CHAPTER VIII

MICRO-MACRO LINKAGES

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MICRO - MACRO LINKAGES

After synoptically describing the macro-contexts (Ch.IV, V and VI), micro-context of Delhi's Gadliya Lohars (in chapter VII respectively), we now venture to explore the linkages, in systemic terms, existing between our micro-system and its super-systemic macro-context.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES:

The substantive contents of the culture of anthropology make it an efficient and effective guide to comprehend micro-level cognitive-cultural-relational phenomena in small-scale societies. That also tends to define the cognitive limits of the socio-cultural fields its practitioners can possibly comprehend (notwithstanding its loud claims to holism and spatio-temporal analytic integration). Their exists an increasing perception, on part of its practitioners, of the relative inadequacy of this cultural guide (system of codes and symbols) in meaningfully perceiving, interpreting and analytically responding to stimuli emanating from extra-cognitive phenomenological domains as also the signals of societal importance originating at macro-spatial and temporal levels of human social reality on this planet.
The existence of analytically undefined and unmapped (in terms of anthropological analysis) social spaces beyond the conventional micro-cognitive-cultural-relational fields of anthropological perception is being gradually accepted by many anthropologists. The responses to such awareness are varied and can be seen to lie within the range of two extremes. One such extreme response is complete withdrawal into involute cores of accentuated cognitivism, overemphasis on signs and symbols and development of sophistry at ultra-micro levels of anthropological analysis (e.g. cognitive anthropology, symbolic anthropology etc). The other extreme response is that of completely abandoning micro-cognitive-culturalist phenomenological empiricism towards pseudo-marxist theoretical explanations at macro-levels in which cognition and other micro-level reality is simply an epiphenomena mechanically determined by processes operating at macro-global levels (e.g. dependency-world system theories). Such theories in their excessive zeal for macro-structural explanations tend to ignore that even Marx, in spite of giving relatively more weightage to economic factors, used the concept of dialectical relationship between 'matter' and 'consciousness' to understand societal historical processes in which the phenomena covered by both these categories had independent existence and internal dynamics of their own.

We feel that none of these extreme responses are really relevant in any meaningful attempt to expand the analytical vision of anthropology. The values of 'holism' and definition objective of a 'study of man in time and space' provides an
anthropologists with adequate rationale to move beyond the limits of micro-level cognitive-cultural phenomenological empiricism towards systemic analyses of human social reality in cognitive as well as non-cognitive structural aspects at both various micro and macro levels.

Operating under such value-precis of researcher's analytical culture, we (mis)ventured into constructing a tentative framework into which these categories of data could be understood in substantive as well as relational terms (See Chapter III for such reflections). In order to understand the macro-context where the conventional micro and social relational analytic modes of anthropological cognition were not conducive to a relevant and adequate cognition of large-scale global systems at various spatial levels (international, national and metropolitan), we did not hesitate to borrow from the analytical as well as data categories of our cognate social sciences, e.g., history, economics, macro-sociology, demography, geography and political economy. The emergent picture, as expected was not homologous to micro-cognitive-cultural-relational image. A detailed analysis of macro-level structure-cognition analysis being really beyond the resources of this study, we chose to concentrate merely upon the extra-cognitive structural aspects in our sketchy description of the nested macro-contexts of our micro-focus, the implicit rationale being the major role played by the macro-structural processes in governing micro-developmental processes among Gaduliya Lohars. As, atleast till now, their cognitive-cultural
information system as well as social organisation continues relatively unchanged due to their relatively weak interpersonal information sharing communication with the macro-contexts.

Such assumptions underlying the selection of relevant foci for comprehending micro-macro linkages tended to pragmatically restrict the intersubjective experiential domain in the expanded anthropological mode of such inter-cultural translations.

FOCI AND PROCESSES

In terms of two locus ('structure' and 'cognition') homologous model for comprehending micro level, macro level and micro-macro dialogical linkages (see Chapter III), it requires documentation of three processes impinging upon each of the four loci defining micro-macro analytical field.

FIGURE 11

MICRO-MACRO INTERACTIONS
Our focus being the microlevel structure-cognition configuration of Gaduliya Lohars in Delhi, one should, therefore, describe a total of six such processes, in addition to description of the micro-level structure and cognitive domains. For mapping of the complete field (two levels) one would require a total of twelve such processes for a holistic micro-macro description.
### TABLE 3.1

**MICRO-MICRO LINKAGES : LEVELS, LOCI AND PROCESSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Locus</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>Structure (Str)</td>
<td>Hi Cog</td>
<td>Not done - intend to experiment on it in generating induced changes in Systems Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macro</td>
<td>Structure (Str)</td>
<td>Ma Cog</td>
<td>Sketchily described in Chapter VII (Urban consumerism and traditional values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ma Str</td>
<td>Follows (in this Chapter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ma Cog</td>
<td>Briefly touched upon in stratification etc, section and section on micro-structures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments**

- Ma Str: Follows in the Chapter
- Also briefly touched in Chapter VII
- Ma Cog: Available data presented on 'Insider's Image' in Chapter VII.
- Micro Structure (Str): Beyond the purview of this work.
- Hi Str: No perceptible influence expected - not covered as it was considered beyond the purview of this work.
- No table entries under Micro Structure (Str).
- Ma Str: Covered in Chapter VII.
- Ma Cog: (Section on 'Outsider's Image')
The above table indicates that we have still to describe the linkages of macro-structural parameters with those of structure and cognition at micro-levels. In respect of our research focus - the Gaduliya Lohars of Delhi. In view of the not so rigid distinction between the structural and cognitive aspects of non-capitalist micro-social systems, as of semi-nomadic artisan community of Gaduliya Lohars, we think that it will be better to see Gaduliya Lohars as an analytical whole - a justified assumption due to their relatively undifferentiated non-hierarchical social system atleast in terms of micro-level relations between various culturally defined units of the overall socio-cultural system, i.e. family, band and the community.

**URBAN INFORMAL MARKETS AND GADULIYA LOHARS**

From the point of view of suprasystemic micro-level national and urban-industrial institutionalised socio-cultural and legal dimensions, Gaduliya Lohars are an urban squatter people illegally occupying and working on the road sides of urban Delhi on public lands. They are not covered by the positive discriminatory policies of the welfare state for upliftment of hitherto disadvantaged sections of Indian society, defined by the inclusion of various castes and communities in the Government lists of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The inclusion of a community in one of these lists tended to overlap with the cognitive classes delineated in terms of Hindu principles of purity and
Whereas caste and occupational status used to define a group's position as also their cognitive-relational parameters in relation to their specific macro-contexts in pre-capitalist social spaces of pre-independent India (thereby obliterating structural mechanisms governing the societal processes in such pre-capitalist contexts), the urban-industrial context of metropolis Delhi is not characterised by such primordial relations governed by the caste and occupational criteria.

In the new urban-industrial context of Delhi, similar to the specific modes of market mechanisms operating in post-colonial third world countries, the position of Gaduliya Lohars can be characterised by their near complete participation in urban Delhi's informal economic sectors. Delhi's macro-structural position in relation to Indian eco-political structure may be termed as the latter's core. The macro-context of India in wider global context, as indicated by its internal dynamics and the structural relations with other macro-units (developed and developing countries), makes one infer it as a combination of national capitalism and a peripheral space of world capitalist system with an increasing tendency since early 1980s to converge to the latter status (For details, see Chapter VI).
Our present state of analytical knowledge of market mechanisms in relation to social processes operating at various levels within third world socio-political units being extremely inadequate and distorted (such knowledge available in social sciences being merely postulates of perfect and imperfect competition uncritically borrowed from western economies and not really suited to specific realities of the post-colonial third world), it is quite difficult to make a systemic study of the exact nature of relationship of a non-capitalist social matrix incorporated into skewed capitalist modes existing in third world macro-level socio-economic processes. An indepth anthropological research programme covering a multitude of such micro-systems in their diverse macro-contexts will contribute to our systematic understanding of third world societal processes as also facilitate adoption/evolution of valid development guidelines for micro-level development. It appears that the market mechanisms negatively effecting a number of third-world micro-social systems (including CIs) are not similar to the economists' idealist conception of perfect and imperfect competition defining market mechanisms but rather involve a rather intricate set of societal parameters, like micro-level perception of value of a commodity, the contingency and needs of the individual/class participating in such transaction and also the structure of choices (governed by cultural as well as extra-cognitive structures) between various parties in various market institutions of the third world societies (our hypotheses and not the conclusions).
Assuming that the operating market mechanisms tend to define, in structural terms, the relationship between a non-capitalist social unit with its market-oriented macro-economic structures, we attempt to delineate Gaduliya Lohar's interactions with their supra-systemic macro context of their economic activities.

Delhi Gaduliya Lohar is involved in numerous types of urban markets, viz. (a) for procuring raw materials (iron and coal) for his work, (b) for marketing the finished products made by him, (c) the market situation created and controlled by him for sale of his skills by way of servicing/repairs of implements and/or job work done on piece-rate basis on raw materials provided by his industrial clients, and (d) for procuring goods for meeting his daily needs of household consumption, like food, clothes and other items from urban consumer markets.

For procurement of raw materials, they evince considerable bargaining skills and entrepreneurial ability and they are able to buy their requirements at highly reasonable rates. Their requirements of iron is met by scrap dealers who are able to give them assorted sizes of iron scrap of various types and sizes to suit their specific requirements, saving them both money and labour (for processing). For coal, their dependency on
markets is almost complete and they have to buy it at exorbitant open (black) market prices. Some of them have, however, been able to locate some dealers who sell partly burnt stean coal (from brick-kilns) or obtain coal pilfered/picked from railway sites at fairly cheap rates. The advantage gained by cheaper acquisition of thermal energy in this way is considerable. However, they having no control over semi-organised market institutions for procuring their raw materials (better quality steel and good coal) and high prices prevalent therein makes their production activities highly vulnerable to market forces manipulated and controlled by finance capital at upper-levels.

For marketing their finished products, their dependence on city traders is almost complete. These traders specify the designs, quantities and prices of such finished products. The prices given to Lohars being so low (sometimes less than price of equivalent quantity of new raw-iron) enables these traders to take nearly 100% profit on their products (selling at least 1.3 times the rate of new iron). Furthermore, the problems of cash flow in these market transactions are to heavy disadvantage to these small-scale producers. The traders and shop-keepers, who prefer to buy on credit, are able to exercise an almost total control over the production of these small-scale artisans. The relatively low level of choice perceived by the artisans/small scale manufacturers due to lack of any fairer marketing channels leave these artisans
completely at the mercy of city traders who chose to give a very low price for the labour input of these artisans (as part of the finished products) by way of market prices defined by them. The disadvantage accruing to the Jaduliya Lohar artisan-manufacturer has to such market mechanisms has not still resulted in sharply focused cognition of such mechanisms which continue to lie beyond the practical limits of their manipulative abilities.

However, the sale of their skills by way of repairing and job working activities negotiated on their own shiyas (worksites) portrays a different picture. Here they command the prices for such jobs realizing very well that a client cannot possibly find any alternative source for such jobs, even if he chooses to do so, the expenses in terms of time involved and transport will offset the accruing price-advantage. In most small bands inhabited by agnatically-linked kins and characterized by intense inter-family ties, they have even evolved ethical codes such as the one that a customer refused by a Lohar on ground of non-payment of price demanded will not be serviced by another Lohar of the same band. Such adaptive strategies to maximally exploit the strategic locational advantage of their Gaddis (on road sides) has helped them define the rules of the Gaddi band-centered markets for sale of their blacksmithery skills. Now they produce for the trader's market only when their earnings by way of repairs and job working activities require to be supplemented.
They clearly realize their disadvantageous situation in own-manufacturing activities. A Lohar's prosperity or destitution is strongly correlated with the availability of repairs on job working opportunities or his dependence on own-manufacturing activities.

Therefore, in terms of relations of production and exchange in their micro-context, they exhibit all the characteristic features of small-scale manufacturer's participation in urban informal sectors typical of third world metropolitan cities (see Chapter IV - Urban Poverty in the Third World - A Suprasystems' Analysis).

Another type of urban markets that are increasingly being used by the Gaduliya Lohars are those selling consumer goods and food items. For food items, they are again critically dependent upon market prices as the contents of their exchange relations with their clients now do not involve such items for daily need (in contrast to their earlier nomadic life). The cash surplus created by them after meeting their essential requirements now tends to be consumed in purchasing items of 'fashion', like shirts, trousers, transistors, artificial jewellery and even scooters, if they can afford so. The imbibing of these symbols of urban-industrial society is speedily resulting in a situation which may introduce new cognitive and hierarchy symbols among Gaduliya Lohars, defining one's position in social hierarchy in terms of possession of
such status symbols (See section on Urban Social Structure in Chapter VI).

What will happen to their traditional practice of marriage festivities, convening of caste-panchayat etc. When there is not much accumulated cash in the household to 'respectfully' fulfill these obligations can be anybody's guess. Furthermore, what will be an individual's response if his earnings by way of blacksmithery activities are not commensurate with meeting his 'felt needs' of acquiring such desired symbols? Will it be begging, stealing or joining the activities of some other group involved in such activities that are hitherto considered socially undesirable by them? Will the responses be in form of organised adaptive responses or those will be merely individualistic? The answers to such questions can only be guessed at this stage. However, it seems that unless concerted efforts for speedy directed integrated development of this community are made, their transformation into a slum-like 'Culture of Poverty' situation appears inevitable. The relevant development processes must involve capacity for generation of appropriate and valid adaptive strategies into their cognitive-cultural domains to effectively cope up with acute stresses of their modes of participation in their macro-contexts. The valid design for such an integrated development endeavour of their community in a participatory mode must take into
account their structural position and not merely parochial
micro-level cognitive-cultural-relational imagery of their
socio-cultural matrix.

In view of our explicit ethical stand for attaining some degree of symmetry in man-anthropology relationship not only in the domain of professed values, but also in the realm of interests, we now proceed towards delineation of one such design.