

McGILL UNIVERSITY

POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: TWO
VILLAGES AND A TALUKA IN WESTERN INDIA

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BY

DONALD W. ATTWOOD

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PREFACE

My work in Poona began in October of 1969 and continued through September of 1971. The first four months were spent primarily in Poona city, studying my first lessons in the Marathi language, and learning about the Poona region at the Deccan College and the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics. A few villages in eastern Poona district were visited, and two which were of particular historical and economic interest were selected for intensive study.

Having arranged for quarters in these villages, so that I could visit them alternately during the next year-and-a-half, I began interviewing the village leaders. I also began a census survey of the villages and drew up a stratified random sample for interviewing on the subject of family economic history. This dual approach was made possible by the help of two very able assistants, Mr. R. P. Nene and Mr. S. V. Kulkarni. Since my language ability was elementary, Mr. Nene acted as interpreter and chief assistant in all the arrangements. Mr. Kulkarni conducted the house-to-house census and later copied out some of the village land and revenue records.

For reasons which will be apparent, I have taken care to conceal the identities of all my subjects and informants by the use of fictitious names. Many forms of political behavior which are considered routine (if not wholly desirable) in the West are considered quite unfit for public discussion by

my informants; and I have made every effort to avoid embarrassing them on this account. Some of the actors in this narration are or were known throughout the district and state. Therefore, I have not only invented names for the villages, but also for the subdivision of the district in which they are located, and for the river and canal which pass through this subdivision. This unfortunately creates some ambiguity in the references to historical documentation which are employed in parts of this essay. The question boils down to fidelity either to the written record or to the living informants.

The originality of this essay resides in the research format and in the method of analysis. The gathering of data was focused on political middlemen, studied against the socioeconomic backgrounds of two contrasting villages. This is not a village study, but a study of village leaders and of the other middlemen in the surrounding area who have had a direct effect on village politics. Thus several movement leaders and politicians are included here who did not live in the villages selected for intensive study, but who have interacted intensively with the village leaders. Along with this wider geographical focus, I have also attempted to trace the development of local politics back in time, to the limits of recollection of the oldest living informants (roughly, from 1900 onwards). Consequently, this is a dynamic study of several different types of political middlemen interacting in local institutions at several different levels--inside and outside the villages.

The analytical approach centers on three contrasting processes: elite-

centered patronage, support-group mobilization, and pluralist machine politics. All three processes are familiar from various political contexts around the world. What is attempted here is to analyze their dialectical interactions. The results appear to be useful in evaluating the interrelations between political and economic development.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the help of those individuals and institutions in India which made it possible for this research to be carried out. I must first thank the University of Delhi and the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (Poona) for allowing me to become an affiliated student and to make use of their facilities. Thanks are also due to the Deccan College (Poona) for the use of their library.

This research would have been impossible without the understanding assistance of Sharad Pawar (MLA). I am also grateful to the Collector and Chief Executive Officer of Poona District for permission and facilities to do the work; and to R. G. Savant (BDO) and S. B. Dharmadhikari (Tehsildar) for their very courteous assistance in the field.

It would be impossible to mention here all the hospitable people in the villages who gave so generously of their time. I am especially grateful to the directors of the "Olegao" cooperative sugar factory for providing living quarters. M. G. Taware and G. S. Dhavan (Chairmen), and S. S. Hiremath (Managing Director) provided every facility. I also want to thank at least the chairmen of the village councils and the village cooperative credit societies for generously allowing me to interview them and study their institutions: N. B. Taware, B. S. Gophane, K. D. Jadhavrao, N. G.

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