Chapter I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Problem

As the title of the thesis shows, the subject matter of the present study is the relationship between education and society, as illustrated by the high school students, of the S.S.C. and pre-S.S.C. classes (stds. X and XI), of Baroda city. The present research is based on a similar study, carried out by Dr. I. P. Desai, now Professor of Sociology at M.S.University, Baroda, among the high school students of Poona.* In his preface, Dr. Desai mentions that "the main object of the enquiry was to see if a hypothesis could be framed... it will be quite fruitful to enquire into the relationship between social stratification and the educational system, and how far education has been a force making for occupational mobility in particular and social mobility in general, and how far it has been moulded itself by the traditional social stratification of India." This, briefly, is the problem which Dr. Desai set out to solve, and this is the problem which, under the guidance of Dr. I. P. Desai, I took up for investigation in Baroda

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* High School Students in Poona by I. P. Desai, Deccan College Monograph Series No. 12, Poona, 1953.

in 1953. The choice of Baroda was in many ways circumstantial. Dr. Desai was at that time Reader in the Department of Sociology at Baroda. I was given a temporary appointment as Tutor from 1953-54 as the head of the department had gone abroad. In order to fulfil my duties as tutor, it was most convenient for me to carry out the research in Baroda.

The problem of the relation of education to the social structure has also occupied the minds of western sociologists. One of these is quoted by Dr. Desai in his Poona monograph. A. J. Allaway in his "Social and Educational Change since 1900", The Sociological Review, 1951, wrote about the British educational system and the rise of new occupations. Occupations are as important to British social structure as caste is to Indian social structure. E. Grant Youmans has an article in Rural Sociology, 1959, on "Factors in Educational Attainment" in which he shows a certain preoccupation with the practical considerations of welfare. He notes that "numerous studies have shown that social stratification is associated significantly with the formal educational attainment of youths. Many young people from lower-social-status families are eliminated from the school system at an early age. They are prevented from acquiring the skills, knowledge, and value orientations which would enable them to improve their socio-economic life. As a result, the lower-social-status youth tends to be kept in his social place."

A very important work which in many respects is parallel to Dr. Desai's Poona monograph, is Hollingshead's Elmtown's

Youth. Hollingshead did not restrict himself to only two classes out of the high schools, but took the entire school. His town, somewhere in mid-western U.S., was smaller than Baroda. His methods of collecting data were much more refined and varied. But his field of study and its interpretations go to prove once again that the educational system is closely related to the social structure. He is able to discern, in Elmtown, a stratification into five classes, the upper, upper-middle, lower-middle, upper-lower and lower-lower. (A similar six-class system was first "discovered" by Lloyd Warner and his colleagues in their Yankee City research. The Yankee City "upper class" consisted of an upper and a lower layer, giving a six-class system, unlike Elmtown's five-class system.) Hollingshead found significant correlations between almost every aspect of a student's activities and attitudes, and his class status. Friendships, leisure activities, choice of courses of study, all varied according to class status. Although the classification of American urban populations - in Yankee City and Elmtown - into six and five classes respectively has been disputed, this does not affect the general thesis that the educational system is based upon the hierarchical system, and in turn reinforces this system. In other words, a stable educational system contributes to the maintenance of the existing social structure. Further, a change in one brings about a consequent change in the other. Dr. Desai, we have already seen, has said that one of the things we

want to enquire into is "how far education has been a force making for occupational ... and social mobility." Whereas in our data it can be shown how greatly the traditional social structure influences the educational system, it can also be shown that the secular educational system introduced by the British in the 19th century is now working changes within this traditional structure. The existing social structure, and changes in the structure will be correlated to the educational system, or that part of it which was covered by the survey, namely, the students.

The area

Having selected Baroda for the study, it was decided that all the schools of Baroda be included, i.e. the schools to which children of the local, bilingual population went. These were the Gujarati and the Marathi schools. The only high school which was specifically excluded was a Sindhi school. Although there is a considerable Sindhi population in Baroda, and it is as much a part of the town as any other minority group, being a permanently resettled group, they nevertheless present a special case as displaced persons. Also, they are, like other minorities, marginal to the local population, and are therefore excluded. The Marathi-speaking population is numerically a minority, but because it is a large minority, having a long period of settlement behind it, and it was the politically powerful group till 1947, it cannot be ignored in any study of Baroda.

Of the 19 schools covered by the enquiry, 10 were Gujarati schools, 1 taught in Marathi only, 3 provided for both languages. The remaining 5 schools were covered with the Gujarati and Marathi questionnaires, but their students are not all Gujarati or Maharashtrian Hindus. These include 1 Muslim, 2 Methodist and 2 Catholic schools. The Muslims are local Gujarati converts to a large extent. The Methodists are also local Gujarati converts, but some Hindu boys also attend their schools. The Catholic schools cater to a very small though influential group of Hindus. Apart from Catholics themselves, the children of government officials, businessmen, doctors, lawyers, and so on, some of them local, many of them coming from other linguistic regions, all characterised by a relatively high degree of westernisation (in a cultural sense), go to these schools.

In the following table [Table 1 next page], Gujarati and Marathi include only Hindus. The column for 'others' includes Hindus not having Marathi or Gujarati as mother tongue, and Christians, Muslims and so on, even if their mother tongue is Gujarati or Marathi.

Of all the students who answered the questionnaires, we find that 67 per cent are Gujarati Hindu, 23.5 per cent are Maharashtrian and 9.5 per cent are others. Although this 9.5 per cent figures in the overall analysis, later, when we divide up our population into the Gujarati and the Maharashtrian group, this 9.5 per cent is ignored.

Table 1 shows very clearly the linguistic composition

Table 1 : Schools by language of students

School	Gujarati	Marathi	Others	Total
1. Shroff Memorial	48	-	1	49
2. Sayaji Boys'	42	1	4	47
3. Sayaji Girls'	21	-	-	21
4. New Era Boys'	39	2	1	42
5. New Era Girls'	17	3	2	22
6. Sharda Mandir	29	2	-	31
7. Pratap High	43	-	5	48
8. University Experimental	10	-	-	10
9. Bharati Vidyalaya	32	1	-	33
10. Wadi	15	-	3	18
11. Jayashree Model	17	31	-	48
12. Jayashree Model Junior	16	28	-	44
13. Maharani High	28	23	2	53
14. Maharani Chimnabai	1	39	1	41
15. Convent	4	-	1	5
16. Rosary	8	2	4	14
17. Methodist	1	-	7	8
18. Webb Memorial	-	-	5	5
19. M.E.S. (Muslim)	-	-	16	16
Total 19 schools	371	132	52	555
	67%	23.5%	9.5%	100%

of each school. The first ten schools teach exclusively in Gujarati, and only 1/13th of their students are non-Gujaratis. The next three teach in both languages, and have hardly any students from the miscellaneous category of 'others'. The one Marathi school also has hardly any non-Maharashtrian students. Of the 5 non-Hindu schools, one is only for Muslims, two are almost entirely for Methodist Christians. But the two Catholic schools have a fair sprinkling of Gujarati Hindus and a few Maharashtrians.

So much for the linguistic-cum-religious composition of schools. Taking up the representation of the schools in our sample according to their medium of instruction, and regardless of the mother-tongue of students, we find, in Table 2, that the Gujarati schools account for 58 per cent, the Gujarati and Marathi (not exactly bilingual, because there are separate divisions for each language) for 26 per cent, the Marathi for 7 per cent and others for 9 per cent.

Table 2 : Schools by Medium of Instruction.

School (by language)	No. of students	Percentage of total
1. Gujarati only (10 schools)	321	58
2. Gujarati and Marathi (3 schools)	145	26
3. Marathi only (1 school)	41	7
4. Others (5 schools)	48	9
Total	555	100

Whereas the 'other' schools, especially the Catholic schools, may represent some sort of local elite, or an inter-regional elite even, because of their small numbers, and because of their relative cultural isolation (a fact known by general observation rather than as a result of the present research), they may be safely left out in a consideration of indigenous Baroda society. The Gujarati and Marathi schools, therefore, provide the true subject matter of our study.

If the schools are plotted on a map of Baroda, a picture emerges of each school catering to a definite locality.[x] Sociologically, the school 'belongs' to the locality in which it is found. Thus, within the old citadel of Baroda, the three extant schools are all Gujarati. This is the area inhabited by local Gujaratis who settled here long before the advent of the Marathas. Most of the other Gujarati schools are to be found round about the old city. Two are to the south, an impoverished wadi, and three are located in Jubilee Bag and near Sursagar tank. The only Gujarati schools that are nowhere near the old city are recent establishments, one run by the University, the other, as we shall see later, drawing its students largely from the countryside.

The three schools teaching in Marathi as well as Gujarati are all situated in and around Babajipura and the one wholly Marathi school is in Raopura. Babajipura and Rao-

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[x] This is dealt with more fully in Chapter II - A Brief History of Baroda, and in Chapter III - The Traditional Structure.

pura are the areas settled by the incoming Marathas in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Muslim school is situated in a pocket in Raopura. The rest of the 'other' schools, four in number, are to be found, appropriately enough, in the Camp area, to the north of the University.

The Method

The research was started off by conducting a pilot survey. Dr. Desai, with his experience of Poona, drew up a short questionnaire. This was cyclostyled and used for the pilot survey. The questionnaire was drawn up in Gujarati, and I was greatly helped by Dr. Desai, and by A. M. Shah, in interpreting the questions and answers. My own knowledge of Gujarati was restricted to the spoken Parsi variety, but I was able to pick up enough local Gujarati to work on the subsequent questionnaires. We visited a few schools, all Gujarati, and were allowed to administer the questionnaire in a separate classroom to about 5 per cent of the students of X and XI classes. The results of this initial enquiry were entered onto a single chart and some idea obtained about the nature of our universe. On the basis of these results, some of the questions were dropped and several others added. Notable among the latter were questions on occupational mobility, and the family.

The final questionnaires were printed in both Gujarati and Marathi. They were administered in November-December,

1953, prior to the preliminary tests of the S.S.C. class. In the case of girls' schools, or schools that were small enough to be handled alone, I was able to manage by myself. In the larger schools, however, and especially in the beginning I was often guided by Dr. Desai, and A.M.Shah and N.R.Sheth gave me their unstinted assistance. Lack of fluency in the languages was not a great handicap, as the instructions to be given to students were few and simple. Conversation with the school authorities could be carried on in English.

The Sample : In the final survey, a twenty per cent sample was taken. The names of every fifth student in the register was taken, and if this student was absent, the next name was selected. This list was handed over to the person in charge, and the students were assembled in a separate classroom. The total number of students who answered the questionnaire is 555. These represent a little over 20 per cent of all students of Xth and XIth classes in the 19 schools.

Table 3 : Students by Class and Sex (from school registers)

	Boys	Girls	Total
Xth	1081	409	1490 [57.5%]
XIth	833	266	1099 [42.5%]
Total	1914 [74%]	675 [26%]	2589 [100 %]

Figures in brackets are percentages.

There are more students in the Xth class than in the XIth. The same phenomenon is found in Poona. It may be mere coincidence. On the other hand, it is possible that because the XIth class goes up for the S.S.C. examination, a good deal of weeding out of weaker students takes place in the promotion from Xth to XIth.

The ratio of girls to boys is slightly higher in the Xth class than in the XIth.

Table 4 : Students - by Class and Sex (from my sample)

	Boys	Girls	Total
Xth	222	86	413 [56%]
Xth	191	56	142 [44%]
Total	413 [74 %]	142 [26%]	555 [100%]

The percentages for the sample closely correspond to the percentages for our total population.* This gives us an initial confirmation of the validity of the sample which constitutes a little over 20 per cent of the population.

The questionnaire : The information sought in the questionnaire falls broadly into two categories, firstly the broad social environment of a student, his caste, his place of residence, the occupation, education and income of his guardian, his language and religion, and so on; secondly, the student himself, his activities at school, at home and at leisure, his attitudes, and his plans. The latter

* By population is meant the universe of study or investigation.

will be correlated to the former wherever it appears to be significant. But they will be dealt with separately in the analysis. Chapters III, IV, V, VI and VII will give the socio-economic background of the student, while Chapters VIII, IX and X deal more specifically with the student population itself. Chapter XI is devoted to schools, while the concluding Chapter XII sums up the main issues of the thesis. Chapter II gives a historical sketch of Baroda, and its socio-economic background as given in recent censuses of the town and district.

Collection of data : After all the questionnaires had been filled, it was decided that categories be established for each item. Thus all answers to question 1 relating to 'class' could be put into one or other of two categories - Xth or XIth. Some questions had a much wider range of possible answers, as in the case of occupation, size of family and income. As the data was to be punched on cards, and each column on a card had numbers from 1 to 9, the answers to each question had to be put in categories of 9 or multiples of 9. Thus, if for a particular item there were 19 answers or less, 1 column would have to be utilised. If there were 10, then a second column would have to be utilised. To avoid wastage, minor categories would be compressed into 'miscellaneous', or all the categories would be broadened so that generally not more than one column was required for each item. As all data had to be entered on two cards, questions considered to be sociologically

important were entered on one, and others less important on the other card.

The first set of figures which the Hollerith machines gave off from the punched cards were simple frequency tables. The population was classified by single items - age, caste, religion, education and so on. Subsequently, contingency figures were asked for. Thus, it was felt that there would be a significant correlation between caste and locality, between occupation and income and so on. Alembic's, who did the entire mechanical tabulation, and for which I am grateful to them, were sent lists of the required correlations, which they got off the machines. The entire material was divided up into Gujarati and Marathi, and in all there are 132 contingency tables for each linguistic section. From these, further, a few merged tables have been worked out where figures were required for the total population.

N o t e

The controversy over the merits and demerits of the statistical method is one that still rages. For the present research, it was perhaps the only possible method. The sample was too large for a minute observational study. Secondly, the sample was a highly literate one, hence the use of a carefully worded questionnaire could be expected to bring in fairly accurate data. But it would still be worthwhile to discuss the limitations of this method and

possible improvements. For this I shall refer to the work of six writers. One of these, Levi-Strauss, discusses the pros and cons of statistical research. The remaining five works are all the results of field enquiries. One is Dr. Desai's Poona monograph, already referred to, and which has been the main inspiration of the present enquiry. The next two fall into one category. They are Hollingshead's Elmtown's Youth and Warner and Lunt's The Social Life of a Modern Community, both field studies of American towns, with a similar theoretical and methodological orientation. Of these, the latter is more relevant for a discussion of method. The fourth work is the survey conducted by D. R. Gadgil in Poona, the results of which are contained in Poona - a Socio-Economic Survey. The latter is not a sociological work like the others, but it is an important work for two reasons. It makes a use of statistical techniques; and it is one of a growing series of similar surveys of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Baroda, Kanpur, etc. The final book is Jean Stoetzel's Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword which contains incisive support for statistical methods in social research.

In giving a critique of these six works, I hope to give some of the arguments for and against the statistical method. I will not however consider the statistical method in juxtaposition with the methods of social anthropology, of observation and so on, as the field of enquiry in my case is one that does not come within the purview of social anthropology. This aspect will come in only in-

-directly in a discussion of Warner's attempts to make his Yankee City study social anthropological.

The first work to be considered is an essay by Claude Lévi-Strauss on "Social Structure" (Anthropology Today, ed. by A. L. Kroeber). Lévi-Strauss has developed concepts of social structure which are extremely useful in the analysis of field data. Although these concepts were not used for the organisation and analysis of the present research, they are here cited because they provide a methodological perspective for empirical data.

According to Lévi-Strauss, the empirical reality, which is the raw material of the social scientist, is social relations in a given society. Out of these social relations, elucidated by observation, by questioning informants, by surveying, and so on, the social analyst constructs a model. This model, or abstraction, is social structure. Structure, therefore, is not the society itself but the abstract model of it that the investigator constructs out of his raw materials.

Such models can be of several kinds. First of all, there is the observational model, as distinct from the experimental. The observational model is a factual one, derived directly from observation of social facts. It represents the first stage of analysis. The experimental model on the other hand is a much more formal abstraction. It is useful mainly for studying the effects of change, and for comparing different societies. Because of its highly formal nature, and

the shedding of all local detail, it is far removed from the empirical reality.

Then, models can be classified as conscious and unconscious models. These can be explained best by illustrations. The Hindu scriptures define Hindu society as consisting of four Varnas. Almost at no time was Hindu society so formed.* But this was the conscious model elaborated in the scriptures. Another example is the democratic society of the United States. It is a widely held American belief that theirs is a true democratic society, free of hierarchical notions, and providing equal opportunities for all. This is the conscious model. Sociologists, however, find that the model that approximates the social reality is quite different. Warner and his followers have constructed a model of a six- or five-class society on the basis of research which belies the democratic ideal and conscious model. But this is an unconscious model, for few Americans will concede that theirs is a class society.

The concept of a model becomes very important at the present time, as sociology and social anthropology aspire more and more to the status of a science. No scientific analysis of phenomena is possible without measurement. For proper evaluation and classification, a phenomenon must be measured so that it can be compared, on some common scale, with other phenomena. In a study of society, however, where, apart from the quantities of various types of social relations, there is the qualitative aspect of the cultural expression

* This statement needs to be revised in view of the new interpretation of Varna given by Dr. Iravati Karve in her recent publication Hindu Society - an Interpretation. It is however true of the post-Vedic period.

of these relations, straight measurement is quite inadequate, and may even be incorrect. In recent times, however, mathematics has made great strides in studying the qualitative aspect of measurable phenomena, and Lévi-Strauss gives Morgenstern's Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour as an example of the application of modern mathematical technique to social phenomena. Lévi-Strauss does not, however, develop this point further in his brief essay.

Finally, Lévi-Strauss differentiates between mechanical and statistical models. The main difference between these is that the scale of the mechanical model corresponds to the scale of the phenomenon itself, whereas the scale of the statistical model does not do so. The latter may be far more extensive than a mechanical model can be, yet may include only some few aspects of the several phenomena covered. Or it may be confined to some part of the phenomenon. Always, it is a shallow model, dealing with a part of the phenomena, to which it gives a quantitative expression. The mechanical model is more easily constructed for societies which Durkheim would classify as having a mechanical solidarity, that is, where social relations of various kinds overlap within the same structure, in a multiplex form. These societies can be studied as both qualitative and quantitative wholes, and make possible the construction of mechanical models, on Lévi-Strauss' argument. The statistical model would be more useful in the study of aspect of a complex society.

Structural models were systematically used by Adrian C. Mayer in his study of a Malwa village as set out in a paper on "Some Hierarchical Aspects of Caste". He avoided an overall analysis of the caste system. In fact, he does not even use the term "caste system" but instead talks of "aspects". These "aspects" are the various criteria according to which a caste may gauge its status. Not all these criteria are of equal weight, and the castes rank differently by each criterion. In the real system, there is bound to be a locally recognised hierarchy even though at some points there may be confusion or conflict. For analytical purposes, however, Mayer prefers to separate the various aspects so as to show the interplay between them, and thinks that inequalities in ritual and secular ranking may reveal a major source of hierarchical change. The different rankings are in fact so many partial models of the whole system. There is first the enumeration of castes which gives a statistical model of the size of castes. Then comes commensality. This is an observational model of ground data, and as villagers are well aware of commensal distances between castes, is a sort of informal conscious model.

Occupations are consciously ranked by villagers according to whether they are regarded as clean or polluting, as for example, white collar occupations which are ranked highest on a par with the traditional village priest and the landowner. The village shares a consensus in its attitudes towards occupations. But the status of a caste is less dis-

cernible through its occupation than through its commensal relations depending as it does on claims and not interactions. The model is not a very conscious one in relation to the caste hierarchy, and may be regarded as a statistical model which throws light on one existing aspect of caste.

Secular criteria, such as landownership and literacy, provide again purely statistical models. Finally, the Varna system which is used to define caste status, represents a formal and conscious model.

The statistical models in the above illustration are aspects of one phenomenon - the village caste system - which they purport to explain. They are aspects of a structure, that is, of what to the social anthropologist could be a possible mechanical model.

We now go on to consider a study of aspects of culture. Jean Stoetzel carried out an attitude study of Japanese youth the results of which appear in Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword. This study made use of quantitative methods, not merely because of their practicability but because it was felt that an ethnographic, qualitative study was inadequate. Ruth Benedict's work on Japan, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, has been severely criticised for its neglect of quantitative techniques. To quote Stoetzel, "Ruth Benedict is of course right to try out the validity, as a heuristic principle, of the idea that cultural behaviour-patterns form significant systems, configurations, or Gestalten....(but)..... the problem of the research worker is not so much to hit on the

more or less poetical formula which will explain the whole as to say with a certain degree of precision who does what: in other words the analysis of form must be abandoned in favour of quantitative evaluations."

Klineberg, who worked on Tensions affecting International Understanding (New York, 1950), is quoted here as having written that Ruth Benedict and her colleagues "give us no idea whatever of the variations among the individuals making up the national group. They leave us with the impression of a pattern of behaviour common to the whole people which probably does not square with the facts."

Stoetzel's study makes an extensive use of questionnaires and sampling techniques. Although the data collected is cultural, as with the preceding work of Ruth Benedict, the arguments cited above may be applied to more strictly sociological problems as in the Baroda material.

We now take up research monographs, all of them of urban societies. The two American works, Warner and Lunt's The Social Life of a Modern Community and Hollingshead's Elmtown's Youth, are closely related works. The latter was actually commenced under the guidance of Warner, and uses the methods and concepts developed in the Yankee City study. The Indian works are not as closely related, though in their scope they are parallel to the American works. Poona : A Socio-Economic Survey is the work of an economist, while High School Students in Poona is the work of a sociologist who used the data of the former but not all his methods. The economic

data of the first has, however, been analysed with a sociological imagination, and the two works may be taken together for discussion.

Poona - A Socio-Economic Survey, in two parts, is the result of an investigation carried out by D. R. Gadgil. The scope of the survey was wide, covering all aspects of economic life, and many of social life as well. The methods of collecting data were not cut-and-dried, and the author is constantly aware of the fact that there may be an unevenness in the data. He relies on qualitative analysis of the data, and not numerical presentation, to arrive at any conclusions, and because of this the unevenness is not a serious drawback although it would not satisfy the kind of social scientist who draws his inspiration entirely from the natural sciences, and distrusts intuitive analysis.

Professor Gadgil describes the method of collecting data for each separate subject. First of all, a census was taken of establishments, not by an exhaustive house-to-house survey but by picking out likely-looking places. Home industries, in residential buildings were thus automatically overlooked.

A detailed study of industries was made by taking a sample of the preliminary census. This sample was taken not on a statistical basis but because the units were considered to be representative. Some industries like handloom, and copper and brass goods manufacture, were made the subjects of an exhaustive depth study.

In the case of trade and transport, use was made of municipal octroi records and related to some of the census material. To ascertain occupational distribution of earners, a house sample population was taken which was more in accordance with the strict requirements of statistical method. In the earlier stages, all-India census data and historical records were used.

Professor Gadgil also states that no attempt was made to study the social life as such of the town or of any part of it because the techniques and agencies required would be different from those used to investigate the functioning of economic units or the economic condition of families. He does not, however, exclude all consideration of social life, and it is significant that this survey, carried out over two decades ago, gives due importance to caste which has been ignored by most of the recent urban surveys. Not only caste, but the shape and the working of a traditional society are constantly in mind. Recent surveys, using more refined statistical techniques, often slur over these traditions as though they no longer exist either in the social or the economic sphere.

The value of the Poona survey, therefore, lies in the interpretation of the data far more than in the methods used for collecting it. The methods had to be selected according to their immediate utility and practicability. D. F. Pocock says, "The material provided by Professor Gadgil.... makes it possible to frame reasonably precise problems for

field research in Poona and even in other cities. Professor I. P. Desai's work for example is based on the Gadgil survey."*

Professor Desai had before him a specific problem, unlike Professor Gadgil. With a limited area of enquiry, it was possible to be far more economical and refined in technique. Because it was a highly literate population, and one accessible at fixed times in fixed places - the schools - the use of questionnaires was very feasible. Yet the author has reservations, and feels that ideally, some at least of the data should have been further elucidated by observation or case-study. With such a simple technique, Professor Desai thinks that only an exploratory survey is possible. He does not regard his own research as anything more than such an exploratory survey.

The value of a method may be judged by the results it yields. Much of the material on the high school students of Poona is descriptive. The number of castes, types of occupations, income levels, education of guardians, the family, and various activities and attitudes of students, are given in a simple statistical count. Some of these are statistically correlated. This does not imply any cause-effect relation between the correlated factors. But with his own knowledge, some casual, much sociological, of Indian caste, it is possible for Professor Desai to give a coherent analysis of his material. On the descriptive plane, it maps out, in a kind of statistical model, the sociographic features

* In "Sociologies: Rural and Urban", Contributions to Indian Sociology, No. IV, 1960.

of the high school student population in Poona City. A comparison with similar data collected in Lucknow (Report on the Survey of the Higher Secondary Students of Lucknow District, 1952) yields a hypothesis on the theoretical plane to the effect that upper castes dominate higher education. This is a generalisation that may be considered tentatively to be true of all Indian systems. A more ambitious attempt is possible if the Indian material is compared to a work like Hollingshead's Elmtown's Youth.

A corollary of the hypothesis is stated at the beginning of the report in a quotation from A. J. Allaway in the Sociological Review 1951 which describes the relation between education and other aspects of social life. Change in the one is followed by change in the other. Some attention is paid to this problem in the monograph, and it was further developed in the present research.

On the basis of both the Poona studies, it is possible to conclude that where resources are limited, the use of statistical techniques is justified. What is important is that they be used, and their results interpreted, with insight.

The Poona surveys have an almost complete parallel in The Social Life of a Modern Community by W. Lloyd Warner and P. S. Lunt and Elmtown's Youth by August Hollingshead. These two works are not about the same urban community. One is in Massachusetts, the other is midwestern. But they both are organised on class principles typical of American society. Warner and Lunt's work covers a whole city, like Gadgil's,

but they are interested in sociological problems and not just economic ones, and their techniques are more refined as well as more strictly sociological. Hollingshead confines himself to one area of urban life - the educational system - using the methods and concepts of Warner.

As Warner claims to have applied a social anthropological approach to his Yankee City - not only unlike Gadgil and Desai, but also unlike the usual run of urban studies in the west, even including the Middletown series - it will be worthwhile to see whether his techniques, complicated by the size and complexity of his universe, as also by his far greater resources, compared to India, produce commensurate results.

The first research that Warner carried out was in aboriginal Australia, the results of which appeared in his A Black Civilisation. When, on his return to America, he decided to undertake a study of an urban community, he decided to use basically the same techniques that enabled him to study the total social structure of an Australian tribe. His basic concept was social structure, his basic technique participant observation, and both were modified to meet the needs of covering a "community" of nearly 17,000. The chief modifications in technique were the use of a team of 30 investigators, under the supervision of Warner, and the use of additional techniques in the form of systematic interviewing, the use of schedules and questionnaires, of statistical surveys for special problems, and the use of all kinds of

literary data. All the data of a general kind was noted down on personality cards, of which there was one for every member of the population, and these were indexed and cross-indexed so that they could be used for various purposes.

As with a primitive community, every individual was accounted for. But it was much more difficult to talk of a social structure. Economic institutions could be understood without direct reference to religion or family, a situation impossible in a primitive community where all these are closely interconnected. Warner gave each of these the status of a structure, so that Yankee City was said to comprise about seven structures. Each one of these again consisted of so many persons, that it was necessary to state quantities for different classes and categories. In the final presentation, therefore, the entire analysis is stated in quantitative terms.

Only at two points do we get a specifically qualitative analysis. One is in the delineation of the six classes. This was based on the evaluation of status by the people themselves, except where there was some confusion, in which case an objective criterion was used. The other is the use of case material or 'profiles' which illustrate the functioning of the various 'structures'.

Given the resources, there is perhaps no need to question the scope of the study. But considering the fact that a sample marked out according to the requirements of statistics gives all the data that a total study can provide, one wonders

if an exhaustive coverage is necessary, while the qualitative material could probably be obtained by a few limited depth studies in the total population.

The other work, Elmtown's Youth, is more or less similar to Warner's study, though the population of 'Elmtown' is smaller, and only one section of this population was being covered - its youth in the schools. As for Yankee City, the presentation is mainly statistical.

A digression may here be justified to consider W. F. Whyte's Street Corner Society. This is perhaps the nearest that an urban study has come to classical social anthropology.

The area of study is a ward of a large city in a north-eastern state in the U.S., near Harvard. It is an Italian area, and shows a high degree of social cohesion. The author lived here for several months at a time, sharing intimately in the life of the groups he had decided to study: the cliques of young men, ranging from gangs hanging out on street corners, to clubs and social welfare institutions. The internal structure of these is given in considerable detail, and is shown to be affected by the social environment.

It is a fascinating piece of work, and of great methodological value as well, for it opens up a new approach to the study of urban life. At the same time it emphasises its own limitations - the restriction on the size of the area to be studied, and the necessity for a well-trained man with much time at his disposal, both of which put it beyond the scope of the present discussion.

An additional work to be cited in defence of statistical methods in social science is Durkheim's Suicide. This work, written at the turn of the century, has drawn entirely upon statistical records on suicides maintained by official bodies in France and other west European countries. Statistical methods, at that time, were simple and unrefined, and had not gained much currency among students of social phenomena, and data on suicides was of the simplest. The social data covers marital status, religion and occupation, and political and national communities, with some details for the military group. The data on motives was not considered by Durkheim, as he thought that motives could not be studied statistically, and he, therefore, concentrated on the social concomitants of suicide.

From his study of the statistics, Durkheim discerns three 'sociological' types of suicide, the egoistic, the altruistic and the anomic. The egoistic suicide takes place where there is a diminution in the degree of integration of a social group. Statistics about religion, marital status, and the nationalities of suicides show that the more integrated the position of a person in the church he follows, in a family, and in his national or political community, the less he tends to commit suicide. Thus Catholics and married persons are freer from suicide than the more individual Protestants, and the single, whether unmarried or divorced. Altruistic suicide takes place where a society is highly integrated, such as a primitive community, or, in modern societies, in

the military community. In such groups, egoistic suicide, dictated by individual considerations, is completely absent, and is replaced by a type of suicide dictated by a sense of duty to the group. The self-immolation of widows among Brahmins and Rajputs is a case in point. Such altruistic suicide may not be absolutely obligatory, but is nonetheless imposed by society. A European example is the martyrdom of Christians, and,in modern times, the suicide of army officers in the Europe of the 19th century.

The third type, the anomic suicide, is similar to the egoistic in that society is insufficiently present in both. Anomic suicide occurs during economic crises, regardless of whether the crisis is one of progress or a depression. And it occurs among the industrial and commercial groups which are more affected than liberal professions or agriculture by economic crises, and where the lack of subordination to an authority aggravates the situation. Anomy may also be domestic, as in the break-up of families by divorce. Domestic anomy, especially when allowed to manifest itself in legal institutions such as divorce, leads to anomic suicide.

Anomic suicide arises out of a crisis of some kind, where the individual finds society and its regulations insufficient to resolve his conflict. It differs from egoistic suicide where the individual has always been insufficiently integrated in his community.

The three types may occur in various combinations, and each may vary considerably according to the individual forms

of suicide.

Durkheim goes on to relate suicide to other social phenomena such as homicide, and he also suggests sociological remedies for suicide.

This briefly is the content of his analysis of the administrative records of suicide. About the usefulness of these records, Durkheim has nothing to say. He accepts their information as social facts with exactly the same status, as objects of study, as the social facts derived from ethnographical data (Elementary Forms of Religious Life by Durkheim). He is concerned to fit these social facts into his concept of a structure. It is important to note that he did not evolve the concept of social structure from the statistical records. He had already worked upon his broad theory, and was interpreting the statistics in terms of this theory. We might say that he tested his theory on the statistics, and added to it an analysis of where and why the structure breaks down [Altruistic suicide alone is conducive to structural integration, rather than disruptive or symptomatic of disruption]. The assumption is that statistical data are fit material for a social scientist, and the demonstration he gives is of how such data can fruitfully illustrate and elaborate a sociological hypothesis. The logical continuation of this stand would be to examine methods of collecting the statistical material and to delimit phenomena to which they may be most usefully applied - which has been briefly dealt with above.