METHOD OF STUDY

Method of study refers to actual conduct of investigation. In essence it constitutes the sum total of devices, steps and procedures the researcher adopts in course of his investigation. Method of study is treated as a means and not as an end; a process and not a product. In its application it tends to have two coordinates. The first pertains to the nature of problem and the second to the field in which the problem is identified. The logicality of the nexus between these two defines the relative appropriateness or relevance of a method of study. Weighing of relevance of a method in relation to the problem and the field of study bears upon the issue of logical cogency. As of now, there is no laid down rule for weighing such a cogency and to follow Polany; it is subject to the "personal knowledge" of researcher. It calls for a robust


common sense drawn from the assimilation of dialectics between theoretic bearing upon the empirical facts and vice-versa. Weber's emphasis on the use of Verstehlen towards the interpretive understanding of social realities, indeed demands high creative imagination the lack of which can lead to hazardous inferences.

One way open to the researcher is to weigh the logical cogency of his method in the light of an over all theoretic orientation in which all the three - the method, the problem, and the field of study - tend to emerge as integral part of a schematic 'whole'. This abstracted 'whole' is of a generalized nature and tends to generate causal connections among its component parts which are subsumed within it. Such a schematic design of a whole, to be sure, determines the perspective of or approach to the study.

Tentative statements submitted in Chapter I are by way of clarification towards a purpose. There is a mounting criticism that too much of emphasis on methods and techniques of research in social sciences studies are

symptomatic of growing ritualization in science. The over faith methods shown by researchers appear as if methods carry some elements of cults that promise an easy delivery of scientific goods to its practitioners. Mills' warning against bureaucratic ethos getting hold over sociological imagination in current social science inquiries and the resultant exercises in abstracted empiricism, indeed, call for a caution. Such realizations remind us against confusing methods which merely refer to the nature of attempts with the substantive comprehension of reality which refer to the yields of the former. Both are grounded into each other, yet they are not functional equivalents for each other in science. In view of the above, we shall confine ourselves to describe as "how I am going to do it" or more exactly (at this stage) as "how I did it".

Before we describe the devices, steps and procedures of this study, refocussing on a few essential methodological points hinted at in Chapter I need recapitulation. We have suggested that the category approach, especially divorced from concrete field situations usually leads to a partial understanding of agrarian realities. Disdain


towards ethnographic field work results in the fallacies and errors of misplaced concreteness, reductionism and of over simplification. The direct offshoot of these fallacies has been seen specially in the fragmented presentation of rural society. For, the earlier approaches suffer the want of methodological relevance and logical appropriateness - a point we made in the beginning of this Chapter.

We insist, therefore, that in terms of methodological appropriateness to the study of rural elite and agrarian power structure in particular and to the study of agrarian social structure in general community approach is desirable. By community approach, we mean ethnographic construction of a stable human settlement in the light of its historical as well as contemporary background. For sociologists the intrinsic value of historiography depends upon to what extent its data on the structure and processes of communities and societies of the past bear upon the understanding of their present nature. From Evans-Pritchard, MacIver, Mills to Chirot, to cite only a few from the community of anthropologists and sociologists, have illuminated the uses and importance of history in the explanation of

existential social phenomenon. Understanding of continuities and discontinuities of parts and segments of social structures; their alignments, linkages, contradictions and breakings help the researchers in their attempt towards an authentic portrayal of a community whose aspects such as elites and power structure he attempts to comprehend. This can be achieved by approaching the community from below as well as from above, both in terms of time as well as in social space, i.e., nearness and distance of one segment to and from the other one.

By approaching the community from below with ethnographic description, one moves from lower structural segments of castes and classes in case of Indian society, upward to those that make up the top of social pyramid, i.e., the elite segment. Similarly, as one moves downward from the top segments to those located at the base of the social structure, this procedure will cut across the former procedure somewhere in the middle of the social structure. This will be a convergent point where the view from top tends to overlap with the bottom view of the community. Community approach in respect of social science researches becomes a middle way ethnographic approach which helps in describing the community as a "whole". Such an approach is needed for the understanding of agrarian power structure and for highlighting the process of compliance and
contradictions, in the present case, between rural elites and the peasants in terms of time depth. Our emphasis is to examine the movements in social structures and the type of changes they undergo.

The middle way approach not only provides a spatial-structural perspective but a temporal-structural one also. What we mean is that while in reference to contemporary structural situations it gives easy access to reach out to castes and classes above and below the middle of the segments, it also can be transposed into a temporal coverage of the various segments of social structure within the boundary of a laid down historical period. The use of archival materials, folklores, narration of events of the community pertaining to pre-colonial and colonial past transmitted from generation to generation as collective experiences are as crucial as the field material of contemporary present.

We do not assume that elites are always and invariably dominant as we do not rely on the alleged quiescence and passivity of the peasants. For the principles, norms and collective sanctions for domination and influence and which, on account of residual-effect approves the subordination of peasants to the elite, are never static. Quiescent peasants of one phase of history tend to become rebels against the established elite in another phase. This is far more true in the case of agrarian communities like the one we are going to make the investigation about.
Finally, emphasis on such egalitarian concepts and values as democracy, socialism, equality, secularism and the implementation of modern rational education and technology during the post-colonial phase and under the impact of these the implementation of different types of economic and land policies adopted in India seems to have generated an urge, if not the total rejection, for the modification of the earlier norms and principles which traditionally accorded power to elite. Attempt towards such a modification created condition for readjustment of relations between rural elite and peasants in particular, and the various segments of agrarian social structure, in general. The responses of both, the rural elite and the peasants to the emerging situations of post-colonial agrarian system unfold not only the play of factors and forces that led to a seeming change which actually is a non-change in terms of basic structural alignments in north India. From a sociological point of view, such an inquiry is crucial as the experiences of south India have been different. For such an inquiry, it is appropriate that we take a district as the unit of study.

DISTRICT AS A UNIT OF THE STUDY

Field as a unit of study has a logical relation with the nature of the problem under investigation. Recognition of this fact is essential in the decision making process about what should be the minimum size of a field of study. Besides, limitations of financial resources, time to be devoted to investigation and the question whether the research is a team's or single man's enterprise also impinge upon the selection of field. Keeping in view all the possible considerations we went in favour of selecting a community occupying a territory covered by the administrative unit of a district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

We could not entertain the idea of taking a cluster of districts of this region (Eastern Uttar Pradesh) on account of two reasons: Firstly, it would have become too big to be the subject for intensive field observation for a single researcher and far more difficult in the management of data. Secondly, since most of the districts of east Uttar Pradesh have historically been jointly the part of ceded Districts (we shall discuss about the ceded district in detail later) any single district could safely be treated as the representative of the rest of them. In addition, common political and historical background, nature of social, cultural and tenurial systems of the past including the spoken dialect have by and large been and
continue to be the same for all of the districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. A single Ceded District was, therefore, found to be a viable unit of study.

While on grounds stated above, we abandoned the idea of taking bigger unit for the field study, smaller units, such as a 'tehsil' (a revenue and administrative sub-unit of a district) or still smaller unit of a district such as Community Development Block (hereafter referred to as CD Block) were recognized as too small to yield data relevant to the problem of this study. In fact, the study of the secondary information and preliminary field visits of the district in course of which the problem of understanding the power structure was discussed randomly with people of various sections, caste, class, regions, etc.; these discussions led to a vague and hazy but a definite recognizable picture of the existence of several power configurations fed and sustained by identifiable net-work of influentials within the confine of a district. In course of tracing these configurations, it was recognized with some degree of confidence that they more often then not transcend the boundaries of a CD Block and the boundaries of a tehsil. This represented the horizontal spread of power.
Seen vertically, these clusters of power configurations of the district tend to throw up a network of connections upward which link hinterland power structure with the same of the region and the state. But, and this important to note, that nature of power configurations at the district was distinctly different from those of the region and the state. The latter observation requires elaboration.

Its distinctness arises on account of the following factors:

a) Rural elites of higher castes such as 'ruling caste of Rajputs and Brahmans'(priestly caste) not only constitute the traditional landed aristocracy during pre-Zamindari abolition period of Independent India but, the former, in the past throughout the colonial period, also represent the system of lineage organizations.

Families of Rajput clan members in course of their conquest and settlement spread over areas which were not confined to the recent area division of C.D. blocks. Sheer numerical growth in a family generated fissions as a result of which members were thrown out centrifugally at peripheral villages which were under their control but were not lived in by them. In course of such a spread lineage members went beyond the confines of the colonial system of a tehsil. The situation of their spread at present cannot be grasped by continuing a family of a lineage to a block or a tehsil.
In fact, as we shall see later, their spread used to be through a tract defined by natural boundaries of a river, nullahs (streams) or a forest-patch.

b) In cases where families of the same lineage are spread over number of CD blocks and in a few instances beyond the boundaries of a tehsil, it is noted that while the person X is ineffective in the village where the elders of the collateral family of his clan are in power, he moves out to the other village of the lineage domain, and makes his domination effective there. The relative power of these two families over different influence-zones of the same lineage is subject traditionally to such factors as the seniority, past chivalrous status, unusual sacrifice, etc. to such modern factors as political connections, relative share over ownership and control of land, groves, ponds and pastures and other economic resources. Such influence zones make up the territorial power configuration of an area which, by and large corresponded initially more to 'Parganas'. Pargana is a sub-unit of a tehsil inherited by the colonial British rule from Muslim period. Nurul Hasan mentions the existence

of Parganas as an administrative unit at the time of 9 Sher Shah (16th century, A.D.). Incidentally, it may be pointed out that ethnogeographers such as K.N. Singh and historian anthropologists, such as Richard C. Fox have highlighted the significance of Pargana basis of lineage organization in East Uttar Pradesh.

c) The affinal kinship relations between and among two or more lineages of higher castes of the district spread along the Parganas tend to reinforce each other in maintaining the power structure in the district. Kinship ties and its functions in patterning and lending persistence to power can be viewed more from the perspective of the district rather than from the smaller units.

d) In the light of our attempt to treat elites as distinct group of influentials from that of leaders who, generally belong to such statutory bodies as Gaon-Sabha (village council), village panchavats or to Zila Parishads, the difference characterizing the two will fade away if we


reduce the area of the field from district to tehsil. Field experiences reveal that the latter are promoted to the offices by the village elites. Most of the leaders in the district were found to lean on massive pillars of powers behind them - the elite. Since rural elite is seen in terms of configuration of power, leader too falls into the same pattern. This recognition again strengthened our earlier points about the district as the only viable unit of the study.

e) And, finally, since 1865 when Basti - the district we select for this study - became an independent district of Gorakhpur Division after the latter's ceding to East India Company in 1801, it has remained the headquarter of administrative, judicial, educational, health and other departments. From this central place, a number of resources of power percolated into the villages covered by its jurisdiction. The British policy of seeking allies of the Raj from the dominant sections of generally Rajput Rajas and Zamindars after the jolt the Raj received from them in the Mutiny of 1857, there grew an institution of Darbar, award of Titles, Ranks, etc. and later on, the system of District Board. These institutions structured the nature of the district an identifiable social "whole". Later on, the National Congress and, subsequently other political parties found their headquarters at the district
town of Basti. Offices of political parties became centre of local and national politics and helped in the emergence of Basti not only as an administrative but also as a political unit.

Further, after the Independence, the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Election constituencies were so carved out as to fall within the confines of the district boundaries. The net effect of these have been to promote the emergence of a social collectivity with a history and a contemporary context in which social relations can be seen crystallised into segments and strata of its social structure. District, therefore, for the purposes of this study became an irreducible unit of study. This investigation aims at recapitulating three distinct historical phases of its structural contexts in an evolutionary sequence. The first phase refers to the historically reconstructed description of pre-colonial antecedents of land and people of Basti district. The second phase begins from 1801 when its parent district of Gorakhpur was ceded to the East India Company till 1947 when India became Independent. The third phase relates to a period between 1947 to 1970 during which Independent India brought about radical agrarian changes in the countryside.

In view of the above endeavour, covering a period of a hundred and seventy years' period we collected two types of
data. The first pertains to primary historical information collected from government records and other sources. The second type pertains to data collected in course of field investigation. Collection of archival data initiated the process of identification of elites of the district. We shall, therefore, describe the nature of historical data collection first before we discuss the problem of elite and leader identification.

**Nature of Historical Data**

We have hinted at the relevance of history in the ethnographic studies of societies earlier. It should be pointed out, nevertheless, that the type of data which historians such as Narain and Ansari call "primary" is generally secondary in nature for social scientists. Controversy raised by historians about the uses of historical material by social scientists are immaterial to the present study for the difference between the two reflects more the difference of disciplinary perspectives rather than the intrinsic value of historical material.


I shall describe below the steps I took to collect relevant historical data from the District Record Office, Basti District. Each district of Uttar Pradesh has a District Board Office, locally known as Zila Malkhana. Malkhana divides its records into two Sections: English Record Section and Vernacular Record Section. Records are kept in files Department-wise by their serial numbers and years. One often encounters a yellow looking parchment, brittle and moth eaten in Persian language. This was useless on account of my ignorance of the language and the records in vernaculars being of secondary nature were redundant on account of our preference for the primary field data.

The English Section of the Malkhana contains records of period from early 19th century to 1920 maintained by the British officers.

The initial four months' time was devoted to the screening of relevant files and copying of data about such aspects as (a) list of Darbaris (distinguished persons), (b) award of Sanads (certificates of honour) to Darbaris for exceptional services, (c) rules of Darbar, (d) confiscation of property of Rajas and Zamindars after their participation in the Mutiny of 1857, (e) award of the confiscated property to Rajas and Zamindars who allied themselves with the British during the Mutiny. In addition, we collected information from these records which throw light on the relationship
of dominant people with the British on the one hand and the peasantry on the other. These records reveal specifically the history of influential lineages and families of the district.

We also got the records of Land and Revenue Settlement of Basti and its District Board elections during the colonial period. A study of District Gazetteers of Basti and adjoining districts provided a fair outline of the structure and dynamics of the powerful persons of the past. A number of folklores recorded by Crooks of Bengal Civil Service who was the member of Ethnographical Survey of North-West Provinces and Oudh and was the first British Officer to compile the District Gazetteer of Gorakhpur in 1881 was found to be valuable for this study.

Secondary information on various elections for Legislative Assemblies, Parliament, Zila Parishad, etc. were collected from the Election Office, Basti. Thus, I had fairly good historical information of people before I started the investigation towards the identification of elite and

* In fact the way these records are maintained by low paid clerk and handled by illiterate peon who throws down the Bastas (bundles) from the upper shelves to the floor shattering the brittle paper into bits is a tragic sight and these documents will perhaps not be available to scholars for study after a few years.

leaders. Information on peasantry was residual and was
gathered during the process of gathering information about
the influentials.

IDENTIFICATION OF ELITES AND LEADERS

Before initiating the actual procedure for the identifi-
cation of leaders and elites, I had already with me the
following types of information regarding the influentials
of the colonial period. Some of these influentials
were alive and responded well to my inquiries. The
archival material yielded enormous data on the history of
some of the dominant Rajput and Brahman families
usually referred to by British Officers as "native nobility".
Their history covered a period starting from 1859 when the
first list of loyal subjects (after the Mutiny) was
compiled and extended up to 1920 when it was terminated.
In addition, the District Election Office provided the list
of all the persons who filed applications for nominations,
and withdrawals, contesting for such offices as membership
for Legislative Assembly, Parliament, and local level offices
like Block Pramukh and Zila Parishads. The latter type of
data threw light on the after-Independence situation in the
district of Basti.

* We could not utilise all of these informations directly.
They, however, indirectly lent support to data used for
analysis here.
I now proceed to describe the procedures and methods adopted by me to identify elites and leaders of Basti. Presentation of an account of conventional approaches towards the similar purpose employed by other scholars is introduced here as a background for our description. As indicated earlier, there are three main approaches that have been used to locate and identify community elites and influentials. These approaches are:

i) Positional approach

ii) Reputational approach

iii) Social activity or issues participation approach

**Positional Approach**

Positional approach is based on a simple assumption that persons occupying the positions and offices of power and authority make key decisions of the community. Identification of elite and leader, therefore, involves identification of power positions in the community. While on account of its "matter-of-fact" exactness, positional approach can render broad picture of power distribution within such units as bureaucracy and political system of...

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a state or other units where hierarchy of positions are relatively neat and clearly defined, it cannot effectively be used in a generalised context of a rural community. Secondly, power and authority are not homogenous concepts. They are subject to typifications, such as traditional, legal, economic and coercive. Each society has its own cultural interpretation and differentially gives primacy to one type of power over the other. While power generally emanates from position in business and economy among industrialized societies such as U.S.A. (as reported by Lynd and Lynd, Hollingshed, Baltzel, Mills), the same is found to flow from politics and political positions as in Nazi Germany (reported by Lasswell and Sereno) and form ideology in case of Soviet Russia (according to Schueller). The ritual of the Potlach reported by anthropologists, has been a popular practice among the Haridas of British Columbia whereby position of power in the


tribe is achieved not by accumulation of material possessions but by its abandonment.

Almost all leadership and elite studies in India, as we noted in the preceding chapter have used positional approach in the identification of elites and leaders. The main limitation of the positional approach is that formal position may not necessarily be correlated with power. Dahl's comment that "This method (positional) would not necessarily uncover the eminence grise of the kingmaker, the political boss, the confidante; nor it would record the power of a class or stratum that rules indirectly by allotting formal offices to others is suggestive of its limitations". There seems to be a relevance in the above statement for most of the position holders in the case of Basti are either mouth-pieces or dummies of influentials as the preliminary information revealed. The latter generally remain behind


the visible positions of power. Despite the fact that
the positional approach has been used by American
scholars and also by many Indian scholars we shall be
cautious of its limitations as it tends the researcher
more often to leaders rather than the elite who lead the
leaders. This approach, at best could be used as an
auxiliary method in support of the main identification
technique.

Reputational Approach

Hunter's publication of "Community Power Structure
of Regional City (Atlanta)" initiated the wide use of
reputational approach towards the identification of community
elites in particular and to the study of its power structure
in general. This approach is based upon the following
assumptions. (a) That elite is a referent of power has
a composite aspects, (b) that if knowledgeable persons are
asked to identify and nominate these elites the former can
do so as they understand the meaning of power and have

21. Such as M. Kent, Jennings, Community Influentials.

22. Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure. Chapel Hill:
University of North Carolina Press, 1953. See
especially, the Appendix, pp. 252-71.
fair knowledge about its holders, (c) that nomination by knowledgeable persons of nominees being free from any prior suggestion or limitations gives liberty to them to nominate any one irrespective of the fact whether he/she holds any visible position of power or not. Emphasis is on the subjective estimate of power and its holder as it exists in the minds of the nominator. And finally, (d) since power may assume different forms by virtue of differences of sources from which such power is drawn, the nominator is in a position to lead researcher to the understanding of actual structure of power and its concentration as it exists in the community from the viewpoint of the researcher himself. This minimises the over-influence of preconceived notions of researcher who tends to carry notions by way of theories to the field.

Hunter's reputational approach became a methodological trend setter and consequently there followed numerous studies on the line of this approach. In India, it has been

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effectively used by Lal in the study of community power structure of a Rajasthan city.

Reputational approach and its various variants in terms of choice of knowledgeable persons who go in the making of the panel of nominators has evoked a good deal of response which range from sheer doubts on its relevance to down right denouncement. Wolfinger ultimately calls for a decent burial of reputational approach.


25. About the Variants of this approach, I[bod], p.14.


Much of criticism of this approach emerges from its application to Hunter's study of regional city - a situation which is entirely different from our case of Basti. We propose to use this approach to supplement our ethnographic approach to the identification of Basti elites and leaders. As a supporting technique we can adopt it to provide a check upon our indigenous techniques. Subordinate to ethnographic and indigenous methods it could enrich the data collected by means other than this technique alone.

**Social Activity and Issue Participation Approach**

Issue participation and social activity approach was used by Freeman, Bloomberg Jr. Koff, Sunshine and Fararo in their famous Syracuse study of local community leadership. Its variant assumes the form of *Event Analysis Decision-making*, or *Case Study* approach. Some major assumptions of this approach are: (a) that those who participate in the process of decision making on community issues and problems hold power, (b) that those who hold such power and influence the process of community decision making are elites.

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Decision making activity and its link with the holders of power, in fact, had been indicated by scholars earlier also. This approach suffers from tautological fallacy. In case of positional approach, the assumption was that holders of position exercise power on community decisions by virtue of their office. In the present approach, the statement is only reversed: those who participate in decision making hold power. What is wanting in this approach is that those who visibly participate in the process of decision making, do so, generally as spokesmen of others. In case of our study, while this approach does provide clues for the observation of actual manifestations of power of elite, it itself was not sufficient to lead us to the real holder of power. For, most of the decisions are tutored by elites. Leaders often only execute and implement the former's decisions.

IDENTIFICATION OF ELITES AND LEADERS IN BASI

Collection of field data towards the identification of elite and leaders was hardly unilinear, step by step

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neat process. A good deal of overlaps and retracing of steps and procedures was involved. Sometime a promising beginning with a specific technique meets an early end and from that end another technique opens up to a new beginning. We shall discuss our identification procedure in the spirit it was actually carried out.

**Ethnographic Approach**

Collection of ethnographic materials leading to the identification of rural elite of Basti was carried out on the basis of unstructured observation and interview of people. It has two phases: The first, began with my stay in one of the two hotels of Basti for a period of four months at one stretch for the collection of archival and other secondary data. After the day's work in the Malkhana and related offices one has sufficient time to look around to observe and talk with people - including the district officers. Basti being the headquarter of district judicial, administrative and police departments, attracts a good deal of local influential with issues and interests and the litigants from the villages. Its developmental offices, such as Cooperative Societies, District Development Office and Zila Parishads are centres of power politics.

While the poor peasant is seen seeking shelter at the Railway platform, bus station shed or just squatting under
a roadside mango tree, the politicians and the powerful of the locality check in the two hotels. The peasant and the powerful both have come from far-off villages either to seek justice as litigants from the civil and criminal courts, locally known as Kuchehari or have come to pull some strings of the district bureaucracy to seek various kinds of benefits. The two hotels, besides being places of stay for community influencers are haunts of local teachers, amateur poets, local journalists of all shades and colours and as such, the hotels function as the fountain-head of all the gossips, rumours and scandals of people and politics of the district and of the state. A researcher has an ample opportunity to pick up a lot of information on people "who matter" in Basti from the managers of these hotels. The managers know almost all the clients by names and by their villages. Their register of arrival and departure of clients in these hotels provides useful clues to reach up to the influencers.

A. Hotel Records

In all, the two hotels* have just thirteen rooms. Collection of names and addresses of clients who checked

*At the time of my field work, these two hotels were Janta Hotel and Raje Hotel. The former hotel was also known as Pande Hotel which was owned and managed by a local Pandav (Brahaman).
in these hotels over a period of six months in 1978 yielded the following types of information: (a) there have been 1100 entries of arrivals during the six months' period. Of the total, 82 per cent belonged to the names and addresses of people from the district. The remaining 18 per cent represented traders, contractors and tourists, who did not belong to the district. Basti is on the main high way which connects two most sacred places of Hindus and Buddhists - Ayodhya, the birth place of Lord Rama, is in the adjoining district of Faizabad and, Lumbini Gardens, the birth place of Lord Buddha is in Nepal, at the outskirts of Nepal-India border. Hence, Basti becomes a transit town for Hindus and Buddhist pilgrims; and (b) Treating 82 per cent of clients as a whole, we got information about caste and communities backgrounds of the local clients who stayed in the hotels of Basti town.

By computing the frequency of local clients' stay in these hotels on the basis of entries of their names in hotel registers, we obtain a sample of 300 clients who have been relatively more consistent in making use of the hotel for their frequent stay in Basti town. Out of the total 300 consistent users of the hotel facilities, there

*I was on 18 months' study leave from the Department of Social Work, University of Delhi, Delhi.*
were 51 per cent, 38 per cent, 4 per cent, 5 per cent of Rajputs, Brahmans, Kayasthas and Muslims respectively. Tehsil-wise distribution of these clients are presented below: (Table - 1)

**Table - 1**

**Tehsil-wise distribution of consistent hotel clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tehsils</th>
<th>% of clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basti H</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Harriya</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Khalalabad</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bansi</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dumariya Ganj</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Naugharha</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: - 100 %

\[N = 300\]

It was found that names and addresses of these frequent clients on the register of those two hotels more often overlapped upon the villages having lineages of local

*Caution may be exercised as to the relative distance between the village of clients and district town of Basti, road connections also bear upon the relations between tehsils and clienteleship to town hotels. Hotel clients are generally those who come from far off villages.*
influentials who had their names on the roll of Honour (the Darbars) during the period of the British Raj. A further probe in this regard, right in Basti town, with the help of hotel managers, government officers, popular advocates and school teachers revealed the fact that the list of names I had taken from the hotel register referred to, in majority of cases (80 per cent) to persons and families which had received Sanads certificates and Seats in the Darbar during the Raj.

While such a clue led me to visualise a possible perpetuation and continuity of the influence of the upper caste in Basti. It remained, however, to be confirmed whether within the segments of upper castes, this continuity exists either by families or by lineages conclusively. Or else there are other groups of power holders who belong to neither on the list of the British District Darbars nor on the list of the hotel registers. With these types of doubts and questions I started the second phase of ethnographic approach towards the identification of elites.

The second phase of the ethnographic procedures towards elite identification began with visits of all the tehsils. Community Development Blocks, Thanas (Police Stations), and the villages around them. The recording of my field observations and interviews with people led me to arrive
at certain set of consistent indicators and symbols which objectively exist in East Uttar Pradesh countryside and if one asks the question as to whom these symbols belong, answers generally would lead one to the elite of the community.

B. Observation of Elite Symbols

a) Branch Road - Generally, if a concrete, brick or occasionally metalled roads are seen branching off from the main state-constructed road and are seen terminated at the gate of a compound of a house, it is found to be an indication that the man who owns the house is a man of local importance. The question is who constructed the road? The usual reply from the peasants, Village Pradhans (President of village councils) and Panchas (members of the village panchayat) would be that "We built the road for the Malik". But if we put the same question to the said Malik, his answer would be that "I got it done for my convenience". If a researcher happens to observe such a road in Eastern Uttar Pradesh chances are that it is going to lead him to key man of the country side. Private roads are sure indicators to identify a powerful Malik in Basti.

b) Gardens and Ponds - The second almost regular symbol of power and prestige is the privilege of owning ponds and gardens. Who dug the Pokhra (water pond)
and who own the groves? Whenever in Basti and other adjoining district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, one comes across a well maintained pond and neatly planted mango trees of grafted types (Kalami), they tend to identify a person of power. For ponds and groves, some time hundreds of acres in area are generally controlled by territorial magnets of the British period who had owned a vast track of land and got the digging of ponds done by begar labour (free labour). The planting of groves like mangoes, etc., on large acreage of land is also usually the product of such past free labour used by them. Thus, they retain power and community influence on local people. These symbols identify them as community influentials.

C) Building of temples and maintenance of Dharamsalas

In course of my field work I found that while Muslims mosque in one village is constructed by collective contribution of money by the Musalmans of the surrounding villages, Hindu temples are frequently built and monopolised by an individual or a family. On account of high communitarianism among the rural Muslim population while mosques hardly function as a symbol of Muslim family property and power. The same is not true with Hindus. Hindu individualism, on the other hand, tends to feudalise the temples and, therefore, the temple becomes the reflection of power, prestige and prosperity in
Eastl. In fact the costs of idols of Hindu Gods in the temple are rated with the capacity of power of its owner.

Dharamshalas are Hindu lodges attached to temples and looked after by Brahmin priests wherein travellers could stay without any payment for night halts en-route to other places. The builders of such Dharamshalas of Basti have, of recent become modernist utilitarian. Travellers now have to pay a fixed amount of money ranging from ₹3/- to ₹6/- per day on the plea that the amount is Daan (religious gift) towards the maintenance of the building and not a hotel charge or fee. Usually, local influential enrich their wealth by collection of such gifts from the Dharamshalas they have built. Temples and Dharamshalas and their ownership in Basti, with rare exception identifies the local influential.

D. Fire Arms

Ownership of shot guns, rifles and pistols are symbols of status. During British rule award of fire arms and licence to individuals were made on the basis of local influence, prestige and honour of the family. Unless one was convicted for violence such licences passed down from one generation to another. Generally, possession of British made guns, rifles and pistols are seen only in the possession of the ex-nobles of the district. The new rich of the lower middle caste/class even after more than thirty years of
independence cannot avail licence of fire-arms unless they pay very heavy bribe to bureaucracy. Such cases are, however, rare. Local influential is frequently seen moving followed by a gun bearer behind him. The one who carries his own gun is generally of the emerging new rich caste peasants trying hard for an elite status.

E) Cultural Liens

Ownership of copper, brass and silver vessels, Palkee Tonjon and Peemas (Palquins), tents, carpets, and other objects usually are symbols of status. These objects are borrowed by less important upper caste people at such ritual occasions as marriage or community feasts. At the occasion of marriage or feast the owner of the symbols arrives at the borrower’s place and, one can note, he occupies the central place of the ceremony, and one cannot miss that person of power around whom the people are hovering. Indeed, if the ceremony of marriage is performed, the groom takes the background position before the person whose glittering objects over shadow his own importance.

F) Elephants, Horses and Modern Machines

Elephant and horses which were the symbols of power and prestige are at wane. They are being replaced by motor cars and ownership of agricultural machines, such as, sugar-
cane crusher, thresher, tractors, etc. Elephants are, however, continuing to coexist with motor cars. Basti district being part of Tarai tract (low wet area) people use elephants to go to places without road connection and where cars cannot ply. Besides, elephants carry traditional ritual status. They are ritually worshipped at the time of marriage of daughter or son in Basti. Besides being a ritual symbol, elephants are an object of property and power. Motor cars have already displaced horses and with the extension of roads, elephants will to cease to be an indicator of being rural elite.

G) Land Plots and Agricultural Crops

Moving around villages and agricultural fields one comes across two types of land plotting and cropping systems. In one case, plots are bigger - say of an acre in size and continue to extend in the same pattern covering an entire area that fill the space between two villages. Corresponding to uniformity of plot-patterns, one notes, if it is a season of paddy or wheat, there is uniformity in the variety of paddy and wheat crops.

On the contrary, in the other system, the plotting of lands is not only small, say - plots ranging from 1/10 acre to 1/2 acre but also haphazard and zig-zag with exceedingly heterogeneous crop varieties. If one asks whose is the former type of system, one will get the name of a possible
elite who used to be a Zamindar during the British Raj but now operates a mechanised farm. Such a person is mostly either the ex-Raja or the ex-Zamindar of the district. The latter type of system belongs to the Raj peasantry in whose case it is no wonder if one acre of land is divided into ten plots owned and cultivated by ten families and each one having his own variety of paddy or wheat crops depending upon the availability of seeds.

H) Size and Design of House

Following the different clues identified above, if one enters into the compound of a house which has an arched gate and a branch road connecting it with the main road, one cannot generally miss to find a large double storied semi-pucca (cement, wood and baked brick) house roofed with tiles inside the compound. The floor and walls are cemented, and wooden furniture are relatively of bigger size and of longer endurance. There is a drawing-room, walls of which are decorated with photographs, mostly of group photos wherein, while the father of owner is seen standing in his breeches and Jodhpuris aside a seated Mr. Z Sahib, the British Officer - a Collector - or a Commissioner of the Raj of the Colonial past. The contemporary photographs of such persons are seen with an ex-Minister of state or with an influential political leader of Independent India. These photographs are
occasionally sandw1ched between the stuffed heads of snarling tigers or of a mute antelope. The effect is history. Two periods made vivid by the drawing room objects.

At present these buildings are generally on decay and, one notes a nucca cement, brick and iron Kothi (mansion) coming up side by side the older Bukhury or Darbar (traditional old house). Following objective features differentiate the house of influentials from those of the non-influential common peasants in the countryside of Basti.

1. Site of the Bukhury or Kothi occupies a commanding upland position in the village landscape. It stands out conspicuously high and often looks down upon the smaller house-sites of the peasant located at low-land site of the village.

2. As opposed to the common man's house, the plinth of the rural influential is usually high by four to five feet. The Bukhury owner is the traditional Malik of the village and he receives the salutations from the ex-asamis (subjects) approaching him up from below the plinth while climbing the steps leading up to the Verandah where the owner sits. Bending his head one climbs up to reach the Malik. One cannot miss to observe the perpetuation of the system of rulers and the ruled in the east Uttar Pradesh countryside.
3. The Bukhars have a wide open field surrounding the compound. The spatial gap separates the Bukhars from the random smaller dwellings of common peasant. Generally there is a mango, lemon or banana orchards attached to the compound.

4. As opposed to the common man's dwelling, Bukhars of the influential Malik is a place where government officials, such as staff members of Community Development Blocks, Tehsils, Thana, besides the Pradhan of village councils, Panchas and Prajashak of Zila Parishad are seen going in and coming out. Teachers of Junior High Schools, Intermediate Higher Secondary Schools, and at some places undergraduate college teachers, form almost a court in the evening at such Bukhars which are presided over by the Malik. Malik as the Manager of schools and colleges exercises control over teachers. An East Uttar Pradesh Malik may not fight for an elective position. He instead opens up a college or schools and by becoming its President or Manager exercises power over teachers, students and over their parents.

The extensive field observation aided with unstructured interview of people about the local influentials led me to conclude a second list of names and addresses of possible elite sample of Basti. It contained a total number of 276 names in
The first list of 300 consistent clients was obtained from what we call Hotel Records' List. We shall refer to the second list as the Observational List. The processing of the observational list data by their castes, communities and tehsils, yielded the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castes and Communities</th>
<th>% of Community Influentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hindus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rajput</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Brahmin</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vaisya (Bania)</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kayastha</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kumi</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musalman</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Musalman</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table - 3
Percentage of the Observed Community Influentials by Tehsils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tehsils</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basti</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Harriya</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Khalilabad</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bansi</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dumariya Ganj</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Naugarh</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100 (N = 276)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AN ASSESSMENT

At this juncture, before we proceed further, it is appropriate to qualify the above type of observational data. Firstly, the incidences of observed distinguishing features of elites in terms of the eight types of indicators did not occur in isolation of each other. These features generally overlap upon each other and their combinations usually go to identify a segment of population with more or less homogenous symbols of life-styles as compared to those who do not have them. Here religion, economy, power and other similar factors tend to converge upon certain castes...
groups more frequently than they do so upon other castes.

In doing so, they also tend to identify the sources
of power such as, the utilitarian, coercive and the
traditional as residing more in the hands of the former
than in the latter - the peasants. The Rajput, ex-Rajas
and zamindars, and the priestly caste of Brahmans who make
up the Malik and priest segment. Maliks and priests constitute
a local equivalent of Bengal's Bhadralok. For, the identifying
symbols and life-styles are more frequently found in their
segments than in the segments of peasantry.

The second, however, refers to the limitations of the
observational approach which leads the researcher to only one
type of rural elites namely, the feudals. This approach
while highlights their socio-economic bases but it fails to
trace the historical positions of power of these feudals who
continued to exercise power over the peasants to a great
extent. The cultural emphasis in this approach also
does not help in identifying the processes, the movements
and the political protests that churned up altogether a new
type of elites during the post-independent phase of Basti.

This new type of elite is a counter political elite who has no
traditional heritages of economic, religious and cultural

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31. On the social significance of Bhadralok, see J.H.Broomfield,
Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century
symbols and yet has emerged to enjoy a threatening position to the traditional elites.

The counter elite is (and has been) a product of protest politics of the Independence Movement. Now they depend upon votes alone. They are the members of State Legislative Assemblies and of the Parliament of the Central Government. They have gravitated peasants to an ideology of equalitarianism, social justice and, in the search of these values they initially not only opposed the British during the thirties and forties of this century but also their alleged agents - the Rajas and the Zamindars.

Generally, being legal practitioner, such as, Vakeels and Mukhtars, they come from the social segments which was in subordination to the feudals one during the Colonial period and, consequently lacked all the conspicuousness of style of life that was open to observation easily. Observational approach, thus excludes this type of new elite. The societal processes that operate relationally and in a subtle ways usually escape from observations and without the exercise of a trained attention, which is difficult to attain, the reliance on this approach alone remains a partial one.
Recognition of such methodological anomaly of observational approach, therefore, led me in addition to this, to use reputational approach. Aim was to fill in the methodological blanks. For, while the ethnographic observational approach yielded the culturological clues towards the identification of a type of elite - the Malik and the Priest, it needed the support of another approach to bring within the range of this study those emergent and emerging influentials who had fallen outside the scope of its coverage. Side by side of the traditional Malik and the Priest, the new elites have come to hold power in Basti. Use of reputational approach was, therefore, residually resorted to include those who escaped from the ethnographic approach and who did matter in the elite study of Basti. Besides, it was also desirable for the validation and reliability of each approach by a cross checking the data yielded by the respective one. Our aim has been to comprehend the total picture of the power-holders and any method which led to such a comprehension was adaptable.

Reputational Approach and the Identification of Elites and Leaders

Application of the reputational approach to the identification of elites and leaders did not begin with a
panel of knowledgeable others have done. Instead, the identification process was initiated by approaching a local influential M.P. (Member of the Parliament) who was requested to nominate first, those persons of his tehsil and subsequently one by one of all the remaining five tehsils in order of priority, who, according to the nominator's judgment wield power and influence in the district. I, being acquainted with the local dialects besides having a fairly satisfactory knowledge of Hindi and Urdu languages uniformly used the same question with each such nominator.

It is appropriate to explain the impact and connotation of the terms I used in the framing of the questions. In Hindi language I used the terms PRATHISHTIT and PRABHAOUSHAL and in Urdu the respective equivalent phrases used were BAA-IZZAT and BA-ASAR. The pair phrases of Prathishtit and Baa-Izzat of Hindi and Urdu respectively stand for nearest English equivalents to refer men of prestige and countenance. The second pair of Hindi and Urdu phrases, i.e. Prabhaoshali and Baa-Asar, respectively refer in English language to men of power and domination. The link between prestige and countenance with power and domination was crucial as the latter qualities one could have without its collective social sanctions. The dacoits, the robbers, the

chronic litigants, the despised brokers of defamed officers, etc., did have power and domination for a short while till he is taken care of by the penal system of police and law. While the terms power and domination in the present context is used in combination of prestige and countenance and of some degree of authority. Phrasing of question in Hindi and Urdu depended upon the contingency of persons who spoke either one or both languages together. In either case I was prepared to maintain the flow of communication.

At my request, the M.P. nominated 150 persons who, according to his judgement, were men of prestige and power and influence in the district. Since I had requested the nominator (in this case the M.P.) to exercise his preference which, in turn meant nomination of persons by their degree of reputation in descending order by tehsils, he was further requested to arrange these 150 names into six groups by six tehsils into one list by preference order. Usually it took five or six sittings with a respondent to get first tehsil-wise list and, then its collapsing into single list of the district.

It is interesting to note that during the initial stages, the coverage of nominees was almost linear but, with step by step progression through nominator to nominator and from tehsil to tehsil it slowly started becoming circular. Nomination was initially linear in the sense that choice of the next nominator was usually from the first name given by
the first nominator. The second nominator extended a bit
the radius of the coverage but after going with fifty or
sixty such nominators recurrance of the same nominee became
repetitive. The intensity of such a repetition grew with
increase in the size of the nominators. This process was
followed in case of each tehsil. Few clarifications in this
regard may be stated as below:

First, the choice of the nominators followed a
caterpilar action. The second nominator was the first
preferred nominee on the list of the first nominator. The
second nominator gave a different preference who, in turn
provided a third preference. But after covering such top
preferred persons, it was noted that their preference
revolved around only among themselves - first the ex-Rajas
and then went down covering the ex-Zamindars and current
political leaders.

If we transform the frequency and the intensity of
nominations into a spatial category, i.e., into a circle,
we would get a thick, pithy and high density zone of nominations
at its centre. Most of the ex-Rajas, Zamindars and Members
of the Parliament would be seen located at the core of this
circle. However, as we move outward, from the centre to
the periphery of the said circle, density of the nominations
would show a distinct tendency to thin and decline. It may
also be pointed out that recalls of nominees located at the centre of influence sphere of the district, according to field experience, used to be quick and easy for nominators; for the persons at the periphery, the same used to be slow and halting.

Second, the radius of the spatial coverage of nominees varied by the degree of personal reputation of nominators. Few nominators who scored top reputation tended to give more names of nominees of various tehsils and villages than those who scored lower reputation. The cognitive map of spatial distribution of power and its holder, was thus found to be of longer range in cases of top influentials securing high reputations and in the case of nominees scoring low reputation score it was found shorter and narrower.

Picking up nominators from the list of nominees provided by the previous nominator we covered 500 nominators of six tehsils of the district. A stage at this point arrived where no fresh names as nominees were mentioned. This was the saturation point of the nominal pool of elites and leaders. And at this point, application of this technique towards the identification of elites and leaders was stopped - except in cases of those in which it was used as a check device on the peasants of tehsils who were randomly
taken as nominators to nominate persons of power and prestige according to their own perception. Peasants only affirmed earlier nominators nomination with one limitation. None could give more than 20 names - a limitation that was noted above in connection with the narrowness of the cognitive map of nominees who scored relatively lower reputation. Peasants nomination was, therefore, not processed for the use in this study.

Following is the breaking of figures of nominators and nominees by tehsils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Tehsil</th>
<th>No. of nominators</th>
<th>No. of nominees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basti</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriya</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kharlabad</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bansi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domariyaganj</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navgharha</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>450</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Nominators group also included few government servants of different ranks who were excluded from being nominated at the request of the researcher.*
Sample of Elites

The elite and leadership pool of 450 individuals nominated by 500 knowledgeable persons was arranged in an unilinear scale by their reputational scores in descending order. The reputational score scale was treated as influence scale. The range of this scale spanned the individuals who secured only 15 nominations - the lowest one, to those who got the highest reputation frequency of 451 nominees.

The influence scale was put to statistical quartile divisions. Each quartile constituted ranges of score groups in which nominees of various score frequencies were distributed. (Table 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score scale divided in quartiles</th>
<th>Score range</th>
<th>No. of nominees in each quartile</th>
<th>Types of elites and leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th Quartile</td>
<td>241 and above</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>Entrenched elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Quartile</td>
<td>131-240</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Emerging elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Quartile</td>
<td>50-130</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>Top leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Quartile</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 450
The Quartile division yielded different categories of influentials. The two lower score groups (1st Quartile and 2nd Quartile) were identified as the "Leaders Group Sample" and the higher two Quartiles (3rd and 4th) as the elites. The elites were again divided into the Emerging Elites (3rd and lower of the two Quartiles) and the Entrenched elites (4th and the highest of all the Quartiles).

It was found that the persons belonging to the elites are the persons identified earlier with the help of data obtained from the hotel record. The overlap of the two was by 95 per cent. While the similar overlap in case of leaders groups did not exceed by more than 45 per cent, similarly, the relation between the ethnographic observational data (list of names) overlapped by 89 per cent upon the elites as opposed to only 33 per cent of their overlap on the leader group. It was interesting to note that about 70 per cent of persons belonging to leader group were subsequently found to have either fought elections and were defeated or have had won for such elective positions as membership for State Legislative Assembly, Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti. The same showed a negative correlation with persons belonging to the elites. In the case of the elites the percentage of elective career was of only 15 per cent.

The fact that elective position holders are perceived as less influential as compared to the non-position holders goes against the method of positional approach used by scholars whose studies have been cited earlier (Chapter I).
Consequently we treated the elite group as presented below (Table 6) consisting of 227 individuals within which 75 are Brahmans, 76 are Rajputs and the remaining 76 belong to other castes and communities as the sample of our main study and the lower score group.

Table - 6
Composition and types of elites by their castes and communities (in percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Entrenched Elite</th>
<th>Emerging Elite</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Brahman</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Rajput</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sadhus (Saints)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Vaish</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kaiskha</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Bhumihar</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ahir</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kurmi</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Barhai</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Chai</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Chamar</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Musalmans</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total:  
100.0  
N=109  
100.0  
N=118  
100.0  
N=227
characterized also by their predominant association with elective offices, as the sample of leaders. Since our main focus is on the study of elite, we shall use the latter group for residual purposes only to understand the networks between the two. In order to get a total picture of elites and leaders covered by our study, we are presenting below (Table 7) their distributions by tehsils.

**Table 7**

Categories of elites and leaders by tehsils (in percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Tehsils</th>
<th>Types of Elites</th>
<th>Types of Leaders</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrenched</td>
<td>Emerging Top</td>
<td>Elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Basti</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Harriya</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Khalelabad</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bansi</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Domariaganj</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Naugarha</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total:</th>
<th>100.0</th>
<th>100.0</th>
<th>100.0</th>
<th>100.0</th>
<th>100.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=109</td>
<td>N=118</td>
<td>N=105</td>
<td>N=118</td>
<td>N=450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grounds on which we divided the nominees into elite and leader groups and, which in correspondence to data gathered with the help of other devices yielded to us the main sample of elites for our study are also grounds
for the separation of various types of leaders into such categories as top leaders and leaders. Since our main concern is the study of elites, our discussion on the issue of distinction between elite and leader, therefore, stands closed at this point of the present study.

**DATA COLLECTION ON ELITES**

The sample of 227 elites identified were subject to indepth study with the help of the following research instruments:

**Schedule**

A relatively open ended and unstructured schedule containing questions on the past and contemporary background of the elites and their families was administered. It attempted to solicit information on social, cultural and economic aspects. Our emphasis was more on land holding and its control and its relation with the exercise of power and influence.

**Interview Guide**

Interview guide was used to seek information which the respondent did not like to be recorded on the schedule form. One of the most sensitive issue was the problem of ownership of land and its actual control. Legal holdings, by and large, did not correspond to actual holdings in Basti district. If we treat legal holdings as white land, there
were good number of cases of enormous size of camouflaged black land (concealed holdings) used and controlled by the elite.

**Participant Observation**

A prolonged field stay provided ample opportunities to observe and record the actual manifestation of power of elites. Such manifestations involve situation which included peasants as well as community leaders. This yielded preparation of issues and participation case notes that illuminate the data collected with the help of other techniques.

**Use of Priest's Records**

Hindu religious shrines of Himalaya, such as, Badri Nath, Kedar Nath and Trigun Narain in Garhwal, located at an altitude higher than 10,000 feet maintain elaborate records of their influential clients who usually go to pilgrimage to these difficult and remote shrines to offer worship deities and make daan (gift) of cash and kind to these temples or else give the same gift to the priests of these shrines who periodically visit those elites in their villages. We collected information from the records of these priests to highlight the bearing of religion in the maintenance and continuity of power of people in the countryside.
TIME PERIOD OF DATA COLLECTION

A total stay of about 16 months in the field during 1969-71 was devoted to the collection of archival and ethnographic data. In 1978, Indian Council of Social Science Research granted financial help to complete the data collection. Since major structural changes as a result of Zamindari abolition and fixation of ceiling on land holdings in 1954 had already resulted in introducing some changes in the social structure by 1965. But the agrarian situation of Basti remains, by and large, with little change since then. During 1978, as ICSSR fellow, I revisited the field to check my records. I found no change except death of two elites whose power position is replaced by their sons. My visits to mountain shrines during the summer of 1978 yielded valuable information. We shall use this data to highlight elites sources of power at appropriate points in this dissertation.

Our study will cover a time period starting from 1801 when Basti was ceded to East India Company to 1970, when after Independence in 1947 and also after radical agrarian changes initiated by abolition of Zamindari system in 1954 Basti became more or less a settled system. The gap between the time periods of collection of data and its presentation in the dissertation form, therefore, has a little impact upon the central issues of this study.
A PROFILE OF THE FIELD OF STUDY OF BASTI DISTRICT

Basti is one of the eastern districts of the erstwhile states of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, now the State of Uttar Pradesh. The district is an irregular stretch of country lying between the parallels of 26° 25' and 27° 30' north latitude and 82° 13' and 83° 12' east longitude with a mean elevation of 290 ft. above the sea level. It has a length, varying from 52 to 68 miles from south to north and a breadth varying from 23 to 52 miles from east to west. Its north reaches are bounded by Nepal at a distance of 20 to 30 miles from outer flanks of Himalayan ranges. On this boundary is located, in Nepalese side, sacred Lumbini Gardens where Lord Buddha was born and, his capital Kapilavastu is located within the Indian boundary.

Hindus sacred river of Sarju (Ghagara) at the Southern bank of which the town of Ayodhya - the birth place of Lord Rama of Hindus is located, divide it in South from the district of Faizabad. Its eastern and western sides are rimed by the districts of Gonda and Gorakhpur.

respectively. Its almost flat surface is riboned by rivers like Rapti, Burhi, Anema, Manoma, etc., and its plains are broken by lakes like Bakhira Jheel, Pathara and Chaur Tals, Lewan and Inawar. Basti was once the part of the famous material belt of qys-Himalayan (Tarai) region which is equally famous for its rice produce.

Some of the villages, rivers, ponds and roads have link with either Hindu mythologies or history of Budhistic period and has a number of archeological sites. The fact that Lord Rama and Lord Budha both reportedly came from the ruling caste of Rajputs has left a deep impact upon the mind of peasant about the legitimacy of the domination of

34. 1. Shrangeri village of Harriya tehsil is said to have been the Asharma (Seat) of Rishin Shrangeri, who presided the Putraesatha Yagna (rites for begetting son) of Dashratha, the father of Lord Rama at another village named Bhikhanra in the same tehsil.

2. River Sarju (Gaghara) is anthropomorphised by the priests and peasant into Sarju-Mata (mother Sarju). Another river Ami or Anema was the one which Budha crossed before going for renunciation.

3. Bathing pond of village Bhar in Domanaganj tehsil is sacred as young Rama used to bath in its water.

4. Janki Maru is a very broken road named after the queen Sita, the wife of Lord Rama and is said to have connected Ayodhya with Janakpur the seat of Raja Janak, the father of Sita in Bihar.

5. Archeological sites are: Bjula-Dih in Basti tehsil and Piprahwa Kot in Naugarh tehsil which have crucial links with Budhist history, see, Basti Gazetteer, op.cit., pp.141-142.
this caste today. The rebel of Hindu renaissance and one of the leaders of Bhakti movement, Sant Kabir Das (1440-1511) belonged to this district from its village Magahar of Khalelapad tehsil.

FOUNING AND POLITICAL HISTORY

In 1801, Nawab Wasir of Outh surrendered a part of his territory to East India Company. The Company, in its desire for colonial expansion had already annexed the Province of Banaras from its actual ruler, Raja Chait Singh of Banaras in 1775 by a treaty with Asaf-ud-Daulah, the then Nawab of Outh who exercised nominal and symbolic power over the Raja. The districts of Banaras, Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Ballia and part of Mirzapur and Azamgarh districts were taken away on the charge of non-payment of revenue of Rs. 22 lakhs by the Raja of Banaras. After a spell of 25 years, the Nawab of Outh was forced to part with another chunk of territory in 1801. This territory included, besides, Gorakhpur district, of which Basti then was a part, the districts of Azamgarh, Allahabad, Fatehpur, Kanpur, Etah, Etawah, Mainpuri, Shahjanhanpur, Badaun, Bareilly, Bijnor and Pilibhit. These are called ceded districts. The districts of Agra, Bulandshahar, Meerut, Muzaffarnagar,

Saharanpur and some part of Delhi and Hissar Division of present Haryana State was grabbed by military action in 1803. These are called conquered districts. Ceded and conquered districts made up North-West Provinces of East India Company.

The encirclement of the remaining territory called Oudh was complete. In 1856 this remaining part was also taken from the Nawabs. It was followed by the Mutiny of Sepoys, Rajas, Zamindars and Talukdars in 1857. The State of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh was the product of an amalgamation of the then North-Western Provinces and Oudh in 1902. The British took only over eighty years to occupy all the territories of what now is the State of Uttar Pradesh. (See Map No. 2).

As a ceded district, Basti remained a part of the vast British Collectorate of Gorakhpur. On 16th May, 1865 it became an independent district under the Commissionary of its parent district - the district of Gorakhpur. During the British rule Basti district had five revenue collection tehsils. They are Hararuv, Basti, Khalilabad, Bansi and Domariaganj. In 1961 one more tehsil - Nangarh was added.

37. Basti Gazetteer, op. cit., p.112.
UTTAR PRADESH
PERIODWISE EXPANSION OF EAST INDIA COMPANY

- 1775 ACHIEVED AND SETTLED DISTRICTS
- 1801 CEDED DISTRICTS
- 1803-1815 CONQUERED AND ACQUIRED DISTRICTS
- 1816-1843 ACQUIRED DISTRICTS
- 1856 ANNEXED DISTRICTS

PRINCELY STATES DURING BRITISH RULE
Before the British occupation the traditional administrative units to be parganas, sub-divided into a number of tappas. The latter were cluster of villages. Originally there were only eight parganas in Basti. On account of its separation from Gorakhpur district and difficulties faced in drawing a neatly dividing line between the parent and the new district by parganas, the eight initial parganas were split up into two, giving rise to 13 parganas after 1865. The original eight parganas tended to correspond to clan principalities of the native rulers.

According to Basti Gazetteer, tappas are 131 in 13 parganas of Basti. While tappas, as hypothetical by the Hooper, (1891) the Settlement Officer of Basti, represented the territory held by Vassals of an independent Raja, the territory of one such Raja used to be demarcated by the boundaries of parganas of which tappas were the constituents.

**SOCIAL PROFILE**

Basti is a district of contrasts and contradictions. Viewing it in contemporary perspective, it has a rare status.

40. Basti Gazetteer, ibid., p.113.
of having two professors, one in social sciences, the other in natural sciences - both are top academicians in their respective disciplines and hold considerable influence upon some of the policy matters of the Central Government of India. Both have been Rectors and Acting Vice-Chancellors of one of the Universities in Delhi. Besides them, University of Delhi - alone has four teachers of the rank of 'Readers and Lecturers holding doctoral degrees who come from Basti villages. There are fifteen Ph.D. degree holders who are in academic professions and there are about half a dozen IAS and IPS officers, one State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in the regime of Janta Government and an other of leader of national repute who come from this district.

The data presented above while glamourise Basti to some extent, it conceals its real ugly face. With the exception of two teachers who come from Musalman community and, one IPS officer of DhoM caste (washerman's family), all the scholars, university teachers, government officers, minister and political leaders mentioned above come from the minority section of the privileged castes. Rajputs and Brahmans have preponderance over all the rest of the castes and communities in terms of excellence and power. The excellence of Lord Rama and Budha is being carried over in a secular sense by the existing Rajput kin group. So are
the Brahmans who are following the Rainput as they traditionally did in the past as priests and Rishis.

In order to have a working acquaintance with Basti, we are presenting below some data on its salient features.

Basti district has a population of 26,27,061 in an area of 2,838 sq. miles. Density of population, therefore, is high. The district occupies the 9th position in area and the second position in population in whole of Uttar Pradesh. As against 648 persons per sq.mile of Uttar Pradesh and 138 persons in the same area of India, Basti reels under the weight of 926 persons per sq. mile.

Its solitary town Basti is its administrative headquarters. Being predominantly a rural district, its 95.5 per cent of population lives in as much as 7,651 villages of which, 6,966 are inhabited villages.

Basti is typical agrarian society and its economy rests upon land and its produce. As much as 91 per cent of its population lives directly upon agriculture and agricultural employment. Any section of population which happens to own and control land and auxiliary resources like pasture for cattle grazing, ponds for irrigation, farm for agricultural yield by hiring labourers is the one which has

singular potential to exert economic pressure upon the majority of population.

In terms of ethnic characteristics of the district, Hindus account for 81.3 per cent and Musalmans for 18.66 per cent of the population. Rest of the percentage is represented by less numerous communities like Sikhs and Christians. Since 1901 while its territorial area, by and large, has remained unchanged, its population has since then shot by 62 per cent by the end of sixties creating a tremendous pressure upon land. No wonder that its 20.1 per cent of scheduled caste population continue to be mostly agricultural labourers and subject to the direct economic domination of large landholders who give them farm employment. Indeed under the above type of structural contradictions, especially under the leadership of the Congress, its peasant became restive and upsurgent twice - once during the late forties and the second at the end of the sixties.

Caste Structure

Traditionally Hindu castes in Basti used to subserve three analytically distinct yet empirically interrelated

42. Ibid., p.8.
categories of population. Despite considerable wear and tears, these generic categories seem to have undergone little or no change during the post-Independence period. They continue to affirm their existence in various degrees of dilution even today. Categories of Rajput rulers, the Brahman priests and the lay peasants continue to exist almost unchanged. The latter being most numerous also include majority of Musalman population. For they share the general life situation similar to Hindu peasantry.

Limiting our description to Hindu population alone, the Census of 1931 reports the existence of no less than 64 castes. Historically the relation of land ownership and the mode of exercise of control over it by these castes explain the basis of their coalescence into the said three categories.

The ruling caste of Rajput - locally referred to as Chattria - had a population of only 3.13 per cent to the total Hindu population. The Census of 1901 divides them into 24 exogamous lineages. The dynastic clans of the Suryavanshis, Sarnets, Kalhansas and the Gautams had lineage

44. Basti Gazetteer, op.cit., p.78.
heads as Rajas. Priests and the peasants, both used to employ court language of Malik (master), Deo-Bhagwan (God incarnate), Sarkar (rule and law) and Mai-Baap (parents) while addressing the Rajput Rajas or Zamindars.

Brahmans caste - the traditional priests had 11.33 per cent of the total Hindu population. They have been next to Rajputs in terms of their control over land and domination over peasantry. With the exceptions like the Pandeyas of Jagdishpur in Harriya and Gadawar of Domariaganj tehsils who had talukdari right over their land granted directly by the Sanad (certificate of award) from the Nawabs of Oudh, almost all Brahman groups like Misra, Shukla, Tiwari, Pathaks and Pandeyas were birta holders (grantees) of ruling Rajput Rajas and Zamindars. The priestly caste of Brahman used to reinforce the secular power of Rajputs by being not only the presiding personnel of the latter rituals and the care-takers of his temples but also his spokesman who mediated between the Rajput Rajas and the subject peasants. The Fifth Land Settlement Act of 1842, however, later on upgraded their inferior birta tenure into zamindari rights.

45. Basti Gazetteer, ibid., p.117.
The middle group includes eight castes, such as, traders and businessmen like Bania, Halwais, Thathara and Sonar who subsist on the sale and purchase of rural commodities. These four castes make up about 7.16 per cent of the entire caste population of Basti. Other castes of this group are Bhumihara, Kayasthas, Jats and Khatri. All of them have been subjects of the Rajputs and have marginal position which is closer to the category of peasants rather than to Rajputs and Brahmins. They have traditionally been underdog relation with the Maliks of Basti.

The category of peasants represent the traditional Paria (subjects) of the Rais. It is internally divided into two vertical segments of caste and ex-untouchable subjects. While total economic subordination to and dependence upon the Maliks, on account of almost similar insecure economic position brought them into one category, the normative and culture elements of pervasive Hindu idioms of hierarchy, walled them out from each other socially. The divided subject peasantry consisted of caste Hindus of 38 castes and the 10 untouchable exterior castes. Besides the substantial contributions from the total Musalman population (18.7 per cent) to the category of peasants, caste peasants like Ahirs, Kumia, Parsi, Kanbres, Kalwars, Gaderias, Bari, Barhais, Murao, Kueris,
Nais, Kumahars, Tamolis, Barai, Mali, Dohis, Fauirs, Lohars, etc., belong to this group. Kanhars, Nais, and Dohis were closely attached to the families of Rajputs and Brahmands as their personal servants and attendants. The numerically dominant Ahirs and Kumis have a population of 11.8 per cent and 8.71 per cent to the entire Hindu population respectively. Consequently, they have traditionally been a politically potential castes. In addition to their numerical dominance, they have been key cultivating castes and, later during the period of Independence they have emerged as economically sound and socially conservative force with a strong leaning towards emulation of life style of the ex-Zamindars as far as the exploitation of exterior castes are concerned.

The lowest of the lower caste groups of Basti peasantry consists of 10 untouchable castes. Radhiks, Bahelias, Bavars, Barwars, Chamars, Koris, Doms, Dausadhs, Mochis, and Bhangis. Chamars are most numerous comprising as much above 17 per cent of the entire Hindu population. It is a telling fact that Chamars had only 29 acres of land in the entire district in 1901. They have been serfs,

46. Basti Gazetteer, p.76.
slaves and labourers of Rainuts and Brahmans and now continue as labourers of all the caste Hindus including Musalman peasants. The tabular presentation of the categories, castes and occupations of Basti Hindu population is summarised in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Caste/ Status</th>
<th>No. of castes</th>
<th>Occupational position</th>
<th>% of relation to the total Hindu population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Prince</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Raja and Zamindar</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Landlords</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mahants and Landlords</td>
<td>11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>a) Middle</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trade and business</td>
<td>7.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Lower</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Cultivators</td>
<td>57.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) Untouchables</td>
<td></td>
<td>Landless labourers</td>
<td>20.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d) Unaccounted</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nomads and unspecialised</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 64 100.00 (rounded)

47. Census of India, United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, op.cit., pp.520-525.
The Musalman section of the population is also internally divided into sects like Shias, Sunnis and Wahabis. Hindu caste system has made deep inroads in otherwise casteless society envisioned by Islam. While Sheikhs and Pathans entertain higher social status groups (castes) like Jullahas, Dhunias, Bhat and Agarias, etc. rank low in the Musalman hierarchy. With the exception of few families, Musalmans in majority belong to Hindu category of peasants. They have, however, relatively better status in Basti as compared to Chamars and Bhangis of the Hindu fold.

In our description of Basti district, I presented the relevant data with a specific purpose. Our aim has been to highlight the archival and field data to be presented in subsequent chapters. We deem it appropriate that before attempt is made towards the presentation of field data on rural elites identified earlier, a historical construction of land, power and peoples relations during the pre-colonial and colonial period (1801-1947) be presented first to portray the antecedent of data of Chapters on Elites of Basti district. Such a preference will help illuminating not only the general socio-political and economic background of people of Basti and their land and

48. Ibid., p.525.
power relations in general but also offer an explanatory background to pinpoint the bases of elite recruitments, its continuities and discontinuities as well. The following Chapter on Pre-Colonial and Colonial Structure of Land, Power and People is, therefore, based solely on archival and historical data.