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Dominant Caste and Socio-Economic Structure

IN THE VILLAGES OF CENTRAL BIHAR, 1967

Over the past two decades, the concept of dominant caste has become one of the most widely accepted ideas in South Asian social science. There are few if any paradigms that command a wider allegiance. But once granted that most villages in north India have a dominant caste, what then? There have been many anthropological field studies of the dynamics of caste dominance in individual villages, but little has been done at any level of generality. Such basic questions remain to be pursued as: are there any patterns to caste dominance? Is the dominance of one caste the same as that of another? This chapter will examine these questions in the central area of Bihar during the late 1960s.

Here again we will draw upon the 1961 census, but this time with the addition of material from the 1971 census as well. The study areas are two, each comprising about two hundred contiguous villages; in both areas, the villages can be grouped by caste dominance among three major castes. It will emerge that differences do indeed exist between villages dominated by different castes. These differences are sufficiently important, in fact, to enable us to separate over 70 percent of our cases into distinct socio-economic sets that correspond to dominance by different castes. In other words, it does make an important difference in the socio-economic sense whether one caste or another is in a dominant position. This fact has important implications for our knowledge of rural India at the micro-level.

In what follows we begin with a look at the pattern of

caste dominace in our first area of examination. We will then turn to consider the socio-economic data. Next will be taken up the principal technique of this essay, discriminant analysis. The results of the discriminant analysis will then be examined, and the procedure will be tested on a second area that has a somewhat different caste composition and a different socio-economic base, Finally, conclusions and implications will be drawn.

The Area of Analysis

Our first area of analysis is Atri, the same rural constituency of the Bihar Legisalative Assembly that we used in chapter 5. Again, within Atri we will draw on the 88 booths (of the total 99) that matched exactly with the census unit boundaries in the 1967 election.[1]

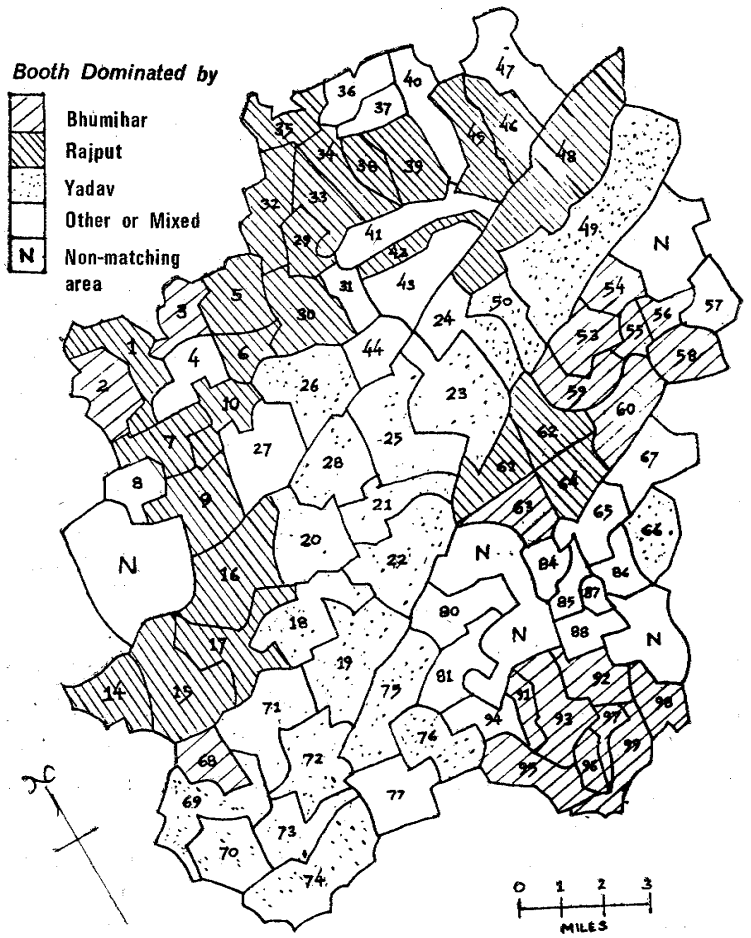
Figure 9 presents the geographical distribution of caste dominance in that year. Here we see that the Bhumihars (21 booths) are dominant mainly in the south and east, though they also have two booths in the extreme northwest and one on the eastern edge of the area. The Rajputs (also 21 polling stations) control a broad band of booths stretching from southwest to northwest, with one stray booth in the southeast. The Yadavs (25 booths) are concentrated in the north and west, though there are three Yadav-dominated polling stations in the east central area of the map. Each of the three major castes then, has a distinct and largely contiguous area of the region under its sway.

The residual "other or mixed" category embraces 21 booths scattered around the area. Of these, 8 are dominated by the Koiris and one by the Kurmis, both agricultural castes ranking about the same as the Yadavs. Three booths are dominated by Muslims and two by Harijans. The other 7 are "mixed," meaning for the most part that the booth's component villages are split between different dominant castes.

Of the three major castes, the Bhumihars are generally thought to rank the highest in ritual terms, just beneath the Brahmans. In fact, the Bhumihars have claimed for at least the last 16 decades, they *are* Brahmans, who have been

Figure 9

ATRI 1967. Dominant Caste in Polling Stations Matching Census Revenue Villages



Numbers in the booths are the official polling station numbers for 1967.

unjustly denied their birthright.[2] For our purposes, though, it is probably more relevant to note that the caste name comes from the work *bhumi*, meaning "land," for it is through control of land that this "twice-born" caste has asserted its position. As with other high castes in eastern India, it has traditionally been considered poor form for Bhumihars to work their land themselves; the preferable arrangement has been to let out land on rent or share to those of lower caste.

In Gaya District[3] as a whole, Bhumihars have been one of the two leading caste groups for most of this century, the other being the Rajputs, traditionally a *kshatriya* caste, and the major rivals to the Bhumihars both in Gaya District and at state-level politics from the 1920s down to the early 1960s (e.g., Roy, 1969; Jha, 1967; Singh, 1975). The western part of the district, indeed, was the home base of the major Rajput politicians in Bihar through those decades, Anugrah Narayan Singh and his son Satyendra Narayan Singh. Like their rivals the Bhumihars, the Rajputs also have generally exercised their dominance at the village level through the control of land.

The third group of importance, the Yadavs, are a traditional *shudra* agricultural caste. Also commonly known in Bihar as Gopes, Gowallas and Ahirs, they are (or at least were at last report in 1931) the most numerous single caste groups in Bihar as a whole (11.0 percent in 1931) and in Gaya District as well (15.6 percent).[4] Over the last decade or two the Yadavs have also become politically conscious, with an all-India caste association, (Rao, 1968) and have become a major factor in Bihar politics as well. In Atri they exercise their dominance partly through landownership, partly through strength of numbers and undoubtedly partly through political acumen at the local level.

It is difficult to get any picture of the numerical strengths of the different castes, but it is possible to get at least some idea from the census. The data at local level are old—from 1911—but they may be of some value even today in indicating that factors other than mere numbers must account for caste dominance. If we take as the geographical unit Atri

Revenue Thana, of which about two-thirds is occupied by the present Atri constituency, we find that in 1911 Yadavs amounted to 18.2 percent of total population, Bhumihars 8.2 percent and Rajputs 4.5 percent (Government of Bihar and Orissa, 1915a).

It is probable that these groups were and are not evenly distributed throughout the locality, but even if they were completely concentrated in the booths they new dominate, and even if they had grown more rapidly than the rest of the population,[5] they would make up significantly less than a majority in the areas of their dominance. In other words, they must be exercising their domination for the most part in some other way than through mere strength of numbers, and in all probability that domination comes through control of land.[6] Such a pattern fits in well with the picture Dumont 1970 : 161-165) has of dominance occurring primarily as a function of economic control rather than numerical superiority, It also makes good sense that the caste in economic control of the land should be the one pointed to by the politicians as being politically dominant, for while numbers surely count politically, control of the economic resource base and through it the patron-client structure counts for a lot more in a peasant society.[7]

The distinct areas of caste dominance in Figure 9 lend support to the speculations advanced by Mayer (1958), Gardner (1968) and others about different levels of dominance. There is the level of the village and polling station, and then above it there is what might be called the "subregion" or "locality"—a group of contiguous villages in which one caste is dominant, rather like Mayer's (1958) "little region," or perhaps better yet Elliott's (1970 : 136) "clusters" of villages, each connected to one predominant village in its area.

Beyond the village and the locality or cluster, Gardner (1968) speaks of the "region" as a level of caste dominance, and Beteille (1974 : 71) reflects that though middle-level castes are often dominant at the local level, dominance at the regional level tends to go to higher castes.[8] These patterns

we find here also, with the Yadavs very prominent at local level, while the regional level—here the district—has been dominated politically by the high caste Rajputs and Bhumihars for most of the last three-quarters of a century.

However the structure of caste dominance fits together at higher levels, we do have a definite picture of the Atri area as split into several localities, each under the sway of a different caste, and at the booth level there are three distinct groups, plus a residual category. The question of whether there are any important socio-economic differences between areas dominated by different castes from the remainder of this chapter.

Socio-economic Differences and Dominant Caste

The most direct way to tell if there is any noticeable difference between the booths dominated by the three caste groups is simply to compare the group means, as in Table 26, which gives data for the 1967 constellation of polling stations. Here averages are given for each of the four groups, as well as the average for all the polling stations, along with the F-statistic from a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), which tests the hypothesis that there is no real difference between the group means.

In all, eight categories of socio-economic measure have been employed, each consisting of three submeasures, one from the 1961 census (Government of Bihar, 1965), the second from 1971 (Government of India, 1973), and the third the difference between the two (i.e., the 1961 measure subtracted from the 1971 measure). We now turn to an examination of Table 26, a procedure which will also permit the variables to be introduced and explained.

1. Density in persons per hectare (2.47 acres), abbreviated as DEN61 and DEN71 for the two census measures and GDEN for the growth over the ten-year period. For both 1961 and 1971, the Bhumihar booths are the most densely populated, with the Rajput areas the least densely settled. A glance at Figure 9 will confirm this finding, for it will be seen that the Rajput booths are considerably larger on the

ground than the Bhumihar booths, even though each booth contains roughly the same number of voters (985 on the average for 1967). Further, the Bhumihar booths grew in density at a faster rate than the others over the intercensal period, as is reflected in the GDEN variable, with the Rajput polling stations growing at the slowest rate. These differences stand out quite strikingly in the F-statistic for all three variables, with significance at the .0001 level in all three cases.

2. Ratio of male landless agricultural laborers to cultivators. "Landless laborers" are defined as agricultural workers who have only their labor to offer, whereas "cultivators" directly farm land, whether on a basis of ownership, tenancy or share. Considerable numbers of people are both cultivators, (say, of half an acre) and laborers on someone else's land, so there is some difficulty in distinguishing between the two groups. Also, there are many who work both outside agriculture (e. g., as an artisan) as well as within it, and it is hard to tell which is the principal occupation. And there is an understandable inclination for laborers (and perhaps artisans, too) to tell the census enumerator that they are cultivators in the hope that the assertion will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. To add in females, who move into and out of the agricultural sector even more elusively (from our point of view) than do the males, would make our measure even more precarious than it is already, so we have confined the index to males.[9]

Still, with all its shortcomings, the measure should give some idea of the relationship between landlessness and proprietorship in our various types of booths. Indeed, we do find that in the high caste Bhumihar and Rajput areas, there are on the average about twice as many laborers per cultivator (MLC61 and MCL71) as there are in the low caste Yadav booths, where proprietorship is more common. The growth in the ratio (GMLC) is also higher in the "twice-born" booths than in the Yadav polling stations, though here the difference is not significant in the statistical sense with the F test.

3. Male agricultural workers per cropped acre. Here cultivators and laborers were added together and divided by

TABLE 26

Atri 1967 : Group Means and Analysis of Variance

	Dominant Caste				*Mean For*	*ANOVA*	
	Bhumihar	*Rajput*	*Yadav*	*Other & Mixed*	*All 4 Groups*	*F*	*Probability*
Density							
DEN 61	4.35	2.03	2.95	3.63	3.23	15.42	<.0001
*DEN 71	5.20	2.43	3.50	4.47	3.88	16.42	<.0001
GDEN	.85	.40	.54	.84	.65	10.18	<.0001
Laborers-to-Cultivators							
*MLC 61	.70	.70	.36	.49	.55	10.87	<.0001
MLC 71	.88	.90	.46	.65	.71	10.96	<.0001
*CMLC	.18	.20	.10	.16	.16	0.75	.5226
Agr. Workers Per Acre							
*CLAC 61	.76	.35	.54	.50	.53	3.36	.0225
CLAC 71	.95	1.28	.38	1.12	.91	1.23	.3043
*GCLAC	.20	.93	−.16	.62	.37	1.77	.1597
Agr. Percent of Work Force							
AGWK 61	.82	.90	.89	.87	.87	2.95	.0374
*AGWK 71	.85	.92	.93	.90	.90	4.38	.0065
*GAGWK	.03	.02	.04	.03	.03	0.30	.8252

Irrigated Acreage							
*IRCR 61	.47	.35	.46	.47	.44	2 29	.0847
IRCR 71	.24	.23	.10	.20	.19	0.88	.4560
*GIRCR	−.23	−.13	−.35	−.27	−.25	1.45	.2325
Untouchability							
SC 61	.30	.39	.23	.28	.30	16 10	< 0001
*SC 71	.32	.39	.27	.28	.31	13 43	<.0001
*GSC	.02	.00	.05	.00	.02	4.13	.0087
Genral Litercy							
LIT 61	.19	.17	.12	.16	.16	14.41	<.0001
*LIT 71	.22	.19	.16	.19	.19	7.94	.0001
*GLIT	.02	.02	.04	.03	.03	0.99	.4010
Persons per Household							
*PERH 61	6.07	6.68	6.33	6.00	6.27	7.63	.0001
PERH 71	6.47	6.55	6.37	6.13	6.38	1 74	.1653
*GPERHH	.40	−.13	.04	.13	.11	2.57	.0598
n	21	21	25	21	88		

*variable included in discriminant analysis

the number of cropped acres reported in the census. For 1961 (CLAC61) the Bhumihar booths evidenced the most intensive agriculture, with about twice as many workers per acre as the Rajput booths, with the Yadav booths much like the Bhumihar areas. In 1971 (CLAC71) the picture changed radically, for in the latter year, the Rajput booths showed far more workers per acre than the Bhumihar stations and over three times the average for the Yadav booths. The difference here is due not to the growth of agricultural workers, however, but to the different figures reported for cropped acres in the two censuses. Why the basis of reporting should have differed so much according to which caste was dominant is an intriguing question, but not one which the census can shed much light upon, officially oblivious as it is to the existence of caste. At any rate, even though the 1961 and 1971 figures are clearly measuring different things, it seemed wise to leave both in our analysis, as well as the difference between them.

4. Male agricultural workers (cultivators plus laborers) as a percentage of the total male work force. At some levels, this measure should give an index of modernization, for the more people there are engaged in non-agricultural pursuits, the more diversified and advanced is the economy. On the ground in rural Bihar, however, working outside of agriculture means working as an artisan or in small-scale trade, not in a steel mill or an office.[10] Further, as we see in Table 26, the portion of male workers in agriculture was higher in 1971 (AGWK71) for all groups than it was in 1961 (AGWK61), with the growth in the Yadav booths at 4 percent (GAGWK) about twice that of the Rajput booths, though the residual "other and mixed" category showed the highest increase. What happened over the 1961-1971 period was a movement into agriculture rather than out of it by those entering the work force, essentially because of lack of opportunity anywhere else. And from the changes in our MLC measure noted above, it is safe to conclude that this movement into agriculture was into a landless laborer status. The variables AGWK71 and GAGWK, then are in a sense measures of agricultural distress, and to the extent that they distinguish between

groups at all (significant only at the 5 percent level for AGWK71 and not at all for GAGWK), the level of distress seems greater in the Rajput and Yadav booths than in the Bhumihar areas.

5. Proportion of cropped acreage irrigated. This measure would seem to give an indication of the state of progress of agricultural technology, albeit a crude one, for irrigation by tubewell, brick-walled *(pakka)* well, earthen *(kaccha)* well, canal and tank is all lumped together.[11] In all groups of booths the portion of crop irrigated declined rather precipitously over the decade, but as with our data on agricultural workers per acre, there appears to have been a change in the basis for enumeration rather than any drastic retrogression in the agricultural sector. Whether the 1961 measure (IRCR61) or the 1971 measure (IRCR71) is more nearly correct is impossible to say, so for the moment we will include both, as well as the "negative" growth rate (GIRCR).

6. Untouchability, in terms of the proportion of Scheduled Caste members to total population. The differences between groups here are startling, for fully 40 percent of the people living in the Rajput booths were Harijans in 1961 (SC61), almost twice as high a proportion as in the Yadav booths, with the Bhumihar stations in between. High caste dominance, then, seems associated strongly with Untouchability.[12]

7. Literacy, measured by percentage of total population literate. In 1961 the Bhumihar booths were as a group over 19 percent literate (LIT61), with the Rajputs close behind and the Yadavs a distant third (or fourth, if the residual category is counted). In 1971 (LIT71), the high castes still held their lead, but the Yadavs and the residual booths were catching up, with higher rates of increase (GLIT). Differences between the groups, as measured by the F-test, were about twice as significant in 1961 as ten years later.

8. Persons per household. As was the case in Bangladesh (Chapter 4), so also in India this family size measure shows promise of serving as a proxy for wealth, although a somewhat inexact one, for family size is correlated quite highly in

the aggregate with both wealth and income in rural India, and at least in some parts of India landholding size is also directly related to family size (NCAER, 1964 : 31 and 35) In 1961 (PERH61) there was a significant difference in our groups, with average household size in the areas dominated by Rajputs somewhat larger than households in the other areas of Atri. By 1971 (PERH71) the differences had disappeared, insofar as statistical significance is concerned, with family size decreasing in the Rajput and Yadav booths (GPERHH) and increasing in the other two groups.

Over the range of our 24 variables, there are a few, such as growth in the male laborers-to-cultivators ratio (GMLC) or the portion of cropland irrigated in 1971 (IRCR71) which are much the same across the whole Atri area. But for most of the variables, and particularly those measuring density, Untouchability and literacy, there are highly significant differences by dominant caste. If we compare Table 26 with Figure 9, it might be argued that the caste differences are really a mask for ecological differences, for after all each of the three castes is dominant in a different area of Atri, and is quite likely facing a different set of environmental conditions with respect to soil type, drainage, market availability (the paved road running across the southern end of the area will be recalled), and the like. But then why should Rajputs be dominant under one set of conditions and Yadavs under another? To pose the first question is to raise the second one—and even more complex questions (e.g., is dominance by caste *X* more nearly a result of market access, or a case of it?). Hopefully, the present inquiry will start us on the way to dealing with at least the first layer of issues involved.

Discriminant Analysis

Our list of variables from Table 26 gives us some power to distinguish between dominance by the three major castes, but it is not at all clear at this point how much power nor with respect to which castes the power is valid. A low reading on CLAC61 would indicate likely Rajput dominance, but a high measure would mean that either Bhumihar or Yadav dominance would be a good guess. MLC61, on the other hand, distinguishes reasonably well between low and high caste dominance, but not very well at all between the two high castes. Much more preferable than this series of one-variable tests would be some kind of overall measure incorporating a number of variables that would enable us to distinguish between dominant castes. Discriminant analysis is a technique that has exactly this task as its objective—reduction of a large number of differentiating variables into a much smaller number of discriminant functions, each of which is composed of weighted values of the original variables, somewhat like the coefficients in a linear regression equation. The discriminant functions are thus a more parsimonious way to sort out the cases into separate groups. If the approach is successful (that is, if there really are overall underlying differences between booths dominated by different castes), it enables us to sort out *a posteriori* our 88 booths into groups that are the same as those we had established *a priori* according to dominant caste.

Discriminant analysis is somewhat akin to factor analysis, in that the latter endeavors to reduce a set of variables into groups by working with cases, while the former is a way to reduce the number of cases into groups by working with the variables.[13] Interestingly, discriminant analysis was first developed in physical anthropology, and one of the major innovators in its use was P. C. Mahalanobis, the great Indian statistician, who originated one of the principal statistics used in discriminant analysis, Mahalanobis' D^2 or "maximum distance."[14] The technique has seen some use in South Asian anthropology, in measuring physical differences among Maharashtrian Brahmans (Karve and Malhotra, 1963) and among regional groups in the United Provinces (Mahalanobis *et al.*, 1949). Despite this illustrious subcontinental heritage, discriminant analysis has not enjoyed much favor among social scientists interested in the area, with the exception of Mary Carras, who employed it in her study of Maharashtrian political factions (1972) and Biplab Dasgupta, who has been using it in his enterprises in ecological analysis (1977).

One danger to be avoided at the outset in embarking

upon discriminant analysis is excessive intercorrelation among the original set of variables, which will make for instability in the discriminant function solutions (Santhanan, 1975 : 245; Morrison, 1974 : 2-451 and 2-455). And as might be expected with our sets of variables measuring the same things for different years, there is some very high multicollinearity. For instance, the zero-order correlation (Pearsonian r) between DEN61 and DEN71 was .988. The best solution seemed to be to face the problem directly, so within each group of three variables in Table 26, those with intercorrelations of $r > .500$ were eliminated. This purge left us with 15 variables, shown in Table 26 with asterisks.

The results of the discriminant analysis are given in Table 27. The technique used was the stepwise one, in which variables are taken into the analysis in the order of their power to classify the cases into groups. As with stepwise multiple regression, new variables are included only up to a certain point, at which the process ceases. The exact method employed here was, appropriately enough in this South Asian context, maximizing the Mahalonobis D^2 measure of distance. A good deal of experimentation was done with varying numbers of steps in an attempt to find a solution that would correctly classify as many cases as possible, yet employ as few steps as possible, in the interests of a parsimonious explanation. The best predictive discriminant analysis classified correctly 80.7 percent of the booths, but at the same time it involved twelve steps. A much better solution turned out to be one with six variables that predicted 73.9 percent of the cases correctly, and that is the version that we will examine here.

There are three discriminant functions (the maximum number possible is one less than the number of groups), with the first two providing most of the discriminating power, which is summed up as a percentage figure at the bottom of the columns in Table 27. The first function is mainly connected with DEN71, though GSC, MLC61 and LIT71 all make a contribution of some substance. The composite that develops here is a booth with low density (negative coefficient on the first function), large proportion of Untouchables

TABLE 27

ATRI 1967

Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients

Variable	*Function* 1	*Function* 2	*Function* 3
DEN71 (Density in persons/ hectare, 1971)	—.487	.645	.129
MLC61 (Male laborers/ cultivators, 1961)	.280	.184	.099
CLAC61 (Male cultivators + laborers per cropped acre, 1961)	—.168	.278	—.502
SC71 (Harijan portion of population, 1971)	.459	.238	—.399
GSC (Growth in Harijan portion of population, 1961-1971)	—.299	—.126	—.761
LIT71 (Portion of population literate, 1971)	.248	.365	.084
Relative importance of function	56 2%	37.7%	6.1%

(though low rate of increase in that proportion), sizeable concentration of landless laborers as opposed to cultivators and relatively high literacy. In other words, there is a comparatively sparse population, high literacy and rather inegalitarian social structure (many Harijans and landless laborers). It appears more than somewhat likely that there is a large overlap between the Untouchables and the landless laborers (cf. Chapter 5, n. 25) but very little between either group and the literate sector of the population. The booths that score positively on this first function[15], in sum, could be chracteri-

zed as exhibiting a distinct agrarian exploitation, while those that score low or negatively display a pattern of high density, low literacy, fewer Harijans and a greater number of cultivators relative to landless laborers.

The second discriminant function accounts for something over one-third of the discriminatory power of all the functions taken together. It focuses mainly on DEN71 with decreasing contributions from LIT71, CLAC61 and SC71. A booth scoring highly on this function shows high density and literacy, a relatively intensive agriculture in terms of workers per cropped acre (CLAC61) and a comparatively high Untouchable population—somewhat like the first function, but here we find a high density and more intensive agriculture, as opposed to the low density and higher Scheduled Caste component that appeared in the first function. The third function accounts for only a bit over 6 percent of the overall discrimination, but does so in a way rather different from what we found in the first two functions. A booth with a high score here would have few Untouchables, a very low growth (perhaps even a decrease) in their numbers over the intercensal decade, and a relatively extensive rather than intensive agriculture (negative CLAC61).

Results of Discriminant Analysis

The data in Table 28 show how effective the discriminant analysis was in classifying the 88 booths of Atri Constituency, We were able to classify 12 of the 21 Bhumihar booths correctly, 20 of the 21 Rajput booths, 19 of 25 Yadav stations and 14 of our 21 residual "Other" booths. Overall, 65 of the 88 cases were correctly classified, or 73.9 percent. With the Rajputs the discriminant analysis was almost completely successful, in that only one booth that actually was Rajput was misclassified as being dominated by another caste (although there were seven non-Rajput booths misclassified as being Rajput). There must be some characteristics of Rajputs polling stations, then, that separated them out from all the others (save for the seven apparently "Rajput-like" booths that got misclassified). In the case of the Yadav

TABLE 28

Classification of Booths by Dominant Caste Through Discriminant Analysis, Atri 1967

		PREDICTED GROUP				*TOTAL*
		Bhumihar	*Rajput*	*Yadav*	*Other*	
Actual group	Bhumihar	12	3	2	4	21
	Rajput	0	20	0	1	21
	Yadav	0	2	19	4	25
	Other	2	2	3	14	21
TOTAL		14	27	24	23	88

booths, 2 actual Yadav stations were erroneously categorized as Rajput and 4 as "Other," while 5 non-Yadav booths were misplaced into the Yadav group. For the "other" booths and those dominated by the Bhumihars, we were less and less successful, though even with the letter, we managed to get 57 percent (12 of 21) correctly classified, a great deal better than we could have done by chance (21/88 or 24 percent).

A short examination of Table 28 will confirm that the misclassification was greater between Yadav and "Other" booths (4 Yadav mis-assigned as "Other" + 3 "Other" misgrouped as Yadav-7). Table 29 sums up the position for the other possible pairs. Overlap is greatest between Yadavs and "Others," least between Bhumihars and Yadavs, Rajputs and Yadavs, Rajputs and "Others". Why should we be better able to distinguish between some groups than others? That is, the discriminant functions seem better suited to differentiate between some types of booths than between others; how is this the case?

Some of these matters are answered by Figure 10, which gives a graphic representation of the ability of our first (and

by far the most powerful : cf. Table 27) two functions to discriminate between the 88 cases. In the figure are shown the individual plot points for each booth according to its score on the first two discriminant functions (cf. n. 15), the "centroids" or center-points for the distribution of each group and the "one standard deviation ellipse" for each group.[16]

TABLE 29

Misclassifications

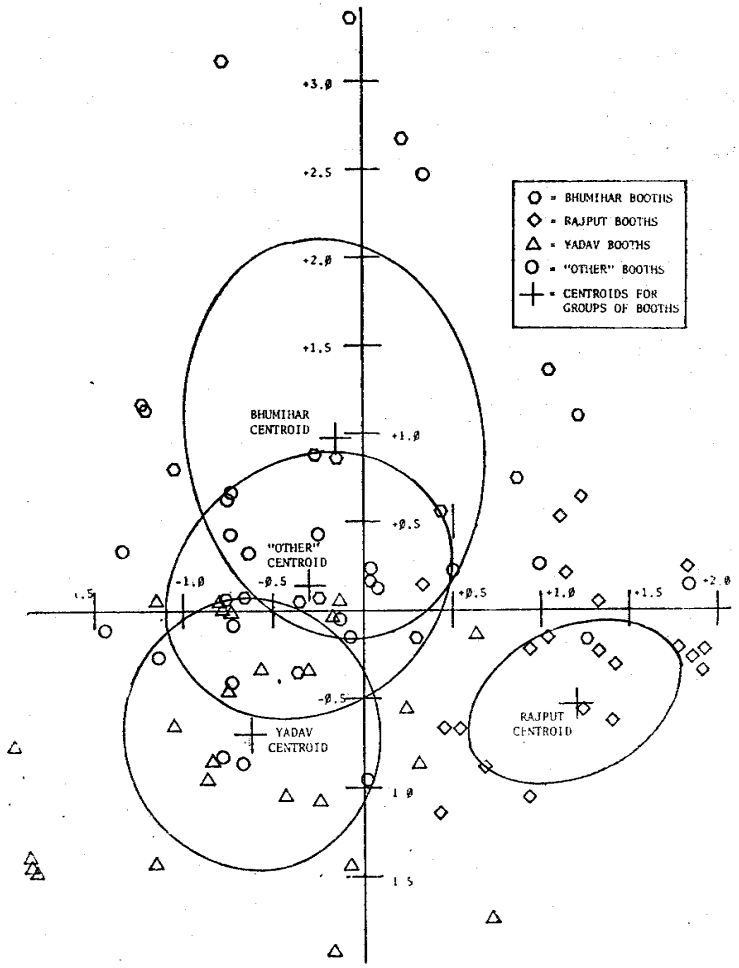
(B—R)	3	+	(R—B)	0	=	3
(B—Y)	2	+	(Y—B)	0	=	2
(B—O)	4	+	(O—B)	2	=	6
(R—Y)	0	+	(Y—R)	2	=	2
(R—O)	1	+	(O—R)	2	=	2
(Y—O)	4	+	(O—Y)	3	=	7

Table should be read as follow : There were 3 Bhumihar booths misclassified as Rajput plus zero Rajput booths misclassified as Bhumihar, for a total of 3 Bhumihar-Rajput misclassifications.

A glance at the figure is sufficient to reveal clearly the ability of the first function (the horizontal axis) to distinguish the Rajput booths from the other three groups, though we see it is less able to distinguish these latter three groups *inter se*. The second function (the vertical axis) is effective at separating Bhumihar from Yadav booths, albeit at the expense of leaving some overlap between all four groups. Taken together (that is, using two dimensions), both discriminant functions distinguish Rajput and Yadav booths, very clearly and do a pretty fair though somewhat overlapping job with the remaining two groups. To return for a moment to Table 29, it might be recalled that the greatest number of misclassifications occurred with the Yadavs and "Other" booths, and in Figure 10 we see how this is the case.

Figure 10

ATRI 1967. Scatterplot and "One Standard Deviation Ellipses" for Discriminant Scores 1 and 2.



Horizontal Axis=Discriminant Score 1
Vertical Axis=Discriminant Score 2
The unit measurement is the standard deviation.

Some of the outlyers in Figure 10 will provide illustrations of how the polling stations were plotted. The Bhumihar booth at the extreme top of the dispersion, for example, is polling station number 91, and the principal reason for its isolation in Figure 10 is that density in that booth is 3.1 standard deviations (s.d.'s) above the overall mean. Since density here has a heavy weight in the second discriminant function (cf. Table 27), the high density for booth 91 gives it an extremely high positive score in Figure 10, reinforced by the booth's value of 3.0 s.d.'s on LIT71, which also has a high coefficient in the second discriminant function. In the first function these two variables have opposite signs (—.487 and +.248 in Table 27). and it is mainly for this reason that booth 91 scores less highly on the first function. The second booth from the top of Figure 10 at about+3.1[17] on the vertical axis is polling station number 93, where density in 1971 was +3.8 s.d,'s, and MLC61 was +3.3 s.d.'s. The two variables pull in the same direction on the second function but in opposite ways and so tend to cancel each other out on the first function.

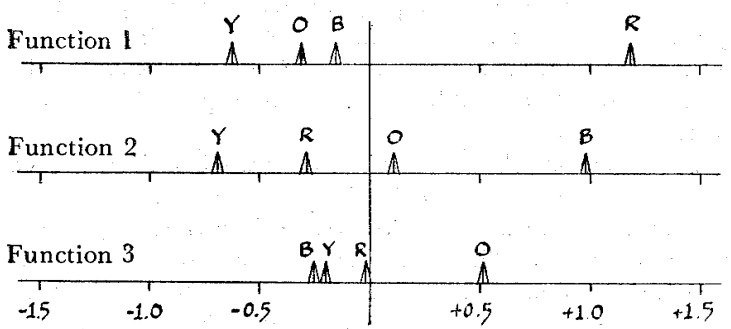
The third discriminant function serves mainly to distinguish between the "Other" booths and those of the three major castes, as we see in Figure 11, which presents a one-dimensional view of each of the functions. Figure 10 gave a picture of the first two functions at right angles (i.e., orthogonal) to each other, and we can imagine the third function orthogonal to the other two, projecting into a third dimension out of Figure 10 and allowing us to distinguish between Bhumihar and "Other" booths.

Comparing Figure 11 with Table 27, we are now in a position to see how the four groups of booths differ from each other. The Rajput booths, separated out by the first function, are characterized by low density, high numbers of literates and Untouchables, and an inegalitarian agricultural structures. Bhumihar booths are sorted out through their high scores on the second discriminant function. They tend to be densely populated, have high literacy, a high agricultural intensity in terms of workers on the land and a modestly high portion of Harijans.[18] The "Other" booths stand out

Figure 11

ATRI 1967

Group Means On Discriminant Functions



OVERALL MEAN

B=BHUMIHAR BOOTHS
R=RAJPUT BOOTHS
Y=YADAV BOOTHS
O="OTHER" AND MIXED BOOTHS

in their positive scores on the third function, due mainly to low Scheduled Caste population and even lower increase, among that population, and the very low intensity of labor in agriculture in 1961.

The Yadav booths are not as easily pinpointed as the other groups, for their "location" is based on two functions rather than one, with the most negative scores of any of the four groups on both functions one and two. On the first function they showed a low but growing Harijan popula tion, low literacy and a relatively egalitarian agricultural structure, while on the second function they exhibit a low literacy, low Harijan population and low labor intensity in agriculture.[19] To put it as a composite picture, we can say that Yabav booths display relative illiteracy and an agrarian structure that is comparatively egalitarian, with a low number of landless laborers, low labor utilization on the soil and few Untouchables available to supply this landless labor.

These low caste booths may be compared with the high caste booths analyzed previously. "Twice born" stations may be either densely (Bhumihar) or sparsely (Rajput) populated, but are alike in enjoying high literacy, and a relatively exploitative agricultural structure in terms of landless laborers in agriculture. Booths dominated by Rajputs tend also to have large Scheduled Caste communities, though Bhumihar booths do not.

V. A Comparative Test

Masaurhi constituency in Patna District offers a good test of our method, for like Atri it is in rural central Bihar (about 40 miles away from Atri) and has three major caste groups, each dominant in a good number of booths, It is somewhat more "advanced" than Atri in that it enjoys a higher literacy and more workers outside agriculture, largely bacause of its proximity to the state capital at Patna (a city of well over half a million people), about 15 miles to the north on a well travelled rail line. These similarities and differences in socio-economic characteristics allow both comparison and contrast between the two areas.

The patterns of caste dominance in Masaurhi for 1967

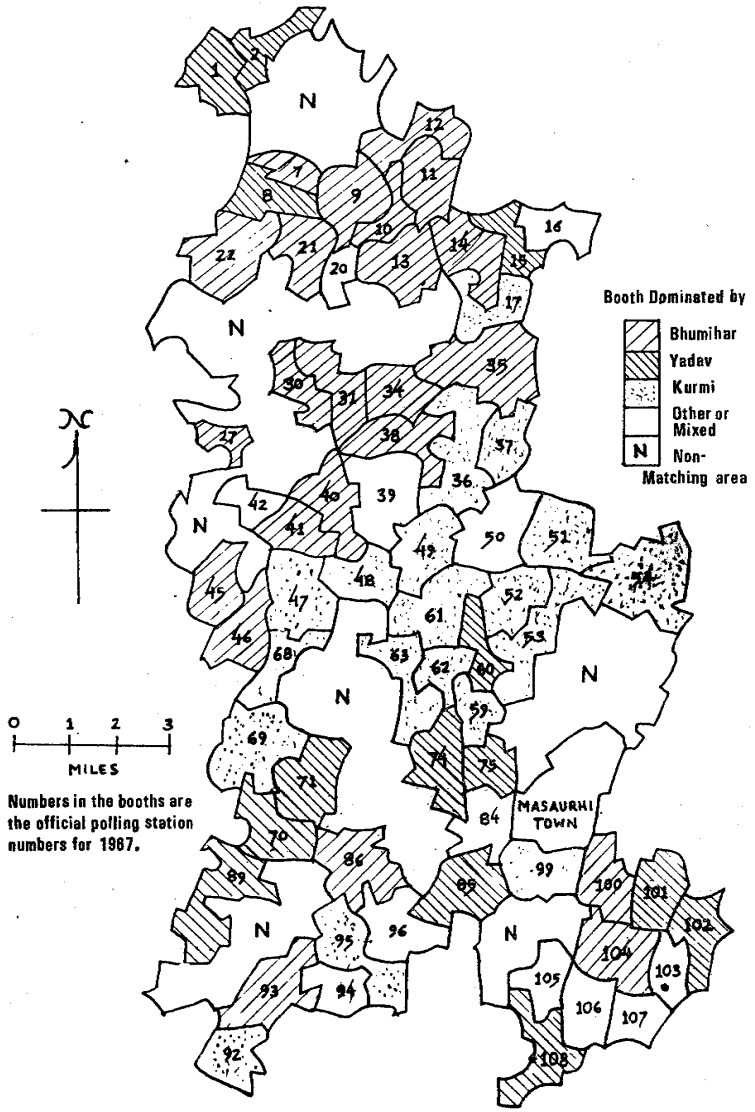


Figure 12

MASAURHI, 1967. Dominant Caste in Polling Station Matching Census Revenue Villages

emerge in Figure 12. As was the case in Atri, each of the three principal caste groups is dominant in a distinct area of the constituency. The Bhumihars hold sway in the northern booths, though with a few scattered in the south where the Yadavs are dominant, in addition to having several booths elsewhere. And in the middle, a new caste has displaced the Rajputs in our considerations; they are the Kurmis, another Shudra agricultural caste, ranking approximately the same as the Yadavs in status. The Kurmis are generally very numerous in this area, and in many parts of Patna District outnumber even the Yadavs.[20]

Altogether, including "Other and mixed" booths, some 66 polling stations coincided with the census units in their boundaries. This figure came to 62 percent of the total 108 polling stations, rather less than the 81 percent obtained in Atri. Still, the 66 we do have are reasonably representative of the total population, as we see in Table 30.

Table 31 presents data on the socio-economic characteristics of Masaurhi, and a glance back at Table 29 will afford a comparison of out two constituencies. Density, as we might expect, was rather higher in Masaurhi with its short distance and rail connections to Patna than in Atri, an area more typical of the *mofussil*.[21] Growth in denstiy was also somewhat higher in Masaurhi. The laborers-to-cultivators ratio was a little higher in Atri in 1961 (MLC61 was .55 as against .51 for Masaurhi), but the increase in landless labor in Masaurhi was over twice that of Atri (GMLC of .32 and .16), with the result that this measure of inegalitarianism put Masaurhi ahead by 1971. Despite the easy access to Patna's urban economy, there were not enough employment opportunities outside agriculture to absorb many people, and those who had to go into agriculture in Masaurhi had to become landless laborers. In Atri, on the other hand, most of those coming into the work force had to enter agriculture, to be sure, but a larger portion of these were able to become cultivators (cf. GMLC and GAGWK for the two areas).

Farming intensity in terms of labor inputs was greater in Atri in 1961 (CLAC61), but in terms of irrigation (IRCR61),

Masaurhi had the advantage. Unfortunately, too many observations were missing from the 1971 data for Masaurhi to permit any comparison for 1971.[22]

TABLE 30

Masaurhi Constituency, Dominant Caste for Sample Polling Booths and Total Population, 1967

Dominant Caste	*1967 Sample*	*1967 Population*
Bhumihar	23	37
Yadav	14	21
Kurmi	20	27
Other or mixed	9	23
Total	66	108

Harijan concentration was about 10 percent greater in Atri than in Masaurhi, but this difference is part of the overall distribution of Scheduled Castes in Bihar (cf. Chapter 3), in that the general area around Atri has been traditionally more heavily settled with Untouchables than the region around Masaurhi. Literacy, as expected, was considerably higher in the more "advanced" area, though the rate of increase was about 3 percent in less-developed Atri, as against only one percent over the entire decade in Masaurhi. Lastly, our household size measure was slightly greater in Masaurhi. It might make sense that Masaurhi should have greater household wealth, but it is dubious whether such a small difference in our proxy measure for wealth could permit such an observation with any degree of certainty.

Differences between the four groups of booths are shown in Table 31, as well as the results of an analysis of variance for each variable across the four groups. In general these

Table 31

Masaurhi 1967 : Group Means and Analysis of Variance

	Dominant Caste				*Mean for*	*ANOVA*	
	Bhumihar	*Yadav*	*Kurmi*	*Other & Mixed*	*All 4 Groups*	*F*	*Probability*
Density							
DEN 61	4.53	4.00	3.98	5.59	4.40	2.14	.1044
*DEN 71	5.32	4.82	4.74	6.77	5.24	2.49	.0681
*GDEN	.79	.82	.76	1.17	.84	1.99	.1247
Laborers-to-Cultivators							
MLC 61	.48	.38	.63	.54	.51	2.67	.0555
*MLC 71	.71	.65	1.00	1.07	.83	3.50	.0207
GMLC	.23	.27	.37	.53	.32	1.91	.1371
Agr. Workers per Acre							
*CLAC 61	.40	.30	.32	.31	.35	.75	.5218
Agr. Percent of Work Force							
AGWK 61	.83	.83	.86	.76	.83	1.80	.1549
*AGWK 71	.88	.90	.89	.79	.88	2.96	.0391
*GAGWK	.06	.07	.03	.04	.05	.88	.4569
Irrigated Acreage							
*IRCR 61	.62	.85	.83	.74	.75	7.01	.0004
Untouchability							
SC 61	.19	.18	.26	.20	.21	4.51	.0063
*SC 71	.19	.17	.27	.24	.22	5.44	.0022
*GSC	.00	—.01	.00	.04	.01	1.71	.1739
General Literacy							
LIT 61	.27	.23	.24	.26	.25	1.97	.1272
*LIT 71	.29	.22	.26	.28	.27	4.36	.0075
GLIT	.02	—.01	.02	.02	.01	.49	.6902
Persons Per Household							
*PERH 61	6.49	6.53	6.22	5.96	6.34	5.95	.0014
PERH 71	6.48	6.27	6.36	6.82	6.45	.44	.7266
*GPERHH	.00	—.27	.14	.86	1.10	1.74	.1677
n	23	14	20	9	66		

*Variable included in discriminant analysis

differences are not as significant as were those for Atri, but there are some important ones, nevertheless. The ratio of male laborers to cultivators is much higher for the Kurmi booths than for either Bhumihar or Yadav areas in both years, as well as in terms of growth over the decade. Interestingly, the low caste Kurmis here resemble the high castes of Atri, while the twice-born Bhumihars appear to be more like the Yadavs.[23] Irrigation is substantially higher for the two low caste areas than for the Bhumihar booths, even though the main concentration of Bhumihar stations lies astride the Patna Canal, a branch of the old (but still effective) Son River canal system.

Harijans are more numerous in the Kurmi booths in both years, in contrast to the pattern observed in Atri of Untouchable numbers in high caste areas. To the extent, then, that high proportions of landless laborers and Harijans go together as part of a pattern of agricultural exploitation, the low caste Kurmi booths are less egalitarian then the high caste Bhumihar polling stations.

Literacy is somewhat greater in the Bhumihar booths than in the others, least developed in the Yadav booths. Lastly, household size is higher in the Bhumihar and Yadav regions than in the other two groups of booths. Taking Table 31 in an overall sense, there are some ways in which Bhumihar and Yadav booths are more alike (DEN61 and DEN71, MLC71, SC61 and SC71, and PERH61), some dimensions along which the Yadav and Kurmi booths are more similar (CLAC61, IRCR61, LIT61 and LIT71). Whether we can find overall measures of differences between our groups of booths is for our discriminant analysis to determine.

Again, as with Atri, a correlation matrix was run for the whole set of variables, and those within each cluster that were correlated by more than .500 were eliminated. The remainder are the variables indicated with asterisks in Table 31, and it is these that were employed in the stepwise discriminant analysis. The optimal combination of fewest explanatory variables and most cases correctly classified turned out to be a five-variable discriminant analysis, again with the Mahalanobis method.[24] Results are shown in Table 32.

Before interpreting Table 32, let us pass on to Table 33, where we see that the discriminant analysis has allowed us to classify correctly 44 or fully two-thirds of the total 66 booths. Our success with the Bhumihar booths (17 of 23 correctly placed) was the highest, with Yadavs (10 of 14) next, the Kurmis (13 of 20) third, and last the residual "Other" category (only 4 of 9, but at 44 percent still better than the 9/66 or 14 percent that we would have gotten by chance alone).

Table 32

Standardized Discriminant Function Coefficients

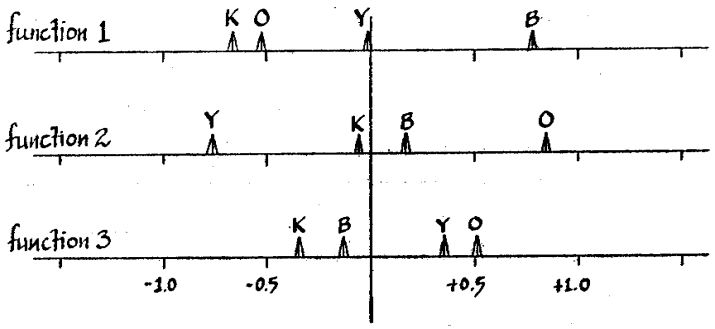
Variable	*Function 1*	*Function 2*	*Function 3*
MLC71 (Ratio of male landless laborers to cultivators, 1971)	—.444	—.348	.094
AGWK71 (Proportion of male workers in agriculture, 1971)	—.060	—.608	—.354
IRCR61 (Proportion of cropped acreage irrigated, 1961)	—.801	—.576	.282
SC71 (Harijan proportion of population, 1971)	—.113	.438	—.969
PERH61 (Persons per household,1951)	.380	—.425	—.434
Relative importance of function	60.2%	28.8%	11.1%

Figure 13, which is analogous to Figure 11, gives a picture of the relative efficacy of each function in separating out the different groups. The first function (which we see in Table 32 accounts for 60 percent of the overall efficacy of the discriminant analysis) distinguishes the high caste Bhumihar booths from the low caste and "Other" areas. Returning to Table 32, we may note that these Bhumihar booths are characterized by low irrigated acreage, few landless laborers relative to cultivators and comparatively large household size. Con-

Figure 13

MASAURHI 1967

Group Means For Discriminant Functions



OVERALL MEAN

B=BHUMIHAR BOOTHS
Y=YADAV BOOTHS
K=KURMI BOOTHS
O="OTHER" AND MIXED BOOTHS

versely, the other three groups generally exhibit a higher irrigated acreage, higher proportions of landless laborers and smaller household size, though it is interesting that the Yadav booths resemble the Bhumihar booths more closely on the latter two attributes than they do the other two categories (cf. Table 31).

Table 33

Classification of Booths by Dominant Caste Through Discriminant Analysis : Masaurhi, 1967

		PREDICTED GROUP				
		Bhumihar	*Yadav*	*Kurmi*	*Other*	*Total*
ACTUAL GROUP	Bhumihar	17	3	1	2	23
	Yadav	2	10	2	0	14
	Kurmi	4	3	13	0	20
	Other	1	2	2	4	9
	TOTAL	24	18	18	6	66

The second function distinguishes Yadav booths on the negative end and the "Other" booths on the extreme positive end. Comparing Table 32 and 31, we find AGWK71 and IRCR61 to be the strongest factors, though the remaining three variables all play some role. Essentially, it is the high agricultural component of the work force combined with high irrigated acreage, high portion of cultivators combined with few Harijans, and relatively large family size (higher wealth?) of the Yadav booths that gives them their strong negative score on the second function, and the opposite of these characteristics that place the "Other" stations at the positive end of the continuum for the second discriminant function.

The third function focuses mainly on the Harijan population, with some help from PERH61 and AGWK71.

Putting together an overall picture. we may say that Bhumihar booths have a relatively unadvanced agriculture (extrapolating from our low irrigation datum) few landless agricultural workers and possibly a fairly high living standard (high PERH61). Yadav booths have few workers outside the agricultural sector, a relatively egalitarian social structure (low MLC, low SC71) and a family size even larger than the Bhumihar average. Kurmi booths are less easily distinguished by any of the three functions, but in general with their high irrigated acreage, large numbers of landless laborers and Untouchables, the Kurmi booths are more like the high caste areas of Atri than its low caste villages.

VI. Conclusion

In Atri the groups of polling stations divided up quite well with the discriminant analysis. To recall very briefly our findings, we determined that low caste, Yadav-dominated booths are characterized by low but increasing literacy, few Harijans, and a relatively egalitarian agricultural structure, in the sense that the ratio of landless laborers to cultivators is low. In addition, growth in the agricultural work force is comparatively modest, meaning that there is less pressure on this ratio.

The "twice born" booths, in contrast, show high literacy and a considerably higher proportion of landless laborers as against cultivators. In addition, Rajput-dominated booths have large Scheduled Caste communities and an accompanying increase of workers per acre in farming, though Bhumihar polling stations do not.

These findings fit in very well with an *a priori* conception of what would distinguish a "low caste village" from a "high caste village." It would be reasonable to assume that a village under the sway of a high caste would have an unequal distribution of land with the dominant caste owning the major share. Consequently there would be a large number of landless laborers (quite possibly Untouchables) working this land. The dominant caste would have a considerable interest in schooling for its young, would be more likely than other

groups to have the necessary political connections to acquire and maintain a school, and therefore would be likely to have a relatively number of literates. We have, unfortunately, no data on landholding in the Atri area,[25] but we have found some evidence that these other tendencies obtain.

Our lower caste Yadav booths, on the other hand, show the opposite characteristics. The greater number of cultivators relative to landless laborers presumably indicate a more egalitarian distribution of land. Further, there is a low level of literacy and rather few Harijans, also indicating a more nearly equal social picture.[26]

In Masaurhi the pattern is rather different. The high caste Bhumihar area displays a relatively high proportion of cultivators and low irrigation, rather more like the low caste area of Atri than its high caste booths. The low caste Yadav stations have a high number of cultivators and a high portion of the work force in agriculture, as we would expect, but also a high level of irrigation. The Kurmi booths are similar to the high caste areas of Atri, with their high irrigated acreage and large number of Harijan and landless laborers. The pattern in Masaurhi, then, does not fit into a convenient high/low caste distinction, nor is the pattern as effective in distinguishing between booths as that discovered in Atri (Table 28 vs. Table 33), but it does have a good deal of discriminatory power.[27]

It is doubtful that any pattern that is as pervasive as those we have uncovered here could have appeared over a short period. Rather, these differences must have existed for a considerable length of time. For Atri, it would be possible to construct an explanation of how high castes with small numbers and a control over land through an exploitative socio-economic structure could have developed one kind of village and how a more numerous lower caste with a comparatively egalitarian societal structure could have developed a different kind of village.[28] But this explanation for rural Atri would clearly not suffice to account for the rather different patterns found in the more "advanced" Masaurhi region.[29]

Perhaps the inclusion of further constituencies would permit us to control for level of moderniation and allow a more general pattern to emerge. In the meantime we have shown that there are clear differences in what might be called "dominance style" between areas under the sway of differenct castes and that these differences are great enough to employ a grouping procedure that yields a socio-ecnomic pattern remarkably like the pattern of caste dominance.

NOTES

1. It might seem better to use the revenue villages as the units of analysis, for there are far more of them. Polling stations are generally made up of one or more "revenue villages" (though in some cases a large revenue village will be split among two or more booths), so that in 1967 some 209 revenue villages were divided into 99 booths. Politicians, however, tend to think in terms of the unit relevant to their purposes, and that is the polling station, not the revenue village, which is itself an artificial unit, more often than not being made up of several separate socio-economic settlements on the ground. To use the revenue village, then, would still leave us at one remove from the actual individual village in most cases. In origin, the revenue village is simply the unit laid out at the last cadastral survey and settlement, which in this case took place in 1911-1918 (Chaudhury, 1957 : 290-291).

2. On the early claim, see Buchanan (1930?: 325). On more recent claims, see Hauser (1967) and Heidenreich (1967).

3. In 1972 Gaya District was divided into several districts.

4. For an estimate of relative caste strength in Bihar today, see Chapter 1.

5. Our assumptions about growth rates of different groups in the same area over 60 years and more may seem unduly heroic, but from the data that are available on growth of other groups (e. g., individual Untouchable castes, who continue to be counted by the census) over this same period, such assumptions are probably reasonable, at least for the rural area with which we are dealing here. See Blair (1969 : 42) for more detail on this issue.

6. This is the pattern found by Schwartzberg in his survey of north Indian villages (1968 :106-107).

7. Certainly, there are cases where numbers are the most important element in caste dominance. See for instance Carter (1974 : ch. 4). Bhatt (1975 : 91-94) found in a survey of 1257 respondents in 100 rural villages (none, unfortunately, in Bihar) that in 62 of the villages, over 70 percent of the respondents agreed on the existence of a dominant caste, with 32 percent attributing the dominance to economic power and 38 percent attributing it to a numerical majority on the part of the leading group.

8. Schwartzberg (1968 : 107) found a distinction between the Yadavs dominant at village level and the Rajputs dominant at regional level in the area just to the immediate west of Atri.

9. For a more extended descussion of this issue see Chapter 3.

10. In Atri Block as a whole (about 3/4 of the constituency), non-agricultural male workers in 1971 were 8.7 percent of the total work force. Of these, 4.6 percent were in livestock, household manufacturing or trade, 3.1 percent were in a residual "other" category, and only one percent were spread across mining, non-household manufacturing, construction and transportation (Government of India, 1973 : 120-121).

11. A "tubewell" is lined with a metal pipe, or tube, and a "tank" is generally an artificial pond. Actually, the 1971 census made an attempt to distinguish between several types of irrigation, but not all. In the data used here, all types are aggregated together.

12. The "correlation ratio" E^2 for SC61 is .351, meaning that dominant caste alone accounts for over 35 percent of the variance in proportion of Untouchables. For SC71, the E^2 statistic is .306.

13. There are available a number of well-written explanations of discriminant analysis, e. g., Sanathanan (1975), Morrison (1969), Klecka (1975).

14. For a short history of discriminant analysis, as well as a review of its use in (essentially physical) anthropology, see Schultz (1973).

15. The score for each booth is calculated by summing the products of each booth's value on each variable and the appropriate discriminant function coefficient (from Table 27). This score is expressed in terms of standard deviations from the overall mean.

16. This ellipse is calculated to be one standard deviation in width (i. e., dispersion of cases on score 1 around the group centroid) and one standard deviation in height (for score 2). On the average, the "one standard devition" ellipse includes about 40 percent of the group cases. For a nexhaustive explanation, see P. J. Rulon *et. al.* (1967 : 367-395).

17. The horizontal and vertical axes of Figure 10 are measured in terms of standard deviations also, but these s. d.'s are for the overall score on the relevant discriminant function, whereas the s. d.'s for individual variables for particular booths are in terms of a standardized value of that variable.

18. We may also note from Table 26 that the Bhumihar booths had an agricultural structure equally as inegalitarian as that of the Rajput booths (MLC 61), though this fact does not emerge in the discriminant analysis presented in Table 27. Here other variables were more important in delineating the second function.

19. In the first discriminant function a negative score would infer high density (cf. Table 27), while in the second function a negative score would imply high density. The fact that the Yadav booths score the most negatively on both functions is not related to density, however, but to the other component of the two functions. Actually, density in the Yadav booths is midway between that of the Bhumihar and Rajput booths (cf. Table 26).

20. In Masaurhi Buzurg Revenue Thana (which overlaps by about two-thirds with the constituency), Kurmis amounted to 15.2 percent of population in 1911, Yadavs were 16.6 percent and Bhumihars 5.8 percent. See Government of Bihar and Orissa (1915b). These three castes enjoy a regional dominance that extends beyond the constituency itself, according to local politicans interviewed in 1967. For more recent confirmation, of this local picture, see Das (1975) and Sinha (1975a and 1977). As the titles of these pieces indicate, there is a good deal of rural unrest in the region. In Atri Revenue Thana, it might be noted, Kurmis were only 1.2 percent in 1911.

21. Masaurhi has a town of some importance, also called Masaurhi (population 16,000 in 1971). The town is shown in Figure 12, but it is not included in Table 32, because its polling stations did not match up with its census boundaries. Certainly, the proximity to Patna has had some significant impact on the Masaurhi area, perhaps similar to what Rao (1970) observed in his study of a Yadav village on the outskirts of New Delhi.

22. Irrigation as well as agricultural workers per acre are available only for 1961, because the 1971 census left out acreage for a substantial number of villages—too many for it to be possible to fill in the missing data by regression, as was done in a few cases for 1961 for both Atri and Masaurhi.

23. The relations between cultivators and laborers in this area have been considerably less than harmonious in recent years (Sinha, 1975a). The subject of Sinha's essay is booth 52 on the map in figure 12.

24. The solution providing the highest number of correctly classified cases involved 12 steps and properly categorized 48 or only 4 more cases than the 5-variable alternative.

25. There is one study available (Government of India, 1951) for a village in the late 1940's located only three miles or so from Masaurhi constituency, showing Bhumihar dominance with considerable landless labor, though Bhumihar ownership of land was shared with Brahmans and Yadavs. By themselves, Bhumihars constituted 17 percent of the families and owned 40 percent of the land.

26. It is being assumed here that literacy is not equally distributed across caste groups. Higher literacy is taken to mean more landowners' sons going to school, whereas lower literacy is interpreted as indicating that there are fewer landowners with enough land to afford the "opportunity cost" of sending their children to school. For more on the costs of school attendance in rural. India, see Shortledge (1976).

27. Literacy, though it did not get included in our 5-variable version of the discriminant analysis (Table 32) is also interesting in this connection. It is relatively high in the Bhumihar areas and low in the Yadav areas, as expected, but here also the Kurmi booths are more like what we would expect of "high caste" villages.

28. The high caste pattern has been around for a long time in the Atri area, at least since the 1890s. See Grierson (1893). More recent fragmentary evidence from the same area indicates that conditions have not greatly chaged in the intervening years. See Sinha (1975b) and Dhar (1975 and 1976).

29. It could be, of course, that the Kurmis of Masaurhi exercise their dominance in much the same way as do the Rajputs of Atri—through landownership and small numbers, not with large numbers and a small-holder pattern on the land. But then the Kurmis would typify what would be thought of as a high caste pattern of dominance, rather than a low caste pattern.