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*Donn V. Hart, *Compedrinazgo: Ritual Kinship in the Philippines* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1977).

*Lynch, "Social acceptance," in *Four Readings on Philippine Values*, ed. Lynch.

*Kaut, "Utang na loob," pp. 270-71. Kaut translates "utang na loob" as "debt of prime obligation," but stresses its basis in reciprocal obligations.

*Elena Yu and William T. Liu, *Fertility and Kinship in the Philippines* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), p. 217.

*This and following sections are based on data from a survey conducted in April 1977 in which 176 migrants living in Dagupan City were interviewed. Using social networks to identify migrants, the survey included migrants representing a range of social and economic characteristics of interest. Forty-seven percent of the sample were male, 53 percent were female. Fifty-one percent came from Pangasinan Province, the rest were from outside the province. All data on visiting and remittances refer to activities during the previous year.

*These distinctions were reflected in the interview schedule used for the survey. It was necessary to ask separate questions about (1) visiting, (2) the bringing of pasalubong, (3) the bringing of items "for needs", and (4) the sending of items. Questions were also asked about things brought back by the migrant and about visits of family members to see the migrants in the city. As will be seen, migrants are involved in some or all of these exchanges.

*Hart, "Philippine Rural-Urban Migration."

*Some three-way tabulations were carried out to examine in more detail the relationship between sex, the giving of remittances, and other characteristics. Data from these are included where relevant but the tabulations are not presented, as for the most part there were remarkably few differences between males and females. With respect to some variables (e.g., occupation), the numbers in each category are too small to make any three-way analysis useful.

*Respondents were asked for the amount they usually sent or brought as well as for the frequency of their remittances; frequency and amount were multiplied to obtain amount per year. The exchange rate at the time of research was P7.50 to US \$1.00.

*It is unreliable to calculate annual income for those who reported income received in terms of daily income, as it is not possible to know the number of days worked. Hence, these percentages refer only to those reporting monthly income.

*The data discussed in this section are based on interviewing and observations with a set of migrants in Dagupan City and family members elsewhere. These families were not part of the survey discussed previously. In selecting migrants and families, I was concerned to find situations where I would be able to examine both rural and urban ends of the links, and to find migrants and families who fit into the usual range of socioeconomic activities. Since, as we have seen, most migrants are from rural farm backgrounds, and since many work in the service sector, I have focused here on families with such broad characteristics.

*Migration as a household strategy is discussed in Sarah F. Harbison, "Family Structure and Family Strategy in Migration Decision Making," in *Migration Decision Making: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Micro-level Studies in Developed and Developing Countries*, ed. Gordon F. De Jong and Robert W. Gardner (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981); Selby and Murphy, *The Mexican Urban Household*, and Charles H. Wood, "Structural Changes and Household Strategies: A Conceptual Framework for the Study of Rural Migration," *Human Organization* 40 (Winter 1981): 338-44.

*Wives of men living overseas formed a small subset of my survey. The men were contract laborers, mainly in the Middle East, earning far larger amounts than they could in the Philippines. I have not focused on this group in this paper but mention their investments here to suggest that, when the resources are available, Filipino migrants and their families are likely to invest in land or other rural productive activities.

*For a discussion of the complexity of stratification in Filipino villages, see Benedict J. Kerkvliet, "Class Consciousness and Change in a Philippine Village" (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 1969).

*When Filipinos resident in the United States return to the Philippines on visits they are expected to bring pasalubong not only for immediate family but for a large set of other relatives as well. People have been known to purchase additional gifts on arrival in the Philippines, after discovering they had forgotten some relatives.

The Historical Context of Social Forestry in the Kumaon Himalayas

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Over the past decade the inexorable deforestation of the Third World has preoccupied those working on planning and research in many centers. It has become common knowledge that a firewood famine has hit the large portion of humanity who still use wood fuel for cooking and heating.¹ In fact, the Third World's efforts even to grow adequate food are jeopardized by the shrinking of forest resources. Villagers in many countries perceive that their subsistence is threatened first by private timber traders and second by governmental bureaucracies. Rural social conflict for centuries centered on access to agricultural land, but in the late twentieth century it increasingly focuses on forest and grazing rights. Especially where modernizing bureaucracies have laid systematic claim to management of nonagricultural lands, conflict between villagers and foresters has become a repeated dilemma for resource planners.

In many peasant societies within the last ten years, planners have designed agroforestry, social forestry, or community forestry programs in attempts to harness the cooperative energies of foresters and villagers to sustain their fuelwood supplies.² There have been some notable successes in expanding woodlots of fast-growing fuel and fodder trees. In many of the new social forestry efforts in Africa and southern Asia, however, we do not yet have clear information on the results of the pilot projects or, almost as important, on their socioeconomic dynamics.

Far more is involved in what happens in any social forestry project than just the professional tools and objectives of foresters and the annual material needs of the villagers. The broader setting includes the division of forestland ownership and use, and power struggles—struggles between landed and landless villagers, between rural and urban people, between hill forests and plains markets, or between village communities and governmental machinery. Furthermore, most social forestry plans have little historical perspective on the roots of conflict among villagers, forest contractors, and professional foresters. The participants themselves, however, have long memories of competition and conflict. These memories are evoked regularly when foresters enforce restrictive laws, contrac-

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tors underpay local labor or overcut timber, or villagers gather fuelwood after midnight.

In Third World countries now politically freed from a colonial past, there is yet another factor in history's ecological legacy. There, as in Europe, peasant resistance to outside authority has been a repeated feature of rural life.³ Governments' gradual extension of their powers of taxation and land-use regulation, including the extraction of forest wealth, long antedated the West's adventures in extracting the Third World's forest wealth. Colonial regimes had world markets at hand, however, making it profitable to control forest resources in the colonies.⁴

The first colonial forestry service was established in Dutch Indonesia in the 1840s, for export of teak to Europe. Shortly thereafter, in the 1850s and 1860s, when railways and expanding urban markets led to sudden shortages of marketable hardwoods, the British organized India's forest service, but effective reforestation and sustained-yield management of India's hardwood forests came into direct conflict with peasants' traditional uses of the forested hill tracts. The forest law of 1878 declared that the twin and equal goals of forest management were to be peasants' needs for fuel and fodder and wider commercial markets. Hence, out of the British experience in India came the best-documented history of relations between villagers and foresters and thus the history of the fuelwood crisis. One of the earliest confrontations, dating from at least 1916, arose in the Kumaon hills of the western Himalayas. It led to one of the earliest formal village forestry systems in India, and it remains one of the most intensely debated social forestry programs in existence.

Forestry in the Kumaon Himalayas

The present state of Uttar Pradesh (or U.P., as it is usually called) dominates the central Ganges plains. Its fertile but overused soils sustain nearly 100 million people. The Ganges basin as a whole supports well over 200 million people. India's ability to feed itself depends to an important degree on the food raised in the Gangetic plains, and that ultimately depends on the ecological stability of both the tilled plains and their semiforested watersheds primarily in the Himalayan districts of India and Nepal. As the Himalayan forests have declined, so has their capacity to mitigate flooding from the annual monsoon rains and to store the rains for gradual release into the branches of the great river during the long dry season. In the unusually severe flood year of 1978 the Indian government spent approximately one billion dollars in flood-control and flood-relief programs. The recent national commission on floods reported that the area of land subject to flooding nationwide expanded from some 20 million hectares in 1971 to an alarming 40 million hectares a decade later.⁵

For the downriver districts of the Ganges system, then, the stakes in watershed stabilization in the Himalayas are indeed high. The eight hill districts of U.P. are thus crucial, for they control headwaters of several major branches of the Ganges system, and they have been under central government control since the British conquest in 1815. Four of those districts, collectively called Garhwal, had a separate history during the colonial era, because much of the area was controlled by the Maharaja of Tehri, not directly by the British.⁶ The four present districts of Kumaon were far more directly influenced by colonial economic and administrative development. Not surprisingly, political struggles over control of forest wealth were far more intense in Kumaon, both at the district level,

where nationalist politicians joined Gandhi's noncooperation campaigns by protesting the forest law; and at the village level, where local landowners struggled to keep forest use under the control of village councils rather than the Forest Department.

Before modern logging began in the mountain region in the 1840s, the subsistence population of the region placed no significant burden on its forest resources. In pre-British times there was no system of individual ownership of nontilled land.⁷ The local rajas held the power to allocate forest use, but forest and grazing lands were so much vaster than the villagers' demands on them that they were generally treated as an unregulated commons. Even during early British times, dense malarial jungle in the *tarai* at the foot of the hills prevented much commercial penetration except along the main river routes. In most of settled Kumaon, both population and agriculture expanded slowly enough before World War I that villagers had little trouble finding wood products and grazing lands to meet their daily needs. Traill, the British commissioner who established the legal precedents for land and resource use there in the 1820s, encouraged villagers to reclaim deserted agricultural terraces and open new fields to the plow.⁸ One technique was to grant outright ownership to any villager who would continuously plow former village common lands. Beyond that, nothing was done to stabilize control of grazing and forest lands. In the early revenue settlements cadastral surveys were limited to lands in or near settled villages. All other lands, formerly controlled by the local hill rajas, were so extensive that neither villagers nor revenue officials as yet paid much attention to ownership or usufruct claims.

The first signs of change appeared in the 1840s, when British timber merchants began harvesting conifer forests in the upper reaches of several Ganges tributaries.⁹ By the late 1850s Traill's successor, Ramsay, began systematically organizing timber management in the lower Siwalik hills, hoping to concentrate logging and new settlement there and limit indiscriminate logging on the more fragile soils of the higher mountains. His moves were well timed, for the great era of railway construction, beginning in north India in the 1860s, generated a demand for hundreds of thousands of trees annually, a demand that continues today.

The government of British India organized the colonial world's first and ultimately most sophisticated Forest Department in the 1860s, primarily to manage the supply of timber for India's vast railway network and for other long-range commercial uses.¹⁰ The early foresters had little doubt that the villagers' subsistence needs could also be well met if efficient systems of forest use were established. India's first comprehensive Forest Act in 1878 was designed for that dual purpose.

Despite its multipurpose intentions, the 1878 act produced a polarization between the Forest Department and villagers that accelerated the decline of forests. Until then there had been almost no regulation of villagers' access to any forest for grazing, fuelwood, construction timber, and their other needs. Now, however the Forest Department was empowered to designate reserved forests, a process that took several decades to complete. In the reserves villagers no longer had "rights," but only "privileges," which could be restricted according to the foresters' assessments of the forests' needs.¹¹ The foresters were becoming specialists in timber production like their counterparts in Europe and North America. In their determination to control the reserves, they constructed a

hierarchy from British professional foresters down to forest guards recruited from local villages, who became the first police force of any sort in the history of the hills. From their training programs to their uniforms the forestry hierarchy emphasized efficiency, discipline, and authority.

The villagers of Kumaon soon came to see the Forest Department primarily as a machinery of repression. Their natural response was either to evade the forest rangers and guards, which was rarely difficult in the wide-ranging hills, or to bribe or intimidate the low-paid guards into overlooking what were now labeled "forest offenses." By 1880, senior British foresters were well aware that many of their employees were corruptible, but within the authoritarian framework they were rarely able to do much about it. This factor, as much as silvicultural necessity, caused their preoccupation with forest offenses and the punishment of offenders.¹²

The 1878 law did not give the Forest Department the same authority over unreserved forests. These tracts, including many small blocks of degraded forests near village agricultural lands, had little commercial potential. Over the years they have gone under various titles; for simplicity here they will be given two labels: Civil Forests, administered by the Revenue Department and available for expansion of agriculture, and Panchayat Forests, controlled by the villages, many of which had already lost much of their tree cover and served primarily for low-productivity grazing of village livestock. Together these unreserved forests were critical for the village economy, as well as for the soil and water resources of the hill region as a whole. As later events were to show, the Civil and Panchayat Forests remained almost entirely unplanned in their use. All that could be said for the system was that it eliminated the need for direct confrontation between foresters and villagers in the unreserved forests but the lands themselves slowly deteriorated.

Before World War I the major issue was what the system of reserved forests meant for the Pahari or hill populace. We can make some estimations of the relative benefits and disadvantages of the reserves for the villagers and their perceptions of the system's operation. The first reserves in the Kumaon were a series of small tracts that were demarcated in the 1890s, primarily as fuelwood reserves for several expanding colonial towns and military cantonments in the hills.¹³ Their total extent was only a few thousand acres, and they were designated in high timber where there were relatively few pressures from nearby villages. The principal issue there concerned the timber contractors and commercial logging.

The system of timber extraction necessitated close cooperation between the Forest Department and the contractors. In some reserved forests the logging work was done by the Forest Department itself, and the timber sold in annual auctions at foothills depot towns. More often the Forest Department did not have the personnel to carry out logging on its own; instead, it auctioned the right to harvest marked trees in preannounced tracts each year. The winning bidders sent their own crews into the hills to cut the purchased trees.

Several aspects of the contracting system led villagers to conclude that they were under pressure from a hostile alliance, even though the foresters rarely perceived the situation in that light. First, very few of the contractors were hill men before 1920; traders with the necessary capital plus access to lowland trading networks were from Meerut, Lucknow, Bareilly, or other cities of the U.P. plains. The Pahari people's traditional resistance to interference by outsiders was rein-

forced by the awareness that both contractors and forest managers held authority and wealth based in the plains. Further, under the system of auctioning standing timber, contractors became notorious for bribing or intimidating local forest guards and removing far more trees than they had formally been allocated. There was little the Forest Department could do or chose to do about this pattern, which has persisted to the present. Although Forest Department files include voluminous records of villagers stealing wood or fodder, letting livestock graze on reserved forests, or setting fire to dry grasslands, the files say virtually nothing about illegal actions of the contractors.

Another issue also appeared around the turn of the century to cause conflict between the commercial and subsistence interests; this one has become increasingly intense in recent years. One purpose of the reserves was to enable the Forest Department to replant forests that would be commercially valuable and would stabilize the soil and water regime. From the first forest plantations of the late nineteenth century, the predominant method of reforestation has been monoculture, usually species of little use to local villagers. The most valuable timber species of the plains and foothills was sal (*Shorea robusta*), a broadleaf hardwood which was the Railway Department's perennial first choice for sleepers (cross-ties) on its north Indian system. In the Siwalik foothills and the tarai jungles there were few permanent villages. Hence there was little conflict with villagers over the sal plantations before World War I.

A second type of monoculture tree plantation has caused far greater conflict since the early years of this century. In the middle elevations of settled Kumaon the dominant conifer is the chir pine (*Pinus longifolia*), which produces the finest resin on the subcontinent. Resin tapping on a commercial scale began around 1906, and by 1920 the Forest Department had built India's largest resin-processing factory near Bareilly, not far below outer Kumaon. For the Forest Department and its labor contractors, the chir forests held the promise of sustained, large-scale revenue; resin products were filling a steadily expanding range of uses around India and in industrial Europe. For the villagers, however, the chir pine had little attraction. Its needles formed a thick mat on the forest floor that inhibited the growth of grasses for their livestock. Its wood was less desirable for fuel and timber than other species. Above all, chir competed with several species of oak (*Quercus spp.*) that gave leaves for fodder and mulch, and limbs for construction and fuel. Where the oak forests have not been renewed or adequately protected in the Kumaon hills, the village economy has become increasingly precarious.

Annual forestry reports for the hill region made persistent efforts to demonstrate that the chir forests and resin industry were highly beneficial to the villagers by providing wage labor, in a region where other sources of money wages had only begun to penetrate. Nevertheless, the department's arguments and their elaborate supporting statistics at best only mitigated the villagers' discontent. Private merchants who purchased resin-collecting contracts evidently preferred to import outside labor, from the plains or other hill regions, just as they did for much of the timber labor. Outsiders would work for lower wages, and they were more "reliable," not being tied into the local agricultural cycle's labor demands.

The Political Challenge of the Nationalist Movement

Many forces were operating in the hills to transform the pattern of nonagricultural labor. Indirectly these forces produced destructive effects on Kumaon's

forests during and after World War I, and this in turn precipitated the Social Forestry movement there in the 1920s. The first open conflict arose over the tradition of *begar*, or unpaid coolie labor, which the colonial regime had adapted from its predecessors, the Princely States of both hills and plains. *Begar* was the north Indian term for *corvee* labor, which had been required of all landowning peasants in lieu of money taxes. In the Kumaon hills a vast majority of the male population were landowning small peasants, living in a rather more egalitarian society than in the plains below. In a region where there were almost no motorable or all-weather roads, *begar* was demanded by the British to meet the needs of both government officials and private travelers on tour. A hunting holiday might require forty or more porters for two couples. Forest and revenue officers on tour usually moved with less elaborate trains, but they were more frequent. Villagers were required to provide unpaid *begar* whenever it was demanded, regardless of the point in the annual agricultural cycle.

In the early years of the century nationalist leaders began to question the justice of this system. When World War I broke out, the system came under sudden and intolerable pressures. Thousands of hill men left with the Garhwal Rifles for military duty around the empire. Thousands more were needed for the emergency timber harvests required for wartime use. By 1915 the first young nationalist political leaders of the Kumaon hill towns found it a worthy issue. Protesting against *begar*, they called it forced labor and demanded the end of the "feudal" system. In 1916 an organization was founded in the hills which established teams of coolies to work for set wages, and by 1919 the first Congress political spokesmen in Naini Tal and Almora joined the struggle to abolish *begar*, with the blessing of nationalist leaders such as Gandhi and C. F. Andrews.¹⁴ One of the new spokesmen was Govind Ballabh Pant, the rising young lawyer and journalist from Kumaon who later became chief minister of U.P. after independence. By 1919 there was a clear threat of labor strikes. The provincial government responded quickly, organizing a new system of paid coolie labor in 1921.¹⁵ In the early 1920s, the *begar* system was phased out in the hills long before this occurred in some of the Princely States of the plains below.

Repercussions of the *begar* controversy on the forest conflict were severe, however. Forest Department officials used the coolies, both on official tour and on holiday, and they were often the only officials on the spot, making arrangements for other British travelers to tour the hills and stay at Forest Department rest houses. Further, as the Forest Department's administrative cadre had expanded to manage the reserved forests, its demands on coolie labor had expanded correspondingly. The tightening link between the *begar* controversy and the expansion of reserved forests led toward the greatest ecological disaster in Kumaon's history, the forest fires of 1921, whose damage was keyed to the specific composition of forests at various elevations.

Facing increased pressure on the forests for both commercial and subsistence uses, the Forest Department continued to survey woodlands for expansion of the reserves. Between 1911 and 1916, they completed working plans for a vast increase in the reserves, which they had the legal power to implement under the 1878 law. Under wartime pressures, the Forest Department initiated these "New Reserves" by 1916, most of them in the middle hills, at the same elevations as the most dense villages and productive agricultural land of Kumaon. Time and again in the modern management of India's forests, the danger of open hostility between officials and villagers has been at its greatest just when

reserves are established, villagers' access to them is restricted within a short transitional period, and their grazing and gathering are forced into new molds. Unfortunately for the hills of Kumaon, the New Reserves were established at a time of maximum political and climatic stress, for the war years were unusually dry, exacerbating the food scarcities brought on by the war.

The hot dry months between February and June are the most difficult of the year for forest management, even in ordinary years. This is the season when villagers burn the dry grasses to encourage vigorous new growth of fodder in the early monsoon rains of June and July. There is always danger that the grass fires will spread into the forests, destroying young seedlings or even mature trees.

The year 1916 was a dangerous one for initiating new forest reserves. The dry months that year saw the first example of forest fires set by the Pahari people not just for their annual grazing cycle but to protest the new restrictions. Forest Department records and other materials make only terse references to these fires, but the acreage burned that year included thousands of acres beyond the usual annual grass fires.¹⁶ It was an ominous precedent for the fires of 1921.

After the war's end in late 1918, political tensions between the colonial government and the Indian National Congress led to the first national Non-Cooperation Campaign, led by Mahatma Gandhi and based on his principle that it was patriotic to resist illegitimate and repressive colonial laws. By early 1921 many districts of U.P. were in ferment and the provincial government in Lucknow feared the worst from peasant protest movements. In Kumaon the protest centered on the *begar* controversy until that was resolved, but then it quickly shifted to the forest reserves, which seemed to the Pahari people to strip away their ancestral subsistence rights.¹⁷

The early months of 1921 were the hottest and driest in many years. By January, young Congress leaders were urging the population to resist what they called the abrupt and arbitrary new forest regulations. In this incendiary atmosphere, the hills were suddenly in flames. Within a few weeks, in March and April, thousands of acres of forest in Kumaon burned out of control, and many more forest areas burned as far northwest as the Kangra valley of the Punjab hills.¹⁸ The most intense fires were in the young sal plantations of the lower hills, where thirty years' Forest Department work was destroyed almost overnight. Dry pine forests of the higher hills vanished in smoke as well.

The provincial government, the Forest Department, and Congress leaders all were appalled at the damage. Congress spokesmen insisted that no one had intended such a holocaust. The Forest Department responded that the fires showed an organized effort of the Kumaoni people and their leaders to destroy their own future in an ignorant effort to undermine a progressive administration. The anguish of professional foresters, helpless to preserve their wooded heritage, was just beginning. The U.P. government under seemingly revolutionary pressure in all parts of the province established a commission of inquiry to recommend measures that would defuse the danger in the hills before the next dry season.

The Forest Grievance Commission toured extensively through Kumaon, interviewing officials, Congress spokesmen in the towns, and village landowners in the hills. The issue of grazing rights was especially controversial in the testimony gathered by the commission. Villagers complained that grazing areas left open to them in the new reserves were far less than their livestock required

and were often far distant from the villages.¹⁹ The Forest Department responded that regeneration of the forests, whether natural regrowth or artificial planting, absolutely necessitated closing recently logged tracts to grazing for several years at a time. Its defense was that nearly all forests in Kumaon were open to grazing for all or part of every year, and the closures were carefully rotated so as not to cause villagers hardship.²⁰

The commission's report largely sided with the villagers and their political spokesmen in the hill towns. It recommended in effect that the new reserves be taken from the Forest Department and either returned to the Revenue Department or given directly to the villages for control by their panchayats, the village councils. Henceforth forests should be designated either Class I, which were of little commercial value but might be significant for preserving vital watersheds, or Class II, which held commercially valuable stands of timber but had few demands from villagers. In the first case, very little would be done to manage the forests, beyond occasional inspection by the Revenue Department. In the second, the Forest Department would retain control but be stripped of its powers to regulate grazing or the lopping of oak branches, except in very limited regeneration areas.²¹

Everyone knew that the Revenue Department, if given control of forest areas, would allow steady expansion of agriculture at the expense of tree cover in these undemarcated forests. It could do little else, for without the Forest Department's expertise it had no capacity to administer them as forests. Nor was it often interested: agriculture, not timber, brought returns to the Revenue Department. Forest Department spokesmen pleaded with the commission not to be stampeded into a decision that would consign many hillsides to permanent barrenness. Nevertheless, the commission listened to the Revenue officials, who were responsible for civil order as well as finance, and to Congress leaders and village spokesmen, all of whom found the reserved forests a convenient target. The government in Lucknow eagerly agreed to the proposal after minimal debate; the commission's report had the political virtues of being decisive and clear-cut. From early 1922 onward, thousands of acres of reserves were no longer systematically managed as forests.²² The Forest Department concluded in 1922:

Under existing circumstances the ultimate disappearance of these forests is quite certain. The intelligentsia of Kumaon appear to think that the community will shortly become so alive to their own interests that they will themselves undertake protection. What agency is going to control the irresponsible Kumaonis is not stated. This department does not share the comfortable convictions of these leaders.²³

The New Village Forests

As the 1920s wore on, the Forest Department had to modify its bitter sense of loss in the face of the movement to establish panchayat control over the Class I forests. The 1922 policy had stated that the areas returned to that designation, henceforth usually called Civil Forests, should be run wherever possible by village panchayats, "communal rules, if possible, being eventually introduced."²⁴ This was the beginning of social forestry in the Himalayan region, for the Forest Department was urged to make its technical services available for assistance to the villages, if they chose to request the foresters' advice.

By the mid-1920's the Forest Department, faced with the reality of the changed situation, adapted its strategies in a somewhat more conciliatory direction. It

began encouraging a program of forest-extension education, to attempt to alert villagers to what it saw as their long-range interest. In the words of a 1926 report:

Improvement can now only come by the education and growth of public opinion. . . . It was the intelligentsia of Kumaon who fanned the flame of anti-Forest feeling and the fact that they are now reported to be on the road to appreciating the dependence of Kumaon for its existence on its forests is a small consolation for the damage they have encouraged.²⁵

This was a skeptical recognition of what many others had come to insist—namely, that no strategy of forestry management could possibly thrive without the committed cooperation of the nearby villagers. Yet the village forests were still not being served well. Extension education under the Forest Department was poorly funded and largely neglected for many years, while the department turned its primary energies to preservation and sustained-yield logging of those forests still under its control. It was not often invited to advise villages that began attempting to manage their own degraded woodlands.

The titles "Village Forests" and "Panchayat Forests" are not descriptive labels but legal designations. They do not indicate which vegetation pattern the land supports but define which organizational entity has control of them. Even in the 1920s most Panchayat Forests had at best only a few scrub trees; any village was severely disadvantaged from the start if it wanted to grow a new crop of timber or fodder trees. Organizationally, however, the opportunity was there after 1929, the year when the provincial government set up procedures for organizing village forest panchayats. The government designated one Revenue Department official as Kumaon Forest protection officer and sent him to Madras to study the southern presidency's system of village forests, which had been the first in India some twenty years before. After his return, his work was to tour the hill region encouraging villages to establish forest panchayats.²⁶

Organizationally the work was not easy. The protection officer had to determine whether each projected forest panchayat would encompass lands of one or several villages. He had to resolve landownership disputes between individuals or villages on forest and grazing lands where many boundaries had never been precisely established. At least in contrast with today, he was empowered to act quickly, making binding decisions on the spot. That done, he had to arrange for all the affected landholders to elect a three- to nine-man panchayat. When established, a forest panchayat had the power to sell products from its lands and the punitive power to fine trespassers or seize their cutting tools or cattle. The Forest Department was to be available for technical advice only.

Under this system the hope that any forest panchayat would manage its trees and grasses well depended on an intricate set of relations: between the Revenue Department's forest protection officer and the Forest Department, between government officials and villagers, between frequently competitive villages, and within the faction patterns of each village. The 1922 legislation had taken one more step designed to defuse tensions: it formed the Kumaon Forest Advisory Committee to work with the government on forest management and appointed influential citizens of the hill districts to it. Meeting several times a year, from 1930 onward the committee encouraged the forest panchayat movement, and so increasingly did officials, sensing the political importance of the panchayats. By 1937, 182 villages had forest panchayats, and though the district commissioner had the power to dissolve any forest panchayat for corruption, crippling factionalism, or inactivity, only a handful were ever actually dissolved.

In addition, several hundred other villages formed unofficial forest panchayats in the 1930s, preferring to avoid the formalities of official supervision.²⁷ The Forest Department was rarely consulted by either sort of panchayat, for its priorities were still at odds with villagers' needs. Even in its most detailed administrative reports, the department in later years has devoted only a few paragraphs to the subject, having concluded that panchayat forestry was outside its sphere of responsibility. A pattern of administration by avoidance was evolving: the various interests whose cooperation was essential for effective natural resource management chose to minimize conflict by minimizing their working contacts with each other.

Over the years after 1930, some forest panchayats in the oak and long-needled pine belt of Kumaon had some success in spite of all these obstacles, regulating grazing so as to improve the fodder crop or harvesting their own timber and investing the profits in village-improvement projects. In the higher mountain districts of the north many of the conifer and oak forests were less degraded and retained great financial potential for commercial harvest after 1930. In some northern areas, the local culture of the villages also seems to have stressed consensual decision making as well. Some forest panchayats in remote Pithoragarh District are said to have been effective for many years in regulating the subsistence system of their hills. One experienced rural-development specialist in rural Pithoragarh asserts that this success was the consequence of the absence of roads there. The lack of motorable roads until recently, he notes dryly, prevented outside contractors from devastating the mountainsides and, equally important, discouraged visitation of the higher hills by officials with the capacity to impose delays and bureaucratic objections on the villagers.²⁸

World War II and the difficult transition to independence brought new pressures to the forests of the western Himalayas, and any new pressure had at least indirect influences on the viability of village forestry.²⁹ The Forest Department was required to harvest timber far in excess of the thirty- to eighty-year cycles that its working plans had established, but by 1945 its evaluations of its own wartime operations concluded that little permanent damage had been done in the reserved forests. The severe damage had occurred in neither government nor village forests, but in the remaining miscellaneous woodlands under private ownership. Under wartime conditions prices for fuelwood and construction timber in the urban markets of northern India rose to unprecedented levels. Private contractors could make fortunes in one season by dealing directly with individual owners, often bypassing the Forest Department entirely.

Nevertheless, villagers and political organizers in the hills often insisted that there was little difference between independent contractors and those who worked closely with the Forest Department, bringing in outside labor to purchase and market timber from the department's auctions. As early as 1930 or so, the timber auctions began to be the scene of confrontations between local people and the forester-contractor coalition. Villagers would picket auctions or demonstrate against what they called the oppression of foreign rulers in league with unscrupulous commercial interests from the plains. There were also threats of labor boycotts at the lumbering sites in the hills, but these were evidently not carried out. Patriotic sentiment in Kumaon was coming to have a combined anti-British and antiplains character.³⁰ The war years left a legacy of Pahari people's hostility to the contractors over labor policies as great as its hostility to the Forest Department's powers. None of this changed much after the transition to inde-

pendence brought Indian forestry professionals into complete control of the forest service in 1947.

Trends since Independence

The end of British rule in 1947 did not mean an abrupt break in the administration of India's forests, since the professional cadre of the Indian Forest Service had been transformed into a largely Indian unit over the previous twenty years, and many people considered that the U.P. forest service was the elite of the subcontinent. Nevertheless, the broad context of forest use was changing with the advent of representative democracy. From 1947 onward foresters had to respond more directly to elected officials and the men who had put them in power, men who often were eager to reduce or eliminate the forest restrictions that had become associated with arbitrary colonial rule. Moreover, the new government under Prime Minister Nehru was committed to rapid industrialization and agricultural expansion. Even the formerly marginal hill region saw accelerated road building and population expansion from the 1950s onward. From 1901 to 1951 the hill population had grown by 46 percent; from 1951 to 1981 it grew another 80 percent.³¹ With these trends came the extension of tilled land onto ever more marginal hillsides, usually at the expense of denuded commons, and with little innovation in farming methods. The same territory was asked to grow more food, at the expense of designated forest lands.³²

In this setting any effort to grow more fuelwood and fodder on village forest lands faced severe obstacles. In the years after independence there were two major changes in the legal structure of Kumaon village forests. The first concerned the private forests. Because of the dismal record of their cutting during the war, foresters and others around India pressed successfully for legislation giving the government the right to manage private timber stands. In 1952, the U.P. government transferred management of each private forest to either the Forest Department or the village forest panchayats.³³

The second change was to end the neglect of the civil forests, for they too were reaching the point of total denudation. For many decades the Kumaon Nayabad and Waste Land Act had encouraged villagers to open new soil to the plow (the *nayabad* land); in return they ultimately gained full ownership of the tilled plots. This policy of the Revenue Department, which dated from Traill's time in the 1820s, long since had been outdated by the disappearance of trees from the civil forests. In 1957, new legislation declared that no further *nayabad* grants were to be made. Finally, in 1964 another law transferred the civil forests to village control, wherever villages could follow stipulated procedures so as to qualify for panchayat forest management. All other civil forests were given to the Forest Department for management. Hence, since 1964 there have been two major categories of forest lands, those under commercial management by the Forest Department and those primarily for subsistence use controlled by the villages.³⁴ The steady increase in the number of forest panchayats is indicative of the rural population's interest or at least their resistance to bureaucratic control. At independence in 1947, the official panchayats alone numbered 741, a year later that had grown to 1,043. By 1966 there were 2,185, controlling an average of approximately one square kilometer each.³⁵

The Forest Department was eager to gain control of the maximum possible extent of civil forests. One of its goals was to manage the vanishing oak forests

more effectively, but in this context its continuing orientation towards the villagers is evident. As one recent working plan expresses it, the oak stands "are very important forests as they act as a store house of water and are the source of many a perennial spring and thus help to maintain the water supply. Depredation on these forests by men and cattle has resulted in drying up of many springs and acute water shortage in many villages during summer months."³⁹ From its inception the forest service in India has been committed to improving the quality of forest land.⁴⁰ By the 1970s, however, after long decades in which foresters and villagers had often been adversaries, some foresters' commitment to maintaining viable watersheds had hardened into a description of the villagers' actions as "depredation of the forests." A recent Forest Department study of the timber resources and watershed preservation strategies of the hill districts concludes that the forests under village control, fully one-third of the total forested area, have had no systematic management. It concludes: "The productivity capacity of these forests is not being utilized either for timber and firewood or for fodder. . . . The transfer of these forests to the forest department and their proper management to meet the demands of the people is an urgent necessity."⁴¹

Under the long shadow of the decades' struggle with the hill people, however, even the most sophisticated initiatives of the Forest Department are bound to meet great skepticism in the panchayats. This is even more true since 1973, when the village protest movement saw a resurgence in adjacent Garhwal, as the highly publicized Chipko movement.

For a decade now, village women in upper Garhwal have been working with local organizers and allies as far away as New Delhi to end all commercial logging in the hills and provide both trees and jobs for the Pahari villagers before attempting to answer any other demand on the Himalayan forests. Chipko organizers have recently expanded their organization to work with forest panchayats in many villages of Kumaon and are looking beyond to the entire mountain region as far northwest as Kashmir.⁴² They charge the contractors with pervasive corruption in overcutting the trees in their contracts and underpaying their laborers. Their critiques of the Forest Department have been uncompromising and the department has responded with attitudes ranging from wariness to open hostility.

Under these conditions, how do the forest panchayats operate today? Can there be effective cooperation between villagers and the Forest Department? The first detailed studies at the village level in Kumaon show that few forest panchayats have effective management programs yet.⁴³ Part of the difficulty lies in the excessively bureaucratized approach of the government. Each forest panchayat has the power to designate part of its lands for social forestry management. Once a panchayat has defined certain lands, however, the proposal must go to the Revenue Department for a survey of its records to guarantee that the tract in question is in fact panchayat owned. This title check has often taken up to five years, leaving the villagers discouraged at the start. Even when it moves quickly, the villagers then have little control over their project. Forest officers usually form the details of a management plan, and in many cases villagers seem to know little or nothing of the plan and participate little in its formulation.

Over the years the growth of elaborate governmental regulations has been designed in part to control what outsiders see as corruption or gross favoritism within the villages, though some villagers perceive the fight for control of profits as consistent with traditional social behavior on the land. Difficulties abound

on both sides. There are profits for powerful villagers in work such as building boundary walls or fences. In all too many cases where planning has moved into action, aggressive panchayat chairmen control these valuable contracts for themselves or their families or castemates undercutting all efforts at genuinely cooperative management.

Beyond this there are still other barriers for foresters and villagers to surmount in order to work effectively together. In another move against corruption, regulations stipulate that any profits coming to the panchayats from sale of forest produce must be banked by officials. This is usually done in the form of five-year savings certificates, which gain favorable rates of interest but postpone the village's effective use of its benefits almost indefinitely. Under these patterns, it is no wonder that most foresters see the social forestry program as one of the least desirable assignments they can have, rather than as a challenge to bring about effective working relations with villagers against the grain of a century's habits.⁴⁴

Where the social forestry program is taking hold in Kumaon's villages, the key seems to be a familiar one. Unusually effective and evenhanded village leadership must be matched to a crusading forester who is unusually alert to the ways in which his professional style may inhibit active response from the villagers. Beyond this, third parties, such as local teachers, social workers, and perhaps even Chipko organizers, may be starting to play important catalytic roles in some areas. Still, progress has been slow against the background of over fifty years' experience with forest panchayats, which usually would prefer to work separately from the professional foresters. Some forests are actually contributing more than they once did to rural subsistence; others still have major potential in their soils. More often, however, the social forestry program in Kumaon has not yet turned the corner toward preserving both a major watershed of the Ganges system and the viability of rural life in the hills.

NOTES

³⁹Of the recent publications on the subject, none has alerted the wider public more effectively than Erik Ecklonn, *Losing Ground: Environmental Stress and World Food Prospects* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976).

⁴⁰For valuable surveys see Douglas F. Barnes, Julia C. Allen, and William Ramsay, *Social Forestry in Developing Nations* (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 1982); D. Wood et al., *The Socioeconomic Context of Fuelwood Use in Small Rural Communities*, Special Study no. 1 (Washington, DC: Agency for International Development, PPC, 1980); Michael Cernea, *Land Tenure Systems and Social Implications of Forestry Development Programs*, Staff Working Paper no. 452 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1981).

⁴¹References to forestland conflict abound in studies of European rural history. See Peter Linebaugh, "Karl Marx, the Theft of Wood, and Working Class Composition," *Crime and Social Justice* (Fall-Winter 1976): 5-16. In France alone, forest protests erupted periodically for some 200 years. For examples, see Louis Claret, "Le Code forestier de 1827 et les troubles forestiers dans les Pyrenées centrales au milieu du XIXe siècle," *Annales de Midi* 77 (1965): 293-317; John Merriman, "Les Demoiselles de l'Ariege," in *1830 in France*, ed. Merriman (London: Franklin Watts, 1975); and Ted W. Margadant, *French Peasants in Revolt: The Insurrection of 1851* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 41-46. For references to structurally similar conflicts in Third World settings, see James Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 63-64, 135-36.

⁴²Richard P. Tucker and J. F. Richards, eds., *Global Deforestation and the Nineteenth-Century World Economy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1975).

¹Report of the National Commission on Floods (New Delhi: Government of India, 1980); R. Kumar Gupta, "Deforestation and Floods," in International Society for Tropical Ecology, *Souvenir Silver Jubilee Symposium*, 1982, pp. 32-41.

²For the human ecology of the region see Raj Kumar Gupta, "Social-Economy of the Himalayan People in Relation to the Forests of Garhwal Himalayas," in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, India* 33, sec. B, pt. 1 (1963), pp. 104-14.

³E. T. Atkinson, *The Himalayan Gazetteer* (Delhi: Cosmo Publications reprint, 1973), vol. 2, chaps. 6, 7.

⁴G. W. Traill, "Statistical Sketch of Kumzon," *Asiatic Researches* 16 (1828): 137-234.

⁵V. B. Singh, "Working Plan of the Uttarkashi Forest Division, Uttar Pradesh, 1961-62 to 1975-76," p. 43.

⁶For fuller detail on the period before World War I see Richard P. Tucker, "The British Colonial System and the Forests of the Western Himalayas, 1815-1914," in *Global Deforestation*, eds. Tucker and Richards, pp. 146-66.

⁷For the system in recent form, see Gerald D. Berreman, *Hindus of the Himalayas: Ethnography and Change*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), chaps. 1, 2, and 8.

⁸United Provinces Forest Department, *Annual Administration Reports* (hereafter *UPFDR*) give precise details on the numbers of arrests and convictions.

⁹Each Forest Division was provided with detailed working plans for its reserved forests; these plans carry full detail on management of the reserves.

¹⁰Samuel E. Stokes, "Begar in the Hills," in *National Self-Realization*, ed. Stokes (Madras: Ganesan, 1921), pp. 131-47.

¹¹United Provinces, *Legislative Council Debates*, on several dates from 16 December 1918 through 22 March 1922, carry the controversy in detail.

¹²Harry G. Champion, "Working Plan for the Forests of the Central Almora Forest Division, 1921," pp. 139-42; *UPFDR*, 1916-1917, p. 7.

¹³For a fuller account of the political campaigns until 1947, see Richard P. Tucker and Ajay S. Rawat, "Forest Protests and the Freedom Movement in Kumaon," in press.

¹⁴*UPFDR*, 1921-1922, pp. 7-9.

¹⁵United Provinces, *Reports on the Native Press*, 1921, p. 201.

¹⁶*UPFDR*, 1920-1921, pp. 6-7.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 1921-1922, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸*Report of the Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee* (Lucknow: United Provinces Government, 1922).

¹⁹*UPFDR*, 1922-1923, p. 9.

²⁰*The Leader* (a daily newspaper in Allahabad), 5 July 1922.

²¹*UPFDR*, 1925-1926, p. 2.

²²*Ibid.*, 1929-1930, p. 3.

²³*Ibid.*, 1936-1937, pp. 1-3; F. C. Ford Robertson, *Fifteen Years' Forest Administration in the United Provinces* (Lucknow: 1942), p. 120.

²⁴These observations and others are based on my personal interviews in Kumaon, October 1981.

²⁵For a fuller analysis of the impact of the Depression and World War II, see Richard P. Tucker, "The British Empire and India's Forest Resources: Assam and the United Provinces, 1914-1950," in *The World Economy and the World's Forests in the Twentieth Century*, ed. J. F. Richards and Richard P. Tucker (forthcoming).

²⁶*UPFDR*, 1930-1931, pp. 4-5.

²⁷*Report on the Task Force for the Study of Eco-Development in the Himalayan Region* (New Delhi: Planning Commission, 1982), p. 10.

²⁸Vimal Kishor and Raj Kumar Gupta, "Economy of a Typical Western Himalayan Watershed: An Analysis for Eco-Development" Dehra Dun, 1982.

²⁹*UPFDR*, 1952-1953, pp. 1-2, 38-42.

³⁰Working plans of each Forest Division since 1964 give statistics on the distribution of each type of forest.

³¹*UPFDR*, 1948-1949, p. 3, and 1965-1966, pp. 1-2; *Report of Kumaon Forests Fact Finding Committee* (Lucknow: 1960).

³²B. N. Dwivedi, *Working Plan of the Naini Tal Forest Division, 1978* (Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Government, 1978), p. 111.

³³This was reinforced once again in 1982, when the distinguished commission of planners appointed by the central government to study the mountains declared, "Commercial exploitation for national industries, pulp, packing cases [should be met] only after subsistence needs of the local population have been met and ecological safeguards are fully satisfied" (*Report of the Task Force for the Study of Eco-Development in the Himalayan Region* [New Delhi: Planning Commission, 1982], p. 28).

³⁴P. N. Gupta, *Afforestation, Integrated Watershed Management, Torrent Control, and Land Use Development Project for U.P. Himalayas and Siwaliks* (Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, 1979), p. 28.

³⁵In addition to several excellent accounts of the movement written by its organizers, most of them unpublished, see Bharat Dogra, *Forests and People: The Efforts in Western Himalayas to Re-establish a Long-lost Relationship* (Rishikesh: Himalaya Darshan Prakashan Samiti, 1980). For a more recent analysis, in the context of Garhwal regional politics, see Gerald D. Berreman, "Identity Definition, Assertion, and Politicization in the Central Himalayas," in *Identity: Personal and Socio-Cultural*, Uppsala Studies in Cultural Anthropology no. 6, ed. Anita Jacobson-Widding (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1983).

³⁶S. L. Shah, "Ecological Degradation and the Future of Agriculture in the Himalayas," Presidential Address, Indian Society of Agricultural Economists, December 1981; and S. L. Shah, "Socio-Economic, Technological, Organizational, and Institutional Constraints in the Afforestation of Civil, Soyam, Usar, and Waste Lands for Resolving the Fuel Wood Crisis in the Hill Districts of Uttar Pradesh" (Almora: Vivekananda Laboratory for Hill Agriculture, 1982).

³⁷For an outstanding recent example of systematic prescriptions to overcome similar difficulties throughout Asia, see Christopher Gibbs and Jeff Romm, "Institutional Aspects of Forestry Development in Asia," Asia Society/USAID Conference on Forestry and Development in Asia, Bangalore, India, April 1982.