

# **INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA**

**A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE** ↗

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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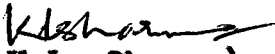
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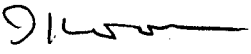
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## PREFACE

As industrialization proceeds, it leaves a trail of mementos on the existing pattern of social stratification. The modes of social differentiation and the unequal allocation of social status and rewards to various positions and functions are affected in a major degree. It is proper to say that a society undergoing the process of industrialization will exhibit competing systems of social stratification. Thus, it does not leave anyone in doubt to decipher the impact of industry on the systems of social stratification.

However, the impact is not unilinear. Both industrialization as a process and social stratification not only affect each other but are also affected by each other. They interact concomitantly and exert influences.

In the present analysis, our main endeavour is to show the mutual interaction between industrialization and social stratification in India. We do not have an elaborate theoretical construct of our own. We note certain accepted formulations of the impact of industrialization on the system of social stratification in the Western societies and use them as the background against which to present the results of our analysis, primarily based on some selected studies, surveys and reports.

The first Chapter presents a discussion on the theoretical aspects of industrialization and social stratification, followed by an analysis of different theoretical approaches revealing the relationship between the two. A set of broad changes are presumed to flow from industrialization, under the general concepts of structural change, i.e., differentiation, consistency, and mobility. Thus, there is a highly developed theory of the presumed 'impact' of industrialization. It is believed that as industrialization grows in any given society, the traditional institutions and value-patterns will change in the direction of the Western modes of social life and thought. The second part of the Chapter deals with the impact of social stratification on industry.

The second Chapter, dealing with India, questions the above assumption about the movement of non-industrial societies towards the institutional framework of the Western society. We plan to show that industrialization of traditional society like India does not result in the total disintegration of the old social order but in mutual accommodation between the industrial and non-industrial sectors of social life. The fact that the impact of industrialization varies from one society to another has particular relevance here.

We shall give special attention to one specific mode of stratification, that is based on the ritual concepts of purity and pollution of which 'caste' provides the most characteristic example. We will try to explore the processes underlying the transformation of Indian society from one with hierarchically organized caste groups to a relatively open society stressing individual attributes. We will also explain as to how the caste system in India has been adjusting itself to new forces of industrialization and is not yielding to class system and that the process and impact of industrialization in India differ from the West.

The second part deals with the impact of caste system on industry. Several questions will be attempted, i.e., whether the social organization of the society as a whole is reflected within the industry? Whether the hierarchical ranking of castes parallels the hierarchical ranking within the industry? Whether a worker's caste predicts his career and position in an industry?

The most direct form of study of the present problem seems to be to select an area where a new industry or factory is established, and to make an intensive investigation of the economic and social lives of the inhabitants

of the area as well as of the workers employed in the factory. We have, therefore, selected Bihar as an area of study in the third Chapter. My intention and purpose of choosing Bihar as an area of study is purely academic. Since, we have to depend solely on secondary sources at M.Phil level, we will make use of personal experience and acquaintance with the field to somewhat compensate the lack of depth in studies based wholly on secondary data. Since the total scholarly resources for analysis of the social implications of industrialization in Bihar are small, we will also make use of the Census data to show the partial disintegration of occupational structure, based on traditional stratification system (due to industrialization). In our analysis of Bihar, we will also include different tribes since the major portion of industries lies in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur division.

It is my privilege to express a few words of gratitude to all those who have helped in completing the present piece of work. Words prove too weak a vehicle to give the expression of my thanks to my Supervisor, Dr. K.L. Sharma, who guided me at successive stages of work by giving valuable suggestions. My heart-felt thanks go to my friends - Talkeshwar, Sanjay, Phulchand, Sabal,

Murli, Ravindra, Mukti, Ashok, Awadhesh and Rajan, who provided help and encouragement in writing this dissertation. I wish to express special thanks to Mr. Gajanan Hegde who typed this dissertation, and the staff of JNU Library who extended all possible help.

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January 4, 1984.

*Madhusudan Srivastava*

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## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
PREFACE	1
CHAPTER I    INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES	1
CHAPTER II    INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA	44
CHAPTER III    INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN BIHAR	87
CONCLUSION	120
BIBLIOGRAPHY	127



## CHAPTER I

### INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

From the initiation of sociological writings in the field of industrial sociology and sociology of social stratification, social theorists have applied a variety of theoretical perspectives to elucidate the nature and processes of industrialization and social stratification. They have also taken pains to explain the impact which industrialization processes exert on the nature of the system of social stratification prevalent in a particular social system. Scanty attention has been paid both at the conceptual and substantive levels to demonstrate the impact of social stratification on the process of industrialization. The question arises whether it is a one way process, i.e., industrialization brings about changes in social stratification; Or social stratification also affects the nature of industrialization; Or the two are interactive and interdependent.

Industrialization has been variously defined by sociologists. Central to all of the definitions, however, is the idea of a shift in the economic base of society from agriculture to industry. The customary index of this shift is a decline in the proportion of the labour

force employed in agriculture and an increase in the proportion - employed in the manufacturing and service industry.

In spite of the diversity, there are common features of industrialization process, no matter where it occurs. These common features lie, for the most part, in what Paul Meadows has called the inner-structure of industrialism, i.e., "specialized machines and tools; a body of knowledge about machine processes, properties and tasks and human beings disciplined for machine work."<sup>1</sup>

There are in other words some intrinsic elements of industrial technology that appear - irrespective of the point in time at which industrialization occurs and irrespective of the particular cultural heritage upon which it is superimposed. One of these elements and the one which seems to have the most far-reaching effects, is a complex form of division of labour.

The major question to which this Chapter is addressed is: what are the social effects of industrialization? There are certain questions that also need to be answered. Are the instances of common features of industrial

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1. Meadows, Paul. The Culture of Industrial Man. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1950, p.13.

societies and those in the process of industrializing, a result of simple imitation of forms, established earlier in occidental societies or are they an inevitable consequences of the industrialization processes itself? How can we separate the effects of industrialization from the effects of urbanization and other processes occurring at the same time?

One of the major themes (and one of the important unanswered questions) in the recent literature on industrialization centres around the issue of wide-spread initiation of the process moving in the direction of a common world-culture or a diversity of forms of industrialism.<sup>2</sup> This is another way of posing what was identified above as the central question of this Chapter: Are there effects of industrialization that can be predicted without regard to considerations of time or place?

There is a wide-range of opinion among sociologists regarding the answer to this question. One of the extreme positions on the effects of industrialization is that of Herbert Blumer who maintains that "..... industrialization by its very make-up, can have no definite effect."<sup>3</sup>

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2. Moore, Wilbert E. *The Impact of Industry*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1965, pp. 9-20.

3. Blumer, Herbert, *Early Industrialization and the Labouring Class*, Sociological Quarterly, 1, January 1960, p. 9.

Although few sociologists would agree with this statement, there is less than complete consensus regarding what social effects may be attributed to the introduction of manufacturing industries. Particularly in the analysis of the "outer structure of industrialism", i.e., the patterns of social organization of firms, communities and various social institutions,<sup>4</sup> it has become clear that a variety of organizational forms may serve the same needs. Wilbert Moore has used the phrase "principle of structural substitutability" to refer to the fact that "the general functional requirements for the persistence of any society set only very wide limits on the appropriate structural ways of accomplishing these requirements".<sup>5</sup>

The effects of industrialization upon the degree of division of labour assume special importance not only because any change in the form of division of labour has far-reaching consequences, but also because of its special relevance, i.e., increasing occupational specialization is, in itself, an important form of structural differentiation and in addition tends to produce more differentiated stratification patterns, increases the number and variety of

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4. Meadows, op.cit., pp. 15-21.

5. Moore, op.cit., p. 83.

special interest organizations and in various other ways contributes to the segmentalized character of industrial societies.

There is a growing recognition of the necessity for cross-cultural comparative studies in which hypotheses regarding effects of industrialization can be tested in various cultural contexts as well as for comparative studies of developing societies over time.

Current studies leave some important questions unanswered, including whether the findings are generalizable to all industrial societies and whether they are results of urbanization or industrialization. However, the following points are emphasized: the breakdown of traditional culture under the impact of industrialization, the increase in the division of labour and resulting complexity in the patterns of social stratification and the emergence of rational forms of integration which can be noted, among other places, in "organic solidarity".

The most important point in this regard that assumes cardinal significance is the analysis of the process of differentiation as it occurs during the early stages of industrialization. Most sociological comparative studies have not involved any real "processual analysis" but have

analyzed, at a single point of time, societies that are presumably at different stages of industrialization. They have then assumed that the observed differences are accounted for by the operation of various sets of processes.

### Social Stratification

Social stratification has been viewed differently through a variety of conceptual frames by different social theorists, but all the theories carry the common theme of viewing it as an institutionalized form of social inequality. To put it differently, social stratification refers to the presence of social groups which are arranged hierarchically, usually in terms of the amount of power, prestige and wealth their members possess and those who belong to a particular group or stratum will have some awareness of a common interests and common-identity.

There are different approaches dealing with the relationship between industrialization processes and social stratification.

### Marxian Approach:

Marx's theory of social stratification in all societies is based upon his analysis of social classes. He affirms strongly the economic basis of classes and the

antagonistic relationships between them. The differing relations of individuals to the privately owned means of production form the basis for constitution of social classes, of those who own the means of production and those who do not, that is, 'haves' and 'havenots'.

Marx distinguished several important epochs, or major forms of social structure, in the history of mankind such as, ancient civilization, feudalism and the modern capitalism. "Each of these periods is characterized by a predominant mode of production and based upon it, a class-structure consisting of a ruling and oppressed classes. The struggle between these classes determines the social relations between men. In particular, the ruling class which owes its position to the ownership and control of means of production, controls also, though often in subtle ways, the whole moral and intellectual life of the people."<sup>6</sup>

A social class in Marx's terms is any aggregate of persons, who perform the same function in the organization of production. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeymen, bourgeoisie

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6. Bendix, R. and Lipset, S.M. Karl Marx's Theory of Social Classes, in Bendix and Lipset (eds.), Class, Status and Power. Fletcher and Son Ltd., Norwich, 1974, p. 6.

and proletariat"<sup>7</sup> are the names of social classes in different historical periods. Classes did not exist during the era of primitive communism when societies were based on a socialist mode of production.

From a Marxian perspective, relationship between the major social classes is one of mutual dependence and conflict. However, the mutual dependency of the two classes is not a relationship of equal or symmetrical reciprocity. "Very often - as in the famous opening passage of the 'Communist Manifesto', which begins: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" - Marx employs the term 'class' to refer to the major social groups - oppressors and oppressed - which are in conflict with each other in every type of human society beyond the most primitive."<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Marx maintains that the historical changes from one type of society to another are brought about by class struggles and by the victory of one class over other. While investigating the origins and development of modern capitalism (in Europe), Marx observes that the

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7. Marx, K. and Engels, F. Manifesto of the Communist Party, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 41.
  8. Bottomore, T.B. Classes in Modern Society, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1965, p. 23.



working class would be victorious within a relatively short space of time in its struggle against the bourgeoisie. His conviction is founded largely upon his conclusion that modern large-scale factory production would be extremely favourable to the development of class consciousness, to the diffusion of socialist ideas, and on to the organization of a political movement.<sup>9</sup>

Marx was of the opinion that "within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over and exploitation of the producers. They mutilate the labour into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil, they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process... they transform his life into working-time and drag his wife and child under the wheels of the juggernaut capital."<sup>10</sup>

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9. Ibid, p. 21.

10. Marx, Karl. *The Poverty of Philosophy*. New York: International Publishers, pp. 708-709.

This extreme form of exploitation leads to the formation of a 'class for itself' from a 'class in itself'. The oppressed mass becomes united and the interest it defends becomes class-interests. The question arises as to why it only happens in a capitalist set-up! In the case of industrial workers, a ready communication exists. They are concentrated in the large industrial towns, the condition of factory production brings them into close physical contact with one-another.

Yet, Marx did not believe that the political organization of the working class and the development of class-consciousness in thought and action would be the automatic result of these objective conditions. In his view, these objective conditions provided a favourable setting for the development of political agitation. And this agitation was in good part the function of men, who were not themselves workers, but who had acquired a correct understanding of historical change and who were willing to identify themselves with the movement of those who were destined to bring it about. "... a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hand. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a

section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, Marx's analysis projected the increasing nature of exploitation and alienation of workers in an industrialized society to be changed only through revolution. In other words, revolution is brought about by the increased differentiation between the classes and homogeneity within the classes.

However, Marx's views have been widely criticized on the ground that his preoccupation with class, in terms of the relations of production, neglects other important social relationships.

Although his theory fits reasonably well the phenomenon of class relation in modern capitalist societies, it does not fit so well a number of other types of social stratification.

Marx predicted that the social gulf between the two principal classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat, would become wider, as a consequence of the increasing disparity between their life conditions, and elimination of the intermediate strata (middle class). The class-consciousness

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11. Marx, K. and Engles, F. *op.cit.*, p. 57.

among the proletariat would develop which would assume a revolutionary character. However, an objective sociological observation presents a different picture about the changes in the structure of modern societies. The vastly increased productivity in modern industries has improved the general level of living, even though there is disparity in the distribution of income among the classes. This has removed the revolutionary aims of the working force. Thus, the gulf between bourgeoisie and proletariat has not widened as presumed by Marx. Moreover, the growth of the new middle-class, for example, office workers, supervisors, managers, technicians, etc. manifests the greater complexity of social stratification in modern industrial societies. It introduces an important element of social stratification, that is, social prestige which is based upon occupation, consumption and style of life.<sup>12</sup>

Weber's view: Like Marx, Weber sees class in economic terms. He says: "We may speak of a 'class' when (1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the

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12. Bottomore, T.B., op.cit., p. 25.

possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labour markets."<sup>13</sup>

Thus, he argues that classes develop in market economies in which individuals compete for economic gain. "Those men whose fate is not determined by the chance of using goods or services for themselves on the market, e.g., slaves, are not, however, a 'class' in the technical sense of the term. They are, rather, a 'status group'."<sup>14</sup>

Weber has parted company with Marx on a number of important issues. Weber extended his analysis by maintaining that interest groups existed on bases other than property ownership. "Weber differentiates between inequalities deriving from class, status and power. In Weber's scheme, class and power appear to be generalized categories: the former arises from unequal life chances in a market situation and the latter from the nature of domination which is present in one form or another in all societies. Status, on the other hand, seems to be a kind of residual category."<sup>15</sup>

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13. Weber, Max, *Essays in Sociology*, translated by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1952, p. 181.

14. *Ibid*, p. 183.

15. Betteille, Andre, *The Decline of Social Inequality?* in Betteille Andre (ed.) *Social Inequality*. The Chancer Press Ltd., Bungay, Suffolk, 1976, p. 370.

Thus, Weber rejects the Marxian view that social status necessarily derives from economic status. "Whereas the genuine place of 'classes' is within the economic order, the place of 'status groups' is within the social order, that is, within the sphere of the distribution of 'honor'."<sup>16</sup> Those who share the same class situation will not necessarily belong to the same status group. Occupations, ethnic and religious groups and most importantly styles of life are accorded, differing degrees of prestige or esteem by members of society, for example, in the "caste" system, where status distinctions are guaranteed by rituals. In addition, the presence of different status groups which cut across class divisions can weaken class solidarity and reduce the potential class consciousness.

Weber also argues that social power does not necessarily derive from economic power. Within the spheres of economic order and social order, classes and status groups influence one-another and also influence the legal order toward the acquisition of social "power". In Weber's words, "Parties" are concerned with the acquisition of social "power". He says: "parties may represent interests determined through "class situation" or "status

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16. Weber, Max, op.cit., p. 194.

situation".... But they need be neither purely 'class' nor purely 'status' parties. In most cases they are partly class parties and partly status parties, but sometimes they are neither."<sup>17</sup>

Thus, instead of rejecting Marxian view, Weber supplements it. Weber's focus, however, was slightly different from that of Marx in that his interest was in uniqueness of capitalism rather than how far it typified the history of all societies. For Weber, industrial society was unique because it was characterized by substantive and functional rationality - by the growth of rationality as a thought system via the growth <sup>of</sup> science and the growth of rational organizational forms. Bureaucracy typified this latter emphasis on rational and routinized structures. Disenchantment and the loss of personal freedom were the consequences, Weber feared could result from the major structural and cultural trends of industrialization.

### Functional Approach

Functionalists assume that there are certain basic needs or functional prerequisites which must be met if society is to survive, and stratification is one of them. Thus, functionalists are primarily concerned with the

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17. Ibid.

function of social stratification, with its contribution to the maintenance and well-being of society.

Parsons writes: "Since the scale of stratification is a pattern characterized by moral authority which is integrated in terms of common moral sentiments, it is normally part of the institutional pattern of the social system."<sup>18</sup>

Parsons argument suggests that since stratification systems are basically an expression of shared values, they are inevitable, just and proper. He also holds that those with the power to organize and coordinate the activities will have a higher social status than those they direct.

However, the continued debate, within the boundaries of the structural-functional explanation of the nature of society, between Davis and Moore, and M.M. Tumin seems to be more useful for us.

Davis and Moore first put forward their theory of stratification, in which they argued that there is a 'universal necessity which calls for stratification in any social system.' On the one hand, they maintained, different positions have different degrees of functional

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18. Parsons, Talcott, *Essays in Sociological Theory*. Light and Life Publishers, New Delhi, 1975, p. 71.



importance for societal preservation or survival, on the other hand, the amount of talent and training available in the population is scarce. So the system attaches greater rewards to the functionally more important positions in order to ensure that the individuals with greatest talent and training occupy these positions.<sup>19</sup> David later on added that mobility of the more highly rewarded positions is prevented partially by status ascription through the family.

Tumin questioned the logical status of the notion of differential functional importance as being unmeasurable and intuitive. He also questioned the differential scarcity of personnel as an adequate determinant of stratification. He argued that in practice most stratification systems artificially restrict the development of whatever potential talent and skill may exist in the population.<sup>20</sup>

Davis replied, agreeing that stratification restricted talent and training, but maintaining that his modification (in 1948) of his theory had met this objection by explaining ascription in terms of the role of the family.<sup>21</sup>

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19. Davis, K. and Moore, W.E., in Bendix, R. and Lipset, S.M., op.cit., pp. 47-53.

20. Tumin, Melvin M., Some principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis, in Bendix and Lipset, op.cit., *Ibid*, pp. 53-58.

21. Davis, K., Reply to Tumin, in Bendix and Lipset, *Ibid* op.cit., pp. 59-62.

In a reply to Davis, Tumin further challenged the necessity of 'unequal rewards' by suggesting the feasibility of 'functional equivalents', for example, intrinsic job satisfaction and social service may be adequate motivations 'for seeking one's appropriate position and fulfilling it conscientiously.'<sup>22</sup>

However, even we observe that 'Davis Moore theory' is not devoid of certain shortcomings. The postulate of differential functional importance is a fallacy since there is no evidence that different positions make different degrees of contribution to societal preservation or survival. Also, the assumption that societies whose stratification systems approach a pure achievement order have greater survival or endurance than most ascriptive societies is probably false. Nevertheless, three remaining parts of the theory seems to be valid: (1) unequal rewards attached to different positions are a cause of the mobility of individuals into certain positions, (2) the existence and operation of the institution of the family is a cause of status ascription, and (3) differential scarcity of qualified personnel is a cause of 'stratification' (unequal rewards attached to different positions).

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22. Tumin, M.M., Reply to Kingsley Davis, in Bendix and Lipset, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

*Ibid*

Thus, we can conclude that strata in society or in industry do not exist 'out there' separately from actor's definition of the situation. The existence of stratification in a society ultimately rests on a majority of its members legitimizing the differences in authority attached to the various strata. In particular, the superordinate positions of the higher stratum (order-givers, managers, leaders) is not possible without the consent of a majority of the lower stratum (order-takers, the managed, the led).

R. Dahrendorf's View: Dahrendorf examines the changes that have come about in industrial societies since the time of Marx. He concludes that contrary to Marx's prediction, class differences have become less and not more conspicuous. He writes: "Marx was right in seeking the root of social change in capitalist society in the sphere of industrial production, but the direction these changes took turned out to be directly contrary to Marx's expectations."<sup>23</sup>

Contrary to Marx's opinion, he finds the manual working class becoming increasingly heterogenous. He sees this resulting from changes in technology arguing

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23. Dahrendorf, R. *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1972, p. 41.

that "increasingly complex machines require increasingly qualified designers, builders, maintenance and repair men and even minders."<sup>24</sup> Dahrendorf claims that the working class is now divided into three distinct levels - highly skilled, semiskilled and unskilled. These three groups differ not only in their levels of skill, but also in other attributes and determinants of social status. Highly skilled workmen increasingly merge with both engineers and white-collar employees. Thus, in place of a homogeneous proletariat 'we find a plurality of status and skill groups whose interests often diverge'. Demands of the skilled for security may injure the semiskilled; wage claims of the semi-skilled may raise objections by the skilled, and so on.

Dahrendorf claims that it has become doubtful whether speaking of the working class still makes much sense. He believes that during the twentieth century there has been a 'decomposition of labour', a disintegration of the manual working class. Moreover, he finds that along with the decomposition of both capital and labour, a new stratum has emerged both within and outside the industry, which is the "new middle class". Though it is

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24. Ibid, p. 49.

difficult to determine its upper and lower limits, he, however, finds that "in terms of prestige and income many salaried employees occupy a position somewhere between the very wealthy and the very poor, somewhere in the middle of the scale of social stratification."<sup>25</sup>

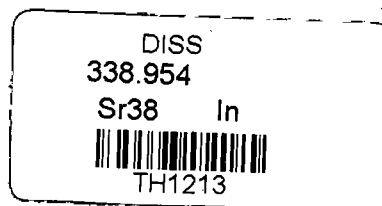
As against Marx, who holds that mobility was a symptom of short-lived transitional periods of history, Dahrendorf observes that it has become one of the crucial elements of the structure of industrial societies.

Thus, he writes that Marx's view of the increasing differentiation as well as homogeneity of classes was checked by the decomposition of labour and capital, the emergence of white-collar workers and bureaucrats, and the institutionalization of social mobility and neither of them has come true. Nevertheless, he concludes: "Insofar as the theory and practice of equality in post-capitalist societies are concerned, it seems certain that they have changed the issues and patterns of class conflict, and possible that they have rendered the concept of class inapplicable, but they have not removed all significant inequalities, and they have not therefore, eliminated the causes of social conflict."<sup>26</sup>

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25. Ibid, pp. 52-53.

26. Ibid, p. 64.



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Embourgeoisement: Marx predicted that intermediate strata would be depressed into the proletariat. Contrary to this view, a number of sociologists suggest that the general improvement in levels of living has led to the embourgeoisment of the working class as a whole, which <sup>is</sup> now adapting middle class standards and patterns of life. From the triangle or pyramid shape of the nineteenth century, with a large and relatively impoverished working class at the bottom and a small wealthy group at the top, it has been argued that with an increasing proportion of the population falling into the middle range, the stratification system has changed to a diamond or pentagon shape.

But the changes which have taken place are still open to various interpretations which are largely impressionistic. Goldthorpe and Lockwood<sup>27</sup> tested the embourgeoisement hypothesis under conditions favourable to its confirmation, but found it was not confirmed. They conclude that it is therefore unlikely that large numbers of manual workers are becoming middle-class. They observe that as a result of the studies of Luton in Britain '..... a picture has been built up - and it is one which would be

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27. See, Goldthorpe, J.H., Lockwood, D., et al. *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969.

generally accepted - of a system of stratification becoming increasingly fine in its gradations and at the same time somewhat less extreme and less rigid. Of late, however, still further economic progress has resulted in a new factor entering into the discussion - that of working class "affluence"..... It has been argued by a number of writers that the working class, or at least a more prosperous section of it, is losing its identity as a social stratum and is becoming merged into the middle class... This, one should note, is to claim a far more rapid and far-reaching change in class structure than any which could ensue from secular trends in occupational distribution, in the overall distribution of income and wealth or in rates of intergenerational social mobility."<sup>28</sup>

By separating out the economic, relational and normative changes in working-class life, they conclude that, despite the economic progress of the working class in relation to the middle class, the gulf between the two remains very wide. They maintain that there is little basis for the thesis of embourgeoisement in the sense of the large-scale assimilation of manual workers and their

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28. Goldthorpe, J.H. and Lockwood, D. 'Affluence and the British Class Structure', The Sociological Review, XI(2), July, 1963, p. 134.

families to middle-class life styles: status goals seem much less in evidence than economic goals.

### Social Stratification in Industrial Societies

The revolutions of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century brought about great changes in the social structures of the advanced industrial societies. Nevertheless, the division of society into classes or strata, which are ranged in a hierarchy of wealth, prestige and power remains a prominent and almost universal feature of different social structures.

In order to provide some comprehensive analyses, many sociological studies have attempted comparative studies of the changes in social stratification which have occurred in the two principal types of industrial society - capitalist and socialist. It is here that some of the most fundamental ideas regarding class and stratification are tested.

There are important differences between the two principal types of industrial societies, the Western capitalist societies and the Socialist Society of USSR and its closer satellites in the Eastern Europe. In the advanced capitalist societies, political power is significantly less concentrated and the economy is planned in a far less



centralized way. From this it results that in the West economic and specifically market forces act as the crucial stratifying agency within society. They are, in fact, the major source of social inequality. Consequently, the class situation of individuals and groups, understood in terms of their economic power and resources, tends to be the most important single determinant of their general life chances. This is why we can speak of Western industrial society as being 'class' stratified.

In the mid-nineteenth century England was generally regarded as showing most fully and clearly the typical class structure of the new capitalist society. However, there has been a gradual and limited movement towards 'classlessness', from changes in the relative earnings of different occupational groups and in rates of taxation, improvements in education and social services, increasing opportunities for individual social mobility, and the recent rapid growth in total national income. Social mobility has increased substantially in post-war Britain, due mainly to the vast new opportunities for upward movement provided by educational reforms. The findings of recent studies<sup>29</sup> may be summarized in the following way. Social

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29. See, Glass, V.D. (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954, and Lipset, S.M. and Bendix, R. *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1959.

mobility has generally increased with the economic development of the industrial societies. The increase has been due to changes in the occupational structure, that is, to the expansion of white-collar and professional occupations and the contraction of manual occupations.

A second important feature is that mostly social mobility takes place between social levels which are close together, for example, between the upper levels of the working class and the lower levels of the middle class. Movement from the working class into the upper class is very limited in any society, and notably so in Britain.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the strict boundaries of class may have become less rigid, primarily at the lower levels of the social hierarchy due to some expansion of opportunities, but there is no general sense of greater "classlessness". In Britain, all manner of ancient institutions and modes of behaviour..... frustrate mobility and buttress the public conception of a rigidly hierarchical society.<sup>31</sup>

The capitalist societies are also diverse in their class structure. For example, the USA differed most remarkably from the European societies in the nineteenth century.

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30. Miller, S.M. 'Comparative Social Mobility', Current Sociology, IX(1), 1960.

31. Bottomore, T.B., 'Classes in Modern Society', London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1975, p. 40.

In the USA, in contrast with the European countries, the ownership of property was quite widely diffused in the early part of the nineteenth century, and some 80 per cent of the working population (excluding the Negro slaves) owned the means of production with which they work. America was, predominantly, a society of small farmers, small traders, and small businessmen; the closest approach there has been to a 'property-owning democracy'.<sup>32</sup>

However, after 1880 and 1890, a period in which industry grew rapidly, class divisions began to appear more clearly, and to resemble more closely those in the European societies, and they were more openly asserted. Even in the first decade of the century, successful businessmen had not generally risen from the lower strata of society, but had come for the most part from old-established families in the business and professional strata.

In the present century, industrialization has tended to bring about greater equality of condition in the American society and has practically extinguished the tentative class-consciousness. But at the same time, several studies have indicated that the USA does not have a rate of mobility significantly higher than that of some other industrial societies.<sup>33</sup>

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32. Bottomore, T.B., *Ibid*, p. 41.

33. See, Lipset, S.M. and Bendix, R., *op.cit.*

Thus, the Western societies are still capitalist in the sense that their economic systems are dominated by privately owned industrial enterprises and that very pronounced social differences exist between the group of industrial property-owners and the group of wage-earners.

Soviet society, on the other hand, is claimed to be significantly different from the Western societies in terms of stratification. It is claimed that social classes, or at least the hierarchical class structure, have disappeared with the abolition of private ownership of the means of production; and that the construction of a classless, socialist society is under way. Soviet economy operates within a totalitarian political order and is, in principle at least, totally planned. Unlike capitalist societies, market forces cannot be held to play a comparable role in the stratification process in the USSR.

In spite of the absence of private property in production, Soviet society appears to be stratified on an often similar pattern to the capitalist societies of the West. For example, to a large degree, there is apparent similarity in the connections between occupational role, economic rewards and social prestige, in the part played by education in determining occupational level, in the operation of an

informal status system, and so on. The emergence of a "new ruling class" also reveals the same fact.

The increasing differentiation and social mobility in the Soviet society can be explained (as in some Western countries) by the demands of rapid industrialization in the 1930's. Industrial development created an array of new positions in the higher levels of social hierarchy, and while the employed population doubled between 1926 and 1937, the intelligentsia (officials, professional and scientific workers, managers, and clerical workers) increased nearly four times. The increase in certain occupations was even more spectacular, the number of engineers and architects increased nearly eight times, and the numbers of scientific workers nearly six times.<sup>34</sup> The process of expansion of white-collar occupation is still continuing.

However, the rate of expansion is likely to slow down as industrial maturity is reached. There would be a slackening of the trend towards greater inequality with the completion of the stage of rapid industrialization.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, social stratification in the advanced societies of the communist world - or at any rate in the USSR

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34. Bottomore, T.B., op.cit., p. 50.

35. Ibid, p. 48.

and its closer satellites - is not of the same generic type as in the West. The upper levels of Soviet society probably remains fairly open and accessible to talented individuals from the lower strata. Moreover, social status depends mainly upon occupation, that is, upon a definite contribution to the well being of society, which limits the social effects of economic differences. In the Western countries, on the other hand, the social distinctions, based upon property ownership and inheritance are more strongly felt, and are more divisive in their effects, than those which arise from differences in earned income. For this reason, one may conclude, Soviet society is not, in the same way as Western society, class stratified.

#### Impact of Industrialization on Social Stratification

Industrial development requires a variety of changes in the structure of economic activities and the norms governing them. Some of these changes are its pre-conditions, others are consequences.

In spite of their different origins, modern interpreters of industrial sociology, tend to be alike in stressing the standardizing effects upon social stratification of the exigencies of modern technology. Drawing heavily on earlier

anthropological works, Wilbert E. Moore, Bert F. Hoselitz, Clark Kerr, and others began conceptual analyses of the processes and problems of industrialization. Thus, Hoselitz suggests that industrialization follows a path along which developing societies gradually approximate the characteristics of advanced industrial societies. According to him, the allocation of new occupational roles may involve major cultural adjustments, and we may expect to find situations. "..... where people still highly value agriculture as a way of life and where many of the new industrial workers still resist full absorption into the industrial proletariat."<sup>36</sup> However, he suggests that once countries enter into the advanced stages of industrialization, they tend to become increasingly comparable in their major institutional arrangements. The "logic" of industrialization has therefore, been regarded as powerfully encouraging the emergence of a new type of society both from former 'class' and 'status' societies alike.<sup>37</sup>

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36. Hoselitz, Bert F. "The Market Matrix", in Wilbert E. Moore and Arnold S. Feldman (eds.) Labour Commitment and Social Change in Developing Areas, New York, Social Science Research Council, 1960, p.224.
37. Kerr, Clark, et al., Industrialism and Industrial Man. Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1973. pp. 270-275.

With this theoretical construct in the forefront, we will examine the effects of industrialization on social stratification under three main heads: differentiation, consistency and mobility.

Differentiation: In regard to differentiation, the major proposition that is put forward is that, in course of industrial advance, there is a decrease in the degree of differentiation, in all stratification systems. Due to industrialization a process of relative homogenization takes place, narrowing the gap between the top and the bottom.\*<sup>38</sup> A marked increase occurs in the proportion of the total population falling into the middle ranges of the distribution. Thus, the shape of the stratification hierarchy changes from 'pyramid-like' to 'diamond-like'.

Even Wilbert E. Moore holds that during early industrialization, few and sharp distinctions in social status emerge. As industrialization advances, the skills of manual workers becomes more differentiated due to the addition of more kinds of managers, technicians and professionals in the productive organization. These developments

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\* in income and wealth, in status and political power.

38. Ibid, pp. 279-305.



multiply the ranks based on position in the occupational structure. However, he appears to support the relative "homogenization" thesis by saying that "... these distinctions can not be meaningfully equated with 'class' - unless the 'class' system is to duplicate the number of distinct levels, if it does not, the dividing lines are likely to be arbitrary."<sup>39</sup>

Thus, due to the increased division of labour the middle of the stratification hierarchy becomes considerably expanded. An advancing technology increases the number of higher level occupational roles. These roles require relatively high standards of education and training, and commands relatively high economic rewards and social status. Education, in its turn, reduces the scarcity of skilled persons and this after some time reduces the wage and salary differentials they receive. People are pulled out of the least skilled occupations at a raised wage levels.<sup>40</sup>

Consistency: As society becomes increasingly industrial, there is a growing tendency, within the stratification system towards 'equalibration' or 'status consistency'.

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39. Hozelitz, Bert F. and Moore, W.E. Industrialization and Society, UNESCO, Mouton, 1963, p. 354.

40. Kerr, Clark et al., op.cit., p. 268.

Through status-consistency, the relative position of an individual or group in any one stratification order remains the same as his position in other orders.

In traditional societies, it is observed, status-inconsistencies in the stratification system are frequent because of the rigidity of the levels within the different subsystems and the relatively low degree of interaction between them. For example, the Indian Varna system, where status is ascribed. In industrial societies, by contrast, the occupational structure becomes the base of stratification order. The occupational role of the individual is in close correlation with most other of his attributes which are relevant to his position in the stratification hierarchy as a whole, such as, his economic situation, his educational level, his prestige in the local community and so on.

Thus, "an economic and social system under extreme centralized control is likely to provide greater status consistency in many contexts of life than is a system that permits a great deal of autonomy in organizations and in private lives."<sup>41</sup>

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41. Hoselitz and Moore, op.cit., p. 356.

Moreover, in the industrial society, the distribution of both economic rewards and prestige come into a close relationship with occupational performance, since in this type of society the emphasis is upon achievement, as opposed to ascription, as the basis of social position. Besides, occupational achievement becomes increasingly dependent upon education, and in this way closer ties are formed between economic standing on the one hand and lifestyle and other normative aspects on the other.

**Mobility:** From the above analysis of 'differentiation' and 'consistency', it follows that the overall rate of 'social mobility' tend to become increasingly high with growing industrialization. The increasing number of intermediate positions in the stratification hierarchy widens the opportunity for upward mobility.

The emphasis upon occupational achievement rather than on the ascriptions of social positions means that "in competition with others, the individual can move from one job to another with changes in his own ability or the abilities demanded by jobs."<sup>42</sup>

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42. Faunce, William A. (ed.) Readings in Industrial Sociology. Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1967, p. 85.

This increased mobility changes the status of the individual between the generations or within occupational career. "The changes that accompany industrialization make for a vastly increased mobility of the population - movement within a single career from job to job, company to company, neighbourhood to neighbourhood, community to community; movement between generations from father's occupation down, up or across to a new occupation."<sup>43</sup>

Moore and Hoselitz hold that "the principal cause of the breaking of large kinship organizations is the extensive mobility required by industrialization. This mobility is geographical, involving a concomitant physical separation of kinsmen. It is also social, thus involving the separation of kinsmen in social status and styles of life". They further write: "Perhaps even more damaging to the notions of lineage is the expectation of inter-generational mobility - hereditary, ascribed social status is widely superseded by status - assignment made on the basis of individual qualities and achievements."<sup>44</sup>

Thus, it is believed that in industrial societies the crucial factor is the occupational distribution and

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43. Ibid.

44. Hoselitz and Moore, op.cit., p. 338.

that from one such society to another social mobility will tend to be much the similar. Lipset and Zetterberg are of the opinion that Western industrial societies have broadly similar rates of intergenerational mobility, and that factors other than the "standardizing" one of the occupational structure were of major significance.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the high level of mobility is taken as an inevitable consequence of the technologically and economically determined division of labour and of the necessary pressure within a highly dynamic form of society for the increasingly efficient use of talent.

The above discussion leads us to assume that industrialization has pervasive effects on the stratification system in any society. However, this assumption of unmitigated change as a consequence of industrialization will be tested in the chapters to follow.

#### Social Stratification as a Factor Affecting Industrialization

Industrialization affects social stratification so as to bring changes that does not elude one's observation. However, even the industrial structure and behaviour in their turn, are greatly influenced by the society which they serve and draw their resources from.

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45. Lipset, S.M. and Zetterberg, H.L. The Theory of Social Mobility, in Bendix R. and Lipset, S.M.(eds.) Class, Status and Power, Routledge and Kegan Pvt. Ltd., London, 1974, pp. 561-573.

Industrial enterprises, collectively and individually have a system of stratification that has internal and external aspects. Internally, the division of various types of workers and managers into strata may be held to be functional or dysfunctional for the enterprise or the industrial system as a whole. Externally, it is possible to trace the ways in which status stratification in the society influences the status privileges that are accorded to certain individuals in their occupational roles. These two aspects are analytically distinct, but in practice merge; as Bergel puts it, every stratification system finally correlates status and occupation.<sup>46</sup>

Just as there are social classes or status groups in society at large, so within industrial enterprises there are hierarchical levels of authority to which varying degrees of status are attached - with the chief executive at the top and the ordinary workers at the bottom. What are the reasons for the existence of a stratification system in industry? Defenders of the status system (i.e., functionalists) in industry stress the need to recruit managers and technical experts by offering 'appropriate' rewards, including those of high status. Critics of

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46. Bergel, E.E. Social Stratification, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1962, p. 330.

status consciousness in industry (i.e., Marxists) point to its divisive consequences, such as failure of communication between strata and (in class terms) the attitudes associated with the recognition of 'two sides of industry', i.e., 'oppressor' and 'oppressed'.

There is ample evidence of the concern with status in industry on the part of both management and workers. Many managers expect their hours of work and privileges associated with their employment to be sharply distinguished from those of lower grades. A process of social differentiation is often active within a management structure as well as between managers and other employees. Clements, for example, found that senior management positions tended to be filled by men who were of higher social origin and who were even trained for senior management posts at an earlier point in their careers.<sup>47</sup>

Workers show concern for status in different ways. Those who are moved to another job at the same pay but with lower informal status often become deeply resentful.<sup>48</sup> Differences in wage rates between various jobs are also

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47. Clements, R.V., *Managers: A Study of Their Careers in Industry*. Allen and Unwin, 1958, p. 95.
48. Brown, J.A.C. *The Social Psychology of Industry*, Penguin, 1954, p. 140.

important in establishing status. Workers are often seen more concerned with how their wages compare with others than with absolute amount. The difference between semi-skilled and skilled workers, having staff status, can be a source of discontent.

To what extent can status position in the workplace be kept separate from status position outside the workplace? It seems clear that some separation between the two statuses is possible for many workers. The principal factors in this process are the tendency for people no longer to carry the 'marks' of their occupation with them into non-work life, and the comparative rarity of having work as a central life-interest. Separation between status at work and in the community is, however, more possible in urban than rural areas where status is ascribed.

The consumption standards of the working class have become more like those of at least some sections of the middle class cannot be denied, although social strata within industry and the authority relationships on which these are based have remained broadly unchanged. As Goldthorpe and his colleagues remark, '.... despite his affluence, the worker's experience of the social divisions of the workplace, of the power and remoteness of management, and



of his own inconsiderable chances of ever being anything but a manual wage-earner all generally dispose him to think himself as a member of the class of 'ordinary workers', and to seek collective rather than individualistic solutions to his problems.<sup>49</sup>

#### An Approach For India

The above analysis indicates that industrialization as a process tends to bring about a greater equality in any given society. The development of industry breaks down any rigid and exclusive differences of rank, by creating unprecedented opportunities for social mobility, by extending and improving education to meet the new scientific and technological needs, and by raising the general level of living, thus reducing the harshness of the contrast between the conditions of the upper and lower strata of society.

The study of this relationship between industrialization and social stratification is of great significance in developing societies, where a large proportion of the world's population continues to live by agriculture. Agrarian modes of production are associated with patterns of stratification which are rather different from those associated with industrial organization. Moreover,

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49. Goldthorpe, J.H. et al. op.cit., p. 78.

colonial rule created new patterns of stratification in many parts of what has now come to be known as the Third World. It introduced new modes of production and also new conceptions of equality. Some of these have been carried over into the post-colonial phase where the challenges of development and modernization are giving a new character to the entire problem of social stratification. Thus, throughout the history, one finds an element of a colonial or new neo-colonial relationship between the metropolis and its colonies or neo-colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

At this juncture, it becomes difficult to see how one can formulate any general and comprehensive propositions concerning stratification change as part of *the* "logic" of industrial development. The indicators of change formulated in one particular social context, cannot automatically attain a universal validity. The indicators will have to be formulated with specific reference to the place, the time, and the object of change.

or (As for India, "the current course of industrial and rural development, and urbanization and spread of education, has certainly initiated a chain reaction in the society with reference to the newly emerged behaviour

patterns. The chain, however, does not invariably follow the expected course or culminate in the anticipated target of social change. For example, it has not destroyed the joint family or the caste system, which industrialization and urbanization, in particular, were supposed to do."<sup>50</sup> Moreover, an extraordinarily intricate and inflexible traditional form of stratification successfully resists any radical changes, and if we look into the social history of India we find that it is characterized by an assortment of different behaviour patterns, by their accumulation, adjustment and compromise, and not always by their successive replacement.

In the present analysis, we will, therefore, try to explore as to how far the sequential model of social change of industrial societies, is adequate to study the relationship between industrialization and social stratification in India, in a contemporary perspective.)

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50. Mukherjee, Ramkrishna, "Study of Social Change and Social Development in the Developing Societies", E.P.W., Vol. V, Nos. 29-31, Special Number, 1970, p. 1160.

## CHAPTER II

## INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA

We live in a caste-based society which is among the most rigidly hierarchical in the world. "The individual is born into a particular stratum, and in most cases, remains a member of it for the rest of his life. In some cases he might move from one stratum to another, either upwards or downwards, but this in itself would not change the nature of the strata themselves or their mutual positions. Much of what the individual does in life and indeed a great deal of what he can do will depend on the stratum or hierarchical level to which he belongs".<sup>1</sup>

However, this system has not remained immutable. The last few decades have witnessed many changes in the patterns of traditional hierarchy. These changes have been closely attributed to the introduction of the new technological order and its social structural concomitants.

In this chapter, we propose to concentrate on two issues: the impact of industrialization on the system of social stratification and the impact of social stratification on the process of industrialization. We will also

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1. Beteille, Andre *Inequality and Social Change*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1972, p. 3.

try to look into how Indians are changing their cultural tradition as they incorporate modern industry and how they are changing modern industry in order to maintain their tradition. These aspects will be examined in the light of different theoretical constructs relevant to our discussion.

This aspect will be preceded by an overview of India's industrialization and the Indian system of stratification. We will confine ourselves to the caste dimension of social stratification which is neither fundamentally economic nor political.

### INDUSTRIALIZATION IN INDIA

"Industrialization does not proceed in the same fashion in every society. Its basic functions in all societies may remain the same but its forms undergo variations owing to the historicity of circumstances and the pre-existing structural characteristics from which industrialization has to proceed."<sup>2</sup>

These observations are relevant to Indian society as well. Though modern technology entered in the middle of the nineteenth century, India still remains largely a peasant society. No doubt, industrialization has been

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2. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Thomson Press (India) Ltd., Faridabad, 1977, p.154.

moving ahead but at a slow pace. Among a host of reasons responsible for its retarded growth are "apparently the Indian social organization, the long sway of Britain, and the gradually evolving demographic situation."<sup>3</sup>

### INDUSTRIALIZATION DURING COLONIAL PERIOD

Like a number of colonial countries India too was kept underdeveloped by British Imperialism. Her industrial development was predominantly regulated to suit the needs of British capitalism. The British rulers ruralized India and kept her predominantly as a raw material producing appendage of British Imperialism. The artisans and craftsman suffered great setbacks. They were reduced to the small peasants and agricultural labourers. The colonial economy remained multisectoral in which modern industry was only loosely connected to other major economic structures. Heavy industries were not permitted to grow. Even only those light industries were allowed to develop which had no potentialities to compete with similar home industries and were able to provide better and more profitable opportunities for the investment of British capital. Shirokov rightly observes that the characteristic feature of the economic structure of colonial India was in fact the overwhelming predominance

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3. Davis, Kingsley, <sup>The</sup> Population of India and Pakistan, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1951, p. 213.

of a backward agriculture over an insufficiently and narrowly developed industry and the dependence of the reproduction of fixed as well as working capital on the foreign market.<sup>4</sup>

As a result, in 1951 only 9.6 per cent of the gainfully employed population were engaged in industry. The organized mining and manufacturing industries accounted for 41.2 per cent of the national income produced by all industries and 25.9 per cent of all those engaged in industry. On the other hand, the share of the lower forms was 58.8 per cent and 74.1 per cent respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, during the colonial regime industrial revolution, which involved the transition from manual to machine production, was even in industry itself incomplete. Desai observes: "under the British rule, a hybrid national economy developed in India composed of two inharmoniously interconnected sectors, viz., a sector organized for market and an inherited sector which predominantly survived and functioned for subsistence."<sup>6</sup>

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4. Shirokov, G.K., Industrialization of India, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1980, p. 14.

5. Ibid., p. 15.

6. Desai, A.R., Sociological Problems of Economic Development, in Desai, A.R. (ed.) Rural Sociology India, Popular Prakashan Private Limited, Bombay, 1978, p. 118.

The economic environment had far reaching social consequences. The traditionally self-sufficient community based on the equilibrium of agriculture and artisan industry was disorganized. The then existing village panchayat, caste, joint family institution, customs and the outlooks were badly undermined. However, they were not replaced by a new social relationships corresponding to the new type of economy. In the absence of these, the new legal system resulted in a total chaos in social relations. The old principle of coordination and cooperation, based on hierarchy, inequality and authority, in the pre-British community, was replaced by the principle of competition. The restricted and uneven economic development further prevented the emergence of a new form of social solidarity and modern outlook.

#### INDUSTRIALIZATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

However, the Independence of India was followed by rapid strides in industrialization. Efforts were made to accelerate industrial development with an objective to obtain self-reliance and 'a socialist pattern of society', based on mixed economy. "Industrialization and establishment of the complex of heavy industries were viewed as a principal method of raising labour productivity, increasing national income and the accumulation of fund, speeding



up economic development and overcoming backwardness."<sup>7</sup>

The Indian Government after Independence, undertook a number of measures to establish heavy industries, to encourage public sector, to regulate private sector and to protect the interests of industrial workers. These measures were expected to bring industrial revolution in the country by transforming a predominantly agricultural economy into an industrial economy. True to the expectations, these measures brought about a sudden spurt in industrial growth during the period 1951-1965. But as it is evident from the data given below, the year 1965 marks the cut off point. The picture has changed thereafter, with slow and uneven growth rate. This is primarily because of a shift in the approach towards industrialization. Instead of building a strong industrial base investments for short-term quick profits were preferred. This degenerated the potential for growth.

ANNUAL GROWTH RATE (Compound) IN THE INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

	1947 to 1951	1951 to 1955	1955 to 1960	1960 to 1965	1965 to 1970	1970 to 1977	1965 to 1976
General Index	4.8	5.7	7.2	9.0	3.3	4.7	4.1

Source: S.L. Shetty "Structural Retrogression in the Indian Economy since the Mid-Sixty", E.P.W., Annual Number, 1978, p. 186

7. Ibid., p. 303.

Shetty,<sup>8</sup> examining the detailed implications of structural retrogression on industrialization, finds that small factories both in term of size of labour force and the gross value of plant and machinery accounted for much of the growth that occurred in the manufacturing industries. The noncorporate sector consisting of factories owned under partnerships and proprietorships registered a remarkable increase. On the other hand, the corporate sector's share in the total number of factories declined. Its share in the total number of employees in the factory sector and their emoluments registered a sharp fall.<sup>9</sup> Within the corporate sector, the public sector has not been able to attain a dominant position in the industrial sector despite heavy investment.

Shetty also highlights the process of polarization that has accompanied recent industrialization. There is a growing trend towards exploitation of workers due to the fact that increase in labour productivity has not resulted in a corresponding increase in wage cost. There is also declining trend towards the proportion of workers in the

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8 Shetty, S.L., "Industrial Growth and Structure as seen through Annual Survey of Industries." E.P.W., October 2, 1982 and October 7, 1982, pp. 1610-1618 and 1661-1668.

9. Ibid, p. 1612.

category of employees. All these clearly demonstrate that we are witnessing in India the phenomenon of an aborted industrial revolution.<sup>10</sup>

The Indian industrial world can be broadly categorized into "organized" and "unorganized" sectors. In the organized sector, the industries are led by a number of large scale public sector and private sector plants. In the public sector organizations like HMT, BHEL, etc. are huge enterprises with formal organizational structures. They employ thousands of skilled and unskilled workers along with sophisticated and modern machinery. They provide 'ideal' working and living conditions and job security for their permanent employees.

The private sector corporations, led by a handful of big industrial houses also present the same picture. They have their own marketing agencies and prefer to enter into collaborations with foreign firms.

These public sector and private sector corporations look like, what Panini calls, 'citadels' when they are contrasted against the surrounding industrial scene.<sup>11</sup>

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10. Panini, M.N., "Industrialization and Social Stratification in India", Paper presented to the workshop of Social Stratification in India. Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, J.N.U., New Delhi, March 8-9, 1983, p. 8. (unpublished)
11. Ibid, p. 9.

The public sector corporation (citadels), in order to promote the development of small scale industries and to increase employment, buy certain specified components from the small scale industrial units. These units are also sponsored by the public sector for various types of government assistance from time to time. These small industrial units, in their turn, sometimes subcontract jobs to other small scale, and household industries. These small workshops may not even be registered as industrial units. The proprietors are skilled craftsmen employing one or two simple machines and a handful of workers. They may not even possess the working capital and accept the subcontracting work only when the raw material is also supplied.

The private sector enterprises also help extensively to the subcontracting business to flourish. By doing so, they are able to avoid the labour laws and ensure adequate supply of quality components. Since there are provision for several concessions for small scale units, the big industrialists encourage reliable workers to open small workshops by providing them necessary finance and contracts. This, coupled with a link with the bureaucracy, enables the private sector to create a parallel economy.

The disintegrated organization of industries leads to the fragmentation of the labour market as well. As Lalit Chakravarty characterized it, the labour market continues to be vertically and horizontally fragmented.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, unlike the industrial revolution in the west, the economy is not getting progressively 'organized'. There still exists an interlink between the hierarchy of 'organized' and 'unorganized' sectors. Even in the post-Independence phase the industrialization has not been able to effectively integrate the multisectoral industrial world. Contrary to this, state intervention through various 'controls' and 'progressive' laws has divided markets and *enclaves within the industrial world. Instead of decline* has created numerous *in its size*, the unorganized sector is growing and getting diversified with the growth of the organized sector.<sup>13</sup>

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12. Chakravarti, L., "Emergence of an Industrial Labour force in a Dual Economy - British India, 1880-1920", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. XV, No. 3, pp. 249-327.

13. Panini, M., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

## SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA

### I

Each society has its characteristic pattern of stratification. The stratification system in India is recognized as static, acquired status ridden, tradition bound, and primary group oriented. It is based, largely on a very peculiar type of social grouping which is termed as "caste grouping". Though "caste like" phenomena exist in other societies as well, it is found in its most rigid form in Indian society. "It has fixed the psychology of the various social groups and has evolved such minutely graded levels of social distance and superior-inferior relationships that the social structure looks like a gigantic hierarchy pyramid with a mass of untouchables as its base and a small stratum of elite, the Brahmins, almost equally unapproachable, at its apex."<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the system of caste rests upon the unequal distribution of power between status groups occupying different position in the prestige hierarchy. It largely determines the function, the status, the available opportunities as well as the handicaps for an individual. The treatment of caste, then becomes unavoidable as a standard

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14. Desai, A.R. (ed.), *Rural Sociology in India*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, Chapter IX, p. 39.

to measure changes with reference to other principles of stratification such as of wealth (class) and power (elite). It becomes clear when we take a broader view of the system of association between caste on the one hand and ownership, control and use of land, on the other. Traditionally the larger landowners were from the upper castes; members of the lower caste were generally landless labourers; and in between were the middle level "peasant" or "cultivating" castes.<sup>15</sup>

The relationship between caste and the agrarian hierarchy can be studied at two levels. It constitutes both a system as well as structural unit of social stratification. Beteille says - "It is both a form of social organization and a system of values. As a system of relations it is marked by a division of society into groups which are ranked in an elaborate hierarchy. As a system of values it is characterized by the legitimacy it accords to social inequality and the importance it assigns to the ideas of purity and pollution."<sup>16</sup>

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15. Beteille, Andre, *Inequality and Social Change*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1980, p. 23.

16. Beteille, Andre (ed.), *Social Inequality*, Richard Clay (The Chancer Press), Bury, Suffolk, 1969, p. 263.

We can define caste, as an institutionalized system of interaction among hierarchically ranked hereditary groups for marriage, occupation, economic division of labour, enforcement of cultural norms and values by caste bodies and performance of ritual, based on principles of purity and pollution.

Thus, the bases of caste stratification are the institutionalized inequality, closure of social system in respect of social mobility, an elementary level of division of labour legitimised on ritual basis of reciprocity, and emphasis on quality (ritual purity) rather than performance. This institutionalized inequality and its cultural and economic coordinates are indeed the factors which render caste in India as a unique system of social stratification.<sup>17</sup>

Theoretically, caste system in India is rooted in the Varna system: a four-fold division of castes, the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The Varna model of caste system is macro-structural in nature. The principle of "status summation" that a caste being high or low on one scale of ranking say, economic would also be high or low on political, social and ritual scales of the status system, is giving way in contemporary Indian social system. At

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17. Singh, Yogendra, Social Stratification and Change in India. Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 6-9.



the existential level there does not exist a single Varna with an all India structural network of kinship, occupational specialization and continuity of social interaction.<sup>18</sup> Castes are divided into numerous regional endogamous groups and new forces have set in the conditions for the processes of social mobility and change to take place in the system of caste stratification.

## II

After having made a distinction between the theoretical formulation of caste and its existential processes, it is worth considering the structural properties of caste. To what extent do the new forces, operating from outside the caste system such as democratization, land reforms and other <sup>legislations</sup> stratification and create cleavages in the summation of social statuses based on ritual prestige, economic rank and political power? To what degree do the castes undergo the processes of new structural differentiation through fusion and fission of forms?<sup>19</sup>

Different hypotheses have been put forward in this regard.<sup>20</sup> Based on the dialectical materialistic scheme, the 'mode of production' hypothesis is apprehensive of the

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18. Singh, Yogendra, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Thomson Press (India), Ltd., Faridabad, 1977, p. 161.
19. Singh, Yogendra, *Social Stratification and Change in India*, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 9-10.
20. *Ibid*, pp. 17-21.

transformation of caste into class under the impact of industrialization. This hypothesis views the system of caste as the social manifestation of forces of modes of production and ownership of property in India based on the agrarian feudal complex. Desai holds that caste ranking basically inheres an underdeveloped but potentially explosive class character.<sup>21</sup>

Subscribing to this hypothesis, the non-marxist sociologist, Kingsley Davis is of the opinion that if industrialization proceeds rapidly in the nation, the caste system will essentially disappear by the end of this century. He says: "the forces now opposing caste are more numerous and definite than those favouring it. This conclusion can be reached in another way, namely, in the actual evidences of the decline of caste. For<sup>e</sup>most among such evidences are: (1) noticeable loosening of the restrictions on interdining; (2) widespread violation of taboos; (3) slight tendency to ignore intermarriage barrier; (4) pronounced growth of social mobility; and (5) gradual removal of untouchability."<sup>22</sup>

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21. Ibid, p. 18.

22. Davis, Kingsley, *The Population of India and Pakistan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1951, pp. 175-176.

However, the two systems of caste and class are not polar opposites. To consider caste system as 'static' and therefore to think class as a dynamic system is not correct. K.L. Sharma writes: "The attributional approach to class does not provide full understanding of class relations because class is not quite separable from caste, and caste is more of an "interactional" system of relations rather than "ordering" of people in just higher, middle and lower ranks.... class in India is not just a system of economic relations, and caste is not just a system of ritual and religious activities. Classes are ingrained in the caste system, hence class system has a culture of its own, and caste system has an economics of its own."<sup>23</sup>)

Following the structural-functional orientation, the second hypothesis, 'the caste resilience and adaptation hypothesis' is based on the argument that caste system has undergone some transformation but without much alteration. "The forces of industrialization, Westernization, growth of technology and other democratic institutional spreads tends to enlarge the process of caste functions and contribute to its organizational mobilization, rationalisation

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23. Sharma, K.L., *Essays on Social Stratification*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur, 1980, pp. 21-22.

and fusion of caste ranks."<sup>24</sup>

Supporting the thesis of continued caste resilience, M.N. Srinivas says that whereas caste mobility in medieval India was based on fission, in modern India it takes the form of fusion of caste segments.<sup>25</sup>

Andre Beteille uses Max Weber's term of status group to characterise caste and finds evidence of "the emergence of new caste like structural forms which are both "elaborate" and rigid in structure; these 'new castes' as Beteille describes them are discernible in the crystallization of professional and occupational groups. These maintain exclusiveness of life-style and social interaction similar to status groups. Logically, these new status groups may continue despite industrialization and increased political participation. Beteille writes: "Many changes are taking place in the productive organization as well as in the political system. These changes are not likely to lead to a disappearance of status groups which in any case have to be differentiated from classes.... In India the status groups of the future will no doubt carry the marks of the caste system..."<sup>26</sup>

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24. Singh, Yogendra, 1980, op.cit., p. 19.

25. Ibid.

26. Quoted from Y. Singh, Ibid.

However, some sociologists, like E.R. Leach, F.G. Bailey, Yogendra Singh and Rajni Kothari, emphasise that through new structural adaptation such as formation of caste associations, caste federations and clusters, castes lose their original character and assume class - like forms.<sup>27</sup>

IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALIZATION ON STRATIFICATION SYSTEM  
IN INDIA

It has been argued on the basis of western experience that industrialization means a breakdown of traditional social institutions and values. Gould says: "As is well known, industrialization involves the altering of fundamental relationships among men in many spheres of social life so that, if carried to its ultimate conclusions, it means the achievement of a new form of human society."<sup>28</sup>

Modern industrialization is characterized by the factory system involving not just a division of labour but also the use of machines which would progressively appropriate the worker's skill. The process which involves not just a new way of organising work and workers but also a new kind of relationship between the man and the machine is therefore considered to possess a revolutionary potential.

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27. Ibid, p. 20

28. Gould, H.A., Lucknow Rickshawallas: The Social Organization of an Occupational Category in Rao, M.S.A. (ed.), Urban Sociology in India, Orient Longman Ltd., New Delhi, 1974, pp. 291-292.

The pattern of industrialization in the West supports a body of sociological theory which views the long sweep of social evolution as a transformation from one ideal type - "folk" society, *Gemeinschaft* - to another ideal type - urban society, *Gesellschaft*. Lambert writes: "It is assumed that the introduction of the factory system has certain institutional imperatives that flow from this form of work organization imperatives which are instrumental in moving a society from one end of the polarity to another, from a static, acquired status ridden, tradition bound, primary-group oriented, particularistic, fatalistic society into one that is rapidly changing, achieved status, dominated; progressive, universalistic and aspiring. In fact, the factory is presumed to embody the latter set of characteristics and thus, by its example, to upset the stable, traditional structure."<sup>29</sup>

Most observers of Indian society would accept that it has undergone one general sort of change over the past century or two. From a social order which placed closed corporate caste groups in a hierarchy - an order found in village-India has been moving towards a more open society,

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29. Lambert, R.D., *Workers, Factories and Social Change in India*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 17.

less dependent upon the ideology of hierarchy - found primarily in urban areas. Thus, it is assumed that as industrialization grows in a society like India, the traditional institution and value patterns will change in the direction of the Western models of social life and thought. Here, Western society and industrial society are taken as interchangeable labels.

If we proceed with the aforesaid assumptions, we are beset with following questions: Is the caste system breaking up or taking a new form? Is the principle of hierarchy, considered pivotal to this system of stratification, giving way to new principles of stratification?

One explanation for this <sup>is</sup> that industrialization would break down the barriers of caste in India. If it has not so far achieved, it is due to the fact that under the colonial rule India could experience only a partial industrialization. Another explanation offered in this direction, is that the limited industrialization in the colonial period, followed by the attempts to accelerate the process after independence has already divided the society into classes. The caste system has only succeeded in effectively veiling this transformation.

Due to the growing impact of industrialization, caste associations, federations, and clusters have increasingly

been formed, and these compete as corporate groups for access to political power, economic and cultural resources and opportunities. This has enhanced the competitive interaction of castes with other castes on a scale which never existed in traditional Indian society. Moreover, in the Metropolitan settings the principle of "Corporate ranking"\* does not operate. The exclusiveness of the traditional principle of social status determination has been broken up. Industry proves to be a ritually ambiguous sphere in which the status hierarchy is defined by "secular" criteria rather than by the criteria of the traditional ritual and caste structure.

Thus, the principle of "status summation" is also giving way. The clustering of castes and communities in different occupations is more and more determined by educational and skill qualifications and genetic status factors rather than by caste and community. Very few jobs in the factory are considered to be the exclusive monopoly of any

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\* In Corporate ranking, status is attributed to the entire group and even if individuals or families in that group are able to acquire status enhancing attributes, the status of the group as a whole is not changed. The status is collectively defined as on cultural criteria. In the rural caste system principles of purity and pollution, hereditary occupation and kinship relations which are more binding factors in social interaction, render the ranking system corporate.



particular caste.<sup>30</sup> Departure from traditional caste and Varna occupations are far more numerous and significant. In Madras city, Brahmans outnumbered Cettiarys and other castes and communities as industrial leaders. Former untouchables are found throughout the spectrum of industrial employments as machinists and mechanics and in highly skilled types of jobs.<sup>31</sup>

The fear of ritual pollution from inter-caste contact is not a major problem in industrial set-up. The intercaste work teams, intercaste dining in factory canteens and the use of common washing and medical facilities are all now standard practices. Thus, "... in the public matters of work, the modern occupations have opened up to all castes, not only in law as applies to all India, but also in practise."<sup>32</sup>

A. Neihoff, in his study<sup>33</sup> shows the trend of migration among the industrial workers in Kanpur. He observes

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30. Singer, Milton, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* Praeger Publishers, New York, 1972, pp. 313-315.

31. *Ibid*, p. 346.

32. Saberwal, Satish, *Mobile Men: Limits to Social Change in Urban Punjab*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1976, p. 225.

33. Neihoff, A., *Factory Workers in India*. Publication in *Anthropology*, Public Museum Milwaukee, 1959.

that together with the lower-caste people who leave rural areas to seek menial jobs in the city, the higher caste people are also migrating to the industrial areas. This change in the migration pattern is probably more a matter of choice than necessity by the high caste men, since those who bear the brunt of economic privation during hard years in the villages are the low caste people. This change in part represents a new attitude towards the work by the high caste people.<sup>34</sup> He finds a new pattern of mobility among the higher caste Hindus and their willingness to labour in industries at occupations which traditional caste values prohibits for the Twice Born.

Victor S. D'Souza, evaluating the importance of the caste system in the urban social structure of Chandigarh, finds out that both among the Hindus and Sikhs, the educational hierarchy is not in correspondence with the caste hierarchy. While, the Brahmins, who hold the top position in the caste hierarchy occupy only the fourth position in educational hierarchy, the trading castes (Vashyas) are on the top.<sup>35</sup> Assuming that the social class position of a

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34. Ibid, p. 34.

35. D'Souza, V.S., Caste, Occupation and Social Class in Chandigarh in Rao, M.S.A. (ed.) Urban Sociology in India, Orient Longman Ltd., New Delhi, 1974, pp. 280-281.

person is indicted by his occupational status, we find a positive correlation between education and family income on the one hand and occupational status on the other.<sup>36</sup> Thus, occupational structure is not consistent with the operational caste hierarchy.

Since the principle of 'status summation' and the congruence of ritual status, economic status and power status as in the traditional caste stratification is withering away under the impact of industrialization, social mobility as a process has become more active in recent times.

In the traditional system of stratification, vertical mobility for the untouchable was difficult. Bailey points out that neither improved economic status nor Sanskritization has helped the untouchables to cross the barrier of untouchability in the village.<sup>37</sup> However, Patwardhan<sup>38</sup> feels that due to industrialization and other socio-economic factors, Indian society is no longer a

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36. Ibid, p. 288.

37. Bailey, F.G., Caste and Economic Frontier: A Village in Highland Orissa, English Language Book Society, London, 1972, p. 227.

38. Patwardhan, S., Aspects of Social Mobility Among Scheduled Caste in Poona. In Rao, M.S.A. (ed.) op. cit., p. 335.

closed system, where ascriptive status determines predominantly the range and nature, as well as the extent of mobility. He finds that the Chambhars in Maharashtra have lost the stigma of untouchability and are becoming part of the wider Hindu society.

✓ These new changes are so fundamental that it is often debated if the new forms of castes are indeed a manifestation of caste or class properties. Desai writes: "The transformation of self-contained rigid castes into modern mobile classes has taken place in a peculiar manner. Certain castes have been monopolising the position of the privileged upper classes of modern society. Certain castes have been losing previous status and functions and slowly submerging into the lowest class groups of modern industry."<sup>39</sup>

Even Victor D'Souza is of the opinion that "if social class is defined as a category of people having more or less similar prestige and not a group with clearly circumscribed limits, the division of the community in Chandigarh could be said to have a class like formation."<sup>40</sup> In this study, he has divided the population of Chandigarh in four social classes, namely, upper class, middle class, working

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39. Desai, A.R. (ed.), op.cit., p. 38

40. D'Souza, V.S., op. cit., p. 285.

class, and lower class. Here, the distinction between 'caste' and 'class' is based on the concepts of 'rigidity' and 'fluidity'. Thus, it inheres the distinctions between "cumulative inequality" said to be the characteristic of caste and "dispersed inequality" treated as a characteristic of the class system.

However, this 'breakdown' hypothesis is quite misleading. As K.L. Sharma also says: "Caste and class relations cannot be understood by the application of the rigidity-fluidity dimensions of the caste system. The view that change is taking place from caste to class, hierarchy to stratification, closed to open, organic to segmentary system of stratificational relations is not correct."<sup>41</sup>

Yogendra Singh observes that there is confusion among the sociologists over the tradition-modernity dichotomy. It has led to the contention that mobility was completely absent in the traditional Indian social system. The reasons for this misconception are: "first, their view is based upon classical literature and its ideology which overemphasise the element of continuity and secondly, for the Western scholars the most striking feature in Indian system has been the contrast it offered to their own society."<sup>42</sup>

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41. Sharma, K.L., op.cit., p. 15.

42. Singh, Y. op. cit., p. 116.

Srinivas corrects this confused perspective saying that while traditional, that is pre-British, Indian society, was stationary in Character, it did not preclude the mobility upward as well as downward, of individual caste in the local hierarchy.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, we find that in a number of ways the actual situation in India appears to differ from the results to be expected according to the accepted path of industrialism and its related phenomena. Yogendra Singh refers to a "prismatic model" of change where traditional segments of caste and kinship undergo adaptive transformation without completely being "diffracted" into classes or corporate groups. The class segments operate within the frame of caste categories with a new sense of identity, and they also violate caste norms, thereby pointing out contradictions.<sup>44</sup>

At this juncture, it becomes inevitable to present few studies on the impact of industrialization on the traditional Indian stratification system.

Formulating his conceptual scheme in the study of five factories in Poona, Lambert writes: "Throughout this

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43. Srinivas, M.N., "Mobility in the Caste System", in Milton Singer and Bernard Cohn (eds.), Structure and Change in Indian Society, Aldine Publishing Co., Chicago, 1968, p. 169.

44. Quoted from Sharma, K.L., op. cit., pp. 15-16.

literature, however, a relatively simple polarity occurs - a set of ideal types whose component parts appear again and again in discussion about changes from peasant to industrialized societies. For our purpose, we will select five changes which are presumed to accompany that process of social change called modernization: status is superseded by contract as the predominant basis of interpersonal economic relations; primary group organized production processes are supplanted by a more complex division of labour, finer job specification, and the interdependence of separate economic role, ascribed status gives way to achieved status as the legitimizer of social gradations; status immobility surrenders to rapid vertical and horizontal mobility; and belief in the durability, inevitability, and propriety of one's status is replaced by aspiration for improving one's lot.<sup>45</sup>

Substantively, however, Lambert's findings do not confirm many assumptions with which he started. A more important one was that in the process of industrialization traditional structures must give way to new forms. The traditional structures like caste and family, he finds, have undergone only adaptive changes under the impact of

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45. Lambert, Richard D., *Workers, Factories and Social Change in India*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 16.

the factory system. The differentiating structures such as labour force, unions, and other industrial work groups maintain many particularistic and ascriptive ties and yet participate as effectively in the industrial role structure,

The thesis concerning the substitution of achieved for ascribed status requires that caste gives way to education as a basis of ranking. However, he finds that the two are so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them, and one supports the other.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, Lambert's thesis is that the factory is a much more differentiated and gentle graft. Its institutional imperatives are not nearly so strong as might be imagined and they are not moving in so orderly a fashion towards the modernization end of the polarity.<sup>47</sup>

Milton Singer, in his study of nineteen industrialist families in Madras, rejects the view that traditional Indian society was resistant to change and points out that it is wrong to equate the "traditional" with the stagnant and unchanging as is usually done. Indian society, for instance, has been adjusting itself to new forces and circumstances throughout its recorded history and has evolved certain strategies of adaptation which continue to serve it well.

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46. Ibid, p. 216.

47. Ibid, p. 17.



Singer has identified some of the adaptive strategies of Indian culture to new forces and circumstances, such as 'compartmentalization', 'ritual neutralization of the work sphere', 'vicarious ritualization', etc.

He writes: "Compartmentalization is an adaptive process that permits Indians to combine the modes of thought and behaviour of modern industry with traditional modes of thought and behaviour without too direct a collision."<sup>48</sup>

The conflicts the industrialist encounters with traditional institutions, beliefs, and values he contains and mitigates by compartmentalizing his life in industry from his domestic and social life. He categorises the latter as his "traditional culture", although it also contains many modern features and the former as his "modern culture", although it contains some traditional features.<sup>49</sup> The weakening of pollution is more evident in the factory than it is at home and in social relations. In the home, intercaste dining is rare. Besides, caste-consciousness has not been eliminated. High castes tend to associate with high castes. On the other hand, factory sweeping and

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48. Singer, Milton, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1972, p. 322.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

scavenging are still largely done by untouchables. As such, compartmentalization works as an adaptive process to reduce the conflict between tradition and modernity. Singer observes that by compartmentalizing their lives the industrial leaders in Madras are able to function both as good Hindus and as the vanguard of modernization in the industrial sphere.<sup>50</sup>

Saberwal, while studying Punjabi industrial town, tries to explore the processes underlying the transformation of Indian society from one with hierarchically organized corporate caste groups to a relatively open society, stressing individual attributes. His analysis has shown it to have been a many-layered structural change, shaped by a wide range of influences. He writes: "As is well-known mobility is a function, in part, of one's castes rank in the ritual hierarchy. However, the mobility experiences in Modelpur have been influenced not so much by the caste rank as by its hereditary occupation, and the new opportunities coming its way, which gave it particular mix of resources and handicaps in a changing economic and political setting."<sup>51</sup> Saberwal has found that despite the

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50. Ibid.

51. Saberwal, Satish, op.cit., p. 220.

occupational mobility, a fair number of Ad Dharmis continue to work with leather, and the Ramgarhias with wood or, even as industrialists, with metal. In these cases, a certain residual inherited element survives in occupations.

One of his major findings is that "the high castes are moving from a belief in inherited pollution" to one in "occupational pollution", reducing the social distance kept from a Harijan in a modern occupation. Some of them might so far as to observe only "episodic pollution"; allowing even a scavenger, after a clean up, to enter close social relations, but only a few act in this manner yet".<sup>52</sup>

The basic point in Gould's study of Lucknow rickshawallas, which shows the impact of industrialization upon Indian social life is that the adoption of achievement oriented occupation in the context of the city does not imply the total abandonment of traditional social organization. Features of the latter remain viable both in rural communities and as 'adaptive mechanisms' in cities. "Compartmentalization of behaviour appears to be a major mechanism...."<sup>53</sup> Gould comes to the conclusion that the

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52. Ibid, p. 226.

53. Gould, H.A., op. cit., p. 298.

rickshawallas comprising of several religious and caste groups do exhibit uniformity of patterns of interaction and attitudes in respect of their common occupation. Beyond this the professional values are inoperative, caste and religion hold their sway in guiding their activities concerning marriage and family life. This is an important finding because it shows that there is a dichotomy between the work and domestic situations.

Investigating the social and economic backgrounds of entrepreneurs in the medium-scale firms of Madras state, James Berna has found that there is greater freedom of entry into industry than is generally supposed to exist in one of the less-developed countries where traditional occupation and caste are important in determining economic status. The entrepreneurs represent various castes and communities. The cases suggest that sociological factors such as caste, attachment to tradition activities and approval or disapproval of the social group to which a potential entrepreneur belongs, are less important than economic factors such as access to capital and technical knowledge. However, he observes that "the prevailing social structure and community relationships have great influence in determining who obtains access to capital and knowledge."<sup>54</sup>

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54. Berna, James, Industrial Entrepreneurship in Madras State, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1960, p. 213.

Mckim Marriott has pointed out that, in the Maharashtra town of Wai, which he has studied "low-artisans", whose places of work and residence are not physically separate, also 'blend' rather than compartmentalize modern and traditional segments. In this town, the "high" professionals (lawyers, doctors and teachers) do, however, compartmentalize both between office and household, which are usually separate, and within the household, where the areas for work, visitors and the family are distinctly demarcated.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, we can <sup>tentatively</sup> conclude that as a consequence of industrialization, there is a shift from ascribed status to achieved status as a basis of hierarchical ranking. The aspiration level is rising and it is increasingly being tied to performance. Social mobility is taking place in a greater number through the acceptance and pursuit of modern secular modes and symbols. The territorial mobility due to migration has led both to horizontal mobility and vertical mobility. The occupational feature of the caste has disintegrated in the modern economic order and there is strengthening of relations on class line. However, despite the disappearance of caste as an occupational

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55. Quoted from Milton Singer, op. cit., p. 360.

factor in the industrial division of labour, it cannot be simply asserted that caste has entirely disappeared from the social life. It continues to survive through certain adaptive mechanisms.

### CASTE IN INDUSTRY

Referring to Weber, Yogendra Singh writes: "the role of cultural and institutional factors in the slow growth of industrialization has been a subject of much speculation among social scientists. There is a long standing tradition of a section of social scientists who pin down slow rate of economic growth in India to its philosophy of renunciation or 'other-worldly-asceticism' of the Hindu religion."<sup>56</sup>

A.R. Desai holds caste as a obstacle to industrialization. "The retarding role and the reactionary significance of this institution is still very insufficiently realized by the students of India's economic development."<sup>57</sup>

Coming back to Weber, we find that his analysis of Hinduism implies that a good Hindu cannot simultaneously become a good industrialist, the inner 'spirit of Hinduism' is incompatible with industrial capitalism. One aspect

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56. Singh, Y., Modernization of Indian Tradition, op.cit., p. 111.

57. Desai, A.R., op.cit., p. 120.

of Hinduism especially singled out by Weber and others as incompatible with modern - industrial life is its ritualism and magic. Thus, Weber who also recognized the revolutionary potential of capitalism - in particular its inherent rationality - held the view that in the caste society even the forces of capitalism have to slow down.<sup>58</sup>

However, neither in real life nor in the traditional postulates has Hinduism defined materialism or pursuit of pleasure in life. The fact is that the Hindu society has adopted to new circumstances and has developed new institutions and new secular activities. It has a high level of rationality and an openness to reinterpretation of its sacred traditions. Thus, we can emphasise the 'rational adaptibility' rather than the 'irrational resistance' of Hinduism to change. Refuting Weber's view, Milton Singer writes: "Weber dogmatically insisted that Hinduism and caste system are essentially negative and anti-rational in their effects on economic activity."<sup>59</sup> Singer's argument is supported by the fact that sixteen out of nineteen industrial leaders (studied by Singer) in Madras city are Hindus.

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58. See Weber, Max, General Economic History, Translated by Frank H. Knight, New York: Collier Books, 1961, p. 146.

59. Singer, Milton, op.cit., p. 273.

The question of the caste system in industry has many facets: To what extent does a particular community dominate the industrial leadership? To what extent do the industrial leaders prefer the members of their own caste or religious community in recruitment and promotion of employees? To what extent does the distribution of employees in a factory accord with traditional caste occupations?

In India, industrial organization is perhaps too recent a development to be considered the traditional occupation of any caste. Industrial entrepreneurship is thus not the preserve of any single caste and community. It has attracted able individuals from different castes, including Brahmans and cultivating castes whose traditional occupations had been remotely associated with industry.

However, it is interesting to note that most of the dominating positions in the industry are monopolized by a few castes all over India. Mostly these communities hail from the castes whose traditional occupation has been trade and money-lending. "In social structural terms their rise provides a continuity with the past tradition; most of them belong to the trading and mercantile castes of India and as such their emergence does not mark a radical break in



their traditional social structure of the business elite."<sup>60</sup> The dominance of the Marwaris and Jains in Calcutta, Gujarati Baniyas, Jains and Parsis in the West, the Chettiars in the South and the Agarwals and other Bania communities in the North can be easily observed.

While this may fit the classical pattern of the merchant becoming a capitalist, evidences of certain artisans and craftsmen communities making good in the industry are also available. Saberwal's study of Rangariahs of Punjab produces a well documented case of artisans turning into industrialists. Another case is that of Jatavs of Agra who have taken to shoe manufacturing.<sup>61</sup>

However, as the craftsmen and artisans face several structural obstacles, relatively fewer amongst them have made it to the top. James Berna's study in the Madras state shows that the emergent level of entrepreneurs has risen not from among the hereditary rich but from among those who first started with a very small capital and worked their way upward in stages.<sup>62</sup>

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60. Singh, Yogendra, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

61. Lynch, Owen M., 'Rioting as a Rational Action', *E.P.W.*, Nov. 28, 1981, pp. 1951-1956.

62. Berna, James, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

Another trend is to be found among the landowning castes taking to industry. Under this category can be placed the Mahishya industrialists of Howrah, the Patidars of Gujarat, and the Naidus and Reddys of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Certain upper castes and communities such as the Brahmins and Syrian Christians in Madras have also been recently entering the field of industrial entrepreneurs.<sup>63</sup> But only a limited number of middle level entrepreneurs from traditionally non-business communities have emerged so far.

The different backgrounds of the industrial leaders and the different paths by which they came into industry strongly suggest that factors such as individual and family experience, previous occupation, education and capital in relation to available opportunities have been more decisive in recruiting the industrial leaders. The more successful entrepreneurs, apart from having their business accumen, use networks based on loyalties like kinship, caste, neighbourhood, religion, region, language and other links like interest groups and political parties. Suberwal also observes caste solidarity and opportunistic links with "social networks" as the strategies of mobility for the industrial entrepreneurs.<sup>64</sup>

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63. Panini, M.N., op.cit., p. 15.

64. Saberwal, Satish, op.cit., pp. 220-221.

Networks are also important in recruiting labourers. N.R. Sheth has shown how the factory management manipulated caste networks to recruit loyal workers. Klass Vander Veen studying Bulsar district finds that unskilled labourers get recruited in various jobs in the government and factories through the articulation of patron-client and neighbourhood ties.<sup>65</sup> Saberwal finds that Ad Dharmis in Modelpur, due to their numerical dominance, have brought in caste-mates as apprentices and workers in the industry.<sup>66</sup>

Milton Singer, in his study of Madras observes that traditional merchant castes are prominent in industry and most firms are locally known as caste or community firms and are presumed to favour their particular community in recruitment, training, promotion and contracts.<sup>67</sup>

There are sufficient evidences to show that even the uncompromising condition of the hiring and firing in the modern occupational order, which is based on achievement criteria is modified by the tie of freiendship, kinship and caste.

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65. Panini, M.N., op.cit., p. 18.

66. Saberwal, Satish, op.cit., p. 219.

67. Singer, Milton, op.cit., p. 346.

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The above tendencies account for the prominence and near monopoly of particularistic groups in certain factories. In carpet weaving and textile industries in Uttar Pradesh the Muslim Julahas have developed a strong hold. Even in the public sector industrial units in Bangalore, Malayalee workers and the Tamilian workers can be isolated from the Kannadiga workers who are recruited from certain parts of Karnataka.<sup>68</sup>

The existence of these particularistic enclaves have a peculiar impact on mobilization along class lines. However, since the recruitment to the industrial class is more on the basis of particularistic ties than free individual motivation, it reduces its sociological impact, that an industrial force could have had on the system of social stratification.

Following the caste clustering of particular castes in particular job areas, there is a status hierarchy within the modern industry, which overlaps the old hierarchical system. The status hierarchy exists with the top management at the top; skilled and unskilled workers at the bottom and office staff and technical engineering departments in the

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68. See Holustrom, M., South Indian Factory Workers, Cambridge University Press, London, 1976.

middle. Though this hierarchy is not in one-to-one correspondence with the hierarchy of ritual pollution and purity among castes and is largely defined by differences in salary, educational qualifications and degree of authority and responsibility, there is some overlapping atleast in one narrow area. While traditional merchant castes are prominent in the industry and the non-trading upper castes are in the middle of the hierarchy (white-collars, etc.), the factory sweeping and scavenging are still largely being done by untouchables.

However, if the untouchables continue in scavenging, it is more due to its rising wages and to their lags in more competitive arenas than to pollution-linked disabilities as such. Even Milton Singer is of the opinion that the status hierarchy within a particular industrial company is not a replication of the caste hierarchy but is more like the "blue-collar", "white-collar", "management hierarchy of European and American companies. As regards purity and pollution the hierarchy in the industry is ritually neutral.<sup>69</sup>

#### An Overview ✓

The above analysis reveals that the process of industrialization need not necessarily destroy the traditional

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69. Singler, Milton, op.cit., p. 328.

system of stratification and inevitably bring in a "modern" system of economic classes. In fact, a good deal of technical modernization in India has strengthened the traditional system of caste. The traditional Hindu institutions and beliefs are quite compatible with modern industrial organization and they are being adapted by the industrial entrepreneurs to supply the motivations and a positive social ethic for continuing industrialization.

Thus, the Indian experience of industrialization does not fit the Western model and the "breakdown hypothesis" does not prove true. Yet, it should be recognized that though industrialization has not succeeded in generating the class-consciousness, it has weakened the significance of primordial caste loyalties.

What, in short, we infer is that the achievement-oriented stratification system rooted in modern technology and occupation, succeeds in detaching work from its caste contexts without necessarily altering the other features of caste such as endogamy etc. Caste still plays a predominant role in social life.

## CHAPTER III

## INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN BIHAR

In this chapter we shall examine the nature and process of industrialization and its impact on the system of social stratification in Bihar. In this exercise, we shall also examine the historical development and social condition that prevailed in the state.

The growth of industrialization and urbanization in a developing region are crucial events as these are the indicators of economic development. Although Bihar, in terms of population, is the second largest state of India, the pace of its industrialization and urbanization is very low in comparison to other industrially developed states in India. According to the Census report of 1971, urban population of the state constituted only 10.0 per cent of the total population as compared to the 20.0 per cent for the country as a whole.<sup>1</sup> This low level of urbanization in the state can be attributed to the low level of industrialization.

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1. Computed from Census of India, 1971, Series-I, India, Final Population, p. 86.

Though the state ranks first in terms of mineral resources, the growth of mineral based industries is inadequately poor.

The economic structure of the state is predominantly rural and agrarian. The state has not been industrialized despite its immense potentialities for industrialization. Because of the agricultural character of the economy and its poor development, the per capita income is the lowest in the country.

The occupational structure also reveals the same trend. About 83 per cent of the state's working population is engaged in agriculture as compared to 72 per cent in India as a whole. This shows that there is a close relationship between occupational structure and economic development. Furthermore, the empirical evidence relating to the composition of economic activity in a country or region at different levels of development suggests that economic progress is associated with certain "distinct, necessary and predictable changes in occupational structure."<sup>2</sup> A high level of economic development is closely associated with the extent of working population engaged

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2. Khan, Nasir A., Problems of Growth of an Underdeveloped Economy - India, Asia Publishing House, 1961, p. 121.



in the secondary and tertiary sector. Colin Clark argues that "in studying economic progress in relation to the economic structure of different countries, we find a very firmly established generalization that a high average level of real income per capita is always associated with a high proportion of the working population engaged in tertiary industries. Contrary to this, the low income per capita is always associated with a low proportion of the working population engaged in tertiary production and a high percentage in primary production."<sup>3</sup>

Prof. A.G.B. Fisher also draws the same conclusion. He observes: "we may say that in every progressive economy there has been a steady shift of employment and investment from the essentially primary activities to secondary activities of all kinds, and to a still greater extent into tertiary production."<sup>4</sup>

If we consider the occupational structure of Bihar in the light of Fisher-Clark hypotheses, we find that it reflects the backwardness of the state's economy. The majority of the state's population depends on agriculture

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3. Clark, Colin, *The Conditions of Economic Progress*, Macmillan, London, 1940, p. 128.
  4. Fisher, A.G.B., *Economic Progress and Social Security*, London, 1945, pp. 5-6.

and only a small proportion depends on industries. In the 1971 Census, there were 17.49 million workers of various categories in the state which constituted 31 per cent of the total population. The proportions of the worker's to the total population for three regions of North Bihar, South Bihar and Chotanagpur were 30,9, 30.4 and 32 per cent respectively.

Though Bihar has marked rapid urbanization during the last two to three decades, yet it lags behind compared to the country's average rate of urbanization. The table given below indicates the level of urbanization in the three regions of Bihar state.

Table - I

Region	Levels of urbanization (in percentage)
North Bihar	5.2
South Bihar	12.6
Chotanagpur	16.0
Bihar	10.0

Source: Draft Fifth Year Plan (1974-79), Government of Bihar, Bihar Planning Board, p. 2.

It is evident from the table that the percentage of urban population is relatively higher in Chotanagpur in comparison to other regions. This may be attributed to the heavy and mineral based industrial complex forming urban islands in a vast rural existence.<sup>5</sup>

It is noteworthy that the backwardness of the economy cannot be attributed to the lack of resources in Bihar. Apart from the vast human resources, the state has the richest mineral belts. It has immense potential for producing industrial raw materials, power resources and agricultural commodities. In spite of these, the state remains backward. Even after thirty-six years of Independence and thirty-two years of planned economic development Bihar remains one of the most backward economy in India and offers a paradoxical spectacle of 'poverty amidst plenty'.

#### Industry in Bihar

Although a stagnant economy is characteristic feature of the state, yet Bihar has a fare share of some of the basic and important industrial complexes both in the public and private sectors.

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5. Draft Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), Bihar State Planning Board, Government of Bihar, p. 2.

Most important industries of the state are Iron and Steel, Mica and Cement. Sugar, Paper, Jute and Lac industries and Oil mills are also important industries. In the public sector, the main industries are, fertilizers, railway work-shop, engineering works, electrical engineering units, oil refinery, printing presses and road transport. In the unorganized and small scale sector, there are more than 1,00,000 establishments with approximately 2,30,000 workers. The location of the industries is determined by the availability of the raw materials. Evidently the industries based on agricultural raw materials are mostly concentrated in North Bihar, while those on minerals are concentrated in Chotanagpur.

The industrial structure of the state has a dual character. Despite the existence of a number of large scale industrial units, the cottage and small scale units predominate in many respects. The rate of growth of village and small industries has been lesser than large and medium industries in Bihar. This is clear from Table 2 given below.

It is also evident from Table 3 that while the output of Bihar as percentage to that of India increased from 1.4 in 1949-60 to 3.6 in 1960-66 in case of village

Table - 2

Percentage increase in the output (constant prices) of Industries in Bihar during the Three Five Year Plans

Heads	First Plan	Second Plan	Third Plan
Large and Medium Industries	35.3	33.2	33.5
Village and Small Industries	9.6	79.2	75.8

Source: A.N.S. Institute of Social Science, Patna.

Table - 3

Average Values of output of Bihar as percentage to that of India during 1949-60 and 1960-66 (Figures in the bracket give co-efficient of variations)

Heads	1949-60	1960-66)
Large and Medium Industries	7.58(10.0)	4.9(5.07)
Village and Small Industries	1.4 (10.6)	3.6(24.5)

Source: A.N.S. Institute of Social Studies, Patna.

and small industries, it declined from 7.58 in 1949-60 to 4.9 in 1960-66 so far as large and medium industries were concerned.

Moreover, the low values of co-efficients of variations for large and medium industries in the above tables suggest that as the planning progresses, the pattern of large and medium industries in Bihar will closely follow that of India.

However, the impact of large-scale public sector projects on the State's economy has not been significant in Bihar. A high man-land ratio, an adverse rural-urban ratio and preponderantly large dependence on agriculture, and a low per capita income are still some of the characteristic features of the state's economy.

#### Social Stratification in Bihar

As we have discussed earlier, the division of society on the basis of caste is a typical Indian social phenomenon. It exists in Bihar also. Like other parts of the country, the social system in Bihar consists of a number of castes and their sub-castes. These castes and sub-castes constitute heterogeneous social units with certain degree of social distance among themselves. The higher on the caste scale enjoys higher status (in terms of prestige, power and wealth) in the society.

At the top of the social pyramid are the upper-castes or the "twice-born" in Bihar. Traditionally, they

have been enjoying ritual superiority and social prestige although they are numerically weak as compared to other castes.<sup>6</sup> Their numerical weakness gets diluted because of their higher ritual status, economic positions and social power and prestige. On the basis of their ritual rankings, the Brahmins hold the first position followed by the Bhumihar Brahmins, Rajputs and Kayasthas. These four upper castes also maintain a certain degree of social distance from other caste groups according to their ranks in caste hierarchy. The difference between upper castes, the backward castes (barring a few), and the Scheduled castes, is very wide in terms of both social and economic statuses and political power.

In order to examine the social stratification in Bihar - based on caste hierarchy - an attempt has been made to classify few selected Hindu castes into three categories, i.e. Upper castes, Backward castes and Scheduled castes along with their respective numerical strength. The same is given in Table 4.

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6. Roy, Ramashroy, Caste and Political Recruitment in Bihar, in Kothari, Rajni (ed.) Caste in Indian Politics, Orient Longman, 1970, p. 229.

Table - 4

Caste		Total Population (in %)
Brahmin	Upper Caste	4.74
Bhumihar Brahmin	- do -	2.89
Rajput	- do -	4.27
Kayasthas	- do -	1.15
Yadav or Ahir	Backward Caste	10.78
Koeri	- do -	4.20
Kurmi	- do -	3.36
Teli	- do -	2.77
Dhannik	- do -	1.77
Kahar	- do -	1.66
Kanu	- do -	1.64
Barber	- do -	1.40
Kamhar	- do -	1.32
Baniya	- do -	1.04
Dusadh	Scheduled Caste	4.17
Chamar	- do -	4.05
Mushar	- do -	2.32
Tanti	- do -	1.66
Mallah	- do -	1.49
Dhobi	- do -	0.82
Pasi	- do -	0.55
Dom	- do -	0.01

Source: Jha, Shashisekhar, Political Elites in Bihar, Vora and Co., Bombay, 1972, p. 20.



### Stratification Among the Upper Castes

Among the upper caste group, the Brahmins occupy the first position in the caste hierarchy. They constitute 4.74 per cent of the total population of the state. Traditionally they performed the religious rituals and, to some extent, engaged in teaching.

Bhumihars are an important landowning caste which constitute 2.89 per cent of the total population of the state. Though Bhumihar as a caste is not included in the 'four-fold Varna System', they have occupied an important position among the upper castes. Agriculture is their traditional occupation. They, being the landowning caste, possess major portion of land in Bihar.

The Rajputs are spread all over the state. They occupy the second position in the caste hierarchy. Traditionally, they were the warriors and the landlords. Even today the Rajputs are the land-owning caste. Educationally they are more advanced than Bhumihars.

Educationally, Kayasthas are more advanced than any other upper castes. In fact, they were the first in Bihar to modernize themselves.

Stratification Among the Backward Castes

The Yadavas are numerically the strongest among all the castes in Bihar. Their traditional occupations consist of selling of milk and taming of cows. These are still their main occupations. However, rich and educated among them are entering into different professions. Some of them have become powerful political entities.

The 'Keeri' is a cultivating and vegetable growing caste. For the last two decades, they have been trying to combine themselves with 'Kurmis' to achieve some political ends.

After Yadavas, Kurmi is an important backward caste. The mythological origin of this caste has no definite history of its own. Their chief occupation, however, is agriculture.

These three castes have been trying to Sanskritise themselves. They have adopted "Singh", "Sinha" etc. as surname and are also wearing sacred threads like upper castes. Often there is a tussle regarding their respective positions in the social hierarchy. Each of them regards itself higher than the other.<sup>7</sup>

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7. Jha, Shashisekhar, op.cit., p. 75.

'Banias' or 'Vaishyas' is yet another important backward caste in Bihar. They are one of the four original castes, according to the Varna system. Their chief occupation is trade, money-lending, and business.

#### Social Stratification Among Scheduled Castes

Scheduled castes constitute 14.07 per cent of the total population. They embrace as many as 23 scheduled castes. Among Scheduled castes 'Dusadh' are numerically the strongest followed by Chamar, Musahara, Dhobi and Pasi.<sup>8</sup> They are primarily landless labourers but some of them have specific traditional occupations.

An attempt has been made by L.P. Vidyarthi to categorize the Scheduled Castes into four economic types.<sup>9</sup> (1) groups engaged in scavenging and allied occupations like the 'Bhanghi', and the 'Mehtar', (2) Communities engaged in leather work like the 'Chamar', (3) the artisans or the semi-skilled labour like the 'Pasi' and the 'Turi', and (4) the peripheral and landless agricultural labourers like 'Dusadh' and 'Mushar', etc.

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8. Singh, R.P. and Kumar, A., 'Monograph of Bihar', Bharati Bhawan, Patna, 1970, p. 104.

9. Vidyarthi, L.P., 'Harijan Today', Classical Publications, Delhi, 1979, pp. 212-213.

Stratification Among the Tribes

The large scale industries are mainly concentrated in the Chotanagpur region of Bihar. Incidentally this region is largely inhabited by various tribes who also form the major chunk of labour force in these large-enterprises. It, thus, becomes desirable to include these tribal people for our analysis of the 'consequences of industrialization on social stratification in Bihar'. Moreover, the tribes cannot be left alone, as Gharye also believes that "it is misleading to call the tribes aborigines or antoethones, they were fallen Hindus and should be treated as backward Hindus and that they should be completely assimilated into the Hindu society."<sup>10</sup>

Table 5 sums up the occupational status of different tribes, found in the Chotanagpur region of Bihar.

Table - 5

Occupational/Economic Status

Hunting and collecting stage	Shifting or Jhum cultivation, Jhum-bering, etc.	Settled agriculturist, weavers, poultry keepers, etc.
Kharia, Birhor	Saheria, Bhuiyan, Karwar, Asur	Manda, Ho, Santhal, Oraon

Source: Prasad, Narmadeshwar, Integration of Tribal People in Indian Society, Paper for the Annual Conference of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, Patna, December 15, 1957, p. 4.

10. *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.  
Prasad, Narmadeshwar, *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.

### Impact of Industrialization on Social Stratification

Industrialization of a region is followed by an increasing interdependence of its economic and social factors. Oftentimes, the sociological and also the socio-anthropological and economic literatures reflect that such interdependence between the economic and social sectors is generally accompanied by a disintegration or at least a modification of traditional structures existing in that particular region.

In the *present* section, it ~~will be~~ our endeavour to assess the process and extent of disintegration of the traditional system of stratification in Bihar, caused by the above-said interdependence. For this purpose, caste-occupation link can be taken as a ground to judge the actual extent of disintegration in the traditional caste system.

With the establishment of the large-scale enterprises in South Bihar, a great demand for industrial working force resulted in a mass scale migration from the neighbouring areas. Martin Orans, studying the effects of Jamshedpur's urban and industrial environment on the traditional culture of the neighbouring areas, observes the trend of migration. He finds that while the upper caste

have shifted to modern professions requiring higher education, the lower castes have shifted to modern jobs requiring little literacy.<sup>11</sup> This shows the trend of horizontal mobility which is largely prevalent in the occupational structure of the industries in Bihar.

However, with an increased occupational hierarchies in the industrial arena, the possibility of upward occupational mobility cannot be denied. As we find that the closer one approaches to industry, the more the traditional trades of the various castes lose their importance. Recruitment to the higher positions in the industry is not based on caste. It is made available on individual skill and specialized knowledge. Moreover, in the industrial area, workers from different castes have to work side by side, live in the same blocks of building and draw water from the same taps. Thus, in this secular atmosphere of industry, caste loses its identify so far as its rigidity is concerned. The change in occupation is immanent in the industry which is bound to bring changes in the occupational structure of castes. Most of the occupations in the industry are caste free and are open to members of

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11. Orans, Martin, *The Sental: A Tribe in Search of a Great Tradition*. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1965.

every caste. This change of occupation overcomes the caste system in the sense that members of one caste have gained footing in the occupational monopoly of another caste.

However, the greater existence of the hierarchical system of ranking, which is a crucial factor for the social and functional organization and to some extent, the local circuits of relationships which frequently survive in Bihar, presents a view that by far the largest number of castes are straight forward Occupational Castes - which hold the monopoly over the occupations traditionally carried out by them.

This may be attributed to the low level of industrialization in the state. Table 6\* shows that very low percentage of total scheduled castes are dependent on industries.

The low percentage of dependence, as is evident from Table-6, on the industrial sector can be said to be a consequence of low degree of industrialization in Bihar. If we survey the economic development, particularly in the industrial sector in conjunction with the population growth, it becomes evident that the industrial and service sector

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\* Unfortunately, no such data is available for the upper castes and backward castes in the Census after 1931. We have, therefore, shown the caste occupation structure of the Scheduled Castes in Table-6.

TABLE - 6

PERCENTAGE OF MALES EMPLOYED IN THE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN KEEPING WITH CASTE MEMBERSHIP,  
BIHAR, 1971

Caste	T.O.	T.E.	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Bantar	40.2	59.8	11.0	46.1	1.2	0.01	1.5	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.34
Bhogta	41.5	58.5	37.7	17.0	1.0	1.6	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.12	0.2	0.4
Bhuiya	47.1	58.3	6.0	51.0	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.05	0.1	0.1
Bhumij	42.8	57.2	11.6	44.5	0.2	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	0.6
Chamar	46.2	53.8	7.5	42.8	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.12	0.12	0.3	0.6
Chaupal	44.6	55.4	11.0	39.6	0.3	0.01	2.0	0.2	0.01	1.7	0.12	0.5
Dabgar	47.4	52.6	5.3	25.5	0.2	0.2	5.7	6.1	-	7.6	0.9	1.1
Dhobi	48.0	52.0	17.0	22.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	9.7
Dom	43.0	57.0	9.3	23.8	1.0	0.6	17.8	1.5	0.18	0.2	0.6	2.3
Dusadh	44.4	55.6	9.2	42.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.13	0.2	0.6	1.47
Ghasi	46.2	53.8	15.4	29.2	2.7	0.44	1.5	1.0	0.3	0.3	1.0	2.0
Halalkhor	51.0	49.0	7.8	25.5	0.3	-	3.8	2.6	0.1	1.1	1.8	6.0

(contd...)



Table - 6 (Contd...)

Caste	T.O.	T.E.	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Hari	44.7	55.3	7.4	34.1	1.7	1.1	2.3	1.0	0.2	0.2	1.8	5.5
Kanjar	42.4	57.6	6.5	28.7	2.3	11.7	6.5	0.6	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4
Kurariar	40.3	59.7	11.4	37.2	3.7	0.3	4.5	0.1	-	0.3	-	2.0
Lalbegi	40.1	59.9	-	58.1	-	-	1.8	-	-	-	-	-
Musahar	38.8	61.2	2.3	57.4	0.9	0.1	0.04	0.1	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.3
Nat	61.9	38.1	5.7	27.8	1.3	0.03	0.2	0.3	0.06	1.6	0.1	1.0
Pan or Swasi	42.7	57.3	24.0	19.8	0.8	0.8	7.0	1.3	0.1	0.6	0.8	2.1
Pasi	48.8	51.2	10.7	23.9	0.4	0.5	7.7	1.6	0.2	4.9	0.5	0.8
Rajwar	42.6	57.4	12.7	39.4	0.5	2.5	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.6

T.O. - Traditional Occupation; T.E. - Total Employed.

I - Cultivators; II- Agricultural Labourers; III- Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries; IV- Mining and Quarry; V- Household Industry; VI- Other than Household Industry; VII- Construction; VIII- Trade and Commerce; IX- Transport; X- Other Services.

Source : Census of Bihar, Special Tables for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes  
Series- 4, Part V-A, 1971, pp. 22-23.

is by no means capable of absorbing the surplus labour force. With a current population growth rate, the industry would have to provide several millions of new jobs a year in order to provide employment to the new potential workers. We notice that even when the degree of industrialization is low in Bihar, it has affected to some extent, the caste-based occupational structure of the state.

#### Industrialization and Its Social Impact in Chotanagpur

As we have already seen, the first wake of industrialization was felt in the Chotanagpur division of Bihar. The establishment of various coal mining industries in Jharia, Bokaro and Karanpura coalfields in Dhanbad district in 1856 and the installation of Tata Iron and Steel Factory in Jamshedpur in Singhbhum district in 1907 were important events for the region.<sup>13</sup> The pace of industrialization was further accelerated after India's Independence. Many industrial cities like Ranchi, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Jamshedpur, etc. came up in due course and provided a network of industries.

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13. Vidyarthi, L.P. Socio-cultural Implications of Industrialization in India - A Case Study of Tribal Bihar, Research Programme Committee, Planning Commission, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1970, p. 5.

L.P. Vidyarthi also observes: "..... in the process of urbanization and the growth of industrial towns, one can not fail to notice that Chotanagpur has been in the grip of an Industrial Revolution, and consequent to a rapid urbanization, comparatively in a short span of time which has led this region to "industry-based urban explosion". Such an "explosion" in the heart of tribal belt of Middle India has led to the "cultural mutation", and the once isolated, homogeneous folk and primitive communities were exposed to the world-wide network."<sup>14</sup>

The impact of the various large-scale enterprises was largely felt by the tribals who are numerically dominant in the Chotanagpur division. A number of studies, conducted by sociologists and social anthropologists reveal that industrialization has transformed the tribal culture in this region. L.P. Vidyarthi's study<sup>15</sup> of the Hatia Heavy Engineering Complex near Ranchi and Pranab Gupta's study<sup>16</sup> of the cement factory in Jhinkpani reveal that many tribals have been uprooted from their land and have lost their traditional mainstay of life, i.e., agriculture.

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14. Ibid, p. 6.

15. Vidyarthi, L.P. Ibid.

16. Gupta, Pranab Kumar Das, Impact of Industrialization on a Tribe in South Bihar. Anthropological Survey of India, Calcutta, 1978.

They have shifted to various industrial occupations mostly unskilled ones. Due to their shift in the industry and thereby an increasing contacts with different caste-people, a significant change, i.e., "detrribalisation" is taking place among the tribes.

However, the impact of industrialization has been greatest among the factory workers than elsewhere. On the one hand, industrialization is bringing changes in their traditional structures and on the other, it is creating a new society marked by new social values and behavioural patterns.

Table 7 gives an account of the major tribal categories of Chotanagpur, employed in the occupational groups. As it appears from the table, less than 50 per cent of the tribal population are engaged in their traditional occupation. Tribes like Bihor and Lohara show a marked shift from their traditional occupation to household - industries. Bihor accounted for about 20.3 per cent while Lohara accounted for about 13.0 per cent. It is the Khond which showed more concentration in mining and quarrying activities. They have accounted for about 41.6 per cent of their total population.

TABLE - 7

PERCENTAGE OF MALES EMPLOYED IN THE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN KEEPING WITH TRIBE MEMBERSHIP,  
CHOTANAGPUR DIVISION, BIHAR, 1971

Tribe	T.O.	T.E.	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Birhor	41.6	58.4	12.3	17.3	5.1	0.8	20.3	2.5	-	-	-	0.1
Gond	40.4	59.6	42.1	12.2	0.6	1.0	0.2	1.4	0.04	0.2	0.3	1.56
Hô	45.4	54.6	35.8	14.1	0.8	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.07	0.03	0.6	1.2
Kharia	46.2	53.8	40.3	10.9	0.4	0.03	0.1	0.2	0.03	0.06	0.05	1.7
Kharwar	42.3	57.7	42.8	13.1	0.8	0.2	0.06	0.1	0.03	0.06	0.1	0.4
Khond	28.3	71.7	28.3	00.6	-	41.6	-	-	-	-	1.2	-
Lohara	44.5	55.5	20.2	17.6	0.5	0.6	13.0	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.5	1.1
Munda	43.8	56.2	44.3	9.0	0.3	0.3	0.13	0.67	0.1	0.1	0.02	1.3
Oraon	47.9	52.1	40.2	8.0	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.06	0.4	1.6
Santhal	43.8	56.2	35.6	16.0	0.7	2.1	0.07	0.7	0.1	0.03	0.3	0.8

T.O. - Traditional Occupation; T.E. - Total Employed.

I- Cultivators; II- Agricultural Labourers; III- Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries;  
IV- Mining and Quarry; V- Household Industry; VI- Other than Household Industry;  
VII- Construction; VIII- Trade and Commerce; IX- Transport; X-Other Services.

Source: Census of Bihar, Special Tables for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes,  
Series-4, Part V-A, 1971, pp. 262-263.

Thus, these tribes have been more influenced by the industrial development in the region. There have been large-scale shifts in their occupations. Majority of them are engaged mainly in the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in various factories. However, their enhanced economic condition has earned them higher prestige and status in their native villages. In view of these, the possibility of upward mobility can be attributed to the industrialization that has taken place in the region.

Though the above analysis is not quite comprehensive, it does enable us to conclude that there is no significant disintegration of the traditional occupational pattern. It seems that the new class structure in the industrial area still continues to function within the existing caste identities, only occasionally cutting across the caste loyalties. The new principle of modern industrialism, not yet having come into existence in a revolutionary break with the caste divisions, the top in the caste hierarchy find it handy to use the caste loyalties to keep their class advantage. Thus, it can be said that in the urban setting, it is the continuation of the rural divisions beyond the village boundaries. As a result, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes mostly come to occupy the

lowest, the most degraded and low paid positions in working class in various industries.

The upper-castes being educationally in advantageous positions, claim larger share in higher jobs in the industries. Theoretically, the esteemed jobs are available on the basis of individual's achievement and talent. It is often the nature of caste-feudalism that determines which groups would have access to certain jobs and which groups would be willing to take the most arduous employment. From the very beginning, the "educated elite" composed of higher castes. Therefore, the new professions and occupations in urban areas, based on modern education, are filled in overwhelmingly by the members of the upper castes and to some extent by the economically advanced backward castes.

The other reason for the individuals to continue with their traditional occupations, particularly in the lower castes, is the inferior economic status. Many of them remain under debt. This is one of the crucial factors which does not allow any change in their occupations. There are a few possibilities open to individuals belonging to the lower castes to shift to new occupations. In majority of the cases, it is more difficult as they do not have capital (especially land) of their own.

Moreover, transfer to other sectors are most frequently encountered in those occupational groups whose traditional basis of earnings have been withdrawn. The changes in occupations get restricted in those situations too where a largely stagnating demand is no longer able to support the increasing number of members in those castes. For example, the caste of Chamars, which specialises in leather works, is affected by the modern development. The majority of the population increasingly prefers to buy mass-produced shoes and leather goods which are available even to the rural population through a network of market. This means that they cannot compete with the leather goods produced by the factory. Therefore, great majority of them have to look for employment avenues available in the industrial sector.

#### Impact of Caste on Industry in Bihar

The pattern of social stratification in Bihar is keeping its agrarian character unaltered to a great extent. The forces of industrialization and urbanization have not taken over substantially. There are evidences to demonstrate that most of the individuals or groups, which enjoyed higher social position in the past, still have near access to the highest positions in various industries. A very few



social groups enjoying middle ranks in the caste hierarchy occupy the top positions, while most of them have low positions. This is also noticed in respect of those who belong to the lowest stratum of the caste system.

Yogendra Singh rightly observes that "the caste stratification does influence the nature of the industrial working class. It affects its class character. Industrial workers maintain and continue close relationships with their caste and kin groups, village and regions."<sup>17</sup>

Somewhat same observations hold true for Bihar also. Martin Orans found that the Santals who work in Jamshedpur have accepted industrial employment as an alternative to living on the land without giving up all their traditional culture. "Having a job at Tata is like having land", they say, "you can pass it on to your son."<sup>18</sup>

Martin Orans found that the degree of "Modernization" varied directly with residential proximity to the city. He also observed, however, that such proximity was not automatically followed by acculturation of Hinduism. Although

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17. Singh, Yogendra, *Sociology of Social Stratification A Survey of Research in Sociology and Social Anthropology*. Vol. I, p. 347.
  18. Orans, Martin, *The Santal: A Tribe in Search of a Great Tradition*. Wayne University Press, Detroit, 1965.

the Santals were adapting to industrial life, they were doing so by incorporating some of its features into a newly created Santal "Great Tradition".

Michael Ames's study of two Jamshedpur factories extends to the earlier study of Martin Orans on Santal tribes in industrial employment of Jamshedpur. Ames finds a process of "compartmentalization" within the factories and between the city and the village:

"The social relations in the 'works' departments of the factories appeared more impersonal and 'modernized' than the relations in the clerical departments; managers or supervisory personal, who sometimes ran their offices like petty Zamindars, would quickly switch to more professional, job-specific behaviour when dealing with workers inside the factory. The most noticeable compartmentalization, however, was between Jamshedpur (work) and native place (home). It seemed that many of the workers considered their quarters in the company housing colonies as part of the working rather than home compartment. They preferred to hold ceremonies, births, confinement, etc. at home at their native places, but when it was necessary to use company or city - quarters, all manner of ritual neutralization was permissible".<sup>19</sup>

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19. Ames, Michael M. 'Modernization and Social Structure of Family, Caste, Class in Jamshedpur', EPW, July 1969, Special Number, pp. 1217-1224.

Thus, both Ames and Orans studies suggest that a company house is not a home and that the significant compartmentalization in these cases is between the village and the industrial urban environment.

Thus, it seems plausible to assume that the lower castes are trying to adapt modern and traditional segments of culture in a dynamic manner with the resources at their command. Their adaptations need not follow a general "law" of change other than those of the upper or middle castes.

Among the lower castes working in the industry, some sort of segregations are practised. Endogamy is still practised. The members of different castes do not usually pass their leisure hours in inter-caste groupings. L.P. Vidyarthi, while studying the Hatia Heavy Electrical Complex also points out "..... it has been noticed that among tribals they generally try to prepare their houses in the slums with their tribe members and also with their village people. Whereas among the non-tribals it is found that they like to have a neighbourhood with their caste people of their areas or atleast with the members of the same language. But it is not found so strictly in the industrial township areas as the formation of neighbourhood does not depend upon the people themselves."<sup>20</sup>

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20. Vidyarthi, L.P. op.cit., p. 206.

Thus, the "caste mixings" in the modern industries in Bihar follow the old patterns. Work-related caste-mixings always exist alongside more caste-restricted conduct in the domestic and social spheres.

#### The New Working Class and Middle Class in Bihar

As we have already noted, the advantageous position in the old (caste) system generally facilitates advantages in the new (industrial class) system.

As far as the structure of the new 'working class' is concerned, only ten per cent live in the urban areas. Among them 41 per cent workers employed in industrial and mines areas live below the poverty line. These workers mostly belong to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes. A large number of agricultural labourers often leave their village in slack season and migrate to the urban areas to earn some money. However, they return to their villages during the agricultural season. Thus, we find that most of the industrial workers in Bihar are pushed out by the nature of the agricultural operations in the region. Their migration is also caused by the overcrowding and unemployment in agricultural sector rather than they are pulled by the factory life. Besides, most of the factory and mines workers are organized in trade unions and these trade unions are

controlled by UNTUC, AITUC, CITU and other political organizations.

Another significant consequence of industrialization in Bihar is the emergence of the urban 'Middle Class'. The composition of the urban middle class is interesting. It belongs to the upper castes who had opportunities to take advantage of modern education. They formed the class of modern intelligentsia. Due to low economic constraints and also lower social status castes like 'Yadav', 'Kurmi', 'Dhobi', 'Chamar', 'Dom', 'Dusadh' and a number of other remained deprived of modern education. Thus, the professional groups, the managers, the white-collars and other government officers are overwhelmingly drawn from the upper castes. They are economically as well as educationally well off. As G.K. Prasad says: "83 per cent of the bureaucrats at different levels in Bihar belong to the upper castes."<sup>21</sup>

However, due to political decisions and constitutional provisions for reservation in favour of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Castes in education as well as in jobs, a sizeable number of them have entered

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21. Prasad, G.K., Bureaucrats in India: A Sociological Study, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1974, p. 36.

in the state bureaucracy. Among the backward castes - Yadavas, Kurmi, Koiri and Bania, who are economically better off as compared to other backward castes, are increasingly entering the modern jobs available in the state and outside it.

Thus, even in the transformation of the urban middle class industrialization does not have a direct relevance. Educational opportunities, the economically and politically advantageous positions pass through the pre-existing caste mould and take the form to grab newly created opportunities.

#### An Overview

The above analysis of the stratification system in Bihar even after industrialization, gives an impression that the existing stratification is a true representation of the agrarian society, i.e., based on the caste hierarchy. However, if we look at the class stratification as comparatively an open system, in which any one can have an access provided one has competence and resources to manipulate the demands made by an industrialized society, we find that both the systems are co-existing atleast in and around the industrial set-up. Neither the caste stratified society has fully disappeared nor the newer class stratified one has fully emerged. Particularly in the industrial-urban

areas class~~s~~ come to exist within a single caste and different castes are building up a single class. Hence, it is generally believed that the present society in Bihar is at a transitional stage, of course, by a disproportionate admixture of elements of caste as well as class stratification.

Yet, it is non-logical to assert that the exact transitional point of Bihar society from traditional (caste) to industrial or modern (class) has arrived. Traditional elements are still dominating the scene in the industrial sector, though the system of production is slightly shifting from agrarian to industrial. Once highly placed individuals or groups in the traditional stratification system finds it easy to dominate the existing upper most social scale, materially as well as socially (power and prestige). On the other hand, lower and lowest strata in the industrial class structure occupy, by and large the same position which they occupy in the caste hierarchy. However, changes brought about by the industrial system can not be denied in the industrially advanced areas. Thus, it can be safely concluded that industrialization has succeeded in bringing only a PARTIAL change in the traditional caste stratification in Bihar.

### CONCLUSION

Much of what has been said is the extreme contrast between the patterns of social stratification in pre-industrial and industrial societies. It is believed that a drastic change in the economic conditions of a country invariably leads to an equally drastic social change. Thus, as industrialization grows in a given society, the traditional institutions and value-patterns are assumed to change inevitably in the direction of the Western modes of social life and thought. At the very least, it must result in the 'complication' of systems of stratification. More commonly, it gives rise to competing systems of stratification, since its criteria of placement and valuation contrast sharply with traditional modes of assigning status, power and prestige.

However, in a number of ways the results of the several studies on India appear to differ from the results to be expected according to the accepted path of industrialism and its related phenomena. They have arrived at a conclusion that the adoption of achievement-oriented occupations in the context of industrialization does not imply the total abandonment of traditional social



organization. Features of the latter remain viable both in rural communities and as "adaptive mechanisms" in cities. In his study of five factories in Poona, Lambert finds that the industry is not moving in so orderly a fashion towards the modernization end. Industry is a much more differentiated and gentle graft and its effects are not so strong as might be imagined. Similarly, Milton Singer, while studying nineteen industrialist families in Madras concludes that the modern technology has not affected much the features of caste. Caste still plays a predominant role in social life. He asserts that the Indian society has been adjusting itself to new forces and circumstances through certain strategies of adaptation. Caste system also persists in industry through some adaptive strategies, like compartmentalization between work sphere and the social life.

Thus, we find that a slow and limited industrialization has permitted a considerable adjustment and compromise between the traditional and the modern. One can possibly find a direct transfer of quasi-feudal relations between landlords and tenants to similar relations between factory-owners and workers (although it is not necessarily always proportional). Only certain castes have been able to take advantage of the fruits of industrialization and only certain

occupations are open to them. Professional, white-collar, big business, etc. are yet 'closed' to the vast majority of the lower castes. This may be attributed to the fact that since education becomes a key determinant of occupational achievement, the chances of "getting ahead" for those who start in a lowly position are inevitably diminished. This is the reason, they work mostly as skilled and semi-skilled workers and are also engaged in their caste-occupations in small trade and household industries.

Regarding the matter of differentiation, it has been said that there is a broad trend towards greater economic equality as a particular society progresses from a traditional to an industrial form. We find, however, that in India, the different social strata may well be benefitting from a levelling upwards of living standards, at the base of the stratification hierarchy, there is increasing inequality.

The second set of arguments has been that there is a growing consistency between different stratification orders due to industrialization. However, evidences in India indicate that as a consequence of industrialization, stratification systems are becoming somewhat less well integrated in certain respects. This evidence refers to

what has become known as the "industrial working class". It suggests that the appreciable gains in income and in general living standards recently achieved by certain sections of the lower castes have not for the most part been accompanied by changes in their life-styles of such a kind that their status position will be enhanced commensurately with their economic position. In other words, certain cultural and 'social' barriers still widely exist between 'working class' and 'middle class' even in cases where immediate material differences have now disappeared.

Lastly, we come to the matter of social mobility. Here, the first question arises is that whether it is valid to assume that Indian society is having regularly higher rates of mobility after the introduction of industrialization than before. We argue that this view should not be too readily accepted and suggest that Indian society was far less rigidly stratified than have been supposed. The caste system did offer, though in limited and exceptional cases, changes in status mobility. There is substantial evidence to suggest that, even in the past, mobility was possible through channels such as migration to far-off regions, raising a particular caste status (Sanskritization), accumulation of wealth and power during economic or

political crisis by some castes and so on. However, with the growth of industrialization social mobility is increasingly taking place, especially in the urban areas.

Caste and Class: We can characterize the systems of social stratification found in the industrial and pre-industrial societies as achievement-oriented and ascription-oriented, respectively. The industrial value system assumes that any given occupational role and its role-occupant are distinct and separable so that in response to the needs of efficiency people are free to move from one occupational role to another. On the other hand, the ascription-oriented stratification of the complex non-industrial society is associated with a value system which implicitly assumes that the work a man does and the man himself are indistinguishable.

The traditional India, of course, is a noteworthy instance of the latter. Her caste system fuses occupational role and role-occupant with respect to thousands of specialized tasks.

Nevertheless, the impact of industrialization, during the colonial period and especially after Independence, has not remained neutral in this regard. The achievement-oriented stratification system in modern technology and occupation have succeeded in detaching work from its caste contexts.

Thus, if a certain individual, group or family is able to acquire high status attributes such as education, wealth or better occupational position, the individual or group may become a member of higher social rank. This is no doubt associated with an increase in individual mobility. The distinctions between the strata have become less rigid and less visible today than they have been in the previous centuries.

This new phenomenon, as a consequence of industrialization, makes one assume that the caste system in India is yielding to 'class' system of the West. However, a comprehensive analysis of the problem reveals that the above phenomenon is confined largely to the few industrial-urban centres and the cities. The impact of industry is felt only in the neighbouring areas, limited to few miles. In the rural areas, still occupied by the vast majority of Indian population, the system of stratification remains 'closed'. The ranking depends more on the traditional evaluation of caste status. In other words, ascribed social status ~~is~~ widely superseded <sup>the</sup> ~~by~~ status - assignment made on the basis of individuals' qualities and achievements. The occupational structure is also widely determined by the institution of caste.

Thus, we find that both caste and class have a situational focus and a person participates simultaneously in both situations. It can certainly be argued that nearly everyone in India is in some sense "marginal" as between caste and class values.

The contrast between the patterns of stratification in pre-industrial and industrial societies holds special significance in our analysis. What we realize is that the new technological order and its social structural concomitants have until now failed to replace completely ~~the~~ the earlier traditional social order and its technological base. The Indian experience of industrialization and its social consequences, therefore, does not fit the Western model. Our analysis reveals that the process of industrialization need not necessarily destroy the traditional system of stratification and inevitably bring in "modern" system of economic classes. In fact, a good deal of technical modernization in India has strengthened the traditional system of caste. We, therefore, conclude <sup>by</sup> saying that <sup>since</sup> ~~because~~ both the industrial process and traditional societies are heterogeneous, contact between the two will occur at different points of every society, making it a mistake to assume that consequences of industrialization will be uniform in all societies.

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