SYNOPSIS

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.

Education is recognized as a very important factor in the preparation for citizenship. In a democratic system especially, it is through education that values sustaining the system are internalized by the children and adolescents. Recent studies on political socialization have emphasized the role of the family and the school in the training of children. Though the controversy is far from settled about the relative value of these institutions in influencing children and especially adolescents, the general tendency is to recognize the importance of education.

In the Indian context, the traditional social structure, organically built around the family, caste and the village, contributes to the socialization of an average Indian. The influence exercised by these institutions creates a personality oriented towards dominant-submissive relationships. Thus the traditional social order is conducive to authoritarian political and social structure and not the democratic one.

The values underlying the Indian political system are different from the traditional values of Indian society and social institutions. It accepts values like democracy, secularism, socialism and national integration. To inculcate these values among children the State has to depend mostly on the school as against other institutions. This makes the study of the school as an instrument of dynamism in society very urgent.
The stage of adolescence is one of stress and strain in the life of the individual. The values accepted in childhood are scrutinized in the adolescent period. Students of political socialization have only recently taken up the study of adolescents.

The present study purports to study the adolescents studying in high schools and the P.U.C. in selected institutions in this context. The subjects mostly related to the preparation for citizenship are History, Civics and Geography together described as social studies in high schools and along with these other social sciences in the P.U.C. For the purpose of this study only History and Civics are chosen as subjects relevant for the preparation for citizenship at both the high school and College. The purpose is to see to what extent these subjects and the teaching of these subjects have been instrumental in infusing the values of democracy, secularism, socialism and national integration among the students.

The locality chosen for this study is the medium sized city of Aurangabad and its adjacent rural area. The city has grown from a small town into an industrial city with a population of one and a half lakhs. It is having a University since 1958 and is the headquarters of the Marathwada division which includes five districts of the Maharashtra State. It is on the railhead joining Hyderabad to Bombay, Poona and North India and is an important tourist attraction by virtue of its historical significance and monuments of art, architecture and sculpture. The area is reputed to be backward. The rural places selected are even more backward.
It is to study how the students of the adolescent group imbibe the values of citizenship in this locality, that the present survey was conducted.

II. THE HYPOTHESES.

Both History and Civics are the core subjects in creating values of citizenship. The responses, therefore, of both the teachers and the pupils were restricted to these subjects and only text-books prescribed for History and Civics by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education have been dealt with in the study.

The hypotheses the study purports to test are three:

1. That the teaching of History and Civics makes the students politically aware;

2. That the teaching of History and Civics has resulted in students accepting the values of democracy, secularism, socialism and national integration;

3. That the teaching of History and Civics developed among the students critical ability and the inquisitive attitude.

These hypotheses were based on the objectives laid down as guidelines in preparing the text-books. The study attempts to measure the attitudes of the students towards these values mentioned above and to test these hypotheses on the findings based on responses to questionnaires issued to students. The teachers are viewed as contributors in this process of politicization and their responses were also recorded in separate questionnaires designed for them.
III. METHODOLOGY.

Twenty schools and five Colleges were selected for the survey. Of these 16 schools and 4 Colleges are located in the city of Aurangabad and four schools and one College in the rural area near Aurangabad. These institutions were selected because of their significance as semi-Government and or Government institutions and also because they were by and large identified with certain communities. Within the institutions students were interviewed on a selective sample basis, roughly one student out of ten in the class. The P.U.G. students were interviewed as they formed the intermediate stage between the College and High School and also because the new courses in History and Civics only applied to the High School respondents.

The variables under which the present study took into account were four:

1. Community.
   (Maratha, Muslim, Scheduled Castes, Brahmin and 'Others', that is those who did not belong to any of the categories already mentioned).

2. Sex (Male and Female).

3. Area (Rural and Urban).


Similar variables except the class/standard were applied to the study of responses from the teachers. In all 51 teachers and 686 students were studied. The data was processed by the investigator personally.
IV THE PLAN OF THE STUDY:

The plan of the study comprises three parts. One, introductory, including the theoretical part as dealing with the citizenship and the role of the school in inculcating the values of citizenship in the Indian context. Two, a study of text-books and the questionnaires issued to teachers and students. Three, a summary of and conclusions drawn from the findings of the survey. Appendices contain questionnaires and bibliography.

V A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE FINDINGS.

(a) The text-books

The text-books were prepared under the auspices of the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education. There is a big change in the emphasis on the contents of History. Emphasis on Indian History and chronology is given up in favour of emphasis on cultural history and political movements in the Western countries without stress on dates and a lesser stress on India. The approach, however, is not uniform throughout the three years of High School. While cultural History is emphasized in the case of India, political history predominates at a later stage with emphasis on the value of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism.

The text-book of Civics compresses the material in one book which earlier was distributed in three books prescribed for the three standards of High School. While the population problem finds an important place in the text, such important aspects as education, health, employment, the press and its role, are neglected.
(b) Teachers.

The questionnaires of 51 teachers of History and Civics showed that the teachers in general preferred to remain apolitical. They called themselves 'liberals', kept away from political parties, did not profess any ideology, showed faith in 'democracy' and avoided political discussion in the classroom. In general, they lacked sophisticated teaching aids like the projector and the museum but were content with teaching their school libraries and traditional/aids. Most of them followed the lecture method but also claimed that they discussed the subject matter in the classrooms. They wanted schools to remain free from the Governmental interference and opposed nationalization of educational institutions. They wanted less emphasis on History and more on the coordination of knowledge from various social sciences. They wanted to develop critical ability and a sense of inquiry among the students. The development of Civic sense was emphasized as a value. They favoured social change as well as political stability with democracy as the political order.

(c) Students.

Responses of 686 students showed that they were open to the influence of mass media, the press, the radio and the cinema. Political orientation was influenced by these as well as by the home. The school had the least influence in this respect. Political participation in the sense of belongingness to youth organizations and participating in the agitations remained low. Students were found to worship heroes and showed intolerance towards any criticism of these heroes. Belief in leadership was pronounced.
Attitudes towards the administration and the police seemed ambiguous. The majority considered them corrupt and idle but considered them necessary in the public interest. Corruption was viewed with complacency.

Attitudes towards democracy were positive. Democracy was valued for the freedom it gave. It was considered as suited to Indian conditions with its tradition of tolerance. Fundamental Rights were considered as sacrosanct and beyond the reach of government. Elections were viewed as very expensive. However, the attitudes towards the press and the judiciary remained doubtful. The majority favoured judges committed to governmental policies and did not reject the censorship of the press. It seems that they had not clearly understood the role of the free press and non-committed judiciary in a democracy.

The attitude of respondents to caste was also ambiguous. Pride of caste was supported though support was extended to equality and freedom. It was also considered as a natural phenomenon reflecting unequal capacities of human beings. Mixed locality consisting of various castes was favoured as a remedy. Reservation of seats in educational institutions and services on the basis of caste was rejected and economic backwardness as a criterion was suggested as a substitute. The majority agreed that the spread of education would result in the eradication of caste.

Secularism in the form of toleration was accepted by the majority, while the role of the State in removing the evils of the social system was also upheld.
The majority considered local issues no less important than the national ones. Nevertheless it was accepted that there should be one law applicable to all citizens irrespective of their religion. One medium of instruction was also favoured to develop a single nationality. One language for the whole country was also favoured to facilitate free movement of citizens within the country. Linguistic states were also justified along with the removal of restrictions on trade and settlement.

Socialism received general support. The workers’ right to revolt against the capitalist class and its government was supported by the majority. Taxation of agricultural income and abolition of inheritance were favoured by a near majority. Nationalisation of the means of production was acceptable to the majority. The responses in favour of socialism, on the whole, were positive.

Responses relating to critical ability revealed inconsistencies and confusion. On the influence of caste in politics the responses were equally divided. The majority held the view that we should vote for good men in the elections while the minority held that elections are intended to change the government. The position of the President vis a vis the Prime Minister was considered more important by a substantial majority. The majority were unclear and very often wrong about the nature and causes of federalism in India. The majority also held wrongly that the object of teaching History is to appreciate the greatness of our fore-fathers. Thus responses to all five questions showed that critical ability was wanting.
On the two questions the majority seemed to be right. Nuclear explosion was justified as necessary to keep pace with other nations in technological advancement. The cause of British conquest of India was also rightly attributed to the lack of national solidarity.

History and Civics were recognised as contributing to the understanding of socio-political questions by an overwhelming majority.

VII) CONCLUSION.

The new syllabi and course in History and Civics is found to improve the understanding of the students of socio-political questions. The inconsistencies and lack of critical ability were striking features. These could be overcome by a greater coordination of the syllabus and teaching and stressing more the critical outlook than memorizing the facts. There is also a need to improve the syllabus to suit the ability and aptitude of the adolescents of g to grasp abstract concepts. The survey reveals that the school hitherto has played a minor role as an agent of politicization and modernization. It requires freer atmosphere, higher status to teachers, and radical outlook on the part of the State to make the school an effective agent of political socialization.

POST-SCRIPT.

A postscript is added to note the responses of those who were in High School classes when the questionnaire was served in 1974. The Emergency and the General election followed after the survey was originally conducted. It was felt necessary to check the earlier responses in the change circumstances. The students have now entered the College classes and therefore classes XI, XII of the Junior College and
1st Year from the Senior College were visited and responses on selected items were obtained from the whole class in one College. The responses showed that such change has taken place in the thinking of the students more and their ideas were much/consistent than those earlier expressed though on some items the responses remained more or less unchanged.

On responses relating to hero-worship, democracy, freedoms and judiciary the responses radically changed but on caste, secularism and socialism little change was observed. There was also a shift in favour of localism and federalism. The students seemed to have gained more in critical ability.

The attitudes towards the administration and the government became more critical and the attitudes towards secularism and national integration became more consistent, though not necessarily in favour of these values. The attitude towards socialism became more a critical and suspicious. On social issues like caste, little change was discernible. If by progressive attitudes we mean a positive approach on all these aspects, these findings tended to cast doubts on all these values except Democracy as a political system where the approach was consistently and impressively in its favour.