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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the changes in the distribution pattern of land holdings during 1970-71 to 1976-77 indicated that there has been an increase in the number of holdings in all the States. Over the years the availability of land for cultivation, on an average, has declined on each holding. With a few exceptions, the proportion of marginal holdings has increased. The concentration ratios reveal that there is some improvement in the distribution of land holdings in 1976-77 as compared to 1970-71. There is some indication that as the average holding size increases the productivity would decline. The study also confirms that the small holding size and higher proportion of marginal and small holdings contributed significantly to the higher cereal productivity.

## AGRARIAN RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT (A REGIONAL STUDY OF NORTH-WEST BIHAR)

Harihar Bhakta\*

Agrarian relations are the mutual relations among men as a class who exchange their activities in the process of production and exchange. In the sphere of production who owns land and agricultural implements and in the sphere of distribution and exchange the objective of production, *i.e.*, production for use value or for exchange value determine the type of agrarian relations. However, it is very difficult to identify the pure nature of agrarian relations because in this sphere relations of production change slowly almost imperceptibly, coalescing and even merging with old forms.

The study is based on primary data collected from all households of nine villages—three from each district, Saran, Siwan and Gopalganj comprising Saran division, *i.e.*, north-west Bihar—selected at random and observations made during June 1974 and July 1975 in connection with the author's Ph. D. dissertation.<sup>1</sup> The villages under study have been classified into three categories on the basis of their agrarian status. 'A' comprises only Chaphawa of Gopalganj district; 'B' of Korea, Saraia of Saran district, Sonabarasa of Siwan district and Maharani Ugarsain of Gopalganj district; 'C' of Jafarpur of Saran district, Parasia and Bharthui of Siwan district and Bharkuian of Gopalganj district.

### AGRARIAN RELATIONS OF THE REGION

In Chaphawa, *i.e.*, 'A', the major portion of land (53.31 per cent) is owned by the landlords. They lease out a substantial portion of their land

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1. Harihar Bhakta: Agrarian Relations in North-West Bihar, Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Patna University, Patna, 1977.

and do cultivation on the remaining portion under their own supervision. Landless labourers have been given land in lieu of their labour service. Tenants on share yield belong to the adjoining villages. The purpose of leasing out land is more to keep labourers bonded than to get a surplus. On the other hand, the purpose of leasing in land is to produce the means of subsistence (food intakes) and to utilize the labour power available in the household to the maximum, *i.e.*, even overtime work—dire need.<sup>2</sup> Thus direct producers are also in possession of land.

TABLE I—PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL

Particulars	'A'	'B'	'C'	Total
(1) Output (kg./acre)				
(a) Wheat .. .. .	276.25	300.37	377.10	331.79
(b) Paddy .. .. .	248.75	267.87	380.62	315.86
(c) Maize .. .. .	—	270.37	292.68	281.44
(2) Percentage of cultivated area under				
(a) Double cropped ..	62.00	70.00	81.00	74.00
(b) Multiple cropped ..	8.00	22.00	30.00	24.00
(3) Wage rate per male worker per day (Rs.) .. ..	2.25	3.25	4.00	3.47

TABLE II—TECHNOLOGICAL AND INVESTMENT LEVEL

Particulars	'A'	'B'	'C'	Total
(i) Utilization of chemical fertilizer (kg./acre) .. ..	9.00	17.00	29.05	21.46
(ii) Land (acres)				
(a) Per tractor .. ..	—	—	239.27	618.61
(b) Per pumpset .. ..	155.41	72.78	46.00	61.86
(iii) Percentage of HYV seeds utilized (first hand) ..	5.00	20.00	60.00	36.11
(iv) Percentage of irrigated area	100.00 (Government canal)	50.00 (Private tubewells and others)	70.00 (Private tubewells)	64.44
(v) Percentage of agricultural savings utilized for				
(a) Reinvestment in agriculture .. ..	2.00	14.00	29.72	19.65
(b) Purchase and usufruct mortgage in land ..	41.59	40.34	23.39	32.95
(c) Subsistence loans ..	30.68	16.37	11.24	15.68
(d) Social ceremonies ..	15.23	14.84	17.21	15.94
(e) Others .. .. .	12.50	14.45	18.44	16.01

TABLE III—FEATURES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Characteristics	'A'	'B'	'C'
1. Percentage of households			
(a) Landlords .. .. .	5.48	1.71	2.34
(b) Cultivators .. .. .	19.24	4.02	21.92
(c) Big and middle peasants .. .. .	11.43	13.94	24.66
(d) Poor peasants .. .. .	2.99	51.93	16.05
(e) Landless labourers .. .. .	60.86	9.41	9.78
(f) Others (not dependent on agriculture) ..	—	19.15	25.25
2. Percentage of ownership of			
(i) Cultivable land: Total (acres) .. ..	155.41	940.24	844.85
(a) Landlords .. .. .	53.31	7.15	2.69
(b) Cultivators .. .. .	41.30	24.28	68.23
(c) Big and middle peasants .. .. .	5.09	49.16	19.57
(d) Poor peasants .. .. .	0.30	19.41	9.01
(ii) Tractor: Total number .. .. .	—	—	3
(a) Landlords .. .. .	—	—	—
(b) Cultivators .. .. .	—	—	100.00
(c) Others .. .. .	—	—	—
(iii) Pumpset: Total number .. .. .	1	9	20
(a) Landlords .. .. .	—	—	—
(b) Cultivators .. .. .	100.00	33.34	75.00
(c) Big and middle peasants .. .. .	—	66.66	25.00
(d) Others .. .. .	—	—	—
3. Percentage of landowner households who are			
(a) Purchasers of land .. .. .	57.14 <sup>°</sup>	19.59	16.21
(b) Usufruct mortgagors mortgaging in land	35.71	34.46	33.64
(c) Sellers of land .. .. .	7.14 <sup>°</sup>	19.83	14.43
(d) Usufruct mortgagors mortgaging out land .. .. .	21.42	25.25	26.42
4. Percentage of labour force of agricultural households in agriculture .. .. .	80.23	54.91	50.42
5. Percentage of households who have			
(i) Leased-out land on			
(a) Labour service .. .. .	37.00	—	—
(b) Share-cropping .. .. .	12.00	7.43	18.18
(c) Fixed rent .. .. .	—	—	1.04
(ii) Leased-in land on			
(a) Labour service .. .. .	60.00	—	—
(b) Share-cropping .. .. .	20.00	17.52	6.81
(c) Fixed rent .. .. .	—	—	2.15
(iii) Percentage of households involved in land lease of			
(a) Labour service .. .. .	97.00	—	—
(b) Share-cropping .. .. .	32.00	24.95	19.22
(c) Fixed rent .. .. .	—	—	3.19
6. Percentage of utilization of labour power			
(a) Family labour .. .. .	22.05	48.00	20.05
(b) Attached bonded .. .. .	21.05	2.00	—
(c) Attached casual .. .. .	12.05	20.00	28.00
(d) Bonded casual .. .. .	26.05	1.05	—
(e) Free casual .. .. .	10.90	20.00	45.00
(f) Others .. .. .	7.90	8.95	6.95
7. Percentage of marketable surplus of the total produce			
(a) Wheat .. .. .	22.25	14.23	33.53
(b) Paddy .. .. .	31.75	12.07	37.18
(c) Maize .. .. .	—	4.61	29.90
8. Percentage of marketable surplus sold in			
(a) Regulated markets .. .. .	9.00	8.00	32.00
(b) Villages and village traders .. .. .	91.00	92.00	68.00

Other means of production like bullocks, agricultural implements, etc., are owned by the landlords. However, these are also utilized by the lessees on labour service for their own farm operations. Share tenants have their own bullocks and agricultural implements which are also utilized on the farms of landlords in which case they are paid at the traditional rate. Thus, the landlords are the owners of land and other means of production. Direct producers are in possession of some land and in some cases owners and possessors of land and other means of production. The land of the landlords is operated by their own implements and also by the implements of their tenants. But all this does not affect the fundamentals of the system.<sup>3</sup>

Direct producers are tied to the soil in some cases and to the landlord in other. In the case of share-croppers, direct producers may have owned and leased in land from more than one landlord like feudal tenants. They derive their subsistence also from sources other than the land of the landlord. In other words, they are more tied to land than to the landlord.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, landless labourers who have taken land for their labour services are tied to the landlords. The landlords have given them land and loans which are their only sources of subsistence. The peasants' 'own' farming of their allotments was a condition of the landlord economy and its purpose was to "provide" not the peasant with the means of livelihood but the landlord with hands.<sup>5</sup> They can not leave them unless they return their land and repay the principal and interest of the loan. The former may be possible but the latter impossible in the existing set up as it far exceeds their means. They even can not get loans from others. This bond between the landlord and the direct producer is traditionally fixed.

In Korea, Saraia, Sonabarasa and Maharani Ugarsain, *i.e.*, in 'B' the major portion of land (49.16 per cent) is owned by big and middle peasants who utilize mainly their family labour for farm operations. Some poor peasants have leased in land but it is too little to be significant from the point of view of political economy. They are also the owners of means of production like bullocks, agricultural implements, etc. Thus the villages lack the features of feudal system in which land is owned by feudal lords and of capitalist system in which land is owned by capitalist farmers, *i.e.*, non-producer class. Land and agricultural implements are owned by direct producers. It is also possessed by them like feudal tenants.<sup>6</sup> But they do not do work on others' field. Therefore, the question of independency or bondedness does not arise.

In Jafarpur, Parasia, Bharthui and Bharkuian, *i.e.*, in 'C' the cultivators own 68.23 per cent of land. They utilize 45 per cent of free casual hired labour of poor peasants and landless labourers for farm operations. Direct producers are independent but not proletariates as they own some land and agricultural implements, although ownership of little land and implements does not nullify the concept of proletariat wage labour in agriculture.<sup>7</sup>

3. Lenin: *op. cit.*, p. 194.

4. Leo Huberman: *Man's Worldly Goods*, Bombay, 1949, pp. 175-176 and Lenin: *op. cit.*, p. 192.

5. Lenin: *ibid.*, p. 191.

6. Huberman: *op. cit.*, p. 32.

7. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 137.

The villages differ in the sphere of exchange too. The distinguishing feature of villages of categories 'A' and 'B' is the system of production for use values. And "the crucial feature of feudalism in this sense is that it is a system of production for use."<sup>8</sup> It implies that the produce is consumed in the immediate needs of households. It fails to be determined by market forces. Trade is there but nourishes the traders rather than the producers. It is generally remote from production, it is excrescence upon the mode of production not part of it, and its presence in no way alters the character of this mode of production.

The produce is utilized mainly in the form of food intakes. Even in 'A' a part is also given in loans and in wages to the poor peasants and landless labourers. Besides, the dependent members of outmigrant workers live in native villages and utilize the yield. The system continues to exist due to non-agricultural workers' right in the ownership of land leading to land and joint family attachment and tradition bound mentality. On the other hand, cash requirements of households and investment needs of agriculture are met out of this non-agricultural income. All this implies that production fails to be guided by market forces and profit motive.

Cropping pattern and sub-division and fragmentation of holdings lead us to the same thing. Wheat, paddy, maize, etc.,—food crops—are the food habits of the people. Besides, a household consumes various products produced in various plots, scattered all over the village and locality differing in fertility, soil condition, waterlogging, irrigation facilities and so on. "Peasant sows just those cereals that he consumes, and that he sows them in just that proportion in which they are consumed",<sup>9</sup> then it implies that natural economy predominates.

It has also been found that the per acre utilization of fertilizer diminishes with the increase in the size of holdings. Bigger peasants are able to produce the required food intakes with lower dose of fertilizer than smaller ones.<sup>10</sup> Besides, cash crops get higher dose of fertilizer than food crops because of their market orientation.

In category 'C' there is market orientation and hiring of free casual labour. Cultivators hire in labour to produce for the market. More than 30 per cent in the total and more than 60 per cent of the cultivators' produce constitute marketable surplus of which 80 per cent is sold in the regulated markets at Siwan, Gopalganj and Chapra.

There is standardised cropping pattern. One type of standing wheat crops was seen during the author's visit. Both food and non-food crops are produced for money income. Yield and its market value are the main considerations rather than the tastes and habits of the people.

#### AGRARIAN RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

The varying features of agrarian relations of the region have profound and varying impact on agricultural development.

8. Paul M. Sweezy, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism, *Science and Society* (New York), Spring 1950 and 1953.

9. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 312 (footnotes).

10. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 133.

'A' — In this village bondedness of direct producers and the system of production for use values have made the agrarian relations semi-feudal tuned towards low level of development. Direct producers owe personal dependence to the landlords. This has made land and man important for earning surplus income, a feature of feudal system.<sup>11</sup> Landlords earn surplus income in various ways:

1. They take half-yield of the leased-out land on share-cropping without sharing in cost.
2. They pay low wages, *i.e.*, Rs. 2 per day traditionally fixed.
3. They charge 25 to 50 per cent within three to four months on grain loans and 40 to 60 per cent per annum on cash loans.
4. They have reduced the area of leased-out land up to 50 per cent on labour service because of double cropping consequent on Gandak canal irrigation facilities. It shows that direct producers are deprived of the benefits of development. They are not allowed more than their bare minimum subsistence.
5. They utilize non-economic pressure to exploit them.

These sources of earning surplus income have prevented them from investing in modern technology. Investments in usury and purchase of land bring them more income besides other privileges and non-economic power. Consequently, the demand for land is very high. Its price has increased more than five times during the last ten years. Tenancy,<sup>12</sup> land transactions, rising prices of land are hindrances to agricultural development.<sup>13</sup> Thus, "there is nothing in the internal structure of that economic regime to stimulate the transformation of technique; on the contrary, the secluded and isolated character of that system of economy and the poverty and downtrodden condition of the dependent peasant preclude the possibility of improvement."<sup>14</sup>

'B' — The features of agrarian relations analysed in 'B' presents a picture of a system of production for use values in which land and other means of production are owned and possessed by direct producers themselves. There is lack of commodity production and market orientation. The needs of households are known and production is planned and organized with the purpose of satisfying these needs. This has extremely important consequences. There is no strong pressure for continual improvements in the production technology. Capitalist surplus labour is insignificant.<sup>15</sup> And throughout history the extension of the market has always been a tremendous incentive to the increase of production.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the picture suggests a system which we may call semi-feudal with a model tuned towards low limited development of agriculture.

There are few modern implements. Utilization of fertilizer and HYV seeds is low. We would like to cite a concrete example noting the system

11. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 86.

12. Harihar Bhakta, "Tenancy System Discourages Farm Productivity", *The Economic Times*, February 14, 1977.

13. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 147.

14. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 229.

15. K. Marx: *Capital*, Vol. I, Kerr Edition, p. 260.

16. Huberman: *op. cit.*, p. 33.



inherent as limited development of productive forces. One household of village Korea having about 8 acres of operated area, installed a power operated tubewell in 1968. In 1970, it went out of order due to some major defects. The transformer was also burnt. Since then he had never tried to bring it in order. The reason which he expressed himself is the system of production for use values. Whatever the increase in the yield, it goes to fill up the bowels of family members. The cash income is too meagre to replace the capital. On the other hand, moderate investment is sufficient to produce the required food intakes. So instead he installed cavity boring with oil operated pumpset in 1973. Lenin has also said: "If the agricultural production of the small peasant is not drawn into the sphere of commodity production, if it is merely a part of household economy, it also remains outside the sphere of the centralising tendencies of the modern mode of production."<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, there are other avenues of investment more advantageous than in modern techniques. The earning from usury is higher than earning from investments in agriculture. Purchase and usufruct mortgage in land is important for producing food intakes. To them land is a means of earning a living, not a source of profit or rent.

'C' — In these villages the agrarian relations are at pre-capitalist commodity stage. The main distinction is that in the pre-capitalist commodity system "the most important of the means of production—the land—was largely owned by the class of non-producers"<sup>18</sup> while in semi-feudal, land is generally either in the possession or in the ownership of direct producers. Besides, the system of production is profit motive market oriented. "Peasant is completely subordinated to the market on which he is dependent as regards his personal consumption and his farming."<sup>19</sup> There is strong pressure for continual improvements in techniques. Thirst for increasing surplus labour is keen. Cultivators treat farm operations as commercial and industrial enterprise,<sup>20</sup> an ordinary industry.<sup>21</sup> But these features are not strong enough to have capital, the decisive factor in the production organization, i.e., capitalist character of agriculture, although it is capitalist development. It is a precursor stage. However, capital is taking hold of agriculture. It is smashing the old forms of production.

The villages have tractors one each except Bharkuian. There are 20 pumpsets, besides many threshers and other modern implements. A substantial portion of farm operations is performed by machines. Their induction and use are increasing day by day and agrarian relations are no hindrance. "The introduction of improved implements on the farm of private land owners means converting the bonded peasant into a wage worker."<sup>22</sup> Besides, it creates (a) "a market for means of production and (b) a market for labour power."<sup>23</sup>

17. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 124-125.

18. Sweezy: *op. cit.*, p. 15 (footnotes).

19. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 172.

20. *ibid.*, p. 193.

21. *ibid.*, p. 213.

22. *ibid.*, p. 230.

23. *ibid.*, p. 232.

Per acre utilization of fertilizer is higher (30 kg.). The percentage of area under double cropped (81 per cent) and multiple cropping (30 per cent) and utilization of HYV seeds (60 per cent) are also higher. Wage rate is also higher (Rs. 4.00). Land purchase gets lower priority in the utilization of agricultural savings (23.39 per cent). The price of land has not risen as high as in 'A' and 'B'. Kautsky is also of the opinion that "The simple commodity production peasant can, thus, pay a higher price for a given piece of land than one who produces on a capitalist basis."<sup>24</sup>

#### SUMMING UP

Thus, the agrarian relations in the villages under study are neither pure feudal nor pure capitalist. It has the features of both mingled with each other in varying degrees. Feudalism is disintegrating. Capitalism is either penetrating or making ground slowly for its penetration. This conforms to the historical evolution of agrarian relations and development. Lenin also opines that "the capitalist economy could not emerge at once and corvee economy could not disappear at once. The only possible system of economy was accordingly a transitional one, a system combining the features of both the corvee and the capitalist system... with all the endless variety of forms characteristic of a transitional epoch."<sup>25</sup> Actually "capitalism penetrates into agriculture particularly slowly and in extremely varied forms."<sup>26</sup>

Thus, "there can not be any doubt that in agriculture the process of development of capitalism is immeasurably more complex and assumes incomparably more diverse forms."<sup>27</sup> The variations in these transitional forms may be explained in terms of mainly two features: independency of direct producers and the system of production for use values or market values. The first case is of bonded direct producers and the system of production for use values; the second of independent direct producers and the system of production for use values and the third one of independent direct producers and the system of production for market values. This has put the agricultural economy of the villages at different stages of development.

### AN ANALYSIS OF AGRARIAN STRUCTURE IN THE PUNJAB

S. S. Grewal and P. S. Rangi\*

The agrarian structure prevailing in a country at a point of time has a close bearing on its agricultural development and hence on the overall development of the economy. A number of developing countries including India

24. Kautsky: *Agrarian Question*, French Edition, 1899, Chapter VIII.

25. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 194.

26. *ibid.*, p. 178.

27. Lenin: *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 111.

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