

379
N81
No, 5112

THE ROLE OF THE PEASANT MASSES IN MARXIAN POLITICAL
THEORY AND PRACTICE: A COMPARISON OF
CLASSICAL AND INDIAN MARXIAN VIEWS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Eapen P. Mathews, B. A.

Denton, Texas

December, 1975

Mathews, Eapen P., The Role of the Peasant Masses in Marxian Political Theory and Practices: A Comparison of Classical and Indian Marxian Views. Master of Arts (Political Science), December, 1975, 167 pp., 13 tables, 2 maps, bibliography, 142 titles.

The central thesis is classical Marxian views concerning the peasant masses have been adopted regarding India; two causal factors are the Hindu caste system and parliamentary democracy.

Descriptive and analytical methodology is utilized to study classical and Indian Marxian theory and its relationship to "Marxist" practice in India.

Four major elements involved are: wealthy landowners, poor and landless peasants, the Indian government, and Indian communists.

Nonimplemented land reforms and recent capitalist farming compounded the problem. Attacks were launched on the Congress government by three communist parties. Government coalition has included the CPI, and has implemented agrarian reforms advocated by the CPI(M), thereby postponing possible militant communist success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF MAPS	vi
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Maoism in India	
Classical Marxism and the Peasantry	
V. I. Lenin's View of the Peasantry	
M. N. Roy and V. I. Lenin on the	
"National and Colonial Question"	
Relations with the National Bourgeoisie	
The Use of Violence as a Means of Achieving	
Socialism	
II. THE HINDU CASTE SYSTEM: SOCIAL CLASS AND	
POLITICAL ACTIVITY	35
Historical Background of the Indian	
Caste System	
Spirituality of "Essential Hinduism"	
Versus Marxist Secular Materialism	
The Relationship of Caste to Social Class	
Caste and Electoral Politics	
1951 Andhra Elections	
1955 Andhra Elections	
Some Concluding Remarks	
III. INDIAN COMMUNISM AND THE PEASANTRY.	88
Introduction	
Capitalism or "semi-Feudalism in India?"	
"Land Reform" Legislation	
The Communist Party of India -- Early	
Background and Strategy	
The Communist Class Analysis of the	
Indian State	
Indian Communist Mobilization of the	
Peasantry--Tactics and Goals	
West Bengal: A Case Study	
Conclusions	
IV. BHOODAN YAJNA--AN ATTEMPTED ALTERNATIVE	124

	Page
IV. Continued	
"Ghandhism" as Philosophical Basis of Sarvodaya	
Materialist Basis of Marxism and the "Spiritual" Basis of Sarvodaya	
Sarvodaya as a Revolutionary Ideology --Programs of Bhoodan and Gramdan	
Conclusion	
V. PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF PEASANT MOBIL- IZATION: SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS. . . .	143
The Causes of Peasant Quiescence in India	
The Relevance of the CPI(M) Strategy for Mass Peasant Mobilization	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	157

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. The Positions of Kautsky and Lenin Concerning the Tactics of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and Corresponding Indian Marxist Views.	30
II. Cumulative Percentages of the Households in Rural Areas Operating Land, and the Total Land Operated by Them, Classified According to Size of Operated Holdings . . .	47
III. Occupational Distribution of Different Caste Ranks Among Hindu Rural Households, 1952-1954.	56
IV. Percentages of Population and Land Ownership by Caste, in Southern Chingleput Villages	57
V. Caste Solidarity.	65
VI. Caste Solidarity and Political Alliance	66
VII. Number of Candidates by Major Castes in Andhra Delta Districts in 1946, 1951, and 1955 State Assembly Elections.	70
VIII. Number of Elected Legislators by Major Castes in Andhra Delta Districts in 1946, 1951, and 1955 State Assembly Elections.	71
IX. Communist Kamma Strongholds in Andhra As Shown in 1951 and 1955 Elections.	80
X. Defeated 1951 Communist Kamma Candidates in Andhra Delta Districts.	81
XI. How Strong Are the Communists?.	121
XII. Distribution of Operational Holdings in India by Size Groups, 1950-1951	125
XIII. Distribution of Bhoodan, Gramdan, and Sarvodaya Workers by State	138

LIST OF MAPS

Map	Page
I. Andhra--1951 Elections	72
II. The Indian State of West Bengal and Its Districts	107

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

India, in 1975, is a predominantly rural nation. According to the Government of India's 1971 Census, the population of India was 547,949,809. Twenty-five per cent of the population was classified urban, seventy-five per cent rural. Criteria stipulated in defining "urban" were

(1) towns (places with municipal corporation, municipal area committee, town committee, notified area committee or cantonment board); (2) also all places having 5,000 or more inhabitants a density of not less than 1,000 persons per square mile, pronounced urban characteristics and at least three fourths of the adult male population employed in pursuits other than agriculture.¹

The United Nation's estimated projection of the Indian population for 1972 was 563,494,000; the urban-rural percentage remains the same as that cited above.² Given the size of the rural population, this can provide a broad mass base of peasant support for political change. To examine and report the ways in which the Indian peasants are to be and are being used by the Marxist elements in India is the basis of this thesis.

¹United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1972 Demographic Yearbook, (United Nations, New York, 1973), pp. 148, 154.

²Ibid., p. 148.

This study will seek to analyze the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels concerning the peasant masses in society and more particularly as they pertain to the peasants in Indian society. This author finds a succession of "orthodox" and "revisionist" Marxist theoreticians (including Lenin, Karl Kautsky, and Mao Tse-Tung), examining the agrarian question. The role of the peasant masses in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century Indian Marxian and non-Marxian socialist thought is in need of further study.

The theoretical investigation has concerned questions as to the nature of the peasant masses: (1) What is the historic nature of this group? (2) What are the political, economic, and social functions it has performed and is to perform as a group in society? What has been and is to be its relationship to the ruling group in non-socialist and socialist society?

The term "socialist" used herein rather generally includes the "scientific socialism" of orthodox Marxism and the "young" Nehru, as well as the "utopian communitarian" socialism of Gandhi and the "old" Jayaprakash Narayan.

Following the general theoretical consideration, the leading Indian socialist (Marxist and non-Marxist) literature has been examined and out of this two major themes have been found: (1) the use of violence in achieving "Indian socialism," and (2) the material basis of Marxist socialism as juxtaposed with the nonmaterial, "spiritual" basis of a predominantly Hindu society.

The hypothesis of this study is first, classical Marxian views concerning the masses have been modified, as in the case of China,³ to fit the Indian scene; second, the resulting theoretical modifications are derivatives of a unique combination of two factors endemic to contemporary Indian society: the socio-cultural factor as seen in the Hindu caste system; the political factor as seen in the workings of parliamentary democracy.

In order for this study to bear some semblance of fullness, it has to go beyond a mere descriptive analysis of classical Marxian and Indian socialist theory with regard to the peasant masses. Study of the actual agrarian social and political movements arising from the attempt to implement Indian "socialist" theory--both Marxian and non-Marxian--continues. In the study, the Hindu caste system and the position of the peasant group in that system have been useful. The definition of the term "peasant masses" as utilized in this study is limited to mean those rural elements of society whose subsistence is directly dependent upon or connected to the working of the land. This definition is intended to include all sections of the peasantry from the landless, agricultural laborer and the poor peasant to the middle-level and rich peasantry (including the wealthy landlords).

In many instances the proposed programs of various groups in Indian society have been modified or completely discarded, due to the political and cultural circumstances in India.

³Brantly Womack, "Theory and Practice in the Thought of Mao-Tse-Tung," The Logic of Maoism, (New York, 1974).

A case in point illustrating such a transformation in theoretical and practical political strategy in India is that of Jayaprakash Narayan. Having been involved as a youth with Gandhi in the Indian Independence movement, he left in 1922 for the United States to study. In 1922, while studying for his master's degree in sociology at the University of Wisconsin, he read the writings of Karl Marx and his followers and became fully converted to Marxism. Freedom for India still remained his goal, but the Marxian "science of revolution seemed to offer a surer and quicker way to it than the technique of Gandhi."⁴

Marxism provided Narayan with another goal, that of equality. It became apparent to him that political independence for India was not enough; it had to be accomplished by freedom of the masses from exploitation and poverty. Jawaharlal Nehru, too, future Prime Minister of India, was similarly influenced by Marxian socialist thought in the early 1930s. A valuable source is Nehru's autobiography, Toward Freedom. While involved with the Indian Independence movement, Nehru wrote in 1933:

... the theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many a dark corner of my mind. History came to have a new meaning for me. The Marxist interpretation threw a flood of light on it, and

⁴Jayaprakash Narayan, Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy, (Asia Publishing House, New York, 1964), Introduction, p. x.

it became an unfolding drama with some order and purpose. ...In spite of the appalling waste and misery of the past and the present, the future was bright with hope... It was the essential freedom from dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism that appealed to me...

The great world crisis and slump seemed to justify the Marxist analysis.⁵

Thus Nehru's position. J. P. Narayan shaped his position through his valuable theoretical and practical contributions made regarding the agrarian section of Indian society.

An excellent source of information concerning Narayan's theoretical contribution regarding the agrarian section of Indian society is Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy.⁶ Edited by Professor Bimla Prasad (M.A., Patna, Ph.D., Columbia), it comprises selected works of Jayaprakash Narayan. Here, Narayan's emphasis on India's eighty per cent rural population was best expressed in his Democratic Socialist thinking concerning agriculture. His capacity to think independently of dogmatic Marxism is also revealed in the same. Thus, while advocating cooperative and collective farming, he visualized the Indian village as being the unit for agricultural production, as opposed to the Soviet situation, where a conglomeration of several villages with huge collective farm lands existed as the unit.

⁵Jawaharlal Nehru, Toward Freedom, (John Day Company, New York, 1941), p. 230.

⁶Jayaprakash Narayan, op. cit.

In Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy, Narayan visualizes the Indian village as an actively cooperating unit in a larger economic system. Also, the transition to cooperative farming was to be slow, gradual, and non-coercive; not hurried and coerced as in the Soviet Union. For Narayan, even the techniques of agricultural production were to be different from those employed in Soviet agriculture. Indians would need fewer labor-saving devices in view of their large population and shortage of land compared to the smaller population and vast virgin lands of the Soviet Union.⁷

In his article "Jayaprakash Narayan," Minoo Masani presents an updated account of Narayan's thought and practice.⁸ Masani, a personal friend of Narayan and also a fellow worker during the Indian Independence movement, together with Narayan established the Congress Socialist Party in 1938. Concerning Narayan's involvement with the Indian agrarian sector, Masani claims that "Jayaprakash has devoted the last two decades of his life in the villages spreading the Gandhian doctrine of Trusteeship..."⁹

⁷ Ibid., p. xiii.

⁸ Minoo Masani, "Jayaprakash Narayan," Illustrated Weekly of India, Vol. XCV, 12 (May 19, 1974), p. 6.

⁹ Ibid., p. 8.

Masani's article has proved valuable because it traces Narayan's political thought and political involvement from the 1920's up to 1974. The article also focuses on Narayan's mass non-violent campaign of 1974 which called for dissolution of the state legislature of Bihar because of widespread governmental corruption, due to which the Sarvodaya, land reform, and rural self-help programs were being hindered.

An examination of the Gandhian doctrine of trusteeship is most relevant for an understanding of Gandhi's views concerning the position of the peasant masses in Indian society. A source suited for this purpose is Gandhi's My Socialism.¹⁰

According to his theory of trusteeship, Gandhi asserted that a wealthy individual who has gained his wealth either by way of legacy or by means of trade and industry should realize that "all that wealth does not belong to (him), what belongs to (him) is the right to an honourable livelihood, no better than that enjoyed by millions of others. The rest of (his) wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community."¹¹

In My Socialism, Gandhi applied this theory of Trusteeship to the agrarian sector: the wealthy landowners are to

¹⁰Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, My Socialism, (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1959).

¹¹Ibid., p. 40.

conceive of themselves as trustees of the land and therefore to utilize the products of the land for the benefit of all, especially the landless agricultural laborers. The wealthy landowners may have to be "forced" to comply with the theory of trusteeship by means of united nonviolent resistance by the laborers.¹²

While investigating Gandhi's views concerning the peasant masses, it is interesting also to note some of Mao Tse-Tung's views concerning the peasant masses and their role in society. This is important for the reason that both men were prominent leaders of the masses (predominantly rural and peasant) as well as the intellectual articulators of respective mass revolutionary movements.

In Mao Tse-Tung and Gandhi, J. Bandyopadhyaya compares and contrasts the various perspectives on social, economic, and political transformation found in Mao's and Gandhi's thought.¹³ According to Bandyopadhyaya, approximately 80 per cent of the population, in both Gandhi's and Mao's political settings, lived in the agricultural sector, which was characterized by "semi-feudal and exploitative relations

¹²Ibid., pp. 43, 44.

¹³J. Bandyopadhyaya, Mao Tse-Tung and Gandhi, (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1973). Bandyopadhyaya is professor and Head of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Calcutta. The ideas in his work were articulated during his two years of research and teaching at the American University and at Columbia University.

of production, fragmentation and subdivision of holdings, considerable tenancy, landlessness and disguised unemployment, and abysmal poverty."¹⁴ Therefore, all of Gandhi's and Mao's political, social and economic strategies and tactics, including the general ideological framework, had to be adjusted to the mobilization, socialization, and upliftment of the oppressed and famished peasant masses.

In Chapter Three (People's War and Satyagraha), Bandyopadhyaya examines the theoretical and tactical aspects of Gandhian and Maoist thought concerning the peasant masses. For Mao, people's war is a war waged by politically organized masses, rather than by a standing army on behalf of the masses. This belief in the immense power of revolutionary consciousness of the popular masses (especially the peasants) has led Mao to insist that they, rather than weapons decide the issue of victory or defeat in a war. Bandyopadhyaya further claims the same is essentially true of mass Satyagraha (the Gandhian technique of non-violent resistance) also, more so because of its inalienably nonviolent character.¹⁵

Since people's war in China and mass Satyagraha in India took place in a primarily agrarian context, the most

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 43, 44.

important organizational requirement for both was the political mobilization of the peasantry. At this juncture, Bandyopadhyaya provides a concise examination of the manner in which Maoist thought deviates from that of Marx and Engels and Lenin with regard to the peasant masses.

Bandyopadhyaya's first claim is that Marx and Engels regarded the peasantry as a property-oriented and relatively reactionary class which could not be expected to act as the vanguard of the revolution.¹⁶ The socialist revolution envisaged by them was essentially a proletarian revolution. Bandyopadhyaya advances his position concerning the views of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao as follows.

Marx and Engels regarded the capitalist transformation of Asiatic societies as an inalienable prerequisite to a revolution in these societies. Lenin visualized the possibility of the occurrence of armed revolutions in the predominantly agrarian Asiatic societies even before such revolutions could be expected in the advanced capitalist countries. However, Lenin was speaking only of a possibility and thought that a peasant revolution could develop in Asia only with the help of the international proletariat.

As noted by Bandyopadhyaya, given the

socio-economic condition of China the peasantry was the only possible mass base for the revolution, and Mao had the courage to look this massive reality in the face and take it with both

¹⁶Ibid., p. 45.

hands to make the revolution. From 1927 onwards he had practically no doubt left in his mind regarding the feasibility and desirability of a peasant revolution in China.¹⁷

Given the socio-economic condition of contemporary India, the peasantry, here too, seems to be the only possible mass base for a revolution and particularly a "socialist revolution," be it Gandhian or Marxist. However, the crucial question appears to be whether or not the socio-cultural and politico-historical factors such as mass adherence to the Hindu caste system and the institution of parliamentary democracy will hinder a Chinese-type mass revolutionary upsurge. Also, the situation in India lacks an external threat from a tangible enemy such as the Japanese; one that successfully enabled the Chinese Communists to rally the masses while providing a vent for their latent nationalism.

A concise summary of Mao's contribution to Marxist-Leninist theory is provided by Bandyopadhyaya:

It was this peasant base and essentially agrarian character of the Maoist revolution that impelled Mao to innovate the transitional ideology of the "new democratic revolution," in which the emphasis was on the broad alliance of the masses rather than on the leadership of the proletariat, and to name the government which came to power in 1949 as the "people's democratic dictatorship" rather than dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 45, 46.

In The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung, Stuart Schram notes Mao's claim that "guerilla warfare is the key to the victory of the revolution in a backward country."¹⁹

In a text quoted by Schram, Mao claims that armed struggle in the form of guerilla warfare, in a backward, semi-feudal country such as pre-revolutionary China, is "the inevitable and therefore the best form of struggle for the people's armed forces to overcome the armed enemy and create their own strongholds."²⁰

Maoism in India

It is the Maoist advocacy of armed rural struggle in the form of violent guerilla warfare that has proven to be the most influential aspect of Maoism to effect the Maoist faction of contemporary Indian communists. The two major groups of Maoists active in the Indian political scene are the Naxalites of Bengal, whose party affiliation is the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), and the Naxalites of Andhra.

In Socialism and Communism in India, Sankar Ghose provides an informative and well documented chapter entitled

¹⁹ Stuart R. Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung (New York, 1971), p. 372. Schram is Professor of Politics, University of London, and Head of Contemporary China Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 374, 375.

"Maoism and the Naxalites."²¹ This work provides excellent material concerning the philosophical and historical backgrounds of Socialist and Communist thought in India, as well as detailed, well-documented analyses of the three factions of the Communist Party of India.

Sankar Ghose, in the chapter "Maoism and the Naxalites" claims that according to the Indian Maoists their basic task is to "liberate the rural areas through armed agrarian revolution and then to encircle the cities and, finally, to liberate them. (The Maoist faction) has pledged itself to the task of bringing about an agrarian revolution in the light of Mao's teachings."²² An analysis of the theory and practice of the Maoist elements in India will be provided in Chapter III.

Classical Marxism and the Peasantry

J. Bandyopadhyaya's claim that Marx and Engels regarded the peasantry as a property-oriented and relatively reactionary class which could not be expected to act as the vanguard of the revolution²³ is echoed by David Mitraný in Marx Against the Peasant.²⁴

²¹Sankar Ghose, Socialism and Communism in India, (Bombay, 1971). Ghose is an Indian Political Science scholar.

²²Ibid., p. 443.

²³J. Bandyopadhyaya, op. cit., p. 45.

²⁴David Mitraný, Marx Against the Peasant, (University of North Carolina Press, 1951). Mitraný, at the time of publication was Permanent Member and formerly Professor in the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton); Sometime Visiting Professor in Government (Harvard); and William Dodge Lecturer (Yale).

Mitrany attributes the causes of antagonism between the urban proletariat and the peasantry to the growth of industry and to Marxist socialism. With the growth of industry the economic interests and problems of the urban working class and the rural masses became more differentiated. According to Mitrany, Marxist socialism

was a doctrine based upon the facts of industrial evolution and devised for the benefit of the industrial workers. (Therefore) its central demand for the collective ownership and the large-scale use of the means of production flouted the traditional ways and claims of the (peasant), i.e., the stubbornly individualistic tiller of the soil.²⁵

The idea of a rural proletariat had been stated by Marx and Engels in 1850 when they warned the German comrades against allowing the landed estates to be divided and re-distributed among the peasants on an individual basis. The German workers were to "demand that the confiscated property remain public property and be converted into workers' settlements, to be cultivated by the associated agricultural proletariat..."²⁶ Mitrany, quoting directly from Marx in the preceding statement, points to the collectivist, revolutionary view of agricultural production propounded by Marx.

In his The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte Marx's lack of faith in the ability of the peasant masses

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 4, 6.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 43.

to perform a revolutionary role in the socialist transformation is pronounced. Using the peasant masses of mid-nineteenth century France as subjects of study, Marx disclaims their existence as a social class. He states:

In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited government power that protects them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.²⁷

Marx claimed that "the peasants find their natural ally and leader in the urban proletariat, whose task is the overthrow of the bourgeois order."²⁸ In short, Marx's general view of the peasantry was that of an amorphous, unorganized, individually oriented, uneducated conservative mass that did not constitute a social class. The peasant masses were to be led to revolutionary triumph by a tightly knit, well-disciplined, revolutionary-conscious urban proletariat.

²⁷ Lewis S. Feuer, ed., "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, New York, 1959.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 512.

V. I. Lenin's View of the Peasantry

V. I. Lenin, recognizing the claims made by Marx regarding the relationship between the urban proletariat and the peasantry, sought to adapt the Marxian theoretical claims to the practical situation found in the economically underdeveloped and agrarian Russian society. Herein lies the crucial importance of Leninist agrarian theory and practice to early Indian Marxist theoreticians such as M. N. Roy and contemporary Indian Marxist theoreticians such as Harekrishna Konar.

Lenin's Alliance of the Working Class and the Peasantry and Anna Rochester's Lenin on the Agrarian Question are valuable sources concerning Lenin's views on the peasantry. In his work he emphatically claimed that the rural working and exploited masses consisting of three groups, must be lead into the revolutionary struggle by the urban proletariat. He lists these rural categories: (1) the agricultural proletariat, who obtain their livelihood by working for hire in capitalist agricultural enterprises; (2) the semi-proletarians, or dwarf peasants, those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage-laborers in agricultural and industrial capitalist enterprises and partly by working on their own, or rented plots of land and; (3) the "small peasantry, i.e., the small tillers, who hold either as owners or tenants, small plots of land which enable them

to meet the requirements of their families and their farms without hiring outside labor."²⁹

According to Lenin the three above-enumerated categories of the rural population are

capable of giving resolute support to the revolutionary proletariat only after the latter has won political power, only after it has resolutely dealt with the big landowner and capitalist and only after these down-trodden people see in practice that they have an organized leader and champion, strong enough to assist and lead them and to show them the right path.³⁰

Lenin proceeds to categorize the "middle peasants" as small tillers who also hold, as owners or tenants, plots of land and who accumulate a certain surplus and therefore are able to hire outside labor. This stratum must be "neutralized."

As an important tactical concession, Lenin stipulated that in the majority of capitalist countries, (in this case he included Russia) the proletarian state should not immediately abolish private property completely; at all events, it is to guarantee both the small and middle peasantry the preservation and enlargement of their plots of land by abolition of rent. Concerning the collectivization of agriculture, Lenin suggested a gradual, voluntary policy.

²⁹V. I. Lenin, Alliance of the Working Class and the Peasantry, (Moscow, 1959), pp. 343, 344.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 345, 346.

Even upon coming to power, Lenin's "new government did not propose immediate collectivization."³¹ However, lands with highly developed forms of cultivation were to be maintained intact and cultivated either by the state or by the communes.

Lenin's strong emphasis on the leadership of the urban working class in the Communist Revolution is closely related to his theory of revolution in the underdeveloped countries and his debate with M. N. Roy, the leader of the early communist movement in India.

M. N. Roy and V. I. Lenin on the
"National and Colonial Question"

Stuart Schram, in The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung, presents a concise outline of Roy's and Lenin's theses concerning revolution in the colonial areas.³² The phenomenon of the politico-economic domination of Europe and America over the developing and/or dependent countries referred to as "imperialism" drew the attention of all socialist politicians and thinkers in the early twentieth century.

According to Schram, Edward Bernstein regarded colonization as a service rendered by the civilized peoples; Karl Kautsky considered it the negation of a civilizing

³¹Anna Rochester, Lenin on the Agrarian Question, (New York, 1942), p. 103.

³²Stuart R. Schram, op. cit.

mission; but nearly all saw the colonial peoples as passive objects. Even an extreme revolutionary such as Rosa Luxemburg was convinced that resistance on the part of the colonial peoples was impossible and that the world revolution could be saved only by the European proletariat. In his introduction to The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung, Schram points out that Lenin was one of the few to break out of this Europocentrism and to suggest that Asia could play an active role in world revolution.

Schram then notes the first proposition of Lenin's theory of imperialism: "it was the profits from the exploitation of Asia and Africa that enabled the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries to corrupt part of their own working class; by cutting off this possibility, a revolution in the colonies would contribute to the outbreak of revolution in the mother country."³³

Schram proceeds to mention the general principles of the remaining Leninist propositions that have remained fixed over the years. These include the propositions that -- as in the more highly developed capitalist countries -- there will be two stages to the revolution, a bourgeois-democratic and a socialist stage, but because of factors of backwardness and dependence, the roles of the various classes will be somewhat different. In essence, this means that because of

³³Ibid., pp. 36, 37.

backwardness, the peasantry will play a greater part, and because of common hostility to foreign domination, the bourgeoisie of the colonial countries will play a more progressive role than its European counterpart.³⁴

In Socialism and Communism in India, Sankar Ghose claims that M. N. Roy, one of the first Indian communist theoreticians and activist (1887-1954) passed through three phases. In the first, which lasted until 1919, Roy was a national revolutionary engaged in smuggling arms and money for the terrorist revolutionary movement in Bengal. In the second phase, he was a Marxist engaged in active communist movement in Mexico, Russia, China and India. In the last phase, Roy emerged as a "radical humanist who had disowned Marxism (for) some kind of liberal humanism."³⁵

Two points of difference between M. N. Roy and V. I. Lenin concerning the colonial question were made evident at the Second Comintern Congress in July, 1920. In his aforementioned work, Schram claims that the

two men differed first of all on the respective importance of the proletarian revolution in Europe and revolutionary upheaval in the colonies. Roy made of the latter a condition sine qua non of the former. This was too much for Lenin, who was willing to give equal weight to Europe and Asia, but unwilling to ... make of the European workers mere passive objects awaiting the initiative from the East ...³⁶

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 37, 38.

³⁵ Sankar Ghose, op. cit., p. 143.

³⁶ Stuart Schram, op. cit., p. 39.

According to Schram and Ghose, the position of Lenin was clearly endorsed by the Comintern Congress, although at the insistence of Lenin, Roy's radical thesis was also adopted. However, this did not check the tendency of Asian communists to regard their countries as the true home of revolution in the twentieth century.³⁷ As a result of the predominantly agrarian character of Asian economics, Marxian political theory has had to take cognizance of the large peasant masses available as a resource for political, economic, and social change.

Further to the above point, John H. Kautsky, in Moscow and the Communist Party of India, claims that in practically none of the developing countries have the communists in any real sense of the word been a working class party. Rather they have been intellectuals seeking a popular base where they could find it. In this search, they have never looked exclusively to the industrial working class but have also "sought out the petty bourgeoisie and at least some sections of the peasantry, both of which can easily be characterized as exploited classes in underdeveloped countries."³⁸

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ John H. Kautsky, Moscow and the Communist Party of India, (John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1956), p. 11. Kautsky is Professor at the Department of Political Science at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

Relations with the National Bourgeoisie

The second point at issue between Lenin and Roy concerned relations with bourgeois revolutionaries. According to both aforementioned works by Schram and Ghose, Roy demanded that the proletariat -- i.e., the communists -- assert its hegemony over the revolutionary movement from beginning to end. Lenin admitted the desirability of this assertion, but, as a realist and as the leader of the Soviet state interested in weakening the European "imperialists," he was prepared under certain circumstances to turn over the leadership of the revolution in the colonies to the bourgeoisie, until such time as the communists were in a position to take charge themselves.³⁹

On one point both Lenin and Roy were in agreement: in countries where the communists succeeded in establishing their predominance, they could lead the peasant masses to socialism without passing through a capitalist stage of development.⁴⁰

Sankar Ghose's comparison of the views of Roy and Lenin concerning the role of Gandhi in the Indian nationalist movement offers an interesting parallel to the respective position taken by the contemporary Communist Party of India (CPI)

³⁹Schram and Ghose, op. cit.

⁴⁰Schram, op. cit., p. 39.

and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] regarding collaboration with the Indian national bourgeoisie. In Socialism and Communism in India, Ghose notes that M. N. Roy was distrustful of the national bourgeoisie altogether and that he regarded Gandhi as a purely mediaevalist reactionary. In contrast, Lenin considered that Gandhi was playing a progressive role given the conditions prevalent in India.⁴¹

As will become evident in Chapter III of this investigation, the CPI has become in several states a coalition partner of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's ruling Congress Party. The Congress claims to be a national party and also represents the national bourgeoisie. The CPI also supports Prime Minister Gandhi and other Congress politicians in implementing their economic and social programs.

The CPI(M) has often led the opposition to the ruling Congress — CPI coalitions and depends on grass-roots initiative and militant extra-parliamentary and parliamentary methods to accomplish its objectives.⁴²

The Use of Violence as a Means of Achieving Socialism

In his work Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy, Jayaprakash Narayan reiterates his party's (Socialist Party of

⁴¹Ghose, op. cit., p. 144.

⁴²Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems of Communism, Vol. XXI, (January-February, 1972), p. 17. Sen Gupta is Professor at the School of International studies at Jawarhalal Nehru University, New Delhi.

India) statement of policy: "there are two roads to social revolution: (1) the road of armed mass rising or the insurrectionary method, (2) the peaceful or democratic method."⁴³ The statement goes further and distinguishes the insurrectionary method from mere violence or terrorism, and the democratic method from mere constitutionalism. The statement goes further and declares that in the present conditions of India, and future anticipated conditions, the democratic method is the "only" right method to work for socialism.

The "democratic" method includes tremendous grass-roots "social politics." It is epitomized in Bhave's and Narayan's Bhoodan and Gramdan programs and Sarvodaya, emphasizing village self-help, cooperation, establishment of cottage industries and agro-industrial communities (discussed in depth in Chapter IV).

In rejecting violence for "democratic" means, Narayan even draws from the writings of Marx. He does this only in order to satisfy the die-hard orthodox Marxists for whom there is only one road to socialism: that of a blood-soaked revolution. Narayan quotes from Marx's speech on tactics at the "First International."

The worker must one day capture political power
in order to found the new organisation of labour.

⁴³J. Narayan, op. cit., p. 70.

He must reverse the old policy, which the old institutions maintain ... But we do not assert that the way to reach this goal is the same everywhere. We know that the institutions, the manners, and the customs of the various countries must be considered, and we do not deny that there are countries like England and America, and if I understand your arrangements better, I might even add Holland, where the worker may attain his object by peaceful means. But not in all countries is this the case.⁴⁴

Narayan was strongly convinced that the "objective conditions" in India were such that a violent revolution, in which the proletariat would overthrow the capitalist order, was not only unnecessary but would be counter-productive and unsuccessful. He mentions the existence of parliamentary democracy and civil liberties as some of the objective conditions in India, calling for democratic, non-violent means to institute socialism. He also mentions that in Russia and China these conditions were non-existent at the time of their violent revolutions.

Narayan proceeds to explain what is meant by the "democratic" method. This is not merely constitutionalism. The Socialist Party (of which he was a leader at the time) is more than a Parliamentary party. It is a revolutionary party that organizes trade unions, kisan panchayats (peasant groups), youth leagues, at the same time conducting local struggles, strikes, and peaceful demonstrations. At the

⁴⁴Ibid.

same time, Narayan did not rule out mass insurrection and mass action to seize power provided the masses had been educated to the point of revolutionary consciousness, and providing that all democratic alternatives were refused them. Force was to be the last resort, and even then excesses would not be necessary if the masses were in full control of the socialist movement, unlike in Russia.

A certain parallel can be seen to Karl Kautsky's thought regarding the use of violence in a socialist revolution. Kautsky, an orthodox Marxist, also held that democracy was indispensable to the realization of socialism, and that if a humanely socialist society were to exist, it would have to function within a democratic political framework.⁴⁵

Kautsky drew on Marx in propounding this view. He especially refers to Marx's call for mass education and propagandization of the working class in order to prepare it for revolutionary struggle. The full ripening of the bourgeois system was to be advanced by a campaign for universal suffrage and the organization of labor unions. Then, after the working class had participated in parliamentary politics and it was composed of a popular majority, the capitalist fruit would be ripe enough to fall from the tree

⁴⁵Karl Kautsky, The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1964), p. 9.

without much effort. The idea contained in the above statement was Kautsky's interpretation of Marx.⁴⁶

Kautsky's view of Marx's concept, "dictatorship of the proletariat" was in direct opposition to that of V. I. Lenin's view of the same Marxian concept. In his State and Revolution, Lenin claimed:

The doctrine of the class struggle, as applied by Marx to the question of the state and of the Socialist revolution, leads inevitably to the recognition of the political rule of the proletariat, of its dictatorship, i.e., of a power shared with none and relying directly upon the armed forces of the masses. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie is realizable only by the transformation of the proletariat into the ruling class, able to crush the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie, and to organize, for the new economic order, all the toiling and exploited masses (including the peasantry).⁴⁷

In his Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Kautsky claims "the expression 'dictatorship of the proletariat', is the dictatorship not of a single person, but of a class, excludes the inferences that Marx thought of dictatorship in the literal sense."⁴⁸ Kautsky further quotes from Marx's study of the Civil War in France:

In that work (Marx) wrote: 'The (Paris) Commune was essentially a government of the producing class against the appropriating class, the political form under which the freedom of labour could be attained being at length revealed.'

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 12-58.

⁴⁷ V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution (New York, 1932), p. 23.

⁴⁸ Karl Kautsky, op. cit., p. 43.

Thus the Paris Commune was, as Engels expressly declared in his introduction to the third edition of Marx's book, 'The Dictatorship of the Proletariat.'

It was, however, at the same time not the suspension of democracy, but was founded on its most thoroughgoing use, on the basis of universal suffrage. The power of the government was subjected to universal suffrage ...

Marx constantly speaks here of the general suffrage of the whole people, and not of the votes of a specially privileged class. The dictatorship of the proletariat was for him a condition which necessarily arose in a real democracy, because of the overwhelming numbers of the proletariat.⁴⁹

Lenin took the word "dictatorship" in the literal sense and therefore argued for a strong, suppressive, anti-libertarian form of rule by the Communist Party, i.e., the "vanguard of the proletariat," during the transition phase from capitalism to communism. Lenin, in his State and Revolution quoted from Marx's Critique of the Social-Democratic Programmes, in defense of his argument:

Between capitalist and Communist society -- Marx continues -- lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the former into the latter. To this also corresponds a political transition period, in which the state can be no other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.⁵⁰

Lenin continued with his explication of the Marxian concept of "Dictatorship of the Proletariat":

... the dictatorship of the proletariat, -- i.e., the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing the oppressors -- cannot produce merely an expansion of democracy. Together with an immense ex-

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 44, 45.

⁵⁰V. I. Lenin, op. cit., p. 71.

pansion of democracy which for the first time becomes democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich folk, the dictatorship of the proletariat produces a series of restrictions of liberty in the case of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage-slavery; their resistance must be broken by force; it is clear that where there is suppression there is also violence, there is no liberty, no democracy.⁵¹

The fundamental difference between Lenin's and Kautsky's views of the dictatorship of the proletariat concerns two criteria: (1) the means used in realizing the proletarian revolution, i.e., violence; (2) the length of time and process of the "ripening" stage. For Lenin, the ripening stage had to be hurried along and the ripe fruit plucked from the tree. For Kautsky, the ripening process was to be nurtured carefully and in an all-encompassing manner, i.e., the process of mass propaganda, education, and parliamentarianism; it followed that the fruit would fall from the tree in the "right" time.

If it is possible to place the two methods of the "revolutionary process" at the extremes of a continuum, Jayaprakash Narayan's "Socialism" would tend to lean toward Kautsky's position. The Communist Party of India's ideological platform also tends toward the Kautsky position as regards the aforementioned criteria. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is seen to be more or less halfway between

⁵¹Ibid., p. 73.

the two extremes. The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) tends strongly toward the Leninist extreme (see Table I).

TABLE I
THE POSITIONS OF KAUTSKY AND LENIN CONCERNING
THE TACTICS OF THE "DICTATORSHIP OF THE
PROLETARIAT" AND CORRESPONDING
INDIAN MARXIST VIEWS

KAUTSKY (Non-Violent Means and longer "ripening stage")	LENIN (Violent Means and Forced "Ripening Stage")
J. NARAYAN Marxist Socialism	COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA	COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST- LENINIST)

In his The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Kautsky made a reasoned plea to socialists to be faithful to democracy before and after their expected coming to political power. In a later polemic against Lenin, Terrorism and Communism⁵² Kautsky returned to attack the Bolsheviks and their terrorist tactics. Even the noble ends of socialism do not justify violent means:

⁵²Karl Kautsky, Terrorism and Communism, (London, 1920), pp. 158-234.

But the end does not justify every means but only such as are in agreement with that means. A means which is in opposition to the end cannot be sanctified by that end.⁵³

Kautsky demonstrated that by forcing the "Socialist Revolution" on Russia before the objective conditions were ripe, Lenin and the Bolsheviki were doomed to failure in their attempt to build a truly socialist society. This is the main question that has concerned the various Marxist "Socialist" groups in India to the present day: are the "objective conditions," in the Marxian sense, ripe for "revolution," and what is the method of revolution to be employed? There are three major questions that have divided the Communist Party of India into three separate parties. However, in the following project, we are specifically concerned with the role that the peasant masses, as a conceptual group in Marxian theory, are to play in the various aforementioned theoretical and practical disputes.

In conclusion on the theme of the use of violence versus non-violence, note the challenge of Gandhian non-violence to the violence advocated as means by some Indian Marxists, e.g., M. N. Roy and S. A. Dange.

The Indian Communists have a long-standing adherence to the principle that the overthrow of the exploiting classes

⁵³Ibid., p. 210.

can be accomplished only by violent struggle. The Communist Party of India's 1930 platform stated:

The Communist Party declares that the road to victory is not the method of individual terror but the struggle and the revolutionary armed insurrection of the widest possible masses of the working class, the peasantry, the poor of the towns and the Indian soldiers, around the banner and under the leadership of the Communist Party of India.⁵⁴

In 1923, M. N. Roy, founder of the Communist Party of India (CPI), said: "If India will not have freedom conquered by violent means, she will have to go without it."⁵⁵ Here, of course, Roy was referring to the Indian Independence struggle which, for him, was to be a Marxist Communist struggle. In recent years the Communist Party of India "has been less forthright in stating its position on violence; (however) there is no doubt that violence remains in the CPI arsenal, ready to be employed whenever the situation seems to warrant it."⁵⁶

Indian Communist theoreticians have responded somewhat ambivalently to the Gandhian-Satyagraha technique. Satyagraha has generally meant defying state authority by open

⁵⁴"Draft Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India," Inprecor, X(December 18, 1930), p. 1219, cited in Overstreet and Windmiller, Communism in India, (University of California, Berkeley, 1959, p. 522.

⁵⁵M. N. Roy, The Aftermath of Non-Cooperation (Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1926), p. 118.

⁵⁶Gene D. Overstreet and Marshal Windmiller, Communism in India, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1959), p. 522. This study was conducted for the Modern India Project at the Center for South Asia Studies, Institute of International Studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

and organized infraction of the law, and was used on a nationwide scale for the first time in India's fight for independence. Satyagraha conducted, according to Gandhi's teachings, required the avoidance of violence, and on this the Communists disagreed.

Both M. N. Roy and S. A. Dange argued that "Satyagraha mobilizes the masses against injustice and then frustrates their natural impulses, stopping them short of true revolutionary action."⁵⁷ In order to have been consistent with communist doctrine, the CPI policy should have totally opposed Satyagraha. However, the dilemma for the Party is that Satyagraha has been a popular and revered technique in India, and to keep away from Satyagraha-type political and social movements is to be isolated from "one of the main focal points of political action in post-independence India."⁵⁸ The various aspects of this dilemma, including statements from CPI leaders S. A. Dange and Ajoy Ghosh, have led Overstreet and Windmiller to believe that the Indian Communists will continue to view Satyagraha expediently. They will probably "eschew it for themselves, but whenever it is successfully employed by others they will attempt to join it and to channel it into Leninist forms of revolutionary struggle."⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 523.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 524.

In *The Ordeal of Change*, Eric Hoffer claims that the unquestionable appeal of communism as a vehicle for modernization is only partly due to the example of Soviet Russia

lifting itself out of backwardness by its own efforts and in a relatively short time. More immediate and decisive is the Communists' proven ability to ready a backward society for victory on the battlefield. . . . The Western democracies, try as they may, cannot generate pride, enthusiasm, and a spirit of self-sacrifice in a population poignantly conscious of its backwardness and inferiority.⁶⁰

Given Hoffer's assessment, it is necessary to investigate the ways and means by which the vast majority of India's population, i.e., the peasant masses, can provide support for political, economic and social change.

⁶⁰Eric Hoffer, *The Ordeal of Change* (New York, 1967), pp. 18-19.

CHAPTER II

THE HINDU CASTE SYSTEM: SOCIAL CLASS AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY

The most apparent division in Indian society, transcending the various other social, economic, and political groupings, is that between the rural and urban sectors. In Democracy and Economic Change in India, George Rosen indicates that although there are many interactions and influences from one sector to the other, the social system of the rural sector may be usefully considered to be the caste system. Although "it is in the process of change, caste underlies the economic, social, and political relationships among the peasants."¹ In contrast, in the urban sector "many of the characteristics that identify the caste system in the village have broken down and have been replaced by a system based on factors much less related to family and inherited position."²

Rosen defines the caste system as the network of inter-relationships among castes that governs the economic, political, and ritual behavior of the castes within the

¹George Rosen, Democracy and Economic Change in India (Berkeley, 1967), p. 15. Rosen works for Rand Corporation and has been economic advisor to the governments of West Bengal and Nepal.

²Ibid.

system, and thus of the members of the castes.³ Rosen proceeds to describe the concept of caste by some of its broad characteristics. The castes are ranked in a hierarchical order of ritual purity with the Brahmin castes universally ranked at the highest and the unclean castes at the lowest level. The ranking of each specific caste is traditionally associated with certain specific occupations, based in large part on the character of the materials handled and the functions performed in religious ceremonies.⁴

A caste protects its status by defining the social behavior of its members. The first major limitation of behavior is in connection with marriage: it may occur only within the caste boundaries. A second major limitation is in terms of social contact, especially at meals or the occasion of physical contact with either members of the lower castes or the objects handled by lower castes; such contacts are carefully regulated and may occur only under certain conditions, and any violation results in ritual pollution and requires penance or punishment.

Finally, Rosen indicates

this system of hierarchy and controlled relationship is an integral part of the Hindu religion; it pro-

³Ibid., pp. 15, 16.

⁴Ibid.

ceeds from its structure of reward and punishment, which directly relates the present caste position and future prospects of the caste member, in his reincarnation, and his descendants in the world to his ancestors' past obedience and his own present obedience to the prescribed rules of caste behavior.⁵

Although the caste system functions throughout all rural India and national generalizations with regard to its functioning are possible, its detailed characteristics, especially in terms of ranking of castes between the Brahmins on top and unclean castes at the bottom, vary from region to region. Within the Indian village, the basic caste unit is not the broad caste division but the local subcaste or jati.⁶ In India there exist nearly five thousand localized subcastes and jatis.⁷

Historical Background of the Indian Caste System

According to Hindu theory four broad caste divisions known as varnas, were instituted at the beginning of time and are eternal: Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra, respectively priests, nobles, cultivators, and serfs.⁸ The Harijans or outcastes are literally "'beyond the pale' of caste," according to the varna model.⁹

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷A. L. Kroeber, "Caste," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York, 1967), p. 255.

⁸Ibid.

⁹M. N. Srinivas, Social Change in Modern India (Berkeley, 1966).

Only in India has caste become an intricate system which has "entwined all aspects of the civilization with which it was able to come into contact."¹⁰ In spite of this, the Indian caste system seems to be less than three thousand years old. The Vedas, spiritual writings of 1000 B.C. and beyond, did not contain the concept of caste in a substantially developed form. By Buddha's time, around the fifth century B.C., caste had become fairly prevalent; and the Greeks reported it a few centuries later.¹¹

The history of the Indian caste system is extremely complex and its causes are manifold. The origin of the social system of India, "so inextricably bound up with its religious history can be traced to the circumstances of the Aryan invasion (c. 2000-1000 B.C.)."¹² These invaders from the West, consisting of a new ethnological type and bringing a new language and a new religion, Vedism (which had its roots in pre-historic Indo-European life¹³) conquered the indigenous Dasyus on the plains of the Punjab, in northwest India. Cultural and racial amalgamation occurred between the conqueror and conquered.

¹⁰Kroeber, op. cit.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²H. D. Griswold, "Brahmanism and Hinduism," Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (New York, 1967), p. 674.

¹³Ibid., p. 673.

In Social Change in Modern India, Professor M. N. Srinivas indicates that the varna model of the caste system seems to have evolved gradually during the Vedic period of Indian history, and the early Brahman writers seem to have accepted it as a description of the caste system as it then existed.¹⁴ These writers laid down the rights and duties of the first three varnas, the Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya who were considered "twice born" (members of a lower caste in the previous life). The Brahman writers on law propounded a model of the caste system which placed them at the top and gave them the privilege of declaring the duties of the other castes, including those of the King's.

According to H. D. Griswold, the status of each of the four orders according to birth and occupation is definitely given in a text of one of the earliest and most authoritative Hindu scriptures, the Rigveda (almost entirely the composition of Brahmans). In his article "Brahmanism and Hinduism" Griswold further notes that "here is the religious sanction of Indian caste, a system which, notwithstanding its defects, has furnished India with a tough and enduring social fabric."¹⁵

¹⁴Srinivas, op. cit., p. 5. (Srinivas is Professor of Sociology in the Delhi School of Economics of the University of Delhi.)

¹⁵Griswold, op. cit.

The supremacy in the system of the Brahman order is a central fact of Indian history. Of the four original varnas, it alone has maintained its identity and distinction through the centuries. Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shrādhra are "largely fossilized terms, but Brahman is a living designation."¹⁶ The Brahmans constitute the "aristocracy" of India, and have been intellectually and religiously creative through the ages. The Indian Marxist leaders M. N. Roy, Harekrishna Konar, and E. M. S. Namboodiripad, were and are members of the Brahman caste.

National agreement on the ritual importance of the Brahmans and on their role in the system contributes to making Hinduism a national religion, and also to an accepted body of theology and religious practices on a national basis. Rosen claims that this has been an important unifying factor in Indian history.¹⁷

Spirituality of "Essential Hinduism" Versus Marxist Secular Materialism

In his article "Brahmanism and Hinduism," H. D. Griswold outlines the group of doctrines that constitutes "essential Hinduism."¹⁸ First of all, it is monistic or

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Rosen, op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁸Griswold, op. cit., p. 675.

monotheistic, Brahman-Atman being recognized as the central reality of the universe. In contrast to the changeless bliss of the Atman, stands the weakness and vanity of mortal life, not only subject to change here and now, but also - in accordance with the doctrines of karma and transmigration developed in the Upanishads -- bound to suffer the vicissitudes involved in an indefinite number of births. Hence, Griswold claims, there developed a pessimistic attitude and the idealization and practice of an ascetic renunciation of the world, both coupled with a passionate desire for release from the bondage of transmigration.¹⁹

The social implications of the group of doctrines have been enormous. Transmigration and karma (translated as "submission to fate") furnish the philosophical bases of caste; they explain one's caste and condition in the present life as the expression of merit or demerit gained in past lives.²⁰ Griswold further claims that Hinduism is not more a religion than a social organism, since it reflects the life and institutions and beliefs of an overwhelming majority of the Indian people. Hinduism has proceeded by the "mass movement" method, annexing whole tribes or communities. Its proselytization is by absorption, as much social as religious.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

Hinduism never developed a series of religious institutions. So diverse a tradition has neither room nor need for a central organization or a central creed; its priests need not struggle for secular power. They are an essential part of society. In no country, "are there more temples or more frequent religious performances than in India, but in contrast to Western conditions both are maintained as part of the social fabric and not through corporate organization."²¹

When viewed as a social and political movement that has, in some instances, borne the traits of a religion,²² Communism, as a product of Marxist thought, presents a curious contrast with the aforementioned traits of Hinduism. The initial point of contrast between the philosophical bases of Hinduism and those of Marxism is Marx's "Promethean image of man,"²³ according to which "...the world is objective reality which lies ready to be grasped and mastered by the cognitive minds and the purposive hands of men."²⁴ This "materialistic faith," as Alfred G. Meyer labels it, and the Promethean image of man are in conflict with the Hindu concept of karma and the Hindu belief in Brahman-Atman as the central reality of the universe. Karma or

²¹Ibid.

²²Robert C. Tucker, The Marxian Revolutionary Idea (New York, 1969), p. 32.

²³Alfred Meyer, Marxism, The Unity of Theory and Practice (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1968), p. 75.

²⁴Ibid.

submission to fate, when adhered to, produces a passive, enduring attitude to one's present position, no matter how oppressive, with hopes, for a less oppressive existence in the next life, depending on the manner in which one carries out his duty or dharma.

Human misery or debasement is seen by Hinduism as payment for neglect of one's dharma in a previous life. In Marx, according to Meyer, "'The highest being for man is man himself', so that even a resigned justification of human misery runs counter to the very basis of Marxist theory."²⁵ The subject of Marxism is man as a species. In The Marxian Revolutionary Idea, Robert C. Tucker indicates that "in essence (Marxism) is a theory of mankind's historical society that Marx treats under the heading of . . . 'communism.'"²⁶

According to Hindu philosophy, mankind's historical growth process occurs through the cycle of innumerable births and rebirths until the "soul" of an individual is finally released from the process and united with the Brahman-Atman in the Heavenly condition of Nirvana.²⁷ Whereas Nirvana is a non-material, other-worldly condition, the Marxist heaven, or utopia, pure Communism is an entirely

²⁵Ibid., p. 27.

²⁶Tucker, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁷Griswold, op. cit.

this-worldly situation, at which stage humanity has made the "great leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom . . ."28

In the final stage of Communism, the realm of freedom, man will no longer need the division of labor which is "unnatural and inhuman, an impediment to human being's self-realization . . . 'In the division of labor,' writes Engels, 'man is divided. All other physical and mental faculties are sacrificed to the development of one single activity.'"29 Only when the division of labor is abolished will man give rein to the natural human tendency to become a versatile, universal man - "to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic."30

The Marxian abolition of the division of labor is the direct antithesis of the major basis of the Hindu caste system, which is the concept of dharma. Dharma, "the total body of moral and religious rules, is to some extent identified with the duties of one's caste - and this is not only

²⁸Tucker, op. cit., p. 183.

²⁹Ibid., p. 22.

³⁰Lewis S. Feuer, ed., "The German Ideology," Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, (New York, 1959), p. 254.

by the common people, but in works of great influence like the Bhagavadgita."³¹ Therefore, the dharma of a shoemaker is to make shoes and the dharma of a soldier is to fight. The Bhagavadgita delivers the message clearly, ". . .It is better to die performing one's dharma. The dharma of others is dangerous . . ."³² Therefore, the association of each caste with one or more hereditary occupations and their gradation into high and low has provided religious sanction for the division of labor.

The Relationship of Caste to Social Class

The initial step in an analysis of the relationship of the Hindu caste system to social class in India is a working definition of the Marxian concept of social class. In his "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" Marx provides his definition of social class:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests, and their culture from those of the other classes and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class.³³

Marx proceeds to disclaim the existence of the small-holding French peasants as a social class, because there was

³¹M. N. Srinivas, Caste in Modern India and Other Essays (Bombay, 1962), p. 151.

³²Ronald Segal, The Anguish of India (New York, 1966), p. 32.

³³Feuer, ed., op. cit., p. 338.

only a local interconnection among them, and "the identity of their interests beget no community, no national bond, and no political organization . . ."34

André Beteille, in Harmonic and Disharmonic Social Systems, claims that according to Marx, the class structure of a society cannot be adequately grasped unless it is viewed both as a "mode of existence and as a mode of consciousness."³⁵ Beteille is not trying to argue that Marx himself assigned to consciousness the same importance which he gave to the conditions of existence. However, the division of society into classes (categories) is there, whether or not individuals are aware of it, but class divisions acquire their full significance only when they are matched by certain modes of consciousness.³⁶ One fact is certainty: that caste consciousness does exist in an overwhelming manner in Indian society.

In India the "inequalities in the condition of existence" can be seen most clearly in her agrarian society, e.g., inequalities in the ownership, control, and size of land (see table II.³⁷) Here, we have touched upon an important Marxian criteria utilized in determining the position of a social class, i.e., its relationship to the means of production: whether or not it owns or controls the means of production.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 339.

³⁵ André Beteille, Harmonic and Disharmonic Social Systems (Sidney, Australia, 1971), p. 13. Beteille is Professor at the Department of Sociology, Delhi University, Delhi.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Economic and Political Weekly, January 9, 1971.

TABLE II

CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN RURAL AREAS OPERATING LAND, AND THE TOTAL LAND OPERATED BY THEM, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SIZE OF OPERATED HOLDINGS

Size Class of Operational Holding (Acres)	Kerala		Tamil Nadu	
	House- hold	Area	House- hold	Area
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
0.00	16.73	0.00	39.98	0.00
Less than 0.50	54.05	4.10	51.98	0.63
" " 1.00	69.46	12.40	58.18	3.14
" " 2.50	85.19	30.81	75.07	18.01
" " 5.00	93.94	53.95	88.01	41.27
" " 7.50	97.03	67.95	94.16	60.14
" " 10.00	98.19	75.32	96.45	70.26
" " 12.50	98.96	81.89	98.09	79.45
" " 15.00	99.28	85.37	98.65	83.48
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total number of rural households (million)	2.492	--	6.764	--
Total area operated (million acres)	--	3.314	--	13.107

TABLE II--Continued

Assam		West Bengal	
House- hold (6)	Area (7)	House- hold (8)	Area (9)
36.22	0.00	33.83	0.00
39.58	0.47	41.17	0.68
44.91	2.19	46.62	2.31
60.82	13.77	63.57	13.89
84.83	50.10	83.19	41.87
94.61	74.96	92.31	63.41
97.68	86.21	95.50	72.19
98.47	89.87	97.60	83.14
99.41	95.22	98.62	88.56
100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
2.024	--	4.914	--
--	4.694	--	12.557

TABLE II--Continued

Size Class of Operational Holding (Acres) (1)	Jammu and Kashmir		Union Territories	
	House- hold (2)	Area (3)	House- Hold (4)	Area (5)
0.00	11.09	0.00	26.81	0.00
Less than 0.50	16.72	0.32	33.33	0.38
" " 1.00	24.50	2.29	37.44	1.43
" " 2.50	54.14	18.61	50.97	9.23
" " 5.00	80.30	47.79	77.78	39.76
" " 7.50	91.89	69.87	89.61	61.67
" " 10.00	95.86	80.91	93.72	72.39
" " 12.50	98.01	88.43	97.10	82.90
" " 15.00	98.84	92.11	98.31	87.32
" " 20.00	99.50	96.11	99.76	95.35
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total number of rural households (million)	0.604	--	0.414	--
Total area operated (million acres)	--	1.875	--	1.333

TABLE II--continued

Bihar		Orissa	
House- hold (6)	Area (7)	House- hold (8)	Area (9)
21.71	0.00	32.59	0.00
35.71	1.14	32.69	0.24
46.31	3.92	42.80	1.52
65.17	14.91	59.70	9.86
82.77	36.64	78.94	30.58
52.43	87.60	46.03	
93.96	63.06	92.42	58.63
96.34	72.19	95.47	68.79
97.40	77.18	96.92	74.67
98.57	84.04	98.18	81.19
100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
8.503	--	3.799	--
--	24.536	--	12.604

TABLE II--Continued

Size Class of Operational Holding (Acres)	Uttar Pradesh		Punjab and Haryana	
	Household (2)	Area (3)	Household (4)	Area (5)
(1)				
0.00	20.76	0.00	39.09	0.00
Less than 0.50	27.24	0.44	45.75	0.11
" " 1.00	35.39	2.17	49.32	0.60
" " 2.50	55.58	11.77	56.62	2.79
" " 5.00	77.47	33.73	65.08	8.34
" " 7.50	87.74	51.55	73.86	18.34
" " 10.00	92.24	62.45	79.95	27.98
" " 12.50	95.17	71.67	85.12	28.55
" " 15.00	96.68	77.56	88.69	47.48
" " 20.00	98.31	85.51	93.58	62.71
" " 25.00	98.97	89.61	96.03	72.70
" " 30.00	99.40	92.92	97.51	80.20
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total number of rural households (million)	13.372	--	2.494	--
Total area operated (Million Acres)	--	46.978	--	13.605

TABLE II--Continued

Andhra Pradesh		Mysore	
House- hold (6)	Area (7)	House- hold (8)	Area (9)
37.95	0.00	24.11	0.00
46.15	0.37	31.79	0.04
50.07	0.98	34.17	0.25
65.95	6.97	43.99	2.65
77.10	16.45	57.22	9.37
84.57	26.98	70.23	20.74
88.25	34.38	78.50	30.65
91.09	41.61	84.30	39.82
92.77	47.06	87.22	45.62
95.21	56.81	91.06	54.96
96.88	65.43	93.83	63.64
97.61	70.05	95.74	71.15
100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
6.641	--	3.567	--
--	28.219	--	24.277

TABLE II--Continued

Size Class of Operational Holding (Acres)	Gujarat		Madhya Pradesh	
	House- hold (2)	Area (3)	House- hold (4)	Area (5)
0.00	25.41	0.00	18.45	0.00
Less than 0.50	34.46	0.09	24.88	0.07
" " 1.00	36.42	0.38	28.09	0.37
" " 2.50	47.09	2.92	39.20	2.96
" " 5.00	58.68	8.70	54.83	10.43
" " 7.50	67.11	15.55	67.31	20.52
" " 10.00	74.85	24.14	75.16	29.50
" " 12.50	80.80	32.96	81.16	38.25
" " 15.00	84.34	39.41	85.42	45.86
" " 20.00	89.43	50.83	91.31	59.28
" " 25.00	92.45	59.65	94.32	68.04
" " 30.00	94.87	68.42	96.22	74.87
" " 50.00	98.82	88.15	98.87	87.59
All Classes	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total number of rural households (million)	3.141	--	5.479	--
Total area operated (million acres)	--	23.215	--	41.789

TABLE II--Concluded

Maharashtra		Rajasthan	
House- hold (6)	Area (7)	House- hold (8)	Area (9)
26.29	0.00	11.84	0.00
35.61	0.00	14.00	0.03
38.21	0.34	15.56	0.13
48.60	2.65	26.89	1.82
61.00	8.46	43.47	6.89
69.05	14.78	56.12	13.29
75.10	21.52	65.09	19.79
80.16	28.83	71.75	25.81
83.44	34.64	76.59	31.22
88.36	45.63	82.25	40.70
92.10	56.24	87.75	48.97
94.17	63.56	90.46	54.99
98.32	83.75	96.45	73.62
100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
5.302	--	2.956	--
--	50.975	--	36.552

Rosen provides a concise description of the Hindu caste system's economic sphere.³⁸ Considering this social system as an equilibrium system, he employs the theoretical concept of "dominant caste." Essentially, this states that when a particular caste enjoys a position of dominance in one sphere (e.g. economic) it tends to acquire, over time, a similar position of leadership in the other two spheres (political, and ritual or social), so that it is dominant in all aspects of village life.³⁹ Ritual status centers about the caste group's role in interpreting the Hindu religion, and thus its purity and susceptibility to pollution. With respect to this scale, all other castes in the village are ranked in terms of their relation to the members of the Brahman caste.

Although the Brahman caste everywhere is ritually dominant, Rosen claims, it is much less often politically or economically dominant, since the Brahman's traditional occupation is that of neither a warrior nor a cultivator of land. However, in certain areas of India, for example in Kerala in the South, the Brahmin's ritual rank "in fact corresponds closely with their secular rank; they are dominant in all respects."⁴⁰

In the traditional economic sphere, Rosen indicates, in an agricultural and largely self-sufficient village,

³⁸Rosen, op. cit., pp. 17, 18.

³⁹Ibid., p. 18.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

dominance is derived from the control of the use of land. The members of the "dominant caste" in the village are the largest landholders, whether by conquest, original settlement, gift, or (since British rule) by purchase.⁴¹ Around these dominant caste members, who are often an extended family, there are other caste groups, in many cases with their occupations determined by tradition, performing the specific tasks necessary for village life.

Under this system the members of the economically dominant caste are traditionally responsible for the output of

TABLE III
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENT CASTE RANKS
AMONG HINDU RURAL HOUSEHOLDS, 1952-1954
(millions)

Occupation	Hindu Households by Caste Groups				Total
	Upper	Middle	Lower	Scheduled	
Agriculture					
Farmer	1.1 (24.4)	0.9 (7.6)	1.7 (7.0)	0.2 (1.5)	3.8 (7.5)
Cultivator	2.0 (43.9)	6.5 (53.3)	10.2 (41.8)	3.2 (27.1)	21.9 (41.4)
Sharecropper	0.2 (3.9)	0.8 (6.2)	1.5 (6.2)	1.0 (8.5)	3.4 (6.5)
Agri. Laborer	0.1 (1.1)	1.5 (11.9)	4.1 (16.8)	4.3 (36.2)	9.9 (18.4)
Forestry, fishery, and livestock	0.02 (0.6)	0.2 (1.4)	0.8 (3.3)	0.3 (2.3)	1.3 (2.4)
Total, agri- culture	3.3 (73.9)	9.8 (80.4)	18.3 (75.1)	8.9 (75.7)	40.4 (76.3)
Others	1.2 (26.1)	2.4 (19.6)	6.1 (24.9)	2.9 (24.3)	12.5 (23.7)
Total	4.5 (100.0)	12.2 (100.0)	24.4 (100.0)	11.8 (100.0)	52.9 (100.0)

⁴¹Ibid., p. 18.

the crop, and they thus control the income of the village. Rosen clearly notes that if this economic system were in its pure form there would be no distinction between caste status and class position.⁴² (See Table III.⁴³) The point is also borne out in Table IV.⁴⁴

TABLE IV

PERCENTAGES OF POPULATION AND LAND OWNERSHIP, BY CASTE,
IN SOUTHERN CHINGLEPUT VILLAGES

Caste	Village and Total Population				
	Manjapalayam (1,362)	Paccaiyur (1,595)	Peru-Malpuram (1,597)	Chinnavur (617)	Annur (1,217)
Brahman					
population	9.0	--	--	--	--
land	23.0	--	--	--	--
Reddiar					
population	--	--	5.0	--	20.0
land	--	--	20.0	--	29.6
Mudaliar					
population	--	25.0	--	18.0	4.0
land	--	45.0	--	28.0	8.5
Vanniyar					
population	67.0	11.0	46.0	27.0	--
land	61.0	18.0	28.0	24.0	1.0
Yadava					
population	--	--	11.0	--	--
land	--	--	7.0	--	7.6
Nattar					
population	--	--	--	--	18.0
land	--	--	--	--	1.5
Paraiyan					
population	10.0	47.0	15.0	36.0	37.0
land	0.1	6.0	10.0	1.0	1.0

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 29.

⁴⁴ Joan P. Mencher, "Caste System Upside Down, or the Not So Mysterious East," Current Anthropology, XV (December, 1974), 469-493.

In a similar vein A. L. Kroeber, in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences argues that

castes . . . are a special form of social classes, which in tendency at least are present in every society. Castes differ from social classes . . . in that they have emerged into social consciousness to the point that custom and law attempt their rigid and permanent separation from one another.⁴⁵

For Kroeber a caste system seems to be one of the extremes on a continuum of social stratification systems which includes the class system. This view raises the interesting question of whether or not both types of systems can exist in the same society, and if so, what is the direct relationship between the two systems?

Relating to the aforementioned question, Joan P. Mencher, in "Caste System Upside Down, or the Not-So-Mysterious East," presents the general view that the Indian⁴⁶ caste system "masks" the class system in that society.⁴⁷ Utilizing the

⁴⁵A. L. Kroeber, "Caste," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, III (New York, 1967), p. 254.

⁴⁶I use the term "Hindu caste system" and "Indian caste system" interchangeably, because, not only is 83.5 per cent of the Indian population Hindu (Area Handbook for India, Washington, 1970) but the census of India includes as caste groups tribes, races, and sects including Christian converts; even "self-sufficient groups whose racial or cultural origin is foreign and who are not intrinsically interested in constituting a caste are forced into the mold by Hindu opinion." (A. L. Kroeber, op. cit., p. 255).

⁴⁷Mencher, op. cit., pp. 469-493.

Marxian conflict model as the framework for her analysis, she views the Indian caste system from the bottom up, i.e., from the position of the lower castes. Viewed from the bottom up, the system presents two striking features:

- (1) caste has functioned (and continues to) as a very effective system of exploitation
- (2) One of the functions of the system has been to prevent the formation of social classes (in the Marxian sense) with any commonality of interest or unity of purpose.⁴⁸

Mencher attributes to the latter function the reason for the persistence of the caste system and for the general failure of well-to-do leaders to do anything which would really break it down. She questions the high-caste point of view that low-caste people have always accepted their position. Mencher argues that it was the superior economic and political power of the upper castes that has kept the lower ones suppressed. The untouchable or outcastes are now known generally as "Harijans" (God's people -- a euphemism coined by Mahatma Gandhi). They "are included with a few other groups of marginal status in the legal category of Scheduled Castes, constitutionally entitled to special considerations" and numbering 85 million.⁴⁹

Class Consciousness Among the Peasantry

Addressing herself to the question of "why did not the untouchables revolt in the past?" Mencher cites

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 469.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Moore, who claimed that in traditional China ". . . the structure of the peasant society together with the weakness of the links that bound the peasantry with the upper classes, helped to explain why China was especially subject to peasant insurrections." Concerning the scene in traditional India, Mencher offers the caste system and the manner in which the poorest laborers were divided from the peasantry as having been a significant factor in the lower number of insurrections.⁵⁰

However, Mencher admits, when conditions became especially bad for the Indian peasants, there were "occasionally small-scale insurrections, some of which were of temporary benefit to untouchable laborers also."⁵¹ Kathleen Gough, in "Indian Peasant Uprisings," provides a valuable historical and theoretical work. She notes that Barrington Moore attributes the "alleged weakness of Indian peasant movements to the caste system . . . and to the 'strength of bourgeois leadership' against the landlords and the British and the pacifying influence of Gandhi on the peasantry."⁵²

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 473.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Kathleen Gough, "Indian Peasant Uprisings," Economic and Political Weekly, IX, Nos. 32-34 (Special number, 1974) 1391. Gough is a British anthropologist who has lived and researched in South Indian villages for five years since 1947, and is currently Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto. She received her Ph.D. from Cambridge University.

In contrast to Moore and Mencher, Gough argues that peasant revolts have in fact been common both during and since the British period, every state in India having experienced several over the past two hundred years. Her assertion is based on data gathered in a recent survey which disclosed 77 revolts, the smallest of which probably engaged several thousand peasants in active support or in combat. The frequency of these revolts and the fact that at least 34 of those considered were solely or partly by Hindus caused Gough to write "I doubt that the caste system had seriously impeded peasant rebellion in times of trouble."⁵³

Gough claims that the limitations of Indian peasant revolts have sprung more from broader political forces at the level of the province, the colonial, and the post-colonial state than from the caste system or from peculiarities of village structure. To bolster this claim she cites two Indian authors, Irfan Habib and E. M. S. Namboodiripad (several times CPI(M) Chief Minister of Kerala), who have argued that the caste system provided a framework for the organization of peasant rebellions, since in many cases peasants were able to assemble quickly through the medium of their caste assemblies.⁵⁴

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 1392.

In a conclusive statement Gough indicates that the more impressive uprisings show that even in India, where inter-ethnic strife has produced some of the "most tragic holocausts, peasants are capable of co-operating in class struggles across caste, religious, and even linguistic lines to redress their common grievances."⁵⁵ Mencher provides some evidence, in another article "Problems in Analyzing Rural Class Structure," in support of Gough's position. Here Mencher found that organized peasant movements (of a class nature in the Marxian sense) have occurred in areas, e.g., Kuttanad in Kerala, where there is a strong polarization between the landless and all others (including the small 2-acre men):

Thus in social class analysis and in development of class consciousness, while it may be clear that well-to-do members of middle ranking castes have sometimes given preference to their own castemates when it comes to giving land for sharecropping, they have done this also because it served to keep the poor from uniting (politically). . . . One finds for example, that when land is not given for sharecropping (as in the case of Kuttanad in Kerala), the landless of different castes somehow manage to get together in support of strikes.⁵⁶

Mencher claims there is some good evidence that, at least in some parts of India, caste Hindus and Harijan

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 1403.

⁵⁶Joan P. Mencher, "Problems in Analyzing Rural Class Structure," Economic and Political Weekly, IX, No. 35 (August, 1974), pp. 1495, 1496.

landless laborers are "beginning to unite, at present primarily in the arena of political activity (Srinivas, 1966). In Kerala, labor-union membership is primarily recruited on the basis of class affiliation."⁵⁷ Mencher noted that if the caste Hindus and the untouchable landless laborers should unite, one of the structurally most useful purposes of the caste system (according to Mencher that of preventing the development of class consciousness) would be threatened.

Mencher has not gone unanswered. Paul Alexander of Canberra, Australia, questions the validity of her arguments. Alexander points out that although caste "clearly makes it difficult to establish unity between Harijan and caste-Hindu, social classes with commonality of interest and unity of purpose are not common among landless laborers of other peasant societies, and it may be doubted that caste is the major reason for the absence in India."⁵⁸ Alexander further claims that an indication of the rather peripheral relationship between the caste system and class formation is that Mencher's argument can be stood on its head: "it can be argued (somewhat along the lines of Namboodiripad and Habib) that caste has had a positive effect on the formation of social classes

⁵⁷Mencher, "Caste System Upside Down," op. cit., p. 477.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 493.

among India's landless laborers. Harijan status has "provided the focus for the organizing of a major section (perhaps the majority?) of the landless laborers, and the inclusion of the caste-Hindus, while broadening the base of this incipient social class, would surely diminish its consciousness."⁵⁹

What is meant by "consciousness?" In "Caste and Class Consciousness in Rural Rajasthan: Some Social and Psychological Expressions," K. L. Sharma views consciousness as "a social-psychological phenomenon, which explains existing hierarchical relations in terms of equal, high, and low ranks and positions."⁶⁰ According to Sharma, expression of caste consciousness is essentially a result of the sentiments of belonging to a particular caste group. By virtue of hereditary caste membership people share common socio-religious norms and values in regard to occupation, commensability, and marital relations. Intracaste competition is ruled out and the cultural autonomy which caste provides for

59

Ibid.

⁶⁰K. L. Sharma, "Caste and Class Consciousness in Rural Rajasthan: Some Social and Psychological Expressions," Sociological and Social Research, LIV (April, 1970), 378. Sharma gets his definition of "consciousness" from Morris Ginsberg, "Social Class," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, III-IV (New York, 1959), pp. 536-38. Sharma's data was drawn from a field study conducted for a doctoral dissertation on "Changing Rural Stratification System: A Comparative Study of Six Villages in Rajasthan, India," 1965, 1966.

its members as a group in course of time strengthens caste consciousness. Cultural autonomy and caste consciousness are reflected through the caste members' attitudes toward ritual performances, religious practices, dining habits, social contacts, and occupations.⁶¹

In order to elicit the feeling of "caste solidarity" or "casteism," Sharma posed the following question to the sample survey population of six Rajasthan villages: "Do you think that one's caste members should be helped always (irrespective of other considerations)?" Table V indicates the responses to this question.

TABLE V
CASTE SOLIDARITY
(Totals and Percentages)⁶²

Caste	Should Be Helped Always	Not Always	Total
Upper	46 (53.1%)	41 (46.9%)	87 (100%)
Intermediate	93 (61.7)	61 (38.3)	154 (100)
Lower and Untouch- ables	<u>87 (75.7)</u>	<u>28 (24.3)</u>	<u>115 (100)</u>
TOTAL	226 (63.5)	130 (36.5)	356 (100)

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., p. 380.

As Table V indicates, caste solidarity is stronger, the lower the caste rank. Sharma notes that high caste consciousness among the lower castes makes them more "politicized" in comparison to the upper castes. He also states that paradoxically, despite this consciousness, power lies with the upper castes, because they have better resources. This sparks a chain reaction of more self-consciousness among the lower and higher manipulative tendency among the higher castes."⁶⁶

Caste solidarity or consciousness is strongest at the level of voting among the lower castes in comparison to the upper castes. See Table VI.

TABLE VI

CASTE SOLIDARITY AND POLITICAL ALLIANCE⁶⁴
(Totals and Percentages)

Caste	Vote for Caste Men	No Consideration of Caste Men	Total
Upper	37 (42.5%)	50 (57.5%)	87 (100.0%)
Intermediate	83 (53.9)	71 (46.1)	154 (100.0)
Lower and un-touchables	<u>79 (68.7)</u>	<u>36 (31.3)</u>	<u>115 (100.0)</u>
TOTAL	199 (55.9)	157 (44.1)	356 (100.0)

⁶³Ibid., p. 381.

⁶⁴Ibid.

Caste consciousness sometimes becomes differentiated within the caste.⁶⁵ In such cases, factions are formed. Among the six Rajasthan villages studied by Sharma fourteen factions were found. These factions "carry on clashes over a set of interests, particularly concerning political and other offices carrying power and prestige."⁶⁶ Factions can be intra-caste or inter-caste. When it is intra-caste, caste consciousness becomes less intense.

Caste and Electoral Politics

In his monumental work, Asian Drama, An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations, Professor Gunnar Myrdal notes that "Caste is so deeply entrenched in India's traditions that it cannot be eradicated except by drastic surgery; and for this there has been no serious political pressure. As a result, caste is coming more and more to be tacitly accepted and privately condoned."⁶⁷

Caste was outlawed in the Indian constitution, and a bill unanimously adopted by Parliament in 1955 made the practice of untouchability a criminal offense. A number of policy measures have since been legislated to aid the "backward classes." Yet, according to Myrdal, nothing very much

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 382.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama, An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations, Vol. I (New York, 1968), p. 278.

has changed.⁶⁸ The political and intellectual leaders of the nationally dominant Congress Party, though continuing to publicly condemn "casteism," together with "communalism," "provincialism," and "lingualism," and all the other forces that fragment national life, do so in an unconvincing way; they suggest no specific, practical measures for its abolishment. Myrdal further claims that politicians of all parties in their election campaigns patently cater to caste sensitivities. Universal suffrage has since "compelled the politicians to come to terms with the dominant elements in (the rural) setting, the rural elite of landowners, merchants, and moneylenders. This implies, in the first place, condoning caste."⁶⁹

Myrdal's 1968 statement is only too relevant to the 1975 Indian political scene. In a statement on the 1975 Bihar state elections, the Overseas Hindustan Times noted that one of the massive problems Chief Minister Dr. J. Mishra (ruling Congress party) was bound to face was the balancing between the various caste and class groupings seeking representation in his Ministry.

. . . Mishra's tough task was in devising a "caste balance" in the new team which he had promised earlier would have a strength of 35

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 278, 279.

in all. For the present, he had worked it out by giving two seats each for Brahmins, Muslims and Adivasis, three seats for Harijans, and one each for Yadavas, Rajputs, Kurmis, Keoris and other backward classes.⁷⁰

The task in Bihar in 1975 was to balance caste within a victorious state governmental ministry. However, the task of both Congress and Communist candidates in Andhra immediately preceding each 1946, 1951, and 1955 election was to manipulate the caste factor in order to engineer electoral triumph.

In his case-study in Andhra politics, Selig Harrison concentrates on the politics of the castes in the Andhra state legislature.⁷¹ Harrison argues his case from a model of caste-party identity, according to which the two peasant castes of Andhra, namely Kammas and Reddis, first united to dislodge the Brahmins from power, then fell apart as a result of political rivalry, and joined two different political parties.⁷² The Kammas joined the Communist Party and

⁷⁰"Caste Balancing in Bihar," The Overseas Hindustan Times, April 24, 1975, p. 3.

⁷¹Selig Harrison, "Caste and the Andhra Communists," American Political Science Review, L (March-December, 1958), 378-404. See also, Selig Harrison, India: The Most Dangerous Decades, (Princeton, 1960), pp. 204-245. Harrison was a consultant to the Modern India Project at the University of California at Berkeley and held a fellowship in Journalism at Harvard. He has also worked for the Associated Press at the Detroit Bureau and three years as foreign correspondent in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Ceylon, and Afghanistan.

⁷²A. H. Somjee, "Caste and the Decline of Political Homogeneity," American Political Science Review, LXVII (September, 1973), 799-800. Somjee is Professor of Political Science at Simon Fraser University, Canada.

the Reddis joined the Congress Party. In "Harrison's view, therefore, the nature of political cleavage in Andhra was none other than the politically transformed social cleavage between the two peasant castes."⁷³

In substantiation of his argument, Harrison provided the following two tables:

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF CANDIDATES BY MAJOR CASTES IN ANDHRA
DELTA DISTRICTS IN 1946, 1951, AND 1955
STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS⁷⁴

Year	Communist				Congress			
	Kamma	Reddi	Brahman	Other	Kamma	Reddi	Brahman	Other
1946	9	--	1	1	4	3	4	7
1951	22	2	3	15	17	7	2	20
1955	32	4	6	24	28	7	7	25

Note: Constituencies reserved for scheduled castes and tribes have been omitted. In the case of 1946, when certain constituencies were also reserved for urban as distinct from rural voters, and on the basis of labor union membership, religion, and sex, these figures apply only to general rural constituencies.

Caste designations on which this and subsequent tables are based have been compiled through the cooperation of members of major Telegu castes. This compilation has included a cross-check list of the designations made by each cooperating informant by other persons of different castes (Harrison's note).

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Selig Harrison, The Most Dangerous Decades, (Princeton, 1960), p. 219.

TABLE VIII

NUMBER OF ELECTED LEGISLATORS BY MAJOR CASTES
IN ANDHRA DELTA DISTRICTS IN 1946, 1951,
AND 1955 STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS⁷⁵

Year	Communist				Congress			
	Kamma	Reddi	Brahman	Other	Kamma	Reddi	Brahman	Other
1946	--	--	--	--	4	3	4	7
1951	14	2	3	6	3	3	--	4
1955	1	2	3	3	24	7	7	25

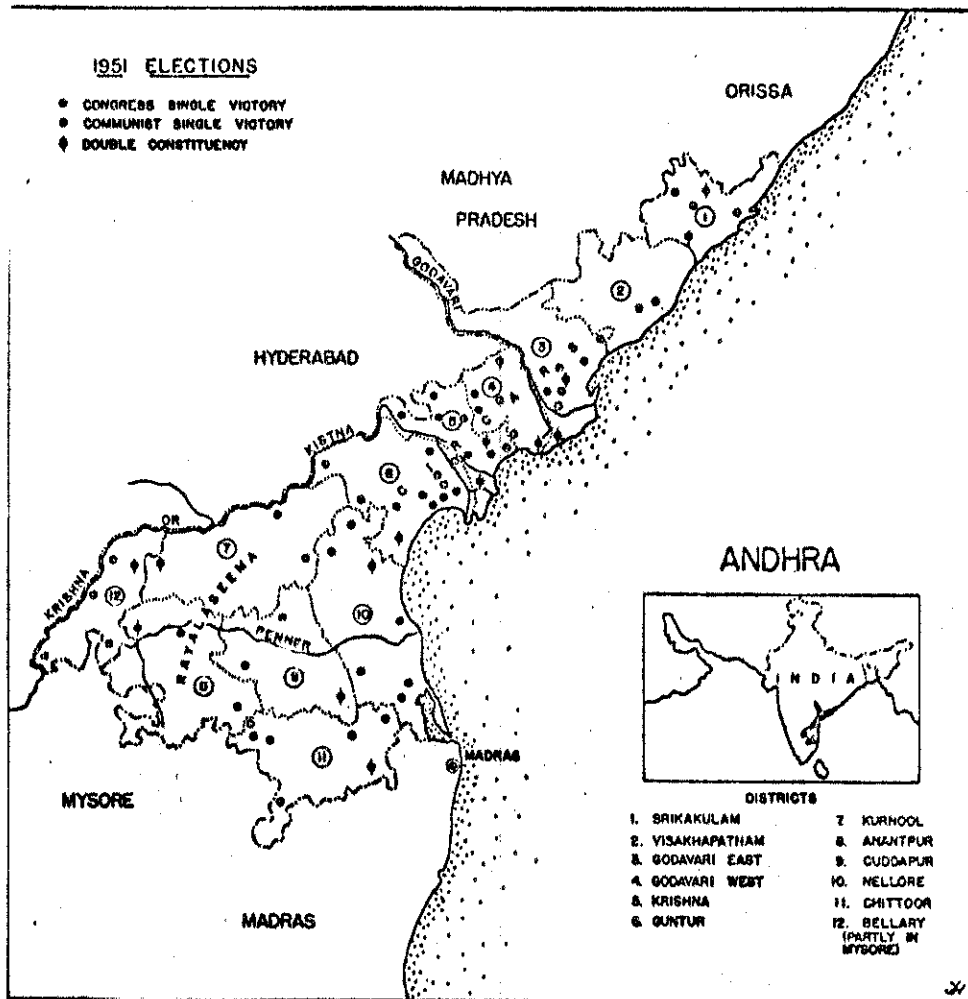
Note: Same as Table VII.

Harrison provides, in the previously cited article "Caste and the Andhra Communists," a brief historical and social account of the Andhra Communists before the 1946 election. In their case, the effective use of caste "(did) not arise full-blown out of a bottomless tactical armory but rather out of the caste homogeneity of the Andhra Communist leadership itself."⁷⁶ Since the founding of the Andhra Communist Party in 1934, its leadership had come exclusively from a single subcaste, the Kamma landlords, who dominated the Krishna-Godavari delta (see Map I). This was an important fact, because of the rising influence of the Kammas in Andhra life. The war and postwar years

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Harrison, "Caste and the Andhra Communists," p. 381.

MAP I



SOURCE: Selig Harrison, "Caste and the Andhra Communists," American Political Science Review, L (March-December, 1958,) p. 380.

were a boom period for the Kamma farmers who owned an estimated 80 per cent of the fertile delta land.⁷⁷

Kamma funds had made the Andhra party better able to support itself than any other regional arm of Indian communism. In all kinds of political weather a virile, expensively produced communist press in Andhra's Telegu language had been kept alive by a Kamma publisher, Katragadda Rajagopal Rao, whose family also operated one of India's largest Virginia tobacco plantations and virtually monopolized the fertilizer market in Andhra. As the "dominant caste" in the villages of the delta districts, even relatively modest Kamma landholders were in a position to put decisive influence on the side of the Communist Party.⁷⁸

In India: The Most Dangerous Decades, Harrison notes that the Andhra Communist leaders at state, district, and village levels are all predominantly of rich and middle peasant stock. Three wealthy Kamma-caste intellectuals had maintained for at least the previous fifteen years key control of the Andhra Communist Party: party secretary Chandrasekhar Rao, former Indian Communist Party secretary Rajeshwar Rao, and M. Basava Punniyah, a member of the Indian Communist Central Committee. As a result, an Andhra Communist dissident had coined the epithet: kulak pettandar

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid.

to attack the Andhra leadership, coupling the Russian term for rich peasant with the Telegu term for head of a caste or tribe.⁷⁹

In contrast to Kamma control of the Communist Party, stood the power of the rival landowning Reddi subcaste in the Congress Party. According to Kamma historian K. Bhavaiah Chondary, political competition between the two castes is a modern recurrence of an historic pattern dating back to the 14th century. The Reddi caste were centered in the five Rayalaseema districts of west Andhra, whereas the Kammas were found in the four mid-Andhra delta districts. The geographical separation of the two castes provides the final historical backdrop of the 1946, 1951, and 1955 elections. The results of the elections themselves are helpful in viewing the dynamics of the areas.

1946 Andhra Elections

In the 1946 Andhra elections, Communist candidates were massed solidly over the Kamma delta stronghold. Of the sixty-two constituencies in Andhra, as it existed prior to the reorganization of states and the formation of Vishalandhra, or Greater Andhra in 1956, the Communists contested twenty-nine, virtually side by side. Twenty-four were located in the Kamma concentrated delta districts of Krishna, Guntur, East Godavari, and West Godavari.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Harrison, India: The Most Dangerous Decades, pp. 208-209.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 213.

One feature distinguishing the delta scene from other parts of Andhra was the high population density, (900 to 1200 persons per square mile compared to 316 in the rest of Andhra) and the high percentage of landless laborers (37 per cent of the total agricultural population is landless labor).⁸¹ Andhra Communist leaders have from the beginning attempted to organize the Adi-Andhras, an untouchable sub-caste comprising the bulk of the region's landless migrants, and have been successful. However, in 1946, the Communists did not derive much voting support from the group due to the fact that franchise limitations excluded all but thirteen per cent of the population. Harrison notes, in addition to a literacy requirement, only registered landholders owning, in addition to their homes, immovable property valued at the rupee equivalent of \$10 or more were permitted to vote.⁸²

The Andhra Communists waged a vigorous campaign in the 1946 elections, putting their major effort into Kamma strongholds. However, the sole successful Communist contestant won in a labor stronghold, and the dominantly rural nature of the 1946 Communist effort was overlooked. Of the twenty-four delta seats the Communists contested, seventeen were entirely rural. Of these seventeen, six were reserved seats for scheduled castes (untouchables). In each of the eleven remaining "general rural" constituencies, the per cent

⁸¹Ibid., p. 215.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 216, 220.

of the vote polled by the Communists was surprisingly high -- ranging from a low of 11.5 to a high of 31.9, with the median falling just above 20.⁸³ These were not substantially votes derived from agricultural labor, but were drawn from the general, landed, caste Hindu population in the countryside and from propertied voters in small rural centers.

A caste analysis of candidates reveals the Kamma base of the Communist leadership. Omitting the six constituencies reserved for scheduled castes, "a caste breakdown of the eleven Communist-caste Hindu entrants shows nine Kammass, while of eighteen caste Hindu Congress entrants for rural seats in the four delta districts only four were Kammass,"⁸⁴ (see Table VII).

1951 Andhra Elections

Between the 1946-1951 elections, Andhra Congress leaders were locked in a factional war, in which the political fortunes of the Kamma leader, N. G. Ranga, rose and fell. The three way pull between Ranga, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, and T. Prakasam was complicated by the multi-lingual nature of Madras politics during that period.

⁸³Ibid., p. 220.

⁸⁴Ibid.

Prakasam, having helped his own men win Congress seats in the Madras Assembly, commanded powerful support during the initial stages of the three-way skirmish. In "the 1946 wrangle for ascendancy in the multi-lingual Madras Legislative Congress party, Prakasam emerged with the prize of the Madras Chief Ministership."⁸⁵ His majority was shaky, however, since Tamil members of the Assembly had joined in electing him for factional reasons of their own. The ruling Tamil Congress bloc, predominantly non-Brahman, used Prakasam to head off Tamil Brahman C. Rajagopalachari in his bid for the Chief Ministership. Once successful, they sought allies to replace Prakasam. Caste loyalties seemed to have stopped at the linguistic border.⁸⁶

The 20 Andhra supporters of the Brahman, Sitaramayya lined up with the non-Brahman, Tamil bloc and half of the Malayalam-speaking members of the legislature to unseat Prakasam. In order to save his political position in his home territory, Prakasam joined forces with Ranga. Together they obtained control of the Andhra Congress machinery defeating N. Sanjiva Reddi, nominee of the Sitaramayya group.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Harrison, "Caste and the Andhra Communists, pp. 393, 394.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 394.

⁸⁷Ibid.

With the Kamma Ranga at the head of the Congress, the opposition to Prakasam and Ranga had strong caste overtones. Reddi forces were partly responsible for the maneuvering that brought Ranga's downfall in April, 1951, when N. Sanjiva Reddi won the Andhra Congress presidency in a close 87-82 decision. Ranga and Prakasam, charging that the Reddi victory hung on "irregularities," walked out of the Congress. Fifty of their sympathizers on the Andhra Congress Committee followed them out of the party. The final blow to Congress unity came in the form of a Ranga-Reddi split. Prakasam announced that his candidates in the general elections would bear the symbol of the new Kisan Mazdoor Praja (Peasants Workers Peoples) party led by Acharya J. B. Kripalani. Ranga formed a Kamma front, the Krishikar Lok (Farmers') party (KLP). Therefore, in delta election constituencies where Kamma influence counted, the three-way Congress split "meant that at least two Kammas, a Ranga candidate and a nominee of the official Congress, and in many cases other Kammas named by Prakasam, the Socialist party, or independent local groups, all competed for the campaign support of their wealthy caste fellows."⁸⁸

Selig Harrison contended that Communist victory margins in 1951 stemmed from a "timely confluence of events,"

⁸⁸
Ibid.

favorable to the manipulation of social tensions, which did not reoccur in 1955, accounting for the loss of Communist strength in that election. For example, in 1951 the movement to carve a separate Telegu-speaking Andhra State out of Madras had reached a high emotional intensity.⁸⁹ The Communist propaganda was keyed to Telegu patriotism, whereas in 1955, with Andhra State a reality, the Congress could make Indian nationalism the issue. Also, while they were exploiting Telegu solidarity in 1951, the Communists made the most of a tense moment in Andhra's caste rivalries -- a crisis which the Congress was able to overcome in time for the 1955 elections.⁹⁰

At the time that the Congress was enduring a period of disarray and factionalism, the Communists entered the electoral scene of 1951. The Communists had the issues on their side.

Not only could they promise five acres and a cow to their traditional supporters, the Adi-Andhra landless laborers; they could also put the Congress on the defensive in the Andhra State issue. Then, too, they could inflate popular discontent with food shortages and blackmarketing that grew worse while ruling Congress politicians seemed too busy feuding to take action -- or, as the popular image had it were knee deep in the trough of corruption.⁹¹

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 387.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 387, 388.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 395.

It is readily apparent that a significant section of the Kamma put their funds, influence, and votes behind

TABLE IX
COMMUNIST KAMMA STRONGHOLDS IN ANDHRA* AS SHOWN
IN 1951 AND 1955 ELECTIONS

Constituency	1951				1955		
	Con- gress	CP	KLP	Others	Con- gress	CP	Others
Krishna							
Kanchikacherla	31 ⁺	52 ⁺	13 ⁺	4 ⁺	50 ⁺	47 ⁺	3 ⁺
Kankipadu	30 ⁺	54 ⁺	11 ⁺	5 ⁺	51 ⁺	49 ⁺	--
Divi	20 ⁺	44 ⁺	--	36 ⁺	59 ⁺	41 ⁺	--
Gudivada	14 ⁺	48 ⁺	--	38	--	42 ⁺	58 ⁺
Guntur							
Chilakaluripet	19 ⁺	55 ⁺	11 ⁺	15	56 ⁺	43 ⁺	1
Bapatla	32	36 ⁺	25 ⁺	7	56	40 ⁺	4
Mangalgi	14 ⁺	51 ⁺	23 ⁺	12	57	43 ⁺	--
Rapalle	34 ⁺	52 ⁺	9 ⁺	5	60	40 ⁺	--
Ongole	12	40 ⁺	20 ⁺	28	54	46 ⁺	--
Ponnur	15	37 ⁺	21 ⁺	27	65 ⁺	35	--
East Godavari							
Rajahmundry	27	40 ⁺	--	33	59	41	--
West Godavari							
Kovvur	23 ⁺	30 ⁺	--	47 ⁺	63 ⁺	32 ⁺	5
Eluru	26 ⁺	40 ⁺	--	34 ⁺	62 ⁺	37 ⁺	1
Chintalapudi	32 ⁺	46 ⁺	--	22 ⁺			

*Constituencies shown represent all those in which Kamma Communist candidates were elected in 1951. The outcome in the same constituencies is shown in 1955, though it should be borne in mind that new delimitation of constituencies prior to the 1955 elections makes the 1955 constituencies not exactly congruent with the originals under comparison. These constituencies do not necessarily represent the sites of greatest Kamma Communist success in 1955. The site of one 1951 Communist victory--Chintalapudi (West Godavari)--cannot be compared meaningfully with any 1955 constituency.

+Candidates designated in this manner are members of the Kamma subcaste.

the Communist Kamma Candidates (see Tables IX and X)⁹² This was the deciding factor in the delta for Communist victory. Although the Kamma vote was divided, the share of Kamma support won by the Communists provided the margin of victory in 14 of 25 delta general constituencies where Communist deputies were elected. Three of the six Communist members of the lower house of Parliament elected in 1951, from the delta, were Kammass.

TABLE X
DEFEATED 1951 COMMUNIST KAMMA CANDIDATES IN
ANDHRA DELTA DISTRICTS

Constituency	Per Cent of Total Vote			
	Congress	CP	KLP	Others
Krishna				
Kaikulur	37 ⁺	36 ⁺	--	27
Guntur				
Guntur	24 ⁺	23 ⁺	--	53
Duggirala	42	38 ⁺	13 ⁺	7
Prathipadu	26	25	22 ⁺	27
East Godavari				
Pamarru	49 ⁺	46 ⁺	--	5 ⁺
West Godavari				
Tanuku	29 ⁺	25 ⁺	--	46 ⁺

+Constituencies designated in this manner are members of the Kamma sub-caste.

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest decimal. Communist-supported Kamma candidates running on other party tickets or as independents in other constituencies are not included in this analysis.

To a great extent the 1951 results in the delta can be explained simply by the multiplicity of candidates, which enabled the Communists to capitalize on a divided opposition. Looking further into the matter one notes that the Communists were uniquely situated to exploit the divisions in the Kamma camp. Their leaders were Kmmas on Kamma ground. Kamma influence is spread evenly over the delta so that even in those delta constituencies where non-Kamma Communist candidates were successful, the Kamma vote must have played an important role. The factor of multiplicity of candidates is seen in proper perspective when one is aware of the fact that the average Communist Kamma winner polled 44.6 per cent of the votes. In only two constituencies did the combined vote of non-Communist Kamma candidates exceed that of the Communist Kamma victor. Even in defeat, Communist Kamma candidates in 1951 polled 33.1 per cent of the votes (see Table X), with the margin of defeat a matter of one to four percentage points in every instance where the successful candidate was also a Kamma. In contrast, other defeated Communist candidates in the delta polled only an average 22 per cent. The fact that the Communists could compete strongly for the support of the caste group most strategically placed in delta politics was the key to the Communist sweep.⁹³

⁹³Ibid., pp. 396, 397.

In the following section, a study is made of the 1955 election and the manner in which the Congress met the Communist challenge, by matching caste with caste in selecting candidates.

The 1955 Andhra Elections

In November, 1954, Congress leaders in New Delhi came to realize that firm intervention from outside would be necessary to forge a united front for the new election in February, 1955. For N. G. Ranga this was an important political moment in which his whole future as a Kamma spokesman lay at stake. Nehru summoned the forces of Ranga, T. Prakasam, Sanjiva Reddi, and other anti-Communist Andhra leaders to map a united election campaign. Ranga emerged from the negotiations with control over nominations in 38 constituencies as part of the Congress United Front, enough to insure a single Kamma entry by Congress forces in all Kamma strongholds. The regular Congress organization received 136 constituencies and the Peoples' Party, a Prakasam group comprising Andhra remnants of the defunct KMP, won control of nominations in 20 constituencies.⁹⁴

With the Congress camp united, independents withheld from the contest. There were 78 straight contests between

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 399.

the Congress and the Communists, 65 more with only three contestants, and in only the remaining 53 was there the dispersion of 1951. The Communists "dashing to the fray," had announced their candidate lists in the first week of December to take the offensive. But this cut two ways: the Congress had time to match caste with caste in selecting candidates. The upshot was that in their delta stronghold the Communists won only 11 seats, two of these in reserved constituencies, as opposed to their 31 delta seats in 1951. A solitary Kamma was elected on the Communist ticket.⁹⁵

The Communists had made every bit as intensive an effort in 1955 as in 1951 to capitalize on the Kamma "social base" in the delta, running Kamma candidates in 29 delta constituencies. With anti-Communist Kamma forces consolidated in the Congress, however, the Communists could not make their Kamma support a decisive factor in 1955. Confronted with a single Kamma opponent (see Table IX), the Communist Kamma candidate was in a defensive position. N. G. Ranga had recaptured the initiative in the contest for Kamma support by showing he could drive a hard bargain for the caste within Congress councils. The 28 Kamma Communist losers still won substantial support in their caste strongholds--an average 38.7 per cent of the votes. However, this

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 399, 400.

was a drop from an average 44.6 per cent polled by the 14 Kamma Communist winners in 1951.⁹⁶

Some Concluding Remarks

The noted Indian sociologist Professor M. N. Srinivas has expressed the view that the establishment of Pax Britannica provided the various castes with the opportunity of overcoming the "severe limits on the horizontal extension of . . . ties," which were impressed on them by the pre-British fragmentary political kingdoms in India. Added to this were the increased facilities for communication and transport which brought together men of the same castes who were "scattered in far-flung villages." Long before parliamentary institutions were established in India, the networks in the post-independence period were used in order to influence votes. Because the social organization of the castes on horizontal lines had preceded the introduction of democratic ideology, they found it easier to subsume the new political institutions.⁹⁷

Political parties in search of mass support covetously look to the existence of primary social cohesion within the endogamous units of caste and hope to tap it or turn it with a "vote bank."⁹⁸ Herein lies the problem,

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ M. N. Srinivas, Caste in Modern India, p. 74.

⁹⁸ Somjee, op. cit., p. 518.

since the primary cohesion of the caste exists for its social concern only, according to A. H. Somjee, who writes that political parties are forced to start at the base, with the members of the caste and caste-neighborhood influentials, and work their way horizontally so as to encompass more and more supporters.⁹⁹

In order to mobilize mass support of a caste, a political party must win over as many influentials to its side as possible, and usually the task is assigned to a "caste political active." He contacts the influentials. However, the factional structure of groups and rivalry among the influentials, campaigning by political parties, perception of issues, interpretation of personal interests, attraction to certain personalities, influence of regional newspapers, exposure to different political views in the place of one's work, and learning from a cumulative electoral experience itself, do not simplify the task of a "caste political active."

Despite the work of the political actives, the appeal of the caste of a candidate, the work done in certain cases by "caste associations" such as the Kshatriya Sabha, the electorate in the rural as well as the urban Indian community seems to register a growing political diversity.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Somjee concludes that the political cohesion of castes is shrinking from the wider horizontal integration to smaller more diversified residential segments. His advice to political parties in India is to build up a "patchwork of segmented political support on multi-caste lines rather than rely on a single caste, however numerous it may be."¹⁰¹ Indeed, the fission and fusion process of Communist social base support in Kerala State in the past 18 years calls for an open ear concerning Somjee's advice.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

CHAPTER III

INDIAN COMMUNISM AND THE PEASANTRY

Introduction

In his monumental study Asian Drama, Gunnar Myrdal states,

The Indian village is like a complex molecule among whose parts extreme tensions have been built up. Although the tensions crisscross in a manner that maintains equilibrium, it is conceivable that they may reorganize in a way that would explode the molecule. This would perhaps not happen spontaneously but as a result of forceful onslaught from outside.¹

According to three agrarian experts of the Communist Party of India (CPI), the molecule of the Indian village has "started exploding."² Although this would appear to be an overstatement if one took an overview of the Indian rural universe, it is evident that peasant militancy under Communist leadership has shaken the traditional equilibrium in certain rural portions of the country, notably the states of West Bengal and Kerala.³

It is highly significant that during the last six or seven years the agrarian question has pushed itself into

¹Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama: An Inquiry Into the Poverty of Nations (New York, 1968), Vol. II, pp. 1063, 1064.

²C. Rajeshawara Rao, Bhowani Sen, and Y. V. Krishna Rao, Problems of India's Agrarian Sector (New Delhi, 1970), p. 288.

³Bhabani Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics (New York, 1972), p. 288.

the forefront of Indian politics. For the first time in India, the Communists have looked toward the rural proletariat, recognizing it as the largest single potential revolutionary element in Indian society.⁴ Peasant struggles such as Naxalbari and Srikakulam in 1967, have spread rapidly during this period in comparison to the preceding fifteen years, taking militant forms in several other areas.

Experience in the Indian situation has shown that agrarian tensions "almost automatically tend to lead to violence, for there is a tremendous amount of violence, hatred, and bitterness hidden beneath the superficially quiescent caste-cum-agrarian relation in India."⁵ Professor Sen Gupta claims that traditionally, the poor peasant and the landless agricultural laborer, who are generally also members of the untouchable castes, have borne with their famous docility and resignation the inhumanities inflicted by the landlords and their rent-collecting agents. Nearly every significant peasant struggle in India has therefore tended to be violent.⁶

Since 1967, there have been several major changes in Indian agrarian relations. The ensuing events have pointed to the phenomenon that land relationships have been the

⁴Ibid., p. 289.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

strongest determinant in political alignments at the state level. At the national level of politics other factors exert powerful pulls -- such as organized industry, unionized workers, the bureaucracy, the military, and the intellectual and technological elites.⁷

The two most important changes that have taken place in India's agrarian sector since 1967 are the "green revolution" and organized peasant militancy under Communist leadership.⁸ Both phenomena have occurred simultaneously. The "green revolution" is the result of the first large-scale application of science and technology to agriculture, revealing prospects of a capitalistic development of farming. At the political level, Sen Gupta claims the "green revolution" has convinced the majority of political leaders that technology would make structural changes in the existing land relationships avoidable and could therefore work as a substitute for land reforms. Tractors used for cultivation on large privately owned farms have thrown vast numbers of laborers out of employment.

According to Professor Haridwar Rai and K. M. Prasad, ...this process of Kulakisation, mechanisation and "green revolution" has intensified the process

⁷Ibid., p. 290.

⁸Barry Pavier, "The Telengana Armed Struggle," Economic and Political Weekly, Special Number IX (August, 1974), 1413-1420. Pavier provides an excellent analysis of social and economic factors leading to the struggle -- the first large-scale Indian Communist led uprising, 1946-51.

of class polarisation and class contradiction. It is (the) landlords and rich farmers who have benefitted most from the huge amounts of state subsidies, state assistance and state loans at cheap rates for land improvement, irrigation, farm implements, fertilizers and seeds.⁹

It is the tensions created by recent capitalist development of agriculture in addition to traditional agrarian inequities and injustices that the Communists are trying to exploit in their bid for power. They have been organizing the rural proletariat in demands for tenure and land reforms and for the amelioration of other hardships like the burden of indebtedness.

Capitalism or "Semi-Feudalism" in India?

Working independently on the problems of Germany and Russia respectively, Karl Kautsky and V. I. Lenin saw agriculture as part of the national economy that was undergoing capitalist transformation.¹⁰ Industry was growing at a high rate, employing an increasing proportion of the national work force. On the one hand, industrial development provided new inputs to agriculture in the form of

⁹Haridwar Rai and K. M. Prasad, "Naxalism: A Challenge to the Proposition of Peaceful Transition to Socialism" Indian Journal of Political Science, XXXIII (October-December, 1972), 460. Rai is Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Bhagalpur University; Prasad is Lecturer, Postgraduate Department of Political Science, Bhagalpur University.

¹⁰Nirmal K. Chandra, "Farm Efficiency Under Semi-Feudalism, A Critique of Marginalist Theories and Some Marxist Formulations," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (Special Number 1974, Nos. 32-34), 1342.

machinery and chemicals, unleashing new productive forces in agriculture. On the other hand rising agricultural prosperity created new markets for industrial consumer goods and provided raw materials for industry. Therefore, the whole process was one of mutual benefit to both industry and agriculture. Viewed against this perspective Kautsky and Lenin formulated the following "laws" of motion for agriculture:

- a. The law of increasing returns to scale operates as much in agriculture as in industry so that large-scale farms are superior to small-scale ones.
- b. As a consequence of (a), there is a continuous differentiation among the peasantry, i.e.,
 - (1) land gets increasingly concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer persons; and
 - (2) the ranks of agricultural workers get swelled so that they form an even larger portion of the total agricultural population.
- c. The extent of share-cropping declines over time. For, this kind of tenancy is pre-capitalist in nature and obviously does not suit the interests of the big farmers.
- d. Alongside (b) agricultural production is increasingly oriented not towards the cultivator's self-consumption but towards the outside market whether in the form of food or cash crops.¹¹

Attempts have been made at applying the above general "laws" to the Indian scene by Marxist scholars and activists. In "Farm Efficiency Under Semi-Feudalism," the contemporary Indian economist Nirmal K. Chandra states that most writers on the Indian economic scene using the Marxian framework,

¹¹Ibid.

have emphasized law (b). Thus R. Palme Dutt, in his India, Today and Tomorrow, refers to the whole process of deterioration, expropriation, and increasing class differentiation among the peasantry that went on from the early twentieth century to World War II. He also "uses S. J. Patel's figures to show that agricultural workers constituted an increasing part of the total agricultural population."¹²

The Indian economist Ramkrishna Mukherji, in Dynamics of a Rural Society, studies the economic structure of Bengal villages during the British period and notes the increasing concentration of land-ownership.¹³ In Mukherji's view, the absence of irrigation precluded other types of capital investment in agriculture; therefore, there were no special advantages to large-scale farming and share-cropping was more prevalent than large farms based on hired labor.

N. K. Chandra further indicates that Bhowani Sen, not only a brilliant theorist, but also a leading figure behind the Communist-led 1946 Tebhaga movement of the Bengal share-croppers against their landlords, has echoed Palme Dutt's arguments.¹⁴ Since the beginning of the twentieth century

¹² Ibid. Dutt was the major overseas advisor to the CPI and founder of the British Communist Party in August, 1920.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Bhowani Sen, Evaluation of Agrarian Relations in India, (New Delhi, 1962), pp. 147, 280 cited in Chandra, Ibid.

land was leaving the hands of the tillers who then became agricultural laborers, accounting for a rising part of the agricultural population. Sen also believed that a "rickety" capitalism was growing. However, neither Dutt nor Sen make any reference to the superiority of large-scale over small farms in India.

In "Capitalist Development in Agriculture," Usta Patnaik, from the study of a sample of 66 large farms scattered all over India, has argued that all the laws of motion propounded by Kautsky and Lenin are fully valid in the context of India in the 1960's, if not earlier. Patnaik claims that a vigorous capitalist development is indeed taking place.¹⁵ Given these Marxist "rules" of capitalist development, the limited historical evidence can be examined in this context.

Chandra, in his aforementioned article, indicates that there are hardly any reliable tables on land distribution, either for the country as a whole or for any part of it, extending over a long period of time. Therefore any conclusion concerning the "mode of existence" of Indian agriculture is tentative and speculative. However, Chandra draws some speculative conclusions after presenting a brief account of the following evidence:¹⁶

¹⁵Usta Patnaik, "Capitalist Development in Agriculture," Economic and Political Weekly, Review of Agriculture (September, 1971).

¹⁶Chandra, op. cit., p. 1325. All the studies mentioned by Chandra are clearly footnoted in his article.

1. He notes that Rajat and Ratna Ray present estimates of the land distribution in Dinajpur in 1808 based on Buchanan's "Geographic Description of Dinajpur." Comparing these with the Floud Commission figures for 1940 one does not notice any polarisation.

2. N. K. Ghosh has compared the data for West Bengal in the years 1940, 1953-54 and 1961-62, taken respectively from the Floud Commission, National Sample Survey 8th Round and National Sample Survey 17th Round. "The Lorenz ratio of concentration of land ownership remained unchanged over the period as a whole."¹⁷

3. Reworking on Ramkrishna Mukherji's data on Six Bogra villages between 1920 and 1942, Rajat and Ranta Ray state that the jotedars (wealthy landowners and rich farmers) increased their holdings by 1.3 per cent against the self-sufficient raiyat's gain of 3.2 per cent and a loss of 0.16 percent by the sharecroppers. Along the same lines, they quote from Hashim Amir Ali's study of a few villages near Santiniketan between 1933 and 1958.

4. A large amount of similar data from different parts of Bengal and other parts of India for the period 1920-1944 has been utilized by Karunamoy Mukherji to show that the crises of the Great Depression of the 1930's and

¹⁷ Ibid.

1943 led to large-scale land transfer. However, the sellers were not always small farmer and the purchasers were not always from the jotedar class.

According to Chandra, although data on the occupational structure of the agricultural population are available for every census since 1972, intercensal changes in definitions make any conclusion nearly as tentative as that on land distribution. Chandra cites the following research concerning occupational structure:¹⁸

1. He notes that the Indian sociologists Rajat and Ratna Ray in the aforementioned study found that the proportion of share croppers and agricultural laborers declined from around one-half to one-third of the agricultural population between 1808 and 1938 in the districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur. Based on the 1961 Census for East Pakistan, the authors claim that the proportion did not increase. However,

2. S. J. Patel reworked the Census data from 1871-72 to 1931, and for India he finds a steady increase in the proportion of agricultural laborers and their families to the agricultural population from 13 per cent in 1801 to 22 per cent in 1911 to 26 percent in 1921 to 80 per cent in 1931. He included all unspecified laborers in agriculture in the category of agricultural laborers.

¹⁸Ibid.

3. According to Indian economist J. Krishnamurty the percentage of male agricultural workers in the male agricultural workforce remained fairly static in India between 1901 and 1961. It may be no higher in 1971. In the absence of "more definitive data (Chandra presumes) that (a) agricultural workers as a proportion of the agricultural workforce may have increased somewhat and (b) a part of this rise may have been caused by the disappearance of village industries."¹⁹

Returning to the next-to-last point of the Kautsky-Lenin theses, one does not seem to find a decline of the extent of share-cropping over time in India. According to Chandra, "... no one has suggested that it is a dying institution, even less that it is substituted by hired-laborer farms."²⁰ The widespread eviction of sharecroppers in India is due to an "extraneous" reason: the landowners are afraid that sharecroppers may acquire permanent occupancy rights sooner or later. Often, the sharecropper is shifted from one plot of land to another belonging to the same landowner. Rarely does the landlord himself begin cultivation hiring field laborers under his supervision.²¹

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

A question mark seems evident regarding the final point of the Kautsky-Lenin theses. From Irfan Halib's study of the late Moghul period it appears that the amount of non-marketed produce of the countryside was very large -- "at least a fourth of (the total), if not a third or a half."²² This amount does not seem to have increased greatly.

N. K. Chandra argues that if the size of holding, labor type, and tenancy do not effect farm efficiency, then there should be no general trend towards land concentration, or for hired labor farms to be replaced by family farms (or vice versa), or for tenancy arrangements to disappear. Thus, none of the laws of motion formulated by Kautsky and Lenin seem to apply to India. The country does not appear to have been going through capitalist transformation but seems to be stagnated at a "semi-feudal" state of agricultural relations.

In "A Study in Agricultural Backwardness Under Semi-Feudalism," Amit Bhaduri, a contemporary Indian economist, from data collected on 26 West Bengal villages in 1970, claims that the dominant character of the existing relations of production can be best described as "semi-feudal." In claiming that the existing relations of production have

22

Ibid.

"more in common with feudalism of the master-serf type than with industrial capitalism," he examines four prominent features of this type of agriculture: "(a) share cropping, (b) perpetual indebtedness of the small tenants, (c) concentration of two modes of exploitation, i.e., usury and landownership, in the hands of the same economic class and (d) lack of accessibility for the small tenant to the market."²³

There are several factors involved which seem to perpetuate this system of semi-feudalism. Small tenants have incomplete access to rural "markets" and are forcibly involved in involuntary exchange. Their perpetual indebtedness is due to the landlords' role as moneylenders, thereby enabling the landlord to charge the sharecropper exorbitant interest, which in turn leaves the sharecropper insufficient means of subsistence, forcing him to borrow once again. Herein lies the "master-serf" relationship: the sharecropper is reluctant to flee his tormentor, because of the vast amount of under employment in the countryside.

Capital investment that may increase production is often inhibited, because this may increase the tenant's share and remove his indebtedness to the landlord. However,

²³Amit Bhaduri, "A Study in Agricultural Backwardness Under Semi-Feudalism," Economic Journal, (March, 1973), 120-121.

when capital investment has taken place, as in cases producing the "green revolution," the tenant's share is lowered by the landlord and he is kept as poor and dependent as he always was. After an extensive study of the effects of the "green revolution," W. Ladejinsky of the World Bank found the sharecroppers' condition growing worse, because as ownership of improved land is priced very highly, there is increasing determination on the part of owners not to permit tenants to share in the rights of land they cultivate.²⁴

In 1970, three years after the Naxalbari uprising in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal (see Map II), the 70,000 Jotedars in West Bengal constituted five per cent of the rural population and possessed forty per cent of the arable land. Sixty-four per cent of the villagers were landless peasants and workers who found no work for more than 100 days per year. The situation is similar in other areas of India.²⁵ Given all the above evidence, it seems that Indian agricultural relations had been stagnating in a state of semi-feudalism until the late 1960's, when incipient capitalism has begun to enter the scene with

²⁴W. Ladejinsky, "Green Revolution in Bihar," Economic and Political Weekly, 28 (September, 1969).

²⁵Rai and Prasad, op. cit., p. 460.

the "green revolution." The capitalist entry has not ameliorated the condition of the peasant masses in the Indian countryside, but has created "inequalities . . . far more glaring than the previous ones stemming entirely from unequal distribution of landholdings."²⁶ In exploiting this situation, the three Communist factions in India have three different tactical lines for mobilizing the peasantry. Before examining these lines, a discussion of the "land reforms" is in order.

"Land Reform" Legislation

Over a period of 100 years, (1793-1890) the British introduced in India, two major land-tenure systems: the Zamindari tenure in eastern and northern India and the ryotivari tenure in southern and western India.²⁷ Under Zamindari the British raj (ruling power) determined the total revenue payable for agricultural lands and made settlement with the zamindars who were not the actual cultivators but a group of master holders or revenue farmers.²⁸

In the course of time "layers of middlemen" emerged between the cultivators and the state, sharing the rent paid by the cultivator to the state. The land "reform"

²⁶V. M. Dandekar and Nilakantha Rath, "Poverty in India: Policies and Programmes," Economic and Political Weekly, (January 9, 1971), p. 109.

²⁷Myrdal, op. cit., II, 1037.

²⁸Ibid.

measures adopted in India during the 1950's (in some instances the 1960's) "practically abolished all these intermediary tenures. Nearly 20 million tenants under the intermediaries came under direct contact with the state." However, V. M. Dandekar and N. Rath claim, that this was "basically a reform of revenue administration rather than a measure of land reform."²⁹

In most of the states, legislation placed a ceiling on personal ownership of land. State governments came into possession of several million acres of cultivatable land. Added to previously owned land, the state governments have in their possession 1.2 million acres in blocks of more than 250 acres each, and 4.6 million in smaller blocks.³⁰ All this land was to be distributed principally to landless workers. Sen Gupta claims that "it is doubtful whether any considerable number of landless families have been settled in viable agriculture."³¹

The worst feature of the tenure reforms is that they provide no protection to the sharecroppers. Implementation of the reforms has also varied from state to state. For example, Sen Gupta claims that while in Maharashtra

²⁹Dandekar and Rath, op. cit., p. 109.

³⁰Sen Gupta, op. cit., p. 296.

³¹Ibid.

ownership of land was transferred during the 1950's and early 1960's to cultivating tenants and for all practical purposes tenancy was abolished; in most parts of Bihar the Tenancy Act of 1885 is still the rule: nonoccupancy under rai-yats, and sharecroppers remain completely unprotected.³²

Sen Gupta notes that on an all-India basis with the "Land Reform" Act of the 1950's and 1960's the intermediaries were transferred by the Act into a class of specially privileged agriculturalists with the exception of Kerala, where the Communist government elected in 1957 did subsequently seek to introduce a number of radical reforms.³³ In conclusion, it appears that the "land reforms" of the 1950's and 60's did not produce a structural change in agrarian relations but merely left 20 million of the former "intermediaries" as big and middle landlords. In addition, it is these landlords -- the bulk of whom belong to the higher castes and exercise economic and commercial power in the country -- who have benefitted most from the inputs that have gone into Indian agriculture since Independence."³⁴

³² Ibid.

³³ Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems in Communism (January-February, 1972), p. 3. Regarding the "failure" of the land reform laws see: Z. A. Ahmed, "New Land Ruling Laws Fail to Take Off," New Age, (April 15, 1973), p. 3; "Severe Indictment of Government's Land Reform Policies," New Age, (April 15, 1973), p. 3; and H. K. Konar, "On Land Reform," Mainstream, (New Delhi, July 29, 1967).

³⁴ Ibid.

The Communist Party of India -- Early
Background and Strategy

During the early phases of the development of Indian Communism in the 1920's, the movement was largely under the direction of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), but this control was exercised indirectly through the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). The ties between Indian and British Communists covered matters of ideology, strategy, and tactics, in addition to the supply of funds, trained organizers, and other agents.³⁵

The formation of the CPI, in late 1928, from the loosely related regional parties and front organizations which had been active in the Communist movement was followed in 1929 by the arrest and detention of 31 leaders of the Party. The Party's operations were hampered seriously for several years. From 1928 to 1935, the CPI, under Comintern direction, followed the united-front-from-below tactics which resulted in an antagonistic posture toward the Indian National Congress (INC). In 1935, when the Comintern dictated the shift to the united-front-from-above tactics, the CPI readily moved to active cooperation with the Indian nationalist movement. Its members joined the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) and over a period of time infiltrated positions of leadership

³⁵Ralph H. Retzlaff, "Revisionists and Sectarians: India's Two Communist Parties," cited in Robert A. Scalapino, ed., The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals, and Achievements (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967), p. 330.

within it. In 1939, when the CPI members were expelled from the CSP for disruptive tactics, the CPI took with it the bulk of the cadres in areas now comprising the three south Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nad.³⁶

In addition, during the early 1940's, the CPI successfully extended its control over substantial segments of the most important peasant, labor, and student organizations. In return for support of the war effort, the British granted the CPI legal status in 1943. On the eve of Indian independence, the CPI had increased its membership from an estimated 5,000 in 1942, to 53,000 in 1946, and it had recruited most of the leaders who currently control the national and state units of the Party.

Immediately prior to the granting of Indian independence, the CPI was obliged to define its position in Indian politics and, in particular, its attitude toward the INC. Over this issue, a split began to develop within the Party. A radical wing emerged, calling for a turn away from positions of cooperation with the INC and for the adoption of a militant line. It "advocated a reversal of the wartime policy of restraining mass activity of a revolutionary character, and called instead for a policy of insurrection and guerrilla activity."³⁷ B. T. Ranadive, an exponent of the insurrec-

³⁶ Ibid., p. 331.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 332.

tionary view, replaced P. C. Joshi as General Secretary at the Second CPI Congress at Calcutta in February and March of 1948. Ranadive, strongly influenced by the Russian Revolution, emphasized the role of the urban working class.

Shortly thereafter, the Andhra Pradesh unit of the CPI, under the direction of C. Rajeshwar Rao (presently General Secretary of the CPI³⁸), vigorously criticized Ranadive's adherence to a Russian-style revolution, calling instead for "emulation of the Chinese experience under Mao's concepts of 'new democracy'."³⁹ In June 1947, the CPSU gave tentative approval to this approach and Rajeshwar Rao became General Secretary of the CPI in May, 1950. The shift of emphasis from urban to rural struggle was sustained, coinciding with the Andhra-Communist led Telengana peasant uprising (1946-51).⁴⁰ This "largest and longest (Communist-led) revolt . . . is reported to have engulfed 2,000 villages in an area of 15,000 square miles, with a population of four million and a peasant army of 5,000."⁴¹

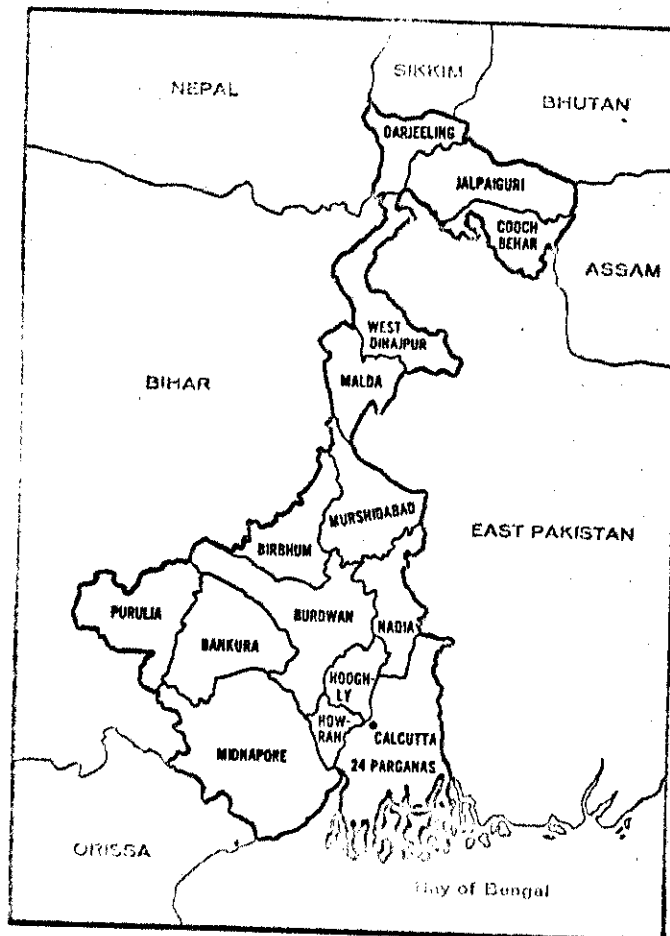
³⁸R. G. K., "Communism by the Backdoor," Illustrated Weekly of India (March 23, 1975).

³⁹Retzlaff, op. cit., p. 332. See also R. G. K., ibid.

⁴⁰George N. Patterson, Peking Versus Delhi (New York, 1964), p. 262.

⁴¹Kathleen Gough, "Indian Peasant Uprisings," Economic and Political Weekly (Special Number August, 1974), p. 1405. For present day views of the CPI and CPI(M) concerning the Telengana struggle see: C. Rajeswar Rao, The Historic Telengana Struggle (New Delhi, 1972) and P. Sundarayya, Telengana People's Struggle and Its Lessons (Calcutta, 1972).

MAP II



The Indian State of West Bengal and Its Districts

Source: Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems of Communism, XXI (January/February, 1972), 12.

After the Telengana movement had been suppressed by Government of India troops in 1951, the CPI switched from violent to peaceful methods of struggle.⁴² Under new leadership from Ajoy Ghosh the CPI gradually and reluctantly came to support peaceful parliamentary methods as the road to power. This position was formally adopted by the Party in the wake of its electoral triumph in Kerala in the 1957 elections.⁴³

During this period, right-left factionalism within the CPI evolved. The right faction ". . . while not abandoning its ultimate faith in revolution, did not give up hope of making substantial gains for the communist movement through constitutional methods. Against this was a leftist section which leaned more towards a party of revolution."⁴⁴ As a split developed in international communism over differences between Moscow and Peking concerning ideology and policy, the impact was felt within the CPI. In 1964 the CPI was split into two separate political parties: the CPI, ideologically closer to Moscow, and the Communist Party of India-Marxist or CPI(M), which was originally ideologically closer

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Retzlaff, op. cit., p. 333.

⁴⁴Sankar Ghose, Socialism and Communism in India (Bombay, 1971), p. 347. Ghose is an Indian political journalist who works include The Western Impact on Indian Politics and The Renaissance to Militant Nationalism.

to Peking, now "classifies itself as one of the most independent Communist parties in the world . . ." ⁴⁵

It must be noted, however, that the split in the CPI was

not due to a simple alignment into a pro-Russian and pro-Chinese schism but rather to irreconcilable differences between those who wished to see a strong, independent party (CPI(M)) unified round a clear and closely argued Marxist program resting on sound revolutionary bases, and those (CPI) who were content to maintain the less complicated roles of political respectability within a parliamentary democracy and who hoped to 'persuade' the bourgeois government to carry out the task of social revolution for them. ⁴⁶

Many of the important leaders of the old undivided CPI, including A. K. Gopalan, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, P. Sundaraya, Jyoti Basu, Promode Das Gupta, B. J. Ranadive, M. Basava-punniah, and P. Ramamurthy belong to the CPI(M). ⁴⁷ A. K. Gopalan is a member of the CPI(M) Polit Bureau and a member of Parliament. Namboodiripad is General Secretary of CPI(M) and former Chief Minister of Kerala state. Basu is member of the CPI(M) Polit Bureau, Central Committee, and West Bengal State Committee.

On May 1, 1969, the CPI(M)'s extreme left-wing which had been expelled sixteen months earlier, formally announced the inauguration of a third party, the Communist Party of India -- Marxist-Leninist (CPI(M-L)). The CPI(M-L) "claimed

⁴⁵ Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry."

⁴⁶ John B. Wood, "Observation on the Indian Communist Party Split," Pacific Affairs, XXXVIII (Spring, 1965).

⁴⁷ Ghose, op. cit., p. 358.

to be a contingent of the international Communist movement led by the Communist Party of China."⁴⁸ Kanu Sanyal, and (now deceased) Charu Mazumdar, both leaders of the armed Naxalbari peasant uprising, assumed leadership of the CPI (M-L). Rejecting the parliamentary path, the CPI(M-L) calls for armed revolution in the form of guerrilla warfare.⁴⁹ After Charu Mazumdar's arrest and death in July, 1972, the CPI(M-L) as a political party has virtually disintegrated. In the countryside, the CPI(M-L) revolutionaries were either liquidated by the police or neutralized by the militant peasant struggle of the CPI(M).

The three-party split in the Indian Communist movement continues today. Unpopularity of Prime Minister Gandhi's Congress party has stuck to its political ally, the CPI. A call to the CPI(M) by S. A. Dange, the CPI Chairman, for a united Communist front has been rejected by the CPI(M).⁵⁰

The Communist Class Analysis of the Indian State

Since the 1964 split, the CPI and CPI(M), the two major Communist parties in India, have produced differing analyses of the class forces in Indian society. The CPI views the Indian state as the "organ of class rule of the national

⁴⁸Mohan Ram, Maoism in India (Delhi, 1971), p. 108.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 109.

⁵⁰R. G. K., op. cit., p. 7.

bourgeoisie as a whole" while the CPI(M) views it as controlled by the big bourgeoisie in alliance with big landowners.⁵¹ Both viewed India as overtaken by the crisis of capitalist development, which they saw reflected in the rising cost of living, food scarcity, hoarding and profiteering, corruption among politicians and civil servants and the increasing misery of the masses.

The CPI took a less negative view of the capitalist crisis than its rival. In the CPI's estimation, the "ushering in of the bourgeois democratic state" constituted "a historic advance" from the former "imperialist-bureaucratic rule over our country."⁵² The CPI(M), however, saw the strategy of capitalist development being followed by the Indian monopolists, with the aid of foreign imperialist capital as presenting a threat to the country's national independence.

In the CPI(M)'s view, the national bourgeoisie and the big landowners were joint class-owners of the Indian state and compromisers with imperialism in both domestic and foreign policy. The CPI's view of the national bourgeoisie

⁵¹Bhabani Sen Gupta, "India's Rival Communist Models," Problems of Communism (January-February, 1973). Sen Gupta's comparative analysis of the political lines of the CPI and CPI(M) is based on resolutions and documents of the respective 1964 Congresses, using as far as possible the actual language of the Congress formulations.

⁵²Ibid.

was less monolithic: "the upper bourgeoisie was becoming more and more differentiated from the rest, and only the monopolist groups and feudal circles continued to constitute the main anti-democratic and reactionary forces."

These differing views are reflected in the willingness of the CPI to form coalition governments and oppositions with the Congress Party as partners in several states. For example, since the March 1972 elections, the CPI "retains its position as a major partner of the Congress party in a coalition government in Kerala, and it has been accorded the status of an influential ally in return for its 'qualified' support of Congress led governments in West Bengal, Bihar, and Punjab."⁵³ Since the election, Mrs. Gandhi has included several former CPI leaders in her Council of Ministers, entrusting some of them with strategic portfolios.

The CPI(M-L) claimed to be the contingent of the international Communist movement led by the Communist Party of China (CPC). The CPC conferred legitimacy on the CPI(M-L) on July 2, 1969, by recognizing it as India's "only Communist Party, by publishing excerpts of its political resolution in People's Daily."⁵⁴

The political resolution "identified the contradiction in contemporary India as 'between feudalism and the manner

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ M. Ram, op. cit., p. 108.

of our peasantry.' The stage of revolution was that of people's democratic revolution, 'the main content of which is the agrarian revolution, the abolition of feudalism in the countryside.' In order to destroy feudalism, which along with comprador-bureaucratic capitalism was one of the two props of imperialism, the people would have to fight the U. S. and Soviet social imperialism, too."⁵⁵ The CPI (M-L) called for a class alliance of the poor and landless peasants, who constituted a majority of the peasantry, and the middle peasants and the working class.

Indian Communist Mobilization of the
Peasantry--Tactics and Goals

Professor Sen Gupta claims that a Communist party's model of development grows out of the interaction between its theoretical formulations of strategic goals and its actual tactical operations to achieve those goals.⁵⁶ Initially there must be a "scientific" analysis and conceptualization of the balance of class forces in the given political universe, and these class forces must be related to those operating on the wider global scale. There is generally a hierarchy of strategic goals, each one leading to the next higher objective until the final goal of socialism is reached. The model of political development

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Sen Gupta, "India's Rival Communist Models," op. cit.

is derived from the economic model, which in turn is shaped by class ownership and control of the productive forces. Some Communist development models have been fashioned from actual experience in administering large liberated areas, as in China and Vietnam.⁵⁷

In the debate on the national and colonial question at the Second Comintern Congress in 1920, Lenin argued that "the peasantry is usually the support of . . . national revolutionary movements The struggle of agricultural toilers against landlord exploitation is the basis upon which you can build an organization of toilers even in backward countries. In such countries it is quite possible to build a Soviet authority."⁵⁸ M. N. Roy, the founder of the Communist Party of India, "frequently quoted Lenin on the necessity of gaining the support of the peasantry if revolution in pre-capitalist areas was to succeed."⁵⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, in Political Order in Changing Societies, has stated, "Revolutions are thus less likely to occur if the period of frustration of the urban middle class does not coincide with that of the peasantry The countryside . . . plays the crucial 'swing' role in modernizing politics."⁶⁰ If the

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ John Patrick Haithcox, Communism and Nationalism in India, M. N. Roy and Comintern Policy, 1920-1939 (Princeton, 1969), p. 263, footnote.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ S. P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Society, (New Haven, 1969), pp. 75-77, 277, 292.

system cannot politically mobilize the rural poor, they will be mobilized and organized against it.

Between 1957 and 1967, Indian Communists lived with a huge paradox. As the CPI "opted for constitutional Communism and adopted the parliamentary line, it lost sight of the peasantry as a revolutionary element."⁶¹ Although their experience in Kerala and Andhra had showed that only by mobilizing the peasantry could they build a strong and stable support base, because India's parliamentary politics is essentially urban politics (although elections are won or lost in the villages), their tactical lines continued to be predominantly urban-oriented.

The change in tactical lines was due to several factors. The CPI(M), in rejecting the placid parliamentarianism of the CPI, was obliged to evolve a more militant line. The search for a more revolutionary strategy than the CPI made it look to the rural poor. The Marxists were helped by the serious depression of 1965-67, which hit the peasantry more than the urban proletariat. The severe drought brought about famine-like conditions in large portions of India and the Marxists, in organizing demands for food, found a responsive constituency among the rural poor.⁶²

Competition with the CPI induced the Marxists to launch mobilization programs in Kerala and West Bengal, then two

⁶¹Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics, p. 292.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 292-293.

traditional strongholds. Mobilization was found to be effective only among the poor peasants and landless workers, a constituency unexplored by the other political parties, including the Congress. The Moscow-Peking split, and the CPI(M)'s effort to establish an independent strategic-tactical line acted as a motivation for a reappraisal of the Chinese revolution and its relevance to India. The outbreak of the peasant rebellion at Naxalbari worked as a catalyst.⁶³ The CPI(M) "alone appears to be trying to work out a sustained militant struggle for the poor peasant, the share-cropper and the landless worker."⁶⁴

While each of the aforementioned factors upgraded the value of the rural proletariat for the CPI(M), it was during the united front regimes (in which it was the dominant party) in West Bengal and Kerala that the Marxists actually discovered the poor peasantry as a revolutionary element.

West Bengal: A Case Study

The first West Bengal United Front government was established on March 2, 1967, and although the CPI(M) was the largest single group in the coalition, the Chief Ministership went to Ajoy Mukherji, the Bangla Congress leader.⁶⁵ The

⁶³Ibid., p. 293.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 294.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 212.

coalition's land policy took time to evolve. The common program promised nothing beyond gradual, incremental benefit for the rural poor. The late Harekrishna Konar (the foremost intellectual articulator of the CPI(M)), who was CPI(M) Minister for Land and Land Revenue, saw as his main problem in the spring and summer of 1967, that of obtaining an accurate estimate of the land that had been misappropriated by the landlords over and above the 25-acre ceiling imposed by the land "reform" measures in the 1950's. That this misappropriation had occurred on a large scale was well known. The ceiling had been imposed not on the family but on the individual registered as a single unit.

Landlords had only to split the land among individual members of a joint family, and often "register" land in the names of individuals who did not exist. However, each document filed with revenue officials had the appearance of legality, and the search for benami land (land registered under false names) was a major task.

The recovery of khas land (land belonging to the government) was also a major task. Until the beginning of 1959, the Congress government had "obtained" 125,000 acres of khas land as a result of agrarian "reforms."⁶⁶ This land was allowed to remain with the landlords. Three or four years

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 223.

later it was found that most of the 600,000 acres that might have been obtained by the imposition of the 25-acre limit had "disappeared."⁶⁷ Among those responsible for the disappearance were tea plantation owners in north Bengal, and some of the leading landlord families, including ministers during Congress rule.⁶⁸

By the end of July, 1967, Konar appeared to have drawn up the broad framework of a land policy that included controlled peasant militant action.

"The primary task," he wrote in a brief article in a left-wing weekly, was "abolition of large-scale holdings and distribution of land to the landless. The next stop would be for the government to explain to the peasants the disadvantages of small holdings. The peasants will then voluntarily take to collective farming. Private ownership of land will thus be done away with."⁶⁹

Konar's progressive land program could not be effectively implemented, however, until the establishment of the second United Front government in West Bengal. The results of the mid-term elections in February, 1969 gave the West Bengal CPI(M) a much stronger power base from which to implement its programs than that possible under the first United Front.

Reflecting the "polarization that had occurred in West Bengal politics, the second United Front ministry began with

⁶⁷Bhowani Sen, Evolution of Agrarian Relations in India (New Delhi, 1962), p. 202.

⁶⁸Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics, p. 223.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 224.

a more radical program, particularly in the vital areas of food, land, and labor."⁷⁰ The CPI(M) held the important portfolios of police, internal administration, land, labor, education, and relief and rehabilitation. Although Jyoti Basu was head of the police, and also the deputy chief minister, he began to function from the beginning as if he were the leader of the government. Land Minister Konar, also then a member of the CPI(M)'s Politbureau and General-Secretary of its national peasant front (all-India Kisan Sabha (AIKS)), began to implement his land program with single-mindedness.

The ministry's list of achievements was rather impressive:

It stopped the eviction of sharecroppers in all districts, recovered 300,000 acres of land illegally appropriated by landlords, distributed 230,000 acres to poor peasants and landless laborers, gave small homestead plots to a large number of landless laborer-families free of cost, granted remission of land revenue on holdings of 3 acres and less, enabled 800,000 workers of the tea plantations, jute, textiles, and engineering, and other industries to vest from their employers concrete benefits like cost-of-living allowances, higher salaries, bonuses, stopping of retrenchments, reinstatement of dismissed workers, and unionization -- all benefits amounting to Rs. 200,000,000 (or \$27,000,000).⁷¹

The central question regarding the CPI(M)'s land policy as implemented by Konar is whether it can bring about structural changes in agrarian relations without pushing the rural

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 248.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 249.

poor and the rural rich into a civil war. What distinguishes Konar from the Congress ministers in charge of land was that he was prepared to implement new legislation by using the coercive power of the state, the police. It was this combined thrust of the law and the law-enforcing machinery working for the first time on behalf of the rural poor against the entrenched interests of the rural rich that created panic among the rural gentry.

Konar "utilized the machinery of the Marxist-controlled kisan sabha to activate the rural poor and then kill two birds with a single stone."⁷² As a Marxist his objective could not be just to give each poor peasant an acre of land, even if it were possible. By activating the rural proletariat for a limited immediate objective, Konar was also trying to build the CPI(M) base among the village poor for the purpose of a future revolution. In the latter thrust of his policy, he came into conflict with the other political parties and groups, especially those whose political base was in the rural areas, such as the Congress party, Bangla Congress, the CPI, and the Forward Bloc.⁷³

Conclusions

The CPI seems to be still greatly influenced by Marx's own concept of the peasantry's role. Marx pointed out the

⁷²Ibid., p. 252.

⁷³Ibid.

the importance of organizing the peasantry for revolution as well as the difficulty in peasant mobilization.⁷⁴ The

TABLE XI
HOW STRONG ARE THE COMMUNISTS?⁷⁵

In Parliament				
	Total Seats	Congress	CPI	CPI(M)
Lok Sabha	524	353	24	26
Rajya Sabha	243	140	12	7
In Assemblies of States and Union Territories				
	Total Seats	Congress	CPI	CPI(M)
Andra Pradesh	288	214	8	1
Assam	114	95	3	--
Bihar	319	181	35	--
Haryana	81	51	--	--
Himachal Pradesh	67	53	--	1
Jammu & Kashmir	75	57	--	--
Karnataka	217	166	3	1
Kerala	134	35	16	31
Madhya Pradesh	297	232	5	--
Maharashtra	271	232	2	1
Manipur	60	12	6	--
Meghalaya	60	12	--	--
Nagaland	60	--	--	--
Orissa	146	69	7	3
Punjab	104	67	10	1
Rajasthan	184	142	4	--
Tamil Nadu	235	6	5	--
Tripura	60	41	1	16
Uttar Pradesh	426	215	16	2
West Bengal	281	216	36	13
Goa, Daman and Diu	30	1	--	--
Delhi Metropolitan Council	61	47	3	--
Mizoram	33	30	--	--
Pondicherry	30	7	2	1

⁷⁴Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," Lewis Feuer, ed., Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), pp. 318, 348.

⁷⁵R. G. K., op. cit.

CPI believes in the importance of mobilizing the small-holding and poor peasantry, but firmly stands by the classical concept of the working class leading the struggle for a proletarian society. Its current strategic concept seeks to work for a national democratic state. This concept leads it to engage in parliamentary tactics, in particular. (See Table XI). The CPI's adherence to the parliamentary line obliges it to take a "mainly incremental view of rectifying the grave ills of India's agrarian relations."⁷⁶

The CPI(M-L) espouses the strategic concept of a Maoist revolution with the armed rural proletariat in the vanguard. Both the CPI(M) and the CPI(M-L) stand for a people's democratic revolution, and both consider the agrarian crisis to be the foundation of the general crisis in Indian politics.⁷⁷ The CPI(M-L) however claims that the main content of the Indian revolution is agrarian, and that only the peasantry can play the determining role; power is to be seized along Maoist lines.

The CPI(M-L) has been outlawed after the Declaration of the State of Emergency on June 26, 1975.⁷⁸ Even before June 26, 1975, Sen Gupta pointed out that the CPI(M) alone appears to be trying to work out a sustained militant

⁷⁶Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics, p. 310.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 309.

⁷⁸Overseas Hindustan Times, July 17, 1975, p. 1.

struggle for the poor peasant, the sharecropper and the landless agricultural laborer.

In addition to the effect of the Indian Communist Movement on the Indian agrarian crisis, there is another force at work: Vinoba Bhave's (also later Jayaprakash Narayan's) land redistribution movement known as Bhoodan Yajna. It has had some impact on the Indian agrarian situation in that it presents a challenge to both Communist ideology and tactics. This Bhoodan Yajna movement is the subject of Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

BHOODAN YAJNA -- AN ATTEMPTED ALTERNATIVE

On April 18, 1951 at the village of Pochampalli, Nalgonda district, in the Telengana region of Hyderabad State (see Map I), Acharya Vinoba Bhave launched the Bhoodan Yajna (land gift mission).¹ Claims Mohan Ram, an expert on Indian Maoism,

Bhoodan was meant to be the Sarvodaya movement's answer to the communist-led peasant armed struggle in Telengana (1946-1951) on the land issue. The Naxalbari peasant uprising in 1967 was a forceful reminder that neither two decades of land reform legislation nor the Sarvodaya movement had solved the basic problem.²

The Bhoodan experiment, undertaken and led by inspiration of the Gandhian philosophy during the 1950's "is perhaps the most unique attempt to solve the problem of landownership by peaceful methods . . . by governmental agencies."³ (See Table XII for all-India land distribution at this time.) Professor K. R. Nanekar and S. V. Khandewale of Nagpur University have conducted a systematic survey of

¹Shriman Narayan, Vinoba: His Life and Work (Bombay, 1970), p. 190.

²Mohan Ram, "The Sarvodaya Farce," Economic and Political Weekly, XVIII (May 3, 1973), p. 720.

³K. R. Nanekar and S. V. Khandewale, Bhoodan and the Landless, book review by N. M. Khilman, India Quarterly, XXX, (January-March, 1974), p. 89.

TABLE XII⁴
DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATIONAL HOLDINGS IN INDIA BY SIZE GROUPS, 1950-1951

Size of Holding ^a (acres)	All India Area Operated (1000 acres)	Agricultural Population (millions)	Value of Output, 1950/51 ^b				Marketed Surplus Per Cent of Gross Output
			Total Gross (million rupees)	Per Cent of Total	Marketed Surplus (million rupees)	Per Cent of Total	
0-5	58,497	129.0 ^c	16,786	15.8	5,640	26.0	33.6
5-10	68,813	52.6	16,260	25.0	4,448	20.5	27.3
10-15	44,120	20.9	7,355	11.3	1,701	7.9	23.1
15-20	37,518	13.4	5,737	8.8	1,738	8.0	30.1
20-25	24,594	7.2	3,449	5.3	1,110	5.1	32.2
25-30	21,369	5.1	2,939	4.5	1,168	5.4	32.2
30-40	27,566	5.0	3,504	5.4	1,396	6.4	39.8
40-50	17,198	2.5	2,321	3.6	1,078	5.0	46.4
50+	50,600	4.9	6,614	10.2	3,399	15.7	51.4

NOTES:

^aThis is an operational holding, including nonagricultural lands, but this latter inclusion is felt to be factually unimportant.

^bFrom estimate by D. Narain, which he considers superior.

^cInclude agricultural laborers without land. In 1950/51 the Second Agricultural Labor Inquiry estimated there were 9.0 million such households with a population of about 45 million.

⁴George Rosen, Democracy and Economic Change in India (Berkeley, 1967), citing D. Narain, Distribution of the Marketed Surplus of Agricultural Produce by Size of Holding in India, 1950-51 (New Delhi, 1961), Statistical Appendix, Tables 1 and 7, pp. 39 and 44.

the Bhoodan movement in Vidarbha of Maharashtra and generalized about the efficacy of the movement as a whole:

On an all India basis, the Bhoodan movement shows two distinct phases. During the first phase which began in 1951, the land donations came to 43,81,871 acres. During the second phase which began in 1950, the movement showed a slackening pace. By 1951, the movement seemed to have lost its momentum.

(Regarding the distribution of land) . . . in 1954 only 96,000 acres were distributed, the figure reached to 11,90,718 by 1967. State-wise, Bihar donated the largest area (about 61 per cent of the total area donated in the whole of India). There were only 12,119 donors of land and the number of villages, where effective donations took place, comes to only 4,019.⁵

Although there may be a great deal of validity to the claim that neither land reform legislation nor the Sarvodaya movement has solved the basic land problem in India, this study's main focus is on the impact of Bhoodan and Gramdan (gift of village) on, and as an alternative to, the communist-led peasant struggle in India.

Before analyzing the details and implications of the Bhoodan and Gramdan programs, it is necessary to examine the philosophical basis of the Gandhian-inspired Sarvodaya movement, the parent of the Bhoodan and Gramdan programs. The term Sarvodaya is translated as "the upliftment of all."⁶

⁵Nanekar and Khandewale, op. cit., p. 351.

⁶Narayan, op. cit., p. 351.

"Gandhism" as Philosophical
Basis of Sarvodaya

The contemporary Sarvodaya movement is the "direct descendant of the Gandhian Constructive Programme and of the institution of persons involved in it."⁷ The Constructive Programme is central to the understanding of "Gandhism." It was a program that Gandhi developed step-by-step, beginning with Khadi (hand-spun, hand woven cloth) in 1922, and including Hindu-Muslim communal unity in 1925, to prohibition in 1930, to the abolition of untouchability in 1932, to the promotion of village industries in 1935.

In 1931 Gandhi wrote, "'My work of social reform was in no way less than or subordinate to political work. The fact is that when I saw that to a certain extent my social work would be impossible without the help of my political work, I took to the latter and only to the extent that it helped the former.'"⁸ The import of the above statement becomes apparent in J. P. Narayan's recent decision to enter the political sphere temporarily (evident in his mass agitation movement calling for the dissolution of the Bihar state assembly on charges of corruption), in order to ensure the effective pursuance of Sarvodaya goals. The Sarvodaya movement in India represents an attempt to apply to the task

⁷ Geoffrey Ostergaard and Melville Currell, The Gentle Anarchist, A Study of the Leaders of the Sarvodaya Movement for Non-Violent Revolution in India (Oxford, 1971), p. 6.

⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

of social reconstruction the ideas originally developed by Mahatma Gandhi.

For Gandhi, political independence from Britain "was only the first, if necessary, step towards a radical reconstruction of the whole social order."⁹ In 1941 Gandhi published the pamphlet The Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place, listing eighteen items of social work. These were: the building of communal unity, the removal of untouchability; the introduction of prohibition, the development of khadi; the promotion of other village industries; adoption of new or basic (craft-centered) education; the amelioration of the condition of women and securing them equality of status and opportunity; education in health and hygiene; assisting the preservation and development of provincial languages; adoption of Hindustani as the national language; working to secure economic equality; organizing the kisans (peasants), protecting their rights, and helping them to lead a happy and non-violent life; organizing industrial labor on the basis of truth and non-violence; looking after the welfare of the adivasis (tribal peoples); giving adequate care to lepers; and finally, working with students to improve their mental, moral, and physical equipment.¹⁰ Gandhi himself attached particular

⁹Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 4.

importance to the attainment of economic equality, which he regarded as "the master key to non-violent independence."¹¹

Although the ruling Congress Party governments claim to be inspired by Gandhian ideals and espouse many items in the original Constructive Programme, they also pursue certain policies such as developing heavy industries and building up the military forces, which are contrary to Gandhian ideals. Therefore it is important to understand the relation between constructive work and politics, as seen by Gandhi himself during his last years.

Gandhi opposed the idea of non-violent movement entering the Indian political arena. He argued that "the moment non-violence assumed political power it contradicted itself and became contaminated."¹² The role of the constructive workers, he suggested, was to guide political power and to mold the politics of the country without capturing power themselves.

"Politics have today," he said, "Become corrupt. Anybody who goes into them is contaminated. Let us keep out of them altogether. Our influence will grow thereby. The greater our inner purity, the greater shall be our hold on the people, without any effort on our part."¹³

The Gandhian insistence on the personal transformation of the individual as a prerequisite to the transformation of society is echoed in the thought and practice of Vinoba Bhave,

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 5.

¹³ Ibid.

the "spiritual heir" of Mahatma Gandhi and founder of the Bhoodan and Gramdan programs. According to Bhawe,

"the advocates of (Sarvodaya) maintain that life and the welfare of society depend on man's character, his moral qualities, and his effort at self-improvement. An individual's life is driven under the force of his moral nature. The social structure changes its form along with the development of human character . . . The creed and ideology of the Communists is the very opposite of this. They hold 'What you call the development of moral virtues, is a set of phenomenon, which though they become manifest in the mind, are not, however, the creation of the mind, but are the result of environments. The mind itself is the product of its material environment.'"¹⁴

It becomes apparent that the three major distinctions between Sarvodaya ideology and Marxist ideology are (1) the relationship of the individual's moral values to the social structure of society, (2) the means used to achieve transformation of the social structure of society, and (3) the insistence on economic and political decentralization. As regards the first point, Bhawe claims that what Sarvodaya (contemporary "Gandhism") considers moral and spiritual qualities of the individual's Self or Soul, are in the eyes of Communists nothing but the product of the correct socio-economic environment.¹⁵ According to J. P. Narayan (the other prominent Sarvodaya leader), social reconstruction is impossible without individual human reconstruction; "society

¹⁴Narayan, op. cit., p. 199.

¹⁵Vasant Nargolkar, The Creed of Saint Vinoba (Bombay, 1963), p. 170.

cannot be good unless individual men are good, and particularly those men who form the elite of society."¹⁶

Materialist Basis of Marxism and the
"Spiritual" Basis of Sarvodaya

Out of the three aforementioned points of difference between the Sarvodaya and the Marxist ideologies, the first point will be discussed in this section through an analysis of J. P. Narayan's rejection of Marxist materialist philosophy. The point with which we are concerned here is the relationship of the individual's moral values to the social structure of society.

In the transformation of his thought from Marxism to "Democratic Socialism" to Sarvodaya, Narayan still retains his Marxist ideals and ends. It is the Marxist means he has given up as inadequate and producing poor results. Narayan continues to strive for the Heaven on Earth described by Marx: a society in which the means of production are cooperatively owned, class distinctions and exploitation are non-existent, and the communist maxim "From each according to his ability to each according to his need" will be realized.

The principal argument advanced by Narayan against the orthodox Marxist "materialists" is their complete dependence

¹⁶Jayaprakash Narayan, Socialism, Sarvodaya, and Democracy (New York, 1964), pp. 97, 98.

on materialist philosophy to attain the ideal good society. He observes that in modern society, despite the fact that the hold of religion is gone, faith in God shaken, moral values discarded, and materialism is "enthroned in men's hearts,"¹⁷ men are everywhere engaged in creating a heaven on earth.

The question of individual goodness is raised by Narayan: why, if there is no God, no soul, no morality, no life hereafter, no cycle of birth and death, should the individual be good? The individual is merely an organization of matter and is destined to soon dissolve into the infinite ocean of matter. When he sees all around him corruption, profiteering, lying, deception, cruelty, power politics, and violence, he naturally asks why he should be virtuous. Narayan claims that "our social forms of today and the materialist philosophy which rules the affairs of men answer back: "he need not."¹⁸ The more amoral he is the better, and because of this amorality, the ideals, dreams, and aspirations of mankind become warped, twisted, and lost.

Concluding that a materialist philosophy of any sort robs man of the means to become truly human, Narayan also claims that in a merely materialist civilization man has no

¹⁷Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 97, 98.

rational incentive to be good. In his Socialism, Sarvodaya, and Democracy, Narayan presents a rather convincing argument to the effect that man must go beyond the material to find the incentives for goodness. He presents a corollary to this statement: the task of social reconstruction cannot succeed under the inspiration of a materialist philosophy.¹⁹

An additional corollary follows: "this "materialist" philosophy, by rejecting matter as the ultimate reality immediately elevates the individual to a moral plane, and urges him, without reference to any objective outside himself, to endeavor to realize his own true human potential.²⁰ The primary goal of Marxism is also to free the individual from the bonds suppressing his human potential. However, under the premise that reconstruction of the socio-economic relations of production will result in perfecting the individual, any sort of means used to attain this goal is condoned.

With regard to the second point (the means used to transform the social structure) Sarvodaya ideals reject means which are inconsistent with the end goals. Because the goal of the attainment of a Sarvodaya society (through the programs of Bhoodan and Gramdan) conceived as its ultimate objective, the establishment in India of a "non-violent,

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 97-99.

²⁰ Ibid.

non-exploitative social order,"²¹ the methods utilized also have to be non-violent and non-exploitative. At this point the Gandhian technique of Satyagraha, is employed in pressing Sarvodaya programs.

Sarvodaya as a Revolutionary Ideology --
Programs of Bhoodan and Gramdan

In Social Movements, R. Herbele defines an ideology as "'the entire complex of ideas, theories, doctrines, values, and strategic and tactical principles that is characteristic of the movement.'"²² Herbele's definition differs from the Marxian usage of the term, in which "ideology" is contrasted with "scientific knowledge" and seen as the product of "false consciousness," a "set of selected and distorted ideas in defense of an existing social system."²³

Utilizing Herbele's definition of ideology, it is necessary to examine closely the third major point of distinction between Sarvodaya and Marxism: the insistence, by the Sarvodaya ideology, on economic and political decentralization. The Gandhian emphasis on pandayati raj (village self-rule) and village and cottage industries illustrates his push for political and economic decentralization.

²¹Nargolkar, op. cit., p. 247.

²²Ostergaard and Currell, op. cit., p. 26.

²³Ibid., p. 26n.

In Gandhi's view the decentralized governmental structure would be:

"an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, (a miniature republic) the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its strength from it."²⁴

Such a decentralized policy implies a decentralized economy. Industries are to be brought to the villages, so that it will be possible for a village, or group of villages, to constitute an "agro-industrial community practically self-sufficient in respect to the basic needs of its inhabitants."²⁵

J. P. Narayan puts the case for decentralization succinctly:

(Marxism) ultimately aims at creating a casteless (and classless) society, but it wishes to make the State all-powerful by making the social revolution itself dependent on State action. Gandhism too, like (Marxism), aims at a stateless society. But on that account it proceeds more consistently by making the social process as little dependent upon the State as possible.²⁶

In the Sarvodaya ideology, the process of social transformation -- in this case the transformation of the ownership of the means of production, i.e., land -- is pursued through

²⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 35.

²⁶ J. Narayan, op. cit., p. 121.

non-governmental and peaceful methods, Bhoodan Yajna. In the Indian Communist ideology, the transformation of the ownership of land is advocated by the CPI through legislation, the CPI(M) through legislation and force, and the CPI(M-L) through force and violence. The Sarvodayaites initially require a change in peoples' hearts and the Communists initially require a change in the social structure of society.

Vinoba Bhave's creative approach to social transformation led to Bhoodan. Bhoodan, "the campaign to persuade landowners to donate voluntarily a proportion of their lands for redistribution to the landless laborers who constitute the poorest fifth of India's rural population, could be seen as a new addition to the items listed in Gandhi's Constructive Programme."²⁷

The campaign for Bhoodan, conducted by padayatra (pilgrimage on foot) from village to village, spread widely throughout India. As the initial target figures were exceeded, enthusiasm mounted and the objective of 50 million acres was set to be reached by the end of 1957.²⁸

²⁷Ostergaard and Currell, op. cit., pp. 8, 9.

²⁸The target represented Vinoba's estimate that about one-sixth of the total acreage of cultivatable land could meet the needs of the landless laborers, if only the landowners would recognize their obligation to the landless.

That year ended with a total of 4.2 million acres donated.²⁹ By that time Bhoodan had widened into Gramdan (gift of the village). Gramdan called for complete surrender of property rights in favor of the village community. Under Gramdan, individual ownership of land was abolished. Ownership was vested in the village community. Gramdan represented a move "from a basically individualist to a basically socialist program."³⁰

Although Congress and other political parties were persuaded to endorse Gramdan as a desirable method of land reform, in practice it elicited less enthusiasm and support than had Bhoodan. However, by the end of 1956 the number of Gramdan villages had reached 1,935, and by March, 1964 it was 6,807 (see Table XIII). Their distribution throughout the country was less even than in the case of Bhoodan, and the villages concerned were generally small, very poor, and concentrated in low-caste and tribal areas, such as the Koraput District of Orissa. By the early 1960's the pace of the movement had slackened considerably.

²⁹Ostergaard and Currell, op. cit., p. 10.

³⁰Ibid.

TABLE XIII
DISTRIBUTION OF BHOODAN, GRAMDAN AND
SARVODAYA WORKERS BY STATE

State or Union Territory	CENSUS DATA			BHOODAN						GRAMDAN			SARVODAYA WORKERS		
	Population (1961 Census) (thousands)	No. of districts	No. of villages	Land gifts (acres)	Land distributed (acres)	Uncultivable land: gift cancelled (acres)	Land still to be distributed (acres)	No. of donors	No. of donees	No. of 'villages' declared as Gramdan:		No. of blocks declared as Blockdan:	No. of districts declared as Districtdan:	No. of Lok Sevaks (March 1964)	No. of Shanti Sainiks (May 1964)
										(March 1964)	(October 1969)	(October 1969)	(October 1969)		
Andhra Pradesh	36,983	20	27,084	241,952	103,051	86,385	52,216	16,627	22,733	651	4,231	14	1	335	246
Assam	12,209	19	27,702	11,935	265	—	11,670	7,344	N.A.	966	1,648	1	—	622	237
Bihar	46,455	17	67,665	2,127,453	351,443	1,364,637	411,372	297,200	224,850	121	60,065	574	15	1,560	3,027
Gujarat	20,633	17	18,584	103,530	50,924	—	52,606	18,327	10,270	164	1,040	3	—	348	78
Jammu and Kashmir	3,561	9	6,559	211	5	—	206	N.A.	N.A.	—	1	—	—	9	—
Kerala	16,904	9	1,573	26,293	5,774	7,999	12,520	N.A.	N.A.	559	418	—	—	508	24
Madhya Pradesh	32,372	43	79,414	405,786	173,062	56,477	176,245	58,375	47,445	191	7,925	39	5	620	213
Madras (Tamilnad)	33,687	13	14,124	51,330	16,394	—	34,936	21,899	11,153	254	14,004	143	4	207	60
Maharashtra	30,554	26	35,851	105,094	70,950	3,316	30,828	19,953	15,199	790	4,000	17	—	450	1,321
Mysore	23,586	20	26,377	15,864	2,123	—	13,741	5,017	941	58	1,156	4	—	190	97
Orissa	17,549	13	46,466	185,782	96,404	—	89,318	84,856	42,614	2,405	12,622	70	1	401	217
Punjab (and Haryana)	20,307	20	21,269	14,739	3,601	3,380	7,758	N.A.	N.A.	6	3,986	17	—	430	214
Rajasthan	20,156	26	32,241	432,868	84,781	122,489	225,598	8,391	13,158	234	1,736	1	—	460	347
Uttar Pradesh	73,746	54	112,624	435,458	210,091	201,653	23,733	38,296	73,318	56	25,727	147	5	2,018	1,601
West Bengal	34,926	16	38,454	12,960	3,898	8,426	636	N.A.	N.A.	347	748	—	—	330	194
Delhi	2,658	1	276	300	180	120	—	N.A.	N.A.	1	74	—	—	27	151
Himachal Pradesh	1,351	6	10,438	5,240	2,531	—	2,709	N.A.	N.A.	—	—	—	—	6	7
Others	3,433	3	11,252	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—
Total: All-India	439,974	322	566,878	4,176,815	1,175,838	1,854,882	1,146,095	575,885	461,681	6,807	140,020	1,030	31	8,621	8,114

SOURCES: Figures for population, number of districts, and number of villages: *India 1964*, Government of India, 1964.

The Bhoodan statistics are derived from Appendix 6 of *Report on Activities, May-September 1960*, Sarva Seva Sangh, Varanasi, 1960 (in Hindi). The figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number. It should be noted that the figures for land distributed, uncultivable land, and land still to be distributed do not always add up accurately to the number of acres of land donated.

The Gramdan statistics for March 1964 and the figures for Lok Sevaks and Shanti Sainiks were supplied by Sarva Seva Sangh in April 1965. The remaining statistics for Gramdan, Blockdan, and Districtdan are those presented to the 18th Sarvodaya Sammelan, 23 October 1969. See *People's Action*, 3, 11 November 1969, p. 31.

NOTES: *Gramdan villages do not necessarily coincide with 'revenue' villages as counted in census returns. This applies particularly to figures in the 1964 column, which relate mainly to Gramdan in its original (pre-Sulabh) form. **Included in the figures for Punjab and Haryana. N.A. = Not Available.

Source: Geoffrey Ostergaard and Melville Currell, *The Gentle Anarchists*, (Oxford, 1971), p. 11.

A new approach was developed in the form of Sulabh (simplified) Gramdan. It represented a concession to the principles of private ownership, and its effects are definitely less egalitarian than the original Gramdan. Within the space of four years, 1965-69, the campaign for Sulabh Gramdan multiplied by the factor of sixteen the number of Gramdans. By October, 1969, 140,020 villages - approximately one-fourth of all villages in India - had declared for Gramdan. Villages in large contiguous areas, for the first time, joined the movement. Bhoodan and Gramdan were primarily the work of the Sarvodaya organization, Sarva Seva Sangh. Well over half a million landowners contributed to Bhoodan, and their donations have benefitted less than half a million peasants who formerly owned little or no land. A large class of landless laborers still exists. Also, the 4.2 million acres of Bhoodan land included 1.85 million which were unsuitable or legally disputed (see Table XIII). Further, of the remainder only just over half had, by 1969, been distributed. Distribution of the remaining Bhoodan land has now virtually ceased. Under the Sulabh Gramdan concept, a landowner's Bhoodan donation counts towards the proportion which he has undertaken to provide for cultivation by the landless of the village. The typical Gramdan village is far from being the Indian version of the Israeli kibbutz. Many of the 140,020 villages have only declared for Gramdan, and not followed up with action.

Conclusion

In summary, the ultimate and most important impact of the Sarvodaya movement's Bhoodan and Gramdan programs is not to be found at present in absolute results, i.e., amounts of land and number of villages donated. Rather, Bhoodan's and Gramdan's overall psychological impact on the agrarian crisis has sharpened the focus on India's acute land problem. The Bhoodan campaign "focused public attention on the land question in a spectacular fashion, and contributed in no small measure to sustaining or smoothing the way for the Indian government's land reforms, notably the abolition of absentee landlordism, the imposition of ceilings on land holdings, and the encouragement of cooperative farming."³²

Ostergaard and Currell, Professors of Political Science at the University of Birmingham (England), claim that the "movement has some substantial achievements (e.g., Bhoodan and Gramdan) to its credit, but that it has not yet fulfilled the expectations it has aroused."³³ Professor J. Bandyopadhyaya, Head of the Department of Political Science at Jadavpur University (Calcutta), claims that "the Sarvodaya leaders have not been particularly successful in mobilizing the masses for economic development and social transformation

³²Ibid., p. 14.

³³Ibid., p. 15.

for various important reasons."³⁴ He lists three reasons, as follows.

First, the Sarvodaya leaders have been unable to adapt their detailed programs to contemporary economic conditions. A quarter century after Indian independence they still insist on retaining the spinning wheel as the principal instrument of economic development, instead of developing more "modern and productive handicrafts and small-scale industries; there is a debate among the leaders even now (1973) as to whether electricity should be introduced in the villages."³⁵ Secondly, their activities depend on heavy governmental subsidy (contrary to Gandhi's thinking on the subject) rather than the self-help of the masses. Thirdly, as far as the Bhoodan movement is concerned, they merely have been requesting the landowners to surrender a very small part of their land, and not launched any Satyagraha anywhere in India against big landowners or other "vested interests." Finally, no attempt has been made to attack the stratified social structure of the Indian village as a whole.³⁶

Bandyopadhyaya, too, agrees that the impact of the Sarvodaya movement has not been all in vain. Away from the

³⁴ J. Bandyopadhyaya, Mao Tse-Tung and Gandhi (Bombay, 1973), pp. 122, 123.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

struggles of party politics, they have succeeded in sustaining the psychology of constructive work and an equalitarian moral atmosphere in the Indian villages.³⁷

³⁷Ibid.

CHAPTER V

PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF PEASANT MOBILIZATION:

SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Of the three communist parties, the CPI(M) has developed the best relationship with the Indian peasants, and it is in this context of the emerging agrarian crisis that one has to examine the problems and prospects of peasant mobilization and organization that have faced all three communist parties and the government. The present agrarian crisis in India is a direct result of the failure of land reform legislation passed by the state legislative assemblies in the 1950's. According to Professor Gunnar Myrdal,

These measures can hardly be said to have produced a radical change in property relationships. For the former intermediaries (zamindars) abolition meant merely a change in the source of their income and - particularly for those with a large income - some reduction in its size. On the land, the new measures meant chiefly that some remnants of feudal land arrangements were eliminated. Lands taken over were sold or distributed to a new set of owners or, in some cases, held by the government and leased out. In an evaluation of the longer-term effects of this legislation, several points must be born in mind. These reforms affected only the intermediaries; they did not touch all those landlords in India who possessed unrestricted ownership rights. But even the intermediaries -- who were the specific targets of the legislation -- often managed to circumvent its intent through a legal loophole that entitled them to hold unrestricted title to lands under their "personal cultivation."¹

¹Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama, II (New York, 1968), 1307.

Even after land-ceiling legislation had been passed in the early 1960's by all the major Indian states, "owner-holdings were reduced by pro forma transfers of land to family members"² enabling circumvention of the law. Resistance has had a chance to build up against many reforms that might have been pushed through in the first flush of independence.³

Because of the negligence in implementing social and economic agrarian reforms, organized rebellion by the land-hungry, job-hungry rural proletariat "may well be the catalyst that may make the politics of consensus and slowly, incremental change irrelevant."⁴ As Professor Sen Gupta has pointed out, stability in India has largely been due to the comparative quiescence of the countryside. This was achieved mainly through the political linkages established between the ruling Congress party and the landholding community; it has also been due to the slow pace of change in the agrarian sector. The bulk of the new resources created by community development irrigation, rural credit societies, industrial cooperatives, and rural electrification went to the new "kulaks." They manned the new institutions of political power in the villages from the panchayats (village councils) to the zila parishads (district councils). These rising village leaders became the new recruits of the Congress Party. Caste

²Ibid., p. 1317.

³Ibid., p. 278.

⁴Bhabani Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics (New York, 1972), p. 418.

institutions, fully organized politically, meshed with the newly created economic and political resources, and became the functional framework of party politics focused on elections.⁵

All this has begun to change. The first "major jolt came from the economic stagnation of the 1960's. The food riots in Bengal . . . reached the countryside in a large scale in 1966."⁶ A second factor contributing to the change is the acute competition among the political groups for electoral support, resulting in an unprecedented political mobilization of the rural population since 1967. The third and most important factor of change is the "green revolution." As was noted earlier, the "green revolution" has caused considerable class polarization in the countryside and this rural class conflict has been causing increasing agrarian unrest.

The Causes of Peasant Quiescence in India

Traditionally, the Indian peasant has been quiescent. Sen Gupta seeks explanations of this phenomenon in the Indian peasant's historical experience, in the institutions and traditions that have governed his life and molded his psychocultural reflexes. Sen Gupta identifies two factors that seem to have been primarily responsible for the "tranquil" landlord-peasant relations:

⁵Ibid., p. 417.

⁶Ibid.

First, there is the separation of the rural universe from the political universe. For more than a thousand years the villages lived greatly removed from government, ruled by castes which provided a self-sufficient framework by regulating all human conduct from cradle to grave.⁷ Exploitation and expropriation were sanctioned by the castes and therefore by religion; it was almost always carried out by the local landlords who, being born into higher castes, were seen to be performing functions which carried the sanction of religion. The mythology of fate grew. This mythology "rationalized deprivation as an inheritance from previous births, which could be gotten rid of in a future birth only by patient and meek submission to what life had to offer in the present."⁸

Sen Gupta's second reason lies in the nature of the Western impact on India. The British left the rural framework alone, carried out exploitation of the peasantry through native landlords and their agents, and even reinforced the authority of the exploiters by conferring on them permanent land settlements (zamindari system). Also, they kept the peace in the countryside, and effected some improvement in the lot of the peasants. They were aware that the quiescent village was the best assurance for imperial rule, and they made "no effort to change the landscape."⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 420.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

With Indian Independence, the rural scene began to change rather rapidly. The peasantry became differentiated through the direct intervention of the government. The apathy of the peasant could not be taken for granted any longer. As economic disparities in the countryside grew, the moods of the "have-nots" began to change in response to the moods of the "haves." However, what was lacking was the "induction of subjective conditions to explosive objective realities. No political party intervened to mobilize the rural masses."¹⁰

The Relevance of the CPI(M) Strategy for
Mass Peasant Mobilization

When the Communists took up the task of rural mass mobilization in the late 1960's, they were surprised at the response they got from the peasantry. Rural-support bases "built through the initiative and the advocacy of even modest programs of land reform tend to be more solid and stable than urban bases founded on industrial workers and the middle class."¹¹ This discovery has led to new tactical thinking in the strongest of the three Communist parties, the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Harekrishna Konar, member of the CPI(M)'s Politbureau and General-Secretary of its national peasant front (all-India

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 422, 423.

¹¹ Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems of Communism (January-February, 1972), p. 1.

Kisan Sabha), claimed that in West Bengal, as noted in Chapter III, the CPI(M) had managed to evolve "revolutionary tactics using the parliamentary method for waging class struggle." That is, it had learned to make 'simultaneous use' of legal and extralegal means of struggle."¹²

Konar declared that the "red" district of Burdwan in West Bengal was the "model" for peasant mobilization -- not merely because the party had won 24 of the district's 25 seats in the national parliament in the 1971 mid-term election, but mainly because the district had become "impregnable" to other political elements. One reason why Konar labeled Burdwan District as the "model" for Communist mobilization of the peasantry is that he and his fellow party leaders believe they have succeeded in enlisting the support of the middle peasants against the jotedars (big landlords).¹³

This general approach distinguishes the CPI(M) from the CPI and the CPI(M-L). The CPI is firmly committed to the fundamentals of the Soviet revolutionary model -- it believes that the Indian revolution can come about only under the leadership of the working class. In addition, the CPI, in conformity with current Soviet prescriptions for enhancing

¹² Ibid., p. 2. The late H. K. Konar came from a landlord family in Burdwan district of West Bengal. He was attracted to the Communist movement during his college days, and he later refused his share of family land. He had spent the greater part of his political life with the peasant front.

¹³ Ibid.

Communist influence in India through the formation of a "national-democratic" front as a prelude to eventual participation in the national government, collaborates with the ruling Congress party of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; and it seeks incremental social change through legal, parliamentary, mass pressures on the government. This program does include efforts to win adherents in the rural areas. For example, the CPI sponsored a "land-grab" propaganda campaign in 1970 which helped to focus national attention on the growing polarization in the countryside. However, CPI undertakings of this kind have concentrated on "reformist" agitation for the redress of specific local grievances rather than on appeals to broad class militancy.

As previously noted, the CPI(M-L), like the CPI(M), lays primary stress on mobilizing the peasantry, but it rejects parliamentary activities as a means of conducting revolution. In accordance with Maoist doctrine, it urges the institution of protracted guerrilla warfare from rural base areas. However, the police, sometimes with the aid of the army, have quelled the various insurgencies, and since the first months of 1970, the "revolutionism" of the CPI(M-L) has dwindled to little more than urban terrorism in West Bengal.¹⁴

¹⁴ Ibid.

It becomes apparent that while the CPI is continuing its Soviet-directed practice of placid, parliamentary Communism, and while the CPI(M-L) has almost disintegrated because of its self-destructive policy of mere acts of terrorism and its professed wholesale transplant of "Maoist" strategy to the Indian scene, the CPI(M) alone appears to be one of the most independent Communist parties in the world. It has no organizational links with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or the Chinese Communist Party, as is the case with the CPI and the CPI(M-L), respectively.¹⁵

The following statement by Lajpat Rai seems appropriately applied to the CPI and the CPI(M-L), though more so to the CPI:

Conformity has slowly become a "Maoist" habit and Lenin's imperative for communists to think boldly and act boldly has been thrown overboard.

Their total allegiance to the orthodoxies consecrated in Moscow and in other centres of state power has interrupted every reflex of critical thought. Parroting meaningless phrases, mouthing outworn cliches and indulging in sterile quotation-mongering, the traditional communists have emerged as nothing more than comprador intellectuals living off the crumbs of other people's thoughts.¹⁶

The CPI(M)'s present independent stance and seemingly articulate leadership, including Konar and E. M. S. Namboodiripad, have enabled it to take more of an experimental and

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2n.

¹⁶ Lajpat Rai, "Traditional Communist Parties," Economic and Political Weekly (August 3, 1974), p. 1256.

flexible view concerning peasant mobilization and land policy than either of the other two more doctrinaire parties, the CPI and CPI(M-L). For example, by the end of July, 1967, Konar, as Minister of Land and Land Revenue, had conceptualized the broad outline of a land policy in which the land-hungry peasantry would play an active role.

"The primary task," he wrote in a brief article, was "abolition of large-scale holdings and distribution of land to the landless," but the governmental machinery alone "cannot carry out land reforms even though there are honest officers in the administration." Therefore, the efforts of the government had "to be strengthened and supplemented by the conscious and organized participation of the peasants and the people at large."¹⁷

In August, 1967, West Bengal State Committee of the CPI(M) called for radical land reforms and resolved to focus the labors of its kisan sabha (peasant front) organizations on a struggle for distribution of land to the landless and against eviction of sharecroppers. Before Konar could translate his land policy into an action program the central government dismissed the Bengal United Front regime from office.

During 1968, the National Council of the CPI(M) accepted Konar's contention that it ought to devote primary attention to the peasantry, and it adopted a "revolutionary"

¹⁷Bhabani Sen Gupta, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems of Communism (January-February, 1972), p. 12.

tactic of parliamentary politics designed to "wreck the system from within." This included several tactical actions: the CPI(M) - dominated leftist coalitions in the states would wage a relentless "class struggle" against the center; the masses of land-hungry poor peasantry would be allowed to take the initiative to seize benami (land registered under false names) land in an organized way through the kisan sabha units in the villages; and the sharecroppers would be allowed to defend their crops against the "illegal" attempts of land-owners to "misappropriate" them.

When the second United Front government took office in West Bengal after the mid-term election of February, 1969, the CPI(M), holding de facto leadership by virtue of its dominant position in the state assembly, began implementing the above tactical line. Harekrishna Konar returned to the post of Minister for Land and Land Revenue and Jyoti Basu, as Deputy Chief Minister, assumed control of the police.¹⁸

Within 90 days after the second United Front government began functioning, Konar publicly circulated draft legislation to eliminate the land tax on three acres or less in single possession and increase tax on holdings of more than seven acres. Armed with a list of benami land prepared by revenue officials, Konar informed the state legislature

¹⁸Ibid., p. 13.

that the biggest culprits included stalwarts of the Congress party.¹⁹

Herein lies the difference between the CPI and CPI(M). Konar was in no hurry to carry out his land policy through legislation. As he explained, such an approach would have been time-consuming and would have given the landlords an opportunity to:

"evade the new laws as they had the old ones. The crucial point in our program was to allow the peasant masses to do things on their own initiative. They must feel that they have fought and won on their own strength. Lenin said if the bourgeoisie gave land to the peasants, they won the loyalty of the peasants. We do not wish to give land to the peasants; we wish to make the peasants get land from the landowners by their own organized class strength. This is what the party could not achieve in Kerala. And this is what we were able to achieve in West Bengal.²⁰

The CPI(M)'s program of land seizure and crop protection was implemented with great zeal over the next 12 months (after which the central government once again imposed its rule on the state). Landless peasants and peasants with dwarf holdings were employed to locate benami land, and then encouraged to

¹⁹Ibid., p. 13.

²⁰Ibid., p. 14. Asked whether he thought that the CPI(M)'s capture of governmental power at the state level was an essential pre-condition for militant peasant mobilization, Konar replied that while this would help accelerate the agrarian movement, the CPI(M) would wage struggles in the countryside even where the party remained outside the government. But in such cases, he noted, it would take time to raise the struggles to a high political level.

to seize this land "stolen by the landowners." Whereas sharecroppers traditionally had to transport all their harvestings to the homes of the landowners -- where the cultivators were often deprived of their portions because the landowners, who were normally also the moneylenders, insisted on immediate payment of their loan interest or repayment of loan capital -- sharecroppers were now encouraged to demand division of the harvesting in the fields. Whenever landowners resisted peasant occupation of the land or peasant defense of crops, the police (on Jyoti Basu's orders) refused to assist them. In most cases police officers enabled the peasants to keep not only the crops but also the land.²¹

It must be noted that not all the CPI(M)'s tactical path was smooth travelling. As the land-seizure drive spread rapidly from district to district, it created an agrarian conflict of unprecedented dimensions. Once activated by the party the rural poor sometimes became uncontrollable -- especially where kisan sabha organizations were new or did not exist. In certain areas, "excesses" were committed, and legitimate holdings of the middle peasants were taken over.²²

²¹Ibid.

²²Konar claimed that there had been no such excesses in Burdwan District and that this was one reason why it had been possible to attract the middle peasant to the CPI(M)'s peasant movement.

After the campaign had acquired substantial momentum, Konar proceeded to confer "legality" on it. In the spring of 1969, the West Bengal United Front government issued an ordinance securing sharecroppers the right to farm for three years lands "left idle" by their owners. This had the effect of giving sharecroppers tentative tenure of such lands, a right which the "reforms" of the 1950's had overlooked. It also provided that 20 per cent of the crops from these lands would go to the owners, 10 per cent to the government, and 70 per cent to the actual tiller.²³

"The CPI(M) alone," according to Professor Sen Gupta as previously noted, "appears to be trying to work out a substantial militant struggle for the poor peasant, the sharecropper, and the landless worker."²⁴ The CPI(M)'s peasant movement in West Bengal has employed the concept of armed resistance and armed defense. According to this concept, the rural poor will not provoke violent clashes, but they will resist, by means of arms if necessary, violent attacks of the landowners and the police. The CPI(M) does not consider the agrarian situation or the political climate in India as ripe for guerrilla or armed warfare. The experience of the CPI(M-L) was sufficiently illustrative of this point. In also rejecting the "placid parliamentarianism" of the CPI

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Sen Gupta, Communism in Indian Politics (New York, 1972), p. 294.

and incorporating an active parliamentary struggle, the CPI(M) indeed is waging the most relevant and most successful "political" struggle of the peasant masses in their effort to realize a meaningful existence.

This telling impact on the Indian political scene required a partial response from the Congress leadership, and this can be seen in the July, 1975, imposition of the State of Emergency by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.²⁵

Much of the spirit and substance of the CPI(M)'s "rural reconstruction" and "poor peasant upliftment policy" has been adopted and implemented through the Prime Minister's declared 20-point economic program. The three major areas touched are: (1) the liquidation of rural indebtedness; and the setting up of rural banks in order to provide the landless laborers, marginal and small farmers, and village artisans an alternative source of investment and consumption credit from that of the village moneylender;²⁶ (2) outright government grants to poor farmers, most of whom were previously landless laborers, in order to meet their immediate requirements for seeds, chemical fertilizers, organic manures, and consumption requirements; enforcement of the land ceiling legislation, long overdue, and distribution of land

²⁵Overseas Hindustan Times, July 10, 1975, p. 1.

²⁶Ibid., October 23, 1975.

to the landless laborers;²⁷ (3) disciplinary action against grain hoarders and smugglers resulting in a reduction of food prices and the stemming of inflation.²⁸

The program of reforms does not end the problems confronting India; however, time is bought in which the threat of militant Communist success has been lessened. Beyond this, it is too soon to speculate.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁸ Ibid., July 10, 1975, p. 1.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Atal, Yogesh, The Changing Frontiers of Caste, Delhi, National Publisher House, 1968.
- Bandyopadhyaya, J., Mao-Tse-Tung and Gandhi, Bombay, Allied Publishers, 1973.
- Barnabas, A. P. and Subhash C. Mehta, Caste in Changing India, New Delhi, Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1967.
- Béteille, André, Castes: Old and New, New York, Asia Publishing House, 1969.
- _____, Harmonic and Disharmonic Social Systems, Sydney, Australia, Sydney University Press, 1971.
- Black, April E. and Thomas P. Thornton, Communism and Revolution, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1964.
- Bondurant, Joan V., Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967.
- Bouglé, Célestin, Essays on the Caste System, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971.
- Chouday, Manmoham, Freedom for the Masses, Varansi, Senetay Sawa Seva Saugh, 1966.
- d'Encausse, Hélène Carrère, and Stuart R. Schram, Marxism and Asia, London, Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1969.
- Drachkovitch, Milorad M., Marxism in the Modern World, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1965.
- _____, Marxist Ideology and the Contemporary World, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1966.

- Dreuhe, David H., Soviet Russia and Indian Communism, New York, Bookman Associates, 1959.
- Dumont, Louis, Religion, Politics, and History of India, Paris, Mouton Publishers, 1970.
- Dutt, R. Palme, The Life and Teachings of V. I. Lenin, New York, International Publishers, 1934.
- Eastman, Max, Marxism, Is It Science? New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1940.
- Feuer, Lewis S., ed., "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1959.
- _____, ed., "The German Ideology," Marx and Engels, Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1959.
- Gandhi, M. K., Non-Violent Resistance (Satyagraha), New York, Schocker Books, 1961.
- _____, My Socialism, Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1959.
- Ghose, Sankar, Socialism and Communism in India, Bombay, Allied Publishers, 1971.
- Gupta, Bhabani Sen, Communism and Nationalism in India, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Haithcox, John P., Communism and Nationalism in India, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Harrison, Selig S., India: The Most Dangerous Decades, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1960.
- Hoffer, Eric, The Ordeal of Change, New York, Harper and Row, 1967.
- Hulton, J. H., Caste in India, London, Oxford University Press, 1963.
- Huntington, S. P., Political Order in Changing Society, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1969.
- Kautsky, John H., Communism and the Politics of Development, New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968.

- _____, Moscow and the Communist Party of India, New York, The Technology Press of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1956.
- _____, Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries, New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962.
- Kautsky, Karl, The Class Struggle (Erfurt Program), Chicago, Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1910.
- _____, The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1964.
- _____, Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History, Chicago, Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1907.
- _____, The Proletariat, London, The Twentieth Century Press, Ltd., 1904.
- _____, The Social Revolution and on the Morrow of the Social Revolution, London, The Twentieth Century Press.
- _____, Terrorism and Communism, London, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1920.
- Laski, Harold J., Communism, New York, Augustus M. Kelly Publishers, 1968.
- Lenin, V. I., Alliance of the Working Class and the Peasantry, Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1959.
- _____, Lenin's Collected Works, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1932.
- _____, State and Revolution, New York, International Publishers, 1968.
- Linton, Erica, Fragments of a Vision: A Journey Through India's Gramdan Villages, New Delhi, Prithvi Raj Company, 1972.
- Loomis, Charles P. and Joan Rytina, Marxist Theory and Indian Communism: A Sociological Interpretation, Michigan State Press, 1970.

- Mendelbaum, D. G., Society in India - Continuity and Change, Vols. I and II, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970.
- Masani, M. R., The Communist Party of India, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1954.
- Meyer, Alfred, Marxism, The Unity of Theory and Practice, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.
- Mitrany, David, Marx Against the Peasant, Chapel Hill, North Carolina University Press, 1951.
- Myrdal, Gunnar, Asian Drama, An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations, Vols. I, II, III, New York, Twentieth Century Fund, 1968.
- Narayan, Jayaprakash, Socialism, Sarvodaya, and Democracy, New York, Asia Publishing House, 1964.
- Narayan, Shriman, Vinoba: His Life and Work, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1970.
- Nargolkar, Vasant, The Creed of Saint Vinoba, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963.
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, Toward Freedom, New York, John Day Company, 1941.
- Norman, Dorothy, Nehru: The First Sixty Years, Vol. I, New York, John Day Company, 1965.
- Ostergaard, Geoffrey and Melville Currell, The Gentle Anarchists, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Overstreet, Gene D. and Marshall Windmiller, Communism in India, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1959.
- Patterson, George N., Peking Versus Delhi, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964.
- Political Report and Political Resolution: Communist Party of India Congress, (c 32), New Delhi, New Age Printing Press, December, 1971.
- Ram, Mohan, Maoism in India, New York, Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1971.
- Rao, C. Rajeshawara, Bhowani Sen, and Y. V. Krishna Rao, Problems of India's Agrarian Sector, New Delhi, 1970.

- Rochester, Anna, Lenin on the Agrarian Question, New York, International Publishers, 1942.
- Rosen, George, Democracy and Economic Change in India, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967.
- Roy, M. N., The Aftermath of Non-Cooperation, London, Communist Party of Great Britain, 1926.
- Rudolph, Lloyd I., and Susanne Hoerber Rudolph, The Modernity of Tradition, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1967.
- Scalapino, Robert A., ed., The Communist Revolution in Asia, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Publishers, Inc., 1969.
- Schram, Stuart R., The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1971.
- Segal, Ronald, The Anguish of India, New York, the New American Library, 1966.
- Sen, Bhowani, Evolution of Agrarian Relations in India, New Delhi, 1962.
- Srinivas, M. N., Caste in Modern India, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1962.
- _____, Social Change in Modern India, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1962.
- Tucker, Robert C., The Marxian Revolutionary Idea, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1969.
- Weiner, Myron, The Politics of Scarcity, Public Pressure and Political Response in India, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Womack, Brantly, "Theory and Practice in the Thought of Mao Tse-Tung," James Chieh Hsiung, ed., The Logic of Maoism, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1974.

Articles

- Adams, J., "Agricultural Growth and Rural Change in India in the 1960's," Pacific Affairs, XLIII (Summer, 1970), 189-202.

- Ahmed, B., "Caste and Electoral Politics," Asian Survey, X (November, 1970), 979-992.
- Bardhan, Pranab K., "Chinese and Indian Agriculture: A Broad Comparison of Recent Policy and Performance," Journal of Asian Studies, XXIX (May, 1970), 515-537.
- _____, "Cropsharing Tenancy in Agriculture," American Economic Review, LXI (March, 1971), 48-64.
- Bhaduri, Amit, "A Study in Agricultural Backwardness Under Semi-Feudalism," Economic Journal (March, 1973), 120-121.
- "Caste and the Andhra Communists," American Political Science Review, L (March-December, 1956), 378-404.
- Chakravanti, A. K., "Green Revolution in India," Association of American Geographical Annual, LXIII (September, 1973), 319-330.
- Chandra, Nirmal K., "Farm Efficiency Under Semi-Feudalism: A Critique of Marginalist Theories and Some Marxist Formulations," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (Special Number, 1974), 1309-1332.
- "CPI (M): How Equidistant?" Economic and Political Weekly, VII (November 18, 1972).
- Dandekar, V. M., "Democratic-Socialist Path to Economic Development in India," The Indian Economic Journal, XXI (January-March, 1974), 159-185.
- _____, and N. Rath, "Poverty in India," Parts I, II, Economic and Political Weekly, VI (June 2, 1971), 25-47.
- Dutt, Gargi, "Peking, the Indian Communist Movement and International Communism, 1962-1970," Asian Survey, X (October, 1971), 984-991.
- Franda, Marcus, "India's Third Communist Party," Asian Survey, IX (December, 1969), 797-817.
- Gough, Kathleen, "Indian Peasant Uprisings," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (Special Number, 1974, August, 1974), 1391-1412.
- Grover, D. C., "Contemporary Socialist Thought in India: A Study in Revisionism," Indian Journal of Political Science, XXXIII (January-March, 1972), 58-74.

- Gupta, Bhabani Sen, "Indian Communism and the Peasantry," Problems of Communism, XXI (January/February, 1962), 1-17.
- _____, "India's Rival Communist Models," Problems of Communism, XXII (January/February, 1973), 1-15.
- Hariharan, A., "Corruption: the Bihar Offensive," Far East Economic Review, LXXXV (August 9, 1974), 28.
- Harrison, Selig, "Caste and the Andhra Communists," American Political Science Review, L (March-December, 1958), 378-404.
- Johari, J. C., "Caste Politicization in India," Indian Political Science Review, VII (April-September, 1973), 185-216.
- _____, "Political Ideas of Marxist-Leninist Communists in India," Indian Journal of Political Science, XXXII (April-June, 1971), 175-194.
- John, J. C., "Naxalite Politics in India," Book Review, Indian Political Science Review, VIII (January, 1974), 1888.
- Jones, M., "India's Reluctant Revolution," New Statesman, LXXIX (January 16, 1970), 74-77.
- Khusro, A. M., "Economics of Land Reforms and Farm Size in India," Book Review, Economic and Political Weekly, IX (May 4, 1974), 719-720.
- Koshal, R. K., "Gandhian Economic Philosophy," American Journal of Economics, XXXII (April, 1973), 191-209.
- Ladejinski, Wolf, "Green Revolution in Bihar," Economic and Political Weekly, (September, 1969).
- _____, "New Ceiling and Implementation Prospects," Economic and Political Weekly, VII (September 30, 1972), A-125.
- Masani, Minoo, "Jayaprakash Narayan," Illustrated Weekly of India, XCV (May 19, 1974), 6-9.
- Mencher, Joan P., "Caste System Upside Down, or the Not-So-Mysterious East," Current Anthropology, XV (December, 1974), 469-493.

- _____, "Problems in Analyzing Rural Class Structure," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (August 31, 1974).
- Misra, R. N., "Bhoodan Movement in India," Review in Economic Studies, XIV (April, 1974), 489-490.
- Nanda, Indu, "Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia," Book Review, India Quarterly, XXX (January-March, 1974), 79.
- Nanekar, K. R., and S. V. Khandewale, "Bhoodan and the Landless," Book Review, India Quarterly, XXX (January-March, 1974).
- "Jayaprakash Narayan," Illustrated Weekly of India, XCVI (February 9, 1975), 20-25.
- "On the Essence and Manifestation of Capitalists in Indian Agriculture," Economic and Political Weekly, VIII (March 31, 1973), A-27.
- Patil, Sharad, "Government's War on Adwasis: Maharashtra," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (October 26, 1974).
- _____, "How Officials Sabotage Land Reform: Gujarat," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (October 26, 1974).
- Patnaik, Usta, "Capitalist Development in Agriculture," Economic and Political Weekly, VI (September 25, 1971), 123-142.
- _____, "On the Mode of Production in Indian Agriculture," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (September 25, 1971), A-145.
- Pavier, Barry, "The Telengana Armed Struggle," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (August, 1974), 1413-1420.
- Rai, Haridwar and K. M. Prasad, "Naxalism: A Challenge to the Proposition of Peaceful Transition to Socialism," Indian Journal of Political Science, XXXIII (October-December, 1972), 455-480.
- Rai, Lajpat, "Traditional Communist Parties," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (August 3, 1974).

- Ram, Mohan, "The Sarvodaya Farce," Economic and Political Weekly, XVIII (May 3, 1973).
- _____, "The Telengana Peasant Armed Struggle, 1946-51," Economic and Political Weekly, VIII (June, 1973), 1025.
- Rao, C. H. Hanumantha, "Socio-Political Factors and Agricultural Policy," Economic and Political Weekly, IX (August, 1974), 1285-1292.
- Rastyanmikos, V. C., "Social Types of Rural Hired Workers in Independent India," Asian Survey, 14 (March, 1974), 258-266.
- Raza, Ahmad, "Economics of Land Reform," Book Review, Economic and Political Weekly, IX (May 4, 1974).
- Sanyal, H., "Continuities of Social Mobility in Traditional and Modern Society in India: Two Case Studies of Caste Mobility in Bengal," Journal of Asian Studies, XXX (February, 1971), 315-339.
- Sharma, K. L., "Caste and Class Consciousness in Rural Rajasthan: Some Social and Psychological Expressions," Sociology and Social Research, LIV (April, 1970), 378-387.
- Somjee, A. H., "Caste and the Decline of Political Homogeneity," American Political Science Review, LXVII (September, 1973), 799-816.
- Van Der Kroef, J. M., "Indian Maoism, Peking and Bangla Desh," International Political Science Abstract, XXIV, (Number 5), 2435.
- "When, How and By Whom?" Economic and Political Weekly, IX (May, 1974), 757.
- Wood, Conrad, "The Impact of Ultra-Leftism on the Communist Party of India, 1928-1936," Journal of Indian History, LI (August, 1973), 349-394.
- Wood, John B., "Observation on the Indian Communist Party Split," Pacific Affairs, XXXVIII (Spring, 1965).
- Zagonia, D. S., "Ecology of Peasant Communism in India," American Political Science Review, LXV (March, 1971), 144-160.

_____, "Kerala and West Bengal," Problems of Communism, XXII (January, February, 1973), 16-27.

Encyclopedia Articles

Griswold, H. D., "Brahmanism and Hinduism," Encyclopedia of Social Science, (New York, 1967), p. 674.

Kroeber, A. L., "Caste," Encyclopedia of Social Science, (New York, 1967), p. 255.

Public Documents

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1972 Demographic Yearbook, United Nations, New York, 1973.

United Nations, Foreign Agricultural Economic Report, Agricultural Development and Farm Employment in India, United Nations, No. 84.

Newspapers

Embassy of India, Washington, D. C., India News, February 11, 1972.

_____, August 16, 1974.

_____, August 15, 1975.

New Delhi, The Overseas Hindustan Times, April 3, 1975.

_____, April 10, 1975.

_____, April 24, 1975.

_____, May 8, 1975.

_____, June 19, 1975.

_____, July 10, 1975.

_____, July 17, 1975.

_____, October 9, 1975.

_____, October 23, 1975.