend no more money for the Chamar's milk business. The Chamar then agreed that he and his family would

do whatever they were asked to do by their Jat creditor.

The debts incurred by another of the Chamars with heavy liabilities clearly illustrated the general principle that loans were sought wherever money was available; the major sources were relatives and village moneylenders. This Chamar had borrowed 300 rupees from one Jat moneylender of Shanti Nagar and 1000 rupees from another, 1500 rupees from his mother's brother, 100 rupees from a cousin, 100 rupees from a moneylender in a neighboring village, and 600 rupees from a credit society (that will be described below) for a total of 3600 rupees. He had borrowed to pay for weddings, to build a house, and to buy four water buffaloes that he hoped to sell later at a profit. One water buffalo died and three miscarried, so that there was no profit. This loan would be repaid from the earnings of two men of the family who had city jobs. At present, the Chamar claimed to be paying only the interest on the loan from the society and that his other debts were accumulating.

The third Chamar who was deeply in debt has already been mentioned as one of the two Chamars with a traditional jajmani relationship. He owed his Jat employer between 2500 and 3000 rupees; the interest was said to be at the rate of 2 percent. The Chamar received 400 rupees a year, his meals, and about an acre of land to farm. His only hope of repaying his debt was for several of his five sons to find city jobs when they grew up. Each of the other three men with substantial debts had borrowed 2000 rupees to enable them to build new brick houses. Two of them had borrowed from a merchant in a neighboring village at 2 percent interest, and the third had borrowed 1000 rupees from the same merchant and the second 1000 from a Jat moneylender of Shanti Nagar.

Our Leatherworker informant listed six of his caste fellows who had borrowed small sums from a credit society formed by five Chamar men. To accumulate capital, each of the five men contributed 10 rupees per month for 27 months for a total of 1350 rupees. Accumulated interest from money borrowed from the group had increased the capital of the fund to 1800 rupees. Loans had been made to four members of the society, to two other Leatherworkers, to one Chuhra Sweeper, to one Chuhra of Shanti Nagar then

living in a city, and to one outsider who worked in the same factory as did one of the members of the society. The monthly rate of interest was slightly less than 1.6 percent (one pice per rupee). Loans ranged from 50 rupees to 600 rupees with an average of 290 rupees. Money was borrowed to buy buffaloes or to finance house building. The society collected the interest on all loans every month. While the credit society mainly served the Chamars, especially its founders, it transacted some business with members of other castes. So far, no loans had been made to members of higher castes. It appeared to be generally true that money was borrowed either within a caste or from a lender who was of a higher caste than the borrower.

We have little information about the debts of the Gola Potters. Five men were said to be in debt, but we have details on the debts of only two. One Gola man borrowed 735 rupees at various intervals from the same unidentified moneylender in order to buy mares and mules. Another Potter borrowed from one of the Jat moneylenders of Shanti Nagar and planned to repay the loan from his earnings at a job outside of Shanti Nagar. Our informant said that the other Potters borrowed from sources outside of the village. In addition to the usual common reasons for borrowing money, Gola Potters borrowed to purchase mares, donkeys, and mules for use in their transportation business.

Moneylending could be a troublesome business for all involved. Moneylenders might find that debts were difficult to collect; debtors, on their part, might feel themselves so harassed as to leave the village, at least temporarily. Such a departure did not stop the determined creditor who trailed the debtors to their new homes, not only adding to his expense but increasing the annoyance of the debtors. We recorded a business scheme; its outcome illustrated some of these difficulties. A Jat had lent approximately 800 to 1000 rupees to two Chuhra Sweepers. The money was to enable the Sweepers to buy buffaloes to supply milk to one of the village milkmen, a client of the Jat. The milkman guaranteed the loans. In addition to the two Chuhra Sweepers, other villagers participated in the scheme. The project prospered for a time, but, finally, the buffaloes went dry. Their owners sold

them, and a few of the owners then left the village, neglecting to pay their debts. The milk business collapsed and the milkman who had guaranteed the loans had no money. The moneylender, consequently, had to collect from the original borrowers, a difficult undertaking that involved travel, threats, and attempts to enlist the aid of the police and the courts. According to the moneylender, one of his village antagonists attempted to intervene on the side of one of the debtors and encouraged him not to repay the loan. Of particular interest was the fact that both Chuhra Sweeper men left the village, at least in part, in an attempt to escape pressure from the moneylender. One Chuhra, who had a job in Delhi to which he usually commuted, began to live there, and his mother kept his address a secret. The other debtor worked in a more distant city to which he would not have been able to commute in any case. However, informants said that his debt was one of the reasons why he chose to leave Shanti Nagar.

If urbanization had had any effect on moneylending in Shanti Nagar, it was only that city jobs offered debtors an additional source of income from which to repay loans. The villagers did not borrow from city banks or governmental institutions. Within the village, the relationship of the high-caste lender and the low-caste borrower was undisturbed as was the relationship between caste fellows who were borrower and lender. However, the villagers had taken advantage of various government financial programs, most prominently that by which the government assisted low-caste people to build brick houses. A government program of low-cost loans would probably have been attractive to the villagers because the current village interest rate was from 1½ to 2 percent per month. It seemed, however, unlikely that the government would lend money to finance weddings, a common cause of indebtedness. The government might, in all probability, consider loans secured by a buffalo or two as too risky and would most certainly not be interested in establishing a semi-permanent relationship with a debtor and his family as security for a loan. A village moneylender would accept such a relationship and might even seek it. Thus, the village moneylender had definite advantages and would undoubtedly continue as a feature of

the rural scene for the foreseeable future. It is worth noting that the interest rates of village moneylenders, often considered by westerners to be excessive, were quite favorable when compared with rates of finance companies in the United States.

#### CEREMONIAL INTERACTION

Another major area of caste interaction was in the ceremonial life of the village. Although some ceremonies consisted of individual rites such as the offering of water to the full moon, and others, such as Gobardhan (Cowdung Wealth), involved only the family, still other ceremonies might include people outside the family, lineage, and caste. A portion of this caste interaction has already been described in our discussion of the jajmani system. For example, Nai Barbers and Brahman Priests who performed important duties in the ceremonies of other castes were paid for their participation. Their services were necessary; the ceremonies could not be held without them. However, another kind of caste interaction through ceremonial activity was largely voluntary, depending on the mutual affection of the participants, their desire to maintain friendly relations, or upon the entertainment value of the ceremony. Some ceremonies included processions or other public spectacles or involved feasts or other entertainments that could be attended by people of many castes. Intercaste participation could include such activities as joining a procession, giving a gift, accepting food, listening to a story, playing games, participating in an evening of songs and dances, or simply acting as spectator. We recorded information on the composition of scores of such ceremonial groups.

*Sili Sat.* Processions formed a part of many ceremonies, both annual and those of the life cycle and ceremonies that were held only occasionally, such as Akhta, a cattle-curing rite. The groups that paraded through the village were usually composed of women, most of whom represented a single caste. The few representatives of other castes in such processions came from families living in geographical proximity to the caste that furnished the majority of the participants in the procession.

For example, the festival of Sili Sat (Cold

Seventh) featured processions of women who passed through the village where they made offerings and worshiped at shrines that represented seven mother goddesses, especially the smallpox goddess, Shitala. All the castes participated. We observed five groups of women during the ceremonies of Sili Sat in 1959. One group consisted entirely of Gola Potter women; another, solely of Chuhra Sweeper women; the other three groups were composed of representatives of more than one caste. All the multicaste groups were alike in one respect: most of the women came from one of the five more populous castes of the village; the rest represented a single family of one of the smaller castes. Thus, one group was composed of the women of seven Brahman and one Nai family; another, of Brahmans and women from the single Lohar Blacksmith family; and the third, of Gola Potter and Chhipi Dyer women. Geographical proximity (for example, the Chhipi family lived in the Gola Potter quarter) and affection were basic to the formation of these groups. Nearly equal status in the caste hierarchy was apparently not a major factor in the composition of these informal groups, although the high castes did not join the ceremonial processions of the Chamar Leatherworkers or Chuhra Sweepers, and the latter two castes did not ordinarily participate together in ceremonial processions.

Although we have emphasized joint participation in a procession in our discussion of caste interaction at Sili Sat, other varieties of interaction also occurred: members of all castes stopped to watch the processions; some people distributed sugar candies to honor happy events that had occurred in their own families, such as the birth of a son or the recovery from illness of a valuable animal. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the participants distributed food and, occasionally, other gifts to the Chuhra Sweepers who served them (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1962, pp. 262-270). In short, a single ceremony might involve joint participation in a procession and worship at shrines, participation as spectators, and the receipt of gifts based on jajmani ties.

*Diwali and Amla Sinchan Gyas.* A number of other calendrical ceremonies included processions: Holi (a saturnalia), Amla Sinchan Gyas (Amla Watering Eleventh), Diwali (Festival of Lights), and Makara Sankranti (winter solstice) as



well as the occasional celebration of the ceremony of Akhta. At Diwali the procession was a relatively minor part of the ceremony, but, early in the evening a group of girls, among whom we noticed Bairagi Beggars, Brahmans, and Lohars, walked singing to the village well around which they placed lighted lamps. The ceremony of Amla Sinchan Gyas consisted almost entirely of a multicaste procession of women to the garden of the Mali Gardener where an offering was made at an Amla plant. When we observed the ceremony, Brahman, Bairagi, Baniya Merchant, Jat Farmer, and Nai Barber women participated in the procession. The group of women was accompanied, as were all processions, by a large crowd of children who went along to watch.

*Makara Sankranti.* At Makara Sankranti, the winter solstice, young wives gave presents to members of their husbands' family. The cere-

mony in part involved several groups of women who formed processions through the village. Each group of 20 or 30 formed around a nucleus of a few wives belonging to the same family or caste who had presents to deliver to some of the male members of their husbands' family. The women walked singing through the village carrying the presents to those who, at that season, were often working at the sugarcane crushers. Although the ceremonial processions might be multicaste, they were dominated by women of the same caste as the nucleus of wives who were giving the presents. Residential proximity was important in the formation of these groups: thus, we saw one group composed of Jat, Brahman, and Lohar Blacksmith women, all of whom lived in close proximity to one another.

*Akhta.* The rites of Akhta have been described elsewhere (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966). Many



FIG. 17. Multicaste group of women on their way to garden of Mali Gardener to make offerings to Amla plant during festival of Amla Sinchan Gyas.

aspects of this ceremony, including a circumambulation of the village, involved all castes. During the procession, each caste paraded as a group, one following the other. After the procession, Brahman men, children of the upper castes, and, finally, Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers partook of a feast. The rites of Akhta strongly emphasized joint caste participation for the welfare of the entire village. The hierarchical aspects of caste were not ignored: for example, Brahmans paraded and ate first and Chuhra Sweepers last. However, the necessity for all castes to participate if the rites were to be effective in banishing the epidemic of cattle disease impressed on everyone the fact that the welfare of each caste and individual could not be divorced from that of all others.

*Holi.* The festival of Holi and the fortnight preceding it abounded in processions, singing, dancing, dramas, and entertainments. The participants usually represented several castes. As the climax of the festival, a huge bonfire was lighted in the evening of Holi, after dark. During the afternoon and early evening preceding the lighting of the fire, groups, usually small, of women and children paraded to the pile of wood where they worshiped and presented offerings. Of the groups we observed, five were women and children of a single caste and two were multicasite. Like the multicasite women's groups of Sili Sat, those of Holi consisted principally of members of one of the larger castes and representatives of a family of one of the smaller castes. Thus, the women of the single Baniya Merchant family came with Brahman women who were their neighbors, and the Chhipi Dyer's wife, who lived in the Gola Potter quarter, came with two Gola Potter women.

The lighting of the fire and the games played during the evening attracted a large number of spectators. Although the crowd was composed of members of all the castes of the village, individuals generally clustered in caste groups. This situation was especially noticeable of the Chuhra Sweeper women who stood at a greater distance from the Holi fire than the higher castes and kept very much to themselves. The principal game played during the evening was *kabaddi*, a rough game played by two teams. A man of one team

advanced into the territory of the opposing team and tried to touch someone then hastily retreated to his own territory. The defenders tried to capture him. The evening we attended Holi, the *kabaddi* players were Jat and Brahman boys and young men.

The fortnight preceding Holi was enlivened by the presentation of dramas, dancing, and singing throughout the village. Groups of women gathered every evening to sing, dance, and watch skits performed by a few of the more talented women. Chamar Leatherworker men presented nightly entertainments of almost professional quality that were attended by people from all castes. The groups of women performed for their own amusement and that of the usual crowd of watching children, whom they completely ignored. Ordinarily men were not spectators at these affairs. The groups of women were generally composed of neighbors. There might be several such groups in action simultaneously in various parts of the village. Because the groups formed on the basis of propinquity, they were often multicasite. We observed groups composed mainly of Jat Farmers, Brahman Priests, and Bairagi Beggars, for such a group formed nightly close to our house. Although the individual participants varied from night to night, the same castes were represented repeatedly. In addition to the women's groups, we observed groups of young unmarried girls and boys. The girls danced and sang; the boys attended as spectators. We also watched a group of about 15 boys who performed a drama for their own amusement.

The content of these pre-Holi skits deserves some attention, especially because some of them drew their inspiration and subject matter from important kinship relationships or from caste interaction. For example, one skit focused on a man, his wife, and his mother, a triangular relationship traditionally teeming with problems and drama. One of the actresses pretended to be a plowman working in the fields. After an interval, his wife brought him his meal. He complained that she was late, that the bread was poorly prepared, and that there was no vegetable. She blamed it all on his mother. The husband said that the two "widows" (an insult) must have quarreled that day. The wife said she had quar-

reled with no one, but that her mother-in-law was causing trouble. The conversation continued in this vein and was repeated many times. This portrayal was very popular, and the spectators laughed at every line.

Another skit in which a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law were the main characters concerned a series of visits from the daughter-in-law to the mother-in-law to invite her to a feast at Holi. At the beginning of the skit, the daughter-in-law asked her mother-in-law if she covered her face and wore her skirt properly because her husband had complained that she did not conform to the correct behavior and was therefore immodest. The mother-in-law reassured her that she behaved properly. The daughter-in-law then visited her mother-in-law repeatedly, first, to tell her to bring her own flour to the feast since she and her husband were short; then to report that her husband had said that she should also bring her own clarified butter and sugar; then to request that she bring her own dishes; and finally, to advise her that they had decided not to give a feast for her that year, but that she should come the following year. All the onlookers enjoyed this skit immensely.

A skit involving caste relationships revolved around a daughter who had gone about the village to visit people of many castes leaving younger siblings at home unattended. The mother, annoyed, asked her daughter where she had been. She replied that she had gone to the Potters. The mother asked her why she had gone there; the daughter answered that she had gone to get some pots. Angered, the mother said, "I will set you right. I will break your pots. Why did you leave my children alone?" Next, the mother repeated her initial question as to where her daughter had gone. The girl replied, "To the Jhinvar Waterman." Her mother asked why; the girl answered that she had gone to get some water, and so on. This basic episode was repeated for almost all the castes of the village.

Although the foregoing performances of the informal groups attracted a fair number of spectators, the major social center of the village in the fortnight ending with Holi was the Chamar Leatherworker quarter. Here, Chamar men, skilled singers, dancers, and actors, presented skits and songs before large crowds of villagers of

all castes. The songs, recorded in books, were called *holis*, and the Chamars had several such books. New songs were constantly being composed; hence, the performances of the Chamars sometimes had a current, nontraditional flavor that was absent in the skits performed by the women. One *holi*, sung by two Chuhra Sweeper men (Chamars did most of the singing, but members of other castes might also perform) praised Nehru, then the greatly respected prime minister of India, and Gandhi, the revered leader of the movement for Indian independence. Its theme, that caste and untouchability were no longer in existence, was very socially conscious. Songs from films were also sung. The text of one sung by the Chamars recited the complaints of a young wife that her husband had learned bad habits, smoking, drinking, gambling, and using opium, and that he was ruining her. One young Jat man of the village became greatly interested in *holis* and wanted to compose some. The Chamars told him that they would sing them if they proved to be any good. One evening we heard him singing one of his compositions: the melody was from a film; the text that he had composed advised people to love one another because one could not take anything from this world.

The positioning of the spectators at the entertainments in the Chamar quarter was of some interest. Broadly speaking, they sat in groups forming two circles around the drum and dancers. Men sat in the inner circle, and women, in the outer circle. All the daughters-in-law of the village kept their faces covered revealing only their eyes. Early in the evening when the crowd was small, some upper-caste men sat on cots with Chamars and Chuhras; but as the crowd grew, men tended to sit in caste groups. We noted that Jat Farmers to whom several Chamar Leatherworkers owed debts, were given cane easy chairs. In addition, people watched from the roofs of houses that surrounded the open courtyard of the Chamar quarter.

*Dulhendi*. Traditionally on the second day of the Holi festival, Dulhendi, people play pranks and splash one another with colored water. We observed the horseplay of Dulhendi in Shanti Nagar two successive years. The activities appeared to be somewhat different from those usu-

ally described for Indian villages or from those we observed in Delhi. Dulhendi has been characterized as a day of abandon and merriment in which many villagers participate actively. Anthropologists have often emphasized the feature of "role reversal" that is manifest in the horseplay; that is, women, whose status is lower than that of men, can freely assault them with sticks, rope-ends, water, and cowdung. These are actions that females ordinarily do not do to males, or members of low castes to those of high castes. In Shanti Nagar, however, there were relatively few active players. They were generally daughters-in-law of the village and young men, often younger brothers of the women's husbands. The relationship of sister-in-law and husband's younger brother in these instances was very often fictive (see S. Freed, 1963b). A number of spectators of various castes watched the players. Thus, we once observed a Brahman Priest woman, a wife of the village, playing with a Jat Farmer man who was a good friend of her husband and his fictive younger brother. A large crowd watched. The woman had a stick; the man, a bucket of water. They guardedly approached each other; then, suddenly, the woman rushed forward and tried to strike her opponent as he dodged and threw water at her. As the woman threw her stick at him, he fled. A spectator returned the stick to her; someone gave the man another bucket of water, and so the game continued. It was not particularly rough. The woman carefully threw the stick at the Jat Farmer's legs and not forcefully.

On the lower caste side of the village, activity was somewhat more vigorous. Two Chuhra Sweeper wives and several men, two of whom were Chamar Leatherworkers, were playing. Although the women struck with their sticks a good deal harder than had the Brahman lady, they were clearly getting the worst of it. The pattern of play did not differ from that in the higher caste quarter: again, the women tried to strike the men who dodged and threw water. After about an hour of this activity, the Chamar Leatherworkers brought out their musical instruments and there was singing and dancing. We observed that the older men, especially those of high caste, were conspicuously absent from the village lanes, and we believe that they tended to

stay at home on Dulhendi. When we asked the villagers about what we interpreted as a lack of action, in view of our expectations from reading the published descriptions, they told us that they were unusually restrained because of the recent death of a prominent man who had lived in the village. Despite this explanation, the following year the activity on Dulhendi was generally no different and there had been no comparable death. However, because of the mourning for the prominent village man, the pre-Holi skits were not performed the year he died.

Although the play of village wives and young men that attracted throngs of spectators dominated Dulhendi, there was similar activity among other villagers. Any unwary man might receive a blow. Men were allowed to watch the play, unmolested, provided they submitted to a blow or two, and this was the strategy adopted by the male author and his companions. A man could also avoid a beating from his older brother's wife by giving her a gift, and this strategy was also quickly seized upon by the author when he learned of it. Another effective method to evade assault was to claim to be a fictive brother of an assailant. The author learned that the invoking of this emotionally most powerful kinship tie always brought the women up short. Once, three women came to his sitting room to beat him, but, when he asked them how they could beat him, their brother, they departed having done nothing. A woman who watched the scene was disgusted. "You came to beat him," she told the women, "but he said that he was your brother and you didn't do it." However, the foreign visitor did not escape untouched. A young girl in the household of a friend came up behind him and gave him so forceful a blow with a stick that, had it struck a vulnerable spot, it could have resulted in serious injury. In a more gentle ceremonial activity, friends rubbed color on one another's forehead and embraced.

The pranks played on each other by men on Dulhendi could be rough. The horseplay and joking that we observed among a group of young Jat Farmer men in a sitting house seemed relatively unrestrained. One man struck one of his close friends a blow with a stick that must have really hurt; another physically quite powerful man played like a fiend, beating and rubbing color on

everyone. When villagers set out to tease someone publicly, their intimate knowledge of everyone's foibles could make the victim squirm. On this occasion, much of the joking was directed at two men who had recently lost their wives, one by suicide (rumored to have been murder) and the other through divorce. The two men isolated on a cot, were teased by everyone, an ordeal that they bore as good-naturedly as possible.

This brief survey of behavior on Dulhendi portrays a situation of formalized interaction rather than one of general license, nor did the pattern of "role reversal" appear to have been particularly prominent. Role reversal was noteworthy only in the pre-Holi skits in which actresses portrayed men. On Dulhendi, the men and women who threw sticks and water at each other were often older brother's wife and husband's younger brother, a relationship, generally warm and informal, that might involve teasing. Although any stray man was vulnerable to assault, we observed that if the really prestigious men of the village happened to walk through the streets, they were not assailed. Women apparently used a certain degree of discretion. Thus, we observed that a Brahman woman, approaching a group of Brahman men and an older Nai Barber man, pelted the Nai with wet cowdung while the Brahmans watched and laughed. One would hesitate to characterize this behavior as an example of role reversal, for the woman was of the higher caste. At first, the Nai was angry, but when everyone laughed he calmed down a bit and smiled sheepishly. There was no obvious role reversal among the young men who beat and teased one another; they were all Jats and routinely teased one another occasionally. Although their behavior on Dulhendi was more abandoned, it was essentially an intensified version of the kind of action that could be observed at any time. Thus, despite a certain amount of license, it seemed clear that neither the rules of kinship nor caste behavior were abandoned on Dulhendi.

*Tijo and Karva Cauth.* Intercaste interaction based on propinquity or friendship occurred on other ceremonial occasions. For the festival of Tijo (Third), swings were hung from trees in several places in the village and girls and young women swung while older women sat and watched. Some of the groups that congregated

around swings were confined largely to a single caste but others might be multicasite. We observed one group of women of the Jat Farmer, Brahman Priest, Lohar Blacksmith, and Mahar Potter castes, and another of Jat, Brahman, and Gola Potter women.

Although the yearly festival of Karva Cauth (Pitcher Fourth) was observed within the home, principally by family members, a family might at that time distribute sweets to other families with which it had affectionate relations. For example, one Brahman family distributed sweets to Brahmans, Jats, Jhinvar Watermen, Nai Barbers, and Baniya Merchants.

*Sanjhi.* The rites of Sanjhi (the name of a Goddess) might involve single families, small groups of from two to four families, a lineage, or all or most of a caste. By sticking pieces of painted dried or fired clay and bits of cloth on walls of houses with cowdung, groups of women and girls created figures of the Goddess. For nine successive evenings, the women and girls sat in front of their figure of the Goddess and sang. On the tenth day, the members removed the figure of Sanjhi and immersed it in the village pond. Later, the girls and young women of a lineage formed a group and went from house to house in their lineage begging grain that they exchanged for sweets at the shop of the Baniya Merchant. They subsequently distributed the sweets in the lineage. However, lineage and caste membership were not strictly adhered to. We observed one group that consisted of the females of a Brahman lineage as well as Jhinvar Watermen and Baniya females, all of whom lived in the same neighborhood. The families who combined to model a figure of Sanjhi usually belonged to the same caste, but congenial women of different castes could combine their efforts. Thus, two families of Brahmans and the Jhinvars jointly celebrated the festival. As is so often true of ceremonial interaction, the families were neighbors and quite friendly. The festival varied considerably from caste to caste with respect to group versus individual family participation. Each Gola Potter family modeled its own figure of the Goddess; the Chuhra Sweepers made only two figures for the entire caste; and the Bairagi Beggars and the Chamar Leatherworkers only one for each caste.

*Janamashtami.* The observance of Janamash-

tami (Birth Eighth) featured a long drama based on the life of Lord Krishna. So familiar were young Jat and Brahman men with the story of Krishna's birth and life and so often had they watched plays based on these events that they could improvise a truly impressive performance. The presentation we attended began about 8:30 in the evening and lasted until nearly midnight. Preparations during the day appeared to be rather perfunctory, rendering the high quality of the production all the more impressive. Performing on a raised platform, many of the young actors, especially those with the principal roles, displayed both enthusiasm and considerable talent, as did the Jat man who played the harmonium to accompany the performance. The drama was attended by a very large crowd that represented most, if not all, of the castes of Shanti Nagar. It was dark and difficult to recognize individuals in the audience. After the drama, those villagers who had fasted during the day broke their fast. Villagers told us that the fast was not to be broken before midnight, and this custom might partly have accounted for the duration of the play. There was no reason to end it early as people would have had to stay awake in any case waiting for the proper time to break their fast.

*Pilgrimages.* Often multicaste groups of villagers made pilgrimages to bathe in the Ganges or Jumna rivers or to worship at a distant shrine. A popular yearly pilgrimage to bathe in the Ganges on the day of the full moon occurred in the month of Kartik (October-November). In 1958 informants named some 25 or 30 Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests and a few Gola Potters who had gone that year; we doubt that this list was at all complete. Some, at least, of the Jats and Brahmans traveled together. The monthly trip to Delhi to bathe in the Jumna on the day of the new moon involved a wider range of castes. We accompanied one such group consisting of representatives of the Brahman, Jat, Chhipi Dyer, Jhinvar Waterman, Bairagi Beggar, and Chamar Leatherworker castes. When we arrived at the river in the morning, the men and women separated by a few yards to bathe. All the men bathed together as did the women; there was no subdivision into caste groups. Everyone in the group was in a good mood, and many people

stayed in Delhi for the afternoon to attend a circus. A multicaste group, unusual in that it was composed of a dozen Brahmans and a Chuhra Sweeper woman and her daughter, journeyed by train to Gurgaon to worship at the shrine of the Mother Goddess of Gurgaon. The Shanti Nagar group stayed together until it reached the railroad station at Gurgaon, where the Brahmans and Chuhras became separated, "because the station was so crowded," according to our Brahman informant.

*Rites of the Life Cycle.* Ceremonies related to the life cycle, birth, marriage, and death provided many occasions for intercaste participation. There were evenings of singing in which women and girls participated; occasions when dancers performed before groups of spectators; feasts; and processions through the village when worshipers went to the village well or to the Potter's wheel or to various shrines to make offerings and to pray. The castes that participated on such occasions depended upon the nature of the specific rite. The women who sang at the various wedding rituals were drawn together by the affection of their families and to some extent by living near one another. Participation in such a sing (*git*) was by invitation of the host family. These intercaste groups were, in general, composed like those of Sanjhi or Tijo, for example. The interacting castes were not necessarily adjacent to one another in the caste hierarchy. However, one did not see members of the two lowest castes, the Chamar Leatherworkers or the Chuhra Sweepers, among the women who gathered in the evening to sing at a Brahman wedding; nor would a high-caste person participate in the wedding feast of one of the lower castes. However, people could watch. Thus, high-caste people might enjoy watching the dancing at a Chuhra Sweeper wedding, and low-caste people could watch the high-caste processions and the public parts of their rites.

Because of the complex and lengthy series of ceremonies that constituted a Hindu wedding and the various rites at birth and death, in a village the size of Shanti Nagar, life-cycle ceremonies occurred frequently throughout the year. A few examples of these ceremonies will give some idea of the multicaste interaction that was observable at many of these rites. The worship of

the village well 40 days after the birth of a child was the final ceremony related to birth. We watched this ceremony following the birth of a son in the Lohar Blacksmith family. Twenty or 25 women and girls gathered at the Lohar's house, among them representatives of the Brahman Priest, Jat Farmer, Mahar Potter, Gola Potter, and Nai Barber castes. The last two were present to fulfill their jajmani duties, but the others came because of affection or neighborliness. Many guests brought little dishes of grain that they gave to the Lohars. Singing, the group walked to the well where the ceremony was performed, and singing, returned to the house of the Lohar. Grain was distributed to the guests; some of the women danced while the girls continued to sing. The dancers were quite skillful, and the spectators obviously enjoyed the performance. The singing and dancing did not continue for very long, however, as the participants and onlookers were busy and could not stay.

Evenings devoted to singing by women and girls were one part of many life-cycle rites. Such singing groups were usually multicaste. For example, we attended such a sing held during a Brahman wedding. The participants were Brahman and Jat women and girls; some young boys were also present as spectators. The younger married women seemed to do most of the singing; the older women were busy gossiping and taking care of the children. Another multicaste sing took place in the home of a Jat Farmer to commemorate the tenth day (in Shanti Nagar, celebrated on the ninth day) after the birth of a son. Women and children who lived at the end of the village furthest from the Jat's home began to assemble about 8:00 P. M. After the women and children had gathered, they began to sing and parade toward the Jat's house. As the group moved, it was augmented by recruits along the way so that it numbered some 30 women when it arrived. The group included women of the Jat Farmer, Brahman Priest, Bairagi Beggar, and Nai Barber castes.

Although high-caste people did not eat at low-caste weddings, they did attend some of the rites. Principally, they were spectators, but, occasionally, they participated in other ways. Musicians and dancers were prominent at Chuhra

Sweeper weddings; large crowds gathered to watch the professional entertainers, not only the performances that took place in the course of processions through the village but also those in the Chuhra quarter. Thus, during a dance in the Chuhra quarter, we noticed that the neighboring Chamar Leatherworkers were out in full force. There were also a few people from the Jat and Lohar Blacksmith castes, as well as a horde of children of many castes. A performance by the professional entertainers in the evening of the same day at the houses of the Jat jajmans of the Chuhra family whose daughters were being married attracted a crowd of high-caste people.

When a boy was being married, one of the rites consisted of a procession around the village where the bridegroom worshiped at the shrines of Mother Goddesses. At the wedding of a Chuhra boy, we witnessed a procession that was accompanied by musicians and dancers who presented prolonged displays in front of a number of houses belonging to high-caste people. Once, a Jat woman came forward and blessed the bridegroom. At another point, the bridegroom, spotting one of the most liberal of the Jat young men among the onlookers, invited him to accompany the wedding party to the bride's village. The Jat laughed, accepted noncommittally but did not go. At the termination of the procession women passed small coins around the head of the bridegroom then put them in his lap, and one participant was a Brahman Priest woman.

*Basic Factors in Ceremonial Interaction and Urbanization.* The foregoing brief accounts of ceremonial activity give an inkling of the extent to which the rich ceremonial life of the village provided opportunities for interaction between castes apart from that stemming from jajmani relationships. The factors basic to such multicaste ceremonial activity were geographical proximity, affection, curiosity, and the entertainment potential of the specific rite. Proximity in the caste hierarchy apparently was not a major consideration for most castes, despite the fact that informal interaction between castes generally diminished as the hierarchical separation between them increased. However, caste rank was a most important consideration governing informal ceremonial interaction between the two lowest rank-

ing castes, the Chamar Leatherworkers and the Chuhra Sweepers, and the higher castes. Across this gap in the caste hierarchy, villagers interacted principally as spectators at each other's rites. For example, at one of the rites of a Mali Gardener wedding, Lohar Blacksmith, Brahman Priest, and Bairagi Beggar women sang; members of these castes were joined by Nai Barbers and Jhinvar Watermen at a wedding feast; a Chuhra Sweeper woman participated solely as a spectator at one of the rites.

It would be difficult to conceive how this current multicaste ceremonial activity could be disrupted short of a revolutionary change in village life. When villagers moved to Delhi to live and work, they participated infrequently in the ceremonial life of Shanti Nagar; but, with few exceptions, if they returned to live in the village, they renewed their involvement in its ceremonial life. Any observable decrease of ceremonialism in Shanti Nagar in the past 40 or 50 years could be attributed as much if not more, we believe, to Arya Samaj influence than to urbanization.

### CHANGES IN THE CASTE SYSTEM

In some ways, the caste system was changing in Shanti Nagar. Villagers criticized it. In Delhi, near enough to serve as a model for the villagers, caste identification in many areas of life was largely irrelevant and interaction between castes was generally freer than in villages. Furthermore, the government of India was actively intervening in many areas that affected caste with programs to aid those castes most disadvantaged and also with laws designed to remove caste-related disabilities in such matters as access to public facilities. Economic developments, such as the availability of wage work, and modern machinery, such as mechanical fodder cutters, were also effective in influencing changes in the caste system. When one assembles all the criticisms of the caste system made by villagers, both spontaneously and in response to specific items in questionnaires (Appendix, questions 33 and 34) and their frequent assertions that the caste system was currently weaker than in the past (Appendix, question 37), one might be tempted to conclude that in a few decades the traditional caste system

would be unrecognizable in Shanti Nagar. However, the daily behavior of the villagers offered little evidence that the caste system was about to disappear in the foreseeable future or even that it could be expected to change in any fundamental way. Some aspects of caste interaction could be expected to change, especially in the economic area; caste-related disabilities, such as those involving access to public facilities, might be removed; and expanded educational opportunities and favorable job quotas might improve the economic condition of the low castes. But the basic features of the system, endogamy, hierarchy, and ascription by birth, were totally intact. Furthermore, the liberal trend currently manifested in Indian life, which was not necessarily irreversible, might demonstrate not so much a weakening of the caste system but its resilience in adapting to new conditions and, consequently, persisting.

In appraising changes in the caste system in Shanti Nagar and speculating about its future on the basis of observations and interviews, one must not permit the critical statements of informants or their assertions that change was taking place to blind one to the overwhelmingly traditional caste behavior in daily life. Neither, on the other hand, should one ignore attitudes that seemed to foreshadow change. In analyzing this problem it is especially important to distinguish between opinion and behavior, because opinion is not so readily translated into behavior in caste relationships as in other areas of life. A man who has opinions about the most favorable crops to grow or the best type of house to build is free to act according to his opinions, assuming there are no financial barriers, and no one will interfere. However, a man with liberal ideas about caste must take into account the reactions of his caste fellows, for these are capable of bringing strong pressure to bear when anyone departs too far from acceptable standards.

Answers to questions 33 and 34 (Appendix) indicate the proportion of villagers who held critical opinions about caste and the components of the village population in which criticism was strongest. Criticism appeared to be concentrated in two groups: low-caste men and urban-oriented men. About 75 percent of the urban-oriented men and 87 percent of the low-caste men were



critical; only half, approximately, of the high-caste and village-oriented men criticized the caste system. The differences in the replies to both questions between low-caste and high-caste men were statistically significant. It is not surprising that low-caste men were more critical of the caste system than high-caste men. In addition, we would expect that the less traditional environment of the city also tended to lead to a more critical attitude toward caste. That a little over half of the high-caste men criticized the caste system reflected, in part, the fact that the majority of high-caste men were urban-oriented. Urban experience was becoming more common for men; to the extent that urbanization was correlated to a critical attitude toward caste among men, one could anticipate an increase in this attitude.

Although living in Shanti Nagar had made us aware that the attitude of women was generally more traditional than that of men, we did not anticipate the considerable difference between them with regard to opinions about the caste system. Critical responses by women ranged from 3 percent on question 33 to 19 percent on question 34; those of men were about 70 percent on both questions. The concentration of critical opinion in the low-caste and urban-oriented components of the male population was not duplicated among women. We did not necessarily anticipate a difference between urban-oriented and village-oriented women, partly because of our definition of an urban-oriented woman (marriage to an urban-oriented man was sufficient to classify a woman as urban-oriented). However, the absence of such a difference between high-caste and low-caste women does require comment. Apparently women, even those of low caste, were more comfortable with the caste system than men (cf. Tandon, 1968, p. 106). One could reasonably argue that caste disabilities were more prominent in the life-styles of men, especially their economic activities, than in those of women, whose work was centered more in the home. In the home environment, the social and supportive aspects of caste might seem more important than the caste-related disabilities that many of their husbands had to endure working away from home. Therefore, it is noteworthy

that, in reply to question 33, 15 of 21 low-caste women said they liked their own caste but only two of 29 low-caste men gave the same answer. That men who worked in the city were exposed to a weakening of caste restrictions might well have contributed to their increased dissatisfaction with those still in force.

The majority of villagers, be they urban- or village-oriented or of high or low caste, believed that the caste system had weakened since the advent of Indian political independence (Appendix, question 37). This belief was more frequently asserted by men (87%) than by women (56%); thus the men, who were most critical of the caste system, were much more likely to believe that it had weakened than were the women, who criticized the caste system infrequently. From the comments made by informants, "weakening of the caste system" signified the abandonment of unfavorable economic arrangements, such as *begar*, and the weakening of untouchability, that is, the less strict observance of traditional rules regarding the acceptance of food and water, touching, sitting on cots, and the use of wells. Villagers frequently distinguished between the more liberal behavior in the city and the less liberal in the village. Many villagers declared that the changes were for the better; low-caste people often said that their situation had improved. However, this judgment was not unanimous; some people, usually not members of the highest castes, asserted that Indian political independence had brought ruin. As we have frequently noted, land reform legislation, for example, was not an unmixed blessing for the landless.

The following remarks were typical of high-caste villagers.

An urban-oriented Brahman man: "There is no strength now. All are tending to become one."

A village-oriented Brahman man: "Previously all the lower castes could be bullied into working, but now you can't force them. They can't be bullied into anything now."

Another village-oriented Brahman man: "Now it is all mixed up. Low castes did not use the wells previously. Now they do."

An urban-oriented Brahman man: "The sys-

tem has weakened. The low castes get more education. It is better."

A young Brahman man who attended college: "There must come a day when there is no caste or creed; one nation in India."

An urban-oriented Brahman woman who lived in Delhi: "In the cities it has weakened, but in the villages it is the same."

A village-oriented Jhinvar woman: "They say it is independence, but it is ruin. Only those who have land can do something. They want all the wealth in the world. Previously, people used to want people. Now they don't."

An urban-oriented Jat man noted: "The Congress Party has weakened caste somewhat."

Another remarked: "Caste is the same yet. Untouchability is less, but the caste system is the same." This man, intelligent and one of our most perceptive informants, voiced the conclusion that grew upon us in the course of our interviewing: although caste-related disabilities had lessened, the system was basically unchanged.

A third urban-oriented, well-educated, Jat man, holding a high governmental position: "There is a difference. The educated people have mixed very well. Lower-caste educated people mix with upper castes in offices, trains, everywhere. They're getting dignity too." This comment suggests an important feature of caste: the system can continue to function but lower castes can achieve considerably more economic equality and dignity within it.

The judgments voiced by low-caste villagers were generally similar. An urban-oriented Chuhra woman: "Previously everybody used to say, 'get out of the way.' Now nobody can. Everybody is free now; there is freedom."

Another, thinking principally of economics, said, "Before independence I used to live in Sukkur, Pakistan, and earn a good income. Now I cannot even earn a living."

A village-oriented Chamar woman: "Now we don't have the pressure, the high-handedness, of the landowners as formerly. Except for this, the poor remain poor."

An urban-oriented Nai woman: "To me it is the same. I have seen no benefits since independence. It is harder now. Independence has brought ruin to the world." The phrase about independ-

ence and ruin occurred frequently in the interviews. In Hindi, there is a rhyming effect: *azadi* (independence) and *barbadi* (ruin).

A village-oriented Chamar man, concerned with the relative powerlessness of the lowest castes: "Untouchability is not there as strongly as it was; children at school drink water from the same source; and the landowners sit on lower caste cots. However, the power of the zamindars (landowners) continues, and therefore the weakness in the lower castes continues. If my children go to pull vegetables out of the fields, the landowners beat them or shout them off."

Another village-oriented Chamar, echoing a recurrent theme: "Untouchability has been reduced, but otherwise the world has gone to ruin. Things are difficult. One cannot get land to cultivate from the landlords."

A Chuhra man, who worked for the railroad as a waterman, that is, he served water to people, told us with satisfaction: "People are not particular about caste any more. Some people objected to this appointment [waterman], but they were told that they would lose their jobs if they insisted. Now even the ones who objected take water from me, a Chuhra."

Another urban-oriented Chuhra man: "Our situation has improved considerably since independence. Our people are going up; fees for us are lower; we get clothes, books, scholarships."

Another noted, "Only people in the village care for the caste system. In the city everyone eats at the same hotel."

But some respondents dissented. An urban-oriented Chuhra: "Caste has strengthened. In the time of the British, nobody bothered about caste as much as they do now."

Observations of behavior that departed from traditional caste rules occurred often enough in Shanti Nagar to support the villagers' contention that untouchability was decreasing. This change was most apparent with regard to sitting on cots. It was not that people of one caste sat on cots with people of other castes: this was routine. It was that members of the higher castes occasionally sat with Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers or permitted other approaches that formerly would have been rejected. This behavior was not routine, and, on occasions when it hap-

pened in our presence, it prompted the involved high-caste individual to comment to us. Thus, a Brahman Priest explained that he now permitted Chamar men to enter his sitting room and to sit on chairs; another Brahman commented that times were changing, for he was sitting on a Chuhra Sweeper cot and touching some bedding; and a Baniya Merchant man called our attention to the fact that he had served a Harijan and that he did not wash his hands afterward. "Times have changed," he said, "and I am not disturbed."

Our observations in Shanti Nagar failed to support the villagers' claim that Chamars and Chuhras were permitted to use the wells of the higher castes or that the restrictions against the acceptance by the higher castes of food and water from them had been relaxed. The Chamars and Chuhras each had their own well; they did not use the other two wells in the village habitation site. However, they were permitted to draw water from irrigation wells in the fields. We do not know if the Chamars and Chuhras were permitted to use irrigation wells a generation ago, but, in any case, the high-caste wells in the village habitation site remained inviolate. Statements about liberal behavior with regard to restrictions on food and water and access to wells referred in most cases to the practice in cities. Some informants might have offered such examples in the belief that the more liberal model as practiced in city life would have inevitable effects in the village. However, systematic questioning of 23 men about the castes from which they would accept food and water showed only a slight tendency for the urban-oriented to be more liberal than the village-oriented (S. Freed, 1970, table 1).

The effects of urbanization upon intercaste interaction in Shanti Nagar may be observed principally in changes in jajmani and other economic relationships. Because of the availability of urban employment for the worker and new machinery and/or hired wage labor for the patron, it was possible for families to drop from the jajmani system without seriously inconveniencing either patron or client. The effects of urbanization were also observable in the more critical attitude that urban-oriented men took toward the caste system. Except for cot sitting, the decrease in the

observance of untouchability was more a city rather than a village phenomenon; the same man might behave differently in the two different environments. Thus, one man told us that since independence he would eat with anyone in Delhi but not in Shanti Nagar. Members of both high and low castes sometimes phrased the economic changes and the decrease in untouchability in terms of freedom for the low castes.

One may in fairness conclude that the caste system was undergoing change as people adjusted their caste behavior to the demands of the new economic and political influences that emanated largely from cities; but, despite the observable changes in the system, there was no apparent desire to change its basic features, especially that of endogamy. As long as the system of arranged, caste-endogamous marriage persists, caste will endure. That the current system of marriage will change appreciably in the foreseeable future is highly unlikely. Indians generally regard their institutions of marriage and family life as superior to the comparable customs of the West. These Indian institutions minimize many of the family and social problems with which the West must contend, such as unstable families, divorce, a burdensome welfare program, unwed mothers, abortion, and the like. With regard to marriage and family life, the West has nothing positive to offer to India except for more freedom for the young; but such freedom is not yet, and may never be, pertinent to the structure of rural family life where the desires and welfare of the individual are subordinate to those of the kin group.

For the immediate future, the trend toward the elimination of caste-related disabilities will continue. The Removal of Untouchability (Offenses) Act 1955 has legally prohibited the practice of untouchability. Thus, were the low castes to insist upon the use of all the village wells, their demand would be supported by law. The educational and economic conditions of the lower castes should continue to improve, and this improvement will be accompanied by some enhancement of their status in the eyes of the high castes, and probably by an increase in informal interaction between members of high and low castes. However, in appraising the extent and importance of change in the caste system in Shanti

Nagar, current trends, most of which were more pronounced in the cities than in the countryside, must be balanced against the persistence of an ancient institution deeply embedded in the fabric

of village life. Drastic structural changes in the system do not appear to be imminent (cf. Dumont, 1970, pp. 217-218, 226).

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: VILLAGE

Despite the divisive tendencies inherent in a system of endogamous castes the members of which were closely linked by kinship and ceremonial ties to their caste fellows in other villages, the individual village was an easily identifiable, integrated unit of social organization (S. P. Sharma, 1969, pp. 1349-1351). Individuals who were members of the village community could be specified with considerable precision; only with regard to emigrants long absent from Shanti Nagar could there be any significant doubt as to their membership in the village. The village lands were clearly defined both as known to the villagers and as described in government records; and, in addition, most of the village land was farmed by the people of Shanti Nagar. Thus, the village was clearly demarcated both as to territory and personnel.

The different castes of the village were integrated through many economic and ceremonial ties, as described previously, and also by an atmosphere of village unity that was manifest during various ceremonial, political, and legal occasions and in such matters as cooperation in the maintenance of village resources for the welfare of all its inhabitants. For example, members of all castes cooperated in the festival of Akhta for the welfare of cattle (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966); and villagers often preferred to settle serious legal problems themselves rather than permit the involvement of the police and courts of the Union Territory of Delhi (cf. R. Freed, 1971). Because the village lands were a prime source of income for all castes, members of all castes participated in relatively large-scale projects to improve them. While it is true that individual landowners benefited most, the landless contributed a day's labor, albeit grudgingly, because they enjoyed the benefits of membership in the village and recognized to some extent their obligation to cooperate for its welfare.

The village was a more inclusive unit of social structure than the family, lineage, and caste; it had leaders and maintained governmental institutions for managing its wells, roads, and lands and regulated some aspects of caste interaction, principally the disputes that erupted between members of different castes. Although village leadership was diffuse and informal, village leaders could, nonetheless, be identified. Some leaders were very active and prominent; others, no less powerful, preferred to work quietly behind the scenes. There were village administrative and judicial bodies. As with individual leaders, these bodies were sometimes rather informal and composed of those prominent men who were interested enough in a specific problem to become involved. However, other bodies had a fixed membership and met with fair frequency. It was largely through its leaders and governing bodies that the village, as a unit, dealt with the officials of the Union Territory of Delhi.

Thus, as a unit of social organization, the village had a name, a clearly defined population and territory, and institutions that regulated its internal affairs and directed its external relations. Some observers, who choose to emphasize the divisive influences of caste and kinship within the village and the considerable amount of extra-village contact that derives from them and from economic needs, claim that a united village community hardly exists (e.g., Lewis, 1958, p. 148). This view excessively minimizes the importance of the village. In fact, the village forms a principal unit in the social structure of northern India. The study of this unit provides, in all probability, the best general understanding of rural Indian society (Lewis, 1958, p. viii; Mandelbaum, 1970, vol. 2, p. 327), although a complete understanding requires a broader perspective that includes the relationship of one village to other villages, to cities, and to higher governmental levels. In this

section, we deal with the village as a unit of social structure. We describe, first, its internal structure and method of functioning and follow with its external relations.

### FICTIVE KINSHIP

The village-wide fictive kinship system was one of the institutions that counteracted the separatist tendencies of endogamous castes and enhanced village unity. A villager of Shanti Nagar regarded all or most of his fellow villagers as his fictive relatives; customarily, he used kinship terms for them even though most of them had no traceable genealogical connection with him (S. Freed, 1963b). This practice has been reported elsewhere in northern and central India (S. P. Sharma, 1969, p. 1351). The selection and use of kinship terms went beyond a mere application of a general principle of courteous social intercourse that required everyone to be addressed by kinship terms, if appropriate complimentary names for castes were not used. For example, in adherence to such a principle, a man would call another man, roughly his own age, "brother" or a somewhat older man "uncle." However, with regard to his fellow villagers, a person's selection of kinship terms depended, first, upon the village-wide fictive genealogical system and, second, on considerations of relative prestige that reflected the caste hierarchy.

The fictive genealogical system was the village-wide system of relationships that resulted from the establishment of a fictive link among all the lineages of the village. Once such a link was established between two individuals of different lineages, all the other individuals in those two lineages were considered to be related as if there were a blood connection among them, and the appropriate kinship terms were used. In other words, the relationship between fictive kinship terminology and the fictive genealogical system was the same as the relationship between "real" kinship terminology and a group of consanguineous and affinal kinsmen. Thus, all the criteria expressed in the real kinship terminology of Shanti Nagar, such as relative age, sex, generation, bifurcation, polarity, collaterality, and affinity were also expressed in the same way in fictive kinship terminology.

In addition to the fictive genealogical system, considerations of relative prestige that derived from the caste hierarchy could be a determinant in a person's selection of fictive kinship terms. Some respondents apparently adjusted their own positions upward or downward a generation in the village fictive kinship system with regard to certain castes or lineages. Almost all such adjustments were apparently attempts by respondents to bring their positions in the kinship system into agreement with what they believed to be their status in relation to other persons. These adjustments usually involved the use of more honorific terms for members of higher castes by lower caste members and less honorific ones for members of lower castes by those of higher castes. In general, the more senior the term the more honorific it was. For example, a Chuhra Sweeper respondent, adjusting terms for a Brahman Priest of his own generation to express the difference in status between a Chuhra and a Brahman, would call him uncle instead of brother; on his part, a Brahman respondent, adjusting terms for a Chuhra of his generation, would call him brother's son instead of brother. See S. Freed (1963b, pp. 98-99) for a detailed account of the mechanisms of these adjustments and the reasons for them.

It is important to emphasize that terminological shifts such as these were adjustments and not errors. When adjustments were made for specific castes or lineages, the relationships of their members to each other remained unchanged, but the whole group was shifted a generation with respect to the respondent. This kind of phenomenon did not result from ignorance, for the informants were well aware of the relationships of the members of each caste or lineage to one another. In some cases, these adjustments clearly demonstrated intimate knowledge. For example, by their selection of fictive kinship terms, six nonBrahman respondents raised two Brahman lineages one generation. These two lineages included a number of men, 50 years of age or older, who were in Generation 3 of the four generations (numbered one to four in descending order of seniority) to which most adult men belonged. The six respondents might have felt that these older Brahman men were entitled to kinship terms indicating greater seniority than they

would receive as members of the third generation. They raised the Brahmans a generation by tracing their relationship to them through the wives of two members of one of these Brahman lineages rather than entirely through local males. Ordinarily, the husbands of these women were in the third generation in the fictive kinship system, but if one's relationship to them was traced through their wives they could be regarded as in the next more senior, or second, generation. This situation developed under the following circumstances. The Mali Gardener family had moved to Shanti Nagar some 75 years earlier; after a time the family became absorbed into the village fictive kinship system. The wives of the Brahmans in question came from the same village from which the Malis had come. In the kinship system of that village they were the fictive sisters of one of the Malis who in Shanti Nagar was of Generation 2. If a person should trace his relationship to the two Brahman lineages through these women, all members of these lineages would rise one generation in seniority.

Such virtuosity in manipulating kinship terms for members of another caste demonstrated the detailed knowledge that villagers had of one another despite caste differences. In this example, our respondents had to know the village of origin of the Mali Gardeners and of the wives of two men of another caste. It was necessary also that they be familiar with the fictive relationships of those people in their original village as well as the fictive kinship system of Shanti Nagar. This was the sort of knowledge that was obtained from the continuous intercaste contact that occurred in the village setting.

To the extent that residential propinquity diminished, interaction decreased, and the villagers' knowledge of fictive kinship became less precise. This can be demonstrated by comparing fictive kinship terms elicited from samples of village- and urban-oriented respondents to determine which agreed more closely with the fictive genealogical system of the village. Sixteen male village-oriented respondents provided 845 terms out of a total of 929 (91%) that agreed with the fictive genealogical system; 10 male urban-oriented respondents, only 526 of 614 (86%). This difference is significant, as tested by the chi-square statistic ( $p < .01$ ). Thus, urbanization

apparently reduced somewhat village integration as measured by a knowledge of the village fictive kinship system. This situation was not surprising because village-oriented men spent more time in the village and therefore had a greater opportunity to mingle with other villagers and to learn the fictive kinship system.

Fictive relatives generally behaved toward one another as did blood relatives. For example, women were required to cover their faces in the presence of their husbands' senior relatives, a practice extended to senior fictive relatives. We once observed a Jat male teenager joking with an older married Bairagi Beggar woman who had covered her face in his presence. He was younger than the woman's husband, but in the fictive kinship system of the village, he was his uncle. The Bairagi woman had behaved correctly by covering her face, but the young man was amused nonetheless by the conflict between age and kinship terminology.

#### IMMIGRANTS AND FICTIVE KINSHIP

The unity of the village and its general atmosphere of, to some extent, a closed system, at least as far as men were concerned, was made obvious by the considerable lapse of time necessary for immigrant males to be accepted as fictive relatives by all villagers. Men immigrated to Shanti Nagar infrequently. The scant number of males who did were usually related to a woman of the village, as a husband or brother, or were adopted in childhood by a Shanti Nagar family. The only man, currently living in Shanti Nagar, who had been adopted from another village was the son of the brother of a village wife. The men of Shanti Nagar could usually trace a relationship to such individuals through their wives or sisters, and most of the men in our sample of 26 informants whom we interviewed about fictive kinship did include them in the village kinship system. However, some respondents continued to regard them as outsiders and did not use kinship terms for them. When recognition was extended, the relationship was often traced through women so that terms such as *mama* (mother's brother) and *jija* (elder sister's husband) occurred in our sample of terms. Descendants of immigrants were almost always considered to be village kinsmen.

One Brahman respondent, however, did not use fictive kinship terms for the grandsons of certain immigrants, but preferred to designate them as outsiders despite the fact that, like their fathers, they had been born in Shanti Nagar. Four men regarded as an outsider an 80-year-old man (mentioned above) who as a boy had been adopted by a local man, his father's sister's husband. Thus, the "outsider" label was not easily obliterated, even in the affirmation of adoption and/or kinship ties through women.

Because affinal terms had status implications, informants sometimes made terminological adjustments so that such implications did not conflict with status considerations that derived from the caste hierarchy. For example, the term for elder sister's husband (*jija*) was mildly honorific. Some high-caste male informants were apparently reluctant to use such an honorific term for a Chuhra Sweeper who had married a woman of Shanti Nagar preferring instead to use his name only or to substitute a descriptive phrase explaining that he was married to a woman of the village.

Men who moved into Shanti Nagar and who were unrelated to any villager were slowly absorbed into the village fictive kinship system at a pace roughly comparable to the absorption of men related through women. Some 80 years might be required for almost all the villagers to be willing to extend kinship terms to such men or their descendants. The descendants of one man who had come to Shanti Nagar some 80 years previously were assigned kinship terms by all our respondents. The Mali Gardener family who had moved to Shanti Nagar more than 75 years earlier had been generally absorbed into the fictive kinship system, although four respondents still referred to them as outsiders. The members of the Mali family, although admitting that they were not of Shanti Nagar, nevertheless used fictive kinship terms for the people of the village. Four families of Jat Farmers, not members of the Man *gotra*, moved to Shanti Nagar in 1947, a decade before we began our fieldwork. Our respondents were asked to give us the kinship term that they used for a man belonging to one of these families. Fourteen of them referred to him as an outsider. Five other informants used an affinal term on the basis of a fictive relationship

that could be traced through his wife. Seven respondents used agnatic terms thereby accepting him as a fictive kinsman without bothering to trace a relationship through his wife. It is interesting that the respondents who used kinship terms for this Jat observed no consistency with respect to his generational position; opinion was almost equally divided among Generations 2, 3, 4.

Although the village fictive kinship system demarcated its population from that of most other villages, there was an exception. Fictive kinship terms were extended to members of seven other villages of the Man clan. Together with Shanti Nagar, these villages constituted a unit of eight villages (*athgama*) that were believed to be related, because the Jat Farmers of these eight villages, the dominant caste, were said to be ultimately descended from one man. A further extension of fictive kinship to another eight-village unit of a different Jat clan was based upon the fact that a woman from one of these villages was the wife of the Jat who was the ancestor of the eight Man villages.

Immigrants to Shanti Nagar from villages of the eight-village unit of the Man clan lost the "outsider" label more easily than other immigrants. In 1958 the Chhipi Dyer family moved to Shanti Nagar from the neighboring Man village of which Shanti Nagar was an offshoot. Twenty respondents used kinship terms for the head of the Chhipi family. The other five respondents referred to him as an outsider, although three of them also assigned a kinship term to him. Furthermore, he was placed in the same generation by 22 of the 23 respondents who gave us kinship terms for him. The willingness to extend fictive kinship terms to the Chhipi Dyer and the general consensus as to his generational position were in marked contrast to the case of the Jat who had arrived in Shanti Nagar in 1947, a decade before the Chhipi Dyer.

Although immigrants were ultimately absorbed into the village fictive kinship system, the deliberate pace of the process and the fact that the alien origin of some villagers was remembered for generations substantiated the unity of the village and the atmosphere that its male membership constituted a discrete group of agnates. Although fictive kinship terms were extended to people in eight villages, dominated by the same

Jat clan, that were considered to be closely related and also to another unit of eight "mother's brothers" villages, the villagers of Shanti Nagar did not entirely abandon the attitude that immigrants from these villages were also outsiders, as indicated by the minority of our respondents who so identified the Chhipi Dyer. Such people were fictive relatives, but they were also outsiders. Thus, the fictive kinship system not only united the various castes of the village, but also served largely to demarcate its agnatically related male population from that of other villages.

### VILLAGE EXOGAMY

Village exogamy, a logical correlate of village fictive kinship, involved Shanti Nagar in a marital network of over a hundred villages in which all marriages were arranged between families of the same caste. This is one of the features of village life that has led some observers to question the possible existence of a united village community because intervillage marital relationships apparently unite families and lineages of the same caste but do not involve noncaste members. Village fictive kinship counteracted this separatist tendency because all villagers, as fictive relatives, were involved to some extent in the relationships that stemmed from any marriage. This could be observed in the fact that as a unit the village preferred that wives not be taken from the same village to which daughters were sent because this "confused relationships." Affinal relationships were not symmetrical: a wife's brother did not behave in the same manner as a sister's husband. Thus, an exchange of women between two villages placed the participants in the position of simultaneously occupying somewhat conflicting statuses.

The belief that one should refrain from sending daughters to the same village from which one took wives diminished in intensity from family through lineage and caste to village, where it was rather attenuated. Thus, one informant said that the practice could be followed in a caste, but not in a lineage; another, that it could be done in a lineage but not in a family. Explanations varied in accordance with the examples that a respondent had in mind and especially events within his own lineage and caste. For example, the latter

respondent could cite two occasions in his own lineage when a daughter was sent to a village from which the lineage had taken a wife so that he was inclined to accept such a situation within a lineage, but not within a single family.

Our analysis of the villages of origin in a sample of 111 wives of Shanti Nagar and those into which 44 daughters of the village had been married demonstrated that violations of the belief that daughters should not be married into the villages of wives occurred with fair frequency. Thirty-three of the 155 women (21%) had had their marriages contracted in apparent violation of this preference. However, of the 10 "villages" involved in these marriages, three were cities, and one of them, Delhi, accounted for 12 of the 33 marriages. Cities were not exogamous units as were villages. City residents might avoid contracting marriages in their own quarter but they could marry elsewhere in the city. Thus, if we eliminate from consideration the 16 marriages involving cities, we find that only 17 of 139 marriages (12%) contravened the preference that villages should not exchange women. In six of the seven villages at least one wife and one daughter were from the same caste; in two cases, a wife and daughter represented the same lineage; but in no instance did a wife and daughter come from the same family. Even the exceptions to the sentiment that villages should not exchange women provided an occasion for villagers to emphasize symbolically the unity of all the castes of a village. When a marriage party came to the bride's village, in one rite the bridegroom's family gave a rupee to all families, regardless of caste, in which a woman from the bridegroom's village had been married.

In the same way that fictive kinship was extended beyond the village to the eight-village unit of the Man clan and to the eight mother's brothers' villages, so too was the principle of exogamy generally extended. Furthermore, the people of Shanti Nagar did not marry into the villages with which it had a common border. Immigrants observed village exogamy and its extensions, but marriages that violated the exogamous rules of the village contracted prior to immigration seemed to cause no difficulties. Although fictive kinship and its correlate, village exogamy, were extended beyond the village, we have al-



ready noted, in our consideration of the treatment of immigrants, that fictive kinship nonetheless largely demarcated the agnatically related male population of Shanti Nagar from that of other villages. That the village was not submerged in the larger eight-village unit is also indicated by the fact that the gift of a rupee to a woman's affinal family as part of the wedding ceremony was confined to women of the village and not extended to those of the eight-village unit.

### CEREMONIAL EXPRESSIONS OF VILLAGE UNITY

Symbolic expressions of village unity were common in the religious life of Shanti Nagar. One of the important places of worship in the village was the Bhumiya shrine that represented the founding male ancestor of the village. It was a small but substantial shrine constructed of bricks and mortar, the most solidly built shrine of the village; it was in marked contrast with other important shrines that consisted of, at best, a few scattered bricks. Here, members of all castes worshiped on a variety of occasions, for example, at wedding ceremonies or during the festival of Sili Sat (Cold Seventh). The shrines of mother goddesses were also places of worship for most of the people of Shanti Nagar. There were several of these: one, devoted to seven goddesses of disease, often referred to as the seven sisters; another, that represented Khanti Mata (typhoid); and a third, known as Cross Roads Mother. As with Bhumiya, villagers might worship at the mother goddess shrines during festivals or for individual or family reasons. The existence of these shrines provided a focus for a part of the religious activity of all villagers.

Circumambulation of the village during weddings was a noteworthy symbolic expression of village unity. Before the departure of a marriage party for the village of the bride-to-be, the bridegroom, the men who planned to accompany him, and the women of his lineage circled the village and worshiped at the Bhumiya shrine. When the groom returned from the wedding ceremonies, he brought his bride for a two-day visit to his parents' house. At this time, the bride and groom circled the village and worshiped at the Bhumiya shrine. The circling of the village reassured the

bridegroom that the village, as represented by the wedding party, would support him in the alien village of his bride; and the same rite, upon his return, reaffirmed his identification with his village and was the first step in the acceptance of the bride by Shanti Nagar. Worshiping at the Bhumiya shrine was also to ensure fertility, a condition basic to the life and welfare of the village.

Perhaps the most dramatic religious expression of village unity occurred during Akhta, a ritual to cure cattle disease. The ceremony began at sundown on a Friday and ended at noon the following Sunday. During this period, the village was closed; no one might enter or leave. A few days before the ceremony, the village watchman went through the village to announce that Akhta was to be held the following weekend. This announcement allowed those villagers who had business outside of Shanti Nagar to arrange their affairs so that no one would violate the village border during Akhta. A variety of normal activities were forbidden during that time, such as the use of iron, salt, and wheat. We were told not to use our pens, typewriter, or camera. Everyone had to observe these taboos. A fine of five rupees was supposed to be collected from anyone who broke them; but the taboos were not broken, in part, because all the villagers were committed to the success of the ritual and also because they believed that their own cattle would die if they transgressed.

In addition to the closing of the village and the village-wide taboos, both powerful symbolic expressions of village unity, all the animals and buildings of the village were smoked with incense and a ritual circling of the village symbolically demarcated it from the rest of the world. After dark on Friday, a group of young men led by a Brahman Priest carrying an earthen pot containing burning cow dung and incense visited each house and cattle shed to smoke all the buildings and animals. Twice on Saturday, in the morning and early evening, and once on Sunday morning, the villagers gathered all the village animals in a field just outside the village and drove them in a circular route through the streets of the village and out again. These processions represented every family of the village. Some time after the first procession, some women symbolized the cir-

cumambulation by drawing a long horizontal line on buildings adjacent to the places where the animals entered and left the village. These lines were auspicious; elsewhere in northern India they were believed to symbolize a charmed circle (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966, p. 686). After the animals had circled the village, they were smoked with incense, and then the pot containing it was buried outside of village land. A young Jat Farmer explained, "The transfer of the disease is a symbol that we have taken the disease out of our village and put it into another village." The ceremonies concluded with a feast partaken of by elderly Brahman men, children from the upper castes, and finally, the Chamar Leatherworkers and the Chuhra Sweepers. The entire rite was a noteworthy expression of the belief that in times of crisis, the village had to act as a unit as opposed to the outside world. The same belief existed, as we shall see, when legal disputes within Shanti Nagar threatened to become serious enough to involve agents of higher political authority in village affairs.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

In 1958 the political organization of the village was changing to conform to the Delhi Panchayat Raj Act passed in 1954, due to be implemented in 1959. Under the terms of this act, administrative control of the village was to be vested in a village panchayat (*gaon* panchayat) elected by all the adults of the village who had voting rights under the constitution of India. A circle panchayat (panchayati adalat) representing several villages was to be charged with the judicial aspects of village administration. Aware of the planned changes, the villagers had already acted to establish village governmental bodies that more or less resembled the intent of the government of the Union Territory of Delhi; however, as was customary in Indian villages, governmental policies were modified to conform with traditional village procedures. The shift to a rule by panchayat was not a break with tradition, because the panchayat had long been a feature of village life. Rather, the somewhat informal panchayat was to be strengthened, democratically elected, and formally charged with administrative functions, such as the maintenance of vil-

lage streets, wells, and ponds. As a concomitant of the establishment of government by panchayat, village offices that had been important in the days of British rule were to be eliminated. The office holders would no doubt continue to enjoy a modicum of their former prestige and could be expected to become ceremonial figures with no power except for that exercised through the force of their personalities and their ability to adapt to and utilize the new political forms. Lumberdar and *tholladar* were two such offices in Shanti Nagar.

### LUMBERDAR AND THOLLADAR

Lumberdars had been appointed by the British Government in India. In Shanti Nagar, each *pana* of the village had a lumberdar who was responsible for collecting the land revenue from the individual farmers of his *pana* and transmitting it to the government. For this service, he received a fee of 5 percent of the land revenue. The *tholladar*, a much less important official, assisted him. In the appointment of lumberdars, the government was careful to respect the realities of village life; thus, the men selected were prominent villagers. After the initial appointment, the office tended to become hereditary, passing from father to eldest son. The villagers described the duties of the lumberdar as the collection and transmittal of revenue to the government and, in general, a concern with the welfare of the village. If a theft or murder occurred, the lumberdar or the village watchman was supposed to inform the police. The *tholladar* extended hospitality to village visitors. If a group of police came, he fed them, or if a stranger was stranded in the village at night, he might stay at the house of the *tholladar*. Lumberdars and *tholladars* were supposed to receive a rupee at marriages, which they usually contributed to the village fund.

During British rule, the lumberdar was an important official; a forceful individual in that job could become very powerful in the village. This situation had not changed when we arrived in Shanti Nagar. One of the three village lumberdars who represented the strongest Jat lineage of the most important *pana* was effectively a village headman who took a leading role in making arrangements for such necessary village work as

the maintenance of roads, ponds, and irrigation ditches, helped to settle disputes, and, to some extent, protected the rights of the lower castes. He died shortly after our arrival. The title fell upon his eldest son, a man fitted neither by temperament nor ability to assume his father's role. From habit, the villagers approached him for assistance as they had done with his father. For example, once a dispute arose when a shepherd from a neighboring village let his sheep get into the fields of one of the Shanti Nagar farmers. The farmer wanted 25 rupees as damages. There was much arguing; finally, it was decided to take the dispute to the lumberdar. He was playing pachisi at the time and clearly did not want to be bothered. The dispute was settled by summoning the shepherd's father who promised to replace the plants that had been damaged by the sheep. This was the kind of dispute that could be settled as easily by a panchayat as by a lumberdar, as was already the case in 1958. The administrative work of the village was also in the hands of a panchayat; and the principal duty of the lumberdar, the collection of revenue, was handled by government officials who visited the village periodically. Thus, the office of lumberdar had been stripped of its functions and no longer existed effectively. However, the title would probably be used for decades, as might the title of *tholladar*, because its honorific value was still noteworthy; and the men who held these titles might continue to receive gifts at weddings.

#### CHAUKIDAR

The village watchman (*chaukidar*) was the single village official left over from the days of British rule whose role would probably not be particularly affected by panchayat rule. His duties were to report and prevent crime and to report births and deaths to the police. In order to discharge his duties, he visited the police station roughly once a fortnight. Because of the frequency of his reports to the police, the watchman possessed the potential for causing a great deal of trouble; consequently, the villagers selected a timid and powerless man for the post. Such a man, they believed, would fear involvement in village intrigues. However, while this policy insured the villagers that, to some extent,

they would have little to fear from the watchman, he was vulnerable to pressure from powerful villagers and had to be careful not to incur the wrath of anyone unless he had powerful supporters.

One day a policeman had come to announce that the law required that the village be guarded at night by two men, one high-caste and the other low-caste, who would make regular rounds during the night. The guards were to be selected as follows: the names of pairs of men, one low-caste and the other high-caste, were to be written on potsherds. Then a potsherd was to be drawn every day, and the two men thus selected would be the watchmen for the evening. Both a low-caste and a high-caste man had to serve because each would know the people of his own side of the village. As the men patrolled, they called out the name of the head of each house they passed; he would reply, indicating all was well. Whether this system effectively protected the village we cannot testify, but it certainly succeeded in waking people from a sound sleep. The authors were delighted when it was tacitly abandoned after a few weeks.

Most villagers accepted the plan with good grace, but two older Jat farmers refused to work with low-caste men. This refusal could be construed as a violation of the law. It provided an opportunity for a youthful Jat to attempt to embarrass the two men who were members of an opposing faction. Since the *chaukidar* was required to report violations of the law to the police, the young Jat brought pressure upon him to report the incident, something that he would never do ordinarily because it would antagonize two men who could crush him with ease. However, the young Jat was equally powerful, and he began the conversation by addressing the watchman by name rather than, more politely, using a kinship term. The Jat said that the watchman ought to report the incident; it was his duty. If he did so, the Jat would protect him; if not, the Jat would report him for not having done his duty. The watchman replied that he feared no one and would do his duty. He reminded the young Jat that he had once testified against a powerful Brahman and that the young Jat had protected him. At this point, the Jat remarked that he had recently defeated his two enemies in

an election. The watchman agreed to report the matter the next morning. As far as we know, he wisely never did so.

Although the government required the village to have an official watchman, it was the village, not the government, that paid him 90 rupees semi-annually. Formerly, it was customary for the lumberdar to collect Rs. 1.25 from every house to pay the watchman. However, the lumberdar had ceased to function as a collector of revenue; therefore, a panchayat of a dozen or so Brahman Priest and Jat Farmer men and the watchman met at the Jat meeting house to arrange for the collection. There was some debate about how much to collect from each house, for the number of houses had increased because of family division since the rate of Rs. 1.25 had been established. The panchayat, lacking figures on the number of families, was unable to resolve the problem and decided to retain the then current rate. It seemed that the watchman was left to collect his own fee.

#### VILLAGE PANCHAYAT AND THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The village was governed by a panchayat that met irregularly but frequently. Its composition varied from meeting to meeting. Panchayat members were not elected. Any village man could attend meetings and participate, but the core of the panchayat consisted of the more powerful Jat Farmer and Brahman Priest landowners. Some of these men were present at most meetings, and most of them attended the more important sessions. Occasionally, low-caste men attended and participated, but they usually preferred not to.

Panchayat meetings were almost always held in the Jat meeting house if the subject to be discussed was important and many men were expected. Panchayats sought unanimity; we never observed a vote taken by a show of hands, by voice, or by writing. Women were forbidden to attend meetings in the Jat meeting house even when the subject under discussion involved them, although they were allowed to watch meetings held elsewhere. Once, we observed a woman attempt to mount the steps of the meeting house to speak to the panchayat as it was deliberating

on a complicated and important matter that concerned her, but she was made to descend the steps. The meeting houses of the Jats and Brahmans were generally closed to women, except the woman school teacher (the Jat meeting house was also the village school house) and the woman who swept them. One informant told us that daughters but not wives of the village could enter these buildings.

These prohibitions were relaxed for Ruth Freed. Once she was asked to leave an important meeting, but a few minutes later she was invited to return. Such courtesies were extended, we believe, because of the prestige derived from her holding the doctorate rather than from her status as a foreigner and guest. Our woman interpreter was also accorded courtesies not granted to village women because of her M.A. and her knowledge of Sanskrit and because it was understood that we could not function without her.

The panchayat dealt with both the administrative and judicial aspects of village government. At one meeting it might exercise its executive function; at another, its judicial function; and sometimes, it might deal with both at a single session. The members of the panchayat were not formally differentiated; there was neither a president nor a headman. When the panchayat needed people to execute its decisions, they appointed them for the occasion; others might serve another time. The panchayat based its actions on unwritten custom rather than on a written set of village statutes and ordinances. There was no village policeman to enforce its judicial decisions. The panchayat did not levy annual taxes to finance its managerial activities; rather, money was raised by special assessments to pay expenses as the necessity arose. Women rarely complained about their exclusion from village government. On their part, low-caste men were more concerned with their poverty, recognizing that any participation in village government would be influenced by their generally unfavorable economic circumstances. Low-caste men never recognized political activity on the village scene as a means of improving their condition. Efforts to democratize rural political life that emanate from the government of India will probably not be too effective as regards village government as long as basic economic and educational conditions re-

main unchanged. Even if those conditions did change, the belief of most of the villagers that the village should be governed by the "big men" would probably leave most of the power in their hands (see LeClair, 1964, p. 209, for a general definition of a panchayat).

To assist with its administrative functions, the panchayat elected a committee of 13 men named the Development Committee. Two seats reserved for low-caste men were never filled; among the other 11 members were four Brahmans and seven Jats selected to insure the representation of the major landholding lineages. The members, especially those most active, were generally young and well educated. The Development Committee elected a president, secretary, and treasurer from its members. The Development Committee differed from the parent panchayat in its fixed membership and its permanent officers. Apparently it had no formal charge other than to exercise its best efforts to improve life in the village. There was no division of functions between the panchayat and the Development Committee. The same problem might be discussed and managed by both. Because all the Development Committee members were also members of the panchayat, this arrangement caused no confusion. The Development Committee acted on controversial matters only after consulting with the panchayat. The Development Committee was organized in response to a belief that a permanent group of energetic and educated men, smaller than the panchayat, might be especially effective in attracting governmental support of village development projects.

Many divisive features of village life were reflected in the workings of the panchayat and the Development Committee: the different interests of high and low castes, factionalism, the importance of the lineage, and the clash of personalities; but overriding all of these considerations was the recognized need to improve the village as a whole, especially its educational and health facilities, its streets, and its lands. In trying to solve village problems, both the panchayat and the Development Committee had increasingly to deal with the government of the Union Territory of Delhi, because its cooperation was essential to the success of many projects. It had also created programs under which villages could apply for funds. Consequently, it was the necessity to deal

with government officials who often were educated, sophisticated urbanites that had increased the importance of the participation of younger, educated, urbanized men in village government. To be sure, these men were under the control of, or at least influenced by, their elders. They were, however, also in a position to develop and to argue for their own ideas. The Development Committee was largely under the control of these younger men.

#### VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

*Election of the Development Committee and Its Officers.* The administrative side of village government can best be understood by examining how the panchayat and the Development Committee handled several important matters during 1958-1959. The election of the members of the Development Committee in 1958 by the panchayat and the committee's subsequent election of its own officers provided some insight into the political processes of the village. The members of the committee were elected by consensus at a panchayat meeting. Only 11 members were selected; the problem of the low-caste members was not resolved, and, as a result, became a source of some rather vehement debate in subsequent months. A few days after its selection, the Development Committee met to elect its own officers and to discuss enlisting two Harijan members. One committee member reported that he had visited the low-caste side of the village and found one man, a Chamar Leatherworker (who never attended a single meeting, as far as we know), but he continued that the Chuhra Sweepers and the Chamar Leatherworkers definitely did not want to participate, claiming that they were not needed and saying that if the village were really benefited by the actions of the committee, the Chamars would also benefit. Another committee member reported that the Gola Potters had said that because they were illiterate, they could not help. If any work was to be done, they would cooperate; otherwise they preferred to be left out. As a result of this effort, the committee seemed to believe, at least for the moment, that it had done its duty with regard to the low castes. At one point, someone suggested that a Jat Farmer from the several families of recent immigrants from Delhi be added to the commit-

tee. The idea was abandoned when another man commented that the committee needed workers, not figureheads. As we have noted, many villagers regarded the immigrant Jats as outsiders; otherwise, their representation on the committee might have been taken more seriously.

The members of the committee then turned to writing the minutes of the panchayat meeting during which they had been selected. They recorded the names of those who had attended the meeting and the results of the election for the Development Committee. There was some discussion as to the necessity for a new committee. The members claimed that the preceding committee, actually the first in the village, had been composed generally of older men, and that people believed that it had not accomplished anything. A new committee composed largely of young, educated men who could be aggressive with government officials was believed to be necessary. However, the committee members believed that statements like these should not appear in the minutes; consequently, they wrote that the old committee had resigned.

The increased prominence of younger men did not happen without ruffling the feathers of some of their elders. At a subsequent panchayat meeting during a particularly heated debate, several members of the Development Committee dramatically resigned. The next day, an older man who had been a member of the previous committee and whose son was on the current one called to us as we were walking through the village. He wanted to know if we had understood what had happened at the meeting the previous evening. We said that we had not understood all the resignations. He chuckled happily, saying that they were all the consequence of immaturity. He explained that the younger men had complained that there was much to be done in the village, so the older men had permitted them to form a committee. The debate that we had heard stemmed from side issues and personality clashes. He repeated the immaturity charge. He then predicted correctly how the major issue would be resolved; he also predicted correctly that the committee members would not stand by their resignations.

Efforts to elect a president of the Development Committee resulted in a struggle. An older Brahman was nominated by a Jat (both had been

members of the previous committee); for a moment, it seemed that the nomination would be unopposed. Then another Jat objected strongly, and a Brahman nominated a young Jat. There were two or three other nominations, but these nominees withdrew their names. Ordinarily, people would have sensed the desires of the committee, and all except the appropriate man would have withdrawn. However, an impasse developed when it became apparent that neither of the two original nominees would withdraw. The committee then asked the two candidates to leave the council circle and themselves decide who was to be president. They went off for a few minutes and returned to say that neither would withdraw.

The seven other members (two men were absent) then began a subtle discussion clearly designed to put pressure on the Brahman to force him to withdraw. For example, committee members began listing the necessary qualifications of a president. As listed, the qualifications clearly fitted the Jat candidate more than the Brahman. After discussing each qualification, everyone looked meaningfully at the Brahman. When it became obvious that he would not withdraw, this type of pressure began to diminish. The seven members then moved several steps away from the two candidates, beyond hearing, to select a president. The discussion was lengthy. At one point, one man left the group to confer with the Jat candidate and to announce that if a vote was inevitable he would go home. He said that he had never participated in an election and that he would instruct his children never to participate in one. Finally, the seven men returned and announced that the Jat had been unanimously selected. This announcement was followed by a flurry of nominations for secretary and treasurer. Without much fuss, a Jat was appointed secretary, and a Brahman, treasurer.

The committee then settled the agenda for the next meeting to be held in a few days, and the meeting was adjourned. The agenda included consideration of paving a village street, improving the village well, a problem concerned with people's discharging water into the village lanes, and the digging of a ditch to drain those village lands that had become waterlogged. As a final act, the three officers folded their hands before the lighted lamp, saying that with God as their witness they would work hard. One of the offi-

cers told a brief story that made the point that those who had not been selected as officers should not be offended.

The following day, one of the committee members, a Brahman, analyzed the election of officers for us. He did not know why the Brahman candidate had not withdrawn. He added that he should have understood the situation, but perhaps he thought that it was a question of prestige. In order to minimize loss of prestige and to avoid hurt feelings, the successful candidate had proposed the Brahman be made vice-president. The other members vetoed the idea because they did not want to be burdened with unnecessary officers. Our informant said that the election of the president had been influenced by neither caste nor lineage considerations, although in the organization of the committee it had been arranged that the major Jat and Brahman lineages be represented. He indicated that in the election of officers, personality and qualifications were important considerations, especially so in the choice of the secretary whose role was regarded as critical to the successful functioning of the committee. For this position, the committee selected a college graduate whose English was excellent. He was reputed to have organizational ability, to be aggressive, and to have filled a similar post in an association in Delhi. The president, a very forceful man from an important family of the strongest Jat lineage, was, however, an arbitrary individual with whom it was difficult to work. Another informant said that he had been selected as president partially because of the desire of the village to pave a street that passed his house. His selection as an officer assured his cooperation, and the necessary work could be done; failure to honor him would have insured his hostility. Our informant noted that a common strategy to win over opponents was to honor them in some way or to call them *chaudhari* (leader). That both the president and secretary belonged to the same Jat lineage supported our first informant's contention that lineage, at least, had not been the principal consideration in the selection of these two officers; otherwise care would have been taken to select them to represent different lineages. Because both the president and secretary were Jats, a Brahman had to be chosen as treasurer. He too had most impres-

sive qualifications both with respect to education and experience; in fact, he was almost forced to serve.

Of the three officers elected in September, 1958, only the treasurer remained in office until the next general election at the end of May, 1959. The capriciousness and difficult personality of the president soon caused problems. By early March, he had already been strongly criticized by other members of the committee for failure to fulfill his duties and responsibilities. During his absence at one meeting a committee member went to his home to obtain the register in which the minutes of the meetings were recorded, but it could not be found. Committee members also claimed that a bill for Rs. 300 that had to be submitted to some governmental agency in two days had not yet been forwarded although the president had said that he had sent it and had received an acknowledgment. After the meeting, a Brahman committee member told us that the president preferred to do things in his own way but that the rest of the village was not pleased.

Less than a month later, a committee member told us that the president had been removed from office when he had misbehaved at a meeting and that one of the Brahmans on the committee had replaced him. The Brahman, a man 60 years old, tactful, and literate, but not well educated, had worked in Delhi for 17 years. When we asked the former president what had happened, he said that the other members of the committee had preferred to talk and do no work, so he had told them that he had lost the register. He said that one day they elected a temporary president for that meeting, but that he continued to be the actual president. The seeming uncertainty as to who was president was principally the result of the effort of the usually tactful villagers to avoid damaging the prestige of the previous president so as not to incur his enmity. Thus at a committee meeting some two weeks following the change of presidents, when the secretary was collecting the signatures of the committee members on a contract, he handed it to the former president saying, "President sahib [sir], sign it." However, the secretary wrote the term, president, under the name of the new president. By the end of May, even this slight obei-

sance to the former president ceased when the new president was unanimously re-elected in a panchayat meeting at which a government official (the Block Development Officer) was present.

The secretary also failed to serve through the year. We recorded no adverse comments about his work; we believe that he simply wanted to be relieved of the responsibility. The three committee offices, as well as general committee membership, demanded both time and energy, but were not compensated. Only a man who valued the prestige highly, who enjoyed or, at least, was not bothered by contention, and who, in the office of the secretary possibly more than the others, was willing to work without compensation would be able to continue in office very long. A month after his election, it was clear that the secretary wanted to resign when, during a particularly contentious committee meeting, he repeatedly told the others that the government department in which he was employed had demanded that he resign as secretary of the village Development Committee. Finally, the treasurer, also a government employee, became irritated and told him that his excuse was nonsense. Nevertheless, some five months later, another man was acting as secretary. The new secretary was much like his predecessor, young, well educated, and a Jat Farmer; but he clearly enjoyed the committee meetings and, in addition, had a knack for keeping the other members in good humor, even when the arguments were heated.

*Drainage Ditch.* One of the most important administrative problems the panchayat and the Development Committee dealt with in 1958-1959 was the digging of a drainage ditch. Our informants reported that it was to be a mile and a half long and would drain the substantial portion of the village land that had become waterlogged and useless for agriculture. The waterlogged area was reputed to be the most fertile part of village land, and the many farmers who owned fields in the area were eager to open the drain. Although many panchayat and Development Committee meetings were devoted to this problem, the drainage ditch had not been completed when we left the village. The problem was complicated by the fact that its potential solution was not solely in the hands of the

people of Shanti Nagar. When completed, the ditch would cross the land of two other villages and a railroad right-of-way. Furthermore, it was necessary to enlist government assistance to help finance the project and bring pressure upon the other villages concerned as well as upon the railroad. Thus, two villages, the railroad, and the governments of the Union Territory of Delhi and Shanti Nagar were involved. While Shanti Nagar would benefit from the proposed ditch, the other two villages would lose small parcels of land and the railroad would be obliged to spend a substantial sum of money to construct a culvert. The government was in favor of the project, but at that time did not appear to be giving it high priority and responded slowly to the pressure of the villagers. In addition to negotiations with the other villages and the government, the panchayat and the Development Committee had to face some intravillage problems, principally, that of gaining the support of the low castes, financing the project to the extent of the ability of the village, and finding people who were willing to do the necessary work. It was clear that considerable patience, political skill, and organizational ability on the part of village leaders would be necessary to have the drainage ditch opened.

By the time we arrived in the village and became aware of the problem of the drainage ditch, the villagers had begun their efforts to enlist the aid of the government. A 40-year-old Jat Farmer, a prominent member of the Congress Party in Shanti Nagar, arranged for a delegation of Delhi officials, members of the Congress Party, to come to Shanti Nagar to discuss the problems of the village. The delegation was headed by a deputy who, although defeated in a recent election, was still in office. He was young, about 35 or 40 years old, had an air of competence, and served on the governmental committee charged with rural problems, such as drainage and irrigation. The deputy began the meeting by enquiring about the principal difficulties that were connected with the problem of opening the drain. A young Jat, later elected president of the Development Committee, asserted that it was necessary for the drain to cross the land of another village. The deputy said that the people of Shanti Nagar should start digging the section of the ditch that crossed their own land and that if the people of



the neighboring village did not release the land across which the ditch had to pass, the government would acquire it. He recommended that the young people of the village take things into their own hands and begin the work. His advice displeased the villagers. The Jat who later became president remarked that this procedure would be like having the branches of a tree before the roots. An elderly Jat, the leader of the faction opposed to the future president, agreed, saying that without access to the necessary land in the neighboring village all the land (for the ditch) as well as the labor of the people of Shanti Nagar would be wasted. The official asserted that the government was not so foolish as to allow such a waste. A third Jat tactfully commented that it would be most helpful if the portion belonging to the other village were dug first since its altitude was higher.

The government official decided that he wanted to see the land under consideration. He said also that in four or five days he would gather all the interested parties to show them where the drain would be. However, he warned the villagers that the government would need some time to effect these promises because many people would have to come to the village to examine the situation. The meeting then drifted into a political discussion, and the official embarked on a political speech. The president-to-be interrupted him, saying that if politics were to be discussed, one could go on forever and that if the deputy had a program to present he should outline it.

At this point, the meeting turned to other village problems, principally education. A young Jat complained that the fifth grade was taught by individuals who had themselves studied only to the third, that the educational system in Delhi was superior to that of the villages, and, consequently, village boys were unable to compete with city boys. The deputy conceded the point saying that he would fight for better education in the villages. Excessively optimistic, he dramatically declared that in 15 days the village school would be enlarged from five to eight grades.

As the deputy promised, government officials did come to examine the drainage ditch. However, several months subsequently elapsed and the government took no further action. One evening, we attended a large panchayat meeting

that had been called to consider the best procedure to speed government action and to obtain governmental assistance to finance the digging of the ditch. The meeting was begun by a young Jat member of the Development Committee who reported that a delegation had recently approached the government without any apparent results. The panchayat decided that the only way to obtain governmental action would be to send some men daily to the appropriate offices. This decision led to the problem of providing expense money. Everyone agreed that the men should be reimbursed for their expenses; the panchayat then decided to draw upon a small village fund on deposit with the Baniya Merchant. He was summoned to render his account. His books did not balance, but the panchayat members agreed that to obtain a complete accounting it would be necessary to consult the accounts of the treasurer of the previous Development Committee. He was not present. The failure of the village books to balance was a frequently recurring problem during subsequent meetings and in general discussion in the village, and was usually accompanied by the insinuation that the ex-treasurer had misappropriated funds. Nothing was ever proved, at least while we were in Shanti Nagar; in our opinion, the ex-treasurer was probably not at fault. Gossip about the misbehavior and bad character of individuals pervaded village life and was best viewed with a certain skepticism.

The panchayat then turned to a discussion of the financing of the project. The president of the Development Committee proposed a plan whereby the government would pay the entire required amount. It was government policy to pay 50 percent of the cost of certain village development projects. The president suggested that false bills be submitted double the estimated cost of the project, so that if even half of this amount were received, they would have enough money to finance the work. At this suggestion, a member of the Development Committee, who represented a lineage and faction hostile to the president, called attention to the presence of the author, saying that talk of false bills was reckless. The president replied that everyone went to the authors' house and told them everything anyway. Another Jat suggested that the subject should be dropped. This was a very mild argument and rep-

resented no real clash between the factional leaders. Lest the president of the Development Committee be thought to be unscrupulous, we might point out that the plan that he suggested was a more or less recognized and acceptable procedure to evade governmental limitations on aid. Some eight months later when the villagers were discussing aid to dig the ditch with a government representative, he too suggested a similar plan. He said that the government would not provide a penny for any earthwork; however, if it were possible to construct a bridge somewhere over the ditch, the bills could be inflated somewhat and some funds be made available to defray the cost of the digging.

The next major panchayat meeting devoted to the ditch concerned the contribution that would be asked of the landless low castes. It was one of the most contentious administrative sessions that we attended. At the outset, two older members of the Development Committee began a heated argument concerned with low-caste membership on the committee. A Brahman Priest, a strong supporter of the Congress Party that, following the Gandhian tradition, was concerned with the welfare of the low castes, asserted that Harijans must be asked to participate. His antagonist, a Jat Farmer, replied that if the Brahman really wanted low-caste men to participate as members, the Brahman could have refused to serve on the committee until some Harijans had been selected. The Brahman replied that he had been elected by the village, so he was in duty bound to serve. Another Development Committee member, the man who ultimately succeeded as secretary, acted as peacemaker. During the argument, he dramatically resigned from the Development Committee, touching off a wave of resignations, all of which were later tacitly withdrawn. The president of the committee said that he would never resign when service to the village was involved.

At this point, the treasurer of the Development Committee sent the village watchman to advise the Harijans that they had better come to the meeting or the people of the village would go to fetch them. So urged, seven men came. They were in a bitter mood; they knew why they had been asked to come: to be taxed one day's free labor to dig the ditch. As for participation in the

Development Committee, they adamantly refused any memberships, saying that they had no time, that they had too much work to do, that they were uneducated and could make no contribution. Cleverly, they also made a point about disproportionate representation, asking if the village wanted a committee of 25 men, based on the fact that 42 percent of the families of the village were low-caste. (Only two of 13 seats were to be reserved for the Harijans.) They said that they were in sympathy with the village and that they would keep ahead of the Jats and Brahmans in any village work. However, they did not relent in their refusal to participate in the Development Committee. Finally an older Jat, who had one of the largest landholdings in Shanti Nagar, was one of the major moneylenders in the village, and was also a generous man, asked if they would work for a day on the ditch. They agreed. Then someone said that a month's labor might be necessary. The Harijans agreed to work for a month if the farmers would supply them with grain. The elderly Jat replied that only a single day's labor would be unpaid and that they would be paid for any additional work. So, the panchayat meeting ended.

Immediately afterward, the Development Committee met. Clearly, the session with the Harijans had disturbed everyone. The president seemed subdued, a most unusual condition for him. The secretary repeatedly said that he must resign. Someone alluded to the unbalanced village account, and they all became even more upset. A normally calm committee member became quite agitated, saying that this committee business was only "party" (faction) politics. The minutes of the previous meeting were read, and the members began to discuss their resignations. The president showed his genius for splitting hairs when he observed that his resignation was genuine: he had been elected by the committee and he was resigning to the committee. The other members were elected by the village and, consequently, would have to resign to the village. Only an hour earlier in the panchayat meeting, the president had said that he would never resign, but as it became apparent that the other members were resigning, he also did so. The discussion continued rather fruitlessly, so we went home.

About two and a half weeks later, some men

from Shanti Nagar, a delegation from a neighboring village, and a policeman marked the course of the drainage ditch. The people from the neighboring village agreed to reimburse the landowners of their village for any land lost to the ditch. We asked a member of the Development Committee about obtaining the cooperation of the railroad; he told us that it was a legal requirement that the railroad build a culvert wherever its roadbed interfered with the drainage of village lands. The demarcation of the ditch was a major step that cleared the way for some actual digging. Three days later, a panchayat convened to set a date to begin the excavation of the ditch. Jat Farmers, Brahman Priests, and Chamar Leatherworkers were well represented. There were also a few Chuhra Sweepers but, as usual, no Gola Potters. The panchayat selected a day that happened to be a festival (Gobardhan); the Chamar Leatherworkers objected mildly to working on that day. Although to us it appeared to be a token objection that lasted only a few minutes, the secretary of the Development Committee made a fairly long speech to pacify the Chamars. However, despite the mildness of this dispute, it was enough to raise the tempers of some of the more excitable high- and low-caste men. A young Jat admonished the Chamars, saying, "You are talking back to some very big people. Aren't you ashamed?" This remark created a small furor. An older, powerful Jat who liked to work behind the scenes and attended only the most important meetings approached the Chamars and talked quietly to them until calm was restored. Finally, everyone agreed to dig the ditch on the festival two days later.

Five weeks later, toward the end of December, a panchayat met to discuss several administrative matters, among others, the drainage ditch. The meeting was short, probably because of the cold weather. About 20 Brahmans and Jats attended; each caste huddled in a circle around its respective hookah. The problem was concerned with the second of the two villages through which the ditch was to pass. Apparently the villagers of Shanti Nagar had petitioned the District Commissioner by letter, but the panchayat now agreed that this had been a mistake. "The other village is our big brother," the panchayat members said, "and we should go and fold our hands

and talk to them." The president of the Development Committee reported that he had already spoken to a few men from that village and they were willing to permit the ditch to be dug.

Three days later, a judicial panchayat assembled in the evening to consider, among other matters, the failure of several Harijans to help dig the ditch on the appointed day. After several calls, the panchayat managed to persuade the Harijans to attend the meeting. A Chuhra Sweeper was accused of failing to have gone to dig. The accused Chuhra said that he had been helping another Chuhra build his brick house, labor for which he was not being paid. The panchayat considered this excuse. An elderly Jat said that he would be forgiven by the village but, nonetheless, he would have to dig at the village pond when he had a day free from his work at a sugarcane crusher. The panchayat then accused the Gola Potters of under-representation at the ditch digging, claiming that only eight of the 12 Potter houses were represented. The Potters countered by remarking that some of their houses acted cooperatively and that since they had dug their allotted portion, the number of persons concerned made no difference. This answer stopped the panchayat members and they dropped the issue. During the meeting, high-caste panchayat members addressed some caustic remarks to the low-caste men. One Jat told the Chuhra Sweeper that he had a bad character and should be beaten with sticks. Another man commented that when it came to ruining the village the Gola Potters were always first.

The last panchayat meeting we attended that dealt with the drainage ditch was held near the end of May, 1959, shortly before our departure from India. The principal purpose of the meeting was to elect a Development Committee for the following year. The Block Development Officer and the Medical Officer for the development block, neither of whom were residents of Shanti Nagar, were present. According to our informants, the law required that the Block Development Officer and another officer attend the meeting at which the Development Committee and its officers were elected. Because of the presence of government officials, this panchayat meeting was quite important and, in addition to the election, many problems were discussed.

When the meeting began, 30 or 35 men, all Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests, were present at the Jat meeting house. The ex-president of the Development Committee, who had been replaced during the year, was conspicuously absent. The two men each of whom had served as secretary of the Development Committee during the preceding year conducted the meeting. The Jat who had served as treasurer for the original Development Committee recorded the minutes, presumably because the current secretary would be an interested party in the election. The Block Development Officer was appointed chairman for the evening. He urged the panchayat to make the election unanimous. A young Jat then rose to say that in his opinion the present committee had done a good job and should be re-elected together with its officers. This suggestion was accepted unanimously. The Block Development Officer asked if the committee included any Harijans. The villagers told him that none were currently members, but that the Harijans had finally agreed to participate and two would be selected to serve on the committee.

The secretary then presented a budget for the following 12 months, or rather a statement of the work the village hoped to undertake. Included in the list of projects were digging the drainage ditch, erecting four bridges, repairing the two village meeting houses, improving the main village well, paving the unpaved village streets, and starting a youth club. The panchayat estimated that Rs. 14,000 would be needed for these projects, and asked the Block Development Officer how much his department could contribute. He asked about the size of the village population. The secretary said that it was 500, thereby again emphasizing the need and importance of accurate village statistics, as the village population actually totaled 799. The Block Development Officer asked the total of the money that the village had already received from his department; the amount was Rs. 1400. The Block Development Officer stated that Shanti Nagar could obtain Rs. 10,000 less whatever had already been received, but that the amount paid would be only 50 percent of actual expenses. As for digging the ditch, the government would not pay for the earthwork, but could pay certain other charges.

It is worthy of note that during the year that the drainage ditch was under discussion, no progress had been made toward financing the digging. At various times throughout the year, the villagers had discussed a levy on landowners of from one-half to two rupees per bigha to finance the ditch, but as far as we know, no positive action had been taken. The villagers contributed labor, but no special cash assessment had been levied. Perhaps they wanted to assure themselves that no government assistance to pay for the digging could be expected. The Block Development Officer left them little doubt that they would have to finance this project themselves. During the meeting the previous May, there had been some discussion about enlisting the aid of the Bharat Sevak Samaj, a society that assisted in socially valuable projects; the villagers thought that with the aid of that organization many volunteers could be attracted to help dig. As far as we know, nothing came of this idea.

The history of the efforts of the villagers of Shanti Nagar to dig a drainage ditch is a good example of administrative activity at the village level. Although the project had not been completed when we left Shanti Nagar, considerable progress had been made. The drain had been demarcated, a right-of-way through the land of one village had been obtained, the cooperation of a second village had been sought with encouraging results, and a day had been devoted to digging. On the whole, this was a rather imposing accomplishment in view of the complexity of the problem and the fact that village leaders were not full-time specialists, but essentially volunteers who devoted their evenings and days, when they could spare them, to serving the village. Of course, it is true that, by serving the village, they were also helping themselves, as was especially true of the landowners who firmly retained control of village affairs. Village leadership gave prestige; moreover, some men enjoyed the role.

However, the demands of time and energy were apparently excessive for one man who served briefly as secretary, and other men who were well qualified to fill important posts may have felt the same way. Of the five men who served as officers of the Development Committee during the year, three had full-time jobs in Delhi and all were involved in agriculture. Daily com-

muting, farming, and village administrative work presented a rather full schedule. It is easy to understand why low-caste men were not interested in participating in village government. For them, the struggles of the panchayat and the Development Committee about the drainage ditch meant only that they would have to contribute a day's unpaid labor. Furthermore, many of the other projects planned for the succeeding year would be of little benefit to them.

The problem of the drainage ditch clearly demonstrated the unity of the village both in word and deed. While factionalism, personality clashes, and especially the conflict of interest between low and high castes were all obvious, the entire village did unite when unity was needed. It is true that considerable pressure was put on the low castes, but ultimately their cooperation depended on their view of themselves as part of the village. On other occasions when low-caste people believed themselves to be severely exploited, they were capable of withstanding pressure and refusing to work, as was demonstrated in the abolition of begar. The problem of the drainage ditch also illustrated the involvement of the village with the government of the Union Territory of Delhi. This involvement will almost certainly increase in the years to come. There may come a time when the correspondence and record keeping will become too much for a part-time voluntary secretary.

*Cattle Dung Contract.* Another important administrative problem that concerned the Development Committee in 1958-1959 was the cattle dung contract. The president of the Development Committee was generally credited with the idea of auctioning rights to the cattle dung that fell on the common village grazing land. Although some wood was burned, and products from certain agricultural activities were also used as fuel (for example, bagasse was dried and burned as fuel under the pans in which the sugarcane juice was heated), the dung of cattle was the principal fuel of the village. In addition, cattle dung was an important fertilizer and had other uses as well. In short, it was a valuable commodity.

Customarily, the dung that fell on village common land belonged to anyone who picked it up. The president told us that there were quarrels

over this dung every day; consequently, he thought that it might be a good idea to auction it off to the highest bidder and use the money for the welfare of the village. We asked him if there would not be disputes over people picking up the dung anyway, but he said this could be prevented with a system of fines. He pointed out that although bathing at the village well had been prohibited, one Jat man had done so in defiance of the ban. The village had fined him Rs. 1.25. He mentioned another similar case, and emphasized that afterward the rules had been observed and there had been no more trouble. He predicted that the experience with cattle dung would not differ. The president proved to be correct; villagers discontinued the collection of dung from the common grazing land.

The members of the Development Committee accepted the idea and it became their project. The auction was held about the middle of October. A senior Jat Farmer, the leader of the faction opposed to that of the president of the Development Committee, bought the rights for six months for Rs. 134, a sum immediately paid in cash to the treasurer of the Development Committee. There were several other serious bidders: three Jat Farmers, among whom were the president of the Development Committee and a Chuhra Sweeper who was the principal herdsman of the village. The agreement in the form of a contract written in Urdu was between the successful bidder and the Development Committee. The treasurer signed the contract on behalf of the committee. The contract stipulated that dung falling on the common village grazing land belonged to the Jat who held the rights, that anyone infringing his rights would be fined Rs. 5 by the village, and that the herdsmen of the village would be fined if they failed to rest their cattle on the common grazing land. Anyone grazing his own cattle could do as he wished, but a person grazing 20 or 30 head of cattle had to rest them on the grazing land. Cattle could graze anywhere; it was only when they rested that they had to be brought to the grazing ground. It was this last provision that was crucial as far as the purchaser was concerned. If the cattle were not brought to the grazing ground to rest, he would collect little dung; and it was this provision that caused trouble later.

Before the auction, the treasurer of the Development Committee made a speech. He emphasized the value of the dung and that the proceeds would go to the village. He said that a cartload of dung worth Rs. 25 could be collected daily. If this were an accurate estimate, the contract would be worth about Rs. 4500. We asked the treasurer why the bids had been so low; he replied that the dung contract presented a new idea and people were very cautious about adopting it. He claimed that the bids would be higher at the next auction. The treasurer probably deliberately overestimated the value of the dung as an incentive to raise the bids. Another informant later gave us a more realistic estimate of Rs. 427. The purchaser presumably might have to pay a laborer to collect the dung. Thus, he was in a position to make a modest profit on his investment but not one as dramatic as the treasurer had indicated.

One can easily understand the attractiveness of the dung contract to the Development Committee and to other village leaders. All of these men owned cattle; they did not depend on the dung that fell on the village grazing land for their fuel. From their point of view, the dung contract provided a relatively painless way of assuring the village administration a small but steady source of income. Special assessments were a source of village income much more painful to the landowners. The treasurer said that the Development Committee had ideas for several similar projects. For example, they would have the Sweepers dump the refuse from the streets into a special pit and auction it periodically for use as fertilizer. They were also considering the leasing of the village ponds to raise a kind of fruit that grew in water, and also the stocking of the ponds with fish that could be auctioned to someone from Delhi. The treasurer claimed that before the Development Committee functioned, people from Delhi and other villages used to help themselves to village dung. Now the proceeds could be used to finance projects such as paving the streets and erecting a few street lamps.

Although the villagers no longer gathered dung from the common grazing land, an unforeseen serious violation occurred; and three days after the auction, the dung contract was in jeopardy. A panchayat meeting was called to hear a

complaint by the purchaser of the contract that the principal village herdsman had rested the cattle on areas other than the common grazing land. A large number of landowners were present at the meeting. The president of the Development Committee dominated the proceedings. He was furious with the herdsman. He insulted him, telling him that he was not true to his salt and that he was an outsider (he had married a woman of Shanti Nagar). The president was in a difficult position, and his anger was understandable. The dung contract had been his idea; the leader of the opposing faction had bought it; and the herdsman who had jeopardized it worked for his family on a regular basis. Therefore, in order to rescue his idea he was compelled to argue on behalf of his opponent against his own employee. The purchaser on his part was active in the role of the injured party; and the secretary, the treasurer, and another elderly Jat served as restraining influences on the president. At the climax of the proceedings, the president asked the herdsman to rise and approach the circle of panchayat members. The president told him, "You can pay a fine of five rupees [as per the contract] and continue to herd the cattle, or you can give up the job of herdsman and pay no fine." Humbly, the herdsman replied, "Forgive me this time and I'll not do it again." The panchayat accepted his plea with the proviso that should he violate the contract again, he would have to pay a fine of 10 rupees. Thus, he received a suspended sentence.

Five months later, the Development Committee met at the Jat meeting house to hear the purchaser of the contract complain about the low yield of dung. He attributed this to the practice of the herdsman who grazed the cattle so that the dung fell outside the area specified in the contract. Eight members of the Development Committee, the contractor, and the herdsman were present; but the president of the committee was absent. The principal point that emerged from the discussion was that the contract had apparently been drawn with special reference to the rainy season (July through September), but that in winter the hours for grazing were different. During that period, the herdsman had to follow a different schedule and could not bring the cattle to the common grazing ground for rest and defecation. He also pointed out that he was no

longer the principal village herdsman because most of the village cattle were now under the care of two other men. One member of the Development Committee persistently supported the herdsman. Not long after the beginning of the meeting, the president's brother, who employed the herdsman, appeared and called him away, saying that he had work to do. The contractor received only a very vague promise from the herdsman to manage the cattle better. The contractor was upset, saying that the village had cheated him in failing to carry out its part of the agreement. The secretary asked for suggestions as to the best means of correcting the situation, but none were forthcoming and the meeting ended. During the discussion, several participants hinted at two possible reasons for the misbehavior of the herdsman: first, that he had been bribed by some of the landowners from a neighboring village to rest the cattle in their fields and, second, that the president of the Development Committee, who opposed the contractor and whose family employed the herdsman, was trying to harm his enemy by encouraging the herdsman. The purchaser said that although the president might be trying to damage him now, the next time, someone who could bully the herdsman could take the contract and then he would know how to cut in on it. The treasurer commented that cutting in was bad business, but the purchaser ignored the remark.

One day, little more than a month later, the village watchman announced that the contract for the cattle dung for the next six months would be auctioned the following morning at the village bus stop. The president and treasurer of the Development Committee and a few others were present. At first, when there was no offer, the group adjourned to a nearby house. One Jat commented on the futility of auctioning cattle dung. Just as the group was on the point of dispersing, four Jats approached. Immediately, one man from the original group, who had bid on the first contract, offered 100 rupees; at that point, everyone moved back to the bus stop. In contrast to the first auction when bidding was lively, at the second auction, there was only a single bid which was accepted and the contract written. The purchaser was a clever businessman. At first, he had not intended to bid. However, he changed

his mind, prompted to do so because one man among the new arrivals had bid on the previous contract and might have planned to bid in the current auction. The two men had been occasional opponents in the past. The purchaser had probably planned to collect dung on the common grazing ground, but saw no reason to pay for the privilege unnecessarily. However, he knew that his opponent was interested in the dung because he had bid on the previous contract. The purchaser probably had carefully calculated that a bid of 100 rupees would forestall competition. Although lower than the successful bid of six months earlier, this one was reasonable because it was chiefly for the duration of the rainy season. Less dung could be expected to accumulate during the rains than during the winter because the cattle were fed a different diet. Moreover dung cakes could not be made during the height of the rains.

The history of the dung contract indicated that village leaders were capable of acting very quickly in those matters that involved only the village. The digging of the drainage ditch became a problem partially because it was necessary to deal not only with neighboring villages but also with the government. The principal intravillage problem concerning the drainage ditch stemmed from the conflict of interest between low and high castes. The dung contract presented no external problems, but there was a conflict of interest with regard to high and low castes. The village leaders were landowners. As a group, landowners owned over twice as many cattle per person as landless people (S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972a, table 1); only two of 64 high-caste families owned no cattle, but 14 of 46 low-caste families had no cattle. It follows that high-caste people were far less dependent for fuel on the dung from the common grazing area than were the landless. The dung contract functioned effectively as if it were a regressive tax; its burden fell most heavily on the landless who were least able to afford it. We do not know whether the landowners were aware of this situation or whether they were aware of it and just did not care. We never heard them discuss it.

The dung contract resulted in the severest hardship to the two potters who used quantities of dung to fire their pots. A few days after the

award of the contract, one of the village potters told us that he would be forced out of the pottery business for lack of fuel. We asked if there was not enough dung in the village lanes to keep him in business; he informed us that this dung was reserved for the landowning families. He explained that after the death of the lumberdar, low-caste people were forbidden to collect that dung. This information was somewhat exaggerated because all families were entitled to the dung dropped by their own cattle. As the cattle of a family were driven through the streets of the village, the dung they dropped was immediately marked by the herder; later a family member usually a female child or the Sweeper that served the family collected it. Because high-caste landowning families owned most of the village cattle, they obtained most of the dung that fell in the village lanes. In any case, there was insufficient dung for our potter informant, and he did in fact abandon making pottery and emigrated to a distant town to work in a factory, leaving his wife and children in Shanti Nagar. The second potter continued in business, however.

Government officials who operate at some distance from the village for which they plan development projects are sometimes criticized because of their inadequate consideration in their planning of the interrelation of many facets of village life, in consequence of which a change in one area can have unanticipated and frequent unfortunate repercussions in other aspects of village life. However, the results of the dung contract indicated that village leaders were themselves not sufficiently aware of this problem. We do not know whether they realized that one of the potters would be forced out of business or that carrying out the dung contract would make the village a less attractive place to live for the low castes. We can only speculate that perhaps they did know, but believed that the benefits to the village as a whole would outweigh the disadvantages. That low-caste people were unwise to divorce themselves so completely from participation in village government was demonstrated in the case of the dung contract. No landless people participated in the debate to point out their interest in maintaining traditional common rights to dung that dropped on the common grazing ground.

In broader perspective, the problem of the dung contract in Shanti Nagar can be seen as a minor example of a worldwide movement to restrict common land, a movement that eventually forces landless rural laborers to abandon the countryside and to migrate to the city. Free fuel, a free house site in the village habitation area, and similar amenities were part of the traditional relationship between the landless and the landowners that was basic to the rural social structure and economic life of the Shanti Nagar region in the late 1950s. Actions on the village level, such as the dung contract, combined with national or state legislation, such as land reform, all struck at this relationship with unforeseen consequences. Historically a customary result of such disruption has been an increase of migration into the city. Such was one immediate outcome of the dung contract in Shanti Nagar as it affected one man. It must be noted that although the dung contract was planned and executed by villagers, it was actually an example of urban influence in the village. Village development was vigorously promoted by the government. The men advocating the dung contract were young, urbanized, and educated. Both in personnel and in motive (raising money for city-style amenities such as street lights and paved streets), the dung contract reflected urban influences.

*Miscellaneous Problems.* A review of several administrative matters handled by the panchayat and the Development Committee from March through December, 1958, indicates to some extent the variety of problems that had to be solved in a small village in a short period of time. During this interval, the drainage ditch, the dung contract, and the watchman's fee were also discussed as described above; the panchayat met to decide when and if to hold the ceremony of Akhta (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1966, p. 683); a number of judicial problems were also before the panchayat. Panchayat meetings of one kind or another were not a rarity in village life; they occurred frequently. The panchayat was the basic governmental institution for the village, a complex unit of social organization that maintained a host of relationships with other similar units and with the government. Most of the problems described below were more or less routine in that agreement was general and arguments and



conflicts of interests were at a minimum. Nonetheless, the same individuals who fought on other occasions often did not refrain from arguing even during these generally prosaic meetings.

In grief over the death of a grandson, an elderly Jat Farmer woman committed suicide by jumping into the main village well. Consequently, the well had to be cleaned because it had been contaminated by the release of urine and feces. A panchayat met to discuss the problem. Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests as well as one Nai Barber and the village watchman were present. The watchman was dispatched to invite an important Jat, the head of one of the village factions. However, that man refused to participate. He sent word that he was willing to pay any assessment levied by the panchayat, but that he would not attend. A few days earlier a candidate whom he had backed had lost an election as president of one of the nearby higher secondary schools to a leader of the faction opposed to his own; as a result, he was feeling touchy and preferred to avoid large gatherings. The discussion was lively and disorganized. A number of points were made: that the well should be cleaned by those who had originally dug it because they would know all its peculiarities; that all the impure black mud should be removed down to yellow mud; and that logs should be put around the lip of the well over which ropes could ride when buckets were being raised. The panchayat then had to choose men to find the well diggers. Their selection led to an argument between a Jat and a Brahman, two men who often clashed during meetings of the panchayat or the Development Committee. The Brahman said that because the Jat was young, he should go; the Jat retorted that the Brahman should go because all he did was sit and grow fat. In the end, another Brahman and Jat were nominated and went to find the well diggers.

A panchayat meeting was called to discuss two more problems in addition to the drainage ditch. One problem was concerned with water in the streets. It arose, in part, because some villagers had installed hand pumps, and their overflow was running into the streets. The discussion was quite good humored. According to one Jat Farmer who had recently installed such a pump,

he never deliberately threw water into the street, but the overflow from his pump reached the street. Others pointed out, however, that some unnamed people habitually threw dirty water into the streets. We did not get the impression that a decision had been reached. However, immediately after the panchayat meeting, the village watchman walked through the streets to announce that anyone throwing water in the streets would be fined Rs. 1.25. An informant explained that the watchman had correctly understood the will of the panchayat that was not always explicitly stated.

The second problem of the evening was to set a date to reopen the mouth of the village irrigation canal which had become blocked by mud. The panchayat quickly decided that in two days everyone should participate in the necessary digging. At an earlier meeting, another problem concerned with irrigation ditches was discussed. Two Jat Farmers who belonged to opposing factions shared an irrigation ditch. Their schedule for drawing water had not been fixed, a circumstance that had led to a dispute. There was a fairly general consensus that the dispute should be solved by digging separate ditches.

Panchayat meetings were concerned with a variety of topics. One dealt with the payment of the land revenue, the annual tax on land paid by all landowners. The land revenue had not been collected for a longer period than usual. Consequently, the government had decided to collect the tax due for the last seven harvests at one time. In the opinion of the panchayat members, such a collection of the tax would be burdensome for the farmers. They decided to petition the government for permission to pay it in installments. The following day, the secretary brought the petition to our house for typing.

Another panchayat discussed a bill of 300 rupees that was owed to a man in another village for bricks for the Jat meeting house. The panchayat decided to assess the Jats.

At one panchayat meeting it was decided to collect contributions to aid in the construction of a school for girls. Although the school was to be built near Shanti Nagar, it would draw students from other villages; hence contributions from other villages as well as from some of the

leading landowners of Shanti Nagar were being collected. A few years after we left Shanti Nagar, we learned that the school had been built.

A panchayat meeting was called to select a poll watcher for elections that were to be held in the Union Territory of Delhi. After a brief discussion, a prominent young Jat Farmer who was very much interested in the election was selected.

The panchayat and the Development Committee were concerned with paving the village streets with bricks. It was decided that the village would arrange to pave the streets on the low-caste side of the village after the one still unpaved street on the high-caste side had been paved. It was necessary to obtain the cooperation of the householders living along each street because of the method of financing such projects. According to the treasurer of the Development Committee, the bricks for a strip 4 feet wide in the middle of the street would be bought with village funds; when the paving was completed, the government would reimburse the village. Each householder would pay for the bricks for that part of the road, excluding the middle, that adjoined his property. The laborers who laid the bricks would be paid by the Sanitation Department of the Union Territory of Delhi. The treasurer, anticipating success, told us that the drainage ditch and the paving of the street on the high-caste side of the village had been the two major achievements of the Development Committee which had been in office at that time for only two months. Neither project was then near completion, but some progress had been made. Another member of the Development Committee said that the village had been trying, for years, to have this street paved, but that two Jats who lived along it refused to cooperate because, although they were of the same faction, they were opposed to each other. Our informant claimed that the village resorted to the familiar technique of honoring the men in some way to win their cooperation.

One meeting of the village Development Committee considered whether the wage for daily agricultural labor should be raised from Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2. The members wondered how anyone could live on so little with the price of grain so high. At that time, wheat was selling for about 20 naye paise per pound; thus, a day's pay would

buy only 7.5 pounds of wheat. The price of day labor was a sensitive issue among the landowners; consequently, the Development Committee decided to refer the problem to the full panchayat. The problem of the daily wage provides another example of an issue that deeply concerned the landless low castes; yet, they were unrepresented on the Development Committee, largely by their own choice, and for reasons that were not trivial. Nevertheless, the low castes could have benefited by a few tactful and forceful spokesmen on the Development Committee and in the larger panchayat.

#### PANCHAYAT: JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS

In addition to its administrative activities, the village panchayat had judicial functions. It did not deal with every dispute or infraction of law and custom that happened in the village. Some disputes were settled within the lineage, others resolved by informal counseling by respected elders, and still other disputes or transgressions were adjudicated by caste panchayats. A village panchayat usually was concerned with disputes between people of different castes, with cases that were too difficult for a caste panchayat, or with offenses against administrative decisions made by the panchayat in its executive role. In the case of disputes, the panchayat attempted to reconcile the two parties; for infractions, the village panchayat often fined a violator Rs. 1.25. Sometimes, however, he was forgiven if he promised not to repeat the offense.

Those cases regarded as most serious by the villagers, based on the small sample that came to our attention, developed from disputes over the ownership of land or involved a high-caste man's inflicting violence upon a low-caste man. These two causes could, of course, be elements of a single dispute. The village panchayat often lost control of such cases when the disputants invoked the police and/or resorted to the courts. In order to avoid police involvement, a multivillage panchayat might be convened to hear a case.

The police and courts were feared in cases involving violence because a villager might be sent to jail. For this reason, assaults of a high-caste

man upon one of low-caste were viewed seriously. A low-caste man could obtain redress in the courts; if he had been seriously hurt, the temptation to go to the courts would have been great. Such a situation could easily be used by men of competing high-caste factions to try to injure their opponents. For example, if a man of the Gola Potter caste were beaten by a Jat, another Jat, his opponent, might act as the Gola's patron and encourage him to go to the police and to the courts merely to damage his opponent. The opposite situation, that of a low-caste man assaulting a high-caste man, was not as likely to occur and was not so serious. The more numerous and powerful high castes would simply beat a low-caste man in retaliation.

Although people often went to court in disputes over land, this was a serious step because of the expense involved and the fact that a decision imposed by a nonvillage authority could lead to lasting antagonisms. The two factions of Shanti Nagar stemmed from such a dispute. Sometimes, after a court had handed down a decision, a panchayat met to affirm it in an attempt to get the contesting parties to avoid costly appeals, and, hopefully, to cool tempers and to assuage hurt feelings. The proceedings of the judicial panchayat of Shanti Nagar mirrored a number of the major features of village life: the domination of the high over the low castes, the general distrust and fear of external intervention, the importance of landownership, the concern for prestige, and factionalism.

*Infractions of Orders of the Panchayat.* We have already described two examples to demonstrate how the village panchayat dealt with infractions of its orders. The village cowherd appeared before a panchayat because he had violated the terms of the dung contract; and some low-caste men had to answer charges that they had failed to dig the drainage ditch on the designated day. We have recorded a few similar cases. The village panchayat had decreed that no sugarcane was to be cut until the harvesting had begun, but three Gola Potter children had been caught doing so. A judicial panchayat of about 12 Brahman Priests and Jat Farmers met one afternoon to hear the case. The children represented two families; the heads of these families appeared before the panchayat. The 18 pieces of

illicitly gathered sugarcane were placed before the panchayat as evidence. There was considerable discussion, but no decision. The president of the Development Committee argued in favor of imposing a heavy fine of Rs. 15. Another young Jat, a corporal in the Air Force, at home on Christmas leave, remarked that the Potters were asking for forgiveness and suggested that the panchayat forgive them. The president retorted sharply that the soldier was a child. "You sit all day with pen and paper," he said, "what do you know of serious things?" After a lapse of time during which nothing much happened, the two Potters walked away. The panchayat agreed to reconsider the case in the evening during a meeting scheduled to hear the plea of the low-caste men who had not gone to dig the drainage ditch. A young Jat told us not to bother attending the panchayat meeting because he could predict the outcome: the offenders would be fined Rs. 1.25 each.

In the evening we did attend the panchayat meeting. As our informant had predicted, the panchayat fined each child Rs. 1.25, a total of Rs. 3.75, to be paid to the treasurer of the Development Committee. Although a fine of Rs. 1.25 (about 26 U.S. cents) may not seem large, one must remember that the wage for a day's hard agricultural labor amounted only to Rs. 1.50 (about 31 U.S. cents). There was some discussion about the nonpayment of previous fines. Afterward, a critical young Jat commented that the panchayat threatened but never did anything; consequently, thieves were encouraged. Another case of a child's taking sugarcane was similarly resolved. Although we did not attend the panchayat meeting, we learned that one of the Nai Barbers had been fined Rs. 1.25 because his daughter had cut some sugarcane before the harvest. The man who reported her (it was his field) was given the quarter rupee; the balance of one rupee went into the village fund. Although small, fines provided a steady source of income for the village fund.

*Land Dispute between Chamar Leatherworkers.* We have already discussed (above) the case of two Chamar Leatherworker brothers who fell into a dispute over land in the village habitation site. The dispute moved quickly from lineage to caste and, finally, to the village. A formal

panchayat met. It was composed of three Brahman Priests and eight Jat Farmers, including the president of the Development Committee, one Jat who was a major moneylender for the Leatherworkers, and another Jat who often acted as village secretary. The secretary wrote the agreement, the disputants affixed their thumb prints, and the moneylender took the agreement home with him. During the discussion, some people suggested that a multivillage panchayat of Chamars be formed to decide the dispute. Someone also suggested that the Sanitation Department of the Union Territory of Delhi be consulted. The latter suggestion seemed bizarre to us; but because the dispute concerned, in part, the location of a drain, perhaps it made sense. The oldest son of the recently deceased powerful Jat lumberdar, who was a member of this panchayat, tried to exert some of the authority of his late father. He was, however, an ineffectual man and was quickly put in his place by his younger brother. Surprisingly, at one point the older brother announced that he had already settled the dispute. His younger brother demanded to know why he was interfering since the other panchayat members had arrived at an acceptable decision. The older brother immediately departed.

*Land Dispute: Brahman Priest versus Jat Farmer.* Another dispute about land in the village habitation site arose between a Brahman Priest and a Jat Farmer. Although the quarrel had been settled before our arrival in the village, it was still reasonably fresh in the memories of many people. However, because we were not on the scene at the time of settlement, we were able to obtain only the outlines of the dispute, and it was somewhat difficult to evaluate the conflicting claims. This dispute was more complicated than that of the Chamars. A panchayat met but failed to settle it, and the case went to the courts. The decision was ultimately rendered in favor of the Brahman.

The point at issue was possession of a small piece of land that adjoined the properties of both the Jat and the Brahman. At one time, a mud house had been built on it. By the time we arrived in Shanti Nagar, the house had collapsed into a pile of mud that marked the location. The small piece of land jutted into the courtyard of

the Brahman. His house was built several yards in from the street and his courtyard, which fronted on the street, was in front of his house. If the Jat were to own the property in contention, the only access to the Brahman's house from the street would be through a narrow passageway and, furthermore, the frontage of the Brahman's property on the street would be considerably reduced.

According to the Brahman, his father had owned the mud house but, because he had no sons at that time, temporarily he had no need for it. Consequently, he invited a goldsmith to come to the village to occupy the house. The goldsmith soon discovered that he could not earn a livelihood in the village and left. After the departure of the goldsmith, the Jat began to store property in the vacant house and to use it to accommodate guests. He told the Brahman that he would return the house whenever requested. After the Jat had occupied the house for some time, he cut a door through a common wall between his house and the mud hut. (The houses belonging to different families often have common walls; for example, when a mud hut is built beside a brick house, the brick wall may become one wall of the mud hut.) Thereupon, the Brahman asked the Jat to vacate the house, and a panchayat supported the Brahman's request. When the Jat refused, the Brahman appealed to the courts. He lost in the lower court, but won in a higher court. The Jat appealed and lost. According to the Brahman, he also obtained a judgment of Rs. 800 which he forgave when the Jat apologized.

The Brahman was supported by one of the Jat lumberdars. The rest of the Jats sided with his opponent. The Brahman also had the covert support of his fellow Brahmans; they could not support him openly because many of them at that time were cultivating land belonging to Jats. The Brahman said that the dispute cost him Rs. 1500. His version was corroborated in all its important details (except that the cost of the litigation was given as 1100 rupees) by one of our Jat informants, whose testimony must be viewed with some caution because he was the son of the Jat who had supported the Brahman.

Understandably the Jat gave a different version of the dispute. He argued that the connecting door and the position of drains served as

evidence that the property belonged to him. He also said that everyone, except a single Jat who supported the Brahman, testified that the land belonged to him. He also said that the Brahman had been dishonest and had managed to have government records altered in his favor to help him win the case. One of our Jat informants, who had no special interest in the affair, said that the land belonged to the Jat, but that the mud hut interfered with the Brahman's frontage on the street. He added that the Brahman had acted correctly by offering to trade double the amount of land elsewhere in the village, a detail not mentioned by any of our other informants. On the basis of what we were told, we were unable to decide who was right in this dispute. It was clear, however, that the mud hut would have spoiled the frontage of the Brahman's property. It is also worthy of note that the Brahman spent in excess of 1000 rupees on a few square feet of land. Even allowing for exaggeration, this would seem to be several times the value of the land, although some consideration must be given to the fact that the total value of his property would have been reduced without the land on which the mud hut stood. Villagers would fight very hard for land; in addition, to win a lawsuit served to increase one's prestige.

*Land Dispute: Landowners versus Landless Villagers.* Disputes over land might go directly to the courts bypassing a hearing before the village panchayat because it might be an inappropriate body to adjudicate the dispute. Generally, panchayats were composed of Jat Farmers and Brahman Priests whose caste and lineage memberships might give them a vested interest in the decision. An illustrative dispute involved an attempt on the part of many, or most, of the large landowners to divide some village common land among themselves and the other landowners. They were opposed by two leading villagers, a Jat and a Brahman. It would have been useless for the village panchayat to hear the dispute because all or most of the panchayat members were involved in the plan. This dispute took place before we lived in the village; consequently, our notes lack the detail that we might otherwise have obtained because we did not have the opportunity to interview the participants while the case was still fresh in their minds. We obtained a fairly full

account from only one informant, who, however, was most reliable.

The land in question included approximately 8 acres of the habitation site and 9 acres of the common grazing land. When the landowners proposed to divide this area among themselves, the landless people approached a village Brahman skilled in dealing with the courts and asked him to prevent the division, which, if permitted, would deprive them of a place to live. The Brahman enlisted the aid of a Jat lumberdar, the most powerful man in the village, and they both apparently opposed the rest of the larger landowners. The Brahman and his Jat friend won the case when they were able to show that one of their opponents had tried to include the 9 acres of village grazing land in the habitation site, but that the transfer had not been entered in the appropriate government records. The court before which the case was tried was not empowered to distribute pasture land; therefore, the 9 acres were safe. As for the other 8 acres in question, the area was considered too small to be divided among all the landowners who would have been entitled to a share. The Brahman claimed that he never recovered the five or six hundred rupees he spent on the case. His Jat supporter was said to have contributed no money.

The motives of neither the Brahman nor the Jat were clear to us in this dispute. For the Jat, it could have been a matter of prestige. He was the most important man in the village and he permitted no one to play the role of leader (*chaudhari*). He prevented people from becoming too important and powerful in the village. Prestige could have been a factor in the Brahman's participation or, perhaps, he believed that the low castes were being treated unjustly. However, there were probably other reasons for his actions of which we never learned. In the following case it will be observed that some of the facets of the relationship between a low-caste client and his patron and moneylender could influence the patron to support the low-caste client in a land dispute with another high-caste man.

*Land Dispute: Chamar Leatherworker versus Brahman Priest.* A Chamar Leatherworker who had been cultivating the land of a Brahman Priest for a number of years attempted to claim it under the provisions of the Delhi Land Reforms

Act of 1954. The intent of the act was to create a uniform body of peasant proprietors with no intermediaries. The act provided that tenants who had cultivated land since 1952 or before were to become its owners. In Shanti Nagar, the most common result of this legislation was that tenants voluntarily, or under varying degrees of pressure, furnished statements that they had not cultivated the land in question during the critical period. However, the Leatherworker was both combative and ambitious. In addition, he had a powerful ally, his patron, the Jat lumberdar whom we have frequently identified as the most powerful man in the village, who had lent him a substantial sum of money variously estimated by informants as from five to 15,000 rupees, the latter figure probably much exaggerated. The lumberdar was afraid that he might not be able to collect the debt if the Chamar lost the case. The other landlords of the village supported the Brahman. The Brahman eventually won.

We believe that the critical factor in the case was the lumberdar's lack of support from his Brahman friend who worked so skillfully in the courts. The Brahman told us that he had to support his caste fellow because they were related. He had a talk with his friend, the lumberdar, in which he urged him not to support the Leatherworker. The other landowners were also putting pressure on the lumberdar; finally, he capitulated. Nevertheless, the Chamar Leatherworker would have been in a strong legal position because he was listed in the land records for the village as the cultivator of the disputed land. However, the legally skilled Brahman was quite clever; he told us that he had had a lien placed on the Leatherworker's crops so that they could not be harvested. Thereupon the Leatherworker, in order to be allowed to harvest his crops, agreed to make a legal statement to the authorities that he had never farmed the disputed land.

This dispute is of interest because, although one of the disputants was a low-caste man, apparently it was settled by maneuvering among the high castes. Once his high-caste patron withdrew his support, the Leatherworker's position deteriorated. This case also illustrates the importance of the ability to use the courts skillfully. One informant said that a panchayat had been convened to consider the case, but its deliberations

had apparently been ineffectual. Although the Chamar lost his dispute with the Brahman, he did win some land from a Jat Farmer on the basis of the new land reform legislation. For some reason, possibly because they were newcomers to the village, the Jats did not fight; the Leatherworker won about 2.5 acres and became the only Harijan in the village to own land. In commenting upon the behavior of the uncombative Jats, a Brahman said, "You've got to have a big heart to hold the land."

The patron-client relationship of the Chamar Leatherworker and the Jat Farmer illustrated how the mutual interests inherent in such a relationship could sometimes override the general solidarity of the landowning high castes in opposing attempts by low-caste men to better their economic status at the expense of the high-caste landowners. One ramification of the case further illustrated the network of patron-client relationships that bound high and low castes. A Gola Potter told us that he had lost his job as an orderly at a nearby higher secondary school immediately following the death of the lumberdar. According to the Potter, the lumberdar had asked him to testify that the Leatherworker had farmed the land under dispute. The Potter was indebted to the lumberdar, through whom he had obtained his job. The Potter had been accustomed to procure liquor from another village for the lumberdar, and a relationship had developed based on this service. The Leatherworker lost the case; the lumberdar died; the Potter lost his job because landowners did not look kindly on low-caste men who opposed them in disputes over land. The two sons of the late lumberdar tried, unsuccessfully, to help him to retain his job. The lumberdar had been a member of a small committee that directed the affairs of the school, but neither of his sons succeeded him as a committee member.

*Assault: Brahman Priests and Chamar Leatherworkers.* The patron-client relationship was also a factor in a case that involved, among other aspects, an assault upon a low-caste man by a high-caste man. The case indicated the importance of the support of a high-caste patron for a low-caste man involved in a dispute with a high-caste man. It also illustrated the seriousness with which high-caste people treated such incidents. The

nephew of the Brahman involved in the dispute told us that it started as a fight between children. The son of a Chamar Leatherworker had borrowed a book from the Brahman's son, and some time later the two had begun to fight over it. The Chamar's son returned home and told his father. The following day both father and son went to the fields, found the Brahman boy, and beat him. The Brahman boy's father heard what had happened and he too went to the fields to confront the Leatherworker. A general fight erupted. A group of Brahmans then joined the dispute, and it appeared that they meant to beat the Chamar. When they did nothing, the episode appeared to be finished. However, the Leatherworker had a patron, the son of the late lumberdar, and he supported his client. A day later he took the Chamar to Delhi to be examined and to have his head X-rayed in preparation, apparently, for a complaint to the police.

On the day of the fight, we went to the Chamar Leatherworker quarter; it was crowded with Chamars and Brahmans, all arguing excitedly. The Chamars told us that one cause of the fight was that Chamar children had been taking a little sugarcane from the Brahman's field for use in the festival of Gobardhan. The Leatherworkers pointed out that this was a traditional privilege, and no one had the right to interfere. Judging from the contrasting behavior of the Brahmans and Chamars, it was obvious that the Brahmans had done most of the beating and the Chamars had suffered most of the damage. All the Brahmans, especially the cousin of the party to the dispute, were trying to make peace. The Chamars were complaining mightily. The cousin, the same Brahman we have previously described as skillful in the courts, and the Chamar victim were the central figures. The Brahman had obtained medicine from us to treat the Leatherworker, who, for a long time, refused to allow himself to be treated. The Brahman was very agitated. He told the Chamar that he could beat him if he so wished, that his father had been on good terms with the Chamar's father, and that he had once been injured by the Chamar or his father, but had taken no action. Another Chamar interrupted to say that the Leatherworkers had no fear of the Brahman who had been involved in the fight. However, they were afraid of his

cousin, the experienced manipulator of governmental legal machinery, and provided that the latter did not interfere, they would take care of his cousin. The Brahman asked, "How am I interfering? I have offered to let you beat me." The occasion gave the Leatherworkers a grand opportunity to let off steam. One of them made a fiery speech the main theme of which was that no poor person could remain in the village. The wife of the Chamar victim was very prominent in the argument; occasionally, the Brahmans admonished her to keep quiet and refrain from meddling in the affairs of men. The argument at the Chamar quarter began about four-thirty in the afternoon and at seven in the evening was still in progress. Later, a large serious group of Brahmans gathered in the house of the cousin of the Brahman who had beaten the Leatherworker.

The next day, the postman, a prime source of intervillage gossip, discussed the case with the mother of the Brahman who was recognized as the legal expert. The postman expressed disbelief that the Jat was supporting his client against the Brahman because the patron and his client had been fighting bitterly only a few days earlier. "That's how he is," said the Brahman woman, "unpredictable. He doesn't know who his friends are and he has forgotten all we've done for him." The postman asked whether the affair had been reported to the police; the Brahman woman replied that she did not know. Then the postman observed, "Why a court case? This is a little thing. There has been no dacoity. A court case is expensive and everyone loses. There will be a reconciliation. There has to be. The trouble is that the Harijans are rising." The Brahman woman then told him about the episodes of the book and the sugarcane. The postman advised that the theft of the sugarcane should be reported to the police. He asked if the Chamars had been beaten. When the Brahman woman replied affirmatively, the postman said, "That's right. Idiots know only that language." The postman's remarks revealed many of the common themes that were basic to the handling of disputes in Shanti Nagar: the fear of the courts, the emphasis upon reconciliation, and the desire to keep the low castes in their place.

At this stage, the dispute was essentially between the Brahmans, led by their legal expert,

and the patron of the Leatherworker. Both parties approached the police and registered complaints. Four weeks after the fight, the dispute was still unresolved; then a week later, we learned that the Jat had decided not to pursue the dispute any further and that it was effectively over. Its resolution was quite simple. The legally skillful Brahman called upon the senior Jat of the lineage of his Jat opponent and requested his aid. The Jat summoned his youthful relative and told him that the young man's father and the Brahman had been close friends and that the quarrel should be discontinued. He declared that to continue the fight would be tantamount to opposing him, the senior man and the head of their lineage. Even if the first argument were ineffective, the second would carry weight because opposition to the respected and capable head of one's own lineage would be considered a serious matter.

This case serves as a noteworthy illustration of how the seriousness of disputes between high-caste and low-caste men can be augmented by the intervention of a high-caste patron on behalf of his client. However, this specific problem was resolved by enlisting the aid of a lineage elder. This dispute carried the potential for real trouble if the disputants had been members of different factions. The high-caste antagonists were, however, friends so that factional considerations were not involved. All that was needed was a face-saving device to permit the Jat to discontinue his support of the Leatherworker. In the following case, we shall see how a similar incident, a fight between lower- and higher-caste men, expanded into a struggle between factional leaders that, eventually, involved the police, the courts to a minor extent, and a multivillage panchayat composed of important officials of the Union Territory of Delhi.

*Assault: Jat Farmers versus Artisans.* One of the largest Jat landowners of Shanti Nagar and the leader of one of the factions of the village became involved in a dispute with a man belonging to one of the middle-ranking, landless, artisan castes. Several differences between the two men had been festering for several years; finally, increasing tensions between the two families erupted in a fight in which the more numerous Jats severely beat the artisans.

A Bairagi Beggar woman, the wife of the village watchman, gave us a brief account of the happening the day after the fight. To simplify the various narratives of the episode and the account of its aftermath, we will use pseudonyms for some of the principals: Sher Singh, for the Jat who had been involved in the fight; Hari Pal, for the artisan; Om Prakash, for the youthful Jat, a leading member of the faction opposed to Sher Singh; and Ram Krishna, for the senior man and head of the largest Jat lineage of which Om Prakash was a member. According to the watchman's wife, the artisan had been putting cattle dung in a place near his shop, an area claimed by Sher Singh and his brother. Sher Singh told Hari Pal to move the dung, but the artisan refused. The two families began to fight; Hari Pal's eldest son was beaten. Hari Pal sent the village watchman to summon the police.

Hari Pal's wife gave us a more complete but somewhat different account. She told us that, in the evening, her husband and eldest son were sitting in front of their shop when Sher Singh and his sons were returning from the fields. Sher Singh noticed that dung had been removed from the piece of land under dispute and he asked Hari Pal who had taken the dung and who had allowed it to be taken. Hari Pal answered that he had given the dung to another Jat Farmer who had asked for it because he had more than he needed. Sher Singh was outraged; he threatened the artisan because he regarded the land and the dung on it as his property. Hari Pal asked why Sher Singh was angry, since the dung belonged to him (Hari Pal). At this remark, Sher Singh ordered his sons to beat the artisans. The bus from Delhi arrived while the fight was in progress; the villagers who left the bus stopped it. Sher Singh threatened to renew the fight when the artisans went to their house. Their shop was situated on the outskirts of the village near the bus stop, but their house was in the heart of the village across a lane from Sher Singh's house and adjoining his cattle shed. To reach the artisans' house, one had to pass the house of Sher Singh. The artisans attempted to go to their house, but the Jats blocked the lane. A fight started. However, neighbors came quickly and separated the combatants before very much happened. Hari Pal and Om Prakash went to the police the same



evening. Hari Pal's wife mentioned that her family used to work for Sher Singh, but as he had not paid them for two years, they had discontinued the relationship.

Sher Singh and various members of his family gave us versions of the actual fight that agreed reasonably well with that of the watchman's wife. They added, however, that the serious damage to the artisans had occurred after the fight and was part of a plot against them. Sher Singh's nephew, who was present at the fight, said that his uncle had asked Hari Pal to move the dung from the disputed land, but that he had refused. At this, his uncle leaped from his bullock cart in which he and another nephew were riding and seized Hari Pal's son by the neck. Our informant, who had been walking behind the cart, was afraid that his uncle would kill Hari Pal's son; so he stopped the fight. He said that when Hari Pal went to the police to report the incident, two of his teeth had been knocked out. He claimed, however, that the teeth had been knocked out, not by any member of his family, but by someone else in order to build a strong case against his uncle. He insisted that his uncle was a peaceable man, but so strong that he was dangerous when angered. Sher Singh's nephew pointed out that involvement in a fight can be costly, and added that some people liked to see this happen.

Sher Singh was upset by the fight. He charged that his adversary, Om Prakash, a young Jat Farmer, a leader in the opposing faction, had taken the artisans outside the village after the quarrel and had badly beaten them to strengthen the case against him. Sher Singh was bitter about Hari Pal's behavior and charged him with ingratitude. He said that many years earlier he had befriended Hari Pal who used to live in a neighboring village but had worked for Sher Singh. One day he came to Sher Singh and reported that his brother had taken away his wife. Sher Singh advised him to settle in Shanti Nagar with his wife and he would make sure that she did not leave him again. Now Hari Pal had ungratefully reported his benefactor to the police. Sher Singh likened Hari Pal to a dog, "You tame him," he said, "and he starts damaging his own home."

Sher Singh's brother essentially repeated his family's version of the quarrel. He characterized it as only a trivial argument, but charged that their factional opponent had taken the artisans

outside the village where he had broken their teeth and bruised their faces and then had taken them to the police station to press charges. The two brothers had then gone to Hari Pal to ask why he had involved the police. They said it was only a minor dispute that could have been settled peaceably. The two brothers then went to the police station where they were told that the police would take no action if the dispute could be settled peacefully. Accordingly, the two brothers summoned three distinguished men from a neighboring town, all elected members of the Delhi Municipal Corporation, the governing body of the Union Territory of Delhi, and convened a large panchayat in an effort to resolve the quarrel.

Om Prakash justified his involvement, saying that he had accompanied Hari Pal to the police station because he was always on the side of the weak and the artisan was poor and politically weak. He said that when one person beat another, he could be tried under Law 325 and jailed for three years. Consequently, the sentiment of the villagers was to keep the case out of the courts, and he too was willing, provided Hari Pal agreed. One of Hari Pal's younger sons said that Om Prakash had always been a friend of his family and had accompanied Hari Pal to the police station in that capacity. He also observed that there were unfriendly feelings between the two Jat families. He said that Sher Singh habitually failed to pay for labor, and that Om Prakash used to tell him that this was not proper.

The panchayat meeting turned into a lengthy hearing that lasted from about 11:00 A.M. for more than three hours. A large crowd of men from Shanti Nagar and other villages was present. The three members of the Delhi Municipal Corporation who came to adjudicate the dispute were from a nearby town. One was a Brahman Priest, the second a Baniya Merchant, and the third a Jat Farmer. They arrived in a truck, went to the house of the late lumberdar for some refreshment, and waited while a crowd gathered at the Jat meeting house. Hari Pal sat on a cot with one of his sons, his grandson, and a relative from another village. Sher Singh and his brother arrived and sat on separate cots. There was preliminary conversation. Sher Singh remarked that he had never harmed Hari Pal. Hari Pal's eldest son set a conciliatory tone by saying, "We work for

you. We are yours and you are ours. Who will take care of us?" Sher Singh replied, "I know that in anger people do many things."

A corporation member initiated the proceedings by asking Hari Pal to relate the cause of the fight. The elderly artisan, who appeared to be under great physical and emotional strain, spoke in a weak voice. During his testimony, he offered to take an oath saying that if he lied his whole family would die. He began by relating one of his grievances. For two years he had not been paid for his labor and Sher Singh owed him 90 seers (about 185 pounds) of grain. Consequently, he had decided not to work for Sher Singh any longer. Once, he said, one of Sher Singh's sons had called him to come to work, but he gave an excuse and did not go. After that incident, Sher Singh's family had their work done in a neighboring village. Then Sher Singh himself had called Hari Pal to come to work; again he refused. A month before the panchayat meeting as he was passing Sher Singh's house, one of Sher Singh's sons called out telling him to move his house and that Sher Singh would fight him if he failed to comply. The young man said that in exchange his family was prepared to provide a house site for Hari Pal elsewhere. Sher Singh wanted Hari Pal's land, which adjoined his own, for his cattle. Hari Pal told the young Jat that he was like a son to him but that if Sher Singh wanted him to do something, he should tell him so himself. In other words, Hari Pal, an elderly man, the head of his family, believed that he should deal with the head of the Jat family and not with a junior member.

At this point, Sher Singh, disturbed by the gist of Hari Pal's testimony, interrupted to swear that if he (Sher Singh) lied, his whole family would be ruined. Many people then suggested, "Let Hari Pal say what he has to say." Hari Pal continued saying that Sher Singh's son had threatened him, telling him that if he did not change his house site he would have trouble. Then, one day, when all the Jats were returning from the fields, they charged the artisans with placing dung on their land. They said that because Hari Pal had been making so much trouble they would beat him. Hari Pal said that he had folded his hands to Sher Singh, saying that he was a poor man. At that point, Sher Singh's nephew descended from the cart and struck Hari

Pal's son. Abruptly, Hari Pal interrupted his testimony and turned to Sher Singh to ask, "Didn't I work for you?" Sher Singh said, "Do you mean that I didn't pay you?" Hari Pal said, "Yes, you didn't pay." Sher Singh was astounded. "This is impossible," he said. "Tell the panchayat that I have paid you everything. He's just like my son and he's telling lies. He ran away in the middle of my work and it suffered." A corporation member tried to restore calm by saying, "As you (Sher Singh) have said, people who are big should protect him. It's just like a family and you should forget. Hari Pal should also believe that we are just like a family and he should forget."

Hari Pal complained that he was poised between two stones of a mill. Sher Singh countered, saying that if he were in such a situation, why blame him? What could he do? Hari Pal explained that Sher Singh's son had told him to come for his payment, but Sher Singh denied that any payment was due. Sher Singh reminded Hari Pal that, once before, they had had a quarrel and that Hari Pal had then wanted to leave the village but a Jat elder had intervened and they were reconciled. At the mention of reconciliation, the Jat to whom Sher Singh had referred, Ram Krishna, a respected elder, the head of the largest Jat lineage of the village, pointed out that everyone had gathered to settle the current dispute peacefully.

There followed a general discussion to the effect that both disputants were at fault and should admit it; that differences should be forgotten; that if younger people became angry, their elders should counsel them to forget their grievances; and that opponents should become reconciled. One corporation member commented that the two families had loved each other for 10 or 20 years. This remark referred to the fact that when Sher Singh's wife was alive, she had been friendly with the artisans, and the two families had gotten on well. She had died two or three years previously; since then the relationship had begun to deteriorate. Sher Singh's brother reaffirmed the earlier friendship as he said to Hari Pal, "We used to eat at your house, and you, at ours. Isn't it true?"

Hari Pal, fearful that the panchayat was drifting toward a recommendation of reconciliation without resolving his grievances, said, "I am a poor person." One of the members of the corpo-

ration replied, "Why are you a poor person? In the panchayat all are equal and no one person can ask another to remain silent. We can encourage you so much that you can work hard and become rich." Ram Krishna, never varying from the theme of reconciliation, said, "These things always happen and people are reconciled."

Silent until this moment, Om Prakash arose to try to swing the panchayat from its emphasis on reconciliation to an attempt to learn who was at fault, so that justice could be done, and to a consideration of Hari Pal's grievances. "I do not know who was at fault," he said. "I was not present at the time of the fight. Everyone else heard the noise and ran to the fight. Everyone must know what happened. Someone said that there is no justice in the village. If I'm telling lies, say so. It is good if a poor person is aided." He then alluded to Sher Singh's contention that Om Prakash himself had beaten Hari Pal, remarking sarcastically that those who complain of having been beaten and can show their wounds are actually the people who administered the beating. He then said that Hari Pal wanted several concessions in order to settle the matter peacefully. Otherwise, he would fight in the courts.

A corporation member asked Hari Pal what he wanted. Hari Pal, a timid and not very bright man, missed the opening provided by the question and began to talk about the affection of the two families prior to the death of Sher Singh's wife and how recently, Sher Singh had not treated him properly. A corporation member, ignoring Hari Pal's remark about recent trouble, began to question him about the past good relations. Om Prakash became irritated and said, "We have just agreed that Sher Singh has done something bad. Ask Hari Pal what he did that was wrong." Everyone began to talk at once, demanding that Hari Pal be asked what he wanted. When quiet was restored, Hari Pal listed his three main problems: (1) he had not been paid for two years; (2) Sher Singh blocked the lane with his cart so that Hari Pal's family was unable to reach his house; and (3) for years he had put his cattle dung on a specific piece of land that was now being claimed by Sher Singh. He did not mention the dispute over his house site; however, that was tacitly included in the grievance about the blocking of the lane.

The investigation of Hari Pal's three grievances

was begun by questioning him about the piece of land where he had put his cattle dung. The corporation members asked who owned the land. Hari Pal said that he owned it but that Sher Singh had occupied it. They asked Hari Pal if he had a place other than the disputed area to put his dung. He replied that he had such a place. At this point, Hari Pal's eldest son spoke, saying that they had used the latter area for 10 years. This statement alluded to the fact that the current arrangement of their property, with the shop on the outskirts of the village and their house within it, had existed for 10 years. From time to time, Hari Pal's eldest son addressed the panchayat, creating a bad impression each time. It was not his place to speak; he was usurping the authority of his father, even though his father was not the most competent and forceful of men.

Then Hari Pal was asked if he would work for Sher Singh. Hari Pal said that he would if Sher Singh wished it. Sher Singh said that in the past he had given Hari Pal grain and would continue to in the future, implying that he had always paid for Hari Pal's work and that he would be willing to have Hari Pal work for him. At this point, Hari Pal's son interrupted, saying, "You should bring water from the Ganges River for him to swear upon. It's been 10 years since the lumberdar told us to move our shop from the middle of the village." For Hari Pal's son, whether or not they continued to work for Sher Singh was a minor issue; he was more concerned with being free from harassment to move their house. Sher Singh said, "I will give them grain." Angrily, Hari Pal's son replied, "I don't care if he gives grain. If he is telling lies, we don't want it. When Sher Singh puts his cart in front of his house, he doesn't leave any space for us to pass. How can we bring our own cart to the house? He should empty his cart and take it away, not leave it overnight." A corporation member agreed and said, "All right, he won't leave his cart in the lane." Sher Singh did not like the direction the inquiry was taking and said, "There are 20 houses," alluding to the approximate number of Jat households that would support him and to the fact that the artisan was the single representative of his caste in Shanti Nagar. A corporation member said, "We are not worried about the number of houses. We are here to settle the dispute."

The corporation members reverted to the problem concerning the disputed area. One of them said that Hari Pal should have some space for his dung, and suggested that either one landowner or the village donate such a space. Another member returned to the theme of reconciliation. He said that when all agreed that their hearts should be pure, there would be no trouble about the cattle dung, the grain payments, and the cart in the lane. He reminded Hari Pal that he used to have Sher Singh near to his heart and that he should re-establish the old relationship. He said that like children who sometimes talk nonsense, Hari Pal did too. Hari Pal's son, who had received the worst beating, commented that he was not sure that the two families could live amicably as they had formerly. Sher Singh's brother disagreed, saying that it was possible. Aware that the proceedings of the panchayat had developed very favorably for Hari Pal to this point, Om Prakash called for a written statement. "Hari Pal has told us his grievances; if Sher Singh thinks they are inaccurate he should say so. If not, they should be written, and everyone will sign. That will be an agreement." One corporation member increased the pressure on Sher Singh when he remarked, "When the three of us came [from the nearby town], we assumed the responsibility for settling the dispute. If Sher Singh is not prepared to give the grain payment, I will give it, or the three of us will." Hari Pal's son said, "Bring Ganges water." A corporation member reprimanded him, "Anything said in the panchayat is just like swearing with Ganges water."

A corporation member, who noticed Sher Singh sitting quietly, asked him to speak if he had anything to say. "What can I say," said Sher Singh, "you believe him." The corporation member protested that they were listening with open minds and that if Sher Singh had anything to say he should speak. An elderly village Brahman, alluding to the dispute over the ownership of the land where Hari Pal had kept his cattle dung, said, "There are many old people here. Let them all speak." Om Prakash, sensing that the favorable moment was slipping away, asked, "On whose side should I speak?" The village Brahman reprimanded him; "You should say what is right. You shouldn't talk for only one side." A corporation member remarked, "What is said in the panchayat is like Ganges water." Om Prakash re-

plied, "If you want to do justice, why bring Ganges water? One person must be telling lies because how can two people own the same thing? If you want the opinion of the people of Shanti Nagar, many old people are sitting here; you can ask them." A corporation member observed, "Only you people can tell. People from other villages cannot." Hari Pal's uncompromising son insisted, "If one of the parties is telling lies, then people should say he's telling lies." Ram Krishna, constantly pleading for reconciliation, suggested, "You should come to an agreement. Tell Hari Pal where to put his dung." Om Prakash, always aware of the feelings of Ram Krishna, the head of his lineage, carefully remarked, "The person who doesn't want an agreement is the worst person. If two people want to agree and the third does not want them to do so, he is the worst person." We interpreted this as a warning to Hari Pal's son that he was making a very bad impression with his intransigent hostility toward Sher Singh. Also, because Om Prakash lacked the support of Ram Krishna, he would have preferred the case to be settled. Ram Krishna said, "We are in such difficulty. We don't know who is speaking the truth." Trying to establish his good intentions, Om Prakash replied, "I was the first to persuade Hari Pal to come in and settle the dispute." A corporation member said, "If the space belongs to someone, then another person can't put his dung there. Now is the time to settle this point." The panchayat therefore decided to inspect the land in question.

The point to be decided was a difficult one. Landless people did not own land in the habitation area, but they did have the right to use such land.<sup>1</sup> Use of land, however, was subject to permission from the village landowners. If an area of

<sup>1</sup>Our analysis of the case is in terms of the law as understood by the villagers. Post-independence tenancy legislation dating from 1954 for the Punjab contains the provision that title to land in the habitation site that is under a house owned by a nonproprietor shall vest in the said nonproprietor (Aggarawala, 1956, p. 601). We have been unable to find a similar provision in the Delhi Land Reforms Act of 1954, but, in view of the tenor of the times, we would expect that the landless people of the Union Territory of Delhi would have similar rights. Our analysis assumes that the disputed plot was in the habitation site (*abadi deh*) and not in the common land (*shamilat deh*), for different legal provisions apply to the two categories of land.

land belonged to or was often used by land-owners, then a landless artisan or worker could not use it, even if it was temporarily unused. The division of the habitation site among the land-owners was not recorded in the land records of the village; only the agricultural land was so recorded.

At the site, the discussion dealt with whether the general area had been divided and among whom, and how it was being used. A division of the general area would indicate that the disputed space had been assigned to a landlord, possibly Sher Singh, although there was no clear evidence to substantiate this surmise. If it had not been divided, the panchayat then had to decide who had been using the area. If the general area had not been divided and Hari Pal was using the space, his plea would be strengthened. Of the several issues between Hari Pal and himself, Sher Singh regarded the ownership of the disputed land as most important. Of course, the other land-owners were also concerned with any precedent that might be established on the basis of the decision in this case.

At the site of the disputed ground, Sher Singh declared, "This case will not be settled here. It will go to the courts." This served as a warning to the panchayat that with regard to the land Sher Singh would not accept an adverse decision. Hari Pal's son pointed to their dung cakes, saying that they had been moved from the disputed area. Sher Singh asked a Jat Farmer to tell who owned the space. Sher Singh, a canny politician, had addressed the question to a Jat who was a member of the same lineage as Om Prakash and yet had had disputes with him. The Jat avoided answering directly, but he identified two adjacent areas as belonging to Jats, thus strengthening Sher Singh's argument. However, a corporation member noted that there was no partition between the two areas specified by the Jat, thus weakening the contention that the space had been divided. Everyone noted that there were no written records, but Om Prakash declared that people should agree anyway. Another Jat, asked about the disputed area, said that he knew nothing. A respected Brahman elder concluded that the Jats themselves did not know who owned the piece of land. At this, Om Prakash's well-meaning but clumsy older brother, trying to

help his younger brother, said, "Everyone knows whose space this is. Those dung cakes belong to Hari Pal." Sher Singh, ignoring the ineffectual older brother who only reflected his brother's opinions, angrily turned to Om Prakash and said, "You are saying that this belongs to Hari Pal." Om Prakash protested innocently, "When did I say that?" Sher Singh insisted that Om Prakash had said it and began to shout and talk rapidly. He was greatly disturbed. A corporation member addressed the elderly Brahman who had originally called for a poll of the village elders to determine ownership and said, "This is a matter that concerns your village. You must say to whom this belongs." Sher Singh said, "Everyone knows it's mine." The Brahman who had inadvertently contributed to the problem by calling for a poll tried to minimize his involvement by saying, "I didn't know there was a fight until this morning." For a moment, the patience of one of the corporation members wavered and he remarked, "I have come to the conclusion that they are fighting only about dung."

Everyone returned to the Jat meeting house to continue the discussion. The panchayat had been in session for a long time. Pressure began to build for a written agreement, even though no decision had yet been made as to the ownership of the land. Most of the pressure was directed toward Hari Pal. The Jat member of the corporation asked him why he was making trouble. He replied that the space belonged to him. Unconvinced, the Jat asked, "Did he have all that land?" A corporation member asked Hari Pal where he had put his dung after having been forced to move; he replied that the Mali Gardener had permitted him to use some of his land. The corporation members declared that the problem could be solved only by the villagers, who refused to take the responsibility. The corporation members suggested that Hari Pal and Sher Singh each nominate two trustworthy individuals and that these four should make the decision. Taking the position that he maintained to the end, that the problem of the land was separate from the fight and the other grievances, Sher Singh said, "You can settle the fight, but you can't decide who owns the land." He repeated this several times. Om Prakash told Hari Pal's son not to talk so much, that he should simply state

whether or not he was willing to agree. Sher Singh said, "Hari Pal's shop is next to the disputed area. How can we guard that place to keep him from putting dung there. It's Hari Pal's scheme to make trouble and occupy the space. You can get me hanged, but I don't want a decision about the land."

Ram Krishna became more forceful. Addressing Hari Pal, he said, "The decision that is written by the panchayat must be followed by both of you. Sher Singh has always helped you and he will do so in the future. If you leave the village, you will be in trouble, and so will Sher Singh. If Sher Singh wants you to stay here, he won't put his cart in front of your door. You are pushing the matter too far. If you don't want to agree, you'll be sorry in the future." However, no one changed his position. The Jats continued to maintain that they did not know who owned the land; each disputant repeated that he was the owner, and Ram Krishna continued to admonish them, saying that if they did not agree they would be sorry. Two elderly men expressed a growing sentiment of the group by asking the disputants, "If you did not want to agree, why did you call everyone? People are busy and have to go." Om Prakash, realizing that Hari Pal would receive only minimum aid, shouted at someone, "I am prepared to accept the decision of the panchayat. I have no trouble with Sher Singh or Hari Pal." He then started to leave. Ram Krishna said to him, "You are [an important man] of the village and should stay until a decision is made." Om Prakash left anyway. Ram Krishna, with the air of a prophet, said, "I have told you many times that you'll be sorry if you don't agree."

The panchayat divided into small groups for final discussions. A corporation member put his arm around Hari Pal's shoulders and led him to one side where he talked to him earnestly. Then, one after another, all the older men talked to Hari Pal. Meanwhile, Sher Singh sat quietly on his cot, smoking the hookah. Hari Pal's son, who had gone to Om Prakash's house, was summoned. He arrived. Ram Krishna spoke to Hari Pal, "All the people have come to help you. No one wants to harm you. There is a saying that people who are in the house are far away, but neighbors are near." Hari Pal tried to leave, but people held him. A corporation member said, "I have seen

many people who disagreed with a panchayat's decision and were sorry." One of the corporation members began to write. An elderly artisan from another village said, "Let them make the decision. If we don't like it, we'll say so." The written decision was circulated for thumb impressions and signatures. Om Prakash had returned, having changed his shirt. A corporation member gave the written decision to Om Prakash to read. Om Prakash said, "It is written that we agree." Hari Pal's son said, "We don't. If you haven't settled our problems, we don't agree."

After the panchayat meeting, we traveled a few miles on the Delhi bus with the three corporation members who said that the dispute had been settled, that all the parties involved had signed the reconciliation agreement, and that it was decided that the land belonged to Sher Singh, but that Hari Pal would be permitted to put his dung there. Informants seemed to be in general agreement about the broad outlines of the settlement. Hari Pal's wife reported that everyone in the panchayat had said that Sher Singh should not block the lane. She also thought the panchayat had done something to persuade Sher Singh to pay the artisans what they claimed he owed them. A Jat informant, saying that the fight had been foolish and that both sides had been foolish, summarized the agreement: first, the artisans were to work again for Sher Singh if he paid them the 90 seers of wheat he owed them for previous work; second, Sher Singh agreed not to put his bullock cart in front of Hari Pal's house and to refrain from harassing Hari Pal; and third, the villagers told Hari Pal to put his dung elsewhere, and he had agreed. The Jat informant also said that because the land had been undivided and Sher Singh had occupied it, he owned the land. The Jat informant explained the basic principle of land ownership: that those who did not own agricultural land did not own land in the habitation site. Landless people had usufruct rights in land in the habitation site based on the permission of the landowners. A nephew of Sher Singh said that the panchayat had ruled that the land belonged to Sher Singh and that Hari Pal had to move his dung. He said that since Hari Pal swore that Sher Singh owed him grain, Sher Singh would pay, but he indicated that Hari Pal had lied.

One of Hari Pal's younger sons, however, had the impression that Hari Pal had been awarded possession of the land. As for the grain payment, he noted that the panchayat had agreed that Sher Singh should pay what he owed. Hari Pal and his eldest son were bitter. Eleven days after the panchayat meeting, they told us that the panchayat had done nothing. They said that they had never agreed to the panchayat ruling. They complained that Sher Singh still blocked the lane with his cart and that they were afraid to go to his house for their grain because he might beat them or say that they were trying to steal something. When asked if Om Prakash should go with them, they replied emphatically in the negative, saying that the people who had rendered the decision should accompany them. Hari Pal's eldest son was very upset. He said he should kill Sher Singh and then die himself.

The dispute did not end at this point. Five months later, Hari Pal summoned a village panchayat in the wake of a new incident in his dispute with Sher Singh. A relative of Hari Pal, who lived in a village many miles distant, had initiated a lawsuit against Hari Pal because of the alleged theft of a water buffalo. Everyone in the village took it for granted that Sher Singh had instigated the suit because he was known to be acquainted with Hari Pal's relative. When the police came to Shanti Nagar to serve legal papers on Hari Pal, they were said to have asked for Sher Singh.

Hari Pal began the panchayat proceedings with a short speech, the main theme of which was that the village belonged to both the rich and the poor. Then the arguments began. All the issues that had presumably been resolved at the earlier panchayat meeting were discussed. The land dispute was mentioned; again, Hari Pal accused Sher Singh of trying to take his house. This time the argument was between Jat factions: Sher Singh and another leading Jat of his faction in opposition to Ram Krishna, the leader, and another important Jat of the opposing faction. Om Prakash spoke from time to time but was very restrained for him. A leading Jat from the other Jat *pana* (the contending factions both belonged to the same *pana*) acted prominently in the proceedings as a peacemaker. Finally, he decided that both Sher Singh and Hari Pal were

deceiving the village; that they were, basically, on very good terms. As proof, he remarked that Sher Singh had once given Hari Pal a ride. Although everyone knew that there was bad blood between the two men, this theme that they were basically friendly was developed for a while.

Then the panchayat decided that Sher Singh should ask Hari Pal to work for him and that Hari Pal should accept the offer. Hari Pal's eldest son said perhaps his father could live on good terms with Sher Singh, but that he never could. Immediately, Sher Singh and his supporter jumped to their feet and began to leave. They were persuaded to sit down again. Everyone agreed that Hari Pal's son should not have made his statement and that he should retract it. Hari Pal's son folded his hands and retracted. The panchayat repeated its suggestion about the resumption of normal relationships; but both Sher Singh and Hari Pal refused. Since the aim of the panchayat had been to reconcile Sher Singh and Hari Pal with no loss of face to Sher Singh, and since they had refused to become reconciled, the meeting ended after having lasted about two hours.

A large crowd attended this panchayat meeting; for once, the Harijans were well represented, although they did not participate in the discussion. At one point, about five Harijans started to leave, probably thinking that they were only witnesses and merely lending their presence to the proceedings; but the Jats forced them to remain. Shortly after this abortive attempt at departure, a Chamar Leatherworker made a long speech that was intended to comply with the landowners' view of the ideal pattern of the relations of high and low castes. He began with apologies, stating that if he said anything wrong the village should correct him. He then heaped considerable praise on the landowners, calling them kings who gave grain to the lower castes. When he had finished, everyone agreed that he had spoken well. Sher Singh asked him a few questions to clarify a few unfavorable points in his talk. The Leatherworker answered to Sher Singh's satisfaction.

Two days after this meeting when we were walking through the village with a young Jat, we all stopped at the artisan's shop to discuss the panchayat. The Jat said that the panchayat had supported Hari Pal. A visiting artisan from another village disagreed, saying that the panchayat

had made no decision. The Jat said that the decision would be made, but first, the panchayat wanted to reconcile the disputing parties so that fighting would not erupt again. He said that Hari Pal's son, who was present in the shop, had acted inappropriately and so had hindered the panchayat. The visiting artisan was not convinced by this explanation. Hari Pal's son was extremely calm, for him.

A week later, we were present at a conversation between Om Prakash and one of Sher Singh's nephews, a man somewhat older than Om Prakash but no match for him as a debater. Its substance was quite revealing as to the role of factions in the dispute, the motives and current position of Om Prakash, and the feelings of his factional opponents. Om Prakash minimized his involvement with Hari Pal. He told Sher Singh's nephew that he had called Hari Pal to his house to inform him that if he were compelled to move out of his house he would just have to find another house site on the outskirts of the village. If Hari Pal had to fight the lawsuit, he would have to spend his own money; no one would help him very much. He also informed Sher Singh's nephew that he was not aligned with Hari Pal but with the lineage. Sher Singh and Om Prakash belonged to different lineages that were known ultimately as having been related, although the details of the relationship had been forgotten. By appealing to a common lineage relationship, Om Prakash emphasized his closeness to Sher Singh; on the other hand, he frequently attacked Sher Singh's family. For example, he mentioned two recent minor disputes that involved the beating of cows in which Sher Singh's family had clearly been in the wrong.

The nephew reacted, denying his family's guilt in the episodes involving the cows and saying that he and Sher Singh feared Om Prakash. He added, "You can kill us, but we'll not go to the artisan." Om Prakash assured him that the lineage would not force them to take this step, saying that the lineage had to act as a unit. The nephew countered that even brothers quarrel, to which Om Prakash replied, "Even so, you face the outside world together." The nephew agreed, whereupon Om Prakash asked why Sher Singh had opposed him in a recent election. The nephew had nothing to say.

Om Prakash stated that he could fight for himself and did not have to fight under the cover of the lower working castes. He claimed that he did not want to quarrel with Sher Singh and that he had put pressure on Hari Pal to come to an agreement with Sher Singh. Then, at the panchayat meeting, Sher Singh had accused Om Prakash of preventing a reconciliation, at which point Om Prakash had walked out of the meeting with a parting remark that Sher Singh could settle the dispute without his help. The nephew said, "You claim that you support the lineage, but I will tell you later what you are really doing." Om Prakash said, "What do you mean? I will not support Hari Pal in any way. There is no friendship with the lower working castes. I have never wanted to fight Sher Singh by helping Hari Pal." He then observed that everyone has his motives; for example, Sher Singh had opposed him in the election but he had not resented it and had forgotten the incident. The nephew said, "Well, what could you have done, even if you had resented it." Om Prakash said, "If you oppose a man, it is better not to say anything to him." He then added that, at the moment, he had nothing against Sher Singh. He also observed that, prior to the major land dispute that had led to the formation of the Jat factions, the two lineages had always acted together. No sooner had he insisted that he had nothing against Sher Singh than he remarked slyly that "someone" had tried to cause trouble between him and one of his neighbors, but that this scheme had failed because of his own tact and the good judgment of his neighbor.

The last episode in the dispute between Sher Singh and Hari Pal was recorded a month later when we encountered Hari Pal at the bus stop. To answer the summons he had received with regard to the water buffalo that he had allegedly stolen, Hari Pal said that the village panchayat had written a letter to the court reporting that he had left the village. He believed that this letter would take care of the summons temporarily, but that an attempt might be made to serve it again. He added that he had been told that summonses could be easily forged and that one could get them typed and mailed for a few rupees. He asked us if this were true. We replied that we did not know. Since the village panchayat had writ-



ten to the court to protect Hari Pal, it was apparent that its members knew that he had not taken the buffalo and that the summons was an attempt to put pressure on him, possibly to leave the village, or at least to frighten him. In any case, Hari Pal was a timid, anxious man who needed some assurance that he would no longer be harassed, assurance that was not forthcoming.

*Libel: Jat Farmer versus Jat Farmer.* About five months later, a dispute developed that was indirectly related to the one between Sher Singh and Hari Pal in that it involved Sher Singh and Om Prakash. Om Prakash told us that he had filed a suit for libel against Sher Singh and several nonresidents of Shanti Nagar. Apparently Sher Singh had accused Om Prakash of misappropriating funds. Om Prakash believed the lawsuit would put a stop to what he considered harassment. Although never happier than when engaged in a good fight, Om Prakash appeared to be somewhat worried because his opponent had engaged a good lawyer and, apparently, had uncovered some strong evidence against him. In this dispute, the supporters of the principal contestants lived outside of Shanti Nagar; the two factions of Shanti Nagar had allies in other villages. This dispute would involve some of the most important men of the region and promised to be a bitter fight. Accordingly, those people who ordinarily could be counted on by one faction or the other were cautious about becoming involved. One important Jat of Shanti Nagar, customarily an ally of Sher Singh, approached by both factions, had decided to remain neutral on this occasion.

*Disputes Settled by Violence.* Although violence or threat of violence usually served to complicate disputes, occasionally a problem was solved by such means, as is illustrated by the following episode. A 20-year-old Jat man, a member of an important family, found a cow that belonged to a landless man in his field, and beat the animal. The cow ceased to give milk. The landless man believed that he had too few allies and not enough power to fall into a dispute with the Jat family; consequently, he remained silent. He had no redress.

Some time later, the young Jat found a Brahman's pregnant cow in his family's fields, and beat this animal also. The Brahman, much more

powerful than the landless man, protested, saying that a pregnant cow should not be beaten just because it had wandered into the wrong field. He also told the young Jat that he should have summoned him and he would have come to get his cow. The Jat replied that in the future, with the same provocation, he would do the same thing, and if the Brahman objected, he should get his staff and they would settle the matter. (Men owned long heavy staves of bamboo which they sometimes carried for personal protection.)

All the Brahmans then proceeded to take their staves and called to the members of the Jat family to come out of their house. However, no one came to the support of the Jat family; the Jats refused to come out to fight. The head of the Jat family, recognizing that his young son was clearly in the wrong, had nothing to say. A relative of the Jat family told us that he and one of the older sons of the family in question had acted to prevent the quarrel from getting out of hand. "We were only six," he said, "and there were so many Brahmans with staves." He and the older son apologized for their younger relative, saying that he was only a boy. The cow was not seriously injured.

This case principally involved the disciplining of a young man and, indirectly, his family. To be faced with an overwhelming number of armed opponents while simultaneously to be completely abandoned by one's caste fellows could not avoid having a beneficial effect upon the youthful and somewhat tactless landowner. Despite the threat of violence, the villagers did not regard this episode as a serious dispute. "This is a village," said a young Brahman calmly, "and disputes like this are bound to happen all the time."

*Attempt of a Woman to Settle a Dispute.* Generally, the settlement of disputes was the province of men. However, we did record one incident when a high-caste woman attempted to settle a dispute in a lower caste. The argument was principally between women. Daya, the wife of a Gola Potter, had quarreled with Nirmala, another Gola Potter woman, and Nirmala's husband. Daya's son by her first marriage, Ram Chander, who headed his own family, habitually used the fodder cutter of Nirmala and her husband. Daya told her son to refrain from using that fodder cutter; however, he continued to do

so. The quarrel between Daya and Nirmala which led to the displeasure of Daya with Ram Chander resulted in a fight between Ram Chander and Daya's sons by her second husband during which Ram Chander was struck on the forehead by a stone. Some of the people who intervened were also injured.

We were present when a Jat woman acted as peacemaker. Attempting to resolve the antagonism of Daya and Nirmala that was the cause of the tension between Daya and Ram Chander and of that between Ram Chander and Daya's other sons, she asked Nirmala to respect Daya and not to bother her when Daya's husband was temporarily absent from the village at work in a distant town. Nirmala defiantly told the Jat woman to mind her own business. Quite furious, the elderly Jat woman warned Nirmala that she had the power to have all the low castes turned out of the village in five minutes. The Potter woman invited her to try. Both sides repeated their threats a few times. The Jat woman departed; as she walked through the low-caste side of the village, she exchanged smiles with some of the Harijans. This episode was probably little more than an attempt by the Jat woman to express her status. Had she tried further action, other Jats would have told her to mind her own business. Jats did not intervene in the affairs of other castes unless called upon to do so.

*Disputes, Panchayats, and Characteristics of Village Life.* We have described at some length a number of legal cases, especially that of Sher Singh and Hari Pal, because they illustrated so well many characteristic features of village life and government. In Shanti Nagar, disputes over land were a basic cause of the most bitterly fought legal cases. Landless villagers could become involved in such disputes because of their usufruct rights in land in the habitation site as well as from the possibilities for claiming ownership in agricultural lands that were opened by land-reform legislation. Their traditional rights regarding agricultural land could also lead to other problems. Thus, we reported the dispute of the Chamar Leatherworker and the Brahman Priest in which one of the issues was concerned with Leatherworker children who had taken some sugarcane from a field for use in a particular ceremony. The Chamars claimed that this

act was a traditional right; the Brahman who owned the field charged theft. In the dispute between Hari Pal and Sher Singh, a side issue involved Hari Pal's right to give away surplus dung. Sher Singh was alleged to have told the artisan, "For eight months your buffalo grazed in my fields and so the dung is mine." Although Sher Singh was exaggerating the issue, it is of interest that he would indirectly protest the traditional right of landless people to graze their cattle in his fallow fields.

Part of the dispute between Sher Singh and Hari Pal was due to the changing statuses and roles between landowners and serving castes. The landowners were receiving somewhat less service from artisans and landless laborers than they had formerly. Some landowners seemed to believe that grazing and other rights in the use of land enjoyed by the serving castes depended on the service relationship between landowner and worker. If artisans and laborers did not provide the same services as formerly, they did not deserve the same privileges. Although most landowners did not openly express this attitude, they still made a strong effort to enforce what they considered to be the proper attitude and behavior among the dependent serving castes. For example, the landowners tried very hard to repress Hari Pal's son, who was only a few years younger than Om Prakash and whose behavior was not nearly so tempestuous, aggressive, or inappropriate. The difference as to what constituted acceptable behavior for these two young men depended on their status and rank. Nevertheless, during the dispute, both of them had to be taught their proper behavior and where their loyalties should lie, also that neither violence nor involving the police or the courts was an acceptable means of settling disputes. As the rulers of the village, the landowners preferred to handle disputes themselves. Thus, they were protecting their own interests, but, at the same time, preserving village unity, although on their own terms.

As a means of harassing each other, factional opponents could enter into disputes that did not directly concern them. Although high-caste people tended to stand together in disputes with the lower castes, high-caste patrons sometimes believed that it served their interests to support

low-caste clients. Such support, however, was generally curtailed if the patron was not supported by his caste and lineage fellows as often happened. Villagers were suspicious of the courts and generally preferred to avoid them. However, the financial resources and the ability to use the courts skillfully gave a man a substantial advantage in village disputes. Violence usually failed to settle disputes but only served to complicate them. The possibility that violence could lead to a court case and a possible term of imprisonment for a villager was regarded most seriously.

The panchayat was a council rather than a court; it therefore differed from most American courts but resembled, to some extent, the moots reported from Africa (cf. Gulliver, 1969). The members of the panchayat usually shared the functions of eliciting information, making decisions, and enforcement. Although the more powerful members exerted the most influence, this was seldom apparent in overt role playing in the panchayat. There were no formal roles, such as prosecutor, mediator, or judge, assigned to specific individuals. In the United States a jury is composed of people who have no previous connection with the principals in the case and know nothing about it or, at least, are expected not to have formed an opinion about it. Panchayat members generally have known the disputants (or the accused) all their lives, have discussed the circumstances in detail prior to the hearing, and often have definite opinions. In the United States a court in a civil action usually renders an enforceable decision in favor of one of the litigants. A panchayat was not so much interested in deciding who was right and who wrong as it was in reconciling the disputants so that village life would again be harmonious. The village population was very small; despite their differences, its inhabitants had to continue to live in close proximity. When a panchayat considered an infraction of its own administrative decisions, the accused was not presumed innocent. A panchayat would not bother to convene unless the accused was strongly suspected of being guilty. Often a fine was forgiven if the offender apologized. No police officers enforced the decisions of the panchayat, but public opinion could not be safely ignored. We observed many panchayats and were impressed with their seriousness of purpose and

the wisdom of their decisions. The panchayat was well adapted to life in a small village; for the solution of many problems, it seemed to us to be a more appropriate forum than an impersonal city court. In all essential respects, the multivillage panchayat resembled the village panchayat; however, it gave added weight to the seriousness of the proceedings because of the participation of distinguished men from other villages.

As was true of many features of village life, the panchayat system favored the landowners and was often used by them to maintain their control over the serving castes. However, national and state laws were causing changes in many aspects of village life including the panchayat system. Panchayats under the new legislation would be elected by all the eligible voters of the village and would contain either representatives of the artisan and laboring castes or members of other castes who owed their election partly to the support of these castes. Such a situation could result in more concern being given to the problems of the lower castes while at the same time maintaining the virtues of the traditional panchayat.

*Courts and Panchayats.* When the stakes were very high, especially if land was concerned, there was little chance that a dispute could be prevented from going to the courts (cf. Cohn, 1965, pp. 104-105). However, after a court decision had been rendered, a panchayat might be convened to confirm the decision and to prevent further litigation. The major land litigation of the previous 50 years that had led to the current Jat factions of Shanti Nagar was such a dispute. The point then at issue was the common claim of occupancy right versus the right of hereditary ownership. About 40 or 50 years earlier, a childless widow had died leaving an estate consisting of 600 bighas (126 acres) of land. In the village context, this was a very large estate. According to the right of hereditary ownership, the land was to be divided in genealogically determined shares among a number of men. Figure 18 presents a simplified diagram of the relationships of the male heads of families who would be entitled to share in the estate after the death of the widow, the last survivor of lineage A. Shares in the estate were calculated on the basis of the equal inheritance of land by a man's male descendants or, if he had no such descendants by

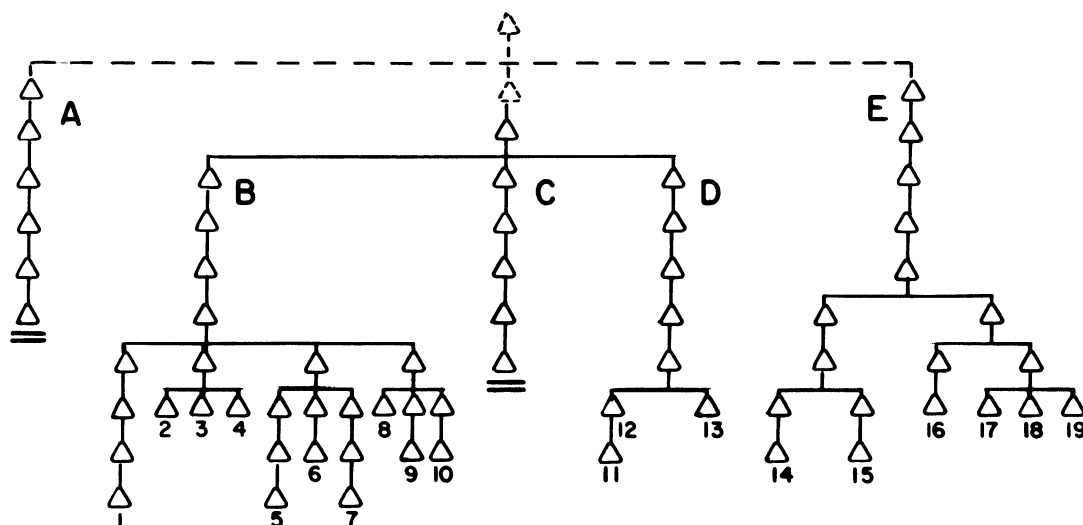


FIG. 18. Simplified diagram showing relationships of male family heads involved in most important recent litigation over land in Shanti Nagar. Dashed lines represent reconstructed relationships. Capital letters denote lineages; numerals represent male heads of families in 1958. Double bars at bottom of a line of descent signify no male issue, in which case property reverts to closest collateral males.

his collateral male relatives in genealogically determined shares traced from a common ancestor. Thus, lineage E was entitled to half of the land of lineage A; lineages B, C, and D were entitled to the other half. Villagers customarily considered landownership to be vested in family heads, and so we follow this practice with reference to disputes, litigation, and inheritance. To further illustrate the process of division, in lineage E, family heads 14, 15, and 16 were each entitled to 1/8 of the estate of lineage A (75 bighas each); family heads 17, 18, and 19 were each entitled to 1/24 of the land of lineage A (25 bighas each).

Lineages B, C, and D should have received equal shares in the remaining half of the land of lineage A. At that time, however, the sole representative of lineage C was a childless widow. Under the land laws then in effect, she was entitled to maintenance from the land during her lifetime but she could not inherit it. Our informants indicated that the widow received her due. When they specified the areas of land actually received by each family head in lineages B and D, their figures indicated that lineage C inherited nothing and its share was divided equally be-

tween lineages B and D. This was consistent with the land laws because only male issue could inherit. Accordingly, family head 1 received 1/16 of the estate of lineage A or 37.5 bighas; family heads 2 through 10 each received 1/48 of the estate, 12.5 bighas; family head 12, 1/8 or 75 bighas (of which half went to family head 11); and family head 13, 1/8 or 75 bighas.

Family head 8 farmed an area of land in the estate of lineage A in addition to the area to which he was entitled by hereditary ownership and therefore wanted to divide the property on the basis of occupancy rather than heredity, because he would then be entitled to both areas of land. Family 8 was supported by family head 1 and opposed by lineages D and E. Although lineage D was genealogically closer to lineage B than to lineage E, it sided with the latter because of similar economic interests. The family heads of both lineages D and E, who would receive relatively more land than those of lineage B on the basis of hereditary right, opposed the efforts of family heads 1 and 8 to divide the estate on the basis of occupancy.

There was precedent to support the claim of family heads 1 and 8 in the then current land

laws that conferred the right of permanent occupancy after a period of continuous tenancy. However, the Jats who claimed occupancy rights had not farmed the land the requisite number of years. The case was said to have been in litigation for 10 or 15 years and to have been quite bitter. The courts finally rendered a decision in favor of the group arguing for hereditary ownership. Following the decision of the court, a panchayat representing seven or eight villages was held in order to insure the eviction and to end the affair. As an aside, we note that when the surviving widow of lineage C died some time later, the land of lineage C was divided without a struggle in the courts. The participants had not had time to recover from the costly dispute over the land of lineage A.

The litigation was said to have been settled some 30 years before our residence in Shanti Nagar, but some of the bitterness remained; the antagonisms were strong enough to establish more or less permanent political alliances among the Jats. Such political alliances were known as parties or *dhars*. One party was composed of 10 families belonging to lineage B; the other, of nine families representing lineages D and E. When we lived in the village, some of these families paid scant attention to factional politics. They were headed by quiet men, concerned with their own families, with little interest in the conflicts of others. However, factional antagonisms were continually generated chiefly by three men in the village who had strong personalities and seemed to enjoy contention. Without leaders such as these, we believe that the factions would not have endured for so long a period.

One evening after we had been living in Shanti Nagar for a year, one of these factional leaders came to our house and charged that of village politics we understood only about the worth of one anna (about 6%; one rupee contains 16 annas). He then gave us a lengthy account of political life in Shanti Nagar, replete with examples of motives and strategies. The major points of his analysis are worth noting here; most of them have been well illustrated by the preceding disputes. In addition, our informant certainly qualified as an expert on the affairs of the village. He said three main motives were the basis of vil-

lage politics, most important of which was the ownership of agricultural land. Second in importance was the control of land in the village habitation site and third was the desire to be a leader (*chaudhari*). He identified the principal tactic as the initiation of quarrels between people in order to weaken the position of one's opponents. He illustrated this kind of maneuver by recounting the successful effort of one of his factional opponents to cause or, at least, to aggravate a quarrel between him and one of his allies. Another tactic was a willingness to endure a loss in order to make one's enemies lose. Other villagers used to emphasize this point, saying that a man might consider it a victory to cause his opponent to lose one rupee even though he himself had had to lose two. In the mind of our informant, education was a tactic in village politics as was business acumen. He was much concerned with the prestige of leadership and spoke at length of the devious ways that men attained it. One must lie, he said, curry favor with important people in the village and in government, and keep the low castes in line by putting pressure on them. He said that such men go through the streets tensely. In his opinion, they would achieve nothing in this life. One could attain leadership, he said, only by following the path of truth, implying that he did so. Although the details of the disputes of which we learned and the strategies of various opponents were frequently complex, these could, without too much distortion, often be reduced to the principles suggested by our informant. We were pleased when, a few months later, he informed us that our understanding of village political life had reached the two-anna level.

## VILLAGE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION TERRITORY OF DELHI

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

The foregoing discussion of the administrative and legal institutions of the village has necessarily involved the corresponding institutions of the Union Territory of Delhi because the administrative and judicial panchayats of Shanti Nagar had limited powers. Many important legal matters, es-

pecially those relating to rights in agricultural land, could be finally resolved only in the courts. Plans to improve the village and its lands, both common and privately owned, often required assistance in planning and financing from governmental agencies situated outside of the village. Thus, as a unit, the village had continuing and vital relationships with higher governmental levels.

Of the various governmental agencies involved with the village, the Community Development Block of which Shanti Nagar was a member, established in 1952, was most important from the point of view of introducing changes in village life. One of the goals of the government of India was to bring about a planned transformation of the countryside. Legislation such as the Delhi Land Reforms Act was part of this policy; and, to the extent that the courts were called upon to enforce this law, they were agents of social change. However, the courts were essentially passive agents in the sense that they did not send representatives into the villages to stimulate change. The same passivity was characteristic of other governmental departments. Officials sent to collect the land revenue or those who maintained the land records brought the village into contact with higher governmental levels; however, these were traditional relationships and had changed relatively little for centuries. The representatives of the development block, however, were charged with trying to induce the villagers to accept a variety of projects for the improvement of agriculture, sanitation, education, and health. An appraisal of the activities of the functionaries of the Community Development Block in Shanti Nagar provides some appreciation for an aspect of the close relationship between the village and the government that promises to become increasingly important, i.e., the direct involvement of the government in planning and directing rural change.

The villagers came into contact principally with three officers of the community development program: the Block Development Officer, chief executive officer of the multivillage development block; one of the sanitation officers, who happened to reside in Shanti Nagar and, from time to time, sent his crew of sweepers to

clean the village streets so that Shanti Nagar appeared to us to be exceptionally tidy; and the Village Level Worker, lowest official in the hierarchy, who was assigned to a few villages and whose job it was to implement the programs planned in Delhi. Both the Village Level Worker and the Sanitation Inspector were villagers who understood rural life very well. We considered them extremely competent men. We saw the Block Development Officer less frequently than the other two men. We knew nothing of his background other than that he was young and well educated. From the point of view of implementing most departmental policies in the village, the crucial person was the Village Level Worker. He had to present programs to the villagers in such a way as to win their acceptance, often a difficult task. Because the Village Level Worker had to convince individual farmers to accept a new and relatively untested plan, he was asking them to take risks; and the farmers of Shanti Nagar were often unenthusiastic because if the change were to prove unsuccessful, they would be the ones to suffer. Many projects were concerned with agricultural improvements, such as new seeds and fertilizers. The Village Level Worker was consequently much more involved with the high-caste landowners than with the Harijans.

On the whole, the villagers were critical of the community development program and the Village Level Worker. One young Jat Farmer challenged us to name any community development program that had helped the village. We mentioned the paving of certain streets and the lining of wells with bricks. The young farmer countered that the village had paid for both of these projects; moreover, the villagers had provided the labor. Although he failed to mention the fact, the government had at least provided the bricks for the center of the roadway. Our informant criticized the Village Level Worker because he visited the village only as a guest. He spent his time gossiping at one house, claimed our informant, and then went to another house for his meals. We asked him what community development should do. He suggested that the department should dig the drainage ditch, consolidate the fragmented holdings of agricultural land, provide fertilizer and seed on loan, maintain a good

school in the village, and establish a marketing society in order to assure fair prices. He claimed that the village would then prosper and that the fertilizer and seed loans would be repaid with interest.

While this seemed to be a sensible program, we were aware of some of the difficulties involved as was our informant although he did not mention them on this occasion, and there were no doubt numerous other problems of which we were unaware. Land consolidation, for example, presented an extremely difficult problem; many farmers fought it vigorously. In fact our informant himself had his doubts; he once charged that consolidation would bring many unscrupulous people into the village in the guise of accountants. As for fertilizer and seed, such programs did exist to help the farmers, but they resisted them. Part of the resistance to the adoption of a new fertilizer stemmed from the failure of demonstration plots on which the recommended fertilizer had been used to yield more crops than the control plots, as we could testify from our observations of the fields in question. Elderly and younger farmers were equally critical. A senior Jat man, for example, discussing community development, criticized the Village Level Worker because he allegedly induced a cooperative villager to sign papers testifying that certain work had been done although it had not.

Some projects were manifestly ill-advised. For example, the community development officials had arranged for the construction of a concrete dry latrine for the village. In a dry latrine, people defecate on the floor; the facility is cleaned by the sweepers and their pigs. The building was situated just outside the habitation site. It was never used, a monument to well-meaning but unrealistic planning in Delhi. Even a foreigner with a certain sympathy for indoor facilities would have known that the dry latrine would never be accepted by the villagers; nor should it have been. The building was too small and would have become unsanitary and aesthetically unpleasant had it been used to any significant extent. Furthermore, none of the villagers considered such a public latrine to be healthful; and none would have used it in preference to the fields. Nevertheless, one must credit the planners with an effort to alleviate conditions that might contaminate the

water supply and cause disease. On the positive side, a urinal built at the same time beside the meeting house was occasionally used. Another project that appeared to be ineffective was the formation of 20-man teams to visit villages in the fall to try to improve the spring (rabi) crop that was then being sown. To the best of our knowledge, the team that visited Shanti Nagar apparently did not accomplish much. A young Jat farmer, often critical of community development, said that the team did nothing but gossip, smoke, drink tea, and urge farmers to buy expensive fertilizer. A Brahman farmer, perhaps with a greater tolerance for the limitations of men and their programs, said that the community development people were not in a very good position to help the farmers but that the Agriculture Department did render considerable aid.

The community development representatives were responsive to complaints, but their inability to solve problems quickly seemed to leave the villagers somewhat impatient. For example, the Assistant Development Commissioner and another high official came to Shanti Nagar because the village had filed a complaint about the waterlogging of fields. We were quite impressed with this evidence of governmental concern because the Assistant Development Commissioner was the second ranking officer in the entire program, responsible for more than 300 villages. The officials explained that a plan had been devised to solve the waterlogging problem for all of the Union Territory of Delhi. Then they went to inspect the fields. They were accompanied by a member of the Development Committee of Shanti Nagar. He did not seem at all impressed by the activities of the officials. Another example concerned the problem of rats in the village; we overheard a villager complain to the Village Level Worker about them. However, some months later when a team charged with rat control appeared in the village, no enthusiasm was forthcoming from the villagers.

To conclude, on the basis of the few unsuccessful programs cited above and the criticism of some villagers (it must be remembered that criticism was a common commodity in Shanti Nagar), that community development was ineffective and that the officers of the program were of modest competence would be erroneous.

Many of the projects appeared to be very sensible; the officials we encountered were, we thought, quite competent. Many of the individuals involved were outstanding, but they were dealing with difficult problems, many of which had been developing for centuries. Miracles could not be expected.

#### VILLAGE LEVEL WORKER

The Village Level Worker was the critical man in the program, because he represented the Community Development Block in the village. Whenever we spoke with him, we found him sensible, realistic, and on the whole effective. His principal approach was to persuade the better educated farmers to establish demonstration plots; when successful, these plots could be used to convince the more intransigent.

One day he visited us when he was in the village to arrange for a demonstration plot for a new variety of wheat that had been developed at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. He planned to ask a young, educated farmer, who also happened to be employed at the research institute, to plant the new variety of wheat experimentally in a small field and said that the educated villagers, those who were not living from hand to mouth, were the most receptive to new ideas. The older farmers he said, told him that because they had been farming all their lives, he could tell them nothing. He remarked on the caution of the farmers, stating he had been trying to push the planting of a new gram seed that had been developed in Uttar Pradesh and was cheaper than the local seed, but the farmers would not risk planting it because it had been developed in another area and might not grow well in the local soil. In this endeavor, the Village Level Worker was subjected to the typical emotional problems of the man in the middle. A farmer himself, he appreciated the wisdom of the farmers of Shanti Nagar in refusing to adopt a seed that was unproven locally; on the other hand, the promotion of the new seed was the policy of his department. Because the Indian Agricultural Research Institute was constantly producing new varieties of seed, the establishment of demonstration plots was one of the principal activities of the Village Level Worker. For

the rabi season, 1958-1959, he listed four varieties of wheat seed then in use in addition to a new variety that had recently been developed. One progressive farmer planned to plant two of the established varieties of seed to enable him to compare their yields. Another farmer agreed to plant the new variety in a few small plots.

It was true that the Village Level Worker spent some of his time sitting and talking with the villagers, but we believe that much of this activity was effective in introducing new ideas and building trust and was not merely time-wasting gossip as charged by critical villagers. To introduce new seeds, fertilizers, and procedures, the Village Level Worker first had to establish a climate of receptivity to new ideas. The arguments and debates in which he engaged with the villagers served as an important technique to achieve this end. For example, one day the Village Level Worker visited us. He was in the midst of describing the demonstration plots and other agricultural work that he sponsored when an elderly Jat Farmer arrived. The Jat listened for a short time and then remarked that no one helped the poor farmers and that the Village Level Worker occupied himself only with the big landowners. The Village Level Worker replied that this was true. "It is a crime to be poor," he continued. "The rich can do anything in the village, but the Chuhra Sweepers and the Chamar Leatherworkers cannot. They have to find living space in little holes." He warned that the communities that had been so long suppressed would rise and that those that had dominated would fall. The Jat replied that such a turn of events would suit him because his status and that of his group had always been low. It was people like the Village Level Worker who would fall from their high status.

The Village Level Worker replied that this remark demonstrated the wrong attitude of villagers. When they observed a person bettering himself, they tried to restrain him rather than to surpass him. He then alluded to the refugees who had come into the region following the political separation of India and Pakistan and asked the farmer if he had ever considered why these refugees who had arrived penniless were now better off than those who had lost nothing. The farmer said that the answer was very simple, "They are



merchants, and we are fools." The Village Level Worker countered that the real reason was rooted in the greater flexibility of the refugees. They knew how to change. He added that the major problem of the Delhi farmers was that they failed to consider agriculture from a commercial viewpoint; he told his interlocutor that he should learn to do more with agriculture.

By this time close to being routed, the Jat Farmer claimed that he had increased his yield of sugarcane during the current year by using fertilizer. Dissatisfied, the Village Level Worker implied that the Jat could do much more. He suggested the use of night soil obtained from Delhi as fertilizer, and criticized those who did not want to use it merely because it was night soil, despite its efficacy as a fertilizer. He invoked national pride. "We continue worshipping the moon with offerings of water," he charged, "when Americans and Russians are claiming ownership of the planets. It is a race; unless we hurry we shall be nowhere." He concluded by alluding to the Japanese farmers to whom Indian farmers were often invidiously compared at that time because of their considerably lesser agricultural yields. "There's nothing special about the Japanese method of rice cultivation," he said. "If one plants his fields that way, they look nicer and are easier to work on. That's all. One should keep trying even if one fails. One must try over and over again."

While we doubted that the remarks of the Village Level Worker would have much effect on this particular Jat Farmer, an old man unlikely to change his ways, his arguments were nonetheless skillfully developed and would probably have some influence upon other, more receptive individuals. He made a point about the condition of the Harijans whose betterment was a major governmental concern. His comments about restraining people rather than trying to progress oneself echoed a common theme when villagers discussed barriers to progress. The villagers regarded this as an unfortunate attitude but recognized its strength. The Village Level Worker argued for a commercial approach to agriculture which implied investing in newly proven seeds and fertilizers and striving for maximum yields. He was scornful of Indian attitudes that might obstruct increased production, such as the reluctance to

collect and use night soil because of the ritual pollution entailed. And he appealed to national pride, at that time a particularly fervent emotion, especially among the young (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1968, p. 38).

#### VISIT OF THE BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER TO SHANTI NAGAR

On one occasion the Block Development Officer visited the village to attend a large panchayat meeting. He was the center of attention and took advantage of the opportunity to suggest a variety of projects. After listening to a listing of projects the village hoped to undertake during the succeeding year, he suggested several additions. The principal village well, he said, should have a roof over it; a room for bathing could also be added. He proposed too that the Brahman meeting house be used as a seed store that would become the nucleus for a service cooperative. He explained the advantages of a service cooperative as providing an opportunity to obtain better and less expensive seeds and fertilizers; he said Shanti Nagar was an exceptional village because its people cooperated enthusiastically in village affairs and suggested participation in an intervillage contest that he believed Shanti Nagar would have a good chance to win. Three considerations were important in the contest: the relative absence of party (faction) politics, the presence of an institution like a youth club to channel the village activities, and, to a lesser extent, the amount of money in the small savings program of the government. The villagers listened attentively to the Block Development Officer; apparently, they liked his suggestions.

When he finished speaking, another officer described the medical resources that were available at the headquarters of the Community Development Block: a dispensary, a maternity center, and a sanitation unit. When discussing the maternity center, he also mentioned birth control emphasizing the resultant better health of women if the births of children were widely spaced. Through the visits of the Village Level Worker, the Block Development Officer, and other officials of the community development program, the villagers were reasonably well informed of the most recent governmental programs designed

to assist them. Although the villagers ignored some projects, they accepted others. Immediately after the panchayat meeting at which the Block Development Officer appeared, the Development Committee of the village met to frame project applications to be submitted the following day.

#### MEETING AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

Just as the villagers complained of the community development representatives, so too did the latter have problems with the villagers, which they discussed freely among themselves. They were also confronted with pressure from the higher echelons of their own organization to implement programs and to meet quotas. Such an assignment could be difficult when programs appeared to be ill-advised, untested, in conflict with village values, or difficult to translate to the villagers in meaningful terms. The discussion at one meeting that we attended at block development headquarters with the Block Development Officer, his Village Level Workers, and other officials of the program illustrated some of these problems.

The first subject presented by the Block Development Officer was the need to find additional villages that were exceptionally receptive to community development programs. Community development officials could then intensify their efforts in such villages with the result that they would become to some extent exhibits of the beneficial effects of community development. Such villages were known as model villages. He observed that people often visited the development block where they were shown model villages. When they returned for another visit, they would ask to see different villages. The Block Development Officer said that his organization had to be prepared for these requests.

Then a discussion devoted to the distribution of rat poison began. Some villagers were said to refuse the poison because they were orthodox Hindus and opposed to the taking of life; others rejected it because their cats ate it and died. We might add that our own experience with one locally available rat poison indicated that it was ineffective. The first night that we used it, one or two rats ate some of it and died; after that, the

rats ignored the poison. Metal screens on the windows and doors were, however, totally effective against rats as well as quite helpful in barring flies and mosquitoes from the house. Of course, for screens to be effective against rats, a house would have to be of brick. Rats could penetrate the walls of mud houses.

The Block Development Officer next explained a new process to make wheat resistant to fungus. The seed was first soaked in water for 24 hours; then it was spread in hot sunlight (105° F. to 110° F.) for about eight hours. Each Village Level Worker had been assigned a quota of 275 maunds (about 11 tons) of seed. A few had reached 10 or 20 percent of the quota but most of them reported no progress. The Block Development Officer pointed out that they were involved in a kind of competition, but would have no chance of success if they could do no better. No one had anything to say, possibly because nothing could be done for six weeks or so. The meeting was held in the middle of July, during the monsoon; the required temperatures probably would not recur until September.

Then the Block Development Officer requested soil samples. The Village Level Workers had not supplied samples because, they said, they had no bags for them. However, the Block Development Officer announced that bags had become available. One of the Village Level Workers complained that he and his colleagues did not know the meaning of a technical term ( $\text{Ph}^+$ ) used in soil analyses, and therefore could not explain it to the farmers. Other Village Level Workers declared that without a recommendation as to which crops should be planted, a soil analysis was worthless. The Block Development Officer explained that the crop recommendation would be furnished by another officer. He suggested that the officers from Delhi sent to help the Village Level Workers should be given no rest. "Drag them along with you," he said.

A general discussion followed, mainly devoted to complaints about the attitudes of the villagers. The Village Level Workers noted that the villagers who were the most eloquent critics of community development usually made the least contribution to the programs. The Block Development Officer advised the Village Level Workers to be firm with the villagers. Some villagers, he

said, acted as though the development representatives were their slaves instead of merely individuals charged with a special job. The Village Level Workers then complained about the corruption among the village accountants (*patwaris*), who allegedly charged an illegal fee of 15 rupees to issue a certificate of ownership.

The meeting then turned to another project. For purposes of demonstration, the Block Development Officer wanted to obtain about two tons of gypsum for fertilizer. He wondered if the Village Level Workers would be willing to have the cost of the gypsum deducted from their salaries if some farmers could not be found who would agree to buy it. Some were willing to do so but others refused.

At this point, three officials from the Delhi headquarters entered the room to clarify various programs and to hear the reports of the Village Level Workers regarding the programs they supervised. These officials described the grants available for wells and Persian wheels and the program for the national tree-planting day. There was some feeling among the Village Level Workers that government loans should be made available to assist farmers to purchase tractors. The officer in charge of the program for building tanks (large ponds) received his verbal report from the Village Level Workers, and then the man in charge of the small savings program received his. Everyone treated small savings as a joke. However, this report led to a discussion of the quantity of gold and silver jewelry in the possession of the villagers and the difficulty of persuading the owners to sell it and invest the proceeds. It was pointed out that the possession of jewelry was a form of saving; moreover an attempt to force the owners of jewelry to sell it would make a bad impression. One man observed that jewelry, unlike savings, did not increase in value. Another countered, "Why save? Invest in *gur* when the price is 12 rupees and sell when it is 27 rupees. It is like that every year." Everyone concluded that the proclivity of the villagers to hoard should be changed. Initially, one could try to persuade them to present saving certificates as part of a dowry in marriages. In fact, one of the more progressive Jat Farmer families of Shanti Nagar had done this at a marriage we attended.

To judge from the remarks of the Block De-

velopment Officer, the Village Level Workers, and other officials of the community development program, it appeared that projects whose results were reasonably predictable and did not depart too much from the existing patterns of village life were relatively easy to introduce. The program designed to assist farmers to dig wells was an example. According to the official in charge, the program was over-subscribed so that no new applications could be entertained until the backlog had been processed. A well was a capital investment; the return over a period of years could be reasonably and favorably anticipated. A farmer could spend his money with some confidence that he would not lose his investment even in the event of a few bad agricultural years. Buying commercial fertilizer was more hazardous. Even with governmental assistance, its purchase was expensive. Moreover, fertilizer was used in a single year. Therefore, the farmer gambled not only that the fertilizer would help to increase yields, as the government claimed, but also that the weather would be good. Unfavorable rainfall would result in a reduced crop despite the use of expensive fertilizer. Farming was always a gamble. Only the more prosperous farmers were in a position to invest heavily in fertilizer. The same argument obtained for trying new seeds. It was always questionable whether the seeds would perform under local conditions. However, one or two successful demonstrations usually convinced the farmers.

We found that noneconomic problems, such as the taste of a new variety of produce, a factor some observers have offered as an explanation for the failure to adopt a new variety, were largely irrelevant as compared with strictly economic considerations of crop yield and financial rewards. Occasionally, some farmers told us that the new varieties of wheat or sugarcane they were growing were not so tasty as the old ones; they had, however, adopted the new seeds because one simply could not argue against the increased yields. The cotton, wheat, and sugarcane seeds that were in use during our stay in Shanti Nagar had all been introduced relatively recently.

With regard to some innovations, the farmers seemed to be in advance of the government. They expressed their ideas to the Village Level Workers who funneled them upward in the hier-

archy to the Block Development Officer and to officials at the Delhi headquarters. For example, this chain of communication was apparently activated with regard to the desire for tractors. The Village Level Workers believed that the government should do more to help farmers purchase them. We have no information as to the position of the highest ranking community development officers with regard to tractors, although we can appreciate the reason why they might have wished to move cautiously. Tractors were very expensive; only landowners with large holdings would benefit by owning them. Furthermore, to use them effectively, a significant degree of land consolidation would be imperative. Either a farmer would have to know how to maintain the tractor himself or else find himself dependent on unpredictable urbanites. Finally, the large-scale use of tractors would have major repercussions in the relationship of landowners and landless laborers who might under these conditions find their employment opportunities significantly reduced. Unless urban employment was available or the government provided programs in advance to cope with this possibility, the landless laborers could find themselves in even less favorable economic circumstances than the existing ones that can be described as yielding at best a bare subsistence.

It was difficult to persuade villagers to adopt projects that conflicted with their established values, that would yield less satisfactory results than existing arrangements, that had unclear purposes, or whose success was unproven. For the same reasons, the Village Level Workers often did not promote such projects with enthusiasm. The use of rat poison was one example of a project that conflicted with the values of at least some villagers. The small savings program was ridiculed because the interest rate was considerably less than that obtained either by lending money in the village or by participating in a credit society. Speculation in agricultural commodities or in livestock was also a tempting investment for those who had money. The tactic of reducing the resistance of villagers by suggesting that saving certificates be included in a dowry was clever and might possibly be effective. The villagers did not object to the collection of soil samples because it cost them nothing. However, the Village Level

Workers believed that such sampling was pointless unless they could return to the farmers with a crop recommendation based on it. The scheme to soak wheat seed in water and expose it to hot sunlight to inhibit the growth of fungus could gain momentum only through successful demonstrations. To promote this program, the Village Level Workers would have to enlist the aid of their most valued allies, the progressive farmers who consistently cooperated with them.

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND THE LOW CASTES

Inevitably in a program that had as one of its most important goals the improvement of agricultural practices and the increase of crop yields, the activities of the community development program involved principally the landowners. The villagers appraised the programs generally on their merits. Complaints that some villagers were favored more than others did occur; however, such complaints were infrequent and of low emotional intensity. Programs expressly designed to benefit the low castes, however, aroused the hostility of a small number of landowners. They resented the practice of giving government money to low-caste people and did not hesitate to indicate how they felt. Furthermore, specifically with regard to one program, some landlords threatened to take, or took, punitive economic action against the low castes. This reaction, as nearly as we could determine, was a passing phase, but its occurrence served to indicate the attitude of the landowners toward any economic and social advance on the part of the Harijans as a threat to their own position.

During our residence in Shanti Nagar, several Harijan families took advantage of a government plan designed to subsidize rural housing to replace mud houses with brick houses. The plan was administered by the Harijan Welfare Board. The government proposed to pay half the costs of a house, to a maximum of 750 rupees; the beneficiary was expected to contribute half the costs in the form of labor, a house site, and a cash expenditure of 200 rupees for building materials (India, 1957, p. 263). This was an excellent plan for the Harijans of Shanti Nagar since they already had their house sites. From a

landlord, they could borrow the money needed for building materials and, if necessary, pay a bricklayer, build a house, and also receive 750 rupees from the government. Most of our low-caste informants claimed to have borrowed in excess of 750 rupees to build their houses. Nevertheless, the 750 rupees that they would receive from the government would serve to repay a major part of the loan. In this way, a Harijan would have a new house at the cost of his own labor and that of his family, with only a relatively modest loan outstanding. The hours of labor a man invested in building his house would not detract from his normal income because he could arrange to work on the house without interfering with his customary agricultural work or urban job. The Chamar Leatherworkers were the principal group to take advantage of the program. During 1958 they erected 12 brick structures; the Chuhra Sweepers built five. We did not learn if all these buildings were subsidized by the government, but in all probability they were. Prior to January, 1958, only three Chamar buildings and one Chuhra building were entirely or partially constructed of brick. Unquestionably, the government had devised an effective program that served substantially to improve the housing of the Harijans.

This housing program was the most visible of those that aided principally the low castes, and it was the one that aroused the most high-caste criticism and alleged economic retaliation. One day, we were in the fields resting under a tree with eight or 10 Chamar Leatherworkers and two Jat Farmers, when a political discussion developed. The housing subsidies were mentioned. The Jats criticized the government for giving money to the Leatherworkers and repeated the frequently heard homily that the surest way to ruin a man was to feed him without requiring him to work. The Jats asked us if it was not wrong for India to borrow money from the United States and proceed to give it away. In their argument, the Jats ignored the fact that the government contribution was contingent upon a contribution of labor by the low-caste beneficiaries. The Chamars were conciliatory, saying that although they wanted to raise their standard of living, they had no ambition to own land. By these remarks, they tried to reassure the Jats with regard to one of their basic

fears, that somehow, they would be deprived of their land. They also asserted that they did not want farming to be mechanized because they would lose their livelihood as a consequence. Later, we walked back to the village with one of the Chamars. He said that the trouble with India was that when a group like the Chamars tried to better itself, another like the Jats tried to restrain it.

Some Jats did more than complain; they acted. One Chamar Leatherworker reported that a moneylender had refused him a loan to enable him to complete his house. The moneylender, interpreting the government grants as loans, told the Chamar that if it was a question of repaying him or the government, the government would take precedence. The moneylender used this argument only to express his dissatisfaction with the Chamar's participation in the program; he was an experienced moneylender, perfectly capable of resolving whatever difficulties might arise with the repayment of the small loan of only 500 rupees that had been requested.

The second tactic of the landowners was to discipline the Leatherworkers by refusing to give them work. We visited the Chamar quarter one day during the period when this policy was at its height; the Leatherworkers seemed very subdued. They reported that the landlords had told them that they would learn their lesson if they starved a little. They said that the landowners were exchanging labor among themselves more and more and were hiring laborers only when absolutely necessary. They charged that the landowners were jealous of the progress made by the Chamars and were counseling one another, "Do your own work. Don't depend on the other [low-caste] side of the village. The government is helping them."

During a discussion of the problems faced by landless people in working for the landowners, we asked some Chuhra Sweepers their opinion about the Chamars' enforced unemployment. The Sweepers immediately became silent; after a moment, an old man commented that the relations between high and low castes in the village were not good. A married daughter who was visiting in Shanti Nagar added that such relations were not good anywhere. We believed that the complaint of the Leatherworkers was largely jus-

tified. Two days following this conversation, we visited the fields and observed about a dozen laborers from another village working in the fields of a Jat landowner.

We asked the Chamars whether, in view of all the trouble they were having, they would build brick houses if they had the choice again. They replied, definitely, that they would not because mud houses were preferable to starvation. We suggested that one would think the landowners would be proud to have all the houses in the village built of brick. The Leatherworkers answered, "That's what they'll tell you. Actually they're very jealous." As we have noted, the economic retaliation of the landowners was fairly brief and relatively few men strongly manifested their disagreement with the program. A Brahman landowner believed that most high-caste people were in favor of the Harijans' building brick houses. He said that the 5 or 10 percent who were opposed composed the same group that wanted to control the lower castes by keeping them in their debt so that they would be compelled to continue to work for them. The housing project for the Harijans was an excellent example of the village maxim that when someone is observed to be prospering, others try to hold him back rather than strive to progress themselves.

#### EXTRA-VILLAGE POLITICS

Not only were the villagers involved with the courts and administrative agencies like the Community Development Block and the Harijan Welfare Board but they also participated in the politics of the Union Territory and the nation. They voted in elections; some were members of the Congress Party. One of the villagers served as an official of the Congress Party in the Shanti Nagar region. The villagers were also capable of forming their own political party when this seemed the only means of translating their feelings into effective political action. Under such circumstances, the people of Shanti Nagar necessarily had to cooperate with many other villages. This cooperation took the form of multivillage panchayats, often representing what the villagers described as a 62-village election circle. The effectiveness and flexibility of the traditional panchayat was demonstrated by the ease by which it

was adapted to modern political activity. The elections in Delhi Union Territory in the spring of 1958 illustrated the great concern of the people of Shanti Nagar about broad political issues. Despite the ability of the villagers to evade or ignore governmental legislation that conflicted drastically with their traditional practices, they were well aware that legislation passed in Delhi could affect them fundamentally.

In the spring of 1958 many villagers, but especially the landowners, were disturbed by much of the then recent reform legislation that had been supported by the Congress Party and enacted by the legislatures of the Union Territory and of India, such as the Delhi Land Reforms Act of 1954 and the Hindu Succession Act of 1956. The landowners disliked the former and almost everyone disapproved of the latter because of its provision that daughters might inherit the property of their fathers. The extent of the antipathy to this provision was indicated by a survey made in another Delhi village, Jhatikra. The head of every household was questioned on this point; not even one was in favor of a daughter's inheriting her father's property (India, 1961a, p. 66). The arguments advanced by the villagers of Jhatikra were interesting. They argued: first, inheritance by a daughter would augment the dispersal of the ownership of land, consequently increasing the problems of cultivation; second, because daughters settled in the villages of their husbands, they could not properly cultivate land inherited in the village of their fathers. They would either have to sell the land or as an alternative settle in their parental village; both of these alternatives conflicted with the customs of the villagers. Finally, because daughters had specific rights in the property of their husbands, they had no need to share in that of their parents.

With regard to the inheritance of land by daughters, the villagers of Shanti Nagar presented the same arguments as those of the Jhatikra villagers. Moreover, they also pointed out that a family gave its daughter a substantial dowry when she married and continued to send her gifts throughout her lifetime at festivals and ceremonies of the life cycle. Villagers regarded these gifts as constituting the daughter's share of the family property. Some villagers even argued that sometimes daughters received gifts of greater

value than that of a proportional share of the family property.

The villagers identified these legislative changes with the Congress Party. They decided to form a political party to be known as the Panchayat Party and to challenge the Congress Party by entering a slate of candidates for the next election. A panchayat that represented 62 villages of what the villagers described as an election circle met in a town close to Shanti Nagar and selected three candidates. Shanti Nagar was represented at the panchayat by two Jat Farmers. However, after the panchayat had made its decision, a fourth villager entered the election. Many people of Shanti Nagar told us that his objective was to split the vote for the candidates of the Panchayat Party; they suspected that the Congress Party had instigated this move.

This development led to many other multivillage panchayats. We attended one held in Shanti Nagar. We were told that representatives from 16 related villages (some said from all 62 villages) were present. We estimated the attendance to be from 100 to 150 men. Brahman Priests and Jat Farmers predominated, but we also recognized Chamar Leatherworkers and Chuhra Sweepers; doubtless many other castes were present. A prominent Jat rose to say that the decision with regard to the identity of the candidates was not just the concern of the Jats, but that all castes should participate. Other speakers pointed out that people should abide by the decision of the panchayat; otherwise, the panchayat would not be respected. One of the candidates offered to withdraw in favor of the fourth candidate, if the panchayat requested it. Apparently this was merely a gesture. An elderly Jat from Shanti Nagar made the principal speech. He said that Shanti Nagar would follow the lead of its ancestral village because Shanti Nagar was its younger brother. The panchayat lasted about an hour. Afterward, many of the men went to the nearby ancestral village where a similar panchayat was in session. The election was held a few weeks later; the three candidates of the Panchayat Party won. The villagers believed that the overwhelming Jat support of the Panchayat Party was the principal factor in the outcome. They said that the Brahmans and the Harijans voted for the Congress Party.

Despite some dissatisfaction with the Congress Party, its influence in Shanti Nagar was important, in keeping with its position as the dominant political party of India. The leaders of the Congress Party, past and present, had enormous prestige. Some villagers regarded Mahatma Gandhi as a god. "A man who did so much," said a Brahman Priest, a devoted Congress Party member. "He kept no weapons or tools; yet he got freedom from another country." Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then the prime minister, was also uniformly respected; he was immune from the criticism occasionally leveled at the party and some of its other leaders.

Involvement with the Congress Party predated Indian independence when a disciple of Gandhi visited the village on many occasions to talk of freedom. He was a simple and honest man; under his influence about 14 people in Shanti Nagar became members of the Congress Party at an annual cost of four annas a year. We asked our Brahman informant how membership in the Congress Party had affected his thinking; he replied that he no longer believed in untouchability. "The low castes should just keep clean," he said. Another Congress Party member estimated that about 150 villagers were currently paying the yearly membership fee of four annas. He said that Brahman Priests and Harijans were generally Congress Party members; he also listed seven Jat families as members. He thought that, in the Delhi election described above, many Brahman and Harijan party members had deserted the party. As for the Jat members, he believed that they probably did not support the Congress Party candidates because of the new land laws. However, he added that had a Jat been a candidate for office under the Congress Party banner, every Jat would have voted for him.

Two men in Shanti Nagar took a more active interest in Congress Party affairs than the average four-anna member. One, a Brahman Priest, habitually represented Shanti Nagar at meetings, usually held in a nearby town, that dealt with the affairs of the Congress Party in the region. The other, a Jat, worked for the party. He collected money for it and was said to act as a secretary for about 25 villages. Clearly, he had considerable influence with the Congress Party. He arranged for the Congress Party representatives

who were elected officials of the Delhi Administration to come to Shanti Nagar to discuss the problems of the villagers. Although a taciturn man, he had considerable status in the village, where he was also a member of the Development Committee. Beyond the village, he was probably one of the most influential residents of Shanti Nagar because of his political connections. He apparently used his political influence to obtain governmental assistance for the village rather than to further any personal political ambitions.

The common complaints leveled against the Congress Party by the villagers were of some interest. One elderly Jat Farmer, not given to complaints, criticized the Congress Party at great length. He charged that it failed to understand the farmers and their problems; that when asked for action to solve some problem, it evaded the issue or delayed a response; and that it aided the Harijans in order to win their votes, but did nothing for the landowners. We once heard some Harijans criticizing the policies of the Delhi Administration. They complained bitterly that taxes were about to be leveled on houses and animals. A Jat Farmer, overhearing, commented that this was an example of what happens when one votes for the Congress Party. A young Chuhra Sweeper remarked quietly that he had voted for the Congress Party. As far as we know, no such animal or house taxes were in force at that time. According to one young Jat Farmer, the national government was dominated by big businessmen and factory owners who wanted to disrupt villages in order to increase the supply of labor for factories. "You've been here six or seven months," he said. "Look at what the government has done to the relationship of landowners and tenants." He was alluding to the land reform legislation, as a consequence of which the landowners no longer leased land to the landless with resultant hardship for the latter. He charged that people would be forced out of the village and into factory work where, unable to depend on the village for their livelihood if work in the factory failed, they would be completely dependent on the factory and, in consequence, afraid to strike.

Just as the need for assistance led the villagers to the government, the need for votes brought government officials to the village. We have described what occurred at the meeting when Con-

gress Party officials visited the village to discuss its problems. It is true that the proper discharge of their duties required such visits, which also provided opportunities for some discreet political activity. Sometimes these visits were devoted as much to political speeches and ceremonial activity as to discussions with villagers about their problems. An example was a large meeting which was addressed by a high official from the Delhi Administration. The villagers had made an impressive effort to honor him: a large welcome banner had been suspended over the road to the village; the village had been cleaned so that there was no rubbish in the lanes or streets; there were signs on some of the houses announcing such public health benefits as cholera vaccinations; a canopy had been erected on village common land to shelter the dignitaries because a large outdoor area was necessary to accommodate the crowd, and the speeches were given there.

The head of the youth club of a neighboring village was the master of ceremonies. A few villagers spoke briefly; they outlined their needs, principally the construction of the drainage ditch, a school for girls, a dispensary, and a paved road leading to Narela, a nearby town. The speaker from Shanti Nagar was the head of its largest Jat lineage. We were highly impressed with his performance. Often quiet and reserved in the village, he stood before this gathering composed, forceful, distinguished, and well-spoken. After the villagers had spoken, the Delhi official replied, promising to give serious consideration to their problems. A prominent visitor from another village donated 1000 rupees that had been collected in two neighboring villages to help defray the cost of building the proposed school for girls. The Delhi official then ceremonially laid the cornerstone for the school and turned a spade of earth as a symbolic beginning for the drainage ditch. He also briefly visited two Jat houses in Shanti Nagar before returning to Delhi.

Although some of the political activities of the people of Shanti Nagar involved more than the village, these were much less ambitious than participation in the founding of an independent political party. An example of such extra-village activity was the successful campaign of a young Jat Farmer for the presidency of a nearby higher secondary school. He was opposed by a man



from a neighboring village. The factional politics of Shanti Nagar became a factor in the election because one of the young Jat's factional opponents supported the other candidate. The young Jat campaigned in surrounding villages, including the home village of his opponent. He claimed to have spent about 2400 rupees on the campaign. Villagers who discussed the campaign with us believed that the people who voted for the young Jat would be casting their votes for his family as much as for the candidate. Our informants also believed that his factional enemy did not have enough power to influence effectively the voting and that his opposition would serve, at most, to advertise his enmity to the young Jat. Our informants were proven correct in their analysis; the young Jat won by a substantial margin.

#### EXTERNAL CONTACTS: ECONOMIC, MEDICAL, CEREMONIAL, AND EDUCATIONAL

Since Indian independence, the variety of contacts between the villagers and the government has increased. New programs and new agencies, such as the Community Development Block and the Harijan Welfare Board, have been added to long-established governmental functions, like revenue collection, the keeping of land records, and the management of irrigation. A similar trend has occurred in other aspects of village life: additional extra-village contacts have taken their place with those long established. Although the village has always been an identifiable, integrated unit of social structure, it has never been isolated either from other villages or from an urban center. The recent trend toward increased extra-village involvement has been most marked in government, education, health, and economics; less so in religion. A number of the contacts between villagers and higher governmental levels have already been discussed. We will now describe some of the economic, religious, and other relationships maintained by villagers with individuals and institutions located beyond the confines of the village. Most of these relationships were traditional in the sense that they had functioned for a long time and had not been particularly affected by modern influences that emanated either from

the government or the city. A few were recent developments.

#### ARTISANS

The people of Shanti Nagar had relationships with many specialists who lived in other villages, principally because the number of local artisan castes was inadequate to provide all the services and crafts necessary for village life. At least two carpenters from two other villages regularly worked in Shanti Nagar. They were capable of producing more elaborate and complex carpentry than was the local Lohar Blacksmith. For example, they assisted in building houses and, especially, made and installed doors, window frames, and shutters. After a successful harvest, a family might decide that it could afford to have a new door or some new windows built. It was at such times that we saw the visiting carpenters.

Work of this kind was done on contract; it was not part of a jajmani relationship. One carpenter told us that he had agreed to make a new door for one family for 100 rupees, one-third of which would be the fee for his labor for 11 days; he had also negotiated a major contract with a Jat Farmer to build eight new doors and nine new window frames in return for 850 rupees to cover the cost of wood, labor, and metal fixtures. He estimated that the job would take about two months. When he worked in Shanti Nagar, the family that had hired him provided his meals. The carpenter maintained the customary jajmani relationships with the farmers of his own village. Only one Shanti Nagar farmer said that he had a jajmani relationship with this out-of-village carpenter. Consequently, we concluded that such an arrangement was rare. The carpenter received the same jajmani payment as the Lohar Blacksmith.

Another artisan, a weaver, also lived outside of Shanti Nagar. Villagers provided the yarn with which he wove the required textiles in his own village. He was paid one rupee for weaving two pounds of yarn. Tailors visited the village. They brought their sewing machines with them and worked in the houses where they were employed.

Masons, chair-caners, professional cooks who served at weddings, blacksmiths, and bangle sellers were among other specialists who visited

Shanti Nagar. The blacksmiths and bangle sellers who lived in neighboring villages came to peddle their traditional wares. They were well known in Shanti Nagar and were usually well received. Of these visiting specialists, only the bangle sellers were females.

Not all visiting peddlers were successful. One day a seller of clarified butter (ghee) stopped at a Chamar Leatherworker house during our visit there. He asked five rupees for two pounds of ghee. A woman put a little of the vendor's ghee and a little of her own on her hand and asked a bystander whether he could distinguish between them. He did so with no difficulty. Then two Chamar men began to discuss how it was possible to sell an inferior product as pure ghee. One adds a chemical, they said, to make it appear genuine; also if one were to offer the peddler four rupees for two pounds, he would sell his entire stock. The peddler walked out.

Salesmen of modern products also appeared. A station wagon that belonged to a company that sold Indian medicines, particularly an anodyne, came to the village one morning. The salesmen began to play records through a loudspeaker. We encountered one of the Baniya Merchants walking away from the automobile to his shop carrying a few packets of the anodyne, a few wooden pens bearing the company's name, and posters advertising the medicine. For a short time, the posters were displayed on some houses.

We were aware of only one outside specialist, the Dhobi Washerman who lived in the ancestral village of Shanti Nagar, who had a significant number of jajmans in Shanti Nagar. He listed five families for whom he worked; as compensation, he received a yearly payment of grain, one maund of wheat or gram from four patrons and half that quantity from the fifth. The payment depended upon the amount of work he performed.

A Jhinvar Waterman from a nearby village came to make baskets for some of the farmers. Each farmer provided the required material and received half the baskets; the Jhinvar retained half in payment for his work. He had visited Shanti Nagar for the same purpose for many years. The locally resident Jhinvars were said to be too busy with work at the sugarcane crushers

to weave baskets for all those who needed them. Villagers also bought winnowing baskets from visiting Sweepers. In addition to the Jhinvar Waterman basket-maker from nearby, other Jhinvar Watermen from Uttar Pradesh came to make brown sugar (gur) during the sugarcane harvest. Jhinvars were reputed to produce superior gur; consequently, some Shanti Nagar farmers preferred to enter into a contract with the Jhinvars to process their sugarcane juice rather than do it themselves.

Another specialist, the genealogist for the Chuhra Sweepers, came from a considerable distance. A native of Rajasthan, he visited Shanti Nagar at intervals of two or three years. We encountered him one day in the Chuhra quarter as he played a drum and sang of the Chuhra's ancestors while his daughter, about ten years of age, also sang and danced.

The Goldsmith who lived in the ancestral village of Shanti Nagar was an artisan close at hand. At one time, a Goldsmith did live in Shanti Nagar, but he failed to make a living and soon left. The ancestral village had a population large enough to support several Goldsmiths.

Agricultural laborers from outside the village were regularly hired to supplement the local labor force, sometimes despite local unemployment. Once, as we sat in a farmer's house, a Chuhra Sweeper from outside Shanti Nagar entered to borrow a sickle. One farmer commented that he failed to understand why workers from outside the village should be hired when so many local people were unemployed. Another farmer, however, said that he did not believe that one should oppose the hiring of men from a neighboring and related village. Such laborers were hired for other than agricultural work. For example, the two or three men of Shanti Nagar who were the principal traders in wood sometimes engaged outside laborers to cut up the trees they purchased.

In addition to laborers and specialists who processed sugarcane juice, other agricultural assistance had its source outside the village. We recorded several occasions when farmers hired tractors and drivers from other villages to plow their land. In all such instances that came to our attention, the tractors were used on land long unculti-

vated, often because it had been waterlogged. The initial plowing of such land was difficult, so that the farmers preferred to use the more powerful tractors instead of bullocks. The usual charge for this service was two rupees per bigha. The tractors were owned in villages as far distant as 8 miles. Such sharing of tractors through hiring arrangements was imperative if they were to be used economically in the Shanti Nagar region where landholdings were generally not only small but usually fragmented. Few farmers cultivated enough land to justify owning a tractor; but a man, willing to work for other farmers, might find ownership of a tractor economically feasible despite the relatively small area of his own farm. Everyone then benefited; the small farmer had access to a tractor if he needed it. The owner of the single tractor in Shanti Nagar also plowed for other farmers.

Two important agricultural implements, in addition to tractors, were obtained from outside Shanti Nagar. Metal sugarcane crushers were rented from a firm in Narela; a machine to make raw sugar (*khand*) from gur was rented from a large village nearby. The rental of the sugarcane crushers was an annual necessity. *Khand* was made only when justified by its selling price. In 1958 the price of gur was relatively high and *khand* low, so *khand* was not made because the price did not justify the considerable labor required. In 1959 many farmers made *khand* because the price was favorable.

In the same way that artisans came to Shanti Nagar to work or sell their wares, the Gola Potters and the Lohar Blacksmiths of Shanti Nagar sold some of their products beyond the confines of the village. The Potters sold clay hookah bowls at regional annual fairs. For sale at a fair, a Potter prepared a batch of about 500 hookah bowls, half of them large and half small; the former sold for two annas, the latter for one. Allowing for bowls that were unsuccessfully fired, a Potter might earn about 40 rupees for his products. It took about 10 or 15 days to form and fire the hookah bowls.

The Blacksmiths were more steadily involved than the Potters with marketing their products outside the village. Work for their customers in Shanti Nagar provided considerably less than a full-time occupation; consequently, the Black-

smiths used their remaining time to make a variety of agricultural implements that they peddled in nearby villages and towns. One Blacksmith estimated that if his whole family worked a full day at the shop, they could earn five rupees per day, exclusive of their income from their patrons in the jajmani system. The Blacksmiths had also opened a shop in Narela, a nearby town, where they employed two men to make the large iron pans in which sugarcane juice was boiled. A young Blacksmith told us that his family was considering moving permanently to Narela where, he said, they could charge for all the uncompensated work that they did in Shanti Nagar. However, a Brahman Priest, a good friend of the Blacksmiths, said that he did not think they would move, not only because they would forego the yearly grain payments they received from their patrons but also because they owned two houses in Shanti Nagar.

#### BUYERS, BROKERS, AND MARKETS

The marketing of agricultural products brought the villagers into contact with buyers who visited the village, with outside markets, and with brokers who worked in those markets and came to the village occasionally. During the sugarcane harvest, buyers of gur came daily from Delhi on their bicycles. Each one had established a business relationship with the men who processed their sugarcane at a specific crusher. The price at which they bought gur varied constantly, depending upon its quality and its daily price in Delhi. The buyers, expert bargainers and hard-working, were capable of making two round trips daily between Delhi and Shanti Nagar on their reinforced bicycles which carried about 250 pounds of gur. Other buyers visited the village to purchase crops, cattle, hides, and bones. Buyers of the hides and bones dealt only with the Chamar Leatherworkers who skinned cattle that had died and auctioned the hides within the *biradari* (the locally resident caste segment). The successful bidder then tried to sell the hides at a profit. The amount realized at the auction was put into the Chamar caste fund, as was the small return from the sale of cattle bones.

Cattle were sometimes sold to the professional traders who visited the village, but in one case, at

least, a farmer was able to arrange a small auction in preference to dealing with a single buyer. We once observed a group of men from a neighboring village who had come to Shanti Nagar to inspect a pair of bullocks that were being offered for sale by a local farmer. He was plowing a field in demonstration and the visiting farmers watched intently. Several of them worked the bullocks for brief periods. We asked one Shanti Nagar farmer about this somewhat unusual sale; he said that the price of bullocks had risen greatly. He assumed that the farmer planned to buy bullocks at a lower price elsewhere.

The farmers of Shanti Nagar generally used the wheat market in the nearby town of Narela. Trading in wheat was less active than in sugarcane; no urban buyers rushed daily back and forth between town and village. Furthermore, a family consumed much of the wheat that it grew; any surplus could often be sold in the village. The price, however, was established with reference to the prices current in the urban market. A farmer who had a large surplus might sell it at the wheat market in town. Surplus chilies were also sold in Narela.

The villagers also frequented the vegetable and flower markets, the latter of interest only to the Mali Gardener, who grew flowers for sale. However, a number of villagers patronized the vegetable market; the growing of vegetables had steadily increased since Indian independence because of the demand generated by the explosive population growth of Delhi. With luck, growing vegetables for the market could be extremely profitable.

At the market, farmers sold through a broker who rented the space and with whom they had a business relationship. Buyers circulated through the market. Sometimes the farmers sold produce; sometimes the broker sold it. No matter who actually sold it, the broker received commission from the seller which, according to the broker, varied from one-half an anna per rupee (8.3%) to an anna per rupee (16.7%) depending upon whether the farmer brought the produce to the market himself, whether he sent it unaccompanied, or whether he wanted an advance on the sale.

We observed a few sales, and found that this scale of fees did not seem to be closely observed.

We noticed that after some village women had completed a sale, the broker took an anna commission when technically he should have taken half that amount. Apparently he took as much as he could get. He also received from the buyer an anna per basket-load that he called a tax. The broker retained the "tax"; it went neither to the market nor to the government. Two vendors from Shanti Nagar were in the market when we visited it. The broker complained of the inferior quality of some of their produce. He recorded all sales in a book; apparently he settled his accounts periodically. We asked him what he regarded as the principal consideration in his business; he claimed that it was to maintain relations with his clients in the villages. We often saw him in the village. In fact, he had been planning a visit to Shanti Nagar that afternoon.

#### MEDICAL CARE

Despite the presence of a villager who specialized in curing the evil eye, another who treated snake bites, the village midwives, and one or two villagers who dispensed a few medicines, most of the medical assistance available to the people of Shanti Nagar had its source outside the village. Several important sources of medical aid were available. India has a national health program. The villagers sometimes took advantage of it to obtain free treatment in the hospitals of Delhi. For example, a Chamar Leatherworker woman who had lost five of six children delivered her seventh child in a lying-in hospital in Delhi. The woman's natal family lived in Delhi, was familiar with the available medical services, and arranged for her admittance. Her comments about her treatment in the hospital were very complimentary. For assistance at childbirth, a government-trained midwife, whom the villagers always referred to as a nurse, could be summoned from a large village nearby. However, her services were infrequently employed. The villagers pointed out that the village midwives traditionally took care of the mother during childbirth and for nine days thereafter, performing sanitary services, such as bathing the mother and removing her night soil. Since the nurse could not provide these services, many villagers saw no advantage in summoning her, despite the fact that they were aware that

she was trained in modern scientific methods. Aside from serving as midwife, the nurse had other duties: one villager reported that his wife received contraceptive tablets from her.

Some villagers who needed operations or who were badly injured usually went to hospitals in Delhi. For example, a young Brahman Priest suffered a severe injury to one eye that rendered it sightless. He was treated in a hospital in Delhi where we visited him one day to find him surrounded by members of his natal family and some of his friends. The atmosphere in the hospital was calm, resembling a small-town hospital in the United States rather than the hectic, impersonal hospitals more characteristic of New York City. Some modern medical facilities were also available at the headquarters of the Community Development Block and in neighboring towns.

Medical practitioners who lived outside the village and depended principally on traditional remedies were consulted more frequently than physicians trained in western medicine. A number of swamis who lived nearby dispensed not only ayurvedic remedies but also injections of penicillin. They treated many villagers for a variety of ailments. During epidemics, literally cartloads of people went to them for treatment. Once, during our residence in Shanti Nagar, a fever swept through the village. It did not appear to be a serious illness although it was most unpleasant, as we can testify from having caught it. One informant estimated that about 100 people were sick; several times patients were loaded into bullock carts and taken to see the swamis. They did not charge fees, but they did ask for charitable contributions, the giving of which constituted an act of merit. Each person receiving an injection contributed one rupee. Other medicines were free or sold at cost.

Bonesetters who lived outside Shanti Nagar were frequently patronized. Broken bones could be set in the hospitals of Delhi, but the villagers seemed to prefer the services of the traditional bonesetter. The reasons for this eluded us, especially because the bonesetters charged fees, their work was sometimes poor, and treatment in a hospital was free. We observed the results of treatment by a bone setter. When the son of one of our best friends in the village fell from a tree

and broke his wrist, the boy was taken to a bonesetter. A few weeks later, the bone had grown together at an odd angle, consequently the hand had no strength. Fearing that he would be permanently handicapped, we suggested to his father that the son be taken to a hospital or a physician. The father rejected the suggestion. The bonesetter, he explained, had done a reasonably good job and physicians always criticized the work of bonesetters; further, if one consulted a physician after going first to a bonesetter, the physician would insist on breaking the bone again to reset it. The father believed that such a procedure might worsen his son's condition.

It may be that the villagers continued to rely on bonesetters because in the past they might have been credited with correctly setting broken bones when, actually, they may have treated a less serious condition that would have cleared up without special attention. For example, an elderly woman told us that she had broken her wrist and a wrestler in Delhi had set it. She was able to use her hand rather well just a few days after having broken her wrist; in a few weeks she seemed to be fully recovered. We believed, then, that she had sprained rather than broken her wrist. The bonesetter, therefore, could be credited with having perfectly set a nonexistent break. Cures such as this, weighed against his failures, might have been adequate to give the wrestler a reputation favorable enough to continue to attract patients. We recorded only one occasion when a villager used the services of a hospital to set a broken arm. One man told us he had taken his son to a hospital rather than to a bonesetter because the boy had additional health problems and he thought, correctly as it developed, that an operation might be necessary.

#### CEREMONIES

The ceremonial relations of Shanti Nagar with other villages, towns, and cities were as extensive and important as the economic contacts. Just as artisans, buyers, peddlers, and brokers came to Shanti Nagar to contribute to its economic life so, too, religious specialists from beyond its borders were necessary for its full ceremonial and religious life. For example, the elaborate wedding ceremony required the services of priests of

greater ceremonial competence than those living in Shanti Nagar; so nonresident priests were summoned by all castes. Brahman Priests officiated at the weddings of the high castes; the lower castes were served by priests of their own caste.

The proper celebration of weddings and other ceremonies sometimes brought entertainers as well as priests to the village. Drummers and dancers performed at the weddings of the Chuhra Sweepers that we witnessed, and a band played at one of the Brahman Priest weddings (fig. 19). Chamar Leatherworker musicians visited Shanti Nagar during Holi to perform with the local Leatherworkers. Visiting professional entertainers were not confined to appearances at ceremonies; a fair number of itinerant performers visited the village to present their acts, after which they collected as much as they could from a generally appreciative if not overgenerous crowd. On different occasions, we watched magicians, musicians, jugglers, strongmen, dancers, snake charmers, and animal trainers. Religious specialists were summoned to function not only at weddings but also for some of the ceremonies of childbirth. Men who controlled supernatural powers (bhagats) and could cure spirit possession might be called to treat its victims. (S. Freed and R. Freed, 1964).

The relationships among villages that derived

from marriage, with all its ceremonial and economic ramifications, accounted for a substantial proportion of intervillage travel. The search for a husband for a daughter might require a number of trips to call upon families with eligible sons. Considerable travel also resulted from the lengthy series of ceremonies that constituted a Hindu wedding. Furthermore, individuals were not only involved in the weddings of their own children but also in those of their relatives, castemates, and friends. A man could be obligated to participate several times a year as a member of different wedding parties that went to the village of the bride for the wedding ceremony. The fact that a woman was related to two families, her natal family and her husband's family, who lived in different villages also resulted in considerable travel. Brothers traveled to the affinal villages of their sisters; husbands' brothers went to the homes of their affines to bring back their brothers' wives who were visiting their parents; married women, especially younger ones, frequently visited the homes of their parents; and the Nai Barber and others went from village to village carrying messages and presents for families united by a marital tie.

The ceremonies of childbirth might also require visits to other villages by both men and women. A woman was expected to attend the



FIG. 19. Band that came from outside village playing at a Brahman Priest wedding.

birth ceremonies of her brother's and brother's sons' children and bring a gift, traditionally one rupee and a towel, but other gifts were also presented; and she received gifts in return. For the birth of a son in a very prominent, wealthy family, whole villages might be invited to attend the celebration of the birth. Once, during our residence in Shanti Nagar, a wealthy Jat from a neighboring village invited all the castes of Shanti Nagar to celebrate the birth of a son. Because the entire village had been invited, the cost of the traditional gift of a rupee and a towel was taken from the village fund on deposit with the Baniya Merchant. Thus, the village acted as a unit with relation to another village, additional evidence that under specific circumstances the unity of the village superseded its divisions of caste, lineage, and faction. In addition to the invitation tendered to the whole village, some men received special invitations, and these men presented personal gifts. Because of the number of guests that attended this important ceremony, it was necessary to borrow cots from other villages. Shanti Nagar contributed a cartload. We saw them being sorted by family after they had been returned. Although we saw only Jats and their servants claiming cots, we believed that members of other high castes may also have contributed.

The ramifications of village exogamy as a basis for interaction between villages did not end with the obligation to attend the ceremonies of marriage and childbirth and the travels of women between the homes of their husbands and parents. Men were required to give gifts to their married sisters and daughters at a number of annual festivals. Obligations to sisters extended to sisters' children in an attenuated form and even to the children of sisters' children. For example, a Brahman Priest said that his gifts to his sister were worth approximately 250 to 300 rupees annually. She received gifts worth about 10 rupees at seven or eight festivals and about 200 rupees if she visited her brother in Shanti Nagar which she usually did once a year. The significant value of such gifts was one of the reasons why villagers objected so strongly to the new legislation that made daughters eligible to inherit the property of their parents. As our informant explained, the gifts sent to a daughter or to a sister constituted her share of her father's property.

In addition to the gifts our informant sent to his sister, he had similar obligations to his father's sisters' children and to their children. His father had three sisters. One of them had seven children; the second two; and the third three. Gifts worth about 250 to 300 rupees were obligatory at the wedding of each child of the first sister, the last of which weddings occurred after the death of his father, when our informant assumed the responsibilities of the family, and 500 to 600 rupees at the weddings of the children of the other two sisters. Apparently, the total value of gifts for each of the three sisters had to be roughly comparable; hence, a lesser amount was given at the wedding of each of the children of the sister who had seven. Our informant said that the sons and daughters of his father's sisters' children had begun to marry, and he was obligated to give them gifts. At that time, only two of these children had been married, a boy and a girl; he gave two pots, 150 rupees, and clothes at the girl's wedding and 100 rupees and clothes at the boy's.

#### PILGRIMAGES

Villagers made pilgrimages to temples, shrines, and rivers beyond the limits of Shanti Nagar. Delhi was a popular place of pilgrimage, principally to bathe in the Jumna River. Especially on the day of the new moon (*amavas*), men and women often went to Delhi to take a dip, usually to fulfill a vow; widowed persons tended to go regularly on the day of the new moon. People who were unable to go to the Ganges River at the festival of Ganga Nahan (Ganges Bathing) which was held at the full moon of the month of Kartik (October-November) tried to go to Delhi to bathe in the Jumna. Many people also bathed in the Jumna on Baisakhi (Spring Festival). People also visited Delhi for other religious purposes. One Chamar Leatherworker told us that he liked to attend religious discussions and sermons that were held near the Birla Temple: he found them edifying and said that he went frequently. Villagers also went to Delhi to attend the Ram Lila, a religious drama.

A trip to Hardwar to bathe in the Ganges River was a more ambitious pilgrimage. It was possible to go to Delhi and return in one day, but Hardwar was farther and it was necessary to stay

in camps overnight. A number of villagers, especially those who had made vows, went every year for the festival of Ganga Nahan. They presented offerings, bathed, sang devotional songs, and participated in religious discussions. The great fair held in conjunction with the festival was a major attraction; people confessed that when they were children, the fair was the most enjoyable feature. Many of the villagers from Shanti Nagar traveled as a group and stayed together in one camp. Arrangements for a camping place were made in advance with *pandas*, priests who assisted pilgrims. Sometimes these priests visited Shanti Nagar to bring Ganges water and *parsad* (sweets distributed after a religious ceremony). On these occasions, they received gifts of grain and money. They were said to maintain lists of people from Shanti Nagar who had bathed in the Ganges; when they came to the village, they recounted to individuals the names of their ancestors who had made the trip. In this function, the villagers compared the *pandas* to genealogists. Villagers went to the Ganges on other occasions and for other purposes. Some people in Shanti Nagar made a pilgrimage at Mesha Sankranti (the vernal equinox), but the day was not observed with any consistency (R. Freed and S. Freed, 1964, p. 84). After a corpse had been cremated, relatives often collected the remaining fragments of bones and put them in the Ganges. If this could not be done, the bones might be disposed of in the Jumna.

Gurgaon, a large town about 25 miles from Shanti Nagar, was popular as a place of pilgrimage where people went to worship at the shrine of the Mother Goddess of Gurgaon. Such pilgrimages were made throughout the year, but especially during the month of Chaitra (March-April) when a large fair was held every Monday. Some villagers went during the festival of Devi Ki Karahi (the Cooking Pot of the Goddess), observed in Chaitra. The trips to Gurgaon were usually made to fulfill a vow or to cure an ailment. Women who had no sons often vowed to make an offering to the Mother Goddess if they gave birth to a son and he lived for a specified time. Since many children died during the first year of life, the object of the vow was not merely to bear a son but to have him live to adulthood; hence, the prudent devotee specified a period of time after which an offering would be made. For

example, a Chuhra Sweeper described a pilgrimage to Gurgaon in April undertaken to fulfill such a vow when his son was one year old. The Chuhra, his wife, and son boarded the train at a station in a nearby village. They stayed overnight at the shrine of the Mother Goddess where they sang devotional songs with the assembled crowd. The next day, they made the traditional offerings of sweets and coconuts at several shrines, distributed sweets and a head cloth to beggars, and had their son's hair cut, after which they returned home. The Sweeper estimated that he spent about 16 rupees on the pilgrimage.

In April a Brahman Priest and his wife went to Gurgaon to worship the Mother Goddess because the woman was afflicted with an eye disease. In the bazaar, one could buy various offerings that were specifics for different diseases. For the eye ailment, one offered little strips of foil with a hole in the center, which were said to represent the eye. The Brahman and his wife were accompanied by a group of people, mainly Brahmans, and stayed overnight. After worshipping, they returned by way of Delhi where they bathed in the Jumna for Baisakhi.

On the yearly festival of Budh Ki Duj (Old Man's Second), many villagers made a pilgrimage to a village a few miles away where a fair was held and people worshiped the old man who, during his lifetime, had achieved renown as a holy man. A pond was situated near the village. Worshipers cooked thick pieces of bread, which they ate beside the pond or distributed to beggars, made offerings, and removed some mud to clear the pond. These acts were said to offer protection against boils, sores, eczema, and blisters.

A few other shrines in nearby villages and towns attracted worshipers: at a temple for Shiva in a nearby village, devotees of the deity worshiped, especially on Shivaratri (Shiva's Night); villagers worshiped at a temple for Devi (Goddess) in a nearby town when a large fair was held there.

The Gola Potters attended a fair held twice a year in a large village, Beri, in Rohtak District, Punjab, where they bought and sold animals and where the women, especially, worshiped at the shrine of a Mother Goddess. Other villagers went to the Mother Goddess shrine at Beri for a child's first haircut.



Once, a young Brahman Priest stopped by our house on his way to a shrine of a Muslim saint in another village. Our landlord's mother gave him a little ghee and gur to offer on her behalf. We do not know whether villagers commonly worshiped at this shrine; we recorded only one such incident.

#### EDUCATION

As with medical services, formal education involved the villagers in relationships with institutions and individuals from outside the village. Three schoolteachers from Delhi came daily to teach in the village school which had its quarters in the Jat meeting house. Although the teachers were daily visitors when the school was in session, they appeared to have little contact with villagers other than the school children. For them, the village was merely a place to work; they left it at the end of the day to return to their families and friends in Delhi. Regular bus service made commuting easy. For their part, except for a certain amount of gossip and criticism, the villagers largely ignored the schoolteachers who were employees of the Delhi government and not of the village. Children who pursued their education beyond the fifth grade attended school outside the village. There were several higher secondary schools in the region and also a school for girls. College students usually went to Delhi, occasionally to the Punjab or Uttar Pradesh. In the same way that students had to leave the village to attend school beyond the fifth grade, the few villagers who were schoolteachers taught in schools in other villages.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

The foregoing discussion of extra-village political, economic, religious, medical, and educational relationships is presented to give some idea of the villagers' network of relationships. It is not intended to be comprehensive: for example, although the employment of villagers in the offices and factories of Delhi and elsewhere was barely mentioned, this practice was one of the most important aspects of extra-village economic activity. Half of the adult men of Shanti Nagar had either lived or worked outside the village, a proportion that had been increasing in

recent years. We have mentioned markets beyond the village boundaries where various crops were sold, but equally significant in the life of the villagers were the shops of Delhi where a substantial proportion of the utensils used in the home were purchased. Employment outside of the village and the extent to which villagers shopped in the bazaars of Delhi will be discussed at greater length in another paper.

Although villagers frequently worked outside the village for salaries or wages, they established commercial or manufacturing enterprises away from Shanti Nagar much less frequently. Only two families were engaged in such business: the Lohar Blacksmiths maintained a shop in a neighboring town; a Gola Potter was a partner in a mill located in a nearby village that ground grain and ginned cotton.

Such activities as grinding grain and extracting the juice of sugarcane were still largely home industries. However, such home industries were vulnerable to power-driven mills and large sugar factories. Some villagers, when pressed for time, occasionally took grain to nearby mills. High-caste women said they much preferred flour ground in the stone mills found in every home to flour ground in power-driven metal mills. They believed that the heat of the power-driven mills adversely affected the taste of flour. These comments are similar to those from Latin America where gradually the grinding of maize flour has been transferred from household to mill. In Shanti Nagar women did not always have money to have their grain ground at a mill; the men preferred to have the women of the household grind grain rather than pay for the service. Resistance to this technological change stemmed from misgivings about a new form of technology, attitudes toward woman's work in the household, and financial conservatism. However, the speed and convenience of the power-driven mill attracted customers and it was especially useful for preparing the large quantities of flour used at weddings. With greater education and urbanization of both men and women, flour will increasingly be ground by power-driven mills.

A few of the farmers of Shanti Nagar had expanded their activities by purchasing or leasing land outside the village. Some of the younger men were attracted by the theaters, restaurants, and other amusements of Delhi.

## CONCLUSION

In 1958 to 1959, Shanti Nagar was a traditional village in the initial stages of responding to strong urban influences emanating from a rapidly growing city that was itself undergoing modernization and westernization. The villagers were not overwhelmed by these influences. Shanti Nagar was a well-integrated unit. Its population, despite internal differences and the recognition that improvements in village life were desirable, nonetheless placed high value on many aspects of traditional village culture. The villagers, therefore, were capable of selectively adopting such innovations that they considered useful and of resisting those that were perceived to be disruptive of cherished values and customs. Social change was gradual, tolerable even to those villagers who believed that in some respects they were threatened by it, and greater in some aspects of village life, such as economy and education, than in others, such as religion and family life.

Men generally desired urban employment, although high-caste men were usually more satisfied with their traditional occupations than low-caste men. To an even greater extent, both men and women wanted urban employment for their sons. Family members rarely objected when a man took an urban job. The villagers recognized education as the path to urban employment and therefore valued it highly. "I want my son to be educated and have a good job" was a frequently recurring statement.

The desire for urban employment did not necessarily imply a rejection of an individual's village occupation or of village life in general. Most urban-employed men were commuters who preferred that style of life to life as a city dweller. Although few villagers foresaw any difficulties in living in Delhi, they nonetheless cherished the village environment: it was home, familiar, friendly, healthier, and less expensive. Many men and families combined city employment with their village occupation. Although villagers in general infrequently emigrated permanently from the village and landowners rarely severed their village ties, low-caste, landless people favored city living more than did high-caste people. Economic considerations provided the major motives for emigration, just as they

were an important influence for villagers to maintain their village ties. The desire to escape some of the disadvantages of low-caste status was also a factor in influencing emigration.

Changes in material culture, as for example, an increase in the number of brick houses, paved village lanes, mechanical fodder cutters, and wristwatches were the most visible results of urbanization. Such useful innovations were generally welcomed by the villagers. We can expect a continuation of this trend, possibly resulting in an increased emphasis on consumer goods; urban-oriented villagers, whose numbers will undoubtedly continue to grow, indicated a strong interest in spending for consumer goods. Continued improvement in medical facilities and possibly in sanitation may also be expected.

Neither our observations nor our interview data provided evidence of family breakdown or a significant reduction in the number of effectively maintained kinship ties as a result of urban contact. Most role behavior, e.g., that of father, son, husband, and wife appeared to have undergone little change. However, the general role of women may undergo some changes in the near future. We observed some indications that urban-oriented men might favor a relaxation of purdah; the increasing number of educated women would, in all probability, also favor such a development.

Some features of the caste system and the economic relationship between high and low castes had undergone changes. Urban-oriented men were much more likely than village-oriented men to sit with people from other castes or to have a friend belonging to another caste. The caste system was under considerable criticism among urban-oriented men and, especially, among low-caste men. Caste related disabilities in such matters as the prohibition to use public facilities and untouchability had decreased, a trend that will continue. Although still important to the members of many castes, the traditional jajmani system had undergone change; the alternative of urban jobs for the landless laborer and the introduction of farm machinery and the availability of wage labor for the landowners had reduced interdependence. Furthermore, there was a tendency to convert jajmani relationships

to that of a fee-for-service arrangement. A reduction in *jajmani* ties carried with it the potential for diminished village cohesiveness, although other developments, such as the establishment of a democratically elected panchayat, might compensate for any change in such ties. As more villagers become educated and are exposed to significant urban influences, the view that prestige should accord with individual attributes may possibly offer an increasingly prominent alternative to the interactional foundation of caste rank. The basic features of the caste system, however, membership in the caste of one's birth, endogamy, and hierarchy were unchanged.

We observed no evidence to suggest the existence of a secular trend in village life as a result of urban contact. The major differences in religious values and attitudes were observable between the high-caste men, and the women and low-caste men. The high-caste men were apparently more familiar with Hindu philosophy than the members of the other two groups, a situation that doubtless reflected their generally better education. Urban-oriented men emphasized those doctrines of Hindu philosophy that seemed adaptable to modern industrial society. One can better serve God, they said, by doing one's work, without any thought for reward than by ceremonial or charitable activity. Urban-oriented men were religious Hindus who tended to be philosophically rather than ritually oriented.

Direct governmental intervention through legislation carried the greatest potential for rapid major change in village institutions and customs; for example, in governmental bodies, relations between castes, and in the laws of inheritance and the related rules of post-marital residence. The government had legislated in these areas. While some developments, such as legislation concerning caste and the increase in the opportunities for urban employment, had somewhat altered the traditional basis of caste interaction, we believe that other legislation had potentially strengthened the traditional village, at least for the immediate future. The new structure of village government created by legislation that was on the verge of implementation was firmly based on the traditional village panchayat. Hence, its adoption would institute no major

change in village life, and would, in fact, serve to strengthen the village as a political unit by fortifying the informal panchayat with legal and other governmental support.

Yet the seeds for far-reaching change had been sown. Legislation involving inheritance that was at odds with traditional practices could, if its potential were realized, transform the social structure of the traditional village. The villagers, who considered this legislative innovation dangerous, had resisted it successfully. However, the legislation continued in effect. Eventually, the general resistance of the villagers could begin to crumble when a few scattered individuals recognized that it was possible to profit sufficiently from the new arrangements to brave the disapproval and perhaps the stronger actions of their neighbors.

The foregoing formulation accords well with Saberwal's (1972, p. 125) view of social change in small-scale systems. He described a "social transformation trinity" consisting of normative pressure, deviant micro-settings, and generational turnover. Normative pressure refers to the influence on the local scene of elite norms expressed through the governmental decisions of a ruling elite. Even a small village is characterized by deviant micro-settings having different traditions and interests; for example, a number of castes with different traditional occupations, landowners and landless villagers, or sons and daughters of the village. When elite norms, especially those expressed in law, accord with the interests of a minority, members of such a group, especially the young, might choose them in preference to local majority norms. This process is facilitated by generational turnover. Although in the Shanti Nagar region such a process was not politically unchallenged, as witness the revolt of the majority in the formation of the Panchayat Party, it occurred nonetheless without excessive political disruption because, in general, villagers accepted the activities of the governmental elite as constituting modernization, a condition that they valued. Villagers expected India to take its place in the world with countries of comparable size and population. They understood the initiatives of the ruling elite as leading in this direction.

Because Delhi and its many job opportunities were within easy access and educational oppor-

tunities were also available to villagers to qualify them for urban jobs, the future toward which life in Shanti Nagar would gradually evolve seemed reasonably clear: (1) the material culture of the village would be increasingly modernized; (2) villagers would earn their livelihood to a greater extent in modern industrial and commercial jobs than from traditional crafts and farming; (3) the landless would become less dependent upon the landowners; (4) caste would continue to be important, but more casual social interaction would take place across caste boundaries; (5) various features of Hinduism that are more in accord with city than with rural life might be emphasized; (6) the educational level would rise; and (7) more villagers would be exposed to the wider world in the form of magazines, newspapers, and the cinema.

Initially, these trends would characterize men more than women, who were generally more conservative, but eventually women would also be influenced. However, neither our observations nor our interviews seemed to foreshadow any drastic change in traditional village institutions.

As we were writing these concluding remarks, we received two letters from friends in Shanti Nagar. An older man wrote briefly of his family, an account that would not have been out of place in 1958 except for the high educational level that had been attained by his daughters, all having passed their higher secondary examinations. He hoped to be able to send two of them to college. He wrote of the increased rates for tractors and the use of tube wells; in 1958 tractors were rare, our friend had not used one, and tube wells were nonexistent in the village. He told us that he was only breaking even in agriculture. A younger man, more optimistic, wrote, "Our village has absolutely been changed. Every house has been electrified. The farmers work in the fields with the help of tractors and tube wells. New types of seeds and chemicals are used in the fields. Every street and house has become pukka. It is a modern village now. There are about 20 graduates and 10 postgraduates in the village. From all aspects the village has become prosperous and progressive. All the boys and girls (belonging to all castes) get education in schools and colleges. When you lived here, there were about 85 schools in whole Delhi [Union Terri-

tory] but nowadays there are more than 600. In two miles radius of our village there are five higher secondary schools. If you come to our village, you will find an absolute change. Television, tape recorders, radios, fans, gas have become the matter of necessity."

Such trends in education and material culture were clearly foreshadowed in 1958. Changes in material culture are easily identified; those in basic social relations are less obvious. Trends in types of employment, changes in caste relations or in family life, and shifts in political power could be specified only through a thorough re-study of the village.

In 1958 Shanti Nagar was in the initial stages of urbanization, characterized by a substantial difference between urban life and village life. The villager had to go to the city to obtain salaried employment, commercial entertainment, and all but the most basic consumer goods. This situation constitutes only a stage in the process of urbanization; it can be followed by a phase of decentralization and development of the peripheries. With electricity available in the Delhi hinterland, factories and offices might choose to locate there. City-style bazaars could be situated near large villages, and the number and variety of shops could increase in the smaller villages. Although Shanti Nagar will probably remain a village with its traditional institutions in good order, the typical problems of the suburbs could gradually become a part of the life of the urban-employed villager. One of our friends wrote, "I have to depart from home at 7:30 a.m. and catch the train at 8:30. I then reach Delhi at about 9:30 and get the bus from the Red Fort to arrive at my office before office [opening] time at 9:55 or 10:00 a.m. The same procedure in the evening. I reach home at 8:30 p.m. Arrangement of buses is very hard in Delhi. No line or queue of passengers is performed in Delhi. One has to make wrestling efforts to get the bus."

In writing this report we hoped to document the life of a single village located in space and time as strategically as possible to reflect the beginnings of intensive modernization. Fieldwork is a humbling experience; no less than modern social scientists, the legendary writers of the past recognized the provisional nature of their work. Saberwal (1972, p. 113) called our attention to

the comment of Denzil Ibbetson in the Punjab census (1881), "In matters such as are discussed in this report, the next best thing to having them put rightly is to have them put wrongly, if only the wrongness be an intelligent wrongness; for so we stimulate inquiry and provoke criticism; and

it is only by patient and widespread inquiry and incessant and minute criticism, that we can hope to arrive on these subjects at accurate information and sound generalisations."

Our goal will have been achieved if inquiry is stimulated and criticism provoked.

## APPENDIX

### ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

To provide quantitative data on subjects particularly relevant to a study of urban effects on villagers, we administered a questionnaire to a sample of 123 individuals, 20 to 50 years of age, inclusive. We restricted the sample to this age group because we did not want an age effect to complicate comparisons between villagers with urban experiences and those who lacked such experiences. Urban experience, defined to mean that the individual had lived or worked in cities, was much more common in the age group selected for questioning than among people more than 50 years old. If, from all males 20 years old and over, we selected at random a group with urban experience and a group of the same size that lacked it, the average age of the latter would probably be substantially greater than that of the former. Thus, because we had time to interview only a relatively small number of people, it would be difficult to determine whether differences between the two groups were due to urbanization or age.

To select the individuals who participated in the study, we wrote the name of each villager of proper age on a card and divided the cards into two decks, one for men and one for women. Then each of these decks was sorted into a high-caste and a low-caste deck. The Nai Barbers, Gola and Mahar Potters, Chamar Leatherworkers, and Chuhra Sweepers were classified as low caste; the remaining castes, as high. Finally, the decks for men were again divided in two on the basis of urban experience. Those who had lived or worked in urban areas were in one deck and those lacking urban experience in another. Thus, for the men of Shanti Nagar, we had four decks of cards: high-caste men with urban experience, low-caste men with urban experience, high-caste men lacking urban experience, and low-caste men lacking urban experience.

The procedure for women was somewhat different. In classifying women on the basis of urban experience, we took into consideration not only their own experiences but also those of their husbands. If a woman's husband was classified as having had urban experience, we classified his wife in the same way. We followed this practice principally because it was the only way

to isolate a group of women who corresponded to the men with urban experience. Relatively few women had had the urban experience that was common for men. We believed that if urban effects were to be manifest in the female portion of the village population, they would result from the influence of husbands on wives. However, we did not expect such indirect influences to have equally as strong effects as those resulting from direct urban experience.

After the cards for men were separated into four decks, we randomly selected 10 men from each deck using the table of random numbers in Wallis and Roberts (1956). While administering the questionnaire, we found that several men whom we had classified as lacking urban experience had in fact lived or worked in cities and so had been misclassified. Misclassification resulted when we classified informants on the basis of our census data. When taking the census of the village, we asked only about current occupation. The number of villagers who had worked or lived in cities and later retired to the village was a surprise to us. We learned about them when, in interviewing with the questionnaire, we asked about their employment history. When we discovered that a past history of urban residence or employment was fairly common, we made a survey of all the adult men of Shanti Nagar to complete the data.

We completed our interviews with the men who had been misclassified but transferred them to the groups with urban experiences; we then randomly selected replacements so that the number of informants in the two groups without urban experience would not fall below 10. Thus the number of men in each group was as follows: high caste, no urban experience, 10; low caste, no urban experience, 10; high caste, urban experience, 15; and low caste, urban experience, 14, a total of 49 men.

The cards for women were treated in the same way. Again, we found that the husbands of some women had been misclassified. However, we did not select replacements for women who had to be shifted from the categories of those who lacked urban experience. The number of women in each group was as follows: high caste, no

urban experience, 9; low caste, no urban experience, 7; high caste, urban experience, 11; and low caste, urban experience, 13. We interviewed a total of 89 villagers in all the above categories.

We also interviewed 34 emigrants who had left Shanti Nagar for cities. This category included both permanent and temporary emigrants. These 34 people did not constitute a random sample. We tried to discover all the people from Shanti Nagar who had moved to Delhi and interviewed everyone of those. We also interviewed temporary emigrants who returned to Shanti Nagar for a visit. Undoubtedly, we did not learn about all the emigrants from Shanti Nagar who lived in Delhi, and those villagers who had moved to more distant places could be interviewed only if they happened to visit the village while we were there. Our sample, then, is drawn from a population of emigrants of unknown size but includes all those of whom we had knowledge and were able to contact.

No one, either among the villagers or the emigrants, refused to be interviewed. However, many informants did not answer all the questions. Sometimes they did not understand the question well enough to answer. They did not answer some questions because they thought that they did not know the answer, despite the fact that we emphasized that there were no correct or incorrect answers and that we were interested in their own experiences and opinions. Sometimes they apparently did not want to answer a specific question. Women failed to answer questions more frequently than men. It was necessary to interview many informants when other people, usually family members, were present. It would have been preferable to interview each informant privately, but such a procedure was often impossible under village conditions. Since the majority of questions had no bearing on relatives or family life, their answers probably were not greatly affected by the presence of onlookers. However, questions 31 and 32 that deal with preferences for living in extended or nuclear families may, in some cases, be exceptions.

Discrepancies in totals among the tables which present the tabulated questionnaire data are due largely to the failure of some informants to answer certain questions, to the fact that certain questions did not apply to particular informants and therefore were not asked, and also, possibly, to a few inconsistencies or errors in scoring the questionnaires. For example, table 35 deals with a total of 18 high-caste men; table 36, a total of

21. Ideally the totals should be equal. The totals differ because three men gave no reason for taking a job and they were therefore omitted from table 35. There are 21 low-caste men in table 35 and 25 in table 36. Three low-caste men who were Leatherworkers living in Delhi entered one of the traditional occupations of their caste, shoemaking, as independent businessmen. The question "Why did you take the job?" appeared irrelevant for these men and either was not asked or the informants did not answer. The fourth man owned his own metal business. Although he talked at some length about it, he did not really explain how or why he acquired it. These four men, therefore, are not included in table 35.

The questionnaire probes attitudes and behavior in eight principal areas: work, the expenditure of money, ceremonies and religion, friendship, caste, family, access to newspapers and films, and preferences with regard to city and village life. Many of our questions are from the questionnaire used by Elder (1959) to study the effects of the presence of a factory on villagers. Because we planned to administer the questionnaire to a random sample of villagers and not only to our best informants, we were concerned that the villagers be able to complete the answers in 45 minutes or, at most, an hour. The average villager was often too busy to devote much more time to us at a single sitting, and we preferred not to have to make two or three visits to complete an interview. We tested the questions with the core group of villagers who were often in our house, revised them several times, and finally, decided on a list of questions with which we were reasonably satisfied.

The Hindi wording of the questions presented few problems because we had two interpreters, both of whom had considerable experience in Shanti Nagar by the time we were ready to begin using a questionnaire. One interpreter translated the English into Hindi and the second interpreter translated the Hindi back to English without having seen the original English version. The four of us then compared the two English versions. The discrepancies in the two translations were easily resolved in discussions with the interpreters. When we began to administer the questionnaire, we found only one question that seemed to cause difficulty because of its ambiguity, question 31, which deals with living in an extended family or separately in a nuclear family. Some informants interpreted this question as dealing with a choice between living with one's relatives or living far from them in a

more or less isolated situation. We had to explain that the choice lay between cooking on the same stove with one's relatives or cooking on a separate stove. In Shanti Nagar, families are considered to be separate when they separate their cooking, even though they continue to live in the same house and own considerable property in common.

The questionnaire data are presented below in the following manner. Each question is given in English and Hindi. When necessary, this is amplified by a discussion of the criteria we used to classify the responses. The classified responses are then tabulated according to whether the respondents were emigrants (both permanent and temporary), commuters (a category that includes retired individuals who previously had worked in cities, as well as villagers then working in urban areas), urban-oriented (a category that includes both emigrants and commuters, i.e., the total of the first two categories), and village-oriented (those villagers who had neither worked nor lived in cities). The four groups, emigrants, commuters, urban-oriented, and village-oriented, will hereinafter be referred to as categories. Each tabulation is followed by a discussion of the data. After the discussion of differences among villagers on the basis of urban experience, the same data are tabulated according to whether the informants are of high or low caste; and each tabulation is also followed by a discussion. This presentation is used for each question except the first seven which concern employment history and apply only to the urban-oriented men. For these seven questions, therefore, the only comparison is between men of high and low caste. We permitted each informant only one answer to a question. In the few cases in which informants gave more than one answer, we used only the first one.

For each table, we calculated several chi-square statistics to test for significant differences among categories within sex, between people of high and low caste within sex, between sexes within two of the four categories, and between sexes within caste. That is, we compared the emigrant men and the commuter men, the emigrant men and the village-oriented men, the commuter men and the village-oriented men, the urban-oriented and village-oriented men, and the high-caste and low-caste men. We made the same comparisons for women. In addition, we compared the urban-oriented men and the urban-oriented women, the village-oriented men and the village-oriented women, the high-caste men

and women, and the low-caste men and women. We did not compare either emigrant men and emigrant women or commuter men and commuter women because any significant difference between men and women with urban experience could be expected to be revealed in the comparison of urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women.

In calculating the chi-squares, the expected probabilities were calculated from marginal totals under the hypothesis that the responses were independent of category, caste, and sex. Thus, our chi-square statistics test the null hypothesis of independence. We have adopted  $p < .05$  as our level of significance. A probability this small or smaller permits us to reject the null hypothesis that responses are independent of category, caste, or sex. Note that the chi-square statistic yields inexact probabilities when an expected frequency is less than one or when expected frequencies are less than 5 in 20 percent of the cells of a table. These guidelines are violated in some of our calculations and therefore we have to be content with approximate probabilities. In the discussions below we report values of chi-square and probabilities only when  $p < .05$ .

*Question 1.* How many years have you been at your present service? *ājkal kī naukari karte āp ko kitne sāl ho gaye hāi?*

"Service" (*naukarī*) refers to steady employment that is paid for in money rather than in kind. Villagers do not use the term for traditional village occupations. Since this question refers only to current employment, the retired workers ordinarily included in the categories of commuter and emigrant are excluded. There is no significant difference between high-caste and low-caste men with regard to length of current employment (table 34).

*Question 2.* Why did you take the job? *āp ne naukari karnī kyō śurū kī?*

Most villagers replied that they had to earn a livelihood. All the responses that gave economic need as the reason were classified in table 35 as "economic." These include: to support family, was unemployed, did not have enough land, needed to earn a living, there was limited work at home, did not have adequate arrangements at home, father and/or brother took care of the farming and there was no other work available at home. A few informants gave other reasons: that they were tired of the village, tired of their studies, that they wished to live in a separate household, or that they wanted dignity and the



**TABLE 34**  
**Answers to Question 1<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	0-4 Years	5-9 Years	10 or More Years	Total
Low	4 (22)	5 (28)	9 (50)	18
High	3 (25)	4 (33)	5 (42)	12
Total	7 (23)	9 (30)	14 (47)	30

<sup>a</sup>Number of years in present job. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 35**  
**Answers to Question 2<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Economic	Other	Total
Low	19 (90)	2 (10)	21
High	15 (83)	3 (17)	18
Total	34 (87)	5 (13)	39

<sup>a</sup>Reasons for taking a job. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 36**  
**Answers to Question 3<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Applied, Competition	Relative, Friend	Other	Total
Low	9 (36)	9 (36)	7 (28)	25
High	13 (62)	5 (24)	3 (14)	21
Total	22 (48)	14 (30)	10 (22)	46

<sup>a</sup>Method of obtaining a job. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 37**  
**Answers to Question 4<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Yes	No	Total
Low	2 (10)	19 (90)	21
High	1 (06)	17 (94)	18
Total	3 (08)	36 (92)	39

<sup>a</sup>Objections by relatives to service. Informants are men arranged by caste.

opportunity for advancement. There were few such responses, so all were classified as "other."

Retired workers as well as those currently employed are included in table 35. For a retired worker, the question referred to his previous job. If he had held more than one job, the question was interpreted to refer to his last job.

There is no significant difference between high- and low-caste men with regard to their reasons for taking a job. Economic reasons were strongly dominant. We thought that low-caste men might be more likely to mention freedom from some of the disabilities arising from their low-caste status as a reason for undertaking urban employment. However, this motive seemed to be subordinate to economic considerations.

**Question 3.** How did you get the job? *āp ko naukari kaise mili?*

The methods included: just applying, through the employment exchange, in a competition, through a relative, through a friend, with difficulty, bribery, has his own business, and through considerations due to the informant's refugee status (some of the Sweepers of Shanti Nagar had previously worked in the part of the sub-continent that became Pakistan). We grouped these responses into three classes in table 36: the first three responses are "applied, competition"; the following two are "relative, friend"; and the last four are "other." For retired workers, the question referred to the last job held.

No significant difference exists between high- and low-caste men. However, it is noteworthy that 62 percent of the high-caste men obtained their jobs by their own efforts and only 24 percent depended upon a relative or friend; on the other hand, only 36 percent of the low-caste men obtained jobs by their own efforts and an equal percentage depended on friends or relatives. This difference suggests that high-caste men, possibly because of their superior education, are better equipped for the urban job market than low-caste men.

**Question 4.** Did anyone at your home object to your going into service? *āp ke naukari karne par āp ke ghar me se kisi ne itraṛ kiya thā?*

We thought that higher caste Hindus might express objections to urban service because of potential ritual pollution. However, only three of 39 informants (8%) reported any objections from family members (table 37). There is little opposition to urban employment in any caste.

**Question 5.** Have you ever had any other job? *kabhi āp ne koī aur naukari bhī ki hai?*

The first three columns of table 38 concern

**TABLE 38**  
**Answers to Question 5<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	None	One Other	More Than One Other	Yes (If Retired)	Total
Low	7 (29)	6 (25)	5 (21)	6 (25)	24
High	5 (24)	3 (14)	4 (19)	9 (43)	21
Total	12 (27)	9 (20)	9 (20)	15 (33)	45

<sup>a</sup>Previous jobs. Informants are men arranged by caste.

men who were currently employed. "None" means that the informant had had no job other than his current one. The fourth column concerns retired or unemployed men. A "yes" response indicates that the informant previously held a job, although not necessarily more than one. There is no significant difference between high-caste and low-caste men.

**Question 6.** For how many years? kitne sāl tak?

This question refers to the informant's last job if he had more than one previous job. There is no significant difference in length of previous employment between low-caste and high-caste men (table 39).

**Question 7.** Why did you leave service? naukari kyō choṛī?

This question refers to the reason why an informant who had a history of several jobs left his last job. The following reasons were given: did not like the work, illness, just quit, the work was too hard, poor pay, found a new job that was preferable, a relative died and had to return to the village to farm the family land, an older relative decided, family wishes, too old, discharged, the factory moved, the job was only

**TABLE 39**  
**Answers to Question 6<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	0-4 Years	5-9 Years	10 or More Years	Total
Low	10 (59)	4 (24)	3 (18)	17
High	6 (38)	6 (38)	4 (25)	16
Total	16 (48)	10 (30)	7 (21)	33

<sup>a</sup>Duration of last previous job. Informants are men arranged by caste.

temporary, retrenchment, lost job because of the partition of India and Pakistan. These reasons were classified in table 40 into three groups: the first six as "individual," the next three as "family," and the last six as "discharged."

The reasons given by low- and high-caste men with regard to leaving service show no significant difference. However, it is interesting to note that family reasons were much more prominent among the high castes (50%) than among the low (15%). Someone must farm the land owned by high-caste families. Urban workers often returned to the village to care for the family land when the relative who had been farming it died or became too old to work. This motive for leaving service and returning to the village was much less important to low-caste men.

**Question 8.** Would you like it better to farm (if the informant was a farmer), to work for the farmers (if the informant was landless), or to go into service? kyā āp khetī karnā (if the informant was a farmer), zamindārō ke liye kām karnā (if the informant was landless), pasand karēge yā naukari karnā?

Generally, informants selected one of the two choices offered. However, a few replied that they preferred their traditional work, which involved occasional agricultural labor for most of the landless people. Thus, in tables 41 and 42 we divided the responses into two groups: "farming (or traditional work)," and "service."

No significant differences can be observed among categories with regard to preferences for traditional work or service (table 41). A somewhat surprising feature of these data is that the village-oriented men preferred service (72%) to a slightly greater extent than did the urban-oriented (60%). This preference suggests that the village-oriented men worked in the village not so much because they preferred to do so but rather because they lacked the training and opportunity for urban employment.

**TABLE 40**  
**Answers to Question 7<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Individual	Family	Discharged	Total
Low	6 (46)	2 (15)	5 (38)	13
High	3 (30)	5 (50)	2 (20)	10
Total	9 (39)	7 (30)	7 (30)	23

<sup>a</sup>Reason for leaving job. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 41**  
**Answers to Question 8<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Farming or Traditional Work	Service	Total
Emigrant	7 (41)	10 (59)	17
Commuter	11 (39)	17 (61)	28
Total urban- oriented	18 (40)	27 (60)	45
Village-oriented	5 (28)	13 (72)	18

<sup>a</sup>Preference for farming or traditional work or for service. Informants are men arranged by category.

There is no significant difference between low- and high-caste men (table 42). However, high-caste men tended to prefer their traditional work (47%) more than did low-caste men (26%). This preference was due to the obvious fact that farming is more pleasant and profitable for landowners than farm labor is for the landless.

*Question 9. Why? kyō?*

The reasons given by the informants can be divided into two groups: "economic" and "other." Economic reasons include: the risks of farming, no land, greater income, the work is temporary, no work is available with the landlords, inadequate work in the village, other benefits (vacations, etc.), and regular pay. Reasons classified as "other" include: agriculture is a bother, prefers village life, no practical knowledge, can live on the land, can work when one wishes, can be independent, more leisure, father and other relatives have done it, one must do one's duty only, comfort, the work is easy, fate, will not work for the landowners, where would the grain come from (if there were no farmers), is lazy, is uneducated (and cannot get a job), the

**TABLE 42**  
**Answers to Question 8<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Farming, Traditional Work	Service	Total
Low	8 (26)	23 (74)	31
High	15 (47)	17 (53)	32
Total	23 (37)	40 (63)	63

<sup>a</sup>Preference for farming or traditional work or for service. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 43**  
**Answers to Question 9<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Economic	Other	Total
Emigrant	7 (44)	9 (56)	16
Commuter	11 (46)	13 (54)	24
Total urban- oriented	18 (45)	22 (55)	40
Village-oriented	11 (65)	6 (35)	17

<sup>a</sup>Reason for job preference. Informants are men arranged by category.

work is of one's own hands, freedom, and the informant is old.

There are no significant differences among the categories (table 43). However, the village-oriented men emphasized economic reasons (65%) more than did the urban-oriented men (45%). If we compare table 43 with table 35, both of which are concerned with reasons for selecting specific kinds of employment, we find that 87 percent of the men in table 35 (all are urban-oriented) gave economic reasons but only 45 percent of the urban-oriented men in table 43 gave such reasons. Question 2 refers to an actual decision that an informant made; question 9 inquires about an abstract preference. When dealing with hypothetical questions, informants tended to minimize economic considerations (cf. R. Freed and S. Freed, 1968), but in making actual decisions, economic reasons seemed to predominate.

No significant difference could be observed between high- and low-caste men (table 44) although the latter mentioned economic reasons (59%) more than the former (43%). Possibly because high-caste men generally have a stronger

**TABLE 44**  
**Answers to Question 9<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Economic	Other	Total
Low	17 (59)	12 (41)	29
High	12 (43)	16 (57)	28
Total	29 (51)	28 (49)	57

<sup>a</sup>Reason for job preference. Informants are men arranged by caste.

economic position than low-caste men, the former can afford to be less concerned with economic reasons.

*Question 10.* How do you want your son to earn his bread? *āp kyā cāhte hāī ki āp kā beṭā kis tarah roṭī kamāe?*

Under the heading "farming, traditional work," we classified the following responses: he is uneducated and so he will farm, I can do nothing for my children, labor, honestly, independently, he should earn with respect, and responses that combined traditional work with service. Under the heading of "service," we grouped: service, doctor, research in science, he should get an education and a good job, engineering, a technical job, and his own business or profession (tables 45 and 46). Of all these responses, by far the most frequent (55 of 111 responses) was that the informant wanted his or her son "to get a good education and get a job."

No significant differences are evident among categories for either men or women, between the sexes, or between low- and high-caste people. The overwhelming preference expressed was for service. The villagers knew that the principal means of obtaining service was through education; and to obtain the better jobs, education was imperative. These considerations accounted for the frequency of the response, "I want my son to be educated and have a good job." If we compare the responses of men in table 46, which deals with hopes for one's son, with those in

TABLE 45

Answers to Question 10<sup>a</sup>

(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Farming, Traditional Work	Service	Total
Men			
Emigrant	4 (20)	16 (80)	20
Commuter	3 (12)	22 (88)	25
Total urban-oriented	7 (16)	38 (84)	45
Village-oriented	5 (26)	14 (74)	19
Women			
Emigrant	3 (33)	6 (67)	9
Commuter	5 (22)	18 (78)	23
Total urban-oriented	8 (25)	24 (75)	32
Village-oriented	4 (27)	11 (73)	15

<sup>a</sup>Job preference for son. Informants arranged by category and sex.

TABLE 46

Answers to Question 10<sup>a</sup>

(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Farming, Traditional Work	Service	Total
Men			
Low	4 (13)	27 (87)	31
High	8 (24)	25 (76)	33
Total	12 (19)	52 (81)	64
Women			
Low	5 (23)	17 (77)	22
High	7 (28)	18 (72)	25
Total	12 (26)	35 (74)	47

<sup>a</sup>Job preference for son. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

table 42, which concerns one's own preference with regard to service or traditional occupation, we find that 63 percent of the men select service for themselves but that 81 percent select it for their sons. This pattern of response suggests that villagers may be increasingly depending on the city as a source of employment. High-caste people showed slightly more satisfaction with traditional occupations than did low-caste people, a tendency we noted in discussing table 42.

*Question 11.* Why? *kyō?*

The responses are grouped in two classes in tables 47 and 48. Under the heading "self," we classified: agriculture (or traditional occupation of our caste) has disadvantages, he should earn his living easily (and well), prestige, he will improve his life, to earn his living, so that he will be happy, our land is not sufficient, uneducated, a lack of work in the village, freedom and a salary, and do not be a slave or work for the landowners. Under the heading "duty to others," we grouped: he should do something for India, work is necessary, duty of parents to children, so that the parents will be happy, he should respect parents, only honesty pays, benefit to the village, fate, and he should support parents and support sons. The reasons classified as "duty to others," are concerned with moral principles, duty to one's family, and the opportunity to do something for India or one's village.

There are no significant differences among categories or between sexes. Reasons of "self" are dominant. These are principally economic reasons although such concepts as prestige and freedom are mentioned. "Self," in these tables,

**TABLE 47**  
**Answers to Question 11<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Self	Duty to Others	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	12 (71)	5 (29)	17
Commuter	17 (68)	8 (32)	25
Total urban-oriented	29 (69)	13 (31)	42
Village-oriented	12 (75)	4 (25)	16
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	5 (83)	1 (17)	6
Commuter	10 (53)	9 (47)	19
Total urban-oriented	15 (60)	10 (40)	25
Village-oriented	9 (69)	4 (31)	13

<sup>a</sup>Reason for job preference for son. Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 48**  
**Answers to Question 11<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Self	Duty to Others	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	26 (90)	3 (10)	29
High	15 (52)	14 (48)	29
Total	41 (71)	17 (29)	58
<b>Women</b>			
Low	11 (65)	6 (35)	17
High	13 (62)	8 (38)	21
Total	24 (63)	14 (37)	38

<sup>a</sup>Reason for job preference for son. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 49**  
**Answers to Question 12<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Traditional	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	7 (41)	10 (59)	17
Commuter	11 (41)	16 (59)	27
Total urban-oriented	18 (41)	26 (59)	44
Village-oriented	8 (44)	10 (56)	18
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	7 (78)	2 (22)	9
Commuter	8 (40)	12 (60)	20
Total urban-oriented	15 (52)	14 (48)	29
Village-oriented	7 (54)	6 (46)	13

<sup>a</sup>Most respected of selected occupations. Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 50**  
**Answers to Question 12<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Traditional	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	14 (45)	17 (55)	31
High	12 (39)	19 (61)	31
Total	26 (42)	36 (58)	62
<b>Women</b>			
Low	7 (35)	13 (65)	20
High	15 (68)	7 (32)	22
Total	22 (52)	20 (48)	42

<sup>a</sup>Most respected of selected occupations. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 51**  
**Answers to Question 13<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Aids Others	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	9 (56)	7 (44)	16
Commuter	17 (61)	11 (39)	28
Total urban-oriented	26 (59)	18 (41)	44
Village-oriented	8 (42)	11 (58)	19
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	2 (25)	6 (75)	8
Commuter	12 (67)	6 (33)	18
Total urban-oriented	14 (54)	12 (46)	26
Village-oriented	7 (64)	4 (36)	11

<sup>a</sup>Reason for most respected of selected occupations. Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 52**  
**Answers to Question 13<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Aids Others	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	19 (61)	12 (39)	31
High	15 (47)	17 (53)	32
Total	34 (54)	29 (46)	63
<b>Women</b>			
Low	11 (58)	8 (42)	19
High	10 (56)	8 (44)	18
Total	21 (57)	16 (43)	37

<sup>a</sup>Reason for most respected of selected occupations. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 53**  
**Answers to Question 14<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Traditional	Other	Total
Emigrant	8 (50)	8 (50)	16
Commuter	13 (57)	10 (43)	23
Total urban-oriented	21 (54)	18 (46)	39
Village-oriented	9 (53)	8 (47)	17

<sup>a</sup>Most preferred of selected occupations. Informants are men arranged by category.

**TABLE 54**  
**Answers to Question 14<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Traditional	Other	Total
Low	13 (48)	14 (52)	27
High	17 (59)	12 (41)	29
Total	30 (54)	26 (46)	56

<sup>a</sup>Most preferred of selected occupations. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 55**  
**Answers to Question 15<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Aids Others	Economic	Other	Total
Emigrant	6 (35)	4 (24)	7 (41)	17
Commuter	5 (23)	3 (14)	14 (64)	22
Total urban-oriented	11 (28)	7 (18)	21 (54)	39
Village-oriented	3 (19)	3 (19)	10 (63)	16

<sup>a</sup>Reason for most preferred of selected occupations. Informants are men arranged by category.

**TABLE 56**  
**Answers to Question 15<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Aids Others	Economic	Other	Total
Low	6 (22)	5 (19)	16 (59)	27
High	8 (29)	5 (18)	15 (54)	28
Total	14 (25)	10 (18)	31 (56)	55

<sup>a</sup>Reason for most preferred of selected occupations. Informants are men arranged by caste.

**TABLE 57**  
**Answers to Question 16<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Own	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	5 (28)	13 (72)	18
Commuter	12 (48)	13 (52)	25
Total urban-oriented	17 (40)	26 (60)	43
Village-oriented	1 (06)	16 (94)	17
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	3 (38)	5 (63)	8
Commuter	4 (22)	14 (78)	18
Total urban-oriented	7 (27)	19 (73)	26
Village-oriented	0 (0)	10 (100)	10

<sup>a</sup>Whose responsibility is it to find a job? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 58**  
**Answers to Question 16<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Own	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	8 (25)	24 (75)	32
High	10 (36)	18 (64)	28
Total	18 (30)	42 (70)	60
<b>Women</b>			
Low	2 (14)	12 (86)	14
High	5 (23)	17 (77)	22
Total	7 (19)	29 (81)	36

<sup>a</sup>Whose responsibility is it to find a job? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 59**  
**Answers to Question 17<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Excessive	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	5 (26)	14 (74)	19
Commuter	4 (15)	23 (85)	27
Total urban-oriented	9 (20)	37 (80)	46
Village-oriented	3 (16)	16 (84)	19
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	0 (0)	10 (100)	10
Commuter	8 (36)	14 (64)	22
Total urban-oriented	8 (25)	24 (75)	32
Village-oriented	4 (29)	10 (71)	14

<sup>a</sup>Adequate or excessive spending on weddings. Informants arranged by category and sex.

refers to the son of the informant rather than to the informant.

There is a significant difference between low- and high-caste men (chi-square equals 8.32,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). This difference is the result principally of the very high proportion of low-caste men who gave reasons of self (90%). Economic motives and/or motives related to the self are generally more prominent among low-caste men than among high-caste men (see tables 35 and 44). The most obvious explanation for the different preferences is the generally better economic position of the higher castes. They can afford to entertain such ideas as service to India or to others.

*Question 12.* I shall now tell you the names of six persons. Of these, whom would you respect most? A farmer owning 40 bighas of land, a soldier in the army, a swamiji, a clerk, a factory worker, a schoolmaster. Of these, whom would you respect most? *abhi māi chah ādmiyō ke nām batātā hū, in mē se āp sab se zyādā izzat kis kī karēge: cālīs bighe zamīn ke mālāk zamīndār, fauj mē sipāhī, swāmījī, ek klark, ek mil mē kām karnewāle, skūlamāstar? in logō mē se āp sab se zyādā izzat kis kī karēge?*

In addition to the choices offered, six informants said that they respected everyone, seven women said that they respected their husbands or some other relative, and three women said that they respected the earth. In tables 49 and 50, we classified the responses into two groups: "traditional" and "other." Farmer, swami, and, for women, husband or other relative and earth comprised the "traditional" class; the rest were grouped as "other." The distinction between "traditional" and "other" was not based upon whether an occupation has had a long tradition in India but rather upon whether an occupation, as practiced today, involves modern education and technology. For example, farming in Shanti Nagar uses basically traditional equipment and requires no formal education. Although the occupation of soldier existed in ancient times, the soldiers in the modern Indian army are relatively well educated and use complex equipment.

Of the nine responses, schoolmaster (40) was by far the most popular followed by farmer (24) and swami (14); these three accounted for 78 of 104 responses or 75 percent. We have often wondered if our presence could have been partially responsible for the many responses of schoolmaster. We had told the villagers that we expected to teach when we returned to the United States, and they thought that we had the air of

schoolteachers. However, we believe that it is preferable not to overestimate this factor. Schoolmasters, except for some of those in village schools (grades 1 to 5) about whom there may be unfavorable gossip, did have considerable prestige, and teaching was believed to be a desirable occupation because the salary was rather good and a teacher had lengthy vacations. Also, see question 14 where schoolteacher ranks a distant second to farmer in popularity when incomes are equated.

Although there are no statistically significant differences among categories or between sexes or castes, the differences between low- and high-caste women and between high-caste women and high-caste men, principally reflecting the fact that high-caste women selected traditional occupations much more often than did men or low-caste women, are worthy of note.

*Question 13.* Why? *kyō?*

As for all "why" questions, informants gave a large variety of responses. In tables 51 and 52, they are classified in two groups: "aids others," and "other." The "other" class includes, principally, qualities of the occupation (for example, good pay and travel) and qualities of the people who hold specific occupations (for example, he is good, he works hard). Under the heading "aids others," we grouped the following responses: he educates people (to earn their living), helps the nation, brings people to the right path, grows food, helps one obtain moksha (release), improves the community, and helps everyone. Under the heading "other," we listed the following reasons: he is respected, educated, apart from all involvements, works hard, is good, independent, is like us, is in government, is detached, owns land, stays home, enjoys life, travels, he (the subject of the question, not the informant) would feel good if people respected him; earth, mutual aid, good pay, power; one respects a capable man.

No significant differences can be observed between the categories, sexes, or castes.

*Question 14.* If the incomes are equal, which of these would you like to be: a factory worker, a schoolmaster, a clerk, a handicraftsman like a carpenter or a tailor, a farmer on your own land, a soldier in the army? *agar āmdanē barābar hō, to in mē se āp kyā bananā cāhēge: ek mil mē kām karnewāle, ek skūlamāstar, ek klark, ek khātī yā cīpī jaise kārīgar, apnī zamīn par kisān, fauj mē sipāhī?*

This question was asked only of men. Farmer (25), by far the most popular response, was fol-

lowed by schoolmaster (13). These two responses accounted for 38 of a total of 56 (68%). The rest of the responses, in descending popularity, were soldier (10), handicraftsman (5), clerk (2), and factory worker (1). In tables 53 and 54, the responses are grouped into two classes: "traditional" which includes farmer and handicraftsman, and "other" which contains the rest.

No significant differences are evident among the categories. It is interesting that, although schoolmaster and farmer were the two most popular answers to this question as they were for question 12, their order is reversed: farmer is here the overwhelming choice; schoolmaster the overriding choice for question 12. People seemed to respect the schoolmaster but, if incomes were equal, they would rather be farmers.

There is no significant difference between castes. However, the high castes selected a traditional occupation more often than did the low castes, although the difference between them was not great (59% of the high-caste men selected traditional occupations as compared with 48% of the low-caste men). Whenever a choice between traditional occupations or other kinds of work was presented, high-caste people selected traditional occupations more often than low-caste people (see in addition tables 42 and 46) although the differences are not significant.

#### *Question 15. Why? kyō?*

This question, to which the responses were similar to those for question 13, was also asked only of men. In tables 55 and 56, the responses are classified under three categories: one we called "aids others" under which we included the same responses classed under this heading for question 13; a second was called "economic" which included such responses as the job pays well and it is permanent; and a third, called "other," included principally qualities of the job, such as freedom, power, respect, the work is easy, and the responses of five informants who said that they knew only the selected job and could do no other work and one informant who said that matters depended on fate.

The reasons given by the informants show no significant differences among the categories or between castes.

*Question 16. Whose responsibility is it to find a job for a person: his own, his relatives' or his caste's, people of his village who have access (i.e., influence), the government's? kīṣī ādmī ke liye naukārī dhūdhnā kī kī zimmedārī hai: us kī apnī, us ke nātedārō (or rīstedārō) kī yā jāt kī, gāv ke pahūc wāle logō kī, gaurmēt kī?*

Informants supplied three additional choices to the four provided in the question: "anyone (or everyone)," "bribery," and "luck or fate." The most popular response given by both men and women was "anyone (or everyone)." This response was chosen by 21 men as compared with 18 who chose "own," the next most popular response, and by 13 women as compared with seven choosing "own," which was next in popularity. "Relative" was chosen by six men and four women; "villagers with access" by four men and two women; and "government" by eight men and eight women. "Bribery" was mentioned by only two men and two women and "luck or fate," by a single man. In tables 57 and 58, the responses are classified under two headings: "own" which includes only the "own" responses and "other" which includes all the rest.

There are noteworthy differences among the categories for men. Commuter and village-oriented men differ significantly (chi-square equals 6.54,  $.01 < p < .02$ ) as do the urban-oriented and village-oriented men (chi-square equals 5.07,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). These differences accord with our expectations as to the effects of urban experience. The men who had lived or worked in the city depended less upon relatives and traditional village relationships and more upon individual efforts in an urban world where economic relations were much more impersonal than in the village. Although the differences among the categories for women are not statistically significant, the same trend is noticeable. Not a single village-oriented woman selected "own"; however, 27 percent of the urban-oriented women did. There are no significant differences between sexes. Although village-oriented individuals desired nontraditional employment for themselves and their sons (tables 41 and 45), they believed that this could best be obtained in a traditional manner, through relatives or others with access. It is more comforting to approach the unfamiliar through the familiar; and, in any case, this approach was effective, for many villagers obtained city jobs through the intercession of relatives and friends.

There are no significant differences between castes or between men and women. However, high-caste men tended to depend slightly more on their own efforts than did low-caste men: 36 percent of the high-caste men but only 25 percent of the low-caste men believed that to find a job was their own responsibility; the comparable figures for women are 23 percent and 14 percent. This tendency recalls the similar but much



stronger tendency revealed in table 36 where 62 percent of the high-caste men but only 36 percent of the low-caste men obtained jobs through their own efforts. With regard to the questions dealing with work, answers to similar questions, such as 3 and 16, and 8 and 10 were generally consistent in that castes or categories that tended to select a specific response in one question selected a similar, and therefore consistent, response in the other. For example, informants favored "service" for themselves (question 8) and also favored it for their sons (question 10). Such consistency in responses suggests that these questionnaire data are generally reliable.

*Question 17.* In your opinion do you spend on weddings adequately or rather excessively? *apne khyāl mē kyā āp śādiyō par pūrā hī kharc karte hāi yā kāfī zyādā?*

This question and the following three are concerned with spending on weddings. Foreign observers are often impressed with the elaborate Indian wedding ritual and the considerable expense that it entails. Although Americans sometimes spend a great deal on weddings and funerals, they do not ordinarily go deeply into debt to finance these ceremonies. Indebtedness due to expenditure for weddings occurred frequently among the landless of Shanti Nagar; even moderately well-to-do people might find weddings a financial burden. In Shanti Nagar, the patterns of spending, saving, and investment were affected to a considerable degree by the financial obligations attending weddings. It follows, then, that the attitudes of villagers with respect to such expenditures are important.

Informants gave the following answer to this question: excessively, more than one can afford, beyond capacity, borrows, the minimum, not adequately, very little, one spends within one's capacity or according to one's means, adequately, as much as one can, a lot, and fully. In tables 59 and 60, we classified the first four responses as "excessive" and the rest as "other." We had some doubts about omitting the responses "a lot" and "fully" (a total of 10 men and 11 women gave these answers) from the "excessive" class, but we decided to restrict this class of responses only to those that clearly indicated that the informant thought his or her spending was excessive.

No significant differences are evident among the categories between castes or between the sexes. Although foreigners are impressed with the costs of Indian weddings, most villagers were not. Only 18 percent of the men and 26 percent of the women complained of excessive expenses.

One feature of these data was surprising to us. Because their incomes were generally smaller and there was a minimum standard in weddings that had to be observed, we would have expected that low-caste people more often than those of high caste would complain of excessive wedding expenses. However, 25 percent of the high-caste men and 33 percent of the high-caste women complained of excessive expenses but only 12 percent of the low-caste men and 18 percent of the low-caste women did so.

*Question 18.* Were you to spend less on weddings would your prestige be reduced? *śādiyō par is se kam kharcne par kyā āp kī izzat kam hogi?*

The responses are presented in tables 61 and 62. There are no significant differences among the categories or between the sexes. The majority of informants said that prestige was related to expenditures on wedding ceremonies. As we would expect, the village-oriented people held this view more strongly than the urban-oriented: 68 percent of the village-oriented men and 77 percent of the village-oriented women said that to spend less on weddings was to reduce one's prestige, whereas the comparable figures for urban-oriented men and women were 48 percent and 68 percent.

No significant differences could be observed between low and high castes or between men and women. However, in the matter of prestige and expenditures on weddings, the attitude of women appeared to be considerably more traditional than that of men: 70 percent of the women connected prestige with spending on weddings but only 54 percent of the men did so. In view of the small percentage of people who complained of excessive spending on weddings (table 60) and the fact that most informants saw a connection between expenditure and prestige, it is unlikely that villagers will reduce this type of spending in the near future.

*Question 19.* If you had the money, would you spend more on weddings? *agar āp ke pās rupaye hō, to śādiyō par aur zyādā kharc karē?*

The responses are given in tables 63 and 64. There are no significant differences among the categories for men and women. However, there is a significant difference between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 9.51,  $.001 < p < .01$ ); the women were much more willing to increase spending (88%) than were the men (51%).

Although there are no significant differences between castes, such differences do occur between low-caste men and low-caste women (chi-square equals 4.23,  $.02 < p < .05$ ) and between high-caste men and high-caste women (chi-square

equals 7.33,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). A very large proportion of women (91%) was willing to spend more on weddings; the proportion of similarly inclined men was much smaller (57%).

*Question 20.* In your opinion, do you spend more on weddings than most people in your caste? *apne khyāl mē kyā āp śādiyō par apnī jāt ke bahut logō se zyādā kharcte hāi?*

The informants' responses are presented in tables 65 and 66. Significant differences occur between the sexes, although there are none among the categories for either men or women. Urban-oriented men differ significantly from urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 12.91,  $p < .001$ ) and village-oriented men from village-oriented women (chi-square equals 6.04,  $.01 < p < .02$ ). In both cases, a substantially greater proportion of women than of men believed that they spent more on weddings than most other people of their caste.

There are no significant differences between the castes, but low-caste men differ significantly from low-caste women (chi-square equals 8.56,  $.001 < p < .01$ ) and high-caste men from high-caste women (chi-square equals 10.98,  $p < .001$ ). Although few men (17%) believed that they spent more than was normal for their caste, two-thirds of the women did. Women appeared insatiable in spending on weddings: they believed that they were outdistancing their caste fellows, but 91 percent wanted to spend even more than they did (table 64).

*Question 21.* What is the most essential thing for getting ahead in life: access (i.e., influence), hard work, good luck? *jīwan mē āge baṛhne ke liye sab se zarūrī kyā ciz hai: pahūc, mehnat, khuś-kismatī?*

The most common response was "good luck [and/or] God's aid." Twenty-six of 60 men and 19 of 31 women gave this answer. The next most common answer, "hard work [and/or] education," was given by 22 men and seven women. These two answers accounted for 81 percent of all responses. Other answers comprised a combination of choices, usually, "hard work" and "good luck" (nine informants, all men, gave this response), and health, money, income, salary, and power (six informants gave one or another of these answers). Only two informants gave "access" as an answer. In tables 67 and 68, the answers are classified under two headings: "hard work" which included only the "hard work [and/or] education" responses, and "other" which covered all the rest.

We had assumed that the urban-oriented people, especially the men, would more often select "hard work." Although 41 percent of the

urban-oriented men did choose "hard work" as compared to 21 percent of the village-oriented men, 22 percent of the urban-oriented women, and 25 percent of the village-oriented women, the differences among categories or between the sexes are not significant.

There are no significant differences between the castes and sexes. Men selected "hard work" more frequently (37%) than women (23%).

*Question 22.* On death what happens to a man's soul? *marne par ādmī kī ātmā ko kyā hotā hai?*

Informants gave a variety of responses to this question. Many alluded to the traditional Hindu view that the soul is immortal, that it leaves the body on death when it either attains release (moksha) and reunion with the *Brahman*, the all-pervading essence of the universe, or is reborn in another body. The nature of the soul's rebirth depends upon the moral quality of actions (karma) in its previous existences. Responses that dealt with any or all such beliefs were classified as "karma and rebirth" in tables 69 and 70.

Four other classes of responses were grouped together as "other." The first of these classes concerned the emotions or actions related to the soul and/or to the person at death. These answers included: the soul goes happily, peacefully, with difficulty, with pain, to heaven, goes, goes to a good place, wanders; God takes the soul; one remembers God. The second of these four classes included answers stating that at death everything comes to an end. Most of these responses probably referred to the body, but some informants were quite explicit in their belief that the soul is also finished, a view of the soul that is not in accord with traditional Hindu philosophy. These answers included: becomes dust, it is the end, one dies, and nothing remains. Another class of answers ignored the soul and dying person and concentrated instead on the effects of death upon the relatives of the deceased. Such responses included: relatives mourn, are inconvenienced, suffer expenses, have a ceremony, realize the true worth of the deceased; ties to one's relatives hold one back; at death one thinks of one's children. Finally, a number of informants responded: no one knows, he (the informant) does not know or understand, and no reply. If a single informant mentioned two classes of responses, we used only the first mentioned.

Because "karma and rebirth" is a traditional view and was also the most common response, we compared it with all the other answers which we grouped under a single heading, "other." "Karma and rebirth" was given by 25 men and nine women; the "other" responses, in descend-

**TABLE 60**  
Answers to Question 17<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Excessive	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	4 (12)	29 (88)	33
High	8 (25)	24 (75)	32
Total	12 (18)	53 (82)	65
<b>Women</b>			
Low	4 (18)	18 (82)	22
High	8 (33)	16 (67)	24
Total	12 (26)	34 (74)	46

<sup>a</sup>Adequate or excessive spending on weddings. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 61**  
Answers to Question 18<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	7 (44)	9 (56)	16
Commuter	14 (50)	14 (50)	28
Total urban-oriented	21 (48)	23 (52)	44
Village-oriented	13 (68)	6 (32)	19
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	5 (56)	4 (44)	9
Commuter	16 (73)	6 (27)	22
Total urban-oriented	21 (68)	10 (32)	31
Village-oriented	10 (77)	3 (23)	13

<sup>a</sup>Is spending on weddings related to prestige? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 62**  
Answers to Question 18<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	15 (48)	16 (52)	31
High	19 (59)	13 (41)	32
Total	34 (54)	29 (46)	63
<b>Women</b>			
Low	17 (74)	6 (26)	23
High	14 (67)	7 (33)	21
Total	31 (70)	13 (30)	44

<sup>a</sup>Is spending on weddings related to prestige? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 63**  
Answers to Question 19<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	9 (50)	9 (50)	18
Commuter	14 (52)	13 (48)	27
Total urban-oriented	23 (51)	22 (49)	45
Village-oriented	12 (75)	4 (25)	16
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	8 (80)	2 (20)	10
Commuter	20 (91)	2 (09)	22
Total urban-oriented	28 (88)	4 (13)	32
Village-oriented	13 (100)	0 (0)	13

<sup>a</sup>Would one increase spending on weddings? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 64**  
Answers to Question 19<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	19 (59)	13 (41)	32
High	16 (55)	13 (45)	29
Total	35 (57)	26 (43)	61
<b>Women</b>			
Low	18 (90)	2 (10)	20
High	23 (92)	2 (08)	25
Total	41 (91)	4 (09)	45

<sup>a</sup>Would one increase spending on weddings? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 65**  
Answers to Question 20<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	4 (27)	11 (73)	15
Commuter	2 (08)	22 (92)	24
Total urban-oriented	6 (15)	33 (85)	39
Village-oriented	3 (23)	10 (77)	13
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	4 (40)	6 (60)	10
Commuter	13 (72)	5 (28)	18
Total urban-oriented	17 (61)	11 (39)	28
Village-oriented	9 (82)	2 (18)	11

<sup>a</sup>Does one's spending on weddings exceed the caste norm? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 66**  
**Answers to Question 20<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Yes	No	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	6 (23)	20 (77)	26
High	3 (12)	23 (88)	26
Total	9 (17)	43 (83)	52
<b>Women</b>			
Low	13 (72)	5 (28)	18
High	13 (62)	8 (38)	21
Total	26 (67)	13 (33)	39

<sup>a</sup>Does one's spending on weddings exceed the caste norm? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 67**  
**Answers to Question 21<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Hard Work	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	9 (50)	9 (50)	18
Commuter	10 (36)	18 (64)	28
Total urban-oriented	19 (41)	27 (59)	46
Village-oriented	3 (21)	11 (79)	14
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	2 (33)	4 (67)	6
Commuter	3 (18)	14 (82)	17
Total urban-oriented	5 (22)	18 (78)	23
Village-oriented	2 (25)	6 (75)	8

<sup>a</sup>What is most essential for success in life? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 68**  
**Answers to Question 21<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Hard Work	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	12 (41)	17 (59)	29
High	10 (32)	21 (68)	31
Total	22 (37)	38 (63)	60
<b>Women</b>			
Low	4 (27)	11 (73)	15
High	3 (19)	13 (81)	16
Total	7 (23)	24 (77)	31

<sup>a</sup>What is most essential for success in life? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 69**  
**Answers to Question 22<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Karma and Rebirth	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	10 (50)	10 (50)	20
Commuter	10 (34)	19 (66)	29
Total urban-oriented	20 (41)	29 (59)	49
Village-oriented	5 (25)	15 (75)	20
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	1 (09)	10 (91)	11
Commuter	4 (17)	20 (83)	24
Total urban-oriented	5 (14)	30 (86)	35
Village-oriented	4 (25)	12 (75)	16

<sup>a</sup>What is fate of soul at death? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 70**  
**Answers to Question 22<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Karma and Rebirth	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	8 (23)	27 (77)	35
High	17 (50)	17 (50)	34
Total	25 (36)	44 (64)	69
<b>Women</b>			
Low	3 (12)	22 (88)	25
High	6 (23)	20 (77)	26
Total	9 (18)	42 (82)	51

<sup>a</sup>What is fate of soul at death? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 71**  
**Answers to Question 23<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Before Death	After Death	Both, Either	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	9 (47)	4 (21)	6 (32)	19
Commuter	13 (46)	3 (11)	12 (43)	28
Total urban-oriented	22 (47)	7 (15)	18 (38)	47
Village-oriented	8 (44)	5 (28)	5 (28)	18
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	5 (45)	3 (27)	3 (27)	11
Commuter	13 (62)	1 (05)	7 (33)	21
Total urban-oriented	18 (56)	4 (13)	10 (31)	32
Village-oriented	1 (10)	3 (30)	6 (60)	10

<sup>a</sup>When will God give rewards for actions? Informants arranged by category and sex.

ing order of popularity, were "no one knows, etc." (16 men and 13 women), "the soul goes happily, etc." (12 men and 11 women), "effect upon relatives" (eight men and 15 women), and "becomes dust, etc." (eight men and three women).

No significant differences could be observed among the categories although the urban-oriented men selected "karma and rebirth" more frequently (41%) than did the village-oriented men (25%), the urban-oriented women (14%), or the village-oriented women (25%). There is a significant difference between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 5.66,  $.01 < p < .02$ ); men selected "karma and rebirth" more frequently.

Low- and high-caste men differ significantly (chi-square equals 4.39,  $.02 < p < .05$ ); a greater proportion of high-caste men (50%) than of low-caste men (23%) chose "karma and rebirth." Differences similar to that between high- and low-caste men can be observed between high-caste men and low- and high-caste women. On open-ended questions, such as this one, that may involve points of Hindu philosophy, high-caste men appear to be better informed and/or more willing to deal with philosophy than the other three groups and often differ from them to a significant extent (see also table 78). The differences among the groups are probably the result of the better education of the high-caste men. Low-caste men and low- and high-caste women all appear to be generally similar in their beliefs.

*Question 23.* If a man does good acts, when will God give him fruits for this: before death, after death? *agar ādmī acche kām kare to un kā phal bhagwān kab degā:* marne se pahle, marne ke bād?

In addition to the choices provided in the question, a number of informants replied that God will reward actions either before or after death or he may give some rewards before death and some after. In tables 71 and 72, responses were classified: "before death," "after death," and "both, either."

There are no significant differences among the categories for men or between the sexes. Among women, emigrants and village-oriented women are significantly different (chi-square equals 8.53,  $.01 < p < .02$ ) as are urban-oriented and village-oriented women (chi-square equals 6.66,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). Village-oriented women rarely replied "before death"; the majority of urban-oriented women did so.

Although we suspected that urban-oriented

men, like the women, might be more likely to answer "before death" because modern urban culture is probably less concerned with the after-life than traditional village culture, we were somewhat surprised to find significant differences among the categories of women and not even the slightest similar tendency among the men. We might offer a word of caution: in general, conclusions drawn from this questionnaire would more likely be valid when based upon trends that appear in the answers to several questions rather than to a single question. Accidents of sampling can account for occasional "significant" differences, especially where samples are relatively small.

There are no significant differences between the castes or the sexes. Low-caste people displayed a greater tendency to answer "before death" than did high-caste people; 56 percent of the low-caste men and 53 percent of the low-caste women gave this answer, as compared to 36 percent of the high-caste men and 39 percent of the high-caste women. It is interesting to observe that the large majority of informants believed that at least part of the rewards for actions come in this life rather than in the next one. Only 19 of a total of 107 informants (18%) thought that rewards for actions came only after death.

*Question 24.* Four men serve God in different ways: one serves God by giving money to the poor; a second, by studying and teaching the Vedas; a third, by doing havan (a ceremony) every morning and by giving a religious feast every year; a fourth, by doing his daily work well and not thinking of the fruits of action. Of all these which is the best way to serve God? *cār ādmī bhagwān kī alag alag tarah sevā karte hāi:* ek to garibō ko dhan de kar bhagwān kī sevā karta hai, dūsarā, vedō ko parh-parhā kar, tīsarā, roz sabere havan kar ke aur har sāl dharm ke nām ek dāvat de kar, cauthā, roz kā kām khūb acchī tarah kartā hai aur phal kā khyāl nahī kartā. in sab mē se bhagwān kī sevā karne kā sab se acchā tarikā kyā hai?

In addition to the choices offered, eight men and five women answered "think of God and/or take his name and/or believe in him." The most popular response was "give money to the poor" (25 men and 20 women) followed by "havan and yearly religious feasts" (12 men and 10 women), "do one's work and do not think of fruits" (18 men and three women), and "studying the Vedas" (two men and one woman). We were particularly interested in the "work and do not think of fruits" answers because we thought that

**TABLE 72**  
**Answers to Question 23<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Before Death	After Death	Both, Either	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	18 (56)	5 (16)	9 (28)	32
High	12 (36)	7 (21)	14 (42)	33
Total	30 (46)	12 (18)	23 (35)	65
<b>Women</b>				
Low	10 (53)	1 (05)	8 (42)	19
High	9 (39)	6 (26)	8 (35)	23
Total	19 (45)	7 (17)	16 (38)	42

<sup>a</sup>When will God give rewards for actions? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

this response, although traditional in concept as are the other responses, might have greater appeal to the urban-oriented people, especially the men, because it would supply a motive for performing the rather routine factory and clerical jobs held by many of the villagers who worked in the city. This response appears in tables 73 and 74 as "work, fruits." "Give money to the poor," the most common answer, is listed under the heading, "charity." The other responses are grouped as "other."

Men with urban experience answered "work, fruits" more often than did the village-oriented men or any of the categories of women. How-

**TABLE 73**  
**Answers to Question 24<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Charity	Work, Fruits	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	6 (32)	8 (42)	5 (26)	19
Commuter	13 (45)	8 (28)	8 (28)	29
Total urban-oriented	19 (40)	16 (33)	13 (27)	48
Village-oriented	6 (35)	2 (12)	9 (53)	17
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	3 (43)	1 (14)	3 (43)	7
Commuter	8 (42)	1 (05)	10 (53)	19
Total urban-oriented	11 (42)	2 (08)	13 (50)	26
Village-oriented	9 (69)	1 (08)	3 (23)	13

<sup>a</sup>What is best way to serve God? Informants arranged by category and sex.

ever, none of the differences are significant except that between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 7.11,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). Hindu philosophy is diverse; while some of its doctrines, such as the concept of maya (illusion), may appear unlikely to supply a religious motive for people to develop and operate a modern economy based on science and technology, other concepts, such as "one should do one's work without any thought of reward," may be as well suited to such an enterprise as the doctrines of western religions are said to be (cf. Singer, 1966, p. 497).

There are no significant differences between castes or sexes. We assumed that low-caste people might select "charity" more frequently than high-caste people because the former were generally poorer and might see an advantage in encouraging charity; but, if anything, the opposite tendency is present with high-caste people answering "charity" slightly more often than the lower castes.

**Question 25.** This question took two forms. If the informant were of a low caste, i.e., Sweeper, Leatherworker, Potter, or Barber, the first clause was "When you see a Brahman or a person of some other upper caste. . . ." If the informant were of a high caste, i.e., the other castes of Shanti Nagar, the first clause was "When you see a Sweeper or a person from some other lower caste. . . ." The complete question is, therefore: "When you see a (Brahman, Sweeper) or a person from some other (upper, lower) caste, in your opinion is his caste in this life a fruit of his actions in his previous life, or do you

**TABLE 74**  
**Answers to Question 24<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Charity	Work, Fruits	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	11 (33)	8 (24)	14 (42)	33
High	14 (44)	10 (31)	8 (25)	32
Total	25 (38)	18 (28)	22 (34)	65
<b>Women</b>				
Low	8 (47)	1 (06)	8 (47)	17
High	12 (55)	2 (09)	8 (36)	22
Total	20 (51)	3 (08)	16 (41)	39

<sup>a</sup>What is best way to serve God? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

think that this is not a fruit of his actions in the previous life but is simply so? jab āp kiśi (brāhman, cūre) yā dūsarī (ūcī, nīcī) jāt ke ādmī ko dekhte hāī, to āp ke khyāl mē kyā us kī is janm kī yah jāt us ke pichle janm ke karmō kā phal hai, yā kyā āp socte hāī ki yah us ke pichle janm ke karmō kā phal nahī par yū hī hai?

We varied the wording of the question in accordance with the caste of the informant because we believed that low-caste people might be reluctant to attribute their caste status to the moral qualities of their past actions, but that high-caste people might be eager to do so. For this question, we wanted to obtain an informant's views as uninfluenced as possible by considerations arising from his own caste rank. A few informants (eight men and eight women) said that they did not know or gave answers irrelevant to the question in that they could not be classified as either "fruit of actions" or "simply so." These answers have been included in the latter class in tables 75 and 76.

There are no significant differences among categories or between castes or sexes. The low castes were as ready as the high castes to relate a person's caste to his actions in his previous life. Because of the wording of the question, we do not know if informants, especially those of the lower castes, would be equally willing to accept the same relationship with regard to their own caste position. Kolenda (1964, pp. 74-76) has presented evidence indicating that low-caste people do not accept such a relationship between

TABLE 75  
Answers to Question 25<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Fruit of Actions	Simply So	Total
Men			
Emigrant	13 (65)	7 (35)	20
Commuter	17 (61)	11 (39)	28
Total urban-oriented	30 (63)	18 (38)	48
Village-oriented	12 (67)	6 (33)	18
Women			
Emigrant	7 (70)	3 (30)	10
Commuter	11 (58)	8 (42)	19
Total urban-oriented	18 (62)	11 (38)	29
Village-oriented	11 (79)	3 (21)	14

<sup>a</sup>Is one's caste the fruit of his actions in previous life? Informants arranged by category and sex.

TABLE 76<sup>a</sup>  
Answers to Question 25<sup>b</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Fruit of Actions	Simply So	Total
Men			
Low	22 (69)	10 (31)	32
High	20 (59)	14 (41)	34
Total	42 (64)	24 (36)	66
Women			
Low	14 (70)	6 (30)	20
High	15 (65)	8 (35)	23
Total	29 (67)	14 (33)	43

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 6.

<sup>b</sup>Is one's caste the fruit of his actions in previous life? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

karma and caste position to the extent that high-caste people do.

Question 26. What is the best thing in the Hindu religion? hindū dharm mē sab se acchī ciz kyā hai?

The considerable variety of answers to this question was first classified under six headings which were later reduced to three for tabulation. A number of informants (18 men and eight women) said that the cow was the best thing in Hinduism. This was the most common single answer. Second, the answers of many informants (28 men and 12 women) described activities or conditions with a religious aspect such as: non-violence, peace, to believe in God, truth, charity, cleanliness, no malice, honesty, and to bathe in the Ganges River. Third, some informants (eight men and three women) mentioned Hindu philosophy in general or traditional Hinduism (*sanatan* dharma) as best. Fourth, a few informants (five men but no women) mentioned predominantly secular activities: to earn, to work, to eat, and to guard one's prestige. Fifth, several informants (three men and seven women) said that the Brahman Priest or some other caste was best. Finally, five men and 17 women said that they did not know. In tables 77 and 78, there are three classes of responses: "cow," "philosophy and proper actions," which includes the second and third of the above classes, and "other" which includes the fourth, fifth, and sixth of the classes discussed above.

There are no significant differences among the categories for either men or women. The difference between urban-oriented men and urban-

**TABLE 77**  
**Answers to Question 26<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Cow	Philosophy and Proper Actions	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	3 (15)	14 (70)	3 (15)	20
Commuter	9 (32)	14 (50)	5 (18)	28
Total urban-oriented	12 (25)	28 (58)	8 (17)	48
Village-oriented	6 (32)	8 (42)	5 (26)	19
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	2 (25)	2 (25)	4 (50)	8
Commuter	2 (08)	7 (29)	15 (63)	24
Total urban-oriented	4 (13)	9 (28)	19 (59)	32
Village-oriented	4 (27)	6 (40)	5 (33)	15

<sup>a</sup>What is the best thing in Hinduism? Informants arranged by category and sex.

oriented women is statistically significant (chi-square equals 15.66,  $p < .001$ ). The most noteworthy difference between the urban-oriented men and the urban-oriented women is the much larger proportion of the latter who gave "other" answers (59% of the urban-oriented women but only 17% of the urban-oriented men).

The difference between low-caste men and high-caste men is statistically significant (chi-square equals 8.00,  $.01 < p < .02$ ). It is the result of a different distribution of answers between "philosophy and proper actions" and "other." Low-caste men frequently answered "other" (32%), but high-caste men did so infrequently (6%). High-caste men, on the other hand, answered "philosophy and proper actions" 67 percent of the time and low-caste men, only 41 percent. The statistically significant difference between high-caste men and high-caste women (chi-square equals 12.50,  $.001 < p < .01$ ) is based on similar factors: 44 percent of the high-caste women answered "other" and only 32 percent answered "philosophy and proper actions."

The pattern of responses to this question offers some support of a tendency that we noted in the replies to question 22: on open-ended questions that may involve Hindu philosophy, high-caste men were better informed and/or were more willing to deal with philosophy and

differed, often to a significant extent, from low-caste men and high- and low-caste women, the three groups being generally similar in their responses. This tendency can be observed less clearly here than in question 22 because the responses here classified as "philosophy and proper actions" involve principally proper actions (40 informants) rather than abstract philosophy (11 informants). However, of these 11 informants, six were high-caste men, two were low-caste men, two were low-caste women, and one was a high-caste woman. Although this tendency must be viewed with caution, it is supported by our general experience in interviewing in Shanti Nagar as well as by the results of the analysis of the questionnaire. It probably reflects the generally better education of the high-caste men.

*Question 27.* Usually whom do you sit with most? *ām taur par āp kin ke sāth zyādātār uthte-baiṭhte hāi?*

The responses to this question were divided into two groups in tables 79 and 80. Under the heading "family and own caste," we placed these answers: my family, families related to mine, husband, caste fellows, and neighbors. We classed "neighbors" under "family and own caste" because they were usually caste fellows. Under the heading, "everybody, other," we grouped the following answers: everybody, anybody, those who like good company, those for whom he feels affection, friends, educated people, fellow workers (in a factory), people of own age, important people (said sarcastically), Harijans,

**TABLE 78**  
**Answers to Question 26<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Cow	Philosophy and Proper Actions	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	9 (26)	14 (41)	11 (32)	34
High	9 (27)	22 (67)	2 (06)	33
Total	18 (27)	36 (54)	13 (19)	67
<b>Women</b>				
Low	2 (09)	7 (32)	13 (59)	22
High	6 (24)	8 (32)	11 (44)	25
Total	8 (17)	15 (32)	24 (51)	47

<sup>a</sup>What is the best thing in Hinduism? Informants arranged by caste and sex.



TABLE 79  
Answers to Question 27<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Family and Own Caste	Everybody, Other	Total
Men			
Emigrant	2 (10)	18 (90)	20
Commuter	7 (24)	22 (76)	29
Total urban-oriented	9 (18)	40 (82)	49
Village-oriented	11 (58)	8 (42)	19
Women			
Emigrant	3 (30)	7 (70)	10
Commuter	15 (63)	9 (38)	24
Total urban-oriented	18 (53)	16 (47)	34
Village-oriented	4 (29)	10 (71)	14

<sup>a</sup>Whom do you sit with most? Informants arranged by category and sex.

good people, people of other castes, the landlord, God, nobody, and likes to be alone.

As expected, we found that village-oriented men were less inclined to sit most with people outside their family and caste than were urban-oriented men. The differences are significant between commuter and village-oriented men (chi-square equals 8.02,  $.001 < p < .01$ ), between emigrant and village-oriented men (chi-square equals 4.23,  $.02 < p < .05$ ), and between urban-oriented and village-oriented men (chi-square equals 8.49,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). The results for women were different. The village-oriented women were most likely to sit with people outside their family and caste and the commuter and urban-oriented women were least likely to do so although the differences are not significant. We had not expected to find differences among the several categories of women, except possibly between the emigrant and village-oriented women, because, in general, women worked at home no matter how their husbands earned a living.

There is a significant difference between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 9.41,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). The men (82%) were more likely to sit with people other than family members or caste fellows than were the women (47%). This was not the situation, however, between village-oriented men and village-oriented women where 71 percent of the women but only 42 percent of the men sat most with people who were neither family members nor caste fellows. We can offer no explanation for the responses of the village-

oriented women, a surprising feature of these data.

There are no significant differences between the castes or the sexes. Women rather than men were somewhat more inclined to sit with family members or caste fellows. This tendency accords with the fact that, traditionally, women were expected to stay at home when they were not working in the fields.

Question 28. Of the people whom you sit with most, who is your best friend? (For men): jin logō ke sāth āp zyādātār uṭhte-baiṭhte hāī, un mē se āp kā sab se acchā dost kaun hai? (For women): jin logō ke sāth āp zyādātār uṭhti-baiṭhti hāī, un mē se āp kī sab se acchī sahelī kaun hai?

The responses were initially grouped into six classes: family, same caste, different caste, outsider, all the same, and no friend. Only eight men mentioned family members as best friends, but this answer was the most popular among women (18). Seven men, but only one woman, mentioned people of their own caste; 15 men and eight women mentioned people of different castes. A few informants (four men and one woman) chose people from outside the village whose caste affiliations were unknown to us. This was true especially of men working in factories. We assumed that such individuals were of a caste different from that of the informant. The most popular response among men (20) was that "all men are the same to me," an answer which was the second most popular for the women (13). Finally, 11 men and eight women said they had no friend. These six classes were

TABLE 80  
Answers to Question 27<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Family and Own Caste	Everybody, Other	Total
Men			
Low	12 (35)	22 (65)	34
High	8 (24)	26 (76)	34
Total	20 (29)	48 (71)	68
Women			
Low	12 (55)	10 (45)	22
High	10 (38)	16 (62)	26
Total	22 (46)	26 (54)	48

<sup>a</sup>Whom do you sit with most? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 81**  
**Answers to Question 28<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Family and Own Caste	Different Caste	All Equal, None	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	4 (21)	8 (42)	7 (37)	19
Commuter	3 (12)	9 (35)	14 (54)	26
Total urban-oriented	7 (16)	17 (38)	21 (47)	45
Village-oriented	8 (40)	2 (10)	10 (50)	20
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	2 (20)	2 (20)	6 (60)	10
Commuter	11 (46)	3 (13)	10 (42)	24
Total urban-oriented	13 (38)	5 (15)	16 (47)	34
Village-oriented	6 (40)	4 (27)	5 (33)	15

<sup>a</sup>Who is your best friend? Informants arranged by category and sex.

reduced to three in tables 81 and 82: "family and own caste" which includes the first two of the above six classes, "different caste" which includes the third and fourth, and "all equal, none" which includes the fifth and sixth.

As in the replies to question 27, there are significant differences between urban-oriented and village-oriented men. Comparison of emigrant and village-oriented men yields a chi-square equal to 6.73 ( $.02 < p < .05$ ); for urban-oriented and village-oriented men, chi-square equals 7.27 ( $.02 < p < .05$ ). These differences are due principally to different distributions of responses between "family and own caste" and "different caste." The village-oriented men (40%) were much more likely to find their best friends in their own families or castes than were commuter (12%) or urban-oriented men (16%). There are no significant differences among the categories of women; almost equal proportions of village-oriented and urban-oriented women selected their best friend from among their family members or caste fellows. There is a significant difference between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 7.63,  $.02 < p < .05$ ); this is entirely due to a different distribution of responses between "family and own caste" and "different caste." Women more often selected best friends from the former class; men, from the latter.

There are no significant differences either between the castes or the sexes (within castes).

*Question 29.* This question has two forms. We asked people who owned no land: With whom do you share your work? *āp apnā kām kin ke sāth batāte hāī?* We asked both men and women from landowning families: With whom do you share agricultural work in the fields? *āp khetō mē kin ke sāth dangwārā karte hāī?*

Initially, the answers were grouped into six classes: family, same caste, different caste, outsider, anyone, and no one. Most of the women either shared work with family members (19) or shared with no one (13). Two women answered "same caste"; four, "different caste"; and four, "anyone." The answers of men were more evenly divided among the six classes. In descending order of popularity, men answered: no one (16), anyone (13), family (13), different caste (7), outsider (5), and same caste (4). Outsiders referred to nonresidents of Shanti Nagar whose castes were unknown to us. We assumed that these individuals were not members of the same caste as that of the informant. Only urban-oriented men mentioned outsiders. These six classes were reduced to three in the tables 83 and 84: "family and own caste" which includes the first and second of the above six classes, "different caste" which includes the third and fourth, and "anyone, no one" which includes the fifth and sixth class.

Although the difference is not significant, it is of interest to observe that male emigrants more often than male commuters answered "family

**TABLE 82**  
**Answers to Question 28<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Family and Own Caste	Different Caste	All Equal, None	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	9 (28)	9 (28)	14 (44)	32
High	6 (18)	10 (30)	17 (52)	33
Total	15 (23)	19 (29)	31 (48)	65
<b>Women</b>				
Low	12 (50)	3 (13)	9 (38)	24
High	7 (28)	6 (24)	12 (48)	25
Total	19 (39)	9 (18)	21 (43)	49

<sup>a</sup>Who is your best friend? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

TABLE 83  
Answers to Question 29<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Family and Own Caste	Different Caste	Anyone, No One	Total
Men				
Emigrant	6 (40)	5 (33)	4 (27)	15
Commuter	5 (20)	4 (16)	16 (64)	25
Total urban- oriented	11 (28)	9 (23)	20 (50)	40
Village-oriented	6 (33)	3 (17)	9 (50)	18
Women				
Emigrant	5 (50)	1 (10)	4 (40)	10
Commuter	10 (56)	1 (06)	7 (39)	18
Total urban- oriented	15 (54)	2 (07)	11 (39)	28
Village-oriented	6 (43)	2 (14)	6 (43)	14

<sup>a</sup>With whom do you share your work? Informants arranged by category and sex.

and own caste," which probably reflects the fact that a number of city families had their own family businesses or were involved with caste fellows in a caste-related enterprise, such as shoe-making. The urban-oriented and village-oriented men were very similar with regard to the proportions of informants who gave each of the three answers. There are no significant differences among the categories of women. As might be expected, the urban-oriented women shared work within the family and caste with greater frequency than did the urban-oriented men, a tendency which, although not statistically significant, is worthy of note.

Low-caste men differ significantly from high-caste men (chi-square equals 6.92, .02 <  $p$  < .05). Low-caste men answered "family and own caste" more often than did high-caste men. This tendency also applies to the answers of the women but the difference between the low and high castes is not statistically significant. There are no significant differences between the sexes.

Question 30. To the weddings of which houses do you go? āp kin gharō kī śādiyō par jāte hāi?

We divided the responses to this question into six classes: related families (given by three men and 11 women); own caste (20 men and 14 women); a few other castes (13 men and 11 women); Brahman Priests and Jat Farmers, a

response given only by Brahman and Jat informants (six men and three women); many other castes (22 men and 10 women); and none, the informant stating that he was represented by other family members at weddings (four men and no women). These six classes have been reduced to three in tables 85 and 86: "related families and own caste" which includes the first two of the above six classes, "a few other castes" which includes the third and fourth of the above classes, and "many other castes" which includes the fifth class. We eliminated the sixth class because the question was irrelevant to the four informants who answered "none."

There are no significant differences among the categories of either men or women. Although the difference is not significant, there was a fairly strong tendency for the urban-oriented women to answer "related families and own caste" more frequently (56%) than did the urban-oriented men (36%). This tendency for urban-oriented women to confine their interaction primarily to family members or caste fellows to a greater extent than urban-oriented men also appeared in the answers to questions 27, 28, and 29. It stems from the fact that most urban-oriented women, like village-oriented women, worked at home; it was the urban-oriented men whose work took them, at least part of the time, from the traditional setting of family, caste fellows, and village.

There is a significant difference between low-caste and high-caste men (chi-square equals 13.95,  $p$  < .001). The low-caste men answered

TABLE 84  
Answers to Question 29<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Family and Own Caste	Different Caste	Anyone, No One	Total
Men				
Low	11 (39)	8 (29)	9 (32)	28
High	6 (20)	4 (13)	20 (67)	30
Total	17 (29)	12 (21)	29 (50)	58
Women				
Low	12 (60)	1 (05)	7 (35)	20
High	9 (41)	3 (14)	10 (45)	22
Total	21 (50)	4 (10)	17 (40)	42

<sup>a</sup>With whom do you share your work? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 85**  
**Answers to Question 30<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Related Families and Own Caste	A Few Other Castes	Many Other Castes	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	6 (35)	6 (35)	5 (29)	17
Commuter	10 (36)	6 (21)	12 (43)	28
Total urban-oriented	16 (36)	12 (27)	17 (38)	45
Village-oriented	7 (37)	7 (37)	5 (26)	19
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	4 (40)	4 (40)	2 (20)	10
Commuter	15 (63)	5 (21)	4 (17)	24
Total urban-oriented	19 (56)	9 (26)	6 (18)	34
Village-oriented	6 (40)	5 (33)	4 (27)	15

<sup>a</sup>Whose weddings do you attend? Informants arranged by category and sex.

"related families and own caste" much more frequently (58%) than did the high-caste men (13%). These different responses stemmed primarily from the fact that the men of the two most populous high castes, the Jat Farmers and the Brahman Priests, regularly attended at least some of the rites at each other's wedding ceremonies. Men of the two largest low castes, the Chuhra Sweepers and the Chamar Leatherworkers, followed this practice to a lesser extent. The same tendency applies to the answers of the high- and low-caste women, although here the difference is not significant. High-caste women and high-caste men differ significantly (chi-square equals 6.31,  $.02 < p < .05$ ); the high-caste women more frequently (42%) answered "related families and own caste" than did the high-caste men (13%).

**Question 31.** Do you prefer living in joint houses or separately? *āp ikatṭhe gharō mē rahnā pasand karte hāi yā alag alag?*

Some informants interpreted this question as referring to a choice between living with one's relatives or living far distant from them in relative isolation. We explained that the choice was between cooking on the same stove with one's relatives or on a separate stove. In tables 87 and 88 the responses are classified under the two headings, "joint" and "nuclear."

**TABLE 86**  
**Answers to Question 30<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Related Families and Own Caste	A Few Other Castes	Many Other Castes	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	19 (58)	6 (18)	8 (24)	33
High	4 (13)	13 (42)	14 (45)	31
Total	23 (36)	19 (30)	22 (34)	64
<b>Women</b>				
Low	14 (61)	7 (30)	2 (09)	23
High	11 (42)	7 (27)	8 (31)	26
Total	25 (51)	14 (29)	10 (20)	49

<sup>a</sup>Whose weddings do you attend? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

There are no significant differences among the categories for either men or women or between the sexes. Men and women of all categories strongly favored the joint family. Village-oriented people expressed a preference for the joint family slightly more frequently than the urban-oriented. Among emigrant men, preference for the joint family was weakest (only 61%).

There are no significant differences between castes or sexes. High-caste people, especially men, selected the joint family slightly more often than did low-caste people. The strong preference for the joint family, expressed by all castes,

**TABLE 87**  
**Answers to Question 31<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Joint	Nuclear	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	11 (61)	7 (39)	18
Commuter	23 (82)	5 (18)	28
Total urban-oriented	34 (74)	12 (26)	46
Village-oriented	17 (89)	2 (11)	19
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	9 (75)	3 (25)	12
Commuter	16 (73)	6 (27)	22
Total urban-oriented	25 (74)	9 (26)	34
Village-oriented	11 (85)	2 (15)	13

<sup>a</sup>Do you prefer to live jointly or separately? Informants arranged by category and sex.

TABLE 88  
Answers to Question 31<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Joint	Nuclear	Total
Men			
Low	25 (71)	10 (29)	35
High	26 (87)	4 (13)	30
Total	51 (78)	14 (22)	65
Women			
Low	18 (75)	6 (25)	24
High	18 (78)	5 (22)	23
Total	36 (77)	11 (23)	47

<sup>a</sup>Do you prefer to live jointly or separately? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

reflected rather more an ideal pattern of village life than it did actual living arrangements. The discrepancy between ideal pattern and existing arrangement was especially marked for the lower castes. Of the 64 high-caste families, 47 percent were joint; of the 46 low-caste families, only 24 percent were joint.

*Question 32. Why? kyō?*

The responses given by 11 men and 13 women were principally concerned with emotions and feelings (one is not lonesome, increases prestige, share griefs and pleasures, plenty of love, affection, and comfort). Twenty-three men and 13 women gave answers related to mutual aid (work together, help each other, cooperation, protection, and strength in a fight). Nine men and one woman selected financial reasons (lower costs and greater financial strength). The answers of 10 men and eight women were concerned with quarreling and fighting in the family (women fight and the arrangement leads to quarrels). Two men discussed the individual's responsibility for performing work under various family arrangements. In tables 89 and 90 mutual aid and financial reasons are grouped under the heading "mutual aid, economic." The rest of the reasons are classed as "other."

Although the difference is not significant, it is worthy of note that the answers of the village-oriented men emphasized emotions and intra-family quarrels more frequently than those of the urban-oriented men whose responses concerned chiefly economics and mutual aid. Like the answers of the village-oriented men, those of the urban- and village-oriented women also emphasized emotion and intrafamily quarreling. The fact that urban-oriented men worked away

from home and invested part of their emotional energy in their jobs may account for their lesser concern with the emotional side of family life as compared to the village-oriented men and all women except the emigrants.

Economic reasons and mutual aid predominated in the answers of men and high-caste women. However, low-caste women strongly emphasized emotions and intra-family quarreling. There is a significant difference between low-caste women and low-caste men (chi-square equals 4.52, .02 < p < .05). It is not clear why low-caste women placed so much less emphasis on the economic side of family life than did the men or the high-caste women.

*Question 33. What would you like: to be of an upper caste, or to live in a situation where there is no caste?* āp ko kyā acchā lagegā: ūcī jāt kā honā, yā aīsī hālāt mē rahnā jāh jātpāt na ho?

Seven men and 13 women preferred membership in an upper caste; 37 men and only one woman chose to live where there is no caste system. In addition to the choices provided by the question, eight men and one woman said that the caste system is all right as it is, two men and 24 women said that they liked their own caste, and one man said that caste should be determined by one's actions in this life. In tables 91 and 92, these answers were divided into two groups: "no caste," and "other." Answers classified as "no caste" were "live where there is no caste" and "caste should be determined by actions." The rest of the answers were grouped as "other." Although we were particularly interested in comparing critical ("no caste") and noncritical responses, one feature of these data which is obscured by the tables is worth noting: the large proportion of low-caste women who like their own caste. This affirmative answer was given by 15 of 21 low-caste women. Only two of 29 low-caste men gave the same response.

Although no significant differences among the categories for either men or women can be observed, urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women differ significantly (chi-square equals 34.99, p < .001). The strongly conservative views of the women contrast sharply with the critical opinions of the urban-oriented men. The village-oriented men occupy a position almost midway between the women and the urban-oriented men.

There is a significant difference between the low- and high-caste men (chi-square equals 6.81, .001 < p < .01). As we anticipated, the low-caste men were more critical of the caste system than the high-caste men. Low-caste men and low-caste

**TABLE 89**  
**Answers to Question 32<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Mutual Aid, Economic	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	11 (65)	6 (35)	17
Commuter	16 (67)	8 (33)	24
Total urban-oriented	27 (66)	14 (34)	41
Village-oriented	5 (36)	9 (64)	14
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	6 (60)	4 (40)	10
Commuter	5 (28)	13 (72)	18
Total urban-oriented	11 (39)	17 (61)	28
Village-oriented	3 (43)	4 (57)	7

<sup>a</sup>Reason for preferred family type. Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 90**  
**Answers to Question 32<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Mutual Aid, Economic	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	16 (59)	11 (41)	27
High	16 (57)	12 (43)	28
Total	32 (58)	23 (42)	55
<b>Women</b>			
Low	3 (20)	12 (80)	15
High	11 (55)	9 (45)	20
Total	14 (40)	21 (60)	35

<sup>a</sup>Reason for preferred family type. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 91**  
**Answers to Question 33<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	No Caste	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	13 (72)	5 (28)	18
Commuter	19 (76)	6 (24)	25
Total urban-oriented	32 (74)	11 (26)	43
Village-oriented	6 (50)	6 (50)	12
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	0 ( 0)	8 (100)	8
Commuter	0 ( 0)	20 (100)	20
Total urban-oriented	0 ( 0)	28 (100)	28
Village-oriented	1 (09)	10 (91)	11

<sup>a</sup>Do you prefer high caste status or no caste system? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 92<sup>a</sup>**  
**Answers to Question 33<sup>b</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	No Caste	Other	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	25 (86)	4 (14)	29
High	13 (50)	13 (50)	26
Total	38 (69)	17 (31)	55
<b>Women</b>			
Low	1 (05)	20 (95)	21
High	0 ( 0)	18 (100)	18
Total	1 (03)	38 (97)	39

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 8.

<sup>b</sup>Do you prefer high-caste status or no caste system? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 93**  
**Answers to Question 34<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Critical	Favorable	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	14 (78)	4 (22)	18
Commuter	18 (78)	5 (22)	23
Total urban-oriented	32 (78)	9 (22)	41
Village-oriented	7 (54)	6 (46)	13
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	1 (25)	3 (75)	4
Commuter	2 (17)	10 (83)	12
Total urban-oriented	3 (19)	13 (81)	16
Village-oriented	1 (20)	4 (80)	5

<sup>a</sup>Reason for preference for high-caste status or no caste system. Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 94<sup>a</sup>**  
**Answers to Question 34<sup>b</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Critical	Favorable	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	24 (89)	3 (11)	27
High	15 (56)	12 (44)	27
Total	39 (72)	15 (28)	54
<b>Women</b>			
Low	2 (20)	8 (80)	10
High	2 (18)	9 (82)	11
Total	4 (19)	17 (81)	21

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 10.

<sup>b</sup>Reason for preference for high-caste status or no caste system. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

women differ significantly (chi-square equals 29.19,  $p < .001$ ), as do high-caste men and high-caste women (chi-square equals 10.49,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). It is noteworthy that the answers of 69 percent of the men could be interpreted as expressing criticism of the caste system; those of only 3 percent of the women could be so interpreted.

*Question 34. Why? kyō?*

This question elicited answers that represented almost all the different comments about the caste system that we heard while in India. We classified the answers into five groups. Seven women and 13 men said, in general, that the system is all right or that it fulfills some useful purpose (the system is all right, even if there were no caste system there would still be social groups, the system makes for a necessary division of labor, can share troubles within caste, makes for respect, regulates marriage, maintains social distance, the system will continue, it exists, we live well as it is). Ten women and two men explained their answers to question 33, saying that the high castes are rich and/or powerful or that they cannot join a high caste. Two women and five men were generally critical (caste is useless; the basis of the system is no more, e.g., the Brahmans have no special knowledge; it is man-made; it foils progress). Two women and 29 men (21 of these were low-caste) criticized specific features of the system (there are food and other restrictions, it causes conflict, makes unnecessary social distinctions, causes hatred, all should be equal, all should love one another). Finally, five men said that one should be rewarded according to his actions. In tables 93 and 94, the first two groups of answers were combined under the heading "favorable"; the last three, under the heading "critical." It should be noted that classification of the answers to this question depended upon the informant's entire answer; its flavor cannot always be grasped from the brief phrases cited above. For example, the "unnecessary social distinctions" of a critical informant were the "maintains social distance" of one favorably inclined.

No significant differences were evident among the categories for either men or women. However, there is a significant difference between urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women (chi-square equals 14.67,  $p < .001$ ). As in the answers to question 33, the urban-oriented men were much more critical of the caste system than were the women. The village-oriented men, on the other hand, again occupied a position

between that of the women and the urban-oriented men.

The low-caste men were significantly more critical of the caste system than were the high-caste men (chi-square equals 5.91,  $.01 < p < .02$ ), but the low- and high-caste women showed no similar tendency. As for question 33, again we observe a strong tendency for men rather than women to be critical of the caste system. Low-caste men and women differ significantly (chi-square equals 13.44,  $p < .001$ ); although not significant, the same tendency applies to high-caste men and women.

*Question 35. In your opinion, can a low-caste man benefit from education as much as a high-caste man? āp ke khyāl mē ek nīc jāt ke ādmī ko parhāi se utnā hī fāyadā ho saktā hai jitnā ek ūcī jāt wālē ko?*

In asking this and the following question, we were interested to learn whether our informants believed that members of low castes are inferior to members of high castes in intellectual and technical ability. Fifty men and 34 women said that a low-caste man could benefit as much from education as a high-caste man. Seven men and six women said that he would benefit less. However, nine men and two women said that a low-caste man would benefit more; furthermore, of these nine men, six were high-caste, and both of the women were high-caste. In tables 95 and 96, the answers of informants were classed under two headings: "as much or more" and "less."

Three of the informants who gave "less" answers provided explanations. They said that a low-caste man would profit less because the lower castes could not get recommendations nor did they have caste fellows in high places to wield influence on their behalf in obtaining employment. After a while, noted one informant, at such time when many low-caste men would be highly placed, they would then be able to aid their caste fellows to secure good positions. At that time, a low-caste person would be as able to profit equally from education as a high-caste person. The informant who explained his "more" answer added that an educated low-caste man could get jobs not equally available to a high-caste person. We interpret this explanation as a reference to the Indian policy of reserving quotas of jobs for the very low castes. Thus, it appears that those informants who gave answers that might be interpreted as implying inferior (or superior) ability were actually thinking, not of a person's ability, but of the social circumstances in which he must function.

**TABLE 95**  
**Answers to Question 35<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	As Much Or More	Less	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	19 (95)	1 (05)	20
Commuter	25 (86)	4 (14)	29
Total urban-oriented	44 (90)	5 (10)	49
Village-oriented	15 (88)	2 (12)	17
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	6 (67)	3 (33)	9
Commuter	18 (90)	2 (10)	20
Total urban-oriented	24 (83)	5 (17)	29
Village-oriented	12 (92)	1 (08)	13

<sup>a</sup>Can a low-caste man benefit as much from education as a high-caste man? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 96<sup>a</sup>**  
**Answers to Question 35<sup>b</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	As Much Or More	Less	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	31 (94)	2 (06)	33
High	28 (85)	5 (15)	33
Total	59 (89)	7 (11)	66
<b>Women</b>			
Low	17 (81)	4 (19)	21
High	19 (90)	2 (10)	21
Total	36 (86)	6 (14)	42

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 2.

<sup>b</sup>Can a low-caste man benefit as much from education as a high-caste man? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 97**  
**Answers to Question 36<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	As Much Or More	Less	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	17 (89)	2 (11)	19
Commuter	19 (70)	8 (30)	27
Total urban-oriented	36 (78)	10 (22)	46
Village-oriented	14 (82)	3 (18)	17
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	8 (89)	1 (11)	9
Commuter	16 (80)	4 (20)	20
Total urban-oriented	24 (83)	5 (17)	29
Village-oriented	11 (92)	1 (08)	12

<sup>a</sup>Can a low-caste man grow as much grain as a high-caste man? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 98<sup>a</sup>**  
**Answers to Question 36<sup>b</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	As Much Or More	Less	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	31 (97)	1 (03)	32
High	19 (61)	12 (39)	31
Total	50 (79)	13 (21)	63
<b>Women</b>			
Low	20 (95)	1 (05)	21
High	15 (75)	5 (25)	20
Total	35 (85)	6 (15)	41

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 4.

<sup>b</sup>Can a low-caste man grow as much grain as a high-caste man? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 99**  
**Answers to Question 37<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Weaker	Same, Stronger	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	18 (90)	2 (10)	20
Commuter	24 (89)	3 (11)	27
Total urban-oriented	42 (89)	5 (11)	47
Village-oriented	12 (80)	3 (20)	15
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	6 (75)	2 (25)	8
Commuter	8 (47)	9 (53)	17
Total urban-oriented	14 (56)	11 (44)	25
Village-oriented	5 (56)	4 (44)	9

<sup>a</sup>Has the caste system become weaker? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 100<sup>a</sup>**  
**Answers to Question 37<sup>b</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Weaker	Same, Stronger	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	27 (87)	4 (13)	31
High	27 (87)	4 (13)	31
Total	54 (87)	8 (13)	62
<b>Women</b>			
Low	8 (57)	6 (43)	14
High	11 (55)	9 (45)	20
Total	19 (56)	15 (44)	34

<sup>a</sup>Source, S. Freed and R. Freed, 1972b, table 12.

<sup>b</sup>Has the caste system become weaker? Informants arranged by caste and sex.



There are no significant differences among the categories or between the castes or the sexes. A high proportion of informants in all categories believed that a low-caste man could benefit from education as much or more than a high-caste man. In an area where a difference of opinion between high and low castes might be expected, there was apparently no significant tendency toward differing opinions.

*Question 36.* In your opinion, if a low-caste man were given land, would he be able to raise as much grain as a high-caste man? *āp ke khyāl mē, agar ek nīc jāt ke ādmī ko zamīn dī jāe, to kyā vah ek ūcī jāt wāle ke barābar anāj ugā sakegā?*

Forty-seven men and 33 women answered that if a low-caste man were given land he could grow as much grain as a high-caste man. Three men and two women replied that a low-caste man could grow more. Thirteen men and six women said that a low-caste man would grow less. In tables 97 and 98, we classified the answers under two headings: "as much or more" and "less."

Of the 19 people who answered "less," six explained their answers. All six commented that a low-caste man would grow less grain because he would need experience and knowledge as well as land; however, once he had gained experience, he could do as well as a high-caste man. Thus, as was indicated in the answers to question 35, there was no belief that low-caste people are inferior to high-caste people in inherent capabilities or that they have personality characteristics that would be a barrier to satisfactory intellectual or technical performance.

However, we must immediately qualify this observation because it depends so much upon the wording of the questions. One informant, in response to a different line of questioning, did declare that with regard to doing well in school, children of the low castes were inherently inferior to high-caste children. He said that even were a low-caste child to be raised in a high-caste family, some residue of his low-caste biological origins would remain to affect adversely his educational performance. It would take, according to our informant, a few generations before the "effects of the blood" would disappear entirely.

No significant differences could be observed among the categories or between the sexes. A high proportion of informants in all categories said that a low-caste man could grow as much as or more grain than a high-caste man.

There is a significant difference between low-

and high-caste men (chi-square equals 10.10,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). Low-caste men were almost unanimous in their view that they could grow as much grain as could men of the higher castes. Although the majority of high-caste men shared this belief, there was a substantial dissenting minority (39%). However, as we have noted above, some of those who declared that low-caste men could not grow as much also pointed out that the reason was a temporary lack of experience.

*Question 37.* In your opinion, has the caste system been strengthened since independence, weakened, or is it the same? *āp ke khyāl mē, azādī ke bād jātpāt mazbūt hūī hai, kam hūī hai, yā vaisī hī hai?*

Fifty-four men and 19 women said that the caste system had become weaker since Indian independence; three men and five women said that it had become stronger; and five men and 10 women said that it had not changed. In tables 99 and 100 the answers are grouped under two headings: "weaker" and "same, stronger."

There are no significant differences among the categories for either men or women. The urban-oriented men and urban-oriented women differ significantly (chi-square equals 8.67,  $.001 < p < .01$ ); most of the former (89%) believed the caste system had become weaker, but only slightly more than half of the latter (56%) held the same opinion.

There are no significant differences between the castes, but high-caste men differ significantly from high-caste women (chi-square equals 5.01,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). Men more often (87%) than women (56%) answered that the caste system had become weaker. This difference of opinion probably reflected the fact that women worked in the home where relatively few changes had taken place; men, especially the urban-oriented, had wider contacts in areas where change was more pronounced. Although according to the majority opinion the caste system had become weaker, to assume that it will disappear in the next few decades would be unjustified. Caste is an ancient institution strongly embedded in Indian society. While an occasional caste disability may be removed or weakened, the essentials of the system, endogamy, hierarchy, and ascription by birth, are entirely intact.

*Question 38.* If you had extra rupees, how would you spend them? *agar āp ke pās fālatū rupaye hō, to āp unko kaise kharcēge?*

Twenty-six men and 10 women said that they would save the money or make capital invest-

ments, such as starting a business, building a house, or buying cattle. Five men and two women would spend the money on education. In tables 101 and 102, the foregoing responses are presented under the heading, "savings, education." Eight men and five women would buy consumer goods, such as clothing, food, an automobile, and gold for gifts, or spend it for entertainment. Five men and seven women did not specify how they would spend the money, simply saying that they would spend it slowly, or quickly, or in such a way as to increase the prestige of the family. These responses are classified as "consumer goods, other" in tables 101 and 102. Nineteen men and 18 women said that they would spend their extra rupees, if they had them, for various religious and charitable purposes, responses designated as "religion" in the tables. Many respondents gave more than one answer, in which case we disregarded all but the first one.

We had expected to find that village-oriented people preferred to spend for religious purposes more frequently than the urban-oriented. Although no significant differences could be observed among the categories for men, there are such differences between emigrant and village-oriented women (chi-square equals 12.24,  $.001 < p < .01$ ) and between urban-oriented and village-oriented women (chi-square equals 10.68,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). The urban-oriented women are less interested than the village-oriented women in religious expenditures; they have about the same interest in saving and are considerably more interested in consumer goods.

There is a significant difference between the village-oriented men and the village-oriented women. When the category "consumer goods, other" is combined with "savings, education" to eliminate two cells in table 101 that contain only a single response, chi-square equals 4.89 ( $.02 < p < .05$ ). The village-oriented men are less interested than are the village-oriented women in religious spending and more interested in "savings, education."

There are no significant differences between the castes or sexes.

*Question 39.* Do you go to the cinema? *kyā āp sinamā dekhne jāte hāĩ?*

In tables 103 and 104, the answers to this question were divided on the basis of whether or not the informants had ever gone to a cinema. The "yes" answers include those who visited cinemas only occasionally or perhaps only once or twice in their lives as well as those who went

TABLE 101  
Answers to Question 38<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Religion	Savings, Education	Consumer Goods, Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	7 (35)	10 (50)	3 (15)	20
Commuter	7 (27)	10 (38)	9 (35)	26
Total urban-oriented	14 (30)	20 (43)	12 (26)	46
Village-oriented	5 (29)	11 (65)	1 (06)	17
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	4 (44)	2 (22)	3 (33)	9
Commuter	4 (20)	7 (35)	9 (45)	20
Total urban-oriented	8 (28)	9 (31)	12 (41)	29
Village-oriented	10 (77)	3 (23)	0 (0)	13

<sup>a</sup>How would you spend extra rupees? Informants arranged by category and sex.

regularly. Informants who answered "no" had never been to a cinema.

Among both men and women, emigrants were most likely to have attended the cinema; next in number were the commuters and then the village-oriented. The reason is obvious: there were many cinemas in Delhi but none in the village. A significant difference occurs between commuter and village-oriented men (chi-square equals 5.10,  $.02 < p < .05$ ).

There are significant differences between low-

TABLE 102  
Answers to Question 38<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Religion	Savings, Education	Consumer Goods, Other	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	10 (31)	14 (44)	8 (25)	32
High	9 (29)	17 (55)	5 (16)	31
Total	19 (30)	31 (49)	13 (21)	63
<b>Women</b>				
Low	5 (28)	5 (28)	8 (44)	18
High	13 (54)	7 (29)	4 (17)	24
Total	18 (43)	12 (29)	12 (29)	42

<sup>a</sup>How would you spend extra rupees? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

and high-caste women (chi-square equals 5.76,  $.01 < p < .02$ ) and between low-caste men and low-caste women (chi-square equals 5.25,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). Male and high-caste informants more often than female and low-caste informants had gone to the cinema.

*Question 40.* During the last two or three weeks have you read a newspaper or a magazine? *pichle do-tīn haftō mē āp ne koī akhbār yā rasālā paṛhā hai?*

Among the men, there are significant differences between the emigrants and the village-oriented (chi-square equals 4.34,  $.02 < p < .05$ ) and between the urban-oriented and the village-oriented (chi-square equals 4.45,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). The urban-oriented answered "yes" more often than the village-oriented. Differences in literacy as well as differences in exposure to an urban environment account for these differences among the categories of men. The urban-oriented men were generally better educated than the village-oriented men; the latter were more often completely illiterate. There are no significant differences among the categories of women. Few women read newspapers or magazines, but this was largely because few women were literate. There is a significant difference between the urban-oriented women and the urban-oriented men (chi-square equals 5.74,  $.01 < p < .02$ ).

Although high-caste people were more often literate than low-caste people, and men, more often than women, no significant differences could be observed between the castes or sexes. The villagers really did not read very much, a conclusion supported not only by observation but also by these questionnaire data. Of the 119 people who answered the question, only 20 (17%) said that they had read a newspaper or magazine in the previous two or three weeks.

*Question 41.* Where would you prefer living: Shanti Nagar, Delhi, or some other village? *āp kahā rahnā pasand karēge: śānti nagar, dillī, yā koī dūstre gāv?*

Most people answered Shanti Nagar or Delhi. Few informants mentioned another village or city. Eighteen people said that they had no preference, usually explaining that they would live where they could earn a living. As one man commented, "There is no preference; one lives where one can earn a living. To act out one's preferences will take a long time in India." Six women said they wanted to live with their relatives, and one man wanted to live in America. In tables 107 and 108, we grouped the responses under three headings: "city" included all those

TABLE 103  
Answers to Question 39<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	No	Yes	Total
Men			
Emigrant	8 (40)	12 (60)	20
Commuter	20 (69)	9 (31)	29
Total urban-oriented	28 (57)	21 (43)	49
Village-oriented	16 (80)	4 (20)	20
Women			
Emigrant	8 (67)	4 (33)	12
Commuter	18 (75)	6 (25)	24
Total urban-oriented	26 (72)	10 (28)	36
Village-oriented	15 (100)	0 (0)	15

<sup>a</sup>Do you attend the cinema? Informants arranged by category and sex.

who answered Delhi or any other city and also the one man who wanted to live in the United States; "village" included those who answered Shanti Nagar or any other village; "no preference" included those who said that they had no preference or that they wanted to live with their relatives.

Emigrant and commuter men differ significantly (chi-square equals 10.26,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). Male emigrants preferred the city more frequently than either the male commuters or the village-oriented men. Among the categories of women, the commuters differ significantly from the village-oriented (chi-square equals 9.21,  $.001 < p < .01$ ); and the urban-oriented from the village-oriented (chi-square equals 7.81,  $.02$

TABLE 104  
Answers to Question 39<sup>a</sup>  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	No	Yes	Total
Men			
Low	24 (69)	11 (31)	35
High	20 (59)	14 (41)	34
Total	44 (64)	25 (36)	69
Women			
Low	24 (96)	1 (04)	25
High	17 (65)	9 (35)	26
Total	41 (80)	10 (20)	51

<sup>a</sup>Do you attend the cinema? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 105**  
**Answers to Question 40<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	No	Yes	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	14 (70)	6 (30)	20
Commuter	19 (66)	10 (34)	29
Total urban-oriented	33 (67)	16 (33)	49
Village-oriented	19 (95)	1 (05)	20
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	10 (83)	2 (17)	12
Commuter	23 (96)	1 (04)	24
Total urban-oriented	33 (92)	3 (08)	36
Village-oriented	14 (100)	0 ( 0)	14

<sup>a</sup>Have you read a newspaper recently? Informants arranged by category and sex.

$< p < .05$ ). These differences principally reflect the fact that not a single village-oriented woman said she preferred to live in a city.

Low-caste and high-caste men differ significantly (chi-square equals 7.73,  $.02 < p < .05$ ). Low-caste men preferred the city much more frequently than did high-caste men. The same trend is noticeable for the women; 32 percent of the low-caste women but only 12 percent of those of high caste preferred the city. However, for women, the difference between low and high caste is not significant.

**Question 42. Why? kyō?**

Thirty-nine men and 17 women gave basically economic reasons for their preference (e.g., one

**TABLE 106**  
**Answers to Question 40<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	No	Yes	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	30 (86)	5 (14)	35
High	22 (65)	12 (35)	34
Total	52 (75)	17 (25)	69
<b>Women</b>			
Low	24 (100)	0 ( 0)	24
High	23 (88)	3 (12)	26
Total	47 (94)	3 (06)	50

<sup>a</sup>Have you read a newspaper recently? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 107**  
**Answers to Question 41<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Village	City	No Preference	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Emigrant	5 (25)	10 (50)	5 (25)	20
Commuter	20 (69)	4 (14)	5 (17)	29
Total urban-oriented	25 (51)	14 (29)	10 (20)	49
Village-oriented	12 (60)	4 (20)	4 (20)	20
<b>Women</b>				
Emigrant	4 (33)	4 (33)	4 (33)	12
Commuter	13 (54)	7 (29)	4 (17)	24
Total urban-oriented	17 (47)	11 (31)	8 (22)	36
Village-oriented	13 (87)	0 ( 0)	2 (13)	15

<sup>a</sup>Do you prefer living in a city or a village? Informants arranged by category and sex.

can earn a living, your country is where you have a job, one can live well there). Seventeen men and 19 women answered that they preferred their home (e.g., I was born here, I like village life, this is my native place, I know everyone, I want to be with my husband or other relatives). Five men and three women gave health as a reason (e.g., the climate is better, one's health is better, the diet is better). Only two men, both of a low caste, cited social pressures: one man stated that he did not want to be subservient to anyone, and the other said, "Because there is no

**TABLE 108**  
**Answers to Question 41<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Village	City	No Preference	Total
<b>Men</b>				
Low	14 (40)	14 (40)	7 (20)	35
High	23 (68)	4 (12)	7 (21)	34
Total	37 (54)	18 (26)	14 (20)	69
<b>Women</b>				
Low	13 (52)	8 (32)	4 (16)	25
High	17 (65)	3 (12)	6 (23)	26
Total	30 (59)	11 (22)	10 (20)	51

<sup>a</sup>Do you prefer living in a city or a village? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 109**  
**Answers to Question 42<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Economic	Home, Health	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	14 (74)	5 (26)	19
Commuter	14 (56)	11 (44)	25
Total urban-oriented	28 (64)	16 (36)	44
Village-oriented	11 (58)	8 (42)	19
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	4 (50)	4 (50)	8
Commuter	9 (47)	10 (53)	19
Total urban-oriented	13 (48)	14 (52)	27
Village-oriented	4 (33)	8 (67)	12

<sup>a</sup>Reason for preference for living in a city or a village. Informants arranged by category and sex.

pressure from anyone in Delhi. Here the landlords trouble us; they have lands and fields; we have nothing." We established two classes of reasons in tables 109 and 110: "economic" which included only the economic reasons, and "home, health" which included all of the rest.

No significant differences are evident among the categories for either men or women, between the castes, or between the sexes. However, it is of some interest that a majority of men (62%) gave economic reasons; a majority of women (56%) answered "home, health."

It is noteworthy that only two low-caste men cited social pressure as a reason for their choice of residence. For this question as for others, such as question 2, to which low-caste men might have given freedom from some of the disadvantages arising from their low-caste status as a reason for following a particular course of action, we find that this motive was subordinated to other, especially economic, considerations. It seems to us that this reasoning was based principally on the fact that the chief disabilities that stemmed from low-caste status were economic. When low-caste men spoke of "pressure" and "trouble," they generally meant economic pressure because almost all of them were landless. However, question 34, which asks the reason for an extremely improbable choice, elicited from low-caste men a high proportion of responses (24 out of 27) that criticized the social restrictions and conflicts involved in the caste system. In general, when asking about actual courses of action or presenting a number of alternatives with which

**TABLE 110**  
**Answers to Question 42<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Economic	Home, Health	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	19 (59)	13 (41)	32
High	20 (65)	11 (35)	31
Total	39 (62)	24 (38)	63
<b>Women</b>			
Low	11 (52)	10 (48)	21
High	6 (33)	12 (67)	18
Total	17 (44)	22 (56)	39

<sup>a</sup>Reason for preference for living in a city or a village. Informants arranged by caste and sex.

**TABLE 111**  
**Answers to Question 43<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	No	Yes	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	14 (78)	4 (22)	18
Commuter	22 (76)	7 (24)	29
Total urban-oriented	36 (77)	11 (23)	47
Village-oriented	12 (71)	5 (29)	17
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	9 (75)	3 (25)	12
Commuter	15 (75)	5 (25)	20
Total urban-oriented	24 (75)	8 (25)	32
Village-oriented	11 (79)	3 (21)	14

<sup>a</sup>Would an orthodox Hindu have difficulty living in Delhi? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 112**  
**Answers to Question 43<sup>a</sup>**  
 (Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	No	Yes	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	30 (91)	3 (09)	33
High	18 (58)	13 (42)	31
Total	48 (75)	16 (25)	64
<b>Women</b>			
Low	17 (74)	6 (26)	23
High	18 (78)	5 (22)	23
Total	35 (76)	11 (24)	46

<sup>a</sup>Would an orthodox Hindu have difficulty living in Delhi? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

an informant could very easily be faced, we find that economic considerations tended to dominate the answers of low-caste men. When offering choices that, under present conditions, were definitely unrealistic, such as asking an informant if he would like to live where there was no caste, we find that noneconomic considerations became more prominent.

*Question 43.* In your opinion, would an orthodox Hindu have any difficulty living in Delhi? *āp ke vicār mē kyā kisī karmī-dharmī hindū ko dillī rahne mē koī muškāl hogī?*

No significant differences could be observed among the categories or between the sexes. Approximately three-fourths of the informants of all categories said that an orthodox Hindu would have no difficulty living in Delhi.

There is a significant difference between low-caste men and high-caste men (chi-square equals 7.53,  $.001 < p < .01$ ). The high-caste men more often (42%) foresaw difficulties from urban living than did low-caste men (9%).

*Question 44.* Why? *kyō?*

We asked for reasons only of those who replied to question 43 by saying that an orthodox Hindu would have trouble. Thus, question 44 was asked of only 16 men and 11 women, all of whom answered. In question 43 that asked for a judgment about an orthodox Hindu rather than about the informant himself, the wording was an effort to maximize the opportunities to point to religious consider-

**TABLE 113**  
**Answers to Question 44<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Category	Economic, Other	Religious	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Emigrant	2 (50)	2 (50)	4
Commuter	3 (43)	4 (57)	7
Total urban-oriented	5 (45)	6 (55)	11
Village-oriented	4 (80)	1 (20)	5
<b>Women</b>			
Emigrant	2 (67)	1 (33)	3
Commuter	5 (100)	0 (0)	5
Total urban-oriented	7 (88)	1 (13)	8
Village-oriented	3 (100)	0 (0)	3

<sup>a</sup>Why would an orthodox Hindu have difficulty living in Delhi? Informants arranged by category and sex.

**TABLE 114**  
**Answers to Question 44<sup>a</sup>**  
(Figures in parentheses are row percentages.)

Caste	Economic, Other	Religious	Total
<b>Men</b>			
Low	2 (67)	1 (33)	3
High	7 (54)	6 (46)	13
Total	9 (56)	7 (44)	16
<b>Women</b>			
Low	6 (100)	0 (0)	6
High	4 (80)	1 (20)	5
Total	10 (91)	1 (09)	11

<sup>a</sup>Why would an orthodox Hindu have difficulty living in Delhi? Informants arranged by caste and sex.

ations, especially ritual purity and pollution. Seven men and one woman gave such answers (there is tap water, latrines are inside houses, nobody believes in caste, there is no room for worship and other ceremonies, how can one keep his practices in Delhi, vegetarians may face a few difficulties). Two answers are worth quoting in full because they express a point of view that we had expected to hear considerably more often than we did in view of the emphasis on orthodox (*karmī-dharmī*) Hinduism in question 43. A village-oriented Jat man said, "If he doesn't cook his own, but eats at hotels, drinks water at taps. Worst of all, Delhi has cinemas and theaters; if he lives in Delhi, he will surely go in that direction some time or other. In the village his religion will always be safe." An emigrant Mali Gardener man said, "An orthodox Hindu won't drink tap water because the tap contains a leather washer; he'll be afraid of sitting with people who may be of unknown caste; he won't be able to eat anywhere—it may be a Muslim's shop."

Two men cited reasons of health. Two men and two women said that the city would present difficulties because it would be unfamiliar (one doesn't feel at home in Delhi without his fields, one does not know his way around Delhi, one does not know the urban tricks). Five men and eight women gave economic reasons (high rent, expensive, no income there). In tables 113 and 114, we established two classes of reasons: "religious" which included considerations of ritual pollution and religion in general, and "economic, other" which included all the others.

There are no significant differences among the categories. Although the number of respondents is small, suggesting considerable caution in drawing conclusions, it is nonetheless noteworthy that most of the "religious" responses were given by urban-oriented people; the village-oriented

informants answered almost entirely under "economic, other."

There are no significant differences between the castes or the sexes. Men (44%) rather than women (9%) seemed to be concerned with difficulties arising from religion.

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