CHAPTER SEVEN

PROFILE OF RANKHANDI VILLAGE IN WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH

Rankhandi, a village situated in Saharanpur district of Western Uttar Pradesh is that village which has been studied by many anthropologists and sociologists from India and abroad. It is perhaps the most studied village in India, yet its agrarian question has not been highlighted substantially. A brief mention about the account of studies on this particular village already done seems necessary at this stage and is dealt with in Section I. The village as observed by the present researcher is introduced in Section II. Then follows a brief outline of the question raised in the present work.

I

The nature and significance of Earlier Studies On the Village

1. S.C. Dube's work *India's Changing Villages* takes


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note of the village under description of a 'Rajput Village' and deals with the significance of cultural and human factors in community development continues to be studied till this date since it was first studied in the mid 50's. At least three decades have passed since John Hitchcock examined the question of dominant caste politics there. John Hitchcock has referred to the core and client families in the power-structure of the village. The core and its allies share a hookah in the village and normally expected to support each other whether they are doing right or wrong acts. These allies could be expected to support each other in any physical fight or go to the court of law as their witness if occasion demands it. At the time of the crisis these allies came for support with the help of some lower castes working at their places. John Hitchcock has never denied the working and styles of Rajputs as the dominant caste of the village. Poorer families depend upon them and have been referred to as retainers of the Rajput caste. The core could get the labour of these retainer castes during the harvest period when there is a crisis (of labour), but


3. Ibid. pp. 244-45.
the leadership could lose its effective strength if the person lost control within his extended kingroup. In khalapur there are more than thirty castes and each has its caste council which to some extent helps in pursuing their interests in the political affairs of the village.  

Leigh Minturn attempted to study the village and examine the question of child-rearing. She found that the mothers discourage their sons against any quarrel or fight, but as the child starts moving out of home and remains in the company of male members he learns to distinguish between friendly, neutral and enemy families. He learns aggression in order to defend himself. This sort of child-rearing and socialization is tried to be associated with the traditional notion of Rajputs as a warrior caste.  

Minturn and Lambert found that the Rajput girls generally

do not take care of the young child. John J. Gumperz observed friendship on intercaste basis among the castes of almost similar status. Minturn and Hitchcock pointed out that at the time of division of assets in the family, it is the working and dining that get separated first and the rest later. They also pointed out that at the time of crisis kinship networks are activated and either mother's - or wife's brother's place are used to take shelter. Within the village, kinship happens to be such a strong phenomenon that one could not get any power without it. Such kinship alliances when challenged by another in the village or even in the court of law over small pieces of land rather tend to be a minor issue in comparison to demonstration of power. The demonstration of power by the Rajputs on a caste which refused to remove the dead cattle, had been noted in


11. Ibid, pp. 239.


which Rajputs won at the end. They had all legal rights to remove the men of that particular caste not only from their houses but stopped them from collecting fodder from their fields. Rajputs' ownership and control over land and other means of production like a right to take away the house sites, fodder facility etc. from other villagers of lower castes have also been discussed. Minturn and Hitchcock have referred to an incident in which a Rajput who had beaten a sweeper had to apologies when sweepers stood as a force and threatened to stop their services which Rajputs could not afford to lose. Pauline Kolenda in her comparative study of families at six places found that when wife's natal family does not provide economic support the family remains joint and when wife's natal family provides some economic support the joint family finds it difficult to continue and generally the fellow breaks away from it. But generally according to her a husband does not wish to involve his wife's brother in any economic bonds.

15. Ibid, pp. 48.
16 Ibid, pp. 48-49
18 Ibid, pp. 52
B.R. Chauhan published an article on the elites of village Rankhandi. Here the noticeable difference is that for the first time with this publication the real name of the village has been referred. The village earlier referred to as Khalapur shall be known as Rankhandi hereafter. In Rankhandi B.R. Chauhan has attempted to identify the elites of the village mainly using reputational approach for that purpose. In this exercise it came out that there were 12 people who came under this category of elites. This study seems to support the earlier views of Minturn and Hitchcock that if a person loses control over his kindergroup then he may lose power also. Demonstration of power used to rest upon a strong kinship tie referred to as "strong allies" who would support them independent of the fact whether they were right or wrong. This point is also supported in the study on child rearing that when the male child starts moving out of the house and in the company of other elder males there he learns to distinguish between friendly, neutral or enemy families. It seems that the family and the immediate kinship play an


important role in the affairs of these elites of the village. It remains to be examined whether a family as an important unit of the village has anything to do with Shanin's characterization of family farm as an important unit of "peasant society". It is quite possible and also a matter of research whether this strong nature of family is a typical characteristic of peasantry and its underdevelopment or it is independent of it. Apart from this not only the strong family in itself but also their association with the immediate kinsmen as strong allies who help them to become a force of their own and acquire a place in the elite section of the village, needs be studied and examined in the empirical study. It could also be examined in the empirical study of the village what has been the source of this traditional elites. These elite families with larger kinship groups might not survive the test of recent changes brought up by new forces. This insight is based upon Pauline Kolenda's work where she had pointed out that if one's family got a regular economic support from one's wife's natal place, then one's family could lead toward the break in the joint family. The break away members might form a new nuclear family. The insight developed from this example is that affinal forces could be strong enough to break the joint family. Several other forces like education, urban connections, new economic institutions like
banks, new communication facilities like post office etc. might play their role. This village and the nearby villages had been connected with state level politics and just to mention one name, Thakur Phool Singh carried not only a good name but also respect and support in the village of Saharanpur district.

But the more important areas of change in the village could be the consequences of the zamindari abolition and land ceiling, education at urban centres, new technology, green revolution, media communication, connection with the urban world and sugar cane production as a cash crop. In short, these new and external forces could throw up a challenge to the traditional sort of the leadership. These new forces from outside could create more inequalities in the village in the areas of the consequences of higher education and jobs outside the village and that of green revolution. These elites of village could be expected to face a challenge to leadership as a consequence. The question of the elites of the village and a challenge to their leadership could be examined or at least taken up for the empirical inquiry. Similarly John Hitchcock's position

21. For a discussion on the political image and influence of Thakur Phool Singh in Saharanpur and U.P., please see S.C. Dube, op. cit. 1958, pp. 82-84.
that Rajputs worked as a dominant caste in the village also needs a reexamination.

In addition to the study of elites, B.R. Chauhan had published yet another work which seeks to clarify the issues around rural-urban articulations in this village. In his study he has taken up three villages namely Rankhandi, Akkhapur and Kotana. The other two villages were in the Meerut district forming part of the western U.P. He has tried to see and examine the question of dependence of these villages on urban areas. This seems to be an extension of his earlier notion that the villages in India had never been self-sufficient and depended for support from outside. But our purpose here has been to understand and analyse the new data on Rankhandi. B.R. Chauhan had found that the Rajputs still work as a dominant caste in


24. For a detailed description of this nation please see B.R.Chauhan. op.cit. 1967.

25. B.R.Chauhan. op.cit. 1990, pp.26
of the village. According to him the Pundir clan of Rajputs constitute a little less than half of the population of the village. Chamars population in the village is 12 percent followed by Brahmans being 7 percent. Assessing the current political situation he says, "Competition for power is usually within the (Pundir) clan of the Rajput". It could be interesting to note that in spite of so many challenges from outside the Rajput caste has remained a dominant one. According to 1971 census, 48 percent people have been referred to as workers and of this (taken equal to one hundred) 54.42 percent were cultivators and 19.03 were agricultural workers, thus peasant-proprietorship emerge as a strong phenomenon. Even otherwise the phenomenon of peasant proprietorship is wider spread in the Western part of Uttar Pradesh. The nature and type of this peasant-proprietorship shall form a major part of the next chapter based on field studies in the village Rankhandi.

Rankhandi village has continuously been studied since professor Opler made the initial beginning.

26. Ibid. pp.33 The population of Rankhandi has been referred to be 7,755 people in 1971.

27. Ibid, pp.33
Professor Opler through National Planning Commission came into contact with a deputy minister of U.P. who offered his own constituency and particularly the village Rankhandi for study purpose, Cornell University team in association with Lucknow University started their work in the mid-fifties. Cornell - Lucknow study team constructed a building on the outskirts of the village. This building was later donated to the intermediated college and is now used as a hostel. It is now known as Cornell Hostel (For boys).

B.R. Chauhan has also pointed out that since the village has connections with the urban centres, it is quite possible that one may not find his "field" there. He has pointed towards the methodological problems when a field worker comes across the facts like a section of his field having temporarily migrated to the urban areas. He says that some effort needs to be made in this direction to meet this sort of a methodological problem. The field seems to have become fluid and some effort needs to be taken there to

28. For details please see Ibid, pp.59-60
29. Ibid, pp.60.
30. Ibid, pp.97
cope with this fluidity of the situation. Some of the experiences of B.R. Chauhan in field situation are close to the ones that we have read in two edited volumes earlier one by Andre Beteille and T.N. Madan and the other by M.N. Srinivas and others.

In the present study an attempt has been made to understand the agrarian social structure in a historical perspective. Beginning with the agrarian social structure during the British rule and its significance in the context of the East versus West question, through the period of independence, till date have been examined. In the process an effort was made to identify the agrarian question with the help of other disciplines like history and economics. It was found during the process of writing that enough emphasis has not been given to the studies conducted by anthropologists and sociologists. Moreover there had been no attempt to conceptualize the whole thing. In this exercise an attempt had been made to put the entire agrarian


question in Uttar Pradesh in a proper perspective. An analysis of studies suggested that it was that the peasant - proprietorship which made a difference between the Western and Eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh.

II

The Village and its Institutions

Rankhandi is the largest village in the Deoband block of Saharanpur district. The village is divided into seven parts, namely, Khala Patti, Badhai Patti, Mundia Patti, Gulal Patti, Chhajju Patti, Pachhaya Patti and Kheri Patti. The village is at a distance of seven kms. from Deoband, a well known town which has a religious training centre for the Muslims. Young Muslim scholars get admission and training at Darul Uloom which is known to the outsiders as Deoband School. Rankhandi is connected by road with neighboring town of Deoband, with district headquarters of Saharanpur and Muzaffar Nagar. Earlier the mode of transport between village Rankhandi and Deoband was horse driven carts but now at least four tempos also operate. The buses connecting the village with district head - quarters are operated by private bus owners. Deoband is the nearest railway station connecting it with Saharanpur and
Ambala towards the North-West and Muzaffar Nagar, Meerut and New Delhi to the South.

The village Rankhandi is divided into seven parts or pattis. Johon Hickcock and Leigh Mintern remained concerned with Khala patti only. These scholars of the controversial Cornell - Lucknow (University) Project used to live outside the village in one building now known as Cornell Hostel. After completion of work, the building has been handed over to one Intermediate collage and now it is used as a small hostel for the boys. The hostel is situated just in front of the building Thakur Phool Singh Memorial Intermediate College. Thakur Phool Singh was an outsider to this village but got settled in Rankhandi. He fought the election of M.L.A. and was appointed minister later. While he was a minister in Uttar Pradesh government, he came to know about the Cornell - Lucknow (University) Project and invited the scholars to study the village Rankhandi. Though, the village Rankhandi came to the anthropological literature via the Cornell - Lucknow (University) Project and studied later by other scholars like Michel H. Mahar, Pauline Kolenda and B.R. Chauhan but they have all tried to remain unassociated with the scholars of the controversial project.

Although Rankhandi happens to be the village studied and visited by a good number of the anthropologist
sociologist combine, people of this village have heard the terms "anthropology" and "sociology", they do not hesitate much before answering, but a mention should also be made of why the controversial project had to be abandoned after its completion. The decision that the foreign anthropologists associated with the Cornell - Lucknow (University) Project shall not be allowed to do field work again was taken by Kripal Singh, the then principal of the Intermediate College. He had also instructed the villagers, not to allow these foreign anthropologists associated with the controversial project to have any access inside the village to live there on. Anthropological studies received a set back for some time as a result of this incident, but the beginning had been made. The villagers were happy with the decision taken by the then principal Kripal Singh. The entire episode went like the following.

The village has large population of Rajputs. These Rajputs are drawn from one sub-caste known as Pundir. More than half of the population of over ten thousand dwellers are that of Pundir Rajputs. After a thorough probe some old age villagers told the present researcher about this significant event. Possibly either in the middle or at the end of their field work - these foreign anthropologists tried to collect a peculiar type of data. They had started asking people - first the lower caste persons and then with
some poor Rajput families, about how did they quarrel with each other in the family. How does a husband quarrel with his wife in this village? And then how does the wife respond. They were asked to tell all this in their own local language. All this was tape-recorded. After this, it was disclosed to me that they had asked a Rajput man about how did he have sexual relations with his wife. According to one information the scene was photographed. People asked me to respond to their questions, "What sort of anthropology (or Sociology) is it?" I replied that this is neither anthropology nor sociology. But through their narration of this particular incident, I have observed that villagers became serious as well as sad. The Rajput man who became ready for it, is looked down upon by the villagers till now. But it seems that every villager does not know about this incident and it is possible that the decision had been taken at a top level of Rajputs and others know that the foreign anthropologists had left after the completion of their work. But since the beginning was made the village continued to receive a large number of scholars both Indian and foreign as researchers and visitors to the village.

The village is divided into seven parts of Pattis. Each patti is connected by the other by brick made road.
locally known as Kharanja, except some part especially the Khedi Patti which is quite distant from rest of the Pattis. There are more than one hundred shop in the village, including a medical store and one crop fertilizer shop. The village has been electrified. People have their own tractors, thrashers and tube wells. Even otherwise the village has the facilities of Canal irrigation. Sugar cane is the major cash crop of the village but there are some other crops grown in the village like wheat and rice. Sugar cane are sold to the cooperative mill and the amount is paid in cash. This aspect of the village - i.e. having outside relations have been studied by B.R. Chauhan in a Unesco sponsored project. Even otherwise it could be safely said that the village has come to outside contact through a post office, a bank (Bank of India) and a Public Health Centre (PHC). The dominant trend among the Rajputs regarding marriage is that they accept brides from the South -East i.e. Meerut and Bulandshahar and marry their daughters towards the North - West i.e. Karnal district of Haryana. Girls who could not get education - some of them at least go outside their home to spin charkha from where they earn about rupees ten per day. In the absence of a separate girls

34. B.R. Chauhan 1990., op.cit.

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school a large number of girls even from Rajput families could not pursue their education in the village to elect the village chief or Pradhan and in all these elections, barring one the Pundir Rajputs have won. Politically the Rajputs of the village are inclined towards the Congress (I) - following the legacy of Thakur Phool Singh, but on the other hand there was a deep respect and regard for Vishwanath Pratap Singh, ex-Prime Minister of India. A section of the Harijans were swayed away by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). But Rajputs of this village had obstructed their way on the polling day, demanding that the then existing Congress (I) government has done a lot to improve the living standard of the Harijans, so they must vote for it. The notion and fear of Rajputs and their unity prevails in the village. Other castes are afraid of Rajputs and a local ice-cream seller told me that he was very much fearful of Rajputs and did not go towards "their" side for ice-cream selling. One Brahman family which has been studied in detail also revealed that they are fearful of Rajputs. There has been a dispute over land issue between one Brahmin family and other Rajputs. This case has been taken note of in the following discussion. But this single case points out clearly that social tensions in the village are built around "public" v. "private" occupation of land.
In Rankhandi people are the follower of two religions the Hindu and the Islam. Muslims are in a minority in the village - in fact there are very few houses of Muslims in the village. Apart from it there are 32 castes in the village, of which 7 are found among the Muslims. The castes that are found among the Hindus and the Muslims have been listed below. In the list, if any caste is following Islam then Muslim has been written along with it.

A list of Castes in the village:

1. Rajput
2. Gosain
3. Brahim
4. Badhai
5. Gadaria
6. Nai
7. Mir Saheb/Doom (Muslim)
8. Chamar
9. Bania
10. Sunar
11. Jheenwar (Kahar)
12. Leelgar (Muslim)
13. Kori
14. Pujageer (Muslim)
15. Julaha/Kabirpanthi
16. Kumhar
17. Mirasi/Doom
18. Bhangi
19. Saini
20. Mali
21. Bhadbhuja
22. Dhobi
23. Rangad (Muslim)
24. Jatia/Mochi
25. Chamar/Julaha
26. Darzi (Muslim)
27. Lohar
28. Manihar (Muslim)
29. Teli (Muslim)
30. Jogi/Upadhyaya
31. Bhat/Rai

This study does not inquire into various complexities related to caste and that is why only a mention

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has been made. This list does not follow any system of hierarchy as such. It has been clarified at the very beginning that the aim of this study is to examine the question of agrarian relations and methodologically it was decided to treat caste question as a closed one (or a controlled group) so that the requisite attention could be paid to agrarian relations and class analysis of peasantry. The argument that has been advanced is that we have had enough studies on castes in India. The perspective on class is yet to be developed and unless it is developed, it would not be proper to have a meaningful debate along caste and class lines. Before proceeding to discuss agrarian relations, it would be worth mentioning of the working of one powerful institution of the village concerning the housing pattern to understand the village-ethos and its further implications.

The Ghar, The Gher and the Chaupal: Institutions of the Village:

The set of three institutions, depicts the pattern of housing in the village as they are found among the Rajputs of village Rankhandi, but their significance is much wider. These institutions are found among other peasant castes also (e.g. among the Jats) and their existence ranges at last upto Bulandshahar in the South-East and upto Karnal.
in the North-West of the village. An attempt has been made with the study of one village to identify some wider forces that are at work in the region (Western Uttar Pradesh and the adjacent part of Haryana). Earlier Andre Beteille had also attempted to identify the nature of the wider forces, with the study of a single village Sripuram.

Unlike urban notion and understanding the concept of Ghar is quite different in Rankhandi. Here Ghar refers to a place where women and children (generally up to the age of twelve years in the case of boys) live. Domesticated animals like cows, buffaloes and cattle are also kept here i.e. near but outside the Ghar. The male members of the household generally stay at Gher. Gher is the main and central place of all the activities. While discussing about Gher one point is necessary to be noted. The notion of Gher presupposes the existence of joint families. The boy gets socialized at two places one at Ghar and two at Gher. All adult male members of the joint family necessarily stay at Gher throughout the day and also during the night. In the morning these adult male members go to work in their fields. They take food at Gher. However, one change has been noted and i.e. that the

younger male members have now started visiting their Ghar once in the morning and then once in the evening to take food. This is their maximum period of stay at Ghar. However, male members of older generation do not like to visit Ghar and the food is brought for them at Gher only. Some girls of the family also help in bringing food for the older people and taking the utensils. The girls above the age of eight to nine years get their head covered with a Chunni, a thin piece of cloth. This is a mark of respect for the elders. Even otherwise not only among the Rajputs but in other castes also no girl goes out of Ghar without having her head covered with the cloth known as Chunni.

Gher is the central place of all the activities. Men go to meet each other at Gher and not at Ghar. All male members including guests stay at Ghar. Some relatives of younger age are allowed to visit Ghar only to take food. Their delay at Ghar is not tolerated and they are called back through some messenger who happens to be a boy of the family. At Ghar people keep their animals like bullock and he-buffalow and tractor and other agricultural implements if they have. In this village, since the blooming of cash crop sugar cane, there has been a lot of construction of Ghars or modification. But as it has been stated earlier that the concept or notion of Gher presupposes the existence and
support of a joint family. As the boys grow up and the property is divided among them, it means division of property at three places - at the Ghar, at the Gher (at these places rooms or portions of Ghar are divided with some understanding among the brothers) and their agricultural fields. This sort of a division might look a complex phenomenon, but elders help in making this process smooth, and this division compels the brothers and their own wives and children to live adjacent to each other.

As the property of the joint family is likely to be divided among the boys of the same family and the possibility of its further sub-division among the next generation might lead towards non-construction of Gher. When a young man knows that ultimately the Gher shall have to be divided, he might plead for not constructing any new part or addition to the existing structure of Gher. This suggests that it is quite possible in future that the concept of Gher may cease to exist. One more change in the Gher - Ghar arrangement has been noted. Now younger generation wants and prefers to live at Ghar. About one generation ago to live at home was considered to be against the prevailing values and any such attempt was discouraged. The sex was permitted to the married couples only for a limited time and any discussion around matters of sex was considered very bad. In this set up the matter related to sex needs a brief
The young man sleeps at Gher during the night and his wife remains at Ghar. When all sleep at Gher this man comes out of Gher, very calmly and quietly so that no one could see him going out and moves towards Ghar and meets his wife. He returns to Gher and sleeps again on the same cot which he had left. He must return to the Gher in the morning before the waking up of other members of the family. There is one more understanding i.e. common in almost every family. If any of the brother is inside the Ghar, the other man shall not go inside and instead return back to Gher immediately. Its mechanism is very simple. Whenever a man enters his Ghar at night he puts the pair of his shoes outside the main entrance gate. If so, any other brother shall not enter in the Ghar. This mechanism was developed perhaps to avoid the possible meeting of two brothers inside the house - particularly when one is going inside and the other is coming out. Here any matter pertaining to sex is considered very bad in terms of values. Members of older generation still argue in favour of the Ghar - Gher separation and count the benefits of this institution. They also give credit of this to the people of earlier generations who had designed it. However the benefits of this Ghar - Gher separation by the people of older
generation are worth mentioning. The first argument is that since sex happens to carry very bad value, it should not even be noticed by the unmarried sisters of the person. The second argument is that since childhood socialization of boys who generally remain outside Ghar, play together in the field this keeps them healthy, The third argument is that this separation helps in planning the family. It has been observed, however that now these values are changing and the young married boys have started staying at home for more time during the day and even in the night.

These facts suggests a strong domination of the value of patriarchal family including its own hierarchy. The emergence of a personality that can challenge these values has always been prevented. Particularly joint family its hierarchy and values associated with it, dominated the life of every member of the family. One more illustration shall substantiate this point. According to another value of this patriarchical joint family it was considered bad for a father to fondle his son. His elder or younger brother or any other member of the family took care of his son. Similarly he took care of someone else's son in the family. According to the older generation, it is still considered to be a bad value to fondle one's own son. But it has been observed that there has been a change in this value too and now fathers have started caring for their own sons. In
general it has been observed that the institutional separation between Ghar and Gher is diminishing and specifically Gher has already started losing its identity.

The institution of Chaupal is on the decline in the village. The Chaupal used to be a place where all male members of the patriarchical joint family used to live, sleep and interact. In fact in this village all the Pundir Rajputs are blood relatives of each other and the visiting caste from Rajasthan, locally known as Jaga Bhat have kept all their records. However, there are above seven thousand Pundir Rajputs in the village but they are said to be the heirs of one man known as Baba Kalu. At one Chaupal I was told that Baba Kalu had migrated to this village from Andhra Pradesh, but this still needs verification. The phenomenon of staying together for the people of three generations was not uncommon in the village about 20 to 30 years ago. I have seen a big Chaupal in the village where I was told by an old man that there used to be seventy to eighty person sleeping in that Chaupal during night. Now I could find only three old people staying there. The Chaupal has a pakka physical structure - but there are not sufficient people to fill in. The structure exists but nobody takes care of it now. It is quite possible that the Chaupals provided space to a large people mainly kinsmen of the same lineage and was
the centre of all the activities. For the construction as well as maintenance of the Chaupal and also for its working as an institution, the efforts of many people was required. This was a much larger institution than the Gher. In Chaupal the values of large extended partiarchical family dominated over its members. But this very large size became unmanageable in due course of time. Along with it the continuous increase in the members of the family and the associated division of the property left this institution to weaken day after day. In a sense it could be said that previously the Chaupal were the dominant institutions of the village and from there people have shifted towards the institution of Gher and it is quite possible that this institution may also not survive due to its own weaknesses, due to the rise in population and division of property among the family members. People have already left Chaupals and now they might not keep interest in Gher also due to the fear of division of property. Increase in education of the family members and services outside the village have provided them ample opportunities hitherto unseen, and an alternative set of value structure in which nuclear family and individualistic way of life are the main components.

However, the relationship between three modes of living pattern - the Ghar, the Gher and the Chaupal, as they have been observed in the village Rankhandi, are found
in other areas of the region i.e. the adjacent areas of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. These institutions follow a historical pattern, in which with the strength and then the decline of the Chaupal then that of Gher, need explanation. It has been inferred from this discussion that historically this village has witnessed a strong control of extended patriarchal family, then that of the joint family over individual life. These values have a tendency to wither away in favour of a new set of values having the freedom of nuclear family and individualism.

The rise and decline of Gher needs closer examination, I have been told at one Gher by a visitor of Haryana state that Ghers are stronger in Rankhandi in comparison to Gher in his region. Haryana has not seen a boom in cash crop like sugar cane of Western Uttar Pradesh. It is quite possible that when people wanted to do away with Chaupals and their huge unmanageable size, they opted for some smaller unit like Gher and invested the money earned as a result of boom in the cash crop of sugar cane. However, the cohesiveness of the family needs an examination in a historical perspective. This could be done with study of a meaningful sample drawn from the villages of Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh and then the historical - comparative study of these institutions. But very important at the
moment is to study and record the data on the Ghar, the Gher and the Chaupal before the last two cease to exist. This shall be the priority area of work before me, after completion of the present one.

In this part an effort has been made to put forward some aspects of the empirical situation concerning this particular study. But before proceeding any further it would be a worth mentioning point once again, as it has been done earlier also, that every effort has been made to not to touch the matter related to caste. Methodologically, it seems necessary to avoid the caste - trap in which any study on the Indian society might get caught in. On the other hand if we talk about caste everytime than it limits our analysis that could look beyond the caste.

III

Towards A Study of Agrarian Question

It is clear that the existing studies on a single village carried over a period of three decades were mainly related to the understanding of family socialization, child care, modes of address and cultural factors affecting rural life. The main concern of the present study namely agrarian relations has somehow escaped attention of the earlier
scholars. The nature of questions that such a study would direct to the respondents would vary in content and style. The questions are briefly here and their answer are attempted in the next chapter. Following are the questions.

Q. 1. What is the agrarian social structure of this Village?

Q. 2. Is there any similarity between this agrarian social structure and the primordial one?

Q. 3. What have been the major or minor changes in the agrarian social structure of this village?

Q. 4. Has cropping pattern to do anything with the agrarian social structure?

Q. 5. How the new technology affected the agrarian social structure?

Q. 6. If the agrarian populace could not be classified into the categories of the framework, then what alternative explanation could be given?

Q. 7. What could be the organic composition of peasant -proprietorship?

Q. 8. What are the major areas of social tensions based upon agrarian questions?
Q. 9. Has ceilings on land affected the purchase of land by big landlords?

Q. 10. How cash crop has changed or affected the agrarian social structure?

All these questions along with relevant facts will be examined in the next chapter.