



Fig. 1: At a post-funerary reception (*ghor*) in Mandi village sponsored by a wealthy farmer, "Mantri" Kabool Singh gives a speech before passing on a gift to a slightly puzzled Chamar from the village. At the table Chaudhari Sukhviri Singh (left), a retired government servant (in the middle), and Mahendra Singh "Tikait" (right). (Photo by author, February 1982)

also known as the Jat College – in Baraut town, a Tomar ex-president of the college even quoted Hindu scriptures ("Manu Smriti") to support the case of the Malikis in Baral. He said that after residing in a village on the property of another *gotra* for seven generations, the *gotra* of an immigrant group changes to that of the people among whom they reside.<sup>5</sup>

It was also a powerful Tomar politician who arranged the marriage in Goela. His brother had already married into the same Balyan family in Goela and he suggested that the Malikis marry their daughter to his brother's wife's brother. Ironically, both these couples lived and worked near the native places of their wives. The Balyan boy from Goela worked in a sugar mill close to Baral.

While the dispute strengthened the relation between the Malikis and Tomars in Baral and weakened the link of the Malikis in Baral to their old village Lisarh, the Malikis of Goela came closer to Lisarh. Thirty years ago the Lisarh headman had refused to accept the turban offered by the Malikis of Goela as a sign that he was their headman. Now, he readily took up their case as a genuine Malik case.

## 9. The Compromise

In the end the dispute was contained by the intervention of Ilam Chand Arya. His intervention was based on several factors. One of these was his connection to a confederation of all the eighteen *khaps* of the area called the Sarv Khap Panchayat (All Clan-territory Council).

The Sarv Khap Panchayat goes back several hundred years, but after the 1857 uprising in North India it ceased to function (Pradhan 1966). In the 1950s it was revived by men of Arya Samaj convictions. The Arya Samaj movement is a revivalist, antiritualist monotheistic movement founded by Swami Dayanand and very widespread among Hindu Jats. The headmen and the secretaries of the *khaps* were ex-officio members of the Sarv Khap Panchayat. Its governing body was supposed to be elected for a five year period. It consisted of a president, a vice-president, and – this is a disputed point – a general-secretary and three or four secretaries. For a time the Sarv Khap Panchayat was active in "curbing social evils" such as dowry. Big meetings were held in 1950 and 1956 in Shoron, and in 1963 in Baraut. Shoron hosted the panchayat twice because the secretary of the Balyan *khap*, Mantri Kabool Singh, was a prominent figure at that time.

Kabool Singh was the chief informant of M. C. Pradhan for his book on the Jats (1966). The structuralist-functionalist analysis presented in Pradhan's book bears witness to his influence. Kabool Singh was literate in three languages: Hindi, Urdu, and Persian. He constantly reiterated the

5 "Manu Smriti" may not contain such a statement. He may have had in mind the following passage: "If (a female of the caste), sprung from a Brāhmaṇa and a Sūdra female, bear (children) to one of the highest caste, the inferior (tribe) attains the highest caste within the seventh generation" (Bühler 1975: 416 [X, 64]). See also "Yajñavalkya Smṛiti," I: 90–96. I thank Erik R. Sand for these references.