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# THE INDIAN URBAN ELITES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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What are the characteristics of Indian urban elites? Using data from a survey conducted in the city of Calcutta, this paper seeks to test a series of propositions of different dimensions: political, economic, social, professional, role, and self. At the end, a number of unresolved issues have been raised which provide guidelines for future research in the area.

The interest in and the study of elites in developing countries are reflected in the growing social science literature. The themes of modernization and planned social change in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have been receiving increasing attention. India has also received its share of exploration. Some of the literature on urban elites does make several observations and maintains a variety of positions, which are not necessarily in accord with one another. Edward Shils (1957, 1961) has referred to the conflict in the minds of intellectual elites between the traditional values and the demands of modernization and its resolution in the form of a "legal, literary or ideological relationship" with the contents of modernization. More recently, Shils (1972) has postulated that in the new nations there exists a sense of ambivalence in the intellectual towards possession of power, which state of mind he describes as "oppositional mentality".

Rowe (1964) has analysed the dominant themes of Indian culture and their impact on the emerging elites. His analysis brings out the changing ideology and values of the elites who have undergone formal education. Bottomore (1965), accepting Misra's (1961) contention, has drawn a distinction between the middle-class *elites*, a product of the prevailing education system, and the *bourgeois* class. Further, he maintains a distinction between the ruling and the non-ruling elites and says that the Indian elites, unlike those in some developing countries, are "much more attached to traditional ideas". The modernization ideals of the politically alert and active intellectual class have been spelled out by Myrdal (1968).

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Analysing the *bhadralok* (respectable) class of Bengal, Broomfield (1968) has described the superior position of the professional classes and their conflict in terms of adjustment to a pluralist society. Franda (1971) has traced the origin and nature of radical politics in West Bengal and its challenges to intellectual elite in providing the requisite leadership.

Mason Haire *et al.*'s study (1966) of Indian industrial managers indicates that they bear "exceptionally high expectations" of need fulfilment with the result that even "adequate need fulfilment" leaves them "dissatisfied". Their expectations have been labelled as "unrealistic". Kennedy (1966) has referred to the elitist characteristic of "tender-mindedness" which is a paradoxical amalgam of high-minded principles and disinclination to carry out the obligations of stated objectives. Smith and Thomas (1972) have referred to the findings that Indian managerial elites show contradictions of "belief in group-based, participative decision-making" and "little faith in the capacity of workers for taking initiative and responsibility". There exists "the high level of overall cynicism" that ethics and morals would need to be compromised to accomplish a task. Promotion process also invokes their cynical response.

Observations of Indian scholars on the elites are also available. Beni Prasad (1945), writing before Indian independence, felt that "there has been an inevitable trend towards modernization" although only some of the elements of Western thought had been "grafted" to "traditional stems". Mukerji (1958) has perceived an unresolved conflict between the traditions and the new values that the urban elites have been seeking to establish in vain. Essentially, he believes that the elites themselves are the carriers of tradition, *anglicized* rather than *westernized* in their orientation and separated from the masses caused by their "total conditioning through the English language". Srinivas (1965:429; 1966) could discern "certain lack of faith in the ability of human efforts to relieve human sufferings" in the intellectuals in pre-British times which "as a result of British rule . . . has become activist and this-worldly, and this is indeed a fundamental change". He believes that the Hindu traditions of "tolerance, syncretism and self-criticism" have facilitated the change process which is seen as a "westernization" process, although, according to him, the basic commitment to tradition continues. Singh (1973:136) is of the view that "the elites . . . had one factor in common, that is, emphasis on maintaining the traditional cultural identity of India", and that there "is a feeling of ambivalence between tradition and modernity emerging from the differential demands involved in the quest for cultural synthesis on the one hand and cultural identity on the other". Chaudhuri (1966) has referred to the elites as the products of anglicization process and that they exist as a dominant minority group retaining the essential "negatives" of traditional values. While enquiring into the formation of Indian culture, Kosambi (1962)

has referred to the coexistence of idealistic orientations and behaviouristic realisms throughout the course of Indian history. Chattopadhyaya (1959; 1964) has also documented the contradictions between the two trends and the general propensity to project *an idealist view of life*. Joshi (1972), in his study of cultural dimension of economic development, has highlighted the social parasitism aspects of Indian urban elites as a phenomenon distinct from, and opposed to, the production culture.

There also exists literature that seeks to put the tradition-modernity conflict on a "low-key" and prefers to harness the traditional values for economic growth and development. McClelland *et al.* (1969) believe, on the strength of their work in India, that it is possible to get people fertilized with the "mental virus" of achievement orientation without upsetting the traditional value system. Rudolph *et al.* (1960) and Gould (1969) have sought to see the strengths of the caste system utilised for the cause of planned change process. The same is the stand of Madan (1969), Weiner (1966) and Kunkel (1970) have provided support to this "optimistic argument thesis", on the strength of substitutability principle and behaviour modification principle respectively.

This broad survey of elitist literature is indeed incomplete; in particular, the studies on the rural elites have not been referred to as these are not directly relevant to this study. However, it would be fair to infer that certain values and traditions do govern the urban elites as much as the rural elites. It has been, for example, shown that caste or kinship considerations do influence the managerial elites in their personnel decisions (De, 1961). Singer (1959; 1960:154-158) has shown that "Little and Great Traditions are not neatly differentiated along a village-urban axis. Both kinds of tradition are found in villages and in the city in different form . . . The effect of the mass media . . . has not so much secularized the sacred traditional culture as it has democratized it". Inkeles (1971:277) has shown that "exposure to urban living, in itself, does not significantly produce individual modernization . . .".

#### THE STUDY

This is an exploratory study undertaken in the summer of 1973 in the city of Calcutta involving non-ruling professional elites essentially to ascertain their perceptions of the realities of India's progress since independence, the developmental process, their own leadership styles, value orientations, and self image. It has also been an objective of the study to put to empirical test some of the observations from earlier studies. Utilising the concept of Lasswell (1965:8), it may be said that the elite groups covered in the study represent the values of "power", "enlightenment", "skill",

“respect”, and “rectitude”, five of the eight identified by him as elite values. The group includes both, what Aiyar (1973:3) calls, *the stability maintaining elite* and *the spiritual elite*. While many scholars may refer to the elites as “men of knowledge”, particularly if they are concerned with the intellectual elites, the authors have preferred to use “influence”—actual and potential—as the key variable in the concept of elitism. The description by Piet Thoenes (1966:25) is what has influenced the authors:

The elite is the relatively small, adventitiously organized group, which, legitimately or not, exercises authority over the other groups with which it maintains a relationship, usually of a political or cultural nature.

The professional groups included in the study have certain homogeneous characteristics that bear mention:

- (a) They belong to the non-ruling elites in that these professional groups—journalists, educators, industrial managers, “grass-root” trade union leaders, and litterateurs—do not directly participate in or take responsibility for politico-economic policy-making, although as organized, vocal interest groups they do wield, actually or potentially, influence on policy issues. The litterateurs, admittedly, are not an organized entity like the other professionals; however, their expressed words do carry their message through modern communication media. Thus, all of them do enjoy public opinion-forming and influencing role.
- (b) They belong to urban setting as distinct from rural setting. All the respondents live in Calcutta except for the 63 trade union leaders. The unionists too belong to such industrial centres as are mildly to highly urbanized (Durgapur, Rourkela, Bhilai, etc.).
- (c) They are an educated lot. Except for the trade union group, all the others had at least 12 years of formal education. The industrial managers and educators have spent more than 14 years in formal education. The trade union group has spent not less than 9 years in high school. Of them 92.5 per cent have spent more than 10 years in formal education.
- (d) The respondents belong to the white-collar status in that, in the context of popular belief, their activities do not belong to direct production process. As leaders of others in a directional sense, with paper and pen as tools rather than machines and inputs for machines, the respondents belong to “intellectual cerebral elaboration” rather than muscular-nervous effort” (Gramsci, 1972:121). This description applies to the trade union sample as well.

The respondents can be taken as a significant segment of the Indian elites for the following reasons: (i) they are located in the city of Calcutta

which was exposed to western education and influence before any other places; (ii) the city is the metropolis of the eastern region which provides the base for mining operations and heavy industry in the country; (iii) the city harbours elites from all the regions representing major language groups and diverse cultures; (iv) the city and the State of West Bengal have experienced major political upheavals in recent years (since 1967) on a scale which does not have a parallel in the country. The sample of the elite group is given in Table 1.

Except the 63 trade union leaders, the respondents were located in Calcutta. The 63 trade union leaders came from different industrial centres of the country to attend an educational programme in Calcutta. Thus, barring a very small size of the sample, all the respondents were located in Calcutta. Women were so few in number that they were not shown separately.

#### RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A 59-item questionnaire (with linear scale, rank order types, and 2 open-ended questions) was utilised. The questions referred to political, social, economic, professional, role, and self dimensions. Aspects of leisure time activities, educational and training background, and demographic characteristics were also covered.

Having decided on the types of profession to be included, the sample was randomly chosen from lists of names obtained by the senior author through his contacts in the respective professional fields, except for the trade union leaders who were participants in an education programme. The coverage was extensive in that all the universities in the city, a large number of colleges (except the exclusive women's colleges), journalists belonging to different language group publications, industrial managers from indigenous and foreign capital-dominated companies as well as from the public sector were included in the study. In case of non-availability of any chosen respondent, another person from the list was chosen. The questionnaire was individually administered for an average period of 1½ to 2 hours per respondent, either at his place of work or at his residence, according to the convenience of the respondent.

The interviewers, twelve in number, were students of the graduating class of two educational centres. Before the survey was undertaken, the interviewers were trained by the senior author in the interview techniques which included mock interviews and skill practice sessions. With some trade union leaders, interviews were conducted in the Bengali or Hindi language; otherwise, English was the language of transaction.

Having taken into account certain homogeneous characteristics of the

TABLE I  
Sample characteristics

Language	No.
Bengali speaking	389
Other Indian languages	171
	560

Age distribution	Bengali literary artists	Other language speaking journalists (excluding Bengali and English)
	<30 yrs. 50 31-40 yrs. 181 41-50 yrs. 173 >50 yrs. 98	20
	502	560

Professional groups	No.
Industrial managers	119
Trade union leaders	80
College teachers	116
University teachers	82
Journalists	143
Literary artists	20
	560

respondents, the authors utilised essentially the chi-square tests on the basis of support available in Siegel (1956:42-43).

This is an exploratory study. Based on limited data, the authors have sought to test various hypotheses. On occasions, data show some inconsistencies and contradictions among the different indicators of a dimension. In cases where an indicator shows a trend or significance in the opposite direction (that is, in the direction against what has been postulated in a hypothesis), the authors have retained the data and the nature of the statistics, so as to provide an opportunity for further exploration of a complex theme.

#### PROPOSITIONS

The various propositions made are presented, discussed, and tested sequentially.

##### *Proposition 1: Elites are critical of India's post-independence performance*

The respondents are urban elites belonging to various professional groups existing outside the pale of the ruling elites essentially consisting of political leaders and administrators. There are evidences that in recent years the rural *kulaks* and the organized trade exercise a considerable degree of influence on the power structure. The respondents as professionals do no longer perceive themselves as influential in the national sphere. (The trade union sample consists of "grass-root" leaders primarily active at the enterprise level.) The "outsider" feeling would contribute to the development of critical attitude. Singh (1973:137) provides support to the contention that there is a perceptible decline in the influence of the urban elites in recent years. In addition, the *value aspirations* of these urban elites do run ahead of the *value capabilities* of the socio-economic institutions over whom the ruling elites preside (Tullis, 1973). (However, there is no suggestion that the elite groups belong to a "deprived" category.) In any event, rising expectations and non-influential status would combine to give a critical evaluation of the country's achievements.

Table 2 provides the data on seven dimensions. On three variables—the totality of efforts of the Central government, the non-alignment foreign policy, and the totality of success of the Central government—the proposition does not get established on chi-square tests. In fact, on items 1 and 2 the significance lies in the opposite direction. However, the non-critical responses include a substantial quota of uncertainties—neither critical nor appreciative (33.6 per cent, 17.3 per cent, and 29.1 per cent respectively). Should one exclude the "uncertain" responses, it becomes

TABLE 2

Perception about India's achievements

Dimensions	% Critical	% Non-critical	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Total "efforts" of the Central government	43.0	57.0 (33.6) <sup>Q</sup>	10.7	.001*
2. Non-alignment foreign policy	36.1	63.9 (17.3) <sup>Q</sup>	43.2	<.001*
3. Totality of "success" of the Central Government	50.0	50.0 (29.1) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
4. Central government's attitude towards West Bengal	55.4	44.6	6.28	.007
5. Five Year Plans and planning	59.3	40.7	18.81	<.001
6. Policy towards Nepal	58.5	41.5	15.22	<.001
7. Role of political and administrative leadership in the rate of progress	76.4	23.6	158.17	<.001

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

\*Significance is in the opposite direction.

evident that on items 1 and 3 the elites are definitely more critical than appreciative. In particular, their critical assessment is more firm in the matter of *achievement* and *effort*. It is, however, relevant to mention that 46.6 per cent of the sample is appreciative of the non-aligned foreign policy. In fact, non-criticality is significant at  $p < .001$ .

On the other four dimensions—Central government's attitude towards West Bengal, Five Year Plans and the planning process, policy pursued towards Nepal, a neighbouring country ("patronizing attitude"), and the role of the political and administrative elites in steering the country's progress—the proposition is established. In the first case, the level of significance is  $p < .007$  and in the other three cases  $p < .001$ . It may be noted that dimensions 4, 5, and 6 as well as 2 are more specific compared to 1 and 3. The mass media in Calcutta and the political platform periodically ventilate the grievances of West Bengal against the "step-motherly" treatment by Central government in the matter of allocation of scarce resources such as controlled items of industrial materials, funds for development, and industrial licences. The respondents seem to subscribe to

this view. Item 7 confirms the view that the non-ruling elites do not identify themselves with the governing group, a sentiment of "outsider" role that Shils (1972) postulates about the intellectuals in the U.S.A.

It is worthwhile to compare the responses on non-aligned foreign policy and attitude towards Nepal. There is appreciation for one and criticality about the other. It is possible that the elites appreciate the spirit of the foreign policy and its global application while in its specificity they see that the spirit has not been maintained in respect of a neighbouring country. Is it reflective of the oft-mentioned criticism that there exists a contradiction between the precept and the practice?

The proposition is, on the whole, confirmed, though not on each single item.

*Proposition 2: Elites are critical about West Bengal's post-independence performance*

This proposition may be perceived as a corollary to the first one although West Bengal is somewhat of an unusual case. The instability of the State government since 1967, political polarization process within the "left front" reflected in the emergence of an extremist violent movement popularly referred to as *Naxalism*, high degree of urban and rural unemployment with about 70 per cent of the State population being below the "poverty line", relative decline of industrial growth, and a stalemate situation in the management of the education system have made West Bengal a special case indeed.

It is hypothesized that the elites will be particularly critical about the performance of the State. The data are presented in Table 3.

It will be observed from the analysis in Table 3 that on two sub-items, 1(i) and 3(i), the proposition does not stand vindicated. In fact, the significance is established in the opposite direction. The period refers to 1947-1966, when the Congress party was on the saddle. This period was conspicuous by the vivisection of Bengal into two parts with consequential migration of over five million persons from the then East Pakistan, whose resettlement programme remained a sore point in Centre-State relations, as also by a process of politico-industrial stabilization under a strong paternal leader (B.C. Roy) who remained in power from 1947 till mid-1962. The disturbing signs of economic recession visible in 1966 had their full impact on the traditional engineering industries in West Bengal in 1967 when the Congress party lost political control over the State machinery in the general elections to a coalition of anti-Congress parties dominated by leftist ideologies. Since then, on account of a complexity of events, there have been a series of unstable governments in the state including four spells of the suspension of parliamentary government between 1967 and 1971.

TABLE 3

Assessment of West Bengal

Dimensions	% Critical	% Non-critical	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Totality of "success" of the State government:				
(i) during 1947-1966	36.7	63.3 (25.9) <sup>Q</sup>	37.5	<.001*
(ii) during 1967-1971	79.7	20.3	189.28	<.001
2. Rapid decline of West Bengal due to unstable State government	74.6	25.4	132.05	<.001
3. Totality of "efforts" of the State government:				
(i) during 1947-1966	29.6	70.4 (23.0) <sup>Q</sup>	88.1	<.001*
(ii) during 1967-1971	73.6	26.4	118.98	<.001
4. Present state of education in Calcutta	66.7	33.3	60.22	<.001
5. State government's policies and practices leading to Naxalite movement	72.6	27.4	109.06	<.001

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

\*Significance in the opposite direction.

The elites have evaluated the 1967-1971 government in terms of "success" and "efforts" more critically compared to the earlier period. Even if the "uncertain" responses are ignored, one will find that 47.4 per cent are appreciative of the government's efforts and 37.4 per cent of the government's success in the 1947-1966 period. This period is essentially marked by the status quo character on socio-economic dimensions. There was, indeed, no conscious plan for a basic change in the configuration of socio-economic forces in West Bengal. Do the responses, then, indicate a conservative orientation of the elites? This question calls for further exploration.

On the other three items and two sub-items, the proposition is established with  $p < .001$  level of significance. It may be noticed that for both the periods, 1947-1966 and 1967-1971, the elites have been more critical of achievements than of efforts. It seems that the non-ruling elites are aware of the subtlety that differentiates achievements from efforts, which, according to Paul Appleby (1965), is blurred in the audit culture of India's civil administration.

*Proposition 3: Elites do maintain a pessimistic orientation towards the future of West Bengal*

With a critical evaluation of India's and West Bengal's performance over a period of two and half decades on certain dimensions, it is postulated that the elites will adopt a pessimistic stance towards the future. In particular, it was felt that the (elite respondents located in Calcutta and exposed to the unsettled and tension-laden experiences in recent years would indicate a pessimistic orientation towards the future of Calcutta and West Bengal. (No attempt was made to assess the orientation towards India's future.)

Polak (Boulding, 1964:12) has maintained that "in the dynamics of a society, the principal factor is not so much the particular content of the image of the future as its quality of optimism or pessimism". It is postulated by the authors that the image of the future will not be content-free. And the content will be conditioned by direct experience as well as by symbols. Boulding (1964:13) believes that "it is the essentially symbolic nature of the human image which dominates the social system . . . . Because of this, the image-makers are a profoundly significant elements in society when it comes to the interpretation of social dynamics."

It is felt that in respect of the United Nations as an effective organization, there will be a less deterministic orientation. China's entry into the organization as the last of the super-powers may bestow upon it, in the elitist perception, a symbol of all-inclusiveness. Besides, the third world (the Afro-Asian bloc) is perceived as an influential collective force on significant global issues, particularly on matters on which the super-powers may not be in accord with one another. The direct experiences, however, are a mixed bag. On the Kashmir issue, the popular impression has been that the world body did not do justice to India. Similarly, on the Bangla Desh issue, the world body did not come forward in favour of the oppressed. However, there also exists a feeling that when India went in support of the liberation of Bangla Desh the world body did not put any definitive obstacle to the effort. Thus, the image of the United Nations will be determined by the resultant of the assessment on "symbolism" and "direct experience". On balance, it is hypothesized that the United Nations will be perceived more optimistically than otherwise.

The case of Calcutta and West Bengal will, however, be different. The direct experience is of critical variety. In addition, the instruments of change—the ruling elite—will be perceived critically on the basis of past experience again. On the basis of the dichotomy, that is maintained between the roles of the ruling elite and the non-ruling elite, it is also likely that the non-ruling elites will not perceive themselves to be influential with the ruling elites. Thus, on account of both direct experience and

symbolism about the ruling elite, the future of Calcutta and West Bengal will be judged pessimistically.

TABLE 4

Orientation towards future

Dimensions	% Pessimistic	% Not-pessimistic	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Future of West Bengal for the next ten years	67.1	32.9	63.91	<.001
2. Future of Calcutta for the next decade	65.6	34.4	53.17	<.001
3. Future of the United Nations as an effective organization	40.1	59.9 (17.9) <sup>Q</sup>	—	NS

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

Data are presented in Table 4. It will appear that the proposition about Calcutta and West Bengal is established at  $p < .001$  level of significance. The future of Calcutta and West Bengal for the next ten years was perceived pessimistically despite the developmental expenditure that is being incurred in the city through the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority. The prediction about the United Nations as an effective organization for the future has not been substantiated at the level of significance. However, the trend is towards the predictive direction. Should the "uncertain" responses of 17.9 per cent be isolated, 42 per cent are optimistic compared to the pessimistic responses of 40.1 per cent.

The point to note is that the respondents who are a significant segment of "image-builders" in the community are conditioned by a negativistic orientation about the city and the State and this may have self-fulfilling prophecy implications for the future of the State and the metropolis. Srole (1956:709-716) has postulated a connection between pessimistic orientation towards future and individual anomia. This aspect calls for further investigation in the Indian setting.

#### *Proposition 4: Elites are alienated*

This proposition is sequential to the three earlier propositions. Negative perception of the past performance of India and West Bengal and a pessimistic orientation towards the future of West Bengal will, it is hypothesized, indicate the existence of alienation in the elite population.

Methodological work now exists on the meaning and measurement of

alienation (e.g., Dean, 1961; Keniston, 1965; Seaman, 1959). Instead of utilising measurement of several aspects of alienation, the authors concentrated on the following elements: commitment or its absence to instrumental action in the form of political powerlessness and political normlessness (Finifter, 1970:389-410); locus of control (Seeman, 1972:467-527); and hostility towards minorities (Srole, 1956:709-716).

The data are presented in Table 5. Items 1, 2, 5, and 6 are a measure of a sense of powerlessness to influence the ruling elites including political decision-makers. Items 1 and 2 have been utilised to establish proposition 3, i.e., pessimistic orientation towards future. Now, the same data are being utilised to establish the point that a sense of powerlessness exists in the minds of the non-ruling elites represented in this study. Items 3 and 4 are a measure of political normlessness in that violent activities have been perceived as a rewarding norm. On chi-square tests, all the items have assumed significance as the table indicates.

In respect of the locus of control, the Rotter-type instruments (Rotter, 1966:1-28) were not utilised although the concept of internal control versus external causation was utilised on a linear scale. Items 7, 9, and 11 do establish the reality of the feeling of dependence on external environment at  $p < .001$ . On items 8 and 10 significance has not been established. However, on item 8, the majority (52.9 per cent) are of the view that professionals do not have influence on organizations of which they are a part. On item 10, however, even if the uncertain percentage of 11.2 is excluded, 47.4 per cent do not feel that "democratic way of life acts as a disadvantage to elites (i.e., themselves)" as opposed to 41.4 per cent who perceive the democratic way of life as a disadvantage. It is possible to speculate here that like the non-aligned foreign policy, democratic way of life is being perceived by the elites as an essential and desirable institution for India. Item 12 is somewhat different in that it has a collective connotation as opposed to the other items which have individualistic flavour. In that sense, it is possible to conceive that, leaving aside the uncertain response of 9.9 per cent, 48.6 per cent do see that human destiny is not beyond the collective control of men. All in all, the data are indicative of dependence on external control as against internal control. Hagen (1962:75) has referred to this type of dependence of the elites in traditional societies.

Srole (1956:709-716) has been of the view that "social malintegration in individuals is associated with rejective orientation toward outgroups in general and toward minority groups in particular". There is support for this view in Williams (1951:536). Although the authors did not delve into the measurement of individual anomia, they felt that the elites as an entity would maintain a positivistic orientation towards elitism (to be tested in this paper later on) and that they would maintain a sense of "distance" from some of the major minority groups in the country, who are, on the

TABLE 5

Alienation orientation

	% Agree	% Don't agree	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
<b>A. Commitment to instrumental action</b>				
1. West Bengal will remain a problem State for the next ten years	67.1	32.9	63.91	<.001
2. Living condition in Calcutta will not change appreciably in the next decade	65.6	34.4	53.17	<.001
3. Increased governmental investment in Calcutta due to acts of collective violence	56.2	43.8	8.22	.002
4. State government agencies/policies responsible for Naxalite movement	72.6	27.4	109.06	<.001
5. Political and administrative leadership responsible for lack of India's progress	76.4	23.6	158.17	<.001
6. Failure of the citizens to influence the Central and State governments and apathy/weakness of these two governments responsible for West Bengal's decline	72.6	27.4	107.6	<.001
<b>B. External versus internal control</b>				
7. People learn only through suffering	74.2	25.8	90.4	<.001
8. Professionals do not have influence on organizations	52.9	47.1	1.75	NS
9. Individuals cannot control their own future	65.7	34.3	53.36	<.001
10. Democratic way of life acts as a disadvantage to elites	41.4	58.6 (11.2) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
11. Prestige and status are needed for effectiveness	73.9	26.1	126.3	<.001
12. Human destiny beyond men's control	41.5	58.5 (9.9) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
<b>C. Hostility towards minorities</b>				
13. Preference to scheduled castes should be withdrawn	47.0	53.0 (11.1) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
14. Firm policy towards tribals located in border areas necessary	60.7	39.3	24.6	<.001
15. Frequency of negative adjectives used for Muslims in India	79.2*	20.8**	179.31	<.001

\*refers to percentage "unfavourable".

\*\*refers to percentage "favourable".

Q refers to percentage "uncertain".

whole, at the lower end of the socio-economic scales. Hagen (1972:76) has referred to the elites' sense of identity in terms of differentiation from the simple folk.

Data on hostility towards minorities are presented in Part C of Table 5. It will appear that on items 14 and 15 the proposition has been established at  $p < .001$ . On item 13 significance has not been established, although, if 11.1 per cent of uncertain responses are separated, 47.8 per cent indicate hostility towards the scheduled castes as against 41.9 per cent who do not. So, the trend towards hostility is established. Item 14, one may argue, may not be a true measure of hostility towards the tribal population. Their location at the sensitive eastern and western borders of India may really be the villain of the piece. As such, the response might have been prompted by the strategic nature of the country's northern borders. The authors do not subscribe to this interpretation. In their view, a rational response (i.e., free from ethnocentric hostility) would be to adopt adequate measures to protect the border which would not necessarily involve adoption of a punitive policy towards the people inhabiting the border. Ethnocentric mistrust would, however, favour a firm policy directed towards the people.

One may speculate that members of the scheduled castes are perceived by the elites as nearer to them as members of the Hindu community and, as such, the degree of hostility is the least here. The tribal population is perceived as somewhat distant and the location of many of them in areas which constitute the border region of India may make the point of ethnocentric hostility somewhat stronger. As regards the Muslims in India, certain terms describing them, as revealed in a 1965 survey, were presented (Panchbhai, 1972:50-60). The respondents in the elite survey were asked to select five words to describe the Muslims in India. They had the option to opt out of the list presented to them and to choose different words. In the original list furnished to the respondents, none of the six terms used were positive. Some of the terms were strongly negative while others were mildly negative.

The majority of the respondents went out of the given list and selected some new terms. The analyses of the *new terms* are presented in item 15 which indicate that 79.2 per cent of the responses were unfavourable as opposed to 20.8 per cent favourable. The ethnocentric hostility towards the Muslims in India is thus established at  $p < .001$  level of significance.

On the whole, alienation on the dimensions of political powerlessness, political normlessness, external control, and hostility towards the minority has been established. Finifter (1970:389-410) has been able to establish that the sense of political powerlessness is negatively correlated with political participation. Another of her findings is that large city-size is correlated with political powerlessness as well as political normlessness.

It is thus possible that a high degree of political alienation of the elites is conditioned by the lack of participation in political processes resulting in contribution towards decision-making and residence in a large metropolis like Calcutta. Similarly, predilection towards external control may be perceived as an indicator of dependence on fate, a traditional item in Hindu values. This may also be an indicator of alienation from self, although, in the absence of further research, such an inference is at best speculative. It is also possible that hostility towards the minority is indicative of social isolation as defined by Seeman (1972:473).

*Proposition 5: Elites show more task-oriented leadership style than relationship-oriented leadership style*

The elites, it is felt, would seek to influence other members of the social system through guidance, direction, and control, the values which are in conformity with certain traditional values such as interpersonal and social hierarchical structure, cautious fatalism, acceptance of authority, conformity to caste norms, respect for powerful others, and submissive conflict avoidance (Hagen, 1962:58-84; McClelland *et al.*, 1971:260-268). Smith and Thomas (1972:39) have shown that Indian managerial elites have a low estimate about the capability of their subordinate employees. Anderson (1964) has mentioned that in a heterocultural group situation, Indian students have shown stronger predilection to caste considerations than their American counterparts in a combined problem-solving situation.

It is thus predicted that the elites will exhibit stronger task orientation than relationship orientation. Fiedler's (1967) instrument "least preferred colleague" questionnaire (LPC) was used. Table 6 presents the data. The mean LPC score was 3.93 on an 8-point scale. For the purpose of the proposition, scores up to 4.0 were accepted as indicator of task orientation. On this basis, 54.2 per cent of the respondents were task-oriented and on chi-square test,  $p < 0.04$  was significant. The proposition has thus been established.

Based on the researches conducted elsewhere with the assistance of LPC questionnaire, one may seek to interpret the score of the Indian elites bearing these observations in view.

TABLE 6

Task versus relationship orientation

Mean LPC Score	= 3.93
X <sup>2</sup> value	= 3.38 significant at 0.04
% task-oriented	= 54.2*

\*scores up to 4.0 taken as measure for task-oriented leadership style.

The high LPC leader (relationship orientation) generally behaves in a positive, relaxed, tension-relieving and supportive manner in the pleasant group condition. The low LPC leader (task orientation) tends to behave in a more supportive, more active and less rejecting, withdrawing and antagonistic manner in the unpleasant situation . . . Tension-arousing conditions thus seem to trigger different kinds of behaviour in persons with high than with low LPC scores. The results suggest further that individuals with high and with low LPC scores look for different need satisfactions in the group situation. When the individual's need satisfaction is threatened, . . . the high and the low LPC persons concentrate on different goals. (Fiedler, 1967:54-55)

and

High LPC leader's retrospective satisfaction with the task was markedly affected when he was told that he had been successful while the low LPC leader's satisfaction was essentially unaffected by this information. (Fiedler, 1967:59)

Overall, it has been established that task-oriented leadership style is more successful under conditions of stress and under conditions of unfavourableness while relationship-oriented leadership style is successful in intermediate situations which lie between extreme favourableness and extreme unfavourableness. The essential point appears to be that in a group work situation, the elites under study might be maintaining a leadership style which would be effective in certain set of conditions and *not* across the whole range of situations. One may note that recently (Kamath, 1973) Myron Weiner in the course of hearings before a congressional committee maintained that the forte of Indian leadership (referring to political leadership) was crisis management.

*Proposition 6: Elites maintain a favourable orientation towards the elite role*

The elites, it is hypothesized, will maintain a positivistic orientation towards those aspects which are perceived as their own strengths. They will view such activities and situations as are closely associated with themselves as *central*. This view, however, will not stand in the way of being critical of the ruling elites as has been established earlier, nor of the minority groups or the non-elites.

Data have been presented in Table 7. On items 2, 3, and 4 the proposition has been substantiated at  $p < 0.001$ . On item 1, significance has not been established. It is conceivable, as pointed out earlier, that democratic way of life is perceived as basic and desirable for this country and, as such, it is not seen as a hindrance to elitism. Nonetheless, one cannot ignore the data that 41.4 per cent of the elite population do consider democratic way of life as a disadvantage.

That educated persons should enjoy more decision-making authority is indicative of the fact that this is an expression of aspiration of the

TABLE 7

## Perception of elitism

Dimensions	% Agree	% Don't agree	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Democratic way of life acts as a disadvantage to elites	41.4	58.6 (11.2) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
2. Educated persons should enjoy more decision-making authority	83.9	16.1	232.49	<.001
3. Elites should have influence in matters of public policy	63.0	37.0	35.28	<.001
4. "Centrality" of Calcutta in West Bengal's stability	81.7	18.3	223.31	<.001

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

non-ruling elites. The reality, however, is that decision-making authority is exercised today by the ruling elites who, by accepted standards, are also educated. Item 3 is more direct. Even then, 63 per cent of the respondents are in favour of the elites enjoying more influence in matters of public policy. Item 4 refers to the importance given to the metropolis of Calcutta in the socio-economic life of West Bengal. As has already been mentioned, barring 63 respondents, all the others in a sample of 560 are residents of Calcutta.

*Proposition 7: Elites maintain orientation towards traditionalism*

In the introductory section some of the foreign and Indian scholars have been referred to in their assessment of the elitist position on tradition-modernity dimension. While there exist polarized views, by and large, the empiricists are of the opinion that the dimension is on a continuum and that the two value systems will coexist. There are findings (Meade, 1967; van den Ban and Thorat, 1968) which establish that authoritarian leadership style has been found more effective than democratic style as also the contrary findings that "parental ideology of authority relations" do have "negative effect on subordinate performance" (Kakar, 1971 a; Sharma, 1974).

However, the authors are of the view that Hall's categorization of culture (Hall, 1967:63-90) is relevant here. While technical culture is more amenable to change, formal or informal culture is not so. To quote Hall,

Formal activities are taught by precept and admonition. The adult mentor moulds the young according to patterns he himself has never questioned . . . . Informal learning is of an entirely different character . . . . The principal agent is a *model* used for imitation. Whole clusters of related activities are learned at a time, in many cases without the knowledge that they are being learned at all or that there are patterns or rules governing them . . . . (Technical learning) is usually transmitted in explicit terms from the teacher to the student . . . . Deep emotions are associated with the formal in almost every instance . . . the formal changes slowly, almost imperceptibly.

In the Indian context, certain formal and informal culture may show resistance and high survival value while through technical change process some others may be in a state of transition. Kakar (1971a) has shown the persistence of traditional concept of authority in textbooks for school students. His conclusions:

The findings indicate that the most dominant authority theme in the story readers pertains to authority in family situations. The main source of the authority which conditions its acceptance is traditional-moral . . . . An interesting finding is that the image of the superior as portrayed in these story readers, which in cent percent of the cases is that of an autocrat, either assertive or nurturant, and that these authority figures enforce their authority primarily by providing emotional rewards to, and arousing guilt in the subordinate individual. Finally, in a very large number of cases, the acceptance of authority is so complete that it takes the form of active submission.

This formal culture, as it were, was sanctioned by "social cultural factors" (Kakar, 1971b). Gould (1969) has observed the extension of "the essential properties sociologically and psychologically inherent in [caste] structures in contemporary social spheres like politics and bureaucracies".

Taking these forces into account, it is hypothesized that many of the items of traditional values the elites will adhere to, while some of the items will show a shift towards what in the Occidental sense is known as modernism. On the whole, however, the traditional values will predominate.

Data are presented in Table 8. On five of the items—1, 2, 3, 4, and 8—the proposition has been established significantly at  $p < .001$ . On item 7, the role of the students in academic decision-making, the chi-square test reveals significance at  $p < .001$  in the opposite direction. It has already been established earlier that the respondents are overwhelmingly disillusioned with the state of education in Calcutta. It is possible that their response in support of the extended role of the student community in academic decision-making is an expression of concern seeking a remedy to the current stalemate. One may, however, consider this "modernist" trend in the context of "obedience and respect for authority" as a most desirable quality in children and that "youth needs strict discipline, rugged determination and will to fight for family and country". The expectation, in terms of attitude, may be a subordinate, consultative role for the students as a price for "industrial peace" in the education system.

TABLE 8

## Orientation towards traditionalism

Dimensions	% Agree	% Don't agree	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. People learn through suffering alone	74.2	25.8	90.4	<.001
2. No control over one's future	65.7	34.3	53.36	<.001
3. Obedience and respect for authority are most important virtues for children to cultivate	81.5	18.5	214.61	<.001
4. Youth need strict discipline, rugged determination, and will to fight for family and country	91.0	9.0	363.05	<.001
5. Leaders are born	43.1	56.9 (5.8) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
6. Human destiny is beyond men's control	41.5	58.5		NS
7. Students should not participate in academic decision-making	30.1 (4.4) <sup>Q</sup>	69.9	81.24	<.001*
8. People should become sober as they grow older	74.2	25.8	126.42	<.001

\*refers to reverse trend.

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

Item 6 refers to human destiny vis-a-vis the collective control of men. It has earlier been pointed out that 48.6 per cent of the responses refer to the belief that human destiny is not beyond the collective control of men. From Western point of view, this is indeed a trend towards modernity. However, Mukerji (1958:235) had pointed out that in Indian tradition collectivity (group) rather than individuals were at the root of human activities. From this point of view the responses may as well be an expression of the traditional belief rather than an indicator of modernity. Item 5 refers to the emergence of leaders. Of the respondents, 51.1 per cent—if we isolate the uncertain responses—believe that leaders are not born as opposed to 43.1 per cent who do. This is certainly a modernized trend. One may speculate that this modernity orientation may be an expression of the non-ruling elite's aspiration of playing a more active role now perceived as denied to it in the matter of political decision-making. It is also found that the elites perceive that they enjoy respect from their subordinates

( $p < .001$ ) (vide item 4 in Table 9) which may be an indicator of traditional-hierarchical values.

All in all, on the majority of the items orientation towards traditionalism is established as has been hypothesized. Some of the responses no doubt point towards the transitional character of the elites on tradition-modernity dimension.

*Proposition 8: Elites are satisfied with their work roles*

The elite sample consists of professionals—educators, industrial managers, journalists, fiction writers, and trade union leaders. Their very identity lies in their professional work-role. While in their perception they do not seem to exercise any appreciable influence in the politico-economic spheres of the community, they are likely to enjoy role-autonomy within the ambit of their work organizations. It is hypothesized that they will perceive the fulfilment of some of the values of elitism in the bureaucratic structures of which they are members.

TABLE 9

## Work-role satisfaction

Dimensions	% Agree	% Don't agree	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Satisfied with work	75.6	24.4	140.81	<.001
2. Opportunity for growth exists in work	71.1	28.9	97.02	<.001
3. Scope for promotion exists	58.6	41.4	15.98	<.001
4. Respect from subordinates	87.3	12.7	291.58	<.001
5. Friendly work atmosphere	66.4	33.6	57.26	<.001
6. Established in own profession	86.0	14.0	260.22	<.001
7. Authority over others in work situation	65.6	34.4	51.65	<.001

Table 9 presents the data. On all the seven items, the proposition has been established with significance at  $p < .001$  level. It may be relevant to point out that the positive responses may as well be indicative of ideal self-role complex rather than the real. McClelland (1971:270) has shown in another context that the "inactives" as distinct from the "changers" among small-scale industrial entrepreneurs show a more idealized self image. It will be seen that the respondents do not perceive that professionals have influence on organizations (vide item 8 in Table 5) which is somewhat incongruent with the responses recorded here. So, it seems that further studies are called for to probe into the matter of work-role satisfaction.

*Proposition 9: Elites maintain a non-radical orientation towards politico-economic issues*

It has been maintained that the non-ruling elites have had their disillusionment with the overall performance of the ruling elites since the days of independence. Their frustration, at one level, refers to their own non-participative role in influencing the decision-makers and, at another level, the experience with the politico-economic policies in terms of implementation effectiveness.

At the same time, the non-ruling urban elites would not wish to lose the comparative advantages that have accrued to them, in the wake of independence. The values of elitism and the socio-psychological distance from the non-elites would make them to prefer politico-economic gradualism as against radical orientation towards changing the status quo system. In other words, their frustration would not orient them towards radicalist option.

TABLE 10A

## Politico-economic assessment

Dimensions	% Agree	% Disagree	% Values	Level of significance
1. Present form of government suited for India.	73.5	26.5	99.49	<.001
2. Preference for economic policies other than ideology-guided policies.	75.4	24.6	141.02	<.001
3. Which country has helped India more in economic and social development?	%U.S.A. 47.3	%U.K. 17.0	% U.S.S.R. 34.8	*

\*Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient—1.0 (significant at all levels)

Table 10A presents the data. On all the three items, the proposition has been established. In respect of items 1 and 2, significance is established at  $p < .001$  level on chi-square test. Item 3 refers to contribution to India's socio-economic development by foreign countries. With radical orientation it would be possible to see the role of socialist ideology on the one hand and the contribution of the Soviet Union towards development of basic and heavy industry on the other. But data do not establish this. The U.S.A. gets preference over the U.S.S.R. Spearman rank correlation coefficient establishes significance at all levels. It will appear that the parliamentary democratic form of government is perceived as functional for

India and this perception tallies with the favourable perception of the democratic way of life referred to in the earlier propositions. On economic policies, the elites show preference for economic policies free from ideology-guided preferences. In this sense, neither free enterprise nor total state capitalism is perceived as realistic in the present context.

Yet in another way the issue was examined. The authors felt that the elites would essentially be prone towards status quo-ness, and that it would be indicated irrespective of the age of respondents.

TABLE 10B

## Age-wise response to radicalism

Dimensions			
1. Type of government suited for India	$X^2_3$	6.191	NS
2. Type of economic policy required for India	$X^2_3$	2.133	NS
3. Japanese economic style's suitability for India	Knuskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA		
	$X^2_3$	1.823	NS
4. Which country has helped India most in economic matters?	$X^2_3$	19.261	.03*

\*For two-tailed alternative, i.e. testing the hypothesis that there is no difference in radicalism with age.

Data are presented in Table 10B. In item 1, it appears that age has no correlation with preference between parliamentary democracy and presidential form of democracy on the one hand, and Soviet-type of government on the other. On item 2, it was found that age had no impact on the preference for nationalization of monopoly houses and banning of private trade and investment. Japanese-type economic planning and development also did not indicate any particular significance with age on Knuskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance. However, in respect of item 4, it appears that there is correlation between radicalism and age in respect of the evaluation of Soviet aid to India. For a two-tailed alternative, it appears that lower the age more is the radicalism at significance  $p < .03$ .

On the whole, therefore, even on this second type analysis non-radicalism of the elite is established except on the dimension of Soviet aid to India. Lower the age more is the positive perception of Soviet economic aid to India.

*Proposition 10: Elites exhibit ethnocentric hostility*

It is felt that there is cultural as well as historical basis for the elites, most of whom belong to Hindu upper castes, to maintain ethnocentric hostility towards the outer groups, particularly the minorities. The traditional values of hierarchical authority structure, social and psychological distance between one group and another on caste, language and other differentiated socio-religious values and anxiety for status and prestige, will contribute towards the idealized image for the elite group in the minds of the elites and an outgroup insensitivity towards the minority groups. In an earlier proposition, based on Srole research, it has been pointed out that hostility towards minority is an expression of social isolation. Observations of Gould (1969), Franda (1971), and Hagen (1962) do support the contention that insensitivity towards the non-elite is likely. *Ethnocentrism* and *ethnocentric hostility* are used here in the sense in which the researchers have been utilising these terms following the lead given by Sumner (Levine and Campbell, 1972:1-2; 205-209).

Historically, politico-economic forces during the British rule have fostered a culture of divisiveness among the caste Hindus, the scheduled castes, and the tribal population on the one hand and between the Hindus and the Muslims on the other. Modern history of India is replete with illustrations of political manipulation to play one group against another, particularly involving the majority and minority communities (e.g., Patwardhan *et al.*, 1942). In recent decades, increasing population pressure, comparative sluggish economic growth, and other related matters may have accentuated the status quo orientation of the upper-caste Hindus in order to maintain the comparative advantages enjoyed by them. At the same time, the minority groups have been able to mobilize themselves on the strength of constitutional guarantees and the facilities provided by mass media. This development may also have accentuated the growth of "in-group/out-group" culture.

It is felt that all these socio-historical forces will show up in ethnocentric hostility against minority groups.

Table 11 presents the data. On items 2 and 3, the proposition has been established at  $p < .001$  level of significance. On item 3, the data are more comprehensive than what have been presented in Table 5. In respect of item 1, the proposition has not been established in terms of statistical significance. However, a plurality of 47.0 per cent responses do show hostility towards scheduled castes as compared to 41.9 per cent who do not. It has earlier been pointed out that on social distance scale members of the scheduled castes may be perceived as closer to the caste Hindu elites in comparison with Indian Muslims and tribal population.

TABLE 11

## Ethnocentric hostility

Dimensions	% Agree	% Don't agree	X <sup>2</sup> Values	Level of significance
1. Preference to Scheduled Castes should be withdrawn	47.0	53.0 (11.1) <sup>Q</sup>		NS
2. Tribals located in border areas should be dealt with more firmly	60.7 % positive	39.3 % less negative	24.6 % more negative	<.001
3. Terms used to describe Muslims in India	10.6	41.4	19.0	196.4 <sup>*</sup> <.001

\*dichotomy of positive and negative terms.

Q refers to percentage of "uncertain" responses.

A sample of the typical terms used to describe Indian Muslims is presented below:

Sample of positive terms	Sample of less negative terms	Sample of more negative terms
Artistic	Selfish	Aggressive
Laborious	Jealous	Hostile
Honest	Quarrelsome	Cruel
Straightforward	Luxury loving, etc.	Extra-territorial loyalty
Gentle, etc.		Fanatic, etc.

*Proposition 11: Elites exhibit positive self-image*

It is hypothesized that the elite respondents, who are essentially professionals with an established career in their work role, maintaining positive perception of elite-role and positive perception of their own work-role, will also carry a positive self-image about themselves. Osgood *et al.*'s (1957) semantic differential test was utilised in the measurement of self-image. McClelland *et al.* (1969) have used a scale which measures self-image in terms of evaluation, potency, and activity. In the measurement of potency, they have used terms such as large, hard, deep, bright, etc. The authors felt that these words might cause

some cultural dissonance in the elite group based on their experience with a group of college students to whom this test was applied on an earlier occasion. The student sample was somewhat critical of the terms measuring potency by referring to them as odd words and not applicable to them. The authors felt that they would prefer to avoid the controversy. Accordingly, a 15-item test was utilised to measure evaluation and activity dimensions only.

TABLE 12

## Self-image

Dimensions	Mean*	X <sup>2</sup> Value	Level of significance
1. Evaluative	+1.33	5.33	<.001
2. Activity	+1.05	5.33	<.001

\* Mean on a 7-point scale ranging from +3 (most favourable) to -3 (most unfavourable).

Data are presented in Table 12. On a 7-point scale with +3 as most favourable and -3 as most unfavourable, the mean score on evaluative dimension of self is +1.33 and on activity dimension +1.05. The positive self-image proposition is thus established at  $p < .001$  level of significance.

It has already been mentioned that McClelland has found that "no-changer" industrial entrepreneurs do show an idealized self-image compared to those who are prone to change. These data do not throw any light on the observation of McClelland.

Gergen (1968:299-308) has maintained that there need not be a simple relationship between personal consistency and presentation of self. He concludes the study thus: "... a revision of the construct of self seems in order, and such a revision might profitably be directed toward a theory of *multiple selves*. In lieu of *the self* concept, a process of self conception will ultimately be necessary" (emphasis in original). On the other hand, one may argue that a positive self-image has a potency value compared to an image based on self-devaluation. In any event, it will be necessary to undertake further studies to make a more meaningful sense of self-image of the elite sample represented in the study.

## CONCLUSION

This exploratory study focussing on urban non-ruling elites raises a

number of issues rather than providing definitive answers. Some of these issues are:

- (a) Is there a modality of Indian urban elite personality or are there several strains not necessarily congruent with one another? In order that a tentative response can be attempted it will be necessary to undertake profession-wise analysis of data.
- (b) Given the complex socio-cultural diversities of India, one cannot be sure whether the findings of this exploratory study are representative of the country or an expression of the ideosyncratic characteristics of the city and the region. More extensive studies may shed light on this issue.
- (c) The stances of critical evaluation of India's past performance, pessimistic outlook on West Bengal's future (elite group's State of residence and work) and status quo orientation towards politico-economic issues, do provide a complex picture which does not get clarified by information on self-image, values of elitism, and satisfaction with work-role.
- (d) While there are manifest data on alienation, the study did not focus specifically on such aspects as alienation from self and social isolation. As such, a totality of picture does not emerge from the study.
- (e) While the study does throw some evidence on the dilemma of tradition-modernity dynamics it does not establish the range of attitude-behaviour complex that can present a coherent direction in the continuum. A more comprehensive study, perhaps along the line proposed by Inkeles (1973), is called for.
- (f) While the data on ethnocentric hostility are somewhat revealing, the study does not shed any light on the possible linkage between ethnocentric distance and the long-standing belief that one-strength of Indian culture lies in "unity in diversity".
- (g) While there are data on the "outsider" feelings of the urban, non-ruling elites and as such a sense of "disorientation" towards the ruling elites, evidence exists that the non-ruling urban elites are also status quo oriented and non-radical in their change-proneness. These phenomena justify further probing.
- (h) Lastly, while the study does provide some elements of values that are associated with the urban elites in India, one does not get a picture as to what role the non-ruling urban elite is likely to play in social change process. It appears that this central issue calls for further studies before one can offer any insightful comments, particularly in the context of Gramsci's concept of the role of elites. Antonio Gramsci has made a distinction between the traditional elites and the organic elites. The former represents "an historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms"

(Gramsci, 1973:7) and the latter are the "intellectuals which every new class creates alongside itself and elaborates in the course of its development" representing "for the most part specializations of partial aspects of the primitive activity of the new social type which the new social class has brought into prominence" (Gramsci, 1973:6).

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