Conclusion
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The examination of 'the Kallar society' of Periyakottai Panchayat and the manner of establishing social ties and relations, interestingly enough conform to the observations of the Japanese scholar Chie Nakane. It was observed that social ties are established, fostered, cemented through kinship ties, caste ties, and also the fact of hailing from the same area. Thus social ties are, perhaps, strongest among the Kallars of Periyakottai Panchayat and strong even among the Kallars and non-Kallars of the same panchayat. Thus both the variables of Nakane i.e. the frame (i.e. the lineage group, village, nadus) and the attribute variable (i.e. caste ties) seem to have played a part in establishing strong social ties among the people of the three nadus, building them into a confederacy.

In examining the formation and working of the power structure in the modern context, Nakane's theory of social persistence seems to have validity for the traditional instruments and factors and even institutions which are the life and blood of the modern Kallar polity.

The office of the village headman in a revenue village is one of the new bases of power created by the British administration. But source of acquiring power (to this office) is traditional and hereditary. In fact, a village headman is a part time official appointed by the revenue officials of the district. But there is a convention to appoint a person from a rich family belonging to a dominant caste in the village. The office will be inherited successively by a member of the same family. In such a situation, the office of the village
headman is mostly held by a dominant caste of the village. As far as Periyakottai Panchayat is concerned, it is noted that the office of the village headman is mostly held by members of the Kallar community. But after the Panchayat Raj, the Periyakottai Panchayat is reserved for the scheduled caste member who is highly influenced by the dominant Kallar caste. It shows that there is a high degree of influence of caste in the modern village administration.

Apart from the village level revenue unit, a statutory village panchayat is another new base of power in the traditional village setting. Unlike the traditional village panchayat in which the hereditary principle is the main source of power, the principal modern village panchayat depends upon the numerical strength of the voters of a caste. Even in such a modern village panchayat, which is dependent on a new base and source of power, power is mostly held by the Kallars as they have got a numerical strength. As far as Periyakottai Panchayat is concerned, power is held by dominant Kallars in all three-village panchayats by directly electing their presidents to these panchayats and more than 50% of the voters belong to the Kallar caste.

A further analysis into the internal power structure of the statutory village panchayats reveals that the traditional ruling clans of the Kallars have also projected their dominance into these modern village panchayats by virtue of having more than 50% of the total Kallar members in these panchayats. In fact, Kallar members belong to the traditional Kallar clans. It proves that there is caste-clan influence in modern polity at the village level. Apart from village level politics, caste and kinship ties of the Kallars influence the Assembly and Parliamentary elections also because
density) in a way that would leave quite adequate holdings for individual households as well as allowing substantial area which could have the benefits of cooperative farming methods. Such a reform involves two major assumptions. First, an 'economic' holding need not be defined as one which produces a large surplus for the market. Secondly, it need not be assumed that the individual landowner must have all the financial resources needed for the full exploitation of his land. No one would contemplate a major reform of this kind without certain additional measures, principally the availability of credit for landowners of all sizes as well as the encouragement of cooperative farming. The advantages of such a reform would be, in addition to a lessening of tension between higher and lower (with a reduction in expenditures on police, courts, and administration), there would be heightened motivation to produce on the part of those who now see themselves benefiting directly from their own labour. Those whose holdings have been reduced may also be motivated to raise their yield per acre.

Far from being incompatible with increased production, the real land reform is the essential ingredient of a real increase in productivity. Those nations which have significantly increased their productive capacity in recent years (such as North Vietnam or Taiwan) have done so on the basis of radical land reforms. It is striking that Vietnam, despite the unbelievable hardships of a war with a major world power, was able to bring about a major public works programme and a significant increase in rice production. With meaningful land reform, they were able to form effective cooperatives and to create enthusiasm for technological change not
only among profit-seeking elite but also among all segments of the peasantry.

Real land reform would also make possible the introduction of cooperative farming methods because the main hurdle standing in the way of the cooperative approach is the great disparity in the size of holdings. Cooperation implies that those involved see some commonality of interests which it is clearly unrealistic to expect in the present circumstances. Cooperative methods could be introduced first on the lands held jointly in each village. Particularly if these are dry lands, they would benefit greatly from the kinds of improvement which could be made under a cooperative approach. It is clear that in Periyakottai Panchayat, there is a great potential for improved water management. Thus, there is a need for creating grids for the optimal use of water within villages, which are based on agricultural needs, not on the location of the fields of well-to-do farmers who have pump-sets. This would only be possible if all villagers would benefit from such a grid, which in turn would be possible only with a major redistribution of the land and the introduction of cooperatives where each earned a share of the produce proportional to his holding. This would also require a major reorganization of the development bureaucracy and a change in its orientation.

There are also other long-range possibilities that remain to be tapped, which, however, would require a larger labour input. For example, the present eris (lake) and tanks could be greatly deepened for increased storage capacity in case of failure of the monsoon. In the case of eris (lake), this would mean power would be required to raise water. This could possibly be provided by using small amounts of solar or wind power. But this sort of development would not be
invariably a member of their own caste or more precisely of their kin group, gets elected to these bodies.

Thus the socio-political organization of the Kallars of Periyakottai Panchayat clearly demonstrates that they have many features of an 'organized community' polity. Their institutions or units of management at various levels have, by tradition, well-defined 'area' concerning a group of people (which here would form the unit's jurisdiction). They (institutions) are composed of members who have the traditional 'right' (and therefore appropriate 'qualifications') to hold position in the councils. These councils are autonomous units with their own resources and compulsions of accountability. Thus, the Lineage Councils are entrusted with power (in traditional set-up, 'influence') and responsibilities and named by heads of lineages. These councils work for lineage groups.

The same is true of other levels of management, i.e. village, inter-village or nadu and inter-nadu or confederacy levels, which have their respective institutions of management, i.e. Village Councils, Nadu Councils and the Inter-Nadu or the Confederacy. There may not be any hierarchical chain of accountability rising upward but there exists a well-recognised tradition of 'accountability' to them. This ensures one more variable management and organization, i.e. the principle of accountability. These features, among others, safely establish that Kallars of Periyakottai Panchayat are an organized community. And because of their ties of kinship and affinity, they are an identifiable kin-group, 'a community', a nation', who will not allow or easily accept 'outsiders' into their group. Since the said Kallars are an 'organized community' (which has been clearly established), the fact
(organized community) fulfils the condition of them being constituted as a polity. As such, there is viable kinship-polity.

In short, the first two hypotheses have been proved right. As far as the last two hypotheses are concerned, empowerment of Dalits and Women has been made possible thanks to the 73rd Amendment but they still continue to be governed by the values fixed by the dominant Caste named Kallars.

At the introduction chapter, certain questions were raised about the future, about possible directions for change or improvement in food production and consumption standards, taking Periyakottai Panchayat as a case in point. Given the present structure of society, the ecological and historical background, the nature of agricultural operations, and the present bureaucratic set-up, what developments are possible, or conceivable? What obstacles are insurmountable? The Researcher has sketched his own view of the optimal conditions for agricultural development. Chapter- IV provides much material in this regard and points to the direction in which development has been moving, and tries to assess the future prospects.

What are the possible steps which would lead to significant improvements? Meaningful land reform is the first essential step towards raising the productive capacity, as well as solving the distribution problems, and leading to a rational use of available resources. Though it is generally believed by planners as well as by many social scientists that real land reform would lead to 'uneconomic' holdings, it is worth noting that land reform has been carried out in villages of other districts (an area of high population
density) in a way that would leave quite adequate holdings for individual households as well as allowing substantial area which could have the benefits of cooperative farming methods. Such a reform involves two major assumptions. First, an 'economic' holding need not be defined as one which produces a large surplus for the market. Secondly, it need not be assumed that the individual landowner must have all the financial resources needed for the full exploitation of his land. No one would contemplate a major reform of this kind without certain additional measures, principally the availability of credit for landowners of all sizes as well as the encouragement of cooperative farming. The advantages of such a reform would be, in addition to a lessening of tension between higher and lower (with a reduction in expenditures on police, courts, and administration), there would be heightened motivation to produce on the part of those who now see themselves benefiting directly from their own labour. Those whose holdings have been reduced may also be motivated to raise their yield per acre.

Far from being incompatible with increased production, the real land reform is the essential ingredient of a real increase in productivity. Those nations which have significantly increased their productive capacity in recent years (such as North Vietnam or Taiwan) have done so on the basis of radical land reforms. It is striking that Vietnam, despite the unbelievable hardships of a war with a major world power, was able to bring about a major public works programme and a significant increase in rice production. With meaningful land reform, they were able to form effective cooperatives and to create enthusiasm for technological change not
only among profit-seeking elite but also among all segments of the peasantry.

Real land reform would also make possible the introduction of cooperative farming methods because the main hurdle standing in the way of the cooperative approach is the great disparity in the size of holdings. Cooperation implies that those involved see some commonality of interests which it is clearly unrealistic to expect in the present circumstances. Cooperative methods could be introduced first on the lands held jointly in each village. Particularly if these are dry lands, they would benefit greatly from the kinds of improvement which could be made under a cooperative approach. It is clear that in Periyakottai Panchayat, there is a great potential for improved water management. Thus, there is a need for creating grids for the optimal use of water within villages, which are based on agricultural needs, not on the location of the fields of well-to-do farmers who have pump-sets. This would only be possible if all villagers would benefit from such a grid, which in turn would be possible only with a major redistribution of the land and the introduction of cooperatives where each earned a share of the produce proportional to his holding. This would also require a major reorganization of the development bureaucracy and a change in its orientation.

There are also other long-range possibilities that remain to be tapped, which, however, would require a larger labour input. For example, the present *eris* (lake) and tanks could be greatly deepened for increased storage capacity in case of failure of the monsoon. In the case of *eris* (lake), this would mean power would be required to raise water. This could possibly be provided by using small amounts of solar or wind power. But this sort of development would not be
possible without a genuine cooperative effort. One could also conceive of massive public works programmes to provide for improved irrigation and better drainage as well as improved health conditions through availability of adequate drinking water, basic sanitation, etc. Such programmes could be organized during slack agricultural seasons to provide income for agricultural labourers who would otherwise be idle. Possibly workers might even be willing to put in work for less than the going wage level, if it meant personal benefit to themselves and their own families. This may not be possible under the present system of land distribution. And in any case, to raise the funds for such massive programmes would require a substantial agricultural income tax as well as other tax measures. As long as such measures remain politically not feasible, the one resource which could be mobilized to transform the Indian countryside, namely, the large mass of semi-employed labourers, remains untapped. The productive capacity of this extremely fertile area remains unrealized.

Ernest Feder (Peasants’ Perspectives in Underdeveloped Countries’, in *Monthly Review*, 1975, pp.26-27), among others, has argued that with mass poverty and unemployment in the rural sectors of developing countries, even the most radical agrarian reforms will find it almost impossible to raise simultaneously employment and income of peasant masses in the shorter run. If there were radical land reform in an area like Periyakottai Panchayat, it would unleash tremendous productive forces. Obviously this would require considerable organization. But if every present landless labourer in the area saw how his own family would benefit from cooperative effort in improving irrigation works and in making permanent improvements in the land, etc. people would be willing
to participate. This is not to say that all people would suddenly have a high standard of living, but that there would be work for all, and at the same time there would be an increase in food production. Feder notes that some countries have opted for a strategy to benefit first a small proportion of the rural masses with a relatively high income and ability to reinvest, who then bear the brunt of increased production. This has not only increased inequality and generated new conflicts but it has been unsuccessful in terms of increased production itself. Thus, one of the main points, which this research work asserts that it only through radical land reform that India can hope to permanently free itself from the spectre of famine.

The researcher proposes functional hierarchy as a strategy to help the Panchayat under study to get out of the mess it finds itself in. The Caste Panchayats enjoying social recognition and functioning as power centers parallel to the legitimate Panchayats created after the 73rd Amendment, could be neutralized to a certain extent only if people occupied in the primary sector activities only are deliberately mobilized into secondary sector and tertiary sector activities. This shift is possible only with increasing levels of urbanization.

**Level of functions of Urban Centers**

Urban centers grow in size and function within a system. The nature and intensity of economy of each center is inter-linked with that of the neighboring urban centers spatially in such a way that the economy in a growing mode establishes its expanding base in a state of sustainability. In other words, an urban center cannot be seen in isolation. Urban centers play an important role as carrier of economy from lower level to higher level, generally from
primary sector dominance to secondary sector areas. The spatial location of a particular urban centering channelises the energy flow of the economy and decides its order in the functional hierarchy.

Accordingly, in order to examine the economic profiles of the urban centers around the study area towns in Pudukkottai, sixteen urban centers were studied on a comparative basis in terms of their population growth rates for the decade between 1991 and 2001, and the participation ratio of main work force in the primary, secondary and tertiary occupations during the decade. Urban centers within a range of 50 kms from the taluk under study in the districts of Pudukkottai, Trichy and Thanjavur, have been identified between 1981 to 1991 as illustrated in Appendix-IV.

**Future Urban Centres in the Taluk**

For a balanced and widespread development of a region, an evenly distributed, well-knit hierarchy of settlements is essential. This facilitates trickle down effect and diffusion of secondary and tertiary sector activities. The rural and urban areas come in close contact with each other and this association leads to integrated development of both. The selected urban centres for development functionally link the urban with the rural. This linkage provides easy access to economic, social, political opportunities, urban facilities and services to the rural mass. This not only influences the rate and distribution of economic growth impulses but also the life style of rural people. Based on the study of physical and functional linkages of important centers in the adjoining rural areas upto 50 – km radius, an attempt has been made to identify the potential centres to be graduated and urbanized in the foreseeable future in the Gandarvakottai taluk. While providing the services
and facilities, different habitations dictate different location of services. The potentials of local resources and the present level of their utilisation is identified while assigning functions to the selected centres.

**Functional Hierarchy of Urban Centres**

An examination of the urban centres around the Gandarvakottai taluk as discussed earlier shows prevalence of urban centres of service sector activities of varying degrees. Since industry dominant centres are located beyond the 50 - km belt, urban centres which come up within the taluk, promote only the third order (service) urban settlements in the taluk. In order to select the settlements for being urbanized, an analysis of the likely economic activity concentration areas needs a closer look.

The functional units at the various centres of functional hierarchy such as service centre, market town, growth point centre, growth pole and also key village are worked out by the Town and Country Planning Organisation, Government of India. Each content has its own definition and limitation.

i. **Service Village**

A service village is essentially a big village with a population ranging from 5,000 to 10,000, and serves the population in its catchment area (within walking distance) with their day-to-day requirements of goods and services. This may contain small retail shops, weekly / bi - weekly markets, police out-post, primary and middle schools, a dispensary, branch post - office, etc., In short, it performs every localized functions.
ii. Service Town

A service town is a small urban unit in the urban sector with a population ranging from 10,000 to 30,000. It encourages mainly the primary sector activities with the support of required tertiary activities in its catchment area. Administration is represented by Taluk Office, Block Development Office, Police Station, Court Houses, etc. There are retail and specialized shops, banks, money lenders, pawn brokers, weekly/bi-weekly market. Agricultural extension agent, middle and higher secondary schools, dispensary and clinics, rural industrial estate, Post and Telegraph office, repair shops, vocational services and lower level professional skills also operate at this level.

iii. Market Town

Market Town is normally a bigger town, with population around 50,000 and provides link between primary sector and intensive secondary sector functions. It may be a district or taluk level centre or important nodal centre. It possesses specialized services like wholesale and retail shops and markets, financial institutions, taluk or Sub – Divisional HQ, courts, hospitals and clinics, Post and Telegraphy Offices, ware house, service station, etc. Market Town will also have processing and intermediate industries.
In conclusion, the intensive micro-study conducted in the Periakottai Panchayat has enabled the Researcher to document scientifically the social reality of the caste panchayats and their interference with the democratically elected political panchayats to the extent of nullifying the government-sponsored developmental programmes after the 73rd Amendment. The Researcher, therefore, recommends the deliberate intervention of the state to operationalise the concept of functional hierarchy for the purpose of putting the panchayats on the road to urbanization. This is the only way the panchayat under study as well as other panchayats could overcome the stultifying effects of caste panchayats in the context of modern India which is in a hurry to align itself with the global economy.