

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Society in India* by David G. Mandelbaum, 2 Vols., Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1970, xii + 665 pp.

This two volume work is one of the most comprehensive and important studies on Indian society to appear so far. The most distinguishing and unique feature of this study lies in its attempt to give an understanding of the various patterns of social relations and their coordinate changes as shown in many other works based on different village surveys through David G. Mandelbaum's own framework. He says "Indian society is indeed complex but not beyond understanding, provided that the fundamental uniformities of caste behavior are grasped." (p. 4) His key to finding out the regularities in Indian society is to look at that society, and at its various components, *as a system*.

The following abridgment of the content of this work by the author himself shows clearly his attempt; that is "to sort out several of the principal institutions of Indian society—notably family, jati, and village—to understand them both as systems and subsystems of the larger society, and to indicate some regularities among person's roles in various subsystems, and to formulate the social changes that people in India have made and are now making." (pp. 5-6)

The author, David G. Mandelbaum, is professor of anthropology at the University of California and a prominent scholar of Indian society. He started his own study of Indian society with a field survey of Kota society in 1937. Since then he has visited India several times including his stay in the military service during the Second World War. The reader will realize the wealth of knowledge and rich experience of Indian society that permeates this book. Mandelbaum is very likely one of the most appropriate persons to do such a comprehensive study.

First of all, the concept of social system and of caste order, the general nature of Indian society and the customary relations among members of different groups are examined. The author then deals with family and kinship relations. According to his view, the family is the smallest social component serving both as model and as mould for the *jati* and its relations.

Some of the description of hierarchy in family roles, family functions, and changes in relations within a family is perhaps highly adaptable to the Japanese family in recent times. For example, "in the context of public behavior a wife should not challenge her husband's precedence and authority. But inside the house, as Mrs. Karve indicated, domineering women are not unknown." (p. 47) Such behavior was not unfamiliar to the Japanese family until recently. Moreover, the situation of the son who does not attain the full responsibility of an adult, even though a husband and father, while his father is alive and while the son is in the same village as his father, was not unusual in Japan before the end of the Second World War. There was a custom of seating arrangement around the hearth (*iroori*) according to family rank in rural Japan like the cot-seating arrangement according to *jati* ranking in India. A Japanese reader will easily find many resemblances in behavior and mentality to the Indian villager throughout this book. These require us to consider what are the peculiarities of Indian society

and what character is common to all Asian societies. It will also help us to analyze these customs and habits in general sociological terms. Therefore, one regrets that this section does not fully make clear its meaning for a sociological study.

The author says "villagers fulfill their family roles in a cycle of family development that is vital for all of village society and economy, as well as for the maintenance of the *jati*." (p. 94) He takes up each stage of the family cycle, namely formation, maintenance, growth, and completion. In this connection, it would be worth examining how the family cycle makes its impact on differentiation among the size of operational holdings, that is, the so-called Chayanov's demographic differentiation in the context of Indian reality. Particularly he describes in detail the procedure and process of family separation, paying attention to the relevance of family relations in the larger society, the cultural effects of kinship networks, and the psychological effects of tensions inherent in family relations. Caste society is not just the family writ large, nor is a family only a *jati* in miniature. There are other groupings, other bonds, other traditions within a *jati* and among *Jatis* that together make up village society.

He then examines lineage, clan, gotra, and other kinship groups. Kinship ties characterize and bond the *jati*. Relations among people of different *jatis* are fundamental in each local system. The *jati* occupies a key position in the dynamics of Indian village society. In sum, the *jati*-group is, according to the author, a fundamental unit of village society, a category of attribution, a field for cooperation, and sometimes a unit of group action. Thus it is proper that just half the space of Volume 1 is assigned to an analysis of the *jati*. Principal relations among people of different *jatis* are *jajmani* arrangements and hierarchical relations, according to the ranking of the *jati*. *Jajmani* relations are discussed not only from the aspect of economic exchange but also from that of ritual and social transactions. More attention should be paid, in my opinion, to the function of *jajmani* arrangements as the means of securing the labor force by the landowner family or large cultivator family in peak season. The author aptly points out, "at times of peak demand for labor, that a farmer is more likely to get help from those who can charge whatever the market will then bear." (p. 175) It would be interesting to find out how change in the decline of *jajmani* arrangement brings on big operational holdings.

The following three chapters are devoted to examining how *jatis* are ranked on the basis of both ritual and secular criteria. Then the influences of religious and other cultural differences on *jati* order are treated. The relations within a *jati* are reviewed from two perspectives, alliances and oppositions. Alliance rivalries, due to wide disparities of wealth and prestige, can occur within *jati*-groups at every level of village society. On the other hand, *jatis* have agents and agencies for cohesion and maintenance. The role and function of *jati* leaders, *jati*-group *panchayats*, and other facets of *jati* organization, both intravillage and intervillage, are revealed from this point. This would explain the background of so-called factional politics that has appeared so gravely in Indian politics since the introduction of *panchayati raji*.

Volume 2 begins with the village. The first four chapters on the village examine the salient features and dynamics of internal and external relations, the ties among villages, center and region, and villagers' responses to certain problems of modernization. The author says the main locale of cooperation and competition between *jati*-groups is the village. To the student and observer it is a principal unit for understanding the society. The village is, as it were, the main stage in which the dynamic relations of the *jati*-group evolve. *Jati*-groups play the leading part in this stage.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, he points out that a village is not a neatly separable social unit. Here the author refers to the question of whether the village is an isolable unit for study. His answer is that "in some way it is, in others it is not." (p. 337) In this connection we are reminded of the debate between Louis Dumont, David Pocok, and F. G. Bailey on the other, which appeared in *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Nos. 1, 3, and 4, and also S. P. Sharma's comments published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 4, Nos. 33 and 34. The main points at issue in this debate are whether or not a village in India has a "sociological reality" and whether such a village can be satisfactorily comprehended and conceived as a whole, according to S. P. Sharma. This question is inevitably connected with the methodology of analysis of Indian society. The author's comment on this issue is too light and too simple compared with the importance of the problem.

Then it is shown that local geography (especially the settlement pattern) and local economy (the means of land management) are two important factors affecting village solidarity. This indicates how wide range problems are treated in this work. But it is doubtful which effect of the settlement pattern or of the historical age of the village is decisive for village organization in the case of a linear village of the Bengal delta. (p. 339) Besides the role and influence of headman, accountant, and other village officers, economic transactions and social intercourse of the villagers are discussed. It should not be forgotten that the role of village accountant differs greatly according to the land system of the village concerned.

The next theme is the internal regulation of the village. It is examined in the context of dynamics of dominant *jatis*, village *panchayats*, and village alliances. Then the author turns from the forces for change arising within the village to those coming from outside the village. The external relations of the village, the regular relations of villagers with networks and centers beyond their village bonds, are discussed. Here *jati*-groups and villages are treated as a component subsystem within a wider local social system. In connection with the demarcation of region, the author points out that major differences noted in social organization between northern and southern India—more accurately between Hindi speaking people of the upper and central Ganga Basin and the Dravidian speakers of the southern part of the Indian peninsula—are basic and, of all the observers' classifications, the most generally useful are the major linguistic groupings. Here also the author does not give the details of various opinions on regional differences of Indian rural society.

Prof. Mandelbaum, having extended his view from *jati* to village and region, comes to refer to the encompassing natural system of biology and ecology, "the parasocial system," and discusses the dual roles and functions in economics, politics, and religion, one for more local, personal, and immediate purposes, the other for more distant, societal, and long-range purposes. In the end of this chapter he reaffirms the social entity of the village. The author says "the village is a basic feature of the civilization and continues to be a vital community for its inhabitants." (p. 421)

The subtitle of Volume 1 is "continuity and change" and that of Volume 2 is just the reverse. If the subtitle of the latter means to emphasize the aspect of change rather than continuity, by its content, Part 5 in Volume 2 seems to belong to Volume 1. In the successive three parts, two kinds of social change, recurrent and systematic, are treated. Recurrent changes occur through social mobility and through religious and tribal movement. Individual mobility, by itself, is limited and ephemeral in Indian society. Therefore the mobility in rank must take the collective form and must be

*jati* mobility, if it is to be fruitful and durable. The shifts of *jati* rank are positional not structural changes. Social structure remains quite the same even though one group now is accepted as higher than its former superior. *Jati* mobility is inevitably accompanied with status competition among *jatis*. Then the conditions for social mobility are considered. It is a very interesting point that the historical availability of new land for cultivation has provided the opportunity for mobility. Gains in wealth and political power are also conditions for social mobility. In the next place, cultural adaptations and modes for mobility are taken up. It is suggestive that the census was indeed an area for mobility struggles and precipitated a new phase of competition. The Kshatriya model has been the most popular and easier model to take on among various models for ambitious men of lower *jatis*. The social tactics *jati*-groups use to secure higher rank are contingency, individual influence, individual passing and percolation, *jati* campaign, use of political parties or administrations and "demonstrative effect."

In the following two chapters, four kinds of *jati* regrouping are discussed. Two of them are fission and fusion, the other two are regrouping on religious grounds and accretion of tribal peoples. After independence, particularly since the end of 1950s, many caste organizations have appeared in the political arena as strong influential bodies. They come to play important roles at every political level from village to national. These phenomena are analyzed from the sociological aspect, as one of the tactics for *jati* improvement.

The next part deals with recurrent change through religious and tribal movements and the central theme of this part is the clarification of how it was that those who held other ideas for good society were repeatedly absorbed into caste organization and into the caste processes of recurrent change as if it were the inevitable course of destiny. The author examines the case of indigenous religions, Jains, Lingayats, and Sikhs in the first and the case of introduced religions, Muslim, Parsis, and Christians in the next. In addition to these types of recurrent change within local systems and within the general system of Indian society, another kind of repetitive process, the subsumption of tribal peoples into caste society, is explained using concrete examples. It is very curious that Buddhism is completely neglected in this part. Of course, the influence of Buddhism is limited in the area and the number of its devotees are few compared with other indigenous religions, but it should not be ignored from the viewpoint of social regrouping.

The final part begins with a discussion of two psychological factors, cognitive assumption and personal motivation. Also competition and conflict as systematic process, and adaptive capacities are considered. In the last chapter, the author concludes that "people throughout India commonly keep to traditional social patterns while adapting them to modern circumstances. Abstract ideals are most readily revised: fundamental motifs of cognition and motivation seem little altered and are evident in the newer arenas of competition." (p. 655)

In the appendix, the author shows the merit in using the concept of system and says "the subject of social stratification is more in the background than in the foreground of this inquiry." (p. 661) He tries to show the caste system in the general form and claims that it is important to understand the dynamic nature of the Indian system. As already mentioned, the uniqueness of this work lies in its understanding of Indian rural society and its components as a system. But it cannot be said positively that his attempt is fully successful. Because the use of the term "system" seems to be

useful only for parsimonious use of words the same explanation would be possible without using it.

Readers will be easily able to recognize that one feature of the author's analysis lies in the dualistic viewpoint. After clearly distinguishing outsiders' cognition or understanding and villagers' cognition or self-identification, he tries to consistently compose united image from both cognitions. In this connection, he says "social divisions in Indian society most clearly follow both objective and subjective criteria; they involve both stability and strain, both cooperation and conflict. The problem is not whether one or the other kind of influence prevails but how much of each exists and under what circumstances." (pp. 662-63)

There is a problem of how to draw out general trends or a common character from the individual village surveys. This is due to the fact that each village in India is, as is well known, quite different from the other, even though they may be neighboring villages. A prominent Indian sociologist cynically says that in the beginning every sociologist talks modestly about "my village" surveyed by himself, in the meanwhile he tells about "my region," even "my state," then he talks boldly about India as a whole only on the basis of "my village." The more the number of villages surveyed increases, the more important the comparative examination. In this connection, Joseph E. Schwartzberg's and Pauline M. Kolenda's works in *Structure and Change in Indian Society*, ed. Milton Singer and Bernard S. Cohn (1968), are suggestive. But the reader cannot expect a detailed examination of this point in this book. Generally it seems that Prof. Mandelbaum avoids mentioning methodological controversies and theoretical debates.

We may say that hereafter anyone who wants to study Indian village society cannot ignore this work. Already many data on Indian villages have been accumulated in the fields of social sciences other than sociology and anthropology. The village survey reports of the 1961 census, reports of National Sample Survey, and many village survey reports written by agricultural economists are also useful for the study of Indian rural society. Therefore it is desirable to examine these reports comparing with sociological and anthropological studies. In this way, it will become possible to promote interdisciplinary studies of the Indian village. Some parts would be able to be cut without harming the content of this work due to repetition. The bibliography listed in the end of this book will be very useful for the scholar. (Masanori Koga)

*Private Investment in India 1900-1939* by Amiya Kumar Bagchi, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1972, xi+482 pp.

This monograph was published by the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press in association with the Cambridge University Centre for South Asian Studies. Amiya Kumar Bagchi is a professor at the Presidency College, Calcutta.

The book is composed of two parts, general-theoretical framework and studies of major industries. Part 1 takes up the influence of macroeconomic factors on the fortunes of private investment. Part 2 discusses the major manufacturing industries one by one to find out which factors are specific to those industries. It is to be noted