In accordance with the objectives of our study we have been mainly concerned with the interpretation of the three principles of social structure in Seohara. This was done with the intention of studying the social structure of the community in a systematic way.

The study proceeded with the assumption that the town Seohara constitutes a community. Keeping this assumption our main interest was to test for the town in question, which constitutes a community in ecological, political and administrative sense is a community in terms of intrinsic inter group unity. That is to say how far the different groups within the town are socially integrated at different sociatal levels and whether the different groups in the town exhibit heterogeneity or homogeneity in terms of social relationship. Therefore, our main focus was on the interpretation of the nature of social interaction between the various groups in the town.

The homogeneity of the community was observed in terms of its population distribution based on religious factor. The town is predominantly inhabited by the two major religious groups of India, i.e. Hindus and the Muslims. This typical feature provides the community a plural character.

Religion is not the only factor, which accounts for the heterogeneity in the community. There are also other important factors. Each religious group is further divided...
into caste and occupational groups which are found reflected in the functioning of the wider community. All this, if taken into consideration in a broader sense, provides the community a complex social structure.

In the light of the above our major task was to study the nature of social structure of the community in a systematic way. Another aspect of the study was to find out how far the various principles of social structure, covered under this study, show functional unity? In other words how far the plural nature of the community is successfully reflected in the functioning of Seohara. Having studied the above two aspects of the present investigation our last objective was to study the pattern of change in the community social structure. We are now in a position to provide an answer to these questions. In the first phase we may summarise our major findings.

The inferences drawn here are based upon a sample study of 236 households of which nearly 34.0 per cent are Hindu households and the rest Muslim. The data forming the basis of these inferences have been drawn mainly from primary sources, collected through structured interview schedules administered and gathered personally.

The caste structure of Seohara in both the religious groups can be understood in a hierarchial order. There is no single caste hierarchy applicable to both the religious groups. Each religious group has its own grading of castes. As regards the position of prestige of various castes in
each group, the ranking of each for the other is somewhat identical. The analysis of caste revealed that while the Hindus are largely concentrated in lower and lower middle castes, the heaviest concentration of Muslims is in the upper caste with a more or less equal proportion being in the upper middle and the lower castes.

On the basis of prestige level of occupations each of the religious group was broadly divided into four class categories, viz. the Upper, the Upper Middle, the Lower Middle and the Lower. There are more Muslims than Hindus in the Upper Class, while Muslims are quite small in number in the Upper Middle Class. In the Lower Class, however, Muslims have a relatively larger proportion. Thus, the Muslims are either at the top end or at the bottom of the social ladder.

The analysis of the relation between caste and class showed that there was very little association between the parallel categories. Whatever association existed was between adjacent categories in caste and class. This clearly indicates that class is not a reflection or duplication of caste or vice versa. On the contrary, they represent two distinct type of groupings.

Initially education was excluded as a component of social class which was developed exclusively in terms of occupational prestige, because, most of the members were illiterate. Even among those who were literate, the level of education was very low. Nevertheless, an attempt
was made to find out whether education bore any relation to caste and class hierarchies. It was found that there was no significant relationship which fact therefore justified our initial exclusion of education.

Our analysis of the community social structure conclusively proved that religion, caste and class which we assumed to be the underlying principles were in fact important. Having delineated the social structure we proceeded to analyse the functioning of the community in terms of the existence of voluntary associations, political behaviour and leadership with a view to see how far the principles of religion, caste and class affect the functioning of the community.

We found that most of the voluntary associations studied were based on religion, caste or class. The only interaction in these associations was between the upper and upper middle castes or upper and upper middle classes. With this exception, the two religious groups and within each religious group, the various castes and classes were isolated.

The above conclusion is further reinforced by an analysis of the political behaviour. Religion plays an important role. It is very evident from the fact that votes are cast on the basis of religious affiliation. Next to religion, caste also plays an important role. The Muslim population favourably supports the Congress party. The secular characteristic is absent in respect of preference to various political parties. This stresses the fact that democratic ideals have not very much appealed to the people, and traditionalism continues to enjoy its supremacy. However,
within a particular religious group, it is difficult to say whether caste or class considerations affect the political behaviour of the people. Apparently, caste appears to play a dominant role but class is also a potent factor. People falling in different occupational groups reflect different pattern of political behaviour which is evidenced by the preferences of the respondents in each group to the various political parties and to the political leaders.

The social structure of the community, when judged on the basis of leadership patterns, indicates that hierarchy of a caste or occupational class is a factor in the determination of leadership in the community. A majority of leaders have been identified on the basis of religious affiliation. This is evidently so in the case of religious leadership. Even in case of political and social leaders religious group determines the leadership in different spheres.

Our analysis of the functioning of the community once again revealed the predominant role played by religion, caste and class. There is little interaction between the groups based on these principles which tend to exist in more or less a state of isolation. Thus what determines the interaction between the members of the community are religion, caste and class, each of which exercises its influence in varying degrees. For example, the Muslim population, being in majority, gives its unflinching support to the leader who is a Muslim, while the other group functions as a small faction only. This may be interpreted that the concept of dominant caste in the determination of leadership is not
applicable to big communities. Of course, it may be true in the case of small village communities, as has been shown by M.N. Srinivas and others, but not in a semi-urban or peri-urban community. In a multi-religious community, the influence of caste tends to be subject to the wider influence of the religion. In towns, the lower caste people look to the higher caste people for their leadership but of their own religion, which is a uniting force. There may be factions or sub-factions between different groups, but broadly they are united by the factor of religion. So it is not the question of dominant caste but the question of dominant religion in such communities with the characteristic features as that of Seohara. Thus, in a way, there is no secular leadership in which the leaders are identified without any strings with numerical strength of a particular religious group. The leadership of the community is diffused, as no single individual has been identified by a majority of people. This may be largely due to large population of the Community, where people tend to be more divided in identifying leaders.

A comparative analysis of the Class status of individuals in 1947 and 1962 has revealed that there has been very little class mobility. Within this restricted sphere of mobility the Muslim group has moved upward in slightly higher proportion than Hindus. This movement is found to be higher in the upper middle class. But by and large, both the groups have retained their traditional occupational status during the period of 15 years. This
further emphasises the fact that the new social forces generated during the last 15 years have not been able to break through the important basis of the Community structure.

The Mobility with regard to inter-generational changes in the status of individuals shows three broad trends: (a) There is a continuous, though minor, increase in the proportion of each successive generation in the upper middle and lower middle class categories; (b) there is a continuous decline in equal proportion of each successive generations in the lower class; and (c) there is a small increase from the third generation (that is, subject's grandfather) to the second generation (that is, subject's father). This is true for both the religious groups. We may, therefore, conclude that the social structure of Seohara has largely remained static.

A marked difference is found among the two religious groups in their attitudes and opinions about several issues. A most remarkable and self contradictory feature is that although Muslim respondents voted Congress Party candidate in a higher percentage than Hindus, they expressed their lack of faith both in the Congress representative and the Government relatively to a higher degree. An analysis of aspirations regarding education stressed that there was a positive relationship between caste and class status on the one hand and higher aspirations on the other. On the whole, those of the aspirations of Hindus were higher than the Muslims.

On the basis of the findings summarized above we
can arrive at certain conclusions. In the first place what we have assumed to be a community is a community only in the territorial and administrative sense. That is to say, it is a population inhabiting a common territory and having an elected body of people to manage some of their affairs. In the sociological sense, it is not a community of inter-acting people bound together by bonds of common ideas or sentiments. On the other hand, it is primarily a case of two communities i.e. Hindus and Muslims existing side by side. The separateness of these two communities also finds expression in territorial segregation.

Each one of these two segments is further differentiated both in terms of caste and class. As regards caste though each of the two religious groups consists of castes of different status each one of which acts as a separate unit for certain purposes. Caste differences within a religious segment are not so powerful as to destroy religious unity. Thus, while caste introduces an element of differentiation, religion helps in holding together the differentiated elements. In other words, castes are meaningful only within the religious context and are subject to the unifying influence of religion.

Even though the hierarchies of castes are more or less parallel within the two religious groups, castes of identical status within the two religions have less in common than castes of different status within the same religion. This again demonstrates the unifying influence of religion.
In view of the fact that the community is traditional, the idea of class may have not been applicable in the sense in which it applies to modern communities. We have defined class exclusively in terms of occupational status. Since the majority of the members are illiterate and the occupations in the community are of a traditional nature, the only basis of occupational prestige must be income. Since economic condition in a traditional community is generally associated with caste status, one would have expected a close correspondence between occupational status and caste status. In our study this correspondence is absent because we used an occupational ranking based on judgements of university students in Bombay prepared by D'souza. Since the occupations listed in this scale and the occupations existing in the community were different, this scale cannot be said to have been applicable to the community under study. It is, therefore, felt that if we had asked the members of the community themselves to rank the occupations in the community, as we did for caste, the criterion of occupational prestige in a traditional community being income and income being generally associated with caste status, we would have got a close correspondence between occupational status and caste status. In that case class in a traditional society would have been nothing more than a reflection of caste. Accordingly, class in our study must be taken as representing broad income groups and in a predominantly agricultural community like Seohara income groups have
a totally different meanings and significances from those associated with it in the modern community. In fact, another important fact which our study has disclosed is that caste, class and religion (class being understood in the restricted sense mentioned above) constitute the important principles of social life in Seohara. This again, conclusively proves the traditional character of the community.

The community has been found to be more or less static insofar as no major change has taken place in its structure either since independence or during the two preceding generations. Hence the picture we get of Seohara is essentially a traditional and static community based on a predominantly agricultural economy.

In spite of the fact that Seohara is regarded as a town and has a population of 19,000, its social structure is essentially that of a rural community. The only difference is that a rural community is generally integrated at certain levels whereas Seohara not being a uni-religious community lacks its integration. But within each religious group the structural pattern is identical to that of a rural community.

The existence of more than one religion ought to have introduced a certain element of cosmopolitanism and a degree of integration at the economic or political level, if not at the social or religious level. But the rural character of the community has stood in the way of such integration which may be present when the population size
of the community grows and its agricultural base is replaced by industry. In other words, none of the modern factors such as industrialization, education and development of transport and communication has been operating in the town to produce social change. A change in the traditional social structure of the community can be expected only when it is exposed to the influence of modernization.

The study, therefore, exposes the myth that urban communities have a social structure which represents a departure from that of traditional communities in so far as they are under the impact of urbanization. Seohara is urban only in terms of its population size and not in any other sense. A community with a large population cannot, therefore, ipso facto be regarded as urban unless its social structure also changes from the traditional pattern to the modern one. Factual studies of this type are, therefore, necessary to assess the actual extent of urbanization and population size alone is not enough.