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VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

No. 9

KOSA
(TAHSIL & DISTRICT DURG)

K. C. DUBEY
Deputy Superintendent,
Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh

1967

KOSA VILLAGE SURVEY

Field Work	—	K. C. DUBEY, Deputy Superintendent.
	—	B. L. PARGANIHA, Investigator.
		H. N. PANDEY, Investigator.
		M. L. THAKUR, S.E.O., Gunderdehi Block, Durg District.
Photographs	—	K. C. DUBEY.
Line Drawings & Diagrams	—	B. L. PARGANIHA.
		R. C. DAS, Sorter.
Maps	—	B. L. PARGANIHA.
Cover Design	—	B. L. PARGANIHA.
Proof Reading	—	H. C. JAIN.
		M. G. MOHRIL.

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PART I (in Sub-Parts)	General Report including Subsidiary Tables.
PART II-A	General Population Tables.
PART II-B (in Sub-Parts)	Economic Tables.
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FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life — sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions.' In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralisation on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive: the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows:

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, e. g. fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500-700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of

modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record in *situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress. ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immoveable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel' to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve: to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in Appendices I and II to the Monograph on Village Bendri (Vol. VIII Pt. VI, No. 2).

Asok Mitra,
Registrar General, India.

New Delhi,
July 30, 1964.

VILLAGE SURVEYS IN MADHYA PRADESH

Fortynine villages were initially selected in Madhya Pradesh for these surveys on the basis of four main considerations. First the caste indicated for a particular district should be dominant in the villages. The principal caste/s of the district was/were determined on the basis of the 1931 Census returns as castewise or tribewise figures were not available in full for later Censuses. The second, which was also sociological, was that the village should be, as far as possible, at a certain specified distance from the nearest urban area. It was felt that a study of villages at different distances from urban centres would help us understand the strength of the forces of urbanisation. The 43 districts of the State were arranged in the order of Census location code numbers and a set of three distances (15, 25 & 35 miles) was repeated, only one figure appearing against each village. It was likely that this procedure would impart a somewhat random character to the sample in respect of urbanisation. Next came two administrative considerations: first, the village was to have a population within the range 250-400 yielding thereby some 50-80 households. It would have been impossible to cover a large number of households in the desirable degree of detail. Second, the village should not have been already surveyed by a different agency. Though normally it was to be one village per district, an extra village was selected in districts with a population of more than a million each so that the total number rose to 49 instead of being 43.

2. While it was not expected that it would be possible to stick to the exact distance (from the nearest urban centre) given for each villgae, it proved difficult to ensure that a village of the given population size also contained a large proportion of the members of a particular caste or tribe. This to some extent has distorted the pattern of purposes that governed the selection. It was also difficult to re-do the selection because it was not certain that a second attempt would succeed. In the last thirty years, the composition of the population seems to have changed quite a lot in some areas. And, we had no figures whatever to go on with so far as the 1960-61 distribution of the population among castes/tribes in villages was concerned. In any case, the main purpose of these surveys was to obtain a detailed picture of present day rural life and the statewise scatter of localities required for the purpose was ensured by making the district the primary group of the villages selected, 9 had each a dominant (scheduled) caste; 16 had each a dominant (scheduled) tribe; and the remaining were multi-caste and/or multi-tribal villages.

3. It was soon discovered that it would be impossible to make a reasonably good job of the survey in respect of all the 49 village. We started with a very simple questionnaire which was expanded in due course to some 70 or 80 pages. An attempt was made to make them factual but whether the investigator's or somebody else's view of the hierarchical level of a particular caste (or tribe) is objective enough to be considered substantially valid fact is a difficult question to settle but inquiries of this kind were included. This basic survey was left to an official selected by the district authorities; in quite a few villages the results were not unsatisfactory. But the official of the Census Organisation who had to write the report found it necessary to go to the village once or twice again not only to go through most of the schedules right on the spot but also to collect some more information on particular aspects and prepare the pictorial part of the survey (photographs and drawings). It was at this stage generally that I came into the picture. I have also myself seen a few of the villages. My scrutiny of the first draft resulted in a number

of suggestions which were incorporated, the draft finalised and sent upto the Registrar General. The trouble with a survey of this kind is that there can be no end to it even though it is microcosmic in character. We tried our best to modify the report again in the light of the criticism made by the Registrar General. What happened as a result of the approach was that the number of villages we could deal with was determined by the number of officials we had in the Census Organisation who could write at least presentable first drafts. The initial ambitious design was therefore abandoned and the hope at present (December 1965) is that we should be able to produce in Madhya Pradesh some 11 reports, though spade work in respect of another 10 has been completed. The only apology I can offer for publishing them is that very hard work has gone into them even though a strictly sociological approach might have yielded different results. In every survey, an attempt has been made to delineate the 'personality' of the village even if in the process the mere recording of information on various generally important aspects may also have suffered. It is like striking out the heading, 'relationship', in a Census enumeration schedule and entering 'squint-eyed' in that space. It seems to me that the Census Organisaion should continue in coming Censuses to supplement their microcosmic operations with studies of this kind which together will probably give a better picture of the varied life of our people than mere statistical reports. For the results to be more satisfying than they have been in this Census, it will be necessary to make a careful study of the present schedules and draw up a new one.

4. I have to acknowledge the debt of deep gratitude that we in State Census Organisations owe to the Registrar General, India, Shri Asok Mitra, who initiated and directed these studies. In the State, the main burden of dealing with matters relating to these surveys fell on Shri K. C. Dubey, Deputy Superintendent of Census Operations and Shri N. B. Basu, Chief Investigator (now District Organiser, Durg, in the Department of Tribal Welfare) to both of whom I am extremely grateful. Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, who helped us with advice and criticism, deserves our particular thanks.

5. Kosa, the subject of this survey, is a predominantly Satnami village in the Chhattisgarh region of Madhya Pradesh. According to Hindu tradition, Chhattisgarh is hallowed country; it is supposed to have been ruled for a long period of its history by the Haihaya dynasty. But for an occasional temple and a number of impressive relics carefully preserved in the museum at Raipur, it is difficult to find any distinctive mark of the influence of this ancient heritage on contemporary Chhattisgarh. However, the vitality that is characteristic of the true catholicity of the deeply religious showed itself in the Satnami revolt against caste-ridden Hinduism though, unfortunately, as has often happened in the history of Hinduism, the Satnamis themselves have now become a caste. Co-exitsent with such potentiality for "progressive" change are many rituals and practices which, as elsewhere, are difficult to defend — or even understand. Witchcraft is one among them; the author has counted 13 witches in Kosa — 11 women and 2 men, and out of the 13, 7 are married, presumably with the spouses living. Whether or not they have the power to do evil, the fact that they are universally hated is proof that they are taken seriously. On the other hand, the obnoxious practice of Satlok happily — seems to have disappeared. Though at a far lower level of significance, it must be observed that the curious aversion to red vegetables that the Satnami cult ordains continues. Into this social maze has descended a modern industrial gaint — the Bhilai Steel Plant — which is only 15 miles away from Kosa. At the time of the survey, however, no great sociological impact following from Bhilai was observed in Kosa except that a few people found some work to do on a more or less regular basis. It does appear that the local people had *not* been told of the opportunities that would open up with the establishment of the Steel Plant; nor were any

skills developed locally that could have found profitable employment in the new industry. In a such a situation, the general reaction is one of indifference or fear. Contacts between the villagers and the officials of the Community Development Block seem to have been few and far between. As a result, these people will not easily find their way about in the modern world for quite some time to come. These are the facts; changing them is a challenging task. The right way to face this challenge is certainly not giving them ill-considered advice, pumping in a little money here and there and hoping for the best. The kind of deep and sympathetic understanding of the people exhibited in these pages is the first pre-requisite. I consider it a privilege to have had something to do with this remarkably careful sociological study of a rural prototype in one of India's many regions. I congratulate the author on this really competent study of an extremely difficult sociological entity.

G. JAGATHPATHI,
Joint Secretary,
Ministry of Home Affairs,
Government of India,
(Formerly) Superintendent of Census Operations,
Madhya Pradesh.

New Delhi
27-7-1966.

PREFACE

Kosa is one of the villages selected for socio-economic surveys. It is the name of an actual village situated at the distance of 9 miles from Durg town as the crow flies. Three things must be made clear at the very outset: first, except in some cases pseudonyms have not been used in this monograph; second, the word 'caste' as used in this monograph does not carry the sense of the four categories of Hinduism (*Verna*) but is referred to as a translation of the common parlance word *Jat* or *Jati* which is an endogamous group dispersed over several villages, and, third, whereever some views have been expressed in the monograph, they are auhtor's own and do not reflect the opinion of the organization he is serving.

The field work in connection with this survey was begun in the summer of 1961 and completed in February 1962. As a first step a questionnaire called the Household Schedule was convassed in every-household of the village and after a preliminary processing of information collected on this basis was done, subsequent visits were paid to elicit detailed information. It must be placed on record that the villagers bore these 'probings' with patience and cheer though some of them at least, had some misgivings about the purpose of these seemingly 'meaningless' enquiries.

It must also be admitted that the monograph presented here has no claim to be a thorough and complete study of Kosa. It was done in a rapid stride. All operations of the Census are carried on according to a strict time-schedule and these village-surveys were not exempted from that. A large number of villages are intended to be similarly covered within the time that we have at our disposal and as far as I am concerned, Kosa ,is the third monograph that it has been my great privilege to write. It must be remembered that this is not all that we are concerned with in the Census. The first two monographs were written when I was in the thick of sorting the Census slips and my first and foremost duty as Deputy Superintendent was to supervise and complete the sorting of 61 lakhs of slips. The village survey monographs were taken in addition to this. The present monograph was also written when a more difficult task of closing the Tabualtion Office was facing me.

Once the Tabulation Office was closed, I had some breathing-time and going through the completed manuscript, I felt dissatisfied with what I had done and so throwing away the manuscript in one corner, I began the monograph once again some time in October 1962, and have brought it to its present form, though I must say that if I were not bound by the time schedule, I would have thrown away this draft also and begun the whole thing once again.

But, an end to it might never have come, because though it may be possible to feel the pulse of the village-microcosm, its physiology and anatomy are not things that can be revealed in a year or two even to expert sociologists and much less to administrators. I was a little fortunate in this survey. Firstly, I could get an opportunity to write it two times and carry on the field work as and when I liked, secondly, the experience of two earlier monographs gave me some bearings and thirdly, (and probably most important) my knowledge of the Chhattisgarhi dialect which I picked up during my six years of service in Raipur district helped me a lot. This knowledge of the dialect in which the

villagers spoke coupled with an inherent love for village-life put me on better footing than I would have been without them.

All this said and done, the monograph suffers from one obvious handicap — it is not theoretically oriented. And it just could never be. The use of words like 'sanskritization', 'brahmanization', 'secularization' and 'westernization' has been deliberately avoided, and the attempt has been to write the monograph in a matter-of-fact style. Quite a large number of Chhattisgarhi words, phrases and sentences have been written in the monograph in ordinary Roman script. I have never been a student of phonetics and philology and do not know if they have been correctly written. But, as far as practicable, it has been ensured that there are no mispronunciation. But if some have still then crept in, the substance of the sentence, I hope, will not be obscure.

Though the authorship of the monograph has been ascribed to me and though I have all along in the above used the personal pronoun, Kosa is actually the result of a team-work. Though the field-work was directed by me and I prepared the questions, the burden of doing the field-work fell on Shri B. L. Parganiha and Shri H. N. Pandey. Shri Pandey made the first two visits and subsequent visits were made by Shri Parganiha. The questionnaire was designed by Shri Jagathpathi and I do not know if it would ever have been possible to complete the monograph had this questionnaire not been there. Line-drawings were done by Shri R. C. Das, a sorter from my Tabulation Office and Shri Parganiha. Maps were prepared by Shri Parganiha. Shri H. C. Jain and Shri M. G. Mohril helped me in the arrangement of the photographs and read the manuscript and typed parts and Shri T. S. Shendurnikar typed the entire report.

The debt that I owe to Shri Jagathpathi, I. A. S., Superintendent of Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh, cannot suitably be expressed. He guided the project from the very inception and read and corrected the first draft. But for the guidance and encouragement that he gave me the monograph could never have been what it is. If there are any lapses and mistakes in the monograph they are entirely due to my inability to follow his instructions. To Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Head of the Social Studies Section of the Registrar General's Office, I am deeply indebted for various instructions that he gave from time to time.

I must not forget to acknowledge my sense of gratitude to my wife who allowed one room of our 3 roomed house in the 1250 Quarters of the South T. T. Nagar to be utilized for the purpose of spreading the schedules and writing the monograph. She managed to carry on the affairs of the household in the other two rooms and but for this gesture I do not know how I could have completed this monograph.

Bhopal,
28th March 1963

K.C. DUBEY.

PLATE I

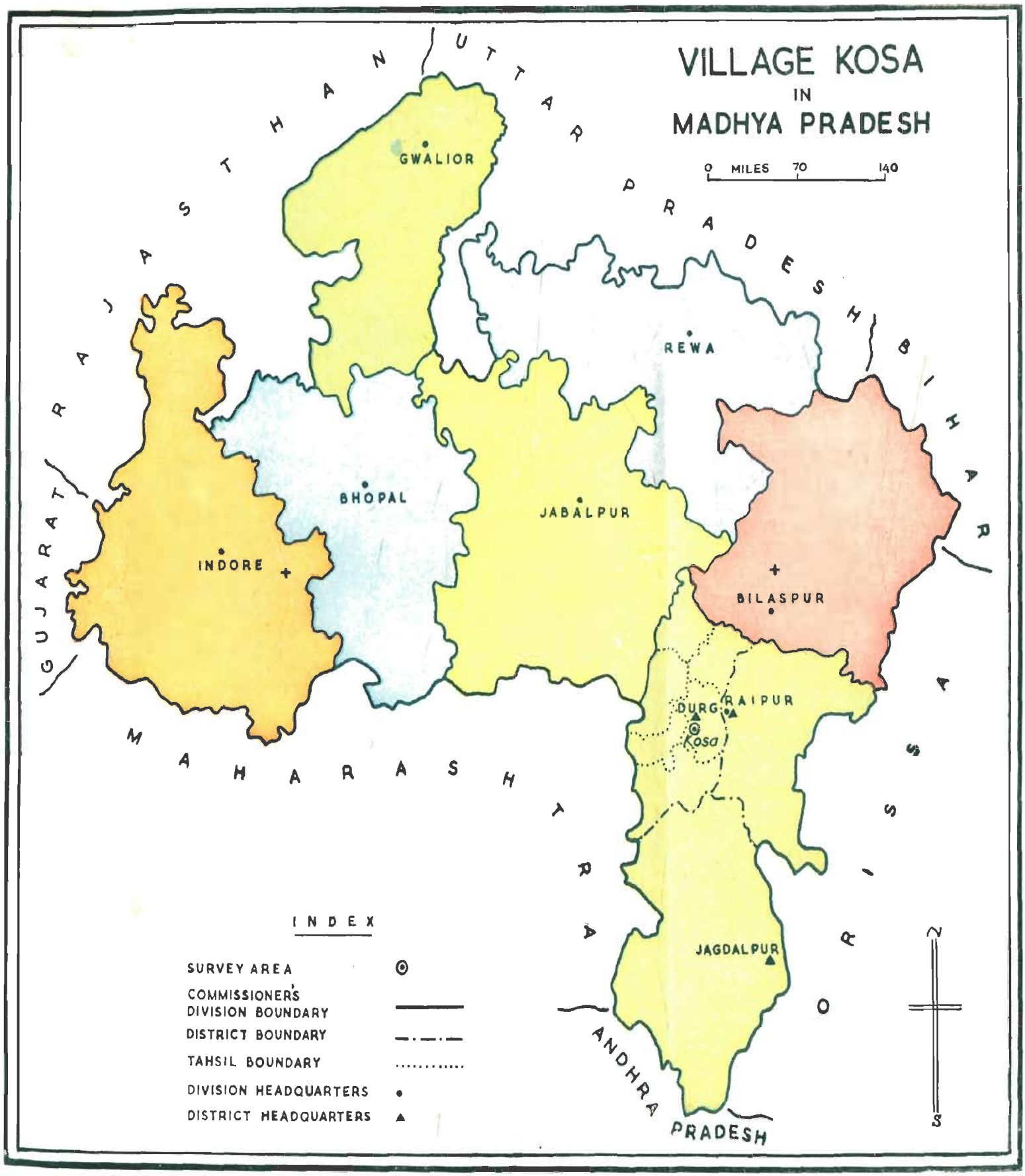


Illustration 1

PLATE II

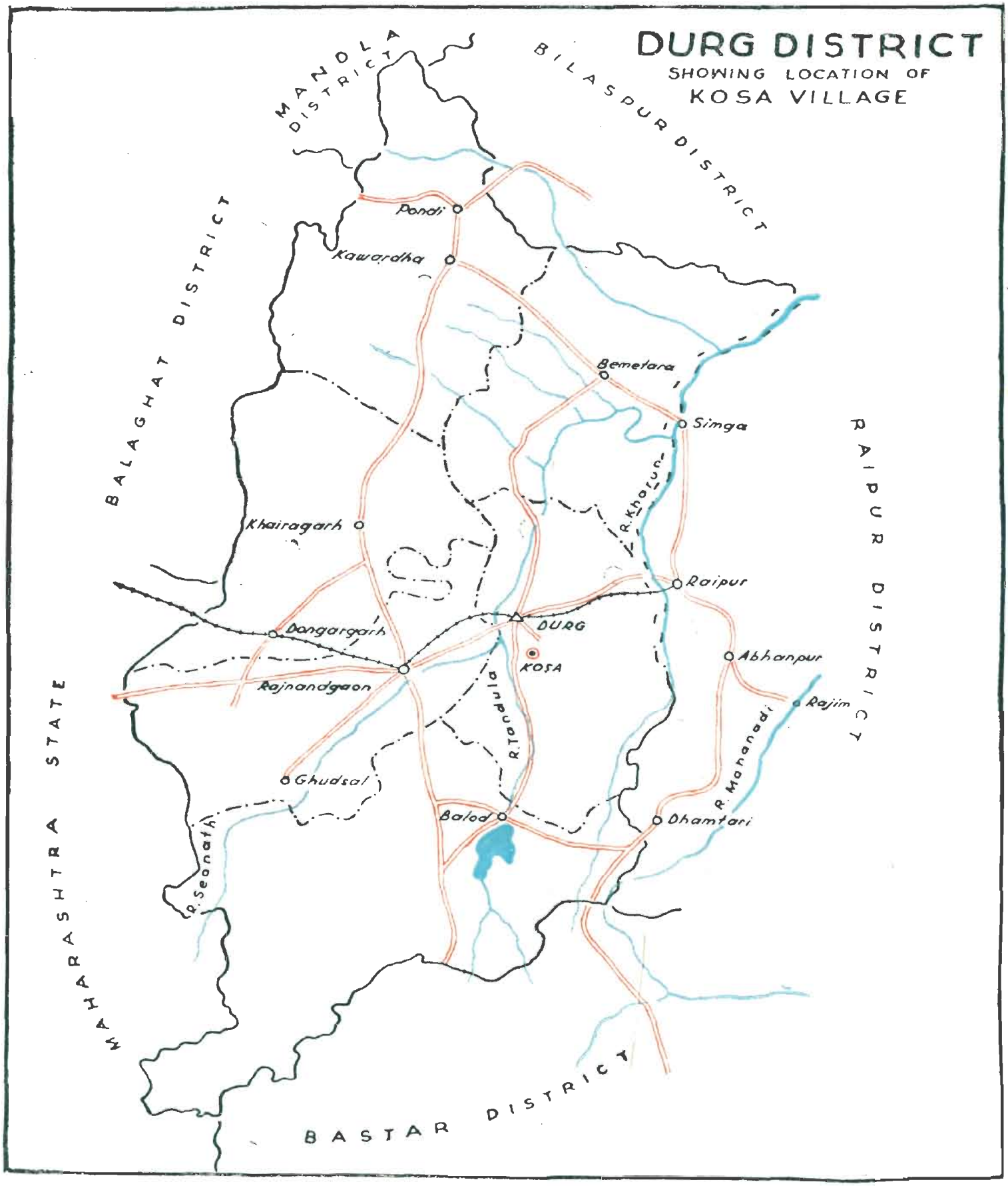


Illustration 2

PLATE III

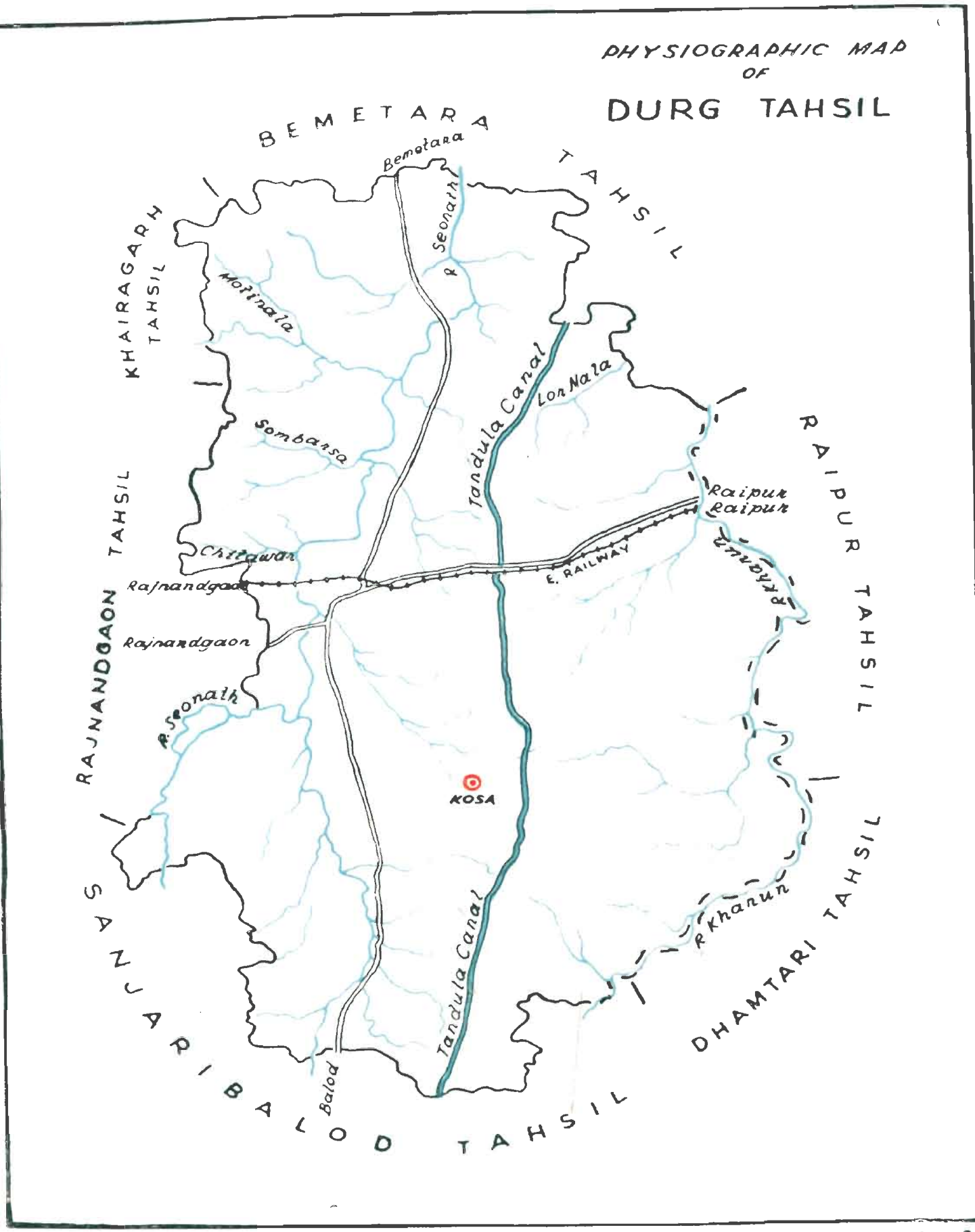


Illustration 3

PLATE IV

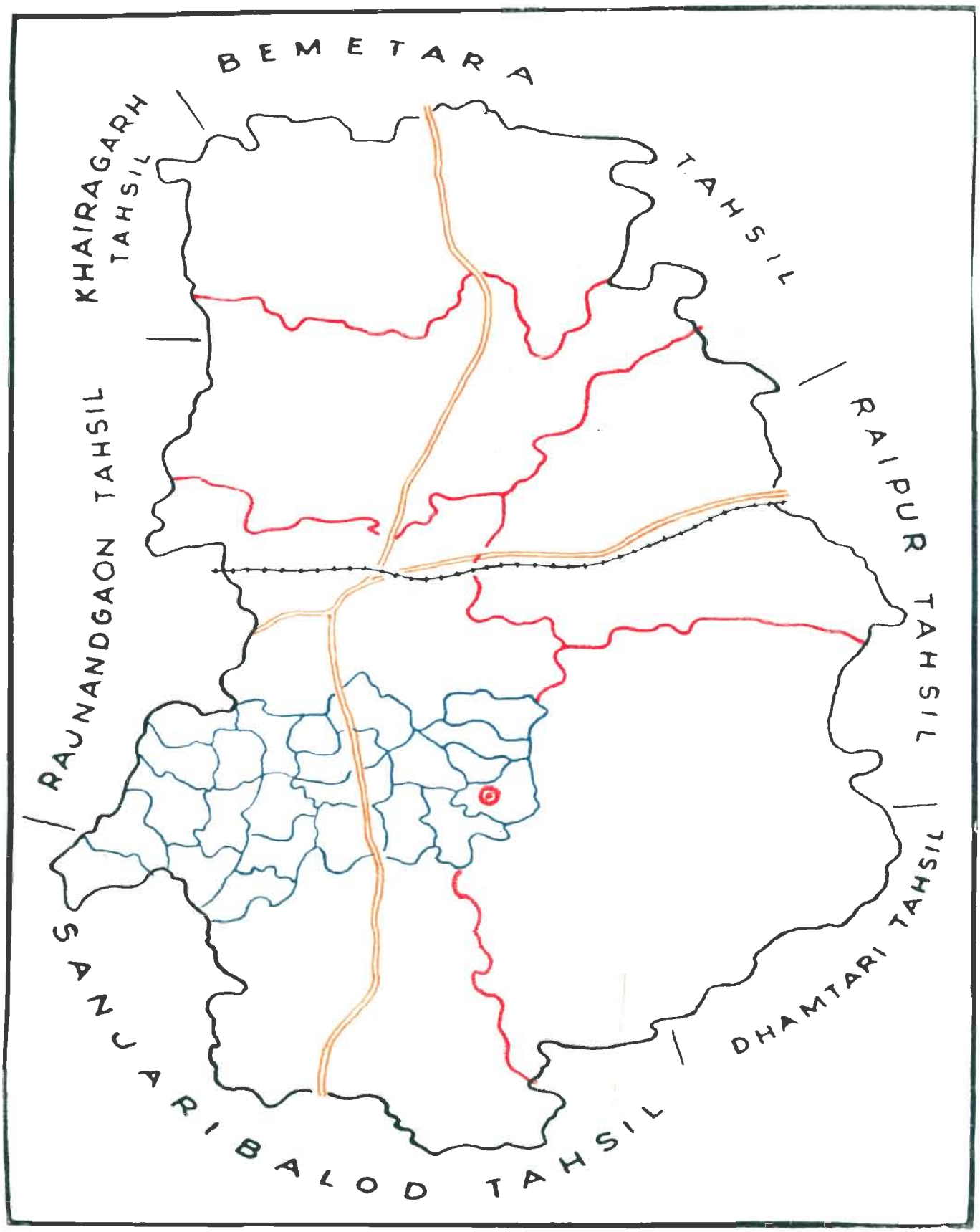


Illustration 4

Administrative Divisions of Durg Tahsil

PLATE V

VILLAGE KOSA

ON ONE INCH TOPOSHEET No. 64 G/8

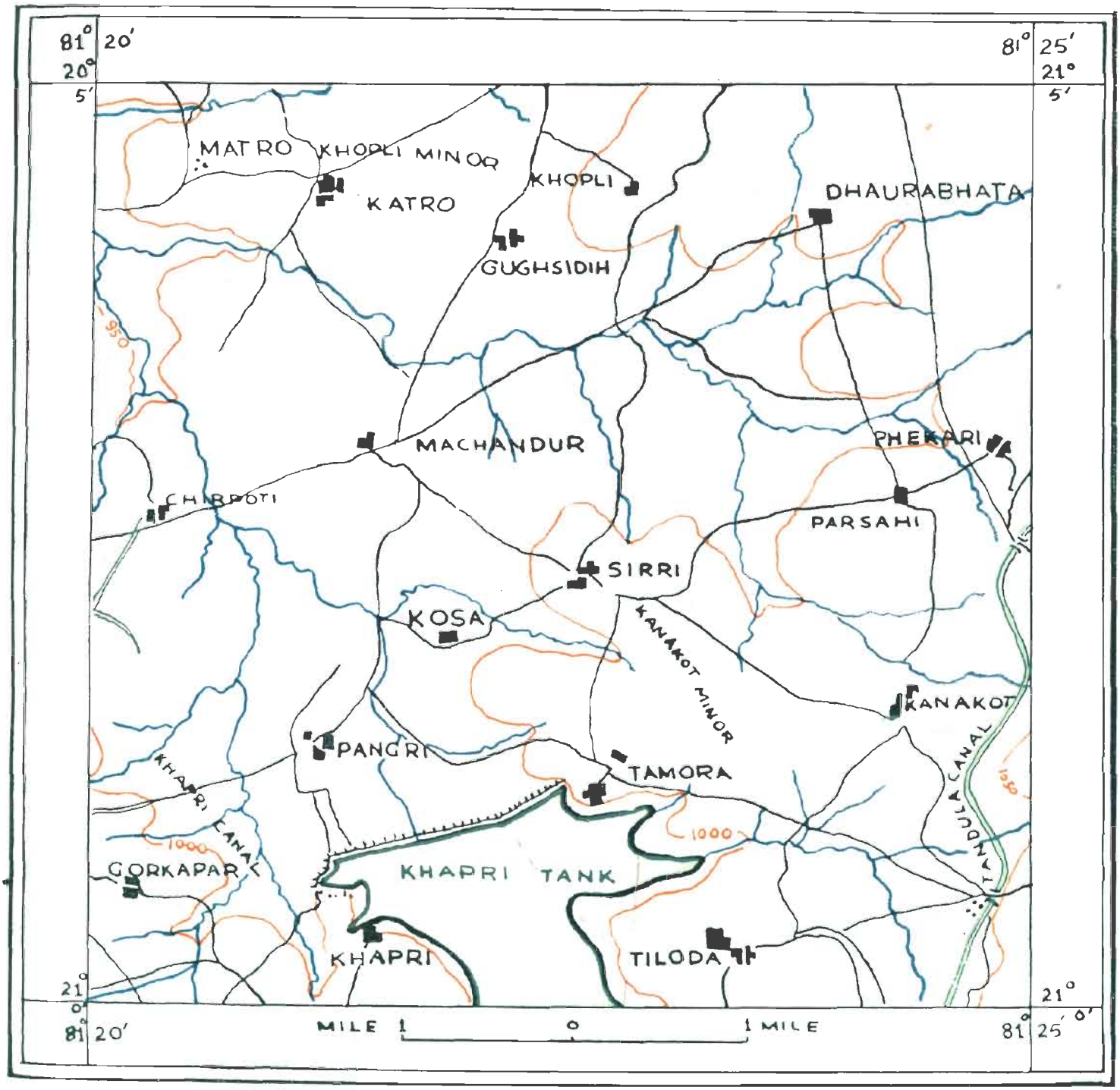


Illustration 5

PLATE VI

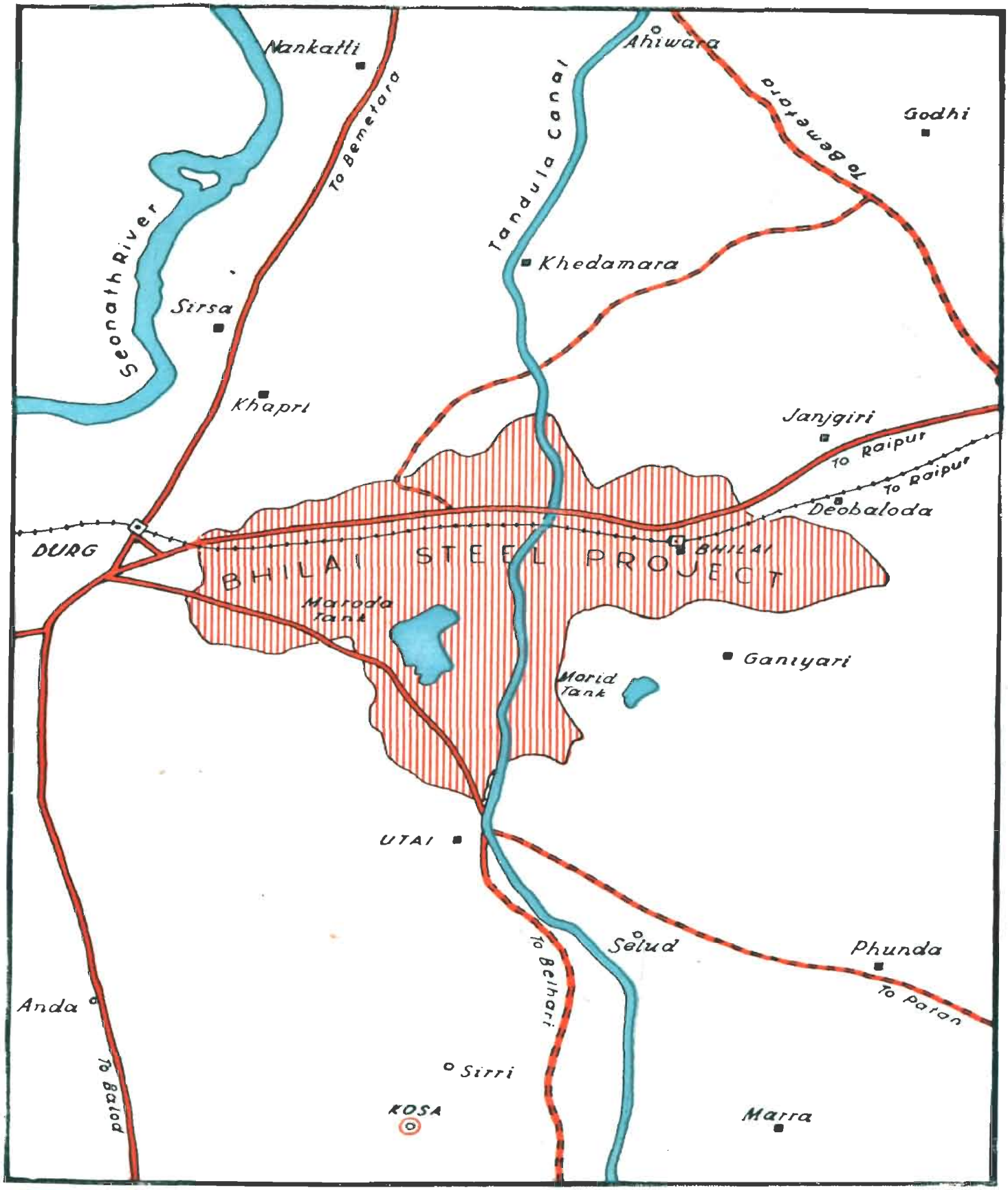


Illustration 6

Map showing location of Kosa and Bhilai Steel Project

PLATE VII

APPROACH ROUTES TO KOSA

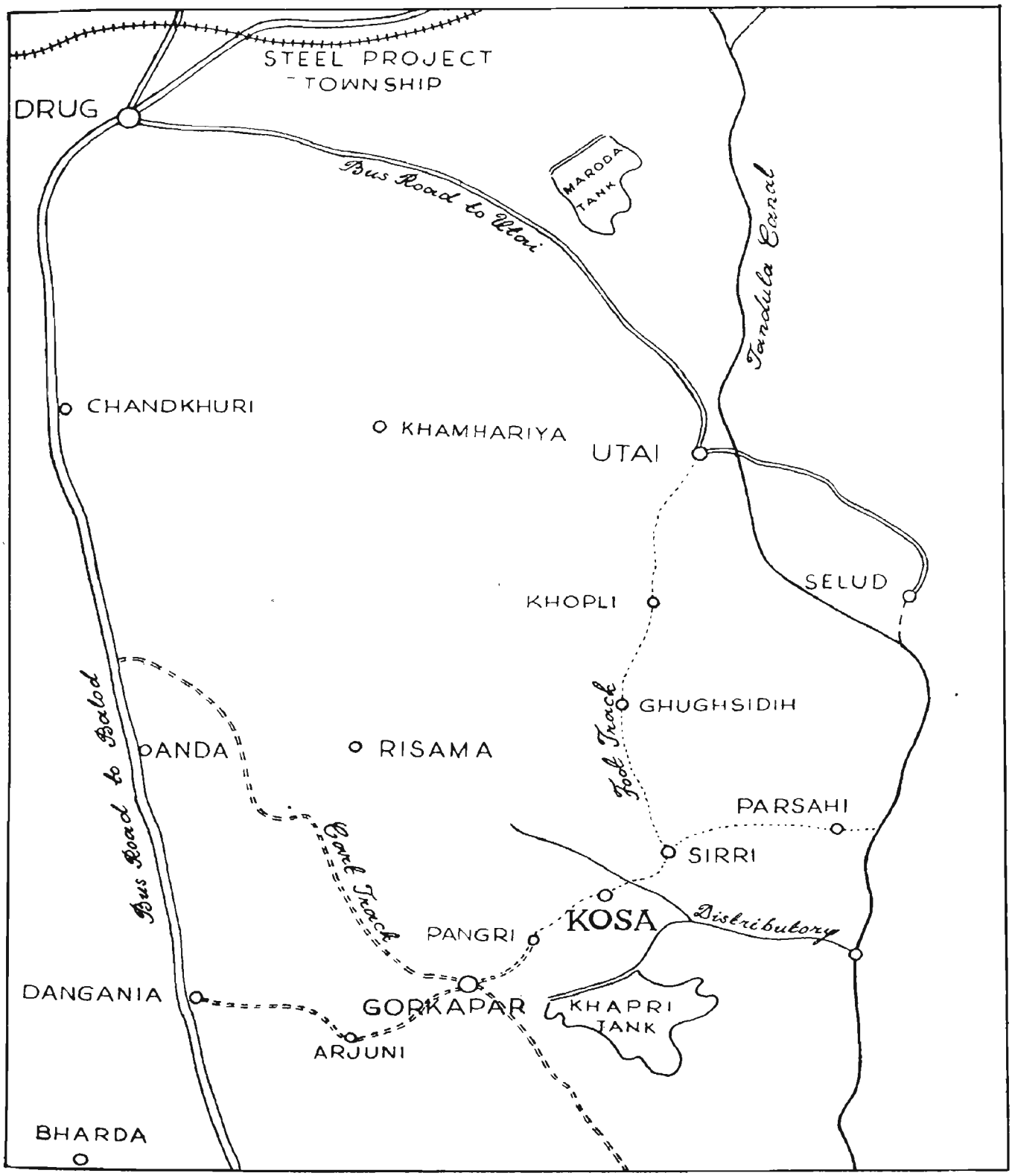


Illustration 7

PLATE VIII



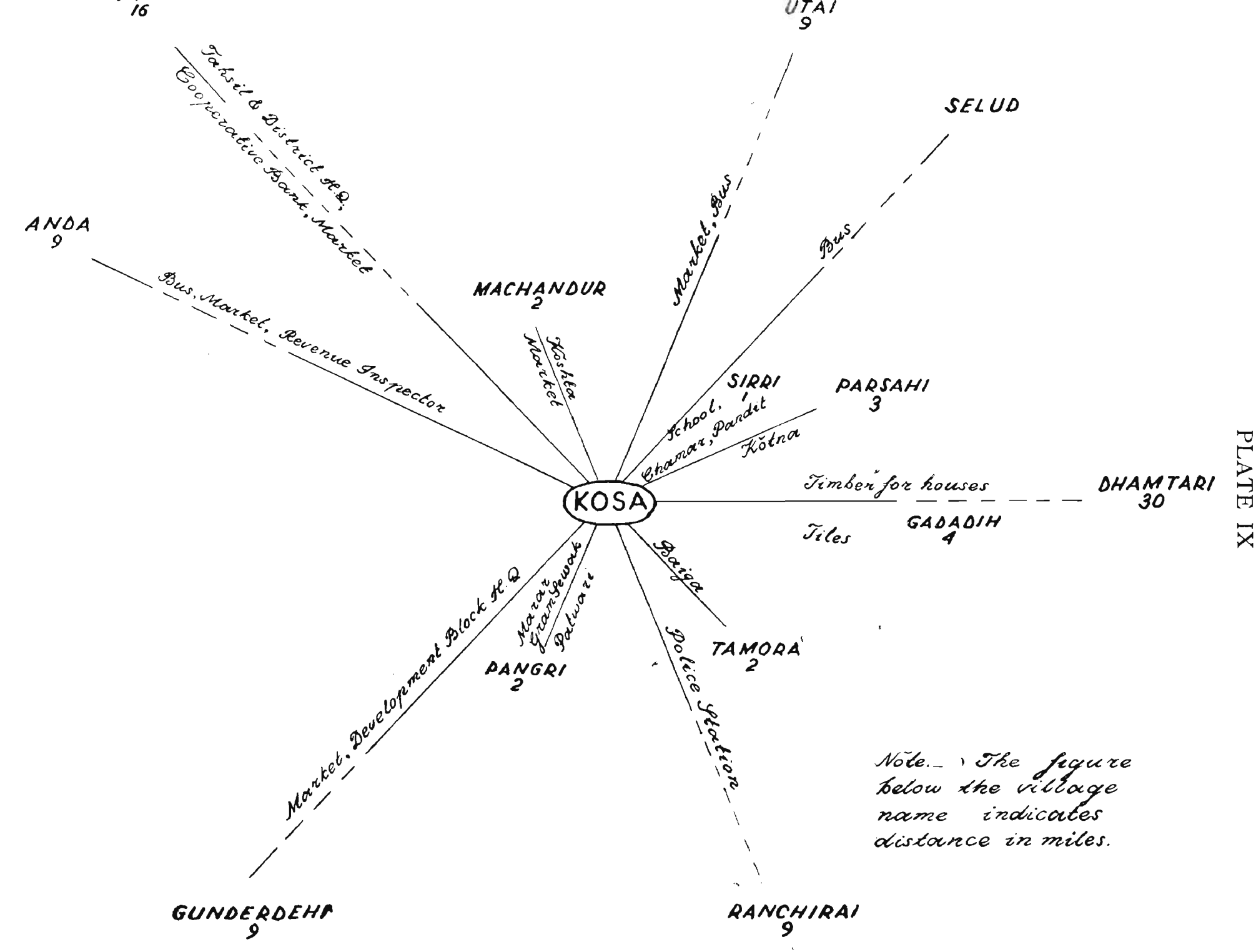
Illustration 8

Village Kosa from the eastern approach



Illustration 9

Morning scene on the village tank



Dependence of Kosa on sorrounding villages

Illustration 10

PLATE IX

CHAPTER I

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND DEMOGRAPHY

General Description

The present report is based on a socio-economic survey of village — Kosa, a village (population 309) situated 10 miles to the south-east of Durg town of the Durg District, Madhya Pradesh. On the topographical map of the Survey of India the village is located on latitude 21°3′ North and longitude 21°20′ East.

Kosa has been selected for the present study for at least three reasons. The first and msot important factor in its selection is the study of the Satnami caste, who according to 1931 Census[1] formed 12.7 per cent of the population of Durg district and according to 1961 count are 8.18 per cent in the district. Village Kosa with its 81.2 per cent Satnami population, offered itself as an ideal locale for the study of this caste. Secondly, its location within 15 miles of Durg town and the new township of Bhilainagar is also a factor in favour of its selection for the study of urbanization and the effect of technological changes, if any, on the socio-economic fabric of village organization. Thirdly, its location within the jurisdiction of a Community Development Block, makes it possible to make an assessment of the extent of 'development' in the rural areas.

Village Kosa is situated in that part of the State which is known as Chhattisgarh. The etymology of this word is uncertain. According to some people it means thirty-six forts while according to others it means thirty-six houses. Be that as it may, Chhattisgarh has a rich historical past and beyond the period of ascertainable history finds mention in mythological works like the *Jaiminiya Ashwamedha*. An account of the history of Chhattisgarh is, however, not relevant in the context of the present survey and is, as such, not being given here. But though nurtured in a rich historical past, the area had reverted to a period of slumber and inactivity and Charles Grant wrote of it in 1870 in the *Gazetteer of the Central Provinces*: "Land-locked on every side by deep forests or hill-passes, and remote from all centres, whether of eastern or more modern western civilization, this little principality was till of comparatively late years the least known portion of the obscurest division of India." (p. XXV)

Most of the people now found in the Chhattisgarh appear to be immigrants and sections in the various castes with names like Kanoujia are not rare. Hewitt in his Report of 1869[2] says: "The population of Raepore has been recruited from all quarters, but the most important immigrants, and the earliest after the first great Gond invasion, are those who have come from the north. From the east the immigration has been very small, and the immigrants consist chiefly of a few wild wanderers in the jungles, while from the south and west there has been a considerable influx the population. Of the immigrant tribes of Koormees, Telees, Lodhees, Chumars, Aheers or Gairas, Gandas and Kams seem to have come from the north, though a large section of Telees and some few Koormees have come from Nagpur, while the greater number of immigrants from the south and west are Halbas from Bustar and Chanda and Mahrattas." Hewitt has estimated that the Satnamis (Chamars) in the area are immigrants of a comparatively late date and may have come here about the 15th Century.

The Village

Kosa, a medium-sized Satnami village, is situated only 10 miles from Durg town as the crow flies. Nearer than Durg, however, is the more spectacular new township of Bhilainagar the high chimneys of which factory can easily be seen from the fields of Kosa and the lights of this factory and the township around can easily be seen from the fields during the night. But though looking so near on the map, the minimum accessible distance between Durg and Kosa is about 16 miles, Bhilainagar being a little nearer.

There are 4 routes which may be taken to make a visit to Kosa and these are shown in the diagrammetic sketch (Illustration 7). But, two each of these various routes converge at Pangri and Sirri, between which villages Kosa lies. Thus the approach to Kosa is either through Pangri or Sirri. The most convenient route would probably be the one we followed during our last visit: this would be the one via Selud. There is a bus — known as Selud-halting bus which leaves Durg bus stand in the afternoon. It goes through a part of Bhilainagar,

1. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII, pt. I, p. 359.
2. Ibid, p. 32.

past the Cooling Towers of the Project to a village Utai and after a little halt goes over a rather jumpy road to village Selud. At Selud there is an Inspection Hut of the Irrigation Department. From Selud, the Tandula Irrigation Canal can be followed upto half a mile of village Kanakot, which village can be reached along a distributory. This distributory can be followed almost upto Sirri village and from Sirri, the village Kosa is just a mile or so. On this route, a cycle can conveniently go upto Sirri. During the rainy months of the year there are only two approaches to the village, the one described above, being one of them.

For purposes of Revenue Administration Kosa lies in the Durg tahsil and the villagers have to go to the tahsil office at Durg for Revenue and Criminal cases. The concerned Patwari Circle is 106 with the head-quarters of the Patwari at village Pangri (2 miles to south-west). Anda (north-west) is the head-quarters of the Revenue Inspector. The Police Station-House having jurisdiction is located at Ranchirai (9 miles south-east) and village Gunderdehi (9 miles south-west) is the head-quarters of the Development Block.

There is no school in the village and the school-going children have to attend the Janpad Primary School at Sirri (1 mile north-east). For marketing the villagers have to go to the nearby weekly markets of Machandur, Utai, Gunderdehi, Sirri, Khapri and also the market of Durg. There is no barber in the village, nor any Dhobi (washerman). Similarly there is neither a Kumhar (potter) nor a Chamar (skinner of dead cattle). There is no forest nearby from where timber could be obtained. And thus for all these requirements, Kosa has to depend upon other villages. This dependence has been shown in the diagram (Illustration 10).

Kosa is situated over gently dipping quartzitic sandstone of the Cuddapah system of rock-formations. The bare sandstone rock is however not exposed anywhere and only the decomposed cap of *murrum* is seen. This sandstone is overlain by a pink coloured nodular limestone of the same system which is exposed 3 miles to the north near village Parsahi and from which rock *kotna* or the stone-vessal for the cattle is made. Physiographically, the village is situated in a saucer-shaped basin with the surrounding villages Machandur, Pangri, Sirri and Tamora being situated at the rim of this physiographic saucer. The settlement of Kosa is situated in the middle region of this bowl, which is a little raised ground. Because of this physiographic setting, the rainy season is a difficult period in the village for the visitors, because there is water and mud all around and the village lanes become very slushy and sometimes even unloaded bullock-carts get stuck up.

In its physical form, Kosa is a shapeless massive cluster. The houses constitute two connected clusters, loosely referred to as Satnami-*para* and Hindu-*para*. The village *abadi* is in the shape of a dagger with the length running east-west. The area of this *abadi* is 4.49 acres and 73 houses are built over it without any particular design or arrangements. The area of this *abadi* remaining vacant constitutes the only land available for future construction, because at the time of the Nistar Enquiries in 1955, no other land is kept reserved for extension of settlement. As it is, practically no land is left out and there is no space for further expansion in Kosa except possibly by way of encroachment over the *gouthan* and grassland.

The village lanes are extremely narrow and at many points even two persons cannot walk side by side. There are two wells in the village — one in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi — the ex-proprietor of the village and the other near the house of Nangainha Satnami. The first well belongs to Ghanshyam and is inside the house; the latter well has been constructed in 1958 with the financial aid from the Development Block. The villagers, however, do not drink the water of this well. The drinking water is fetched by the women from the *nala*. The *nala* (stream) water tastes better according to them and it also gives good taste to the *basi*. Resort to this public well is taken when the stream dries up in summer. If the well also dries up, the women go back to the stream, dig small pits (*jhiria*) in the stream-bed and get water from there.

There are three tanks in the village — one (Khasra No. 50, area 0.49 acres) is in the western end of the village *abadi*, by the side of the houses. This tank was got dug by a *koshta* (weaver) from Machandur village as a religious and charitable act. This tank is a public tank and is the most useful one for the villagers, but it gets dry during hot months. It was deepened by the people of Kosa with the grant-in-aid by the Development Block. The other two tanks are situated side by side (Khasra Nos. 226 and 229, area 1.90 and 1.82 acres respectively). One of these (Khasra No. 226) has a high embankment and was dug by the ancestors of Rajan Satnami. This tank is used only when the tank near the settlement dries up. Usually this tank, situated in the field also dries up in summer and then the people go to the tank in Sirri village. But the people of Sirri allow only men and women to bathe there: bathing of cattle is prohibited. Thus, in summer the Kosa villagers face

great difficulty in the matter of washing the cattle. Though keeping buffalos for the use of plough and cart is very common in Chhattisgarh, the people from Kosa do not like to keep buffalos. The reason they have ascribed is that buffalos need washing every day in summer and when their own tanks get dried up, things become very difficult. The bullocks do not require to be bathed every day.

The village burial-ground is about half a furlong to the north-west of the village and is situated by the side of a stream. The area of the burial-ground is 0.46 acre and in this area, the Satnamis and non-Satnamis have separate areas for burial. There is, however, no definite demarcation for this.

The village has no place where the people can meet, like the *Panchayat-Bhawan* or Community Centre. Even the *Gudi* (village rest house, constructed by the villagers for the use of visiting officials) which used to be a common feature of many of the villages in Chhattisgarh, is absent here. Visiting officials have to stay in the outer verandah of Ghanshyam Kurmi's house where the people also gather for gossip. At other times the tank embankment or the platform near the *Mahabir* serves as the meeting ground for the villagers.

For the use of visiting officials, the villagers have, however, purchased one table and some 2 or 3 chairs. These are the property of the whole village and have been purchased out of the amount of fine imposed on some of them by the *Panchayat*. This furniture is kept with the village watchman Jairamdas Panka — who brings them to the place where the visiting official is staying. Initially, the Satnamis were opposed to purchasing of this furniture for the comfort of Government officials, because they do not like officials visiting their village frequently, but Ghanshyam Kurmi, Jairamdas Panka and Chintaram Satnami were able to persuade them to agree for the purchase.

There is no temple in the village and the places of worship are a *Siv-ling* under a *pipal* tree near the tank, *Mahabir* under two trees, the *Jait-kham* or the sacred pillar of the Satnamis and a number of other deities.

There is no apparent explanation for the village name. There is one more village in the Durg tahsil having the same name (now acquired for Bhilai Steel Project) and in both the cases the origin of the village name appears to be purely fortuitous. The villagers could not give any explanation for the origin of the name of the village.

There is no written record of village history. An oral tradition is however vaguely remembered by some old people like Shobharam Satnami. According to him, the Satnamis are the oldest inhabitants here, settling for nearly seven generations. He said: *"Ham man bharua kat ke base han"* (we have settled here after clearing the growth of reed). The story of the first settler of Kosa is that one old Satnami came here with his two wives — Kari (black) and Pandri (white) who were so named because of their complexion. This old man and these two wives of his were the precursors of the Kosa Satnamis and Shobharam claims to be a direct descendent of these. He has, however, no idea as to which of these two ladies was his great-great grand-mother. The old man, assisted by his two wives cleared the land of a jungly growth of reed and made the first hut in Kosa.

There is another view also. It is stated that the thick growth of reed in this physiographic depression of the present village used to serve as a hiding place for his ancestors who after theft or plunder hid themselves here. In course of time they took to settled life and founded the settlement about seven generations ago. Nobody in the village is able to explain the reason that led the old man and his two wives to leave their original home and come down to this place for settling.

The recent history of Kosa is, however, available from the records. It is known that this village was held by a Rajput *Malguzar*, who in addition to this village, was holding 51 other villages. He sold this village to one Mukti Kurmi, some 56 years back for a consideration of Rs. 5,000/- and thus Mukti became the first Kurmi settler here. He was the great grand-father of Ghanshyam Kurmi, now residing in Kosa. In his Settlement Report of 1911, Hemmingway[3] records that this village belonged to the *Malguzar* of Marra, and he sold it to a Kurmi after settling tenants on the whole of the homefarm. A geneology of Mukti Kurmi is given in the description of the Kurmi caste.

The Thethwar and Lohar households settled in Kosa about 2 generations back. The Panka came here from village Dhaneri Bodra, about 20 miles away from Kosa, only some 16 years ago on the invitation of the villagers because they did not have a watchman (*kotwar*). Prior to him, the village watchman belonged to Mahara caste.

The post of village watchman is held in Chhattisgarh by members of Panka, Ganda or Mahara caste, which are supposed to be very low in the social hierarchy. The same position exists in the northen districts also e. g. in Morena and Shivpuri districts it is the

3. Settlement of Durg District; H. E. Hemmingway, 1911, Drug tahsil Report p. 1536.

members of the Khangar (Gohanja) caste, in Sagar it is the Chadar caste and also Khangar in some villages and in Jabalpur it is mostly the Mahars or Mahara who become the village watchmen. And so in Kosa when the former watchman, belonging to the Mahara caste left, the people invited the Panka to come to the village.

The Steel Project at Bhilai which, as mentioned before, is visible from the fields of the village, has, apart from providing a source of livelihood to some enterprising labourers of the village, brought an unfounded and imaginary source of danger in the minds of quite a good number of people (mostly Satnamis) of Kosa. They live under the shadow of a suspicion that their village may any day be acquired by the Government and the land of the 'old man and Kari-Pandri' would have to be abandoned. Any enquiry, and much more so, the enquiry that was made for the present survey, is looked at from this point of view and though one may try to convince the people of the utter baselessness of their feeling, the fear looms large and one cannot say when it would disappear.

Thus, though founded by a Satnami and though a Satnami preponderant village, Kosa may be said now to be a multi-caste village with a Kurmi, Rawat, Panka and Lohar admixture in its population.

Demography

Census of India, 1961, shows that village Kosa has a population of 309 persons. The population changes in the village from before the beginning of this century are shown below:—

Year	*Population*			*Increase or Decrease*	
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Persons*	*Per cent*
1891	221	Not available		—	—
1901	157	Not available		—64	—28.9
1911	162	76	86	+ 5	+ 3
1921	234	Not available		+72	+44
1931	Not available			—	—
1941	264	122	142	+30	+13
1951	288	134	154	+24	+ 9
1961	309	147	162	+21	+ 7

Regarding the decrease of 28.9 per cent in the population of the village in intercensal period 1891-1901 nothing specific can be stated and the following extract from the District Gazetteer may be found useful in interpreting the decrease.

"The population of the present district in 1891 was 181,362,1 persons and the decrease during the next decade was 136, 362 persons or 17 per cent. The decrease was 15% in Durg, 17% in Sanjari. The new district contains those portions of the Chhattisgarh plain which were most severely affected between 1896 and 1900 ..... in recent years many Chamars and others of the labouring classes have emigrated in search of work on the railways and in the coal mines of Bengal".[4] The decrease may therefore have been a general feature of the whole tract. Sobharam Satnami vaguely remembers that his father used to tell that there was some temporary emigration from Kosa during this period and that they had returned after normalcy was attained. Beyond this there is no indication from the village about this decrease in the population.

The greatest population increase is in the intercensal period 1911-1921 when the increase was 44 per cent. This increase is a significant feature because the period 1911-1921 was not a favourable period for population growth. According to Census Report of 1921[5], "the cessation of rains in September 1918 resulted in a failure of Kharif crops over the whole of Central Provinces and a widespread scarcity was experienced. The monsoon again failed in 1920 resulting in a second scarcity in the whole province. The year of 1918 was again a year of severe influenza epidemic which took a toll of 6% of the population of the province."

Variation of population per cent in the 1901-1921 period in the province is shown in the table below:—

Region	1901-1911	1911-1921
C. P. and Berar	+17.9	— 0.3
Chhattisgarh plain	+23.3	+ 3
Durg district	+14.3	— 4.1
Kosa village	+ 3	+44

No reason is to be found for this abnormal increase in population in 1911-1921 period.

Another feature about the village population is the preponderance of females over males. The sex-ratio in the last three censuses is as below:—

1941	—	1,160
1951	—	1,150
1961	—	1,100

This feature of preponderance of females over males is common to the whole of Chhattisgarh region and a

4. District Gazetteer, Durg District, p. 52.
5. Census of India, 1921, Vol. XI, pt. I.

sustained investigation into the cause of this phenomenon may be necessary. Preponderance of females in the Chhattisgarh is shown in the Census Report of 1931 where[6] proportion of each sex in every 1000 of the population for the Censuses between 1872 and 1931 is tabulated as shown below.

Region	*Year*	*Male*	*Female*
Chhattisgarh Region	1872	503	497
	1881	498	502
	1891	494	505
	1901	486	514
	1911	488	512
	1921	487	513
	1931	486	513

The sex-ratio in the Satnami caste in the Census of 1931 was, 1,062 and according to 1961 Census this ratio has been found to be 1,044. Now, so far as Kosa is concerned, it is outside the scope of the present enquiry to make a detailed investigation into the causes which led to the preponderance of females here. The feature as has been stated earlier, is general to the region in which Kosa is situated. It is, however, indicated that the excess of females is not due to emigration of males in large numbers. Whenever there has been emigration, men and women have both moved out.

Births and Deaths

The village watchman (*Kotwar*) keeps a register of births and deaths in the village and this register is carried by him to the Police Station House every week where the figures are posted in the relevant registers and periodically reported to the authorities concerned. At the village level, the reporting is very satisfactory and the coverage is full, though now the visiting officials rarely check this register maintained by the village watchman. Information extracted from this register has been compiled in the following three tables showing the births and deaths in the village during the decade 1951-1961.

Year	*No. of Births*	*No. of Deaths*
1951	17	7
1952	16	12
1953	14	5
1954	10	4
1955	19	10
1956	17	11
1957	18	8
1958	13	6
1959	13	8
1960	12	7
Total for 10 years	149	78

Figures of deaths in the village during the last decade have also been tabulated sex and age-group-wise and the statement is as below:—

Age-Group	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Below 1 year	28	15	13
1 to 5 years	21	12	9
6 to 10 years	2	2	—
11 to 20 years	—	—	—
21 to 30 years	4	1	3
31 to 40 years	3	2	1
41 to 50 years	2	1	1
51 to 60 years	5	2	3
61 to 70 years	4	3	1
71 to 80 years	6	2	4
81 and over	3	1	2
Total Deaths	78	41	37

Number of Deaths — Age-wise in 1951-1960

Age-Group	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	*Total*
Below 1 year	4	7	1	2	—	5	2	1	2	4	28
1 to 5 year	1	2	2	—	6	3	4	—	1	2	21
6 to 10 years	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2
11 to 20 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
21 to 30 years	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2	—	4
31 to 40 years	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	3
41 to 50 years	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
51 to 60 years	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	1	1	5
61 to 70 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	4
71 to 80 years	1	2	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	6
81 and above	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	3
Total	7	12	5	4	10	11	8	6	8	7	78

6. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII, pt. 1, p. 147.

In such a small population of about 300, it is pointless to talk of birth and death rates but a study of sex-wise distribution of population in different age-groups, marital status and age-group — and sex-wise statement of deaths brings out features which corroborate the general tendencies noticed in Indian demographic investigations, and in particular, in the Chhattisgarh region. The tables of births and deaths show quite a high degree of child-mortality: in 10 years, there were 49 deaths of children below 5 years of age. The month-wise deaths are shown in the table below:—

Year	*Number of deaths in the month of*											
	Jan.	*Feb.*	*Mar.*	*Apr.*	*May.*	*June*	*July.*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*
1951	—	2	—	1	—	1	—	—	1	2	—	—
1952	1	1	—	—	1	2	1	1	—	2	2	1
1953	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	1
1954	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	1
1955	—	1	—	—	5	1	2	1	—	—	—	—
1956	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	—	1	—	—	—
1957	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	3	—	1
1958	1	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	—	1	—	1
1959	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	1	1	1	1
1960	1	1	2	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Total	6	7	3	4	7	9	9	5	5	11	6	6

AGE AND SEX-GROUP

Age-Group	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
0 — 4	47	26	21
5 — 9	50	23	27
10 — 14	26	12	14
15 — 19	15	7	8
20 — 24	24	10	14
25 — 29	33	14	19
30 — 34	33	21	12
35 — 39	11	6	5
40 — 44	11	6	5
45 — 49	12	5	7
50 — 54	14	6	8
55 — 59	7	3	4
60 — 64	7	3	4
65 — 69	3	1	2
70 & Over	16	4	12
Total	309	147	162

Marital Status

The Marital status of the population of Kosa is shown in the table below:—

Age-Group	*Married*		*Unmarried*		*Widowed*		*Separated*	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 — 4	2	1	24	20	—	—	—	—
5 — 9	3	4	20	23	—	—	—	—
10 — 14	5	5	7	9	—	—	—	—
15 — 19	5	7	2	1	—	—	—	—
20 — 24	10	13	—	1	—	—	—	—
25 — 29	14	19	—	—	—	—	—	—
30 — 34	21	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
35 — 49	17	15	—	—	—	1	—	1
50 — 59	7	7	—	—	2	5	—	—
60 and above	6	2	—	—	2	16	—	—
Total	90	85	53	54	4	22	—	1

This table brings out following three features:—

(1) Child-marriage, though not very common, is still practised and there are 5 boys and 5 girls married in the age-group 0-9 years.

(2) Generally speaking, girls and boys get married before they attain the age of 20 years.

(3) The number of widows is much greater than that of widowers. The age-group at which this phenomenon is observed is over 50 years i. e. after the child-bearing age for women is crossed.

Size of the Family

Size of family in Kosa is shown in the table below:—

Size	*Type*	*Number of families*				
		Satnami	*Rawat*	*Kurmi*	*Panka*	*Lohar*
1 Member	Very Small	4	—	—	—	1
2-3 Members	Small	14	—	—	—	—
4-6 Members	Medium	25	3	2	—	—
7-9 Members	Large	10	2	1	1	—
10 & over members	Very Large	2	—	—	—	—

This shows that 77 per cent of the families in the village are small to medium-size; 20 per cent families have 7 to 9 members and there are only 2 families (3%) with over 10 members in the household.

Literacy

Village Kosa does not have a school and the children have to go to the Primary School at Sirri village, about 3/4 mile from here. Even though the village does not have a school, there has been considerable increase in the number of literates, particularly males. The number of male and female literates in the last two censuses are shown below:—

Year	Total Population		Number of Literates		Percentage of Literates to total population	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1951	134	154	17	3	12.6	1.9
1961	147	162	42	5	28.6	3

Statistics of education in the village (number of school-going children) are given below for the years 1956-57 upto date.

Year	1st Hindi class		2nd Hindi class		3rd Hindi class		4th Hindi class	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1956-57	5	—	7	—	2	—	1	—
1957-58	7	—	5	—	7	—	1	—
1958-59	6	—	3	1	5	—	6	1
1959-60	7	3	5	—	4	1	4	—
1960-61	4	1	5	1	5	—	4	1

In the year 1958-59, there was one boy in 5th Hindi class and in 1959-60, the number in this class was 3 boys. In 1960-61 the number was again one boy. These figures were furnished by the Primary School, Sirri, and it is not known why no girls are shown in 1957-58 when in 1958-59, there is one girl each in second and fourth class.

Birth-place and Migration

The division of population on the basis of birth-place is as below:—

Description of Birth-place	Total	Male	Female
Persons born in Kosa	206	138	68
Born in Durg District	99	8	91
Born in Madhya Pradesh but outside the Durg District			
(a) Raipur District	4	1	3

In the females, the entire age-group 0-9 years is born in Kosa and in 10-14, only one female has birth-place in the village; in 15-19 age-group, there are 4 women; in age-group 20-24, there are 2 women; and one each in age-groups 40-44 and 65-69. Naturally thus, among the females, there is a large number of persons born out of the village — these being the women who came to this village after marriage.

It may be noticed that according to vital statistics presented earlier, the natural increase is 149—78=71 whereas according to the Census the increase is only 21. This difference may be due to a number of factors. It has, however, not been possible to get the figures for the women who, during the last 10 years, went out of this village after marriage elsewhere. 28 women came to this village during last 10 years as brides, one woman came here after her widowhood elsewhere and at the time of enumeration of 1961, there was one woman guest. Thus we have 30 women who came here during last 10 years as brides or otherwise. This figure is however of no avail since we do not have the corresponding figure for women going out to other villages during the same period.

Though because of memory lapses, the people have not been able to state the number of males and females emigrating out of and immigrating into the village after the Census of 1951 and before the count of 1961, they have given the households who have gone out or come in.

Emigration			Immigration		
Period/years before	No. of house holds	No. of persons	Period/ years before	No. of house holds	No. of persons
1 year	1	NA	NA		
2 years	1	NA	NA		
				Not available	
3 years	2	NA	NA		
4-5 years	1	NA	NA		
Total	5				

2 households have, however, come here after Census enumeration of 1961 and 6 households from here have shifted to Bhilainagar temporarily to work on earth-digging and road construction.

In view of lack of data, the discrepancy between the Census figures and vital statistics remains unexplained.

Names

A sorting of slips was done to find out the extent of modernity in names of persons. Of course the classification of names into modern and old names is arbitrary because the transition from the old to modern is an imperceptible process: the Sukaloo become Sukhit and then in a new generation becomes Sukhlal. In males, names like Ramadhin, Shantilal, Jairamdas, Bhisham, Raghubar, Ghanshyam, Shobharam and Laxman have been classified as modern names and Hatoi, Budgoo, Halali, Bhagoli, Bhemku, Ghosiya, Mahtaroo, Khomlal, Guha, Kaskoo, Paltoo and Feroo have been classified as old names. Similarly among females, names like Urmila Parvati, Gauri, Chandrabhaga, Jamuna and Savitri have been classified as new names and Dhimsinwa, Parania, Johatarin, Bisahin, Ramhin, Manjara and Hirondi have been classified as old names. The result of this classification is as below.

Age-Group	*No. of persons*		*New names*		*Old names*		*Percentage of new names*	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 — 9	49	48	29	31	20	17	59	64
10 — 19	19	22	11	3	8	19	58	14
20 — 29	24	33	8	4	16	29	33	12
30 — 39	27	17	9	2	18	15	33	12
40 — 49	11	12	2	3	9	9	18	25
50 — 59	9	12	1	2	8	10	11	17
60 +	8	18	2	5	6	13	25	28

Statistics of Crime in Kosa

As has been mentioned in the General Description the early settlers of Kosa are believed to have been thieves and dacoits who, after committing the crime, used to hide here in the thick growth of reed. Whether or not this is taken as true, it is a fact that petty thefts are more common in this village than in an average village. Since 1906 upto the date of survey, 63 crimes have been committed in Kosa. There has, however, been no crime here since 1957. The statistics of crime since 1940 are shown below.

Year	*No. of Crimes relating to*		
	person	*Property*	
		House tresspass	*Theft*
1940	—	—	2
1941	—	1	—
1942	—	—	—
1943	—	—	3
1944	—	—	1
1945	—	—	—
1946	—	—	3
1947	—	—	4
1948	—	—	—
1949	—	—	—
1950	—	1	—
1951	—	—	3
1952	—	—	2
1953	—	—	—
1954	—	1	1
1955	—	—	1
1956	—	—	1
1957	—	—	—
1958	—	—	—
1959	—	—	—
1960	—	—	—
1961	—	—	—

Caste and Communities

As stated earlier, Kosa is a predominantly Satnami village, the Satnamis living here with 4 other communities viz. Rawat, Kurmi, Panka and Lohar, the being only one Lohar household. The population of the Lohar household is only one female. The caste-wise population of Kosa is shown below.

Caste	*No. of house-hold*	*Population*		
		Total	*Male*	*Female*
Satnami	55	254	125	129
Rawat	5	30	11	19
Kurmi	3	18	8	10
Panka	1	6	3	3
Lohar	1	1	—	1
Total	65	309	147	162



The Satnamis

Illustration 11

PLATE XI

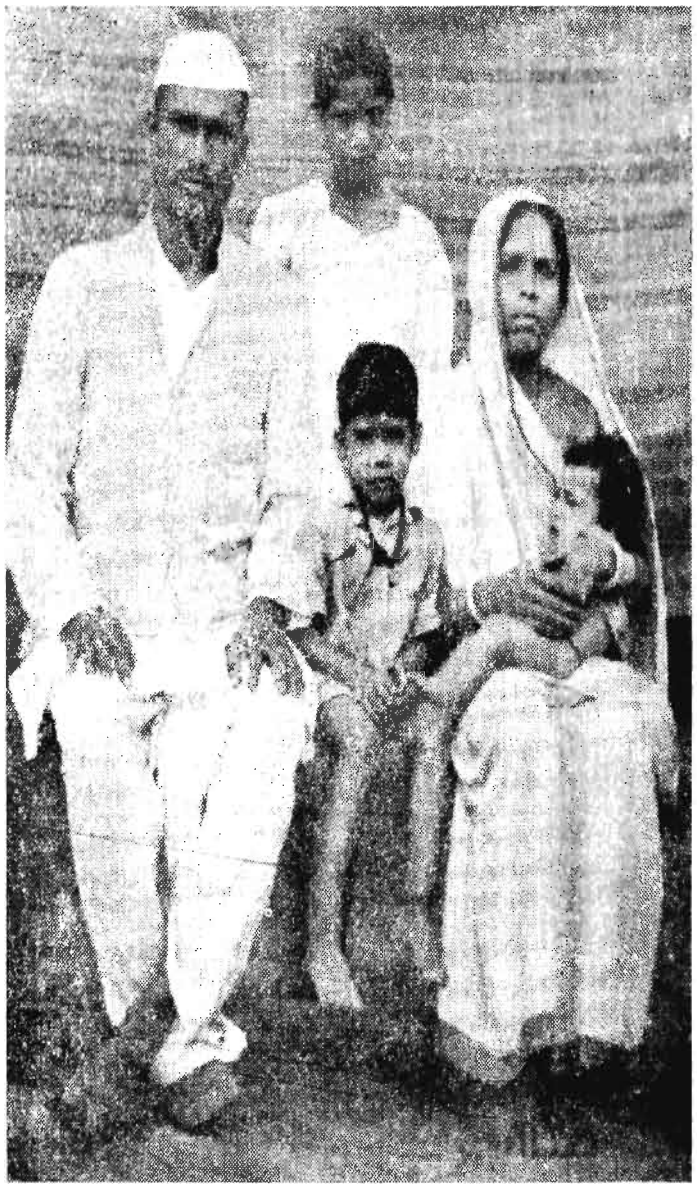


Illustration 12

The Kurmi



Illustration 13

The Rawat

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL CULTURE

It is seen from the statement furnished towards the end of the last chapter that the Satnamis are numerically the biggest caste in Kosa. But apart from this numerical domination they also exercise a preponderant influence on the life of the village community and their decisions are of vital importance in the political and economic life of the village as the following pages would show. In the deepening of the tank, for example, the ex-proprietor, who is Kurmi by caste, was showing a luke-warm attitude but the Satnamis forced him to abide by what they decided. This incident, a full description of which is given elsewhere, shows the dominance of the Satnamis. Viewed from this angle, it would not be incorrrect to state that the Satnamis are the dominant caste in Kosa.

In the following pages is given a description of the castes found in Kosa. In this chapter and in the following chapters, the description of castes is given in the same order as their numerical strength i.e. Satnamis, Rawats, Kurmis, Panka and Lohar. In the description of the Satnami caste quotations have been given at some length because the literature from where the references are taken have been long out of print and are not available easily. A detailed description of the prophet — Ghasidas is given as an appendix.

Satnamis

The etymological origin of the word Satnami is from *Sat* meaning True and *Nam* meaning name and thus the term Satnami may mean — 'of the True Name'. The Satnamis were formed as a religious sect around 1820-1830 A.D., the founder of the sect being one Chamar, Ghasidas by name. Ghasidas, an exceptionally handsome man is said to have seen visions and went to a hill near village Girod in Raipur District where he lived alone and unknown in the hill, to come out after six months to announce the new religion — *Satnami Panth*. Ghasidas appears to have been inspired by the teachings of Jagjiwandas of Barabanki, District of Uttar Pradesh. Marten[1] in his Report of 1911 gives the following description of the sect — "Satnamism, an offshoot of Kabirpanthism, was started by a Rajput, Jagjiwandas, in the United Provinces, and numbered some high caste chiefs as its followers. Its principles seem to have been imbibed by a Chamar named Ghasidas, who lived in a village of the Bilaspur District. While the teaching did not make much way in the land of its original birth, it made a deep impression on the minds of the Chamars who are universally despised by the Hindus, and Ghasidas, a single ploughman with a turn for solitary meditation, found himself by a combination of circumstances the founder of a sect which abjured all Hindu gods and ignored the headship of Brahmans. From enquiries made at Girod and surrounding villages, it appears that Ghasidas was an individual possessing no exceptional qualities. His bent of mind was, however, devotional and unsuited to a domestic life. In his wanderings in the jungles of Sonakhan and Sarangarh he must — probably near the latter place according to Rai Bahadur Hiralal's latest enquiries — have met a wandering devotee of the Satnami sect of the United Provinces from whom he derived his inspiration and received instruction in the precepts of the Satnami sect started by Jagjiwandas. The fact that most of the Chamars of Girod, including Ghasidas' relatives, are not Satnamis affords a striking instance of the want of influence of the prophet in his own country and suggests that it was his reputation and the character of his teaching rather than his personality which procured him so large a body of converts."

Marten appears to be wrong in describing Satnam *Panth* as an offshoot of Kabirpanthism because the two are not related in any way. They are founded by two different persons — Satnam *Panth* by Ghasidas and Kabirpanth by Kabir — at different periods and the origin of Satnami movement was not inspired by Kabir but by Jagjiwandas. It would therefore not seem justified to say that Satnami movement is an offshoot of Kabirpanth. Both these sects were, however, started in Chhattisgarh and both stood against the supremacy of Brahmanism. Both were again, as Hewitt[2] has stated, "dissident religious sects against the tyranny of Brahmanism" and both attracted the lower castes — in this State Satnamis recruited mostly the Chamars and Kabirpanth attracted the Ganda caste into its fold.

1. Census of India, 1911, Vol. X, Pt. I, p. 77.
2. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, J. F. K. Hewitt, 1869.

The Satnami movement thus originated as a religious sect but before a century passed, it emerged out as a caste[3]. The population of the Satnami caste has not shown any marked tendency to rise since 1891. Most of the population of this caste is concentrated in the Chhattisgarh region with a small number in adjoining districts and reorganization of States has not had any marked effect on the population figures of the Satnamis e.g. in 1931 Census, the population of Satnamis in Central Provinces was 491,933 and if the present State of Madhya Pradesh is taken into consideration the Satnamis numbered 491,519. The population of the caste from 1891 to 1961 is shown below:

Year	*Population*
1891	430,237
1901	389,599
1911	460,280
1921	430,361
1931	491,933 — Males 238,568 Females 253,365
1961	591,633 — ,, 289,378 Females 302,255

The sex-ratio in this caste is quite high and for various censuses works out to be as below.

Year of the Census	*No. of females per 1000 males*
1901	1,080
1911	1,050
1921	1,058
1931	1,062
1961	1,044

As said earlier, the main concentration of the caste is in Chhattisgarh. The figures of 1961 Census and those off 1931 Census arranged according to the present constitution of the State are shown below:

Division & District	*Satnami population in*	
	1931	1961
Raipur Division	325,210	360,305
Raipur District	174,528	203,634
Durg District	149,263	154,260
Bastar District	1,419	2,411
Bilaspur Division	156,374	230,985
Bilaspur District	146,056	204,851
Raigarh District	9,440	25,540
Surguja District	878	594
Jabalpur Division	9,446	343
Sagar District	24	—
Damoh District	150	—
Mandla District	2,144	71
Seoni District	25	1
Narsimhpur District	4	—
Chhindwara District	15	—
Balaghat District	101	80
Bhopal Division	485	—
Hoshangabad District	395	—
Betul District	126	—
Indore Division	4	—
Nimar District (Khandwa)	4	—
Madhya Pradesh	491,519	491,633

The table of population from 1891-1961 shows some decrease in the population in 1901 and 1921. This is a part of the general decrease of the population in these years — the Census of 1901 being preceded by the famine of 1896 and that of 1921 by the scarcity and influenza of 1918. These periods, apart from causing a natural decrease through death, might have also caused migration of a large body of persons in search of livelihood.

A section of the Satnamis is known as Ram-ramiha Satnamis. These people have the name of Rama tattooed all over their body and they also use a sheet printed with this name to cover their person. These Ram-ramiha Satnamis are mainly concentrated in Raigarh District and have not been studied for the present survey.

Ghasidas had prohibited smoking but after his passing away a great controversy arose about the permissibility of smoking and two separate groups were formed — the smokers called *Chongia* — and non-smokers. The division has more or less become obliterated now.

The Satnamis are a fine body of people, tall, healthy with light wheatish complexion and some being extremely fair. They are rather turbulent in nature and the Satnami tract of Bilaspur District is notorious for rioting and murder.

3. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII Pt. I

One of the earliest references about Satnamis is found in the Report of the Ethnological Committee 1866, wherein it is mentioned[4] that "The Chumars are known all over India as workers in skins, as their name imparts; they have raised themselves in the social scale in Chutteesgurh by adopting the Sutnamee tenet; they are gradually getting rid of the name — Chumar; and their descendents will probably set up as distinct caste."

In the description of the caste, the authors of the Report described the Satnamis as below (the extract is given *in-extenso* since the Report is now a rare document).

"Name of the Race — Rohedass or Sutnamee.

Habitation of the Race — Northern parts of Raepore and southern of Belaspore.

Physical conformation of selected specimen — There is nothing remarkable or peculiar in their appearance or manners.

Manners & Customs — These people are termed Chumars by others but repudiate the designation and call themselvs 'Sutnamees' of the "Great Name" of God. In common with other races of these wild parts they are supposed to have been fugitives before the races who overran India ....., from the north-west. The origin of their new move is thus described: A Fakeer of the race who had, it is supposed, got some inkling of better things from western sources, declared about 40 years ago that he had received a revelation that idolatry was sinful and that there was only one true God, of the "Great Name"; whom men ought to worship. He proclaimed this, and equality of all castes, which made him very obnoxious to the Hindu portion of society. Nevertheless, he made thousands of converts whom he inhibited from eating flesh, fish, fowl, or stimulants, also from drinking anything intoxicating or using tobacco. He became the high priest of the sect, who are pure deists. They all wear "Kanthees" or necklace of wooden beads. When they meet one another, they salute with the words "Satnam"; they use the word "Johar" where a Mohamadden would say "Salam alickoom" or the Brahmin "Numuskar". They are all, or nearly so cultivators; many of them are Malgoozars and they may be approximately two hundred thousands of them. They are generally well-to-do and very industrious. They retain many of the civil customs of the Hindoos as well as ceremonies at marriages and it is said of them that the presiding priest has the first favours of the bride in the temple after which he hands her over to her husband and relatives at the door; this probably may be an assumption. They burn all their dead, save lepers who are buried."

Hewitt and Chisholm, who conducted the Land Revenue Settlement operations in the Raipur[5] and Bilaspur Districts respectively about the year 1869 made relevent references about the people in these districts and their Reports contain statements about Satnamis also. Chisholm's detailed description of Ghasidas, the founder of the Sect has been given as an appendix (Appendix A) in this monograph because of its interest and because Chisholm's report is not available now.

Hewitt[6] writing about the 'Chumar Caste recruited from other castes' states: "It is generally supposed that the names of Sutnamees and Chumars are synonymous; but this is by no means the case, as the Sutnamee religion does not refuse to receive proselytes from any class, but as the Chamars form the majority of the sect, and as no distinctions of caste are admitted among its members, all converts of other castes become in the eyes of the Hindoos, Chumars. Under the influence of Ghaseedass a considerable number of men of other castes became Sutnamees, especially Aheers, and similar accessions must have taken place from time to time, otherwise it is hard to account for the very large number of Chumars found in the district. As a class they do not present the same degraded appearance as their brethren in other parts of India, and as a rule they are lighter in colour than the members of other cultivating castes, while some of the men and many of the women are remarkable for good looks".

Reverend Sherring in his "Hindu Tribes and Castes" describes the Satnamis under the heading—'Agricultural Tribes' and under the Chamar caste. He states[7] that

4. Report of the Ethnological Committee, 1866-67, pp. 102-103.
5. Raipur District, at the time of Hewitt's Settlement contained large areas of Durg District — the area in which Kosa is situated being in Raipur District.
6. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, pp. 33-34.
7. Hindu Tribes & Castes; M. A. Sherring, 1879, pp. 110-111.

"nearly the whole of the Chamars of Chhattisgarh are adherents of the Satnami religion, which was founded by Ghasi Das, a Chamar, between the years 1820 and 1830. Idolatry of every form is eschewed, and the supreme being is worshipped without any visible sign or representation. Moreover, all the worshippers are socially on an equality. They have no temples, no public religious service, no creed, no form of devotion. The religious act simply consists of muttering the name of God and asking his blessing. A Satnami prostrates himself before the sun, morning and evening, crying *'Sat Nam'*, the True Name or the True One. The Satnamis will not eat meat; nor will they take water from any one not of their own caste. They drink no spirits. But some smoke tobacco, and as others do not, two separate and important divisions of the tribe have sprung up. The Satnamis bury their dead without performing any religious ceremony".

"A few years ago a serious division arose among the Satnami Chamars on the subject of smoking tobacco. This and drinking spirits were both forbidden by their spiritual teacher. The latter was easily abandoned, but the former although given up for a time by all Chamars, was after an interval resumed by some of them. These did not adopt the *hookah* as formerly, but, in its stead, a broad *pylas* leaf was folded into the shape of a pipe, and thus smoked. This pipe is called *choongee* and the smokers are designated *choongiyas*. The more orthodox Satnamis, however, have resisted the temptation; and the sect has split into two great sections the smokers and the non-smokers."

Russell and Hiralal[8] have described the Satnami sect in the first volume of their "Tribes and Castes". In the article on the sect, they state that "one of the precepts of Ghasi Das was the prohibition of the use of tobacco, and this had led to a split in the sect, as many of his disciples found the rule too hard for them. They returned to their *chongies* or leaf-pipes, and are hence called *Chungias*. They say that in his later years Ghasi Das withdrew the prohibition. The *Chungias* have also taken to idolatry, and their villages contain stones covered with vermillion the representation of the village deities, which the true Satnamis eschew".

"The social customs of the Satnamis resemble generally those of other Chamars. They will admit into the community all except members of the impure castes, as Dhobis (washerman), Ghasiyas (Grass-cutter) and Mehtars (Sweepers) whom they regard as inferior to themselves..... They always bury the dead laying the body with face downwards.. ..... They observe mourning for three days". In their article on the Chamar caste, Russell and Hiralal[9] further state that "the Chamars are broken up into a number of endogamous sub-castes. Of these the largest now consists of the members of the Satnami sect in Chhattisgarh who do not intermarry with other Chamars". The Satnamis of Kosa stoutly deny that they are Chamars. They say that intermarriage with Chamars is not permissible.

Captain Forsyth[10] describing his visit to Ratanpur in Bilaspur District made a reference to the Satnamis as below: "As the temples of old faith have suffered decay, so, too, has the religion itself; and orthodox Hinduism has over all this country been extensively displaced by a deism, planted less than fifty years ago among the Chamar inhabitants of Chhattisgarh by a prophet of their own race. It is, like the Buddhism of old, an uprising of the downtrodden low castes against the tyranny of Brahmanism, its leading principle being abjuration of the Brahministic pantheon of the worship of one God, whom they call 'Sat Nam' or the 'True One'."

This concept of visualizing the Satnami sect and caste as a revolt 'against the tyranny of Brahmanism' seems to have taken deep root in the minds of the then travellers, scholars and the government and Shoobert wrote[11] in his 1931 Report: "There are two sects of considerable importance in the Central Provinces, the Kabirpanthis and the Satnamis..... They represent respectively the revolt of the depressed castes of Gandas, or weavers, and Chamars or tanners, against the tyranny of Brahmanism and the caste system. Both started with the fundamental ideal of the equality of all men, the abolition of caste and the worship of one supreme God who required no idols or temples and so no Brahmans, and yet so quickly did old influences make themselves felt, that both sects now recognise caste and by the Census of 1911 they were both returned under Brahmanic Hindus. In 1921 also both were shown as sub-headings under Brahmanic Hindus in the Census Tables because they recognised the priesthood of the Brahman..... Chamars are still almost the only

8. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. I, Russell and Hiralal, 1916, pp. 307—316.
9. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces Vol. II, Russell and Hiralal, 1916.
10. The Highlands of Central India, J. Forsyth, 1919, p. 338.
11. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII, pt. I, p. 327.

followers of this religion (Satnami) and it is significant that in spite of (or perhaps following) the early ideals of their creed a section of them were able to persuade the Local Government to recognise a separate Satnami caste. The number returning the religion name as their caste was 351,573. An interesting sub-sect of the Satnamis is Ram-Ramiha. Members of it are found chiefly in Chhattisgarh and they strive at even greater ceremonial purity than the Satnamis proper".

The following remarks of Blenkinsop[12] on the Chamars deserve insertion here: "The Chamars have during recent years been at their worst. They seem to be subject to no moral scruples or restraint. Very few of them have any real respect for their Guru, and to lie, steal, destroy cattle and commit arson are every day affairs; while the bolder spirits indulge in burgalaries, dacoities and violent assault. I do not say that they are all as bad as this, and I have come across many Chamars who were respectable and pleasant to meet, but I do say that in any village where Chamars predominate, it is an even chance that the village is in a bad condition, the *Malguzar* an absentee or without the least influence, and if the cattle of the village are spared, there will be losses of cattle in the surrounding villages. Other castes are so afraid of attracting to themselves the special enmity of the Chamars, who are very clannish, that they will often not make any complaint". Though Blenkinsop makes this mention about the Chamars, it no doubt refers to the Satnami caste, who were able to get recognition as a separate caste from the government in 1926 or so.

In the Settlement Report of the Durg District, 1911, Hemmingway[13] refers to the turbulent nature of the Chamars of the district as reported by his predecessors but he himself did not find any sign of it. His estimation of the Chamars was that they are stupid but felt that they cannot be called lazy.

The prophecy of the authors of the Report of 1866, quoted earlier, came true and by 1931, the Satnami sect emerged out as a caste. In the 1931 Census there was a representation[14] from the Chamars for being recorded as Satnamis and not Chamars. Thus in 100 years time (from 1820 to 1921) this religious tenet, referred to as a revolt against caste system, itself added to the already bewildering number and itself started practising the 'tyranny of caste-system' ranking the Chamars proper as lower to them.

In their physical built, the Satnamis are medium-statured to tall people with wheatish to fair complexion, though black complexion is not uncommon. They possess sharp and handsome features. "As a body they possess active and well set figures, are more brown than black in colour..... Their women are strong, sturdy creatures and are not unfrequently fair and comely."[15] Other observers also found "men of the caste with skins almost as fair as a Southern European's and with blue eyes."[16] "In Chhattisgarh, the Chamars are generally of fine stature and fair complexion; some of them are lighter in colour than the Chhattisgarhi Brahmans and it is on record that a European officer mistook a Chamar for a Eurasian and addressed him in English".[17]

Writing about the Chhattisgarhi women, Shoobert[18] mentioned in his Report: "People who know the Chhattisgarhi must have been struck by the fine physique of the women which compares more favourably with that of men". Now, while as a whole, the Chhattisgarhi women folk have better looks and more well-set features than their counterparts in many other parts of the State, the Satnami women are more beautiful than the average women folk here and writing about them Hutton[19] stated that they "have a great reputation locally for their handsome features".

In Durg District, the Satnamis formed 11.82 per cent of the total population in 1931, and in 1961 this percentage has been found to be 8.18. The largest number of them is, however, found in Bilaspur District where in the 1961 Census, they formed 10.13 per cent of the population. The typical Satnami tract in Chhattisgarh is in the Balodabazar Tahsil of Raipur District and southern and eastern parts of Bilaspur District and it is in these areas that the physical features of the Satnamis are best exhibited.

12. Settlement Report of Durg Tahsil, Blekinsop, 1903, p. 44.
13. Bemetara Tahsil Report, Settlement of 1911, H. E. Hemmingway, p. 10.
14. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII, pt. I, p. 354.
15. Report on the land Revenue Settlement, of the Belaspore District, J. W. Chisholm, 1869, p. 45.
16. Final Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Bilaspur District, 1904-1912, J. E. Hance, pp. 73-74.
17. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces Russell and Hiralal, Vol. II, 1916, p. 404.
18. Census of India, 1931, Vol. XII, pt. I, p. 148.
19. Caste in India, J. H. Hutton 1951, p. 23.

The remark of the authors of the Ethnological Committee Report 1866[20] that the Satnamis burn all their dead except the lepers, does not appear to be correct because, firstly, corroboration of it is not found in any of the subsequent writings already quoted earlier in this chapter and secondly, because our detailed enquiries in Kosa and casual enquiries elsewhere among the Satnamis have not suggested that this practice was ever in vogue among them. Sherring's remark that the Satnamis worship the Supreme God without any visible manifestation is also not correct and Russell had already found that the *Chongiya* Satnamis had taken to idolatry. The Satnamis of Kosa worship many of the Hindu deities and have idols as well. Again, Sherring's observation that the 'Satnami prostrates himself before the sun morning and evening' has not been found correct in this and many other villages. The Satnamis have also become less rigid in acceptance of water from other castes.

The division of the caste into smokers and non-smokers, as reported by earlier workers, is not known to the people in Kosa, who do not even know the term *Chongiya*. It has also been found that both in this village and in other villages, the Satnamis do not observe the restriction in food mentioned by Russell and Hiralal.[21] The *taroi (Luffa acutangula)*, brinjal, tomatoes and red chillies are freely eaten by them and there is good reason to believe that meat and liquor are also taken by them, though not openly.

The Satnamis of Kosa, in general are not very fair complexioned, but wheat complexion is quite common. There are two persons who have very fair complexion and blonde hair. One of this is a young woman, the name of whom could not be found out, and the other is a girl of about 8 years, called Nira. Bhookhin a woman of dark complexion is still quite beautiful. Among the men, the old Hatoi, who is the husband of 3 wives, is a very fair complexioned man and people like Chintaram, Shobharam and Mannu are fine good looking, wheat-complexioned men. The poor boy Ramadhar is dark but his features are very sharp and lovely. If Chintaram may be taken as a specimen of the Satnami male, Parania can well be taken as a good representative of the Satnami womenfolk.

The Satnami men smoke *bidis* though they do not know that this could put them in the *Chongiya* division, the existence of which they do not know, and though not admitted, they have told us that some people eat meat and take liquor. The people do not have any reliable information about Ghasi Das, the prophet of the tenet nor do they know that Ghasi Das got his revelation at Girod or as to where this village is. They do not know the name of the successors of Ghasi Das and they do not know much about their caste, exogamous septs and totems.

The exogamous sections of the Satnamis have not been compiled anywhere and so it is not possible to say if the interpretations given to or admitted by the people of Kosa have any genuine information. The names of those exogamous divisions of the Satnamis obtained from the present enquiry may broadly be classified into totemistic and titular. This classification is, however, purely tentative and a wide and more intensive survey would be necessary before the significance can finally be derived.

The *got* names from Kosa are Jogi, Tadaiya, Kosariya, Gadra, Baghmar, Sonwani, Jarkodiya, Dahariya, Banjar, Maghimudi, Todar, Maraiya, Sang-sutaiya and Kurra.

The exact meaning of many of these terms is not clear and the villagers are not able to extend any assistance in this regard. *Kosariya* is a common endogamous section in many communities in this part of the State e. g. Kosariya Rawat, and these it is supposed to have come from the word *Kosala* the ancient name of this part of the country and being retained in the of *Mahakosala* which is used to refer to districts of old Madhya Pradesh included in the present State after reorganization. Baghmar, similarly, is also an exogamous section of, for example, the Kurmi caste and as the term suggests may have originated from killing a tiger. Sonwani, meaning gold-water, is again an exogamous section of the Agarias. The probable significance of the *got*-terms may thus be:—

Jogi = Wandering monk; Kosariya = from Koshala; Baghmar = Killer of Tiger; Sonwani = Gold-water; Sang-sutaiya = Sleeping together; Banjar = Barren; Tadaiya = Worker at lifting water for irrigation (from an implement *Teda*). Dahariya = Road; Maghimudi = head of Magh month; Maraiya = Quarrelsome; Todar = Breaker.

20. Report of the Ethnological Committee, 1866-67.

21. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces Vol. I, Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 309.

The Satnamis of the village said that they could not say anything for or against these interpretations. These *got* names were used by their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents and "who can now tell you what they mean". And, as they said, the *got* names are required only when one has a son to be married and is searching for a bride. "But, Sir", as somebody said, "who cares for the *got* when the hearts become one".

The Satnamis of Kosa, wear sacred threads like Satnamis elsewhere; they have their own Satnami priest and employ a Brahmin priest only very rarely. The Satnamis of Kosa are regarded with disfavour by the Police. Some description of the crime situation in the village is given at the end of this section.

Rawats

Rawat, also known as Raut or Gahira, are the next important community of Kosa from the numerical point of view and have 5 households in the village — 4 of Rawats and 1 of Thethwar. The etymological origin of either of the three terms is not known and the last-named-term is also now more or less extinct.

Nothing is known about the history of the caste. They have been included by Russell in the description of the Ahir caste and like the Ahirs elsewhere, they form the occupational caste of cowherds, graziers and household servants in Chhattisgarh. From their physical features, it appears likely that they have descended from the aboriginals and largely from Gonds but unless detailed investigations are carried on, it would not be safe to say as to which tribal stock they belong.

Russell[22] mentions that "In Central Provinces Ahirs live in small forest villages with Gonds, and are sometimes scarcely considered as Hindus. On this account they have a character for bucolic stupidity as the proverb has it: 'when he is asleep he is an Ahir and when he is awake he is a fool'." The Ahirs have, however, a good social status and the Rawats living in village Tikanpal of Jagdalpur Tahsil of Bastar District (which village has been studied for a similar survey) have assumed a very superior status. The Rawats are again a caste from whom everybody accepts water.

It is believed that in "Central Provinces, the Ahirs are largely recruited from the Gonds and other tribes." "The Ahirs or cow herds and graziers probably take their name from the Abhiras, another of the Scythian tribes. But they have now become a purely occupational caste, largely recruited from the indigenous Gonds and Kanwars, to whom the business of tending cattle in the jungles is habitually entrusted".[23]

Describing them Hewitt mentioned in his Settlement Report:[24] "The Aheers or Gairas are divided into three Gotes, two having the same name as those of the Telees, namely Jhurreea and Koosuria, and the third or Canoojeea being late immigrants. Like the some classes among the Telees, the Jhurreea and Koosuria Aheers have been settled from time immemorial in the District, and probably first settled when the jungle was half cleared, grazing their cattle on the rank jungle grasses.....".

The Rawats of Chhattisgarh are a fine sturdy people, medium to tall in stature and from light to dark black in complexion; wheat and fair complexion is rather rare except among the Rawats in the towns where it may possibly be due to admixture of blood. The Rawats usually keep their hair long or instead they keep a long *choti* (tuft of hair at the back of the head). Their accompaniments are the *kamra* or the country made blanket, *lathi* or stick, flute and a *khumri* (rain-hood) Near about Diwali, they go out dancing, singing the *dohas* and *dadariya*. ... ..

As stated earlier, there are 5 households of the Rawats in Kosa, but one of these households calls itself Thethwar and regards the Thethwars to be superior to other Rawats. The term "Thethwar" may possibly mean 'pure' or 'exact'. (Theth meaning exact, original, pure) and Russell and Hiralal state in connection with Rawats[25] that "the superior class of them refuse to clean household cooking vessels, and are hence known as Thethwar, or exact or pure, as distinguished from other Rawats, who still perform this somewhat derogatory work".

A detailed description of the Rawats is given in the Survey Report of village Bendri and also in that of village Tilaibhat; it is not being repeated here. This village has, however, brought out two new *got* names (exogamous divisions) the *Bhains* (buffalo) and *Tangya* (Axe). Thus the list of exogamous sections of the Rawats compiled from the two village studies named

22. The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. II, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 36.
23. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. II, Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 24.
24. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 33.
25. The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. II, Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 25.

above and from the present survey, becomes 27. It was mentioned in the Tilaibhat village Survey Report that "a complete list of such sections of the Rawats has not been compiled anywhere and unless special investigations are carried out among the Rawats, an exhaustive list of different *gotras* or these exogamous sections cannot be obtained". Similar studies among the Rawats of other villages may possibly bring out some more names.

The Rawats are generally known to be divided into 3 sections — the Jheria, the Kosaria and the Kanoujia. The present survey and a similar survey of village Tilaibhat have shown that there are two more, though rather less known sections — the Thethwars and the Desaha, both of which regard their members to be higher in social status to other Rawats. About 20 years back, the Kanoujia section of the Rawats also started a movement towards 'social elevation' which they termed as *Suraj* (a corruption of *Swarajya* = self rule) and this movement has been so successful that all the Kanoujia Rawats have stopped cleaning household cooking utensils. They are now also known as *Surajia* Rawat — though the term is not very current. The Kanoujia now have petty tea-shops in the bus-stands or such other places. This has also necessitated a migration of these Kanoujias towards cities.

The Rawats of the village under study belong to the Jharia or Jheria group which according to the term itself suggests long residence in these parts. Jhadia appears to be derived from the word 'Jhad' (tree) or 'Jhadee' (bushes) and may thus refer to the jungle-habitat of this group. Kaskoo Rawat may easily be taken as a typical representative of the Jheria Rawats, with his tuft of hair, his rather dark complexion, ruddy features, a broad grin and slightly snubbed nose. In a Gond village, he may easily be passed as one.

The ancestors of the present Thethwar came to Kosa from the village Marra with the Rajput Malguzar which must have been, in any case, before the Settlement of 1911, because in 1911, the Malguzars were Kurmis. The Thethwars have on the whole better-set features than the Rawats and do not generally have the flat 'gondish' nose. Though regarding themselves socially superior, the Thethwars also follow the same occupation as the Rawats i. e. cattle-grazing and Panchram Thethwar of Kosa is also following the same. Some of the exogamous sections of the Thethwars are Hathiya-bargar, Khaddar-routiya and Tat-bandiya, the Thethwar of Kosa belonging to the first-named division. The relations of the Thethwar live in the nearby villages of Machandur, Sirri and Dongitarai.

Kurmis

Etymologically the word Kurmi is probably derived from the sanskrit word *krishi* meaning cultivation or from *kurma*, the tortoise incarnation of Vishnu. The Kurmi call themselves as *Koorma-vanshi* Kshatriya and thus it can not be said definitely how the name of the caste originated from tortoise. It may be because it is the token of the caste[26] or because as suggested by one writer, the Kurmi supports the population of India as the tortoise supports the earth in mythology. As Russell has further stated in the same connection, this derivation of the term is rather unlikely and the origin of the term is either from *krishi* or from some unknown source.

The Kurmis, like the Kunbis, are an occupational caste and are efficient agriculturists and describing them Hewitt[27] writes: "The Koormees have next to the Chumars the most strongly marked characteristics of all the inhabitants of the district. They are indisputably the best and most enterprising cultivators; are exceedingly frugal and thrifty in their habits, make money rapidly, and have indomitable perseverance. They do not appear to have been very long settled in Raepore, as I have found no family who claim to have been in the country for more than seven generations or about 200 years. They are divided into four principal Gotes who do not inter marry or eat together, called Monoha, Churnao, Durreria and Singrowl, and all say that they first came here from Bündelkhand".

Some detailed description of this caste has been given in the Village Survey Report of Bendri; it is not being repeated here. It may, however, be stated that before the abolition of Proprietory Rights in 1951, the Kurmis were the Malguzars (proprietors) of many villages in Chhattisgarh and still are one of the principal land-holding castes. The proprietor of Kosa also was a Kurmi and is living in the village as the Patel of the village.

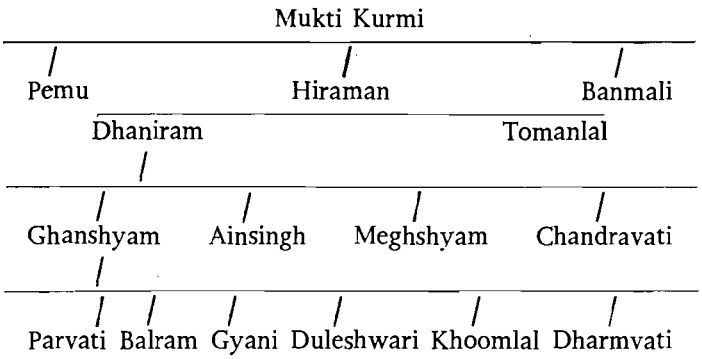
The Kurmis have founded an All-India association and now claim to be of Kshatriya caste, designating themselves, as stated earlier, as *Koorma-vanshi* Kshatriya. Their name-suffixes in many cases have now been

26. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. I, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 56.

27. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 32.

changed to Singh and Verma though names like Baghel, Baghmar, Banchhor, Tikariya, Barchhiha and Parganiha are still quite common.

The Kurmis are quite a literate class now and also quite awake politically. There are three Kurmi households in Kosa. They say that they have settled here for three generations (i.e. nearly 80-85) years having the purchased the village from a Rajput Malguzar. All the 3 households in the village belong to the chandranahu sub-division of the caste and use the word Chandrakar after their name. A rough geneological tree of the first Kurmi settler of Kosa, Mukti Kurmi, is being given here.



Panka

Russell and Hiralal[28] have described the Panka caste as below: "A Dravidian caste of weavers and labourers found in Mandla, Raipur and Bilaspur..... The name is a variant on that of the Pan tribe of Orissa and Chhota Nagpur, who are also known as Panika, Chik, Ganda, and by various other designations. In the Central Provinces it has, however, a peculiar application; for while the Pan tribe proper is called Ganda in Chhattisgarh and Uriya country, the Pankas form a separate division of the Gandas, consisting of those who have become members of the Kabirpanthi sect. In this way the name has been found very convenient, for since Kabir, the founder of the sect, was discovered by a weaver woman lying on the lotus leaves of a tank... and as a newly initiated convert is purified with water, so the Pankas hold that their name is *pani ka* or from water. As far as possible they disown their connection with the Gandas, and say that they are a separate caste consisting of the disciples of Kabir. This has given rise to the following doggeral rhyme about them.

PANI SE PANKA BHAE
BUNDAN RACHE SHARIR,
AGE AGE PANKA BHAE
PANCHHE DAS KABIR.

which may be rendered, 'The Panka indeed is born of water, and his body is made of drops of water; but there were Pankas before Kabir'. Nevertheless the Pankas have been successful in obtaining a somewhat higher position than the Gandas..... This is therefore an instance of a body of persons from a low-caste embracing a new religion and thereby forming themselves into a separate caste and climbing socially.

The Village Survey Reports of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat contain some detailed description of this caste and the same is not being repeated here.

Marten says, as mentioned earlier, that the Satnami sect is an off-shoot of Kabirpanth. As already stated, this appears to be a wrong conclusion. Kabir "is said by his followers to have first commenced preaching in Rewa where their first Gooroo Dhurum Dass, was installed in Samvat 1520 i. e., 1463 A.D." — Ghasi Das started his movement in 1820-1830 A.D. and the inspiration of Ghasi Das, if at all he had an inspiration from Jagjiwandas was different. Both the sect attracted lower castes — the Chamars became Satnamis and the Gandas became Panka and in both these cases the lower castes adopting a new religious sect as their religion, emerged out as a distinct caste.

The Pankas serve as village watchmen in Chhattisgarh and in this occupation at least they are the same as the Gandas of Chhattisgarh and Mahars and Chadars elsewhere. It may be mentioned here that somehow or the other the occupation of village watchman has come to be associated with low-castes and in Chhattisgarh only a Ganda or Panka would accept the post. In Sagar District it is the Chadars who would accept the post and no other caste would ever accept the job. Similarly in Bastar District and elsewhere only Mahars would accept the post. It is not known why this has come to be so but the position is as stated. And though the Pankas regards themselves to be a high caste and do not accept water even from Brahmans, they knowingly and willingly accept the post of *Kotwar* or village watchman. It is in this connection that Jairamdas Panka came to Kosa 16 years back on the invitation of the villagers here, because they had no *Kotwar* after the death of the former *Kotwar*. Any other caste

28. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. IV, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 324.

would consider it below their dignity even to be offered this post.

The Pankas are short to middle statured people, not well-built physically, and in nature a rather timid people. They are very strict about dietary rules and do not even touch non-vegetarian food which would constitute an offence and get referred to the caste-Panchayat. Similarly they do not drink liquor, the violation of which rule would again be an offence. "In Chhattisgarh, the Pankas are considered above the average in intelligence and sometimes act as spokesman for the village people and as advisors to Zamindars and village proprietors".[29]

Lohar

There is only one household in the village — that of an old issueless widow who is earning her livelihood by begging and doing some odd jobs for the villagers. She was not available for most of the time and the information she gave was also very vague. Her husband used to work in the village as a black smith but after his passing away the widow has hardly any socio-economic role to play in the village life. Talking to her one feels that she has accepted the verdict of Fate without a murmer. The grand old lady with the skin of her once-fair-complexioned body all folded into wrinkles, keeps her little hut neat and clean, washing it with cow-dung and *chhuhi* (clay), and often sits on the small front court-yard of her hut, may be looking "before and after and pining for what is not" or may be brooding that:

"The Moving Finger writes;
and having writ
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all thy Tear wash out a Word of it."

Inter-caste relations in Kosa

In practically every village in Chhattisgarh where Satnamis live, they have a cluster of their own — sometimes a little away from other castes and sometimes contiguous. And in Kosa, which is a preponderant Satnami village, the houses of Kurmis, Rawats, Panka and the Lohar are situated towards the western fringe of the settlement. Though to all external appearance the village settlement appears to be one and continuous, there are two arbitrary parts of its — the Satnami *Para* and the Hindu *Para*. The position in this regard appears to remain the same though nearly 94 years have passed since Hewitt[30] wrote "the Chumar and Hindu parra, in villages where both classes are found, being always separate and distinct".

For appreciating the inter-caste relations of Kosa, it would probably be profitable to give some background information. In the Settlement of 1911, Hemmingway[31] wrote about village Kosa as follows: "The village belonged to the malguzar of Marra, and he sold it to a Kurmi after settling tenants on the whole of the home-farm. The Kurmi is trying to force these men to give up their holdings by demanding excessive rents, but they neither pay nor give up". In the 1929 Settlement, the Mahalwar Abstract[32] for Kosa contained the note that "the settlement Kurmis continue to hold the village. They are non-resident and are in ordinary circumstances. Relations with tenants strained." Describing the tenants, this Abstract further mentioned them as "a fair lot but extremely truculent and quarrelsome, a substantial proportion of them being previous convicts." And when in the light of this one encounters the Satnamis like Shobharam, it is easily understood why Ghanshyam Patel is so much afraid of the Satnamis. "If they do not co-operate, then I will have to give up my cultivation and go to another village. I do not know why ancestors purchased this village." Ghanshyam also alleged that the Satnamis are very much against the Kurmis and that they are a difficult lot and would not hesitate to attack his house, property and himself if they are annoyed. Hewitt had also noted this when he said that "the Chumar ryots are a power in the land, as a class they always act together and are persistent assertors of their rights, real and fanicied, and a terror to encroaching Malguzars".[33]

But inspite of these fears of Ghanshyam, it is found that the Satnamis are not against the Kurmi caste as such. In fact there are two groupings in the village — one consisting of Ghanshyam Kurmi, Chintaram Satnami, and Jairamdas Panka and the other consisting of all other Satnamis and the other two Kurmis. But though heavily out numbered, the former group si still a strong one with the Patel and the *Kotwar* in it and the toughest man of the village — Chintaram, and further all the Government officials usually stay with Ghanshyam Kurmi.

29. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, Vol. IV, 1916.
30. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of Raepore Dist. 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 34.
31. Drug Tahsil Report, Settlement of 1911, H. E. Hemmingway, p. 1536.
32. Mahalwar Abstract for Kosa, Settlement of 1929.
33. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 34.

This groupism manifests itself only in the village politics, if it could be so called. To the outsider, the village presents a unity e.g. as when some government official visits the village and stays in the verandah of Ghanshyam, the people Satnamis, Rawats, and Pankas all come and submit problems common to the village. There is very little grazing land available in the village and Kosa is not included in any zone for purposes of grazing. Here then there is not a problem of Ghanshyam's cattle or Shobharam's cattle but the 'village cattle'. When, again, the cattle of Kosa, are impounded in the cattle pound of Anda or Marra or Ranchirai by the villagers of Pangri or other village, the people here talk as one man. And when Ghanshyam does not want to co-operate in the deepening of tank then even his intimate friend Chintaram goes against him. When it is a question of affliction of some person by a witch (*Tonhin*) then also the village is one irrespective of caste and these groups.

There is another facet also: religion unites. At the time of the *Jawara* festival or worship of the village deities, Mata or Thakur Deo the people of Kosa assemble and pay their homage to the deities irrespective of their caste. Guha and Kasku Rawats are *kabirha* (followers of Kabirpanth) and participate in the religious ceremony *Chouka* in the house of the Panka who in turn also participates in the *Chouka* in the house of the Rawats. They belong to the same religion, pay homage to the same deity, have the same sentiments, same restrictions on foods and drinks. But when it comes to commensality of food and drink, they are separate: a Rawat is a Rawat and a Panka is a Panka. The *kabirha* Rawat would eat and drink from a non-*kabirha* Rawat but not from a Panka.

Another example of this caste-loyalty is found in the 'ritual friendship' described in some detail in the following section. Ritual-friendship is a very intimate kind of friendship where the 'friends' regard each others as brothers. Guha Rawat and Itwari Satnami of this village are *Gangajal* friends to each other. But when it comes to taking food, Guha would not eat the food in tht Satnami house of his *Gangajal*, nor would Itwari eat in the house of Guha. It may thus be seen here that caste-loyalty outweights the friendship-relation. The 'ritual-friends' may send grain to each other's house after harvest, and at the time of some ceremony in their house, but in commensality of food, ritual friendship becomes subservient to caste-loyalty.

It is in the celebration of life-cycle rituals that the inter-caste relations become most manifest. In the celebration of birth and death rituals, there is not much of a ceremony. The Satnami *suin* (midwife) may or may not be called by other castes at the time of delivery. The *chhatti* and other ceremonies are done by the household members only. Similarly in the death rituals in the Satnamis, members of other castes do not join and in the death rituals of other castes, it is not a tradition in the village that certain caste-members would join. The participation depends on individual cases. But it is in the marriage rituals that inter-caste participation is best seen and because of this fact and also because of the fact that for birth and death rituals, inter-caste participations could not be thoroughly enquired into, it is only for marriage rituals that the following is described.

The Satnamis have their own caste *pandit* from whom they enquire about the auspicious date. This may also be enquired from Ghanshyam Kurmi of the village. In marriage functions the Kurmis do not take any part and though two Kurmi households in Kosa are in the same group as the majority of the Satnamis, they do not participate in the marriage rituals. Here again, as described earlier, the caste-loyalty weighs more than the group loyalty.

In the marriage rituals of the Rawats more castes participate e.g. the barber and the washerman and the Brahman *pandit*. From the village, however, only the Panka and the Lohar join.

It is in the Kurmi marriage ritual that there is the biggest inter-caste participation and from the village, all castes except the Satnamis participate. From outside the village, the services of barber, washerman, Chamar, Gond *baiga* and Brahman are required.

It is not necessary now to get the shoes from the Chamar because the same may be had from the town. And similarly the head-gear (*mour*) which is got from the town has much better finish. But though the Kurmis, who are ex-proprietors, get these marriage items from the town, the Chamar and the Marar come to him for getting the presents (*Neg*). The Kurmis also purchase the clothes for marriage from the town.

In the Panka marriage all castes except Satnamis may go with the marriage party, but there are separate food arrangements for the Kurmis. The Rawats and Lohars and the Gond-*baiga* from Tamora may also accompany the marriage party but there would be separate arrangement for them also though they eat from the same hearth.

The sociograms of birth and marriage are presented in illustrations 14 to 20. From these sociograms, it is clear that this village depends on some other castes outside the village. The brahman *pandit* is called here by the Kurmis, Rawats and Pankas from village Sirri, the Gond who is the professional *baiga* comes here from Tamora. He performs two types of duties in the marriage of the Kurmi and the Rawat, he brings the *magrohan* or the marriage-post and receives about one rupee as his due (*Neg*). In the Panka marriage, the earth for the *Mayan* ceremony is brought under his direction and supervision i.e. he shows the place from where the earth is to be dug. For this he receives clothes. Marar is the caste of vegetable-gardener and the Marar from Pangri is the person who supplies the marriage head-gear in the marriage ceremony of Satnami, Rawats and Panka. The Kurmi may or may not avail of his services. The Satnamis give him one rupee, one seer or one and a quarter seer rice and a *dhoti;* the Rawats also pay him in the same kind, and the Panka pay him in kind (*dhoti* and grain). Whenever the Kurmis avail of his services, he is paid in cash from one to ten rupees. The Dhobi participates only in the rituals of the Kurmi, Rawat and Panka castes. He neither washes the clothes of the Satnamis nor plays any role in their rituals. In the Kurmi marriage the wife of the Dhobi puts vermillion in the hair-parting of the bride — the custom copied from or similar to the one in vogue among 'higher' castes like Brahmins and Kshatriyas. In the Panka and Rawats it is his house from where the fire to light the sociogram (Illustration 21).

Economy and Inter-caste Relations

Inter-caste relations in the field of material culture and village-economy can also be represented in a sociogram (Illustration 21).

The Satnamis have constituted themselves into a more or less self-sufficient and self-contained community. They do not need the barber or the washerman in any of their life-ritual ceremonies and in their material culture, they have developed the art of cutting one another's hair. More frequent visits to town have fortunately eliminated even this encumbrance because when they go to town, they get their hair cut there. In the mad-rush of the town, nobody bothers to know one's caste and there money is the more predominant consideration; this is what Shobharam had said.

But without the assistance of the Satnamis, other castes in the village would be put to great inconvenience. The carpenters in the village are the Satnamis, the tailor is a Satnami and the agricultural labourers are the Satnamis. The village quack-medicinemen are also the Satnamis.

Religion and Inter-caste Relations

In some aspects of religion the village is one unit and all the castes participate in the celebrations but in the worship of the deities we find segmentation. The fact is illustrated in a sociogram (Illustration 22).

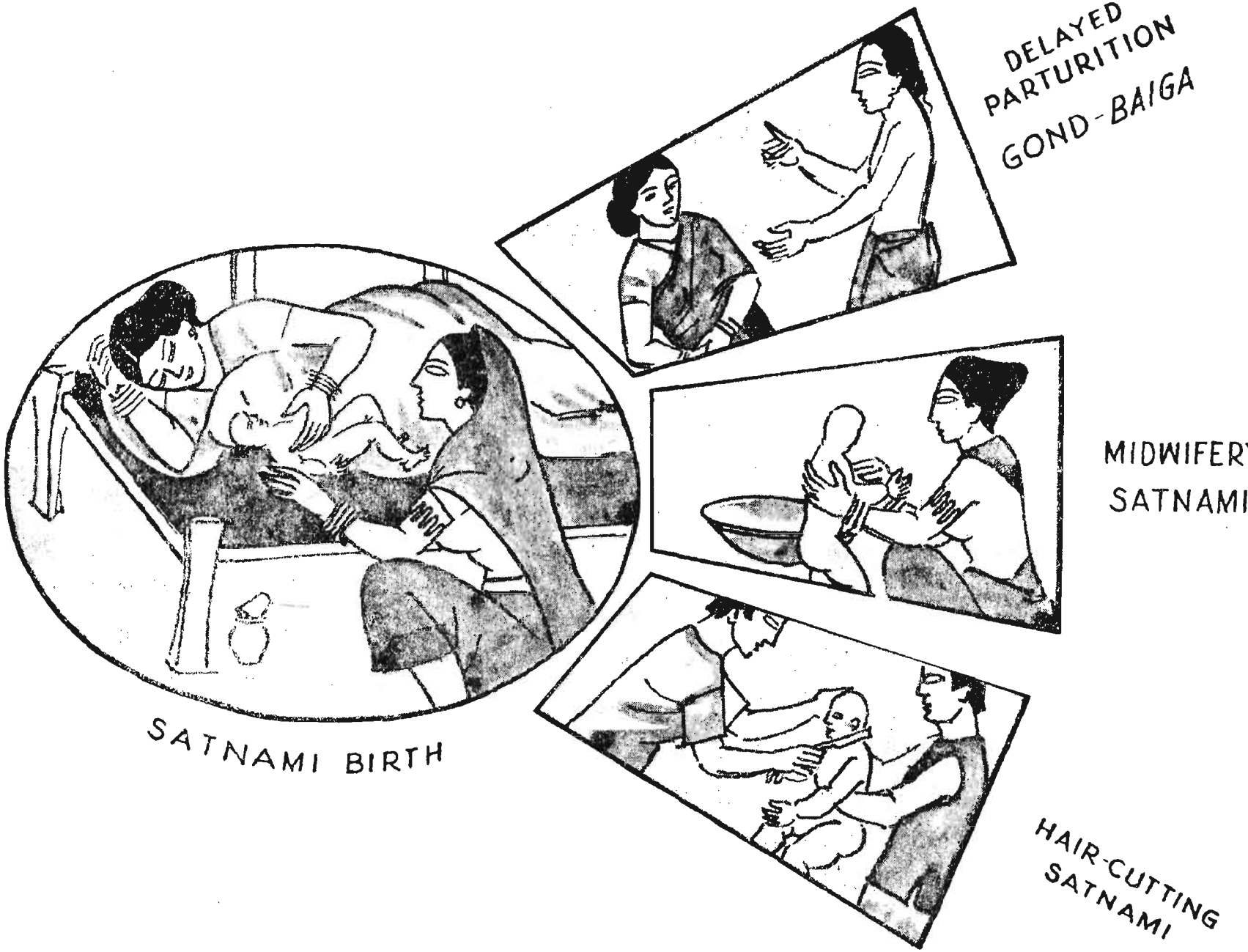
Village and Caste-loyalties and Relations

The outer circle in Illustration 23 represents the unity of the village. In the aspects, mentioned in the outer circle the village appears to be one and without any cleavage. But within the village and when left to themselves the different segments are visible, though each of the segment is in some way or the other dependent on the other. When the matter is one which touches the outer circle or goes up to the outer circle in the above diagram, the caste-loyalties are submerged and village loyalty comes to the top. But the matter which remains within the outer circle, and does not touch it, brings into fore only caste loyalties.

The People of Kosa in the Eyes of the Administration

From 1906 till the date of the present survey, there have been 60 crimes in this village punishable under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code. Between 1906—1939, reports were lodged with the police in respect of 36 offences. Out of these 25 complaints were disposed of by the police under Section 157(b) of the Criminal Procedure Code. In 9 of the cases, the investigations were unsuccessful in locating the culprit and the property and as such action under Section 173 of the Criminal Procedure Code was taken and further investigations were closed. In the two remaining cases — one in 1906 and the other in 1917 the investigations were successful and the persons were dealt with in Courts of Law.

From 1940 till the date of this survey, complaints of 24 offences were made, out of which the police did not take cognizance of 15 complaints; in 8 cases investigation was made but no trace was found of property or the culprit and as such the investigations were closed. In one case reported in the year 1947 the accused was brought before a Court of Law and convicted. One of the Satnamis of this village has been convicted under Section 429 of the Indian Penal Code. The offence was, however, committed by him in some other village. No reports have been received of offences after 23rd June, 1956.

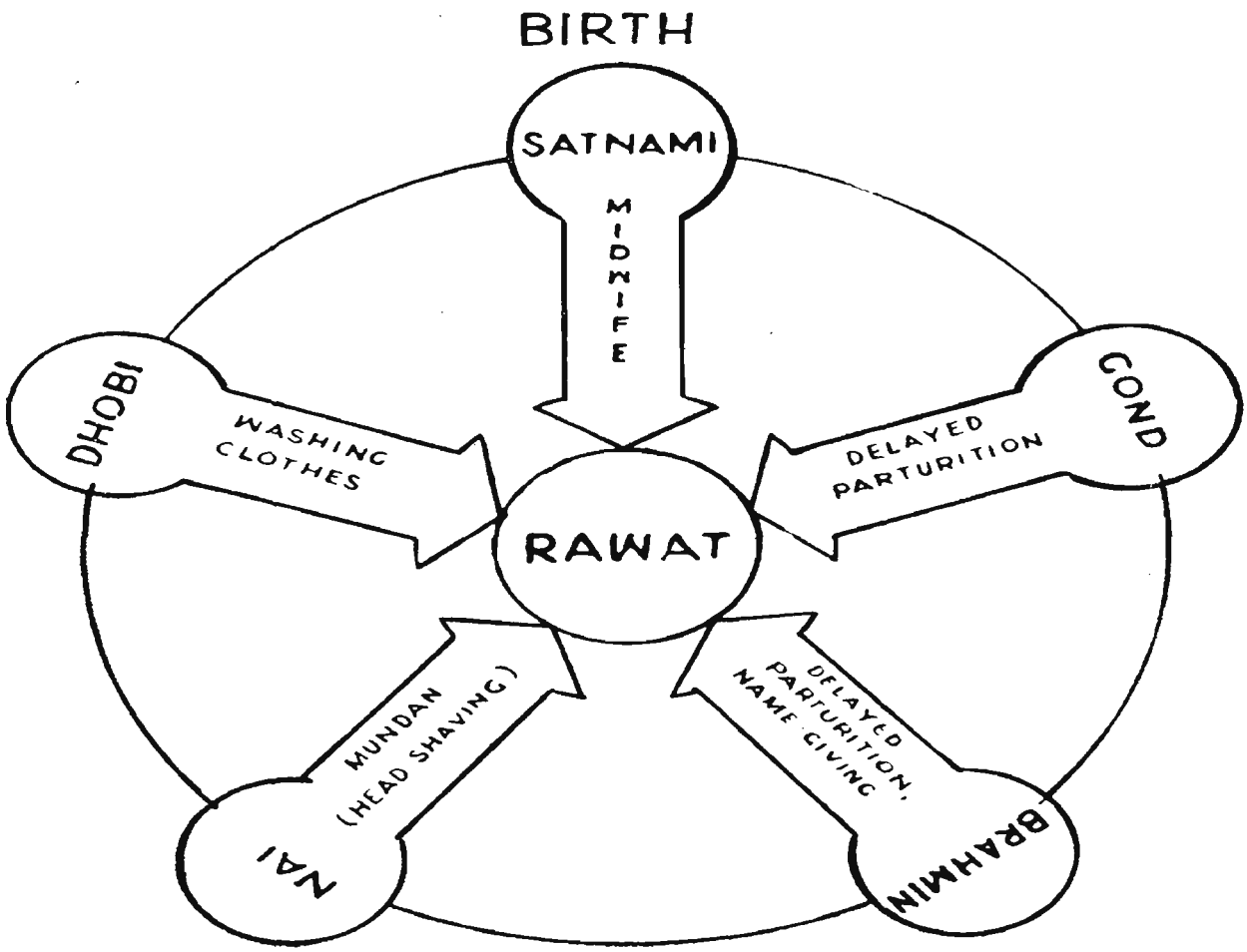


Sociogram of Satnami Birth

Illustration 14

PLATE XII

PLATE XIII



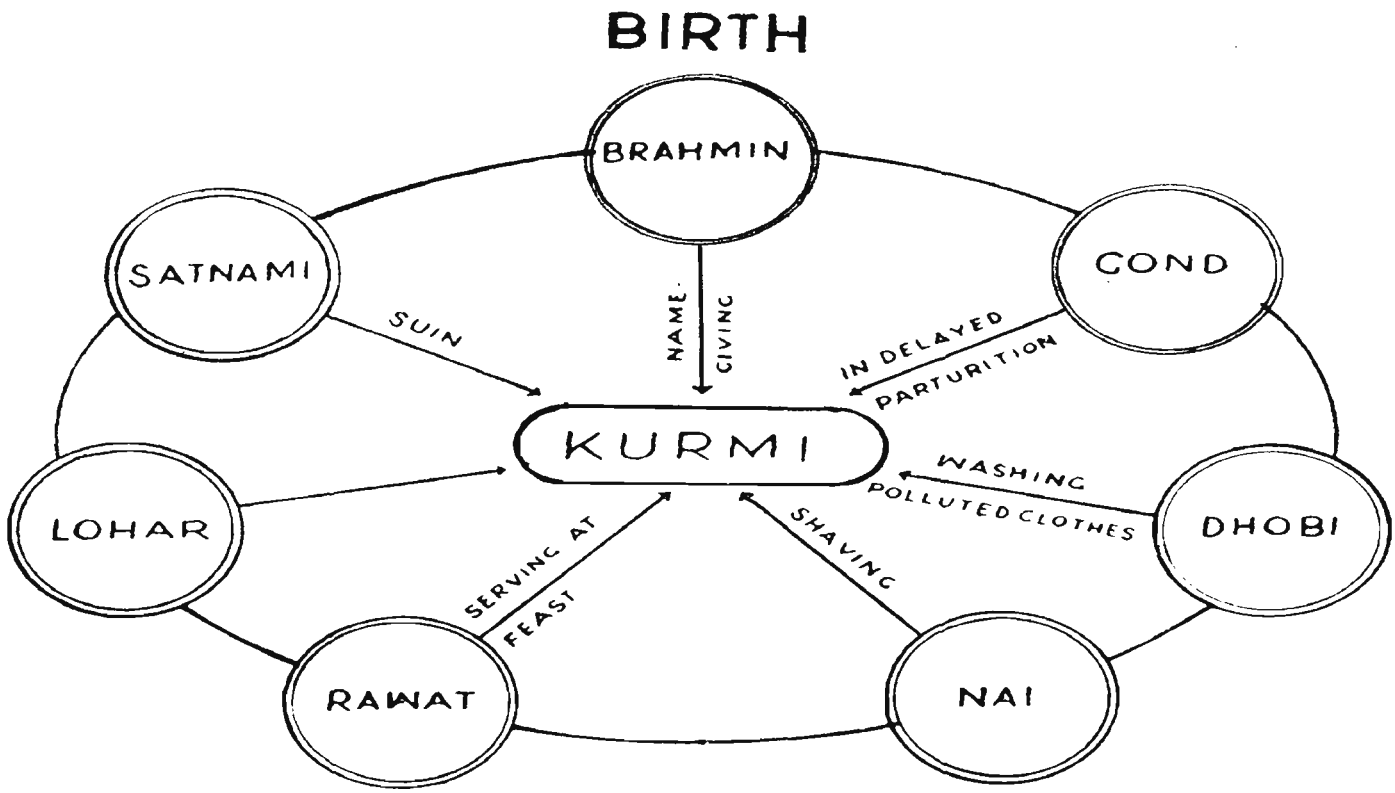


Illustration 15, 16

Sociograms of Rawat and Kurmi birth

PLATE XIV

SOCIOGRAM OF A SATNAMI MARRIAGE

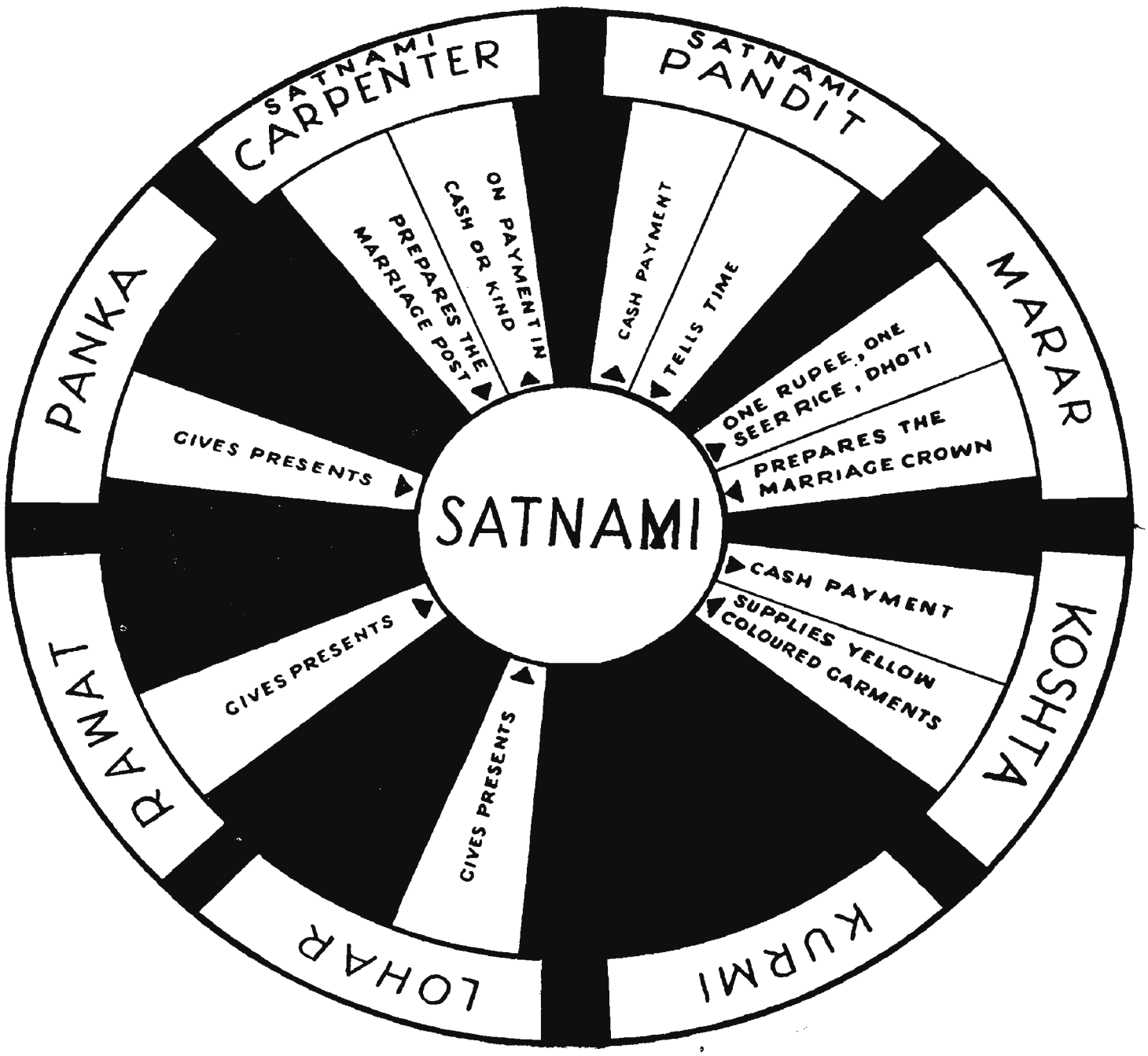
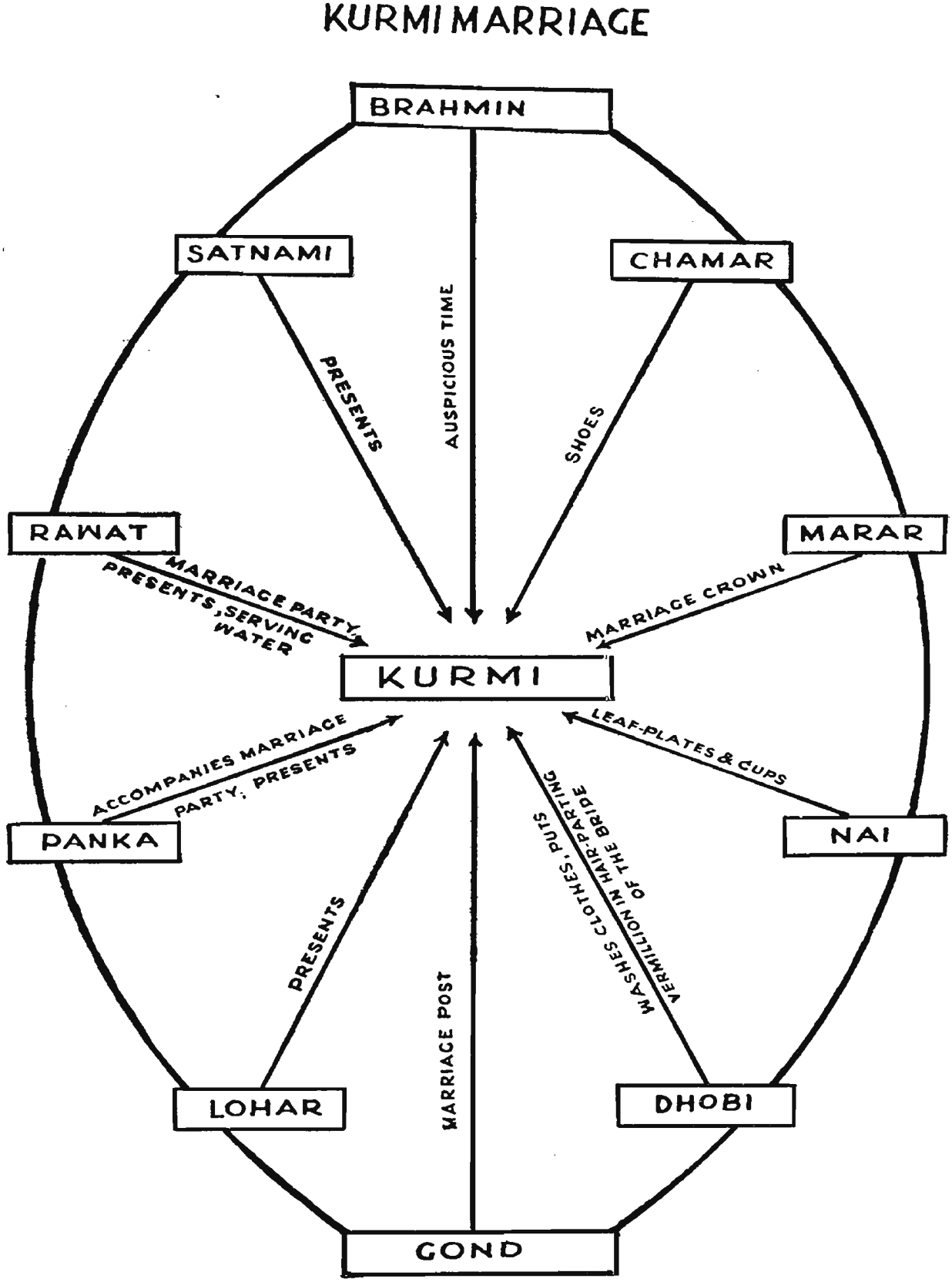


Illustration 17

PLATE XV



Sociogram of Kurmi marriage *Illustration* 18

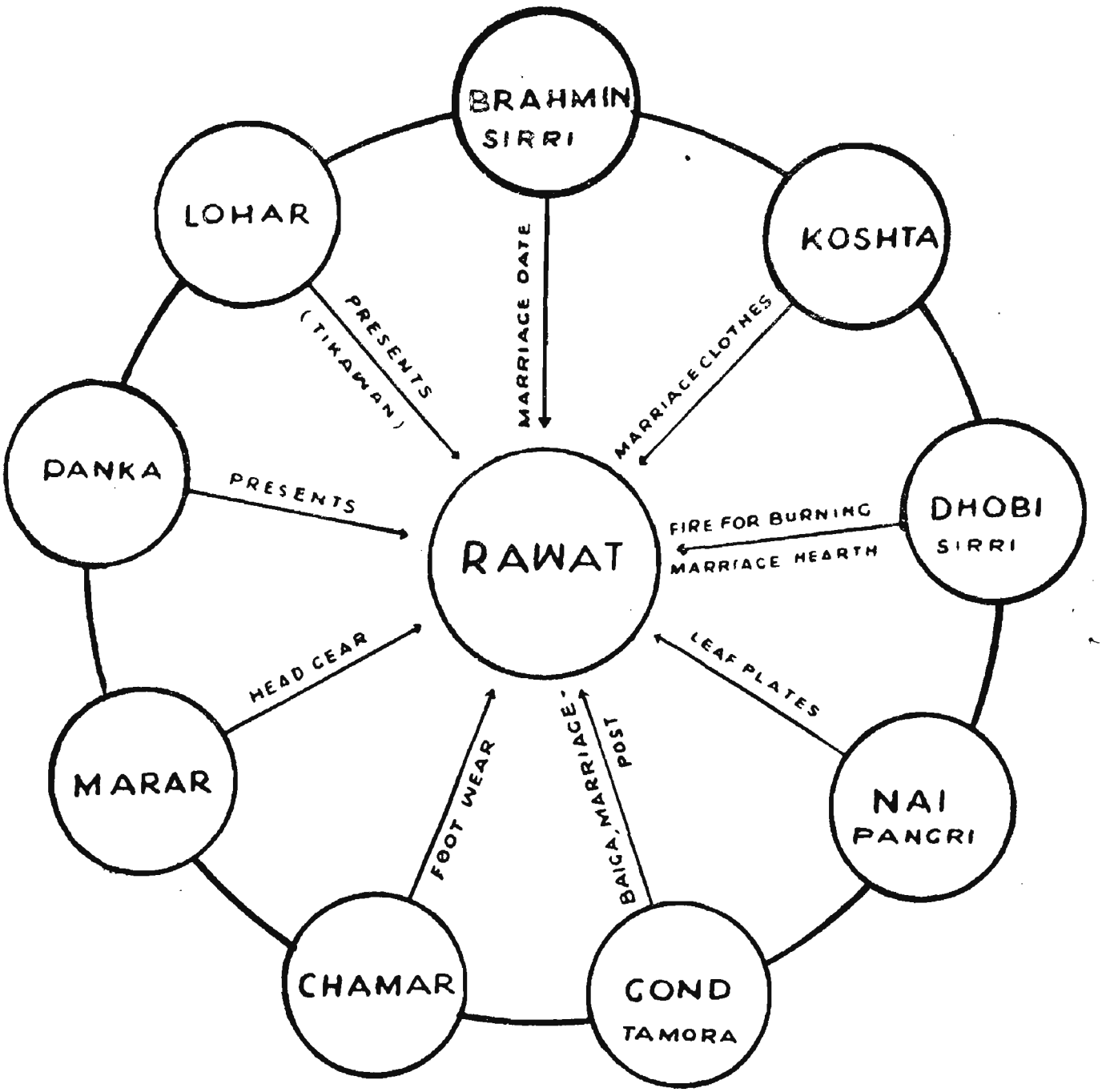


Illustration 19

Sociogram of Rawat marriage

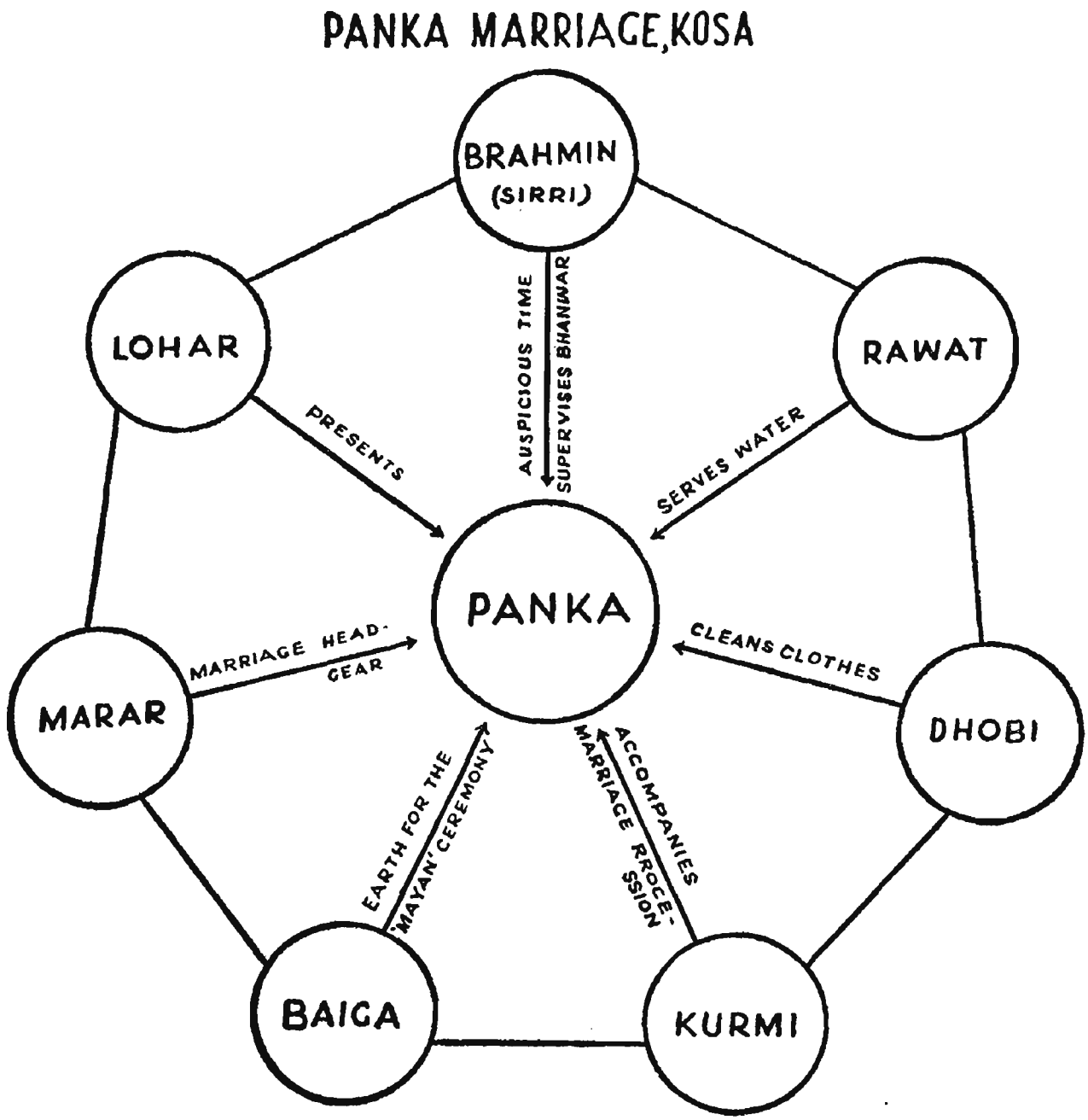


Illustration 20

Sociogram of Panka marriage

PLATE XVIII

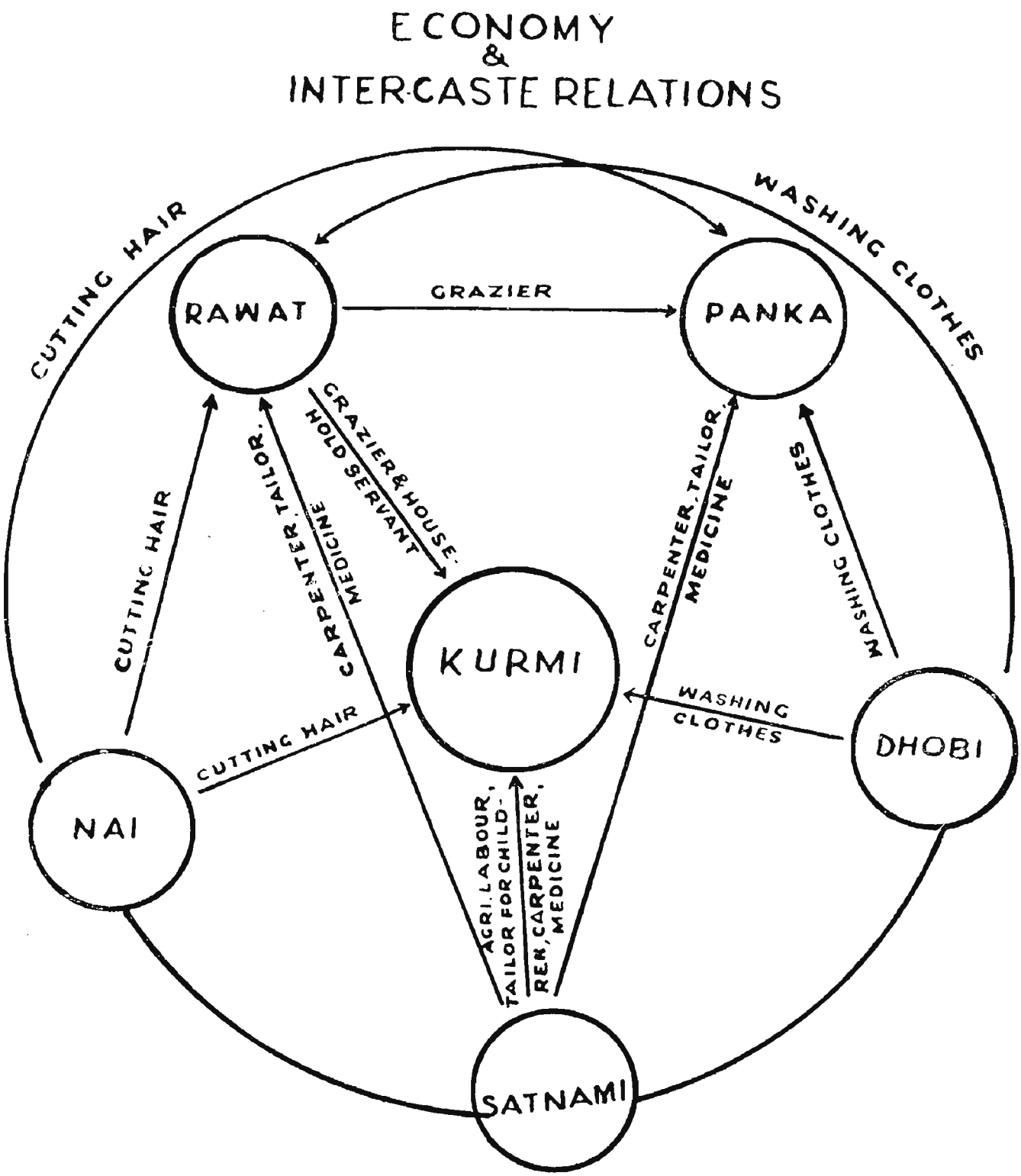


Illustration 21

PLATE XIX

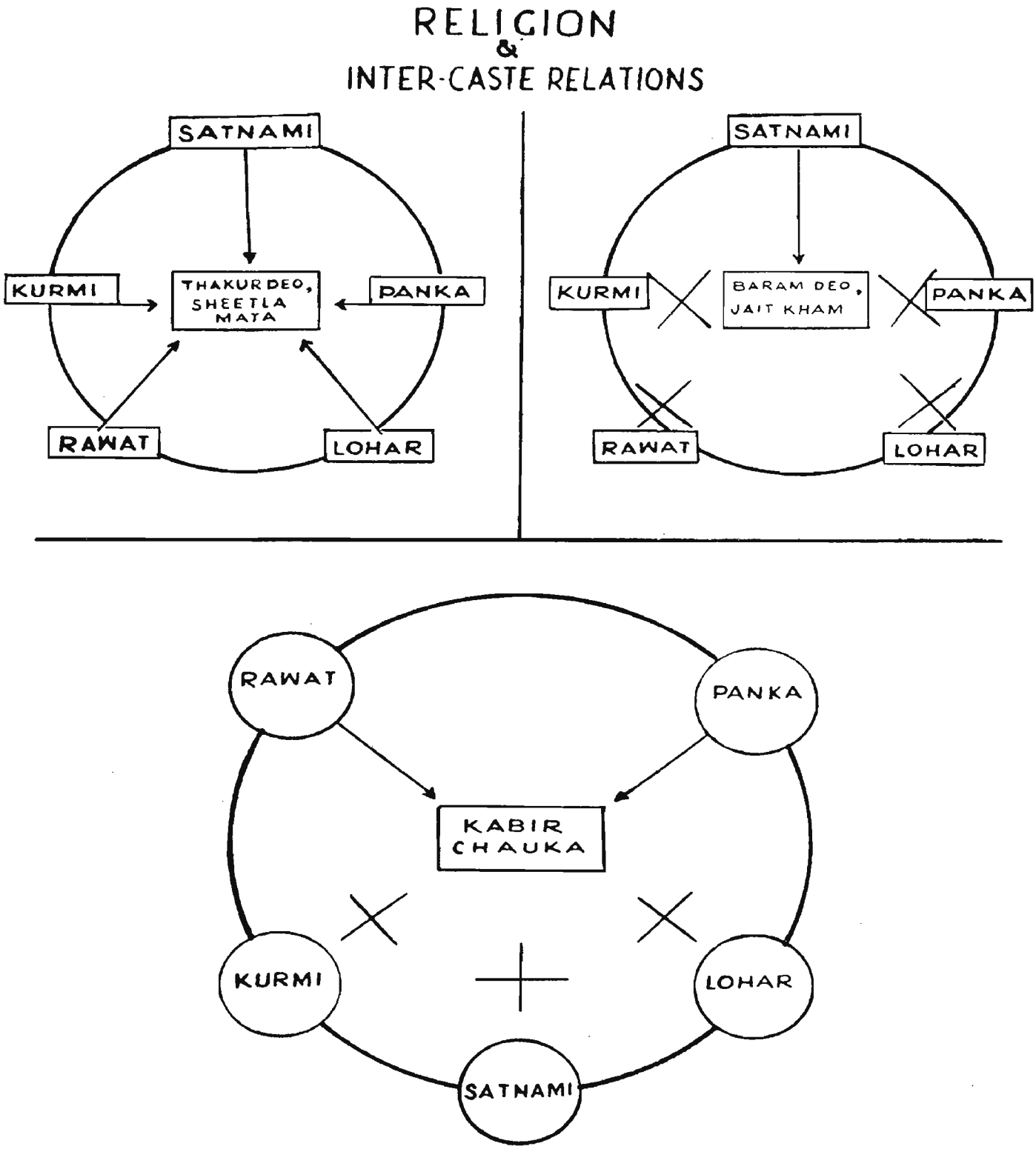


Illustration 22

PLATE XX

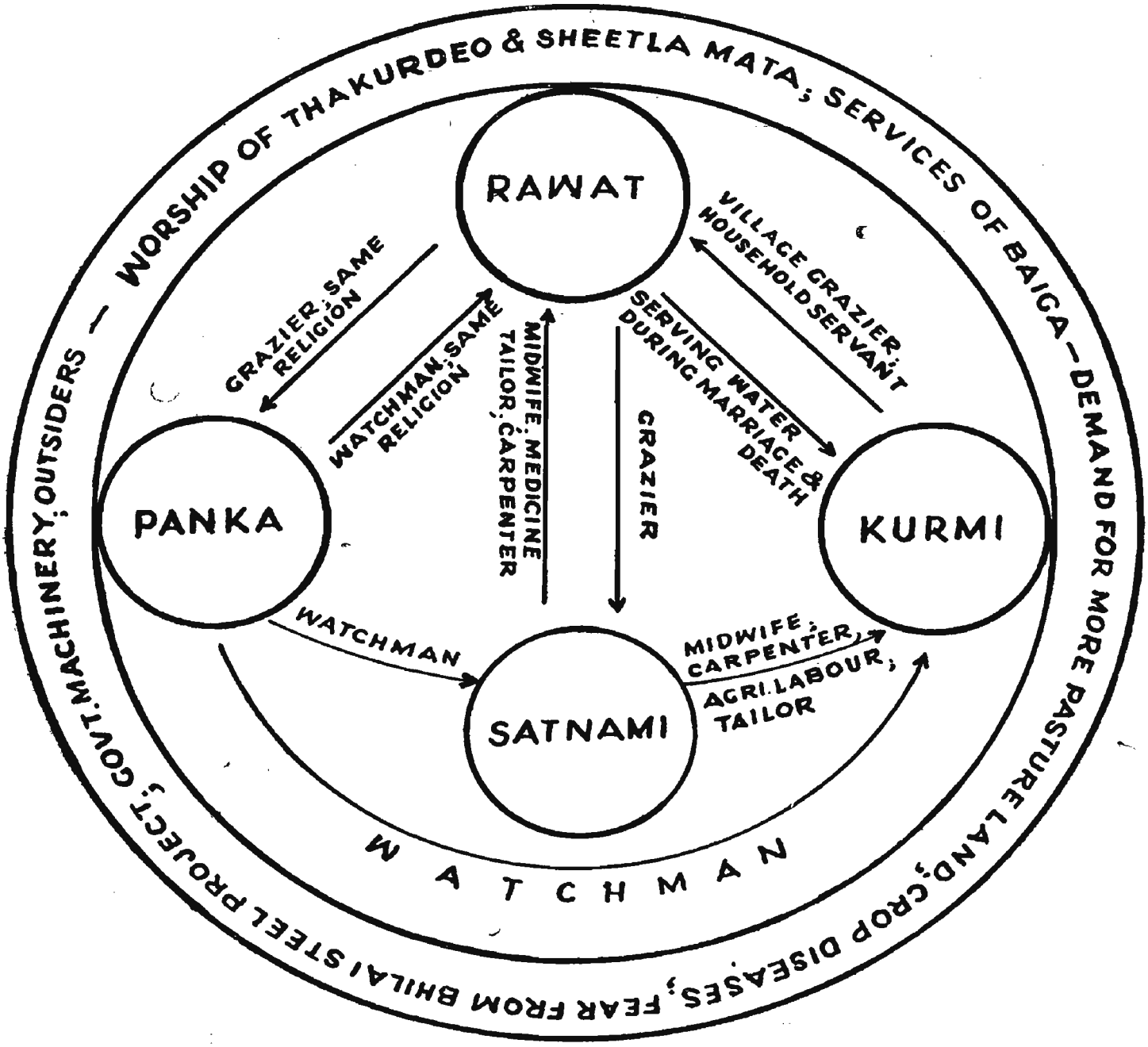


Illustration 23

Village Kosa as one unit and in segments. The outer circle shows the village as one single unit. Within it are the various caste segments.

PLATE XXI

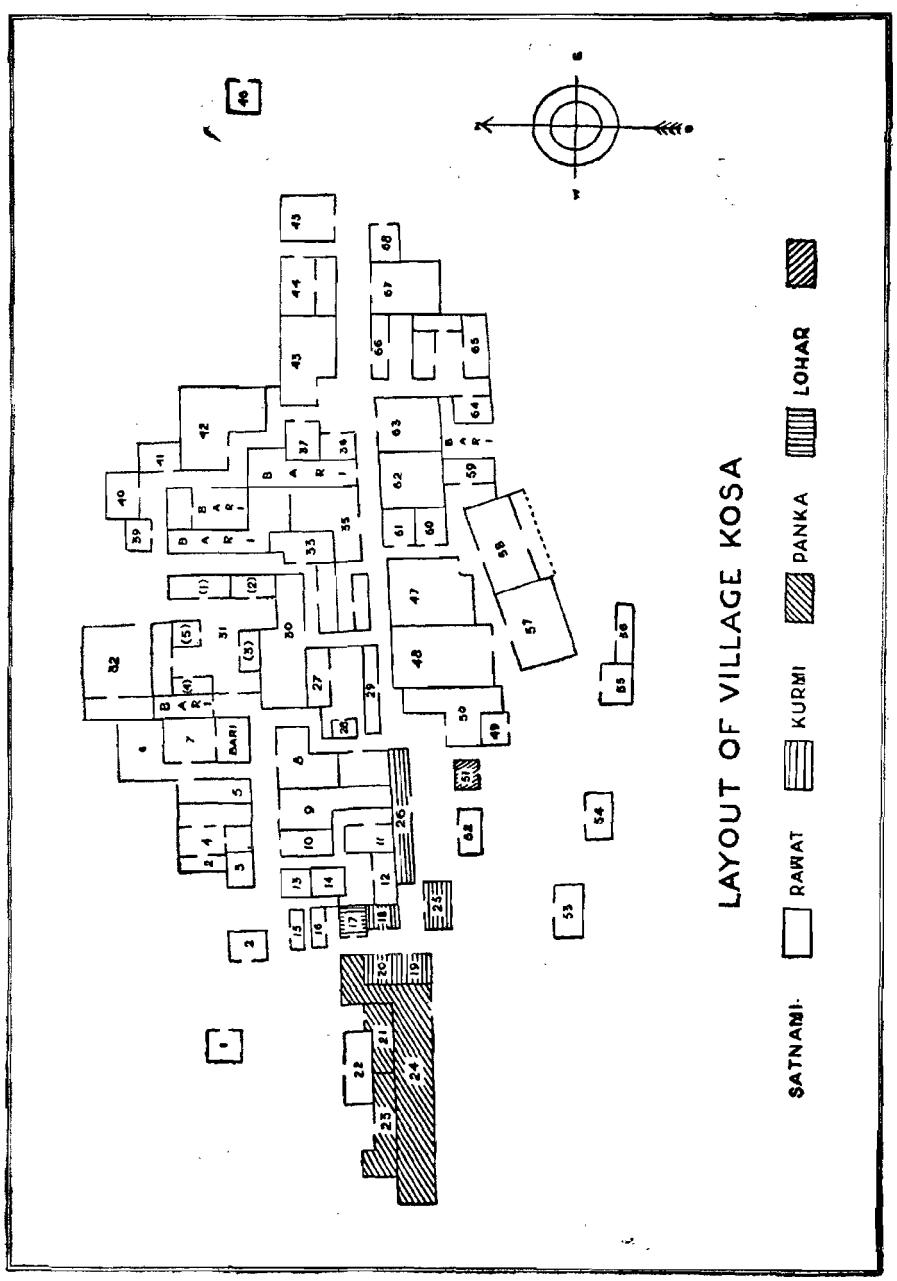


Illustration 24

Reference has already been made to the mention of the inhabitants of Kosa in the Settlement Records. In other records maintained by the Government following mentions occur about Kosa.

The people of this village were regarded as notorious for cattle-poisioning and have contacts with some famous culprits. In 1919 there is a note that all the Satnamis were united against the non-Satnamis and they commited petty thefts. The non-Satnamis were afraid of them. Again, there is a note that petty thefts of crop and paddy from the fields of non-Satnamis were fairly common but since the Satnamis were in majority the non-Satnamis did not make reports for fear of reprisal.

In 1929 a mention occurs that the Malguzar has started living in the village. In 1932 two notorious culprits were having contacts with some people of the village. It appears from the records that about the period 1933-34, the grand-father of Panchram Thethwar was a powerful personality of Kosa. In 1934 some of the Satnamis of the village were suspected of committing an offence of house-breaking in village Machandur.

In 1939, there was an apprehension of break of peace and tranquility and as such action under Section 145 of the Criminal Procedure Code was initiated but both the parties came to a compromise and the case did not proceed further. In 1955 there was a case of house-breaking in the village where the culprit had entered the house through the roof and one of the Satnamis was suspected of the offence but the offence could not be detected.

The people, however, pay the land-revenue demand regularly and there are no arrears against them. In development activities, the people are reported to be uninterested and cold.

Thus this is the picture that emerges about the people of Kosa, who appear normal and hospitable during such visits as were made during the present survey. There is of course some haughtiness and adamance in their attitude but one who has seen the Satnamis of other areas would soon realize that this is the natural character of the caste.

Material Culture

Kosa, as has been stated earlier, is a shapeless cluster in form. It could also be described as a nucleated village. Though, arbitrarily the people of the village talk about Satnami-*para* and Hindu-*para* (*Para* means a ward) these wards cannot actually be separated and the houses from east to west form more or less a continuous row. Houses of castes other than Satnamis, are of course situated on the western part of the village but there is no perceptible break in continuity so as to justify the names Satnami-*para* and Hindu-*para*. These terms, it seems, are used not with reference to physical characteristics but in regard to social phenomenon.

The area of *abadi* in Kosa is 4.46 acres. There are in all 73 Census houses in the village according to the definition of a house in 1961 Census and according to the definition of a building, there are 68 buildings. 8 of these houses are non-residential and the other 65 are used for residence. Even if the non-residential houses are left out of consideration, the area available on the average for one house is 0.686 decimals (or say 7 decimals) or roughly the measurement could be imagined as 61′ x 50′. And in this area is built the house proper, and the cattle-shed, the kitchen, the court-yard and the *bari*. Actually speaking, if the area of the *bari*, the well and streets is deducted from the *abadi* area, the area for houses only would be much less. However, this was not done, but roughly speaking, if these factors are taken into consideration, the area of an average house would be something like 50′ x 50′.

Apart from this area of 4.46 acres there is no other *abadi* area in the village nor was any area reserved for future *abadi* during the Nistar Enquiries. On a rough estimate (eye survey) it was found that only about 0.40 acres of *abadi* area is vacant in the village for future construction and this is north of the *gothan* ground and west of the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi in the so-called Hindu-*para*. So at the most 6 more houses can be constructed in the village and then after that there would only be two courses open to the villagers — to encroach on government land or to apply to the government to acquire some land for the *abadi*. Under Section 243(2) of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, (1959) the land can be acquired if there is no *abadi* land available in the village.

There has already been, it appears, some encroachment on the, government land e. g. the house of Muni Satnami is built on the western embankment of the village tank which is a government tank. Similarly, some area of Khasra No. 113 seems to have been encroached upon. Khasra No. 113 is government land marked as 'grass'. The above remarks are being made here on the basis of on the spot observations by the writer, but a report from the Patwari of the village regarding the quantum of encroachment has not been obtained.

The houses in Kosa are constructed on the sides of the streets and in most of the cases facing the street. The streets are very narrow and hardly allow three persons to walk side by side. Bullock carts can come upto the *Jait-kham* in the east and upto the house of Budgoo Satnami in the west and for going from east to west, the cart-tracks lies to the south of the *abadi*. The village streets are generally clean though this is not due to any active work by the villagers. The refuse of the houses and from the cattle-sheds is thrown in the manure-pits (*khatu-gadha*) near the *gothan*. The houses are generally neat and clean and on the outside washed with white and yellow clay (*chhuhi*). Some designs in colour and also mud-frescoes of human figures are made on the outer-walls.

Construction of the House

Before the foundation a token worship of God Ganesh is performed at the site of the proposed construction. This worship is not only elaborate ritual but simply consists in breaking a coconut in the name of this deity. The *pandit*, Kamta Prasad from village Sirri, is sent for by castes other than Satnamis. When the *pandit* comes, he worships the earth, lights an earthen wick-lamp and breaks the coconut. The Satnamis simply break a coconut on a piece of stone and the *prasad* is shared by those present. They may also invite their Satnami *pandit* for the purpose.

An eclipse-day is supposed to be the most auspicious day for the worship, but there is no explanation available as to why this is so. The digging of the foundation and construction work need not start immediately and in cases where construction material is not ready at hand, the construction is taken up at a subsequent date after enquiring for an auspicious time from the *pandit*. The Satnamis ask about the auspicious date from Ghanshyam Kurmi or go to Sirri and ask for it from the Brahmin *pandit*.

The soil at the *abadi* site is *Matasi* i.e. Yellow Soil, and it does not require deep foundation. The villagers say that the depth of foundation in Kosa is from two and a half to three feet deep. Bigger houses like that of Ghanshyam Kurmi require a deeper foundation and in case of Ghanshyam's house, it is four feet or so. The earth for constructing the house is got by the people from their agricultural fields and in case suitable earth is not available there, the earth is got from some other field with the due permission of the owner of that field.

The mud for constructing the house is prepared in the manner described below. Lumps of earth are broken and paddy-husk (*pirousi*), bits of dried stem of linseed (*alsi dahta*) and *kodon*-straw are mixed with it in suitable proportion. The whole thing is then heaped up and a depression is made in the centre of the conical heap. Water is filled into this depression. It is then allowed to remain as such for some time during which the water soaks through the earth and the mass becomes wet. The earth, water and other constituents are well-mixed by kneading the mass with foot. This kneading operation is known as *Matana* and is done by women. The kneaded mass is left for 12 to 16 hours for setting, (*Sarotna*) and then again kneaded by mixing more water. After the mud attains a suitable consistency, it is used for construction. Great care is taken in properly kneading the mud and no pains are spared till the desired consistency is attained.

Because the village-*abadi* is a little depressed, the houses in Kosa have to be provided with a high plinth of a foot or two feet and in some cases like the verandah and room of Ghanshyam Kurmi, the plinth is nearly four feet. Household members themselves participate in the construction. The walls are built up by placing lumps of mud and then pressing it and planing. All the four walls of a room are raised simultaneously. Because the people do not use plumb-bob or such other 'expert' techniques, the walls of the houses are not straight.

After the walls attain 3 to 4 feet height, the door frames are fixed and the height of the walls raised. When the four walls have attained the height of about 6 to 7 feet the side walls are further raised in the form of a triangle. The central beam is placed on the apex of these triangles and is supported on the two sides by vertical wooden posts. From the central beam, cross-beams are put on the front and back walls and over this is prepared the bamboo frame-work for tiling or for thatching as the case may be. Houses in Chhattisgarh are constructed in the same fashion and since the method of construction has already been described in the Survey Report of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat of Raipur and Bilaspur districts respectively, the subject is not being described in any further detail here.

The availability of other building materials for Kosa is shown in the statement below. Since the village does not have any forest or even what is known as *'Bara jhar ka jangal'* (Big tree forest) or *'Chhota Jhar ka jangal'* (scrub forest) the villagers have to depend entirely on outside. Some trees of *Babul* (*Acacia arabica*), *Saja* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *Kouha* (*Terminalia arjuna*) may of course be available from the fields themselves. But

PLATE XXII

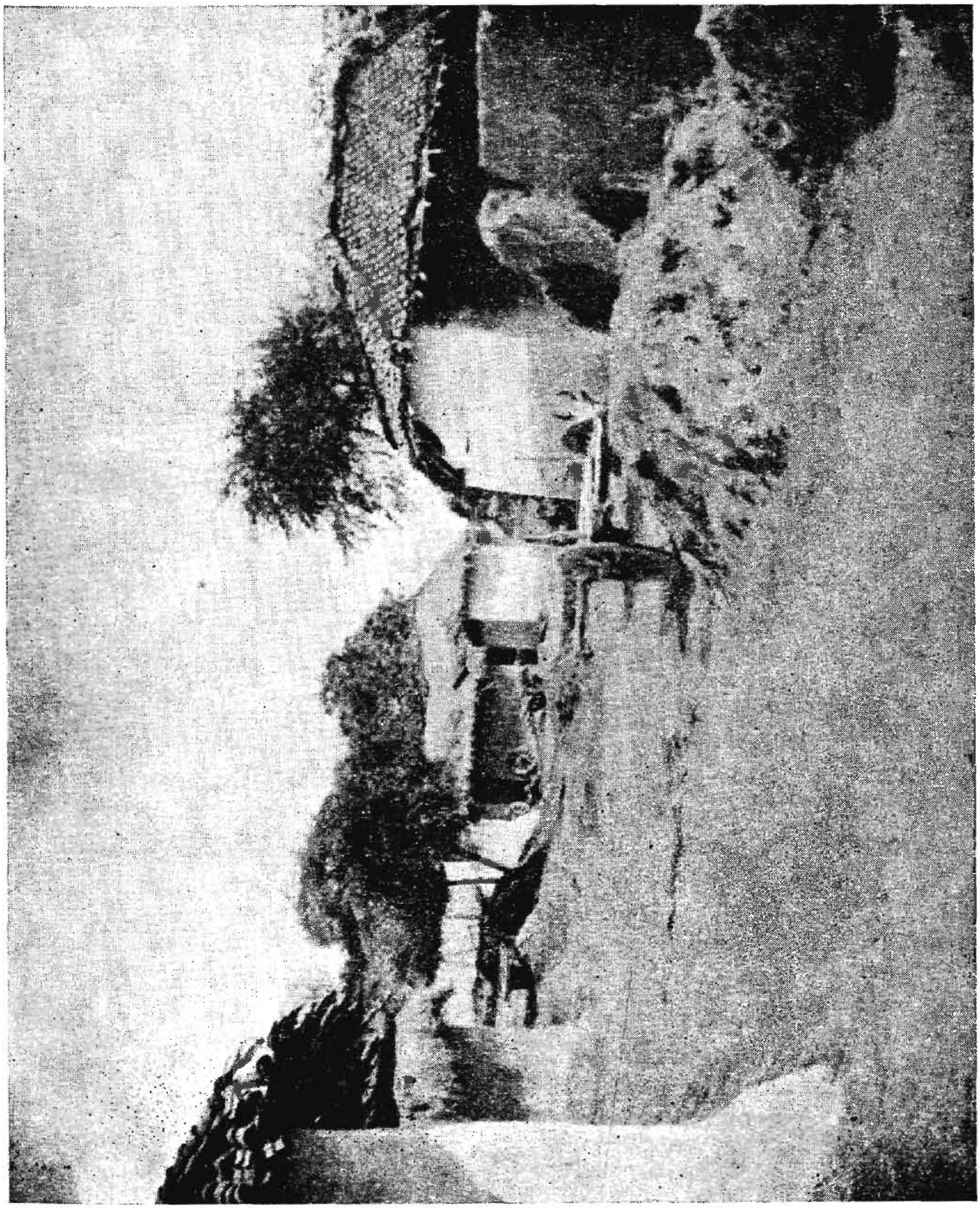
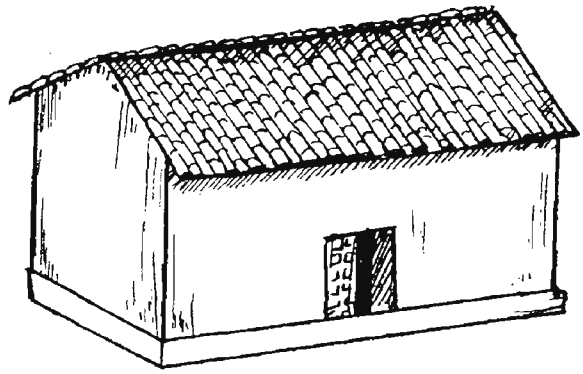
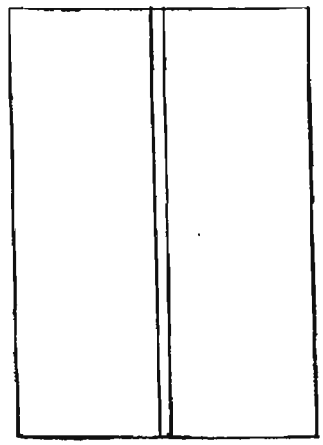


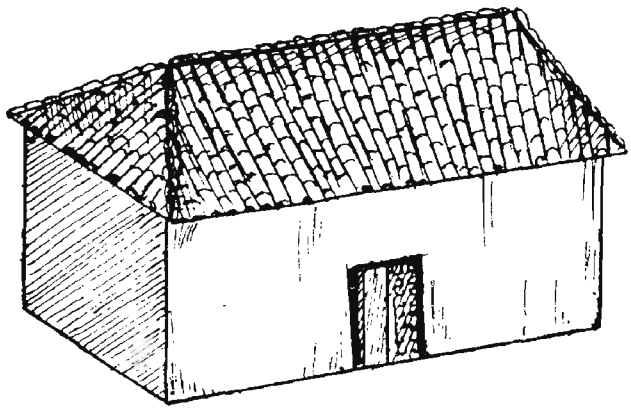
Illustration 25

A street in Kosa

PLATE XXIII







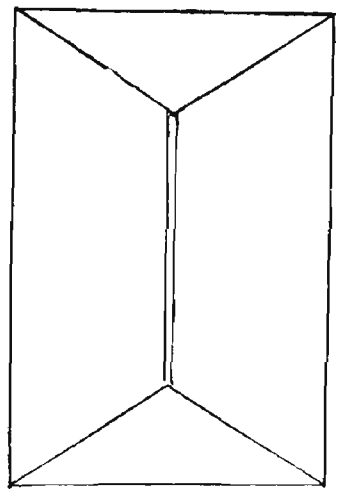


Illustration 26

Roof types

PLATE XXIV

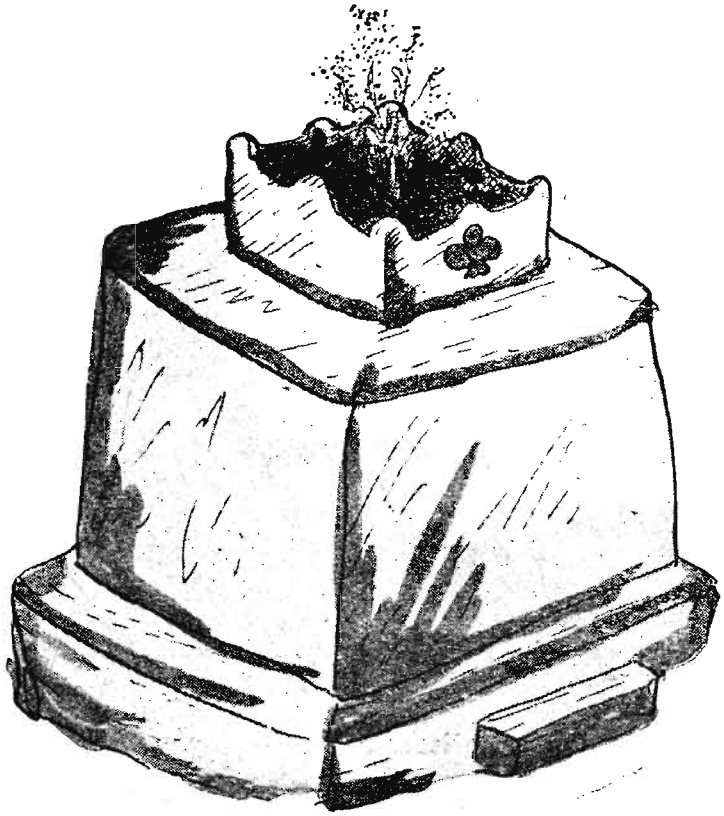
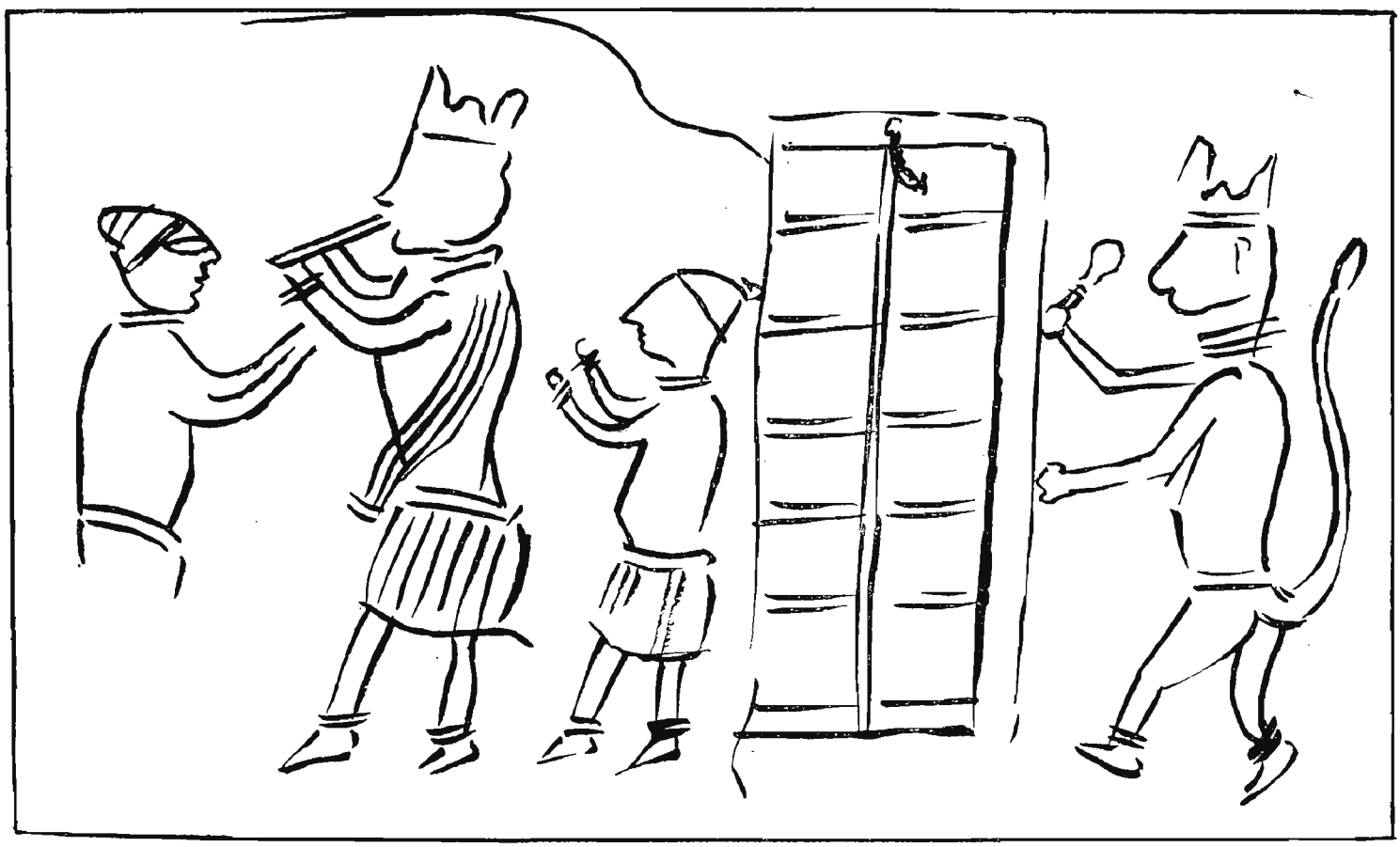


Illustration 27

Tulsi Chaura



Paintings on a wall

Illustration 28

PLATE XXV

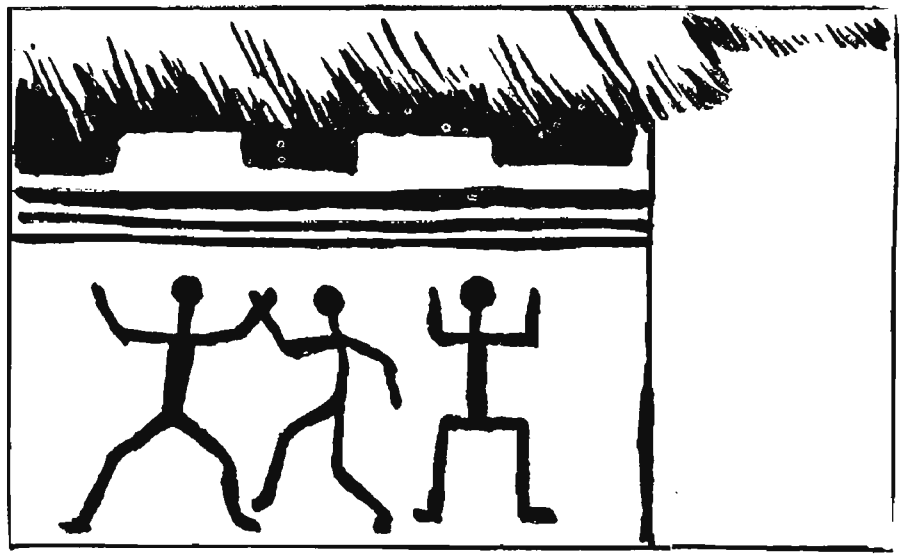
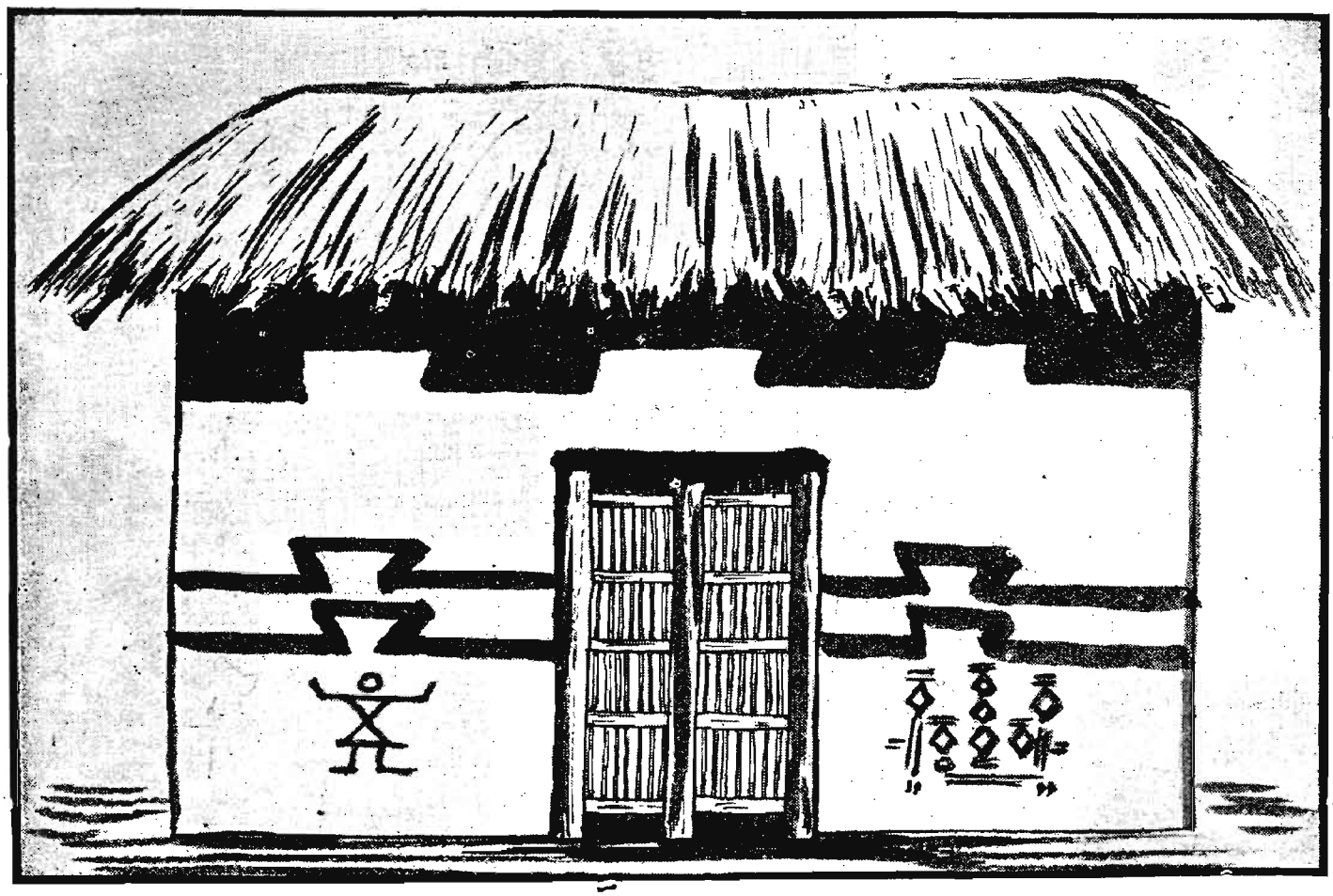


Illustration 29

Care and decoration of houses



Decoration on the wall with red-ochre *Illustration* 30

PLATE XXVI

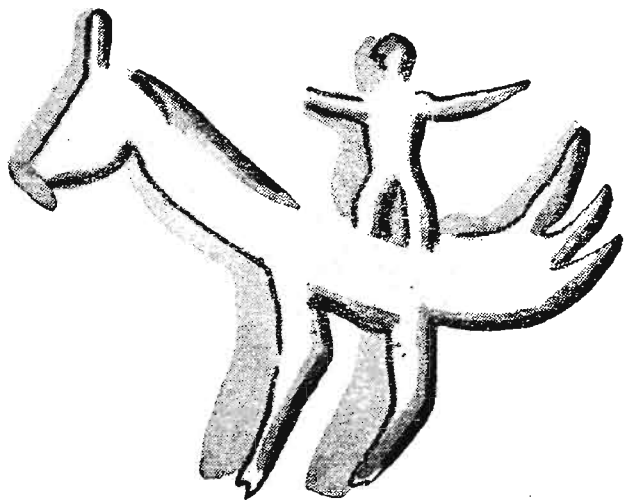


Illustration 31

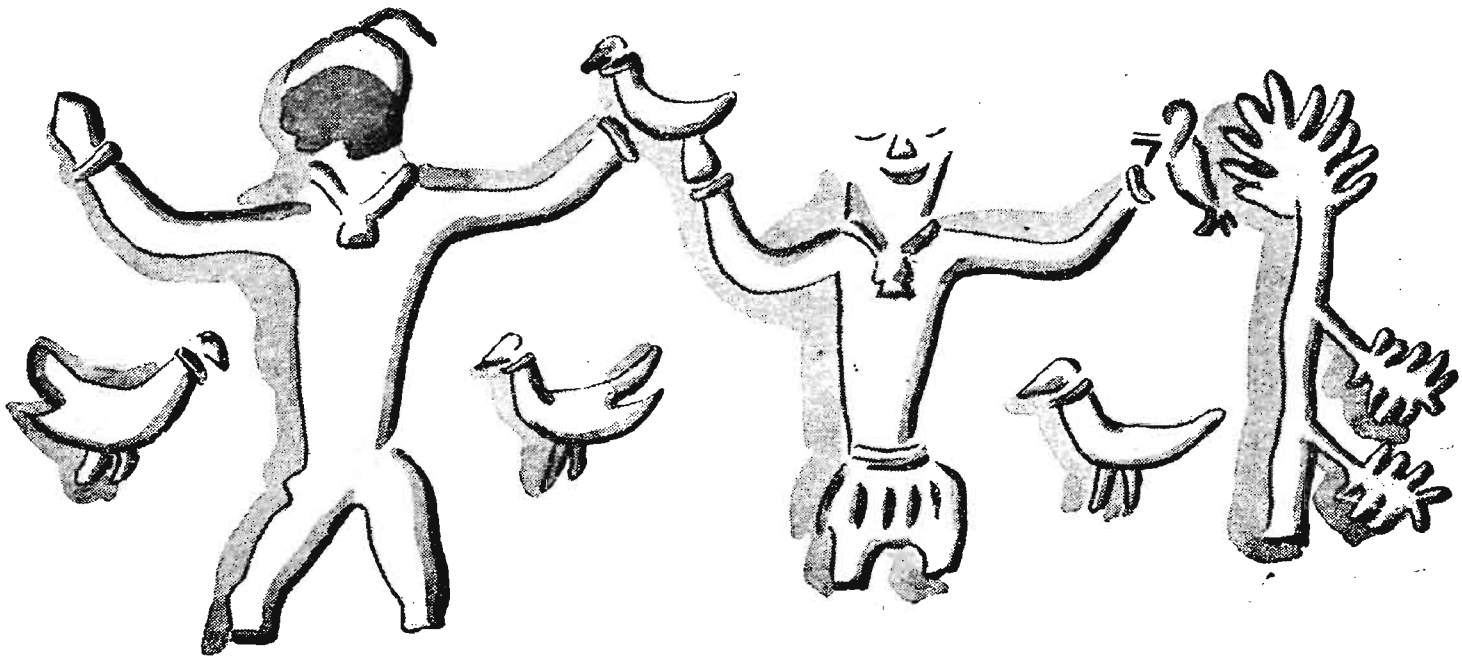
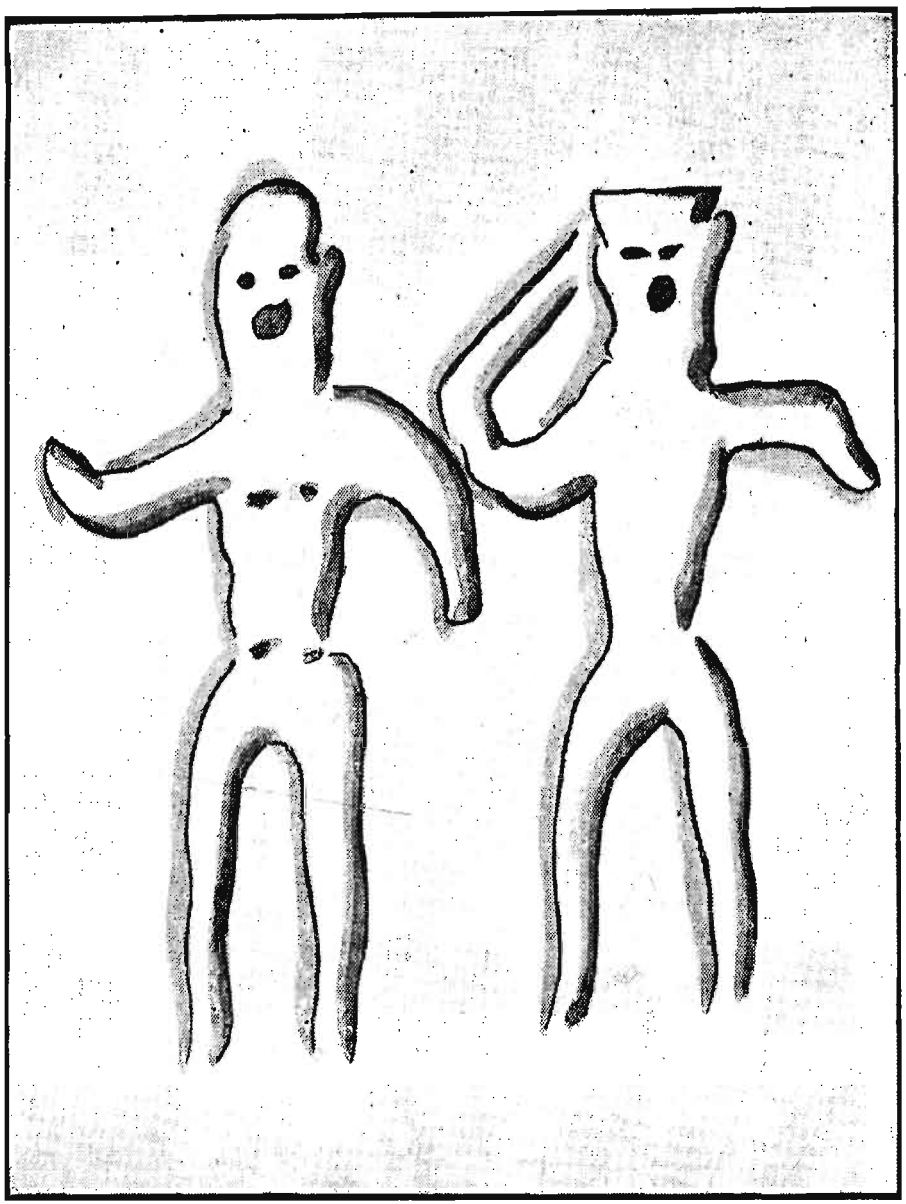


Illustration 32

Wall-decorations in mud relief



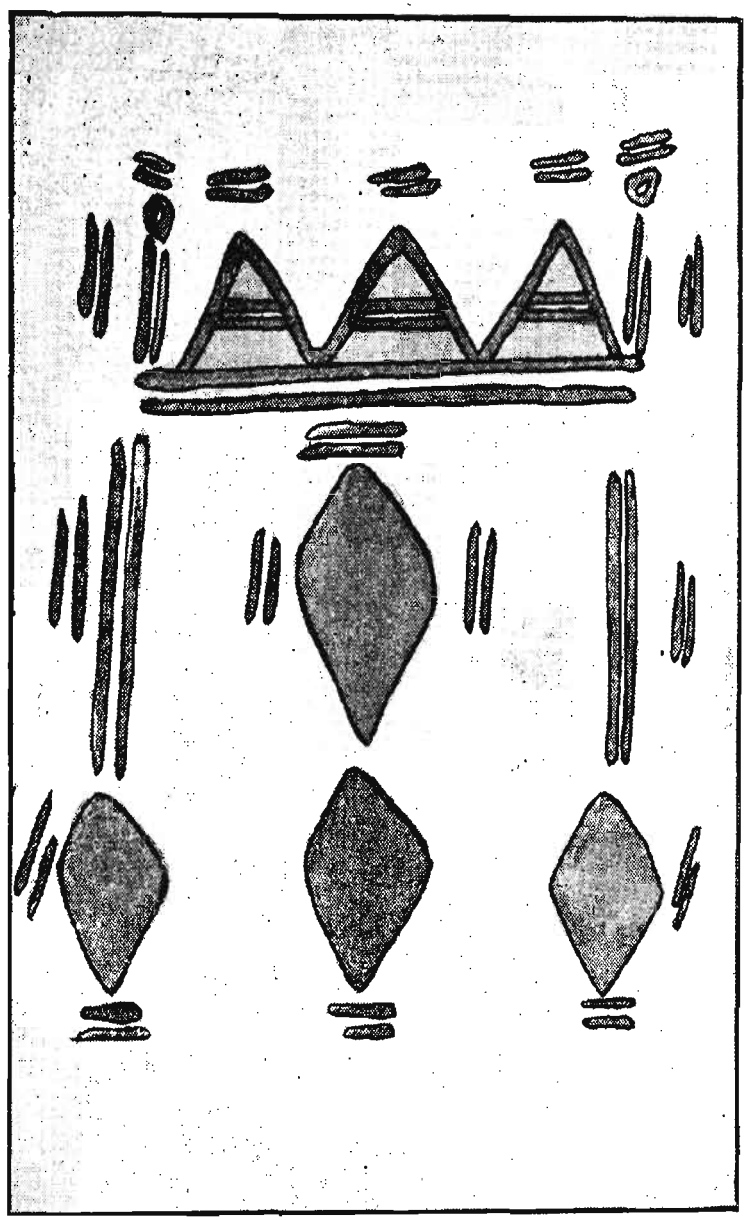
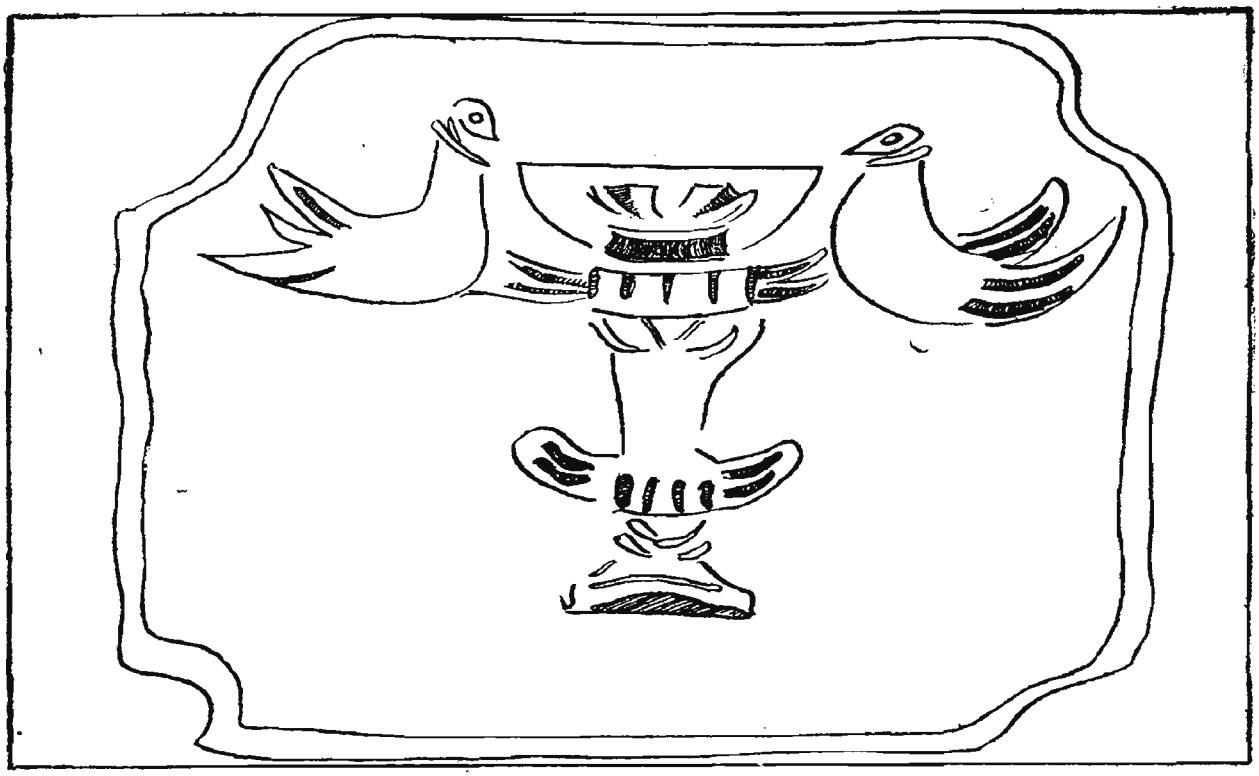


PLATE XXVII

Illustration 33

Wall decorations in mud relief

PLATE XXVIII



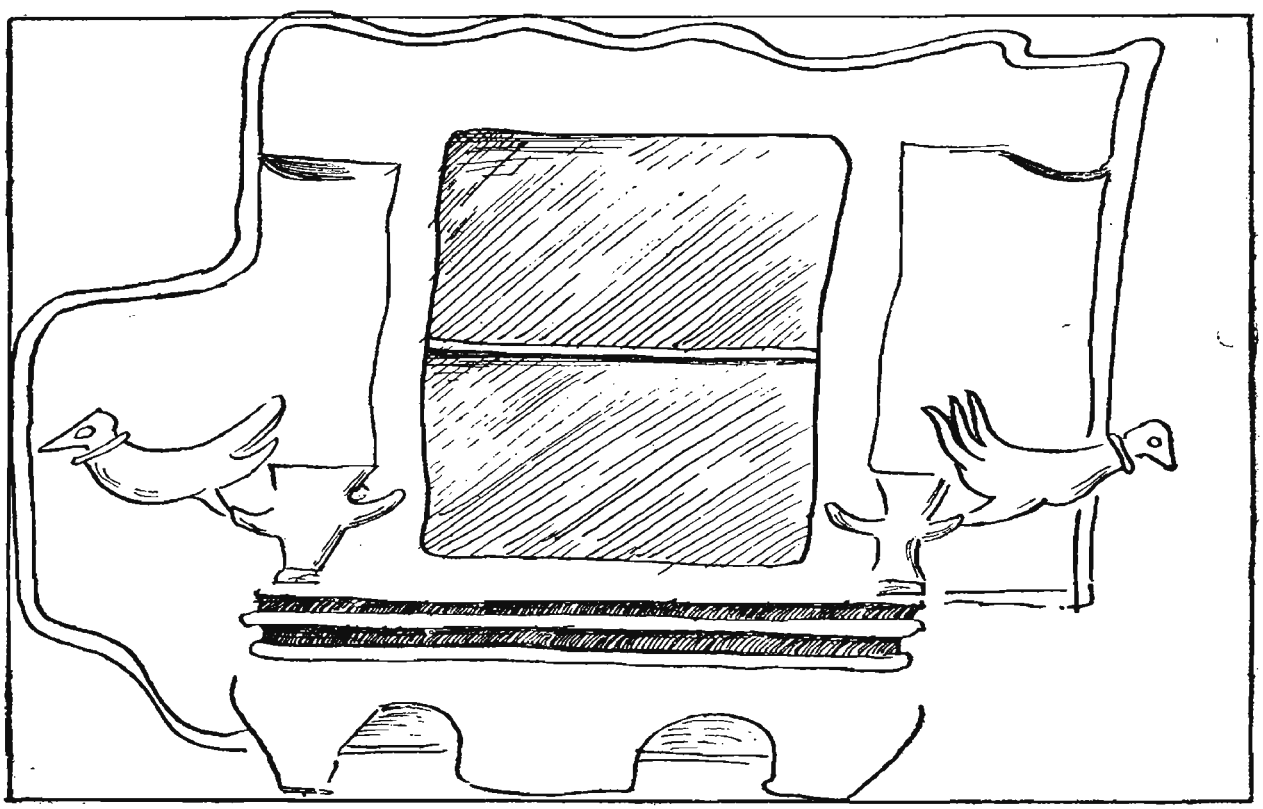
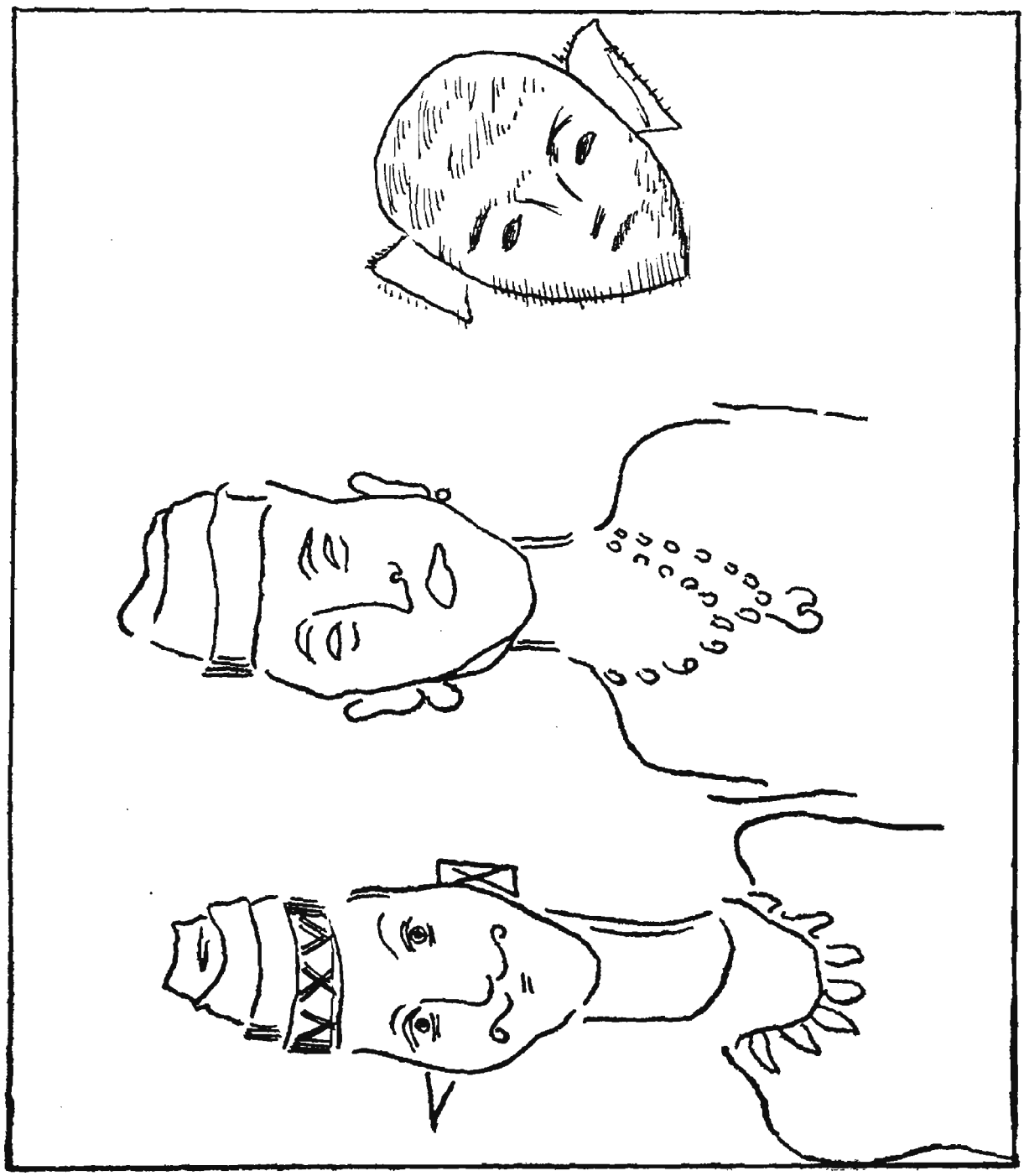


Illustration 34

Wall-decorations in mud relief

PLATE XXIX



DRAWING OF KABIR ON A WALL.

Illustration 35

PLATE XXX

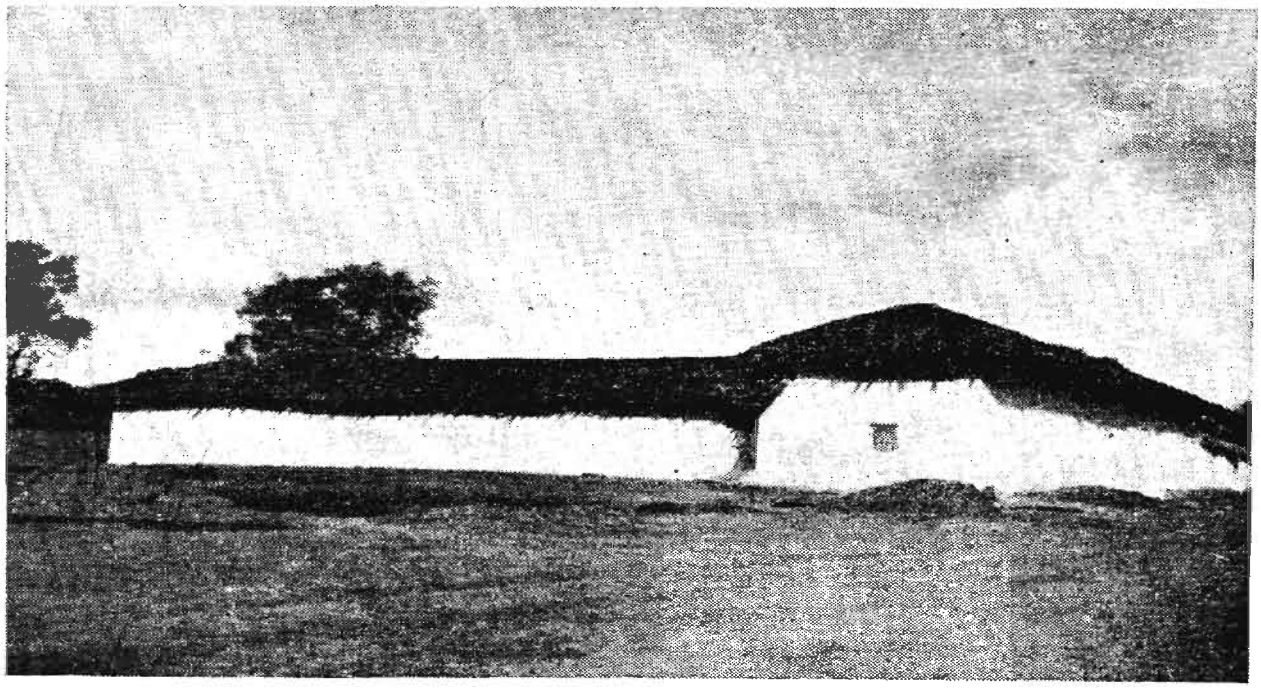


Illustration 36

The house of a high income group person in Kosa
(Ghanshyam Kurmi)

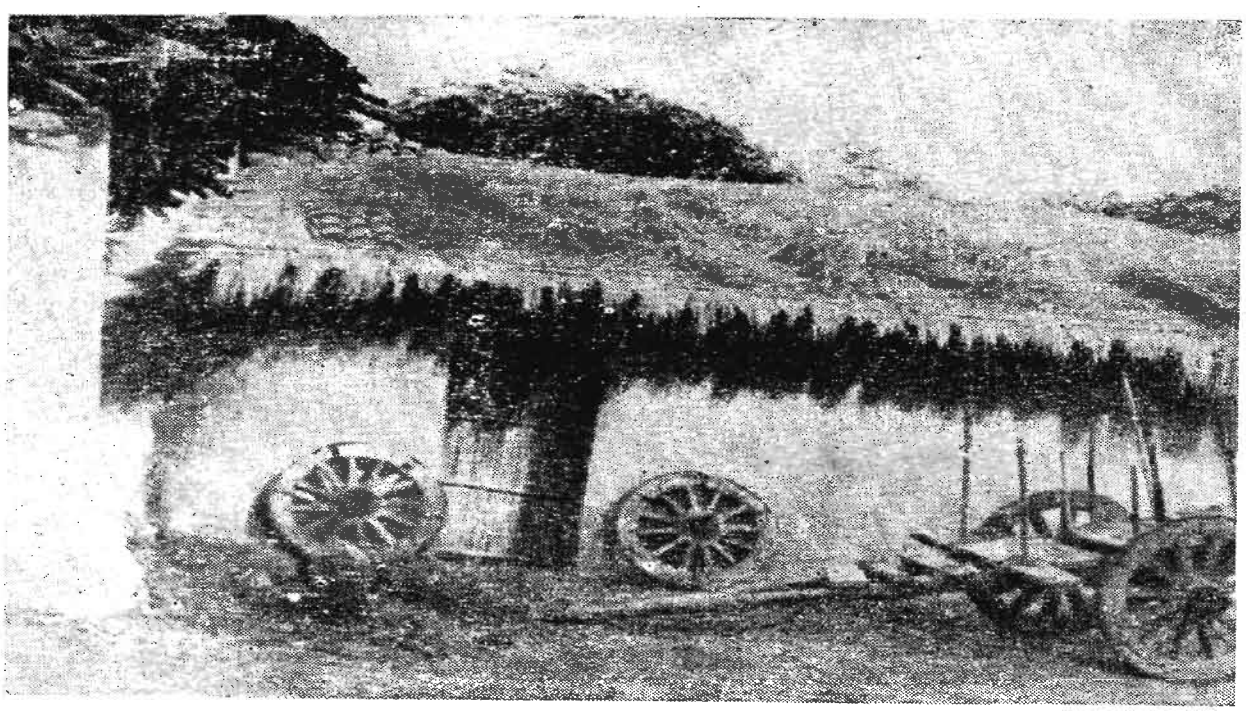


Illustration 37

The house of a middle income group person in Kosa
(Fudkoo Satnami)

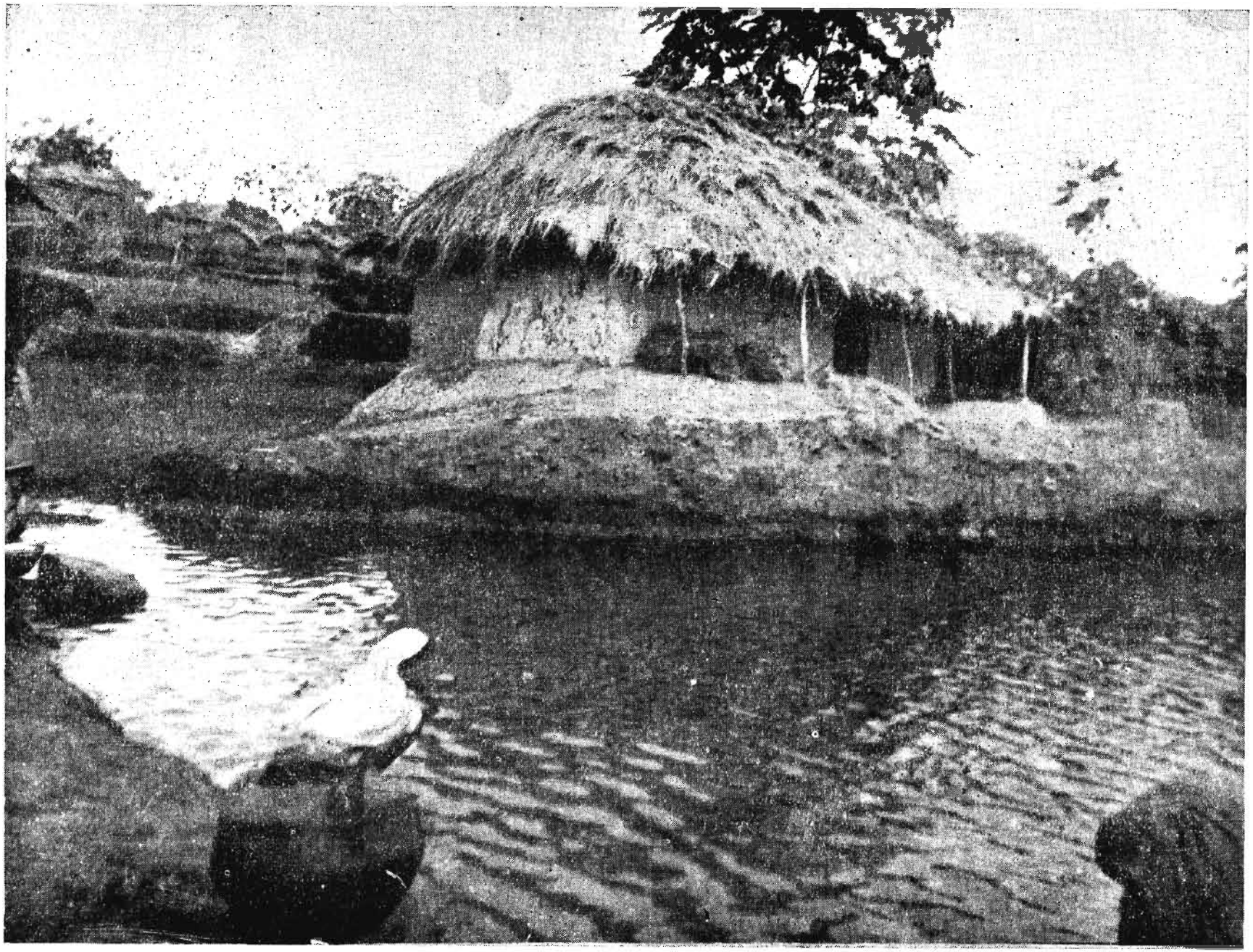


PLATE XXXI

Illustration 38

The house of a low income group person in Kosa
(Muni Satnami)

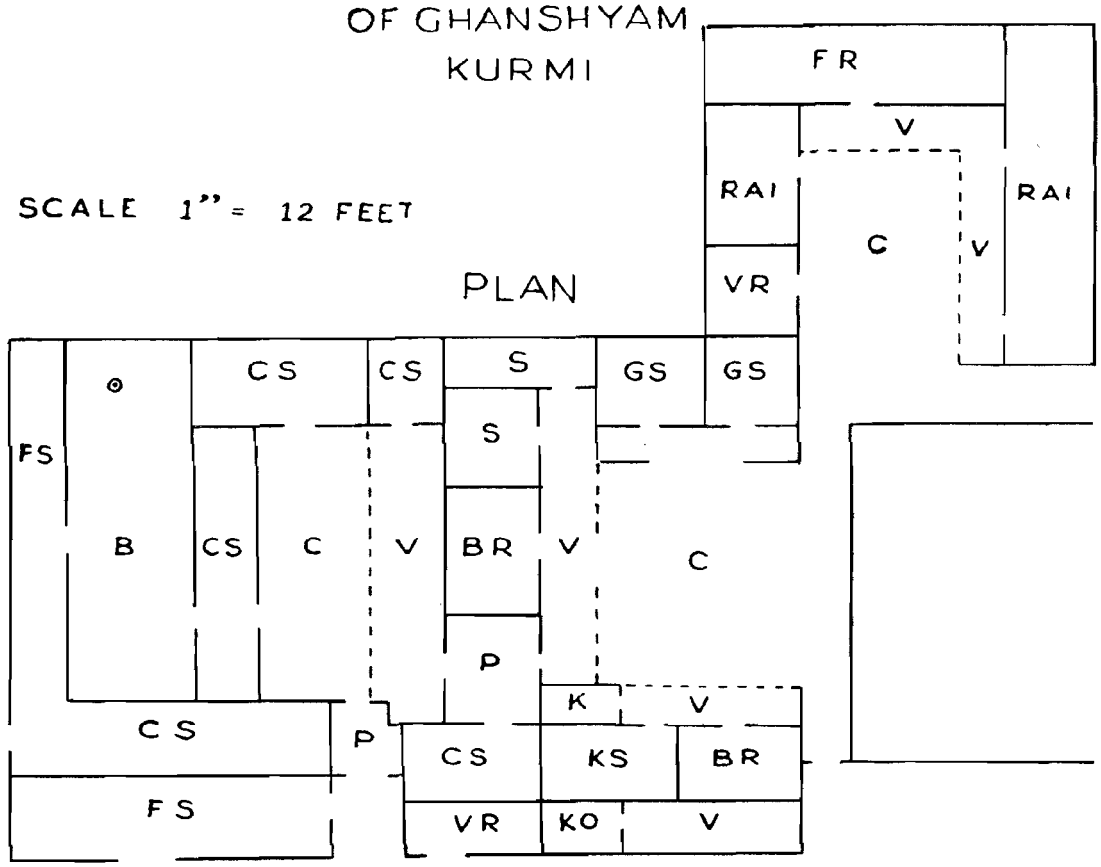
PLATE XXXII

A HIGH INCOME-GROUP HOUSE

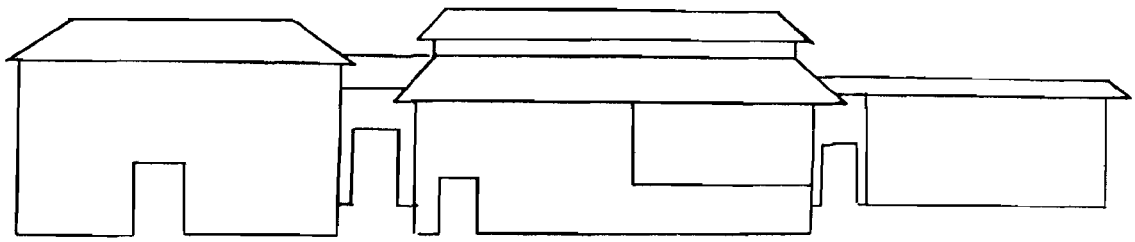
PLAN AND ELEVATION OF THE HOUSE OF GHANSHYAM KURMI

SCALE 1" = 12 FEET

PLAN



ELEVATION



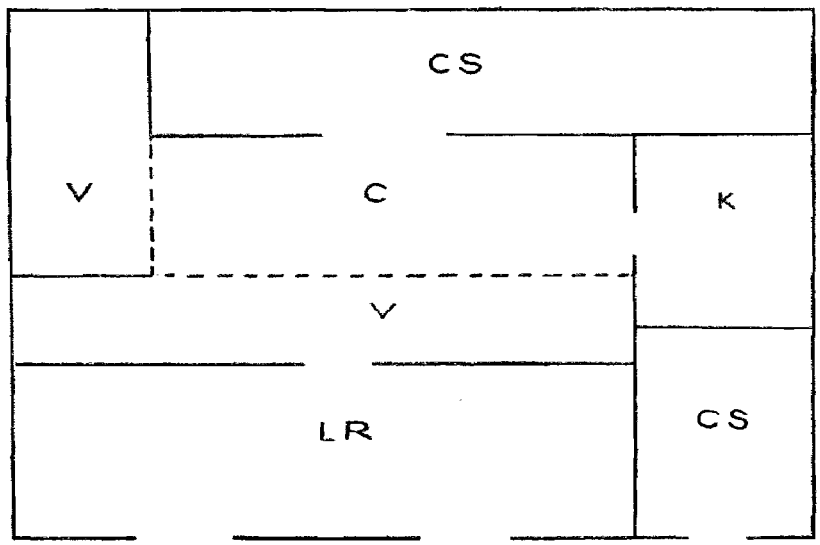
B	Bari
BR	Bed Room
C	Court Yard
CS	Calleshed
FR	Fuel Room
FS	Fodder Storage
GS	Grain Store
K	Kitchen
KO	Kitchen for officials
KS	Kitchen Store
P	Passage
RAI	Room for Agricultural Implements
S	Store
V	Verandah
VR	Vacant Room

Illustration 39

PLATE XXXIII

A MIDDLE INCOME-GROUP HOUSE

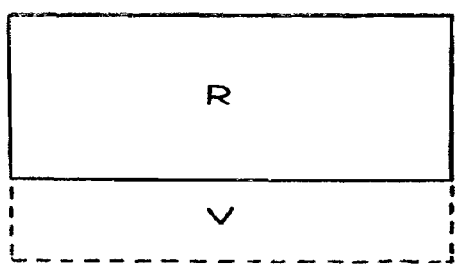
PLAN OF THE HOUSE OF PHUDKU SATNAMI



SCALE 1"=8'

A LOW INCOME-GROUP HOUSE

PLAN OF THE HOUSE OF MUNI SATNAMI



SCALE 1"=6'

Illustration 40

it is not sufficient to meet the requirement. Perusal of the *Nistar Patrak* shows that there is no land available for planting trees or for creating fodder-reserve. The people of Kosa meet their requirements as below.

Material	*Place from where got*	*Distance From Kosa*
Teak for making door Panes	Dhamtari, Raipur district	30 miles
Sal-beams	—do—	—do—
Saja, Kouha, and Senha	Village, Gunderdehi, Dhamtari	9 miles 30 miles
Bamboo for making the frame before tiles are laid	Utai, Gunderdehi,	9 miles 9 miles
Nails	Drug	16 miles
Tiles	Gadadih Utai	5 miles 9 miles
Thatching Grass	Village	

Bhokloo, Mannu and Fudkoo Satnamis of the village serve as village carpenters and make doors, door-frames, and windows. They are also employed by other castes of the village and the daily wage for their services is from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3/-.

There is no particular fetish about keeping the door in a certain direction and, as stated earlier, the front doors are kept facing the lane or the street. The door panes may be made of bamboo net-work or they may also be made of timber. Some houses, as that of Fudkoo Satnami (Illustration 37) have doors of both types. The doors have usually two chains (*Sankal*) for locking purposes. Windows are not generally kept and the reason advanced for the absence of windows is that the blast of wind through the window extinguishes the lamp. Windows are, however, provided in the cattle-sheds because fresh air is considered necessary for the cattle.

Roof Types

The houses in Kosa have two types of roof known locally as *dandariya* and *chaukhadi*. In the *dandariya* type, the roof slopes on the two sides from the central beam whereas in the *chaukhadi* type, the slope of the roof is on all the four sides. *Dandariya* roof is easier and cheaper to construct. It requires not only less timber but also less tiles. But the *chaukhadi* roof provides better protection to the walls and is more lasting, and as such notwithstanding the cost, majority of the houses in Kosa have the *chaukhadi* type of roof and only 9 houses have the *dandariya* roof. The diagrametic representation of the two types of roofs is given in Illustration 26.

All the houses of the Rawats, Kurmis and Pankas have tiled roofs; the house of the Lohar widow has a thatched roof and the majority of the houses of the Satnamis have tiled roofs. The number of tiles and thatched-roofed houses in Kosa is shown in the statement below:

Caste	*Number of houses with*	
	Tiled roof	*Thatched roof*
Satnami	35	20
Rawat	5	—
Kurmi	3	—
Panka	1	—
Lohar	—	1
Kosa village	44	21

Only residential houses have been taken up for the above table.

Everybody is agreed that a tiled roof is far better than the thatched one. Firstly, there is no fear of its being blown away by fast winds during the rainy season; secondly it is safer from the point of view of accidental fire, and thirdly it does not require repairing every year. During the rainy season, the thatched roof sometimes gives way or starts leaking. But as Paltoo and Bakaram Satnami said: "With all its good points, the tiled roof requires a bigger investment initially and it cannot be afforded. The thatched roof requires only labour and is suitable for poor people." The 21 thatched-roof houses of Kosa, arranged according to income group, present the following picture.

Income range in rupees per month	*25 and below*	26-50	51-75	76-100 & *above*
Number of houses with thatched roof in the income range	4	9	8	—

There is no Kumhar in the village, nor do the people prepare tiles themselves. They purchase tiles from village Utai and Gadadih and the present rate, as reported by them was Rs. 11/- to 12/- per thousand tiles.

Care of the House and House Repairs

For protecting the mud walls against splashes and showers of rain, a mat woven out of paddy-straw is hung on the outside of the houses. This is known as *jhipari*. In general, the houses in Chhattisgarhi villages are kept very clean and attractive on the outside though, of course, the Chhattisgarhi 'rural' villages are not as clean and attractive as the tribal villages. The women take great pains in regularly washing the inside and the outside of the house with white, yellow and red clay and cow-dung. The inside of the houses is similarly washed with clay. The floor is regularly washed with cow-dung and then the border is washed with clay. The woman or the girl so washing the room may be instructed by the elderly people of the house as *"Charo khut dhar ke leep debe"* (wash thoroughly touching all the four corners).

Enquiries in the village about the frequency of washing the floor show that the Kurmis wash the floors everyday; the Pankas and the Rawats wash only the cooking-place daily and other rooms of the house only occasionally once in 4-5 days whereas the Satnamis and Lohar wash their house-floors only occasionally and are not fastidious about washing the cooking-place every day.

Many of the houses have geometrical designs painted on the outer wall of the house with red clay or colour and a few houses like that one to the west of the *Jait-kham* and the interior of Shobharam Satnami's house have stylish figures made in mud frescos representing birds, animals and men. The figures of men made in fresco in the inside of Mandlin Satnami's house are extremely well-done pieces of art.

Mud-walls and thatched roofs require annual repairs. The thatching-grass is renewed practically every year before the onset of rains and the mud-walls are replastered after the cessation of rains, normally during the Diwali festival. Information was collected on the amount required for annual repairs and the results of the enquiry are shown below:—

Caste	*Total amount required by the caste for repairs*	*Average cost of repair per house (approximately)*
Satnami	520	9.50
Rawat	50	0.10
Kurmi	65	21.66
Panka	7	7.00
Lohar	3	3.00
Village	**645**	**10.21**

The loan for house-repairs is sometimes taken from private money-lenders and it has been found that seven families in Kosa are in debt on this account, the burden of debt on the village as a whole being Rs. 1,125/-.

Cost of houses in Kosa

All the houses in Kosa are constructed of mud except a portion of the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi which is made of stone and earth. The cost of an average house in Kosa is about Rs. 1,850/-. But if the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi is taken out of this consideration, the average cost comes down to about Rs. 1,700/- per house. Below is shown the number of houses arranged on the basis of cost.

Caste	*Number of houses with the cost in rupees*					
	500 & below	501 1000	1001 1500	1501 2000	2001 3000	3001+
Satnami	1	22	9	15	8	—
Rawat	—	1	—	2	2	—
Kurmi	—	—	—	—	1	2
Panka	—	—	—	1	—	—
Lohar	1	—	—	—	—	—
Village	2	23	9	18	11	2

Both the houses of over 3,000/- cost belong to the Kurmis and the individual costs of these houses are Rs. 15,000/- and Rs. 4,000/- respectively. Nearly 58 per cent of the Satnami houses are below Rs. 1,500/- each whereas the Rawats build more substantial houses. In the table below is shown the cost of houses correlated with income-range.

Income range	*Number of houses with the cost ...in rupees*					
	500 & below	500 1000	1001 1500	1501 2000	2001 3000	3001+
Below Rs. 20	2	2	—	—	—	—
21 to 30	—	—	—	—	—	—
31 to 40	—	3	—	1	—	—
41 to 60	—	8	4	2	3	—
61 to 80	—	4	1	5	5	—
81 to 100	—	4	3	6	1	—
100 & over	—	2	1	4	2	2

Taking only the instance of two vertical columns from the above table, it is found that 22 Satnamis and 1 Rawat households have houses costing Rs. 501/- to Rs. 1,000/-. But the above table shows that these 23 houses are found in all the income-groups. Similarly 9 houses of the Satnamis are of Rs. 1,001/- to Rs. 1,500/- in cost but they are distributed in all the income-ranges

from Rs. 41/- to Rs. 101/- and upwards. It thus appears that the cost of house has nothing to do with income-group but that it may have some relationship with:—

(a) the availability of initial investment;
(b) the area available for building and
(c) the size of the family.

Living conditions in Kosa

It is a little difficult to say whether or not the living conditions in Kosa are satisfactory. The people are quite satisfied and do not know if anything else could be done. It has already been stated in the beginning of this section that on an average the area available for one house in Kosa is about 7 decimals and actually the area for the built up house may be (on the average) about 50′ x 50′. Looking to the fact that we are talking about the house in the village and, not, say, in the Tatya Tope Nagar of the State Capital, it appears that the area is too small because it includes the area of cattle-sheds and so on without which the villagers cannot imagine a house.

In the table below the houses in Kosa are arranged on the basis of number of living rooms.

Caste	*Number of houses in Kosa with*					
	one room only	*two rooms*	*three rooms*	*four rooms*	*five rooms*	*More than five rooms*
Satnami	7	21	13	9	4	1
Rawat	—	1	—	3	—	1
Kurmi	—	1	1	—	—	1
Panka	—	—	—	1	—	—
Lohar	1	—	—	—	—	—
Village	8	23	14	13	4	3

It is seen that 69.2 per cent of the residential houses have one to three rooms only. Since the size of the rooms in all the houses has been observed to be more or less the same, a classification of the houses could be made as below:

Small — Those having upto 2 rooms;
Medium — Those having 3-4 rooms;
Big — Those having more than 4 rooms.

House type	*Percentage of type of houses to the total number of houses in*				
	Satnami	*Rawat*	*Kurmi*	*Panka*	*Lohar*
Small	50.9	20.0	33.3	100	100
Medium	40.0	60.0	33.3	—	—
Big	9.1	20.0	33.3	—	—

The biggest house in the village belongs to Ghanshyam Kurmi, the ex-proprietor of Kosa and it is in the southern verandah of his house that the officials visiting Kosa stay. There is no other place in the village to stay and Kosa does not have a *gudi* or the village Rest House which is a common feature in some of the Chhattisgarh, and all the Bastar villages. The smallest houses are of Dulorin Lohar and Muni Satnami.

Except houses like those of Dulorin Lohar and Muni Satnami, other houses in Kosa have a cattle-shed in a part of the house near the front entrance so that the cattle do not have to pass through the living rooms. There may be one or more verandahs and a court-yard. The house of the latter is situated on the western embankment of the tank in a very picturesque surrounding. One of the rooms or more commonly the verandah is used as the cooking place in the open season. During rains when the rain showers come into the verandah, one of the rooms is used as the cooking room. Below is shown a statement of houses having separate cooking rooms.

Caste	*No. of houses*	*Number of houses having*	
		Separate cooking rooms	*Living and cooking together*
Satnami	55	37	18
Rawat	5	4	1
Kurmi	3	3	—
Panka	1	1	—
Lohar	1	—	1
Village	65	45	20

In other rooms of the houses are kept the other impediments of a villager, the grain-bin, the husking-lever, the plough and so on.

Household possessions

It would be somewhat difficult to prepare an inventory of the goods possessed by the average household or even in some categories of households because the possessions differ from house to house. In the following the various household possessions have been described under four broad heads.

(a) Possessions related to economy and economic pursuits;
(b) Possessions like cooking and eating utensils;
(c) Sleeping and bedding equipments and
(d) Other possessions.

Possessions of Economic life and Economic pursuits

Agricultural implements and other implements of industry are not being described here; they will be dealt with in the section on village economy. Other household possessions related in some way or the other with the economy are — *Dhenki* (paddy-husking lever). *Moosar* (rice-dehusking implement): *Jantwa* (griding wheel); *Khumri* and *Mora* (Rain-hood). *Soopa* (winnowing pan); *Tokni* (baskets); *Kanwar* and *Kotna*.

Dhenki

All the households in Kosa do not have a *dhenki* of their own though it may be said to be an item of day to day necessity, because paddy is not dehusked entirely after the harvest. It is stored as such and 10 to 20 seers are dehusked every time. Information has not been collected as to which houses have husking levers. Out of the 8 houses visited by the writer only 4 had the *dhenki*. The people who do not have the *dhenki* go to the persons who have it and get their paddy dehusked there.

Dhenki consists of a 5½′ to 6′ long rectangular and 6 to 8 inches thick log of wood. At about one and a half feet from one end there is a hole in the log through which passes a thick iron nail or a long circular piece of wood, the diameter of which is less than that of the hole. This nail or the wood rests on two wooden fixtures on the two sides of the rod and acts as the lever. The farther end of the long beam has a rod attached and to the end of the rod, an iron cap is fixed. At the place where the rod with the iron cap falls, a depression (*okhli*) is made in the ground. In this depression is put the paddy or the rice to be dehusked. A woman presses and releases the end of the beam near the lever with her foot, the end carrying the iron-ringed rod rises and falls in the depression. Thus two women are necessary for the operation — one to work at the *okhali* to go on stirring the paddy and take it out when the husk is removed and the other to press the *dhenki*. Thus the women from those households which have the *dhenki* and those which have not, cooperate with one another and when necessary the women call one another for assistance. The four houses where *dhenki* was seen by the writer are those of Ghanshyam Kurmi, Chintaram Satnami, Phutku Satnami and Shobharam Satnami.

Moosar

Whereas the *dhenki* requires an operation by at least two persons, the *moosar* can be easily handled by one person only. Though *moosar* is not as effective as the *dhenki* and though it takes a long time to do the same job, it is less cumbersome than a *dhenki*.

Moosar is a thick piece of heavy wood about three feet long and having about three inches diameter in the centre tapering at the top. The lower end is thinner and has an iron-ring. About 16″ higher from the lower end, the diameter of the *moosar* is about one inch. This serves as the hold and by holding the *moosar* here paddy can be dehusked in the *okhli*.

Jantwa

Also known as *janta*. This is the circular grinding stone. The villagers in Chhattisgarh are mostly rice-eaters and the grinding stone is required only very occasionally. The grinding stone is not portable but is fixed in the ground. The house of Ghanshyam Kurmi has a *janta* or *jantwa*. Some Satnami houses also have it because flour is required at the time of festivities for preparing delicacies and wafers.

Khumri and Mora

Khumri is the protective rain-hood made of split bamboo and then covered with leaves. It is a conical hat usually about 1½ feet in diameter and fitted with a strap to be tied below the chin. *Khumri* is the common wear of the *bardiah* (grazier) while he is grazing his cattle. *Khumri* has an advantage over the umbrella in this respect that it leaves both the hands free for work and people use it when working in the fields for ploughing and sowing. It is also used when going out to market or to other villages, but is here facing a rival in the umbrella.

Mora is made up of the same material as the *khumri* but is of a different shape and much bigger. It is like a long winnowing-fan — the hallow end covers the head and the long sheet covers the entire back region of the person. It is very useful for working in the fields during the *nindai* operation which is done by women who are required to keep kneeling all the time. The *mora* protcts persons from getting drenched. *Mora* possibly may not have any substitute except a plastic coat.

Soopa and Tokni

The *soopa* and *tokni* are the bamboo winnowing—fan and baskets respectively and are the possessions of every household because without them, the paddy husk cannot be removed. The *soopa* is also used for threshing. After the *douri* i.e. cattle treading on the harvested crop stored in the *khalihan*, has been completed and

the straw has been removed from the top, the paddy is taken in the *soopa* and then keeping the *soopa* up, is allowed to fall on the ground. A final whirl with the *soopa* separates the last remnants of straw. The paddy is then collected in the *tokni* and brought home.

The *soopa* and *tokni* are commonly plastered with cow-dung to close the openings in the bamboo-frame work. Such washing also gives a better look to the *soopa*, and as the people say, makes it last longer.

Kanwar

The *kanwar* is made of a stick (about 5 feet long) of *dhaman* (*Grewia elastic*) wood at the two ends of which are attached the *seeka* or the rope-frame for keeping a receptacle or *tokna*. The middle portion of the stick is kept on shoulders and the luggage carried. The device helps to minimise the weight on the shoulder. *Dhaman* wood is used because it is flexible but if it is not available, a bamboo pole or any other wood may be used instead.

In the central districts of the State, as in Sagar and Jabalpur, the *kanwar* is known as *bahangi*. The *kanwar* is shown in the diagrammatic sketch. It is used for a variety of purposes: to bring water, to bring threshed paddy from the threshing field, to bring the paddy straw, to take paddy from the field to the threshing floor and to bring grass. It is also used to carry the luggage from one village to another.

Kotna

Kotna is a stone receptacle, rectangular in shape, in which water for the cattle is kept. In almost every house, except in some as Dulorin's and Muni's, there is a *kotna* kept in the verandah or the court-yard.

The *kotna* is not made at Kosa. It is purchased from Parsahi and the price of a *kotna* capable of holding a tin (6 gallons) of water is about four rupees. The *kotna* is made of concretionery pink limestone, the outcrop of which is exposed at village Parsahi.

Cooking and Eating Utensils

Names of various utensils found in the village, in almost every household, are given here in Chhattisgarhi dialect. Most of the utensils used for cooking are earthen and it is asserted by the villagers that the food cooked in earthen vessels is tastier and the milk boiled in an earthen vessel tastes better than milk boiled in a metal vessel. It is of course a question of taste but, from personal experience, it can be said that at least in the case of milk, the present writer is inclined to corroborate the opinions of villagers of Kosa.

Name of the utensil/vessel in the village	*English name of the same*	*Made of*	*Purpose to which put*
Kalounji	Frying Pan	Earthen Metal	For cooking vegetables
Handi	Small pitcher	Earthen	Cooking rice
Houli	Pan	Earthen	For keeping excess water from cooked rice
Kundera	Lid	Earthen	For covering the *handi*
Parai	Lid	Earthen	For covering the *kalounji*
Dar-randhni	Pitcher with broader mouth	Earthen	For cooking the pulse
Marki	Pitcher (small)	Earthen	Keeping water
Marka	Pitcher (big)	Earthen	Keeping water
Serha or *Dhurhwa*	Oil receptacle	Earthen	Keeping oil
Nunha-Dhekwa	Salt receptacle	Earthen	Keeping salt
Dhomra	Pan	Earthen	For eating
Doski	Small pan	Earthen	For serving cooked vegetable
Thari or *Thali*	Dish	Brass or Bronze	Eating
Gilas	Glass	Brass, Bronze, Aluminium	Drinking
Lota		Brass, Bronze	Keeping water
Batki	Pan	Bronze	Eating *'Basi'*
Maliya	Small pan	Bronze	For keeping vegetable or pulse while eating
Hauli	Pitcher	Brass	For bringing water
Haula	Pitcher	Brass	For storing water
Parra	Pan	Bamboo	For keeping vegetables for cooking
Dua	Ladle	Wood	For taking out water from the pitcher

The characteristic vessels of Chhattisgarh seen in Kosa are the *batki* and *maliya*. Both of these are made of bronze metal. *Batki* is a deep pan like vessel, as shown in the sketch and used for eating *Basi*. *Maliya* is of the same shape but is smaller in size — and is used for keeping pulse or vegetable. *Batki* is not a vessel to

be seen in the wheat-growing districts of the north; it is exclusively seen in the *Basi-eating* regions.

It has been seen that the Satnamis of Kosa have bronze utensils in their houses like the *batki, thari* and *maliya* and they do not know that some of the Satnamis in other villages near Bhandar do not eat in bronze vessels.

The possessions of the households of different castes in respect of earthen and metal utensils are shown in the statement below:—

Caste	*No. of House-holds*	*Total number of utensils made of*			*Average number per house-hold of*	
		Earthen	*Brass*	*Bronze*	*Earthen vessels*	*Metal vessels*
Satnami	55	525	222	178	9.5	7.3
Rawat	5	41	34	22	8.2	10.2
Kurmi	3	20	35	40	6.6	25.0
Panka	1	5	25	—	5	25.0
Lohar	1	10	1	4	10	5.0

Bar-chart (Illustration 46) shows the number of earthen and metal utensils in the average houses of Kosa.

Sleeping and Bedding Equipment

People in Kosa sleep on cots but there is no adequate bedding and covering material like mattress, bedding sheets, blankets and quilts. Every house has some cots for the members of the households. The cots in Kosa are small and 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet in width and about 5 feet in length and are woven with jute or coconut fibre rope. Some cots, as in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi are woven with the cotton *niwar* and Chintaram Satnami has a cot with iron-plates fixed in place of *niwar*.

Kathri are used in place of mattress and bed-sheets. The *kathris* are made at home by sewing together torn *lugdas* and *dhoti*. Some of the *kathri* may be used even when they are more or less unserviceable and more than half torn. Pillows are not commonly in use. For covering, the villagers use the *lugda* or the *dhoti* itself or the country made blankets called *kamra*. Mill-made blankets are also seen in some of the houses. The use of mosquito-nets is not a common feature and only 6 households in Kosa have mosquito-nets. It may, however, be mentioned here that in these houses also mosquito-nets have not been provided to all the members. The households possessing mosquito-nets are those of Ghanshyam Kurmi, Guha Rawat, and Chintaram, Punoo, Bharose and Fudkoo Satnamis.

Other possessions

Other household possessions in Kosa are the *gorsi, chatai, machia* and *dhibari*.

Gorsi

Gorsi is an earthen receptacle made by the women at home. Some paddy straw is spread over the bottom side of an earthen pitcher (*Marka* or *Marki*) according to the size of *gorsi* to be prepared kept upside down and then well-kneaded mud is put over it in about one to one and a half inch thick layer. About half of the pitcher is so covered and then the thing is left to dry. After the mud gets dried the *gorsi* can be taken out. It is then given a coating of cow-dung solution.

Gorsi is a multi-purpose item in the household. Babies are fomented from cow-dung fire burnt in it; milk is kept hot by letting the vessel remain in it; the necessity of match-sticks is minimised by letting the fire remain in it covered by ashes. As Shobharam Satnami said: "Remove the ash and light your *Bidi*. It is so easy. No fumbling with the match-box in the rainy season." In the folk-songs and *dadariya, gorsi* is often mentioned and it has a romantic attachment about it. In the winter it gives warmth to the people who keep the *gorsi* under the cot. *Gorsi* is also associated with removing the affliction of the 'evil eye' as will be shown later. And these are only some of the uses to which 'Gorsi' may be put. Every house in Kosa has one or more *gorsi*.

Chatai

These are the mats woven from a variety of legume and is a common item for sitting and is used when women sit basking in the sun and for sleeping when they are in the menstrual period.

Machia

Machia, the small four-legged common item of furniture in the villages with the seat woven with jute-rope has passed from the village to the drawing rooms of even the most sophisticated persons. In the villages, as in Kosa, the *machia* is more crudely built than its sisters in the drawing rooms of Tatya Tope Nagar, Bhopal. In Kosa, the *machia* have seats woven with hemp-rope.

Dhibari

Though lanterns have now come in the village, *dhibari* is still found in a number of houses and in 9 houses forms the only source of light. It is a small

PLATE XXXIV

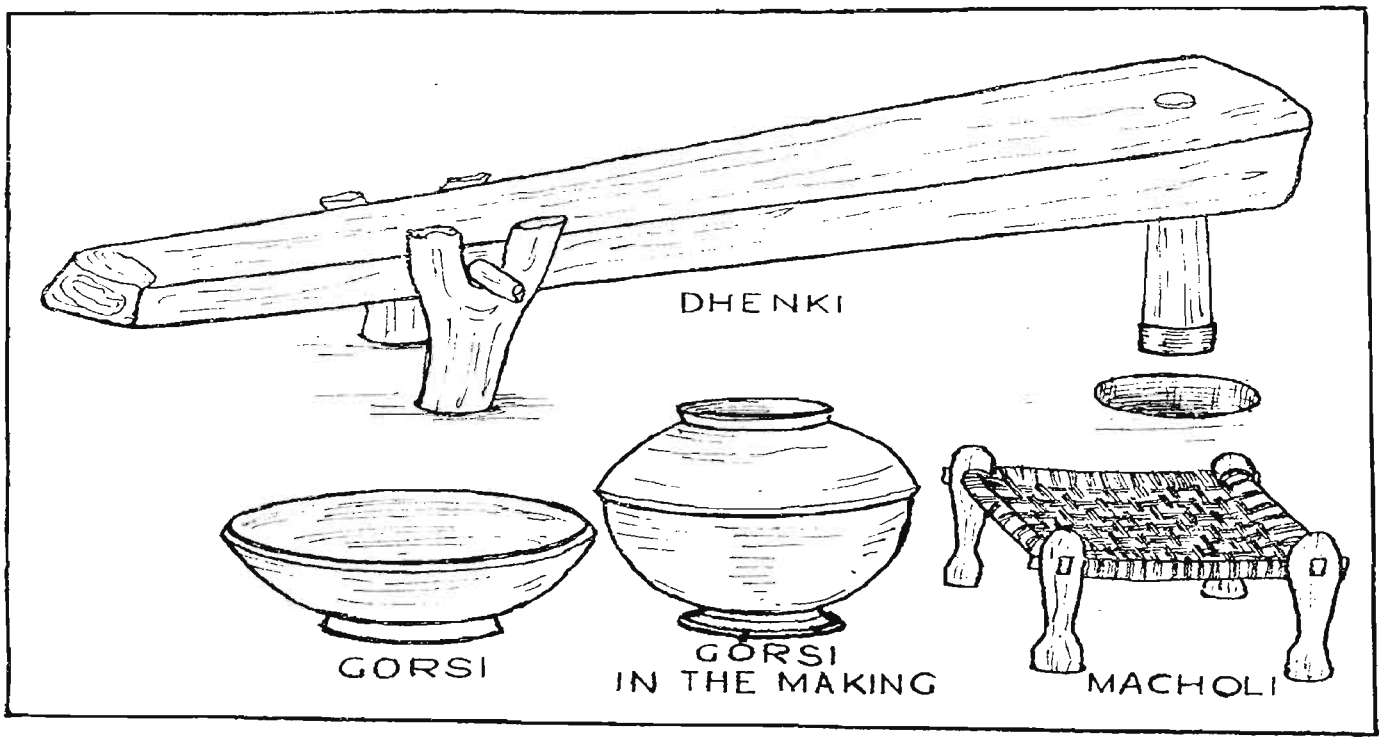
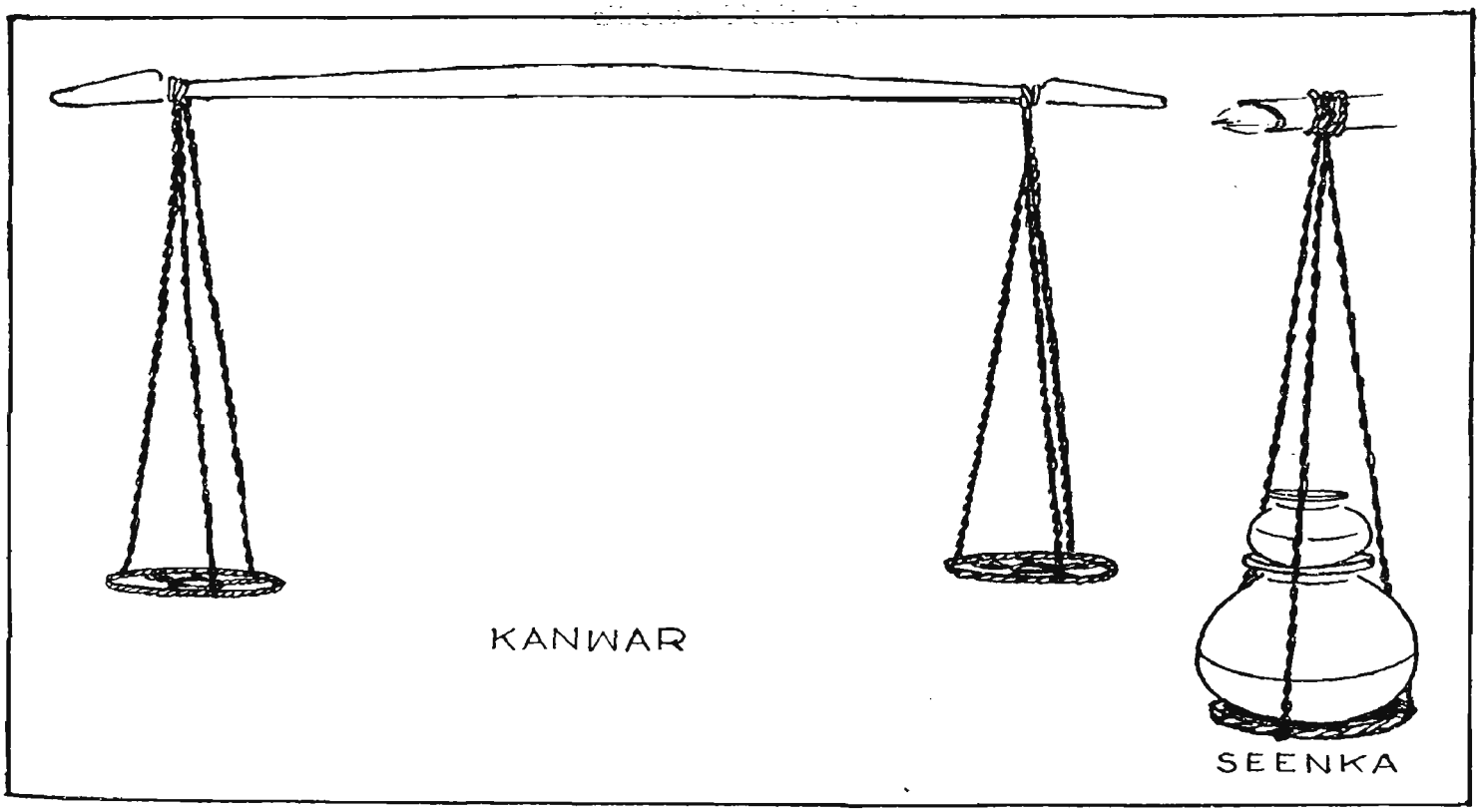


Illustration 41



HOUSEHOLD POSSESSIONS

SCALE 1" = 15"

Illustration 42

PLATE XXXV

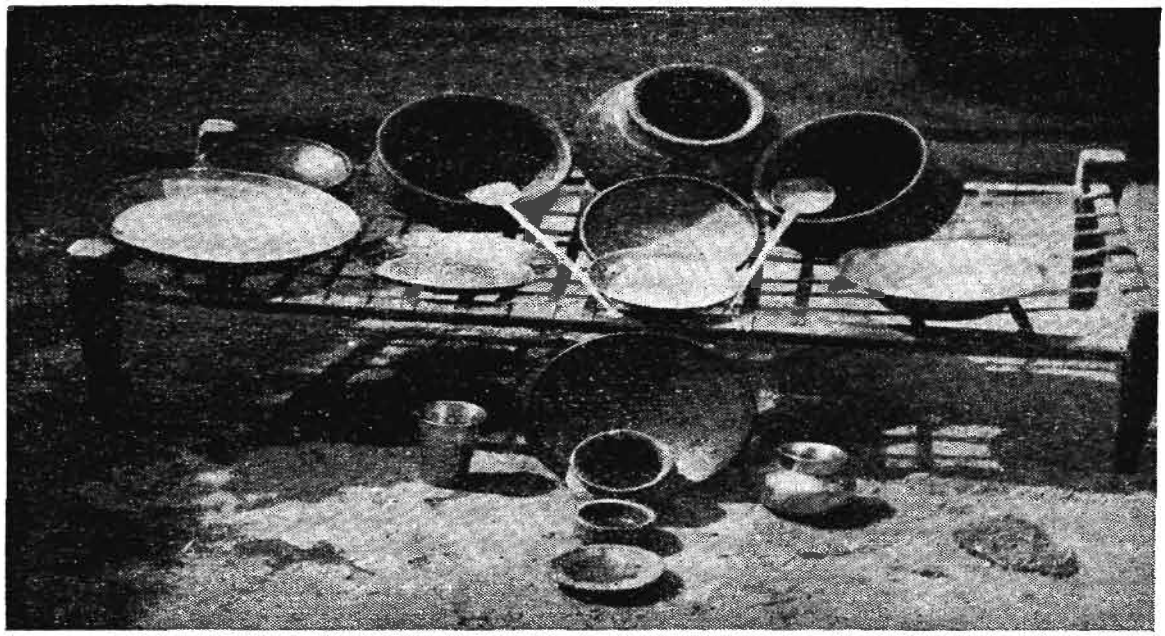


Illustration 43

Household utensils



Illustration 44

Chintaram's mother cooking vegetable

PLATE XXXVI

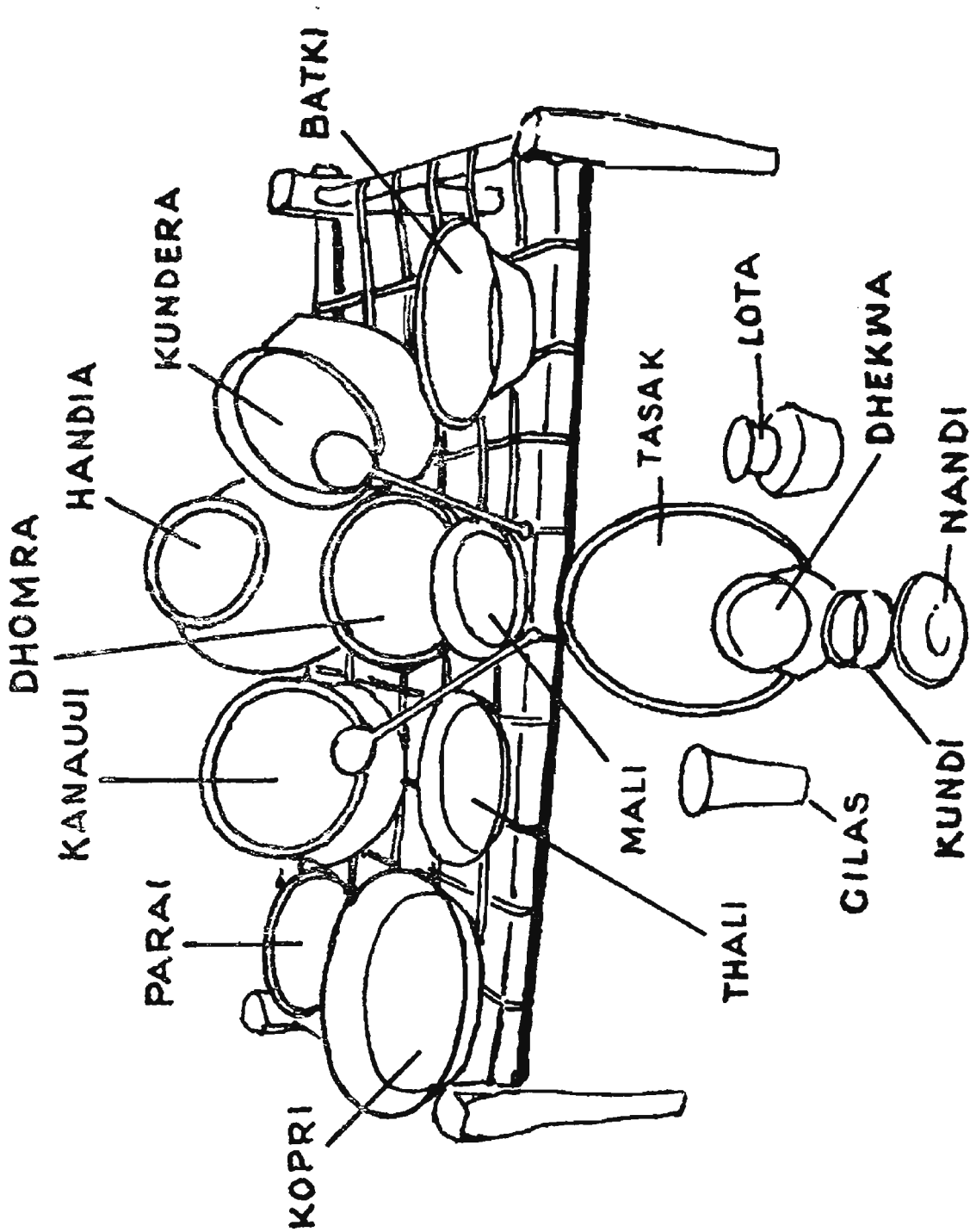


Illustration 45

Household untensils

PLATE XXXVII

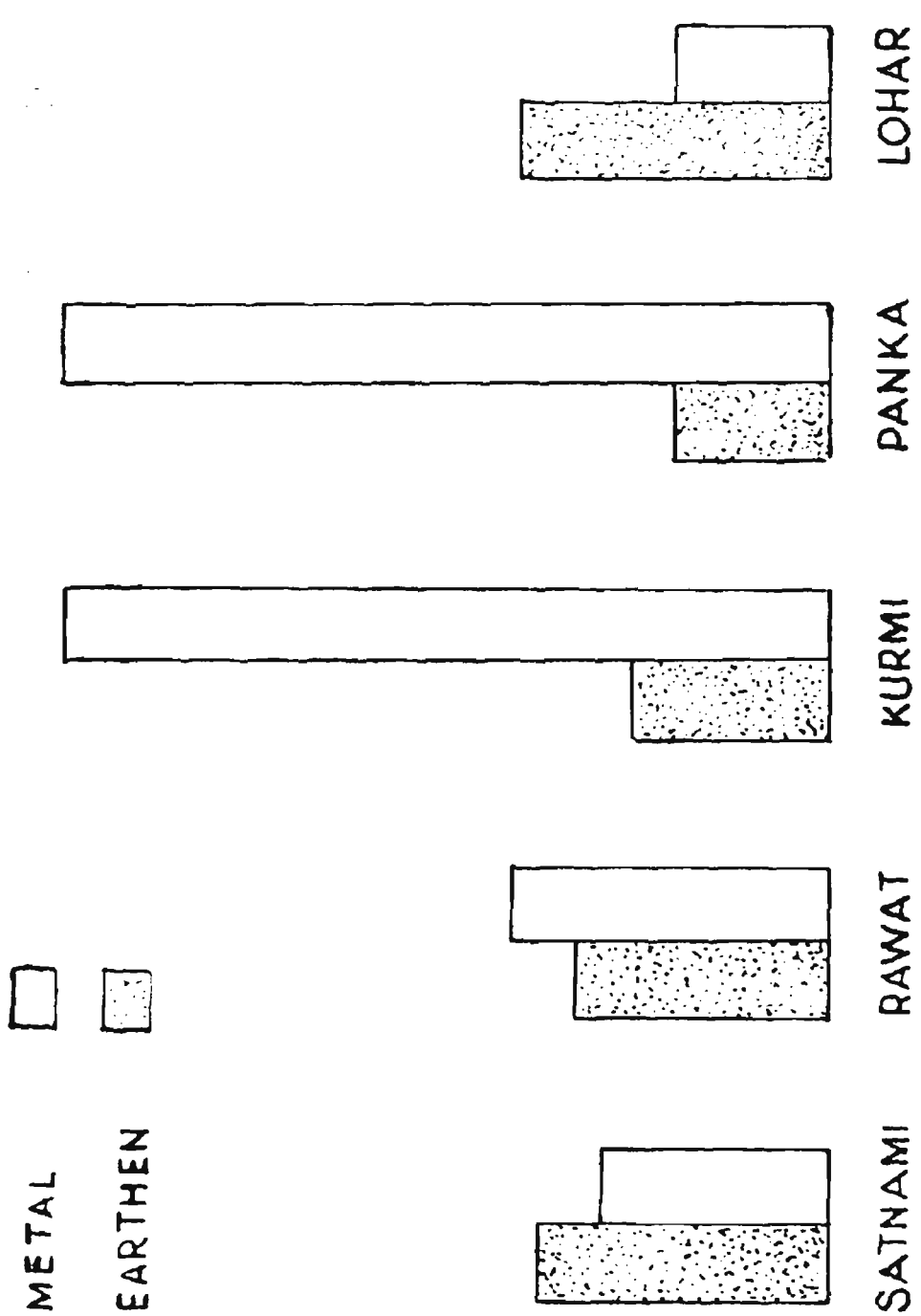


Illustration 46

Bar-chart showing number of earthen and metal utensils in different castes.

PLATE XXXVIII



Illustration 47

A Rawat in his customary dress



A WOMAN WITH *MORA* (A TYPE OF RAINHOOD)

PLATE XXXIX

Illustration 48

PLATE XL

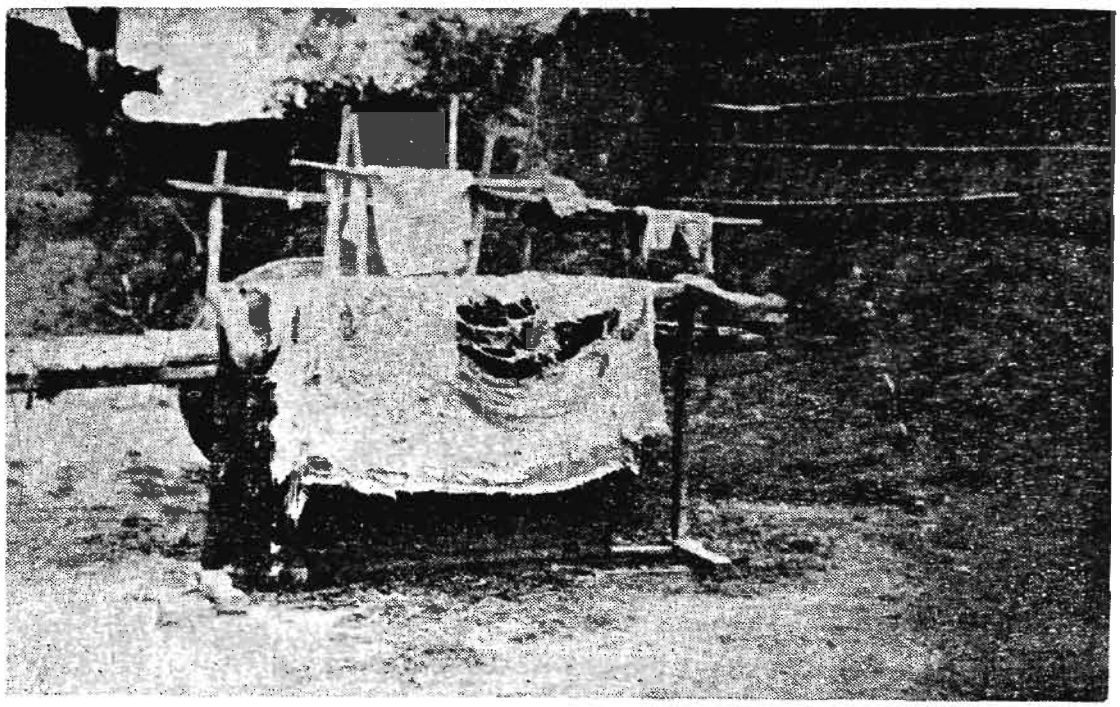


Illustration 49

Cot and Kathri

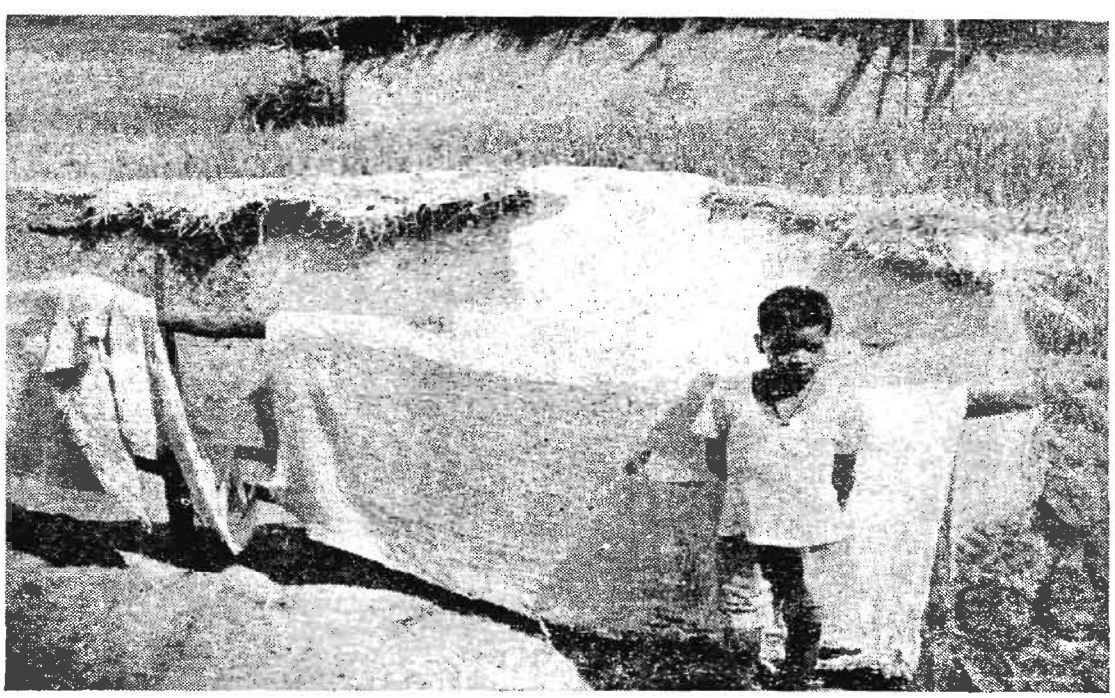


Illustration 50

Kathri

PLATE XLI

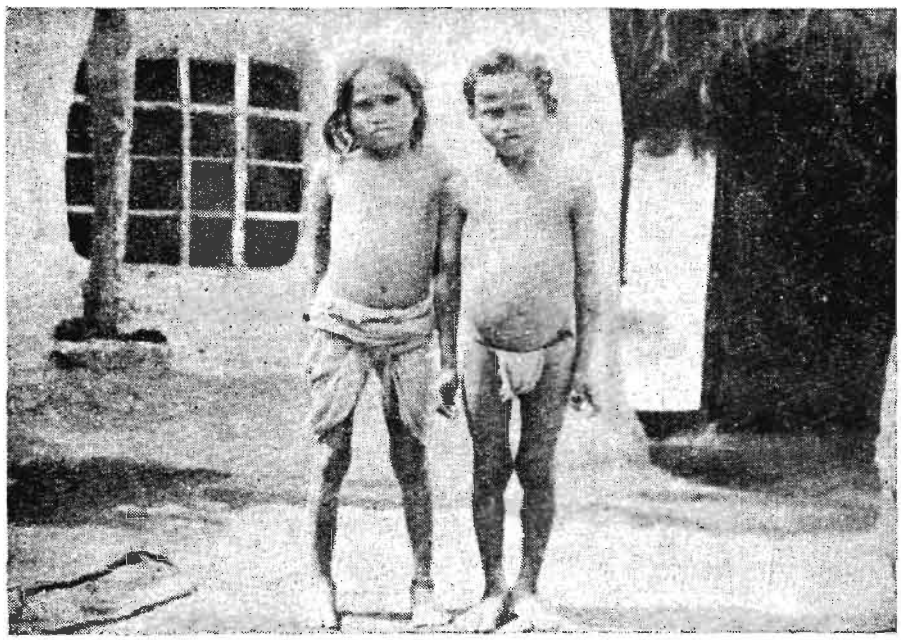


Illustration 51

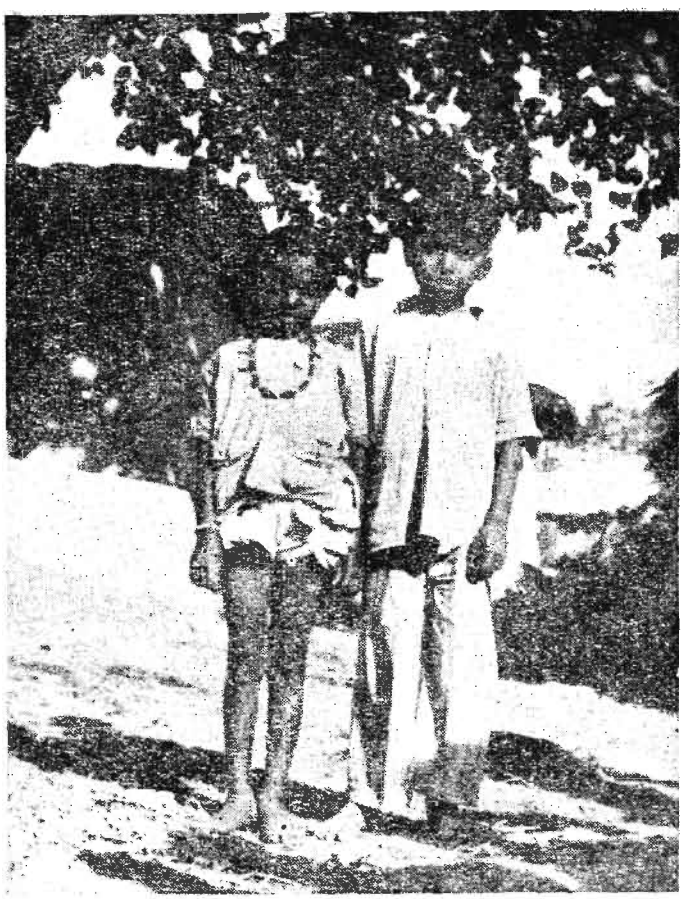


Illustration 52



Illustration 53

Trends towards Urbanisation in dress

PLATE XLII



Illustration 54
Change in the same age-group



Illustration 55
Change in two generations

earthen receptacle with a narrow neck and opening through which a piece of cloth is put into the oil contained in the *dhibari*. Even in those houses where lanterns are found, *dhibari* is not absent and is used quite commonly.

Trends towards Urbanization

The days seem to be long past in Kosa when Kari and Pandri used to protect themselves from the rain with the *khumri* on their heads and when they used to work in the house only by the light of *dhibari*. Now 54 households in Kosa have hurricane lanterns. The nine households where there is no lantern are those of Dulorin, Sukul, Muni, Gondhi, Sheocharan, Fudkoo, Bisahat, Ghasiya and Khusal Satnamis. Every household except those of Dulorin Lohar and Gondhi and Samedas Satnamis have umbrella in their houses in addition to *khumri* and *mora*. In bedding equipment, 6 households have mosquito-nets. These households are those of Ghanshyam, Gopal and Nirbhe Kurmi, Guha Rawat and Chintaram, Punoo, Bharosa and Fudkoo Satnamis who have in all 12 mosquito-nets as below:

Kurmis — 7
Satnamis — 5

Furniture in the nature of tables and chairs are still not a common feature in Kosa because the people do not need them. Ghanshyam Kurmi has a bench, some easy-chairs and one chair. The whole village has however purchased two chairs and a table from the common fund of the village because they felt that these are needed for visiting officials. These items of furniture are kept with the village-watchman — Jairamdas Panka and brought to the place where visiting officials stay.

There are two bicycles in Kosa — one with Ghanshyam Kurmi and the other with Rewaram Satnami. Ghanshyam Kurmi also possesses a torch-light and Chintaram Satnami owns a sewing machine.

Dress and Ornaments

There is an old proverb about Chhattisgarh reported to by Russell and Hiralal[34]: "What will a washerman do in a Chhattisgarh village where the people live naked?" Though the presence of a washerman is not required even now in quite a large number of villages of Chhattisgarh, it is no longer true that the people live naked. Of course, the village-life being what it is and the villagers being what they are, the provision for clothing is not very liberal and the habits of generations die slowly. Writing about a century ago Hewitt[35] had stated: "The influence of wealth has not yet shown itself in rousing that passion for display which is to be observed in many other parts of the country, and it is probable that it will be long before it does so." The people of villages like Kosa have moved with the tide of time though they started late and the pace has been slow but conspicuous changes have come about in matters of dress and ornaments and now, not only could a washerman live in a village but the dress and ornaments have become very much a matter of display of wealth. Shirts have taken the place of *bandi* and *salooka* to a good extent and women have started wearing blouses and even petticoats. Because of the demand for clothing Chintaman Satnami has purchased a sewing machine and does the tailoring for Kosa preparing shirts and *salookas* for the villagers. The dress and ornaments of the people of Kosa are described below.

DRESS — MALE DRESS

The Headgear

The Satnamis, Kurmis and Pankas do not use the turban commonly. The Satnamis may, however, wrap the *safi* (towel) round the head to protect themselves from cold and heat, but the use of *paga* or *pagdi* is not a common item of dress among them. The Panka wears the blue cap given to him by the government as a part of his uniform and Ghanshyam Kurmi puts on a Gandhi-cap. The *paga* (turban) forms the traditional headgear for the Rawats and they invariably put it on during festive ceremonies. When they are out grazing the cattle, the *paga* on the head serves as the convenient spot to insert the *chongi* or *bidi* which can be taken out whenever required. The Rawats say that their traditional headgear is a yellow-coloured *paga*. The Thethwar is not particular about the colour of the *paga* and he uses *paga* of a gaudy colour — red and also deep pink. The boys do not use any headgear except the grazier boy who sometimes puts on the *safi* round his head.

Upper Garments

The Satnami men and boys wear a variety of apparel ranging from the *salooka* to the bush-shirt. The poorer section of the people do not put on anything or may put on the *salooka* occasionally. The poor boys may

34. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. II; R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916.

35. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869, J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 51.

wear the tattered and torn dress given to them by somebody or themselves use it till it is much past its life and hardly gives a protection except possibly a satisfaction that a shirt is there. Other people of the caste wear shirts, *salookas, kurta* and one or two people also use bush-shirts. Most of them use the village-sewn *sandow* vest (under garment) made of coarse cloth or striped cloth which Chintaram Satnami makes for them at a reasonable charge. Some also put on mill-made under garments. The shirts and *salookas* are also sewn by Chintaram and for these the villagers do not depend on the market now. All they have now to do is to get the cloth and give it to Chintaram. Chintaram himself wears a Khaki shirt. The school going children put on shirts and bush-shirts and also *salooka* at home.

The Rawats and Thethwar mostly use the *salooka* but the shirt is also used for common wear. During marriages and other festivities the *salooka,* however, takes precedence over the shirt. The *salooka* of the Rawats is of a black, yellow, blue or red cloth and never white because the white *salooka* starts looking dirty very soon. Ghanshyam Kurmi puts on *kurta* and shirts of *khadi.* He says that he uses *khadi* because he read in some book that *khadi* cloth brings purity of thoughts to the mind and health to the body. The Panka wears shirts and vests.

Lower Garments

Dhoti is the common lower garment but it is not worn in the manner in which people wear it in the towns. In Kosa it is normally worn up to the knees or upto just below the knees. The *dhoti* is of 8 hands i.e. 12 feet in length.

The Satnamis wear a coarse cloth *dhoti* purchased from Durg or Gunderdehi, but the *dhoti* is not worn all the time. Most of the time, the people wear only a *panchha* or *patuka* which is handloom woven and 7 feet long and 2 to 2½ feet wide. It is just wrapped round the loins or one end of it is tucked at the back in the *dhoti*-fashion. When worn, the *patuka* or *panchha* comes up to the knees. In the night when retiring, the people even put out this *panchha* and put on *angochha,* a handloom woven cloth also used as towel and for tying round the head as an apology for a turban. General opinion in the village is that use of *dhoti* or *panchha* day and night is likely to reduce the life of those clothes and secondly *angochhi* is quite a comfortable wear for the night in addition to saving the use of *dhoti.* Some of the Satnamis like Rewaram Satnami have purchased a turkish towel and use it in place of the *panchha* and move about freely and also with some sense of pride wrapping it round the loins. Rewaram Satnami was feeling so elevated in the turkish towel round his loins that he made a special request to be photographed.

The Kurmi men wear *dhotis* more or less in the same fashion as in the towns and usually with an underwear. They do not put on *angochhi* in the night but sleep with the *dhoti* on. The *angochhi* or the *patuka* may be worn when taking a bath. The Pankas and the Rawats wear the *dhoti* and the *panchha* as the Satnamis.

The new generation has taken to the use of short, pants and pyjamas but these are used more or less by the school-going children. Where Shobharam can not even imagine himself in pyjamas, the younger children in the caste may put on these dresses and at least one boy was seen putting on striped pyjama.

Female Dress

Lugda is the name by which *sari* is known in the village. The common *lugda* is the handloom-woven red or white *sari* and this is worn by women in all the castes. Ghanshyam Kurmi's wife uses mill-made finer-cloth *sari.* Mill-made *lugdas* are also used by other castes but sparingly.

The *lugdas* is not worn in the fashion in which one sees ladies wearing it in towns. It is wrapped round the loins up to the knees and one end, known as *alga* is then thrown over the right shoulder. The *lugda* seen in Chhattisgarh and in Kosa is of 21 feet length and one end of it is used to cover the upper portions of the body.

Usually one *lugda* is worn continuously day after day till it becomes absolutely necessary to boil it in washing-soda (*mati-rakh*). The *lugda* is, however, washed every day while bathing. The women wrap one half of the *lugda* in the body from above the breast and the other half is washed. Then the washed half is similarly wrapped and the remaining half is similarly wrapped and the remaining half is cleaned. And after bathing the *lugda,* being of coarse cloth, dries up on the way back home.

Blouse

The use of a blouse or *polka* as it is called is getting more popular with the young generation and is generally worn by the young girls and the younger married women. But it is not so common, once the woman cross, say, the age of 30 or so i.e. when they become mothers.

The older women do not put on the *polka* because it was not the fashion in the days of their youth and now they do not see any use in wearing it. In Kosa, it is difficult to say whether the Kurmi women wear the *polka* more commonly than the Satnamis because the younger generation of Satnamis who are leading more of an out-of-door life and go to markets like to show off more. In general it may be stated that the younger women wear the *polka* invariably while going out and during festive ceremonies like a marriage, *polka* is worn by almost all ladies.

Dress of Girls

Small girls put on frock and underwear or go only putting on a simple *lingoti* i.e. loin cloth. They may also put on a *polka* with the *lingoti* as the lower garment. The *lugda* is put on after they start developing signs of puberty as stated elsewhere, the reference to a grown up girl is as *alga dar le he* (has put over the end of her *lugda* on the shoulders).

Footwear

The country-made shoes common in Chhattisgarh are seen in this village also. These shoes are made by the persons of Chamar caste and are purchased by the people of Kosa from the weekly markets of Anda, Utai or Gunderdehi. These country-made shoes used by men are known as *bhadai* and *panhi* and those used by women are known as *aktaria*. *Panhi* is the more common wear in Kosa. *Aktaria* can be said to be a precursor of the modern sandals exhibited in the showrooms of the Bata, Carona and Flex shoe-shops. The cost of a pair of *panhi* is 4 to 5 rupees and the *aktaria* cost about 2 to 3 rupees. The Rawats usually have the *bhadai* shoes. *Bhadai* is made in a different style and in the sole are kept seeds of *sirsa* (*Albizia lebbek*) between two layers of leather. While walking the seeds rubbing against one another and against the leather produce a peculiar sound. The *panhi* and *aktaria* are not only more convenient but more durable and lasting for the village roads and would still work when the soles of even the most durable shoes from the showrooms of renowned shoe-firms would get quickly worn out. Some people use the company made shoes purchased from Durg e.g. Ghanshyam Kurmi uses shoes and his wife uses chappals.

Trends towards Urbanization in Dress

The trend towards urbanization in the dress can best be illustrated by referring to the photographs. One of the agencies of communication in the village is the school at Sirri and the boys and girls shown in the last two photographs of the plate no. XLI are school-going children. The most well-dressed children are the Kurmi boy and girl and the other two photographs are of Satnami children.

This trend in dresses is also noticeable in the two photographs. Butiya and her mother represent the two generations and the change towards which the younger generation is heading. Butiya wears her *lugda* in a different fashion, in a more sophisticated manner and she puts on a tight-sleaved blouse. And the same trend can also be seen in the same generation between Parania and Bhookhin who are almost of the same age-group. Parania, the more comely and quieter of the two, still wears her *lugda* in the 'old style' and she has not felt the necessity of a blouse though she was sent one for from her house by her *kura-sasur* for the specific purpose of getting photographed. And Parania, came as she is seen here; the lady of Chhattisgarh. By her side in the photograph is Bhookhin, the wife of Ledga with whom she had eloped after leaving her husband. Bhookhin represents the trend in which Kosa is developing. She puts on a tight-sleaved blouse and the *lugda* in a more sophisticated manner, and as a closer examination of photograph would show, she puts on a ready-made market purchased petticoat too. Enquiries in Kosa have shown that there are 16 women in Kosa who put on petticoats as under-garments and out of these 13 are Satnamis; two being Kurmis and one Rawat. Out of these 13 Satnami women mention may be made only of the five in whose cases some history could be traced. The case of Bhookhin has already been referred to earlier. Jugan, the wife of Nangaihan has been to Bhilai Steel Project as a labourer and at the time of the last visit the couple had gone again to the Steel Project to work as labourers. When Jugan comes back to Kosa, she puts the *sari* with the petticoat below it and the blouse and so on. Similarly, Mangla and Gabharu go to the Steel Project as labourers and Gabharu's wife and Mangla's wife Bhana put on petticoats and blouse. And with about 6 people from this village gone to Bhilai from where they would come back soon, it appears that the wind of sartorial change in Kosa is coming from the Steel Project. Similarly, 5 other people have gone to towns for earning their livelihood and their wives have accompanied them. When these people come back, they may bring new ideas to Kosa. These people are — Murha (gone 1 year back); Meghoo (2 years back); Kheera (3 years back); Dalal (3 years back) and Halali (5 years back) and they are all Satnamis.

The case of Rewaram Satnami using the turkish towel, (though he uses it as a multi-purpose thing) has already been referred to earlier and now the proverb quoted in the beginning — "What would the washerman do in a Chhattisgarhi village where the people live naked", looks very much a saying of long ago in Kosa.

ORNAMENTS

Ornaments of the Males

In the ears, some men, as Kaskoo Rawat, wears a golden *fulli* — the *kanfulli*, or they may also wear silver *bali*. In the neck the Satnamis and Pankas wear the *kanthi-mala* or the wooden bead necklace which are supposed to be made of basil-wood. Silver amulets (*tabij*) are worn in the neck and *kada* in the wrist. One Kurmi male wears a *kardhan* or the silver waistband. The Rawats wear coloured bead necklace and Kaskoo and Guha, who are *Kabirha* by religion, wear the wooden bead necklace as the Satnamis and Panka.

Ornaments of Children

The boys wear a silver-*bali* in the ear-lobe, silver *kada* in the wrist and an amulet (*tabij*) in the neck. The boys do not wear the bead necklace. They can wear it only after the *guru* gives them the *mantra* (sacred word). Small children, like Kaskoo's son shown in the photograph, wear a necklace of cowrie-shells, coloured beads and beaten lac and in the legs they wear the chain of brass jingle.

Ornaments of the Female

Women are women all the World over and so they are in Kosa. Ornaments are displayed with a sense of vanity and pride. Among the Satnamis and in all the other castes the vermillion-oil paste (*sindoor*) is put in the hair-parting and is a sign of married women. Another sign is the red coloured glass bangles used by them. Among the Kurmis and Rawats, these bangles need not necessarily be red; they can be of any colour except black. *Tikli* of parchment or tin with printed coloured designs on them are pasted in the middle of the fore-head.

Ornaments of the ear are *bali, karanful, tarki* and *khinwa*. These various ornaments are shown in the photograph and diagrams. The *karanful* is a silver ornament in the shape of a small cone and hollow in the inside. It has a chain attached to it which is put around the ear-lobe. *Khinwa* may be of gold or of brass or a cheaper *khinwa* may also be of yellow coloured lac. It has an umbrella like shape and is fixed in the hole of the ear-lobe.

The ornament of the nose is *fulli*. It is put in the nose-bore. Ornaments of the neck are the *rupiya* or the *hamel* and *soota* or *sutiya*. *Hamel* or *rupiya* is a necklace of imitation rupees strung together in black cotton thread. It is an ornament of daily wear. The *soota* is a solid ring of silver worn round the neck. It is usually worn during festive ceremonies and not daily. The ornament of the waist is the *kardhan* and ornaments of the arm are the *nagmori* and *bahunta*. *Nagmori* is the serpentine silver band worn just above the elbow. *Bahunta* may be worn in place of *nagmori* and is a hollow ornament of silver which fits around the arm above the elbow. *Nagmori* is, however, a more common ornament because it is not cumbersome. The *bahunta* may be taken out during festive ceremonies. Ornaments of the wrist are the *pata, kada*, and *harraiya*. The *pata* are the flat writ bands used either by themselves or in association with the *kada*. The *kada* is a solid silver ornament worn round the wrist. *Harraiya* is another hollow ornament worn on the wrist. These ornaments also are shown in the diagram in the absence of a suitable description about them. *Mundri* or the ring is the common ornament worn in the fingers.

Ornaments of the leg are the *toda, paijan*, and *choora*. *Toda* are the anklets made of two pieces joined together with a hinge at one end and joined at the other end with a screw. It is round and hollow in the inside. The *choora* (*pairi*) did not seem to be a popular ornament in Kosa but is found here among Rawats and some Satnami women. It is a characteristic ornament of Chhattisgarh. It is made of bronze and is a heavy ornament. It is a round ornament with three rings projecting out like teeth all around. *Chutki* and *bichhiya* are the ornaments worn in the toes. *Chutki* is just a silver or an alloy ring worn in the toes whereas the *bichhiya* is a more sophisticated ornament and may have a design of fish or a flower made at the top of the ring worn on the toes. It is made of silver.

Girls wear *kada* in the wrists and *rupiya* in the neck. They also have a *fulli* in the nose and *bali* in the ears. *Nagmori* is a sign of married girls and women and unmarried girls and widows can not wear it. In fact the widows are prohibited from wearing any ornament except *kada* in the wrist. The possession of ornaments in different castes and in different income-groups is shown in the statements below:

PLATE XLIII

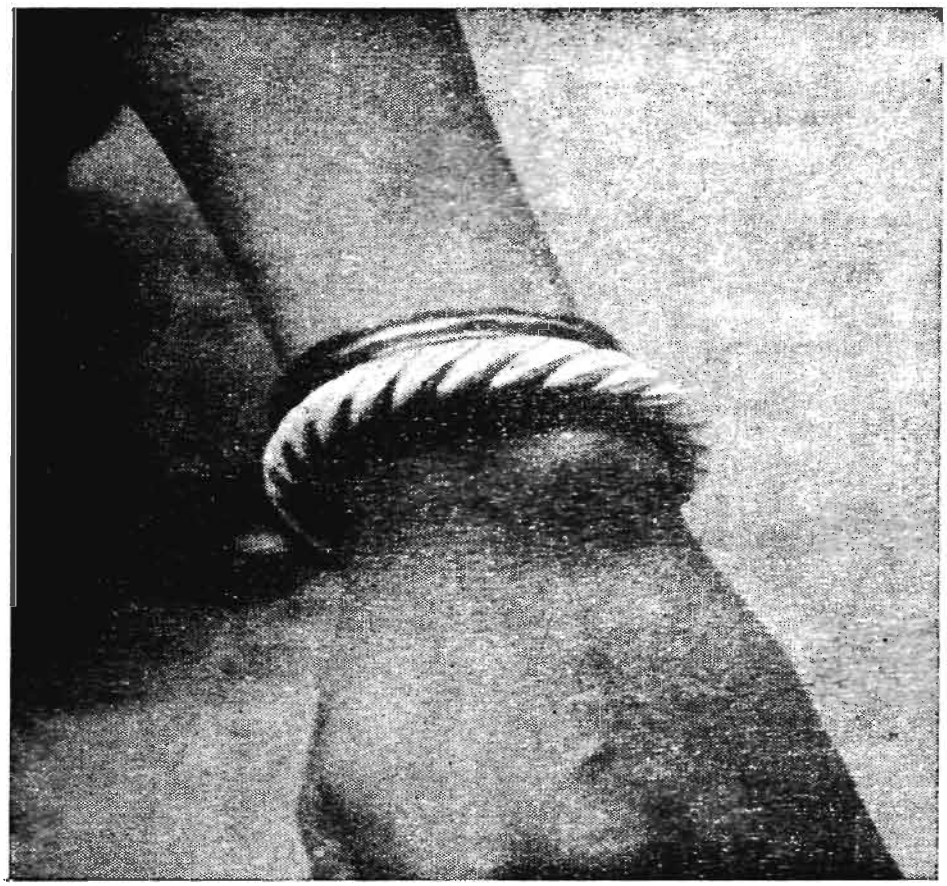


Illustration 56

Ainthi

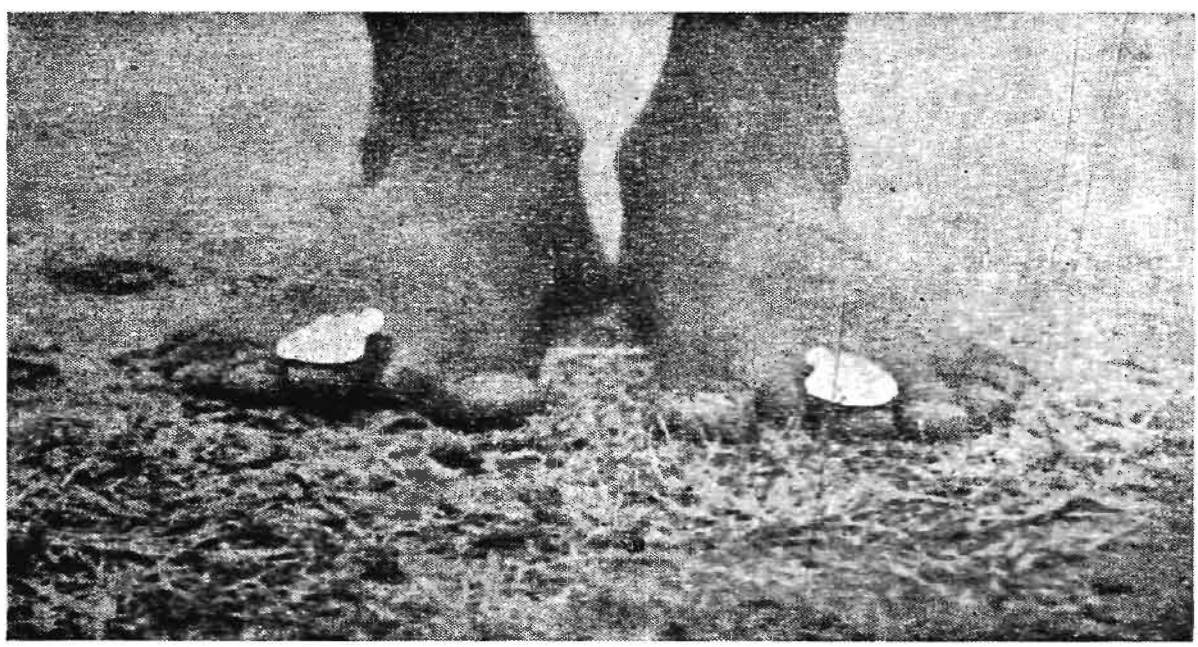


Illustration 57

Bichhiya

PLATE XLIV

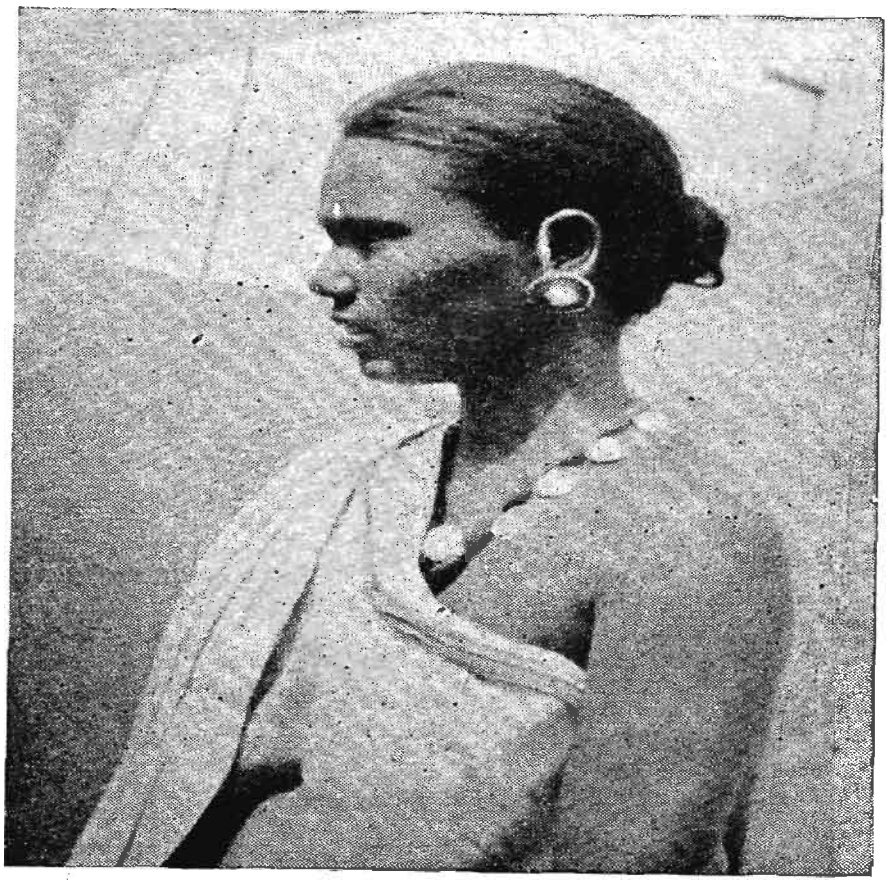


Illustration 58
Tarkil (Ear) and Hamel (Neck)

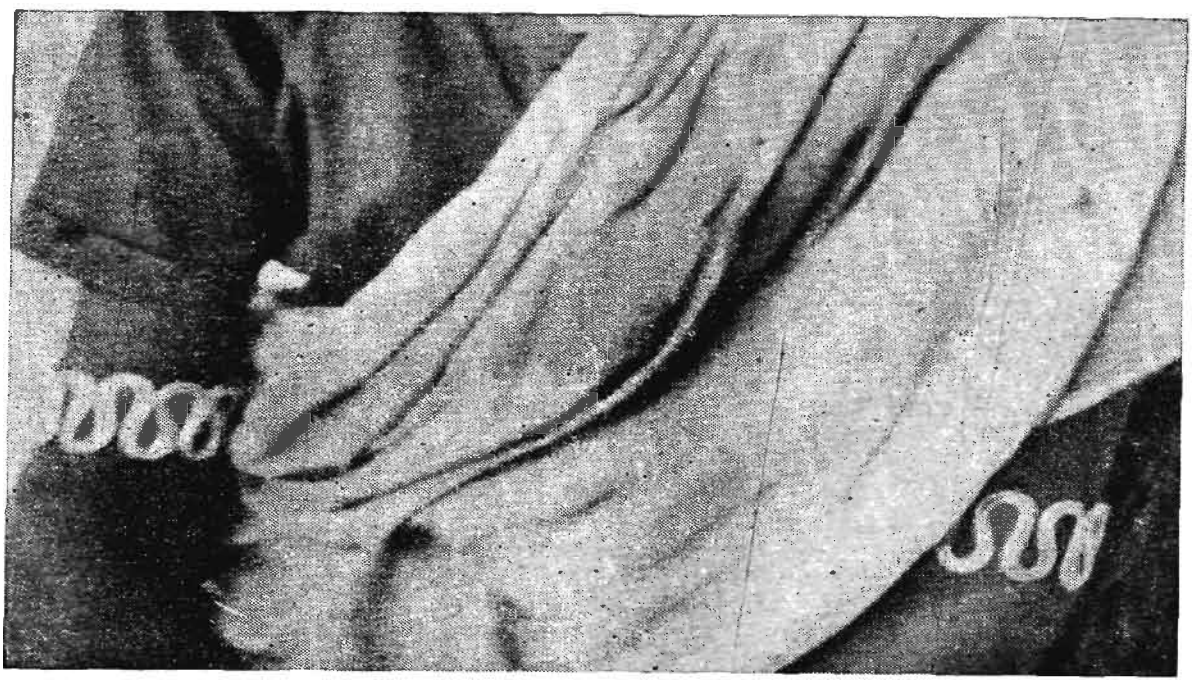


Illustration 59
Nagmori

PLATE XLV

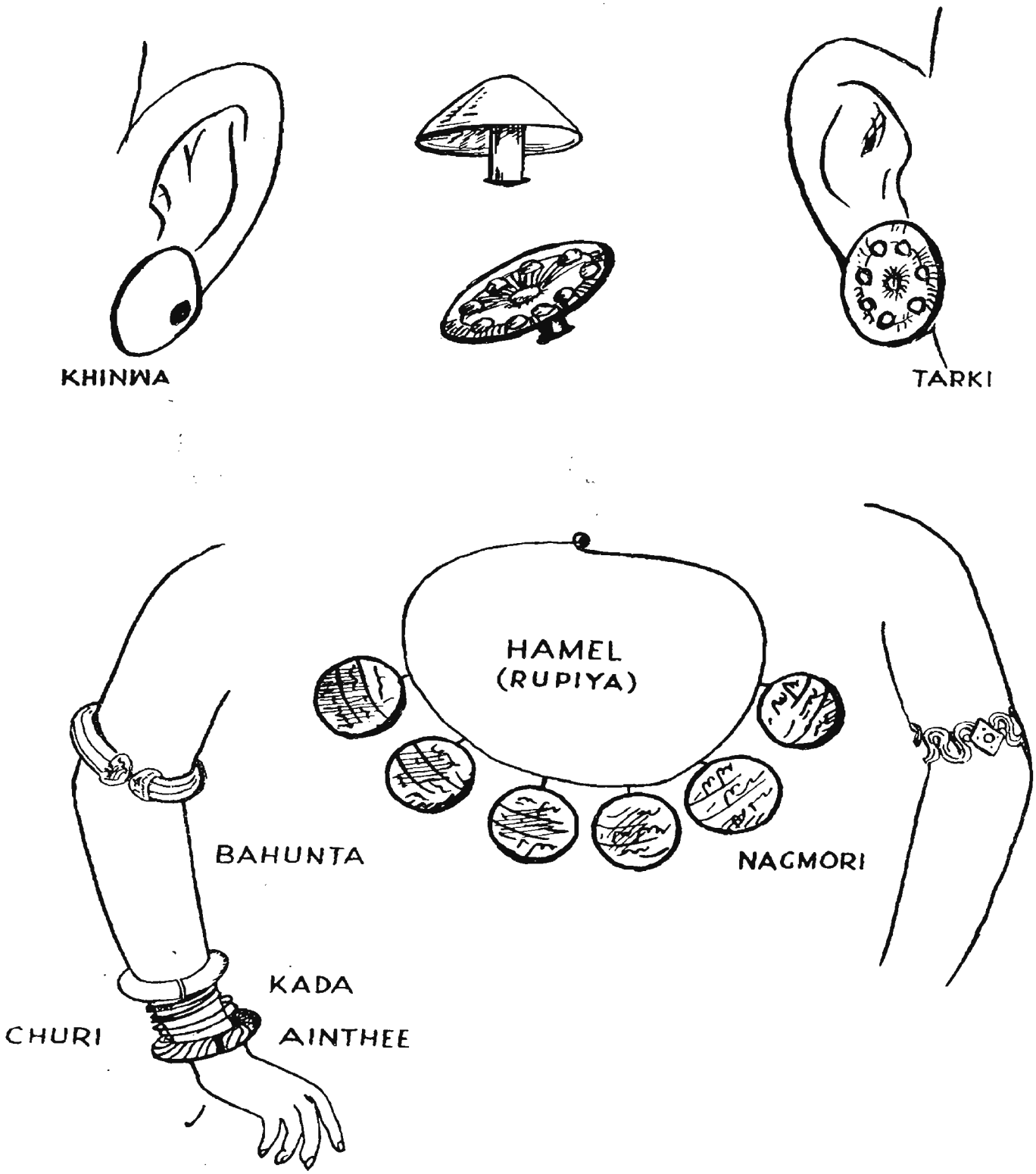


Illustration 60

Ornaments

PLATE XLVI

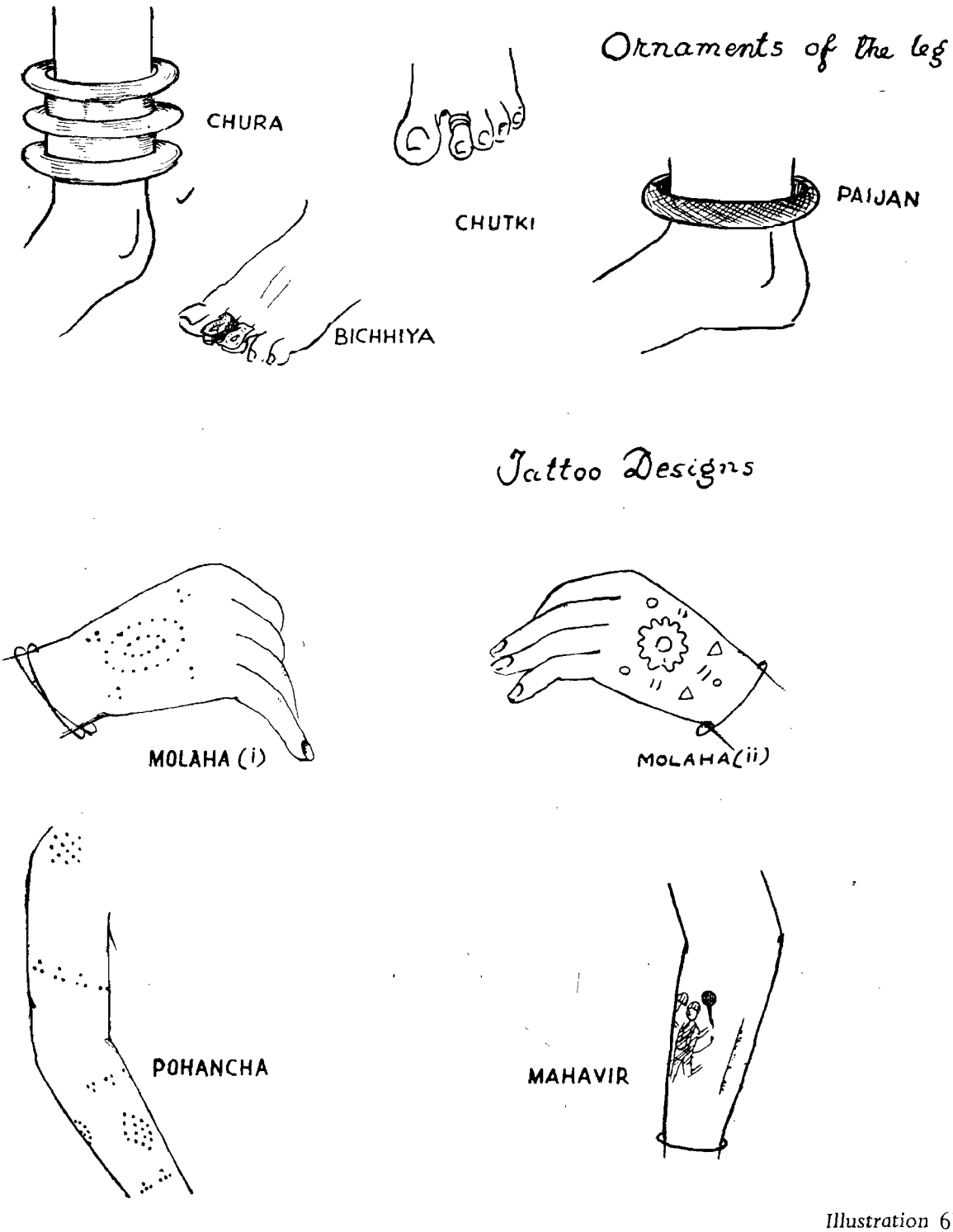


Illustration 61

Ornaments and Tattoo designs

STATEMENT SHOWING CASTEWISE POSSESSION OF ORNAMENTS

Caste	No. of house holds	Number of house-holds		Number of households having ornaments of								Average weight of silver ornaments per house-hold
				Gold				Silver				
		No orna-ments	Orna-ments	No. of hose-holds having orna-ments		Weight of the orna-ments in tola		No. of hose-holds having orna-ments		Weight of the orna-ments in tola		
				M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Satnami	55	12	43	1	4	1	4¾	6	43	94	1415	33
Rawat	5	—	5	1	2	½	2¼	4	5	47	247	49
Kurmi	3	—	3	—	2	—	14	2	3	42	374	125
Panka	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	89	89
Lohar	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Village	65	13	52	2	8	1½	21	12	52	183	2125	—

STATEMENT SHOWING POSSESSION OF ORNAMENTS IN DIFFERENT INCOME-GROUPS

Income group in rupees per month	No. of house-holds	Households possessing no ornaments		household possessing ornaments	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Below 20	4	3	75	1	25
21 to 30	—	—	—	—	—
31 to 40	4	2	50	2	50
41 to 60	17	5	29.4	12	70.6
61 to 80	15	1	6.6	14	93.4
81 to 100	14	2	14.3	12	85.7
101 & above	11	—	—	11	100

It may be stated here that the information shown in the above two tables has been compiled from the returns made by the households during survey, and there does not appear to be any reason to disbelieve the villagers' statement.

The first table shows that for the households possessing ornaments, it is the Satnamis among whom the average weight of silver ornaments possessed (in tolas) is only some 33 tolas. Kurmis, the ex-proprietors have the largest number of ornaments in terms of weight and there the average possession per household is 125. Next below the Kurmi is the Panka, the village watchman. The Rawats who have about 49 tolas silver ornaments per household, possess $4\frac{1}{4}$ tolas of golden ornaments in two families, whereas there is no golden ornament with the Panka.

The second table shows that the difference that exists to-day in Chhattisgarhi villages like Kosa now from the time when Hewitt[36] wrote that: "The influence of wealth has not yet shown itself in rousing that passion for display which is to be observed in many other parts of the country." And Hewitt's estimate that "it is probable that it will be long before it does so." So now that 'long' is long-past and in higher income-groups people have a greater passion for ornaments. In the third table is shown the number of households who possess a certain type of ornament. Here only silver ornaments have been taken into account because the variety of gold-ornaments is limited and these ornaments are mostly *tarki* (ear-tops) and *bali* or *lurki*. The last table would thus show that *soota*, *hamel* and *ainthi* are the commonest ornaments in Kosa. It may be seen from these tables that though the Satnamis possess a larger variety of ornaments the average weight of silver ornaments per household is less than in other castes. This is due to the fact that in the other castes there is a larger proportion of heavier ornaments like *soota* and *kardhan*.

36. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District; J. F. K. Hewitt, 1869, p. 51.

TABLE SHOWING NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS POSSESSING VARIOUS TYPES OF SILVER ORNAMENTS

Caste	Total No. of households	No. of households possessing ornaments	For men and boys				For women and girls, ornaments of the																	
							Ear			Neck			Waist	Arm			Wrist				Leg			Toes	
			Bali (Ear)	Tabij (Neck)	Kada (Wrist)	Kardhan (Waist)	Bali	Khinwa	Tarki	Soota	Hamel	Necklace	Kardhan	Nagmori	Bahunta	Pahuchi	Pata	Kada	Ainthi	Harraiya	Pairi	Choora	Paijan	Chutki	Bichhiya
Satnami	55	43	1	1	5	3	1	—	1	11	23	1	2	2	1	4	1	19	16	10	—	4	1	—	1
Rawat	5	5	1	1	2	1	1	—	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kurmi	3	3	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	2	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Panka	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lohar	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Village	65	52	2	2	7	6	2	—	1	16	24	2	5	2	1	4	6	19	23	10	—	4	1	—	2

PLATE XLVII



Illustration 62

Designs of tattooing on the face of an unmarried girl.



Illustration 63



Illustration 64

Designs of tattooing on the arm and hand of a married woman

PLATE XLIX



Illustration 65

Chintaram's four years old son
cleaning his teeth with a twig

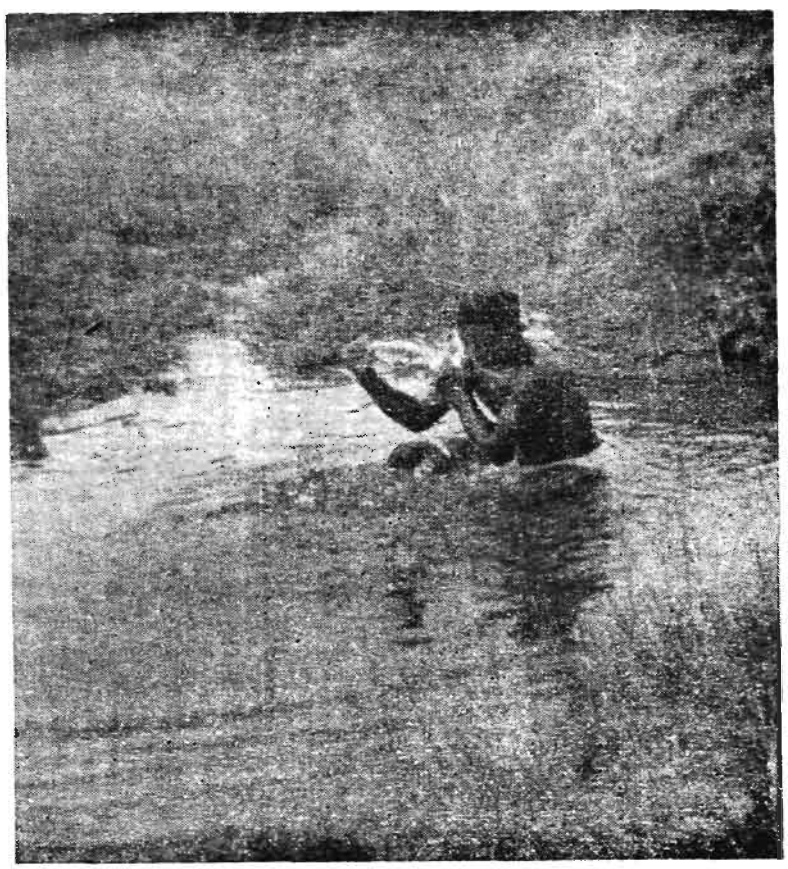


Illustration 66

Chintaram bathing in the stream

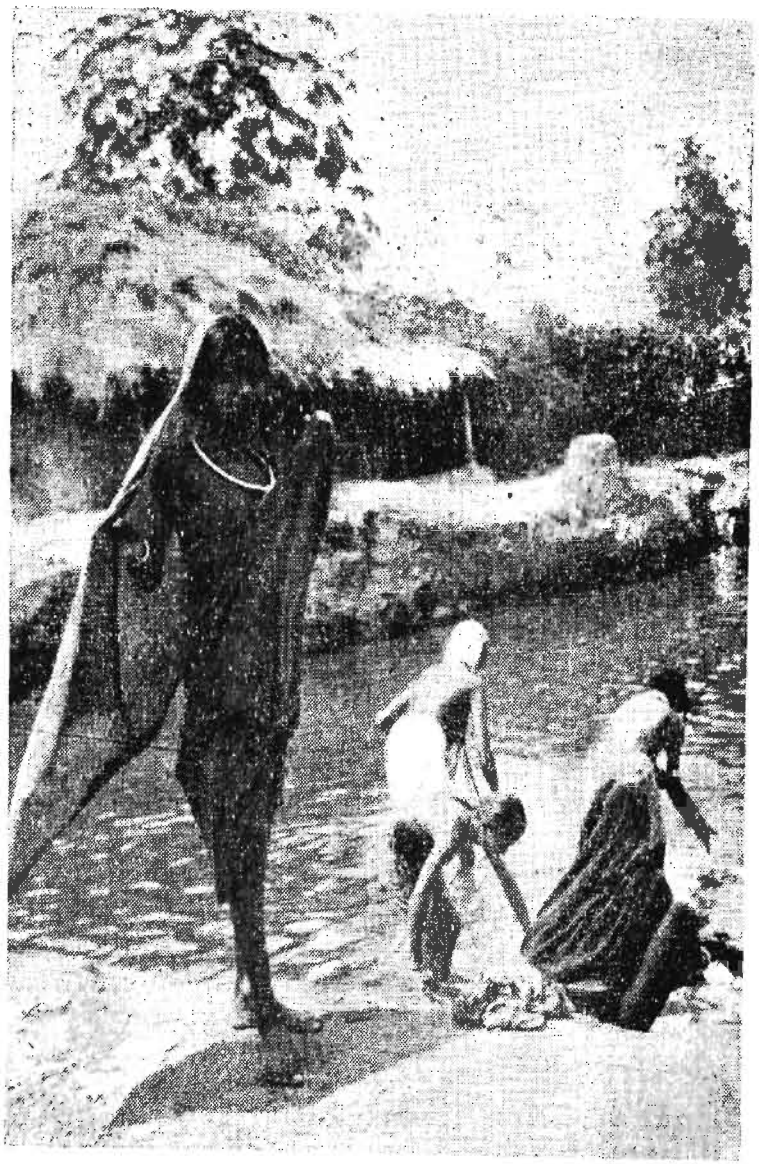


Illustration 67

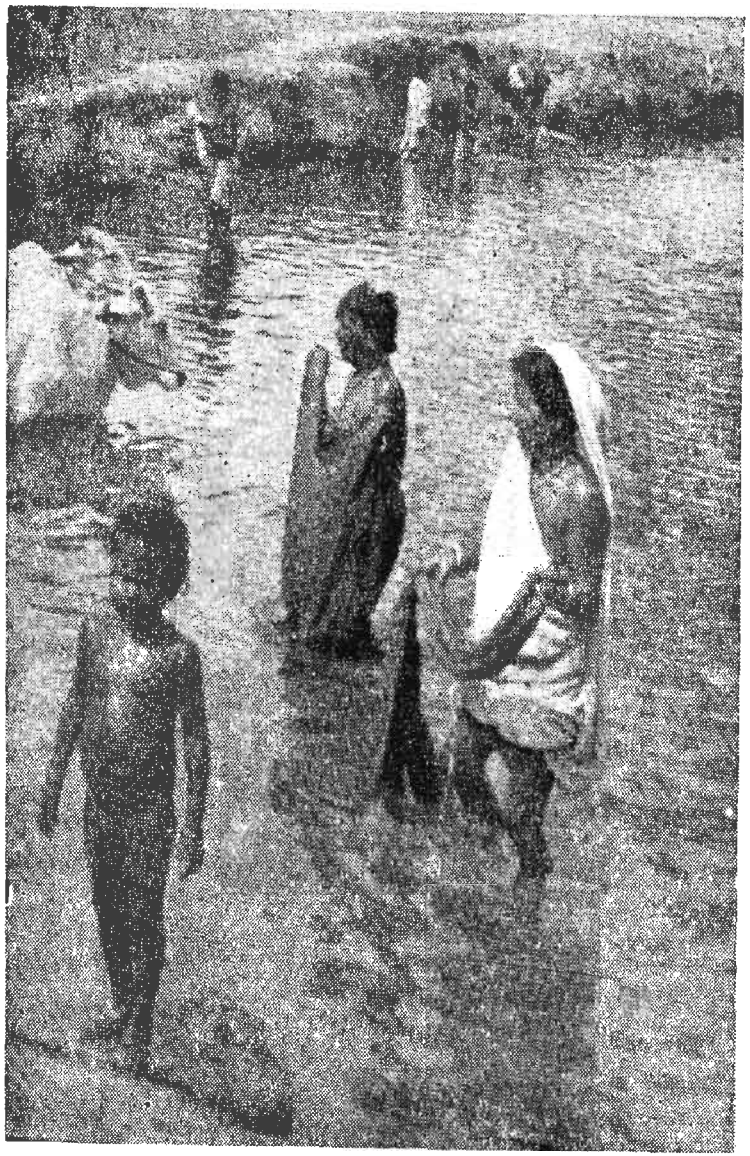


Illustration 68

Bathing in the tank

PLATE LI

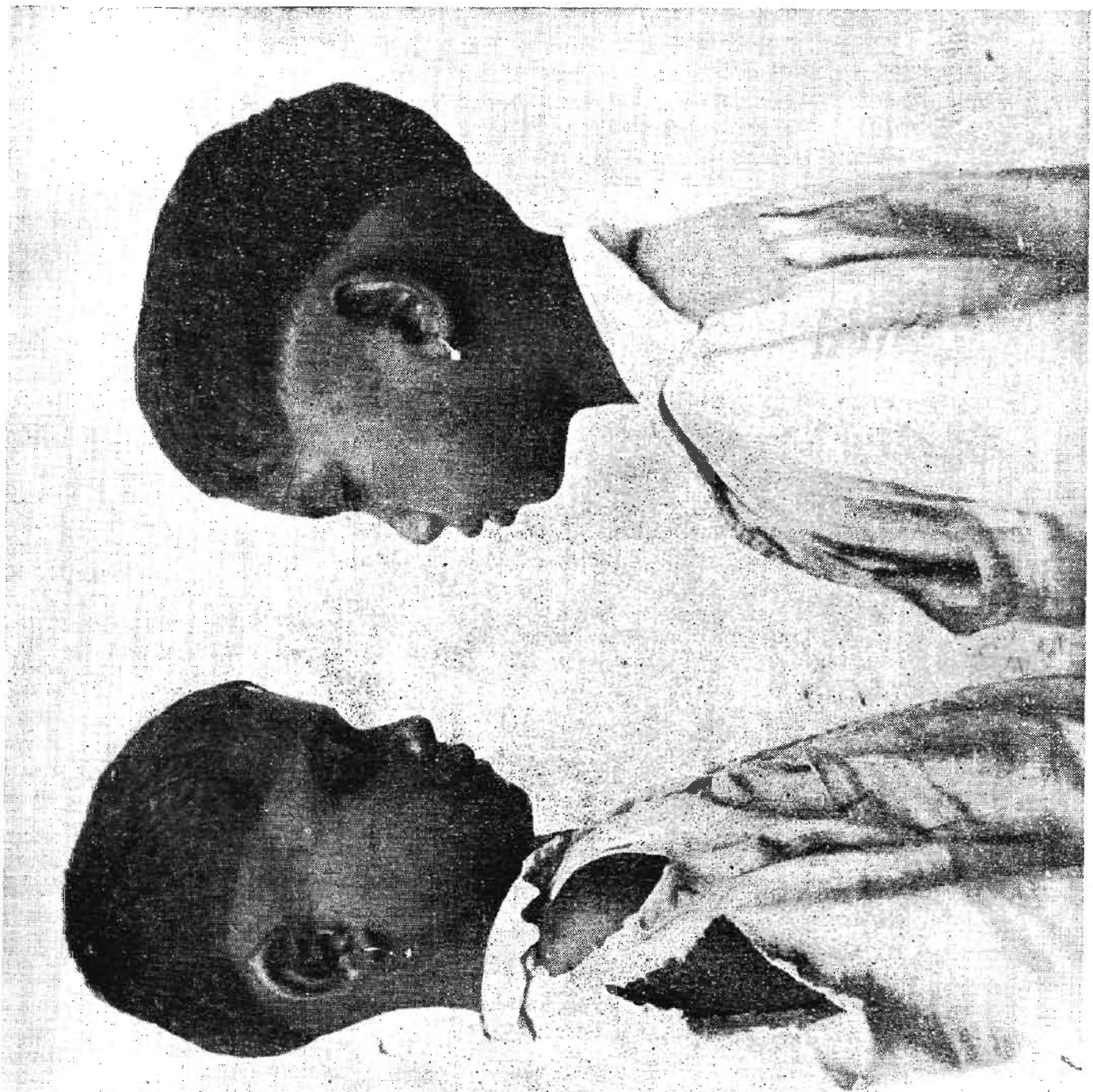


Illustration 69

Hair Style



Illustration 70



Illustration 71

Hair Style

PLATE LIII

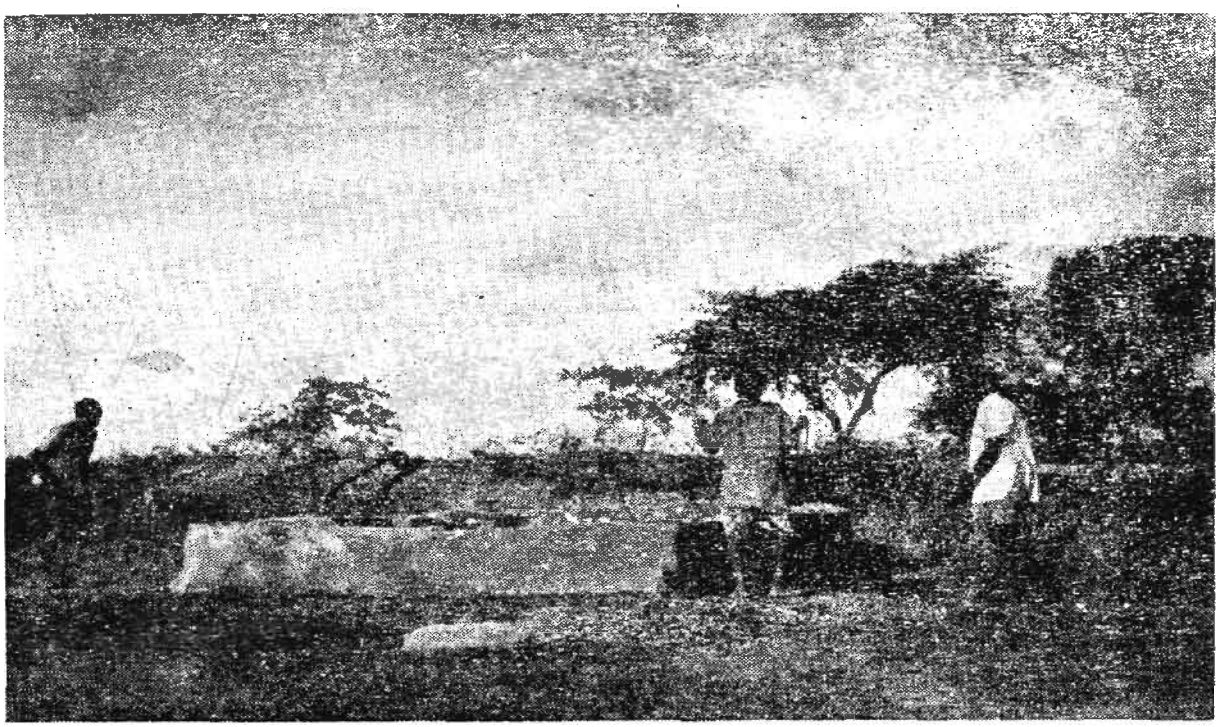


Illustration 72

Well in the Village



Illustration 73

Women bringing water from the stream

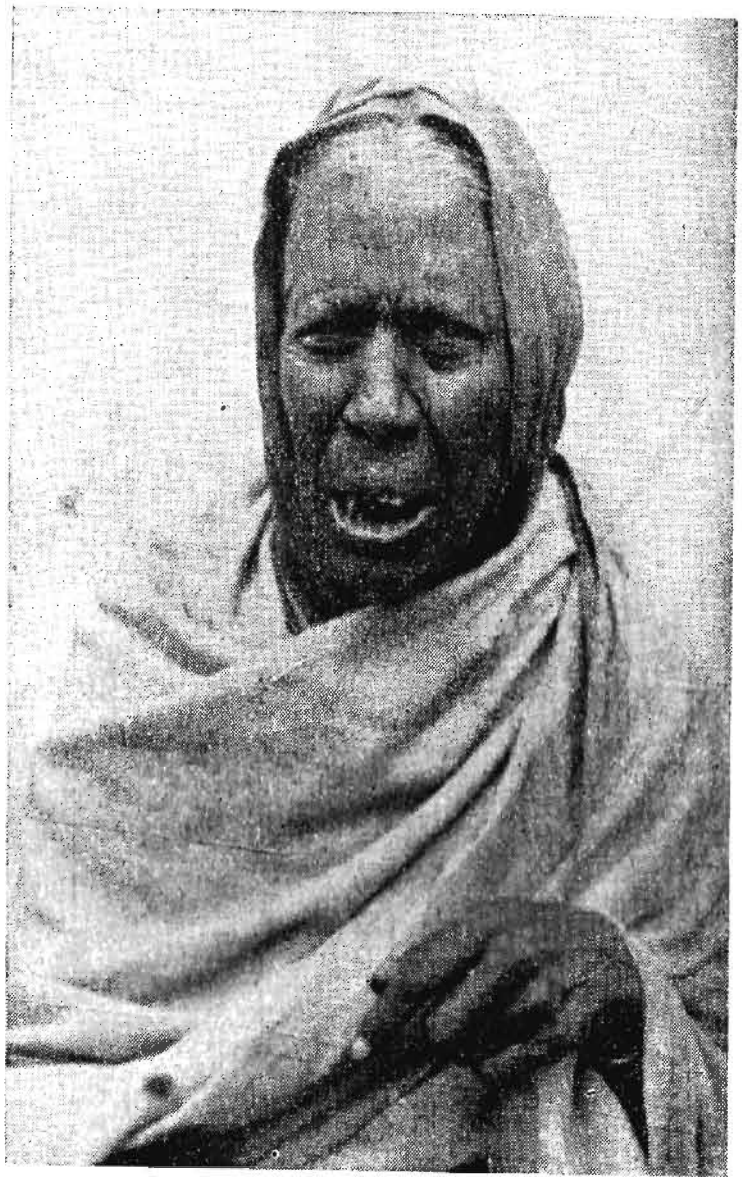


Illustration 74

Dhimrin Satnami — the village quack



Illustration 75

The village mid-wife

Tattooing

Tattooing is a very common feature among the women and girls in Kosa and some men have also got their arms tattooed. Tattooing is got done from professional tattooers of the Dewar caste who visit the village in the winter season. Their women are called *dewarnin* and it is they who tattoo the bodies of the women of Kosa.

The belief about tattooing is that this is the only ornament which goes with the women to the grave and to the 'other-world'. The designs for married and unmarried girls are different. In childhood and before marriage a girl gets tattooed in the face at three places, above the eye, on the left side of nose and on the chin. The tattooing is in the nature of dots only — either one dot or three dots in the form of a triangle. These designs are called *Purouni, Mutki* and *Bhursi* respectively. It is considered a privilege for the grown-up married woman to bear the expenditure of tattooing on an unmarried girl and before getting themselves tattooed on arms and legs, they first get some young girl tattooed and bear that expenditure.

After attaining puberty and after they are married, the girls get themselves tattooed on the shoulders, on the arms, on the wrist and on the legs. These designs have been shown in the diagrammetic sketches. The people do not know the names of these various designs. They say that the *dewarnin* shows these various designs to them from a note-book and then tattooes the design selected by them.

Tattooing is a rather painful operation and the small girls, who, when pricked by the *dewarnin's* needle, begin to cry or complain of pain, become a subject of ridicule and joke-making by other ladies present. Grown-up married girls who have not gone to their husbands even once after attaining puberty and who, on getting tattooed, cry and shout *"Ey dai mar geon"* (O Mother, I am dead) attract a louder peal of laughter from the women collected there and especially from her brother's wife and women with whom she has 'joking relationship'.

Tattooing is entirely and exclusively a womens' affair — men are not present there. It is believed that if a man sees his wife being tattooed, he would get ill, he may even become blind and the absence of men from the place, gives the women more freedom and they pass the time in some revelry. For two days after tattooing, the woman does not do any cooking and she is supposed to be polluted, probably because of her contact with the *dewarnin*.

Enquiries in Kosa have failed to bring out any suggestion of the tattooing being of any magico-religious significance nor is it though that it is taken resort to as a curative or preventive for pain in the body or for rheumatism. The only explanation known to the villagers is that it is an ornamentation of the female body — an ornament which is everlasting, this being the only ornament that goes with them to the grave. "One thing is certain", says Luard "and that is that the wearers of these devices only look upon them as ornamental and decorative devices with no deeper significance".[37]

Trend towards Urbanization

The people in Kosa purchase the ornaments from Durg town but inspite of source of ornaments being a town, the *pata, hamel, soota, nagmori* and *ainthi* are persisting and they have so far not been replaced by more sophisticated ornaments. Replacement by more sophisticated ornaments is seen in respect of the *khinwa* (ear-ornament). This *khinwa,* which has its ancestor in *khunti,* (just a plug which used to be inserted in the big hole in the ear-lobe) has to a large extent been replaced by *tarki* which is not only better craftsmanship, but is also better looking in the ear with a chain going round the whole ear. The ornament of the toes *chutki* is also getting replaced by *bichhiya* with designs of fish or flower over it. The *chutki* can even be of a cheap alloy and it is just a ring but the *bichhiya* being more sophisticated is more costly also. In the ornament of the leg, the *choora* and *pairi* may get replaced by *paijan.* In the village, the *paijan* are seen in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi and Mannu Satnami. This *paijan* is an introduction from the town. Opinions of the villagers on the utility or otherwise of these new ornaments could not be obtained. Some women, like Butiya for example, put on imitation bead necklaces and Bhookin puts on Durg-purchased ear-tops with a floral design.

Personal Hygiene

The people of Kosa bathe daily and take two baths in the summer months. In the tank there are separate bathing places for men and women — but there is no strict segregation and women bathe near about the same place as men. The men, however, avoid as much as possible to go and have a bath where women are bathing. The villagers bathe the cattle in the same tank in which they themselves take bath and the place where the cattle bathe is just adjacent to the human bathing-places. Ghanshyam Kurmi and his family bathe

37. As quoted in 'The Baiga' by Verrier Elwin, 1939, p. 18.

in the house itself and other Kurmis also bathe at the well in the rear of Ghanshyam's house.

The use of soap is not a common feature in Kosa. The women cleanse their hair with a black clay known as *mur-minjni-mati* (hair-cleansing earth) which has some detergent qualities. This *mur-minjni-mati* whatever be its hygenic qualities, cleanses the hair well and leaves them very soft and glossy and not as rough as an ordinary soap would. Sometimes, as after the menstrual period, the women may also cleanse their hair with washing soda. The men also may wash their heads with this clay or use soap but the use of bath-soaps like Lux or Nahan is not yet seen in Kosa. The washing soap is the soap used for bathing also. The people of Kosa purchase soap from the weekly markets of Sirri and Machandur.

While bathing the women rub and clean their body thoroughly and there is no hesitation in cleaning any part of the body simply because the bathing-place is open. The bath is taken as if it is being taken in a closed bath-room. As already stated, the same *lugda* is generally used after bath. In those cases where they have another *lugda*, the clothes may be changed. The men only put on a *lingoti* (strip of cloth) while bathing. A piece of stone or brick is used to clean ankles and soles of foot. The teeth are cleaned with the twig (*datoun*) and even small children, like the one seen in the photograph, clean their teeth thoroughly. This cleaning of teeth is not done in the morning but just before taking bath. The Kurmis, however, clean their teeth in the morning before taking tea or milk.

The barber does not do any service to the Satnamis. Men of other castes — Kurmis, Rawats and Pankas get their hair cut once in about a fortnight or so when the barber visits the village. The Satnamis get their hair cut in the town whenever they happen to go there because there in the town nobody asks for their caste. More commonly, however, they cut one another's hair and they must be given credit for having some proficiency in this. Because they use only a comb and scissors and not the hair-cutting machine, the hair cut is not as well-finished as is done by a professional barber. This is seen from the photographs of some Satnami boys from the village who had their hair cut a day or two before the photographs were taken. Almost all the Satnami men know hair cutting. Kalloo, (the girl Bisahin) also gets her hair cut by the men as other boys do. For shaving, the men use *ustara*, the steel blade which they purchase from the town. The superfluous hair of the arm-pit of the men is also shaved with this *ustara* (country razor). The arms-pits of women are absolutely clean always. The arm-pits are exposed when the women are bringing water-pitchers on their heads and there was no case in which the women were found having the arm-pits unclean. The men said that the women remove the superfluous hair in the following manner. They take some paddy about half a handful and rub them in the arm-pit for some time. Then they extract the hair. Another method employed is to take warm ash and rub it thoroughly in the region and then extract the hair.

The hair is combed with *kakai* (the comb) and women may help one another in combing. They also help one another in cleaning the hair of lice. No girl or woman was observed using any cosmetics and even Bhukin had only oil rubbed on her face. The men keep a *choti* or a tuft of hair at the back of head. Kaskoo Rawat has a big *choti*.

The bath is usually taken at about 10-11 A.M., and bathing is not considered necessary before cooking except in the houses of Kurmis. In other castes, the women may cook their food before bath. But more commonly in the non-agricultural season, they take their bath before cooking. The men bathe on return from the fields and in non-agricultural seasons, bathe near about the same time as the women do.

A bath or changing clothes is not considered necessary after defecation but as it is usually done before bath, this automatically takes place. If, however, defecation is done after bath, the clothes are not changed. The term for defecation in Kosa is *Khet koti jana* (going towards the fields) and the person may say *Khet koti jawat hon* (i.e. I am going towards the fields).

Though the houses are kept very neat and clean and swept every day by the women members of the household, the men after smoking *bidi* or while coughing, do not hesitate in spitting anywhere in the house. Shobharam Satnami was met in his house where sitting in his verandah he was talking and smoking a *bidi*. Time and again he went on spitting in a corner of the verandah which only some time before had been swept by a woman of his house. After meals, the hands are washed in the *batki* or *thali* itself or in the court-yard; there is no drain in the houses. The utensils are cleaned in a portion of the court-yard with earth and cow-dung ash.

Foods and Drinks

In the description of the Satnami sect, Russell and Hiralal have stated[38] . "He (i.e. Ghasidas) prohibited the

38. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces; Vol. I, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916.

use of meat, lentils (on account of their red colour suggesting blood) of the brinjal or egg-plant, which was considered, probably on account of its shape, to resemble flesh, and of intoxicating liquors." They state further[39]: "The seven precepts of Ghasidas included abstinance from liquor, meat and certain red vegetables, such as lentil, chillies and tomatoes, because they have the colour of blood,..... The use of *taroi* is said to have been forbidden on account of its fancied resemblance to the horn of the buffalo, and of the brinjal from its likeness to the scrotum of the same animal."

Enquiries in Kosa show that the Satnamis here do not observe any prohibition in the use of chillies, brinjal. tomatoes or *taroi* and they do not even know if there was ever any prohibition in this regard. They say that they do not take non-vegetarian food but as Mannu and others admitted, people of their caste do take fish and meat stealthily; in their own words — *Jekar ihan chale aye he, wo to khatech hohi* (people may be taking these if that is so in their families). They of course did not name any Satnami family in Kosa where meat and fish are eaten but from the demeanour it appeared that they were not ruling out the possibility.

The Pankas being the followers of *Kabirpanth* are strict vegetarians and do not even touch non-vegetarian food. Among the Kurmis, two of the households are non-vegetarians but Ghanshyam Kurmi is a vegetarian. The Loharin widow likes to have non-vegetarian food but she cannot afford to purchase any. She therefore keeps on patiently waiting for the day when the *baiga* gives a sacrifice to the Thakur Deo and she gets her share of the *Prasad.*

It is indeed curious why vegetables should be regarded as a delicacy and item of luxury in Chhattisgarh. Whenever and wherever two women meet their talk will invariably start with the question on the kind of vegetable they have cooked or eaten. When women in Kosa meet on the tank-bank or after 'lunch' the talk starts with "*Ka sag randhe has*" or "*ka sag khaye has*" (what vegetable have you cooked or what vegetable have you eaten) as the case may be, and the other woman replies: "*Dar to baneyen hon*" (I had cooked pulses) or "*noon mircha ke chatni to ay*" (It is just a chutney of chillies-salt) or again it may be: "*Chench bhaji to baneyon*" (I had prepared the *chench* vegetable) and then the talk would be on the place from where she got it and the cost of it and so on. This "*Ka sag khaye ho*" is some thing like the 'How do you do' of English. As the people do not grow sufficient vegetables, most of the days of the week an average family of Kosa does not have vegetables in its diet.

The method of cooking vegetables in Kosa is different from that followed by people in the towns. The present writer has experience of other villages in Chhattisgarh and also in some of the tribal villages of this area and in those villages also the vegetable and non-vegetable curries were prepared in the same way as has been observed in this village. In the Kurmi households, of course, the preparation approximates more to the sophisticated way but there again it is not always that it is followed. During festivities, the common method may change but in day to day life, the way in which vegetable and other curries are prepared in Kosa is as below.

The vegetable is first boiled in water and salt and chillies are put in it. When the water evaporates, a little quantity of oil is heated in the *kalounji* and garlic or onion may or may not be put in it. When the oil is heated to the desired extent, the vegetable boiled in water is put into the *kalounji*, stirred with the laddle and taken out.

This method requires much less oil than the more sophisticated method in which spices like coriander powder, turmeric and chillies are first fried in oil and then vegetable is also fried in it before some water is put to serve as gravy.

In Kosa, people have 3 meals a day — in the morning, in the noon and at about 7 or 8 P.M. in the night. In the morning, the *basi* is eaten, in the noon *pej* is eaten with vegetable or pulse and in the night, cooked rice-*bhat*. These three items of food eaten at three different times are also an indicator of time in Kosa apart from the position of the sun in the sky e.g. asking somebody to come in the morning, it is said: *Basi kha ke aa jabe* (come after eating *basi*) or similarly telling a person that he would go by 1 P.M. or so, it is said: *Pej khaye ke bera me chal debe.* The *basi, pej* and *bhat* are described here.

Basi is a common food-item of Chhattisgarh and a pecularity of the region as well. The meaning of the term *basi* in Hindi is — 'left overnight' and that is exactly what is done to prepare the *basi*. In the evening, when *bhat* is cooked, much more is cooked than is required for one meal of the members of the household; it is prepared in almost double the quantity. Now, after all have taken the evening meal, the excess cooked rice (*Bhat*) is put in an earthen pot and water is put into it so as to cover the rice by about 4 to 6 inches. This is left for the night and then in the morning after people have washed their mouth, they take some of

39. Ibid.

this soaked *bhat* and the water in the *batki* and eat the rice with salt or salt-chillies *chutney* and then drink the water in which the rice was soaked. They do not need tea and do not need any other breakfast. This *basi* is supposed to be a substantial food and, as is believed in Kosa, a food which keeps the system cool and healthy.

For *basi* the women go to the stream in the west of the village and bring water from there. This water is also used for drinking. There is one public well in Kosa which has been repaired with aid from the Gunderdehi Development Block, but the people do not drink water from this well. Water for cattle and for washing utensils is, however, got from this well but the drinking water is got from the stream only. Asked as to why they send the women to this long distance for fetching water, when there is a well in the village itself, the Satnamis first stated that the village well gets dried up in summer. But then faced with the question that after all for four months the well could be used as a source of drinking water, Mannu Satnami said: *"Narwa ke pani ma basi mithat he. Kua ke pani ma nichchat sittaha basi banthe"*. (In the water brought from the stream, the *basi* is tasty; it is tasteless when soaked in the water from the well). The women also do not grudge going to the stream, because they complete two or three duties in the visit. The fields nearby serve as the lavatory grounds; they have their bath in the stream and bring water for drinking in which *basi* tastes better.

Pej is the common persons' luch in Kosa. It is actually a rice-gruel, the rice cooked in the ordinary way but a little more water is put in the rice than is done for *bhat*. After rice is well cooked, it is like gurel — a mixture of rice-water. *Pej* is eaten hot and is also given to convalescent people. After child-birth, a woman is not allowed to eat *basi*, the nature of which is supposed to be cold; she is given *pej*. The *pej* may be eaten with pulse or vegetable curry and the poorer sections, not able to have vegetables every day eat it with an apology for a chutney which is prepared by grinding together red chillies and salt. The *bhat* is prepared in the manner common all over India.

A characteristic vegetable of Chhattisgarh is *kheda*. It appears to be restricted only to this region because it is not seen in other districts. It grows up to a little more than 3 feet in height and the thickness of the stem may be up to that of the thumb of the hand. A full grown *kheda* plant stem becomes yellowish in colour. The people of Kosa do not grow *kheda* but purchase it from the markets. Both the leaf and the stem, of this plant are eaten as vegetable, the leaves are known as *kheda-bhaji* and the stem as simply *kheda*. The *bhaji* is prepared in the manner described in the preceding pages and the stem may be prepared in more than one way.

The stem is cut into two inch long bits cooked in the vegetable way, the stem-bits being eaten in the same manner as drumsticks. In another preparation, a little curd may be put or again in the *kheda* curry may be put a solution of gram-flour, and the whole thing cooked further. The *kheda* prepared in whatever manner remains a speciality of Chhattisgarh and it is said of them *Mathura ke peda ou Chhattisgarh ke kheda*. i. e. Mathura of Uttar Pradesh is known for its sweet (*peda*) and Chhattisgarh is famous for *kheda* or the rendering may also be — the *peda* — sweet of Mathura is very tasty and unequalled; the *kheda* of Chhattisgarh does not have a parallel. The people of Kosa also know of this couplet and they like the *kheda* and its *bhaji*.

Days after days the routine of *basi, pej, bhat* goes on in majority of the households of Kosa, the only exception being the Kurmi households. Some people may eat the rice-flour *roti* but wheat-flour is used very rarely. The people said that wheat does not suit them and causes indigestion.

Festivities bring about a break in the monotony of food and the children and grown-ups alike eagerly look forward for festivals because apart from everything else the food would be special — and not the *pej* and *bhat*. The *basi* of course is eaten in the morning even on the festive days and *bhat* is prepared in the day in place of *pej* and served with other items of food prepared for the celebration. The common preparations prepared on festivities and festival days are *sunhari, bara, ladoo, thethri, khurmi, phenee, khir, dahrouri, arsa, tasmai, kusli, khaja, pediya*. These delicious dishes are prepared in the following manner.

Sunhari is the Chhattisgarhi word for the Hindi — *poori* or *luchi*. It is a thin cake of flour fried in groundnut or *til* oil. Both wheat and rice flour are used to prepare *sunhari*. *Bara* is another common item of festival food. *Urid* pulse is soaked in water the night before, ground to paste in the morning and small cakes of it are fried in oil. The *bara* are also soaked in butter-milk and curd. *Ladoo* is made of rice or wheat flour, slightly roasted and then mixed with *gur* or sugar to taste. *Ladoo* may also be made of gram or *tiwra* flour first made into dough, passed through a sieve and then fried. This is then mixed with a syrup made of *gur* and made into balls. *Thethri* is prepared out of gram-flour, made into a dough and mixed with

salt and chillies. The dough is then made into thin bits as thick as the little-finger and pieces of it about an inch or two long are cut, given a little twist and fried in oil. *Thethri* may also be prepared of wheat flour. *Kurmi* is prepared out of wheat flour and sweetened with *gur*. Little rectangular pieces (an inch or two long), are cut and fried in oil.

Khir is rice cooked in milk and sweetened with sugar or *gur*. *Dahrouri* is prepared of rice flour. The flour is made into dough and small cakes of it are fried in oil. The cakes are then soaked in a syrup of *gur* for sweetening. *Kusli* are the same thing known as *gujhiya* in the northern districts of the State and in Uttar Pradesh. Because of scarcity of milk and milk-products *khowa* (solidified milk), sweetened flour is put in between a layer a flour-dough pieces and this is then fried. *Arsa* is the name for the sweet *anarsa* prepared in Uttar Pradesh and by people in town. It is made out of rice flour.

Some other items of food in Kosa are *phara, muthiya, boir-muthiya* and *angakar* or *angara*. *Phara* and *muthiya* are prepared in the same manner, they differ only in shape. *Phara* is rolled with hand so that it is long and circular; the *muthiya* is pressed in the closed palm so that it has the impressions of the fingers on it and is irregular in thickness. The *phara* and *muthiya* are prepared in the manner described in the following. Flour is prepared into a dough by mixing water with it and then little portions of it are well-pressed and rolled as the case may be. Water is boiled in a container and the rolled and pressed piece of dough is put into boiling water and allowed to remain in the water on fire. It is cooked by the heat of water and may be eaten with pulse.

Boir-muthiya is a preparation from *ber* fruit, known in the Chhattisgarhi dialect as *bori* (*Zizyphus jujuba*). The *ber* fruits are dried and then the seed is removed, the dried pulp is reduced into powder and salt and chilli powder is mixed with it. The powder is soaked in water and allowed to remain for some time for letting the water evaporate. When the mass attains a suitable consitency, it is taken in the palm and pressed, placed on a *soopa* and left in the sun for drying. After the pieces become dry and hard, they are stored to be taken out and eaten later while working in the field or going on foot to Durg.

Angara-roti or *angakar* is dough cooked straight in fire. Fire of cow-dung cake is lit and in it is placed the thick dough wrapped up in the leaf of castor (*Ricinus communis*) plant. It is again covered with a layer of burning cow-dung cakes from which the smoke is gone. The dough is thus baked fully between two layers of cow-dung cake fire and is protected from the ash by the covering of leaf. *Angara-roti* is, however, not a delicious dish but is prepared off and on in the households. Another preparation *popehi* is a circular and thick piece of wheat flour dough baked in fire and soaked in a syrup of gur.

Thus the food taken by the people of Kosa would show that in their diet, it is the starchy food that predominates and there is very little protein in it. The only protein available is in the form of pulses which they take in a very little quantity. The quantity of vegetable consumed per individual is also very poor and as told by them, the Satnamis and the Pankas, being vegetarians do not partake of meat, fish or eggs and other non-vegetarian food from which they could have got some protein.

Drinks

Taking tea is not a popular habit in the village. Tea is taken regularly in the households of the Kurmis and one or two Satnamis (Chintaram and Shobharam). In other houses, it is taken only when somebody is ill. Since the cows and she-buffalos do not yield enough milk the villagers do not take milk also and whatever milk is available is given to the children. Kosa, being in the Durg district, is a 'dry' place and the people do not take liquor or any other alcoholic beverage.

In spite of non-protein and poor vitamin diet, the health of the people is good in general. But then advanced age and vagaries of Nature affect them also and when they fall sick they rely upon the treatment of their own 'doctor' in whose prescriptions they have full faith.

The People of Kosa in Sickness and Disease

The villagers rarely go to an allopathic or ayurvedic dispensary for treatment and depend on their own indigenous medicines and herbs for curing ordinary ailments. For delivery there is a *suin* (mid-wife) in the village. She belongs to the Satnami caste and is quite efficient in her work. She has learnt her job by experience and it is on her that the people of Kosa depend during child-birth in the family. No delivery case has so far been taken to a hospital.

For diseases, there is an old Satnami woman in Kosa who is called *Baidin* (from *Vaidya*). She is quite advanced in age now and has become almost blind but is said by the villagers to be an efficient *Baidin*. She feels the pulse of the sick person and prescribes the treatment. Then, there is Shobharam Satnami who is also believed to be an expert in diagnosing the disease by the feel of

pulse. The prescriptions for some of the common ailments are:—

Cold and Cough

Sonth (dry ginger), *gur* and *peeper* are ground together and taken.

Hurt and Wound

(1) The ash of burnt cloth;
(2) The leaf of *gwali* tree is put over the wound;
(3) Tobacco and lime mixed together into a paste and put over the wound;
(4) Kerosene oil is put over bleeding wound;
(5) Dry cow-dung (*Kharsi*) made into powder;
(6) Roasted rice ground into powder applied to the wound and bandaged over;
(7) Turmeric and *harra* fruit ground to powder and applied to the wound;
(8) If the wound has become septic, *alsi* oil is applied to it.

Malaria

Known as *Jada jar* is treated in the following manner by Shobharam:—

(1) Root of *kathi* plant, root of *bhatkatiya* (*Solanum xanthocarpum*) and root of *gurud* creeper are ground and an extract taken out by pressing the paste is boiled with water and given to patient.
(2) *Neem* leaves are tied in a piece of cloth and hammered to break the leaves. The packet is then put in boiling water and allowed to remain for some time. The water is boiled till only remains half of the original quantity. The extract so prepared is given to the patient.

Baidin's preparation is as below:—

(i) A mixture of pepper, sugar and *jeera* is eaten;
(ii) Root of *neem* tree and *kirayat* is boiled with water and the extract so prepared is given to the patient.

Pneumonia

(i) Branding with red-hot end of the iron-sickle in the stomach;
(ii) Giving ginger-juice to drink;
(iii) A little musk is given.

Intermittent fever (known as *Tijra*)

The stem of *gurud* or *guruch* is put in boiling *ghee* and given.

Ordinary fever

Tea, fomentation;

Measles

Nothing, Diet is sago and *tikhur*. Same is the treatment for small-pox. In both of these diseases prayers are made at the Mata's place on the tank-bank and the patient is fanned with branches of *neem* tree.

Stomatch ache

The seeds of *bajir* are ground with *gur* and eaten.

Dysentry and loose motions

A solution of white clay in water is given to drink, curd, tender leaves of *babul* tree (*Acecia arabica*), pulp of *bel* fruit; juice of onion and a little of opium with it; *Ark-podina* purchased form the market.

Gastic disorder

Fomentation of stomach with a packet of salt warmed over fire. A mixture of *harra*, *baheda* and *aonla* fruits mixed with *gur*.

Cholera

Ainthi-moori, *makad-tendu*, *ganja*, opium, are given. During the gram crop in the field, there is a coating over the crop which is fanned and collected. As soon as cholera is diagnosed, this is mixed with water and given to drink. Smelling napthalene balls, juice of onion is given to drink.

Eye trouble

Juice of *munga* leaves (drumstick plant). If there are gromles in the eye, *fitkiri* (alum) is put in the eyes. Seeds of *chhini* are powdered and put in the eyes.

Eczema and skin troubles

Leaf of *karonj* tree over which a coating of oil extracted from the fruit of the same plant is put and pasted over the affected part. Lemon juice (if lemon is available) is given for drinking in water.

But, these treatments apart, the fear always looms large in the minds of the people that the trouble may be due to some witch and as such enquiries are made from the patient if he or she had encountered a witch or talked with the witch or whether any of the witches had passed some remarks on him or her. Once the suspicion arises that it is a case of witch-craft, the entire village collects together and instead of treating the patient, they call the concerned person, reputed to be a witch and ask her to make the patient well. The diseases of cholera and small-pox are invariably taken to be due to misdeeds of the witches and they are first taken to task. Apart from prayers to various deities, the *baiga* from village Tamora is called for *Jhad-phoonk* and the people of Kosa also who are supposed to be experts in removing the affliction of 'evil eye' are called to use their 'powers'.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND PHASES OF LIFE

The family

As the table given in Chapter II shows, the majority of the families in the village are those having upto six members. Families having seven members and above are only 23% and the remaining 77% of the families are of small to medium size.

A study of the structure of various families shows that joint families i.e. husband and wife living with married sons, married brothers living together and one of the parents living with married sons are quite common. Different type of families are shown in the table below:—

S. No.	Family type	Satnami	Rawat	Kurmi	Panka	Lohar
1	Husband and wife without issue	11	—	—	—	—
2	Husband and wife with unmarried issue or issues (including married daughters below 10 years of age)	14	1	2	1	—
3	Husband and wife living with married son or sons	15	—	1	—	—
4	Married brothers living together	2	—	—	—	—
5	Father living with married son or sons and their issues	2	—	—	—	—
6	Mother living with married sons or sons and their issues	6	4	—	—	—
7	Husband and wife living with grand-children	1	—	—	—	—
8	Widow living alone		—	—	—	1
9	Man living alone because of desertion by wife	3	—	—	—	—
10	Mother-in-law/ Father-in-law living with Son-in-law	1	—	—	—	—
	Total	55	5	3	1	1

It may be seen from the above table that the families of the 3rd and 4th type are the same i. e. married brothers living together. In the first case the brothers live with parents and in the other without parents. In the 5th and 6th type one of the parents is found living with his/her married sons. The 10th type of family i.e. father-in-law and/or mother-in-law living with the son-in-law is rare.

According to the people, the family types have always remained the same. Sometimes, of course, the families break up after the death of the father or even during his life-time as has happened in the following cases.

Hagru and Punoo Satnamis are brothers. They separated after the death of their father. The relations between the brothers are quite cordial. Mannu, Bharosa, Sheocharan and Fudkoo Satnamis, who are real brothers, separated after their father died. All of them got 4 acres of land each and the relations among them are cordial. There are similar other cases also.

Head of the family

Normally the eldest male member in the family is the head of the family. But in some cases e.g. in the household of Chintaram, his father has vested the powers and rights of the head of the household in Chintaram. Though Chintaram is regarded as the head, he consults his father in all matters concerning the family. The families in the village are known after the name of the head of the household e.g. *Feroo ke ghar, Munnu ke ghar* or *Tetkoo ke ghar* and so on. The head of the family is referred to as *Siyan* if he is old, but if, as in the house of Chintaram Satnami, there is another old male member the head is simply referred to as *Mukhiya;* this latter term is however not popular.

It has been observed that the wishes of the head of the household are respected and he on his side does not interfere in the affairs of his son and daugher-in-law. There has been no case so far in the village where the son has broken away from his father because he and his wife wanted to live a more 'modern' way of life.

Inheritance

The elder son gets a bigger share in the property by virtue of his being the eldest. The extra share due to the eldest son is known as *Jethasi.* It is however not compulsory for the family to give the *Jethasi* to the eldest son. If after the death of father, the brothers

separate, the property is divided with the *Jethasi* (if agreed upon) to the eldest son and a share to the widowed mother. The mother may either live separately or with one of the sons.

This system of inheritance in giving a little more share to the eldest son is quite in keeping with the laws laid down by Manu. In the ninth chapter of his treatise, Manu[1] lays down that when the father's property is to be divided amongst the sons, the eldest son should get the twentieth part, the middle son should get the fortieth part and the youngest son the eightieth part of the property and the rest of the property should then be divided equally amongst them.

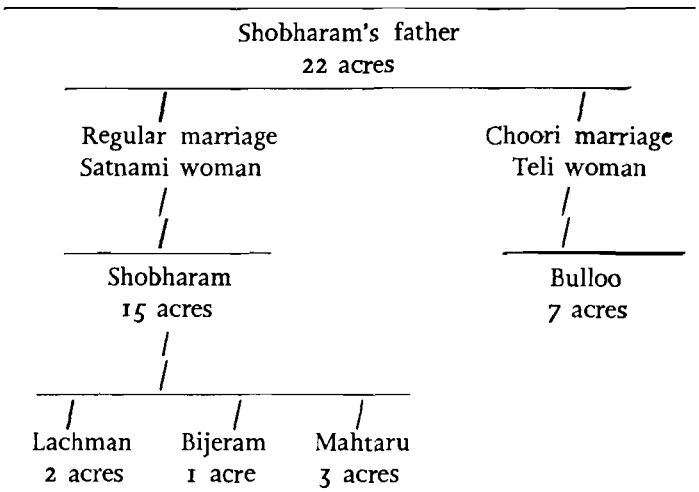
The following cases would show the eldest or the elder brother receiving the *Jethasi*:—

1	Hagru Satnami	—	10 acres	—	Elder brother
	Poonu Satnami	—	9 acres	—	Younger brother
2	Pusau Satnami	—	5 acres	—	Eldest brother
	Bisahat Satnami	—	4½ acres	—	Middle brother
	Bisahu Satnami	—	4½ acres	—	Youngest brother

But there are other cases also where *Jethasi* has not been given and the brothers agreed to take equal shares e.g. Feru, Bisal, Kushal, and Tetkoo who are real brothers have all got 1 acre of land each after the death of their father. Similarly Mannu, Bharosa, Sheocharan and Fudkoo have got 4 acres each and no *Jethasi* was given to the eldest. There are many other cases also.

If a man has no issue, the wife gets the property after his death. If the wife has predeceased, then the property goes to his brothers. If a man has no sons, but only daughters, the daughters get the property, but with sons present, the daughters do not have any right. 11 persons (8 Satnamis and 1 each from Rawat, Kurmi and Panka) were interviewed in this regard and all answered the question in the negative. The answer was that the daughters are after all respected every time they come to the father's or brother's house. *"Beta bataye ek bar, Beti bataye das bar."* (son shares only once, the daughter shares ten times). According to them the daughters get their due in their father-in-law's house and here also, in the house of the parents, they get something or the other every time they come here.

The son-in-law has no claim on a man's property. No distinction is normally made between the issues of a regular marriage and those from a *choori* marriage Shobharam's father had two wives — one was a Satnami and was a regularly married wife. The other — a *teli* woman, was kept by him in *choori* form. The division of land was as below:—



Shobharam, being the son of the regular marriage from a woman of the caste got 15 acres of land and Bulloo was satisfied and gave his concurrence to get 7 acres. Shobharam in his life time has given 1 acre each to his three sons, two of whom have purchased other land also.

A woman has all rights over the ornaments given to her by her parents. When she leaves her husband to take another, she takes away these ornaments with her.

Position of Women

In Chhattisgarh, the women in all castes in the rural areas and especially so in the Satnami caste enjoy many privileges. Gait, in his Report of the 1911 Census quotes J.T. Marten, Superintendent of Census for C.P. and Berar. In the erstwhile Central Provinces, Marten writes,[2] "there are comparatively few classes of society in which women are secluded, and in most of the chief cultivating castes, in some of the artisan castes and in all the low Hindu and aboriginal castes and tribes, women take a considerable part in the actual work required to maintain the livelihood of the family".

In Chhattisgarh, the role played by, or assigned to, women is much greater than what has been pointed out by Marten for the province as a whole. This out-door life and comparatively greater freedom has probably made the Chhattisgarhi women-folk so beautiful. Shoobert has remarked that "people who know the Chhattisgarhi must have been struck by the fine physi-

1. Manu Smriti — 9-112
2. Census of India 1911; Vol. X, Pt. 1; P. 410

que of the women which compares more favourably with that of the men".[3]

In Chhattisgarh, women play a more prominent role in life than men. They go to the market to make purchases and sell things and are generally more intelligent than the men. At slightly advanced age, they dominate the men-folk and when going out they would generally walk ahead with the men following them.

This dominance of women is reflected in day-to-day utterences. The men refer to their wives as "*mor admi*" (my man) e.g. "*mor admi bazar ge he.*" (my man has gone to market) or "*mor admi bhaga gis*" (my man has run away).

The women share work with their men and help them in the agricultural pursuits. In fact their work is more arduous than that of the men, because, they not only work in the agricultural operations but also look after the house, e.g. bring water from the stream, cook food, prepare cow-dung cakes and maintain the house. And thus the women in the village help the men in the economic pursuits and "She it is who cares for and animates the dwelling where the past is preserved, the future prefigured....."[4]

The role of women of Kosa in the economic life of the villagers can be seen from the following table:—

Age-group	*Female workers*	*Female non-workers*
0—14 years	8	54
15—44 years	62	1
45—59 years	16	3
60+	7	11
Total	93	69

RELATIONSHIPS

Husband-wife relationship

Chhattisgarh presents a paradox as far as position of women and the relationship between a man and his wife or wives is concerned. Normally in a society where women are in excess, the procurement of a wife should be easy and her position not so exalted and dominant. But in Chhattisgarh, the reverse is the case. Though the females are in excess here, procurement of wives is difficult and is paid for and consequently, it is the wife who is the dominant person in the house and her husband is guided by her and is subservient to her. The picture in Kosa is not different from that of Chhattisgarh as a whole. Some of the cases of this village where the man lost his land to get a wife are — Itwari Satnami and Bauda Satnami. These would be dealt with later in detail. The point here emphasized is that, in this condition, where even the land is parted with to get a woman, the position of the woman becomes important. The husbands show very great kindness towards their wives and it would not be wrong to suggest that they are afraid that the wives may run away. They usually turn a deaf ear and close their eyes to their wives' infidelities and, only when the extreme limit of patience is reached, the case brought before the caste panchayat.

It has not been possible to collect specific cases from the village in support of the above and the villagers were very unwilling to give information on the subject of desertion by their wives. It has, however, been possible to know that there are 20 men in the village whose married spouses deserted them and they, therefore, had to get other spouses in *choori* form. 17 of these belong to the Satnami caste, 2 are Rawats and 1 is the Panka. If and when a woman runs away from her husband, he tries his level best to get her back. The desertion of wives is most common among Satnamis and next among the Rawats. The man goes in search of her with some friends and well-wishers and tries to persuade her. If after living with other man or men, she comes back to him, he would gladly accept her without any stigma. On the other hand, he is inclined to think that his reputation has gone up because the woman did not get any other as ardent a lover as himself.

The woman does not take her husband's name and the husband also in turn does not call her by name but only as "*aye O*" or as "*Chaitoo ke Dai*" (i.e. as the mother of her son or daughter as the case may be). He does not show any affection to her outside nor does he show any annoyance towards her. But cases are not rare of the wife rebuking him in public for his foolishness.

Parent-Child Relationship

Very great kindness and consideration is shown to children in Chhattisgarh and so it is in this village also. The children are rarely beaten, and, if at all some parent beats his or her child, the whole locality would collect there and ridicule the offender. Among the Satnamis the daughters are loved more than the sons.

3. Census of India 1931, Vol. XII, Pt. I p. 148
4. A History of Sex, Simone de Beauvoir, (Four Square Ed.) 1961, p. 202.

But it is only kindness and love from the parents that the children receive. They do not get any training or education from them. The boys most readily learn the abuses sworn by their fathers and the parents do not pay any attention to the vulgar abusive terms which the boys freely use.

The children reciprocate the love and kindness. They obey the parents and on growing-up share the outdoor work with them. In later life the parents or in case of death of one, the mother or father, as he case may be, lives with his or her sons.

A typical case of this is Chintaram Satnami. He is more 'modern' than his father and has learnt tailoring, his company is with Ghanshyam Kurmi but he is very respectful towards his parents who live with him.

Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law Relationship

There are 21 households in Kosa where the mother-in-law is present. The relations between the mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law generally remain cordial because the mother-in-law knows where she stands. On growing old, she is not required to do anything but to look after the children. In cases where she is physically fit to work, she shares the household work with her daughter-in-law. This we found in the house of Chintaram Satnami. Chintaram's mother was cooking the food and his wife was husking the paddy.

Father-in-law and Daughter-in-law Relationship

No *pardah*-system is observed by any community in the village, but the daughter-in-law, in the first few years of her stay, usually covers her head in the presence of her father-in-law. In later years, she may or may not observe this formality. Usually the relation between a person and his daughter-in-law is one of avoidance. In the village, if they meet each other on the street, the daughter-in-law simply turns her face away. The daughter-in-law touches the feet of the father-in-law if she meets him after a long time. Another feature observed in Kosa is that the daughter-in-law would not sit on a cot in the presence of her father-in-law. She may, however, sit on the ground or on some object like say, a wooden bench or stone implement — *Kotna*.

Jocking-Relationships

The joking relationships in Kosa are:—

Grand-father	—	Grand-daughter
Grand-son	—	Grand-mother
Elder brother's wife	—	Younger brother
Wife's brother's wife	—	Husband
Wife	—	Husband's younger sister's husband
Sister	—	Brother's wife
Husband	—	Wife's younger sister

Avoidance Relationships

Daughter-in-law	—	Father-in-law
Woman	—	Husband's elder brother
Man	—	Wife's elder sister

The joking and avoidance relationships observed in Kosa can be classified into 5 classes as below:—

Description of segment	*Relationship*
Complete avoidance to marked restraint	Father-in-law, Daughter-in-law, Husband's elder brother,
Respect to moderate reserve	Son-in-law, Mother-in-law, Wife's elder sister,
From informality to intimacy	Grand-father, Grand-daughter, Grand-mother, Grand-son,
Familiarity to privileged jocking	Wife's brother's wife, Husband's younger sister's husband,
Obligatory joking to extreme licence	Wife's younger sister, Husband's younger brother,

Grand-parent—grand-child relationship

The joking relationship between a grand-parent and grand-child is very formal. The grand-mother may refer to her grand-son as "*mor dauka*" (my husband) and similarly the grand-father may tease the grand-daughter as "*mor sang bihao karbe ka*" (would you marry me) or they may joke about the disparity in age, were they to move as married couple and the grand-mother may joke with her grand-son "*Sabe jhan tola kaiheen ke kahan ke budhee douki le lane.*" (Every-body would ask you about the old woman you have brought as your wife). In Kosa, Bhikari Satnami (now deceased) had entered into a 'ritual friendship' of *Jawara* with the sisters of Chintaram Satnami because they were his grand-daughters. *Jawara* is a ritual friendship in which joking is permitted.

Relationship between wife's younger sister and husband's younger brother

This joking-relationship is common over the great part of India. In Kosa, apart from normal joking, the marriage ceremonies provide occasions when the joking becomes highly frivolous and extreme licence prevails. The people in this relationship try to catch each other and apply wet turmeric powder on various parts of the other's person. Considerable freedom also exist at other times.

Elder brother's wife is referred to as *Bhauji*. The woman, when quarrelling also use the term *Bhauji* in an abusive manner i.e. the keep of brother. The joking between a man and his elder brother's wife normally revolves around the subject of sex and appreciation of beauty e.g. *"mor bhauji gajab karat he"* (my sister-in-law is doing wonders — she is creating havoc) or *"Mor bhauji mola mar darhi — ab bachan nahi de"* (My sister-in-law would surely kill me — I cannot be saved now) or similarly a woman may taunt her husband's younger brother *"Bane thouka bane has"* (you have become quite a nice guy). At the time, we were taking the photograph of some people for this monograph, Mannu Satnami said to a woman passing by *"Are bhauji photo to lewa le"* and turning towards us had said *"Saheb mor bhauji ka photo kheench lo bane sughar ahi"* (O, sister-in-law, please get yourself photographed. Sir, take a snapshot of my sister-in-law. It would be very nice) and the woman had remarked *"Hat re labra"*. (Be off, you liar). Any joking with wife's younger sister was not observed during the survey, but people have informed us that it very much exists and can be observed when people assemble during festive ceremonies.

Marten[5] makes the following reference about the relationship between a man and his elder brother's wife. "The relations between a man and his *Bhauji* (elder brother's wife) are thus apparently tinged with a familiarity almost verging on licence, and are not unfrequently the subject of scandal and gossip." In the same connection Murdock states that "the higher incidence of joking with WiYoSi and ElBrWi merely reflects the preference for junior sororate or junior levirate". There are 2 cases of junior levirate in the village — that of Hatoi Satnami and Budgu Satnami .

Avoidance Relationships

The woman avoids her husband's elder brother (*kura sasur*) and father-in-law (*sasur*). Before both of these she would not sit on a cot, she would touch the feet of both, but as far as possible, both the man and the woman would try not to meet face to face.

Regarding the relationship between a woman and her husband's elder brother, Marten[6] says: "The taboo between the *Jeth* and *Bhaihau* is the converse of the proverbially equivocal relations that exist between the elder brother's wife and her *dewar* (husband's younger brother) dating from the time when fraternal polyandry was common. This peculiar reverence held by the *Jeth* seems to correspond with the position occupied by the elder sister in the eyes of the younger sister's husband and to date from a time when polyandry was undermined by the rights of primogeniture."

Names tabooed

Women in all the communities do not utter the name of the husband. Other relations whose names are tabooed are — father-in-law, mother-in-law, husband's elder brother, husband's younger brother, husband's elder sister and elder brother's wife. These persons are addressed by the women as below:—

Relation	*Term of address by women*
Husband	Father of the children e.g. *Noni ke dada; eye ho.*
Wife	Mother of the children e.g. *Chaitoo ke dai; eye ho.*
Father-in-law	*Dada*
Mother-in-law	*Dai*
Husband's elder brother	*Bada*
Husband's younger brother	*Babu*
Husband's elder sister	*Didi*
Brother's wife	*Bhauji*

Ho is the most common term used as prefix or suffix to the term of address e.g. — *Ao na Ho Bada, Aona ho bada, Dai ho, Didi ho* or simply *Aye Ho.*

Some kinship terms used in Kosa

Some of the kinship terms used in the village are listed below:—

Relationship	*Term known in the village*
Father	*Dada*
Mother	*Dai*
Sister	*Bahinee*
Elder brother	*Bhaiya*
Younger brother	*Babu*
Elder sister	*Didi*
Younger sister	*Noni*
Father's elder-brother	*Kaka, Bade Bap, Bade Dada*
Father's elder-brother's wife	*Bade Dai*
Father's younger-brother	*Kaka*
Father's younger-brother's wife	*Kaki*

5. Census of India, 1911, Vol. X pt. I, p. 141.
6. Ibid, p. 150.

1	2
Husband's elder-brother's son	*Sasur Beta*
Husband's elder brother's daughter	*Sasur Beti*
Father's sister	*Fufu Dai/Fufu Didi*
Wife's brother's children	*Sarghun*
Father's sisters' daughters	*Fufu Bahinee*
Mother's brother	*Mama*
Sister's children	*Bhancha* (male) *Bhanchi* (female)
Father's father	*Baba*
Mother's mother	*Mama* Dai
Wife's elder brother	*Sara*
Wife's brother's wife	*Sarhaj Bahinee*
Husband's elder brother	*Kura Sasur*
Husband's younger brother	*Dewar*
Husband's elder sister	*Dedh Sas*
Husband's younger sister	*Nanad*

Some other terms used in the village

English Term	*Term used in Kosa*
Old Men	*Siyan*
Widower	*Randwa*
Widow	*Randee*
Man whose wife has left him and who has not got a wife yet	*Rita, Khalee, Akla, Chhand.*
Divorced/separated woman	*Chhandwa*
Bridegroom	*Dulha Douka*
Bride	*Dulhi Douki*
A married woman divorced for misconduct	*Buja*
Lunatic	*Baiha*
Lier	*Labra, labar*
Foolish, simpleton	*Ledga*
Abuses — For men	
Sickly	*Rogha*
Servant of a prostitute	*Bhandwa*
Mongrel	*Berra*
Abuses — For women	
Sickly (May the illness attack)	*Roghi* ...
Mongrel	*Berri*
Widow	*Randee*
One who goes to many men	*Charkat*

Ritual Friendship

In Chhattisgarh, some persons in both sexes enter into a friendship bond after performing a ritual. This ritual-friendship is the culmination of intimate acquaintence and the beginning of an abiding and intimate friendship, more than that of real brothers, because friends may quarrel and the brothers may separate, but this ritual friendship lasts for life, the 'friends' share each others comforts and discomforts — pain and pleasure.

During the field-work of village Amwar in the Mandla District, it came to our notice that in some of these ritual friendships, the relation between the 'friends' is that of the brothers and in others it is the relation of brothers-in-law (*Sare-Bahnoi*). In the former there is no joking relationship, in the latter joking can be indulged in. But in Kosa, the villagers are not aware of these separate kinds. According to them, in all the ritual-friendship types, the relation is that of brother-brother. It has, however, been observed elsewhere in Chhattisgarh that sometimes men cut jokes with and taunt women with whom they have 'joking friendships' as below: *"Kaise Jawara, kahan ke tiyari"* (Hallo Jawara, where are you preparing to go) or *"Are mor mongra, aj eti nahi dekhas ka"* (O, my *'Mongra'*, would you not glance this side to-day). From these it appears as if these are the 'ritual friendships' where joking is permitted. But there is no information available about this from Kosa.

In Kosa, seven types of 'ritual friendships' have been noted:—

(i) *Mahaprasad* — Both sexes
(ii) *Gangajal* — Both sexes
(iii) *Ganga baru* — Both sexes
(iv) *Jawara* — Both sexes
(v) *Bhojli* — Females only
(vi) *Tulsidal* — Both sexes
(vii) *Gajamung* — Both sexes

In the above list, except *Bhojli* the other six types can be entered into between members of both sexes — i.e. man-man and woman-woman. 'Ritual friendship' is not entered into between a man and a woman, though, as said earlier, a woman may be addressed as *Jawara* by a man. For entering into this ritual-friendship bond, caste is no barrier, and in Kosa, inter-caste 'friendship' is present in case of Guha Rawat and Itwari Satnami, Jairamdas Panka and Bullu Satnami, Bhaga Satnami of Kosa and a Rawat of village Kasouda (9 miles). Among women Dulorin Lohar has a *Mahaprasad* friend at village Tarighat; she is a Teli woman.

Mahaprasad

This term may be literally translated as "Great offering" and the friendship is usually solemnised after people return from some pilgrimage from Jagannathpuri or from some fair like Rajim and Bhandar. The 'friendship' is solemnised in the village between members of same sex and this is common among men. The ritual consists in the person presenting a coconut, a sweet and some cloth to each other, the variety and quantity of items depending upon the economic condition of the people concerned. The ritual may be performed in the village itself or in some other holy place like Rajim. After the ritual is performed, the persons do not take each other's name but address, and refer to each other as *Mahaprasad*.

Example of *Mahaprasad* friendship from the village are:—

Chintaram	(Kosa)	—	Jhumka	(Tarighat)
Ramchand	(Kosa)	—	Parganiha	(Khamariya)
Rewaram	(Kosa)	—	Jhunuram	(Kosa)
Punoo	(Kosa)	—	Gadhe	(Kosa)
Bhokloo	(Kosa)	—	Shankar	(Kosa)
Firtoo	(Kosa)	—	Shyam	(Kosa)

Gangajal

Gangajal means water of the Ganges. The friendship so named is solemnised in the same manner as that of *Mahaprasad* but the use of the water of the Ganga (*Gangajal*) is required for the ritual. The friendship is entered into when people return from some pilgrimage from Kasi (Varanasi), Prayag (Allahabad) or even Rajim or Bhandar. Persons entering into this ritual-friendship call each other as *Gangajal*. Examples of this friendship or some similar friendship are found in the books of the great novelist from Bengal — Sarat Chandra — where the address is *Gangajali*. The friendship may be entered into by members of both sexes, though in Kosa, the example of female *Gangajal* was not found.

In Kosa, this friendship presents an example of inter-caste intimacy. Guha Rawat and Itwari Satnami are *Gangajal* to each other and there are two more men, both Satnamis, who are Gangajal friends.

Ganga Baru

The term means sands of the Ganges and the friendship is solemnised when people returning from Prayag or Kasi bring the 'sacred' sands of the Ganges. The procedure followed is the same as in the *Gangajal* friendship; the sand from Ganges is used instead of the water. The term of address between the friends is *Ganga-Baru*. *Gangabaru* friendship is a very intimate friendship as the following couplet suggests.

"Futha Mandir Kalash Nahin he
Mor ay Gangabaru, daras nahin he"

(The temple is dilapidated, there is no pinnacle. I have a ritual friend-*Gangabaru*, but there is no glimpse of him).

Jawara

The *Jawara*-friendship is solemnised at the time of *Jawara* festival and examples of this friendship in Kosa are:

(i) Laikhan Satnami and Ramlal Satnami, and
(ii) Chintaram Satnami and Muni Satnami.

After the *Jawara* are immersed in the tank and people come back home, those intent on entering into this friendship present each other with the sprouts of crops used in the festival; embrace each other and, if economic condition permits, exchange new clothes, coconut and sweet. This is of course subsidiary. Mere exchange of *Jawara* sproutings solemnises the ritual. After the ritual is performed the persons are *Jawara* to each other.

As stated earlier, the relationship in this ritual-friendship appears to be of *Sara-Bahnoi* i.e. brothers-in-law (person — sister's husband) and joking is allowed. But the people of Kosa are unable to give any information on this question.

Bhojli

Bhojli is the ritual-friendship of the women and the example of *Bhojli* in Kosa is the friendship of Janki and Man Bai.

The ritual in this friendship ceremony is a very simple one. It is solemnised either in the *Bhojli* procession or after returning from the tank where the immersion ceremony of *Bhojli* takes place. The woman entering into this intimacy put the crop sproutings of the seeds sown at the time of *Bhojli* in each others' earlobes and present each other with *Lugda* (*dhoti*) and coconut and the like which is only done if the parties can afford these things.

Tulsidal

The term of this ritual friendship means — 'leaves of the basil plant'. An example of *Tulsidal* friendship in Kosa is that of Sukloo Satnami and Jairam. The friendship is solemnised just after the *Bhagwat-Saptah*

is over. In this *Bhagwat-Saptah*, a Brahmin *pandit* is invited and he recites some stories from the epic Srimad Bhagwat. This goes on for seven days' the function being organised in the evenings and nights. The persons entering into this ritual friendship solemnise the function just after the *Bhagwat Saptah* is concluded. They exchange leaves of the basil plant and other ancillary items if possible and become each others' *Tulsidal*.

Gaja-Moong

No example of this friendship, is found in Kosa but the people know about this friendship also. The ritual is solemnised in the month of *Ashad* (June-July) and the item used in the ceremony is the grains of *Moong* pulse (*Phaseolus mungo*).

Though not found in Kosa, the following other ritual friendship terms may be incidently mentioned here. They are commonly found in Chhattisgarh. It has, however, been observed that these friendships are becoming rarer now and there has been a considerable decrease in the number of such friendships in Chhattisgarh in the last two decades or so. This remark is not based on any detailed study but on the basis of a general observation in various villages of Chhattisgarh for many years. It would, however, be interesting to find out if the tentacles of our 'Octopus-civilization' kills all that is lovely and healthy and substitutes that by economic exploitation, economic competition and jealousy.

These various other ritual friendships observed elsewhere in Chhattisgarh are — *Kewara*, *Mongra*, *Sakhi* and *Mitan*.

Sahinav

Persons having the same name address each other as *Sahinav* which means 'similar name'. The term may have been coined possibly to avoid the ridiculousness of taking one's own name when calling the other person. Seven *Sahinav* pairs could be traced in Kosa. They are — Itwari, Gopi, Ghanshyam, Bishah, Sukhoo, Dhaniram, Fagwa. No ritual is necessary for this *Sahinav* calling, nor is it a friendship union. Persons of different castes having the same names also call each other as *Sahinav*. It is, however, seen that the formality of calling each other as *Sahinav* instead of by name (which is one's own name) is more or less restricted to similar age-groups. No case has so far been observed where, say an old man calls a young boy of the same name as *Sahinav*.

In all the ritual friendships described above, the people do not utter each other's name and if they happen to commit the mistake of addressing the ritual friend by name, then they present him with a rupee and a coconut as a sort of expiation. This restriction is, however, not enforced strictly nor is it obligatory to expiate in the manner described above.

Ritual Friendship and Inter-caste Relation

Caste is no bar for entering into a ritual friendship of any kind. But though it is said that the ritual friend *Mahaprasad* for example, is more than a brother, people who enter into these friendship with members of other castes do not inter-dine. Chintaram Satnami said, "If the *Mahaprasad*-friend is of the same caste we take food in his house. In the case of the *Mahaprasad* belonging to another caste, we would prepare food separately. Because of love and affection, we may accept food from him now but other caste people do not take food with us even though they are ritual friends." Thus though in day to day life and in economic pursuits, the ritual friends may behave like brothers and share each others pleasures and sorrows, they shrink back when it comes to inter-dining, here caste-consciousness comes again to the surface.

Phases of Life

From the cradle to the burial ground, tradition in India ordains a series of rituals associated with the life-cycle of an individual. Different castes living together for generations in the same village and as neighbours, follow rituals which differ from one another in minor details. In the villages there is no written literature prescribing these rituals and they are passed down from generation to generation. For this very reason, these rituals undergo some changes as time passes, and the different castes, in imitation of rituals followed by higher castes, adopt some of them in an attempt at pretentious social elevation. In the pages that follow, these life-rituals followed by different castes are described as they are observed in Kosa.

Attainment of puberty

There are no ceremonies attendant upon the attainment of puberty. A boy reaching puberty is referred to as *"Bane samajhdar ho ge he"* (has begun to understand well) or as *"Bane mechha jag ge he"* (moustaches have come in). A grown-up girl is similarly referred to as *"Okar kandh ma kapda pad ge he"* (Cloth has come over her shoulders) or as *"Alga dar le he"* (has begun to put the end of her *sari* on her shoulder) or again as *"Kandhela dar gis"* which means the same thing and all these imply that she has begun to cover her breasts.

Menstruation

Women during menstruation are referred to as *"bahar ho ge"* (is out) or as *"Sir Mailee"* (dirty head) or again as *'Ghinaha he'* (is didty). In Kosa, the girls start menstruating by the age of 12-13 years. The taboos attached to menstruating women generally are:—

1 She cannot enter the kitchen.
2 She cannot go to the well, tank and bazar, but she may go to the stream.
3 She cannot enter the cattle-shed.
4 She cannot put oil in her head nor can she comb her hair.
5 She should not see the face of her husband. (This is however rarely followed).

In some of the families, the menstruating woman cannot sleep on the cot but this taboo is not universal.

The menstruation pollution as observed by the communities in this village is slightly different in each case.

Satnamis

The pollution is observed for three days. The woman cannot cook. She may sleep on the cot. She cannot go to the well but may go to tank. She is strictly prohibited from entering the cattle-shed and the *khalihan* (threshing floor) because if she goes to these places, they become polluted and the cattle may become ill. Normally continuance is observed for the period of menstruation but, as Shobharam said wryly, the young generation do not seem to adhere to this rule strictly. After the third day, the woman boils her clothes with washing soda, and washes her hair with *mur minjni mati* (black clay).

Rawat

The Rawats also observe the pollution for three days and the woman may cook on the 4th day. During the period, she cannot sleep on the cot and usually sleeps or sits in a corner of the room. She can go to the fields but cannot enter the cattle-shed and *khalihan* (threshing floor). Again, she cannot go to the well, but may go to the tank. The Thethwar do not regard the menstruating woman as polluted, but because of other castes, she cannot go to the well.

Kurmi

The Kurmis observe the pollution for four days and the woman can cook food only on the fifth day. On the fourth day, she washes her head with the black clay and boils and washes her clothes with washing-soda. During the period, she is given food only once a day, because it is believed, that eating more than once would surely take her to hell after death. This restriction is not observed now and the women may take the evening meal before lamps are lighted.

Panka

The Panka observe the pollution for 3 days and on the 4th day the woman can cook food. She can sleep on the cot during her periods and can also go to the fields to cut the crop, but she cannot go to the cattle-shed and threshing-floor.

Conception

The villagers of Kosa are no doubt aware of the biological basis of conception. But they hold that, unless God wills, mere biological factors do not result in conception. The Satnamis think that conception is due to the blessings of God and even if somebody wants to prevent this, he can never succeed, because the thing is ordered by God. On the other hand if God does not like the conception to result in the birth of a child, there is no power on earth which can check abortion. The Rawats, Kurmis, Panka and Lohar also think that conception results as a result of God's will. The Kurmi says, 'Man's work is simply to put the seed in the field. The harvest depends on God's will'.

Conception is detected by the stoppage of menstrual flow. The pregnant woman becomes 'very soft' in her limbs, her body becomes yellowish (anaemic) and she looks prettier. She develops bad taste and loses appetite. She does not find any taste in the *Basi* (a kind of food) and suffers from morning sickness. The villagers are of the view that these complaints persist as long as life does not come in the uterus: as soon as life comes there, the complaints stop automatically.

A pregnant woman is referred to as *"doo ji ke mankhe"* (person with two souls), *"bhari deh"* (heavy body) *"adha-sisi ke mankhe"* (sick and weak person) and as *"hamal me have"* (is pregnant).

There are some taboos and restrictions for pregnant woman. They are:—

1 She should not come out in the open when there is thunder and lightning.
2 She should not see the eclipse. If she comes out at the time of the eclipse, the child may have some physical deformity.
3 She should not go to the house where delivery has taken place, lest she should be affected by birth-pollution.

4 She should not go out alone in the night.
5 She should not cross rivers and streams.
6 She should not go to the forest. (There is however no forest in Kosa).
7 She must not come in contact with any of the witches of the village and must do her utmost to protect herself from being seen by any of them.
8 She must not go towards the burial-ground, because en-route to the burial-ground, there is a place where the *paretin* (an evil-spirit) lives.

A pregnant woman is supposed to be very vulnerable to witch-craft and to being affected by evil-spirits and this danger is all the greater if she is pregnant for the first time. The pregnant woman is given all due care. She is not allowed to do hard physical labour, though 'hard' is a very relative term in the village-context because, except possibly in the first pregnancy, the woman goes to the stream to fetch water as late as till the 8th month of her pregnancy. The only precaution taken is that the work should not be too much. She should not draw water from the well and should not split wood with the axe. During pregnancy all her desires and cravings for eating various eatables are satisfied, otherwise, it is believed, that the child would be greedy all his life. At this time, the villagers take care not to give her any medical treatment. The village *Baidin* should not prescribe any hot medicine for her. Special care is taken to see that she does not take any medicine from the hospital because all hospital (allopathic) medicines are supposed to be hot and are liable to cause abortion.

Celebration of pregnancy

A special function known as *Sadhori* takes place to celebrate the onset of pregnancy. This function is celebrated on a bigger scale at the time of the first pregnancy by the Satnamis, Kurmis and Pankas. Except the Thethwar, the other Rawats do not practise the custom of celebrating *Sadhori*. The non-observance of *Sadhori* by the Rawats of this village is very significant because Russell[7] mentioned this custom only in his description of the Ahir (Rawat) caste. The Rawats of Bilaspur and Raipur districts have also been observed and the practice is found to persist among them. As brought out in the Socio-Economic study of the village Bendri in Raipur District, the practice of *Sadhori* is observed by all the castes in that village. The Rawats are not able to give any explanation for their non-observance of this custom excepting saying "*Hamar ihan nahin chale*" (It is not observed in our houses) nor are they able to remember if the system has been stopped because some deaths took place in the past at the time the *Sadhori* was being celebrated. Such unfortunate accidents often close the observance of a certain festival or ritual in many castes and it is likely that some ancestor of the Kosa Rawats may have suffered losses at the time of *Sadhori*. The above is however only a surmise; there is no confirmation of it from the village.

Sadhori is celebrated in the 7th or 8th month of pregnancy. The parents of the pregnant woman send some clothes for her and also send various eatables and sweets. In her house, she puts on these clothes and seven married women then sit with the pregnant woman and partake of the sweets and eatables. The persons who bring these items from the woman's parents are suitably rewarded by her husband or father-in-law. A feast is then arranged and caste-members are invited.

In the *Bilaspur District Gazetteer* the following description is found about this custom[8] "The word *Sadhori* comes from the word *Sidhor* which signifies the 'craving of a pregnant women' and the food is supposed to satisfy this." *Sadhori* seems to have a two-fold significance: one to let the pregnancy be finally known and second to feed all delicacies to the pregnant woman in the belief that if she does not get the things she craves for, the child would be greedy one and long for these things and eatables all through its life.

Determination of the sex of child in the womb

The Satnamis, Rawats and Pankas feel that the sex of the child in the womb can be fairly accurately predicted by experienced persons. The Kurmis, however, say that it is not possible to predict the sex of the child in the womb.

According to those who held that sex-prediction is possible, the gait with which a pregnant woman walks is supposed to be a fairly good basis for prediction. If the woman puts more pressure on her right foot, the child would be a male one, because the male child is towards the right side in the womb. If, however, the woman puts more pressure on the left foot, the child would be a female. Similarly, while sitting if she leans on the right hand, the child would be a male; if she leans on the left hand, she is carrying a female child.

7. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. II, Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 27.
8. District Gazetteer Bilaspur District, 1909,

A second indication is supposed to be that if the woman becomes weak and frail, the child is a male, because, it is said, a male child utilises the entire nourishment taken by the pregnant woman. If the pregnant woman looks healthy and fresh, the child would be a female one.

A third indication believed in is that the female child takes a longer time in the womb. If delivery does not take place in the 9th month, the child is more likely to be a female one.

Types of Children

The villagers of Kosa recognise two types of children. The identification is carried on soon after child-birth because the treatment of the child in case of illness differs for these two cases and the care of the child during infancy also depends on this identification. These two types of children are:—

(a) *Panbooda* (boy) and *Panboodi* (girl)
(b) *Suruj-laika* and *Suruj-laiki*

The word *Panbooda* and *Panboodi* literally means 'submerged in water or one who remains in water'. The child having a pustule in the inside of the palate is recognised as *Panbooda* or *Panboodi* as the case may be. The number of such pustules determines the number of baths the child is daily given and throughout his life the greatest remedy for a *Panbooda* or *Panboodi* person afflicted by any illness, is to take a cold water bath. The *Panbooda* child is supposed to be of a cold-loving nature and he or she is not usually treated with medicines. If the child has more than seven pustules in the inside of the palate, then he or she is known as *Bada-Panbooda* (*Bada* means big) or *Badi-Panboodi* as the case may be. A *Panbooda* or *Panboodi* child is not fomented in the manner in which a non-*panbooda* child is fomented because if he is subjected to it, he would be ill — may even die — because such treatment is against his nature.

The other type of child is recognised as *Suruj-laika* (boy) and *Suruj-laiki* (girl), the word *Suruj* meaning sun. In the case of such a child, its whole being is supposed to be more than normally warm; it is easily affected by cold. In weak health and illness, it should not be bathed in cold water as such bathing may prove to be fatal. The child is kept warm during infancy. Cow-dung cakes are fired in the earthen *gorsi* and when the smoke is gone, the baby is rested on the mother's stretched legs, oil is applied on his stomach and back and warming the hands over the *gorsi* the child is fomented with it till the stomach becomes almost reddish.

As far as is known, the entire rural Chhattisgarh recognises *Panbooda* children. In some villages, there may be no name for the non-*panbooda* child — but the characteristics can be found out. By examining the inside of the mouth of the infant, experienced ladies can immediately say whether it is a *Panbooda* or not and on this diagnosis alone depends the course of treatment given in case of physical ailments and sickness throughout life. Now whether there is medical justification for the villagers recognition of these two different types of constitution, cannot be said but it remains a fact that many a *Panbooda* child has been cured of fever and other sickness by taking no medicine but only by bathing in cold water.

Barrenness and its Cure

A sterile woman is not liked and if a person does not get issues within 2 or 3 years of marriage it becomes a cause of worry to him and his family members. It is believed that, if a barren woman eats the placenta or drinks a decoction made of it she would become fertile — and that is why the placenta is so carefully buried in the same room where the delivery has taken place so that there is no possibility of its being taken out by somebody. Here probably may lie the belief of placenta being the seat of the external soul.

The Satnamis believe that barrenness is removed by the blessings of the *Guru*. They, however, do not go to Bhandar, the place of pilgrimage for this but wait for the *Kanphoonka Guru*. When he comes to Kosa on his yearly round, the woman who has not had conception after 3 or 4 years of married life, goes to him with a coconut and offers it to him. The *Guru* of course comes to know about the intent of her visit. He takes the coconut and shakes it near his ear. Then he says, "It is there. Is it not?" and the people sitting with him at that time say, "Yes it is there." They refer to the sound of the coconut flesh within the shell made by shaking the coconut. But the general belief is that, if the God does not will it, nobody can do anything.

In the first 2 or 3 years of marriage, if the woman does not conceive, it is supposed to be due to some witch-craft and people take resort to *Jhad-phoonk* by the *Baiga*. As one old woman of Kosa said *"Andhra kas gada chadhai to ay"* (it is like a blind man trying to climb over a cart). She was referring to the fact of conception in women and the meaning of what she said was that it is a question of trial and chance. The blind man may put his foot at the right place and

climb the cart in one attempt or one may go on trying and still fail.

The case of Hagroo Satnami of Kosa is interesting. His wife did not conceive for 4 or 5 years after marriage and he and his wife were somewhat worried. Once Hagroo had a dream in which he was given four mangoes each by his grand-father, father and a Thethwar. After this dream, Hagroo had four sons and he believes that the persons who in the dream presented him with mangoes have taken re-birth as his sons; Sukloo his eldest son is his grand-father who has taken re-birth, Bhoklu, his another son is the re-birth of his father and Chintaram, his youngest son is the Thethwar who came in the dream.

BIRTH RITUALS IN DIFFERENT CASTES

Satnamis

In the first volume of "Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces" Russell and Hiralal have described the Satnami sect but the life-rituals have not been described in that note; the note dealt with only the sect. Birth-customs of the Chamar caste have however been described in the description of that caste. Birth-customs observed by the Satnamis of Kosa are described in the following.

The first delivery usually takes place in the woman's husband's house. The presence of the village midwife (*Suin*) is considered necessary during delivery because she is supposed to be an expert. There is a *suin* in Kosa, who belongs to the Satnami caste. In cases where the *suin* is not available, elderly ladies of the caste help the women of the house, extreme care being taken that none of the women reputed to be witches come to the house. The presence of any particular member of the parent's side or husband's side is not compulsory. Usually the woman's married *nanand* (husband's sister), mother-in-law, *bhouji* (brother's wife) are present. Even when the *suin* is attending the case, the presence of at least 5 to 6 women is necessary to assist her. There are so many things to be done — the expectant mother's belly is be be massaged, oil is to be put in her hair and ear, water is necessary and so on. The delivery takes place in a squatting and not in a recumbent position. If the parturition is delayed, the Gond *baiga* (priest) from Tamora village is consulted. He recites some words over a glass of water and this water is then given to the woman to drink.

When the labour-pains begin, the women make a wick of cotton and soaking it well in oil put it on the wall of the delivery room. This is then pressed as a result of which the oil oozes out. It is prayed that the child may come out of the womb with the same easiness and painlessness as the oil gets out of the wick. This cotton wick soaked in oil is known as *sukhar* (*sukh* = pleasure, without pain). This explanation appears to be more logical and plausible than the one which Chintaram offered. He said this is a prayer so that the milk of mother may ooze out as easily as the oil from the wick. Ghanshyam Kurmi's wife had another explanation for this *sukhar*. Her interpretation does not seem to be correct because the name itself of the wick — *sukhar* — means painlessness and in the context in which the wick is used, it could mean possibly only one thing — the easy painless delivery.

placental-cord of the infant is cut with a piece of roof tile. The placenta is buried in the same room in two feet deep pit. Fire is kept over this place for about six days or so. It is believed that the placenta is very much sought after by barren women who make up a decoction of the blood or the navel cord and drink the same. Fire is kept in the earthen *gorsi* in the delivery room to keep it warm in the winter and rainy months. As soon as the child birth has taken place, one woman comes out to announce this to the people waiting outside. She also announces the sex of the child sometimes like — *"Noni hoyo he"* (It is a daughter) or as *"Babu hoy he"* (it is a boy).

The elderly ladies then try to identify some signs on the body of the infant which could help them to correlate it with some former deceased person from that family. A brownish-reddish mark is supposed to be one made by *ghee* and the blackish or bluish mark is supposed to be one made by *kajal* (soot). The Satnamis believe in re-birth and when a person dies, some mark is made on the body with either *ghee* or soot. The children born in the family subsequent to that death are examined for the presence of some mark on the body of the infant which may bear some resemblance to the one made on the person of the deceased person. Such bluish or red marks are not difficult to find on an infant body where even the hard fingures of those present during delivery leave some mark on the tender skin.

Just after delivery and before the navel-cord of the babe is cut, the mother is given the *munga-gabhoti* (soup of drumstick) and coconut. Then for two days she is not given anything to eat or drink. On the 3rd

day after birth, the mother is given *chor kake* or *kankhe* water. *Chor-kake* is a decoction of *kankhe* wood (*Flacortia ramonchi*), *arhar* (a variety of pulse), *ajwayan* (thymol), *alsi* oil, *gur*, *til*, and *lahsun* (garlic), *til-ladu* (*til* seed and *gur*) and a preparation of *sonth* (dried ginger) is also given to the mother.

In the delivery room, red clothes are tabooed and nobody can go to the mother and infant with red clothes on. It is believed that the child would get some sickness if it sees the red colour. It is also believed that evil spirits may get attracted towards the red colour. A thorny branch of *beri* (*Zizyphus jujuba*) is hung at the outside of the door of the delivery room and sometimes the fishing-net of the Kewat may also be hung there. The evil spirits attracted towards the delivery room are believed to get entangled in the thorns and fishing net.

Birth pollution is supposed to persist till the sixth day (*chhati*). If anybody happens to touch the woman before the *Chhati* day, a bath becomes necessary for him or her. The mother is supposed to be polluted during this period and is known as *chhewari*.

On the sixth day, the woman bathes in the house itself assisted by the *suin* and then the *mudan* (head shaving) of the infant is done. Since the barber does not serve the Satnami caste, this *mudan* is done by some elder person of the household or of the caste. The male members of the household also get their hair cut. The house is cleaned and washed with cow-dung and the clothes used during delivery and during the period upto *chhatti* are boiled in water with washing soda. The woman then comes out in the open with her infant and breaks a coconut in the name of *Suraj Narayan* (sun). Black bangles and coconut are offered by the man or the father of the baby at the tree where *Sat Vahinia* deity is supposed to dwell. If this deity is not thus propitiated on the *chhatti* day, the child, it is is feared, will develop a bad temper and go on crying for nothing. Caste members and relatives are then fed and the woman becomes free of the pollution and she may now enter the kitchen.

Chhatti is the only ceremony of importance among the Satnamis. They do not pay any importance to the *barhi* which should normally be performed on the twelfth day after birth. They perform the *barhi* ritual on the seventh day itself, just after the *chhatti*. There is no ritual in particular and the ceremony actually is a prolonged *chhatti*.

Rawat

The first delivery usually takes place in the husband's house. As already mentioned, there is no ritual of *sadhori* among the Rawats of Kosa. The village *suin* attends the delivery case. If parturition is delayed then the *Baiga* (the Gond Priest from Tamora) or the Brahmin *pandit* from Sirri are consulted. Like the Satnamis the *sukhar* (i. e. the cotton-wick soaked in oil and pressed) is also done.

The navel-cord of the baby is cut with reed (*bharua*) and the placenta is buried out of the delivery room. The Rawats also believe in re-birth and examine the infant's body for some marks to supposedly identify the child with some deceased relative. For two days after birth, the mother is not given anything to eat or drink. On the third day the *kankhe* decoction, as among the Satnamis, is given to her. *Chhatti* is celebrated on the sixth day.

On the *chhatti* day, the barber is called and the babe's head is shaved. The child is also branded with a red-hot sickle by touching the stomach of the babe with the pointed end of the sickle giving small round brand-marks. It is believed that if the child is not branded, his digestion would always be poor in life and in infancy he would not be able to digest even milk. The clothes used by the baby and the mother are given to the Dhobi (washerman) for washing. The *suin* gets about two rupees in cash, one *lugda* and some *sidha* i. e. rice, *dal*, salt and red chillies and her services are discontinued on this day. The house is washed with cow-dung and cleaned. Birth pollution is supposed to be removed on the *chhatti*.

As in the Satnami, the mother comes out with the babe in her arms and breaks a coconut as an offering to *Suraj Narayan*. The *Sat Vahinia* deity is offered black bangles and a coconut.

After the delivery, the Rawats hang the branch of *anda* (castor, *Ricinus communis*) and sometimes also put an old torn shoe below the cot. This is supposed to keep away the evil spirits. The child is given a name by the elders of the family on the *chhatti* day itself. The Rawats of Kosa do not observe *barhi* i.e. the ritual of the twelfth day.

In the Thethwar household of this village *sadhori* is observed in the seventh or eighth month of pregnancy. But new clothes are not given to the pregnant woman because new clothes are not supposed to be auspicious. The persons from her father's house who take the sweets and other eatables stay in her husband's house for a

day or two but no singing takes place. In the Thethwar, the presence of *suin* is not considered necessary. If parturition is delayed, then the *baiga* or a brahmin *pandit* is consulted. Just after the delivery the mother is given the cooked pulp of the drumstick soup and coconut. Then for the next two days, she is not given anything to eat or drink and on the third day, she gets the *kankhe* decoction. The navel-cord is cut with *bharua* (reed) and the placenta is buried, but unlike the Satnamis, no fire is kept over it. The Thethwars also believe in re-birth and the body of the infant is examined to discover some marks.

In case of a female child, the Thethwars observe the *chhatti* on the fifth day and if the child is a male, the ceremony takes place on the seventh day. Like the Rawats, the Thethwar also calls the Dhobi for washing clothes. Caste people are fed and the brahmin *pandit* gives a name to the child, but the *mundan* (head shaving) of the child is not done on the *chhatti* day. It takes place in his third or fourth year in Rajim fair. *Barhi* or the twelfth day ceremony is observed on the tenth day. From this day the mother can take normal food and it is from this day that she takes *bhat* (cooked rice). She puts on new clothes and bangles.

The Rawats and Thethwar, both believe in the *Panbooda* and *Suruj-laika* children like the Satnamis.

Kurmi

Normally the first delivery takes place in the husband's house. In the 7th or 8th month of pregnancy *sadhori* ceremony takes place as among the Satnamis but on a more lavish scale. Woman's parents send to her various clothes and sweets such as *ladoo, kushi, khaja, pedha, fenee* and the like and also new clothes for her. *Sadhori* is observed only in the case of first pregnancy. In the woman's husband's house, seven married women sit with the pregnant woman who wears new clothes sent by her parents and partake of these sweets. The persons from her father's house who bring these things stay there for the night and a music programme is arranged. The pregnant woman's father-in-law then presents these persons with a *dhoti* and some money each before they depart. When the time of confinement approaches near, the *suin* is called for and she is assisted by some elderly women of the house or of the caste. If parturition is difficult or delayed, it is believed to be the effect of *totka* (black art) and the *baiga* (priest) from Tamora is consulted.

As soon as the child-birth takes place, the *suin* informs of it to the men and women waiting outside. Just after the delivery, the mother is given soup of drumstick and coconut and after that the navel-cord of the infant is cut with a piece of tile. The placenta is buried in the same room where delivery has taken place and fire is kept over the spot for three days. Some people burn the placenta and then bury the ash. It is believed that if a barren woman digs out this placenta and eats a little of it, she would become fertile; and to prevent this, lest some misfortune may befall the infant, the placenta is safely buried inside the room.

In front of the delivery room a branch of *anda*-castor, (*Recinus communis*) is hung and an old shoe may be placed below the cot of the infant and the mother so that evil spirits may not come near. Nobody is allowed to go to the room wearing red clothes, the explanation being the same as in the Satnamis. The Kurmis also like the other castes believe in re-birth and examine the infant's body to discover certain distinguishing marks. The *Panbooda*, and *Suruj-laika* is also believed in and the palate of the infant is examined to ascertain this nature.

The Kurmis celebrate the *chhatti* on the 5th day after child-birth. The mother and child are given baths in warm water, the house is cleaned and the barber is called for shaving. After bath, the mother comes out of the room with the child and breaks a coconut in the court-yard offering it to *Suruj Narayan*. Black bangles and a coconut are offered to the *Sat Vahinia* deity. From the *chhatti* day the mother starts taking cooked rice once a day but she cannot yet partake of *basi* (a kind of food described earlier). The drumstick and *bari* soup are given to her and *til-ladoo* and *kankhe-pani* form part of the food and nourishment prescribed to her. On the *chhatti* day the Dhobi comes and takes away all the clothes used for these 5 days. The birth pollution is removed on the *chhatti* day and the services of the Satnami *suin* are discontinued from this day. The house is cleaned and washed and a feast is given to caste members. If the child is to be branded, this is done on the *chhatti* day.

Barhi is celebrated on the ninth day after birth. On this day the women sing some songs and a feast is given to caste members and other villagers. The name-giving of the child takes place on the 21st day after birth when the brahmin *pandit* consults his almanac and gives a name to the child. The *mundan* or head-shaving of the child is done when he grows up from

9. 'Bari' is the ball made of ground 'Urad' pulse in which the pulp of white gourd is mixed. These are dried and used for currey-making.



Illustration 76

Kaskoo's Son



Illustration 77

Punnoo's daughter



Illustration 78

Ramadhar Satnami



Illustration 79

Niru Satnami

PLATE LVI

PLATE LVII



Illustration 80

Dulorin Lohar

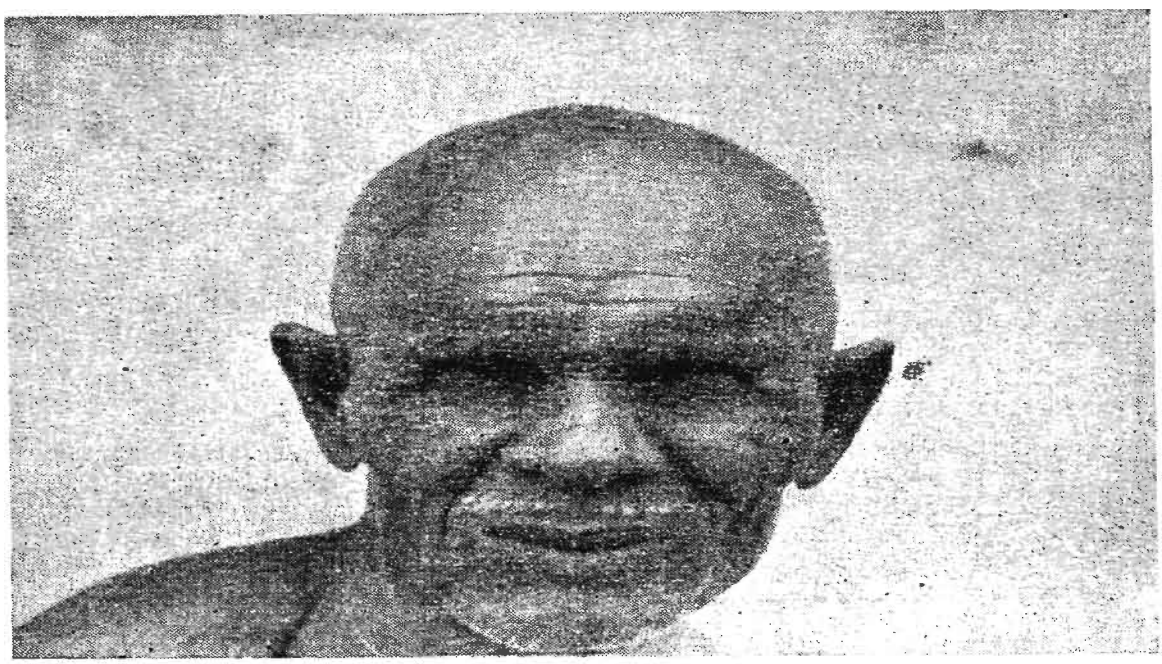


Illustration 81

Samedas Satnami

PLATE LVIII



Illustration 82
Kalloo (Bisahin Satnami) who dresses like a boy

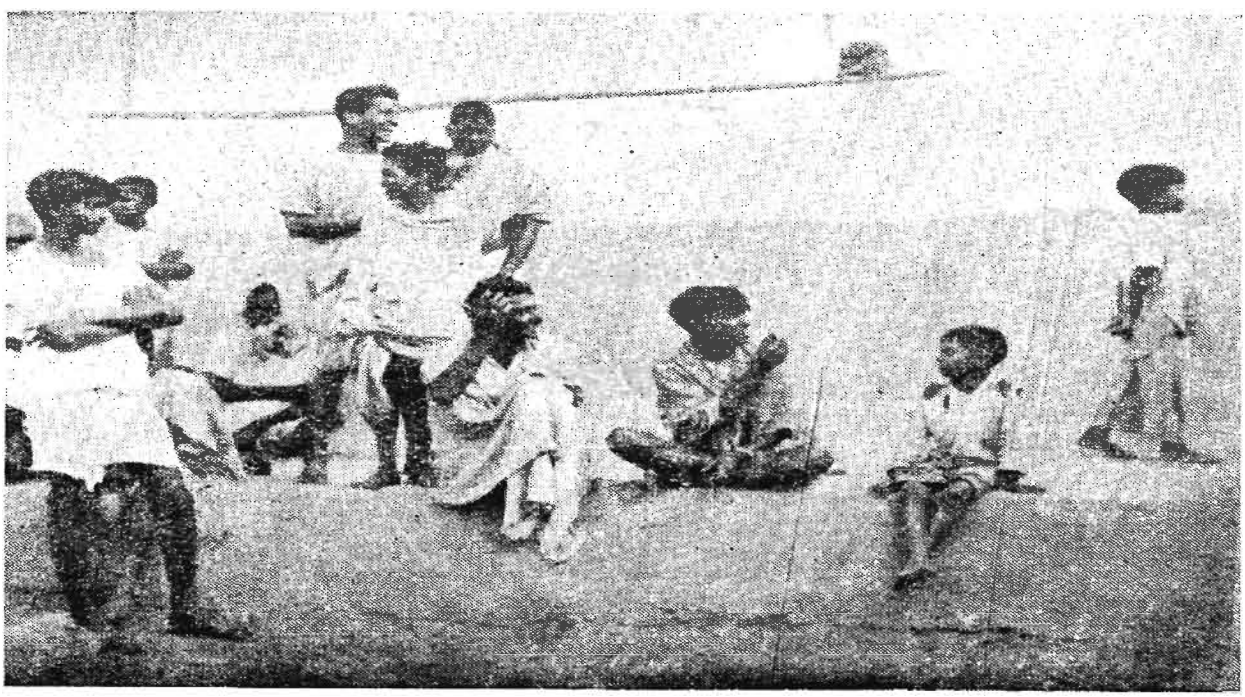


Illustration 83
Kalloo smoking a cigarette which she asked for from us

1st to 3rd year. This is usually done at Rajim fair on the confluence of Mahanadi and Pairi rivers in Raipur district. The head-shaving is known as *Jhalar utarna*.

Panka

In the Panka household, the first delivery may either be in the husband's house or in the house of the woman's father according to convenience. *Sadhori* is observed in the seventh or eighth month as in other communities. At the time of delivery, the village *suin* is called and elderly ladies of the house may assist her. In case of delayed parturition, the *baiga from* Tamora is called to remove the affliction by *totka* (black art). But the Pankas believe more in taking difficult cases to the hospital rather than depending on the efficacy of the *baiga's* powers. There has, however, been no such difficult case in the household.

Among the Pankas also, the mother is given drumstick soup and coconut just after delivery, but before the navel-cord of the new-born is cut, and then, for two days nothing is given to her — not even water. The navel-cord is cut with the reed (*bharua-kadi*) and is buried in the same room. Fire is kept over the place where the placenta is buried. Like other castes, the Pankas also believe in re-birth and examine the infant's body for supposed marks and similarly they also believe in the *Panbooda* and *Surujlaika* nature and examine the palate of the infant for pustules. As in other castes, the Pankas also hang the branch of castor in front of the delivery room and also present offerings to the *Sat Vahinia* deity.

The Pankas celebrate the *chhatti* on the 5th day after birth. The *suin* bathes the mother and child in warm water, the house is washed with cow-dung and clothes are given to the Dhobi for washing. After bathing the mother comes out with the infant and breaks a coconut in the court-yard. The barber shaves the head of the infant (*mundan*) on the *chhatti* day. The usual payment to the barber and the washerman is Rs. 2/- each. The birth pollution is removed on this day. The *barhi* is celebrated on the seventh day. There does not appear to be any explanation for this early celebration of the *barhi* and the Panka says that they cannot wait for twelve days to celebrate this simple ceremony. On this day the mother and the child bathe and the house is washed. Delicious dishes are prepared and ceremony is over. The Pankas do not brand the child if it is healthy. If it is sickly looking, he is branded in the stomach.

The name-giving is usually done on the 10th day after birth. But it is not incumbent to celebrate it on that very day. The Brahmin *pandit* from Sirri is consulted for giving the name to the child. On this day the function is bigger than on the *barhi* day. The caste people from nearby villages are invited and a feast is given to them, and if possible the *Chauka* (religious ceremony) is also performed for which the *Chauka Guru* from Selud is invited.

Childhood and Adolescence

Children are rarely beaten in Chhattisgarh and in Kosa also the same holds good, save the rare case when Jairamdas Panka started slapping his son in our presence. May be he wished to assert his father-hood before us or may be he did not like the son to disturb 'official proceedings'. Otherwise children are really loved. The villagers of Kosa do not allow the children to play such 'dangerous play' (games) as *kabaddi, khokho* and so on lest they should get hurt.

The segregation of sexes is observed to come in at a very late stage. In fact it is difficult to find out when the segregation takes place. Girls and boys play together upto 9-10 years and then even upto 13-14 years the girls and boys move out together as can be observed when the cattle go grazing and girls, about 14 years of age go with them to collect cow-dung where they freely mix with the boys. Even Bhookhin (aged 15) who has left one husband and at present has a second one, was not at home like a good house wife but in a playful mood and Butiya (aged 21) freely joined a group of boys in the game known as *bhotkul*. In short, there does not seem to be any inhibition attached to this free mixing. Kalloo, the 21 years old girl who dresses and lives like a boy, of course, moves only with the boys of her age. But then Kalloo is a different matter.

Kalloo

Though the name Kalloo brings the picture of a boy before the eyes, the Kalloo of Kosa is a young girl. She is the female who is the solitary case of "unmarried" in the age-group 20-24 in the table on marital-status shown in Chapter II.

Kalloo eluded being discovered during the first four visits to the village and it was only during the last trip that she was accidentally encountered. The real name of Kalloo is Bisahin. She is 21 years of age, the daughter of 55 years old Balwa Satnami. Before Kalloo was born, Balwa had lost 3 or 4 children. He somehow had a fancy for a son but, as his luck would have it, Kalloo came instead and Balwa from the beginning

addressed her as Kalloo, dressing her up as a boy and using the masculine gender in addressing her. This went on till Kalloo was 8-10 years of age. From the beginning she also displayed a tendency to play with boys and also speaking in the masculine gender. But when the signs of puberty came on her person and when people could say *"alga dare ke laik ho ge he"* (now she is grown up enough to cover her breasts). Kalloo still donned the shirt and *panchha*. She still got her hair cut in the male fashion and would not listen to the entreaties of her father who doted upon her. She was thus allowed to have her way and Balwa thought that she would soon realize her womanhood and out of shame start putting on clothes suited for woman. Balwa's hopes were, however, belied and as time advanced Kalloo became more and more manly, started smoking *bidi*, bringing water on *kanwar* as the men do, going about with young boys and not mixing with girls. She was not a docile person anyway but rather offensive and even now everybody, young and old, is afraid of her. She may abuse anybody or even beat them and so people leave her alone and do not joke with her. She is, however, quite friendly with two boys of her age-group and was seen during the survey sitting with them alone under the *Peepal* tree near the *gouthan* smoking a *bidi*. She, however, obliged us by letting us take her photograph after which she demanded a cigarette and smoked it (Plate LVIII). It has not been possible to get any detailed information about her because the villagers were not willing to give the same and as said earlier, it was towards the fag end of the field work that Kalloo came to light.

Kalloo, as Bisahin which is her real name, was the fourth child of Balwa Satnami. The three preceding children born to Balwa were all girls.

Because of Balwa's unaccountable liking for a son, he kept Bisahin as if she were a boy and now though she has already stepped into full womanhood, she lives like a man, does all the works which men will do. She even bathe in that part of the tank which is usually used by men but while bathing she keeps the upper part of her body covered. Though she is quite grown up and girls of her age have already had one or two issues, Kalloo does not seem to have any liking for marital life. As far as is known she is a virgin so far because if she had any 'affair' it would have been known. On her mother trying to argue with her that her destiny is as a woman and she would get married, she says that she does not feel the desire to get married and Kalloo buys her clothes herself from Durg from her earnings. She is a miracle at earth digging and works in the fields of big cultivators like Ghanshyam Kurmi. She avoids the company of woman and is friendly with some boys but even they are afraid of her.

Kalloo is by no means an unattractive girl. She of course, has a dark complexion but that is no bar to her getting married. What psychological reasons there are in her adopting the mode of life peculier to her sex, is not within the competence of the present writer. But Kalloo *alias* Bisahin is undoubtedly an interesting feature of Kosa.

Conception of beauty in Kosa

Complexion is a criterion of female beauty according to the villagers. A woman with a fair complexion is regarded as beautiful by all. A fair-complexioned woman is appreciated in the following terms, which were recorded from the village. *"Bane sundar hawe. Fak-fak le pandri dikhate"* (Is quite beautiful. Looks absolutely white). *"Bane sughar dikhte"* (Looks quite charming) *"Bane sunder hawe, Sahibin asan dikhte"* (Is quite beautiful. Looks like the wife of some officer).

Breasts and buttocks of women are the other criteria for judgment of a woman's beauty. But, as the people said, in a fair-complexioned woman these may not be necessary as a deciding factor. A woman with well-developed and pointed breasts is regarded to be more beautiful than one with undeveloped breasts or with rounded breasts. The villagers, however, do not appear to have any terminology for the different types of breasts. Buttocks are also a criterion of beauty and a girl with buttocks like a man is not liked. To be beautiful, a woman should not have big, protruding teeth and she should not have any deformity.

Means of Procuring a Spouse

Six different types or means of procuring a mate are known and practised in Kosa. These are:—

1 *Bihai, Bihav*, or the regular marriage.
2 *Adh-Bihav* or *Barandi*
3 *Randi banana*
4 *Chhandwe banana*
5 *Udariya or Udaliya*
6 *Paithoo*

The *bihav* or regular marriage is not being described here since the marriage rituals differ from caste to caste and detailed caste-wise description of *bihav* or *bihai* has been given later in this chapter. It may suffice here to mention that the regular marriage is known in Kosa as *bihai*. *Bihai* is actually an adjective e.g. *Bihai douki* (married wife) and *Bihav* is the noun

and that these terms are used in contradiction to *banaye* which is used both as adjective and noun, e.g. *banaye douki* or simply as *banaye*.

The *bihai, bihav* or regular marriage may be of two types — *bihav* and *chhot bihav*. Normally the boy's party goes to the girl's house for the celebration of marriage, this is *bihav* but where the girl's parents are poor and cannot feed the marriage-party, it is agreed that the girl's parents would come to the boy's house with the girl and the celebration would be done there, the boy's father bearing the entire expenditure. Separate figures for *bihav* and *chhot bihav* were, however, not available.

Adh-bihav or Barandi

The literal meaning of *adh-bihav* is half-marriage and *barandi* is the other name for this type of marriage. This type of marriage becomes a social necessity because of the prevalence of child-marriage. If a girl becomes widow before she attains puberty (i.e. child-widow) she is sought by another man who marries her by *adh-bihai*. The marriage does not consist in any detailed ritual like the regular marriage, because, it is said, 'a woman gets married with full rites only once in life'. In the *adh-bihai* a very simple ceremony takes place; the man offers bangles to the girl which she puts on and then a feast is given.

Barandi is the other name of this marriage. *Barandi* is described in the District Gazetteer of Bilaspur District in the connection with the Chamar caste in that district, and it is quoted below:—[10]

"Widows are either known as *barandi* or *randi*, the *randi* being a widow in the ordinary sense of the term and the *barandi*, a girl who has been married but has not lived with her husband. Such a girl is not required to break her bangles on her husband's death."

In Kosa the present wife of Nangaiha Satnami came to him after *adh-bihav*.

Randi banana

This is widow re-marriage. A widow is married by some man in the *choori* form i.e. by offering her bangles and keeping her as his wife. Usually the younger brother of the deceased husband has the first claim to marry the widow so that she remains in the same family. But if she of her own accord, marries out of that family, the family of the deceased is entitled to receive some compensation from her new husband. There are two such cases in Kosa where after the death of the man, the widows were kept with *choori* formality by the younger brothers of the deceased and these cases are Hatoi and Budgoo Satnamis. Hatoi has three wives, one of whom married as *randi banaye*, is his own brother's widow. Thus we have two cases of junior levirate in Kosa.

Chhandwe

A woman who separates from her husband is known as *chhandwa* and when she is taken by a man as his wife after the *choori* formality, the marriage is known as *chhandwe*.

The social recognition for the *chhandwe* marriage is lower than for the *randi banaye* and *barandi* marriages, because whereas the latter are considered to be necessary and socially desirable, the former is considered to be an evil practice. Whereas in the latter cases it is necessary for the "sexual tranquality" of the society that the widows are accomodated in re-marriage, the former practice encourages the women to run away from their husband's house, they know that they would not remain without a husband for long. There are 21 cases of this type in the village that came to light during survey — 18 in the Satnamis, 2 in Rawats and 1 in Panka. The latest case of this type of marriage is that of Ledga-Bhookhin. Bhookhin was married in 1960 at village Parsahi which is 4 miles away from here. She lived with her husband for sometime and came to her father's place here for a visit. She has not gone to Parsahi since and is now living with Ledga Satnami as his wife. In the table that follows this example has been classified under *udariya* because Bhookhin and Ledga had run away from the village and returned here after some time. Bhookhin's case is not included in the 18 cases referred to above.

Udariya

This is the elopement or runaway marriage. It is described by the villagers as below. The man under some pretext lures the woman to go with him somewhere and then makes her his wife. It is apparent from this that in the villagers' opinion, the main culprit in this show is the man. In practice, however, this is rarely the case. The elopement is jointly managed and in majority of the cases which were observed elsewhere in Chhattisgarh, it is the woman who is the main partner in the game. After elopement the man keeps the woman as his wife by *choori* form of marriage. The status of this marriage is the same as that of *chhandwe* and lower than *randi banana* and *barandi*. There is only one case of this type in Kosa at present that of Ledga — Bhookhin.

10. District Gazetteer, Bilaspur District, p. 95.

Bhookhin was married when she was seven years of age. When she became 9 years old, she was taken by her husband to Parsahi. But after some time Bhookhin had a quarrel with him. She returned to Kosa and declared that she would not go to him since his was a very poor family.

Bhookhin had in fact become very friendly with Ledga, a boy of her age and she used to play and move with him in the village prior to her visit to her husband. After running away from her husband, she lived in Kosa for about four months; her intimacy with Ledga developed and then one day the lovers ran away from Kosa. They lived in Urla village for about 15 days and from there they went to Doma and Sirsa villages. By this time the parents had become anxious about them and after these exploits the couple returned and Bhookhin was accepted by the village as Ledga's wife.

Paithoo

Paithoo also known as *Paithu* is marriage by instrusion. In this case the woman simply walks into the house of the man whom she loves and declares that he is her husband. She does not leave the house even if tortured and beaten by other members of the man's family or by the man himself. In case of her being taken back forcibly by her parents or her former husband she runs away again and comes back to this man again 'intruding' into his house. The man thus compelled makes her his wife by *choori* form but the marriage, though socially recognised, is considered to be lower than even *udariya* and *chhandwe*.

It is said that a woman already in love with a man takes recourse to *paithoo* when she finds the man to be backing away from the promises he once gave to her. But it is doubtful if this actually is the case. The *paithoo* course is adopted by unmarried women, by widows and by *chhandwa* who because of their illicit exploits become pregnant and when it is difficult to suppress the pregnancy, they adopt this mode. It, however, thus be more natural to assume that the *pathoo* or *paithau* is taken recourse to in such extreme cases.

There are 3 instances of *paithoo* marriage in Kosa and all of these are found in the Satnamis. One of these *paithoo* marriages is that of Balwa Satnami (aged 55) whose daughter Bisahin now moves about as male — Kalloo — referred to earlier.

Paithoo Marriages in Kosa

(1) Gadawa Satnami's sister Jamuna was married at an early age and after marriage she did not go to live with her husband because she had not attained puberty. In the village, she developed intimacy with Balwa Satnami and played and moved with him. When she attained puberty she went to her husband in *gawan* and came back to Kosa after living with him for some time and her friendship with Balwa became greater. Then she went again to her husband only to come back again to befriend Balwa. After some time she went to her husband and lived with him for a year. But after this a quarrel arose between them and Jamuna beat her husband and ran away from him. She came to Balwa's house and entered it. What had happened to Balwa's married wife is not known to the villagers.

Because Jamuna belonged to Kosa itself no quarrel arose between Gadawa and Balwa and the people accepted them as husband and wife. Balwa had of course to pay some compensation to the husband of Jamuna.

(2) Bharosa Satnami's daughter Jhulan was married at Kasidih which is 4 miles from Kosa. But between the time of her marriage and her going to her husband, she became friendly with Bhoklu. On attainment of puberty her husband from Kasidih came and took her away and she lived with him for a year. But then she ran away from him and entered Bhoklu's house. When her parents came to know that she is living in Bhoklu's house, they came to him and demanded their daughter. Chintaram and others also intervened and Jhulan was taken away by her parents.

She, however, did not go to her husband and after a month or so again came to live in Bhoklu's house. Bhoklu's father and brothers accepted her as Bhoklu's wife. Her husband at Kasidih was enraged and one day he beat Bhoklu's mother when she was going to village Pangri. The mother went before the *Nyaya panchayat* at Gunderdehi and the *Nyaya panchayat* would surely have fined him. But a compromise was effected and Bhoklu's parents paid him Rs. 200/- as compensation.

(3) Surjantin, the sister of Shobharam, was married at village Sirri (1 mile). She lived with her husband for two years; but when she was in Kosa, she had become friendly with Bisahoo and the lovers used to meet in the fields and on the stream often even when she was at Sirri because Kosa and Sirri are adjacent villages.

Surjantin was in the habit of running away from her husband and come to Kosa and every time Shobharam used to send her back. But once she came to Kosa and went to Bisahoo's house and said that she is his wife. Her husband of Sirri came to Kosa with some people. He did not press for the return of his wife but



Illustration 84

Bhookhin Satnami



Illustration 85

Hatoi Satnami

PLATE LX



Illustration 86

Diagrammatic representation of social approval of various types of marriages. *Bihav* is regarded to be the highest type and *Paithoo* as the lowest type.

demanded compensation and Bisahoo had to pay a *bihati* of Rs. 200/-.

Polygamy, Sororate and Levirate

Hatoi Satnami of Kosa combines in him the example of all these three characters. He has three wives i.e. his regularly married wife and 2 wives in *choori* form. After the death of his elder brother Hatoi married the brother's widow (*Randi banaye*). He thus presents the case of junior levirate in Kosa. After some time he kept the younger sister of his married wife in *choori* form and thus again presents an example of junior sororate.

Hatoi Satnami must have been a dashing and cheerful person in his youth. He is a previous convict being found guilty of an offence under Section 429 I. P. C. and fined Rs. 50/-. In 1938 he was suspected of an offence of lurking house tresspass with intent to commit theft punishable under Section 457 I.P.C. The police investigated the case but did not find any evidence and Hatoi was not prosecuted. As Mannu Satnami said of him "Hatoi ploughs three acres of land every day. And with only one plough, Sir", — Mannu had said this laughing when enquiries were being made about land-holding possessed by individual cultivators in Kosa. But Mannu became silent when somebody said to him "why do you not take some of his land in *adhiya?*" (Adhiya means share-cropping). By this remark Mannu was hinting at the three wives of Hatoi — whom he married 55, 37 and 12 years back respectively.

Frequencies of the marriages described above and approval — contours

Frequencies of the various types of marriages described above is shown here in the tabular form:—

Caste	*Number of cases of*				
	Barandi or Adh-bihav	*Randi banaye*	*Chhandwe*	*Udariya*	*Paithoo*
Satnami	1	2	18	1	3
Rawat	—	—	2	—	—
Kurmi	—	—	—	—	—
Panka	—	—	1	—	—
Lohar	—	—	—	—	—

The percentages of these various types of marriages (other than *bihav*) in the different castes would work out to be as under. In this calculation, total number of married females as returned in 1961 enumeration has been taken into consideration.

Caste	*Total No. of household*	*Total No. of married females*	*No. of females married by choori (not in bihav)*	*% of non-bihav-marriages*
Satnami	55	73	25	34.2
Rawat	5	6	2	33.3
Kurmi	3	4	—	0.0
Panka	1	2	1	50.0
Lohar	1	—	—	—
Total for Kosa	65	85	28	32.9

From the description given in the foregoing, it is clear that the *bihai* or the regular marriage is undoubtedly the highest and most respected form of marriage. The *randi-banaye* and *barandi* types come next in order of social recognition and approval and the society regards these types necessary. The *chhandwe* and *udariya* types though socially recognised are not looked upon with approval and the young men are always haunted by the fear of their wives running away. These types would therefore take their place below the *randi* and *barandi* types. The *paithau* or *paithoo* type is supposed to be the lowest type of marriage because it is forced on the man against his will and because quite a good amount of 'freedom' is already enjoyed by the couple in the pre-marital stage. The contours of these various marriage-types may be diagrammatically represented in Illustration 86 (Pl. LX).

A question may arise here as to how people get information about women available for re-marriage, that is, girls who have left their husbands or have become widows and are eligible for re-marriage. One of the sources is the markets where men and women meet. Another source is the members of the caste who inform the boy's father or the boy whose wife has deserted him that a certain girl is available for *choori*. The following case would illustrate this.

A girl of village Pangri was married in village Chirpoti (The present age of the girl is 25 years). She lived with her husband for about three years in all. But she was in the habit of frequently running away from her husband's house. Her husband sometimes used to follow her to Pangri and live with her in her parent's house. The wife of Lachhman, Shobharam's son, had died, and Shobharam desired that he should get a wife. Some of his friends from Pangri told him about this girl and so he went to Pangri with Lachhman. The girl's parents were too willing because Shobharam gave them some money and Lachhman brought this

girl as his wife in *choori* form. This happened about a month ago.

This girl's former husband and people from his side have come to Shobharam 2 or 3 times to demand compensation (*bihati*) and they had also come on 13th January, 1962, (when investigation was going on in Kosa for the present survey) but Shobharam has asked them to wait for some more time — say 4 months or a year. In their last visit they came to Ghintaram Satnami also and told him what Shobharam had said and Chintaram, because of loyalty to the village, said that Shobharam was right. He also told them that if they agree to accept half the *bihati*, he would try to mediate. But since they were adamant in getting full amount i.e. Rs. 200/- Chintaram folded his hands and requested them to keep patience and not precipitate a quarrel.

As one of the villagers said they keep on the look-out for women who have become widowed or have separated from their husbands. *"Sabe man soriyabat rahithen"*. (All keep on the look out).

The regular marriage

Bihav customs of the Satnamis

The Satnamis generally marry their children within 15 years of age. Since the wife should not be taller that her husband, the boy is measured with a stick and when 3 or 4 people from the boy's house go to the prospective bride's house to make the marriage proposal, they take this stick along. In case their proposal is accepted, they measure the height of the girl with this stick. If she is found to be shorter, then only further negotiations are carried on.

Since the height of boys and girls at this age is not indicative of the height they would attain on growing up, this operation of comparing their height at this young age appears to be of no use. It is, however, done very faithfully. The boy's father or guardian as the case may be, then makes the proposal: "Will you give away your daughter to us in marriage. Please also take the opinion of girl's mother". The girl's father ask his wife's opinion as well as the opinion of other relations and if he is able to entertain the proposal, he invites the caste-officials, the *Bhandari* and the *Santidar*. The boy's people, if they are from another village and not known to these mediators, are introduced to them as *"Saga man aye hen"* (caste-people have come) and their opinion is obtained. Then the bargain starts. The boy's father has to pay for the girl. There may be many determining factors for a girl's price like her beauty, her age and her father's economic position. The bride-price generally prevalent in the village is Rs. 300/-, one tussar-cloth *lugda* which is called *poteya* and 2 ordinary *lugdas*.

An auspicious date for the marriage is found out from the Satnami *pandit* from Khopli village but sometimes even Ghanshyam Kurmi is also consulted. The invitation is sent to the relatives by sending them either areca-nut (*supari*) or bread (*roti*). The various rituals performed during marriage are *tel* (oil) *mayan* (Incovation of deities and departed ones) and *bihav* (marriage). The first two rituals are observed both in the house of the bride, and bridegroom but the final ceremony i.e. *bihav* is celebrated in the house of the girl, except in the case of *chhot-bihav* where because of the poverty of the girl's parents, the *bihav* is also performed in the boy's house.

Tel

This is also known as *telmati* or *choolmati* (meaning "oil-earth" or "oven-earth" respectively). Some women known as *suwasin* go to the field singing and bring earth from there. This earth is believed to be sacred and it is mixed with cow-dung and the house is washed with it. The earth is kept in the centre of the shed (*madwa*) and branches of mango and *doomar* (*Ficus glomerata*) trees are stuck in it. A *kalash* containing turmeric and water is also kept there. On this day, oil is put over the bodies of the boy and girl in their respective houses. Five or seven women dip their hands in a dish containing oil and in turn put oil on the person of the bride or bridegroom. The ceremony is known as *tel chaghana* and is done in the following manner. The woman dips her hand in oil, and touches the feet, knee, shoulders, fore-head and head of the person. This is done five times, the woman every time dipping her hand in oil.

Mayan

The exact meaning of this term would probably be — "inviting the ancestral spirits" because that is what is done during the ritual. On the day of this ritual all the members of the family keep fast. In the *kalash* kept under the marriage-shed, seven wicks are lighted to represent 'seven-names' (*Sat-nam*), which according to the people is the name of the caste. This is of course no meaning of the caste name and the interpretation may have been introduced by some caste-priest at sometime in the past. The term *Sat-nam* has been referred to in the published literature as "True name" and *Sat* in Chhattisgarhi means 'True or Truth' or 'Power of truth' e.g. *"Wo deota ka bada sat hot*

he" (That God is a truth or that God has great power).

After the lamps are lighted, all the people gather near the *kalash* and shout in loud voices, "Come out and participate in this joyous celebration". Near the *kalasha* an earthen pitcher is kept containing some rice and one *ladoo* (sweet ball) as a token of invitation to the ancestral spirits. The pitcher is covered with a lid (*parai*).

In the boy's house, five pieces of turmeric are ground and then taken to the *Bhandari*. The turmeric powder is further ground in the house of the *Bhandari* and the women dance and sing. This turmeric powder is then mixed with oil and rubbed over the face and body of the bridegroom.

Bihav

The bridegroom is decorated and dressed. He puts on a yellow *kurta* and *dhoti* which the weaver (*Koshta*) from another village supplies, and also some ornaments like *choora*. He wears a turban over which is put the *mukut* or the head-gear made out of *chhind*-leaves by the Marar of Pangri. The marriage procession consisting of as many relations as possible then goes to the girl's village. On reaching there they sit in some open space to be received and taken to their boarding place. The reception is known as *parghani*.

The final ceremony of the *bihav* consists in the *bhanwar*. This takes place in the night and consists in the bride and bridegroom taking five rounds of the mango and ficus branches already fixed in the centre of the shed. On the second day a ritual known as *hardahi* takes place and this consists in the people of the bride's house putting wet turmeric powder on the persons of the people from the boy's side. This is an occasion on which free and uninhibited joking and retorts are indulged in, sometimes verging on the obscenity, for example, a man may catch a woman with whom he has 'joking relationship' and rub this powder on her face, hands, breasts and navel. After the *hardahi* the marriage-party returns.

On reaching his house, the bridegroom has to perform a ritual which consists in his kicking a pitcher containing rice, and the grain so scattered is collected and put back into the pitcher. The bridegroom kicks and scatters the rice grain seven times and the bride has to collect the same every time and put it back into the container. The bride being normally of a tender age, somebody from her parents house, usually an old lady, accompanies her. The woman accompanying the bride is called *lokadihin*. After some two or three days the bride returns to her father's house.

Gauna

Since the girls are usually married at a pre-puberty age the *gauna* becomes necessary. This ceremony takes place after the girl attains puberty. In the *gauna* or *gawan* as it is called, the boy's father or guardian has again to pay Rs. 50-60 to the girl's father and one *lugda*. The parents of the girl are entitled to use this money and the *lugda* themselves and the money or the *lugda* is not given to the girl. In the *gawan* ritual, the boy and the girl make five rounds about a *kalash* and the boy takes the girl to his village. She lives there with him for a month or so and then again returns to her father's place and lives there for a year before again going back to her husband.

The Problem of Divorce and Separation

The table showing the percentage of non-*bihav* marriages given in the preceding pages shows that 32.9 per cent of the married women in Kosa are married in this way and out of this those in castes other than Satnamis are only 3.5%, the rest belonging to the Satnamis alone and in the Satnamis out of 24 such marriages in the village 17 (70%) are only *chhandwe* marriages i.e. those re-married after separation from their regularly married husbands. This unusually high ratio of separation observed among the Satnamis of this village is a common feature of this caste in Chhattisgarh. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, the separation is effected by the woman and the people regard this as a curse of the caste.

The description of the Satnami marriage itself suggests causes of this frequent separation and divorce. One of the main considerations is economic. The parents of the girl receive money from the boy's side for their daughter and cases are not rare where the parents after marrying their child-girl to a certain boy and taking money from his parents encourage her to run away with a different boy from whom also they take money. Then another reason for frequent separations is the early age at which the girls are married and the time that intervenes before she starts living with her husband. Between her marriage and the *gawan* ceremony, promptings of Nature force her to enter into friendship with some other boy of the village and if she starts liking this boy more than her husband, she leaves him (the husband) on the slightest pretext. In any case her friendship with the other boy at least induces her to compare her husband with her lover and she naturally finds the husband not as ardent as the boy-friend. The case of Bhookhin and Ledga, referred to earlier, may be mentioned here also. Bhookhin was married at village Parsahi at an early

age. Before she went to Parsahi after her *gawan* ceremony she had already developed friendship with Ledga, a boy of her age in Kosa. After her *gawan* she went to Parsahi, but found that Ledga was a more interesting man than her husband. She ran away from him and eloped with Ledga. Thirdly, sometimes the disparity in age is great or the 'stick measurement' fails i.e. the girl grows faster and becomes a woman; the boy remaining a boy. Fourthly, when after the *gawan* she returns to her father's house, for one year after having lived with her husband for sometime, this period of one year is too long for her to lead a celibate life. She makes friends in the village, in the markets she visits, and in other villages she goes to and in very many cases becomes the *choori* wife of some one of these acquaintances.

When asked about the causes of frequent divorces in their community, the Satnamis of Kosa gave the following factors.

(a) *"OKAR MAN NAHIN MANE ME MAIKE CHAL DET HE"* (She is not able to adjust with her husband and goes back to her parents house).

(b) *"BALAKPAN KE SATHI JADA PASAND HOY ME OKAR PAS BHAGA JAT HE"* (The childhood boy-friend is liked better than her husband and she runs away to him).

(c) *"BAP-MAHTARI KE NEEYAT KHARAP HOT HE. APAN LADKI SE RUPIYA KAMAT HEN. EK ADMI LA BECH KE OLA DUSAR KARA BHAGA DET HEN, AU RUPIYA LEHIN"* (The parents have evil intentions. They want to earn money through their daughter. First they sell her to a man and later they prompt her to run away with another man from whom again they demand money).

(d) *"HAMAR JAT TO RAKSHASHA JAT HE — MAHARAJ"* (Sir, our caste is a demon caste).

(e) *"OKAR DAUKA OKAR MANG LA PURA NAHIN PAYE TO, KAISE KARBE"* (What can you do, her husband is not able to fulfil her demands).

The present writer had once to deal with a case of the Satnami caste in Raipur District in 1958. A woman having a 5 years old daughter had run away from her husband and taken the daughter also with her. The husband had come with the application that the Law should help him get back the daughter since she was his daughter. He did not care whether the woman comes back or not. On further enquiry, he had stated that he had made a bargain with a boy for marrying the girl to him. But now the daughter was gone and he was losing this money. Instead, the faithless woman, would sell her somewhere and get the money. This case, though not in any way connected with the present survey, speaks of the economic reason indicated earlier in this connection.

When a woman runs away from her husband, he leaves no stones unturned to get her back. He goes in search of her with many friends and well-wishers and sometimes the 'bringing back' is very cruel and at the same time funny. 20-25 people go to her parents or to the house of the person where she has gone and—

(i) In the night when she is sleeping bring her with the cot. Sometimes they are so furious that they set the house on fire;

(ii) When she is going to the tank or to ease herself, they ambush her and forcibly bring her to the husband. This has happened in the village but the name of the woman has not been disclosed;

(iii) They catch hold of her and put a noose in her nose-bore and tying a rope bring her home. This was done to Baren's wife when she was caught. The people who caught her, took out her nose-ring and in the nose-bore they put the thread of the *kardhan* and then, like a bullock, with a noose through her nose, she was brought to the village. Everybody saw her being brought like this.

The villagers have told one very interesting case of elopment in his village. 'X' was married to her husband 'Y', when she was only 9 years old. When she started putting on the *alga* on her shoulders — (i. e. attained puberty) the people took her husband to the village for the *gawan*. 'Y' had become *samajhdar* and *mechha* (moustaches) had grown on his lips. After due ceremony 'X' was brought to the village and 'Y' was very happy. But 'X' was of a sulky nature and irritable by temper and she often quarrelled with 'Y'. One day under the pretext that she was going to ease herself, she ran away from 'Y' but her intentions had somehow become known and people chased her. 'X' on sensing that she was being chased, jumped into a tank and hid herself among the *purain-pan* (lotus leaves). She was, however, detected and when taken out, 5-7 *leeches* were found sticking to her body at two or three parts. It was with some difficulty that the leeches could be taken out and she was in great pain. She came back to her husband and has since been living with him. It is really strange that this woman has not deserted her husband so far.

The Satnamis have a caste panchayat dealing with the cases of running away and separation but they do

not seem to be able to check the frequency of these cases which are probably highest in this caste in the whole of Chhattisgarh. No final explanation could possibly be offered without a more detailed study for this off-handish attitude in matters of sex. In this matter at least, the Satnamis are almost like the people of the West.

In this connection, the case of a Satnami of village Tamora (one and a half miles from Kosa) may be mentioned. This man in Tamora village has had twenty wives already and the present one living with him is the twenty-first wife. But there was never any polygamy. At no time in his married life did he have two wives at the same time. One after another the wives went on deserting him and the indefatigable Satnami went on procuring a mate for himself. At the ripe old age of 58-60 years, he is living with the twenty-first wife. She may or may not be the last.

Though cases like the one above are on the extreme side they at least indicate the limits to which separation and desertion can lead.

Divorce and Economy

This social problem of frequent divorce and the custom of the caste in the payment for the bride has economic aspects as well. Firstly, when a legally-married woman runs away from her husband to another man, the latter has to pay marriage compensation to the former. The compensation is known as *Bihati* and the person who is so deserted keeps another woman and has to pay for her. And this paying for the woman one keeps is often the cause of making him sell his property. In Kosa, as would be seen later in the chapter on Village Economy, there are some non-resident land-holders also and Moti Marar of village Pangri has 4.67 acres of land in this village. Enquiries revealed that he got this land from Itwari and Bonda Satnami. Itwari had taken a loan from him since he wanted the money for getting a wife from village Bhainsbor. The loan was granted and Itwari got a wife but the land was mortgaged and Itwari could never repay the loan. Motiram Marar thus got Itwari's land. Motiram further advanced some loan to Bonda Satnami and mortgaged his land. Bonda wanted to get a wife for his son and not able to repay the loan, Bonda had to give up the land.

The Initiation Ceremony of the Satnamis

After a Satnami is married and he begins to live with his wife, he becomes eligible for initiation as a member of the sect and wearing of the 'sacred thread'. The initiation is known as *Kan Phunkwana* (getting blown in the ears) and it is at this ceremony that the men are given the sacred-thread-*Janeu*. The ceremony is quite inexpensive and can be performed by giving a rupee and a coconut to the *guru* who visits the village once a year. The ceremony is as below:—

The floor of the room or the verandah of the house where the ceremony is to take place is washed with cow-dung. A design (*chouk*) is made on the ground with wheat or rice flour and over that a cloth is spread for the *guru* to sit. Another cloth is spread a little away from this for the husband and wife who are to be initiated. The novices take their bath before the ceremony and some elders of the caste are invited to attend the ceremony.

The *guru* lights a wick-lamp and when the couple are seated together, their hands are covered with a cloth. The *guru* then gives them the *mantra*. The *mantra* is:—

"BIRAGI TOOMA MAT KHANA, NAHIN TO GURU KO KHAYE. KUNDRU JHAN KHAO. MANS MACHHRI MAT KHAO. CHONGI-MAKHUR MAT PIYO. GURU SAKSHI SATYA-NARAYAN BHAGWAN".

(Do not eat the sweet cucumber having the shape of a *kamandal;* eating this would tantamount to eating the *guru* himself. Do not eat *kundru* (a type of vegetable). Do not eat meat and fish. Do not smoke. Let God Satyanarayan be the witness).

When the *guru* puts the *tilak* on the fore-head, he recites this rhyme.

"BAMHAN KE CHEERE CHARE
KATE GURU KE ARHE
BABAJI KA ANGA BHABHOOTI
SATPURUSH KE THADHE
SATNAM KE SAKSHI"

(The exact meaning of this is not clear but this is a reference to the *tilak* or mark on the fore-head. The *tilak* of a Brahman is as if torn from the middle and that of some is a horizontal line. Babaji's identity is his ash-rubbed body and Satnami is known by straight lines of *tilak*. May the Satnam be witness).

When the Satnamis take their bath they should say:—

"JAN GURU BIJAN CHELA
PANCH PATHAR PANI PAHO
SURJAWAN HARA"

(The *guru* is life, the disciple is life-less. Let the Five Plateau accept the water. O — Sun God). And after saying this he should drink a little water. No Satnami

in Kosa, however, does this while taking bath. But this is an instruction given to him during the initiation ceremony.

When a Satnami gives a feast and the *Bhandari* takes his seat, the following is said. This rhyme is also chanted when the new initiate gives a feast to the *guru* to which other members of the caste are also invited.

"EK BAITHE TOR ANSBANS
NAHITE POORA KODHAR
BAL SUNDARIYA KE HUKUM PAWON
BAITHE JOT SAHEB — SATNAM"

(Again the exact meaning is not clear. It may mean — Here is your dynasty. We seek the orders of Mother Light. O, Light, *Satnam* to you).

After the *kan-phoonkna* the *guru* gives a thread to the man so initiated and from now on he wears it. The woman puts on the *kanthi* (wooden bead necklace) from this day.

Marriage Customs of the Rawats

Among the Rawats also, child marriage is a common feature, the usual age for boys being 7 to 10 years and 6 to 8 years for girls. It is the boy's father who has to find the girl and it is his side which starts negotiations. The girl's father has the upper hand in the whole show.

The boy's father or guardian, as the case may be, does not go to the girl's father directly. He first goes to the head of the caste and tells him about the girl. On the *mukhiya* or *kurha* (Head) agreeing to his proposal, he takes him along to the girl's father and further negotiations are settled between the girl's father and the *mukhiya*, the boy's father merely playing the role of 'yes-man' of the *mukhiya*. If the negotiations succeed, the boy's father returns home and after 2 or 3 days comes back to the girl's house with some presents for her which finalizes the betrothal. These presents are 1 *lugda* (small *dhoti*), 1 *polka* (blouse), 1 set of bangles, 1 *fundri* (ribbon for the hair), bread or *sunhari* (wafers) of flour with some cash amounting to about Rs. 3/-. The bangles and clothes are given to the girl to wear who after wearing them touches the feet of boy's father. The boy's father eats *bhat* (cooked rice) in the girl's house and returns home.

The betrothal having been finalized, the auspicious date of the marriage is given by the Brahman *pandit* and this is the only role that the Brahman plays in the Rawat marriage. The marriage customs of the Rawats have also been described in the Village Survey Reports of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat. In Kosa, these rituals consist of the following:—

Choolmati

In the *choolmati*, the 'sacred earth' is brought from the fields or such spot as the *baiga* of Tamora indicates. It is the women who perform this ritual. The ritual is performed in both the houses i.e. the house of the bride and the bridegroom. The girl's and boy's mothers are accompanied by other women known as *Suwasin* and usually they bring the earth from the field before the village Mother Goddess — *Sheetla duar*. The Sheetla deity is supposed to reside below the *neem* tree on the western embankment of the tank. The earth so brought is mixed with cow-dung with which the house is washed, and the marriage cooking-oven *chulha* is made out of it. The earth is also placed in the *madwa* (marriage-shed).

Tel

After the *choolmati* the girl and boy in their respective houses are annointed with oil. Oil is put 7 times on the body of the person to be married in the same manner as has been described for the Satnami caste and like that caste-ritual is known as *Tel-chaghana* (oil putting).

Mayan

On the next day, the ancestral spirits are invoked after which people sing and dance. The songs are usual marriage songs. The dance is known as *Dautela nach*. Since the marriage has not been observed, it has not been possible to give a chart of steps and movements of this dance.

Chikhal-edi

Then the party assembled in the *madwa* engage in some revelry and joking and people having 'joking-relationships' throw coloured water on each others' persons and put oil and turmeric on the back and other parts of the body. The jokes are mostly centred round the subject of sex and sometimes verge on obscenity.

After the *chikhal-edi* the boy's party departs for the girl's house where it is received on the outskirts of the village; the reception is known as *parghani*. In the night the people assemble in the marriage-shed where a branch of *gashti* tree (a species of Ficus) is fixed and near it are placed a wick-lamp and a pot full of water (*kalash*). The girl is brought to the shed by the women known as *suwasin* and after the ends of the clothes of

the bride and bridegroom are tied in a knot, the couple take 5 rounds of the *gashti* (*Ficus infectoria*) branch and the wick-lamp. The girl's father then gives some utensils and ornaments to his daughter and other people perform the *teeka* or *tekawan* (presents). In the *teeka* they give some money — 4 annas to a rupee to the bridegroom. After the feast, the bridegroom's party returns home with the bride. The bride lives with the husband's family for 2-3 days and returns to her parent's home. She goes back to her husband only after attaining puberty.

The post-marriage ceremonies are — the *gawan, pathouni,* and *ghar-bandhi.* After the girl's father notices that her daughter is stepping into or is on the threshold of womenhood he sends word to his *Samdhi* that it is time that he should come for *gawan.* The boy comes with a party to the girl's house and after one or two day's stay there returns home with his wife. This is *gawan.* After the *gawan* the girl lives with her husband for 15 days to a month and her father again takes her back, to his house. Some time after, ranging from six months to a year, the date of *pathouni* is fixed. The boy comes to the girl's house accompanied by one or two men and takes the girl with him who lives with him for a month or two and again returns to her father. The boy is then called after 6 months or a year for finally taking her away from her father's place. The ritual is known as *ghar-bandhi* (tied to house) and signifies that the girl would not now be permitted to live with her parents but "remain tied" to her husband.

It would be thus seen that the attachment of the girl with her father's house is broken in degrees and after marriage and *ghar-bandhi* the two rituals *gawan* and *pathouni* serve as the two steps. In other communities *gawan* and *pathouni* are simultaneous. It so happens that sometimes before the *gawan* and sometimes before *pathouni* and *ghar-bandhi,* the girl becomes the wife of somebody else, by *choori* form and then her regularly married husband demands the *bihati* from the person who has kept her as his wife. And in Chhattisgarh rural society, where girls have considerable freedom, cases are not rare when the girl after having visited her husband for the *gawan* and then permitted to live without him with her parents develops intimacy with some other man who comes her way. And as such, as amongst the Satnamis so in Rawats, the unusually long period that elapses between marriage and her finally living with her husband and the freedom that is given to her, are the factors which encourage and prompt girls to desert their childhood husband.

In the Thethwar section of the Rawats, the head of the bridegroom is shaved (!) and the couple take 7 rounds in the marriage-shed. The Thethwars fix a *magrohan* instead of *gashti*-branch. The *magrohan* is a small pillar made by the carpenter out of *doomar* (*Ficus glomerata*) wood. In other respects the marriage rituals are the same.

Marriage Customs of the Kurmis

The marriage customs of the Kurmis are more elaborate than those of the Satnamis and more nearly like those of high-caste Hindus. These rituals have been described in some detail in the Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces by Russell and Hiralal[11] and also in the Survey Report of village Bendri of Raipur District by the present writer. The marriage customs of the caste described here are those as are in vogue among the Kurmis of this village.

The marriage-age for the boys is 17 to 18 years and for girls 11-13 years i.e. when they attain puberty. It is said that the girls must be married before they start menstruating otherwise the parents commit a sin and earn a bad name. Usually the boy's people go in search of the bride but in some cases, as Ghanshyam Kurmi stated, the girl's people search for a groom. The reason, he said, is the spread of education and fathers of girls now want to get educated boys for their daughters and this necessarily forces them to go to the boy's house. In both cases, after the preliminary selection is over, the people return and after some time the boy's father goes to the girl's house. He takes a meal of cooked rice in the girl's house and after this puts some sweetmeat, a coconut and 10 to 20 rupees in the girl's lap. The ritual is known as *god-bharna* (Filling the lap). Another name for the ceremony is *faldan* (Gift of Fruit). The girl then touches his feet and the ceremony confirms the betrothal.

It may be mentioned here in passing that *faldan* ceremony is observed by some castes e. g. brahmins of Uttar Pradesh as well as the immigrants into Madhya Pradesh and amongst the brahmins settled in the Narbada valley and in Bundelkhand as well. In other castes the *faldan* ceremony is known as *Lagun.* In the *faldan* and *lagun* ceremonies the girl's brother goes to the house of the boy and offers him a coconut and some cash which among the dowry-ridden Kanyakubja brahmins may go upto Rs. 5,000/- or even more. The

11. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. IV, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, pp. 60-66.

faldan ritual of the Kurmis is just the opposite of the *faldan* of those higher castes in that it is the boy's side which goes to girl's house to offer her coconut and money. In both cases, however, the rituals confirms the betrothal. The Kurmi custom of *faldan* conforms to the general rule of Chhattisgarh according to which the boy's party requests for the girl's hand.

After the *faldan*, a brahmin *pandit* is consulted for fixing an auspicious date for the marriage and then invitation is sent by messangers to the relatives and caste-people. The marriage rituals are the same as described in connection with other castes i. e. *choolmati*, and *telmati*, *tel*, *mayan*, *barat* and *bhanwar*.

Choolmati and Telmati

This ritual is observed in both the houses — that of the boy and of the girl. The women in both the houses go to the field singing and bring earth from there. The spot for digging the earth is indicated by the *baiga* (village priest). The boy's mother (and girl's mother in her house) is accompanied by some women known as *suwasin* when she goes to dig the earth. The whole party goes there singing and with the accompaniment of music by village drummers. If these are not easily available, the women go to the field singing themselves. The earth brought from the fields is used in constructing an oven in which food and other eatables for the marriage festivities are cooked. Some earth is also brought from the fields in front of the *Mata-duar* i. e. the place of *Sheetla* deity and this earth is kept beneath the *kalash* in the marriage-shed. The former earth bringing is known as *choolmati* (oven-earth) the latter is known as *Telmati* (oil earth).

Tel

Among the Kurmis there are 4 oil-annointings i. e. oil is put four times on the bodies of the boy and girl as against five such annointings of those of Satnamis and seven of Rawats. The *tel-chadhana* (*tel chaghana*) ceremony takes place on the same day as *choolmati*.

Mayan

Mayan is the ritual of the second day in both the houses — those of the boy and the girl. In this ritual the ancestral spirits of the family are invoked to participate in the ceremony. The girl and the boy are given massages of oil; sweets like *ladu* (sweet balls), *balusahi*, *kheer*, *seo*, *sunhari* and *bara* are prepared. Beneath the *madwa* and near the *kalash* is kept an earthen vessel with some rice in it and the married people of the house then shout to the ancestors "Come-so-and so, join the celebration". Thus they take the names of as many departed ancestors as they know. After the ritual, the caste-people are fed. The ancestral spirits are supposed from now on to be present in the earthen vessel.

After the *mayan* is over in the boy's house, the party prepares to depart for the girl's village. The bridegroom is seated in a cart or in a *doli* (litter) though the use of *doli* has become very rare now and if the girl's village is approachable by bus, the bus-service may be availed of. Fire-works, dancing boys and the village band are taken in the party. The girl's people welcome and receive this party on the outskirts of the village and then take them to the camp. The reception is known as *parghani* as in other castes and the place where the boy's party stays is called *janwas*. In the *janwas* the girl's people bring *lal-bhaji* (a kind of leafy vegetable) before the *bhanwar* ceremony and request the bridegroom to eat it which he promptly declines. This ritual of offer of *lal-bhaji* has not been described in Russell's book and it is not followed by other castes in the village and the significance of the ritual is obscure.

Bhanwar

The auspicious time of the *bhanwar* is determined by the *pandit*. In the marriage-shed a post of *doomar* (*Ficus glomerata*) is fixed and is known as *magrohan*. Near it are placed the *kalash;* the wick-lamp and the vessel containing the 'ancestral spirits'. The clothes of the bride and bridegroom are tied with the help of a turmeric coloured cloth. In the *bhanwar* i. e. going round the *magrohan* seven times as the *pandit* recites the sacred text from his book. The *bhanwar* being over, the couple are seated, the bride on the right side of the bridegroom and then the *hawan* (offerings to fire) takes place in which rice-*til*-sugar mixture is put in the fire. After this *hawan* the bride and the bridegroom exchange their seats i. e. the bride comes to the left side of the bridegroom and the *pandit* asks them to remain faithful to each other.

The bride's father then presents things like utensils, bicycle, watch, Ramayana (sacred book) and other things to the bridegroom depending on his economic condition and other relatives of the bride also present to the bridegroom some cash or some other articles after touching his feet, but relations like bride's father's sister's husband and bride's elder sister's husband do not touch the feet of the groom. Other villagers also make their presents. This present giving ceremony is known as *teeka* or *tekawan*.

After the *teeka* the bridegroom's party is fed in the shed and while the party is eating, women from the girl's side sing songs containing some jokes. This is known as *Ram Kalewa Ke Gali* (abuses of Ram's lunch). In the night of the second day the bridegroom's party departs with the bride who is accompanied by some old women servants of her parent's house known as *loka-dhin*. The girl returns to her father's house after living for 2 or 3 days at her husband's place. But if she has already attained puberty, the period may be longer. Where the bride has been married well before puberty, the *gauna* or *gawan* takes place after she grows up. In the *gawan* the boy comes to take his wife with him. No ritual is observed in the *gawan* because the necessary exchange of seats has already been performed during the marriage itself.

The Kurmis do not have the system of *gawan, pathouni* and *ghar-bandhi* as in the Rawats nor does the bride keep on shuttle-cocking between her husband's and her parent's houses. After the *gawan* she lives with her husband and comes to her parents only now and then living with them only for short periods.

Marriage Customs of the Pankas

Russell and Hiralal have described the marriage customs of the Pankas and the customs followed by this caste in Bendri and Tilaibhat villages of Raipur and Bilaspur districts respectively have been described in the Reports of those villages. The description given below is on the basis of information collected from the family of Jairam Das Panka of Kosa.

The Pankas also, like the Satnamis, follow the system of child marriage and children are usually married at pre-puberty age. As in other castes the boy's father accompanied by 3 or 4 relatives and acquaintances goes to the girl's house and puts the marriage proposal before the girl's father. The girl's father does not give any categorical reply to the proposal. If he is willing, he comes later to the boy's house to have a look at the boy and his house and economic conditions. If he is unwilling, he sends word that the marriage would not be suitable. The auspicious date for marriage is found out from the brahmin *pandit* of Sirri village.

The marriage-celebrations go on for 5 days and the itinerary is as below:—

1st day :— *Choolmati, Tel.*
2nd day :— *Mayan.*
3rd day :— *Barat* departs for the girl's village; *Parghani* in girl's village; *Bhanwar.*
4th day :— *Dahej, Tekawan;* feast.
5th day :— Marriage party departs with the bride.

As in the other castes, the *choolmati* is brought from the field by the *suwasin*. With this earth is constructed the marriage-shed and the ground is repaired, levelled and washed with cow-dung. Beneath the shed and in the centre of it is fixed a post of *doomar* in which the crude human form is sometimes engraved. This is done by the Satnami carpenter of Kosa itself. This post is *magrohan*. A small heap of rice is placed near the *magrohan* and over this is put the *kalash*. The *tel-chaghana* ritual is the same as in the Satnamis. In the *mayan* ritual the women in the bridegroom's house, lift him in the lap and dance after the invocation of 'ancestral spirits' is over, but if the boy is quite grown up, the dancing is not resorted to evidently because the bridegroom cannot be easily lifted.

On the 3rd day, the bridegroom is decorated. He puts on the marriage-crown and turban and new clothes of yellow colour. It may be remarked here that the Pankas of village Bendri of Raipur District (16 miles north-east of Kosa) do not wear yellow coloured clothes in marriage and instead put on only white clothes.[12] The Panka here is not able to say why they put on yellow clothes while the Pankas of Bendri wear white ones.

When the marriage party reaches the outskirts of the girl's village, it is received by the party from the girl's side. The reception, as in other castes, is known as *barat parghana* or *parghani* and after this the party is taken to the *janwas* or the camp for the marriage-party of the bridegroom. Before the party goes to the *janwas*, the bridegroom has to perform a ritual known as *madwa chuwana*. This consists in the bridegroom touching the roof of the shed with a stick.

In the night the *bhanwar* takes place and the couple take 5 rounds of the *magrohan*. After the *bhanwar* a ritual known as *dharam-teeka* is performed. This rite has not been described in Russell and Hiralal's book nor was it noticed during the surveys of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat as part of this project. In the *dharam-teeka* a new dish and *lota* are put before the couple and then 5 married men kiss the forehead of the bridegroom, the bride being similarly kissed by 5 married women.

On the 4th day i. e. the day after the *bhanwar, tekawan* or the present-giving ceremony is performed in which the bridegroom receives presents from the bride's side. The bride's father gives ornaments to his daughter according to his status. He may also give a

12. Village Survey Report, Village Bendri, Raipur District, Census of India 1961; Vol. VIII, Part VI, No. 2.

cow or a bullock to the bridegroom and new clothes to him. The party returns with the bride on the 5th day. On the following day the parents (both father and mother) go to the boy's house accompanied by some relatives and stay there. The boy's father arranges a feast. The girl is brought back by her parents when they return. This bringing back the girl by the parents is known as *chouthiya*. The term *chouthiya* seems to have a meaning connected with the number 4. The *gawan* takes place after the girl comes of age. The Pankas do not have other systems like the *pathouni* and *ghar-bandhi* followed by Rawats.

The Problem of Divorce and Separation

In Kosa, all the communities approve of divorce but it is most common among the Satnamis, in fact, as has been stated earlier, it is so prevalent and common that it is a perpetual nuisance to the Satnami men, over whose head the fear that their wives may desert them, always hangs like the 'sword of Damocles'. The desertion by women is most common in the age-group 15-30 years and if a woman has lived with her husband till this age of 30-35 years, there is every hope that she would not run away. Some social equivalent of the Law of decreasing utility seems to hold good here and desertion by women is resorted to during the "acceptable age."

If a woman runs away from or deserts her husband and takes another husband, the former husband is entitled to receive compensation from the latter husband provided that he is of the same caste. But if a woman goes away with a man of another caste, the husband is not entitled to receive any compensation for the simple reason that the Caste-Panchayat has no jurisdiction over a woman of another caste and also because the woman has become outcaste. The amount of compensation is known as *bihati*.

Among the Satnamis, when a woman runs away, she takes away her children also with her and especially the female children and the new husband gladly accepts these children. The father of the children is however, entitled to receive them back even if the woman does not come back.

Though the *choori* form of marriage is permitted amongst the Kurmis too, it can be seen that amongst the Kurmis of Kosa there is no case of divorce. The explanation lies in the fact that the Kurmis marry their children after puberty and there is no time-gap between marriage and the woman living with their husbands, Also there is comparatively less freedom for women in the Kurmi caste.

A statement showing the number of women in the village who are married in *choori* form has been given earlier in this chapter. The number of cases given in that statement refers to only to the present incumbents. The table given below shows the position with regard to separation and desertion by the women.

Caste	*Number of households*	*Number of households in which divorce is*		*No. of households in which there is a desertion*
		Approved	*Disapproved*	
Satnami	55	55	...	26
Rawat	5	5	...	2
Kurmi	3	3	...	...
Panka	1	1	...	1
Lohar	1	1	...	...

The statement below shows the causes of such desertion and divorce in Kosa.

Catse	*No. of household in which there is a case of desertion*	*Number of households where the cause of desertion by wife was*				
		At will	*Continued illness*	*Impotence Barrenness*	*Mal-treatment*	*Others*
Satnami	26	20	4	1	—	—
Rawat	2	—	2	—	—	—
Kurmi	—	—	—	—	—	—
Panka	1	—	—	—	—	—
Lohar	—	—	—	—	—	—

It may thus be seen from this that 80.7 per cent of the total cases of "desertion at will" by wives are among the Satnamis. There are no cases of mal-treatment or any other causes. Continued illness is a cause of minor importance though it appears that this may not be correct. There was, however, no time during the survey to investigate into these cases to find out whether they are genuinely stated. The statement of the villagers has been taken at its face value. Even if they are true, among the Satnamis they form only 15.6 per cent of the total desertion cases.

The case of Muni Satnami where the cause of separation (according to Muni himself) was the barrenness of his wife may be referred to here. Muni was married when he was 14 years of age and after his wife came to him in *pathouni* Muni did not get any child for 10 years. According to him, he suspected his

wife of being barren and one day his wife deserted him to his great relief. He married Rajobai in *choori* form and this marriage has lasted 18 years, but as luck would have it, Muni is issuless even now. But Muni now has reconciled himself to his fate. *"Bhagwan dihi tabhe to hohi, Maharaj"*, he says. (It can only happen if God wills it).

It would also be seen from the first table that divorce and separation are approved by all the communities though there has been no such case in this village in the Kurmi households and in that of the Lohar.

Child Marriage

As the table given in the section of demography shows, pre-puberty marriages are not rare in Kosa and there is no objection in the village to child marriages. The table given below shows frequency of pre-puberty marriages in Kosa.

Age in Completed years	*No. of children married*	
	Male	*Female*
1	—	—
2	—	—
3	2	1
4	—	—
5	—	—
6	1	—
7	—	—
8	1	2
9	1	2
10	1	1
11	—	—
12	1	2
13	2	2
14	1	—
Total married below 14 years	10	10

Among the 10 females shown in the above statement, only 1 at the age of 13 years is married in this village and is living as wife. The other 9 girls from this village are married elsewhere but have not gone to their husbands in *gawan* and *pathouni*. In Kosa, everybody is of the view that girls must be married before they show signs of puberty because if the girls starts menstruating before she is given away in marriage, the father 'earns' a sin for himself.

Inter-caste Marriage and Recruitment to Satnami Caste

It has been stated in connection with the description of the castes that apart from the Chamars who form the great majority, Rawats also form an important constituent of the caste. The good looks of the Satnami women have not infrequently attracted Rawats to the Satnami fold. And Khemhan Satnami of the village presents such an example. Khemhan was previously a Rawat by caste. He knew Chaiti Satnami of the village who was not going to her husband and they fell madly in love with each other. This meeting went on for quite some time. Chaiti was married but had not gone to her husband's house in *gawan*. The intrigues of the lovers could not be kept secret and the issue was raised in the caste-Panchayat. But Khemhan proved to be true lover. He offered to become a Satnami and make Chaiti his wife by *choori* form. His offer was accepted because there was no hitch in his marrying Chaiti after he becomes a Satnami himself. And today Khemhan Satnami and Chaiti are one of the happiest couples living in Kosa. Their son Firtoo lives with them with his wife Thagni and Khemhan has now 3 grandchildren.

Urbanization and Disturbance in Inter-caste Relations

In the social set up existing in Kosa, it was the privilege of the Koshta (weaver) and Marar (Vegetable-cultivator) to supply the marriage clothes and marriage head-gear respectively to the people of Kosa and for this they got the payment in cash or sometimes, as in the house of the ex-proprietor, in kind (a *dhoti* and grain). Similarly the shoes were supplied by the Chamar and he again got the payment in cash. Now, since Kosa village has none of these castes, the villagers had to depend for these on the neighbouring villages—Machandur for Koshta, Pangri for Marar and Sirri for Chamar. And this dependence apart from the inter-caste relations, was also a factor of inter-village relations. The trend in urbanization has disturbed these relations.

Now that going to Durg has become very easy (i.e. only 4-5 miles walk and rest by bus). The people like to buy the head-gear (*mour*) from Durg and the Kurmis would invariably do it now, as Ghanshyam Kurmi said, because there is better finish in the head-gears obtained from the towns. The poorer sections in the village depend on the Marar even now. Similarly, the richer people, e. g. the Kurmis, purchase the shoes from Durg and so also the clothes. The other people also, if they can, go to Durg for these items and thus there is a shift

in the dependence of Kosa on these adjoining villages and the shift is townwards.

Protection from the Evil-Eye: Religion and Social Ceremonies

It is a common belief in the village that the bridegroom and the bride, and especially the latter, is very vulnerable to the effects of evil eye and evil spirits at the time of marriage. They become so vulnerable after the *tel chaghana* or *tel chadhana* ritual and are not allowed to roam about freely.

In every caste, the eyes of the bride and bridegroom are lined with soot (*kajal anjana*) and a dot of soot is put on the fore head. Among the Satnamis during the marriage, a monkey is made out of paddy-straw and hung outside the *madwa* (marriage-shed). The crude doll made out of paddy straw hardly resembles the monkey but that is what it is called. The face of this doll or monkey is coloured black. It is hung outside the marriage-shed and an onion, garlic and some pieces of bread are tied together in a piece of cloth and hung with the monkey. This 'Monkey' and its accompaniments are supposed to work as charms against evil spirits and are known as *Totka* or *Thua*. It is believed that intruding evil spirits would get entangled in or get scared by the monkey and the accompaniments. Other castes do not follow this 'monkey making' practice.

A Note on Satlok

A very curious ritual known as *Satlok* is reported in connection with the Satnamis and it is disputable if it is prevalent at present or not. In a study as the present one, it is not much that can be attempted, but a detailed and sustained work amongst the Satnamis of Chhattisgarh is bound to produce some profitable results about the survival of this curious ritual.

When first asked, the Satnamis deny the occurance of this custom in their community and in Kosa also, the results of first enquiries were in the negative. When taken into confidence, one of the Satnamis stated later that the custom of *Satlok* was prevalent in the community but is out of vogue for the last sixty years or so (i. e. 1900). He also stated that it was not common to the entire community but used to be observed only by certain families and the custom used to be followed hereditarily generation after generation in those families only.

In the Report of the Ethnological Committee 1866, it is mentioned[13] in connection with Satnami caste that "It is said of them that the presiding Priest has the first favours of the bride in the temple after which he hands her over to her husband and relatives at the door; this possibly may be an assumption." Chisholm, who gave a fairly detailed account of the Satnamis, only made a casual mention about this ritual and regarded it as a disputed issue. Regarding this he[14] states: "Another is whether Sutnamee brides associate with the high priest before being taken to their husband's homes. No "Sutnamee" will acknowledge this and the ceremony is attributed to brahminical ingenuity."

Russell and Hiralal [15] gave a more detailed description of the ritual. They state: "Formerly when a Satnami Chamar was married, a ceremony called *Satlok* took place within 3 years of the wedding, or after the birth of the first son, which Mr. Durga Prasad Pande describes as follows: it was considered to be the initiatory-rite of the Satnami, so that prior to its performance he and his wife were not proper members of the sect. When the occasion was considered ripe, a committee of men in the village would propose the holding of the ceremony to the bridegroom; the elderly members of the family would also exert their influence upon him, because it was believed that if they died prior to its performance their disembodied spirits would continue a comfortless existence about the scene of their mortal habitation, but if afterwards that, they would go to heaven. When the rite was to be held, a feast was given, the villagers sitting round a lighted lamp placed on a water-pot in the centre of the sacred *Chauk* or square made with lines of wheat flour; and from evening until midnight they would sing and dance. In the meantime the newly married wife would be lying alone in a room in the house. At midnight her husband went into her and asked her whom he should revere as his guru or preceptor. She named a man and the husband went out and bowed to him and he then went into the woman and lay with her. The process would be repeated, the woman naming different men until she was exhausted. Sometimes, if the head priest of the sect was present he would nominate the favoured men, who were known as gurus. Next morning, the married couple were seated together in the courtyard, and the head priest or his representative tied a kanthi or necklace of wooden beads round their necks, repeating an initiatory text. This silly doggerel, as shown in the

13. Report of the Ethnological Committee, 1866-67, p. 103.
14. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Belaspore District, 1868, J. W. Chisholm, p. 48.
15. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. I, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, pp. 311-312.

footnote is a good criterion of the intellectual capacity of the Satnamis." The initiatory text referred to above is given in the footnote and is reproduced below.

"BHAJI CHHURAI BHANTA CHHURDI
GONDLI KARAI CHHONKA
LAL BHAJI KA CHHURAWATE
GAON LA MARAI CHAUKA
SAHIB KE SATNAMIA; THONKA."

[We have given up eating vegetables, we eat no brinjals; we eat no onions with more relish; we eat no more red vegetables. The *Chauka* has been placed in the village. The true name of the God — (to which the pair replied) 'Amen'].

The Satnamis of Kosa (and for that matter the Satnamis all over) claim that this ritual is out of practice for the last 60 years or so. According to Chintaram Satnami the *Satlok* ritual was never an initiatory ritual only nor was it performed only after the wife came to live with her husband for the first time after attaining puberty. According to him it also used to be celebrated when some serious misfortune befell the family in the nature of a serious illness and some kind of promise (*badna*) was made to the village deity or the family deity or the 'True one'. A promise of *Satlok* used to be made in the name of the 'True One' and after relief, *Satlok* took place.

Marriage Area

Information has also been collected about the villages (and the distances thereof from Kosa) from where brides are brought here and it is seen that usually the people of Kosa go to a distance of 20 miles for the brides. The following table shows the result of this investigation.

Caste	*Number of brides brought to Kosa from villages located at a distance of*					
	more than 30 miles	*20 to 29 miles*	*10 to 19 miles*	*5 to 9 miles*	*upto 4 miles*	*From Kosa itself*
Satnami	1	5	16	22	26	16
Rawat	—	—	—	3	3	—
Kurmi	—	1	3	1	—	—
Panka	—	1	—	1	—	—
Lohar	—	—	1	—	—	—
KOSA	1	7	20	27	29	16

It would be seen from this that 92 per cent of the wives in Kosa have been brought from a distance of 20 miles and below. It is also seen from the enquiries that there has been no impact at all of improved communications, migration, education etc. on the marriage area.

DEATH RITUALS IN KOSA

Belief in Reincarnation

The Satnamis and all other castes of Kosa believe in reincarnation and believe that the person after his death takes birth in the same family. This belief is not only widely prevalent in Chhattisgarh but is also common amongst the tribes of this region and in Bastar. To keep track of these different persons who after death are born back in the same family, the people make some distinguishing marks on the corpse. These marks are made in the following manner.

When a person dies, the corpse is bathed by the men if the deceased was a male and by the women if the deceased was a female. After bathing the body, some elderly woman of the household, or from the caste, makes some mark on some parts of the body. This mark is made with *ghee* or *kajal* (soot) and may consist of just a line, or a circle or a triangle on calf, thigh, stomach or chest. Usually just a line is drawn with the finger. The person is buried or cremated as the case may be with this mark on the body. Now when a child-birth takes place in the family, the same lady is called upon to examine the child and taking the new-born infant in her hand, she examines it and proclaims that so-and-so is reborn because the child has such and such mark at such and such part of his body. A person on whose corpse a mark is made with *ghee* is supposed to be reborn with a red mark on the person in the same part. The mark made with soot is supposed to appear as a bluish one on the rebirth of the person. Suppose a mark was made with soot on the stomach of 'A' on his death. Next year a child was born in the family and the woman on examining him discovered a reddish spot on his stomach. It would be concluded that the new-born child is not 'A' reborn but 'B' on whose corpse a mark was made with *ghee*. Had there been a bluish mark on the stomach, the child would have been identified with 'A'.

Belief about Fate and Soul

Rewaram Satnami thought that the soul finds out another body for itself before leaving the present body. And that is why, the person who is dying occasionally becomes unconscious and sometimes has vacant looks. "Because the soul is out — searching for a body it is going to adopt." But again according to him the body

that the soul is going to get, depends on the actions of the person in his or her present life. Shobharam Satnami said — *"Jaise karni vaise utare para."* (The landing on the other side depends on actions).

The men, Satnami, Kurmi and Rawats who used to assemble for the evening talks during the survey expressed the views given here and most vocal of them was always Shobharam Satnami whose grey head is respected by all. He once said *"Taraiya ma jal dal dehe me sabech machhli ke ek sath kal ath he"* (Many fish find their end in one net thrown into the pond). And thus from time to time God throws such a net in the tank of the world and many people die. According to Shobharam and Rewaram Satnami, in which opinion others concurred, the soul leaves the body through the head — and then resides for 3 days in the same house though, naturally, unseen. On the 3rd day when the caste people are fed, the soul departs on a pilgrimage to Jagannath Puri and then after that crosses Baitarni river that intervenes between this world and the world of spirits. It crosses the Baitarni river holding the tail of the cow that has been given as a gift (*Godan*) to the sister's son or the priest and after crossing the Baitarni it resides in the world of spirits for some time.

The ideas of Rewaram Satnami about the 'heaven' and 'hell' were interesting and verging on the metaphysical. He said: 'The real hell is the mother's womb itself because there the soul and body faces untold miseries. In fact to come in the mother's womb is in itself to come to hell. He who escapes this cycle of birth and death goes to heaven.' It cannot be said whether this is the general consensus of opinion of the whole village and also of the women-folk. (The opinion seemed to be the common opinion of 15 Satnamis, 1 Rawat, 1 Panka and 1 Kurmi men).

Death Rituals of the Satnamis

In the section on the description of caste where references have been made to earlier writing about the caste, it has been mentioned that according to Ethnological Committee, the Satnamis cremate the dead. Subsequent writers — Sherring and Russell and Hiralal stated that burial was the practice. In fact burial is the common practice among the Satnamis. But the Satnamis of Kosa resort to both practices of burial as well as cremation. Burial is the more common practice though in certain cases e. g. when a person dies in good old age leaving behind a big family, his body is disposed of by cremation.

When the relatives and assembled people become aware that the person is about to die, he is brought down from the cot and laid on the ground. Leaves of *Tulsi* (Basil) and curd are put into his mouth. Then *Godan* (gift of cow) is given by him. If he has a sister's son (*Bhancha* or her husbands sister's son) then the cow is given to him. If there is no sister's son (*Bhancha*) the *Godan* is given to the priest. *Bhancha* or the sister's son is regarded to be as high and worthy as the priest. During the survey when the old village *baidin* (doctor) who is blind came for being photographed, she heard Mannu's voice and said — *"Are Bhancha, tai has ka, Aa tor pav to par leo."* (O nephew, are you here? Let me touch your feet). And ignoring us all she first touched the feet of Mannu who is her *Bhancha*. The cow so given as a gift to the *Bhancha* or the priest is the cow which is supposed to carry the soul across the Baitarni river to the heavens.

After death, the corpse is bathed with cold water, (body of the woman is attended to by woman only) and after the bath oil and turmeric is smeared over the body. Then some old lady of the house or of the caste in the village marks the body with *ghee* or soot and a new cloth is put on the body. If the corpse is that of a woman who has died with her husband living, new bangles are put into her hands and vermillion in her hair-parting. All ornaments are taken off from the body.

The dead body is carried to the cremation-ground either on the cot (if the person has died on the cot) or on an *arthi* made of bamboo poles and sticks. While carrying the people throw parched paddy (*lai*) on the corpse and repeat the following common couplet — *"Ram Nam Satta he Satta Bolo Gatta he."* (Ram's name is Truth, speak truth because only therein lies salvation). The Kurmi, Panka and Rawats do not accompany the body.

In the burial ground, the grave is dug by common efforts and it is well washed in the inside with cow-dung. After this a coconut with water is broken and the coconut water is put in the mouth of the corpse, the *bhandari* (village head of the caste) reciting some sacred words. The body is then lowered into the grave and the body in all cases men and women alike is put in a dorsal position i. e. on the back with face upwards and the head towards the north. Over the body about one seer of salt is put and then the grave is filled with earth. It is well-presesd and a small platform is made over the grave, and is washed with cow-dung.

The women of the house in the meantime go to the tank, bathe and return home with wet clothes. They are accompanied by other women from the caste and

while going to and returning from the tank they move in single file. The men similarly go to the tank from the burial ground and on the tank the coconut which was broken in the burial ground is divided into small bits and distributed to those who had participated in the burial. The people then bathe and come back home.

The period of mourning after the corpse has been disposed of by burial is 3 days. On the 3rd day, the men shave one another's heads, the earthen utensils are thrown away, the house is washed with cow-dung and clothes washed. The people, men and women separately go to the tank for *Nahawan* (bath) and after this the caste people are fed. The feast is repeated on the 4th day also. The pollution of death is supposed to be removed on the 3rd day.

If the body has been disposed of by cremation, the pollution persists for 10 days. The last remains of the dead are collected and taken to Ganges or to the Mahanadi-Pairi confluence at Rajim. The Satnamis do not have any other ritual after the 3rd day in case of burial and 10th day in case of cremation and do not observe *Barsi* or *Shradha* (i. e. a year after death).

Burial is the common practice but the adoption of cremation, though it is yet in a very restricted form, seems to have been an influence from the upper caste Hindus. The actual quantum of acceptance of this system by the Satnamis would need investigation over the entire Satnami tract.

Death Rituals of the Rawats

The death rituals of the Rawats and Thethwar Rawats differ and there appear to be two reasons for this variance. Firstly, the Rawats Guha and Kaskoo are *Kabirha* i. e. followers of Kabirpanth in which sect burial is the custom. Secondly, the Thethwar section of the Rawats are in the process of 'social climbing'. They do not associate themselves with the common Rawats and it is likely that the practice of cremating the body, may have been adopted by them as a step in this 'climbing'; because the general practice of Rawats is to bury the body after death. Rituals and customs observed by the Rawats are described first.

When it is known that the person is on the death-bed, then he is brought down from the cot and laid on the floor of the room. *Gangajal* (Ganges water) and curd is put into his mouth and sometimes, rice or other delicacy is cooked and put into his mouth, the idea being that after all the person is in the very last lap of his journey on this earth and he should go from here well-fed.

After death, the body is not bathed but some water is sprinkled on the corpse and turmeric powder moistened with water is pasted on it. In the village that was similarly surveyed in Raipur District[16] the corpse among the Rawats was bathed in water.

In Kosa, after applying a paste of turmeric, some mark, as in the Satnamis, is made on the corpse with soot or *ghee* as the lady in charge of this operation may decide.

In the grave-yard, some money — usually a copper coin — is placed on the land where the grave is to be dug, this being a token of the land having been purchased. The grave is dug by all and is washed with cow-dung. On the body is put some salt. No coconut is broken in the grave-yard.

On the 3rd day the *Nahawan* takes place, when, as in the Satnamis, the earthen vessels are thrown away, the house is washed with cow-dung and the clothes are given to the Dhobi for washing. The Nai from Sirri comes and cuts the hair and the nails of the mourners on the tank. The mourning is over on the 3rd day on which day the ritual pollution is removed. The Kabirha Rawats Guha and Kaskoo invite the *choukaha guru* Shankardas from village Selud (5 miles away) and get the religious ceremony *Chouka* performed.

In the Thethwars, the person who is about to breath his last, is brought to the ground and *Gangajal*, basil leaf and curd is put into his mouth. After death the corpse is bathed and a new cloth is put on it. Marks with soot and *ghee* are made on the corpse as in other castes. In the case of a woman who has died with her husband still living, oil is put on the hair of the corpse, vermillion is put in the hair-parting and new bangles are put in the wrists.

The first person to lift the bier is the eldest son and in case there is no son, the *Bhancha* (sister's son) lifts the bier first. In case of women, it is the husband who has to put the first hand on the bier and in his absence the son or the *Bhancha*, as the case may be lifts the bier first. The bier is carried to the burial ground silently.

Among the Thethwars, both the practices — that of cremation and burial are in vogue. If the deceased was a married male, cremation is resorted to, but in case the deceased was unmarried, the corpse is buried.

16. Village Survey Monograph — Bendri; K. C. Dubey; Census of India, 1961, Vol. VIII, Part VI, No. 2.

In case of cremation, the fire is taken from the house in the form of 7 pieces of cow-dung cake. The pyre is prepared of 360 cow-dung cakes and the idea is that since there are 360 days in the year (of course wrongly) there should be as many cow-dung cakes as the days in the year. Some fuel wood is also used on the pyre. The use of cow-dung cakes for cremation is a significant feature because there is a great shortage of fuel-wood here and cow-dung cakes are easily available in every house. The head of the corpse on the pyre is kept towards the north and the husband, son or *Bhancha* is the first person to light the pyre.

In case of burial, the people accompanying the corpse dig the grave and after the inside of the grave is washed with cow-dung, some paddy grains and salt is spread in the grave. The body is then taken round the grave once and then lowered into it.

Both in the cremation and burial, the corpse of a male is put on the chest with face downwards whereas that of a female is put in the dorsal position i.e. on the back with the face towards the sky. The Thethwars are not able to explain why these different positions are adopted. They say that it is so observed in the caste. In the survey of village Bendri in the Raipur District it was noticed that this was the common practice in that village but the practice was not observed in village Tilaibhat of Bilaspur District. The exact significance of this difference in the position of a male and female corpse is not clear.

After the burial or cremation, the extra paddy grains are put near the grave or pyre and people go to the tank. The period of ritual pollution in the case of a child is 3 days and in case of adults the death pollution is supposed to last for ten days. On the 3rd day, the people go to the burial ground, (if the body has been cremated) and collect the last remains from the pyre. These may be buried under a *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) tree or taken to Rajim in Raipur District for immersion at the confluence of Mahanadi and Pairi rivers. On the 3rd day, the earthen utensils are broken and thrown away, the house is cleaned and the Dhobi is called for washing clothes. On the 10th day after death, the ritual *Das-karam* is observed. The ritual is performed under the directions of a brahman *pandit*. The *Das-karma* consists of a ritual known as *Pind Padna* in which balls are made of cooked rice which represent the soul of the deceased and those of the ancestors. The soul of the deceased is then mixed with the 'souls' of the ancestors. Some money and *dakshina* is given to the Brahmin. This *Das-karma* is a custom of the higher castes and appears to have been borrowed from them.

On the 10th day, after the pollution is completely removed, the caste people are fed. A year after the death, the annual *Sraddha* known as *Barsi* is perfomed which consists of a feast to caste-members.

Death Rituals of the Kurmis

Death rituals of the Kurmis are more elaborate and are more nearly like those of the upper Hindu castes. In this caste we find ceremonies like *Teej-nahawan, Das-karam, Terhin, Chhemahi* and *Barsi* and the immersion of the last remains in the Ganges.

In his last moments, the person is brought down from the cot and laid on the ground with his feet towards the south. It is believed that keeping his feet towards the south would make the passing away of the soul easier. Basil leaves, *Gangajal* and milk or curd is put into his mouth and a sacred text from the Gita or Ramayan is read out to him. Gifting of a cow is also got done from his hands (*Godan*) and the cow is given to a brahmin.

After the passing away, the body is taken to the burial ground in a bier made of bamboo. While the body is being carried the people repeat — Ram's name is the only Truth. Speak Truth for therein lies salvation. Before the burial ground is approached the bier is put down on a point where some roads or tracks meet and at this point some paddy grains are left. The persons carrying bier now carry it on the other shoulder (*Kanth Badalna*). Bathing of the corpse is got done at the burial ground and not at home. After bathing, some elderly person puts a mark on some part of the corpse with *ghee* or soot and a new cloth is put on the body. The Kurmis dispose of the dead body either by cremation or by burial. If the deceased happens to have been married in his life, the body is cremated but the body of those dying before getting married and the bodies of children are buried.

The pyre is prepared of fuel-wood and the fire for lighting the pyre is carried from home in a black earthen pitcher (*handi*). The body is placed on the pyre in the dorsal position with the head towards the north and slightly tilted towards the east. The pyre is lighted by the son or brother if there is no son. In cases of women, if there is no son the pyre is lighted by the husband. After sometime everybody present on the cremation ground throws five pieces of wood in the burning pyre. This is known as *"Panch lakadiya"* (five wood). The burial is done in the manner as described for other castes.

On the third day after death, *Teej-nahawan* (bath of the third day) takes place. The earthen utensils are thrown away, clothes are given to the washerman, the house is cleaned and the inmates of the house are shaved and have bath. On the tenth day the *Maha-brahman comes and the ritual of joining the soul of the* deceased with the souls of the ancestors is gone through. The last remains in cases where cremation has taken place are collected on the day of *Teej nahavan* and kept in a bag of red cloth. This is then hung to a *pipal* tree. On the *Das-karam* day, the *Maha-brahman* performs the *Pind-dan* ritual. Sometime after the *Teej nahawan* but before *Das-karam* the last remains are taken for immersion to Allahabad.

On the *Terhi* day, a feast is given to caste-members and the mourning period is over, the ritual pollution being over on the *Das-karam* day itself. On the *Chhemasi* (six month after death) and *Barsi* (a year after) caste-people and other people from the village are fed.

Russell and Hiralal[17] state: "It is considered to be meritorious to assist at a burial and there is a saying that a man who has himself conducted a hundred funerals will become a *Raja* in the next birth." The Kurmis of this village do not know about this saying but say that is it one's duty to assist in the death rituals in the caste. Of course, the Kurmis would not go to a Satnamis burial in the village though they may go to a Kurmi burial in other villages. Here the loyalty towards caste is greater than the loyalty to the village relationship.

Death Rituals of the Pankas

Death rituals of the Pankas of village Bendri and Tilaibhat have been described in the Reports of those villages. In Kosa, these rituals are as below.

In his last moments, the person is made to lie down on the ground and basil leaves are put into his mouth. If time is available, the brahmin *pandit* is called who recites Ramayana to the dying person. But if a person has died on the cot, the cot is later on burnt.

After the death, oil-turmeric paste is put over the corpse and a new piece of cloth is put over it. Elderly woman of the house or from the caste then makes some mark on the corpse with soot or *ghee*. This mark can only be applied by woman, but why should this be so is not known. The corpse is taken on a bier made of bamboo and the first person to lift the bier is the son of the deceased and in his absence the husband and brother as the case may be. Some salt, money and paddy is taken along to the burial ground and while the bier is on its way to the burial ground, paddy is thrown over it.

No money is put in the grave. The grave is prepared in the same way as in other castes and over the corpse the salt and paddy are placed before filling the grave. The posture of the corpse in the grave is different for the male and for females. The corpse of a woman is kept in the dorsal position i. e. on the back with the chest and face skywards whereas the corpse of a man is in the reverse or ventral posture i. e. with his chest and face earthwards. Like the Thethwars, the Pankas are unable to offer any explanation for this difference in the burial of men and women except the common reply that it has so come to be practised in their caste. The first person to put earth in the grave is the son, husband or brother as the case may be. After the burial, the people go to the tank for bathing.

The death pollution for children lasts for 3 days and for adults 10 days. On the 3rd day the *Teej-nahawan* takes place as in other castes. The brahmin *pandit* is also called on this day and he recites some text. The Panka does not know as to what that text means. He only says that it may be some *Purana*. On the 10th day the brahmin *pandit* comes again and gets the *Das-karma* rituals performed i. e., the soul of the deceased is symbolically merged with the souls of the ancestors by making one ball of cooked rice with three other balls. The Panka of Kosa again is not able to say what text is recited. In his view, everything that the brahmin *pandit* recites is a *Purana*. On the 10th day itself the Pankas invite their *Choukaha guru* from Selud village. The head of the household keeps fast on this day and *chouka* is performed. The caste people are then fed in a feast. No other rituals like *Terhi*, *Chhemasi* or *Barsi* are done after this.

NOTE ON BURIAL AND CREMATION RITUALS

The village has only one common burial and cremation ground — Khasra numbers 2-3, area 0.46 acres which is situated to the north-eastern fringe of the village boundary by the side of the stream. It has already been observed that though the village is a unit for outsiders, it is divided into various caste segments — the Kurmis, the Satnamis, the Pankas, the Rawats and the Lohars and these castes live as "in life apart and

17. Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol, IV; R. V. Russell and Hiralal, p. 77.

dead separated". In the common burial-cremation ground, the different castes have separate areas though these separate areas are not demarcated. As far as possible, the dead of a particular household are buried near-about, though it is not always incumbent for the villagers to adhere to this strictly.

Purchasing the land for the grave

Except in the Pankas, other castes put a copper coin or some money on the land before starting digging of the ground for the grave. This placing of the coin is said to mean a token purchase of the ground for the dead.

Position of the corpse in the grave or on pyre

As described in the foregoing the position in which the corpse is laid on the funeral pyre or in the grave is different in the Thethwars and Pankas of Kosa. In other castes i. e. Satnamis, Kurmis and Rawats the position of the corpse is dorsal i. e. the body is laid on the back with the chest and face skywards. In the Thethwars and Pankas, the position of the corpse in cases of males and females is different. The corpse of a male is put in the ventral position i. e. the chest and face earthwards whereas that of a female is in the dorsal position i. e. chest and face skywards. No explanation of this is available from the village itself.

A Death in the Village

A death in the village touches everybody else and men and women all talk about the deceased. The women gather on the tank bank and the men in front of the *Jait-kham* and express their sympathies. If the death has been, as was the case of Bisal's wife or Sukal's wife, because of suspected witch-craft, the women talk in whispers of the dread of witch-craft, how the deceased was attacked and how she behaved and they curse the suspected witch, and in their talks such sentences as *"Bapura la bada taklif rahis he"* (poor fellow was in great distress) or *"Sabech janjal la chhand ke chale ge"* (He has been freed of all the encumbrances of mortal existence).

The term for burial and cremation in the village is *Mati dena* (to give earth) and people say *Mati dehe bar geen* (They have gone to the burial ground). *Teej-nahawan* is simply known as *Nahawan* — *"Aj okar ghar nahawan he."* (There is to be a communal bathing ritual in his house).

But, though a death in the village is the talk of the whole village, active participation in the rituals is not universal. The Kurmis, for example, do not go to a Satnami burial. Caste members from other villages come to participate in the death ceremonies. The people, however, gather in the house of the deceased to offer condolences but here again, Ghanshyam Kurmi would not go to the houses of other castes. Nirbhe and Gopal Kurmis may go and stand for sometime outside the house of the deceased, but that is all. And so here again we find that caste-stratification is deeper than village loyalty and faction loyalty.

Death Ritual and Social Climbing

Though Thethwars are a branch of the Rawats caste, it is seen from the foregoing account, that the death customs in them as seen in Kosa are markedly different from those of the Rawats. Whereas Rawats resort to burial, cremation is the practice followed by the Thethwars. And further, the Thethwars also observed *Barsi* i. e. feasting the caste-members one year after death in the house. The calling of a Brahmin *pandit* and the ceremonies like *Pind-dan* and *Das-karam* indicate the adoption of practices followed by higher castes.

Another significant feature is the calling of the brahmin by the Pankas. The Pankas are the followers of Kabirpanth which religion was supposed to owe its origin "to a reaction against Brahminical tyranny". In Kosa, the Panka in addition to calling his *Choukaha Guru* from village Selud, invites the brahmin also for the *Pind-dan* and other rituals. The Pankas have as such made a compromise, and first call the brahmin for purificatory ceremony and *Pind-dan* and then get the *chouka* performed. The custom of calling a brahmin in the Panka death rituals was not noticed in villages Bendri and Tilaibhat.

Whether the death-rituals are to be elaborate or very simple of course depends on the economic condition of the household concerned because money is required for the feast, for the purchase of new clothes and payment to the *pandit*, barber and dhobi. And though the person might have died because the family did not have money to purchase food, medicines and nourishment for him, money has to be had for performing the rituals.

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE ECONOMY

The people of Kosa have no legends to tell as to how the land came to be occupied here except that when the first settler — the old man came here with his two wives, Kari and Pandri, there was a jungle of wild reed here which he cleared and brought the patch under cultivation. On which field of the village, the old man grew the first harvest of Kosa, is not known to the present inhabitants.

It may be safely inferred here that as the 'tribe of the old man' increased, more and more land was brought under plough till all the available area was cleared, hardly leaving any land for the cattle to graze on. We find from the records that out of a total area of 480.59 acres, 445.33 acres are under cultivation and only 35.26 acres are Government land and include the area of *abadi, gothan,** burial ground and grass land. This area was occupied by 1911 because we find from the Settlement records of that year that the occupied area had increased from 298 acres to 449 acres. It would be appropriate here to reproduce the description of Kosa as given in the Settlement Records.

In the Settlement of 1911, Hemmingway[1] described Kosa in the following words: "A very small village on the Phulgaon nala. In the lower portions there is fair black soil, but above this comes *Matasi* which is not very good. Very little wheat is sown, but rice covers 52 per cent of the occupied area. The village belonged to the Malguzar of Marra, and he has sold it to a Kurmi after settling tenants on the whole of the home-farm. The Kurmi is trying to force these men to give up their holdings by demanding excessive rents, but they neither pay nor give up the land. The tenants are mostly Chamars and are classed A-1, B-6, C-13 and D-10. I propose a rate of 1.10."

Though the Satnamis never had the reputation of being good tenants the seeds of strained relations between the Kurmis and Satnamis were sown by this Malguzar of Marra, who was a Rajput, and who sometime before 1911 sold the village to Mukti Kurmi. In the next Settlement, that of 1929, the village is described as below in the Mahalwar Abstract[2] prepared at the time of Settlement.

"Mouza Kosa S. No. 163."

Position of soil

A small village of 481 acres on the Phulgaon *nala. Dorsa* covers 48% and *Matasi* 41%. Soils are of average type. 67% is embanked of which 95% is *Gabhar.* Of the unbanked 82% is *mamuli.* A good village.

Occupation

Constant at 93%. Fallows negligible.

Cropping

The net crop area is up by 12% to 91% of occupation. Nearly three quarters of this is under rice which has expanded by 31%. One third of the rice area yields an after crop.

Population

Up by 44% between 1911-1921.

Irrigation

The village is commanded and is under agreement.

Plough Cattle

Up by 28% and ample with a pair for every 13 acres.

Holdings

Home-farm amounts to 30% and is scattered.

Land Values

5 acres of Absolute occupancy sold for Rs. 69/- an acre or 156 times the rent.

Malguzars

The Settlement Kurmis continue to hold the village. They are non-resident and are in ordinary circumstances. Relations with tenants strained.

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* Also called *Gouthan.*

1. Settlement Report of Drug District, 1911, H. E. Hemmingway, (Drug Tahsil Report), p. 1536.
2. Mahalwar Abstract prepared at the time of Settlement of Drug District; Settlement of 1929.

Tenants

39, mostly Satnamis. Classed B-1, C-27, D-1 and E-10. A fair lot, but extremely turbulent and quarrelsome, a substantial proportion of them being previous convicts. 29% are free from debt and 42% owing less than Rs. 100/- each.

Rental History

Rental arrears amount to Rs. 155/- or 17% of three years demand mostly due to indifference partial suspensions in 1920-21 only. Rent rate down from 1-10 to 1-3 due to surrender of high rented tenancy land."

SETTLEMENT OF DRUG DISTRICT — 1911,
STATEMENT 'A' — VILLAGE KOSA —
ARJUNDA GROUP[3]

Assets at last Settlement	Cash	Rs.	153.0
	Estimated value of Sir, Khudkasht and maufi land	Rs.	75.0
	Siwai[4]		Nil
	Total	Rs.	228.0

Revenue — Rs. 120/-

Percentage of revenue on assets of former Settlement — 53

Assets at present	Cash	Rs.	423.0
	Estimated value of Sir, Khudkasht and muafi land	Rs.	1.0
	Siwai[4]		Nil
	Total	Rs.	424.0

Increase in assets since last settlement — Actual + Rs. 196.0

Percentage + Rs. 86.0

Increase per cent in cultivation + 10.0

The earliest Settlement of which records are available is that done by Hewitt in 1869 when Durg District formed a part of Raipur (written as Raepore by Hewitt). Extracts from the Report by Hewitt would be given at appropriate places.

SETTLEMENT OF DURG DISTRICT — 1911, STATEMENT 'C'

Class of Tenants	*At former settlement*			*At present*			*Increase (+) or decrease (—) per-cent of present incidence per-acre on that former settlement*	*Incidence per soil unit*	*Unit rate proposed and sanctioned*
	Tenant Area	*Rental*	*Incidence per acre per area*	*Tenant area*	*Rental*	*Incidence per acre per-area*			
Malik Makbuza	—	—	—	Ordinary without rent.....8. Regarding 3 for Rs. 5. Regarding without rent.....1.					
Absolute occupancy	108	5,100	077	98	4,700	078	+ 1	.70	
Ordinary	68	4,100	098	50	2,900	093	— 4	.70	
Superior ordinary	98	4,200	0,610	111	6,300	091	+ 33	.83	C
Protected-cum-superior Occupancy	274	13,400	0,710	259	13,900	087	+ 10	.76	
Pure ordinary	24	1,900	0,128	190	28,400	1,711	+ 89	2.04	
Total ordinary	122	6,100	080	301	34,700	125	+130	1.61	
Total	298	15,300	083	449	42,300	0,151	+ 83	1.31	

3. Op. cit. p. 1499.

4. These and other terms used in this chapter are explained in the appendix.

The village-land according to the Settlement of 1929-30, which is the last Settlement of the District, is classified as below.

Total area of village	—	489.59 acres
Makbuza area	—	445.33 acres
Gair Makbuza area	—	35.26 acres
Area under *Abadi*	—	4.62 acres
Burial & Cremation Ground	—	0.46 acre
Area of *Gothan*	—	0.64 acre
Skinning ground	—	0.46 acre
Grass land	—	18.66 acres
Under water	—	11.98 acres
Sir land	—	87.44 acres
Khudkasht	—	47.33 acres
Mowrisi Katai	—	61.78 acres
Mowrisi	—	234.28 acres
Mowrisi Bila lagan	—	14.50 acres

The total fallow land at the time of 1929-30 Settlement was 40.19 acres (19.59 old fallow and 20.60 acres current fallow).

We do not know if there was any effective land system in Kosa when the legendary founder of the village came to settle here with his two wives. The Marathas, of course, had a land-system and administration but to what extent this system affect the village and what the changes in Kosa were when the land-system changed is not known. It is therefore, so far to confine the discussion to more recent periods.

When the British took over possession in 1854, the district was divided into tahsils for better government. Durg tahsil was created as a separate administrative unit in 1857. Proprietory Rights were conferred on the *Malguzars* between 1854 to 1860 and though no records have been made available, it is safe to assume, on the basis of the note contained in the 1911 Settlement records, that it must have been during this period that the Rajput *Malguzar* came into existence as the Proprietor of Kosa.

After the British took over the administration, the systematization of land-revenue administration started. The first Act governing the relations between land-lord and tenants that was extended to the Central Provinces on the 2nd March, 1864, was the Recovery of Rent (Bengal) Act X of 1859. It was, however, a temporary makeshift arrangement and in 1873 Mr. Jones, who was afterwards Chief Commissioner, was entrusted with the duty of framing a suitable law for regulating the relation of landlord and tenant and in 1880, the Central Provinces Tenancy Bill was framed, which with material alterations was passed into law as the Act IX of 1883. This was later amended by Act XVII of 1889 and both these Acts were repealed by Act XI of 1898. As Central Provinces had no Legislative Council of its own before 1914, all the above-mentioned Acts had to be passed in the Imperial Council where the local official and non-official views were imperfectly represented. In 1914, when the Legislative Council was established, two most important pieces of legislation relating to Land Revenue and Tenancies were introduced therein soon after; and the Land Revenue Act was passed in 1917 and the Tenancy Act in 1920.

One important change made in the new Tenancy Act was the abolition of ordinary tenancies, and the classification of tenants only into two main divisions, Absolute occupancy and Occupancy. In fact the institution of ordinary tenants in the Act of 1883 was merely a tentative measure.

After these two important laws concerning land-revenue and tenancy were enacted, the system of land tenure in the erstwhile Central Provinces became easier. The system of periodical settlements at which very elaborate and minute enquiries were made into ownership and possession of every inch of land in the villages, whether held by proprietors or tenants, and the prevailing local customs and other rights, made the administration law much easier and the frontiers of administration entered the village.

After independence in 1947, changes of far-reaching importance were introduced and the first such step which affected the villages was the enactment of Madhya Pradesh Abolition of Proprietory Rights (Estates, Mahals, Alienated Lands) Act, 1950 (I of 1951) which received the assent of the President on the 22nd January, 1951. Section 3 (1) of this Act stated: "Save as otherwise provided in this Act, on and from a date to be specified by a notification by the State Government in this behalf, all proprietory rights in an estate, mahal, alienated village or alienated land, as the case may be in the area specified in the notification, vesting in a proprietor of such estate, mahal, alienated village, alienated land, or in a person having interest in such proprietory right through the proprietor, shall pass from such proprietor or such other person to and vest in the State for the purposes of the State free of all encumbrances." Thus by a stroke of pen, the *Malgujars* were divested of their proprietory rights, and it was under this section that the descendent of Mukti Kurmi who had purchased Kosa from the Rajput *Malguzar*,

lost his proprietory right over Kosa and became just a farmer under Section 53(1) of the same Act which reads: "Every proprietor who is divested of his proprietory rights in an estate or mahal shall, with effect from the date of vesting, be a *Malik-makbuza* of the home-farm land in his possession."

As far as the people of Kosa are concerned, this is by far the most important Act that the Government have ever passed and all except two people are of the opinion that they have been benefitted by the Act. The two dissenters to the general opinion are the ex-proprietor and the village watchman.

Because of the policies and directives of the Planning Commission and also because of the merger of Zamindari and Feudatory States in 1948 wherefrom a variety of land tenures were added to the already existing number of land tenures, a consolidated and amended law relating to land revenue and land tenure was called for and Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1954 (No. 11 of 1955) was enacted. This Act received the assent of the President on the 5th February, 1955 and was put into operation from October 1, 1955.

This Code put an end to the maze of land tenures and only two types of tenures were created viz. Bhumiswami and Bhumidhari. The old tenures *Malik-makbuja*, absolute occupancy tenant and raiyat *malik* became the Bhumiswami (Section 146) and occupancy tenants and raiyat or raiyat sarkar became the Bhumidharis.

Under the provisions of the Code a Bhumidhari could become a Bhumiswami by his depositing three times the revenue assessed on the holding (Section 150). Conferral of Bhumiswami rights, apart from other advantages under the Code, gave them the rights over timber trees standing on their holdings (Section 162 (i)). This provision became very popular in jungle tracts and revenue courts had to decide a flood of such applications in those areas. The people of Kosa were not at all keen to become Bhumiswami because there is hardly any timber tree here, and majority of them were not even aware of the provision. In this respect, ignorance proved to be bliss, because by the coming into force of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959, only one class of tenure remained — the Bhumiswami — and all Bhumidharis automatically became Bhumiswamis.

After the reorganization of the States and the formation of the new State of Madhya Pradesh on 1st November, 1956, it became necessary to consolidate the law relating to Land Revenue and tenancies prevailing in the different parts of this large State and hence the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code Bill, 1958, was introduced in the Assembly. The preamble to the present Act calls the Act both an amending and consolidating Act. These terms came up for interpretations by the High Court of Judicature, Allahabad where the following observations were made.

"It should be noted that it does not merely consolidate previous enactments but the law on the subject. Further, it does not consolidate the pre-existing law but also amends it, which taken with the consolidation of it implies both addition to and derogation from the pre-existing law. It follows that it is a complete Code in itself as regards the subject it deals with."

The Act received the assent of the President on the 15th September, 1959, The sailent[5] features of this Act are:—

(1) Only one type of tenure has been recognised, that known as Bhumiswami who directly hold land from the State Government. They will be the full owners of the land they hold. Their interest on their death shall devolve in accordance with a prescribed order of succession (Section 164). They will have rights of transfer subject only to the restriction that the transfer should not create a holding above a ceiling limit or an uneconomic holding, that is a holding below 5 acres of irrigated or 10 acres of unirrigated land.

(2) The Bhumiswamis will be able to mortgage their land both by simple or usufructuary mortgage subject, however, to certain restrictions. No mortgage shall be valid unless atleast 5 acres of irrigated land is left with the mortgager free from any encumbrance or charge. No usufructuary mortgage of any land shall be valid if it is for a period exceeding 6 years, unless there is a condition that on the expiry of the stipulated period, the mortgage shall be deemed without any further payment whatsoever to have been redeemed in full [Section 165(2)]. Moreover, in the case of mortgages other than usufructuary mortgages, the total amount of interest accruing under the mortgage deed shall not exceed half of the principal amount advanced under the mortgage.

(3) It is now an accepted principle of Land Reform that land should be with the tiller who should be fully protected against arbitrary ejectment and

5. As quoted in 'Commentaries' on the M. P. Land Revenue Code, 1959; R. K. Pandey, 1960, p. 2.

rack-renting. All such persons, who were formerly known as sub-tenant, Shikmis and lessees, shall now be called 'occupancy tenants'.

(4) Sub-letting or leasing of land is not permitted except in very emergent cases once in 3 years or by certain classes of persons suffering from a disability such as widows, unmarried women, married women who have been deserted by their husbands, minors, persons subject to physical or mental disability due to old age or otherwise and certain other classes. (Section 168).
If a Bhumiswami leases out his land unauthorisedly, his lessee shall become an occupancy tenant thereof and the rights of Bhumiswami shall accrue to him in due course. (Section 169).

There are some more salient features but they are not being given here because they are not necessary in the context of the present village. In the following pages, it would be shown how these provisions of law are violated by the people of Kosa.

Agricultural land of Kosa

At present the total 'occupied area' of Kosa is 443.93 acres as against 445.33 acres at the time of 1929-30 settlement. This area is held in the village below:—

Caste	*Area held in acres*
Satnami	265.18
Rawat	24.23
Kurmi	128.11
Panka	0.59
Marar	4.67
Gond	15.91
Teli	4.00
Bairagi	1.24
Total	443.93

As this table would show the last four castes shown in it do not belong to the village. Also, 4.85 acres of land is owned by Rawats of Sirri and Tamora. Thus out of this 443.93 acres of land of Kosa, 30.67 acres are held by people who do not belong to Kosa and only 413.26 acres of land is held by the people of Kosa.

There are in all 475 holdings in Kosa which are comprised in 96 *Khatas*. On an average, it would appear that the size of a holding is 0.93 acres only. Most of these holdings are uneconomic being made of fragments situated away from one another. In the statement below, the size of holdings is shown.

Caste	*No. of holdings the size of which is*								
	Below 1 acres	*1.01 to 2 acres*	*2.01 to 3 acres*	*3.01 to 4 acres*	*4.01 to 5 acres*	*5.01 to 6 acres*	*6.01 to s acres*	*7.01 to 10 acres to*	*10.01 20 acres*
Satnami	309	56	10	6	5	1	—	—	—
Rawat	13	3	2	1	—	—	1	—	—
Kurmi	17	3	7	3	7	1	—	3	2
Panka	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marar	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gond	7	2	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
Teli	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bairagi	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total 475	355	69	19	11	12	3	1	3	2
Percentage of the total holdings	74.7	14.5	4.0	2.3	2.5	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.4

It will be seen from the above table that in Kosa the percentage of small holdings is very high. In the First Five Year Plan[6] we find that in erstwhile Madhya Pradesh, the percentage of holdings of 0-5 acre size for the State as a whole was 51.5 and in Second Five Year Plan, this percentage was found to be 59.4. In Kosa the holdings of 0-5 acre in size are 98.1 per cent of the total number of holdings. It may further be seen that nearly three-fourths of the total holdings of Kosa are of one acre and below in size.

Consolidation of holdings is an accepted form of agrarian reconstruction and it was laid in the Second Five Year Plan[7]: "In the First Five Year Plan it was urged that in all States programme for consolidation of holdings should be expanded and pursued with vigour. The advantages of consolidation of holdings are well-known. Consolidation saves time and labour, facilitates improvement of land through irrigation as well as dry farming practices, provides an opportunity for replaining individual holdings and village *abadi* and providing roads and other amenities." The Second Plan mentions that by the end of March 1955, 2.5 million acres of land had been consolidated in Madhya Pradesh. The Plan further states: "In National extension and community project areas consolidation of holdings should be undertaken as a task of primary importance in the agricultural programme."

6. Second Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India, p. 199.
7. Second Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India, p. 199.

Provision also exists in the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code 1959 for consolidation of holdings and Chapter XVI of the Code (Section 205 to Section 221) deals with the subject. In addition to this, there is the Consolidation of Holdings Act, 1928. Under Section 206(1) of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code any two or more Bhumiswamis in a village holding together not less than one hundred acres may apply to the Consolidation Officer for the consolidation of their holdings. There is, however, a proviso to the rule which says that the State Government may by order, fix such other minimum limit in a village, as it deems fit. There is one more provision also in the Code (Sec. 206(2)) by virtue of which the Collector may on his own motion direct the Consolidation Officer to make an enquiry into the feasibility of consolidation of holdings in any village. Neither have the villagers of Kosa made any application for the consolidation, nor has the feasibility been examined by the Collector *suo moto*. The views of the villagers were not obtained by us during the present survey.

Ownership of Land

The kinds of tenants and the area occupied by them at the Settlement of 1911 is shown in statement given earlier. Prior to the coming into force of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code 1959, there were 15 cultivators in Kosa who held land purely in Bhumiswami rights, there was one of them who held land both, in the Bhumiswami and Bhumidhari rights, i. e. some holdings were held in the former rights only. There were 10 other Bhumidharis and 2 Bhumiswamis who, in addition to their land, held land from others in subleases. Thus prior to the new classification of tenants came into vogue the tenure holders of Kosa were classified as below.

	Description	*No. of households*
1	Bhumiswami only	15
2	Bhumiswami and Bhumidhari both	1
3	Bhumidhari only	33
4	Bhumidhari also holding leases from others	9
5	Bhumiswamis also holdings land from others	2
6	Without any land cultivating as lessee	1
7	Without land	4
	Total	65

At the time of the Census enumeration of the present Census, there were 12 households in the village where the head of the household had taken a lease from other Bhumiswamis because, out of these one had no land of its own and 11 others had some land with them. Out of these 12 lessees, 10 are Satnamis, 1 Rawat and 1 Panka.

Now, Section 168(1) of the Land Revenue Code lays down that "Except in the cases provided for sub-section (2) and (3), no Bhumiswami shall hereafter transfer by way of a lease for any period whatsoever any land comprised in his holding." Section 168(2) states: "A Bhumiswami who is (i) a widow or (ii) an unmarried women; or (iii) a married woman who has been deserted by her husband; or (iv) a minor; or (v) a person subject to physical or mental disability due to old age or otherwise or (vi) a person detained or imprisoned under any process of law; or (vii) a person in the service of Armed Forces of the Union; or (viii) a public charitable or religious institution; or (ix) a local authority or a Co-operative Society, may lease the whole or any part of his holding," and sub-section (3) of the same section lays down: "When on account of any unforeseen calamity a Bhumiswami is unable to cultivate his holding and obtains certificate in that behalf from the Gram Panchayat or from the Patel, where there is no Gram Panchayat, he may lease the whole or any part of his holding for one year during any consecutive period of three years." But "if a Bhumiswami leases out for any period whatsoever any land comprised in his holding in contravention of Section 168, the rights of an occupancy tenant shall thereupon accure to the lessee in such land." (Section 169).

Notwithstanding these provisions in the Land Revenue Code, leasing out has not stopped. Before dealing with the cases of contravention of these provisions, the kinds of leases would be described.

In Kosa, these leases are of two types — (1) *Reg*, and (2) *Adhiya*. Leasing out land on *reg* basis appears to be more popular.

Type of lease	*No. of cases*	*Area of leased land*
Reg	10	13.60
Adhiya	2	8.00
Total	12	21.60

Reg is that kind of lease in which the lessee has to pay a fixed amount of money to the owner of the land. In the *adhiya* kind, the lessee has to give half of the produce to the owner (share-cropping). Evidently,

the latter form is unpopular because it is an uncertain bargain. The harvest may or may not be good and in the case of a bad crop, the lessor gets only half of what the field yields. In *reg*, this danger is not there because the lessor gets the amount in cash before he gives the land to the lessee; he has not to wait. Whether or not, *adhiya* would amount to a lease as contemplated in the Land Revenue Code, cannot be stated here. It is a legal point and there may be some rulings on this, as in the case of *batai* cultivation of northern districts, from the High Court of Judicature. It is out of the scope of this monograph to enter into those legal niceties. It may only be stated that in the *adhiya* the lessee has to use his own bullocks and seed. The lessor does not do anything.

Because the villagers were good enough to tell us that they carry on the *reg* and *adhiya* cultivation and because this leasing is now in breach of a legislation, we would not be justified in giving out the names of the lessees and lessors in the following and only the first word of their names is being used in describing the cases:—

Reg

(1) 'C' took 2.00 acres of land from 'R' because R's buffalo died before the start of cultivating season and he had no money to purchase another buffalo. He leased out this land to 'C' and wanted to purchase a buffalo out of the *reg* amount.

(2) 'G' had given some loan to 'D'. 'D' could not return the loan in the prescribed time and gave 1.00 acre of his land to 'G' for cultivation on *reg* basis and the amount of this consideration was adjusted towards the loan.

(3) 'Pt' took 1.00 acre of land on *reg* from 'Pc' because 'Pc's' son died that year and he could not cultivate this land. Further he had no buffalos and wanted to purchase one; so he leased out the land to get some money.

(4) 'Mn' took 0.30 acre of land on *reg* from 'Mg' 'Mg' is a great gambler and does not care for his cultivation and he usually leases out his land.

(5) 'B' had given a loan to 'H'. 'H' could not repay it in the prescribed time. Since 'B' was pressing for repayment, a bargain was settled that he should cultivate H's 3.00 acre land for one year and the consideration on *reg* basis be adjusted towards the debt.

(6) 'Bi' took 1.00 acre of land from 'R' because 'R' had to purchase a buffalo.

(7) 'N' took 2.00 acre land from one Rawat of village Machandur. This Rawat actually lives in another village Kasora and the land in Kosa is in the name of his father-in-law. He does not cultivate it himself and leases it out.

(8) 'R' gave the land on *reg* to others because he did not have the buffalo for ploughing. The buffalo had died before the cultivating season. Because of this eventuality 'R' became a servant in another house and leased out his land. He has now purchased a buffalo.

The usual rate of *reg* prevalent in Kosa is Rs. 60/- per acre but it was also said by the villagers that sometimes the lessee exploits the position of the lessor. If the latter is hard-pressed for money or is not able to cultivate the land for any other reason, his land is asked for at less than Rs. 60/- an acre. Similarly sometimes the lessor gives his land on a little higher rate because the lessee wants the land very badly. Rs. 60/- an acre is more or less the present rate of *reg*.

None of the above cases come within sub-section (2) of Section 168 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code. They may however be said to be cases of 'Unforeseen Calamity' (except cases Nos. 4, 5 and 7) and they are as such in contravention of Section 169. Even in these 3 possible exceptions, Section 168 (3) of the Code lays down that the Bhumiswami should obtain a certificate from the Gram Panchayat and where there is no Gram Panchayat, the Patel should certify about the inability of the Bhumiswami to cultivate land because of some unforeseen calamity. Nothing of the sort is being done. The villagers are happy as they are. They say that *reg* is a mutual arrangement and is traditional. They resent the encroachment of administration on their economic frontier.

Adhiya

(1) 'M' took 2.00 acre land from 'B' on *adhiya* because 'B' did not have bullocks for ploughing.

(2) 'P' took 6.00 acre land of his maternal uncle who owns this land in villages Machandur and Pangri but himself lives in Rajnandgaon. 'P' cultivates these lands in villages Machandur and Pangri for the last 10-12 years on *adhiya*.

The people have said that one of the implied conditions of *reg* and *adhiya* is that the lessee should not disclose the fact to any Government official. On being asked by the officials, the answer of the villagers is that they are cultivating the land jointly. The villagers know the povisions of Section 169 that rights of an

occupancy tenant can accure to the lessee (thanks to the lower rung of the Land Records Department) and on being told that a lessee may take such action some day and get the leased land in occupancy right, the answer was that this would happen only once and then nobody would lease land to anybody. The whole village would have then to suffer for the doing of one man and therefore nobody does it.

Ownership

There are 96 *Khatas* (accounts) in the land-records of Kosa and many of these lands are jointly recorded. But this does not record the *de-facto* condition because in many cases partitions have occured. It must be admitted here that a complete survey of this was not made in the present study, but one or two cases would be described here to illustrate this.

14.95 acres of land comprised in Khasra numbers 10, 77, 179, 153/2, 154, 203, 206, 270 and 271 is recorded jointly in the name of Pusau, Bisahoo, Bisahat sons of Guha and Kunwar widow of Guha Satnami. But in this case partition has occurred (dispute described in Chapter VI) and Pusau who is living apart from his brothers is the full owner of land he is cultivating. This has, however, not brought for on the Register of Mutations and in the record of rights. (Section 110 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code), nor have the persons concerned moved the competent authority in this regard. They feel that it is sufficient if the Panchayat has sanctioned the partition and is aware of it. Similarly 35.26 acres of land is recorded jointly in the name of Nirbhe, Gopal, Gopi, sons of Ganesh and Deepak Bai widow of Ganesh Kurmi. But the persons have separated and the land is partitioned. In both of these cases however the lands are jointly assessed for land-revenue and the same is paid by the persons concerned according to the settlements of Personal Law.

Thus it would be clear that though in the last 15 years or so frontiers of administration have advanced towards the village, the latter have been able to maintain a separate entity and separate frontiers. What concerns them more is the verdict of an recognition by their caste and village Panchayat and their personal unwriten law.

How does land of Kosa pass to People from outside of Kosa

When the first settler of Kosa the old man — came here with his two wives, the land he cleared for cultivation, was the only wealth with him. And this must have been the only wealth that the people may have had for quite sometime. But as the needs of the people grew and the economic frontiers expanded, land came into the market. It began to be exchanged for money and for getting wives. And since money was advanced by people from outside Kosa the land of Kosa began to pass into their hands. And this is how people from outside came to possess land in Kosa. The study of indebtedness has been made later in this section. For the present only the following cases are being given.

(1) About 15-20 years ago Ratauram Satnami had taken some loan from Kejuram Sahu of village Tamora and mortgaged his land. He could not repay the amount and the land was taken possession of by Kejuram Sahu.

(2) Banda Satnami has no land now. He had some land formerly which was sufficient for his subsistence. But he had to get a wife for his son Mangloo and for paying the bride-price money was needed which he did not have. So he took a loan from somebody. But he could not repay it. So he had to sell the land to Moti Marar of village Pangri.

(3) Itwari Satnami's wife had run away and he had to marry another woman. But he had to pay compensation to the former husband of this woman and to her father. He had no money and so he sold his land to Moti Marar of village Pangri.

(4) 10-12 years back Bali Gond of Tamora village purchased some land from Ghanshyam Kurmi. Ghanshyam's father became ill and Ghanshyam sold the land to Bali Gond and utilized the amount for the treatment of his father. Bali Gond also purchased from Dukalhin Satnami of village Pangri. Dukalhin's father was one Bisambhar Satnami and he had no male issues. He had two daughters who quarrelled and so a partition was effected. Bisambhar gave the land in Kosa to Dukalhin and his land in village Arjuni to another daughter.

Dukalhin was living at Pangri and did not find it convenient to look after this land so she sold it to Bali Gond.

(5) Tekoo Satnami of Kosa did not want to live in the village and he sold his land to Moti Marar.

(6) Jugal Satnami used to take loans from Kejuram Sahu of Tamora. He could never repay the loan and went on losing his land to Kejuram.

Livelihood Classes in Kosa

In the 1951 Census the pattern of livelihood in

Kosa was found to be as below.

Description	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Cultivators of owned land and their dependents	258	118	140
Cultivators of unowned land and their dependents	6	2	4
Cultivating labourers and and their dependents	15	8	7
Production other than cultivation	9	6	3

Thus 97 per cent of the population subsisted on agriculture and only 3 per cent earned their livelihood and supported their dependents, on production other than cultivation. The comparability of 1951 Census figures with those obtained at the 1961 Census is not possible, because at the present Census, workers and non-workers were separately found and economic workers were divided into 9 categories. The livelihood classes of Kosa arrived at in the 1961 Census is as shown below.

Description	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Total workers	176	83	93
Cultivators	116	55	61
Agricultural Labourers	60	28	32
Non-workers	133	64	69

Thus the proportion of workers: non-workers in the population of Kosa is 100:75.5 i. e. for every 100 economically active persons, there are 75 economically inactive persons to feed. The proportions of workers and non-workers by sex and broad age-groups is as below.

Age-group	*Workers*			*Non-workers*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
0— 9	—	—	—	97	49	48
10—14	11	3	8	15	9	6
15—44	125	63	62	2	1	1
45—59	28	12	16	5	2	3
60+	12	5	7	14	3	11
Total	176	83	93	133	64	69

THE NON-WORKERS IN KOSA

In the 1961 Census, non-workers in Kosa belong to 3 categories and these categories are:—

(1) Whole-time students; (2) Housewives; (3) Dependants — like old persons, children and disabled.

S. No.	*Type of non-workers*	0-9 *Yrs*		10-14		15-44		45-59		60+ *Yrs*	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Whole-time students	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	House wives	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
3	Dependents	48	48	8	6	1	—	2	3	3	11
	Total	49	48	9	6	1	1	2	3	3	11

This table shows that:—

(1) Among the females of Kosa, there is only one woman who is engaged purely in household activities and does no other economic activity. Rest of the non-workers are dependents because of old age. Other women, apart from doing the duties of a house wife are also engaged in some economic activity or the other.

(2) In the age-group 15-44 years there are only two non-workers — one male and one female, the female being the house wife referred to above and the male being a dependent.

(3) In the age-group 10-14 years we find that there are 3 male workers and 9 non-workers, the proportion of worker to non-worker in this age-group being 33:100. For the same age-group the proportion of worker to non-worker for females is 100:55.5. This is an age-group in which the males are no longer whole-time students (they normally pass the primary school certificate by 10th year) and this is again an age-group when the boys in these villages start some economic activity. The following table shows the literacy vis-a-vis this position.

Literacy	*Worker*	*Non-worker*
Literate	2	9
Illiterate	1	—

Out of these 9 non-workers only 1 is a whole-time student and there appears to be no reason why the other 8 are not engaged in some activity when 2 of the same age-group (10-14) are so engaged. The villagers on being asked said "*O man padhaiya toora hen, Saheb*". (Sir, they are the literate boys) and there was a clear implication that because of their education they do not collaborate in the activity of their household. There is again one non-worker in the age-group 15-44 years (age 16 years) and he is again a literate boy having passed his primary school certificate examination from Sirri.

This fact of non-working in the age-group 10-14 years does not seem to have any connection with

income, because the workers and non-workers belong almost to the same income-group. This is borne out by the following table.

Income-group of the household in rupees per month	*No. of males in the age-group 10-14 years who are*	
	Workers	*Non-workers*
Below 25	—	—
26—50	—	—
51—60	—	—
61—70	1	2
71—80	—	4
81—90	2	1
91—100	—	1
101—110	—	—
111—120	—	1

So, it is that the educated boys just do not work. No further enquiries were made on this issue from the villagers but during the survey we once found Gobind (age 16 years) who is a non-worker, moving about with Hindi translation of a novel by the great novelist Sharat Chandra. On being asked as to where he got the book from, he said he gets these books from Sirri and the villagers said that he reads lots of books. So this Gobind may prove to be a misfit in the economic set up of the village life because he has so far not looked after for any job according to his educational standard and he does not help his parents in agriculture and other pursuits. The 'basic-education' that he received in his school is not helping him to adopt himself to his environment; it seems to be tearing him apart without offering a suitable alternative. As said earlier we have not made any further enquiry in this line.

The Workers in Kosa

There are mainly two economic activities in which the people of Kosa are engaged — cultivation and agricultural labour. The figures as arrived at in the 1961 Census, however, relate to the main activity only but many of the persons are also engaged in other activities as secondary occupations e.g. a cultivator may also be an agricultural labourer and vice versa. The following table shows the primary and secondary activities of the working population of Kosa.

Sex of Worker	*Engaged in cultivation only*	*Engaged in cultivation and having secondary occupation*		*Engaged in agricultural labour only*	*Agricultural labour with cultivation as secondary work*
		Agricultural labour	*Other work*		
Male	39	14	2	8	20
Female	45	16	—	7	25
Total	84	30	2	15	45

Two of the male cultivators are engaged in secondary work other than agricultural labour. One of these is the village watchman and the other keep the shop. One of the agricultural labourers, apart from cultivation as a secondary occupation is also engaged on a third economic activity. This is Chintaram Satnami who does tailoring in the village.

But the Census enumeration failed to bring out some other economic activities which came to light during the present survey. These activities came to light evidently because the present survey was a more detailed one and a much longer stay was made in the village. For example, in case of women and girls who are engaged in collecting cow-dung and making cow-dung cakes this activity has not been recorded. It is of course true that excepting 4-5 girls, this activity is a tertiary one, the women being primarily cultivators or agricultural labourers with agricultural labour or cultivation being their secondary work. Then again, in case of Guha Rawat his services as village-grazier have not been recorded and in case of Mannu, Punoo and Bhoklu Satnamis the activities as carpenter have not found place in the enumeration slips. Some women serve at the houses of others and do such odd jobs as rice-pounding and working as household servants, like Dulorin Lohar and the wife of Guha Rawat. The instructions on this point were very clear. Page 14 of the 'Instructions to Enumerators' says: "An adult woman who is engaged in household duties but doing no other productive work to augment the family's resources should not be considered as working for purposes of this question. If, however, in addition to her household work she engages herself in work such as rice-pounding for sale or wages, or in domestic services for wages for others or minding cattle or selling firewood or making and selling cow-dung cakes or grass etc., or any such work she should be treated as a worker".

In this village, all such persons have of course been treated as 'Workers' because of their being engaged in cultivation and/or agricultural labour. But the secondary or tertiary work in which they are engaged has not been recorded. The mistake has largely been in case of tertiary work, but since this kind of activity has not been separately tabulated in the Census, the results are not vitiated because of such an omission.

In Kosa, there are three persons who are also carpenters, 2 are graziers, 2 or 3 women do household work and such odd jobs as rice-pounding and there are others who make cow-dung cakes to be burnt as fuel.

Then there are two elderly women; one is the village *suin* (mid-wife) who attends on delivery cases in the village and gets payment for these. The other is a quack-medicine woman. She is consulted in case of sickness and paid for her services. References to these activities would be made in the course of this chapter. Leaving these smaller activities, the entire working population is engaged in agriculture either as cultivators or as agricultural labour.

Cultivation

Out of 480.59 acres, the total area of Kosa, 443.93 acres are under cultivation being divided into small holdings. The village is commanded by the Tandula Irrigation Canal System.

In the section on Agricultural land a statement has been given showing the size of holdings. That statement has been prepared from the Land Records papers. Since land has been in many cases partitioned and has not been brought on Government record, it was not possible to tabulate size of land possessed by individual households from the Land Records documents. This table is prepared on the basis of information given by the people and is as below:—

Caste	*Number of households possessing in acre*								
	No land	0.1—1.99	2.00—2.99	3.00—4.99	5.00—6.99	7.00—8.99	9.00—11.99	12.00—14.99	15.00+
Satnami	3	9	6	12	13	8	3	1	—
Rawat	—	—	2	—	3	—	—	—	—
Kurmi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
Panka	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lohar	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kosa	4	10	8	12	16	8	3	3	1

LAND UTILIZATION AND CROP-PATTERN IN KOSA FOR THE LAST 13 YEARS.

Year	*Makbuza area*	*Tenancy & Malik Makbuza Land*	*Description of Crop*						*Irrigated Area*		*Total Kharif Area*	*Total Rabi Area*	*No. of plough cattle*	*Land Revenue Demand*
			Area under crop	*Double cropped Area*	*Important Crops*				*Government Irrigation Canel*	*From private owned wells*				
					Paddy	*Kondon Rahar Kutki*	*Wheat*	*Alsi*						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1948-49	444	330	605	186	319	24	18	85	319	—	345	260	96	417
1949-50	444	330	638	271	328	40	17	99	328	1	378	260	133	419
1950-51	444	331	645	212	327	22	27	104	327	—	352	293	143	420
1951-52	444	444	656	226	329	43	21	114	329	—	374	282	109	556
1952-53	444	444	429	225	331	7	24	128	481	—	338	313	—	556
1953-54	444	444	666	237	336	40	25	102	336	—	378	288	111	556
1954-55	444	444	665	237	339	28	26	112	298	—	368	299	102	556
1955-56	444	444	756	302	435	37	23	80	435	—	475	280	79	564
1956-57	444	444	661	231	343	1	26	103	343	—	345	316	79	564
1957-58	444	444	761	237	443	3	24	99	443	—	448	313	91	564
1958-59	444	444	651	225	350	25	14	121	350	1	375	275	112	564
1959-60	444	444	658	234	351	21	25	163	351	1	372	188	113	564
1960-61	444	444	681	256	353	—	16	154	353	—	353	328	106	564

At the time of 1929-30 Settlement, the area under *kharif*-crops was 320.40 acres and that under *rabi* crops was 168.62 acres. It would thus be seen that in the production of *kharif* crops there has been practically no increase since 1929-30. The area under *rabi* crops has, however, increased from 168.72 of the last settlement to 260 acres in 1948-49 and to 313 acres in 1960-61.

Since 1911, when the tenant area in Kosa was 449 acres, there has been no extension of the cultivated area. In 1911, however, there were 39 tenants and if one Malguzar-cultivator, then existing, is added to this number, there were 40 tenants or cultivators in Kosa. Now there are 4 households who do not have any land for cultivation and thus there are now 61 cultivating households. So the number of cultivators has gone up by 56.4 per cent but the area has remained constant and this has resulted in smaller and smaller holdings in the village. The people are therefore persuaded to increase the double-crop area which has gone up from 186 acres in 1948-49 to 256 acres in 1960-61 and it is the *alsi* crop that shows an increase in the village and there is a tendency to grow more *rabi* crops, the area under *kharif* remaining more or less constant.

89 per cent of the village-land consists of *matasi*

and *dorsa* soil, which with the irrigation facilities existing in the village give a moderate outturn of paddy but not so much of wheat. The people are quite keen to get increased production from their fields but are very sceptic of innovations. To substantiate the means of their livelihood, recourse has been taken to subsidiary occupations and some people also migrate temporarily to other areas like the Steel Project or road construction works.

There are 4 households in Kosa who do not possess any land. As per rules framed under Section 162 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959, a landless person is one "who is a bonafide agriculturist and who whether individually or jointly with other members of his family holds no land or land less than 4 acres of unirrigated land or two acres of irrigated land in rice tract." Where a cultivator holds irrigated as well as unirrigated land, one acre of irrigated land shall be deemed to be equal to two acres of unirrigated land and vice versa.

We have no data on irrigated and unirrigated land khasra-wise, but assuming that the land held is irrigated there are 14 persons who may be classified as landless according to the provisions of the Land Revenue code and there are 8 others who hold just two acres of land.

Some of these landless persons were asked if they know that there is a provision in the Land Revenue Code for the allotment of land to landless persons. All of them replied in the negative. They, however, said that if their case is considered by the Government, they would not like to get such land in far-off villages. Asked to specify the villages, where they would like to go, they said that they would be willing to go to Sirri, Pangri, Machandur or Tamora and in addition to land for cultivation, the Government should also give them land for constructing houses.

The Village Cattle

Between 1911 and 1929 the plough-cattle in Kosa had grown up by 28 per cent and there was in 1929 one pair for every 13 acres of land[8]. But the area under plough in 1911 and 1929 remained the same. The number of tenants had, however, increased between the two settlements: In 1911 there were 30 tenants increasing to 39 in 1929, the increase being 30 per cent and thus the increase of plough-cattle may be directly correlated with this increase. The same feature is seen between 1929 and 1960-61. The number of land-holders grew up to 36 per cent and the plough-cattle by 37 per cent. In 1929, there was a pair of plough-cattle for every 13 acres of land; in 1960-61, there was a pair for every 8 acres of land. Below is furnished a statement showing the number of cattle in Kosa. The source of information for 1929 is the settlement records and for 1960-61, a document known as Titamma has been used. The figures for 1911 are derived from those of 1929.

Year	*Area*	*Tenants*	*Number of*									
			Plough	*Bullocks*		*Buffalo*	*Cow*	*Calf*	*She buffalo*	*Calves.*	*Goat*	*Cart.*
				Plough	*Stray*							
1911	449	30	N.A.	———	56 ———		N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1929-30	445-33	39	38	40	6	38	45	27	1	1	20	20
1960-61	444	61	59	—60—		47	39	38	8	5	—	59

The impoverishment of cattle in Chhattisgarh is proverbial and the cattle other than plough cattle do not appear to be kept for milk but for cow-dung which apart from being used as manure is also the most important source of fuel for the hearth. Kosa does not offer a picture any different than the general condition in the tract.

The breed of cattle in these parts seems to have fast deteriorated since Hewitt wrote his report in 1869 and wherein he stated[9]: "The breed of cattle belonging to the country is by no means bad, and almost all are of good shape, but as the only sires of the village cattle are young bulls less than four years old, at which age, or even earlier, they are castrated, and as the mothers are underfed, it is no wonder that the offspring are small and weak. Buffalos which are much used in the district are also small is size, though more care is paid to them than to the cattle, as they are more valuable, fetching from 80 to 90 rupees a pair".

"The richer ryots feed their plough bullocks and buffalos during the hot months, giving each animal from two to three seers of oil cake or *dhall* daily, and about 20 bundles of grass, and the buffalos continue to be fed throughout the year; but except in the hot

8. Supra, p. 372.
9. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District; J.F.K. Hewitt, 1869, pp. 59-60.

months the bullocks get nothing but straw. The remainder of the village cattle are made over to the herdman (*bhurdeha*) who takes them to graze daily, getting as payment one day's milk out of four and two maunds of unhusked rice (*dhan*) from each ryot holding a plough of land."

People of Kosa regard buffalo to be more suitable plough-cattle because they stand the rain more effectively. Actually, in the whole of Chhattisgarh the buffalos are much prized animals and are purchased from the Banjaras and Basdevas who come here each year from the northern districts.

The people pay more attention to the plough cattle. They are given stall-feeding with paddy-husk (*Kondha*) and paddy-straw (*Paira*); the practice of feeding them with oil-cakes has long since disappeared because of economic considerations. The plough-cattle are regularly bathed by the cultivators themselves. The villagers refer to the cattle as *Lachhmi* (Laxmi, the Goddess of Wealth).

During the present survey an observation was made as to the mode of grazing of cattle. At about 7 A.M. people open the cattle-shed and the cattle are driven by the cultivators or by their children to the *gothan* which is just near the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi. Here the cattle of the whole village assemble and keep standing till about 8-30 A.M. Some five to six girls move about among the cattle with baskets in which they collect cow-dung. There is quite a scramble for cow-dung among these girls and they keep running about to collect it. There is often a competition when two or more of them run for collecting the same heap. Then at about 9 A.M. or so the village-grazier drives the cattle towards the grazing ground where they feed on whatever grass is available. The girls collecting cow-dung accompany the herd and the scramble for cow-dung continues throughout. In the evening the cattle are brought back to the *gothan* and from there to the respective houses.

Grazing of the cattle is a real problem in Kosa and the people are quite concerned about it. There is only 18.66 acres of land available for cattle-grazing in Kosa and thus on an average there are 11 cattle to be fed on an acre which is a fairly high incidence especially when the grazing is never closed.

Since the problem of grazing exists in the nearby villages also the villagers of those villages resent the cattle of Kosa grazing on their lands, and they immediately impound the cattle in the cattle-pound of Sirri, Anda, Marra or Ranchirai which causes great trouble. The *Nistar-patrak* of the village shows that the villagers of Kosa do not have any right of *Nistar* in any other village. We do not have information available regarding availability of grazing ground in the neighbouring villages but the very fact that provisions of Section 238 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959 (Section 223 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1954) have not been used, shows, that such land is not available there. This section lays down that "Where the Collector is of the opinion that the waste-land of any village is insufficient and it is in public interest to proceed under this section, he may, after such enquiry as he deems fit, order that the residents of the village shall have a right of *Nistar* or a right of grazing cattle, as the case may be, in the neighbouring village to the extent specified in the order". The problem becomes really acute in the hot months but there appears to be no solution.

The cattle of Kosa are grazed by Guha Rawat, who is known as *bardiha* (village-grazier). The professional term *bardiha* comes from the Chhattisgarhi word *bardi* meaning a herd. The system of payment that the grazier receives is almost the same as existed at the time Hewitt wrote his Report, except that in 1869, the *bardiha* used to receive two maunds of unhusked rice from every cultivator holding a plough of land, but now the payment is one *katha* (i.e. four seers) of paddy for every animal that he grazes and thus he receives nearly 20 maunds of paddy every year. For milking the cow and the she-buffalo the grazier gets what is known as *baruhai*. The *baruhai* has remained exactly the same as mentioned by Hewitt i. e. the grazier milkman receives one day's milk out of four. In addition to these payments, Guha receives one *soopa*-full (*Soopa* means a winnowing fan) paddy from each household at the time of Diwali. He is also the owner of all the cow-dung of the cattle when they are grazing, though this is not the case in practice and, as said earlier, there is a great scramble for the cow-dung among the girls from the village. The owners of the cattle get the cow-dung when the cattle are in their sheds.

Agricultural Implements

Agricultural tools and implements of Kosa are age-old ones and except in one case they might be the same as were being used by the old man and his two wives when they ploughed the land of Kosa for the first time. The main agricultural implements are *nagar* (plough) *kopar*, *dantri* and *hansiya*.

Various tools and implements seen in Kosa are shown in the table below.

Local Name	*English Equivalent*	*Purpose to which put*
Nagar	Plough	For ploughing the field
Kopar	Planner or Harron	For levelling the field
Dantari	Serrated wooden plough or rake	For weeding operations and for breaking the clod
Belan	Roller	For threshing
Sabar	Crow-bar	For digging
Chatwar	Wooden shovel	For throwing the earth on field embankment
Khudri or *Rampa*	Shovel	For digging and removing the earth from fields
Kudra or *Kudari*	Pick-axe	For digging
Kalari		For separating straw from the threshed grains
Hansiya	Sickle	For cutting the harvest

Describing the agricultural implements of this area (then included in Raipur District) Hewitt[10] had stated as below: "The Agricultural implements in use in the District are the plough (*nagar*), the drill plough (*Oonharea nagar*), the paring plough (*Bukkur*), the harrow and rake (*kopur* and *datari*), the pickaxe (*kodali*), and the hoe (*phowra*). All of these are as far as I am aware common to other parts of the Central Provinces, except the *kopur* which differs from that described elsewhere in use. The Chuteesgurhee *kopur* consists of a beam of wood about 9 feet long and about 4 inches thick, with a number of holes pierced on its upper side. When used for cotton or kodo, wooden pegs are driven into these holes, and the instrument is called *datari*, and it can thus be used either as a clod-crusher or a harrow. In rice cultivation it is reversed and only the smooth side drawn over the crop".

Nagar

The *nagar* consists of an 9′ long and 4″ thick wooden shaft known as *dandi*. This *dandi* is made of *saja* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *sarai* (*Shorea robusta*), *karra* or *senha* timber. At one end of it is fixed a wooden piece, about 4″ long and half-an-inch thick, known as *kheela* and at the other end is the *nagar*. It is this curved wooden structure that has given the name to the whole implement. Like the implement, this piece is also known as *nagar*.

The *nagar* is made up of *babul* (*Acacia arabica*) wood which is very hard and stands the strains and stress during ploughing. The end of *dandi* passes through the *nagar* from just over its middle region and is kept fixed to it by a wooden piece nailed through it. This wooden piece is known as *pet khila* (stomach nail) or also as *pond khila* (buttock nail). The 'play', if any, in the hole made in the *nagar* for the *dandi* and the shaft of the *dandi*, is set right by a piece of wood. This is known as *path* and is made up of *babul* wood.

The upper portion of *nagar* is a little less thick than the middle portion. At the upper end is fixed a 9″ long and round piece of wood which passes through the upper end of *nagar* and keeps projecting on its sides. This serves as the handle during ploughing. This round bar is known as *pandkiya muthiya* and it is also made of *babul* wood. The lower end of the *nagar* is bent inwards and to it is fixed the iron-blade known as *nagar-loha*. This *loha* is fixed to the *nagar* by means of a nail known as *jaru*.

The attachment of yoking the bullocks or buffalos is known as *juda* and consists of a 5″ (approximately) thick beam made up of *nim* (*Melia indica*) *boir* (*Zizyphus jujuba*) or *sagon* (*Tectona grandis*). The end of the *dandi* carrying *khila*, rests over this attachment and is fixed to it by means of a rope tied round the *dandi* and the beam and tightened properly. In tying the rope, help is taken of the *dhur-khila* and *khila*.

On the beam there are two holes on each side and in these holes are put the wooden rod known as *parchali* and the iron rod known as *onta*. The bullock or buffalo are yoked to the plough by means of these, the rope from the *onta* passes below the cattle's neck and is put to the *parchali* on the top of beam.

There is a variation in the *nagar* when it is used for the wheat sowing. It is then called *unhari-nagar*. There is probably only one *unhari-nagar* in Kosa that we could come across in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi. In this the only addition is a hollow bamboo known as *kundi* fixed through the *dandi* and reaching upto the *nagar-loha*. At the upper end of the bamboo, is fixed a hollow wooden cone known as *paili* which is made of mango, *mahua*, or *kauha* (*T. arjuna*) wood. The diameter of the cone is 6 to 7 inches i.e. equal to the width of palms kept side by side (as shown in the diagram). The seed is put into this cone and it falls on the *nagar-loha* and thus sowing proceeds along with final ploughing of the land.

10. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of Raepore District, 1869; J.F.K. Hewitt, p. 53.

PLATE LXI

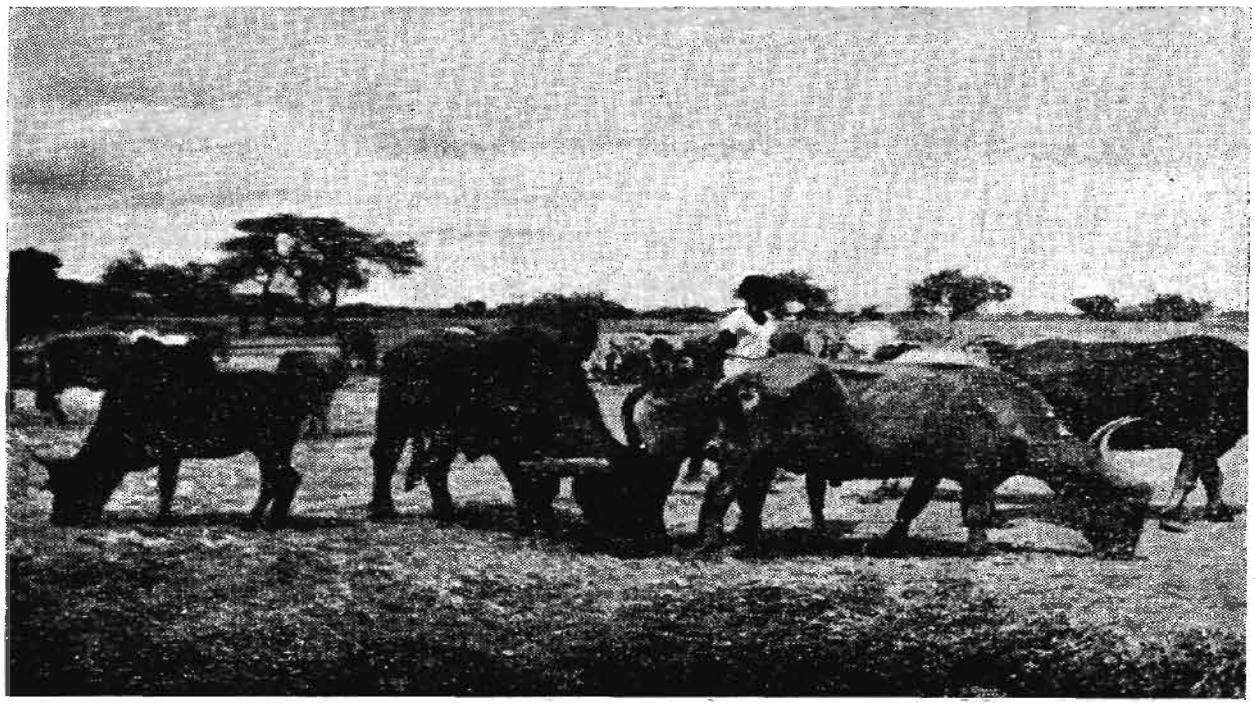


Illustration 87

Village cattle grazing

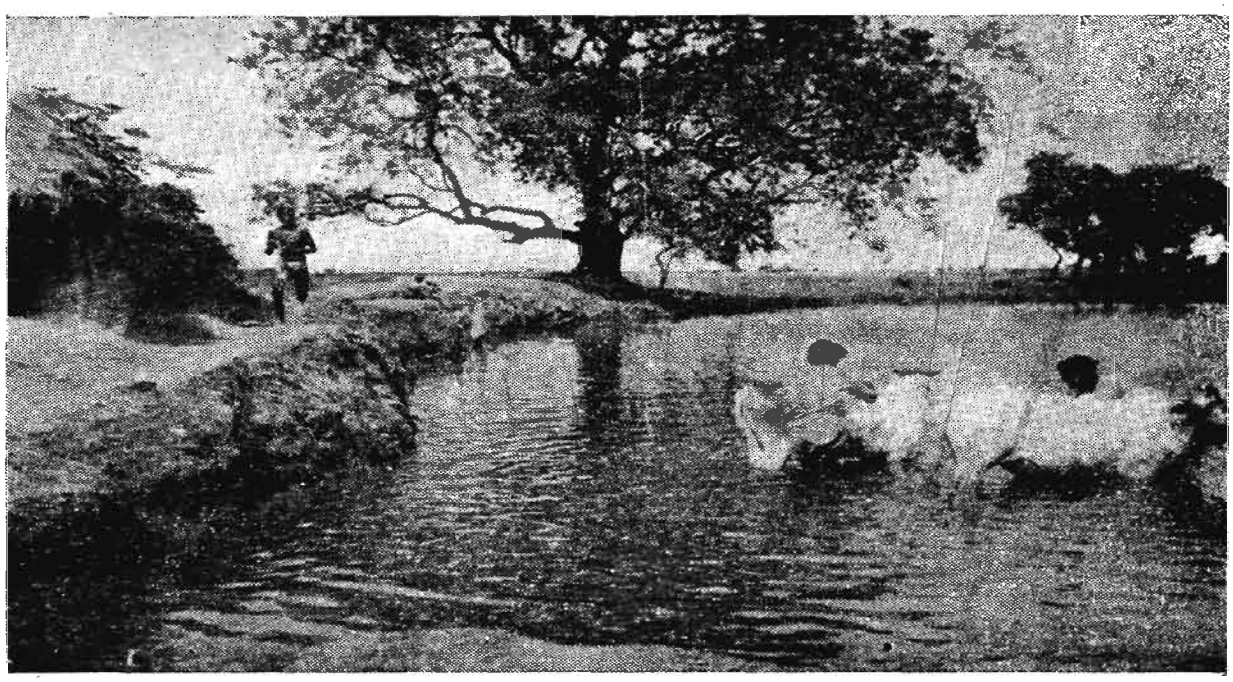


Illustration 88

Village cattle being bathed

PLATE LXII



Illustration 89

Making Cow-dung Cakes

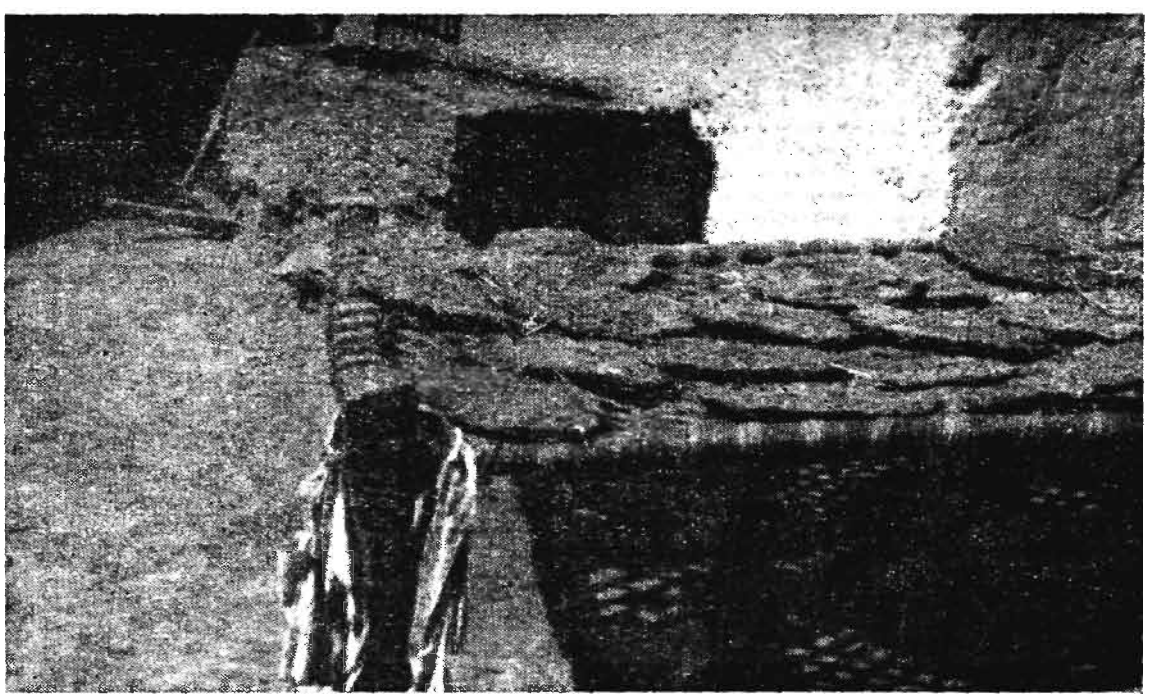


Illustration 90

Cow-dung cakes being dried on a cot in the courtyard of Chintaram's house.

PLATE LXIII

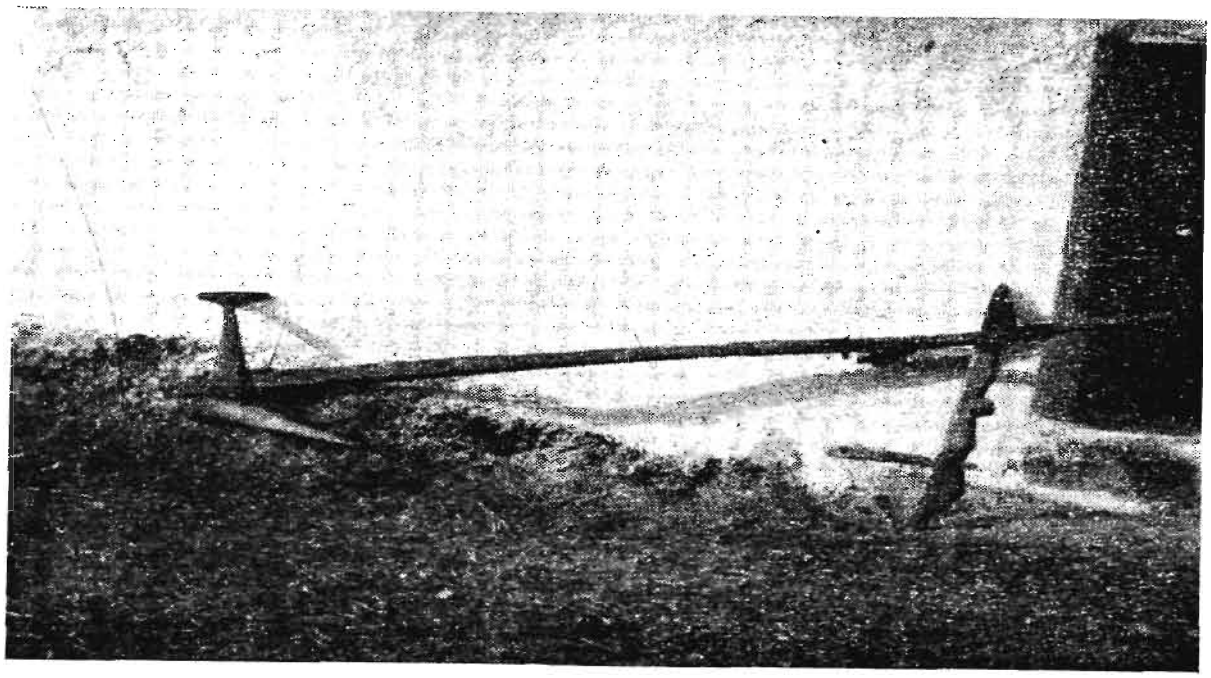


Illustration 91

Nagar

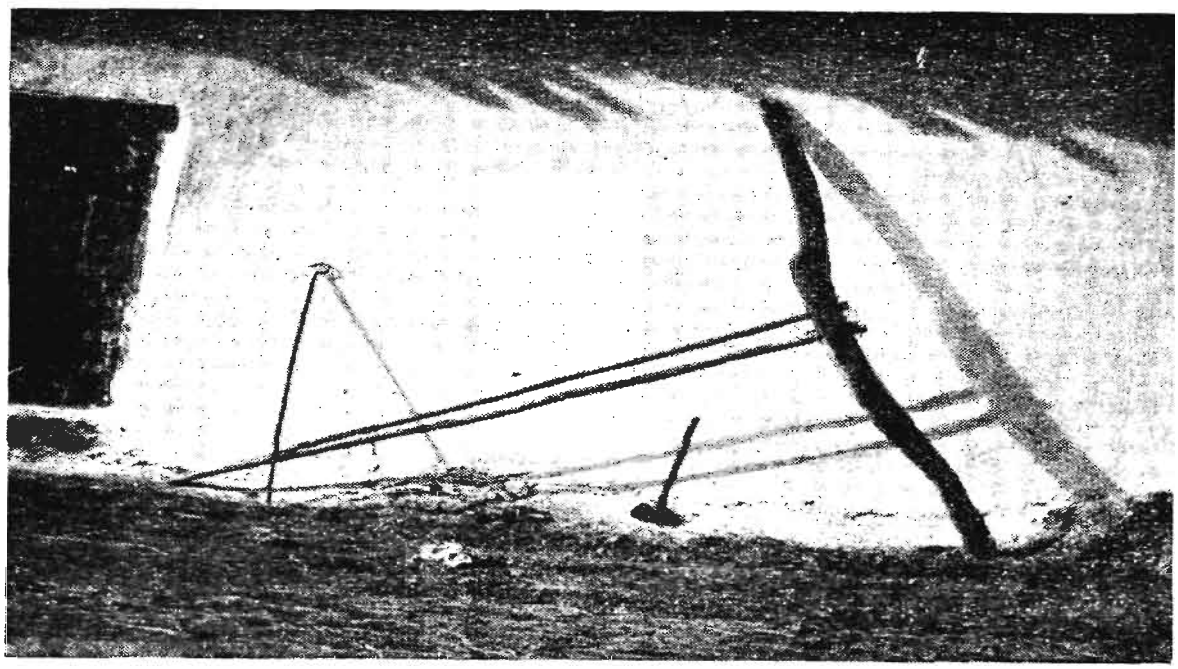


Illustration 92

Kalari, Kopar and Rampa

PLATE LXIV

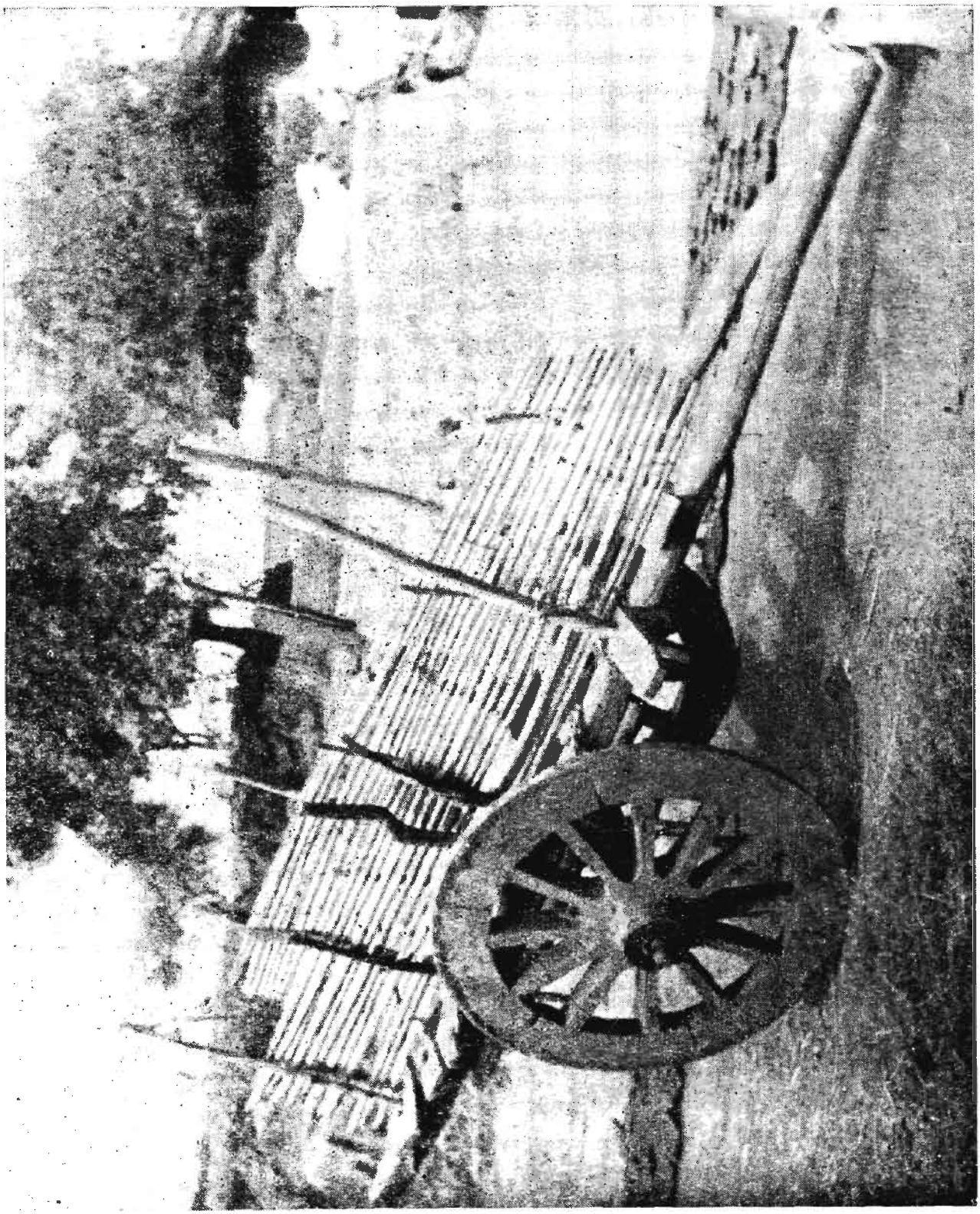
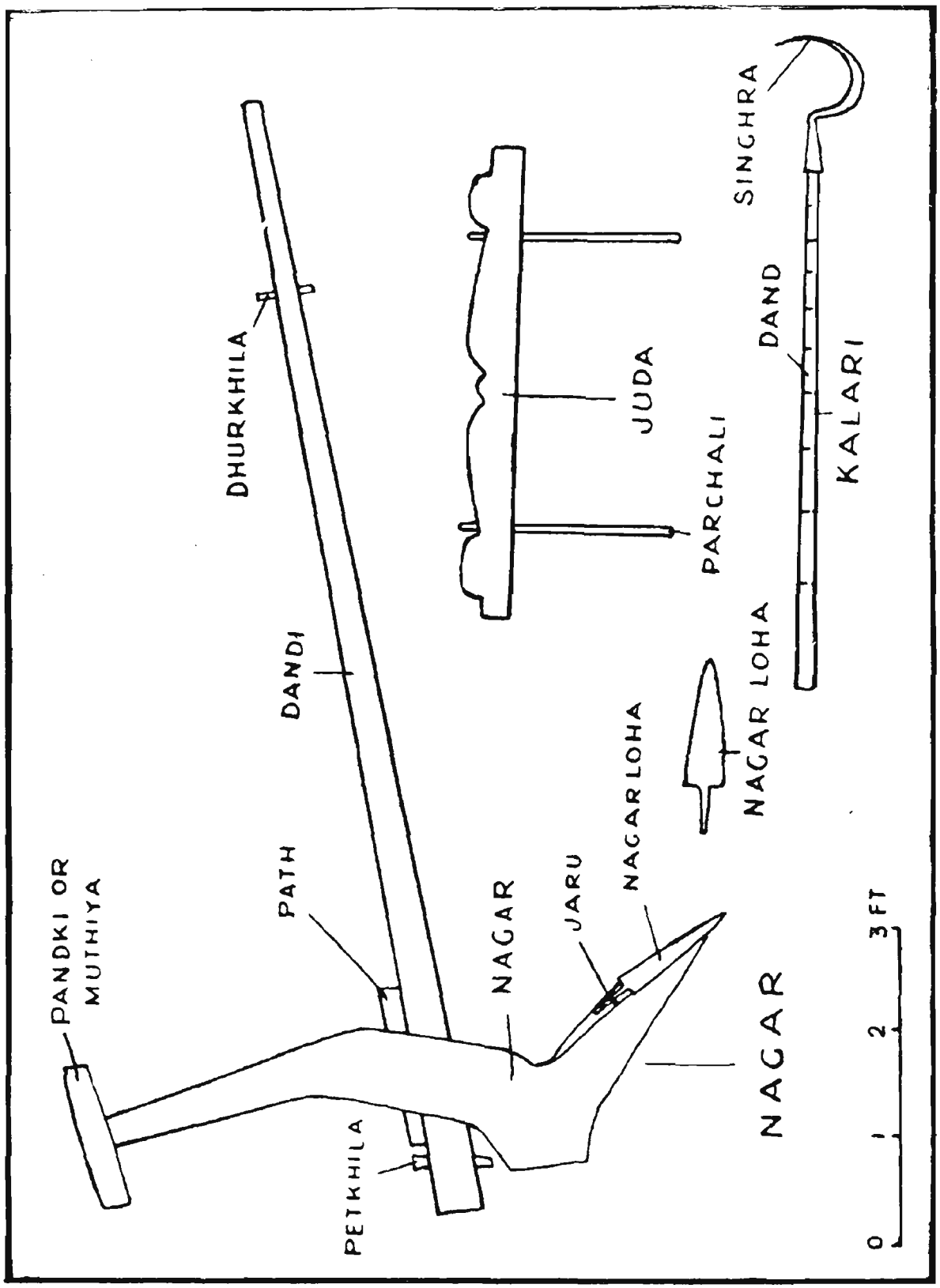


Illustration 93

A Village Cart

PLATE LXV



Agricultural Implements

Illustration 94

PLATE LXVI

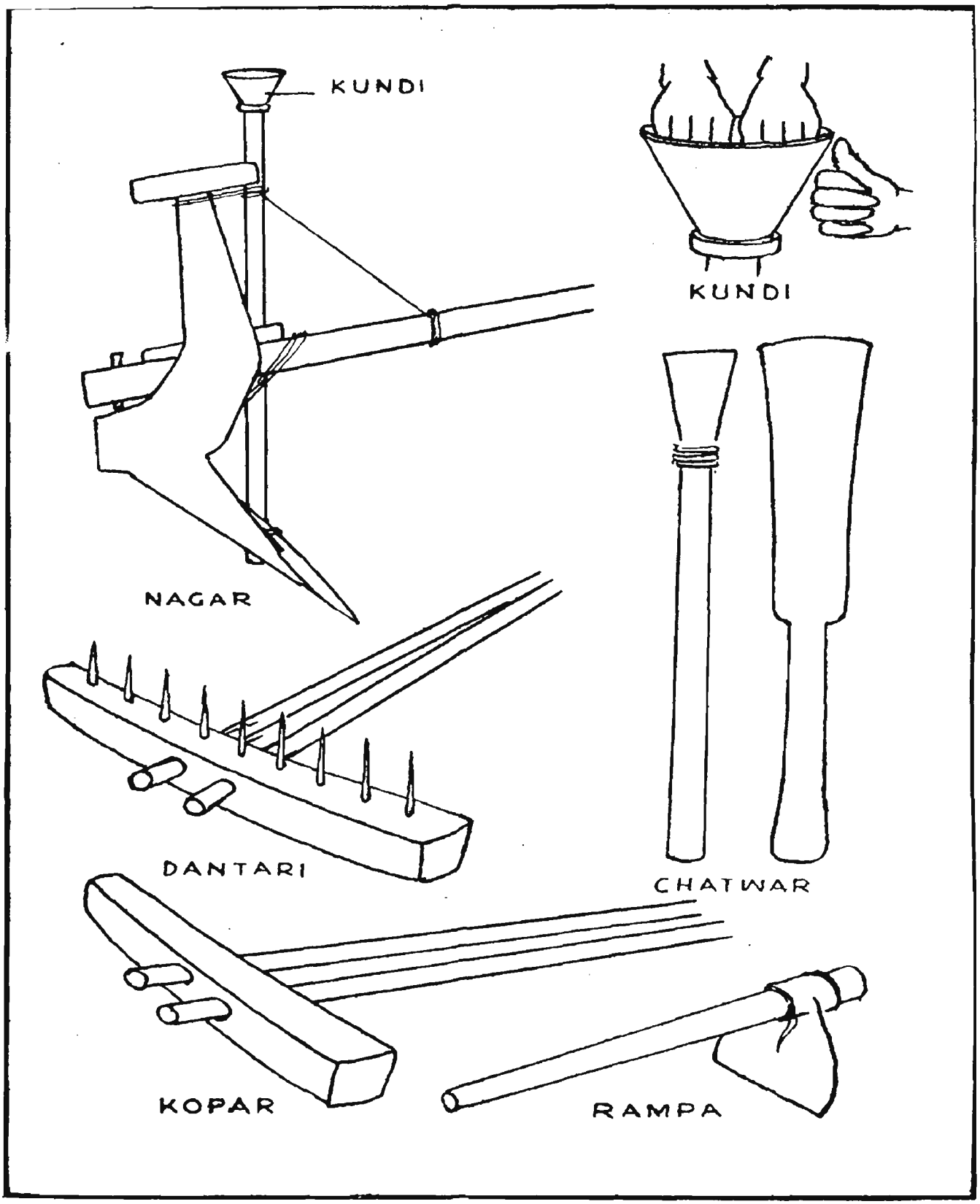


Illustration 95

Agricultural Implements

PLATE LXVII

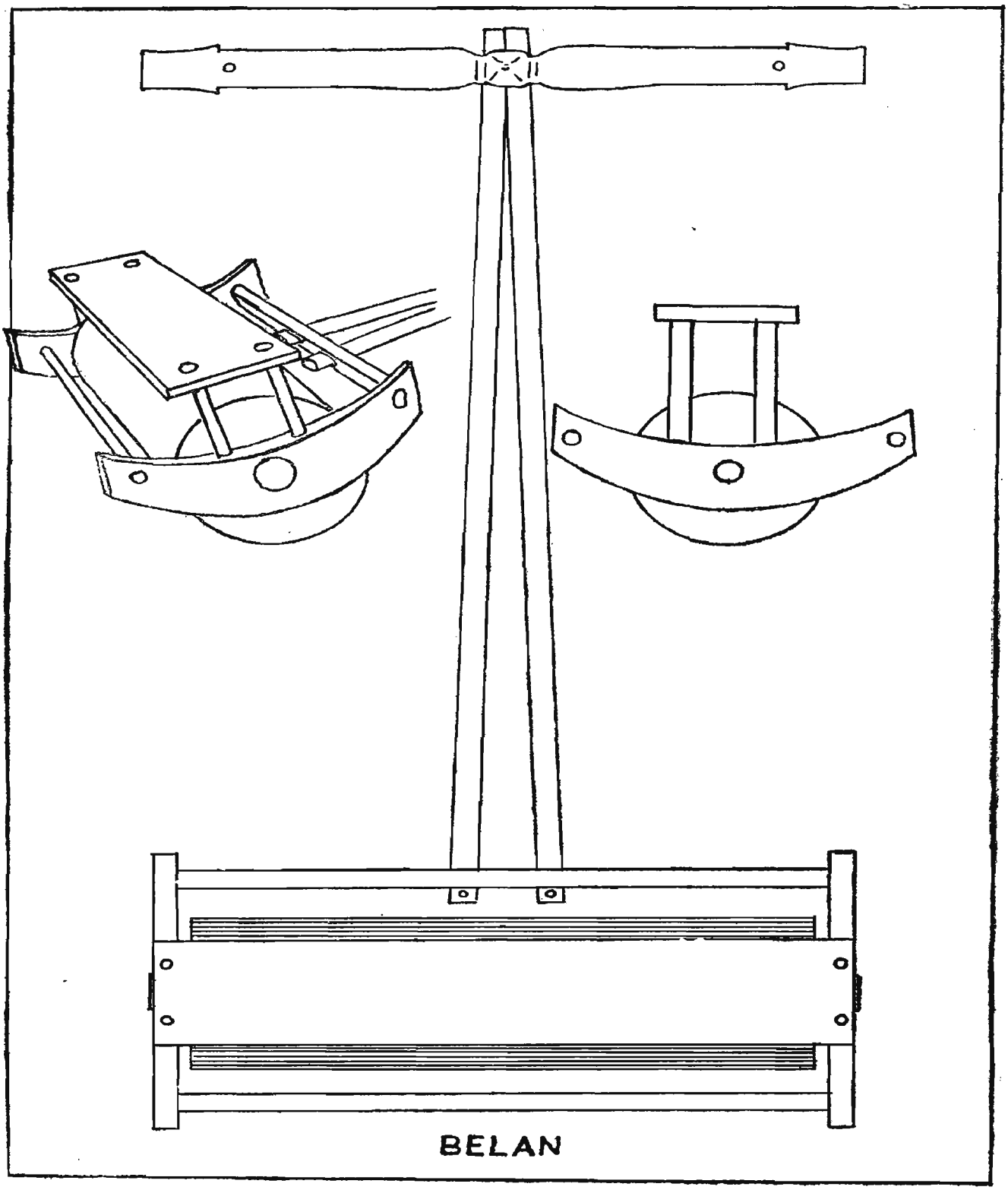


Illustration 96

Agricultural Implements

Kopar

Kopar is an implement used for 'planing' the field and also for weeding operations. It is also used when there is excessive rainfall and the field is full of water and not suited for sowing. In such a case *kopar* is used on and again and the field becomes swampy resulting in the quicker evaporation of excess water.

The *kopar* consists of a flat beam of wood about 10' in length and about 6" in width. From its middle region two 13-14 feet long wooden poles are fixed converging at the opposite end. The *joodd* or *juda* is fixed at this end.

Dantari

Dantari is just a *kopar* in the wooden beam of which wooden pegs are fixed giving it the shape of harrow teeth. The implement is used for weeding and thinning operations as well as for breaking the clods.

Sabar

Sabar or the iron crow-bar is not in use very much in Kosa and very few households own it. It is used to dig holes through the embankment for the passage of water.

Chatwar

Chatwar is a wooden implement in the form of a huge ladle. It has a flat broad portion at one end and a long handle at the other. It is used for throwing the earth from one place to another.

Khudri or Rampa

Khudri is the shovel with a broad iron-plate attached to a wooden handle. The working edge of the *khudri* is 6 to 8 inches long. It is used both for digging and for throwing the earth.

Kudra or Kudari

Kudra also called *kudari* is the pick-axe, consists of a 3 feet long wooden handle and 1 foot long, slightly bent and pointed iron-rod fixed at one end of the wooden handle. *Kudari* is a digging implement.

Kalari

Kalari is the implement used while threshing operations when it is used to separate the paddy-straw from the threshed grains. It consists of a long bamboo pole (8 to 9 feet) at one end of which is fixed a sickle-shaped iron-piece known as *singhra*. The long bamboo handle of the *kalari* is called *dand*.

Hansiya

Hansiya is the common sickle consisting of a 6 inches long wooden handle and the curved iron-blade. Every house has a number of these for cutting the standing crop in the field.

All these implements are the traditional ones and there has been practically no innovation or introduction of any improved variety. There is, however, one recent introduction in these implements and that is the *belan*,* or the roller which is used during threshing operations. 6 cultivators in the village *viz.* Gopal and Nirbhe Kurmi and Pussau, Sheocharan, Hagroo and Punoo Satnamis possess this implement. The implement has come to be used in Kosa in 1960-61 for the first time and the people say that they have got the idea of using it from Bilaspur District. It is a fact worth mentioning here that the implement has been introduced in the village by the people themselves and they got the idea of it from outside the district. According to them, the Community Development Block existing at Gunderdehi has no role to play in the introduction of this improved implement.

Belan is actually a roller, the diameter of the roller being just a little over one foot and the length being 4 feet. It is made of the wood of *sirsa* tree (*Albizzia lebbek*) and in the non-availability of *sirsa*, wood of *sarai*, *sagon* or *babul* could also be used. The structure of *belan* is shown in the diagrammatic sketches.

Belan is rolled over the harvest crop on the threshing floor. Two bullocks are needed to drag it over. There are two advantages of the *belan;* first the threshing is more efficient, secondly only two bullocks are needed instead of 5 or 6 of them in the ordinary threshing.

Belan has proved to be a success in Kosa and all the cultivators have seen the efficacy of it at the threshing floors of Nirbhe, Gopal and others and the time is not far when everybody in Kosa would be having one *belan* and the Satnami carpenters of Kosa may take to making it, though at present they say that they have not attempted to make one.

Mode of Cultivation

Paddy is the main crop of Kosa and in 1960-61 was

* Though the people of this village do not know it, *Belan* is actually the Raipur paddy thresher — developed under the package Programme.

occupying 79.5 per cent of the total cultivated area of the village. The cultivation operations start by the month of May when the people repair the field embankments and begin transporting the cow-dung manure from the pit to the fields. The ploughing starts by the last week of May or the first week of June. This ploughing is known as *khurra* and the purpose of this is to loosen and aerate the soil. Some fields may require two ploughings to effectively loosen the soil. As the fields are ploughed, the manure gets well-mixed with the soil.

Boni (sowing) is done after the first few showers. The *boni* may be of three types:—

(a) *Chhitka* — or the broadcast method.
(b) *Ropa* — or the transplantation method.
(c) *Lehi* — or post germination method.

Out of the three methods, *chhitka* method is the commonest in Kosa. The seed is just sown broadcast. The method is of course primitive and requires 60 seers of seed per acre. The *ropa* method has not become popular in the village because it requires labour which is not available to everybody. The *lehi* method is sometimes used by the villagers. It consists in soaking the seed in water for two days or less and let it germinate. It is then sown after germination. *Lehi* method is adopted for sowing when the ground is well saturated by an early and heavy showers of monsoon. The method consists in ploughing up the wet ground, with an inch or two of water standing on it, into thick mud until all the water is absorbed in soil. Then the soaked and germinated seed is sown broadcast but it is not ploughed in.

Sowing may be classified on another basis also and may be called *khurra, batar* and *lehi* type. *Khurra* sowing consists in sowing on land which has been ploughed once or twice before the break of monsoon. *Batar* sowing is the sowing in land which is ploughed for the first time when the monsoon breaks. In both these types the seed is sown broadcast but before the *boni* begins, the ground is ploughed in once more finally. The *lehi* method is the same as described in the last paragraph and is taken resort to when there is a heavy rainfall and sowing is late.

Weeding operations are known as *nindai* and these are carried on in two stages; one before the thinning operations and the other after it. The weeding is done by manual labour and grass, weeds and other undesirable plants are separated from the paddy plants.

In a field which has been sown by broadcast method, thinning operation is absolutely necessary and it consists in ploughing the field in which seeds have already sprouted, by using the rake or *dantari*. The thinning operations are known as *biasie* and it is succeeded 20-25 days after by the second *nindai*. The time of *biasie* is usually at the end of July or the beginning of August and it is regarded as a very important operation and its postponement owing to unseasonable want of rain is said to be very detrimental to paddy crops.

After the paddy seed has germinated well and the plants are a foot or so in height, the field is closed and water is stored. The paddy plants grow in water. This is known as *bherawat*.

For the proper growth of paddy rain-showers at the time of Dasahra (in October) are absolutely essential and many a bumper-looking crop may be spoild by the failure of rain at this time. The cultivators of Kosa are, however, very fortunate and they can always depend on the Tandula Canal water in case of failure of rain.

The *luai* or reaping operations begin before Diwali in Kartik (October/November). *Luai* is done by manual labour with sickle. The harvested crop is allowed to remain in the field for a day and then brought in the cart and head-loads to the threshing floor (*Khalihan*). The threshing operations are known as *misai* or *minjai* and are done in the month of *Agahan* (November). Except in the case of 6 cultivators who possess the improved threshing implement *belan* the threshing is done by means of getting the harvested crop trampled over by the cattle.

The *khalihan* is washed with cow-dung and clay solution and there is a wooden post in the middle. The harvested crop is spread over around the post and then 2-4 cattle (usually bullocks) are roped in side by side and looped into the pole. These bullocks circumambulate the post over the harvested crop. After some time, the straw gets separated from the grain and is removed by means of *kalari*. This operation of threshing by means of cattle is known as *douri chalana* or simply as *douri*.

After the straw is separated the grain is collected in winnowing fans and allowed to fall slowly from it. One man stands on a stool and keep the winnowing-fan over his head. The breeze separates remnants of straw from the grain and a final whirl with the winnowing-fan separates even the last remains of straw from the mass.

The Utera Crops

The system of double cropping is known as *utera*. in this system the land is not reploughed in order to sow spring crops, but the seed is scattered in the slush of the rice-fields whilst paddy is still standing. Thus the only expense to be incurred is the cost of the seed. The outturn of crops so sown is about half that of similar crops in properly ploughed fields. The crops grown as *utera* are *alsi* (linseed) and *tiwra*.

Other crops grown in Kosa are *kodo*, (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*), *rahar* (*Cajanus indicus*), *urad* (*Pheseolus radiatus*), *masur* (a kind of pulse) and *dhania* (coriander).

Wheat is grown by 30 cultivators in the village, who sow it in small areas and mostly sell the crop.

There is some variation in the area under various crops as reported in the Land Records papers and as reported by the cultivators during this survey. It must be clear that there was no means of ascertaining the correctness of their statements regarding this and for purposes of comparison, both these figures may be given here.

Source	*Area under crops in acres*								
	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Tiwra*	*Alsi*	*Kodo/Rahar*	*Urad*	*Mung*	*Masur*	*Coriander*
Land Records for 1960-61	353	16	—	154	—	—	—	—	—
Informants	291.02	26.02	123.65	90.18	0.30 plus 174 seers	1.60	0.50	0.40	0.50

In the statement of Land Utilization of the village since 1948-49 to 1960-61, only important crops have been given and total *kharif* and total *rabi* areas have been given separately. In this also there is a little variation between the Land Records figures and those given by the cultivators. The former figures are of course more reliable because they are arrived at by an annual on the spot study by the *Patwari* during the Girdawari operations. The cultivators do not have a correct assessment of the area over which they sowed different crops.

Trends of Change

The trend of change in Kosa has been to bring more area under *rabi* crops. This would appear natural also since the land under cultivation has remained the same and the holdings became smaller because of partitioning and therefore the only course left was to utilize the area more effectively by double-cropping and sowing *rabi*-crops. For the sake of comparison the following statement is being given below:

Period	*No. of tenants/ cultivators*	*Occupied area*	*Total Kharif area*	*Total Rabi area*	*Double cropped area*
At the Settlement prior to that of 1911	NA	298	NA	NA	NA
At 1911 Settlement	30	449	NA	NA	NA
At 1929-30 Settlement	39	445.33	320.40	168.62	95.88
1950-51	NA	444	352	293	212
1960-61	61	444	353	328	256

The trends of change may be seen from the statement given below:

Name of Crop		*Area sown at last settlement* 1929-30	*Area sown in* 1950-51	*Area sown in* 1960-61
Total Kharif		320.40	352	353
Paddy		295.52	327	353
Kodo Kutki / Kodo Rahar	1.68 / 34.62	36.30	22	—
Total Rabi		168.22	293	328
Wheat		22.07	27	16
Alsi		29.65	104	154
Tiwara / Masur / Urad, Mung	74.38 / 2.57 / 39.75	116.70	162	158

This statement together with the statement of crop-pattern for last 13 years would show that:—

(1) The double-cropped area has increased from 95.88 acres in 1929-30 to 256 acres in 1960-61 and even in the past 13 years or so, there has been a tendency towards increase. For example, in 1948-49, double-cropped area was 186 acres only.

(2) There has been an increase in the production of *alsi* (linseed) rising from 29.65 acres to 154 acres. In 1948-49, the area under *alsi* was 85 acres.

(3) The area under wheat crop has remained the same since 1929-30, but there has been an increase in the area under *tiwara*.

Thus, the total occupied area remaining the same, it has begun to be utilized more and more effectively as the population pressure on land increased.

Outturn of Crops in Kosa

We have not conducted any crop-cutting experiments in Kosa to find out the outturn of various crops and the only source of information is that furnished by the people themselves. This was got from all the 61 cultivators and the outturn reported is more or less uniform and therefore may be taken as correct.

In the statement below is shown the outturns reported by 10 cultivators selected at random.

Cultivator	*Outturn per acre of*			
	Paddy	*Wheat*	*Linseed*	*Tiwara*
1	20	—	—	3
2	17	—	—	2
3	18	1	½	1
4	16	—	—	2
5	15	4	1	1.25
6	14	1.50	—	1
7	20	1	—	1
8	22	—	—	—
9	19	0.75	—	1
10	12	—	—	1
Average	17.3	1.6	1	1.5

This outturn may be compared with that given in the Revenue-Book Circular IV-4.

Source	*Average outturn per acre of*		
	Paddy Irrigated	*...Wheat*	*Alsi*
Revenue Book Circular IV—4	1500 Lbs	600 Lbs	200 Lbs
Cultivators of Kosa	17.3 Mds.	1 Md. 24 seers	1 Md.

This reduced cultivation appears to be due to impoverishment of the soil by constant cultivation and poor fertiliser. In the past some land used to be left fallow and at the time of the Settlement of 1929-30, 40.19 acres of land was lying fallow (19.59 old fallow and 20.60 current fallow). With the pressure of population on land, it is not possible to leave the land fallow any more because, in a majority of cases, it would mean no production at all. Thus there is no natural recuperation and the manuring is poor. There is no rotation of crop which might have been of some use. The *rahar* (*Cajanus indicus*) is usually grown on the embankments. Grown in the fields it could have given more nitrogen to the soil.

It is seen from the present survey that about 10 cart-loads of cattle-dung manure are used for one acre of land. The use of cattle-dung manure in Kosa is shown in the statement below.

Caste	*No. of cultivating households*	*Land area held*	*Amount of manure in number of cart-loads*
Satnami	51	266.42	1090
Rawat	5	24.23	270
Kurmi	3	128.11	1445
Panka	1	0.59	15

This is evidently a very rough statement because the cultivators take some land in *adhiya* or *reg* basis and the amount of fertiliser given above relates to those lands also. But on the average, it comes to about 10 cart-loads per acre of land. Among the Satnamis, the amount of manure comes to about 5 carts per acre. 7 to 8 cart loads of cattle-dung manure per acre is quite a sufficient amount if it is supplemented by 2 to 3 maunds of bone-meal or one to one and a half maunds of superphosphate. But both these supplementaries are absent in Kosa and an average Satnami cultivator uses just 5 cart-loads of cattle dung per acre, which appears to be a low amount.

The cattle-dung manure is also of a poor quality. The cattle-dung and refuse from the cattle shed is just put into some open pits exposed to air. Many of these pits may be seen near the village *gothan*. According to the figures available from the Development Block at Gunderdehi, 34 compost-pits have so far (by 10-1-1963) been dug in Kosa. Not even one of these pits has so far been noticed by us in the area of the village that we visited. There are many open-air, old-fashioned pits near *gothan* and there are many such pits on the south of the tank. Compost-pits must of course be there in those areas which we could not see.

Some change is occuring in Kosa. In 1962, (the people say) ammonium sulphate was used and according to Development Block 58 bags of Urea has been taken by the cultivators of Kosa. Regarding these fertilisers, the general opinion in the village is that "These fertilisers are no good. They of course give better outturn when used but cannot be brought every year; it is so inconvenient to bring these. And then there is another defect also. The soil becomes used to getting the fertiliser. If the fertiliser is given, the crop is good, if it is not given the crop is very poor. With the cattle-dung manure there is no risk, and it is preferred to chemical fertilisers".

We do not know if the information given by the cultivators is correct. But from their statements it appears that where the dose of cow-dung manure is

bigger, there is better outturn. Some cases may be given here in illustration.

(1) Nathloo Satnami and Tetkoo Satnami have almost the same area of land. Nathloo puts 40 cart-loads of manure in his fields as against only 12 cart-loads put by Tetkoo and grows 80 maunds of paddy as against 72 maunds grown by Tetkoo though the area sown with paddy by Tetkoo is greater.

(2) Paltoo, Amarsingh and Gamru have same acreage of land and they put 4, 6 and 10 cart-loads of manure respectively in their fields growing 15, 18 and 20 maunds of paddy per acre.

(3) Pusau sows paddy over 3 acres and Bharosa sows it over 5 acres. Pusau uses 60 cart-loads of manure and grows 96 maunds of paddy. Bharosa puts 16 cart-loads and grows 96 maunds.

Introduction of Improved Technique and Improved Seed in Kosa

According to the information supplied by the Development Block, the following improved agricultural practices have been adopted by the cultivators of Kosa.

(1)	Japanese Method of paddy cultivation	10 acres
(2)	Improved *Biasie*	90 acres
(3)	Green Manuring	400 cuttings of Ipomaea cornea
(4)	Line sowing	Figures not available
(5)	Compost	175 Maunds

Besides this, one demonstration and one control plot were laid by Ghanshyam Kurmi in the year 1962.

We have not been able to collect complete information regarding the persons who obtained improved variety of seed. The information collected in this survey is that the following persons took the improved seed.

Hirsingh Satnami	—	6 maunds paddy
Udhawa Satnami	—	4 maunds paddy
Dalali Satnami	—	4 maunds paddy
Paltoo Satnami	—	2 maunds paddy
Itwari Satnami	—	2 maunds paddy
Kaskoo Rawat	—	4 maunds paddy

Green manuring has not yet been practised in Kosa though in the Block Report 400 cuttings of Ipomaea have been shown as planted. The villagers have not gone beyond planting these and we do not know as to how many of these are surviving. The people are in urgent need of getting some suitable fertiliser which would give them increased production from their meagre holdings but they are very cautious on the point; they do not want to experiment. If the experiment fails, they would even lose what they get. This fact has been stated very clearly by Ensminger. He states[11]: "Village people are like people everywhere, in that they do the things they do, in the way they do them, largely because they know what results can be expected if they follow the traditional ways which have been handed down from the past. So far as agriculture is concerned, since the villagers have very small acreages they cannot afford to readily accept and experiment with new agricultural practices. Because the villager operates on such small margins he cannot afford to take the risk of getting crop yield lower than the one which he gets from his traditional practices".

The villagers of Kosa are not at all enthusiastic about the demonstration plots laid by Ghanshyam Kurmi and it appears that the demonstration misfired somewhere, for as Ensminger says in the same connection; "In seeking to change village practices the staff must take considerable time to understand why the villager does things the way he does them. The Block staff will have in mind new practices which have been developed out of research. The question which confronts the Block staff is how to get the villager to try the new. The adaptation of scientific recommendations to village conditions must, if it is successful, be a process of grafting the new on to the old in much the same, way the horticulturist grafts a new bud on old root stock."

As already stated the villagers have adopted the *belan* (roller) for threshing and they feel that it is very useful and convenient in use. The opinion of the Block authorities is that the villagers of Kosa do not come forward to adopt improved practices in the fields of agriculture and the reason for this is considered by the Block to be the poor financial condition as well as illiteracy. We respectfully differ from this finding and feel that neither of these is the cause. The principles laid down in 'A Guide to Community Development' by Ensminger have just not been followed and no headway in this direction seems possible till a well-formulated approach is made. There can be no other course except the hard way, and the lines for which have been ably indicated by Ensminger.

11. A guide to Community Development; Dougles Ensminger; 1957, p. 21-22.

Agricultural Practices and Religion

The village economy is not an isolate in itself; it interacts with many other facets of the village-life and out of these religion governs nearly all phases of agricultural activities. *Thakur Deo*, the village-diety is regarded as a deity of crops and so is *Bhainsasur*. The role of these deities have been described subsequently in the section of religion. Here it may suffice to mention only those points at which these two facets of village-life economy and religion interact.

Thakur Deo, the supreme deity, is worshipped before the sowing operations begin and the village *baiga* indicates that sowings may start on a certain day. Usually the sowing operations are started on the day of *akti* festival. Before the sowing starts, *Thakur Deo* is worshipped with burning of incense and offerings of handfuls of the seed which is to be sown in the fields. Some people break a coconut also. The worship on this occasion is known as *muhurat banwat*. When the crop is standing on the field, worship of *Bhainsasur* is done with the sacrifice of a pig every third year.

Harvesting operations are started only after *hoom* (this word appears to be a corruption of the Hindi word *hom* meaning fire-offering) is performed. This consists in putting a little *ghee* and some sugar or *gur* on a burning cow-dung cake. This is done by all cultivators in their fields. After performing the *hoom* the cultivators start cutting the crops of their fields beginning from that part of the field where the crop had shown signs of ripening first.

When the first instalment of harvest is threshed and winnowed, the winnowed grains are kept in a heap in one clean corner of the *khalihan* and a circle is drawn around it with the *kalari*. This is known as *ras bandhna*. Below the heap are kept:— (i) Five or seven rounded pieces of cattle-dung; (ii) thorny branch of *boir* plant (*Zizyphus jujuba*); (iii) a branch of *mokhla* (*Argemone mexicana*), a thorny plant; (iv) black coloured bangles; (v) soot or *kajal* and (vi) a coconut. The coconut is not broken at this stage. It is kept till the last instalment of paddy is threshed and then it is broken and the *prasad* given to the members of the household.

When the threshing is over and the bullocks are unyoked, a prayer is made to God — the substance of which is "O God, may there be enough left for us to eat after the birds and rats and cattle have taken their share from our produce."

Some people like Ghanshyam Kurmi get a *Satyanarayan ki katha* recited in the house before starting the threshing operations. After the threshing is over, the paddy is brought home in baskets by the men and women but before taking it inside the house the old lady in the house or any other woman member sprinkles water on the first instalment. The new crop is eaten on the *Nawakhai* festival. The food on this festival may be entirely of the new crop or of the grain of the previous year in which some grains from the harvest of the new year are mixed. The *Nawakhai* festival is celebrated by the poorer people on the Dasahra day but more well-off cultivators celebrate it on the Diwali day which is a day of greater festivity. In the chapter on religion are described the various other rituals connected with agriculture.

Crop and Cattle Diseases and their Treatment

Crop Diseases

Various crop diseases recognised by the cultivators of Kosa are the *gangai; banki marna* or *banki lagna; katuwa; tiddi; fanfa; mahur; tushar* or *maini* and *sokha marna*. These diseases are described here.

Gangai

The people say that green coloured insects develop in the plant sprouting and thus affected the sprouting shrivels up. On growing the leaves become white and in such plants the corn-ears do not come up. Even if the ears develop, they are devoid of grain. The villagers do not know anything about the diesease and do just nothing about it except getting worried.

Gangai is actually a pest and is known by three names — *gad, gangai* and *ponga*. The scientific name of the pest is Pachydiplosis oryzae and it is in the larvel stage that the insect causes damage to the crop. The nature of damage is that the maggot attacks the growing plant and a hollow silvery shoot is formed. The control measures recommended by the experts cost about 3 to 4 rupees[12] and the villagers would be too glad to adopt them. But no agency has so far shown them as to how this pest can be controlled.

Banki Marna or Banki Lagna

The villagers say that when affected by this disease, the plant become white and the plant dries up. The disease affects the crop in the month of *kunwar*, and

12. The Village Level Workers' Guide and Calender, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Development of Agriculture, 1953, p. 34.

the cultivators of Kosa feel that it is caused because of the delay in taking up the thinning operations (*Biasie*) at the proper time and also because of poverty of the soil.

The name of the pest is Rice Case Worm (*Nymphula depunctalis*) and it is at the caterpillar stage that the pest affects the crops and damages the leaves. Here also the control operations are cheap but the cultivators do not know about it.

Katuwa

The cultivators say that this insect eats away the leaves and sometimes the entire plant. They have reported that once or twice some officials came to the village when the crop was affected by this diesease and they dusted some power.

The insect is a caterpillar but we do not know if it is the swarming caterpillar (*Spodoptera mauritia*) or Army Worms (*Cirphis unipuncta*) because both these pests affect the crop in the caterpillar stage and in both cases the symptoms are the same.

Mahur

According to the cultivators this disease affects both, the paddy and wheat crops. The grains become brown. The diagnosis of the villagers is that it is due to excessive heat that the insect develops in the crop and to check the disease they put *mahua* (fruit of *Bassia latifolia*) in the field; the smell of the fruit kills the insects.

This disease is known as *Maho* disease (*Nephotettix bipunctatus*). It is at the nymph-adult stage that the insect affects the crop and sucks the juice from the plant. The control operations for this disease are a bit costlier and may be upto rupees 9. The villagers, however, do not know anything about them and are content with their technique of putting *mahua* in the field.

Fanfa

Fanfa is the Chhattisgarhi term for gross-hopper and this hopper sets in the paddy plants in the month of *Srawan/Bhadon*. It is a green coloured insect and feeds on the leaves and sometimes on the ears also. The villagers remove the hopper from the fields but since they are not eliminated they affect other fields.

Fanfa is actually the paddy grass- hopper (*Hieroglyphus banian*) and the state at which it causes damage is the hopper and adult state. The control operations consist of collecting hoppers and adults in field bags (cost estimated at Re. 1) or dusting 5 per cent BHC at 20 lbs. per acre (cost Rs. 5). The Shell Oil Company has also brought out a chemical known as Andrax and 14 oz. of Andrax 20 E. C. per acre mixed with in suitable quantity of water and sprayed over the affected crop, kills the hoppers. The villagers do not know anything about these operations.

Tiddi

According to the villagers locust swarms come sometimes in the months of *Bhadon-Kunwar* after the *biasie* operations are over and attack the fields, feeding on the crop. As a result of this the plants dry up.

Sokha Marna

This is a disease of the *rabi* crops — *Tiwara* and *arhar*. The cause attributed by them is the untimely cloudy condition of the sky. The plants fail to grow properly and very few grains develop in the pods.

Tushar or Maini

This disease also affects *tiwara* and *arhar* crops. Untimely cloudy conditions and rain cause some insect to develop in the crop and seeds do not come up. The disease appears to be the Tur-plume-moth (*Exelastis atomosa*) but we do not know if this is correct.

Insects in the vegetable gardens and crops

If insects develop in the vegetable crops like the chillies and beans, the cultivators spray cattle-dung ash on the affected portions.

In 1961, some cultivators had purchased 12 Lbs. of Benzene Hexa-chloride (BHC) from Durg and used it in their fields. They are happy with its performance and said that they would try it again in case the crops are affected by insects. From their talk it appears that they would be too keen to adopt any insecticide once the efficacy of it is demonstrated to them.

CATTLE DISEASES

Galghot

This disease is also known as *bagharra* and is the local name for Haemorrhaegica septicymea. The disease infects the cattle in the beginning of rains and if not controlled in its initial stages, may result in the death of the cattle within 48 hours. Symptoms of the disease are constipation, high temperature, difficulty in breathing, swelling of the throat and tongue and high salivation. The swelling in the throat and difficulty in

breathing have earned the name *galghot* for the disease. (*Galghot* means strangulation of the neck).

There are two kinds of treatment that the villagers undertake for this disease. One is to put the sickle in fire and when it is red-hot, the cattle are branded by the pointed end in the neck. The other treatment is to make a paste by grinding the following ingredients:— (i) Alum; (ii) Dry ginger; (iii) clay; (iv) linseed; and (v) *Ama haldi* (a variety of turmeric). The paste so prepared is applied around the neck.

Mata

Mata is the local name for rinderpest and cattle-plague. The disease can affect the village cattle at any time of the year and takes a heavy toll of life. The cultivators recognise two kinds of this disease viz. *bade mata* and *chhote mata*. The symptoms of the disease are redness of eyes. The infection in the cattle grows very fast and the villagers worship at the shrine of the *Mata* (village-Goddess) on the tank-bank. The treatment for the disease administered by the people is:—

(1) Giving the animal curd or butter-milk to drink;
(2) Giving the diet of gruel of *madia;*
(3) Taking out juice of (i) a branch of *Kauha* (*Terminalia arjuna*); (ii) leaves of *sem* (*beans*); (iii) leaves of *ber* (*Zizyphus jujuba*) and (iv) leaves of *neem* (*Melia indica*). The juice so extracted is mixed with butter-milk and given to the cattle.

Ektangi

Also known as *khurra*, this is the local name of the disease known as black-quarter. As the name itself suggests it is the legs which are affected. The most important diagnostic symptoms of this disease is the lameness in the animal, other symptoms being high temperature and swelling of the leg muscles. It is actually the hoof that is affected. The disease affects young animals and kills them in 24-48 hours.

The treatment offered is to grind the bark of *karra* tree into paste, putting a plaster of this on the affected parts and keeping the part so treated wet with butter-milk.

Chapka

This is the foot and mouth disease. The cattle get temperature, memberanes get congested, ulceration takes place, mouth muscles twitch and the whole palate and tongue is affected by blisters. The animal experiences great difficulty in eating its food. The treatment is to grind alum and coriander leaves together, mix it with butter-milk and give it to the animal to drink.

Sonahi

This disease usually affects the cattle in the month of July. The animal develops a high temperature and starts breathing heavily; there is high salivation in the mouth and bad smell in the dung. The cattle stops taking food and, if not cured, dies within 2 or 3 days. The people regard this as a very serious disease for the cattle.

They do not have any treatment for the disease and make fervent prayers to the deity Mahakali. There is no image of this deity in the village; nor is the deity an object of worship during the general worship of village-deities. But on the occasion of cattle being affected by *sonahi*, the people offer a coconut and betal-nut in the name of this deity on the field embankment. A toy-cart is made out of the wood of *neem* tree, a chicken is seated on it and the cart and the chicken are left in the name of this deity. The *baiga* is also called who uses his supposed magical powers. The cattle is forcibly fed chicken-eggs.

Chhai

This is a disease of the throat and chest region and is believed to be caused by exposure to cold. Symptoms of the disease are stoppage of excretion and the cattle stop feeding. There is heaviness in breathing.

The villagers are of the opinion that *chhai* is caused by the coming of blood in the sac which is in the inside of the throat and because of this the cattle are not able to breathe.

The treatment for *chhai* is to prepare a mixture of the following, bark of *munga* tree ground to paste, coconut, chillies, *dhawansu* and *alsi* (linseed) oil. This is then thoroughly stirred with more of *alsi* oil and fed to the cattle. Another medicine is prepared by mixing *sonth* (dry ginger), *peeper*, *gur* and *alsi* oil and fed to the cattle. Chicken-eggs are also given to the cattle. If the case becomes serious and there is danger to life, the tips of cattle's ears are cut. The belief in cutting the tips of ears is that the unwanted blood which has accumulated in the throat goes out from the part cut.

Teeha

This disease usually affects the cattle during the rainy season. The cattle develops fever which lasts for

two and a half to three days and the cattle becomes restless during this period and appears very weak. The disease causes weakness but is not fatal.

The treatment followed by the villagers is to stop giving solid food to the sick cattle. Grass and paddy straw is stopped and *alsi* oil is drained down the throat of the animal. The temperature of the animal is felt by touching its ears.

Indigestion

Known as *badhajmi* (bad digestion), the disease is caused by irregularity and defect of food and the bowels stop moving. The cattle is treated with two types of medicine. First is to prepare a mixture of *harra* (myrabolum), *sonth* (dry ginger), Soda-bi-carbonate and *gur*. This mixture helps the bowels to move. The other mixture consists of onion and *ghee*. This is supposed to keep the digestive system cool.

Kandh Ana

This is the name by which the sprains in the neck and forelegs, are known. Usually it is the part of the neck where yoke is put, that gets the sprain. There are two medicines for this: making a paste out of red-ochre powder and castor oil and massaging the affected part with that; second medicine is to rub the affected part with only *ghee* or castor oil. These may be rubbed on the horns in addition.

Bat

Bat is the term for rheumatism and the villager's cure for it to rub the affected part with kerosene oil.

Bhangra-marna

Bhangra is the name of an insect which bores through the hide and thus creates a wound. The cure is to grind the bark of *karra* tree and leaves of *neem* tree and filling up this paste in the affected part. Another treatment is to make a powder of dry cattle-dung and mixing it with oil, filling it in the affected part.

Other ailments

If the animal eats *alsi* (linseed) husk, then his belly swells and not treated in time the cattle may die. The cures are: (i) leaves of basil plant and salt are fed to the cattle; (ii) Giving the leaves of *fudhar* plant to the cattle; and (iii) making the body of the cattle wet with cold water.

The general health of cattle can be judged by an examination of its upper lip. If the animal is affected by some ailment and is not well, then the upper lip becomes dry. In case of healthy cattle, the upper lip is always moist and shining like a pearl.

Shobharam Satnami is regarded to be an expert in the treatment of cattle diseases and people take his advice in case of cattle-sickness. Most of the medicines described above are from the *materia-medica* of Shobharam. His knowledge of cattle medicines and ability to examine the health of cattle is one of the reasons why Shobharam is respected and obeyed by all in Kosa.

Weights and Measures in Kosa

The villagers know almost all the weights and measures in use but many of them are not yet well-up in converting the old system of rupees and annas into naya Paise. Their knowledge of kilogram and gram weights is more vague and they do not know the liquid measurements litre and the like.

Weights and measures like *maund, seer, chhatak* and *pav* are still in use in Kosa and they sell the outturn of crops and their necessities in these weights and measures. It is, however, found that in measuring the outturn of their fields they do not even use these measures but use the *gada, khandi* and *katha* system, the lowest unit being the *katha*.

The standard *katha* is equal to four seers. The measure is a wooden or iron receptacle in which grain is filled upto the brim and the quantity is four seers. The *katha* in the village is not of the standard type; it is *tin-seriya katha* i.e. it is equal to 3 seers. One *katha* full of paddy would be equal to 3 seers when weighed on scales. *Katha* is used because it is very convenient to use while measuring the outturn.

20 *katha* make 1 *khandi* and 20 *khandi* make one *gada*. The conversion table of these measures would work out as below.

Village-system	*Maund-seer system*	*Kilogram system*
One *Katha* (standard)	4 seers	3.73 kg.
One *Katha* (Tin-seriya)	3 seers	2.7993 kg.
One *Khandi* (20 standard Katha)	2 Maunds	74.648 kg.
(20 *Tin-seriya Katha*)	1 Maund 20 seers.	55.986 kg.
One *Gada* (400 standard *Katha*)	40 Maunds	14.930 quintal
(400 *Tin-seriya Katha*)	30 Maunds	11.197 quintal
One *Pailee*	1 seer	0.9331 kg.

Thus asked as to how much paddy he grows, Balwa Satnami said that the outturn is 2 *Gada*.

The area of land is also usually told in terms of amount of paddy seed sown and also in terms of plough e.g. it is said that a certain person possess 10 *kathas* of land (*Das Katha ke Jamin*). This means that he has a land on which 30 seers of paddy seed is required for sowing. This would come to 1 acre of land.

ECONOMICS OF PRODUCTION

On the basis of the information supplied by the villagers, it is found that on the whole the cost of cultivation per acre in Kosa comes to a little more than Rs. 25/-. The outturns of various crops of Kosa have already been stated earlier. The people sell crops like *alsi, tiwara,* wheat, coriander, pulses and even paddy. Where *rahar* and *tiwara* are grown, the tendency is to sell *rahar* which is costlier and gives good price and retain *tiwara* for self-consumption. *Tiwara* is a very inferior variety of pulse but the people prefer to eat this and mostly sell other pulses eating *rahar* and *moong only* on special occasions. It has already been mentioned in connection with Material Culture of the people that when two ladies meet the question is — *"Ka sag khaye has"* (literally meaning — 'What curry have you eaten'?) and the answer may be *"Rahar dar to ay"* (It was *rahar* pulse). *Rahar* thus becomes a delicacy.

The people are not very clear on the amount of income derived from the sale of agricultural produce and it cannot be said if the information given by them gives the exact position. As the sales vary from year to year and as the figures of income and expenditure are not remembered correctly even by educated people, it is likely that memory-lapses have occured here. The statement given below shows the caste-wise cost of cultivation and income derived from cultivation.

Caste	*No. of cultivating households*	*Cost of cultivation in rupees*	*Income from cultivation in rupees*	*Average yearly income per household*	*Average monthly income per household*
Satnami	51	7,065	33,408	655/-	54/-
Rawat	5	875	2,280	456/-	38/-
Kurmi	3	3,300	7,240	2,413/-	201/-
Panka	1	50	240	240/-	20/-

(Muni Satnami, though holding land, did not cultivate it in 61-62 and therefore 51 households are shown against Satnamis).

Usually the income derived from cultivation is not such as to substantiate the economy of the household and they have as such to work as agricultural labourers and on other occupations. With the establishment of Bhilai Steel Project within 15 miles of the village and repair of Durg — Patan road, the people have also avenues where they can go for work during the non-agricultural season. Those who do not like to go out carry on some subsidiary occupation in the village.

SUBSIDIARY OCCUPATION

Agricultural labour

8 males and 7 females in Kosa are engaged purely as agricultural labourers. 20 males and 25 females have agricultural labour as primary and cultivation as subsidiary occupations; and 14 males and 16 females do agricultural labour as subsidiary occupation.

Agricultural labour consists of doing such work as making and repairing field embankments, working on *nindai* and *biasi* and sometimes, as in the case of Ghanshyam Kurmi, labourers are engaged for harvesting and threshing operations also. The wages for labour are about one rupee a day.

Going outside Kosa in search of job in non-agricultural season

Murha, Meghu, Khira Dalal, and Halali Satnamis have left the village for the last one to four years and have gone elsewhere to earn their livelihood. The people of Kosa have no knowledge of their present whereabouts. Nongaiha, Pusau, Banda, Sukal, Manghi and Gabhru Satnamis have gone to the Bhilai Steel Project and work there in the construction works like digging foundations of the house. They had come here during Diwali but have gone back to their work.

Other subsidiary Occupations

Pahatiya

Pahatiya is the Chhattisgarhi term for a servant who works as household servant and also grazes the cattle of the master. It is generally well-to-do people in villages who keep *pahatiyas* and in Kosa, it is Ghanshyam Kurmi who keeps a *pahatiya*. *Pahatiya* is more or less a whole-time worker and grazes cattle, cleans utensils, sweeps the house and fills water and does similar other household works. Kaskoo Rawat is working as the *pahatiya* in the house of Ghanshyam.

The services of *pahatiya* are engaged for a year and he is generally paid in kind. Kaskoo Rawat is paid one *gada* paddy.

Bardiha

Bardiha is the name for a grazier (from Chhattisgarhi

PLATE LXVIII

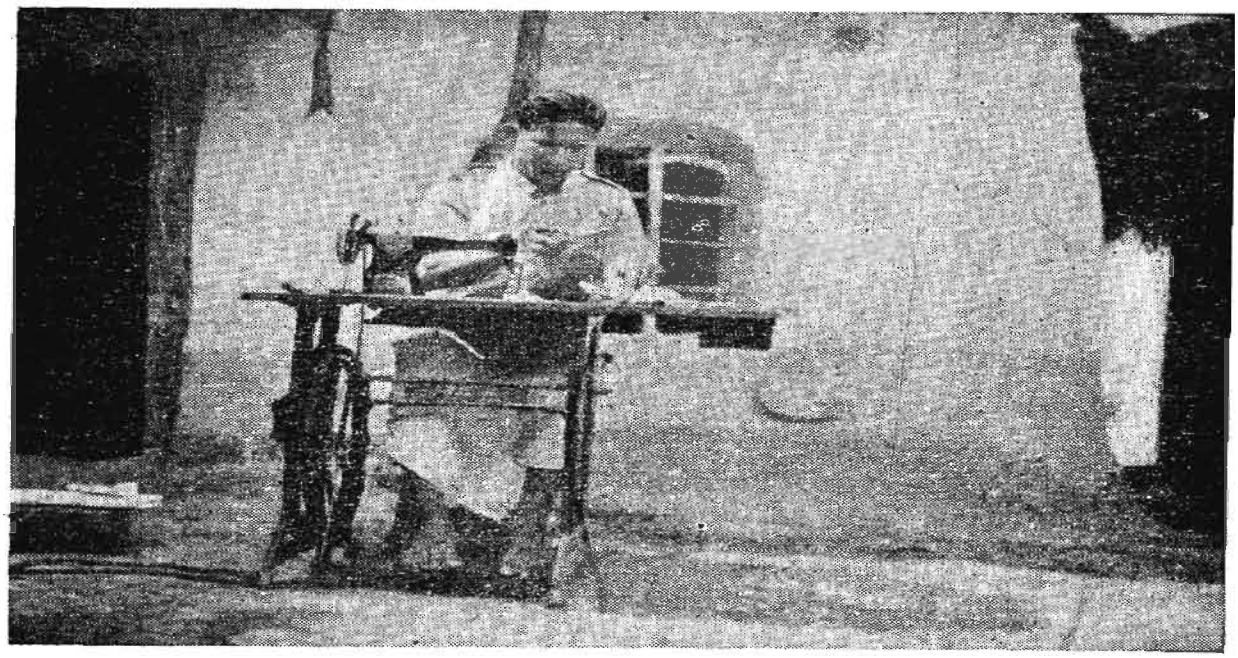


Illustration 97
Chintaram Satnami with his sewing machine.



Illustration 98
Punoo Satnami with his pillar carved by him

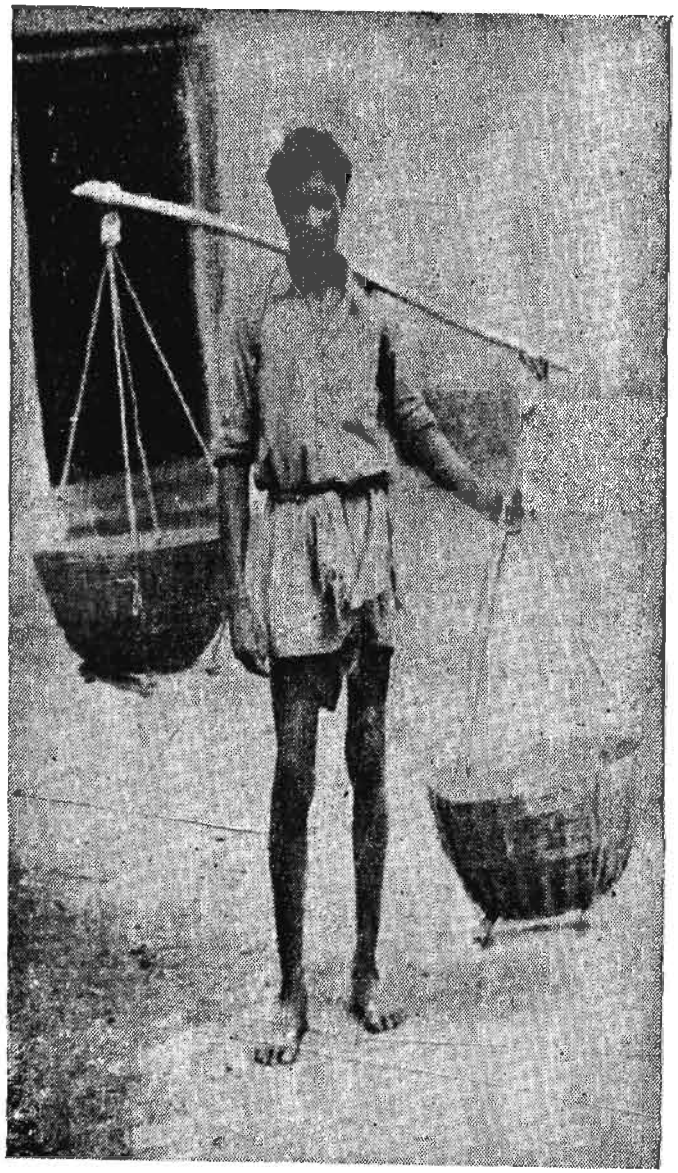


Illustration 99

Bhaga Satnami carrying the Kanwar



Illustration 100

Dhanmat Satnami going for begging

PLATE LXX

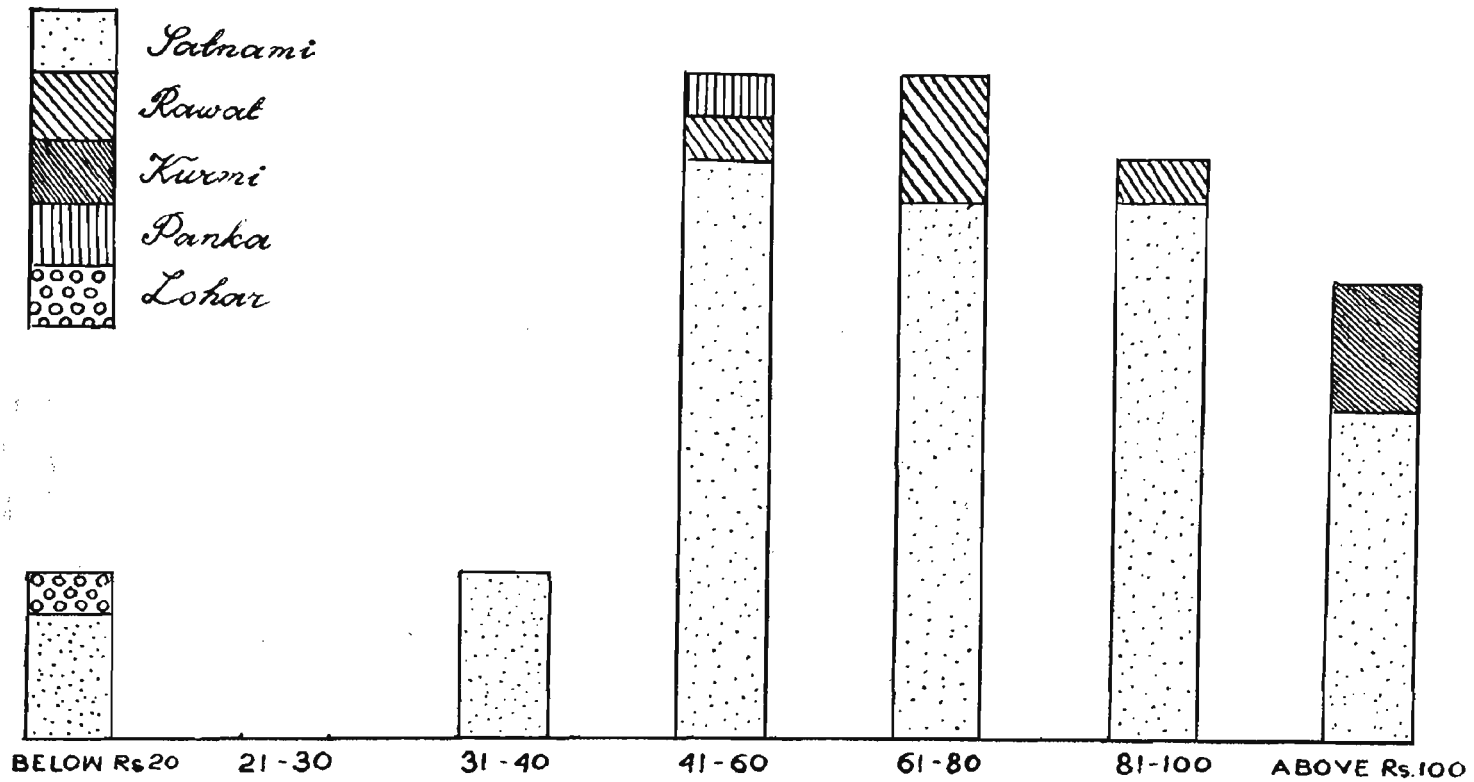


Illustration 101

Income Range

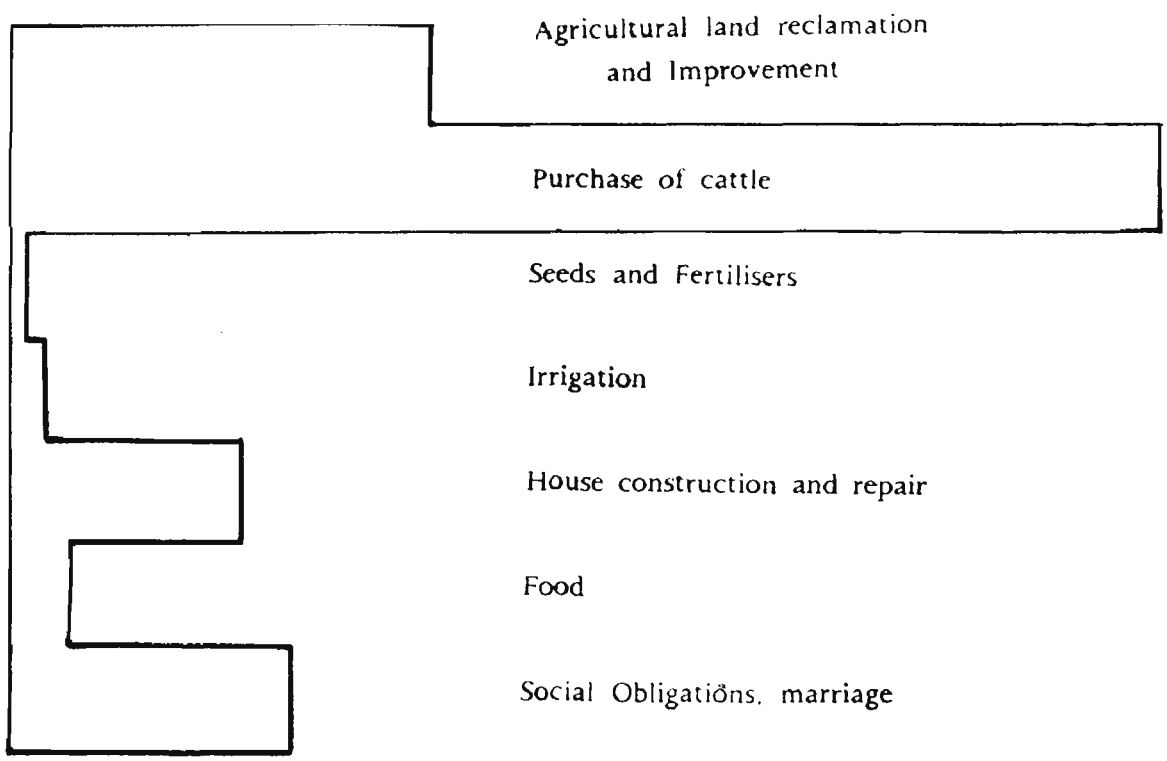
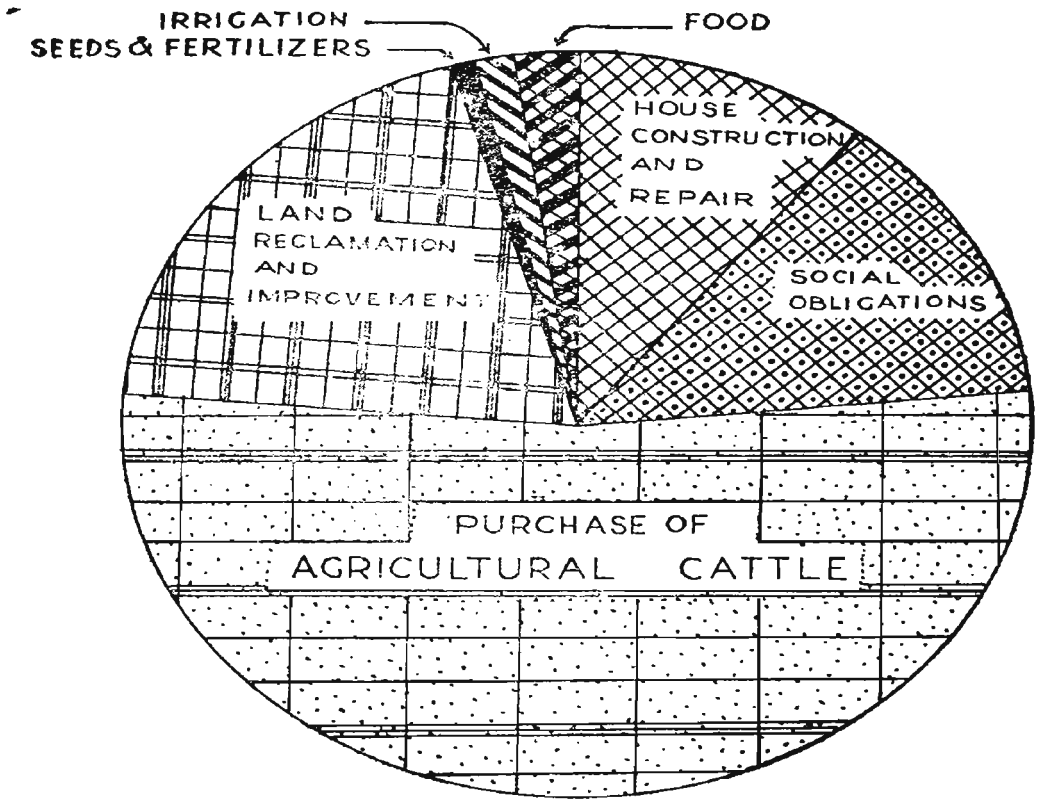


Illustration 102

Utilization of debt

PLATE LXXI

INDEBTEDNESS BY CAUSE



UTILIZATION OF LOANS TAKEN FROM MONEY-LENDERS

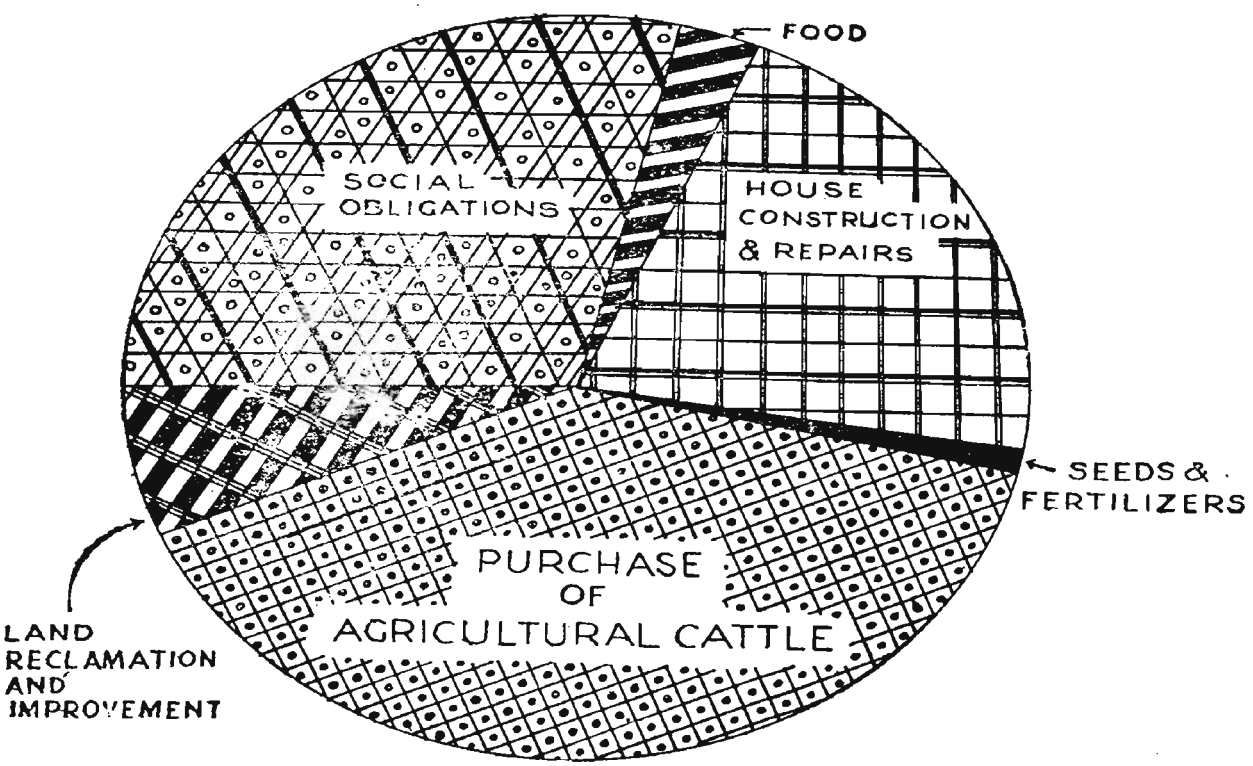


Illustration 103

word *bardi* meaning a herd) and his job is to graze the village-cattle. The *bardiha* are of the Rawat caste and in Kosa, Guha Rawat is the *bardiha* of the village. He gets four seers of paddy per cattle and one day's milk out of four.

Tailoring

To substantiate his income, Chintaram, the enterprising young man of Kosa, has taken to tailoring. He has purchased a Rex-sewing machine and to learn the craft, he worked as an assistant with one tailor in Selud village. People of all castes in the village now get their clothes sewn by Chintaram and also get torn clothes repaired by him. The rates that Chintaram charges for his services are:—

For sewing *Salooka*	0.50
For sewing shirt	0.50
For sewing *Kurta*	0.25
For sewing Baniyan	0.37
For sewing Blouse (*Polka*)	0.50
For sleeveless Baniyan	0.25

It would thus be clear from the rates that they are extremely reasonable because the charges for getting a shirt made in Durg is Rs. 1.50. Chintaram earns from Rs. 5.00 to 10.00 a month from this occupation.

Carpentery

There is no *badhai* in Kosa in the sense of a caste (carpenter caste) and it is the Satnamis themselves who have taken to carpentery as a secondary occupation and they are engaged for making doors, beams, rafters etc. of the houses and for repairing agricultural implements.

Bhoklu, Mannu and Punoo Satnami are the carpenters of Kosa and they are called by other villagers whenever required. Punoo says that they charge from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3/- per day of working. Punoo has also carved a beautiful pillar with a figure of God Ganesh and this, according to him is available for sale. But there is nobody in Kosa who will purchase it and he does not want to take it to a market because there is no guarantee that he may be able to sell it there. But the pillar is a good example of the craft of Punoo and shows that he has some artistic imagination. He has also carved the door-frame of his house and is legitimately proud of it.

Though carpentery is practised to augment the income of the family the earning is not such as to invest in land. Further, the income from this occupation in seasonal — clients are available in May-June for getting ploughs etc. repaired and house roofs changed before rains but for the rest of the year, there is practically no work till a new house is constructed.

Shop Keeping

One Ganesh Ram Kurmi was keeping a general merchandise shop in Kosa some years ago. He was the first person to keep such a shop and hoped that he would have a good business because the people of this village had to go to Sirri and other villages in weekly markets. His business, however, had failed miserably because people, mostly Satnamis, took things from him on credit and never paid him. Some of them paid after being reminded politely but others adopted a quarrelling attitude and apprehending disputes, Ganesh Ram closed the shop for good.

He was followed by Jitrai Satnami, Punoo Satnami, Kejau Satnami, Guha Rawat, and Budgoo Satnami. These people thought that Ganesh Ram had to close his shop since he was a Kurmi and Satnamis would not pay him but that they would not adopt this attitude towards their own caste-men. There hopes were belied, because after some time they had the same experience as Ganesh Ram and before they could suffer as much loss as Ganesh Ram had suffered, they closed their shops.

At present Jairamdas Panka's mother is maintaining a petty shop in Kosa and keeps potato, onion, chillies, soap, *bidis*, tea-leaves packets, sugar, jaggery and cheap toffees. She does not sell any of these things on credit and so far has always insisted on cash-payments. She is a widow and earns some little profit out of her business.

Government Service

Ghanshyam Kurmi is the Patel of Kosa. These Patels are appointed under Section 222(1) of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959 and their most important duty is to collect and pay into the Government Treasury land revenue and cesses payable through him and such other Government dues ordered to be collected by him (Sec. 224(a)). The remunerations of Patels are fixed as per rules framed under Section 223 of the Code and the scale is that the Patel gets a commission of 6 Naya Paise in the rupee on the first 1500/- rupees provided that the annual remuneration of any Patel in respect of any village shall not be less than Rs. 36/-. (The complete scale is not being given here since not applicable).

The present demand of land revenue of Kosa is Rs. 564/- and calculated on the scale the remuneration comes to Rs. 33.84 and therefore according to the proviso, Ghanshyam gets Rs. 36/-.

Jairamdas Panka is the other person in Government service. He is the village-watchman (*Kotwar*) of the village and is holding this office under Section 230 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959. He receives Rs. 192/- per year from the Government as his remuneration. In some villages, the *Kotwars* are given land known as service-land in lieu of their services but in Kosa there is no service-land and Jairamdas is working only Rs. 16/-* per month. His most important duty is to record births and deaths in the village and also to record names of visitors to Kosa with purpose of their visits and report these at the Police Station once every week.

Services of Barber and Washerman

There is no *nai* or barber in Kosa and the barbers from villages Sirri and Pangri (one mile away each) come to Kosa once a week or sometimes once a fortnight. They do not do any service to the Satnamis and serves the Rawats, Kurmis and Panka.

The rate of payment is 10 *katha* (30 seers) of paddy per year per adult male served. No payment is fixed for hair-cutting of children and the barbers accept anything that is given.

Similarly there is no washerman in the village. Usually the services of a washerman are not required except at the time of ritual ceremonies like birth and death when he is required to wash clothes to remove the pollution. No yearly payment is therefore fixed for the *dhobi*. The rates usually charged by him are:—

At *Chhatti ceremony*	—	Rs. 1.25
At death ceremony	—	Rs. 4—5

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

It would be too much to expect the villagers to give correctly their income and expenditure figures. Even we, who get a fixed salary every month, may not be able to give correctly our expenditure account. It therefore appears that these figures have to be viewed in this light.

The main items of income have been described above. Cultivation is the predominant source of income of the villagers of Kosa. The statement given below shows the caste-wise position in different income-groups.

Caste	*Number of household in the income-range of rupees per month*						
	Below 20	21 *to* 30	31 *to* 40	41 *to* 60	61 *to* 80	81 *to* 100	*Above* 100
Satnami	3	—	4	14	13	13	8
Rawat	—	—	—	1	3	1	—
Kurmi	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Panka	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Lohar	1	—	—	—	—	—	—

Thus 12.4 per cent of the households are in income-range below Rs. 40/- per month. All the Kurmi households of Kosa fall in the income-range of Rs. 101/- and above. In the table below are shown the income-groups arranged according to sources of income.

Sources of Income	*Number of households the monthly income of whose is in the income-range of*						
	Below 20	21-30	31-40	41-60	61-80	81-100	100
Cultivation	—	—	—	3	6	5	4
Cultivation and agricultural labour	2	—	3	10	7	8	6
Agricultural labour	—	—	1	2	—	1	—
Cultivation and Government service	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Cultivation and other service.	—	—	—	—	3	—	—
Begging and other odd jobs	2	—	—	—	—	—	—

Cultivation and agricultural labour (working in both) are the commonest occupations of the people of Kosa, and 55.3 per cent of the households come in this category. Many of the households who go out temporarily in search of work have usually not given that particular in response to the questionnaire because, they said, that they go out for a short while only and do not bring any income home. The persons who have gone out for work have already been mentioned before and as such it has not been considered necessary to include them in this table.

Expenditure

The main items of expenditure of the people is on

* Since the writing of this Report, the payment has been raised to Rs. 18/- per month.

clothing. In the table below is shown the position with regard to items of expenditure.

Items of expenditure	*Satnami*	*Kurmi*	*Rawat*	*Panka*	*Lohar*
Food	2,243	245	180	30	8
Conventional necessities	151	11	10	2	—
Intoxicants	—	—	—	—	—
Fuel and lighting	207	30	18	3	0.50
Clothings	358	40	39	10	3
Education	11	13	3	—	—
Medicine	29	20	9	—	—
Over means of production	353	60	25	2	—
Fodder	133	26	16	2	—
Social Obligations	—	—	—	—	—
Other domestic utilities	229	65	25	5	3.00
Dwellings	43	9	4	0.50	0.50
Religion	77	12	8	2	—
Recreation	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—

The people have not given any figure for expenditure on social obligations and their reason is that this is uncertain and ceremonies like marriages do not come every year.

Some Family Budgets

6 Family Budgets are being given here to bring out the picture of income and expenditure in a clearer perspective. These six families have been selected from three broad income-groups.

(a) High Income-group of Kosa	Ghanshyam Kurmi and Hirsingh Satnami
(b) Middle Income-group of Kosa	Guha Rawat and Budgoo Satnami
(c) Low Income-group of Kosa	Dulorin Lohar and Megu Satnami

(1) Ghanshyam Kurmi

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
Income from cultivation	Rs. 333/-	Food	Rs. 80/-
Income from other sources	Rs. 3/-	Conventional necessities like *Bidi, Pan* etc.	Rs. 2/-
Total	Rs. 336/-	Fuel and lighting	Rs. 10/-
No. of members in the household	— 8	Clothing	Rs. 20/-
No. of Earners	— 1	Education	Rs. 3/-
		Medicines	Rs. 5/-
		Over means of production	Rs. 30/-
		Fodder	Rs. 15/-
		Other domestic utilities	Rs. 20/-
		Dwelling	Rs. 3/-
		Religious ceremonies	Rs. 2/-
		Total	Rs. 190/-
Surplus	Rs. 146/-		
Debt	Rs. 1,000/-		
Source of debt	—	Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank	
Items for which debt amount utilised		Land Reclamation	Rs. 300/-
		Bullocks	Rs. 500/-
		Irrigation	Rs. 100/-
		House Repairs	Rs. 100/-

(2) Hirsingh Satnami

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
Income from cultivation	Rs. 120/-	Food	Rs. 60/-
Other sources	Nil	Conventional necessities like *Pan, Bidi*	Rs. 5/-
		Fuel and lighting	Rs. 7/-
Total	Rs. 120/-	Clothing	Rs. 10/-
No. of members in the family	— 8	Over means of production	Rs. 12/-
No. of Earners	— 4	Fodder	Rs. 5/-
		Dwellings	Rs. 3/-
		Religion	Re. 1/-
		Total	Rs. 103/-
Surplus	— Rs. 17/-		
Debt	— Rs. 300/-		
Source of debt	—	Cooperative Land Mortgage Bank	
		Mansukh Money-lender of village Machandur.	
Items for which debt required	—	Land Reclamation	Rs. 50/-
		Purchase of Bullocks	Rs. 100/-
		Food	Rs. 50/-
		Social obligations like marriage	Rs. 100/-

(3) Guha Rawat

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
From cultivation	Rs. 30/-	Food	Rs. 30/-
From service and labour	Rs. 25/-	Conventional necessities like *Bidi, Pan* etc.	Rs. 2/-
Total	Rs. 55/-	Fuel and lighting	Rs. 2/-
No. of family members	4	Clothing	Rs. 8/-
No. of Earners	2	Medicines	Rs. 1/-
		Over means of production	Rs. 5/-
		Fodder etc.	Rs. 2/-
		Other domestic utilities	Rs. 5/-
		Religious ceremonies	Re. 1/-
		Total Expenditure	Rs. 56/-

Deficit	—	Re. 1/-
Debt	—	Rs. 100/-
Source of debt	—	Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank
Item for which debt required		Land Reclamation Purchase of Bullocks.

(4) Budgoo Satnami

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
From cultivation	Rs. 60/-	Food	Rs. 25/-
Other sources	Nil	Conventional necessities like *Bidi, Pan* etc.	Rs. 3/-
Total	Rs. 60/-	Fule and lighting	Rs. 3/-
Number of family members (both earners)	2	Clothing	Rs. 10/-
		Over means of production	Rs. 5/-
		Fodder	Rs. 3/-
		Medicines	Re. 1/-
		Other domestic utilities	Rs. 5/-
		Dwelling	Rs. 2/-
		Religious ceremonies	Rs. 2/-
		Total	Rs. 59/-

Surplus	—	Re. 1/-
Debt	—	Rs. 200/-
Source of debt	—	Cooperation and Land Mortgage Bank, Durg
Items for which debt required		Land reclamation Purchase of Bullocks.

(5) Dulorin Lohar

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
Income from begging and doing odd job like paddy, husking, cleaning and washing dwellings	Rs. 15/-	Food	Rs. 8/-
No. of family members (self)	1	Fuel and lighting	Rs. 0.50
		Clothing	Rs. 3.00
		Dwelling	Rs. 0.50
		Other domestic utilities	Rs. 3.00
		Total	Rs. 15/-

—— Balance
Debt — Nil

(6) Megu Satnami

Income (Monthly average)		*Expenditure* (Monthly average)	
From cultivation	Rs. 10/-	Food	Rs. 10/-
From agricultural labour and other labour	Rs. 10/-	Conventional necessities like *Pan, Bidi* etc.	Rs. 2/-
Total	Rs. 20/-	Fuel & lighting	Re. 1/-
No. of members in the family (Self)	— 1	Clothing	Rs. 3/-
		Over means of production	Rs. 5/-
		Other domestic utilities	Rs. 2/-
		Dwelling	Re. 1/-
		Religious ceremonies	Rs. 2/-
		Total	Rs. 26/-

Deficit	—	Rs. 6/-
Debt	—	Rs. 50/-
Source of debt		Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank
Items for which debt required		Agricultural land reclamation

Though the budgets given above may not be strictly typical examples of the groups they represent, they at least bring out three important features:—

(1) It is in the higher income-group that there is some saving; the middle and the lower income-groups live almost hand-to-mouth spending as much as they earn and sometimes even more e. g. on the occasion of a marriage and for paying bride price.

(2) Even in the higher income-groups where there is saving in the family budget, people take loans.

(3) In the higher income-ranges there is more burden of debt.

In the light of these observations we may study the position with regard to indebtedness in Kosa.

Indebtedness

In the Mahalwar Abstract prepared at the time of the Revenue Settlement of 1929, it is mentioned that 71 per cent of the tenants are indebted. (29 per cent being free from the debt) and that 42 per cent of them owe less than Rs. 100/- each, the rest having debt of over Rs. 100/-.

In the table below is shown the position of indebtedness by income-groups.

Income group	*Total No. of Households*	*No. of Households in debt*	*Percentage of households in debt to total No. of households*	*Average indebtedness per household in rupees*
Below Rs. 20	4	2	50	45
21 to 30	—	—	—	—
31 to 40	4	4	100	38
41 to 60	16	9	56	124
61 to 80	16	14	80	172
81 to 100	14	13	93	159
100 & over	11	11	100	430

This table brings out point number three stated above and it is found that in the higher income-groups generally, there is not only higher incidence of indebted families but the average indebtedness is also high.

Indebtedness by cause is shown in the following table.

Cause	*Amount of debt in rupees*	*Number of families in debt*	*Proportion of debt due to cause to total amount of debt*
Agricultural land reclamation and improvement	2,036	31	19.3
Purchase of agricultural cattle	5,590	29	52.9
Seeds and Fertilisers	50	1	0.5
Irrigation	150	2	1.4
House construction and repair	1,125	7	10.6
Food	255	6	2.4
Social obligations like marriage	1,360	13	12.9

Source of Debt

From the above table it is found that it is for agricultural pursuits that the largest amount of loans have been taken by the people of Kosa. But about 20 per cent of the amount has also been taken for house-construction, food and social obligations and it is here that the money-lender comes into the picture in Kosa. Ghanshyam Kurmi, the ex-proprietor of Kosa, is in a position to lend out money, but he does not do it and his reason is very simple. He is afraid that he would never get the money back and to take the possession of the land through Civil Court would earn him the enmity of the people. He does not want to take all this botheration and the people have to look for the loan outside Kosa.

There are 12 private sources from where people of Kosa have obtained loans and these are:—

Money lender	*Village where he resides*	*Whether village itself or tahsil or outside the tahsil*	*Amount of Debt advanced in rupees*
A	Kosa	Village	75
B	Kosa	Village	150
C	Kosa	Village	100
D	Chirpoti	Tahsil	1,050
E	Sirri	Tahsil	60
F	Kasaridih	Tahsil	50
G	Durg	Tahsil	800
H	Machandur	Tahsil	150
I	Gorkhapar	Tahsil	800
J	Machandur	Tahsil	800
K	Rajnandgaon	Outside the Tahsil but in the district	120
L	Not known	Not known	440
			Rs. 4,595

The preceding tables on income-expenditure and family budgets show that in a large majority of cases, there is hardly any saving at all and if and when the family has to spend on this and similar other occasions the only source is to get a loan from some body after mortgaging their land. As the cases mentioned earlier show the land is lost in many cases. It may be noticed here that Kejuram Sahu and Moti Marar who used to advance loans previously and have come to occupy land in Kosa because of non-repayment, have not advanced any loan in recent years and we have not been able to ivnestigate the cause for this. Also we do not know if the people sometimes misutilize the amount advanced to them by the Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank.

Total amount of debt on the people of Kosa, as told by them, is Rs. 10,566/- out of which Rs. 4,595/- has been taken from private sources and indigenous money-lenders; the other i. e. Rs. 5,971/- has been advanced to them by the Bank. For getting loans for agricultural work, the people now invariably approach the Bank.

The households who have taken loan from private money-lenders are in the following income-groups and it may be seen that generally the trend is for a higher incidence in the higher income-groups.

Income group in rupees	*Total No. of households where debt has been taken from money-lenders*	*Amount of money as loan from money-lenders in rupees*
Below 20	—	—
21 to 31	—	—
31 to 40	—	—
41 to 60	3	490
61 to 80	8	1,255
81 to 100	4	500
101 & over	7	2,350

The table shows that in the higher income-groups people take more debts from private money-lenders also. This is obviously because of two factors viz. (i) repaying capacity and (ii) social status. People in higher income groups take higher amounts of loans because they have greater capacity for repayment and have land which may be mortgaged without the fear of starving the family for the whole year and because of a higher status, people naturally spend more in social obligations.

The loans obtained from these money-lenders is utilized for the following purposes.

Use for which amount was utilized	*Amount in rupees*
Implements & tools	—
Land reclamation and improvement.	300
Purchase of agricultural cattle	1,820
Seeds, Fertilisers	50
Irrigation	—
House construction and repairs	975
Food	140
Social obligations	1,310

In the preceding tables, the information that has been presented, is given by the people themselves. It is not possible to check the amounts that the people have taken from money-lenders but it has been possible to verify the position with regard to the debt obtained from the Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank. The people have given out the amount to be Rs. 5,971/- and from the information that we verified from the books of the Bank, the amount of loan advanced has been found to be Rs. 6100/- in the year 1961-62. There is thus a remarkable correctness in the statement of the people. The difference of Rs. 129/- is evidently because of some lapse of memory.

The position with regard to the loan from the Bank is shown in the following table: —

Year	*No. of house-holds obtaining loan*	*Amount of loan in rupees*	*Number of households obtaining loan belong to caste*			
			Satnami	*Rawat*	*Kurmi*	*Panka*
1955-56	20	1,970	19	1	—	—
1956-57	22	2,280	21	1	—	—
1957-58	26	2,760	25	1	—	—
1958-59	30	4,100	27	2	1	—
1959-60	30	4,100	27	2	1	—
1960-61	32	4,800	29	2	1	—
1961-62	38	6,100	33	3	1	1

The procedure of advancing loan by the Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank is that the Bank advances the loan to the Co-operative Society in the village which has been formed in the year 1955 and is duly registered. The Bank advances loans at the rate of Rs. 40/- over one acre of land and the rate of interest charges is as below.

For Co-operative Society — Short term 6 %
Medium term 6½%

For Members — Short term 9 %
Medium term 9½%

The villagers are more particular in refunding the loan taken from the Co-operative Bank, because here it is a concern of the whole village. In respect of loans taken from money-lenders, it is their individual responsibility and so they repay it whenever they can afford.

This is then the economic picture of the village. As Shobharam said *"Ey Sal Bhagwan ke daya nai hois"* (The God was not kind this year), the villagers have the land and the muscles but they are of the firm conviction that these would not yield crops if the Gods do not will it. They have of course faith in their efforts and reliance on their muscles but have greater faith on *Thakur Deo* and a host of other deities who, they think reside in the village, and over-see all that is happening.

CHAPTER V

BELIEFS AND RELIGION

It was Hewitt who wrote nearly a century ago "Chuteesgurh to orthodox Hindoos is not only hateful as the land of the Dasyus and witches, but as the Headquarters of religious dissent, as it is to its secluded wilds that all those who opposed the prevailing tenets fled to escape from their persecutors, and consequently Hindooism sits lightly on most of the people, while large members are avowed dissenters belonging to the Kubeerpantee and Sutnamee sects."[1] Hewitt wrote this about the "Raepore" (i. e. Raipur) District which in his time included the present district of Durg also and, though in his days these areas to which the 'religious dissenters' fled and lived, might have been 'secluded wilds,', at present chimneys of a big Steel Project located here emit clouds of smoke that cover the sky. And yet in the very shadow of the Blast Furnaces, one still finds the land full of supposed witches the fear of whose evil powers looms large in the minds of those who live with them. This is what we find in Kosa from the fields of which village one may see the chimneys and huge structures of the Bhilai Steel Project in the northern horizon.

The religious beliefs of the people of Kosa are a mixture of superstition, belief in supernatural spirits, witchcraft, magic, idolatry and restriction on certain foods. This 'religion' governs all their activities — social and economic. In the birth of a child a certain deity has to be propitiated; before the sowing starts another deity has to be offered a sacrifice and when the harvesting is done, then again religion comes into play. And again a certain deity cannot be propitiated in a certain manner because the people cannot afford that much money, for example goat sacrifice has been replaced to a great extent by only breaking the coconut.

We may begin with the superstitions. The common superstitions observed by the people of Kosa, both Satnamis and non-satnamis, are:—

(i) Half the days of the week are auspicious, the other half being inauspicious. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday are regarded as auspicious days and things like starting the construction of a house or starting sowing and threshing operations or the performance of a marriage ceremony are all done on these auspicious days. The inauspicious days are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and no work, social or economic, is started on these days.

(ii) Before starting on a journey or on any work, people pay a good deal of attention to good and bad omens. Good omens are:—

(a) Seeing a woman carrying a filled up water pitcher
(b) Cow suckling her calf
(c) Two or more sneezes
(d) Jackal crossing the path from left to right

The bad omens are:—

(a) Meeting a blind person or a person with one eye: the latter is regarded to be more inauspicious
(b) A cat crossing the path
(c) Jackal crossing the path from right to left
(d) One should not look at a fallen and delapidated house just after getting up in the morning or when about to do some important work.

BELIEF IN SUPERNATURAL SPIRITS

The people of Kosa believe in the existence of supernatural spirits which are usually thought of as malevolent. Many of the diseases which the village *baidin* (the female quack) and Shobharam are not able to cure, like hysteria, refusal of the infant to suckle, high fever and delirium, are ascribed by them and by the people to affliction by these malevolent spirits. And no caste in the village is immune from these 'infectious' beliefs even Ghanshyam Kurmi believes in these. The supernatural sprits distiguished by the people of Kosa are:—
Male spirits — *Raksa, Bhoot,* and *Shaitan*
Female spirits — *Paretin, Churelin,* and *Chandrabaini*

Raksa

Belief in the existence of *raksa* is widespread in the rural areas of Chhattisgarh as a whole, and it was observed to be common among the people of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat of Raipur and Bilaspur districts

1. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, J.F.K. Hewitt, 1869, p. 47.

respectively. The present writer is acquainted with many other villages of Chhattisgarh where dread of *raksa* prevails. The phenomenon so termed is the supposed presence of flames on the ground and in the sky seen in the night. It cannot be stated for certain whether it is due to hallucination or it is the flicker of a distant burning flame or whether it is some incandescent algae in the air or again, if it is the presence of bone-phosphorous left in the cremation grounds. The people of Kosa, like people of many other villages, have a belief in the phenomenon being genuinely a supernatural one.

It is stated by the people of Kosa that grown up men dying unmarried and without having their sexual desire satisfied in life become *raksa* in the 'after-life'. Elwin[2] has also referred to the phenomenon of *raksa* in his study of the *Baigas*. He writes "The *Raksa* is a much more unpleasant being. He is the ghost of a man who has never experienced coitus. His face red and burning, his body covered with thick black hair, he lives in a semur tree waiting for an unwary village maiden to pass his way." In Kosa, the people stated that *raksa* may trouble all and sundry. He does not look only for village maidens though of course, women are more likely to be troubled by him. The writer has been shown clefts and hollows in trees in many villages. The sap had come out in these clefts and become coagulated as gum and this was shown as the spot where the *raksa* had satisfied his sexual yearning. The people of Kosa, however, did not know of any such phenomenon in the village, though they stated that the *raksa* usually satisfies himself in this way in the holes and clefts of trees. They said further that he does not necessarily live on a *semur* (*Bombak malabaricum*) but may make his abode on any tree, the favourite being, according to them, the *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*). The figure of the *raksa* is said to be like that of a man but it is very huge and burning in flames; the flames are the flames of his unsatisfied desires. In the nights the *raksa* may obstruct the path and one should not attempt to cross him.

Two or three people in Kosa claim to have encountered a *raksa*, but only Shobharam Satnami described to us his experiences. Once he was going to his fields when he saw a *raksa* burning in the cremation ground. It was away from him and he did not take any notice of him. When Shobharam was young he had, (according to him) actually met a *raksa*. Here is the account in his own words.

"I was very much in my youth and was not afraid of going out even in pitch darkness. I had then purchased a pair of buffalos, young calves, who were all energy and speed. I was coming in my bullock cart to which these young buffalos were yoked and it was quite late in the night. As I crossed a *nala*, I happened to see the *raksa* on a tree near the road. It was burning and saliva fell from his mouth as balls of fire. I halted the cart and was wondering what to do. But the buffalos knew no restraint. They just sped across and I could not check them. When I passed the tree, the *raksa* jumped — a huge ball of fire but I had crossed the place and, after covering some distance, I looked back. The *raksa* was there on the tree again, burning and his saliva was falling on the ground as fire embers."

It may be mentioned here that the belief in village Tilaibhat of Bilaspur district is that it is only men of the Brahmin caste who, dying unmarried, become *raksa*. Men of other castes do not become *raksa* but become *bhoot*. The people of Kosa said that it is not so. Men of any caste who have not known what a woman is, would become *raksa*. One cannot say whether it is this fear of being a *raksa* in the life beyond death that men in Kosa and other villages of Chhattisgarh are so keen not to be left unmarried and it is likely that this belief may be one of the many explanations why in Chhattisgarh, and especially among the Satnamis, where the sex-ratio is high, females are so keenly sought after.

Bhoot

This malevolent male spirit appears in spotless white clothes. Its abode is trees and field-embankments. It appears and disappears in moments. Persons afflicted with the *bhoot* would look at empty space with dilated, expressionless eyes. *Bhoot* also troubles children and throws them off their mothers' laps. It may trouble the entire village also.

It is the men dying an unnatural death as a result of murder, drowning, burning or suicide that become *bhoot*. The antidote for this malevolent spirit is to give the afflicted person human urine to drink, beating him with shoes and forcing him to inhale the smoke of red chillies.

The people have not told me whether there has been any case of a person in Kosa, afflicted by *bhoot* but it would be interesting to note how the beliefs of the people of Kosa regarding *bhoot* are similar to those

2. The Baiga; Verrier Elwin, p. 465.

found in otner parts of India. Crooke[3] stated that "the proper *Bhut* is the spirit emanating from a man who has died a violent death, either by accident, suicide or capital punishment. Such a soul reaches an additional degree of malignancy, if he has been denied proper funeral ceremonies after death. This is one of the special wants which deprive the spirit of his longed — for rest. Thus we read in Childe Harold 'Unsepulchred they roamed and shrieked, each wandering ghost'."

Shaitan

Shaitan is neither a malevolent spirit nor a benevolent one. Children dying in infancy are believed to become *shaitan* in after-life.

FEMALE SPIRITS

Paretin

Paretin is a malevolent female spirit and is supposed to be very dreadful. A woman dying after delivery but before the ritual pollution is over, becomes a *paretin* and takes its abode on some tree. The *paretin* afflicts woman during the menstrual period and on the *chhatti* ceremony after child-birth. If a woman after delivery but before the *chhatti* happens to pass by the side of the tree where the *paretin* lives, she becomes afflicted by this spirit and then probably there is no cure but death. The symptoms of affliction are shouting and crying. A promise has then to be made to the *paretin* but she may or may not oblige.

There is a *paretin* in Kosa also. It is believed to be living on the *ber* (*Zizyphus jujuba*) tree on the way to Machandur village. Kamal Satnami's wife was haunted by this *paretin* and died. Nothing was spared to save her but the *paretin* could not be controlled. Kamal's wife had gone to ease herself in the fields 3 or 4 days after she had given birth to a child. She by mistake happened to go by the side of this *ber* tree and had high fever on coming back. For some time she was in delirium and Kamal called the *baiga* and other experienced persons, made all sorts of promises to the *paretin* but his wife passed away after a day. Sukal Satnami's wife was also afflicted by the *paretin* before the *chhatti* of her child-birth could be performed. She also died after two days of a delirious state and high fever.

This *paretin* of Kosa is supposed to be very malignant. She does not spare even men. Bharosa Satnami was afflicted a year ago by it. He was ill for some time and on getting a little well, he was going to answer the call of nature. He passed by the side of the *ber* tree when the *paretin* caught him. Then Chintaram and Itwari Satnami and Kaskoo Rawat used their magic-powers and luckily Bharosa was saved.

A supposed case of affliction by *paretin*, which the writer recently observed in Bilaspur District could be given here to illustrate the cause of this 'affliction'. A Rawat woman was given cold water bath on the 6th day after delivery. She was taken to the court-yard and bathed. Just after that she got high fever and became delirious. The people took this to be a genuine case of affliction by the malignant *paretin* and the *baiga* was called but when he could not do anything, the woman was taken to the Main Hospital, Bilaspur, where she was treated and saved.

Churelin

Though the villagers believe in this malevolent spirit, they are neither able to describe it nor distinguish it from *paretin*. Shobharam Satnami said that it was akin to the *paretin* with the only difference that those women who die within one day of delivery become *churelin* whereas if they pass away after one day from child-birth, their fate is to become a *paretin*. The signs of affliction by a *churelin* are the same as those relating to the *paretin* but the *churelin* is less malignant than the *paretin*. There has been no case in the village of a woman being afflicted by the *churelin*.

As in the case of *bhoot* so in the case of *churelin* the beliefs of the people of Kosa find an echo in the beliefs and superstitions in other parts of India. It is singularly curious to find how similar beliefs could have originated in widely different regions. If it is diffusion of one idea, the power of the idea behind such diffusion should be remarkable indeed. Crooke[4] has the following say about *churel*.

"More dreaded even than the ghost of a man who has been killed by a tiger is the *Churel*, a name which has been connected with that of *Chuhra* or sweeper caste. The ghosts of all low caste people are notoriously malignant, an idea which possibly arises from their connection with the aboriginal faith, which are treated half with fear and half with contempt by their conquerors. The corpses of such people are either cremated or buried face downwards, in order to prevent the evil spirit from escaping and troubling its neighbours. So it was an old custom in Great Britain in order to pre-

3. The Popular Religions and Folk Lore of Northern India, Vol. I; W. Crooke, 1896, p. 234.
4. Ibid, p. 269.

vent the spirit of a suicide from 'walking' and becoming a terror to the neighbourhood, to turn the coffin upside down and thrust a spear through it and the body which it contained so as to fix it to the ground. Riots have taken place and the authority of the Magistrates has invoked to prevent a sweeper from being buried in the ordinary way."

"The *Churel*, who corresponds to the *Jakhai, Jokhai, Mukai* or *Navalai* of Bombay, is the ghost of a woman dying while pregnant, or on the day of child's birth, or within the prescribed period of impurity. The superstition is based on the horror felt by all savages at the blood, or even touch of a woman who is ceremonially impure. The idea is, it is needless to say, common in India."

Chandarbaini

The people have some ideas about *chandarbaini* but they were not able to say who becomes a *chandrabaini* and because of what manner of death. *Chandrabaini* is a neutral spirit normally and is pleased with the votive offerings of rags, pieces of cloth, even pieces of thread and people who pass that way throw a piece of thread or cloth as the case may be on the tree.

The *chandrabaini* of Kosa is believed to be living on a *renja* tree (*Accecia leucophloea*).

DEVICES TO PREVENT AND COUNTERACT AFFLICTION BY MALGIN SPIRITS DURING LIFE-CYCLE RITUALS

Pregnant women and women in post-natal stage (after delivery but before the ritual pollution is over) are supposed to be particularly prove to be afflicted by evil spirits and the people have therefore certain devices which they believe to be efficacious in counteracting these influences. Some of these devices which came to light during the present survey, are:—

(1) In pregnancy and particularly so in the first pregnancy, the women do not cross rivers and streams and they always wear the amulet given to them by the *baiga*.

(2) When pregnant women go out they stick a shoot of *douna* plant in their ears, which because of its pungent aromatic smell is supposed to keep the evil spirits away.

(3) People wearing red and yellow coloured clothes are prevented from going to the room where delivery has taken place if the birth-pollution has not yet been removed. It is believed that the colour attracts the evil spirits and they would make the mother and child ill.

(4) After child birth, *ajwayan* (Ptycotis) is burnt in the delivery room and sometimes amongst the Kurmis an old torn shoe is put below one of the legs of the cots. The Satnamis burn such old shoes in front of the room. It is believed that the smell of a burning old shoe would drive away evil spirits.

(5) The Satnamis hang the branch of a *ber* tree or the fishing net of the Kewat in front of the room where delivery has taken place so that the evil spirits trying to enter the room may get entangled in the thorns or net. Among Kurmis and people of other castes, a branch of castor known as *anda-kadi* is hung (branch of *Rininus communis*).

Treatment of the person supposed to be Afflicted by Evil Sprits

The *baiga* from Tamora is sent for to treat persons supposed to be afflicted by evil spirits. This *baiga* is a Gond by caste and holds 15.91 acres of land in Kosa also. The *baiga*, according to the Durg District Gazetteer[5], is a "village priest, and is usually a Gond or Pardhan, as there are no real Baigas in Drug. But as the Baigas commonly act as Priests in Gond villages by virtue of their being the oldest residents and being supposed to have a more intimate knowledge of the local deities, the name of the tribe has become attached to the office." This *baiga* recites some *mantra* keeping the ash of burnt cow-dung cake in his palm and then blows with his mouth at the person afflicted. The process is known as *Jhar-phhonk karna*.

The *baiga* lives in another village and is not available every time. To remove this difficulty, some villagers of Kosa have also learnt the 'art' of removing the affliction by evil spirits. These persons who are the 'witch doctors' of Kosa are Chintaram and Itwari Satnami and Kaskoo Rawat. What their 'art' is and from whom they have learnt this is not disclosed by them but they said that they have to refresh the knowledge on every *Nagpanchmi* day. On this day they fast and make a figure of a snake on the ground with rice grains or with the extract of *bhengra* plant. This snake figure is then worshipped with coconut,

5. Drug District Gazetteer, 1909; p. 52.

parched paddy, milk and some delicious dish and the *mantra* becomes reinvigorated.

Ordinary affliction can be cured now by these three people of the village who not only cure the effects of evil spirits but also effects of witch crafts and cases of scorpion-bite and snake-bite. Effects of the 'evil eye' are also cured by them.

Protection from Evil-Eye

The villagers believe that women in pregnancy and child-birth, children and vegetable and cereal crops are liable to be affected by the 'evil eye' of strangers and they therefore take recourse to certain practices as checks against this apprehended danger. The following were reported as the practices followed by the people of Kosa :—

For human beings

(i) A mark with soot (*Kajal*) is put on the fore-head, chest and soles of the foot of the child when it is sent out or goes out to play.

(ii) A copper *kada* in hand or *choora* in foot is put on the child's person.

(iii) In the necklace is put a fruit of *reetha*. It is believed that the effect of the "evil eye" would break the *reetha* fruit and itself get nullified. An imitation *reetha* made of clay is also put in the necklace.

(iv) Cowrie-shells and fruits of *bhelwan* are put in the necklace. The effect of the evil-eye gets absorbed in these cowrie-shells.

(v) In the marriage-shed of the Satnamis, two bamboo poles are fixed on the outside and on the top of these are hung two dolls made of paddy-straw or *kans* grass. These dolls are supposed to be monkeys. A small packet containing a *sunhari* or *roti*, some red chillies, one onion and dried cow-dung, is also tied to this post near the straw-doll. It is believed that this curious structure would attract the eye and the evil forces would get nullified. The contrivance is known as *Totka*.

For vegetables and crops

Vegetable crops like the cucumber are supposed to be very vulnerable to 'evil eye'. Other vegetable crops and *bari* crops (kitchen garden crops) are equally susceptible to the 'evil eye' and for these certain *totka* are put up. The cereal crops are not so vulnerable and only a scare-crow may be put or the *Bhainsasur* is supposed to protect it. For protecting the vegetable crops from the evil eye, the following methods are followed :—

(1) It is covered by a black earthern pitcher.

(2) Vermillion mixed with oil is painted over the pitcher and the cucumber is covered with it.

(3) A discarded broom-stick is tied to a bamboo post to which fruits of *Bhelawan* and cowrie-shells are also tied.

(4) A dog's skull is put over a bamboo post and the same is hung in a prominent place in the *bari*.

(5) A part of the stem of a plant is torn with knife and a piece of broken tile is inserted in it so as to be easily visible.

Remedy for the Affliction by Evil-Eye

(1) When cucumbers generally fail to develop into good fruit, one of the cucumbers is cut into many pieces and put on the street. A ring of cow-dung ash is then made around it. The failure of the plant to produce a good crop is supposed to be due to affliction by an 'evil eye' and this *totka* removes the affliction.

(2) A plant which is not giving good fruit or not yielding adequately is subjected to the following treatment to remove the effects of 'evil eye'. One of the branches or one of the plants is removed and then the owner takes his sickle before it saying "*Lootech to hon, lootech hon*" (I am about to cut I will cut). Then the other person says "*Jhan loo, Jhan loo, Farhi*" (Do not cut do not cut. It will bear fruit). The plants then start giving fruits.

Remedy for the Affliction by Evil-Eye for Children

Affliction of children by 'evil eye' is known as *deeth lagna*. The effect of *deeth* is removed as follows. In *guriyadhema* (small earthen receptacle) are put some hair from the head of a woman of the house, some red chillies and *ajwayan* (Ptycotis) and the receptacle is put on fire sometime. It is then taken out and circled seven times over the head of the child, after which it is put in water and the water and the *guriyadhema* are put in the *gorsi*. The *gorsi* is then taken out of the village and placed at the point of bifurcation of the road (i. e. where two or more roads meet).

There may be a little modification in this. The *guriyadhema* may not be put in the *gorsi* after it is circled round child's head but taken out of the village and kept upside down at a road junction.

The *baiga* and Chintaram, Itwari and Kaskoo may also be summoned to remove the effects of 'evil eye'.

Belief in Witch-Craft and Black Art

When Hewitt wrote his Report in 1869, Chhattisgarh was known to outsiders as a 'land of witches' and this evil reputation had persisted till about 1939-40 and in some measure persists even now. The Second World War, the economic shake up in its wake, freedom from the British rule, opening up of tracts, development and industrialization are some of the factors that have helped to remove the stigma attached to Chhattisgarh and now witches have become unknown in the towns and big villages. They are only heard of now in the villages in the interior and it is a little surprising to find so many of them in Kosa because the village is quite near the town and not as secluded as many other villages. And yet witches have persisted in Kosa and more so in the nearby village of Machandur and the people are more afraid of them than of anything else.

The witches in Chhattisgarh are called *tonhin* or *tonha* depending on whether the person so reputed is a woman or a man. The word comes from the Chhattisgarhi word, *tona*, meaning 'black art'. The majority of witches are women and the women of the species are regarded as more dangerous. Sometimes the male witches (Wizards) also are supposed to possess unusual powers. (In what follows 'witches' is used in connection with males also — 'Wizard' probably does not convey the right sense). The present writer knows of one case that of Naga Gond of village Dabnai of Bindranawagarh tahsil who was dreaded all over the area more than the man-eating tiger and he was arrested sometime in 1937 or 1938 for committing a sacrifice-his eighth human sacrifice.

In Kosa there are 13 witches in all—11 women and 2 men. If we take the age-group 15 years and above the percentage of women witches to the total number of women in Kosa is 11, and that of men witches 2.3. It is quite a high percentage and is said to be higher in the nearby village of Machandur.

For obvious reasons, pseudonyms are being used here in describing these witches and the cases of witch-craft in Kosa. The witches are:—

S.No.	Name of witch	Age	Marital status	Caste
1	Chaiti w/o Dular	55	Widow	Satnami
2	Baisakhin w/o Manglu	55	Widow	Satnami
3	Mantora w/o Jethu	70	Widow	Satnami
4	Chanda w/o Ghasiya	30	Married	Satnami
5	Paliya w/o Keju	70	Married	Satnami
6	Mongra w/o Karan	80	Widow	Satnami
7	Bundiya w/o Sitaram	47	Married	Satnami
8	Kaushila w/o Gendoo	22	Married	Rawat
9	Hara w/o Ratti	34	Married	Rawat
10	Debi m/o Ratti	60	Widow	Rawat
11	Sadhwa m/o Ramchand	60	Widow	Panka
12	Gambhir Singh	50	Married	Satnami
13	Feroo	35	Married	Satnami

But in Kosa the witches are just normal women and men. Some of them are of course old and wrinkled with age but they have nothing to distinguish them from other old women. The only characteristic which one could possibly mark after a very close examination of them is the look in their eyes. To the writer they appeared to have sharp penetrating looks.

Training in Witch-Craft

Persons desirous of being trained in the dreaded art of witch-craft are trained by the witches and a *tonhin* passes her art on to some younger woman before her death. The dark night of the *Hareli* festival day is supposed to be the time when the *tonhin* practise their art and refresh their *mantra*. In this village the witches have learnt their crafts as below:—

Chaiti, wife of Dular, was taught by Baisakhin, wife of Manglu. This Baisakhin was a Teli woman but she married a Satnami and thus became Satnami by caste. She was already a trained witch when she came to this village. Mantora, Mongra and Hara came to this village as witches. They had learnt the craft before they came to Kosa. Paliya learnt the art from her mother-in-law at Sirri and in this village, she trained Chanda, Paliya and Debi were ousted from Sirri because of their evil reputation and they took shelter in this village. Other witches learnt their art as below.

Bundiya learnt it from Maniram's mother who is dead now and she in turn taught the art to Kaushila. Maniram's mother had also trained Sadhwa. The men witches Ferro and Gambhir Singh were trained by women witches. Gambhir was trained by his own mother and Feroo was the disciple of Paliya.

It is believed that the *tonhin* control a certain spirit known as *Vir Masan* who lives in cremation and burial-grounds. The procedure of training in witch-craft, as

told by Chintaram's brother-in-law (wife's sister's husband) is sometime like this. The novice has to go to the burial ground every night stark-naked and there he or she has to make a *parikrama* of the burial or cremation ground for twenty-one days. All these twenty-one days the *guru* is with the novice. After this the disciple goes to the *marghata* alone, the *guru* remaining at a distance. When the novice has reached the *marghata* the *guru* invokes the *bhoot* and *baital* (evil spirits) who go to the novice and terrify him or her and he/she throws the turmeric-coloured rice grains at them. These rice-grains are given to the disciple by the teacher. The ordeal being over, the novice brings something from the cremation as a proof that he was actually there and not sitting somewhere else.

Having thus tested the courage and the suitability of the person, the *mantras* (or whatever they are) of witch-craft are imparted. The novice has to bring the skull of an adult Teli (person of oil-presser caste) who has died unmarried and, in the skull, rice is cooked. The spirit if this Teli becomes the *Vir Masan* for the novice. When the rice is cooked, the novice goes to defecate and then without washing eats the cooked rice. After this, the text is given to the novice and he or she becomes a full-fledged *tonhin*. All these operations are done stark-naked. There should not be even a strip of cloth.

It is said that when the *tonhin* goes out naked in the night, flames are emitted from the person and if anybody sees the flame when the *tonhin* has just got out of house, the person dies instantaneously. There has, however, been no such case in the village. It is also believed that the *tonhin* knows some drug by which they dope the inmates of the house who as a result do not wake up during her absence from the house. By eating the roots of the *Bhatkataiya* (*Solanum xanthocarpum*) plant, the *tonhin* possess the powers of disappearing from view and only the flames are seen. The *tonhin* are also believed to possess the power of levitation — walking in the air.

Some people claim that they have seen the *tonhin* in their true form. The stories told by these people are given here, whether true or not does not matter. But when they are told the people of the village listen with rapt attention believing every word.

The first story is from Firta, the *baiga* of Sirri village (1 mile from Kosa). Firta was in love with a *tonhin* woman in his youth and they used to live in adultery. Firta knew that the woman was a *tonhin* but he was not afraid because he is a *baiga* and then, as he says, the woman was young, beautiful and very receptive. One night, this woman came to Firta stealthily and waking him up asked him to accompany her. She took him to a teak-log (*Tectona grandis*) lying in the street and asked him to sit on it with her. As soon as they sat, the teak-log flew up in the air and then the *tonhin* stopped in a forest. There was an old delapidated temple there. The woman left Firta at a distance from the temple and herself went inside. Firta does not know what happened inside the temple but he overheard the talk that was going on between the woman and some supernatural power. The talk was something like below:—

Supernatural power:—

You, flirt and bitch! You have brought your adulterous lover here. You want to show him to me with pride?

Tonhin:—

No mother. Whatever you may say, now the thing is done. It is my mistake that I have brought him here. But I love him. Anyway, I have come to invite you, I will give you fifty persons.

Supernatural power:—

You have to give me your husband's younger brother first. I can come only on this condition.

And Firta says that the woman accepted the condition. She came back to Firta and they came back to the village on the same teak-log. After some time there was severe outbreak of cholera in the village and the *tonhin*'s husband's younger brother was the first person to die. Firta later on learnt the art from this woman and knowing the secrets of *tonhin*, he is now using his powers to cure cases of witch-crafts and effects of evil-spirits, channelling his knowledge into useful channels.

Shobharam Satnami relates two incidents from personal knowledge. In the days of his youth, he once went to village Selud to his *fufa dai* (father's sister). Near a village-survey mark (*chanda*) near the burial ground he found seven women sitting quietly. The time was about 8 or 9 P. M. He asked them who they were but no reply came and he went to the village. Every house in the village was closed and there was no sound. It appeared as if everybody was asleep. He went to his aunt's house and called more than once without getting any reply. He then jumped the courtyard wall and said he was Shobharam from Kosa. His

aunt then opened the door and asked him to come in. Then she told him that a Rawat boy had died that day because of suspected witch-craft and that there was an epidemic in the village. She chided him for coming at that hour alone. Next morning Shobharam went to the place where he had seen the seven women and found the body of the Rawat boy seated on a *peedha* (wooden stool) near the place he was buried. He then knew that the women were witches and had exhumed the corpse of the Rawat boy. They were experimenting with the black-art on the corpse.

Another incident related by Shobharam related to village Bhopidih. He was quite young then and had gone to this village. In the night, the village *baiga*, who was a friend of his, asked him to go for a walk to which he consented and accompanied him. On the outskirts of the village, in the open ground, they found two lights burning and moving and he immediately knew that they were *tonhins*. The *baiga* asked him if he was afraid and Shobharam said that he was not. Then the *baiga* left him and went ahead towards the burning lights. Shobharam kept sitting there and after some time he found that the *baiga* also started burning like the *tonhins*. In his mind Shobharam started thinking that his friend also was a witch. The balls of fire went on dancing for some time and then came nearer and nearer and then the lights extinguished. After some time Shobharam found his friend coming with two naked women. They were the two Teli women from the village and the *baiga* was keeping their *lugda* in his hand. Because of his powers the *baiga* had 'tied' the *tonhin* and they were requesting him to forgive them and to give them the clothes. But the *baiga* was adamant and wanted them to take to the village in the same condition. They then took the two *tonhin* to the village stark-naked and they were seen by the villagers of Bhopidih. They were asked to spit in their palm and then lick it. This they did and then only the *baiga* gave them their clothes. They promised not to practise the black art any more in the village.

As stated earlier, we cannot vouch for the authenticity of the stories described above, but the villages like Kosa, the *tonhins* are a real dread and diseases like cholera and small-pox are supposed to be due to their machinations. A little digression from Kosa would not be out of place here to bring out this point in a clearer perspective.

In 1958, when the present writer was Sub-Divisional Officer in the Bindranawagarh tahsil of the neighbouring district of Raipur, a severe outbreak of Asiatic cholera broke out in a village named Kurud which ultimately took a toll of 104 lives. A brand new UNICEF jeep was placed at the disposal of the civil authorities and it was thought desirable to protect the surrounding villages of Loharsi, Gadaghat, Bhendri and Panduka from the epidemic. One night the doctor in charge of the operation and the writer were going from village Kurud to Loharsi and the plan was to come to village Kopra. The route was a zig-zag one through fields and, as embankments had been made in the fields and it was night, we lost our way. The land between Kurud and Loharsi is on a higher elevation and the head lights and more frequently the red brake lights were seen by the people of Kopra. They saw the red light going from Kurud, where cholera was raging, towards Loharsi and since the jeep had to be stopped on and aften for finding out the route, the lights were switched off frequently. The movement of the red light of the brand new jeep and its becoming invisible from time to time was taken as the *tonhin* moving from Kurud to Loharsi and then after some time moving towards Kopra. When at about 10 P. M. the writer came to village Kopra, he met about 50 people armed with sticks sitting on the route to Loharsi about 2 furlongs from the village. On first enquiry no reply came out but subsequently when another party, similarly armed, was met somewhat nearer the village, it was given out by one of them that they were sitting for the *tonhin* who was moving as a red ball of flame from Kurud to Loharsi and was moving towards their village. But seeing the strong red light on the back of the jeep and being told of the movements of the jeep, they were convinced of their folly. But one can imagine the treatment that would have been accorded to a woman found coming from Loharsi to Kopra that night. She would have been branded as a witch and one cannot say what the villagers would have ultimately done to her.

Now some cases of witches and with-craft from Kosa itself can be given. These cases have been reported by the villagers when they were sitting in a group—Kurmi, Rawats, Pankas, and Satnamis together and everybody present testified to their being authentic.

First Case

When Shobharam was young, a marriage party had gone from Kosa to village Dhangaon Sikosa and after marriage they were returning with the bride on foot. At one place there was a stream and the old woman from the bride's parents' house informed the men that the bride felt like easing herself and would as such wait

at the stream. So leaving the bride and the woman back the men went some distance and halted under a tree.

A long time passed and there was yet no sign of the bride and the woman with her so the party sent Shobharam to find out what the matter was. Shobharam was sent for the simple reason that he was younger than the bridebroom and the bride was his *bhauji* and could talk to him. When Shobharam reached the stream, he found that the woman companion and the bride were busy making an earthen-bullock. The earth for preparing this bullock was wettened with their urine. It took no time to Shobharam to understand that the bride was a *tonhin* and was probably being tutored by the woman-companion (*lokadhin*). Seeing what the women were busy at, Shobharam said *"Kaise ho tonhin ho. Tum man ekar bar ruke raheo."* The women got very much frightened and broke the bullock.

Shobharam returned and told the marriage party and the bridegroom of what he had witnessed. But they had no recourse but to bring the bride to Kosa and so she was brought. Everybody was very careful with her.

Baro (present age 50 years) was just a girl of 8-9 years then and the bride was her brother's wife. Once Baro was alone with her sister-in-law and she gave her *bara* and *roti* which Baro ate. After that Baro's tongue and face were paralysed and she could not speak. On enquiry she told people about the offer of food that she had eaten. Then the villagers called the *tonhin* (Baro's sister-in-law) and asked her to bring Baro back to normal condition or she would be killed. The *tonhin* said that there was nothing wrong with Baro and then Baro slowly recovered, but even now she is not able to speak properly. Both Baro and this *tonhin* are living. Though the villagers knew of her evil qualities on the very day she was being brought to Kosa as a bride, they are living with her and she has not been discarded by her husband.

This case shows that if the *tonhin* suspected of committing the illness or trouble says that there is nothing wrong with the person affected, he or she would become all-right. But if the suspected *tonhin* keeps quite or says that she does not know anything, the person is sure to die. No power on earth would then be able to save him or her. And so in all cases of supposed witch-craft, the people catch hold of the suspected *tonhin* and compel her to say 'nothing has happened to the person afflicted and why would he or she not get well?'

Second Case

Ghanshyam Patel had purchased a new pair of bullocks. One of the bullocks was a lovely creature and Ghanshyam was very proud of him. The servants used to bathe these bullocks every day in the tank. Then one of this lovely healthy bullock suddenly became ill and, not responding to any treatment, died.

Ghanshyam was sorry and the villagers suspected witch-craft; for how else could the healthy bullock become ill. Enquiries from the servants were made and then the one who used to attend on the cattle said that before the bullock got ill, he was taken to the tank for drinking water and while he was drinking, Sadhwa was looking at him constantly.

So, here was the clue to the healthy bullock's death. He was seen drinking water by Sadhwa, who is known to be a witch. Then Sadhwa was called before an assembly of villagers and threatened that if the thing is repeated, she would have to face very serious consequences.

Third Case

Bundiya had not been able to learn the full art of witch-craft, when she got married. And because her knowledge was incomplete she became hysteric and also used to cry and shout as if she was afflicted by a *paretin*. The people did not know that she is a half-witch and called the *baiga* and other experts for *jhad-phoonk* but nothing happened. Bundiya was pregnant and she gave birth to a daughter. Some days after child-birth, she ran away leaving the infant behind. Her husband and other villagers tried their level best to search her out and at last were convinced that she has been hidden somewhere by the *paretin*. The infant girl died in the meantime. After some days Bundiya returned. She had gone to complete her course. She is a full-fledged witch now.

The villagers knew about Bundiya being a half trained witch when they had gone to search her out. People of her village told them about her apprenticeship in witch-craft.

Fourth Case

Bisal Satnami's wife had an attack of fever and after that had small-pox. During her illness she used to say repeatedly that Mongra *tonhin* has caused her illness but the people were suspicious of Baisakhin, the telin who became a Satnami and Baisakhin, was called and threatened but Bisal's wife died taking Mongra's name.

Fifth Case

Mongra is a dangerous witch. Amroo Satnami's children died because of her witch-craft. She also wanted to kill Amroo and Amroo had once a severe illness. He used to vomit blood and there appeared to be no hope of saving him. He spent a big amount of money on the *baigas* and called many expert *baigas* who were successful in removing the affliction. Many times in fits of anger Amroo wanted to kill Mongra but he has always been restrained by the villagers.

Sixth Case

Chaiti is the most powerful witch in the village. She is a *Manukhdeva* (Giver of human beings). Every third year she sacrifices a human being to her dreaded art. If a child happens to go to her door at this time i. e. every third year then it is doubtful if he would live any more. 10-12 years back Shobharam's son aged 8 years died because of her spell, Mathura's son aged 3 years died this year only, 3 years back Kajan's daughter aged 3 years was 'sacrified' by her. Shobharam and other villagers are very much afraid of her and wanted her to be punished.

Seventh Case

Sukal Satnami's wife had cut some *tiwra* (*lakhdi*) crop from the fields of Chaiti and Chaiti had cursed her that the person who had cut the *tiwra* would die. Sukal's wife became seriously ill soon after this and died. All efforts were made to save her. Sukal consulted the *baigas* and Vaidyas. Ghambhir Singh's mother who herself reputed to be a *tonhin* was also consulted and she used her occult powers but to no avail. Sukal's wife was taken out of Kosa also for treatment but nobody could save her. Chaiti is a very strong witch.

Eighth Case

Ghanshyam's wife's younger sister Sumitra had come to Kosa about 7 years ago to visit her sister. While in the village, she used to go to the tank to bathe. One day she met Chaiti there and Chaiti the witch made her a victim. On return from the tank, Sumitra went to the *bari* and saw a big snake there. She was frightened and called other people for help but there was no snake at all anywhere near about. Next day when she was washing her hands after meals, the same big snake came there and bit her. The *baiga* and the people of Kosa who know the *mantra* to counteract the effect of snake-bite were called and necessary *jhad-phoonk* was done but Sumitra became unconscious.

The villagers were of the view from the beginning that this was a case of witch-craft, and the snake Sumitra saw was not a real snake, but a magical one sent by Chaiti. And before becoming unconscious Sumitra also told of her meeting with Chaiti. The villagers held a meeting and sent for Chaiti but she did not come and sent her son. The villagers gave all sorts of abuses to Chaiti in presence of her son and told him that either Sumitra becomes well or Chaiti dies.

That night Chaiti absconded from the village and went to village Limora to Ghanshyam's father and waking him in the night told him of the danger she was apprehending to her life. She told him that she has not done anything and Ghanshyam had dug a pit for her and wants to kill her as a witch. Ghanshyam's father knew many cases and he wanted to hear from Chaiti's mouth that nothing would happen to Sumitra. So he intelligently tackled her and Chaiti said that there was nothing wrong with Sumitra and there was no reoson why she should not get well. Ghanshyam's father wrote a letter to his son in Kosa and sent it by a messanger in the night itself. He wrote everything that Chaiti had said and expressed the hope that Sumitra would get well.

In Kosa, Sumitra showed signs of improvement. In the morning Ghanshyam sent for the Brahmin *pandit* Shukla Maharaj from village Gadadih and he also used his *jhad-phoonk*. On his advice, Sumitra was taken to outside the village and after she crossed the stream at the village boundary, she became all right.

In this connection, it may be interesting to note that mention of witch's snake is made by Elwin in his studies of the *baigas*. In his account of the life stories of some typical *baiga*, Elwin records the beliefs of snakes being sent by the witches[6] and states[7] that "the witch commonly makes a snake out of the dirt of her body and sends it to kill someone. The witch Maniaro killed Mahatu's father Punna in this way. In Jethu's life-story there is a dramatic account of his encounter with a magic snake and the disaster that befell. Mahi was bitten by a magic snake and nearly died." In Kosa, it has not been possible to know how the witch (*tonhin*) prepares the magic snake and the people themselves do not know about it. A reference is, however, found in the aforementioned book by Elwin who records the following account[8]. "The witch gets

6. The Baiga, Verrier Elwin 1939, pp. 133, 162, 169, 373.
7. Ibid, p. 373.
8. The Baiga, Verrier Elwin; 1939, p. 373.

a chip of wood from a tree or a house that has been struck by lightning. She buries it. At cock-crow on a Sunday she goes naked to the place, walks round it twice and then, in the middle of the third round jumps over it. Then the chip of wood pushes its way out of the ground. She asks it, 'Will you become a snake?' If the chip is ready, it wriggles along the ground. If not it stays still." Whether the snake that bit Sumitra was prepared in this way or not cannot now be ascertained and we may have to be content with Elwin's account given above.

Thus it is seen that two things are necessary in curing affliction by witch-craft. The suspected witch should say that no harm would be done to the person afflicted or there is no reason why the person would not get well and secondly the person should be taken out of the village boundary because the powers of the witch do not across the village boundary.

These cases would show the fear in which Kosa lives. As told by them, they are mortally afraid of these witches and especially Chaiti. Fortunately, however, we also came across Chaiti during our survey. She is an old woman having none of the characters described by Shakespere, Scott and Harsnet and it did not appear to us that the people avoid Chaiti. For example, when she was taking her bath at about 3.30 P. M. after returning from the fields, there was a small girl standing on the tank embankment and Chaiti was talking to her. And we found another suspected witch sitting with a group of women. So there is no boycott or anything like that. The witches live as ordinary women in the village. Time and again the villagers tell them that nothing should happen to the people in the village otherwise they would be punished one and all.

Sometimes the punishment inflicted by the villagers on the suspected witches is excessive. The writer knows of one case that happened in 1946 in village Darmohli of police station Marwahi of Bilaspur district. Two suspected witches were made naked and beaten so much with shoots of tamarind tree that both of them died and the villagers cremated them. In the court of law, however, the case could not be proved because the entire village was accused and there was only one prosecution eye witness who also faltered. The people of Kosa are also highly indignant of the inaction on the part of the Government. Shobharam and others, for example, failed to see why the Government should not listen to their reports about the witches and why the Government should not punish them. They were also of the view that if the Government find themselves ineffective in dealing with the witches, the villagers should be given a free hand in dealing with them in the manner they deem fit.

In the beliefs, superstitions and fear of witch-craft, the village is one and no caste-stratifications are seen. A case of witch-craft in Satnamis house is as much a concern of the Kurmis as it is of the Satnamis about the case of witch-craft in the Kurmi house and in meeting this danger they become one. But in other aspects of religion, as in the worship of deities, caste again emerges and the deities of the Satnamis are not the deities of Kurmis and vice-versa. The deities of crops and the deities of diseases are of course universal.

Village Goldings and Deities

As said earlier in connection with inter-caste relations and in the paragraph above, there is a stratification in paying homage to village godlings and deities. Some deities are worshipped by the village as a whole irrespective of whether they are Satnamis or Pankas and there are other deities which are worshipped only by a certain caste and not by others. Further, there are some deities which are purely household deities, and not paid homage to by other households of the caste. It is seen that it is the deities of the crops and harvest, and of the epidemics that are worshipped by the village as a whole. By worship here what is meant is that the entire village community has to contribute towards the expenses because the worship is done by the *baiga* of Tamora. The *baiga* is the keeper of the religious conscience of the people of Kosa.

Deities	*Worshipped by*
Thakur Deo	Whole village.
Bhainsasur	Whole village.
Mata	Whole village.
Satvahinia	Whole village.
Marrapat	Whole village.
Sahanra Deo	Whole village.
Gorh-kunda Deo	Whole village.
Shankar (Siv-ling)	Whole village.
Jaitkham — Mahabir	Satnamis.
Baram Deo	Satnamis.
Mahabir	Kurmis, Rawats.
Kabir	Rawats, Panka.
Satti	One Satnami household only.

Thakur Deo

Out of the host of deities shown above, *Thakur Deo* and *Mata* are the most important and biggest. Writing about *Thakur Deo*, Hewitt[9] had stated in his

9. Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, 1869; J.F.K. Hewitt, p. 41.

Settlement Report of 1869 that "the real religion of the people....., is concentrated on their devotion to *Thakur Deo*. Without a sacrifice to him no agricultural operations can be performed. The seed sown and the first shoots of the young rice must be presented at his shrine, and he must be invoked to bless the field before the crop is cut, while it would be the height of reckless impiety to tread out or winnow the grain on a threshing floor where some offering had not been made to the great Earth-God. *Thakur Deo's* power does not extend only over the crops, but over the whole surface of the Earth, and hence his protection is efficacious against wild beasts, and an offering made in his honour at the commencement of the year infallibly prevents to tiger from taking up his abode within the precincts of a village".

Regarding the etymology of the deity's name Grierson states[10] "The Aryan origin of the word *Thakur* has been doubted, but no other possible derivation has been proposed. The word occurs in the late Sanskrit in the form *thakkura*. The form *thakkura* shows that the word has been borrowed from Prakrit. It has almost the same significance as *Sthavira* and is used as a respectful title." Fuchs[11] states that the name Thakur Deo is very common in Bengal and as far west as the Bilaspur District, probably the original home of the Bhumias."

In Kosa *Thakur Deo* is represented by a cluster of stones on the southern embankment of the village tank near the womens' bathing place. This representation of *Thakur Deo* is different from that what Fuchs has described in his books. According to Fuchs[12] the abode of *Thakur Deo* is on a tree. "A large stone slab is brought and laid on the ground at the base of a tree. On this slab another stone slab is placed in a vertical position and made to lean against the trunk of the sacred tree". In Kosa there is no tree nor are any slabs placed to lean one against the other. Here there is only a cluster of stones and pebbles on open ground. The *Thakur Deo* of Kosa approximates more to the description given of this deity in the District Gazetteer of the neighbouring district of Bilaspur, wherein[13] it is mentioned that "he often dwells in a little thatched hut outside the village. The deity is represented by a number of stones of different shapes in which he is supposed to dwell and various pebbles and rock-crystals or remains of cut stones from temples are added to the heap".

In Kosa there never was any hut nor was even there any tree. This is what Hagru Satnami says. He has been seeing *Thakur Deo* in his present form since his childhood and never heard his parents talk about any hut or tree.

People in Kosa believe that *Thakur Deo* is the senior most of the deities and not only protects the human beings on this earth but also protects these various other deities who are subordinate to him. He is supposed to keep the village immune from disease and misfortune and keep the villagers prosperous by providing them with good harvests. Sometimes *Thakur Deo* appears to some persons in dreams and warns them of coming bad events. Once when cholera was spreading in Durg District, *Thakur Deo* appeared in a dream to the village watchman Jairamdas Panka and scolded him in these words: "You are supposed to be the watchman of the village and you are sleeping and carefree as if you do not have any responsibility towards the village." Jairamdas narrated the dream to the other villagers and they called Bali Gond of Tamora, the village *baiga* who duly performed the worship of *Thakur Deo* with the sacrifice of a black goat, offerings of coconut and *hoom*.

Thakur Deo is worshipped every year on the occasion of the Pola festival, the worship known as *Garabhpooja*. Subscriptions are raised from the whole village for this worship and a black and tan goat without having any hanging tubes in the neck is sacrificed. The *baiga* takes the sacrificed goat himself after giving some bits to the non-vegetarian families of Kurmis and Rawats and to the *Loharin* widow. Worship of the deity is also made at the time of *Aktiz* festival. Paddy threshing cannot be done without the public worship of *Thakur Deo*.

Goat sacrifice to the *Thakur Deo* has become very much less now because of economic reasons and people are contented with the offerings of coconut only. Sacrifice is, however, made when the *baiga* so directs or when the *Thakur Deo* demands it in a dream.

The villagers say that the cluster of stones near the *Thakur Deo* represent his children and they go on increasing. The *baiga* sometimes counts them and the number is always more than the last count. The names of these many children of *Thakur Deo* are not known to the villagers and they say that the *baiga* may be

10 Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV, G. A. Grierson, 1906, p. 31.
11 Gonds and Bhumias of Eastern Mandla; S. Fuchs, 1960, pp. 383, 384.
12 Ibid.
13. District Gazetteer, Bilaspur District, 1909, p. 73.

knowing the names. Since the *baiga* is not a resident of Kosa, information could not be obtained on this point. In this connection a reference is found in the 'Gonds and Bhumias of Eastern Mandla' wherein Fuchs[14] mentions that there are three sons of *Thakur Deo* whose names are *Ghamsen, Maswasi Deo* and *Saiha Deo*. But though Fuchs has mentioned about the sons of *Thakur Deo*, he has not mentioned anything regarding the wife of *Thakur Deo*.

The people of Kosa say that *Thakur Deo* has a wife by the name *Annakunwari* and she is buried in the earth below the *Thakur Deo*. She is represented by a white coloured round stone but nobody from this village has seen this stone. The *baiga* has told them of *Annakunwari* and has many times asked them to perform the ceremony of taking out this wife of *Thakur Deo*, but he has given them an estimate of three hundred rupees; so they are not very keen to have a look at *Annakunwari* especially when her functions are not known and in any case she appears to be neutral to the affairs of the village and has no power over crops.

It is believed by the villagers that the many children of *Thakur Deo* possess the power of locomotion. This information was also given to them by the *baiga*. The worship of *Thakur Deo* is entirely the business of the *baiga* and the people do not pay any attention to the cluster of stones, in their day to day life.

A description of *Annakunwari* is found in the article on Oraon by Russell and Hiralal. They state[15]:-

"There is also *Anna Kuari* or *Mahadharni*, who is the most cruel and repulsive deity of all, as she requires human sacrifice. Those savage people, who put good crops above everything, look upon her in a different light. She can give good crops and make a man rich, ... *Anna Kuari* finds votaries not only among the Oraons, but especially among the big Zamindars and Rajas of the Native States. When a man has offered a sacrifice to *Anna Kuari* she goes and lives in his house in the form of a small child. From that time his fields yield double harvest, and when he brings in his paddy he takes *Anna Kuari* and rolls her over the heap to double its size. But she soon becomes restless and is only pacified by new human sacrifices. At last after some years she cannot bear remaining in the same house any more and kills every one".

The association of *Thakur Deo* with *Annakunwari* in Kosa suggests the worship of Earth Goddess[16].

Bhainsasur :

It is difficult to say whether the *Bhainsasur* is a deity or a devil; the people of Kosa do not know anything. Here *Bhainsasur* is represented by a big stone in a field to the east of the tank. Every year in the month of *Bhadon*, eggs (of hens) are buried near it and every third year a live-pig is buried here. The cost of the pig is borne by the villagers. It may be mentioned here that the buffalo and pig are regarded as corn-spirits. In many of the Folk literature of the world[17].

It is believed that if the crop is not good, it is the *Bhainsasur* who has taken it and as such his propitiation is done well before ears start coming up in the corn. When the standing crop in the fields is *beaten down* at night, it is thought that *Bhainsasur* has been passing over it. He is also believed to be stealing the crop when it is being cut and is lying on the ground and to prevent all his mischiefs, the villagers pay homage to him at the very beginning.

It may be interesting to note here the difference in the ideas about *Bhainsasur* in various parts of the State. Fuchs[18] regards this godling to be worshipped all over Central and Northern India and at another place he gives the following description about Bhaisasur[19]: "Bhainsasur Deo is the god of the water-buffalos. No image exists of the god, but he is believed to live in the stagnant pools which buffalos frequent in the hot season. There they can be found buried in the muddy water up to the mouth and the ears. When a Gond or Bhumia has a she buffalo with calf, he often promises *Bhainsasur* the sacrifice of a pig. When the sacrifice is due after the calf is born safely and shows promise of growing well, the owner buys a pigling which has just passed the stage of suckling, catches it by the hind legs and smashes its head on the skull of the she-buffalo between the horns. Then the pigling is thrown outside. It is cut up, the meat is boiled and eaten by the family in the cattle-shed. If no sacrifice is made to *Bhainsasur*, the god would take possession of the buffalo calf it is feared, and make her sterile, or he would make her throw the calf or at least prevent her giving milk".

Thus in Mandla, *Bhainsasur* is the god of water-buffalos, in Kosa of Durg District it is a godling who

14. The Gonds and Bhumias of Eastern Mandla; Stephen Fuchs, 1960, p. 386.
15. The Tribes and Castes of C. P. Vol. IV; R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 312.
16. Infra. p. 568.
17. The Golden Bough; Vol. II; James Frazer.
18. Children of Hari; Stephen Fuchs, 1950 pp. 233, 275, 322.
19. Gonds and Bhumias of Eastern Mandla, Stephen Fuchs, 1960, pp. 394-395.

steals crops if not properly propitiated, in Raipur and Bilaspur District,[20] the conception about *Bhainsasur* is the same as in Kosa. In one village of Mahasamund tahsil of Raipur District, the ceremonies of sacrifice were the same as seen in Kosa—the pigling being buried alive. In Mandla the sacrifice is made when the water-buffalos delivers a calf; in Kosa when the crop is standing in the field. Again in Mandla the propitiation is individual; in Kosa *Bhainsasur* is propitiated by the entire village at the same time. The worship is collective. In Mandla where the Gonds and Bhumias are non-vegetarians they sacrifice the pigling by striking it against the head of the buffalos and later on eat the meat of it. In Kosa, the Satnamis claim to be vegetarians and so they bury the pigling.

We cannot say at this stage if the *Bhainsasur* of Mandla is the same as that of Kosa unless we know the source of the conception of this godling. According to Hindu Mythology, *Mahishasur* was a demon who was killed by the Goddess and *Mahish* is the sanskrit word for buffalo. Whether the *Bhainsasur* of Kosa and Mandla is the same as *Mahishasur* of the Hindu Mythology, whether he is the creation of the Gond and Bhumia or whether he is the creation of the Chhattisgarhi cultivator, cannot be stated with certainty unless more investigations are carried on. As stated earlier, the information from Bali Gond, the keeper of the religious conscience of Kosa, cannot be obtained in this survey.

Mata

Mata or *Mateshari* (Hindi word *Mateshwari* meaning Mother Goddess) is the most powerful of the female deities in Chhattisgarh and in Kosa believed to be almost equal to *Thakur Deo*. She is the counterpart of *Thakur Deo* in human affairs. *Thakur Deo's* wrath can spoil the crop and *Mata's* wrath can bring epidemic and disease to the inhabitants. But it is significant that though *Mata* governs their lives and can sweep them off with her wrath, she is given the second place in the 'order of precedence'; *Thakur Deo* occupies the first place.

The shrine of *Mata* in Kosa is on the eastern embankment of the village tank and under a *neem* tree (*Melia indica*). But there is no structure at the place, the *Mata* being represented by a long and slender earthen receptacle known as *mai-kalash* and some small iron tridents (*Trishul*) and a black flag kept nearby. Some stones are also lying near the *mai-kalash*, probably for breaking the coconuts on.

The *Mata* is propitiated at the time of *jawara* or at any other time when there is an out-break of some epidemic in the village. At the time of the *jawara* festival, a wick-lamp is kept burning in the *kalash* for seven days and the *baiga* keeps fast for all these seven days and on the concluding day he gets a trance. No sacrifice is done at the shrine of *Mata*, the worship being entirely the *baiga's* affairs and the women taking part in singing. The two devotional songs are:—

SEETLANG, SEETLANG, SEETLANG MAIYA
RATAN RATATU HAI,
UD SEETLANG KANH PAIHAU
VAHI SEETLANG ME GAON KE BAIGA
NIT DIN DIWAN JALAY.
BUDHIYO MOR MAIYA
AY HO MAI.

This is a devotional song sung at the time of the *jawara* festival and also when some people get attacks of smallpox and the *sewa* (service) to the *Mata* is done. '*Sewa*' (service) is the term for worship and singing devotional songs. Another devotional song sung at the place of *Mata* is —

ATEET BAR AWADH SUN MATA
GHAR ANGAN POTWAYO
ANGAN CHANDAN KA KHAMBA
GADE HO
TORAN DWAR BANDHA-YO
SOMWAR SUR, NAR, MUNI AWE
RATAN SINHASAN LAYO
JAPAR BAITHE AD BHAWANI
DOODH ME CHARAN PAKHARE
SAB GHAR VYAPE,
TOR PAR NA KOI PAWE, MAI
MAI, TOR PAR NA KOI PAWE.

The propitiation of *Mata* and the celebration of *jawara* festival is quite a costly affair and one to two hundred rupees are spent, these being raised from the village by contribution. This 'costly' propitiation of *Mata* is done once in three years and the general belief is that if this is not done at all or not done properly, the village would get an attack of epidemic like cholera or pox. The *baiga* cleans the place of the *Mata* whenever he comes to the village. None of the villagers take the trouble of removing dead-leaves and dirt from the place. Normally the *baiga* visits the village on every Monday and Thursday.

Satvahinia

Mention of *Satvahinia* or *Satbahini* has already been made in connection with birth-rituals when on the *chhatti* day black bangles are offered at the seat. It is believed that if this is not done the child would start

20. District Gazetteer, Bilaspur District, 1909, pp. 74-75.

crying and not take its mother's milk till this deity is properly propitiated.

The seat of *Satbahini* is to the east of the tank and about 50 yards away from its south-eastern corner. It is under a *pipal* tree and by the side of a *chhind* shrub. There is just a very small earthen platform and the ground in front of this is clean with some black bangles lying there.

In the *Satvahinia* of Kosa we again find a trace of primitive forms of Devi worship "of the goddess as Earth Goddess, who is connected with fertility and reproduction"[21] The term *Satbahinia* means seven sisters and thus here "we get an idea of the seven sisters or seven principal *Jognis*, all personifications of the Devi, who preside over various diseases." *Satbahinia* appears to be the third most important personification of the Goddess presiding over child-birth and the *Satbahinia* of Kosa may be the same as the *Satwai* or *Bijasen* referred to in Marten's description in his Report of 1911.

Marrapat

The exact functions and nature of this godling are not known to the villagers who say that the *baiga* may be knowing what he stands for. They, however, feel that he is not an important deity. He is worshipped along with other village-deities because, the villagers say, all the deities in the village both important and unimportant should be paid homage to. The deity is worshipped at the time when the worship of *Thakur Deo* is done by the *baiga* and the worship consists of clearing the ground of grass and weeds, washing it with cow-dung, performing *hoom* i. e. burning of incense and breaking a coconut.

The place where *Marrapat* is believed to reside is in a field south-west of the tank about 25 yards away south of the south-western corner because of the unimportant nature of the deity and because he is situated in a field, the place is not as regularly cleaned as the place of *Thakur Deo*, *Mata* and *Satvahinia*. *Marrapat* is believed to be situated under *khajur* tree and at the time of the writer's visit, there was a paddy crop in the field and the field was full of water no trace of *Marrapat* being found.

Sahanra Deo

Sahanra Deo is believed to be the 'Protector deity' of the cattle. His place is in the *gothan* (where the village cattle gather in the morning). Near the *gothan* there is a small earthen platform and a stone is fixed in it representing the deity.

Sahanra Deo is worshipped at the time of Diwali festival and on *Goberdhan pooja* day when the village grazeir (*bardiha*) sacrifices a chicken in the name of this deity on behalf of the village and later on the chicken-meat is cooked at his house.

Sahanra Deo of Kosa is evidently the same as the Kharak Deo reported by Russell and Hiralal[22] according to whom, he is "the special deity of the Ahirs" and "always located at the Kharka or place of assembly of the cattle on going to and returning from pasture."

Shankar Ji or Shankar Bhagwan

A rather unusual type of *Shiv-ling* is placed below a *peepal* tree on a stone-platform at the south-eastern conrner. The *ling* is in the shape of a bottle rather than in the form commonly seen elsewhere. Another noticeable feature is that in the normal type of *Shiv-ling* seen elsewhere there is a stone base known as *argha* with a small cavity in the middle on which the *Shiv-ling* is placed. In the bottle-shaped *Shiv-ling* seen at Kosa, there is no *argha* and the *ling* is placed supported by the stones.

There is no particular occasion when the *Shiv-ling* is worshipped. Some people including the Satnamis, pour water over it as and when they like depending on their fancy. The *baiga* of course breaks a coconut before the deity at the time of worship of other deities. The villagers do not take Shankarji very seriously because he is not a deity of crops nor is he supposed to be a deity of diseases, and the villagers appear to have kept the image just to look somewhat sophisticated.

Gorh Khunda Deo

Another name by which this deity is known, is *Gorh Khundwa Deo*. *Gorh* in Chhattisgarhi dialect means foot and *Khunda* or *Khundwa* is derived from the word *Khundna* or to trample over, and etymologically the name signifies the deity who is trampled over.

But the deity does not require to be deliberately trampled over. He is actually a safety-valve for omissions and commissions. If by mistake some deity is trampled over this deity takes the sin on itself. It is again a deity who does not mind if accidently and unintentionally his place is trampled over. There is another interpretation of the functions of *Gorh Khunda*. Being situated on the path just at the eastern entry to the village, *Gorh Khunda* protects the village from the intrusion of disease.

Gorhkhunda Deo is represented by a stone embedded in the middle of the street just at the entry of the

21. Census of India, 1911, Vol. X Pt. I; J. T. Marten, p. 890.
22. Tribes and Castes of C. P. Vol. I; R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 31.

village near the south-western corner of the tank. The propitiation of *Gorhkhunda* is done at the time of the *jawara* festival by cleaning the ground around it, washing it with cowdung and breaking a coconut. As in other cases, this is done by the *baiga* and then the rest of the year, nobody pays any attention to the deity and the children even walk over it.

Jaitkham

Etymology of the word *Jaitkham* is not clear. *Kham* in Chhattisgarhi dialect means a post but the meaning of the word *Jait* is not known and the people are not able to tell anything about it. The word may mean victory from the Hindi word *Jai* or *Jeet* and it is likely that the word originally was *Jai-kham* or *Jeet-kham* meaning the 'post of victory' signifying the victory of Ghasidas over the tyranny of Brahmanism and the word in course of time has become corrupted to its present form *Jaitkham*, but this is only a conjecture.

The *Jaitkham* of Kosa is a 5 feet high wooden post at the top of which is tied a white flag in a bamboo-stick. This is fixed on a platform under a *peepal* tree. By the side of the *Jaitkham* is kept a stone covered with vermillion and with a red-flag by its side. This stone is referred to as *Mahabir* (another name for the monkey God Hanuman). It is not known, however, as to how the representation of *Mahabir* came to placed by the side of this Satnami emblem. Enquiries in the village about the relative ages of the two representations have shown that the *Mahabir* stone was there since long ago. The *Jaitkham* has been installed about 8-9 years back by the Satnamis.

Russell and Hiralal[23] refering to the religion of the Satnami state that the section of them known as *Chungias* (smokers) "have also taken to idolatry and their villages contain stones covered with vermillion, the representations of the village deities, which the true Satnami eschew." It appears from this that in Kosa, the stone painted with vermillion and known as *Mahabir* has been placed near the *Jaitkham* by the Satnamis themselves.

Though the *Jaitkham* is situated in the midst of the village and at a place where the Satnami men gather for leisurely chats, no particular attention is paid to it in day to day life. Some people may sometimes pour a *lota* of water over the *Mahabir* stone, but even they do not perform this regularly. The white-flag is changed by some people on return from Bhandar (a place of pilgrimage for the Satnamis) or when some cherished desire has been fulfilled.

Baram Deo

The *Baram Deo* is exclusively a deity of the Satnami who of course do not know anything about it. The *Baram Deo* is represented by a stone kept under a *peepal* tree behind the house of Nangaihan Satnami and near the village well. The villagers have built an earthen platform around the tree trunk.

Baram Deo is another example of the departure of the Satnamis of Kosa from the original precepts of the sect — *viz.* giving up of idolatry. *Baram Deo* appears to a corruption of the Hindi word *Brahmha Deo*, one of the three Gods — the two others being Vishnu and Mahesh and the Satnamis have evidently installed the stone called *Baram Deo* with the idea of looking respectable. The present generation of Satnamis are not able to say when this stone was installed and in their opinion, the village *baiga* may be knowing about the deity. Ghanshyam Kurmi said that he does not even know about the existence of this idol of *Baram Deo* in the village. This idol is very near the house of the Kurmis.

Mahabir

Though the stone representing *Mahabir* has existed in the village for long, another *Mahabir* has been installed some 6-7 years back. This installation was done at the instance of Ghanshyam Kurmi. The reasons for this duplication of the deity are firstly that the former *Mahabir* was situated in the Satnami-*para* and there is some inconvenience in going there for worship and secondly there is no space at the old site. As the people stated, the old *Mahabir* has gone too much inside: "*Mahabir bhitariya ho ge he. Ganjmanjasi lagthe.*" (The old *Mahabir* has gone too much into the interior, surrounded by houses. One feels suffocated). Then there is no place for meeting there on the occasion of *Katha*. At the time of general worship, the Satnamis also worship the new *Mahabir*.

But whatever reasons Ghanshyam may advance, it is clear that the installation of new *Mahabir* was done with the sole intention of separating the non-Satnamis from the Satnamis. Ghanshyam probably did not like to go in the Satnami-*para* even for worship and so he got another *Mahabir* image installed near his house under the above pretext.

The new *Mahabir*, like the old one, is represented by a vermillion dabbed stone kept under a tree near the *gothan* in the west of the village about 30 yards from the house of Ghanshyam. But the new *Mahabir* has also gone the way of other deities and scant attention

23. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. I, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 313.

is paid to the 'image'. There is mud platform around the tree trunk on which the stone is placed and this is the place where Kalloo, the girl who dresses herself as a boy, is seen sitting with the boys. There is another reason for the very little attention — even less than that paid to the old image — being paid to the representation of the deity. The old image is in the *basti* and is met with on return from the tank so the people can pour a *lota* of water over it while returning home from the tank. But to pour water over the new *Mahabir* one would have to cross the village and then go there. It can only be done when it is specifically desired and such occasions are extremely rare. Gods are remembered in Kosa only when there is some trouble; no need is felt otherwise and in this respect Kosa also presents the picture so aptly described by the hindi couplet.

"DUKH ME SUMIREN SAB KAREN
SUKH ME KARE NA KOY"

(everybody remembers at the time of sorrow and crisis, nobody remembers at the time of happiness and pleasure).

Kabir

There is no image of Kabir. Kabir Saheb was only religious reformer like Ghasidas but his teachings have stood the test of time better than Ghasidas's. There are only 3 Kabir Panth households in the village — one that of the Panka and 2 those of the Rawats. They do not keep any idol because idolatry was prohibited by Kabir himself. They, however, say that Kabir was an incarnation of God and is their deity.

But though not keeping any idol of Kabir because idolatry is not recommended by Kabir, all the three households take part in the general worship of *Thakur Deo, Mata* and other deities. Idolatry or no idolatry, a good crop and immunity from disease is desired by everybody and *Thakur* Deo and *Mata* ensure these and then further their conscience is also clear because they do not perform the worship, it is the *baiga* that does it. As members of the village community, they have to share the expenses; the loyalty for the village is seen to be greater than the loyalty towards sectarian religious beliefs and tenets.

Satti Deo

An earthen structure, like the platform made for the *tulsi* plant, with a rectangular cavity at the top is seen in one of the Satnami houses. The owner of the house did not know what deity it represented nor were 3 other Satnamis who were there able to tell about it. Their reply was the oft-repeated one, *baiga janhi*. (The baiga may be knowing). At the time the present writer accidently visited this household, a wick-lamp was burning in the cavity being lighted by the wife of the owner of the house.

Enquiries from other Satnamis showed that this deity is purely a household one and not paid homage to by others though at the time of general worship in the village, the *baiga* visits this place also breaking a coconut here. They further said that the deity is *Satti Deo* though this is all they know about it. One hesitating reply was that the *Mata Devi* has 21 sisters and *Satti* is one of them, but he did not know who these other 20 sisters are and he could not give the name of even one of them.

In Chhattisgarh, traces of *Satti* are frequently found e.g. *Satti*-Bazar of Raipur town is a ward of the Municipality and there is a platform there said to be the place where *Satti*-ceremony was performed in some older days. Again in Raipur there are some platforms near the tanks on the Great Eastern Road said to be *Sati* manuments. *Satti Deo*, as a household deity was also found in village Bendri of Raipur District surveyed in the present series but there also the functions, nature and powers of the deity were not known.

It is likely that some member of the household may have got the idea of *Satti Deo* from a visit to Raipur or some other place. There has been no *Sati* in that household and in the village and the idea must have come from somewhere else, the *Sati* taking the shape of *Satti Deo* during the migration of the idea.

Dulha Deo

Dulha Deo is conspicuous by his absence. In similar surveys of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat in the Chhattisgarh region, it was noticed that *Dulha Deo* is quite a popular deity in the village and especially so amongst the Rawats. Though Kosa is a Satnami preponderant village and though two out of the five Rawat families in the village are followers of Kabirpanth, *Dulha Deo* was expected to be found in the other three households of the Rawats. In Bendri village of Rapiur District it was observed that the Kurmis also pay due homage to *Dulha Deo* on certain occasions. But in Kosa, the deity is totally absent. This absence of *Dulha Deo* from the pantheon of the Rawats is especially significant because according to the Raipur District Gazetteer[24], he is supposed to be worshipped only by the Rawat caste.

It, however, appears that the worship of *Dulha*

24. Raipur District Gazetteer, 1909, p. 98.

Deo has slowly become extinct and now only traces of this deity are found, for example the Rawats sing the following *Doha* at the time of Diwali.

"BAGHDHARA KE DUHAI
SARSATTI KE DUHAI
EK KACHH KACHHEW, AN DOOSAR DIYE LAMAI
TEESAR KACHH KACHHEW RE
MOR DULHA DEO KE DUHAI "

(I make entreaties to Baghdhara, I make entreaties to *Sarasatti;*
I washed a part and spread the other to dry
Then washed the third part, O friend
I make entreaties to my *Dulha Deo*).

On enquiry about the village deities Ghanshyam Kurmi said that he knows only of 3 deities in the village — *Shankarji, Mata* and *Mahabir* and he said that *Thakur Deo* is of course there. But he expressed surprise at the name of *Baram Deo* and said that he had never heard that name and was not aware that such a deity exists in the village. As stated earlier, the stone representing *Baram Deo* is situated near the well just near the house of the Kurmis and Ghanshyam's utter ignorance about some deity of the village is unexplanable:—

In Kosa, Satnamis form the dominant caste and Ghanshyam could not say publicly — "What can one say about the deities of these fellows. They worship anything and everything." The present writer heard this being said about the Marias in a village of Bastar District where they were numerically very much less and Halbas, Rawats and Pankas from Chhattisgarh were the dominant castes.

So in Kosa, the village consisting of 65 households, we find 13 godlings and deities about whom people are not clear in their minds and the worship of whom is only done on some special occasions of agricultural importance like the *akti* or the *jawara* festivals as we would see later.

The founder of the Satnami movement in Chhattisgarh had "absolutely prohibited the aboration of idols, and enjoined the worship of the Maker of the Universe without any visible signs or representation.....[25]. The Satnami religion thought as propounded by Ghasi Das agreed with the Kabirpanth in its "rejection of images."[26] "Abolition of idol-worship"[27] was one of the seven precepts of Ghasi Das and the Satnamis in the initial stages appeared to be successful in their substitution for the Brahmanistic pantheon of the worship of one God, whom they called *Sat-nam* or the 'True One'.[28] But the Satnamis probably never completely gave up idol-worship and worship of the 'Visible representations' of various deities. Soon after the passing away of Ghasidas there was a dissension in the sect on the point of permissibility of smoking tobacco and those who took to tobacco (known as *Chongia* Satnamis, though the name is not known in Kosa) again took of idol-worship.[29] In Kosa the Satnamis have no restriction on smoking and food as enunciated in the original precepts of Ghasidas and worship all the village deities. Their view is that not abiding by the precepts of Ghasi Das would do no harm to them and at the worst make them a target of ridicule by the orthodox Satnamis who are difficult to find these days, but the anger of *Thakur Deo* would devastate the entire crop and upset their economy; the wrath of *Mata* would reduce Kosa to a cluster of mud-houses without a lamp. This is their belief and this is the religion of Kosa.

Jawara

The *jawara* are sown on two occasions — at the time of *Ramnavami* and at *Naodurga*. The poor people sow the *jawara* on the former occasion, the rich people do it at the time of *Naodurga*. The reason for this is not known to them. Five elderly men of the village (*Siyan*) irrespective of caste distinction, sow 7 kinds of grain paddy, barley, wheat, *urid*, *til*, gram and *tiwra* in a basket and this is kept for seven days. This is known as *maikalash* (mother receptacle). People sow the *jawara* similarly in their houses also, at the same time these 7 seeds are also sown in an earthen receptacle kept near the place of mother Goddess (*Mata*). On the eighth day *hoom* (fire offering) is performed and on the ninth day immersion takes place. On the fifth, seventh and ninth day a *kalash* is kept near the *jawara*. Thus three *kalash* are offered. On the very first day, *hoom* is performed in a tile and a wick-lamp is kept near the *jawara* which is kept constantly burning till the immersion ceremony. This wick-lamp is known as *jot* or *nandi*. The *siyan* or the eldest male member of the house where the *jawara* is kept is known as the *panda* and he supervises the celebrations.

25. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Belaspore District, 1869; J. W. Chisholm.
26. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District; 1869; J. F. K. Hewitt, p. 47.
27. The Tribes and Castes of C. P. Vol. I, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 309.
28. High Lands of Central India, J. Forsyth, 1919, p. 338.
29. The Tribes and Castes of C. P.; Vol. I Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p.

He either keeps fast for all the days or takes his meals only once a day. The *jawara* is looked after by the *baiga* who keeps the lamp burning, sweeping the room and performing the duties of keeping *kalash*. If the *jawara* is sown by the whole village then the *baiga* himself performs the duties of *panda*. On some occasions the villagers invite Baiha Satnami from the nearby village of Pangri who officiates as *panda*. This *Baiha* Satnami keeps *nirjala upas* (fasting and not taking even water) for all the days.

Till the eighth day, the people of the village assemble near the *jawara* in the nights and sing devotional songs. This is known as *Sewa Karna*. Some people get in trance when the *sewa* (service) is going on and then coconuts are offered to them after which they regain normality. The people of Kosa who get into such trances are Jitrai, Hirsingh, Kheman, Firtoo and Gomha Satnamis.

On the day of the *hoom* i.e. the eighth day the trident (*Trishul*) kept at the place of *Mata* is taken to the blacksmith at Sirri village who cleans it. When the trident is brought back to the village, the *baiga* recites some *Mantra* before it and puts three lemons over the trident. This is called *mantra maran*. Oil and turmeric is mixed in water and is sprinkled over the *Jawara* pot. This is supposed to quieten the spirit of the deity of the *jawara*. Curd is also sprinkled over the sproutings and if some people have to sacrifice a goat in token of fulfilment of some desire, they buy the goat from the village or from some nearby village on this day itself.

On the ninth day, the *jawara* is taken out in procession. Before the procession starts, the *baiga* offers *hoom* and fixes three small flags (pieces of cloth of black, white and red colour) in the *kalash* and a lemon is fixed at the top of each of the three flag-rods. Thread is loosely tied around the *mai-kalash* and a coconut is broken. Then five elderly people, who must be married people, together lift the pot of the *jawara* and bring it out of the house where women are waiting. This main *jawara* pot is carried on the head of the wife of the *panda* or some elderly woman of the house where the *jawara* was kept. With the *jawara* pot, there are small pots kept by individual families and women from those families then lift their pots on their heads. The wife of *baiga*, carries the pot kept near the *mata*. The procession starts with a cry from the *baiga* who at the top of his voice shouts — *Ha-a-a* or *Hoo-hoo-hoo, Haa-aa-aa* and proceeds at the head of the procession. As the procession winds its way through the village, women come out with the *jawara* pots kept in their houses and join the procession. When all the *jawara* pots of the village have joined the procession the *baiga* goes on circling round the women who keep the pots, and all the times he keeps on making some fearful sounds as the above. The whole atmosphere seems to be charged with awe, fear and reverence. People move quickly or singing only devotional songs and there is no other sound.

This perfect orderly procession is taken through all the streets of the village. This is known as *Nagar Bithana* (literally meaning town-sitting). While the procession is thus moving, the *baiga* cuts lemons and puts them under the big toe of the woman who is carrying the main pot (*Mai-kalash*). This continues to be done at short distances.

The procession ultimately reaches the eastern extremity of the village where on the southern bank of the tank is the cluster of stones representing *Thakur Deo*. A *parikrama* of the *Thakur Deo* is done here and then the procession goes to the western embankment of the tank to the place of the *Mata*. The *jawara* pots are offered to the *Mata* and then the pots are immersed one by one in the tank, the *mai kalash* being immersed first, followed by the *jawara* pot sown near the *Mata*. Sacrifices are made at the place of the *Mata*, sometimes before and sometimes after the immersion ceremony. After the immersion, the people return to the place of the *Thakur Deo* and a white goat without any lobes in his neck is brought and his ears are cut by the *baiga* as token sacrifice, the goat being let off. Coconuts are then broken here and the *prasad* shared by men only.

While the *jawaras* are being immersed, some coconuts are thrown into the tank and boys and young men jump after them to fetch them. The coconuts belong to the persons who fetch them from the tank. Some people also get into a trance at this time. Some of these entranced men take the trident and poke it into their tongue or through the cheeks while others get a chain and beat their back and body with it. But, as the people of Kosa have said, there is nobody in the present generation of the village who pokes the trident; Jitrai, Bharosa, Palton and Gomha Satnamis, getting into trance only beat their body with the prickly iron-chain. The *baiga* is eligible to take the heads of the sacrificed goat or goats, the rest being taken by the non-vegetarians of the village.

When the people are returning from the tank some of them enter into the ritual-friendship known as *jawara*. The whole village witnesses the ritual, the people entering into this friendship exchanging coco-

nut and *dhoti* and putting the sproutings of *jawara* sown seeds into each others ears. After the ceremony, the people return to their places and wait eagerly for the delicious dishes and then in the day there is no work, the people assemble somewhere and pass their time in gossip.

The Pankas who are followers of Kabirpanth do not sow *jawara* and similarly Guha and Kaskoo Rawats also, who are both Kabirha do not sow *jawara* in their houses. These people, however, participate in the function and go with the procession. Before coming to Kosa, Guha and Kaskoo Rawats used to sow the *jawara*, but they have given it up now.

Ramnavami

Ramnavami is not celebrated with any enthusiasm in Kosa. Only Ghanshyam Kurmi and two other households of Kurmis celebrate it for name's sake. Ghanshyam Kurmi keeps a fast on this day and reads Ramayana or recites some stories which Chintaram may come to hear. The Satnamis and other castes do not observe the festival.

Hareli

The *Hareli* festival falls on the 15th day of the month of *Sawan*. It is actually a festival of fresh verdure. This festival has been described by Hewitt as Hurialee and describing this, he[30] writes: The Hurialee is the festival of the plough and takes place in the beginning of *Sawan*. The bullocks receive salt and rest from their labours while the plough is brought into the house, washed and sprinkled with rice."

In Kosa people get up early in the morning and bathe the cattle and then take them to the *gothan*. Ploughs are washed thoroughly in the tank and brought home. They are then hung at some suitable place. The people bow their heads to the ploughs and break coconuts near them and also offer *sunhari* and *cheela* to it. The women of the house clean the cattle-shed and wash the walls with clay. The outside of the cattle-shed is also washed and some human caricatures are made on the outside, the figures known as *Sawaniya*.

Each household prepares balls of wheat-flour dough and these with salt are carried to be *gothan* where the cattle are resting. Some of these balls are given by all the households to the village grazier (*bardiha*) and the rest and salt are fed to their cattle. No work is taken from the cattle on this day and all agricultural work is kept suspended. The women prepare delicious dishes like *sunhari, cheela,* and *bibra* (thick fried cake of wheat flour sweetened with *gur*). In the evening the people collect at some place and enjoy themselves with music.

Hareli festival is enjoyed by the boys also. It is on this day that they take out their bamboo stilts known as *gendee* and roam about on top of them in merriment. *Hareli* festival thus is a symbolic thanksgiving to the agricultural implements and cattle for doing their jobs satisfactorily.

The night of *hareli* is an *Amavasya* i.e. moonless night and with dark clouds in the sky the darkness of the night is greater. On this night the *tonhin* are believed to be out to some dreaded place like the burial ground for freshening up their malign art. The people of Kosa do not move out on this night for fear of seeing some *tonhin* bursting into evil flames because a sight of this would bring instantaneous death. Marks of soot are made on children and an eye is kept on them lest they should become victims of 'black magic' and it is likely that the *sawaniya* figures are made on the outside of the cattle-shed to avert the effects of 'evil eye.'

Rakhi

Nobody in the village knows the significance of *Rakhi* or *Rakchha bandhan* festival excepting the wife of Ghanshyam. Even Ghanshyam Guha Rawat, Jairamdas Panka and Chintaram Satnami do not know about it. Chintaram had said with some pride *"Mai nai jano tela dusro nai jane."* (If I do not know it, no body else can) and he was found to be true. Ghanshyam's wife says that Subhadra the sister of Krishna, had tied a *rakhi* on his hand and as such the sister ties the *rakhi* thread on the wrist of the brother and the brother offers her presents.

But in Kosa, the *rakhi* celebration does not consist in the sisters tying the *rakhi* thread on their brothers' wrists. Here the Brahmin *pandit* comes from Sirri and ties the thread on the wrists of Kurmis and Rawats who pay him some money and some grain. He does not visit the Satnamis. The brahmins from Machandur and Kanakot villages may also come to Kosa a day or two after the *rakhi* day and tie the thread to the Kurmis and Rawats. The Satnami get their own caste-*pandit* from Gudihari. This Satnami story-teller comes and visits the Satnamis. Tatkoo Satnami said — *"Jhan aisne chale he, Maharaj. Apan jaise purthe taise dethen"* (This is the custom here, Sir. We pay them according to our capacities). Some special food may

30. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District; J. F. K. Hewitt, 1869, p. 49.

be cooked in the house of Ghanshyam otherwise the day of *Rakhi* or *Raksabandhan* in Kosa is as drab as any other day.

Pola

Pola festival falls just a month after *hareli* and is also known as *Pora* and, like *hareli*, it is also an agricultural festival. The agricultural cattle are bathed in the tank and decorated their horns and tail coloured and colour sprinkled on their body; a coloured rope is put in the neck as a necklace and then people burn incense in the shed and perform *arati* before the cattle. They are then taken to the *gothan* and people of the village assemble there to see decoration of the cattle. Agricultural work is suspended for the day and people even do not walk over the field embankments.

In the Settlement Report of Raipur District (which in 1869 included the area in which the present village is situated) Hewitt[13] writes that "in the beginning of *Bhadon* are the great festivals of *Pola* and *Gurhpooja.* In the former the oxen are worshipped....." On the market days preceeding the festival, the people buy earthen toy bullocks and wheels for the children and in the village they put on these earthen wheels on the toy-bullocks with the help of split bamboo pieces and rope. On the *pola* day when the parents are taking the decorated bullocks to the *gothan* the children accompany them with their toy bullocks similarly decorated. The stilts (*gendee*) which were taken out on *hareli* day are put back on the *pola* day.

Pola festival is a day of great festivity. Good food like *sunhari, thethri* and *bara* is prepared at home and the old and the young alike, are happy and gay. In the evening the people collect at some place and the men enjoy themselves with recitation of Ramayana and other devotional songs.

Tija

This festival is celebrated in the month of *Bhadon* and is exclusively a womens' affair. It is a very important festival from the social aspects also. The festival falls on the third day after *pola*. All the young married women like to go to their fathers or brothers as the case may be and it is more or less incumbent on the part of the husband to let her go there in the first 5-10 years of married life. Afterwards, on growing older the women normally do not go nor are they welcomed at the other end.

On the *tija* day all married women observe fast and do not taken even water. In the evening delicious food is prepared and women engage themselves in singing and merry making. They put on new clothes and ornaments given to them by their brothers. The fast is kept for the well-being of the husband. A prayer is made in the nature of songs to God Shankar and his consort Parvati but no formal and detailed worship is done nor is any priest sent for.

The social aspect of *tija* is a little disquieting to young men whose wives have gone to their parents' place to celebrate the festival. *Tija,* looked at from this angle presents an example to show how divorced the precepts are from practice. The festival is celebrated for the well-being of the husband and paradoxically enough in many a cases they do not return to their husbands after the *tija* and become the *choori* wife of somebody else. *Tija* is the occasion when they go to their parents' house and meet the boy-friends of their childhood or some friend of the boy-friend and they desert their husbands. This may be the reason why the husbands are rather nervous about the *tija* and the young wife so longing for it.

Boula-Chouth

The name of this festival in Northern India is *Bahura-Chouth. Boula-Chouth* is not a common festival of the village and the Satnamis do not observe it. It is observed in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi where the ladies of other Kurmi households collect and the Rawat women also come there. Among the Rawats, Guha and Kaskoo do not observe this festival.

In this festival, the women and girls of about 10 years and over in age fast and pray for the welfare of their sons and brothers. The brahmin *pandit* from village Sirri comes to the house of Ghanshyam for conducting the worship. A symbolic image of *Gouri* is made out of cow-dung and some mud-toys like marble and top are made and kept there — these being the play-things of the boys. On this day the use of cow's milk and of other products made out of cow's milk is prohibited.

The brahmin *pandit* relates four stories and in the absence of *pandit* these stories are recited by Ghanshyam's wife or some other Kurmi woman — other ladies listening to them attentively and with great reverence. These stories are:—

(1) *The cow and her calf*:— "There was once a cow. She had a male calf. One day while she was out in the jungle for grazing, a tiger came out and told her that he would kill and eat her. The cow requested him to spare her for some time and told him that she

31. Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of Raepore District; J. F. K. Hewitt, 1869, p. 49.

had left the young calf at the village who must be hungry and that she would go to him. She promised that after the calf has suckled her, she would come back to be devoured. The tiger did not believe her at first but on her repeated promises let her go. The cow came to the village, very sad in her heart. As soon as the calf saw his mother he came to her jumping and started suckling. But after taking one or two gulps he looked at the cow and said 'Mother what is the matter to-day. Your milk is hot and you look so sad'. The cow evaded the question and said she was in hurry and had to go back to the jungle. The calf persisted in questioning and so ultimately the cow disclosed the fact. The young one said that he would also accompany his mother and he was adamant that the cow had to take him along.

In the jungle, the tiger was waiting for her. As soon as the calf saw the tiger he ran towards him saying "O maternal uncle, salutations to you; O maternal uncle I salute you." The tiger said "How can I eat your mother now, she has become my sister" and he went away." And the story-teller says "As was the luck of the cow so be ours."

(2) *Gahira-Gahiran*:— "Once upon a time there were a Gahira and Gahirin. The Gahirin used to go to a nearby village to sell milk. On the *Boula-Chouth* day the women of that village were on fast and had requested the Gahirin to supply to them only buffalo's milk as cow's milk is prohibited on that day.

The Gahirin, in spite of this request of the village women played mischief. She mixed cow's milk and water in the buffalo milk and supplied them to the villagers. When, after distributing milk, she came back home, she found that all her children were lying unconscious. She started crying and then it providentially dawned on her that this mgiht be due to her supplying cow's milk to her clients. Leaving the children in that very condition, she rushed to the other village and told all the clients of her mischief requesting them not to drink the milk and curd supplied by her. Everybody returned her the milk. When she returned to her children, she found her children were all right and were playing as if nothing had happened to them." And then the story-teller says — 'As the good luck came back to Gahirin, so be ours.'

There are two, other stories *viz.* those of *Bamhan-Bamhnin* and *Kumharin*. But these are not remembered by the people. Actually in some of the households in the towns and in Uttar Pradesh, the writer found the second story being related in connection with another festival — *Kamarchhat* were it is related under the caption of Gwalin (i. e. milk seller) and in Kosa too, this story is repeated in *Kamarchhat* festival also.

Kamarchhat

Kamarchhat known also as *Khamarchhat* in Kosa is a festival of the women and only married women celebrate this. The festival is celebrated for the well-being of the children and husbands and is also observed in other parts of India. In Kosa it is celebrated by the Satnamis, Kurmis and Rawats and has thus reached deeper than *Boula Chouth*.

On this day the women fast. Going to ploughed fields and anything that has grown in a ploughed field are prohibited on this day. Salt is also not taken. After the fast, the women, in the evening take *pashar ka chawal* i. e. rice which grown by the side of the fields in the unploughed region and by itself. As in *Boula Chouth*, taking cow's milk or anything made out of cow's milk is prohibited and the women take along with *pashar ka Chawal* a number of vegetables that grow in unploughed fields and in *bari* like *chench bhaji, munga bhaji, kohda bhaji, kanda bhaji, jari bhaji* and *barbati bhaji*. The women clean their teeth with twigs of *khamar* plant and eat in the leaf-plates made out of the leaves of this plant.

The worship procedure is more or less the same as *Boula Chouth*. A symbolic *Gouri* is made out of cow-dung, and worshipped. In the Kurmi households, the brahman *pandit* from Sirri is invited; in his absence the ladies do the *pooja* themselves. The Rawat and some Satnami women assemble in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi to listen to the stories.

Six stories are usually recited in this festival and this takes the major part of the brahman *pandit's* time when he comes, the worship ceremony itself being a very nominal one. The four stories of *Boula Chouth* are repeated here and two others told, one of the stories being as below:—

Bamhan-Bamhnin

"Once there lived a Brahmin family and a Chamar family in a village. The Brahman had no issue and the Chamar had many children. The *Brahmani* (wife of the Brahman) sometimes used to visit the house of the Chamar and everytime, when she rose upto go, the *Chamarin* (wife of the Chamar) used to sprinkle water at the place she had sat. One day the *Brahmani* asked the *Chamarin* for an explanation and the *Chamarin* said that since the *Brahmani* was sterile (*banjh*), the place where she sits becomes impure.

The *Brahmani* became very sad and prayed to the

Goddess *Harshasti* (known as *Kamarchhati* in Kosa) to give her a child no matter how long it lives so that the stigma of being sterile may go. The Goddess went in search for some child who was not wanted by the parents but there was no such case. At long last the Goddess saw a queen whose son was ill for quite some time and the queen was praying to God that either the child should become all right or should be taken away by God so that his sufferings are over. The Goddess thus discovered a child who was not wanted by his parents and taking him away from the queen gave him to the *Brahmani*.

The *Brahmani* became pregnant and in due course gave a birth to a son. But she had told the Goddess that it is only for the removal of the stigma, that she wanted a child and the Goddess could have him back any time. So the Goddess came on the *chhatti* day and wanted to take back the child. The *Brahmani* asked her to come on the *barhon* (twelfth day) and on *barhon* she wanted the child upto the *mundan* and then to *janeu* (sacred-thread ceremony) and then desired that the son should be left till his marriage so that she can see the face of her daughter-in-law and then the Goddess can take away the son.

The boy got married and the daughter-in-law came and the *Brahmani* was very happy but then the Goddess came to take away the boy. The *Brahmani* asked the daughter-in-law to touch the feet of the Goddess and this she did. The Goddess clessed *'sada shoubhagyabati raho'* (you will always have your husband alive). Then she asked the *Brahmani* about her promise and said that she would take away her son. The *Brahmani* said that she had no objection but the son was now married and the Goddess should ask the daughter-in-law too. The Goddess went to the daughter-in-law who said that she had no objection but the Goddess had only a minute before given her the blessing of having her husband alive as long as she was alive and if she wanted to take him away, she should take her life first. The Goddess was in a great fix and ultimately said that she was defeated and let the *Brahmani* keep her son and the daughter-in-law her husband and saying this she vanished." And the story-teller says "As the blessings dawned on the *Brahmani* and her daughter-in-law so they should dawn on us too."

This festival of *Kamarchhat* is known elsewhere as *Harchhat* or *Harshashti-Vrat* and the Goddess is *Harshasti devi*. Amongst the Brahmin immigrants from Uttar Pradesh, the women clean their teeth on this day with twigs of *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*). In Chhattisgarh and in this village twigs of *kamar* or *khamar* tree are used. This *khamar* looks to be the same as *palas* tree (*Butea frondosa*) and has given the name *Kamarchhat* to the festival.

Janmashtmi

Athen is the popular term by which *Janmashtmi* festival is known in Kosa. People of all castes fast on this day and they know that the festival signifies the birthday celebration of Lord Krishna. Their explanation of the fast is that Krishna's mother was in labour pains for the whole day and he was born in the night and as such they also fast for the whole day as symbolic sympathy for the Lord's mother. The fast is ended at mid-night.

In one of the rooms the people make a figure of Krishna known as *athen kanhaiya* with red ochre (*geroo*) or with the juice of *bhengra* plant (The leaf of *bhengra* plant is very juicy and rubbing it on the ground leaves an impression). This figure is worshipped in the night with coconut and offerings of the food prepared for making the fast.

People do not wear new clothes on this day nor do they engage themselves in singing songs. Ghanshyam Kurmi does not prepare the figure of *athen kanhaiya* on the ground with *geroo* or *bhengra* but he has no reason for this. He probably worships the printed picture of Lord Krishna.

Peetar-Pakh

Peetar or *Pitar* is the corruption from the word *pitra* meaning ancestor and *pakh* means a fortnight. *Peetar-pakh* of Kosa is the same as *pitra-paksha* but the rituals observed by Brahmins and other higher castes are not gone through in the village. The rituals are performed by members of all castes.

After bathing in the tank, *tarpan* is done at the tank itself and consists in sitting on the bathing stone and letting some handfuls of water pass through the joined palms. Then the men come with wet clothes and at home they put some incense in the fire and a piece of *roti* (rice or wheat flour baked dough) in the name of the departed persons. This is done for about 15 days and on the last day, 12 *roti* and incense is taken to the tank and after burning incense the *roti* are thrown in the tank. It is believed that this serves as the food to the ancestral spirits till the next *peetar pakh*, one *roti* for each month.

Dasahra

Dasahra falls in the month of *Kunwar* and coincides with the *Dasahra* festival observed everywhere else in India. The observance of this festival in Kosa

is however not elaborate. A mud replica of the demon-king Ravana is made and the brahmin from village Sirri is invited by the villagers. He 'shoots' the Ravana with the improvised bow and arrow and the party disperses. Some delicious food is prepared at the homes.

Many people from this village go to the nearby village of Sirri where the festival is observed more gaily because of an enthusiastic Kurmi young man there who is the leader of that village. The villagers from Sirri also invite some Ramlila party who stage a drama and in imitation of them, the people of Kosa also invite some Ramlila party to the village on a charge of Rs. 75-100 for one night, the money being contributed by all the villagers.

Parched gram and rice (*murra*) and balls made of parched rice and *gur* are purchased at Sirri and eaten. The great gaiety of the festvial is not because of itself but because of *Nawakhai* festival which coincides with *Dashara*.

Nawakhai

Nawakhai is the festival of 'new eating'. (*Nawa* means new and *khai* means eating). The festival falls in the month of *Kunwar* and in Kosa coincides with *Dasahra*. This is the occasion when the villagers 'taste the fruit of their labour'. This is celebrated by all the villagers on the same day and not on separate days which custom is reported to in vogue in Eastern Mandla by Fuchs.

On this day the *baiga* comes to the village. It may, however, be mentioned again that Bali Gond, who is the village *baiga*, owns 15.91 acres of land in Kosa too. He comes to the village in the morning and takes bath in the tank. Then with wet clothes he goes to his fields and brings handful of paddy plants from there. He then puts some of the plants bewteen the stones representing *Thakur Deo* and also some near the place of *Mata* and *Mahabir* (near the *Gothan*). At each of these places he burns incense (*hoom-dena*) and breaks a coconut. In this ceremony many villagers join him. The *baiga* then returns to his village.

The men and women bathe early, men bathing quite early in the day. The head of the family then goes to his field with wet clothes and plucks some plants. If the paddy is of the early growing variety, he cuts some handfuls and brings it. On the way home, he puts some plants at the place of *Thakur Deo, Mata, Shankarji* and *Mahabir* and the Satnamis also put these near the *Jaitkham*.

At home the paddy is separated from the plants and is husked. The rice is ground and five or seven big rolls of dough (*rot*) are made out of it. These are offered to the *Durpata Deota* i. e. the basil (*Tulsi*) plant after performing the *hoom* and a coconut is broken. All members of the household then partake of the *prasad*. The new rice is cooked along with other delicious dishes and the people enjoy themselves with a hearty meal.

If the paddy is not fully ripe, then only a handful of plants are brought from the fields and the grains of new rice are mixed with the rice of the house and cooked. In his study of the Baiga, Elwin[32] records that "all food eaten that day must be of the new harvest, nothing of last year." This is not the case in Kosa and the practice here is similar to the one described by Fuchs according to whom "the meal is prepared from the rice of last year, but a few grains must be of the new crop."[33] The rice (new rice or the old rice in which new grains are mixed) must be prepared by the mother, wife or daughter-in-law of the person who brings the plants and if he has none, then his brother's wife does the job. But a daughter of the house is not permitted to do the rice-cooking in any case. The reason is "The daughter does not belong to our family, she belongs to the other."

The village pulsates with life; people and children put on new clothes and smell of incense and good food is in the air. The women take out their ornaments and put them on and when a woman, as woman everywhere else, puts on the ornaments, she moves out (instinctively, of course) so that they are seen and praised and asked about.

Relatives of the same *got* or *gotra* are invited and it is belived that if people belonging to other *gotra* come and join in the feast, the deity would harass the family for doing so. But exception is made of women who though of other *got* may be present e. g. a married daughter or widowed mother-in-law. The question of son-in-law's family on the occasion has not arisen so far because all son-in-laws even if they happen to be in the house of their wives' parents, go back to their houses for the *Nawakhai* of their field produce. The wife or the daughter-in-law or laws if they are out in their parents' house are sent for to be present at the husband's house on this occasion.

32. The Baiga, Verrier Elwin, 1939, p. 63.
33. The Gonds and Bhumias of Eastern Mandla; Stephen Fuchs, 1960, p. 477.

Jethouni

This festival falls on the *Ekadasi* day of the *Kartik* month and probably is the same as the *Deo-uthani* (God's waking) *Ekadasi* observed by more sophisticated people elsewhere. There is, however, no indication in Kosa suggesting that these two fesitvals are the same and the *Jethouni* here is celebrated as a festival of worship of cattle. The festival is, however, celebrated on the same day as *Deo-uthani Ekadashi* in U. P. and M. P. and in the towns.

In Kosa, men and women both keep fast for the whole day and eat only at night at about 8-9 p. m. After the cattle go for grazing, the shed is cleaned and in the dusk when the cattle return after grazing they are worshipped. The worship consists in bowing heads to them.

When the cattle assemble in the *gothan* or when the *bardiha* (grazier) comes to take them from the shed to the *gothan*, he puts on garlands of coloured rope round their necks and there in the *gothan* gives a little *tiwra* pulse to them. The garland is known as *souhar*. For the *souhar* and pulse that he gives to the cattle, the *bardiha* gets a winnowing-fan-full of paddy from his clients.

The people of course prepare some delicious dishes to eat in the night and in the night light a lamp in the cattle-shed but apart from these no other ceremonies are performed and the people are not aware of any other significance of the festival.

Goura-Gouri

Goura-Gouri is a typical Chhattisgarhi festival and would justify some detailed description. This festival is celebrated in the month of *Kartik* before *Diwali*. It is also known in its abbreviated form *Gaura*. The festival being on the 5th day before the *Diwali* and in Kosa is celebrated mainly by the Kurmis and Rawats and also by some of the Satnamis, but by and large the Satnamis are only onlookers.

The people who went to establish the *Gaura*, prepare a small mud platform about 8" to 10" high and one foot square. On this platform known as *chaura* (Hindi word *Chabutara*) are placed seven kinds of flowers, leaves of basil and some rice grains. Seven unmarried girls pound these things seven times with the *moosar* or paddy-husking implement after which incense is burnt and *arti* is performed in front of the platform. Seven leaf plates (*patari*) are then offered to the *Gaura* and the following sung:—

"EK PATARI CHADHWON GOURA
RAYRATAN DURGA HO, RAYRATAN DURGA
CHOUKI CHANDAN PEEDHALI
GOURA KA BAD MAN HO, GOURA KA BAD MAN
JAISE GOURA TUMHAR MAN
JAISE KARMA KA DAL HO
ARE JAISE KARMA KA DAL
KARMA AISAN DODHI, PARODA AISAN PHOOL HO
KARMA AISAN DODHI, PARODA AASAN PHOOL
AMERCH AMA JANE GOURA AM GOODA LAGAI HO
AMERCH AMA JANE GOURA AM GOODA LAGAI
DOODHA MANGE POOTA MANGE
JANAM JANAM AHIWAN HO
JANAM JANAM AHIWAN."

(The meaning of this song is not very clear and the people are not able to explain the meaning of some words. The meaning of some of the lines is — I am offering one leafplate O Rayratan Durga. The seat is a platform of sandal — how great the glory of Goura, how great! Goura, your glory is like the branch of *Karma* tree. I am praying to you to make me fertile, to give me children, I shall be grateful for generations.)

The above song is repeated every time a leaf-plate is offered e. g. when offering the second leaf plate the first line becomes:—

DOO PATARI CHANDAWON, GOURA
RAYRATAN DURGAHO, RAYRATAN DURGA'

(Second left-plate is offered.) And thus the song is repeated seven times, only the first word of the first line changing according to the serial number of plate being offered. This kind of worship and offerings of leaf-plates are done every night till the night of *Dhanteras* i. e. 2nd days before *Diwali*. After *Dhanteras*, women keep awake for a little longer and sing in a group to the accompaniment of drums. One of these songs is:—

"DASE DASAHRA MORA BEESE DIWARI
KA KAR RAHIN UTHAI HO — KA KAR RAHNI
GAWE GOSAIYAN MORA THAIYAN
BHUIYAN JEKAR RAHNI UTHAI HO
GAWE GOSAIYAN MORA BAIGIN BAIGA
JEKAR RAHNI UTHAI HO.. ....."

And in the same song in the place of *baigin baiga* are taken the names of various deities like *Bhola Mahadev, Thakur Deota, Sheetla Maiya, Maya Dai, Chhappan kot Deota* and the first and last words — *'Gawe Gosaiyan mora ..... jekar rahni uthai ho* are repeated every time.

The song appears to be an invocation of various deities. The second song refers to the *akhada* of Lord

Shiva (Mahadev). A child express a desire to go to the place where Lord Shiva resides and his mother is trying to dissuade him. She says that the place is too far, he may die of thirst and hunger. But the son is unwavering and therefore the mother keeps food and water for him and provides an umbrella and a horse for him to go.

Singing many songs like this the women keep awake near the *Goura* platform till about 10-11 p. m. and then after burning incense, the *Goura-Gouri* are sent to sleep. The lullaby for inducing the deities to sleep is:—

"SUTO SUTO MORI RANI GOURI DEWA HO
KEKTI KERA KI CHHANW."

'Sleep, sleep, my Gouri queen, O deity sleep under the shadow of *ketki* plant, under the shade of plantain).

On the night of *Dhanteras*, the women keep awake the whole night and sing many songs to ward off sleep. After the night-long vigil, the idol of *Goura* is installed in the morning. The woman, in whose house the programmes are going on goes to a field singing with other women and brings earth from there. This earth, like the earth of *Choolmati*[34] is brought from the field in front of the *Mata* Shrine. From this earth are made two images a male figure on the bull and a female figure on a tortoise. The former represents Lord Shiva, the latter his consort — Parvati. The images are brought home singing and, when they are being brought, some people get into a trance and it is supposed that they become possessed by Mahadeo or Parvati.

When the people get 'possessed' and go into a trance others make prayers to them for some boon by offering a coconut to the 'possessed' person and he may put the coconut on the lap of the person who has offered it or on the lap of any other person. The 'possessed' person then informs the person or persons praying for boons about the ways, means and time for the fulfilment of their desires and tell him how he or she should live to get the best fruits.

Near the earthen-platform the *Gauri-Gaura* idols are taken round it five times. These are the *kunwari bhanwar* (virginal circumbulations). A mock marriage is then performed. On the morning of *Diwali*, the women take early baths and the mock marriage is repeated. But this time there are 7 *bhanwars* and are known as *suhagin bhanwar*.

After this the images are immersed, the immersion being done by men and then *prasad* is distributed. The worship of *goura-gouri* is mainly done for fertilty and also done if some desires expressed at the *goura* of previous year have been fulfilled.

By the time the immersion ceremony is over and people return home, preparations for Diwali are already begun.

Diwali

Diwali has undergone some local modifications in the village. In the morning after immersing the *goura-gouri*, the men decorate their cattle by putting garlands of cotton-fibre and rope. *Khichri* (rics-pulse mixture) is given to the cattle to eat and then they are sent to the *gothan*. People take early bath and put on new clothes and in the homes are prepared *sunhari* and *bara*.

Goberdhan (cow-dung wealth) is worshipped on the *Diwali* day. An image is made of cow-dung and it is got touched by the cow's foot. *Hoom* is offered by burning incense and a coconut is broken there. One coconut is also broken in the cattle-shed and then the people go to the *gothan* where the *bardiha* sacrifices a fowl as an offering to *Sahanra Deo* with a prayer that the deity may give good health to the cattle and there may be no cattle epidemic in the village. In the night, houses are lighted by earthen-wick-lamps and in some of the houses e. g. in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi children enjoy themselves with fire-works and crackers. Almost the entire village-children gather in the house of Ghanshyam to see his children playing with fire-works. A picture of Goddess Laxmi is worshipped in the Kurmi houses. But other people say that there is no need to worship the picture. Laxmi is in their houses. Laxmi is the reference made for the cattle in the rural areas and it may be for this reason that the cattle are worshipped on this day.

Sankrant

Sankrant is the name by which *Makar-Sankranti* is known is Kosa. It is not celebrated with any enthusiasm. Many people go to Rajim in Raipur District to have a dip at the confluence of Mahanadi and Pairi rivers and those who do not go, take their bath as usual in the tank. Few people fast on this day. The women prepare sweet-balls (*laddu*) of parched-rice-*gur* and flour-*gur*, a few of them also preparing *laddu* of *til-gur*.

Chher-chhera

This festival falls on the full-moon day of the

34. This ritual is described in connection with Marriage Ceremony.

Magh (*Magh-Poornima*). *Chher-chhera* used to be a very gay festival till about, say 1940 (the present writer has taken part in the *Chher-chhera* festival in 1937-1939 in villages of the present Bindranawagarh and Balodabazar tahsils of Raipur District) but it has lost much of the 'old-spirit' now. As far as the towns are concerned, *Chher-chhera* has become almost extinct and atleast in the nearby towns of Raipur, the writer has not observed *Chher-chhera* being observed now though in the thirties and forties, *Chher-chhera* used to be the festival occasion when teachers of Primary Schools used to go with their students from house to house and the grain collected was sold to purchase some item of furniture for the school or for making the compound wall and so on. The festival thus used to serve as an occasion to get "public contributions" for some school-work. Sadly enough, in this age, when the words 'public contributions' and 'public participations' have become slogans, unspectacular festivals like *Chher-chhera* have gone into slow decay. It must however be said without any dis-respect to the great philosophy of Community Development that atleast in Chhattisgarh, the agency has failed to realise that the *Chher-chhera* festival could be converted into a "public participation" day.

In the rural areas, as seen in Kosa during the present survey, *Chher-chhera*, festival has still some life. On this day, the boys and young men form some parties and go from house to house dancing. In the parties, boys are, of course preponderate. In the party of children gilrs also join. Some of the members wear womens' clothes and are known as *Nachkarin* (danseuses). Others carry musical instruments — *chikara*, *manjira* and *tabla*. Two of them dance with a stick in hand and on reaching a house the party, in one voice, shouts *Chher-chhera* — *Chher-chhera*. The householders give them some money or handfuls of paddy.

The *Chher-chhera* parties of Kosa are mostly Satnami; the Rawats form a separate group. They may also visit nearby villages and parties from nearby vlilages, in turn, come to Kosa. Paddy collected in this manner is sold in the village itself or in some market and the sale-proceeds are added to the cash amount collected. The boys either purchase some eatables in the market or sometimes purchase some items of more lasting value and of common benefit. In 1961, the villagers purchase a *tabla-set* for Rs. 20/-; the money was collected at the time of *Chher-chhera*.

On the festival day, the women wash their houses with cow-dung. *Hoom* is offered at home in the name of all deities and in the name of Laxmi, the cattle; incense being burnt in the cattle-shed. Towards the evening people discuss what to do with the collections.

Shivratri

Some persons from the village go to Rajim (Raipur District) to have a holy dip at the confluence of Mahanadi and Pairi rivers. In the village people take an early bath and pour a *lota* full of water on the idol of Shankarji kept on the south-eastern bank of the tank. They fast on this day. This fast is observed by Ghanshyam Kuri, Chintaram Satnami, and Anandram Rawats and other people. The Panka and the two households of *Kabirha* Rawats do not observe the festival.

Holi

Some persons like Chintaram Satnami know the significance of *Holi* fesitval in a very vague manner e. g. it is said that Holika the sister of the tyrant *Harinkashipu* was burnt by Pahlad (Prahlad) and *Holi* is a commemoration of that event. In the *Holi* it is said "Let Pahlad be saved let Holika be burnt."

Holi-songs and *bhajans* are sung in the village right from the beginning of *Phalgun* month. On the night of *Holi*, the *holi*-fire is lighted near the tank where every house contributes fuel-wood and *chhena* (cow-dung cake). It is mostly the cow-dung cakes that form the main mass because fuel-wood is scarce in Kosa. The fire is lighted by the *baiga* and, after the fire is burnt out, a coconut and milk-curd solution is thrown over the burnt fire. At the place of *Holi* some men assemble with their musical instruments and sing some songs.

Next day the women wash their houses with cow-dung water and the *baiga* offers incense (*hoom*) to all the village deities; the people also offering *hoom* in their respective houses. The Satnamis give the *hoom* offering to the *Jaitkham*. The women prepare *roti* and *bara*. (*Roti* or bread is considered to be a delicious dish because rice and *basi* is the common food). In the evening the villagers assemble at some place and sprinkle coloured water and *gulal* on one another's person irrespective of caste. Then they enjoy themselves with some music songs to the accompaniment of *tabla*, *manjira* and harmonium.

Other Religious Festivals

The festivals described above have fixed dates when they are celebrated. There are other occasion of religious festivities which have no fixed dates and which

are celebrated by individual households. Inter-caste participation of varying degrees is observed in these religious festivities.

Occasions of these festivals are — *Satya Narayan Ki Katha, Chauka* and visits of Satnami *guru* in the village for *Kan-phoonkna*. These ceremonies are described here in some detail to show the difference that has crept into them.

Satya Narayan Ki Katha

'*Satya Narayan Ki Katha* (story of the true God) is common among the Hindus all over Norhtern India. In Kosa it is celebrated by all castes except the Pankas who do not celebrate it because they are *Kabirha* i. e. followers of *Kabirpanth*, but the *Kabirha* Rawats, Guha and Kaskoo perform the celebration at their homes. It is interesting to note that this religious ceremony is in vogue amongst the Satnamis of Kosa.

The worship is performed, in the non-Satnami castes, by a Brahman *pandit*. The *pandit* of Kosa is one Shukla Maharaj of village Gadadih. He comes to the house where the *Katha* is to take place in the morning and prepares the *prasad* from wheat flour and sugar. Except in case of Chintaram Satnami, he does not go to other houses of Satnamis. Chintaram has only recently been successful in requesting the *pandit* to his house. The Satnamis have their own caste-*Pandits* who live in the villages of Khopli, Tamora and Sukhri. In the house of Chintaram Satnami, where the Brahman *Pandit* prepares the *prasad*, people of other castes except Ghanshyam Kurmi accepts it. Though Ghanshyam Kurmi and Chintaram Satnami are friends, Ghanshyam does not accept the *prasad* even though it is prepared by the Brahman. In a Satnami house where the *prasad* has been prepared by the householders or by the Satnami *Pandit*, nobody except Satnamis accept the *prasad* though they may go to listen to the stroies. This non-acceptance of *prasad* is noteworthy because in the stories that are recited on the occasion, there is one story which tells of the misery that fell on persons for the non-acceptance of *prasad*. Notwithstanding the story and its lesson, the caste-prejudice holds sway. Ghanshyam does not accept *prasad* in other castes too though other Kurmis do.

This acceptance of *prasad* by people of different castes in Kosa is shown in plate LXXVII (115) People, of course, accept *prasad* from houses of their own caste and this has not been shown.

Another modification is that when the Brahman *pandit* comes, he usually brings the brass images of Krishna, Ram and Ganesh in his bag, but the Santami *pandit* does not bring any image (being probably conscious that image-worship should atleast not be done by him). But he prepares two rough homunculi with cow-dung to represent Gouri and Ganesh. Whether there are brass images or there are only these cow-dung homunculi these are kept on a wooden *peedha* bedecked with leaves of plaintain.

Satya Narayan Ki Katha is held when some desire has been fulfilled or some crisis during which some promise (*badna*) was made has been overcome successfully and before residing in a new house. In spite of the fact that the stories have been told in the village on many occasions, the Satnamis remember only two and those too rather vaguely. Regarding others they say "*Kojani*" (who can tell?).

In the *Satya Narayan Ki Katha* as is observed in Kosa, it is the story that is important and heard with attention; people are not fastidious about the mode of worship. In the *katha* there are five stories and the one known to the villagers is that of the *baniya* (tradesman) and Lilawati-Kalawati. This story is as below:—

Once upon a time there lived a *Vaishya* (the villagers refer to him as *Baniya*) in a certain town. He was issueless and his wife Lilawati very much yearned for a child. Prayers of the *Vaishya* to various deities were of no avail. One day he heard about the *Satya Narayan Ki Katha* and the benefits that accrue. The king told the *Vaishya* that if a *badna* is made, *Satya Narayan* fulfils the desire. The *Vaishya* on coming home told his wife of what the king had told him and they both made a *badna* to the *Satya Narayan Bhagwan* that if they get a child, they would perform the *katha* in their house.

Lilawati did not take her monthly bath thereafter and in due course gave birth to a female child who was named Kalawti. The *Vaishya* however did not fulfil his promise though reminded by his wife and went on postponing it to the next celebration of life rituals. A number of years passed and Kalawati got married but even then the Vaishya failed to perform the *katha* and with his son-in-law proceeded on a business sojourn. There in a distant land he became falsely implicated in theft because of the wrath of *Satya Narayan* and here in his house a theft was committed and everything was looted his family being reduced to the level of paupers. One day Kalawati listened to the *katha* in the house of of a Brahman and when she told her mother, she be-

came reminded of her husband's promise and vowed that she would perform the *pooja* if her husband and son-in-law returned soon.

The King of the domain where the *Vaishya* and his son-in-law were imprisoned, saw a dream in which *Satya Narayan Bhagwan* ordered him to release the innocent Vaishya and his son-in-law and next morning they were relieved. When the *Vaishya* was returning *Satya Narayan* wanted to test him and he appeared in the form of a *jogi* to ask him what was contained in the boat. Though the *Vaishya* had gold and money, he falsely informed the God that he had only leaves there. *Satya Narayan* went away and the *Vaishya* to his great horror found that his boat had become very light; it was full of dry leaves. He began to cry and the *jogi* returned and reminded him of his promise of getting the *Satya Narayan katha* performed in his house. The *Vaishya* said he would do it as soon as he returned home, and there was again gold and silver on his boat as before.

When the news of the *Vaishya* and his son-in-law returning home and coming ashore was conveyed to Lilawati and Kalawati, they had already performed the *pooja* but in the great excitement ran to the shore without taking the *prasad*. When they reached the shore there was neither trace of the boat nor of the *Vaishya* and his son-in-law. Fearing that they were drowned, Lilawati and Kalawati started wailing. There was a proclamation from the skies that since the ladies had left without accepting the *prasad*, the God had become enraged. Lilawati and Kalawati made a fresh *badna* and their husband appeared again. This time they fulfilled the promise and lived for many long years in great prosperity and happiness.

After all the 5 stories are over, *hoom* is performed in which *til*, sugar, barley and *ghee* mixture is put into fire. The Satnami-*Pandit* and the Brahman both read the stories from books — Shukla Maharaj has the book in Sanskrit with Hindi commentry and published from Benaras, the Satnami *pandit* has the book only in Hindi in which only the stories are given, the book is published from some other place and the *pandit* has purchased it from Durg.

Chauka

The *Kabirha* i. e. the Panka and Rawats (Guha and Kaskoo) get a ceremony known as *Chauka* performed after birth, marriage or death in the family or on the occasion of fulfilment of some desire. In times of difficulty and crisis, they make a vow that if the trouble is over without loss, they would get the *chauka* performed. But whereas the *kabirha* Rawats also get the *Satya Narayan Ki Katha* performed in their houses, the Panka gets only the *chauka* done. He says that *Satya Narayan ki katha* and worship of deities like Ganesh and Krishna is not permitted by his religion. Before starting living in a new house, the Panka would get the *chauka* performed, the *kabirha* Rawats take recourse, like other villagers, to the *Satya Narayan pooja*.

The Panka and *kabirha* Rawats have their own priests for performing the religious ceremony of *chauka* and he is known as the *chaukaha guru* as distinguished from *kanphoonka guru*, i. e. the *guru* who gives them the sacred word and initiates them into the *panth*. One Shankardas Panka of village Selud is the *chaukaha guru* for the Kabirpanthis of Kosa. He visits this village once a year or more frequently if invited. The *chauka* ceremony of Kosa more or less follows the one described by Russell and Hiralal[35]

"A Kabirpanth religious service is called *Chauka*, the name given to the space marked out for it with lines of wheat-flour, 5 or 7½ yards square. In the centre is made a pattern of nine lotus flowers to represent the Sun, Moon and seven planets and over this a bunch of flowers is laid." In Kosa, *Kalash* or long-cylindrical object is made with wheat-flour dough, with a cavity at the top in which a wick is lighted. 9 such *Kalash* are prepared and it is these that represent the Sun, Moon and the seven planets. At one corner is a small hollow pillar of wheat flour which serves as a candle stick. A *Chouk* is made on the ground with wheat-flour and the *chaukaha guru* sits at one corner of it and the worshippers sit all around. To the accompaniment of *Jhanjh* and *Manjira*, the *guru* sings some poetry of Kabir. Two such songs are given here:—

"KAR LO MAN MALA KA DHYAN
JISME NARAYAN BOLE
KAHE KI TERI GURIYA BANI HAI
KAHE KA TERA DHAGA
KOUN KAL ME JAP HOT HAI
KAHE SUMRAHI LAGA
SOHAM KI TERI GURIYA BANI HAI
SWAS KA TERA DHAGA
KAR LO MAN MALA KA DHYAN
JISME NARAYAN BOLE."
(Mediate on the garland of your heart
The God speaks there;
What are the beads of your garland composed of
What is the thread (of garland) made of
At what time do you repeat the holy text

35. The Tribes and Castes of C. P.; R. V. Russell and Hiralal, Vol. I, 1916, pp. 239-240.

Why do you remember the text?
The beads (of your garland) are composed of
— "I am Ha"
And the thread is made up of breath
Medicate on the garland of your heart.
For there the God speaks).

" *KABOO NA RAHA MAN JO*
JAP DHYAN KIYA TO KYA
VISHAYON SE MALIN HAI DIL
SNAN KIYA TO KYA
BAHU VASNA BHARI HAI
ANTAHKARAN KE ANDAR
NISHKAM NA HUA DIL YADI
TAP DHYAN KIYA TO KYA
MITHYA JAGAT KE DHANDHE
KARATE UMAR BITAI
PAYA NAHIN PARAM PAD
PURSHARTH KIYA TO KYA."

(If the mind is not controlled, what is the use of meditation and repetition of holy text. If the heart is dirty with lust and passion, what is the use of taking a water-bath? The interior of the mind is full of desires and attachments. If the mind does not become free of lust, what is the good of penance and meditation?

The life is spent in doing the odd jobs of this false world. What is the use of manly efforts if the Absolute is not attained?)

After these *bhajans* are over, the *guru* performs the *arti* and then breaks a coconut on a piece of stone and the flesh of the coconut is distributed to the worshippers. The dough candle-stick is broken, mixed with fragments of the coconut and some more flour, if necessary, and the *guru* prepares small wafers (*puri*). The *guru* also has a number of betel-leaves which are known as the *parwana* (summons) from the head *guru* of the sect at Damakheda (Raipur District). These are cut up in small pieces and given to the people assembled. The *guru* also keeps a bottle of *charanamrita* or water in which feet of the head-*guru* are dipped. This is given to the persons who receive it in the palms of both hands. They also receive the small-wafers as *prasad*.

The person who gets the *chauka* ceremony performed may give some presents to the *chaukaha guru* like umbrella, a piece of cloth and some grain and cash. If the convener's sister's son is present he also gets some presents because the sister's son is supposed to be worthy of worship.

The Satnami religious ceremony and Kanphunkawa Guru

All the adult Satnami men wear a *Kanthi* i. e. a necklace of wooden beads like the *Kabirpanthis* do. They become eligible to wear the *kanthi* after receiving the 'sacred word' (*guru mantra*). This *guru* who gives them the *mantra* is known as *kanphunkawa guru* or *kanphooka guru* and is different from their Head *guru* and tahsil *Mahant* and other office-bearers of the Caste-*panchayat*. The people of Kosa have two *kanphunkawa guru* one lives in village Khopli (6 miles) and the other at village Tiloda (3 miles). These *guru* are believed to be the descendents of Ghasidas, the founder of the sect.

The *kanphunkawa guru* comes to the village once a year in the month of *Magh* for giving the 'sacred words' to eligible men. Those who are married and become adults get the *mantra*. The *guru* stays in the village with the *Bhandari* (an office bearer of the caste-panchayat) and he completes the *mantra*-giving ceremony in one day because he has to go to other villages for the same and because, as the Satnamis of Kosa reverently said, *'Bahta pani ou ramta jogi to he, Maharaj'* (Sir, the *jogi*, like the flowing water, is ever-moving).

The *guru-mantra* which the people receive is — *"Neek se khao, neek se kamao, neek se raho; par stree ka mukh na dekho; mans-machhri mat khao; foote bartan me pani mat piyo; kiseeka jhanjhat me mat pado."* (Eat good food; earn your livelihood in a good and honourable manner, live a good chaste life, do not see the face of a woman other than your wife; abstain from meat and fish; do not drink water from a broken utensil, do not dabble in the affairs of others).

After giving the *guru-mantra* or *kan-phoonkna* (blowing ears) as it is called, the *guru* gives two bead-necklaces to the person initiated. These beads are supposed to be made of basil wood which only married men can wear. The Satnamis have implicit faith in the *guru* and they say that they take his name everyday and that he is the sustainer of their lives. As somebody said in Kosa: "The *guru* lives in every fibre of our body, Sir. It is his *charanamrita* that is seen as water in the ponds and tanks."

That the Satnamis become eligible to wear the *kanthi* and get initiation into the sect only after getting married and on becoming adults, that the *guru* comes to the village every year and that the *guru* is held in such high esteem probably indicates that this is a re-

mnant of the system of *satlok* described earlier. Otherwise there does not appear to be any reason why married boys whose wives have not yet come to live with them, are not initiated.

The present *guru* who has 'blown the ears' of the Satnamis of Kosa is a young married man of about 30 years of age. Every house offers a coconut, new clothes, shoes, umbrella and some money according to their economic status. On the day when the initiation ceremony is done in a household, caste-people are invited for a feast.

Enquiries have also shown that the Satnamis also, like the *kabirhas*, used to observe a religious ceremony known as *chauka* but this has long since been stopped by the caste-*panchayat*. Why this was done is not known clearly and one answer was that the prestige of the ceremony could not be kept up. (Here again, though the answers were in the negative, the *chauka* probably refers to *satlok*). And Shobharam in this connection said, *"Ghar ghar choolha ghar ghar deota ho gain ab to."* (Now there are as many deities as there are hearths. Every house has a deity of its own like the separate hearth). The fact that the Satnamis have the *chauka* ceremony has not been mentioned by Russell and Hiralal or by any other writer. The veracity of the statement of the villagers of Kosa regarding *chauka* needs verification by enquiries in other villages.

Religious — trips

All the villagers believe in going to sacred places or *teerath* as they call it. At the time of *Makar Sankranti* and *Shivratri*, many of them go to Rajim in Raipur District to take up a dip at the confluence of Mahanadi and Pairi and to take a *darshan* at the temples there. There is a big fair at Rajim at this time. People of all castes go for the holy-dip at Rajim. The Satnamis also sometimes go to Bhandar in Raipur District where the Head-*guru* of the sect lives and Bhandar is also a *teerath* for them. The *Kabirpanthis*, similarly visit Damakheda in Raipur District where the Head-*guru* of the Kabirpanth lives. Damakheda is a *teerath* for the *Kabirhas*.

Those of them, who can afford, go to Allahabad for the immersion of the last remains of the deceased. This of course, is restricted to those who cremate the dead. But going to Allahabad for a holy-visit only is not seen in Kosa; people go there only for the immersion-ceremony.

Religious dependence of Kosa on other Villages

For getting its religious needs fulfilled Kosa has to depend on other villages, and this dependence would continue. The village *baiga* has to be of an aboriginal tribe — and there is no Gond or other tribal household in the village. Similarly the Pandit who performs religious ceremonies performed at Kurmis and other non-Satnamis households, has to be a Brahman and there is no Brahman in Kosa. This dependence of Kosa on other villages is shown in Plate LXXVII; 117; the distances of the village is not to scale.

Metaphysics in Kosa

In the survey as the present one, it has not been possible to ask every villager on the abstract and metaphysical aspects of religion, nor were the questions asked of persons who are referred to in the lines below. They talked about it in a common, casual manner, in some group-talks and the remarks appeared to be so significant that they are being given here. In the land of *raksa* and *churail*, *tonhin* and *paretin*, *baram deo* and *Satti deo* talks as are discussed below were indeed remarkable and it appears that Kosa is not a closed citadel. Its windows are opened, it is receiving air from outside, however little that may be.

Ghanshyam Kurmi has a number of books published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur, and Hindi version of 'Geeta-Pravachan' by Acharya Vinoba Bhave. Though he has implict faith in such phenomenon as *raksa*, *tonhin* and *paretin* he reads these books also and he and Chintaram sometime talk about Ram and Krishna. But Ghanshyam did not speak much during discussions. He became vocal when the talks about *raksa* started.

But Rewaram Satnami gave almost a discourse. The gist of his talk is: 'We are not bodies, we are *Atma*, the God personified. This body is our *Shiv*-swaroop. When the *Atma* releases itself from the bondage of this body, it merges into the Absolute. The *Atma* is eternal it does not get born, it does not die. It neither comes from somewhere, nor does it go anywhere. It neither feels pleasure, nor does pain affect it. It is *'Sat-Chit-Ananda'*.

Talking about food habits, the writer was interrupted by Shobharam Satnami who said, *"Mans mans ko khata hai, saheb. Par Ap to alag rahta hai. Ap par iska kuchh nahin hota. Kuchh khao, kuchh piyo."* (It is the flesh which eats flesh, Sir. But the self is aloof; It is apart, untouched. Nothing happens to the

Self eat anything, drink anything). It was a little surprising to hear this main stream of Hindu Religion from Shobharam Satnami, who was only a few minutes before reciting his encounters with the *raksa* and *tonhin*.

When the writer was taking leave of the villagers, it was Shobharam again who said: "Who is the guest of whom, Sir? We are all guests here." He was of course referring to our transitory sojourn on this planet called Earth. Shobharam recited one poem after another and since we were leaving, it was not possible to halt the old man and write them all down, which he would certainly have not liked. But what he was saying referred to *Atma* and the short journey of life, good deeds and after-life. "*Jaise karni vaise utare para*" (Reaching the shore depends on the acts performed).

This was thus the abstract and the metaphysical that came out of Kosa in an unpremeditated and spontaneous manner.

Religious influence in Kosa

Festivals

The festivals of Kosa can be broadly classified under two categories those connected with agriculture and agricultural activities; and non-agricultural. Festivals like *Boula-Chouth* and *Kamarchhat* in which the milk of the cow is not drunk suggests some affinity to the agricultural activities.

Associated with agriculture	Non-agricultural
Jawara	*Rakhi*
Hareli	*Ramnavami*
Pola	*Teeja*
Jethouni	*Janmashtmi*
Goberdhan-pooja (of *Diwali*)	*Pitarpakh*
	Dasahra
	Diwali
	Sankrant
	Holi
	Chherchhera
	Kamarchhat
	Boula Chouth

The Agricultural festivals may be classified also as below —

Related to crop	Related to agricultural cattle
Jawara	*Pola*
Nawakhai	*Goverdhan-pooja*
	Jethouni
	Hareli

PLATE LXXII

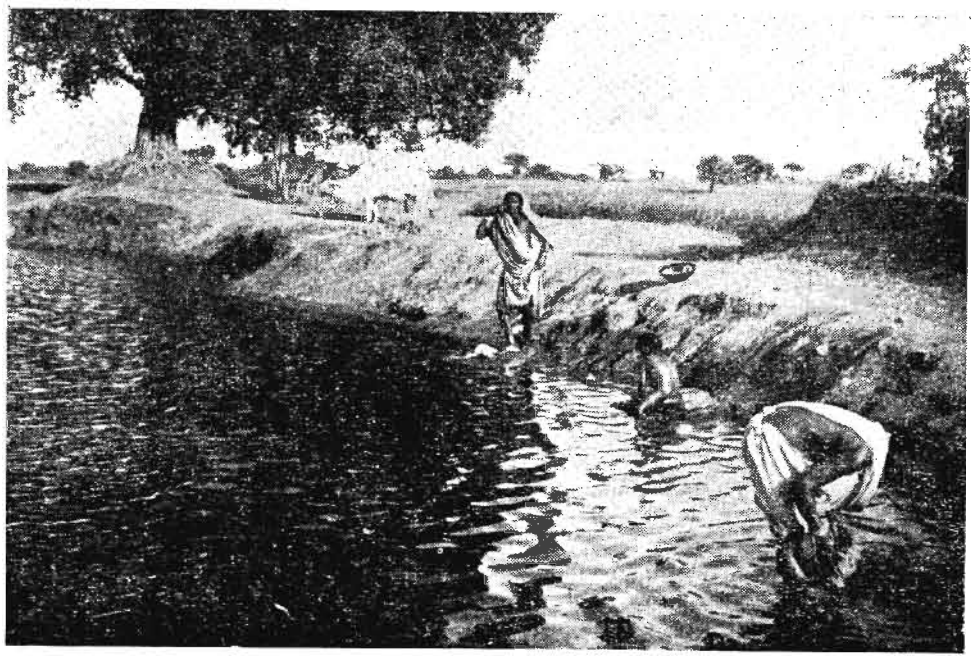


Illustration 104



Illustration 105



Illustration 106

Suspected Witches

PLATE LXXIII



Illustration 107

Thakur Deo

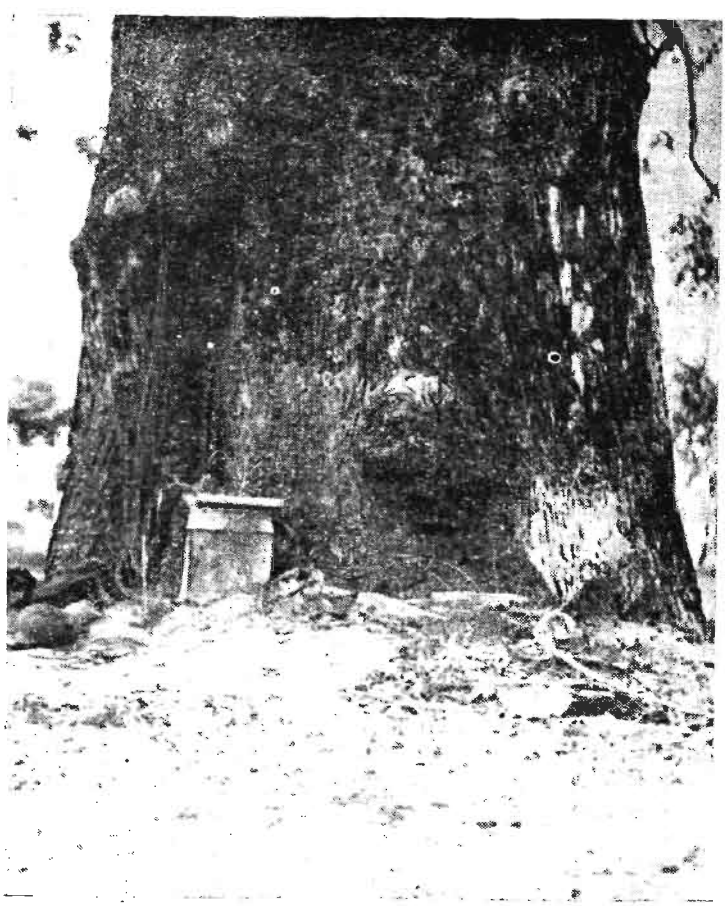


Illustration 108

Mata

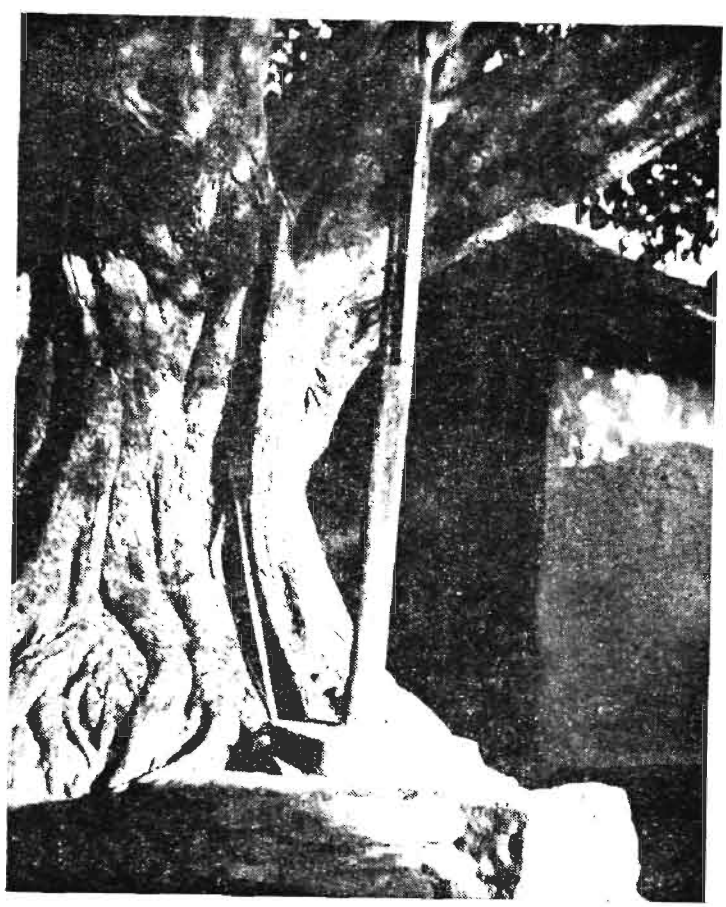


Illustration 109

Jaitkham

PLATE LXXIV



Illustration 110

Baram Deo



Illustration 111

Gorkhunda Deo

PLATE LXXV

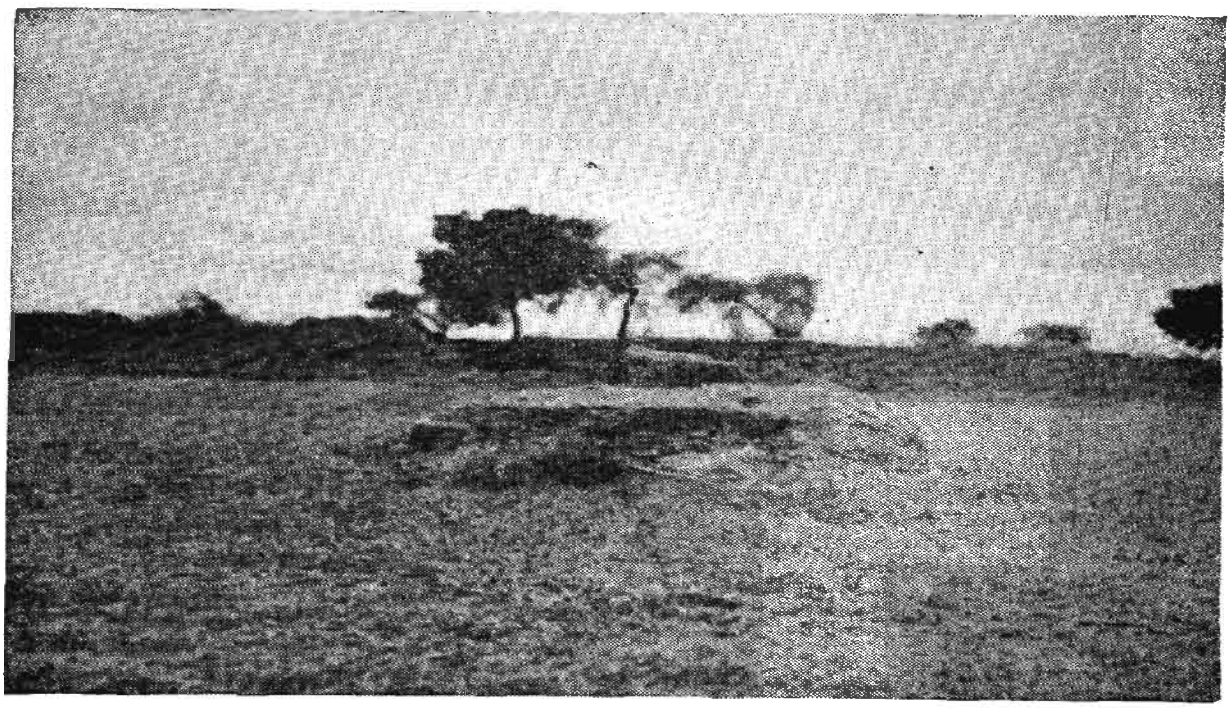


Illustration 112

Sahanra Deo



Illustration 113

Siv-ling

PLATE LXXVI

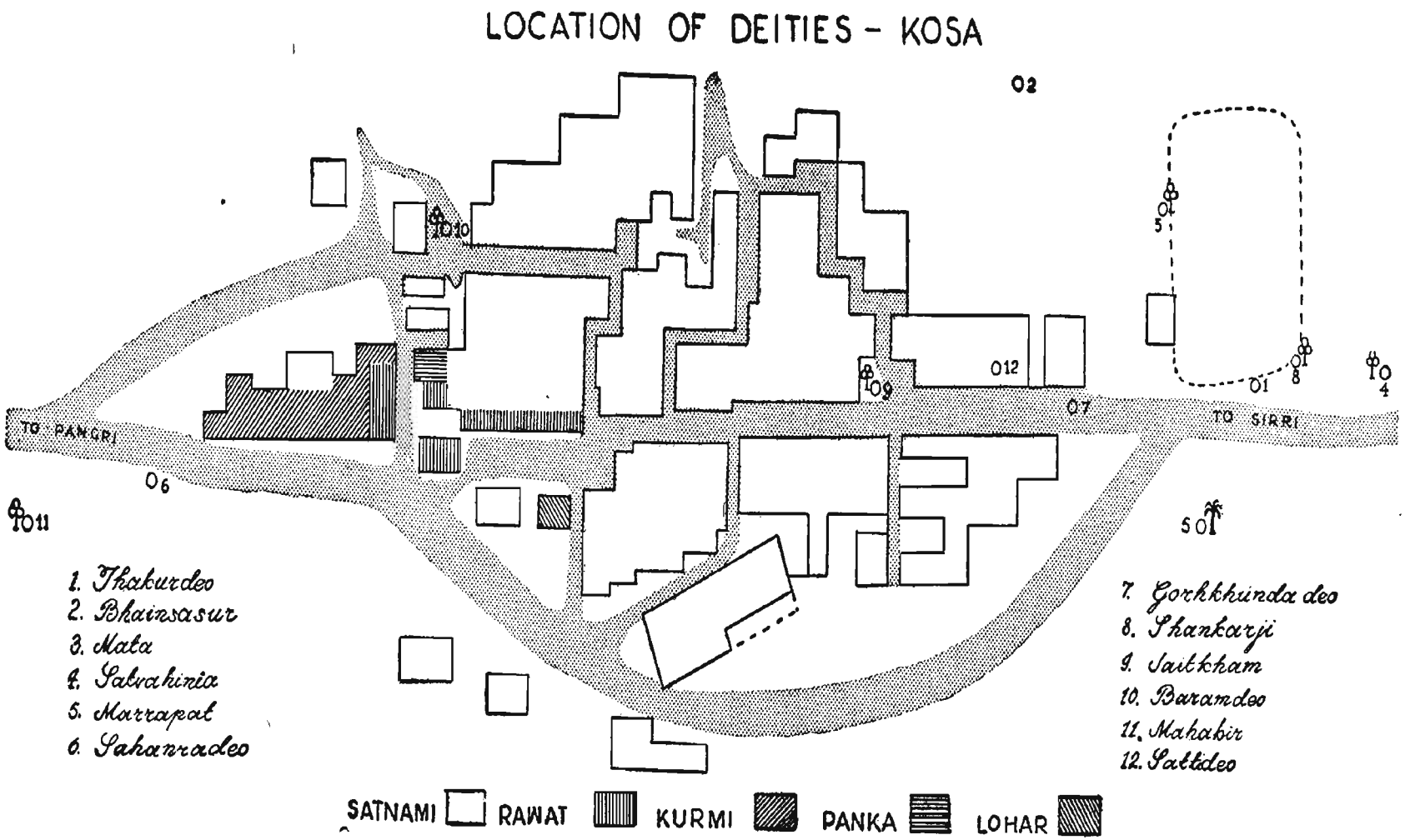


Illustration 114

PLATE LXXVII



Illustration 115

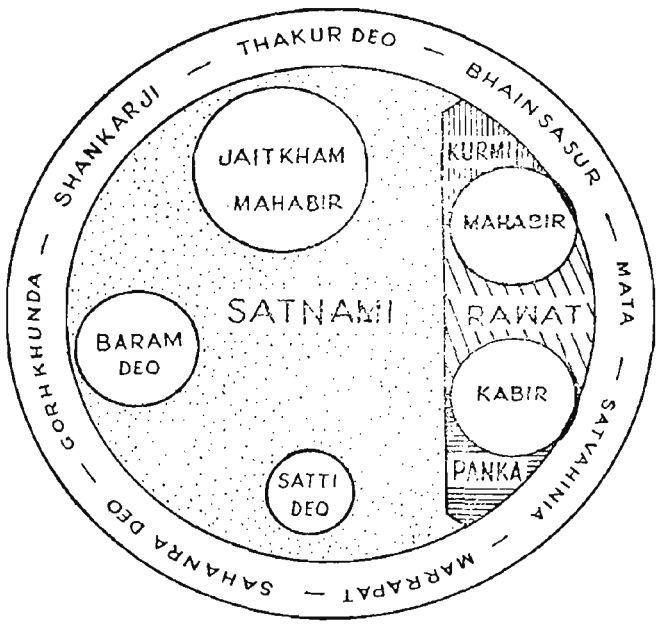


Illustration 116

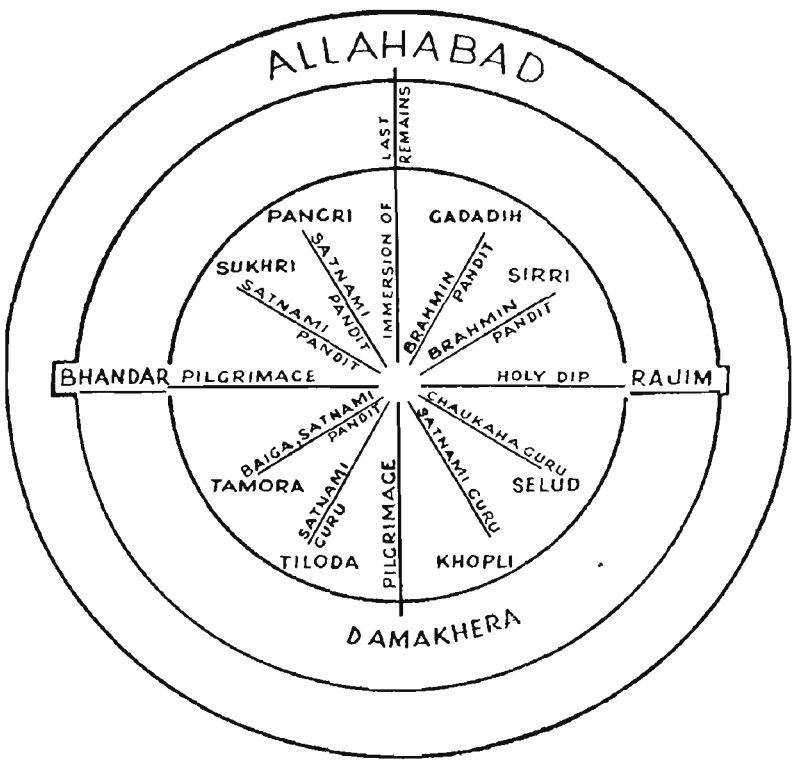


Illustration 117

PLATE LXXVIII

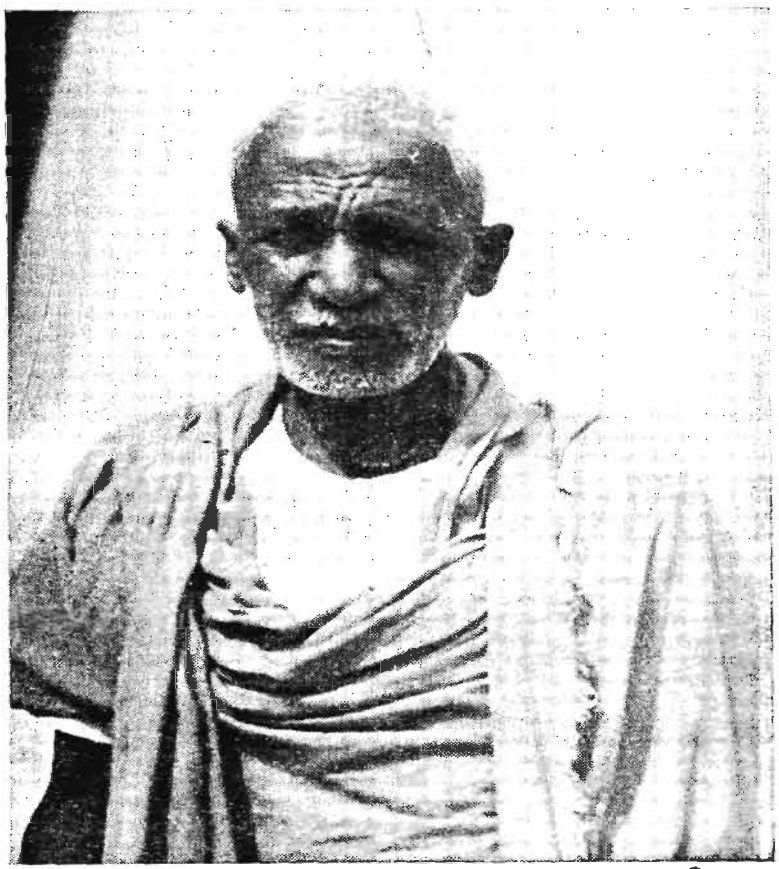


Illustration 118
Shobharam whose word is respected by all

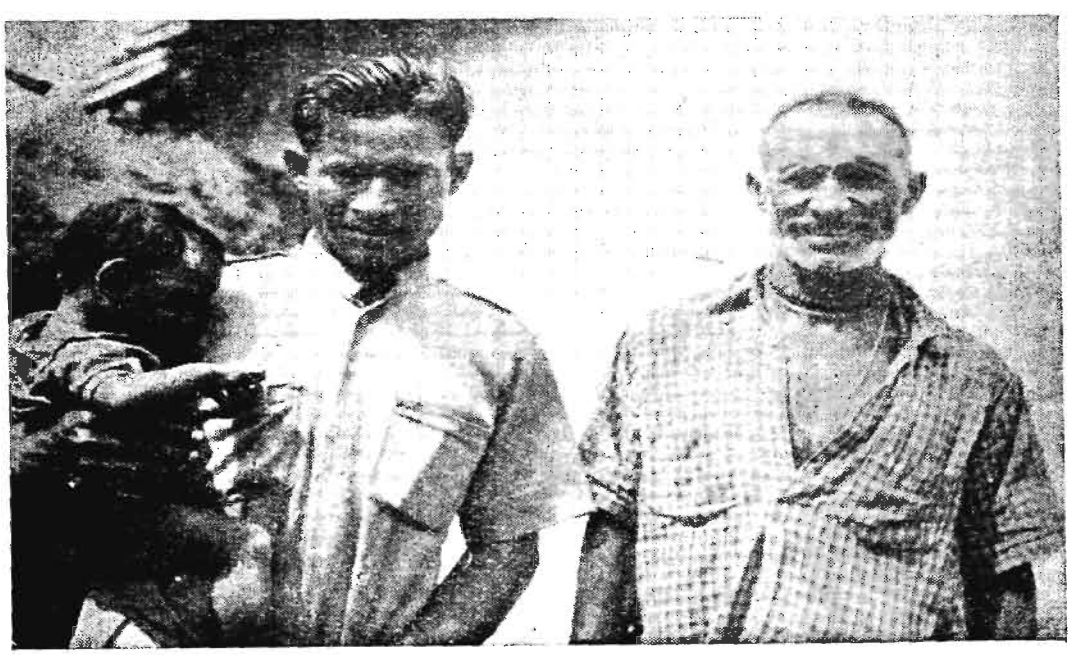


Illustration 119
Hagru and his son Chintaram, both of whom are leaders in Kosa

PLATE LXXIX

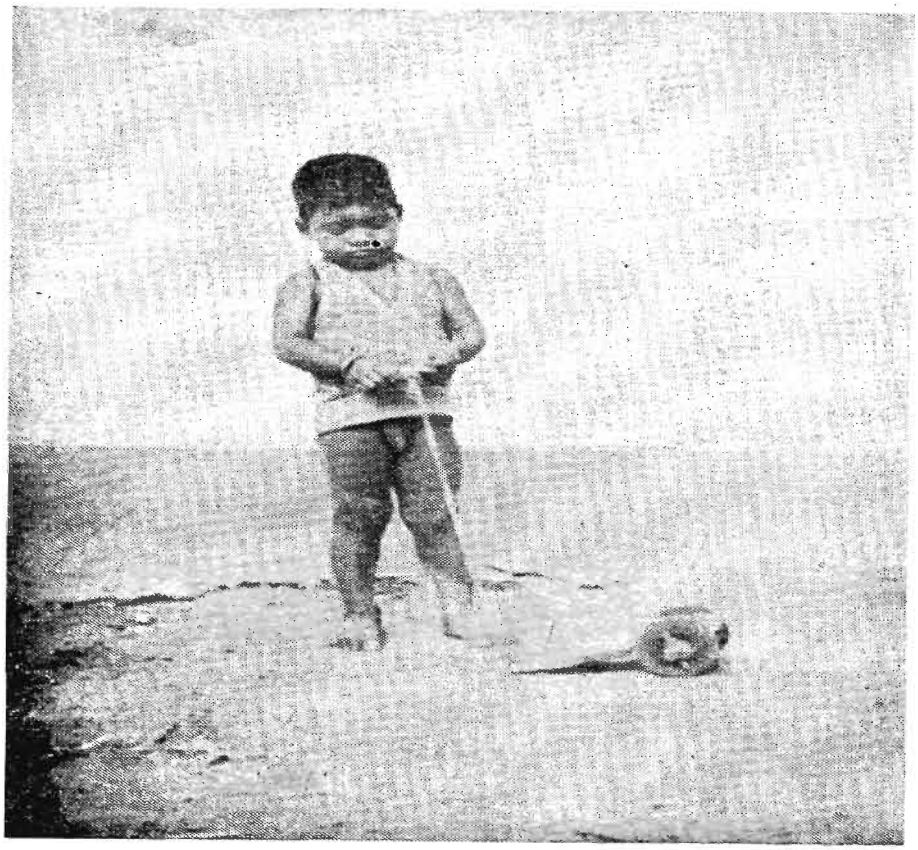


Illustration 120
Chintaram's son playing with his toy cart

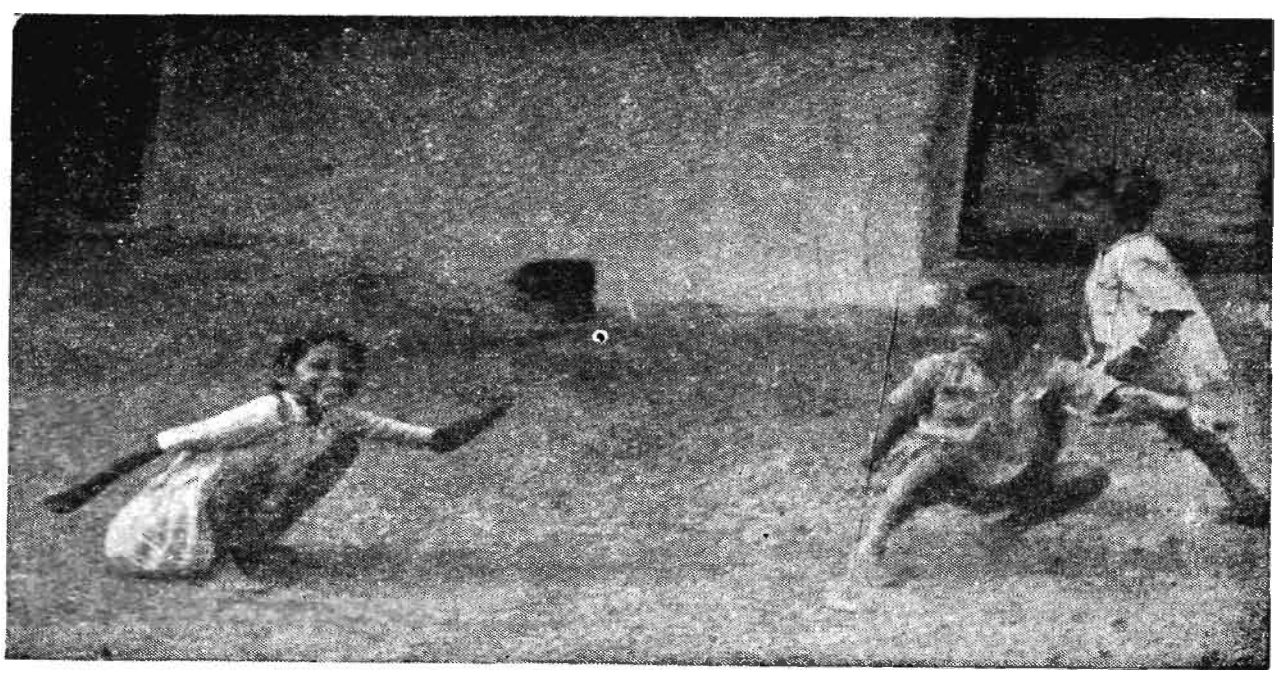


Illustration 121
The Fugdi competition

PLATE LXXX

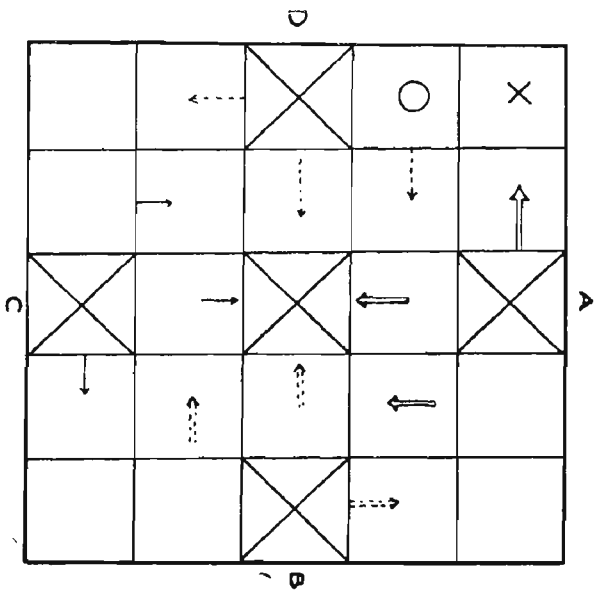


Illustration 123
Tiri-Chouk



Illustration 122
Playing Tiri-Chouk



Illustration 124
Playing Choupad

PLATE LXXXI

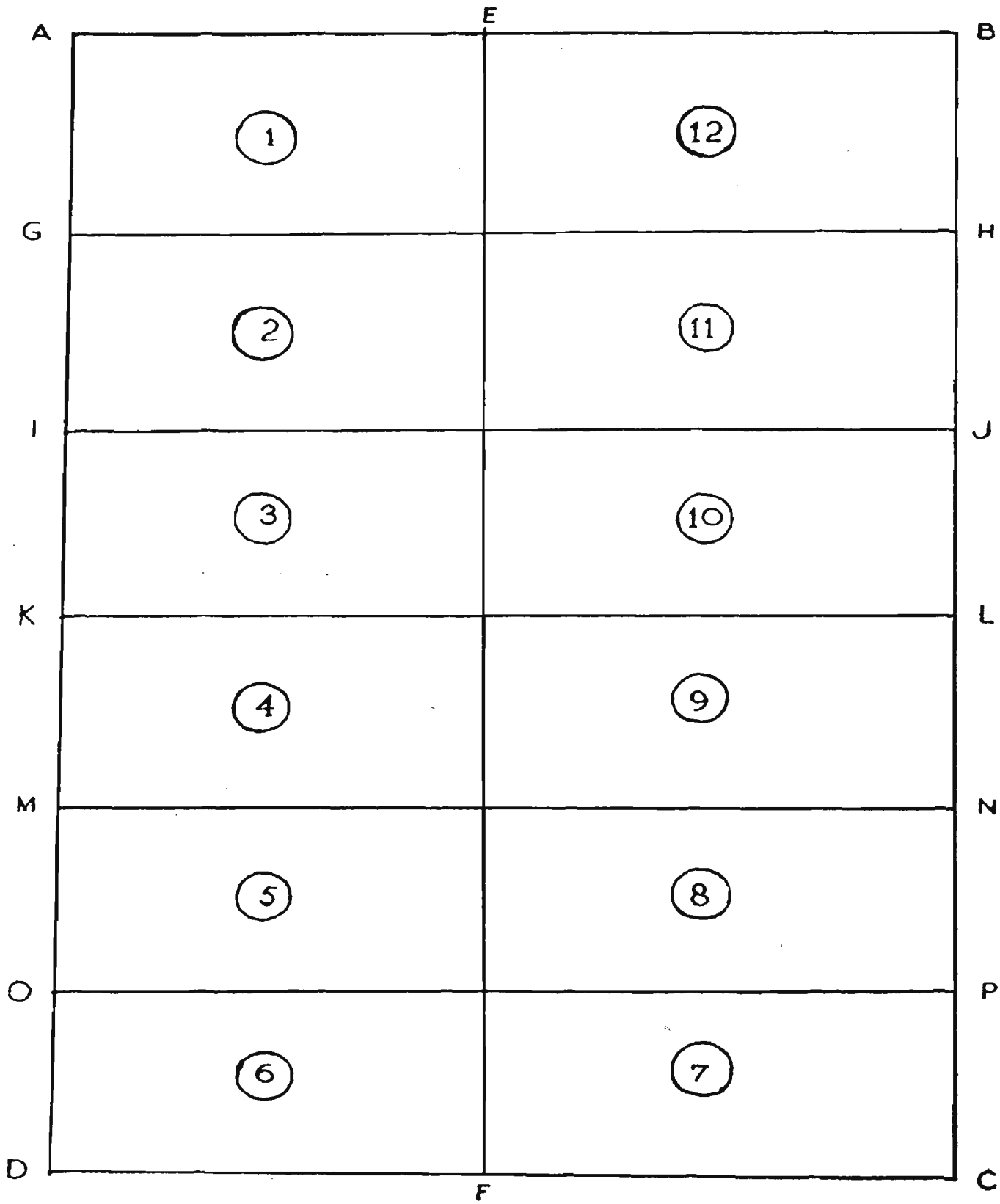


Illustration 125

Noon-pat

PLATE LXXXII

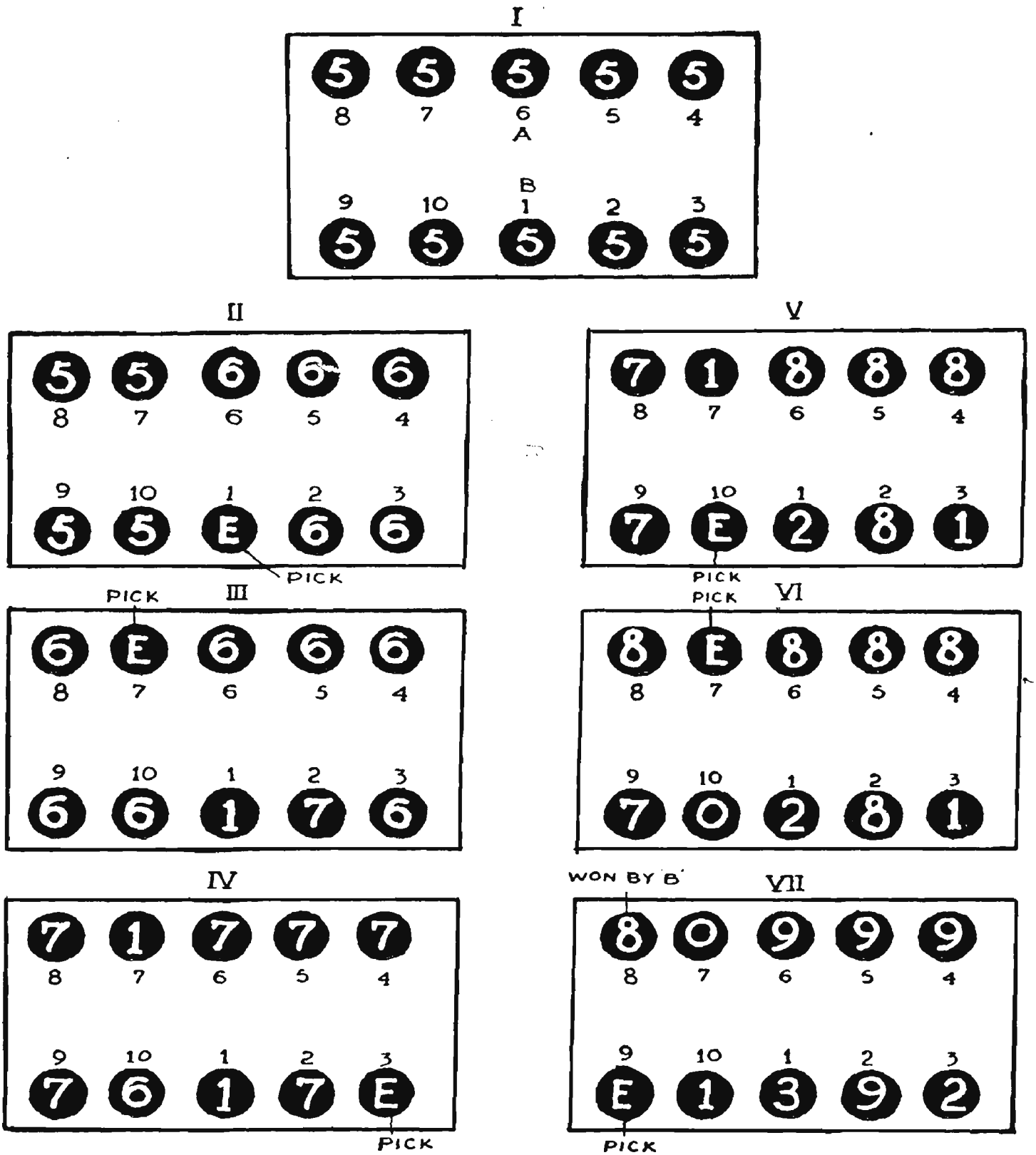


Illustration 126

Bhotkul

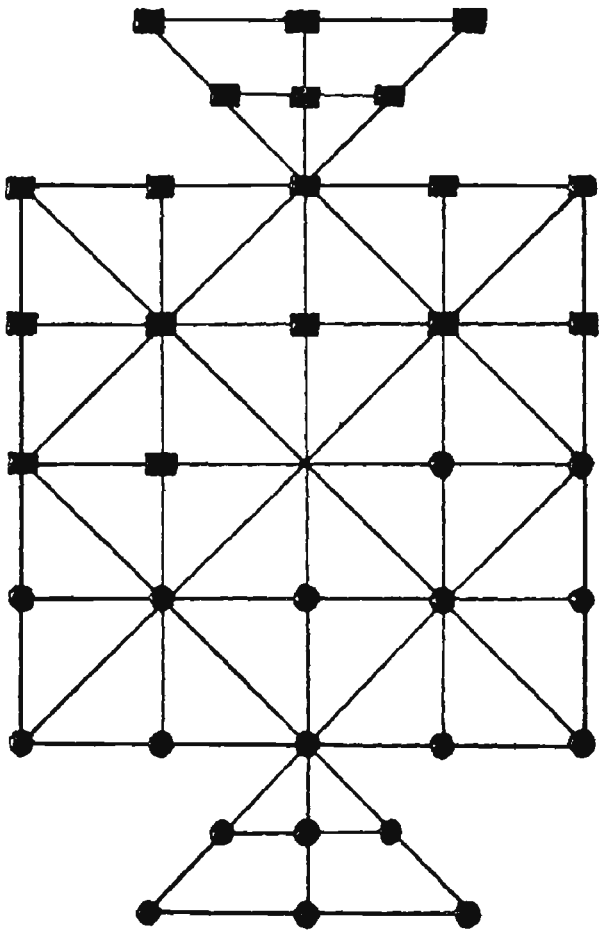


Illustration 127
Ramchiwra

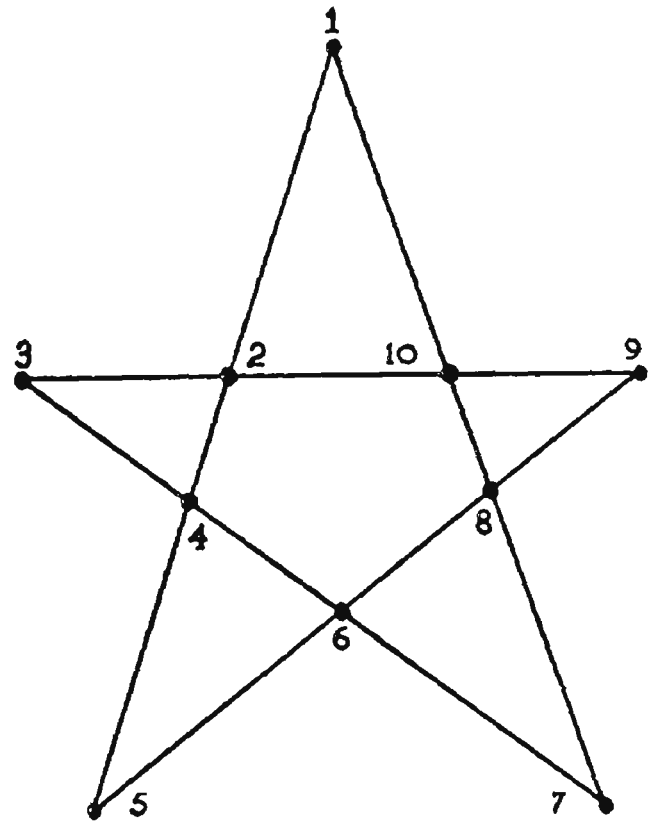


Illustration 128
Nou-gotiya

PLATE LXXXIV

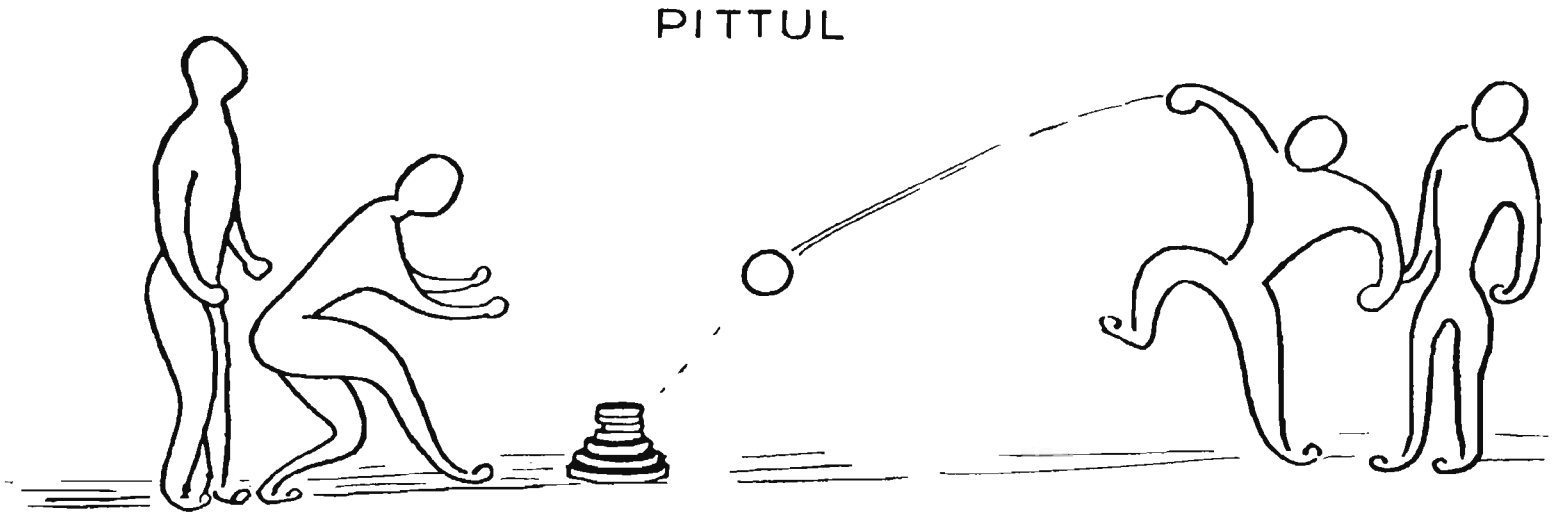


Illustration 129

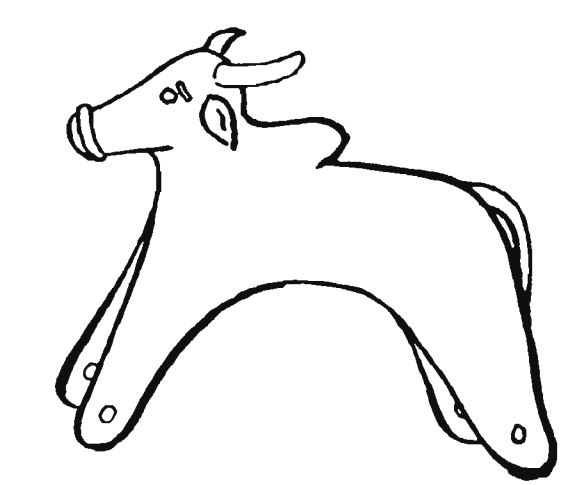


Illustration 130
Earthen bull — Nadia-baila

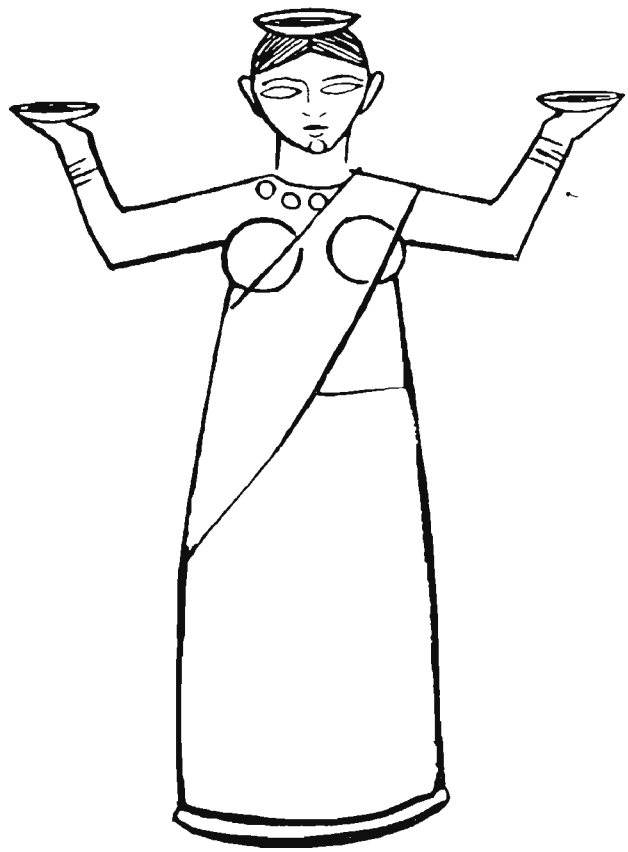


Illustration 131
Earthen doll — Gwalin

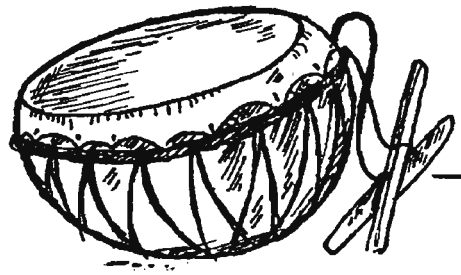
PLATE LXXXV



Illustration 132

A Rawat in dancing costume

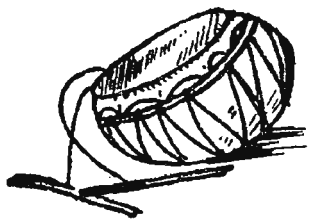
PLATE LXXXVI



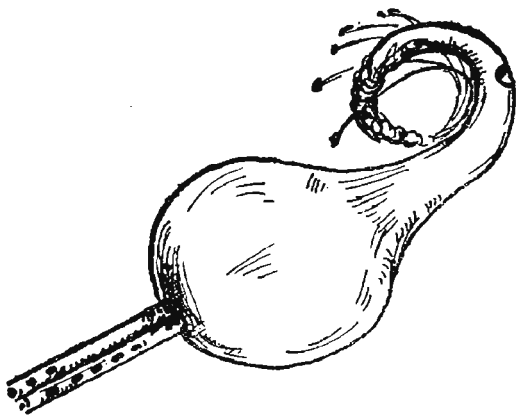
NAGARA



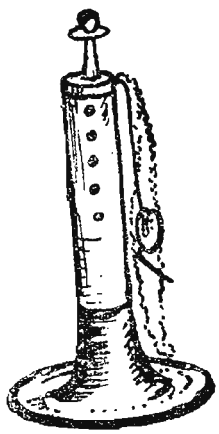
BATHENA



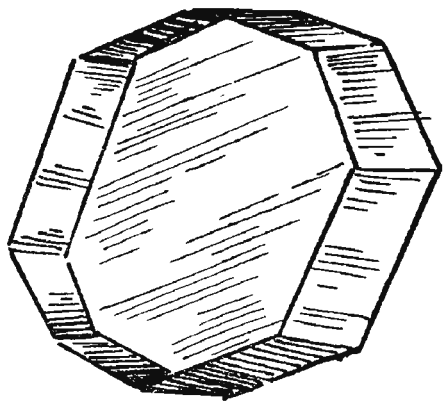
DAMAU



NAGDEWAN



MOHRI



DAFDA

MANDAR

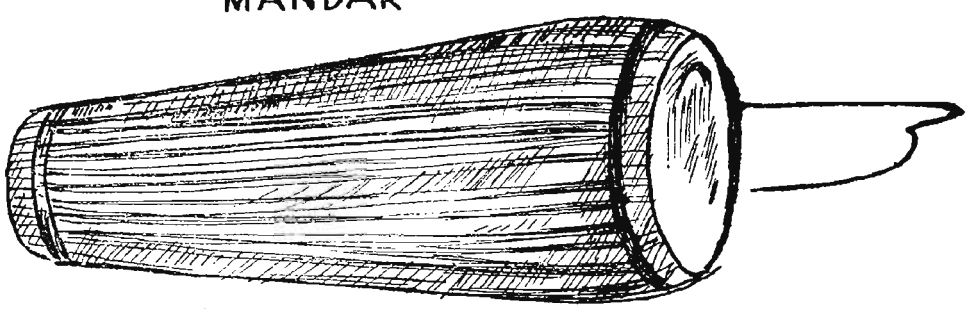


PLATE LXXXVII

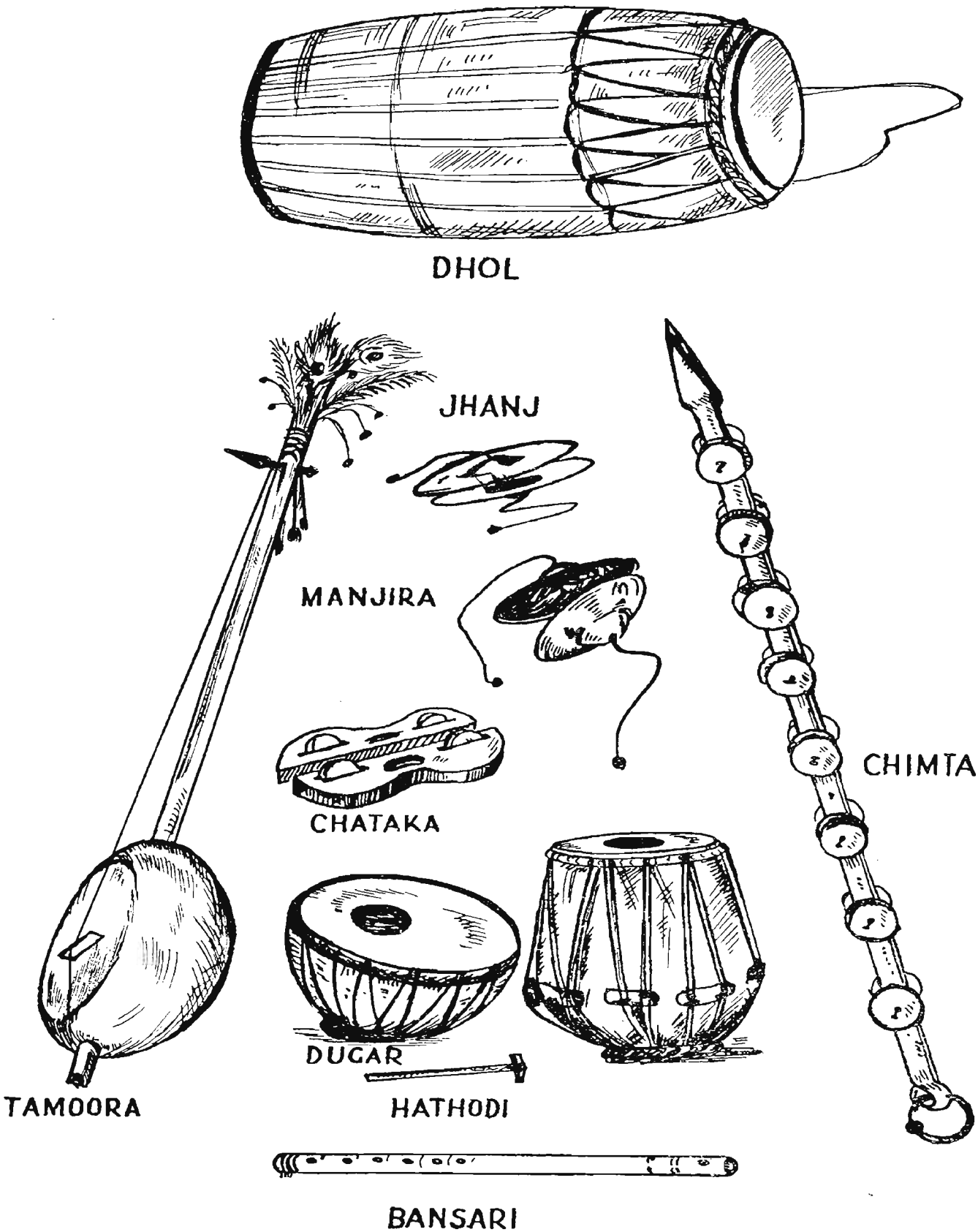


Illustration 134

Musical Instruments

CHAPTER VI

PANCHAYAT, LEADERSHIP, RECREATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Panchayats

"The *Panchayat* or the Council of five is perhaps a development of the patriarchal system, when the patriarch, confronted with difficult problems, sought the aid of the more intelligent persons of the community which he headed. Apparently he took four persons into his confidence and with himself as president, formed a council of five. In common parlance, people say "*Char panch jo kahen so sahi*" i. e. what four *panchas* say is correct. They never say *panch panch*. With the growth of democratic views, this limitation of members was made elastic so as to include all the members of the community, which recognised a certain *panchayat* as the leading authority over it. With the multiplication of the castes, the *panchayats* are multiplied, but, although the members' voice grew stronger, a certain respect was still shown to that of the representative of the old patriarch." These are the words in which J.T. Marten, Superintendent of the 1911 Census, described[1] the *panchayats*. But In the list of castes and tribes which have permanent caste-*panchayats*, the names of the castes found in Kosa do not occur. It has however been found that the Satnamis have a permanent caste-*panchayat*. Whether the omission of Satnamis from the list was an error or whether they did not have this *panchayat* then, cannot be stated here but the Satnamis of Kosa have said that the *panchayat* is as old as the institution of their *guru*.

In Chhattisgarh, the *panchayats* seem to have been in existence from very early times and these were utilized by Colonel Agnew during his short rule in this area. A reference to this has already been made in the very first chapter of this Monograph. The following extract from the Settlement Report of 1869 would be useful in this connection. Hewitt, describing the administration of Colonel Angew states:[2]

"The head of the *Punchayut* called the *Punje*, was generally an influential inhabitant of the *Pergunnah*, appointed on a salary of from 150 to 200 Rupees a year, to superintend the *Punchayat* or Arbitrators, who were assembled for the decision of petty disputes."

Without meaning any disrespect to the modern democratic system of decentralization and with the intention only of pointing to a historical fact, it may be mentioned here that as early as 1818, Hewitt had already taken steps to vitalize the existing organization of village-*panchayats*.

In Kosa, we find a two-tier structure — one the village panchayat, where the unit is the village and caste-loyalties are subservient. The *panchayat* decides cases which concern the village as a whole. Below this is the caste-*panchayat* where the village is not the unit, the membership of the *panchayat* transgresses the village boundaries and members of other villages take part in the decision of cases. We shall see these two tiers of local organization in action.

The Village Panchayat

10 influential persons of Kosa are accepted by all to be the *siyan* (elders) and are the *panch* of the village. These *siyan* are:—

Ghanshyam Kurmi, Anandram Thethwar, Jairamdas Panka, and Chintaram, Hagru, Mannu, Shobharam, Tatku, Lachhman, and Bisal Satnamis. Shobharam is accepted by all as the *Sirpanch* or the head of this body. The following cases illustrate this *panchayat* in action.

Caste Disputes in the Village

(1) Baisakhoo, Baisakha and Pusan Satnamis are brothers. Their father, before his death, had partitioned his land and given shares to the three brothers. Baisakhoo and Baisakha were living jointly and the father was living with them. Pusan had separated. Since the father was living with Baisakhoo and Baisakha, the land held by him as his share was being ploughed and sown by them and Pusan was content with his share.

1. Census of India, 1911, Vol. X, pt. I p. 236.
2. Report on the Land Revenut Settlement of the Raepore Dist ict, J. F. K. Hewitt, 1869.

The trouble arose on the death of the father. Pusan's contention was that he should get a share out of the land which was held by the father. It was decided that the matter should go to the *panchayat* and Ghanshyam Kurmi, Jairamdas Panka and Chintaram, Jitrai, Bisal, Mannu and Ballu Satnamis sat as the *pancha*. The *panchas* heard Pusan and the two brothers, — Baisakhoo and Baisakha. They found that initially their father had given more land to Baisakhoo and Baisakha and Pusan had got a lesser share and if the father's share also goes to the two brothers, their share would become disproportionately large. So they decided that Pusan must get some more land. The land held by the father was therefore divided into 3 equal parts and Pusan was given one part. The decision was taken by Chintaram.

(2) Baisakha Satnami had a suspicion that Thanwar Satnami was having illicit relations with his wife. One day when Thanwar was found near his house in suspicious circumstances, Baisakha beat Thanwar with a stick. Thanwar belonged to the part of village where Chintaram lived and the people, arguing that a man of their part of the village was assaulted by somebody living in the other part, wanted to take revenge on Baisakha. But Chintaram intervened and said that this would only aggrevate the situation. He satisfied their vanity by saying that he would beat Baisakha in his house but that would not settle the matter. He decided that they should first try to settle the matter in the village *panchayat*, and if it is not settled there, then further action may be contemplated.

A *panchayat* was convened and the members were — Ghanshyam Kurmi, Jairamdas Panka, Shobharam, Mannu, Tatkoo, Bisal, Kejan and Chintaram Satnamis. Shobharam acted as the *Sirpanch*. He heard both the parties and the *panchayat* gave the decision that there was no concrete proof in the allegations of Baisakha and that he took the uncalled for action in an unilateral manner and on mere suspicion. Baisakha was found to be unjustified in what he did and was fined Rs. 25/-. Baisakha had to agree to this and paid the fine.

(3) Sukaloo Satnami raised a quarrel with his parents. He argued that since he has been given less share, he would not give food to his parents and they should manage for themselves. His father Guhari and his mother used to take food with him and with Chintaram. Chintaram's argument was that Sukaloo would have to feed his parents.

The matter was decided to be taken to the *panch* and Sukaloo convened the *panchayat*, the members of which were Ghanshyam Kurmi, Punoo Satnami and Bidroo. The *panchas* gave the verdict that during the division of property, Sukaloo never raised this point and it was settled during division that Sukaloo would have to feed his parents and he must abide by this. Sukaloo agreed to abide by this decision.

(4) In 1961, Sukal Satnami's wife became seriously ill. Sukal told the villagers that his wife is taking the name of Chaiti, the *tonhin*. The news spread like wild fire in the village that Sukal's wife was a victim of witchcraft. The entire village collected in front of the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi, where there is some open space, and the *panchayat* members heard Sukal repeating his allegation that his sick wife was taking the name of Chaiti, the wife of 'G' and that he suspected witchcraft in the illness of his wife.

Chaiti was absent from the crowd that had assembled and she was sent for, but she did not come. Messengers were thus sent three times and every time Chaiti did not come. Then Mannu Satnami, who was one of the *panchas* stood up and said *"Kaise nai ahi, ga. Mai jath hon."* (How will she not come, gentlemen, I am going). Chaiti was brought before the *panchayat* by Mannu.

The *panchas* asked her about illness of Sukal's wife and she pleaded ignorance. Then the *panchas* asked her to say that Sukal's wife would be all right and she said the same. The *panchas* then asked her to give the *bhabhoot* (ash believed to have some magical curative qualities). They said *"Chal Bhabhoot de. Hamu man dewat hon."* (Go and give the ash, we are also giving). Chaiti went to Sukal's wife and gave the *bhaboot* but she could not be saved. The *panchas* did not take any action. They said *"Jo hoy ke rahis toun ho ge"*. What was to happen, has happened). But as Chintaram says, the *panchas* did not take any action because they were themselves afraid of Chaiti.

(5) In the last week of December 1962, Johan, the Lohar (blacksmith) from Sirri village beat Jairamdas's mother. The quarrel arose because he owed some money to the old lady. She demanded it and he expressed his inability to return the same immediately. Jairamdas's mother then abused him and when the limit of his patience was reached, he beat her.

Jairamdas Panka was not in the village when the news of this quarrel reached there. On his return, he too, came to know of his mother being beaten and he wanted to take revenge by beating Johan. Some people

of the village asked him to quieten down and not to take rash action.

An hour later, Jairamdas convened the *panchayat* but Anand Ram Thethwar was not called and he did not come on his own. Anand Ram was believed to be favourably inclined towards Johan and as such Jairam omitted him from the *panchayat*. Johan was called from Sirri and he came without any delay. The *panchayat* heard him and Jairamdas's mother and Shobharam Satnami gave the judgment that he ought not to have raised his hand on a woman. Johan was fined Rs. 10/- and he paid it immediately.

(6) A month ago, (i.e. from the date of investigation) Hatoi Satnami's son aged 7-8 years plucked some *rahar* pulse plants from the field of Jitrai Satnami. Jitrai put the matter before the *panchayat* and Hatoi was fined Rs. 2/- for the mischief of his son.

(7) In 1959 there spread a cattle epidemic in Kosa and *Lachhmi* (cattle) started dying in large numbers. The people consulted the *baiga* of Tamora who in consultation with them decided that a *panchayat* be convened. The *panchayat* then assembled and entrusted the *baiga* with the eradication operation to remove the disease. It was decided that the results of the victory of the *baiga's* powers over the malevolence of the deity should be awaited for eight days and if it does not subside, then further action would have to be planned. It was also decided to withhold *dand nahakana* i.e. taking all the cattle outside the village boundary till then.

The *baiga* entrusted with this responsibility circled the village in the night and also poured a volley of abuses addressed to the mealevolent spirit by going from street to street of the village; all villagers sitting in their houses with closed doors. The disease subsided within 8 days.

(8) The village tank used to get dry in summer and the villagers had to take resort to the other tank which is a little away and to the stream and even to going to Sirri for bathing. But the problem of cattle used to remain unsolved since the people of Sirri did not allow bathing of cattle in the tank of that village. The Satnamis decided that it would be better to get the village tank deepened and they acquainted the Rawats of this decision who gladly accepted it. But Ghanshyam Kurmi was not informed of it and the people are not able to tell why they failed to do so. The incident relates to the year 1960.

All the villagers (men only) assembled on the tank bank but neither was Ghanshyam Kurmi called by them nor did he come of his own accord. The villagers decided that Ghanshyam should contribute Rs. 200/-. A word was then sent to Ghanshyam through Chintaram Satnami. It may be mentioned here that Chintaram is designated by common consent as the 'Police' and his duty is to bring people forcibly, if such a contingency arises, on these occasions of village-meetings. Chintaram was a great friend of Ghanshyam and when he went to call him, Ghanshyam refused to come. Chintaram came back and was rediculed by all. They said—"If it had been anybody else, you would have lifted him up physically and brought him here. Why could you not bring your friend here? We have to see if you can similarly bring your friend also." And when Chintaram's vanity was touched, he again went to Ghanshyam's house who repeated his refusal to go and then Chintaram had to tell him that he would have to do his duty and take him by force. Ghanshyam and his wife were surprised at this attitude of Chintaram but seeing his adamant behaviour, Ghanshyam was persuaded by his wife to go.

On the tank-bank there was a scene; Ghanshyam's complaint was that he was left out of the meeting initially and as such he was not going to contribute Rs. 200/- and the argument of the villagers was that he was the biggest cultivator and he would have to pay since the tank was a problem that concerned all. After some discussion and mediation, Ghanshyam had to contribute Rs. 80/-.

This incident broke the happy relation between Ghanshyam and Chintaram and they were not on talking terms for a year or so. These two persons were behind the *Ramayan Mandli* of Kosa and since they stopped talking with each other, the *mandli* also was closed and has not been revived since then.

What is important to emphasize here is that Ghanshyam did not want to cooperate in the deepening of tank but he had to bow down to the decision of the Village-*panchayat*.

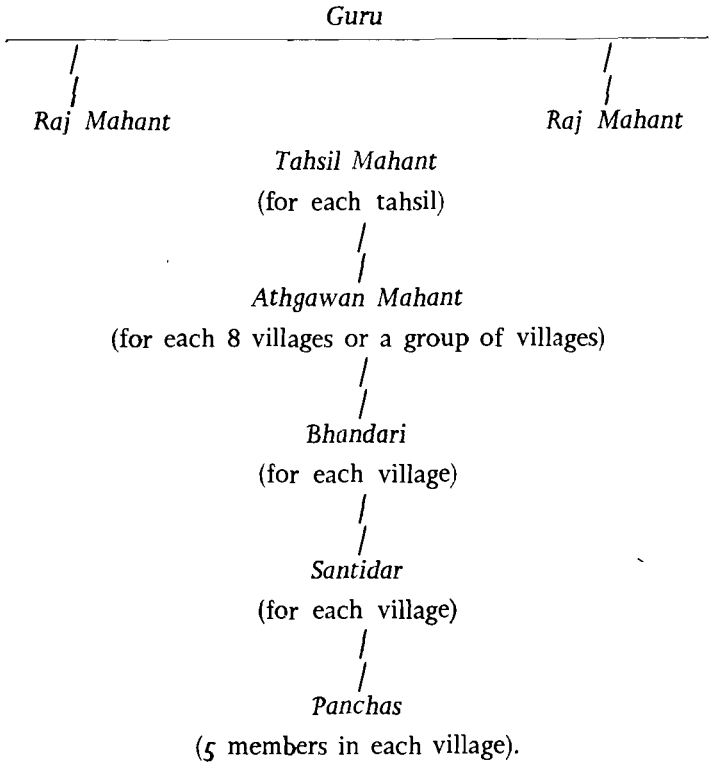
Caste—Panchayats

The other tier of the 'Village democracy in action' is represented by Caste-*panchayats* which are quite elaborate organizations.

Satnamis

The Satnamis have a well knit caste organization

which decides the disputes within the caste. The hierarchy of this organization is shown below:—



Guru is the highest authority and lives in Bhandar a village in the headquarters tahsil of Raipur District. The *guru* is believed to be a direct descendent of the prophet — Ghasi Das. There are two *Raj Mahants* having separate jurisdictions and below them is a Tahsil *Mahant*. Then there is an *Athgawan Mahant* or the 8—village *Mahant* who has jurisdiction over 8 villages or a group of villages. Below the *Athgawan Mahants* there are *Bhandari, Santidar* and *panchas* in each village.

Disputes are settled in the village itself with the *Bhandari* acting as the Chairman of the *panchayat*. Disputes not resolved at village are referred to the *Athgawan Mahant* who also hears cases of inter-village disputes.

The people of Kosa know the chief *guru* at Bhandar but they do not know the *Raj Mahant*. The Tahsil *Mahant* having jurisdiction over Kosa is one Moolchand of Sirsida village (4 miles). The *Athgawan Mahant* for Kosa is Lala Satnami of village Sukhri and the villages which he has in his jurisdiction are Pangri, Tamora, Filoda, Powara, Gudihari, Kanakot, Sirri, Machandur, Chirpoli, Sukhri and Kosa. The *Bhandari* of Kosa is Somedas Satnami and the *Santidar* is Kejan Satnami. The *panch* are usually Shobharam, Chintaram, Mannu, Bisal, Jitrai, Bullu and one or two more members.

Rawats and Thethwars

The Rawats and Thethwars have separate caste-*panchayats* because the Thethwars consider themselves to be superior to the Rawats.

Among the Rawats, the *Mukhiya* or the leader of the caste is known as *Kurha*. Every village has a *Kurha* who is assisted by a *panchayat*. The *Kurha* is an elected caste-official and the institution appears to be a trace of Gond influence. Anand Ram Rawat of Kosa is the *Kurha* of the village. The *Kurha*-ship appears to be hereditary, unless of course, there is something patently wrong with a particular person. Before him, Anandram's father was the *Kurha* of the village. If the *Kurha* commits any mistake, then he need not be removed. The punishment that the members of the caste impose on him is that he has to admit his guilt and has to do a series of *baithak* (stand-sit-stand), catching his ears with the hands all the time. He has to do this before an assembly of caste-members. If he does not plead guilty or if he refuses to undergo this humiliating act, the caste may dismiss him from his office. No such incident has however happened in Kosa so far.

The *Kurha* is assisted by some *pancha* and the caste disputes are decided by these members with the *Kurha* as the Chairman. These *panchas* are usually the *siyan* or elder members of the caste. The *panchayat* follows the principle of 'Natural Justice' and both the contending parties are given opportunities to be heard. The Caste-*panchayat* usually does not decide cases like theft but there is no bar and they may take up these cases for consideration, like petty theft of paddy when the accused and the complainant both belongs to the Rawat caste. But by far the most common cases coming before them are those concerning women.

The amount of fine varies according to the gravity of the offence and there is no fixed scale for this, the decision rests with the spontaneous unpremeditated verdict of the *panchas*. The amount of fine may vary from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 100/-. The *panchayat* may pardon an offender if as per their orders, he offers tobacco and *bidi* to those present.

If a Rawat woman goes to a man of another caste, she is out-casted. If a Rawat man brings a woman of any other caste, except Brahman, as his wife, he is also thrown out of the caste. If, however, the woman is a Brahman, she is accepted into the caste-fold. If a Rawat is beaten by a Satnami with shoes, he has to give a feast to all the caste-members. This is known

as *bhat lagna*. No such incident has however happened in Kosa.

The Rawat caste is a dispersed community and it is rare to find a Rawat preponderant village. This is so because the Rawats are an occupational caste, serving mainly as village-graziers. Because of this fact and also because of the fact that a village-caste-*panchayat* would have no voice on the Rawats of other villages, there is a bigger *panchayat* of the caste and the hierarchy is as below:—

Raja
(The *Raja* has a *Dewan* & a *Sipahi*)
/
/
Secretary
/
/
Mantri
/
/
Bees gawn ka panch
(Panch of 20 villages)
/
/
Panch gawn ka Panch
(Panch of 5 villages)
/
/
Village Caste-*Panchayat*.

The chief of the caste in a certain area is known as the *Raja*. The *Raja* of the caste in the area of Kosa[3] lives in village Patan. He has a *Dewan* and a *Sipahi*. Then there is a Secretary who lives in Durg. Bullu Rawat of village Daimar (9 miles) is the *Mantri*. The 20 villages *panch* is Budhram Rawat of village Selud and also a Rawat of village Gudihari. There is thus a dual Government and village Kosa refers its cases to both these people as they think proper. Budhram Rawat of village Sirri is the 5 villages Panch and has jurisdiction over Sirri, Kosa, Tamora, Machandur and Dih.

Thethwars

Since the Thethwars are an even more dispersed group than the Rawats, it is not possible to have a *panchayat* for every village, for example in Kosa there is only one Thethwar household. The head of the Thethwar *panchayat* over a certain area is known as *Raja*. The *Raja* of the area in which village Kosa is situated is the ex-proprietor of village Parsahi (3 miles). The *Raja* should be a well-to-do man as far as possible so that he may be able to feed the *panchayat* members when they assemble for the meeting.

The Thethwars are much more strict than the Rawats in the observance of the caste-code and their codes of conduct are very much like those of the Pankas with the only difference that the man or woman keeping a spouse from any other caste are accepted into the caste-fold if they pay the fine levied by the *Panchayat* and feed the caste-members.

Kurmi ...

Members of the Kurmi caste meet regularly every year or sometimes every second or third year at Mahadeo Ghat near Raipur. The *Mukhiya* of the caste is known as the *Raja*. He is elected by the people and then a ceremony known as *pagdi-bandhna* (turbon tieing) takes place to formalise this election. The ceremony consists in some elder members of the caste tieing a turban of new cloth over his head. At present one Durwasa Ram Kurmi of village Iraguda is the *Raja* of the caste.

Disputes are settled by Durwasa Ram with the elder members of the caste who are selected by him. Fines are imposed according to the gravity of the offence and may range from Re. 1/- to Rs. 400/-. The *panchayat* normally takes up social cases only for consideration.

If a woman from the caste elopes with a man of lower caste or goes wrong with him, then she is declared out-caste. If, however, she elopes with a man of a higher caste e. g. Brahman, she may be taken back into the caste-fold. Similarly if a Kurmi man keeps a woman of a lower caste like Rawat, Panka, Ghasiya, Chamar, Satnami and the like, he is out-casted. If, however, the woman belongs to a higher caste, the man does not loose his caste. Nevertheless, the status of such persons is not considered to be high and a permanent stigma remains attached to them.

If a Kurmi is beaten with shoes, then, though he is not out-casted he has to give a feast to the community

People from villages like Kosa rarely go up to the *Raja*. Apart from the minor nature of offences against the caste-code, money is also a consideration and as

3. Southern area of Durg Tahsil.

such, there are smaller *panchayat* units in which 5 to 10 villages or more join. The present *Panchayat* to which Kosa refers its disputes (relating to Kurmis) has *pancha* from 5 villages and these *panchas* are Lakhan from Sonwara, Kulanjan from Amalosi, Lakhan from Risama, Bhanupratap from Chirpoti and one Kurmi from village Matwari.

Panka

Unlike the Satnamis, in which caste, the caste-*panchayat* fits in the religious heirarchy, the Pankas have these two agencies as separate entities. The head of the caste-*panchayat* is known as *Raja* and he is assisted by an official known as President and another known as *Sarpanch* and then there are some *pancha*. The *Raja* is an elected official and he can be ousted in case he fails to perform his duties to the satisfaction of the community. Such a contingency has, however, never arisen.

At least three qualifications are considered to be necessary for a person to be eligible for election as *Raja*.

(i) He should be an elderly person so that his judgments are based on maturity and experience.

(ii) He should be economically well-off so that he may be able to entertain the members of the *panchayat* as and when they meet.

(iii) The *Raja* should have some knowledge i. e. he should be literate.

These caste-*panchayats* have jurisdictions over certain areas which may be a tahsil or a district. The present *Raja* of the *panchayat* which has jurisdiction over Kosa, is one Kalloodas, the ex-proprietor of village Dhobanpuri (27 miles away). The *Sarpanch* is Premdas of village Khurpa (12 miles). Jairamdas Panka of this village is not able to say who are the *panchas* of the *panchayat*.

The *Raja* maintains a register in which details about the caste and its members are written. The facts of the cases before him are also noted in the same register. In ordinary disputes a fine of Rs. 5/- to Rs. 100/- is imposed, but in serious cases like abduction the guilty person is fined upto Rs. 200/- or more. The *Raja* gives a signed receipt for the amount of fine received and the amount is utilized for purchasing items like petromax, mat, *shamiyana* and similar other things for use during meetings and benig loaned to the caste-members if they request for the same. The salary of the *chaprasi* is also given out of this amount. The amount which remains unutilized is sent to the *guru* at Damakheda in Raipur District.

If a Panka woman runs away with a man of another caste, she is out-casted and never taken back into the caste-fold. Similarly if a man keeps a woman of other caste including Brahman caste, then he is out-casted. The Panka would not accept water even from Brahmans because they regard them as lower than their caste and because many of the brahmans have started taking non-vegetarian food and to alcoholism. If a Panka takes to non-vegetarian food and liquor, he would be boycotted and *roti-beti* (bread-daughter) would be stopped with his family. Women of the caste who are charged with adultery are out-casted. If a husband permits adulterous behaviour of his wife, he too is out-casted.

If a Panka is beaten with shoes by a person of any other caste he used to be straightway out-casted in former days but for many years past the *panchayat* has been taking a lenient view of this thing and the persons so affilicted is accepted into the caste and his sin expiated if he gives a feast to the community.

THE CASTE-PANCHAYAT IN ACTION

Below are described some cases from Kosa to show the caste-*panchayats* in action. Many of these cases were resolved by the smallest unit and only some could go up to the *Raja* of the community for consideration. As it would not be justified in giving out the names of the persons, only the first word of their names is being used in describing the cases:—

(1) Many years ago 'C' Satnami's aunt (mother's sister) was kept by a Chamar of Chhapra District outside the State. Because the Satnamis regard Chamars as a lower caste, she was out-casted. After living with the Chamar for a number of years, she came back to Kosa with her husband and they stayed with 'C'. Her Chamar husband died here and 'C' performed the funeral ceremonies. Because of this 'C's' family was declared to be out-caste.

'C' went to Kirti Mata, a descendent of Ghasi Das with the request that they should be taken back into the caste. But Kirti Mata demanded a big sum of money for this which 'C' was unable to pay. After their entreaties, however, Kirti Mata accepted Rs. 11/- from them and asked them to give a feast to the community. This was done by 'C' and he was accepted into the caste-fold.

(2) 'K' Satnami's son 'G' brought a girl from village Nikun as his wife. This girl was married and had deserted her husband. 'G' fell in love with her when she was living with her parents and brought her to Kosa as his *Banaye* wife (Choori form of marriage). Having come to know that she was living in Kosa as the wife of 'G' Satnami, her legally married husband came to Kosa accompanied by 4-5 persons of Satnami community and requested the caste *panchas* of Kosa to settle the matter.

'K' had already agreed to give the deserted husband some compensation but the *panchayat* was called for two reasons: first, to give a formal sanction to this affairs, and, second to fix the amount of compensation to be paid to the divorced husband.

'K' called 'L', "B, 'Bu' and one more as *pancha*. The deserted husband demanded Rs. 700/- as the compensation (*bihati*) but 'K' contended that the sum was excessive. The *panchas* gave the decision that 'K' should pay Rs. 200/- as compensation to the divorced husband. This wes paid by 'G'.

(3) 'R' Satnami is the son-in-law of 'P' Satnami. Some years ago his cousin (mother's sister's son) asked him if he could suggest some suitable girl to him for marriage. 'R' said that there was one girl in Kosa itself and on this suggestion his cousin accompanied by 2-3 people came to Kosa. 'R' took them to 'B' Satnami whose daughter was the girl in question. The cousin and men accompanying him saw the girl and wanted to have further negotiations.

'B' called other members of his caste — 'M', 'Pt', 'Ptn', 'T' and 'E'. 'B' said that he would accept 14 *kori* ruppes (i.e. Rs. 280; one *kori* is equal to twenty) and one tussor cloth *sari* (*Kosahi*) from the bridegroom as the bride-price. The boy's party wanted to pay only Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/-. After some negotiations the the caste memebrs named above were able to settle the matter and the boy's party agreed to pay Rs. 280/- and on their behalf 'R' gave Rs. 7/- to 'B' as advance money.

The boy's party then went back and the marriage was considered to be finally fixed up. But some days after this 'B' and 'J' Satnamis went to village Gujra and there fixed the marriage of the same girl with a boy of that village. At Gujara, he was getting Rs. 300/- for his daughter and also tussor-cloth *sari* and this latter bargain was definitely more advantageous than the first.

After returning from Gujra, 'B' went to village Sirsa to return Rs. 7/- to 'R's' cousin and to tell him to treat the negotiation as cancelled. 'R' was also at Sirsa with his cousin and he refused to take back the money. His argument was that the negotiations had taken place and marriage was fixed before the *panchas* and he was not willing to take back the money advanced. He further said that the *panchas* had settled the matter and the refund should now be made before them. If they agreed to support the act of 'B' he would take the money.

At Kosa, the *panchayat* was called and 'M', 'T', 'F', 'Pt', 'Ptn' and some others were called as *panchas*. 'R' put the issue before them reminding them of the settlement that they had arrived at and how 'B' was violating it. One or two *panchas* (names of these are not known) supported 'B' saying that if 'R's' cousin was so keen for his daughter, he should agree to give Rs. 300/- and a tussor-cloth *sari*. But majority of the *panchas* rebuked and ridiculed 'B' and said that two marriage processions would have to be entertained by 'B' — one from Sirsa ('R's' cousin) and the other from Gujra and he who proves stronger would carry the bride. "Let the matter now be decided by might", they said.

But the tempers cooled down slowly and the *panchas* asked 'B' to leave the village and requested 'R' to accept the amount of Rs. 7/- which 'B' was refunding. 'B' bowed down to the verdict of the *pancha* and left Kosa with his family. 'R' wanted to take the case to a Court of Law but on being advised by some people did not take any further action.

'B' was away from the village for some months but one day he came back and requested 'M' and other Satnamis to let him live. Probably nobody was against him individually and they sympathised with him. 'B' returned to Kosa and after some time got his daughter married at Gujra.

(4) It is about 6 years ago from now that a *panchayat* of the Pankas was convened at village Dhourabhanta. The occasion arose because a married Panka woman had got a child from a Gond lover with whom she was having adulterous relations. The *Raja* Kalloodas of Dhobanpuri, was not able to attend this *panchayat and in his absence Premdas Sarpanch was in the chair.*

The *panchayat* was of the view that the woman was married and it could not be believed that the child she had was from the Gond. It could be, they argued, as well from her husband, who had not reported about her behaviour earlier. They therefore did not excommunicate the woman and her husband from the caste.

But since the husband himself had raised the question of adultery, he had to pay a fine of Rs. 100/- and was asked to give a feast to the community for the crime of adultery by his wife. The husband gave the fine and the feast.

(5) 'K' Rawat's present wife belongs to village Khapri. She was formerly married at village Akhra but after living for some time with him, she had left him and came to live with her parents. She met 'K' at Khapri where he had gone to attend a marriage and there 'K' had asked her *"Kaise Ho, jate ta nai Jas"* (Hallo, O, will you or will you not go with me) and she had said *"Hon, ja hun"* (O yes, I would go) and then 'K' had given her his ring. She went to her husband in Akhra and lived wtih him for 15 days and then ran away from there and came to 'K' and 'K' married her by *choori form.*

Her husband at Akhra village soon came to know about this and he came to Kosa with a constable of Rawat caste. A *panchayat* was summoned and 'A' presided. The *panchayat* decided that 'K' should give Rs. 125/- as *bihati* (compensation) to the former husband of the woman, and the decision was obeyed by both parties.

(6) The case of 'J' and 'B' has been referred to earlier. 'J' was married at Parsahi but she had developed great intimacy with 'B', both of them being from Kosa. She left her husband and eloped with 'B' and after some time came back to Kosa where she and 'B' were accepted as wife and husband.

Nothing happened for six months but 'C' felt that the former husband must be paid the compensation. He therefore sent a word to the ex-husband's parents who came to Kosa. A *panchayat* was called and both parties were heard.

The aggrieved party (i. e., ex-husband's party) demanded Rs. 300/- as the amount of *bihati* but 'B's' parents requested the *panchayat* to fix the amount looking to the facts of the case. It may be recalled here that this was a run-away marriage and the argument of 'B's' father was that this marriage was not with his consent and encouragement and he deserved to be dealt with sympathetically. The *panchayat* decided that 'B's' father should pay Rs. 120/- to the party of 'J's' former husbad. Both parties agreed to this decision.

Thus it would be seen that in the disputes of the caste, the matters rarely go up to the bigger *panchayat* presided over by the *Raja* and the *sarpanch*. The case are decided at the village itself. But, if any of the above six cases the decision of the *panchayat* was not obeyed, the matter would have been referred to the higher body, which has the powers to excommunicate people from the caste.

These are the two more or less well-defined tiers of the *panchayat* system in Kosa which may be conceived as horizontal tiers. It however appears that there is also a diagonal cutting across both these horizontal tiers and along which the two systems correspond. This diagonal system cutting across the two horizontal tiers is seen in the case described below:—

Guha Rawat was employed as a *pahatiya* (grazier) for Ghanshyam Kurmi. Once while the cattle were out grazing, a she-calf belonging to Ghanshyam Kurmi was lost. Ghanshyam thereupon called a *panchayat*, the members of which were Shobharam, Hagroo, Bisahoo Satnamis, Jairamdas Panka and some others. The *panchas* decided that Guha should pay the compensation to Ghanshyam for having lost his she-calf. Guha agreed to pay Rs. 30/- to Ghanshyam.

After the year ended, Guha continued to work as *pahatiya* for Ghanshyam but some people gave him the suggestion that he should not serve Ghanshyam because he had taken the compensation from him for no fault of his. Guha left the work after 6-7 days but Bisahoo Satnami and others persuaded him not to take this course and Guha again started grazing Ghanshyam's cattle. But when only one and a half months remained for the year-end, Guha discontinued the service. After the year ended, Ghanshyam settled his accounts.

At this point Guha convened a caste-*panchayat* in which some Rawats from nearby villages also participated. Guha proposed that no Rawat should serve Ghanshyam Kurmi. This was agreed to. For some time after this, Ghanshyam was in real difficulty and his cattle entirely depended on stall-feeding only. But Anandram Rawat some how was persuaded by him for service and he started grazing Ghanshyam's cattle and also cleaning his household utensils. This went on for about four years and when Guha found that Anandram was working with Ghanshyam he requested Ghanshyam to take him back. Guha was definitely a more efficient worker than Anandram. Ghanshyam was not late in accepting his offer and took him back into service.

When Anandram was dislodged, he convened the caste-*panchayat* and Budhram from Sirri and some Rawats from Tamora participated in the meeting. The

panchas of these three villages — Kosa, Sirri and Tamora told Guha that he had originally demanded that nobody should work at Ghanshyam's house and he himself has broken the decision. He would as such be liable for a fine (*dand*). Guha retaliated at this decision and said that Anandram was also working before him and so if the fine is to be imposed, it should as well be imposed on Anandram Rawat. He also threatened that he would not abide by the decision of this *panchayat* but would call the bigger *panchayat*. The *panchas* once again asked him to leave the service of Ghanshyam but Guha did not agree.

In the month of *Asadh* (June-July) 1962, Guha convened the bigger *panchayat* in which the 20 village *panchas* of Selud and Gudihari were invited. This *panchayat* was of the view that Guha was not guilty of losing the she-calf of Ghanshyam. After all one *bardiha* could not look after so many cattle and if one animal was lost, he should not have been fined. The *Raja* requested the village-*panchayat* of Kosa to review its earlier decision of fining Rs. 30/- and requested that the amount of fine be returned. Another issue was also decided by the caste-*panchayat*. Guha was fined Rs. 5/- one by the village-*panchayat* because he had beaten Bharosa Satnami's bullock with a stick (*Thenga*) and Bharosa said that he would refund this amount to Guha. The village-*panchayat* also agreed to the decision of Rawat-*panchayat* in respect of Ghanshyam's case and asked him to return Rs. 30/- to Guha. Ghanshyam agreed and returned the amount.

Guha had to bear the expenditure incurred in this *panchayat*. The expenditure was Rs. 25/- in cash.

This case illustrates an instance where the caste-*panchayat* requested the village-*panchayat* to adopt a certain course in the present case that of revoking its decision and the village *panchayat* agreed. There is no case from Kosa illustrating the opposite process i.e. the village *panchayat* requesting the caste-*panchayat* to take a certain course and the latter agreeing to the request. But the villagers say that such a thing can happen. Thus there we find the diagonal cutting across the two tiers of *panchayats*.

Here it would not be out of place to quote from the Report of Marten. Marten states:[4] "It is notable that caste-*panchayats* are found chiefly among the lower castes. Brahmans for instance, have no caste-*panchayats*."

"The constitution and procedure of the *panchayats* are the same in most of the castes. As a rule, the *panchayats*, are not permanent bodies but are called together when required. It is the business of the man, who, for any reason, requires a decision of the *panch*, after consulting the head-man of the caste to collect the members of the caste at the appointed place."

From what we have seen in Kosa, the caste-*panchayats* are permanent bodies with a hierarchy of officials and the peons of the *panchayats* have also belts and badges like the ones seen in the Collectorate. It is however rarely that these caste-*panchayats* are called to meet and it appears that when Marten says that the caste-*panchayats* are not permanent bodies, he probably refers to the *panchayat* at the village level. His view would certainly be wrong if he is referring to the caste-*panchayat* on a regional-level because they are definitely permanent bodies.

Marten states further: "Each sub-caste has its own *panchayat* and there is no general caste-*panchayat* with controlling or appellate jurisdiction over their decisions. A single sub-caste may, for the sake of convenience, have several local *panchayats* but even in such cases there is usually no controlling *panchayat* common to the whole sub-caste."

Here again, we find the difference between Marten's remarks and the information recorded from the present survey. Among the Satnamis, for example, the regional *panchayats* are governed by the religious *panchayats* with the *guru* as its head and that body can serve as the appellate authority. In one of the instances, that of Guha-Anand Ram we find that Guha had not agreed with the decisions given by the caste-*panchayat* of the village and the bigger regional *panchayat* had overriding judgment. It has been told by the villagers that there is a bigger *panchayat* also to which the decision of the regional *panchayat* could be referred. Again, in the Pankas, the decisions of the regional *panchayat* with the *Raja* as the Chairman could be upset by the *guru* at Damakheda.

Marten, describing the questions dealt with by the *panchayats*, states: "The *panchayats* deal chiefly with social and domestic questions, occasionally professional and industrial but rarely criminal matters. Adultery is the most common subject with which the *panchayats* concern themselves..... The penalties inflicted by caste-*panchayats* usually take the form of feasts or fines, but never corporal punishment..... *Panchayats*, as a rule, do not record their decisions on paper, all matters

4. Census of India, 1911, Vol. X, pt. I, J. T. Marten, pp. 236-238.

are orally settled."

Among the Panka caste-*panchayat*, however, we find that facts of the case are noted in the register kept with the *Raja* who also gives receipts for the amount of fine received.

Marten is absolutely correct in saying that "The control of the caste-*panchayat* whether permanent or otherwise is, as a rule, very efficient, and the outside community responds to its decisions and wishes. An offender usually finds himself unable to elude them as the caste can make his life a burden to him. By outcasting him they stop not only all intercourse with his caste-fellows but can prevent him from enjoying the usual necessities and amenities of life."

Gram Panchayat

In the light of what has been seen in Kosa about the caste-*panchayats* and their efficiency, the statutory *panchayats* appear to be puny affairs. It is a Directive Principle of the State Policy of the Constitution that "The State shall take steps to organize Village-*panchayats* and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of Self-Government." The First Five Year Plan[5] says in connection with the 'Village Agency for Development' in the following words — "For many decades the village has been the primary unit for revenue and police administration but, as a social and economic organization, it became weaker under British rule. As settled conditions developed, the village community became increasingly dependent on the administration and less able to manage its own affairs. Even in works undertaken by Development Departments the approach was nearly always to the individual, not to the community, so that thirty years of development activity have influenced only a fraction of the population.....since independence, several states have revised their earlier enactments with the object of promoting the quicker development of *panchayats* and of giving to them a large role than before..... ... Taking a general view, it may be said that the *panchayat* legislation in India is marked by boldness of thought and an earnest desire to make the village *panchayat* a vital base in the national structure..... The functions of *panchayats* are conceived widely enough to permit them to comprehend most of the civic and economic activities of a village community. In practice, few *panchayats* discharge all the functions entrusted to them, and the activities of many of them suffer from local faction, lack of resources and want of guidance..... Although there are exceptions, the *panchayats* as an institution has not yet become the instrument of village reconstruction and development which it was intended to be."

And this is what the Second Five Year Plan stated:[6] "It is the general aim to establish a statutory *panchayat* in every village, especially in areas selected for National Extension and Community Development Projects." The Second Five Year Plan stated further: "Rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organization in the village which can bring all the people — including the weaker sections mentioned above — into common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the administration."

In connection with statutory *panchayats*, it was stated in the National Conference on Community Development at Mysore City[7]: "Village *panchayat* should be adopted as the single agency by all the departments to approach villagers for implementation of the programmes. State Governments should direct the Departments accordingly. It will also be the responsibility of the Departments to educate the panchayat suitably to discharge their role properly in respect of their respective programmes."

The following extract is being given here from the Report of Community Development Mission.[8] The authors of this Report state: "One of the problems of which Community Development workers have to be aware is centred in what, for want of a better term, can be called the village community, especially where that community consists of a member of different caste groups all living within a village nucleus and not in separate hamlets. Planners and administrators sometimes talk of the village as though it were, for all purposes, a self-conscious and integrated and homogeneous group. A closer examination, however, of the ways in which decisions are made and agreement obtained for certain common village activities, brings out the relationship of the *panchayat* to the total village community as well as to the richer and more influential groups within the village..... On the whole, village attitude towards their *panchayats* seem to be favourable..... It

5. First Five Year Plan, Government of India, page, 123.
6. Second Five Year Plan, Government of India. p. 207.
7. National Conference on Community Development at Mysore, City. Main recommendations and conclusions, p. 5.
8. Report of a Community Development Evaluation Mission in India; M. J. Coldwell, R. Dumont and M. Read, 1959, pp. 72-73.

seems, therefore, from the observations made by the Mission, from discussions with officials and non-officials, and from the village studies referred to, that at present the *panchayat* is accepted as a representative body for the village, elected by them, though with a preponderance of richer and older influential members.. ..... In this new responsibility for planning and development at the village-level, the support which the *panchayat* can count on for its decisions will depend upon the respect and cooperation of all the villagers. Here the genuine village community feeling can be called into service where it exists and strengthened."

In Madhya Pradesh *Gram Panchayats* are established under the provisions of the *Gram Panchayat* Act 1946 and in case of smaller villages, 2 or more villages are joined to make one *panchayat*. Kosa has been joined to village Tamora for this purpose and in the *Gram Panchayat*, there are two members from this village — Chintaram Satnami and Ghanshyam Kurmi. The villagers have not taken any interest in the formation of the *Gram Panchayat*. They say that the names of Ghanshyam and Chintaram were recommended by the *Patwari*.

In view of what has been stated before about the village-*panchayat* and caste-*panchayats* and the picture that the *Gram Panchayat* presents, it is clear that whereas the former two agencies are, as if interwoven into the very fabric of village (and individual) life, the *Gram Panchayat* hardly touches the fringe of their consciousness. Even Chintaram and Ghanshyam are not enthusiastic towards the *Gram Panchayat* and it is clear that as far as Kosa is concerned, a very difficult task lies ahead if the statutory *panchayat* has to play the role that is envisaged in the Five Year Plans and in the philosophy of development.

Youth Organization

Both, in the First and Second Plan, promotion of youth organizations and Youth Clubs was conceived to be an important aspect of rural development. The subject was dealt with in successive conferences on Community Development. At the sixth Development Commissioners' Conference held at Mussorie in April 1957, the general consensus of opinion was that:—[9]

"(i) Youth organizations to be promoted should cover all youths, whether school-going or non-school going, because it was felt that the association of school-going young men with these organizations would be desirable;

(ii) the sub-committee was further of the opinion that there should be two age-groups for such youth-organizations, the junior creation comprising youth of the age of 10-18 and the senior young men of the age of 18-30".

The National Conference on Community Development held at Mysore City in 1959 stated:[10] "Reorganising the vital role that rural youth can and should play in national development and the community development programmes, the Central and State Governments should encourage the formation of *Yuvak Mandals* in all villages in the C. D. Blocks."

The Community Development Evaluation Mission in India, 1959 stated[11] that "the 15 to 25 age group is the most important one in village society to be exposed to new ideas indispensable for economic and social advancement. All over India, the majority of young people in rural areas between the ages of 15 and 25 or 30 are unorganized and their constructive potential for economic and social improvement is either wasted or is gradually turning into criticism and restlessness, which might lead them to a negative or destructive attitude."

When, in the light of this, one looks at Kosa, the picture seen is not a happy one. There is no youth organization or the so-called *Yuvak Mandal* and even the *Ramayan Mandli* has disintegrated following the dispute over contribution for tank deepening described earlier. Enquiries were made from people — Chintaram, Ghanshyam and others. The number of those favourably inclined towards the proposal is insignificant and the general opinion is that they have no time for such activities. The people are as ignorant and as hostile towards the scheme as they are towards the statutory *panchayat*.

VILLAGE LEADERSHIP

Whom does the Development Block recognise as the Village-Leaders

The Development Block officials of the Gunderdehi Block reportedly recognise 4 people of Kosa as the leaders of the village. These persons are Hagroo Satnami (age 55 years), Chantaram Satnami (age 25 years), Nir-

9. Summary Record of Sixth Development Commissioners' Conference, 1957, p. 528.
10. National Conference on Community Devolepment, 1959, p. 7.
11. Report of a Community Development Evaluation Mission in India, pp. 58-59.

bheram Kurmi (age 38 years) and Ghanshyam Kurmi (age 32 years). On what criterion the Block officials selected these leaders is not known. Hagroo Satnami and his son Chintaram are keen to get the village-well deepened (though, as it is, they fetch the drinking water at present from the stream) and it is in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi that officials stay and talk to the people.

Whom do the villagers of nearby villages recognise as the leaders of Kosa

One young man of the nearby village of Sirri, who is a real village-leader said in the interview that Ghanshyam Kurmi could be a village-leader. He has the land and the money, he is literate and most important of all considerations, he is ex-proprietor of the village. But this young man felt that Ghanshyam Kurmi is not the leader of Kosa and in fact he is anything but a leader.

Whom do the people of Kosa recognise their leaders

Opinion of six villagers was obtained on the question as to whom they regarded as the village-leaders. Bisahoo Satnami said *"Nyaya ka samjhaiya mor najar ma kono nai dikha. Tabho le—Phudkoo, Shobharam, Hagroo an Tatkoo la manat han."* (As far as I can see there is not just one person. Even then, we regard Phudkoo, Shobharam, Hagroo and Tatkoo as leader). Chintaram said that Shobharam was the unquestionable leader of the village though people also listen to Mannu, Tatkoo, Lachhman, Sheocharan, Hargoo, Bisahoo, Bisal, Phudkoo, Ghanshyam and Nirbhe. Tatkoo regarded Mannu, Anandram, and Jairamdas as the leaders and qualified his statement by adding that Jairamdas Panka is regarded by him as a leader since he is a *sarkari admi* (Government servant — village-watchman). Kanwal Rawat regarded Shobharam, Hagroo, Chintaram Tatkoo, Ghanshyam, Nirbhe, and Jairamdas as leaders. Ghanshyam Kurmi regarded Shobharam, Hagroo, Bisahoo, Phudkoo and Chintaram as the leaders and Jairamdas Panka regarded Shobharam, Tatkoo, Mannu, Phudkoo and Hagroo as the persons who command respect and whose word is obeyed.

This would show that Shobharam is regarded by all of these six people as a leader and Hagroo is regarded so by four persons. These 14 village-leaders are in the following income-ranges.

Income Range	*Number of village leaders*
Rs. 41/- to 60/-	2
Rs. 61/- to 80/-	7
Rs. 81/- to 100/-	3
Above Rs. 100/-	2

How has Shobharam acquired this reputation? There are many qualifications that he possesses — Firstly, he has past the middle-age and is respected for his age. Secondly, he is a reputed physician of the village and the villagers depend on him for treatment. Thirdly, he is the person supposed to be most experienced with evil-spirits and witches. And added to these are his qualities of boldness, and free uninhibited speech, his knowledge of religion and sayings of prophets and saints. As Chintaram said "Shobharam does not have much of a physical power but he is very bold and even defy Government officials." The following story is told about the boldness of Shobharam.

During the Second World War, there was some military posted in Durg town. The men were afraid of the army since they used to catch them without any reason and the women used to go for marketing. Once some men from Kosa went to Durg in seventeen carts to sell the harvest. After selling the produce, the men were roaming aimlessly on the streets when two army men came and held one of them. On asking as to why he was held, he was slapped by the other army man. Then this other man caught Shobharam's hand. Shobharam was of about 30-34 years of age then and bolder in his attitude. He said to them "You take me wherever you like, but release these people". And so the army man caught him by both the hands and dragged him towards police station. Then some more army men came and caught hold of Shobharam's hair but at this juncture he dropped the bundle he was holding in his hand. It was just an old *dhoti*, but Shobharam said 'The bundle contains a good sum of money and you would be responsible if it is lost.' One of the men holding him went to pick up the bundle and the others released their grip. Shobharam still held the cart-driver's stick in his hand and with that he gave a hit to the man on the left in his stomach, as a result of which he sat down. Then he hit the man on the right who also collapsed. He then turned towards the third man but he ran away and picking up his *dhoti* Shobha-

ram also ran away. Shobharam entered the first house he saw and entering it from the front, got away from the back. He passed the night in Kasaridih and then came to Kosa the next day."

Now, this story is most probably clearly a fabrication but it has gone round and people look towards Shobharam with great admiration. There are two more stories both told by Shobharam. Here are the stories in his own words:—

(1) "On one occasion we were coming back from the market of Amgaon. We were 6 or 7 people and travelled by train. At the railway station, where we got down we found a Police Inspector standing with his luggage. He asked us where we were from and then demanded the ticket. I said — "You are nobody to ask for the ticket. There are Ticket Collectors for this purpose". The Inspector got enraged at this and said *'Sala Satnami chor. Ye kanwar utha aur mere sath chal.'* My colleagues were afraid and wanted to transport the Inspector's luggage but I asked them not to do so and going up to the Inspector, I told him that we were not going to carry his luggage. On this he said *'Sala tum Kosa ka Satnami bahut badmash ho'* (You Satnamis of Kosa are very mischievous)."

(2) Once a Police Inspector posted at Ranchirai was a real tyrant. He used to beat people even for little things. He used to tour the villages on his big horse. Everybody was afraid of him. Once he came to Kosa and while going back wanted us to do the *begar* for him by carrying his luggage to the police station. The *kotwar* was not able to find any person and the Inspector was uttering all sorts of abuses to the *kotwar*. I did not know of what was happening here and was returning from my fields. But when the Inspector saw me he caught hold of me and said I would have to carry his luggage. The *kotwar* also requested me to protect the prestige of the village. I was terribly enraged but agreed to carry his luggage. In my mind I resolved to teach the fellow the lesson of his life. So we started, I in front and he following me and thus did not give me a chance to run away.

Then we came to a stream. I put down the *kanwar* and told him that I felt like answering the call of nature. He said that he would not allow me to be out of his sight and asked me to ease myself before him. This I denied to do and he stepped forward with his whip. I picked up my stick and said in a menacing tone — 'Sir, if you move a step forward, I would break your head and then you would realize what Shobharam is.' The Inspector said "You bloody Shobharam, I know your are a great rougue". He was so scared that leaving the luggage there, he went to village Pangri and I came back home."

Now it is true that there is lot of exaggeration in the stories as in the stories that Shobharam tells about the supernatural spirits, but when he relates these he is heard with pin-drop silence. People say that Shobharam is a *patha* type of man meaning obstinate and haughty and he is capable of doing things he relates in the stories.

Other people are also regarded as leaders because they are more vocal than others and it could be seen in two informal meetings during the writer's stay in the village that except Chintaram, Ghanshyam and Hagroo, the rest of the persons named as leaders were the dominant speakers. Chintaram is a quite type of man but is very strong physically and so is his father Hagroo. Ghanshyam is the most literate man in the village and the ex-proprietor. The majority of the Satnamis, however, do not regard him as a leader as acceptable as Shobharam or Mannu.

But neither Shobharam nor the other 'leaders' do anything to promote communication between members of the village community and Shobharam especially appears to be talking a great deal in order to demonstrate his status rather than promoting communication between members.

In the statement given below is shown the relationship of economy and literacy with the leadership.

Name	*Caste*	*Age*	*Area of land possessed*	*Monthly income average*	*Literacy*
Shobharam	Satnami	70	11.68	70/-	Illiterate
Hagroo	Satnami	55	5.00	78/-	,,
Phudkoo	Satnami	65	8.00	90/-	,,
Tatkoo	Satnami	40	4.41	100/-	,,
Mannu	Satnami	40	5.86	80/-	,,
Sheocharan	Satnami	35	2.27	90/-	,,
Bisahoo	Satnami	30	6.00	60/-	,,
Chintaman	Satnami	25 (With Hagroo)		—	Literate
Ghanshyam	Kurmi	32		330/-	,,
Nirbhe	Kurmi	38	12.00	120/-	,,
Jairamdas	Panka	34	1.00	60/-	,,
Lachhman	Satnami	32	6.00	75/-	Illiterate
Bisal	Satnami	35	8.00	64/-	,,
Anandram	Thethwar	45	6.00	75/-	Literate

In the above table the names are arranged roughly in order of their acceptance as leaders e. g. Shobharam is accepted by all as a village leader and all of six persons who were asked the question regarded him to be

so. Hagroo and Phudkoo were regarded as leaders by 4-5 persons each and so on till Anandram and Bisal were named by only one person. In the caste-*panchayats* and village *panchayat* also the names occuring higher up in the statement are invariably made *pancha*.

This statement brings out the following features:—

(1) The persons most respected as village leaders are in the advanced age-group of 50 years and over and Shobharam with the age of 70 years is the most prominent village leader.

(2) Except Chintaram, all others are in the middle age-group 30-45 years.

(3) Economic status has nothing to do with leadership. Though Shobharam owns 11.68 acres of land, it is jointly owned with his sons.

(4) Literacy also has nothing to do with the village-leadership in Kosa.

Chintaram, aged 25, looked to be the only one of these who was keen to see the world with more open eyes and to receive some light from there. If his word were as respected as that of Shobharam, he might have served as an important source of communication and might have played a not insignificant role in the development of Kosa.

RECREATIONS

It is indeed remarkable that, in spite of the conspicuous absence of any means of recreation, life in Kosa does not present a humdrum, mechanical existence. The people are gay and lively with a smile on their faces. The boring dullness of the cities has not yet found its way to Kosa.

But there are hardly any pastimes and recreational activities and the sole use of leisure is gossip. Whatever little games there are in the village, are all the games of children. For the men, the crops and the fields and the agricultural cattle are probably all those is to talk about. For the women there is still less and their gossiping is confined to food and clothes and scandals. The men gather in front of the *Jaitkham* or in front of the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi and talk about epidemics and contagious diseases, ghosts and spirits, deitites and witchcraft, crops and the pests and price of the produce and the vagaries of the seasons. If there is nothing to talk about, elopement, divorce and adultery always come in handy. The women gossip on the bank of the tank and the stream where they go to bathe and fetch drinking water. After lunch they may also gather in front of some house and just while away their time. Children are children all the world over and so the children of Kosa also enjoy themselves with whatever comes to hand.

Games of Children

Small children have nothing to play with except the toy bullock-cart which Mannu and Punoo and Bhoklu Satnami prepare for them at a very nominal cost. The children tie a rope to the cart and go about dragging it. Small children in the towns play with toy motor-cars; parents of some of them own motor-cars and most of them may possess their own cars in future. And there could not be a better substitute toy for the children in Kosa. The bullock-cart is not only an important means of transport, it is also an indispensable item in the agricultural activities and the children from an early age develop a liking for it. At the time of *Pola* festival, the children play with the toy earthen bullocks. These toys are pucrhased from weekly markets and are made by the people belonging to Kumhar caste (earthen-ware worker). Upto the age of 7-8 years, there is no segregation of sexes and boys and girls play together. The games played by the children in this group in Kosa are *ghar-gondia* and *dauka-dauki*.

Ghar-gondia is nothing but the Chhattisgarhi term for the game known in Northern India as *Gharghoola*. Some crude design is made on the ground with earth; it represents a house and the various compartments in it represent the rooms of the house. In these compartments the children put small earthen utensils and say that it is the cooking-room. Then imaginary food is cooked and eaten and they feign sleep and going to fields and to market and so on. Thus the game proceeds and ends only when the parents call them for food or when they quarrel.

Dauka-dauki game is just a variation of *Ghar-gondia*. Literally the term means 'husband-wife'. The small boys says that he is the husband (*dauka*) and that the small girl companion is the wife (*dauki*). Then he feigns going to field to plough or to cut the crop and the 'wife' cooks the food and brings drinking water from the stream. Then the 'husband' returns from the field, demands food and small girl serves him the *pej* or the *bhat*. They thus impersonate their elders and it is in this *dauka-dauki* game that children sometimes attempt to play the sexual-act too. We found a boy and a small girl seriously busy with the game of *dauka-dauki*. The 'husband' had returned from the market and the 'wife' was serving him the *'basi'* but the game was

spoilt by Kaskoo Rawat who said *"Hato re dauka-dauki ho"* (Be off you husband and wife). The game, it may be appreciated, prepares the small boys and girls for the tasks in the life ahead.

Games for the age group 9-13 years

Observation suggests that there is some segregation from the age of 9 years onwards and boys play separately from girls. The games of children of the age-group 9-13 years are — *pittul, bhanwra, gilli-danda, luka-chhipi* and *banti*. These are all the games of boys. Those for girls, in the same age-group are *fugdi, pittul,* and *luka-chhipi*.

Pittul

The word *pittul* has come from the Hindi word *pitna* meaning 'to beat' and this game is very popular among the school going children in the towns. It has found its way to the village through the children who go to Sirri Primary School. In Kosa, the game is played with a ball made out of rags.

The game is as follows:— seven pieces of tiles are made into circular bits in a series one bigger than the other, and the other requirement is a ball. The game is played between two parties — one taking the field and the other playing. The circular series of tile- pieces are arranged in a pile and then one member of the playing side stands about 8 feet away from this and tries to hit the pile with the ball. If he is 'caught' without hitting the pile, he is out. He is also out if he is caught after the pile is hit and the other members of the party follow him similarly trying to hit the pile. (Plate LXXXIV: 129)

If the pile is hit and scattered without the player being caught, the fielding party tries to hit the members of the playing party before they can rearrange the piles. If they succeed in doing this, they win and get *a pittul* and play again. But if any one member of the party is hit, before the pile is rearranged, the entire side is declared 'out' and the other party plays. The game is thus very interesting and is played by both boys and girls.

Luka-chhipi

Luka-chhipi is the hide and seek game and is played in the moon-lit nights of the summer months. The players divide themselves into two parties, members of one party hiding themselves and the other trying to seek them out. The party which is to 'hide' asks the other party to bring the leaf of a certain tree and by the time the members of that party return with the leaf, the players hide themselves here and there. Even if one player is found out, the entire party is out, but before the party can be declared as defeated, they demand the leaf which was asked for. This game is also played by both the boys and girls and sometimes they play it together.

Bhanwra

It is the game of swinging the wooden top. The game is restricted to school going boys who purchase the wooden *bhanwra* in the weekly markets, or from Durg town.

Gilli-danda

It is a popular game played even by older boys and young men. The game is played with a wooden stick and a small wooden piece, both ends of which are made pointed by chopping. The game is common practically everywhere in the State and also elsewhere and needs no description.

Banti

Banti is the Chhattisgarhi name for marbles. It is again a common game of children and hardly needs a detailed description. It is played only by boys and is restricted in Kosa to the school-going children.

Goda

The players sit in a circular formation, facing the centre and one of them goes out circling round on the outside of the circle with a piece of cloth which he tries to place behind the back of some one of the sitters. If he is 'caught' while doing this, he has to repeat the rounds. If, however, he is successful in placing the cloth without the sitter being aware of its presence, he makes one more round pretending that he is still keeping the cloth and coming back to where he had placed the cloth, he beats the sitter till he gets up and collect the cloth. He then takes the seat so vacated. If, however, the sitter discovers the cloth before the runner has made a round, he collects it and runs after him trying to touch him. If he is successful he comes back to his seat; if he is not successful, the runner takes his seat and he has to perform the rounds. The game is played both by boys and girls but is more commonly played by the girls.

Fugdi

Fugdi is exclusively a game of girls and is a game

of competition between two or among a group of them. The girls squat on the ground and move their legs forward and backward, jumping a little in so doing. The legs are moved alternately one at a time. It is a game of endurance and those who get out of breath leave the field, the one remaining in the field till the end wins the game. The game involves good exercise for legs and other parts of the body because the girls have to move their legs outward and inward alternately, while in a squating posture, without losing the balance. A small couplet is sung while they play and this recitation tends to make them more out of breath. The couplet depicts scenes from pastoral life and is as below:—

BACHHROO BACHHROO GOBAR DE
CHARO KHOOT LA LEEPAN DE
CHARO DEWARNI LA BAITHAN DE
APAN KHAT HE GOODA. MOLA DET HE BIJA
O BIJA LA KA KARHUN, RAHI JABO TIJA
TIJA KE BIHAN DIN, SARI SARI LUGRA
HER DE BHAUJI KAPAT KE KHILA
EK GODA MA RAIJIRA, EK GODA MA KAPUR
KATEK LA MANO MOR DEWAR SAUSR
FUGDI FUN — FUN — FUN
FUGDI FUN — FUN — FUN

(Calf, calf, give me the cattle-dung

Let me wash (with it) four corners (of the house)

Allow my four sister-in-law (husband's younger brothers' wives) to sit

(They) eat the pith themselves and give me the seed

What would I do with the seed, I had better fast

(Tija is coming) On the morning of the day of Tija festival, torn *saris* (you would get)

O my sister-in-law (brother's wife) open the latch of the door

In one leg are the *raijira* seeds, in the other is the camphor

How many should I regard as my fathers-in-law and (how many as) my husband's younger brothers

Fugdi Fun — Fun — Fun
Fugdi Fun — Fun — Fun

Games and recreation for age group 13-16 years

At this age-group, the segregation of sexes is quite well-marked, but it is not absolute and in some games like *bhotkul* the girls and boys play together. The girls have almost no out-door games and play *bhotkul, tiri-chowk* or *ram-chiwara*. The boys have a greater variety of games like *kabaddi, bajni, noonpat* and *gendi*. *Gendi* (stilts) are also used in the age-group 9-13 years.

Kabaddi

This popular Indian game has, like the *pittul*, come from Sirri village where the Primary School is located. The game does not require any description since it is played almost all over India. The boys in Kosa, however, do not know the rules of the game and there is no referee when it is played.

Bajni

Bajni is the name by which the people refer to wrestling. It is not a common item of recreation but is held once a year about the time of *Nagpanchmi* festival. *Bajni* is used to mean 'to compare strength' and *bajni* is not confined to wrestling only but includes some other items also. Apart from wrestling these other items are (1) eating raw *karela* (very bitter in taste) (2) Breaking the coconut.

Karela, a very small-sized species of which is grown as a creeper on the *bari* compound, is all the more bitter in taste than the big-sized *karela* we see in the town markets. The competition is as to who eats the largest number of these. Drinking water or eating any other thing in between is not allowed. He, who eats the largest number, wins the competition.

People who enter the competition of 'breaking the coconut' take one coconut each. The shell and fibrous covering of the coconut is not allowed to be removed. The coconuts are then thrown by them with full force on the bare ground (no stone is allowed to be used) and the number of such throws is the test of strength of the person who is competing. The person who is able to break the coconut with the least number of throws is declared to be the winner.

Wrestling is in the popular Indian style. The person who is laid on his back by the other loses the game.

These items of recreations like eating raw *karela*, breaking the coconut and wrestling are also popular among people of higher age-groups and young men upto the age of 30-35 participate in the competitions. These competitions are held just once or sometimes twice a year at the time of *jawara* and *nag-panchmi* festivals. At present Chintaram Satnami is the acknowledged 'Mr. Kosa'.

Noonpat

This is a very interesting rural game and will have

to be described in some detail. The game is played by two parties, each consisting of upto 11 players. The game is played in such a manner that the playnig party tries to outwit the fielding party and go from one end of the field to the other without being touched by any member of the fielding side. If any one member of the playing party is touched while crossing the lines. The entire party is out. The fielding party tries to check the passage of the members of the playing party from one square to another. The field for the game and the procedure of the game are described below. See Plate LXXXI: 125)

A rectangle ABCD is drawn on the ground, the length of the rectangle being about 25 feet and the breadth about 15 feet. Longitudinally it is divided by a line EF and horizontally 5 lines are drawn at equal distances going through the width of the rectangle. The rectangle ABCD is thus divided into 12 compartments, and these may be numbered 1 to 12 for the sake of understanding the game.

The players of the fielding side stand at points E, A, G, I, K, M, O & D and if there are more players, then points F, B, H, J, L, N, P & C may also be occupied. It is more common however to use the former arrangement. The smartest player stands at E and runs on line EF, while other players standing at A, G, I, K, M, O & D operate along lines AB, GH, IJ, KL, MN, OP and DC respectively. The players of the fielding party stand outside near the line AE and one by one or in a group try to enter the compartment 1. They are checked by players at A and E. Then after this and even when other members of the playing party have not entered compartment 1, those who have entered attempt to cross into compartmtent 2 and so on till they reach compartment 6 from where try to go to 7 and so to compartment 12. If all players are successful in reaching compartment 12 without being intercepted, they win the game.

The rule is that the players of the fielding party must run on the line drawn on the field. They may of course stretch their hands, but they cannot move away from the line into the compartments to touch the players. The most difficult part is that of the person who manages line EF because he has to run the most. The game easily runs from 45 minutes to an hour and is quite a vigorous one. When the boys are playing this game, other villagers assemble there to witness it and also buck up the players.

Gendi

Gendi or the game of stilts is probably the only recreational item that has some organization about it, and this is so because it appears to have some association with the religious activities of the people. The bamboo-stilts, known as *gendi*, are prepared and taken out on the *hareli* festival and put back on the *Pola* festival. In areas where bamboos are plentiful, the boys immerse their *gendi* on the *pola* day but in Kosa, immersion is not done because bamboos are costly and the people keep the *gendi* in the houses to be repaired and used in successive years.

The people are not able to give any reason for the association of *gendi* with the *Hareli* and *Pola* festivals. *Hareli* falls in July-August and *pola* in August-September and the stilts may be the symbols of wading through fields which are full of water. This recreation of children may impart that idea that the fields should be so full of water that stilts are necessary. It may thus be a propitiatory game.

The *gendi* are made of two pieces of bamboo which vary in size according to the age of the rider. Boys of about age 10 years to 16 years have usually 6 feet long bamboo pieces. This is split into two upto about 2½ to 3 feet length and at this height is inserted another one foot long piece of bamboo which is well-fixed to the split portion with ropes of coconut fibre. This one foot long bamboo fixed in the longer sticks serves as the foot-rest. The rope used for tying is made wet with water and tightened well. On drying it when the *gendi* is used a croaking sound comes out. *Gendi* is the recreation of the village boys from *Hareli* to *Pola*. (July-August to August-September).

Indoor games and games of girls at age-group 13-16 years

The girls have practically no outdoor games to play. Most of them in the age-group 13-16 years are married and some have even lived with their husbands. Their only pastimes are to chat with their sisters-in-law or to see the boys playing. The only game which they play is known as *bhotkul* and is a game either played indoors or in a quiet spot somewhere. *Bhotkul* is also played by boys and girls of the younger age-group and very rarely older women also play it. The game of *bhotkul* is played as follows:—

Bhotkul

Though pronounced as *bhotkul* the correct name of this game appears to be *bhatkul* from the Hindi word *bhatkana* or to get lost. The game can be understood

with the help of the diagramatic sketches. (Plate LXXXII 126).

The game is played by two persons. 10 small pits are made on the ground 5 in one line and the other 5 opposite to the first and separate from them by about 10-12 inches. In between the two and at the two ends, two more slightly bigger pits are made and one each is shared by the players.

In all of the 10 pits 5 pieces of stones or seeds of tamarind are kept. The player starting the game picks up all the 5 draughts from any pit and proceeding anti-clockwise puts one draught in each pit (not the 'store'). Supposing he starts from pit marked 1, he picks up all the five draughts from here and will put one each in pits 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Then he picks up all the draughts from pit No. 7 where there are 5 pieces and those he puts in pits in 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. In pit No. 10 there are now 6 draughts and these are picked up and put in 1, 2, 3, 4.5 and 6. Next pit to be picked up is 7 where there is only one draught. This is picked up and put in 8. Then the player picks up the 7 draughts of pit No. 9 and those are put in 10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Now pit No. 7 is empty and so the player is entitled to receive all the draughts that are there in pit No. 8 (which are 8).

The rule is that a player is entitled to get this benefit only on the opposite side. If he gets this chance on his side, he gets lost (*bhatak-gis*).

Now 'A' player starts. Let us suppose he starts from pit No. 4 where there are 8 draughts. Those are put in 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 1 & 2. Now he picks up one draught of pit number 4. Next he takes 9 draughts of pit number 5 and puts one each in 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 1, 2, 3, 4. House number 5 is empty but since the empty house is on his side, he has 'gone lost' and 'B' begins the game again from his side.

Thus the game proceeds till the players have exhausted all the coins. Then each player counts his coins and rearranges 5 draughts in each pit. Suppose 'A' has 16 draughts and 'B' has 34. After arranging 'B' will have 9 draughts extra and 'A' will be able to fill up 3 houses completely and left with 1 draught. 'B' will put his five draughts in one pit of 'A' and 4 in the other pit where 'A' would also put his 1 draught. These houses, say 8 and 7 will not be touched in the second round and after the game the draughts of 7 will be taken by B (4 draughts) 'A' (1 droughts.....).

The game takes a long time and is very interesting. The trick of the game is to try to arrange as many draughts as possible on the other side and arrange the move in such a manner, as to finish the draughts before an empty pit. All the draughts in the pit after the empty pit belong to the mover.

Games of the Adults and Grown-Ups

Grown-up men of Kosa play some indoor-games in the verandah of Ghanshyam's house or in front of some house. But even these easy indoor games are not usually played daily, but only on festival days or when the people have some other occasion of pleasure and happiness. These games are known as *nou-gotiya, tiri-chouk* and *ram-chiwara.*

Nou-gotiya

Also sometimes referred to as *Krishna-chiwara,* this is an easy game but requires some thinking on the part of the players. The game is also played by women and by persons in lower age-group. It is also played when the cattle are grazing and the grazier finds himself free to play with the cattle-dung collectors. People working in fields during the agricultural season play *nou-gotiya* when they get a little time. The game is known as *nou-gotiya* (nine draughts) because it is played with 9 small pebbles. The game is played as described below:—

A star (as shown in the diagram) is drawn on the ground with a stone and 9 small pebbles are taken in hand. Two players play the game and the task is to arrange these nine draughts (pebbles) at 9 points in 9 moves in such a manner that, starting from a point, the third point should be occupied in one move (the point of start being counted as one) and secondly the move should always be in a straight line. The rule is that each point can be used only once as a starting point and secondly the point occupied cannot be used as the starting point for future moves. The person who is not able to place the 9 pebbles in 9 moves according to these rules loses the game. The *nou-gotiya* is explained in Illustration 128 (Plate LXXXIII).

The correct method would be to start from a point and the second move should be to occupy the previous starting point. First move may be from point 1 and the draught would occupy point 4. In the second move point 1 should be occupied and so the start should be from 8, third move point 8 should be occupied from 5; in fourth move 5 should be occupied from 2; in 5th move 2 should be occupied from 9; in sixth move 9

should be occupied from 6; in seventh move 6 should be occupied from 3; in 8th move 3 should be occupied from 10 and in 9th move 10th should be occupied from 7th point which will remain vacant. This is the quickest method. Played in any other way the draughts are difficult to be arranged according to rules..

Pasa

Pasa is the name given to the common game of *choupad*. The *choupad* board (on cloth) has recently been purchased by Jairamdas Panka (the watchman) from Durg and people sometimes play it. The game is not being described here since it is a common item of partime in many other areas of the country. Shobharam does not like the game. He says that it is *"dauki hare ka khel"* i.e. the game of the losing wife. He, of course, refers to the story in Mahabharata in which Draupadi was lost by the Pandavas while they were playing *choupad* with Shakuni, one of the Kaurvas, who was an expert in this game. It is likely that the influence of Shobharam has been instrumental in the unpopularity of this game.

Tiri-Chouk

Similar to the game of *pasa* and much simpler than it is the game of *tiri-chouk* which is played by adult men and women and also by children in 10-16 years age-group. In some areas of the State this game is known as *ath-char* (eight-four). The game is played in the following manner.

A square is drawn on the ground with chalk or clay. The square is generally 15 to 18 inches square and is divided by four vertical and four horizontal lines. Thus 25 small inset squares are formed. The central square is marked with a cross and the peripheral middle squares are similarly marked. The latter serve as the 'houses' where draughts are placed and the central square is the house where these draughts are to be deposited.

The game can be played by 2 to 4 persons who use pieces of tiles, charcoal, stone and wood pieces as draughts keeping them in the peripheral middle squares. Four *cowrie* shells or four half tamarind seeds are used as dice. One side of the tamarind seeds, done into two, is white and the other side with the skin is black and similarly one side (the ventral side) of the *cowrie* shells has the opening. *Cowrie* shells with ventral side up and tamarind seeds with the white side up when thrown on the ground, are counted as one. All the four dice thus placed are counted as eight and all of them are counted as four when they are the other way up (i.e. the black of tamarind seed up and the top of *cowrie* shells up). The player who plays four or eight repeats the throw. Similarly if he has replaced (killed) the draught of any other player, he repeats the throw. Once so beaten, the player has to bring his draught to the starting point.

The player moves his draughts to the right as many 'houses' away as he gets such numbers on the dice. In the game the players can 'kill' one anothers draught, for example, if 'A' has moved his draught 2 houses and is at point X, he can be killed by 'B' who playes six. And then 'B' would be entitled to one more throw. He, in the first throw got 'four', repeated the throw and got two; replaced (killed) the draught of 'A' and thus got one more chance. Supposing he gets only one so he places his draught at point O in the diagram and then C and D play. Then 'A' gets his chance and supposing he gets three on the dice, he may replace (kill) the 'O' draught of 'B' and would get one more throw.

When played in pairs — A and C would be on one side and B and D would constitute the other pair. The partners do not replace each others draught but play in such a manner as to enable them to take their draughts in the central square. The route is shown in the diagram. The person who is able to take all his draughts into the central square wins the game and when more than one player is playing the game, he who remains with any one or all his draughts out loses the game. The draughts are known as *gotee* and to take a *gotee* into the central house is known as *pakna* (to get ripe) and when *tiri-chouk* is being played there is quite a bit of excitement. One may shout *'mor gotee pak ge'* (my draughts have ripened) and the other may shout while throwing the *cowrie*-shells *'Doo chal'* or *Teen'* (I should get two, literally, move two or three). When somebody replaces or 'kills' as it is called the draught of the opponent, he may shout *'marenw re'* (I have killed). When four persons are playing the game, others assemble there to watch and enjoy and tender unasked advice.

Ram-chiwara

The game known as *ram-chiwara* is much simpler than the game of *tiri-chouk* and is played by adult men and women and also by boys and girls. It is again a common game played on field embankments and on grazing grounds. The playing-chart for the game is

drawn on the ground as shown in Illustration 127 (Plate LXXXIII).

The game is played by two persons and 18 draughts of broken tile, coal or stone pebbles are used by each player. These draughts, or *gotee* as they are called, are arranged in the manner shown in the diagram and there is only one house left for the players to move. The player starting the game occupies this house and his *gotee* is 'killed' by the other and so the game proceeds. The object is to take as many *gotee* as possible to the other side and the player who loses all his *gotee* first loses the game. The game does not require much thinking and is ended very soon. It is therefore a very popular game in the field and on grazing grounds and the grazier can play a set with his companion before the cattle stray away too far, and similarly the cultivators can finish the game by the time the plough-cattle get a little respite.

Games of Cards

Games of cards are sometimes played on festive occasions and these are all simple games known as *nakkas, katpatti, bhes* and *teen-do-panch. Katpatti* game is played by four persons forming two pairs with 52 cards. One pair shuffles the cards and the other pair has to declare the trump card. The party who make seven hands win the game. *Teen-do-panch* is played with 30 selected cards by 3 persons who have respectively to make 2, 3 and 5 hands. If a player has got more hands and one has less than allotted, the one having more has the right to withdraw a card from his lot in the next shuffle and replace that by one from his piece. *Nakkas* and *bhes* are ordinary games of cards but we have not witnessed it being played and are as such not able to describe it.

The villagers deny having any knowledge of gambling and it is not possible to investigate into this aspect. But some people of nearby villages have told us that some villagers of Kosa are very fond of gambling and even invite and give shelter to gamblers from other villages. Since Kosa is a little away and one has to walk 2 miles in any case before the village can be reached, the gamblers find themselves pretty safe here. Gambling becomes more common at the time of the annual bazar. We do not have any information either to confirm or deny this.

Other recreations

Up to 1960 the villagers had a *Ramayan-mandli* and Ghanshyam Kurmi, Chintaram Satnami and some others used to pass some time in the *mandli*. But because of the quarrel over the deepening of the tank (described in the section on *panchayat* and Leadership) this *mandli* has become defunct. When functioning, the party used to meet in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi and recite passages from Ramayan and sing *bhajans*. Though Ghanshyam and Chintaram have since then been reconciled, the *Ramayan Mandli* has not been revived. Some boys pass their time reading novels and other literature which they get from the School-library at Sirri and we found one boy with the Hindi edition of a novel by the great Bengali novelist Sharat Chandra.

Kosa has two *naach* (dance) parties consisting of some boys and young men. The members of these parties are all Satnamis. The dances are not a regular feature but are arranged only on festive occasions like marriage and *jawara* festival. Thy have a harmonium and a set of other musical instruments.

THE DANCES AND SONGS OF KOSA

Unlike the tribal villages in greater part of Bastar District where the people have an organized system of recreation in the nature of a variety of dances, rural and pastoral villages in Chhattisgarh have almost nothing worth the name. Those villages in which the Rawat community has a sizeable population of their own, are somewhat more colourful in this respect. But even in these villages the dances are seen only during a certain part of the year — before Diwali. For rest of the year the Rawats play on their long thick flute and sing *dadariya*. Those who have ever listened to the melodious sound of this thick flute ringing through the silence of nights, may probably never forget it. But the ring of the flute becomes all the more enchanting when it is played alternating with the *dadariya*.

Dadariya are the mainstay of the indigenous poetry of Chhattisgarh and it is the Rawats who excell in it. Some of them compose *dadariya* couplets on the spur of the moment. Examples of some *dadariya* have been given in the Village-Survey Reports of villages Bendri and Tilaibhat of Raipur and Bilaspur districts respectively. The writer is reminded of a line of the *dadariya* which somebody had composed during the last World War and it would be interesting to mention it here. It said — *"GOLA GIR GE SADAR MA*
KAMPAT HE CHOLA, GA
DANADAN BAM KA GOLA"
(A Bomb has fallen in Sadar. O friend my body is

trembling. Oh, the Bombs one after another).

Dadariya are not long and monotonous poetry. They consist of only two lines which are usually unrelated and sometimes may not mean anything at all. The only feature is that both the lines are well-rhymed and only such words are used which satisfy the rhyme; meaning is not important. Some of these *dadariyas* are in the nature of questions and answers and one example of this form was noted in village Tilaibhat of Bilaspur District; it is given in the monograph of that village. No example of this question-answer form of *dadariya* could be got in Kosa. Some of those collected from Kosa are being given here:—

BATKI MA BASI, CHURKI MA NOON
MAI GATH HON DADARIYA, TAI KAN DHAR KE SUN.

(There is a *basi* in the dish and salt in the salt-pot. I am singing the *dadariya*, hear it intently).

BATKI MA BASI, DONA MA DAHI
PATWARI LA BALADE, NAPAN JAHI.

(There is *basi* in the plate and curd in the leaf-cup. Call the *patwari* he will go to measure the field).

GOLA RE GOLA RE, CHANDI KE GOLA RE,
GOLA GIR GE SADAR MA, NAHI BACHE CHOLA RE.

(O, the Bomb, Oh, the Bomb. It is the Bomb of silver. The Bomb has fallen in the Sadar, the body cannot be protected).

CHHIN CHHIN PANI, CHHIN CHHIN GHAM
GHINGHINHA BALAYA, BADAN BHAIS ANG

(This moment is the rainfall and that moment is the sun-light. That dirty fellow is calling me, my body is as if on fire).

RAHAR KADI, BANDHE LA KHARPA
GHAR BAN LE HAROTHA, BAHIR HALKA

(From the dried stems of the *Rahar* plant the door is made. Do the make-up within the house, go out without it).

Some other examples of *dadariya* are:—

BAMHAN BAIRAGI LA SUPA MA DIYE DHAN
OKAR POTHEE KA PADHAIYA LA LEGE BHAGWAN.

(Gave alms of paddy to Brahman ascetic in the winnowing-pan. The reader of scripture has been taken away by God.)

CHHENW CHHENW DHOBI, MANJHOT CHAMRA
BEECH GALI MA GADARIYA BEENAT KARMA

(The Dhobi has his house in the extremity and interspersed are the houses of the Chamars. The grazier is right in the middle of the lane and is knitting the blanket).

MARE BAR LAKDI, KUTUM BAR BHAT
JILA SAHEB BAR KACHERI, CHADACHAD KARE BAT.

(Fuel is required for a corpse and rice is required to feed the household. A court is required for the Collector of the district where he chats without halting for breath).

GAHUN GADELI RE, BATURA KE KUN
GHARELI DET HE BASI, BIHAI DET HE NOON.

(The wheat is in the palm and the pea-grains are in the pot. My concubine serves me the *basi* and the married wife serves the salt).

AMA GIRAWE, KHAHON KARIKE
TAI KAISE DAGA MA DARE, AHOON KAHIKE.

(Saying 'I will eat them' he knocked down mangoes. Why have you deceived me saying 'I will come'.)

KHARE MAJHANIYA NIKAR PANIYA
DAGNI BIDH DOLE TOR KANIHA

(At exactly mid-day you went out to fetch water. Your waist sways like a thin bamboo).

KUWA KA PANI JHIKEW LEJ MA
NAHI NAHI KAHAT HON CHHAILA, GIRAT HAS DEH MA.

(I drew water from the well in the bucket. Though I say 'no, no', coxcomb you fall upon my body).

GAY HE GOHADI BHAINS BIJARA
MOLA KHANSE ALBELA GIJARA

(Like a cow in a herd — (I am) and 'you are) a breeding he-buffalo. O gallant smiler, you coughed at seeing me).

Devotional Songs

In the section on 'Religion' have been given some devotional songs collected from Kosa. Below is given a song which the people sing while performing the *danda nach*.

"JOHAR RE, JOHAR RE GURU THAKUR DEOTA
SEWA RE LAGON ME TORE JOG — OONH
JOHAR RE LAGON TORE
JOHAR RE JOHAR RE, MAI MATA SHIRI DEOTA
SEWA RE LAGON ME TORE — OONH
MADI LA DHOWA LE, JHOOLEO PARONO KA HANSA
HANSA CHUGTHE MOONGA MOTI,
FOLE CHANA KE DUI DAR.)

(Obeisance to thee O teacher Thakur God

I am offering service to thee
Obeisance to thee O Mother Goddess
I am offering my service to thee
Allow me to wash your feet
Allow me to swing you, O the Swan of by heart
The swan picks the pearls

I have only two grains of gram). And the dancers make a common sound Oonh.

Songs of Holi

At the time of the *Holi* festival there is some freedom for the men to talk and sing obsence songs but this is not done to extreme in the village. Some songs which seem to have symbolical significance are however sung and one of such songs is given below:—

CHHOTE DEWARA MOR BARI MA LAGA DE KEWARA
KON JAT HE ARI BARI,
KON JAT HE FULWARI,
KON JAT HE BHATA BARI,
KON MAJA MARI,
CHHOTE DEWARA MOR BARI MA LAGA DE KEWARA

(O, my husband's younger brother, plant a *Kewara* shoot in my kitchen-garden. Who is going on and again, to and fro who is going to the garden? Who is going to the field of brinjals and who is getting the fun? Oh, my husband's younger brother plant a shoot of *Kewara* in my kitchen-garden).

Now, in this song, the words like *bari, kewara, ari-bari* seem to be symbolical — in their meaning.

Another song of *Holi*, which is devotional, is:—

MOR MURLI BAJAY, MOR BANSI BAJAY
CHHOTE SE SHYAM KANHAIYA
CHHOT CHHOT RUKHWA KADAM KE
BHUIYAN LAHSE DAR
JA TAREE BAITHE KRISHNA KANHAIYA
GALA LIYE LAPTAY
CHHOTA SA SHYAM KANHAIYA,
MUKH MURLI BAJAY.

(Plays on my flute, plays on my flute Shyam Kanhaiya so young
Small are the trees of *kadamb*
The branches kiss the ground
Seated below it is Krishna embracing
Shyam Kanhaiya — so young — is playing on the flute with his mouth).

Danda-nach (stick dance)

This dance is arranged at the time of the *jawara* festival and at the time the general worship of *Thakur Deo* is being made in the village. Some boys and young men take a one-and a half foot long stick in their hands and make a circle. They dance to the accompaniment of the song given above and to the beat of the *mandar* (a drum). As the music is going on the dancers beat their sticks with one anothers' turn about, beat again, move in two circles and beat again. And the sound of beating sticks is so timed as to harmonize with the music and the song. The dance is a drab one and there is no vigour about it nor organized and well-timed paces.

Suwa—nach (Parrot dance)

Russell and Hiralal have described[12] this dance in the following words: "In Raipur the women make an image of parrot in clay at the *Diwali* and place it on a a pole and go round to the different houses, singing and dancing round the pole, and receiving presents of rice and money. They praise the parrot as the bird who carries messages from a lover to his mistress, and as living on the mountains and among the green verdure, and sing:

"OH PARROT, WHERE SHALL WE SOW
GONDIA GRASS & WHERE SHALL WE SOW RICE
WE WILL SOW GONDIA IN A POND AND RICE IN THE FIELD
WITH WHAT SHALL WE CUT GONDIA GRASS
AND WITH WHAT SHALL WE CUT RICE?
WE SHALL CUT GONDIA WITH AN AXE
AND RICE WITH A SICKLE."

It is probable that the parrot is revered as a spirit of the forest, and also perhaps because it is destructive to the corn. The parrot is not, so far as is known, associated with any god, but the Hindus do not kill it. In Bilaspur an ear of rice is put into the parrot's mouth, and it is said there that the object of the rite is to prevent the parrots from preying on the corn.

If the *dadariya* can be said to be the main pillar of Chhattisgarhi poetry, *suwa-nach* can definitely be said to be the main arch of the citadal of the indigenous dances. This is clear from the fact that though *suwa-nach* has been shaken to the roots by the onslaughts of urban culture, it has not fallen. And it exists in Kosa though restricted to the Satnamis only, and as seen in Kosa, the dance differs from that described by Russell and Hiralal. The song given by Russell is not known

12. The Tribes & Castes of the Central Provinces, Vol. II, R. V. Russell and Hiralal, 1916, p. 33.

here nor do the people know if parrot is symbolically appeared so as not to feed upon the corn. Again no ear of rice crop is put into the mouth. The *suwa-nach* songs of Kosa have a tragic theme. In one, the mistress of one Birsingh has probably become unfaithful to him and is talking to her friend; in the other a newly-wed girl has been left by her husband who has gone away for business and the girl is asking her friend as to how she should pass her time.

The *suwa-nach* starts some four days before the fifteenth day of *Kartik* (usually November). The dance does not require any paraphernalia. All that it requires is an earthen bird representing parrot — placed over a concial piece of wood and put in a basket. Two or three handfuls of paddy grains and some flowers are also put in the basket and the basket and the 'parrot' are partly covered with a cloth. The dance is done to the tune of a song and is not accompanied by any musical instrument. The dance is performed only by women and they clap in a harmonious way; the clapping is the only musical company to the song. The song usually consists of questions and answers. The dancers divide themselves into two groups and these two groups arrange themselves into the form of arches of a circle and stand facing one another. The basket containing the 'parrot' is placed in the centre of this circle.

The group which start the dance bend down, clap their hands together in a very rhythmic manner and set the music. Then they stop and stand up again. The other group now bends down and clapping similarly sets the rhythm and the music. Then they also close and stand up. At the same time the first group bends down and sing a line or two and they are followed by the other group. While singing and also while standing the groups keep on moving sidewards to the left.

The *suwa*-dancers go with their *suwa* (parrot) from house to house in the village, irrespective of castes and the people whose house they visit give them rice, paddy or money which they keep in the same basket. Visiting a house, the dancers put the basket in some open place either on the outside or in the court yard of the house and forming the group as they sing and dance remain in one particular house for about 10 minutes. The song begins with two or three meaningless lines, the only meaning of which appears to be to set the rhythm and the motion. Some lines of a *suwa* song are given here:—

TARI NARI NANA, NANA SUWANA WO
TARI NARI NANA, NANA HO
JHANI SUNI PAWE BIRSINGH RAJA HO
JHANI SUNI PAWE BIRSING RAJA
KHANDARI LA HERHI, BHOOSA LA BHARHI KO

(Tari nari nana, nana O parrot
Tari nahi nana, nana parrot
King Birsing should not hear, O friend
King Birsing should not hear
He would skin alive and fill paddy-husk in the skin-bag).

The song thus goes on telling the tragic tale of the beloved of some legendery King Birsing. Another popular *suwa* song is in the nature of questions and answers; one group singing the question part of it and the other group singing the answer to it. This song is also a pathetic, one some young man is leaving behind his newly married wife and going out for business. The song is:—

TARI NARI NANA HO NANA HO NANA HO SUWANA
TARI NARI NANA HO NANA HO NANA
SUWANA RE SUWANA, HO MORE SUWANA RE
PAHIRE GAWAN KE DEHARI BITHAYE
CHHORH RAJA JAWE BAN ARI
KAKAR SANG KHELIHON, KAKAR SANG KHAHON
KA DEKH KE RAIHON MAN BANDH

(This is what the first group sings. The meaning is:
Tari nari nana ho nana ho nana O parrot
Tari nari nana ho nana ho nana
Parrot, O parrot, O my own parrot
Bringing me to the threshold of the house after the *gauna*
My beloved is leaving me and going to the forest
With whom would I play, with whom would I eat
Looking at whom would I control my feelings).

ANGANA LAGA LE TULSI KA BIRWA RE SUWANA
OLA DEKH KE RAH MAN BANDH
TULSI KA BIRWA HARIYAR HARIYAR RE SUWANA
TOR PIYA KARAT HE BANIJ
TULSI KA BIRWA JHURMUR JHURMUR
TOR PIYA GAIS RAN JOOJH, RE SUWANA

(The second group reply thus:
'O parrot plant a basil in the court-yard
Look at that and control your heart
O parrot, as long as the basil plant is green
Take it for granted that your beloved is doing his business
If the basil plant becomes dry and crumpled
The indication is that your beloved has fallen in the battle).

And so on it goes, the group moving from house to house without completing the whole tale since it would take a long time. And here, it seems, the parrot is neither regarded to be a spirit of the forest nor destructive to the corn. It may be regarded as a messenger and possibly more in the nature of a consoling counsellor. The woman in the song asks for consolation and guidance from the parrot.

Parrot or *shuk* is a bird, which, like the swan, crow and pigeon, is popular in folk-tales and folk-songs and also in literature. Malik Mohammad Jayasi in his great poetical work 'Padmavat' narrates how a parrot told king Ratansen about the ravishing beauty of princess Padmini of the Sinhal Island and how Ratansen, getting impatient to have a glimpse of Padmini, accompanied the parrot to the Sinhal Islands. His wife Rani Nagmati, thus deserted, passed her days in agnoy. In the *suwa* songs described above, the parrot appears to be a companion and a counsellor and the woman, having no other companion, is shown as talking to the parrot giving vent to her feelings.

Be that as it may, the *suwa-nach* is a delightful dance to watch and to listen to the song. Taken to its completion, it may tend to be a little monotonous but this rarely happens because the dancers hardly stay in a house from the beginning to the end; they sing two or four stanzas and then move away and so monotony does not creep in.

Other recreations

Occasional recreation is provided to the villagers of Kosa when some snake-charmer, *dewarnin* (tattooer) or *dang-chagha* (acrobat) come to the village. These people do not belong to the village nor are they specifically called by the villagers. They come and go as and when they like. Whatever little recreation they provide is short-lived and in any case once a while in a year or two years. As stated in the chapter on 'Religion' the villagers sometime invite a 'drama-party' or 'Ramlila' party at the time of Dasahra and get some recreation for a night or two talking about the roles and the robes and the story of the drama for some days.

Some riddles are posed by the villagers to one another. These are done when the people are gay and completely at ease as at *jawara, Hareli* or *Pola* festival day. The riddles may be in the nature of a mathematical querry or may have some sexual suggestion. Some of these riddles are:—

PANCH RUPAY MA BHAINS BIKAT HE
EK RUPAY ME GAY
CHHAR ANNA KA CHERI. BIKAT HE
BEES RUPAY ME BEES JANAWR LENIS
KATKA KATKA KON JANWAR LENIS?

(She-buffalo is being sold for five-rupees, and the cow for a rupee. The she-goat is being sold for four annas.. Somebody has purchased twenty cattle for twenty rupees. How many cattle of each kind did he buy?)
(Ans. 3, 1, 16.)

The young boys of the village ask this riddle. It is also a common riddle during marriage ceremonies. The riddle has a sexual significance.

MOR HALAT HE
TOR CHATKE HE
KA AYE — JANE JAN?

(Mine is hanging, yours is fixed as if pasted. What is it — tell if you can.)
(Ans. (1) Male and female genitalia, (2) Peacock and *taroi* (*Luffa.*))

Mati Ke Baila, Mati Ke Palan
Oma Chaghe Mati Ke Dewan.

(An earthen bullock, and earthen saddle on it rides and earthen Master).
(Answer — Earthen cooking pot — *handi.*)

Alag Dar Me Phare Lakariya
Teka Chate Tor Dokariya.

(A bit of wood becomes fruit on a branch apart and your old mother relishes it—
(Answer — drumstick, *munga*).

This is possibly all that may be stated about the recreations and games of Kosa. Different festivals are still the occasions which provide some sustained and regular means of recreation by breaking the monotony of life and drabness of food. They are the occasions when the people forget their worries and problems and are completely relaxed. Worship of the *Thakur Deo*, the trance of the *baiga*, the *gendi*, and the *suwa-nach* are all the occasions and items which every villager eagerly looks forward to. In the meantime, the surrounding markets provide means of recreation and Kosa itself holds a market once a year. Here and in those markets the people see various things, meet different people, review old contacts and establish new ones and it is here that people meet many friends of their childhood and these keep them happy and gay with smile on their faces. And days after days the usual topics are already there, the cattle and the crops, the food and elopment, the adultery and the *panchayat*, talk about

the experience of a visit to Durg and about the *patwari* or the police constable who visits Kosa. But by and large, it is the religion too that is recreation.

Communication

In the present National and World context, where time and distances have been relatively reduced, no individual, community or country can manage to remain as isolate. And the villagers of India, which had in the past, closed their door, to outsiders and outside knowledge cannot remain so even if they like it. At the time the founder of Kosa came here with his two wives Kari and Pandri, his needs were practically nil and he and his wives remained content with themselves and they lived within the closed world of Kosa. His 'tribe' has enlarged: the times have changed: the economic and social frontiers of the village have expanded and Administration has entered the village. The country has witnessed 3 General Elections and the political aspirants have got to contact the electorate. They and their representatvies visit the villages. These factors have brought about a change in the world of, and in the world view of, the descendents of Kari and Pandri and their eyes very much see beyond the line where the eyes of the old man and of his two wives rested when they came to settle the Kosa.

Though Kosa is only 9 miles or so from Durg as the crow flies, the actual approach-distance is about 19 miles, only 11 miles of which is covered by a bus. This has helped Kosa to still maintain some amount of exclusiveness and to be 'far from the madding crowds' of the city. But still then, continuous communication is going on and the various channels in which this is being done are described here.

Visitors from outside

We do not know if anybody ever visited the old man and Kari and Pandri to tell them what was happening in the world beyond the horizons of Kosa, nor do we know if during the Maratha domination in the area anybody ever visited Kosa but for collecting the tax on land. And from all that we know, even during the British rule in India, the only officers that came to Kosa, were the police constable and the *patwari*. "But now", as Shobharam Satnami said "everybody and anybody comes to us: somebody to look at the crop and somebody to ask us for votes and others to tell us that we are the rulers; that our votes are so valuable as to send this person to power or that to lose the election. And now you have come to ask us as to how we live, what we eat and how we marry; how Bhookhin eloped and why Kalloo does not marry." What he said was true because many people visit Kosa and from all of them, no matter for what purpose they come, the villagers of Kosa get some or the other information: all of them serve as an important means of communication of ideas and of knowledge.

We do not know how many people have visited Kosa for such purposes as Shobharam related because they came and went back. But there is a record of persons who came here and stayed here. The village-watchman keeps a register known as *Musafiri*-register in which he makes entries about persons who stayed here (except Government officers, of course) and the information for five years is presented here.

VISITORS TO KOSA

Year	*Number of persons who came to Kosa for*													
	As agricultural labour	*Meeting relatives*	*Marriage party*	*For other social purposes like taking daughters, demanding marriage compensation and the like*	*For selling buffalo*	*For doing blacksmithy work*	*For selling shoes*	*For selling & repairing utensils*	*For selling & making ornaments*	*For selling sweet-meat*	*For selling Honey, Cloth (H) (C)*	*For selling quack medicines*	*For reciting Bhagwat*	*For begging*
1957	—	6	—	5	—	2	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	4
1958		9	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
1958	—	10	85	14	7	—	2	5	—	1	1 (C)	1	—	4
1960	—	9	150	4	9	—	—	—	—	1	2 (H)	—	—	3
1961	9	1	125	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	2 (C)	—	2	18

Most of these visitors serve as media of communication and the villagers of Kosa know about other villages. The sweetmeat-sellers come here from Bhilai and from Raipur and bring them some news from there and by the time the news travels, to Kosa it becomes so much modified as to be almost fantastic. How this modified and extra-adulterated information comes to Kosa is clear from the following, which the villagers told us.

(1) 10 or 12 years back some people came from the side of Deo Baloda to nearby villages and posed as police officers and also as revenue officers. They said that they would give land to landless persons and with this bait they took money from the villagers. Asked as to which were the villages these imposters visited, the people said they do not remember the names now. The information was passed to them by some such visitors as feature on the above table.

(2) About 2-3 years ago some people committed a murder in village Khopli. These murderers were from Bhilai Steel Project.

(3) The Satnami *guru*, who is also 'something in Delhi' was approached by some agents from Pakistan and they requested the *guru* to become a muslim. It is about 10 years back when this happened. The *guru* of course rejected the proposal. Then the agents met the husband of the *guru* and gave an offer of money and weapons but to no effect.' Asked as to the source of this information, the people said they do not know from where they heard this. But somebody who came to the village related the story. There was some difference of opinion on this. Some villagers said that it was not the *guru* who was approached but her husband. But they were concerned about it and that the *guru* should not give her consent to become muslim otherwise all of them would have to follow her and they do not want to change the religion, but at the some time the *guru* cannot be opposed.

(4) The present *guru* has a 7-8 years old son who possesses supernatural powers, and one of these powers is the power of leviation. But his mother has directed him not to exhibit these powers and thus waste the energy. The boy therefore keeps a secret of this and does not do any miracle-mongering.

Chintaram Satnami has another improvement over this. He says that he has heard that one day this boy took three births. In the morning he appeared like a child, in the noon he becomes a grown-up man and in the evening he looked as a wrinkled old person. He has however not seen this but believes it to be correct.

Thus the villagers of Kosa listen to the outsiders about such improbable stories and modified versions of incidents. From the Brahman *pandits* who come here to recite *Satyanarayan ki katha*, stories of *boula chouth* and *kamarchhat* and to recite the *Bhagwat*, the villagers know some vague ideas about the 'Great tradition' or the parochial version of the 'Great Tradition' and sometimes the people parochialize the 'Great Tradition'. The police constable tells them of the crimes that happened in some villages or about some case that he attended. The *patwari* tells them about the villages in his charge and what happened there and so on. But it is surprising to find that the villagers do not know that the Government allots land to landless persons, that new Code of Land Revenue has come into force and that the cultivators are now called Bhumiswamis and that this is the only class of tenure-holders. This is surprising in the light of the fact that they know that sub-letting is a contravention of the provisions of Law. It is for this reason that they have instructed the lessees that if anybody asks them about it, the answer should not be about *reg* and *adhiya* but that of partnership.

The villagers know about the district, tahsil, block, police-station and *patwari* headquarters. Very few women however know about the block headquarters. The functions of *gram-sewak* (village level worker) are fairly accurately known to most of men and these functions are described as distribution of seed, and fertilizer, getting well dug and tank deepened. Except Ghanshyam Kurmi and Chintaram Satnami who have some vague ideas about the objects and functions of Development Block and about the philosophy of Community Development, no villager has any idea about it except that it is an agency which distributes money for construction of wells or deepening of tanks.

Even at the office of the Development Block at Gunderdehi, figures of the visits of Extension Officers to Kosa prior to 60-61, are not available (the Block was started on 1-10-57). We have figures of visits of Extension Officers to Kosa from 13-11-1960 onwards and these are as below:—

Category of officer	*No. of visits*	*Since when and upto date*
Block Development Officer	3	15-11-1960
Agricultural Extensoin Officer	4	17- 4-1961
Social Education Officer (Male)	3	1- 4-1960
Social Education Officer (Lady)	Nil	—

Veternary Extension Officer	3	13- 1-1960
Cooperative Extension Officer	4	1-10-1960
Overseer	5	1-10-1960
Village Level Worker	53	Since 1960

It appears that the people of Kosa have not been benefited from these visits and we dare not say where the lacuna lies — whether in the villagers or in the officers. The Block Development Officer, in all these visits stayed for a day each in the village and we have again no information if he made a night halt there. For the effective communication of ideas in the villages, a night-halt is absolutely essential for it is in the evenings and in the night that one gets all the villagers together. Be that as it may, the villagers of Kosa do not know that India is passing through the Third Plan phase and that the entire country is now covered by the National Extension Blocks. They do not know their 'friends, philophers and guides' who have their head-quarters at Gunderdehi.

The villagers of Kosa live under the shadow of a fear that Bhilai Steel Project is some day going to acquire their village and then they would lose the land. Every Officer of the Government, even the officers of the Census Organization, are viewed from this angle. Every enquiry made, however sympathetic the approch may be, is generally believed to have some ulterior connection with the acquisition of the village. It is a tragic fact that in spite of the visits by officers of the Development Block and other departments, the villagers should still have this fear. Official visitors from outside have not proved to be as effective a means of communication as they should have been.

Contacts made by the Villagers

Some of the villagers go to Durg occasionally and some go to Bhilai Steel Project for working there temporarily. These people bring new ideas and 'new' fashions into the village. 14 men and 3 women in Kosa have seen the Steel Project. The boys who go to Sirri to get their education tell the villagers of the new things they have learnt. The villagers have gone to see the Steel Project and once some people saw the factory from the inside: they were taken their in a truck, as they say. And they tell other villagers how melted iron flows like water and boils like milk. When the Prime Minister of India once came to the Steel Project Chintaram, Shobharam and many other villagers had gone there to have a glimpse of him. Nobody was able to tell us what the Prime Minister spoke but practically everybody was able to describe how he looked and what he wore. "His name is Jawahhir Lal Nehru", said Shobharam, "and he may be as old as I am. But see the difference. I look done up but he looks very fresh and energetic. It must be something to do with the food he eats." Another villager said: *"Jhak jhak dikhe. Hath ma Bet dhare hare."* (He was looking very handsome and had a small stick in his hand).

Villagers and Politics

The men know that the two parties which contested the General Election are *Baila-chhap* (Bullocks) and *Jhopdi-chhap* (Hut) and they participated in the election also. But it was said that they do not like to cast votes. "We do not get anything from it, Sir. What is the benefit to us from this?" And somebody talking about the electioneers said — *"O man ye debo ye karbo wo debo wo karbo kaithe ou kuchhoo nahi karre."* (Those people say that they would give this and do this and give that and do that and then do not do anything). Asked as to how do they cast their vote, they said they cast their votes en-block in one box. "We decided it here that we would put our vote in '————*chhap*' and we did it. We do not know what the party stands for."

The villagers have heard the name of Mahatma Gandhi but except the school-boys and Ghanshyam Kurmi, nobody is able to give any idea of the philosophy for which the Mahatma Gandhi stood or about his role in the resurgence of India. As said earlier, they have seen Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru in Bhilai, but very interesting opinions are given about him and his party. Three such opinons were:—

> Jawaharlal is also known as Congress;
> Congress is the law;
> Congress is the name of *Janta-raj* (people's Government).

Villagers and Urban contacts

The economy of the village depends to a great extent on the town of Durg. It is from there that they get the loan from the Co-operative and Land Mortgage Bank and it is there that they go and sell their crops and go to attend courts when necessary. But most of them do not like going to town. Shobharam said *"Ham man la shahar ma kono nai poochhe. Kookur asan ghoomat rath han."* (Nobody bothers about us in the town. We just move about like dogs there).

But the younger generation is rather fond of going to towns. Rewaram, Bijeram and Bhokloo Satnamis

are quite fond of going to Durg for seeing movie-films and so are Ghanshyam Kurmi and Chintaram Satnami. Chintaram Satnami has seen the largest number of films. These people know the names of film actors and actresses and have their own likes and dislikes.

Among the women, Butiya and Bhookhin are fond of going to city and to markets. From there they get ideas about dress and make-up and they are probably the most 'fashionable' ladies of Kosa as can be seen from their photographs given earlier.

Villagers and Chinese aggression

The villagers of Kosa are aware of the aggresion committed by China on Indian soil and said that war is going on between India and China. They, however, did not know where China had committed aggression or to which side of India it lies. They were very keen to learn about what was going on and why China should have committed the aggression.

Villagers and Literature

No newspaper or journal finds its way to Kosa, not even in the house of Ghanshyam Kurmi and as such the villagers of Kosa are months, if not years, behind the clock. They do not know that the State has been reconstituted, that the Chief Minister is changed and that China committed aggresion in NEFA and LADDAKH. All they knew was that the aggression was committed and this news they received from Durg There is no radio-set in Kosa, though the people have seen radio-sets in Durg.

The boys who have passed out the middle-school certificate examination read some books got from the school library of Sirri. As already mentioned earlier, we found a novel of Sharat Chandra in the hand of one such boy. Most of the people, however, have a copy of Ramayana in their house which they sometimes read. Ghanshyam Kurmi has a good collection of books in his house most of which he has not read and these books 'adorn' his house in the same way as there are books kept in the drawing-rooms of some of the sopisticated people where they are as unread as the books in the house of Ghanshyam.

Villagers and family-planning

None of the villagers know that family-planning can be deliberately done by use of contraceptives. Some of them however know what is known as *coitus interruptus* and *coitus reservatus* but they were also of the view that these techniques are not good. According to most of them (women have not been interviewed for this) "children are the gifts of Gods and there is no need to interfere in that. It is beyond the powers of man to 'erase what is written on his *bhagya*' and he would get as many children as Gods will." Role of the supernatural is explained by them as below: "How is that some people do not get children at all. They tire themselves out in the efforts to have atleast one issue. If, what you say is all, then they should get children. But, Sir though they have everything and do everything there is no child because the God is there and they have no children in their *Karam* (luck)". And here Shobharam was almost caustic when he said "If what you say is all, then many of us should have had two or three children every night in our young age. But, Sir, that is not the case. How do you account for that."

After explaining the use of some contraceptives and their efficacy in family-planning, 11 persons were again interviewed. (8 Satnami, 1 Rawat, 1 Kurmi and 1 Panka) and the results were as below:— 4 of the Satnamis were definitely against family-planning. Shobharam was of the view that Gods will should not be interfered. "After all what is there so big to stop children from coming in. Can they give children to those who do not have any?" Bansi Satnami was equally opposed to the concept. He felt that bigger households are always better than smaller ones. Bisahu Santami, who does not have any issues, was of the same view as Sobharam and so was Hagru. (How Hagru got children has been related earlier). Shivcharan and Rewa Satnamis were in favour of planning the families and said that larger number of children entitled larger difficulties and hardships. The Rawat, Kurmi and Panka were also in favour of planning. The table given below gives the result of this enquiry.

Caste	*No. of persons interviewed*	*No. of persons aware of family planning*	*No. of persons wanting more children*			*No. of persons wanting no more children*		
			have more than three issues	*have 1 to 3 issues*	*have no issue*	*have more than three issues*	*have 1 to 3 issues*	*have no issue*
Satnami	8	Nil	2	3	1	—	2	—
Rawat	1	Nil	—	—	—	1	—	—
Kurmi	1	Nil	—	—	—	1	—	—
Panka	1	Nil	—	—	—	—	1	—

Villagers attitude towards Government Officials

The villagers do not like the visits of Government officials to Kosa. One of the grounds of opposition to the purchase of furniture for use of visiting officials (described earlier) was that by providing furniture the villagers would indirectly invite more of them. They still fear the *patwari* and the police constable and would like to provide them a seat of honour before other higher officers. For some time, on one day, we had the company of the *patwari* who was keeping standing while we talked to the villagers. He was on and again offered a chair — *"Patwari saheb, baitho."* The mode of address was also more respectful towards the *patwari* e.g., to us the villagers addressed as *Maharaj* which means 'Sir' but to the *patwari* the address was always as *Patwari saheb.*

In the opinion of the villagers the lower officials are always more useful and the most useful and effective of these is the *patwari* and the police constable. The *patwari* is the more effective and respected of the two and his voice has some weight in it. The villagers do not bother much about the Tahsildar, or the Subdivisional officer or the Collector. Asked as to why this is so, the answer was "Sir, these officers do not come to measure our fields and to report about us. Even if we have contravened the law, the higher officers have to accept what the *patwari* says. They do not come to the spot and may be they do not know how to measure the field."

But in spite of this opinion about the ineffectiveness of the officials, the people do not want them to come to Kosa and in the heart of many of the villagers of Kosa is the lurking fear that visits of more and more officers may ultimately merge the village into the Steel Project.

Villagers and Community Development

The opinion of the authorities of Development Block at Gunderdehi is that the 'felt-need' of this village is mainly drinking water facilities i. e., tanks and wells. The other needs are a recreation house and construction of roads to connect it with important villages. But at the same time the development officials feel that the villagers are not very keen to have implementation of development activities in their village. They do not come forward to adopt the different methods of improved practices and the reason for this apathy has been ascribed by the Development Block to financial condition and illiteracy.

We have not lived in Kosa for a long enough time to be in a position to dispute the opinion of the villagers who must have arrived at this conclusion about the 'felt need' and the apathy of the villagers after a careful and sustained study. From the talk of the villagers and the study that has been described in preceding pages of this monograph it, however, appears that the villagers of Kosa do not regard any of the above items as their 'felt-needs'. They have said that the well is of course all right but the stream-water tastes better and as long as there is water in the stream, drinking water is brought from there and even in summer, people make small depressions into the stream-bed and bring drinking water from there. The water from the well is used for cleaning utensils and for giving to the cattle. Even the well has been incompletely done because there was no further public contribution. Though Hagru Satnami is making all efforts, nobody in the village is interested in the completion of the well-construction. This is not how people reach to a 'felt-need' unless of course the 'felt-need' is not theirs but somebody's else. Similarly, though there 'should be' a recreational centre in the village, the villagers do not think so and it cannot be called their 'felt-need'. Again, they do not think that heavens are going to fall if roads are not constructed in Kosa.

Our study has shown us that the villagers of Kosa are extremely concerned about two things — agriculture and grassland. In agriculture they want to increase the production per *acre* and want to know effective measures to control crop-pests and similarly they are in genuine need to have more grass for the cattle. The apathy of the people towards the schemes initiated by the Block is, in our opinion after the present survey, not because of illiteracy or financial condition of the people but because they never considered there to be the problems. "Diagnosing and prescribing for village problems requires three steps. First, the many individual village problems must be identified; second, the thing which causes village problems must be known; third, active steps should be recommended to solve each village problem. This is an essential process of getting the village people to look searchingly at themselves, and is the only basis on which the village people can take intelligent decisions as to what they want to do, when they want to do it, how they want to do it, and who is to take the initiative."[13]

13. A Guide to Community Development, D. Ensminger, 1957, p. 67.

The villagers of Kosa do not know the Block staff as much as they know the *patwari* and Tahsildar. And in turn the *patwari* also knows almost every villager and his field. The officials of the Block hardly know ten people in the village and may probably not be aware that the cluster of stone on the bank of the village-tank is believed to govern the well-being of the village. "Extension is education and its purpose is to change attitudes and practices of the people with whom the work is done."[14] To change the attitudes and practices of a people and that too of such a hot-headed people as the Satnamis, is not an easy job but it is not impossible. "There are no short cuts to changing village attitudes. Changing attitude is a process of creating new social values and new wants which become important to individuals, families and villages."[15]

Probably the most important step to bring out a change in village out-look is to know the lines of communication in the village. Lines of communication mean the ways ideas reach all the people in the village. In Kosa, these channels of communication appear to be two — Shobharam on the one hand and the *baiga* and festivals on the other. There is a third channel also and that is the caste and village-*panchayat* (not the statutory *panchayat*). At a first casual look Kosa appears to lack organization but it certainly has a leader-follower pattern and every village is a functional part of some leader-follower pattern. To bring about a change, say, in the use of seed and practices of agriculture, demonstration on the plot of somebody on whom the villagers have no reliance would not yield any sympathetic reaction: it may be confined to that individual only.

One of the most important criteria of the appearance of a new village outlook is seen when the village people begin to express hopes and expectations for better things. Kosa has certainly, atleast during the present survey, expressed hopes, and desires for better things. The "friends, philosophers and guides" of Kosa have got to approach them in a planned way otherwise the answer of the people would be as it was for creating a youth-organization in the village — "We do not have any time for such things."

14. A Guide to Community Development, D. Ensminger, 1957, p. 6.
15. Ibid, p. 14.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages have been described the variegated facets of a village of Chhattisgarh. We do not know whether Kosa is a typical village of the region, but it has been described in its entirety and an attempt has been made to look at it from all angles — social, economic and religious. While the field-work was in progress and more so when the monograph was being written, there was an almost overwhelming temptation to take up only one single perspective of village-life — for example the religion and religious beliefs of the people — and devote the entire Report to it. But the Report is monographically oriented and to look at these villages in segments was never the intention of the present surveys. An attempt has therefore been made to touch upon all sides of the village life and thought and the description given, I am fully aware, is not as comprehensive as it should have been.

Kosa was not a existence, when, as described in *Jaiminiya Ashwamedha*, Krishna and Arjun came to this part of the country in search of the horse left by them and when the great gift-giver Moraddhwaj ordered his wife and son to saw his body into two. Kosa, again, may not have seen the rise and fall of the Haihaibansi dynasty in Chhattisgarh. But probably the founder of Kosa had come here with his two wives— Kari and Pandri — when in 1740 Bhaskar Pant overran the territory of Raghunath Singh of the Haihaibansi line. And this founder of Kosa may have been lying some where in the dust, when in 1853 the British took over the administration of this area from the Marathas.

The echoes of these changes hardly reached Kosa and the children of Kari and Pandri went on increasing and tilling the soil of Kosa, eking out their existence, self-satisfied and self-contained. The centre of their economy was in the village and the periphery of their needs coincided with the physical periphery of the village. In matters of economy and material culture they hardly looked beyond the horizons of Kosa and disputes over land and women hardly came before the Government of the country: the caste-*panchayat* and the village-*panchayat* reigned supreme. Sir Charles Metcalfe[1] wrote about Indian villages in 1832:—

"The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution ..... but the village-community remains same..... This union of village-communities, each one forming a separate little State in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence."

But the villagers could not perpetuate this heavenly exclusiveness, contentment and self-satisfaction for all time to come. As more and more water flowed down the Phulgaon *nala* and joined the Kharun river, so more and more wind blew from the outside into Kosa. The economic and social horizons of Kosa were widened; the frontiers of the village expanded. What happened elsewhere started being felt in Kosa and the people of the village started looking out and being looked into from outside.

Kosa lives under the shadow of two fears — the Bhilai Steel Project and witchcraft and this is a symbol of the trend of the whole life and thought of Kosa, the fear of modernity and the dislike for the old. The chimneys of the Steel Project are as awe-inspiring to the people of the village as the dreaded craft of the witches.

Kosa would, however, have to carry on with both — for some more time to some we do not know how long. At present, the old and the new stand side by side like Bhookhin and Parania of the village shown in a photograph. This co-existence of the old and the new is seen almost in all phases of life in the village— *Salooka* and the shirt; the regular marriage and the promiscuity; the *Thakur Deo* and the Sivling and the caste-*panchayat* and the statutory Gram-*panchayat*.

In the material culture of the people changes are coming in imperceptibly and they would probably go on coming whether liked or not. Most of the older people dislike going to town except when unavoidably necessary. But still ways of the town are being copied in the village. Kingslay Davis[2] has observed:

1. As quoted by Srinivas, Economic Weekly Bombay, 30th October, 1951.
2. The population of India & Pakistan, Kingslay Davis; p. 136.

"The modern city in Asia is of peculiar significance because it is the diffusion centre of Western traits. The city is where social change begins, where the specialization, talent and oroganization necessary for originating and executing new ideas are available. City development is therefore a good index of past economic progress and a safe augury of new progress to come. In many ways what is happening in the city to-day is what will be happening to all India in the future."

There used to be a proverb in the old days: what will the washerman do in a Chhattisgarhi village where the people live naked. This has become very much a thing of the past and we now see the women with petticoats and tight-sleeved blouses and men with shirts and *dhotis*. But still, though more attention is being paid to the external appearance, bedding equipment is neglected to a large-scale and tattered *kathri* are found still in majority of the houses. In general, the demands of the people, at least of the young generation, have increased and when the children at present going to the school at Sirri grow up, their demands would certainly be more.

But where demands are increasing there appears to be no headway in economy. Agriculture still engages the majority of the population. On a land where 39 families used to carry on cultivation in 1911, there are 61 families now and this has resulted in fragmentation. The size of most of the holdings is uneconomic. Whatever population growth took place in the village, all of it was accomodated in the existing land increasing the presure on it. There has of course been an attempt to go out but except in one or two cases, this going out is temporary and people return to their lands during the cultivating season. Pressure on land has induced the cultivators for more production from the land as seen in the increase in the area under double-cropping. But even this is insufficient and people have some ancillary occupations like carpentry and tailoring.

Some of the customs prevalent in marriage indicate the fact that the concept of family-planning would take a long time to be successful in the rural areas because continued fertility is a virtue prayed for during these rituals. Use of *doomer* and *gashti* tree, both of which are species of Ficus, are symbols of incessent child-birth like the *doomer* ever-laden with fruit. This desire for fertility to the bride is expressed symbolically even in advanced sections of Hindu society e.g. placing coconut in the lap of the bride before or after marriage is an indication of that; giving a ladle to the girl by her parents is a symbol of children.

The people are keen to develop their agriculture but they do not seem to get guidance from any agency. One should not except the village people to abandon age-old and tested practices and adopt new things overnight. They are never going to adopt a new practice or implement unless the usefulness of the same has been effectively demonstrated to them. One or two demonstrations of some improved practice performed on the field of somebody, who even otherwise gets a good harvest, is not going to convince the villagers. The task is certainly a hard one but it is not impossible, and, the people whom we have studied in this monograph were certainly anxious to adopt improved practices. Till they are convinced of the genuineness of the 'improved practices', they are however never going to adopt it.

The villagers look upon Government officials with suspicion and we cannot accuse them for this. For nearly 90 years, they have been taught to distrust the Government; the thought instilled into their minds is that Government servants are their enemies and this feeling cannot suddenly evaporate into the air if once in 5 years somebody goes to them and tells them that they are the rulers and 'King-makers'.

I have felt, therefore, after listening to the people of Kosa and trying to fathom the depths of the village life and thought that the approach for making improvements in the village has not been substantial. Village life is not divided into fragments: it is a composite whole and one aspect of life here interacts with the other. Only one or two examples may be given here and I would have to talk from a personal point of view. I am not an 'extension worker' nor have even been trained into the principles and practices of 'extension'. But were I sent to Kosa, I would certainly have seen that *Thakur Deo* is the supreme deity of agriculture and would have offered the 'fertilisers' first at his 'shrine'; I would have utilized the *Jawara* festival in the first place to demonstrate the efficacy of the fertiliser and seed that I wished to propogate. If my prescription were right, the *Jawara* sown in my pot would certainly have been the highest. And with all respect to our genuine intentions to arrange supply of good drinking water to the rural-folk, I would never have taken up the construction of a well. The village-cattle could as well get water from the tank. But this is purely from a personal angle and we have made our study of the village only for a year or so. Those who are observing the village for years must of course be knowing better.

That the villagers are keen to adopt useful things

is clear from the introduction of *belan* in the village. This implement has been adopted by them after they saw it in operation somewhere outside the district. The time does not seem far when all cultivators may have the *belan* and there certainly would be a great change from *Douri chalat he to Belan chalat he.*[3]

Agriculture is the mainstay of village-economy. Most of the paddy grown is consumed in the village itself, very little is available for sale and it is only the substantial cultivators who are in a position to do so. The income from agriculture is through the sale of other crops like *alsi*, and *tiwara*. The majority of the households have income less than Rs. 100/- a month and since demands have increased with income not keeping pace with it, indebtedness has increased. Except very poor people, everybody today is in debt. Any social function or construction of the house throws them into the hands of some money-lender or the other and this is how the land of Kosa has passed into other hands.

The cultural level of a human group has sometimes been evaluated in terms of the status given to its women. Seen from this standpoint, Kosa and the entire Chhattisgarh region, present a picture that may be compared with the civilized countries of the West. Woman is not a drudge or a beast of burden here, but exercises a firm hand in family matters. She is given freedom for divorce and remarriage. In the absence of sons, daughters have full and exclusive rights over property.

Kosa and the region in which it is located show a paradox in respect of the status of women. In these areas females preponderate in number over males but yet there is a system of bride-price and it is the girl who is sought-after in marriage. Cases are not rare where a person has parted with his land, the only source of subsistence, to get a wife. It has not been possible to account for this anamoly and this may perhaps require a wider study than the present one.

Child-marriage has probably been adopted by the castes in attempts for social-elevation. But attendant problems of child-marriage are not there. Provision exists for the remarriage of child-widows — the society regarding such marriage (*Barandi Bihav*) with more than mere approval. The problem of divorce has been adequately met by the provision of *choori* form of marriage (or rather is a creation of it).

The most powerful wind of change that Kosa ever received, blew from Girod in about 1820-1830 when Ghasidas emerged from the hills to preach the new doctrine of *Satnam* Panth. The founder of Kosa was not a Satnami. He might just have been a Chamar looked up on as a member of the lowest caste. But his children accepted the teachings of the Master and became Satnamis — worshippers of the 'True One' — and may have given up idol-worship, smoking and non-vegetarian food. Probably in the fifties of the nineteenth century, no deities were propitiated except *Thakur Deo* and *Mata* because it appears unlikely that even such a personality as that of Ghasi Das could remove *Thakur Deo* from the minds of the poeple. This is only a surmise and we have no information about how many deities there were then in Kosa.

But the people of Kosa may have been among those who rejected the original doctrine of Ghasidas as soon as the Master was gone. Though the people do not know the word, they must have been the dissenters — the *chongiya* Satnamis (Smoker Satnamis) who introduced these host of deities in their village, and restarted eating *taroi* and brinjal and lentils. In respect of the various festivals, Kosa seems to keep its 'eyes and ears open' and trying to absorb whatever it can from the 'dominant culture' in which it is situated. Most of the rites and rituals and beliefs of these festivals which Kosa receives from the outside are parochialized by the indigenous genius.

Though there are a host of deities in the village and though religion is such an overpowering force in the village-life, the people of Kosa do not bother about these deities in their day-to-day life and do not bother themselves with the mechanical routine of a *pooja* at their houses. From this point of view they may even be labelled as irreligious. They have made the *baiga* the custodian of their religious conscience; he is their representative before the deities. Like the 'Gods of the olden days' who only listened to prayers in Sanskrit language, the deities of Kosa listen to nobody but the *Baiga*.

In its religion and religious belief, Kosa offers a continuum from the primitive religion to the dominant Hindu religion. Deities like *Satvahinia* and *Marrapat* are the deities taken from the pantheon of the primitive tribes like Kawars and Baiga, and *Jaitkham* is found to be worshipped amongst the Nagarchi Gonds. The worship of Bhainsasur as a corn-spirit is also from the primitive tribes. And side by side we have the *Shiva* and *Mahabir* and the recitation of *Shrimat Bhagwat*. Trace of primitive religion is also found in the

3. This phrase has been used before in Economy. It means that threshing is going on by getting the harvested crop trampled over by a number of cattle.

celebration of life-cycle rituals. In the marriage ceremony, one of the rituals is *Mayan* which consist in invocation of ancestral spirits. Worship of ancestral spirits is found to be the only religion among the most primitive tribes like Kamars, Bhunjias and Kawars and it is likely that this once-widespread belief is found now only in its remnant in the ritual of *Mayan*.

Parochialization of dominant Hnidu religion is also noticeable. The demon Mahishasur of the greater Hindu traditions has been parochialised as a spirit of the corn and so has been Diwali and Gowardhan-worship. But though there has been influence of Hinduism, deities of agriculture and agricultural cattle, reign supreme and it is these who still attract the people more than *Shiva* and *Mahabir*.

In recreation and use of leisure, there are signs of drabness coming in. Kosa does not have the gay rhythm of a tribal village nor does it yet have the boring monotony of urban life. But the shift is towards the latter and it may be that a time is coming when the only recreation left for the people would be their festivals and occasional visits to a movie. What changes would movie pictures bring in the dress and manners of the people of Kosa and in the general behaviour, is a matter which only time can tell.

The hold of the traditional caste-*panchayats* and the council of elders in the village is still very strong and it does not seem likely, after what has been seen from the preceding pages, that the statutory Gram-*panchayat* can, at least in the next one or two decades, be as popular and powerful as these. Village leadership does not lie with the young; it is the older people whose voice is more respected.

The country is through the process of a tremendous change and in the light of the National Extension Movement, it is the problem of communication which appears to be of the most vital significance for the success or failure of the Extension philosophy. We do not know if Kosa is a typical village of the region, and we cannot say that what is happening in Kosa is happening everywhere else also. One thing is however clear and it must be stated: there is no agency for communication in the village and the people do not have any satisfactory idea about the 'extension movement'. It is usually said that the problem of India is not so much to understand it as to change it and it is with this idea that a net-work of National Extension Service Blocks has been spread over the length and breadth of India.

Without any disrespect to the great philosophy of change and extension, I, as a common person, feel that no change can be brought about effectitvely, nor can it be lasting, unless we understand the datum line. Only one example would suffice here. Before prescribing medicines and tonics for expectant mothers one has to know that the people of Kosa believe that allopahtic drugs are 'hot' and taking these during pregnancy would result in abortion. If, wtihout this knowdelge, we still press them that tonics and drugs be taken because they would do good, we can be absolutely certain that the tonic would serve as a 'fertilizer' for some useless plant.

I would have to reproduce some quotations given in Margaret Mead's 'Cultural Patterns and Technical Change': "In many groups we find the attitude of doing with what is there rather than changing it, of coping rather than fixing. Such people see no reason why 'anything should be done about it'." "All of these attitudes are, of course, related to the positive value which the traditional way of life holds for many of the people where this is paramount, change is either resisted or, if accepted it is kept along the fringes. Changes which increase income, and are introduced in the interest of an improvement in living-standards, are rendered ineffective by this attitude."[5] "Programmes for improvement are sometimes rendered ineffective because failure to take account of what the people specifically value."[6]

So we feel after making a study of Kosa that we would have to have some knowledge at least of the ethos and aspirations and the sentiments and value system of village life before we can attempt to effect changes in it. I have talked with many people and heard even many more and when the excellent philosophy of National Extension was being dinned into my ears, I have again and again been remined of the famous hunter Jim Corbett. Corbett says in one of his books that once he came across a certain gentleman during a voyage who boasted knowing everything about the tigers because he had spent a few days with a friend in a forest-clad district and on an other occasion when he had taken a friend of his on a beautiful forest road on a fine morning and asked him how he felt, the friend replied that the road was very bad. These are, or course, two extreme cases, but, somehow, I feel that this is exactly how we tend to feel about villages.

4. Cultural Patterns and Technical Change, Margaret Mead; Mentor Book Edition, p. 185.
5. Extension work among the Arab Fellahin; Tannous, 1944; Margaret Mead, p. 143.
6. Ibid, p. 187.

GLOSSARY

Abadi — The area reserved from time to time in a village or in a non-urban area for the residence of the inhabitants thereof or for purposes ancillary thereto.

Badmash — Rogue, mischievous.

Baidin — The village quack (woman).

Baiga — Village priest and witch-doctor usually a member of some primitive tribe like the Gond.

Bardiha — The village grazier; from the Chhattisgarhi word *'Bardi'* meaning a herd.

Bari — Mixture of grounded urid or mung pulse and white pumpkin made into small balls and allowed to dry and then used as curry.

Bari — Vegetable-garden attached to the house.

Basi — Cooked rice of the previous night soaked in water and eaten on the next morning; a favourite food in rural Chhattisgarh.

Bhata — A poor detritus of laterite.

Chongi — Leaf pipe, usually made of Sal (*Shorea robusta*) leaf in which tobacco is filled and smoked.

Choti — Tuft of hair at the back of the head.

Dorsa — Meaning 'two-juices', is a mixture of *Kanhar* and *Matasi* soils.

Gabhar — Means a flat land. It is a term indicating position of land and is used in the Settlement Reports and operations.

Girdawari — Annual operations done by the *patwari* who visits individual holdings and records the crop grown, area under each crop and so on.

Godan — Means 'gift of cow'. Gift of a cow is given by a dying person to a brahman or to his sister's son. Sometimes the gift is given symbolically by paying 125 naye paise.

Gountia — Proprietor, used as a form of address for the *Malguzar*.

Gouthan — The place in the village where the village cattle assemble in the morning before being taken by the grazier.

Gudi — The term for the village resting-hut constructed by the villagers for the use of visiting officials; prefixed by the word mata i. e. *mata-gudi*, means shrine of the village goddess.

Hoom — Corruption of the word 'Hom' meaning fire-offering a common practice during ceremonial worship. Also performed symbolically by burning incense.

Jhad-Phoonk — Removing the effect of evil-spirits and evil-eye by reciting some sacred text; an operation done by the *Baiga*.

Jhalar — The hair on an infant's head. First shaving of the child's head is known as *'jhalar-utarna'*.

Jhiria — Small pits dug in the stream bed to get water.

Kamra — Country-made coarse blanket.

Kanhar — A black clay, very retentive of mositure and a very good soil for wheat but not so good for paddy because of its water-logging quality.

Kathri — An apology for a mattress, made by the villagers at home by sewing together torn saris.

Kharif — The monsoon-crops like paddy.

Kotwar — Village-watchman whose duty is to report births and deaths in the village, keep a record of visitors in the village and to report crime at the police station concerned.

Lachhmi — Corruption of the Hindi word 'Lakshmi' name of the Goddess of Wealth; the term is used to wean cattle.

Lokadhin — The woman who accompanies the bride from her parents' house to her husband's house after marriage.

Lugda — The Chhattisgarhi term for *sari* or garment worn by the women.

Mahabir — Another name of Hanuman, the monkey-god mentioned in the epic Ramayana.

Malguzar — Village proprietor; there are no *Malguzars* now after the abolition of proprietory rights in 1951.

Malik-makbuja — Absolute occupancy tenant.

Mantra — Sacred words which the *Guru* (teacher) imparts to the disciple.

Matasi — A yellow soil, not retentive of moisture but with heavy rainfall gives far better outturn of paddy than any other soil.

Mundan — Head-shaving during birth and dead-rituals.

Murram — Lateritic soil.

Nachkar — Male dancer.

Nachkarin — Danseuse.

Nala — A stream; also referred to as *narwa*.

Nirjalaupas — Fast during which even water is not taken.

Nistar — Easements and such other rights as grazing, burial etc.

Nistar-patrak — A document containing a record of the rights enjoyed by the people in a village over Government land.

Pahlad — Corruption of the word 'Prahlad', from the Hindu mythology.

Para — A ward or hamlet.

Parikrama — Circumambulation.

Patel — A village-officer appointed under the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, whose main duty is to collect revenue.

Patwari — An officer of the Lands Records Department whose duty is to keep the village papers up-to-date, and periodically submit reports of crops and cattle.

Peedha — A wooden plank used as seat.

Rabi — Winter crop like wheat.

Sala — Wife's brother; also used as an abuse.

Sivling — The idol of God Shiva in the form of an egg shaped stone.

Siwai-income	—	Miscellaneous income e. g. income from groves, lease of river-bed cultivation etc.
Siyan	—	Elder, used for village elders.
Suin	—	Village mid-wife.
Tahsil	—	A unit of administration under an officer known as Tahsildar.
Tikli	—	A spangle.
Tona	—	Witchcraft.
Tonhin	—	Witch (woman)
Totka	—	Measures for protection against evil-eye.

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APPENDIX—A

Ghasee Doss

96. The Chumars as a helot class have always been among the busy bees of the community. In Eastern society nothing is more remarkable than the calm satisfaction with the which the traditionary "hewers of wood and drawers of water" accept their position, and as the only effectual check on the tyranny of authority, the fear of opposition, did not exist, the helot classes have too often come to be treated with insult and violence. Of treatment of this kind, the Chumars had their full share, and it was doubtless to raise them in the social scale, and of course by so doing, to raise himself too, that led Ghasee Doss, the founder of their new faith, to set up as their leader and teacher. He has to a great extent been successful, and as regards his own people, has been the instrument of a social and religious revolution.

His origin

97. A description of the change which has come over the Chumar community, may not be out of place as referring to so important a section of the people. The facts are abridged from a paper formerly written by me. Ghasee Doss, the author of the movement, like the rest of his community, was unlettered. He was a man of unusually fair complexion and rather imposing appearance, sensitive and silent, given to seeing visions, and deeply resenting the harsh treatment of his brotherhood by the Hindoos. He was well known to the whole community, having travelled much among them; had the reputation of being exceptionally sagacious, and was universally respected. By some he was believed to possess supernatural powers, by other curative powers only, by all he was deemed a remarkable man.

His mission

98. In the natural course of events, it was not long before Ghasee Doss gathered round himself a band of devoted followers. Whether impelled by their constant importunities, or by a feeling of personal vanity, or both causes combined, he resolved on a prophetic career; to be preceded by a temporary withdrawal into the wilderness. He selected for his wanderings the eastern forests of Chutteesgurh, and proceeded to a small village called Girode, on the outskirts of the hilly region bordering the Jonk river, near its junction with the Maha Nuddee. He dismissed the few followers who had accompanied him, with the intimation that in six months he would return with a new revelation, and mounting the rocky eminence overhanging the village, disappeared into the distant forest.

His message

99. Meanwhile the followers who had accompained him to the foot of that henceforth mysterious hill, were active in speeding through the whole Chumar community his farewell message, with the warning that all should appear at Girode as the termination of the six months interval approached.

Effects on the people

100. Among a supersitious people these tidings worked marvels, and created a perfect ferment of expectations. During the period of suspense nothing else was talked of, and the public mind anxiously looked for some revelation. As the close of the appointed time drew near, Chumars from all parts of Chutteesgurh flocked to Girode. The scene as described by an eye witness was strange and impressive. The roads leading to this hitherto unfrequented hamlet were traversed by crowds of anxious pilgrims. The young and old of both sexes swelled the throng — mothers carrying their infants, and the aged and infirm led by stronger arms. Some died by the way, but the enthusiasm was not stayed. Arrived at the spot, the plain skirting the rocky eminence presented to the eye a vast multitude of human beings, divided into different knots, discussing the strange crisis which had brought them together.

His return

101. At last the long looked for day arrived, and with the realization of the hopes of this hitherto despised community. In the quiet of the early morning, their self-appointed prophet was seen descending the rocky eminence over-hanging Girode, and as he approached, was greeted with the acclamations of the assembled crowd. It must have been a proud moment for Ghasee Doss, who soon commenced haranguing the expectant multitude. He explained to them how he had been miraculously sustained for the period of six months in the wilderness, how he had held communion with a higher Power, and how he had been empowered to deliver a special message to the members of his own community. This message absolutely prohibited the adoration of idols, and enjoined the worship of the Maker of the

universe without any visible sign or representation, at the same time proclaiming a code of social equality. It appointed Ghasee Doss the high priest of the new faith, and added the proviso, that this office would remain in his family for ever.

His death

102. The simple faith thus enunciated may best be termed a "Hindooized deism" for there were mixed up with it certain social and dietary regulations copied from Brahminism. The movement occured between the years 1820 and 1830, and is scarce half a century old. It includes nearly the hole Chumar community of Chutteesgurh, who now call themselves "Sut Namees", meaning thereby that they are worshippers of "Sut Nam" or "The True one" — their name, and a very appropriate one, for God. They would fain bury the opprobrious epithet chumar among other relics of the past; did it not with traditional pertinacity, and owing to the hatred of the Brahmins, refuse to forsake them. In the early years of the movement, an effort was made to crush its spread, but in vain, and Ghasee Doss lived to a ripe old age, to see the belief he had founded a living element in society, constituting the guide and directing the aspirations of a population exceeding a quarter of a million. He died in the year 1850, at the age of 80, and while the work he accomplished by our clearer light, seems darknened with prejudice, ignorance and imposture; yet there can be no doubt he did a good fight in demolishing, even within a small area, the gaint evils of idolatry, and thus perhaps preparing his community for the reception of a higher and purer faith.

Office of high priest

103. On the death of Ghasee Doss, he was succeeded in the office of high priest by his eldest son, Baluk Doss. This Baluk Doss carried his feeling of equality to so high a pitch, that he outraged all Hindoo society by assuming the Brahmanical thread. Wherever he appeared, he offensively paraded the thin silken cord round his neck, as an emblem of sacredness, and hoped to defy Hnidoo enmity under cover of the general security against violence afforded by British rule. So bitter, however, was the hostility he raised, and so few the precautions he took against private assassination, that his enimies at last found an opportunity. He was travelling to Raepore on business, and remained for the night at a road-side rest-house. Here a party of men, supposed to be rajpoots, attacked and killed him, at the same time wounding the followers who accompanied him. This occured in the year 1860, and the perpetrators were never discovered. It exasperated the whole Chumar community, and a deeper animoisty than ever now divides them their Hindoo fellow citizens.

Present holder

104. Baluk Doss was succeeded nominally by his son Saheb Doss, a child, but really by his brother Agur Doss, who is now virtually high priest. The duties of this office are more of a dignified than onerous character. The high priest decides finally all questions involving social excommunication, and prescribes the penalties attending restoration. For those who can attend on him personally, or whom he can arrange to visit, he performs the ceremonies at marriage, and on naming children; at the latter ceremony a bead necklace, in token of entrance into the sut namee brotherhood, is placed round the neck of the child. It is not absolutely necessary, however, that the high priest should officiate at any ceremonies. They are sufficiently solemnized by meetings of the brotherhood. Most Chumars once a year visit the high priest, and on these occasions a suitable offering is invariably made. They have no public worship of any kind, and consequently no temples, they have no written creed, nor any prescribed forms of devotion. When devotionally inclined, it is only necessary to repeat the name of the deity and to invoke his blessing. No idol of wood or stone is seen near their villages. They have a dim kind of belief in a future state; but this does not exercise any practical influence on their conduct. Their social practices correspond for the most part with those of Hindoos. They ignore, however, Hindoo festivals. As a rule they are monogamists, though polygamy is not specially prohibited. Their women are not in any way secluded from public gaze, and are equally with men busy, and industrious in home and field pursuits. In fact, in most of their arrangements, to a superficial observer, the Chumars present nothing peculiar, and it is only after enquiry, that many of their distinguishing features are discovered.

Sut Namee practices

105. The account thus given has been gathered from oral testimony, a source of knowledge liable to error and exaggeration. In its main features however it is accurate. On disputed points I have not touched. One is whether Baluk Doss was accepted as an Incarnation. Most "sut namees" deny regarding him as such. Another is whether sut namee brides associate with the

high priest before being taken to their hubands' homes. No "sut namee" will acknowledge this, and the calumny is attributed to brahminical ingenuity. Some forms of prayer collated from Hindoo authors are said to exist among the teachers, but these are quite unknown to the people and the only act of devotion which a "sut namee" practices is to fall prostrate before the sun at morn and eve and exclaim "sut nam", "sut nam", "sut nam" translated literally God, God, God, or perhaps implying "God have mercy, have mercy". Turning to their social practices, it is found that they eat no meat. They will not even drink water except from one of their own caste, and liquor is prohibited. They marry ordinarily at the age of puberty, the parents selecting a bride, the marriage itself is purely of a civil nature, being celebrated by the elders with a feast given to the friends of the family. They bury their dead without any religious ceremony, and in every day life their moral notions are not rigid. A fatal split in the community has arisen from a most trivial cause, the use of tobacco. In the first out-burst of religious enthusiasm which animated the followers of Ghasee Doss, it would seem that drink and tobacco were simultaneously forsaken. The use of liquor apparently was a weakness, which was easily and effectually overcome, but the strange solace which smokers appear to find in tobacco, and more especially a labouring population, possessed irresistible charms. A reaction set in and finally a considerable portion of the community returned to their pipes. To talk a pipes in connection with an eastern people seems an anomaly, but in Chutteesgurh it is strictly correct. The hooka of northern India is unknown here, and in its stead the broad "pylas" leaf is folded into a pipe-like shape with a bowl at one end, in which dry tobacco is palced. It is called a "choongee", is universally indulged in by all classes, and field labourers by its use break the dull monotony of their daily toil. The "sut namees" who again took to "choongees" came to be opprobriously designated "choongeas" by their brethren and retain the appellation. They maintain their orthodoxy and urge that Ghasee Doss had a subsequent revelation conceding the use of tobacco to his people, and that consequently in his latter years he absolutely withdrew his original prohibition. The "sut namees" thus remain divided into two grand sections, the "smokers" and "non-smokers". It is said that the smokers eat meat and are not real "sut namees", but as a body perfectly repudiate the insinuation.

Their loyalty

106. The "sut namees" thus described are a strange and interesting people, and as a special Mission has lately been inaugurated for their enlightenment and instruction, they are perhaps destined in the future to exercise an influence proportioned to their numbers and position in the annals of Chutteesgurh. There is no class more loyal and satisfied with our rule than this community, and if it should happen that like the Koles, they are favourably impressed with Missionary teaching, a time may come when they will be a source of strength to our government.

(Extract from Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Belaspore District, 1868 — J. W. Chisholm pp. 45-49).

APPENDIX—B

Religion prevalence of dissent in Chuteesgurh.

Chuteesgurh to orthodox is not only hateful as the land of the Dasyas and witches, but as the head-quarters of religious dissent, as it is to its secluded wilds that all those who opposed the prevailing tenets fled to escape from their persecutors, and consequently Hindooism sits lightly on most of the people, while large numbers are avowed dissenters belonging to the Kubeerpuntee and Sutnamee sects.

Origin of the Kubeerpuntee and Sutnamee sects.

These two sects are said to have arisen about the same time and both evidently, like the older Buddhism, owe their origin to a reaction against Brahminical tyranny. Their respective founders, Kubeer and Raidass, are said to have both been disciples of Ramanund; and Kubeer is said by his followers to have first commenced preaching in Rewa, where their first Gooroo, Dhurum Dass, was installed in Sumbut 1520, 1463 A.D. It is said that duirng the life time of Kubeer, but most probably after his death, Dhurum Dass was driven to take refuge under the Ruttunpore Princes, and since then his descendants have always lived in Chuteesgurh. About Raidass, tradition has less to tell, as his mission was principally to the Chumars, and never seems to have much influenced the higher classes, at all events in late years. Now he is almost forgotten, his fame being eclipsed by Ghasee Dass the last Sutnamee apostle.

Points of similarly between the two sects.

The two sects agree in their rejection of images, their veneration for life, their objection to strong drink and tobacco, and the sign of initiation in both is a necklace of wooden beads; but while the Sutnamees worship one God under the name of Sutnam "the true name", and have never distinctly deified either Raidass or Ghasee Dass, though there are signs that the apotheosis of the latter is not far off, the Kubeerpuntees distinctly regard Kubeer as an incarnation of the Deity, though they do not profess to address their paryers to him.

Points of difference between the two sects.

The chief difference between the sects arises from the more aristocratic proclivities of the Kubeerpuntees, and may probably be traced to the different social position occupied by their respective founders, Kubeer being a weaver by catse, while Rai Dass was a Chumar. Hence, the Kubeerpuntees, making their converts from a higher class than the Sutnamees, received many who were unwilling to give up their caste distinctions (these being preserved among the former sect). while the more democratic Sutnamees ignore all caste differences among the members of the sect. Similarly while the Kubeerpuntees pay Brahmins a certain degree of reverence, some having their marriages performed by them, though the more orthodox employ a Kussondee Bunnia, the Sutnamees abhor all Brahmins, hatred of the race being almost an article of their creed. The sects differ also in that the Kubeerpuntees fast once a month, while the Suntnamees do not. Both sects bury their dead.

Classes holding Kubeerpuntee doctrines, and internal administration of sect.

The Kubeerpuntees include a large number of Bunnias, Kayesth, Telees and Koormees, as well as other castes, while the Gandas to a man belong to the sect. Their principal Gooroo lives at Kowardha in Belaspore, but he only exercises jurisdiction over the Kubeerpuntees in the north of the District, the office in the south having been many years ago delegated to a younger branch of the family which is settled at Dhumturry, and which is now represented by Kumod Dass. The Dhumturry Gooroo is said to have all the power of the Chief Gooroo at Kowardha, while he is not subject to the disagreeable necessity of dying 25 years after he has assumed office as the Kowardah Gooroo must, if he has a proper respect for tradition, do. But at the best, either Gooroo has very little to do with his disciples, their intercourse being restricted to yearly visits made by the Gooroo to his followers in the cold weather, while he is only sought by them when they want their children to be invested with the sacred necklace. Their only distinctive festival in Raepore is that held at Koora Bungolee, in the Simgah Tehseelee, on the last day of "Magh" each year, in honour of Seoree Narain, a Kubeerpuntee Mohunt of great sanctity, who is burried there. The concourse of pilgrims forms the nuclous of the annual fair, which is one of the largest in the District.

Internal administration of the Sutnamee sect.

The Sutnamees on the other hand, at least all who have not been led away by the charms of tobacco, and

become choongeeas or tobacco smokers (a name which to an orthodox Sutnamee implies a state of unpardonable vice), visit their Gooroo regularly twice every year at Bhundar, in the Raepore Tehseelee, where the temple of the sect, an empty building without an image, is situated. These visits take place in "Magh" and "Bhadon" and each votary brings his offering. The present Gooroo is the grandson of Ghasee Dass, but as he is a minor, his uncle Agur Dass acts for him.

Morality of the Kubeerpuntees superior to that of the Sutnamees.

In morality, if common report is to be trusted, the Kubeerpuntees are very much superior to the Sutnamees, though it must be remembered in justice to the latter, that their antagonism to the Hindoos exposes them to calumny. After a great deal of close inquiry, I must, however, say I think there is good ground for imputing some of the worst of observances of the Maharaja sect to some at least of the Sutnamees.

Dissenters from Sutnamee and Kubeerpuntee sects.

Both sects have suffered from the "dissidence of dissent". The Choonggea or Sutnamee dissenters have been already mentioned, and the Kubeerpuntees have divided into two bodies, one acknowledging and the other disavowing, the Kowardha Gooroo as a genuine "Avatar" of Kubeer. The dissenters however are not numerous. Their Gooroo lives in Nandeea in the Khoojee Zemindaree.

Thakoor Deo. The real object of worship to all the inhabitants of Chuteesgurh.

But these sectarian differences, though going deeper in the case of the Sutnamees, have for the most part little influence on the real religion of the people, which is concentrated in their devotion to Thakoor Deo. Without a sacrifice to him no agricultural operations can be performed. The seed sown and the first shoots of the young rice must be presented at his shrine, and he must be invoked to bless the field before the crop is cut, while it would be the height of reckless impiety to tread out or winnow the grain on a threshing floor where some offering had not been made to the great Earth god. Thakoor Deo's power does not extend only over the crops, but over the whole surface of the Earth, and hence his protection is efficacious against wild beasts, and an offering made in his honour at the commencement of the year infallibly prevents a tiger from taking up his abode within the precincts of a village. If he should do so an old Malgoozar told me, a proof that the sacrifice was not costly enough and that it must be repeated, a doctrine which at all events benefits the "Bygas".

Festivals observed in the District.

The Principal festivals of the District in addition to the usual Hindoo festivals of the Holee, Dussera and Dewalee, which are universally observed, are the Hurialee, Nag Punchaumee, Gurhpooja and Pola.

The Hurialee

The Hurialee is the festival of the plough and takes place in the beginning of Sawun. The bullocks receive salt and rest from their labours, while the plough is brought into the house, washed and sprinkled with rice. On the Nag Punchumee all the village turns out to the ant hill, where the scared snake is supposed to live, and pour milk over it, the lucky few who have been bitten during the last year, and have recovered making more substantial offerings.

Pola and Gurhpooja.

In the beginning of Bhadon are the great festivals of the Pola and Gurhpooja. In the former the oxen are worshipped, and on the latter the "deodhan" or wild rice is gathered from the tank and hung up in the houses of the ryots. It is on this latter festival, that the "Byga" goes his rounds and performs the solemn ceremony of blessing the fields.

Ancestors worshipped in Kooar or Asan.

During the first fifteen days of Kooar, or Asan, pooja is performed to ancestors, the 9th of the month being devoted to the females and the rest of the time to the males of the family.

Local deities.

The worship of local deities, which was once universal throughout the District is now almost entirely confined to the jungles, and the chief office of the "Bygas" or priests in the open country is to perform occasional pojas to Thakoor Deo. In case of emergency, such as the occurrence of an epidemic, he is also sometimes called in, but in such cases it is considered more respectable to secure the services of a Brahmin poojaree.

The influence of the "byga" or aboriginal priest still great in the jungles.

In the jungles the "Byga" still reigns undisputed, for it is he alone who can charm the much dreaded tigers, and where the aboriginal inhabitans have been left undisturbed, the Bygas who are almost always Boonjias or Gonds' are men of influence, and are wealthy as compared with their neighbours, holding frequently a large number of villages on the tenure of keeping the local deities propitious, and of using their powers to warn off tigers from the country within their jurisdiction.

(Extract from Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Raepore District, Chuteesgurh Division Central Provinces, 1869, by J. F. K. Hewitt, pp. 47-50.)