

International Labour Migration from Two Pakistani Villages with Different Forms of Agriculture

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This paper is an analysis of the socio-economic situation of two Punjabi villages. It makes an attempt to explain why the villagers of these rural places have to seek work abroad. The first part of the paper deals with the agricultural conditions, the non-agricultural activities available to the villagers, and the budgets of different social categories found in the villages. The second part examines the effects of the process of migration on the young people. It particularly discusses the profile of the migrant, the problems faced by him before his departure, the remittances and their utilization, and the impact of emigration upon women's economic role in the villages and upon the traditional social conflicts. The important conclusion of the paper is that these villagers cannot ensure their social, economic, and cultural reproduction.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to analyse international labour migration from two Punjabi villages with different forms of agriculture, and to determine the relations between the levels of their economic development and the necessity to take a job abroad. For the sake of comparison, one of these villages should have an irrigated type of cultivation, the other rainfed agriculture. The choice of the two villages was also determined by other criteria. Firstly, their population had to be included in a range spreading from 100 to 250 households; secondly, at least 20 households should have experienced migration, either with one of their members abroad or with a returned migrant. The size of the population and of the migrants' sample was dictated, on the one hand, by the possibility to obtain a deep insight into each household and, on the other hand, by the necessity of not generalising from a limited sample.

The selected villages B. and G. are located in an alluvial plain ten miles from the bazar-town Pasrur and on the Pothowar plateau – a succession of rocky ridges

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and basin plains — five miles from a local trade and administrative centre, Gujarkhan, respectively.

In 1982, B. . had a population of 1381 persons distributed amongst 216 households (mean size of household: 6.4 persons), and G. . with 950 inhabitants living in 135 households (mean size of household: 7.0 persons).

Both villages are 20 minutes away from a main metalled road connecting important towns. However, it is extremely difficult, even for a four-wheel-drive vehicle to reach G. . .

Basic facilities like running water, latrines, drainages, medical assistance for people and animals, adequate schooling possibilities for both genders, link roads, are absent in both villages. G. . has even more acute needs since no electricity connection has been installed yet and very few houses are equipped with a hand-pump in the yard. The provision of proper drinking water is the villagers' priority demand.

Political disagreement with the government, a desire to experience a new socio-cultural environment, or a wish to acquire an education outside Pakistan have not motivated the villagers to leave their home. The reasons for taking a job abroad are *solely economic*. I have, therefore, taken as a point of departure for the understanding of the migratory phenomenon an analysis of the actual economic situation in the two villages, i.e., I have focussed upon the possibilities which the villagers have for maintaining their social, cultural and economic reproduction.

THE PEASANTS' ECONOMIC STATUS IN THE TWO VILLAGES

It will be a mistake to consider these villages as isolated, self-centred and autarchic communities, lacking an internal dynamic and without the possibility of tackling external transformations. They have never been so. They are incorporated in a regional entity, which in turn is influenced by the national policy of the state. The villagers' situation is conditioned by local factors as well as by Pakistan's role in the world economy. As an anthropologist I have concentrated my attention on the former since migration studies at the grass-root level are still very limited in number and, therefore, very much needed for the establishment of development strategies. For analyses, which introduce a historical perspective to the social, economic, and political reasons behind the necessity for Pakistan to have become a labour-exporting country and its articulation with the economic system of the oil-producing countries in the Middle East, I will refer to the pertinent works of Pakistani scholars such as I. Ahmad, F. Ahmed, M. A. Chaudhary and J. Rashid.

Both villages are very old and the narration of their creation is tainted by mythological elements. The actual social organization of space is directly derived from the first inhabitants' mode of settlement. B. . is divided in four *pattis* (quarters) where each one refers to a patrilineal descent group of land-owners (*biraderi*), to

which are associated the necessary castes of craftsmen and service people. In G., the feeling of being connected with one's ancestors' place was not as strongly expressed as a result of the dramatic social changes which occurred at the time of Partition. The village consists of a centre inhabited by the refugees, who came mainly from Kashmir after Partition – consequently without a deep emotional feeling for their new home – and who occupied the places left vacant by the Hindus and Sikhs, and of two hamlets where one finds a Muslim community which has been living there for many generations.

1. Before Partition

Before 1947, B. was a village of Muslim cultivators and artisans with a Sikh and Hindu minority. The latter was engaged in trade and usury. The composition of the population was the opposite in G. with a majority of Hindus and Sikhs and a minority of Muslims engaged in agriculture and craftsmanship.

These religious communities were not – economically speaking – homogenous. Among Hindus and Sikhs were found both wealthy shopkeepers and poor peasants and artisans. However, the Hindus were the better off in both villages because of their exploitation of the other villagers through their practice of a system of compound interest. It ruined the customers, independent of their faith. A general consensus exists in both villages on identifying the Hindu community as one of the reasons for the Muslims' poverty.

Before Partition, the relationships between the religious communities were, as a rule, harmonious. They had social contacts through their economic interdependence. The main causes of conflicts were the religious rituals and customs.

In B., a group of untouchable Hindus embraced Christianity due to the intense missionary activities at the end of the 19th century. This did not occur in G..

Even if the two villages differ greatly in their ecological environment, the agricultural yield was not sufficient to meet the people's nutritional needs. B. lies in an alluvial plain, with a generally fertile soil and with a moderate average rainfall, reliable and relatively well-distributed through the year. The groundwater, found close to the surface, allows the cultivation of tiny paddy- and fodder-fields, however limited to the area near the Persian wheels (26 in all). G. is located in an area where the relief and the nature of the soil make irrigation impracticable through traditional technical means.

In other words, the agriculture was mainly rainfed in both villages before Partition and oriented towards subsistence production. It gave very low yields. The peasants could not harvest enough for their own consumption. Non-agricultural incomes were not available to improve one's economy since job opportunities outside the village were few. Work in the army and the police was in great demand because

this provided a regular salary. Several men from G. . were soldiers and the state of poverty was such that many Hindus took the step of converting to Sikhism at the beginning of this century in order to be enrolled in the British army. In fact, the British preferred to recruit soldiers among the Sikh community. Therefore, this was not possible for the Muslim population of B. . . They were not considered as reliable by the British as the other religious communities since the First Independence War in 1857. This discrimination was an element of their divide-and-rule policy.

The villagers' poverty forced them to purchase flour and other foodstuffs on credit from the local Hindu shopkeepers, and/or to borrow money from them in order to finance the daily consumption and expenditure connected with the social ceremonies of the life cycle. It led to a vicious circle of dependency which often ended in the debtor's loss of his land or other assets, such as cattle. The Hindu merchants and usurers acquired land through this practice and rented it out to tenants. Very few of the Muslim and Sikh landowners did so. On the contrary, these self-cultivators were always seeking larger holdings to till. It was therefore very easy to find tenants especially among the Muslim community, many of whom were landless, and where for the majority of the households the socio-economic reproduction depended solely on agricultural and/or artisan labour. The Sikhs could compensate for the mediocre agricultural yields by wages earned in the army.

A tenant was paid $1/25$ of the production in G. . ($1/5$ today) and $1/2$ in B. . when the landowner provided the water. Otherwise, the rate was/is equal between the tenant, the landowner, and the man irrigating the fields. Seasonal labourers were hired in B. . and they received $1/25$ of the yield. Most of the peasants of G. . did all the tillage themselves since they needed to keep the largest share of the limited yield for their households.

Between 1860 and 1947, the number of landowners increased five times in G. . while the available cultivating area remained the same. The size of holdings decreased from generation to generation while it was impossible to improve production due to the absence of available sources of irrigation.

Both villages were identically ruled under the colonial administration, with the first records of landholdings, rules of tenancy, and collection of land revenue implemented in 1865. However, the two World Wars were experienced differently. The criteria for the recruitment of soldiers were not as tough as in the peace time, and many men of G. . joined the army so as to have access to much-needed soldier's pay. Promises of political independence were an element of the British propaganda to attract the villagers. Inevitably, many soldiers were demobilized with a greater political consciousness, and this might partly explain the more violent clashes which took place in G. . at the time of Partition. Its bazar and its Hindu and Sikh settle-

ments were burnt down by Muslim militants from the surroundings. In B., the Hindus peacefully left the village. Not because they were pushed out by the Muslim community but because they were afraid of the situation as a whole. They thought that it was a temporary crisis and that they would be able to come back later.

2. Between Partition and the "Green Revolution"

After 1947, the villagers became better off little by little in B.. This was due to the departure of the Hindu usurers and to the digging of a canal in the middle of the 1950s which has been profitable to the village. Although it does not irrigate the area, it became easier and cheaper to sink tubewells because it raised the level of the underground water.

G. has never recovered its commercial activities to the level known before 1947, which were such that a railway station was built on the Peshawar-Lahore line. The destroyed bazar has never been rebuilt. In the middle of the fifties, refugees from Kashmir arrived and they were allocated some land previously owned by Hindus and Sikhs. The size of the redistributed holdings was equivalent to those lost in India. The native landowners were not satisfied by this policy and considered that the refugees received holdings which should not be theirs.

A consolidation of land was implemented in B. in 1965 but unfair means and corrupt methods meant that the politically and economically strong landowners profited from it. Afraid of eventual frauds, the villagers of G. refused to implement it. Otherwise, the size of the cultivated holdings is so limited that the 1959 and 1972 land reforms did not have any effects in the villages.

Both in B. and G., the cultivated area has not increased with the same rapidity as the number of cultivators. Almost the totality of the fertile area was already under cultivation before the beginning of the "Green Revolution". Moreover, the uncultivable land has more than doubled in B. in the last fifty years, mainly because of waterlogging.

The scarcity of cultivable land is responsible for the rural-urban migration which took place during this period. Many cultivators' households left the villages in the twenty years following Partition, 25 percent and 30 percent in B. and G. respectively. The international migration boom had not started at that time. The villagers moved with their families to large cities in Pakistan where they took any kind of unskilled labour. In fact, the peasant does not possess knowledge which is marketable in a city, as opposed to the castes of craftsmen, as we shall see below.

For the remaining cultivators, the subsistence agriculture could not cover their basic needs, and a large number of men were engaged in a second occupation outside the village. There were few job opportunities in the surroundings. Only some employments in brick-factories and on construction sites, as well as cooly

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jobs in the main towns of the district, were available. Therefore, the villagers could not count on a permanent and substantial supplementary income from this side.

In G. ., it took several years before the refugees from Kashmir could begin to cultivate the land themselves. They arrived without agricultural tools and working animals. Most of them rented out their new property to the native peasants who were already tilling it. The yield was divided in two equal shares. Some of them benefited from the government *taccavi* loans¹ for purchase of the necessary agricultural equipment. However, the majority of the refugees did not take advantage of this assistance because they were afraid of not being able to pay it back within the due time. They instead preferred to take some work, mostly on construction sites, in Rawalpindi and Gujarkhan.

3. The "Green Revolution"

Confronted with the impossibility to increase agricultural production through a quantitative rise of the cultivated acreage, the peasants of B. . and G. . have turned towards a qualitative improvement of their land by slowly adopting new methods of cultivation.

The "Green Revolution" began in the second half of the seventies. Technical assistance of agricultural advisers, propaganda programmes on the radio, and encouragement through the results obtained by the first users of the high-yield variety seeds and fertilizers have had a ripple effect. However, 30 percent of the tillers in B. . cannot afford to purchase H.Y.V. seeds, while 30 percent in G. . use neither fertilizers nor H.Y.V. seeds. This difference in the impact of the "Green Revolution" is due to the slow improvement of the economy which B. . has experienced in the fifties and the sixties thanks to the better ecological conditions. It has helped the cultivators to finance the sinking of tubewells and, therefore, made possible the cultivation of paddy-fields, providing both a subsistence — and a cash-crop. Most of their owners (60.5 percent) are shareholders who are relatives. Today more than 90 percent of the fields are irrigated. To own a tubewell is a remunerative asset. It brings a new source of income since the water required for irrigation is sold at either one-third of the rice production or one-fourth of the wheat production.

In G. ., irrigated agriculture is not possible due to its cost and the absence of governmental economic assistance. Cultivation is still exclusively rainfed and follows the traditional techniques: 59 percent of the tillers leave their land fallow for half-a-year. Crop-rotation is also common in B. . but without the practice of fallowing, thus with a risk of land impoverishment in the long run. As a rule, the cultivators

¹The *taccavi* loans were implemented by the British rulers after W W 1 so as to help the villagers to buy consumption goods and agricultural gears.

are not aware enough of this danger and instead complain of not having sufficient economic means to increase the yield of their fields through the purchase of more fertilizers.

Agriculture is still mainly unmechanized. Only three tractors – purchased by remittances – are available in each village and about a third of the cultivators hire the service of their owners. The cost is still too high (50 Rs per acre) for the rest of the villagers, who continue to cultivate by traditional manual means and with working animals.

All in all, even though the agricultural situation has improved (650 kg of wheat per acre in B.), it is still a long way before the peasants can fulfil the needs of their families. In G. , the production covers only 6-7 months of the household consumption, (22 kg of wheat per acre; it means twice the amount before the “Green Revolution”). This leads to the peasants’ dependency on the local shopkeepers, crop-selling agents, and fertilizer depot-holders – either governmental or private – who practise corrupt methods and who manoeuvre with the fluctuations of the supply-demand mechanisms. The fixed rates for crops, imposed by the government, are not implemented.

Beside complaints about corruption, the agriculturalists criticize the absence of an adequate credit policy. One cannot expect the peasants to finance the modernization of their means of cultivation without external financial help. However, nobody takes loans from the private and/or governmental credit organizations. Their policy of credit does not satisfy the peasants, who ideologically dislike any system based on a rate of interest. They consider, for example, the Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan more as a business company than as a service body. Moreover, the credit policy practised in Pakistan has been implemented to favour landowners whose acreage ownership is above the average. The majority of the cultivators do not own holdings of the size required as a minimum guarantee.

A third difficulty in obtaining a loan is the debtor’s use of it. Cash is not required for productive investments but for the fulfilment of basic material and/or ideological needs, such as repairs to the house and/or the marriage of a daughter; in other words, needs which are not considered as being of first priority by the creditors.

Consequently, the villagers continue to rely upon their traditional sources of credit: the social network of relatives and friends. In G. , 47 percent of the households were in debt at the time of investigation.

In other words, the “Green Revolution” so far has not been able to satisfy the totality of the household’s basic needs. It has not stopped the peasants’ tentativeness to increase their holdings. Many among them try to cultivate others’ land as tenants.

In B. , the size of the rented-out land is very small. Widowerhood, illness, or

non-agricultural occupations outside the village are the three main reasons for a landowner to rent out the land. The peasants are self-cultivators and owner-cum-tenants, being 48 percent and 38.6 percent respectively. In G., the fields cultivated by a tenant are very unusual since 95.5 percent of them are tilled by self-cultivators. This difference may be explained by the excessive costs of inputs, which agriculture requires in G., for the output it gives. The production expenditures are too high and the work is too strenuous compared with the yield obtained, which moreover has to be shared with the owner. Consequently, some fields may remain fallow.

When tenancy is practised, it is mainly based on a share-cropping payment in both villages (*hissa* tenancy). It is always of a short duration – maximum two years – because the landowners have been traumatized and have misunderstood the land reform of the Bhutto administration. They believe that a tenant might become the owner of his rented holding after many years of cultivation. On rainfed fields, the agricultural expenditures and the production are divided equally between the owner and the tenant. On irrigated fields, the yearly distribution of crops is more complex since it depends on the provision of the water.

The higher number of owner-cum-tenants in B. should not conceal the increasing tendency towards more and more peasants becoming self-cultivators. The size of the landholdings does not allow payment in kind with a share of the production. For the same reason, the hiring of seasonal labourers diminishes in B. while it has never been really practised in G. due to the lower productivity of the fields. The household labour-force is sufficient and external help is furnished by *biraderi* members on a reciprocal basis in the peak agricultural seasons.

As the following Table 1 shows, the land-tenures are very small. One does not have a concentration of land in the hands of a few big landowners. Moreover, the

Table 1

Relation Cultivators/Size of Holdings in the Two Studied Villages (Percent)

Size-class	B. (Irrigated Agriculture)		G. (Rainfed Agriculture)	
	Self-cultivator	O.C.T.*	Landowners Renting out	Self-cultivation
1	68.4	47.8	53.3	65
2	15.7	32.6	26.6	9.6
3	8.7	17.4	20	0
4	1.75	2	0	1.7
5	1.75	0	0	0

*O.C.T. = Owner-cum-tenant, i.e., landowner who rents and cultivates other people's fields.

renting of land in the majority of cases does not allow to come into a superior size-class category. In other words, the owner-cum-tenant is only able to economically better manage his difficulties but he cannot accumulate a large size of land.

In order to be able to compare the results of the analysis with other studies done in Pakistan about migration and agriculture, I have used the same tenure size-groups as the ones defined by economists at the Department of Economics of the Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad. These categories correspond to different acreages for rainfed and irrigated areas. It is also usual to make one irrigated acre equivalent to two rainfed acres. One has then the five classes:

Size-class	Rainfed (<i>Barani</i>)	Irrigated
1	0.10 – 12.49 Acres	0.10 – 7.49 Acres
2	12.50 – 24.99 Acres	7.50 – 12.49 Acres
3	25.00 – 49.99 Acres	12.50 – 24.99 Acres
4	50.00 – 99.00 Acres	25.00 – 49.99 Acres
5	100.00 and Above	50.00 and Above

This qualification is acceptable for the villages because there are no extreme cases of *barani* land with very high productivity due to well irrigation nor is there irrigated land with a very low productivity due to waterlogging and salinity.

The problem is rather the opposite with very fragmented holdings, where the plots have become smaller and smaller over each generation due to the pattern of inheritance. They cannot assure the reproduction and the maintenance of a household of normal size.

Another possibility to increase one's acreage is to purchase additional land. But ideological beliefs limit this eventuality. Land is considered "as a mother who gives everything" and therefore cannot be sold without emotional difficulties. The seller must be under really hard economic pressure to take this step. Moreover, prohibitive prices, instigated by the inflationary influence of foreign remittances, prevent the majority of households from buying land. Its price is located in the range 15,000 – 40,000 rupees per acre, depending on its location, quality, and possibility of irrigation. All in all, the pressure on land has been permanent since the beginning of the century – even though, for example, the landowner population has decreased threefold in G. since 1956. It leads to harsh competition and increases the social tensions in the villages. However, the clashes occur more often and more violently in B. because the agricultural yield is higher. Consequently, the villagers' incomes rely there more upon the traditional form of economy than in G., where the agricultural income has become a secondary source of living for many households.

The villagers' other means of production is cattle. They fulfil a role of primary importance in the household economy, both as working animals and as dairy animals. They may also be considered as a form of saving which is disposed of when a large amount of money is needed (for instance the financing of migration). The largest part of the milk produced is consumed daily by the household, or is transformed into clarified butter and butter milch. The ability of the peasants to generate income from the raising of cattle is also restricted by their economic difficulties. Their purchase requires a major economic effort from the household and the small landholdings prevent the peasant from devoting a larger acreage to the cultivation of fodder. The quantity of fodder provided by the fields is insufficient as is the quality of the grazing areas. This is a permanent problem which leads to the strenuous and repetitive daily tasks of collecting grass and cutting fodder. This lack of fodder is even more acute for the landless villagers who constitute the other main heterogeneous social class in B. and G. . . They may belong to castes of landowners who have lost their land, as is the case for instance for some of the refugee population who came from Kashmir to G. in the aftermath of Partition. They may also belong to traditionally landless castes.

THE LANDLESS VILLAGERS

The traditional organization of labour in a Punjabi village is based on complementarity between the castes of landowners and the craftsmen/service castes. The former are engaged in agriculture while the latter either assure services, as for example the waterman, the shoemaker or the barber; or manufacture and maintain the agricultural tools; as the blacksmith and the carpenter. This complementarity is institutionalized in the *seypidar* system, through which the cultivators pay the craftsmen's work or service with a different but fixed amount of crops yearly. The payment between landless castes takes the form of exchange of services.

The tasks of these castes were similar in both villages. The craftsmen in G. . were a Muslim majority before Partition. Their economic situation was difficult because the *seypi* payment depends on the yield of the fields which was/is more limited than in B. . . The remuneration could be made either in cash or its equivalent in agricultural products.

The difference in the standard of living between the two villages is reflected in the ratio of landowners/craftsmen. In B. ., the population is almost equally distributed between the two social groups – respectively 55 percent and 45 percent – while the still very mediocre agricultural conditions of G. . have led to a transformation of the social composition with 85 percent of landowners and 15 percent of service people, since many of the latter have migrated to towns.

The causes of the landless villagers' rural-urban migration are manifold. One

reason is the changes of the economic conditions, both at the local and national levels in the past decades. They have led to the disappearance of several of craftsmen's tasks and/or a transformation of their activities. In B., water-carriers, pot-makers, washermen, and garbage-collectors are no longer found; in G., it has been the printers' and dyers', weavers' and shoemakers' fate.

The landless castes do not stand equal in the face of economic transformations which have occurred in the villages. Especially, the service castes have suffered from the changes, which have affected the villagers' patterns of social relationship. Their traditional occupations, associated with a specific type of social life, are no longer needed and they do not possess a vocational knowledge which could be in demand in production sectors outside the village. Consequently, their members are engaged in various unskilled tasks (agricultural seasonal labour, work on construction sites, tending of a shop, buffalo trading, cart-driving and the like). In other words, all kinds of menial work, without regularity and security of employment and often in other towns in Pakistan. One can call this type of labourers 'internal migrants'. They reside far from their family a major part of the year and send money home.

The artisan castes, traditionally engaged in tasks related to agricultural production (blacksmith, carpenter), stand in a much more favourable socio-economic position than the other landless castes when they are confronted with the transformation of the village economy. Their professional knowledge is still in demand, not only by the peasants for the manufacture and maintenance of their agricultural tools but also by economic sectors external to the village, on the domestic as well as on the international labour market. The high demand for their skill — because of the general lack of artisans in the Pakistani economy due to the emigration of the best qualified workers — gives them the opportunity to become economically independent of the landowners' dominance and capricious goodwill. The *seypi* relation is not compulsorily hereditary and it may be broken by both parties after the yearly payment. Only bad economic conditions used to bind the craftsman to his landowner-patrons. But when new income possibilities appear, he is free to stop the relation without being compelled to find a substitute. The craftsmen are then able to economically compete with the landowners, if not to become better-off than the poorest among these latter. This economic change leads to sharper and new conflicts in the village.

Another reason of the rural-urban migration is the reduced demand for extra manpower by the landowners. In B., the planting and harvesting of the paddy and sugar-cane fields were mostly done by the landless families for the landowners who could remunerate them. The situation changed when the landowners started to do themselves more and more work in their fields because of the increased cost of agricultural input. Many people of the landless castes then moved to the cities because of the ever increasing difficulties to find work in the village.

Moreover, the relative economic progress of the country in the sixties gave new job possibilities in the cities. The traditional rate of payment of the *seypi* relationships could not compete with the daily salary which a man could earn in the city, even if he worked as a low-paid cooly.

Last but not the least, by moving to a city, the craftsmen could escape this servitude of always having to be at the landowners' disposal with whom they had *seypi* relationships. They then could become anonymous and get free from the feeling of frustration provoked by the landowners' discrimination.

The relationships between landowners and landless people today are not identical in the two villages. The economic improvements brought by the "Green Revolution" are greater in B. because of the easier access to water for irrigation. But the progress of the productive forces has not been accompanied by a concomitant change in the relations of production from the landowners' side. The *seypidar* system, which should ensure a redistribution of the agricultural production between the villagers, underlines instead the dependency of the landless people on the castes of landowners. The situation is quite the opposite since agriculture became more lucrative and then gave a renewed possibility to continue the traditional life-style. Consequently, the customary unfairness and discrimination of the landowners towards the landless people could continue.

In fact, even if the landowners cannot exempt themselves from the craftsmen and service people, they treat them as their servants. They call them their *kamins* (inferior), and consider themselves to have a higher social status. Often they abuse them by not rightly paying them. On the other hand, more and more craftsmen refuse to be subordinated to the landowners. It is no longer compulsory for them to be totally dependent on the landowners' lunatic goodwill for assuring the basic needs of their family. Some craftsmen have deliberately left their *seypi* relationships and started to work as wage labourers in towns, where they may earn up to Rs 50 a day while their remunerations in the village have not followed the improvement of the agricultural production. They are proportionally less paid today than seventy years ago. The yearly rate of payment does not ensure the material reproduction of the household. The landless people, who still live in the village, can no longer accept to be humiliated by the most traditional landowners. However, they do not organize themselves in movements of protest. Their class consciousness is not yet developed to this level. They consider that the improvement of their situation is only an individual affair.

The opposition between the two social groups is not as sharp in G., partly because of the settlement of refugees in the fifties, and partly because of the villagers' more progressive world-view thanks to a longer contact with the external world. The landless villagers in G. do not constitute an homogenous social group. One distinguishes between two categories. On the one hand, one has people of the land-

owner castes who lost their land at Partition when they arrived from Kashmir. They did not possess the necessary documents which could prove their landowner's status before they fled from India. They started to work as peon, clerk, railway-worker, unskilled labourer on construction sites, and the like, outside the village and often in far-away cities. To have become landless suppressed the means to occupy a higher social status than the traditional castes of craftsmen and service people. The demarcation line between the landless people and landowners progressively softened and with it the unfair exploitation of the former by the latter. On the other hand, people from the artisan and service castes compose the second category of landless villagers. They accomplish *seypi* tasks for the landowners.

The other main reason for the differences in the social climate between the two villages is the greater difficulty to make a living only from agriculture in G. . . The villagers have been compelled to take a supplementary occupation outside the village at an earlier stage than in B. . . These external contacts have influenced the traditional mentality of the people and loosened the rigidity of the *seypi* relationships.

As a rule, the landless households have more than one male income-earner. They have to mobilize all the available labour force in order to increase their income by pooling the different wages. Young boys are put to work at an early age, but women never take a job outside the village.

As a whole, in both villages the limited cropland, the subsistence-oriented agricultural production, the limited cash-earning if cash crops are cultivated, and the traditional rate of payment of the landless castes do not cater for the economic and socio-cultural reproduction in the households. Employment outside the villages is a must, especially when the agriculture is mediocre. In G. , 85 percent of the landowners' households and 93 percent of the landless households are irregularly engaged in jobs outside the village. In B. , the proportions are lower, respectively 25 percent and 57 percent since the conditions of agriculture are more favourable. However, these figures do not indicate the percentage of men who cannot obtain work. Both villages suffer from the general unemployment and underemployment crisis which Pakistan is facing. In the last generation, agriculture has ceased to be the principal source of income for the villagers of G. . . The high number of households with extended families (41 percent in B. and 39 percent in G.) also allows a division of labour in which the shortage of manpower is not a problem for the accomplishment of the agricultural tasks. All the men of the households are not permanently needed on the holdings, and the women, even if they are not engaged in direct income-generating activities, play an important economic role by releasing the men from some of the strenuous and repetitive work in the fields — like cutting grass for the cattle. They can, therefore, be absent from the village during the day. This economic complementarity of the household members is also accompanied by the complementarity of different jobs for the same individual. Since none of these

occupations provide sufficient wages, it is advantageous to participate simultaneously or seasonally in more than one job. The incomes are then pooled together.

The job possibilities offered to the peasants, who are considered unskilled in economic sectors external to the agricultural sector, are very few. Local rural industries are limited in both areas and the agro-technical sectors offer only seasonal jobs. The army and the police are considered as the most feasible possibilities, even if they are not highly remunerative. In B. . 25 percent and in G. . 43 percent of the men with an extra-agricultural activity have been or are enrolled in the army or the police. Besides the security of being a permanent job, the army offers other favourable conditions such as free accommodation, clothes, and medical facilities. Moreover, the early age of retirement (35 years) allows to start a new profession, with sometimes the chance to have acquired a skill, such as driving vehicles. The retirement pension is also an advantage which is very much appreciated. It has often been used as an initial capital for new activities, like the opening of a store in the village or the nearby bazar.

The other peasants are engaged in diversified jobs which do not require a professional qualification; and if they do, the labourers acquire this by practice, not by schooling. However, more and more parents are aware of the advantage of giving some sort of technical training to their sons. Many young men expect then to have better chances to obtain a work-contract abroad. But technical schools are badly lacking in the rural areas.

BUDGET OF THE HOUSEHOLDS AND SOURCES OF CREDIT

Even if the general picture of the economy of these villages gives the impression that all the peasants are poor and cannot meet their basic needs, some households have always been better off than others according to the local standard of living. The economic resources at the household disposal may vary according to the combination of activities and the number of people who pool their wages together. No fixed pattern of economic organization exists. The increase of resources also depends on the entrepreneurial ability of an individual to get the maximum out of a global tough economic situation. One encounters the following combination of income sources:

- agricultural income;
- agricultural income + one male member working outside the village;
- agricultural income + income from several male members working outside the village;
- income from one male member working outside the village; and
- income from several male members working outside the village.

Moreover, the peasant's family always tries to earn some extra money through all kinds of small jobs performed here and there by all the household members according to what is socially acceptable. For instance, the women, who always work indoors, are busy with embroideries which are sold at the bazar; or the 8-9 year old son is a *tchai-wallah* in a local tea-house and monthly brings home 100 rupees; or the head of the family makes speculative gains through the purchase and immediate sale of livestock. These extra incomes may seem ridiculously low, but when they are saved over a long period, they become meaningful for the household. Moreover, the general tendency is to moderate one's needs, such as the consumption expenditures which do not increase proportionally to the income.

The agricultural income is four times higher in B. than in G., and even if the cultivators of G. increased their input, the difference will only be reduced by half. As long as the selling price of the crops does not rise substantially, the "Green Revolution" makes cultivation too costly in comparison with the income generated. The low wage-policy practised in Pakistan leads to monthly salaries between Rs 450 and Rs 700² which cannot be regarded as a substantial source of supplementary revenue. They only enable the villagers to meet their basic needs. But many still buy food and clothes on credit from the local shopkeepers.

In G., 47 percent of the households are indebted. But even if many villagers have difficulties to assure their material reproduction, the global economy does not collapse because the income of each household goes up and down at alternative periods according to the conjuncture. In an acute situation, one always can borrow from one's relatives for small expenditures. However, sources of credit have to be found for unforeseeable expenditures, like medical treatment, or for consumption-type investments and productive investments.

1. The Purchase of Goods on Credit

The highly indebted Muslim peasant because of the Hindu money-lenders' system of compound interest was a well-known figure of the pre-Partition Punjab. After 1947, the Islamic ideology of the state forbade this form of usury and professional money-lenders were eradicated since they moved to India. A vacuum in the rural credit facilities appeared while the peasants' demand for financial support remained identical. In consequence, new sources of credit were innovated at the local shopkeeper's and crop-selling agent's after the start of the "Green Revolution". In effect, interest is charged by these new creditors through their manoeuvring of buying and selling prices of agricultural commodities. In contrast to bank practices, these creditors do not require any minimum size of land as a form of guarantee

²Rs 12.00 = US \$ 1.00 at the time of the inquiry.

from their debtors.

This credit system offers two advantages to the cultivators. The poor peasant then can afford to purchase the necessary agricultural input for the next season at a time when he has difficulties to make both ends meet because he has not yet received the income from the harvest. However, he is maintained in a state of dependency on the agricultural dealer, who does not buy his crops at the governmental fixed rate. The advantage for the peasant who is better off is in allowing him to sell all his crops so as to save this income for costly expenditures like the purchase of a buffalo, the marriage of a daughter, and nowadays the international migration.

2. The Private Loans

Another traditional source of credit in the village is to borrow small amounts of money without interest and without deadline for the repayment from relatives and/or friends. Both affinal and consanguinal relatives may be requested for help. Their contribution is limited to a few hundred rupees per person. These creditors may deduct this money from their ceremonial fund. They just want to help a friend or a parent even if they do not have much themselves, but a little bit more than the debtor at that particular time. The total sum rarely can be more than 3,000-4,000 rupees, unless the debtor occupies an important social position which allows the mobilization of a wide network of relationships, inside as well as outside the village.

3. The Share-holding System

A third source of financing is the share-holding practice between very close relatives. In this case, several brothers or cousins, or a father and his sons collectively make a costly investment, like the sinking of a tubewell. In this arrangement, each share-holder contributes to the cost of functioning and maintenance of the equipment according to a percentage equal to the individual share.

4. The Ceremonial Fund

The only source of credit in the villages which is institutionalized is the ritual of prestations and counter-prestations, called *vartan bhanji*, between members of the same *biraderi*. It is only practised in connection with marriages. They are the most costly social ceremonies of the life-cycle in the villages because of their determining importance for the biological, social and cultural reproduction of the group. Besides being a form of economic assistance among the villagers, the *vartan bhanji* also allows to maintain the relationships between the members of the *biraderi*. In fact, the amount of the returned gifts have always to be higher and higher for each new marriage, and a household cannot break this chain of unequal reciprocal exchange without serious social consequences. All in all, the establishment of a ceremonial

fund has the household priority. To save money for financing social and religious rituals is a must in a society where one permanently must reaffirm and strengthen one's cultural identity through the accumulation of honour and prestige, which are the two driving-forces behind the villagers' relationships. These savings have traditionally been limited due to the few possibilities offered by a subsistence economy. They have increased with the "Green Revolution" and the appearance of a cash-crop production. But in this domain, the international migration brings transformations. The non-migrants' households are unsatisfied by not being able to live up to their ideals. The *vartan bhanji* cannot compete with the amounts spent by the migrants' households. A feeling of frustration appears because of this unfair competition.

Consequently, the departure to a foreign country appears to be the only real solution to the economic problems when poor villagers are confronted daily with the relative apparent well-being of the migrants' households. They believe that the migrants dispose of endless economic resources, that their consumption of material goods is unlimited, and that they can live up to the ideal emic values.

MIGRATION AND ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS

For almost half the villagers' attention, efforts, and plans are turned toward and based on the hope of sending a relative abroad. They are under permanent psychological pressure because they believe that there is, at last, a possibility to overcome their poverty if they obtain a work-contract in a foreign country. But it is not the poorest households which can afford the expenditure related to emigration. The liberal policy of emigration and the acute demands for work abroad have led to a jungle of private labour-recruiting agencies whose prices are prohibitive, and which unscrupulously exploit the villagers. The average cost of migration is around 15,000–20,000 rupees today. With the resources at the household disposal, the would-be migrant can only finance his departure by making big economic efforts and by taking risks. Nobody disposes of savings which are sufficient for paying all the expenditures; no one is certain of obtaining a working-visa; and the date of departure is unknown. As long as an effective government control upon the labour-recruiting agents is absent, villagers can continue to be grossly cheated. This has especially happened in G. since 8.8 percent of the total number of households have lost important amounts of money. For them this unsuccessful migration has worsened their economic situation with the impossibility to repay the borrowed money; and it has also provoked a traumatic psychological shock since they believed that they were at last able to improve their situation. But the general economic climate does not provide any means to solve this sudden crisis.

The potential migrant might sell his wife's jewels, some of his cattle, all the

crops after harvest, but not his land because of its ideological value. Nevertheless, a great part of the money has to be borrowed either from friends or relatives. The general climate of social peace in a village influences which individuals of the would-be migrant's social network are mobilized. The tensions in a village are directly related to the agricultural conditions.

In B., constant feuds between factions about land have been going on since the beginning of the century, and the "Green Revolution" has not modified the situation. In fact, it has produced a double effect. On the one hand, irrigation has made cultivation a more profitable source of income, but it is insufficient for the peasant to independently cope with costly undertakings like international migration. On the other hand, the shortage of cultivable holdings is felt more acutely when agriculture becomes more rentable; and the feuds between factions have consequently regained in intensity. There is more money in circulation due to the increased savings but the villagers' solidarity is decreased. Therefore, the migrant's agnatic kinship group (the *biraderi*) is not an institution on which he can rely in business matters, although generally there is solidarity in conflict situations with other *biraderis* or the authorities. Jealousy, rivalry, and the desire to dominate each other characterize the relationships of many villagers. Friends and affinal kins are the surest support one can obtain in B. . . These are rarely involved in the tussles between agnates.

The situation is different in G. with its less tense social situation. Consanguineous ties play an equally important role as affinal ties in the financing of migration. G. is in a way less traditional than B. . . Its inhabitants have been forced to be more engaged in activities outside the village due to the agricultural low output. Feuds about land are not so numerous there. In G., the "Green Revolution" has also put more money in the villagers' pockets — however less than in B. — without destroying the traditional system of solidarity between the people. Consequently, more households in G. have been affected by international migration than in B., exactly 3.5 times more, or 32.6 percent and 9.25 percent of the total number of households respectively. But these figures would be much higher if potential migrants could solve the economic problems related to migration. In G. 60 percent and in B. 41 percent of the households would like to have at least one of their male members abroad. This means that international migration could become a source of income for more than 92 percent and almost 50 percent of the households respectively in these two villages.

The percentage of migrants is higher amongst the landowning castes in G. than in B., 28.8 percent and 4 percent of the total number of households of the villages respectively. Again, this is due to the differences in the agricultural situation. An even more convincing figure is the ratio of migrants from households of the landowning castes/total number of households of landowning castes: 34 percent

in G. . and 7.5 percent in B. . . In other words, more than one third of the cultivators of G. . have tried to emigrate or have emigrated. The figures for the service castes are smaller because of their members' great difficulties in collecting the necessary amount of money: only 3.7 percent in G. . and 5 percent in B. . of the total number of households. However, here too there are more households of service castes with a migrant, in relation to the total number of service caste households in G. . than in B. ., 23.8 percent and 11.3 percent respectively. G. . is economically less self-centred than B. . because of its greater poverty, and consequently migration is more necessary. But the variations in the structure and size of landholding are not factors accounting for the variety of the migration pattern. The cultivators belong to the average type of landowners' category found in the villages, i.e., to the sizeclass 1. Therefore, migration does not entail a reduction in agricultural production. The size of the cultivated holdings is so limited that the shortage of manpower is not a problem.

Instead, two types of factors influence the migration pattern. The first is the distinction made between the migrants of landowning castes and the migrants of craftsman-service castes. The former are in a better position to finance their departure because, firstly, they possess more saleable assets, and, secondly, as landowners their network of contacts and support is more developed. On the other hand, they do not have a professional qualification which is demanded by the oil-producing countries and the majority of them do not attend vocational training before departure. They work as unskilled labourers, mostly on construction sites, i.e., jobs which are unacceptable in the village because of their subordinated value become attractive abroad. On the other hand, the migrants of the craftsman-service castes are hired on the basis of their traditional occupation but they have greater difficulties in collecting the necessary amount of money.

The second set of factors which influences the migration pattern is the structure of the family. In G. ., 73 percent of the migrants come from extended families compared to 40 percent in B. . . Many married men in G. . do not have the economic means to start their own nuclear families. Consequently, many more migrants of B. . are heads of households (60 percent to 27 percent in G. .).

To summarize, the international migration has benefited from the relative improvement of the village economy through the "Green Revolution", according to the social situation specific to each village. It started in both the said villages in the second half of the seventies. This was after the closure of the borders of the western industrialized countries, but precisely when the oil-producing countries of the Gulf and Middle East began to develop their infrastructures due to the boom in oil prices after the October 1973 war against Israel. The Pakistani labourers travelled to these countries, and among them were the villagers of B. . and G. . .

As a rule, the migrant leaves with a two-year work-contract in his pocket,

which is renewable, but only from his home country. This pattern of circular migration does not provide to the workers the possibility to organize themselves, to improve their qualifications, or to obtain a length of service bonus. The wages are very low – between Rs 3,000 and 5,000 monthly – and therefore advantageous to the transnational companies which employ them. But for the villagers, these salaries are from 6 to 10 times higher than what they can earn in Pakistan.

A part of the salary covers the migrant's maintenance in the receiving country. He restricts his standard of living in order to save as much as possible. The remitted money corresponds to $1/3$ – $1/2$ of these monthly wages. They are sent preferably every six months to the head of the household, which may be the wife in nuclear families. Important amounts are also spent on consumer durable goods (radio-set, TV-set, wrist-watch, juice-mixer, blankets, clothes, etc.) which are, on the one hand, offered as presents to relatives and friends, and on the other hand, kept by the migrant's household. One expects the migrant to be generous and his prestige increases concomitantly with his generosity.

Only a part of the remittances are used on consumer goods. The migrant's household does not change its pattern of consumption even if it can now afford to. Priority is given to other types of expenditure.

- To pay back the money borrowed for financing the departure, as soon as he receives his first wages. Not to do so would be an abuse of the solidarity between individuals, not to mention a loss of honour for the migrant and his family. It takes from one to three years to reimburse.
- Simultaneously, money is saved for financing marriages in the household. Marriage is the most costly social expenditure, especially when daughters follow each other in a row. Beside two matching partners, a good marriage is characterized by an expensive dowry and luxurious treatment and entertainment of the guests. It is an economic burden for each household, which has to indebt itself, even if the institutionalized frame of economic assistance – *vartan bhanji* – brings some help.
- To repair the old house or to build a new house or simply to add rooms is the third type of plan in the migrant's household. This consumption-type investment is a priority because of the unsatisfactory housing conditions existing in both villages.

These expenditures associated with marriages cannot be understood according to a western rational economic approach. The social life of the villagers functions according to other criteria. The village community is a society of honour (*izzat*) and shame. To be a man of honour is the dominant value of the individual's definition.

Without *izzat*, the villager is nothing. He/she has no identity and no place in the society. Honour gives prestige, respect, and authority — three qualities which are needed for the establishment of political and economic relationships. Therefore, the accumulation of honour, which one may call an accumulation of symbolic capital, has always been a driving-force behind the villagers' behaviour. Honour, in this case, is not an inherited property but is obtained through the ordinary deeds of life and through the ostentation expressed during the rituals of the life-cycle. Substantial economic resources, like foreign remittances, have not decreased the importance of the symbolic capital. Quite the opposite. The villagers have succeeded in adjusting the criteria for obtaining more prestige to the pompous display of material possessions. The show-off of the wedding-ceremony and the exhibition of the bride's dowry are the two events in the villagers' daily routine when the status of the concerned families becomes visible to everybody. These families' prestige is offered to collective judgement. Therefore, remittances are directly responsible for the inflationary tendency in the quantity of gold and presents contained in the dowry. They allow increasing the display of this ritual. An average of Rs 26,000 is spent in G. . among the migrants.

Only when these material and ideological basic needs are satisfied — it may take at least ten years — does the migrant employ the remittances in productive investments. But at the time of the investigation, their plans were not clear and precise. Some would like to mechanize their agriculture, mainly through the purchase of a tractor, which provides a substantial supplementary income through the ploughing of other cultivators' fields. But an intensive mechanization will lead to the disappearance of this possibility for extra cash. In B. ., some landowners think that there will be a redistribution of landholdings in the years to come because the next generation of the actual petty landowners will be unable to rely on their inherited plots. They will have to sell them, and only migrants will be able to afford the inflated prices of land.

To summarize, the main differences between the migrant's household and the non-migrant's household are not only the amount of money at the former's disposal for the fulfilment of basic needs, but also the psychological satisfaction to be able to live up to the customary ideology of honour accumulation. But migration strengthens the social inequalities existing in the villages. The most needy cannot leave and they have to suffer from the inflation of the prices of consumer goods, durable goods, and social expenditures.

MIGRATION AND VILLAGE WOMEN

The financing of migration is not the only difficulty to be solved before departure. The migrant has to make sure that his absence will not have negative

social consequences. These could be mainly of two kinds: firstly, the security and honour of the family left behind could be threatened, and secondly, the balance of power between the different factions in the village could be altered.

In both villages, a traditional understanding and practice of Islam is a part of the ideological framework within which individual norms and behaviour are moulded. This framework is characterized, for the women, by their segregation from men and by their seclusion, a practice called *pardah*. The ideal behaviour of a man towards the women of his household is to give them the possibility to observe *pardah*. It means to grant them all the facilities, economic as well as social, so that they do not have to be involved with tasks outside the house. Every man tries to live up to this cultural prescription. His prestige and respect increase according to how strictly he can assure the protection of the woman's honour. In fact, her honour is not her private property. It is intermingled with the honour of her family. Women, irrespective of their caste position, are submitted to the same customary rules which define the relations of production between genders.

1. Migration and Woman's Role in the Production Process

The ideological values are not the only factors which organize the sexual division of labour in the household. The degree of participation of the female labour-force is also determined by the different levels of economic resources at the disposal of each household. In fact, the possibility to live up to one's ideals of honour and shame depends on socio-economic factors. The poverty of the villagers prevents them from following what they consider to be proper and ideal Muslim behaviour, i.e., to limit women's activities to the domestic tasks and to the rearing of children. All the manpower available in the household has to be engaged in the production process. The female labour-force is necessary and complementary to the male labour-force in the agricultural tasks. Consequently, the man's departure should not entail a shortage of manpower in the household, for which an increase in the participation of the female labour-force in the production process would compensate. An economic improvement through remittances must not be accompanied by a loss of prestige, which will be the case inevitably if women have to be engaged more in the extra-domestic tasks.

The structure of the household determines the way in which these problems are solved. In a household with extended families, the organization of extra-domestic labour continues according to the same pattern. The eventual shortage of manpower does not occur there, but it might happen in households with nuclear families. The migrant has then made the necessary arrangements before his departure in order to avoid a greater involvement of the women of the household in the process of production. A male relative or a tenant is in charge of the cultivation.

Concerning the craftsman and service castes, their unsound economy has not traditionally allowed their women to observe *pardah*. Their labour has always been necessary for the income-pooling of the household, and in some cases, the *seypi* tasks are based on the complementarity of the woman's and man's work. Among this category of villagers, the international migration has not decreased the importance of the women's economic role. The landless households have had to take great economic risks for financing the migrant's departure. It might take several years before some economic improvements are really noticed. The women's engagement in production activities, like the work in the landowners' fields, continues to be necessary for covering the consumption expenditures of the household. Moreover, unsuccessful migration means a sudden economic crisis, and the woman's labour then acquires a renewed importance.

Independently of the size of the household and the structure of the family, the ideological practice supports a very strict sexual division of domestic labour too. Only women are involved in daily housework necessary for the maintenance and the running of the household. The migrant's departure then does not lead to a change in the woman's domestic duties. In extended households, the distribution of tasks between women is not modified; and in nuclear families, women have still to do the same domestic labour, but they might feel more relaxed with the time-schedule of their work.

2. Migration and Women's Relationship to Property

Traditionally, land, together with livestock, is the only commodity which is income-generating in the villages. It is controlled by men, even if the legislation gives the women the right to inherit a share of their father's land. In reality, the relations of the women to land are not governed by the Muslim Family Law Ordinance of 1961, but by the customary laws of the village. Daughters do not take their share but instead leave it to their brothers. This is due to the virilocal residence after marriage. In entails that the woman does not live close to her natal land. It will, therefore, be inconvenient for her to control the tenant tilling it.

Secondly, and more importantly, the woman needs the protection of her brothers after the death of her parents. In case of conflict with her in-laws, her brothers are the only relatives who will defend her. She may take the inheritance but she knows that her brothers' reaction will be a social and economic boycott. It is much more important for her to remain on good terms with them than to follow the *Shariat* law.

The men's emigration has not led to any changes in the relationship between women and land. If a plot of agricultural or residential land is bought with the migrant's remittances, it is still registered in the name of the male head of the house-

hold. Moreover, this transaction is realized by the senior members in households with extended family. One might ask for the opinion of the migrant's wife, but she does not have much importance in the decision-making process.

Only the woman's moveable property — the dowry gifts brought by the new bride into her husband's household — is affected by the international migration. The direct relationship between the migrant's remittances and the inflationary increase in the value of the dowry has already been mentioned. The Table 2 gives a clear illustration of this tendency.

Table 2

	Household with Migrant (in Rs)	Household without Migrant (in Rs)
Jewellery	95,000	10,000
Clothes and other Domestic Items	25,000	5,000
Food and other Expenditures for the Wedding Ceremony	25,000	5,000
Total	1,45,000	20,000

However, this swelling of the bride's dowry does not change its nature. It remains composed of goods which do not give the wife the possibility to become economically more independent. She has no access to commodities which could break her dependence on her husband. In other words, remittances strengthen the traditional customs instead of changing them: the dowry continues to assure only the material and ideological reproduction of the household. It is not used as a source to finance productive-investments.

3. Migration and Woman's Decision-making Power

It is not then in the quantity of the woman's work that one may find a change brought about by international migration, but instead in her social importance in the household. Here, too, the distinction between the extended and the nuclear families is relevant.

In households with an extended family, the senior women have control over the younger women, and the unmarried daughters over the daughters-in-law. However, variations are found from family to family. The relationships between household members are not only determined by the social structure of the family

but also by the personality and temper of each individual. It may happen that this hierarchical allocation of tasks does not lead to conflicts within the household if its members have a good understanding with each other. The social status of the migrant's wife is not modified. She still occupies the same hierarchical position. Her social upgrading remains affiliated to the number of children — especially sons — she bears, and not to her husband's economic importance. She does not have more say in the decision-making process, and usually the remittances are not sent to her but to the head of the household. She neither benefits more from them nor has more control over them than the other members. Disputes about unfairness may arise but the daughter-in-law's social status requires her to accept this situation. The control of the household economy remains in the hands of the senior members, either male or female.

In nuclear families, the wife provisionally takes over the role of head of the household. She is responsible for the daily budget and for some extra-domestic decisions (the children's education for example), however within the limits which are acceptable for the observance of *purdah*. She is chaperoned by a male in-law relative who helps her with activities outside the village. In fact, emigration should not compel women to have more contacts with the male-dominated spheres of the society outside the village, because the woman's observance of *purdah* is not only guaranteed by economic security but also by physical protection against anybody who could threaten her honour. A man never leaves the village if nobody can take care of his wife and children. Therefore, she might feel her freedom to decide to be more restricted than before because of the in-laws' magnified control over her. It all depends on the nature of their relationship.

Remittances are sent either directly to her or to her father-in-law, who then has to give her a share. In either case, it will often lead to conflicts, either because of the mother-in-law's jealousy or because the migrant's wife thinks that her in-laws do not give her a sufficient amount of money. But all in all, the husband remains the real decision-maker. Important economic decisions, such as consumer-type investments or productive investments, never occur in his absence.

In the migrant's households of craftsman and service castes, women do not experience any changes in their influence over the process of production. This is due to the non-ownership of land and the nature of the men's work.

In both villages, customary rules, which are believed to be Islamic, continue to determine the socio-economic role and position of the migrant's wife. They prevent some energetic women from becoming direct income-earners through the opening of a shop or a handicrafts workshop in the village. The realization of these projects could easily be supported by the remitted money.

Instead of an improvement of the woman's social position, money in circulation in the villages leads to new causes for disputes — because of jealousy and mutual

accusations of unfairness – between the traditionally opposed in-law parents. The women are not engaged in tasks and roles outside their traditional sphere of activities. Every arrangement has been made by the migrant to prevent it. Moreover, migration, in the long run, seems to strengthen the observance of *pardah*. This is the case in the wealthiest migrant's households; a phenomenon which has been noticed elsewhere as a cultural change concomitant with economic improvement. The women's seclusion is used as an external sign for the display of one's social upgrading.

MIGRATION AND VILLAGE FACTIONS

Conflicts in villages are manifold. They occur at all the levels of social organization: between individuals within the household and between households, within the *biraderi* and between *biraderis*, between landowners and landless people. The disputes may run from one generation to the other, and their causes – land, woman, and the notions of inferiority/superiority between individuals – are complex. The political scene is very different between the two villages because of their recent history and their actual economic situation. In G., the settlement of refugees without strong emotional feelings for the village and the absence of charismatic leaders has led to a rather peaceful social life. Even though tussles about land still exist between refugees and native landowners, they do not have the intensity of the feuds one finds in B. between factions of the dominating landowners' *biraderi*. The oldest available records show that B. is a village affected by factions since the beginning of the century. These factions originate from disputes about land between agnates. The scarcity of land has always made it a very coveted commodity. All kinds of means have at all times been used by the village rulers so as to increase the superficiality of their land. They do not hesitate to put pressures upon the socially weakest petty landowners and upon their rivals for the control of the *biraderi* by attacking them at their most touchy point of their honour, i.e., by insulting or abducting their womenfolk. They expect that shame will lead to their enemies' departure from the village and, consequently, to an easier illegal access to their land. By terrorizing the protesting villagers and by bribing the government officials, like the land-registrar (*patwari*), they rule the village according to their wish and whim. However, when the strifes reach this level, they become feuds which overlap generations.

In such a tense atmosphere, it is important to be able to display one's force. The strength of a *biraderi* and that of its factions – is characterized by the number of their male members, by the presence of charismatic leaders, and their ability to gather allies, which is a costly affair.

In this context, emigration may have a double and concomitant effect on the political life of the village. The political equilibrium is very fragile and the emigra-

tion of several men or of the leader of one faction entails a revival of the fight to obtain control over the village. But, at the same time, the remitted money gives a new economic power which is very useful for winning conflicts about land due to the general practice of corruption in different administrative bodies. A provisionally weak political position is worth facing if later on it leads to an improved economic position.

Thus, as long as political power is associated with land-ownership, emigration does not alter the dominance by the same social group in the village. Consequently, an economic challenge to the landowners' influential position by the traditionally subordinate craftsman-service castes is not accepted. These have to respect the social *status quo*, and are reminded that money and land are not, in their case, the keys to become powerful in the village. The landowners change the rules of competition in their favour when remittances have transformed totally the traditional economic conditions. New clashes take place with the migrants who no longer want to follow the customary social laws and principles of the village which they consider to be based on unequal relationships between people. They want their social status to increase concomitantly with their economic resources.

ANOTHER FORM OF ECONOMIC RATIONALITY

To summarize, in this study about the economic situation of two villages in the province of Punjab, I have shown that it is very difficult for the majority of the villagers to reach a minimum satisfactory standard of living through their traditional activities, and that the possibilities of finding jobs outside the village are very limited. Moreover, the wage-policy practised in Pakistan means that the income from wage labour is not sufficient to cover the expenditure of a household. To go and work in a foreign country is then considered as the most appropriate way to overcome unemployment, underemployment and poverty. For labour-exporting countries, like Pakistan, the boom in oil prices in the Middle East has provided an opportunity for development. But the benefits from migration depend on the state policy, on the policy of international labour migration pursued by the state.

The ruling classes in Pakistan believe that labour migration is beneficial for the development of a country, even if the migration of workers from South-European and North-African countries to Northwestern European countries since 1945 has shown that it is not always the case.

In fact, one has supposed that the labour migration gives the labour-exporting country such benefits as:

- remittances which may be used as productive investment;
- skill acquisition offered to the migrant worker which could be used once

- he returns to his country — he is believed to be a potential entrepreneur; and
- reduction of unemployment through a diminution of the pressure on available jobs.

However, the study of the two villages has not shown these trends. Most of the villagers are engaged abroad either in unskilled tasks or in their traditional occupations (carpentry, tailoring, etc.). They do not increase their technical knowledge.

Many of the results obtained by the studies on the migrant labourer in Western Europe reappear in this new context: the migrant workers are confined to unskilled jobs, paid the least, and hired on a temporary basis. They also face all the social problems of immigration, like their counterparts in Western Europe: illegal entry, improper housing, unequal pay, and denial of rights. These are well-known characteristics of the internationalization of capitalist relations, with its concomitant internationalization of the acquisition of labour force.

Quantitatively, only a small percentage of the villages' male population goes abroad. The pressure on land and on jobs available in the neighbouring cities is still acute. Moreover, Pakistan experiences a shortage of skilled personnel. The best and the most productive part of its manpower is abroad. This certainly retards the development of the country. The departure to foreign countries of able-bodied men has not, so far, helped in the creation of new possibilities of employment.

Productive investments are not the main use of foreign remittances, even if the consumption of local goods has stimulated some domestic sectors of the economy, especially the construction sector. In fact, as long as some of the basic needs of the migrant's family are not met (better nutrition, better housing facilities, medical assistance, and the like), it is unrealistic to think that the hard-earned currencies will be *directly* invested in income-generating projects, except in the case of some few individual entrepreneurs. It will take some years before the migrant's household considers that it has reached a satisfactory standard of living and chooses another economic strategy. Even then, economic development will continue to be conditioned by the ethical values of the local population, namely, the popular practice of Islam and the traditional social organization of the village, which require that very important amounts of money should be spent on the occasion of religious festivals, marriages, and other social ceremonies. Even though some changes are in progress, the social life of the villages is still based upon traditional notions of social prestige, upon religious knowledge, upon generosity towards fellow men and upon the concept of inferiority/superiority between individuals. Money in itself is not the main key to becoming a predominant figure among the villagers; it has to be associated with, at least, one of the criteria traditionally required for the achievement of respect and recognition.

International migration has not modified these customs, although one might

have expected that contacts with the outside world would have altered the migrant's *Weltanschauung* (world view). On the contrary, it has entailed an inflationary race between migrants' households, which compete with each other over the amounts of money involved in these ceremonies. In other words, the economic rationality of the villagers is not identical to the capitalist form of rationality which the Pakistani and foreign development-policy planners expect them to possess. Instead, a rationality only explained by cultured factors determines the type of investments made possible by remittances in the villages.

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