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The Jajmani System: An Investigation

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the Australian National University

Department of Prehistory and Anthropology

1986
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my friends and colleagues in South India with special thanks to Dr. Abusaleh Shariff, Mr. M. Guruswamy, Mr. K.N. Raju, Miss P.N. Sushama, Mr. P.R. Laxman and Mrs. Revathi Laxman, and Dr. P.H. Reddy, for helping me in my research.

I would also like to thank those who have helped me in Australia with particular reference to Dr. James Urry, my first supervisor, Dr. Caroline Ifeka, Dr. Richard Barz, and to my main supervisor, Dr. Douglas Miles, without whose help and encouragement I might never have finished, and to the general intellectual atmosphere of the Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, headed by Professor Anthony Forge.

Most of all, I would like to thank the people of Mayasandra who looked after me, and whose discussions provided the field evidence for this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank Indrani whose presence provided the final impetus.

Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

BK Caldwell 21.8.86
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: The Origins of the Jajmani Debate</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: The Jajmani System: An Anthropological Debate</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Jajmani in Mayasandra</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: The Search for a System</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Conclusion</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These have this Privilege, that each has a parcel of Towns belonging to them whom none but they are to work for. The ordinary work they do for them is mending their Tools, for which every Man pays to his Smith a certain Rate of Corn in Harvest time according to ancient Custom.

Robert Knox, An Historical Relation of Ceylon (1981: 205) (originally 1681)
The idea for this thesis developed as a result of work I undertook as a research assistant on a demographic survey in India. During an initial visit in 1978-9, I became interested in the effects of occupational and educational change on caste, on which subject I subsequently wrote my honours thesis, *Stability and Challenge: Caste Responses to Changes in Occupation and Education in an Indian Village*. While reading for this subject I became interested in the concept of the jajmani system.

As described in the anthropological literature, jajmani is a system whereby the services of a range of craftsmen, which may include barbers, washermen, carpenters, and blacksmiths, are provided in return for fixed annual allocations of harvested grain rather than for payment in money or payment for each service tailored to the size of the service. The services are provided only by the appropriate castes and may include other specified ritual duties. Jajmani relations have been identified as being hereditary and as involving duties and responsibilities on the parts of those giving and those receiving the service.

The literature on the jajmani relations interested me but did not seem to describe the relationships I had noted in the field. During my next visit in 1979-80, I was determined to explore this matter but at first I made little progress.

I asked the chief landlords of the village in which I was working, Mayasandra, in Karnataka State, South India, whether they made the annual payments of grain to their labourers that anthropologists held to characterize the jajmani system. They uniformly said that they did not but paid their labourers in cash, usually on a purely casual basis. Conversations I had with the labourers reinforced this information. It
was only when I had cross-questioned a much wider range of people, that I found that harvest payments were made, but only by the smaller farmers of Mayasandra and in the outlying hamlets. They were paid not to the labourers, but only to the so-called service castes, the Barbers, Washermen, Blacksmiths etc. (When an occupation is spelled with an initial capital letter it designates the caste which traditionally undertook that work.)

On rereading the literature, I found that I had made several unwarranted assumptions. Firstly, although theoretical models of the jajmani system generally cover all occupational groups (see Wiser, 1958; Dumont, 1980), most ethnographic descriptions (including Wiser's) only mention the service castes, and the few exceptions are highly suspect.

The second assumption was that the large landlord was the archetypal jajman. Dumont argued that 'only those who have at their disposal the main source of wealth and power, the land, can really display the system in all its pomp' (Dumont 1980: 102). Yet in Mayasandra, the large landlords were the category least involved in jajmani relations. As a consequence, I became interested in why the theoretical models of the jajmani system did not match my experiences in Mayasandra or of ethnographers elsewhere in India. One factor is that the theorists were seeking to describe the ideal past rather than the actual present. During my research, however, I became convinced that the disagreement between the research and the evidence ran deeper than this. The reason is, I believe, that models of the jajmani system were not simply drawn from the ethnographic evidence, but were affected by older theories. Clearly, this is inevitable as no theory can be entirely original, and, indeed, older theories are a necessary intellectual stimulus providing both interpretations for ethnographic
data and questions to answer. Nevertheless, a reliance on earlier theories can be a major drawback if it means that anthropologists ignore the evidence.

The major concept, I believe, to influence models of the jajmani system was that of the "village community", and its predecessor, the "village republic". I believe, the debate on the jajmani system to be part of a continuous discourse with its origins in the concept of the village republic and including the concept of the village community.

The first two chapters of this thesis explore the development of the discourse. To what extent did the identification of jajmani relations, and especially of a jajmani system, emerge from field observations and to what extent did the ideas have a life of their own, resting perhaps on a previous generation of ideas themselves brought into being by circumstances and controversies only remotely connected with jajmani relations? There is some substance in the latter contention and its exploration will take us back two centuries in discovering what each theorist owed to his predecessors.

The first chapter will concentrate on the missionary William Wiser who was the first social scientist to use the term, "The Hindu Jajmani System". I will show how he derived his understanding of the system from previous writers on the village community. It will also focus on writers in the village republic/community debate concentrating on Thomas Munro and Mark Wilks who first developed the concept of the village republic, Henry Summner Maine who played a major part in replacing the concept of the village republic with that of the village community, and Radkamal Mukerjee who was to have a major influence on Wiser's formulation of the jajmani system.

The second chapter will be concerned with how anthropologists have modified Wiser's concept of the jajmani system. It concentrates on
what I regard as being the two main interpretations of the jajmani system. According to the first argument, the jajmani system is a labour system, in which landlords use the power derived from their control of the principal means of production, land, to exploit their workers. The most succinct expression of this viewpoint is Oscar Lewis' *Village Life in North India*.

The second interpretation of the jajmani system is associated with Louis Dumont. He was interested in how ideology has affected the way people behave. He regarded the jajmani system as an example of how ideology, specifically the ideology of caste, can affect economic behaviour.

Through the first two chapters of the thesis, I aim at separating the essential and persisting themes and identifying modifications and rejections, I rarely attempt to judge these concepts in terms of the social realities of the day. Indeed, there are no data which would allow this, but only the interpretations chronicled here.

I postpone such judgments until after a brief description of my own field work. This helps to provide a factual basis for separating reality from pre-conception. Though contemporary field work can provide no certainty about the nature of jajmani relations even half a century ago, change is sufficiently gradual for some revealing light to be thrown. Certainly, the testimony of the older population is invaluable for understanding the recent past. Furthermore, the limited information which there is about the past is often more in keeping with contemporary evidence than with the models of the theorists.

The field data for this thesis was collected during three separate trips to India in 1978-9, 1979-80 and 1980-1. This material is drawn from nine villages in Tumkur district of the South Indian state of Karnataka. I stayed in the largest village, Mayasandra, which is the
market and governmental centre for the surrounding villages. I also visited all the villages involved for extensive periods.

I believe that these villages are representative of a large region of South India. Specifically this is the Multan region of south Karnataka but more generally of much of the Decaan plateau. I have studied several villages, so as to look at jajmani relations in a wide variety of situations.

I collected survey data on matters which I regarded as being of central importance to a study of jajmani such as which families still made jajmani payments, who received them and the size of the payments involved. I also attempted to find out how much families knew about jajmani payments by their parents and grandparents. I collected enough survey data for these to be cross-checked by the caste and religion of the families and by whether or not the families own land.

I complemented the quantitative data of the survey with my own observations of such aspects of village life as peoples' daily activities, the village economy and local religion. This was useful in understanding the context in which jajmani payments occur.

I also had extensive interviews with a wide range of people. This allowed me to investigate more wideranging issues than I could cover in the survey. In particular, it provided subjective information involving attitudes, feelings and ideas about the nature of jajmani and other ties in the villages. Interviews made it possible to gather information on topics too sensitive to be investigated through a survey. One such issue was bonded labour. Bonded labour is illegal but quite common. While it is not a jajmani relationship itself, its study is important in studying the total context of the economic and social relationships that occur between castes.
Chapter 1: THE ORIGINS OF THE JAJMANI DEBATE

Wiser: The Concept of a System

The term jajmani was originally used in the anthropological literature by William Wiser in his work, The Hindu Jajmani System (1958 - 1st edition 1936).\(^1\) According to Wiser (1958: xviii), in the Indian village, 'each caste...at some time during the year is expected to render a fixed type of service to each other caste'. He noted that there was no exact equivalent of this system in the West so he adopted, what he asserted to be the North Indian terminology: the person providing the service (Wiser used the example of a carpenter) calls his entire clientele his 'jajmani' or 'birt' - these terms being identical in meaning. The individual family or head of the family whom the carpenter serves is called the carpenter's 'jajman'. The 'jajman' speaks of the carpenter's family and all other families that serve him as his 'kam-wale' or 'kam-karne-wale' (i.e. workers), if they are of the serving castes, i.e shudras or lower. If the one who serves is a 'Pandit' (the title of a Brahman priest), a 'Bhat' (astrologer), or another from one of the three upper caste divisions [or varnas], he is referred to by his caste name - 'Pandit', 'Bhat' etc. and not as a 'kam-karne-wale' (Wiser 1958, xviii).

Wiser called the services supplied 'jajmani services'; the payments, 'jajmani payments'; the relations created by these services, 'jajmani ties'; and the total of these relationships, the jajmani system. In the more recent literature, the single term jajman was adopted for all family heads receiving jajmani services. The term kamin is usually preferred to Wiser's kam-karne-wale for the person supplying the service.
As Wiser understood it, ideally this relationship was not a one-way tie between those who served and those who were served. Jajmani ties created a community where all castes 'existed' to serve each other. Caste restricted people from employment outside their traditional occupations thus forcing villagers to recruit people of other castes than their own to do many jobs. In return for these services the castes supplied their own services to other castes. Wiser summarized his concept in the statement, 'Each in turn is master. Each in turn is servant'. (Wiser 1958: xxiv)

The ties by which these services were exchanged were permanent between families. That is, the tie was inherited by succeeding generations. As with other property, the son of each 'kam-wale' or 'kamin' would inherit his share of 'jajman' (patron) families.

In return for supplying standardized services, a kamin received a standardized set of payments and concessions. For Wiser, the system of rewards for services is the strength of the system:

In return for the various services rendered, there are payments in cash and in kind made daily, monthly, biannually, per piece of work, and on special occasions, depending on the type of service rendered and in part on the goodwill of the jajman. The strength of the system depends, however, not on the actual payments made but on the concessions granted to the different occupational groups. These may be listed as: (a) free residence site; (b) free food for the family; (c) free clothing; (d) free food for animals; (e) free timber; (f) free dung; (g) rent-free land; (h) credit facilities; (i) opportunities for supplementary employment; (j) free use of tools, implements and draft animals; (k) free use of raw materials; (l) free hides; (m) free funeral pyre plot; (n) casual leave; (o) aid in litigation; (p) variety in diet; (q) healthful location.

These concessions do not apply equally to all, but vary according to custom. (Wiser 1958: xxiv)

The key point to note of Wiser's model of the jajmani system is that there was no place for bargaining. Unlike the situation in a capitalist society where individuals seek private financial gain,
jajmani binds the economic and the social together. An individual cannot exploit others for his individual gain except at the risk of a grave social backlash. Wiser gave the example of a farmer who attempted to break his jajmani obligations by selling his crop, but who was forced to back down when his kamins distributed his crop 'for' him according to the traditional practice (Wiser 1958: 116).

Wiser recognized that his description of the jajmani system did not accurately represent the ethnographic reality of Karimpur. He claimed as an instance of change from the original ideal the failure of some castes to carry out their duties towards other castes. 'The Brahman, bard, barber, water-bearer and washerman, in refusing to serve some of their fellow Hindu castes on the grounds that they are untouchable, are contributing to the disintegration of their own religious system' (1958: 113). Wiser believed this was due to historical causes, ranging from the medieval invasions of the Rajputs to private land ownership and individual legal rights introduced by the British, which upset the equilibrium of the jajmani system.

Wiser argued that such changes, which he believed threatened the communal aspect of Indian villages, were not a recent phenomenon. He maintained that the jajmani system itself is 'a disintegrated form of the ancient village commune'. He added, 'The Hindu Jajmani System as it stands today in Karimpur is ancient in that it recognizes the claims of the different occupational groups to a share of the earnings of the village as a whole, but it is not ancient in its detailed form as described in the preceding pages' (1958: 108).

Wiser cited Radhakamal Mukerjee who claimed that the contemporary village system was the hybrid offspring of two contrasting social systems. One was a primitive Dravidian tribal society based on communal ownership of property and the other, the ancient Indo-European
society based on family ownership of property. The result was a community based on exchange between families.

Wiser's work was important in that it was the first detailed study of jajmani ties. It would, nevertheless, be a mistake to assume that Wiser was an innocent missionary who discovered the jajmani system by happenstance. In fact, he was strongly influenced by earlier writers, as is indicated by the subtitle to The Hindu Jajmani System, A Socio-Economic System Interrelating Members of a Hindu Village Community in Services.

Wiser quoted extensively from writers on the village community e.g., Sir Henry Maine and Radhakamal Mukerjee. The influence of these writers shows in Wiser's reliance on historical explanations for understanding jajmani. It also comes out in his belief that, in an ideal jajmani system, all castes would provide services for each other in an essentially egalitarian system. The jajmani debate has, in some ways, been a sophisticated attempt to maintain the main premise of the theorists of the village community, that the village was the central institution of Indian society, the jajmani system itself providing the underlying ties maintaining the village as a community and not just as an agglomeration of people. To comprehend the influence of the village community debate on the jajmani debate through Wiser and others we need to study it in depth.

Munro and Wilks: The Village Republic

The concept of the village community or rather village republic had its origins in discussions of British officers of the East India Company, on how to collect enough revenue to pay for the Company's expensive wars without endangering India's and the Company's future prosperity.
Early attempts to introduce a land tax reflected the laissez-faire economic theories of the time. It was believed necessary that, in order to develop India's resources, a system of land tenure should be introduced that would encourage land owners to develop their own land. According to Adam Smith and contemporary economists, the cause of a nation's wealth was the collective desire of individuals to better themselves, self-interest being the most powerful force making for economic development. Economists believed that governments did not have a major role in economic development as they were not seen as being a source of wealth. The economists thought that governments should provide a basic infrastructure, legal and material (roads etc.), within which economic development could take place. Otherwise, the State would encourage individual incentive by collecting only as much taxation as was necessary to carry out basic services.

Adam Smith believed that the best way such necessary taxes could be levied on land was by means of a 'permanent settlement'. This was a tax that would remain fixed irrespective of changes in the land's productivity. Under this system, any increase in production would accrue to the farmer, thus providing him with a powerful incentive to improve the land's productivity. A second advantage, in view of Adam Smith's lack of enthusiasm for government, was that, as wealth developed, the proportion of revenue collected by the government would fall, thereby allowing more private investment.

To the officers of the East India Company a question rose about whom a settlement should be concluded with. The problem occurred because Indian land tenure differed from British land tenure and it was not clear who owned the land. According to the political economists land was owned by the person who collected the rent. They defined rent as the profit contributed by land, as distinct from that contributed by
the farmer's or tenant's labour or by capital. Rent, however, had to be distinguished from taxation which was the revenue needed to carry out the functions of government.

In Britain it was fairly clear who owned the land for there was a market in land. A farmer selling land was selling the right to rent. It was not so clear in India as there was only an underdeveloped land market. Thus a debate rose on what payments were actually made and whether these bore comparison to rent or tax. In India the right to rent was attributed by various theorists to one of three levels, the sovereign, the 'zamindar' — roughly equivalent to overlord, and to the 'ryot' — equivalent to peasant. According to the theorists concerned the ryot paid rent or tax to the zamindar and the latter paid rent or tax to the sovereign. What separated the theorists was the basis of their calculus for deciding what was rent and what was tax.

An early argument emphasised the very high levels of land revenue demanded by the king. This was used to argue that the king was the real land proprietor. Such an argument was useful for the East India Company for it helped to justify the very heavy demands and land revenue needed to pay for the wars caused by the Company's aggressive policy of expansion. They were doing no more than taking their rightful due.

The alternative view proposed was that 'grasping' Indian kings had forced taxation up to dangerous levels threatening India's prosperity, and one might add the future well-being of the Company. Most advocates of this view held that the real landholders were the zamindars. It was argued that the zamindar was equivalent to the enterprising British landlord who was held to be responsible for the success of British agriculture,\(^6,\)\(^7\) that by returning to the zamindar his rent through a
permanent settlement, he too would be encouraged to improve his land. This view 'triumphed' in the Bengal permanent settlement.

The perceived failure of the Bengal permanent settlement led to a proposal for ryotwari settlement, settlement with the peasants. Though originally developed by Colonel Alexander Read in his settlement of the Baramahal (Beaglehole 1966: 8), the main advocate of ryotwari settlement was Read's assistant, Thomas Munro, later governor of Madras 1820-1827 (Beaglehole 1966: 121). According to Munro, the zamindar was merely an hereditary farmer of revenue. By treating him as the landowner, the Company was failing to encourage the true landowner, the ryot to improve his land. The solution was individual agreements with each ryot as to the amount of tax to be paid. I will not go into Munro's reasons for believing that the ryot was the landowner as they are not strictly relevant to my theme. What are relevant are the conclusions he and others drew from this belief.

Though many officials concurred with Munro that ryotwari settlement was preferable to zamindari settlement, it was open to the attack that it was bureaucratic, stretched the resources of the Company, and was an unwarranted interference in the affairs of the villages.

Colonel Mark Wilks, resident at the Court of Mysore, held that the solution was not to make settlements directly through the ryots, but indirectly through the agency of the village republic, a concept he borrowed from Munro himself.

He quoted Munro,

Every village, with its twelve Ayangadees as they are called, is a kind of little republic, with the Potail [i.e. Patel] at the head of it; and India is a mass of such republics. The inhabitants, during war, look chiefly to their own Potail. They give themselves no trouble about the breaking up and division of kingdoms; while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred: wherever it goes the internal
management remains unaltered; the Potail is still the collector and magistrate, and head farmer. From the age of Manu until this day the settlements have been made either with or through the Potailems (Munro quoted by Wilks 1810, Vol. 1, 121).

Wilks was not simply using the village republic as a crafty coup de grace to Munro's argument. He claimed that, if recognized, the village republic could be a very useful ally of the East India Company. After all, according to Munro, the Indians 'give themselves no trouble about the breaking up and division of kingdoms, while the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred: wherever it goes the internal management remains unaltered' (Wilks 1810). If the company left the village republic alone it need face no trouble from the villagers.

According to Wilks the village republic could, given the right circumstances, also play a role in India's development. He claimed that economic and social development in India had been prevented by the rapaciousness, despotism and extreme instability of Indian states. He reasoned that the East India Company had the right and indeed the obligation to impose its rule so as to provide the essential stability and security in which true development could take place.

Fostering economic and social development by providing a true freedom, quite explicitly did not mean intervening in the daily affairs of the Indian villager. This is what truly separated Wilks and Munro. Wilks argued that the British had no right to seek to change India by replacing the ancient laws with their British equivalents, which anyway he believed to be inappropriate. He argued that

'The founder of a philosophical Utopia would certainly reject with abhorrence a system which tends to enslave the human mind, and to entail hereditary degradation on a large portion of his citizens. But we are not here discussing speculative theory. The objects in our contemplation are not metaphysical entities to be moulded into ideal forms, but human beings, already fixed in stubborn and immovable prejudices, to which
any system founded in wisdom and humanity must necessarily conform. It is not the question, it never can be a question, whether the English or the Hindoo code of religion and jurisprudence be entitled to the preference, but whether the Hindoo law and religion, for they are one and the same, are, or are not, to be maintained, or whether we are at liberty to invade both. (1810, Vol. 1, 498-9).

Wilks believed that 'the Hindoo code (with all its numerous imperfections on its head), combined with the local customs, or common law of India, [is] not ill-adapted to the state of society to which it is intended to apply' (Ibid., 501).

Besides, Wilks argued, the introduction of English law might provoke Indians into opposing British rule. He wrote that,

'The spirit of the English constitutions assigns to the mass of the people (14) an extensive control over the exercise of public authority; and deems the executive government to be the representative of the public will. The spirit pervades the whole body of its laws. These laws necessarily reflect back, and reproduce the principles from which they spring: and it is matter for grave reflection, that, if this species of reaction should ever be produced in India, from that moment it is lost to this country for ever ... The efficient protection of our native subjects in all the rights which they themselves consider to be essential to their happiness, is certainly the most sacred and imperious of our duties; and it is on this express ground that our present regulations, considered as a system of jurisprudence for the south of India, appear to me to require a radical reform. (Wilks 1810, Vol. 1, 495-6)'

Wilks thought that, while the British should protect Hindu law, it should be implemented not by them, but by the Indians themselves. He believed that to implement properly the Hindu law required people well versed in it, and trusted by the community. This was the importance of the village republic. The village republic already contained an institution composed of such people, the Panchaiet or Indian jury (Ibid., 501). He said that the Indian village also had the means to enforce the law with a system of village policemen, who formed part of the system of village servants.
The term 'village republic' is interesting. It meant for Wilks and Munro an ordered society in which basic civil rights are respected - including private property and profit. Its opposite was despotism - a sort of parasitic anarchy (Ibid., 28). The term implies a community which has certain basic civil liberties and a defined territory. Wilks saw this as a community of landholders - in which others who were not members also resided, comparable to the small republics of Greece, and their slaves.

Unlike the Greek republics the Indian village republics were not true independent States. One can compare Wilks' view of the village republic with Adam Smith's view of the town in Medieval Europe. Smith believed that in Europe towns had been of fundamental importance in economic development during the Middle Ages. They had been able to develop due to the considerable political autonomy from feudal lords, civil rights and policies of low taxation granted them by the monarchs. Smith thought that it was the avarice of the lords who took the profit earned by others that had held back economic development outside the towns. The towns were granted special rights by kings who wanted their political support to oppose the demands of feudal lords (see Smith 1974: 496-507).

Wilks argued that in India the government could seek political support and encourage economic development through a sort of compact, not with the towns but with the villages:

'A company of merchants may confer a more solid benefit than was announced in the splendid proclamation of the Roman consul to the cities of Greece: freedom, in its most rational, safe, and acceptable form, may be proclaimed to the little republics of India, by declaring the fixed and moderate revenue that each shall pay, and leaving the interior distribution to themselves, interfering only on appeal from their own little magistrate, either in matters of revenue, or of landed, or of personal property. Under such a system varying only from their ancient constitution in substituting for the tax on industry, involved in the
exaction of a proportion of the crop, a fixed money payment, which is also of great antiquity in India; the waste would quickly be covered with luxuriant crops, because every extension of culture Ti [cultivation] would be a clear profit to the proprietor.

(Wilks 1810 Vol. 1: 196-7)'

The extreme political instability had discouraged the development of trade and thus the towns and the industries they contained. Those artisans and tradesmen who did exist were mainly the village servants. 15

Indeed, according to Wilks, it was the self-sufficiency brought about by this internalized division of labour that enabled the village republic to survive amidst general chaos. Wilks' interest in this division of labour led to what Louis Dumont has termed the first recorded description of the jajmani system:

Every Indian village is, and appears always to have been, in fact, a separate community or republic; and exhibits a living picture of that state of things which theorists have imagined in the earlier stages of civilization, when men have assembled in communities for the purpose of reciprocally administrating to each other's wants: 1. the Could, the Patail, Muccuddim, or Mundil (as he is named in different languages), is the judge and magistrate; 2. the Curnum, Shanboag, or Puturanee, is the registrar; 3. the Taliary or Shulwar, and 4. the Totie, are severally the watchmen of the village and of the crops; 5. the Neerguntee distributes the water of the streams or reservoirs in just proportion to the several fields; 6. the Jatishee, or Joshee, or astrologer, performs the essential service of announcing the seasons of seed time and harvest, and the imaginary benefit of unfolding the lucky or unlucky days and hours for all the operations of farming; 7. the smith, and 8. carpenter, frame the rude instruments of husbandry, and the ruder dwellings of the farmer; 9. the potter fabricates the only utensils of the village; 10. the washerman keeps clean the few garments which are spun, or purchased at the nearest market; 11. the barber contributes to the cleanliness and assists in the toilet of the villagers; 12. the silversmith, marking the approach of luxury, manufactures the simple ornaments with which they delight to bedeck their wives and their daughters; and these twelve officers (Barra bullowuttee, or Ayangadee), or requisite members of the community, receive the compensation of their labour, either in allotments of land from the corporate stock, or in fees, consisting of a fixed proportions of the crop of
every farmer in the village. In some instances the lands of a village are cultivated in common, and the crop divided in the proportions of the labour contributed, but generally each occupant tills his own field; the waste land is a common pasture for the cattle of the village; its external boundaries are as carefully marked as those of the richest field, and they are maintained as a common right of the village, or rather the township (a term which more correctly describes the thing in our contemplation), to the exclusion of others, with as much jealousy and rancour as the frontiers of the most potent kingdoms. Such are the primitive component parts of all the kingdoms of India' (Ibid., 117-119).

Wilks' description included much that Wiser later defined as part of the jajmani system. Wilks saw the village as being a community where groups of people have certain assigned services to perform for the community. Those services may be paid for by a share of the crop (Wiser talked of fixed quantity of grain). Although there are earlier description of jajmani relations,16 this is the first expression of jajmani ties, as part of a larger system.

In one important respect Wilks' theory differed from Wiser's. Although Wilks mentioned village servants and the payments that tie them to the village, he was not interested in the social ties suggested therein. For Wilks it was enough that the village servants had certain functions, for which they were paid by the village. In contrast, Wiser focused on those ties, because he saw them as a way by which castes, through exchanging services, create an integrated community. For Wiser, the jajmani system was the way that rights and obligations associated with jajmani ties created a moral force that could link all the castes into a joint community.

The difference between them can in part be related to their different themes. Wiser was in the tradition of the modern social scientist. He was trying to understand the village through living in it, and by carrying out a modern social survey. This meant that he investigated the social relations and institutions that tied village
society together as being interesting in their own right. While Wilks obviously had considerable interest in Indian customs and beliefs, his book is consciously didactic in regard to the immediate political realities he confronted as 'resident' (adviser) to the court of Mysore. Wilks was putting forth a political argument that the British should make use of the village for administration. For him, the village republic was a political unit.

This political unit consisted not of the entire community, but only of the landowners. Although Wilks referred to men having assembled to administer reciprocally to each other's needs, the emphasis throughout the book is on the landowners as being the citizens who make up the village republic and not on their tenants, or the village servants c.f. Sparta and slaves. Wilks' view of the village is not of a socialistic ideal. He goes to some pains, in attempting to deflect, in advance, criticism of his ideas, by stating that a certain degree of inequality is and must be a part of the village (Wilks 1810 Vol.1: 178). What Wilks was emphasizing was not the 'socialistic community' that Wiser saw (albeit that Wiser recognized that inequality existed) but a republic of men who shared certain basic rights and equally recognized basic obligations. The landed men were the backbone of such a community, those who had a stake in the land and who provided the stability that was the basis of any evolving society.

In Wilks' theory, the role of the village servants is that they allow the village, based on the landowners, to be autonomous, independent of outside political turmoil and economic disruption. Village servants supplied the needs of the village in administration, religion, crafts and other services that the farmers could not supply for themselves. To ensure village autonomy, it would have been important that these people be paid in a way that helped to preserve
village autonomy. While Wilks was not explicit on this, this is presumably why he stated that village servants were paid in land or by a share of the grain. This would have been the simplest and most effective means of using the village's own resources to pay for such services. No doubt, in a society where trade was as underdeveloped as Wilks suggested it was in India (due to the lack of national authority), village servants may well have preferred to be paid in land or grain, than in money.

After Wilks, proponents of the village republic lost the political debate. Thomas Munro became governor of Madras Presidency and was able to implement direct ryotwari tenure. Interest shifted to the republic as a social institution and it was renamed the village community. This change was encouraged by a belief that the Indian village community was a fossilized remnant of what European society had been.

Maine: The Community of Status

The period, in which the village community was most popular, was the heyday of theories of social evolution. The proponents of social evolution were very interested in Indian village communities because of the discovery of the relationship between the Indo-European languages at the end of the eighteenth century. The man most responsible for this was Sir William Jones, Chief Justice of the Indian High Court, and a leading orientalist (see Encyclopaedia Britannica 1982, Vol. 9: 433, Vol. 10: 993). He was one of the first Englishmen to learn Sanskrit and translated a number of the major Sanskrit texts. Jones noted great similarities in vocabulary and grammar between Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, and Latin. From this observation, he argued that these languages were descended from a common ancestor. This, he believed to be Sanskrit.
Later, similarities were found in other aspects of culture. The gods, religious beliefs and myths, as revealed in the Rig Veda, India's oldest religious text, had much in common with early Greek and Roman beliefs. Not surprisingly, people looked for similarities in social and economic organization. As the village community was supposed to be the most stable Indian institution many believed it to be the most ancient. Wilks was probably influenced by the theories of Jones. He quoted a number of passages from Jones' translations of Sanskrit texts (eg Manu - see Wilks 1810: 121), and would have been aware of Jones' Indo-European theory. However, while Wilks stated that the village republics were at an early stage of development, he did not claim that they could be used to trace the early development of an Indo-European society. He compared the village republics with the Greek Republics, but he did this only in terms of the requirements for development: in this he was following Adam Smith, not Jones. Among those who suggested that the village community could be used to trace the development of Western Society was Sir Henry Sumner Maine.

Maine, born in 1822, was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he excelled in classical studies. From 1847 to 1854 he was Professor of Civil Law at Cambridge, and also lectured on human law at the Inns of Court in London. These lectures formed the basis of his major work, Ancient Law, first published in 1861. From 1863 to 1869 Maine was a legal member of the Council of the Governor-General in India, where he was largely responsible for the codification of Indian law. During this period, he served as Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University. On returning to England in 1869, he became the first Professor of Historical and Comparative Jurisprudence at Oxford, and, in 1887, Professor of International Law at Cambridge. He died in 1888 at Cannes, France (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1982, Vol.VI: 509).
Maine combined interests in the classics and in law in his life's work, an attempt to trace the development of modern European law from its roots. However, as even the oldest sources of European law (e.g. Roman law), were themselves remote from the origins of European law, they did not by themselves provide adequate data on the origins and early development of law, nor more importantly the 'context' in which early law developed. For Maine, even where written documentation concerning laws existed, an analyst who did not take into account the different 'moralities' of societies was liable to misunderstand the laws he was studying: 'The mistake of judging the men of other periods by the morality of our own day has its parallel in the mistake of supposing that every wheel and bolt in the modern social machine had its counterpart in more rudimentary societies'. (Maine cited in Block 1974: 238)

For Maine the Indian village community was a solution to these problems for it was, he believed, a living society with many similarities to the society in which early European law had arisen, which could be studied directly in a largely unchanged form. These similarities were a result, in Maine's view, of a common ancestry.

Although Maine's assumption that (second-hand) reports on Indian village society could be used to interpret European data was questionable, Maine claimed to be introducing hard evidence into a field that had previously been entirely speculative. He wrote that, 'Theories, plausible and comprehensive, but absolutely unverified, such as the Law of Nature or the Social Compact, enjoy a universal preference over sober research into the primitive history of society and law' (1916: 3). In order to rid the study of jurisprudence of speculation, it was necessary 'to commence with the simplest social forms in a state as near as possible to their rudimentary condition.
In other words, if we followed the course used in such inquiries, we should penetrate as far as we could in the history of primitive societies. (Maine 1916: 128-9)

The Indian village community was particularly important to Maine, as an example in his argument on the origin of property. Maine thought that contemporary theories on the origin of property placed too much emphasis on the actions of individuals. He argued that 'there is a strong a priori improbability of our obtaining any clue to the early history of property if we confine our notice to the proprietary rights of individuals. It is more than likely that joint-ownership, and not separate ownership, is the really archaic institution, and that the forms of property which will afford us instruction will be those which are associated with the rights of families and groups of kindred. (1916: 217)'

Maine argued that the village community supported this assertion for it was an assemblage of co-proprietors' organised on the model of, and originating from, the patriarchal family (1916: 272). Usually the co-proprietors were kinsmen, and, even if they were not, they regarded themselves as such (1916: 275). Just as Maine held that the principal characteristic of the patriarchal family was the subordination of individual rights to the 'corporation', he also believed that in the village community individual rights were subordinated to the community. Similarly, in the patriarchal family, each person had an ascribed role, according to their age, sex and birthrank, and so, too, in the village community each person had rights and responsibilities fixed by custom.

Although Maine held that 'a body of kindred holding a domain in common, is the simplest form of an Indian village community', he also noted the existence of village servants: 'the Community is more than a brotherhood of relatives and more than an association of partners. It
is an organized society, and, besides providing for the management of the common fund, it seldom fails to provide, by a complete staff of functionaries, for internal government, for police, for the administration of justice, and for the appointment of taxes and public duties' (Maine 1916: 274). Unfortunately, Maine's work adds nothing to our understanding of village servants. Indeed, his views on village servants seem to be anomalous in terms of his statements about the patriarchal community. Maine's emphasis, throughout his discussion, was that in a patriarchal system there is no finely articulated hierarchy of law or government separate from the family's own hierarchy of authority. It would only be in a society where individual rights are respected, that such systems would be necessary. Thus there would seem to be little need for functionaries to administer justice or apportion public duties.

The importance of Maine's views on the village community, in terms of the jajmani system, lies not in what he said about village servants, but in what he said on the nature of Indian society. Maine's emphasis on the village community's denial of the individual contrasting with Western society's celebration of the individual, as summed up in his formula that 'the movement of progressive societies has been from status to contract' (Maine 1916: 174) (status was where a person's relations with others was ascribed, contract was where a person was free to determine his own relations), has been influential ever since.

But, whereas Maine attributed the dominance of status to family, later writers have associated it with caste. Maine's emphasis on the family was undoubtedly because he was interested in making comparisons using the village community to elucidate how modern European institutions had developed. As such, Maine's interest was in what he believed it had in common with other early Indo-European societies, i.e. the patriarchal family.
Maine's emphasis on the subordination of the individual to the community is still a central concept in the 'jajmani debate'.

Maine, Wilks, Rationalism, and the Social Contract

Maine's and Wilk's thoughts on India owed much to the long European tradition of rationalism. The rationalists believed in a 'rational' view of the universe and of man's place in it. They believed that, through the power of induction and deduction, it would be possible to discover 'the laws' that underlay nature. Great progress was being made in the physical sciences, as in the case of Newton's laws of motion. Similarly, they though it should be possible to discover laws underlying the social institutions of man.

According to traditional European views, the West's hierarchical society (at that time) was necessary because it had been ordained by God for the good of man. In particular, the central institution of society, the state, was necessary as men were essentially sinful beings, who had to be preserved from their own evil inclinations. However, the rationalists had a different understanding of society and the state, largely, because they had a very different view of man. They argued that a loving God would not have created an essentially evil being; therefore man's nature must be good. The problem was to answer what purpose society and the state served.

One solution to this problem was to argue that individuals had short-term desires which conflicted with the long-term needs of the general population. To solve this problem they entered into a 'social compact' which established social relations, the laws that protected them and a political structure that enforced the laws (see Hobbes 1981, Rousseau 1968).
The theory of the social compact gave a great impetus towards studying other societies, as it implied that societies were once simpler in nature than they later became. The advocates of the social compact, were interested in finding such simpler societies, either in their own history, or in other areas of the world, both as proof for their theories, and in order to investigate the nature of those relationships. They thought that, in the long period of time that followed the compact in their own society, men had lost sight of the reasons for the compact. This had in part been due to growth of irrational thought through religion. The rationalists were not necessarily opposed to religion, but they were to revelation and mysticism, as they believed all truths were open to logical investigation.

Thus, by finding a society that was still close to its original state, it should be possible to prove the universality of the compacts, and to study their nature. Such societies could be found in two ways, either by looking back into one's own history, or by looking overseas for primitive societies.

The histories produced by those who believed in the social compact tended to have an ahistorical feel about them, as the writers were more interested in proving the existence of laws and institutions that were true for all societies. Therefore, though these histories were preferable to the older dynastic histories, in that they took an interest in society, they still tended to see the difference between societies in superficial terms and thus were unable to explain social change.

However, the interest which they raised in ancient society and ancient law led to genuine rationalist historians, who were more
conscious of the changes taking place in ancient society. The most famous of these historians was Edward Gibbon.

Gibbon (1981) was not interested in an original social compact as such but his view of Rome as a rational society which was slowly undermined by irrational forces had much in common with the earlier theorists. He identified these forces with Christianity. Though the rationalists were not necessarily against the concept of God, they often identified Christianity with revelation and mysticism, which they believed obscured the real truth that was to be found through logical investigation.

The theories of the rationalists had a major influence on concepts of the village community. Wilks in his History of Mysore seems to have had in mind both the social compact and the Greek Republic in his description of the village republic. The former shows in a description that could have come straight from Hobbes or Rousseau:

'Every Indian village is, and appears always to have been, in fact, a separate community or republic; and exhibits a living picture of that state of things which theorists have imagined in the earlier stages of civilization, when men have assembled in communities for the purpose of reciprocally administering to each other's wants' (1810: 117).

Wilks made several references to the Greek Republic as an ideal model for the village republic. He said that the greatest boon that Britain could confer on India was to grant the same autonomy of affairs to the village republic that Rome once gave to the Greek Republics (Wilks 1810 Vol. 1: 196-7).¹⁸

Whereas Wilks used rationalist views in order to examine Indian society, Maine used Indian society in order to examine rationalist concepts. The Indian village community was an ideal concept for this purpose. Maine used the village community to dispute the rationalist belief in 'Natural Law' and to argue against the idea of the social
compact. Maine did this by disputing that ancient society, as represented by the village community, was organized on principles which were equivalent to those used in modern society. If the principles were not equivalent, the concept of a natural law that applied to all societies was meaningless. This logic applied even more strongly to the idea that there was an original covenant, still applying between men. Such a concept was meaningless, if it could be shown that early society was based on different principles of organization than later society. This may be illustrated by Maine's argument that one of the key differences between ancient and modern society was that ancient society was based on the family whereas modern society was based on the individual.

This was symptomatic of the fact that individual-based societies were founded on relations of contract, whereas family-based societies were founded on status. As such, the concept of a social compact was absurd - the very notion of an agreement based on abstract principles was unknown to the society. In Maine's view the advocates of the social compact were putting the cart before the horse. Society did not arise out of an agreement of individuals. Rather, the individual evolved out of society.

Maine argued convincingly that natural law and the social compact were based on idealistic views of what society, law, and the state were about. Maine's argument was that law and the state developed out of the all dominating family of the early village community. Law evolved slowly to meet the specific needs required in societies, at different stages of development. Maine thought that to ignore this would be a dangerous lapse of judgement, for it would lead to the development of unsuitable law.
The difference between Maine and the rationalists was not really that he believed that law should be seen in a historical setting whereas they believed that there was an ideal underlying system of law which they contrasted with the inferior law of the statute book. It was that, whereas the rationalist had a rather static view of society, Maine saw history as the steady progression of society slowly improving itself. Thus, whereas the rationalists admired the 'primitiveness' of the ancient state, Maine denigrated it. For Maine, Europe not Asia was the centre of mankind.

Mukerjee: The Collective Conscious and the Utopian Community

The final writer in the village republic debate to influence Wiser was Radkhamal Mukerjee, Professor of Economics at the University of Lucknow in the early decades of this century. The major influence on Mukerjee was Emile Durkheim who was seeking to explain how the 'utopian' society might be achieved; Mukerjee insisted it existed in the here and now in the Indian village community.

Like the earlier writers Mukerjee compared India and the West, but by contrast made the comparison to India's advantage and emphasised that the West had achieved much in material progress, at the cost of spiritual deprivation. He claimed that Western spiritual deprivation was due to the nature of the Western economy and the Western state. Industrialists had reduced the working people to being wage slaves. They no longer had the time or the control over their lives necessary to develop themselves fully in all spheres of knowledge. The state, instead of intervening to reduce this deprivation, acted solely in the interests of the owners of property.

Thus the economic and social institutions of the West were divorced from 'the individual'. Mukerjee argued that to abolish this
division it was necessary to reorganize the institutions of society. This required the recognition that the concept of 'individualism' is a myth; where the Western individual is by no means in full control of his life. Such a belief merely encouraged the development of an all-powerful state while allowing industrialists to alienate the individual from the ownership and means of production.

Mukerjee claimed the solution was to break down the distinction between the governing and governed, that is between the state and the individual. Mukerjee said that it was increasingly being recognised that,

The old controversy between rights and duties, law and liberty, which is another version of the Individual and the State as fixed and antithetical concepts, is not resolved in the emphasis on mutual interaction, and on the vital process of association which indeed makes the State and remakes the Individual. (Mukerjee 1923: vi)

Essentially, Mukerjee was asserting that true liberty did not consist of the passive allocation of rights by an omniscient state. It consisted in the recognition that the state played an active role in the lives of its citizens, and that, in a truly democratic society, the citizens should actively participate in the state. It was only by doing so that they could fully develop as citizens in the true sense and not just as subjects of the state.

According to Mukerjee, to reduce the state to the level of the governed it was necessary to introduce administrative decentralisation for a decentralized government would be more responsive to local needs. Secondly it was necessary to organize society into its 'economic and functional groups', on professional lines so that people could participate in the economic decisions that affected their lives. In the East this had already happened:

The desire of each economic and functional group to render itself as an autonomous unit is universal among Eastern communities. This has corresponded with the
ethnic and social history of many countries which have left a great part of administration to semi-independent local and communal bodies without the superimposition of the State's authority or sanction. In political evolution these are prior to and independent of the State, and entrusted with the settlements of disputes, the maintenance of schools, temples, mosques, and public works, the relief of distress, the administration of a common fund, and even the protection of property. All this had achieved a degree of economic and political decentralisation, hardly to be found elsewhere. Not decentralisation conceded by a central government, but real decentralisation which reveals the growth of federalism. It is less connected with the fact that China and India form continents of villages than with the organic and functional solidarity of Asian society, from the guild-halls and platforms of their flourishing cities spring the same communal impulse and standards which organise and direct life in family or clan altar, the village shrine, or under the shade of the spreading banyan tree. (1923: xvi)

The integration of economic and functional groups into local assemblies prevented their conflicting interests leading to the rise of narrow-minded vested interest groups. Mukerjee stated that,

In the East there has been a differentiation of social and economic functions and interests and their corresponding organs, the occupational or professional guilds, unions and brotherhoods. But at the same time there has been an interweaving of divergent interests in the local assemblies and unions which are peacefully orientated at the bottom of the social structure, thus preventing the rise and development of organised political classes, identifying themselves with particular and exclusive economic interests. Neither the evils of party system nor of class rule would be natural in a system which has sought to harmonise conflicting interests and functions in a long unending chain of free local and functional bodies, while the all-pervasive authority of the modern State is distributed here among a number of more or less independent intermediary jurisdictions. (1923: 89-90)

In rural India, the village community formed the context within which the functional groups and the assembly, operated,

The most difficult thing for a foreigner to understand about the village community is that it is a functional and territorial group in one, representing and fulfilling common interests, economic, juridical and religious. The indigenous polity has expanded both in the area and the occupation lines and combined the geographical basis for certain types of problems,
particularly those in which the interests of consumers is dominantly concerned, and the functional basis for working out a delimitation of occupation and profession, confiding the care of their problems to those most concerned in them. (1923: 354)

In the village community, people belonged to their own occupational guilds which were usually but not always coterminus with caste. Each caste had its own panchayat (council) which had full jurisdiction over matters that only affected the caste, such as marriage disputes - each caste being endogamous. Questions that affected individuals from more than one caste, a category that covered most occupational disputes, would be dealt with by a general village assembly representing all the members of the village. The village assembly acted both to complement the caste panchayat in dealing with matters that the latter were not competent to deal with, and to supplement them, in supporting their decisions.

An example was given by Mukerjee. If someone refused to obey a panchayat decree, he was ostracized. Mukerjee wrote,

To carry this into effect, the caste Panchayats must have to refer to the Village Assembly, which alone has control over the village, and the barber and the washerman.(19) (1923: 272)

Mukerjee concluded from this that,

...the strength and efficiency of caste-government depended upon the active co-operation of each caste with the village government as a whole. Village autonomy, and caste autonomy, indeed, mutually support each other. (1923: 272)

Mukerjee's model of the village community is reminiscent in some ways of Maine's. They both argued that it was based on status. The major difference between the two was that Mukerjee rejected as illusory a vital premise in Maine's contract theory: that in Western society individuals are free to behave as they wish. By so doing he was rejecting the premise that the movement of progressive societies had been from status to contract. More fundamentally, Maine's views
implied that there was a hidden individual waiting to emerge given the right conditions. The individual would then be able to organise his relations with other individuals through contracts. In contrast, Mukerjee believed that the individual had to develop through participation in society.

Status fitted more naturally into Mukerjee's ideas than contract. However, while Mukerjee accepted Maine's position that in the village community an individual's social relations were determined by his structural position within a group, he rejected Maine's argument that those individuals of high status had absolute power over those of inferior status. Mukerjee said that, although people with high status did have great authority over those below them, this authority was not arbitrary. Those who had such authority had to respect the rights of all. Furthermore, authority over inferiors also meant, in the context of the village community, great obligations to them. As Mukerjee put it,

...the discretion of the Hindu patria potestas or any other status is a bundle of duties with a conception of right in due subservience to the proper performance of those duties. (1923: 123)

For Mukerjee status can be related to the Hindu concept of "dharma". A definition of "dharma" is "right behaviour" (Concise Oxford Dictionary). This means in its most immediate context, how each person should behave according to his status as defined by caste, sex, age, office etc. In a wider sense, dharma means an order in which everybody has certain duties to perform for the total good. These duties are to be performed according to dharma in the first sense. For example, as a member of a family, a man would have his dharma as a son: he had to show respect towards his parents who had given him the gift of life, and look after them in their old age. He also had his dharma as a husband, as a father, and as a son-in-law. Similarly, as a member
of a caste, he had to follow the dharma of that caste which meant behaving in certain ways towards members of other castes, and following the caste occupation. A man might also have dharma as the hereditary bearer of an office, such as the king, or on a minor level, a village watchman. Thus, an individual's dharma was made up of totally fixed roles, such as membership of caste, or roles determined by his structural position as in a family, which is affected by the developmental cycle. The only exception to this statement is the ascetic who renounces secular life. But there were attempts to incorporate this too. It was argued that there should be four stages in a man's life, as a child, a student, a husband and father, and finally an ascetic.

An individual's dharma was not to be taken lightly. It was better to do one's own dharma than somebody else's, even if this meant going against personal sentiment, or committing a sin. An individual's dharma was assigned by God for reasons of his own which no mere mortal could expect to understand. Thus Krishna told Arjuna, a Kshatrya, who was contrite at being forced to kill his cousins, the Kauravas, that he must do his caste duty. Indeed, doing one's caste duty was the proper way of worshipping him, Krishna (God). To quote,

By dedicating the work that is proper (to his caste) to Him who is the source of the activity of all beings, by whom this whole universe was spun, a man attains perfection-and-success.

Better (to do) one's own (caste) duty, though devoid of merit, than (to do) another's, however well performed. By doing the work prescribed by his own nature a man meets with no defilement.

Never should a man give up the work to which he is born, defective though it be: for every enterprise is choked by defects, as fire by smoke.

(Zaehner 1969: 394-5)

The relevance of dharma to Mukerjee was that it provided him with a view of Indian society in which individuals worked for the good of all. While dharma served as the rationale for people to co-operate
with each other, the functional group provided the organisation which made it possible.\footnote{21}

More generally Mukerjee's ideas were clearly largely drawn from those of Emile Durkheim who modified Maine's distinction between societies based on status and societies based on contract into a distinction between societies based on 'mechanical solidarity' and others based on 'organic solidarity'. He made this distinction because he argued that no society could be based on contract alone, as contracts themselves depended on the pre-existing sanction of society.

Nevertheless, the moral rules suitable for societies in which contract played a major role differed from those where it was of minor importance. Contract was more important in societies with a highly developed division of labour. Such societies had an innate social cohesion which he termed 'organic solidarity' because individuals were naturally dependent on each other, allowing the organization of societies on a hitherto unprecedented scale.

This very dependence meant, however, that those in a weak position in the division of labour were open to exploitation by those in a stronger position. Durkheim argued that such a situation would not only be unjust but it would also be dangerously unstable, and would inevitably result in the destruction of social relations.

Durkheim argued that moral rules were necessary to prevent such a situation (which he called 'anomie') occurring. Durkheim claimed:

> That such anarchy is an unhealthy phenomenon is clearly very evident, since it runs counter to the very purpose of society, which is to eliminate or at least to moderate warfare among men, by subjecting the physical law of the strongest to a higher law.

(Durkheim 1984: xxxiii)

Only a social rule can serve as a barrier against abuses of power for only,
a duly constituted society enjoys the moral and material supremacy indispensable for prescribing what the law should be for individuals, for the only moral entity which is above that of private individuals is the one constituted by the collectivity.

(Durkheim 1984: xxxiv)

The role of society is not passive in formulating these rules, it:

intervenes actively and positively in the formulation of each rule. Firstly it is the arbiter appointed by nature for disentangling conflicting interests and assigning appropriate bounds to each. Next, it has a paramount interest in the maintenance of order and peace. If anomie is an evil it is above all because society suffers through it, since it cannot exist without cohesion and regulation. Thus moral or legal rules, essentially expressed social needs which society alone can identify. They rest upon a climate of opinion, and all opinion is a collective matter, the result of being worked out collectively. To be shot of anomie a group must thus exist or be formed within which can be drawn up the system of rules that it is now lacking.

(Durkheim 1984: xxxiv-xxxv)

However, though western political institutions represented the collectivity these were unsuited to introducing moral rules into economic relations, the major problem area. This required separate institutions:

Political society as a whole, or the state, clearly cannot discharge this function. Economic life, because it is very special and is daily becoming increasingly specialized, lies outside their authority and sphere of action. Activity within a profession can only be effectively regulated through a group close enough to that profession to be thoroughly cognisant of how it functions, capable of perceiving all its needs and following every fluctuation in them. The sole group that meets these conditions is that constituted by all those working in the same industry, assembled together and organized in a single body. This is what is termed a corporation or professional group.

(Durkheim 1984: xxxv)

Unfortunately institutions such as the medieval guild had decayed in the West. Unions were not professional groups for they represented only parts of and not entire professions. Indeed their very existence assumed power conflicts whereas in a true collectivity such power conflicts would not arise.
In contrast, societies with an undeveloped division of labour lacked such an organic solidarity. Morality alone imposed social cohesion. It was only by people having a strongly shared set of beliefs, in Durkheim's terminology a 'collective conscious', that people could behave 'socially'. These shared beliefs were protected by moral sanctions characteristically expressed in religious terms (Durkheim 1984: 119-120).

Clearly, Mukerjee was affected by Durkheim's arguments. His view of the alienation of the Western individual has much in common with Durkheimian anomie. His solution, the creation of functional groups, was identical to Durkheim's. The difference was that Mukerjee claimed that they already existed in the Indian village community in the form of castes and caste panchayats.

Nevertheless, despite Mukerjee's view that the village community represented the perfect solution to the problems of organic solidarity, his concept of the village community was much closer to Durkheim's model of mechanical solidarity.

Durkheim's concept of the collective conscious was to exercise a strong influence on later concepts of the village community. This is evident in Wiser's and Dumont's views of the subordination of the individual to the whole, and in Dumont's concept of the subordination of politics and economics to ideology.

Mukerjee's importance was that he recognised caste as being a central institution in the village community. The concept of the interdependent castes, where everybody has ascribed rights and duties, provided Wiser with a model for the jajmani system as is well illustrated by the following quote from Wiser.

The Hindu Jajmani System represents an interrelationship built upon clearly defined function. It represents the organisation of a community based on the Hindu belief that God 'assigned separate duties and
occupations to each individual from birth', these
duties being as fixed as the functions of a father and
mother in a family. Its strength in giving stability
and psychical integration to Indian village communities
throughout the centuries is undisputed. (1958: 145)

Both the terminology and the concepts in this passage are clearly
derived from Mukerjee's writings. The only noticeable differences from
Mukerjee's works are the greater emphasis on the exchange of caste
services rather than on functional government, and the use of the term,
the Hindu jajmani system.

Wiser: The Community in a New Guise

Wiser was, thus, more truly a participant in the village
community/jajmani system debate rather than the creator of an entirely
new debate on the jajmani system. Nevertheless, he was important, for,
by concentrating on a new aspect of the village community, the jajmani
system, he gave new life to the debate. This occurred, I believe, for
four main reasons.

The first follows from Wiser's emphasis on intercaste ties and the
exchange of services. His emphasis on these two points was largely due
to the fact that he was undertaking, '... a survey of the social,
religious and economic life of a typical North Indian village' (Wiser
1971: xiii). He was interested in the relation between society and
economic development, in contrast for instance to Mukerjee who was
arguing the case for political reform. This shift marked a major step
forward for it involved the recognition that castes had to be seen in
relation to one another and not as autonomous bodies.

The emphasis on caste appealed to anthropologists and sociologists
who were interested in what distinguished India and not, as Maine was,
in what India shared with the Indo-European past. For the social
scientists caste could be seen either as an alternative to class or as an extreme form of class. Either way it was worthy of study.

The second reason for Wiser's success is his use of 'system'. The term jajmani system emphasised Wiser's belief that he was dealing with an alternative economic and social system to that of capitalism, wherein goods and services were exchanged for harvest payments, gifts and village concessions, without the need for cash. Thus, whereas the term 'community' had emphasised the parallels between Europe and India, the term system emphasised the differences.

The third reason why the jajmani system was attractive to social scientists was that, in contrast to previous writers, Wiser had offered firm ethnographic evidence for his conclusions. He had, afterall, carried out a social survey of the Indian village. Furthermore, he supported his thesis by identifying certain traits as characterising the jajmani system (e.g. harvest payments, village concessions, and hereditary ties) which were open to study either to prove or disprove Wiser's hypothesis or merely to indicate where the system might exist.

The fourth reason is that his model of the jajmani system offered anthropologists ethnographic evidence for a prima facie challenge to both orthodox economics and the theory of economic determinism.

Proponents of orthodox economics attempted to discover universal tenets applicable to economies. The jajmani system challenged them by apparently providing an example of an economy in which the profit motive was subordinated to the needs of the village community, exchange being regulated by custom, and not by individual self-interest.²²

The jajmani system challenged economic determinist arguments which held that the social and political institutions of a society reflect its economy by offering an example of an economy which apparently reflected its social organisation. The argument centred on the nature
of the jajmani tie. According to the economic determinists the relationship between the two castes involved in a jajmani tie was dependent upon each caste's access to resources. Their view implied that the relationship between the two castes would be an exploitative one - of the economically dependent caste by the caste which controlled the resources.

Their opponents argued that exchanges between castes did not just reflect power relations derived from control over resources but that the very exchange itself helped to create the social relations. The castes themselves existed to supply each other with their respective services. This was made necessary by the ideology of purity which stated that certain castes of great purity - in particular the Brahmans who were necessary to maintain relations with the Gods - had to be protected from pollution by castes of lesser purity.

In the following chapter I will discuss the arguments of a proponent of each side of this debate, Oscar Lewis and Louis Dumont.
CHAPTER 2: THE JAJMANI SYSTEM: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL DEBATE

Since Wiser, two main interpretations of the jajmani system have been advanced: jajmani as 'exploitation' and jajmani as an ideologically based exchange system. The first is representative of an 'economic determinist' position, the second an 'ideological determinist' view. I will discuss the 'exploitation' hypothesis first.

Lewis: The Stark Community

The most influential 'exploitationist' has been Oscar Lewis. Lewis came to India as a 'consulting anthropologist' of the Ford Foundation in the early 1950s (Lewis 1958: vii-xiii). This was in the period just after the Second World War (and Indian independence) when American foundations, led by Ford, believed that they could supply the money and the skills to cure poverty, provided they knew what was needed. Thus, Lewis' village study, like Wiser's, was largely an attempt to identify the factors influencing economic and social development. However, whereas Wiser emphasised how well the traditional social system was adjusted to the poverty and insecurity of agrarian India, Lewis argued that poverty and insecurity were used to coerce and exploit the weak.

Lewis attributed his definition of the jajmani system directly to Wiser:

It is greatly to Wiser's credit that he was able to characterise jajmani relations as a system ... Under this system each caste group within a village is expected to give certain standardised services to the families of other castes. A Khati (carpenter) repairs tools, for example; a Nai (barber) cuts hair; but they do not necessarily perform these services for everyone. Each man works for a particular family or group of families with which he has hereditary ties. His father worked for the same families before him, and his son will continue to work for them, the occupation or services being determined by caste ... It is a characteristic of this system to operate without much exchange of money. For it is not an open-market
economy, and the ties between jajman and kamin are not those of employer and employee in the capitalistic system. The jajman compensates his kamins for their work through periodic payments in cash or grain, made throughout the year on a daily, monthly, or bi-yearly basis. Kamins may also receive benefits such as free food, clothing, and residence site, the use of certain tools and raw materials, and so forth. To Wiser these concessions represent the strength of the system and are more important than the monetary payments. (Lewis 1958: 55-57)

Unlike Wiser, Lewis did not see jajmani as a symmetrical system, where 'each in turn is master. Each in turn is servant' (Wiser, 1958: xxi). He claimed that the landowner was always master, never servant. Those farmers who had enough land to support themselves did not supply jajmani services but only received them. Wiser saw this as evidence of the breakdown of the jajmani system, the better off farmers no longer wished to carry out their caste duties, while the lower castes no longer could carry out their caste duties, as their services were not in demand. Thus caste and occupation no longer matched, a situation which Wiser perceived was destroying the basis of the jajmani system. For Lewis, the jajmani system was simply a means by which landowners ensured themselves a secure source of labour. He wrote:

...landownership is clearly the single most important determinant of power in the jajmani system. Indeed, a major function of the system is to ensure a stable labour supply for the dominant agricultural caste in a particular region by limiting the mobility of the lower castes, especially those who assist in agricultural work. (Lewis, 1958: xii)

The jajmani system made it the kamin's obligation to supply his service rather than the landowner's responsibility to hire the kamin. The kamin either had to provide the service himself, or to ensure that someone else provided it. Lewis noted that,

If a kamin leaves the village, he must get someone to take his place, usually a member of the same joint family'. (Lewis 1958: 57)
When the kamin died it became his family's responsibility to ensure the continuity of the service, either by one of the family members or by an outsider (usually a relative or an affine).

In return for these restrictions, the kamins gained certain benefits - the most important of which ensured security in a society where access to food and the other needs of life was uncertain. The obverse of having to supply services to the jajmans was that the kamin was guaranteed the need for his services. Moreover, he could rely on help from his jajmans in cases of trouble. Lewis pointed out that this had the effect of locking the kamin more tightly into the jajman's hold:

All the Bhangis at Rampur are heavily into debt and owe money to the Jats. In the past, they used to borrow money from their jajmans, either interest-free or at very low rates'.

(Lewis 1958: 70-1)

Lewis, like Wiser earlier, suggested that the jajmani system was now disintegrating. He attributed this to the dissolution of the economic and political integration of the castes. Changes in political conditions meant that higher castes were no longer in a position to exercise the control the jajmani system had provided them over the lower castes. Two critical political changes were the abolition of zamindari tenure, and the repeal of traditional law. Both these measures came with independence.

According to Lewis, the abolition of zamindari tenure removed one of the landowners' main instruments of control over kamins, 'village concessions' (Lewis 1958: 80-2). Lewis (1958: 57) agreed with Wiser's view that concessions were more important for the kamin's welfare than the jajman's direct payments for they included rent-free land, house sites, grazing land, firewood etc. While these were normally considered part of the kamin's rights, any challenge to the jajman's position could lead to their loss. The ending of zamindari tenure
apparently made these rights general property, thereby destroying what Lewis regarded as one of the main props of the jajmani system.

The repeal of traditional law was equally important. Under the British, traditional caste relations were covered by the wajib-ul-arz. The wajib-ul-arz was the written version of the traditional law of each village (Lewis 1958: 74). It was enforceable under British law (Lewis 1958: 60).

These changing conditions provided fertile ground for outside reform movements such as the Arya Sumaj and the Congress Party to encourage the lower castes to assert their independence, especially by avoiding those actions which expressed their low status. In particular, this meant giving up activities which were regarded as polluting. Lewis gave an example of a low caste attempting to do just this:

With the coming of independence, the position of the Camars (27) was strengthened both legally and ideologically. Now the Jats could no longer enforce the provisions of the wajib-ul-arz, which specified the traditional village duties. The Camars stopped the payment of the house tax and the handling of dead animals. However, with the more limited opportunities for employment after the war, the Camars once again became dependent on the Jats... (28)

Giving up the practice of removing dead animals was a gradual process. For a while the Camars removed only those animals that died a lingering death from badly smelling wounds. The Jats disposed of other carcasses by burial. This violated provisions laid down in the wajib-ul-arz. Previously, when a Jat had buried a bullock, the Camars had reported the matter to the police, who then had the carcasses dug up and turned over to them. If the skin were decomposed, the Jat was made to pay the cost of the skin to his Camar...

In 1934 - the Camars temporarily gave up removing dead animals, partly because of objections raised by a doctor, who claimed that they were skinned too near the villagers' homes. Two years later, when a different place was set aside for the skinning, the removal of dead animals was resumed rather half-heartedly by the Camars. In 1947, on the eve of Indian independence, the Camars at Rampur gave up the practice altogether.' (Lewis 1958: 74-5)
The conflicts engendered by lower caste aspirations to improve their status, and their economic and social well-being, was leading, according to Lewis, to the undermining of the jajmani system. Not only were the lower castes unwilling to accept the patronage of the higher castes, but the various castes were no longer willing to trust each other to carry out their obligations according to the jajmani system. These developments encouraged on-the-spot payments and the collapse of the long term relationships between the families concerned.

Lewis argued that caste conflict had led to castes poaching on each other's occupations. This was endangering the whole basis of the jajmani system—the exchange of caste services. The lower castes no longer felt obliged to provide services to the higher castes. More importantly, the higher castes were willing in times of conflict to carry out those services themselves. Lewis gave one example of how this happened:

The famine of 1944-45 damaged the jajmani relationships between the Khatis and the Jats. Since grain was scarce, the Jats decided to reduce the customary dues. The village panchayat accordingly announced that the grain payments would be half the traditional amount that year. The Rampur Khatis and Lohars did not agree to these conditions and said that they would not work for their jajmans if they insisted on such terms. Six Jat families then broke off jajmani relationships with the Khatis and now do their own work, or else get it done by cash payments. Three of the Jat families have taken up carpentry. (Lewis 1958: 62-3)

Perhaps the most fundamental change of all, upon which the legal, political and social changes depended, were changes in the economic circumstances of the villagers. Technological change meant that many of the crafts carried out by specialised castes could be performed more cheaply by outside manufacturers. On the other hand, economic development meant that the lower castes could obtain work, particularly outside the village in occupations where, at least ostensibly, caste was not a factor. In this regard, it may be noted that Rampur is a
A final factor which greatly influenced the economic situation of villagers was, Lewis argued, population growth. The resultant land division and consequent impoverishment meant that even the families of high caste farmers were forced to work in the fields themselves. This family work, together with the fact that smaller holdings demanded less work, resulted in a reduced demand for field labour (as noted above, Lewis regarded field labour as having been covered by the jajmani system). He gave an example of how this affected one caste:

The women in most of the Jat and Brahman families at Rampur now handle cow dung and make cow-dung cakes themselves. However, the Bhangis are still indispensable as sweepers and removers of refuse from the home. So the jajmani relationship persists, although at a low rate of return for the Bhangis. (Lewis 1958: 70)

To sum up, one may note that what truly distinguished Lewis' analysis of jajmani from Wiser's was his rejection of Wiser's concept of community. The only sense in which a village community could be said to have existed in Lewis' writing was as the community of landowners. However, it was a much less coherent concept than that, for instance, of Mark Wilks, for Lewis' emphasis was on the individual interests of the landowners, and not the 'community' of the landowners. Lewis' rejection of the village community was reflected in his definition of, and explanation for, the jajmani system, in both of which he differed significantly from Wiser.

In Wiser's writings, the village was portrayed as a community where everyone had a right to share in the village resources so long as they carried out their caste duties. The exchange of caste services, that was the jajmani system, was the basis of the village community.
These exchanges created an integrated organic society, in contrast to the atomistic society of the West.

In contrast, in Lewis' analysis of jajmani, caste was relatively unimportant. Jajmani was what Lewis' student Beidelman called 'feudal' (Beidelman, 1959: 5), in that it was a way by which the landlords could exercise power over the labourers and extract cheap and reliable power. Lewis, too, maintained that the basis of the jajmani system was the control of land. Caste merely gave extra stability and strength to this arrangement but it was not the cause of it. Caste strengthened the arrangement by allocating a specific occupation to each caste, thereby restricting people's choices in doing as they wished.

In regards to Lewis' definition of jajmani, the major implication of his rejection of the village community was that it allowed him to widen the definition of services included within the jajmani system. If the jajmani system was primarily seen not in terms of creating village unity, but only as providing the landowners with labour, it was not necessary to restrict the jajmani system to caste services. Lewis' inclusion of services in the jajmani system which were not governed by caste monopolies made any distinction between village servants and jajmani servants irrelevant. Both types of 'servant' worked for the landowners.

Lewis, by repudiating Wiser's concept of community, rejected the view that Indian society could be studied as though it were shaped by different forces from those of Western society. The same forces of individuals seeking security and well-being for themselves and their families underlay all societies. These forces explain the jajmani system which benefited the landlords by providing them with cheap secure labour. The labourers were hardly in a position to reject the
system; besides, it had the advantage from their point of view of providing them with some security.

In view of their differing points of view, it is not surprising that, while both Lewis and Wiser claimed that the jajmani system was breaking down, they differed as regards to the implications of this. Wiser emphasized the breaking down of community spirit, and the creation of an atomistic society. Lewis, in keeping with his 'dynamic' model, saw the collapse of the jajmani system, unleashing built-up tensions between the castes. The lower castes were no longer under the power of the upper classes and would try to assert their 'rights'. In Lewis' words,

As the jajmani system declines, a great deal of tension is bound to develop between the upper and lower castes, particularly since the system's decline is concomitant with a great increase in population and a decrease in the size of land holdings. Although the dominant position of the Jats is not yet in jeopardy in Rampur, their influence over the lower castes has been much reduced, and the demands of the lower castes have increased. In would, therefore, seem that the Jajmani System contains some explosive potentialities and that, as the system continues to weaken, we may expect to see a heightening of the conflict between the dominant and subordinate castes in villages such as Rampur.

(Lewis, 1958: 82-3)

Lewis suggested that the hierarchy of the caste system was breaking down but that castes themselves were not. Indeed, Lewis quoted M. N. Srinivas to the effect that they were setting up caste advancement societies to help the various members of the caste, and were even becoming influential political pressure groups.

Dumont: Jajmani, An Aspect of Caste

Before discussing my interpretation of jajmani, it is necessary to discuss one more writer, Louis Dumont. Dumont differed from the previous writers I have been examining primarily in the way he defined 'system'.
In Wiser's work, the system was the series of economic exchanges which tied the castes of a village into a single economic and social community. The 'system' of the jajmani system was equivalent to the 'community' of the village community. Indeed Wiser referred to the jajmani system as being what was left of the ancient village commune. The village as a political unit, the village republic, no longer existed, but a degraded form of the village community - the economic and social unit - did. Wiser's contribution was to reveal the institutional basis of this community, as a series of exchanges which made up a jajmani 'system'.

Lewis referred to Wiser's discovery of system in jajmani relationships as being his major contribution to anthropology. However, whereas Wiser used system as being equivalent to the entire economic and social system, a series of ties integrating people, Lewis was merely referring to a method of extracting labour. The system was restricted to the patron-client relationship involved. It was an aspect of village life, but not all of it.

Dumont used system in quite a different way from either of these writers. Dumont saw system as an ideological model rather than as an empirical system of social and economic relations. Dumont asked:

...what is to be understood by 'system' of castes? The word assumes two different senses, an empirical sense and an ideological one. The set of actual castes which are found together in a definite territory may be spoken of as a geographically circumscribed system of castes...there are good reasons for thinking that in the past the caste system in fact existed in the form of such concrete wholes spatially juxtaposed and each corresponding to a small political unit. It is therefore useful to consider things in this way, but from the theoretical point of view it is neither sufficient nor primary, for these concrete wholes, once isolated, are seen to be alike and to rest on common principles. In this sense, one can speak of the caste system as a pan-Indian institution. At this level, the caste system is above all a system of ideas and values, a formal, comprehensible, rational system, a system in
the intellectual sense of the term...Our first task is to grasp this intellectual system, this ideology.
(Dumont, 1980: 35)

Although, in this quote, Dumont was defining system with regard to the caste system, clearly the same principles were applicable to the jajmani system. This would mean that the jajmani system could be seen either as a substantive system existing in a local area or as an ideological model. The substantive approach is similar to that taken by Wiser and Lewis. For Dumont, as a structuralist, it was the definition of system as an ideological construct which mattered most. Dumont perceived the jajmani system as a series of ideas linking clients and patrons. By defining the jajmani system in terms of ideology, Dumont rendered the concept of the village community irrelevent. The jajmani system was no longer a community of social and economic relations but a theoretical model for understanding how caste affected one particular type of economic tie. What the ideas constituting the jajmani system were will be outlined below.

Dumont was interested in the jajmani system only as part of a general analysis of Indian society. Within this general interest, jajmani had an important place, as it showed, according to Dumont, how India's economic and political institutions were affected by ideology. Therefore, to comprehend properly Dumont's position on jajmani, it is necessary to summarise his views of Indian society in general.

In Dumont's major work, Homo Hierarchicus, he was attempting to bridge the gap between the study of Indology and the study of anthropology. A major achievement of Indology had been the elucidation of the Hindu texts, but Indologists had not studied the relationship between the texts and contemporary Indian society as this was not one of their goals. Unfortunately, anthropologists had almost entirely
ignored the Hindu texts and Hindu ideology in the study of Indian society.

In accordance with the method of participant observation, many anthropological studies distinguished between people's behaviour, which the studies called 'society', and their beliefs, which the studies called 'culture'. The former represented the 'real' social institutions, the latter being merely an epiphenomenon. Such studies shied away from using the ancient texts on the grounds that they were a subjective aspect of local culture rather than the objective analysis of a trained anthropologist.

In Dumont's view such an approach was dangerously ethnocentric for it interpreted Indian institutions in terms of western ideology, thereby arriving at an extremely limited and distorted view of Indian society (Dumont 1980: 2-3). This was very similar to Maine's view that no-one could interpret ancient institutions who did not understand the ancient mind. By so doing western anthropologists had negated one of their principal purposes in studying Indian society, to use it as a comparison for western society. It was necessary to study Indian (or any foreign) society in terms of its own ideology. This required a systematic examination of what Indian ideology was.

Dumont admitted that an exploration of ideology would be an almost impossibly difficult task for two reasons. Firstly, Indian concepts were very different from Western concepts, and secondly, ideology, like language, was only partly conscious; people could manipulate their ideology but they could not escape from it, that is they could not analyse it objectively, as they had nothing with which to compare it.

There was no easy solution to either of these problems. However, the first problem could be lessened by making use of India's own literary tradition. Although Indian ideology could be painstakingly
analysed by the anthropologists, it was simpler and often preferable to build on what the ancients had already done.

The apparent difficulty with this approach is that the ideology being discussed was religious and the ancient writings were largely religious instruction. The writings were concerned with how religious duties, government etc. could be organised in accordance with religious dharma. Hence, the ancient writers were interested in instructing their readers on how they should behave, and not in describing how they did behave. They were dealing with ideal types, not with social reality. For Dumont this was not a major difficulty, for he did not expect the texts to provide realistic social models, but only to indicate the ideological basis of the society.

Perhaps a more fundamental question is whether the ancient texts are still relevant. The texts do not describe contemporary Indian society, for Indian society has undoubtedly changed greatly. They may, however, still be relevant for studying ideology. Dumont did not explicitly comment on this point perhaps because it did not seem to be a difficulty to him. He appears to have assumed that Indian ideology did not change. This contrasts with his assertion that western individualism is a recent ideology (Dumont, 1980: 40-1).

The final difficulty with this approach is whether the literary tradition reflected the ideology of the whole society or merely that of the elite. It is implicit in the caste system that there could not be a single set of beliefs, for each caste will have different perceptions according to its position in the caste system. A higher caste, for instance, will be more interested in moksha, liberation from the world of daily existence, than will a lower caste who will be more concerned with daily problems. The higher castes will, therefore, perceive religion essentially in terms transcending daily existence and will be
interested in the Vedic gods who do so. The lower castes will see
religion in terms of solving everyday problems, and worship those gods,
usually the village gods and goddesses, who are most likely to help in
that.

This difference in religious motivation and behaviour is logical
as the higher castes are much more likely to obtain moksha because they
have gained merit from good actions in previous lives (the same good
actions that are responsible for their present high ranking). The
Hindus explain the differing interests of the higher and lower castes
in terms of bodily humours. The high castes have a higher proportion
of sattva which makes them more spiritually inclined. Thus, there is
not a simple collective conscience of the kind envisaged by Durkheim.

Dumont accepts that castes do have different beliefs but regards
this as unimportant. He says that to equate the views of Harijans with
those of Brahmans is to impose an assumption of western individualism.
In a hierarchical society, it is the views of those at the top which
matter (Dumont 1980: xxi), and which, presumably, are systematized and
so appeal to anthropologists. The views of others are, by implication,
the pale imitation of their 'betters' views. Though this view seems
elitist it is my impression from discussion with Harijans and others
that it may be correct.

Dumont argued that the second problem of examining ideology, that
of examining one's own ideology objectively could be solved by use of
the comparative method, in this case contrasting Indian and Western
society to examine the ideology in each. He argued that the
comparative method was particularly important in determining what was
ideological and what was not.  

Though Dumont believed that Western society was based on
'substance', he claimed that Indian society was based on 'structure'.
He quoted Louis de Broglie with reference to physics to illustrate the difference between structure and substance:

[In quantum physics]...the individuality of the elementary particles is the more attenuated the more they are engaged in interaction. As, on the one hand, there is no completely isolated particle and as, on the other hand, the bonding of the particles into a system is practically never sufficiently complete for something of their individuality not to remain, it can be seen that reality seems in general to be somewhere between the concept of autonomous individuality and the concept of a completely fused system.

(Dumont, 1980: 40)

Dumont concluded that,

The solution in our subject is to avoid a mixture and to speak either one or the other of two languages. This is possible because one corresponds well enough to modern mentality, the other to the mentality I shall call traditional because it is dominant in the societies which have preceded our own. According to one approach, a system is conceived as made up of objects each with its own essence, and it is in virtue of this essence, together with a definite law of interaction, that they act on one another: for example, physical bodies each have their own mass and act on each other to an extent determined by this mass and their relative position...According to the other approach, the 'elements' in themselves of which the system seems to be composed are disregarded, and only considered as the product of the network of relations; this network would then constitute the system.

(Dumont, 1980: 39-40)

Once anthropologists realised that India was a structural society, they would go much of the way toward understanding Indian ideology.

Dumont claimed that,

The passage from one mentality or state of mind to another, from the world of structure to the world of substance or conversely, is no doubt the major problem in the comparison of societies. Here we have the good fortune to find ourselves faced with a world which is structural to a very high degree. This deserves a moment's reflection, for it is the prime reason for the difficulty we have in understanding the world of caste. As soon as we hear of human groups which separate themselves, distinguish themselves, isolate themselves fiercely from one another, we believe we know what we have to deal with: very well, we think, we know about this, it is rather like what we do as individuals, these castes resemble our precious modern persons, they are just so many little societies shut in on themselves
and juxtaposed as we are juxtaposed in our fellow men in modern society. Well, nothing is more false. The caste isolates itself by submission to the whole, like an arm which does not wish to marry its cells to those of the stomach...While in our society the reference is to the elements, in this society it is to the whole. (Dumont, 1980: 140-41) (34)

The structuralist institution par excellence in India was the caste system. Dumont argued that the caste system could be reduced to the basic concept of hierarchy. In the West, hierarchy had the connotation of power: the power of one individual over another but according to Dumont, hierarchy in India did not have this connotation, nor, he claimed, had it always had it in Europe. He pointed out that the dictionary defined hierarchy in terms of status, not power:

...hierarchy in India certainly involves gradation, but is neither power nor authority; these must be distinguished. We can already do so within our own tradition. Thus the Shorter Oxford Dictionary says under 'hierarchy': '(1) Each of the three divisions of angels...(2) Rule or dominion in holy things...(3) An organised body of priests or clergy in successive orders or grades...(4) A body of persons or things ranked in grades, orders, or classes, one above another.' It can be seen that the original sense of the term concerned religious ranking. We shall keep to this sense here, making it somewhat more precise. We shall admit that, any idea of command being left aside, the religious way of seeing things requires a classification of beings according to their degree of dignity. Yet the presence of religion is not indispensable, for the same applies whenever the differential elements of a whole are judged in relation to the whole, even if the judgement is philosophical as in Plato's Republic. (Dumont, 1980: 65-66)

Thus, hierarchy was not equivalent to power, but rather to status, which in the case of India meant religious status. The distinction between power and status was particularly important in the caste system. One difficulty which anthropologists had when analysing the caste system, was that, in many villages and regions, the most powerful and wealthy caste did not have the highest rank. Dumont argued that this supported his contention that caste was based on religious hierarchy, not power. The Brahmans who had the highest rank in the
Caste hierarchy were not necessarily particularly powerful, indeed they were often poor and dependent on the patronage of lesser castes. They ranked highest because of their intrinsic religious merit. Similarly, the Harijan castes ranked lowest because they had least religious merit.

Dumont emphasised hierarchy as a structural concept by defining it as:

...the principle by which the elements of a whole are ranked in relation to the whole, it being understood that in the majority of societies it is religion which provides the view of the whole, and that the ranking will thus be religious in nature. (Dumont, 1980: 66)

In essence, he was arguing that in a hierarchy all the ranked elements reflected a single religious principle. This was in contrast to the atomistic society of the West, where 'hierarchy' was simply the reflection of the power that groups or elements had over other groups or elements.

Dumont argued that the religious principle which underlay hierarchy took the form of an opposition between purity and impurity. Dumont used the opposition of purity and impurity to explain the caste system. For his analysis, Dumont borrowed Bouglé's definition of the caste system:

According to him [Bouglé], the caste system is composed of hereditary groups...which are both distinguished from one another and connected together in three ways:

(1) by gradation and status or hierarchy;
(2) by detailed rules aimed at ensuring their separation;
(3) by divisions of labour and the interdependence which results from it.

Bouglé sometimes tended to separate these three aspects from one another. However, it is obvious that all three exist together and that their separation is an analytic distinction introduced by the observer ... The three 'principles' rest on one fundamental conception and are reducible to a single true principle, namely the opposition of the pure and the impure. This opposition underlies hierarchy, which is the superiority of the pure to the impure, underlies separation because the pure and the impure must be kept
separate, and underlies the division of labour because pure and impure occupations must likewise be kept separate. The whole is founded on the necessary and hierarchical coexistence of the two opposites.

(Dumont, 1980: 43)

The pure-impure opposition, provided a single principle which explained the great variety of forms which characterised the caste system as described by ethnographers. Caste hierarchy differed between villages, and between regions. Many villages lacked castes found in neighbouring villages, or alternatively had different sub-castes carrying out particular occupations. Even the exact position which a caste had in the hierarchy differed between villages. At the regional level the differences were even greater than they were at the village level, in that the criteria by which the castes were ranked differed. Dumont argued that these were not important problems for, although caste rank did differ, and although different criteria were used, the basic principle of purity and impurity still applied: for example, various aspects of lifestyle or occupation could be used to construct a hierarchy based on the purity-impurity opposition.

The lack of clear criteria for applying the principle of the purity-impurity opposition meant that caste hierarchy was often ambiguous. It was clearest amongst the castes at the extremes of the caste system, and least clear amongst the 'middle castes'. The extreme castes were usually those with the most clearly definable roles. Because of the multiplicity of criteria for determining rank, it was possible, within this ambiguous area, for factors which were not strictly ritual such as power to influence hierarchy.

Dumont did not see his belief that power modified the caste hierarchy as being contrary to his theory of caste as an ideological concept. Ideology provided the structure of the caste system within
which power had a restricted role. He described his approach as involving two stages:

...first, we shall be concerned with the ideology, which easily accounts for the overall framework; secondly, finding the concrete factor, power, in the 'middle zone', a factor not immediately accounted for by the theory of purity, we shall consider it in turn.

(Dumont, 1980: 76)

Power was recognized but in a subordinate position to religion.

Dumont argued that this distinction between power and religious status was encapsulated in the ancient concept of varna. Anthropologists distinguished between caste as found in contemporary India, "jati" (or simply "caste"), and caste as described in the Hindu texts, "varna". Four varnas were mentioned in the texts: the Brahmans (priests), the Kshatryas (warriors or kings), the Vaishyas (merchants, originally farmers), and Shudras (farmers, originally servants). Outside the four varnas were the untouchables, though they were sometimes regarded as being Shudras.

Although the varna schema strongly influenced Indian notions of what the caste system was about, and had a major impact on the first Western analyses of caste, it has been discounted by more recent anthropologists. They argued its use had led to a distorted view of the caste system: for example, M.N. Srinivas, India's best known anthropologist, has written that:

The varna-model has produced a wrong and distorted image of caste. It is necessary for the sociologist to free himself from the hold of the varna-model if he wished to understand the caste system. It is hardly necessary to add that this is more difficult for Indian sociologists than it is for non-Indians.

(Srinivas, 1962: 66)

Varna was misleading as it emphasised vague cultural concepts, rather than concrete sociological reality. As Professor Ghurye noted,
...in each linguistic region, there are about 200 caste groups which are further sub-divided into about 3,000 smaller units each of which is endogamous and constitutes the area of effective social life for the individual. The varna-scheme refers at best only to the broad categories of the society and not to its real and effective units. (Srinivas, 1962: 65)

As evidence for the vagueness of varna, Srinivas mentioned that,

The category of Shudra subsumes in fact the vast majority of non-Brahmanical castes which have little in common. It may at one end include a rich, powerful and highly Sanskritized group while at the other end maybe tribes whose assimilation into the Hindu fold is only marginal. The Shudra category spans such a wide structural and cultural gulf that its sociological utility is very limited. (Srinivas, 1962: 65)

Dumont agreed that varna was not an accurate description of the caste system, but he argued it should not be seen as such. He stated that, while caste was a matter of birth, varna was a matter of function (Dumont, 1980: 69). It was a scheme for relating the various functions of society, and the people who carried out these function. In the contemporary context, it was tied to caste, but Dumont believed that varna predated the caste system.

Whereas the caste system was based on the opposition of purity and impurity, varna was based on a series of oppositions, the most important of which was the opposition between religious status and power. The Shudra was opposed to the three higher varnas, known collectively as the 'Twice Born', as servant to master. The Twice Born were similarly divided between the Vaishya, originally the common farmer, and the higher varnas, his political and religious superiors. The final and most important opposition was the one which is of concern in the present context: that between the Brahman and the Kshatrya, who represented respectively religious status and political power. 37

As with the purity-impurity opposition, the varna oppositions were asymmetrical. The Twice Born castes were superior to the Shudras; the
Brahmans and the Kshatryas were superior to the Vaishyas, and the Brahmans were superior to the Kshatryas. By making the Brahmans superior to the Kshatryas, varna emphasised religious status over power. Thus, in contrast to the purity-impurity hierarchy, power was allocated a role, albeit on condition that it was subordinated to religious status.

It is not entirely clear why, within varna, the Brahman was superior to the Kshatrya, unless one refers to the outside schema of the pure-impure opposition. This is awkward as Dumont was using varna to explain an anomaly in the pure-impure hierarchy. A better explanation is to be found in the Hindu concept of kingship.

One of the major functions of the king as a Kshatrya was the implementation of justice. Dumont wrote,

So far as justice is concerned the classical texts are very clear, the king, advised by Brahman specialists in the dharma, metes out justice in full sovereignty. It may be said that legislative authority belongs to the Brahmans, judicial authority and the administration of justice, to the king. Generally speaking, the royal function appears in the Dharmaashtras as the almost miraculous solution of a formidable problem, the pivot which permits the attachment and coupling together of two otherwise irreconcilable universes: force and the law, ideal and fact. Thanks to the king in particular the Brahman transcends the administration of this world, the king's essential function being to preserve the system of the varnas by preventing them mixing, he quite naturally had authority over the castes.

(Dumont, 1980: 167-8)

Thus the Brahman determined what proper justice according to dharma was, but let the Kshatrya implement it. Each had their role, the Brahman interpreted correct behaviour, while the Kshatrya enforced it. While both need the other, the Kshatrya was dependent on the Brahman in a more fundamental way, for the latter was necessary to make his power legitimate. The actual situation was more complex than this, for not all of the Kshatrya's power involved upholding the dharma. The king also looked after the particular short-term interests of the state, but
nevertheless these concepts allow a reasonable idea of the relationship between religion and power.

Dumont argued that while varna was not an integral aspect of caste, it did influence the popular perception of caste. Varna provided a model which enabled people to integrate non-ideological factors such as power and wealth into the caste hierarchy.

By allocating a high importance to power, varna meant that castes with power were conceded a caste rank just below the Brahmans. This applied not just to royal castes, but also to landowning castes. According to Dumont (1980: 106) these castes replicated in the village the function of monarchs.

Varna also helped people to understand the role of the jajman in the jajmani system. Just as the landowning caste replicates the function of the ruling caste, so too the jajman replicates the role of the king. The king rules his palace and his kingdom with the help of his Brahmans and his various ritual specialists. The jajman directs his house and his farm with the help of the various ritual specialists.

Also of relevance to the jajmani system was Dumont's views that varna implied the subordination of power in religion. Power and wealth were linked. Wealth could be defined in the Indian context as control over men. Individuals were the producers of wealth as well as its protectors. To discuss the subordination of power to religion was also to discuss the subordination of wealth to religion (Dumont, 1980: 164-6). For Dumont, the jajmani system was the very model of an economic system subordinated to religion.

According to Dumont, the jajmani system was based on the ideological opposition of purity to impurity. As I mentioned earlier, Dumont claimed that the purity-impurity opposition 'underlies the
division of labour because pure and impure occupations must...be kept separate' (Dumont, 1980: 43). The opposition restricted the services which castes could perform because they would be polluted by the task required or they were too impure to be able to perform the service. Thus castes were forced by a religious ideology to obtain necessary services from other castes.

Dumont's view that ideology underlay caste specialisation, not the advantages of economic specialisation, lay at the basis of his analysis of the jajmani system. The jajmani system served to integrate the castes into a whole. This was not a 'natural' integration but one created by ideology. For Dumont the economic exchanges themselves reflected this ideology. This can be seen in Dumont's use of the terms prestation and counter-prestation in his definition of the jajmani system (prestation and counter-prestation are gifts and reciprocal gifts respectively, within a specific social context and with social significance).

Dumont defined the jajmani system as,

...the system corresponding to the prestations and counter-prestations by which the castes as a whole are bound together in the village, and which is more or less universal in India. To a large extent it is a question of natural as opposed to monetary economy. It is also a question of the closed economy of the Indian village in which essential goods and services are found, or used to be found, either on the spot or in the immediate vicinity: this fact corresponds, therefore, to what has been called the 'village community', in the economic sense of the phrase.

(Dumont, 1980: 97)

Prestation and counter-prestation were terms first used in anthropology by Dumont's teacher Marcel Mauss. For Mauss, prestations were primarily made for social (and religious) reasons, not for economic reasons. By exchanging prestations two parties recognised each other as legitimate social entities. Such a recognition was a necessary pre-condition for more general social relations including
trade to be carried on. In this sense it was equivalent to the social contracts of Hobbes and Rousseau which enabled regularised social relations. 40, 41

Although Hindu society was more complex than the primitive societies Mauss was studying, Dumont's and Mauss' analyses had much in common. In Mauss' model a number of roughly similar, and usually neighbouring, groups exchanged with each other. In Dumont's model exchange occurred between groups or rather castes within a ritual hierarchy.

For Mauss and Dumont, prestations created a special kind of relationship, one in which the exercise of power had only a minor role. Mauss saw prestations as an alternative to anarchical warfare; in Dumont's model prestations mediated in relationships where power had no part, due to the ideology of purity.

The concept of prestation was central to Dumont's argument that Indian society was based on ideology, for prestations represented exchange carried out on moral grounds, rather than economic grounds. As such, prestations emphasised an interdependence much more profound than that of western societies with their complex exchanges of goods and services.

However, while prestations were important to Dumont's case, their nature differed from those described by Mauss. Mauss' prestations were not of fixed amounts as the central reason for exchanging gifts was to impress others with one's generosity. There was always the illusion that one was making a pure gift, that one could give as much or as little as one desired, or indeed did not have to give at all. In practice not to have given, or to have given less than was expected, would have threatened or even destroyed the relationship established by prestations. It would have resulted in a loss of prestige and even war.
While in India some payments of this type did exist, as in charitable payments to Brahmans, temples and for certain ritual purposes, most jajmani payments were fixed by custom. Nevertheless, they were prestations because they were fixed according to ideology, the ideology of hierarchical interdependence, and not according to the economic mechanism of the market.

Dumont summarised his views of the differences between the jajmani system and a market economy in the following statement:

In a market economy all buyers and all sellers are as such identical, each after his own profit, and needs are adjusted, unconsciously, by the market mechanism. But this is not the case here: not only are the majority of the relationships personal, but this is so in virtue of an organization which is to some extent deliberate and orientated towards the satisfaction of the needs of all those who enter into the system of relationships. What is effectively measured here is, so to speak, interdependence. Whilst directly religious prestations and 'economic' prestations are mingled together, this takes place within the prescribed order, the religious order. The needs of each one conceived to be different, depending on caste, on hierarchy, but this fact should not disguise the entire system's orientation towards the whole. Thus, we shall say that distribution on the threshing floor is essentially different from a market in that it takes place by virtue of the fact that everyone is interdependent. If we look closely (43), we see the farmer part with a significant portion of his crop for the benefit of a whole series of different people, and we shall feel in the end that we are not in the world of the modern economic individual, but in a sort of co-operative where the main aim is to ensure the subsistence of everyone in accordance with his social function, almost to the extent of sharing out the produce of each piece of land. In the one case, the reference is to the individual pursuing his own gain, in the other, to the hierarchical collectivity. By adding to these contrasting cases the claims of modern socialism, we obtain three terms which can be arranged in a series:

(1) hierarchical collectivity: resources distributed more or less consciously;
(2) anarchaic individualities: external and automatic regulation;
(3) regulated individualities (or) egalitarian collectivity: deliberate regulation.

(Dumont, 1980: 105)
The term 'hierarchical collectivity' should be emphasised; while the jajmani system stressed interdependence, it did not emphasise equality. The orientation of the whole was based on the hierarchical opposition of purity to impurity, and the jajmani system reflected this. For instance, although everyone was guaranteed a living, they were not guaranteed an equal living: thus, the Brahman received more for his services than a leatherworker because his service was more important in terms of the ideology of purity.

Dumont would nevertheless, have disagreed with Lewis' assertion that the jajmani system implied exploitation, which he insisted could only occur in a modern market economy. Evidently, he regarded exploitation as being the manipulation of the market (presumably by those who controlled the means of production including land) to obtain services at rates regarded as being unfair by society as a whole. This was not the case in India as, Dumont claimed, rates were fixed, according to rates representing the ideological value of the services performed. Dumont asserted that,

...the caste system should be seen as less 'exploitative' than democratic society. If modern man does not see it this way, it is because he no longer conceives justice other than as equality.

(Dumont, 1980: 105)

Except for the terminology, Dumont's concept of jajmani payments was very similar to the one advanced by William Wiser. Both claimed that jajmani payments were determined by principles independent of the market. Wiser clearly stated his view in the claim that,

the jajman when he makes a cash payment thinks not in terms of value for value received, but that the payments together with certain concessions will give the 'kam-karne-wala' his livelihood. (Wiser, 1958: 42)

The major difference between Dumont and Wiser on jajmani payments was the notion of the ideology of purity, and how this affected payments made between jajman and kamin.
An important implication of the term prestation is that prestations create permanent relationships not long-term contractual ties. The difference is not so much the difference between social and economic ties, though this is implied, but that a contractual relationship can be ended, in theory, by meeting its terms through acquitting debts and obligations, whereas permanent relationships cannot be terminated since prestations and counter-prestations do not cancel each other out. Debts are not so much acquitted as exchanged. Far from relieving the debt created by prestations, counter-prestations create corresponding debts on the other side, thereby strengthening the relationship between the two parties. Indeed, as the two sides involved are families and not individuals, the ties cannot be ended even by death, but were hereditary.

Jajmans, Purohits, Zamindars, and Kamins: Dumont and Parry Compared

The major remaining aspect of Dumont's jajmani system to be discussed is the relationship of the jajman and the kamin. Not only was the jajmani system hierarchical but it was also asymmetrical. The jajmans needed the services of the kamins, but they rarely provided caste services in return, as few jajmans carried out their specialist occupations. While the position of the kamin was the result of the opposition of purity and impurity, the jajman held a functional position. The head of every family had to be a jajman to gain the benefits of the hierarchical division of labour.

Dumont explained the relationship of the jajman and the kamin by reference to the etymology of the word jajman:

Those who are part of this system do not always use the word jajmani nor even the word jajman. However, the latter is very widely used to designate the employer or patron with respect to the person he employs. Now this
is an interesting word. It comes from the Sanskrit 'yajamana', a particle having reflexive force and meaning 'sacrifier' (as opposed to 'sacrificer'): 'he who has a sacrifice performed'.(44) It can be seen that etymologically the jajman is the master of the house who employs a Brahman as a sacrificer. The religious connotation is important, and is still present today, although there is no longer any question of vedic sacrifice. A Hindi dictionary gives for jajman 'he who has religious (dharmik) rites performed by Brahmans by giving them fees, etc' (note the mention of the counter-prestation immediately evoked by the notion); for jajman: 'the privilege (adhikar) of performing the function of domestic priest (purohit), barber, bari (a helper) on the occasion of a marriage, etc'. Everything in this definition should be remembered: it is a question of family ritual, and above all, of marriage. It is a privilege to take part, even in the capacity of preparing the humble ceremonial materials, cups made from a leaf pinned together (the bari). I have translated adhikar by privilege, but it is also responsibility, and a personal asset is involved: each family has its purohit, its barber, etc., and neither party is free to escape from this relationship, so much so that the jajmani in the sense of such an obligation can, for example, stand as security for a loan of money (...)

Brit is also used in the same sense. The words may vary or be absent, yet the notion is omnipresent. There are many words to designate the specialists, who are more like clients in their relation to a patron than employees in relation to an employer, since the relationship is a personal one: in Hindi, praja (also 'creature, descendant, subject'), pauni, kam karnewala (workman), etc. Incidentally, this whole vocabulary is mostly North Indian.

(Dumont, 1980: 97-8)

The important point about this etymological analysis of the jajman-kamin relationship is that, although the kamin was materially dependent on the jajman, the jajman was ideologically dependent on the kamin. The kamin provided the jajman with essential services, particularly religious services, though secular services were incorporated into the system on the religious model. Without the kamin, the jajman would have been unable to participate in religious life, and in effect without religious status. Therefore, although the kamin needed the jajman for the practical concern of making a living, the real honour in the jajmani system belonged to the kamin. Dumont regarded the jajman's relationship with the kamin as being equivalent
to the king's relationship with his Brahman priests. Although the king ruled, he acquired his legitimacy from having the Brahmans perform sacrifices for him.

This equivalence of the jajman and the kamin to the king and the Brahman had many aspects to it. Castes which had the necessary power and wealth could utilise the jajmani system to gain status, in the same way as the kings gained their legitimacy from the Brahmans. The major castes which were in a position to do so were the landowning castes as land was the principal source of wealth.

According to Dumont,

...there are two strongly contrasted functions: that of patron and that of specialist client, and only those who have at their disposal the main source of wealth and power, the land, can really display the system in all its pomp. In short, it constitutes a device which guarantees them the services of the specialists, and conversely indirectly guarantees the subsistence of the specialists, by giving them limited but real rights over the products of the land and the affluence of their masters. (Dumont, 1980: 102) (45)

Though the etymological meaning of jajman emphasised the religious nature of the relationship between the jajman and the kamin, Dumont argued that all economic relationships between patrons and clients were jajman-kamin ties. He wrote that,

Whilst religious overtones are in the forefront, the word jajman designates anyone who employs someone in conformity with the system, and the complementary word, let us take praja, anyone thus employed. This applies not only to ceremonial tasks; all others are expressed in the same language. (Dumont, 1980: 98)

This was part of the subordination of the secular to the religious.

The argument depended upon accepting that the terms jajman and praja, or jajman and kamin, were complementary and could be applied to all patron-client relationships. Yet the evidence on both these points is not convincing. While jajman was defined in terms of religion, with reference to sacrifice, its 'complementary' terms, praja and kamin,
were not. Both kamin and Wiser's kam-karne-wale literally meant workman, a term with no suggestion of religion, sacrifice or complementarity. Not surprisingly, Dumont preferred to use the term praja which meant, according to Dumont, 'creative descendant, subject' (Dumont, 1980: 98). While none of these terms suggest the religious connotations of the sacrifice, 'descendant' and 'subject' both suggest a personal dependence. 'Subject' also suggests political subordination. One could interpret this in terms of the relationship between the king, who had political authority, and the Brahman, his religious superior but political inferior, who sacrificed for him.46 Nevertheless, on whether praja is the reciprocal of jajman, the answer must remain possible but unproven.

A second aspect of complementarity depends not on etymology, but on whether the words were complementary in use. Although Wiser used the terms jajman and kam-karne-wale to complement each other, his description indicated that both terms were not always used. The term kam-karne-wale did not apply to the Brahman who was called pandit (priest) the very person on whom Dumont's etymological explanation depended. This would seem to be contrary to Dumont's proclaimed approach of taking:

...lessons from the Hindus, Hindus of today and of times past, in order to see things as they do. They see them very systematically and it is not impossible to isolate the principle behind their view. Indeed, we shall realize that they have largely done the work for us...on certain points we shall take the liberty of completing and systemizing the indigenous or orthogenic theory of caste - not without employing empirical aspects in a secondary capacity - by postulating that men in society behave in a coherent and rational manner...and that it is possible to recover the simple principle of their thought. Naturally we make these modifications at our own risk, the touchstone always being what the people themselves think and believe. There is nothing new in all this, of course: it is what the ethnologist or social anthropologist has always tried to do. (Dumont, 1980: 37)
While there is an element of truth in this final sentence, Dumont went further than most anthropologists would in claiming that an anthropologist should use indigenous categories to analyse his ethnographic data. In the case of the jajman-kamin relationship, it is open to question whether he did not oversystemise indigenous concepts.

Jonathan Parry's *Caste and Kinship in Kangra* (1979) revealed a district in Himarchal Pradesh in Northern India where people made a sharp distinction between the patron-client relationship involving a jajman and one involving a kamin. According to Parry, in Kangra, the terms jajman and jajmani are used in accordance with their religious etymology (Parry, 1979: 59). He quoted Dumont for the etymology of the two terms and added that,

As far as Chadhiar people are concerned a jajman is a patron of either a Brahman or a Barber or of a Funeral Priest. When he is working as a ritual cook the Brahman is a bati to his jajman, but as a priest he is a purohit. The Barber, in his capacity as an essential functionary at life-cycle rituals, also stands in the relationship of purohit to his jajman. (48) None of these terms could appropriately be used in the context of any other employer-employee relationship. (Parry, 1979: 59)

Thus, Brahmans and Barbers when they acted in their priestly functions were purohits to their patron's role as jajman. The Brahman as bati was in a similar relationship to the jajman.

In contrast, kamins were mainly artisans:

It is essentially those who pursue an artisan-type profession who are labelled kamin, and this craft aspect of their specialization is emphasised by their adoption of Viswakarma - the artisan god and architect of the universe - as a patron deity. (Parry, 1979: 67)

Parry added that,

The patron of a kamin is probably a zamindar, or landowner, but this pair of terms are not reciprocals in the strict way that purohit-jajman are. While the word purohit is an honourific and implies superiority of status, kamin has distinctly derogatory connotations and always applies to inferiors. For this reason, it is impolite to refer to somebody as a kamin in his presence, though the term will be used freely of those who are out of earshot. A kamin is ideally supposed to
act out his subordination in much the same way as a house tenant (...), and makes identical offerings to his patron at the seri festival. Like the pahu, he is called to weddings and other major rituals in his patron's house, though these days he is likely to ignore the summons since he knows that he will be letting himself in for a whole series of menial chores; and instead of being fed with the guests he will be given a pile of cooked rice to take home to consume with his family. (Parry, 1979: 67)

The kamin, then, did not have the prestige of a purohit. Nor did he have the close relationship with his patron that the purohit had with his jajman. This latter point is indicated by the fact that the terms purohit and jajman were defined by each other (as Dumont maintained that jajman and praja or kamin were), whereas the terms kamin and zamindar (the kamin's normal patron) were independent. Zamindar meant landholder, kamin literally meant worker, though artisans were apparently meant in Kangra.

As Parry pointed out, the apparently obvious way to interpret the differences between purohits and kamins is to see them as representing religious and secular occupations respectively. However, he argued that,

While the term 'religious' retains the habitual sense it has acquired in the sociology of India as an adjective for anything positively charged with status-purity implications, it is grossly misleading to characterise the Kangra distinction between purohit and kamin as a distinction between religious and secular specialists. The inappropriateness of such a translation is clear from the fact that the Barbers and Leather-workers rate as kamin, although both are (in this sense) religious specialists who restore purity to their patrons by removing pollution, the Chamars by disposing of the carcasses of dead cattle and the Barbers by barbering. That, even on profane occasions, the barber refused to serve the lowest castes, while the patron suffers mild impurity from his ministrations and sprinkles his head with water in token of a bath, should warn us against viewing barbering as a purely technical act devoid of status implications for either party. (Parry, 1979: 74)

Parry added that,
...the Kangra distinction between purohit and kamin does not discriminate between 'religious' and (in the strict sense) 'secular' specialists but rather between those specialists essential to the performance of life-crisis rituals and the artisan-type occupations.

(Parry, 1979: 78)

That is, although many kamins performed apparently secular services, other kamins performed services which Westerners would regard as religious, i.e. services which existed primarily to remove impurity. In Kangra, no distinction was made between secular and religious activities. All kamins were workers - the aim or motivation of the service being irrelevant.

As Parry noted above, what distinguished the purohits from kamins was that they served in family ritual: they were 'sacrificers' to their jajman 'sacrifiers'. There is a significant distinction between providing the conditions in which religious life could take place through removing impurity, and actively taking part in the rituals of which religious life was composed. It was the kamin's duty to remove pollution; it was the purohit's honour to participate in family ritual.

The purohit's tie to his jajman was much stronger that the kamin's link to his patron. No doubt, this was because they were partners in 'sacrifice'. This meant that the purohit played a vital part in the ritual unity of the family. It was natural that his link with the family was permanent.

Parry noted that,

Between jajman and purohit sub-clans there is a relationship which is thought of as permanent. Within this alliance an individual jajman household will have an hereditary relationship with an individual household of the purohit sub-clan, and in theory this relationship lasts from one generation to the next. In fact the ties between particular jajman and purohit households do not have quite this long-term immutability, since few of Chadhar's Brahmans are actually priests (...) and since a priest's sons frequently take to secular occupations. When a purohit dies his jajmans often redistribute themselves among
the other purohits of the deceased's sub-clan. But, during his lifetime, switches are very rare. (Parry, 1979: 63)

Even incompetence was not sufficient excuse for a jajman to break with a purohit. Parry explained,

If for any reason it is impossible for a purohit to attend to his obligations in a jajman's house, it is his duty to provide a substitute, and it would be out of place for the jajman to make separate arrangements without consulting him. Some purohits are much more sophisticated than others in their knowledge of the often elaborate and complicated rituals. If an hereditary purohit does not know how to conduct a particular ceremony, a second purohit will be invited to perform it. But it is the hereditary purohit who will collect the payment, and he will divide it with his colleague by a private arrangement, which is no concern of the jajman. (Parry, 1979: 64)

The reference, in the first of these two quotes, to a clan taking purohits from particular Brahman clans is interesting. A later passage in Parry's book would appear to indicate that the deities of individual clans of jajmans could only be honoured by members of particular Brahman clans. Parry stated that,

In theory, all members of the clan, no matter where they live, owe allegiance to a common clan deity, or kulraj. The kulraj is propiated by the principal celebrants at all important life-cycle ceremonies; but there are no rituals at which the whole clan, or even the whole of a localized segment of the clan, unites in common worship of its deity. In theory too, all clan members recruit their kul-purohits (household priests) and guru-purohits (spiritual preceptors) from the same two Brahman clans. Although few people are aware of it, in fact different localized segments of the same clan often worship different deities and call on different clans of Brahmans as their purohits. (Parry, 1979: 133)

A kamin did not have equivalent rights to a purohit. Parry noted that,

A kamin does not have the right to serve his zamindar in the same way as a purohit has a right to serve his jajman. There is no question of jaddi ('ancestral property') here; the term would be quite inappropriate. Although a kamin may take over his father's clientele he will soon find that they go elsewhere if he is not a competent craftsman. Either party can terminate the
contract at will though it is considered only right and proper to wait until the crop is in.

(Parry, 1979: 69)

The differences between the two types of relationship, that is between the kamin and his patron, was even more marked in the system of payments. Parry commented that,

By way of remuneration the purohit receives a series of prestation which fall into the general category of dan. Dan also occurs in contexts outside the system of customary rewards. A pre-pubescent bride, for example, is offered, along with a dowry, as dan to the groom's family. But whatever the context, the morality of dan is fundamentally distinct from the morality of a commercial payment. It has rather the character of a charitable donation humbly offered to somebody of superior status, whose condescension in accepting the gift allows the donor to acquire merit. Under no circumstances may any material return be accepted, for a counter-prestation would cancel out the merit acquired by the original gift. It is for this reason that an orthodox and conservative Rajput will not eat at a Brahman's house, any more than he will eat in his married daughter's house...A respectable man gives as much as he can afford in dan, and the bigger the gift, the more the merit. The purohit's takings then, are neither rigidly fixed nor subject to bargaining.

(Parry, 1979: 65-6)

In India payments to Brahmans are often in the form of gifts to the gods: the Brahmans use what the gods leave.

Payments to kamins were quite different. Parry explained that,

The relationship which links the zamindar and his kamin is kalothish. Gadi refers to a sheaf of paddy; kalothi to a basket used for storing maize. But due to the great shortage of rice-land in Chadhia, very few landholders in the mauza are these days prepared to give paddy to their kamins. At the seri crop they give maize; at aiai a quantity of wheat, most of it as grains but perhaps one or two unthreshed sheaves (puliyan) as well.

In return for this payment the artisan is expected to provide prompt and efficient service throughout the months from the first ploughing until the crop is in. At sowing time and harvest time the pressure of work on the carpenter and blacksmith is extremely heavy as impatient farmers, with an eye on the weather, make
urgent demands that a plough be mended, a new ploughshare forged, or a sickle sharpened...

In contrast to dan, gadi-kalothi is explicitly a payment. Although the old papers of the village accountant list fixed rates for each variety of kamin, nobody in Chadhiar takes a blind bit of notice of them, and even 50 years ago they do not seem to have been observed. The District Gazeteer (1926-235) notes that 'none of (the kamins) has fixed perquisites, and their duties and remuneration vary in different parts'. In my [Parry's] own experience the details of gadi-kalothi payments are subject to a good deal of bargaining and disputes between artisan and patron are common. The general complaint amongst the kamin is that the size of the gadi-kalothi payment has diminished slowly steadily over recent years. The amount paid corresponds roughly to the amount of work done during the season, but it also depends on how large the crop has been. An artisan, then, may find that his income varies a good deal from harvest to harvest. (Parry, 1979: 67-8)

Parry pointed out that,

All this would seem to have some bearing on the striking disparity between those authorities who conceptualise the division of labour between castes in terms of a harmonious interdependence in which the 'special privileges' of the low castes are guaranteed (e.g., Wiser 1936; Leach 1960) and those who emphasize the asymmetrical power relations between patrons and specialists and insist that 'any integration possible is of a coercive nature' (e.g., Beidelman 1959: 68). (51) (Parry, 1979: 74)

Harmonious interdependence would appear to describe the position of the purohits and jajmans, whereas coercive integration might be used to describe the kamin's relations with the zamindar. This supports Dumont's view that religion can 'impose itself' on economic relations with regard to purohit-jajman relations, but not in terms of kamin-zamindar relations.

The sacrifice emphasised the interdependence of castes. To haggle over prices or services would have been to besmirch the character of the purohit and of his function. The honour lay in giving, not in paying. The kamin's position was quite different. Although many of the kamin castes existed only because of the religious division of labour, this did not necessarily affect their relations with their
patrons (except to the extent that they could not perform services for some castes as it would endanger their purity). In Kangra, relations between kamin and patron seemed to be marked by a market mentality, with prices being open to bargaining, and varying according to harvest, the amount of labour required and so on.52 My own field area in South India differed from Kangra in this respect only in that all the inter-caste ties I found fitted Parry's model of the kamin-zamindar ties, or were arranged for and paid on a casual basis and none fitted his model of the purohit-jajmani tie (as discussed below in chapters three and four).

Though neither Kangra nor my field area can be representative of all India,53 they do show that Dumont had not proven his case that the religious ideology of interdependence was reflected in all inter-caste economic ties.

This brings me to one final point. Most recent writers, such as Parry, dealing with the jajmani system, have restricted their discussion to the priestly and artisan castes. Although Dumont called these castes the core of the jajmani system, he, like Wiser, regarded it as covering all caste services. He included as one such service agricultural labour, also known as farm labour.

Agricultural labour is difficult to reconcile with the jajmani system. It was a utilitarian service with little direct relevance to the religious division of labour. Dumont accepted that non-religious activities were generally outside the religious division of labour:

...agriculture - defined as vaguely as this it is more a kind of occupation than a true profession - is a religiously neutral occupation for the majority of castes (though there is a prejudice amongst high castes against using the plough in person) and is respectable from the non-religious point of view...

(Dumont, 1980: 96)
Despite the neutrality of agriculture in terms of purity, most full-time agricultural labourers were Harijans. The reason given for this is that they were connected with activities which were impure. The most important labouring caste in both North India and Karnataka were the 'leatherworkers'. They were rendered particularly impure as their caste occupation involved the removing of dead cattle, and was also associated with the skinning of the animals and the eating of their flesh.

This explanation of the association of agricultural labour with untouchability is in keeping with Dumont's claim that utilitarian services were absorbed into the jajmani system on the model of the religious occupations,

'In the last analysis, the division of labour shows not a more or less gratuitous juxtaposition of religious and non-religious or 'economic tasks', but both the religious basis and the religious expression of interdependence. Better, it deduces interdependence from religion'.  
(Dumont, 1980: 108)

Dumont conceded; in a rather condescending tone, that,

Concerning untouchability in general, the modern reader will no doubt ask some question such as: why are huge castes like the Chamar in Uttar Pradesh, representing the bulk of the agricultural labour force, unfree labour, considered untouchable? Is this not simply a 'rationalization' of their oppression and exploitation? First of all, we have no idea why the Chamar are more numerous than all the other untouchables of the region put together. More scientifically, the question can be put in this way: what is the relation between the religious expression of the condition of the untouchable and the general function of these castes as labourers close to agricultural serfdom? Without exhausting the significance of the fact...it may be said simply that the overwhelming religious inferiority of these castes in effect expresses and encompasses their strict secular dependence on the dominant castes: the lowliest suffer the greatest subjection. Or again: the hierarchical solidarity between the two highest varnas is here reflected in the fact that those who are most oppressed materially, are at the same time seen as supremely impure.  
(Dumont, 1980: 137)
I fail to perceive the difference between simple rationalisation and secular dependence, expressed and encompassed by religious inferiority. If there is a difference, it would best be analysed in terms of the relations between the castes. If the religious status of agricultural castes was a rationalisation, their ties with their patrons would have been marked by exploitation. If the labouring castes' status reflected religious encompassment it would reflect interdependence. Thus, even if the religious division of labour had little relevance to people's actual activity, if intercaste relations, nevertheless, reflected religious hierarchy, then the jajmani system could be said to exist. However, as I have pointed out, Dumont did not prove his case. If it is questionable whether kamin-patron relations were marked by interdependence it is even more questionable whether the relations of agricultural labourers with their patrons were marked by interdependence.

In the following two chapters I will examine intercaste relations in a district of South India, with a view to whether they are marked by religious interdependence or not.
CHAPTER 3: JAJMANI IN MAYASANDRA

This and the following chapter offer a selective examination of the ethnography of a particular region and village focussing on the issues which we have been discussing. The first problem under investigation is whether the jajmani system existed in this South Indian settlement and its surrounding hamlets. Following a brief description of the geography, economy and caste composition of the villages, it seeks to discover whether they contain the various elements which constitute the jajmani system, with particular emphasis on the types of payment made for services. I then reconsider the definition of the jajmani system. The length of these two chapters is due to my belief that the lack of a clear definition of the jajmani system and in particular of jajmani payments and services has largely been responsible for the indecisive nature of the jajmani debate and therefore of the number of assumptions made in the debate. The final chapter, the conclusion, summarises the findings of this thesis with regard both to the concept of the jajmani system itself and to the village republic/community/jajmani system debate. The data for this analysis are drawn mainly from my own field work, but where necessary I refer to the work of anthropologists, including M.N. Srinivas and T.S. Epstein, who have worked in the region. I also discuss Jan Breman's work though he conducted it outside the region, for it throws light on aspects of my own data. To provide an historical perspective, I refer to three earlier writers who visited the area, Mark Wilks, Francis Buchanan and the Abbé Dubois.
The Scene: The Geography of the Mayasandra Region

The Mayasandra region is part of the State of Karnataka. The area is situated in Tuvukere Taluk, Tumkur District, 100 kilometres to the west of Bangalore, the present State capital, and 100 kilometres to the north-east of Mysore City.

Geographically, the region is located in the great basaltic plateau of the Deccan. The land is dotted by granite outcrops, many of which, due to their phallic shape, are associated with the worship of Lord Shiva. The volcanic soil is fertile provided there is water. The population is, therefore, concentrated near tanks. The largest and richest village of the study area, Mayasandra, is situated next to the largest tank.

Mayasandra has a population of about 2,500. Though smaller than the Indian census definition of a town, it has many urban characteristics. Mayasandra is the commercial centre for the surrounding villages and hamlets; it is the location of a weekly market, a large number of shops, grain mills and other services. The commercial nature of villages such as Mayasandra seems a modern phenomenon, but appearances are misleading. Francis Buchanan wrote at the beginning of last century that at

convenient places in every Taluk there are weekly markets, which in good parts of the country may be about two or three miles from each other. To these, the farmers carry their produce, and sell it, partly by wholesale to traders. (1807, Vol 1: 125)

Mayasandra also has a large permanent service sector, including tailor shops, barbers, carpenters and washermen, tea houses offering meals and beverages, a sugar mill, a rice mill, a reading room, coffee grinders and the area's only full-time goldsmith. A touring cinema occasionally visits. The village also serves as the centre of government services for the surrounding area, having a full post and
telegraph office, a health centre with a doctor, a veterinary hospital and a police station.

Agriculture too is an important component of Mayasandra's economy. Having the area's largest tank means that it has the largest amount of wet land. It is, therefore, the area's principal producer of cash crops as most cash crops require irrigation. Most of these cash crops, including sugar cane, toddy trees and rice, are directly irrigated from the tank. An exception is the growing of coconuts which are irrigated from wells located below the tank walls.

This study also concerns eight other settlements which surround Mayasandra. They are much smaller than Mayasandra being better described as hamlets, both in terms of size and social and economic complexity. Their populations range from 50 to about 650 and are mainly employed in farming. Indeed, only one or two of the hamlets even have shops. For the most part the farms are on dry land which is mainly devoted to subsistence crops: for example, finger millet (ragi) and sorghum (jowar).

The Castes of Mayasandra

The different economies of the settlements are reflected in their social structure and particularly in their caste composition (see Table 1). Mayasandra has the most complex caste structure. In part, this reflects its size. The bigger a population the greater the likelihood that a particular caste will be represented in it. There are economic, social and historical explanations too. The commercial nature of Mayasandra means that several sectors of the population engage in trade including two non-Hindu communities: the Jains and the Muslims. In contrast, only one of the hamlets has a sizeable group of non-Hindus - Dasihalli is half Muslim.
By Mayasandra's standards the Jains are wealthy. They own the sugar mill, the rice mill, the main tea shop and various other businesses. Together with the Brahmans, they own most of Mayasandra's wet land. The Muslims own most of the smaller businesses: small general

Table 1  Caste Composition in Mayasandra and Surrounding Hamlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDENSED CASTE</th>
<th>MAYASANDRA</th>
<th>BOMMENAHALLI</th>
<th>DASIHALLI</th>
<th>KHODINAGA-SANDRA</th>
<th>KOMBANDE-VANAHALLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
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<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Muslim</td>
<td>134 32.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32 50.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Jain</td>
<td>23 5.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Lingayat</td>
<td>16 3.9</td>
<td>33 68.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Vokkaliga</td>
<td>58 14.0</td>
<td>5 10.4</td>
<td>23 36.5</td>
<td>4 30.8</td>
<td>17 89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Brahmin</td>
<td>24 5.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Harijan</td>
<td>43 10.4</td>
<td>10 20.8</td>
<td>4 6.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Service caste</td>
<td>38 9.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 3.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Poor peasant and pastoralist</td>
<td>60 14.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 53.8</td>
<td>1 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Not known</td>
<td>17 4.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
<td>2 15.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>413 100.0</td>
<td>48 100.0</td>
<td>63 100.0</td>
<td>13 100.0</td>
<td>19 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDENSED CASTE</th>
<th>SORAVANAHALLI</th>
<th>TICALARA-PALYA</th>
<th>TABINAKATE</th>
<th>VITTALAPURA</th>
<th>TOTAL VILLAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
<td>No.  %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Muslim</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Jain</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Lingayat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Vokkaliga</td>
<td>44 86.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26 83.9</td>
<td>80 80.0</td>
<td>257 32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Brahmin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 16.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51 3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Harijan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 2.0</td>
<td>59 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Service caste</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 11.0</td>
<td>51 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Poor peasant and pastoralist</td>
<td>7 13.7</td>
<td>48 100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 4.0</td>
<td>127 16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Not known</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 1.0</td>
<td>21 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51 100.0</td>
<td>48 100.0</td>
<td>31 100.0</td>
<td>100 100.0</td>
<td>786 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
stores, tailor shops and bicycle shops. They also carry out a number of traditional crafts, such as fitting cow shoes to cattle and, like other communities in Mayasandra, they own some land.

The importance of irrigation farming in Mayasandra is also a factor in the complexity of the caste structure. Wet land is largely owned by a landlord class and requires a much more organised use of labour than dry land; e.g. to rebuild banks, canals etc. Ploughmen are hired to guide the buffaloes in ploughing the fields, and other workers for various agricultural operations such as planting, transplanting and harvesting. It is difficult for wet land farmers to stagger their crops to gain the maximum advantage from an exchange of labour, as wet land crops in Mayasandra are governed by the release of water from the tank to all farmers on the same day.

The system is not inefficient. Wet land crops are grown after dry-land farmers have harvested. This system gives dry land farming households a source of extra income, and the wet land farmers a source of cheap and plentiful labour.

The small landholder has few advantages over the larger landlord in the farming of wet lands. The farming family's own labour is only a small proportion of the total labour needed. More important is the ability to pay for hired labour, to invest the necessary capital in building canals, etc., and the ability to absorb the occasional total loss; e.g. the 1982 harvest was a complete loss for the wet land farmers due to drought. Although the dry land farmers suffered a diminished crop, they did not suffer a total disaster.

What makes wet land farming worthwhile are the high returns it provides a well-financed farmer. For such farmers wet land is a valuable investment. In consequence, wet land farming is associated with a landlord class.
Dry land is much less profitable and apparently has always been farmed mostly by small landholders or tenants as there was little profit for the larger landowners in directly farming it. The small farmer has two advantages over his larger counterpart household: his family supplies most of the labour and he has few difficulties in supervising the work and in protecting the crop.

The large landlord can rarely provide all the necessary supervision from his own household and is forced to pay for what is at best inadequate supervision. In the past landowners overcame this problem by leasing land to tenants, who had as much interest in ensuring a good harvest as did small farmers. Nowadays land reform laws which enable tenants to claim the land they farm have made this difficult.

Since the 1960s long term tenants have been granted landownership rights. Thus the hamlets where dry land predominates lack the clear distinction between a landlord class and dependent castes which exists in Mayasandra.

The major communities owning wet land in Mayasandra are the Brahmans, Jains, Lingayats and Vokkaligas. The Brahmans probably received wet land a thousand years ago as a gift of the king. Land was given to Brahmans so as to establish and support centres of religious prayer and Sanskritic learning. Such grants earned religious merit for the donor and they were also politically expedient, in ensuring the support of the Brahmans. Such support was essential, because of the Brahmans' authority among the people, and also because of the Brahmans' vital role in providing a literate class. They were necessary for the State bureaucracy and even for village accountantships (necessary for collecting land tax). Moreover, the creation of Brahmanical settlements had other advantages, as in providing local centres of
pilgrimage where markets could be encouraged and for serving as centres of administration. Wet land grants to Brahmans were common, presumably because it was essential that there be an agricultural surplus if the aim of creating centres of religion and learning were to be met (Stein 1980: 344).

The Mysore State Gazeteer for Tumkur District (M.S.G.T.D.) stated that Mayasandra was one of the original pancha gramma settlements of the Iyengar Brahmans in Karnataka (1969: 88, 591). This indicates that Mayasandra has been inhabited by Brahmans since the eleventh century.

The Jains, Muslims, Lingayats, Vokkaligas and many Brahmans have acquired wet land more recently, much of it after the present tank was built in the last century. These communities acquired wet land because of its commercial value.

Associated with Mayasandra's landlord class are Harijans who depend on labouring as their main source of income even if they have acquired some land mainly from government grants. Harijans form a larger proportion of the Hindu population, and of the agricultural workforce of Mayasandra than of the hamlets.

Mayasandra has a number of other dependent castes. These are the service castes, a category covering blacksmiths, washermen, barbers, potters, etc. These castes are represented to a greater extent in Mayasandra than in the hamlets. This is largely because members of these castes prefer to live with their fellow caste members. While many work in the hamlets, Mayasandra offers a more 'cosmopolitan' atmosphere where they are simply another caste rather than a subordinate caste to a single dominant caste. Now that trade is becoming more important there are advantages in being in Mayasandra so as to offer one's services to people visiting the market.
A greater number of high caste families would also increase the number of service caste families: for example, Brahmans who have to be particularly careful to protect their purity, have a greater need for service castes such as the washerman and the barber than do other castes.

In contrast to Mayasandra the hamlets under study have a simple caste structure. Large 'peasant' castes own and farm most of the land. Many of the hamlets have only one caste, and with one exception the others have only a small minority, usually Harijans, who do not belong to the dominant caste. This is largely a consequence of historical accident. As Maine pointed out many hamlets consist of the descendants of a single founding family. Even if other families moved into the village they had to recognise the founding family's property rights to the village's land, as gained through the right of first possession.

The major peasant caste in the hamlets is the Vokkaliga caste, which dominates in five of the eight hamlets.

The three exceptions to this Vokkaliga dominance are Dasihalli, Tiga kil Palya and Bom menahalli. Dasihalli is half Muslim, half Vokkaliga. Tiga kil Palya is inhabited by a single low status peasant caste, the Tigalarus. Their caste occupation is market gardening (Iyer, 1931: Vol 4: 623) and many of them still follow this occupation in the growing of betel nuts. Bom menahalli is predominantly Lingayat. The Lingayats are interesting for they deny the existence of purity and impurity yet they have their own caste system. I will discuss this and its implications for the jajmani system below.

**Services and Payments: Is There a Jajmani System in Mayasandra?**

There is no indigenous concept in Mayasandra equivalent to the term, 'jajmani system', though castes do exchange services, or at least
some families supply their caste services to families of other castes. By itself, however, the exchange of caste services does not justify the term 'jajmani system'. If jajmani relations did not differ from other economic relations, they would simply be an aspect of the wider village economy. The justification for using the term the jajmani system and investigating it as being worthy of study lies in the belief that jajmani relations and their accompanying system of exchange are significant in their own right.

To investigate whether inter-caste ties differ from other ties, I will first investigate the system of payment, for these have been emphasized in most discussions of the jajmani system. Payments in the Mayasandra villages are made in three forms: grain, land and cash. All three occur in jajmani relationships.

**Hadade: Payments in Grain**

Harvest payments are known in Kannada as 'hadade'. Unlike jajmani payments, hadade is not restricted to caste linked exchanges. It is used to pay both caste specialists: eg. the Blacksmiths, Washerman and Barbers, and many but not all priests, and to pay village servants: eg. the Neergunty and the Kulvadi.

The Neergunty is responsible to the village administration for opening the water gates to irrigate the field (which he does nowadays according to the instruction of the government engineer) ensuring that water goes to the right fields, and acting as a watchman to protect those fields. The Kulvadi undertakes messages and errands for the village administration. Though the offices of Neergunty and Kulvadi are normally held by Harijan families, they can be held by middle caste families e.g. Srinivas described a middle caste Neergunty (Srinivas 1976: 128).
For Dumont, the Barbers and the Washermen are the classical jajmani servants as their very existence results from the opposition of purity and impurity. Both remove the impure by-products of the body. The Barber shaves and cuts the hair of all his Hindu customers once or twice a week (a high caste Hindu would be polluted if he cut or shaved his hair). The hadade Barber did this outside the houses of his customers - to have done the job inside the houses would have polluted them (Barbers must always bathe before they return home). The Washerman washes and irons all their clothes about once a week. An important part of his or rather his wife's job is to wash menstrual cloths which are regarded as being particularly impure.

Blacksmiths are the only artisans currently receiving hadade - Potters received hadade formerly. Blacksmithery is one of a number of caste occupations carried out by the Achar or Panchala caste. As Iyer wrote,

The term Panchalas or Panchavalas implies persons making up the number five, and the caste covers five kinds of handicrafts, namely, (1) work in gold and silver, (2) in brass and copper, (3) in iron, (4) in carpentry and (5) in sculpture; so that these artisans are all of the same caste known under the general name of Panchalas although there are shades of difference between them according to the locality and spoken language. (Iyer Vol 4: 457)

Within the Panchahala caste there are smaller endogamous groupings but they are not formed along occupational lines.

Gold and silver working, brass and copper working, and sculpting are all carried out by specialist families. Sculptors produce religious idols. No sculptors live in the Mayasandra area. Mayasandra's copper and brass workers or tinkers, are itinerants who spend only a few weeks a year there. These families are paid on a casual basis, though the customer provides the raw materials.
This leaves the two main artisan occupations, ironworking and carpentry. While strictly speaking only the former is hadade the distinction is often meaningless as most Blacksmiths also do carpentry. The making and repairing of agricultural implements (e.g. sickles and ploughs) and larger items (e.g. ox-carts) require the skills of both carpentry and the ironworking. Therefore, when a blacksmith is paid hadade for the making and repairing of agricultural implements he is also being paid for his carpentry.

An analytical distinction can, nevertheless, be made between the two crafts as those jobs which require more carpentry than ironwork are paid for in cash, whereas those where ironwork predominates are paid in hadade. This is because ironwork is primarily important in providing agricultural implements. While demand for agricultural implements is fairly stable, they must be kept in constant repair, throughout the agricultural season. The payment for such services reflects this. The delayed reciprocity of hadade payments should ensure that the patron's needs come first. Thus the Blacksmith is expected to give priority to the maintenance of the landowner's tools. In theory it ensures that the patrons' needs come first. In practice only the powerful patron can ensure that his needs are met quickly. A patron who cannot control his kamins can be forced to pay cash if he desires prompt service. The evidence that I have had from older villagers indicates that this is a recent development reflecting the breakdown of the moral and legal sanctions linking patron and client, or, as Dumont might say, the development of individualism.

Carpentry is associated with larger but less urgent demands than ironwork: e.g. the building of a cart or house supports. These demands are rarely urgent and are usually left for the off-season. There is no need to enter into a relation of delayed reciprocity to ensure the
provision of such services. Indeed, it would be impractical as the demand for carpentry is far from constant. It would be extremely unfair to both patron and client if remuneration was also fixed. It would also be unfair if the payment for carpentry occurred only at harvest time for most carpentry is done during the off season: the carpenter would then wait almost a year to be paid, whereas the blacksmith waits only a few months.

Carpentry and ironworking also differ in that many non-Panchalas practise carpentry, either on a full time basis, or more often for their own needs. Iron working, in contrast, is a monopoly of the smith. This is due to the greater skill needed to undertake ironwork than carpentry, and, relatedly, the smith's innate powers, held to be necessary for his work.61

The Barbers, Washermen and Blacksmiths have special duties to their customers during life cycle rites: e.g. births, deaths and weddings, and during village festivals as do a number of castes who received hadade in the past, e.g. the potters.62 Indeed, one reason for paying hadade is simply to ensure the provision of these ritual services. The washerman for one of the Mayasandra hamlets, Sorvanahalli, told me that, while he used to wash for the whole village, his principal duty now was to lead a procession to the 'Kangamma' temple, holding a lighted torch. In light of his reduced duties, the village lowered his pay from thirty seers per family to fifteen. The demand for washing has diminished following the widespread acceptance of vegetable-oil-based soaps in recent years. Unlike Europeans, Indians were, for religious reasons reluctant to use animal-fat-based soaps.

For their ritual services, caste specialists receive, in addition to hadade, a remuneration in the form of a gift. Some other
individuals with a ritual role but who do not get hadade also receive such gifts: e.g. dassapas. A corollary of their ritual services is that caste specialists receiving hadade do not serve Harijans.

The three castes, Barbers, Washermen and the Blacksmiths are the classical jajmani servants, being easily defined, associated with long term relationships and receiving harvest payments. However, there are a number of ambiguous groups with some but not all of the attributes. The most important of these groups are the priests.

Unlike the Barbers, Washermen and Blacksmiths, it cannot be assumed that priests are jajmani servants for not all 'priests' belong to priestly castes, though those priests who receive hadade do. There are two types of priest in Karnataka, the purohit and the temple priest. The purohit for the higher castes is normally a Brahman. He formerly had the hereditary right to serve as the domestic priest of his clientele (Srinivas 1976: 74) as Brahman purohits would not serve Harijans, they relied upon lower castes 'purohits'. For his services he was paid in gifts - the amount given was regulated by custom. People still prefer to use the hereditary purohit but are no longer under an obligation to do so. There has also been a change in payments to cash. Neither of these types of payment is hadade, though the purohit has many of the characteristics of a jajmani servant.

Temple priests have hereditary responsibilities for a particular temple or shrine. Every South Indian village has a number of temples and shrines dedicated to deities ranging from high Sanskritic Gods to village gods and goddesses. The Sanskritic gods are served by high caste priests normally Brahmans and Jangamas (a Lingayat priestly caste) though in the hamlet of Dassihalli, where there are no Brahmans or Jangamas, the Hanumantha temple is served by an alternative specialist priestly caste. In contrast, the shrines of the village
gods and goddesses are not served by priestly castes, but by priestly families, of peasant or lower castes. The temple of Mayasandra's village goddess was served by a priestly family of the fisherman caste. The Harijans have separate shrines, and their own priests.

Though non-Brahmans serve in village temples, only members of the priestly castes, the Brahmans and the Jangamas, receive hadade. One reason locals give for this is that the Sanskritic gods receive daily pujas, whereas the village gods are approached only during crises, when the supplicant makes a sacrifice, or during the periodic festivals, at which time everyone makes a donation.

As Edward Harper has noted, Sanskritic gods are worshipped to obtain religious merit - 'Merit affects the worshippers karma, his fate after death. (Harper 1959: 229b)' The village gods are worshipped to overcome the periodic crises of this life.

Although, as Harper argued, villagers enter into permanent relationships with all deities, Sanskritic gods require a more continuous commitment to dharma, both in executing one's duty in daily life and in displays of devotion to the gods. The village gods have a more direct relationship to their followers, in that they make it clear, by bringing on a pestistence, for example, when they need obeisance.

Studies by Srinivas and Epstein indicate that a number of other castes in Karnataka once received harvest payments. Srinivas noted,

Formerly, in Rampura, it was customary for two families, one belonging to the upper caste and the other to the Untouchable caste, to be linked in a master-servant relationship. The servant was called the halemaga (old son) of the master. The servant family had certain duties on ritual and social occasions, e.g., at a wedding in the master's family, the servant had to present a pair of sandals to the bridegroom. The servant family was paid a quantity of paddy and straw at the harvest. In addition, it had
the right to the carcass of any cow or bullock which died in the master's house. (67)

Nowadays, Untouchables are beginning to refuse to perform these and other tasks as they are considered to be degrading. But the upper castes want the practice to continue and there is friction.

Formerly, it seems that entire sub-castes occupying a very low position in the hierarchy were attached as halemagas to certain sub-castes occupying a relatively high position. Thus we find a man of a high caste saying that "formerly such and such sub-castes were halemagas to us. They are no longer so!"

(Srinivas, 1960: 28)

Epstein referred to such payments as still occurring in the village of Wangala, both during her 1955 study (Epstein, 1962) and in her 1970 revisit (Epstein, 1973: 217). She argued that in return for a small amount of grain the halemaga families had to work for their patron when required (for which they received an additional daily remuneration): for example, during the busier parts of the growing season. This provided security for both farmer and halemaga (Epstein, 1962: 181).

This was a quite different view of halemaga from that of Srinivas. According to him the halemaga provided a restricted range of ritual services closely tied to his caste occupation. Epstein, however, included agricultural labour, an occupation open to all castes. 68

The difference between Srinivas and Epstein may be that halemaga still existed in Wangala, but not in Rampura. One wonders, however, if Epstein did not idealise her field data. While Epstein still found halemaga in Wangala in 1970, Srinivas, a very precise fieldworker, found no trace of it in 1948. Although Epstein's views were supported by one writer, Iyer, one might note that Iyer's work was published in 1931, and his project, the compilation of a caste and tribe gazetteer was started some years earlier. When he stated that halemaga still
remained in some rural areas, he was referring to the 1920s and quite possibly earlier.

Srinivas was of the opinion that halemaga had not been an important institution since before World War I (Srinivas, 1955: 27). I have no evidence of halemanga in the Mayasandra region; nor do the older people say that they remember such a system. The Harijans admit to having removed the carcasses of cattle from the houses of higher castes in the past. They expressed this in general terms - that they, as Adi Karnatakas (A.K.s) or Adi Dravidas (A.D.s) (the two Harijan castes), were responsible for removing all dead cattle, rather than having to do so for a particular master. For them, the responsibility to remove dead cattle was not just an obligation, it was also a right. They had rights to the skin which was used for leather working, and to the meat (hence the A.K.s traditional name Madiga - leatherworker - more generally Harijans are known as scavengers). In return they would have to present the cow's owners with some remuneration, e.g. a pair of sandals made from the leather. Apparently, this right was given up, under pressure from social and religious reformers. In Mayasandra the A.K.s say an A.K. holyman persuaded them to give up beef (the scavenging of beef from carcasses is closely associated with the Harijans' low position). This may have been the occasion when the removing of carcasses was relinquished. My data is scanty and incomplete because the practice terminated some years ago and there is great confusion over the details: e.g. the landowners claim to have had greater rights over the carcasses than the Harijans allow.

Wangala might have been a very 'traditional' village but nevertheless I suspect that Epstein exaggerated the strength of halemaga in Wangala, in contrasting it with the more progressive village of Dalena. Mandya District, in which the villages of Wangala
and Dalena were situated, was the site of a major irrigation project in the 1930s. Epstein noted that residents of Wangala, whose land was irrigated by this project, benefitted by it without being forced to change their ways. In contrast the residents of Dalena, whose land remained dry were forced to adapt to the new conditions, by going out and acting as entrepreneurs in wet villages, if they were to receive the project's benefits. One might note, however, that in Srinivas' Rampura, halemaga had broken down in the period following the introduction of irrigation.

Although it is against my intuition and the evidence of Srinavas' Rampura, the impact of irrigation may have resulted in an exaggeratedly conservative society being developed. Epstein argued that irrigation failed to alter the basic social and economic relations thus allowing older institutions to survive. It is possible, however, that irrigation caused a greater need for such an 'ancient' institution as halemaga giving it a new importance and even leading to it changing its nature. Irrigation would have increased the seasonal demand for labour. For hard pressed farmers it would have become more important than it ever had been to be able to train labour when necessary. Farmers might have been willing to pay for this privilege. Despite my doubts, halemaga, at least as described by Srinivas, presumably did once exist in the Mayasandra area.

**Inam: Payments in Land**

Inam is the main non-monetary alternative to grain payments. Polly Hill defined inam as 'any official grant made by the government for religious or charitable purposes or to individuals in respect of services rendered for any other reason' (Hill, 1982: 257). The religious reasons included helping poor Brahmans, aiding Brahman
scholars in their studies and devotions and supporting temples (and indirectly their priests). 69, 70

A wide variety of secular services were paid in inam. In North India, under the Mogul rulers, governors and generals received inam in return for providing their services, men and materials to the State. Inam was also granted to encourage village development. Buchanan cited such a case,

When a rich man builds [a reservoir] in order to acquire a name and reputation, it is customary to give him and his heirs, free of rent, one-tenth part of the land which the reservoir waters, and also for every canada of watered land thus formed, he obtains free of rent, six Seers sowing of Ragy-land, which amounts to about 146 acres of dry field for every 1,000 acres of that which is irrigated. So long as he enjoys these, he is bound to keep the tank in repair. If the reservoir be very large and expensive, the man who builds it and his heirs have over a fourth of the land which it waters; but then they get no dry-field. When the family of the original builder becomes extinct, the government resumes the free lands, and keeps the tank in repair. (Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 1: 279)

More commonly, inam land was given to village servants and artisans who worked in the village. Buchanan commented,

In every village there are some free-lands that pay no rent. In this district there are free-lands to the annual value of seventy-eight Pagodas, which formerly belonged to the Panchagas, or village astrologers; but since Tipoo's death they have been given to Vaidika Brahmans. They formerly had many villages entirely belonging to them, which were reassumed by Tipoo, and have not yet been given back. The same is the case with the lands that formerly belonged to the temple. The Talliari of each village, who is a kind of watchman and beadle, has as pay, from twenty to thirty Farnams worth of land free from rent. Here this officer performs the annual sacrifice to the village gods...The hereditary banda [village headman] and iron smith had each a portion of land, for which they paid only half rent. The full tax was imposed on these lands by Tipoo, and is still continued. (71)

(Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 2: 110)

In Karnataka, until recently, the government recognised five village officials as village servants. They were paid in a mixture of inam and 'potgi'. 73 According to the Tumkur Gazetteer,
Until a few years ago, the village establishment in the old Mysore area consisted of five hereditary offices, i.e. those of Patel (village headman), Shambhogue (village accountant), Talari (village scout), Hioti (village watchman) and Nirgunti (distributor of water from irrigation tanks). The remuneration of the Patel and the Shanbhogue consisted of Inam lands subject to jodi of full assessment and cash allowances called potgi on the basis of the land revenue demand. The other village servants received a certain quantity of grain from each cultivator and certain cash payments from non-agriculturalists in addition to the remuneration by rent-free or lightly assessed lands.

These hereditary offices were, however, abolished by the Mysore Village Offices Abolition Act, 1961, which came into force throughout the state on 1st February 1963. Under the provisions of this Act in the place of Shanbhogues, Village Accountants have been appointed as full-time Government servants on a salaried basis. They are required to perform such other duties also as may be entrusted to them by the Tahsildar or the Deputy Commissioner. The present incumbents of the post of Patels and other village offices are, however, being continued for the time-being without hereditary rights. The Patels get an annual remuneration equivalent to the potgi which they were receiving prior to the abolition of their hereditary offices. (M.S.G.T.D.: 340)

This is a description of village officers as codified by the British. It is noteworthy that Wilks' description of village servants written prior to 1874, made no distinction between village officials who worked for the government and artisans who also received inam land. Government codification tends to obscure the fact that both types of village servant received their inam grants from the village headman. This latter point is expressed by Janet Benson (1977: 24) and Paul Hiebert (1971: 92) with regard to Karnataka’s eastern neighbour, Andhra Pradesh. Benson (1977: 248) added that 'land may also be granted by large landlords'. Hiebert and Benson were describing villages in the old Hyderabad Princely State, a notoriously conservative State. The codification which occurred in Mysore State (in 1874 under British rule) may never have occurred there.
According to Paul G. Hiebert, service caste recipients of inam land, had to execute services for the village administration. This system was called begar, and the workers concerned were called begaris.

Leatherworker begaris attend government officials passing through on duty. When an official camps outside the village, the begaris show up to draw his water, collect firewood, and, in general, serve his needs. At his departure they carry his luggage to the next village. They also carry chains for the survey teams and perform tasks for the local government. These services entitle them to the use of seventy-five acres of gift land. Twenty-three Weaver families currently share beggar rights as village watchmen and messengers. One or two men sleep before the houses of the village officials at night while others patrol the village and report disturbances to the police patel. Passing officials use them to summon individuals for private audiences or to announce public meetings in the village square. In the past other caste services were needed: Washermen to launder the clothing of passing officials, Barbers to cut their hair and trim their lamps, Potters to provide cooking utensils, and Ironsmiths and Carpenters to furnish the necessary furniture and tools. These, too, have gift lands. (Hiebert, 1971: 93-4)

Inam grants also helped to ensure that the village had access to the full range of services deemed necessary for a proper 'community'. Here again inam was used to encourage development.

In theory, inam only involved usufruct rights, normally for the period during which specific services were carried out, but as Srinivas pointed out,

...after the lapse of a generation or two such property tends to be treated as the private property of the donee. The village priest of Rampura, for instance, sold a portion of his land a few months before I started work in the village. And it is very common, if not universal, for such property to be divided, like any other property of a joint family, among the heirs of the deceased person. (Srinivas, 1955: 12)

The most distinctive feature of inam land was that it was subject to either little or no tax. When land was more easily available and taxes were higher, this was probably the major attraction of inam.
I have referred to inam in the past tense as the legal position of inam has changed in recent times. The Zamindari Abolition Bill abolished the larger inams (Hill 1982: 259), by removing their tax-free status and redistributing their land (M.S.G.T.D.). Village Servant inams were abolished by the Mysore Village Offices Abolition Act of 1961. This replaced the hereditary village servants with government appointed officials. In return they (the hereditary village servants) were given full rights of ownership to their land, as were all tenants under the various tenancy and land reform bills.  

Non-inam payments in land also occurred. Srinivas noted that occasionally a faithful servant was given land (for the duration of his service) (Srinivas, 1955: 11). Srinivas also noted, as being intermediate between grain payments and payments in land, 'the payment of a crop growing on a piece of land' (Srinivas, 1955: 11). Although I do not know of such payments still occurring in Karnataka, I am told that they are still common in neighbouring Tamil Nadu. Here there is a type of farm servant (farm labourers employed on a permanent basis) called the adiyal. Adiyals are given the produce of a third of an acre of land in return for which they have to present themselves to work whenever their employer demands it. On these days they are paid four rupees and are provided with two meals. On days when their services are not required by their employer they are free to work elsewhere. I will discuss farm servants and their remuneration further.

Payments in Money

The third form of payment is money. Cash is used extensively for ad hoc payments. Traders normally work in cash, though they will sometimes accept grain. Similarly, artisans like the goldsmith who are not paid in grain, are normally paid in cash. Even many Barbers,
Washermen and Blacksmiths will nowadays work for ad hoc payments in cash. Nor is this a recent phenomenon for, as Chris Fuller pointed out, though taxation could be paid in grain, Indian governments following the Moghuls preferred to be paid in coin. To raise this cash farmers had to sell up to fifty percent or more of their harvest to merchants.

In addition to ad hoc payments in cash, 'gift payment', as I noted before, can also be made in cash or kind. Furthermore, cash payments can be used in some longer term ties. The most important of these involves 'jita servantship'.

Most agricultural labourers are employed on a casual basis and are paid daily. A minority known as farm servants, however, are employed on a long term basis. Unlike halemaga servants, they are normally paid in cash, nowadays. The simplest way of paying farm servants and the one adopted for most adult workers, is monthly payments. However, the master is expected to make loans or advances if they are desired. Even when farm servants receive regular payments they can be and often are paid in advance. In this case credits and debits may be entered on a ledger. The loans are symptomatic of the patron and client relationship involved, serving to express and maintain that relationship. In its more highly developed state, this relationship takes the form of jita servantship, the type of farm servantship dominant amongst juveniles. A detailed description of jita servantship was given by Srinivas,

'Jita servantship' may be termed "contractual" servantship, to mark it off from traditional servantship. Under it a poor man contracts to serve a wealthier man from one to three years. The terms of the service, including the wages to be paid by the master, are usually reduced to writing. The master advances, at the beginning of the service, a certain sum of money to the servant or his guardian, and this is worked off by the servant. Usually no interest is charged on the advance unless the servant tries to run
away or otherwise break the contract. The sum paid is exclusive of food and clothing which it is the master's duty to provide. Frequently, before the period of the service runs out, the servant or his guardian borrows another sum of money and thus prolongs the service. Formerly it was not unknown for a man to spend all his working life between ten and seventy years of age in the service of one master. In one case a servant lived with his joint family, numbering over a dozen in the house of his master, who was also an agnatic kinsman. On the death of the servant the corpse was accorded the honour of a burial in the master's land, near the graves of the master's ancestors.

Some members of most castes in Rampura are involved in contractual servantship, either as servants or as masters. In 1948 there were fifty-eight servants in Rampura. These servants came from every caste except the Brahman and Lingayat castes, and included fourteen Untouchables. Masters were found in every caste excepting in the Untouchable caste, which ranks at the bottom, and in the Smith castes, whose members are assisted at their work by relations and customers. Hindus and Muslims are bound together by contractual servantship, for Muslim masters invariably employed Hindus as servants while Muslim servants served only Hindu masters.

The bond between master and servant is intimate. Contractual servantship is often only one of the bonds prevailing between the two families. Sometimes a master employs a man as tenant on condition that he agrees to having his son or younger brother work as servant in the master's house. (Srinivas, 1955: 27-8)

The key term in this statement is 'contractual'. In theory, to use Maine's terminology, jajmani relations are based on status, but jita servantship is based on contract.

For families without capital, particularly land, jita service is one of the few ways to raise loans, e.g. to buy food, or to pay for a marriage. A boy may be contracted out either to pay for his own marriage costs, including bridewealth or to pay his sister's including her dowry (in recent decades there has been a change from paying bridewealth to dowry: in the lower castes where jita servantship is most prevalent bridewealth predominated until very recently). Jita servants who work for a number of years for a master, expect him to help arrange their marriage and to help pay for it. Although the
master is often of a different caste than his jita servants, he usually has better contacts. Furthermore, he will be in an influential position with many families which have eligible daughters.

In the past, the reverse could operate. If a debt had not been paid and an adult jita servant without sons died, the master could give the servants' daughters away in marriage, and receive the presents that are usually given on such occasions, unless these should exceed the amount of the debt' (Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 1: 124-5) (in the last thirty years dowry has replaced brideprice in Karnataka - for Harijans this change has occurred only in the last ten years). The reliance of landless families on jita servantship has increased, as the breakdown of most forms of patron-client relationship has meant that patrons are increasingly reluctant to lend large amounts of money to their clients.

Another economic reason for jita servantship derives from the system of payments for daily labour and helps to explain why most jita servants are juveniles. In the Mayasandra region daily wages are fixed for each sex (jobs are largely segregated), irrespective of age or ability. This means that those who are less productive will only be employed when there is a strong demand for their services. Jita servantship overcomes this because the jita servant's remuneration is fixed by agreement between patron and servant (or by the servant's father). It is generally renegotiated every year, usually with a new master. The remuneration is less than daily labour but it is secure and it comes with board, clothing and other help; for example, help with marriage costs, in return for which the servant will have to work longer for his master.

I can illustrate this by giving the example of an A.K. man living in the Mayasandra hamlet of Vittalapura. He started working at 10 years of age. For his first year he was paid 30 rupees plus two sets
of clothing each year, three meals a day, and shelter. The next two years were spent with a new landlord who paid him 50 rupees annually, two sets of clothing per year, three meals daily and shelter. For the next five years he worked for a landlord who gave him 60 rupees plus his previous benefits. His last employer paid him for the first two years 150 rupees plus previous benefits. For his last year he received the same payment and benefits but he stopped living at his master's house. This was because he had married. He said that he had changed masters purely to increase his wages. Prior to his marriage the money was taken in advance by his father. His master had helped in his marriage by advancing 400 rupees; 600 had been raised by his father selling land; while 1,000 was raised through the parents' savings. So the jita servant's marriage cost his parents more than the earnings that he had contributed to them.

From the master's point of view there are two advantages in jita servantship. These are that he obtains cheap and more importantly 'flexible' labour. As the jita servant is virtually a member of the master's household he can be used for tasks which normal labour could not or would not undertake: for example, he may be sent on an urgent errand in the night, or a young boy might be sent out all day to look after the cattle. Furthermore, he can generally be trusted to a greater degree than ordinary labour (after all he has more to lose if he does not behave correctly). Therefore jita servants are used to help in the supervision of others.

The third party for whom jita servantship has advantages is the jita servant's parents. It allows them to control their son, through his earnings, as they receive the 'loans' involved. Furthermore, the discipline imparted by the master would be regarded by most parents as being no bad thing. This is a further reason why few girls and adults
are jita servants. Being under the control of other people means that a jita servant lacks the full status of an 'independent' adult. For adults this is demeaning. For girls, jita service would render them open to accusations of immorality, particularly as jita servants live in their master's house. However, an equivalent informal status does sometimes exist for girls. If women in a household desire domestic help, they can employ a girl, usually a poor relative (her father will probably be paid something, perhaps 50 rupees). A girl of a low caste cannot be employed as she would pollute the house and particularly the kitchen in which she worked.

The point that arises clearly out of the two preceding paragraphs is that the 'contract' of jita servants is not purely economic. Epstein characterised jita servantship as serf labour. The jita is a bond 'expressed in an idiom of indebtedness' (Epstein, 1962: 75). That is the bond is more important than the loan itself.

That an economic relationship should provide a cover for a social relationship is reminiscent of Dumont's use of the term prestation for jajmani payments. The jita servant owes his master a debt, just as according to Dumont the jajman and kamin through their asymmetrical exchange continually try to recompense each other. However, the essence of a prestation is the fact that neither side can ever truly acquit its debt to the other side. Prestations and counter-prestations cannot be equivalent. Equivalence implies a market which judges their value, a market which in fact does not exist precisely because of the social nature of the relationship involved. There is always a residue of unacquitted debt in the relationships which is precisely what cements the social ties of the two parties involved. Unlike prestations, jita payments are part of the market economy. They are negotiable between the servant and the master willing to pay the
highest price. The relationship between master and servant involves a payment not a prestation. Though the jita tie is a long-term relationship, it is not permanent. Prestations involve permanent relationships because they cannot be acquitted. Since loans can be acquitted, a long-term relationship only is formed, which, in theory, may be terminated at any time.

However, while jita implies contract not status today, this was less true in the past. Then, there was little pretence of a simple economic contract between jita servant and patron. The use of a bond obscured a status relationship. This type of jita, I shall call 'bonded labour' to distinguish it from the modern more contractual form of jita. As bonded labour proper was outlawed in 1915 (Epstein, 1962: 75), descriptions of it rely upon historical accounts (all types of jita servantship were outlawed in Karnataka in 1975 - this has not ended it, but it has discouraged it in the bigger villages like Mayasandra).

Dubois noted at the beginning of the nineteenth century, well-to-do cultivators always employ men of this class, and, in order to keep them in perpetual bondage, they lend them money either on the occasion of a marriage or for other purposes. The poor wretches find themselves, on account of their small wages, quite unable to pay back their capital thus advanced, and in many cases even the interest, which soon exceeds the original loan, and are therefore reduced to the necessity of working, with their wives and children, until the end of their days. From the time this happens their masters look upon them as actual slaves, and refuse to grant them manumission until they have repaid both the principal and interest of the sum which they or their fathers borrowed perhaps twenty or thirty years before.(83) (Dubois, 1928: 82)

Dubois treated bonded labour as though it were the result of unscrupulous landowners entrapping gullible or desperate men into unpayable debts. Yet, although bonded labour did result in a loss of freedom for the landowner, it is unlikely that the relationship between
the patron and the bonded labourer can be attributed to the loan itself, rather the loan reflected or even was symbolic of the relationship involved. Buchanan described a system of bonded labour where the loan 'underlying' the bond was unrelated to payments made to the client. It was merely a token payment which operated as an expression of the relation involved.

The hire of farmers' labourers at Seringatam, and generally within two miles from the city, when employed throughout the year, is 10 Sultany Fanams, or 6s. 8d. a month. The servant lives in his own house, and it is customary for the master, on extraordinary occasions, such as marriages, to advance the servant money. This is not deducted from his wages by gradual instalments; but it is considered as a debt, that must be repaid before the servant can leave his place. In case of the servant's death, his sons are bound to pay the debt, or to continue to work with their father's master, and, if there be no sons, the master can give the daughters away in marriage, and receive the presents that are usually given on such occasions, unless these should exceed the amount of the debt.

(Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 1: 124-5)

This form of bonded labour is strikingly reminiscent of halemaga as described by Epstein. The client was obliged to provide his patron with labour when the latter needed it. The loan represented this relationship between the client and the patron. It would be interesting to know whether this relationship like halemaga was caste specific.

Epstein has also commented on bonded labour. Unlike Buchanan, she described a form of bonded labour where the bond was directly tied to the payments,

the poorest peasants borrowed money from the wealthier and, if they were unable to pay even the interest on the debt, they had to work off their debt by service to the creditor. There was no fixed salary for 'jeeta'(84) servants, which made them cumulatively more and more indebted to their patrons so that generations of 'jeeta' servants in Wangala, though there is still the practice of working off one's debt, but nowadays servants are paid a fixed wage.

(Epstein, 1962: 75)
For Epstein, like Dubois, the bonded labourer had been enticed into bondage through the offer of a loan, but with the added duplicity by the landlord who by refusing to pay fixed wages made it impossible for the labourer to have any chance of paying off his debt. However, this is taking the analogy of contemporary jita servantship too far. Non-fixed payments indicate an entirely different relationship between the landlord and the bonded servant. The relationship involved was a tight patron-client relationship where the client contributed his services and in return depended upon the protection of his patron. This type of relationship has been analysed most succinctly by Jan Breman (1974) for hali, the prevalent form of bonded labour in Gujarat.

Although Breman accepted that halis lack independence, he questioned whether it was uncontrolled debt which had led to their circumstances. He argued that in pre-modern India, economic scarcity meant that a hali was better off than an unattached labourer. Breman argued that far from the hali attempting to end his servitude by paying off his bond, he (and his patron) regarded his borrowing as his income. Therefore, the hali attempted to increase his debt, not reduce it. It was the patron who tried to keep the loans to a 'manageable' level. The master, of course, did not keep an accurate record of the debt owed to him. No doubt this acted to bond the hali more securely to his patron, but this would have been unnecessary as the halis regard the bond as being in their interests. It did, however, allow the master to act as patron by exaggerating his benificence and thus to emphasise the hali's dependence. As Breman put it, it allowed the master 'to behave like a patron' (Breman, 1974: 60).

It is...more than doubtful that the hali strove to end his attachment. His being coerced to work is usually inferred from the condition that the servant was not allowed to leave his master as long as he was indebted to him. But the debt was rather fictitious in character and, if only for this reason, the term of
debt slavery applied to this form of servitude is not very felicitous. Not only was repayment merely theoretical on account of the hali's minimal remuneration, but it was not envisaged by either of the parties.

For the master the expense involved in the beginning of the service relationship was an investment he had to make in order to obtain the services of a farm servant. He did, however, try to keep this debt within reasonable limits, as he well knew he could not recall it. The hali, on the other hand, did his best to maximize it, and tried to get something out of his master as often as he could. That his dependence thus increased did not trouble him in the least. In view of his slender chances of finding work as an unattached labourer, repayment of his debt in order to end his bondage was the last thing he wanted. In short servitude was sought rather than avoided by Dublas.(85)

So much was labour compulsion regarded as fundamental to bondage that some authors found it surprising that the halis were in no way inferior to the other Dublas. Not only were they not held in contempt, a Dubla was even gratified if his daughter married one. Only then could he be sure she was provided for.

The option held by a master on the son of his farm servant also applied the other way around. Continuance of the tie from generation to generation was contingent upon the approval of the hali and his descendants. For them it was as much a right as a duty to succeed their fathers as farm servants. The initiative to begin the relation was taken by both parties, and it was in the interest of both to maintain it. (Breman, 1974: 44-5)

The hali received a regular wage from his patron only when there was work. At other times he depended upon the 'generosity' of his patron.

The master did not have employment for his servants throughout the year, certainly not for all of them. When there was little or no work for a hali he was allowed to work for someone else and keep his earnings. Yet it was precisely in the slack period that other landowners needed little extra labour. At first the hali lived on the credit he had saved up, withdrawing only so much grain from his daily allowance as he really needed for food. The rest remained to his account, but he could never save enough to bridge the whole of the slack period. When his reserve was exhausted - and it did not last long, the master being the only one who kept book - he was allocated a quantity of grain, an advance payment which was now called khavati (literally, to eat). At the end of the rainy season the account was made up and the balance he
owed was added to his total debt. Illness and other accidental circumstances caused the servant to be even more deeply indebted to his master, and repayment was obviously out of the question. (Breman, 1974: 42)

Breman compared a hali's borrowings to a kamin's livelihood:

...the hali could claim total though extremely sparing support from his master. As a kamin received his grain allowance irrespective of the service he had performed, so the hali was not remunerated on the basis of his merits but on that of his needs, which were rated low indeed. There being no contractual agreement related to a market situation, the allowance of the farm servant was not very flexible. This allowance - a more accurate term than 'wage' - was paid largely in kind and remained at the same minimal level throughout the last century. (Breman, 1974: 59)

The hali did not receive an economic wage from an employer but the protection of a patron,

providing for the material needs of his farm servant was not the only obligation of the master. The protection offered by the Anavil to his hali reached far beyond giving him a living: he had to guarantee his existence in a much wider sense. This meant that the master should defend the social interests of his servant and that he was held responsible to some extent for all the actions of his subordinate. Consequently, the hali of a prominent Anavil(86) patron was assured of a reasonable amount of security and protection. For his part, he had to behave loyally, that is, do nothing that might provoke the displeasure of his master. Should conflicts arise, he was expected to take his master's side, even if it meant opposing his fellow caste members, the Dubla clients of the other Anavils. (Breman, 1974: 60)

Though Breman's study was confined to Gujarat, it helps to explain the bond of bonded labour in Karnataka. Furthermore, it suggests an explanation for Epstein's claim that bonded labourers did not receive fixed wages: they were receiving an allowance not a wage. Conversely it suggests an explanation for Buchanan's statement that the loan was separate from the bonded servant's wages. The hali too received a separate wage when they were working. It was when they lacked work that they became indebted. Far from describing different types of bonded labour, Buchanan and Epstein may have been discussing different
aspects of the same bonded labour, respectively when work was available and when it was not.

Bonded labour (in its older and more complete form) then, had many of the characteristics of the jajmani system, in practice if not in theory. As in the jajmani system payments were removed from, at least, the direct influence of the market. Relations between patron and client were governed, as Maine might have said, by the status of the two sides rather than by a contract between them. Although in theory, bonded labour did not have the 'permanent' relationship of jajmani where both sides were obliged to continue the tie, in practice it often had the characteristics of it. The bonded servant could not easily withdraw from the relationship even if he so wanted. The relationship could not be ended by paying off the loan. Similarly the master was expected to carry on his patronage of his client.

Nevertheless, the kamin is part of a permanent relationship with a recognised position vis-a-vis the jajman. He has very specific rights whereas the bonded labourer is dependent upon his patron's sense of 'noblesse oblige'.

Furthermore, neither the bonded labourer nor the jita servant gave his services as a representative of his caste. Though bonded labour was most common among low castes as was indicated by Buchanan's statement that 'by far the greater part [of the Whalliarus, a Harijan caste] are yearly servants or Batigaru (Buchanan 1807 Vol.1: 314)' (Buchanan used the term battigaru for bonded servants), they could come, as Buchanan also remarked, from all communities barring Brahmans and Muslims (Buchanan 1807 Vol.1: 298). Thus, while bonded labour reflected a society where status rather than contract was basic, it could not be explained in terms of the caste system.
Hadade, Inam and Money Payments Compared

The 'customary' payments of hadade and land are used for a much wider range of services than just the 'jajmani' services performed by castes. Conversely, many caste services are paid for in cash. That is, the form of the payment does not neatly correlate with the nature of the services being remunerated.

Grain, land and cash serve as equivalent payments for many purposes. Even today grain can be substituted for cash: for example, a pot might be bought with a measure of grain or a day's labour might be paid in grain. Even grants of land can be equivalent to payments in cash. Srinivas' example of devoted farm servants receiving the use of land is a relevant case for farm servants are normally paid in cash or kind.

Similarly, government grants of inam land are more like grain payments than they appear at first sight. Payment in land was formerly a convenient way to pay for services. Villages lacked central graineries or treasuries as these would have required an unnecessarily complex organisation. Land payments by the village were simpler than making each farmer pay village servants separately. Furthermore, land payments served to emphasise ties with the village administration, for which the village servants were working. It is symptomatic that the modern bureaucratic State has replaced payment in land with cash wages. For the State, cash is more convenient and facilitates direct control over village officials. Wage payments manifest the officials' dependence on the State.

Village servants who did not work for the whole village were often paid separately by those landowners who needed their services. Neerguntees, for instance, could either be paid in inam land from the village or in grain from wet land farmers. Some areas have moved from
paying Neerguntees in land to paying them in grain. When the
government replaced the old system of hereditary village servants with
directly paid functionaries, it failed to replace the lower village
servants including the Neerguntees. In areas where the Neergunty was
paid in land some landowners have started paying them in grain. Other
landowners have relied on the moral obligation of Neerguntees to supply
their services free (deriving from their occupation of ex-inam land).
This moral pressure is encouraged by social and economic pressures from
the landowners.

In contrast to the case of the Neerguntees, it would have been
impracticable for farmers to pay kamins and village servants in land.
Farm servants rarely received land either as a reward or to ensure
their services.

There are few major differences between payments in land, grain or
cash. Land and grain payments offer more security than cash payments.
Land payments offer security because they involve direct control of the
principal resource, land. Individuals are still subject to the
vagaries of the harvest, but at least they have control over what
produce there is. Grain offers less but still valuable security, for
during famines, when the little that it obtainable is available only at
exorbitant prices, grain is preferable to money. Srinivas noted that
payments in land and grain were much more prestigious than payments in
cash. This presumably reflected the degree of access to land and the
resultant security.

The major difference between the three types of payment, grain,
land and cash, is not that land and grain payments are associated with
jajmani ties but that they are associated with permanent ties. Dumont
noted,

for the usual tasks, repayment is in kind: it is not
made individually for each particular prestation but is
spread over the whole year, as is natural for a permanent relationship in an agricultural setting: a little food may be provided each day, and there is always the right to a fixed quantity of grain at harvest time, and finally there are obligatory presents (often of money) on the occasion of the main festivals of the year and, above all, at the major family ceremonies, which are advantageous occasions for the praja of the house. (Dumont, 1980: 98-9)

A permanent relation is a type of long-term tie, involving open-ended relations between two parties (in this case families). 88 Permanent relations differ from other long-term ties in that they are more institutionalised, with strong rights and obligations on both sides. In jajmani relations this is expressed by the obligatory presents on festival occasions.

Long-term relations like permanent ties do not require payments in harvest grain or land. Such a tie can be established by a bond. Nevertheless, long-term ties are suited to payments, which involve rights to produce for an extensive period of at least one season. Grain payments are also suited to Dumont's concept of prestations. The farmer gives his product, grain, in return for the skills of the artisan.

Despite the impression given Dumont, permanent relations were not restricted to jajmani relations. Village servants such as Neergunties who were not kamins also had permanent relations, either with the village administration or with other villagers. Furthermore, Dumont's (1980: 98-90) assertions about grain payments apply equally well to many long-term arrangements: for example, farm servants can be paid in harvest grain (or in land).

This raises the question as to whether the existence of payments in harvest grain proves the existence of jajmani relations. The short answer is that they do to the extent that long-term ties are associated with harvest payments, and jajmani relations are one type of such ties.
To equate grain payments directly with jajmani ties is misleading for the reasons outlined above. Many writers nevertheless had reasons for doing so. A writer who used a particularly narrow definition of jajmani payments was Epstein. She wrote that in the jajmani system, 'rewards are paid annually in the form of fixed quantities of farming produce' (Epstein, 1967: 230). Epstein's definition of jajmani payments was more restricted than most for she was attempting to analyse the economic rationale behind jajmani payments. To do this she ignored many characteristics which for Wiser and Dumont were evidence that the jajmani system was contrary to strict economic rationalism. There are other reasons for the recent more restricted definition of jajmani payments. One is that grain payments are the most obvious phenomenon to investigate as an indication of the existence of jajmani relations. A second is that the abolition of zamindari tenure means that many of the other characteristics which Wiser attributed to the jajmani system are now absent. Harvest payments nevertheless do not prove the existence of jajmani ties.
CHAPTER 4: THE SEARCH FOR A SYSTEM

The key question becomes what precisely were the distinguishing characteristics of jajmani payments, and jajmani relations. The receipt of gift payments by kamins is one distinctive characteristic of many jajmani ties. Nevertheless, such 'gifts' are not unique to jajmani relationships. These payments are also made to Dassapas and others. Thus 'gifts' cannot be used to define jajmani payments.

Livelihood and the Denial of the Market Economy

The concept which distinguished jajmani relations from other economic ties was, for Wiser, 'livelihood'. The concept explained what he, as well as Lewis and Dumont, regarded as the chief characteristic of jajmani relations, the lack of a normal economic contract.

For Wiser jajmani payments were independent of market forces, being affected by social and ideological considerations more than economic considerations.89

Wiser outlined his concept of livelihood in the following passage,

The daily, monthly, bi-yearly, piece-rate and special occasion payments represent the fixed cash and kind payments made in the village. They cannot be compared with payments made for similar kinds of work outside of the jajmani system. They are not sufficient in themselves. They are in addition to certain concessions which will be discussed further on. The jajman when he makes a cash payment thinks not in terms of value for value received but that payments together with certain concessions will give the 'kam karnewala' his livelihood. (Wiser, 1958: 42)

Lewis commented,

It is a characteristic of this system to operate without much exchange of money. For it is not an open-market economy, and the ties between jajman and kamin are not like those of employer and employee in a capitalistic system. The jajman compensates his kamins for their work through periodic payments in cash or grain, made throughout the year or on a daily, monthly or bi-yearly basis. Kamins may also receive benefits
such as free food, clothing, and residence site, the use of certain tools and raw materials, etc. To Wiser these concessions represent the strength of the system and are more important than the monetary payments. (Lewis, 1958: 56-7)

Four characteristics of jajmani payments arguably had the nature of a livelihood rather than of a purely economic contract.

Firstly, payments were made not when services were performed but at times dictated by custom. Such occasions coincided with the agricultural activities of the village and with the ritual life of both the village and the families concerned.

Secondly, payments were made in the form necessary for a livelihood. The kamins received grains and various items suitable for a livelihood.

Both these observations would also apply to any long-term relationship, though the emphasis on ritual of the first point supports Dumont's stress on the religious basis of jajmani relationships.

Thirdly, according to Wiser, Dumont and others, a jajmani relationship differed from a simple economic contract because the jajman had to supply a fixed payment and the kamin had, in return, to supply a fixed service (or ensure that it was supplied) irrespective of the market forces of supply and demand. Wiser claimed that the position of each was protected not by the market place, but by tradition, religion and village law as supported by village and caste councils (Wiser 1958: 43).

Unfortunately, fixed payments were not restricted to jajmani services. Many services independent of caste also received fixed payments. Thus the distinction between jajmani relations and other relations remains ambiguous.

There would seem to be little to distinguish fixed payments of this kind from other fixed payments, even those made in other parts of
the world: e.g. wages and salaries. A distinction might be made if it could be shown that jajmani payments were permanently fixed whereas other fixed payments were subject to periodic adjustment. However, in the Mayasandra area residents attested that adjustments were also made to jajmani payments. This may be a modern day adjustment to changing real prices, but it is evidence that no fundamental problem was involved.

Even if the jajmani payments were fixed there is a question of whether they were fixed as a quantity or as a proportion of the crop. The orthodox position held by Wiser (1958: 44-6), Lewis (1958: 60-2) and Dumont (1980: 98) was that it was fixed in quantity. Epstein used this position as a premise to argue that the jajmani system provided kamins with a minimum subsistence in a bad season, in return for giving windfall profits to the farmers in a good season (Epstein, 1967: 249-250).

The alternative view was forcibly advanced by Henry Orenstein. He claimed that in Poona District (Maharastra) people were paid a proportion of the total crop,

Most informants agree that each group is paid a different proportion of the total crop and that each village has its own standards. However, even within the same village, variation among informants is very great with regard to the proportions appropriate to each group. Hence we can say that payment is probably based, in a rough way, more on production than service rendered...

(Orenstein, 1962: 305)

He stated that jajmani,

is one of the few economic systems, possibly the only one, in which payment is usually gauged not only with regard for the goods or services rendered, but also with regard for the amount of goods produced by the 'purchaser'.

(Orenstein, 1962: 302) (91)

Thus, opposite traits are cited as characterizing the jajmani system: that payment was constant irrespective of the farmer's production and the quantity of work needed (payments were determined by
factors such as size of landholding, or the number of ploughs held by the farmer), or, alternatively that payment varied according to the farmer's production. For Wiser, Epstein et al. fixed payments made the jajmani exchanges unique for they were in defiance of the market. For Orenstein proportional payments meant that jajmani payments were the only payments to take account of the goods produced by the purchaser and not only the goods and services rendered. Both positions raise certain difficulties for proponents of the jajmani system.

The notion of jajmani payments as a proportion of the crop seems at first sight more in keeping with the notion of the village community which Wiser regarded as lying behind the jajmani system. Surely all members of the village community should share the benefits of their work in a good season even if this meant doing without in a bad season? It seems implied by the notion of the village community that everybody by contributing to the community, either materially or spiritually, is also contributing to the product of that community. A good harvest requires not just the skill of the farmer but also the material contributions of the blacksmith, carpenter, etc., and equally the contributions of the priest, the barber and the washermen in creating the right spiritual climate for the harvest. Thus, if jajmani payments were proportional, it could be argued that jajmani payments were not compensation for the kamin's services but his right to a share of the harvest. The implication is that the farmer is not really the proprietor of his land, but he is looking after it in the interests of the community. This would be in keeping with Mukerjee's notion that the village community was descended from Dravidian communalism.

While such an argument has its attractions, it has its difficulties in that it can also be argued that proportional payments are in keeping with a market economy. In busy years when labour was
short, and the farmer had more to pay the kamin, he would be paid more. Such a connection - between jajmani payment and market forces - would be contrary to Wiser's concept of a livelihood as a payment made not as remuneration for a service but simply to ensure his welfare.

Fixed payments also raise problems for the jajmani theorists in having similarities to payments in the West, in particular to salaries and wages. According to classical economics, profit is the proprietor's return for taking risk. That is, in return for giving his employers a wage, the owner has the right to the entire profit (minus tax) as well as the responsibility for loss. This is virtually identical to Epstein's position on the jajmani system. The one difference is that wages in the West (even in bureaucracies which do not exist to make a profit) are theoretically affected by the market - at least in the long run. However, as I have noted for Mayasandra even the assertion that jajmani payments were absolutely fixed is open to question.

That aspects of jajmani payments were similar to other payments does not challenge the distinctiveness of jajmani payments provided it can be shown what their distinguishing trait is. When, however opposite characteristics are cited as such a distinguishing trait then one must wonder how distinctive jajmani payments really are.

Parry (1979: 76) noted that both systems occurred in various parts of India. Neale (1957: 225-6) argued that both systems could exist together: a kamin would receive some grain as a fixed payment and some as a proportion. This assured the kamin a minimum living even in a bad season while enabling him to share some of the benefits of a good season.

Buchanan like Orenstein, noted the great variety of payments used,
In almost every village (Gramā) the customs of the farmers, especially in dividing the crops, are different. The Shanaboga, or village accountant, keeps a written account of these customs.

(Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 1: 299)

In a second comment, Buchanan showed how even where grain was paid in fixed amounts there was often a degree of flexibility,

This estimate is made on the supposition that the heap of grain contains at least five Candacas. If it should contain forty Candacas, it pays no more, bit of less than five Candacas there is a deduction made from the allowances that are allocated to different persons. Twenty Candacas may be considered as the average size of the heaps. (Buchanan, 1807, Vol. 1: 265-6)

In Mayasandra a fixed quantity, rather than a fixed proportion was paid. The question of whether jajmani payments were absolutely fixed or were proportional raises the question whether jajmani relations were a type of patron-client relationship. Patron-client relationships were an important part of any economic relationship in the past and they are often so today. As would be expected they would also be an important part of jajmani relations.

A central aspect of patron-client relationships must be the provision of help when needed, including help during shortages: for example, famines. If the jajmani relationship is genuinely a patron-client relationship, rather than just a relationship associated with patron-client relations then this should be true of it too. A proportional payment would not imply this, unless it was accompanied by a minimum fixed payment.

I have not discussed patron-client relationships, partly because of the terminological problem of precisely who is the patron and who is the client (in a sense the jajman is the client for the kamin's services). More importantly, if the jajmani relationship is a patron-client one, it is one of a peculiar and distinctive kind. I will discuss jajmani and patron-client relationships later.
Wiser's fourth feature was the one which he regarded as most clearly indicating that jajmani payments provided a livelihood and were not 'market based' payments. It was that the kamin received his major 'reward' through village concessions, not direct payments. These were granted to all members of the village community, provided they met their village obligations, including their caste duties. People were rewarded not directly for their services but for participating in the village community. Among the concessions were usufruct rights to rent-free land, house sites and access to fuel, grazing rights, etc. (Wiser, 1958: 71-84).

The concept of village concessions and indeed the very concept of a livelihood were natural consequences of Wiser's belief that, 'The Hindu Jajmani System was a disintegrated form of the ancient Village Commune' (Wiser, 1958: 108).

Wiser explained the jajmani system by quoting Mukerjee's argument that the jajmani system ultimately derived from the communal society of the primitive Dravidians. The Aryan invaders superimposed a family-based structure, creating a mixture of communal and family rights.94

Strictly speaking, in the statement quoted above Mukerjee was discussing land tenure, but Wiser added that, following the Aryan conquest,

...in each village there grew up a staff of officials, artisans, and employees who became hereditary and served the village, not for payment by the job (such a thing, of course, was unknown) but for a regular remuneration, paid in kind, chiefly by a fixed share in the harvest. (Wiser, 1958: 109)

These two statements by themselves do not adequately explain the development of the jajmani system. It is unclear why a change in land tenure would have led to the creation of a staff of officials, artisans
and employees. Mukerjee apparently associated it with the development of a division of labour following the creation of separate property. However, the important point was not why such a staff emerged but that many of the characteristics of the supposed earlier communal society remained. These characteristics were reflected in the system of payments.

Wiser's adoption of Mukerjee's position implies that to establish the existence of the jajmani system it is necessary only to show whether kamins receive 'concessions' from the village. Although kamins did in the past receive inam payments in land from the village administration, such 'concessions' were not specifically associated with caste services. Village 'concessions' in land were made to all village servants, and not just to kamins.

This position would not have worried Wiser, for it assumes that village servants and kamins were separate categories. As Wiser's usage of Mukerjee's quotations above indicates, he did not distinguish between village servants and jajmani servants. For Wiser, the jajmani system was the village community. That which fell outside the definition of the jajmani system was extraneous to the village community.

This concept of village servant excluded many people who were regarded as being village servants in South India. In particular, it excluded most of those who worked for the state, both as 'village officials' (for example, the headman, accountant) and in more minor capacities (for example, the Neergunty) for few of these worked in a caste capacity.

In his general study of Karimpur society, Behind Mud Wallis, Wiser noted the existence of village 'agents'. Agents were representatives of outside authority, particularly state authority in the village. As
such they were roughly equivalent to those village servants who in South India worked for the state. They did not include artisans, who performed services which remained within the village. Wiser did not regard agents as being village servants as they were not kamins.

Wiser's view of agents reflected his concept of the state. Wiser followed Mukerjee in regarding the modern state as being a foreign institution contrary to the spirit of the village community (according to Mukerjee, the Hindu state was a federation consisting largely of village communities themselves consisting of interdependent guilds whereas the modern state was a power-hungry institution inimical to the interests of the village community). Characteristically, in *The Hindu Jajmani System*, Wiser only mentioned the existence of the state as a modern factor encouraging the disintegration of the jajmani system through its law courts etc., after he had discussed the jajmani system as an ideal model. In this book he did not even mention the existence of 'government agents'.

If village servants are defined as people who work for the village and are rewarded by the village, then Wiser's distinction between agents and village servants seems artificial as applied to South India. Both agents and other village servants receive inam land from the village headman in the name of the government. However, this was not true of Karimpur. According to Wiser's sole reference to the remuneration of agents, police watchmen received a small honorarium in cash (Wiser, 1971: 103). This distinguished them from kamins who were paid in a mixture of harvest grain, land and gifts.

Karimpur's sharp distinction between officials and jajmani servants may have been more apparent than real. Prior to the Moghuls, taxes in North India were collected in grain (Fuller, n.d.). The state would have paid its village agents a proportion of this grain as it did
until much later in South India. Thus their payments would have been almost indistinguishable from those going to kamins.

For this discussion a more important distinction between village agents and kamins was that the former did not receive the concessions of rent-free land which the latter did. Considering my earlier discussion this is a surprising distinction for in South India tax-free concession of land to kamins identified them as being 'village agents'. The headman acting in the name of the state gave land to kamins in exchange for 'free' begar services to government officials and jajmani services to families willing to pay in grain for these services (Benson 1977: 24). The reason for the difference is, I believe, that Karimpur had zamindari tenure. Unlike South India, it was not possible for the state in Karimpur to pay its servants in land.

In ryotwari regions, waste land, that is land which was not under cultivation, was the property of the State. Thus the State's representatives, the village authorities, could use this wasteland to pay workers. In Karimpur this was not possible for waste land was controlled by the zamindar.

This did not stop the village headman from giving land to obtain the services of kamins. It merely meant that, when he did so, he was granting the land in the name of the zamindar not the state. This land was not inam land - only the state could rescind taxation. However, it was rent-free, for the rent was the zamindar's share of the revenue.

It is interesting to note that, unlike Wiser, Dumont saw land grants purely in terms of village administration rather than as constituting part of a livelihood. He noted from Wiser's description of rent-free land in Karimpur that, while the grants of land were very small, they indicated 'the official function that these people have in
the village, and such arrangements occur very widely' (Dumont, 1980: 99). One might question what official function these people have in the limited sense as members of the village community. Presumably, people who are paid by the zamindar have no obligations to serve visiting officials, unlike the situation in parts of the South. It is possible that Dumont was applying his experience of other parts of India, principally Tamil Nadu, indiscriminately to Karimpur.

Wiser's assumption that the zamindar's rights once belonged to the village is consistent with a theory of the village community predicated on the belief that the zamindars had been created by Muslim and British rulers. Thus, differences in land tenure gave rise to the anomalous situation where payment in land was evidence of government service in South India and of the jajmani system in Karimpur.

Many characteristics, then, which Wiser associated with the jajmani system were attributable to his concept of the village community and not directly to the caste system. Wiser's historical model implied that castes were not central to the development of the village community but were guilds, which only developed later out of village servantship. If this were so, then harvest payments were tied to caste to the limited extent that most village offices were caste-specific and received grain payments. However, Wiser's historical model was improbable. He provided no convincing historical or other evidence for it. Nor did his model explain the strong religious connotations of caste and particularly its connection with concepts of pollution. If castes preceded the village community or just developed separately from it, then Wiser failed to explain convincingly any connection between caste and payments in land and grain. If Dumont is correct that grain payments were associated with jajmani relations because they involved permanent ties. This
statement can be rephrased by stating that Wiser failed to provide any adequate explanation of why permanent relations existed between castes. One might add that he did not even attempt to explain why jajmans and kamins behaved as they did within the system.

Nor does Wiser's concept of livelihood help to demonstrate that jajmani payments were fundamentally different from non-jajmani payments. Each of the various payments which Wiser claimed were uniquely characteristic of jajmani were features of some non-jajmani payments as well. This does not invalidate outright the concept of livelihood. It is conceivable that the concept of livelihood may apply to non-kamins as well as kamins, though Wiser himself did not argue that this was so. Nevertheless, one must have doubts about a concept which is so hard to define and for which the principal justification is based on a misreading of the ethnographic evidence.

Dumont and the Satisfaction of Needs

Though Dumont did not use the term 'livelihood' he too asserted that kamins were rewarded according to their perceived needs:

an organization which is to some extent deliberate and oriented towards the satisfaction of the needs of all those who enter into the system of relationships. What is effectively measured here is, so to speak, interdependence. Whilst directly religious prestations and 'economic' prestations are mingled together, this takes place within the prescribed order, the religious order. The needs of each are conceived to be different, depending on caste, on hierarchy, but this fact should not disguise the entire system's orientation towards the whole. (101)

(Dumont, 1980: 105).

Considering the weaknesses of Wiser's proof for his concept of livelihood it is not surprising that it is similarly difficult to prove Dumont's assertion that kamins were rewarded according to need. Although Dumont supported his argument by quoting Wiser's description and definition of the jajmani system (Dumont 1980: 105, 375) he
rejected Wiser's principal proof of livelihood, the granting of rent-free land, saying that it merely indicated 'the official function these people have in the village' (Dumont, 1980: 99). If jajmani payments were according to need as determined by hierarchy, then, it should, in theory, be possible to compare the 'real' utilitarian value of a kamin's services with the value of his remuneration. In practice, the absence of a properly developed market for services means that it is difficult to calculate the value people place on services, especially ritual services. Dumont's real proof was based on showing how his concept of the jajmani system fitted in with his interpretation of the caste system. He did not prove that the jajmani system was oriented to the whole, only that it should be.

Village Concessions: Rights and Privileges

Oscar Lewis, like Wiser, regarded village concessions as proof that jajmani payments were not based on the value of services received but on the kamin's needs. Lewis differed from Wiser in asserting that the kamin's needs were determined by the jajman and not by custom. According to Lewis, concessions were under the control of landowners. Normally, all kamins enjoyed such privileges which they could lose by opposition to the will of the jajmans. This is a substantial modification to the view of Wiser who held that concessions were rights protected by the forces of tradition and village law.

The contrast between Wiser's and Lewis' positions on concessions was not just the result of their theoretical dispositions, for it was evidently affected by ethnographic contrasts between the different villages each studied. The most important contrast was in land tenure.
Unlike Karimpur, which was a zamindari settlement, Rampur, where Lewis worked, was a 'modified pattidari' village (Lewis, 1958: 91). This meant, that part of the village is owned in common and part by individuals whose rights can be traced genealogically. Baden-Powell coined the term 'joint village' for a type of North Indian village in which the land is assessed by the government as though it were one estate, the entire village being held accountable for the revenue payment in a lump sum. Rampur is a 'joint village' of this type, having, among other characteristics of the ideal 'joint village', an area of wasteland owned in common by the proprietary group.(103)

Families from three Jat clans owned Rampur's arable land severally, that is by individual proprietorship, and its wasteland jointly. Other castes either worked for the Jats or leased land from the Jats.

Thus, whereas in ryotwari Mayasandra common land was owned by the State, and in Karimpur by two zamindari overlords, in Rampur it was owned jointly by a Jat 'brotherhood'. As village concessions themselves were made from this common estate the concessions themselves were under the control of the local landowners. Thus, concessions could be used to extort subservience from kamins. In this respect zamindari Karimpur had more in common with ryotwari Mayasandra than with pattidari Rampur, for only in the latter did the families in control of cultivation have control over common land.

The abolition of zamindari tenure also destroyed pattidari tenure, for the State made settlements directly with the landowner, rather than with an overlord or a brotherhood, and it also assumed control of common land. In so doing, the zamindari abolition bill ended the landowners' control of concessions. This, in Lewis' view, had played an important role in the decline of the jajmani system.

On another level, the difference between Wiser's and Lewis' position on concessions was related to a more theoretical difference in
the relationship between jajmani relations and caste. Although Lewis nominally accepted Wiser's definition of the jajmani system as the exchange of caste services (Lewis, 1958: 55-6), in fact he treated the jajmani system as merely the means by which the landlords extracted labour from their dependents.

Lewis apparently assumed that the exchange of services and payments involved was organised on a caste basis, but he did not clearly state whether this correspondence was more than coincidental. Lewis quoted with apparent approval (Lewis 1958: 56) Cox's assertion that caste grew out of specialised groups, a concept reminiscent of Mukerjee's guilds. 105 This could be interpreted as suggesting that castes existed so as to ensure the provision of services to the landowners. Lewis did not commit himself on this statement, though it would have been in keeping with his argument that jajmani relations were a means of ensuring cheap and secure labour for the landowners. The important point, though, is that the jajmani system either existed independently of, or prior, to the caste system.

Lewis' treatment of jajmani relations as being incidental to caste was in line with his lack of distinction between caste and class. By treating relations between jajman and kamin as differing only in degree from relations between other landowner patrons and their clients, Lewis was treating inter-caste relations as inter-class relations. Both were relations based on power. 106, 107 If inter-caste relations were essentially identical with class relations, then 'the jajmani system' loses any claim to being unique. Many societies have or have had landowning elites who use their power and wealth to control any number of dependent clients.
Lewis' identification of caste with class is at variance with the view held by many anthropologists including Dumont, and less overtly Wiser, that ideology distinguishes caste from class. Their position was put most strongly by Edmund Leach who distinguished between class based on competition and caste based on interdependence. He asserted,

Caste ideology presupposes that the separation between different named castes is absolute and intrinsic. People of different caste are, as it were, of different species - as cat and dog. There can therefore be no possibility that they should compete for merit of the same sort. (Leach, 1971: 7)

This argument seems extreme; power is surely a factor in any relationship. Nevertheless, it is another thing entirely to suggest that any relationship can be reduced to power without any reference to ideology. While this might be true of some relationships it is not true of others: for example, it would be a tremendous simplification to see a mother and child or husband and wife relationship simply in terms of power.

Although Wiser accepted that power now affects jajmani relations, he evidently regarded this situation as a perversion of the historical jajmani system. Jajmani relations had been 'isolated' from the effects of power by the force of tradition and village law. The British government's recognition of private property and the development of a monetarised economy had led to a situation where jajmans and kamins no longer felt constrained to carry out their traditional duties. The situation was developing where both sides attempted to use the power they possessed to influence their relations with those who were increasingly becoming their opponents, instead of their partners. In essence, competition was replacing cooperation, class was replacing caste.

Lewis argued power had always underlain jajmani relations. All that had changed was that power was now explicit not implicit. In the
past the kamins would not have dreamed of challenging the jajmans. In the years prior to independence, political legal and economic changes encouraged kamins to challenge the jajmans thus causing the latter to demonstrate their strength.

Once again the difference between the two writers may not be entirely theoretical. I have stated how, for ethnographic reasons, power affected village concessions more strongly in Rampur than in Karimpur. In a more general sense, Rampur's caste relations may have been closer to class relations than were those of Karimpur. In Rampur the major landowning caste was the Jats; in Karimpur it was the Brahman caste. One would expect that a Brahman landowning caste would have been particularly conservative, specially in caste attitudes. In contrast, the Jats have long had a reputation for progressiveness, at least where economic matters such as agriculture are concerned, and also a relative lack of concern about caste purity.

Lewis did not discuss the Jats' reputation for progressiveness but he did note the region's reputation for a lack of class consciousness, a reputation which he played down,

Some writers [he wrote] have stated that the caste system is weaker in the Punjab than in other parts of India, that rules governing untouchability are weakly observed there, and that the influence of Brahmins is slight. But these generalisations apply more particularly in West Punjab, where the numbers of both Brahmans and 'untouchables' like the Chamars have long been lower than in the eastern part of the region.

He concluded, noting the influences of the Muslims, Sikhs (and he might have added its proximity to Delhi),

It is striking that, in spite of this history, and in spite of Rampur's numerous ties with the world outside the village, it still remains conservative in so many respects.

I believe that Lewis was confusing conservatism with exploitation. The Jats use of power suggests a lack of the nobless oblige which would
be more in keeping with an old fashioned caste conscious 'aristocracy'. To this extent Wiser may have been closer to the truth than Lewis. The apparent differences between Karimpur and Rampur were limited, and by themselves insufficient to explain the different conclusions of Lewis and Wiser. They nevertheless were enough to support the preconceptions of Wiser and Lewis in their analysis.

Even if Wiser's and Lewis' interpretations of the jajmani system were affected by their ethnographic data, the problem remains which, if either, interpretation of the jajmani system is correct. To determine whether either is correct requires knowing whether anything would be left if it were possible to remove power from a jajmani relationship. If there were, then there must be an ideological component to jajmani ties. The obvious point of departure for such an analysis is that the jajmani tie is a permanent relationship, for this is the one thing that all writers agree is part of the jajmani system.

While Wiser and Dumont regarded the permanency of jajmani relations as being due to the ideology of interdependence which recognised the mutual dependence of the jajman and the kamin, Lewis claimed that jajmani relations remained permanent because jajmans exercised power over the kamins to obtain their services freely and cheaply. Lewis commented,

A major function of the jajmani system is to assure a stable labour supply for the dominant agricultural caste in a particular region by limiting the mobility of the lower castes, especially those who assist in agricultural work. If a kamin leaves the village, he must get someone to take his place, usually a member of the same joint family. This does not usually involve sale, and the jajman is not likely to object as long as the position is filled.

(Lewis, 1958: 57)¹¹

This explanation of permanency in jajmani relations rested heavily on the jajmans' need for agricultural labour. Yet agricultural labour per se is not the ostensible reason for any caste-linked permanent
relationship. Jajmani relations as defined by Wiser exist for the purpose of exchanging caste services, but no caste is defined as having agricultural labour as its caste occupation. Lewis avoided this apparent difficulty by, in effect, redefining caste occupations as including any service done for landowners. He noted that in Rampur most agricultural labour was performed by the Camar caste, and that leatherwork is only one of the Camar's traditional tasks. Ibbetson has described some of their duties in the Karnal tract, not far from Rampur: 'The Camars are the coolies of the tract. They cut grass, carry wood, put up tents, carry bundles, act as watchmen and the like for officials; and this work is shared by all the Camars in the village. They also plaster the houses with mud when needed. They take the skins of all the animals which die in the village except those which die on Saturday or Sunday, or the first which dies of cattle plague. They generally give one pair of boots per ox and two pairs per buffalo skin so taken to the owner...

Camars were formerly required to perform begar, including compulsory service for government officials who visited the village. In general, their position has always been a very low one, but recently they have been making efforts to raise their status, and have discontinued some of their traditional jajmani obligations and services. (Lewis, 1958: 72)

Although nominally a kamin might have had a permanent relationship with a jajman for the purpose of performing his ostensible caste duty, he would at the same time be undertaking his subsidiary caste occupations. When a kamin ensured that his 'caste occupation' (for the Camars leatherwork and scavenging) were carried out, he was also ensuring that his subsidiary services were performed too (in the Camars' case agricultural labour).

However, Lewis' own evidence gives rise to questions on how much of Rampur's agricultural labour was performed according to permanent relationships. Lewis distinguished between ordinary and extraordinary services. The Camar caste performed five ordinary tasks, work without payment for officials (begar), repairs of jajman's shoes, work in
extraordinary situations (illness or death, etc.), help in harvesting, and removal of dead cattle. Extraordinary service meant full-time work in the kharif crops\textsuperscript{111} (Lewis, 1958: 73).

The distinction between ordinary and extraordinary crops was apparently the difference between what a Camar was obliged to provide as a member of his caste and that which he provided as the result of a specific contract between the labourer and the landlord.\textsuperscript{112} As such, extraordinary services could not have been part of a permanent relationship.

This did not mean that ordinary services were necessarily part of a permanent relationship either. Lewis did not provide adequate data to establish with certainty whether they were or were not. What he did provide was suggestive. He included as an 'ordinary service' work without payment for officials (begar).

\textit{Begar}\textsuperscript{113} was the reverse side of concessions. People provided begar because if they did not they would lose their village rights. Lewis noted,

\begin{quote}
All the village land, including the house sites, is owned by the Jats; the other castes are thus living there more or less at the sufferance of the Jats. It was the crucial relationship to the land, with the attendant power of eviction, which made it possible for the Jats to exact \textit{begar} service from the Camars in the past and still enables them to dominate the other caste groups. (Lewis, 1958: 79)
\end{quote}

I noted earlier Hiebert's comment that in Konduru certain families provided begar services in return for various concessions including inam land (Hiebert, 1971: 92-4). Begar in Lewis' Rampur had had a much more prominent role than this. The Jats' control of waste land (including house sites) under pattidari tenure, meant that they had been able to extort begar not only to aid government officials but also to ensure they had help themselves when labour was short.
The ending of the landowners' control of village waste land had led to the disappearance of begar, and for Lewis the weakening of the jajmani system.

Since the passing of zamindari abolition bills, the key of power of landowners may have been curtailed in certain areas. Majumdar and his colleagues, for example, report that in the village they studied near Lucknow, where zamindari abolition has taken place, Camars now refuse to perform begar, while the barbers refuse to draw water for the Thakurs and will not wash their utensils or remove their leaf plates any more.

(Lewis, 1958: 82)

Begar in Rampur also differed from that in Hiebert's Konduru in that it applied to the Camars as a caste and not to individual families. As the Jats had held the entire waste land jointly they were able as a block to extract begar from all the Camars. To the extent that a permanent tie was involved it was between the Jat community and the entire Camar community, and not between individual jajmans and kamins. It is questionable, however, whether this was a true permanent relationship for no evidence was provided by Lewis that a Camar had to provide a replacement for begar services - only that while he accepted the village concessions (which as a member of the village he was obliged to simply to obtain a house site) he had to undertake begar. This leaves open the question of why only the Camars had to perform begar, rather than all the families who depended on the Jats. Lewis' writings indicate that every dependent caste was obliged to perform some duty for the Jats. One might note Lewis' reference to how in a village near Lucknow, east of Rampur, barbers refused to draw water for the Thakurs (the local Rajput landlord caste) and would not any longer wash their utensils or remove their leaf plates (Lewis, 1958: 82) (cf. Majumdar, 1959: 37). The only difference between the Camars and the other castes was that the Camars had to undertake agricultural labour. The identification of agricultural labour with the Camars is a more
difficult problem. Clearly, for some purposes caste was treated as class (or perhaps more accurately as varna); that is, secular attributes were added to the ideological attributes of caste. In this respect, however, Rampur differed from Mayasandra where, although there is a general identification of agricultural labour with the lower castes, members of all castes (with the exception of the Brahmans and Jains) work as agricultural labourers.

Begar was in keeping with Lewis' argument of jajmani as a mechanism for obtaining cheap, secure labour. The problem is, if begar did this, how can the association of jajmani ties with permanent relationships be explained? The answer to this must be that, contrary to Lewis' claims, permanent jajmani relations existed for ideological reasons, or alternatively that the existence of caste monopolies meant that a permanent relationship was necessary if a landlord was to obtain all the services he needed. The latter case can be illustrated by a village which requires a caste service. If a family of the relevant caste were in the village they might be coerced into providing a service but, if they were not, the village would have to attract a new family. This could be done by offering in addition to a grant of inam land the security and guarantee of a permanent relationship.

Neither of those alternative explanations for permanent jajmani relations is entirely satisfactory. The first, that the permanent relations could not be explained simply as providing labour, rendered not only Lewis' explanation of jajmani relations inadequate in failing to explain all types of jajmani relations, but it indicated that his treatment of caste as class was mistaken. If the second is correct, that permanent relations existed to overcome problems created by caste monopolies, Lewis' explanation of jajmani relations might have been right in part, but it would not have explained why caste, and in
particular caste monopolies, existed. Earlier, I noted that Lewis seemed to favour Cox's idea that caste grew out of specialized groups. The implication being that castes existed to ensure the provision of services to the landowners. Such an explanation of caste would be contrary, however, to an interpretation of permanent relations as existing to overcome caste monopolies.

Lewis' discussion of begar raises the issue of bonded labour. If, as he argued, the jajmani system was primarily a means of recruiting labour, the question is how did it do so in agricultural areas which lacked the all-enveloping begar of Rampur, as did all of South India. The answer might be bonded labour. Like begar, it tied agricultural labourers to landlord patrons. It is interesting that Lewis did not describe bonded labour in Rampur. It is as though a village might have either the complex begar of Rampur, or bonded labour, but not both.

Bonded labour like Lewis' model of the jajmani system provided landholders with secure labour, while also giving an element of security to the labourers. As noted earlier, Breman stated that for the Dubla caste of Gujarat, bonded labourers had greater prestige than their free brothers. The labourers' desire to be bonded was due, precisely, to their lack of access to land and the other means of production. This is a classical patron-client relationship where the client for economic and institutional reasons (that is, his lack of economic and legal rights) is forced to rely upon a patron. Similarly, in an agrarian society where people were at the mercy of the seasons, and where individual and property security was low, it was advantageous for the patron to have clients too.

That bonded labour had advantages for the landholder in providing labour and security does not, however, reinforce Lewis' model of the
It merely emphasizes that Lewis' failure to explain convincingly the role of caste in jajmani ties meant that he had also failed to explain the distinctive characteristics of jajmani ties.

Lewis' failure to provide a plausible explanation for all jajmani ties must make one question his definition of the jajmani system. This is especially the case as he failed to explain the relationship which Wiser regarded as central to the jajmani system, the permanent tie and its relationship to caste. Besides, the obligation of labourers to provide labour can be better explained by specific concepts like patron-client ties, the power of landholders over labourers, than by including all such relationships into a single amorphous concept.

The answer as to whether the jajmani system can be defined is probably that there is not a single 'jajmani system'. Jajmani ties, however, can be studied as a series of relationships with a number of distinctive traits. The task remaining is to identify and explain these traits. The most interesting is the apparent association between inter-caste services and permanent ties.

Why Do Permanent Ties Exist?

One way of approaching this problem is to examine who is or was actually involved in permanent jajmani ties (see Table 2). For this I will examine the Mayasandra region using hadade as a proxy for jajmani payments. The reservations outlined earlier about equating harvest payments and jajmani payments should be kept in mind. In the Mayasandra region some communities are much more likely to pay hadade than others. In part, this is explained by the concentration of certain communities, such as the Vokkaligas, in the hamlets, where the factors contributing to the decline of the jajmani system were weakest:
e.g. the cash economy, education, and urban influences. Nevertheless, even accepting this, there is still much to be explained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Farmers who make annual grain payments for services</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total No. of Farmers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayasandra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bommenahalli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dasihalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khodinagasandra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komhandevanahalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorvanahalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigalarapalya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubinakatte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vittalapura</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As noted in table heading, the source is fn. 114 where Table 3 is located. The data in Table 2 are derived from Table 3.

Certain communities are not involved in permanent relations simply because they do not receive jajmani services from the caste specialists. Harijans, for example, cannot enter into permanent relations with Barbers and Washermen because the latter would be dangerously polluted if they were to do so. Besides, according to the ideology of purity, it would be of little benefit to the former as they are irredeemably polluted. To a lesser extent the same applies to
relations between Harijans and Blacksmiths. Blacksmiths are reluctant to supply services to the Harijans because they believe their ability to perform their craft depends on the preservation of what purity they have.

Non-Hindus rarely enter into permanent ties of any kind. They do not need Barbers and Washermen to remove their pollution. They prefer to do these services themselves. Even when they do use specialist castes such as the Blacksmiths they rarely enter into a permanent relation with them. Seemingly, this evidence supports Dumont's contention that the permanent jajmani tie reflects the ideology of purity. However, such a case is not supported by the example of the Lingayats, a "Hindu" sect.

Originally the Lingayats were opposed to caste but they are now divided into several endogamous castes. They are, nevertheless, much less likely to make hadade payments than other similarly placed castes such as the Vokkaligas. The reason for this is that like non-Hindus they do not believe in the ideology of purity, or, at least, according to Dumont, they do not believe it applies to themselves Dumont 1980: 191). Dumont argues that Lingayat castes are divided not by their relative purity but by their exclusiveness. He suggests that Lingayatism (strictly speaking, the Lingayats' religious beliefs are known as Veerashavism) is a sect of renunciation. Their 'caste hierarchy' is arranged according to the degree of renunciation. Though I believe that Dumont is correct in his analysis, it does not explain why the resultant castes are hereditary. Dumont would presumably attribute this to the influence of the surrounding Hindus.

Thus, though the Lingayats do have caste, they do not have the ideological need for the services of those castes who perform a primary role in removing pollution. This is reflected in the small numbers of
Lingayats who pay hadade to Washermen. However, even though they do not regard long hair and beards as being polluting, many Lingayats pay hadade for the services of barbers.

The existence of hadade, albeit at a low level amongst the Lingayats, has two possible explanations. The first is that it is due to the influence of Hindu society on the Lingayats. The second, and more convincing explanation is that, while ideology may encourage Hindus to pay hadade, there are also practical reasons too for so doing: e.g. the lack of cash and the easy availability of grain means that payment in kind is preferred, and the permanent tie ensures the provision of needed services.

Non-Hindu groups such as the Jains and the Muslims are less likely to pay hadade than Lingayats. Most Muslims and Jains live in the large commercialized village of Mayasandra where they combine farming and merchandising and so have easy access to cash and are less at risk in times of difficulty.

But is is not simply the case that Muslims and Jains do not pay hadade because they lack Hindu beliefs about permanent ties, for the Lingayats who also lack such beliefs have such ties. The solution is that the non-Hindus have an active dislike of permanent ties which overcomes any practical advantage it confers. The Muslims, in particular, have a strong egalitarian ethic which bridles at being in bond to another, particularly a Hindu, or having another in bond to them. Added to this, is a reluctance to indulge in what are regarded as Hindu practices - one Muslim told me, 'We do not have hadade, that is a Hindu practice'. This ideology is reflected I believe in the greater mobility of Muslims. Muslims are more likely to have come from another village or to have parents who did in pursuit of better
opportunities. This is partly because many are merchants, but it is mainly, I believe, because they are not tied to patrons.

Surprisingly, Brahmans are less likely to pay hadade than the high peasant castes, and, in particular, the Vokkaligas. From talking to Brahman landowners, I believe this is only a recent phenomenon. The older Brahmans say that they paid hadade until the last generation or two. They say that they have given up hadade because of the development of the cash economy, greater contacts with the cities, and changing demands.

As noted earlier, the development of trade and the intrusion of a fully fledged cash economy into rural India, has led many patrons and clients to prefer cash payments to hadade. In the Mayasandra area, the concentration of Brahmans in the largest, most commercialized village, and in commercial wet land farming, means that they are in a better position to pay cash to their clients, and that they have reasons for preferring to do so. This is primarily because, as commercial farmers, they are in business to make a profit. They can afford to carry an occasional loss if there is a greater profit to be made in the long run. Paying cash on an ad-hoc basis carries a certain risk but it means farmers do not have the cost of supporting clients.

Brahmans also have greater contact with the cities. This largely derives from the Brahmans' high level of education. This has given them great access to new occupational opportunities, particularly in India's considerable bureaucracies. The effect of this has been to re-orientate Brahmans who are left in Mayasandra away from village life and towards the city.

Education has also had a more direct influence on this re-orientation. Brahmans now read newspapers and periodicals from the city. These urban-orientated Brahmans are less concerned with gaining
power and status in the village by maintaining patron-client ties. Now they are more interested in educating their children and in giving their daughters the large dowries necessary to marry educated 'sons-in-law' so as to gain access to the status and security of having relatives with government jobs in the towns.

When using the services of the specialist castes, Brahmans nowadays are much more likely to make ad hoc payments in cash. Thus, permanent jajmani ties have broken down along with other patron-client relationships.

However, the new influences have not simply undermined the permanent tie of most jajmani services; they are also reducing the need for the service itself. Education has had an important role here, by redefining Hinduism.

Brahmans have a less direct role in ritual activities in which village gods are involved as distinct from the higher Vedic gods where they have a major role. Modern education has encouraged this tendency by emphasizing a concept of religion which is in keeping with western models. Greater stress has been placed on devotion to the higher Vedic gods who are concerned with more spiritual matters such as rebirth and moksha and a lesser emphasis has been placed on village gods who are concerned with the more mundane material matters of this world. One of the effects has been to reduce the Brahman's dependence on the service castes, particularly on the Barbers and the Washermen who play a major role in the ceremonies of the village gods.

The Vokkaligas have been the mirror image of the Brahmans. As the region's dominant caste, they have been much more involved in the rural social order. Though they are imitating Brahmans by educating their children, they are still concerned with maintaining their status and power in their own villages.
This examination of hadade payments shows that permanent ties are not essential to the performance of jajmani services. The Brahmans who still use services provided by specialist castes but no longer pay hadade are an example of this.

Secondly, it shows that permanent jajmani ties cannot be solely explained by the ideology of purity and impurity, as is demonstrated by the example of the Lingayats. The precise role of ideology in a permanent jajmani relationship is a very difficult matter to define. Certainly, arguments which attribute the permanent tie to ideology are attractive. It is arguable that jajmani ties are consistent with caste ideology. In an institution like the caste system, where each person’s rank and duties are prescribed, it is logical that their rewards should be so too. This would prevent competition which could undermine Dumont’s "orientation to the whole".

Parry’s data from Kangra showing that purohits and jajmans are tightly bound together in permanent ties supports this assertion. A jajman felt compelled to use his hereditary purohit even if the latter was incompetent. Parry, however, noted that such ties were not characteristic of the great majority of jajman-kamin ties, what he called zamindar-kamin ties. In the Mayasandra region, Parry’s jajman-purohit relationship does not exist, but, according to Srinivas (Srinivas 1976: 74), Brahman priests in Karnataka once had permanent ties with jajmans.

Nevertheless, though such arguments may be attractive, jajmani ties can be explained more simply as a patron-client relationship. In a largely subsistence society where it is important to avoid risk, assured services are more valued than ad hoc ones. Permanent ties are not an ideological necessity for the Lingayats but they are a practical necessity. Even the apparent exception of the priests supports this
The early breakdown of the priest-jajman relationship in the Mayasandra area indicates that ideology is not central to the relationship. The logical explanation for the breakdown of the system is that priests are not used on a regular basis but only for occasional life cycle rites. The practical advantages of a permanent tie do not apply to priestly services to the same extent that they do to some other permanent ties and thus the ties have not survived changed circumstances.

The main influence of ideology is, I believe, an indirect one in ensuring a demand for permanent ties. The concept of pollution creates a need for certain services, like barbering, while restricting who can supply them. In the circumstances, the best way of ensuring the services is by making it the responsibility of the kamin to provide the service in return for a guaranteed income.

For the jajman a permanent tie also had the virtue of giving him some control over the kamin's general behaviour. It becomes the kamin's responsibility to protect his own purity by not serving Untouchables. Equally, the jajman would be expected to protect his own purity and not be outcasted.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This summary of the nature and place of jajmani ties in Indian society leads us to require a more general conclusion. The major theme of the earlier part of this thesis was the origin of the concept of the jajmani system. The concept of the jajmani system was shown to be a logical evolution of the concept of the village community, itself a development of the village republic. The three concepts constitute part of a continuous discourse. At the beginning of the discourse, the village republic was conceived of as a purely political and economic unit but increasingly emphasis was placed on the village as a community. This shift has involved a change in interest away from how India could be remodelled along Western lines to interest in India as an alternative and contrasting model to the West. The village republic, as perceived by Wilks, revealed that, though India's institutions were different from those of the West, they could be used to remodel India in accordance with the West. By making a permanent settlement with the village republics, it was possible to provide an incentive to Indian farmers to improve their land, and to create a concept of thrift. Later writers, such as Maine, Mukerjee, Wiser and Dumont, saw the village community or jajmani system as fundamentally opposed to Western society. The increasing focus on caste was a natural part of this trend. Caste clearly distinguished India from the West. Mukerjee and Wiser saw it as providing the framework underlying the village community. It was this that led Wiser to rename the village community the jajmani system.
**Village Community: Reality or Artefact?**

An important theme throughout the history of the discourse was that the village community was similar to the original state of society. Social theorists, from advocates of the social contract on, have been interested in the conditions in which early society originated. One point on which they were agreed was on the small size of such societies. The social contract, it was believed would have been viable only in a small population. Similarly, Maine's assertion that society originated in the patriarchal family also emphasized small origins. Durkheim's "primitive" society dominated by a collective conscience could exist, according to Durkheim, only in a small homogeneous community. Darwin's theory of evolution, where the "higher", more complex forms of life developed from the smallest and simplest organisms, seemed to support the concept of small origins. Such societies were presumably to be found isolated from progress in remote valleys, forests, deserts or even islands.

Indian society had many traits associated by anthropologists with such communities yet apparently it was characterized by its large size and heterogeneity. Thus, for instance, India had many traits which Durkheim associated with the collective conscious although he asserted that mechanical solidarity based on a dominant collective conscious could only exist in small homogeneous societies.

For social scientists like Mukerjee and Wiser, the village community was a godsend. It enabled the anthropologist to adapt existing models of non-western societies to India, without facing the deeper question of whether the simple correspondence of "primitive" traits with small scale societies was warranted, by allowing them to treat India as a mass of small homogeneous communities.
The question which occurs here, is to what extent was the village, a village community. The village republic as such never existed. Though industrialization, motorized transport, schooling etc. have reduced the isolation of the village, it has always been affected by outside forces. As Metcalf (1979: 3-16) noted, even village elites were often of recent origin. Successful rulers reinforced their position by ensuring that their supporters, often of the same caste or community, controlled the principal means of production, land. Similarly, although succession to the office of village headman was usually hereditary, the ruler retained the right to appoint a new headman if he so desired. Economically too, the village lacked independence in that it had to pay heavy taxes and if the taxes were in cash it had to sell its products to outside markets to pay for them. Villages were rarely self-sufficient in caste services either: e.g. Mayasandra was dependent upon travelling families of tinkers to make and repair metal pots.

Nevertheless, the Indian village had and still has a greater degree of autonomy than any comparable unit in industrialized societies. Thus, for example, though a ruler could appoint his own headman, a cautious ruler did so with discretion, usually choosing a man from the main landowning community, since a headman without the support of the dominant caste would have had little authority. Indeed, while the ruler, in theory, had complete authority over the village, his representatives often identified with the village elite and protected their interests. Frykenberg (1969: 227-248) noted how, in a village in Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, the headman and the accountant understated village revenue so as to reduce the land tax on landowners in general and on their own lands in particular. The village had autonomy in other ways too. It was, for instance, the
responsibility of the village council to ensure the provision of village services by village servants: e.g. the waterman, watchman etc., and by jajmani servants, giving land in return. Despite trade to pay for taxation, most food and other products consumed were produced locally within the village. In this sense, each member of the village had something vital to contribute to the economic welfare of that village. Most social ties too were within the village.

Though the village community concept may have exaggerated the degree of autonomy possessed by the village, this was hardly more than anthropologists were prone to do anyway. After all, anthropologists were interested in the village community precisely because they wished to study an isolatable unit. It was an artefact of anthropology's participant observation methodology that anthropologists concentrated on the social relations of a single locality. As far as studying inter-caste relations is concerned, the village was quite a suitable unit as most such ties were within the village. Indeed, as far as the Mayasandra region is concerned, Wiser was quite correct that harvest payments are best preserved in the more isolated smaller hamlets where the most important social relations are still within the village. Few anthropologists are interested in the village community as such nowadays. This probably owes less to evidence linking villages to the outside world than to a loss of interest in evolutionary models of society. 122, 123

From the Community of Understanding to the Ideology of Purity

The major influence of the village community debate on the jajmani system was not, I believe, the village as the autonomous village republic, but was the village as a community of understanding. For Mukerjee and Wiser, the village was a community not just in the sense
that it was a group of people living in a single locality, not even in the sense that it had joint political, economic, and social institutions. A community was also created by the sharing of a common ideology - what Durkheim called a collective conscious. In the Indian village community this ideology involved the subordination of the individual to the whole. People performed services not through choice or because they had made contracts with other individuals to do so, but because they had been born into a caste which had the attributes necessary to perform a particular occupation. That they had these attributes had been ordained by the gods, dharma, and their actions in previous lives. Similarly, they were paid by the whole village, to perform these services and not by individuals.

The community of understanding as a concept exaggerated the differences between the 'communalistic' societies of the East, and the 'individualistic' societies of the West. Wiser understated the importance of achievement in Indian society, and of ascription in Western society. One effect of this was to make Wiser's model of the jajmani system inflexible. Ascriptive models which completely ignore achievement are static. If everyone's role is predetermined, it is difficult to see how the society can adjust to externally induced changes. Thus Wiser saw recent changes not as a challenge to the jajmani system but as a threat.

In recent years, most anthropologists have shown little interest in the jajmani system. This is not because anthropologists have disproven the jajmani system, for few who have commented on it have attempted to do so, but because anthropologists have been turning away from all-inclusive, all-explaining models such as those of Durkheimian functionalism used by Mukerjee and Wiser. They have argued that such models stereotype societies, understate variation, fail to explain
change etc. They have preferred to study society at the level of individual institutions. In particular, they have rejected stereotyping Indian society as ascriptive and Western society as achieving. In all societies there is both ascription and achievement though undoubtedly in India more relationships involve the former than is the case in the West. For this reason, anthropologists have preferred to study ascription and achievement in individual relationships rather than characterizing whole societies as being ascriptive or achievement based.

The exception has been Louis Dumont. Dumont admitted the existence of achievement and ascription in all societies but this did not overly concern him. Dumont, unlike Wiser, recognised that his model of the jajmani system, like his model of the caste system, was simply a model of an institution in terms of the logic of a particular ideology: i.e. the ideology of purity. Though achievement was an integral aspect of Indian society, it was not central to this ideology. When it occurred, the changes wrought were incorporated into the model as if they were the status quo e.g. occasionally low castes gained power. Eventually, they were recognized as having the right to claim higher status. New genealogies and mythologies soon appeared supporting such claims. Dumont's recognition that the jajmani system was a model meant that his concept was not inflexible in the way that Wiser's was, for he was not describing what actually happened but what people believed to have happened as determined by ideology. Although Dumont was interested in how ideology incorporated "reality", the minutiae of actual behaviour was of secondary interest to him.

For Dumont the jajmani system was important in proving that the caste hierarchy involved the subordination of the individual to the whole. It did this by showing that the economic system associated with
caste, i.e. the jajmani system, was not based on the market as in the
west but on the community: kamins were paid according to their position
and participation in the whole and not according to a market. Dumont
asserted that there was no market because its very existence was
predicated on the "individual", a concept specific to Western ideology.

Unfortunately, though Dumont's argument that the jajmani system
was an economic system oriented to the whole, his argument remains
unproven for he did not prove that the characteristics of the jajmani
system were attributable to the hierarchy of caste. Each of the
factors involved in jajmani ties can be explained in other ways. In
the absence of a developed monetary economy, it is logical that farmers
should make payments in grain and that they should make them once a
year. It spread risk and provided security. Even the permanent rights
held by the kamin, can be explained as being necessary to overcome
shortages of essential services caused by caste monopolies.

Indeed, one can go further than this: jajmani payments are not
even essential for caste services. I noted how in Mayasandra payments
are often made in cash on an ad hoc basis. Similarly, harvest payments
are not confined to jajmani services. Thus, though, for reasons
outlined earlier, jajmani payments do seem to be in keeping with the
ideology of the caste system as Dumont says, they are not conclusive
proof of Dumont's argument.

What cannot easily be explained by purely economic causes is caste
itself. It is perhaps for these reasons that discussion of Dumont's
theories has tended to avoid his analysis of the jajmani system and
concentrate on his much more powerful analysis of the caste system, for
that is where his analysis stands or falls.
The Jajmani System: Two Investigations

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the jajmani debate is the disjunction between jajmani theory and the ethnographic evidence. In the title I refer to the thesis as being an investigation of the jajmani system, but in reality it is two investigations. The first is an investigation of jajmani theory in its historical context, the second an investigation of the jajmani system in its ethnographic context. My argument is that the theory of the jajmani system as it developed in its historical context involved various assumptions which were contrary to the ethnographic evidence, and that those traits which were cited as proof of the jajmani system were either illusory or could be explained more simply.

I have referred in the thesis to a number of traits which I think are essential to any definition of jajmani system. The first of these is that it involves the provision of caste services. The provision of caste services by itself is not, however, an adequate definition of the jajmani system. The nature of the services and the way in which they were provided must in some way be distinguishable from services unrelated to caste.

Wiser said that one way in which jajmani ties were distinguishable from non-jajmani ties was that those involved were in turn servant and master. This was not, however, as Wiser admitted, the situation even in Karimpur, nor despite Wiser's speculations is there any evidence that it was ever true, anywhere.

A more meaningful trait claimed for jajmani ties was the concept of livelihood. This was that contrary to the mentality of the market economy, individuals were not directly rewarded for their services. These they supplied as members of the village community, and in return, as members of the community, they received a "livelihood". This
livelihood was not commensurate with the value of the services but was, rather, according to Dumont, in accord with the "status" of the provider.

The problem is that, while the concept of livelihood accords well with the concept of the village community, it was not supported by Wiser's own data from Karimpur, nor by data from elsewhere in India. The various payments such as harvest grain and inam, which Wiser regarded as proof of a livelihood, were true of non-caste linked services too. In Mayasandra, for instance, the village headman was formerly given inam, and the village waterman, the Neerguntee, and the village watchman, the Kulvadi, are still paid in grain. As I have argued, there are good reasons why in a semi-monetarized society where famine was always a danger, people preferred payments in grain and land.

This raises an additional problem with the concept of "livelihood". If jajmani ties do differ from non-jajmani ties, there must be an explanation. Wiser assumed that both caste and livelihood derived from the village community, but he offered no explanation why this should be so, or historical evidence that it was so. In the absence of evidence supporting Wiser's assertions, it is preferable to assume that anything which distinguishes jajmani ties from non-jajmani ties must be due to caste itself.

Writers since Wiser have concentrated on permanent ties as distinguishing jajmani relations. Though it is true that many jajmani ties are permanent, the permanent tie is not unique to jajmani relations, nor are all jajmani ties permanent. In Mayasandra, for example, the Kulvadi and the Neerguntee also have permanent ties with their patrons. Similarly, many jajmani services do not involve permanent ties. The goldsmith, for example, supplies his services to
any customer in return for an immediate payment in cash or grain. The evidence from Mayasandra is that this has always been the case, largely because there is no regularity in transactions with goldsmiths.

Thus any correspondence between jajmani and the permanent tie is not absolute. An explanation of such a correspondence should also account for why some non-jajmani services involve permanent ties and why some jajmani ties are not permanent.

The simplest explanation is that permanent ties are logical where the need for security of both payment and service is paramount. The evidence from Mayasandra clearly demonstrates that it is those services for which demand is constant, and which cannot be delayed until a more suitable time, that involve permanent ties. In these cases the permanent ties assure the performance of services even when there is a demand for labour, notably agricultural labour, elsewhere. This applies just as much to Neerguntees as to Blacksmiths.

The Mayasandra evidence also casts doubt on explanations of the jajmani system which relate it to caste as a religious phenomenon. The most important of these theories is that of Dumont who explained the jajmani system as the expression of purity and impurity between the castes in economic relations. The ethnographic evidence of Mayasandra does not support this argument. The Lingayats who do not believe that purity and impurity applies to themselves, are nevertheless involved in permanent ties. In contrast, Brahmans, who, in theory, have great need for jajmani services, are nowadays unlikely to enter into permanent relations. The communities and castes who are likely to enter into permanent ties are those in the smaller hamlets, whereas such ties are much less likely in the larger villages and towns. The difference reflects, I believe, the hamlets' lower level of monetarization, greater dependence on agriculture, fewer contacts with the cities, and
lower educational levels. These factors mean that life in the hamlets is more precarious than life in Mayasandra. People are dependent on what they earn in farming, have little money to support themselves when conditions are bad, have few contacts in the towns who might help out, either directly in cash or food, or indirectly through help in getting a job. Lower levels of education have a similar effect, as in most town jobs it is preferable to have some education. Similarly, education is useful in obtaining help from government, the better educated are more able to find out what government programmes they are eligible for, can understand and fill out forms, and are more confident in dealing with officials.

For all these reasons life in the hamlets is less secure than life in the larger villages. In the absence of effective institutional support, people were forced to depend on personal ties for support. For this reason, the patron-client ties, like jita servantship, were important. Patron-client ties were "effective" where the client was more dependent on the patron than the patron was on the client, as was the case with agricultural labour. But where the adequate provision of services was vital, especially services needed during the agricultural season, when there was competing demand for labour, there were reasons for farmers to enter into permanent ties. These assured the farmers of the services while at the same time guaranteeing the providers of the services of their "livelihood". Arguably my investigation of jajmani ties in Mayasandra is misleading, for I can only describe the present, and clearly there have been great changes. Hadade payments were much more common in the past than they are today. Many jajmani services which now are permanent on an ad hoc basis would then have involved permanent ties. Many more non-jajmani services, however, would also have permanent ties. There have been other changes too. Inam has been
abolished. Bonded labour has been abolished. The question is, then, what is the sum effect of these changes.

It is probably fair to say that society has become more "individualistic", or, in Maine's terms, that it has moved from status to contract. The reasons for this are probably the ones listed above as distinguishing the larger villages from the hamlets. The greater degree of monetarization links to the cities and education and the influence of government. The difficulty here is that these changes themselves may reflect the influence of individualism.

Nevertheless, though clearly there have been major changes, there is little evidence that the reasons for paying hadade were any different in the past than they are today. However, the various factors which cause people to pay hadade today were more important in the past, and therefore hadade too was more common. While it is arguable that religious concepts such as purity and impurity may have played a more important role in the past, there is little evidence to support this contention.

I was surprised to find that historical accounts of South India, and even Robert Knox's (see footnote 74) account of seventeenth century Sri Lanka, had more in common with my experiences of Indian village life than do many anthropological accounts. It is arguable that this is because they, and I, have failed to see the essence of Indian culture, and have perceived it purely in terms of preconceived prejudices. I believe, however, that the explanation for this lies in the use by many anthropologists of the historic present. Most accounts of the jajmani system describe it not as it actually is but as they believe it might have been in the not too distant past. The danger with such an approach lies in idealizing the system. I have noted how Wiser was aware that Karimpur was not as he pictured it to be in his
account of the jajmani system but he put down the differences between reality and his model of the jajmani system to recent events. I believe that by relying on unsubstantiated historical explanations to account both for differences between reality and theory, and to account for the system itself, Wiser failed to address adequately evidence that conflicted with his model. That is he did not have to explain what distinguished jajmani relations from non-jajmani ties, for, in Wiser's historical model, by definition, all economic exchanges were jajmani exchanges.

These criticisms apply equally to Dumont simply because he used Wiser's data as his primary evidence for the jajmani system. Indeed Dumont never discusses the jajmani system, and rarely discusses the caste system, in anything but "ideal" terms.

Past writers, such as Buchanan, Knox and to a lesser extent Wilks, never discuss payments in grain, and the relations accompanying them, in anything but practical terms. As such relations can be explained practically I see no reason not to do the same.

Thus, to restate, firstly, a convincing definition of the jajmani system should show what distinguishes jajmani ties from non-jajmani ties. Secondly, this distinction if it exists, will almost certainly owe something to the nature of caste. Thirdly, if caste is religious in nature, jajmani ties will reflect its religious basis. Each of these points is challenged by my data from Mayasandra. In Mayasandra there is no evidence to suggest that jajmani ties are to be distinguished from non-jajmani ties. Nor is there any evidence that permanent ties, associated by many writers with jajmani ties, should be explained by caste; certainly they cannot be explained simply in terms of religious belief.
Why Continue the Jajmani Debate?

As regards the relevance of my discussion of the "jajmani debate" to anthropology in general, I can give a negative answer and a positive one.

The negative one is simply the demonstration of what the jajmani system does not do or rather does not prove. It is arguable that an understanding of the jajmani system would contribute to an understanding of the Indian village economy, and thus those factors that affect rural economic development. If, as I believe, jajmani ties were logical and that they have begun to break down with changing conditions, then the remnants of the jajmani system neither hinder nor promote development. This is particularly so, as the jajmani system at its height never covered more than a minority of services. It did not even cover agricultural labour, the most important service performed within the village.

This is not to say that caste does not hinder economic development. I believe that caste monopolies and, more importantly, concepts of purity which prevent individuals from performing occupations have affected economic development in India, but these relate to the caste system and not to the jajmani system per se.

The jajmani system has also been used by Dumont and others to analyze the caste system. A convincing demonstration of its use, for instance in supporting Dumont's model of the caste system, would certainly be of great value. In terms of the study of Indian society, caste is obviously of major importance in any study, as it is in terms of anthropological theory.

Dumont used the jajmani system to bolster his argument that caste was an example of the more overt importance of ideology in traditional societies in general, and in India in particular, than in Western
societies (an argument strikingly similar to Durkheim's on the relation of morality to mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity). He followed Weber in arguing that caste reflected ideology whereas class reflected power and money. This led him to assert that caste's ideological basis would be reflected in the economic relations of the castes. Thus, Dumont used the jajmani system to support his contention that ideology was an independent factor in society, separate from economics and power, and indeed from the individuals who believed in it. Though the views Dumont held about the caste system may have been valid, the jajmani system did not support them as he failed to demonstrate that it had an ideological basis.

The more positive answer to the question of the relevance of my discussion of the jajmani system to anthropology is that it is an excellent example of what Foucault (1980) and Said (1978) have called a discourse, an on-going debate building on the ideas and pre-suppositions of previous writers. Several strands link the debate. There is the concept of the closed self-sufficient community independent from the outside world. There is also the role of the castes providing the village essential services, with the village as a whole, or the farmers, representing the village, rewarding them. The main change during the period is that, while originally the village republic was emphasized as an administrative unit with its own institutions of government and justice, later the jajmani system was emphasized stressing the role of the community in giving the village unity.

The on-going village republic, village community, jajmani system debate influenced its participants in several ways. An obvious point is that it was very ethno-centric or, to be more precise, Euro-centred in its content. All the writers were implicitly or explicitly
comparing India with Europe, usually to the former's disadvantage. For the early writers like Wilks, Europe was the example of what India should be. Later writers generally used India, in terms of an evolutionary hierarchy, as an example of what Europe had once been. What was European was regarded as being more advanced than what was Indian. Two writers who did not regard India as representing a stage of development prior to European society were Mukerjee and Wiser. Even these two writers employed an evolutionary framework but they postulated that the village community was an alternative and not an early stage of development. Evolutionary models have been less important for the development of the theory of the jajmani system than they were for the village community, partly because most anthropologists have lost interest in such models and partly because the role of caste in jajmani ties means that it is difficult to compare the jajmani system with early European stages of development. Nevertheless, Louis Dumont has tried to do precisely this.

It is logical that writers should compare India with Europe since most of them come from that culture and even those who were not European were writing in the context of a debate dominated by European writers who made the comparison, but this did have the effect, as noted earlier, of stereotyping the village community as being a backward static community-based society.

The stereotyping of the village community is also related to the extreme use of didactic argument by many of the participants. Few of the writers were interested in studying the material at first hand, being mainly interested in using the village community for promoting their own beliefs as to the nature of society. In this regard, the jajmani system debate suffered less than the village community debate.
Such didacticism is not in all ways a disadvantage. By focussing attention on the problem, it forced people to outline clearly their approaches to it. In this case, the problem was the nature of the economic ties of caste and caste's relationship to the other institutions of society. Unfortunately, such a debate often obscures more than it reveals. In the village community and jajmani system debates this didacticism meant that many writers were willing to accept the premises of a debate without proper examination if the premises fitted their argument.

At the risk of making my own generalization, one can say that 'discourses' occur when people try to prove overarching claims, make wild generalizations, and advance theories at the expense of the facts. While such a debate may seem to encourage all points of view, the participants using the same premises for quite different ends, in fact all the participants in the debate, accept its basic assumptions. Those who do not accept these assumptions are outside the discourse. In the end, such a debate can only advance knowledge by being accepted by all or ignored totally.

As to the future of the 'jajmani system' in the Mayasandra region, hadade is still being paid in the hamlets surrounding Mayasandra, but only to a limited extent in Mayasandra itself. Nevertheless, with increasing commercialization, and the reduced isolation of the hamlets, hadade can be expected to disappear there too. Already, features which many writers associate with the jajmani system, such as inam concessions and bonded labour have disappeared, or are disappearing. There is, as yet, little evidence that the caste system is similarly likely to disappear. This, I believe, reflects the much greater importance of ideology in caste relations than in 'jajmani relations'.
FOOTNOTES

1. This work is based on research carried out, during the late 1920s, by Wiser and his wife, Charlotte, in a village which they referred to as Karimpur. Karimpur is situated in the North Indian State now known as Uttar Pradesh which at that time was named the United Provinces.

2. Originally the village republic, the concept became in the course of time the village community.

3. As the East India Company acquired large tracts of Indian territory, the burden of taxation shifted from excise taxes to land taxes. A land tax was the only tax that could have met the required revenue needs.

4. The term 'permanent settlement' was not Adam Smith's but the concept was (Ambirajan 1978: 155).

5. The farmer could utilize this rent directly by farming the land himself or indirectly by letting it out to tenants and receiving the rent in cash or kind.

6. This was prior to Peel's abolition of the British corn laws.

7. As Neale has noted, 'For British thought at this period, "the improving landlord" assumed the role which, for some economists today, is assumed by Joseph Schumpeter's entrepreneur' (Neale 1969: 11).

8. A treatise advocating the rights of the sovereign, The Husbandry of Bengal, put the two arguments. 'On the subject of the rights of Zamindars the reasonings continued for years in extremes. On one hand it was asserted that the Zamindar had been merely an officer or collector of revenue; on the other, that he had been a feudal prince of the empire. It has required the most laborious investigation to discover the fact, viz that the Mogul was the lord superior or proprietor (terms equivalent in their meaning) of the soil; that the Zamindars were officers of revenue, justice and police in their districts, where they also commanded a kind of irregular body of militia; that this office was frequently hereditary, but not necessarily so; that on the failure of payments of the rents, or of fulfilling the other duties of his office, he could be suspended or removed from his situation at the pleasure of the prince, that the rents paid to him were not fixed, but assessed, at the will of the sovereign and that the ryot or cultivator of the soil, though attached to his possession, and with the right to cultivate it, yet was subjected to payments, varying according to particular agreements and local customs; that, in general he continued on the spot on which his labours were directed to raise the means for his own subsistence, but that the proportion to be paid to the State was assessed by the Zamindar; that the rights of the ryot had been gradually abridged, and the proportions he paid increased, during the successive revolutions through which his country had to pass before and after the fall of the Mogul empire' (The Husbandry of Bengal-cited in Wilks 1810, Vol.1: 115-116).
9. According to H.R.C. Wright, the settlement with the zamindars had little to do with theory. Practical circumstances left Cornwallis no choice (cited in Arnbirajan 1978: 149). From my point of view, this is not of primary concern as we are interested in the theories used to justify British policy.

10. Munro's views were supported by Mark Wilks in the following statement, 'It may be permitted more than to doubt whether we should not as this day have witnessed lighter taxes and more ample revenue, if a less rash and ambitious haste for unobtainable perfection had left improvement to be the offspring of knowledge, and the landlord's rent to have enriched the real proprietor of the soil, instead of pampering the hereditary farmer of revenue' (Wilks 1810 Vol. I: 171). Munro's views were mostly found in unpublished East India Company reports to which Wilkes had access. Hence in the treatment here Wilkes is used as the cited source for the materials he quoted and analyzed.

11. Mark Wilks supported Munro's contention that the ryots were the true owners of the land on two grounds. Firstly, they were recognized as such by the ancient Hindu authorities. Secondly, they had the inherent rights of landowners, that is they could buy and sell land, mortgage it, and they received the rent from the land. Wilks quoted numerous passages to demonstrate that the ryot was the landowner. For instance, he quoted Manu as saying 'cultivated land is the property of him who cut away the wood, or who first cleared and tilled it' (Wilks 1810 Vol. I: 122). Wilks believed that this established 'the existence of private property in the days of Manu (Wilks 1810 Vol. I: 122). Manu also stated that, 'Property is equally divested by the voluntary act of the owner in sale as in gift, and it occurs a hundred times in practice'; which for Wilks established his second condition of private property, that land can be bought and sold, though he did modify this by saying that, according to Manu, only land which a man had acquired himself could be given or sold at his pleasure. Inherited land 'cannot be alienated without the consent of the heir, or heirs (that is, all the sons equally), who have a lien equally in the immoveable heritage, whether they be divided or undivided' (Wilks 1810: 125). Wilks' main argument that ryots and not zamindars are the land owners is based on the concept of rent. This is what Wilks called 'the proprietor's share', that is the income that the landowner gets for the value of the land. Wilks says 'The occupants and Meerassdars...are far from being mere nominal proprietors; they have a clear, ample, and unquestioned proprietor's share, amounting, according to the same authority, to the respectable proportion of twenty-seven per cent of the gross produce, a larger rent than remained to an English proprietor of land who had titles and land tax to pay, even before the establishment of the income-tax' (Ibid., 179). Wilks argued that Zamindars, like kings, only received tax from land, not rent. He based this on the proportion paid to them, and on the belief that they were not responsible for improving the land. Wilks argued that the Zamindar, far from receiving the major share of the rent, only received a fraction (one-tenth is one of the figures quoted) of that handed on to the king, itself, a low figure and thus obviously a tax (Wilks 1810 Vol. I: 192).
In advertising to the incessant revolutions of these countries, the mind which has become accustomed to consider the different frames of polity which have existed in the world as one of the most interesting objects of intellectual enquiry, will be forcibly struck with the observation that no change in the form of principles of government was the consequence either of foreign conquest, or successful rebellion; and that in the whole scheme of polity, whether of the victors or the vanquished, the very idea of civil liberty had absolutely never entered into their contemplation, and is to this day without a name in the languages of Asia' (Wilks 1810 Vol.1: 21-2).

Wilks said that the political instability in India could be related to a belief held by both Hindus and Moslems that attributes all authority to divine will. He wrote that

'the broad and prominent distinction between the characters of eastern and western polity, between despotism and regular government, seems to consist in the union, or the separation, of the divine and the human code; in connecting in one case by inseparable ties the ideas of change and profanation, or admitting in the other the legal possibility of improvement; the permission to practise, as well as to learn, the lessons which are taught by the experiences of ages. The sacred code of the Hindus, like the Koran of the Mohammedans, is held to be all-sufficient for temporal as well as religious purposes; they have adopted the regal government, because such is the will of God; they have been passively obedient to this emanation of the divine power so long as no competition has appeared; and they have embraced with facility the cause of rebellion and civil war because like, the Mohammedans, they believe that kingdoms are the immediate gift of the Almighty, and that victory is a manifestation of the divine will'.

Wilks' conclusion was: 'To the general injunctions of the sacred codes may be ascribed the undeviating continuance of regal government, and to a subordinate branch of the same doctrine the incessant revolutions of the East. (Wilks 1810 Vol.1: 26).'

Thus one of the causes of European prosperity has been the separation of the temporal and the divine, so that the west had been willing to learn by experience. One example of this was royal succession. While the East had no commonly agreed form of succession the West has learnt by experience the advantages of primogeniture. This had little justification in natural right, but had by its existence
'contributed more than any other cause to the growth of civilization in European monarchies - a rule, of whatever kind, which defines the right of succession, and has been matured by time and popular opinion, pallsies the arm of faction, leaves to the monarch no motive of cruelty, and, with the hope of permanence, gives to the subject the leisure and the incitement to improve his condition. (Wilks 1810 Vol.1: 26).'

13. Wilks' position is reminiscent of that of Edmund Burke, who in a House of Commons debate on the powers of the East India Company, stated that,

'All political power which is set over men and...all privilege claimed or exercised in exclusion of them, being wholly artificial, and for so much a derogation from the natural equality of mankind at large, ought to be some way or other exercised ultimately for their benefit...such rights, or privileges...are all in the strictest sense a trust; and it is the very essence of every trust to be rendered accountable (Beaglehole 1964: 2)

14. This was written at a time when only a small minority had substantial property and hence the right to vote.

15. While India has suffered grievously from despotism, for Wilks it had one advantage over medieval Europe, it did not have feudal landlords. This may be why Wilks was so opposed to the use of feudal terminology in India, and also to the creation of a zamindari class. This had allowed a wide range of simple trades to develop among the village servants.

16. Eg. Knox in Sri Lanka (see quote on cover page). For Karnataka, Francis Buchanan gives several lengthy descriptions of sharing grain to client service caste families.

17. Those who believed in social compacts used them to justify widely different ideologies. Hobbes believed that in the compact men had permanently alienated their individual rights, thus legitimizing an authoritarian government. Rousseau believed that such rights could not be alienated, thus men always had the right to withdraw from the compact if the state was acting contrary to their wishes.

18. The influence of the rationalists on Wilks is evident in his views on subjects other than the village republics. For instance, in his argument that the East was subject to 'despotic government' due to the fact that Hindus and Moslems believed that government should reflect the will of God rather than that of the people, a belief which reflected the fact that they did not distinguish between 'the divine and the human code' (Wilks 1810 Vol.1: 26) (see footnote 12). By this statement, Wilks was drawing attention to the distinction drawn in the Western world between the church and the state, a distinction which was unusual in the world. It was a distinction which had arisen more through
accident than through theology, as is shown by the long struggle for power over matters both ecclesiastic and secular between the Papacy and the monarchs of Europe. The division had really only been accepted since the Enlightenment with the dissemination of rationalist arguments that the world could be examined independently of God. In the course of time this justified reducing religion to an even smaller role. Thus Wilks' distinction between the divine and the human codes did not so much reflect Christian views as those of secular society.

On the basis that the East lacked the Western distinction between religious and civil spheres, Wilks concluded that the East did not have any concept equivalent to the Western idea of improvement. He claimed that this was because, in the East, religious texts were regarded as the source of all knowledge, and therefore the accumulation of secular knowledge was dismissed as being meaningless. Indeed, change itself was dismissed as being profane, because, in a religious society, change was virtually, by definition, away from the ideal as created by God.

19. To be boycotted by the barber and the washerman laid the individual open to pollution.

20. Dharma is a much more complex concept than this, with many different meanings, many of which to the novice seem contradictory. I am not competent to discuss its more esoteric meanings in detail (see Zaehner 1966: 102-124).

21. This view of dharma has much in common with the more recent views of Louis Dumont. Dumont has also described Indian society in terms of the subordination of the individual to the whole (e.g. 1980: 105). However, whereas Dumont regarded dharma as an ideological concept specific to India, Mukerjee treated dharma as meaning little more than status. Mukerjee's avoidance of dharma as an ideological concept may be due to its association with the caste hierarchy. While the execution of all caste services earned religious merit, some services were more meritorious than others. By emphasising a sociological explanation, Mukerjee was able to claim that dharma was really an ideology of functional interdependence. Hierarchy was only a later and superficial accretion. According to Mukerjee, castes were originally open. People could freely change caste and occupation as they wished. It was only in order to preserve their societies from invaders that castes became exclusive — a fact which Mukerjee does not see as being bad in itself, because it can be justified in terms of economics (1923: 102-3). Later, immigrant groups (presumably conquerors) became exclusive groups superior to those already there (1923: 72).

22. However, this argument was not a fair representation of the position of political economists such as Adam Smith. Smith did not see the profit motive as central to all societies but (like Maine in regard to law) as true only of progressive societies (see Smith [1970: 488] where he discusses societies in which profit was accorded a low priority). The profit motive was not universal but it was something that should be nurtured by governments desiring to develop their nation's wealth. It is a fair comment in that macro-economics has had a tendency to ignore the influence of social factors in favour of overall supply and
demand, thus implying that all economies are essentially the same.

23. One writer whose views should be mentioned in this context is Karl Marx. Although Marx preceded Wiser by many years, his views are relevant, both in terms of his great interest in the village community, and in terms of the above debate between the economic determinists and what one might call the ideological determinists.

Even though Marx’s ideas were explicitly determinist he came to radically different conclusions from the economic determinist writers to whom I have so far referred. These writers viewed caste as being merely an exaggerated form of class. They claimed that jajmani payments differed from normal wage payments only to the extent that payment in kind acted to reduce the independence of the kamins vis-à-vis the higher castes.

In contrast, Marx’s view of caste was very similar to that of Wiser and Mukerjee: the caste system was a very rigid guild system. For Marx, this meant that the village community did not have the exploitative relations of capitalism, as in such a rigid guild system there was no role for capital.

Marx argued that capitalism could only arise in an economy with a highly developed division of labour. At first this division of labour developed as craftsmen exchanged commodities. Eventually a new development in the division of labour occurred when the expansion of trade enabled the creation of the workshop. In the workshop, men specialised in a single process of a product. Marx said that what distinguished their work from that of craftsmen was that they did not produce a commodity that could be sold separately (1976: 475). Thus they were effectively under the control of capital - of those who owned the workshop (1976: 461-480). It was at this point that exploitation could truly be said to have occurred when the worker was separated from his product.

This could not occur according to Marx in the village community for two reasons. Firstly, the products of the village community were produced for the village’s own consumption. The only surplus that the village community produced went to the State as rent in kind (1976: 478) (this, of course was a type of exploitation). This meant that there was no opportunity for a well developed division of labour to arise.

Secondly, the caste system meant that people worked in their own trade. Merchants were prevented by the system of guilds from investing in workshops. (This comment was made in connection with European guilds but from its context it can be extended to India [1976: 477, 479]).

A third factor which one might add to these two is the fact that, according to Marx, the major productive resource of the village community, land, was held in common (1976: 477). Indeed, Marx refers to the village community as having paid rent for the land to the state, thereby implying that the state owned the land (1976: 477). This meant that nobody could exert control over other members of the village community through their control over property. Furthermore, the payment of a heavy rent to the state would have reduced the amount of capital to be invested in workshops.

Marx referred to village servants as being 'maintained at the expense of the whole community' (1976: 478). This is not the
same thing as saying that they were paid employees as they were craftsmen in charge of their own commodity. One might add that Marx, like Maine, did not admire the village community. He wrote that these

> idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. (1973: 306)

Of course, it is not entirely fair to compare Marx's writings of the mid-nineteenth century with the writings of more recent economic determinists. Marx may well have changed his conclusions had his data on India been better. Marx's writings on India mirror those of Maine, Mukerjee and Wiser because they were all drawing on the same body of ideas, the village republic debate.

24. Though Thomas O. Beidelman has been quoted as much as Lewis I am restricting myself to a discussion of the latter's views because Beidelman's work was essentially a lengthier development of ideas that Lewis had already presented more succinctly. Beidelman, a student of Lewis, wrote his study of the jajmani system without any experience of India, a disadvantage which he seemingly attempted to disguise by the sheer didacticism of his work. His work has been extensively quoted, but often as an easy target for the opponents of the 'exploitationists'; for example, Louis Dumont devoted a large part of the section of the jajmani system in Homo Hierarchicus to deriding Beidelman's views.

25. Lewis did his major work in Mexico. His most famous field study was his revisit to the Mexican village of Tepoztlan, originally studied by Lewis' father-in-law, Robert Redfield. Redfield saw Tepoztlan as a folk community, with its own traditions. It was a communal society whose social and economic relations reflect mutual trust and co-operation, contrasting strongly with the tensions of his native Chicago. However, Oscar Lewis found it to be highly factionated with deep conflicts along economic lines. This is not such a surprising view considering that Tepoztlan was in the centre of the Mexican Revolution, and that insurgents under Zapata were operating in the area not long before Redfield's visit. In Lewis' claim to have seen through Redfield's idealistic model, one can see parallels with his re-analysis of the jajmani system.

26. This was a legacy of the Indian Mutiny, which impressed upon the British government that it was safer to accept village law as the basis of the Indian legal system.

27. The Camars or Chamars were the leather-worker caste. They were also the major caste of agricultural labourers in North India.

28. The timing of events in this quote are questionable though their sequence is probably correct. Independence occurred in the
period after the war. Presumably it was the shortages caused by the War which had improved the position of the Camars and not changes caused by independence. The effects of independence, both legal and ideological would have been long term rather than short term.

29. It is remarkable how many of the ethnographic studies, in India, have been carried out within an easy commuting distance of a large city.

30. In India, it was preferred that the members of high caste families, particularly the women, should not soil their hands with farm work.

31. Indology is the study of ancient Indian culture, history and literature.

32. The failure to do this had created problems for western 'empiricists', even in defining caste. The empirical approach tended to see castes as being corporate units, similar to lineages, which would be easy to define. Such a unit, the sub-caste, did exist. Prior to the period of intensive 'village studies', a number of sociologists had indeed proposed the sub-caste as being the true caste, even though it was not regarded as such by the villagers. Dumont regarded the Sanskrit scholar Senart as being,

...the first to pose the problem...Senart was concerned with the starting from a precise idea of the modern state of affairs. He realised that it was not the caste but the sub-caste which in reality bore some of the most important characteristics ordinarily attributed to caste: you do not marry just anywhere within your caste but usually only within your sub-caste, and it is also the sub-caste and not the caste which has judicial institutions: it meets as an assembly covering a definite locality, and can excommunicate its members. Hence, Senart concluded, it was the sub-caste, the endogamous unit and framework or organ of internal justice, which was the fundamental institution and which in all logic ought to be called scientifically the true caste. (Dumont, 1980: 61)

Ghurye, the doyen of Indian sociology, according to Dumont, expressed the distinction between caste and sub-caste very clearly. He wrote,

Stated generally, though, it is the caste which is recognised by society at large, it is the subcaste which is regarded by the particular caste and individual,

and he concluded:
There is ample reason why, to get a sociologically correct idea of the institution, we should recognise subcastes as real castes. (Dumont, 1980: 62)

That is, the sub-caste was the real unit that could be sociologically verified by observation: the caste was merely a popular concept.

Dumont cited the example of Mrs Karve, whom, he said, went even further in emphasising the importance of sub-caste than Ghurye. Mrs Karve reversed the notion that sub-castes were divisions of caste by arguing that castes were the aggregation of sub-castes. Thus, she took what Dumont referred to as 'the terminology plunge and says "caste" for the sub-caste and "caste-cluster" for the caste itself' (Dumont, 1980: 62). Dumont pointed out that this was:

...a serious innovation for it is tantamount to saying that there is no caste of washermen of such-and-such a kind (subcaste). This is evidently absurd so far as the overall system goes and can only be justified from the limited viewpoint of an author interested exclusively in the origins, particularly customs and racial composition, of groups which doubtless constitute the material of which the system is made up at the empirical level, but certainly do not constitute the system itself. (Dumont, 1980: 62)

Dumont also referred in Homo Hierarchicus to the willingness of certain authors to ignore indigenous beliefs, with reference to Stevenson:

For this writer [Stevenson], the caste is not a real group, and consequently it is characterised by a certain arrangement of groups distinguished analytically by the sociologist and considered real: endogamous group, commensal group, etc. The result is a complicated description in which the stress is transferred from the indigenous categories to those of the observer, with no hope of synthesis. (Dumont, 1980: 350)

According to Dumont, this was an extreme view. Other sociologists soon pointed out the weaknesses of this view. Blunt rejected Senart's conclusion on two grounds: firstly, endogamy is less rigid at the level of the sub-caste than at that of the caste (this is in Uttar Pradesh where intermarriage is sometimes tolerated in certain directions between different sub-castes); secondly, one must adapt to the ideas of Hindu society' (Dumont, 1980: 62).

Few post-war anthropologists held such extreme views as Senart, Karve and Stevenson, if simply because 'caste' was the level of occupational specialisation. In general, they were interested in caste, as part of an hierarchical (in the Western sense) social order. Most anthropologists avoided the problem by defining caste by restricting their analysis to a village: in most villages there occurs only one sub-caste out of the many
that may belong to a caste. Other anthropologists, such as M.N. Srinivas, argued that the only difference between caste and sub-caste was one of scale. Srinivas argued that sub-castes were the result of caste fission (Srinivas, 1962: 3-4). They were castes in the process of formation. (This tied into Srinivas' theory of Sanskritisation. According to this theory, although people could not attain individual social mobility within the caste system, whole castes could. It was a difficult process and, in order to do so, occasionally a segment of a caste found it advantageous to splinter off from the rest of the caste, normally on the pretext of increasingly specialised occupations.) Presumably, the reason why the sub-caste were perceived as being different by members of the castes but not by the whole community was simply the reluctance of the community to accept the pretensions of the new castes.

Probably, the difference between caste and sub-caste was more complex than Srinivas suggested. If sub-castes were merely the result of caste fission, they, like castes, would be based on occupation. In fact, while castes were defined by and named after their occupations, sub-castes were defined and named after their localities.

Dumont pointed out that the sub-caste was the unit of endogamy, and of caste justice, whereas caste was the unit of occupation. As Adrian Mayer established, people referred to individuals outside their caste in terms of the 'caste' of those individuals, not their 'sub-caste'. This was because occupation was the major distinguishing feature between families. Indeed, it was occupation which determined the caste's approximate position in the caste hierarchy. However, it was sub-caste which delineated the community of people with which the individual had something in common. It was within the sub-caste that an individual had kin and affines. Moreover, it was the sub-castes' caste panchayat which regulated his behaviour.

Thus, in functionalist terms, there would appear to be two different entities under discussion. A cultural concept in which castes were seen as part of a hierarchical order, and a social unit, the sub-caste, which was an endogamous corporate institution. A functionalist would probably accept that caste relations should be treated in terms of ideology, on the basis that they were cultural concepts, but undoubtedly he would argue at the same time that sub-caste relations were a part of the social system, and should be treated in terms of power relations.

33. Dumont wrote:

We have said that we shall be concerned first and foremost with a system of ideas and values. We have also in passing acknowledged territory or locality as an example of a factor which, while not figuring directly in ideology, intervenes at the level of the concrete manifestations of the caste system. It is as well to throw some light on this duality. First let us note that the two kinds of aspects are perceived in different ways, so that the distinction between them expresses our position in relation to the object. On the one hand, it is the indigenous theory which provides us with the name: when we say 'caste' we
are more or less translating an indigenous concept (jat, jati, a word of Indo-European root but which is probably encountered everywhere); if we were to speak of 'social stratification' we would introduce the following arbitrary judgements: (1) that caste and social class are phenomena of the same nature; (2) that hierarchy is incomprehensible; (3) that in the Indian system the separation and the interdependence of groups are subordinated to this sort of shame-faced hierarchy. On the other hand, in so far as we are able to detect in the facts a dimension other than that contained in indigenous consciousness, this is thanks to comparison, thanks first and foremost to the implicit and inevitable comparison with our own society.

(Dumont, 1980: 36-7)

34. Dumont praised Claude Lévi-Strauss for introducing into anthropology a strict definition of structure, from phonology. As Dumont pointed out:

A phoneme has only the characteristics which oppose it to other phonemes, it is not something but only the other of others, thanks to which it signifies something. We shall speak of structure exclusively in this case, when the interdependence of the elements of a system is so great that they disappear without residue if an inventory is made of the relations between them: a system of relations, in short not a system of elements.

(Dumont, 1980: 40)

35. Termed by Srinivas the 'dominant caste'.

36. According to Hindu theology, the caste ranking, and also happiness of an individual in this life is a direct result of his or her actions in past lives.

37. These oppositions are not particularly clear-cut. They may be more clearly comprehended in the historical context. Dumont suggests that the three highest varnas originally corresponded to the Indo-European tripartition of social functions into the priesthood, the imperium, and the clans or people. The Shudras 'seem to correspond to aborigines (...) integrated into the society on pain of servitude' [Dumont, 1980: 68].

38. Dharma was in this usage the moral order which determined the proper relations of the gods, castes, and individuals.

39. One might note Mauss' own interest in India; he was in Dumont's words a 'Sanskritist - cum - anthropologist' (Dumont, 1980: xxv).

40. Mauss noted of Trobiand Island exchange,

as these gifts are not spontaneous so also they are not really disinterested. They are for the most part counter-prestations made not solely in
order to pay for goods of services, but also to maintain a profitable alliance which it would be unwise to reject, as for instance partnership between fishing tribes and tribes of hunters and potters. Now this fact is widespread - we have met it with the Maori, Tsimshian and others. Thus it is clear wherein this mystical and practical force resides which as once binds clans together and keeps them separate, which divides their labour and constrains them to exchange.

(Mauss, 1969: 71)

41. Mauss believed that in the most primitive societies, prestations were central to the regulation of social relations. Indeed, as Marshall Sahlins noted (Sahlins, 1972: 149-82), for Mauss the prestation was a kind of original social contract. Whereas Hobbes (1981: 223) had argued that 'original anarchy' had been ended by the creation of the State, Mauss saw such anarchy as being ended by the development of prestations. He wrote,

It is by opposing reason to emotion and setting up the will for peace against rash follies of this kind that people succeed in substituting alliance, gift and commerce for war, isolation and stagnation. (Mauss, 1969: 80) (46)

One might note that this had occurred prior to the State:

All the societies we have described above with the exception of our European societies are segmentary. Even the Indo-Europeans, the Romans before the Twelve Tables, the Germanic societies up to the Edda, and Irish society to the time of its chief literature, were still societies based on the clan or on great families more or less undivided internally and isolated from each other externally. (Mauss, 1969: 79)

In essence in the earliest most primitive societies, prestations combined economic, political and social relationships. Mauss defined prestations in this situation as being total prestations:

In the systems of the past we do not find simple exchange of goods, wealth and produce through markets established among individuals. For it is groups, and not individuals, which carry on exchange, make contracts, and are bound by obligations; the persons represented in the contracts are moral persons - clans, tribes, and families; the groups, or the chiefs as intermediaries for the groups, confront and oppose each other. Further, what they exchange is not exclusively goods and wealth, real and personal property, and things of economic value. They exchange their courtesies, entertainments, ritual, military assistance, women, children, dances, and feasts; and fairs in which the market
is but one element and the circulation of wealth but one part of a wide and enduring contract. Finally, although the prestations and counter-prestations take place under a voluntary guise they are in a sense strictly obligatory, and their sanction is private or open warfare. We propose to call this the system of total prestations. (Mauss, 1969: 3)

42. Or to be still more precise between families of different castes.

43. Dumont was referring to an imaginary 'threshing floor in traditional India' (Dumont, 1980: 104).

44. A sacrificer is the person, normally a priest, who carries out a sacrifice. A sacrifier is someone who causes the sacrifice to be carried out, that is, he is the patron who organizes and pays for the sacrifice. The terminology is borrowed from Hubert and Mauss as translated by W.D. Halls (Dumont 1980: 371). One might note that for Mauss, sacrifice and exchange were closely connected,

The connection of exchange contracts among men with those between men and gods explains a whole aspect of the theory of sacrifice. It is best seen in those societies where contractual and economic ritual is practised between men. (Mauss 1969: 13).

Mauss pursued his argument by claiming that,

sacrifice presupposes institutions of the type we are describing, and conversely it realizes them to the full, for the gods who give and repay are there to give something great in exchange for something small. (Mauss 1969: 15).

45. The importance of the landowners as patrons is vividly expressed in the following passage:

There are two kinds of castes: those who hold the land, and those who do not. In each village the land is held by one (or several) castes...This caste is thus the 'dominant' caste, enjoying economic power since it controls the means of subsistence, and political power, allowing for its subordinate position with larger territorial units, say, its subordination to the king whose function it reproduces at the level of the village. For such castes, the relation between caste and profession is vague. For, in the last analysis, their function can be acquired by force: that which is reserved for the Kshatrya varna in the classical ideology is in practice shared among a large number of castes.

All the other castes are dependent. Roughly speaking, their members obtain direct or indirect access to the means of subsistence through
personal relationships with the members of the dominant caste, in virtue of the functions which they are fit to perform and which the dominant caste requires. (Dumont, 1980: 106-7)

46. It is interesting to note McKim Mariott's comment on the custom of calling kamins by the name of the court:

Hocart pointed out that many of the kinds of ritual relationships which exist among Indian village castes today may be regarded as the result of a 'degradation of the royal style'.

(Hocart, 1950: 155)

If the king has a royal chaplain or a royal barber in his retinue, then no peasant home can afford to be without one. Even a poor householder in Kishan Garhi today retains six or seven servants of different castes mainly to serve him in ceremonial ways demonstrative of his own caste rank. Householders and their servants formally address each other by courtly titles. Thus the Brahman priest is called 'Great King' (Maharaj) or 'Learned Man' (Panditji), the potter is called 'Ruler of the People' (Prajapat), the barber 'Lord Barber' (Nan Thakur), the carpenter 'Master Craftsman' (Mistri), the sweeper 'Headman' (Mehtar) or 'Sergeant' (Jamadar), etc. (Mariott, 1955: 190).

47. Kangra is a Himalayan district to the north of the Punjab.

48. In India, the barber has an important ritual role. In South India this is true of the washerman as well.

49. Parry used zamindar to mean landholder (Parry, 1979: 321). It is not a precise equivalent to Wilk's zamindar.

50. These references refer only to the position of Brahmans. While a barber was in some situations a purohit, he was 'not part of a permanent alliance between clans' (Parry, 1979: 73).

51. Beidelman expressed similar sentiments to Oscar Lewis (see above).

52. The distinction between purohits and kamins made in Kangra has much in common with Dumont's explanation of varna. If, like Dumont, one takes varna to be based on function, rather than to be strictly analogous to the caste system, then the varna Brahman can be interpreted as being equivalent to the purohit. Thus, when the barber is performing as a purohit, he is equivalent to the varna Brahman; when he is working as a barber, he is a Shudra. What Dumont had to say about the jajman-kamin relationship was entirely in terms of the Brahman-Kshatrya relationship. The Shudra merely served them both. This is not to argue that Indians see castes as being equivalent to different varnas according to situation, but then Dumont was not arguing that all landowners were perceived as being Kshatryas. He was arguing that it served as an almost subconscious model for relations between castes.
Kangra would appear to have been representative of the Himalayan districts. Berreman working in the Himalayan areas of Uttar Pradesh also noted a very restricted use of the term "jajman". It was applied only to those using the services of Brahmans and occasionally others carrying out priestly functions. Even in the Gangetic Plain where its meaning could be extended, Berreman suggested that this was no more than an analogy. He wrote,

"When Sirkanda villagers use the term "jajman", they refer to one kind of exchange: that of the Brahmin's ritual services to his clients (jajmans) in exchange for traditional "gifts" paid in grain or other goods. This is in accordance with widespread usage of the term among villagers in North India and with its etymological meaning: one who asks another to perform worship and offers a gift to him in return.

Sirkanda villagers also understand, though they do not themselves normally use, the term jajman to refer the traditional arrangement whereby an artisan or service caste member is paid a fixed portion of grain at each harvest the amount depending upon the size of the household or land-holding of the agriculturalist and the type of service performed. Application of the term "jajman" to the clients of artisans appears to be the result of substitution by analogy of a term which is convenient for explanatory purposes because it is understood by those accustomed to the Brahmanical system of client relationships. This may account in part for widespread application of the term to artisan's clients in anthropological writings. In some areas of Uttar Pradesh, however, this usage is reported even among villagers, while in others it is absent.

It should be mentioned that many low castes perform minor ritual services for their clients for which they receive small additional amounts of grain or money. In this ritual context the term "jajman" is literally applicable. It is used in this way in a plains village reported by K.N. Sharma, but not in Sirkanda.

The Pahani term which Sirkanda villagers normally use in reference to an artisan's clients, parallel to their use of "jajman" in reference to a Brahman's clients, is gaikh, one who purchases the services of another. Ideally the relationships between artisan and gaikh is a permanent one with standard traditional payments, but in practice there is a good deal of shifting, especially where there is more than one local artisan available (Berreman 1962: 388-9)."

Once Mysore State

Formerly the capital of the princely State of Mysore of which Mayasandra had been part.
56. Tanks are large earthen dams.

57. Toddy trees are used for making toddy, a kind of palm wine. Toddy itself can be distilled and made into arrack.

58. When I use the term hamlet, it is being used solely in reference to these villages.

59. Nowadays this is occurring increasingly as landlords educate their sons for non-agricultural employment. One reason why joint families are more common among landowning families is so more family labour is available for supervision.

60. I use the term 'landlord' with reluctance as it implies an absentee class, who lease out their land to tenants. Neither of these suggestions is true of Mayasandra's landowning class.

61. These powers are related to the gods who dwell in the forge. In medieval Europe too the blacksmith was regarded as having special powers.

62. Srinivas described the harvest festival of the Coorg.

The solidarity prevalent between the various castes in a village (or nad) finds ritual expression during putri, the harvest festival of Coorgs. On this occasion, the representatives of the priestly artisan, and servant castes living in the village (or nad) visit the house of every Coorg in their area, and either give a gift or perform a service characteristic of their caste. They are given in return gifts of provisions like rice, rice-flour, pepper, jaggery, coconut oil, coconuts and a giant yam (putri genasu) which is harvested during putri.

The local Brahman priest visits, in turn, each Coorg house in his village (or nad). He purifies the house by sprinkling it with a little consecrated water which he carried in a ritually pure vessel. He also gives each member of the house a tiny spoonful of consecrated water to drink. The caste is sent away with a gift of provisions.

Like the priest, the Kaniya astrologer visits the various Coorg houses in his village (or nad). He informs the head of each house when the rites of neve Kattuvudu (...) and cutting the paddy shears should be performed. These rites are performed only during auspicious periods.

The members of the artisan castes follow the Kaniya. The Tachchayira or carpenter brings with him a gift of a new wooden ladle with which to stir the festival curry made with all the vegetables grown at this time of the year. He
also brings a bamboo receptacle (kutti) in which the severed paddy sheaves are brought home. The malla or blacksmith brings a new sickle with which the sheaves are cut. The Meda brings a new harvest basket (putri pachchiya) which is used in the festival. The Kumbara or potter brings a new pot in which the harvest curry is cooked. Finally, the Poleya brings a new mat which is used in the festival.

The harvest festival is the biggest occasion of the various calendar festivals of Coorgs, and on this occasion each of the several castes with whom Coorgs live in close and intimate contact does some service, or brings some gift, characteristic of it. Gifts are given in turn to each of them. (Srinivas, 1952: 44)

Although the Coorg are a tribal people, Srinivas' description fits Hindu harvest festivals. Contemporary festivals are rarely so elaborate but apparently this is due to changes in Hindu society, and not to differences between the Coorg and Hindus. I will discuss these changes later.

63. So called because they are described in the Sanskrit literature.

64. Her shrine was on the tank wall and one of her duties was to protect the tank.

65. One reason for this is that as animal sacrifice is central to the worship of the village gods, it would be most unsuitable for vegetarian castes to serve them.

Srinivas mentioned the surprising fact that, while a local god was worshipped through sacrifice, his priest was (through his own choice) a vegetarian (Srinivas 1976: 299). Srinivas noted in another section that, 'a gudda [hereditary non-Brahman priest] (Srinivas 1976: 346) was expected to lead a stricter life than a layman. A gudda, who was a vegetarian, or meticulous about the observance of pollution and diet rules, was singled out for praise by the villagers just as a lax gudda was criticized (Srinivas 1976: 193).

For Hindu theologians, a deeper reason would be that the world of everyday reality, maya, which is the realm of action and desire, to which village gods and goddesses belong, is only one aspect of reality. This world, hides the deeper reality of Brahman where the supreme godhead (normally identified with Vishnu or Shiva) and the individual elements of which the universe is composed, are to some degree (depending on the theology) identified. The Shaivites (devotees of Shiva) identify the world of action and desire with Shakti, the female side of Shiva, normally depicted as Shiva's consort Parvathi, or in one of her forms Kali, Durga or the numerous village goddesses. In Mayasandra the principal village goddess is Mayamma (amma meaning mother is attached to all female names). As in this case, Maya can be a synonym for Shakti. It is to Shakti that appeals for the fulfilment of the desires of the world (e.g. relief from...
disease or childlessness) must be made. The Sanskritic gods are concerned with problems of a higher order.

The higher castes cannot represent Shakti for they represent the spirit, as opposed to the actions and desires of the body. In Hindu terms they represent the humour of sattva as opposed to the humours of rajas and tamas. Zaehner noted that these

    can be literally translated as "the quality of being, energy, and darkness" (Zaehner 1966: 69).
    Usually they are translated as "goodness, energy, and dullness".

It is sattva which is needed for the transcendence (moksha) of the soul from maya to Brahman, whereas the qualities of rajas and tamas are responsible for the continuity of Maya.

Members of any caste can obtain moksha (though the innate qualities of rajas and tamas make it unlikely in case of the lower castes), and even the higher castes are concerned with the world of action, but they must solve those problems through priests who have the requisite qualities. However, their inherent qualities naturally mean that higher and lower castes have different problems and interests in their religious observations.

66. However, like kamins, halemagas could have more than one patron family.

67. Indian cattle normally stay at night in compounds built into their owner's houses, or even in the houses themselves.

68. Epstein's position was similar to that put earlier by Iyer,

Formerly, each family of the Madigas was attached to one or more families of ryots or agriculturists, whose work they had to do, and in return get the customary remuneration. The Madiga was entitled to take the carcass of any cattle that might die in the master's house. This qualified kind of serfdom has, however, all but died out, except in the rural parts.

A village Madiga has to supply each person who contributes to his yearly allowance of grain with a pair of sandals and some leathern ropes for the ploughing cattle. He has also to make the leather bucket for lifting water with the hides supplied by the ryot and to keep it in proper repair. He is required to help at the harvest. In return for this service, the Madiga gets, in addition to the dead bodies of cattle in his patron's house, one bundle of the unthreshed crop and a winnowful of grain, food for the working-man, and remanant of the grain left on the threshing-floor after measurement. He is also given other perquisites, such as food on marriage and other festivals observed in the patron's house. (Iyer, 1931, Vol. 4: 166)
Mayasandra's Brahman community might have been founded as an inam gift.

For example, the medieval traveller and Moslem holy man, Ibu Battuta, who complained that inam rights to one hundred villages were inadequate for his mosque (and himself).

It was discontinued later.

This description is similar to the village republic as described by Buchanan's critic Wilks (despite their very different views on land tenure) though Wilks referred to village servants being paid by land or grain.

It is unclear precisely what form potgi took, for in this quote it is described as a cash allowance, but in another passage the Tumkur Gazeteer described it as remuneration in kind.

[In 1874 the potgi rules were passed] providing for the remuneration in kind of the minor village servants, introduced first in the Nandrug division. These rules were more or less the offshoots of the introduction of the revenue survey and settlement. (M.S.G.T.D.: 347)

Potgi probably could be paid in either cash or grain. As will be argued later in more detail, each was open to substitution by the other.

Inam, both as payment for services to the king and to the village, and to ensure the provision of services was described by Robert Knox in his account of seventeenth century Ceylon:

The Countrey being wholly His, the King Farms out his land, not for Money, but Service. And the People enjoy Portions of Land from the King, and instead of Rent, they have several appointments, some are to serve the King in his Wars, some in their Trades, some serve him for Labourers, and others are as Farmers to furnish his House with the Fruits of the Ground: and so all things are done without cost and every man paid for his pains: that is, they have lands for it; yet all have not watered land enough for their needs, that is, such land as good rice requires to grow in; so that such are fain to sow on dry land, and Till other mens Fields for a subsistence. These Persons are free from payment of Taxes; only sometimes upon extraordinary occasions, they must give an Hen or Mat or such like, to the King's use: for as much as they use the Wood and Water that is in his Countrey. But if any find the Duty to be heavy, or too much for them, they may leaving their house and land, be free from the King's Service, as there is a Multitude do. And in my judgement they live far more at ease, after they
have relinquished the King's land, than when they had it.

Many Towns are in the King's hand, the inhabitants whereof are to Till and Manure a quantity of the land according to their Ability, and lay up the Corn for the King's use. These Towns the King often bestows upon some of his Nobles for their Encouragement and Maintenance, with all the fruits and benefits that before came to the King from them. In each of these Towns there is a Smith to make and mend the Tools of them to whom the King hath granted them, and a Potter to fit them with Earthen Ware, and a Washer to wash their Cloaths, and other men to supply what there is need of. And each one of these hath a piece of land for this their Service, whether it be to the King or the Lord; but what they do for the other People they are paid for. Thus all that have any Place or Employment under the King, are paid without, any Charge to the King. (Knox 1981 [1681]: 167)

What stands out in this passage is Knox's treatment of inam as a simple contract - to the extent that the poor's need for land allowed, and not as a feudal obligation. Individuals received inam land if they were willing to serve the king or lords appointed in his place. The individuals receiving the land were only constrained to serve for 'free' those who gave them land. Everybody else had to pay for their services.

75. In some instances the legal status of the original inam grant may have reduced the impact of legislation abolishing inam. Benson noted that in Andhra Pradesh 'inam' grants made by the headman were not registered (Benson, 1977: 491). This meant that, like inams recognised by the State, they were not subject to taxation. As long as this land remained unregistered they remained untaxed and in effect inam. Freedom from taxation would have proved a powerful incentive for these inam holders not to claim ownership of their land. This legislation has given tenancy rights to tenants, but it required the land to be registered.

76. I will discuss the reasons for this later.

77. I have not discussed Chris Fuller's article as I only found it when my thesis was well advanced. Many of his ideas are similar to those pursued here, and I find little to disagree with. Nevertheless there are clear differences as readers of both essays will note.

78. Buchanan mentioned taxation both in cash and in kind for Mysore.

79. Fuller pointed out that this rather undermined the concept of the isolated village community. Though in one sense it did not, for the village always met any demands made upon it and was otherwise was largely self-sufficient.

80. I.e. halemaga.
81. Figures given for payments differed greatly between villages, and even between people. One estimate was that, for each session (one in the morning, one in the afternoon), men were paid two-and-a-half rupees, without food, or two rupees with food (one meal each session). Females were paid one-and-a-half rupees without food in the busy session (though they may get piece rates instead) or one rupee without food in the slack season. Children were paid the same rates as adults.

However, in Epstein's Wangala junior rates were lower than adult rates (Epstein, 1962: 72).

N.B. There were at the time of field work approximately ten rupees to the Australian dollar.

82. Father Dubois was a French priest who fled revolutionary France to India. He spent many years in Madras and Mysore, before writing down his experiences (Colonel Mark Wilks arranged their publication for the East India Company).

83. Dubois' type of jita servantship is related to the classical form of bonded labour where the worker merely works to pay off the interest. Bonded labour of this sort is not restricted to India. In the Australian novel, My Brilliant Career, Sibilla worked in lieu of the interest on a loan to her father. She received board and lodging as part of the terms of the bond.

84. Epstein used jita (jeeta) for what I am calling bonded labour.

85. The Dublas were a Gujerati caste of agricultural labourers.

86. A Brahman landowning caste in Gujarat.

87. Permanent relationships will be discussed later.

88. As the Indian family is a corporate unit, inter-family permanent ties are inherited by the descendants of the original parties.

89. In Maine's terminology, status more than contract.

90. This applies not only to ties between families but even to the relationship between the farmer and the king (and the zamindar where he existed). This was a permanent relationship between the farmer's family and the royal dynasty. Just as the kamin received his share so too did the king. This does not in itself prove than grain payments extended beyond jajman-kamin relationships. It can be argued that the king (and the zamindar as a sort of mini-king) received his share for carrying out his caste duty as a Kshatrya: i.e., protection.

91. Yet share farming all over the world uses such a system.

92. It may seem questionable whether this would apply to kamins like barbers and washermen who are not necessary for agricultural production. However, during a good season they too may prefer to work on their own farmland (including inam land) or as agricultural labourers rather than carry out jajmani duties.
Admittedly, even if jajmani payments were open to adjustment, it might have been claimed that there still would have been an open labour market simply because there was a permanent relationship. Even this, however, has been disputed. Adrian Mayer has noted for Malwa in Central India that jajmans frequently changed kamins to obtain better service (Mayer, 1960: 69). In contrast, in the Mayasandra area, people claimed that kamins were changed only in cases of long disputes and only if the old kamins accepted the change. Normally, kamins would only surrender a family in exchange for another, thus keeping the total patronage of each unchanged. However, there is a considerable discrepancy between what people say and what they do. That this might particularly be true of jajmani is highly likely considering the relationship between jajmani and caste. Caste, like religion, is often spoken of in terms of ideal models. However, the records I assembled for Mayasandra appeared to show great stability in those jajman-kamin relations which did exist.

A similar argument had been proposed by J.P. Hewitt (Hewitt, 1897: 628-41).

The florist received 0.19 acres of cultivated land, the oil presser 0.86 acres, the washerman 0.41 acres, the carpenter 1.34 acres, the seamster 0.87 acres, the sweeper 1.15 acres, and the Brahman for lighting the Holi fire 2.33 acres (Wiser, 1958: 83). See also Wiser, 1971: 112.

As with inam land, what were being given were usufruct rights. As Wiser noted, 'For this [land] no rent is charged and the employee is expected to render a particular type of service in the village' (Wiser, 1958: 82).

Undoubtedly, Wilks would have disputed this.

Grants of land to artisans can be made by lesser landowners. I have already noted Janet Benson's reference to large landowners in a ryotwari district making such grants (Benson, 1977: 248).

Permanent ties may be defined as open-ended relationships between two parties, in this case families, which are hereditary among the descendants of those families.

This is an over-simplification of Dumont's position but for the present it will suffice.

Author's emphasis.

Rampur should not be confused with Srinivas' Rampura.

Joint villages were very similar to the village republic as described by Mark Wilks. Indeed, Metcalf who first applied the concept of village republic to North India, used the joint villages of the Delhi region as his model. He, like Wilks, argued that zamindari tenure resulted from the decay of the original village republic (Stokes, 1978: 65). According to Maine, the British originally failed to perceive the importance of the village republic because the part of India they first came to know well, Bengal, was the area where joint villages were most
It was only when they conquered more remote areas they came to realise their importance (Maine 1876: 103-4). One point that Lewis' account emphasises is that the joint village, and therefore the village republic, was not an egalitarian institution.

104. Common land only comprised five per cent of the total area of Rampur. Thus, Lewis not surprisingly placed little emphasis on concessions such as rent-free land or grazing rights. In contrast, he strongly emphasised access to house sites. Houses were located on common land and in the past, non-Jats had to pay a 'rent' to the Jats for its use (Lewis, 1958: 74).

105. According to Cox,

The caste structure is fundamentally a labour structure, a system of interrelated services originating in specialised groups and traditionalised in a religious matrix.

Cox quotes Pramathanath Bannerjea as follows:

The chief economic significance of the system is that it fixes absolutely the supply of any kind of labour. The scope given for the play of competition thus becomes limited, and consequently the law of demand and supply is rendered inoperative or oppressive in its operation. When any change takes place in the economic world, labour is unable to adjust itself...Wages and prices have very often to be regulated by custom or some artificial means.

(Lewis, 1958: 56)

106. Lewis' student Beidelman was in keeping with the logic of this statement in characterising the jajmani system as feudal (presumably Lewis and Beidelman regarded the feudal 'estate' as being a rigid type of class too).

107. This did not prevent him from recognising class as well as caste,

We tend for example, to think of castes as forming rather homogeneous units, and they are so described, at least by implication, in much of the literature. But our study shows that even in a small village dominated by a single proprietary agricultural caste (the Jats) there is a great range of variation within the caste with regard to socio-economic status, landholdings, etc. (Lewis, 1958: 89)

108. Though he did note the high opinion held of their farming prowess and their rapid adaptation to irrigated farming. The Punjab in the 1950's was the site of major irrigation projects.

109. The Punjab to which Lewis was referring included at that time both the modern states of Haryana and Punjab. It was the western neighbour of Delhi Union Territory in which Rampur was situated.
110. Lewis accepted that the relationship between jajman and kamin was not entirely coercive, in that, in return for his services, the kamin had some valued rights (as is suggested by the notion of sale),

The kamins have valued rights and advantages which make them hesitate to move. 

(Lewis, 1958: 57)

Nevertheless he did not regard this as being fundamental to jajmani relations.

111. The terms kharif and rabi refer not to the type of crop grown (which may be practically anything) but to the season when the crop is grown. The kharif crop was grown with the aid of monsoonal rains. The rabi crop, grown during the dry season, depended upon irrigation (Lewis, 1958: 31).

112. A difference which is reminiscent of that between halemaga and jita servantship in Karnataka.

### Table 3 Households which make hadade payments

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MAYASANDRA</th>
<th>BOMMENAHALLI</th>
<th>DASHALLI</th>
<th>KHODINAGA-SANDRA</th>
<th>KOMBARADE-VANAHALLI</th>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Whether grain given to** |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| 1 Agricultural labourers |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 6          | 2.6          | 1        | 2.5              | 1                    | 5.9                  |
| . No                     | 111        | 48.3         | 3.5      | 87.5             | 46                   | 88.6                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 100.0        | 4        | 100.0            | 53                   | 100.0                |

| 2 Priests                |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 32         | 13.9         | 15       | 37.5             | 40                   | 75.5                 |
| . No                     | 85         | 37.0         | 21       | 52.5             | 7                    | 13.2                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 100.0        | 40       | 100.0            | 53                   | 100.0                |

| 3 Washermen              |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 38         | 16.5         | 13       | 32.5             | 18                   | 34.0                 |
| . No                     | 79         | 34.3         | 23       | 57.5             | 29                   | 54.7                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 99.9         | 40       | 100.0            | 53                   | 100.0                |

| 4 Barbers                |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 29         | 12.6         | 23       | 57.5             | 20                   | 37.7                 |
| . No                     | 88         | 38.3         | 13       | 32.5             | 27                   | 50.9                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 100.0        | 40       | 100.0            | 5.3                  | 99.9                 |

| 5 Dasappas               |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 32         | 13.9         | 8        | 20.0             | 11                   | 20.8                 |
| . No                     | 85         | 37.0         | 28       | 70.0             | 36                   | 67.9                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 100.0        | 40       | 100.0            | 53                   | 100.0                |

| 6 Blacksmiths            |            |              |          |                  |                      |
| . Not a farmer           | 113        | 49.1         | 4        | 10.0             | 6                    | 11.3                 |
| . Yes                    | 11         | 4.8          | 9        | 22.5             | 20                   | 37.7                 |
| . No                     | 106        | 46.1         | 27       | 67.5             | 27                   | 51.0                 |
| **TOTAL**                | 230        | 100.0        | 40       | 100.0            | 53                   | 100.0                |

(Table 3 continued)
### Table 3 (continued)

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<th>SORAVANAHALLI</th>
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</table>
115. Dumont wrote,

One can observe that the small and more or less incomplete caste system formed by the Lingayats is grouped under the aegis of the sect and in virtue of this depends closely upon renunciation, either directly or through the medium of the sect's own priests. This is a special feature, as this is not so in Hindu castes. It may be wondered whether this complementarity between caste and renunciation does not in some manner replace the complementarity of the pure and the impure. In other words, only the presence of renouncers dedicated to bhakti and beneath them of priests sharing the doctrine and the dignity of the renouncers, can preserve the Lingayats from impurity; at the same time, it tends to maintain the division into castes, this being, in fact, part of the definition of the Jangama priests.

(Dumont, 1980: 191)

116. The Brahmans are the most educated community in Karnataka, having adapted their caste position as the scribes and literati of India to Western education.

117. Moksha is defined by the Concise Oxford as 'release from the cycle of existence', that is the cycle of birth and rebirth. What precisely this means differs according to different Hindu sects.

118. Though Maine believed that 'Western individualism' had developed out of the village community.

119. The odd writer out of those I have discussed is Oscar Lewis. Lewis did not share in the development of the concept of the village community. He had more in common with Wilks than with the later writers in that he essentially saw society as consisting of groups of individuals. Admittedly, those individuals were organized into interest groups and could and did bring pressure to bear upon other individuals to conform to their interests.

120. Marx too believed that village boundaries had 'preserved' the traits of small communities in India, and thus their destruction was necessary for India's future development:

English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindu spinner and weaver, dissolved these semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities, by blowing up their economic basis, and thus produced the greatest, and, to speak the truth, the only social revolution, ever heard of in Asia.

Now, sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness those myriads of industrious patriarchal and inoffensive social organizations disorganized and dissolved into their units,
thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilization and their hereditary means of subsistence, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslave it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. (Marx 1973a: 306)

The 'smallest possible compass'. restraining the human mind is reminiscent of Durkheim's later concept of the collective conscious.

121. It is perhaps for this reason that village studies have been more revealing than similar studies in the west, though an equally important reason may be that most readers already know more about western society.

122. It would not have been a suitable model for studying intra-caste relations as, for instance, a study of marriage and the family would require, for these involve ties crossing village boundaries. This is particularly true of North India because of the practice of village exogamy.

123. Though it should be remembered that inter-caste relations in the village were affected by inter-caste relations elsewhere. The relations of the castes to the dominant castes in surrounding villages and to the ruler were of particular importance. More recently, a caste's hold on urban jobs has also affected inter-caste relations.

124. 'The Hindu Jajmani System has as its central core the belief that God himself intended that society should be organized as is described in these pages. As has already been indicated, the various functions to be performed by the different castes are a biological fact representing inherent differences in physical and mental traits irrevocable except through the intervention of God himself. C. Bougie, in his study of the Indian caste regime, has come to the conclusion that without the religious factor neither the origin nor the long existence of the caste system are comprehensible (...) The place held by religion as a social control of man's conduct is brought out by numerous writers. But more convincing still is the system that we have been studying in these pages. The threads of religion are woven through and through, and very few changes can be made without breaking one or more of these threads.

The greatest contributing factor to a sense of security and social insurance in a village community is the recognition of its common
responsibility for the livelihood of all its members, including its own dependents, delinquents, and defectives'.


125. I noted earlier that Wiser's model of the jajmani system was greatly influenced by Durkheim through Mukerjee. Durkheim's concept of the collective conscience would have encouraged Wiser's static model for it assumed the existence of a small bounded society where everyone shared common beliefs. Anything that threatened that homogeneity threatened the jajmani system.
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