

## CHAPTER 5 EVALUATION

### METHODOLOGY AND FIELD WORK REVIEW

As the interpretational value of an analysis of the material presented in the previous two chapters is as contingent on the empirical authenticity of the material itself as it is on the acumen and skill of the analyst, it would be prudent to reflect on the relative success and shortcomings of the methodological strategems employed to perforate and bare the social anatomy of the community under surveillance.

With regard to the utility of documentary sources, the Bhilwara District Gazetteer is a reservoir of authoritative information on the history of Bhilwara's economic and political administration from 1818 to the present day.<sup>1</sup> The gazetteer's sources are predominantly drawn from the former Rajputana Political Agency's archives at Bikaner and the Government of India Home and Foreign Departments' files.<sup>2</sup>

The main omission in the gazetteer's concordance with official archives which the author examined was a reference to the damming of the Kothari River proposed during the reign of Maharana Fateh Singh.<sup>3</sup> Another shortcoming of the gazetteer was the occasional but important mislabelling of tables. For instance, a 1951-71 diachronic comparison of Bhilwara municipality's income and expenditure was rendered impossible on discovering that the municipal incomes and expenditures tabulated in the gazetteer covered for the period 1951-58 not just Bhilwara city but Shahpura, Gangapur, and Jahazpur as well.

However, the quantitative data tabulated in the district census

handbooks would provide as reliable a guide of district, tahsil and town population characteristics as one could reasonably find but district data on the 1981 census was still not entirely available (even in provisional form) and election data on Bhilwara municipal council were inaccessible on account of the government servants' strike over March and April 1982.

Comprehensive political histories of Mewar in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries number but two and one suspects that neither author has been as rigorously thorough in his researches as scholarly convention might wish nor as objective in his evaluation as scholarship might dictate. Yet, for students of modern Mewari history, these are the only primers available (save the narratives of Tod and Heber which were published in early colonial times).<sup>4</sup> Hunter's Imperial Gazetteer (Udaipur Chapter) and the Mewar Volume of Erskine's Rajputana Gazetteers are helpful.<sup>5</sup> (One of the most recent scholarly articles on Mewar's political and social history in pre-Independence times was reliant almost entirely on these works.)<sup>6</sup>

Making contacts within Bhilwara proved sometimes exceedingly difficult and sometimes came with ease but, in all successful cases, a personal introduction by an intermediary was the key to fruitful interviewing. Sometimes a dudh-wallah had family relations in domestic service. Sometimes a chance encounter with a villager from Bhupalgarh who had relations working a small-scale power loom arose. Sometimes college students were able to introduce parents who were employed in managerial positions at RAJSPIN or the Bhilwara water-works.

The sources of contact and contacts themselves were widely dispersed in order to capture broad ranges of respondents' impressions and observational data but selection of contacts and respondents came by way of spot chance rather than by deliberate random or systematic selection (save for particular community leaders). The degree of suspicion and fear with which one could be regarded by factory owner, manager, supervisor, and labourer alike would have made direct interviews on the basis of systematic sampling inappropriate and subtler tactics imperative. Some labourers could be quite resentful and defensive when the purpose of questions became too apparent. A factory owner on the other hand could be quite terrified and, if anything, overapologetic either about/<sup>spartan</sup> employment conditions or about wages which employees were paid. For these reasons, information on standard of living for specific categories of factory labour and one's own impressions required the corroboration of surveys done by local graduate students in earlier years.

Gidhari Lal Vyas proved as elusive in New Delhi as he did in Bhilwara. Bansi Lal Patwar, the Vidhan Sabha member, and Sampat Mal Lodha were equally as elusive. Vishan Singh Yadav was the only trade unionist to give appreciable assistance. Vyas' position and influence in local labour affairs could be gleaned mostly from daily press coverage of his political activities.

Hindu marriage and tehravin ceremonies as well as festivals remain of immense cultural significance in Bhilwara. Participation in a household festivity such as a marriage was, for research information purposes, more productive than a formal appointment. However, while such a tactic might generate data of superior quality

and in greater abundance, it does require a lot of time but, in the case of Indian community studies, cultural barriers do exist and, because their successful negotiation is dependent on patience, the luxury of protracted periods of time for serious study may be an inevitable necessity.

As a foreigner to India, one can nevertheless count oneself fortunate, first, in having been entertained in labourers' challs, civil servants' quarters, mica mines, Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, the RSSS parade ground, and the police kotwali. Mobility was probably easier for a foreigner than it would have been for a local person who could be constrained in developing social contacts outside of his occupational group or caste.

Secondly, in catering for oneself, there was the stress and strain of having to cope with banal household conditions which the bulk of Bhilwara residents had become accustomed:

- . adulterated milk,
- . electrical blackouts,
- . venal officialdom,
- . "dhobi-itch",
- . no running water,
- . street violence, and
- . unreliable public transport

## PRE-CAPITALIST RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION IN BHILWARA

Using Rudra's original indicators (which were explained in the second chapter) of "pre-capitalist" and "capitalist" relations of production, there now falls the task of constructing an analysis of class in Bhilwara society.<sup>7</sup> The analysis aims to do two things: first, it should produce a community class structure which corresponds to contemporary relations of production within Bhilwara and, secondly, it should be able to trace the historical development of these contemporary structures.

### "Unfree" Labour and Extra-Economic Coercion

In the period just before the East India Company's entry to Rajputana, the economic surplus of Bhilwara's inhabitants was extracted by various "extra-economic coercions" which acted in peculiar concert. In the first place, produce, bullion, livestock, and chattel property were plundered, first, by the Marattas and their confederate Pathans and Pindaris, and then by aboriginal Bhil and Mina tribespeople. The reasons behind the Marattas' incursions directly related to the East India Company's competition for consolidating its economic, military and political control of the Indian subcontinent, the Marattas being the solitary serious rival.

Coercive extraction of economic surplus took place on two other levels. In the first instance, as every Rajput state was tributary to the Marattas there was no escaping them, save long-distance migration which was an extreme and largely impracticable solution. Secondly,

there were the constraints of feudal bondage to a Rajput overlord, chokhala (and similar Hindu ties) and mortgaged immovable assets - the mortgages not having been arranged for the purpose of lands' capital improvement but under duress precipitated by physical aggression from an extra-territorial power.

The political structure of Mewar, dominated as it was by a network of Rajput thakurs, militated geographically and economically against a "free" labour force. Cultivators were bonded to overlord thakurs insofar as the thakurs had control over produce and revenue extraction. The relationship is best expressed in the formula "Bhog ra dhani raj ho, bhum ra dhani ma cho" whereby the cultivator could claim soil but the crown could claim produce.<sup>8</sup> The crown's claim was not exclusive and payment of various cesses, tithes, and taxes could be enforced in support of service caste Hindus, thakurs, and the chauth claimed by the Marattas. In summary, one could describe the extra economic factors governing surplus extraction of a "fixed" labour force over Bhilwara's immediate pre-colonial period as recurring cycles of political anarchy and political autarchy.

Emancipation of hitherto "unfree" labour occurred with Mewar's treaty with the East India Company and the company's intervention in Mewar's internal government but this emancipation was confined to the kalsa parganas of Bhilwara, Pur, and Sanganer (collectively less than 1% of the area of the entire Bhilwara and Shapura regions combined) and lasted barely more than two decades.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the agricultural sectors of the parganas were virtually untouched and the sudden "rise and fall of 'Tod-Ganj' affected only labour connected

with handicraft manufactures, mercantile trade, and indigenous banking. However, the protection and stimulation which Tod gave to local mercantilism was prompted by supra-local political and economic considerations and besides, the direct influence of the East India Company on Rajputana (including Mewar) diminished as the company's pre-occupations with wars with Afghans and Sikhs grew in importance.

With regard to the agricultural sector, the East India Company's administration of the reserved parganas achieved relatively little in encouraging the economic emancipation of labour. The company's revenue collection policy obviously aided the production of agricultural surplus sufficient for exchange, which in turn enabled consequent the amortisation of cultivators' accumulated mortgage debts and, at the same time, the generation of indigenous capital that usurers could apply to local mercantile trade and banking.

While extortions during times of lawlessness gave way to systematic revenue collection under Tod's aegis, it is doubtful whether the benefits of prosperity which accrued to cultivators were of a magnitude which really afforded them options of diversifying their occupations or increasing their land-holdings. On this latter point, land-holding ultimately was vested in the crown and could be apportioned or alienated in limited ways only. On the former point, it should be remembered that the East India Company's rights to the reserved parganas extended only to revenue collection rights and appropriation of the collections. While the company's administration of collections was superior in its efficiency, the collectors merely acted in the stead of the maharana's hakims - the basic structure of the revenue

system remained intact. The crown retained claims on produce and feudatory obligations of its vassal tillers - the mere machinery of exercising these claims was temporarily assigned to an outside power.

Moreover, the direct influence of the company over Bhilwara's economy and civil administration was so limited in terms of time and scale, the long-term possibility of a "free" labour force, however embryonic, was curtailed. The company's withdrawal from local administration was accompanied by Bhilwara's collapse into civil disorder. As parganas, whose revenues were reserved exclusively for tribute, the maharana had only a nominal interest in the region's prosperity and would not have gained materially by imposing an improved administration. Furthermore, the imbalanced structure of political power which had traditionally favoured thakurs in Mewar could militate against strong central control even over khalsa lands.

Conditions were stable until the period of the Mutiny after which the introduction of a road connection and then a rail connection afforded improved guarantee of law and order as well as military security. The post-Mutiny emancipation of merchants and artisans would have precipitated, if anything, emigration from Mewar of a skilled labour force rather than the creation of a free labour market within, a process which a flood of imports brought by rail would have accelerated. The reactionary policies of Maharana Fateh Singh sought to entrench the perpetuation of Rajput aristocracy which, in turn, implied the economic oppression of the bulk of Mewar's inhabitants rather than their liberalisation.

In Bhilwara, where not only commerce but civil and revenue

administration as well was in the hands of banias and mahajans, oppression would have been little different from that imposed on the thikana estates.

The fledgling cotton gin and press at Bhilwara was a commercial failure not on account of any particular coercive regime of Mewar state but a discriminatory tariff policy imposed by the British imperial power which favoured the fledgling cotton industry of its own neighbouring territory, Ajmer-Merwara. The only time a "free" labour force mustered to operate the Bhilwara gin was during an abnormally severe famine when labouring for food rations was the only alternative to starvation and not only were thikana administration unable to curtail the emigration of their inhabitants there were also indications that jajmani as the economic mainstay of intercaste association among Hindus was also in varying stages of collapse. Other famine relief work was applied to improvement of the local railway built primarily for military purposes to aid the political and economic consolidation of British colonialism, the process of which included the subservience of native states such as Mewar.

This uncontrolled ravage of natural disaster weakened Bhilwara's economy but the continuation and, indeed, reinforcement, of the traditional structure of Mewar polity (which effectively tied labour to specific localities and specific functions in specific economic relationship), was as attributable to Maharana Fateh Singh's administrative limitations as it was to the superprestigious status of Fateh Singh's position over and beyond his own state, a status which obstructed any attempt on the British part to influence his rule.

Even after Fateh Singh's abdication, enforced as it was by the imperial power, the traditional structure continued to be preserved intact. The policies which embalmed the political status quo largely originated from external sources. To begin with, the imperial power's fiscal crisis was resolved by an invigorated land revenue administration which was pursued as tenaciously in the native states, including Mewar, as it was in British India. Faced with nationalism in British India and uprisings of Bijolia kisans, the imperial policy towards the native states of laissez-faire was belied not only by the removal of Fateh Singh but by the direct intervention of British settlement officers in securing the suppression of the kisans ' satyagraha. Hence, certainly until the genesis of industrialisation in the late 1930s and until well after national Independence, the influence of British paramountcy in Mewar had the effect of conserving the state as an agriculturally based economy worked by a majority of inhabitants under the hierarchical supervision of a despotic minority.

#### Non-Market Intervention

Rudra's second indicator of pre-capitalist relations is that of the extent to which an economic surplus is extracted without the intervention of any market. In the case of Bhilwara's pre-Independence period, surplus was extracted directly and coercively as booty.

The short-lived emporium which was instituted during Tod's term as agent was the first market facility in Bhilwara's modern history that enabled distribution and exchange of primary and secondary commodities on a cash basis. However, the purpose of

"Tod-Ganj" was not the inception of an indigenous competitor to the East India Company's trade monopoly over the sub-continent: Bhilwara, or at least what public revenue its inhabitants could produce under British protection, was basically held as a "trust" or "mortgage" in favour of the East India Company in order that payment of tribute under Mewar's treaty obligations should be guaranteed. Hence, once the "emporium" collapsed in the wake of Tod's departure and that of the company's local political agency, the maharanas would have derived little direct personal benefit from attempting to revive Bhilwara themselves as a commercial mart.

However, it would seem that Tod's stimulation of local indigenous commerce and establishment of civil protection was sufficient to liberate the economic aspirations of local bantias, mahajans and seths whose activities had previously been hindered by the Maratta and Pindari "vicissitudes". Once established, these communities continued to play an influential role in urban and, to some degree, rural politics usually with the aims of extending opportunities for trade in Mewar, the small cash economy, and the enhancement of their economic power as a means of applying political opposition too diffused by entrenched aristocratic Rajput rule.

The incidence of selling children and that of voluntary bondage to usurers, the bantias, seths and mahajans which extended even into the post-Mutiny era, would suggest that the mobility of labour was as stagnant in Mewar's urban sector as it was in the rural thikanas.

Appropriations of cultivators' produce in both khalsa and thikana areas could be "garnisheed" by a multitude of claimants according to a

synthesis of traditions and obligations which partly derived from the prevailing civil polity and partly from Hindu jajmani and dharma principles. Hence, as copious quantities of produce had to be surrendered (by extortion if need be), comparatively little cereal produce would have been available as marketable surplus. In addition, access by road to Bhilwara as a market centre was restricted in Maharana Fateh Singh's reign by deliberate neglect of public roads.

On account of the inequitable tariff structure imposed on the native states by British India, Mewar became an accessible market for foreign imports (foodgrains and processed food such as sugar and artifacts) and, while the retail trade of these imports undoubtedly benefitted the mahajan and bania communities, local cultivators and artisans could not compete with cheaper prices.

It would be exaggeration to view Bhilwara as an area transformed into a plantation economy but, with regard to the revenue settlements of Bhilwara's khalsa tracts which were imposed successively by Wingate and Chenevix Trench (and initiated at the same time as the advent of a rail link), the settlements were premised substantially on the capacity of these tracts to produce cash crops such as cotton, sugar cane, and (in Pur) tobacco so that revenue, first, could be paid more often in cash rather than in kind and, secondly, according to an embryonic system of land rent differentiation. However, the crops were destined, not for processing centres in Bhilwara, but for centres in British India: a substantial portion of revenue was remitted either to Udaipur, the capital, or to British India.

In British India, the success of the nationalist swadeshi movement

stimulated indigenous entrepreneurial investment in industrially manufactured textiles. The foundation of MTM in Mewar was a by-product of the same process. Local cultivators could sell their raw cotton to MTM initially "off their doorsteps" but MTM, on the other hand, held a guaranteed monopoly on manufactured cotton yarn and cloth in Mewar for nearly a decade. Furthermore, with regard to the labour market, the initial incentives for investment in MTM lay also in the prospects of a lack of worker organisation and depressed wages.

It should be remembered too that liberalisation of land tenure occurred only in the time of Chenevix Trench's appointment but only extended to khalsa lands. The laying-out of Bhupalganj under Trench's guidance would suggest that a market for alienable transferable freehold land title had been developing in the urban sector. The existence during the same period of a growing number of tenants-at-will in Bhilwara whose tenancies required regulation and who were able to comply with new requirements also suggest a demand for freehold land, a diversification of land utilisation, and an accompanying differentiated rent.

### **Dissipation of Surplus**

The third indicator used by Rudra is that of the dissipation of economic surplus. Dissipation could occur either by way of conspicuous consumption or by way of unproductive investment thereby leaving the stock of productive capital unchanged. In the case of pre-1818 Bhilwara, surplus was siphoned off in chauth, the proceeds of which were not even dissipated locally but transferred beyond Mewar to

maintain Maratta armies elsewhere in Central India.

Most of the fortifications or garhs in Mewar date from the late eighteenth century and exhibit few features of luxury - they were clearly to serve as functional defence outposts and, while many continued to be structurally maintained by the nobility until the post-Independence abolition of jagir, there are very few indications that, as domestic dwellings, any of these garhs was the apotheosis of comfort and utility.

Indeed, Udaipur, the erstwhile Mewari capital, is the only city nearby which exhibits palatial ornamentation and luxury on any noticeable scale. In comparison with palace architecture of the same period elsewhere in Rajasthan, Udaipur's scale is remarkably modest. Even the more lavish of Mewar's religious architecture pre-dates the Maratta period and Jagdish Mandir and Ekling-ji were the only two religious centres maintained by the maharanas.

In the time of Tod, local revenues raised in Bhilwara were despatched to British India as treaty tribute. While the expropriation represented a drain on local economic surplus, there were aspects of the treaty relationship which had the effect of stimulating Bhilwara's economic and social development. For this reason, it would be inappropriate to dismiss altogether Mewar's "investment" in a treaty with the East India Company as a drain.

In the first place, "Tod-Ganj" enabled the systematic growth of taxable commerce but, among the "by-products" of this innovation were, first of all, the regeneration of the commercial communities of

the bantias, mahajans and seths, secondly, the rehabilitation of the apparatus of civil law and order and, thirdly, an embryonic bureaucracy of revenue collectors and administrative officials. Furthermore, it was to the former communities that the latter civil and fiscal functions, at least in khalsa (and to some extent thikana) areas, were entrusted.

It was through the British connexion that Bhilwara was opened to the rest of the sub-continent by road and rail. It was also through the British connexion that public education and rudimentary artificial irrigation was instituted, not to mention the suppression of brigandage and the systematic collection of revenue. Progressive amelioration in the fiscal, military and political circumstances of the maharanas which occurred under British influence enabled the maharanas' authority vis a vis that of the thakurs to be enhanced and the administrative autonomy of the thakurs to be curtailed.

In hindsight, one could argue that the tribute, as an "investment", yielded dividends to Bhilwara insofar as it facilitated the emergence of an indigenous industrial and bureaucratic infrastructure which, once Independence had removed colonial supremacy and princely authority, enabled an impetus to Bhilwara's industrialisation. However, at the time of their inception, road links, rail links, public education and revenue collection did not necessarily encourage a uniform and equitable development throughout the state. Moreover, these developments were imposed from outside as instruments of a comprehensive pattern of colonial policy embracing the entire subcontinent and were, for the same reason, selective.

Aspects of these developments were economically counterproductive. The Mewar Durbar had to share the cost of constructing the Nasirabad-Nimuch Road. For the construction authority, i.e. the imperial power, strategic importance of the road was military not trade. Likewise, the importance of the Ajmer-Kandwa railway was military rather than trade but the Mewar Durbar had to compensate tenants, khalsa and thikana, whose lands were affected by resumption. Furthermore, the Mewar Durbar was remunerated a pittance for the privilege of allowing transit of passengers and goods through the state but there was no share in the profits and guaranteed 5% dividends of the railway's operation. The construction of the Chittorgarh-Udaipur and Maveli Junction-Marwar Junction branch lines also had to be borne by the durbar.

The cost of constructing a political residency as well as maintaining in the durbar's service, a cadre of seconded European officials (the size of which grew as the years progressed) had to be met by Mewar State. And it is worthwhile noting that, whereas Indians came to be admitted to the ICS, all echelons of British India's "diplomatic corps", the IPS, were reserved for Britishers. The durbar also maintained the Mewar Bhil Corps.

Mewar's premier educational establishment, Bhopal Nobles School, catered to the progeny of the thakurs. The urban durbar schools catered to the sons of the trading cum usurer communities (but none of these educational institutions appeared to have produced notable leaders in any branch of Mewar's public life). Even Mewar's judicial system, as improved under Maharana Bhopal Singh, catered principally to the urban areas.

It must be conceded that surplus, to some degree, was used on conspicuous consumption. Even cursory historical knowledge of Hindu matrimonial customs suggests that marriage celebrations and provision of bridal dowries would have been a drain on personal finances whether a Rajput thakur or a Jat cultivator. Indeed if contemporary peasant social behaviour in Gujarat in the 1920s and 1930s is any useful guide to marriage customs in Mewar, kisans were anxious to arrange lavish marriages in emulation of customs of superior castes as a means of enhancing their religious prestige.<sup>10</sup> Dues had to be paid by thikana cultivators to thakurs at the time of their progeny marrying. Cultivators were liable to cesses imposed by thakurs when their own children married.

While there is little to suggest that thikanas were efficiently managed, there is equally little to suggest that thakurs were grossly profligate in their habits of spending. There was no doubt that costs of maintaining stables for unnecessary purposes and of household retinues were met often from arbitrary exactions but there are indications too that surplus resources could sometimes be usefully spent on digging wells and building tanks. (One problem was that these kinds of works were implemented after the onset of drought rather than before.)

Indeed, it is conceivable that physical survival on thikana estates was as dependent on the extremes of Mewar's arid climate as it was on the vagaries of indolent thakurs. Considering the devastation wrought by the 1899 famine in Mewar and the magnitude of social and economic reconstruction needed to build up the regional economy, it

is unlikely that there was much surplus around suitable for dissipation of any description. Moreover, apart from an itinerant bania or a diligent thakur, there was no local banking facility to enable the accumulation of savings. Indigenous banking continued in Bhilwara proper well into World War II when the first commercial banks appeared.

Maharanas Fateh Singh and Bhopal Singh were both relatively restrained in their personal spending. One obvious reason was that the distribution of thikana lands (vis a vis khalsa) limited their sources of money but incomes were not squandered on overseas pleasure jaunts (their strict Hinduism would have proscribed foreign travel anyhow) or ostentatious palace architecture. Fateh Singh's only indulgences were cut-glass crystal and shikar. The comparatively modest Shambhu Niwas Palace and old Durbar Offices are the major architectural legacies of the period.

The one "showpiece" which did absorb state finances was the Mewar State Forces which (apart from the Mewar Bhil Corps) comprised corps of infantry, artillery, cavalry and elephants. World War II was the only occasion during this century when the forces were actually mobilised.

In conclusion, following British intervention in Mewar in 1818, one can discern a relief to the economic implosion which had paralysed Mewar under the Marattas. The capacity of outside capital investment in Mewar to invigorate an indigenous capitalism was thwarted, however, by lack of interest on the part of the paramount power in the state's economic growth other than traditional agriculture. The availability of investment opportunities was restricted by the prevailing Mewar polity and, in particular, the reactionary attitude of Maharana Fateh

Singh. In the pre-Independence period British policy of using the Rajput states to buffer the tide of nationalism in British India (a policy to which the laissez-faire doctrine had served as a convenient prelude) tended to conserve anciens regimes (including disinterest in industrialisation) rather than energise them. Hence, the effect of Bhopal Singh's regency and succession in inducing an economic development based on an agriculture other than seasonal cyclical reproduction was but marginal.

With such a prolonged regimen of compounded socio-economic stagnation prevailing in all of Mewar, it is of little surprise that leadership in Bhilwara's industrial and political development should have been drawn originally from outside of the state. Manikya Lal Verma and Vijay Singh Pathik were from British India. Labour leaders Vyas and Yadav too were immigrants to Mewar.

MTM's promoters came from a British India province and MTM's original labour force too was drawn from outside. At state level Mohan Lal Sukhadia was originally from the deosthan town of Nathdwara but was educated in Bombay. Mewar's last and most distinguished and progressive diwan was from South India.

### Unchanged Technology

Rudra's last indicator of the existence of pre-capitalist relations is that of unchanged technology in the process of production. In the case of Bhilwara's agricultural sector, production occurred by means of manual labour complemented by the aid of oxen, buffaloes and camels. Allotments for cultivation were small; artificial irrigation was

worked by human and animal power; earth was broken by ox-plough; and harvest and threshing done by hand. Inadequate granaries invariably meant significant losses of produce. In the manufacturing sector, tools, techniques, looms, spindles, kilns, etc. were all manually operated and rudimentary in construction.

The gin and press installed by the durbar at Bhilwara in the 1880s was probably the first time machinery had been applied to indigenous manufacture. MTM brought power generation (albeit for the factory's own use) to Bhilwara for the first time. In the generation of artificial energy Bhilwara was at a natural disadvantage because neither Mewar nor any other region in Rajputana had deposits of fossil fuels and the climatic aridity precluded the harnessing of water power.

There was, of course, the introduction of rail as an improved means of surface transport but it would be fairer to say that, even as an infrastructural element, the rail link facilitated the distribution of commodities from various sources outside of Bhilwara rather than engender the production of commodities indigenous to Bhilwara. The relative inaccessibility of much of Mewar's hinterland and the prevailing socio-political order would have militated against widespread technological innovation but there were other pertinent contributing factors.

In the first instance, there was no centre of higher education or foundation for agricultural science or industrial technology. Neither did there seem to be a demand for developments in this connexion. Even the Scottish medical missionary resident in Udaipur, William Shepherd, found extreme official hostility towards Western medicine

and any notion of training doctors locally.

The curriculum of Bhopal Nobles School emulated the European classical educational approach adopted by every other elite Indian school founded under British oversight. Attitudes of parent thakurs would have hindered the introduction of material on technical or agricultural skills. The durbar schools cultivated proficiency in literacy and numeracy, a sufficient intellectual facility for conducting day-to-day trade and administration among the bania and mahajan communities.

Secondly, the dharma and jajmani principles inherent in the ideology of the Hindu caste system militated against occupational mobility. The avarna-savarna distinction between jatis exacerbated the rigidity of this division of labour. Lastly, one needs to recognise too that, with the local nationalist movement being dominated by Gandhian social philosophy and its attendant stress on village self-reliance and traditional technology, small-scale (if not domestic scale) industrial development, rather than wholesale adoption of high-powered industry, would no doubt have been favoured by the early nationalists (besides, their chief local objective was to overthrow the thikana system, not to transform Rajasthan into an Asiatic "Midlands".)

## CAPITALIST RELATIONS

### The "Free" Labour Market

Rudra's first indicator of the existence of capitalist relations is the extraction of economic surplus from "free" sellers of labour power in a commodity production process. The previous section detailed the various circumstances which hindered the emergence of large-scale commodity mass production and, consequently, the emergence of a wage-labour force.

The creation of a "free" labour force engaged in the mass production of commodities began with the arrival of MTM, an event which virtually coincided with transfer of power from colonial government to an independent India and the dissolution of Mewar state. Previous to then agricultural share-cropping or paid agricultural labour was possibly employed but not, it would seem, as a widespread practice. Paid labour was possibly employed in the short-lived durbar cotton gin and cotton press in Bhilwara. Paid labour was no doubt used in initial railway construction and also in mica extraction but labour which was also used on drought-relief works might not have been paid and begar too periodically appeared as late as the 1930s. These considerations, coupled with the discharge of obligations of the Hindu jajmani system and exactions which could be made by hakim or thakur, tend to leave a confused impression as to the nature of conditions which led to the emergence of an embryonic free labour force.

Following Independence, labour legislation which had been previously enacted by the British Raj was applied to the newly merged

native states. Freedom of labour was accorded a constitutional guarantee in the new dominion in concert with various legislative measures which outlawed untouchability, bonded labour, child labour, trucking and, furthermore, guaranteed payment of a minimum (living) wage, industrial arbitration, workers' right of association, and tolerable working conditions. However, as the material of Chapter 4 would suggest, there remain formidable obstacles to the growth of a "free" labour force, not least of which is an underdeveloped commodity-production process.

### 1. The Primary Sector

Looking first at the primary sector, agricultural land tenure has been made freehold and alienable (subject to ceiling constraints on the size of lands already held by a given purchaser and save in the case of scheduled caste proprietorship where tenure is inalienable). At the same time, land ceilings policy, calculated on a needs basis of each land proprietor's family has tended to curtail landlessness and also against the development of commercial-scale agriculture. Fragmentation and division of land-holdings with each successive generation's inheritance has further hindered this latter development. In his institution of a package of land reforms (which included abolition of jagir), it was Mohan Lal Sukhadia's ambition not only to see Rajasthan self-sufficient in food but also to eliminate the remnants of hereditary Rajput aristocracy through Congress' building-up of a popular political base among the prominent widespread cultivating castes of Rajasthan, in particular, the Jats, gadaris and malis.

Land reform was partnered by the "Green Revolution", that is,

the introduction of high yielding varieties of cereal crops, electrical pump irrigation, chemical fertilisers and, latterly, motor-tractors with compressors and trolley attachments. Bhilwara also saw the construction of artificial reservoirs. Changes in agricultural and animal husbandry practices were reinforced by public veterinary services, public health services, agricultural extension and provision of cooperative markets for disposal of saleable agricultural surplus. It was the author's observation in the case of Bhupalgarh that a perceptible economic polarisation was emerging between landless agricultural labourers and "larger"-scale proprietor-cultivators in the wake of the progress of the "Green Revolution". Land-owning Hindus with capital other than land were able to extend and multiply their business interests (including agricultural cultivation). Even scheduled caste Hindus whose dharma included herding (and consuming) livestock, a practice which was taboo to savarna Hindus, found lucrative export markets in Bombay, Ahmedabad, and Surat for chicken, mutton and pork. Other village case studies which corroborate these observations also suggest that the economic efficiency of the "Green Revolution" technology depends significantly on increased size of individual agricultural unit.<sup>11</sup> (Prior to the "Green Revolution", size of production was inversely proportional to size of the agricultural holding.)

In years of adequate rain, harvests yield disposable surpluses but, due to the ravages of local aridity and protracted drought (such as that experienced between 1979 and 1982), grain and fodder surpluses of "fat" years are needed to offset shortfalls of "lean" ones. The problem can be exacerbated by inadequate supplies of electricity for

pump irrigation. Hence, simple cyclical subsistence reproduction still tends to dominate the routine of Bhilwara's agriculturalists, be they owner-cultivators or sharecroppers. There is an embargo on trading milk, processed sugar and ghi, as well as food grain outside of the district so only those producers who are deft smugglers either to local black markets or to destinations outside of Rajasthan. The marketability of Bhilwara's relatively inferior raw cotton is confined to local vanaspathi processing and to local gins and presses.

However, where cultivators possess movable pieces of asset machinery (such as fully equipped tractors), agriculture during drought can be suspended because the tractor can be used for a host of transport and extractive purposes. Public carriage of stone and timber, as well as quarrying, roadworks, mining, and other applications of pneumatic drilling is possible not just within Bhilwara but sometimes as far afield as Gujarat and Maharashtra States.

Potential in the rural sector for the accumulation of cash savings for capital investment is impeded by the lack of banking facilities and, even where they do exist, deposits are not only modest in size in comparison with those of city banks, the even more modest advances indicates a rural to urban transfer of capital. The rural sector is disadvantaged in its ability to gain access to liquid capital, cultivators are also disadvantaged in their ability to transform immovable assets such as agricultural land into liquid capital.

But there are cultural and social ties to the land as well. Given that rural literacy is lower than the urban and that, in any event, Mewari (rather than Hindi, the official and commercial lingua franca of Central India) is the commonly spoken language of the region,

verbal communication would be a serious obstacle. Within traditional Hinduism, owner-cultivation is a significant attribute of the Brahminical dharma and, in communities where religious values are widely entrenched, owner-cultivation is a status which attracts religious prestige. In fact, psychologically, celebration of the major Hindu festivals such as Holi and Dipawali have immense significance in rural Bhilwara. This is evidenced by the high rates of industrial absenteeism during these times and during the main marriage seasons as labourers return to their villages of origin to participate in the festivities. Caste, kinship, marriage circle, and similar institutions (together with language) psychologically and socially restrain geographical movement. Since, because of these various combinations of reasons, the pattern of small-scale self-employed owner-cultivator or sharecropper is so pervasive in Bhilwara's agricultural sector, the growth of a wage-labour force is likewise constrained.

The gemeinschaft-gesellschaft cultural transition which can accompany total occupational transfer from a rural village to the city is by no means unknown to farmers of Bhilwara but, economically too, there are disincentives. Choice of occupation can be determined by caste in that it would be easier for a Brahmin to work in a public restaurant than a Rajput or member of a meat-consuming caste. A Brahmin would be reluctant to become a construction-worker whereas a balai would not. A dhobi could find a job as a washerman or set himself up in business quite readily. Housing costs would be near prohibitive. Because industrialisation in Bhilwara is so limited, even menial jobs, badli and permanent, are rarely in oversupply.

Despite owner-cultivators' socioeconomic ties to agricultural land,

which appear to continue unabated in the face of the dissolution of feudal bonds, there are perceptible signs indicative that the agricultural cultivators are becoming "freer" in so far as they are becoming more alienated from their main means of production. In the first place, Bhilwara District's decadal population over 1971-81 varied by an increase of 24% of which one half of the increase occurred within Bhilwara's municipal bounds. Notwithstanding that the recent drought could have influenced a drift to the district metropolis, it would certainly seem unlikely that a growth of this magnitude could be explained solely by natural increase. The main reasons underlying the trend is possibly that rural cultivation has reached its saturation point and that the "dividend" returnable on small-scale farming even under the "Green Revolution" has reached its optimum.

## 2. The Secondary Sector

In Bhilwara's secondary sector, labour is "free" only in a limited sense. Historically, a wage labour force has been absent (mainly because of the absence of commodity producing industry) and so indeed has been a skilled labour force. In the context of the Hindu caste ideology, industrial labour is not seen as a prestigious occupation, first, because industrial labour is not "pure" in itself and, secondly, there is the necessity of having to associate with scheduled castes and Muslims on the shop floor. Living in the Labour Colony and factory labour challs attracts stigma.

While Brahmins, such as Ramesh Chandra Vyas, have been prominent in Bhilwara's struggling labour movement, they have originally been foreign to Bhilwara. Sometimes highly skilled technicians (such as

MTM's first hosier) have been Brahmins but, again, they have been immigrant to Bhilwara.

The overwhelming bulk of labour in the manufacturing sector is not competitive. Widespread illiteracy and lack of technical skill limits local job opportunity and wider geographical job mobility is constrained by lack of a Hindi language facility. Historically, the development en masse of artisanal and intellectual skills has been constrained by the dominance of the Hindu caste system and transmission of craftsmanship has occurred hereditarily in accordance with the dharma principal. Flexible and adaptable skills differentiation is occurring on an egalitarian basis but its emergence has been very belated and limited development.

Industrial arts is not featured in current educational literature and Bhilwara is not only just two decades old, but its curriculum is also narrowly based and related to vocations for which there are not always ready demands in Bhilwara itself. Apprenticeships available in Bhilwara would number no more than seven in toto. Instruction in mica dressing was having limited success because of the educational backwardness of the trainees.

Industrial labour in Bhilwara has economic ties with rural villages, ties which are strengthened by the short supply of permanent jobs, and lack of large-scale labour-intensive industrialisation. Uncertain supplies of fuel and power have led to reduced production in all levels of manufacture and to consequent lay-offs with the result that a worker must seek local seasonal or casual jobs or rely on his family's agricultural produce as a mainstay.

Uniform protection of jobs and associated entitlements is constrained by a barely bouyant trade-union movement and the comparatively large number of very small industrial concerns exempted from industrial legislation. Among large industrial units, lack of education among workers and a high turnover of badli labour obstructs widespread participation in trade union affairs, dissemination of knowledge of workers' entitlements, and the emergence of fresh leadership. In small factories, where industrial disputes legislation might not apply, labour is particularly vulnerable to exploitation. Accessibility to jobs is bound-up with dastur and "jobbing". Corruption in official labour administration militates against workers' interests.

Potential for accumulating disposable income is predominantly restricted to those categories of workers with permanent jobs in the older factories who are eligible for payment of dearness allowance and a statutory upper limit of 20% annual bonus. One needs to remember that even payment of bonus was cut or suspended during Emergency. Construction coolis and thela-wallahs are unprotected largely by labour law, prepared to place their health at physical risk, and accept religious contempt in order to earn the comparatively higher wage of Rs 750/- per mensem.

Disposable income which could be otherwise directed to investment in industrial securities or government bonds is absorbed in essential household costs, indebtedness, and ignorance of banking. Cultural expectations in workers' villages of origin necessitate expenditure on family marriage celebrations and tehrain. In labour housing colonies, wastage on consumption of drink could be excessive.

There was no history of large-scale factory ownership enticing workers to procure shares in the firm. Besides, of Bhilwara's two major textile concerns, only one was a public company. Public equity in RAJSPIN exceeded 49% but the stock was government-owned rather than owned by workers or the public-at-large.<sup>12</sup> Certainly, there was no history of any attempt at introducing, in any Bhilwara factory, worker participation in management.

In summary, while it may be said that, as in the agricultural sector, labour in Bhilwara's manufacturing and extractive sectors is "free" in the sense that labour has become alienated from control over the means of commodity production, industrial commodity production itself is also underdeveloped both in scale and in prevalence. Hence, the place of the owners of the means of commodity production also needs to be considered.

### 3. The Owners

As itinerant Marwari entrepreneurs, the predecessors of the present owners of the large-scale industrial units in Bhilwara were accustomed to "merchant adventurism" on an indigenous scale. Before the Marwari emigration from Rajputana to British India in the mid-19th century, rudimentary banking, usury and limited trade had been all which the compound of Rajput feudal polity and economic autarchy could have allowed.

Marwari capital drained from Rajputana was invigorated through the indigenous economic gains which occurred as a direct result of successes in the swadeshi movement. Under the pliant rule of Bhopal Singh, select Marwaris were able to reinvest their accumulations in

the hitherto industrially untouched Mewar.

The contemporary picture of ownership of industrial capital is not one of rapacious avarice but, by the same token, individual entrepreneurs are safely insured against insolvency should they relinquish their interests in Bhilwara or should their enterprises collapse. Duduwalas have mica interests in Bihar. Mansinghkas have diversified their interests by investing in interstate business, in pursuits other than mica extraction, and even in local soft-drink franchises. MTM's owner also owns and operates commercial and industrial properties in Ajmer and Kota and is managing agent for some of Bhilwara's smaller factories.<sup>13</sup> Jhunjhunwalas too have interests outside of Bhilwara textiles. In order to circumvent ceilings on municipal property holdings or rules governing industrial finance, properties and factories were often registered in the name of male owners' spouses.

Disputes legislation and powers of nationalisation can be invoked in the event of a transfer of factory ownership which was likely to detrimentally affect a concern's continued operation. While ownership of large concerns cannot be changed overnight or assets transferred at a moment's notice without government intervention, the private right to equity still exists. In the case of MTM's interregnum under government-appointed management, the factory-owner actually returned at the interregnum's conclusion to a better operating enterprise.

Vidhya Niketan School, Mansinghka Dharmshala, and MM College are examples of capitalist philanthropy but the dharmshala is the only institution which might directly benefit Bhilwara's workers. The two educational bodies cater to the children of the town's socioeconomic and Hindu elite.

In the factories, management and supervisors appear unattuned to the sociological and cultural background of workers which must, in the long term, prove counter-productive to efficiency. One may go further. There is, in fact, a negligible number of Rajasthan graduates entering India's three top Institutes of Management which, in turn, tends to suggest that the entire state could be bereft of expertise in management science.<sup>14</sup> Given that graduates of institutes of management are inclined to look to the government sectors for employment, Rajasthan's dearth of skilled managers is probably most acute in the private sector.<sup>15</sup> It is therefore not surprising that the appointment of a temporary manager of IAS calibre was needed to serve MTM in the post-war era. Similar appointments had also to be made to the management of the Beawar textile mills.

In the event of industrial disputes arising factory management in Bhilwara has not been beyond obtaining decisions through bribery. Moreover, management appeared quite indifferent to trade unions.

What of the remainder of the secondary sector? Culturally, with the small exception of Sindis and Punjabis, the majority of small manufacturers, miners, and usurers are either of Hindu or Jain mahajan or bania caste. Being of local origin and Mewari-speaking, they have strong ties through chokala and caste connections with the Bhilwara region.<sup>16</sup> Au fait with local economic and cultural conditions, the mahajans and banias are able to generate and operate local business (perhaps not dissimilarly to the colonial Parsi "dubash" of Bombay).

By virtue of the dharma of their castes mahajans and banias have had hereditary associations with trade and usury in urban

Bhilwara and commercial adroitness accumulated over successive generations continues to be transmitted from one generation to the next. In the late 19th century, the sons of these communities gained access to systematic public education, an amenity which Bhilwara's business communities continue to utilise.

These communities can attract credit from government financial institutions, usurers of their own castes (from whom they are able to borrow at concessional rates), and banks and, through astute management performance, their credit rating is high. The raison d'etre of RIICO is to foster small-scale enterprises and the policy of banks' nationalisation was to distribute finance capital also to small-scale enterprises. An interesting new development in this particular sector has been the emergence of manufacturers' and merchants' associations.<sup>17</sup> As competitors for market capital, the small entrepreneurs are advantaged over wage workers who have meagre savings and equally meagre education and business experience. It must be remembered too that it is these small enterprises which are exempted from factories and labour legislation. Fragmentation of the workforce leaves workers open to employers' exploitation and abuse. The intensity of traditional Hindu orthodoxy observed among Bhilwara's petit bourgeoisie (half of Bhilwara's religious foundations, 18 in number, are bania, Jain or Marwari trusts), distances employers from workers who will tend to be Hindus of low prestige castes, Muslims, or members of Hindu scheduled castes.<sup>18</sup>

Although the pre-Independence praja mandals might have drawn their followers from mahajan and bania communities, an active right-wing following has now emerged. Not only has the BJS (and, since 1977, the

Janata Party) been able to capture consistently at least a fifth of the vote for urban Bhilwara's seat in the Vidhan Sabha, the party managed to retain the seat in 1980, after initially winning it in 1977 in the wake of popular reaction to the excesses of Emergency Rule.

The BJS was strong enough in 1971 to capture Bhilwara's Lok Sabha seat (and captured it again in 1977).<sup>19</sup> This occurred when the growth rate of Bhilwara's population was at its peak and also when rural cultivators were beginning to reap the fruits of the "Green Revolution". The 1971 election could be interpreted as a victory to small business. It is important to note that the right-wing political organisation of Bhilwara has always operated virtually as a bourgeois party, quite independently from any political party promoted by the former Rajput aristocracy (either the Rajya Ram Parishad or the Swatantra).

Related to this fact is that the BJS youth wing, the RSSS, draws its membership from among the sons of the city's mahajans, baniyas, sunar and sometimes Brahmin and Rajput families. Moreover, the RSSS drill sessions are not confined to the sangh's local parade ground but take place regularly in the public parks of Bhilwara's salubrious residential areas of Kasiquri and Subashnagar.

Spatial distribution is also a salient factor. Whereas workers are domiciled more in villages within travelling distance, challs, shacks, sheds, labour colony, or the tenements of old Bhilwara, the residences of the mercantile and commercial communities are to be found in the spine of the business area, Kasiquri, Subashnagar, and sometimes the new estate at Bapunagar.

While one strictly needs to consider the relationship of a myriad of darzis, dudh-wallahs, nais, dhobis and similar service castes in the overall picture of Bhilwara labour, sufficient examples are at hand to underscore the proposition that in the small-scale-cum-small-business sector an alienation between means of production and ownership by labour not only exists economically but is reinforced by factors such as the owners' superior caste, asserted religiosity, and political organisation.

#### 4. The Tertiary Sector

In combination with nationalised industries such as banking and insurance, central government, state government and local government employees comprise a work-force almost equivalent to that of the large and medium scale secondary sector. Sections of the tertiary sector service parts of the secondary with equity finance but the role of the sector in Bhilwara is confined to one of administration cum servicing rather than managing or working in a public goods producing unit. Hence, Bhilwara's workforce throughout the tertiary sector would have to be described as "unproductive". However, it does represent the most mobile, competit<sup>ive</sup> and cohesive element in the overall part oge of labour in Bhilwara.

Theoretically, at least, admission to posts in the police force, collectorate, banks, hospital, public works department, etc. from class IV upwards requires demonstration of suitability and fitness. Whereas "jobbers" monopolise recruitment to the shop floor in the town's factories and mica pits, the public employment exchange recruits to the public sector (or, at least numerous sections of it). Public bodies practise job reservation for appropriately qualified members of scheduled

castes and scheduled tribes. Bank officers, police and other government officials may be drawn from other parts of Rajasthan and sometimes inter-state (e.g. Kerala, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh).

Economically jobs in this sector are the most attractive. Posts are secure, salaries are paid regularly, accommodation is subsidised, and pensions are payable on retirement. From the success of the 1982 bandh, solidarity among state employees is obviously very high. While salaries may be modest, the perks of office (especially the illicit), may be considerable. The lowliest chaprassi or peon may take a few rupees for rearranging the priority file or two in some clerk's "in-tray". "Moonlighting" among teachers and nurses has already been cited. Even in tahsil villages, school supplies can be found among the stocks of the village bania's shop. Labour colony tenements were often sub-let to government and bank employees because they were always reliable in paying their rent. Invigilation of public examinations was similarly corrupted.

Legitimate advantages existed as well. The security of tenure in government and bank employment enabled these employees to obtain preferential treatment in new public or cooperative housing developments - in fact, there seemed few households of Bapunagar whose earning members were not in public employment. Irregular employment and the fruits of corruption enabled extensive investment in residential housing.

And it is equally important to note that, in the wake of affirmative job reservation, members of scheduled castes were achieving upper and lower divisional clerical jobs. Scheduled caste members were entering posts in the patwari circles. Only in one instance was a member of a

scheduled tribe found in a clerical job.<sup>20</sup> In comparison with occupational mobility, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Bhilwara appeared not to be progressing at the same rate as one could find in Jaipur. The attitude of savarna Hindus in Bhilwara towards their scheduled caste colleagues could be subtly hostile and resentful in public but, in private, assertively so.

Supply of credit was no longer controlled in Bhilwara by Marwari, mahajan and bania cartels. Direct government invigilation over revenue, land administration, distribution of food grain and regulation of labour has deprived areas of economic freedom formerly exercised hakims, mahajans and banias. Even though members of these communities were among the most successful recipients of bank and RIICO credit and while they manipulated the dastur system to their own economic or political advantage, they conducted a veritable blitzkrieg on corruption in public forums (especially the RSSS parade ground) and through the press (especially the pro-Janata Tarun Desh).

There is a further category to consider, that of drought relief labour which represented numerically one of the largest (at February 1982, there being 69,185 such labourers employed in Bhilwara District) but one of the least competitive groups of workers.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, it was the one area of employment where female participation was the most obvious. Payment for services was in foodstuffs rather than in cash. Most workers were members of scheduled castes, particularly the balai and illiterate who, when not engaged in agriculture, sought jobs as construction workers, quarrymen or mica miners.

Scarcity of cement had retarded the rate of building construction. Mica pegamites at shallow depth were near exhaustion. Water for

agricultural irrigation was in short supply owing to the drought. Relief work could hardly compare with labour conscription and, least of all, begar but, without other resources to fall back on, there were few options open to rural dwellers in this plight but to undertake relief labour for four kilograms (at Rs 1.26 per kg) of grain per labourer per day.<sup>22</sup> Just as at the turn of the century, drought relief labour built a new rail link to Udaipur, strengthened the Bhilwara railway embankments, and sustained the profitability of the durbar cotton gin and press, drought relief, by improving the road transport routes of the district, was again enhancing the district's economic infrastructure, the use of which the labourers, for themselves, might gain little and only indirect benefit.

#### 5. Women

The discrepancies between male and female worker participation rates in Bhilwara's urban and rural areas together with low urban sex ratio and low rural female literacy growth warrant a special place in the course of the analysis. There are other peculiar social phenomena affecting females as well. For instance, witch-hunts are occasionally reported in Bhilwara and are known to be on the increase elsewhere in Rajasthan.<sup>23</sup> Illegal bridal dowry is becoming increasingly mandatory and as equally costly. The younger generation of women of Rajput and daroga castes espouse vegetarianism as eagerly as their male kin continue to consume eggs, meat, fish and liquor. Illegal child marriages remain commonplace events in rural communities throughout Bhilwara Tahsil.

Employment of women is banned in most Bhilwara factories. It has been noticed in Kota that, since the "Green Revolution" the numbers of

rural women engaged in agricultural labour have diminished considerably. Yet, as mentioned already, women of the poorest rural background are active in quite physically demanding menial roadworks alongside their husbands. The participation of women in the bandh of 1982 and the number of women registering for jobs may suggest a preliminary tremor of urban feminism.<sup>24</sup>

What meaning does one give to these observations in aggregate? One possible answer is that the social role of Bhilwara women is infra-structural. Among communities whose members possess means of production, perpetuation of private property is dependent not only on the production of heirs and successors but also continued management and means of protection. In the Bhilwara context, caste and kin and joint family are integral institutions in the process of keeping property ownership in the hands of traditional property-owning castes.

Under current Indian law, women may own property but there may be insurmountable social obstacles to either a Hindu or Muslim woman using her property as she chooses and it would be unlikely that she could ever attract bank credit or mortgage funds. Women from the higher socioeconomic echelons are spatially and artificially removed from economic activity by an insulation of patriarchy which manifests itself in revival of pardah, strict religious observance, and maintaining the family's public prestige. But, in common with women of communities of little property, few capital resources, and productive capacities, these women are trapped and victims of an enforced monopoly of child care and elderly dependent responsibilities.

Women in the latter category have a more crucial role to play in the reproduction of labour-power but the effort of bearing children,

rearing them, feeding husbands and caring for the aged go unrewarded either by monetary remuneration from the beneficiaries of the labour of these women nor, if their spouses are wage-earning employees, the form of higher monetary wages paid by spouses' employers.

The persistence of child-marriage in the rural sector accompanied by universal insistence on payment of bridal dowry (although stemming also from religious practice and historical custom) is indicative of women being coerced into the labour reproductive process and, at the same time, having to take with her a guarantee or cost of her own sustenance. Women's domestic labour may not be of direct value to a small individual industrial or agricultural commodity unit but, for industries and agricultural taken in toto, women's domestic labour is of considerable consequence in keeping the physical supply of labour replenished.

Enforced patriarchalism as well as male industrial workers' partial dependence on agricultural interests, serves to remove domestic labour spatially from circulation in the capital-intensive economic sphere and, in so doing, ensures the acquiescence of women in the mass reproduction of cheap labour supply. The term "bedroom" village (which was used in the introductory chapter) reflects the routine of commuting men sleeping in villages by night and not women working there by day.

While it could be argued that the revival of patriarchalism represents a defence of male labour against agricultural and industrial exploitation of Mewari women in paid (as well as domestic unpaid) labour, the open participation of poorer scheduled caste women in paid labour would tend to

contradict this. Nevertheless, the prospect of a mass entry of women to the paid workforce would obviously represent a significant threat to what has evolved as an entrenched monopoly of male economic activity. Given that the existing male dominant workforce has, at least by degrees, become within itself more competitive, the threat of female participation would be even more acute.

#### Realisation of Surplus on the Exchange Value

The subjugation of looting Marattas, the eventual dissolution of the Rajput aristocracy, and the emergence of competitive industry have not led to a completely equitable system of economic distribution and exchange for all of Bhilwara's inhabitants. In the agricultural sector, cultivators are limited in the commodities they can offer for exchange and limited in the geographical area where they can at least sell food-stuffs and cash crops. Technological hardware and dwellings are insurable, so too is livestock, but not yet crops. The intrusion of industrially manufactured goods onto local markets necessitates artisans having to rely more on cultivation for sustenance. As opportunity to utilise agricultural produce as saleable commodities is curtailed, so too is opportunity for making cash profit from which to pay agricultural labour. Given that agricultural practice in Bhilwara is still largely labour-intensive and time intensive, there are still enough indications that the orientation of agriculture still tends towards simple reproduction in which case the exchange between owner-cultivator and agricultural labourer is likely to be very marginal.

In the secondary sector, surplus is formally realised through process of exchange but wages are so meagre that disposable income

can be generated only through maintenance of agriculture, second jobs or illicit activities such as sub-letting of challs or smuggling contraband. Realisation by way of bonus bounty is limited by law in a number of ways.

Availability of public labour housing and ration cards for cheap foodstuffs has the effect of depressing wages. The exceptional thelawallah and construction coolis might be able to obtain capital buildings or sites of their own but only by labouring at personal risk.

Factory labour does not have access to the apparatus of exchange transaction and credit supply (such as banks and credit institutions) in the same way as Bhilwara's business cadres do. Furthermore, the caste networks of factory labour are unable to mobilise credit in the same way as those of the town's bantias and mahajans.

The remuneration of agricultural and factory labour is barely equivalent to the cost of daily existence. The surplus is extracted not so much by excessively long working days (though this would apply to workers with second jobs, service employees such as domestics, shop or barbers' assistance and hotel chaprassis) but:

- 1) deprivation of "social" wages such as -
  - . welfare
  - . worker education
  - . nutrition
  - . medical care
  - . suppression of discrimination by religion, sex, and caste
  - . humane supervision and personnel management
  - . closer ties with rural communities;

- 2) vulnerability to exactions by "jobbers", the demands of dastur and diffused political labour organisation.

While cheap public workers' housing may be seen as partial realisation of economic surplus contributed by labour, it serves but a proportion of the workforce and its real value to this group lies in its "sub-lettability". The provision of shelter is borne largely by kin of the local villages and would represent the surplus realised by pre-Independence generations.

The picture of the tertiary sector is a more interesting one. In comparison with the majority of cultivator-labourers or factory labour, the working conditions of the tertiary services are extraordinarily good. Salary and pay structures, tenure and promotional prospects are secure. Even for peons and class IV employees, pay is at least regular with sufficient for small disposable surplus. The working week is confined to 35 hours spread over six working days so that there is ample time on hand in which to pursue further educational qualifications and thereby enhance the individual's efficiency and employability but, more importantly, it also provides ample opportunity in which to pursue personal business interests.

Even if one could stretch the definition of commodity to embrace the provision of services such as education, property and life insurance, physical protection of life and property, and artificial energy and power, the individual producers or providers are able to "re-sell" these items to consumers at "charges" (i.e. illegal dastur) above those set officially by the government authorities or corporations for payment by consumers. Hence, a job in government or nationalised body becomes an "investment"

on account of the "trade surplus" it can generate. Whereas the ubiquitous mahajan or bania served as a "middleman" in governmental, judicial or commercial transactions in the pre-Independence era, the state bureaucracies have emerged as new cadres of "middlemen". The political sympathies of government servants in Bhilwara have tended to be mixed and given that just as many originate from large urban areas and socially elite backgrounds as from rural scheduled caste backgrounds, the Janata Party would probably not be bereft of supporters in central, state and local government administrations. However, the socialist economic policies actively pursued by the Congress Party in Rajasthan since Independence have contributed to the widespread growth and entrenchment of public bureaucracy, a fact which many Bhilwara bureaucrats realised and their unswerving Congress support was tainted, to some extent, with economic opportunism.

Venalism of the kind described could be prompted also not necessarily by immediate financial gratification but considerations of caste and family. For instance, ministerial appointments to government offices were frequently made on the basis of caste and political connection. In this same regard, Rajput police were notorious for their collaboration in securing the release of any of their progeny who had fallen foul of the law.

Besides dastur, there was a second area of labour surplus realisation related to the tertiary sector and that was in production not just of housing for government servants (at Subashnagar and Kasiquri) but the residential housing which the bureaucrats themselves built for investment. Housing is a commodity which is costly to produce in

terms of its consumption of labour time and often raw materials. Housing requires land which competes with other utilisation. Public officials in Bhilwara had access to numerous non-productive capitals such as institutional credit and housing board land as resources for housing construction. As builders' labourers earned less than Rs10/- per day per person and as a dwelling alone cost Rs50,000 or more, it would be impossible for even a team of house construction workers to obtain complete equity in a house which the team produced, together with the land it stood on, within the lifetime of the teams' members.

With the establishment of newly planned fringe suburbs, the rent differential instituted in Chenevix Trench's time between old Bhilwara and Bhupalganj has expanded in area and disparity. Because housing is in short supply and its value is increasing, house owners enjoy a "monopoly" over residential housing stock. Proximity to public amenities, cultural venues (particularly the cinemas), the business district and the consequent opportunities in which to develop useful skills and talents ensure that bureaucracy remains competitive and elite.

#### Regeneration of Capital Leading to Change in the Organic Composition of Capital

In the primary sector the cultivator's capacity to expand his capital depends on a peculiar combination of circumstances. The larger more irrigable and cultivable the land-holding, the more likely are the chances of obtaining marketable surpluses of produce and, from accumulated proceeds of sale, purchasing improved seeds, electrical pumps, artificial fertilisers and tractors. The assets which represent the most lucrative sources of profit are the pumps and tractors. If

Bhupalgarh village can serve as an illustration, capitalist regeneration was most in evidence among the village mahajans and bantias who could spread their investments over agricultural production, small goods retailing, usuary, government contracts and, most importantly, agricultural machinery, particularly tractors because of their mobility and multi-purpose function. As the bureaucratic, commercial and mercantile backbone of the pre-Independence order, a status which, in turn, was partly determined by the dharma of their Hindu caste, village mahajans and bantias had accumulated wealth usable as investment finance and thereby have been able to achieve a head-start in regional capitalist development.

In the secondary sector, it is important to note that, only after a few years of operation, MTM's rate of profit slumped to the point where the factory had to close but it is equally important to remember that, as in the case of the primary sector, this train of events was also influenced by political events which, in turn, precipitated change in the sociological environment. Therefore the Marxian law of diminishing rate of profit in relation to organic change in the composition of capital has to be interpreted with caution in relation to the primary sector as well as the secondary. Marx's law itself contains logical shortcomings but if, in a situation, such as that prevailing in Bhilwara, where the rate of surplus value has, until recently, been low, and the realisation of surplus labour value is now only becoming evident, the rate of profit may not in fact begin to fall below an original level until the number of workers employed in a given capital has been substantially reduced.

In the agricultural sector, improvement in the technical composition of the means of production (i.e. seed, fertiliser and automation) appears to have been accompanied by a reduction in agricultural labour (particularly female). In the industrial sector, the capital plant of MTM has not altered significantly since its original installation and is in dire need of rehabilitation. RAJSPIN's plant is relatively more recent date but does not represent any significant technical improvement over that of MTM. Improved textile machinery would be labour-efficient and possibly more productive but, if these machines were installed, maintenance of profit levels in both cases would be contingent on either a continuation of the present level of the workforce or a reduction in the present level unless sufficient of the new machines were acquired. However, as fuel, quality cotton and skilled labour is not in local abundance, it is doubtful whether, economically, such an investment could be justified. Therefore, while the local organic composition of industrial capital might not have changed and neither the rate of generation of surplus value, the capital return accumulated by the owners is able to be reinvested and regenerated through a range of other portfolios.

In other sections of the secondary sector, non-economic factors have influenced profitability. In the case of the small-scale manufacturers, lack of stable reliable supplies of electrical power have curtailed production (a factor which equally applies to the large-scale concerns) and profitability. Even if power were in abundant supply, the long-term tendency to centralisation and rationalisation would inevitably emerge to the point where, as in the case of the city's indigenous usurers, as independent entrepreneurs, they would be absorbed or outrun by consortiums of small or larger and more efficient plants.

In the extractive industries, the lack of expert technology (and infrastructure) has possibly led to an even more rapid depletion of quality raw mica and profitability is sustainable through contraction of operations rather than through expansion or adoption of more sophisticated technology. The small-scale sector probably retains its buoyancy through the circulation and diversification of individual capitals throughout a range of ventures.

Diversification of economic interests in the tertiary sector was mentioned in the previous sector. Residential housing was one prominent illustration of capital reproduction and regeneration. But government servants too might set up dye-works in collaboration with relatives, or operate small-workshops or retail shops or, as in the case of one Bhilwara PWD engineer, operate a small dairy farmlet alongside the Meja Dam. Life insurance too has become a popular avenue for government employees to conveniently and legally dispose of illegally earned income. According to LIC, a negligible number of policies were ever issued to cultivators. Most were issued to government servants and bank officers.

The one advantage to urban property owners in all three sectors was the proximity of superior educational amenities. This, coupled with the issue of life insurance, would indicate not only the existence of disposable income in the urban sector but that, under certain conditions, occupational skills were assuming a capital value.<sup>25</sup>

### Technological Change

The "Green Revolution" of the 1960s saw the supply and application of artificial energy, power tractors, and artificial irrigation to Bhilwara's

agricultural sector. In the secondary sector, textiles "machino"-factory made its entree to urban Bhilwara on the eve of Independence. The proliferation, over the last decade, of registered factories which use artificially powered machines is evidence enough of the application of automation to small-scale manufacturing industry. Tractor compressors are used in extractive and quarrying industries.

However, the appearance of industrial technology has not necessarily meant a vigorous proliferation of capitalist relations of production in Bhilwara. In the first place, widespread adoption of cooperative agriculture or agricultural collectivisation would be one pre-condition to the adoption, say, of large-scale combine harvesters. Another pre-condition would possibly be the opening-up of the surplus foodgrains market beyond the bounds of Bhilwara District.

In the second place, the machinery of MTM is in dire need of rehabilitation by virtue of its age and lack of highly skilled maintenance staff. RAJSPIN's machinery is 25 years more recent than that of MTM and better maintained but RAJSPIN's plant is only marginally better in terms of its technical advance. A similar comment could be made with regard to the small gins, oil mills, lathes, presses, looms and chain-saws which can be found in the sheds of Bhilwara's industrial estate - while the plant may be of recent installation, the design may be an antiquated invention. In the case of Bhupal Mining Works, inferior technology used in the production of mica insul bricks makes the price of the bricks barely competitive, even on the domestic market.

With the exception of the Lok Jivan newspaper, printing in Bhilwara is done by hand-operated letterpress. Smooth paving is frequently done

by machine. Cement mixers have petrol motors attached. Sewing machines are still hand operated and electric clippers have yet to make a debut to barber shops. Computer processing of financial transactions and records is yet unknown. Small distance bulk transport is carried as often by ox cart and thela as it is by lorry. No matter what the scale or achievement of new technology which might be imported to Bhilwara for industrial application, its success would not be realisable until such time as Rajasthan's electrical grid system can be upgraded and the problems of RAPS power generation unravelled. (The most vocal of protests about Bhilwara's shaky power supply usually comes from the city's commercial photographers.)<sup>26</sup> The problem of energy generation and supply is exacerbated by Rajasthan's natural aridity and lack of natural deposits of fossil fuels. This, in turn, limits the potential for developing local indigenous technology.

The scale of industrial technology still tends to be labour-intensive rather than labour-efficient. Indeed, the rapid deployment of improved technology would raise quite horrendous implications. While more efficient production could result from the application of more sophisticated technology, the labour-saving capacities of the new technology would precipitate the growth of further unemployment rather than allay it. The inevitable social disruption which would follow would not only act as a disincentive to investment but would reduce the availability of money in local circulation which, inter alia, could be recycled for industrial investment.

There is also a human element which cannot be overlooked. Invariably, technological improvement and technological change require

a skilled labour force - operator, technician, supervisor and manager - to ensure efficient transition from one mode of operation to another and the productive utilisation of new machinery. In this regard, very limited local progress has been made at technician level. Lack of education impedes the productivity of operators and negligible spade-work has been initiated in cultivating a professional supervisory cum managerial cadre. In other words, only discrete categories of the total workforce in Bhilwara can claim to be functionally efficient and these categories would predominantly constitute the tertiary sector of the economy. In the remaining two sectors, entree to the paid workforce and mobility within it is, whether in an immediate or long-term sense, influenced by factors other than individual skill, efficiency, initiative and merit. Conversely, the quality of the commodity producing labour force lacks a richness of expertise by which could qualify as an integral "component" of local industrial capital. The underdeveloped differentiation of a wide range of industrial skills and an uncompetitive labour force are factors which compound the progressive alienation of the vast majority of Bhilwara inhabitants from ownership of potentially ever-improving means of production on a large industrial scale.

#### RECAPITULATION

In their historical and contemporary application to social change in Bhilwara, the "indicators" of the existence of pre-capitalist and capitalist relations of production, which Rudra has proffered, are illuminative of a transformation of pre-capitalist relations to capitalist relations. The transformation has occurred extremely rapidly and the pivotal point of

the process was the transfer of power from a regime which was dominated by a colonial regime to federated independent dominion.

Initially, the collapse of an autonomous and indigenous politico-economic system which was geographically peculiar to Mewar was curtailed by the intervention of the British colonial power. The intervention sought simultaneously (save for different but related reasons), the revival of Mewar as a sovereign but protected state and the revival of Bhilwara as an "off-shore" or "free" port of mercantile trade. Alliance with Mewar was needed for the purpose of imperialist military supremacy and the revenues of Bhilwara and other parganas were needed to offset the cost of policing that alliance. Tod's choice of Bhilwara as a revenue pargana arose by accident of terrain and the region's proprietorial status as khalsa.

Accumulation of indigenous capital (albeit primitive) during the interregnum of British administration had its momentum interrupted by the anarchy which emerged in the wake of the East India Company's withdrawal. Post-Mutiny emancipation of artisans and merchants as well as military road and rail construction led to additional drains of indigenous capital.

From the Mutiny until the Inter-War period, the economy of Bhilwara, like that of other parts of Mewar, was stultified by a fusion of feudalistic state polity and imperial attitude of "non-interference", which was, in turn, compounded by policies of reactionary rule pursued by Fateh Singh. Later, official suppression of populist agitation for reform (which was inspired by the national independence movement of British India) and an accompanying preoccupation by the British political advisers on

land revenue together secured the regional economy's ossification.

Over this period, an almost clear-cut alienation existed between Rajput aristocracy and the inhabitants of the state's thikana and khalsa estates (who were virtually all enserfed cultivators and labourers). It is equally important to recognise the mesh of hegemonous relationships which transcended horizontally and hierarchically local Rajput overlords, sovereign Rajput rulers, and to the British imperial power with colonial interests covering, not just India, but the entire globe. A corollary of this viewpoint is that the social structure which historically dominated Bhilwara was as artificially prolonged by the ability of the imperial power to regulate internal change to Mewar as it was artificially reinstated in the time of Tod.

The first of the main intermediate social classes was the cultivators who had title to the means of production if not the production itself and who latterly, like the Dhakars, enjoyed some measure of geographical mobility. The second was the usurer-bureaucrat who (rather like the court Jew of the German Empire)<sup>27</sup> was constrained by religious prerogative and status in the aristocratic hierarchy as to how to dispose of accumulated capital.

The transformation of Bhilwara's economic structure was precipitated initially by post-Famine commercial recovery, which was complemented, first, by the influence brought by participants in the Independence movement of British India and, secondly (as something of an economic by-product of this political awakening), investment in large-scale industrial manufacturing and mica-mining. Legally, the culmination of the transformation came with the post-Independence dissolution of

Mewar State, abolition of jagir, emancipation of labour, competitive bureaucracy, universal adult suffrage and emancipation of trade.

In economic terms the transformation has included capital investment in a limited number of large-scale commodity producing industrial plants, the creation of a wage-labour force (the political articulation of which, while dismembered and barely more than infant in organisation and achievement, is still more than a charade), and a peripheral unpaid labour force, a virtual lumpenproletariat.

Despite the existence of long established mercantile-usurer communities in Bhilwara, industrial investment came from members of an "expatriate" Rajasthan mercantile community which "liberated" from the autarchy of Rajput rule, was able to invest in freer economy of British India and, with the onset of the collapse of British imperial hegemony, was able to plough its accumulations into building-up (initially as a monopoly) an industrial base in Bhilwara's pre-industrial environment. Ownership of the most industrially developed means of production in contemporary Bhilwara must be also interpreted against a supra-local network of interests in joint stock companies (public and proprietary limited) and sources of industrial finance and protection.

In the present setting, it is possible to discern a contradiction in relations of production existing between:

- 1) the large-scale "cosmopolitan" urban industrial entrepreneurs, such as the owners of MTM and RAJSPIN, who have the resources (financial, intellectual and social) with which to sustain and regenerate (if not their Bhilwara factories, then diverse mobile portfolios of investment calculated to protect

- sustain the investors' entrepreneurial autonomy) and
- 2) an immobile dependent rural domestic unpaid labour force with exceptionally few capital assets.

The interpretation of this contradiction as an expression of class structure is a complex process (with which the final chapter will deal) but, for the moment, it will be noticed that these two "pure" classes are diametrically opposed by a hierarchical spectrum of intermediate classes, any one of which is definable by the extent to which its members are able to participate in private ownership of means of production as opposed to having to sell their labour. Besides the small-scale entrepreneurs, merchants, and usurers, one would tend to view the national, state, and local bureaucracies of Bhilwara as occupying a niche at the capitalist "extremity".

Those factory workers who have agricultural land of their own under cultivation would qualify as being partially capitalist, so too would factory "jobbers" who supplement their wage earnings with commissions taken on recruiting workers. Rural cultivators would be classifiable as capitalist but ranked according to the capital composition of their farms and the extent to which they sharecropped or hired themselves as agricultural labour. Regular urban factory workers, private malis, hotel chaprassis, coolis, etc, without private means would qualify as members of the proletariat class but marginally less so than rural landless labourers who, being spatially removed from the circulation of cash, removed both in terms of distance and level of skill, from the competitive labour market, and unprotected by any trade union movement, are more vulnerable to exploitation.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

The preceding chapter sought to argue that Independence had facilitated at least a partial consummation of a historical bourgeois revolution in Bhilwara, a revolution which originated in erstwhile British India and embraced the erstwhile princely states, including that of Mewar. This incomplete consummation had resulted in social relations of production, as they presently exist in Bhilwara, continuing to be conditioned by institutions and cultural factors characteristic of pre-capitalist relations of production. It was argued that a coexistence of pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production could be demonstrated in Bhilwara and that this coexistence manifested itself in a social structure similar to that which Rudra had postulated for agrarian India, viz. a small bourgeoisie, a small proletariat, and a wide spectrum of intermediate social classes the members of which were, to varying degrees, owners of capital while at the same time (and all or some of the time) were in receipt of wages.<sup>1</sup>

Of particular note in the development of capitalism in Bhilwara has been the investment contributions made by a small number of expatriate Marwaris in large-scale industries. Also of note has been the prevalence of small-scale manufacturing concerns (especially those which were outside the purview of public regulation) and their ownership by local capital. Furthermore, it was noted that the state bureaucracy exercised a hegemony (even over the private entrepreneurs) which derived in part from proliferation of administrative, fiscal, and associated governmental functions, in part, by the

establishment of public sector commercial undertakings; in part, by wealth obtained corruptly; in part, by differentiation of occupational skills and acumen; and, in part, by political cohesion and bargaining acumen. Of additional significance has been the large proportion of casual labour employed in manufacturing industry, a reduction in the rate of female participation in the urban and rural workforce (as well as the reduction in Bhilwara's sex ratio), the extent of dependence among cultivators and urban factory labour alike on subsistence agriculture, the obstacles to wider agricultural commercialisation, and the domination of leadership within a torpid local trade-union leadership by dominant political party interests.

The prime object of this chapter is to attempt an interpretation of these findings within a broader synthesis of extended compatible theoretical frameworks. More specifically, it is intended to relate the foregoing observations based on Rudra's analytical framework to more general theories on exploitation of labour. In the first place, for perhaps no other reason than to lay an incidental stress on the point that the historical paths taken by the former native states to modernisation were each as unique as they were complex, a brief comparison is made of Mewar's industrial and political development in pre-Independence times with developments in Jaipur, Baroda and Mysore. In the second place, an attempt is made to portray modern Bhilwara's urban form as an historical outcome of social conflict embracing networks extending beyond the urban and district bounds. In the third place, an attempt is made to view Bhilwara's social structure as the outcome of an on-going encapsulating process of labour exploitation. Lastly, suggestions are made as to further research.

## MODERN DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER PRINCELY STATES: A CONTRAST

Moves initiated by pre-Independence rulers of India towards federation and interstate cooperation were thwarted by a number of factors such as cultural and geographical disparity of their states but also by disparity among the states in economic development. Mysore, for instance, unlike Mewar, had been under direct British rule until 1881, when its own maharaja was installed.<sup>2</sup> Princely government was advanced insofar as it was "responsive" rather than "despotic" but certainly, until 1947, there was no government elected by universal, adult franchise. Anxious to reverse historical incursions of Madras Brahmins into the state bureaucracy and propel the inception of Mysorean nationalism, the government of the maharaja embarked on a program of enforced industrialisation which was well under way by the onset of World War I.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas Mewar's political autonomy under Maharana Fateh Singh was attributable to Mewar's inherent complex political structure, its pre-eminence within Rajputana, and Fateh Singh's personal resistance to foreign interference, the political autonomy of Mysore (whose jurisdiction, incidentally, came under the Madras Presidency and not directly under that of the Government of India) was achieved at the expense of opening up its extractive and manufacturing industrial potential to English and Marwari capital. This process was completed by the state's construction of railways to enable the transportation both of the material which these industries produced and the immigrant labour which was imported to work the industries. Within 50 years Mysore lost enormous quantities of exported capital but it retained a flourishing bureaucracy maintained by regular revenue income

together with a "free" and geographically mobile labour force. It also saw the emergence of vigorous political movements, nationalist as well as anti-communalist.<sup>4</sup>

In Baroda State, the transition to industrialisation occurred very rapidly during the inter-war years under the auspices of an adroit Gaekwad with an adroit diwan. Political and social reform, together with railways expansion, had been instigated under earlier regimes which resulted in the emergence of a competitive state bureaucracy and mass literacy. Wider political participation, plus heavy public expenditure on social development, led to the stage where Baroda had no option but to industrialise: the success of swadeshi provided the opportunity.<sup>5</sup>

The intricacy of detail affecting the historical development of the former Indian states would warrant a separate study and Jaipur's history too is difficult. Like Baroda and Mysore, the Rajput state of Jaipur could afford to remain aloof from its backward southern neighbour, Mewar (besides, the two royalties had been sworn enemies ever since Mughal times on account of Jaipur's collusion with the Mughal emperors), but events in Jaipur have nevertheless influenced Bhilwara before and after 1947.

Maharajas of Jaipur had fewer co-parcener nobles than did the maharanas.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, because British political residents frequently served as regents of Jaipur during minorities of successors, the crown's authority had subdued that of the jagidars even to the extent where village panchayats were legally established in the 1920s and a concrete political alliance had been forged between the Kishans' Sabha

of Jaipur (which was dominated by Jat peasantry) and the city's sethi dominated praja mandal.<sup>7</sup>

By World War II, Jaipur's municipal government was in the hands of professional citizenry drawn from sethi and Brahmin communities. In 1942, the doyen of state administrative talent, Sir Mirza Ismail, was installed as Diwan of Jaipur at the behest of expatriate Marwari financier of Congress, G.D. Birla. Ismail's brief was to pursue Jaipur's constitutional reform and rapid industrialisation. And, by 1949, Jaipur was the most populous and richest of Rajput states. Its urban bourgeoisie which, besides Birla, also included other expatriate Marwari financiers (such as Seth Jumna Lal Bajaj (the associate of Gandhi who had intervened in the Bijolia satyagrahas of the 1930s), who was a formidable influence on Jaipur's nationalist politics) were poised to assume power as Rajasthan's (as well as Jaipur's) political elite at the time of Independence.<sup>8</sup>

The transfer of an agglomeration of princely states to an integrated political state also meant the transfer of an agglomeration of separate praja mandals and, consequently, party factions and consensus emerged along regional lines. Hence, Mohan Lal Sukhadia's political survival rested on his curbing the power of "big business" and the former aristocracy, first, by maintaining a disproportionately high representation of dvija professional bourgeois and descendents of "freedom fighters" in government and the senior bureaucracies; secondly, by "playing-off" one region against another; and, thirdly, by maintaining the alliance between the state's petty bourgeoisie, its professional bourgeoisie, and the rural cultivators.<sup>8</sup>

## BHILWARA AS AN INDUSTRIAL URBAN CENTRE

Historically, in America and Europe, the emergence of the city has been intimately connected with the rise of capitalism. Urbanisation without industrialisation(or with only partial industrialisation) may be a "negative" manifestation of the same process. Recognising the influence of British colonial hegemony, however indirect, not only on the inception of modern Bhilwara but also on the course of its development up until Independence and assuming as an axiom of "classical" Marxism that urbanisation is epiphenomenal to the behaviour and influence of modern capital which transcend national boundaries, it is not methodologically unreasonable to use, for comparative purposes, a model of urban historical development which has evolved from the experiences of a developed country.

In his argument in favour of a Marxist approach to American urban history, David Gordon presents three main hypotheses about the relationship between capitalist development and urban form:<sup>10</sup>

- 1) three urban principal forms have characterised American urban development - each form being abstractly defined by the name of its conditioning stage of capitalist accumulation, viz:
  - i) the commercial city,
  - ii) the industrial city,
  - iii) the corporate city;
- 2) the change from one dominant urban form to another is determined by struggles between owners and workers over social relations of production in the capitalist workplace:

- 3) combining these two preceding hypotheses, the process of capitalist development has created a uniquely capitalist form in the United States.

Gordon's theory is helpful also to the understanding of Bhilwara as a "socially created" physical environment in which capitalist accumulation has evolved. As a commercial city, Bhilwara served four kinds of politico-economic functions:

- 1) it served as a "political" capital, a place where monopoly power and political franchise could be exercised by an apparatus of state (i.e. the East India Company in collaboration with the crown and aristocracy of Mewar);
- 2) it served as a "commercial" capital, a place where accounting, discounting, and lending supported exchange;
- 3) it served as an "inland 'free port'", a place where commodities were supplied from geographically disparate points and carried to geographically disparate markets; and
- 4) it served as a craft manufacturing centre.<sup>11</sup>

As maintenance of initial state monopoly proved diseconomic to "supraordinate" and "subordinate" collaborators, the collaboration subsided whereupon, without civil protection as an essential precondition to commercial growth, Bhilwara survived only in remnant. The indigenous state was able to pursue its own program of monopolistic industrialisation only in the wake of the formal retreat of colonialism. The important feature of this epoch was, first, that Bhilwara's commercialisation began as tactical response by the coloniser, in a time of crisis to a crucial need for revenue, and, secondly, industrialisation

began as a tactical response by the ascendant indigenous state in search of revenue. Both kinds of economic impetus have been responses to crises experienced by capitalist power dominant at the time.

In development towards the "corporate city", Bhilwara is barely embryonic. Despite the advent of joint-stock companies, these ventures yet have no monopoly over a "central business district". Suburban fragmentation has only just begun and industry still tends to be centrally located. In socioeconomic composition, Bhilwara is still inclined towards heterogeneity.

In its spatial characteristics Bhilwara conforms to the model American industrial city insofar as the larger factories are close by major transport routes, as the central bazaars and mass entertainment venues permit convergence of suburban inhabitants, and as segregation of workers' housing and that of Bhilwara's wealthier inhabitants is growing more pronounced.

But Bhilwara's historical transition from a commercial city to industrial city was thwarted by a tandem of political curtailment of indigenous enterprise and natural calamities, so much so that the expatriate Marwaris who arrived in the 1930s were, figuratively speaking, met with a carte blanche for investment opportunities. As a contemporary industrial centre, Bhilwara's pace of industrial growth is spasmodic and largely small-scale but the growth in the number of registered factories which has occurred over the last two decades, combined with the growth in trade union organisation, is indication enough of the presence of an industrialising momentum.

What sustains capitalist production now? The answer is fundamentally the same as it was in the halcyon days of "Tod- Ganj", namely a combination of political franchise and state guaranteed monopoly. In rational terms, Bhilwara has had little to commend it as a centre of industrialisation: it is accessible by metre-gauge railway but not the strategic broad-gauge railway, factory labour had first to be imported, and local quality raw materials have never been in over abundance. Essential intermediate goods, such as machines, have never been procurable as local manufactures and the first important commodities produced, mica and textiles, were consumed in the war effort (of 1939-1945) - neither product was consumed locally. Today, labour is largely uncompetitive and occupationally immobile, power is short, and manufacturing plant is obsolete.

In Tod's time, protection and franchise were exercised for the purpose of revenue realisation and tribute payment. In the reign of Bhopal Singh, industrial mineral and textile producers in Bhilwara were vested with guaranteed monopolies designed to generate revenues to sustain the survival of an autocratic polity against the mounting opposition of indigenous urban mercantile interests. Today, Bhilwara's "qualitative" and "quantitative" efficiency as an industrial centre is inexplicable without reference to the role of Rajasthan's political elite of the post-Independence era.

Bhilwara's historical association with popular nationalist leadership during pre-Independence times and the aspirations of local nationalism to eliminate politically the Rajput aristocracy have been among the factors which influenced Congress governments under

Sukhadia to establish Rajasthan's first labour colony in Bhilwara and to encourage the establishment of a public corporate enterprise, such as that of RAJSPIN. In fact, between 1958 and 1965, Sukhadia's program for Rajasthan's industrialisation had achieved, from initially nothing, a six-fold increase in capital employed in factories, a four-fold increase in gross factory output, a five-fold increase in value added by manufacture, and a two-fold increase in factory employment.<sup>12</sup> As in Bhilwara's case, this no-mean achievement was accomplished by attracting private business, first, through explicit concessions on land-rent, power and taxation; secondly, through an implicit promise of a disorganised, cheap and comparatively docile labour force; and, thirdly, by fostering the small-scale industrial sector. It is these foregoing policies on which Bhilwara's "qualitative" efficiency finds its mainstay. While Birla Cement and Hindustan Machine Tools are among the All-India giants which have established factories in Rajasthan, in 1962, 98% of Rajasthan factories were still small-scale (All-India equivalent: 92%) and represented 59% of fixed capital (A-I: 10%). These units provided 65% of factory employment (A-I: 36%) and 55% (A-I: 30%) of gross factory output.<sup>13</sup>

While refugees from Sind and Punjab, as well as expatriate Marwaris, have responded to Sukhadia's programme, the local bania communities have tended to dominate. As in the case of Bhilwara, these small-scale ventures have been dependent largely on local markets of locally produced raw materials and, inevitably, dastur (or the "folklore of corruption" - to use the Gunnar Myrdal's euphemism)<sup>14</sup>

Whatever the allegiance, politically speaking, of the Rajasthani businessman has been, "connections" with the local Congress hierarchy has been indispensable to survival. Moreover, the position of these subsidised entrepreneurs has been monopolistic, not only in terms of securing "licenses" to do business but also in their business transactions for, as Sukhadia himself once admitted, it was the urban dealers, and not the rural producers, who were "getting the lion's share".<sup>15</sup>

On the "quantitative" side of Bhilwara's industrial efficiency (i.e. the amount of output employers can generate from given labour inputs, all other conditions being equal), it has been the American trend for large cities, rather than small ones, to attract industrial investment.<sup>16</sup> One possible reason underlying the development of this trend has been that, in the highly cosmopolitan and socially differentiated environment of large cities, cadres of industrial workers are more easily isolated and, consequently, overall control of labour (together with the extraction of its surplus value) is simplified. While there is some concentration of workers in the city environs, the cultivation of workers' food and the reproduction of labour power are spatially diffused well beyond the populous municipal pale of Bhilwara. Small-scale industrial development militates against growing concentrations of workers and a concomitant emergence of a common identity through formation and political articulation of trade-unionism or similar enclaves. Cultural diffusion, too, which perpetuates the vestiges of caste observance and religious communalism militates ideologically against the development of workers' perceptions of themselves as members of a social class.

The economic exploitation of factory workers in the Bhilwara context is exacerbated by the "short-fall" of statutory labour law in its surveillance of the small-scale concerns. Widespread illiteracy among workers deprives them of knowledge of legal protection in relation to wages and conditions. Recruitment of labour in Bhilwara still tends to be a "private" rather than "public" contractual relationship. As in 19th century Europe, Bhilwara's private sector relies on a "private" labour market whereby factory-owners and managers can hire a worker virtually on individually agreed-upon wages and conditions. Only in the tertiary sector is labour subject to "public" regulation and the division of labour subject to "corporately" structured "heteronomies" (i.e. "staff establishments" and "job positions").<sup>17</sup> Conversely, on account of these statutory limitations, only the "compulsorily" organised sector (i.e. where given forms of regulation and organisation of labour are "compelled" by statutory requirements) of contractual labour relations lays within the official purview of judicial scrutiny. The voluntary associations (i.e. trade unions) within the "compulsory" associations is of limited development and therefore hinders public scrutiny of labour relations in the private sector, and even more so when production units are small-scale. Furthermore, because the majority of local unions are INTUC-affiliates and are guided by Gandhian principles of reconciliation and inviolability of private property, it would follow that Bhilwara labour will be disinclined towards militancy. This situation is further compounded (through Gidhari Lal Vyas) by the domination of the local Congress hierarchy over the political organisation of Bhilwara labour.

One could presume from this basis that Bhilwara's "quantitative

efficiency" lays in the capacity of the state's ruling elite, in conjunction with local capital, to deliberately isolate workers through a process of "decentralisation" rather than through "swamping" them in a centrally located, highly populated, culturally and economically pluralist milieu. (The policy of "decentralisation" also serves to spatially dismember interests of private capital.)

This pattern of industrial development is also an outcome of Sukhadia's historical strategy of balancing regional political factions within Rajasthan's Congress organisation by manipulating one faction against another. For instance, Jaipur's prospective importance as the industrial, political, and economic concentration of Rajasthani capital was deliberately reduced by Sukhadia's distribution of industrial capital elsewhere and, more recently, by the dismembering and dispersal of Rajasthan's professional bar through the removal of the State's High Court to the remote desert city of Jodhpur.<sup>18</sup>

#### POSTSCRIPT ON BHILWARA'S CLASS STRUCTURE

In the context of Barrington Moore's thesis on the transition of the world's major countries from agrarian to industrial states, social change in Rajasthan has not been preceded by two essential conditions, viz: the commercialisation of agriculture and the coalition of the bourgeoisie on the one hand and landed aristocracy in opposition to the coalition of peasants and labourers on the other.<sup>19</sup> In Rajasthan's case (and more particularly Bhilwara's), agriculture still tends towards subsistence and landed (or "emancipated" peasant) owner cultivators have collaborated in a political partnership with the urban petit bourgeoisie against the Rajput aristocracy. In many respects, the

structure of Rajasthan's political elite is not so dissimilar to that of the former princely states in that unproductive state capitals are distributed for productive purpose by the state through its politicians and bureaucrats to private capitalists (the bourgeoisie) whose status is not akin to that of the former subordinate "co-parceners": the liberation of private capitalists (i.e. the consummation of the historic bourgeois revolution) would still seem incomplete.

The capacity of Rudra's analytical scheme to integrate with analytical approaches to capitalist development (including the division of labour) on a global scale (such as Gunder Frank's theory of modern imperialism (or its more common synonym, neo-colonialism) had originally prompted the author to adopt Rudra's model for the Bhilwara study. To take the treatment of Bhilwara to its ultimate conclusion would involve an exhaustive survey of the labyrinth of "causeways" by which it could be shown that surplus capital is generated from the exploitation of labour in Bhilwara as a "satellite" centre and centripetally transferred to "metropolitan" repositories in more developed areas of India and elsewhere. This process has been explained in part in the context of Rajasthan's political development but links between state and national centre need to be established. The role of foreign capital in the provision, first, of RAPS, secondly, of the seeds and artificial fertilisers which fuelled Rajasthan's Green Revolution, thirdly, of international development aid, and, last, of transnational corporate enterprise to India, is obviously of pertinence to a comprehensive appreciation of India's social structure in its entirety.

Warren was a long-time critic of the dominant thesis (of which Gunder Frank would be the major exponent) that economic imperialism

is retrogressive to indigenous capitalist development. He therefore tried to establish that underdeveloped countries are undergoing a rapid process of industrialisation and, in so doing, explicitly rejected two commonly held premisses, viz:

... that political independence is irrelevant to the pursuit of development because it cannot in itself threaten the underlying relations of exploitation and domination and that the interests of imperialist countries are directly served by the mainstream of underdevelopment in the rest of the world.<sup>20</sup>

In opposition to the first premiss, Warren agreed that independence has facilitated industrial advances by breaking-up the monopoly of colonial power and creating conditions by which Third World countries can utilise inter-imperialist and East-West rivalries to their own advantage. In opposition to the second premiss, Warren suggested that, whereas, during the colonial period, imperialism did use its political power to curb the transition of its colonies to capitalist industrialisation, in the post-war period, imperialist countries have favoured economic development (if only as part of a prospective strategy to contain potential for revolution).<sup>21</sup> There is a contradiction in Warren's position insofar as he doubted the validity of Gunder Frank's concept of "dependence" (thereby challenging the view that underdeveloped countries are dependent on the developed ones) while elsewhere in his publication Warren appears to have accepted that "dependence" is the logical antonym to "development". But the ultimate question which Warren seems to pose is inevitably the ideological one, viz. "Can capitalism promote development or does it necessarily produce underdevelopment?"<sup>22</sup>

Looking at Bhilwara, the development of modern capitalism has

displaced much of the economic autarchy characteristic of pre-Independence times. In many respects a higher standard of living has been achieved. For instance, effect of famine is controllable, preventative medicine has controlled epidemics, education is accessible on a wider basis, and civil disabilities have been removed, at least in written statute. But, more particularly, federal democratic constitutionalism is entrenched (if anything, moreso since the end of Emergency Rule). While actual public participation rates in elections of central, state and local legislatures is by no means optimum, nevertheless (as Barrington Moore himself eloquently puts it), "the democracy [is] no mere sham".<sup>23</sup>

However, while transnational enterprise exports profits from its Indian ventures, the strategy of surveillance and degree of vigilance exercised by government in the post-Independence era has been aimed at nurturing the improvement of the technical composition of indigenous capital as well as providing foreign investment with reasonable returns. (So far as Rajasthan is concerned there are but six operational industrial plants built with foreign equity participation and collaboration.) Given that Indian capital has protected itself against foreign competition and abusive usurpation frequently associated with the behaviour of corporate "multinationals" in less developed countries, an appreciation of India's internal class structure would be essential to an understanding of the mobility of capital on a domestic front and the place of indigenous "satellites" and "metropolises" within global networks.<sup>24</sup> While it may not be difficult to discern surplus labour of Bhilwara's rural inhabitants fuelling the proliferation and propagation of the town's capital, the dispersion of surplus capital from the town is simply not a straightforward transfer to Jaipur or any of India's major commercial-industrial cum

political capitals (e.g. Ahmedabad, Bombay, or Calcutta): the pattern of processes may indeed be highly complex and, in fact, can, on reflection, pose a difficulty for the fundamental Marxian postulate regarding the polarisation of society into bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Equalisation of the rate of exploitation (i.e. the rate of surplus value throughout society) has traditionally been seen as essential to the support of Marx's view of social polarisation: different rates of exploitation among different classes of labour is a concept usually seen as incompatible with Marx's view. However, it may have been that Marx saw no practical difficulty in reducing concrete labour to abstract labour or complex labour to simple labour. Only in the developed world has capitalist society been characterised by a degree of mobility much greater than that which has been prevalent in any previous form of society. It is possible therefore that Marx saw the realisation of the abstract concept of labour (i.e. "labour in general") finding its expression in the most modern of bourgeois societies, the United States. As the observational data presented in this thesis suggests, conditions prerequisite to the realisation of a "labour in general" in Bhilwara, are yet unfulfilled.

However, as Chapter 5's treatment on the realisation of surplus in contemporary Bhilwara would imply, there exists a non-equivalence through relations of exchange not dissimilar in essentials to exploitation through relations of production. Furthermore, there would seem no logical obstacle to unequal exchange as an instrument of capitalist accumulation existing between economic sectors of an individual country just as it can between two or more given countries and, on this point, a recent contribution of Dandekar illustrates both

the complexity of the mechanism of unequal exchange in the less developed sector as well as the way in which Marx's own device of reducing different kinds of concrete labour into abstract labour in proportion to the wages they receive conceals the phenomenon of the exploitation of workers in one industry by workers of another.<sup>25</sup>

In simple summary, to demonstrate his point, Dandekar deviates from Marx, first, by allowing a wage to have, besides the element of subsistence (i.e. a share of the surplus product) and, secondly, by letting the wage-rate be different between different sectors of the economy.<sup>26</sup> According to Dandekar, the adoption of these two deviations enables the observation of the transfer of surplus value from one industry to another, not only for equalisation of the rate of profit between industries but also to maintain wage differentials between them.

If there are grounds on which to suppose that near-perfect mobility and competition exist between different kinds of labour, one might reasonably suppose that the differences in wages reflect relative values of different kinds of labour. By the same token, if there are strong indications that no such mobility and competition between different kinds of labour exist, there is no guarantee that the differences in wages accord with relative values of different kinds of labour. (From the Appendix, it will have been noticed that differences between wages for skilled and unskilled workers and modest and nearly uniform across all occupations in Bhilwara. Furthermore, the prescribed rates do not include conditions such as subsidised housing, payment of bonus, and payment of dearness allowance. It should be remembered too that the statutory minimum wage in an Indian state

is no more than the equivalent of the cost of family subsistence.) Moreover, institutional obstacles preventing movement of labour could also distort relationships between different levels of wages for different kinds of labour and the surplus values of different kinds of labour. In addition, while competitive mobility between different kinds of labour may improve (as Marx himself would suggest) with the development of capitalism, inter-industry and inter-enterprise competitive mobility of labour of some kind may encounter increasing difficulties with the development, not just of monopoly capitalism, but also its opposite counterpart, the trade union movement.

Dandekar presents data which tend to confirm the fact that capitalist development in India's manufacturing sector is highest in the urban registered factory sector and lowest in the rural unregistered factory sector. These same differences too are reflected in the crude measures of labour productivity existing between these same two sectors. The conclusions drawn by Dandekar (albeit using crude examples to illustrate the transfer of surplus value between wages and profits and transfer of surplus from one industry to another) are that workers in one industry, such as iron, are able to exploit workers in another, say wheat, who exploit, in turn, yet another, say coal. It follows that within one country there may exist a hierarchy of sectors at different stages of development. While capital may accumulate in the developed sectors not entirely through appropriation of surplus value in these sectors (in fact, surplus value could be small or even negative) but at least partly, often largely, and sometimes entirely, through the appropriation of surplus value created in the less developed sectors, i.e. the exploitation of the less developed

sectors. The greater accumulation of capital in the more highly developed sectors results in further increases in labour productivity and consequent higher wages accelerating the process of capital accumulation in the more developed sector. Observations made in Bhilwara, particularly in relation to the hegemony of the bureaucracy and public sector, would tend to reinforce the plausibility of Dandekar's hypothesis and the view of this thesis that the ascendancy of this class is attributable to the capacity of its members to enforce (through licit and illicit bargaining) an unequal exchange on the less developed sectors.<sup>27</sup>

Dandekar's theory raises several important implications. In the first instance, it raises implications for Warren's viewpoint in that, in spite of measurable improvements in living standards which neo-colonialism might stimulate, there are still vast discrepancies among countries in workers' wages. For instance, the average Indian textile worker earns four-fifths less than his West German counterpart for operating a third more hours over the same number of days, a discrepancy which inevitably must be explained at some point in terms of unequal exchange between countries and unequal exchange between workers and between industries within individual countries.<sup>28</sup>

If this latter contention were true, its corollary is that employee classes of the more developed sectors undermine national working class unity just as differences between the working class of one country with that of another could militate against a cohesive world-wide proletariat. The contention would reinforce the opinions of this study as to why Rajasthan's political elite has been reticent in encouraging

greater commercialisation of agriculture, why public sector employee leadership has been reticent in forging close links with unions of the private sector and why the political elite should continue to lead Bhilwara's INTUC-affiliated trade unions. The contention would also shed light on why Bhilwara's urban organised labour sector has remained indifferent towards stimulating the involvement of wage labour in the agricultural sector.

In his article, Dandekar has proposed a very tenuous programme intended to bring India's "working classes" into a more cohesive alliance but what Dandekar's thoughts and the conclusions of this thesis tend to do is support Lenin's paradoxical proposition on the working class as a historical movement, viz:

... However much we may try to 'lend the economic struggle itself a political character' we shall never be able to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the level of Social-Democratic political consciousness) by keeping within the framework of economic struggle, for that framework is too narrow ... it pointedly expresses the basic error that all the Economists commit, namely their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers from within, so to speak, their economic struggle. ... Such a view is radically wrong.

Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without, that is, only from outside of the economic struggle, from outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of all classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between all classes.<sup>29</sup>

In closing his exposition of India's rural class structure (in which his methodology of class analysis was also subsumed), Rudra forshadowed a continuing "immiseration" of India's rural peasantry. Besides indications of growing landlessness,<sup>30</sup> diminishing incidence of

adult females in paid work, and mass female illiteracy in Bhilwara's rural sector, there are also indications of widespread undernutrition.<sup>31</sup> (While the Green Revolution may have produced increased volumes of foodgrains, it has entailed increased additional farm inputs thereby increasing the cost of food production.)<sup>32</sup>

Rajasthan's last panchayat elections were held in 1978 and, before that, in 1966. If Bhupalgarh may serve as an illustration of a growth in the political power of banias in grass-roots village politics, an unstable fragmented political alliance of non-bania panchs which existed until 1978 has now subsided and bania domination is in the ascendant.<sup>33</sup> Although Rajasthan's urban bureaucracy would offer opportunity for further research, it will be Rajasthan's rural sector from which structural change is likely to emanate. On the one hand, land redistribution, and continuing social and cultural significance of caste and patriarchal family are factors which could serve to contain threat of social upheaval but, on the other, chronic rural poverty must reach a point of cataclysm if left unchecked.

The role of the urban proletariat would unlikely be of significance in stimulating change at the rural level. In Bhilwara's case, trade union leadership is weak (and politically dominated by Rajasthan's ruling elite), unionists are comparatively small in number, and, moreover, the proportion belonging to the private sector is small. Trade unions of state concerns enjoy the highest rates of wage differential and have the most to gain economically from maintaining bilateral (or, if including illegal perks, multilateral) bargaining to the exclusion of private industrial and agricultural labour. Moreover, the very nature of corporate structures which comprise aggregates of "job positions"

stifles competition and mobility and consequently consolidates the economic supremacy of those who occupy and control these positions. While ideologically dominated by Gandhian social philosophy, the local economy's dependence on public equity in and public subsidy of private enterprise, a dilemma arises as to whether, in a situation where the state exercises so much direct or indirect ("socialistic") control, the state ipso facto protects the workers and, consequently, as the "vanguard of the working class", the trade union movement is redundant.<sup>34</sup>

There are reasons for this other than merely increased rural proletarianisation. Just as legislation governing labour under capitalism is a manifestation of labour's public utility (i.e. an instrument for creating wealth), private property itself also assumes the character of a public utility under capitalism, irrespective of whether or not property is subject to formal nationalisation: it is contrary to the historical process of capitalist development that agriculture and agricultural land utilisation should be constrained in its commercialisation by unprofitability and inefficient farming methods.<sup>35</sup> It is equally retrogressive that rural exchange should continue to be dominated by primitive usuary. In other words, it would seem that improved commercial agriculture would be indispensable to the survival of rural capitalism. If further community studies were contemplated, the structure and behaviour of Rajasthan's panchayati raj would be one area of interest, so too would indigenous rural banking (to which S.S.M. Desai has already made a modest contribution) is another.<sup>36</sup> Given the importance of religious assertion not only to the business castes of Bhilwara but to members of aspiring avarna castes, the "Hindu ethic and the spirit of capitalism" could also offer a topic for an interesting investigation.

## SUMMARY

In the introductory chapter, it was stated that the thesis' intention was inter alia to produce a literary "vignette" of the historical transformation of Bhilwara's social structure and, in so doing, to identify the conditions which contributed to the transformation as well as the causes which underlied their occurrence. Artistic vignettes are rarely intended to provide an absolutely accurate photographic representation and a shortcoming of this exercise is that its empirical base, particularly in relation to material on contemporary economic behaviour of Bhilwara's inhabitants, is too impressionistic. However, there are formidable problems to be encountered in soliciting up-to-date censal information which is in manageable form and, as already stressed, causal definitions of worker have undergone period revision. An inherent problem of the participant observer technique as a field-work instrument is its reliance on anecdotal material rather than systematic quantitatively measurable corroboration. Nevertheless, while the scientific and methodological efficacy of Rudra's model has not perhaps diminished by its application to Bhilwara, a thorough survey of "netted" periods of wage employment in comparison with other income-producing activities among rural and urban populations would provide the ultimate test of the model's utility and the concept of "intermediate" classes.<sup>37</sup> The complementary adaptation and application of Dandekar's model on unequal exchange would also be advantageous.

The fact that Rudra's model, as Rudra himself has presented it, ignores the place of females in the class structure of Indian agriculture renders domestic labour as a theoretical lacuna which needs to be remedied through a rigorous treatment of the aspect of unpaid labour

as well as the process of labour reproduction. The role of political elites (such as that of the near 20-year-long "raj" of Sukhadia as premier of Rajasthan) in preserving the continuation of elements of pre-capitalist relations of production (not only in agriculture but also in urban manufacturing industry) is another aspect of Rudra's model which tends to be overlooked. Given that Rudra intended that his theory be employable for purposes of practical politics, and not just for those of exotic sociological discourse, these omissions are serious. Nevertheless, while this research may be but an incomplete vindication of Rudra's theory, it is not an unreasonable demonstration of the theory's illuminative qualities and its capacities to treat a broad range of dimensions of social phenomena of as specific a case as Bhilwara in consistent and integrated ways.