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Occasional Paper No. 37

**ECONOMIC DISLOCATION IN NINETEENTH
CENTURY EASTERN U.D. : SOME IMPLICATIONS
OF THE DECLINE OF ARTISANAL INDUSTRY
IN COLONIAL INDIA.**

GYAN PANDEY

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Economic Dislocation in Nineteenth Century Eastern
UP : Some Implications of the Decline of Artisanal
Industry in Colonial India

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May, 1981

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Economic Dislocation in Nineteenth Century
Eastern UP : Some Implications of the
Decline of Artisanal Industry
in Colonial India*

GYAN PANDEY

Recent studies of 'de-industrialization' in the Indian sub-continent have helped to clarify some major questions regarding the overall impact of colonialism, although the debate on the fate of India's traditional industries begun in the late nineteenth century will not easily be closed.¹ What the nineteenth century participants in the debate missed out, and more recent scholarship too has not been directly concerned with, is the differential impact of colonial developments on different sections of the local handicraftsmen, and the sharp fluctuations that accompanied the process of tying up India's regional economies with the metropolitan economy of Britain. It is these features that I seek to highlight in this paper, using for the purpose the nineteenth century evidence relating to the most important artisanal class of pre-colonial India, the cloth-manufacturers, in Azamgarh and some of its neighbouring districts in eastern UP. In addition, I hope to be able to indicate some of the social and cultural implications of the massive economic dislocation that came with colonialism, by reference to the more neglected aspects of the cloth-manufacturers' history and struggles : their organisation and consciousness, their periodic (if short-lived) demonstrations of solidarity, and their resistance to various developments of the colonial period.

II

Historians writing about India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have pointed to the various 'levels' of production that existed in the traditional textile industry, the regional and functional specialisation in the manufacture of cloth, and the complex organisation for production and marketing that had developed. A hierarchy of intermediaries advancing loans and exercising various types of controls had evidently come to mark different stages of the enterprise (from the procurement of raw material through the preparation of yarn and the weaving and dressing of the cloth to the stage of transfer to a prospective consumer.) By the eighteenth century the growing demands of the European Companies had added much to the complexity of the Indian clothing business, and further separated the makers of quality cloth both from their raw materials (cotton, silk, mixtures of silk and cotton, or wool) and from the market for their products. The European traders were particularly concerned to promote productivity, standardisation and variation of product, and sought to extend their hold not only (as the Mughals had done) in the small urban karkhanas, or workshops, but indeed into rural units.²

Alongside the centres of fine textile production, meant for the nobility or for sale in distant markets, there existed all along more humble units of production, turning out coarse or medium-quality cloth for use locally or by consumers in nearby towns and villages. At the lower levels, it has been suggested, cloth production (from the cultivation of cotton to the stage of weaving) was sometimes carried out within the

family unit of specific caste groups, such as the Jogis and Julahas of Bengal. But there is some evidence of the intervention of middlemen even in these humbler spheres.³

Taking as his touchstone "the degree of division of labour and specialisation, and the extent of capitalists' participation in and control over marketing and production", Sabyasachi Bhattacharya has distinguished between three different levels of organisation in the industry. The first was typical of rural handicrafts: production was dispersed, artisans worked at home often aided by family members, and marketing was often unmediated by any trader. Here, spinning and weaving might be combined in the weaver's household, or the weavers might use thread already spun in the cultivator's household to produce cloth needed by the latter. However, a good deal even of the coarse cloth produced at this level was marketed through middlemen. At the second level of development, the middleman sought to ensure a regular supply of goods of a specified standard by advancing cash (dadān) to the artisan. He also invested in raw material purchase beyond the means of the artisan in industries involving high value inputs, including silk textiles. The third level saw the expansion of the work group beyond the family unit, the intervention of one or more middlemen in the procuring of raw material and marketing of produce, and in certain cases even the emergence of proto-capitalist 'factories'. Bhattacharya notes that the traditional cloth industry had units located at all these levels, though the majority of weavers were in the second level : but the levels of course only represent "some points on a continuum along which the denizens of the artisanal production system travelled (sometimes sliding back...)"⁴

The work of these scholars has established, then, the existence of intermediaries and the penetration of money-lenders down even to the lower levels of the textile industry. One inference that follows may be noted at once : while India's foreign trade grew and the external demand for her cloth expanded, and huge fortunes were made by entrepreneurs in different parts of the sub-continent at different times in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is almost certain that all but a small minority of the cloth-manufacturers — spinners and dyers, weavers and bleachers shared little in the profits.⁵ Together with this it should be borne in mind that the well-being of the textile trade (as of that in a number of other commodities), based as it was more and more at this time on an expanding foreign demand, remained extremely vulnerable.

The relatively rapid rise and decline of trade in a particular area, like the rise and fall of medieval towns and cities, may not have been a new phenomenon. Babar's observation that "in Hindustan hamlets and villages, towns indeed, are depopulated and set up in a moment!"⁶ deserves consideration, for all the prejudices of the conqueror and this conqueror's deep nostalgia for the land he had left behind. Nevertheless, what Chris Bayly calls the 'forced' town growth of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in northern India was the product of a different situation — more 'settled', yet perhaps altogether more volatile. Political uncertainty and turbulence were marked in eastern UP at least until the 1810s or '20s : neighbouring areas, in Awadh, central India and the Punjab remained unpacified for even longer. At the local level this was reflected in the establishment and decay of many small towns and qasbas in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the extended jostling for power in the countryside (which of course continued until much later), and often violent revolt against new authorities — British and Indian : the great uprising of 1857-59 appears from one perspective, as the culminating point of these extended struggles.

But there was, in addition to the problem of political and social instability, another major factor of uncertainty. Traders, even far inland, were now deeply sensitive to changing demands from Europe, about which, however, they did not always have very direct or up-to-date information, and over which they had absolutely no control. Indeed, in a situation when war, famine and an admittedly harsh assessment, in succession, had ravaged much of the land, we may expect that those who lived in the line of 'prosperity' established along the riverine route to Calcutta, looked ever more anxiously 'outward'. Any shift in the nature or quantum of the foreign demand had repercussions that spread far into the interior of the Indian sub-continent.⁷ The shock-waves from Europe spread in an expanding circle as the British consolidated their position in India. It was somewhere on the periphery of this circle that the cloth-manufacturers of eastern UP stood at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Gorakhpur district (then including Azamgarh) and other parts of eastern UP were ceded by the Nawab of Awadh and brought under the administration of the English East India Company.

III

In terms of the sheer scale of its cloth-manufacturing industry Azamgarh was, at this time, one of the leading districts of the area that came to be known as UP. The cloth produced here had long enjoyed a certain regional renown: the district is mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari, along with Banaras and Jalalabad, as a cloth-manufacturing centre of distinction. Mubarakpur, the largest weaving town in the district when the East India Company took over, was known for its compound cotton and silk, tassar (wild silk) and wool cloths; Maunath Bhanjan

(or Mau) had been famous from before the days of the Nawabs of Awadh for its fine muslins, in the weaving of which counts as high as 150s were used. Kopaganj, six miles from Mau, had developed since the middle of the eighteenth century into another major centre of textile production. Nearby, in other districts, there were other centres renowned for the particular kinds of cloth that they produced. Much of what follows in this paper is based on reports relating to the experience of the spinner and weavers of these specialised centres. But there are some important pieces of evidence, from the second half of the nineteenth century, regarding their less well-known brethren in other small towns and villages.

Any account of the fortunes of the textile industry in eastern India in the course of the nineteenth century must begin with the famous, if mistitled, Company "investments". In Gorakhpur and Padrauna towns, major weaving centres of Gorakhpur district just north of Azamgarh, as the commercial representatives of the East India Company reported on arrival there in 1803, there were numerous weavers "desirous of entering into the Hon'ble Company's employ".⁸ Numbers of them had evidently migrated from the district in the preceding thirty or forty years, and gone to live in the Nawab Wazir's dominions in Awadh : there were forty-nine houses of weavers that had settled in Tanda (Faizabad district) in this way. The Company's Commercial Resident at Gorakhpur and its Reporter-General on External Commerce based at Patna, not unique in this respect (cf. Sleeman on Awadh in 1849-50, and the comments on Mau-Azamgarh referred to below), found in this clear evidence of the misrule and rapine that Gorakhpur had fallen prey to before the coming of the English. But, in passing, the Reporter-General noticed another factor of significance in the migration of the weavers. The forty-nine households were induced to move to Tanda, it transpires, by "the liberal encouragement" of a private English mercha

J.P. Scott, who gave each weaver "a bounty of four rupees, and advanced money to enable them to purchase their looms and thread."⁹ This was said to have occurred "about 1780": could it have been in 1782-83, the year of the great famine, or chalisa, in which many among the poorer classes died from starvation and which people still remembered in the eastern districts of UP a hundred years later?¹⁰

At any rate, the Company's representatives were confident that given the right encouragement, including a suitable "investment" at Gorakhpur, such weavers could be induced to return to what were now the Company's dominions. Indeed their hopes for the future soared much higher: "nothing appears to be wanting", as the Reporter-General put it in pleading the case for Gorakhpur, in order "to secure to Great Britain annually" from 20-30,000 and, later, even 100,000 tons of hemp, sugar, saltpetre, cotton piece-goods, and other articles -- the produce of the Ceded Provinces to be transported on ships built from timber provided by the forests of Gorakhpur¹¹: it was an age of confidence, and ambition.

The commercial residency (or factory) at Gorakhpur in fact proved to be a disappointment. In the year of its establishment, 1803, it was sanctioned Calcutta Sicca (S) Rs.100,000 for "investment", of which it could use only S Rs.15,000 until the end of March 1804. For this sum, only 280 piece-goods, valued at S Rs.2359 had been delivered to the Export Warehouse by that date.¹² In 1805, the Gorakhpur residency was closed.

The Mau-Azamgarh Factory, established at the same time, fared far better. Of the sanctioned sum of Rs.500,000 (S Rs.478,487-3-0), the residency had used well over half (S Rs.258,356-4-0) by March 1804. Of this sum, S Rs.50,306-4-7 was used for "investment" in sugar, leaving S Rs.208,049-15-5 for "investment" in cloth. For this, the Export Warehouse Keeper had

received by 29 March 1804, 21, 679 pieces valued at S Rs.149,266-8-11; and the reports on the 10,025 pieces that had by then been prized were "very favourable".¹³

Given the numerous difficulties that were bound to arise on "the establishment of so very extensive a provision under the system of advance this was without doubt a good start. The Commercial Resident for Mau-Azangarh noted in August 1803 that the average monthly deliveries by weavers had reached a number that would provide 67,000 pieces annually. He calculated that with a little tender care, this figure could soon be raised to 78000 pieces per annum, equivalent at a medium of Rs.7-8 as per piece to Rs.585,000 (or S Rs.560,000) excluding commission.¹⁴

Independent of the Company's investments, a large private trade flourished. The value of piece-goods annually exported by private traders from the areas under the Mau-Azangarh and Gorakhpur Factories was thought to be about Rs.8 lakhs (800,000).¹⁵ This consisted chiefly of very narrow cloths, said to be in great demand inland and quite unsuitable for the Company's foreign markets, but there was no reason to believe that part of this industry and trade could not be diverted to the Company's purposes. In 1804, then, while the amount sanctioned for "investment" in Gorakhpur piece-goods, saltpetre and hemp remained at S.Rs.100,000, that for the Mau-Azangarh residency was raised to S. Rs.600,000.¹⁶

In 1818 the commercial residency at Azangarh was wound up and amalgamated with the one at Banaras. The tract continued to figure prominently in the Company's "investments", but the allotment for piece-goods had declined considerably relative to that for other commodities, most notably sugar.¹⁷ In spite of its reduced importance however the external demand for the region's cloth was, at the time of the termination of the East India Company's trading position in 1833, yet to run dry. In the mid-1830s,

R. Montgomery, Collector of Azamgarh, estimated that there were 13,682 looms at work in the district, 10,561 for cotton and 3,121 for silk and tassar. The probable produce, he thought, was 10 lakh pieces per annum, a total value of perhaps Rs.23 lakhs. Of this, cloth worth Rs.10 lakhs was exported, leaving Rs.13 lakhs' worth to clothe the district's (estimated) eight million people.¹⁸

The statement of exports and imports contained in the report on the Settlement of Chuklah Azimgurh prepared by J. Thomason in 1837 is instructive.¹⁹ The exports were :

Cotton and silk piece-goods (handled entirely by Indian traders)	-	Rs.10,00,000
Opium	-	Rs. 5,09,700
Indigo	-	Rs. 2,70,000
Sugar (exported by Europeans)	-	Rs.19,00,000
Sugar (exported by Indians)	-	Rs. 3,50,000
Total	:	<u>Rs.40,29,700</u>

The imports were :

Raw cotton	-	Rs. 2,15,000
Miscellaneous, spices, etc.	-	Rs. 90,000
Grain	-	Rs. 9,40,000
Total	:	<u>Rs.12,45,000</u>

The Settlement Officer noted that sugarcane (all of it refined within the district for export), indigo and opium were the chief "natural products" of Azamgarh. Comparatively little grain was grown, and grain had to be imported from Gorakhpur, Bihar or districts in the west of UP to feed the local population. The river Ghaghra was the main channel for these imports. "Golahs, or grain markets, are established all along the course of this stream, and the supplies are thence poured in, as necessary, to all the manufacturing towns in the district".²⁰

Forty years later, when J.R. Reid undertook the next settlement (or revenue assessment) of the district, a significant change had occurred. The chief exports of the district were still sugar and molasses, indigo, opium and cloth. But important additions had been made to the list of imports. After grain, the major items now were English cloth and yarn, cotton, silk, dried tobacco (surti), salt, metals and hardware, drugs, and leather-goods.²¹ British manufactures had entered this distant market.

IV

By the beginning of the 1830s, as we know from other evidence, there had been a reversal in the direction of flow of textile products between the British metropolis and its Indian colony. What the consequences of this reversal were for the cloth-manufacturers of eastern UP, it is difficult to compute with any exactness. Not only are statistics for the earlier years unavailable, the available statistics are also difficult to use. Thus J.R. Reid, a painstaking official who has left us a very detailed and valuable account of the results of his survey and settlement operation in Azamgarh district in 1877, declared it impossible, on the basis of the very imperfect returns he had, to reach a conclusion as regards the quantity and value of cloth manufactured in the district or the commodities imported into it.²²

With all the limitations of the data, however, certain long-term trends are discernible. The traditional cloth industry was, from the 1830s, subjected to powerful new pressures which it had no way of combating. For several reasons, which I hope will become clear in the course of this paper, we must be careful not to assume that the impact of these pressures was necessarily, or primarily, reflected in the numbers involved in the textile trade. Nevertheless, some statistical tendencies might be noted.

All reports from the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century seem to agree that the spinning industry suffered a secular decline over this period. In Azamgarh, the decline of traditional spinners, like the Katuas of Mau and other specialised manufacturing towns and villages, was rapid and unchecked. More and more, as the nineteenth century progressed, English thread came to be used instead of local yarn even in the manufacture of cloth for local markets. While "none but the more wealthy classes" appear to have worn any other than the manufactures of the district in the 1830s, it was observed at the same time that English twist had even at that early date began to replace local thread. By the 1870s it was being noted that anyone who wished to dress "with a certain degree of gloss" (without doubt a growing number) used English cloth or local cloth made from English yarn.²³ Filing his report on the new Settlement of Azamgarh district at the latter date, J.R. Reid observed that in Mau, where earlier thread had been spun of such fine quality that it sold for its own weight in silver, quality spinning was "finished": the Katuas of the town now lived chiefly by shop-keeping and petty trading.²⁴ "The spinning of cotton", wrote William Hoey from Lucknow just a few years later, "has dwindled to almost nothing for it has been found cheaper to import European twist and yarn for weaving purposes."²⁵

While the reports are direct and unambiguous as regards the fate of the specialised spinners of prominent centres like Mau, they have less to say about the substantial amount of spinning that was carried on, as full or part-time occupation (especially by women), in widely dispersed households. Yet here too there are indications that the trend was similar. By the end of the century spinning was described as no more than the spare-time pursuit of those primarily occupied in other tasks and those (especially, old women) who were incapable of doing any other work.²⁶ In the area of cotton cultivation spinning certainly continued -- in the households of the cotton-growers themselves, skilled neighbours or local weavers. So did it in many traditional cloth manufacturing districts like Azamgarh, from where Reid reported in 1877 that many of the looms were employed in the manufacture of coarse cloths from yarn "which is spun by women of all castes in all parts of the district."²⁷

Yet the scales, even at this humbler level, were weighted against traditional spinning. Mill yarn was cheaper, finer and more even, and therefore easier to handle; and its attractiveness to weavers increased as Indian mills entered the fray to supply the yarn at still lower rates. In addition changing local tastes strengthened the case for the use of mill-made yarn. We have mentioned Reid's reference to the desire of men of 'status' to dress in English cloth or, at least, cloth made from English yarn. Reid observed, besides, that most of the low-caste labourers, "a fair share of the lower ranks of other classes [read 'castes']", and the majority of the women of the middle and lower classes, still wore local cloth made from local thread. But, even for them, "holiday attire" was an exception: festivals and other special occasions had begun to require "a certain degree of gloss".²⁸ Finally, hand spinning was to be put under greater pressure as agents of foreign traders, and later Indian mills, extended their reach into the cotton growing tracts and the controllers of cotton lands themselves saw a greater profit in the export of their raw produce.

The indigenous hand-spinning industry, then, was early on the slide. For most of the nineteenth century it was in the sphere of weaving that the real competition occurred. Here the traditional sector put up a stiffer resistance. The records show that the cheaper, coarser (and more durable) varieties supplied by the handloom weavers, as well as some of the finer cloths and unusual mixtures which could not easily be matched in conditions of factory production, for long held their own against the challenge of mill-made cloth. At the beginning of the twentieth century, at least one-third of the cloth worn in UP was woven by handloom weavers, and perhaps a million people (out of a provincial population of 48 million) were dependant for their livelihood on the proceeds of weaving.²⁹

"A third" is, for all that, two-thirds down. Certainly, there remains the theoretical possibility that an expanding demand allowed mill cloth (foreign and Indian) to skim off the surface, leaving undisturbed the market for the handloom sector.³⁰ Yet this suggestion fails to consider the timing of different historical events, besides taking a rather too sanguine view of the growing consumption of cloth in colonial India. The collapse of the export market, and a good deal of the domestic one, from the 1820s or 1830s surely entailed a real loss, which was not made good until the end of the century — if then. From all the reports of the period, one gets the impression of a trade in deep trouble, uncertain of its future, surviving — but in altogether reduced circumstances.

"The weavers of Lucknow have been ruined by the import of English goods": Hoey's words written in 1880 echo the kind of report coming in from so many different parts of northern and central India towards the end of the nineteenth century. "The Jolahas of Lucknow are fast leaving the city... and seeking a livelihood in service." East of Lucknow, the Jamdani or figured muslin weaving of Tanda and other places in Faizabad district was

under severe pressure. The town of Tanda had approximately 1125 looms at work in 1862. The 'cotton famine' that then struck hastened certain processes already at work. Many weavers left their trade (and their home) at the end of the 1870s there were estimated to be no more than 875 looms working in the town. And whereas before the annexation of Awadh in 1856 Tanda had exported more than Rs. 1½ lakhs worth of cloth of Nepal, it was now said to send less than "half that quantity". Jais and Rae Bareili, in Rae Bareili district, where very similar work was done, suffered a similar fate. In the town of Jais there were, in the 1840s, 600 Julaha families, all of whom supported themselves by weaving. By the 1890s, no more than 200 of these remained and only a score or so of them lived by their traditional occupation. In Rae Bareili town too, by the latter date, no more than one in ten of the 150 resident Julaha families worked their looms.³¹ Just over three decades later, in 1931, the Census Commissioner of UP recorded that "the fine muslim (muslin?) weaving of Jais, Nasirabad and other places [In Rae Bareili district] is now ... extinct."³²

Lucknow, Faizabad and Rae Bareili districts were all part of the truncated kingdom of Awadh which was taken over by the British only in 1856. It might be supposed, therefore, that the end of the Nawabi administration automatically spelled the doom of the indigenous cloth manufacture. However, the abolition of the courts was altogether too narrow a reason to account for the decline even of the superior fabrics.³³ In Awadh the talugdars and the talugdari style remained, and indeed prospered. In Nepal the only Hindu kingdom in the world lives on to this day. It was the massive influx of Manchester goods that caused the downfall of the traditional industry.

In Azamgarh, where English "investments" gave a distinct fillip to handloom production at the beginning of the nineteenth century, we are evidently faced by a somewhat different example. Yet here too the impact of Manchester was felt before long. The fortunes of Mau illustrate this clearly. When C. R. Crommelin, the East India Company's

Commercial Resident for Mau and Azamgarh, first visited the pargana of Mau in February 1803, he found that it had been "desolated by the Zemindars" warring one against the other under the Nawab's dominion. "As the City of Mow was generally an object for plunder to the most powerful party, it soon became a heap of ruins."³⁴

The Resident drew the inevitable distinction between the light and shade of Company administration and native rule : "On entering the district of Mow from this [The Banarās] Province, the contrast struck me most forcibly, the latter in luxuriant cultivation, the former a desert-waste as far as the eye could reach: indeed I travelled nearly two hours in my Palankeen without seeing a hut or scarcely a vestige of cultivation, until I arrived at the ruins of Mow".³⁵ Such blanket condemnation one must take with a pinch of salt. There is some independent evidence of armed struggle for control of land in the region of Mau in the years before the arrival of the British.³⁶ But the more significant reasons for the decline of Mau before the coming of the British would appear to lie elsewhere.

For one thing, the adjacent weaving centre of Kopaganj was established and given special support in the second half of the eighteenth century. Though Kopa was an old village, the new town of Kopaganj (initially, Iradatganj) was founded there in 1745 by Iradat Khan, the Raja of Azamgarh. Weavers were brought over from Mau, we are told, and merchants, chiefly Agrawals, were "attracted" by Iradat Khan from various places. In 1774 the French traveller, Comte de Modave, described Kopaganj as a large place, with houses that had "a better look than those of other villages" that he had passed on his journey from Calcutta and a bazar that seemed to be "very well filled" with printed and white cloths, pottery and grain.³⁷ Then, in the great famine of 1782-83, the population of Mau suffered greatly and "deaths from starvation" were recorded. If the experience of later

famines is anything to go by, weavers are likely to have been among the principal victims. "But the general population did not die from starvation and wheat sold in the Kopaganj market at 14 sers (80 tolas) for the rupee at an unprecedented rate for those days doubtless, but not indicative of absolute dearth."³⁸ Kopaganj, still receiving the special favour of the authorities, indeed became the centre for relief operations : the construction of a mosque and several wells was taken up under the orders of Mirza Ata Beg, then chakladar of Azamgarh, in order to provide employment to the poor. We may expect that many of the weavers and spinners of Mau trudged across the distance of six miles in order to avail of this charity.

In 1803, then, the aurung of Mau was found by Crommelin to be "in infancy, there being very few weavers settled in it". The Resident was informed that somewhere between 450-500 looms were at work; and judging from the piece-goods that he received from the local weavers between February and July 1803, he felt that he could get no more than a 1000 pieces a month from Mau by the close of that year. At the same time, he anticipated that he would obtain 1500 pieces per month from the Kopa aurung ("this aurung is ... firmly settled. There are many weavers residing in it and a greater increase may probably be effected hereafter"); 1500 pieces from the Maharajganj aurung, which lay on the borders of Awadh (Tanda, Nowabganj and other places in Awadh were "full of weavers", many of whom might be expected to migrate to the Maharajganj aurung once the value of the Company's protection became clear); and 2500 pieces from the Azamgarh aurung, which had been the most productive upto July, and in which presumably lay Mubarakpur — "a flourishing place" at the time of Cession to the Company with an estimated population of 10-12,000, perhaps a quarter of whom were weavers.³⁹

Contrary to Crommelin's expectations, Mau appears to have recovered quickly from the devastations of the late eighteenth century. It was aided of course by the restoration of the regional trade, but very distinctly too by the establishment locally of a Commercial Residency and by the East India Company's "investment" in its cloth manufactures, especially in the long cloth known as sahan. Yet, it was a fragile base for a meaningful recovery. Before long the market for Mau (and other indigenous) produce was adversely affected by the emergence of the entirely new factor of the competition from English mill manufactures.

By the 1830s, Thomason was already observing that the demand for the local cloth was "much diminished" on account of this competition. The decades that followed hastened the decline. Reid remarked on the cloth trade of Azamgarh district, that, while still important, it was "much less than it used to be". Of the industry in Mau, he could only say that it was "not quite dead". His summary statement on the manufactures of the town might be said to stand for the traditional cloth industry in eastern UP as a whole : "Private enterprise for a time kept up the trade of Mau after the abolition of the [East India] Company's monopoly, but the introduction of English-made thread and cloth into this country has given a great blow to it. The place is now in a state of comparative decadence, and many of the weavers are said to seek a livelihood elsewhere."⁴⁰

To what extent the number of weavers at work in the region declined over this period is probably impossible to establish. J.R. Reid provides a figure of 13,058 looms at work in Azamgarh district in 1877, a fall of 624 from Montgomery's estimate of 1837. But we cannot say whether the decline from the 1837 level, when the cloth industry of Azamgarh was already feeling the effects of English competition, was greater or lesser than this difference; we do not know the basis of Montgomery's 'estimate' or how rigorous he was.

One point may be made with certainty, however. There were very major fluctuations in the numbers involved in the handloom industry, periods of a sharp downturn followed by not insignificant revival. We noticed this already for Mau at the turn of the nineteenth century. Another well-documented example comes from the early 1860s, when weavers all over Azamgarh suffered a serious set-back. The disturbed years of 1857-59 were followed in 1860-61 by famine and by general inflation. The great increase in the price of raw cotton, as the external demand for the commodity shot up with the outbreak of the American Civil War, together with the reduced demand for their products resulting from famine and inflation, hit the weavers hard. The number of looms at work in Azamgarh district fell from 12,500 in 1860 to 8,680 in 1863. The falling-off in the quantity of work actually done was no doubt greater than these figures indicate; and the Azamgarh experience was paralleled elsewhere. ⁴¹

For Azamgarh and its major cloth manufacturing centres — Mubarakpur, Mau, Kopaganj and so on — however, the reversal proved to be a temporary one. Barely a decade after the American Civil War, Reid made his calculation of 13,058 looms being worked in the district: roughly 1700, 1200 and 500 in Mubarakpur, Mau and Kopaganj respectively and between 100 and 300 in ten other villages, apart from smaller numbers scattered all over. ⁴²

The ebb and flow of fortune continued on a lesser scale in the succeeding years. At the end of the century, we learn from a survey conducted in the 1890s, the handloom industry of Azamgarh district was certainly "on the decline", but it was "still moderately flourishing" and "a fair export trade" in cloth was being carried on. ⁴³ The plague took its toll: here and in other districts, it was migrant weavers who carried the disease back with them from Bombay and other industrial centres, and the weaving community suffered "terribly". ⁴⁴ But the opening of a railway line through the district (and through the town of Mau) in 1898 occasioned some

"revival" of trade; fewer weavers now left Mau, the District Gazetteer of 1911 noted, "to seek employment in the mills of Bombay, Cawnpore and Calcutta."⁴⁵

The population of Mau, like that of Mubarakpur, was said to have increased steadily in the latter part of the nineteenth century. For Mau the census gave 11,315 inhabitants in 1872, 14,945 in 1881, 15,547 in 1891 and 17,696 in 1901.⁴⁶ Whatever the reliability of these various enumerations, Mau appears to have survived up to this time as a trading and manufacturing centre,⁴⁷ and even registered some growth in the last decades of the century: the opening of the railway and the establishment here of a fairly important railway junction helped in the process. One might even argue, on the basis of this evidence, that the number of workers engaged in the local handloom enterprise probably held up fairly well throughout the nineteenth century; though the early nineteenth century evidence of progressive erosion after a short and sharp increase in the trade would suggest a somewhat different conclusion. But even if we suppose for a moment that the above inference was valid, we surely cannot equate the maintenance of steady numbers with "prosperity", or for that matter unchanging conditions in the industry.⁴⁸ There is striking evidence to the contrary from Mau.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the fine cloth manufacturers of Mau were facing a near total collapse of their market. Their history for the next three quarters of a century is the history of an anxious search for alternatives. New kinds of goods came to be produced. Already by the 1860s, the dakhini pagri (lit. "southern turban", meant for sale in central and western India) had become an important product in Mau. In the 1870s, Reid observed that coarse cloths of countryspun thread, some better cotton cloths, and some of the silk and tassar cloths for which Mubarakpur was better known, were "still" made at Mau. At the end of the century,

while the weaving of muslins requiring yarn from 60s to a 100 counts or more continued, with silk being used for the woof in some cases, the pagri had become Mau's "staple product". Many varieties of red and white turbans were manufactured, but "in the majority of them the texture is and the cotton used is of low counts, the quality of the finished article being considerably inferior to that manufactured in Bulandshahr [In western UP]"⁴⁹ Subsequent developments in western India, most notably the opening up of mills for cloth production, appear to have forced the weavers of Mau to experiment in other directions; and since about the 1920s the local weaving community has been employed primarily in the production of coarse cotton saris, with simple single-or multiple-line borders, for sale in nearby markets.⁵⁰ Here was a "sliding back" indeed. The industry in Mau had come a long way from the flowered muslins once sought after by merchants from many parts of India and the quality saban demanded by the agents of the East India Company. For the weavers it was without doubt a much less lucrative business.

V

The decline of the indigenous cloth manufacturing industry in the middle and later nineteenth century is reflected most dramatically in the reports from the old established centres of quality production. This is understandable. But ~~many~~ the forces that threatened the existence of some of these places as industrial centres also seriously affected the reaches of the cloth industry. We have noticed this already in the case of hand-spinning. A closer examination of the circumstances in which a part of the handloom weaving industry survived indicates some of the adjustments that weavers at all levels had to make in the face of the challenges thrown up by the nineteenth century.

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et.

Among the factors traditionally held responsible for the survival of local cloth manufactures, one of obvious importance was the inaccessibility of many areas - untouched for long by railways and other modern means of communication. Yet, as the fate of the hand-spinning industry and of a good deal of weaving even before the coming of the railways suggests, this was perhaps not as critical an obstacle as it is sometimes made out to be.⁵¹ Banjaras and other wandering traders had, after all, carried exotic and luxury items, as well as low-value commodities such as salt, into distant regions for some time before this : if there was a profit in it, we may expect that the entrepreneurs would be available to carry the cheap yarn and piece-goods produced by the mills into the deep countryside.

Another factor of significance was that the mill-made products coming from England tended to be cloth (and yarn) of middle and high quality. The production of coarser cloth using low counts of yarn remained primarily the concern of the Indian manufacturers. Most of the cheaper materials required by the rural poor continued, then, to be provided by the handloom weavers, whose products were preferred besides on account of their greater durability. This last advantage was lost to some extent as the finer, more even, but less durable machine-made yarn came to be used by the weavers; but the local cloths intended for poorer consumers appear to have maintained their position fairly well through the nineteenth century - although, here too, there was probably some displacement of part-time weavers by the more specialised handicraftsmen who were forced into the production of coarser cloth.

To these factors we may add the survival of old tastes (for part mixtures, traditional patterns and so on),⁵² plus the cheapness of hand products for those who could provide their own raw material. And while importance of the first of these declined as tastes changed rapidly in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the second, it seems to me, proved to be of great significance even as the century wore on.

At the time of the American Civil War, European cloth interests expressed concern that the shortfall in the Indian demand for their products might have been "occasioned by increased indigenous manufacture". The official enquiry in what was then the North-Western Provinces (later, the Agra province of the United Provinces) revealed, however, that these very years had seen "a marked and distressing contraction of local manufacture. This ... is less observable in the western districts, where perhaps from a sixth to a fourth of the looms in the cities and towns (though not in the outlying villages) have stopped working. But in the eastern districts the trade has altogether decayed, and within the last two or three years [i.e. 1860-1 to 1863] the falling-off is shown to have reached a third, in some districts a half, of the looms; and even of the remainder a large portion are only worked occasionally."⁵³

The different consequences in the "eastern" and "western" districts of UP flowed, according to officials, from the fact that the "eastern districts" (including all of Banaras and Gorakhpur Divisions, and Awadh) grew little cotton, whereas the crop was grown on a large scale in the "western districts" (including, in this classification, Allahabad district and Bundelkhand). Of the cotton they produced the cultivators of the "western districts" were reported to be retaining for domestic use a quarter to a sixth, even in this period of inflated demand and soaring prices for the raw material. From this, then, the women spun the thread,

and weavers were hired to make specified kinds of cloth. "It seems to be in this way", the Government report noted, "that a large proportion of the population in the western districts are supplied with clothing."⁵⁴

What this enquiry brings home is that handloom production survived in these years of crisis, not in the tracts that were away from the railroads but in the areas where cotton was grown and where it was, consequently, still available to men with meagre resources. Thus, in a period of marked inflation, it was not so much the lack of penetration of wider market forces and, with them, of European manufactures, but the availability of the raw material at an accessible price that ensured the continuation of the traditional industry.⁵⁵ In districts such as Azamgarh and Ghazipur, Gorakhpur and Banaras in eastern UP, too, any cotton grown for local consumption may be expected to have helped the weavers survive. Yet here, even in the pockets where cotton was cultivated on a significant scale, the weaker position of the tenant-cultivators vis a vis the landowners and other exploiting classes would have rendered more difficult the possibility of retaining much of the produce for local use.⁵⁶ Consequently the contraction in handloom production was "marked and distressing". And all over UP, even in the western region, the weavers in the larger towns, "unable to provide the capital required to purchase material for their trade", forsook their looms.⁵⁷

Those that survived in the trade appear to have done so by a further reduction in their margin of profit. It was found in 1863 that the imports of foreign yarn had contracted sharply from the position of a decade earlier. Many weavers reverted in this era of rising prices to the use of local yarn (of low counts) and the production of cheaper, coarser cloths.⁵⁸ It was a situation evidently loaded with contradictions. The weavers of Mau told the Commissioner of Banaras in 1863 that "they would make the finest quality

[cloth] cheaper than the coarser, as the latter required more cotton than the former. The scarcity of the raw material reduced the value of their labours; and weavers in Mau and elsewhere were forced to accept work on much less advantageous terms than before. Indeed many who had so far succeeded in retaining a measure of independence, were now brought under the closer control of the moneylender.

Thus H.D. Robertson, Collector of Saharanpur, wrote of the "rather remarkable change" that had occurred in the weavers' social position as a result of the rise in cotton prices at the beginning of the 1860s. "Formerly the weavers in this district generally purchased the thread on their own account, ultimately realizing the profits from the sale of the manufactured article. Since the rise in the price of the raw material, it appears that the weavers have, as a general rule, been unable to do this, and that they have consequently now assumed the position of daily labourers, employed by shopkeepers and merchants who supply the thread and make their own profit on the cloth. The zamindars and even cultivators are also turning their attention to this new source of profit by engaging the weavers as labourers for the manufacture into cloth of a portion at any rate of their cotton crops. The weavers naturally feel this change has rendered their position by no means so independent as was formerly the case."⁶⁰

There had been periods of heavy demand and high prices for raw cotton earlier in the century, such as the phase after the end of the Napoleonic wars in Europe when prices reached a peak in 1818-19;⁶¹ but the exceptional circumstances of the early 1860s were not to be repeated in the decades that followed. Indeed, while the prices of foodgrains and most industrial crops appear to have risen in the late nineteenth century, the price of raw cotton seems to have been relatively stagnant -- in part, no doubt, because of the sharp increase somewhat earlier and the generally expanded area under

the crop. From time to time, however, there were wide fluctuations. "The trade in cotton and its price have been subject to wide fluctuations owing to variations in the supply and demand", commented J.A. Robertson in a summary statement published in 1908. "In the third year of the American War the index [of cotton prices : 1873=100] rose as high as 229, and in 1899, when the crop was a failure [sic.] and American cotton was extremely cheap, it fell to 59. The latest rise ... [followed] on the gigantic speculation in American cotton; ... the price of January 1904, gives an index of 103, and during the same month the figures for yarn and cloth are 74 and 85 respectively."⁶²

Whatever the reigning price at a particular moment, there are indications of an increasing centralization and control over the disposal of the cotton produce, as mill agents and agents for exporters penetrated further into the cotton growing tracts and improved the mechanism for the extraction of the raw material in the later half of the nineteenth century.⁶³ Thus, while the lower price of yarn would certainly have benefited many weavers, other weavers (as well as spinners) would presumably have been deprived of the customary access to their raw materials. Seasonal fluctuations in supply and demand could scarcely alter this situation : they probably contributed only to the prevailing sense of instability.

With all this, the generally inflationary trend of the period and the increasing severity of the competition they faced in the urban and rural markets tended to drive the handloom weavers more and more to the wall. Certainly by the end of the century their poverty and their dependance was being widely remarked on. As one participant in an Industrial Conference held at Naini Tal in 1907 put it, "In the majority of cases the weaver at present lives a hand-to-mouth existence; his method of working, the

appliances used by him, and the amount he has to pay to the money-lender to obtain money to purchase his materials, out down his earnings to such a narrow limit that they are barely sufficient to supply his daily wants. "With the decline of the weaving industry", to quote another report of the same period "and the natural growth of population [a popular but simple explanation], the struggle for existence is severe".⁶⁵

It was an index of the extremely depressed condition of the weavers at that time and again in the nineteenth century, when a region was struck by famine or some other calamity, they were among the classes found to be most in need of special relief or charity.⁶⁶ The weavers had been forced "to give up their looms and take to the pick-axe and the shovel", wrote an official from Lalitpur district in Jhansi Division during the crisis of the American Civil War. In this sparsely populated tract, where it had earlier been difficult to obtain labourers for works of any kind, it was now found that whole families of weavers "flock to get work, and...many have left the district."⁶⁷

We have other kinds of evidence, too, pointing to the deteriorated condition of the weaving community as the nineteenth century wore on. In 1888 he was far better off than he is now". This was the view expressed in 1888 by Raza Julaha of village Usia in Ghazipur district, when the Government of India ordered a country-wide enquiry to establish whether or not the poorer classes suffered from a "daily insufficiency" of food. Raza was about seventy. His family consisted of his wife, two married sons, their three wives and three small children. Like many other weaving households, this one possessed no land. Raza and his wife were now too old to weave. The older son had left for Calcutta a few months earlier in search of employment and "since his departure had not been heard of". The second son could weave no more than five yards of cloth a day : in any case, as Raza observed, the consumption of country cloth had greatly diminished on account of the import of European piece-goods. The income of this son was

supplemented a little by the earnings of the women when they got work at harvest time. "I question", wrote the Collector of Ghazipur, "whether such a family as this does not often know what the meaning of a fast is, and whether their daily meal is so regular and sufficient as it should be. A few such families could undoubtedly be found in every populous village".⁶⁸

The profits to be obtained from spinning and weaving at any time in the nineteenth century are hard to establish. "It may be said with certainty, however", C.A. Silberrad wrote at the close of the period, "that it is rare to earn more than 1 anna a day by spinning or $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas by weaving, while in many cases the earnings are much less".⁶⁹ Raza's son appears to have been paid an anna for weaving five yards of cloth, i.e., a day's work.⁷⁰ In Allahabad district, a decade later, Silberrad found that rural weavers earned on average 3 pies per yard and $4\frac{1}{2}$ pies per yard (i.e., $\frac{1}{4}$ anna and just over $\frac{1}{3}$ of an anna) respectively for weaving yarn into coarse fabrics known as gazi and garha, and 6 pies ($\frac{1}{2}$ anna) per yard for weaving a dhoti.⁷¹ These rates compared very poorly indeed with the $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 annas daily that a casual labourer could earn ^{/same} about the time.⁷² The weaver's problem was that he was a poor competitor for agricultural labour where so many sturdier men from the untouchable or other cultivating castes were available for the job. Hence, although in severely straitened circumstances, many handloom weavers carried on; looms were sometimes "kept up morely in order that the children may not forget how to weave."⁷³

VI

It is perhaps necessary to reiterate that the mass of spinners and weavers had probably never shared in the prosperity derived from the textile trade. Their dependance, too, was often of long standing. It will not do to exaggerate the changes that the late eighteenth or the nineteenth century brought in these respects. Yet while survival at subsistence, or slightly above subsistence level may not have been a novel experience for many artisans, the decline of spinning and weaving and other artisanal crafts in our period removed important sources of supplementary income for the villages at a time when supplementary incomes were direly needed. The significance of the decline of traditional industry might be better appreciated if such industry is situated within the context of the rural economy as a whole.

An idea of the importance of spinning and weaving and other traditional crafts in the economy of the rural poor can perhaps be gleaned from George Grierson's 'Notes' on the district of Gaya in Bihar. In the 1880s Grierson conducted a detailed enquiry into the economic condition of cultivators in Gaya, recording statistics of area, outturn, rent, cost of production of different crops, and so on, for over 3500 holdings. He wrote after the conclusion of his survey: "One of the most remarkable facts about cultivation in Gaya is that it does not, as a rule, pay for its expenses. Having quoted the relevant figures regarding size of holdings and average income and expenditure, he went on: "If we exclude other sources of income 70 per cent of the holdings of the district do not support their cultivators. Those of them who have sufficient clothing and two meals a day must, in addition to cultivation, have other sources of livelihood"⁷⁵

As regards the sources of supplementary income, Grierson collected information from 163 families, comprising 1210 persons, in 4 villages. Their net income from agriculture, he found, was Rs.9, 298, from other sources another Rs.5,810. Of the latter, the largest individual items were cattle-farming (Rs.1,027), "service" (Rs.859) and artisanal work (Rs.814). It is likely that the positions of "service" and artisanal work would earlier have been reversed. But now, about Rs.600 was brought home as wages by men working as chaukidars, peons, etc. within the district of Gaya, whether in the village or elsewhere. The remaining Rs.259 under "service" was the amount remitted by men serving in Calcutta, Hooghly and other places outside the district, as darwangs, peons, domestic servants or weavers in jute mills. "The Howrah mills", commented Grierson, "are full of Gaya Jolahas."⁷⁶

Conditions in Gaya were not markedly different from those that obtained in the nearby districts of eastern UP, and villagers here may be expected to have relied in a similar way on a number of other occupations to supplement their income from agriculture. The tract as a whole was quite densely populated and, well before the close of the nineteenth century, aided by the rigorous land revenue administration and legal system established by the British, the problems of sub-division and fragmentation of holdings and rural indebtedness were already becoming evident. In this situation large numbers of the rural poor turned to the only avenue of alternative employment open to them, migrating, with their Gaya counterparts, to the industrial belt of eastern India, the tea gardens of Assam and, as indentured labourers, to plantations abroad. An official report on Azamgarh noted that during the decade 1891-1900 emigrants from the district had remitted an average of Rs.13,00,000 per annum to their relatives at home : it was probable, the report went on, that "but for this addition to their earnings, it would be impossible for the people to support themselves by agriculture alone."⁷⁷

In 1881, the number of people living in the four districts of the Calcutta metropolitan area who came from outside Bengal was found to be 279,621 or 7 per cent of the total number of inhabitants. In the twenty years, 1891 to 1911, the number of immigrants from Bihar, Orissa and UP swelled by over 100 per cent, to 695,855. UP alone provided about a third of the total number of migrants throughout this period: 95,346 in 1891, 188,543 in 1901, and 235,487 in 1911. Of the UP migrants, by far the largest number came from a handful of districts in the east of the province, notably Ghazipur which contributed nearly 29,000 migrants in 1901, Azamgarh and Ballia (nearly 25,000 each in the same year), Banaras (over 20,000) and Jaunpur (over 17,000).⁷⁸

Nor may this be read as a simple case of changing one occupation for another. The point has been argued forcefully that the migrants from these areas had no choice in the matter.⁷⁹ The nature of this migration was quite without precedent in the history of the sub-continent, and the personal crises that it created - though we know precious little about all this yet - were entirely new.

VII

"The history of the weavers in the nineteenth century is haunted by the legend of better days."⁸⁰ E.P. Thompson's observation on English weavers is equally applicable to the weavers of eastern UP. "Fifty years ago ...": Raza's statement echoes a nostalgia found in many of the reports coming in from northern and central India in the later nineteenth century.⁸¹ We know that Raza's comment was accurate in a quite specific sense: the

conditions of trade in handloom products were distinctly more favourable in the 1830s, than half a century later. Yet Raza's lament was the result not only of the decline of his particular craft, but of a more extensive dislocation that affected all sections of the society in which he lived. The growing trend of migration was one indication of this barely comprehended change all around.

Migration had in earlier times been an emergency remedy during famines and other situations of crisis. Frequently, it had been used by weaving communities and other oppressed classes as a weapon of protest. As Ranajit Guha says of eighteenth century Bengal, "The primitive or one might say natural method — the only method in fact — yet known to the ryot for enforcing a bargain was migration".⁸² It had been a collective action that not only succeeded occasionally in winning for peasants and artisans the concessions that they sought, but also emphasized their identity of interests and sense of community. By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, much of this was being eroded, the wholesale migration of a community either to escape from oppression or to look for greener pastures was no longer possible,⁸³ and a collective act of protest had been transformed into an individual act of desperation. The folklore of the Bhojpuri region (eastern UP and western Bihar) captures some of the hopes and travails that arose out of this transformation :

"Poorab ke deshwa men kailee nokaria
Te karee sonwan ke rojigar jania ho".

(one who gets a job in the East
can fill his house with gold).

But also : "Railia no bairee
Jahajia na bairee 84
Nokaria bairee na".

(Railways are not our enemy,
Nor are the steamships : Our
real enemy is naukri [Service]).

At the same time, the resistance of the lower classes in the region tended towards a new extremism and violence. The history of the weavers illustrates the point well. The Julahas (or Muslim weavers) were described repeatedly in the nineteenth century as a particularly 'bigoted' and 'fanatical' community who time and again took the lead in communal rioting. Weavers were singled out in contemporary reports from various parts of northern India as being among the most militant elements in the rising of 1857-59. They were prominent in other kinds of mass violence too — such as grain riots. "It is significant of the hand-to-mouth existence of the weaving community", wrote an observer in central India, "that at the time of the riots which in September 1896 followed in the Nagpur Division close on the sudden rise in prices that heralded the famine, the weavers were prominent among the ring leaders."⁸⁵

The new elements in these outbursts perhaps need emphasis : 'bigotry and 'fanaticism', sectarian strife and (here, as in grain riots) hatred of the bania and the moneylender. This last appears, contrary to one's expectations, to have been a quite novel phenomenon. In medieval north India, the bhakti saints had extolled the services of the moneylender, and even likened the relationship between peasant and moneylender to that between a bhakt (devotee) and bhagwan (object of worship, god).⁸⁶ By the latter half of the eighteenth century, and more clearly in the century that followed, the popular perception of this relationship changed radically. Thus the term nahajan (substantial trader, moneylender) had come to be used in UP in the later nineteenth century as the Kahars' slang for human excrement. And a folk-ditty recorded in the region at the time, ran as follows :

"Sāt sūnarā nau thaggā;
Sau thag Baniya ēk;
Sau baniye ko nārke,
Garho nahajan ōk".

(i.e. Seven Sunārs [goldsmiths] equal nine thugs, a hundred thugs one Bania. But you need to kill one hundred Banias to create one Mahajan).⁸⁷

The fact that the bigger traders and moneylenders in the weaving centres of eastern UP tended to be Hindus, and that members of the hard-pressed communities of Muslim weavers were among their chief clients, certainly contributed to the atmosphere of communal animosity. It comes as small surprise to find, for instance, in the weaving town of Mubarakpur which was the scene of extended friction between Hindus and Muslims in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century and of two major outbreaks of rioting in 1813 and 1842, that Julahas were among the chief protagonists and Hindu moneylenders among their primary targets : in 1813 the houses of two moneylenders were attacked and a merchant moneylender called Rikhei Sahu killed; in 1842 some five moneylenders' households were plundered and relatives and servants found inside two of these houses were killed.⁸⁸ But growing communal feelings were probably as much a reflection of the loss of earlier community, of a search for identity in a world that appeared to be crumbling. The community of groups like the Julahas, grounded in a common heritage, in common occupations and actions in the past, was now severely threatened. Many individuals broke away — in order to seek a better fortune for themselves and their families. But there is evidence, from the same period, of a community struggle to prevent the obliteration of their culture and way of life. One aspect of this struggle was the Julahas' underlining of their Islamic identity. Another, about which we know less, was an extended battle against the factory system.

VIII

At the turn of the present century a Kayasth entrepreneur set up a factory for the production of cloth in Mau. Immediately, however, he came up against a serious obstacle. The Mau Julaha refused to take up employment in his factory "even for double the wage that he earns outside."⁸⁹ Rai Bahadur Goshain Bhawanipuri had encountered exactly the same difficulty a little earlier in Banaras.⁹⁰

Behind this resistance, and their sense of isolation and loss, lay not only the straitened material circumstances of the weavers and spinners but also the memories and self-consciousness and pride of living people. The cloth-manufacturers of Azamgarh district serve as a good example.

The handicraftsmen of Mau could trace the beginnings of their position as an important manufacturing class back to the reign of Shah Jahan. The parganah of Maunath Bhanjan was at the time assigned to the Emperor's daughters, Jahanara and Chimunee Begum, "for their supply with cloth and sugar, the two great staples of the place", and its chief town (Mau) appears to have been named Jahanabad. Under the patronage of the two princesses, the town flourished. "Substantial buildings were erected, a large market place built, and every means employed to induce persons to resort to the town and take up their abode there". The town quickly grew to have 84 mohallas (residential areas) and 360 mosques. Julahas (Muslim weavers), Katuas (Hindu spinners) and traders constituted a large proportion of its population. An important cotton cloth manufacturing industry developed, and the subsequent establishment of an imperial customs post at Mau indicates the volume of traffic that passed through it.⁹¹

It is scarcely surprising that Mau's skilled cloth producers, thus promoted to a place of honour by the orders of the Imperial Court, should display deep pride and a strong sense of brotherhood. Communities of skilled artisans have everywhere tended to be proud of their independence and their skills. The Julahas of northern India have made a determined effort, over a long period, to overthrow the derisive, even contemptuous, view that other sections of the society seem to have had of them. To others' derivation of the name Julaha from the Arabic juhala (meaning "the ignorant class"), for instance, they responded with the suggestion that it was derived from jila (decorated), jal (net) or ujla (lighted up, or white) - from which last perhaps came one of the other names that the Julahas used for themselves in the nineteenth century, nurbaf or "weavers of light".⁹² Already in the later nineteenth century (and more aggressively since then) Muslim weavers in many parts of northern India had come to reject the name Julaha altogether, and insisted that they be called Ansaris (after a claimed Arabic ancestor who practised the art of weaving) or Momins (that is, the faithful, or people of honour).⁹³

Of the Ansaris, or Julahas, of UP it was said at the end of the last century not only that they were generally "inclined to fanaticism", but that they displayed "a strong clannish feeling, helping one another, and to a great extent settling disputes between members of their own caste among themselves".⁹⁴ Those of Mau, Mubarekpur and Kopaganj in Azamgarh district would seem to have been among the leaders in this regard. J.R. Reid writing in the 1870s reported the existence of an interesting social custom that was peculiar to them. All marriages in the community took place together on one day fixed for the purpose every year.⁹⁵ The object was to reduce wasteful expenditure. The custom showed both the solidarity and the single-mindedness of the Azamgarh Ansaris, factors whose influence persisted well into the twentieth century.

Over time the weavers of Mau appear to have attained a special status and a position of leadership relative to other, nearby weaving communities. In the 1880s, the Settlement Officer of Ghazipur (the district adjoining Azamgarh on the south-east) reported that the district had "no counterparts to Mau and Mubarakpur", and that the district's major weaving centre - Banka, near Bahadurganj in parganah Zahurabad - was simply "an offshoot from Mau".⁹⁶ The Katus of Mau were similarly said to be connected with those of Banaras, Bahadurganj (in Ghazipur) and Tanda (in Faizabad), apart from Kopaganj and Ghosi in Azamgarh district. They, too, claimed a distinguished ancestry. They were Bais Rajputs, according to their story, who had once been imprisoned for resistance to authority and released on the condition that they followed the woman's pursuit of spinning. They had then moved from Bheri Tal in Gorakhpur, first settling at Ghosi, then moving on to Mau and from there, at a later stage, spreading out to the various places mentioned above. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, they maintained their status as a distinct caste whose members were the sacred-thread, traditionally a privilege of the twice-born.⁹⁷

The weavers and spinners of Mau, Mubarakpur and Kopaganj may have been a special case. But they were far from being unique in their self-image or their pride. The weavers of Tanda in Faizabad district, Jais in Rae Bareilly district and other such centres traced back the origins of their privileged status to the days of the early Nawabs of Awadh and of their skilled production to a time much earlier. Thus the ancestors of Madar Baksh, whose figured muslin fabrics were said to be "the finest specimens of this work", had been resident in Jais, Rae Bareilly district, for eight centuries (as the family account had it.)⁹⁸ Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a member of the family, Bhika, evolved a style of inter-weaving words, flowers and so on into patterns on fine muslins. He then devoted himself to the preparation of a kurta and pagri of the finest materials, elaborately interwoven with the

names and praises of the Nawab of Awadh, Asaf-ud-daulah. The Nawab, greatly pleased with Bhika's effort, made to him a large grant of land in perpetuity. Later, Bhika made a similar kurja and pagri for Sikandar Jah, the Nizam of Hyderabad, and received for it a gift of Rs.5000 - for which he was waylaid, plundered and killed by highway robbers while on his way home.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Bhika's direct descendants still held the land granted by Asaf-ud-daulah. They had abandoned their original craft, which passed to a younger branch of the family into which Madar Baksh was born. Madar Baksh specialised in the manufacture of caps and handkerchiefs (rumals) with words in Arabic or other languages interwoven into them. In the 1890s, some of his caps fetched as much as Rs.10, some of his rumals upto Rs.100. He took $\frac{3}{2}$ to 4 months to weave a rumal that sold for Rs.50. As the only working member of his family, Madar Baksh will certainly have been under pressure to weave more, and if necessary slightly less 'superior' goods. As far as is known, it was not a pressure to which he succumbed.

Whereas the line of Madar Baksh died out after him, the weaving industry of Mau and numerous other centres survived, as we know, in altered circumstances. How the developments of the nineteenth century, and the far more intrusive presence of usurious capital at every stage of the manufacturing process from the procurement of cotton to the sale of cloth, were viewed by the weaving communities of UP was noticed by some observers even at the time. We have earlier quoted from H.D. Robertson's comments on the loss of their independent position by the weavers of Saharanpur district at the time of the cotton famine in the early 1860s. Robertson concluded his remarks on the weavers' loss of independence with the following observation: "I generally found that they viewed this as more serious than the loss of income, which has undoubtedly been considerable."⁹⁹

The vigorous and extended resistance offered to the factory system of production by weavers in many different parts of India (as elsewhere) is in line with this response. When weavers in Mau expressed their willingness to make the finest cloth "cheaper than the coarser" during the American Civil War they testified to the unprecedented reversal that had taken place: their labour and skills had become an entirely subsidiary consideration compared to the cost of the raw material. In some senses the plight of these men captures the tendency of the age as a whole — which was to reduce the man behind the loom to practical insignificance. What the Kayasth entrepreneur of Mau wanted at the turn of the century, and Kai Bahadur Goshain Bhawanipuri in Banaras a little earlier, was not craftsmen working on their own to produce articles of beauty, but more or less intelligent employees who could be told how to watch over a powerloom functioning at speed and producing cloth of a uniform quality on a larger and larger scale for distribution in farflung markets. The weaver reaction, as we know, was a general refusal to take up employment in their factories.

There can be no explanation of this in simple "economic" terms. The Indian Industrial Commission's later strictures against the Indian artisan's "conservatism, lack of ambition and present inability to appreciate a higher standard of living,"¹⁰⁰ missed the point in this regard. The resistance of the artisans was a struggle for an autonomous culture as much as, if not more than a protest against material deprivation. What the weavers of eastern UP appear to have feared above all was an alienation from their means of production,¹⁰¹ and a fall from the position of proud independent producers to that of working dependants or mere wage earners. What they resented most was the indignity of being ordered about.¹⁰²

IX

It has been ~~one~~ aim of this paper to suggest that the decline of an artisanal industry in northern India in the nineteenth century cannot be measured merely in terms of the numbers employed in the craft: it must be viewed, too, in the light of their displacement from the position ^{of} manufacturing quality goods to one of producing inferior ones. It has been argued also that the process that has been designated the 'de-industrialisation' of India, which we may never be able to quantify satisfactorily, was part of a broader economic dislocation that came about as a result of the progressive integration of the local economy with the economy of a commercially and then, industrially powerful metropolis. Closely related to this is another point. While there were, without doubt, fluctuations in the standing of traditional crafts in one region and another long before the period here under study, the decline of the colonial era was of a rather different quality. For it occurred, as the UP example amply demonstrates, at a time when the buying up of property and other rights in land (both cultivated and waste), combined with a rigorous legal system and (though this is a relatively late problem) the growth of the population which altered the man-land ratio, had made a move to other areas or alternative employment far from easy.

The common objection that all this was inevitable, that older, less efficient modes of production must necessarily give way to more rational and modern ones, is deficient on two counts. The first, put simply, is that it overlooks the history of the generations who lived through the alleged "period of transition" : it is as though Raza and his untraced son might never have been. Secondly, it fails to take account of the particularities of the colonial experience. This is where the very slow growth of modern industry created

special problems, in India as in so many other Asian and African countries. There was a large scale disruption of old forms, without a real transformation. The handicraftsmen of old, like vast numbers of the poorer peasants and agricultural labourers, found their means of livelihood in jeopardy : but their links with their rural homes were not completely severed. What was in western Europe a relatively short-lived if traumatic period of change became in the sub-continent and elsewhere a chronic condition.¹⁰³

In eastern UP, the reduced state of the artisanal classes, the survival of the weavers on sufferance - at the mercy of the moneylender and in pitiable conditions,¹⁰⁴ the effort to eke out a living from minute plots of land, and the necessity of 'semi-permanent' migration, all this continued. In 1941 emigrants from the tahsil of Phulpur in Azamgarh district alone remitted a sum of over Rs.60 lakhs to their relatives and dependants at home.¹⁰⁵ In 1942 the Magistrate of the district recorded that the Julahas of Mau could still think of nothing but "their looms and their religion".¹⁰⁶

Footnotes:

- * UP refers to present day Uttar Pradesh; earlier, the United Provinces of Agra and Awadh (or Oudh).

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1. Among the recent contributions are D. Thorner: 'De-industrialisation in India', in D & A Thorner: Land and Labour in India (Bombay 1962); J. Krishnamurthy: 'Changes in the Composition of the Working Force in Manufacturing, 1901-51', Indian Economic and Social History Review (hereafter, IESHR), IV, 1 (1967); A.K. Bagchi: 'De-industrialisation in Gangetic Bihar, 1809-1901', in Essays in Honour of Prof. S.C. Sarkar (Delhi 1978) and 'De-industrialisation in India in the Nineteenth Century. Some Theoretical Implications', Journal of Development Studies, 12,2 (1976) (See also M. Vicziany's criticisms of Bagchi's findings in IESHR, XVI, 2, 1979, and Bagchi's reply in the same issue); and R. Chattopadhyaya: 'De-industrialisation in India Reconsidered', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. X, No.12 (22 March 1975).
2. There is a considerable and growing body of literature on the textile industry in this period. See, e.g., Irfan Habib: 'Indian Textile Industry in the 17th Century', in Essays in Honour of S.C. Sarkar, and K.N. Chaudhuri: 'The Structure of Indian Textile Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries', IESHR XI, 2-3 (1974). For the different levels of production and the role of intermediaries, see esp. Hamida Hossein: 'The Structure of Cotton Textile Production for the East India Company, 1750-1800 (M. Phil. thesis under preparation at the University of Oxford), Ch.II; H. Hossein: 'The Alienation of Weavers: Impact of the Conflict between the Revenue and Commercial Interests of the East India Company, 1750-1800', IESHR, XVI,3 (1979); S. Arasaratnam: 'Weavers, Merchants and Company: The Handloom Industry in South-Eastern India 1750-1790', IESHR, XVII, 3(1980); G. Bhadra: 'The Role of Pykars in the Silk Industry of Bengal, c. 1765-1830' (Revised & Expanded version of paper presented at the Indian History Congress, Aligarh 1975); & S. Bhattacharya: 'Industrial Production, Technology & Market Structure in Eastern India, 1757-1857' (forthcoming, 'Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol.II).
3. See the papers by Bhadra, Bhattacharya and Hossein cited in f.n.2; also M.M. Martin, ed: The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India, Vol.III (1838, reprint New Delhi 1976), pp.971-8.

4. Bhattacharya : 'Industrial Production 1757-1857'; for the silk industry, also R.K. Gupta : 'Birbhum Silk Industry: A Study of its Growth & Decline' IESHR, XVII, (1980).
5. Cf. H. Hossein: 'The Alienation of Weavers', p.324. As against this, it is necessary to note K.N. Chaudhuri's evidence regarding the strength of the specialised weavers' bargaining position, 'The Structure of Indian Textile Industry', p.155.
6. Baburnamah, tr. A.S. Beveridge (1970 reprint), p.487.
7. Cf. A. Siddiqi : Agrarian Change in a Northern Indian State UP 1819-33 (Oxford 1973); E. Whitcombe : Agrarian Conditions in Northern India, Vol. one. UP under British Rule, 1860-1900 (California 1971); C.A. Bayly: 'The Age of Hiatus, the North Indian Economy and Society, 1830-1850' in C.H. Philips & M.D. Wainright, eds : Indian Society and the Beginnings of Modernisation (London 1976); Bayly : 'Town Building in North India, 1790-1830', Modern Asian Studies, 9, 4, (1975).
8. Board of Trade (Commercial) Proceedings - hereafter, BTC - (West Bengal State Archives, Calcutta), Vol.172, No.33, Letter from Resident, Gorruckpore, 26 March 1804, and 'Report on Commerce and Customs of Ceded Provinces' enclosed with Letter from Reporter-General of External Commerce, Patna, 20 Oct. 1803.
9. Ibid., para 115.
10. J.R. Reid: Report on the Settlement of the Temporarily Settled Parganas of Azamgarh District 1877 (Allahabad 1881), 14; cf. also E.T. Stokes: The Peasant and the Raj (Cambridge 1978), 67.
11. BTC, Vol.172, No.33, Reporter-General's Letter, 20 Oct. 1803, para-123.
12. Ibid., Report from Board of Trade-Governor General in Council, 17 Dec., 1803, para-79.
13. Ibid., para 51; also 'Account of Goods Received from the Ceded Provinces upto the present time' (from Export Warehouse Keeper, 29 Mar. 1804).
14. BTC, Vol.166, Pt. II, No.66, Resident, Mow & Azimgurh - President and Members of Board of Trade, 16 Aug. 1803, paras 8 & 20.

15. BTC, Vol.172, No.33, 'Report on Commerce & Customs of Ceded Provinces', para-77.
16. Ibid., Report from Board of Trade, 17 Dec., 1803, paras 55 & 92.
17. By 1806, the "investment" in Mau-Azamgarh piece-goods was already down to S. Rs.135,000; in 1818 it was a little over S. Rs.117,000 for the combined aurungs of Banaras, Mau and Azamgarh; BTC, Vol.196, no.19 of 1 April 1806, and no.70 of 13 Feb. 1818. For the experience of the sugar trade, which took a far larger share of the Company's investments for most of this period, see Shahid Amin: 'Sugarcane Cultivation in Gorakhpur, UP, c.1890-1940' (Oxford University D. Phil thesis, 1979), pp.13 ff.
18. Figs. quoted in J. Thomason : Report on the Settlement of Chuklah Azimgarh, dated Agra, 16 Dec. 1837 (Art XV of Selections from the Records of Government, North-Western Provinces, Pt.XII-XXI, Agra 1855), p.131.
19. Ibid., 131-2.
20. Ibid., 128. Emphasis added.
21. Reid: Azamgarh Settlement Report 1877, 159.
22. Ibid., 159, 169 and also 144. Cf. also Whitcombe: Agrarian Conditions in Northern India, 252-70; Vicziany : 'The De-industrialisation of India in the Nineteenth Century: A Methodological Critique of A.K. Bagchi', IESHR, XVI, 2 (1979), and Bagchi's 'Reply'.
23. Thomason; Azimgarh Settlement Report, 1837, 130-1; Reid: Azamgarh Settlement Report, 1877, 170.
24. Ibid., 147.
25. W. Hoey: A Monograph on Trade and Manufactures in Northern India (Lucknow 1880), 28. See also Indian Industrial Commission 1916-18 Report (Calcutta 1918), para-225.
26. C.A. Silberrad: A Monograph on Cotton Fabrics produced in North-Western Provinces and Oudh (Allahabad 1898), 45-6. See also A. Blennerhassett: Monograph on the Cotton Fabrics of the Central Provinces (Allahabad 1898), 3.
27. Reid : Azamgarh SR, 169.
28. Ibid., 170.

29. Papers Connected with the Industrial Conference held at Naini Tal, 1907, 'Note by the Honourable Rai Sri Ram Bahadur, C.I.E. on the Handloom Industry', 44; A.C. Chatterji: Notes on the Industries of the United Provinces (1908), 10-11. For India as a whole, during the five years 1924-25 to 1928-29, handlooms still provided some 25% of the total consumption of about 5000 million yards of cloth, while 40% was supplied by Indian mills and about 35% was imported. Report of the UP Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee 1929-30, Vol.III (Allahabad 1930), 386-7.
30. This argument was put forward by M.D. Morris: 'Towards a Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History', IESHR, V, 1 (1968). It has been re-asserted by Vioziany : 'The De-industrialisation of India', p.158.
31. Hoey: Monograph ... on N. India, 28. A.F. Millett: Report on the Settlement of the Land Revenue of the Fyzabad District (Allahabad 1880), para-516; and Silberrad : Monograph ... on NWP & O, 32 & 46. For the same process in central India, see Blennerhassett : Monography .. on C.P.,
32. A.C. Turner : Census of India, 1931, United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol.XVIII, Pt.1 - Report (Allahabad 1933), 426.
33. Cf. Blennerhassett : Monograph ... on C.P., 2.
34. BTC, Vol.166, Pt.II, No.66, Resident Mow & Azimgurh-Board of Trade, 16 Aug., 1803, para-14.
35. Ibid., para-16.
36. Thomason : Azimgurh SR, 136-7.
37. J. Deloche, ed., Voyage en Inde du Comte de Modave, 1773-76 (Paris 1971), 140-1 (I am indebted to Aniruddha Ray for this reference and to Indrani Ray for translation from the French); Reid : Azamgarh SR, 150.
38. Ibid., 15.
39. BTC, Vol.166, Pt.II, No.66, Letter of Resident Mow & Azimgurh, 16 Aug., 1803, paras-13-20. For Mubarakpur, see Reid : Azamgarh SR, 148.
40. The quotations are from Thomason : Azimgurh SR; Reid: Azamgarh SR, 147 & 170.

41. Selections from the Records of Government, North-Western Provinces, Part XI (Allahabad 1864). Art IV - 'Information Regarding the Slackness of Demand for European Cotton Goods', 149. For the adjoining district of Ghazipur, e.g., where the number of looms at work fell by half from 7000, see *ibid*, 152.
42. Reid : Azamgarh SR, 168-9.
43. Silberrad= monograph, 46. The exports went chiefly to neighbouring areas in UP, Bihar & Central India, and a little also northwards to Nepal.
44. C.E. Crawford : Final Report on the 7th Settlement of the Azamgarh District of the United Provinces, 1908 (Allahabad 1908), p. 8; D.L. Drake-Brockman: Azamgarh: A Gazetteer. Being Vol. XXXIII of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh (Allahabad 1911), 62. See also H.R. Nevill: Allahabad Gazetteer: Vol. XXIII of the District Gazetteers of UP (Allahabad 1911), 273; H.R. Nevill: Benares Gazetteer: Vol. XXVI of the District Gazetteers of UP (Allahabad 1909), 27.
45. Drake-Brockman: Azamgarh District Gazetteer, 255. Sharp fluctuations have occurred since then as well. The national movement gave a considerable fillip to the indigenous handloom industry, especially in the 1920s & '30s. Then, the introduction of the power-loom in the 1960s restored the fortunes of the local cloth industry. Mau and Mubarakpur are probably bigger centres of weaving today than they were before; but the conditions of the trade now are very different.
46. Drake-Brockman : Azamgarh DG, 255.
47. Crommelin, the Commercial Resident for Mau and Azamgarh, was given a figure of about 10,000 as the population of Mau in 1803, which he considered exaggerated, however. But Reid in his report on the district in 1877 clearly declared his opinion that, in the 1780s, the town of Mau was "larger than now", Azamgarh SR, 15.
48. Such an equation is often made : of. C.E. Crawford : Report on the Settlement of the Azamgarh District 1908 p. 9.

49. Judgement in Trial no.13 of 1863, Court of A. Ross, Sub-Judge: Government Sheonarian Rai & others, given as Appendix D to 'Petition of Hindu Inhabitants of Mhow, to Secretary of State for India in Council' (1893?) (I am grateful to Shri D.N. Pandey of Mau, Azamgarh, for allowing me to consult this document which is preserved in the library of his late father, a prominent Hindu of the town); Drake-Brockman: Azamgarh DG, /62 It speaks of the transitory nature of the local weavers' trade in the nineteenth century that no one in Mau appears to be able to recall what exactly the dakhini pagri was and for what market it was produced.

50. Census of India, 1961. Vol.XV. UP. Pt.VII. Handicrafts Survey Monograph No. Cotton Textiles Industry in UP with special reference to Maunath Bhanjan, Azamgarh by R.I. Verma. Mubarakpur suffered a similar dislocation. Famous for a silk-and-cotton mixture like satin, woven into fabrics known as sangli and ghalta, the weavers of Mubarakpur, it was said at the turn of the century had "owing to the trade depression...been compelled to resort to the weaving of cotton handkerchiefs and pagris, which are now more in demand than satins"; Drake-Brockman: Azamgarh DG, 62.

Such dislocation was in fact a very widespread phenomenon. Hites Sanyal gives me the following example regarding Ramjiwanpur (Midnapur district) from his researches on West Bengal. Ramjiwanpur, situated near the junction of the old Burdwan-Puri main road and the chief trading road from Midnapur towards the north-west, and surrounded by a number of smaller cloth-manufacturing villages, was the nodal point of a thriving inter-district and also longer-distance trade in textiles at the beginning of the nineteenth century. At this time, the cloths produced in the region were chiefly gara fine cotton cloth, silks and some tassar. For several decades from the early nineteenth century, local manufacturers were able to concentrate their attention on silks and fine cotton cloths, for which there was considerable demand. Sometime around the middle of the century, silks began to lose their importance, and coarser cotton dhotis and garis joined the finer cotton cloths as the chief products of the region. By the end of the century the market for the fine cottons had also collapsed, and the weavers were occupied in the production only of coarse cotton cloths for a local market.

51. Blennerhassett : Monograph on CP, 5.
52. A. Yusuf Ali (comp.): A Monograph on Silk Fabrics Produced in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh (Allahabad 1900), 103, writes of Azangarh : "In silk fabrics, especially of the mixed kind manufactured in this district, there is a peculiar adaptation to local conditions and prejudices, which enables the industry to hold its own, or at least to decline less slowly than it would otherwise have done"! For a different view of the significance of old tastes, see Silberrad's monograph, 46.
53. 'Slackness of Demand for European Cotton Goods', 116.
54. Ibid, 119.
55. Silberrad, writing 1898, accounted it as a specially powerful argument in favour of handmade cloth in the cotton-growing districts : the women of the cultivator's household spin some of their home-grown cotton into yarn, which the Kori then weaves for them; Monograph ... on NWP & O, 46.
56. Cf., for the example of sugarcane cultivators in an era of considerable expansion of the area under the crop and, of the establishment of modern factories for the refining of sugar, Shahid Amin: 'Sugarcane Cultivation in Gorakhpur, c.1890-1940', passim.
57. 'Slackness of Demand', 119.
58. Ibid., 118.
59. Ibid., 148.
60. Ibid., 121.
61. Siddiqui : Agrarian Change in a Northern Indian State, 155.
62. The Imperial Gazetteer of India. The Indian Empire. Vol. III. (Oxford 1908), 465. D.R. Gadgil : The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times, 1860-1939 (Delhi 1972), 21-2, 65, and E. Whitecombe : Agrarian Conditions in Northern India, 102-3, 178-9 and Fig. 3 at end of book, present some of the evidence regarding general price movements during this period.
63. Cf. M. Vicziány : 'Bombay Merchants & Structural Changes in the Export Community, 1850-80', in K.N. Chaudhuri & C.J. Dewey, eds: Economy & Society. Essays in Indian Economic & Social History (Delhi 1979).

64. Papers connected with Industrial Conference Nainital 1907, 44. See also Indian Industrial Commission Report, 7.
65. Drake-Brockman : Azamgarh DG, 118.
66. Papers connected with the Industrial Conference. Nainital 1907, 44; R. Baird-Smith : Report on the Famine of 1860-61 (Roorkee, May 1861), 31; F. Honvey (comp.)-A Narrative of the Drought and Famine which prevailed in the North-Western Provinces during 1868, 1869 & 1870 (Allahabad 1871), Gorakhpur Commissioner's Record Room, Dept. XIII, File 40/1905-9, 'Rules of the Relief of Distressed Weavers'.
67. 'Slackness of Demand for European Cotton Goods', 146.
68. Reports on the Condition of the Lower Classes of the Population of India (Revenue & Agriculture Dept., Dec. 1888. Famine. Progs. Nos. 1-24), Report from Banaras Division, para 17. Blennerhassett, Monograph .. on C.P. (1898) 3, writes of how thirty years ago, the weavers were "a prosperous community common weavers, let alone those of special skill, earning Rs.50 p.m., whereas now the average income was probably as low as Rs.5 a month.
69. Silbernerd : Monograph on ... NWP & O., 49.
70. Condition of Lower Classes, Banaras Division Report, para - 17.
71. Silberrad : Monograph, 46.
72. Reid: Azamgarh Settlement, 129; A.K. Bagchi : Private Investment in India 1900-39 (Cambridge 1972), 221, n.8.
73. 'Slackness of Demand for European Cotton Goods', 152.
74. G.A. Grierson : Notes on the District of Gaya (Calcutta 1893), 91.
75. Ibid, 95. Emphasis in the original.
76. Ibid, 107.

77. Drake-Brockman : Azamgarh D.C. 118. J.R. Reid noted in 1877 that employment on public works in Azamgarh district did not compensate for the loss of service "in the Native Army and with Native Princes" from which "extraneous source a good deal of money used to come into this part of the country", cited in E. Whitcombe : Agrarian Conditions in Northern India, p. 140.
78. R. Das Gupta : 'Factory Labour in Eastern India : Sources of Supply, 1855-1946', IESHR, XIII, 3 (1976) pp.289-91, 310, 312.
79. L. Chakravarty : 'Emergence of an Industrial Labour Force in a Dual Economy - British India, 1880-1920', IESHR, XV, 3 (1978).
80. E.P. Thompson : The Making of the English Working Class (Pelican, London 1968), 297.
81. Cf. Blennerhassett : Monograph ... on CP, p. 1.
82. Report on an Investigation of the Gauripur Raj Estate Archives by R. Guha (Annual Report, Regional Record Survey Committee, West Bengal, 1955-56); p. 29. I am grateful to Gautam Bhadra for drawing my attention to this report.
83. There were a few exceptions in special circumstances, such as migration in times of famine, or the hijrat of Patidar peasants from Kheda and Surat districts during the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-31 which was made possible by "the jigsaw-like juxtaposition of British and Baroda territory in the area"; D. Hardiman : 'The Crisis of the Lesser Patidars : Peasant Agitations in Kheda, Gujarat, 1917-34', in D.A. Low, ed. : Congress and the Raj (London & Delhi 1977), 63.
84. Quoted in D.P. Saxena : Rururban Migration in India. Causes and Consequences (Bombay 1977), 175, 178.
85. Blennerhassett : Monograph on ... CP, p.4.
86. I owe this point to Gautam Bhadra. For an elaboration, see his 'Mughal Juge Bhartiya Krishi Arthaniti te Sroni Vinyas O Sroni Dwanda', Anya Artha, 7 (January-February 1975).

87. Both these examples are from W. Crooke : A Rural and Agricultural Glossary for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh (Calcutta 1888), 181. 16.
88. UP Regional Archives, Allahabad, COG (Gorakhpur), Judicial, Azangarh, Vol.6 File 47, 'Outbreak in the Town of Mubarikpur, Azangarh 1845'. Drake-Brockton Azangarh DG, 261-2. For a fuller discussion of this subject, see my 'Sectarian Strife in the Bhojpuri Region, c.1806-1917' (forthcoming). 17.
89. Papers Connected with the Industrial Conference, Nainital (1907), p. 40. 18.
90. Loc. cit.
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