CHAPTER VII

MICRO-CONTENT: THE GADULIYA LOHARS OF DELHI

- Some Methodological Notes
- Describing the community: Insider's Image
  - Introduction
  - Community and its boundaries
  - Population
  - Bands and Geographic Distribution
  - Family and Kinship ties
  - Mode of Production and Craft
    - Technology
    - Raw Materials
  - Stratification, hierarchy and dependency relations
  - Socialisation and Education
    - Economic value of children
  - Health and Environmental Hygiene
  - Perception, Access to and participation in Suprasystem's Developmental Institutions
    - Symbols of urban consumerism and traditional values.
- Gaduliya Lohars' Links with their suprasystem
- Describing the Community: Outsider's Image
- Micro-level Extra-cognitive structures.
  - Caste Panchayat
  - Relation between sexes within the family
  - Interband and Intra-band Relations
- Extra-band Exchanges.
CHAPTER VII

MICRO-CONTENT: THE GADULiya LOHARS OF DELHI

In this chapter, we endeavour to describe the empirical content of the micro-focus of our research, viz., the Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi.

SOME METHODOLOGICAL NOTES:

Like any social anthropological research work on a small-scale community, this description is based on researcher's intersubjective learning experiences in this community by employing conventional anthropological techniques, viz. quasi-participant observation and various types of interviews. A constant conscious effort, on part of the researcher, to acquire maximum empathy with the cultural actors (Gaduliya Lohars) of the research focus has been made to understand the socio-cultural matrix from an onic perspective.

However, researcher's participation in another eco-cultural matrix within the spatial locale of Gaduliya Lohars, i.e., Urban metropolitan Delhi, as also the fact that this macro-spatial context also aided in constant speedy intersubjective interpretations and analytic translation of such data by the researcher into academic social science idioms (facilitated by researcher's access
to social science libraries and other intellectual resources in Delhi), acted as a check against researcher's reifying the micro-cognitive-relational contents of such socio-cultural matrix. This duality in researcher's eco-socio-cultural participation, as also that of his cultural actors in another way, made the researcher move beyond conventional anthropological micro-phenomenological modalities into exploring the structural-institutional parameters of Gaduliya Lohar's (as also researcher's own) macro-context, explore the systemic linkages (mainly extra-cognitive from Gaduliya Lohar's point of view) between microcosm of Gaduliya Lohar's social reality and the macro-context of their urban mode of living.

Such dynamic interactions in the intersubjective learning experiences made the researcher modify his mode of analytical cognition to adapt to the reality of the primary research environment (GLA) of his experiential world over nearly four years. The codified version of such modifications in researcher's own cognitive domain of his subculture (of anthropology) has been presented in Chapter III of this report.

The high degree of cognitive-relational similarity of Delhi's semi-nomadic Gaduliya Lohar's with their counterparts leading a nomadic life in Rajasthan (as understood by comparison of researcher's comprehension of Delhi's GLAs with those provided in other anthropological
reports, vis. Misra (1977) and Ruhela (1969)) was quite surprising as it was not fitting into one's analytical idiom. Such similarity has also been confirmed during 3-4 weeks of researcher's stay with a nomadic Gaduliya Lohar band camping near Chandigarh (during Jan.1989) and which operates in Southern Punjab-Northern Haryana region.

The dual perspective of looking at the micro-empirical focus, vis. from inside and that from the perspective of the macro-context, has started revealing inconsistencies and contradictions between the two images of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars. Such emergent inconsistencies which are likely to be sharply focussed in subsequent work may necessitate further modifications of researcher's mode of analytically cognising the world and if such modifications are shared by his fellow professionals, it may result in modest changes in his cultural information systems (anthropology in particular and social sciences in general).

In spite of our attempts to make a distinction between the insider's emic and supra systems macro-contextual image of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars, there is a possibility that owing to researcher's dual cognitive-cultural identity and participation in micro as well as macro-contexts, such descriptions in one perspective might have also included translations/impressions from other domains. After all no person can be a pure schizophrenic, even if he is
The Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi are a semi-nomadic sedentarising artisan group specialising in the craft of blacksmithery. This community claims Rajput caste-stratum in Hindu caste hierarchy and explains its nomadic mode of life in terms of historical conditions during Moghal rule in northern India. They believe that they had to flee Chittorgarh region in Rajasthan, their mythological abode of the past, when their Rajput king suffered defeat in the hands of Moghal invaders during the historical past. Like all functional mythologies, their beliefs about their past also seem to have been influenced by injection of external information and new learning experiences (for some details see Chapter I - Section on their history and mythology).

The cognitive maps of Gaduliya Lohars which are used as frameworks for interpreting their concrete situation, wandering and restive life (during nomadism) and miseries/uncertainties associated with day-to-day living contains as a major component various supernatural entities, like Ali Lacha, Khatmal etc, which are predominantly malevolent and which still inspire awe among the Gaduliya Lohars.
WORKING ALONE

ENJOYING A SMOKE

WORKING ALONE
FIGURE 14  GADI ILIYA LOHAR MOODS

1. DISPLAYING TATTOO MARKS
2. MATERNAL AFFECTION
3. WITH GRANDPA
4. LOHAR WITH A SYMBOL OF INDUSTRIAL CONSUMERISM
5. PLAY THE SLUM WAY
The by and large coherent worldview composed of indigenous supernatural entities, supernatural forces associated with the region of their movement as also its secular components has continued to act as an effective guide for interpreting the world and their past. The cognised importance of appeasing the malevolent spirits and deities in the vital rites de passage rituals of an individual's life cycle, like birth, marriage and death and their interpretations of any mishaps and natural calamities in their failure to properly fulfil their obligations to the supernatural entities seems to have provided this community with an effective cognitive-cultural mechanism for maintenance of its self-regulating social organisation and perpetuation of cultural information systems, inspite of relatively less intense communications between various families, and bands due to their nomadic life.

Their domain of knowledge pertaining to existence of other Guduliya Lohar bends was restricted mainly to the neighbourhood regions of their movements and with which they had to have some degree of direct socio-cultural contact due to the principles of band exogamy.

Inspite of relatively less intense interpersonal communications between various member families and bands, culturally defined movement of females (after marriage)
to other bands might have acted as strong communication channels for sharing of cultural information by various bands resulting in the uniformity of cultural information systems among various bands of Gaduliya Lohars operating in a widespread geographical space confronting the anthropologists today (for some data on their spread in various parts of India, see Chapter I).

COMMUNITY AND ITS BOUNDARIES:

As indicated in Chapter I (Section on Gaduliya Lohars in Urban industrial settings), some Gaduliya Lohars are tending towards a sedentary living in urban-industrial centres in northern India. Certain social and economic forces of various types impinging upon their eco-systems (settled agrarian communities) have transformed their environments in such a way that the components of these environments with which GLs used to interact for eking out a living are thinning out. Simultaneously the specific mode of development of the macro-contexts of their existence, and which is transforming the agrarian sectors of nomadic GLs macro-environment, is also resulting in speedy growth of urban-industrial sectors with a strong potential demand for their skills. The rapid growth of urban-industrial centres, the perception of a demand for GL's blacksmithery skills has made many GLs settle down in and close to these urban centres.
In Delhi alone, there have been 5-6 major immigration of big bands (and a few small ones). After sedentarisation these bands have forged community like linkages. Nomadic-band type of social organisation characterised by relatively less-intense and casual interpersonal communications between various bands has gradually paved way for a community type strong permanent communication linkages between various families and bands constituting the community of Delhi's Gadaliya Lohars.

Insipite of their participation in informal sectors of urban economy, squatting on Delhi's roads and the associated need to interact with urban slum-dwellers, they have managed to retain a strong community identity, self-regulating social organisation and perpetual maintenance of their cultural-cognitive information systems to a great extent.

Probably the specific modes of their cognitive maps and world view, modes of socialisation and culturally defined learning situations and other aspects of their cultural information system, which was developed to cope with the stresses generated by their nomadic life, has helped this community to also deal with the stresses of urban participation in a squatter, near slum urban environments till now.
However, the analyst, viewing the Qls from an insider's perspective, feels that the cultural information system of Qls is already showing signs of vulnerability to continuing stresses and may result in the rupturing of their social organisation and perception of irrelevance of their traditional cognitive maps in the new contexts. Already, in some bands such a phenomenon is being manifested though not to a conspicuous level.

The disdain, as attributed to Qls in one such band where some Qls have resorted to begging, stealing and other socially prohibited activities (from Ql's traditional viewpoint) is indicative of setting in of such disruptive trends.

Their crystallising aversion to nomadic life now (after experiencing sedentised living) is another characteristic feature of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars. None of the Gaduliya Lohars interviewed by the researcher would like to revert back to nomadic life. Asked whether they would do so if they stopped getting any work, the typical response was that they would do something else but would not resort to nomadism. A few of them have already started selling their Gadis to buy small pieces of land in the city to settle down, symbolically indicating their break from nomadism.

The Delhi's Qls' sedentarisation has resulted in another development, viz. definition of their community.
boundaries in respect of choice of marriage spouses. The affinal linkages which used to forge social linkages between various nomadic bands, have tended to be localized with a strong tendency to marry among settled Gaduliya Lohars only. For the purpose of establishing marital alliances, sedentarized Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi and neighbouring industrial towns like Ghaziabad, Faridabad and Meerut seem to have restricted the perception of their community boundaries within the geographical locate defined by Delhi and its suburban territories.

The community boundaries, as reflected in the composition of the caste panchayat of the Gaduliya Lohars, encompass all the bands of Delhi, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Rohtak, Meerut and Balandshahar. It may be pertinent to mention that all these bands have relatively settled down. Even though some informants have reported during interviews about being aware of bands still living a nomadic life and their sporadic kinship linkages with some of these bands through their parents, communication with these bands on a continued basis is not there.

There may be another factor involved in such closure of their community boundaries to sedentarized only, viz. their monoresource skills base in contrast to dual resource skills base of nomadic Gaduliya Lohars. One informant narrated his experience of suffering heavy losses in
bullock trade, main stay of economic subsistence of nomadic Qsaduliya Lohars, after he chose to spend couple of years in a nomadic band of Western U.P. with which he was related through his mother. His failure to learn the intricate skills of bullock trade inspire of being an efficient blacksmith made his return to Delhi to his agnatic band at Timarpur in Delhi.

POPULATION:

As mentioned in Chapter I, there is no reliable data available on demographic composition of Qsaduliya Lohars in various parts of India. In Delhi also, they are not separately enumerated in various census surveys due to their claim to Rajput caste status. In terms of occupational classification, these are probably covered under 'Blacksmiths, Hammersmiths and Forging Press Operators' (Family No.331 of National Classification of Occupations) and 'Blacksmiths, Tool Makers and Machine Tool Operators' (No.339 of NSO) which were enumerated to be 5377 (5183 M, 194 F) and 7496 (7365 M, 131 F) respectively in 1981 census of Delhi.

As per a not so sophisticated participatory research work conducted by a team on Qaduliya Lohars in Delhi, there were 775 households (Cadas/households) with a total population of 2369 in 1986. But the primary data collected
on 35 households indicated the average family size to be about 5.0. As so much variation could not be attributed to statistical fluctuations, it was further probed into. The explanation turned out to be cultural rather than inaccurate reporting. A random check validated the figures of total population. Due to Gaduliya Lohar custom of procuring a gadi for the male child at adolescence, so as to enable the family to arrange a suitable match for him or before the gauna (consummation of marriage) if the marriage was performed during early childhood, the community tends to equate the Gadi with a separate household, whether existing or potential. The counting of gadin as a cultural synonym of household (even if the owner of the gadi was still living with his parents) resulted in overnumeration of households from a statistical viewpoint. The increased fertility and decreased mortality after sedentarisation has led to a situation now with a proportionally larger number of marriageable-age youngsters than during nomadic life which required a large number of new gadis for these young men to be acquired over recent years.

For purposes of their development and rehabilitation as also for academic reasons, a detailed population study covering educational, health, fertility and mortality trends needs to be made in a scientific manner. As far as the present study is concerned, such an endeavour was much beyond the time-frame and resources of the researcher.
Even in a relatively settled mode of life, the bands are not permanent. The Gaduliya Lohars, typical to their traditional nomadic way of life, exhibit a good deal of entrepreneurial abilities. So individual households or a group of them, will move to a new place where the competition is less and prospects better for earning a livelihood. The choice in Delhi happens to be new residential colonies where construction activity is brisk or upcoming industrial areas where there is demand for their skills. Therefore, bands are in a perpetual state of relative fragmentation. Even after a family has moved to a new site, it tends to maintain strong links with its original band. Therefore, in a survey, there is always a likelihood of double reporting of the same individuals.

Some of the major focal bands and their approximate reported strengths (total) are as follows:
It will be interesting to have a detailed picture of the band affiliations in historical context (in terms of migration waves) of various small and medium-sized bands of Gaduliya Lohars spread over Delhi. This may also play a crucial cultural role in planning rehabilitation programs for the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCAL BAND AND STRENGTH</th>
<th>ASSOCIATED FRAGMENTED BANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shahdara (90)</td>
<td>Manesar Garden, Shaespur,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nand Nagar, Nauspur, Kakori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asadpur (50-60)</td>
<td>Kishenganj, Timarpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarai Rohilla (60)</td>
<td>Kirti Nagar, Raja Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilak Nagar (120)</td>
<td>Najafgarh, Uttam Nagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayapuri, Lajwanti Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhandewala (25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakarpur (60)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalyanpur (35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalkaji Depot (30)</td>
<td>Badarpur, Bhogal, Ashram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammedpur (30)</td>
<td>Kotla, Garhi, Hanirka (Part)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 7.1
FOCAL BANDS AND THEIR FRAGMENTATION
However, one may classify various bands in terms of their existing strengths as follows:

**Table 7.3:**

**VARIOUS CADULIYA MAR BANDS IN DELHI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size (units)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Size (units)</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Tilek Nagar</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Raja Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kirti Nagar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sebarat Cirana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madipur</td>
<td></td>
<td>Timarpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheddara</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nand Nagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shakarpur</td>
<td></td>
<td>Naraina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kolyanpuri</td>
<td></td>
<td>Okhla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>Najafgarh</td>
<td>Less than 5</td>
<td>Ashram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Varan Rehilla</td>
<td></td>
<td>Garhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mohanwadpur</td>
<td></td>
<td>Geeta Colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Johnkewalan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sewa Nagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kalka Crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>Rafangir</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begumpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kangloi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Naiyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uttam Nagar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lajventi Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mehremli</td>
<td></td>
<td>Noida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narpar Factory</td>
<td></td>
<td>Govindpuri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noyapuri</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shaliner Bagh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jhalal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Manirka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maleviya Nagar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wazirpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palampura</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sadarpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kazipour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jhansa</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The nuclear family consisting of husband, wife and unmarried children appears to be the normative unit of social organisation among Gaduliya Lohars. The nuclear family, culturally symbolised by ownership of a separate gadi is the basic unit of production, consumption and most intense emotional and affective relationships.

Probably due to constraint of the capacity of the traditional bullock-cart (gadi) - their abode in nomadic life - which could accommodate only a few persons, their tools and household effects, nuclear family emerged as a cultural adaptation to their way of life. Usually close agnatic kins are members of the same band and traditionally preferred to travel together and cooperated in every sphere of life albeit maintaining economic independence.

Being a strongly patrilineal and patriarchal community, it is considered the responsibility of the father to marry his wards as also provide gadi and a set of tools for blacksmithery for each of his sons before their marriages. The youngest son normally inherits the gadi and tools of the craft from his father - a Lohar's sole material possessions. The sons may keep on living together with their parents, sharing the same hearth and working together as before marriage. Usually within 1-2
years of marriage, the new couple asserts its economic and family identity and starts separate production unit and cooking. The husband and wife usually both work together and younger children also assist them in the blacksmithery work by either working the blower or hammering depending upon their ages and physical strengths. There is no distinction between male or female child in work. Rather, it has been observed by the researcher that female children start assisting their parents at an earlier age than their brothers. Moreover, she is also expected to assist her mother in household chores. This coupled with reported custom of traditional brideprice among Gadaliya Lohars of Rajasthan (not found among Gadaliya Lohars of Delhi and also not present earlier in their early nomadic life—probed into by the investigator in interviews with aged informants) reflects a typical similarity with other patriarchical nomadic social formations, e.g., Arab Bedouin, Jads of Indo-Tibet border etc.

An aspect regarding the family and kinship patterns among Gadaliya Lohars of Delhi that distinguishes a settled mode from a nomadic life is the increasing incidence of a person moving his gaddi to the band of his wife's family. Another change that is typical of the relative parsimony of residence and easy communication, in the city is that of young housewife's going back to her parent's house due to her strained relations with her husband which
was earlier not possible as the exact location of her natal band could not be an easy guess.

There is a strong sense of economic cooperation among close agnostic kins. During times of economic necessities like that of marriage (which is becoming an increasingly expensive affair, both for girl's as well as boy's families), a person can count upon his brothers and close filial relations for support in the form of loans. There is no interest chargeable and a person does not need to look for external credit. Operating on a subsistence economic level, this community has saved itself from external indebtedness. Mutual economic cooperation based upon kinship and strong effective-emotional bonds in the family has enabled the community to preserve its socio-cultural system.

MODE OF PRODUCTION AND CRAFT

(i) Technology: The Gadaliya Lohars are practising their craft of blacksmithy using the same technology which they were using more than 400 years ago and which they have been successfully transmitting across generations by an informal socialization process.

Basically their craft involves heating the piece of iron in a coal-fired hearth which gets a controlled supply
of air by using a mechanical blower and then shaping it to the desired process by hammering to the desired shape. The process of heating and hammering has to be repeated a number of times before the piece of metal takes the desired shape. They use a variety of tools (mostly made by themselves) for cutting, gripping, boring holes, leveling and shaping the surfaces. The nomenclature of the tools is according to the functions performed. The only change in technology in recent years seems to be the adoption of a centrifugal air blower in place of a leather bellow and various types of mechanical air blowers are observed to be in use by them. The products are dependent upon the technology used by them which they are making the most skilled use of. The exposure to industrial activities in Delhi has made them aware of wide array of technological advances which they could possibly make use of but dearth of economic means as also non-availability of electric power to them restricts any improvement in their technology.

(ii) Raw materials:— The Gadliya Lohars of Delhi have developed a good knowledge of various types of iron and steel alloys and their functional properties. But operating as they are on a primitive technological base and in an informal economy, they have to sell their finished products even at ridiculously low prices. (sometimes lower than fresh iron prices). In this respect their traditional skills of handling all kinds of iron scrap has helped them to
survive in an otherwise adverse eco-technological environment. Their favourite haunts are scrap dealers from whom they buy N.C. rods, worn-out automobile axles and small pieces of N.S. bars (discarded by gate/grill manufacturers) which they shape into items like rope-hooks (for trucks), horse-shoes, plumbing hooks, chynis (chisels) etc. As their existing technology permits only small pieces to be forged in a laborious manner, small scrap pieces of appropriate hardness and cross-sections purchased at reasonable prices serve their purpose. For coal — the other basic raw material — the pinch is real. The increasing price of coal for their hearths is something they have to bear with. Moreover, their traditional mud-lined hearth is not a very fuel-efficient one but one which has been handed over to them over generations and probably most suited for their earlier nomadic way of life.

(iii) Marketing — This artisan community is involved in two types of market relationships with the metropolitan economy of Delhi. One is making finished products out of the raw materials purchased by them and selling it to traders and the users. In this type of market relationship, the value added to the raw material in the form of labour input is relatively much smaller than that accruing to the middleman. If one calculates the price of the finished product in terms of price of iron (non-scrap) plus fuel,
the value-added is in many cases negative. Therefore, any upward fluctuation in the price of scrap-iron considerably reduces their earnings. The other type of market relationship they are involved in relation to the macro-economy is service/repairs and that of job-working on material supplied by the customers. In this type of marketing of their services, their squatting on busy road sides is of considerable advantage to them and they are able to bargain a fair price for the services rendered. Their input in form of fuel and labour in these types of activities is much less than that for a comparable earning by manufacture of goods for the market. The recurring fragmentation of bands is also attributed to seeking more profitable locations for the service/job-working activities. The structure of market relationships of urban economy is a major constraint to further development of manufacturing activities by them.

**STRATIFICATION, HIERARCHY AND DEPENDENCY RELATIONS**

Till now Gaduliya Lohars have not shown any signs of any stratification of their social organisation on clan, kinship or economic lines. The only visible stratification pattern is manifested through the institution of their community panchayat in which traditional leaders of various bands are represented. However, culturally accepted attributes of a panch tend to act as a socially correcting egalitarian mechanism in spite of considerable dependency
on the panchayat for regulation of their life, specially in rites de Passage (decisions connected with marriage, cremation of dead etc.). Now-a-days, probably due to discard of this institution by settled Gaduliya Lohars in Rajasthan (with which a section of enlightened Delhi Gaduliya Lohars are maintaining links and who are also influenced by certain reformist movements among Rajasthan Gaduliya Lohars), some of Delhi Gaduliya Lohars are voicing their concern about its relevance. There appears to be no tendency towards class formation among them. The concept of hired labour in non-existent. If someone needs extra hands outside his family labour pool, Gaduliya Lohars work in a co-operative manner - each one sharing the profits of the joint venture equally irrespective of the kind of work performed. Casual cooperation among kins, however, does not obligate the seeker of assistance to pay back in cash. However, reciprocity is expected and offered.

The society is inegalitarian in as far as the relationship between sexes is concerned. The pattern of male-female relationships indicate a culturally-determined lower status of women vis-a-vis men. Females have relatively fewer choices in all spheres of life despite their equal, probably better, contribution to family's production activities. In families if a child is sent to school, it is invariably the male while the female child is expected to work at home. Thus nutrients for the female child are also fewer
than the male child. Even after marriage, all attempts are made to keep the women 'in place'. Women, however, are quite articulate and do their best to better their lives. In one band, where DACS has been running an adult education centre, the best achievement was shown by adolescent girls of the band. They are eager to learn, are conscious of ills of their community, like heavy drinking by men. Their socio-cultural inferiority and dependency on males is the only obstacle to their development. A well-integrated action research programme to improve their living conditions, drudgery reduction and giving them joint jural rights over the fruits of their labour inputs in production process can help improve their status as also enable them to act as vital agents for a sustained development of the community.

SOCIALISATION AND EDUCATION

Even though they are living at almost the places for decades, participation in formal school system is negligible. They are, however, desirous to send their children, particularly boys, to school but certain restrictions come in their way.

(1) Economic Value of Children: The mode of practice of their craft involves participation of minimum three members - for blowing air, for hammering and of principal worker
(skilled artisan) - in a production unit. Therefore, at least one child has to be brought into the family labour pool unit as early as possible. Generally, children start hammering around the age of 11-12 sparing the mother for cooking and household chores. The more are the family members involved in productive processes the better is the family income.

(ii) Certain efforts by Gaduliya Lohars to admit their children did not succeed because of insistence by school authorities for production of birth certificates which they do not possess.

(iii) Cultural restrictions on education of girls also act as a barrier for their education.

(iv) The economic, cultural and linguistic gap between Gaduliya Lohar children and other school children makes learning and adaptation to school environment difficult resulting in high drop-out rates for Gaduliya Lohar children. The highest level of education among Gaduliya Lohar bands visited by the investigator is a 7th standard failure (1937 - he was also contemplating leaving the school and start helping his family in the craft).

The major institutions of socialization whereby Gaduliya Lohar children learn to perform adult social and economic roles is the family and the band. The
socialization process is informal. The children learn about their cultural values in form of stories and myths from the elders. The craft is learnt by participating in the process of helping their parents. The girls learn the household chores from her mother and also from their mothers-in-law after marriage.

**HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL HABITS**

Gadaliya Lohars try to maintain high standards of personal and environmental cleanliness. Living as they are on the pavements of the roads, exposed to all kinds of rubbish, hydro-carbon pollutants and no civic amenities in the form of water supply or garbage disposal, it is a wonder as how they manage to keep themselves and their settlement so clean. In most of the bands they have dug up hand pumps by pooling in resources. Their food consists of wheat chapatis and some vegetables and lentils. Butter oil (ghee) is a luxury which they indulge in whenever they can afford it. Infants are kept on mother’s milk alone till they can digest solid foods. Liquor and meat is cherished by most of them but under influence of certain reform movements this has been stopped in some families.

Immunisation of children against diseases is not done often. As a result, the incidence of physically handicapped due to polio is quite high. Out of 10
families studied for health observations, four children were found to be affected by polio strokes.

Another problem which is characteristic of old age (50+) among Gadaliya Lohars is some type of respiratory disease among men. The incidence is very high and most of male deaths are attributable to respiratory disorders. A person affected by respiratory disorder cannot sit before the hearth. It looks like a type of silicosis caused by iron fumes and carbon monoxide. Women are not found to be suffering from respiratory disorders because they usually are not performing the job of principal worker. A physiological study of this occupational disorder and its preventive/curative solution can alleviate the old-age suffering and also extend the active productive life of the members.

Due to non-availability of certain herbs in urban ecosystem, their traditional system of ethnomedicine is fast disappearing to be replaced by the services of private medical doctors (and quacks) which are quite expensive keeping in view their meagre earnings.
### Perception, Access To, and Participation in Subsystem's Developmental Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arena</th>
<th>Whether desired by the people</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic amenities</td>
<td>Yes (strongly)</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ration card</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nil (denied)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting right</td>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>Sometime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public security (Police protection against theft etc.)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Approached in cases of theft but no effective results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Communication factors</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Only for entertainment - Not for information and awareness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On all these counts, it is clear that the Saduliya Lohars of Delhi are aware of various state-maintained social development delivery systems and are desires of benefitting from them. Their access to these, however, is extremely restricted. Therefore, it is not a question of making them aware of these and instilling positive attitudes among them but rather of making their legitimate share of the development inputs available to them.
The exposure of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars to a highly westernised metropolitan way of life (at least in terms of attire, consumption of modern factory sector produced goods etc.) has led to their adopting a number of material symbols and artifacts for consumption. Such visible changes as reflected in the adoption of western dress (shirts and trousers) by males, use of Cinema, transistorised radio and television sets for entertainment, bicycles and petrol-driven scooters for locomotion, and using beedis and liquor for intoxication all indicate their increasing inculcation of consumerist values of urban-industrial society, gradually obliterating their symbolic and cultural contrast with their macro-environment, vis. Delhi.

Such imbibing of urban-industrial consumerist values coupled with cognitive changes effected by the learning situations provided by urban milieu of Delhi may result in their completely losing cultural identity and distinctiveness and submerging themselves in the ocean of Delhi's slum-squatter dwellers, a situation which their structural condition of participation in urban informal economic sector dictates them to.

Even now many Gaduliya Lohar youth born and reared in Delhi have started viewing the cultural constraints imposed by their social organisation and cultural information
system with utmost skepticism and contempt. Any significant stress on their economic well-being that may result in their opting for skilled or unskilled wage-labour in urban organised or unorganised sectors may make them completely break away from their traditional moorings.

Some middle-aged and elder members of the community are conscious of their relatively advantageous situation vis-à-vis other squatter-slum inhabitants of Delhi, in terms of the locational advantage of their work-sites in practising their craft - an advantage which they continue to enjoy due to their specific image of being a nomadic, hardworking, peaceful and honest people in the eyes of concerned civic and government officials. Such a cognition of advantage imparted by retention of traditional symbols alone is making them not to completely shed off their traditional moorings in spite of overwhelming cognitive-cultural forces of their milieu on them to completely transform their cognitive-cultural matrix.

CADULIYA LOHAR’S LINKS WITH THEIR SUPRA-SYSTEM

A Caduliya Lohar living in the metropolitan Delhi has two types of linkages with the supra system of its habitat. One such type involves personal communication with outsiders whereas the other is governed by pure packet mechanisms.
One type of linkages with the urban suprasystem of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars is in the form of interpersonal communications mainly with his clients who come to his hearth generally for the services provided by him either in the form of repair of other artisans implements (like chisels and other tools) or involving the job work done by him on raw materials provided by the client on piece-rate basis. As these Lohars continue to stay at the same place as long as there is adequate availability of such work, the clientele is relatively permanent. Such type of interpersonal relations not infrequently involves sharing of economic and allied information pertaining to industrial processes, technology etc.

Some Gaduliya Lohars who have been relatively fortunate to forge such linkages with fairly large industrial units, thereby ensuring regular availability of job-work, have starting abandoning road-squatter mode of urban living towards living and working in pucca houses constructed on plots bought by them, as the locational advantage by way of their visibility on the road side is not a crucial factor for them in earning a living.

The other Lohars, whose subsistence depends upon servicing relatively large number of clients, are critically dependent upon the locational advantage of road side inhabitation and worksites.
For both these categories of Gaduliya Lohars who are able to have an economically lucrative job-working (for industrial sector of urban Delhi) and servicing other artisans/technicians with their skills, the transfer of information in the course of interpersonal communication with their clients provides them with learning situations considerably modifying their cognitive maps and modes of interpreting external stimuli and responding to them.

The other Gaduliya Lohars who are not that fortunate to have adequate job-working and servicing opportunities due to poor locations of their gaddis or due to relatively large size of their band at a particular spot have to depend upon manufacturing activities of their own. In this case they buy their own raw materials like iron (usually in the form of scrap) and coal from the market and they sell the finished products to the traders in the city. Such manufacturing activity is considered by the GLs as less remunerative by the Lohars as the traders are usually able to buy their products at a very cheap rate, sometimes even less than the price of new iron. Inspite of their considerable skills in bargaining and buying the raw materials at very cheap rates, the difficulties involved in marketing their products at reasonable prices makes the Gaduliya Lohars feel helpless against urban market forces which tend to work against them (like any other small-scale manufacturing activity of urban informal economy).
The impersonal nature of urban-industrial market institutions does not provide any scope to Gaduliya Lohar acquire such analytic information pertaining to these institutions. However, they are aware that urban market structures controlled by finance capital is not fair to them but how it actually affects them they are not very sure about.

Another type of interpersonal relations Gaduliya Lohars have established is with those sections of urban population who are inhabiting adjacent spaces in their neighbourhood of squatting and cooperation with whom is necessitated due to their squatter mode of urban living. These are the other people squatting on the roads like the ones sleeping on the pavements or jhuggi (shack) dwellers in their vicinity some of whom may also be petty artisans working in the urban unorganised construction and industrial sectors and who may also be GL’s clients. The typical adaptive responses of these neighbours of GLs, in the form of various attributes of ‘Culture of Poverty’, to the stresses/uncertainties created by their participation in unorganised informal sectors of urban Delhi also appear to be influencing GLs’ cognitive processes and way of life in some bands of Delhi. However, the social pressures/sanctions invoked in relatively bigger bands against acquisition of such slum-influences acts as a strong check to imbibing the cultural correlates of slum-dwelling inspite of their temptation to do so.
In smaller bonds, the possibility of a large clientele and a non-competitive market makes the SL families earn adequate earnings thereby avoiding the structural conditions conducive for acquisition of slumlike poverty subcultural characteristics.

One symbolic feature of Delhi's slum-living has been acquired by Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi. This is the practice of erecting small mud walls around their Gallis and putting a tarpaulin over these to provide a Jhuggi-like protection against vagaries of rain and excessive summer heat of Delhi. This is in response to their perception of need for some privacy as also to their understanding that Jhuggi-dwellers are usually given small home-sites by the administration where they can legitimately erect their own permanent structures without any fear of eviction.

The urban Gaduliya Lohars' cognitive domain of perception of his environment will not be complete unless one also includes the local politicians into it. Local politicians, usually Municipal Corporation Councillors (or potential candidates for these posts), are reported to be sympathetic to the felt needs of the GLs inhabiting within their constituencies. Surprisingly GLs, who till now are not divided on political factional terms, speak positively about a number of such local level leaders. Though some of them were indifferent, none reported negatively about them.
A striking aspect of their urban squatter existence which has been frequently reported by their neighbours to the researcher and which was confirmed by the GLs is that they are not bothered or harassed by the police and other administrative officials who prefer to leave them alone in contrast to their non-GL neighbours who frequently have to make pay-offs to such officials in order to illegally occupy such sites and or to retain existing occupation. A fruit vender who had set up a shop on a pavement adjacent to a lane Gadaliya Lohar Gadi at a site in west Delhi told that he had to spend nearly five thousand rupees to set up his shop and was spending nearly three hundred rupees per month as pay-offs to retain his occupation whereas his neighbouring Lohar did not have to make any such payments. May be the media-projected image of GLs as a patriotic brave warors leading a nomadic tie after their prolonged struggle with alien Moghul rulers contributes to their such favourable treatment from an otherwise oppressive and corrupt administrative machinery (at least so in the eyes of GLs' slum neighbours).

The other type of linkages of GLs with their supra system are those governed by market mechanisms. These linkages are not amenable to conventional cognitive-relational analysis but these have considerable importance in understanding the societal dynamic at least in developmental
terms. Inspite of relatively infirm ground for analysis of such mechanisms we will attempt to do so in our analysis of GLs structural position.

This leads to us viewing Gadiliya Lohar from another advantage point, vis. the outsiders' image of GLs, as view ed by the suprasytem macro-context of their urban existence.

**DESCRIPTING THE COMMUNITY AT OUTSIDER'S IMAGE**

In view of the multitude of cognitive-cultural systems constituting the suprasytemic macro-context of GLs' urban Delhi, no study of such images can ever be completely exhaustive. The present researcher, therefore, has chosen to map out the contents of such images only from the view point of GLs' immediate neighbours, civic and developmental institutions' officials and academic institutions which were perceived to be potential sources of accurate imagery of GLs of Delhi.

Inhabiting the pavements of some of the busiest roads of Delhi, Gadiliya Lohars are quite visible to Delhiites. Their presence is made quite conspicuous due to the characteristic exotic design of their carts, the typical Rajasthani attire of their females and their doing strenuous jobs (presumably masculine) of hammering in open.

Such combination of elements constituting GLs living which sharply contrasts with urban Delhiites' life styles makes the outsiders strongly feel GLs presence in Delhi inspite
of their relatively fewer numbers. Almost all the urban dwellers interviewed by the researcher were aware of GLs staying in Delhi for fairly long periods. Almost all of them had seen them working and could accurately describe their observations despite having only seen them from moving vehicles.

None of them however, had any personal communication with them. Eventhough the urban dwellers were aware of their existence from their direct observations, their knowledge about GLs way of life, especially their mythological past, mainly was derived from various illustrated newspaper articles published in national dailies. Eventhough a careful reading of these newspaper articles on GLs revealed them to be highly impressionistic and not infrequently factually erroneous, they have served the purpose of establishing a specific image of the GLs in the eyes of urban Delhi's middle classes.

Whereas middle class image and attitudes towards GLs are formed mainly by such impressionistic journalism, their slum neighbours and artisan-clients evinced a better knowledge about their way of life presumably owing to their direct interpersonal contacts with the GLs. In their eyes, GLs are accorded a special status among the unfortunate urban poor (squatter and slum dwellers),
presumably due to their specific mythological past, inculcated values among the GLs as not to steal, their honesty and efforts to keep themselves and their homestead clean and hygienic in an otherwise antithetical environment of their urban existence.

Due to strict adherence to some of their cultural norms (like aversion to stealing etc.), their peace-loving nature and the self-regulating type of social organization, even their affluent neighbours not strongly object to their existence in their neighbourhoods.

Some of the police officials interviewed by the researcher told that no GL in Delhi has any police record and there have rarely been any complaints against them. Such an attestation to their nature indicates the effective internal regulation of their social organization, management of internal conflicts as also the effective functioning of their cultural information system. This also tends to confirm our earlier observation made from the insider's point of view.

In spite of their extreme visibility and a favourable image on the cognitive maps of their supra-systemic neighbours, our analysis of their access to and participation in macro-level development institutions (from insider's point of view) points out their neglect in state's welfare
schemes. Even the massive jhuggi-dwellers rehabilitation during 1976 emergency rule (in order to remove the eyesore of urban shacks from urban Delhi) did not benefit any Gaduliya Lohar.

In view of their non-SC/ST status in the eyes of the Government machinery, they are not the target of any special development schemes. As far as the local administration is concerned, their status is merely that of urban squatters illegally occupying Government land. However, the enforcement staff responsible for eviction of such squatters usually tend to look the other way, generally due to their nexus with local level politicians for whom these squatters and jhuggi-dwellers constitute important captive vote-banks.

Even the academic anthropologists/sociologists in Delhi, for whom their exotic material culture and their conspicuous presence in Delhi should have provided with an easily accessible, convenient and fascinating object of urban ethnographic research, have not shown much interest in them. The only data available on the way of life at Delhi University was a M.Sc. practical report on their kinship system which turned out to be a replica of similar data from Rajasthan.

In terms of adult education and extension activities among Gaduliya Lohars, Delhi University's Department of
Adult Continuing Education and Extension has been showing an interest in them as part of their extension programmes for Delhi's artisans under some financial support from 'Khadi and Village Industries Corporation' of Government of India. When contacted, even this department was found to be without a data base upon which it could systematically base its activities. This department in its zeal for provision of quick ideational/technology inputs by way of artisan-technologist meetings aroused a sense of false hope among concerned Gaduliya Lohars regarding some of the strongly felt needs of GLs. The initial inept handling, typical of most such adhocist action programmes by its field workers have made GLs look upon this Department in strong negative terms. Rather than gaining any information from this agency, the researcher provided them with a qualitative data base and an outline of a systems' design which could possibly guide their participatory action programmes among the Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi (subsequently published as Mahajan 1989: 29-49, In Bhatia, S.C. ed.) albeit indicating supplementary data needs for a detailed design for their integrated development. But any significant work in this community does not appear to be in the offering any more.

In a nutshell, one can say that the general image of the Gaduliya Lohars from outsiders point of view even though it is valued as mildly positive (made so by journalistic reportings), it does not contain any detailed accurate
content pertaining to their way of life and the structural conditions of their urban existence.

The suprasystemic cognitive – institutional attitude towards Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars can be summed up in one word: indifference. The only sections of Delhi's population who have acquired any real knowledge about their way of life are their immediate squatter and slum neighbours and with whom Gaduliya Lohars have some continuing interpersonal communication.

From a structural analytical stand point, GLs as well as these neighbours of theirs are identified as participants in urban informal economic sectors. The overlapping of social, geographical and economic spaces imposed by their participation in the informal sectors of urban economy probably accounts for such supra-systemic indifference to the GLs inspite of a mildly positive imagery of their cultural information system from an outsider's viewpoint.

MICRO-LEVEL EXTRA-COGNITIVE STRUCTURES

Insipite of their distinctive cognitive-cultural boundaries, well defined system of symbols and associated distinctive identities, it is quite difficult to delineate the corresponding structures of micro-level extra-cognitive interests among Gaduliya Lohar. It does not imply that all relevant structures governing their societal processes
are completely translated and are incorporated into their cognitive-cultural domain or that their modes of cognising the world are perfectly capable of an accurate reflection of their micro-level and supra-systemic structures. On the contrary, their lack of capacity to do so mainly accounts for their underdevelopment and poor standards of living.

In fact, the analytic difficulties involved in identifying pertinent extra-cognitive structural conditions in respect of pre-capitalist and non-capitalist social formations is accepted even by Marxism-influenced social scientists, some of whom tend to deny the existence of any such structures in pre-capitalist nomadic, agrarian as well as urban societies. Many radical social scientists, as also a few neo-Marxists, on the other hand, infer proto-capitalist relations of production and polity in many of these societies that are characterised by well-defined stratification patterns and marked political and economic inequalities. It will be out of place here to dilate upon the existing polemical situation in the field of structural analyses of pre-capitalist societal systems. Nevertheless, it appears that the uncritical acceptance or blatant rejection by way of assumed irrelevance of Marxist methodological axioms, inferred from Marx's analysis of European capitalism appears to define the polemical field of structural analysis of pre-capitalist societies.

In case of Delhi's Gaduliya Lohars, the non-stratified character of their social system, regulated and uniform
distribution of information (ideational + material resources) and egalitarian principles of intra-community interactions makes such a task of delineating extra-cognitive structures at micro-level quite difficult.

Taking cue from the tentative methodological framework developed for relating microlevel and macrolevels of reality as also 'structure' with 'cognition' (see Ch.III), we chose to analytically delineate such structures in terms of:

(i) Structures of choice between different sections of society at various levels of institutional and situational interactions; and (ii) Processes of exchange and associated choices and decision-making mechanisms.

CASTE PANCHAYAT:

Among the various arenas of institutionalised interactions, asymmetric choice structures were quite marked in the operation of their caste panchayat. The institutionalised regulation of their social life at individual levels by way of providing prescriptive decisions specially in the field of matrimonial negotiations make the Gaduliya Lohars feel a sense of dependence (at moments a feeling of despotic dependency) on the caste panchayat. Panchayat members role in protecting the interests of their respective bund members and facilitating regulated
exchange of women, as carriers of cultural information across the bands, indicates a semi-cognitive, semi-extra-cognitive functional structure governing the micro-level societal processes among Gaduliya Lohars.

Due to their specific mode of interacting with their economic environments (which is in terms of families being units for such interactions), any social sanction imposed by the Panchayat is not likely to be of any significant negative economic value. Therefore, the existing disarticulation between economic and political fields at micro-levels does not impart this institution any significance in regulating day-to-day affairs, or dealing with violation of cultural and social norms. The Gaduliya Lohars are quite aware of such restrictions in the power-domain of the Panchas who do not, therefore, enjoy any special deference in daily interactions any more. The importance of Panchas in helping in matrimonial negotiations, relatively heavy expenses involved in convening a caste panchayat and their fear of police and outsiders, however tend to act as a sufficient deterrent to amicably resolve their minor disputes at interpersonal levels.

If our understanding of the societal dynamics being governed by analytical interactions between 'structures' (including choices + exchange processes) and 'cognitica' is valid, then owing to (1) the changing patterns of choices (and their perception of these) in various
non-political fields at micro-level, (ii) the changing modes of cognition due to external urban influence, and (iii) specific stresses generated in the microcosm of Gaduliya Lobar socio-economic-cultural matrices due to their structural participation in urban informal sectors; this institution's semi-cognitive structural role in regulating and governing micro-societal processes is doomed to extinction. The macro-cognitive framework of their new urban ecological macro-contexts of their existence, which does not contain caste endogamy and other cognitive caste-defined parameters in regulating social interactions anymore; (in contrast to their earlier (nomadic life) socio-ecological macro-fields strongly defined by caste-parameters) is likely to lead to increasing perception of the irrelevance of this institution in their life. The absence of macro-cognitively determined micro-level structural conditions for the institution makes us draw such an inference.

RELATIONS BETWEEN SEXES WITHIN THE FAMILY

As described in our insider's view of the micro-content of GL socio-cultural matrix, the institutionalised cognition of jural status of women in GL society (as well as that in intra-family social organisation) is the only visible element of stratification at micro-level. From the cognitive view point of GL women, their cultural position in GL society sharply contrasts with their contribution to productive
processes in deciding the economic well being of the household as a unit of production, economic and social unit in the GL society. As their input to production processes by way of hard physical labour (in addition to domestic chores) is even more than that by male members, their relatively lower status in GL society is presumably due to expropriation of their labour by the culturally defined property and production relations in terms of sexes. Such juridical principles as property ownership, structure of choices, production and exchange relations (within the family) tend to map out the elements of an extra-cognitive structure (from GL feminist point of view) governing societal processes.

INTER-BAND AND INTRA-BAND (INTRA-FAMILY) RELATIONSHIP

The field of these inter-band and intra-band relations is characterised by cooperation between various families in times of need. Such requirements like need of additional cash at times of marriages (necessitating loans), cooperation required when one GL household is able to procure more market orders than it can possibly execute by itself and the need for an additional person for a newly established nuclear family based household to act as a complete production unit.

Their responses to these needs, vis (a) obligation to help one's agnatic kins in form of loans with no obligation to pay any interest, (b) the 'partnership' type of
economic cooperation between the households entitling equal share to each household irrespective of number of workers from any particular household and complete absence of wage-labour within Gaduliya Lohar society, and (c) the provision of a child from a closely related household till the new household has one of its own of a workable age; respectively all indicate a reciprocal mode of cooperation involving culturally regulated non-exploitative equal exchange with symmetrical choice structures. The well-defined perception, in cognitive terms, of equal value of such exchange processes in macro-temporal societal terms indicates the absence of any extra-cognitive structures of much significance operating or governing socio-economic relationships at inter-band and intra-band levels.

EXTRA-BAND EXCHANGES:

Due to specific mode of interaction of Gls with their socio-ecological environment of urban Delhi, the most intense, recurrent and continuing exchanges appear to occur in their interactions with the macro-context of their urban living. Such extra-band exchange processes, choice structures and their social relations with their macro-level supra-system, belonging as these are to the domain of Gls macro-micro linkages, and discussed separately in the next chapter.
These macro level linkages of GLs micro-contact, constituting as these are the most intense, regular and crucial interactions defining GLs activities, are of vital structural significance in comprehending micro-content of the GL socio-cultural matrices. The failure to analytically do so by any analyst who may chose to confine exclusively to the micro-domains can result only in a highly distorted image of such micro-contents. The relevance, validity and adequacy of such a micro-level imagery to the advance of social science knowledge can be anybody's guess.

Therefore, even at the risk of transgressing safe limits of conventional analytic cognitive boundaries of our discipline, we venture into exploring such linkages in systemic terms.