

"The Incident of the Fish": A Sociological View of Contemporary Indian Political Trends

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In this paper an incident is related which occurred on January 20, 1961, in "Sherupur" (pseudonym for a village in the Faizabad District of Uttar Pradesh, India).¹ I have called it "The Incident of the Fish," in order to stress its deceptive simplicity. After describing this incident, I propose to show that what it tells us about political trends in this single north Indian village is connected with certain basic trends in the structure of rural politics throughout the Indian subcontinent.

The incident of the fish deals with a brief heated altercation among some men of Sherupur over the sale to an outside entrepreneur in behalf of the *gaon panchayat* (or village council), on the initiative of the *pradhān* (or head man) and the resident Village Level Worker (VLW), of the right to stock one medium-sized pond (*talāb*) with fish and, as they mature, to periodically extract them for sale in nearby Faizabad City. Yet it affords a striking insight into the social structure of Sherupur, a village of today's India, and particularly into the connection between caste, religion, and the traditional forms of village leadership, on the one hand, and the new political and economic forces that are arising through the effects of the growing modernization and industrialization of Indian society, on the other.

The incident of the fish occurred on a clear crisp morning during the north Indian winter, and for this reason it was not an unusual sight on January 20 as one moved about Sherupur

to find here and there groups of people sitting together in little clusters imbibing the sun's warmth while discussing whatever topic happened to be commanding their attention at the moment. One such group was assembled in front of the residence of Bhawani Bheek Singh,² the ancient *pradhān* whose senior lineage segment had supplied Sherupur with her men for the last twelve generations or more. This house is one of the largest in the village and, because it commands a sweeping view of the village's approaches from its perch atop the highest rise of land in Sherupur, it is a popular gathering place for all sorts of occasions. The pond in which the fishing rights were let stands at the western entrance to Sherupur, directly in front of Bhawani Bheek's residence.

Something must be said about this *pradhān*, Bhawani Bheek Singh, by way of providing background for the story that ensues. He was a very old, strong-willed Thakur (that is, Rajput caste) with a quick temper and knowledge of customary law so phenomenal that he had argued cases before the high court at Allahabad. His age was a matter of great reknown in the area. Both he and his fellow villagers contended that Bhawani Bheek was 107 years old; my direct and indirect investigations of this, however, led me to the conclusion that an age of 85 was probably nearer to reality. The larger figure had become an article of faith which was sincerely believed, I feel sure, by both the Thakur and his admirers. The reason is obvious: a great amount of prestige attaches to such longevity, both to that person individually and to the village in which he lives. Fancy had become fact in response to the powerful urge in people everywhere to prefer to believe what it is most flattering to believe.

As already noted, this old Thakur was the direct descendent of the senior line of Rajputs who had always provided Sherupur's political leader. Bhawani Bheek had managed to cling to his pre-eminent position in village politics until early 1961 even though the headmanship had technically been an elective office for the last ten years (elections are held every five years for village offices). This was accomplished through a combination of adroit compromises with his chief rivals, the exploitation of the charismatic value of his traditional status and venerability, and (pri-

marily, I think) exploiting the fact that elections were always decided by show-of-hands vote. The Thakurs and Brahmans, being the chief landowners in Sherupur, had in the past had everyone else beholden to them for the bulk of their income. The others rented land from them, rendered various specialized economic and ritual services, and received a wide variety of largesse on a host of constantly recurring ceremonial occasions. Consequently, no one was going to openly oppose a Thakur as rich and powerful as Bhawani Bheek Singh as long as it had to be done by show of hands where the deed could be marked. Retaliation could be swift and catastrophic for any household that did not enjoy a significant measure of economic autonomy.

On the day the incident of the fish took place, Bhawani Bheek Singh was not sitting among the group of men assembled before his house, as well he might have been on many another day. He had left for Faizabad earlier that morning to attend to some private matter. While the others were there, however, the man who had purchased the right to breed fish in the *talāb* in front of Bhawani Bheek's came with his *machhawāñ lōg* (people of the fisherman caste) to remove some fish for marketing. The proprietor of the enterprise was himself from the city of Faizabad and he dressed accordingly—in Western style, well-laundered bush shirt and trousers. His workers at once busied themselves with the job of casting their nets and responding to other commands issued by their employer. The proprietor remained on the opposite bank of the pond from where the men of Sherupur were seated and made no motion or gesture of any kind toward them. Groups of women and children began to form along the banks of the *talāb*, drawn by the excitement that this disruption of the normal rhythm of village life had caused.

The composition of the group at Bhawani Bheek's place is of crucial importance to what happened because of what these individuals did and did not represent in the power structure, as well as other aspects, of the social structure of the community. Sitting on a *chārpai* (or stringed cot) at the group's center, beside a friend and myself, were the VLW of the village (Sharma) and a colleague from an adjacent village, the *pradhān's* only son (Ayodhiya Prasad Singh), and Sitaram Singh. Ayodhiya Prasad

has throughout the eight years that I have known him unequivocally repudiated the idea of succeeding to his father's post. The transformation of the office to an elective one provided him with the "out" he had always yearned for. Ayodhiya Prasad is a quiet, rather passive, unusually intelligent and sensitive man who is already in his mid-fifties and worrying about loss of vitality and virility. Active pursuit of power and recognition have never been his cup of tea.

Sitaram Singh also disdains the pursuit of local glory. He has remained a childless widower for years, ever since his wife died shortly after her *gauna* (final departure for her husband's household) occurred, and he preserves an absolutely independent mode of life. Sitaram gives the appearance of being an extremely stable, secure personality (a view I confirmed through personality testing) who rarely quarrels with anyone, but who does not disdain to do so when his interests seem to demand it. He rarely flatters, but also rarely insults. He asks odds of no one and does not allow himself to be "used" by others. Yet he is popular and an important influence in Sherupur, perhaps just because of his disarming, inner-directed ways.

Distributed in a semicircle around the *charpai* were, in order, the clerk (a partly educated man from a distant village and indifferent to Sherupur's problems, by admission to me) of the Cooperative Bank branch in Sherupur, Jagath Narayan Misra (the village *pundit* or Brahman priest whose fame has spread through the area due to the effectiveness of his powers to heal, dispel evil forces, and prophesy the future), and Ram Nath Singh (the eloquent and bombastic "assistant *pradhān*" who had declared himself to be a candidate for the top office this year in opposition to Bhawani Bheek, his castemate and close kinsman). Then there was slow-witted Sobha Singh whom all dismissed as a sort of semi-mental-defective and who, it is maintained, remains unwed into his middle thirties for this reason. Also there was Harbans Kayastha, son of the late *Lala* (village accountant), who had abandoned his traditional occupation, except on a part-time basis, for a job as clerk on the Northern Railroad at Faizabad. Finally, there were Ram Baksh Ahir and Ram Prasad Kahar who stood somewhat apart from the others

because their caste status was lower and because, at the same time, they were not in any respect powers of consequence in village affairs. On other occasions both had separately confided to me their contempt for the so-called "Thakurs." They referred to them as being all a pack of clever (*chalāk*) and greedy (*lālchī*) scoundrels who were ever out to oppress the real workers in the village. Ram Baksh Ahir had once put it to me this way: "The land records show who owns the land, but they don't show who cultivates it."

So the Ahir and the Kahar listened, took their turn drawing upon the *chilam* (pipe bowl) as it was passed around the circle, but contributed very little to the conversation.

The tranquility of the gathering was suddenly shattered by the needle-sharp voice of Shiv Narayan Mishra. Normally, Shiv Narayan is an excitable, emotional man, somewhat out of character for the Brahman. Today he was obviously deeply troubled and upset about something. His words came in torrents and exploded like shrapnel upon the ears. He paced up and down as he spoke. Everyone stared, open-mouthed, at him.

His agitation stemmed from the presence of those fishermen in Sherupur who were removing fish from the pond. Why was this being allowed? Who was responsible for giving these people the right to come into the village whenever they pleased? Don't they know that there is smallpox (*chāyichuk kī beemāri*) in this village and that we are preparing a *puja* (a religious rite) for *Bhagoti Mai* (the smallpox goddess) in order to expunge this evil scourge? We are supposed to be fasting, and yet these people can come in here and take the life of fish right before our eyes! Where is the *pradhān*?

"Where is the *pradhān*?" he had asked automatically during his outburst. Ram Nath Singh, now the announced opponent of Bhawani Bheek in the forthcoming election, had at once chimed in when this question was asked with a sarcastic reply to the effect that "our *pradhān*" is never around when he is really needed. "He's up in Faizabad someplace doing God knows what." Others snickered and nodded agreement with this remark. And at this point Bhawani Bheek's son rose from the *charpai* and departed. He had no heart to openly defend his father (there had

been no love lost between them for many years now and they had long ago partitioned their property in order to be able to maintain separate establishments) but, at the same time, he had no desire to listen to his father being vilified either.

Once Ayodhiya Prasad had departed, the remaining participants let loose a torrent of abuse against the old man. He cares not one whit for the village's welfare, only for his own ambition, etc. And we must keep in mind that all this came primarily from members of his own and the other paramount caste in Sherupur. Ram Baksh Ahir and Ram Prasad Kahar naturally added as much fuel to the flames as they felt their position allowed. They were obviously delighted with the turn events had taken but remained prudent in their comments. And while this uproar before Bhawani Bheek's continued, the fishermen went on trapping their fish without interruption. The proprietor observed the incident with a look of bored disdain on his face for he obviously saw it as a lot of superstitious nonsense over which only "country bumpkins" could get excited. He later said as much to me.

The VLW tried to quell the eruption by avidly defending Bhawani Bheek and his actions on the grounds that it was the policy of the NES to encourage maximum utilization of rural resources. He said that the whole uproar was senseless and he was plainly exasperated. His comrade naturally adopted the same view.

This did not satisfy Shiv Narayan Misra nor anyone else present. The group had now been transformed into an angry citizenry. Even tranquil Sitaram Singh was upset, but his displeasure was more rationally oriented, directed less against the religious and more against the economic implications of granting the fishing rights to outsiders. His was clearly a minority view, however.

The wrangling continued until well after the fishermen had folded their nets and departed. Its upshot was that the objection on religious grounds to the presence of the fishermen far outweighed in importance the possibly far more cogent economic grounds raised by Sitaram Singh (for example, that the rights were sold too cheaply in relation to the potential value of the

fish harvested). It clearly revealed a uniform hostility to the *pradhān*, Bhawani Bheek Singh; it revealed that his fellow Rajput adversary in the forthcoming election was eager to turn this kind of unrest into votes in his own behalf. It revealed the simmering hostility of the lower ranked castes against the higher. This was the meaning of delight which the Ahir and the Kahar had taken in witnessing this dissension among the elite, especially because it seemed to promise to have an ultimate effect upon the power structure of the community. At the same time, this latter also revealed the extent to which the hostilities of the low castes have always had to be given subtle euphemistic avenues of expression due to the tremendous preponderance of power at the disposal of the traditional elite castes and the derivative sanctions they are in a position to apply. The situation has tended, on the level of the channelization of aggression, to resemble that of the American Negro in the status order of the old South.

Also revealed were the new roles and role conflicts engendered by the penetration into the rural areas of the institutionalized expressions of national planning for modernization. Bhawani Bheek had become the focal point of this controversy over fishing rights because his position as leader of the community was itself in a state of underlying flux. Originally he had become *pradhān* by hereditary right and there had been at the time a whole system of culture and social structure which consistently supported him and maintained him on that basis. But ten years ago the whole situation had ostensibly begun to change when the office of *pradhān* was made elective. This had been decreed by votaries of change whose power and legitimations derived from a secular nationalistic regime. But Bhawani Bheek had found it possible to utilize the new system of political rules to preserve his traditional legacy, for the rules did not in reality provide safeguards to the subordinate castes against the very kinds of coercion which had always been the basis upon which they had been successfully kept subordinate.

However, even though the headmanship proved to be perpetuable on the old basis as far as assuring the continuation in office of its hereditary occupant was concerned, any notion of complete identity with the past was strictly an illusion. Changes

had occurred and were still taking place. The coming of Community Development meant the introduction into the functional sphere of the headman's role, systematic dealings with an agency possessing (1) tremendous new resources, (2) a bureaucratic social structure whose personnel are recruited from everywhere on a universalistic basis, and (3) an impersonally persistent interest in the implementation of policies whose aim is quite frankly change in directions which threaten tradition in many ways.

This is how Bhawani Bheek's dilemma arose, after all. He was accustomed to *ruling*. He had always been an autocrat in the old Rajput tradition, the true *Kshatriya*. In his view, he alone knew what was best for "his" Sherupur, and he acted accordingly. His decisions had to be ratified by the *panchayat*, to be sure, but that too consisted of men chosen by show-of-hands and had, as a matter of fact, never known a contest for any of its fifteen seats because the number wanting to serve had never exceeded the number of seats available. The elite castes were actually numerically inferior by a ratio of about ten to one in the village; they were outnumbered on the *panchayat* as well, but their cumulative economic power and traditional status superiority had enabled them to keep the majority from combining against them with any consistency. The dispersal of Sherupur's population among five separate hamlets (*purwā*) also helped the high castes and Bhawani Bheek in particular to maintain their political mastery of the village council because it meant that the potential opposition was itself atomized into regionally distinct segments whose interests did not always coincide. In short, the different factions could be successfully played off against each other by a powerful and adroit politician like Bhawani Bheek Singh.

But Bhawani Bheek's traditionally sanctified penchant to *rule* had progressively born him mounting difficulties whose cumulative consequences were revealed in the incident of the fish. He could no longer make decisions which simply and straightforwardly reinforced, and were reinforced by, the time-honored religious and other cultural values of the community and by the hierarchial social relationships, so beneficial to the high castes and so unopposable by the low, which flowed from them. His cooperation with the VLW months ago had set in motion an

almost *karmaic* chain reaction which made him seem responsible for promulgating, in the present crisis of a smallpox epidemic, a lethal blow against the whole religious-ceremonial framework within which Sherupur customarily dealt with this kind of peril to its survival. Prior to this, he had gotten the blame for the imposition of a tax on bullock carts which was in no sense his doing, but which he was compelled to implement in his position as *pradhān*.

This, I feel, has also got to be seen against the background of increasing economic differentiation both within and between families and within and between castes. Notions about solidarity are themselves changing and this was also reflected in Bhawani Bheek's high caste compatriots turning against him over the incident of the fish. Coming as it did, in the context of a visitation of Bhagoti Mai's wrath upon Sherupur, the incident acted as a trigger which released a whole underlying complex of hostility and half-conscious opportunism—a trigger pulled, incidentally, by Shiv Narayan Mishra, a Brahman, and thus of a caste that is the traditional antagonist of the Rajputs. Furthermore, his own son had perished in the epidemic, which no doubt gave an added impetus to his religious fervor and to his readiness to seek out a blameworthy party. Also, his father's brother's son had announced his candidacy for the office of *Pradhān*. So we can see that a variety of motives were able to gain release, clothed in the garb of defending and restoring traditional values which were allegedly under threat of being destroyed by the "conspiracy" between Bhawani Bheek and the VLW.

Foremost among these were the smoldering desires to fulfill personal ambitions and the corollary, smoldering resentments against Bhawani Bheek Singh's autocratic monopolization of political power. Thus, the irony had arisen where a man who had seen his power as the *ipso facto* embodiment of ancient tradition was being resoundingly denounced and politically opposed as the enemy of tradition. This kind of complexity and logical inconsistency may be said to be one of the most important structural realities that the present period of transition in rural Indian life presents and is the reason why the outcome of poli-

tical activity there is often difficult to anticipate by observers trained in the milieu of more consistently modern societies. For one can never be certain what sorts of values will be espoused by individuals or groups who employ, oppose or ignore the modern political apparatus now available for political action. Labels are difficult to apply to the effective political groups.

THE CONSEQUENCES

Obviously, the next question is how this interesting series of developments in Sherupur ultimately affected the subsequent election's outcome. The crucial point here is that this election was the first one in history where the secret ballot had been employed at the level of village offices.

The consequences did indeed prove dramatic and surprising. For what did not show at any time during the incident of the fish was the role that would be played under the new conditions by the heretofore politically voiceless nonelite castes. As the notables debated and denounced one another that January morning before Bhawani Bheek's house, they were in no sense conscious of the possibility that their inner divisions were laying them on the threshold of political disaster. At this juncture they took their automatic superiority and invincibility completely for granted. This was inevitable, of course, because there had never been any precedent for their believing otherwise. For this reason, what follows will seem to many a too sudden cleavage in the narrative. I would contend, however, that this is not arbitrary but because, *in fact*, there occurred just such a cleavage in the political narrative of Sherupur. In the incident of the fish, only the old order in politics was visible because up to then that's all there had ever been. It was the only order that had ever mattered in the eyes of those who counted in the community. The subsurface changes that led Bhawani Bheek Singh into such troubled waters had reached a point, unknown to everyone, where the introduction of the secret ballot would become the straw that broke the camel's back—would lead literally to an abrupt new departure in village politics and the distributions of power which underlay them.

To understand what actually took place in the election we must note at this juncture that Shiv Narayan Misra's uncle's son and Ram Nath Singh were not the only declared opponents of Bhawani Bheek Singh. Ram Samojh Ahir and Brijraj Kurmi, both of nonelite castes, were also in the race. Ram Samojh is a tall, dynamic, well-liked, and prosperous Ahir cultivator; Brijraj, a young Kurmi cultivator who recently returned to live in Sherupur after having served for twelve years in the Provincial Police. Neither, it will be noted, participated in the incident of the fish nor were their names ever mentioned at any point by those who did. They simply didn't count in the eyes of the participants then. Yet Ram Samojh Ahir won the election and is today Sherupur's new *pradhān*. The vote-breakdown unambiguously tells the story:

Name	Caste	Votes
Ram Samojh	Ahir	105
Ram Nath Singh	Rajput	103
Brijraj	Kurmi	54
Mahadev Mishra	Brahman	22
Bhawani Bheek	Rajput	10
Total:		294

The fact that Bhawani Bheek Singh was almost totally rejected is striking, of course, and as a personal tragedy it proved to have ramifications far beyond anything that could have been anticipated at the time—for within a year he had died, quite obviously in part because with his defeat life ceased to have any vital meaning to him anymore; he had been deprived of the position which he and his ancestors had held in unbroken succession for at least twelve generations. But what is striking from the sociological standpoint is the fact that for the first time in Sherupur's history the official village leader came from a non-elite caste.

This new development was not idiosyncratic; it was the culmination of a gradual transformation that has been occurring throughout India for the past several years in the social, economic, and political life of the countryside. As a process, of course,

this transformation can be said to have begun with the advent of modern times more than a century ago, but as a conscientious policy of government it began as a series of reforms and systematic development schemes initiated after India won her independence from Great Britain in 1947.

The election in Sherupur was but one of thousands of such elections that were held all over India and represented a climax to the recent years of planning and experimentation in the sense that for the first time the secret ballot was employed to elect village-level officials, as I have pointed out above. That is why Bhawani Bheek Singh and all that he symbolized could now be politically destroyed. His capacity, and the capacity of other traditional leaders to lead through coercion, by divine right, by pedigree, was terminated with the advent of a system of election to office which prevented precise identification of one's opponents.

A new class has arisen in Sherupur and elsewhere in rural India and the secret ballot has in a sense placed the crown of complete accession upon their head. This class follows old caste lines to a high degree and, more importantly, old caste antagonisms in a composite way. I mean that the primary gainers from the years of land reform and community development are what I would call the middle-range cultivator castes, the real peasants, the ones who have always held modest amounts of land and have tilled it themselves directly. They are the ones to whom the Hindustani word *kisān** really refers.

With land reform, these cultivators attained direct ownership of land they had always cultivated as tenants of *zamindars*, so naturally they were in a position to get the most out of the community development programs, being most directly involved in agriculture and its increasing economic rewards. At the same time, they are the most numerous in many parts of the rural area with the result that as their economic fortunes progressively improved they were in a position to exert a strong aggregate effect upon village affairs which in turn made them an object of great attention and favor among the new generation of mass-oriented politicians.

* Meaning cultivator, and one of many derivatives from a Sanskrit stem carrying the connotation of association with the land.

The elite castes were the chief losers in this transformation—directly, because it was their feudal power that the new secular state curbed where it did not shatter it altogether, and indirectly, because they are numerically small and could not hope to survive politically as a group once democratic elections substituted numbers for birth as the chief criterion of the right to govern village affairs. Thus, the old suppressed antagonisms between the elite castes and those beneath them gained an outlet through the new economic and political spheres which deliberately undertaken modernization created. By and large it has meant a gradual relinquishing of power by the elite castes in the villages and its assumption by the *kisān* castes. Even elite caste individuals who survive this changed situation usually do so when they make themselves over into *kisāns* in the real sense and play down their old status as much as possible. The landless and out-caste groups remain downtrodden, however, except where they succeed in using special laws designed to give them opportunities comparable to the other castes, or in allying themselves with the newly emergent middle castes—which, in fact, was what actually occurred in Sherupur.

Nowadays, the sons of elite caste families are leaving the villages in proportionately far higher numbers than are the sons of the *kisān* castes. The latter have something to look forward to in the villages by contrast with the past when it was quite the opposite situation. The elite castes are gradually yielding the village political system to their traditional underlings and are seeking careers in the city as a substitute. This is producing the further irony that modern occupations and high government and political posts are falling *ever more* into the hands of the secularized offspring of the very elite caste families who are being forced out of the dominant positions in village politics. As secular men, these sons form the government that initiates the changes which destroy their own past.

The implications of this are not easy to assay at this juncture, but it is interesting to observe that the new rural elites are tending to adopt much of the Sanskrit ritual, symbolism, etiquette, and pretensions heretofore the exclusive province of the Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and other ultrapure castes while the

latter, as they get increasingly involved with the modern social order centered in the cities and the universities, leads the way toward liberalization of Hindu values and a growing disinterest in purity, Sanskritic ritual, etc. Therefore, it appears that the strongest traditionalism today occurs among the rising rural middle class while the strongest liberalism occurs among the former feudal elite. That is, conservatism and revolutionary tendencies, respectively, are lodged in social groups that are in many ways the opposite of the ones which on superficial examination might be expected to be found harboring these inclinations.

This, in turn, must have important implications for Indian politics writ large. As Selig Harrison has observed,³ the regional elites are coming more and more to be dominated by the personnel and parochial horizons of these *kisān* castes, while the national elite originates more from the ranks of the ultrapur caste who are better educated and have grown progressively liberal in their outlook. Even Prime Minister Nehru's seemingly uncritical devotion to former Defence Minister Krishna Menon, despite his vast unpopularity in many quarters, is in part amenable to interpretation in this light because the increasing parochialization of Indian political life has compelled the Congress Party to amend its policies and personnel more and more toward greater conservatism in order to retain a broad enough popular base to assure its survival. Mr. Nehru's cabinet reflects this vividly because Krishna Menon was the only other effective liberal of cabinet stature aside from Mr. Nehru himself left in the Indian government, a situation in marked contrast to the way things stood even half a decade ago.⁴

By way of conclusion, then, we can say that the incident of the fish and the subsequent election provided an instructive series of insights into the effects of several variables upon political power in villages like Sherupur. For one thing, traditional power is quite clearly losing the institutional foundations upon which it formerly rested. Even where it seems to perpetuate itself it does so atop a subsurface that is alive with changes that are forcing new functional demands upon its possessors. These sometimes involve them in situations so at variance with those heretofore associated with traditional leadership that they can come

to appear to be opponents of the very traditional order they purport to be maintaining. This was Bhawani Bheek Singh's dilemma.

We can see, however, that the mystique of rural Hinduism is still deeply entrenched. It is a force which can be and evidently is being employed often by those who seek office under the new wholly secularized political rules. A secular system of political selection at the village level has not by any means meant a concomitant secular system of thinking on the aims and ideological techniques of political action. This in turn is bound to affect the complexion of Indian politics in general because it means that the new, formidable middle-class force prevailing in villages is for the time being deeply conservative, superstitious, and perilously parochial. It will make, and has already made, itself felt in major national controversies like states reorganization and linguistic policies. In my opinion, its behavior will long be negatively marked by a kind of paranoia over its prerogatives vis-à-vis the elite caste stratum because of the latter's previous oppression of them. It will give to Indian national politics for a long time to come the same complexion of internecine rivalry that has inhered in the traditional caste system throughout Indian history. But instead of opposition between Priest and Warrior, Twice Born and Once Born, it will be rivalry between regional and national elites of different general caste background,⁵ between different political parties whose leadership and following subdivide along the general lineaments of the age-old caste rivalries. And always in the thick of these rivalries will be these *kisān* groups who have emerged into political prominence in Sherapur and elsewhere.

NOTES

1. My work in India has been made possible over the years by three generous sources. In 1954-1955, I made my initial trip to India on a Fulbright scholarship; I returned in 1959-1960 on a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Science Foundation. From 1960-1962, support was in the form of postdoctoral fellowships granted by the National Institute of Mental Health. To the Institute of International Education, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Mental Health, I wish to express publicly my profound gratitude.
2. The names of all persons are, for obvious reasons, fictitious.
3. In his excellent book, *India, the Most Dangerous Decades* (Oxford, 1960).
4. On the present state of Indian politics, Mr. Frank Moraes, the distinguished journalist, asserts:

... I have the feeling that if the Prime Minister's health does not deteriorate sharply and if he continues to function effectively over the next five years, he will build up within the next two or three years a hard ministerial core in the cabinet dedicated to his views capable of carrying the government and the country along the lines he has already chalked out and to some extent established. The answer to the question therefore, "After Nehru who" is there. "But the more important question, "After Nehru, what," still remains to be answered. My own view is that with Nehru's demission from the political stage the Congress Party will burst at the seams and divide into a right and a left wing. Had this happened in Gandhiji's lifetime or even during Nehru's long years of power, it would have been better for India since the danger in such a situation is that the extreme right represented by the more militant Communalists or the extreme left represented by the Communists will surface from the depths of the chasm created by the split between the two Congress groups. The division of the Congress might see the resurrection of the Communists or Communalists, either of whom bode ill for India. ["Nehru's Years of Power," by Frank Moraes. *The Asia Magazine*, July 8, 1962, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 6]
5. On the modern role of caste, a commentator in the (*New Delhi Statesman* 1961) has said:

Caste provides the Indian political system with an extensive built-in lobby or interest group deeply rooted in the past. The temptation to appeal to the caste lobby is overwhelming. The response is immediate because it is so deeply ingrained; the advantages are obvious because caste is a recognized channel to gain access to Ministers and the entire hierarchy of elected leaders, and to secure preference in any of the ever-widening activities of Government. Yet every victory won by caste endangers the achievement of democracy by perpetuating the existence of closed, privileged groups in a society striving to be open, egalitarian and free. ["Caste Hierarchy Declines, as Casteism Rises," p. 6.]