

# Ethnicity And Equality: The Shiv Sena Party And Preferential Policies In Bombay

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the European Parliament. It would certainly help, though, if the price of the book could be set a bit lower.

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**Ethnicity and Equality: The Shiv Sena Party and Preferential Policies in Bombay.** By Mary Fainsod Katzenstein. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979. Pp. 237. \$15.00.)

The central theme of this work can be easily stated: under what conditions does emergent nativist sentiment become organized into a successful political organization? In addition, the study challenges an assumption of comparative theory that individual merit and achievement are the basis of personal advancement as societies become more modernized. As such, the book admirably documents the rise of the Shiv Sena (i.e., Army of Shivaji, the seventeenth-century Maharashtra hero) movement as one pressing claims for preferential treatment of its Marathi-speaking constituency and at the same time paints a revealing picture of a small regional political party so typical of India's complex and fascinating party system.

At the outset of the volume, Katzenstein distinguishes between the "old ethnicity," i.e., demands for regional autonomy which might threaten national integration and the "new ethnicity" or sons of soil movements such as the Shiv Sena which demand preferential treatment for their members in the way of quotas in jobs and educational institutions. In the case study, the author examines several factors related to the rise of organized ethnic conflict in Bombay. These are in particular migratory patterns, economic inequalities and competition, and party organization and leadership. For reasons peculiar to Bombay's colonial status and its position as the major western port, its population has always been ethnically diverse and heavily migrant; after the industrial era began, outsiders predominated in commercial and industrial occupations to the exclusion of Maharashtrians and at the same time maintained control of the city's politics. Even at present there is a high influx of migrants from other areas coupled with low out-migration. Since this pattern is typical of other urban areas in India, the author concludes that a demographic explanation is not in itself sufficient to account for Shiv Sena's success.

Middle-class Maharashtrians felt most slight-

ed in competing for white-collar jobs, many of which were held by South Indians. The latter group, although outnumbered by Gujaratis, became the principal target of Shiv Sena protests largely because of their more visible cultural differences. While economic conflict was a major factor in middle-class support, Shiv Sena's electoral success relied on mobilizing the working-class voters as well. Here, the Shiv Sena had less success. Even though the party's right-wing appeal did have some measure of popularity among the working class, and its efforts at providing amenities in slum areas gained it favorable recognition, economic pressures were much less than among the middle classes, and many continued to support the Congress party.

The author attributes much of the party's effectiveness to its highly disciplined, paramilitaristic organization which engendered a vibrant sense of enthusiasm among its young, upwardly mobile activist cadres, as well as to the widely circulated Marathi language weekly *Marmik*, edited by its leader and founder Bal Thackeray. She is more cautious in assessing the impact of government policy on the actual improved conditions of Maharashtrians in Bombay. Even though the state government more than the municipal council supported its demands, it is suggested that official policy may have strengthened existing trends which were already in effect before the dramatic appearance of the Shiv Sena.

After their first electoral success in 1968 (electing 42 out of 140 city councilors), party leadership found itself in a dilemma typical of so many other regional parties in India: how to expand its electoral base. To do so it became necessary to mute its denunciation of other ethnic groups, and went so far as to support a South Indian in the 1971 parliamentary elections. Perhaps the one weakness of this otherwise excellent study is the failure to analyze in more detail the impact these ideological shifts (and other difficulties briefly cited) on Shiv Sena, which led to a decline in its electoral support (by 1978 its representation on the city council had been reduced to half its initial strength).

Nevertheless, Katzenstein's conclusions suggest propositions which are indeed promising and obviously lend themselves to testing in future studies. Although nativist sentiment and perceptions of ethnic inequality might be widespread, she argues that at least three other conditions must be met before a political movement of consequence can be effectively organized: low out-migration, middle-class economic competition and superior party organiza-

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