P R E F A C E

The present study is an attempt to understand the semi- 
nomadic artisan community of Gaduliya Lohara in metropolitan 
Delhi with an objective to use primary data, secondary source 
materials and available knowledge in social sciences towards 
evolving the framework of an appropriate design for integrated 
development planning of this community in particular, and 
fringe communities in the third world metropolitan cities in 
general.

The author's research work with this community was 
initially designed merely to make a post hoc analysis of socio-
cultural change among Gaduliya Lohara after sedentarisation 
in Delhi - an analysis which might have modestly contributed 
towards existing anthropological knowledge in the realm of 
analysis of socio-cultural dynamics and change. The perceived 
ethical need to make the anthropology - community interactive 
process more symmetrical and equal, not only at the level of 
values but also in the domain of interests, subsequently 
expanded the research goals to also generate some strategies 
for their integrated development which could possibly help the 
community in developing itself and forging meaningful links 
with its macro-context. Such a shift in research foiled required 
detailed analysis of macro-context of the community not only
at the level of urban Delhi but also a synoptic comprehension of the local, national and international social-political-economic structures, so that the general framework for micro-level development design may have validity in other third-world contexts also.

Such a task as emerged from the ethical need to render symmetry and equality to the anthropology-community dialogue has created serious analytical problems which can only be solved by an interdisciplinary co-ordinated knowledge. Within one’s own restricted capacities, the researcher is trying to overcome the limitations created by his specific academic socialisation. It will take some more time and we hope that a committed action research project based on such an effort integrating theoretical knowledge with an action programme will substantially contribute towards not only enriching the methodological and information system of anthropology but may also evolve a framework for systematically channelising the activities of applied anthropologists in the third world countries, who have generally been relying more upon their skills and intuitive abilities rather than on systemic analytical cognition of socio-cultural matrices they endeavour to modify.
Perception of the limitations of hypothetic-deductive analytical framework for the conduct of such a study, specially at the present juncture of social sciences development (characterized by myopia, subcultural inertia, lack of effective communication across disciplinary boundaries, spatio-temporal dissection of social phenomena without effective methodological means to achieve a valid resynthesis), led to adoption of an implicit inductive-inferential approach for understanding social reality in an integrated holistic manner. The inferences emanating from such analysis may provide basis of social science axioms and postulates, the validity of which can possibly be tested by subsequent deductively oriented studies and/or by appropriate social action programmes which may provide a test for their relevance and adequacy and may also provide basis for reformulation of these axioms towards a valid social science paradigm for meaningfully comprehending third world social realities.

This report is not an end or satisfactory culmination of a defined research objective. Based upon author's continuing work with this community, it merely reflects upon the present level of author's modest analytical understanding of the community in its specific micro-context. There do exist vital gaps both at the level of an adequate analytical cognition as well as phenomenological details. No attempts have been consciously made to arbitrarily patch up these gaps for the sake of imposing a harmonious framework on a reality otherwise full of inconsistencies, inherent conflicts and contradictions.
Any attempts to do so may retard the growth of any science and, in the present state of anthropological knowledge, at least in the case of developing societies, will contribute towards rendering the discipline of anthropology unhumane and intellectually sterile.