

FACTIONS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE:

A Sociological Analysis.

A dissertation submitted to the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.Phil. (Master of Philosophy) in Sociology.

By

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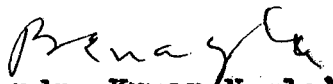
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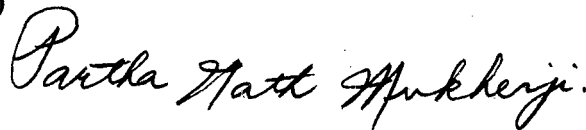
DECLARATION


CERTIFIED that the material presented in this
dissertation has not been previously submitted for
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PREFACE

THE present study is an attempt to examine analytically various studies on factions in India. We strongly believe that the emergence of factions at different levels of social structure and organization reflects the nature of economic development and political modernization taking place in India. The studies which we have reviewed in our essay are mainly of post-independent era. We thought that independent India provided certain economic and political incentives and avenues for emergence of various kinds of factions at different levels, namely, village, district, state, etc. It has also been observed in several studies that factions are "quasi-groups" or "interest-groups" but the empirical evidence used in these studies does not support this generalization.

It is not denied that factions represent different kinds of groups and individuals who constitute a particular society or community but these interest-groups (factions) are largely shaped by structural factors both ascriptive and non-ascriptive. Whereas structural-ascriptive factions operate more at local and micro-levels of social organization, the structural non-ascriptive (economic and political, etc.)

factions
~~functions~~ operate at the district and state level. No doubt, village is more a social unit rather than a territorial unit compared to district and state. The latter are administrative and juridical units of state apparatus. However, there are some other types of factions which do not have long existence but emerge on account of certain vulnerable situations and issues which are also found at different levels of social organization.

In view of this framework we have made an attempt to analyze different studies on the basis of the principles of caste and kin, economic and political interests and situational factors. Our review of ~~these~~ studies shows that there can not be a generalized set of norms which could be applicable for faction formation at all the levels of social organization. We also find certain gaps in the study of intra-party or intra-group factions which had not been adequately studied. The role of 'latent' factors has also not been given due attention.

And finally factional formations and its hierarchical organizations have not been adequately studied at the district and state levels.

I am extremely grateful to Dr. Partha Nath Mukherji for supervising this study. I am really fortunate that I could get his able guidance from time to time in writing

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I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

a) Historicity of the Concept:-

The term 'Faction' is used in one of the two senses¹. It may denote a certain objective condition or state of affairs, without implying a value judgement. The condition specifically occurs when a sub-group is formed from members of a larger group, who separate themselves from the rest.

1. The presentation under this section is an adaptation from the Dictionary of Social Sciences, Gould, Julius et al (ed.) 1969. pp. 265-266.

(2)

The components of a faction are: (a) definite personnel (the leaders, at least, should be identifiable, even if the boundaries of the membership are blurred); (b) enough organization to provide the sub-group with the rudiments of structure and cohesion; (c) a common interest which brings them together initially; (d) common objective or objectives to keep them together for some time; (e) an awareness by themselves and by others outside that they are identified as having these relationships; and (f) an opponent or opponents (e.g. a rival faction) regarded as competitors.

The usage of the term may also signify, in addition to the objective conditions set forth in (1) above a valuative attitude towards the sub-groups called "factions". This attitude is negative and implies that faction-formation is bad for the social order, since it furthers or attempts to further partial or parochial interests at the cost of societal interests. So conceived, factions put asunder those who ought to be united. Hence, all aspects of factions - their membership, aims, stratagems and tactics, fall under general condemnation.

The usage of the concept can best be illustrated by mentioning some of the historical situations to which it has been applied.

The first classic account of faction (and still one of the greatest account of its psychological insight) was written by Thucydides¹, reflecting on the events in Coreyra

1. History of the Palopponesian War, ed. trans. by R.W. Livingstone, London: Oxford University Press, 1943, BK III, p.82.

and on similar strifes in other cities. He uses the Greek word OTADLS* (Stasis) as Plato does in the Republic¹ and Aristotle in the Politics². In the Roman Empire, the Latin factio was literally the name for the companies which provided the terms of charioteers who competed at the circus. At Constantinople, in the Byzantine Empire, the supporters bet heavily on these factions and their partisanship led at times to bloodshed.

When governments were mostly monarchical, political factions consisted either of two groups vying for the royal favour of the supporters of the king and his opponents. Under the latter circumstances, the faction opposing the crown could not escape charges of disloyalty and risk the penalties of treason. These associations, ^{with} ~~of~~ discord and disloyalty still cling in the term even after royal power has declined as an institution and legislatures are almost supreme every where.

Eventually, it was out of the factions that parties emerged. The two terms at first were used as synonyms and it has taken party a long time to get rid itself of the connotation of faction. Indeed, the dissociation is not complete, for the word 'party' often retains a dishonourable meaning, though it has also acquired a respectable sense

* OTADLS

1. (trans. by B. Jewett, Oxford: The University Press, 1922-7 e.g. 465 b, 555 b, 560 a)
2. (trans. by B. Jewett, Oxford: The University Press, 1908, i.e. 1286 b, 1301 b).

which faction never achieved. Madison(1787) argued in the Federalist: "Among the numerous advantages promised by a well constructed union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction... By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority of minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passions or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens; or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."¹ Washington in his Farewell Address (1796) warned against the dangers of 'faction' and alternated, with no change of meaning, between party and faction. He said: "Let me now take a mere comprehensive view, and warn you in ~~the~~ most solemn manner against the baneful affects of the spirit of party, generally....The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetuated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful depotism". Thus both faction and party were understood as negative groupings, however, faction was more so than party.

In modern times the term faction is employed more sparingly than it was in the 17th and 18th centuries. It is ~~used~~ today (a) in communities with well-developed party systems to refer to struggles over leadership and programmes

1. (The Federalist, ed. by M. Beloffi Oxford: Blackwell 1968, pp. 41-42.

that go on between sub-groups within the parties, and (b) in communities where the party system has not yet matured, to describe clusters of persons and interests from which parties may develop later.

The foregoing illustrations exhibit some of the historical aspects of the concept and as such throw light on its genesis. But our concern in the present paper will be mainly with the structural usage of the concept, **structurally** a 'faction' is viewed as an arrangement of individuals bound together by some common interest for acquiring power with a view to safeguard the interests of the constituent membership. We prefer this view simply because it is more sociological.

b) Theoretical Issues:-

We know that no two persons can be exactly similar to their mode and style of living, in terms of attitudes, habits, thinking etc. Styles of life reflect structural (role) differentiation as well in all societies in terms of prestige, privilege and power. Social differentiation is seen through the groups and individuals who constitute a particular society. However, one may state that comparatively lesser differentiation of roles, persons and functions is found in simpler societies, than comparatively ⁱⁿ complex societies. In this way, increasing social differentiation may be taken to be a correlate of increasing social complexity. However, political differentiation of some degree, in terms of power and influence as wielded

by various individuals and groups of individuals is common to most human societies with the exception of some regimented regimes. It can be said that with highly differentiated role-structures, one comes across comparatively greater degree of socio-political differentiation than in societies with relatively homogenous role-structures. However, in even some of the simplest societies characterized by a high degree of role-summation, one notices certain important differentiations on the bases of age, sex, lineage, clan, and also on the basis of leadership in ritual, hunting, fishing and warfare, etc. As a result, men wield more power than women, clans and lineages graded ritually higher are vested with greater political power than others. Political differentiation is thus common to both the simpler and complex societies, however, its form, content and manifestation differ from society to society. Faction refers to a segment of alignments within a political system vis-a-vis other segment or "segments of alignments" within the same political system. Furthermore, a faction aims at the maximum furtherance of the interests of its own members within a certain power-system, where it is faced with other contending factions working towards a similar objectives.

Social structure has several general characteristics, and factionalism is one of them. Can we, therefore, hope to find any society without faction? If it is so, then, that will be an ideal and Utopian society. Unequal distribution of power and resources always results in the clash of interests.

Conflict occurs from time to time in society, and factionalism is a characteristic form of conflict manifestation and conflict resolution. Sometimes it may also give expression to cooperation and association. But the basic principle of factional alliance lies in marking out one group of people-enduring or ephemeral, vis-a-vis other groups within the same social system. Thus, even though a faction may associate with another faction for the realisation of certain systemic goals, the said association is more of the maintenance value for the overall system. In other words, certain conflicts which can completely wreck the system if given full expression are contained. The said association thus has the function of maintaining the overall order of the system in which different faction-groups can pursue their specific goals. A faction-group, therefore, may at a time, be negative or positive, constructive^{or} destructive. But it is found in all social systems of whatever size and of whatever degree of complexity. Faction also has the properties of fission and fusion. This means that a single faction may develop cleavages of its own and may split into two or more than two factions, or components of more than one faction may come together and form a new faction. Both these principles of fission and fusion, however, come into play only when there takes place a re-alignment of interests within one or more factions. As a result of which, various individuals seek fulfilment of their interests through re-defining their factional loyalties. Faction is thus ubiquitous and helps

in converging and diverging ideas of people. As an aid in understanding social reality it helps in the comprehension of social system under cooperation and competition in both pervasive and disruptive situations.

Somewhat similar viewpoint is taken by D.F. Miller. According to him factionalism has ^{as} its distinguishing feature its group actions in competition with one or more political groups for its own political or social interests or at least defensively to thwart similar ambitions in opposing groups" (Miller:1965:22). It may be stated that 'faction' can play both associative and conflictual roles, most sociologists and political scientists view it only in its latter role. Accordingly, most of the empirical studies focus on factions as they contend within the socio-political system for political power, or 'influence' with a view to further the interests of their respective members. Thus, faction-groups emerge to achieve power positions. A.C. Mayer thinks a faction to be a group recruited over one or more disputes. Factions are started, or joined later, by people who have a purpose in doing so and are not merely groups recruited on some other basis (e.g. Kinship), some of whose members are involved in disputes. He tries to investigate whether or not the nature of different purposes which faction members have in their minds are important in determining both the basis of recruitment and the permanence of faction. There are three factors which are important in the formation and functioning of factions; (i) background or issues behind the factions,

- (ii) activity and interactional patterns within the factions,
- (iii) nature, character and composition of factional leadership.

Factions operate for the most part in terms of total allegiance or commitments so that the issue is judged not on its own merits, but in the context of overall relationship of togetherness among the members of each contending faction, so that more often than not a member gets support from his faction, not in one particular sphere of interest, but in several of these. A faction-group may initially come into existence on account of a specific interest of its membership but eventually it may come to look after a wide gamut of interests of the said membership. A typical manifestation of this phenomenon is found in "Communal groups" (Morris:1967:302). The dynamics of such groups acting as a factions is shaped primarily by that leadership, as maintained by Morris. This happens in two ways according to Morris: (i) In the first place, a leader is engaged in a struggle for position within his own community, which means that he hopes to succeed in a career of this kind only if he is relatively rich and can attract followers, and (ii) in the second place, a leader handles extra-communal relations explicitly on behalf of his community and thus implicitly on behalf of his clients.

Here a factional following may not immediately secure power for the leader. Instead, a type of "clique" probably accounts for his assumption of leadership. But in all

communities, however, all through his role as a leader, he continues to play necessarily a dual role. As a result, he is at once a patron with a following and also with clients who keep him in power. At the same time, he is also a societal leader of his community, and therefore, speaks for it as and when the occasion arises.

Lasswell's definition of faction operationally suits our analysis. He writes: "any constituent group of a larger unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or policies (Lasswell:1931:49). Accordingly, factions arise in a struggle for power particularly in competition for official or unofficial influence. Factions so defined may be considered from at least three aspects; recruitment, activity and duration. Factions are found at different levels of society such as village, block and region, and, ethnic, linguistic, caste and religious groups. Finally, factions may emerge in a wide variety of conflict situations.

c) Conceptual Clarifications:-

The term "faction" has generally been used to refer to social groups of varying complexities characterized by opposition to similar groups. Comparison being the accepted technique of study in social sciences, the use of any specific term or concept in the analysis of social organization assumes comparison and ultimately aims at formulating comparable problems (cf. Barth:1961:13). Unfortunately, the term "faction"

has been used in varied and contradictory ways ^{by social Scientists} attributing ~~by social scientists~~ a multiplicity of connotations. That is why it cannot easily be used as a uniform conceptual category.

It looks useful to start with definition of faction by Nicholas who regards "faction" as a kind of political process with all its implied dynamism. In his comparative analysis of five case-studies on factions (1955:23-26) he observes the following five characteristics of factions:-

1. Factions are conflict groups.
2. Factions are political groups.
3. Factions are not corporate groups.
4. Faction members are recruited by a leader.
5. Faction members are recruited on diverse principles.

These five features can be represented in the following ^{four-fold} structural schema as below:-

1. Process: Factions emerge out of conflicts:

Illustratively, factions are visible in the conflicts between Japanese political parties, and therefore, would not exist without conflict. Faction formation has existed as a processes in different political structures and social organisations such as political parties, government, bureaucracy, trade unions and caste councils, etc. perhaps because of divergent interests.

2. Orientations to interests: Factions are interested in acquiring political power for the benefit of their members. It may, therefore, be said that factional groups are political

groups. If we regard 'politics' as organized conflict about the use of political power, then it is factions which organize this conflict in certain social settings and institutions.

3. Organization: Factions are basically ephemeral because their aims and members are all unstable, Nicholas maintains that they are not united into a body. Even in Japanese parties, where factions are institutionalized in clubs, factions maintain their temporary character. At the same time it must be emphasized that factions do have some degrees of internal organization. Otherwise, how can they defend the interests of their members against other groups.

4. Recruitment: It is the leader of a faction who initially thinks of setting up a faction. Thus, with the help of some of his lieutenants, he recruits other members. Usually he is not a charismatic leader even though he may take initiative in forming a faction group. A faction leader employs several criteria in recruiting members. The basis of recruitment of the members may be ethnic or religious considerations, common economic and political interests, socio-political status or even some other considerations. A leader makes use of all such networks to draw supporters into his faction. This view is very close to Raymond Firth's observations regarding recruitment to factions. He writes: Factions '....are usually structurally diverse they may rest upon kin ties, patron-client relations, religious, political, economic ties or any combination of these; they are mobilized and made effective

through an authority structure of leader and henchmen, whose roles are broadly defined, and whose rewards in many cases depend upon the leader's discretion' (Firth:1957:292).

There are two main approaches to the study of factions available in sociological literature. One view is that factions have a significant degree of permanence. This view is held to justify the use of the term quasi-groups as well. This may be called a "structural approach. There are two further variations of this 'structural' approach. One may be called the 'political structural' which regards faction as groups occupying mutually opposing positions in their struggle for political power, with a view to further the interests of their respective members. Lasswell's (1931:49) definition of faction as "any constituent group of a larger unit which works for the advancement of particular persons, or policies" represents this view. The second variation of structural view is the social structural model which views factions as mutually opposed not only in their struggle for political power, but also in several other non-political spheres as well. These groups may stand in a relationship of total opposition to each other. Lewis' study of factions (1954) in a Delhi Village is a case in point. He treats the dominant caste descent groups along with their clients and other traditionally associated lower castes as factions and imputes to these 'groupings' a substantial degree of permanence. These groups as he says, do not confine their activity to political sphere

only, but extend to various other spheres, such as ritual economic, commensal etc.

As against this, in the second view factions are regarded as temporary groups because they centre around particular issues and problems. Pocock says : "...Factions are not permanent groups but are relative to particular circumstances" (1957:296). A.C. Mayer also subscribes to this view when he takes the 'particular' nature of disputes as the pivotal criteria of faction formation and he also regards factions as a specific variety of 'action sets' (Mayer:1961:122). The latter of the two approaches has also been called the 'conflict' approach since its primary aim is to emphasize the nature of 'conflicts' between different sets of individuals and groups. Scarlett Epstein gives incisive expression to this view when she says that "It is not the number of factions that is important but rather the way hostilities between opposing factions are expressed. In a particular dispute, there can be only two opposing factions and a neutral one" (Epstein:1962:139). Since, the approach views the phenomenon of faction formation as a consequence of crystallization of conflict, it has also been called a dynamic or a 'processual' approach.

Conflict and faction: The logical character of 'faction' as a category of analysis cannot be comprehended without 'conflict' which may find expression at different

levels. Siegel and Beals postulate three such levels:

1) It may refer to conflict between parties or groups which are permanently or periodically resolved through votes, arbitration or some other means, conflicts between political parties, football teams, inter-marrying kinship groups, etc. are illustrations of this kind of conflict.

2) It may also refer to conflict between cohesive sub-groups within the larger group often leading to the dissolution of the group. American civil war which led to a permanent cleavage between North and South America may typify such type of conflict.

3) The third variety of conflict as found continuously between the two groups or sub-groups. A permanent state of hostility between two communities is a suitable example of ethnic hostility.

As a further corroboration of the 'conflict' dimension of factions, Siegel and Beals (1960 a) have proposed another classification of factions. According to them there are schismatic and pervasive factions. Two factions are said to be in a schismatic conflict when the latter happens to be between well defined and cohesive groups within a larger group. Example of this is the American Civil war between North and South America or the power conflict between Congress (O) and Congress (N) at the time of last General Election of 1971. Pervasive conflict is said to obtain not only between larger sub-units of

the system but also within the sub-units themselves. The extreme or ideal case of pervasive factionalism would involve conflict between un-organized and transient groupings, while ideal case of schismatic factionalism would involve conflict between two well-organized groups. Both varieties of factionalism would lead to the abandonment of community - wide cooperative activities, but it is only in the case of pervasive factionalism that cooperation within smaller groups would decline or disappear. In general, one may not come across a case of pure schismatic or pure pervasive faction, rather certain elements of both may be found inter-mixed in a particular situation. A complete perspective on a faction is bound to discover both these elements (schismatism and pervasiveness), a well organized faction involved in a schismatic conflict with another well-organized group may, on closer observation, be seen to have internal conflicts between its various sub-units which can thus be recognized as a case of pervasive factionalism.

Intra-group factionalism or pervasive factionalism may sometime become totally destructive for the solidarity of the group and may completely damage its cohesiveness as against outside threats. One such illustration has been reported by Stanley A. Kochanek (1968:1270) about Andhra Politics. In the three important bi-elections of 1963, Congress party lost seats simply because it could not contain the disruptive tendencies of its sub-units who sought informal alliances with opposition parties.

II. EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN INDIA

In this section we propose to review some of the studies which have been done on factions in the Indian society over the last fifteen years or so. Two sets of studies are examined and analysed: (1) Those which focus on factions at the level of the village community, and (2) studies in which focus is on party alignments. ^{While} The first studies purport probe into the village social organization in order to identify the groups which consciously and deliberately try to further the interests of their respective members mostly through acquiring sociopolitical power. The latter studies focus on one or more political parties with a view to identify intra-party or inter-party cleavages (called factions) and acquisition of power for the benefit of their members. More often than not such studies focus on power politics at the regional or national levels.

Under this section, we have selected as many as nine studies. The only consideration in having selected these studies in preference to others has been that they are very frequently mentioned in any discussion on factions, also because these are rated as more pronouncedly 'sociological' studies than others. An overview of these studies yields a bi-categorical conceptual classification of them. This classification can also be made on the basis of other two criteria, namely, the recruitment basis of faction formation and permanent or temporary character

of faction groups. In the ^{micro} structural (~~Micro~~ studies) first, which extends to as many as three of the nine studies view factions (as they are rooted in caste, kinship lineage, etc.) enduring in character. The ^{macro} second structural (~~Macro~~ studies) includes another six studies which view factions not as essentially rooted in caste and other structural attributes of rural social structure but recruitment is diversely made depending upon particular issues involved in faction formation. This reflects the temporary character of factions and cleavages in enduring social segments occasionally cutting across caste and kinship lines. The remaining two studies do not fall into either of these two types of structural studies but represent a permutation of the various criteria inherent in these micro-macro studies. We shall now proceed with the discussion of specific studies.

Micro-

a) Structural (~~Micro~~ studies):-

Oscar Lewis' study of factions in Rampur (North India) may ordinarily be regarded as a pioneering one. He made comprehensive study of factions in a village near Delhi in the years 1952-1953. Lewis observed that Faction group is a basic characteristic of traditional village social organization. Caste and other groups are based upon primary kinship ties, *and* however, kinship divisions and alliances function in practical situations as faction groups. These groups are responsible for carrying out a wide variety of functions, such as

social, economic and ceremonial on behalf of their respective members. Besides these, several other types of conflicts also centre around faction groups. Lewis maintains that insecurity of life in the village is linked with scarcity of land and other resources. ^{This} is a basic fact of rural existence, which in turn leads to the formation of faction. New factions develop as and when new issues of various types arise and draw factions of various subordinate castes to the pre-existing factions. On examining the historical growth of various factions in Rampur, Lewis found that these may develop around (i) quarrels over the inheritance of land; (ii) quarrels over the adoption of sons, (iii) quarrels over house sites and irrigation rights; (iv) quarrels over sexual offences; (v) murders, and finally (vi) quarrels between castes. The people of Rampur have a popular saying that factions and quarrels revolve around wealth, women, and land (Lewis:1954:148).

Lewis has an interesting observation to make on the nature of leadership. He writes: "Leadership in Rampur is limited to faction leadership and is primarily of a protective and defensive nature in which each faction or combination of factions defends its family interests. The leader has little authority to make independent decisions or to exercise power over the group". (p.149) In spite of this, the faction leaders are marked out from the rest of the members in terms of possession of wealth, good family background,

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a reputation for being charitable and giving elaborate feasts, advanced age, education, influence with the people, free time to further the interests of the group, humility, hospitality, trustworthiness, speaking ability, and support of large extended family (Ibid, p.150).

Lewis concludes that a small groups (i.e. factions) existing within the castes are the locus of power and decision-making, and they are a key to ~~the~~ understanding of the socio-political reality of the village communities all over India. He discovered that there were as many as twelve factions (locally known as dhars). Caste-wise distributions of these twelve factions is as follows: Jats-6, Brahmins-1, Kumhar (Potters)-1, Chamar-2, Bhangi-2. Dhars do not denote only hostile relations between groups, but also friendly relations. Dhillon who assisted Lewis in the above investigations makes a similar observation in a comparative study of factions in a South Indian village. He writes: "While hostility towards other groups is a common attribute of factions and new factions are often formed as a result of quarrels and disputes, this is seldom the only or ~~even~~ ¹ the major force which holds factions together". (Dhillon, 1955:30).

1. Lewis did this study with the assistance of Harvant Singh Dhillon, Under the programme evaluation organization of the Planning Commission, Government of India.



Three conditions are described by Lewis for the successful operation of a faction: (i) It must be sufficiently cohesive to act as a unit; (ii) It must be large enough to act as a self-sufficient interesting and participating group; for example it must be able to summon an impressive number of relatives for a marriage party, and (iii) It must have sufficient economic resources to be independent of other groups.

Singh(1959) observes by and large the same attributes of factions as observed by Lewis. Singh made a study of six sample villages of Eastern U.P. and includes analysis of as many as 97 factions. In this study as Singh reports, most of the conclusions reported by Oscar Lewis on his study of Rampur were taken as working hypothesis. The basic structural principles of organization of faction in each of the 97 factions under investigation were found to be confined to the following:

(1) The whole caste-group working as a faction has relations of acceptance or rejection towards other faction. In such cases, the caste group usually consisted of a few households which often belonged to the same sub-caste, gotra, and lineage group.

(2) Factions structurally composed of sub-caste or other sub-divisions within the caste on grounds of:-

- (a) gotra relations
- (b) brotherhood and kinship relations
- (c) regional divisions due to immigration or out-migration within a caste or sub-caste.
- (d) division of a clan on the basis of land settlement (pana tholla grouping of Western U.P. and Palli and thoka of the Eastern U.P.).
- (e) division of a caste into sub-castes based on occupational differentiation.

According to Singh, the term "faction" can be used structurally with regard to caste, sub-caste or its segments ~~and~~ and not in terms of the members drawn from different castes or sub-castes. He writes: "Thus a faction may be defined as a group of households within a caste or sub-caste or as a caste or sub-caste who rally together for rites, rituals, ceremonies, community activities and who stand together in relations of social conflict, cooperation and neutrality"

(P.6). He, however, recognizes such a phenomenon as "Partibandhi" or "Goatbandi" i.e. faction-formation. But this according to him would constitute a power group and not a faction-group, which is essentially a uni-caste entity. Note his remark: "The membership of a power group consists of factions and the membership of a faction consists of households" (Ibid:62).

The issue-wise break up of the formation of various factions studied by Singh is as follows:

1. Inter-caste feuds on the issues of land reported by 44.3% cases.
2. Feuds bases on the violation of the commensal or counubial rules of caste or sub-caste reported in 30% cases.
3. Serious fights and court-cases reported in 15.5% cases.
4. Feuds about the inheritance of property reported in 10.2% cases (p.63).

On the nature of faction leadership, the study reports that a faction-leader is, in all cases, much wealthier than the other members of a faction group. Also, he is supposed

to be of good character drawn comparatively from the older age group and is also supposed to wield a strong influence on the pattern of village leadership (p.63). Singh agrees with Oscar Lewis that factions have an enduring character.

Bailey(1957) discovered various factions all of which were rooted in caste divisions. He also found that different caste-factions which approved of each other in their day-to-day functioning, bridged up their differences and acted as one unit whenever there was a common threat or problem faced by the village community. For example, in 1953 ~~there was~~ an experimental post-office was started in Bisipara. It was running ~~at~~^a loss. The government wanted to close it down. But due to the unity exhibited by the village factions, authorities were ~~co~~ⁿstrained to revise their decision of closing down the post office.

Thus, we may say that each faction group in the village maintained double affiliation, one with its own members and the other with the other factions in the village. These affiliations depended mainly upon the exigencies of social situations that occurred in the village from time to time. An example of Boad distillers may be cited.

Boad Distillers - a caste originally on the lower rungs of the traditional social hierarchy but who have been rising steadily in the social hierarchy maintain this double affiliation and stresses each in different contexts.

Sometime for the sake of furthering the interests of their faction members they support their faction group. On other occasions, when the issues relate to broader affairs touching the entire village community, they stay with one or the other broader political faction - whichever they may choose according to the situation. The question raised by Bailey has not been answered by him adequately, viz. whether a faction group which is successfully improving its position in the social hierarchy would need to emphasize this double affiliation more than others. ~~Who are comparatively static.~~

Macro.

b) Structural (~~Macro-studies~~)

In this, we shall discuss those studies (3) which view factions as comprised of members drawn from different castes. Factional alignments are drawn whenever any issue comes up where different members (individuals) want to take sides in order to safeguard their interests. Further, since factions are formed under the motivation of issues, they have a temporary character, i.e. they dissolve or their membership changes as soon as the issue in question gets settled. We now proceed to the discussion of some specific studies.

J.S. Yadava has studied factions at the village level in Haryana. The village Kulthana studied by Yadava is in Rohtak district of the state. Yadava observes that "factions are ephemeral interest - oriented groups that are formed on non-traditional bases of social organization and operate on the political as well as social level" (1968:70: 898).

According to Yadava, ambiguity of socio-cultural change leads to a growth of factionalism, particularly, when there are new opportunities and an attendant spirit of competition. Yadava's observation is indicative of two theoretical points: (1) that the propensity on the part of individuals to form themselves in faction-groups is related to a state of anomie which occurs since the individuals cannot make a requisite mental and behavioural transfer called for under the changed socio-cultural condition and (2) that the situation of better material circumstances sharpens their achievement orientation, for the realization of which they form themselves into faction-groups. The colloquial expressions for faction formation are 'dhare-bazi' and 'firke-baji'. Both as perceived by the people and also in the objective sense, faction membership is not ascribed, but achieved for realizing some common quasi-group with membership not essentially on structural, caste or kinship lines. However, ^{since} caste and kin groupings are transmitted from one generation to another as ascriptive solidarities at different levels of social organisation, they tend to organise themselves as exclusive groups for realisation of caste and kinship interests. If this is accepted, ascriptive social groupings provide the necessary infra-structure for explicating the faction formation and its operations. Situations of emergency may, however, demand factional alliances on the basis of strategic factors.

Alan Beals studied leadership and factionalism

in Namballi, a Mysore village between April 1952 and August 1953. Beals identified factions from disputes over landownership. The disputes over landownership create a snowballing conflict which involve the whole village. Such disputes give rise to several factions in the village. Beals called this phenomenon of faction formation as a schismatic pattern of social relationship. "These schismatic groups will be referred as factions. The factions need not be represent opposed castes, a conflict between progressive or conservative, or a conflict between economic groups"(1966:433). Also these factions need not be constituted on traditional basis of caste and kinship. Rather, these are formed only on particular disputes and a person may join this or that faction group irrespective of caste or kinship. It could thus be said that a faction exists for a particular dispute and that its membership changes as the dispute changes. Beals identified another social entity known as a 'clique' which comprised of families or households. All these cliques studied by him included relatives, friends and persons bound together. Further, all these cliques wielded political dominance in the village. According to Beals these factions prevented the village from achieving a kind of unity which is very essential for the socio-economic progress and development of the village. Thus, factions are non-enduring groups and basically interest-oriented. The process of faction formation would also be determined by the nature of problems which the people face at different point of view time.

In a situation of scarcity of essential goods, sufferings may aggravate tensions which also promote formation of factions. Leach has observed that the landowners (patrons) compete for the favour of the servants and seek the same by extending help and support to them.

William Mc. Cormack studied factionalism in a Mysore Village between the years 1952-1953. Mc. Cormack discovered three types of faction-groups in the village Morsaalli. All these represent stand taken by a certain group of individuals on a particular issue, viz. attitude towards the government bureaucracies run in the nearby city. First of these factions is called the anti-government faction, whose leaders as well as the members maintain that government officers in these bureaucracies were interested only in bribes and nothing could be got done in the government offices without giving bribes. The second of these is the 'Government' faction which recommends that villagers should follow the leadership of the Patel(Headman) in all matters as he represents the government line of action. This faction works according to a typical slogan that 'we are for the public and the public is for us'. As between these two groups, anti-government group has wider audience and appeals to the people more than the pre-government faction. The third or 'Neutral' faction opposes both the village chief and the elders and the other two village factions. An interesting

feature of these factions is that the members are drawn from the various castes but the factions are involved in the immediate interests of the persons involved. Further, he also maintains that both the membership and leaders of these groups shift continuously in accordance with the changes in the interests of members.

We shall examine under this, two studies which could not be classified under the preceding structural studies .

First to be discussed is Baljit Singh's Study titled 'Next Step in Village India: A Study of land Reforms and Group Dynamics' (Baljit Singh:1960). The investigations for the study were done in U.P. in the year 1956. According to Singh the village community is complex and it is basically faction-ridden. The factions are created largely because of the individual land rights and their attendant conflict relations. It is a stark reality which explains why the villages in India along with their agriculture economy are not on the move. All this, Singh says, leaves no choice but to conclude that the village life and its economy should run along cooperative lines and replace individual family cultivation by joint family holdings in view of grave social dangers on account of the tensions and conflict that inheres in it. Besides this, it means a perpetuation of a stagnant agricultural economy with little or no prospect of meeting the demands of a growing population. Singh observes a solution when he says: "Perhaps in the economic field large capitalistic

farmers or state farming may be an alternative, although a poor one, to join cultivation by peasant families. But these offer no solution to the social problems of the faction-ridden society for which equality of land rights and cooperative organization are the only answer"(Ibid: 108-109). A lack of cohesiveness and 'we-feeling' in the village community helps in the creation of factional society. (Ibid:108-109).

Factionalism is thus caused primarily by private land ownership and inequality in the distribution of land. Out of the 64 factional splits that were studied in detail by Singh, 24 could be accounted as a result of disputes over land, 9 by quarrels over marriage and marriage ceremonies, 8 by caste taboos and rites, 7 by an entire caste or community suffering from a sense of injury or denial, 3 by rivalry among landed households croppers, and the rest by issues such as jajmani rights.

The main role, of a faction is to support its members litigations, disputes and fights. This gives rise to a continuous stream of litigations and acts of violence against persons and property on the one hand, and leads to the complete disintegration and disorganization of the the village society.

R.W. Nicholas studied factions in West-Bengal Villages and found that these were formed on the basis of caste, economic dependency, kinship and territory. Nicholas' paper 'Village Factions and Political Parties in Rural

West Bengal' (Nicholas:1963-64), which is the basis of discussion here, is based on a comparative study of factions in ~~the~~ villages Govindpur, Radhanagar and Chandipur.

The study was carried out in 1960. In Radhanagar and Govindpur factions are comparatively small in size and numerous. In Chandipur, where the power of the headman is great, there are only two factions which oppose his wide-spreading groups.

Political Party affiliations as Nicholas discovers are determined by the nature of factional associations. The headman in all the three settings converts his faction, and those of his allies, into a congress vote-bank. In Radhanagar and Govindpur, factions opposed to the headman and factions opposed to his allies get united in support of Communist party at the time of elections. The opposition alliance has good electoral logic behind it, ^{otherwise} because the headman would defeat several disunited factions in elections for the village panchayat. In Chandipur, however, the panchayat elections have been contested almost by a single party, factions could express themselves only in the General elections. From his above case study and several others existing already in the field Nicholas arrives at the following five attributes of factions:

(i) Factions are conflict groups: (ii) Factions are political groups: (iii) Factions are not corporate groups: (iv) Faction members are recruited by a leader and (v) Faction members are recruited on diverse principles.

We shall now attempt a brief critical overview of the above two studies:-

The entire drama of factional conflict in the rural society ~~is~~, according to Baljit Singh (1961), ^{is} located around the existing system of individual land ownership. He does not even hesitate to make a 'value' statement because he says that this is the single factor most responsible for the slow development of the rural society. A vast majority of the total disputes studied by him was discovered to be related to land disputes. His hypothesis of faction causation is substantially borne out on the basis of the data of his study. But what is the mechanics of faction formation in the case of several other types of disputes mentioned by him, ^{and} what are the basis of factional recruitment in the event of these disputes? This point needs examination. In keeping with his major hypothesis of faction formation as a function of existing system of land ownership, he dichotomises ^o the entire village society into two categories; those owning major portion of the village land, and those who are landless. Corresponding to these, he also visualises two types of factions the 'élite' and the 'subordinate', (coinage ours) the latter being exploited by the former. Since on the event of each dispute some members of both the 'élite' and the 'subordinate' factions join together, ~~then~~ the question arises, ~~On~~ On what basis some of the 'subordinate' factions

align themselves with some particular 'elite' factions ? The answer can be supplied only through more sociological treatment of the data which is missing in this work.

According to Nicholas' finding, factions are both rooted in the structural attributes of the village social organization, such as caste and kinship as well as ^{focused} ~~feinded~~ on relationships of economic dependency. These caste-based factions act as power groups in local politics and make an impact on the national-level politics. The mode of factional politics according to him is influenced strongly by the strength or weakness of the village headman, who more often than not represents the party in power at the national or state level. First three of five attributes of factions deduced by Nicholas correspond to those mentioned in the ^{macro} ~~studies mentioned in category II~~. Again, the fifth attribute that factional recruitment is based upon diversity of principles, also comes under this classification. In brief, his notion of faction is that of a caste-based faction whose membership is not enduring so that it does not have the corporateness of a group. But how this could happen when the basis of formation is enduring and the membership is temporary.

In the preceding section, we have reported some *structured* studies of factions. Now we will discuss some non-structural studies (cultural, psychological etc.).

c) Non-structural studies:

In the ensuing section we shall report three studies which have tried to examine factions in political parties in India both at the village and regional levels. No doubt, even this variety of factions is explainable completely, only if we take into account some structural elements of the rural social organization, such as caste, kinship, lineage etc. But then, the major emphasis in these studies is on the rural social organization only to the extent that it helps to explain their linkage with the politics at the regional and national levels.

The study 'Village and Party Factionalism in Andhra: Pennur Constituency' ^{was} conducted by Myron Weiner (1965).

The study examines how factional ties exercised a determining influence on the way individuals voted. It was found that village factions bargained with candidates of various parties. They could do this bargaining only because factional loyalties within the Congress proved to be greater than party loyalties. The rural Pennur constituency encompasses parts of two talukas in Guntur district. One part of the constituency, known as Chebrele firka, is in Tenali taluka, while the other, known as Pennur firka, is in Bapatla. Weiner emphasizes the factional characteristics which were part and parcel of the village society and were also found to be operative at the

time of elections.

Faction members as reported by Weiner did not care about ~~norms~~ regarding pollution, marriage, customs, religious rites, or ritual status while recognizing others as members of faction groups. Even members belonging to different castes, classes and occupations were found in one and the same faction group. Faction groups as observed by Weiner exercised an important role in the village community. They were involved in a vast variety of disputes of political and social nature. Even though, a faction included both the rich and ^{the} poor, only members drawn from high castes and those who were economically well-off wielded a significant influence on the course of action that a faction chose to take.

Factions were not permanent and sometimes a faction group broke up and its members joined other faction groups in the village. Factions generally speaking did not endure unchangingly for a long time. One could say from this that conflicts and disputes created village factions or that factions increased conflict in the village. A faction group may come to an alliance with different political parties from time to time. But this need not have any impact on its nature and internal composition. Therefore, as Weiner found, 'faction may support Congress in one election and ~~in~~ the opposition party in the next. The fact that Congress may get the same vote in a village from one election to another is quite

misleading since factions may be switching sides. Some villages in Ponnur illustrate this point.

TABIE

CONGRESS AND COMMUNIST VOTES IN
1955 AND 1962.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.

Village	1955 Election		1962 Election	
	Congress	Communist	Congress	Communist
Sangamjagar- lamudi	1,109	805	1,048	873
Chebrele	2,452	1,680	2,659	1,934
Ar ^e manda	678	345	761	319

Thus, the fact that Congress got approximately the same number of votes in Sangamjagarlamudi over the two general elections does not essentially signify that the factions supporting Congress in the first election have also done the same during the subsequent election. The same may apply to the votes polled by Communist party in the two elections under review in Aremanda.

Paul Brass(1966) maintains that factions and factional conflict in India are a part and parcel of the indigenous social and political order. Factional politics is the manifestation of the basic leader-follower relationship interest in

the rural social organization. Loyalty to a traditional order is often siphoned through loyalty, to the lineage group, caste, village, or a region.

A system of factional politics may develop in any society under certain objective conditions. Paul Brass has pointed out the following conditions which are responsible for the factional development within the Congress party in Uttar Pradesh, ~~Congress~~. These are:

1. the absence of an external threat,
2. the presence of an internal consensus upon ideological issues, and
3. the absence of authoritative leadership.

Paul Brass makes use of these three conditions to explain the growth of factional politics both at the state and district level.

Richard Sission⁽¹⁹⁷⁰⁾ tries to spell out different levels of political groupings in terms of factions in Rajasthan Congress Party. He maintains that factions at lower levels such as Municipal Boards and Tehsil Congress Committees are heterogeneous, drawn from numerous castes. Sission's observations are based upon his study in Nagaur District of Rajasthan. Two important political factions are observed by the author. One was Vyas faction, and it was led by Jai Narain Vyas, who was the famous leader of the People's Movement before Independence. The other political faction in the district was that of the numerically dominant caste of Jats. These two faction groups exhibited splits and fission at all

the levels from village to state both socially and territorially.

Sission analyses one particular conflict situation, viz. the one which arose between Lokparishad¹ (dominated by the Vyas group and Jat elites in 1954). In this, the Jat faction finally succeeded, and the dominance wielded by the Vyas ~~as faction~~^{group Parishad} was ultimately snatched away by the Jat faction. As Sission analyses, there were three reasons responsible for this changed pattern of dominance. First, the Jat group displayed its organizational resources in a better way to bring out cohesiveness within the ranks of the party. Second, they had a better and a more pragmatic notion of what leadership means in the modern context. Third, the jat group draw their support from a single dominant caste, whereas the Vyas group draw their support from many caste groups all of which were weak and fragmented.

-
1. Lok Parishad was the first, most vocal and most popularised political movement in Jodhpur State. The objectives of the movement were concerned with propagation of social and political ideas and with changing the nature of traditional polity. the creation of representative government under the aegis of the Maharaja, the promotion of civil liberties within the State, the identification with nationalist symbols and the aspirations of the Indian National Congress, and the eventual merger of the State into an Independent India.

III. ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES

We shall try to categorise and assimilate the data given in the above studies in a fourfold 'structural' scheme. This scheme is a slightly modified version of the one already given in the preceding discussion (at page 11-12). The scheme comprises of the following:

1. Issues/Interests
2. Organization
3. Recruitment
4. Levels of Loyalty (e.g. supra-village loyalties)

1. Issues/Interests

All the studies provide data on issues and interests which give shape and form to the various factions. It is only on the existence of these issues - of various types, that the existence of factions depends.

Factions reported under ^{micro-studies} ~~category-I~~ (Lewis; Yogendra Singh and Bailey) i.e. those which view factions as based upon caste, kinship, etc. and as enduring social groups attend to a comprehensive variety of issues, from social, ritual to political and economic interest. Since these groups are of the enduring variety, these take up various issues affecting the interests of their membership as and when these come up. Factions reported in ^{macro studies} ~~category-II~~ (Cormack; Beals and Yadav) are more directly concerned with

the acquisition of political power and with the furtherance of economic interests of their membership. A majority of issues permeating factional relationships reported under these studies relates to land disputes. A major difference in the relationship of issues to factions in the two studies is that whereas, ^{in first} the faction groups are already in existence before any issue emerges on the scene, but in the latter, with the emergence of an issue the existence of factions comes into effect.

Factions reported in one of the two studies included under ^{structural studies} ~~category III~~ (i.e. Baljit Singh) are oriented mostly towards land disputes, which are rooted in the unequal distribution of land. That is why, he argues that by changing the existing system of land ownership in favour of more egalitarian system, most of these factions would cease to exist. The most common manifestation of the land disputes is litigation which ranges one faction-group against the other.

All the factions reported under ^{structural studies} ~~category III~~, i.e. those concerning political factors, are oriented solely to one issue, viz. the acquisition of political power. Some of these factions are also oriented towards bargaining with the political parties for power (Weiner).

2. Organization

Factions reported under ^{micro studies} ~~category I~~ are organized around caste, kinship and lineage etc. (Lewis; 1954,

Yogendra Singh; 1959, Bailey; 1957) and exist as enduring structural entities. In fact, their being 'structural' segments enduring in nature are two sides of the same coin. Whenever a faction becomes a multi-caste in membership, it ceases to be a 'faction', rather it becomes a power-group (Yogendra Singh, 1959). ^{macro studies} Studies reviewed under ~~category II~~ spell out factions as organized groups primarily around certain issues and therefore they are drawn from several castes and kinsgroups. An issue becomes a rallying point and persons from several castes feel that they can realize their interests better if they unite as groups. As Beals characteristically shows that an issue such as a land dispute has a snow-balling reaction on the community in question (1959) and divides it in various groups or contending factions. As soon as the issue in question gets solved, factions are formed around new issue/issues.

The organizing principle for the factions studied by Baljit Singh (1961) is the system of land-ownership which permanently creates a dissension between the landowning and the landless people. It is from these two sectors of population that factional alignments are formed depending upon the issue at a particular point of time. In general, the operative principle of factional functioning is the principle of exploitation of the landless by the rich landowning sections of the village, who encourage factional alignments for furtherance of their own interests. The second of the

two studies included in the ^{structural studies} ~~category III~~ (Nicholas:1965) show factional functioning around a mix of both caste and kinship of economic subordination. This study presents a culmination of Baljit Singh's study and the studies included under ~~category II~~. *macro-studies*.

3. Recruitment

Studies included in ^{latter} section (B) Weiner:1965, Paul Brass:1966, Sission:1970) highlight non-traditional recruitment as the main organizing principle. This is understandable as these factions are formed with a view to acquire political power to further the interests of their members. However, the role of particularistic criteria, such as caste, kinship, etc. is not completely ruled out. Caste plays an important 'organizing' role in functioning of factions at the village level, whereas multi-caste membership is more common in the regional level factions. (Sission, 1970). Further, in case of inter-faction fight or dispute, a faction-group which utilize the solidary support of one caste as against the support of dispersed fragments of many castes has comparatively less chances of success. (Sission 1970).

A universal feature of faction-leadership as it emerges almost in all the studies is that it is recruited from richer and well-to-do sections of the rural communities

(es. Yogendra Singh:1959; Lewis:1954; Baljit Singh:1961).

This dichotomises the overall membership of the faction-groups into "Elites" and the "masses". Another feature which buttresses the elite position of the leaders is that factional leadership gives them basis to consolidate their position (political and economic), and hence traditionalisation and stagnation.

4. Levels of Loyalty

Most of the factions observed in the different studies show loyalty ^{to} the primordial institutions, such as caste, kin group, village etc. However, the village is the field where concrete operationalisation of these alliances and attached loyalties can be discerned. At macro-levels loyalties become diffused and diverse.

Supra-village loyalties are also found along with factional alliances. Factions at these levels (district, state) cannot be homogenous and unified as the support basis itself is diverse. Interests and issues of groups dominate rather than ascriptive solidarities such as caste membership and kin relationships. However, if primordial loyalties can be channelised at the district or state levels in faction formation, may be that such a faction succeeds more than some others in which such factors do not play a role.

I have drawn some other inferences from the preceding studies: (1) Factions may emerge not only ^{on} account of certain

issues which are internal to a local community and create cleavages or factions within its social organization. Rather, these may take their birth also on account of problem of the party (the community is an example) to bring about its adjustment with the broader social milieu. The emergence of

(a) Government faction, (b) anti-government faction and (c) neutral faction in the village community studied by Cormack is a case in point. All those three factions are related to the way the community in question tries to define its relationship with the outside power structure.

(ii) Corresponding to the social and political hierarchy within a village community it may be possible to envisage a hierarchy of factions. As a result, a faction may be a 'leader' faction. Thus we may speak of an 'elite' faction such as 'Gujar' or 'Jat' faction as studied by Lewis and the 'subordinate' faction as those of 'Potters'. The said hierarchy between two sets of factions may be more closely related to the system of production, so that it is possible to speak of the faction of the landlords and that of the landless (Baljit Singh). Usually better education also goes along with more wealth, so that the faction which is wealthier may at the same time be more educated. We may, therefore, come across a summation of two or more attributes (such as 'Literacy' and wealth) while studying hierarchy of factions.

(iii) Another attribute of the faction groups in the

village society (as highlighted by Bailey) is their segmental character, which means that the faction groups which are hostile to each other may close their ranks and act as a solitary group when the entire village community is faced by a common threat. One may observe the same phenomenon even at the level of caste. One such situation is cited by Yogendra Singh (1959).

" In this village, at the period of consolidation of land-holdings a leader of Brahmin caste faction organized the whole extenants of the village against the Rajput exlandlords. Almost all Rajput families were involved irrespective of their faction membership. Hence, some faction leaders of Rajputs, appealed for the clan to unite and actually all the factions of Rajputs united against the Brahmins and ultimately prevailed upon the situation. Only after a week that the Rajputs had realized their goals, the caste unity was disintegrated, old factions took again their old position" (Ibid. p.60).

Factions and Social Change:

Factions do have a place among those concepts and categories which can help in explaining the process of social change. As we have seen, Indian Factions - especially those existing among the rural communities, present a blend of Universalistic (in as much as these tend to be drawn from

across the caste-barriers) and particularistic (in as much as both caste and kinship still exercise as significant influence in shaping these factions) criteria-which of these two would diminish as the process of socio-economic transformation ^{and} proceeds ahead would be an interesting area of investigation for the sociologists in India in the years to come? This is especially ^{true} since the notion of modernization as understood at the trans-national level is supposed to be accompanied by increasing decline of particularistic criteria of group affiliation. Indian situation would constitute an interesting experimental ground. How far the said model of modernization is borne out would essentially depend upon the future course of social change in this country.

As revealed in all the studies under review, faction leadership is always recruited from the richer sections of the rural society. This also means, in a substantial number of cases, ~~that~~ they are drawn from higher echelons of caste hierarchy. In case, this existing mode of factional leadership is to continue, it is doubtful whether the interests of the larger, poorer masses can be safeguarded by these elites who would ^{manoeuvre} ~~merely~~ factional politics and also define factional strategies largely in terms of their own interests.

CONCLUSIONS

We started this paper with a theoretical statement that factions are an inseparable constituent of the political systems and that the functioning of a political sub-system as a part of the social system always implies existence of factions. We may as well say that factions constitute the dynamic principle which is always inherent in the socio-political relations. We also stated that there is a relationship of opposition between the goals of a system and the goals of a faction group. That is why, a faction-group always tries to bend the sources of the system concerned to the interest - furtherance of its own members.

The studies reviewed in this paper underline these characteristics of factions in specific contexts. Various faction groups studied seem to totally disregard the development goals of the rural society and thriving on the environment power - resources for the betterment of their own members. We have thus a situation where the goals of the Indian society (in particular rural society) are in a state of jeopardy on account of various strains and stresses upon it from various factional groupings. With regard to the goal of socio-economic development, the village community, therefore, does not present itself as a unified entity. As a result,

it is not able to maintain the required pace *with* socio-economic change and transformation. The evidence on the fact that faction groups may sometime merge their separatist entity in the interest of the broader collectivity is sketchy and insufficient. On the whole the impression continues to stay that factions play a disfunctional role in India.

2. Since traditional social structural elements (such as caste, kinship etc.) continue to find an important ~~re~~ place in the Indian social organization, factions too, which rely upon these traditional attributes, acquire a quasi-group character. We have mentioned in the preceding section that factions existing in ~~the~~ village community appear to be even more lasting than ~~the~~ quasi-groups and as such should be placed structurally between these (i.e. quasi-groups) and groups proper.

3. For comprehending this phenomenon of the relative permanence of factions, we propose that ~~they~~ should be studied along a continuum comprised of a group-like permanence on the one hand and absolute temporaryness (like that of "action sets") on the other hand. It would be interesting to spell out as to what ^{extent} ~~mix~~ of universalistic - particularistic criteria makes a faction swing to one end of the continuum substantial degrees of permanence.

4. As one goes through the material presented in the studies under review, one is struck by an anomaly between

two attributes of factions stated in two different contexts. Paul Brass, while delineating the preconditions for emergence of factions, mentioned the absence of authoritarian leadership as one of the significant attributes. On the other hand, it is also mentioned that in a faction group it is a leader, who recruits members and initiates the idea of interest & consolidation. These two attributes seem to be mutually inconsistent to the extent that a person who plays a key role in the formation of a faction and also guides its decisional direction, automatically lacks authoritarian influences. In fact, he must wield such an influence over members of his factions.

5. In all the theoretical formulations of factions reported above and also in all the empirical studies which have been reviewed, it has not been brought out as to how a faction group is able to contain and manage conflicts that might develop between its own members. In other words, the intra-factional dynamics has remained a moot point, even though inter-faction dynamics has been extensively dealt with.

SOME PROBABLE AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In this section, we shall try to spell out some broad areas of research which can be further developed for a study of factions in India.

1. Broadly two settings can be identified for the study of factions in the Indian Society. These are: 1) Rural setting; 2) Urban-setting. The predominant complexion of Indian society being "rural", it is in this area that some new departures can be made. As we have already emphasized in the preceding sections, the precise nature of factional groupings *vis-a-vis* various other social groupings such as caste, family, lineage, etc., needs to be thoroughly probed. It needs to be investigated ^{as} what role various structural elements of the rural social organization play in factional functioning. This would lead us to examine such basic questions. In what specific sense factions as a mode of social grouping differ from traditional social groupings in India such as caste, lineage or gotra groupings in spite of the fact that faction, as suggested in a number of studies, is shaped and formed on the basis of caste and other traditional criteria ?

The urban setting, as it is widely known, is characterized by certain specific parameters, such as

vastness of city life, a realative anonymity of various interactional settings as against the "primary" nature of rural interaction, factory-based large-scale production and various amenities which go alongwith city life and are denied to the rural people. It will be interesting to examine under such a setting as to how far the pattem of factional politics available at the rural level is repeated at this plang and to what extent various characteristics (especially, "particularistic") of rural factionalism perpetuate, get transformed or displaced through interplay with above mentioned urban parametres.

2. Another area of research which is common to the above setting is: the modes of interaction and bargaining between faction groups especially of the rural setting and political parties. The point that needs to be examined is whether or not political commitment which is imposed upon members of a faction-group as a result of some deal or understanding with the faction-group as a whole comes to have with the political party in question generates such strains and pressures which prove dysfunctional for the intra-factional cohesion. In other words, how far the internal structure of a faction-group is viable against inroads from the outside sub-systems. This looks probable since the abstract political ideology, ^{which is} a basically universalistic criteria, ~~which~~ is the guiding principle for a political

party may not fit into several particularistic elements which characterise factions in the Indian society.

3. A pertinent area of theoretical research would be to re-examine the very definition of factions. As already emphasized in preceding section, faction in India seems to have a semi-permanent character which is ~~the~~ largely on account of their being social in traditional sense. It is tentatively suggested that Indian factions especially those found in the rural society having predominantly traditional base need not be considered "factions" in the generally accepted sense. They should be rather considered as a variety of various social alignments which are available in the Indian rural society. A more rigorous theoretical rethinking needs to be done.

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