Sripuram: A Village in Tanjore District

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Tanjore district offers a rich field of study to the sociologist.

Historically, it has maintained a continuity of tradition which is in many ways unique. The numerous temples constructed during Chola times and later constitute important centres of worship in the villages even today. The elaborate irrigation network built from the time of Karikala Chola downwards still constitutes the bulwark of its agrarian economy. In many ways the district continues to be the centre of Brahminical culture in the Tamil-speaking part of the country.

No less interesting are the recent changes that have been taking place in Tanjore. The district continues to be the granary of Tamilnad, although the relations of agricultural production are now undergoing a transformation. A number of tenancy laws have been enacted which seek to alter the landlord-tenant relationship, usually to the advantage of the latter. Such legislation has a somewhat unique application in Tanjore district because of the distinctive position of the Tanjore mirasdar who, in several cases, happens to be a Brahmin. The Brahmin land-owner is more likely than others to be an absentee landlord. And, in any case, his relationship with agriculture is usually less direct than that of landlords belonging to other castes.

Because of the greater concentration and social importance of the Brahmins in Tanjore district one can study there more closely than elsewhere the impact of the Non-Brahmin Movement which has been an important feature of South Indian politics over the last few decades. An analysis of the changing position of the Brahmins in fanfare’s rural society does in fact throw into focus some of the important changes in its political, economic and religious systems.

These changes are making themselves felt at different levels. Political changes at the State level cast their reflections on the village. Economic problems at the village level are taken up by the State which seeks to provide answers through legislative devices. Economic and political changes have drawn, in significant numbers Brahmins from the villages of Tanjore district to many parts of North India in search of opportunities for education and employment.

To study a village in Tanjore district is, therefore, to study all these things.

THERE are some who have been struck by the fact that the Indian village constitutes a kind of structural entity, and have devoted their attention to discussing the internal arrangements of this entity. This is indeed an important point of departure, and in what follows we shall have a good deal to say about the internal structure of the village under discussion. But, in addition to this, we shall have to take into account some of the major social forces which operate over a wider area, and the manner in which they exert their influence on a particular village community. The world of the village constitutes a sort of microcosm, and part of the interest: of our study will be to see in what ways this microcosm is a reflection of the macrocosm which is the outside world.

II

Sripuram is an ancient village, situated about eight miles from Tanjore, to its north. A metalled road runs along the southern side of the village which is situated about midway between Kumbakonam on the one hand and the Grand Ani-
we shall, for the present purpose, regard them as constituting a part of it.

In the three southern districts of Tinneveli, Kaminad and Madura, villages are regarded as belonging to either of two categories, agrahara vadai and pandara vadai. In the former the entire land, or the hulk of it, is, or was until recently, held by a community of Brahmins constituting what is usually known as the agraharam. In the latter category of villages, the landowners are mainly Non-Brahmins. This distinction is equally an important feature of Tanjore villages although the terms agrahara vadai and pandara vadai are not in normal use there. In this sense Sripuram constitutes an agraharam, or a Brahmin village, although this does not mean that the village is exclusively inhabited by Brahmins.

It should be made clear at the outset that in spite of the comparatively large concentration of Brahmins in Tanjore not every village in the district has an agraharam. In fact, in the majority of villages one finds only a few families of the Brahmins who act as temple priests or cater to some of the religious needs of the Non-Brahmin residents. To this extent Sripuram is not a typical village in the statistical sense of the term. It is, nevertheless, of great importance as a type of village in which the inter-play of some of the basic social forces in the region can be observed and analysed.

III

Physically, Sripuram constitutes a more or less compact unit. The houses are clustered together within a small area, giving the village a distinct physical entity. The total population of the village is 1,400, being distributed in 349 households. The breakdown of households and population by caste-group has been shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASTE—HOUSEHOLDS</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non — Brahmin</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adi — Dravida</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Three-fold Divisions

It will be useful to begin with a consideration of the physical structure of the village which has in some ways an important bearing on its social structure. Physically the village divides itself into three well-defined segments, the agraharam, the kudiana streets and the cheri. Of these, the first and the last are most distinctive. The agraharam runs in an almost perfect straight line from east to west, parallel to the metalled road, on its near side. It is separated from the metalled road by the backyards of the Brahmin houses and by a large coconut grove. The cheri is on the far side of the metalled road, also parallel to it. The houses of the Adi-Dravida, or Untouchables, are symmetrically arranged on either side, just as the Brahmin houses are arranged on either side of the Brahmin street. In between the agraharam and the cheri are the Non-Brahmin houses, arranged in a number of streets which lack the symmetry of either the agraharam or the cheri. Some Non-Brahmin houses are also to be found along the metalled road and in front of the Shiva temple which stands at the western extremity of the village.

These territorial divisions are of great importance because social values are attached to them. The agraharam is where all the Brahmin houses are located. It is the centre of their social life. A Non-Brahmin does not ordinarily enter the agraharam except on some particular business. Although it is situated between the metalled road and the Non-Brahmin streets one can enter these streets from the metalled road without passing through the agraharam. The social exclusiveness of the agraharam is related to its being physically sealed from the rest of the village. I am told that this exclusiveness was much more pronounced 25 years ago.

Brahmins Keep Away

The cheri is similarly sealed from the rest of the village. The Brahmins do not normally enter, or pass through, the cheri which they consider to be filthy. Also, a Brahmin, if he has passed through the cheri, is required to take a bath prior to undertaking any ritual activity. The cheri, as we have mentioned earlier, consists of a single street with huts arranged on either side. The residents of this street are all Pallans who constitute the largest group among the Adi Dravidas in Tanjore district. At a slight distance from the Pallan street is a cluster of huts inhabited by five households of Paraiyans. These Paraiyans also belong to the category of the Adi Dravidas or Untouchables, but unlike the Pallans, in this village they are all Christians. The physical separation between the Pallan and Paraiyan huts is clear. Their social separation is expressed through endogamy, the use of separate wells, and a number of other practices.

To me the identity of the Non-Brahmin streets was most clearly brought out the day on which Sripuram was visited by C N Annadurai, the D MK leader. Preparations had been made in advance, and the Non-Brahmin streets were decorated with paper streamers coloured red and black. An amplifier had been fitted in one of the Non-Brahmin houses, and film music blared through the afternoon. All around there was bustle and activity. By contrast the agraharam seemed quiet and deserted.

The physical unity of the village, and its internal division into agraharam, kudiana streets and cheri constitute the most fundamental features of its social structure. The differentiation between the Brahmins, the Non-Brahmins and the Adi Dravidas is evident not only in a ritual context but also in the economic and political spheres. And, in this regard Sripuram mirrors the basic cleavages that are present in Tamilnad today. Throughout our discussion we shall regard these cleavages as providing the framework within which relations between individuals and groups develop and are maintained.

IV

Although the Brahmins, the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas have each an identity of their own, this does not mean that they constitute homogeneous units. The Brahmins can be regarded, as a unity only in relation to the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas. Internally there are many sub-divisions among the Brahmins, just as there are among the Non-Brahmins. The Adi-Dravidas appear to be the most homogeneous, being characterised by a
simple division into two groups as described above.

People who are united in one context may be sharply divided in another. The Brahmins of Sripuram who expressed their unity by refusing as a group to take notice of the D M K meeting are, nonetheless, divided among themselves. In fact the Brahmins themselves are very conscious of their divisions, and point to these as the principal cause of their present decline. They often look back upon the past, to their days of power and glory, when the Brahmins of Sripuram stood united. It is difficult to ascertain whether divisions among the Brahmins have been sharpened in recent times. My own impression is that the opposite is the case. At any rate, there is evidence to show that as far back as in the 1880's they quarrelled bitterly among themselves over ritual and other matters.

As indicated earlier, the divisions among the Adi-Dravidas are less conspicuous than among the Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins. In the case of the two latter they are based partly upon differences in wealth, occupation and education. More apparent than these, however, and, perhaps more fundamental, are the divisions based upon caste.

The categories Brahmin and Non-Brahmin comprise aggregates of different castes. The term caste we use to refer to what 19 locally spoken of as jait or Kalam which is a small endogamous group, bound by ties of kinship, having in many cases a traditional occupation, and pursuing a more or less specific style of living. The Brahmins of Sripuram belong to a number of different castes and, in fact, represent a fair cross-section of the Brahmin castes present throughout Tamilnad. Caste-wise divisions among the Brahmins are not, however, represented in the distribution of their houses which appear to succeed each other without any plan or order. Fifty to sixty years ago, I am told, the settlement pattern of the agraharam was more consistent with the cleavages between castes.

Three Language Groups

The Brahmins of Sripuram represent three language groups, Kanna-da, Telugu and Tamil. The Kannada and Telugu Brahmins use somewhat corrupt forms of their respective languages when speaking at home, and Tamil for all other purposes. I emphasise the cultural diversity of the Brahmins because it highlights an important aspect of their position in the social structure. The Brahmins as a group have been far more mobile than other groups, and a Brahmin caste has generally a much wider territorial extension than a Non-Brahmin caste. In the traditional system the Brahmins often moved from one region to another to settle on land granted to them by a particular king or prince. Connections were often maintained across very wide distances. Thus, some of the Tamil Brahmins of Sripuram have kinsmen in Mysore who settled there many generations ago on land given to them by the Mysore king. Some Telugu Brahmins who were granted land in Sripuram have relatives in Andhra Pradesh whom they visit to this day.

There is only one household of Kannada-speaking Madhyav Brahmins in Sripuram. This household settled in Sripuram only about fifteen years ago, although the ancestors of the present head of the household had lived in Tanjore, district for a number of generations. There are 14 households of Telugu Brahmins belonging to several castes. We shall not go into these differences here but note only one important distinction. Many of the Telugu Brahmin households have settled in Sripuram only within the last generation. Different from these are the families which have roots in the village and trace their ancestry in the male line to one of the original coparcenaries of the village. These families, which constitute the Kakkarai (one-fourth share) Shastris group, have a somewhat different position in relation to land ownership, control and management of the Vishnu temple as well as many other matters.

Jobs Draw Immigrants

Among the indigenous Tamil Brahmins also there are many households which have moved into Sripuram only recently. This gives a somewhat amorphous character to the agraharam which is rather different from other agraharams where a substantial majority of the Brahmins can be placed on a single genealogical chart. Many of the older Brahmin families have moved out of the village in course of the last fifty years. This is very much in keeping with the pattern of villages in Tamilnad as a whole. What seems, however, to be rather unusual is that many new families have moved into the agraharam during the last few decades. This is partly to be explained by local conditions, primarily, the availability of teaching and clerical jobs in Thiruvaiyaru. It may be mentioned that more than a dozen families in the agraharam live in rented houses. Indeed the rise in house rents is a minor problem for some of the Brahmin residents of the village.

The Tamil Brahmins of Sripuram themselves belong to different castes. There are two families of temple priests, one for the Shiva temple and the other for the Vishnu temple. These families do not inter-marry with each other or with the other Brahmin families of the village. The rest of the Tamil Brahmins belong to the two main divisions of Smarthas (or Iyers) and Shri Vaishnavas (or Iyengars). The Smarthas are doctrinally affiliated to the eighth century monistic philosopher, Shankaracharya, and worship both Shiva and Vishnu. The Shri Vaishnavas are doctrinally the followers of Ramanuja, the twelfth century protagonist of “qualified” monism and traditionally they owe allegiance to Vishnu alone.

Vaishnavas Outnumber Smarthas

In Sripuram to-day the Shri Vaishnavas greatly outnumber the Smarthas. This is somewhat unusual because Thiruvaiyaru and the surrounding areas are noted for the practice of Shavism and the concentration of Smartha Brahmins. Also, Sripuram itself has an ancient and famous Shiva temple whereas the Vishnu temple is of recent origin and comparatively inconspicuous. The concentration of Shri Vaishnavas in Sripuram can to some extent be explained by historical factors which, however, cannot be discussed here.

The Smartha Brahmins of Sripuram belong mainly to the Brihadheeswarar group which is one of the four primary sections among the Smarthas. There are three households of Vadamas and one of Ashta-sahasram. There are minor differences of custom between these

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groups and they are endogamous. The Brihacharnams again include some belonging to the Mazhanattu sub-section and others to the Kandramanickya sub-section. These sub-sections are themselves mutually endogamous, although in recent years there has been some inter-marrriages between them. Only a few of the Brihacharanam families in Sripuram to-day trace their descent from one of the original coparcenaries of the village. The trusteeship of the Shiva temple was hereditarily vested until recently in one of these families.

The Shri Vaishnavas or Iyengars, who constitute the bulk of the Brahmins of Sripuram belong mainly to the Vadagalai section. To-day there are only three Tengalai households, although in the nineteenth century the Tengalai group was of considerable importance. There are a number of differences between these two sections, and the men can be easily identified from the distinctive ways in which they wear their caste marks. There have been some inter-marriages between Tengalai and Vadagalai, although they usually tend to be endogamous. There are subsections among the Vadagalai based upon affiliation to particular acharayas or preceptors, but these we shall not discuss here. Two Vadagalai Iyengar families, namely, the Peri an and the Dikshitar families have been of importance in the history of Sripuram. Some of their descendants continue to reside in the village, although many have moved out and been replaced by new families from outside.

Non-Brahmins More Divided

The divisions among the Brahmins have been discussed in some detail because they reflect the complexity of the caste structure even within the agraharam. The number and variety of castes are even greater among the Non-Brahmins. The distinction between caste and sub-caste not being quite clear in one or two cases, it is not possible to give here the exact number of the Non-Brahmin castes. Suffice it to say that there are about twenty castes some of which have sub-divisions which are themselves endogamous. These include artisan castes such as Potters and Goldsmiths; servicing castes such as Barbers and Musicians; Konans who are cowherds by tradition; and a number of cultivating castes such as Vellalans, Padayachis and Gaundans.

Some of these castes, such as the Potters, continue to practise their traditional occupation; others, such as the Goldsmiths and the cowherds, do not.

Among the Non-Brahmin castes particular mention should be made of the Vellalans and the Kilians. The Vellalans are numerically the largest Non-Brahmin caste, and they have deep roots in the village. In fact, it is generally believed that they have been by tradition the kudis, or cultivators, tilling the land for the Brahmin mirasdars. Although almost all the Vellalans in the village belong to the sub-caste of Chozhia Vellalans, there are a number of differences in their social and economic positions. The Kilians are, on the other hand, a smaller and economically more homogeneous group. They are comparative newcomers to the village, having been there for only three generations. They are a prosperous and well-knit group, being bound by ties of kinship, and they are also a considerable force in the politics of the village.

Clear Banking of Castes Not Possible

A comparison between Vellalans and Kilians leads us to an important question, namely, the problem of their mutual rank. The problem of assigning specific ranks to different castes has been of central importance in anthropological studies of caste until recent times. The outcome of such studies has been to show that no clear or unambiguous rank-order of castes is possible except in a very broad and general way. First of all, one has to consider the question of ritual rank. Even this is not easy to determine, particularly in the case of adjacent castes. Then there are elements of economic, political and numerical dominance, often cutting across ritual criteria, which greatly influence the attitudes of castes with regard to each other. This can be well illustrated by making a comparison between the Kilians and the Vellalans. In terms of the general (ritual) rank order prevalent in the area, and in the view of the Brahmins of Sripuram the Vellalans are higher than the Kilians. It is doubtful, however, to what extent this has a bearing on day-to-day behaviour, particularly in view of the present economic and political ascendency of the Kilians.

The same problem of rank-order may be raised with regard to the mutual positions of the different Brahmin castes. It may be said without much fear of contradiction that the caste of Shaivite temple priests, for instance, is lower in rank than any of the Smartha sub-castes. But what about the rank of the Smarthas in general in relation to the Iyengars? It is doubtful whether a definitive answer can be provided even after a detailed consideration of political, economic and other "interactional" features.

Our purpose in drawing attention to the problem of rank order is to give some indication of its many ambiguities when we consider castes and sub-castes instead of caste-groups. We turn now to a consideration of the three caste-groups, namely, the Brahmins, the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas, because the problem of rank-order can in their case be meaningfully discussed within a short space. The differences which are so ambiguous when we compare Smarthas with Iyengars, or two sub-castes among the Vellalans, stand out sharply when we compare the Brahmins with the Non-Brahmins or Non-Brahmins with Adi-Dravidas.

Friendship Follow Caste Divisions

It will be admitted by all, or almost all, that the Brahmins are ritually superior to the Non-Brahmins, and that the Non-Brahmins are likewise superior to the Adi-Dravidas. There are other differences which are very important, if not equally clear. For instance, the Brahmins as a group own considerably more land than the Non-Brahmins who in turn own much more land than the Adi-Dravidas. Again, many of the Brahmins are mirasdars, and not one of them engages in actual cultivation or other menial work. Almost all the Adi-Dravidas engaged either in actual cultivation or in other menial work and no Adi-Dravida from Sripuram owns any land in the village. The Non-Brahmins stand somewhere midway since they both own land and engage in actual cultivation as well as in other menial work.

The importance of the divisions between the Brahmins, the Non-
Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas can be illustrated finally by considering the case of personal friendship. Personal friendships often cut across caste consideration: they rarely, if ever, cut across taste group, at least in the context of the village. There are personal friendships between Smartha, Iyengar and Madhya young men who are school teachers. I have not come across a single instance of such personal friendship within the village between a Brahmin on the one hand, and a Non-Brahmin or an Adi-Dravida on the other. A Vellalan youth along with a Padayachi youth organises cultural functions among the Non-Brahmins from time to time. It is doubtful whether similar relationships exist at all between any Non-Brahmin and an Adi-Dravida.

We shall now undertake a brief discussion on the economic life of the village in order to further highlight the basic cleavages in its social structure. The economy of Sripuram, as of the majority of Tanjore villages is rent red largely around the cultivation of rice through the extensive use of irrigation. The regulated supply of water enables the paddy crops to be raised with considerably less labour here than in the drier districts. It also gives the farmer a certain measure of protection against the vagaries of nature, although floods in the Kaveri may cause destruction even to-day. Paddy is grown both for consumption and for sale. The principal cash crop is banana which is grown particularly on lands adjoining the river-bed (padughai lands) and requires intensive cultivation. Betel vines which require even more labour and attention are grown only on a few acres, although their cultivation is extremely profitable.

Absentee Landlordism Common

Land ownership in Sripuram has acquired a somewhat complex pattern owing primarily to the migration of some of the owners, and the sale by others of their land to people who themselves do not always belong to the village. Absentee landlordism is fairly common in Sripuram. One of the four big mirasdars of the village lives in Srirangam and has his land managed by an agent. A second lives in Tanjore, but pays regular visits to the village where his widowed mother still resides. A third also lives in Tanjore, but has his land managed by his daughter's husband (also his wife's younger brother) who has taken up residence in his house in the village. The last of the four big mirasdars decided to settle in the village, having resigned from a job which he held in Madras some 15 years ago. All these four mirasdars are Brahmins and none of them owns more than 30 acres of land in this village. Some of this land again is not in their own name, but in the names of their wives, sons, daughters, sisters, etc.

The hulk of the land is owned by the Brahmins. Some land is also owned by the Non-Brahmins, none of whom, however, owns more than ten acres. It seems likely that at one time all the land was owned by the Brahmins with, however, one notable exception. A certain Maratha family, claiming descent from the princely family of Tanjore, owned about half the land in the village at one time. This family still survives, although to-day almost all the land has gone out of its hands. The Maratha family is even to this day quite distinct from the other Non-Brahmin families, and even the ancestral house is not situated in one of the Non-Brahmin streets but inside a walled garden, conspicuously separate from the houses of the Brahmins as well as the Non-Brahmins.

Non-Brahmins Acquire Land

It is not possible here to give figures with regard to land holding by caste-group. In any case, such figures would not give a complete picture if we take only Sripuram, or even Melur into account. For one thing, many of the Brahmins own land in other villages, particularly in Peramur and Vishnumur which, prior to the nineteenth century, appear to have constituted a single revenue unit along with Sripuram and Melur. For another, much of the land in Sripuram is owned by people from outside, and the caste affiliations of such people are not easy to ascertain, particularly if they happen to be women, as in some cases they do.

It is clear that the Non-Brahmins have acquired much of their land in recent years, although even by the end of the nineteenth century they owned some land in the village. At that time most of the Non-Brahmin land-owners were Velalans, none of whom, however, could be considered as a big land-owner. Later, some land was acquired by a Padayachi who is today one of the bigger landowners among the Non-Brahmins. More interesting is the case of the Kilians who have come up progressively in course of the last few decades. They owe their prosperity in large measure to their ownership of considerable portions of padughai lands on which bananas are grown for sale outside.

Although the Brahmins own most of the land they do not actually till the soil. There are two ways in which the Brahmins have their land cultivated, and an analysis of these will bring out their economic relationships with the two other groups, the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas. One may say that these constitute the basic relations of production as far as Sripuram is concerned. It should be indicated that even in the field of agriculture these relations frequently extend beyond Sripuram or even Melur as a whole. Some of the Brahmin mirasdars of Sripuram have their land cultivated by the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas from the adjoining village of Peramur. Some Non-Brahmins and Adi-Dravidas cultivate land in Sripuram owned by absentee landlords who in a number of cases did not ever belong to Sripuram.

Brahmins Feel Insecure

A few of the Brahmins have their land cultivated directly by engaging agricultural labourers whose work they themselves supervise, and who are paid daily wages in cash. It should be emphasised that this mode of production is exceptional, rather than usual. There are two general reasons why this should be so, in spite of the fact that normally it would yield greater returns to the land-owner. In the first place, many of the land-owners live away from the village, and even among those who live in it there are some who engage in other occupations such as
teaching, or clerical work, and this makes it difficult for them to engage directly in the supervision of agriculture. Also, the Brahmins in general do not seem to have much experience of this kind of work and they try to avoid it as far as they can. Secondly, the relations between the Brahmin land-owners and their Non-Brahmin and Adi-Dravida labourers have deteriorated rapidly over the last two decades. The constant complaint of the Brahmin land-owners is that their labourers have become progressively demanding and insolent. This appears to be true, at least in part, and is, indeed a reflection of the political insecurity of the Brahmins in Tamilnad as a whole. It is not easy to determine to what extent the Brahmin? are justified in thinking that they cannot enforce their legitimate demands over the labourers. But the feeling of insecurity is there, and it tends to keep them away from directly supervising their farm work as this involves much closer relationships with cultivators and labourers.

The second and more usual way for the Brahmins to have their land cultivated is by annually leasing them out according to the katta-khai system. Although the lease is, under the terms of the contract, for one year only, it is usually renewed automatically. In fact, quite frequently a formal contract is not even entered into. Legally the lessor can claim only 40 per cent of the yield., but usually his claims vary between 50 and 60 per rent because he foregoes the straw and certain other byproducts over which he has a legal title. The lessee supplies the seeds to be sown, the plough cattle, the manure, and other pre-requisites of cultivation. Usually he manages to give a little less than the actual share of the crops he has agreed to give.

The lessee himself does not necessarily till the land he has leased. If he happens to be a Non-Brahmin, and has some land of his own, he engages labourers who are usually Adi-Dravidas and pays them daily wages in cash. Many Non-Brahmin lessees, of course, till the land themselves. The Non-Brahmin lessee is often able to make considerable profit by paying his Brahmin lessor a smaller share than he has agreed to pay, and by squeezing as much work out of his Adi-Dravida labourers for as little money as is possible. In this he owes his success to the political decline of the Brahmin, to his own political ascendancy, and to the fact that the Adi-Dravidas are as yet politically backward and unorganised.

**Triangular Bitterness**

The Brahmin is bitter against the Non-Brahmin because he feels that the new land laws and the new political climate cheat him of his patrimony and give the rewards to the Non-Brahmin although the real work, as often as not, is done by the Adi-Dravida. This, of course, is only one side of the picture. The Non-Brahmin lessee feels that he earns his share of the crops by investment in seeds and manure, hard work and organisation, whereas the Brahmin sits at home and claims half the produce. The Adi-Dravida is bitter against both the Brahmin and the Non-Brahmin and complains that nobody will lease land to him and he has to remain out of work half the year. I have not been able to ascertain why the Brahmins lease their land more usually to the Non-Brahmins than to the Adi-Dravidas. One would have thought that politically it would be of greater advantage to them to enter into relations with the Adi-Dravidas who are less organised and less able to dictate terms than the Non-Brahmins.

Thus, when we consider the relations of production, the cleavages between the Brahmins, the Non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravidas become clear once again. By and large, the Brahmins are the land-owners, although not all land-owners are Brahmins, nor are all Brahmins land-owners. The Brahmin landowners lease their land to the Non-Brahmins, although here again it must be mentioned that some of the lessees are Adi-Dravidas. Further, some Non-Brahmins themselves own land, whereas, at the other extreme, there are others who engage themselves directly as agricultural labourers. The Adi-Dravidas by and large work as day labourers in one capacity or another.

The picture we have presented is a highly simplified one. We have had to level out variations in each category in order to highlight its differences with the others. A more complete presentation would require an analysis in greater detail of the many ties which cut across the cleavages between the three major caste-groups. In the sphere of economic life itself it would have to take into account the many other occupations in which the villagers engage apart from agriculture.

Today perhaps the social structure is in the process of acquiring a more complex form than it had 50 years ago. In the nineteenth century the economic differentiation between the Brahmins and the others was more clear than it is today. Land was concentrated to an even greater extent in the hands of the Brahmins. The Brahmins as a group were economically more homogeneous than they are today. A fuller understanding of these changes requires an analysis of the political transformation which Tamilnad has been undergoing in course of the last 50 years. Economic and political factors influence each other in a very intimate manner and changes in the one cannot fully be understood without considering changes in the other.

**Measures for Integration**

MOST State Governments have designated selected officers in their Secretariat to deal with matters relating to linguistic minorities and national integration. This followed a request from the Union Home Minister that steps taken for the safeguards of linguistic minorities should be coordinated, at a fairly high level.

Madras has appointed a Linguistic Minorities Officer to prepare a note every two months reviewing the progress of implementation of the linguistic minorities (zonal) scheme. The arrangements made in Andhra Pradesh are similar except that the Linguistic Minorities Officer is to prepare his review once in three months. In Mysore, the Home Secretary has been made responsible for coordination of all work relating to linguistic minorities.

In Punjab, this responsibility has been entrusted to the Secretary of the Education and Language Department, and in Rajasthan to the Special Secretary in charge of Appointments. In U P, there is a Special Officer under the Directorate of Education to look after these matters.