CHAPTER II

POLITICAL CULTURE OF INDIA & MADHYA PRADESH
CHAPTER II -- INDIAN POLITICAL CULTURE

It has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that political culture is the sub-culture of the general culture. Historically, India was a Hindu country which grew along with the religious and political upheavals. Indian history is replete with many religious and sectarian movements. During the reign of Asoka, Buddhism spread widely. Subsequently, Greeks, Persians, Afghans Turks, Arabs and Mughals -- all streamed into northern India in successive waves through the mountain passes. Ultimately, the sub-continent became the heart of the British Empire and chains of slavery could not be broken until 1947 when the country emerged as a free nation.

The presence and interactions of numerous religious outlooks in the country call attention to the major distinctive features of the region. At the very outset it gave rise to pluralism with regard to religion, language, race, culture, and social structure. While a few ethnic groups have been assimilated into existing cultures, most of them have maintained their own identity, thus making the land as rich an area in cultural diversity as one may find anywhere in the world. The vastness of the region and its cultural complexity is further marred by strong linguistic groupism which causes perpetual sabre rattling and at times even bloodshed.

In ancient India the rulers were generally autocratic. The notion of "Dharma" was identical with the conception of Plato's justice. The warrior-king with the advice of his Brahmin priests was to ensure that each caste performed its traditionally allotted duty. 'Varna Vyavastha' (four class system) drew a sharp line demarcating the functions of men which later grew as a rigid caste system dividing people into four classes --- Kshatriya -- who were to rule and wage war; Brahmins -- who were to perform priestly duties; Vaishyas -- the merchant community; and Shudras -- who were to do the
drudgery. This traditional caste system prescribed a kind of social norm about the ruling class and debarred the two lower castes from the duties of administration branding them inferior in wisdom and valour. This tendency perverted the psychology of Indian Society and unfortunately it still persists in the formulation of group politics.

(1) Myron Weiner in his essay "The Politics of South Asia" remarks; "The rise of nationalism in the west meant a break with the religious tradition of the Universal Catholic Church, whose very comprehensive character stood as an obstacle to the creation of distinct national units. India could utilize the religious tradition as an instrument of nationalism and as a cohesive force against foreign rule without endangering modernization". 'But alas' it did not happen. Diversity remained as a religious creed of Indian life and perhaps it will continue for ages to come.

The Western culture had its impact on the socio-political life of India with a difference of intensity and duration in different regions of the country. For instance, European influence was first felt in Bengal, Madras, the regions around Bombay and Kerala. Many of the interior parts were not affected until the nineteenth or the twentieth century. This factor of duration had a lasting influence on the regional cultures of the country. Making English a bone of contention the South and the North have developed inimical relations even after a quarter of a century of independence. Language has played a significant role in creating regional groups with political motives.

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The factor of intensity signifies that some portions of India were under the direct British rule whereas
the others were ruled indirectly through the native rulers, as the British Government had adopted the doctrine of Paramountcy in relation to many Indian princely states. These areas (562 States) with a few exceptions, could not be heavily affected by Western Education and British administration. The native rulers with their vested interests did not educate their subjects in order to ensure their eternal ignorance. Even now, some of these regions are invariably the least politically organised and the most influenced by loyalties to castes and religions. The people of most of these areas still believe that the ex-ruling chiefs or their successors were the masters of their destiny. The democratic values are beyond the ken of their understanding. Taking undue advantage of the people's simplicity and ignorance, the ex-rulers and princes formed a concord to pressurise the decision -- making bodies, as they were cock sure of the loyalties of their people whom they still considered their subjects. But with the growth of democratic socialism and abolition of privy-purses, things have gone to a revolutionary change and the people by and large are getting conscious of their own interests.

In the first phase of the British rule, the British did not interfere in the local customs and traditional culture of India as they were concerned only with making profits for the East India Company. But an apparent change occurred during the early part of the nineteenth century when a conflict arose between the "Orientalists" and "Occidentalists". The former stood for nationalism based on traditional culture while the latter supported the British policy of education championed by Macaulay, the Law Member of the Governor General's Executive Council in the 1830's. The British Policy was given an overtone of a reformist zeal which pretended to prepare Indians for participation in the administration of their own country. Whatever be the aim, this policy did influence the traditional Indian institutions and values. A new administrative and judicial system based on British pattern replaced the village 'panchayats' and made Law
dominant over custom. It is an irony of fate that after independence when the Panchayat system was restored, it could not grow on healthy conventions but remained subservient to bureaucracy — a legacy left by the British, and protected by the Indian leaders.

With the introduction of the 'Zamindars' an intermediary class was created between the government and the cultivators. It regularised the collection of land taxes and ensured a continuous and substantial revenue for the British Government. Fragmentation of holdings, introduction of cash crops dependent upon a world market, the growing power of a money-lending class, and increase in tenancy — all contributed to the deterioration in the position of the peasant, particularly during the economic crisis in the early 1920's. Thus, it was no accident that at this stage the peasantry in India joined in the national movement for independence. But except for few exceptions the political leaders failed to inculcate a feeling of nationalism in Indian villagers.

In the economic sphere of the traditional culture of India, the British policy proved still more fatal. The duty-free import of mill-made cloth from England and the subsequent destruction of handicraft industries in India shattered the whole economic structure. These industries were the back-bone of rural economy and had provided substantial rural employment supplementing the meagre income of the peasantry. Moreover, the absence of duties also meant that investment by Indians in Indian Industries could not be protected. Furthermore, the train freight rates adopted by the British were aimed at facilitating the movement of goods from the interior to the ports. Thus, the production for internal markets was discouraged making India only a part of an imperial market. For export to Great Britain commodities like tea, cotton and jute were produced in India, so that Indian economy should become dependent upon her export trade.
British policy resulted in a large expansion in the functions of government. The development of education, the building of roads and rail-roads, and the introduction of social services, such as public health programmes, increased the role of government in all walks of life. As the functions of government expanded, the nationalist leaders called for even more governmental activity and looked upon the state as the only institution which could provide all avenues for development. Even after independence, the national leaders undertook to continue the process of expanding governmental functions which the British had begun. While the British educational system facilitated greater social mobility, it also reinforced the hierarchial social system. A well-polished aristocracy clad in western dress and trained in the westernised educational system sprang up. It formed the upper elite of society and received all out patronage from the British government. This was the class recruited in the civil services and British firms. Although caste-status was not the criterion of getting jobs, the high castes obviously had greater access to better education and hence to the new jobs. However, merit system was introduced in the recruitment of jobs which still continues in free India, though the caste considerations play an important role, at times shamelessly, without acknowledging the fact as such.

British education system and training of Indian youth in Britain had a blessing in disguise. These upper elite Indians were inculcated with British conceptions of liberty and ricocheted the rulers with their own teachings. John Locke and J.S. Mill provided more effective standards of government for educated Indians than did the vedas and other scriptures. The nationalist leaders of the first line were all the product of British education. To name a few great Indian liberals -- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a theological reformer and could, with Macaulay, be said to be the co-parent of English education in India. M.G. Ranade, another liberal was a learned judge. He wrote voluminously on social, economic, and religious questions. N.G. Chandavarkar
was of the same vein. Dadabhai Naoroji was a Parsee businessman from Bombay who settled in London and represented East Finsbury in the House of Commons. With Ranade and R.C.Dutta, he is regarded as one of Co-founders of economic study in India.

After the forerunners came the Liberals proper; G.K.Gokhale, V.Srinivas Shastri, H.N.Kunzru, Surendra Nath Bannerjee, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Telang, Jayakar, Paranjpye, C.L.Setalvad etc., who were teachers, journalists, lawyers, and all of them were students of political philosophy and literature(1) Thus, the background of Indian political culture was prepared by these and their like scholar-politicians. The Indian Constitution itself was a creation of these Indian Intellectuals trained in the British system of education. This tendency continues even today and in every political force we can trace a latent hand of an intellectual; and wherever such a leading hand is lacking, the interest articulation and aggregation becomes difficult.

The British was also responsible for creating differences in the development and progress of different regions of India. Since the initial contact with Europeans took place in the coastal regions, the first three universities were established in the Presidency areas. Consequently, Madras, Calcutta, Bombay, and the Malabar Coast were among the first to adopt a rationalised administrative system and to achieve greater commercialisation followed by industrialisation, Western education, and the use of the English language. These regions grew in importance in at least two respects -- as centres of trade and industry and as educational centres and points of Western influence. In almost all spheres -- industrial, commercial, administrative, political, and intellectual, the Tamils, Bengalis, Malayalees, Gujratis, and Maharashtrians, the people near the sea, held

(1) Edward Shils has made a very good survey of the Intellectuals in Indian Political Development. See the "Political Decision Makers" Ed. Dwaine Marick (Amerind Pub. Co.) PP. 29-57
dominant position. These regional differences grew enormously affecting the social and cultural unity of India. Today the regional groups have become so strong that at times even the national disintegration is feared. They are often in the bargaining position with the Central Government. Since this difference of progress has now largely been mitigated and many educational centres have been created in Northern and Central India, the feeling of competition among different regions has come up. The interior regions are now producing a middle class of lawyers, doctors, teachers and above all, administrators and political leaders. The people of the South have a strong note of protest, that, from Nehru to Indira Gandhi, all Prime Ministers hailed from Uttar Pradesh.

Thus, in analysing the development of Society on the national level in modern India, we should utilize the diverse orientations of the changing pattern of modernity. The upper elite class, to whom, in fact, the power was transferred by the British, tried in a frantic hurry to abolish the traditional institutions of caste and religion as potent determinants for government. They continued English as the medium of instruction and vehicle of communication between the centre and the states. But in the post-independence period a large section of Khadi wearing mediocre leadership had also emerged. This section did not know English and was not even properly educated. To establish their supremacy over the elite, and not so much for the national development, they gave a religious overtone to the national movement and became a strong force behind the adoption of Hindi as India's national language. The late Prime Minister Nehru and his colleagues committed a mistake in reorganising the States of India as linguistic Units. Language is a part of culture and dividing the nation on the basis of language was a sort of cultural division which proved detrimental to the nation.

In every region the business, the workers, and the ruling class were of different castes, social status, and speaking different languages. For instance, Marwaris, Parsees, Gujaratese, and Jains were the leading business communities throughout the country, while the working class was Maharastrian
and lower caste people of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The educated elite of South India was Brahmin, while the less educated were generally non-Brahmins. This sort of new stratification emerged as a major factor in intensifying group conflict. The lower middle class in the small towns and the technically skilled classes working over them as supervisors have entirely different traditional back grounds and represent a source of political conflict.

Besides, enormous cultural gaps have existed between urban and rural areas and, within the cities especially, between the few educated and rich and the many illiterate and poor. Beyond the confines of family and caste, and sometimes villages, there have been few "secondary associations" which could claim the loyalty of most Indians. (1) Politically the major cities of India are less and less 'foci' of political power. The support of the Congress party increasingly comes to rest on rural bases and state legislatures are more and more recruited from rural communities. (2)

In this trend of development we are witnessing the rise of a "tier-like set of diverse nuclei" in which villages and town, town and city, city and metropolis build upon each other. The village is being transformed from an integrated socio-economic unit into a habitation containing a collection of competing castes. (3)

What these developing social units can mean for national unification can be seen in two processes which have clearly developed in India since 1947 -- one is the growth and intensification of regional and state linguistic communities as the base of federal polity. The second process is perhaps more significant and that is the movement of power from the centre and political elites to the state level leadership which aggregates in the political parties. Thus "Indian politics has

(1) See, Gusfield, J. R. "Political Community and Group Interest in Modern India" (Pac. Aff. 38(2) Summer 65, pp. 132-41)
(2) See, Hookerjee, Giriya, K. "The Sociology of Indian Politics (The Illustrated Weekly of India Aug. 9, 1962, p. 42-43)
Also, Myron Weiner, "Politics of Scarcity", Chapter 6
(3) V. Nath, V. "Village, Caste, Community" (The Econ. Weekly Decr. 8, 1962 p. 1882)
entered a new phase in which the old awe -- inspiring, civil and urbanized leadership has come face to face with a new generation of leaders, which has its roots in the rural side, which has its grip in the local organisations." (1)

This change was necessitated by the electoral behaviour of the people and power-capturing devices of ministers and party bosses. But Rajni Kothari's view is not true in the present state of affairs when Chief Ministers are often imposed upon the state legislatures by the High Command of the Centre irrespective of the wishes of the people and their representatives. At the time of Mr. Shastri's election (unopposed) as Prime Minister, the things had of course moved in a way indicating the supremacy of regional leadership. Rangaswami (2) had attributed Shastri's election to a coalition of State-based congress leaders of whom Kamraj (Madras), Ghose (West Bengal), C.B. Gupta (U.P.), and Patil and Chavan (Maharashtra) were most influential. These men owed their political power to their state organisations and not to the centre or to the experience in the Independence movement.

This phenomenon of factionalism represents an element which in its magnitude and intensity is not part of the Western political system. It is highly local and personal in the Indian context. Party choices may split along the lines of already existent village or small city groups whose genesis and composition are the result of personal quarrels and family alliances within the congress party itself. Political competition and defection, may bring about competing groups whose loyalties are based on personal ties alone. (3)

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(1) Rajni Kothari: "India's Political Take Off" Econ. Weekly (Feb. 1962) pp. 149 - 153

(2) K. Rangaswami, K.: "The Background of Mr. Shastri's Election" (The Hindu Weekly Review, Madras) June 15, 1964 P.7

(3) Brass, Paul: "Factionalism and the Congress Party in U.P."
In a pluralistic society like India the problem of nationhood can be solved by elections, political parties, pressure groups and the process of parliamentary compromise. The "Political Community" consists in the development of loyalty and allegiance to such institutional forms, aided and abetted by the mediating role of secondary associations by the caste, occupation, or other interest-oriented groups. Armed with this conceptual apparatus of interest group politics, analyses of India have turned to the Congress Party as the expected instrument for the development of national unity through political "brokerage". But will it not lead to a political regimentation of a monoparty rule, even if a charismatic role was performed by the congress. In fact, our political group leaders are the "non-westernised" men operating "Western" institutions of political representation and rational compromise based on group supports. The intellectual leadership is also dwindling. In every walk of life, including the political ethos, the country is facing cultural conflict. It is on the cross-roads of 'orient' and 'occident' on one hand, and socialism and capitalism, on the other. The dilemma is not easy to solve, especially when there is a wide gulf between words and actions, between the political ideology propounded and the roles performed. It is in this background that the pressure groups play an important role in the functions of the government and decision-making bodies.

POLITICAL CULTURE OF MADHYA PRADESH

Madhya Pradesh, as its name denotes, occupies the central position in the country. India is considered as the seventh big nation of the world and Madhya Pradesh is the biggest state of this country. Its area is about 4,52,376 Sq. Kms. and the population according to the census 1971 is 41,650,684. (1) At the time of the State's reorganisation the population was 26,005,813 and in 1981 it is expected to be 5.20 Crores. Density of population is 94 per sq.km.86 percent of population lives in villages. The western part of the state is dominated by the Malwa Plateau, which offers relief to the plains of Gujarat, while the southern zone of the

(1) The Times of India Directory & Year Book 1972 P.367
state is dominated by the Narbada valley and in the east by the forest of Bastar. The State has borders with seven states -- Bihar and Orissa in the east, Gujarat in the West, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in the North, and Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh in the South.

Madhya Pradesh is an Africa-shaped mass between latitudes 17°48' N and 25°52' N and between longitudes 74°2'E and 84°24'E. The boundaries reflect the linguistic and cultural features of the population rather than topographical relief, and hence the outline of the state is extremely irregular. The area of forests is so big that from this point of view the state is next to Assam. Of the total forest area of 177,200 Sq.Kms. only 77,825 Sq.Kms. are reserved forests and 79,930 Sq.Kms. are protected. The state is also rich in minerals. About 25 kinds of minerals are found in the areas abounding the rock-systems of Gondwana and Dharwar. The regions of Baghelkhand and Chhattisgarh are rich in coal mines besides manganese, Bauxite, Diamond, Fireclay, Chinaclay and Dollomite etc., Vast stores of minerals are yet to be explored. From the point of view of the forest resources and minerals perhaps no state in India offers so much promise in terms of food production, energy sources, and the iron and steel industry. Recent discoveries of larger deposits of coal emphasise its power potential. The big industrialists and businessmen of India know this fact and hence, they want to exploit the resources of the state.

The state literacy is 22.12 per cent. More than 35 per cent of the total state's population comprises Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes. The importance of this socially and educationally backward block is enhanced by its concentration in certain regions of the state, notably the south and east, and by the political practice of reserving seats for members of these communities in educational institutions, government offices, and the state legislature.

The economy of the state is overwhelmingly agricultural and it accounts for between 62 and 65 per cent of the gross
state revenue. Only 10 per cent of the gross state income is received from Industry and mines. Although heavy industry is developing in the state, it has negligible connection with the cottage industry and the market within the state. In spite of the rich natural resources, the poverty of the state is indicated by such factors as the backward areas, inadequate electricity, deficient means of communication, large population of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, insufficient per capita income and per capita production. Resultantly, the state budget always runs in deficit and depends on the mercy of the overdraft facilities provided by the Central Bank.

INDUSTRIAL ESTATES:

There is a network of industrial estates in the following places: Indore, Gwalior, Raipur, Bhopal, Jabalpur Bilaspur, Saugar, Ratlam, Katni, Burhanpur, Satna, Vidisha, Guna, Shahdol, Durg, Rajnandgaon, Bhati and Ujjain.

Besides 27 semi-urban industrial estates 33 rural work sheds have also been constructed in the state.

Most of the industries are concentrated in Indore, Gwalior, Ujjain, Bhopal, Raipur and Bilaspur. The rest of the towns and rural surrounding have yet to be industrialised. Korba, Bhati and Bhopal -- Heavy Electricals are the public undertakings. Total number of working factories is 3,003 employing about 195,010 workers (including 22 defence factories). (1) The work force of labour is, therefore, concentrated in the aforesaid cities. The industries have a minimum linkage to the smaller scale industries and markets of the state. They have yet to produce significant social and political "multiplier" effects outside their immediate region. In the entire state in 1960 there were only 96,184 trade Union Members (2) 'A summary statement of the political

(1) Position as on 31st Decr., 1970.
(2) Census of India, 1961, VIII (Madhya Pradesh) Part II(A)
effects of the historical, social, and economic development of the state would testify to the lack of a single political community in Madhya Pradesh. It would be impossible to define various state class and party interests without making a prior unrealistic assumption of a high degree of political integration. Madhya Pradesh is not a homogeneous state. It was carved out of different cultural regions. Hence, the bulk of political culture is processed through the regional pressure politics. Wayne Wilcox rightly remarks:

"No State in India has fewer bonds underlying its unity, and it can with truth be argued that the parts of Madhya Pradesh are greater than their sum. The dominant characteristic of local politics is that no coherent state political community with well-worn practices and an intrinsic "Spirit of the house" has yet emerged. With adequate allowance for spatial and temporal differences, a suggestive comparison might be drawn with the German States before their unification. The principal bond of unity in both cases was language rather than a common history. Both had the misfortune of straddling middle ground between imperial rivals. The resource base of both was considerable, and each had its Prussia (for Madhya Pradesh read Mahakoshal) to take the lead in unification against the will of smaller constituent states. There was also a shared 'Austrian' problem (for Madhya Pradesh, read Malwa). The history of the German States must be read with that of Europe of the time, so important were external stimuli; so too with Madhya Pradesh and its interested neighbours in Delhi and the bordering states."

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(2) Ibid, P.128.
THE BIRTH OF THE STATE AND REGIONAL PROFILES

The present Madhya Pradesh was created in 1956 consequent to the report of the S.R.C. In fact it was a sort of residual state. That is when all the states were created, whatever was left out was hatched together and given the name of Madhya Pradesh. The essential unity of the Central Indian region was based on the common usage of Hindi, and its administrative organisation was justified on the grounds of economic size and efficiency. The constituent parts of the State were:

(1) Madhya Bharat, a union of princely states in the Malwa Plateau region;
(2) Vindhya Pradesh, a union of native states in the Vindhya mountain region,
(3) Bhopal, a Centrally administered princely state;
(4) and the Mahakoshal region, the Hindi speaking portion of the Central Provinces plus the previously amalgamated Hindi Speaking states of Chhattisgarh.

Each of these constituents, except Bhopal, was a composite entity in itself. Again except the Hindi speaking part of the Central Provinces, the three regions Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh and the Mahakoshal Region had been created after independence. It is important to note that the State was not created on the basis of any indigenous demand. In fact, the states reorganisation was dominated by forces not important in the region, but the central government was forced to change the political organisation of Central India in conformity with the national patterns. Thus the constituent units of Madhya Pradesh possessed almost no political affinity. The princely state unions did not identify their interests with the interests of the common masses. Since they had become financially weak and politically unstable, the central government thought that
safety and stability lay in amalgamation and so it was done.

A brief region-wise analysis is as under:

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Sources -- Census 1951

MADHYA BHARAT:

After independence under the federal scheme of the Government of India on 28th May 1948, 28 small native states situated in the plateau of Malwa were integrated into a collective state under the name and style of Madhya Bharat.

Constitutionally, it was a combined state of Gwalior, Indore and Malwa. The three fourth of the area of the state comprised Gwalior and Indore which were the important Maratha princely states in the Central India under British Rule.

In Ancient India this portion was called the Kingdom of 'Avanti' with 'Avantika' (Ujjain) as its Capital. Asoka, the great had built big 'Stupas' all around the state. Later, the 'Shake', 'Hunas', 'Gurajars' and Malv Nobles' ruled the state one after another and shattered the prosperity and weakened the unity of the state. By the advent of the Khilji dynasty, Jalaluddin took possession of Ujjain and burnt the beautiful temples and buildings to ashes and made it a hell of heaven. About a century later the state was divided into one hundred small princely units. Then came the
Mughals. In 1526, Babar took over Gwalior but soon after Shershah Suri defeated him and snatched it from Babar. Until 1562 Akbar accepted most of Malwa to his vast empire. During the reign of Mohammad Shah, Marathas started their thrust in the region by collecting 'Chauth' and it was for this errand that in 1724 the 'Peshwa' deputed Holkar, Scindia and Pawar as his generals in the region for realisation of Taxes. In 1743 the Peshwa was appointed officially as the Deputy Governor of the State and thus began his rule which was strengthened in 1761 after the battle of Panipat. Scindias in Gwalior and Holkars in Indore set up their states. After 1797 these two princely states indulged in clashes and conflicts with each other jeopardizing peace and prosperity. The British took advantage of this chaotic condition and Lord Hastings with his policy of interference forced these rulers to accept the British paramountcy in the beginning of 1818. The boundaries of the original 25 princely states of this area were clearly marked out and this set-up continued till 1947 when India became free.

In the states of Gwalior and Indore there was considerable peace and prosperity. The rulers had given incentive to industrialisation. Consequently, at the time of merger they could dictate their conditions and even after the reorganisation the two states, particularly Gwalior, exerted a good lot of influence in the making and functioning of the government of Madhya Pradesh. The Rajmata of Gwalior became a mighty political force in the State politics. She was instrumental in toppling down the ministry of D.P. Mishra and installing the S.V.D., government in the state. All the smaller states of this region are mostly under the hegemony of the Rajmata of Gwalior.

After the reorganisation, with the active help and initiative of the Scindias a University was opened at Ujjain.

(1) See Imperial Gazetteer of India (1908) Vol. IX PP. 339-341.
which is known as the Vikram University. In 1964 two more Universities -- Jiwaji University, Gwalior and Indore University -- were added to make this area a seat of learning. This shows that the rulers of Gwalior and Indore were in the habit of taking interest in the general welfare of their people. Both these states, with British administrative assistance, had stimulated the growth of industry -- Gwalior through two state investment trusts(1) and Indore primarily through attracting private investment from Bombay and Ahmedabad in the textile industry. So successful were the enterprises of the two states that Gwalior has to her credit three cotton textile mills, rayon factory, engineering facilities, pottery works, and manufacturing plants for shoes, sugar, paints, matches, biscuits and vegetable shortening. Indore has one silk and seven textile mills, numerous oil pressing and processing industries, and light engineering works fabricating such diverse products as diesel engines and glass.

Indore is the most industrialised city of the state and attracts a large number of workers from Rajasthan and Bombay. In 1921 the census figures revealed that 45 percent of the city's inhabitants were born outside the Indore region, consequently, the thriving economy of the city produced the highest per capita income in the state, but it is only slightly higher than the Indian national average per capita income. Trade Unions and Chambers of Commerce have their hectic activities in the region of Madhya Bharat. One Chamber each is housed in Indore, Gwalior, and Ujjain. Shri Homi F. Daji, General Secretary of the A.I.T.U.C.(State Unit) has his headquarters at Indore.

In spite of the industrialised cities like Indore and Gwalior, the region is said to be undeveloped and economically backward. Transport and communication have not yet linked the remote rural areas of the region with the

(1) See Menon, V.P. "The Story of the Integration of the Indian States". P.P. 224-225
bigger cities. The Chambal rivines until recently had been the shelter places for dacoits. Bhind and Moraina were the dreaded places of the state. As such within Madhya Bharat region contrasts are much sharper between city and countryside than between cities. For instance, Dhar, a former princely state South of Indore, has an urban -- rural ratio of 10.3/89.7 compared with Indore Districts 60/40. But Indore district literacy is 38.2 percent compared to Dhar's 13.5 percent. 51.1 per cent population of Dhar is classified as Scheduled Tribes. Hence, greater contrasts exist in the style of living of the people of these two districts, separated by a few Kms., in space but several centuries in time. (1) The reason of this contrast is largely due to the fact that the constituents of this region were the victims of an age-old feudal disparity. In Madhya Bharat there were 1,329 Jagirs distributed by castes or community as follows:

Maratha -- 92, Rajput -- 720, Brahman -- 249,
Kayastha -- 32, Vaishya -- 14, Muslim -- 60,
Mahant -- 90, and others 72. (2) But while the total area of Madhya Bharat was about 46,166 miles, only 8,449 Sq.miles were administered by Jagirdars. Since the various governments in this region passed legislation minimising the power of the rural intermediaries by providing compensation for the revenue and rights lost, However, the Thakurs and Jagirdars remained an important and powerful force in the regional politics.

For a student of a political behaviour it is necessary that in a state like Madhya Pradesh which is ethnically and socially diverse these factors must be properly studied and empirically mapped. The rural politics tends to be more particularistic than urban politics, and the caste

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(1) For an amplification of this point see Wayne Wilcox's Trade Unions, the Middle Class, and a Communist, M.P. The Indore Parliamentary Election of 1962", in Myron Weiner and Rajni Kothari (Eds), "Indian Voting Behaviour" (1965) PP. 68-84

(2) "Report of the Rajasthan -- Madhya Bharat Enquiry Committee (New Delhi, 1950) PP. 29-30
membership, the tenure system, the ethnic groups play a crucial role in the countryside, especially in the voting behaviour and in determining the public policy. Summing up the brief analysis of this region we may conclude that the following seven unique factors characterise the political culture of the Madhya Bharat region:

(1) A continuous struggle between the ex-rulers and the Congress government and a struggle between former ruling houses for status and power. Since the present socialistic trends of the ruling Congress Party have abolished the privileges of the ex-rulers and snatched away the privy-purses they are turning to the democratic values of life with a view to capture seats in the legislatures.

(2) A modern elite rivalry for business and political power; firstly, between Indore and Gwalior elites; and secondly between the business communities like Marwaris and Gujaratis and the business houses set up by the former ruling class.

(3) Brahmin versus Thakur family feuds which created a class of outlaws taking political power in their own hands by might and, who, despite the surrender of a powerful gang of dacoits under a persuasive plan of the Sarvodaya leaders, still have their sway in the interiors of the region.

(4) The organised groups of business under the political protection of the various chambers of commerce, vis-a-vis a powerful and well financed trade union movement, particularly in Indore.

(5) A large Jain commercial class with historic commercial and religious ties to Gujarat, with a rivalry for regional dominance in coalition with Brahmins.

(6) A tribal bloc in the South which tends to maintain in office experienced political leadership with the help of non-tribal money lenders who play an important brokering role.
A powerful union of students (as three universities, are situated in this region) with their strong united force capable of influencing the government to achieve their ends.

Each of these factors with its rival and conflicting role fragments the politically articulate groups of Western Madhya Pradesh and diminishes the collective voice of Madhya Bharat in state policy. Each group produces political factionalism and fluid coalitions reflecting and contributing to the various conflicting groups which exists in the State Government.

BHOPAL:

The second constituent of the reorganised Madhya Pradesh was Bhopal, which, before independence, stood as the premier Muslim princely state under British Central India Agency. It was administered by the Nawab of Bhopal who played an important role in pre-independence Hindu-Muslim politics. Geographically, it is a part of eastern plateau of Malwa, Historically, it had been a Muslim state since 1708 when during the reign of Bahadur Shah, Dost Mohammad of Afghanistan had founded this state. In the later 18th and early 19th century, when Malwa was facing a lot a turmoil, this state was completely quiet as it had already befriended the British and in 1818 it accepted the British paramountcy which continued till June, 1947. A number of Muslim jagirs and charitable trusts had been created with a view to infusing progressive administration. The rulers enjoyed prestige within their order, but the people of the state were generally poor and backward as Bhopal was little touched by industrialisation before independence.

In 1947 Bhopal ought to have been an integral part of the New Madhya Bharat Union, but because of its heritage and bitter communalism of partition, it posed special problems. (1)

(1) Authentic account is given in V. Menon; Op. Cit. pp 303-306.
The State "Praja Mandal" (Congress backed people's organisation in the State) agitated for both liberalism and amalgamation with Madhya Bharat. But the Central State Ministry decided to keep Bhopal under Central control for atleast five years. (1) The primary factor in the decision was the insecurity of the Muslim population which was concentrated in Bhopal, one of the few islands in a stormy North India.

Consequently, it was made Chief Commissioner's State in the beginning and, later, it was a C-Class state under the new Constitution of India. The new state had an area of 17,883 Sq.Kms. divided into two districts of Sehore and Raisen.

In the field of industry Bhopal was relatively poor. Although, Cotton textile, Straw Board factory and the Sehore Sugar Mills had already been set up before 1948, the real industrialisation began with the establishment of HEL(Heavy Electricals). By virtue of its size, organisation, and trade unions, it has added a new dimension to the political life of the region.

After the states reorganisation Bhopal was made the capital of new Madhya Pradesh and this factor was exclusively responsible for its development. Its isolation from Madhya Bharat and its extra-Mahakoshal, extra-Vindhya Pradesh states, made it a relatively neutral ground for regional politics. The other three units had a lot of bickerings and disagreements within themselves. Hence, Bhopal was ultimately selected to be developed as metropolis of the state.

Recently, a University has also been established at Bhopal. It has been carved out of a part of jurisdiction so far affiliated by the Vikram University and a part by the Saugar University. A few Colleges are still dominated by the Muslim elite.

Concluding, we can say that the political culture of Bhopal is conditioned by the following factors:

(1) Despite the presence of a hundred thousand urban muslims, the land tenure system and the muslim jagirdars did not

(1) S.R.C. Report, 1955, pp 126-27
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consistute problem, nor even a minority problem. In 1953 under the Jagirdari abolition act, 99 jagirs were abolished.

(2) But the muslims do form a powerful elite exercising control over prominent institutions of the State. Bhopal is becoming, by and large, a centre of education and modern learning. All kinds of state level Associations, and industrial organisations have their headquarters/offices at Bhopal and they often work as a political force influencing and aggregating different interests.

(3) The development of the state capital and its effect in stimulating heavy immigration into the city and district are important factors responsible for creating a cross-current of regional politics in the state.

(4) The establishment of H.E.L. has infused an industrial political culture and has paved the way for trade unions which have become a strong political force even in the local politics.

VINDHYA PRADESH:

This again was a group of 35 integrated princely states of Baghel Khand and Bundelkhand regions situated in the eastern and north-eastern positions of the British Central India. Traditionally, Baghelkhand and Bundelkhand never saw each other eye to eye. The most important state in the region was Rewa, which was as large as the entire area of the Bundelkhand states combined together. But because of the family feuds and dynastic quarrels based on Rajput Caste disputes, the regions had never accepted each other as political allies. In fact, the rivalry in the region was as great as between the Scindia and Holkar dynasties of Madhya Bharat. In the initial stages democratic pattern of government was formed, but due to the latent hostile groups it could not function normally and within a year the Central Government had to send a chief commissioner superseding the representative bodies. Under the new constitution it was included in the 'C' category of states. On 25th Jan., 1950, 13 states were merged with Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Bharat
leaving the total area of the state to 61,365 Sq.Kms with a population of 3,574,690 according to the census of 1951.

Vindhya Pradesh took its name from the Vindhya range, which sets Baghelkhand and Bundelkhand apart from the plains of Uttar Pradesh. It is the most backward part of Central India. In no district is the literacy rate more than 15.6 per cent, or the urbanisation more than 9.6 per cent. No district in Vindhya Pradesh has a per capita income higher than the state average. In every district, except the in Chhatarpur, the tribal population is important.

The entire region lacks a coherent political culture as it is a forceful combination of heterogeneous units which had different social and traditional norms. The Maharaja of Rewa, Shri Martand Singh has been a powerful political force who is invariably wooed and fondled by the different political parties at the time of elections. Shri Govind Narain Singh, another feudal chief of the region had been the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in the S.V.D Government who created a University of at Rewa commemorating the name of his father without having a prior sanction of the University Grants Commission.

There is hardly any big industry worth its name, Hence, labour problem and trade unionism are no political force of the state. The political life of Vindhya Pradesh seems to be strongly influenced by (1) tribal and caste loyalties, (2) the continuing strength and mutual hostilities of jagirdars, mostly rajputs, and (3) the continuing power and rivalry of princes which is important in factional politics of Madhya Pradesh.

MAHAKOSHAL AND CHHATTISGARH

It is the largest constituent unit of the present Madhya Pradesh. Before independence, leaving aside the 14 states of Chhattisgarh and the state of Makdai, it was a British province known as the Central Provinces and Berar. It was a bilingual state with Nagpur as its capital. Under the state's reorganisation scheme the Marathi speaking area
was merged with Madhya Pradesh. At the time of the states reorganisation its area was 242585 Sq.Kms. and the population 1,36,40,495. The area occupied by the 14 states of Chhattisgarh and Madai (which had been part of Bhopal agency) was 82,547 sq. kms.

The Chhattisgarh region is the extreme eastern portion of the state on the Orissa border. Of the 15 chiefs of the area, the one with the largest state was the ruler of Bastar, who ruled an area of about 13,000 sq. miles. In the epic age this area was referred to as 'Dandakaranya'. A reference to this effect is available even in the 'Mahabharata' Historically, it had been a part of the Maurayan empire. Later, the Shungas ruled over it. The Milgo of Andhra ruled over this region in the year 124 A.D., but it was very brief, to be followed by the supremacy of the Gupta dynasty, which, in turn, was destroyed by the Huna's invasion. Hunas too, could not stay longer and they gave way to Yashodharman. The Satpura plateau was usurped by the 'Rashtrakutas' of the south and the surrounding area of Jabalpur was ruled by the kings of 'Chedi' dynasty. It was an era of the 3rd century A.D. (1) when a clan of chedi dynasty, known as 'Haihay' immigrated to Chhattisgarh and made Ratnapur, near Bilaspur, as their headquarters.

It is believed that between 9th and 12th century A.D., the Chandels of Mahoba had acceded Sagar and Damoh to their empire, while the Parmar's of Malwa had been ruling over the Western region of Narmada valley. The 'Gond' dynasty of Mandla, established in 664 A.D., had gradually extended its empire upto 1480 during the reign of Sangram Shah when it acceded the districts of Sagar, Damoh, Bhopal, Narmada valley, Mandla, and Seoni. There was a different 'Gond' king, according to Farishta, in Mahakoshal whose capital was Deogarh (Chhindwara) which was later on transferred to Nagpur. His kingdom included Baitul, Chhindwara, Nagpur and Seoni, Bhandara and Balaghat. The mughal emperors could not penetrate in this region beyond the western valley of Narmada, but the district of Baitul was under the mughals who also annexed Sagar and Damoh during the reign of Rani Durgavati, a Gond ruler.

(1) V.S.Rao N.S.Kondawar: Madhya Pradesh Ka Arthik Vikas", (Madhya Pradesh Hindi Granth Academy) P. 15
On the other hand, the Bundela King Chhatrasal infiltrated in the area surrounding Mandla and in the 17th century established his supremacy over the regions of Narmada valley and Vindhya Plateau. But he could not stay longer in this area. In 1735 the Peshwa started his rule in Sagar and in 1781 Marathas took over Mandla. Raghujir Bhonsle, who had become a powerful force by now, annexed Deogarh and by 1751 took the entire region of Chhattisgarh under his control. The Bhonsles had made Nagpur as their capital from where they directed the whole administrative machinery. During the period 1796-98 the entire Mahakoshal was captured by the Bhonsles of Nagpur. The first phase of Bhonsle's rule was benevolent and replete with prosperity and development of agriculture but during the reign of Raghujir II, the circumstances got extremely changed and the period from 1803 to 1818 was full of turmoil and unrest. In 1803 the Bhonsles fought against the British and their decline set in. Although, a treaty of mutual friendship was signed in 1816 but just after a year the battle started again and as a sequel of Bhonsle's defeat the regions of Narmada valley were handed over to the British. The rest of the area was swallowed by the British rulers in 1853 under their crafty device of the doctrine of lapse. Finally, since 1857, after the battle of independence, the entire Mahakoshal was directly administered by the British. In 1861, with a view to the administrative facility, a new province was carved out, in which 4 Marathi Speaking Districts of Nagpur division were also merged and it was called the Central Provinces. In 1903, the area of Berar was also included to give it the name of the Central Provinces and Berar. After independence it was known as Madhya Pradesh and the position continued until the states were reorganised in 1956 when all the centrally situated Hindi speaking areas were merged with Madhya Pradesh.

Culturally, the Mahakoshal region is entirely different from the region of Chhattisgarh and the two portions are quite dissimilar in mode and pattern of living. Mahakoshal had been under direct British administration and the people of this area had a firm belief that they were better educated with a better breeding and better cultural heritage. Jabalpur
the biggest city of Mahakoshal, was a seat of education and learning even during the British rule. Robertson College enjoyed a prestige along with the Morris and Hislop Colleges of Nagpur. Just after the creation of the new Madhya Pradesh in 1956 a university was established at Jabalpur in 1956, whereas the Ravishankar University of Raipur could not be created before 1963. The natives of Chhattisgarh are not only poor and illiterate but backward in their very thinking and approach to life. The former ruling chiefs were not at all liberal in educating their subjects. The Raj Kumar College of Raipur, as its very name denotes, had been catering to the preliminary education of young princes and the wards of the upper elite. The suppressed and the down trodden included a vast number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, most of whom are still continuing their primitive way of life. There was hardly any travail of freedom movement in this area and whatever little awakening was aroused in the later thirties, and forties, was due to active work of late Ravi Shankar Shukla who may be considered as the Chief Pioneer of this region. Incidentally, he too was not the son of the soil but had migrated from Unnao, a small town of Uttar Pradesh, a fountain of various 'Kanyakubja' families, now flourishing in Madhya Pradesh. During his stewardship as Chief Minister of the state nothing worth its name was done for the reconstruction of this area except for the face lifting of Raipur which was known as the hometown of Shuklas (now the worthy sons of Ravishankar Shukla).

Although, Bilai and Korba figure as the nuclei of national industry but these have hardly provided any job, avenues for the natives not because of any prejudice or animosity but because they are too backward, unskilled and lotus-eaters to be absorbed in these sophisticated factories. Both the mineral and agricultural wealth are barely exploited and the forest products of Bastar have not yet been utilised, partly because of the more important political disputes over forest rights.
Irrespective of the backwardness, illiteracy and large number of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, Chhattisgarh, is important mainly in two ways -- it is the rice-bowl of the state, and it sends the largest number of members in the legislative Assembly. Naturally, therefore, the fingers of big leaders are always on the political pulse of the people who really matter in pressurising the public opinion and influencing the voting behaviour. The 'Kanyakubjas' and Chhattisgarh Brahmins are the right rivals in the entire political process, and the group politics is evident even in the most trivial and insignificant matters.

In Mahakoshal the parallel of Raipur is Jabalpur, where the influence of Shri D.P. Mishra is more than obvious. It is also a centre of the caste-ridden politics, and the leaders of Mahakoshal vie with the leaders of the Chhattisgarh region. Thus, in spite of being the two portions of the same region of the same state, they are like the people of two different states competing and jealous on each political count.

The unique characteristics, of the region therefore be summarised as under:

i) Its numerical dominance compared to the three other heterogeneous units.

ii) The importance of the tribal and scheduled caste population, and tactful activities of their leaders in Chhattisgarh region.

iii) The development of heavy industries, and the consequent growth of trade unions and trained cadre of the party workers.

iv) The intricate caste-dominated politics initiating young students of budding universities to factional interest-groups.

v) While caste and tribal loyalties are still important, this region has an experienced political elite, and the style of life of rice/paddy cultivators,
tied to regional markets as they are, is quite
different from that of subsistence farmers in
Madhya Bharat.

vi) The potentials of the region are such as
to encourage growth and urbanisation, thereby
further emphasising the dominance of Mahakoshal in
the life of the State.

CONCLUSIVE TRAITS OF THE REGIONAL POLITICAL CULTURE:

The regional profiles analysed above sufficiently
prove that Madhya Pradesh is, in fact, not one state but
a unique combination of typical heterogeneous units yoked
together by the States Reorganisation Commission on a lame
argument of a common language, ignoring the different
dialects, tribal backwardness of Chhattisgarh on the one
hand, and, adequate prosperity of the Madhya Bharat, on the
other, Every political leader has to blow his own regional
trumpet and every member of the State Legislative Assembly
is mad after cherishing the interests of his own region.
Consequently, on the basis of regional, communal, profess­
ional, industrial and factional stakes the state has become
a hot bed of various interest groups, which, more often
than not, aggregate in the Congress Party -- the only
aggregated political force in the state.

SUPREMACY OF THE CONGRESS:

Since independence, and, except for a brief span
of time, when the SVD formed the ministry, the Congress
party has been continuously ruling over the state. The
reasons of the supremacy of Congress are not far to seek.
To a high degree, it exhibits the characteristics of a one
party system in which the struggle for power takes place
between rival factions within the same party. Party
behaviour is more understandable if regional backgrounds
are kept in mind. Every part of M.P. had experienced some
form of representative government prior to the creation of
the state in 1956. Each of them had well established
branches of the Congress party which had sustained
independent ministries. It was inevitable that these organised subordinate communities should be semi-independent, especially when substantive interests supported them. In addition, the constituencies of the state reflect such a wide spectrum of social organisation that their representatives could hardly share any more than offices in the legislative Assembly.

In the first general elections the Ram Rajya Parishad and Hindu Mahasabha had won 5 and 7 seats, respectively, exploiting the political religious feelings of the caste Hindus, but, in the 1967 elections their force dwindled to nil. Partly, the electorates might have been convinced of the futility of their role in active politics, partly, the growing popularity of the Jan Sangh might have attracted the votes of religious minded people thinking that it was going to be a bigger, lasting political party, next only to congress and partly, because of the tactful propaganda of the congress party, denouncing the narrow outlook of these sectarian parties.

The Socialist party in its different wings faced a conflict of ideology and lacked a party programme on a unified scale. The Congress party in its election manifesto adopted from time to time almost all the socialist programmes leaving no chance at all for the electorate to feel attracted towards any of the socialist parties.

The C.P.I. exists only in name and is almost known in the state Assembly by the presence of Shri Shakir Ali and Shri Homi F. Daji who are elected more on the basis of their personal influence rather than the popularity of their party. The workers' force of the state is generally aggregated in the Congress party through the unions' affiliation to the INTUC, a labour wing of the congress. The workers are given to feel and realise that their interests are secured if they are affiliated to INTUC and through it to the congress. The AITUC is active in the Railway unions and is now thrusting its presence in the local industrial units with the help and support of the congress workers.
The vast agrarian and tribal populations survive on the mercy of the Congress leaders and vote seekers. Through a network of co-operative societies (which are the tributaries of the Congress Party) the farmers are given enormous loans and financial assistance persuading them to offer their unconditional support to the Congress party. The opposition parties are two ill-organised to appeal and convince the illiterate rural masses that they may be of any use to them. It was a blessing in disguise for the Congress that these peasants and tribes were illiterate, that they had no strong interest articulation and that the opposition was too weak to penetrate in the rural masses.

The business has its own axe to grind and they are confident that by paying liberal contributions from time to time to the party organisation in general and to the election campaign in particular, their interests are secured in the congress ministry. Likewise, the ex-ruling chiefs have their own weaknesses. Many of them have money in the foreign Banks which the Congress promises them to return. Others are keen to have income tax relaxations and such other concessions. They are often willing to contest on the congress tickets spending enormous money from their personal funds.

Thus, all the groups and factions supply a blind support to the Congress party, keeping their group solid and sound to make it stout enough to bargain the ruling party to achieve their ends.

In the end, Jan Sangh has been the only largest opposition party securing 78 seats in the 1967 elections, but the debacle of D.P. Mishra's Ministry in the same year and the formation of the S.V.D. under the leadership of the Rajmata of Gwalior pulled down the prestige of the party. J.S., as one of the constituents of the S.V.D., gave a poor and partial performance which belittled its gravity in the public eye. Consequently, in 1972 the simple people of Madhya Pradesh dazed by the charismatic personality of
Indira Gandhi and bewitched by the slogan of "Garibi Hatao" returned the 'New Congress' to the State legislative assembly with a criminal majority of 219 in a House of 297.

It is, thus, clear that the role of opposition parties in the political process of Madhya Pradesh is negligible but this does not mean that the government is a free agent, a dictator or an arbitrary actor. The redeeming factor is the existence of numerous pressure groups which not only dominate in the organisational system of the party but also determine the making and unmaking of the ministry, persuade the policy formulation and the decision-making, pressurise the authoritative allocation of power and yet remain in themselves an 'anonymous empire'.

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