

AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS IN UTTAR PRADESH: A STUDY OF THE NORTH-EASTERN AREAS

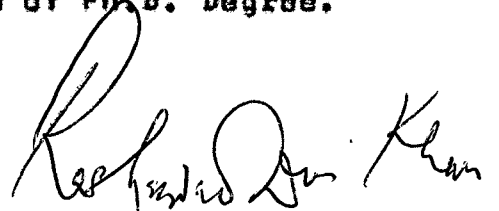
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C E R T I F I C A T E

T H I S dissertation entitled "Agrarian Relations in Uttar Pradesh: A Study of the North-Eastern Areas" submitted by Mrs. Sudha Pal for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University. We recommend that this Thesis should be placed before the Examiners for their consideration for the award of Ph.D. Degree.



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## PREFACE

"Agrarian Relations In Uttar Pradesh: A Study Of The North-Eastern Areas", is a Ph.D dissertation submitted to the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi. [It is an attempt to understand the agrarian system and the prevailing agrarian relations in four districts lying in the North-Eastern corner of U.P. U.P. is a large State and while much has been written in recent years on Western U.P., Eastern U.P. has remained comparatively neglected. This area has been ignored by economists, sociologists and policy planners, and its backwardness has led to the belief that its people are lethargic, caste-ridden and unresponsive to change. This survey attempts to focus attention on changes taking place within the agrarian system in these districts and the new emerging agricultural classes and their inter-relationship. In order to get an intimate picture of agricultural development, four villages were selected for an intensive monographic survey of the prevailing relations. The survey showed that while capitalist relations have begun to emerge, features and forms associated with the feudal mode of production exist side by side.



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## INTRODUCTION - THE THEME

This study is devoted to an examination of the agrarian relations prevailing in four North-Eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh, a State so large in size, and varied in its character, that it cannot be easily studied as a whole. In a predominantly agricultural society, where industrial development has not <sup>preceeded</sup> ~~preceeded~~ very far, and, where land still provides the main source of livelihood, the importance of understanding the nature and types of relationship prevailing among its major agrarian classes cannot be over-emphasised.

In its narrowest sense, by agrarian relations is meant the relationship among the various classes and persons working on, and associated with, agriculture. It would merely be, firstly identification of the main agrarian classes, for example, landlords, tenants and labourers, or owners, employees and labourers, and secondly a study of their inter-relationships. However, this would not help us much either in understanding the agrarian system of East U.P. or its many problems. Rather, taken in its widest sense, the study of agrarian relations would encompass a much wider field. It would provide, in a way, a method or avenue of understanding

an agricultural society. The ownership, control, and use of land is the major factor in rural life. In a village, who owns the land, who works on it, who controls its produce, these are questions worth asking. The various classes arise from it - some own the land, whereas others merely work on it. Social classes and social stratification in fact is based on land. In a society where land is equitably distributed, where it is self cultivated, and where the yield is high due to the use of improved methods, where the number of landless unemployed labourers is not high, the relationship between the various agrarian classes would be in the main harmonious, and vice-versa. [Thus the nature of agrarian relations provide an index to the structure and nature of an agrarian system. Caste is also an important factor providing unity or dis-unity in village life, but if we look closely, we find that 'Jatis' in a village are associated again with land. Often a "dominant" caste is one which owns the most and best land in the village. There are "landowning Jatis", "cultivating Jatis", "non-cultivating Jatis", etc., and in East U.P. the untouchables are those not allowed to touch or use the plough until recently.

Historically speaking, the agrarian system prevalent in ancient or medieval India was very

different from its counterpart either in Europe or in Britain. Feudalism and strictly feudal relations on land never developed fully in India. The feudal landlord or Manor is not seen. Moreover, the idea of land as a transferable and marketable commodity absolutely owned and passing from hand to hand, is not an ancient but a very recent development. In India, the right of cultivating a piece of land was rather a privilege first of the whole people, then of a particular community, and out of the produce, every individual according to his position had his "grain share".

If we examine the traditional agrarian structure in U.P., we find that it was not a feudal, but rather an "authoritarian-cum-paternal" System. At the village level, at its head was the village Zamindar, who was also a local potentate, responsible for law and order, and powerful both in the economic and political field. Below him came the tenants, the hereditary and traditional occupiers and cultivators of particular village plots over generations. They paid a fixed share of the produce to the landlord. Below them, came the share-croppers, who had no permanent rights of cultivation over any plot but could lease land on a percentage basis. Absentee landlordism, and the caste system, which prevented high caste Zamindars and big tenants from working with their hands sustained the share-cropping system. Finally at the bottom of the system were the landless

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labourers who were employed by cultivators during the busy seasons annually. Their position at times was no better than that of a serf and inability to repay debts often led to their becoming bonded servants to village Zamindars.

Such a system, no doubt, had its many attendant evils, it allowed for economic exploitation and social barriers. It was also a major reason specially during the 17th and 18th centuries when agriculture advanced elsewhere, for total stagnation and poverty. The rich upper classes lived on the surplus produce of the peasant leaving him just enough to survive. It was responsible for agrarian tensions and factionalism in village life. However, it was a system which everyone understood and in which each person had his position and a share in the produce of the village. The arrangement between the Zamindars and the rest of the cultivators was more than an agricultural or economic one, it permeated the social, political and financial spheres. The village people were called his "Praja". The Zamindar was also a money-lender and in cases of extreme need, the tenants could borrow from him. He was often a higher caste individual and helped settle village disputes, and helped poorer cultivators of his own caste. The landless labourer was also assured of food and shelter in return for his work. Due to the crop-share system under which all payments were in kind, the various artisans and other workers in

in the village, such as the barber and washerman, received a fixed share of the grain produce annually. Hence, although at times the system was oppressive and the poorer peasants suffered, the village as a whole maintained the total system, and respected it. Agrarian relations, except in areas where the local Zamindars were very oppressive, though not fully harmonious and punctuated often by serious disputes and quarrels - were settled and accepted.

The advent of the British with their notions of private property and written rules legalised this system, but it favoured the large landlords who now formed a class supported by the British. The poorer tenants and share-croppers suffered, and due to sale of land for rent arrears, the number of unemployed landless labourers increased. Agrarian tension in the United Provinces was quite frequent and the mutiny of 1857 also reflected it to some extent.

After Independence, the advent of land reform legislation further broke up the old system. Landlords afraid of losing their lands evicted hereditary tenants and resumed land for self cultivation. The clause of "Sir" and "Khudkhasht" land, and the late imposition of ceilings allowed them to keep large tracts of land. Though absentee landlordism was destroyed, a new class of landowners (Bhumidhars in U.P.) arose. The occupancy tenants in some cases benefited as the lands they had cultivated earlier became theirs, and they took to self cultivation

(or share-cropping as in east U.P.) and prospered. These tenants were traditionally anti-landlord, and agrarian tension was marked in the 1950s and 1960s. However, at the same time, they did not want the poorer tenants and share-croppers to benefit at their expense. In many areas while there are now no big absentee landlords, this new class of landowners no longer bound by the traditional order are now ruthlessly repressing the lower orders. Small earlier tenants-at-will were in the 1950s due to the land reform laws evicted in most cases and could not get help from law enforcement agencies, or land for share-cropping from land-owners trying to show "sir" lands. Even those who did get land for share cropping, it was on a very disadvantageous basis. The lot of the landless harijans has been the worst in recent years in spite of all efforts of the Government. There is no "Thakur" to employ and feed them.

The breakdown of the traditional order in U.P. has created agrarian tension, poverty and unemployment in the rural areas. New social classes have come up, but they are no longer part of a complete interdependent system respected by all. The substitution of cash rents for the grain share in a subsistence economy has removed the earlier institution of grain sharing, and labourers, village artisans and others traditionally dependent on the Zamindar are now facing difficulty.

Thus, agrarian relations have undergone a marked change in N.E. Uttar Pradesh as elsewhere, and a study of the new emerging landed classes, cultivators, labourers, etc., and their inter-relationship is of vital importance. The ownership, use and control of land and its produce provides even today, as earlier, a key to the understanding of the agrarian structure and its problems as a whole.





## CHAPTER I

### The focus And Perspective Of The Study

#### FOCUS

The main objective of this Study is a Survey of the agrarian system and the inter-relationship among its various classes in four districts lying in the northern most corner of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. East U.P. consists of the districts of Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Faizabad and Allahabad division. U.P. is one of the largest States in the Indian Union and contains regions with widely differing terrain, diverse climatic, social, economic and hence agricultural regions. It is a State so large in size, and varied in character that it cannot be studied as a whole. Hence attention is here focussed on only one region which has been selected for Study. It can easily be asked why this particular area of U.P. was chosen and the basis on which the various regions of U.P. were demarcated and such a selection was made. The reasons involve a brief exploration into the concept of agricultural regions in general and those of U.P. in particular.

Generally a region is an area homogenous in respect of a particular set of conditions delineated. For delineating agricultural regions we have to discover areas which are homogenous with respect to rainfall, irrigation, land formations, holdings size,

pressure of agricultural population, types and composition of soil etc. One could say that all agricultural resources would ultimately be reflected in the crop complexes but an agricultural region, and a crop region are different. Agricultural regionalisation is dependent upon many variables and has to be preceded by physical and manpower regionalisation so as to find areas with common rainfall, soil, climate, etc. The integrated picture which then emerges results from the interaction of complex variables covering the "integrated personality", differing from the personality projected by individual elements. Such regions must take into account not only the agricultural inputs but the whole complex of infra-structure reflected by optimum combination of rising agricultural production, effective land reforms, peasant proprietorship, irrigation, electricity etc. As we shall see East U.P. constitutes in this sense, an agricultural region within the larger State of U.P.

India is a vast sub-continent and the various State boundaries do not always coincide with the economic regions. In 1947, the country was divided into many small independent units, the British provinces etc., and the helter-skelter juxtaposition of state boundaries made it difficult to devise analytically valid geographical social or economic regions which could be equated with or confined within the individual States. The old boundaries arose out of historical

circumstances or the administrative convenience of the British. In 1956, the States Reorganisation Commission redrew the map of India, many of the newly formed States did not necessarily coincide fully with economic regions, but by reducing the number of States and increasing their average size, the Commission made fresh attempts at demarcating economic regions possible while respecting State boundaries. U.P. is one of the biggest States and like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh, it can be neatly divided into two major regions - Western U.P. and Eastern-Central U.P. Further divisions are also possible. Such regionalisation is advocated not merely because of its size, but is supported by physiographic and economic factors also.

U.P. spreading from north-west to south-east across the heartland of India can be roughly divided into three parts - (1) The Himalayas (2) the Plains (3) The Vindhyan Hills and Plateau. This division is supported by geological studies too - the Himalayas are young fold mountains whereas the Vindhyas forming a part of the Deccan Plateau are older and more solid. The plains are covered by recent river alluvium which is constantly replenished. We are concerned here with the plains area only. The plains form a vast flat area without even a few hills in between. However, they can be divided into two or three major portions. Many attempts have been made to do so. Spate has divided the "Ganges Plain", as he describes the northern

heartland of India, into two major portions in U.P. These are the Upper Ganges plains and the Middle Ganges plains. Most of the Middle Ganges plains described by Spate lie in Bihar so we are concerned with what he has described as the Upper Ganges plains. These comprise the sub-siwalik zone, Terai and Bhabar, and the trans-Yamuna alluvial veneer. The Upper Ganges plain is difficult to describe, physiography being of no help, the only surface variations such as "Bhur" (Sand) and "Bhabhar" are local. Stamp has, however, in the same work tried to divide this area. He makes a rather imprecise division on a line running roughly from the Yamuna-Ganga confluence in Allahabad across the NNW-SSE section of the Ghaghra. This does not correspond well with climatic isohyets but does divide two main crop areas - wheat mainly in the west and rice predominating with an acreage double that of wheat in the east. It also divides U.P. into two parts - west U.P. and east U.P.

In this study the plains of U.P. have been divided into three major parts - (1) Rohilkhand plains from the Siwaliks to Central U.P. (2) The Ganga-Yamuna doab, from the Siwaliks to Allahabad (3) The Avadh plains from Central U.P. to Bihar.<sup>2</sup> The Avadh plains covering the whole of east U.P. in general, and the four districts of Gorakhpur, Deoria, Basti and Azamgarh in particular is the area we are concerned with. These four Districts

may be described as forming a micro-division within a larger macro-division - eastern U.P.

When we turn from physiography to agro-economic divisions we find that the major socio-economic regions into which the plains area of U.P. can be divided is almost the same as the three mentioned above. The western districts of Bulandshahr Meerut, Muzzafarnagar, and Saharanpur are parts of the progressive wing of western U.P. that fringes the districts bordering on the Punjab. This is a prosperous area which for over a century has been engaged in a broad process of agricultural development. There is no overwhelming poverty, irrigation is well advanced, and the farmers are closer in spirit to the Punjabis than to their eastern neighbours. The central plains area occupies an intermediary position between the two extremes of west and east. The economy progresses at a slower rate, standard of living is only fair, although better than in the east, and the farmers are not as enterprising as those of Bulandshahr. The eastern areas are the most backward. This threefold division can also be seen in table I (Appendix) which divides U.P. into 9 agricultural divisions from the view-point of resources and productivity. The west U.P. plains area represents the best agricultural region in the whole of U.P. and this is reflected by the very high production levels and very high land resources in many districts there.

Another region with high land resources is eastern U.P. - specially Gonda, Basti Gorakhpur, Deoria, Azamgarh and Barabanki. However, due to under-utilisation of agricultural resources, this area is poor in productivity. Broadly speaking, it has been observed that both land resources and productivity decline from western to central U.P. and again to eastern U.P., though the resources go up in some districts. This is evident from a study of Table II (Appendix) which gives land resources and productivity in U.P. Productivity thus tends to decline in the Indo-Gangetic belt.

Thus we see that the eastern, central and western districts of U.P. are economically and hence socially very diverse. As we shall see in Chapter II also, eastern U.P. forms a homogenous region with regard to rainfall, crops and economic and social factors.

Eastern U.P. also forms a separate unit distinct from western and central U.P. and worthy of special attention, because it is a backward region. The eastern districts and specially those in the north form a region in which there is a rare combination of extreme poverty and dense population leading to heavy pressure on agricultural land. The population of these districts and its density is at the same time more than that of U.P. as a whole. This criterion, of course, can be misleading, for Meerut district

which is as heavily populated as Deoria is progressing. What matters really is rural density. This is higher in the east due to slower urbanisation aggravated by lack of land that can be brought under cultivation.

Industrial development is virtually non-existent except for some sugar mills in its north-east region and some industries recently installed in Varanasi, Mirzapur and Allahabad districts. The Census of India, 1961 attempted to classify all the districts of India as to their level of development based on 35 socio-economic indicators.<sup>3</sup> All the districts of east U.P. with the exception of Varanasi, Mirzapur and Allahabad stood on the lowest rung of this classification. Dasgupta tried to refine this analysis by taking into account only 24 indicators, he too came to similar conclusions.<sup>4</sup> U.P. is a backward State and its growth is hampered by the 15 eastern districts which slow down the rate of progress.<sup>5</sup>

[ A study of the agrarian situation in the Eastern districts is also required because this area has been ignored for long by agriculturists, sociologists, economists, and other social scientists.) While much has been written on western U.P., eastern U.P. has remained comparatively neglected. The Eastern U.P. districts come within the Gangetic plains and have very fertile soil; the average rainfall is fairly adequate (40" per year) and there is sufficient ground water and abundant labour. But this area has always been neglected in the allocation of funds both by State and

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Central governments and primarily lack of irrigation facilities has resulted in low agricultural productivity. This area was neglected even before British rule, as it was remote and inaccessible. During the period of the downfall of the Moghul Empire in the unsettled political conditions of the time, it formed the border of suzerainty of the Nawabs of Oudh and East India Company and provided an ideal refuge for the ambitious local chieftains who sought protection of either of the two in case of pressure from the other. During British rule too, this area was neglected partly as punishment for defying and oppressing British authority in 1857 and partly due to its climatic conditions. British officers considered it a punishment if they were posted to one of these districts, which were malarial and tried to get away as soon as possible, contributing little towards its development. During British times, nearly all agricultural development in U.P. took place in western U.P., a major development was the construction of a network of canal system which reduced the element of risk in agriculture and gave farmers incentive to experiment with new techniques and crops with new related industries. Eastern U.P. farmers on the other hand with their complete dependence on the natural forces for agriculture were not in a position to take risks or experiment in ways that if they failed could threaten their very existence. In eastern U.P. agriculture was a very low paying business and received a very low priority in both private and public investment allocations. Holdings were



small and scattered, and prevailing technology made large-scale investments in agriculture both risky and uneconomic. This led to neglect and capital starvation which depressed returns for agriculture still further. Over time surplus population from eastern U.P. moved to cities in search of jobs to maintain their families and those who remained, invested whatever savings they made in things other than agriculture - mainly in education.

Even after Independence in 1947 this area has remained neglected and its backwardness has fostered the belief that its people are lethargic, caste-ridden, tradition-bound and unresponsive to change. In western U.P. development funds have been used to build up a supporting infrastructure for agriculture such as roads, drinking water, marketing facilities, agricultural inputs, credit facilities, etc., which have all helped to create the so-called "Green Revolution". In east U.P. such efforts have only begun. Unfortunately, all efforts have been concentrated for a long time in areas which were already developed to a considerable extent. Thus pockets of progress and prosperity co-exist with poverty, and this has created the problem of regional imbalances as well, while it is obvious that regional differences in economic development cannot be completely eliminated it has to be conceded that the nation can assist the region by providing more funds to speed agricultural development.

community alonge, but for the wider society there has been a shift in the cropping pattern.) following these developments we can formulate the following questions for the purposes of our survey in north-east U.P.:-

1. The nature and position of the landowning class. Do the traditional landlords still own most of the land, or have new agrarian classes emerged in the rural areas? Who today constitute the large producers, the traditional big landowners or the intermediate class of superior tenants and medium landowners? What are the inter-relations among these classes? Traditionally, the relationship between the landowner and his tenants or share-croppers was semi-feudal and the bond between them was not merely economic but social and paternal as well. In N.E. U.P. have new contractual relations completely destroyed the old order? Is leasing out of land still prevalent, or has there been a shift towards personal cultivation?
2. The structure and types of tenancy in N.E. U.P. Tenancy and land size: who leases in and who leases out? Is "Sajehdari" still practised? Landlord-tenant relationship in cost-sharing and cultivation methods, conflicts and disturbances. Tenancy and caste in N.E. U.P.
- semi-feudal (def)*

3. What is the position of the landless class? Are there still "halwahas", attached or bonded labourers in these districts, or is the relationship between the landlord and labourer merely one of business now? Is there widespread land hunger resulting in conflict; or do the landless merely work as hired labour? To what extent having a piece of land is a necessary condition to satisfy the need for equity? Do the landless lower castes still perform duties for the upper caste landowning section in N.E. U.P.?
4. Is caste still an important factor determining the relationship between agrarian classes? Is untouchability still practised? Is money-lending still practised by the landowning class, and are a large number of villagers constantly in their debt, increasing their hold over them and worsening their economic position and social status?
5. Traditionally the villages of east U.P. and elsewhere in India had a subsistence oriented economy where everything required was grown or produced in the village. Payment was by the mode of "grain-sharing" and hence the relationship among the peasants and the village artisans was based on personal

and hereditary ties. However, today in most parts of the country with the emergence of a money economy, wages are paid mostly in cash and since agriculture is not for the village community only, there has begun a change towards growing cash crops and commercialisation. It is necessary to see how far this trend has developed in N.E. U.P. The capitalist farmer does not emerge

√ suddenly breaking his feudal ties. "... he develops within the pre-existing non-capitalist structure."<sup>6</sup>

These and other related issues would enable us to understand the slow but inevitable changes taking place in the modernising rural scene in N.E. U.P. Changes in agriculture, such as, for example, mechanisation, an open market, credit facilities, improved seeds etc. all have an impact on the relationship among the classes involved. "... agrarian revolution is a dramatic change of the productive forces as well as the productive relationships in agriculture. To ignore the role of social and economic over-heads created is to ignore the base for change. To ignore the productive relationships is to ignore the men in relationship to change. To ignore both is to ignore the nature of revolution."<sup>7</sup>

The four districts of Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria and Azamgarh have hence been selected as they are some of the most backward among the 54 districts of U.P. They are part of the Gorakhpur division, and except for Azamgarh lie north of the Ghaghra forming a compact unit. Falling within one revenue circle also, they can be collectively studied from the view point of agrarian change.

### OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Survey can be described as, an attempt to identify the main agrarian classes and determine the relationship prevailing among them in N.E. U.P. with a view to understanding the agrarian system as a whole.

*class def.* Generally speaking, a class may be defined as a group of individuals with a specific relationship to the means of production. The relationship has two aspects: First, is the ownership or non-ownership of means of production, and Second, is the type of use means of production are put to. Land can be considered a key variable since it is the single most important means of production in agrarian economics. However there is considerable overlapping in the various classes and between class and caste distinction. During the post-Independence era, various changes have occurred in the agrarian sectors (i) newly emerged agrarian groupings have altered the old class structure (ii) contractual relations have emerged (iii) since agricultural production is not for the village

## METHODS

The four districts of N.E. U.P. selected for this study form a remote and relatively neglected area of eastern U.P. Very little research has been done on these areas by social scientists; collection of agricultural data is difficult as records are poorly maintained, and communication and transport is also very poor in these districts. Any large-scale survey would hence prove very difficult. It was decided in order to get an intimate picture of agricultural development to select four villages for an intensive monographic survey on the prevailing agrarian relations. These villages do not constitute in the statistical sense a representative sample for an area as large as N.E. U.P. But for an intensive study a large sample is neither feasible nor a necessity. Hence data from a small number of villages was collected, presenting a micro-study. These villages were selected keeping in mind certain factors given below. ✓

A purely random sample would be of little use. In agricultural studies rather, it is better to use a stratified sample. This involves dividing the sample population into separate <sup>strata</sup> stratums. However, this is an expensive process, hence purposive sampling is usually resorted to. In this, after deciding the general breakdown of the sample on scientific lines, the researcher is at liberty to choose the actual sample unit. Hence

it is a type of stratified sampling. Although theoretically it seems less sound as compared to random sampling, if done with adequate safeguards, it can be highly reliable and the extra labour of random sampling can be avoided. It may therefore be said that the systematically chosen purposive sample is the most suitable for our purpose.)

Any method used must at the outset take into consideration certain characteristic features of eastern U.P. Firstly, no attempt to draw a sample is possible without taking into consideration geographical dissimilarities in N.E. U.P. This is a vast area covering four districts with differing terrain. In the extreme north, we find mountains and forested areas, and as we proceed southwards to Azamgarh, a flat plain is seen. Because of this the soil structure is different leading to different types of agriculture. The drainage of N.E. U.P., if studied, shows a slope from NW to SE, and a few major rivers flow an undulating course over it. These factors have been extensively described in Chapter II. Keeping them in mind, two villages north of the Ghaghra river and two south of it were selected. The river Ghaghra forms a dividing line among these districts and the areas north and south of it are different. This would make the sample representative so far as geographic and climatic factors are concerned. Secondly, the size of the villages has also been taken into consideration: in some in East U.P.

are so small that they have less than 500 persons, whereas some large well-known villages have upto 2000-5000 persons. Hence two small and two large villages have been selected. Thirdly, proximity to urban areas is an important factor as villages lying close to a big town or city are open to modernising influences and have more facilities than villages lying in purely rural areas. It is seen that those closest to the towns have the least number of facilities provided. Villages 100-200 kms. away have the largest number of amenities which gradually decrease as the distance from urban areas increases. Many villages deep in the interior and in totally rural tehsils do not have any postal or medical facilities at all. These villages mostly have "kuchha" (cart tracks) roads except for some large ones close to the town. There are some villages with "pucca" (metalled or bricked) roads and this facilitates transportation of crops, often fetches good prices, and also increases contact with urban areas, credit and seed societies in towns, and other farmers. Two of the villages selected here have kuchha roads and lie far from the main road. Two of them lie close to Basti and Azamgarh town, while two lie far from any urban area.

Together with size and population which have to be taken consideration of in any survey, infrastructure is very important. There are broadly speaking two schools of thought regarding the reasons underlying



the backwardness of East U.P. as compared with the western parts of the State. One school of writers holds the opinion that caste factors, the conservative customs of the farmers - such as not touching the plough - combined with the high rate of illiteracy and debt have kept the Eastern areas backward. Another school of <sup>4/1</sup>thought believes that the reasons are largely economic. The eastern areas have been neglected, all development funds having been used in the west for provision of good roads, drinking water, irrigation, etc., in rural areas which has given a boost to agricultural production. Hence, it is necessary to see how far villages in east U.P. have such facilities.

From the view-point of agrarian relations the following criteria were used in selecting the four villages:-

(i) One village in which a single Zamindari interest had been maintained for several generations within one family; a village in which the absentee Zamindar had traditionally enjoyed certain socio-economic privileges together with interests and rights associated with the collection of rent from his tenants.

(ii) Two villages which traditionally had a bhaiyachara system. These villages have been selected in "pairs" that is, one "Zamindari" and "Bhaiyachara" village lie north of the Ghaghra, and another similar pair lie south of the Ghaghra.

The above criterion was adopted in order to see whether the social and economic structure existing

earlier had an effect, good or bad, on the subsequent development of the village and the inter-relations among its classes. It cannot be denied that the existence of the Zamindari system had an effect on the villages concerned. A comparison again between western and eastern U.P. will clarify this point. The two regions differ sharply in agrarian development. Western U.P. is relatively less feudal; there used to be only five Zamindars per district in west U.P. whereas in Oudh or east U.P. there were 80 on an average.<sup>8</sup> There were no Taluqdars in west U.P. This saved the region from the feudal ossification of the eastern districts which teemed with taluqdars. In west U.P. the Zamindars were mostly Muslim Nawabs living in cities little concerned with agriculture. The agrarian system in this region was thus spared feudal deformation such as bonded labour, subsistence wages, unemployment, etc. The harijans in west U.P. did not face crude forms of social oppression either. This helped in the long run in bringing about equalising relations on land. However, in this study no attempt has been made to draw a comparison between agrarian relations in the past and present.

Once the villages were selected field work was carried out in January-February 1978 and February-March 1979. The common anthropological convention of concentrating on only one village had not been followed. For such a course, an extended stay in the village is required. Rather, dependence was placed on questionnaires

administered to villagers. Any attempt to stay for more than a few weeks in a village only causes uneasiness and suspicion as the villagers do not like outsiders. Establishing total rapport is a difficult task which can be accomplished only by slow and persistent efforts. However, it was found that villagers in some villages are accustomed to questionnaires and field investigators, while some dislike this constant probing, others respond willingly. It is possible that this experience has also taught them to avoid giving the information to the researcher without raising the latter's suspicion.

The secondary data was collected from the Census, Government Records and Government publications at the State, district and tahsil levels, gazetteers, etc. The overall information about the villages was gathered from the records of the Lekhpal, Gram Sevaks, and Tahsil officials. In the selected villages a number of households were selected for further study. The bulk of the primary data was obtained with the use of two questionnaires - the Village Schedule and the Household Schedule (given in the Appendix). The Household Schedule was administered to a cross-section of the households in each village. The Village Schedule was used to interview individual villagers such as the Lekhpal, Village Pradhan, caste leaders, big landholders etc., in order to gain general information about the village.]


FOOTNOTES

1. P.S. Sharma, Agricultural Regionalisation of India (Delhi: New Height Publishers, Daryaganj, 1973):7
2. D.H.K. Spate and A.T.A. Learmouth, India And Pakistan: A General Geography (Britain: Methuen And Co. Ltd. 1973): 411-423
3. Census of India, 1961, Series 21, Part IA(i) "Levels of Regional Development In India."
4. Biplab Das Gupta, " Socio-Economic Classification Of Districts; A statistical Approach" Economic And Political Weekly (August 14, 1971) VI:1963-75
5. The backwardness of the four districts can be understood when we realise that even today rail communications are very poor. The basic railway lines laid by the British have hardly been extended. Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria and Azamgarh are not on the Broad Gauge line at all. Whereas S.E. districts such as Jaunpur, Sultanpur, Varanasi, Allahabad, <sup>and</sup> ~~etc.~~ ~~and~~ Faizabad forms a rail head after which there is no broad gauge line at all until Bihar in N.E. U.P. Only in recent years a direct metre gauge service from Lucknow the State capital has been started which runs across Central U.P., through Basti, Gorakhpur and Deoria. Azamgarh has no direct rail connection with any other large town. Buses form the

main mode of transport. A broad gauge line runs from Lucknow south eastwards passing through Shahganj in Jaunpur district. From Shahganj a metre gauge track runs to Azamgarh and eastwards to Mirzapur. To reach Azamgarh by train from Lucknow one must go to Shahganj first. Nor is there any rail service from north to south, that is, for example, from Basti to Azamgarh. The whole of northern Azamgarh and south Basti and Gorakhpur form an area not covered by a single railway track. Lalganj tahsil in south Azamgarh is also not covered by any train service at all.

6. Utsa Patneik, "Capitalist Development In Agriculture", Economic And Political Weekly (Review of Agriculture, 1971) VI: A 123. Quoted in P.C. Aggarwal, The Green Revolution And Rural Labour (Delhi: Shri Ram Centre, 1973):11
7. G. Parthasarthy, "Green Revolution And Some Neglected Implications", Mainstream (33): VII: 13-14. Quoted in P.C. Aggarwal, vide note 6: 10
8. Arun Sinha, "Mockery of Reform", Economic And Political Weekly (December 23, 1978) XIII: 2065

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CHAPTER II**The Situational Context of Agrarian Relations In The North-Eastern Districts**

In this chapter, a brief agro-economic survey of eastern U.P. in general, and the four selected districts in particular is attempted. This will provide an agricultural setting or backdrop to our analysis of the sample villages in Chapter IV. In Chapter III, a short history of agrarian relations in this area with particular reference to the selected districts is also given.

Eastern U.P. stretches between the parallels of  $25^{\circ} 10'$  and  $26^{\circ} 27'$  north and the meridians of  $82^{\circ} 10'$  and  $84^{\circ} 40'$  east. It is almost triangular in shape, the apex lying a few miles east of the district of Ballia is formed by the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Ghaghra. The plain is 250 miles long, sloping gently from NW to SE following the direction of the rivers. U.P. is a large State, its total area being 2,94,413 sq. kms.<sup>1</sup> It is important also at the outset to realise that the area of the four districts is quite large as shown below:<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1

Districts	Area in sq. kms.
Basti	7,309
Gorakhpur	6,316
Deoria	5,400
Azamgarh	5,744

Deoria<sup>3</sup> occupies the eastern most corner and until 1946 was part of Gorakhpur district itself. To the north and east are the Champaran and Saran districts of Bihar, the dividing line being partly artificial, and in part supplied by the Great and Little Gandak. On the west lies Gorakhpur. It is bounded on the south by the Ghaghra which separates it from Azamgarh and Ballia. It has four Tahsils and according to the 1971 Census only four towns. In Deoria extensive tracts of bush and grassy wastes are found in an otherwise fertile plain. Mata tahsil is entirely rural, while Padrauna Deoria and Salempur tahsils have one town each - Padrauna, Deoria and Gaura Barhaj respectively. The largest tahsil is Padrauna, the smallest is Deoria. Proceeding eastwards we come to Gorakhpur<sup>4</sup> which lies between Basti and Deoria and is separated from Azamgarh by the river Ghaghra. It is separated from Deoria by the little Gandak and the Jharra Nala. Gorakhpur lies closest to the Himalayas and the snowy peaks are visible. Below the hills lies the Terai forming a belt some ten miles in width through the Maharajganj and Pharenda Tahsils. South of the Terai lie the rain forests which slope gently to the plains. The Terai and the forest covered area is virtually useless for agriculture. Gorakhpur has four tahsils - (i) Maharajganj (the largest - 1,773.4 sq. kms.) (ii) Pharenda (iii) Gorakhpur (iv) Bansaon (smallest - 1,383.3 sq. kms.). It has only two towns (1971 Census) and the tahsils of Maharajganj and Pharenda

are entirely rural.

Further west lies Basti,<sup>5</sup> the largest of these districts with six tahsils. On its west lies Gonda, south Faizabad and on the north Nepal. It has six tahsils - (i) Basti (ii) Harraiya (iii) Bansi (iv) Domariaganj (v) Naugarh (vi) Khalilabad. It has only three towns, the rest being classified as rural. Geographically the district can be divided into three parts:-

1. Uprhar uplands - and old fertile tract lying between the Kuano and Rapti rivers;
2. The tarhar or lowlands between the Ghaghra and Kuano rivers. Its southern portion called the "Manjha" is constantly under flood from the Ghaghra; and
3. The trans-Rapti area, a heterogenous tract covering large parts of Basti.

Azamgarh<sup>6</sup> lying south of the Ghaghra is far away from the Himalayas and is a level plain without any hills. There are however two natural divisions, markedly different from each other. The southern low lying tract which contains newer riverine alluvium, and the northern high lying User tract which has comparatively old formation of alluvial deposits. Azamgarh is bounded on the east by Ballia, on the south-east by Ghazipur, on the south-west Jaunpur and the north-west Faizabad and Sultanpur. Though smaller than Gorakhpur, it has six tahsils and five towns



(1971 Census). The tahsils are - (i) Sagri (ii) Ghosi (iii) Azamgarh (iv) Muhammadabad (v) Phulpur and (vi) Lalganj.

From the above, it is clear that these districts are predominantly rural and there are few large towns. The number of inhabited villages according to the 1971 Census were as below<sup>7</sup>:-

TABLE 2

District	No. of villages
Basti	6,942
Gorakhpur	4,094
Deoria	3,559
Azamgarh	4,943

The soil in these districts as in most of Eastern U.P. is mainly river alluvium. The table given below shows the various types of soils found here.<sup>8</sup>

TABLE 3

Soils.	Nature	Area
I. Terai & Bhabhar	Coarse textured, excessively drained, high water table condition leading to tall grasses. Dark coloured organic matter, rich surface horizon Muck and peat also.	Along the Himalayas in Gorakhpur mainly, with smaller patches in Deoria and Basti.
II. Alluvial Soils	Consists of riverine alluvium which can be divided into - 1) old deposits called Bangar; 2) New deposits called Khadar or Kachhar	All the 4 districts. Gorakhpur has mainly Bangar because of its highlands near the Terai. In Deoria and Basti, Bangar is found except along the rivers. The Bangar is the most stable land.

Bangar land is usually high ground not flooded by rivers and contains carbonate of lime in nodules called "Kanker", with patches of saline and alkaline affluences.

On high ground and old river beds.

Kachhar land is liable to inundation during the floods as it occupies the beds of rivers which tend to occupy a lower level each year due to erosion. In time Kachhar lands become Bangar and the process continues.

On low ground especially along the rivers.

It is important to note that there is a difference in the Kachhar deposits of the Ganga and the Ghaghra. A high flood level in the Ganga proves useful to the cultivators in the lowlands even when it destroys standing crops, for it leaves a deposit of fertile silt; but a flood in the Ghaghra is undesirable as it is a violent stream in which sand predominates injuring the standing crops as well as the soil. In the N.E. districts hence floods do not replenish the soil as in the S.E. where the Ganga flows, Gorakhpur and Deoria hence have calcareous alluvial soils as compared to the rest of the eastern districts.

The alluvial soils covering the eastern districts can further be classified into 3 types:-<sup>9</sup>

(a) Clay or matiyar which covers roughly 1/2 of the east plain is found in depressions and contains little organic matter. It grows all varieties of crops but is specially suited for rice. Deoria has large areas of matiyar.

(b) Loam or Domat which covers 1/3 of eastern U.P. found in higher regions, is a mixture of clay and sand, and is a good fertile soil of fair consistency excellent - when irrigated. Basti has mostly domat soils.

(c) Karail which covers roughly 1/5 of the plains is a light sandy soil, which resembles the black soil of Bundelkhand. It contains much organic matter and splits into cracks and fissures when dry. It requires plenty of water.

The character of the surface drainage of<sup>10</sup> Eastern U.P. shows a close relationship with the gentle slope of the land. Except for the Ghaghra, most rivers in Eastern U.P. meander across the plains forming Ox-bow lakes. The surface drainage is of two types: lakes and rivers. The principal rivers in these four districts are the Ghaghra, Sarju, Tons, Rapti, Kuano Gandak and many smaller ones. The Ghaghra has its source in the Himalayas while the others rise from lakes in the plains. The minor streams are seasonal, being dry most of the time and flooded for a few days in the year. The drainage of the N.E. districts and the effect this has on the agriculture and the crops of the area can best be understood by dividing the entire N.E. area by principal river systems.

1. Ghaghra System: The Ghaghra is the biggest river in N.E. U.P. and flows in between all these four districts. It rises in the Himalays where it is called the Karnali.

The catchment area of the Ghaghra (20,600 sq. mls.) is even greater than the combined catchment area of the Ganga (8,900 sq. mls.) and the Yamuna (4,500 sq. mls.) while its discharge is one and a half times greater than that of the Ganga.<sup>11</sup> It together with its tributaries brings down onto the plains an enormous amount of coarse material which explains the widespread occurrence of sandbars in its bed which have prevented it from meandering on the level plains.

The Ghaghra flows in between the four N.E. districts. It forms a great drainage outlet for the northern districts of Deoria, Gorakhpur and Basti. A vast network of streams, specially in the monsoon, enter it from these areas. The bed of the river is deep and its banks high with sandbars but occasionally it rises and floods the surrounding areas. The north-western part of eastern U.P. near Singhwara resembles a delta because here a number of secondary channels and branches of the river join together. When the river is in spate, its flood water is diverted into some of these subsidiary branches and the in-between areas are flooded. In 1972 when one of the channels of the Ghaghra broke into the Sarju at Singhwara, the flood scoured the channel of the Sarju for 6 miles and then flowed back to the mainstream through the Badrauhan Nala. The nala during much of the year is a mere string of lakes emptying into the Ghaghra. The silting of the Ghaghra has led to constant shifting of the main course of the river. In Azamgarh the river

does not serve as a drainage outlet but is navigable for a long distance beyond <sup>its</sup> boundaries. Throughout the course of the river many lakes and jhils are found.

2. Rapti System: The Rapti is another big river in north-eastern U.P. It is a drainage outlet for Basti, a part of Gorakhpur and Deoria. It is a powerful stream and apt to flood. The Rapti enters Basti from Gonda and cuts across from west to east flowing into Gorakhpur. 1/4 of Basti is the Ghaghra-Rapti doab and the remaining 1/4 the trans-Rapti tract. The Kuano flows from north Basti into the Ghaghra at Singhwara. Basti is hence a fertile plain cut across and drained by many rivers. In Gorakhpur district, the Rapti is the biggest river though it is confined to the west side of Gorakhpur city. There are many lakes surrounding the river and together with the Ghaghra it serves as a drainage system for Gorakhpur. Moving southwards, the Rapti enters Deoria, separating its S.W. part from Gorakhpur. It flows on into Bihar.

3. Gandak System: The Gandak system consists of the Great Gandak and the little Gandak, both largely confined to Deoria. The Great Gandak the most important river in Deoria, flows in a S.E. direction and for a short distance forms the boundary with the Champaran district of Bihar. This river is subject to violent floods which cause extensive inundation of villages in Hata and Padrauna tahsils. The little Gandak touches the district in Hata tahsil, forms the western

boundary of the district and after crossing the entire district and dividing it into two parts enters Salempur tahsil where it joins the Ghaghra. These two rivers together with the Ghaghra form the drainage system of Deoria.

4. Sarju and Tons System: The Sarju, commonly called the Chhoti Sarju enters Azamgarh near the village of Maharajganj and joins one of the southernly channels of the Ghaghra known as the Badrahan Nala. Later at Harrayat it leaves the Nala and continues S.E. Near Mau, it is joined by the Tons river which is perennial but in the dry months is a mere trickle. On its right bank it is joined by another seasonal river, the Bhainsahi. The bed of the Sarju after the Tons joins it becomes deep and broad and it floods very often. The Sarju-Tons system drains Azamgarh which lies south of the Ghaghra and hence is not drained by the latter. Thus, these districts are supplied by many rivers and in fact lie in their doab.

Besides surface drainage, groundwater resources are important for the purpose of tube-well irrigation which has become important in recent years. Geologists divide U.P. into consolidated, semi-consolidated and un-consolidated areas in regard to Geological formations underground.<sup>12</sup> The probability of encountering groundwater is high in unconsolidated areas, less in semi-consolidated and very low in consolidated areas, due to the degree of cementation and compaction of the

formations. The consolidated and semi-consolidated zones are mostly confined to a belt of varying thickness on the U.P.-<sup>Madhya Pradesh</sup> border, that is where the Vindhyan Rohilkhand and Bundelkhand plateaus rise from the plain and a few patches elsewhere. The entire Eastern plains of U.P. consist of unconsolidated formations which means that irrigation through tube-wells on a larger scale is possible during the dry months.

The climate of East U.P. is characterised by a rhythm of seasons which is produced by the S.W. and N.E. monsoons. The year in east U.P. can be divided into 3 distinct seasons which are very important for agriculture and hence require mentioning:-<sup>13</sup>

- (a) Cold weather Season from November to February
- (b) Hot weather season from March to Mid June
- (c) Rainy season from mid June to October

The S.W. monsoon is the "wet monsoon" when the winds are oceanic, blowing from east to west and comes during the rainy season. The N.E. or "dry monsoon winds" blow from west to east reversing the trend. This period lasts from November to mid-June covering the cold and hot season. The winter rains fall in December and January and though the amount is small, it is very useful for the rabi crops, specially wheat.

The normal annual rainfall when put on a map forms a definite pattern. Starting from the extreme north in Eastern U.P. in the area bordering the Himalayas five belts can be seen as we progress southwards.<sup>14</sup>

TABLE 4

	Normal annual rainfall (in cms.)	Area
1st Belt	180-160	North Gorakhpur
2nd Belt	160-140	North Gorakhpur and Deoria
3rd Belt	140-120	Central Gorakhpur, Deoria and Basti.
4th Belt	120-100	Southern portion of Gorakhpur, Deoria, Basti and Azamgarh.
5th Belt	100-90	Portion of South- West Azamgarh.

However, it should be remembered that most of this rainy falls only in the rainy season, the rest of the year being dry. The seasons depend on the monsoon winds and the amount of rain they bring, and the sowing and harvesting of crops depends on the cycle of rains.

There are great variations in the amount of rainfall from season to season. Years of plenty are often succeeded by years of drought, giving the upcoming farmer a set-back. The variability of rainfall is greatest in the S.W. part of U.P., and least in East U.P. In the former, the mean annual deviation is over 21% while in the latter it is less than 17%. An annual variability of 12% or more makes an area susceptible to famine, so that the whole of Eastern U.P. may be regarded as vulnerable in this respect.



Rainfall is not only variable in total annual amount, but it is much more unreliable in its distribution in different months of the rainy season. There are long dry spells often during the rains and the commencement and end of the monsoon is uncertain. This makes the income of a small farmer in the eastern districts a gamble in rains.

Population figures for the four districts are given in the Appendix (Table IV - Table VIII). A glance at them shows that these areas are heavily populated, all the four districts have over 30 lakhs of population. However, this is not surprising as U.P. as a whole has a population of 9,48 lakhs.<sup>15</sup> However, it is the distribution of population that is important in our study. If we look at table V (Appendix) we find that the percentage of rural population to the total population is very high, over 90%, that is, most of the people live in the countryside, or in a few overcrowded cities. There has been a shift to the cities searching for jobs. As seen earlier, most of these districts have only 2-4 urban conglomeration<sup>s</sup> classified as towns. In Basti and Deoria less than 3% of the population lives in the urban areas and the pressure on land is the greatest. The density of population is also very high, as much as even 521 persons per sq. mile in Deoria. Arithmetic density of population is however not a representative index of pressure of population on land. It expresses

a simple man/land ratio without any consideration of the suitability of land for human occupation, including mountains, forests, barren lands etc. As almost all rural population depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for its livelihood, the ratio between rural population and arable land provides a better yardstick to measure pressure of population on land. This has also been included in Table VI. While the density of rural population is 4-5 persons per hectare of arable land in the whole of U.P., in these districts except in Basti, it is above 5. The agricultural situation can be properly realised when it is remembered that in the 1960s and 1970s the net grown area has remained stable. Extension of cultivation in this region is now almost entirely impossible.

The distribution of population in various types of villages is revealing and given in Table VIII(Appendix). It shows that in N.E. U.P. the villages are small, but numerous. Small congregated hamlets rather than large villages are the rule. In Basti, the percentage of villages with less than 500 persons is 74.8% and this figure drops to only 18.6% when we come to villages with 500-999 persons. The difference in the others is not so steep. Moreover in Basti, if we look at villages with less than 200 persons we find that 7.9% of the rural population live in them and 35.4% live in villages with 200-499. In Azamgarh the corresponding figures are 5.3% and 20.2% respectively,

but they drop in the case of Gorakhpur (3.2% and 15.4%) and Deoria (2.1% and 14.1%). In fact, more than 1/2 the villages in the State (55.3%) have less than 500 persons each.

The percentage of Scheduled Caste population in the total population of these districts is shown in Table X (Appendix). It is higher in the rural than the urban areas. As we shall see, most of the scheduled castes living in the countryside are agricultural labourers, U.P. as a whole has a higher percentage of scheduled caste population (21%) than the rest of India (16.2%). The Scheduled Caste population in the rural areas (22.5%) is twice that in the urban areas (11.3%). There are 64 kinds of scheduled caste listed in the 1971 Census, and only 1/5 of the scheduled castes in the whole State are literate. Detailed tables for each district regarding literacy and occupational structure of the schedule caste are given in the Appendix (Table XI).

The main crops sown in the northern-eastern districts are given in Table XVI (Appendix) along with the area and yield per hectare of each. Wheat and rice occupy the highest percentage of total cropped area followed by barley and maize. Wheat is the most important rabi crop in U.P. But it is no doubt grown more in the west than in the east. Wheat has comparatively greater concentration in western U.P. than elsewhere. The dominance progressively decreases

south-eastward until it goes down to below 10% in Azamgarh and Ghazipur area. Rice is grown more in the east U.P. plains where rainfall is heavy, the predominance of the crop decreasing westwards. Rice, the most important kharif crop occupies more than 25% of the total area in eastern U.P.<sup>16</sup> However, although these two principal crops occupy so much area, the yield of both is low, compared to the western districts as well as the rest of the country. In the case of wheat, except for some districts, such as Shahjahanpur, Kheri, Sitapur and Unnao all the districts of the western plains have a yield which is much higher than the four districts under survey. Only Ghazipur in east U.P. has a yield of 1,440 kg. per hectare to match districts such as Meerut or Bulandshahr (1,626 and 1,448). This is true in case of rice too in spite of the more favourable climatic conditions in the east. Muzaffarnagar (1,054), Meerut (1,088), Bulandshahr (889) although known as "wheat" areas have a higher yield in the case of rice too.<sup>17</sup>

High yielding varieties of wheat occupy very little space - only 56.1% of the total area under wheat in U.P. Whereas high yielding varieties have displaced local ones almost entirely in the west, in the eastern plains farmers are backward in doing so. Only 80% of the total area under wheat in U.P. is "pure crop" the rest is "mixed crop" with barley, maize, gram etc. This practice is again more common in the poorer eastern

districts where it occupies 20% of the area under wheat further lowering the yield.<sup>18</sup>

Smaller millets are not an important crop but in the context of eastern U.P. they are important as crops of poor people who cannot afford to grow wheat due to poor soil, lack of water and money for fertiliser. They cover a large area in east U.P. specially areas around the river Sarju (6.8%, 9.3%, 8.1% and 4.3% of the total cropped area in Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria and Azamgarh respectively).<sup>19</sup> In western U.P. with more progressive agriculture virtually no land is given to these crops. As the yield of these crops is low, they should be rapidly replaced by better crops.

Table XVII (Appendix) shows that in the case of principal crops, the yield in U.P. is in all cases less than that of India as a whole. The yield is low in eastern U.P. mainly due to almost complete dependence of the crop on unreliable rainfall, lack of assured irrigation and little fertiliser use. The questionnaire of the field survey bears out the truth of the above statement. Tables XVIII(A), (B), (C) and Table XIX (Appendix) give agricultural output in East U.P. during the 1960s.

Table XIV (Appendix) shows the cropping intensity in the N.E. districts. The cropping intensity in U.P. varies from 98% (Hamirpur Banda) to 149% (Deoria); the intensity being high both in the eastern and western

plains and low in the Centre.<sup>20</sup> The intensity is high in the east due to the high pressure of population on land and because of lack of alternate employment to agriculture. Multiple cropping has yet to make much headway and intensive utilisation of the land has yet to be made. The land utilisation pattern as given in table XII shows that there is still some culturable waste, but further increase in cultivated area will be limited. The solution to the problem of rural overcrowding lies in the optimum utilisation of land in all possible ways, and provision of alternate means of employment. Table XIII gives the land utilisation pattern from 1956-61 in east U.P. The yield per acre is low in east U.P. partly due to the existing pattern of landholdings. Most of the holdings are small and uneconomic. Land consolidation has been attempted but has not made any radical change in the structure of landholdings. A few landlords own farms covering vast areas of land and the rest own very little. Table XV (Appendix) shows the distribution of holdings in some parts of eastern U.P. In Azamgarh 25.4% of the holdings are less than one acre, while in Mathura (west U.P.) it is only 2.9%. Again, while in Azamgarh 20.7% holdings are over 5 acres, in Mathura the corresponding figure is 59.7%. Share-cropping is widespread in U.P. and a number of the holdings may not even be owned, but leased from a high caste landlord.

Irrigation facilities have been steadily increasing in east U.P. since Independence, but the demand has also

increased specially in years of drought. Most of the rivers in east U.P. are not perennial and failure of rains can lead to severe drought.

✓ Table XXI (Appendix) shows the area irrigated in the four districts by different sources. Basti has the largest irrigated area. Table XXII gives the percentage of net irrigated area against the net cropped area. It is quite high in all these districts, ranging from 41% to 52% while the State average is 40.3%. The progress of irrigation in East U.P. from 1951 to 1961 ✓ can be seen in Table XXV (Appendix).

✓ There is, however, much regional disparity in irrigation facilities between the west U.P. and the east U.P. plains. Table XXVI (Appendix) gives a comparison between 10 districts each in western and eastern U.P.

They are the best irrigated districts in these areas. In western U.P. except for some area with 44.2% no district has less than 50% NCA (net cropped area) under irrigation. The districts of Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Bulandshahr and Aligarh have between 77-82% NCA under irrigation. In comparison, in the east, only Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Faizabad and Basti form a belt with over 50% NCA under irrigation. In most of the others it is between 38 to 46% falling to 25.7% in the case of Gonda. It is interesting also to note disparity in the percentage of NCA irrigated by Government facilities. It is clearly higher in the west. In all the western districts

listed in Table XXVI (Appendix), more than 1/2 of the area was irrigated by the Government. In Musaffarnagar it is as high as 51%. In comparison, in east U.P. except for Varanasi with 30.8%, it is less than 1/2. In Basti and Azamgarh with over 50% NCA irrigated it is only 11%. In Gonda only 2% is irrigated by Government sources. Much of the development of irrigation in East U.P. is due to the initiative of the local people.

This difference can be understood when we look at the major sources of irrigation in U.P. Western U.P. is covered by a number of canals such as the upper and lower Ganga canal, Yamuna Canal, Agra canal, etc. Large number of dams provide both hydro-electric power as well as water for irrigation. In eastern U.P., the N.E. areas, are supplied by only the Gandak Canal. In Gonda, Basti, Bahraich etc., there are no canals at all. S.E. portion of east U.P. is covered by the Sarda Canal running south of the Ghaghra. However, there are a number of schemes under construction. In east U.P. they are the Gandak Canal to provide a benefit of 1.49 lakh hectares of cultivated land in Gorakhpur, and 3.79 lakh hectares in Deoria; linking of Ghaghra, Tanda, Dohrighat, Dalmau, Gyanpur pump canals with the Sarda System; proposed canal north of the Ghaghra to provide irrigation to Bahraich, Gonda, Basti and Gorakhpur.<sup>21</sup>

Tubewells form a far more important source of irrigation in eastern U.P. where as seen there are few



canals. Most of them have been set up by private farmers. Table XIII (Appendix) gives the number of tubewells in the four N.E. districts. Except for Basti, the number of government provided tubewells are less than 1/2 of those set up by private farmers. While it can be argued that such initiative by the local farming community is to be commended, it should be pointed out that most of these farmers unable to utilise all the water "sell" their excess water to poorer farmers at exorbitant rates much above those fixed by the Government. Field work in Gorakhpur showed that there has emerged a class of landlords who do not own much land but have installed a tubewell and are engaged in selling water to their poorer neighbours. Most of the small farmers interviewed <sup>this</sup> pointed out, and asked for irrigation through government sources. The west U.P. plains too have a larger number of tubewells, although they are covered by canals. This is because here agriculture is in a flourishing <sup>condition</sup> and tubewells have generally been provided to supplement canal irrigation. The importance of tubewells and other wells as sources of irrigation has been increasing steadily over the years. They involve lower costs, can be completed faster than canals, and there is better utilisation potential by tubewells. The government has also realised this, and no longer concentrates on only big projects. Table XXVI (Appendix) gives the first to fourth Five-Year Plan irrigation schemes in Azamgarh and Gorakhpur, while Table XIX (Appendix) covers all the districts.

A related problem to overcrowding on agricultural land is the large number of agricultural labourers in east U.P. Agricultural labourers today may be described as a residuary group in the Indian rural community. Changes in the social, political and economic situation in India during the last century have changed the character of the agrarian society and led to the creation of a distinct class of agricultural labourers. In the course of 50 years, from 1901 to 1951, the agricultural working force increased from about 73 million to 98 million, while the non-agricultural working force stood at about the same figure as at the beginning of the century.<sup>22</sup>

The enormous growth of population, the breakdown of the village industries with the advent of manufactured goods, the system of cash rent, the coming <sup>in</sup> of cash crops and an external market all created a landless agriculturalist class who with the lack of alternate employment hired themselves out as agricultural labourers. In the earlier self-subsisting economy there was little scope for the development of the land holder-cum-share cropper and supervising farmer-cum-agricultural labourer relationship. This problem has now reached staggering proportions. Tables IX(i), (ii) and (iii) in the Appendix show the number of agricultural labourers in the four N.C. districts among all the categories of agriculturists. In table IX(i) we see that over 25% of the total population are agricultural labourers. The number of agricultural

labourers are more in eastern U.P. than in western U.P. Table XX (Appendix) shows that the number of agricultural workers per 100 acres cultivated. It is as high as 61 in the east U.P. plains. They form in east U.P. the poorest section of the agricultural community. Their working conditions are very bad, with long arduous hours of work and in spite of a minimum wage act, wages remain lower than in the western part of the plains. In U.P. the current level of minimum wages for casual labourers is Rs. 3-4 per day. The State is divided into three zones - eastern, central and western zone. No hours have been fixed. For attached annually paid labourers the annual wage in 1973 in U.P. was Rs. 936 - 1,170 depending on farm size. In 1968, the corresponding figures were 434 and 612.<sup>23</sup> Being poor the labourers are often in debt thus increasing the hold of the employer over them. However, the number of bonded or attached labourers are now decreasing in U.P.

The number of bonded labourers has decreased since independence, however, one in every 20 agricultural workers in India is a bonded labourer, in spite of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act in 1976. A recent survey<sup>24</sup> of bonded labour published by the National Labour Institute estimates that in 6 States - Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh - there are at least 2.17 million bonded

labourers. This is about 6.1% of the labourers in these States. The incidence is definitely higher than the government estimate of 4.2%. When the proportion of bonded labourers to the total agricultural labour in the country is calculated the figure is around 5%. The incidence of bonded labour is highest in Madhya Pradesh 11.8% of the agricultural workers; however, the number is largest in U.P. being 5,50,000. The Survey has demarcated 7 areas with a high incidence of bonded labour and identified 12 districts as "Bonded Labour Districts" - each with over 40,000 labourers.

Rural poverty with incomes below subsistence level leads to loans and so on to the bonded labourer, who pledges himself and often his family against the loan. The Survey shows that domestic expenditure - rather than, as believed, weddings etc. - leads to loans.

The Survey also revealed that 13% of the labourers were in bondage due to their low caste status or because by tradition one of their family had served the high caste master. The value of their labour is pegged so low that they can hardly pay back the loan during their life time. The report shows that 56.1% were held against Rs. 500 or less; 19.9% against Rs. 500 - 900 and 21% against Rs. 900. 84% of them belong to the scheduled castes and tribes. Only 11.6% are caste Hindus. "The phenomenon of bondage can be identified where there is a distinct social encounter between the landed high caste Hindus and the poverty-stricken Scheduled Caste and Tribes." Thus "Two million

bonded labourers is a considerable source of cheap labour ..... that contributes substantially to the prosperity of the ruling elite...."25

In eastern U.P. very few large industries are found. The whole State is backward as far as industrialisation is concerned. According to the 1971 Census, among the 2 crores and 73 lakhs wage earners, only a meagre 7% were industrial workers.<sup>26</sup> Even among these 7%, 1/2 belonged to the cottage and small scale industries. A glance at Table XXIX (Appendix) gives the percentage distribution of working force in regions by primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of industry. This shows that the occupational pattern in the State is heavily biased in favour of the primary sector. In U.P., the primary sector is the single most important sector. It indicates a heavy pressure of population on agriculture, reflecting lack of employment opportunities in other fields - a sign of economic backwardness. The eastern section has the largest proportion of workers in the primary sector which is higher than the State average and the lowest proportion in the secondary and tertiary sectors. U.P. stands 11th among the States of India regarding industry. Leaving aside Kanpur, Allahabad, Saharanpur, Meerut and Agra which account for nearly 1/2 of the registered industries -

38 out of the 57 districts are industrially backward. The N.E. districts of east U.P. fall much below the State average in industrial development. The modern type of large-scale factories are practically non-existent in these districts except for a few sugar mills - the industrial activity is mainly confined to traditional cottage and household units. There are no large workshops, important public works programmes or private construction activities <sup>these</sup> in districts.

✓ Table XXX (Appendix) divides the districts of U.P. into five groups of ten districts each, on the basis of their net domestic production. They are ranked in descending order. As can be seen, except for Gorakhpur the other three districts of Deoria, Azamgarh and Basti fall into the last group. Basti has the lowest NDP among the districts. The poor state of industry underlines the need and urgency of agricultural development in east U.P.

FOOTNOTES

1. Statistical Diary of U.P., 1975 (U.P. State Planning Institute, Economic And Statistics Division, 1975):1
2. Ibid; 37-38
3. District Census Handbook, 1961, Deoria (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1961): 1-11
4. District Census Handbook, 1961, Gorakhpur (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1961):I-V
5. District Census Handbook, 1961, Basti (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1961): III-IV
6. District Census Handbook, 1961, Azamgarh (Census of U.P. Series 21, Part X-A, 1961):III-V
7. Census of India 1971 U.P., Series 21, Part II-A, "General Population Tables": 9
8. Compiled from -
  - (i) P.S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U.P. (Pantnagar: Agricultural University, Pantnagar 1973): 24
  - (ii) M. Shafi, Land Utilisation In Eastern U.P. (Aligarh: Muslim University Aligarh, 1959)3
9. R.S. Srivastava, Agricultural Labour In Eastern Districts of U.P. (Varanasi, Kashi Vidyapeeth, 1966):3-5
10. M. Shafi, n. 8(ii), 3-5
11. Ibid; 6

12. P.S. Tiwari, n. 8(i), 28
13. M. Shafi, n.8(ii), 16
14. P.S. Tiwari, n. 8(i) 16, Plate: 8
15. Statistical Diary of U.P., 1975 (U.P. State Planning Institute, Economics & Statistics Division, U.P.):1
16. P.S. Tiwari, n. 8(i), 60-62
17. Ibid; 118
18. Ibid; 60. Barley, Maize or Gram is grown with wheat so that in case the wheat crop fails, the farmer has the other grains which are hardier to fall back on.
19. Ibid; 72, Plate 33
20. Ibid; 26
21. "Extension of Irrigation Facilities in U.P." Indian Express Wednesday, the 9th November, 1977: IV
22. K.K. Ghose, Agricultural Labourers in India (Calcutta: Indian Publications, 1969):1
23. G. Parathasathy and R. Rao, "Minimum Wages Legislation For Agricultural Labourers - A Review." Economic And Political Weekly (September, 1975, Review of Agriculture) X: A 76-88



24. Arul B. Louis, "Inhuman Bondage", India

Today (May 1-15, 1979): 89

✓25. Ibid

CHAPTER III**Backdrop Of Land Relations In North-Eastern  
Districts - A Resume**

It would be relevant at this point to briefly describe the system of landholding prior to the abolition of Zamindari in 1951 in the villages selected and data collected. This will enable us to understand the present situation in the light of past circumstances. In what follows attention will be focused on only certain aspects of the agrarian structure in eastern U.P. which are relevant to our Survey. Finally a brief agrarian history of the districts will be given.

In U.P. there have been traditionally two major types of proprietary rights - Bhaiyachara and Pattidari and their members were called village Zamindars. Below them were the tenants who were responsible for cultivation, and finally the agricultural labourers who were responsible for ploughing, harvesting digging of wells, etc. The rights of the Zamindars in eastern U.P. were originally founded either on conquest or colonisation. The original inhabitants of this area were tribals called Bhars who had a chief and paid a grain-share to him in lieu of the right of cultivation. This system current before the advent of the Aryans led to the formation of joint villages over most of north India either by conquest or colonisation; and their

composition was essentially clannish for example villages were "possessed" by clans of Rajputs, Jats etc. exclusively. Whatever the mode of formation conquest, or colonisation - these early Zamindars were in all cases a ruling, conquering and often a non-agricultural sect who took the superior or landlord position over an existing group of cultivators. The upper classes of Aryan origin had little feeling for agriculture except as a source of wealth.

Although the invaders spread over most of this area and formed joint tenure villages and were called Zamindars (owners of the soil), the large single and well-known proprietors of east U.P. were a later growth. It was with their rise that there arose a big gulf between them and the tenantry. In the 11th and 12th centuries as the Muslims became more firmly entrenched in the western areas, big Rajput chiefs were driven eastwards and east U.P. was the scene of a struggle between them and earlier settlers for proprietorship of land. The Rajputs emerged victorious and their clans - whose names are familiar even today - spread over the entire area forming the top layer or proprietary class. Being conquerors and high caste warrior Hindus they did not take to cultivation which they left to the former inhabitants who remained the actual tillers, occupancy tenants-at-will of the Zamindars. Thus the idea of a class of "agriculturists" (no other name can be given as their source of income was agriculture) who did not till the

land but were in a sense owners is very old in north India. This explains the existence until very recently of landlords who regarded farming and farm work or at least handling the plough, as degrading. It was this that led to the rise of the ploughmen or "harwaha" of east U.P., a class of lowly servitors. In a land where change moved very slowly, the lapse of a thousand years scarcely affected sundry characteristics of rural India. In ancient and medieval India there was no concept of property, and overlordship produced in U.P. the interesting feature of a series of rights superimposed on one another. Baden-Powell mentions three layers in U.P.<sup>1</sup>

(1) The original settlers who were reduced to serfs.

(2) The Adne-Malik or owners in the 2nd degree.

(3) The Ala-Malik or superior proprietors.

This process continued over time and more layers were added. This shows that proprietorship did not confer ownership, merely a share in the produce. Thus historically speaking Zamindari was the oldest and most prized norm of landholding in east U.P.

The three main figures in the agrarian system in north India during Mughal times in a hierarchical pattern were the king, the intermediary known in U.P. as the Zamindar, and the peasant. The question of who owned the land is futile as it does not help us in understanding the position of the agrarian classes

and the system of landholding. Rather the revenue system shows us the position of each class in the agrarian structure. The peasant was the cultivator and hence paid the yearly revenue. Above him were not one, but many intermediaries standing between him and the king. Each occupied a distinct position and each had his official and unofficial powers by which he exercised control over the peasant. The general position of the peasantry in N. India was very miserable throughout medieval times. The nobility and upper classes lived on a surplus produce of the peasant leaving him the barest minimum needed to continue working and living. It was this appropriation of the surplus after paying the required revenue that created the great wealth of the governing classes. There was also a tendency, a natural outgrowth of the Jagirdari system, to raise the revenue demand still higher. Moreover, the Jagirdar seldom collected the revenue himself, this responsibility was passed on to the local potentate or Zamindar who in turn might delegate it to the primary village Zamindars. These men in eastern U.P. were often local Rajputs and Brahmins who while oppressing the peasantry often instigated them also against the Muslim overlords. Below the peasant who belonged to the "cultivating caste", came the landless low caste labourers and share-croppers. The only way a peasant could save himself from further oppression was flight to virgin lands or, to the fields of another Zamindar who promised protection. The position of the Zamindar

class was on the whole much better than that of the peasant. During Mughal times, the Zamindars supported the separatist, localist and parochial trends in their regions and the smaller Zamindars sandwiched between the superior Zamindars and the peasantry were constantly struggling to improve their position.

It was because of such an oppressive agrarian structure that the agricultural situation never underwent a change for the better during medieval times. During the 16th and 17th centuries, an era of agricultural advance in Europe and other countries, in northern India there was total stagnation. There was no improvement in the methods, tools of agriculture or in the yield. The Zamindar class who were the only section in rural areas who had capital to invest were not interested in improving agriculture. The surplus from the land was spent on social and religious ceremonies, and in imitation of the ruling class on pomp and extravagance. The rise of the middle class and of popular banking in France and Germany in medieval times was due to the inculcation of thrift as a national virtue. No corresponding institutions have developed in rural India. The peasant on his part had no incentive to improve the yield on his land. Any increase was usually taken away by his landlord leaving him to subsist on the barest minimum. Nor was there a market where he could sell his produce, hence he produced the required minimum and no more. Living for centuries under such a system, the peasant is slow even today to change his habits and take to advanced methods of farming.

The breakdown of the Mughal system created chaos and upset the rural structure destroying land rights and transforming revenue collection to extortion. New Zamindaris and Taluqdaris were created at the expense of hereditary rights and small kingdoms were carved out by local potentates, Oudh itself being an example of this phenomenon.

The British in 1801 faced with a bewildering array of tenures made futile attempts to discover the "real owners" of the agricultural land in Oudh and eastern provinces. Behind this search lay the Whig notion that no society can prosper without the existence of private property, and an independent judiciary. However, unfamiliar with the system of landholding and superior and inferior tenures, they finally adopted two well-known methods of revenue collection - the Zamindari settlement in U.P. and Bengal, and the Raiyatwari settlement in Madras. Seeing the Zamindar as the most likely owner, most of the thirty year settlements in eastern U.P. were made with the Zamindars, the Collector was merely to receive the revenue from them. The existence of a large number of Rajas, Zamindars, Jagirdars, etc., and the mutiny of 1857 also made them realise the wisdom of this policy. Basically a government committed to maintaining law and collecting revenue, the various measures taken by the British had a radical effect on the agrarian structure.

(1) The creation of a proprietary class of absentee Zamindars and Taluqdars: The British, it is true, did not create the Zamindar, they merely granted him legal recognition. However, by doing so, they strengthened his traditional position and gave him full political and economic power within his estates. The legal status given to him was not to expropriate the customary subordinate rights in land which in theory were safeguarded, but in actual practice they suffered creating great discord. The British did try to protect ryots by insisting on written pattas between the Zamindar and the tenant, but, as no attempt was made to define the term Zamindar, Zamindari, estate, proprietor, etc., it was the Zamindars who gained legal rights to the lands they claimed. Nor could the real proprietor because of his ignorance and lowly position, and usually unwritten claim prove his right. The adoption of the Mahalwari settlement in the N.E. districts was also an attempt to help the peasants. Under it the settlement was to be made not with the proprietor of the Mahal (estate) but with all co-sharers or at least the names of everyone of them and their separate rights were to be recorded. However, it was difficult to collect information and investigation into every Mahal proved tedious to a government basically committed to collection of revenue without disturbing the agrarian structure. After 1858 the enquiry was not exacting and <sup>whatever</sup> injury had occurred was accepted and the British made no further attempts to open the question of land rights. However, legislation for tenancy reform, protection of peasants, debt



relief, etc., was all passed and it did have an ameliorating impact on the ryots.

(2) Fragmentation of Holdings: The introduction of the western notion of private and individual holdings also led to fragmentation of holdings, constant sub-division, litigation, and sale of land for arrears. This in turn created greater poverty. Traditionally the cultivation unit was the joint family which cultivated its fields either by its own labour, or hired agricultural labourers. The adoption of the Mahalwari system in the eastern districts meant that the names of all the co-sharers were to be entered in the revenue records and the system of registration of land rights began. This led to partition of land among brothers and other members of the joint family. This continuous sub-division was in its aggravated form a most unfortunate development. "Everything is divided - shares, holdings, plots, tenants houses, groves, ponds and even trees. And where there is no formal partition there is always an informal one."<sup>2</sup> Sub-division is easy in India because there are no hedges and the fields are merely marked off by ridges. The sub-division of plots was carried to extremes in Basti and surrounding districts. In tahsils Bansi and Domariaganj the plots were often 25-30 sq. ft. The average area was 7 biswas. After the settlement of 1889, the number of 'khatas' increased in Basti district from 8,00,000 to a million and a quarter. In the trans-Rapti tract were about 500 agriculturists to the cultivated sq. mile, in the rest of the district

the figure was close on 1,000.<sup>3</sup> Similarly the recorded figures in the Settlement Report of the Gorakhpur District (Tahsils Mata, Padrauna, and Deoria) showed the average holding to be less than one acre; in Pargana Sidhna Jobna it was 1.3 acres, in Tahsil Mata it was 0.9 and in Pargana Salempur Majhauri it fell to 0.65 acres.<sup>4</sup> Table XXXIII (Appendix) shows the average area in acres per cultivator and per plough in some districts of the United Provinces. In this table we can see that as we proceed from west to east the figures drop down from 10.2 for Meerut to finally 3.1 acres for Basti. Thus fragmentation was further aggravated by the fact that the peasants farms have never been compact but scattered over the plains surrounding the village. This system began originally with the notion of providing a plot with every type of soil and degree of fertility to all the cultivators in a village. Thus the holdings of peasants considered from the view point of modern large-scale farming became uneconomic.

(3) Breakdown of the Village Agrarian System  
The various measures undertaken by the British also led to the breakdown of the traditional village agrarian system and the inter-relationship among the various classes of agriculturists, the artisans, labourers, etc. The main features of the Indian economy before the advent of the British was the self-subsisting and self-perpetuating character of the typical village unit. The villages were almost self-subsisting and needed little intercourse with the outside world. There was division of labour, and every village had its own

artisans such as blacksmith, potter, oil pressers, carpenter and its own barber, washermen, etc. Each family except for the agricultural labourers had a plot of land out of the common and the pasture belonged to all. The owner-producer was a self-sufficient cultivator in the agrarian society. The system of barter based on grain-sharing was practised; all payments being made in kind, a money economy was practically unknown. This was the dominant form of production-relation in the village community and this form of relationship was so stabilised in the society of northern India that hundreds of years of rule by different sovereigns made no difference in the structure of the village community.

The system of rent-collecting through Zamindars or by a government machinery started by the British in eastern U.P. was injurious to the village community and deprived the peasant of the protection of the village system. The Zamindar was now the legal owner of most of the village lands and was only interested in rent collection. The mutual inter-dependent relationship of big landholders, peasants and artisans was destroyed by the centralisation of administration. The coming in of money rents was also a factor in disintegration, upsetting the balance of the village economy. The opening up of external markets also had an effect. The peasant used to the small rigid economic structure of the village was suddenly exposed to the influence of the inter-national

market. Prices were determined by it, and the peasants now produced for the market and not merely for his own consumption. The substitution of cash crops for food crops lowered the consumption standards leading to poverty in the villages. Eastern U.P. and specially its northern districts were originally areas where leguminous crops and pulses were grown in abundance. They formed together with wheat or millet, the staple food of the people providing the much required protein in a purely vegetarian diet. It was good for the soil as every second crop was ploughed back into the soil replenishing it. The substitution of sugar-cane, and wheat affected the health of the villagers and so increasingly the agricultural pattern assumed a form under which the producers were separated from the means of production, land itself became a commodity and landed monopolies developed. British land policies and legislation had the effect of turning agricultural produce as well as land itself into marketable commodities.

During British times the pressure of population on arable land also increased. This was partly due to sudden increase in population around the turn of the century. This led to the rise in the number of landless agriculturists who since they did not know any trade or skilled work merely offered themselves in the agricultural market as agricultural labourers. Another factor which contributed to the pressure on agricultural land was the introduction of machine finished goods in India which rapidly replaced the older hand-made products. Due to this an increasing number of artisans

and handicraftsmen became destitute and were forced back upon agriculture and unskilled occupations. This means that apart from a natural increase in population after 1875, the pressure on land was increased by a shift in the occupational pattern, large numbers who were employed in non-agriculture pursuits then were obliged to turn to land. The effect of this can still be seen in eastern U.P. where there are no large-scale industries to provide alternative employment to the large force of surplus labour dependent on land.

(4) Rural Indebtedness: Rural indebtedness increased greatly during British times. In every agricultural community debts are incurred by the peasants for meeting expenses of cultivation. However, in India there has never been traditionally any distinction between productive and unproductive credit, and often borrowing even today is entirely for consumption purposes. During British times, due to the pressure of population on land, impoverishment of the artisan class, the system of cash rents etc., rural indebtedness increased. The main source of rural credit was the money lender since the government gave loans only for agricultural improvement. The village money lender thus emerged as an important person in the village. Very often he was a dealer in grain, a banker, village accountant etc., in short all that the illiterate peasants could not do. Under the British the peasant acquired a legal right to land and borrowing was easy as land

could be mortgaged. The decay of the village system with its laws of credit and interest gave the money lender a free hand. An interesting feature is that the money lender during the early 1800s was interested in grain first and then only later in land. It was when land came into the market, he changed his ideas. The money lender transformed the petty cultivators into landless agricultural labourers. The alienation of land from the cultivator to the money lender generated agrarian discontent and hatred of the "Mahajan". The money lender in east U.P. did not belong to any of the cultivating castes. He was a "Bania". Thus proprietors of land over the last century lost land and the village money lender ~~also~~ became the rising capitalist-cum-Zamindari class in the villages.

Rural indebtedness also gave rise to the class of serfs or bonded labourers - "Sewak" or "harmahas" as they were called in east U.P. These were men who due to inability to repay (often small) debts bound themselves, and sometimes their families, to work for the money lender-cum-landlord in some cases for a few years, often for life. The debt often grew and extended over generations due to shrewd manipulation of the money lender.

#### THE DISTRICTS

Keeping the above general discussion in mind we turn now to a brief history of the districts of Basti,

Gorakhpur and Azamgarh. A survey of the main landholding families, and the main castes and classes involved in agriculture prior to 1951 is given. This will enable us to understand the agrarian situation in the villages during British time. Until recently, Deoria was part of the Gorakhpur district and conditions are very similar in both. Hence no village was selected from Deoria.

Basti and Gorakhpur (including Deoria) lie adjacent to each other and for a long time under the British formed one unit. It was only in 1865 that Basti became a separate unit.<sup>5</sup> In ancient times Basti formed the N.E. corner of the Puranic kingdom ruled by Rama and his descendants. Tradition also holds that Buddha was born there and it was the centre of his empire. Gorakhpur and Basti were some of the eastern districts which came under the Guptas who were aborigines who took to Buddhism. They represent the triumph of the earlier people over the war enfeebled caste Hindu Aryans. The Bhars also covered these districts and Basti was the centre of the struggle between the Bhars and Domkaters or Rajputs. They hence had a long history prior to Aryan colonisation. As in the case of Azamgarh, the Rajput clans driven eastwards colonised and divided the land between them recognising when expedient the suzerainty of Delhi. Gorakhpur and Basti became part of the Mughal Empire, and were later held by the Nawabs of Oudh until its cession in 1801.

The predominantly agricultural character of the district can be seen from the following tables. Whatever their castes, the population of Gorakhpur and Basti consisted of two major sections - agricultural and non-agricultural.<sup>6</sup>

TABLE 1

**BASTI**

Religion	Agricultural Landowners		Classes of Agriculturists		Non-agriculturists	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Muslim	5,472	4,995	82,355	73,547	31,275	28,140
Christian	1	2	1	-	4	1
Hindu	65,258	58,249	4,65,605	405,899	1,34,720	117,470
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,731</b>	<b>63,246</b>	<b>5,47,961</b>	<b>479,446</b>	<b>1,65,997</b>	<b>145,611</b>

**GORAKHPUR (including DEORIA)**

Religion	Agricultural Landowners		Classes of Agriculturists		Non-agriculturists	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Hindu	72,967	66,740	2,23,150	6,30,987	1,75,269	1,50,333
Muslim	1,283	1,219	70,473	62,231	34,646	29,510
Christian	2	3	124	74	158	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,256</b>	<b>67,962</b>	<b>2,93,747</b>	<b>6,93,292</b>	<b>2,10,073</b>	<b>1,80,024</b>

The Brahmins were in the most numerous and important in Basti and divided into a number of sects. They held more land than any other caste but did not touch the plough. They owned 64% of the district.<sup>7</sup> The chamars at the bottom held in 1901, at the time of the settlement very little land, practically none of them were proprietors. The ahirs, though they did not hold much land, formed the back-bone of the agricultural community



being together with the kurmis very good agriculturists. The two castes held most of the land as tenants. The Rajputs formed in 1901, the principal proprietors of the district owning 1/3rd of the area but were not good agriculturists.<sup>8</sup> They were made up of an infinite variety of clans, as many as 24 being listed and having over 200 representatives. The prominent ones were (1) Suraj bansis, found mainly in Mahauli, (2) Gautams found mainly in Harraiya Tahsil and Nagar, (3) Bais and Kalhans found mainly in Basti and Domariaganj. Others, who were not so important, were Bisens, Rathors, Chauhans, Raghubansis etc. The Kayasthas owned about 7% of the land in Basti and were important as a self-cultivating caste. Other lower castes such as the Kahars, Kewets, Kumhars, etc. formed the great mass of agricultural labourers. In Basti<sup>9</sup> 65.8% of the people were engaged solely in agriculture, the industrial population was only 13.14, 1.36 were engaged in commerce and transport and 9.56 in general labour. In no other district was the industrial population so low. The professional community was a mere 0.54% which shows the backwardness of the area in those times.

The proprietary tenures found in Basti in the early 1900s and which continued undisturbed were similar to those in the rest of the U.P. Out of a total of 7,628 villages, 786 were under single Zamindari, 1,451 were under joint Zamindari, while those under

pattidari were over 5,000, the number of bhaiyachara villages were only 10.<sup>10</sup> Constant sub-division of property was the main change thereafter.

In Gorakhpur too, the main castes were the same. The Chamars numerically the largest caste were at the bottom, while the Brahmins owning 25.38, the Rajputs owning 22.28 and the Bhuinhars owning 10.33% of the area were at the top.<sup>11</sup> The Kurmis, Kewats, Koeris, etc., formed the large mass of the tenants. In Maharajganj tahsil the Kayasthas owning 6.5% of the area dominated. In 1909, there were 8,617 mauzas or villages with 8,463 Mahals or properties.<sup>12</sup> The Rajputs as in Basti were made up of different clans, 38 being recorded. Of them the Sarnets of Gorakhpur Tahsil were the most important while the Bisens of Majhauri were definitely the oldest Rajput family in the district dating to the pre-Muslim era.

✓ The nature of the agrarian classes and their inter-relationship can be understood, when we find that the population in these districts was divided into four great classes of which none but the lowest could plough the land. The land was owned exclusively by the Ashraj or noblemen while the manual drudgeries were performed by the lower orders. The Brahmins and Rajputs let out the land and the burden of supporting an "idle, profligate, and litigious body of Zaminders."<sup>13</sup> was thrown on the land. The condition of the peasantry was very bad. It is recorded that "famine was the horizon of the Indian villager, and insufficient food

his foreground.<sup>14</sup> Tenancy right was practically unknown before the advent of British rule, and even after the first British Settlement, the tenants preferred to leave than fight the Zamindar when threatened with eviction. Hereditary and non-hereditary rights were created and protected by the British. Leases were usually verbal and could be terminated easily specially when rents were not paid fully. Rents were usually paid in kind, by a system of "Batai" or division of winnowed crop peculiar to Gorakhpur and Basti even today. Rents were fixed not per acre but on the plough (halbandi) as such and the Zamindar fixed the tax on each plough in the village. The Zamindars raised rents very often, but even if they did not, the large number of petty manorial cesses (nazrana etc.) during festivals were very high. After a certain level of exploitation, the peasants commonly took to flight. Together with parity of tenancy rights and fear of ejection, high rents and cesses, a third obstacle to agricultural progress was the uncertain demand for agricultural produce. The enterprise of the country had not reached the stage of storing in years of plenty for years of drought. Besides this, conspicuous spending at marriages and festivals left the villager in perpetual debt. At the cession of Gorakhpur in 1801, Routledge held, "Although the soil of Gorakhpur is proverbial for its fertility and will certainly yield abundant crops of the most valuable kinds, nothing but the common necessities of life are

now grown and these scantily...<sup>15</sup> Besides even during British times traces of serfdom could be seen in the life of the Halwaha or plough-man who ranked even below the landless class of labourers. The Oudh Gazetteer clearly uses the term slave. His proper name in these districts was Sawak (sewak), and in Basti districts was a bit better than elsewhere. Ploughmen in urgent need of money (often small sums) bound themselves, and often their children to serve the Zamindar or money lender. In Basti, the period was one year whereas in Central Oudh it was in perpetuity. Wynne calls the Gorakpur and Basti Sawakis, "veritable serfs bought with their own consent, it is true by the loan of a lump sum, which, and the sum advanced monthly for sustenance, they are supposed to work out by their labour; and needless it is to say, is never shown in the Zamindars books as quite paid off... a more wretched proletariat it would be difficult to find in any country."<sup>16</sup> The relationship between the Zamindars and tenants were very poor as the above shows. Even then conditions were better in these districts than in other districts not under British rule.

While Azamgarh under the British was mainly a district of small proprietors, in Gorakhpur and Basti, the land was held by a number of petty Rajas who were in actuality Zamindars. Under the British while their titles were not recognised they remained the owners of vast tracts.

In Basti, the Rajas of Bansi, Majhauri and Basti were the main Rajas although a smaller number of chiefs such as the Babus of Radhauri and Mehdaul, Gautams of Nagar, etc., also had big estates. As we shall see, Nagar Khas one of the sample villages is a village of great antiquity and was part of the estate of Nagar. Legend makes the estates of these Rajas large and there are many stories regarding their eastward migrations. Most of Basti until 1947 was divided among these chiefs and even today villagers remember them. Basti is not one of these districts where land change hands easily. No large towns or industries have come up and even today economic power remains in the hands of local landowners.

In Gorakhpur and Deoria the Rajas of Amola, Majhauri, Tamkuhi and Gopalpur held most of the land. The Bisen Rajput Rajas of Majhauri, now in Deoria, were the oldest ruling family. The town of Gorakhpur was founded by the Satasi Rajas of Gorak in the 15th Century near the shrine of Gorakhnath. Besides these were the Babus of Madhopur, Paikauri etc. in Padrauna Tahsil, Deoria. In Sadr or Gorakhpur Tahsil many kayasth families held small estates. Besides these a large number of "Tappas" or estates existed in Gorakhpur and Basti. The term pargana denoted the territory of each Raja within the district, while the tappas are perhaps relics of a kind of feudal system among the Rajputs, each represents a fief of some Vassal of the local Raja held in return for military service. There were 157 tappas in Gorakhpur,

and 131 in Basti in 1909 and 1907 respectively.<sup>17</sup>

From 1900 onwards, these estates were breaking up, but the system of landholding continued to be basically the same. As the Basti <sup>District Gazetteer</sup> mentions, "Since the introduction of British rule there has been no great change in the relative position of the different castes in this respect (land) with the exceptions of the alternations affected by the confiscation of estate for rebellion during the mutiny, land does not change hands rapidly.... when transfers of property occur, as old families decay and new overtake their place, the latter belong for the most part to the same castes and classes as the original proprietors. The territorial distribution of the various Rajput clans follows the arrangement of the former days when every pargana had its own Raja...."<sup>18</sup>

Azamgarh is an irregular shaped tract of land, but it had a long history as a compact block of country.<sup>19</sup> The historical continuity of the area can be understood, when it is stated that since the time of the Ain-i-Akbari which mentions Azamgarh, only two Parganas, Mahul and Atraulia have been added to form the present district of Azamgarh. Tradition points to the Bhars, Soeris and Cherus as the original inhabitants of the district and asserts that these were superseded first by the Rajputs and then by the Bhuinhars, and finally by the Muslims. The establishment of Muslims quite early is a fact,

but historical details are wanting. When the muslim conquerors came east, Azamgarh was included in the kingdom of Kanauj and passed under Delhi rule. In the 15th Century, the Sharki kings of Jaunpur usurped authority over Azamgarh. On their fall, it was reannexed to Delhi as proved by the Sikanderpur fort built by and named after Sikander Lodhi. Under Akbar, Azamgarh formed part of the suba of Allahabad and the Sarkars of Jaunpur and Ghazipur. In the 17th Century, a family of Gautam Rajputs took to Islam and came to possess most of Azamgarh as feudatory chiefs; styled as Rajas of Azamgarh. In 1665, one of them - A'zam founded the town which bears his name. About 1731, Mahaabat Khan, head of the family refused revenue payment to Dwdh and was after some initial success forced to flee. His successors gradually lost their estate and in 1758, Azamgarh became a "Chakla" or district of Dwdh till its cession to the East India Co. in 1801. At its cession Azamgarh was included in the larger district of Gorakhpur and it was only in 1832, that a separate administrative machinery of its own was set up.

Any attempt here to reconstruct the agrarian history of Azamgarh together with a description of the system of land holdings and the main agrarian classes who have resided here can be given only from 1801.

From 1596 to 1801 the agricultural history of Azamgarh is a blank. Not a single record of any kind is available and the amils and their officials left for Dwdh after the cession in 1801. The district is

described as "nearly a waste which would in the course of one or two years more, become an entire scene of desolation".<sup>20</sup>

A brief picture of the major communities and their landholding during British times is presented below.<sup>21</sup>

TABLE 2

	Numbers	Percent	Density of population
Total population	16,04,654	-	757.3 per sq.mile
Agriculturists	12,93,089	80.58	-
Non-agriculturists	3,11,565	19.42	-

Among the agriculturists the following subdivisions are given in the Gazetteer.<sup>22</sup>

Landlords	...	72,758
Cultivators	...	444,081
Agricultural labourers	...	105,051
Estate official service	...	944
		<u>622,834</u>

Azamgarh was mainly a Hindu district (85.85%) with no less than 76 different castes. The major ones are given below.<sup>23</sup>

Caste	Number	Percentage	Landholding	% of 4
1	2	3	4	5
Chamars	2,56,618	19.54	-	-
Ahirs	2,18,958	16.00	-	-



1	2	3	4	5
Brahmins	1,07,589	8.19	1,00,289	11.34
Rajputs	99,373	7.57	4,91,034	34.73
Muslims	2,14,631	14.03	3,30,347	23.37
Bhainpars			2,05,151	14.51
Kayasthas			58,825	4.16

(Census 1901)

f

The Chamars were the single largest class and collectively held large amount of the land during British rule but their individual holdings were small and most of them were landless labourers occupying the lowest position in the social scale. The Ahirs formed the backbone of the cultivating castes being cultivators of a high order. The Brahmins of Azamgarh are described mainly as "Sarjuparis" and did not hold a high religious position. Their landed properties were small, except for large communities such as the Misrs of Akhaichanda in Gopalpur pargana. Of the land holding castes by far the most important were the Rajputs (Thakurs as we call them today). Their proportion of landholdings in some parganas ranged from 89.14 to 17.04.<sup>24</sup> They belonged to a great variety of clans which migrated east under Muslim pressure. There was no great chief among them, the main clans had names met within east U.P. even today - Bais, Bisen, Gautams, Kaushiks etc. Azamgarh has always been a district of small proprietors, the most remarkable feature during

British times being their number. This was no less than 85,137 with the average share falling to each being 9.3 acres only, the smallest being 4.7.<sup>25</sup> They were also described as tenaciously attached to their small plots, which frequent sub-division in each generation makes smaller. There were very few single large proprietors as in Basti. According to a list made in 1877 only 18 paid more than Rs. 5,000 in revenue.<sup>26</sup> The Raja of Azamgarh was the largest landholder. There were cultivators with less than two acres even. However, this was not a problem peculiar to Azamgarh alone.

✓ The tenures under which land was held, was right of occupancy subject to payment of regular rent to the Malguzar or revenue proprietors. Below him were the Mushakhsidars and other intermediate tenure holders coming down to the peasants. Land was sublet to a very large extent and grain sharing with an absentee or resident village Zamindar very common. Besides these there were also cesses called "Serahi", "Pachua" or "Nazrana" which came out of the tenants share.

The great body of high caste tenants employed farm servants to perform all menial jobs, while the lower castes did everything themselves. As a rule the high caste tenants are reported as independent in spirit, and did not allow Zamindars to bully them. They were hostile to the Zamindars and generally acknowledged only his right to a fixed rent in cash and grain and opposed enhancement of rent. The lower

caste tenants were more amenable to the Zamindars will, and fearing ejection, paid higher rent, and rendered him a number of petty dues and services; they were called his "praja" (subjects). The difference between them is seen by statistics. In 1877 the higher caste occupancy tenants paid Rs. 4.11 per acre, as against Rs. 4.53 paid by the low caste occupancy tenants. In the case of non-occupancy tenants it was Rs. 4.20 and Rs. 5.19 respectively.<sup>27</sup>

There was very little progress in agriculture - either in its methods or implements used, or in the yield per acre, under the Nawabs of Oudh or later under the British. Under the latter, there was some progress in irrigation and greater security of tenure. The agricultural implements used, are still in use today and very little manuring was done except on land close to the hamlets.

Thus we see that the N.E. districts were divided among a few Rajput families. When the district was made over to the British the cultivators were mere serfs of the Rajas and their immediate landlords. From 1801, the position of the peasantry improved. They were granted occupancy rights in 1859 and proprietary privileges in 1873. Rent was fixed and courts of appeal were set up. However, the agrarian structure remained the same. We turn now to the sample villages.

FOOTNOTES

1. Baden Powell, The Indian Village Community (Delhi; Cosmo Publications, 1971): 1-9
2. Clew: Settlement Report of The Basti District, 1915-1919: 15, Quoted in Mukerjee, R, Rural Economy of India (London: Longman Green & Co., 1926):38
3. R. Mukerjee, n. 2
4. Ibid; 37
5. F.H. Fisher, Statistical Descriptive And Historical Account Of The North-West Provinces Of India: Basti 1881, Gorakhpur 1901 (Lucknow: Govt. of The United Provinces, 1881 and 1901 Gazetteers): 552
6. Census of Gorakhpur, 1881, in, F.H. Fisher, n.5, 366
7. Ibid; Basti Gazetteer:76
8. Ibid
9. Ibid; 85
10. Ibid
11. Ibid; Gorakhpur Gazetteer: 109
12. Ibid; 106
13. Ibid; 684
14. Ibid; 689
15. Ibid; 35
16. Ibid; Basti Gazetteer: 692

17. Ibid; Gorakhpur Gazetteer: 139
18. Ibid; Basti Gazetteer: 88
19. F.H. Fisher, n. 5, Azamgarh 1881 and 1911  
Gazetteers, XIII: 20-30
20. Ibid; 1881 Azamgarh Gazetteer: 103
21. Ibid; 103
22. Ibid
23. Census of Azamgarh, 1901, in F.H. Fisher,  
n. 19: 106
24. Ibid
25. Ibid
26. Ibid
27. Ibid; 117

## CHAPTER IV

### Micro Study Of The Selected Villages

Our study is based on four villages called Nandapar, Nagar Khas, Sumbhadih and Sakhia. Nandapar and Nagar Khas lie in Gorakhpur and Basti districts respectively north of the Ghaghra river, while Sumbhadih and Sakhia in Azamgarh district lie south of the Ghaghra. A brief description of the sample villages, their situation and history, together with their social organisation today is given before analysing the nature of agrarian relations prevailing there today.

#### THE SAMPLE VILLAGES - A DESCRIPTION

(1) Nagar Khas: Nagar Khas commonly called Nagar is a large and well-known village of Basti district.<sup>1</sup> It lies in pargana Nagar, Bahadurpur block and thana of Basti Tahsil, in its south-east corner almost on the boundary with Harraiya Tahsil. It is a large village with its own post office, health centre and market, although it is only 8 kms away from Basti town. The main State highway S.H. 5 coming north from Tanda to Basti town, passes through the village and hence it is well connected with the outside world. The nearest railway station is Basti. The S.H. 5 joins the national highway N.H. No. 28 which cuts across the district from west to east. The village lies south of the Kuwana river which is on the edge of Basti town. The block headquarters Bahadurpur lies south of the village.

The village lies on either side of the main state highway from Basti and looking at the large number of shops lining the road for about 1/2 km, it has the appearance of a small busy town rather than a village. It is much larger and more developed than any of the surrounding villages, which depend upon it as a centre of trade and communication. There are buses plying on the main road between Basti and Nagar Khas and other villages. However, the main village and its fields lie beyond the shops and about 60% of the villagers are dependent on agriculture alone. Unlike most of the small villages, which we pass while going to Nagar from Basti, which have mud walls and thatch roofs, the houses of Nagar have a more prosperous look, most of them are built of countrymade bricks with tiled roofs. The main streets though muddy and uneven are broad enough for a car; they taper off into narrow paths leading to the fields.

The total area of the village is 1,277 acres or 510 hectares, of it 141 acres are not available for cultivation and 76 acres are cultivable waste.<sup>2</sup> The village has within it 8 hamlets or "gaons" as the villagers call them, which fall into the "gaon sabha" or revenue Mauzaf Nagar Khas. The shops on the main road form the Nagar Bazar while the fields and hamlets form Nagar Khas. Today caste distinctions are not strong nor is untouchability practiced; however, some of the hamlets are on caste lines. The villagers

pointed out that they were very old divisions and not consciously made by the inhabitants today. The total population<sup>3</sup> of the village is 4,255 (2,230 male and 2,025 female) of which the Scheduled Castes form 1,067 (male 567 and female 500) making them the single largest group in the village. There are 709 houses with a total of 820 households. Of the total population 657 persons are literate - in the 1961 Census the number was 402 - they are mainly in the younger age group, the older villagers being for the most part illiterate.

There are five schools in Nagar which again set it apart from most villages in Basti which barely have one school. The census of 1971<sup>4</sup> lists 5 schools - (1) 3 J.B.S. (2) 1 S.B.S. and (3) 1 H.S.S. There is also at present one primary school and one montessori school upto the 5th standard, which the villagers appreciate very much because it has inculcated in their children a sense of hygiene and discipline. There is a Kanya Pathshala but there is talk of its being shifted which has upset the educated section of the villagers. The villagers are aware of the importance and value of education, they complained that the Tahsil Office had granted land and funds for a building for the Kanya Pathshala but the whole scheme had been shifted to some other village by some interested political sections in the district headquarters. The census of U.P. states that there is a maternity and child welfare clinic in the village however there is only



one government Ayurvedic dispensary functioning. In spite of the size of the village and its population, there is no other source of medical aid, the nearest doctor or hospital is in Basti.

Nagar is a village of great antiquity, and long formed the centre or Haveli of the estate of the Rajas of Nagar.<sup>5</sup> These Rajas were Gautam Rajputs who, as tradition holds, as recorded in the District Gazetteer, 1901, ousted the Bhar Raja Rahila, 23 generations ago. Whether he was a Bhar, or a later landowner is not known but that he existed is seen by the existence of a village called Rahilware, while Rihlapara was the old name for pargana Nagar. The family of Nagar was founded by one Rajput Chief Jagdeo who came east from Fatehpur and expelled the Domkatars, and occupied initially 12 villages around Nagar. Subsequent Rajas built the fort or Haveli of Nagar on the banks of the Chando Tal, the ruins of which are still visible in Nagar.

The estate of Nagar was under the British part of the old Nagar Pargana with its capital at Nagar.<sup>6</sup> The term pargana is an old one usually coinciding with the territorial limits of the independent Rajas of these districts. The old Nagar estate was divided into 2 parganas - East and West, the eastern portion fell in Basti, and the western in Harraiya. Nagar East lying in what is today Basti Tahsil, contained the tappa of Nagar Haveli or the centre of the Nagar estate

on the Chando Tal, where the present village is situated. Nagar Haveli stood on a raised site and an attempt was made to prove that it was the birth place of Gautam Buddha. The Nagar pargana itself an ancient sub-division, was under the Rajas a fertile raised land crossed by many rivers and Tals, and irrigated by numerous wells. The pargana in 1901 had 322 villages of which only 2 were Bhaiyachara villages, the rest were held as Zamindari by the Nagar kinsmen. It was customary among the Gautams to divide the lands of the family between the brothers in each generation. Thus the estate broke up, different branches retaining different areas. Nagar Pargana remained in the hands of the main branch of the family. Other important branches were those settled in Ganeshpur and Pipra Taluks. Due to implication in the mutiny of 1857, the Nagar branch lost most of its ancestral lands, though it retained <sup>consisting</sup> the part of Nagar and surrounding villages. Their titles were not used under the British, but the Raja was a recognised Zamindar, responsible for the collection of revenue in his estate or Mahala. Thus, in our sample, Nagar is a village where a single Zamindari interest and right continued for a long time. The descendants of the Rajas live at present in Bansi Tahsil. They own lands in Bansi Tahsil and around the village of Nagar. However, they do not own any land within the village, this has passed into the hands of their erstwhile tenants.

The details of Basti Tahsil are given below:<sup>7</sup>

TABLE 1

Block	Area (sq. km.)	Population	No. of villages	
			Inhi- bited	uninhi- bited
Saltawa Gopalpur	331.1	1,36,766	357	25
Basti	312.4	1,61,997	403	52
Behadurpur	232.2	91,161	263	33
Kudroha Khas	344.7	1,32,737	327	34

Nagar today is a large village consisting of 709 households and it was not possible to undertake a study of the whole revenue mauza. Moreover, not all the households are actually engaged in agriculture. A sample of 50 households were selected for study and interviewed from among the households residing in the village for further investigation and survey. As already said, Nagar consists of 8 hamlets or 'gaons'. Roughly speaking, they are as follows:<sup>8</sup>

- (1) Nagar bazar lying on the main road
- (2) The Brahman Basti lying at the further most point from the road.
- (3) The khatik tola lying close to the Chando Tal.
- (4) The Harijan tola lying on the high ground
- (5) The Koeris forming a small group near the village road.
- (6) The Bania/Kayasthas area.

The remaining 2 hamlets are new and not based on any caste lines. They are close to the main road. The 50 sample households were selected from among these 8

hamlets occupied mainly by the agricultural community.

The hamlet of Nagar Bazar was excluded as it is a business area consisting mainly of petty shopkeepers who do not own land. From among the remaining a number of households were selected on the basis of the number of farmers, and the amount of land they own. The village Pradhan (who resides in Nagar, has no land, and is a shopkeeper) and the Lekhpal were also interviewed.

See Appendix

(2) Nandapar: Nandapar or Nandapur as it is sometimes called, is a poor, small, typical village of N.E. U.P. lying about 12 kms from Gorakhpur town, in Piprauli block, Pargana Bhavapar, under police thana Khajni. It lies on the boundary of Gorakhpur and Bansgaon Tahsils, on the S.W. side of Gorakhpur tahsil. It lies north of the local Ami river which separates the two tahsils. The nearest railway station is Gorakhpur, the one at Saijanwa being a little further off.

MP

Nandapar lies south of the main metre gauge railway line cutting across Gorakhpur district. An important metalled road runs south from Gorakhpur to Barhajganj in Bansgaon Tahsil. It passes within a km to the west of the village, a short kachha road from it leads to Nandapar. It is a small village and hence has no post office. The nearest village with a post office and a market lies adjacent to it.

Villages in eastern U.P. are usually small, 63.4% having less than 500 persons, and from the main

road we see only a cluster of houses surrounded by fields on all sides. This is true of Nandapar too, where the houses are built in a Central clearing so close to each other that some of them have no front courtyards at all and seem to converge on each other. However, being close to the main road, the village is easily accessible, the kachha road being very short and in the dry season easy to cross in a car. Within the village there are only narrow lanes. During the monsoon, the village is cut off from the main road. The houses in the village fall into three categories, the 'pucca' houses of brick and tile belonging to a few rich villagers, the kuchha houses with tile roofs belonging to the middle class cultivators and artisans, and the kuchha houses with thatch roofs of the poor and usually landless agriculturists. The number of tile roofs are very few and decrease as we walk towards the harijan tola nearer the fields and away from the main road. The village is divided into three tolas. The three tolas however are not clearly demarcated, and from the viewpoint of caste, except for the harijans who form a small cluster of their own, the rest do not live on any specific caste basis. However, the the Muslim households form a small group with a common central courtyard near the mosque at the entrance of the village. Similarly further in, the Brahmin houses were grouped close together near a temple. The villagers held that caste tension is absent in the

village and untouchability is not practised. There are three temples and one mosque. A small line of tea and provision shops line the main road near the village, where villagers often gather to drink tea and gossip.

The total area of the village is 596 acres of which the cultivable waste is 19 acres.<sup>9</sup> 240 acres are irrigated, whereas, 266 acres are unirrigated.<sup>10</sup> It is interesting to note that in the 1951 census the total area of the village was 595 acres which means that over a period of 20 years the village has not grown larger. The population has however increased. In 1951, the total population was 571 (male 296, female 275) while in the 1971 census the population was 712 persons (male 395, female 317).<sup>11</sup> The number of Scheduled Castes in 1971 was 189 persons (male 107 female 81). There are now 119 occupied houses and 119 households in the village.

The village has only one Primary school and in spite of three teachers residing <sup>in</sup> the village, the primary school teacher lives in the adjoining village and comes on bicycle daily. There is no secondary school or any other institution. The number of literate persons in 1971 were 66 (male 64, female 2) and very few girls go to school.<sup>12</sup>

Nandapar is not an old village, and is not mentioned in any of the gazetteers or old records. It lies in what was earlier called pargana Bhavapar and within tappa Ret. Pargana Bhavapar during British

times was a long narrow strip of country, 30 miles long and 7 miles wide extending along the right bank of the Rapti from Hasanpur in the NW to Chillupar on the S.E. It consisted of 2 parts, the northern part consisted of what is now Gorakhpur Tahsil (or Sadr tahsil as it was called) with tappa Ret in which Nandapar lies; and the southern part included what is now Banegaon tahsil. Bhavapar, 5 miles south of Gorakhpur was the only town in the pargana prior to the setting up of Gorakhpur town, and was the seat of the old Satesi Rajput Rajas, who legend holds defeated the Bhars. The family and its land was deposed in 1858 by the British for implication in the mutiny. After 1858 in Sadr tahsil, land passed into the hands of wealthy kayastha families such as Babu Bhagwati Prasad and Rai Kishore Chand. Even today the kayasthas hold a more important position locally than the Thakurs. However, Nandapar is a village which has traditionally enjoyed a Bhaiyachara or non-Zamindari system. There are no Thakurs in the village, and although one kayastha family owns 25 acres, such acquisition is fairly recent. The village consists mainly of petty self-cultivating farmers.

At the time of the survey there were about 100 complete households in the village, the rest consisting of only 1 member due to migration. Of these 100 households a sample of 45 households keeping in mind the main castes and pattern of ownership of land among

the households was drawn up for further study. The village pradhan and lekhpal were also interviewed.

TABLE 2

Details of Gorakhpur Tehsil

Block	Area (sq.km.)	Population	No. of villages	
			Inhi- bited	uninhi- bited
1	2	3	4	5
Sahjanwa	305.1	1,55,142	288	45
Jungle Kauria	227.5	1,12,165	146	38
Piprauli Buzarg	160.4	89,810	112	45
Sardar Nagar	213.3	1,30,142	124	2
Pipraich	214.1	1,28,262	153	-
Chargaon	251.3	1,65,836	112	11
Forest Charge	N.A.	597	1	2
Khorabar	273.9	36,546	157	20

(Source: Census of U.P., 1971, Series 21, Primary Census Abstract Part X-A:120)

(3) Sumbhadih: Sumbhadih is a big village lying almost in the centre of Phulpur tahsil, pargana Mahul, Atraulia Block, district Azamgarh. It is situated 10 miles from the tahsil headquarters. Powai where the police station is situated, lies 3 miles to the west of Sumbhadih, while Mahul lies five miles to the south east. It is like Nagar Khas in Basti, a large and well-known village with its own post office and market which serves a large number of surrounding villages too. It lies north of the main N.E. railway



line which cuts across Azamgarh district from east to west, the nearest station being Didarganj Road or Bilwai both at a distance of 6 kms. Sumbhadih lies north of the State Highway running from Shahganj across the district via Azamgarh town. From this road, at a small village approximately 1/2 way between Shahganj and Phulpur a metalled road runs north to Mahul and Atraulia. This road runs through the village and is motoreable during the dry season. The Majhai river flows in the north of the village at a distance of 2 miles or so, while the Ongri river flows in the south at a similar distance of 14 miles to the South East of Sumbhadih.

A metalled road useable during the dry season, runs through the village and there are shops lining it giving it a busy air. Sumbhadih is a market centre for a number of small villages nearby. The revenue village with an area of 1,434 acres is comprised of 7 hamlets with a population of 2,297 persons.<sup>19</sup> It is hence the largest village in the sample. Since it was not feasible to cover all the hamlets, only Sumbhadih was taken up for study. The remaining hamlets fall under the same geon Sabha, but because of their size and in some cases distance, they are for all practical purposes separate villages. Most of the houses have mud walls and tiled roofs except for those of the Thekurs. A 'haat' or village market is held in Sumbhadih every Tuesday and Friday and villagers from all the other hamlets gather there.

In every way Sumbhadih is the main hamlet of the village.<sup>14</sup>

For a village of the size of Sumbhadih, it is surprising that it has only one primary school for boys. There is however a pucca building for the school. The nearest high school is at Mahul. There is no medical facility in the village either, the nearest dispensaries are at Shahganj, Phulpur and Ahraula, each 10 miles from the village.

The total area of the revenue village as a whole is 1,434 acres of which 141 acres are not available for cultivation. On this there are 445 households with a population of 2,297.<sup>15</sup> The hamlet of Sumbhadih consists of 583 acres of which 454.4 acres are cultivated.<sup>16</sup> There are 165 households with over 822 persons. The density per sq. mile in the 1961 Census for the revenue village was 343 persons per sq. mile.<sup>17</sup> There is a growing pressure of population on land. Because of this as we shall see, a number of households depend on more than one occupation. The number of literate persons in the entire revenue village is only 323 males and 70 females, which is very low compared to the population. The number of Scheduled Caste persons is over 400.<sup>18</sup>

Sumbhadih is an ancient village. The Gazetteer of Azamgarh mentions, "..... In 1731 A.D. by an imperial decree issued by Kanwar-ud-din under the advice of Saadat Khan certain confiscated villages in tappa Sumbhadih, Kharaunda, and Bhopaura of pargana Surhurpur,

which had belonged to a rebel named Mir Muhammad Malik, were conferred upon Khan Jahan and Mukarram Jahan, grandsons of Amar Jahan; and in 1763 A.D. Khan Jahan obtained a contract for the tappas Sumbhadih and Kharaunda. The modern tappa of Powai was formed mostly out of tappas Sumbhadih and Kharaunda, and it was apparently after the Saiyids had obtained the revenue contract that they settled at Powai and where they threw up the large mud fort, the ruins of which still exist....<sup>19</sup> The village of Sumbhadih lies in the pargana of Mahul, tappa Powai. Mahul is an ancient pargana, its existence as a separate fiscal sub-division is mentioned in the 18th century. At that time, a large number of tappas and estates had been under the Saiyid family of Mahul as already mentioned. These were collectively called Taluqa Mahul, only after 1801 Mahul became a pargana. The pargana under the British had 519 villages, consisting of 504 temporarily settled estates. Of these 163 were held under single Zamindari and 358 in joint Zamindari tenure.<sup>20</sup>

Sumbhadih is a village where prior to the abolition of Zamindari, a group of resident Zamindars owned most of the land, and were responsible for the collection of revenue. The village was according to its inhabitants established by a family of Sombansi Rajputs who were the joint owners of it. Parganas Atraula, Kauria, Mahul and Gopalpur in Azamgarh even today have a large number of Sombansis. The village

was originally called Somnadih after them, the word 'dih' meaning a mound. To the east of the village, a huge mound of ruins also referred to in the District Gazetteer can be seen even today. The Kshatriyas living in the village today are supposed to be the descendants of this Rajput family. A study of the settlement history of the households in the 1961 census residing there at that time seems to uphold this idea.<sup>21</sup> Of all the non-kshatriya households, only a few Brahmin, Koeri and Muslim households reported that their families had settled there five generations ago. However, out of the 37 Kshatriya households then residing there, 28 reported that their families had definitely settled there five generations ago. Of the remaining households most of them seem to have settled in Sumbhadih two-five generations ago. Most of them earlier were tenants of the main Kshatriya or 'Thakur' households, as they are called. There were 30 Zamindars or Thakurs in Sumbhadih who owned most of the village lands and its surrounding areas amongst themselves. The largest family owned over 100 acres the rest held between 50-100 acres. They were hence small resident Zamindars who lived in Sumbhadih and who supervised the agricultural activity on their lands. Socially, however, they held an important position in the village. Today they retain only their 'Sir' or 'Khudkhasht' lands, the rest having been handed over to their former tenants.

There were 165 households in Sumbhadih with over 822 persons in the 1961 census. The number of households remains the same today though the population has grown. Of these 30 households reflecting proportionately the various castes and agricultural classes were selected for further study. They also include the main artisan classes in the village.

There are no landless families in Sumbhadih, they all own land and are associated with the agricultural life of the village. However, some households involved in business and trade do not own land and cannot be called agriculturists. Most of the artisans have traditionally carried on their calling being artisans by caste, some due to the pressure of population on land have taken up a profession as their income from land is very little. However, the latter are very few.

The table below gives the Azamgarh tahsil details:

TABLE 3

Block	Area (kms)	Popu- lation	Villages	
			Inhi- bited	Uninhi- bited
1	2	3	4	5
Tahbarpur	257.7	1,40,994	277	29
Rani Ki Sarai	193.4	1,11,784	243	32
Mirzapur	181.2	92,974	191	20
Mohammadpur	175.9	69,600	109	19
Azamgarh (urban area)	10.5	40,963	-	-

Source: Census of U.P., 1971, Series 21, Primary Census Abstract: Part X-A: 194.

(4) Sakhia: Sakhia is a small and poor village lying in the N.E. corner of Azamgarh Tahsil, a few kms. from the Tahsil boundary of Sagri on the north and Muhammadabad on the east. It lies north of the main metre gauge railway line cutting across Azamgarh Tahsil from west to east, the nearest railway station is in Azamgarh town, which is 8 kms. from the village. From Azamgarh a branch of the State highway goes north to Faizabad through Sagri tahsil. Sakhia lies 8-10 kms. east of it. Another important metalled road passes within a km. of the village from Azamgarh to Sagri in the north. There is a kuchha road from this metalled road to the village, however it is at present in a very poor condition. In the dry weather, it is at best a narrow road between fields and groves leading to a small clearing on which the houses of Sakhia village are located. The village is not visible from the main road and hence is difficult to locate. It is not a well-known village and lies forgotten among larger villages such as Ukraura near it. The nearest post office is in village Ukraura which lies adjacent to it, and which is a large village with over 1000 persons. On Tuesdays and Fridays there is a market in Ukraura which serves many villages nearby.

Sakhia, a small village, has traditionally had a Shaiyachara system as in the case of Nandapar in the north. It lies in the old pargana of Nizamabad which is a part of the present tahsil of Azamgarh. The village land is owned by petty self-cultivating farmers.

There are no Thakurs in the village. Among the villages selected in the sample, it is the only one which has a large number of destitute landless labourers. The agrarian system of Sakhia cannot be understood without reference to the adjoining village of Ukraura, as it supplies agricultural labour to the latter. Table 4 on page 97 gives the details of Ukraura. Some of the petty farmers and agricultural labourers claim that much of the lands owned by the big landlords of Ukraura today were originally theirs, and the village of Sakhia was much larger. However, there are no records to prove such claims. In fact, it is such a small village that it seems surprising that it constitutes a village and revenue Mauza of its own. Ukraura is on the other hand, a larger village with a total area of 405 acres.<sup>22</sup> It has 312 houses with 330 households and a total population of 2,160. The houses are made of bricks with tiled roofs and have a prosperous look. It has a large number of Thakur households. Sakhia lies on a small clearing and except for a few, all the houses have mud walls and thatched roofs. The houses are very small and the entire village has a desolate look. There is no school or any medical facility in Sakhia. The nearest school is in Ukraura while the nearest hospital is in Azamgarh. Buses ply on the main road to Azamgarh. Drinking water is drawn from the village wells.

The total area of the village is 283.67 acres<sup>23</sup> of which about 24 acres are not available for cultivation. On the remaining there are only 240 persons<sup>24</sup> (male 215, female 115). In the 1961 census the population was 185 persons hence the increase is only 55 persons in over 10 years.<sup>25</sup> The villagers held that most of the children died in infancy. The number of able-bodied in the village are few. The total number of occupied residential houses are 45 and the number of households 55; in the 1961 census the number being 35 and 36 respectively. However, at the time of the survey 5 houses were unoccupied, its occupants having migrated with their families in search of employment. The village is divided by fields into 2 hamlets lying close to each other. The number of literate persons has decreased since the 1961 census from 15 to 14 in the 1971 census. All the literate persons are men. No woman has ever gone to school in Sakhia.

In Sakhia the total number of occupied houses at the time of the survey was 40. A sample of 25 households reflecting proportionately the strength of the various castes and classes of agriculturists in the village was selected for further investigation. The village Pradhan and Lekhpal were also interviewed.



TABLE 4

Village Ukrauro

Total area	...	405 acres
Education/P.O.	...	nil
Medical facilities	...	nil
Electric power	...	yes
Drinking water	...	Well, Hand Pump.
Area not available for cultivation	...	70 acres
Irrigated area (total)	...	241 "
Tubewell with electricity	...	125 "
Ordinary	...	105 "
Tank	...	11 "
Unirrigated	...	92 "
Cultivable waste	...	2 "
Occupied houses	...	312 "
Number of house- holds	...	330
Total population	...	2,160
Scheduled Caste	...	440
Scheduled Tribes	...	nil
Literate	...	464
Total workers	...	<u>541</u>
Cultivators	...	<u>307</u>
Agricultural labourers	...	<u>103</u>
Livestock, fishing & Hunting	...	nil
Household industry	...	23
non-house-hold industry	...	11
Mining & Quarrying	...	nil
Constructions	...	3
Trade & Commerce	...	26
Transport & Communications	...	16
Other services	...	52
Total non-workers	...	1,619

Source: Census of U.P. 1971, Series 21, District Census Handbook, Azamgarh - (1) Part X-A: 210 (11) Part X-B: 192-3.

## SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Caste And Agricultural Life: The caste system has always played an important role in rural life in India, and its close association with agricultural life need not be stressed here. However, in recent years, the caste system has become the focal point in most attempts of social analysis of Indian society. Somewhat less understood is the overriding factor of land ownership and its political determinants which helped the metamorphosis of the system. It is true that the upper castes are the main landholding castes and the lowest provide agricultural labour, yet there is more to consider than this simple classification of caste based inequality. [The structure of rural class relations with land as its determinant, is a significant perspective in understanding dominance as a highly differentiated concept. The economic and political power in a village may be found combined with caste based social status, or may be autonomous of it.]

Down  
2.  
dominance

In the sample villages, caste as an institution has lost the importance it had perhaps a generation ago. There are no separate "Jati Panchayats" today and untouchability is not practised. However, the various castes do not dine together or inter-marry. Divisions seem to be on economic lines, among the rich and the poor, the landed and the landless, rather than on caste lines. Caste quarrels, or dispute over land ownership due to purely caste differences are rare.

The main castes living in Nagar Khas are given overleaf. The figures were supplied by the village elders as there is no official count, and hence are approximate but they reflect the major divisions and their strength in the village. The harijans together with the Khatiks who are also a scheduled caste form the largest single social category. Most of them own very little land or are agricultural labourers. The Khatiks are petty but capable agriculturists some of whom have prospered. The Brahmins are mainly land-owners though there are 2 village school teachers also. The Banias are the village traders, though a very large number own land also. As already said there are 8 hamlets in the village, out of these 4 are arranged on caste lines. The smallest of these is the Brahmin tola which lies at the extreme end of the village separated by the fields. The Brahmins form a comparatively literate and prosperous section of the community. Their houses are bigger and many of them have relatives working in towns. Two of the younger men are employees of the village cooperative. The Brahmins mix freely with other castes but do not even today touch the plough or work as hired agricultural labourers no matter how poor they are. All of them questioned said they employed a permanent "halwaha" (ploughman) as they considered it a degrading job, although they are prepared to do all other

agricultural tasks. The term "halwaha" in east U.P. is no longer a word of contempt nor is he treated badly, but he is always a poor labourer or farmer, and invariably a harijan. The wages paid to these halwahas are very low. A few of the Brahmins paid cash wages as they cultivated high yielding varieties of wheat which fetched a good price in the market, 15 landless harijan households were given 1 acre of land each together with a cash loan of Rs. 100/- three years ago. This has not led to any jealousy but many villagers felt that all poor families not only harijans should be given land. The harijans are very grateful to the gaon sabha for the land. Caste tension is absent in the village, the major division being rather between the richer and poorer farmers.

The Main Castes among the sample households in Nagar Khas:

TABLE 5

Caste	No. of households	Total landowned
Brahmin	10	40.70 acres
Rajput	nil	-
Kayasth	1	0.92
Bania	6	0.67
Khatik	9	3.01
Koeri	7	19.36
Harijan	17	5.27

In this table we see that the Brahmins own more land than any other caste in the village. Even they on an average own only a little over 4 acres per household. The Harijans own the least.

The table below shows the caste division among the sample households in Nandapar. There is only one kshatriya family in the village. In east U.P. most of the big landowners are Thakurs but in Nandapar there are no big Thakurs landowners, the single largest holding belonging to a kayasth is 25 acres.

Caste & land distribution pattern

TABLE 6

Caste	No. of households in sample	Amount of land owned by them
Brahmin:	7	35.5 acres
<u>Kayasths</u>	3	31.0 acres
Lohar	3	7.4 acres
Telli	3	5.5 acres
<u>Ahir</u>	4	<u>13.4 acres</u>
Kewat	7	8.40 acres
Badhai	1	1.9 acres
Kumhar	3	6.9 acres
Harijan	10	11.4 acres
Kshatriya	1	1.0 acres
Muslim	3	3.5 acres
	<hr/> 45	<hr/> 125.64 acres <hr/>

In the table the Harijans are the most numerous as in most villages of east U.P. The kayasthas and the brahmins own the most land, and were also seen to be the most prosperous. The brahmins have prospered, many of them have installed tube-wells and all the school teachers residing in the village are brahmins. They also occupy an important position in the social life of the village. However, among the

is  
0 Kayasthas there/one household which has 25 acres. The Kewats are fishermen originally and hence not strictly speaking an "agricultural caste". One of the poorer families among them on being questioned regarding their occupational pattern, said that being Kewats they did not do "mazdoori". Owning very little land, and in most cases, having no other source of income, they are some of the poorest sections of the village. The harijans are very poor also and since they also own small plots and cannot get employment as agricultural labourers for more than a few months in a year, they find life very difficult. The Lohars, Tellis, Badhais and Kumhars represent the artisans of the village though they also practise agriculture. Their income from their craft has dwindled due to the proximity of big towns and machine-made goods. However, they are paid for their services in kind by the villagers which helps them in feeding their families. As seen in the table, their plots are very small. The three Muslim families do own land, but they are engaged in business in the village. The Ahirs or Yadavs are cowherds. Their plots are larger and they are not as poor as the other lower castes. They also own a few cows and buffaloes and sell milk to the villagers thus augmenting their income.

Caste does not seem to affect the agricultural life of the village, except that the Upper castes still do not believe in the performance of manual labour and

employ labourers who are usually harijans. There is, as will be described below, some illfeeling due to the fact that some of the harijan families have received land from the government.

The main castes living in the hamlet of Sumbhadih are given below:

TABLE 7

Caste	No. of house- holds.	Caste	No. of house- holds.
Ahir	10	Kshatriya	37
Bania	10	Kumhar	3
Barai	1	Koeris	17
Bhar	8	Nai	2
Brahmin	11	Lohar	1
Dharker	1	Pathar	2
Gadriya	5	Pasi	2
Kahar	8	Teli	11
Kayastha	2	Muslim	21
Kewat	13		

The predominant castes are the Kshatriya or Thakur as they are locally called. They own most of the land, and have always occupied the primary position in the social life of the village. They claim descent from the original Rajput founders of the village and although today they are no longer Zamindars they still enjoy a prestigious position. The Brahmins are Sarjuparia and do not enjoy a high religious position.

The Kshatriya, Brahmin, and Kayasth households are literate and are in service. Being more advanced in their outlook and able to afford it they were among

the first to take to education. This ensures them respect even today. They own much larger land holdings than the other castes. Sumbhadih has a large number of lower castes such as Pasis, Gadariyas, Dharkar, Bhars, etc. They own small plots and supply agricultural labourers and share-croppers when required. The Banias are the village traders. The Ahirs were the traditional cowherds but are cultivators of a high order. Their holdings are small, not above four acres. The Koeris are expert horticulturists and sell vegetables. Among the Muslims there are no separate castes in Sumbhadih, most of them are not agriculturists.

The table below gives the castes of the sample households together with the total land owned by each caste:

TABLE 8

Caste	No. of households	Total land
✓Thakur	4	22.00 acres
Kayastha	1	10.00 acres
Brahmin	2	1.17 acres
Kewat	1	8.00 acres
Nai	1	0.17 acres
Teli	1	0.33 acres
Harijan	8	2.17 acres
Lohar	1	1.50 acres
Kumhar	1	1.50 acres
Bania	3	No land
Muslim	3	2.25 acres
Koeris	1	0.30 acres
Raj Bhars	2	0.23 acres
Yadav	1	0.50 acres



From the table on the pre-page we see that most of the land is held by the upper castes. In table 7, the occupational pattern from the viewpoint of caste, in the hamlet is seen. This showed, as already said, that most castes carried on their traditional occupation. Caste still has a strong hold on Sumbhadih. However, this is not due to religious or social reasons, untouchability is no longer practised and there are no jati panchayats. The old economic order based on caste still continues because there has been no change in the economic system. Opportunities for external employment are insignificant. Capital farming or large-scale industrialisation has yet to be established in east U.P. specially Azamgarh.

There are no Brahmins or Kshatriyas residing in Sakhia. The village consists of mainly the lower castes. The table below gives the caste status of the sample households and includes proportionately all the castes living in Sakhia. It also gives the total amount of land owned by each caste:

TABLE 9

Caste	Total amount of land owned	Number of households
Gauria	1.55	11(only 2 have land)
Ahir	0.67	1
Keeri	1.48	2
Pasi (chamar)	0.20	1
Harijan	0.38	4
Lohar	6.01	6
Total households		<u>25</u>

In the above we see that the most numerous is the Gauria muslim caste, however, it has very little land compared to the Lohars of whom there are only 6 households. The Gaurias were traditionally wandering musicians providing entertainment to the villages in U. P. and Bihar. They were very much in demand during weddings etc. and were well paid by the Zamindars and Talukdars. However, today most of the villagers are too poor to pay for such entertainment and they have now become a destitute class untrained in any kind of work. They are strictly speaking not an agricultural caste, they owned large tracts of lands, but due to their constant travels, they employed labourers or gave it to share-croppers. Their economic condition is today worse than that of the harijans or pasis. They have taken to selling toys etc. at village fairs. Farmers employ them only when no agricultural labour is available, as they are not very good agriculturists. The Gauria leaders in the village claimed that most of the land tilled by the landlords of Ukraura belonged to them originally. However, old records do not substantiate such claims. They were probably occupancy tenants of the Zamindars of the area. Among the sample households the landless households are all Gaurias.

Thus we see that caste has an effect on the life of the village, on its occupational structure, its social order and the agrarian classes in it.

FOOTNOTES

1. District Census Handbook, 1971, Basti  
(Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-B, 1971):464
2. Ibid; Part X-A:532
3. Ibid; Part X-B:464
4. Ibid; Part X-A:532
5. F.H. Fisher, Statistical, Descriptive And Historical Account of the N.W. Provinces, 1901; Basti Gazetteer (Lucknow: Govt.<sup>o</sup>f The United Provinces):  
112-113
6. Ibid; 245-246
7. n. 1
8. Report of The Village Pradhan 1978-79
9. District Census Handbook, 1971, Gorakhpur (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1971): 158
10. Ibid
11. Ibid; part X-B: 120
12. Ibid
13. District Census Handbook, 1971, Azamgarh (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1971): 418
14. Sumbhadih was one of the villages selected for study under The Village Monograph Series of the 1961 Census of U.P. - "Village Survey Monograph" - Azamgarh, Vol. XV No. 7, Part VI.
15. n. 13
16. Lekhpal's Record 1977-78.

17. n. 14: 48, Table 1.
18. District Census Handbook, 1971, Azamgarh  
(Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-B, 1971): 398
19. Drake-Brockman, Gazetteer of Azamgarh District 1911  
(Lucknow: Govt. of the United Provinces, 1911):95
20. Ibid; 88
21. n. 14:4
22. n. 13: 210
23. Lekhpal's Records, 1977-78.
24. n. 18:194-5
25. District Census Handbook, 1961, Azamgarh  
(Census of U.P., Series 21, 1961)

CHAPTER V

Structure And Aspects of Agrarian Relations And  
Agrarian Conflict

In the study of agrarian relations, the agricultural structure and the economic system within the sample villages is important because it forms the basis of the nature and type of agrarian relations. The land ownership pattern, the occupational structure and also some aspects of the economy of the village determine the nature of agrarian conflict found there.

AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURE

Distribution and size of village plots: Sixty per cent of the villagers in Nagar are engaged in agriculture either directly or indirectly hence there is overcrowding on the cultivable land available in the village. Because of the large population of the village, the size of the plots are small. There are today in Nagar no large landowners, no agriculturist owns more than 10 acres. On the other hand there are very few landless agricultural families. The agricultural community on the whole consists mainly of petty farmers owning less than one acre plots. The table below gives this:<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 1

Size of plots in acres	Number of patti- dars or owners
Less than one acre	1,200
1-5 acres	600
5-10 acres	46
10-15 acres	nil
15-20 acres	nil
Over 20 acres	nil
*Landless labourers	10

\* (That is, those not following any other occupation)  
Only 646 own more than one acre and in a village of such a large size only 46 have between 5-10 acres. Moreover, it should be realised that a holding of less than one acre often has to support a family of 10 members. There is not much demand for agricultural labourers in Nager because of this, very often the holding does not provide enough work for all the adult members some of whom offer themselves to bigger farmers. Hence many of the 1200 pattedars listed as owning less than an acre also provide agricultural labour to the village.

The table below gives the size of the plots among the sample households, the number of owners and the number of persons in their family dependent on the plots. Only 42 households out of 50 own land at present. We see that 21 plots are less than 1 acre each, while 19 are between 1-5 acres, and only two are between 5-10 acres. The largest plot among the sample

households is 8.34 acres and belongs to a Brahmin household. Of the 8 who do not own land, three are agricultural labourers who have no other source of income, and five are shop-keepers who are strictly speaking not agriculturists, but all traders in Nagar would like to buy a piece of land.

Distribution of plots according to size among sample households:

TABLE 2

Size in acres	No. of households	Average size of family
Less than 1 acre	21	6-12 members
1-5 acres	19	8-15 members
5-10 acres	2	10-15 members
10-15 acres	nil	-
15-20 acres	nil	-
Over 20 acres	nil	-
Landless families	8	5-10 members
<b>Total:</b>	<b>50</b>	

Land ownership pattern: According to the Census of 1971, there were 703 owner cultivators and 266 agricultural labourers in Nagar. The number has since increased. However, categories such as Landowner, Tenant, Agricultural Labour do not reveal the nature of agricultural life and inter-relationship among those associated with or working on land. There are rarely "pure" owners or share-croppers, or agricultural labourers in the villages of eastern U.P. The table

below attempts to show the land ownership pattern and agricultural functions carried out by the sample households:

TABLE 13.

Land ownership among the sample households

Owner-cultivators	...	42
Tenants	...	nil
Share-cropper with or without land	...	3 (at the time of the survey those who could get land to e.c)
Petty landowners who also work as agricultural labourers	...	26
Traders with or without land	...	7 (only 2 have land)
Agricultural labourers who do not own land	...	3
Workers other than in agriculture	...	2

The table shows that only 42 own land, and the number of landless agricultural households who do not have any other means of livelihood is 3, however, as many as 26 households admitted that they had to work as hired agricultural labourers. This is because most of them own diminutive plots and had to supplement their meagre income from agriculture by working on others fields. Most of them traditionally were not



agricultural labourers but used to share-crop on the lands of bigger farmers. They are now reduced to hiring themselves and their families during "peak" seasons - a function which many found degrading. As there is no other industry in Basti which could offer them alternative employment they are dependent on seasonal labour which is scarce. The 2 households consisting of workers not engaged in agricultural work in Basti are employees of the Block and Tahsil.

Occupational Pattern: Nagar has 709 houses, however, not all the households are engaged in agriculture.

The 1971 Census<sup>2</sup> listed a total of 969 persons as engaged in agriculture, a decrease from 1,325 in 1961.<sup>3</sup> The number has increased since according to the Lekhpai to over a 1,000. The table below gives the occupational pattern of the village.<sup>4</sup> A glance at it shows that a large number of villagers are engaged in professions other than agriculture in marked contrast to most villages in Basti:

TABLE 4

1971 Census		1961 Census	
Occupation	Persons	Occupation	Persons
✓ Cultivators (owners & tenants)	703	✓ Cultivators	1145
✓ Agricultural labourers	266	Agri. labourers	180
Livestock, Hunting	1	Mining	-
Mining	-	Household industry	77
✓ Household industry	78	Non-household industry	8
✓ Non-household industry	29	Construction	5

✓ Construction	8	Trade & Commerce	88
✓ Traders	180	Transport	6
Transporters	5	Other services	45
Public services	54	Non-workers	1981
Total workers	1,324	Workers	1551
Total non-workers	<u>2,931</u>		

The table shows many persons as traders or builders, however, it should be remembered that this forms their major source of income. Most of them own some land and are also engaged on farming either directly or through hired labourers. They have an important effect on the agricultural life of the village as they are the one section who have some capital to invest either on land or business. If we study the table above we find that the number of cultivators has decreased between 1961 and 1971, while the number of agricultural labourers has gone up. However, not all cultivators have been reduced to agricultural labourers. A large number of them have taken to trading as can be seen in the increase in the number of traders. The number of persons listed as engaged in household and non-household industry is rather large, but enquiries revealed that they were involved mainly in petty business as blacksmiths, carpenters or brick makers. A few women weave cloth for their household requirements. Besides this there is no industry in the village or in the

surrounding areas which provides employment to the able-bodied villagers. This has surprisingly not led to migration in the last few years either which is a common feature in the eastern district. In the sample, only a few villagers admitted having worked in a town for any length of time, though they do go to Basti town often. This has led to overcrowding on the agricultural land, and has caused "underemployment" and "disguised" employment.

A study of the agricultural holdings in Nandapar shows that the cultivated area per household is very small. According to the Lekhpel's records the size and distribution of village plots are as follows.<sup>5</sup>

TABLE 5

Size of plots in acres	No. of hold- ings (Pattas)
Less than 1 acre	175
2-5 acres	70
5-10 acres	3
10-20 acres	nil
20-25 acres	1

Each household consists of about 8-10 persons on an average and hence a holding or "Patta" of 1/2 acre has often to support 10 persons.

The land ownership pattern in the sample households is given in the table below:

TABLE 6

Amount of land	Number of households
Less than 1 acre	11
1-5 acres	28
5-10 acres	3
10-15 acres	nil
15-20 acres	nil
20-25 acres	1
Above 25 acres	nil
Landless	2
Total:	<u>45</u>

In the table above we find that except two, all households reported owning some land even if it was less than one acre. However, pressed for details some did admit that they were hissedars ploughing the land of a bigger farmer.

The occupational pattern of the village households as given in the 1971 Census is given below:<sup>6</sup>

TABLE 7

Owner and tenant cultivators	M 117/F -
Agricultural labourers	M 108/F-24
Livestock, fishing, hunting	- -
Mining & quarrying	- -
Household industry	M 1/F -
Non-household industry	- -
Building construction, bridge, road maintenance	- -
Retail trading	M 1/F -
Transport agents	- -
Public utility services	- -
Non-workers	M 168/F-293
Total workers	M 227/F-24

This shows that besides agriculture, there is virtually no other occupation in the village. The number of traders or retailers is also only one. There are, however, a few blacksmiths and other village artisans.

The table below shows the occupational pattern within the sample households. All households reported agriculture as their main and most stable source of income:

TABLE 8

Occupation	Number of households
A Households holding land under one tenure only (owner-cultivators)	13
B Households owning land as well as S.C. available land (share-croppers)	3 (at the time of survey)
C Households owning land as well as leasing some or part of it (owner/rent receiver)	1
D Households owning land, share-cropping as well as working as agricultural labourers	26
E Households owning no land, share-cropping or working as agricultural labourers mainly (landless labourers)	2

The table shows the agricultural-occupational pattern within the sampled households. We see that 26 households, that is, 57.8%, though they owned some land they had to carry on share-cropping as well as work as agricultural labourers during peak seasons.

This shows that they own very small plots and find it necessary to carry on share-cropping. On being questioned they said they preferred "batai" (share-cropping) to "mazdoori" as it gave them status as well as a piece of land to cultivate. Their main problem was that since all the village holdings were small and by far, self cultivated, they could get very little land for share-cropping. Sometimes they were able to get a few bighas while during some fasaals they got nothing at all and had to be content with doing "mazdoori" on the fields of others. However, during the current fasal (winter crop 1977-78) these households were carrying on all the three types of work specified in category 'D'. The second largest category is that of households holding land under one tenure only. They consisted of 13 or 28.9% of the households sampled. The 13 households in category 'A' perhaps lease some land but do not admit this fact. Of the 13 households three are "Lohars" or blacksmiths and hence reported that they do not have the time to share-crop any extra land. One of them owns the only flour mill in the village, while another owns a small furnace and is busy repairing agricultural and other implements used by the villagers. Both of these are paid by the villagers in "Kind" annually after the harvesting is over. One of the 13 households belong to a muslim family who held that they did not share-crop

as they owned a shop in the village and also sold bangles at all the fairs. One household belonging to the lone kshatriya family in the sample, consisted of only one member who held that his holding of one acre was enough for him and he did not care to share-crop. One of the households reported having 25 acres of land hence did not need to share-crop. The family denied that they leased out land. They preferred to employ a few labourers as and when required. However, the head of the household admitted that they had one "hereditary" male labourer whose father and grandfather had also worked on their land, and was paid annually to work as an agricultural labourer. Thus we see the usual divisions do not apply.

All the 13 households in category 'A' reported that they employed labourers on their fields when required for manual tasks. A few of them held that as they were Brahmins they had to employ labourers for all agricultural operations. In the sample of households they were the ones who reported using agricultural labourers for 4-6 months in a year, whereas all other cultivators held that even if they employed labourers it was only for about 8-10 days during the peak seasons. (Whether the Brahmins actually employed labourers, or those labourers were in reality share-croppers is not known). However, it

must be mentioned that most of these 7 households had some other source of income as well which kept some of the members busy as well as allowed them financially to employ the labour required. Among them 3 are school teachers whereas all others have a family member earning outside. Turning to category 'C' we find only one household. The members of this household do not reside permanently in the village but visit it frequently on weekends. They reside in Gorakhpur where the male members are all well employed either as teachers or lawyers. Hence, they found it necessary to lease their fields to some of the villagers. One of the members of the family who was present in the village pointed out that they had no other option. The total holding of 2.3 acres was leased out to three families. He freely admitted that it was under a share-cropping arrangement as that was the only system possible in the village. The villagers were too poor to pay cash rent hence the system of "batai" was followed. He, however, held that he helped the share-croppers with fertilisers, etc., and leased out the land to the same family at every fasal. Hence, it was not strictly a share-cropping arrangement, but rather one of owner and tenant. As seen in category 'E' two of the families do not own any land and merely work on the land of others. They complained that they found employment for very few days in the year and hence found life difficult. Some families of their kind had migrated. Sometimes if they were lucky they got a few bighas to share-crop. One



of the households is a Brahmin household whose members for caste reasons do not like to do manual work, but since they had to sell their land due to unfortunate circumstances they are forced to share-crop. In category 'B', 3 households reported that they owned land but since their holdings were very small, they had to share-crop. They did not work as agricultural workers because they held that they were able to get land to share-crop. Thus we see that the agricultural system is one where the usual divisions of owner, tenant and labour do not apply.

Distribution and size of village plots: The distribution and size of village plots in Sumbhadih is shown in the table below: ?

TABLE 9

Size	Number of plots
Less than 1 acre	337
More than 1 but not more than 3.3	60
3.5 - 10 acres	40
10 - 15 acres	7
15 - 20 acres	none
Over 20 acres	none

This shows that most of the cultivators are petty farmers with less than one acre of land. There are no big landowners either with over 20 acres. The lands of the former Zamindars are now distributed among their erstwhile tenants. Till the 1971 Census, consolidation of holdings had not taken place, and holdings were scattered all over. At the time of the survey, however, land consolidation was going on and the Lekhpai reported

that the villagers were quite cooperative. However, there are three rivers on three sides of the village so it is inevitable that some land will be lost and this is causing worry. The land ownership pattern among sample households is given in the table below:

TABLE 10

Size of holding	Number of households
Less than one acre	16
1-5 acres	4
5-10 acres	3
10-20 acres	4
Over 20 acres	nil
Traders without land who are not agriculturists	3

Occupational Pattern: The table below gives the occupational pattern of all the hamlets of Sumbhadih according to the 1971 Census:<sup>8</sup>

TABLE 11

Total workers	660
Cultivators	487
Agricultural labourers	116
Livestock & hunting	nil
Mining & quarrying	nil
Household industry	24
Other industry	nil
Construction	nil
Retail trading	14
Transport agencies	nil
Public utility services	19
Non-workers	1,637

This shows that agriculture is the main occupation of the villagers as 488 out of 660 workers are agriculturists. However, this is for all the 7 hamlets. The next table shows the occupational pattern of the total workers of hamlet Sumbhadih alone.<sup>9</sup>

TABLE 12

Total workers	376
Cultivators	202
Cattle grazers	4
Service	15
Business	3
"Halwai"	2
Traders with shop	25
Agricultural labourers	46
Carpenters	1
Potters	4
Horticulturists	42
Lehars	3
Barbers	9
Telis	20
Tailors	9
Others	9

Here also we see that out of a total of 376 workers - 290 i.e. more than 3/4 were engaged in agriculture either as cultivators, agricultural labourers or as horticulturists.

There has been very little shift from the traditional caste occupation carried on by each household. The table below shows this.<sup>10</sup> The village panch also pointed out that no family had changed its occupation for a long time, nor is there any other source of employment available in or around the village. The whole of east U.P. in this sense ...

is very backward.

TABLE 13

Caste	Number of households	Persons engaged in caste occupation & others
1. Ahir	10	
cultivators		30
cattle grazers		2
✓ 2. Bania	10	
cultivators		2
service		2
business		3
sweets seller		2
trader with shop		12
3. Bhar	8	
cultivators		5
agricultural labourers		17
4. Barai	1	
service		1
5. Brahmins	11	
cultivators		14
service		2
6. Dharker	1	
chick maker		4
7. Gadriya	15	
cultivators		14
8. Kayastha	2	
cultivator		1
service		2
9. Kehatriya (thakur)	37	
cultivators		66
service		3
10. Kumhar	3	
cultivators		9
cattle grazers		2
potter		4

11.	Kahar	8	
	Cultivator		6
	agricultural labourers		2
	service		4
	grain parching		8
	other		4
12.	Kewat	13	
	cultivators		24
	agricultural labourers		19
13.	Koeri	17	
	cultivators		6
	agricultural labourers		3
	horticulturists		42
14.	Lohar	1	
	Lohars		3
15.	Barber	2	
	Barbers		9
16.	Pasi	2	
	cultivators		4
	agricultural labourers		2
17.	Pathar (Scheduled Caste)	2	
	cultivators		4
18.	Teli	11	
	oil-pressers		20
	cultivators		3
	retailers		2
19.	Muslim	21	
	cultivators		12
	agricultural labourers		3
	service		1
	bangle seller		9
	tailor	9	9
	others	1	1
		<u>165</u>	

The Lohare, Nai, Potter, Dharkar, Telie, etc., still carry on their traditional caste trade. However, they also carry on agriculture also. It is only among the higher castes that some persons have taken up service locally with either the agricultural department, tehsil or block offices. Hence, the social and economic system of the village has remained the same. It is still a small complete unit, with a subsistence economy having little contact in its economic dealings with the outside world. The economic level of the villagers has improved, but it has not led to complete break-down of the village system.

The occupational pattern among the 30 sample households is given below:

TABLE 14

	Occupation	Number of households
1.	Cultivators	26
2.	Agricultural labourers	6
3.	Rentiers	6
4.	Traders	3
5.	Blacksmiths	1
6.	Barbers	1
7.	Vegetable growers	1
8.	Tailors	1

Among them, the three traders do not own land, one farmer is employed in Calcutta and has given out his total land on a share-cropping basis making him a

rentier; the remaining 26 households are all those of cultivators. However, among them, some have other occupations also as we see.

The table below<sup>11</sup> shows the importance of agriculture as against other occupations forms in Sumbhadhi:

TABLE 15

Cultivation	50.6 per cent
Agricultural labourer	11.5 " "
Horticulture	10.5 " "
Manufacture	10.0 " "
Business	7.2 " "
Service	6.7 " "
Others	3.5 " "

Cultivation taken together with agricultural labour and horticulture would mean that 72.6% of the population are engaged on the land. Those in business have as the table on occupational structure shows grain, provision, or tea shops. The only industries are very small household industries carried on by blacksmiths, oil pressers, carpenters, chik makers, potters, etc.

However, these tables do not give the nature of agricultural activity carried on by the sample households. Among the 27 households in the sample who are agriculturists (3 are traders) the number of households who have to work as agricultural labourers or carry on share-cropping to supplement their income from agriculture is shown below.

TABLE 16

1. Landowners who do not work as agricultural labourers	14
2. Landowners who work as agricultural labourers	6
3. Land owners who also carry on share-cropping	9
4. Landowners who do not share-crop	11

Fourteen households do not work as agricultural labourers. Most of them are Thakurs, Kayasth, or Brahmin households who traditionally do not perform such tasks, or households carrying on some industry such as the Lohar, Potters or Telis. However, only 11 households do not share-crop. Most villagers pointed out that they preferred share-cropping to working as agricultural labourers, as the former was a more dignified and independent occupation while in the case of the latter the worker was at the mercy of his employer. Moreover, the agricultural labourers were often employed only for a few months every year. Hence, households which share-crop do not work as agricultural labourers unless necessary. Nine households out of 28 are currently engaged in share-cropping. The figure is higher than in other sample villages. This shows that in Sumbhadih land is still available for share-cropping.

Distribution and size of village plots: The distribution of agricultural land and the size of plots in village Sakhie is shown in the table



below<sup>12</sup>

TABLE 17

Size	Number of plots
Less than 1 acre	196
2-5 acres	71
5-10 acres	4
10-20 acres	nil
Over 20 acres	nil
Landless agricultural labour(households)	9
Total sampled (households)	25

From the above, it is obvious that most of the villages have very small plots, the largest being within 10 acres. Most of those having less than 1 acre are also agricultural labourers. There are hence no big landowners, rather 85 persons out of a total of 240 are landless agricultural labourers who have no other source of income. The distribution of plots among the sample households is shown below:

TABLE 18

Size	Number of Patti-dars or owners
Less than 1 acre	11
1-5 acres	5
5-10 acres	-
10-20 acres	-
Over 20 acres	-
Landless agricultural labourers(households)	9
	<u>25</u>

Most of those in the sample who have less than one acre land have only a few "biswas", a biswa being only 1/20th of a bigha. (3 bighas = 1 acre). The smallest plot is only 0.15 acre i.e. 6 biswas. These in fact can be called "garden plots" and can be totally uneconomic for growing food crops. On being interviewed all the petty farmers agreed that their plots are uneconomic. They are prepared to sell their plots to larger landowners if alternative employment of any sort was guaranteed in order to look after their families. There is no strong attachment to land among them, most of them spend their lives on their small holdings because there is no other avenue open for them. Discontent among the new and educated generation of farmers is very obvious.

X Occupational Pattern: The occupational pattern of the population as given in the 1961 and 1971 Census is shown below: <sup>13</sup>

TABLE 19

	1961	1971
1. Total workers	55	73
2. Total non-workers	130	167
3. Cultivators	30	30
4. Agricultural labourers	4	27
5. Livestock, hunting, fishing, etc.	nil	nil
6. Mining & quarrying	nil	nil
7. Household industry	3	2
8. Non-household industry	3	1
9. Construction/maintenance	nil	nil
10. Trading	9	11
11. Transport	nil	nil
12. Public utility services	6	2

In this table we see that while the total number of agriculturists has remained the same, the number of agricultural labourers has increased from 4 to 27. The number of traders has increased, but they all have small tea shops or provision shops on the main road. The only industrial activity in the village is provided by blacksmiths.

The occupational pattern of sample households is given in the table below:

TABLE 20

Occupation	Number of households
1. Cultivators	16
2. Landless households	9
(a) landless households who work as agricultural labourers	5
(b) Landless households who do not work as agricultural labourers	4
3. Petty traders	4
4. Lohars (blacksmiths)	5
5. Darzi (tailors)	1

While agriculture is the main occupation and source of income, some of the agriculturists have made attempts to supplement their incomes by other means too. Sixteen households own land and can be classed as cultivators, but among them 5 are also Lohars or blacksmiths. Of the remaining 11, one is a trader with a shop in the village while another has a job in Azamgarh, and only 9 households showed agriculture as their only source of income. Even in the case of these 9, most of them work as agricultural labourers also, whenever work is available. The Lohar families

in Sakhia own more land than the other castes. Of the 5 Lohar households in the sample, 2 households pointed out that their income from agriculture and industry was the same, while 3 households held that their income from agriculture was higher than what they earned as blacksmiths.

TABLE 21

Landowners who do not work as agricultural labourers	9
Landowners who work as agricultural labourers	7
Landless households who work as agricultural labourers	5

From the above table we find that 7 households owning land, also work as agricultural labourers as the income from their fields is not enough to feed their families. Of the 9 households who do not work <sup>as</sup> agricultural labourers, 5 households consist of the lohars who are busy with their trade. Thus only 4 households in the sample are engaged on their own fields exclusively. Share-cropping is not carried on by any household as there is no extra land available. All the households in the sample held that if land were available they would be glad to share-crop on the landowners terms. Thus the nature of agricultural activity carried on by cultivators cannot be understood by merely grouping them as landowners, tenants, labourers, etc.

**Irrigation:** All the villages in the sample are provided with irrigation facilities on at least a part of the land, electricity for tube-wells and hand pumps and wells for drinking water. In Nagar 2-3 shops and houses have started using electricity for domestic consumption as well. However, rural electrification is largely limited to tube-wells, flour mills and small workshops in east U.P. Electric connections are difficult to get and in Nagar 8 farmers use diesel machines for the tube-wells. Five to eight farmers have tube-wells run on electricity hence there are 13 tube-wells in the village. There is also a large and deep pond or "Tal" - Chando Tal - in the village which is used for irrigation purposes. There are also many old wells which have now fallen into poor shape. Out of the total 671 acres which are irrigated, 34 acres are irrigated by electric tube-wells, 212 acres by ordinary wells and 425 acres by the tal.<sup>14</sup> The acreage under tube-well irrigation has increased since the 1971 census. About 389 acres still remain unirrigated. The village does not suffer from floods every year, but in 1978 flood waters entered the village, whereas in 1977 there was drought.

The table below gives the number of tube-wells put up by the sample households, and the other sources

of irrigation for them also:

TABLE 22

Tube-wells in Nagar Khas

Number of tube-wells in the village	...	13
Number of tube-wells among sample households	...	6

Sources of irrigation

Sources	Number of households
1. Tube-wells	22
2. Wells	1
3. Ponds or Tal	14
4. Other	nil

In Nandapar too, in recent years irrigation facilities have increased, though it is hard to believe as it has improved the crop yield of only a few farmers. In a village with a total of 482 acres cultivated land, 14 pump sets have been installed over the last 5-10 years. In spite of this, there is shortage of water in the hot season and though more households in the sample reported 2 fasals in a year, in actual fact often due to water problems, only one is harvested. The table below gives the sources of irrigation and area irrigated by each: <sup>15</sup>

TABLE 23

Total irrigated area	...	240 acres
Sources of Irrigation		
By tube-wells	...	9 acres
By well	...	136 acres
By tank	...	68 acres
By others	...	27 acres
Unirrigated	...	266 acres

In Sumbhadih, in the entire revenue vilage, a total of 538 acres out of 1138 acres is irrigated.<sup>16</sup> The sources of irrigation and area irrigated by them is given below:<sup>17</sup>

TABLE 24

Source	Acreege
Tank	53
Tube-well/withe electricity	145
Ordinary well	310
Unirrigated area	600
Total irrigated area	538

In hamlet Sumbhadih alone 234.8 acres out of 454.5 acres is irrigated.<sup>18</sup> The vilage tank is used only during the monsoon. From the wells water is drawn by means of a "dhenkal" or an earthen pot suspended by a pole operated by two men. In the 1961 census only 1 tube-well is mentioned in the hamlet of Chajjupati from where the vilagers of Sumbhadih also got water. However, the Lekhpel reported that at present

in the entire revenue village there are 22 private tube-wells operating, an increase by no standards small. Because of this the ordinary wells are rarely used, most of the tube-wells are however small. Among the sample households, there were 4 tube-wells, all of them belonging to Thakur households with over 10 acres of land. The sources of irrigation among the sample households is given below:

TABLE 25

Number of households who get water from tube-wells	...	15
Number of households who get water from tanks	...	4
Number of households who get water from ordinary wells	...	1

Among the sample households, a few of the households complained that they got the water with great difficulty though the rate is the same for all in Sumbhadih. This problem is not so acute here as in the other sample villages.

The village lies on the "banger" or raised portion of the northern part of Azamgarh district north of the river Sarju. It is hence a fertile and well drained area not subjected to floods. The banger areas are usually densely populated and Sumbhadih is no exception. The village is drained by the river Rajhol. Drought does not occur now and is controlled. In Sakhi, according to the Lekhpai's records, has 237,803 acres are available for cultivation, of which only 192,686 acres are irrigated. The cultivable



waste in the village is only one acre, hence there can be no further extension of agriculture. The sources of irrigation and the area covered by each is given below.<sup>19</sup> The Lekhpal records show that there are 10 ordinary pukke wells, 2 persian wheels, and 9 tube-wells from which the farmers of Sakhia get their water for irrigation. However, of the 9 tube-wells, only one is owned by a farmer in Sakhia, the remaining 8 belong to Ukraura. The tube-wells are very close to the northern boundary of Sakhia and all the farmers "buy" water from them.

TABLE 26

Source of irrigation among sample households	Number of households
Tube-wells with electricity	16
Ordinary wheels	11
Persian wheels	1

The table shows that all the 16 households in the sample who own land, get their water supply from the tube-wells. Even the 2 households who referred to ordinary wells and persian wheel, get their main water supply from tube-wells, the wells and persian wheel being only a subsidiary source used only for a small part of their land. The villagers pointed out that most of the old wells were now in a bad state and rarely used.

✓ **CERTAIN CRITICAL ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMY**

The conomic organisation of the villages in our sample is simple, having in fact an almost purely subsistence type of economy. Except in the case of a few innovative farmers, the methods employed and the tools used are still of the primitive type. Capital farming or large-scale intensive farming with modern mechanical devices such as tractors, harvesters, combines, etc. is yet to come in. The villagers carry on agriculture mainly to feed their own families, very few are able to sell their produce outside. Except for a few of the better educated and prosperous villagers very few were able to even tell correctly what was the yield per acre in their fields or their annual gross yield over two fasals. However, it is not the statistics which in this case are important or with which we need concern ourselves. What is more important is that in the entire sample of households only a few households reported that they had any surplus grain to sell. All the others after a few months had to buy grain or borrow from the more prosperous <sup>farmers</sup> until the next harvest. The crops grown are the same in all these villages, the yield per acre is low.

In Nagar Khas, the main crops grown are wheat, sugarcane, and various types of pulses. Inferior varieties of grain and millets etc., have been almost completely replaced by wheat as water is now more easily available and seed from the block office.

On the higher ground which lies south of the main Tal, three crops are grown by villagers, wherever water is available. Only 2 crops are grain crops, the third is mainly vegetables or fodder. This area is never flooded and farmers are prepared to invest and improve the yield. On the lower areas, two crops are planted, but the summer crop depends on the monsoon. Severe drought or floods can result in loss. Crop diseases specially in the case of wheat are widespread, although one agency for pest control is active.

Among the households in the sample who own land, opinion was divided on the question whether in the last five years income from agriculture had increased or not. Twenty one cultivators admitted that there was marked improvement in the yield per acre and the quality of the crops grown, however, they pointed out that their net income had not increased much. The better variety of seeds, the extra fertiliser they used and the high cost of irrigation offset any extra income they could have earned. The difference is felt in their consumption and life style, they have not been able to accumulate any savings in order to invest in agriculture or any industry. Twenty cultivators felt that there was no change. The rest were indifferent. Most of them felt that any improvement in one year was offset by either flood or drought leaving them as they were before. They held that they could not raise a large loan for improving their fields as they

had very little land to offer as surety to the bank. Hence, the economic position of the average villager remains the same. However, better roads, drinking water, schools, medical facilities have definitely changed the character of the village.

The yield per acre for wheat which is the main crop grown in Nager Khas is not very high and is almost the same for all cultivators regardless of the amount of land they own. The table below shows the yield per acre among sample households:

TABLE 27.

Quintals per bigha	Number of households
Less than 2	10
2-5	28
5-10	nil
10-20	nil

Of the 42 cultivators owning land, 28 reported that the yield in their fields was between 2-5 quintals per bigha, 10 reported less than 2. The rest said that they never weighed or calculated the produce as they never felt the need. The important point to be grasped is that of the 42 households not a single one has any surplus to sell, all their crop was consumed at home and kept as seed for the next season, the smaller cultivators in fact had to buy wheat or inferior millets to feed their families after

about six months. Hence the village economy seems to be a subsistence economy totally.

In Nandapar, the yield is lower than in Nagar Khas, the soil is also of a poorer quality. Sixteen households pointed out that the yield per acre had increased, while 20 said it had not increased, the rest were either landless or indifferent to the question.

The total cultivated area in Nandapar is approximately 482 acres. The main crop sown by most of the villagers is wheat followed by paddy and then various pulses. In the sample of households taken the following information was gained.

TABLE 28

Crops	Number of households in the sample.	Total number of households sampled
Wheat	40	45
Paddy	22	
Arhar	20	
Chana	13	
Juar	15	
Kodo	7	

This shows that wheat is the major crop grown. However, some of the poorer cultivators and sharecroppers reported that they could not afford to grow wheat and had to be content with inferior grains such as maize and juar. (Wheat is a crop requiring more water and fertilisers etc.).

Most of the villagers reported that they planted two fasals, however, they were largely dependent on the winter crop for subsistence, as the summer crop depended on the vagaries of the monsoon and often there was either drought or flood. Two admitted that they grew only one fasal. Very few reported (2 in the sample) a third or dry season crop. Hence, the intensity of cultivation is very low, and there is hardly any double cropping practised except by those who are able to get irrigation facilities.

The soil in the area is also Usar and infertile requiring a lot of water and fertiliser adding to the problems of cultivation. The most commonly used fertiliser is cow dung though a large number of the villagers reported using factory produced fertilisers in large quantities. However, due to the scarcity of water, most of them are not prepared to spend money on any improvements in their fields.

In Sumbhedih on the irrigated area two crops are sown, while on the rest only one. There is no third or Zaid crop. The horticulturists grow vegetables, whenever water is available. In spite of the construction of private tube-wells they do not have the money to <sup>buy</sup> extra water. Some of the bigger landowners are <sup>beginning</sup> to make use of modern means.

X Among the sample households two admitted having one tractor each. They are both Thakurs with over 10 acres of land. This has lessened the demand for agricultural

labourers and improved their yield. Thus changes have taken place in the agricultural system.

The table below gives the annual yield per bigha in quintals for wheat. Since no records are maintained, and farmers rarely weigh their produce, some could not give any figures. The tendency to under-rate the produce and give higher consumption figures are but natural:

TABLE 29

Wheat crop (yield per bigha) in quintals	Number of households
1-5	10
5-10	8
10-15	2
Did not know	7

The yield is low and no family in the sample or in fact the hamlet has a surplus of wheat to sell. It is consumed at home. Only sugar-cane, oil-seeds, and vegetables are sold outside the villages. This shows that the village has a subsistence economy. The sugarcane is sold through<sup>a</sup> cooperative cane society to the sugar mill in Shahganj. Due to rise in price of sugarcane, the area under this cash crop is increasing. A number of cultivators feel they earn more with the same efforts as before.

The table below indicates the number of households whose yield and income from agriculture has improved over the last 5 years:

TABLE 30

Number of households whose yield has increased	...	15
Number of households whose yield has not increased	...	15

The rest were indifferent to the question.

In the Sakhia, the average yield in maunds per acre for the village as given by the Lekhpal is shown in the table below:

TABLE 31

Crops	Maunds per acre
Wheat	15-20
Barley	10-15
Peas	7-15
Grams/Dals	10-15

Among the sample households the average was 8-10 maunds per bigha. A few of the households could not report their yield as they pointed out that they had never weighed their produce. No household has any surplus to sell, in fact, all the them need to buy wheat to feed their families after a few months of the harvest.

Crop diseases are quite common leading to high losses. In the last five years, three times the village has been flooded and once it has suffered from drought.



On most of the land in the village only one crop is grown. The Lekhpal's reports showed that on 149.834 acres, only one crop was planted, on 95.969 acres two crops were planted, a third crop had never been attempted by any one. The main drawback was water and fertilisers which very few villagers could afford in large quantities.

The cropping system is a study in contrast to that of Ukraura. Three farmers have in recent years bought tractors in Ukraura, and use of fertilisers and good seeds is widespread. This has been possible through the village cooperative and banks. This shows that the new farming technology and help given by the government to farmers is used mainly by bigger farmers and has not reached the small cultivators. This has increased the disparity between the rich and poor farmer in the rural area.

Among the sample households, of the 16 who own land, 10 households held that the gross income from agriculture has increased in the last five years, 5 held that it was the same and one household was indifferent. This increase was largely due to better water supply and seeds the villagers pointed out. However, the increase in price of all agricultural inputs has not allowed them to improve their life style or accumulate any capital for investment. Their economic condition remains almost the same.

Debt, Credit and Cooperatives: Traditionally the relationship between the landowner and tenant, or big Zamindar and small peasant was also determined by the fact that the former was a money-lender too. In fact, under the British, sale of land due to debts, mortgages, etc., led to a change in the type of population cultivating the land. Non-cultivating castes, that is, the Beniases and Mahajans came to own large tracts of land due to mortgages and inability to repay loans. Today, Rural Banks, Government loans, Cooperatives etc., have made credit available and at much reduced interest rates. However, such benefits are also used mainly by the prosperous farmers and have not percolated to the poorer farmers. The villagers questioned held that they could not understand the complicated manner in which the banks and cooperatives functioned and the paper work involved. It also meant frequent trips to the official, often the loan being granted after such a long time that the need for the money was over. This is an important factor in an agricultural society where loans are often required during a particular season for example, planting, manuring, cutting, etc. The villagers hence prefer to borrow from their more prosperous neighbours even though it means paying a higher interest. A few villagers admitted that they had borrowed from the cooperative society in the past and suffered as the rules of the cooperative

are very strict and the officials demanded full payment by a certain date, no leniency being shown and a failure to comply meant selling of land or valuables. The village money-lender, in contrast, they held, was not so harsh and borrowing from him led to no litigation. However, some villagers in the sample said that they have borrowed from the cooperative and repaid without any difficulty. These were generally the more prosperous and knowledgeable ones. Credit: In Nagar there is one cooperative bank in the village which forms the only source of credit for the villagers. It advances loans only upto Rs. 400/-. There is a cooperative society also which supplies seeds and fertilisers as loan but not cash loans. The government system of taccavi loans from the block headquarters has not been operating for sometime. There is no cane union either, although there is a sugarcane mill at Basti to which the villagers supply cane. The household schedule used shows that most of the villagers borrowed from their own kins men or bigger land/shop owners in the villages, which leads to their being in debt to them. The bank does not give loan without some security and most of the villagers have very little land so they cannot raise big loans. The small loans they do get sometimes are spent on household expenses such as weddings, etc.

Hence, the Bank has not in any way changed the economic life of the small farmer. There is no commercial bank in the village in spite of its having a large merchant community. The traders pointed that Nagar with its

population of over 4,000 had no commercial bank while a small nearby town Captainganj, with a smaller population, had two banks. They have been demanding the opening of a full-scale commercial bank from the Tehsil headquarters for quite sometime. Such a bank would give them large loans for industrial purposes. Nagar has a large and forward looking community of "Banias" or traders. The table below shows the number of households in the sample who have borrowed from the bank. The rest of the villagers in the sample were indifferent.

TABLE 32

Number of households who have borrowed from the bank	...	15
Number of households who have not borrowed from the bank	...	27

Twenty-seven households admitted having borrowed from money lenders, traders or bigger farmers in the village. The bank has not changed the borrowing habits of the farmers. All of them pointed out that borrowing money from the bank was a very complicated affair and took a long time and involved a lot of paper work which they do not understand. Some are afraid of sale of land by the bank against arrears if they do not repay the loan.

In Nagar, also there is a cooperative but very few have ever taken a loan. The village also has a large number of share-croppers and the share-cropping system has robbed a large part of the

villagers of any interest and initiative in improving their land since they do not own it.

There are two cooperative societies serving Sumbhadih. One is <sup>the</sup> cooperative credit society from which villagers who are members can get loans. This is not functioning in a very efficient manner. Most villagers prefer to borrow from their neighbours, kinsmen or villager money-lenders etc. rather than from the cooperative because it involves a large amount of paper work they do not understand, and loans have to be repaid by a particular date which is difficult. Among the sample households only 7 households admitted having taken money from the cooperative, the others depended on other villagers. There is no recognised Mahajan in the village, the bigger landlords and tradesmen being the main source of credit. The main sources of indebtedness reported during the 1961 census are given below. The number of villagers in debt now are less, but the reasons remain the same.

TABLE 33

Ordinary wants	30.7 per cent
Marriage	25.7 " "
Cultivation	16.1 " "
Business	14.3 " "
House repairs	6.6 " "
Sickness	3.6 " "
Funerals	1.9 " "
Litigation	1.1 " "

From the above we see that only 30.4% (i.e. for cultivation and business) is productive in the sense that it is invested in the hope of some return. The rest is either due to poverty (30.7%) or consumption

purpose. It is imperative to raise the villagers out of debt and provide some means of credit. But at the same time it is equally necessary to change their outlook and life style.

There is no village bank or cooperative in the village of Sakhi. The nearest cooperative which also serves the village is at Napiapur which is about 10 kms away. Taccavi loan is no longer given. The villagers, in time of need borrow from each other or from bigger farmers in Ukraura. Loans are taken for consumption purposes mainly, investment on the fields is rare. The farmers mortgage their lands in time of need. The Lekhpel's report showed that in 1978, 26 biswa of land was sold due to non-payment of loans. The land was bought by a farmer of Ukraura.

Of the 16 households in the sample who own land, only one cultivator reported that he had borrowed from the cooperative for digging a well and repaid the loan. He reported that it was very difficult to get a loan from the cooperative and he would never try again. Those households who do not own land cannot get a loan from the cooperative as they do not have any assets to mortgage. The villagers find it difficult to understand the procedures involved in getting a loan.

#### *Srj* AREAS OF CONFLICT

Having described the agricultural, social and economic organisation of the sample villages we must now sum up the nature of agrarian relations prevailing

there. The main agrarian classes, and the relationship among them have been dealt with in the conclusion. Here we will only conclude with what can best be described as "areas of Conflict" within these villages. A study of these villages reveals that there is no constant and open hostility among the various classes. On the surface it would seem that there is no tension on any matter concerning agricultural life. However, there are certain issues where differences of opinion can, and often have led to conflict. These issues seem to be part of the wider feeling which divides the "haves" and the "have-nots" in the villages. Caste tension among the different castes is not seen, unless the issue involves land. Rather, urban contact has made the villagers 'class' conscious rather than 'caste' conscious, and the economic division between the "haves" and "have-nots" was more marked and a more important source of tension. This is seen in the areas of conflict described below:

(1) Water: Water is the bane of the farmers life in east U.P. Either there is too much water causing floods, or too little leading to drought. It is an area where State irrigation came late, and in contrast to west U.P. as we have already seen, there are no canals providing irrigation facilities to a large area, rather it is in the form of tube-wells set up by the Government. The only large government "tube-well irrigation units" are in Gorakhpur such as the Sardarnagar group, Benegaon group, Pharenda group, etc. None of the sample villages

lie close to any government tube-well, as already seen they get their water from private tube-wells set up by enterprising farmers. Hence these districts have long been areas of high rainfall and extensive facilities for irrigation from private sources.

The possession of a tube-well with pump set has come to be looked upon as a source of not only wealth but both power as well as social prestige in the village. Just as under the Zamindars land was the source of power and patronage, so today the ownership of a tube-well gives a villager an important place in the village.

A study of the sample households in the four sample villages reveals that most of those farmers who have installed tube-wells do not own very large plots of land hence unable to utilise the potential of their tube-wells fully they "sell" water to their less fortunate neighbours. In Sakhia, the villagers 'buy' their water from the tube-wells installed in Ukraura, a neighbouring village. In the other villages there has been a phenomenal increase in the number of tube-wells set up in the last 10 years. This has brought both increased irrigation facilities as well as conflict.

The farmers who "buy" water have to pay a flat rate per hour, which ranges from Rs. 9/- in Nandapar to Rs. 3/- in Sakhia. This is disliked by the villagers who feel that irrigation facilities should be provided by the government at cheaper rate. Moreover, they pointed out the rate varies from person to person within the village. For example, in Nagar Khas, the amount



charged varies from Re. 4/- to Re. 6/- per hour, the sum demanded depending upon the economic position of the buyer. Those who have put up tube-wells in Nagar Khas are the Brahmins mainly, who have larger plots and being better educated have always been quick to take to new methods. The Khatiks and Koeris have built water channels and buy water from the tube-well owners, but the poorer harijan households have not benefited being unable to afford the high water rates. In Sumbhadih, the villagers have fixed one rate for all farmers who buy water and so there is no tension there concerning water rate.

In Nandapar and Nagar, some farmers complained that even after advance payment of the water tariff, they were given water for only half an hour, or supplied after much pleading ("hath Jodo" literally meaning, to appeal or supplicate) when their crops were almost dry. This has led to many disputes and open fights which have come up before the village Panchayats. The tube-well owners in Nagar appearing before the Panchayat pointed out that in a village with over 1,000 acres of cultivable land, on which there are only 13 tube-wells with low capacity operating it is not possible to supply all the farmers. The constant stoppage of electricity often does not allow even the owners to irrigate their own fields. The agricultural cycle is such that water for irrigation is required during certain seasons and the sudden proliferation of tube-wells in east U.P. has caused

shortage of electricity in these seasons. The situation is complicated by the fact that electricity for agricultural purposes is supplied only at night. (In the Summer of 1978, this was the situation). Many farmers have acquired diesel sets in Nandapar and Nagar because of which they have to charge more. The position of water channels, their depth and direction have all led to much tension in the village.

The situation is worst in Sakhia. Lying in the shadow of a larger village and providing agricultural labourers for the landowners of Ukraura; the petty cultivators of Sakhia have always resisted any encroachment on their independence. Of the 16 households who "buy" water, 13 held that even after paying Rs. 3/- per hour they got water after much delay. The village Lekhpal reported that theft of motors at night by gangs of armed villagers was becoming more and more common. The tube-well motor is usually stolen by a group of cultivators who have not been supplied water. The motor is returned, but only after a large sum of money, and promises of better supply in future are given by the landowner concerned. The tube-well owners in some cases know who the thief is, but they have not reported such thefts to the police, as they are afraid of retaliation by the villagers in large numbers and sabotage of the tube-wells.

(2) Share-cropping: Share-cropping is a usual feature in the sample villages of U.P. where plots are small, and petty farmers are glad to share-crop any extra

piece of land. In a sense, it is a continuation of the old system of "absentee landlord" except that now the landlord lives in the village and cultivates most of his land, giving only his excess land to the poorer agriculturists to share-crop. Under the present circumstances, where bigger farmers are beginning to use HYV of seeds, instal tube-wells etc. it may seem surprising that share-cropping is still carried on. The main reason why landlords still give out land for share-cropping is that it ensures a cheap and steady source of agricultural labour during peak seasons. In some cases the land given is itself a form of payment and is preferred by the labourers because they can grow their own food. The share-cropper works on his own land and that of his landlord as well. Most villagers who are attached to land and have no other skills prefer 'batal' (share-cropping) or Sajhdari (the local name for the share-cropping arrangement) to working as agricultural labourers as it gives a piece of land and some independence.

The share-cropping system works roughly in the following manner in all sample villages. The plot of land is given to the "hissedar" for a single fasal only in most cases, a factor which itself creates uncertainty. The share-cropper has to bear all the expenses of cultivation including irrigation fertiliser rates. Finally the crop is divided on the threshing floor between the share-cropper and the owner.

The entire system is uneconomic. The amount of land given under such an arrangement is usually only 2-3 bighas, and the amount the share-cropper receives is hence not enough to feed his family. Nor is the share-cropper inclined to use good seeds, more water, or improve the land in any way, since he may not get the same plot of land again for share-cropping in the next season. Share-cropping is simply a means of livelihood and survival.

The relationship between the landowner and share-cropper is not even that of a landlord and tenant because share-cropping is not recognized by the law in U.P. After Independence, 3 guidelines were laid down in the 1st four five-year plans regarding tenancy in any form and rent.<sup>20</sup> (1) Rent should not exceed the level of 1/4th to 1/5th of gross produce. (2) Tenants should be given permanent rights to the lands they cultivate subject to a limited right of resumption granted to landowners. (3) In respect of non-resumable land, the landlord/tenant relationship should end, the land going to the tenant. However, in every State, the degree of protection actually given to share-cropping depends on factors such as definition of the term tenant, circumstances under which land is let and resumed for personal cultivation, status of land reform laws etc. In U.P. share-croppers are not tenants - "any arrangement whereby a person is entitled to a right, merely to a share in the produce grown on land in consideration of such person's assisting, or

participating with the tenure holder in the actual performance of agricultural operations is not a lease.<sup>21</sup> Hence, 'Sajehdars' have no security at all. Nor are land records well maintained. Under the law, all leases, oral or written must be entered into the Lekhpal's records but this is not done. The share-cropper obliged to the landowner for his livelihood, is afraid to insist as he may not get any land at all. Finally even if such leases were to be recognised, the much misused and ambiguous clause of "voluntary surrender" ensures that the landowner by peaceful means or threats can get his land back. Thus the relationship of the landlord and the share-cropper is unequal, and usually one of servitude on the part of the share-cropper although he may himself own a small parcel of land. In the sample villages, the situation differs from village to village. In Nagar, share-cropping is not widely practised now as there are no large landowners with surplus land or absentee rentiers. The petty landowners complained that they were prepared to share-crop but land was no longer available. Before the installation of tube-wells, land on which water was not easily available or required the arduous labour of lifting from wells was given out on share-cropping basis to poorer farmers. Though the present trend towards self-cultivation using better techniques is a sign of progress it has led to "land hunger" among the poorer cultivators. This has also increased the economic distance between the poorer farmer, and

the bigger and more innovative farmer. In Nandapar on the other hand, land is still available for share-cropping and is looked upon as an important means of livelihood. All the villagers questioned, freely admitted that they were prepared to plough more land under share-cropping arrangements if it were available. In Sumbhadih, a hamlet of big Thakurs as we have seen the number of households engaged in share-cropping is higher than the other villages. The Thakurs and Brahmins do not engage in menial agricultural occupations and require labourers on their lands almost on an annual basis. These labourers are paid, as we shall see, in kind, there being no fixed wage, or system of cash payment. Hence although there are no landless agricultural families <sup>in</sup> Sumbhadih, most of them are also share-croppers of the Thakur and Brahmin households. Finally in Sakhi, as we have seen share-cropping is virtually non-existent as the village plots are too small. However, many of the villagers work on the lands of the bigger Thakur households of Ukrauro.

(3) Agricultural Labourers: The lot of those who work as agricultural labourers is the worst and they form the poorest section of the village. The term "agricultural labourer" is ambiguous because as we have seen, a large number of families owning land also work from time to time as agricultural labourers on the fields of their more prosperous neighbours.

Hence if we wish to describe the life of the agricultural labourers in these villages it is difficult to point out particular families as being farmers and others as agricultural labourers.

The current levels of minimum wages in U.P. under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 for casual workers in agriculture was (in 1973) Rs. 36/-4 per day.<sup>22</sup> The State is divided into 3 zones - eastern, central and western since the same wage cannot be applied uniformly. The level is the lowest in east U.P. increasing as we move westwards. The minimum also varies between farms operating less than 20 acres and more than 20 acres, it being less for the former and more for the latter. No difference was made between the wages paid to men and women, and no hours fixed. The conditions laid down in other States give greater protection as they lay down hours of work, specify type of work, and insist on feeding of labourers. In this way, U.P. lags behind. For attached labourers paid annually, the minimum in 1973 was Rs. 936-1,170 on farms below 20 acres, and Rs. 998-1,648 on farms above 20 acres. In 1968, the corresponding figures were Rs. 434 and Rs. 612 respectively.<sup>23</sup>

In Nagar, as the table below shows, 26 petty landowners also work as agricultural labourers, among them 10 held that the main source of their income was the wages they received as agricultural labourers and not the yield from their own small fields. The remaining 12 also felt that they could not feed their families without working as labourers for a few months

annually. All of them are either harijans or khatiks (A scheduled caste):

TABLE 34

Agricultural labourers	Number of households.	Main income-agricultural labour	Main income - land
(1) Petty land-owners who also work as agricultural labourers	26	10	12
(2) Agricultural labourers who do not own land	3		

(Total households sampled - 50)

There are three types of agricultural labourers in Nagar and in the other 3 villages. (1) Those hired for a whole year by the bigger farmers and Brahmins for ploughing called attached labourers. (2) Those hired, as and when required i.e. casual labourers. (3) Bonded labourers. Those hired annually are often given a piece of land (making them share-croppers as well) to cultivate for a year. However, one of them pointed out, usually "User" land, or very poor quality land with no irrigation facilities which the landowner himself did not care to cultivate was given. The casual labourers manage to get work only during "peak seasons" the rest of the year leading a precarious existence. In Mandapur, very few farmers can afford to employ labourers on an annual basis, in fact, only 2 households in the sample admitted doing it, and they own the most land in the village. Hence, under-employment and "disguised" employment is a feature of this



village, there being no industries around which could absorb the surplus on land. The number of farmers who can afford to employ casual labour during peak seasons for work they had found distasteful, too has declined in Nandapar causing more distress, and leading to migration. Of the two families in the sample who do not own land in Nandapar, one is a Brahmin family which prefers to get land on a share-cropping basis and employ agricultural labourers for menial tasks, their caste status preventing them from doing manual work.

In Sumbhadih as already said there are no landless agricultural families. However, due to the plots being very small, 11.5% of the population as we have seen consists of agricultural labourers whether they own land or not. The vast number of petty landowners who share-crop extra lands are also agricultural labourers working on their landlords' lands. However, the situation is worst in Sakhia. Of all the villages selected, Sakhia has in proportion to its population, the largest number of agricultural labourers whose living conditions are very bad. Eighty five persons out of a total of 240 persons i.e. more than 1/4 are landless agricultural labourers who have no other source of employment. Among the sample households 16 own land, but among them too, 7 households work as agricultural labourers as we have seen. That is 12 households are engaged as agricultural labourers as and when work is available.

There is no fixed rate either in cash or kind for these labourers, it depends on the Thekura of Ukraura who employ them. Of the 4 households who do not own land, and do not work as agricultural labourers, 2 are hawkers and sell balloons, toys, etc., at village fairs, of the remaining one of them is a trader and another a tailor. They complained that since agricultural employment was not available, they had taken to hawking. Their condition is also very bad. They belong to the Gauria, a muslim caste which is traditionally not an agricultural caste.

The third category - the bonded labourer, is more difficult to identify as most of them do not admit being in bondage. However, the bonded labourer occupies a much better position today than the "Sarwak" of earlier times in Duh. He is not badly treated nor degraded, however he is not "free" to leave unless he has paid off his debts. There are a number of bonded labourers in east U.P. however, in the sample villages, except for one household in Nandapur, no labourer admitted that he was a bonded labourer. However, a large number of them admitted they were in debt to their employers. This shows that it is possible also for a labourer to borrow money and repay it over a period of time without entering into bondage.

The situation of agricultural labourers has also deteriorated in recent years in western U.P. because of the careless manner in which their wages are paid.

The labourers complained that in the days of the Zamindars, there was a fixed wage paid in kind, on the threshing floor to all the agricultural labourers and other workers such as the barber, washerman, etc. of the village. The system of "grain-sharing" assured them a fixed amount of the produce annually, or a piece of land to share-crop and build their house in lieu of their wages. This unwritten rule was largely adhered to as the village economy itself functioned on a system of barter. The barter system has now been replaced by a monetary economy and there is a minimum wage fixed by the government, but it is not followed in most villages. A number of villagers continue to pay the wages of their labourers in kind. The minimum cash wage fixed has increased appreciably in the last five years but the labourers continue to be paid the same amount of grain. In a village close to Nagar during the visit of the District Magistrate, the villagers complained that often all they got was a handful of grain for a whole day's work. The table below shows the number of agricultural labourers in Nagar paid in cash and those paid in kind:

TABLE 35

Wages	Number of households
Number of labourers paid cash wages	29, @ Rs.2½ per day
Number of labourers paid in kind	6 either in land or grain seldom in cash

In Nandapar, the agricultural labourers are paid a minimum of Rs. 4 per day. This is higher than in other villages and because of low yields many farmers have started paying in cash.

In Sumbhadih, there are no fixed wages for the performance of agricultural labourers; mostly a few biswas of land is given as payment, or grain from the threshing floor itself is given as wages. The village workers such as the barber also are paid in kind, the barber reported that a few biswas of poor quality land was given to him irrespective of the amount of work he did. This has caused as we shall see resentment in Sumbhadih. In most villages in east U.P., households reporting themselves as "Share-croppers" or "Sajehdars" are in reality mere agricultural labourers given land as payment. Hence the line dividing the various classes as they are commonly defined in most works on rural India, do not in reality apply when we study the village as a unit.

✓ (4) Land grants: In recent years, grant of land to landless agriculturist families has become an important part of the government's policy. At the same time, at the level of the village, it is a source of tension and often jealousy. In Nager, 15 agricultural labourers were given one acre of land each and a cash loan of Rs. 100/- three years ago (1976).<sup>24</sup> Among the sample households three have received land in this manner. This has improved their economic situation to some extent though they all work as

agricultural labourers still. They pointed out that they had been given land from the cultivable waste land of the village and it took much efforts to cultivate it, a large part of it being Usar land. This has not produced any jealousy in the village, compared to the other sample villages. Moreover, most of those who do not own land, often try to set up a shop or work in Basti town which is nearby. In Nandapar, the government has granted in recent years, land to 8 families in the village, all of them being Harijans.<sup>25</sup> Of them 5 already have diminutive plots of their own, while 3 had none. Those who had no land earlier were granted one acre each, the others getting less than an acre. The more prosperous of the villagers do not grudge the Harijans the land, but the poor non-harijan landless section of the village feels that land should be given to all those who have very little land and not to Harijans alone, or to none. However, this has not led to any violence but relationships are strained. The Harijans who have received the land on the other hand are not happy. In the sample households some admitted that their fields were still lying fallow and untouched. They hold that the land given to them was full of jungle and bushes, the clearance of which would require extensive labour which they could not afford. Hence, the granting of land has not brought any prosperity to these Harijan families or improved their

status in the village. Sumbhadih is the only village which has no landless agricultural labourers. The village Pradhan, a leading Thakur farmer, pointed out that there was not a single landless family in Sumbhadih now. It is, as seen earlier, a village where earlier, a group of Zamindars owned the land. In 1978, the Thakurs after mutual agreement gave fourteen biswas of land (biswa is 1/20th of a bigha) to the 7 landless families of the hamlet of Sumbhadih; the government had given in the last three years 37 villagers land and in this way the landless families of the village were now all settled. Most of these given land are harijans. Change has thus definitely taken place in the agrarian system of the village. However, the Thakurs are not popular among the villagers; a number of them held that the Thakurs had granted land to 7 families in order to escape the penalties of the ceiling laws which they had been evading. Moreover, the land given as in Nandapar was Usar, poor quality with no irrigation facilities and which had not been cultivated earlier. This joint action was taken by the Thakurs fearing the discontent and land hunger in the village. It also assured agricultural labourers for them during peak seasons when many families migrated to neighbouring villages in search of employment. In Sekhia, in spite of the large number of agricultural labourers, no land grants have been made to any person.

FOOTNOTES

1. Report of The Lekhpal, 1977-78
2. District Census Handbook 1971, Basti (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-A, 1971): 464
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 1961, Basti (Census of U.P., Series 21, 1961): CCXXXIV
4. Ibid; Compiled, no. 2 and 3
5. Records of The Lekhpal, "Fasli 1385".
6. District Census Handbook 1971, Gorakhpur (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-B):158-59.
7. Records of The Lekhpal 1977-78.
8. District Census Handbook 1971, Azamgarh (Census of U.P., Series 21, Part X-B): 398
9. Census of U.P., 1961, Village Survey Monograph, Azamgarh Vol. XV, No. 7, Part VI: 16.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid; 21
12. Records of The Lekhpal 1977-78.
13. Compiled -  
(i) n. 3  
(ii) n. 2, Part X-B: 194-5.
14. no. 2: 532
15. no. 6, Part X-A: 158
16. n. 8, Part X-A: 418
17. Ibid

18. Records of The Lekhpal 1977-78
19. n. 16: 210-11
- ✓20. P.S. Appu, "Tenancy Reform In India, "Economic And Political Weekly", (August Sp. no., 1975)  
X: 1339-75
21. Ibid
22. G. Parathasarathy & Rao, "Minimum Wages Legislation For Agricultural Labourer - A Review," "Economic & Political Weekly"  
(September, Review of Agriculture, 1975):A 76-88.
23. Ibid
24. Report of The Lekhpal 1977-78.
25. Records of The Lekhpal 1977-78.



✓ In Lieu Of A Conclusion: Reflections On Class, Caste  
And Agrarian Relations

We turn now to an examination of the agrarian classes in the sample villages in north-east U.P. An attempt will be made, on the basis of the available data, to identify the main classes, their nature and inter-relationships, together with a discussion on the changing relationship between caste and class. The question of the mode of production and the extent of development of capitalist relations on land in this area will also be considered.

The significance of growth and change in agrarian classes in countries such as India is obvious if one keeps in view the predominantly agrarian structure of such countries. Since 1947, changes have taken place, and these have been due to many factors. The abolition of Zamindari and tenancy reform and later ceiling laws began this process of change. This was largely an "elite sponsored reform",<sup>1</sup> to gain support of the peasantry, curb agrarian unrest, and end agricultural stagnation. Land reform was regarded as fundamental for both economic development and for social justice. However, the elite in India was not prepared to bring in a radical transformation and give land to the tiller; the separation of the elite from the landed classes had not gone so far as to permit drastic agrarian reform. Rather they chose a middle path of conciliating the interests of both the landed proprietors as well as the poor peasants.

In such a situation the intermediate class of resident under-proprietors and superior tenants who had also suffered under the old system but were relatively better off than the poorer peasants came into the fore front. This intermediate class was opposed to the continuance of the feudal landed system but not to the principle of large land-ownership. It aspired to be free from the control of big landlords to join the privileged class of independent proprietors. It sided with the rural poor to oppose any feudal burdens imposed by the landlords, yet it sided with the landlords to oppose any scheme of re-distribution of land in favour of the rural poor. This has been the attitude of the emerging landed class which is seen in most of rural India. The landless or poor peasants have not been able to organise themselves for any action as a class. Thus agrarian reform has only contributed towards the restructuring of the landed class, more specifically the ousting of a paternalistic, and feudal landed class by a more production-oriented but aggressively acquisitive landed class.<sup>2</sup>

The spurt of new farm technology in the sixties with emphasis on the use of modern inputs and practices was another important factor affecting the agrarian structure. This increased agricultural production in India, bringing in the "Green Revolution" but it led to the promotion of inequality and poverty. It had a limited impact on north-east U.P. as seen <sup>in</sup> the use of fertilisers, new varieties of seeds, and a general awareness of modern methods in the sample villages.

The new agricultural strategy has a built-in bias<sup>3</sup> towards the promotion of inequality. This bias gets built into the new agricultural strategy because of the very agrarian structure of production relations in which it is adopted. The existing agrarian structure makes the use of new farm technology more favourable and beneficial to those farmers who own and operate a large size of holding, than those who own small or marginal holdings because of the following:<sup>4</sup>

- (a) They have greater control over scarce agricultural resources such as land;
- (b) greater access to credit with their greater credit worthiness; and
- (c) they possess greater "technical dynamism".

This has strengthened the economic position of the large farm sector on the one hand, and led to increase in the number and proportion of the poorer section, an aspect clearly seen in north-eastern U.P., for example in village Sakhia, a poor village in contrast to the neighbouring village of Ukraura where big landowners have adopted the new farm technology and prospered.

Table XXXIII (Appendix) shows this change over 10 years, the number of households belonging to the weaker sections has increased. Keeping this wider perspective in mind, we turn now to east U.P.

If we study the sample villages dealt with in Chapter IV and V, we can identify four main agrarian classes in these areas:

- ✓ (1) Big land-owners - who can again be divided into -
  - (a) "Pure" landowners carrying on self-cultivation with help of hired labour; &

- (b) Landowners who may be rentiers or who may lease out land to share-croppers.
- (2) Medium land-owners - who can again be divided into -
  - (a) Self cultivating landowners who do not hire in or hire out land; and
  - (b) Land-owners who may be share-croppers also.
- (3) Petty land-owners who own land, share-crop, if possible, as well as work as agricultural labourers in times of need.
- (4) Landless peasants who can again be divided into -
  - (a) Landless peasants who share-crop wherever land is available.
  - (b) Landless peasants who are purely agricultural labourers.

The complexity of such a division is obvious in a situation where the various classes are not clear cut as in the industrial field. The above division is based on - (1) ownership of the most important means of production in agriculture in India today - land, and (2) nature and types of agricultural functions performed by these various rural classes depending on their needs; (3) self cultivation or use of hired labourers, who themselves fall into the third class.

By big land-owners is here meant those who own 10 or more acres of land; medium landowners are those owning 5-10 acres, petty land-owners are those owning less than 5 acres. Ten acres has been selected as the least amount for big landowners, because in the sample villages and generally in north-east U.P. plots are small and there are very few landowners with large plots.]

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to define the term 'class' and explain the manner in which it has been used above. An attempt will also be made to explain the inter-action of 'caste' and 'class' within the limited context of this study. It may be pointed out that any definition of this word must be given within the context of its utilisation. That is, classes and class structure in agriculture would be different to that found in the industrial field. As already pointed out in Chapter I, classes may be defined by their relationship to the means of production, and the type of use, means of production are put to. Land still remains the main variable in Indian agriculture - others such as capital, farm machinery, etc., having yet to attain importance - hence the ownership, control and use of land determines the various classes. Hence classes in agriculture, may be defined by the contradictions of interests arising from the way they are related to the means of production.<sup>5</sup> Class relations are relations of production; but not all relations of production define classes; they define various "social groups", but only some social groups are classes. It is the nature of contradictions that distinguish classes from social groups; it is the points of contradictions that define the boundaries of classes.<sup>6</sup>

Such a definition understands class purely in terms of social conflict and a category for purposes of the analysis of social conflict. Class

can also be defined as an aspect or dimension of social stratification.<sup>7</sup> For example, in the simple village we have landlords, tenants, share-croppers, agricultural labourers & so on forming a hierarchy understood by all. As field work in any part of India can show these "classes" do not comprise separate groups, a single person may be both a landowner as well as a share-cropper, and in certain circumstances an agricultural labourer as well. The four main agrarian classes identified overleaf clearly show this. Hence, as already emphasised, it is not only who owns the land, but who works on it, and who controls its produce that is worth investigating. Thus although there are points of tension between the different classes, it would not be correct to characterise their mutual relations as essentially those of conflict. This aspect has been shown in section 3, of Chapter IV dealing with "Areas of Conflict". An individual often has divided loyalties being at one time a landowner as well as a manual worker. This approach towards class, and class relations is of special importance in agriculture where the distinction between such classes as say poor peasants and rich peasants is not clear cut in the same way as in the case of say industrial proletariat and industrial capitalists.

In the literature on agrarian classes in India, some writers, such as Ashok Rudra<sup>8</sup> hold that there are only 2 classes in Indian agriculture, one of which is termed as "the class of big landowners" and the

other "the class of agricultural labourers", the antagonistic contradiction between them constituting the principal contradiction in our rural society.

The number of middle class peasants who neither 'hire in' or 'hire out' he holds is insignificant. However, such a view does not look at the significance of middle peasants as a separate class, or the various types of "landowners" in the countryside. The numerical strength of middle peasants (not participating significantly in the labour market) varies from one part of India to another, but it would be wrong to deny their importance at least in east U.P. A more extensive survey of this phenomena is obviously called for in all parts of the country.)

In the sample villages, the class of big landowners may now be considered. A study of the data given in Chapter III would reveal that in this class, the number of medium and small landowners are more than the big landowners who own more than 10 acres. The table below shows this clearly -

✓ TABLE 1

Number of Landowner Households					
Name of village	Big land-owners	Medium Land-owners	Petty land-owners	Landless Peasants	Total sample of households
Nandapar	1	3	39	2	45
Nagar Khas	-	40	2	8(5)+	35
Sumbhadih	4	3	20	3*	25
Sakhia	-	-	16	9	25

+ 5 are shop keepers who would like to buy land

\* 3 traders do not own land and are strictly speaking not agricultural labourers.

In Nandepar there is only one household with more than 10 acres, while in Sumbhadih there are four. These households use hired labour for cultivation and while none of them admitted it, they have often leased out a small parcel of land for share-cropping. As already explained, in these villages, giving a piece of land to a share-cropper is often a means of assuring a steady supply of agricultural labour, or again is often payment for the same. Hence in these villages the number of big landlords who use hired labour for cultivation and do not 'hire in' or 'hire out' land are few. This goes to support the argument stated earlier that middle peasants do constitute an important class in east U.P.

Medium Landowners: A glance at table 1 on land-owning households shows that this is the second largest class in the sample villages. The highest number is in Nagar and the lowest in Sakhia. These medium land-owners all have certain characteristics in common apart from mere size of their plots.

These households are largely self-cultivating households, that is, as far as possible they carry on cultivation with the help of their own families and avoid the use of agricultural labourers. However, this is true in the case of those owning very small plots; as we go on to plots which are almost 10 acres, the nature of agricultural operations is such that at peak times the use of outside help sometimes for a few days becomes necessary. Medium class land-owners do not



usually 'hire in' or 'hire out' land to share-croppers. They are self-subsisting farmers who do not take to share-cropping. However, among them, those owning very small plots, in order to increase their income, hire-in land on a share-cropping basis from a bigger landlord. This is their second characteristic, one which they share with the petty landowners. The situation is different in different villages. The table below shows the total number of landowners who own land as well as hire-in land from others:

✓ TABLE 2

Land-owning households who carry on share-cropping

	Nandapar	Nagar Khas	Sumbhadih	Sakhia
Landowners who also share-crop	3 + (26)*	3	9	-
Landowners who do not share-crop	14	-	11	-

\*Those who share-crop as well as work as agricultural labourers.

The largest number of landowners who share-crop are in Sumbhadih, which has the largest number of big landowners. Here the Thakurs still hire out land to share-croppers. In Sakhia, the village plots are so small that there is no extra land available for share-cropping. The peasants pointed out that they were prepared to share-crop on any basis but there was no land. In Nagar, due to the existence of a

large business community share-cropping has lost importance, farmers have taken to other occupations. In Nandapar too, there is not much land available for share-cropping, agricultural labour providing a better source of income.

**Petty Landowners:** This is the largest and most important class of landowners in these villages. Except for Nagar, all the other villages have a large proportion of them. In Sakhia, except for 9 households which do not own land, all the remaining 16 households belong to this class. Nandapar is a village consisting of mostly petty landowners.

Petty landowners whenever possible are prepared to share-crop any extra piece of land available. The table overleaf on landowning households who also share crop covers both the medium and petty class of landowners. However, as table 3 shows, working as agricultural labourers is more important than share-cropping. It is this which sets the petty landowners apart from the medium land owners.

✓ TABLE 3

	Nandapar	Nagar Khas	Sumbhadih	Sakhia
Landowners who work as agricultural labourers	26	26	6	7
Landowners who do not work as agricultural labourers	17	-	14	9

In Mendapar, the figure 26 includes landowners who own land, share-crop as well as work as agricultural labourers during certain seasons. Most of the sample households belonging to the petty landowner class held that their income from agricultural labour exceeded the income from their land.

With this we come to the last class consisting of agricultural labourers who whenever possible try to get land on a share-cropping basis. Their position has been dealt with in Chapter IV.

In the above discussion of different "classes" no place has been assigned to caste. Caste is also a "social grouping", and it is wrong to merely say that big landholders belong to the higher castes and the smaller landowners and landless labourers belong to the lower castes; in actuality the situation is far more complex. Caste may be defined as a small and named group of persons characterised by endogamy, hereditary membership and a specific style of life which sometimes includes the pursuit by tradition of a particular occupation and is usually associated with more or less distinct ritual status in a hierarchical system.<sup>9</sup> Even at a local or village level, caste can be studied from many points of view, here it is merely studied as an aspect of social stratification and of an agrarian system.

An examination of the caste system within a village shows its highly differentiated nature. The

number and types of castes (or jatis to use a more correct term) differ from village to village as our survey shows. The inter-relationship between caste and class is important and determines the sum-total of agrarian relations within the agrarian system. This inter-relationship again centres around land. The problems which arise in the management of land can be broadly of two types - (a) those dealing with technological arrangements and (b) those dealing with social arrangements. By technological arrangements is meant the mode and method of productive organisation which is different in different parts of India. It would cover not only different methods but also different patterns of work. As seen in the sample villages and in our identification of the four main classes above, there are three main patterns of productive organisation. (1) Based on family labour, (2) hired labour, and (3) on tenancy which generally means share-cropping. This technological system can provide the base on which the social relations of production are based. But, we have to take into consideration the social arrangements also. While in our sample villages, the nature of the work is determined by the available technology (for example ploughing with bullocks rather than tractors), yet the manner in which the work is distributed among the various members of the village, caste or family is determined by its social arrangements rather than the prevailing level of technology. Menial tasks are left to the members of the lowest strata

(scheduled or depressed classes) and to women. Ploughing is invariably done by men, whereas weeding and transplanting are women's work, while harvesting may be done by both. Brahmins in east U.P., even when reduced to penury do not take to agricultural labour (as seen in the example of a Brahmin family of Mandapar). In the same way, it is not easy for a chamar to buy a large plot of land and become accepted as a landowner, although land has come into the market. However, it is easier for the jatis which come in between such as the Banias, Kurmis, Kayasthas, etc., to do so.

Caste and class have points of similarity and difference in our analysis of agrarian systems. Castes are status groups having a particular life-style, social position, ritual restrictions, etc. Classes and status groups have been well contrasted by Bottomore as follows,<sup>10</sup> "The difference, broadly, is between a hierarchy of a small number of organised or partly organised economic groups whose relations to each other are antagonistic, and a hierarchy of numerous groups, more correctly described as aggregates of individuals of equal social prestige based on similarities which are not exclusively economic and whose relations to each other are not primarily antagonistic but are partly competitive and partly emulative."

Classes as such are not defined essentially in terms of social prestige, although class positions do tend to be associated with differential honour;

classes rather are defined as seen earlier in terms of property and ownership or non-ownership of the means of production. Property does not by itself create social prestige, for example when a chamar buys land he is not immediately accepted by the higher caste landlords. Hence, classes are open, providing free mobility, while castes are not; in reality in a village the mobility provided by the class system may be limited by the caste system. This again may be because mobility in the caste hierarchy and acceptability is a much more gradual process than in the case of class. It is this factor that may be slowing the process and pace of change in landed relations within rural India.

In Chapter IV, the social organisation of the sample villages has been given. In this section, tables 5, 6, 8 and 9 show the different castes and the amount of land held by them. An examination of these tables reveals some interesting features. In all these villages except Sakhia, which has no high caste household, the two upper castes own the most land. At the same time, the harijans together with the khatiks, bhars, pasis, gadariyas, etc., form the largest social category while owning the smallest plots. The koeris and kurmis are excellent agriculturists and own medium sized plots. They use mainly family labour and are hard working. The caste system is no longer very rigid today compared to even fifty years ago. It is true that in the sample villages, the

different castes still live in separate hamlets, they visit each other though they do not eat together, nor do inter-caste marriages ever take; but they are no longer bound to pursue their hereditary calling.

The emergence of "caste-free" occupations has led to the separation of the traditional unity of caste and class.

This change is seen in the sample villages in our study of the occupational structure. The Brahmins form a comparatively literate section and hence have become school masters or have entered government service, while the other castes supplement their meagre income from land by business or working in nearby towns.

Nagar provides the best example of such a village. Even if the old occupational system based on caste continues it is because there has been no change in the economic system of the village or the surrounding areas, work opportunities for other kinds of work are rare. The village Kumhars (potters), Nais (barbers), Telis (oil pressers), Kewats (fishermen), etc., all held that they would like to educate their children and put them into more profitable professions as their hereditary calling was losing importance in the village hierarchy. Education and a job in the nearby town allows a low caste individual to gain a respectable position in the village. Thus, caste and class no longer coincide today. Both have been undergoing slow change, caste, due to education and secularisation, class, because of the establishment of a monetary economy and the entrance of land in the market. In traditional society there was much more

consistency between the two.

In this context, reference can be made to two concepts often used in recent literature on rural India.<sup>11</sup> There are "dominant castes" and "rich peasants", two phrases used to describe the nature of rural power structures. According to the dominant caste theory there exists in many of India's villages, a particular caste which possesses most of the major power resources, viz., large number of members, high ritual status, most of the land and other economic assets, relatively advanced levels of western education etc. a high position in one dimension helps the caste to be in high positions on other dimensions. Thus political and economic power is combined with, indeed often arises from caste status. The Rich-Peasant theory, basically a theory of political and economic control and its consequences holds, that since Independence, control over the economic surplus in the village, its formal and informal political institutions has increasingly passed to rich peasants. Through this control, they have been able to channel the lion's share of the government's development resources, and exert major power in State and local governments. Rich peasants are those who own the most land and who generate the largest surplus. Applied to east U.P. we can say that in none of these villages,--except perhaps Sumbhadih, traditionally a strong hold of Thakur power - does a single dominant caste control economic and political power. Caste divisions are important as already said.



The economic division between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' is more important. Thus a class of Rich Peasants is emerging who may not always own the most land, but use tube-wells, employ new farm technology, possess technical dynamism and control the economic life of the village.

Having discussed class and its relationship with caste, we come now to the question of the mode of production, a concept which has generated much argument and dispute. Much of the difficulty arises from efforts to apply the concept, to an economy such as the Indian economy, which cannot be categorised in terms of any one of the modes recognised and discussed by Marx. Thus a large body of writers hold that the conditions prevalent in Indian agriculture cannot be satisfactorily regarded as pertaining to the Capitalist mode of production or the feudal mode of production. Some have thought it fit to call it "the colonial mode of production", still others the "economy of semi-proletarian peasantry". This has not helped to resolve the confusion.

(cf. Brader  
(Marx))  
Admin  
Gokul

For practical purposes, India being a vast country, with different types of agriculture practised in different regions, it is not possible to state definitely whether the feudal or capitalist mode of production prevails in Indian agriculture. Rather, a correct class analysis of the region, area or villages concerned - that is, correct characterisation of the different traits, features, relations of dominance etc. of classes in their dynamic setting

is required. This would enable us to see which mode of production (feudal or capitalist - these two being the only ones in question) is dominant and which is declining in that particular area. That is the concept of mode of production does not rule out the co-existence of two modes, and in different regions of India, different levels of dominance and decline can be seen. The issue is not whether "capitalist relations of production exist, nor indeed whether they have completely eliminated all feudal survivals, but precisely the relative weight of each, the alignment of classes that represent each mode of production vis-a-vis each other".<sup>13</sup> Keeping this general argument in mind we turn now to north-east U.P. to see which mode of production is relatively dominant and whether capitalist relations have developed to a significant extent in our sample villages. Consistent with the above argument, that correctly identifying and characterising the different features, forms, etc., associated with the different classes is more important, we shall discuss some features and forms associated with capitalist relations.

Existence of wage labour, as against 'unfree' labour made to work by extra economic coercion, is looked upon as a necessary criterion for emergence of capitalist relations. In our sample villages, the situation differs from village to village. The agricultural labourers are all "free" that is they are not bonded labourers and cannot be compelled to work.

However, their wages are not always paid in cash. As seen in Chapter III in some villages, payment is in the form of a piece of land on share-cropping basis, in others grain. Moreover, cash wages fluctuate from village to village and even within the village, often the minimum wages laid by the government are not adhered to. Desperate conditions of poverty and unemployment afflict the peasant in the labour market, but not so much extra-economic coercion as seen in the discussion on agricultural labourers in Chapter V. The attached labourer has a longer duration contract with his employer than the casual labourer but this does not usually imply serfdom to any significant extent. The employee's need for job security and the employer's need for a dependable and readily available source of labour supply - and not feudal subordination - provide the major motivation of attached labour contracts. Thus cash wages have come to stay in east U.P. contributing to monetisation of the village/rural economy, but wages are often paid in kind or the cash wages are low and not paid regularly. However, economic exploitation is not a feature of feudalism as opposed to other modes of production.

Production, and often surplus generation is a feature of every society based on private property. However, production for the market is a characteristic feature of capitalist relations, just as production for direct consumption is a characteristic of feudal or pre-capitalist relations. In the sample villages,

among the entire 150 sample households only about 10 households claimed that they were able to sell a part of their yield in the market. The rest pointed out that the food crops grown in their fields lasted them for about 6 months after which they had to buy or "borrow" grain until the next harvest. Many of them were not able to calculate in maunds or tons the total wheat or any other grain grown on their fields - they held that the need to weigh it had never arisen. This made any attempt to tabulate their income a fruitless economic exercise. Thus production of exchange values has yet to begin in north-east U.P. The type of crops grown, the implements used, labour expended, etc. all point to a self-subsisting economy with no production market.

Since there is hardly any surplus generated, the question of re-investment of surplus giving rise to accumulation of capital, or dissipation of surplus in luxury and rituals does not arise. In the sample villages very few farmers were able to accumulate capital, that is buy more land or invest it in industry etc. The whole of eastern U.P. is a poor and backward area. However, while there is no capital accumulation, spending on weddings, rituals etc., is still necessary for the poor peasant even if it means getting into debt. In this respect pre-capitalist relations still exist.

In east U.P., a number of farmers have set up tube-wells, adopted HYV seeds, begun using fertilisers and a small minority have also bought farm machinery. However, the basic technology of agriculture remains unchanged. Realisation of profit leading to changes in the organic composition of capital and a continuous process of technological advance-merit, as a feature of capitalist relations has not set in. This process is seen best for example in Punjab and parts of western U.P. but in eastern U.P. technological advancement has yet to take off. Although there is increasing monetisation in east U.P. it does not indicate capitalist development.

Moreover, continuous debts and sources of credit in east U.P. are still the money-lender or big landowner. In spite of the large number of rural banks and government schemes providing rural credit, the peasant continues his unequal relations with the moneylending section of the village. Thus the peasant has not been able to get out of the vicious circle of poverty, debt and unequal economic relationships.

Finally, share-cropping is looked upon as a characteristic of Indian feudal relationships. However, as we have seen, it is on the decline, largely due to lack of land in the hands of big landlords, or recourse to self-cultivation with the help of hired labour. Recourse to self-cultivation leading to employment of wage-labour is obviously a sign of capitalist relations. However, in some villages such as Sumbhadih,

the institution of share-cropping tenancy has been largely adopted to the needs of increasing production and profit by enterprising farmers, both owners and tenants. Unpaid and obligatory service by the tenant to the landlord is rather uncommon. Of course, the economic constraints faced by the small share-cropper are much more severe and they frequently push him into unequal relationships of mutual dependence with the landlord-creditor-employer. Thus we see that in north-east U.P. capitalist relations have begun to emerge, though features and forms associated with the feudal mode of production exist side by side. "The capitalist farmer does not emerge breaking his feudal ties ... he develops within the pre-existing, non-capitalist economic structure."<sup>14</sup>

In conclusion what are the points of contradiction between the four agrarian classes in north-east U.P. listed in this chapter? The medium and petty landowners form in a sense a middle peasant category. Since they do not participate to a significant extent in the labour market, they do not play a prominent role in the wage-exploitation nexus between the class of big landowners and the class of landless agricultural labourers. But to the extent that the class of big landowners try to increase their holdings, lease out land to share-croppers belonging to the middle peasant category and appropriate a big share in the government distribution of subsidised credit, water, fertilisers, and other inputs, their interests clash with those of

the middle peasants. The conflict between the middle peasants and agricultural labourers is less open, since at present there is no scheme of socialisation of land in India, and because the landless are not organised as a class.

FOOTNOTES

1. ✓ Ratna Dutta & P.C. Joshi (ed) Studies In Asian Social Development (Bombay Mac Graw Hill, 1971): 5-10
2. Ibid
3. ✓ G.P. Mishra, Some Aspects Of Change In Agrarian Structure (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Ltd., 1977): 1-18
4. Ibid
5. ✓ Ashok Rudra, "Class Relations In Indian Agriculture -1" Economic & Political Weekly (June 3, 1978 Sp. Article) XIII: 916.
6. Ibid
7. ✓ Andre Beteille, Caste, Class And Power (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971): 185
8. n. 5
9. n. 7: 46
10. Ibid; 189
11. ✓ John Mac Dougall, "Dominant Castes Or Rich Peasants," Economic & Political Weekly (March 24-31, 1979 Sp. Article) XIV: 625.
12. n. 5: 917



13. ✓ Hamza Alavi, "Feudalism And Capitalism In Indian Agriculture, " (Memoograph 1975)  
Quoted in Rudra, n. 5
14. ✓ Utsa Patnaik, "Capitalistic Development In Agriculture", Economic & Political Weekly (Review of Agriculture, 1971) VI: A 123.  
Quoted in P.C. Aggarwal, The Green Revolution And Rural Labour (Delhi: Shri Ram Centre, 1973): 11

**A P P E N D I X**  
**AND**  
**S C H E D U L E S**

Note: The tables given in the Appendix are largely meant for Chapter II. Most of them are specifically referred to in Chapter II. In order to avoid repetition of well-known agricultural and economic facts about U.P. this method was adopted and the data has been put in the form of tables. Those tables which are not referred to either in Chapter II or any other Chapter should be treated as supplementary tables providing extra data.

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TABLE I

AGRICULTURAL REGIONS OF UTTAR PRADESH

Region	Ranking	District	Land Resources Level	Per acre gross value productivity
1	2	3	4	5
Kumaon Uttarakhand	A(1)	Uttarakashi	Medium	Not available
		Chamoli	"	"
		Pittoragarh	"	"
		Garhwal	"	"
		Tehri	"	"
		Almora	"	"
West U.P. Plains	BI(2)	Nainital	High	Medium
		Bijnor	"	High
		Rampur	"	Medium
		Bareilly	"	"
		Badaun	"	Low
West U.P. Plains	BII(3)	Moradabad	High	Medium
		Dehra Dun	"	"
		Sahranpur	Very High	High
		Muzaffarnagar	"	Very High
		Meerut	"	High
		Bulandshahr	High	Medium
		Aligarh	"	"
		Mathura	"	"
West U.P. Plains	BIII(4)	Agra	High	Low
		Etah	"	"
		Mainpuri	"	High
		Farrukabad	"	Medium
		Etawah	"	"
		Kanpur	"	Low
Southern U.P. Hills	C(5)	Jalaun	High	Low
		Jhansi	Medium	"
		Hamirpur	"	"
		Banda	"	"
		Allahabad	"	"
		Mirzapur	"	"

1	2	3	4	5
Central U. P. Plains	DI(6)	Pilibhit	High	Medium
		Shahjanpur	"	"
		Kheri	"	"
		Sitapur	"	Low
		Hardoi	"	"
		Unnao	"	"
		Lucknow	"	"
Bahraich	"	"		
Central U. P. Plains	DII(7)	Faizabad	High	Medium
		Sultanpur	"	"
		Rae-Bareilly	"	Low
		Fatehpur	"	"
		Pratapgarh	"	"
		Jaunpur	"	Medium
East U. P. Plains	DII(9)	Varanasi	High	Medium
		Ghazipur	"	"
		Ballia	"	Low
East U. P.	EI(8)	Gonda	Very High	Low
		Besti	"	"
		Gorakhpur	"	Medium
		Deoria	High	"
		Azamgarh	Very High	"
		Bareilly	High	"

Sources: P. S. Sharma, Agricultural Regionalisation of India (Delhi: New Height Publishers, 1973): 41, Table 4.

TABLE II

LAND RESOURCES AND PRODUCTIVITY IN UTTAR PRADESH

No. of districts associated with different gradations of availability of land resources coupled with different levels of productivity

State	Resources and levels of Productivity									
	Very high resources			High Resources		Medium Resources			Low Resources	
	High Prod.	Medium Prod.	Low Prod.	Medium Prod.	Low Prod.	Very low prod.	Low Prod.	Very Low Prod.	Very low prod.	Very low prod.
U. P. Districts	2	2	2	21	13	-	5	-	-	-

(A total of 48 Districts only in this Study)

TABLE III

CLASSIFICATION OF DISTRICTS BY RESOURCES AND PRODUCTIVITY

Resource Index	P r o d u c t i v i t y I n d e x					Total
	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very High	
Very low	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medium	5	-	-	-	-	5
High	13	22	-	-	-	36

Source: Ibid: 154

TABLE IV

POPULATION OF THE FOUR DISTRICTS

Total population of the four districts ('000) 1975

Gorakhpur	...	32,44
Basti	...	31,33
Azamgarh	...	30,52
Deoria	...	30,00

Source: Statistical Diary of U.P. 1975  
(UP: State Planning Institute, 1975):36



TABLE V

DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION

Percentage of rural and urban population to total population

District	Total	Rural	Urban
Gorakhpur	100.00	92.10	7.90
Azamgarh	100.00	94.79	5.21
Deoria	100.00	97.04	2.96
Besti	100.00	97.48	2.52

Source: Census of India, U.P. Series 21, 1971  
"General Population Tables",  
Part II-A: 18.

TABLE VI

DENSITY OF POPULATION PER SQ. MILE AND DENSITY OF RURAL POPULATION PER HECTARE OF ARABLE LAND

	Density per sq. mile	Density per hectare of arable land
<b>Gorakhpur</b>		
Total	481	5.7
Rural	446	
Urban	5,653	
<b>Deoria</b>		
Total	521	5.9
Rural	508	
Urban	2,875	
<b>Ballia</b>		
Total	408	4.9
Rural	400	
Urban	2,269	
<b>Azamgarh</b>		
Total	497	5.9
Rural	473	
Urban	6,810	

Source: Compiled from 1) Census of India 1971 U.P. Series 21, "General Population Tables" Part II-A Pg. 18.

2) P.S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U.P. (Pantnagar: G.B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology 1973):109.

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE VARIATION OF POPULATION 1901-71

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Basti		Gorakhpur	
Total	61.7	Total	1109.4
Rural	60.6	Rural	117.1
Urban	119.2	Urban	48.0
Deoria		Azamgarh	
Total	89.0	Total	84.2
Rural	92.1	Rural	85.5
Urban	22.1	Urban	62.5

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Source: Census of India, U.P. 1971, Series 21,  
"General Population Tables," Part II-A: 98

TABLE VIII

VILLAGES AND POPULATION

<u>Less than 500 persons</u>		
District	% of no. of villages in this class to total no. of villages	% of population in these villages to total rural population
Basti	74.8	43.4
Gorakhpur	53.4	18.6
Deoria	46.1	16.2
Azamgarh	62.4	25.5
<u>500 - 999 persons</u>		
Basti	18.6	30.3
Gorakhpur	25.7	26.8
Deoria	31.7	29.4
Azamgarh	23.3	29.8
<u>1000 - 1999 persons</u>		
Basti	5.4	17.1
Gorakhpur	15.7	30.9
Deoria	16.5	29.9
Azamgarh	11.0	26.9
<u>2000 - 4000 persons</u>		
Basti	1.2	8.3
Gorakhpur	4.8	19.7
Deoria	5.2	18.8
Azamgarh	3.1	15.2
<u>5000 - 9999 persons</u>		
Basti	0.0	0.5
Gorakhpur	0.4	3.6
Deoria	0.4	3.9
Azamgarh	0.2	2.6
<u>10,000 and above persons</u>		
Basti	0.0	0.5
Gorakhpur	0.0	0.4
Deoria	0.1	1.8
Azamgarh	0.0	0.0

Source: Census of U. P. 1971, Series 21,  
"General Population Tables" Part II-A:129.

TABLE IX(a)

OCCUPATION STRUCTURE

Distribution of working population by agricultural and other workers as percent

District	Working population as % of total pop.	Cultivators	Agricultural labourers	Others
Corakhpur	35.7%	44.2%	36.5%	19.3%
Deoria	31.0	56.8	30.9	12.6
Basti	35.6	64.3	25.7	10.0
Azamgarh	30.1	52.6	27.2	20.2

Source: P. S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U.P. (Patna: G. B. Pant University of Agriculture & Technology, 1973): 110.

TABLE IX(b)

OCCUPATION STRUCTURE - THE DISTRICTS

Tahsile	Total workers	Culti-vators	Agricultural labourers
<u>District Basti:</u>			
Domeriganj	177,091	124,791	40,189
Naugerh	160,573	103,647	44,448
Bansi	153,270	106,428	36,056
Harraiya	155,224	112,440	33,124
Basti	195,023	115,027	53,444
Khalilabad	209,154	117,990	65,848
<u>District Deoria:</u>			
Hata	213,198	129,142	65,132
Padrauna	230,239	128,533	78,559
Deoria	214,898	121,802	66,955
Salempur	190,326	110,510	57,274
<u>District Gorakhpur:</u>			
Pharanda	177,670	108,738	54,195
Maharajanj	228,698	128,247	85,152
Gorakhpur	362,252	129,727	132,712
Benegaon	215,314	92,269	100,399
<u>District Azamgarh:</u>			
Sagri	116,889	71,364	34,230
Ghoel	152,379	77,153	47,590
Azamgarh	124,519	69,106	31,191
Muhammedabad	164,130	67,394	41,052
Phulpur	150,286	94,418	42,103
Leiganj	110,621	66,202	32,663

Source: Census of U. P. 1971 - Series 21, "General Population Tables", Part II-A:494-506.

TABLE X

SCHEDULED CASTE IN THE POPULATION

Percentage of scheduled caste in the population

District	Percentage of S.C.	District	Percentage of S.C.
Gorakhpur		Basti	
Total	21.3	Total	20.4
Rural	22.5	Rural	20.5
Urban	8.1	Urban	15.9
Deoria		Azamgarh	
Total	15.6	Total	24.3
Rural	15.8	Rural	25.3
Urban	8.6	Urban	7.7

Source: Census of India, U.P., 1971, Series 21,  
"General Population Tables", Part II-A:260

TABLE XI

SCHEDULED CASTE - LITERATE & AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN THE DISTRICTS

	Total	Illiterate		Literate		Cultivators		Agricultural labourers	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<u>Azamgarh</u>									
Total	6,95,671	4,917	3,50,001	42,801	7,952	80,853	14,290	72,187	37,032
Rural	6,84,165	2,90,755	3,45,225	40,93	7,217	80,612	14,279	71,727	36,836
Urban	11,506	4,162	4,746	1,863	735	241	11	460	194
<u>Tahsils</u>									
Sagri	97,652	44,004	49,445	4,104	99	13,840	249	3,217	6,518
Ghosi	1,03,772	44,045	52,376	6,582	769	17,597	12,347	8,373	8,995
Azamgarh	1,14,588	47,701	58,487	7,709	691	7,807	2,256	17,405	5,256
Muhammadedbad	1,30,956	57,240	63,386	7,671	2,659	15,127	2,646	12,229	926
Phulpur	1,18,893	52,290	60,782	5,365	465	12,128	5,462	16,931	7,665
Lalganj	1,29,810	49,637	65,525	11,370	3,278	14,254	1,330	14,332	7,672
<u>Gorakhpur</u>									
Total	6,48,152	2,80,051	3,14,186	50,659	3,256	56,479	5,234	1,06,939	58,365
Rural	6,28,719	2,73,309	3,06,368	46,757	2,285	56,341	5,221	1,06,801	58,361
Urban	19,433	6,742	7,818	3,902	971	138	13	138	4



	Total	Illiterate		Literate		Cultivators		Agri. labourers	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b><u>Tahsils</u></b>									
Pharenda	96,466	42,407	46,857	6,989	213	14,557	1,187	13,566	8,038
Maharejganj	1,43,481	65,003	69,826	8,363	289	16,543	1,070	22,811	10,22
Gorakhpur	2,17,259	92,092	1,02,018	21,161	1,988	15,985	1,664	34,352	17,357
Bansgaon	1,90,946	80,549	95,485	14,146	766	9,394	1,313	36,210	22,744
<b><u>Basti</u></b>									
Total	6,07,839	2,76,993	2,40,917	37,904	2,025	99,265	54,748	83,956	8,076
Rural	5,95,830	2,72,275	2,85,583	36,200	1,772	97,718	54,365	83,627	806
Urban	12,009	4,718	5,334	1,704	253	1,557	383	329	15
<b><u>Tahsils</u></b>									
Domariaganj	76,649	36,448	36,355	3,628	208	13,240	5,881	11,874	1,457
Naugarh	80,688	36,629	38,913	4,490	192	11,865	7,172	14,563	1,559
Harraiya	97,602	44,666	47,279	5,350	307	13,579	8,730	16,456	1,617
Basti	1,33,839	59,62	62,877	10,328	672	22,962	12,595	16,680	980
Khallilabad	1,38,004	61,506	66,890	9,190	418	24,686	12,758	134,33	1,212
<b><u>Deoria</u></b>									
Total	438,86	1,86,434	2,15,917	34,419	2,091	48,704	3,257	61,407	31,140
Rural	4,31,726	1,83,676	2,12,810	33,361	1,879	48,652	3,254	61,022	31,015
Urban	71,35	2,758	3,107	1,058	212	52	3	385	125
<b><u>Tahsils</u></b>									
Nata	1,21,447	54,052	58,960	8,104	331	17,328	923	14,803	5,422
Padrauna	1,07,525	47,386	53,396	6,467	276	13,015	559	15,147	6,359
Deoria	1,06,905	44,827	52,113	9,293	672	10,388	555	16,324	8,892
Salempur	1,02,984	40,169	51,448	10,555	812	7,973	1,220	15,133	

Source: Census of India, 1971 U.P., Series 21, District Census Handbook, Part X-A: 184

TABLE XII

LAND UTILISATION PATTERN IN FOUR EASTERN U. P. DISTRICTS (1969-70)

District	Net cropped land	Culturable waste	Permanent pasture	Tree crops, groves	Forest	Barren unculturable land	Land put to non-agriculture use	Total reporting area for land use purposes
Basti	5,68,935	27,989	2,384	19,958	5,725	5,982	75,867	7,31,431
Deoria	4,42,620	9,926	158	16,739	1,098	9,695	40,190	5,39,176
Azamgadh	4,42,416	22,255	809	15,567	190	21,529	52,577	5,74,560
Gorakhpur	4,75,227	10,986	306	17,141	55,607	4,521	50,735	6,33,124

Source: P. S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U. P., 1973  
(Pantnagar: G. B. Pant University of Agriculture And Technology, 1973): 17.4, Table 14.

TABLE XIII

LAND UTILISATION DURING THE QUINQUENNIAL 1960-61

Region	Sown area to total area	% of double cropped area to net area sown
Uttar Pradesh	57.0	26.9
Azamgarh	75.0	24.4
Deoria	81.0	29.0
Ghazipur	77.0	20.2
Jaunpur	72.4	23.6
East Region	64.0	30.7
Hill Region	16.7	28.7
Bundelkhand	54.7	8.2
Central Region	63.0	27.7
West Region	70.9	29.9

Source: Report of the Joint Study Team U.P. (East Districts) Jan., 1964 (New Delhi: Government of India, 1964):18.

TABLE XIV

CROPPING INTENSITY IN EAST U. P. 1969-70

District	Net cropped area (hectares)	Total cropped area (hectares)	Cropping intensity i.e. total cropped area as % of net cropped area
Basti	5,86,153	7,88,030	134.4
Deoria	4,55,071	6,76,898	148.7
Azamgarh	4,54,549	5,56,560	122.4
Gorakhpur	4,85,067	6,44,500	132.9

Source: Tiwari, P.S., Agricultural Atlas of U.P. 1973 (Pantnagar: G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology):115.

TABLE XV

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLDINGS AS REVEALED  
BY QUICK SURVEY OF 1963 (Survey of 1963)

District	Less than 1 acre	More than 1 but less than 3 acres	3 - 5	5 or more
Azamgarh	25.4%	39.5	14.4	20.7
Deoria	19.8	43.1	19.8	17.3
Ghazipur	13.6	35.4	19.1	31.9
Jaunpur	25.0	32.7	20.3	22.0
Eastern Districts	22.1	38.5	17.9	21.5
Mathura	2.9	19.2	18.2	59.7
Sitapur	9.5	38.0	24.5	28.0

Source: Report of the Joint Study Team, U.P., 1964  
(Eastern Districts) (New Delhi: Govt. of  
India, 1964):185, Appendix 8.

TABLE XV(a)

AGRICULTURAL HOLDING PER CAPITA IN RURAL  
AREAS OF EAST AND WEST U. P., 1961

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(Acres)

EAST UTTAR PRADESH

Azamgarh	0.5
Basti	0.6
Deoria	0.5
Gorakhpur	0.5
Bahraich	0.9
Ballia	0.6
Faizabad	0.6
Ghazipur	0.6
Jaunpur	0.5
Gonda	0.7
Sultanpur	0.6
Pratapgarh	0.6
Varanasi	0.5
Mirzapur	1.0

WEST UTTAR PRADESH

Shahjampur	1.0
Bareilly	0.8
Bijnor	0.9
Moradabad	0.8
Pilibhit	1.0
Kheri	1.1
Rampur	0.9
Badaun	0.9
Muzaffarnagar	0.7
Bulandshahr	0.7
Agra	0.8
Aligarh	0.7
Saharanpur	0.8
Mathura	0.9
Meerut	0.6
Etawah	0.7
Farrukhabad	0.7
Mainpuri	0.7
Etah	0.7

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Source: R. N. Tewari, Agricultural Development  
And Population Growth (Delhi: S. Chand  
& Co., 1970): Appendix 1:1.1.

TABLE XVI

MAIN CROPS - PRODUCTION & AREA(1969-70)

District	Area (hect.)	Area as % of total cropped area	Production (tons)	Yield (kg/hect.)	Crop
Basti	1,82,672	23.2	1,87,767	1,028	Wheat
	3,20,406	40.7	2,07,524	648	Rice
	22,464	2.9	15,708	699	Maize
	51,028	6.5	32,703	641	Barley
	53,614	6.8	-	-	Smaller millets
	31,837	4.0	15,03,933	47,239	Sugarcane
Deoria	1,97,486	29.2	1,84,496	934	
	1,80,049	26.6	1,18,597	659	"
	27,655	4.1	22,118	800	
	49,318	7.3	40,305	817	
	54,728	8.1	-	-	
	78,331	11.6	33,86,436	43,232	
Gorakhpur	1,43,555	22.3	1,80,006	1,254	
	2,51,970	39.1	1,82,590	725	
	13,098	2.0	9,159	699	"
	58,339	9.1	49,837	854	
	60,100	9.3	-	-	
	26,684	4.1	14,15,680	53,054	
Azamgarh	38,558	6.9	38,382	995	
	1,99,328	35.8	1,27,400	639	"
	22,975	4.1	16,066	699	
	1,07,984	19.4	1,20,991	1,120	
	24,016	4.3	-	-	
	38,342	6.9	16,67,899	43,501	

Source: Compiled from P. S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U. P. (Pantnagar: G. B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology): 117-128.

TABLE VII

AVERAGE YIELD OF MAIN CROPS IN DIFFERENT STATES (1973-74)

S t a t e s	C r o p s (quintals per hectares)			
	Wheat	Rice	Maize	Sugarcane
Andhra Pradesh	5.6	16.43	13.64	87.47
Assam	11.56	9.94	-	38.29
Bihar	10.46	8.09	9.66	34.84
Gujarat	17.37	10.49	7.49	50.16
Haryana	15.80	18.49	10.08	39.73
Himachal Pradesh	9.52	12.14	17.57	-
Jammu & Kashmir	9.23	19.41	11.82	-
Karnataka	5.42	18.12	30.07	83.94
Kerala	-	15.44	-	54.00
Madhya Pradesh	7.71	7.92	6.71	27.40
Maharashtra	5.57	12.07	8.48	86.01
Manipur	-	14.05	-	-
Meghalaya	-	9.78	-	-
Nagaland	16.77	5.79	-	-
Orissa	22.03	9.34	7.95	60.28
Punjab	10.70	22.89	13.44	53.30
Rajasthan	-	8.90	4.10	48.38
Tamil Nadu	-	20.35	10.73	92.05
Tripura	19.08	12.12	-	-
West Bengal	9.93	11.25	8.17	50.58
Uttar Pradesh	11.58	8.60	7.42	41.51
India		11.51	9.37	51.59

Source: Statistical Diary of U.P., 1975 (U.P.: State Planning Institute, 1975): 90-95.



TABLE XVIII(a)

AVERAGE YIELD PER ACRE - A COMPARISON PERIOD 1960-61

R e g i o n	Rice	Wheat	Barley	Maize	Sugar cane
Uttar Pradesh	7.14	9.04	8.71	8.28	329.31
Azamgarh	3.3	8.2	10.6	8.4	277.7
Deoria	5.3	7.8	7.0	7.4	301.0
Ghazipur	5.6	7.3	9.9	9.1	308.4
Jaunpur	6.3	7.8	8.51	9.7	308.6
East Region	6.08	7.58	8.51	8.51	306.11
Hill Region	2.23	8.96	7.96	7.96	359.89
Bundelkhand "	7.10	10.12	9.93	9.93	252.59
Central Region	7.49	8.71	8.84	8.84	311.54
West Region	8.50	9.64	9.11	9.11	342.70

Source: Joint Study Team, U.P., Jan. 1964 (Eastern Districts)  
(New Delhi: Government of India, 1964): 189.

TABLE XVIII(b)

**YIELD PER ACRE OF IMPORTANT CROPS IN EAST & WEST  
U. P. PLAINS - A COMPARISON**

<u>WHEAT</u>	District	Yield (kg/hect.)
	Deoria	934
	Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur Division
	Basti	
	Azamgarh	1,028
	Saharanpur	995
	Muzaffarnagar	1,327
	Meerut	Meerut
	Bulandshahr	
		1,626
		1,448
<u>RICE</u>		
	Deoria	659
	Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur Division
	Azamgarh	
	Basti	639
	Saharanpur	648
	Muzaffarnagar	Meerut Division
	Meerut	
	Bulandshahr	1,054
		1,088
		889
<u>SUGARCANE</u>		
	Deoria	43,232
	Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur Division
	Basti	
	Azamgarh	47,238
	Saharanpur	43,501
	Muzaffarnagar	Meerut Division
	Meerut	
	Bulandshahr	52,154
		47,119
		39,445

Source: Compiled, P. S. Jigari, Agricultural Atlas of U.P., 1973 (Pantnagar: G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology): 117, 118, 128.

TABLE XVIII(c)

IRRIGATED AREA UNDER FOODGRAINS

R e g i o n	Irrigated area under foodgrains as % of total irrigated area	
	1953-56	1961-65
Himalayan Region	78.58	69.48
Western Region	74.12	60.40
Bundelkhand Region	97.46	94.78
Central Region	88.34	79.15
Eastern Region	89.95	85.21
State Plains	82.33	73.32

Source: Row Nari Jewari, Agricultural Development and Population Growth (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1970); 112

TABLE XIX

POTENTIALS CREATED FROM ALL CATEGORIES  
OF STATE IRRIGATION WORKS

R e g i o n	Irrigation potential of % of net sown area		
	End of 1st Plan	End of 2nd Plan	End of 3rd Plan
Himalayan	16.0	21.2	25.2
Western	33.9	36.9	49.9
Bundelkhand	22.0	25.9	24.5
Central	25.9	26.8	37.2
Eastern	11.9	21.5	21.3
State Plains	24.1	28.7	35.8

Source: Ibid: 112

TABLE XX

IRRIGATION AND CULTIVATED AREA IN U. P.

Z o n e	Net area irrig. as % of net sown area	Rainfall (inches)	Agr. workers per 100 acres cultivated.	% of cultivated to geographical area.	Density per sq. mile.
U. P. Hills & Plateau	17.6	37	32	47.2	301
East U. P. Plains	36.6	44	81	63.7	968
West U. P. Plains	34	34	61	65.2	831

Source: Prem S. Sharma, Agricultural Regionalisation of India (Delhi: New Height Publishers, 1973):112-118.

TABLE XXI

AREA IRRIGATED BY DIFFERENT SOURCES 1969-70

District	(hectares)				
	Canal	Tubewells	Other wells	Other sources	Total
Basti	22,815	94,162	74,798	1,08,294	3,00,069
Gorakhpur	13,262	53,155	60,624	71,117	1,98,158
Deoria	2,067	98,090	74,481	25,852	1,98,499
Azamgarh	19,673	54,661	1,25,080	32,400	2,31,814

Source: P. S. Tiwari, Agricultural Atlas of U.P., 1973  
(Pantnagar: G. B. Pant University of Agriculture  
and Technology) 112, Table 12.

TABLE XXII

IRRIGATED AREAS % OF NET CROPPED  
AREA IN NORTH-EAST U. P. (1969-70)

District	Net crop- ped area (hect.)	Net irri- gated area (hect.)	Net irriga- ted area & % of cropped area	Net irri.by Govt.sources as % of net cropped area
Deoria	4,42,620	1,98,499	44.9	9.8
Azamgarh	4,42,416	2,31,814	52.4	11.5
Basti	5,68,935	3,00,069	52.7	11.6
Gorakhpur	4,75,227	1,98,158	41.7	8.8

Source: Compiled: Ibid: 111, Table 11.

TABLE XXIII

NUMBER OF TUBEWELLS (T.W.) & OTHER WELLS(1969-70)

District	Govt. T.Ws.	Other T.Ws.	Total T.Ws.	Other Wells
Basti	339	408	747	36,993
Gorakhpur	272	2,136	2,408	53,623
Deoria	446	1,799	2,245	37,038
Azamgarh	264	1,225	1,489	38,897

Source: Ibid: 113, Table 13.



TABLE XXIV

IRRIGATION: PROPORTION OF NET CROPPED AREA UNDER IRRIGATION IN WEST AND EAST UTTAR PRADESH AND NET GOVERNMENT IRRIGATED AREA - A COMPARISON (1969-70)

D i s t r i c t	% of net cropped area	% of net cropped area provided by Government sources
Saharanpur	50.4	30.1
Muzaffarnagar	77.0	51.1
Meerut	82.1	48.0
Bulandshahr	77.3	36.7
Aligarh	79.1	37.5
Mathura	64.5	39.8
Etah	58.4	28.8
Agra	44.2	19.6
Mainpuri	64.9	30.5
Etawah	50.0	31.3
Basti	52.7	11.6
Gorakhpur	41.7	8.8
Deoria	44.9	9.9
Gonda	25.7	2.1
Azamgarh	52.4	11.5
Ballia	41.2	16.5
Varanasi	46.8	30.8
Jaunpur	54.4	15.5
Sultanpur	40.3	10.9
Faizabad	53.0	20.0
Ghazipur	38.7	13.6

Source: Ibid: 43

TABLE XXV

IRRIGATED AREA IN THE SEASONS -  
KHARIF, RABI AND ZAID AS % OF  
THE TOTAL CROPPED AREA

R e g i o n	Net irrigated area as % of the net sown area(1961-66)	Irrigated area in each season as % of the total irri- gated area(1961-66)		
		Kharif	Rabi	Zaid
Himalayan	28.37	58.48	39.40	2.12
Western	35.95	39.27	59.54	1.19
Bundelkhand	16.57	27.43	71.86	0.71
Central	24.40	24.74	72.66	2.58
Eastern	37.40	17.49	81.56	0.95
State Plains	32.05	29.51	69.20	1.29

Source: R.N. Tewari, Agricultural Regionalisation of U.P. (Delhi: New Height Publishers, 1973):105.

TABLE XXVI

FIRST, SECOND, THIRD & FOURTH PLAN SCHEMES - IRRIGATION

AZAMGARH

Scheme (name)	Situation	Cost (Rs. in lakhs.)	Irrigation potential ('000 acres)
Pre-Plan Schemes			
N 1 1			
<u>1st &amp; 2nd Plan</u>			
(a) Basu-Gangi schemes (20 Regulators and 30 mls. of Canals)	Basu-Gangi Doab in S. of Distt.	5.48	7.50
(b) Salona Pumped Canal (10 mls.)	N.E. of Distt.	2.93	1.30
(c) Jakri-Batei Tal, Pumped Canal (6mls)	N.E. of Distt.	2.24	4.33
(d) Bhurehat Canal (10 mls.)	Mohammadabad Tahsil, near Mau.	4.52	3.35
(e) Dohrighat Pumped Canal (68 mls.)	East of Dohrighat- Mau Road	62.87	26.50
(f) Channels of Salona Canal (40 mls.)	Silani-Tons Doab in West of Distt.	44.00	13.50
(g) Channels of Sarda Extension(88 mls.)	Tons/Gangi Doab	75.00	8.02
(h) State tube-wells (189 nos.)	-	105.84	66.15
		302.88	130.65

cont.

WORKS -III PLAN

S c h e m e (name)	Situation	Cost (Rs. in lakhs.)	Irrigation potential ('000 acres)
1. Dohrihat Pumped Canal (35 mls.)	East of Dohri- ghat-Mau Road	9.20	13.00
2. Tanda Pumped Canal(78 mls.)	Silani Tons Doab-W.of Distt.	4.90	26.92
3. Channel of Sarada Extension(50 mls)	Tons-Gangi Doab	12.25	13.76
4. State tube-wells (27 nos.)	-	18.90	4.55
5. Extension of Lined Guls on tube-wells (21 mls.)	-	2.57	1.05
<b>Total:</b>		<u>47.82</u>	<u>59.28</u>
<b>Grand total due to further acceleration of above programme</b>		<u>403.80</u>	<u>226.88</u>

**IV PLAN (NO NEW SCHEMES)**

1. State tube-wells mainly (55 nos.)		55.00	19.25
2. Extension of Tanda Channels(25 mls.)		5.00	5.00
3. Extension of Sharada (10 mls.)		1.50	2.00
<b>Total:</b>		<u>61.50</u>	<u>26.25</u>

contd..

DEORIA

Scheme (name)	Situation	Cost (Rs. in lakhs.)	Irrigation potential ('000 acres)
<u>Pre-Plan Schemes</u>			
State tube-wells (15 nos.)		8.40	5.25
<u>Ist Plan</u>			
Naraini Gandak Canal (20 miles)	N. of Gorakhpur, Siwa Bazar, Rly. line.	16.64	8.90
Gandak Canal	Hata and Pedrau- na Tehsil	1.76	-
State tube-wells	-	133.84	78.05
Total:		160.64	92.20
<u>III Plan (1961-63)</u>			
Gandak Canal		55.44	-
State tube-wells (35 nos.)		22.50	15.05
Extension of tube- wells (79 ms.)		9.68	3.95
Total:		89.62	19.00
Total to the end of III Plan (No new schemes)		831.53	166.90
<u>IV Plan (No new schemes)</u>			
Gandak		461.53	459.47
State tube-wells (50 nos.)		50.00	17.50
Extension of lined Guls on tube-wells (50 ms.)		6.13	2.50
Total:		517.66	479.47

Sources: Joint Study Team Report, January 1964 (Eastern Districts)  
(New Delhi: Govt. of India, 1966); Appendix.

TABLE XXVII

DEBT AND CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE

District	Class of cultivators	Debt per household on 30.6.62	Monthly expenditure per household	Debt as % of expenditure.
Azamgarh	Less than 1 acre	102.50	67.10	152.8
	1-3 acres	102.44	94.94	107.9
	3-5 acres	202.58	111.52	181.7
	Over 5 acres	151.55	200.46	75.5
	All cultivators	129.55	108.73	119.2
Ghazipur	Less than 1 acre	254.72	181.49	140.3
	1-3 acres	374.49	94.97	394.3
	3-5 acres	381.52	117.65	324.3
	Over 5 acres	340.29	172.24	187.9
	All cultivators	433.46	129.15	335.6
Deoria	Less than 1 acre	174.44	67.42	258.7
	1-3 acres	274.64	89.42	307.1
	3-5 acres	226.33	117.15	193.2
	Over 5 acres	391.28	205.32	190.6
	All cultivators	286.98	130.13	220.5

Source: Joint Study Team Report, January 1964 (Eastern Districts) (New Delhi: Government of India, 1964):192.

TABLE XXVIII

**ECONOMIC REGIONS OF UTTAR PRADESH**

	<u>Net domes-</u> <u>tic produc-</u> <u>tion.</u>		<u>Net domes-</u> <u>tic produc-</u> <u>tion</u>
<u>1st 10</u>		<u>2nd 10</u>	
1. Dehra Dun	499	1. Bulandshahr	354
2. Nainital	442	2. Bijnor	336
3. Muzaffernagar	398	3. Agra	323
4. Meerut	430	4. Almore	332
5. Saharanpur	385	5. Jhansi	316
6. Kanpur	380	6. Rampur	313
7. Garhwal & Chamoli	376	7. Kheri	306
8. Mathura	374	8. Pilibhit	304
9. Aligarh	369	9. Moradabad	298
10. Lucknow	367	10. Farrukhabad	298
<u>3rd 10</u>		<u>4th 10</u>	
1. Bareilly	291	1. Mirzapur	250
2. Etah	276	2. Allahabad	244
3. Shahjhanpur	275	3. Hardoi	226
4. Varanasi	269	4. Sitapur	224
5. Etawah	269	5. Fatehpur	219
6. Hamirpur	267	6. Tehri Garhwal	210
7. Badaun	267	7. Barabanki	206
8. Mathapur	260	8. Unnao	204
9. Banda	252	9. Ghazipur	198
10. Jalaun	250	10. Gorakhpur	198
<u>5th 10</u>			
1. Deoria	194		
2. Sultanpur	193		
3. Faizabad	193		
4. Bareilly	189		
5. Gonda	189		
6. Bahraich	189		
7. Ballia	187		
8. Jaunpur	186		
9. Azamgarh	181		
10. Pratapgarh	178		
11. Basti	116		

Sources: "Reorganisation of U. P. Urged" - Times of India, Delhi, 9th August, 1974.

TABLE XXIX

PERCENT OF DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING  
FORCE IN REGIONS BY PRIMARY, SECON-  
DARY AND TERTIARY SECTORS OF INDUSTRY-  
1961

R e g i o n	W o r k e r s i n			T o t a l W o r k e r s
	Primary Sector	Secondary Sector	Tertiary Sector	
Himalayan	59.45	13.95	26.60	100
Western	65.51	13.14	21.35	
Bundelkhand	76.93	7.86	15.21	
Central	74.83	9.73	15.44	
Eastern	83.38	7.97	8.65	
U.P. (all districts)	75.07	10.11	14.82	

Source: R.N. Tewari, Agricultural Development and  
Population Growth (Delhi: S. Chand & Co.,  
1970) 18.



TABLE XXX

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS - WAGES IN U. P.

	1891	1896	1901	1906	1911
Agra Provinces East	1.21	1.21	1.50	1.68	2.11
Agra Provinces N.W.	1.58	1.89	2.25	2.68	3.25
Bundelkhand	1.36	1.50	1.79	2.36	2.64
Punjab	2.96	3.46	4.36	5.75	7.64
U. P.	1.38	1.53	1.85	2.24	2.67
North India	2.17	2.50	3.11	4.00	5.16

Source: K. K. Ghose, Agricultural Labourers in India.  
(Calcutta: Indian Publications, 1970): 20 & 163.

TABLE XXXI

NUMBER OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN MILLIONS

1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941
8.2	12.5	25.5	52.4	50.6	27.8	42.2	28.0

Source: Ibid: 266

**TABLE XXXII**

**WAGES OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN UTTAR PRADESH**

(In rupees)

Y e a r	West U. P.		Central U. P.		East U. P.	
	Money wage rates	Real wage rates	Money wage rates	Real wage rates	Money wage rates	Real wage rates
1955-56	1.19	-	0.88	-	0.58	-
1956-57	1.31	-	1.05	-	0.78	-
1957-58	1.28	1.28	1.02	1.02	0.72	0.72
1958-59	1.51	N.A.	1.09	N.A.	0.73	N.A.
1959-60	1.46	1.32	1.12	1.03	0.70	0.68
1960-61	1.54	1.34	1.33	1.17	0.69	0.67
1961-62	1.57	1.34	1.14	1.04	0.66	0.63
1962-63	1.60	1.34	1.18	1.04	0.75	0.71
1963-64	1.62	1.19	1.22	0.90	0.78	0.63
1964-65	2.17	1.22	1.47	0.81	1.19	0.67
1965-66	2.26	1.27	1.58	0.84	1.41	0.75
1966-67	2.75	1.20	1.87	0.76	1.80	0.77
1967-68	3.31	1.28	2.25	0.84	2.05	0.81
1968-69	3.26	1.51	2.19	1.03	1.92	0.97
1969-70	3.37	1.48	2.46	1.06	1.97	0.91
1970-71	3.47	1.62	2.40	1.11	1.96	0.92
1972-73	4.02	1.47	2.73	0.98	2.30	0.88
1973-74	4.60	1.31	3.12	0.86	2.85	0.82

Data for 1971-72 was not available

Source: Nayar, R, "Wages of Agricultural Labourers in Uttar Pradesh", A Note, "Economic & Political Weekly", Vol. II, November 6, 1976: 1771.

**TABLE XXXIII**

**AVERAGE AREA IN ACRES PER CULTIVATOR AND PLOUGH  
IN THE 1920s**

Cultivator		Plough	Density of population per sq.mile	District
Inten- sive	Ordi- nary			
2.8	10.2	10.4	652.3	Meerut
7.8	16.83	16.77	560.1	Bulandshahr
1.0	16.3	10.39	545.6	Aligarh
1.8	11.12	11.47	427.0	Rathūra
2.0	7.69	6.5	446.8	Rainpuri
2.2	6.5	6.5	484.3	Badaun
2.0	5.38	5.07	509.0	Farrukhabad
2.4	5.5	6.0	485.1	Kanpur <sup>0</sup>
2.0	7.0	7.0	397.3	Fatehpur
1.5	10.06	8.59	166.9	Jhansi
1.5	8.72	10.46	261.7	Jalaun
1.3	4.3	4.88	721.5	Gorakhpur*
1.0	3.1	3.1	687.1	Basti
1.8	4.4	4.4	458.4	Unnao
1.2	5.3	6.3	465.0	Hardoi
2.0	4.49	4.15	524.4	Gonda
1.8	6.0	6.0	402.8	Bahraich
	6.0	6.0	592.6	Partapgarh

\* Gorakhpur includes Deoria.

Source: Radhakamal Mukerjee, Rural Economy of India  
(Madras: Longman Green & Co. Ltd., 1926): 37.

VILLAGE SCHEDULE

1. Identification Particulars of the village

A. (1) Name

(2) Location code (1971 census)

(3) Name of Tahsil/Tappa/Thana

B. Village details

(1) Total area of the village                      acres/              bighas

(2) Total population

(3) Number of households

2. Land (agricultural details only)

A. (1) Total cultivated area                      acres/              bighas

(2) Irrigated area

(3) Unirrigated area

B. Source of Irrigation

(1) Tubewells                                      Numbers

(2) Ordinary wells                      kachha              pakka

(3) Tanks

(4) Canal

(5) Persian wheel

(6) Lift irrigation

(7) Ponds/kachha Lakes

(8) Others

3. Agriculture

A. (1) Principal crops and average yield in a normal year  
(Particulars are for the year 1976-77)

---

Principal crops	Average yield in maunds per acre / per bigha
-----------------	---

- (a)
  - (b)
  - (c)
  - (d)
  - (e)
- (2) Crop pattern
- (a) area yielding one crop
  - (b) area yielding two crops
  - (c) area yielding three crops
  - (d) area yielding more than three crops
- (3) Frequency of natural calamities which affected agricultural production in the last five years -
- Number of times
- (a) crop diseases
  - (b) flood
  - (c) drought
  - (d) others

4. Land ownership

- (1) Agricultural holdings and their distribution by size

Size in acres	Number of holdings
---------------	--------------------

0-0.9

1.0-2.99

3.0-4.99

5.0-6.99

7.0-9.99

10.00-29.99

• above 30 acres

- (2) Total number of plots in the village
- (3) Occupational distribution of households into agricultural and non-agricultural

Total number of households

- (a) Total agricultural families
- (b) Artisans
- (c) Money-lenders
- (d) Traders
- (e) Government employees
- (f) Others
- Total

(4) Classification of households engaged in agriculture from the view-point of the type and amount of holding

Category	Number	Size of plots
(a) Landowners cultivating wholly-owned lands		
(b) Landowners cultivating themselves partly and partly leasing land		
(c) Non-cultivating owners, wholly leasing out		
(d) Tenants cultivating partly owned and partly leased lands		
(e) Pure tenants		
(f) Landless agricultural labourers		
Total		

(5) Agrarian relations

(1) Prior to the abolition of Zamindari interests were there any large absentee/residents Zamindars in the village      yes/      no

(2) If so, give the following details

(a) How much land in the village did they own prior to 1950      \_\_\_\_\_ acres

(b) How much land do they own in the village today      \_\_\_\_\_ acres

(c) Do they or their families still reside in the village      \_\_\_\_\_ yes/ \_\_\_\_\_ no.

- (d) If so, do they cultivate their lands personally or lease them
- (e) To whom do they lease out their lands
- (f) What is their socio-economic position today

(3) Is share-cropping (sahjedari) still practised in the village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.

5. Land consolidation and improvements

- (1) Was a programme of land consolidation carried out in the village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.
- (2) If so, did all the villagers agree readily to redistribution of their plots of land \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.
- (3) If not, did it lead to any disputes among the agrarian classes of the village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.
- (4) How much money was spent by the villagers in improvements on their land in 1977

6. Land value and recent transaction and litigation

- (1) Was there any land transaction during 1977 \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.
- (2) If so, at what price was land sold or purchased Rs. \_\_\_\_\_ per acre.

Particulars of the sale

- (a) Was the land sold to a resident of the village or outsider \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Was it sold due to unpaid debts or mortgage \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no
- (c) Was there any legal dispute regarding land ownership during the last three years in the village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no

If so, give particulars



(3) Was any agricultural land in the village, or near the village given by the Govt. to landless agricultural labourers during the last three years        yes        no.

If so did it lead to any factional disputes in the village or litigation? Give particulars

7. Communication and educational facilities

Facility	Place	Distance
(a) Nearest railway station		
(b) Nearest post office		
(c) Nearest telegraph office		
(d) Nearest school		
(e) Nearest college		
(f) Nearest hospital		
(g) Nearest Magistrate's office		
(h) Nearest Thana		
(i) Nearest Mandi		

8. Caste and agricultural life

(1) Caste distribution in the village

Caste	Number of families
(a) Brahmins	
(b) Bhumihars	
(c) Kayasthas	
(d) Kshatriyas/Rajputs	
(e) Harijans (give local names)	
(f) Untouchables	
(g) Others	

(2) Are there any cultivating castes and non-cultivating castes in the village \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

If so, give details

(3) Are there any landless harijans who work as attached workers for any big landlord or tenant in the village \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

If so, give the following details -

Payments given \_\_\_\_\_ cash \_\_\_\_\_ kind

Give details of work and life-style of the attached workers

(4) Is untouchability practised \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

(5) Are there any caste Panchayats in the village \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

9. Section for landless labour

(1) How many landless labour agricultural families are there in the village

(2) Is there widespread land hunger and discontentment among them, or they work quietly as hired labourers.

Give details

10. Debts and credit facilities

(A) Debts:

- (1) Are a large number of the villagers in debt \_\_\_yes\_\_\_no.
- (2) Is there a village money-lender \_\_\_yes\_\_\_no. If so, how much interest does he charge
- (3) Is money borrowed mainly for agricultural purposes of consumption

(B) Credit facilities:

Is the village money-lender the only source of credit or are there other facilities available in the village \_\_\_yes\_\_\_no.

If yes, give the following details

Facilities	Number
(a) Banks	
(b) Cooperative societies	
(c) Cane unions	
(d) Govt. taccavi loans	
(e) Others	

HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE  
(FOR SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS)

I. Identification of household

(1) Serial number in the sample

(2) Name of village

(3) Name of the head of the household

(4) Caste of the household

(5) Informants particulars -

(a) Name of informant

(b) Informant's relation to head

(c) Ability to respond - Good \_\_\_\_\_ Bad \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Survey

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Remarks -

**LANDOWNERSHIP AND TENURIAL POSITION**

(1) (a) Do you cultivate any plot of agricultural land in this village at present \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If so, give your position as an agriculturist below:-

(As a household may hold more than one position or tenure show the order of imp. by giving acreage).

ACRES	LANDOWNER LANDDOWNED	RENT RECEIVER LAND LEASED OUT	TENANT LAND LEASED IN	SHARE-CROPPER LANDSHARE- CROPPED
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

(b) If you lease-out land to a tenant or tenants give the following details:-

RENT RECEIVED ANNUALLY	LAND IN ACRES	FROM A DIRECT TENANT	FROM A S.C.	ON LAND THAT IS SUB-LET
CASH/KIND	1	2	3	4
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

(c) If you lease-in or share-crop land from a landlord following give the details:-

AMOUNT OF LAND LEASED	AMOUNT OF RENT CASH/KIND	DURATION OF LEASE ANNUAL/NO. OF MONTHS
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

(d) If you are a tenant/share-cropper what is your relationship with your landlord Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor \_\_\_\_\_

(2) (a) Do you employ agricultural labour to help you \_\_\_yes\_\_\_no.

If so, give the following details:-

<u>NO. OF LABOURERS</u> <u>PERMANENT/CASUAL</u>	<u>EMPLOYMENT TIME</u> <u>ANNUALLY/MONTHLY/DAYS</u>	<u>WAGES</u> <u>CASH/KIND</u>
--	--	----------------------------------

1.

2.

3.

(b) Are any of your labourers/tenants in debt to you: \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no. If so, details

(c) Do you have any "attached" labourers who are expected to work only on your fields \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.

(d) Into how many plots is your land divided \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Was land consolidation carried on in your villages \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no. If so, did you benefit in any way \_\_\_\_\_

(3) How much land did your household in total cultivate in 1977-78 \_\_\_\_\_acres\_\_\_\_\_bighas.

3. AGRICULTURAL DETAILS

(1) Income

(a) What is your approximate income from agriculture in a year \_\_\_\_\_cash\_\_\_\_\_kind

(b) Do you have any other source of income. If so how much \_\_\_\_\_cash\_\_\_\_\_no.

(2) Crops

(a) Give the following details regarding your crops

PRINCIPAL CROPS	YIELD IN MAUNDS QUANTITY PRODUCED/ SOLD	ESTIMATED VALUE (Rs.)
-----------------	---	--------------------------

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1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

(b) Do you use any mechanical devices in cultivation such as tractors, threshers, etc. If so, specify \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Irrigation

(a) Is your land irrigated \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If only a part is irrigated give details -

(b) By what method is it irrigated,

(i) Tubewells

(ii) Ordinary wells

(iii) Canal

(iv) Ponds

(v) Persian wheel

(4) Agricultural facilities

(a) From whom do you get your supply of seeds, fertilisers, tools, etc.

(i) Landlord

(ii) Village shop

(iii) Govt. local rep.

(iv) Cooperative

(b) To whom do you sell your crops

(i) Local mandi

(ii) Landlord

(iii) Village trader

(5) Have you ever undertaken any activities in cooperation

with your neighbours \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If so specify \_\_\_\_\_  
sowing \_\_\_\_\_ weeding \_\_\_\_\_ harvesting \_\_\_\_\_ others \_\_\_\_\_

LAND LEGISLATION AND AGRARIAN RELATIONS

4. (1) Did you or your father or family member lose any agricultural land due to Zamindari abolition, Tenancy or Ceiling legislation since 1950 \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If so, give the following details:-

(a) How much land did you lose \_\_\_\_\_ acres \_\_\_\_\_ bighas.  
How much remained as Khudkhasht land \_\_\_\_\_ acres \_\_\_\_\_ bighas.

(b) Was this land given to a single farmer or distributed to a number of tenants

(c) Was there any dispute or litigation over this \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If so, details

(d) What is the relationship now between your family and the families of your ex-tenants \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Bad.

Details:-

(e) How much compensation did you or father receive from the govt.

(f) What % of this do you think has been spent on land improvements

other  
(2) Did you, or father or any member of your house acquire land due to Zamindari Abolition, Tenancy or Ceiling legislation \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. Specify mode

If so give the following details:-

(a) What was the legal status of your family prior to your acquisition of this land (i) Tenant \_\_\_\_\_ (ii) Tenant-at-



will \_\_\_\_\_ (iii) share-cropper \_\_\_\_\_ (iv) landless labourer \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Was this land acquired from an ex-Zamindar or landlord \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If so, what, if any, is your present relationship with him \_\_\_\_\_ good \_\_\_\_\_ poor \_\_\_\_\_ none at all.

(3) How much land did your household acquire in total \_\_\_\_\_ acres.

(4) (a) By the acquisition of the land what was your legal position at that time.

Bhumidar \_\_\_\_\_ Sirdar \_\_\_\_\_ Asami \_\_\_\_\_ Adivasi \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What is your legal position today

(c) Are you aware of the fact that govt. of U.P. by an Ordinance in 1976 has given Bhumidhari rights to all former Sirdars and Asamis

(d) If so, have you been registered as a Bhumidar \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Do you feel that your position as an agricultural farmer has improved due to all these changes \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

(5) What is your relationship with the village Patwari \_\_\_\_\_ Good \_\_\_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Poor.

5. LANDLESS AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

1. (a) Do you work as a hired agricultural labourer \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

(b) Do you share-crop a piece of land from a big farmer \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

(c) Which do you prefer

(d) How many days in a year are you employed \_\_\_\_\_ idle \_\_\_\_\_

(e) What are the wages paid to you

EMPLOYMENT

FACILITIES

W A G E S  
CASH      KIND

1. Annual

2. Daily

3. Casual

(f) Are you able to support your family with your earnings from agriculture        yes        no.

(g) If not, what other work do you do

(h) What is your relationship with your employer        Good        Bad        Poor.

(i) Would you like to acquire some agricultural land        yes        no.

(j) Have you ever considered moving to an urban area        yes        no.

(k) Has the Govt. distributed any land to landless families in the last five years in your village        yes        no. If so, give the following details:-

(i) Has this led to any disputes, caste quarrels or litigation        yes        no.

(ii) Do you think that their status and income has increased appreciably        yes        no.

6. LITIGATION BUYING AND SELLING

(1) Were you during the last three years involved in a legal dispute over land in the village        yes        no. If so, give the particulars

(2) Have you bought/sold land during the last year        yes        no. If so, give the following details:-

AMOUNT BOUGHT	AMOUNT SOLD	PRICE PAID
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7. DEBT/CREDIT AND LAND IMPROVEMENTS

(1) (a) Are you in debt        yes        no. If so, give the following particulars:

SOURCE	AMOUNT	INTEREST CHARGED
1. Landlord		
2. Village money-lender		
3. Neighbour		



4. Cooperative

5. Bank

(b) How much of the money borrowed was spent on agriculture

(c) When do you hope to repay your loan and how

(d) Have you made any improvement on your land in 1977-78  
\_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no. If so, give details

8.

CASTE AND AGRICULTURAL LIFE

(a) To which caste do you belong

(b) Is there a caste panchayat in your village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.

(c) Does your caste prevent you from doing any particular agricultural function \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no. If so, give details of how you get such jobs done

(d) What is your relationship with cultivators of other Jatis

CASTE      DINE      INTERMARRY      VISIT THEM      SERVE THEM

1. Brahmin

2. Bhumihars

3. Rajputs

4. Harijans

5. Others

(e) Do you belong to cultivating jati/non-cultivating jati

(f) Is untouchability practised in your village \_\_\_\_\_yes\_\_\_\_\_no.

## AN ENTERPRISING GAON PRADHAN: A PROFILE

Sita Ram Gupta<sup>1</sup> is the Gaon Pradhan of the village of Nagar Khas, one of the sample villages close to Basti town. The post of Gaon Pradhan or Mukhiya as he is often called is not a recent innovation, rather it is a very old institution, the nature of duties entrusted to the post may have changed from time to time. In ancient and medieval India, when villages formed self sufficient units managing all their internal affairs without any control by an external agency, the Gaon Pradhan was primarily responsible for maintaining law and order. He was often an elderly man belonging to one of the higher castes and usually selected by the village Panchayat. He was also expected to settle disputes specially regarding land, report to the Panchayat, and often to collect land and other revenues. The Mukhiya in east U.P. was sometimes a strong man and an agent of the Zamindar, disliked by the villagers specially the poorer farmers.

Today, the Gaon Pradhan occupies an important position specially in big villages with a large population such as Nagar. He is elected by the Gaon Panchayat, which is the executive arm of the Gaon Sabha consisting of all residents of the village. Today the village is no longer a self-contained unit, and has ties with many external agencies right from

the State Government at the Capital, to local authorities at the Block, Pargana and Tahsil level; and unofficial agencies such as Cooperatives, Rural Banks, Cane Unions, etc., catering to the needs of the villager have also come up. The Pradhan is responsible for both the internal and external affairs of the village no doubt assisted by the Panchayat, Gram Sewak, Lekhpal, local police, etc.

Sita Ram Gupta has been the Gaon Pradhan of Nagar Khas for the past four years, just like many other Pradhans in the villages in Basti district. However, certain factors regarding his position in the village and the manner in which he discharges his duties set him apart from most Gaon Pradhans encountered during this survey which make him worthy of special mention. These features also represent a certain trend slowly emerging in east U.P.

Although Gupta is a Gaon Pradhan, he owns no agricultural land in Nagar or any of the surrounding villages. It seems a small matter and rules do not say that a Gaon Pradhan must own land. However, it is important in <sup>the</sup> context of East U.P. where land is the main source of livelihood for all villagers, any other occupation forming a subsidiary source of income. In most villages, the Gaon Pradhan, a prominent man often owns the most and the best land in the village. Traditionally ownership of land was a matter of prestige and the Gaon Pradhan was a big landowner.

This is true of all the other villages in our survey. In Mandapar and Sakhia both small villages with petty farmers, the Pradhan owns the largest plot close to the settlement, and in Mandapar, he is also a school teacher thus being one of the few educated men in the village, besides having a secondary source of income which places him apart from the other villagers. In Sumbhadin, the Gaon Pradhan is a Thakur and together with the other Thakurs owns most of the agricultural land in the village. The Thakurs were petty Zamindars and their dominance in village affairs continues. They are members of the Panchayat. The villagers complained that it was in order to escape the penalties of the ceiling laws that they had recently distributed some land among the landless villagers. The hostility of the villagers was quite apparent. (See Chapter III). In Nagar, since Gupta owns no land, he is not involved in any land dispute nor does he have any personal interest in the settlement of land or irrigation dues etc. This definitely sets him apart from Gaon Pradhans in east U.P. More important on being questioned he pointed out that he was not interested in buying any agricultural land in Nagar or elsewhere. He has a tea-shop and a small provision shop in front of his house which lies on the main street of Nagar Bazar, and would like to set up a small mill or factory in the village if he could find the money to do so.

He represents the new class of entrepreneurs in villages such as Nagar who are no longer attached to land and who would prefer to set up an industry or business rather than take to farming, an already over-crowded occupation. He pointed out that although Nagar is a large village there is no commercial bank which would advance a loan large enough to start any industry. The only bank is an agricultural bank which does not advance more than Rs. 2000/- and only against proper surety such as land.

Sita Ram Gupta does not belong to either of the two dominant land-owning castes of east U.P. - Thakurs (Rajputs) and Brahmins. He belongs to the ~~Kayastha or~~ "Banias" community of which there is a large section in Nagar. In Nagar there are no Thakurs although the village was once the seat of the Rajas of Nagar. There is a large Brahmin Tola and the Brahmins own the largest plots of agricultural land (See Chapter V) in the village. In most villages, the Gaon Pradhan belongs to one of these higher castes. This fact again sets him apart from most Gaon Pradhans in east U.P. The Banias community in Nagar does not own land and has taken to a variety of occupations, giving the village a busy air. They do not have any caste restrictions regarding occupation.



Sita Ram Gupta has been selected Gaon Pradhan by the villagers because he is an educated and enterprising man and is prepared to help the illiterate villagers in their dealings with the Tahsil and Block officials, the local bank, Cooperative, etc. He is very sympathetic to their problems and is always found travelling to the Tahsil office in Basti in connection with some land or water dispute. There is always a small crowd near his tea-shop asking for his advice. Recently, a new metalled road has been made in Nagar which cuts across the fields dividing the village into two. Due to this a few villagers have lost their land and have not yet received compensation from the government. The Gaon Pradhan is very active trying to get them compensation at an early date. The Ayurvedic dispensary and Montessori School in the village are also due largely to his efforts. In his efforts to improve the facilities available in the village, S.R. Gupta is familiar with all the rules and regulations and working of the Tahsil office and the Block. He is well-known to the Tahsildar and Block Development Officer. During the survey he took us around the village and to all the sample households and was very eager to provide information. This enabled us to finish our survey within a much shorter time. This was a great contrast to the Gaon Pradhans of the other villages in the survey, who were often not available, and not willing to take us round the village leaving this task to the villagers.

In Sumbhadih, most of the complaints voiced by the villagers were not done in the presence of the Gaon Pradhan. In Nandapar, some villagers complained that the Gaon Pradhan had collected money for a Pukka school building which had not come up.

Thus S.R. Gupta and the villagers of Nagar represent a new trend in east U.P. - a shift away from land to other occupations and an awareness of the problems of the village and how to solve them. For long in east U.P., the Zamindari system had led to polarisation of the social structure in rural areas, creating a gulf between the rich landowners and the poor cultivators and artisans. Men like S.R. Gupta with new ideas and a desire to improve conditions within the village may provide the much required middle class in east U.P.

FOOTNOTE

1. The Real name of the person has not been given.

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