CHAPTER 1 VIII

CONCLUSION
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The institution of dacoity has been rooted in the socio-cultural matrix of the society. Socio-historical forces paved the way for the emergence of the Institution. The historical mix has given a peculiar 'Robinhood' prestige to dacoity and it is in this tradition that dacoits are not stigmatised in their communities. The long spell of feudal rule in these regions has also contributed to strengthening of the institution of dacoity. Before independence the concern of banditry was nothing more and nothing less than a hallmark of rebellion against the established regime. The problem defied even such drastic measures as were possible under the old regime mainly because of it was vested interest of the power structure itself.

In the long historical process of development, from its early role as a catalyst of liberation from foreign rule, dacoity has established itself a socially recognised activity. Now, the problem could not eradicate by guns or mortars of violent police because it has become an integral part of socio-economic life of the people in these regions.

In recent past far reaching changes occurred in the social structure of Indian society. These changes threatened to destroy the entire feudal network and the feudal elements reverted to their life of predacious violence for status, economic gain and power. Besides it, it is the institutional network of rural society in these dacoits infested regions that lead people to split into factions and break into conflicts and rivalries. Above all, the most prominent feature of these regions
is the existence of sprawling ravines which makes excellent hideouts for fugitives of law and permit longer life span to dacoits.

The area lies on the zigzag serpentine border of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and provide an easy refuge to criminals who commit crime and then skip over the border to another state. In recent times, Doab districts turned out the largest supply of dacoits. It was not accidental certain special characteristics which prevail in the region of Doab, can be regarded as the contributory cause of this malice. The important features are: (i) highest density of population; (ii) less percentage of working population; (iii) least number of worker in registered factory; (iv) least number of females per thousand males; (v) very few villages are linked with pucca roads, bus stops and railway stations and other social amenities.

A long strip of jagged ravines cover a large area in both the regions. Between Ganga and Yamuna and its tributaries.

A vast sheet of land of Etawah district is full of forest and ravines of Yamuna and Doab. Likewise a good acreage of Kanpur, Farrukhabad districts comes under flood and become water logged in rainy season, while the belt between Etah, Etawah and Mainpuri is flat, dusty and barren. The soils are poor and eroded and the climate is semi-arid. The districts of Doab region have the largest percentage of small holdings. Heavy population density continuous fragmentation of holdings, has exercised a constant economic pressure. The entire economy of these regions is solely dependent on agriculture. There is no alternative means of suste-
nance for staggering population. A high percentage of non-
workers is either due to shortage of agricultural-land or due
to alternative means of sustenance. The percentage of working
population is also low in Doab region in comparison of the State
in general and the Bunteikhand region in particular.

To understand the nature of the system, we have con-
centrated on three aspects of the problem — the process of daco-
tisation, gang organisation and narcouring. Some 93 percent
dacoits came from rural areas. Adverse economic conditions,
however, had not been found to provide an adequate ground for
people except a few lower castes men who directly join the
profession. Approximately twenty one percentage dacoits (20.98%) 
had been brought into the system after committing murders, due
to land disputes, party politics, caste rivalry, close relation-
ship with dacoits as well as ill - socialisation; 11.60 percent
dacoits lured into the system by system itself while 15.16 per-
cent were drifted due to oppressive attitude of stronger elements
like police and other opposite parties. Some 20.53 percent
dacoits belong to higher caste like Brahmans, and Rajputs. Majority
of dacoits came from middle castes. The Jatavas do not lag
behind who alongwith other lower castes dacoits came into the
system for property and oppressives by the higher castes people.

Infact, the backward castes are struggling hard for
supremacy, power and prestige over the other castes. The new
economic changes, benefited them more. These castes taught
against inequality, destitution and social injustice. In Doab
area there is a triangular fight between higher castes, middle
castes and to some extent lower castes like Chamars or Jatavas.

A potential number of dacoits underwent a period of intense mental agitation before joining a gang. Most of the dacoits justified that there was no other option left for him except to become bagni (Rebel). Force of circumstances compelled them to become dacoits. After committing heinous crime they could not return back to their communities. Besides it, there is no justice with poor or helpless persons.

As we have analysed people turned into dacoits from different motives - caste rivalry, family enmity and vendetta are the most powerful motivations that forced a man into this profession.

Gangs are organised on permanent and temporary basis in these areas, which operate from inter-districts to inter-state areas also. The chieftain occupies the highest position in the gang. He runs the gang like an autocrat. Major gangs were composed of two or three divisions. Exceptionally co-leadership is also seen in such gangs. Major responsibilities are held by gang leaders. Some core members may assist the chieftain in some matters related to raid, kidnapping or operational strategy.

The code of conduct and unquestioned fidelity are maintained for security of the organisation of gangs. An unwritten code of conduct is practised in distribution of booty, loyalty to gang's secret, while there is no rigidity to sex morality.

Recruitment into a gang is based on the criminal back-
ground of a recruit, his family background, his relations, the weapon he possesses, the motives actuating him to seek admission, security he furnishes and above all his future loyalty to the gang. Some sort of security was demanded especially when chieftain was not certain of the neophyte's bona fides. Above all a hard and well built physique, smartness, youthfulness are essential to a man seeking admission into a gang. It was found that a majority of the dacoits (46.1%) entered the profession when they were between 20 to 30 years. Most of the dacoits came through some mediators.

The process of conditioning a neophyte to adopt the life of a dacoit starts by the gang itself. Gangmen mitigate the pains of his deprivations of liberty, security and possession of property. The neophyte in small gangs learns more through experiences than any planned training about the use of arms and strategies of brigandage. Moreover, living with others in the gang he assimilates criminal values and norms. A gang's survival, as its strength, depends mainly on the unity and loyalty of its members. Besides it, gang chieftain's personality, gang intelligence and the quality of arms and ammunitions are also accounted to the long span of a gang.

The reasons for split into a gang are unfair distribution of looted booty, uncompromising nature of chief, death of a gang leader and dispute on female dacoits. The intra-gang and intergang relations are governed by informal dacoity norms. Violation of such norms are strictly dealt with punishment. Duplicity and wangling on dues owed to a gang is not condoned. An
unwritten code among dacoits bars the entry of such welshers into any gang. One gang avoids to interfere with other one. Still inter-gang conflicts are frequently seen.

Generally, two types of gang operations were observed during the present study—planned and ambush. There is marked shift in strategy adopted by the present dacoit gangs. They are now concentrating on kidnappings and are also utilising the small local gangs, raising the strength between 10-15 members. Night hours and medium sized of gang are found most favourable for the excursions. Motives behind the commission of dacoities are to gain money and arms, or revenge and animity.

Without the active help and shelter no gang can survive for long. A gang has to fall back on harourers for supply of arms and ammunitions, essential articles and informations regarding movements of police and police informers, informations about wealthy persons and their properties etc. Harourers function under the guise of a law abiding citizen. The harourers vary from influential rich persons to a poor man. It is evident that caste and political protection is awarded frequently. Besides is, unscrupulous police and military personal sell arms and ammunitions to them. Some sort of parliamentary body ought to be made a watch dog which could demand from arms forces the tracing of full movements of weapons that are recovered from dacoits in order to check an illicit traffic in arms. The problem of countrymade weapons, manufacturing is the another source of arms. It can be controlled if we can control the supply of ammunitions.

The main points of difference in the pattern of dacoity
in Doab and Bundelkhand regions are as enumerated below:

(1) The statistics of mass murders, dacoity and other heinous crimes are high in Doab in comparison of Bundelkhand.

(2) Dacoity has been more organised with its developed organs and specific pattern in Doab regions.

(3) Dacoit gangs of Bundelkhand are poorly armed. The recovered arms after encounters show that the dacoits of Doab are capable to secure better arms in comparison to other areas of Bundelkhand.

(4) Dacoity has been more savage and ruthless in Doab districts.

(5) The distribution of looted booty is mainly in the Doab region based on the quality of arms possessed by a dacoit while on the other hand in Bundelkhand each dacoit is treated on an equal footing with others in the matter of profit distribution.

Although, dacoity is a product of multiplicity of factors including psychological, economic and political, it is by nature, origin and continuance largely sociological concern. People as we discussed in the chapter 'Nature of Dacoity', resort to violence and murder and abscond in the ravines, caught in a mesh of conflicting emotions, yet feelings, attitude or emotional instability are not the sole reasons for the origin and perpetuation of dacoity as social system. It is the institutional network of society at different levels that lead people to split into factions and break into conflicts and rivalries. Within the same social setup the system of dacoity welcomes and shelters such fugitives and maintains itself.
It is fact that the bane of dacoity is primarily a social problem which has its historical origin. Along with it, it is undeniable that physiographic conditions provide a sound base for its perennial growth. The inaccessible ridges of Vindhyanchal, the dense forest of Bandelkhand and the deep ravine of Chambal provide the ecological cover for banditry since centuries in the Central India. Climate, soil and other topographical peculiarities do not account for the not tempered aggressiveness of its people, but generate a different type of eco-system which affects the human behaviour, economy and above all way of life. Thus we find that the it is the structural reasons which has largely enabled dacoity to take roots in these areas.

There are three broad bases of dacoity which largely account for its origin, growth and sustenance in the present context. As regards the ecological base, we can say that physiographic conditions of these regions are such that they not only provide the best hideouts and shelters for the fugitives of law but affect the economy of the area negatively.

Major effects of the bad land topography which promote dacoity in these areas are following -

(1) Ravines - provide shelter for fugitives of law.

(2) Continuous loss of agricultural land to ravines and dhar land/ Uncultivable land indicates the unbearable blow to the native population responsible for ill-developed economy.

(3) In the development of roads and other means of other communications and transport. Bad topographical features
are main obstacles and hinderance. Inadequacy of road
network has retarded the development of area.

Besides it, the ruinous ravines of these regions have
already taken a heavy toll of fertile land. On a conservative
estimate the country is losing a total output of crores of rupees
per year by failure to productive utilisation of ravines. Total
12.30 lac million hectare land in Uttar Pradesh is in the grip
of ravines.

As pointed out earlier, very few villages are linked
with pucca roads, bus stops and railway stations which also
affects the rural - urban interaction while adequate transport
and means of communication are pre-requisite for the success
of industrial as well as social and national development.

Discrete cases of dacoity have been found in all ages
of human life. It has existed in some form or other in all
parts of the world. But dacoity in India has assumed the chara-
ceteristics of an institution during pre-muslim rule. The whole
region of Doab had been marked by political instability and clan
violence since ancient time. Many Rajputs clans dethroned each
other and took refuge in Doab and Chambal basin from where they
made ceaseless efforts to get their power, but with no avail.
After the defeat of Pritviraj Chauhan, Delhi fell into the
hands of Muslims who also thwarted the rebel Rajputs towards
these areas. Most of them took sanctuary in the ravines of
Yamuna, Chambal and its tributaries.

In course of time they established their dynasties
in Etawah, Agra, Gwalior and Dholpur. The entire Chambal and Doab area is marked the concentration of Rajputs, Brahmans, Yadavas and others aboriginals who settled a long ago. These martial communities wanted to extend their sovereignty over Delhi, Doab and Chambal in Central India. The peculiar geographical features made them experts at guerilla warfare.

How a course of action changes, it depends on the conditions of the age. After the advent of Muslim rule, these aggressive Rajputs showed scant respect for any ruler. With the spirit of revolt they again and again rebelled against the Mohammaden, Marathas and Britishers. During Muslim rule on the name of cultural superiority Hindu society supported their rebellious attitudes. Thus, these predatory Rajputs clans never allowed the Muslims to rule peacefully.

The rising power of the rebels infuriated Aurangzeb who tried hard to suppress the rebels in Central India and also responsible for creating the problem of Pindaries in Baccan. The history of long and insistent fight for power during Muslim period and later on made by the dispossessed Rajputs and Bundelas steadily developed the value of intolerance and rebelliousness among the people of these areas. The second thing is that there was no alternative means of livelihood to the erstwhile Rajput rulers except to rebel and rely on arms. During the period of British rule, the land settlement Act made by Government deprived landlords and old Zamindars from their possessions and they retaliated by resorting to violence and depredations in the name of rebels. Feudal habits of spending lavishly, combined
with economic misfortunes has left no alternative to these impoverished landlords. The economic hardships added fuel to the fire. Thugs were in extreme from Pindari made their fortunes by looting and plundering of scores of villages, towns and cities. The bad characters joined the gang of these outlaws. With the down fall of Mughals and incoming of Britishers their demand fell considerably. Pindaries and thugs got protection of landlords and Sanadars.

In the later part of British rule, the land revenue settlement acts were made and the landlords were dispossessed off from their land due to nonpayment of taxes. This resulted in the sudden spurt in various kind of crimes.

Later on the whole area of Bundelkhand and Doab was marked by anarchy prevailed during the period of mutiny which also supported the deviant activities. It is found that those means of livelihood were few, or were threatened by some changes, they resorted to violence. During British rule petty states were confiscated due to non-payment of taxes or rebellion activities of landlords which also support the system.

After Independence many far reaching changes occurred in the social structure. Abolition of zamindari and adoption of constitution in 1950 dealt a staggering blow to the supremacy of the higher castes by snaking the feudal system to its very foundations. These radical changes in the socio-economic structures also generated violence. Rajputs and Brahmins as well as Yadavas are well willing to help the dacoits from law, if only to use that lever of terror for enhancing their diminished fortunes and strengthening their interests.
As we have analysed that dacoity has its origin in historical, societal factors play a determining role in the existence of dacoity system. Unless there is justification for the act in society, such a widespread menace could hardly prevail in society. Our sociological analysis reveals that there are many contributing social factors for the existence of the problems.

Fundamentally dacoity is an agrarian problem where growing family tension and population pressure, lack of adequate employment, debts, caste politics and factionalism are the push factors.

Generally, it is seen that criminality in family leads a man to dacoity and other types of deviant activities. Some prominent dacoits belonged to the families in which criminal activities were committed already. In the same day kinship system produces the chances to get associates with criminals, easily.

Caste sub-culture has direct relevance with dacoity. Violent norms, pattern of socialisation and reaction against the loss of powers and economic interests of some higher castes are the major determinants for generating dacoity in upper castes like Rajputs. While economic uplift in middle castes like Yadavas and scheduled castes like Jatavas - are the ones who resort to violence to get what they want - status, power and an outlet for their vengeful attitude. Structural inequality did not allow them to fulfil their above ambitions.

Our analysis also shows that the cultural factors are
very important in producing a typed violence. Cross cultural studies have revealed that every culture has a personality. Caste sub-culture directs and gratifies individual needs very differently in these areas. This is due to the fact that every caste culture emphasises its peculiar values and thereby not affects the emotions, perceptions, feelings and thoughts of the individual but also characterises a different way of life. Cultural pressures are among the dominant factors that influence the sense of guilt, emotions and hostility connected with the long history of rebellion and lawlessness has also affected the cultural pattern of social life in these regions, especially so in the case of Rajputs.

Violence and aggressive value if not in general at-least in some caste like Makurs, and Gurjars had long been exercised and justified as a natural means of subsistence. Moreover, members of such castes are socialised under martial and feudal values which encourages in them positive attitude towards violence to resolve their feuds, disputes and problems in life.

Value systems and social cohesion, however are collapsing in increasingly wide areas of these regions. Since the process is going to accelerate, most of the rural youths finds themselves in such environment which is conducive to crime. The ill-socialisation of youth had led to antisocial activities and gangsterism. Moreover the frayed tempered people of these regions do not believe in going to court when a gun can decide dispute more quickly and easily. The values related to the superiority of caste, lure for arms, revengeful feelings and other feudalistic values forms a part of the social norms in
these very regions. The new values failed to take root. People
centered between two sets of values - old and the new. An acute
state of anomie held by society in its grip and more desperate
among them took the law into their own hands.

In the peculiar social set up the economic factors
can not be lost sight of. A number of dacoits were drawn to
this profession because of poverty and unemployment, land and
property disputes were not only confined to the high economic
level group but middle and lower class also. Increasing land
disputes, rising price of land and no other alternative of suste-
nance make the problem worse. Social exploitation breeds not
only the economic exploitation but also the political exploitation.

Another paradox in these dacoity infested regions is
that there is at same time a shortage of service and large scale
of employment. This problem, which has been with these areas
for many decades has now become particularly acute in these years,
because of the unprecedented increase in the population. We
have already discussed that there are very few village industries.
Agriculture is main stay of rural areas, there is hardly any
scope of socio-economic mobility. Insufficient holdings and
growing pressures on land being so tight that land disputes and
rivalries often push a villager to be revengeful.

Political rivalries has polluted the rural environ-
ment to a great extent. Rivalries have been created by elections
devide the whole village into many hostile campus. In number
of cases, dacoits even took active part in influencing people
to vote in favour of a particular member. Who in return extend
his office to protect him. The principle of political equality stands in direct contradiction to the hierarchical order of caste relation and power structure of traditional village community. This resulted into the conflicts which were resolved even by dacoits.

Above all, the legal system in India failed miserably in dealing with the burning problem of dacoity. The inbuilt injustice in our society forced men to dacoity. Defective and corrupt judiciary, undermined the faith of community. The functionaries of police system aid fuel to the fire. Undue harassment, take encounters and biased working of police cause a grave injustice with a simple offender. Facile act of bail system, the problem of identification and other legal problems which have been a part of the development, have ironically their own criminal fall out.

Adopting a liberal moral approach towards the criminals, the protagonists of surrenders held that if a society failed to check the conditions in time which foster deviance, it could at least give the reformed deviants a chance to rehabilitate them. But the recent developments in experimental nonviolence shows that unless the structural and moral framework of society undergoes a radical change, surrender or any such innovation will not bear any fruit. The economic and social development potential of any area depends on the available infrastructure, facilities like vocational training schools, markets, cooperatives, post offices, fertilizer stores, health centres, family planning centres and police stations must be extended to remote villages.
Thus, there are a number of socio-economic forces contributing to the persistence of the system, which have been originated from structural disturbances arising out of the failure of rigid and non-adaptive traditional systems.