INTRODUCTION

India is the land of villages and is likely to remain so. Nearly 72 per cent of the country's population, live in villages. So is the case of Maharashtra State. According to 1961 census 71.8 per cent (28,391,000) of the State's population live in 35,851 villages. Of this rural population 63.97 per cent are wholly dependent on agriculture. The distribution of population by livelihood pattern is as follows:

<table>
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<th>Per cent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Cultivators of land wholly or mainly unowned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Cultivating labourers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Non-cultivating owners of land and agricultural rent receivers.</td>
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<td><strong>63.97</strong></td>
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</table>

Thus the rural population have a great attachment towards the land and its cultivation i.e. agriculture, which formed their way of life. Agriculture is so integrated with rural life that it is difficult to separate one from another. Kroeber puts it, "Peasants are definitely rural yet live in relation to market towns; they form a class segment of a

larger population. They constitute part-societies with part-cultures.\textsuperscript{1}

Urban population has grown rapidly during the first half of this century; the most recent decade has shown the greatest growth. In spite of this India (so also Maharashtra) is still a rural country and distinction between urban and rural is sharp and clear.\textsuperscript{2}

For a very long period the village social system continued to remain integrated, because external factors could not enter deep into it. The result has been that for centuries the rural social organization, power structure and leadership, retained their traditional hierarchical character, with higher castes and landlords maintaining the power equilibrium.\textsuperscript{2} But since the National Movement against the British rule lead by Mahatma Gandhi and its culmination in independent India on August 15, 1947 the village life is facing with a new forces and factors of change. This social change is partly directed by the Democratic Government with the launching of Five Year Plans and Community Development Programme which are aimed at transforming the social, economic and political life of the village. On account of this, great emphasis has been laid on rural studies.

\textsuperscript{1} As quoted by R. Redfield in "Peasant Society and culture" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956) p.29-30.

\textsuperscript{2} R.I. Crane "Urbanism in India" American Journal of Sociology 60 (1935) 463-470.

\textsuperscript{3} R.N. Saksena "Sociology, Social Research and Social Problems in India" p.13.
Some Methodological Problems:

Many Anthropologists and sociologists devoted their energy to the study of man in the rural setting. Physical anthropologists study man as a biological type, describing his development through the centuries and classifying him into racial divisions. Cultural anthropologists concern themselves with tools and techniques, language, beliefs and values, social institutions, and every other man-made characteristic. Sociologists investigate especially the associative and dissociative life of man—how he joins up with and splits off from other human beings.

One of the major trends in cultural anthropology during the last twenty years has been a shift from the study of isolated tribal peoples to the study of peasantry in the economically under-developed countries. These anthropologists have restricted themselves to the study of a small community—a village. Several such studies in India are now available. The illuminating Indian village studies have been


done by Srinivas\(^1\), Dube\(^2\), Majumdar\(^3\), Mayer\(^4\), Lewis\(^5\), Wiser\(^6\) and others. The collection of some of these studies have been published in the form of books entitled (1) "Village India" by McKim Marriott\(^7\), (2) "India's Villages" by M.N. Srinivas\(^8\) and (3) "Rural Profiles" by D.N.Majumdar\(^9\). There is, however, a conspicuous absence of a village study from Maharashtra in these edited volumes. This may be because almost all the village studies in Maharashtra have been done by the Economists as Economic Surveys, except one by Ghurye\(^10\) and another by Karve and Damle\(^11\).

Some of these anthropologists have made generalizations for the vast region from their study of a single village. This village may not be the representative of that region. The criteria of selection of the village being one's convenience. For instance, Oscar Lewis has selected a village Ranikhera near Delhi, the capital of India and a cosmopolitan city, and reported his conclusions in his book "Village Life in Northern India". India is divided in Northern and Southern India by Narmada river. Thus Northern India comprises of several states viz. Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Assam including the tiny Delhi State. There is much variation in the economic, social and political life of village people from one State to another. Moreover, Ranikhera village, being much closer to Delhi, is under urban influence which is evidenced from the fact that in this village only 53 per cent of its 150 families engaged directly in agriculture, whereas the percentage of agriculturists in India is 80.2 per cent of the rural population (1951 census). The variation in Ranikhera and the rest of the country is thus 26.8 per cent. Similarly Mayer has selected a village in Madhya Pradesh and made generalizations for Central India, which is, in fact, mostly inhabited by the tribal

people. Chauhan has pointed out more anomalies in other village studies. Relying on the rigidly scientific study of a single village of Kishangarhi in Western Uttar Pradesh, McKim Marriott makes certain generalizations about "these little communities of northern India", which have not been studied at all levels. Alan Beals, having concentrated his studies on a Mysore village, tells us about Namhalli and other villages in the vicinity of Bangalore and goes to the amazing extent of saying that these villages "have changed far more rapidly and far more significantly than have other villages in India". Saksena opined that these studies reflect the microcosmic approach and try to generalize from one village the nature of social structure of the rest of rural India. How far these generalizations may be said to be a scientific analysis of the Indian rural community is open to grave doubts. Dube considers it difficult to regard any one village as typical or representative of rural India as a whole and goes a step further to say that such a village

3. Alan Beals "Interplay among factors of Change in Mysore village" in Marriott op.cit. p.100.
could hardly be regarded as representative even of its culture-area, except in a very general way. Similarly Srinivas says, "no anthropologist would dare to speak of Indian Villages as a whole until a sufficient number of villages in the different cultural areas had been studied". Dumont and Pocock also felt the inadequacy of the village as a unit of study.

Chauhan has emphasized that "there is a need to look into the macrocosmic data (if available) before one would like to generalize the findings about a single village for a larger area even for an academic purpose". Quoting his own case he further says that "so long as studies were concentrated in a single village different forms of even one institution could not be identified properly. As the study was extended to a few more villages, the varieties began to appear clearly. Proper classification and analysis became feasible. In the absence of such an approach, the varieties of the single institution could not have been located or classified, let alone analysed".

The same difficulty was faced by the author of this thesis when he tried to fit Loomis PAS model in a single

1. S.C. Dube, op. cit.
2. M.N. Srinivas, "Village studies and Their Significance" in his "Caste in Modern India and Other Essays" (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962) p. 120-121.
3. L. Dumont and D. Pocock "Contributions to Indian Sociology".
4. B.R. Chauhan, op. cit.
village, Kamthadi in Poona district. Because today no village is completely autonomous and independent for it is always one unit in a wider social system. An individual villager is not only the member of a village community, but also a member of a caste, a political group, a cooperative society and so on, which cover a wider area, beyond his native village. Therefore, although the setting of social system is restricted to a village in this study, this study is not restricted to a single village, but to as many villages for which empirical data were available. The author has used the primary data of seven villages, viz. Kamthadi and Natambi (Poona district), Bhilgaon and Ambadi (Nagpur district), Navari (Dhulia district), Koka (Parbhani district) and Dongargaon (Akola district), collected through Professors of Agricultural Extension and Agricultural Economics and the secondary data published in journals and books. The author has made use of the data from Rural Credit Survey conducted by the Reserve Bank of India, several village surveys conducted by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona and Deccan College Post-graduate and Research Institute, Poona. However, this study is confined to a distinct cultural region called Maharashtra State. Steward defined region "as a locally distinctive way of life or sub-culture which acquires its characteristics not only from the cultural historical tradition and from particular adaptations to the local environment but also from its relationship to the larger society or sociocultural system. This does not mean,
however, that a region is a territory of cultural uniformity, a cultural subarea in which all persons share the same behavior patterns \(^1\).

The studies of a single village here and there covering some aspects of rural society are available; but there is no comprehensive study of the rural society specifically in Maharashtra and generally in India. Opler says, "There are a good many reasons why more total studies of Indian villages have not been written to-date, but one obvious reason (is that) the study of Indian village life yields material extensively complex and difficult to deal with in his manner.  

...... Indian village material is intricate and the task of ordering it is difficult". Pons also expressed the same opinion. He says, "Our understanding of rural society is inadequate not because we have no knowledge of it, but because our knowledge is unsystematic and uncoordinated and because so few attempts have been made to bring any sociological insight to bear on the explanation of facts which are in themselves common place".  

This problem of social scientists has been solved by Loomis, who developed the conceptualized social system as a

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3. V.G.Pons.
basic research model. The model provides the investigator with a frame of reference for the analysis of the empirical data, at the same time that it provides a procedure for comparative studies. The rationale for Loomis' model is that in a given society certain persistent elements and processes appear at all levels of orderly interaction. Bertrand observed that Loomis' scheme provides a convenient and readily adaptable model. Several social scientists including Beal have found it a valuable tool for analyzing social systems from both the research and action points of view. Loomis and many of his associates have used this conceptualization in their studies of social systems, social change and social action. It has been also found valuable in the present study.

Loomis defines a social system as "a plurality of individual actors, whose relations to each other are mutually oriented through the definition and mediation of a pattern of structured and shared symbols and expectations." He further states that "the concept of the social system enables the analytic observer to move from a given sub-system to the larger societal system and back again." Loomis conceives society as constituted of a "reciprocal number of systems,

4. Ibid p.4
some of them quite distinct, highly structured and persistent; others are not so directly visible are more amorphous, and more transient. All are interlinked in such a manner that one sees different systems according to the perspective taken. Whatever system one is viewing, whether it be the "master system" - society or any of its component sub-systems (community, family etc.) the elements that constitute it as a social system and the processes that articulate it remain the same.^l.

Loomis' Social System Model

Every social system, according to Loomis, contains a number of elements, elemental processes, master processes and conditions of social action which make up the structure of the system and which may be employed as units of analysis in explaining interaction.

Loomis says, "An element is simply one of the constituent parts of some larger whole .... (It) is the unit of analysis employed in explaining interaction from the point of view of a given discipline^2. Elements are (1) belief (knowledge); (2) sentiment; (3) end, goal or objective; (4) norm; (5) status-role (position); (6) rank; (7) power; (8) sanction; and (9) facility. Each of these elements is articulated as Loomis sees it by a number of processes. " The

1. Ibid p.5
2. Ibid p.5
processes mesh, stabilize, and alter the relations between the elements through time; they are the tools through which the social system may be understood as a dynamic functioning continuity, a going concern 1.

The processes are divided into specialised elemental processes which articulate individual elements solely and into master processes which articulate two or more of the individual elements in a given system. Loomis also lists a structural-functional category to go along with his elements and their processes. He considers these categories as "handy names by which any structural element and its particular functional process may be designated as closely connected bundle of phenomena" 2.

The elemental processes along with the elements that are respectively articulated by members of actors of a system are:

1) cognitive mapping and validation by which the element, belief (knowledge) is articulated,
2) tension management and communication of sentiment by which the element, sentiment is articulated,
3) goal attaining and concomitant "latent" activity as process by which the element, end, goal or objective is articulated,

1. *Ibid* p.6
2. *Ibid* p.7
4) evaluation by which the element norm, is articulated,
5) status-role performance by which the element, status-role (position), is articulated,
6) evaluation of actors and allocation of status-roles by which the element, rank is articulated.
7) decision making and its initiation into action by which the element, power, is articulated,
8) application of sanctions by which the element, sanction, is articulated,
9) utilization of facilities by which the element, facility is articulated.

Loomis sets forth six comprehensive or master processes by which activates and many or all of the elements are activated by members or actors of systems. These are:
(1) communication, (2) boundary maintenance, (3) systemic linkage, (4) social control, (5) socialization, and (6) institutionalization.

Loomis sets out the conditions for social action as:
(1) territoriality, (2) size and (3) time.
Figure 1

Elements, Processes and Conditions of Action of Social Systems

The Processually Articulated Structural Model (PASM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes (Elemental)</th>
<th>Structural functional categories</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cognitive mapping and validation.</td>
<td>Knowing.</td>
<td>Knowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (a) Tension management and (b) Communication of sentiment.</td>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>Sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (a) Goal attaining activity and (b) Concomitant &quot;latent&quot; activity as process.</td>
<td>Achieving.</td>
<td>End, goal, or objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Status-role performance.</td>
<td>Dividing the Status-role functions. (position)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (a) Evaluation of actors (b) Allocation of status-roles.</td>
<td>Ranking.</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (a) Decision making and (b) Initiation of action.</td>
<td>Controlling Power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Application of sanctions.</td>
<td>Sanctioning Sanction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Utilization of facilities.</td>
<td>Facilitating Facility</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comprehensive or Master Processes


Conditions of Social Action

1. Territoriality. 2. Size. 3. Time.