

## CHAPTER V

### CASTE AND THE AGRARIAN CLASS STRUCTURE

The economic dimension of the caste relationship holds an important place in understanding the caste structure. K. K. Bose (1958) finds the root explanation of the caste continuity in Bengal in the economic dimension of caste. Bailey (1972: 256), following Barrenman (1967) remarks that the caste ranking should be done not only on the basis of ritual criteria and social usage but also by 'differential control over productive resources'. Dettelle (1969a) also finds the class dimension of caste as very important. This should not create an impression, however, that caste by itself is meaningless. Siddiqui (1973: 13), on the basis of the Gujar Insurrection finds the people going beyond their class boundaries to help their caste fellows.

The earlier studies on the economic relations of caste have taken stray trends. Deidolman (1959) found 'jajmani system' a fertile ground for studying the economic relations of caste. Another group of scholars (Ambedkar 1946, Dube 1967, Ahal 1968) has studied the economic relations of caste on the basis of occupational distribution or division of labour.

The study of the relationship between caste and the agrarian class structure is comparatively a new field of investigation. The few studies directly or indirectly in this line are, however, out with different conclusions. The studies

which have shown a positive relationship between caste and agrarian class structure are : Mayer's study of Ramthori village, Malwa (1930), Epstein's study of Mangala and Dalana in south India (1932), Doteille's study of Sripuram at Tanjore (1960), Berreman's study of Sirtanda (1972), Srinivas's study of Rempura (1973) etc. On the other hand, the studies of Bailey (1972) at Bialpara, Orissa, Caplan in east Nepal (1970) etc. have indicated a change in such a relationship.

Speaking of caste and agrarian structure in the hill villages under study it has been said that due to various reasons the caste structure as well as the agrarian class structure vary from village to village. These may be recapitulated here.

The consensual relations among the various castes, for example, seem to vary rather directly with the variation in the location, educational level, economic development and the degree of urbanisation or modernization. More urbanised and educationally more advanced villages like Partong and Rangballi have thus a freer consensual relations than the less urbanised and educationally less advanced villages like Tarek, Talukhara and Chuchen. The marital relations are also found to vary accordingly. The villages which are more urbanised and educationally more advanced have a higher percentage of intercaste marriages than the villages which are less urbanised or educationally less advanced.

Along with urbanisation, education and economic development, migration is also found to have influenced the caste relations in the villages. Thus, the earlier settlers enjoy a higher social status than the later immigrants despite their respective positions in the ritual hierarchy. Yet an important factor in this regard is found to be the historical background of the castes and the society as such - or originally a caste Hindu, presence or absence of state patronage, the social environment meaning the neighbouring castes/tribes/communities, etc. And the last but probably the most important factor is the agrarian class status of the different castes. Since most of the high caste people are in the lower ranks of agrarian hierarchy these castes have not been able to ascertain their caste superiority.

Regarding the agrarian class structure it may be recalled that it has varied from village to village in respect of the relative numerical strength of the pattidars and pottars and of the categories within these two; also of average landholding; production, distribution and consumption; forms and extent of tenancy; educational, occupational and income distribution; levels of class consciousness and conflict; etc. The reasons behind this variation are not one but many: historical background including migration, density of population and altitude, extent of wet or dry lands, education, occupational diversification, levels of urbanisation or industrialisation, competition within and amongst the agrarian classes and categories, environmental or ecological conditions, etc.

The relationship between caste and agrarian class structure is also expected to vary from village to village and more or less the same factors which have brought about a variation in the caste as well as the agrarian class structure may be expected to be responsible for the variation.

Let us now see the nature of this relationship in the five villages so that a comparison can be made among them on the one hand and between them and the plain villages on the other. The following table shows the picture on Tenak.

Table 45

Caste and Agrarian Class Structure in Tenak

Caste	No. of Households	Pattadar	%	Pattaray	%
High	33	21	55.3	17	44.7
Middle	135	90	66.7	45	33.3
Low	15	4	26.7	11	73.3
Others*	46	42	91.3	4	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>67.1</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>32.9</b>

\* Bihari, Muslim, Lepcha and Bhatis.

It is seen in the above table that the representation of the 'others' castes in the pattadar class is the highest (91.3%) followed by the middle (66.7%) and the high castes (55.3%) but the low castes have only 26.7%.

The highest percentage of the pattadars in the 'others' castes is mainly due to the Lepchas who have 97.6%

landowning households and the low percentage of the high castes is due to the Bahung who are all landless. The Chhotia otherwise have 65.0% landowning households or pattalars. Among the middle castes if the Limbu caste is taken separately the percentage of this caste comes to 70.1 which is much higher than the average percentage of the middle castes. Thus in Tanak though the low castes have a low class position there is no proper caste-class correlation.

The following table on Purbong shows a slightly different picture from that of Tanak. Most of the Nepalese castes have a higher percentage of people in the pakhurey class. The only caste which has 100.0% landowning families is the Rai; the Limbus have 60.0% landowning households and the Santhia and the Khasis have 66.7% each.

Table 43

Caste and Agrarian Class Structure in Purbong

Caste	No. of Households	Pattalar %	Pakhurey %
High	10	30.0	70.0
Middle	33	49.5	50.5
Low	6	66.7	33.3
Others*	24	100.0	-
Total	63	65.1	34.9

\* Bihari, Anglo-Indian and Lepcha.

The case studies of the landless households show that there are 10 households belonging mainly to the high end

the middle castes, which are thrown out from villages at a lower altitude and also from those more urbanized. The reason for their migration from lower altitude villages is perhaps a higher rate of production in such villages leading to a greater competition among the adhiwala or pashuways, which probably led to the driving out of the weaker ones from those villages. The more urbanized villages also have a greater land value and the landholding size also being smaller the landless people have a less chance of being absorbed there. The following table is on its detail.

Table 47

Persons and the Villages Migrated From

Sl. No.	Name	Caste	Villages Migrated from	Altitude	Nature of village
1	Ram Prasad Bains		Pasyor	2100'	a. s. l. Less Urbanized
2	Man Bahadur Chhetri		"	"	"
3	Abhiram Kani		"	"	"
4	Manmaya Chhetri		7th Mile	2300'	More Urbanized
5	Wainakala Chhetri		"	"	"
6	Budha Singh Limbu		"	"	"
7	Krishna Maya Limbu		"	"	"
8	Man Bahadur Bhujal		"	"	"
9	Man Bahadur Tamang		Tenok	2400'	Less Urbanized
10	Harakant Tamang		"	"	"

The Bhangal village is located at a higher altitude and has many features different from other villages studied here. The following table shows the caste and agrarian class relationship in this village.

Table 43Caste and Agrarian Class Structure in Ranghull

Caste	No. of Households	Pattadar	%	Pakhsary	%
High	41	33	80.5	8	19.5
Middle	200	175	87.5	25	12.5
Low	19	12	63.2	7	36.8
Others*	46	22	47.8	24	52.2
Total	306	242	79.1	64	20.9

\* Lopcha, Dhatis, Dumpa, Kaluya (Marvari) and Bihari.

It is seen above that the percentage of the landowners is the highest (87.5) among the middle castes followed by 80.5% among the high castes, 63.2% among the low castes and only 47.8% among the 'others' castes. In Tandi and Purbong the high castes have a still lower class position but in this village the high castes have quite a high class position. The position of the high castes would be even better if all the Bahung were not landless in this village also. Therefore, the difference between the landowners and the landless in Ranghull is apparently difficult to define. The rented houses in which they stay look almost the same because after all the houses are constructed by the landlords only.

The Rajnithang village offers a change from the pictures on caste and agrarian class relationship shown by the villages just discussed. For example, the following table shows that the position of the low castes is the highest with 100.0% landowning households, followed by the 'others' castes

(92.3) and the middle castes (75.7%). The high castes do not have a single landowning household in this village. Thus in this village the caste-class relationship is apparently not positive.

Table 49

Caste and Agrarian Class Structure in Taintiang

Caste	No. of Households	Temporary Settlers	Temporary Pattadar	%	Pattadar	%
High	3	2	*	*	1	100.0
Middle	72	3	33	75.7	17	31.3
Low	4	*	4	100.0	*	*
Others*	15	2	13	82.3	1	7.7
Total	94	6 (6.4)	60	(73.4)	19	(20.3)

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lopcha and Bhutia.

The situation in Chuchen cannot be expected to be very different from the one found above in the case of Taintiang. Anyway the following table may be produced here.

Table 50

Caste and Agrarian Class Structure in Chuchen

Caste	No. of Households	Pattadar	%	Pattadar	%
High	1	1	100.0	*	*
Middle	66	50	80.4	7	10.6
Low	3	1	33.3	2	66.7
Others*	12	11	91.7	1	8.3
Total	82	73	87.8	10	12.2

\* Lopcha and Bhutia.

This table reveals that the high, middle and the 'others'

castes have relatively a better class position than the low castes. Castewise, the only caste which is landless is the sunwar, falling in the middle caste group. Among the castes having landowning households the Kasis have the lowest percentage (33.3) and the castes/communities which have cent per cent landowning households are Chhetri, Kanger and Lepcha. The percentage of landowners in the 'others' castes is higher than other castes excepting the Kasis.

The above discussion on caste and agrarian class structure gives a very broad and sweeping view of the relationship between the two. This is but inadequate because just holding and not holding of land does not determine the class position of a particular family though the agrarian classification has been made here on the same basis. In the context of the hill Darjeeling and Sikkim where the land does not have much of economic or productive value the land alone cannot represent the concept of 'class'. With this conviction the present study includes many other criteria like education, occupation, amount of landholding, income, indebtedness and spatial mobility.

It may be noted here that the difference in the quantum of land held by these castes is quite substantial. In general, as the following discussion on caste and land relationship will show, the castes having a higher percentage of landowners also have a higher percentage of land held. For

more specific details, tabular representation of the data on this aspect has been made on each village - with details not only on the amount of land held but also on the size classification of land in each caste group.

The foregoing discussion shows that in some villages like Tanok and Ranghull, the 'others' castes have a higher percentage of pottahness than other caste groups like the high, middle and the low. However, if we leave out the 'others' caste the picture stands quite differently. The middle castes, for example, have a higher position than the high and the low in Tanok and Ranghull villages; the low castes have a higher position in Furbong and Talartang; and the high castes have a higher position only in Chuchen. But this last caste group has only one household in this village. Now, whether a similar picture may be found on the basis of other criteria also may be seen from the following discussion.

### Caste and Land

It has been already mentioned that the land does not hold much of economic importance in the region under study. However, the social importance of it is still high and having land still means many things besides just a source of income - it is a prestige symbol and also a means of suppression and being suppressed. The relationship between land and caste in Tanok is shown in the following table.

Table 51Caste and Land in Tenck

Caste	No. of Households	%	Amount of Land in acres	%	Holding per Household (acres)
High	38	16.2	60.99	15.7	1.60
Middle	135	57.7	157.37	43.1	1.16
Low	15	6.4	2.72	0.7	0.18
Others*	46	19.7	143.90	38.5	3.13
Total	234	-	364.98	100.0	1.55

\* Bihari, Malin, Lepcha and Bhutia.

The table shows, as expected, that the low castes have a very low percentage of land compared to the percentage of households. The high castes have a slightly higher percentage of land compared to the percentage of their households but the middle castes have a slightly lower percentage of land compared to the percentage of their households. The 'others' castes, on the other hand, have a much higher percentage of land compared to the percentage of their households. The average landholding size per household is also the highest (3.13 acres) among the 'others' castes, followed by 1.60 acres among the higher castes, 1.16 acres among the middle castes and only 0.18 acre among the low castes.

The above figures would probably show a higher percentage of land among the high castes if all the Bahans were not landless. Among the low castes, whatever amount of land is there is held solely by the Koria; the Bastia and the Damia are totally landless. Again the very high percentage of land

among the 'others' castes is due to the Lopchas who are numerically 17.5% but the percentage of land held by them is 33.4.

The picture of caste and land relationship would be clearer if the following table on the caste-wise classification of landholding by size be presented.

Table 52

Caste-wise Classification of Landholding by Size in Tanak

Caste	No. of House-holds	Below 1.0 acre	1.1-3.0	3.1-5.0	5.1-10.0	10.0+Landless	
High	33	9	9	2	-	1	17
	%	29.7	23.7	6.3	-	2.6	44.7
Middle	135	53	29	6	2	-	45
	%	39.3	21.5	4.4	1.5	-	33.3
Low	18	3	1	-	-	-	11
	%	20.0	6.7	-	-	-	73.3
Others*	46	17	12	3	7	3	4
	%	37.0	26.1	6.5	15.2	6.5	8.7
Total	234	82	51	11	9	4	77
	%	35.0	21.8	4.7	3.8	1.7	32.9

\* Binari, Muslim, Lopcha and Bhutia.

In the above table it is seen that the percentage of landless households is the highest among the low castes followed by the high and the middle castes. The 'others' castes have only 8.7% landless households. The castes which have above 3.1 acres of land are the high, middle and the 'others'

castes and the only castes to have landholding size above 10.0 acres is the high and the 'others' castes. On the whole, however, the 'others' castes have the highest class position with regard to the size of landholding.

The very high position of the 'others' castes regarding the landholding size is mainly due to the Lepchas who hold a big percentage of land in the village and also the bigger plots of land. As a matter of fact, all the three Dependent caste groups have a lower position compared to the position of the 'others' castes in the landholding size above 1.1 acre. Even in the landholding size below 1.0 acre the percentage of the 'others' castes is only slightly lower than that of the middle castes.

Now if a similar picture exists in Purbang also may be seen with the help of the following table.

Table 63

Caste and Land in Purbang

Caste	No. of Households	%	Amount of Land in acres	%	Holding per Household
High	10	15.9	11.13	12.1	1.11
Middle	23	36.5	27.62	30.1	1.20
Low	6	9.5	5.29	5.8	0.88
Others*	24	38.1	47.68	52.0	1.99
Total	63	100.0	91.72	100.0	1.46

\* Bihari, Anglo-Indians and Lepcha.

This table gives a strikingly similar picture with

that found in Teak. In this village also the high, middle and the low castes have a lower percentage of land held compared to the percentage of their households. The 'others' castes, on the other hand, have a much higher percentage of land held than the percentage of their households. The size of holding per household is also the biggest (1.93 acres) among the 'others' castes, followed by 1.20 acre among the middle caste, 1.11 acre among high and only 0.88 acre among the low castes. Now, whether they also hold the larger chunks of land may be seen in the following table.

Table 54

Castewise Classification of Landholding by size in Durbang

Caste	No. of Households	Below 1.0 acre	1.1-3.0	3.1-5.0	5.1-10.0	10.0+	Landless
High	10	2	1	1	-	-	6
	%	20.0	10.0	10.0	-	-	60.0
Middle	23	8	1	-	2	-	12
	%	34.8	4.3	-	8.7	-	52.2
Low	6	3	1	-	-	-	2
	%	50.0	16.7	-	-	-	33.3
Others*	24	8	10	3	3	-	-
	%	33.3	41.7	12.5	12.5	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31.7</b>

\* Bihari, Anglo-Indian and Lepcha.

The above table shows that the high castes have the highest percentage of landless households followed by the middle and the low castes. Nobody in the village owns land more

than 10.0 acres. The only caste groups having land more than 5.1 acres are the middle and the 'others' castes and between 3.1 to 5.0 acres, the high and the 'others' castes. Except in the landholding size below 1.0 acre the 'others' castes have the highest class position with regard to landholding size.

In Raagbali the landholding size is very small and the production very low. Nobody in the village owns more than 3.0 acres of land. However, it is not totally irrelevant to give data on the relative amount of landholding among the various caste groups in this village. The following table on the caste-wise distribution of landholding shows the caste and land relationship in this village.

Table 55

Caste and Land in Raagbali

Caste	No. of Households	%	amount of Land in acres	%	Holding per Household
High	41	13.4	11.43	11.4	0.28
Middle	200	65.4	76.34	75.7	0.38
Low	19	6.2	7.41	7.4	0.39
Others*	46	15.0	6.57	6.5	0.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.70</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.33</b>

\* Lepcha, Bhutia, Duppa, Marwari and Bihari.

This table shows that the percentage of landholding is higher than the percentage of households among the middle

and the low castes but among the high and the 'other' castes the percentage of households is higher than the percentage of land held. The average size of landholding per household is also the biggest (0.33 acre) among the low castes, followed by the middle (0.23 acre), high (0.23 acre) and the 'others' castes (0.12 acre). Low percentage of land held or low average size of landholding per household among the 'others' castes is mainly due to a large number of business communities like the Marwaris, Biharis, Dulpas and Bhatias most of whom own only the homestead.

Now, a further attempt may be made here to show the differences in the size of landholding among the different caste groups on the basis of the following table.

Table 50

Caste-wise Classification of Landholding by size in Ranchhull

Caste	No. of Households	Below 0.50 acre	0.51-1.0	1.1-2.0	2.1-3.0	Landless
High	41	29	2	2	-	8
	%	70.7	4.9	4.9	-	19.5
Middle	300	130	93	19	2	21
	%	65.9	16.0	6.0	1.0	12.0
Low	19	10	-	1	1	7
	%	52.6	-	5.3	5.3	33.8
Others*	46	30	2	-	-	24
	%	43.5	4.3	-	-	52.2
Total	306	199	38	15	3	63
	%	61.8	11.3	4.9	1.0	20.6

\* Lepcha, Bhatia, Dulpas, Marwari and Bihari.

The table given above unfolds a different picture from the ones seen above. In this village the 'others' castes have the highest percentage of landless households while the middle castes have the lowest percentage of the landless households. The only castes to have more than 2.1 acres of land are the middle and the low castes but the 'others' castes do not have any land above 1.1 acre. The high percentage of land held but a low percentage of landowning households among the low castes compared with the high and the middle castes indicate a greater extent of land concentration among them. It is also found that they have the highest representation in the landholding class above 2.1 acres. According to landholding class the 'others' castes have the lowest class position in Ranghull. But this is mainly because of the business communities mentioned above most of whom are landless but their income is quite high as it will be seen in the course of discussion here.

The following table gives the data on caste and land in Takuthang.

Table 57

Caste and Land in Takuthang

Caste	No. of Households	%	Total Amount of Land in acres	%	Holding per Household
High	3	3.2	-	-	1.07
Middle	74	72.7	271.73	75.1	1.06
Low	4	4.3	6.00	1.6	1.07
Others*	13	13.6	64.23	23.2	6.43
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>362.01</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3.85</b>

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Shulia.

The above table shows that the high castes are totally landless but it should be mentioned here that they are not, except one household, permanent settlers of the village either. The middle and the low castes have a lower percentage of land compared to the percentage of their households but the 'others' castes again have a higher percentage of land compared to the percentage of their households. It is also seen in the above table that the holding per household is almost equal among the high, middle and the low castes but the same among the 'others' castes is more than six times the size among the Nepalese castes.

This picture may be further examined on the basis of the following table which gives the size-wise classification of landholdings and the distribution among the various castes. The table, for example, shows that the castes which have more than 5.0 acres of land use the middle and the 'others' castes with the latter having a higher percentage above this size. The low castes have percentage-wise the highest position in the size between 2.1 to 5.0 acres. However, there is numerically only one household falling in this size class.

Table 53

Caste-wise Classification of Landholdings by size in Takathang

Caste	No. of Households	Below 1.0 acre	1.1-2.0	2.1-5.0	5.1-10.0	10.0 +	Landless
High	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
	%	-	-	-	-	-	100.0
Middle	72	7	17	13	7	9	19
	%	9.7	23.6	18.1	9.7	12.5	25.4
Low	4	2	1	1	-	-	-
	%	50.0	25.0	25.0	-	-	-
Others*	15	1 (6.7)	4 (26.7)	3 (20.0)	2 (13.3)	2 (13.3)	3 (20.0)
Total	94	10	22	17	9	11	25
	%	10.6	23.4	18.1	9.6	11.7	26.6

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Shuti.

In Chuchen the Mast family is reported to have still owned 300 acres of land. He has some lands in Takuthang - the best lands in fact, about 50 acres in Chuchen and the rest elsewhere. The present discussion, however, includes only the amount of land the family owns within the village itself. The relationship between castes and the amount of landholding in Chuchen has been shown in the following table.

Table 59

Castes and Land in Chuchen

Castes	No. of Households	%	Amount of Land in acres	%	Holding per Household
High	1	1.2	6.17	1.3	6.17
Middle	65	59.6	234.21	59.6	4.31
Low	3	3.7	20.49	4.3	6.83
Others*	12	14.6	166.12	34.8	13.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>476.99</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5.82</b>

\* Lepcha and Bhutia.

This table shows that the percentage of land among the high castes is almost equal to the percentage of their households. But among the middle castes the percentage of land is less by 50.9 compared to the percentage of their households. Again, among the low castes the percentage of land is slightly higher (+0.6) than the percentage of their households. In the 'others' castes, however, the percentage of land is very high (+34.8) compared to the percentage of their households. The landholding size per household is also much bigger (13.84 acres) among the 'others' castes compared with the high (6.17 acres),

middle (4.81 acres), and the low (6.83 acres) castes.

The very high percentage of land among the 'others' castes is primarily due to the Kani family mentioned above, which owns 49 acres of land in Chuchen only. Even otherwise the members of this caste group have bigger plots of land than the Nepalese castes and in a hamlet called Ipain Danga where the land is settled the Lepchas are still found to own very big and fertile lands. This aspect will be cleared with the following table.

Table 60

Caste-wise Classification of Landholdings by Size in Chuchen

Caste	No. of Households	Below 1.0 acres	1.1-3.0	3.1-5.0	5.1-10.0	10.0+	Land-less
High	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
	%	-	-	-	100.0	-	-
Middle	66	4	33	11	24	3	7
	%	6.1	42.4	16.7	21.2	3.0	10.6
Low	3	-	-	-	1	-	3
	%	-	-	-	33.3	-	66.7
Others*	12	-	1	3	3	4	1
	%	-	8.3	25.0	25.0	33.3	8.3
Total	83	4	29	14	19	6	10
	%	4.9	35.4	17.1	23.2	7.3	12.2

\* Lepcha and Dhatia.

The above table shows that the high castes have the highest percentage of households in the size class between 5.1 to 10.0 acres but the only castes which have above 10.0 acres are the middle (3.0%) and the 'others' castes (33.3%) only. It

has also been shown that the high, low and the 'others' castes do not have a single household below 1.0 acre size class.

If we are to draw the total picture excluding the 'others' castes we find that the high castes have the highest position with regard to land in Farak only, the middle castes in Purbong, and the low castes in Rangball and Chuchen. The average landholding size per household is equal between the high and the low castes in Falaitong and in Chuchen the landholding per household is only slightly smaller (6.17 acres) in size among the high castes compared to the low castes (6.93 acres). In Rangball, the difference in the size of landholding per household is almost insignificant between the middle (0.33 acre) and the low (0.33 acre) castes. According to the classification of landholding by size also no clear-cut picture of the relationship between caste and landholding can be drawn. This has been found mainly due to uneven immigration and demographic change.

#### Caste and Education

The following table shows the relationship between caste and education in Farak.

Table 61.

Caste and Education in Bihar

Caste	No. of Inds.	Illit.		Infants Pry. Educ.		Second. Educ.		College +		Total Ill-V
		I	II	III	IV	V				
High	223	69	43	64	59	4				117
	%	30.8	19.0	28.9	33.1	1.7				51.8
Middle	761	357	97	256	187	4				497
	%	46.8	12.8	33.0	24.9	0.5				63.5
Low	89	43	10	17	13	1				36
	%	48.3	11.2	19.1	23.2	1.2				40.4
Others*	394	62	56	83	82	7				177
	%	15.7	14.2	21.1	21.1	1.8				45.2
Total	1379	493	206	598	339	16				737
	%	35.8	15.0	43.4	24.3	1.2				53.5

\* Bihari, Muslim, Lepcha and Shukla

+ also includes deaf and dumb.

This table shows that the 'others' castes have the highest percentage of literates (60.2) followed by middle castes (53.5), high castes (51.8) and the low castes (40.4). At the primary level education, the middle castes have the highest percentage followed by the 'others', high and the low castes. At the secondary level education again, the 'others' castes have the highest percentage followed by the high, middle and the low castes. At the college level and above also the 'others' castes have the highest percentage followed by the high castes.

Therefore, the percentage representation of the

'others' castes has been fairly better than other caste groups in almost all the educational categories while the low castes have a poor representation in almost all the categories excepting at the College level where the percentage of this caste group is better than that of the middle castes. This has been possible mainly due to a few better-off low castes staying by the side of the Rishi Road.

Now whether a similar relationship exists between caste and the education in Purbani also may be seen in the following table.

Table 62

Caste and Education in Purbani

Caste	No. of Illi- Inds.	Infants Pry. Second. College					Total Literates III-V
		I	II	III Educ.	IV Educ.	V +	
High	57	22	11	8	15	1	24
	%	38.6	19.3	14.0	26.3	1.8	42.1
Middle	142	37	34	45	32	3	91
	%	26.1	16.9	32.4	22.5	2.1	57.0
Low	50	12	4	13	14	2	34
	%	24.0	8.0	26.0	28.0	4.0	72.0
Others**133	23	25	41	40	5	6	66
	%	20.1	18.0	29.5	29.8	3.6	61.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>285</b>
	%	29.5	18.5	33.1	30.0	2.8	53.0

\*\* Bihari, Anglo-Indians and Begcha  
\* also includes deafs and dumb.

The above table shows that the highest percentage of literates is among the low castes followed by the 'others',

middle and the high castes. Except at the secondary level education where the 'others' castes have a better position the low castes have a higher percentage at primary and College level education. The percentage of the high castes at the secondary level is, however, quite high.

Thus the above table gives quite a different picture from that in Tonk. In Tonk, the low castes are in a low position in almost all the educational categories but in Purbani, the low castes are in a very satisfactory position.

In Ranchhull, Chapter IV showed that the educational difference between the two classes is not significant. It may be seen in the following table if the educational difference along caste lines is also insignificant.

Table 63

Caste and Education in Ranchhull

Caste	No. of Inds.	Illit.	Infants	Prim.	Second.	College	Total Literates III-V
		Percentage*	II	III	IV	V	
High	185	27	12	49	33	5	86
	%	21.6	9.6	34.4	30.4	4.0	63.8
Middle	1323	222	161	383	319	33	840
	%	16.8	12.2	29.9	23.2	2.9	71.0
Low	109	35	24	29	30	1	60.0
	%	32.9	22.0	26.6	27.5	0.9	55.0
Others**	217	44	23	51	25	4	100
	%	20.3	10.6	23.5	11.5	1.8	46.1
Total	1774	313	230	506	692	43	1236
	%	17.9	12.4	28.5	38.4	2.8	69.7

\*\* Lepcha, Bhutia, Dalipar, Marward and Bihari

\* also includes deaf and dumb.

The above figures show that the highest percentage of literates is found among the middle castes, followed by the 'others', high and the low castes in a hierarchic order. At the College level, however, the high castes have the highest percentage followed by the middle, others and the low castes. Therefore, the high, middle and the 'others' castes have relatively a better class status than the low castes in respect of education. However, the percentage difference is not much among the various caste groups.

The relationship between caste and education in Tamluk may be shown in the following table.

Table 64

Caste and Education in Tamluk

Caste	No. of Inds.	Illit-	Infants Pry.		Second. Collage		Total Literates III-V
		erates* I	II	Educ. III	Ednc. IV	+ V	
High	8	-	2	1	4	1	6
	%	-	25.0	12.5	50.0	12.5	75.0
Middle	401	205	64	20	37	5	132
	%	51.1	15.0	32.4	9.2	1.3	32.9
Low	22	14	3	2	3	-	6
	%	63.6	13.6	9.1	13.6	-	22.7
Others**	74	42	11	19	2	-	31
	%	56.7	14.9	25.7	2.7	-	36.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>164</b>
	%	65.7	15.8	22.2	9.1	1.2	32.5

\*\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Bhutia

\* also includes deaf and dumb.

It is clear above that the percentage of literates among the high castes is the highest followed by the middle castes, 'others' castes and finally the low castes. The only caste group which has reached the College level is the middle caste.

This should not mislead one because the total 1.2% of the villagers represented at the College level are all outsiders. Thus among the villagers themselves there is no much of caste differences regarding education. A similar picture is expected in the following table on Chachon. It is found below that the percentage of literates is equal between the middle and the 'others' castes but it is much lower among the high castes and nil among the low castes. The 'others' castes have the highest representation at the secondary level education followed by the middle castes. The 'others' caste is the only group which has reached the college level. However, at the primary level education the high castes have a slightly higher (25.0) representation than that of the middle castes (23.4).

Table 65

Caste and Education in Chachon

Caste	No. of Inds.	No. of Illite- rates*					Total Literates III-V
		I	II	III	IV	V	
High	3	2	-	1	-	-	1
	%	75.0	-	25.0	-	-	25.0
Middle	360	132	50	23	40	-	145
	%	36.6	13.9	24.4	11.1	-	39.5
Low	17	11	0	-	-	-	-
	%	64.7	35.3	-	-	-	-
Others**	45	23	0	7	6	3	16
	%	51.1	13.3	15.6	13.3	6.7	35.6
Total	435	213	52	33	35	3	125
	%	49.0	14.6	22.6	10.8	0.7	28.1

\* Includes and Bantia. \*\* also includes Gonds and dumba.

Therefore, the class status of the low castes in respect of education is very low in Chuchen. The high castes also have a lower percentage of literates than among the middle and the low castes though this caste group has hundred percent landholding households. The high class position of the 'others' castes in respect of education is, however, solely due to the kazi family.

If we summarize the findings on caste and education in five villages we find that the 'others' castes have a high class position than other castes in villages like Tanek and Chuchen. But if we exclude the 'others' castes from our analysis here the picture stands as following. The middle castes have a higher position than the high and the low castes in Tanek, Rangball and Chuchen, the high castes have the highest position only in Taluthang (due to outsiders as servicemen), and the low castes have the highest position only in Furbong. Thus, if we go about by the number of villages, the middle castes have the highest class position in respect of education in the region under study. Even otherwise this caste group seems to have better adapted than the high and the low castes. This aspect will be clearer after further discussion below.

#### Caste and Occupation

Education is a vital factor which affects occupational mobility. Therefore, the above difference

regarding education among the various caste groups is expected to be reflected in the matters of occupational distribution also. The following table is furnished here to show the relationship between caste and occupation in Tanak.

Table 68

Caste and Occupation in Tanak

Caste	No. of Households	No. of Households with 'heads' engaged in						
		Agrl.	Ser. vice	Busi.	Hotels	Coolie	House	Others
High	38	17	8	1	1	8	3	-
	%	44.7	21.1	2.6	2.6	21.1	7.9	-
Middle	135	62	17	3	3	19	17	14
	%	45.9	12.6	2.2	2.2	14.1	12.6	10.4
Low	15	9	-	-	1	-	3	3
	%	60.0	-	-	6.7	-	20.0	20.0
Others*	45	19	10	3	3	3	6	2
	%	42.2	22.2	6.7	6.7	6.7	13.3	4.4
Total	234	107	35	7	8	30	23	19
	%	45.7	15.0	3.0	3.4	12.8	9.8	8.1

\* Bihari, Muslin, Lepcha and Bhatia.

The above table reveals that the percentage of the heads of the households engaged in agriculture is the highest among the low castes, followed by middle, high and the 'others' castes. In the categories like services, business and coolie the representation of the low castes is nil. The lack of representation of this caste group in the service category is perhaps due to their low educational status and the care in coolie and business categories is probably due to their

higher engagement in agriculture. In the service category the high and the 'others' castes have almost equal representation but in the business and khotala the latter have a much higher representation than the high and the middle castes. In the household category the low castes have one of the highest percentages which is mainly due to a lack of employment in the village for them.

Therefore, on the whole, the 'others' castes have the highest representation in the more lucrative jobs like service and business while the low castes have a poor representation in the same. The high and the middle castes do not have a striking difference in between but the class position of the low castes with regard to occupation can be easily located at the bottom.

The following table shows the caste and occupational distribution in Purboing.

Table 67

Caste and Occupation in Purboing

Caste	No. of Households.	No. of Households with 'heads' engaged in						
		Agri.	Service	Busi.	Khotala	Coolie	House	Others
High	10	1	-	-	2	4	3	-
	%	10.0	-	-	20.0	40.0	30.0	-
Middle	33	9	5	-	6	2	2	-
	%	27.3	15.2	-	18.2	6.1	6.1	-
Low	6	-	2	-	1	-	-	3
	%	-	33.3	-	16.7	-	-	50.0
Others*	24	14	1	3	-	-	5	1
	%	58.3	4.2	12.5	-	-	20.8	4.2
Total	63	24	8	3	8	6	10	4
	%	38.1	12.7	4.8	12.7	9.5	15.9	6.3

\* Bhangi, Anglo-Indian and Lepcha.

The above table shows that the highest percentage of the heads of the households engaged in agriculture is among the 'others' castes. This<sup>15</sup> is mainly due to the Lepchas most of whom are cultivators. The middle castes also have a higher percentage in this category compared to the high castes but the low castes have not at all been represented in this category. In the service category, however, the low castes have the highest percentage followed by the middle, 'others' and all among the high castes.

The above discussion shows that a higher educational status is entailed with a better occupational status in general. This may be further examined on the basis of data on Rangbali.

Table 69

Caste and Occupation in Rangbali

Caste	No. of Households	No. of Households with 'heads' engaged in						
		Agri.	Service	East. Agri.	Lab.	Coolie	House	Others
High	41	6	16	3	1	3	10	2
	%	14.6	39.0	7.3	2.4	7.3	24.4	4.9
Middle	200	45	51	23	5	13	43	15
	%	22.5	25.5	11.5	2.5	6.5	21.5	7.5
Low	19	3	4	2	1	3	2	5
	%	15.8	21.1	10.5	5.3	15.8	10.5	26.3
Others*	46	3	7	27	-	2	5	2
	%	6.5	15.2	58.7	-	4.3	10.9	4.3
Total	306	58	78	60	7	21	60	24
	%	18.9	25.5	19.6	2.3	6.9	19.6	7.8

\* Lepcha, Bhutia, Dakpa, Khasia and Bihari.

It is clear above that the middle castes have the highest percentage in agriculture but in service the high castes

have the highest percentage. In business, on the other hand, the 'others' castes have a very high percentage which is mainly due to the business communities like the Kainyas (Kharwaris), Biharis, Dakpas and the Bhatias. This caste group does not have any representation in the agricultural labour and in the coolie category also the percentage is very low. This indicates a higher class position of this caste group in respect of occupation. The highest percentage of the low castes in coolie and the lowest percentage in the household categories also indicate their low class position. Their representation in agriculture and service is not very high though not very low either in comparison with the high and the middle castes.

In the following is presented a table on Talmathang village. The data show that the middle castes have the highest percentage in agriculture followed by the 'others', high and the low castes. In the service category, however, the high castes have the highest percentage followed by the low 'others' and finally the middle castes.

Table 69

Caste and Occupation in Talmathang

Caste	No. of Households	No. of Households with 'hands' engaged in						
		Agri.	Service	Busi.	Bhatia	Coolie	House	Others
High	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
	%	33.3	66.7	-	-	-	-	-
Middle	74	57	7	-	2	1	5	2
	%	77.0	9.4	-	2.7	1.4	6.8	2.7
Low	4	1	1	-	-	1	-	1
	%	25.0	25.0	-	-	25.0	-	25.0
Others*	13	10	2	-	-	-	1	-
	%	76.9	15.4	-	-	-	7.7	-
Total	94	69	12	-	2	2	6	3
	%	73.4	12.8	-	2.1	2.1	6.4	3.2

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Bhatia.

The above table reveals that the middle castes have the highest percentage in agriculture followed by the 'others' castes, high castes and the low castes. In the service category, however, the high castes have the highest percentage followed by the low, 'others' and finally the middle castes. Therefore, this table gives a similar picture of the class position of the various castes in Takuthang as found in Table 64 on caste and education.

Now if the data on Shuchen are also the same may be seen with the help of the following table. The table shows that the low castes have 100.0% of the heads of the households engaged in agriculture followed by the middle and finally the 'others' castes. The high castes have no representation in this category. It is also to be noted here that the only caste group which has been represented in the service category is the middle caste. The 100.0% representation of the high castes in the household category needs an explanation. The only one household in this caste group is headed by a widow who is a Chhetri by caste and has been sick for the last two years. Thus she cannot work outside and does a few works in the kitchen only.

Table 70.Caste and Occupation in Chanchen

Caste	No. of Households.	No. of Households with 'heads' engaged in						
		Agri.	Service	Busi.	Rhetala	Coolie	House	Others
High	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	%	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-
Middle	66	59	3	-	-	-	2	3
	%	89.4	4.5	-	-	-	3.0	3.0
Low	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
	%	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others*	12	9	-	-	-	-	1	2
	%	75.0	-	-	-	-	8.3	16.7
Total	82	71	3	-	-	-	4	4
	%	86.6	3.6	-	-	-	4.9	4.9

\* Lepcha and Bhutia.

The middle castes seem to have a relatively better class position according to the data given above. But if all the members of a household are included the 'others' castes also have some representation in service and business occupations.

However, as such the occupational diversification is very limited in this village.

The tables on caste and occupation in five villages show that the different caste groups have a higher class position in different villages. If we take the service categories only, the 'others' castes are found to have a relatively better position in Tenak while in the business category this caste group has a better position in Tenak, Purbong and Rangbali. On the

other hand, in Kheta<sup>-1a</sup> and coolie categories this caste group has the lowest percentage except in Tandri where the high and the middle castes have a lower percentage of khetalas than that of the low and the 'others' castes.

If we leave aside the 'others' caste group, the aggregate picture stands thus: In Tandri, the high castes seem to have a better position in respect of service and business; in Partong the low castes have the highest percentage of service holding heads of the households; in Ranghull, the middle castes have the highest position in respect of agriculture, service and business; in Takathang the high castes have the highest percentage of the heads of households in service, followed by the low castes; and in Chuchen the middle castes are the only group having 4.5% representation in the service category. Therefore, no single caste group seems to be dominant in respect of occupation in any of the five villages.

### Caste and Income

It has been deemed necessary here to include the data on income to show the relationship between caste and class relationship. The land is definitely an important source of income in the rural society of Pasjooling and Sikkim but the villagers are today more and more shifting towards the non-agricultural sources of income and to get a composite picture of all these activities, income is a very important because it is one of the best indicators of a family's

socio-economic condition. The following table gives the picture on caste and income in Tanak.

Table 71

Caste and Income (per year) in Tanak.

Caste	No. of House-holds	Below Rs. 1000	Rs. 1001-3000	Rs. 3001-5000	Rs. 5001-10,000	Rs. 10,000+
High	38	4	18	10	8	1
	%	10.5	47.4	26.3	19.2	2.6
Middle	133	13	56	30	30	6
	%	9.6	41.5	22.2	22.2	4.4
Low	15	1	8	2	3	1
	%	6.7	53.3	13.3	20.0	6.7
Others*	46	3	15	11	11	6
	%	6.5	32.6	23.9	23.9	19.0
Total	334	21	97	53	49	14
	%	9.0	41.5	22.6	20.0	6.0

\* Bihari, Maalin, Lopcha and Bhatia.

The above table clearly shows that excepting in the income group of Rs. 3001 to Rs. 5000 where the high castes have a slightly higher percentage representation in comparison with other groups, the 'others' castes group has consistently a higher representation in the income groups above it. Though every caste group has been represented upto the income group of Rs. 10,000+ per year it may be mentioned that the 'others' castes have the highest percentage followed by the low, middle and the high castes. The average monthly income per household is also found to be the highest among the 'others' castes (Rs. 451.09).

followed by the middle castes (Rs.318.51), low (Rs.302.77) and the high castes (Rs.273.61).

The following table gives the figures on caste and income in Panchayats.

Table 73

Caste and Income (per year) in Panchayats

Caste	No. of Households	Below Rs. 1000	Rs. 1001 - 3000	Rs. 3001 - 5000	Rs. 5001 - 10,000	Rs. 10,001 +
High	10	2	5	1	2	-
	%	20.0	60.0	10.0	20.0	-
Middle	29	1	15	5	1	1
	%	4.3	65.2	21.7	4.3	4.3
Low	6	-	3	-	2	1
	%	-	50.0	-	33.3	16.7
Others*	24	1	8	7	7	1
	%	4.2	33.3	29.2	29.2	4.2
Total	69	4	31	13	12	3
	%	6.2	49.2	29.6	19.0	4.2

\* Bihari, Anglo-Indian and Lepcha.

The above table shows that the low castes have the highest percentage representation in the income classes above Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 followed by the 'others' caste, high and finally the middle castes. The monthly income per household was also found to be the highest in the low caste group (Rs.415.70) followed by Rs.321.70 among the 'others', Rs.302.09 among the middle and Rs.238.89 among the high castes. Thus the class position in respect of income is the highest among the 'others' castes as found with regard to other criteria like education,

occupation and occupational diversification.

Now the following table on caste and income in Rangbali may be furnished.

Table 73

Caste and Income (per year) in Rangbali

Caste	No. of Households	Income Class (Rs.)				
		Below 1000	1001-3000	3001-5000	5001-10,000	10,000+
High	41	2	9	15	13	1
	%	4.9	22.0	36.6	31.7	2.4
Middle	200	9	53	69	61	8
	%	4.5	26.5	34.5	30.5	4.0
Low	10	2	10	3	4	-
	%	10.5	62.6	15.8	21.1	-
Others*	46	1	21	19	7	7
	%	2.2	45.7	21.7	15.2	15.2
Total	306	14	93	98	85	16
	%	4.6	30.4	32.0	27.8	5.2

\* Lepcha, Bhutia, Sukpa, Marwari and Bihari.

The table given above shows that the low castes have the highest representation in the income class of Rs.1001 to Rs.3000 and the high castes have the highest representation in the income classes from Rs.3001 to Rs.10,000. But the 'others' castes have a much higher percentage in the income class above Rs.10,000. The percentage of the high and the middle castes above Rs.10,000 is rather insignificant and the low castes do not have any representation at all. Between the high and the

middle caste group having representation in the income class above Rs. 10,000 the middle castes have almost double (4.0) the percentage of the high castes (2.4). The average monthly income of the middle castes is also found to be higher (Rs. 371.50) than that of the high castes (Rs. 300.75). The 'others' castes, however, have a very high average monthly income per household (Rs. 953.23). The reasons for this very high income level of the 'others' caste group have been discussed already in Chapter IV of this report.

It has been mentioned above about Takuthang that there are some temporary settlers in the village, who belong to the high and the 'others' caste groups mainly. Since these people are all government servicemen their income is obviously higher than that of the common villagers. The following table on caste and income in Takuthang may be presented to show this.

Table 74.

Caste and Income (per year) in Takuthang

Caste	No. of Households	Below Rs. 1000	Rs. 1001-3000	Rs. 3001-5000	Rs. 5001-10,000	Rs. 10,000+
High	3	-	1	-	2	-
	3	-	33.3	-	66.7	-
Middle	73	30	33	4	4	2
	3	41.7	41.4	6.5	6.5	2.8
Low	4	2	1	-	1	-
	3	60.0	25.0	-	25.0	-
Others*	15	3	3	1	-	3
	3	53.3	20.0	6.7	-	20.0
Total	94	40	37	5	7	5
	1	42.6	39.4	5.3	7.4	5.3

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Khutia.

The above table shows that the high castes have the highest percentage in the income group of Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 followed by the low castes and finally the middle castes. But the percentage of the middle castes in this income group is relatively rather insignificant. Again, in the income group above Rs.10,000 only the middle and the 'others' castes have been represented but the percentage of the 'others' castes in this group is much higher than that of the middle castes. But as already mentioned this is mainly due to the service holders and among the villagers themselves there is no remarkable income difference.

Finally the caste and income relationship in Chuchen may be shown in the following table.

Table 75

Caste and Income (per group) in Chuchen

Caste	No. of Households	Below Rs. 1000	Rs. 1001 - 3000	Rs. 3001 - 5000	Rs. 5001 - 10,000	Rs. 10,000+
High	1	1	-	-	-	-
	%	100.0	-	-	-	-
Middle	66	16	43	4	4	-
	%	24.2	63.6	6.1	6.1	-
Low	3	1	2	-	-	-
	%	33.3	66.7	-	-	-
Others*	12	2	7	1	1	1
	%	16.7	58.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
Total	82	30	51	5	5	1
	%	36.4	62.3	6.1	6.1	1.2

\* Lepcha and Bhotia.

This table reveals that the low castes have the highest percentage in the income group of Rs. 1001 to Rs. 3000. But above this income group the 'others' castes have consistently a higher percentage compared with other caste groups. The only castes which have been represented above Rs. 3001 income group are the middle and the 'others' castes but the middle castes have not been represented in the income group above Rs. 10,000. This very high class position with regards to income of the 'others' castes has been already mentioned to be due to the Basi family.

Therefore, the 'others' castes have the highest position with respect to income. Among the Nepalese caste groups there is not a single caste which has had consistently a higher percentage of income in all the villages. The low castes have a better position in Tanak and Furbong among the Nepalese caste groups but the middle castes have a better position in the villages like Ranghail, Takathang and even Chuchen.

Barring the 'others' castes group, the total picture in five villages stands thus : in Tanak, the middle castes have the highest percentage (22.2) in the income group of Rs. 5001-Rs. 10,000, followed by 20.0 among the low castes and 13.2 among the high castes but in the income group of above Rs. 10,000 per year, the low castes have the highest percentage (6.7) followed by 4.4% among the middle castes and 2.6% among the high castes; in Furbong, the low castes have the highest representation (33.3%) in the income groups

of Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 and above Rs.10,000, followed by 20.0% among the high castes in the income group of Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 and only 4.3% among the middle castes but this caste group has 4.3% representation in the income group above Rs.10,000 also while the high castes do not have any representation in it; in Ranghull, the high castes have the highest percentage (31.7) in the income group of Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 followed by 30.5% among the middle and 21.1% among the low castes but in the income group above Rs.10,000 the middle castes have 4.0%, the high castes 2.4% and nil among the low castes; in Takithang, the high castes have 66.7%, low castes 15.0% and the middle castes 5.5% in the income group of Rs.5001 to Rs.10,000 but above Rs.10,000 only the middle castes have 2.8% representation; and in Chacher, the high castes have not been represented in the income groups above Rs.1001 to Rs.3000 and the low castes above Rs.3001 to Rs.5000 and no caste group above Rs.10,000.

The above statistical summary shows that not a single caste group is consistently dominant in all the villages with regard to income. This feature has been found more or less true concerning almost all the criteria discussed above.

### Caste and Indebtedness

It is important to study the relationship between caste and indebtedness because a caste may have a higher income, greater amount of land and also a higher level of literacy or occupational diversification but at the same time it may be more

indented also. The following table furnishes data on caste and indebtedness in Tanak.

Table 76

Caste and Indebtedness in Tanak

Caste	Percentage of Households	Total Amount of Loan in Rupees**	Percent	Percentage difference
High	18.2	17,925.04	18.5	+2.3
Middle	57.7	51,571.74	53.2	-4.5
Low	6.4	1,767.50	1.8	+4.6
Others*	19.7	35,610.34	28.4	+8.7
Total	100.0	86,874.62	100.0	-

\* Bihari, Maglin, Lopecha and Bhutia.

\*\* The amount of loan is not limited to a particular period and includes figures on the loan taken till the time of study (1980)

This table shows that the percentage of indebtedness is the highest among the 'others' castes followed by the high castes. On the other hand, the middle and the low castes have a lower percentage of indebtedness compared to the percentage of their households. Among the 'others' castes, the Lopechas alone represent 23.6% of the total loans in the village.

Therefore, it is found that in almost every respect the 'others' castes have a higher class position but in respect of indebtedness this caste group has the lowest class position. But it should be mentioned that the higher percentage of indebtedness alone does not explain fully their class position because the loans may have been taken for some constructive

purposes also. For example, it is found that the 'others' castes has taken only 2.8% of the loans for domestic consumption and the rest of the loans is for cultivation of different crops like paddy, ginger, flowers or even business. The high castes, on the other hand, have taken 35.7% of the loans for domestic consumption and the middle castes 11.8% for the same purpose. The low castes have taken 23.0% of the loans for cultivation but this is mostly spent on the lands of the landowners to meet the high cost of production.

It should be maintained here that the purposes and uses of loans are not always the same. Thus, while the cattle purchase loans are found to have been used for the same purpose to a great extent the loans for cultivation are not found to have been used for agricultural development or on high yielding variety seeds and fertilisers. The small cultivators are found to have spent their loans chiefly in meeting the cost of cultivation while others used them for domestic consumption also.

The following table gives the figures on caste and indebtedness in Purbong.

Table 77  
Caste and Indebtedness in Purbong

Caste	Percentage	Total Amount of loan in Rs.	Percentage	Percentage Difference
High	15.8	2,800	21.7	+5.8
Middle	36.5	4,000	38.0	+1.5
Low	8.5	1,100	8.5	+1.0
Others*	38.1	4,100	31.8	-6.3
Total	100.0	1,23,00	100.0	-

\* Mirari, Anglo-Indian and Lopcha.

The above table gives a slightly different picture from that in Tanak. In this village the percentage of loan among the 'others' castes is found to be lower than the percentage of their households. This is true of the low castes also but among them the percentage difference between the amount of loan and the number of households is not much. On the other hand, the high and the middle castes have a higher percentage of loan compared to the percentage of households.

In the following is presented a table on caste and indebtedness in Rangbali.

Table 73

Caste and Indebtedness in Rangbali

Caste	% of Households	Total Amount of Loan in Rs.	%	% differences
High	13.4	8,100	10.0	-2.5
Middle	65.4	30,504	41.1	+24.3
Low	6.2	3,800	5.1	-1.1
Others*	15.0	31,800	42.8	+27.9
Total	100.0	74,204	100.00	-

Lopcha, Bhutia, Duhpa, Marwari and Bihari.

This table shows that the percentage of indebtedness among the high, middle and the low castes is lower than the percentage of their households. On the other hand, the percentage of indebtedness among the others castes is very high compared to the percentage of their households. The high percentage of indebtedness among them is mainly due to their occupation, viz., business which needs capital for investment while some of them

and also reported to have taken loans to avoid the income tax.

Among the Nepalese castes, the middle castes are the least indebted followed by the high and lastly the low castes. Therefore, the class position of the middle castes concerning indebtedness is the highest. Therefore, it is found that the 'others' castes which are otherwise in the highest class position have also taken the highest amount of loans. But in Purbang village it is seen above (Table 77) that the others castes have taken a lower percentage of loans than the percentage of households among them.

The following table shows the caste and indebtedness relationship in Takuthang. The table does not show any indebtedness among the high castes but as mentioned before they are mainly government officials from outside. Rather many of them were found to have given loans to the villagers. The only high caste household which is from outside and seems to have settled in the village is a Chhetri from a nearby village but nobody wants to give loans to him as the villagers are not sure if <sup>he</sup> is going to stay in the village for ever.

Table 79

Caste and Indebtedness in Takuthang

Caste	% of Households	Total Amount of Loan in Rs.	%	% Difference
High	3.2	-	-	-
Middle	78.7	31,062	72.3	-6.4
Low	4.3	450	1.1	-3.2
Others*	13.8	11,425	25.6	+12.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>42,937</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Bhutia

It is seen above that the percentage of indebtedness among the middle and the low castes is lower than the percentage of their households. On the other hand, the percentage of loans among the 'others' castes is much higher than the percentage of their households. Therefore, this village has quite a striking similarity with the villages discussed above except Parbhong in respect of indebtedness.

The following table shows the relationship between caste and indebtedness in Chuchen.

Table 30

Caste and Indebtedness in Chuchen

Caste	% of Households	Total Amount of Loan in Rs.	%	% Difference
High	1.2	170	0.4	-0.8
Middle	80.5	84,230	90.6	+10.1
Low	3.7	200	0.5	-3.2
Others*	14.6	3,138	3.4	-6.2
Total	100.0	37,738	100.0	-

\* Lepcha and Bhutia.

The above table shows that the middle castes have a higher percentage of loan compared to the percentage of households while among the high, low and the 'others' castes the percentage of loan is lower compared to the percentage of their households. It may also be mentioned that the high and the low castes have quite an insignificant percentage of

loan compared to the percentage of their households.

Therefore, the picture in this village is different from the ones seen above except in the case of Purbong where too the 'others' castes have a much lower percentage of loan compared to the percentage of households. The lower percentage of loans among the 'others' castes in Purbong is probably due to more monetised economy of this village which has facilitated the Lepchas, the main components of the 'others' castes and also the main landholders, to grow many cash crops like cabbage, cauliflower, peas, ginger which can be easily taken to the market from this village. This seems to have decreased the necessity among them to draw more loans from different sources. On the other hand, the case in Chuchen is mainly due to the Kazi family which has raised the percentage-wise class position of the 'others' caste group but has not taken any loan from any sources. The poorer Bhatias have taken some loans from the businessmen of Reshi Hat and some villagers but the amount is not much.

If we keep aside the 'others' castes we find that the high castes have a lower percentage of loan compared to the percentage of their households in Rangbali (-2.5), Takuthang (-0.0) and Chuchen (-0.8); the middle castes have -4.5% in Zanak, -24.3% in Rangbali and -6.4% in Takuthang; and the low castes have -4.6% in Zanak, -1.0% in Purbong, -1.2% in Rangbali, and -3.2% each in Takuthang and Chuchen. Thus, the low castes have a lower percentage of loans than the percentage of their

households in all the five villages. But this caste group has a very low class position in respect of other criteria in many villages. Therefore, the lower percentage of loans compared to the percentage of their households is probably due to the numerical dominance of the higher castes who may not be willing to give them loans as much as to their own castes. The insignificantly lower percentage of loans in Farbung (-1.0) and Bahgull (-1.1), which are relatively more urbanised and with more loose caste relations, than in other villages also indicates that the caste factor is important in this regard.

Loans are after all loans and have to be repaid but still there are some differences between a loan from an official source and a loan from a non-official source. First, the loans from the official sources are charged minimum interest - 12% per annum at the most but the non-official sources charge a much higher interest - 36% per annum. Second, the official sources take back their loans in cash and often give subsidy of 35% or even more but the private sources often recollect the loans in the form of kind only. In an economy where the circulation of money is still very limited the people automatically opt for the non-official sources of loan. This is easier to get also while the official lenders make the people go through a series of formalities for which the villagers have neither the time nor the habit. But they hardly realise that the non-official lenders get a good margin of profit from such non-monetary transactions and even if they realise they are often helpless because in emergency cases these sources have to be taken resort

to however high the interest may be. Finally, the loans from the official sources are at least partly utilized for the purpose for which the loans are taken but the loans from the non-official sources are wholly or almost wholly utilized for consumption.

It is but unfortunate that still a large percentage of loan in the villages is from the non-official sources only. For example, in Takuthang it is found that only 27.5% of the loans is from the official sources and 72.5% of the loans from the non-official sources. In Chuchen also 39.0% of the loans is from the official sources and 60.1% of the loans is from the non-official sources only. The same is true of Ranghull also. In fact, the percentage of loans from the official sources is higher than the percentage of loans from the non-official sources in Fanch, Fuchong and Ranghull but in Takuthang and Chuchen the percentage of loans from the non-official sources is higher.

It has been briefly mentioned above about the difficulties which the villagers face in getting the loans from the official sources. The long list of formalities is found by the illiterate villagers rather nauseating and a wastage of time. Moreover, in many cases the non-official sources also do not charge any interest specially if the loaners are their relatives.

Caste and Spatial Mobility

A higher percentage of spatial mobility in a particular caste group may not necessarily reflect a higher class position of the caste. But this certainly gives a clue to the better adaptability of that caste group, which ultimately leads to class differences in the long run. The spatial mobility outside the village needs some amount of education or contact which are not equally available to all the caste groups.

The following table gives a picture on the relationship between caste and spatial mobility in Tanak.

Table 31Caste and Spatial Mobility in Tanak

Caste	Working Pop.	Persons working within					Out-side	Total
		I	II	III	IV	V		
High	89	77	7	2	2	-	1	12
%	39.4	86.5	7.9	2.2	2.2	-	1.1	13.4
Middle	213	129	14	9	3	-	3	20
%	39.3	83.7	6.4	4.1	1.4	-	1.4	13.3
Low	23	36	-	-	2	-	-	2
%	42.7	94.7	-	-	5.3	-	-	5.3
Others*	150	127	11	4	1	5	2	23
%	51.0	84.7	7.3	2.7	0.7	3.3	1.3	15.3
Total	495	429	22	15	8	5	6	66
%	30.1	86.7	6.5	3.0	1.6	1.0	1.2	13.3

\* Bihari, Muslim, Lepcha and Dhutia.

This table shows that the total percentage of working population in the village is 36.1. Out of 435 working population in the village, 86.7% work within the village, 6.5% within subdivision, 3.0 within district, 1.6% within state, 1.0 within nation and 1.2 outside the nation. The total percentage of persons working outside the village is 13.3.

Caste-wise, the highest percentage of working population is among the 'others' castes followed by the low and the middle castes. The percentage of working population is the lowest among the middle castes which is due to a larger percentage of school or college going students among them. The 'others' castes have the highest spatial mobility followed by the high, middle and finally the low castes. The percentage of persons working outside the village is more or less equal between the high and the middle castes but the low castes, despite a higher percentage of working population have a very low percentage of spatial mobility. 91.7% of their working population is working within the village and nobody has been working outside the state. Therefore, the low castes have a very low class position. In other words they have adapted poorly to the changed circumstances.

The following table shows the relationship between caste and spatial mobility in Purbong. The high class position of the low castes in respect of education, occupation and

income is expected to result into a higher spatial mobility too.

Table 82

Caste and Spatial Mobility in Purvanchal

Caste	Working Pop.	No. of persons working within							Total side
		Village	Subdiv.	District	State	Nation	out-		
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	II-VI	
High	20	12	8	-	-	-	-	8	
%	35.1	60.0	40.0	-	-	-	-	40.0	
Middle	31	24	19	-	-	6	2	27	
%	35.9	47.0	37.3	-	-	11.8	3.9	53.0	
Low	19	12	8	1	-	2	1	7	
%	33.0	63.1	15.8	5.3	-	10.5	5.3	36.9	
Others*	44	24	12	2	2	4	-	20	
%	33.8	54.5	27.3	4.5	4.5	9.1	-	45.4	
Total	134	72	42	3	2	12	3	62	
%	34.5	53.7	31.3	2.2	1.5	9.0	2.2	46.3	

\* Bihari, Anglo-Indian and Lepcha.

The above table shows that the total percentage of working population in the village is 34.5. The percentage of working population within the village is 53.7 and the percentage of working population outside the village is 46.3. Castewise, the high castes have been found to have 40% spatial mobility which <sup>is</sup> next only to the middle castes but not a single person among the high castes is working outside the subdivision. The castes which have been represented outside the nation are the middle and the low castes only. At the national level the

middle castes have the highest percentage followed by the low castes and the 'others' castes in the last. But at the level of outside nation\* the low castes have a higher percentage than that of the middle castes while the 'others' castes have not been represented at all. Therefore, the adaptability of the low castes or the class position of the low castes is uniformly better in this village.

Thus it is seen that the low castes also can be a well adapted group. They have prospered in yet another neighbouring village known as Tiruva Gera which is located just below the Durbin Military Cantonment. This village serves as a bridge between Chhibo and Rikkingpong villages on the western slope of the same hill. It is really difficult to say whether their higher class position is due to a greater adaptability among them or whether it is due to the latter that they are in a higher class position. To me, it seems that it is the juxtaposition of both which has reached them to their present socio-economic status. Being in a higher class usually also means a wider contact to facilitate a greater spatial mobility but without adaptability also the use of such openings is not possible always.

In Raughull, the density of population is very high which has led to a greater pressure on land which in turn has

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\* Outside nation here means mainly Nepal and Bhutan.

a low productive capacity. This automatically leads to greater spatial mobility among the villagers. Now the caste-wise differences in the spatial mobility may be seen in the following table.

Table 23

Caste and Spatial Mobility in Ranchball

Caste	Working Pop.	No. of persons working within						Total II-VI
		Village I	Subdiv. II	District III	State IV	Nation V	Outside VI	
High	56	47	4	4	-	2	2	12
%	84.0	79.7	6.8	6.8	-	3.4	3.4	20.4
Middle	275	197	8	6	12	37	15	78
%	71.5	71.6	2.9	2.2	4.4	13.4	6.5	28.4
Low	35	27	2	3	1	2	-	8
%	77.1	77.1	5.7	8.6	2.8	5.7	-	22.8
Others*	137	112	5	5	1	7	-	18
%	81.1	81.9	3.6	3.6	0.7	5.1	-	13.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>69.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>20.5</b>

\* Lopcha, Dhulia, Dakpa, Harwazi and Bihari.

This table shows that 77.1% of the working population is working within the village, 3.7% within subdivision, 3.5% within district, 2.8% within state, 9.5% within nation and 3.4% outside the nation. The total percentage of working population outside the village is 22.9. Caste-wise, the middle castes have the highest spatial mobility followed by the low, high and the 'others' castes. The castes which have been represented outside the nation also are the high and the middle castes only.

Thus the middle castes have been found to be in the highest class regarding spatial mobility.

In the following is presented a table on caste and spatial mobility in Tokathang village. This being a remote village with a very low educational spread but with a larger average landholding also the spatial mobility has been very low in the village as such. However, some difference has been found among the various caste groups in the village.

Table 24

Caste and Spatial Mobility in Tokathang

Caste	Working Pop.	No. of persons working within					Total II-V
		Village	District	State	Nation	Outside	
		I	II	III	IV	V	
High	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
%	62.5	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Middle	223	216	2	1	-	4	7
%	57.5	56.0	0.9	0.4	-	1.8	3.1
Low	11	11	-	-	-	-	-
%	50.0	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Others*	40	38	1	1	-	-	2
%	50.0	96.0	2.5	2.5	-	-	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>
%	<b>56.0</b>	<b>96.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>

\* Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and 'Bhutia.

This table shows that the spatial mobility outside the village is minimal (3.2%). The only caste group which has some spatial mobility outside the village are the middle and

the 'others' castes. The high and the low castes have no spatial mobility but there is a difference between the two. While most of the high caste members are from outside the low castes people are from the village only. Therefore, only the low castes people can be said to have no spatial mobility at all.

The few people who are working outside the village are mainly the military personnels and a few of them on construction works. None of the villagers is working outside the village in a 'respectable' job. The spatial mobility in the village as a whole is very low. The same picture is found quite true in Chuchen also. In Chuchen there are a few villagers working outside the state also and are also in good positions. But this has been possible mainly due to the Kasi family though there are a few Tamangs who are working outside the village in good posts also. The following table shows the relationship between caste and spatial mobility in Chuchen.

Table 25

Caste and Spatial Mobility in Chuchen

Caste	Working Pop.	No. of persons working within					Total II-V
		Village	District	State	Nation	Outside	
		I	II	III	IV	V	
High	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
%	33.3	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Middle	250	240	6	2	3	-	10
%	69.4	96.0	2.4	0.8	0.8	-	4.0
Low	12	12	-	-	-	-	-
%	70.6	100.0	-	-	-	-	-
Others*	28	20	4	2	2	-	8
%	63.2	71.4	14.3	7.1	7.1	-	28.6
Total	291	270	10	4	4	-	18
%	68.6	93.8	3.4	1.4	1.4	-	6.2

\* Lepcha and Bhutia.

This table like Table 84 shows that the percentage of working population is much higher than in Tanek, Parbang and Ranghull. This is possibly because of a lower level of literacy in these two villages. In Tanek, Parbang and Ranghull the percentage of school or College going children is quite high but these two villages being in a remote place the same phenomenon is rather insignificant. This automatically raises the percentage of working population in these villages.

Castewise, it is found that the only castes which have been represented outside the village are the middle and the 'others' castes. Between these two caste groups the position of the 'others' castes is better than that of the middle castes. The reason for this has been mentioned already.

The above findings in different villages on caste and spatial mobility shows that the differences in the degree of spatial mobility depend on a number of factors. The variation in the degree of spatial mobility is found to have quite a direct relationship with factors like education, levels of urbanisation and modernisation, pressure on land or size of landholding, and the sustenance power of the village economy. The low degree of spatial mobility in Sakuthang and Chuchen for example, is found to be mainly due to a low spread of education, urbanization, and also a bigger size of average landholding also.

Before going to the intra-caste group and intra-caste level analysis, the above discussion on caste and spatial

mobility in five villages may <sup>be</sup> summarized here. If we take out the 'others' castes from our analysis here we find that the high castes have a slightly higher percentage (13.4) compared to the percentage of the middle castes (13.3) but much higher than among the low castes (5.3) in Tanak; the middle castes have the highest percentage (53.0) followed by the high (40.0) and the low castes (38.0) in Purbong; in Rangball also, the middle castes have the highest percentage (33.4) of spatial mobility, followed by 22.8 among the low and 20.4 among the high castes; in Takuthang, only the middle castes have some spatial mobility (3.1); and in Chachen also this caste group alone has 4.0. The high and the low castes do not have any spatial mobility in these last two villages.

Therefore, the middle castes seem to have adopted the best among the Nepalese caste groups with regard to spatial mobility. Now it may be seen to what extent the average holding per household among these castes has a role to play in the differential spatial mobility. In Tanak, it is found that the high castes have the highest spatial mobility despite the biggest holding per household (Table 51). In Purbong, the middle castes have the highest spatial mobility despite the biggest holding per household (Table 53). In Rangball also the middle castes have the highest spatial mobility though the holding per household is only very slightly lower (0.38 acre) than among the low castes (0.39). In Takuthang and Chachen only the middle castes have some spatial mobility though in Takuthang, they have only very slightly smaller holding per household

(1.06 acres) compared with 1.07 each among the high and the low castes but in Chuchen the holding per household is much lower (4.31 acres) among them compared with 6.17 acres among the high castes and 6.83 acres among the low castes.

It may be concluded from the above that land really does not have a role to play on the differential spatial adaptability. Rather education seems quite a significant factor in this regard. In Tanch, Rangbull and Chuchen the middle castes have the highest spatial mobility but they also have the highest percentage of literates in these villages. In Furbong, the low castes have the highest percentage of literates and also have quite a high (40.0) spatial mobility. In Talsithang, the middle castes stand next to the high castes in the literacy ladder but the higher position of the high castes is mainly due to the outsiders who are all well educated.

Whatever may be the causal factor(s) behind the differential spatial mobility, the middle castes seem to be the best adapted in this regard. In the context of spatial mobility it is, however, found imperative to discuss the presence of opportunities outside the village also. The fact that some villages have more of spatial mobility than others indicates that some villages have more of these opportunities than others. Though the internal factors like education and land may also be responsible for this, the 'situational difference' among the villages is also a contributing factor.

If we compare Tanek with Purbong, we find that the spatial mobility in the latter is much higher (45.3%) than in the former (13.3). This is primarily because of the proximity to the Durbin Military Cantonment and the Swiss Dairy on the eastern side of the Purbong village. Tanek is also adjacent to Purbong but on its western side which makes it difficult for the villagers of Tanek to enjoy the employment opportunities open to Purbong villagers. This is also ascertained by a very high percentage (31.3) of spatial mobility within the subdivision in Purbong. On the other hand, <sup>in</sup> the absence of such employment avenues nearby, Tanek has only 0.5% and Ranghull 3.7% within the subdivision. The more remote villages like Talathang and Chachon do not have almost any such large employment avenues as Purbong village had. Therefore, the percentage of spatial mobility has also been less in these villages including Ranghull which is otherwise a densely populated and highly urbanised village. 23.9% spatial mobility in Ranghull is almost solely due to education which has enabled the villagers to go even beyond the national boundaries.

#### Caste and Class : An Intra-Caste Group and Intra-caste level Analysis

The caste-class relationship at the inter-caste group level has been amply discussed above taking various criteria like education, occupation, landholding, income,

indebtedness and spatial mobility. The class position concerning these criteria of the various castes is found to differ from village to village and no particular caste group is found to be in the highest class position in all respects in any village.

It has to be noted, however, that there are class differences not only among the caste groups but also within the individual caste groups and even castes. The following table on Tanak, for example, shows both the intra-caste group and intra-caste class differences.

Table 65

Class Difference Among the Low Castes in Tanak

Caste	No. of Households	%	Pattadars	%	Pekharoys	%
Kami	8	53.3	4	50.0	4	50.0
Sarkai	6	33.3	-	-	6	100.0
Damai	2	13.3	-	-	2	100.0
Total	15	100.0	4	26.7	11	73.3

The above table shows that among the low castes only 26.7% of the households are landowners and the rest landless. The Sarkai and the Damai castes are totally landless while the Kamis have 50% landowning households also. Such a difference can be found not only regarding owning and not owning of land but in many respects. The following table, for example, shows the income differences within the middle castes of Purbang.

Table 37Middle Castes and Income in Purbong

Caste	No. of House-holds.	%	Total Income In Rs.	%	Average Income per Household in Rs.	Average Monthly Income per Household
Rai	4	17.4	15,150	30.7	3,780.00	315.83
Limbu	5	31.7	9,285	12.7	1,857.00	154.75
Tanang	8	34.8	19,101	36.0	2,387.63	198.96
Mangar	3	18.0	22,275	30.3	7,424.00	618.67
Dhujel	3	18.0	7,550	10.3	2,516.67	209.72
Total	23	-	73,368	-	-	-

This table shows that the class difference in respect of income is quite wide among the middle castes in Purbong. Thus while the percentage of households among the Rais and the Mangars is lower than the percentage of their income the percentage of households among the Limbus, Tanangs and Dhujels is higher than the percentage of their income. The average monthly income per household is also Rs. 618.67 among the Mangars but only Rs. 154.75 among the Limbus. But such a difference may be found even within a caste also. For a random instance, the annual income of the three Mangar households in this village may be shown in the following table to give the intra-caste income differences. The table gives a very wide difference in the annual income of the three Mangar households.

Table 38Income Difference Among the Mangars : Purbong

Sl. No.	Name of the head of the Household	Annual Income in Rs.	%
1	Man Bahadur Shaps	17,520	78.7
2	Santali Mangar	1,152	5.2
3	Pahal Singh Shaps	3,600	16.2
Total		22,272	-

Thus, Man Bahadur Thapa contributes 78.7% to the total income of the Mangara in the village, Santali Mangar contributes only 5.2% and Pahal Singh Thapa 16.7%.

To cite another example, the following table on the educational differences among the high castes in Ranghull may be presented.

Table 93

High Caste and Educational Differences in Ranghull

Caste	No. of Inds.	Infants					Total	Literate.
		Illite- rates I	Pry. Educ. III	second. Educ. IV	College + V	III-V		
Bahun	13	5	1	4	3	-	13	
%	3.7	37.8	8.6	33.2	41.4	-	66.7	
Thakuri	107	32	11	39	30	5	74	
%	35.6	30.6	10.3	36.4	33.0	4.7	69.1	
Chhetri	110	33	13	29	35	5	69	
%	48.3	30.9	16.4	30.4	31.8	4.5	63.7	
Total	235	50	30	72	73	10	155	
%		21.3	13.0	30.6	31.1	4.3	65.0	

This table shows that the percentage of illiterates is the highest among the Bahuns followed by the Chhetris and finally the Thakuris. On the contrary, the percentage of literates is the highest among the Thakuris, followed by the Bahuns and finally the Chhetris. At the secondary level, the high castes have the highest percentage with the Chhetris in the second but at the College level and above, the high castes have not been represented at all and the Thakuris and the Chhetris have a more or less equal representation. Such

a difference may, however, be found even among the landless families of a particular caste. The following table, for example, shows the income differences among the landless Chhetris of Banbhul.

Table 50

Landless Chhetris and Income : Banbhul

Sl. No.	Name	Annual Income in Rs.	%	Average Monthly Income in Rs.
1	Ram Prasad Singh	7,200	27.4	600
2	Ram Bahadur Bagrot	3,600	13.7	300
3	Pather Singh Khulal	1,680	6.4	140
4	Dal Bahadur Katawal	4,800	16.0	350
5	Ram Lal Karkhi	3,600	13.7	300
6	Mani Bhasoti	6,000	22.8	500
Total		26,880	-	-

The above table shows that the percentage variation in income ranges from 6.4 to 27.4 and the average monthly income of the families ranges from Rs. 140 to Rs. 600. The class position of all the households according to landownership is, however, the same. The social status of a landless family having Rs. 600 as monthly income and another having only Rs. 140 is found noticeable. This intra-class difference is found to play an important role in an intra-caste relationships also.

It appears therefore that the social planning on the basis of class which sounds most reasonable in any case seems rather difficult. The most important hurdle in this respect is the problem of class identification. Castes, on

The other hand, can easily be identified because they bear certain non-enclature. The problem becomes all the more acute when even two families do not fall in the same class in every respect.

At this juncture, the most dependable criterion appears to be the income because it includes the gist of many other factors like land, occupation and income. Taken this for granted the problem crops up when one starts asking the people about their income. Unless a fair degree of rapport is built up and the confidence won, they are sure to conceal their real income. As a result the reality gets distorted and the planning marred. Despite these difficulties, a caste-based planning cannot be supported until and unless all the households of a particular caste have the same class status which is simply absurd in the present socio-political set-up. So long there remains an intra-caste class difference the lower class members are deprived of the various facilities accorded to them as it is found today. In other words, the richer section of the caste, for that matter any caste high or low, gets benefit while the majority of them who are poor remain poor.

In this context it is desirable to discuss two important texts - one, the article by Subbarao (1982) and another, the Mandal Commission Report on other Backward Classes (1983). Subbarao, in his article entitled 'Pro-Reservationists vs Anti-Reservationists', discusses the various aspects of reservation policy and comments that it has failed to materialize its objectives. But he finally

concludes by remarking that the reservations should continue while the talent and excellence should not be allowed to decay.

Subbarao's conclusion, as probably any other academician would arrive at, is more ideal than practical from the point of view of planning. This, is, however, a general shortcoming of the academicians often pointed out by the planners of our country.

The recommendations of the Mandal Commission Report on other Backward Classes sound more eccentric than Subbarao's. These recommendations cover not only the aspect of reservations for different jobs, central as well as state, but also deals with the promotional aspects. The statistical bases of the Commission's report are not to be challenged but the orientation of it is certainly vulnerable. By strengthening and expanding the reservations it hopes to give the backwards classes 'an immediate feeling of participation in the governance of this country'. This is most welcome as far as it does not result into a 'feeling of deprivation' among those who are not listed for the benefits of such reservations. In fact, such a feeling of deprivation can be sensed among the deprived everywhere in the country and sooner or later this might take an ugly shape endangering the national unity as such, numerically and economically more dominant as they are.

Under these circumstances, it is difficult to make a choice, more so, for various socio-political implications that would follow. But the final solution lies in a 'class-based'

reservation and not on a 'caste-based' reservation. The bigger question here is not the 'operational' aspect of it but the 'acceptance' by those who are in power.

To establish the point further a few more examples may be given here. The following table gives the intra-caste group class differences in respect of land among the middle castes in Takathang.

Table 91

Middle Castes and Landholding : Takathang

Caste	No. of Households	%	Amount of Land in acres.	%	% Difference
Rai	23	32.8	69.57	25.3	-7.5
Limbu	6	8.6	7.80	2.7	-5.9
Tamang	21	30.0	97.41	30.0	+6.0
Magar	17	24.3	91.36	33.7	+9.4
Gurung	3	4.3	6.09	2.2	-2.1
Total	70	-	270.73	-	-

It is shown above that the percentage of landholding among the Tamangs and the Magars is higher than the percentage of their households. On the other hand, the percentage of landholding among the Rais, Limbus and the Gurungs is lower than the percentage of their households. Therefore, within the intra-caste group class difference is clear.

In Chachen, the intra-caste difference is perhaps most clear between the Insi family on the one hand and the rest of the Bhutias on the other. He declares himself as a

Kalon kazi, a caste by itself and different from rest of the Bhutias though the Bhutia villagers say that he is a Bhutia kazi only. But since this would be too selective an example and moreover the present study centres itself upon the Nepalese society the Nepalese castes may be taken here to show the class difference. The following table, for example, shows the inter-caste group class difference regarding income among the middle castes in Chuchen.

Table 92

Middle Castes and Income - Chuchen

Caste	No. of Households	%	Total Income in Rs.	Average Income per household in Rs.	Average Monthly Income per household in Rs.
Soi	34	36.4	45,081	1,325.87	156.32
Teneng	32	43.5	64,945	2,029.53	169.13
Kangar	2	3.0	4,453	2,226.00	185.75
Garung	7	10.0	10,456	1,493.71	124.43
Buwar	1	1.5	2,333	2,333.00	185.25
Total	66	-	1,27,103	-	-

This table shows that in Chuchen which is an economically very little diversified village has less of income difference within the middle castes. For example, the monthly income per household is found to have varied from Rs.124.43 to Rs.185.75 only. Thus, though there may be differences in the size and amount of landholding there is not much of difference in the income within a particular

caste group. Now if a similar picture is available at the intra-caste level may be seen with the help of the following table.

Table 93

Earnings and Income of Chuchen

Sl. No.	Name	Total Income in Rs.	%	Monthly Income in Rs.
1	Hari Maya Logoy	1,500	14.3	125.00
2	Parna Bahadur Ghondey	1,200	11.5	100.00
3	Shashi Maya Bhatija	900	8.6	75.00
4	Hari Prasad Bhatija	2,563	24.6	214.00
5	Birsha Bahadur Bhatija	2,248	21.5	187.33
6	Bhakta Maya Durjan	1,200	11.5	100.00
7	Bishon Bahadur Bhatija	840	8.0	70.00
Total		10,456	-	-

Thus this table also does not give a very wide variation in the monthly or yearly income among the earnings of Chuchen. Though the range of income varies from Rs. 70 to Rs. 214 the economic status of these two households does not differ much. Therefore, it is found that the intra-caste group or intra caste-class differences are always there in every caste and in every village but the differences seem to appear less striking in the villages where the economic diversification, spread of education and urbanisation and other such factors are very limited.

Caste, Class and Tenancy

An important aspect in the caste-class relationship is the tenancy and its role in affecting the caste-class relationship. It is true that all the villages do not have the same kind of tenancy or same amount of land under tenancy. As such, the present discussion does not seek to include every village but only a few villages just to show how it affects the caste-class relationship. It may be stated at the inception that due to tenancy, not only the various agrarian categories but also the various castes are found to have come closer. An example of such a phenomenon may be given below.

Table 04

Caste, Class and Tenancy in Purbani

Lessor Caste	Caste Status	Lessee Caste	Caste Status	Amount of Land under Tenancy in Acres	
				Irrigated	Non-Irrigated
Lopcha	O C	Bahun	H C	-	.50
"	"	Chhetri	"	2.00	-
"	"	Limbu	M C	4.00	.50
"	"	Tamang	"	1.00	-
"	"	Bhujel	"	2.00	1.00
"	"	Kaul	L C	.75	.25
"	"	Bansai	"	Homestead only	-
Chorpa	H C	Chhetri	H C	2.02	.33
Bansai	L C	"	"	.33	-
"	"	Bihari	O C	Homestead only	-
Tamang	H C	Rai	M C	1.00	1.00
"	"	Tamang	"	1.50	.25
"	"	Kaul	L C	.50	.25
Mangar	"	Mangar	H C	3.00	-
Rai	"	"	"	3.00	-
Total				21.73	4.12

Index  
 O C = Other castes  
 H C = High castes  
 M C = Middle castes  
 L C = Low castes.

This table reveals quite clearly the inter-caste and inter-class relationship on the basis of tenancy. The most interesting part to note in this table is that the high castes like the Bahans and the Chhetris also have taken lands on lease from the 'others' like the Lopchas and even from the low castes like the Damais.

It is also to be noted here that in such a tenancy if a high caste happens to be the lessor and the low castes the lessee then there arises a scope for the high castes to enforce their caste superiority. But the table shows that the high castes are represented in the palturey class only and not a single household of the high castes has been represented in the lessor's column. Under these circumstances, the higher castes do not get a scope to impose their caste superiority on the inferior castes. To cite another example, the following table is produced.

Table 35

Caste, Class and Tenancy in Talukthang

Lessor	Caste Status	Lessee Caste	Caste Status	No. of Households involved in			
				Adhia	Tanam	Kadd	Naalkatta
Bhutia	O C	Rai	M C	2	-	-	-
"	"	Limbu	"	-	1	1	-
"	"	Tanang	"	1	2	1	-
"	"	Mangar	"	3	2	1	-
"	"	Gurung	"	-	2	1	-
"	"	Bhutia	O C	1	-	2	-
Lepcha	"	Tanang	M C	-	2	-	-
"	"	Mangar	"	3	2	1	1
Limbu	M C	Rai	"	-	1	-	-
"	"	Limbu	"	-	1	-	-
Rai	"	Rai	"	3	6	1	3
"	"	Limbu	"	-	2	1	1
"	"	Tanang	"	-	1	-	-
"	"	Mangar	"	-	1	-	-
"	"	Gurung	"	-	1	-	-
"	"	Bhutia	O C	-	-	1	-
Tanang	"	Rai	M C	1	2	-	-
"	"	Limbu	"	-	1	-	-
"	"	Tanang	"	1	4	2	-
Mangar	"	Mangar	"	3	2	1	1
"	"	Gurung	"	-	1	-	-
Kami	L C	Tanang	"	1	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>73</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>
		<i>B</i>		<b>26.0</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>8.3</b>

Index : O C = Others castes (Bengali, Bihari, Lepcha and Bhutia)  
 H C = High castes  
 M C = Middle castes  
 L C = Low castes.

It may be mentioned first of all that the above table

includes only the names of the tenancy and not the amount of land. This is done so due to the problem of presentation as there are more than one form of tenancies in this village (see Table B1 Chapter IV). This table shows that the different castes and classes in Takathang are interconnected through the various types of tenancy. Among the four main types of tenancies found in this village Tamang seems to be the most common followed by Achie, Khad and finally Maalikatti.

Another important point this table reveals in compliance with the previous table (Table 94) is that the higher castes have also taken lands from the untouchable castes. In the former case, a high caste Chhetri has taken land on lease from a Dama and in the present case a Tamang has taken land on lease from a Kari. There is only one high caste family in this village and that family is not in a position to cultivate land on operational holding due to a lack of family manpower. Otherwise, there could possibly be more cases of the high castes taking lands on lease from the low castes.

#### Caste, Class and Education

The above discussion shows how tenancy brings together the various castes and classes. But education is also an equally important factor in this regard. In this context the study of Bhadrakar (1972) in some rural communities of Punjab may be recalled. He (ibid: 138) finds a wider sphere of interaction and occupational diversification due to a wider

spread of education. Singh (1977: 195-197) also regards education as one of the most important instruments of modernization in India.

It may be recalled here that the educated boys of the middle castes in Farak are reported to have involved themselves in consensual relations with some of the educated but of the low caste people of Purbong. The role of education is, however, not limited to the sphere of caste alone. The case of Lachhimaya Rai (64) may be briefly described here to show the role of education in changing one's class position also.

Lachhimaya Rai (64). Lachhimaya had eloped with her husband to India about 40 years ago from Nepal. They were first given the shelter by a Lepcha of the village called Phuldali Baba. Her husband was an illiterate but soon got a job as a 4th grade staff under the British Government. The major income of the family was the produce from the sharecropping on the land of Nima Tshering Lepcha.

After some 10 years her husband managed to purchase a small homestead. But the sharecropping continued until her son, Satna Kumar Rai (30) got a job as a Village Organizer in the local GADP office. Her husband had expired when her son was a kid but she schooled him without the least despair. He passed the Higher Secondary Examination in 1969 and after some 6 years got a job.

The economic position of this family changed significantly after that. The first change that was noticed was the roof of the house - from a thatched to a corrugated sheet one. Some years later the land under sharecropping was also abandoned, which was taken up by Dalpat Bahadur Rai and Purna Bahadur Chhetri later.

Thus the position of this family changed from a pathrway to an owner sharecropper to an owner cultivator within a period of about 40 years. Such a change would not have been possible without the education of Satna Kumar Rai. Similar

Examples are found quite plenty specially among the middle castes.

It may be added here that the inter-caste consensual and marital relationship has been predominantly due to education ; whether the concerned castes are happy about it or not is a different question. But even the caste attitude towards an inter-caste relationship is being gradually changed due to education. The only section of the society which still adheres to the caste strictures quite sincerely is the people belonging to the older generation and the high and the low castes.

Education, however, is not an independent variable and, therefore, has its own limitations. Being basically dependent on the economic factors it is more concentrated among the landowning class people than among the landless people. Gordon (1978 : 841-42) thus rightly says that the economic factor is the most important in a 'educational scheme' specially in modern capitalist societies.

It may also be remarked here that the educational difference is more prominent along class lines than the caste lines. In some villages like Purbong the low castes are also found to be educationally in a high position. This has been found mainly due to their higher economic position. Therefore, the class background of a particular caste is important regarding its educational development.

Castes and the Changing Patterns of Landownership

The study of the changing patterns of landownership among the various castes is an important aspect of the present study. Land is the basis of agrarian classification here and despite its low economic value, more so in the higher altitude villages, it still has a high symbolic value. As per the present classification a change in the landownership brings about a change in the class and partly the caste position also. But the ritual aspect of the caste system remains unchanged though a change in the degree of loyalty to the caste strictures may take place.

In this context it is worthwhile to study whether the land is passing from the hands of the lower castes to the hands of the upper castes or vice-versa. The following table has been furnished to show the changing class positions of the various castes though the land is only a partial index in this regard. The data presented on the changing patterns of landownership in Bank are not true of other villages in equal degree but the general trend is amply projected in the following table. Contrary to the theoretical expectation that the higher castes are appropriating the better plots of land and making the lower castes more and more poor, the data are quite on the contrary. In fact, it is found below that even the low castes have gained lands from the hands of the higher castes specially the middle castes.

Table 36

Changing Patterns of Landownership in Tezok

Caste	No. of Inds. Interviewed	Landless	Inherited	The Caste to which the land belonged to					
				H	M	L	O	HI	OH
High	18	8	1	-	3	-	-	2	6
%	43.4	33.3	5.6	-	16.7	-	-	11.1	33.3
Middle	65	13	19	3	10	3	12	6	5
%	62.4	27.7	15.4	3.1	15.4	3.1	18.5	9.2	7.7
Low	7	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
%	46.7	71.4	-	-	14.3	-	-	-	14.3
Total	90	29	11	2	14	3	12	8	12
%	38.5	32.2	12.2	2.2	15.6	2.2	13.3	8.9	13.3

Index : H = High, M = Middle, L = Low, O = 'Others', OH = Own Caste, HI = No. Inds.

The above table shows that out of the total number of individuals interviewed 32.2% is landless, 18.2% is inherited, 13.3% is purchased from one's own castes, 15.6% from middle castes, 2.2% from low castes, 13.3% from the 'others' castes and 8.9% is without any idea. Castewise, the high castes have purchased 16.7% of the holdings from the middle castes while the latter have purchased only 3.1% from the former and 3.1% from the low castes. However, this caste group has purchased 18.5% of the number of holdings from the 'others' castes and 16.4% from their own caste group. The low castes also have purchased 14.3% of their holdings from the middle castes.

Therefore, in this village the middle castes and the

'others' castes have lost a greater percentage of holdings to the high and the low castes though the percentage difference is not alarming in any way. But now the purchase of land from the 'others' castes, specially the Lepchas and the Bhutias has been legally forbidden. It is but found that the Lepchas are still losing lands to the 'others' castes like the Bhutias because there is no legal bar against them to purchase the Lepcha land. Thus one Bhutia of Ghoom, Darjeeling has recently purchased about 3.00 acres of irrigated land from some Lepchas (Gop Tshering Lepcha, Julian Lepcha and Helen Lepcha) of Tanek village. These Lepchas were some of the biggest landlords of the village but reportedly being addicted to various alcoholic habits parts of their lands had to be sold.

The Nepalis cannot officially buy the lands of the Lepchas or the Bhutias but some surreptitious cases in which the lands from the hands of the Lepchas have been reported to have passed to the hands of the Nepalis. Thus, Lal Bahadur Bokoun (50) is reported to have purchased some land from a Lepcha by changing the title of his wife from a Limba to a Lepcha. However, such cases are very few and can well be regarded as isolated cases.

### Summary and Conclusion

The caste-class relationship has been studied here on the basis of various criteria like education, occupation, landholding, indebtedness and spatial mobility. Every village

under study has been discussed on the basis of each of these criteria and the discussion shows that the caste-class relationship is different in different villages. In some villages the middle castes dominated the whole scene while in others the 'others' castes have been in the uppermost class position. In some villages like Parbung and Chuchen even the low castes have a fairly good class position in comparison with other castes.

Despite a heterogeneous nature of caste-class relationship in the villages studied certain broad features can be delineated. For example, it is found that higher the altitude, level of urbanisation or modernization, and economic diversification the less the correspondence between caste and class structures in a village. Thus, Tanch which is a lower altitude village has a stronger caste-class relationship while Parbung which is a relatively higher altitude village has a weaker caste-class relationship. Rangbull which is a still higher altitude village and at the same time more urbanized has a still weaker caste-class relationship. Between Takuthang and Chuchen the former has a weaker caste-class relationship on the basis of landownership. This weaker caste-class relationship in Takuthang is but mainly due to the outsiders temporarily serving in the village. Otherwise, the caste-class relationship is stronger in these two villages compared with the same in Parbung and Rangbull.

Yet another aspect of the study that needs

an emphasis here is the intra-caste group and intra-caste class differences. Profuse examples have been furnished above to show the class difference both at the intra-caste group and intra-caste levels. The various criteria like income, landholding and education taken randomly above show significant differences within a caste group or a caste.

The caste-class relationship at the inter-caste group level certainly holds considerable amount of theoretical interest. A theoretical analysis is more meaningful at the caste-group level than at the caste or intra-caste level. However, from the applied point of view, the individual caste and intra-caste differences perhaps need more attention than the caste-group analysis. This is so because there is considerable amount of class distinction within a particular caste or a caste group. Therefore, despite all the difficulties in planning on the basis of class, such a planning may be regarded to be modern and meaningful than the caste-based planning in which Scheduled Castes are universally considered backward and poor.

Finally, the role of tenancy and education in affecting the caste-class relationship may be briefly recapitulated. It has been seen from a few examples given above that these factors play an important role in minimizing the caste and class distances. Education as a variable is also found to be effective in alleviating the class position of a particular family if not of the whole caste or caste group.

Now the findings on the caste-class relationship in the different villages of Darjeeling and Sikkim may be compared with the findings elsewhere. Bailey's study at Bisipara, Orissa (1972) shows, for example, that there was a great deal of correspondence between the ritual and the economic hierarchies previously. But gradually due to changes in the local economy the caste structure was found changing and the caste and land relationship gradually breaking off though the caste itself remained unimpaired.

In the case of Darjeeling and Sikkim the question whether the caste and land hierarchy corresponded earlier does not arise because the area was earlier covered with forests which were cleared by the immigrant Nepalis. Thus those who came earlier occupied the bigger and better plots of land irrespective of their caste position and those who came later had to be satisfied with small and less fertile plots of land or no land at all. The forests had been cleared within a very short period and moreover after that there has not been very significant change in the local economy as found at Bisipara, which could possibly change the caste-class relationship.

The present study does not fully corroborate the findings of Burrowan (1972) either. In his study of Sirkanda, a village in the northern Himalayas, he finds that until 1815 land ownership and caste relationship was positive and the low castes were not allowed to hold any land. Even later the land was controlled predominantly by the high castes though there

were no zamindars and the sharecropping was minimal. In the region under study no such legal or traditional bar against the low castes to hold the land is reported nor the high castes are found to have appropriated the land. As a matter of fact, many high castes, who are later immigrants, are in a very low class position regarding land.

The present study conforms to the observation of Dock (1972) based on the study of Oleppalciyeri, south India, in respect of the caste ranking but not in respect of internal differentiation. Dock observes a lack of semblance between rank order of castes and the rank order of total assets and average yearly income but he also observes that the Brahmans and the ritually ranked groups show less of internal differentiation than the agricultural castes due to a uniform traditional payment. This second observation does not tally with the situation in question probably for two reasons: one, the traditional ritual payment is virtually absent in Darjooling and Sikkim and secondly, the middle castes have a horizontal status and the castes which have vertical differentiation are the high and the low castes.

Dotelle's observation (1969a) in Tanjore village also does not tally fully with the present study specially in its historical context. He finds a greater degree of caste-class relationship traditionally but this region's agrarian history or social history does not indicate towards that direction. However, his observation (ibid: 5) that education

is no longer a monopoly of a single caste is true of this region also. The findings of Brennan (1979) that agriculture was open to all castes, which led to a dependence of lower castes on the upper castes resulting into a permanent bondage of the former to the latter also does not have a semblance with the region under study. Nor does the present study show full correspondence with his observation (ibid : 8) that the landlords and agricultural labourers represent the extremes of the economic structure and social stratification.

The present study also does not corroborate the findings of Djurfolet (1975) at a village called Thalayar in Tamilnadu where he finds a definite relationship between caste position and the means of production. Even the caste endogamy and the pattern of residential segregation follow caste stratification. Nor does the present study find a similarity with the study of Epstein (1963) in two villages - Vangala and Dalena - of south India. The changing relationship between caste and class due to an increased range of economic relations cannot be accepted readily on the basis of the present study. The absence of proper caste-class relationship at present may be due to the widening economic relations but this does not necessarily establish that earlier there was a positive relationship between the two, at least in view of the agrarian history of this region.

Freeman (1977) observes on the basis of Kappilowar,

Urissa, a widening gap between the rich and the poor with the low castes falling in the second group. The Mallias and the Brahmins are, for example, found most benefitted from the new opportunities after the establishment of Bhubaneswar city. The Purboing village specially shows that even some of the low castes have adapted equally well though in many villages like Janak and Chuchon they are found in a low class position.

The present study also does not support the findings of Gough (1971) who finds caste as a limiting factor on the basis of the study of Kumbapettai, Tanjore. She observes that the differences in wealth, resource, education and occupational opportunities are still hereditary and there is little scope for the low castes to rise to the level of the high castes who are both ritually and economically well founded. Kundu (1978) also finds the higher castes appropriating more and better off lands than the low castes in a Mahanastri village.

Moncher's study (1978) at Chingoleput District, Tamilnadu, finds the land dominance with the high castes and the numerical dominance with the low castes. She further observes that there is no fundamental change in the agrarian structure even after the breakdown of feudalism and the caste-class relationship still continues. But the present study often finds the land dominance with the 'others' castes like the Iyachas and the Bhutias or the middle caste and the numerical dominance with the middle castes in almost every village. If both the high and the middle castes are taken as

higher castes than their numerical dominance becomes still more prominent. The low castes, on the other hand, are numerically subordinate to the higher castes in almost every village studied for the purpose of the present study.

Hillier's study (1976) of Badipur, Baryana also may be briefly mentioned here. He says that the relationship between division of labour and caste system is direct though it does not involve all the villagers. But in this region there is no caste-wise division of labour though the priesthood is still a monopoly of the Bahans and the ironsmithy of the Khasis. But tailoring, though a traditional occupation of the Jannis or Gorgis is followed by the members of the higher castes also. Mathurjee's observation (1920) of caste discrimination as a depressing factor for small tenants also does not hold true of Darjeeling and Sikkim.

There are many more studies which have showed a positive relationship between caste and class. Parray (1970), for example, finds such a relationship in Chashnar, Kangra. There he finds the higher castes (Rajputs) situated in the higher altitudes and the lower castes (Girths) at the lower altitudes for ritual reasons. Moreover, the land and the white-collar services had concentrated among the high castes. None of these findings tally with the present study.

Similarly the findings of Patnaik (1960) on the basis of the study of three villages - Maniapur, Badapur and Saganpadar in Ganjam District, Orissa show that the higher

castes are holding more land than the lower castes. Yet another case of caste and land relationship has been shown by Kumar (1966) in the Madras Presidency. She found the landowners to be invariably the Brahmans or high castes and the caste determined the social or economic role of an individual. This has been reiterated by Sinha (1967) also. All these findings do not find similarity with the findings in this region.

Bhatt (1975) on the basis of a study of 100 rural and 20 urban communities finds a considerable amount of correspondence between caste and the socio-economic status and more so in the rural areas than in the urban. A comparative analysis of the well-urbanized, semi-urbanized and remote villages in Darjeeling and Sikkim show a similar trend.

In the present context, the study of Sivertson (1963) at Thyagarathirun in Tenjore district may also be mentioned. He finds a change from traditional dominant-subordinate relationship to an employer-employee relationship. This is quite true of Ranghull village but his observation that castes are being gradually turned into action groups is yet to be observed even in this village.

Ushinivas's study (1976) at Nampusa village finds the high castes predominant as landowners and the low castes as landless labourers. Thorner's study (1976) also finds that the resident maliks and moneylenders form a distinct group usually belonging to the upper castes like the Brahmans and the Thakurs;

the Kishans belonging to the artisan castes and the Wadhwas to the Hirlians and other 'backward' classes. None of these findings have a significant likeness with the findings of the present study. Though in most cases the low castes are at a low class position there are plenty from the high and the middle caste groups also, who are at a very low class position.

Finally, it may be noted that under the various forces of change such as the colonial rule, urbanization, modernization, education etc. there has been some change in the traditional production relations. This has brought about a causal change in the caste-class relationships also. Bose (1953) and Mehta (1976) have thrown some light on this aspect of change and continuity. Mandelbarn (1978) also has taken considerable theoretical interest in this sphere of study.

To elaborate the discussion on the causal factors of the differences in caste-class relationship in the hill areas we may mainly discuss the historical and ecological backgrounds of the various castes. The castes and classes which are in the dominant position are, more often than not, the earliest inhabitants. The middle castes which stand in the upper stratum of the socio-economic hierarchy are found to be the earlier settlers. Among the middle castes again, the Wadhwas are found to be socio-economically more advanced than other middle castes like the Kais, Limbas, Mangars and Gurungs. This has been guessed mainly due to their urban background and traditionally being mostly businessmen. Most

of them are immigrated from Kathmandu valley which has always remained the most advanced centre in Nepal, culturally as well as economically.

Most of the low castes people are also very early immigrants but they have not been able to rise up on the socio-economic strata. This <sup>is</sup> probably because their traditional occupations like ironmithy, tailoring and cobblery received a major setback in the wake of industrial or mechanized revolution. Their traditionally low position in the ritual caste hierarchy also might have become partly responsible as an inhibitive force for a speedy progress amongst them.

The high castes, on the other hand, are mostly in the lowest rank of the agrarian hierarchy. Their ritual status is also not as high in this region as they had and still have in Nepal. This is probably because they lost the strong state patronage in India and, moreover, the dominant castes and communities around with little submission to Hindu scriptures such as the middle castes or with totally different religions such as the Lepchas, Bhutias, Bakyas and Muslims, also had an impact upon them. The absence of their open entry into the British and the Indian army and the hangover of their ritual status, which might have initially made them hesitant to take up any occupation like the middle castes, may also have contributed to their subinal socio-economic status in the region today.

Such a historical background could have probably

caused a differential adaptation among the different castes or caste groups and, therefore, a differential caste-class relationship. While the differential caste relations in the region is caused by a mass of factors, such as education, urbanization and most importantly the agrarian class position of the different castes, a diffused caste-class relationship can be probably better explained in the historical perspective - the caste as well as the class history of the people living in this region.

Ecology may be considered as a corollary of history as a causal factor in affecting the caste-class relationship, as it has changed along with the historical development of the society or region. Nevertheless, it has certain properties which are quite independent of historical changes. Altitude, for example, is found to affect the agrarian class structure and subsequently the caste structure too; the lower altitudes have a stronger caste-class relationship than the higher altitudes. The nature of land-irrigated or dry, shady or sunny - is also found to have affected the agrarian relations considerably; the dry lands are less attractive than the wet lands so far as controlling (exploiting ?) another class or caste member is concerned. Similarly, the aspect and other climatic conditions have been found to have a role in the differential caste-class relations.

In short, the villages or areas which are ecologically more favourable have a higher density of population, higher

extent of literacy, higher percentage of inter-caste marriages, greater laxity of consensual relations and more frequent interactions between those who own the land and those who do not own it. An apparent exception to this rule is found in the case of villages which are located around the urban centres or along the roads such as Rangball. This village has a high density of population, freer consensual and marital relations etc. but this is mainly because of its location between two urban centres and with proper communication facilities. In Darjeeling and Sikkim, there are many villages with the same physical conditions but have a very thin population. In any case, the location of a village or the level of urbanization/modernization also form part of the ecological milieu.

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