



在过去的六十年中，印度的农村经历了经济、政治和社会特征方面的许多转变。这些逐步形成而非突发的变化在过去曾未有过明显的间断，但在过去六十年所带来的影响却是相当瞩目的。总体说来，若印度农村与经济、政治体制比过去有更加紧密的联系，那么它们便也不像从前那样孤立、自治与自给自足了。

农业人口在印度仍占主导地位。尽管农业人口在总人口比例中有所下降，但还是有所持续的增长。从1951年至2001年间，印度农业人口由1.98亿增至7.42亿，而村庄的增长却不到10%。这意味着，伴随着传统的社会习俗与关系，这些村庄的规模增大了一倍，同样，这样的变化也不是瞬间形成的而是日积月累的。

传统的印度农村为等级制度机构，许多规定清楚的阶层将人们分隔开来。不同阶层间被诸如佃户与地主、债务人与债权人和主仆等垂直关系连接起来。这样的等级制度已丧失了曾经的秩序与连贯性，但多种不平等仍然存在。在过去，无论是高等级或低等极都或多或少接受固有的等级制度，或至少是容忍的。而现在不平等现象已不向以前那样被接受了，民主政治对农村不同阶层间分歧甚至冲突的利益的解释提供了帮助。

The Indian Village Since 1947

Andre Beteille

The Indian village has undergone many changes in its economic, political and social characteristics in the last sixty years. These changes have been incremental rather than radical. At no time has there been a clear and definite break with the past, but the cumulative effects of the changes of the last sixty years have been considerable. In general, there has been a reduction in the isolation, autonomy and self-sufficiency of the village which is now more closely integrated with the wider economic and political systems than it was in the past.

The Indian population is still predominantly rural. Although there has been a decline in the rural population as a proportion of the total population, there has been a continuous increase in it in absolute terms. Between 1951 and 2001, the number of villagers increased from around 198 million to around 742 million, whereas the number

of villages increased only marginally, by less than ten percent. This means that the average size of the village more than doubled within a span of fifty traditional social practices and relationships. Again, this change has been gradual rather than abrupt.

The traditional Indian village had a hierarchical structure. It was made up of many layers or strata with more or less well-defined boundaries separating them. The different strata were linked by vertical ties between tenants and landowners, debtors and creditors, and servants and masters. The hierarchy has lost the order and coherence of the past, but inequalities of many kinds continue to exist. In the past, the established hierarchy was more or less accepted, or at least tolerated, by the lower as well as the upper strata.

Inequalities are no longer accepted as before, and democratic politics has paved the way for the articulation of the divergent, even conflicting, interests of the different groups and strata in the village.

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