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MADHYA PRADESH

PART VI

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS
NO. 6

JAITPURI
TAHSIL & DISTRICT JABALPUR

G. N. TIWARI
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS
MADHYA PRADESH

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PART III	.. .. ..	Household 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—some times 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' of 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many bypaths' 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 decentralization 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 to 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 inter-related 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.

PREFACE

Village monographs based on surveys of selected villages conducted under the auspices of the census organisation are attempts, as the Registrar General in his foreword has put it, "to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh and blood accounts of social structure and social change". The present monograph, which relates to a small tribal village on the fringe of the extended Jabalpur corporation is one of numerous similar attempts all over the country. It deals with the demographic, social, economic, religious and cultural aspects of village life in both its static and dynamic aspects. The selection of Jaitpuri for the present monograph was based on various factors. The first—and the most important—consideration was the study of Gond and Kol tribes who form the bulk of the village population. Another important consideration was the inclusion of the village in a development block, providing a base for a study of the changes in its economic, cultural and social structure and outlook as a result of the impact of the development programme. The situation of the village on the fringe of an urban centre was also a factor, influencing the choice of the village for the present study.

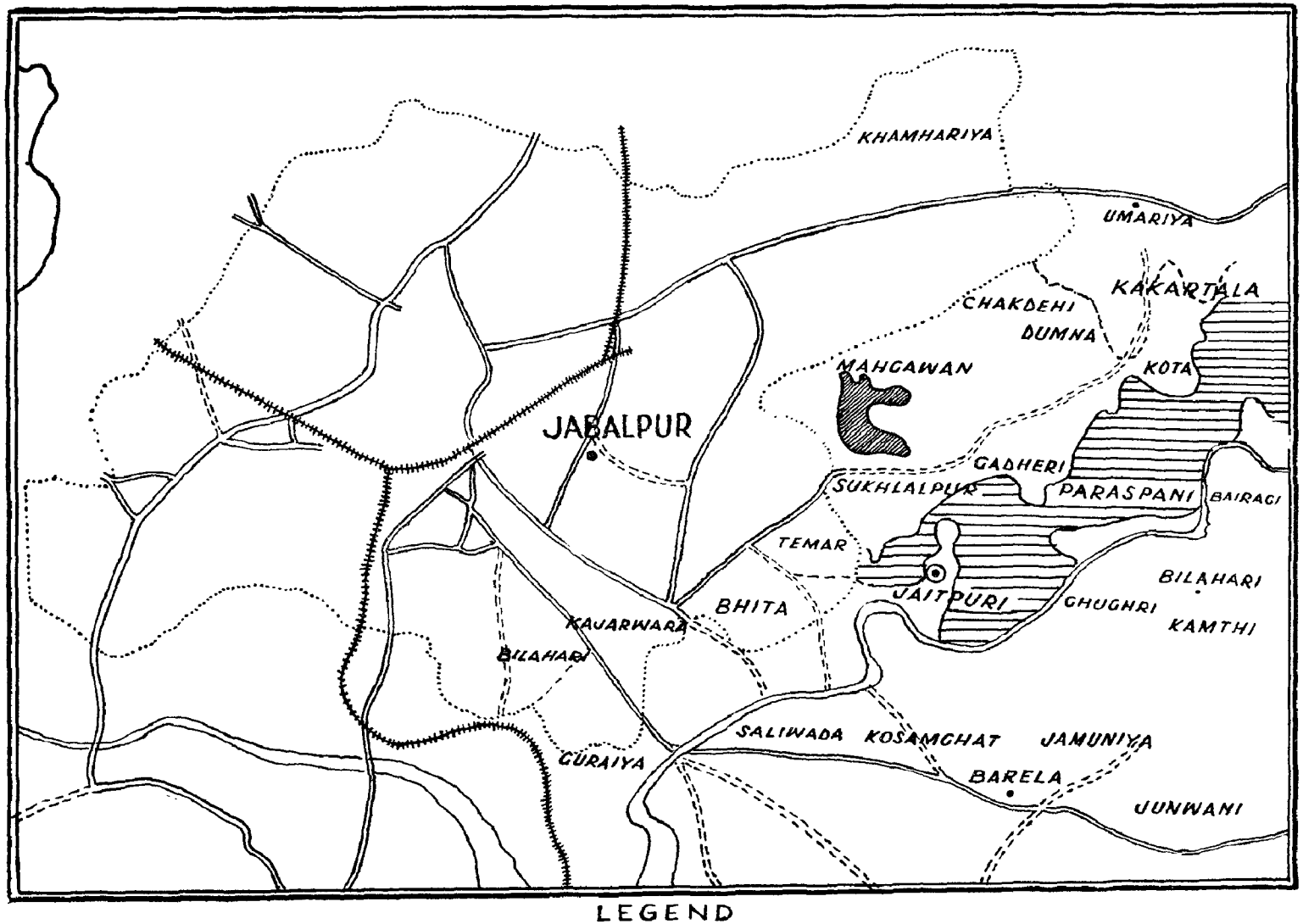
A word or two about the methodology. Before I came into the picture *vis a vis* writing of this monograph, some preliminary information on the village had already been collected by the Barela Development Block. This provided me with a starting point, and, with the help of the data thus collected, I framed a supplementary questionnaire. This questionnaire as well as the household schedules were canvassed by investigators of the census organisation. I had also paid five or six visits to the village before starting the drafting of this report. The field work in connection with this report was mainly done by Shri H. N. Pandey, M. Sc. Research Investigator (Now a District Organiser in the State's Department of Tribal Welfare) from the Raipur Tabulation Office. Shri V. K. Mishra and P. K. Shrivastava, Supervisor and Compiler-checker respectively of the Jabalpur Tabulation Office, had also assisted me in the field investigation before Shri Pandey arrived on the scene. To all of them, I am deeply beholden.

It is difficult to express my deep sense of indebtedness to Shri G. Jagathpathi, I.A.S. who found time to go through the manuscript and the report is enriched by his valuable suggestions. My thanks are due to Dr. B. K. Roy Burman for reading the monograph and offering helpful criticism. Shri S. Tiwari, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the Mahakoshal Mahavidyalaya, Jabalpur kindly took most of the photographs for which I am very thankful to him. I am also deeply grateful to Shri M. L. Sharma, Statistical Assistant, who has read the earlier proofs of the monograph and has also ably done some of the diagrams.

Bhopal:
the 18th June, 1965.

G. N. TIWARI.

MAP SHOWING
THE LOCATION OF JAITPURI VILLAGE

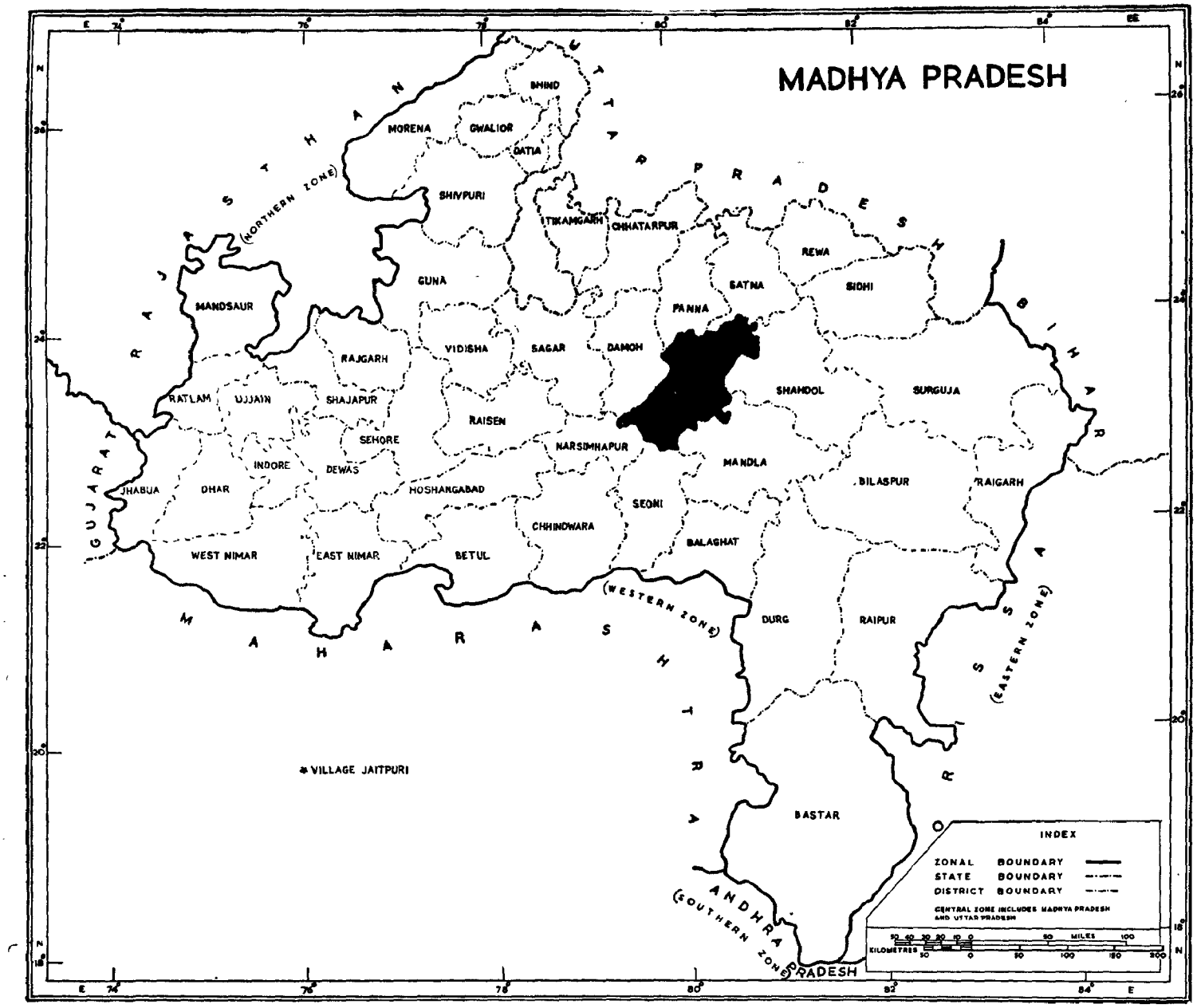


LEGEND

METALLED ROAD ═══ RESERVE FOREST ▤ RAILWAY ┅┅┅

UNMETALLED ROAD - - - - BOUNDARY OF THE CORPORATION .....

FOOTPATH .... JAITPURI VILLAGE ⊙



LOCATION OF JAITPURI IN MADHYA PRADESH

CHAPTER I

The Village

Introduction:

Jaitpuri, the subject of the present survey, is a small tribal village with a population (according to 1961 Census) of 222 situated about ten miles to the south-east from the heart of the city of Jabalpur, which is the second biggest town in the new State of Madhya Pradesh. Jabalpur (the spelling to be met with in old records is Jubbulpore, the present simplified spelling Jabalpur, is a post—independence improvement) is the headquarters of the district of the same name, and is known all over the country as an important centre of production of arms and ammunition. Standing at the head of the Narmada Valley between 22° 58′ and 24° 8′ north and 79° 21′ and 80° 58′ east, topographically, Jabalpur district consists of a long narrow plain, known as *haveli*, one of the richest and most fertile in the State, shut in on all sides by highlands. To the south-east of the *haveli* lies an extensive area covered by the Deccan trap which is an important geological feature of the district. Village Jaitpuri lies just on the border of the trap area.

With its composite population of Gonds and Kols, belonging probably to two of the oldest indigenous stocks, the Dravidian and the Kolarian, village Jaitpuri is of absorbing interest to the student of anthropology. The village is also an excellent field of study to the student of human geography; and with its backward economy depending predominantly on the axe and the plough, the village offers adequate material for study to the sociologist and the economist also. Apparently, the village is impervious to the reception of new ideas and techniques, and this, when seen in conjunction with the fact of its proximity to, and the almost daily contact of its inhabitants with, the town of Jabalpur presents a striking contradiction. All these considerations justify the selection of Jaitpuri for the present study.

Situated in Patwari circle number 57 of the Khamaria Revenue Inspector's circle in the Jabalpur tahsil, the village is bounded on the east, north and west by the lower Gaur Reserve Forest. Beyond the reserve forest, to the north lie the depopulated village of Sukhlalpur, and village Gadheri. Villages Bhita and Balhwara. with each of which Jaitpuri has contacts of a socio-economic and religious nature, bound the village respectively to the west and the south-east. Beyond Balhwara lies village Jamunia. the seat of Baba Thanthanpal, who is a great force in the religious life of the village. It is pertinent to note that the neighbouring villages Bhita, Temar and Gadheri form part of the recently extended area of Jabalpur Corporation. The village is included in the Barela Development block, with headquarters at Jabalpur ever since its inception in the year 1951. It comes in the Barela Gram Sewak Circle, with headquarters at the village Barela, which is about

four miles to the south-east of Jaitpuri. For police administration, the village falls in the jurisdiction of the Barela Police Station.

The surroundings of the village are very picturesque. Low hills or ridges, covered with bamboo-thickets and vegetative growth of an inferior but varied character ring in lowlands, with a tendency to depress towards the centre and giving a circular, almost a bowl's shape to the entire setting. The general slope of the land is to the south—as will be clear from the fact that almost all the rivulets and *nullahs* which cut across and thread the land surface of the village join the river Gaur, which forms the southern boundary of the village, separating it from villages Ghughri, Balhwara, Neemkhera, Kosamghat and Umaria. River Gour enters, or to be precise, abuts on (for the river never actually enters the revenue area of the village) the village boundary from the north-eastern direction, maintains that direction till it flows past Kharhar-ghat, a hamlet of the village lying on the bank of the river, and then takes a turn towards the west. Thereafter, the river maintains its general advance to the west, meandering as it does so, sometimes to the north and sometimes to the south. What with the forest-covered ridges, which together with the river Gaur hem in the village from all sides, and the extremely poor state of communications, the village has acquired a character of remoteness and aloofness. These factors have at the same time tended to give the village a characteristic insularity, which has played a vital part in shaping the economic and cultural life of the village.

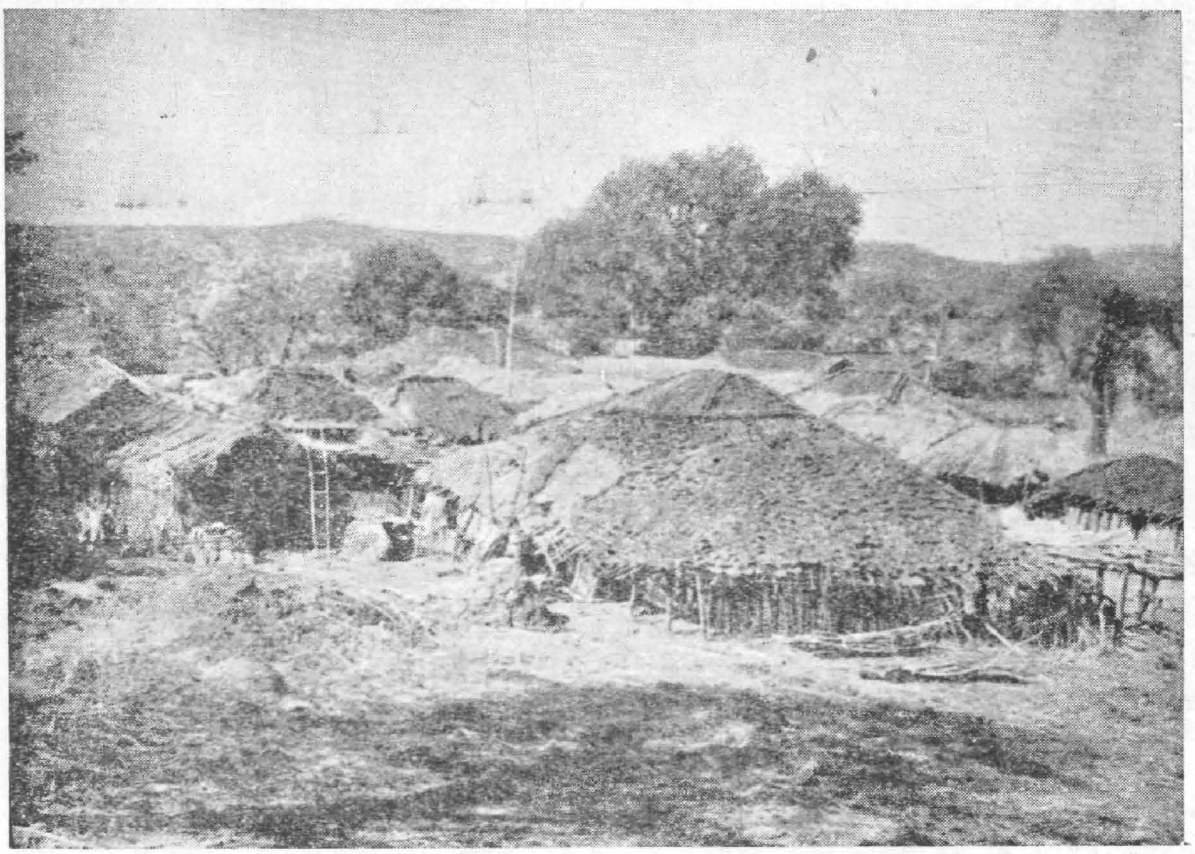
Climate:

The climate of Jaitpuri is similar to the climate of its urban neighbour, the city of Jabalpur. The year is divided into three more or less clearly distinguishable seasons, summer, monsoon and winter. Summer sets in from the month of March-April, and attains its maximum intensity in the month of May, when the mercury may shoot up to 112°F. The month of June, is marked by the occurrence of cyclonic storms—which heralds the advent of the south-western monsoon. The rains start towards the end of June, and last upto the middle of October, the maximum down-pour occurring in the months of July and August. The average rainfall is about 55 inches. Winter starts towards the end of October, when the days are warm but the nights are cool. December and January are the months of the severest cold, when the temperature may drop down to 38°F. In the cold season, foggy days are quite numerous. The falling of dew is a common feature in this season. The villagers do not feel that the seasons have been changing in the last few years. There were, according to them, variations in the quantity of rainfall in different years, but that, they said, was in the hands of God.

Flora and Fauna:

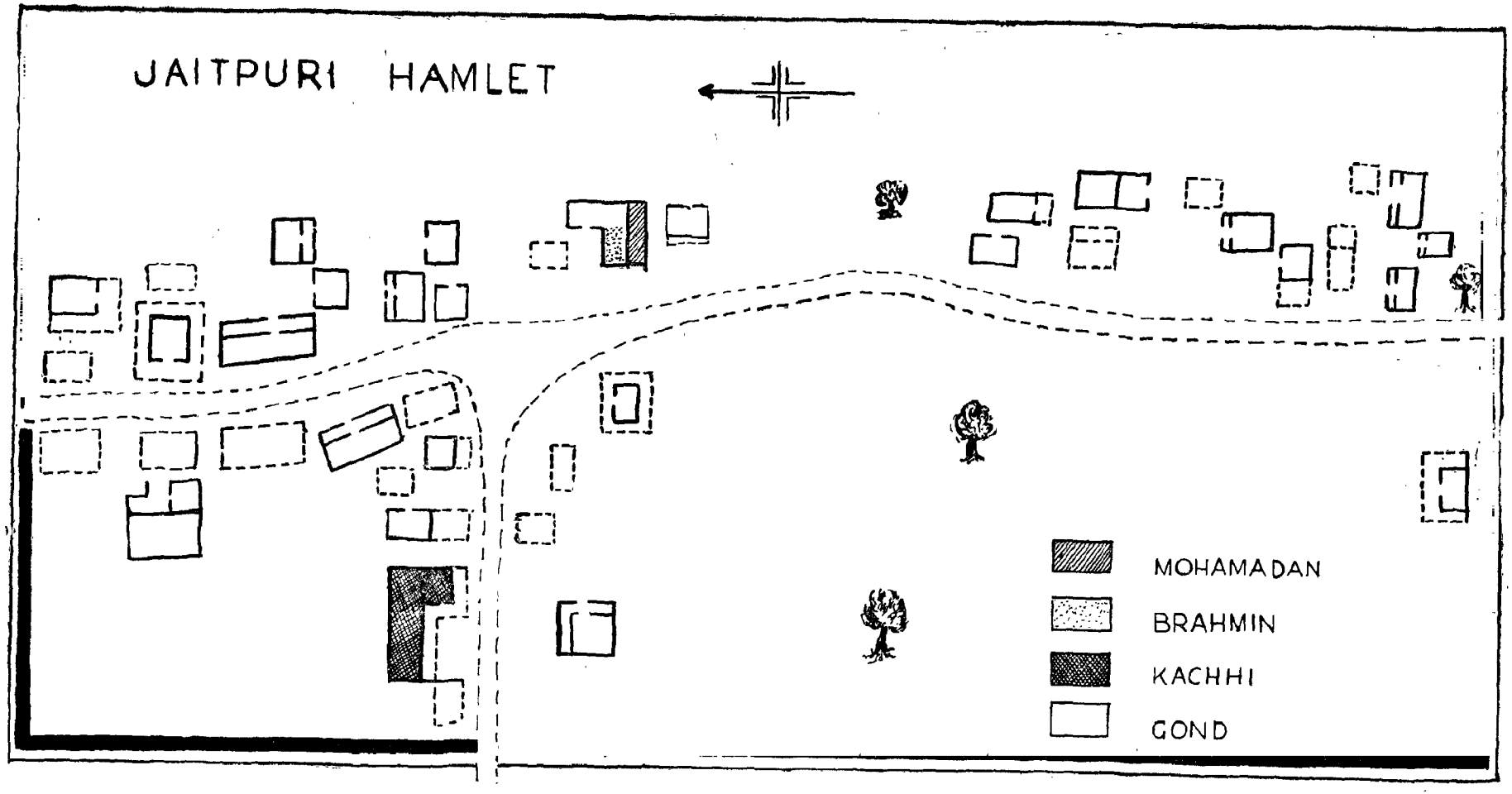
The forest in the vicinity of the village is of the type known as "deciduous". Majority of the trees are denuded of foliage in summer months. The ridges encircling the village have at this time a pale hue owing to the dried leaves of the bamboos. The shrubs of *bansiharoo* and *sukteli* bereft of their leaves contribute to accentuate the prevailing note of gloominess. The former which flowers in the winter months is of no use to the villagers but the latter has got some value as a fuel. It should, however, not be supposed that in summer months the whole surroundings present an aspect of unredeemed gloom and leafless vegetation. The rather plentiful sprinkling of *karonda* (*Carissa spinarum*) shrubs, particularly on the black soil of the lowlands, *mahua* (*Bassia latifolia*) and *jamun* (*Eugenia jambolana*) trees, however, enables the landscape to retain its general verdant character even during these months when trees like *saj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *palas* or *cheola* (*Butea frondosa*) *amaltas*—alternatively known as *jhagarua* (*Cassia fistula*) and *kachnar* (*Bauhinia variegata*) lose their foliage. The loss of foliage in *cheola* or *palas* is more than compensated in spring by its beautiful flowers, dashes of flaming scarlet in the scorching sun, which is the glory of the summer in Gondwana. The tree is otherwise also of considerable use to the villagers. Its flowers yield a dye of purple colour which comes handy to the villagers at the time of *Holi*—the festival of colours. The bark of the tree is suited for propagation of lac, while its flowers generally attract the bees—which make their hives there. Two other shrubs which are very extensively found in the village are *legud* and *makor*..the latter having small red fruits which are eaten. *Bhilma* (*Semecorpus anecardum*), *tendu* (*Diospyros tomentosa*), *gunja* (*Odina wodier*), *khair* (*Acacia catechu*), *tinsa* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*), *salhe*, (*Boswellia serrata*), *achar* (*Buchanania latifolia*), *lendia* (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*), *roana*, *bel* (*Aegle marmelos*), *tamarind* (*Tamarindus indica*), *ber* (*Zizyphus jujuba*), *koomhi*, *dhaman*, *bahera* (*Terminalia bellerica*), *mahuapanda*, and *dhawa* (*Anogeissus latifolia*) are other trees commonly found in the village forest and waste lands. *Tendu*, *aonla*, (*Phyllanthus emblica*), *ber*, *bil*, *kabeet*, *tamarind*, *dhawan* etc., are trees which yield edible fruits. *Bahera* is another tree yielding fruit but *harra* (*Terminalia*

PLATE III



Jaitpuri hamlet

PLATE IV



chebula) a tree common elsewhere in the district is not reported to be growing in the village. The *achar* fruit has an important bye-product in its corolla, which is known as *chironji* and is an important ingredient in many delicious sweet dishes. *Tinsa* and *dhawa* yield timber suitable for making parts of the harrow and the plough while the timber of *lendia* tree is valuable for use as beams in houses, as also in making the axle of a cart (there are however not many carts in the village). *Semar* which retains its leaves in summer has got brilliant scarlet flowers resembling—at any rate from a distance—the *palas* flowers, while *koomhi* gives a white flower in the month of *Asadh*. The *amaltas* or *jhagarua* tree is known because its long beans when thrown on the roof of any house are believed to cause a quarrel (Hindi-*Jhagda*) between its inmates. *Koha* (*Terminalia arjuna*) riverside relative of the *saj* tree grows abundantly on the bank of river Gaur and other streams. The tree is useful because of its known property to prevent erosion of soil from the water current which would otherwise eat into the lands adjoining a river or a stream. The cutting of *koha* within a distance of hundred yards of a river or a stream was banned formerly under provisions of the old Land Revenue Act even though the tree was in occupied land. There is, to my knowledge, no corresponding ban under the new Code. The timber trees—*sagon* (*Tactona grandis*) and *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) are conspicuous by their absence in the village forest. Majority of the bamboo trees growing on the ridges and the low lands is of the inferior type except for a small patch of *kattanga* bamboos which are reported to have been planted about five years ago by a forest guard.

Among wild fauna, the existence of wild animals like tiger and panther (or leopard) is not reported in the forest. The patwari of the village, however, had reported the alleged killing of a *chital* in the neighbouring village Gadheri by a panther. Wild boars are found in the forest and are frequent visitors to the crop-laden village fields. Monkeys, deer, *chital* (*Axis axis*) wild cat (Felis cat) etc. are some of the other animals that occasionally make their appearance in the village fields.

Size and number of Households:

As has been stated at the very outset, Jaitpuri is a small village. Forty eight households consisting principally of Gonds and Kols inhabit the two hamlets into which the village is divided. The bigger of these hamlets is known by the name of the village itself and consists of 31 households, while the smaller hamlet known as Kharharghat is situated on the bank of river Gaur at a distance of about a mile to the south of the principal hamlet. The name "Kharharghat" is onomatopoeic—the part 'Kharhar' of it suggesting the roaring sound produced by Gaur when in spate.

Residential pattern:

The settlement in Jaitpuri hamlet follows a linear pattern, with almost all the houses lying along the road coming from the forest and leading to Kharharghat. A few houses are situated on another road coming from the western side and meeting the road to Kharharghat almost at a right angle. A look at the diagram will show that there is a concentration of houses on the eastern side *i.e.* to the ridge side. Another peculiar feature is that the houses do not have faces towards the road but generally in a direction at right angles to the road.

A careful study of the habitation pattern in the hamlet would graphically bring out how geographical factors occasionally condition and direct the development of the human habitation. The forest covered ridge on the east limits the scope of expansion in that direction. To the west of the Kharharghat road, the land slopes off rapidly till the *nullah* is reached. Even the road from Bhita acts more or less like a water-channel in the monsoon and drains the water of the village into the *nullah*. The habitation obviously could not approach too near the *nullah* for fear of being inundated by the *nullah* during the rains. They could also not build their almost plinthless houses on the more slopy inclines away from the road for such houses would be exposed seasonally to the danger of destruction owing to soil erosion. The chances of expansion towards the *nullah* also are, therefore, very limited. The early settlers, therefore, made the most of the available strip of narrow land just at the foot of the ridge. Another factor which appears to have influenced the choice of the first settlers is that of proximity to the forest. For with one exception, all the households in the hamlet pursue the calling of wood-cutters and would naturally prefer a settlement near the forest. Thus the twin considerations of security and convenience in the pursuit of their traditional occupation completely explain the linear habitational pattern and the concentration of houses on the ridge side of the road.

On being asked to explain why their houses did not face the road, a variety of answers were returned by different persons. According to most respondents, they have a belief that the house should face either north or east. Facing in any other direction is regarded inauspicious.

No explanation was forthcoming for this apparently queer belief. Whether there is any correlation in their preference for the north and east directions for the facing of their houses and the situation of their supreme tribal deity *Bura Deo* in the north and east direction is not known. Others said that their fore-fathers had said that the houses should not have their entrances towards the road. It is interesting to compare this observation with the description in Russell that "the Gond does not like to live in a street"[1]. Yet others said that the main thing was that the house should have its door towards the cattleshed. A few persons said that the houses are not constructed with faces to the road because that would expose the inmates to the gaze of all types of strangers, a thing which they do not like.

In the Kharharghat hamlet also, the houses follow a more or less linear pattern but the axial line is in this case bent so as to give an archlike appearance to the habitation. The selection of the site in this case appears to have been governed by the twin considerations of proximity to the forest and to the river Gaur. Of course, the latter consideration is governed by factor of safety also and subject to that, there is an attempt to be as near as possible to the river. This explains in this case, the grouping of the houses on the side of the road, away from the river.

The residents of Kharharghat who, with the exception of one household are all Kols, do not appear to be satisfied with the present site. This is due to the two-fold danger, *i.e.* from the river and the *nullah* to the north of the village during the monsoon when they are in spate. This year when the rains played havoc in many parts of the district Kharharghat also endured its share of elemental fury, and the villagers had to flee for their lives to the nearby ridge. It is noteworthy that residents of the hamlet do not suffer from the common sentimental objections to the idea of parting with ancestral lands and desire to shift from the present to another safer site. They have even an alternative site in view where according to them their ancestors had lived before they were driven away by the government to the present site. There is no corroborration of their claim in the government records and the residents of Jaitpuri hamlet also did not confirm the claim. In any case the alternative site which the Kols have in mind, is situated in the reserve forest and is not available for residential purposes. There is no other site available in the village proper unless the area at present under cultivation is diverted to residential purposes. Apparently, therefore, the people of Kharharghat must face the periodical danger from Gaur till flood protection measures are taken by the government.

Distribution of Houses and Castes:

Notice has already been taken of the broad castewise distribution of the population between the two hamlets. Even in the same hamlet, the arrangement of houses presents groupings according to castes. Thus, in Jaitpuri hamlet, the Kachhi families are quite separate from the Gond families as will be clear from sketch (opp. page 3). Of course Brahmin Durga Prasad and Muslim Satola are living in the midst of Gonds, but they do not have houses of their own. They are sharing the houses of Gond families.

In Kharharghat, the house of the *Kotwar* is first to be encountered when one goes from Jaitpuri. The house of the Ahir who seasonally comes to Jaitpuri also is situated away from the Kol houses. The residential pattern, therefore, appears to be based on caste with the houses occupied by each caste gathered together in an easily recognisable, separate location.

Communications:

The village is very backward in respect of communications. It is surprising that inspite of its nearness to the town of Jabalpur, the village is not connected with it by an all-weather road. The road which branches off from the Jabalpur-Mandla road and goes to the Corporation water-works touches village Bhita. From Bhita an unmetalled road, which is "Jeepable" in the open season, leads to the bank of the river Gaur after negotiating a ghat of about 2½ miles in length. This road is reported to be maintained by the Public Works Department. From the point where the ghat road terminates, a *kachcha* bullock cart track goes to Jaitpuri, and this is another two miles in length. However, a *kachcha* foot-path to Jaitpuri branches off from the ghat road when one has negotiated about half of the ghat, and it shortens the journey by two miles. The village is connected with neighbouring villages Hinotia, and Balhwara by means of foot-paths; but river Gaur and Ranway, its tributary, have to be crossed on the way. The hopelessly poor State of communications in the village may be imagined from the fact that only village Bhita can be reached from the village in a bullock-cart and that too by a circuitous road in fair weather. During the monsoons, the village is virtually cut off from the rest of the world. River Gaur which connects it to the villages Balhwara and

1. Russell, "Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India" Vol. III. Page, 121.

PLATE V

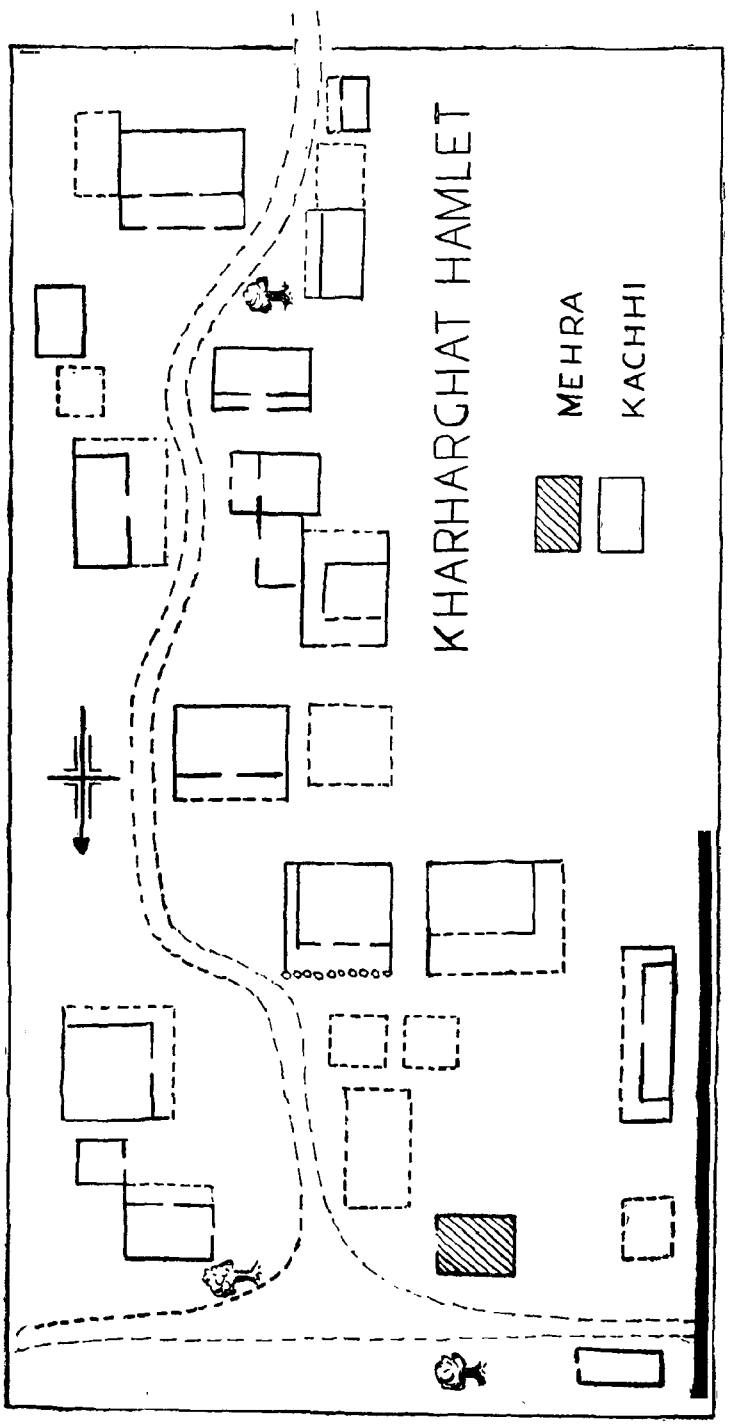
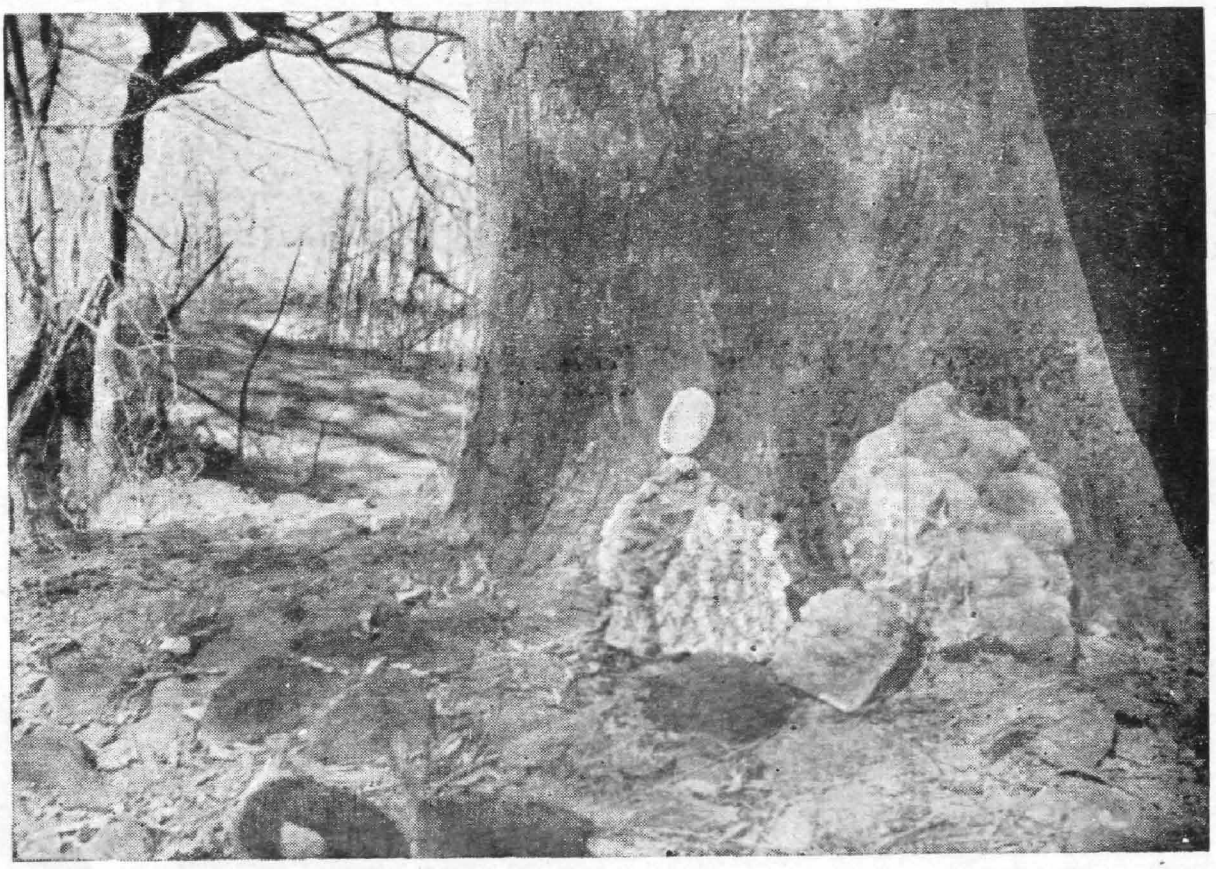


PLATE VI

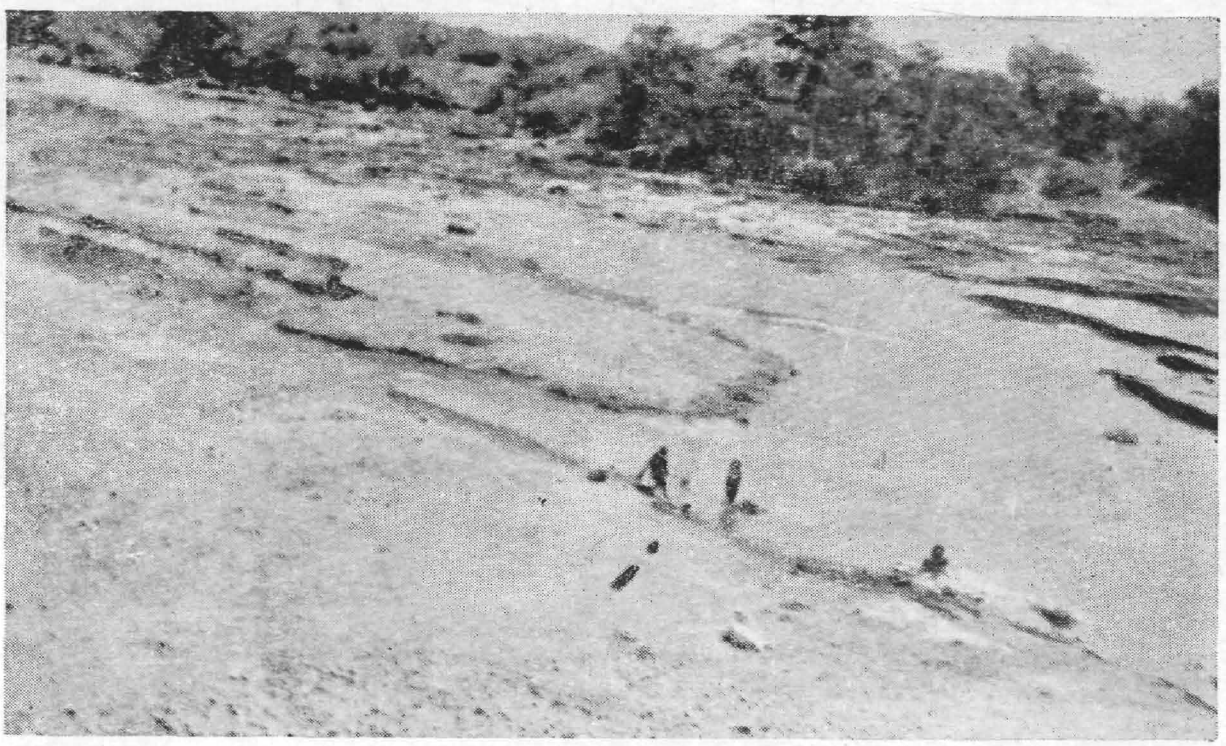


Holera Deo

PLATE VII



The Village Well



The Gour river

Ghugri is not fordable for most of the time in rains. The connection of the village with Bhita also is almost severed on account of the numerous *nullahs* that have to be crossed, and the difficult climb up the *ghat* that has to be negotiated before the ghat road is reached.

The nearest railway station for the village is Jabalpur while the village of Barela is the nearest station served by buses. There is of course no post office in the village. There is a branch post office in village Bhita which is in charge of one of the school teachers. The residents of Jaitpuri apparently do not have any use for the branch post office because they do not receive any letters or money orders. The villagers said that all their relatives lived in nearby villages, so that visit *in personem* is the easier mode of communicating and of course requiring less time. The village has no school. The nearest schools are at Bhita for Jaitpuri hamlet and at Balhwara for Kharharghat hamlet.

There is hardly any place of public resort in the village. In Jaitpuri hamlet, persons assemble either in the court yard of some house, or at the road-crossing whenever they want to meet for a social purpose. In Kharharghat, however people assemble on the land under the *neem* tree in front of the seat of the village deity *Khermai.*

There is no temple in the village. Apparently, the villagers do not feel the need for one. The village gods and goddesses are installed under various trees like *saja, neem,* or tamarind. The seat of *Bura Deo,* the universally worshipped Gond deity, is in the *saj* tree on the ridge to the east and north of the village. On the same ridge, a little below the *saj* tree referred to above one would see a *neem* tree, at the foot of which are placed five or six stones, which are supposed to represent the *Holera Deo.* On the same ridge a little towards the south are installed the images of the *Khermai,* the *Sarda* and *Sitalamai,* and *Hardaul Deo,* under the shades of appropriate trees. On the other side of the village, almost after half the way to Kharharghat is a tamarind tree, under which, perched on a heap of stones, is installed the image of *Mahamaiya Devi,* the goddess whose wrath is generally believed to result in the infliction of small-pox on the victim.

Khermai, the principal deity of the Kols is seated on a raised piece of ground below the *neem* tree at the point where the road from Jaitpuri enters the hamlet. Another image of *Khermai* is installed in the nearby forest under a *mahua* tree. *Sitalamai,* another goddess propitiated when small-pox attacks the village, is worshipped under a *neem* tree. Besides these principal deities, there are others having their seats in or below appropriate trees.

There are no wells in Kharharghat hamlet. The inhabitants of the settlement depend entirely on the Gaur for their supply of water for drinking, and other purposes. In Jaitpuri hamlet there is a well which supplies water for cooking and drinking to the villagers. This well was sunk about eight years ago by Sheodayal Kachhi of the village by taking a taccavi loan from the Government. At that time, the villagers were drawing water from an old well sunk by ex-proprietor Dhelan Singh of the Village who had his *bakhri, (i.e.* a big malguzari country house, usually surrounded by wall) in the village. This latter well was in a dilapidated condition, and when the new well was sunk, people started using it for their water supply. The older well fell into disuse with the result that it began to be filled up. Now it has no water left in it. The water in the village well lasts all the year round. Water for washing and bathing is brought from the *nullah,* about a furlong to the west of the village. This same *nullah* also serves the need of water for village cattle for most of the year. In summer, when the *nullah* dries up, the cattle of Jaitpuri hamlet are taken to river Gaur, about one mile from the village.

There are no latrines in any of the hamlets and the residents use the open fields or the bank of the *nullah.* The village children use the roads. Like any other village of the region, Jaitpuri also presents a sordid picture in the matter of sanitation and cleanliness. There is no village servant charged with the responsibility of sweeping the village road, and, true to the dictum that every body's property is no body's property, the villagers also do not bother to keep the road clean. On the other hand, as has been described earlier, they contribute to make it more unhygienic.

History of Settlement:

No records are available regarding the actual founding of village Jaitpuri. The oldest Gond and Kol families claim to have been residing in the village from at least four to five generations. Enquiries from the older Gond families revealed that their forefathers had come to the village from Mandla District. As regards the factors which led to this migration, or the parts of Mandla District to which their forefathers belonged, no information was available. The Kols have, however, preserved a tradition that their forebears were

settled in the village by Rani Durgawati, the great Gond queen of Garha-Mandla, who also bestowed on them the right to cut wood from the forest. They have even preserved stories that the queen used to grace the village by her visits, mounted on the back of an elephant. About queen Durgawati, Jabalpur District Gazetteer says—"Of all the sovereigns of this dynasty she lives most in the pages of history and grateful recollections of the people." In the tradition preserved by Kols of Jaitpuri, we can discern glimpses of this 'grateful recollection' reference to which has been made by the Gazetteer. Thus from tradition, as well as from the fact that the oldest families in the village have been living in the village for more than five to six generations, it is possible to form some estimate of the age of the village. Queen Durgawati was a contemporary of the Great Mugal Akbar, who reigned over this country in the sixteenth century. We can, therefore, take it that the village is about four hundred years old.

As regards the relative ages of the two hamlets no tangible picture emerged from enquiries made from villagers. At the most, they point out that the two hamlets have always been existing together. As has been adverted to earlier, the Kols said that their forebears were occupying a site nearer to the forest, where image of their goddess the *Khermai*, is installed even to this day. They were however not able to say when their forefathers had shifted to the present site. In the absence of any indications to the contrary, it is safer to presume that the two hamlets must have been existing together ever since the village came to be founded.

Apart from natural calamities like famines and pestilences, which were common to the whole region and of which an account will be found in a subsequent chapter, the village has passed through only one major misfortune within the memory of the older residents. It was a fire which had gutted according to Umrao Singh all the houses in the village about thirty years ago. After this incident, the malguzar left the village, and families belonging to Lodhi, Gosai, Kachera, Dhimar and Kurmi castes had followed suit within the course of the next few years.

It was not possible to know as to, how the village came to be known as 'Jaitpuri'. The part *puri* of the name of the village is a diminutive of the Sanskrit word *pur* which means a village. The meaning of the word *Jait* could not be ascertained as none of the villagers knows what it means. It is pertinant to note that in Jabalpur tahsil there are as many as three *Jaitpuris*. Enquiries made in other villages having this name did not meet with any success, and the significance, if any, of the village name will remain obscure for the time being.

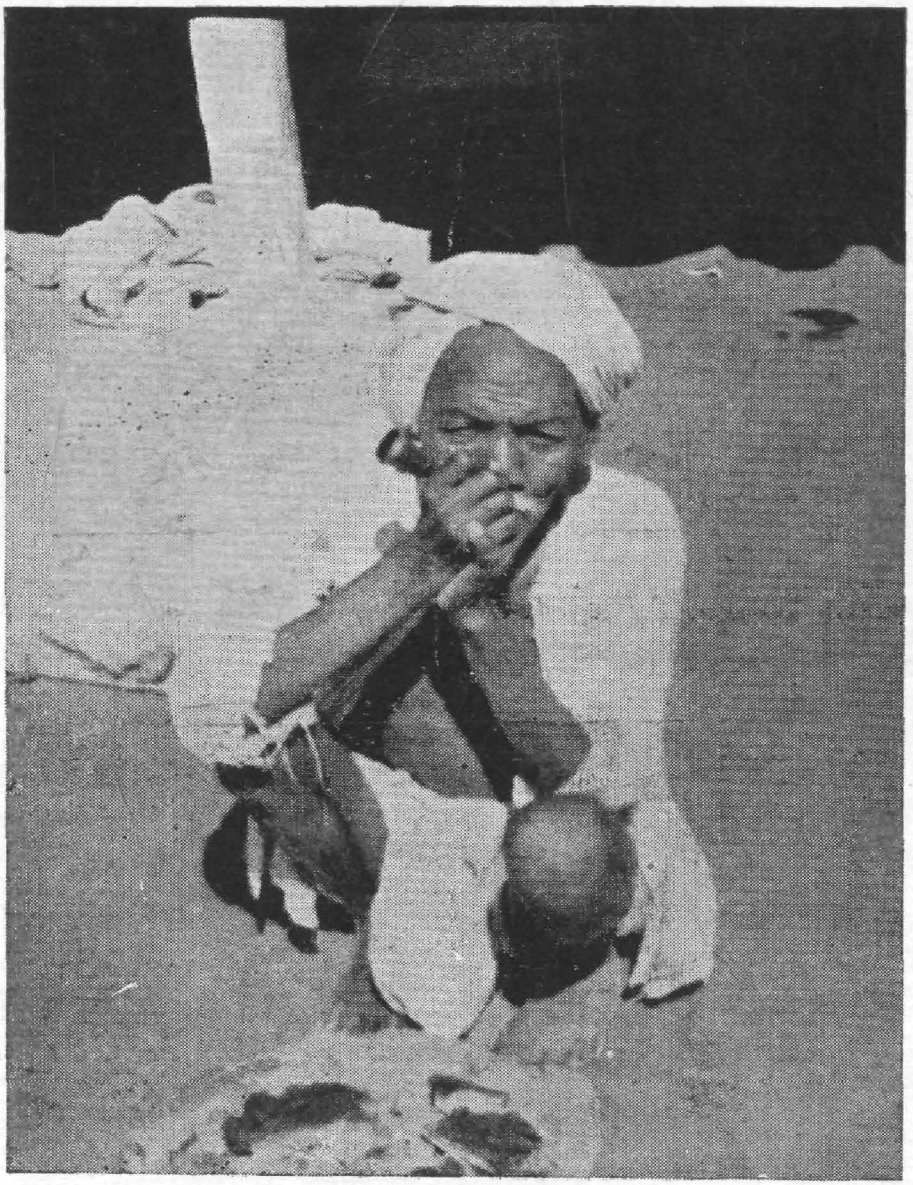
Russell has put forth the view that the Gonds have migrated into the State from the region to the south of the river Godawari, and that this immigration is subsequent to the Aryan immigration. I can do no better than quote the relevant passage from Mr. Russell's "The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces."

"It has hitherto been believed, at least in the Central Provinces, that both Gonds and Baigas have been settled in this territory for an indefinite period, that is from prior to any Aryan or Hindu immigration. Mr. M. A. Crump, however, has questioned this assumption. He points out that the Baiga tribe have entirely lost their own language and speak a dialect of Chhattisgarhi Hindi in Mandla, while half the Gonds still speak Gondi. If the Baigas and Gonds were settled here together before the arrival of any Hindus, how is it that the Baigas, do not speak Gondi instead of Hindi? A comparison of the caste and language tables of the Census of 1901 shows that several of the Munda tribes have entirely lost their own language, among these being the Binjhwar, Baiga, Bhaina, Bhuiya, Bhumji, Chero and Khairwar and the Bhils and Kols if these are held to be Munda tribes. None of these tribes have adopted a Dravidian language, but all speak corrupt forms of the current Aryan Vernaculars derived from Sanskrit. The Mundas and Hos themselves with the Kharias, Santals and Korkus retain Munda languages. On the other hand a half of the Gonds, nearly all the Oraons, and threefourths of the Khonds still preserve their own Dravidian speech. It would, therefore, seem that the Munda tribes who speak Aryan vernaculars must have been in close contact with Hindu peoples at the time they lost their own language and not with Gonds or Oraons. In the Central Provinces it is known that Rajput Dynasties were ruling in Jubbulpore from the sixth to the twelfth century, in Seoni about the sixth century and in Bhandak near Chanda from an early period, as well as at Ratanpur in Chhattisgarh. From about the twelfth century these disappear and there is a blank till the fourteenth century or later when Gond kingdoms are found established at Kherla in Betul, at Deograh in Chhindwara, at Garha-Mandla including the Jabalpur country, and at Chanda fourteen miles from Bhandak. It seems clear then that the Hindu dynasties were subverted by Gonds after the Muhammadan invasion of Northern India had weakened or destroyed the central powers of Hindus and prevented any assistance being offered to the outlying settlements. But it seems *prima facie* more likely that the Hindu kingdoms of the Central Provinces should have been destroyed by an invasion of barbarians from without rather than by successful risings of their own subjects once thoroughly subdued." Examining the other evidence, linguistic, traditional and otherwise, in favour of Mr. Crump's hypothesis that the Gond immigration into the Central Provinces is possibly subsequent to the Hindu immigration, Mr. Russell concluded that "though the evidence is not very strong, the hypothesis, as suggested by Mr. Crump that the settlement of Gonds in the Central Provinces is comparatively recent and subsequent to early Rajput dynasties is well worth putting forward."

The Gonds of Jaitpuri call themselves Gond Thakurs. The term Gond Thakur appears to have been coined recently, and possibly represents a concerted effort of a section of the tribe (the extent of which could not be ascertained during this enquiry) to upgrade itself in the caste-ridden Hindu social hierarchy. It is reported that an organisation with the ostensible object of improving the Gonds has been functioning for some time, with its headquarters reportedly at Lameta in Balaghat District and a branch at Badgaon near Kalpi in Mandla District. The more dignified term, 'Gond Thakur', apparently has been given to a section of the tribe by this organisation. It will not be out of place to state that the term "Thakur" sometimes, and in certain areas, has become something like a caste symbol. But this does not appear to be the case here, for the reason that in the same village, the Kols, the Kachhis and the Mehras, do not attach the appellation Thakur to the names proper of their castes. Secondly it has been observed that the Gonds of Jaitpuri resent very much if they are called simply 'Gonds'. They want to be addressed as Thakurs. This observed fact reinforces our inference that the appellation 'Thakur' after the caste or tribe name 'Gond' is not merely a caste symbol, but one connoting a superior caste status.

It is to be noted that the word 'Gond Thakur' has not been used in the Jabalpur District Gazetteer, compiled in the year 1911; nor has it been used in Russell's. "The Castes and Tribes of Central Provinces."The Gonds have got two aristocratic sections, the Rajgonds and the Khatolas. The Gond Thakurs are however not identical with the Rajgonds or the Khatolas. They are the ordinary Gonds, the 'Dhur' or dust Gonds; so that the use of the term Gond Thakur—which apparently gives a higher status to the tribe—is a recent fabrication. This view is corroborrated from another fact elucidated during the enquiry. It can be said, on the authority of the District Gazetteer, and Russell's book referred to already, that the Gonds of Jabalpur District used to call themselves *Rawanbansis*. During this enquiry, however, it was found that in village Jaitpuri they have started calling themselves *Soorajbansis*. This appears to be a subsequent and deliberate effort on the part of a section of the tribe including the village under survey—to destroy the age-old tradition mentioned in Russell's book that they are *Rawanbansis*, or of the race of Rawan,

PLATE VIII

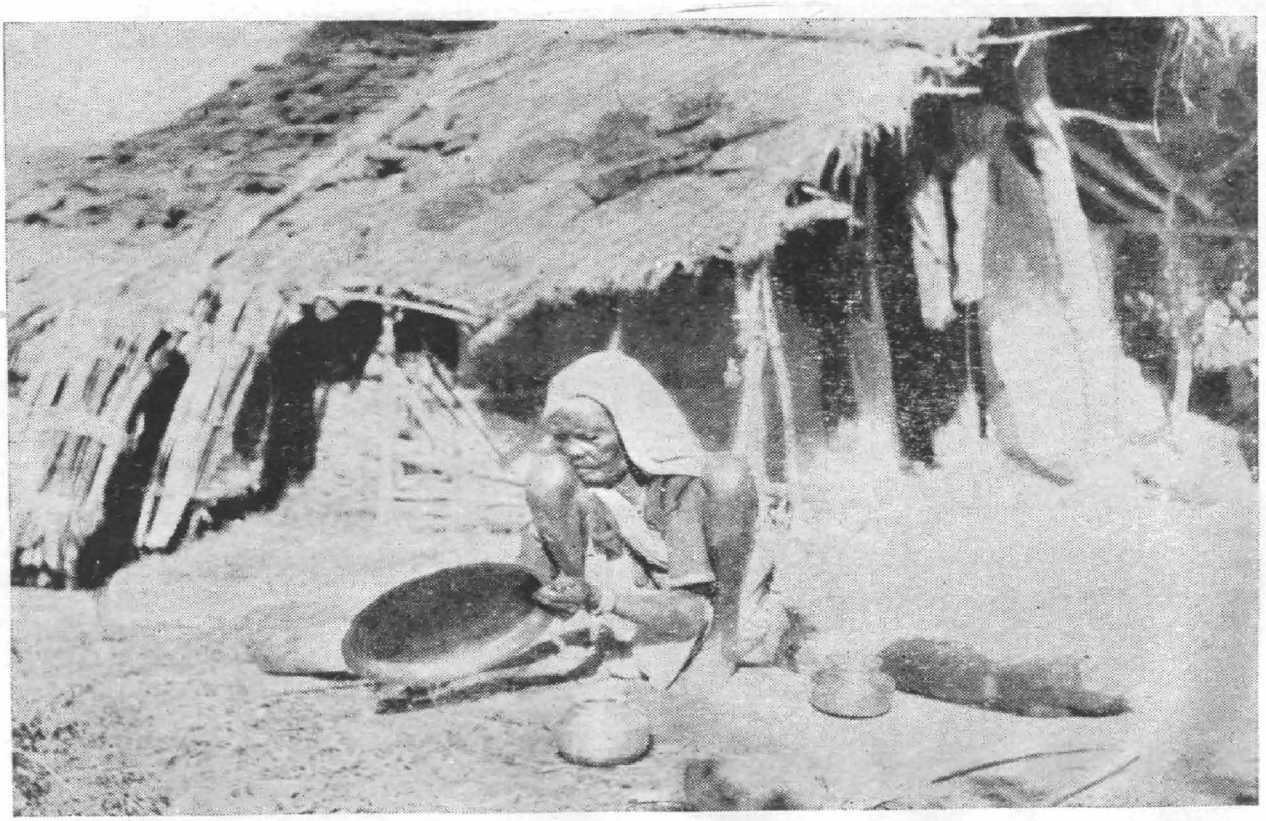


Kishora Gond, oldest man in the village

PLATE IX



A Gond girl



An old Gond woman

the demon king of Lanka. Calling themselves *Soorajbansis*—represents an attempt to associate themselves with Rama and thus to ingratiate themselves into a respectable position in the eyes of the Hindus with whom they happen to be in day-to-day contact. There is reason to believe that both these attempts to artificially boost up the status of the caste emanate from the reported organisation of the Gonds.

Endogamy:

According to Russell 'The ordinary Gonds in most districts form one endogamous group'. From the enquiries made in the village, it is found that the "Gond Thakurs" form an endogamous group. The actual size of this group appears to be limited by economic and geographic considerations—though in theory it embraces the 'Gond Thakurs' in all the districts of State. I feel it would be quite interesting and useful to study the spread of the section of Gonds—which has started to call itself 'Gond Thakurs'. From a case-study made of marriages in the village, it is found that with one or two exceptions almost all the marriages took place in villages Hinotia, Ghugri, Dumna and Kakartala—all of which lie within a radius of six miles of the village.

Exogamy and Totemism:

The endogamous group of the Gond Thakurs is sub-divided into a number of exogamous septs—the basis of classification into septs being two-fold. The first is the classification according to number of gods worshipped. All families worshipping the same number of gods are said to belong to the same *bans* and inter-marriage between them is prohibited. Families which belong to the same *bans* and worship the same number of gods are said to stand in the relationship of *Dadabhai* or *Bhaiband* to one another. Secondly, there exists a system of totemic subdivision into certain *Gotras*; each *Gotra* having an animal for its totem. Marriage of persons belonging to families belonging to same *Gotra* and hence having the same totem is also forbidden.

The following passage from Russell's book about the classification according to number of gods worshipped is of interest as it contains observations about the classification of Gonds according to the number of gods worshipped:—

"In Chanda a classification according to the number of gods worshipped is found. There are four main groups worshipping seven, six, five and four gods respectively, and each group contains ten to fifteen septs. A man cannot marry a woman of any sept which worships the same number of gods as himself. Each group has a sacred animal which the members revere, that of seven-god worshippers being a porcupine, of the six-god worshippers a tiger, of the five-god worshippers the *saras* (crane), and of the four-god worshippers the tortoise. As a rule the members of the different groups do not know the name of their gods, and in practice it is doubtful whether they restrict themselves to the proper number of gods of their own group. Formerly there were three, two, and one god worshippers, but in each of these classes it is said that there were only one or two septs, and they found that they were much inconvenienced by the paucity of their numbers, perhaps for purposes of communal worship and feasting, and hence they got themselves enrolled in the larger groups. In reality it would appear that the classification according to number of gods worshipped is being forgotten, and the three lowest groups have disappeared." The observation of Mr. Russell regarding the names of the gods being not known to the groups which worship them holds true in the case of Jaitpuri also. Nobody in the village was able to name satisfactorily the gods worshipped in his family. It was also found that the restrictions on marriages according to the number of gods worshipped were getting slacker. However specific cases in which the restriction was flouted were not reported. It is to be noted that Russell has not made any mention in his treatise referred to earlier of this classification according to number of gods worshipped in connection with the Gonds of Mandla, Jabalpur and other districts.

The stories connected with the totems have been forgotten by all the families. In a few cases the totems also have been forgotten. In the following table the Gond families of the village have been classified according to their *Gotras*. The totem and the number of gods worshipped have also been noted—whenever information relating to them has been disclosed.

S. No.	Name of *Gotra*	No. of families	No. of Gods	Totem
1.	Uika	10	—	Tortoise.
2.	Purteti	8	7	Crocodile.
3.	Marabi	3	5	Not known.
4.	Utiya	3	—	—
5.	Orkara	1	—	Orkara or wild cat.
6.	Kumharra	2	—	Goat.
		27		

The totem animals are not harmed or killed by the related septs.

The Uika sub-sept of the village is known as *Gaichatiya Uika*. Its members are reported to

1. 'The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India, Volume III, Page 66.

follow a peculiar custom at the time of disposing of the dead. After cremation or burial the place of cremation or burial is swept and washed with cowdung. Salt powder is sprinkled on it, and a cow is made to lick the salt. No explanation of this peculiar custom was available from the persons observing it. They said that their fore-fathers had been doing so and they were merely following in the foot-steps of their fore-fathers.

It may be remarked that besides the above septs, numerous other septs based on totems are found in the Gond Thakurs *e.g., Markam* (mango tree), *Tekam* (Teak tree); *Irpachi; Netam,* (Dog), *Dhurwa* (From *Dhur* or dust). The meanings of the sept names Uika, Purteti, Marabi, Utiya and Kumharra could not be found out as members of the septs themselves did not know them.

Kols:

The Kol tribe had given its name to the Kolarian family of tribes and languages. According to Russell, the original home of the tribe is the plateau of Chhota Nagpur in Bihar State. The Kols of Kharharghat however do not confirm this. They claim the region around Rewa as their *Desh* and call members of the tribe still living there as *Deshaha.*

Regarding the name of the tribe Russell says:—"The word Kol is probably the Santali *har,* a man. This word is used under various forms, such as *har, hara, ho* and *horo* by most Munda tribes in order to denote themselves. The change of r to l is familiar and does not give rise to any difficulty". A similar observation about the name of the tribe has been made by W. Crooke in "The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Vol. III"—which is also reproduced here: "According to Herr Jellinghause, the word means 'pig-killer'. According to others, like the tribal terms *Ho* and *Oraon,* it is derived from the Mundari *Ho, Hore,* or *Horo,* which means 'a man'. The change of *r* to *l* is familiar and needs no illustration, while in explanation of the conversion of *h* into *k* we may cite *hon,* the Mundari for child, which in Korwa becomes *Kon,* and *koro,* the Muasi form of *horo* 'a man'. It may be added that the Khariyas of Chhota Nagpur call the Mundas Kora, a name closely approaching Kol". In Sanskrit, Kol means a pig, and the suggestion is sometimes mooted that the name of the tribe is derived from this *Sanskrit* origin. Russell however has rejected this suggestion though he holds that "after the name had been given, its *Sanskrit* meaning of pig may have added zest to its employment by the Hindus". It may be interesting to note that along with the name of the tribe Kirat, the name of the tribe Kol finds a mention in the "Ayodhya kand" of 'Tulsidas' Ramcharit Manas. They are described as forest tribes, who served Lord Rama during his stay in *Chitrakoot* in Satna District. The couplets in which the name of the tribe is mentioned are reproduced here—

After *Doha* 132:

'Kol kirat bhes sab aye; rache paran trina sadan suhae;

(I) Assuming forms of Kol and Kirat all (gods) came; constructed leave (and) straw huts (with) pleasing appearence.

After *Doha* 134:

Yah sudhi Kol kiratanh paee;
Harshe janu nova nidhi ghar aee.

(II) This news (when) the Kols and Kiratas received (they) were pleased as if nine 'nidhis' had come to (their) house.

"Sab samachar Kirat Kolanhi,
ai tehi awasar kahe".

(III) All news, Kirats and Kols coming that time narrated (to Ram).

From the above, it will be observed that as far back as four hundred years—(*i.e.,* when Ramcharit Manas was written), the name *Kol* was in use for the tribe and that it lived in the region about Chitrakoot. This is corroborated by the fact that the region about Rewa continues to be the home of a large number of Kols. The *Kols* of Jabalpur District, and possibly of Mandla too, have migrated from Rewa District.

A *Kol* from Jabalpur narrated a story to explain how the tribe happened to be known as *Kol.* According to this story, the two wives of their ancestor were going some-where when a storm came. One of the two women took shelter in the hollow of a tree which is called a 'Kol or Khol' in Hindi; while the other was given shelter in the house of a Thakur. The progeny of the latter came to be known as Thakuria which is an endogamous division of the tribe, while the progeny of the second are the other Kols. I am however not inclined to attach any importance to this story as furnishing a possible explanation of the name of the tribe.

A Kol of Jabalpur—who claimed to be conducting some sort of enquiry into the origin of his tribe, told me that the *Kols* are descended from King Yayati of the *Chandrabansa.* Crookes has also mentioned this legend in his book referred to earlier. The Kols of Jaitpuri however were ignorant of this tradition. On the other hand they claim descent from *Sabri,* of the epic age, who is said to have entertained Rama when the latter was serving out his term of exile in the forest. They however did not narrate any tradition connecting them with

PLATE X



Kol children with Bhograj Kol



A group of Kol women

Sabri of the epic *Ramayana*. Russell and Crookes have not made any mention of such a claim and it appears probable that the Kols of Jabalpur have latterly adopted this story about their ancestry in order to associate themselves with the story of Rama and thereby to enhance their prestige in the eyes of the Hindus.

Legend of origin:

The Kols of Jaitpuri pleaded ignorance of any legend or mythical story about the origin of their tribe and the world. They have been "Hinduised" completely in this respect and have picked up their hazy beliefs about the origin of the world—from the *Pandit* who comes from Balhwara.

Endogamous Divisions:

The Kols of the village under study belong to the Rautiya sub-division of the Kols. They should however not be confused with the Rautiya tribe of the Chhota Nagpur plateau. It was reported that the Kols are divided into seven 'बैंक' (*bank*) or castes, six of which are in the order of their gradation in caste hierarchy as follows:—

1. Thakuria.
2. Rautia.
3. Rautele.
4. Gadhwaria.
5. Kagbaria.
6. Kundaha.

They were not able to name the seventh caste. I quote below an extract from Russell. which is instructive as it contains the names of five of the sub-divisions elicited during our enquiry—and furnishes conjectures on probable derivations thereof:—

"Of the important sub-castes here the Rautia and Rautele take their name from Rawat, a prince and appear to be a military or land-holding group. In Chota Nagpur the Rautias are separate caste, holding land. The Rautia Kols practise hypergamy with the Rauteles, taking their daughters in marriage but not giving daughters. They will eat with Rauteles at wedding feasts only and not on any other occasion. The Thakuria, from Thakur, a lord are said to be the progeny of Rajput fathers and Kol mothers; and the Kagwaria to be named from Kagwar, an offering made to ancestors in the month of *Kunwar*. The *Desaha*, from *desh*, the native country, belong principally to Rewah". The Kols of Jaitpuri did not corroborate that *Desaha* is an endogamous sub-division of the Kols. According to them, it is only a territorial name, denoting the Kols who live in the *Desh* but they may belong to the Rautiya, Rautele, Thakuria or other Kol Castes.

The particulars relating to the derivation of the names Rautia and Rautele have been forgotten by Kols of Jaitpuri. About the name Thakuria, I have already quoted earlier a story, which tends to support the assertion made by Mr. Russell. The Gazetteer of the Jabalpur District has named Raikwar also as a sub-caste of the Kols, and this may possibly be the seventh caste, which the Kols of Jaitpuri could not name. According to the District Gazetteer of Jabalpur "The Rekwars and Garhawarias are territorial names, the former referring to a place in the United Provinces and the latter to Garha near Jubbulpore". No significance however need be attached to the number seven, which in village Jaitpuri has come to be used almost in the sense of 'many'.

Exogamy and Totemism:

The sub-divisions of the Kols referred to earlier are endogamous, inter-marriage among them being prohibited. The practice of hypergamy to which reference has been made by Russell and in the District Gazetteer, does exist but no cases of such hypergamous marriage were reported in the village under study. It appears that the Rautiyas regularise such breaches of the rule of endogamy which involve the union of a boy of their caste with a girl of the Thakuria caste, *i.e.* a Rautiya boy eloping with a Thakuria girl will be admitted into the caste-fold along with his spouse. This practice points to the possible paucity of girls in the caste but any conclusive statement on the point could be made only after a closer probe. As far as the village is concerned, the number of unmarried girls is 13 as against 20 unmarried boys.

The Rautiyas of Jaitpuri disown the practice of exogamy based on the observance of totemism. They claim to marry their sons and daughters within the caste, outside the circle of their near relatives from the side of the mother and the father. Though there do not appear any totemic sub-divisions, the Kols of this village observe certain practices which are described as totemic by Russell. The following examples are given:—

(*i*) The Rautiyas of Jaitpuri say that they are *Kathotahas* and their fore-fathers only kept wooden utensils in their houses. The practice has never been followed by the present Kols of Jaitpuri. They revere the tiger, and in every house there is a place for the *Baghaut Baba* as the tiger is reverentially called by these people.

(*ii*) The Jaitpuri Kols do not keep *Kathuri,* a child's mattress made by sewing together bits of cloth in their house. They cannot mend a torn cloth by stitching another piece of cloth on to it, for that is how a *Kathuri* is made. It appears they are reluctant to mention or hear the word. No stories behind the observance of this singular practice were narrated to the investigator.

(*iii*) They revere the *bar* tree and will not take food on *pattal* made of *bar* leaves. For this reason, they are known as *Baram.* (बड़म)

Russell has observed that tiger-worship is a peculiarity of what he calls *Kathotaha* sept *only. This observation is no longer correct now as tiger worship appears to be a practice common to all the Kols living in this district. In Katni Tahsil—where Rautel Kols predominate the tiger is known as *Bagesh*—a variant of the word *Bageshwar,* and outside every village inhabited by *Kols,* a clay image of the tiger is made on a raised platform. Again, Russell has described the Kathotias, the Kathurias and the Bargaiyas as three distinct totemistic septs. This does not accord with the facts in Jaitpuri village. The Rautia Kols of the village simultaneously subscribe to the practices of all the three septs—though they actively follow only two. This means either that the particulars recorded by Russell were inaccurate in some of the details; or that they have now changed. I prefer the second view. It seems that during the last five decades the Kols of Jaitpuri have forgotten the division into totemistic septs—though they still cling to the practices of the septs.

Kachhis:

The two Kachhi families of the village have been living in this village for the last seventy years or so, when the father of Sheo Charan, the father of the heads of the two households left Mahoba, the country of his fathers, owing to out-break of famine in search of livelihood. He settled in the village and in course of time acquired tenancy lands from the *Malguzar.*

The Kachhis are a cultivating caste, who grow vegetables and irrigated crops requiring intensive cultivation. According to †Russell, the word Kachhi may have been derived from *kachhar,* the name given to the alluvial land lying in river basins, which the caste greatly prizes for growing vegetables. A contrary view is, however, also to be found in the Jubbulpore District Gazetteer that "it is probably the soil which derives its name from the caste which cultivates". The view held by the author of the Jabalpur District Gazetteer does not seem to be correct. It should be noted that the word *kachhar* (कछार) is derived from the Sanskrit word (कच्छ) which means the land on the banks of a river or tank. The Sanskrit word (कच्छप) for a tortoise also has the same origin. It would not be correct to suggest that the Sanskrit word (कच्छ) has been derived from the Hindi word (कछार). Hence, there remains no doubt that the word (कछार) is derived from the Sanskrit word (कच्छ) and not, as suggested by the author of the Jubbulpore District Gazetteer, from the caste name (काच्छी). An alternative derivation is suggested by Crooke's** that the name of the caste is derived from *kachhna,* a term used for the process of collecting the opium from the poppy bulbs. Confirmation of this however could not be had from the Kachhi families of Jaitpuri.

Sub-Castes:

The Kachhis have several sub-castes majority of which take their name from names of the plants which they traditionally grow. A few examples of such sub-castes are given below from Russell:—

Name of Sub-caste	Name of Plant which they traditionally grow
1. *Hardia*	*Haldi* or turmeric.
2. *Alias*	*Al* (or Indian madder *Rubia tincturum*).
3. *Phulia*	*Phul* or flowers.
4. *Jiria*	*Jira* or cumin (*Cuminum cymminum*).
5. *Murai or Murao*	*Muli* or radish. ("*Raphanus Sativus*").
6. *Piria*	*Piria* or basket in which they carry earth.
7. *Sania*	*Sun* or hemp.
8. *Mor*	They prepare the *maur* or marriage crown for weddings.
9. *Lilia*	From *nil*—the indigo plant.

Another sub-caste is Kachhwaha which is considered to have a connection with the Rajputs and to rank higher than others. Kannojia, Bhagataha and Nakchheda are other sub-castes. The caste name Kanojia is territorial and refers to the Kanauj region of the State of Uttar Pradesh. The Bhagatahas are so known because it is compulsory for members of this caste to wear the *Tulsi* bead round their neck, which signifies a deeply religious attitude. Other sub-castes of the Kachhis do not permit wearing of the *kanthi* (as the bead of *Tulsi*

* The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. III, Page 510.
† The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Volume III, page 285.
** The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, Volume III, page 77.

is called in Hindi) by their members. The Nakchheda sub-caste is of comparatively recent origin, consisting of the unorthodox section of the Kachhis who get the noses of their women pierced; for it is to be noted that the piercing of the nose, and the wearing of the *nath* or nose-ring are strictly forbidden amongst the Kachhis. Of the various sub-castes mentioned in Russell as taking their name from the crops they grow, it is signficant that the Kachhis of Jaitpuri were ignorant of all but the Hardias and the Murao who derive their names from *haldi* (turmeric) and *muri* (radish) respectively. This fact is quite significant in itself as it brings out how geographical and time factors tend to accentuate the attitude of indifference and ignorance of a section of a caste towards other sections of the caste. The fact is also suggestive of the forces that accelerate the making of new castes.

In the region of Jabalpur Tahsil the Kachhawaha caste of the Kachhis to which the Kachhis of Jaitpuri belong was, till about a year ago, sub-divided into a number of endogamous *palis* which were all territorial in nature, *i.e. Ukhri Walon Ki Pali; Panager Walon Ki Pali, Kamtiwalon Ki Pali* etc. This practice of endogamy has been abolished by a decision of the *Kachhawaha Sabha* last year and intermarriage and interdining among the *Palis* are taking place. It is interesting to note that the Kachhawaha Kachhis, through their *Sabha* have arrogated to themselves a Kshatriya origin, and now trace back their lineage to *Kusa* the second son of Rama. They have even started calling themselves Kuswaha Kshatriyas. Kachhwaha however is a Rajput sept of Jaipur—who also claim to have descended from Kusa, the son of Rama. It would thus appear that the *Kachhwaha* sub-sept of Kachhis has now started identifying itself with the *Kachhwaha* Rajputs as far as lineage is concerned. They have however not been successful in ameliorating their status in the caste hierarchy—where they continue to be treated as an inferior caste, much below the Kshatriya or the Rajput castes.

The Kachhwaha Kachhi families living in Jaitpuri have given up their traditional occupation of growing vegetables and have taken to ordinary agriculture and wood-cutting.

Mehra:

Russell regards the Mehras or Mahars as "the impure caste of menials, labourers and village watchmen of the Maratha country. corresponding to the Chamars and Koris of Northern India". The District Gazetteer of Jabalpur also classifies the Mehras and Koris in the category of impure castes along with Chamars, Mochis and Mehtars. During this enquiry, it was found that the Mehra family of Jaitpuri is not treated as an impure caste whose touch would necessitate an ablution to a clean caste Hindu. The Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri without reservation touch the Mehra and have ordinary social inter-course with him. They would however treat the Chamars, Basors and Mehtars differently. They cannot have social dealing with members belonging to these castes—whom they treat as impure, and do not touch. It appears, therefore, that the classification of the Mehras as an impure caste is no longer true in the region in which the village under enquiry lies. Here they are treated like the low Hindu castes—not putting on the sacred thread—but whose touch does not entail any purificatory bath to a clean caste Hindu. In reply to questions during this enquiry, it was elicited that the Gonds and Kols have always been treating the Mehra as a clean caste and it is not the case that they have been granted this favour in the recallable past. One is, therefore, forced to conclude that the statements in Russell and the District Gazetteer were probably not true for the region round about village Jaitpuri even at the time of their publication.

According to Sukhda, the Mehra village watchman of Jaitpuri, the Mehras who are different from the 'mahars' of the Nagpur and Berar country, are divided into seven *kuris* or endogamous divisions. The number seven however need not be taken seriously as will be clear from his own words *viz. "Kuri to sat sat sab logan ki hot hai Gondan ki, Kolan ki, Chamaran ki, Mehra logan ki bhi sat kuri hoti hain", (i.e.,* all castes—Gond, Kol and Chamar—have seven *kuris* each and Mehras also have seven *kuris*). Number 'seven' in the village has thus come to be used in the sense of 'numerousness'. It is interesting to note that the Gonds and Kols also return the number of their castes or endogamous sub-divisions as seven whereas, infact, the number is more or less than that in each case.

During our enquiry, only four endogamous sub-divisions of 'Mehras' were reported . These are (1) Jharia (2) Mahobia (3) Deharia and (4) Amondha. The Mehra family of Jaitpuri belongs to the Jharia sub-division. They also call themselves Chandrabansis. All these names appear to be territorial. The Jharia have a tradition that their ancestors lived in *Jharkhand*. Strangely enough Sukhda did not know where *Jharkhand* is. Existing literature of Mehras does not support this traditional claim of the Mehras. Mahobia Mehras are said to be living in Mahoba near Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. while Amondha Mehras live in the Jabalpur Tahsil. Deharias are also residents of the Jabalpur District.

According to Sukhda, in social gradation Mahobias are higher than the Jharias in caste status while the Amondhas rank lower than

them. The Mahobias have now however started practising hypergamy with the Jharias, while the latter do so with the Amondhas. The position of the Deharias in social hierarchy could not be ascertained as Sukhda was himself ignorant about it. As regards the position of the Mehras in the Hindus, I have at the outset stated that in Jaitpuri they are regarded as a low Hindu caste, higher than the untouchable castes. They are at the bottom of the castes living in village Jaitpuri.

The Jharias are divided into a large number of exogamous septs called "*gots*" which appear to be totemic in nature. Some of these *Gotras* are listed below:—

(1) Naggutia—The totem is *nag* cobra.

(2) Changutia—From *chana* or gram.

(3) Diya Gotra.—*Diya* is an earthen lamp. Presons belonging to this *Gotra* do not eat after lamps are lighted in the evening.

(4) Chaudhariya—*Chaudhari* in this part of the country means a *Chamar*. Persons belonging to this *gotra* bury the *nand* just as the *Chaudharis* or Chamars do.

(5) Ladaiya Got—*Ladaiya* or Jackal is their totem animal.

(6) Varah Got—The totem is *varah* or pig.

The 'Mehra' family of Jaitpuri is 'Changutia'. It professes the Kabirpanthi faith. The traditional occupation of Mehras is weaving (it should be recalled that Kabir was also a weaver) but in Jabalpur almost everywhere they are also the village watchmen. A Mehra has the general reputation of being very cunning and is therefore, considered eminently suitable for the post of village watchman.

In Jabalpur tahsil 'Mehra' caste is included in the list of scheduled castes.

Housetypes:

Dwellings in Jaitpuri admit of broad classification into three main types, on the basis of their size, the material of which their walls are made and the roof. These types are—(1) the bigger mud-houses, with two rooms, (2) the medium-sized house with a single all purpose room, surrounded by a court-yard on three sides; and (3) the small single-room house, without any verandah, called *jhopdi* or *madaiya*. The frequency of these three types of houses, according to the main castes is shown below:—

TABLE

Name of Caste/ Tribe	No. of Houses belonging to		
	Type I	Type II	Type III
Gond	2	18	7
Kol	4	9	3
Others	—	3	1
	6	*30*	*11*

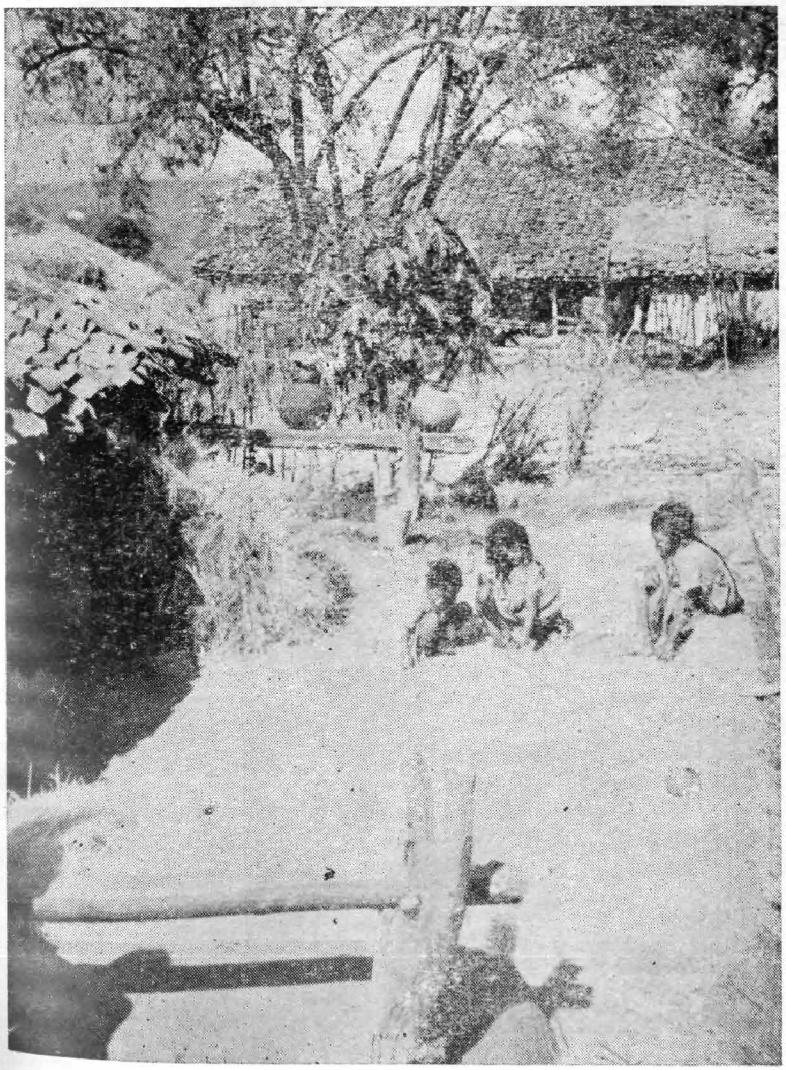
It would be seen that houses of second type are the most frequent in the village, accounting for more than 60% of all the houses. The *jhopdi* or *madaiya* type is next in frequency, while the least frequent are the bigger double-roomed houses. The houses of the last mentioned type are generally owned by persons who are comparatively better in status than others. The *jhopdi* or *madaiya* type of houses are owned by the comparatively stringent section of the village population, while the medium-sized houses of the second type belong to the middle strata of the village population. The salient features of each type of house will now be considered.

Houses of Type II:

As has already been observed, majority of the houses in Jaitpuri belong to the second type. This is a small house with its only room measuring about 12′×10′. It is surrounded on three sides by a narrow verandah, which measures hardly three to four feet in width. The walls of the room are generally made of mud in which *kodon fodder* has been mixed; but rooms having their walls of bamboo wattle (known as *tatta* in local parlance) with or without a mud plastering are also frequent. Of the thirty houses belonging to this category, eighteen had the walls of their rooms made of mud mixed with *kodon fodder*. The remaining twelve had the walls of the room made of bamboo wattle screen covered with mud. The verandah is generally enclosed by a low wall of bamboo-wattle screen, which again may or may not have a mud-plastering on it. Verandahs of some houses did not have any wall-enclosure. The use of bamboo-wattle screen for making walls provides yet another instance of natural surroundings influencing the living habits of the people. The preference for the bamboo as a material for constructing walls is the result of the availability of bamboo in abundance in the village forest. In addition, these walls do not require any plinth to be raised. They are easily repairable, even amenable to replacement without much difficulty.

PLATE XI

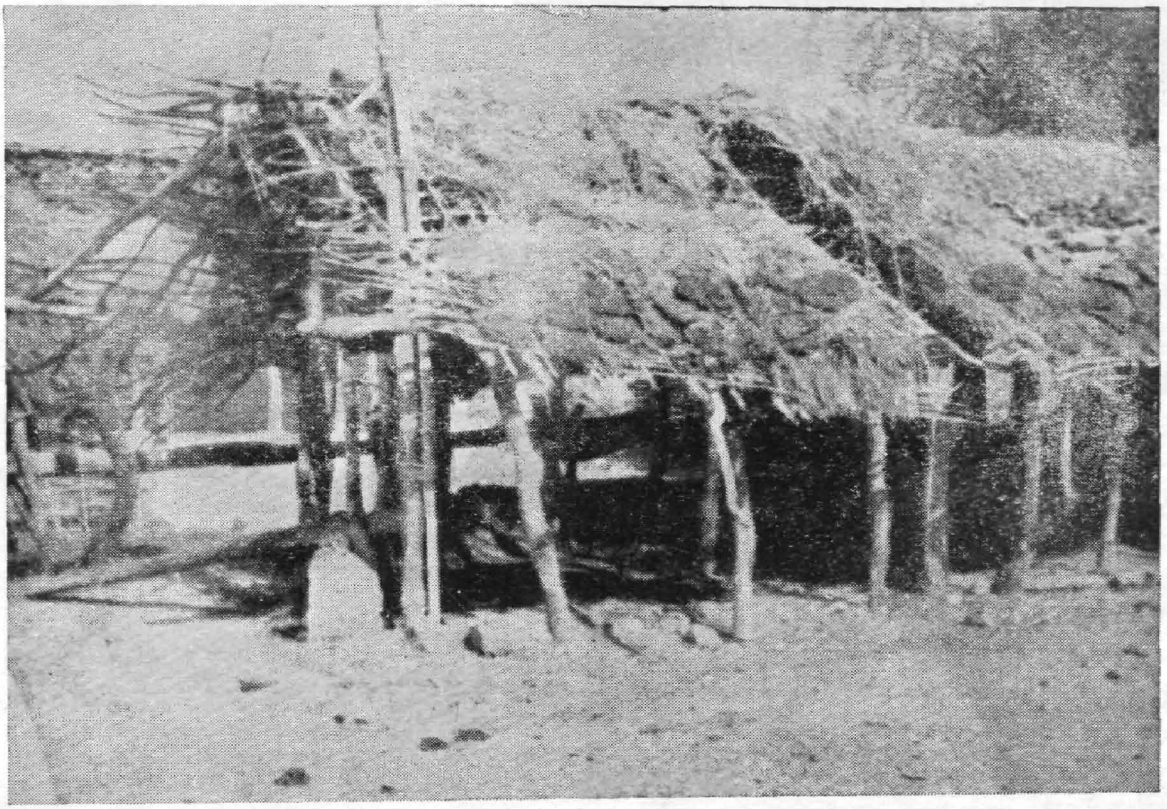




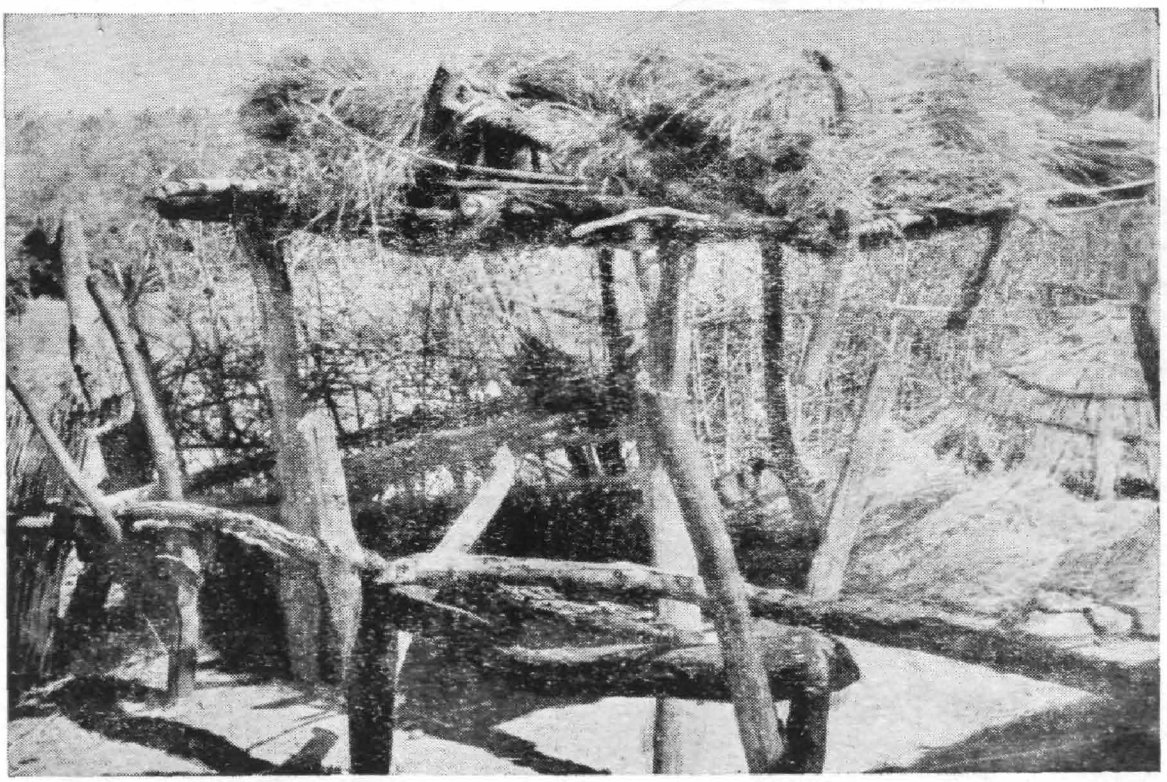
House of type I (above)

Wooden stand for keeping the metal and earthen pitchers of water (left)

PLATE XII



A cattle shed

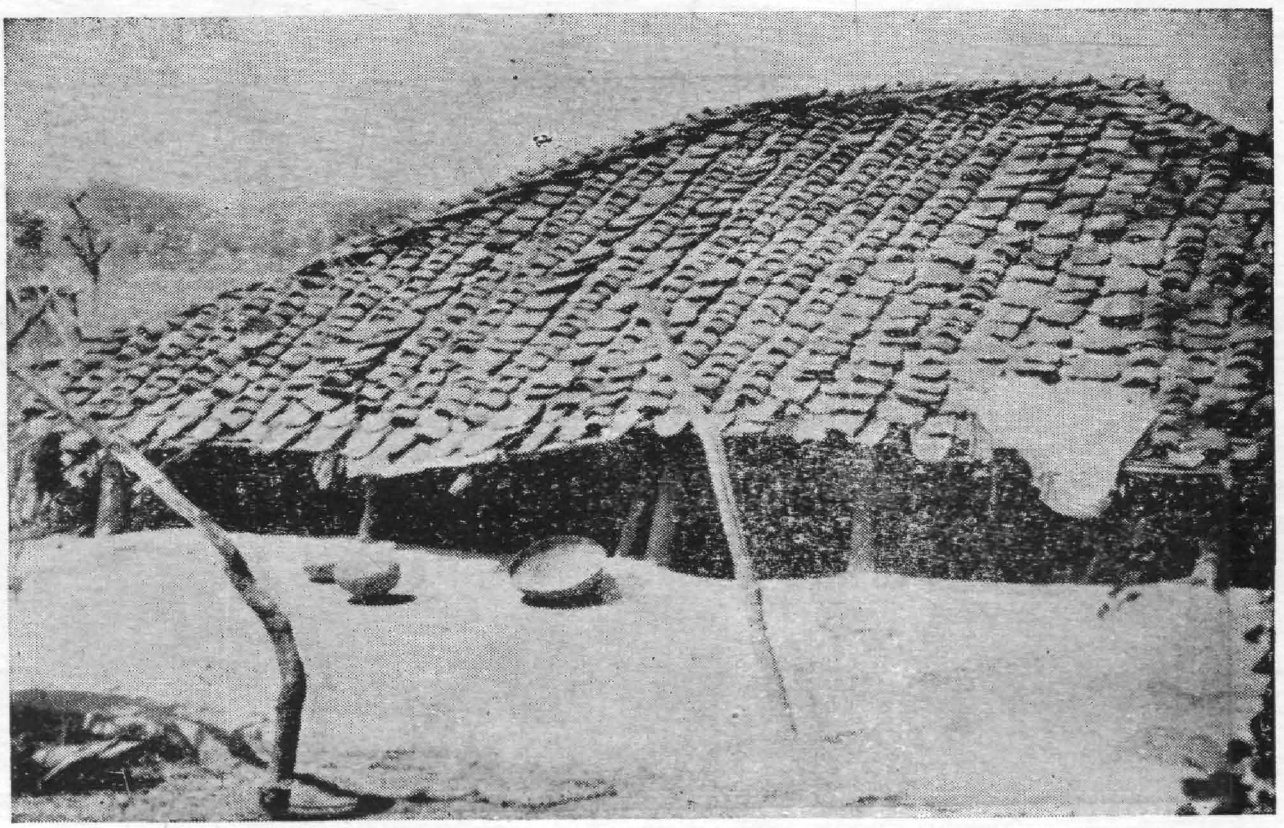


The *maira*

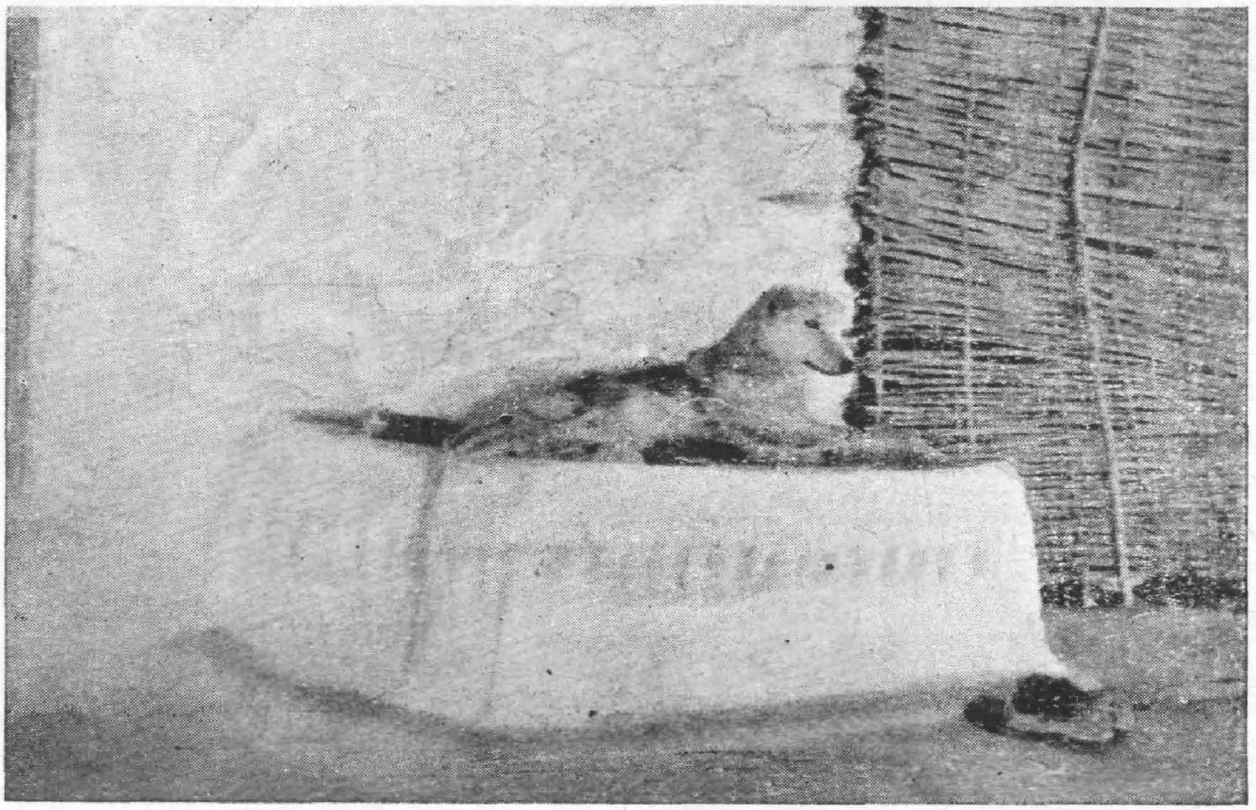
PLATE XIII



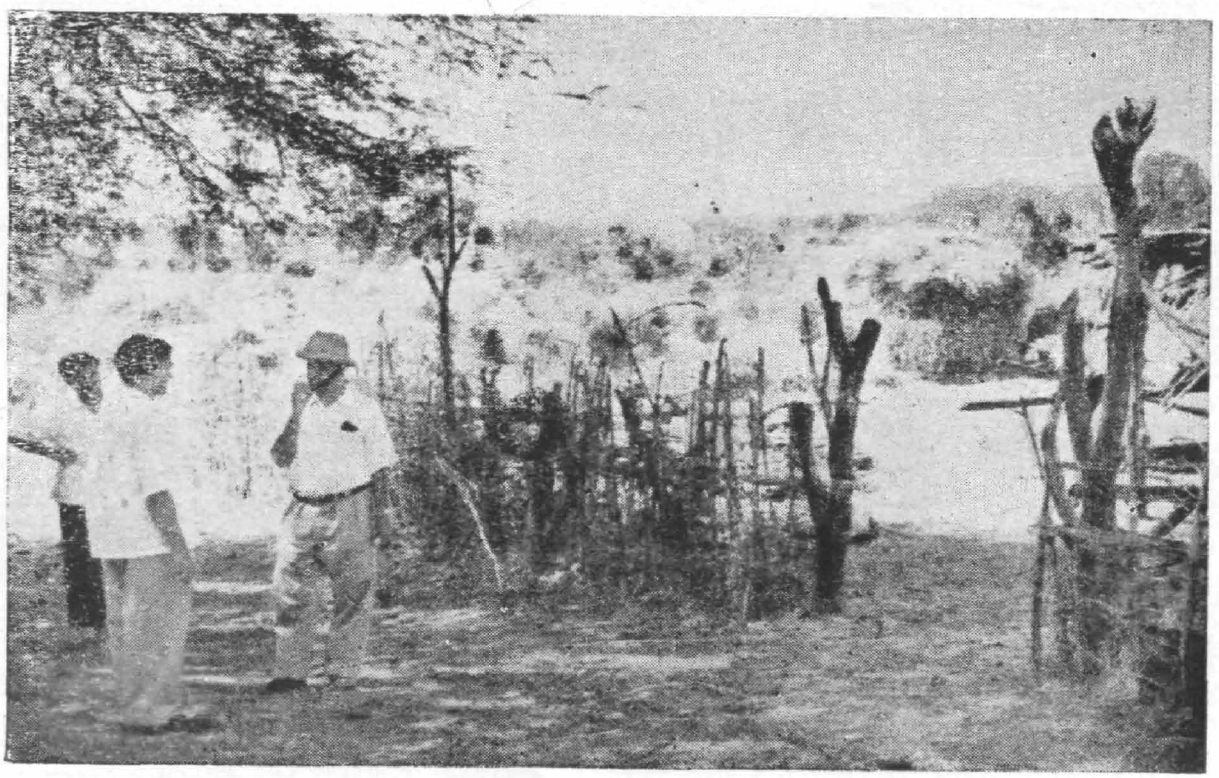
Villagers going about their business



A Kol house—Type II



Deothana or place of gods—the dog sitting on the seat of gods is real.



A threshing floor.

Just infront of the verandah is a court yard, the size of which usually varies with the size of the family. This court yard is surrounded in many cases by a low earth embankment. The roof of this type of house has four slopes two of which descending on either side of a central horizontal beam, are of the shape of trapezium-while the other two are triangular in shape. The roof is generally covered by locally prepared, ill-baked country tiles, but there are thatched roofs also. The roof which covers the verandah is a projection of the roof-which covers the room, and its extremity is very low. When the surrounding verandah is enclosed, the house is entered from an opening of about three feet width. One has to enter the verandah by stooping considerably. The room is entered through a door-which is again not tall enough to allow a person to get in without going through the exercise of stooping. A little slip in the performance of this exercise would result in an injured forehead. The room is generally divided into two unequal portions by means of an improvised partition wall of mud and dried stalks of the *rahar* plant. In the smaller of these two portions, one would find one or two big earthen containers, with a rectangular or circular base, narrow at the extremities, but bulging out in the centre. These pots are intended for storing the grain of the household. In the same part, in a corner may be seen the fire-place, a horse-shoe-shaped mud structure and in its vicinity, the few brass, bronze and earthen cooking and eating utensils of the household. In the bigger portion of the room, in a corner is usually placed a small iron or wooden box containing an assortment of articles ranging from the title-deeds (if any) of the household land to such cash as the family may be fortunate enough to possess. The interior of the room is dark because light is admitted only through the low door. The smoke-black ceiling also accentuates the murkiness of the interior. In a corner, in the verandah is fixed the *chakki*, or 'grindstone', used for powdering the grain. By its side, is usually found the *okhli*, *i.e.*, a cylindrical cavity in the ground, which is used for thrashing the rice or *kodon* before cooking. The doors of the room and their frames are made of wood and they are prepared by the carpenter at Barela. The wall on either side of the door frequently contains ornamental protuberances, which also serve as places for keeping the small earthen *chimneys* or lamps. If the walls of the room are made of bamboo-wattle screen, there is no wooden door in the wall and the entrance is closed by a piece of wattle-screen whenever required.

The floor of the room, the verandah and the courtyard is smeared with cowdung and water. Just outside the courtyard, in every house, one would find a wooden stand for keeping the metal and earthen pitchers of water. On another side, again a feature common to all houses, is a framework called *maira* formed by supporting a few wooden pieces on vertical wooden poles in a criss-cross manner. In the rainy season and winter, this is covered by vegetable creepers the most common being the cucumber or the gourd. In summer, however, it is used as a repository of various household articles like *charpais*, ploughs, harrows and indeed anything, that it may keep. In winter, from one of the horizontal poles may be seen hanging an improvised cradle, *i.e.*, a big flat bottomed bamboo basket with a child lying in it. Associated with every house is another separate room or shed for the cattle. This cattled-shed is covered by thatched roof; and its walls, if any, are of unplastered bamboo wattle-screen.

An invariable feature of every house-whether belonging to a Gond or Kol is a small, circular earthen platform, smeared with white earth, which is called (देवठाना) *i.e.*, the place of gods. This is usually located in the court-yard just below the verandah; often, particularly in the case of Gond houses, this is inside the house. There are no images on this platform, but the household gods are supposed to reside in it. The Gonds and the Kols are very reluctant in disclosing the names of their household godlings and it was after a great deal of pursuasion that one Gond mentioned the names of *Deswali, Asamani* and *Bhairo* as his household gods.

In the case of Kol houses, generally the interior of the house does not present a spectacle of unredeemed gloom, because the room has got a small ventilator through which light can trickle into the room. These ventilators are a peculiarity of Kol houses. Another point of difference between a Kol and a Gond house is in the matter of cleanliness. The Kol housewife apparently keeps her house tidier and cleaner than her Gond counterpart. Apart from daily sweeping at least twice a day, the floors of the room, the verandah and the courtyard are very frequently smeared with cowdung mixed with water. A lining of white earth is given to the border of the room, the verandah and the courtyard; and the earthen embankments of the courtyard are completely whitened with a red lining in the centre. The tidier, and better external appearance of the Kol house readily catches the eye and brings to the fore-front an important point of difference in the living habits of the two tribal castes—even to a casual observer.

Attempts to beautify the walls are obvious from the decorative designs engrafted on the walls in the neighbourhood of the doors, in some of the houses. The motifs are figures like the rising sun or crude human forms. The Kol

houses were also noted for the figures, which are drawn on the walls in red and bule colour.

House-type—III:

The *madaiya* or *jhopdi* type of house is a smaller house, with walls of bamboo wattle-screen, plastered with mud, and having a thatched roof. The roof has two slopes. There is usually no verandah in this house, and there is frequently no door. The entrance to the room is covered by a rectangular piece of wattle-screen. The courtyard in the front is also smaller in size and is not surrounded by an earthen "embankment" or *par*. Small houses of this type are usually occupied by poor and small families not infrequently newly-wed couples. In course of time, when the size of the family grows, the *madaiya* is forsaken and a house of the type already described is constructed. Thus, Gulab, a son-in-law of Bhalloo previously occupied a *madaiya*. He is however now constructing a new mud house.

Houses of Type—I:

With mud-wall and a four-sloped roof of country tiles the bigger two roomed houses follow the same pattern of construction as the second type of houses. The verandah in this type of house is slightly wider—about five to six feet, and the courtyard also has correspondingly bigger dimensions.

Table below shows the distribution of houses according to the roof types. It will be found that all the houses with tile roof, have four sloped roof. In fact, only the *madaiya* or *jhopdi* type of house has a two-sloped roof, which is of straw or grass. The eleven houses having straw or grass roofs, with two slopes all belong to the *madaiya* or *jhopdi* type of houses. The twelve straw-roof houses with four-sloped roof fall in the second type.

There are no latrines or bath rooms in the houses. The open country serves as lavatory ground and the *nullah* caters to their needs of bathing and washing.

Repairs:

The houses in the village are repaired once in a year, *i.e.* after the cessation of the monsoon but before Diwali festival. This annual repairing and cleansing of the houses has almost acquired a ritualistic character in the rural areas, and no breaches thereof are observed. The repairs consist mainly in replastering the rain-washed exterior walls, and covering the room, the courtyard and the verandah with fresh earth. Often enough, particularly in the Kol houses, the floor surface is rubbed meticulously with smooth stone to give it lustre and glaze. In houses having tile roofs, the tiles are annually turned. The repairing is done by the villagers themselves, and it does not involve the household in new expenditure.

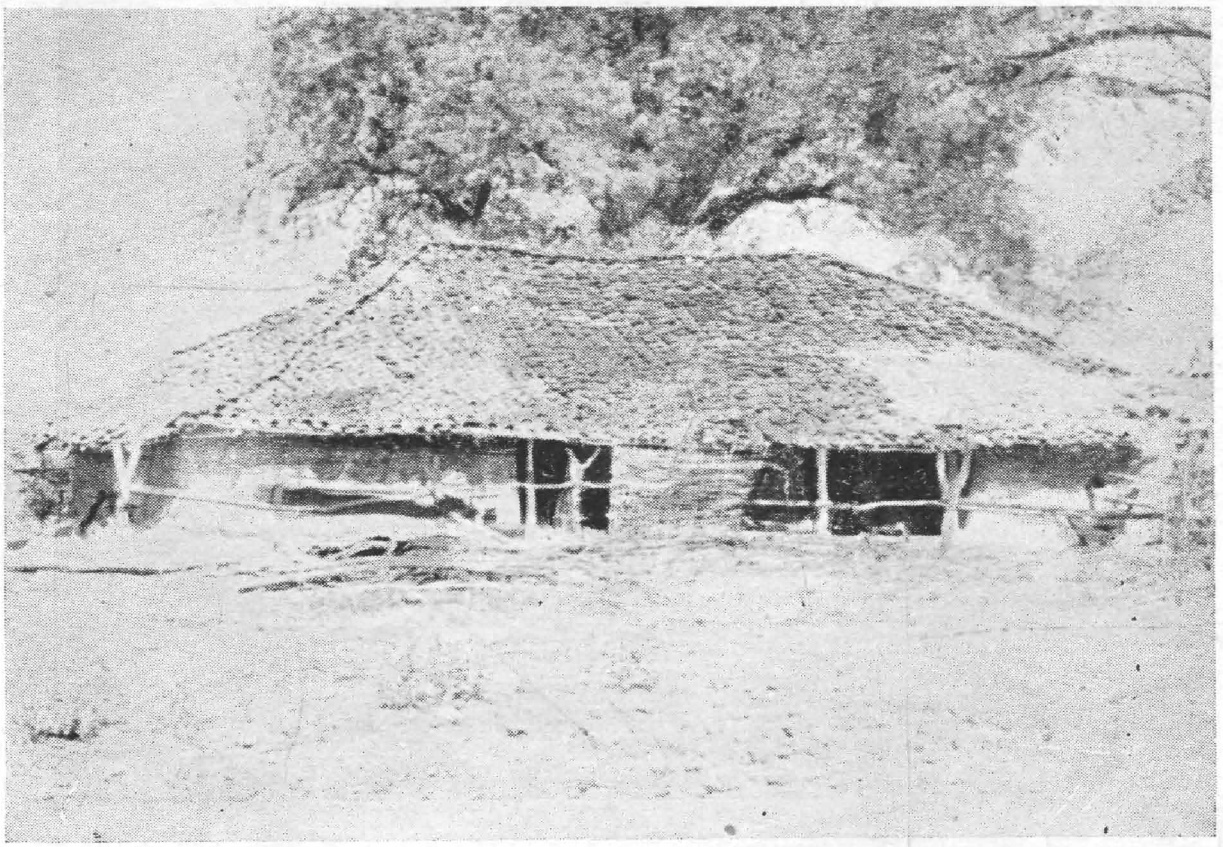
HOUSE TYPE—ROOF

NAME OF VILLAGE JAITPURI: **(Based on item 44 of Model Schedule)**

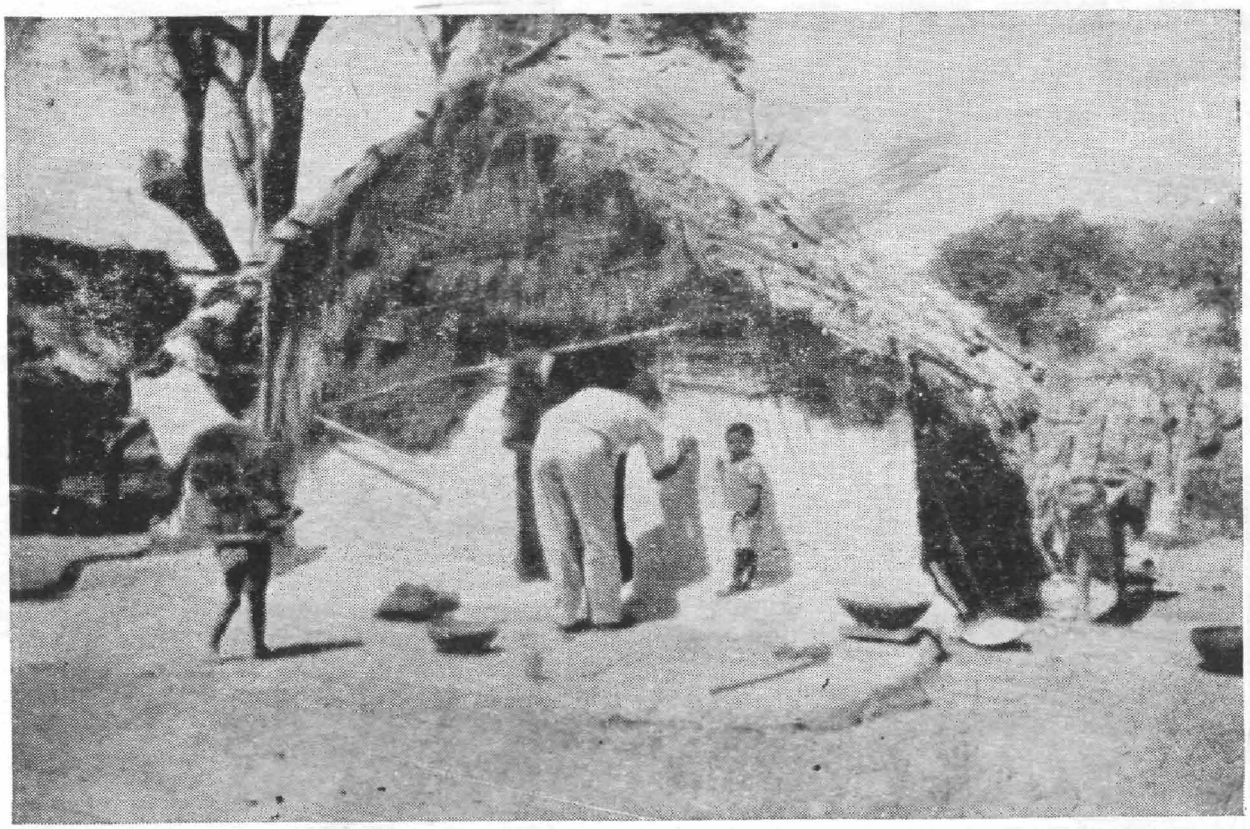
Caste/ Tribe/ Community	No. of households with mud roof		No. of households with pukka roof		No. of households with C. I. sheet roof			No. of households with asbestos roof			No. of households with tile roof		
	with slope	without slope	with slope	without slope	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped
1	2	3		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Gond	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—
Kol	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	—
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—

	No. of households with tin roof			No. of households with wooden roof			No. of households with straw/grass roof			No. of households with leaf roof (name)			REMARKS
	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	2 sloped	4 sloped	More than 4 sloped	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Gond	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	8	—	—	—	—	All houses with mud walls have tiled roof.
Kol	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	5	—	—	—	—	
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	

PLATE XV

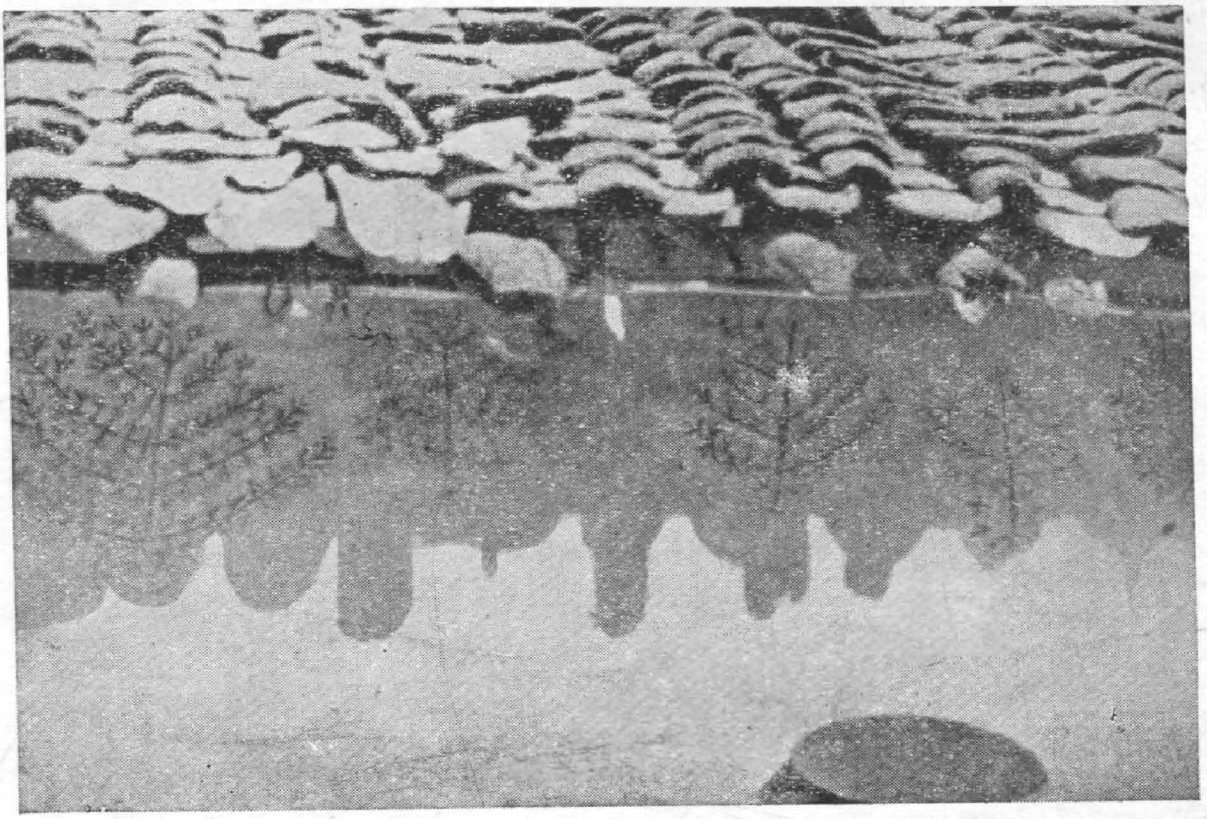


House of type I

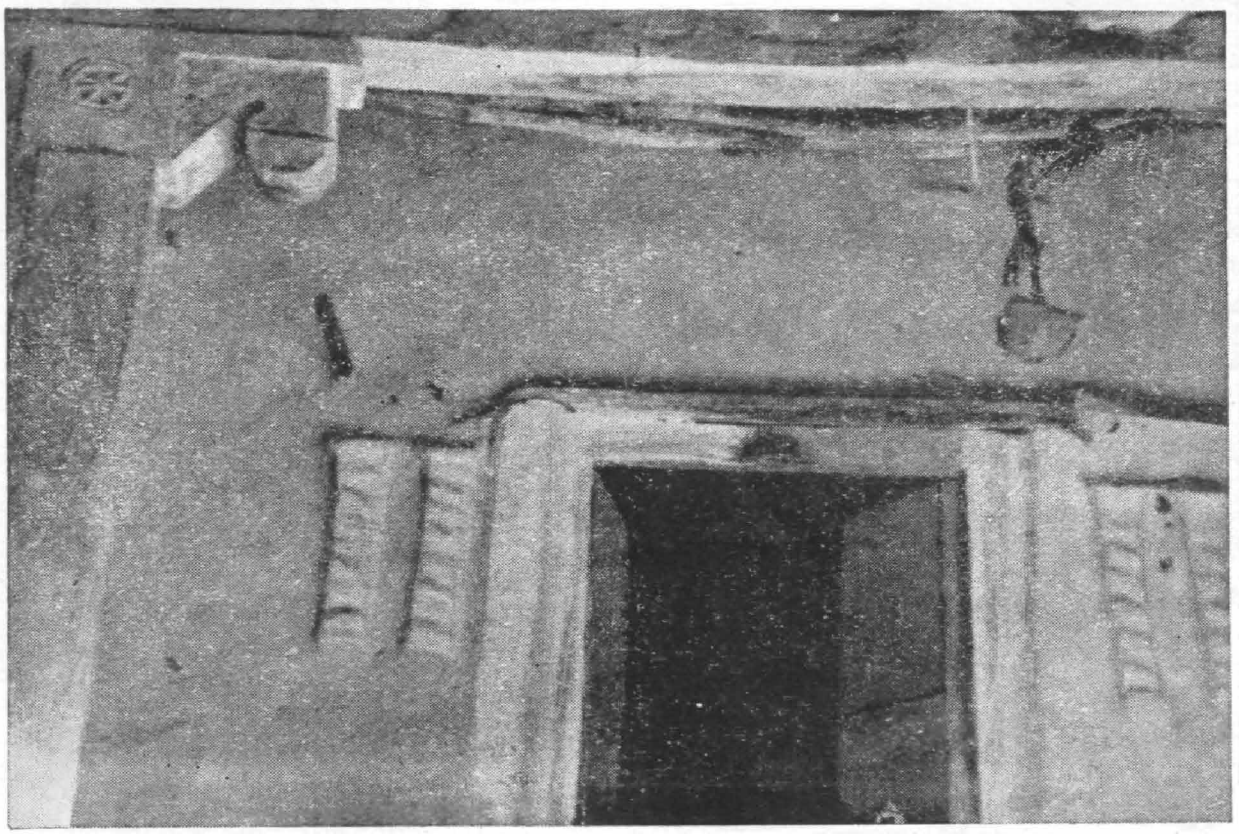


House of type III (*madaiya* or *jhopdi*)

PLATE XVI



Decorative drawings on wall in a Kol house



Decorative designs on doorway of a Gond house

New Houses:

Construction of new houses is started on auspicious day, which is either a Monday or Wednesday for all the castes in the village. Those who can afford his fee also consult the Brahamin priest from Balhwara. The houses are constructed by the villagers themselves. Wood for the beams and poles is cut from forest, the tiles are locally prepared, and the wooden doors and fixtures are purchased from Barela. In case of houses with mud walls, a plinth of about 1½ to 2 feet is dug, but houses with *tatta* walls do not require any plinth to be dug. The practice of first planting a *saj* pole called *khirkutdeo,* referred to by Russell on page 122 (Vol. III) of his treatise is not reported to be followed by the Gonds in the village. On the other hand, to save the house from the evil eye, a pair of old shoes, or the carcass of a dead bird are hung inverted on a bamboo pole which is fixed to one corner of the house under construction. This is considered to protect the house from evil eyes—as well as from evil spirits. This practice is common to the Kols also. The entering of a new house is not reportedly accompanied by any formal ceremony or *pooja.*

Cost of Houses:

The prices of houses show great variation. The cost of the bigger mud-houses including the cost of land is reported to range between Rs. 500 to 1,555 rupees. The medium-sized houses of the second type are in the range of Rs. 200 to Rs. 500. The price of the *madaiya* or *Jhopdi* is between Rs. 50 to Rs. 150. The reported prices of the houses have been tabulated below—according to major castes.

Houses Classified by Cost

Caste	Number of houses with cost (in rupees)					
	100 and below	101 to 200	201 to 300	301 to 400	401 to 500	above 500
Kol	3	3	5	1	1	3
Gond	2	8	5	2	5	4
Others	1	1	1	—	1	The Brahamin and Mohammadan households live in rented houses.
Total	6	12	11	3	7	7

It would thus be seen that houses with prices varying from Rs. 101 to Rs. 300 are the most frequent. There are only seven houses with a price of more than rupees five hundred. These belong to the comparatively better off section of the population.

Dress and Ornaments:

In point of dresses worn by grownup men or women, no differences were observed in the case of Gonds, Kachhis or Kols. They all dress alike. The men wear a short *dhoti* known as *pardhania* and a shirt or sometimes, particularly in the case of older people a *salooka* (vest) purchased readymade from the market. A few Kols were observed putting on *kurta*—a collarless shirt—also. The *pardhania* is so worn that the calves are exposed. One end of the *dhoti* is taken below from between the thighs and tucked behind. Older people keep their head covered with a turban, which is a piece of cloth about five feet in length, by wrapping it round the head four or five times, with the loose end hanging on the back. Generally young men prefer to remain bare-headed,, but even they carry an *angochha* (a country towel) about their shoulders. The women are clad in saries which are invariably coloured. Green, red and blue appeared to be the favourite colours. In case of women also one end of the *sari* is tucked behind at the waist. The other extremity (*pallu* as it is called in the local dialect) of the sari is taken from the side to the back and the head is covered with it. Covering of the head is regarded as essential particularly when strangers are about, and women not doing so are regarded as shameless. In Kols, when a woman is divorced by her husband, the latter is required to uncover her head before the *panchas* and declare that he has nothing to do with her. Above the waist the women wear a loose blouse, got stitched by the tailor from the town.

Among Gonds, boys and girls are also dressed like the grown up men or women. Boys however do not put on *salooka.* The Kol boys are not seen putting on the *dhoti.* They put on a *chaddi*—which is used as an undergarment by men in the towns. The young Kol girl, like her Gond counter-part, puts on the sari and blouse. In Gonds, very young children are allowed to go naked, or in the alternative, a few rags are tied round their waists. The picture again is different in the case of Kols. Frocks or small shirts are the children's garments among the Kols.

The dresses of men and women alike are dirty, stained and soiled at many places, and for this reason the colour of men's *dhotis* which is supposed to be white is often brownish. It is evident that the clothes are not washed with soap or soda ash. Grown up men and women seemed to be quite indifferent about their hair, which are seldom, if ever combed. The hair of young children also are clotted and dishevelled. It was however not so with young boys and girls who appeared to be alive to the need of dressing their hair. Kol girls bestow greater attention on their hair and a few were seen using coloured ribbons also in the pigtails, Grown-up women keep their hair dishevelled. Majority of the men, particularly the Gonds, get their hair cropped to a small size so that they may not have to go through the botheration of combing them.

Men wear country shoes called *panhaiyas*, prepared by the cobbler from village Gadheri. Some women also put on shoes, known as *polia*. Majority of the women, and almost all young boys and girls move about unshoed.

The only Mohammaden in the village dresses exactly like his Gond and Kol coinhabitants, and it is not possible to pronounce his religion from outward appearance alone. He however does not grow the sacred tuft of hair, and this distinguishes him from the Hindus who all grow the *choti* or sacred tuft of hair. The Mehra who is the kotwar of the village is at once known from his official dress of a blue *kurta* and cap, the leather belt round his waist, and the spear-studded lathi. Strangely enough, people in village Jaitpuri, whether Gonds, Kols or Kachhis do not carry *lathis* with them while moving about.

Growing of moustaches is quite common among the males, but there are no men who grow beards.

Ceremonial Dress:

On festive and ceremonial occasions, no separate dresses are prescribed. At weddings, the bride groom puts on what is called *jama* or robe—which is coloured. The bride puts on a new sari and blouse. Other persons put on the best clothes they may get hold of on the occasion.

Urban influence

Situated as it is in the neighbourhood of a great urban centre, there is bound to be a degree of urbanisation in the dressing habits of the people. The shirt is now slowly but perceptibly supplanting the old *salooka*. Very young girls of the Kol community are taking to the frocks in great numbers. Other urban dresses, like the half-pant, and the half-sleeved and sleeveless banayan, have also made their appearance. A noteworthy feature is that urbanisation in respect of dress is more pronounced in the Kols than in the Gonds. Attempts at increasing physical charm by bestowing greater care on hair-dressing, especially in the case of younger women have also an urban touch about them.

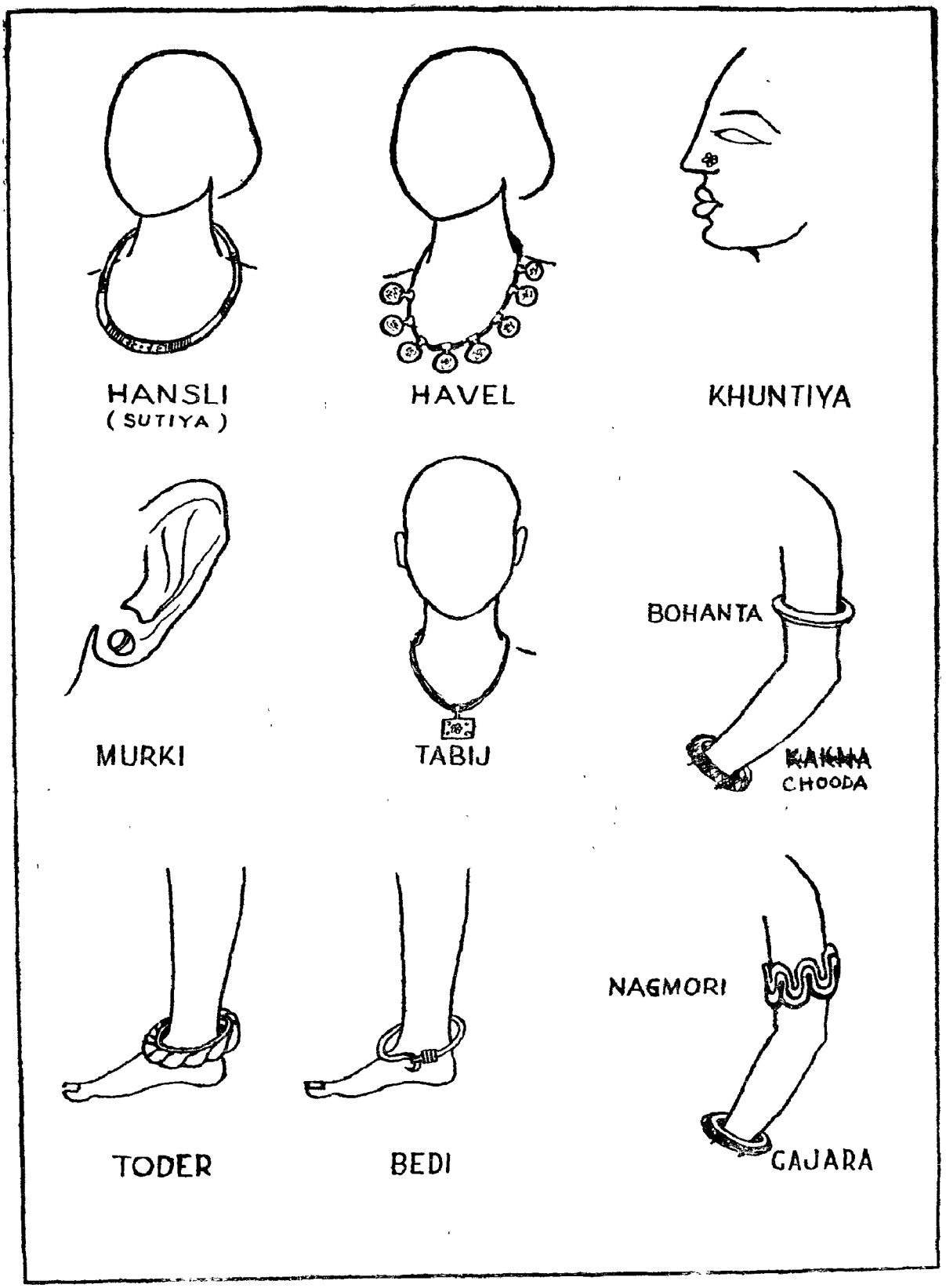
Ornaments:

Village women are very fond of ornaments. Ignorant of the sophisticated ways of members of their sex in the towns, and being too poor to afford attractive clothes, ornaments appear to be the only external aids to beauty known to them. Gond and Kol women too are fond of embellishing their bodies with as many ornaments as their straitened circumstances may permit them to possess. The most common ornaments, graded in the order of their popularity with the village women are the *chooda* or *kada*, the *mundri* and the *hasli*. *Chooda* is generally made of silver, but those who cannot afford to buy silver have them in bronze also. The *choodas* are circular in shape and are worn loose round the wrists. The *sutiya* or the *hasli* is worn round the neck and this also is made of silver. The *mundri* is put on in the fingers of the leg, and is meant only for married women. It corresponds to the *bichhiya* of the higher caste Hindu women. There is one difference, however. Whereas for a married Hindu women of the higher caste, putting on of *bichhiya* is compulsory, the Gond or Kol women do not observe any compulsion in case of *mundri*. The only taboo is that unmarried women and widows cannot put on the *mundri*.

Other ornaments which are not so common in the village for economic reasons are *khutia* or *laung*, the *chhanni*, *todar*, *hawail* and the *bohta*. The *khutia* or *laung* is made of gold and is worn in the nose. The *todar* is put in the legs round the ankles. *Bohta* is intended to adorn the arms while the *hawail* a neck-lace of silver coins richer persons have it of gold *mohars* also is to beautify the bosom. In the following scheme the number of families of Gonds and Kols owning the various types of ornaments is shown.

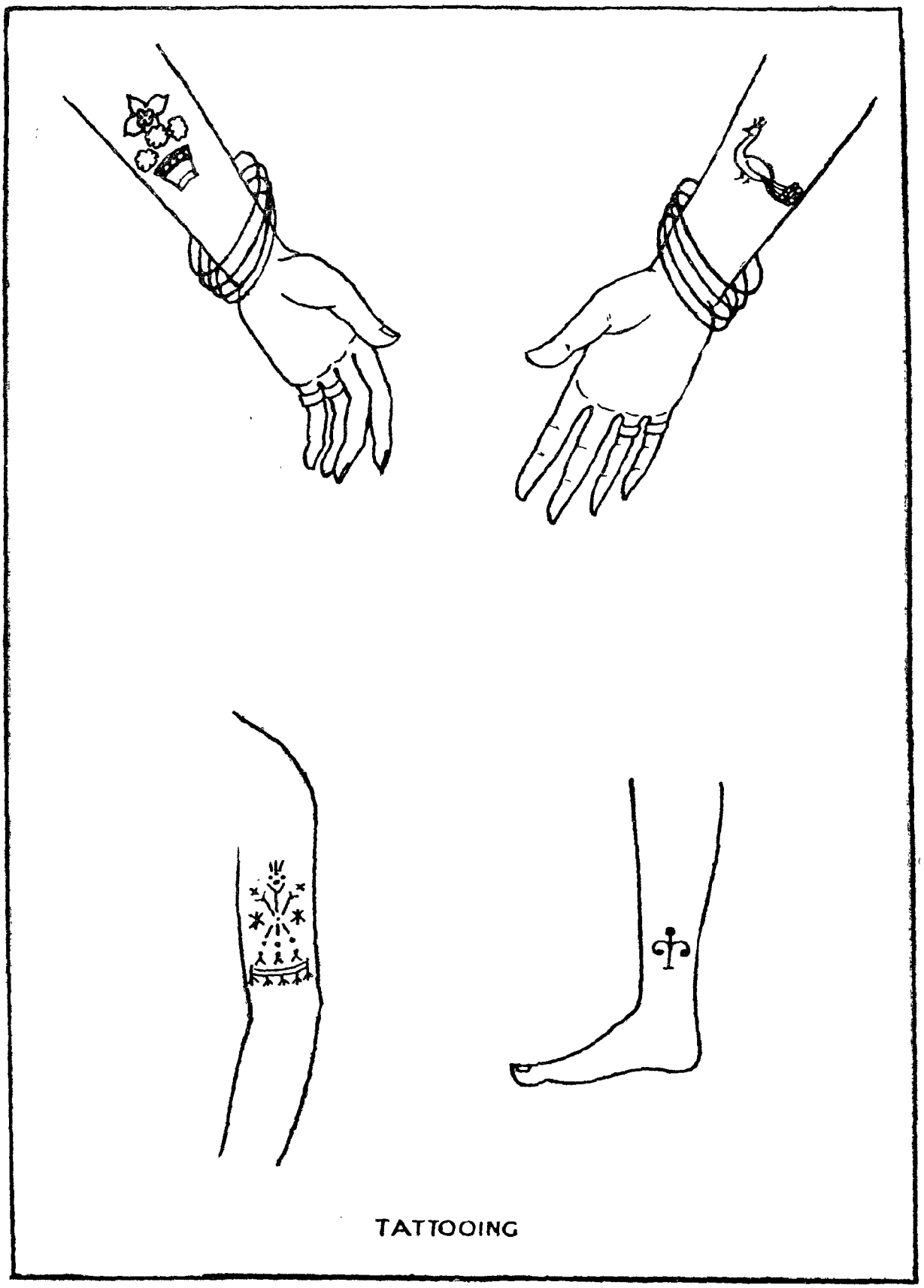
Name of ornament	Number of families possessing the ornament		
	Gond	Kol	Total
Chooda	18	12	30
Sutiya/hasli	10	6	16
Mundri	9	2	11
Khutia	5	2	7
Chhanni	4	1	5
Todar	2	—	2
Bohta	—	1	1
Hawail	1	1	2
No ornaments	2	2	4

PLATE XVII



Ornaments

PLATE XVIII



TATTOOING

The statement brings out clearly the fact of poverty of the people. There are four families, two each of Gonds and Kols, which do not own any ornaments at all. 30% of Gond households and 25% of the Kols do not possess *choodas*. In respect of other ornaments, the picture is even worse. Thus, *sutia* or *hasli* is owned by about one third of the Gond and Kol families. Ornaments like *khutia, chhanni, todar* and *bohta* are rare ornaments.

Value of Ornaments:

In the statement given below, the information returned at this enquiry is tabulated to show the number of households divided according to the value of ornaments possessed by them.

No. of Families having ornaments with value

Name of Caste	Total families	In rupees									
		Below 20	20—29	30—39	40-49	50—59	60 -69	70—79	80—89	90—99	100+
Kols	14	1	5	2	2	1	2	—	1	—	—
Gonds	25	4	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	5
Others	3	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	42	7	8	3	6	3	4	2	3	1	5

It can be observed from this table that the Gond families possess ornaments of greater value than the Kols. There is not a single Kol household which possesses ornaments greater in value than Rs. 90. Gonds have five households owning ornaments costing more than Rs. 100. This reflects the greater relative prosperity of the Gonds.

Besides these ornaments, almost all women and young girls put on yellow coloured beads of glass round their neck. Glass bangles are also put on by all the women—except widows. Married women of the Kol caste were observed putting on the *tiki* on their forehead. A very significant point of difference of the Gond and Kol women from the women of other Hindu castes is that the former do not apply vermilion to the parting of their hair. In fact, there is no parting of the hair and, hence the question of applying vermilion does not seem to arise. Men generally do not put on any ornaments. But a few were found putting on gold tabij and some others were putting on *murkis* also in their ears.

Tattooing:

Tattooing is universal among women. In this village, women are tattooed on the legs, the arms, the forehead and the chin. About tattooing among men and women in Gonds, Russell observes "Both men and women were formerly much tattooed among the Gonds, though the custom is now going out among men". In Jaitpuri, among men, tattooing is not common. In case of women, both Gond and Kol, tattooing is compulsory after marriage, though in practice, almost all the girls are tattooed before marriage also. Tattooing in Jaitpuri is done by women belonging to the Badi caste, coming from villages Sarora and Madai, about six to seven mile away from Jaitpuri.

The flower and leaves, a flower pot with a plant in it, some crude human forms, peacocks, etc. are some of the common patterns and designs that are tattooed. On the chin and the forehead, even dots are tattooed. Tattooing is a painful process, as is clear from the following quotation from Russel, "The tattooing is done with indigo in black or blue, and is sometimes a very painful process, the girl being held down by her friends while it is being carried out. Loud shrieks, Forsyth says, would sometimes be heard by the traveller issuing from a village, which proclaimed that some young Gondin was being operated upon with tattooing-needle". The popularity, and among women the social compulsion to undergo tattooing strongly suggest its association with some religious or superstitious belief. According to one author, "tattooing seems to have been originally a magical means of protecting the body against real and spiritual dangers much in the same manner as the wearing of ornaments". Though majority of the respondents in the village refused to admit that tattooing had any magical or ritual significance about it, one man, probably in an unguarded moment, almost let the cat out of the bag by saying that their women were often moving about unshod in the forest, and the tattooing on the legs was meant to protect them from possible harm. It thus appears that tattooing has got some magical significance attached to it. Most women however take tattooing to be a means of adding to their external charm. It is considered to be a lasting companion in that it goes to the funeral pyre with its owner while other ornaments have to be left behind at the time of death.

Some Kol men had the figure of tiger tattooed on their chests. This probably has a totemic significance. Some of the common patterns of tattooing have been shown in the accompanying diagrams.

Household Possessions:

Poor as the people are, the list of their household possessions is pitiably small. In the name of furniture they have next to nothing. A cot is the only article of furniture which a few of the households possess. There are however households, which do not have even this article of furniture. The table below brings out the pathetic condition of the villagers regarding such essential possessions as mattresses and *rajais* let alone a cot—which is a sort of luxury to them.

Name of article	No. of families possessing it			
	Gond		Kols	
	No. of families	No. of articles	No of families	No. of articles
Rajai	7	18	6	9
Bedsheet	22	61	12	24
Charpai	8	9	10	13
Pillow	2	4	..	..
No bedding article	5	..	..	..

Thus of the 27 Gond families only seven, or roughly 25% of the total are fortunate enough to possess quilt (*rajai*), while six of the sixteen Kol families share that fortune. There are five Gond families (about 20% of all Gond families) and four Kol families (25% of all Kol families), which are too poor to afford even *chadars* or bedsheets—infact they did not have any regular bedding articles at all. Eight Gond families own nine *charpais*, or cots and ten Kol families own 13 charpais—*i.e.* for a population of 205 persons, there are only 22 *charpais*. Generally people use the fodder of *kodon* in place of a mattress and use the *chadars* for covering them. Pillows constitute a luxury, unknown to all but two families. In winter, fire is kept burning throughout the night to give warmth to the persons. Thus, the picture, as regards, bedding articles is very dismal, and has not changed in any important respect from the picture described in the Jabalpur District Gazetteer thus—"Tenants usually do not have cots but sleep on the ground, spreading Kodon straw on it for warmth. They have no bedding except a *gudri* or mattress made of old rags and clothes sewn together. In winter they put it over them, and they sleep on it in summer". If any change has taken place, in this picture, the information collected at this enquiry shows that it is for the worse.

Other Household Goods:

Other household possessions of the people include the few metal and earthen utensils, the grindstone, the *kuthia;* the *moosal;* the *sil* and *lodhi*, the *satai* etc. Mention has already been made of the grindstone and the *kuthia* while describing the houses. The *moosal* is a pole of wood with an iron-cap fixed at its extremity and is used for thrashing the rice or *kodon* in the *okhli* before cooking it.

The utensils for storing water are—(i) the *gund* which is made of brass, and the *gaghar* also made of brass. The latter is also made of baked earth sometimes and is used for drawing water from well. Besides, every household has a couple or more of earthen pitchers for storing water which are kept on wooden stands. It may be mentioned that the Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri (and indeed, of other places in the region too) do not allow their utensils-particularly the earthen ones to be touched by any person not belonging to their caste. Such touch is considered to pollute the pot as well as its contents. In case of earthen utensils, if they are touched by a person of other caste, they are discarded; while brass utensils in similar circumstances, are thoroughly washed. The cooking utensils are (1) the *handia*, (2) *paraiya*, (3) *talaiya*, (4) *khaphra*, (5) *thali*, (6) *karahi* and (7) the *belna*. The *handia* is made of earth, and is used for preparing rice or *pej*. The *paraiya* is used as a cover to the *handia*. The *talaiya* is used for preparing vegetables and *dal*. The *thali* is used for preparing the flour into 'dough' before making *chapatis* out of it. The *chapatis* are prepared by pressing the dough by means of the *belna* on an inverted *thali*. Often, *chapatis* are prepared by pressing the dough between the palms of the hands. The *khapra* is made hot on the hearth and is used for applying heat to the *chapati*. The food is eaten in *thalis*—while the pej is said to be drunk in an earthen bowl especially meant for the purpose.

Food and Drinks:

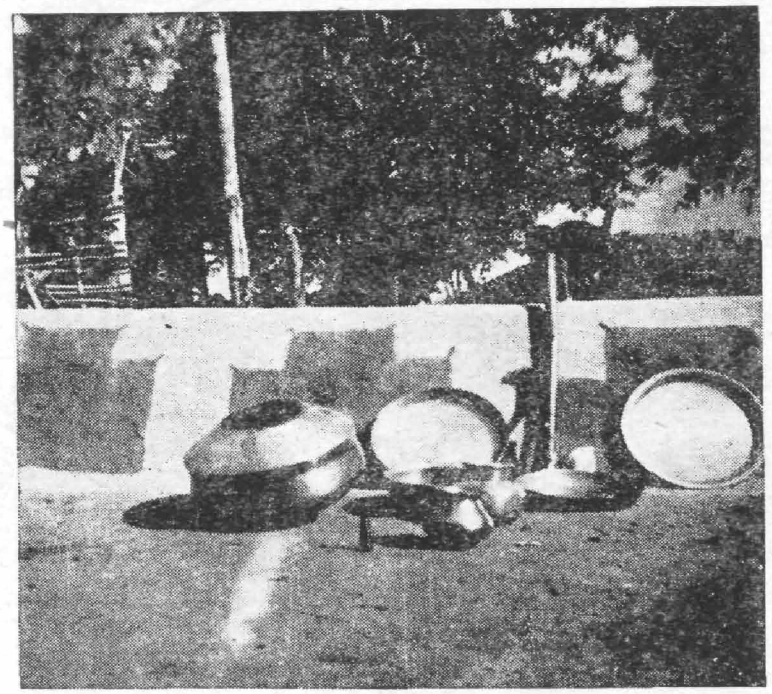
Frequency of meals:

About the food-habits of the people of this district, Jabalpur District Gazetteer contains the following description "*Chapatis* of wheat, pulse, vegetables, *ghi* and milk are the staple food of the better classes and *chapatis* of *juar*, and *kodon* and *kutki* boiled in water of the poor ones. The well-to-do classes eat twice, those who cultivate with their own hands twice or three times, and the Gonds sometimes four times a day". It deserves to be noted that the fifty years or so that have elapsed from the time the Gazetteer has been compiled have not produced much change in the eating habits of the people of Jaitpuri—whose staple diet continues, in the main, to be *kodon* and *kutki*. In place of

PLATE XIX

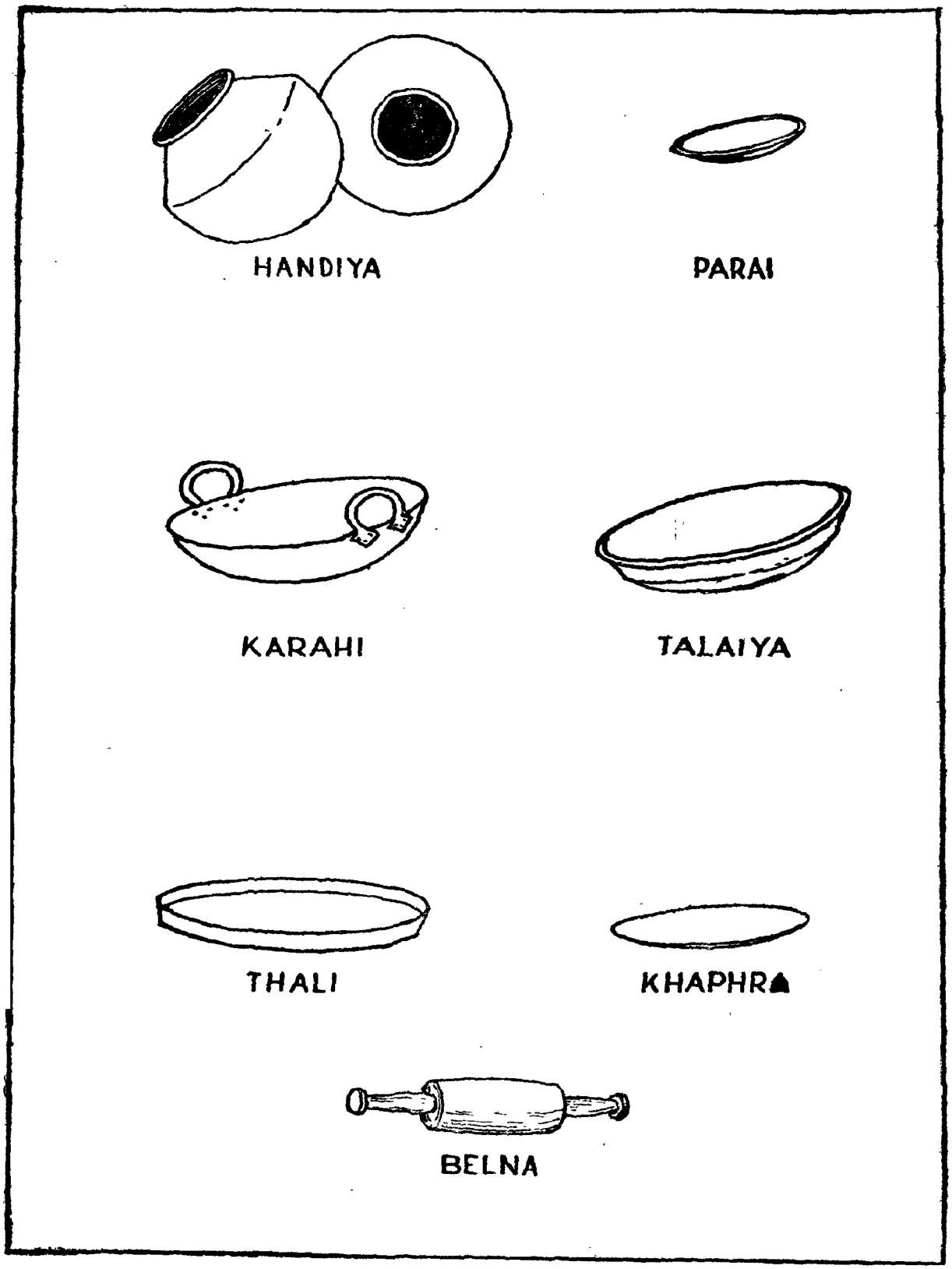


Earthen and Brass utensils in the Mehra house



Utensils in a Kol house

PLATE XX



Cooking utensils

PLATE XXI



Bhuttas (Maize) being preserved by tying them on branches of tree

juar, which is not grown in Jaitpuri for geological and climatic reasons, the people of Jaitpuri have taken to eating *chapatis* of *birra*—a mixture of gram and wheat. The frequency of meals, as ascertained from enquiries made in this survey, is three times a day. The first meal is called *kalewa* and it is more in the nature of a breakfast. It consists of *pej*—*i.e.*, a gruel prepered out of rice or kodon. *Pej* is very thin in consistency and is drunk instead of being eaten. The second meal is taken at about 12 in the noon and it consists of *chapatis* of gram, *dal* and vegetables, if any. Since majority of the people in the village follow the profession of wood-cutting, this second meal is usually taken to them in the forest by their wives. On every alternate day, when they go to the town for selling firewood cut by them the previous day, the second meal is taken after coming back from the town. The third meal is taken after sunset—and it also consists of *pej*, and *chapatis*. There is one Gond family in the village—which reportedly has stopped drinking *pej*. This is the family of Imratlal—who, as will appear later during the course of this report, arrogates to himself the typical caste-Hindu attitude and frowns upon the customs and ways of his less enlightened brethren. It is significant that the Kachhis and the only Mohammedan of the village have also completely adopted the eating habits of the majority castes in the village, the Gonds and Kols.

According to the Kotwar of the village, *pej* is the favourite food of the Gonds. In his own words "*Gond log sabere pej peetey hain, kudai, makke, chawal ki pej peetey hain, Bhai to roti banai, nain to dupahri men bhi pej peetly hain. Khet pe jab unko dil bhao tabai pej pee le hain*". *i.e.*, the Gonds drink *pej* in the morning. *Pej* is prepared out of *kodon, kutki* and *chawal*. If they have grain in the house, they prepare *roti* at the noon-time, otherwise then also, they drink pej. On the fields, they drink *pej* whenever they feel like doing so". The extract which follows is from Russell (Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India. Vol. III-Page 128), and it is interesting in that it shows that *pej* has always been the common and favourite food of the Gonds. "The common food of the labouring Gond is a gruel of rice or small millet boiled in water, the quantity of water increasing in proportion to their poverty. This is about the cheapest kind of food on which a man can live, and the quantity of grain taken in the form of this gruel or *pej* which will suffice for a Gond's subsistence is astonishingly small. He likes to eat or drink his *pej* several times a day, and in Seoni, it is said, will not go more than three hours without a meal." The closeness between this and the observations made by the village Kotwar is rather astonishing. The quotation has, *inter alia*, explained why pej is so popular with the labouring Gonds. Though Kols and Kachhis also drink *pej*, they are gradually giving it up. On account of its association with the Gonds, the term *pej* has acquired a contemptuous significance—and even the Gonds feel shy in admitting that they drink *pej*.

Other subsidiary food articles are the *mahua* fruit and the *maka* or maize corn. In the beginning of summer, village women can be seen collecting the *mahua* in the forest. *Mahua* is dried and preserved for being eaten later on when the stock of food gives indications of depleting. It is either fried and eaten or, alternatively, it is powdered and mixed in the flour for preparing *chapatis*. The *mahua* is also used for distilling liquor. Maize corn is grown in the *baris* in the rains. The crop is ready in the short period of just two months. The practice of preserving some *bhuttas* of corn by tying them on to the branches of trees is peculiar and deserves to be noted.

According to the Gazetteer, "The Gond does not eat salt with his meals, but takes a few chillies and a little salt after them". The Jaitpuri Gonds apparently have given up this practice. They now mix salt in the flour before making *chapatis*—and also in the *pej* and *dal* and the vegetables.

Vegetarians:

Out of the forty-eight households living in the village, only three have been returned as vegetarians. One of these is of course, the household of the Brahmin forest-guard, while the other two are Gonds. Eating of non-vegetarian food is not tabooed among the Gonds, and the two Gond households have abjured flesh by choice. One of the two Gond households that have taken to vegetarianism is that of Imratlal who as indicated earlier prides in his being superior to his other caste fellows. It should however not be supposed that the non-vegetarian households of the village daily consume meat and other non-vegetarian foods. They are too poor to afford that. Non-vegetarian food is a delicacy which they can indulge in only once in a while. The Kols are very fond of eating the flesh of the wild boar, and they would jump with pleasure at the idea of being called to arrange a *beat* of the animal.

Delicious Dishes:

The food eaten on festive occasions are *pooris*, fried in ghee or oil, depending on the means of the family, and *khir*. The latter is prepared by boiling rice in milk and adding a little sugar to it.

Foods tabooed:

The Gonds do not eat the flesh of their totem animals. All sections of the village population

regard the cow as sacred as a 'mother' and cannot harm it. Killing of a dog is also tabooed. One Kol had to give the usual caste penalty for having accidentally killed a dog. There is no restriction on the eating of onions.

Drinks and alcoholism:

Only two households, both of Gonds take tea regularly. This is definitely due to urban influence. Others do not take tea because it is too costly a habit for their scanty means. Alcoholism is rampant in the Gonds and Kols. Usually women do not take liquor, but at the time of marriages, they also drink. The liquor is reported to be purchased from the liquor-shop at Temar which is about three miles from the village. Since village Temar has recently been included in the corporation area, rates of liquor there are Rs. 4.78 and Rs. 3.62 for *Dubara* and *Rasi* (without bottles) respectively. These rates are double the rates for rural areas. There is every reason to believe that the people of Jaitpuri distil their own liquor clandestinely. Five or six persons-all Gonds are reported to be addicted to smoking *ganja* also.

All the grown up persons, and quite a few young persons smoke *biris* or *chilam*. Satola, the only Mohammaden inhabitant of the village has started selling *biris* in the village.

Life-cycle rituals:

Beliefs and Practices connected with Major Crises of Life.

In rural Hindu Society, the major crisis of life are associated with customs and ceremonial observances which have a more or less uniform basic pattern in all communities but which nevertheless show noticeable variety in some of the minor ritualistic details. These crises of life give rise to inter-caste and inter-village contacts of ritual, socio-economic and frequently socio-religious nature. The extent and form of these contacts, as also the socio-economic inter-caste dealings resulting therefrom are, in a village, governed by traditionally fixed norms. In the pages that follow, the customs and ceremonies, attending the major crises of life in village Jaitpuri will be described, separately for each caste-group, and the resulting inter-caste forces will be discussed.

Birth—Gond:

Among people who regard sterility as a social curse, the birth of a child is an occasion for much rejoicing. Precisely for this same reason, in Gonds, the first maternity is attended with greater merriment and fun than the subsequent ones, and the sex of the child makes no difference to the happiness of the parents. The Gonds, like others in the village, detect pregnancy from the stoppage of menstruation in the women. No special rites are observed during pregnancy. There are certain superstitious beliefs regarding the sex of the child in the embryo. One such belief is that if the mother is healthy and fat during pregnancy, the child will almost certainly be a girl; but if the mother remains thin and sickly, it is considered to be an indication of male birth. Another belief that is prevalent is that if birth takes place after nine months of pregnancy, a male child will be born. The colour of the nipple of the mother is also supposed to furnish some indication of the embryo's sex, nipples of reddish colour portending a male birth, while those of black colour indicating female birth. It should be noted that these superstitions are not peculiar to the Gonds, but other castes living in the village also subscribe to them. Two of them have been described in Russell's book also (page 85, volume III).

No special diet is prescribed for the expectant mother during the period of pregnancy though her propensities in this regard are reportedly given sympathetic consideration. It is however, too much to expect the hand to mouth Gonds to give rich food to the expectant mother, and their public professions to that effect need not be taken seriously. There is no inflexible caste rule regarding the place where first and subsequent births should take place; but it is desirable that the first birth takes place in the husband's house. Professional midwives are not called to attend at the child-birth. Experienced women of the caste however remain present in the labour room in order to be of help, should their help be required. If there is delay or difficulty in the delivery, the *baiga* is called who performs some rites to facilitate labour . According to Russell, the *baiga* is called "to discover what ancestor will be reborn in the child, and when he has done this he calls on the ancestor to come and be born quickly". After birth has taken place, the *basorin* from Bhita comes to cut the umbilical cord. The knife for the purpose is given to her from the house. The *basorin* buries the umbilical cord in the room in which delivery has taken place, and from that time, till the day the navel-cord drops, a fire is kept constantly burning in the room day and night. There is no mention of this practice in the chapter of Gonds in Russell, and it appears that Gonds of Jaitpuri have acquired it from the Kols. If the child exhibits some unusual behaviour like refusal to suck from mother's breast or to cry, it is taken to be a sign of the birth of some ancestor in the child, and in such a case, the body of the newborn is thoroughly scanned to discover on it certain signs which will show which ancestor has been reborn.

The mother is reported to be kept without food of any kind till the dropping of the navel-cord. During this time she is given to drink

only hot water which has been treated by boiling with barks of *kankar* tree, *ajawain* and turmeric knot. This water is kept in an earthen pot, called *charua*. On the sixth day, or after the navel-cord has dropped, whichever is later, mother and child are bathed by the *basorin*. On this day, the mother is given rice and *bari* and balls of jaggery and *sonth* for eating. Birth pollution, however, lasts till the twelfth day, when a ceremony called *chauk* is performed. The mother and child are bathed and their nails clipped by the *nain*. The two are then seated on the *chauk*—which is an ornate design made on the ground by means of flour—and *mahur* is applied to the mother's feet. The *mundan* of the child takes place on the same day and its hair are shaved by the child's maternal uncle. The birth of the child is celebrated on this day, and members of the caste are given a feast. Women are given to rejoicing and they express their pleasure by singing *dadre*. Relatives who are invited make customary small presents of cash and clothes to the child. From the thirteenth day, the mother sheds her impurity and starts attending to her normal household duties.

There is no separate name-giving ceremony. The name is usually given by the village Kotwar on the day the birth is reported to him.

At the child-birth in a Gond house, the pattern of inter-caste and inter village contact that comes into play is explained in the following scheme.

Name of caste	Village	Nature of service/ dealing	Payment
Basor	Bhita	The basorin cuts the umbilical cord and disposes it of. On the sixth day, she bathes the mother and child.	Rs. 2 for a male birth and Re. 1 for a female birth. In addition, she is fed from the house on all days on which her services are required.
Washer-man	Bhita	Washer-woman washes the 'dirty' clothes of mother	She is paid Rs. 2 or Re. 1 respectively for a male or female birth. In addition, she takes 'sidha' *i. e.* gifts of grain-as she dose not eat of a Gond kitchen.
Nai	Bhita	The 'nain' bathes the mother and child & clips heir nails. She also applies 'mahur' to the mother's feet on 'chauk' day.	The same as in the case of a washer-woman.
Kotwar of Mehra caste	Jaitpuri	Report of birth is made to him. He usually gives the name to the child.	No payment. The report is made officially.

It is thus clear that the birth of a child in a Gond house in Jaitpuri brings it in contact with the menial castes coming from village Bhita. The payments made are fixed by tradition.

Birth—Kol:

As in the case of Gonds, the birth of a child in a Kol house also is an occasion for rejoicing. A woman with child is variously referred to as *"Do jeev bhari* (having two lives)", *"bal-bachcha howaiya hai* (Is to give birth to a child)" or *hamal se hai"*. (is pregnant). There is no ceremony during pregnancy. Enquiries revealed that the expectant mother was relieved of hard work like carrying fire wood on head to the town for sale some time after the sixth month. No special diet is given to the expectant mother, nor any rites indicative of fertility—*i.e. God bharana* are performed. The expectant mother is however subjected to certain taboos—she is not allowed to look at an eclipse nor is she allowed to cut the arecanut by means of a *sarota*. These taboos are related to superstitious beliefs regarding possible injuries with which the child in embryo might be visited.

Like their Gond counterparts, the Kols do not take their women to the hosptial or maternity home for delivery, nor do they call any trained or untrained *dai* at their house for the purpose. It is customary that the first delivery should take place in the husband's house. The Gonds and the Kols—who follow this custom were not able to explain the reason behind it. As described by W. Crooke in his "Tribes and castes of the North Western Provinces and Oudh" (Vol. III, Page 307) the custom is possibly related to the idea of child's paternity. To quote Mr. Crooke—"It is etiquette that the child should be born in the house of the father as an admission of paternity". After the birth has taken place, the umbilical cord is cut by a *basorin* who, in the case of Kols, comes from village Kosamghat. She brings knife from her own house. The cord is buried in the room and over it a fire is constantly kept burning day and night. An iron article is also kept in the labour room to ward off evil spirits which may harm the child. The custom of burying the umbilical cord in the room and of burning a light over it, is common to the Gonds and Kols, the Kachhis and Mehra also. The village people were not able to explain the reason behind this practice. W. Crooke has referred to this custom in the chapter on Kols of his book referred to earlier in this chapter, but he has also not given any reason for the practice. An explanation however is to be found in the prevalent belief referred to by Russell that if a barren woman can get hold of the first hair of another woman's child or its navel-cord she can transfer the

mother's fertility to herself. These articles are, therefore, disposed of very carefully and there could not be any more careful way than to bury the thing in the labour room itself.

According to Kol custom also, the mother is kept without food till the navel string drops. She is however given milk to drink from the third day. Birth pollution lasts for six days, and during this time the child is fed on goat's milk. The *chauk* in the case of 'Kols' is performed on the sixth day, when the mother and child are bathed by the *basorin*. On the same day, a *nain* from village Balhwara cuts the nails of mother and child. The mother and child are then seated on a *chauk*, and the *nain* applies *mahur* to the mother's feet—(*i.e.* makes ornate designs on her feet by means of red coloured water). The clansmen are in a festive mood, and women celebrate the birth by singing *dadre*. The caste is given a feast on this day. The mother is given *harira*, and sweet-balls of jaggery and *sonth*, as well as *haldibhat* to eat.

Services of three village servants are required on the occasion of a Kol birth *viz.*, basorin, nain and washerwoman. The scheme below adumbrates the extent of participation of each of these menial castes in the rituals and practices observed.

Name of Caste	Village from which it comes	Nature of service performed	Payment
Basor	Kosamghat	The basorin cuts the navel-cord on the day of delivery. She also bathes the mother and child on the sixth day.	Rs. 2 in case of a male birth and Re. 1 in case of a female birth. In addition, she is fed from the house on all the days her services are required.
Nain	Balhwara	Cuts the nails of the mother and child; massages mother's body with flour and turmeric and applies *mahur* to her feet.	Rs. 2 and Re. 1 respectively in case of a male or female birth.
Washer-woman	,, ,,	Removes the foul clothes and washes the clothes of the mother.	The same as above.

It is relevant, in this connection to record that the *basorin* from village Bhita who attends to the deliveries in Gond houses at Jaitpuri, and also in the house of the Kotwar at Kharharghat, has refused to perform services to the Kols of Kharharghat on the ground that their caste status is inferior. She does not eat food from a Kol kitchen. The *basorin* from Kosamghat is not as supercilious as her caste sister from Bhita and, therefore, she is called by the Kols.

As in the case of Gonds, there is no separate name giving ceremony, nor are the services of a Brahmin priest utilised for the purpose. Some name is decided upon by elders of the house before reporting the birth to the village Kotwar, and that name sticks subsequently also. Usually the names are after the names of the months in which, or the days on which, birth takes place *viz.* Chaitu or Chaitibai (from the month of chait), Jethu, Agnu and Baisakhu or Baisakhia (from the months of *Jeth, Agahan* and *Baisakh* respectively), Sukbaria (from *Sukrawar* or Friday), Budha (from *Budhwar* or Wednesday), Mangalia (from *Mangalwar* or Tuesday); after some tree or flower like Gulba (from *Gulab* or rose flower), Phoolmati, Phooljhar, Sembai, Ghasoo or Ghasia (grass); often enough the names are given after some low castes like Dumari (from Dumar), and Basori (from Basor). Names having some contemptuous or calamitous significance are not uncommon like 'Bipat' (from *bipat* meaning calamity), Ghurroo (from *Ghura* meaning a dungheap), Pagalia (from *pagal* or mad); Mehangiabai (*menhanga* means costly), Sukka or Sukkibai (from the attribute of thinness). Names based on attributes like *prem* love, (Premlal) and on Hindu gods and godesses (*i.e.*, Parbatibai, Ganesh, Ram prasad, Narbadia,) are also found. A few modern—looking names like Maya, Tara and Shanti are also heard.

The *mundan* or head-shaving ceremony is performed whenever a suitable occasion arises *i.e.*, when the family goes on a pilgrimage to Narmada or when there is a marriage in the family—at the time of *mayna*.

Birth—Kachhi:

A pregnant woman is not permitted to do hard work after pregnancy has advanced to about five or six months. It is compulsory for the first delivery to take place at the husband's house, and delivery at any other place is regarded as inauspicious. If the new-born is crying continuously and is refusing to suck the mother's breast, that is taken to be an indication of rebirth of a person who has died recently. The names of all such persons are repeated and the person whose name quietens the child and makes it accept mother's milk is supposed to have been reincarnated in him.

The navel-cord is cut and buried in the delivery-room by the *basorin* from Bhita, who brings her own knife for the purpose. Over

the spot, where the navel-cord is buried, a fire called *Jilahri* is kept burning continuously till the birth pollution lasts. The piece of navel-cord which falls from the child's body after four or five days is buried beneath the mother's bed. The child is not given any feed on the first day. On the second day, it is given a little cow's urine for drinking. Thereafter it is allowed to be fed from the mother's breasts. The mother herself, is not given anything to eat for the first three days. On the fourth day, she is given sweet-balls of jaggery, *sonth, ghi* and sundry other articles to eat, and water boiled with barks of *chalthi* tree to drink. It is customary to present the jaggery balls to all near relatives of the family. On the sixth day, a ceremony called *chhathi* is observed when the mother and child are bathed in water boiled with leaves of *neem* and *ajwain*. Prior to that the mother is rubbed with *hing* so that her body may receive warmth. On this day, the priest from village Balhwara is called to perform the *pooja* of *chhati*. The priest also consults from his almanac the stellar positions at the time of the child's birth and declares the first letter with which the child's name should begin. The child is then named by elders of the house. Caste members are given a feast on the *chhati* day, and if it is the first birth, it is customary on this day to present a sari to the child's father's sister. Relatives offer cash and other presents to the child on this day.

The traditional services required at a Kachhi birth are the same as in the case of Gonds and Kols, with the addition in their case of the service of a Brahmin priest. The barber, *basorin* and washer-woman come from village Bhita and are made the usual traditional payments. The Brahmin comes from Balhwara, and payment made to him varies from Rs. 1.25 to Rs. 2.

Birth—Mehra:

There is only one Mehra family in the village. It follows customs which more or less resemble the customs followed by the Kachhi families. The services of a 'brahamin' priest are however not availed of for the *chhati pooja*, or for name giving. Birth-pollution lasts for twelve days, and on the twelfth day parents of the child's mother bring what is known as *path* —consisting of some clothes for the mother and child and some eatables. In the *chauka* ceremony the Kabirpanthi 'guru' of the family from village Barela initiates the child to the sect. In Mehras, *mundan* or head-shaving ceremony is performed on the same day on which the navel-cord drops.

Additional observations on birth:

Though the villagers are aware of the biological basis of conception, they still have the conviction that birth is in the hand of God. If God wills otherwise, no amount of human efforts will prove of any avail, they say. Sterility is regarded as a social curse, and recourse is often had to magical rites to remove it.

It is to be noted that different communities living in the village do not come in contact in a social way on the occasion of a child birth. Caste functions like *chhati* and *chauk* are attended only by caste members of the village. Inter-hamlet contact is secured only through the village Kotwar, to whom all births have to be compulsorily reported. It also deserves to be noted that Jaitpuri hamlet secures the traditional services from village Bhita—while Kharharghat hamlet depends for them on villages Balhwara and Kosamghat.

Pre-puberty rites and attainment of puberty:

None of the Hindu communities living in the village celebrates the attainment of puberty by a girl. The Gonds, Kachhis and Mehra households observe the usual taboo for five days in the case of menstrual women. The menstruating woman is regarded as impure by those communities, and she is not permitted to cook food, nor touch drinking water. She is also not allowed to enter any shrine or place of worship, nor as pointed by Russell, 'to go into cowshed or touch cowdung'. It is significant to note that the Kols of Jaitpuri do not observe the taboo relating to menstrual women. This is an important aspect of the living habits of Kols of Jaitpuri.

Marriage—Gond:

Infant or child marriages are not practised by the Gonds of Jaitpuri. They marry their daughters at the age of twelve to sixteen years, while the corresponding age for boys is sixteen to twenty years. There are only two girls of fourteen years of age in the village who were not married.

Exogamy:

As has already been mentioned, marriage is prohibited between, persons belonging to the same *gotra*, and hence are to one another. Marriage is also not permitted between families worshipping the same number of gods. The Gonds of Jaitpuri, under Hindu influence, now claim to have abjured some of the forms of marriage which were customary formerly in their society. Thus the match known as *dudh lautana* or bringing back the milk, though it used to be customary previously is not now in vogue. Under this type of marriage, the sister's daughter was wedded to the brother's son on the ground that the latter's family had given a girl to the family of the

sister's husband, and the latter should, therefore, give one back. According to Russell, if the sister's daughter marries any one else her maternal uncle sometimes claims what is known as 'milk money' which may be a sum of Rs. 5 in compensation for the loss of the girl as a wife for his son". Marriage of first cousins, which according to Russell, was considered specially suitable, has also now been reportedly given up. There however appears to be a gulf between profession and practice. There have occurred cases in the village where irregular unions have taken place surreptitiously, and they were later regularised by the caste-panchayat. A description of these will be found in a subsequent chapter. At this stage, it is sufficient to state that though there are deliberate overt acts on the part of the Gonds of the village to conform to the new practices, the forces represented by the ageold practices, sometimes assert themselves in the form of breaches of these self-imposed rules.

Settlement of marriages:

The match is settled by the parents of the boy and the girl to be married, the initiative being taken by the boy's father. The latter accompained by a few kins-men goes to the village of the girl's father. The girl's father consults elders of his own village, takes omen, and thereafter the negotiations are finalised. The omen universally taken by Gonds of Jaitpuri is as follows. The person taking the omen has to subject himself to a purificatory twenty-four hour's fast. Next day, after performing ablution, he takes water in a pot and floats an even number, generally four or six, of unbroken rice grains in it. If pairs of grain meet end to end, it is taken to be a good omen and the proposed union is regarded as auspicious. If the grains do not meet end to end, the match is broken off as being inauspicious. When the omen is favourable, the details of marriage, *i.e.* the dates for the performance of the various rites are agreed upon by the caste elders. The bride-price or *chadao* as it is called in the dialect of the village is also settled at this stage. Enquiries at the survey show that the bride-price is usually in the neighbourhood of Rs. 100. It is pertinent to note that Gonds of Jaitpuri do not consult any brahamin priest for selection of auspicious dates. *Baisakh, Jaith* and *Asarh*. corresponding roughly to April, May and June, and *Pus* corresponding to December are the months in which marriages are celebrated. Mondays and Wednesdays are held to be lucky days for marriages. On the day the marriage is settled, a ceremony known as *faldan* is performed, in which the bride-to-be is presented with a coconut fruit, a *sari* and blouse and *batasas*. This is known as *oli bharna* or 'filling the lap' and symbolically signifies the hope that the lap of the bride may remain full. On the same day, the ceremony of *dalbari* follows in which the guests are fed to a fare which includes *dal* and *bari*, from which articles the rite takes its name.

The marriage proper starts at the house of the bridegroom with the ceremony of *lagun*. In higher Hindu castes, from whom the Gonds have borrowed this custom, *lagun* or *lagna patrika* as it is known in sophisticated circles, is a sort of letter of invitation to the bridegroom's party and contains among other things dates and times of important functions connected with marriage. In Gonds of Jaitpuri who do not avail in their marriages of the services of a brahamin priest, *lagun* has been adopted only as a symbolic rite. It is not scribed—Gonds of Jaitpuri are almost innocent of reading and writing and no question of 'writing' the *lagun*, therefore, arises. They merely put turmeric knots, *supari*, and a rupee and four annas in a paper supposed to be the *lagun* and wrap it in a new sheet of cloth. In Jaitpuri Gonds, it is customary for the bridegroom's party to send the *lagun* to the bride's party in contradistinction to the practice prevalent in other Hindu castes in which the bride's side sends the *lagun* to the bridegroom's side. It is not considered necessary to employ a *nai* or barber for carrying the *lagun*—which is carried by castemen of the bridegroom's village. The *lagun* is symbolically read in a formal ceremony at the bride's place attended by caste members. The amount of Rs. one and twenty five naya paisa goes to the caste-panchayat while the cloth sheet in which the *lagun* is wrapped is worn by the bride during the marriage.

Next important function taking place at the houses of the bride and the bridegroom is known as *magar matii*. In this, married women of the caste go to a place outside the village and bring sacred earth from there. This earth is used for making the ceremonial hearths, and for fixing the *khamb* and the *chhemardaroo* in position.

Magarmatti is followed by *mandap* or *madwa* or marriage-shed. The bridal pole or *khamb* is made by Budhu Gond from wood of *munga* or *'Semra'* trees, and he gets a cash payment of Rs. one and fifty naya paise for this. This *khamb* is fixed in the middle of the *madwa*, a frame-work of wood and bamboo poles covered by twigs of *jamun* and *oomar*. Before fixing the *khamb*, a knot of turmeric, *supari* and one naya paisa coin are put in the pit. On the same day, *chhemardaroo* is also installed in the *madwa*. The 'Baiga' chooses an unmarried boy to go to the forest and bring a pole of *salhe* or *oomar* wood, and bamboo. The *oomar* and bamboo poles are tied together and fixed in a pit adjacent to the *khamb*.

On the following day, the ceremony of *mayna* takes place. On this day, turmeric

powder and oil are applied to the body of the bride (or the bridegroom) and *mehar* is worshipped. Admission to the worship of *mehar* is restricted only to persons who belong to the same *kutumb*. On the same day, members of the caste living in the village are given feast.

Following day, the bridegroom's party or *barat* starts and arrives at the bride's village on foot. This party consists of relatives and friends of the bridegroom. The party is received by members of the bride's family in a ceremony called *agwani*, at a place outside the village. The kotwar of the village leads the bridal party with a sword in hand which he brandishes in the air before the formal ceremony of *agwani*. A very strange *agwani* indeed! This custom appears to be a relic of the ancient 'marriage by capture' which was the only form of marriage known to most tribes in the past. Martin, in the provincial Census Report of 1911 wrote—"There is no doubt that till comparatively recently it was common among the tribes for a man, assisted by his friends, to waylay the girl he intended to marry and take her off, overcoming any opposition that might be offered. The custom still survives among some of the remoter tribes, *e.g.* the Maria Gonds. Except perhaps in the wildest part of the country, the capture of wives has become a more or less nominal matter which simply confirms the previous agreement made between the families of the bridegroom and the bride." The Hindu scriptures also lay down the 'Asur' type of marriage which resembles the tribal 'marriage by capture'. The brandishing of the sword appears to be a hangover of the resistance offered by kinsmen of the girl to the boy's party. Soon after *agwani*, the bridegroom's party go to the bride's place where the rite of *dwarchar* takes place. At the time of *dwarchar* the bridegroom is required to throw a fan on the *mandap*. This practice is reported to correspond to the practice of *madwa marna* obtaining in other castes. At the time of *dwarchar* the bridegroom's father pays 'bride-price' to the bride's father. Thereafter, the bridegroom's party goes to stay in the *Janwasa*—which is usually under some tree outside the village. The party does not eat at the bride's place on this day—but eatables going by the name *lahkaur*,—consisting of *puris* and *achar* are sent to the *Janwasa*. This practice, as well as the practice of *madwa marna*—which are common to other Hindu castes also further symbolise the hostility of the bygone days when marriage by capture used to be the rule.

Next day *chadao* takes place. The bride is seated on a *chauk*, where she is presented with the clothes and ornaments brought by bridegroom's father. A caste feast is given on this day. On the third day, the most important ceremony known as *bhanwar* takes place. It is preceded by a minor ritual called *richhwai*—in which the girl is bathed and taken in a *doli* (an improvised palanquin) to the shrine of 'Khermai'. Thereafter, the girl is taken in the *doli* to the houses of persons of the caste in the village. It is customary to make small cash presents to the girl when she goes round the village in *doli*. The *bhanwar* ceremony consists of taking rounds of the *khamb* and *chhemardaroo*. There is no sacrificial fire. A peculiar feature of the Gond marriage is that only four rounds are completed at the bride's place, the remaining three rounds being reserved for being taken in the bridegroom's house. In reply to pointed queries, it was elicited that the caste-fellows of bridegroom's village also want to make presents to the girl and hence a part of the *bhanwar* ceremony is performed at the bridegroom's village. The explanation is far from being plausible—let alone convincing. No other Hindu caste follows this unusual practice, though in other castes also, presents are made to the bride at her father-in-law's house.

The unusual practice of reserving a certain number of rounds of *bhanwar* for being solemnised at the bridegroom's place appears to be survival of the older form of Gond marriage in which the wedding took place at the bridegroom's house. In this connection, the following excerpt from Russell may be usefully quoted:—

"The most distinctive feature of a Gond marriage is that the procession usually starts from the bride's house and the wedding is held at that of the bridegroom, in contradistinction to the Hindu practice. It is supposed that this is a survival of the custom of marriage by capture, when the bride was carried off from her own house to the bridegroom's, and any ceremony which was requisite was necessarily held at the house of the latter". The practice of sending the *lagun* from the bridegroom's place to the bride's place—which has been noted earlier in this narration—also appears to be a survival of this older type of marriage. The writer of this report was told by the Block Development Officer of Kundam, a remote tract in Jabalpur Tahsil largely inhabited by Gonds and Kols that the practice in which the *barat* starts from the bride's place still prevails in the region about Kundam. The majority of the Gonds have however switched over to the Hindu custom, retaining some of the older customs, *i.e.*, like the one pertaining to *lagun*. This is an example of how tribal castes are gradually shedding their peculiar customs and adopting Hindu customs. People who come in greater contact with Hindu customs are the first to give up the old customs. Other sections of the tribe who live far away in the interior, secluded from other castes—are last to accept the change. At

the same time, as pointed out by Risley, the adoption of new ceremonial practices may lead to formation of new sub-castes of those professing the adopted customs and those preferring to stick to the older ones. The emergence of Gond Thakurs as a separate group of Gonds—who do not intermarry with the Gonds clinging to the older customs—appears to be an example of this process of formation of a new sub-caste.

The solemnisation of *bhanwar* marks the consummation of marriage. On the last day, *bidai* or the ritual of farewell takes place and the bridegroom's party return to their village. At the time of *bidai*, custom requires the bridegroom to open the *madwa* symbolically by unloosing some of the knots holding the bamboos in position.

Additional observations about marriage:

Marriage is an occasion for merry-making to the poor people of Jaitpuri and they take it as a welcome relief from, the humdrum routine of normal life. They, therefore, make the most of the opportunity and indulge in drinking and carousing. Marriage is the only occasion when the Hinduised Gonds of Jaitpuri dance. Young men and women participate in the dancing. The name of the dance, or its motions were not disclosed by the respondents—who look upon dancing as an evil. Besides dancing, singing of songs called *dadaria* and *gari* by women continues as long as the marriage lasts.

Chhemardaroo:

The fixing of *chhemardaroo* which consists of a pole of *oomar* or *salhe* wood and bamboo is a practice peculiar to the Gonds and a few other tribal castes. As has been observed, the bride and bridegroom take rounds of the *khamb* and the *chhemardaroo* during *bhanwar*. *Chhemardaroo* symbolically signifies fertility in the bride. It is hoped that the union will be fruitful even as the *Oomar* tree is laden with fruits. The bamboo in the *chhemardaroo* symbolically signifies the union of two *bans* or septs.

On the day of *bhanwar*, elderly members of the bride's house keep a purificatory fast. They then go to the *saj tree* which serves as the dwelling of Bura Deo, and propitiate him by offerrings of chicken and liquor. Save this, and some survivals of the traditional practices, namely those relating to the sending of *lagun* etc., apparently the Gonds of Jaitpuri have now completely adopted the Hindu rituals of marriage. Most important is the change in the custom which required the marriage to be performed at the bridegroom's place. The absence of the brahamin priest is another important feature of a Gond marriage—which separates them from other castes, *i.e.*, Kols, Kachhis and Mehra living in the village, and even some more Hinduised Gonds in other villages. Umrao Singh, the caste *baiga* officiates at all the ceremonies in the marrige and for the services rendered by him, he is remunerated in cash and also in kind. These payments are fixed by tradition and are not very significant.

Participation of other castes in a Gond marriage:

It may be observed that the marriage of Gonds at Jaitpuri does not require services of a traditional nature rendered by menial professional castes like the *nai*, the *dhimar* or the *basor*. The only person not belonging to the caste who is assigned a role in the ceremonies is the village watchman who is the first to greet the bridegroom's party even though the greeting is accompanied by brandishing of sword.

Gauna ceremony:

After *bidai* the girl accompanies her husband to the latter's village. If she is not mature at the time of marriage, she is brought back to her father's house after a brief stay with her husband. The ceremony of *gauna* then takes place after six or seven months, in which the bridegroom, accompanied by a few relatives goes to his father-in-law's house for formally bringing his wife. In case, the girl has attained puberty at the time of marriage, *gauna* is performed simultaneously with the *bidai* ceremony and then the girl does not come back to her parents' house. At the time of *gauna* the bride is given *mundri* to wear in fingers of her legs, and they are considered to be marks of her married state.

Other types of marriage—Widow re-marriage:

When we analyse the marital status of persons in the village, we find a noticeable absence of widows in the younger age-groups. This is because of the universal practice of re-marriage of widows in the village. The *levirate* is permitted, subject to the restriction that elder brother of the deceased husband cannot re-marry the widow. The custom however does not confer any social right on the husband's younger brother to entitle him to claim compensation if the widow chooses to disobey the rule of custom. Breaches of the rule however attract severe disapproval of the caste elders, who may come down with heavy penalty on the renegades. The widow is, at liberty to remain unmarried in which case she may live in the house of her brother-in-law or in her parents' house. In case of re-marriage of widows, the ceremonies connected with the regular or *bhanwar* marriage are dispensed with. The union is solemnised in a simple ceremony called *choori pahrana*, when

the prospective husband puts on bangles in the hands of the widow usually at night. Thereafter, the caste members are fed in a feast. In Jaitpuri, there is no difference in the social status enjoyed by persons married in the regular manner or according to the latter type of marriage. There is however some difference in the ritual or ceremonial status. Women taken as wife under the *choori* form of marriage are not permitted to participate in such functions as *magar matti* or *mehar*. No bride-price is reported to be paid to anyone in case of re-marriage of widows.

Views about re-marriage:

Enquiries revealed that out of the twenty seven Gond households in the village, twenty-five look upon the practice of remarriage of widows with approval. Of the two persons who expressed themselves against it, one is 'I'—Gond who considers himself superior to other members of his caste and frowns upon all that has a tribal touch about it. The other is 'B.S.' Gond, a fellow who had made overtures for marrying the widow of 'K' Gond, but who was refused by the widow. In his case, therefore, the assumption of a superior caste Hindu attitude on the question of remarriage of widows appears to be an example of the fox who wanted to cover his inability to reach at the grapes by dubbing them as sour. He need not be taken seriously. We may, therefore, conclude that barring I—Gond all Gond families in Jaitpuri approve of widow remarriage.

The reason for the popularity of widow remarriage in Gonds is not far to seek. It is mainly economic. The Gonds are very poor. A virgin bride has to be purchased at a price of Rs. 100/- and, in addition, entails expenses which most Gonds in Jaitpuri cannot afford without running heavily into debt. Looked at from this standpoint, widows are easy to get, and no social inferiority attaches to such marriages.

Lamsena or marriage by service:

Another social characteristic peculiar to the Gonds of Jaitpuri is the practice of *lamsena* or serving for a wife. It is an exception to the rule of patrilocal residence. About this practice, Russell writes "The practice of Lamsena, or serving for a wife, is commonly adopted by boys who cannot afford to buy one. The bridegroom serves his prospective father-in-law for an agreed period, usually three to five or even six years and at its expiry he should be married to the girl without expense". This description, with very little change pertaining to the length of the period of service, applies to the practice as followed by Gonds of Jaitpuri. In Jaitpuri the contract of service is not more than three years a shortening apparently a consequence of current high costs. There are three cases of *lamsena* type of marriage in Jaitpuri. Two of the *lamsena* are sons of 'I' Gond. According to Russell, "The Lamsena custom does not work well as a rule, since the girl's parents can break their contract, and the lamsena has no means of redress". In Jaitpuri, the villagers however said that in the event of the girl's parents retracting from their contract in consideration of an offer of higher bride-price from another suitor, the caste-panchayat could always step in to help the *lamsena*, and the fear of threatened ostracization from the caste was a formidable deterrant. The real reason behind the unpopularity of the *lamsena* custom in the village is the social disgrace associated with the idea that the parents were deserted by their son owing to their failure to marry him.

Divorce:

The Tribal Law which has crystallised from long usage permits divorce by a husband of his wife, with the approval of the caste elders. The grounds which generally are held adequate for divorce are sterility of the wife, her habit of running too often to her parent's house, inability to manage the house properly, suspicion of being a witch, infidelity, or a querulous nature. As mentioned by Russell[1], "Divorce is, however, very rare, for in order to get a fresh wife the man would have to pay for another wedding, which few Gonds can afford, and he would also have difficulty in getting a girl to marry him. Therefore, he will often overlook even adultery". No cases of divorce were reported in Jaitpuri. The divorced woman is free to marry any other person of her choice, and no claim for compensation in favour of the former husband arises. In this respect, custom followed by Jaitpuri Gonds differs materially from the one recorded in Russell, according to which "a man who marries a divorced woman may be expected to pay her husband the expenses of his marriage". A husband does not have the liability to maintain the divorced woman, and generally he takes back ornaments given to her by him. Except children who have not weaned away from the mother, all children remain with their father.

A woman need not go to the caste panchayat for leaving her husband. It is sufficient, if she takes matters in her own hands, and quietly slips away from her husband's roof to that of her paramour. The matter is invariably taken before the caste panchayat by the deserted husband for settlement of the compensation payable by the paramour to him. This compensation generally is intended to cover the expenses incurred by the husband in his marriage with

1. "The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India" Vol. III, Page 82.

the woman. The compensation is known as *byahut* or *dawa*. Besides paying *byahut* to the husband, the man has to give two feasts to the caste. The marriage is then solemnised in the *choori* form. If a woman remarries a second time, no compensation is required to be paid by the third husband to the second. It is only the first husband, who was married to the women by *bhanwar*, who can claim *byahut*.

Polygamy:

Polygamy is practised in the village. Inspite of the fact that polygamy is looked upon with approval in the village, there is only one case in which a man has got two wives. The factor responsible for checking the people from taking two or more wives is their stark poverty.

In Kols—marriage:

Like their Gond counterparts, the Kols of Jaitpuri have also adopted many of the Hindu customs of marriage. The match is arranged by parents and caste-elders, and wishes of the boy and girl are not ascertained. As indicated earlier in this chapter, the Rautia sub-division of Kols does not have any exogamous septs—totemic or otherwise—and marriages are excluded between relatives from the mother's and father's side. Village exogamy appears to be practised because the Kols of Jaitpuri do not marry their sons and daughters in the village itself. In this respect, they differ from Gonds, who prefer to celebrate the marriages of their children, if possible in the village. The girls are necessarily married before they attain puberty at the age of about twelve. The usual age of marriage for boys is about sixteen years.

There is an interesting division of the Rautias into *Suasaha* or *Bamhanahas*, the former being those who do not get their marriages officiated by a Brahamin priest but employ the *Suasaha, i.e.* son-in-law or brother-in-law of the house for the purpose. The *Bamhanahas*, as the name implies, employ a Brahmin priest for the purpose. A *suasaha* Rautia will not intermarry with a *Bamhanaha* Rautia. The Kols of Jaitpuri are all *Bamhanahas*.

If there is a marriageable boy in the village, his father along with the caste headman (Sukhlal Kol is the headman of Kols in Jaitpuri) of the village goes to the girl's village, and there broaches the matter before the girl's father and village elders. If the negotiations culminate into an agreement of marriage, the girl's father washes the feet of boy's father and his companions. This is called *god dhulai* (*god* meaning leg and *dhulai* means washing). The whole procedure of settling the marriage is called *pakkayyan, i.e.*, making *pakka* or final. A Brahmin priest is then called who fixes auspicious dates for various ceremonies like *lagun* and *bhanwar*—after duly considering stellar positions from his almanac. The Kols of Kharharghat perform marriages any time after the festival of *'Diwali'* but before the month of *Asadh* (June-July)

On the day, fixed for scribing the *lagun*, the boy's father again goes to the girl's father. *Lagun* is written after the boy's father and party reach the village. Part-payment, *i.e.* Rs. 7 of the bride-price or *chari* is made at the time of *lagun* while the balance of Rs. 5 is paid at the time of *gauna*. The bridegroom's father and party stay for the night at the bride's village. Next day, the party is given a feast, and women of bride's house sprinkle water coloured yellow with turmeric powder on the guests. The party returns with the *lagun*. In this, the Kol custom differs from the custom followed by numerous other Hindu castes, who utilise the services of a *nai* for taking the *lagun* to the bridegroom's house. In no other Hindu caste do we find the bridegroom's father himself going to bring the *lagun*.

Lagun is followed by the usual Hindu ceremonies of *magarmatti*, *madwa* and *mayna*. The bridal pole or *khamb* is supplied by the carpenter from Balhwara on cash payment. Besides, a small piece of *oomar* wood is also fixed at a distance of about a feet from the *khamb*. On the *madwa* day, the bride or the bridegroom is rubbed with oil by women of the house in a rite known as *tel charhana*. On the second day, *mayna* takes place. The bride or the bridegroom is rubbed with turmeric paste the ceremony being known as *haldi charhana*. As in case of Gonds, 'Mehar' is worshipped by persons belonging to the *kutumb* of the bride or bridegroom.

After *mayna* the bridegroom's party consisting of relatives and friends starts on foot for the bride's village. It is beyond the limited means of the Kols to arrange for bullock carts or any other mode of conveyance. This is partly a reason why marriages in Jaitpuri take place within small distances.

At the *dwarchar* ceremony, a rite known as *madwa marna* deserves to be noticed. In this rite, the bridegroom's head is touched seven times with a bamboo pole pulled out from the *madwa*. This infact is symbolic of the beating which the boys must have received in the bygone days when 'marriage by capture', used to be the only form of marriage. After *dwarchar* the bridegroom's party repair to the *janwasa*, where *lahkaur* or eatables consisting of *puri* and *achar* are sent to them. The ceremony of *charhao* is performed as in the case of 'Gonds'.

There is a significant way in which Kol marriage differs from the marriage of Gonds, as also of other castes. Before *bhanwar*, the ceremonial rounds about some sacred object without which no Hindu marriage can claim finality, the Kols arrange fake *bhanwar* with a twig of *oomar* in the *janwasa*. The *oomar* twig along with the *kalasa* is brought by the *suasa* of the bridegroom's party from beneath the *madwa*, the two articles are enclosed by taking a sheet of cloth round them, and the bridegroom is required to go seven times round them. This fake marriage with *oomar* tree is symbolic of fertility. The Gonds do not observe this symbolic custom just in this form though as already seen they also include *oomar* in the *chhemardaroo*. After the fake *bhanwar* with *oomar* branch, the actual *bhanwar* takes place in the *madwa*. Custom forbids the presence of bride's father and relatives in the *mandap* at the time of *bhanwar* ceremony.

After *bhanwar* the marriage is final, *Bidai* or parting is a separate ceremony. The girl is then taken away to the bridegroom's village only to come back after a brief stay of two or three days. The married couple start conjugal life only after the *gauna* ceremony, which takes place anytime within three years, when the girl has attained puberty.

Widow remarriage and divorce:

Like Gonds, the Kols also approve of the *junior levirate*. The practice however, is not binding and the widow may remarry any other person of the caste whom she could marry if she had been unmarried. Divorce also is permitted and the grounds which would justify divorce are the same as those described in case of Gonds. The person at fault has to pay a penalty of Rs. 1.25 to the caste panchayat. The husband uncovers the head of the wife before the *panchas* and declares that he has nothing more to do with her. The divorce is then complete and the *panchas* are witnesses to it. There is no custom permitting women to divorce their husbands. A woman who is not satisfied with her husband simply leaves him and starts cohabiting with her lover. The matter is subsequently thrashed before the *panchas* exactly in the manner described already in case of Gonds.

The practice of *lamsena* is not followed by the Kols. They also do not practice polygamy.

Kachhis—marriage:

Girls are married before they attain puberty, the usual age being eleven to twelve years. Boys are married at the age of fifteen or sixteen years. In the past, infant marriages were also in vogue. Marriages are arranged by the parents, there being no attempt to ascertain the views of the boy and the girl in the matter.

The Kachhi marriage also consists of the traditional Hindu ceremonies of *magarmatti, mandap, mayna, lagun* and *bhanwar* which have all been described while dealing with marriages of Kols and Gonds. One important respect in which Kachhi marriages differ from Gonds and Kols is that no bride-price is paid by the bridegroom's father to the bride's father.

Russell refers to a strange custom obtaining in Kachhis of Damoh District. The relevant extract from his book cited earlier is quoted below:—

"[1]In the Damoh District, on the arrival of the bridegroom's party, the bride is brought into the marriage shed, and is there stripped to the waist while she holds a leaf-cup in her hand; this is probably done so that the bridegroom may see that the bride is free from any bodily defect". The Kachhi families of Jaitpuri do not follow this practice. The custom of *dahej* the oft-criticised curse of Hindu society—prevails in them. The 'dahej' consists of ceremonial presents of cash, ornaments of silver and gold, utensils and grain made to the bridegroom. The *bhanwar* consists in performing rounds of the *kham* or *kalas* and a branch of *semar* wood. There are in all seven rounds. During the first four rounds, the bride walks in front and the bridegroom places his right hand on her back; while during the last three rounds the bridegroom walks in front. As in the case of Kols, the parents and relatives of the girl remain away while the *bhanwar* is being performed. This practice, which is to be found in almost all other Hindu castes of the region appears to be a survival of the 'marriage by capture'.

Gauna ceremony:

Gauna is not performed till the girl becomes mature. The couple do not cohabit before the *gauna* or *chalao* ceremony.

Remarriage and divorce:

Levirate (junior) is permitted but it is not compulsory on the widow who may marry any other person of the caste also. Divorce is allowed; but only husbands can divorce their wives through the caste panchayat. Polygamy is not permitted nor do they follow the practice of 'marrying by service'.

Mehra-marriage;

The Mehras marry their daughters at the age of about 13 years; while the boys are

1. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces Page 286.

married when they are about 16 years of age. A Brahmin priest officiates at some of the functions of their marriage. The usual ceremonies of *magarmatti, madwa, mayna, bhanwar* and *bidai* constitute a Mehra marriage. Bride price, amounting to Rs. 10/- is paid in two instalments. Rs. 7/- are paid at the time of *dwarchar* while the balance of Rs. 3 is cleared when the *gauna* is performed. No special rites peculiar to the Kabirpanthi sect to which the Mehra family of Jaitpuri belongs were reported.

In respect of widow-remarriage and divorce the Mehras observe customs similar to those followed by the Kols and Gonds.

Marriage—Expenditure:

During enquiries in the village marriage expenditure is reported to be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 500 to Rs. 700. This is too heavy a burden on the poor people of the village, and the result is that they invariably fall a victim to unscrupulous money-lenders.

Inter-caste contacts at marriage:

Reportedly, people do not invite persons belonging to other castes in any of their functions. The only person not belonging to the caste who is associated with the marriages of Gonds and Kols is the Kotwar. Even his association in the marriage is of a ritual nature. A Brahamin priest is associated ceremonially with the marriages of Kols, Kachhis and Mehras in the village.

Disposal of the dead and funeral ceremony; Gonds.

Regarding disposal of the dead in Gonds, Russell observes "Burial of the dead has probably been the general custom of the Gonds in the past, and the introduction of cremation may be ascribed to Hindu influence. The latter method of disposal involves greater expense on account of the fuel and is an honour reserved for elders and important men, though in proportion as the body of the tribe in any locality becomes well-to-do it may be more generally adopted". This description applies to Jaitpuri Gonds even today. Burial is the normal mode of disposing of the dead in them, though, those who can, have recourse to cremation. It is not the cost of fuel which dissuades them from cremating the dead, because there is no dearth of fuel in the village. The real hitch is about other expenses involved in cremating—for in case of cremating they have to take the ashes for immersion in some sacred river and have to perform other costly rites. In non-tribal Hindus, *Gangajal* (sacred water of river Ganga) and *Tulsi* leaves are put in the mouth of a dying person. Not being able to afford these two articles, Gonds of Jaitpuri content themselves by putting some grain in the dead person's mouth. Oil is applied to the dead person's body, and if it is a woman it is bathed at the house itself. The corpse is then wrapped in a new cloth, and placed on a bier of wood and bamboo, locally known as *thathri*. Ornaments, if any, which the deceased may be wearing are removed before keeping the corpse on the bier. The last journey starts with the bier being carried on shoulders by four persons. The first person to give shoulder to the bier is the son, brother or husband of the deceased person and he is the chief mourner. The persons forming funeral procession utter the words "Ram Ram". At some place between the village and the funeral ground, it is customary to take rest and the bier is kept on the ground. In the resumed journey another set of persons carry the bier. This is called *Kandha badalna* or changing the shoulders.

At the funeral ground, it is customary to put a paisa or two in the pit. It is said that the Gonds will not bury their dead gratis in no man's land, and by putting some money in the pit they symbolically acquire the land. Some grain is also put in the pit. This is supposed to be the food of the dead person. The corpse is placed in the pit with its feet pointing to the south because the region of *Yama* is in the south. There can be little doubt that Gonds have picked up this belief, and the custom from the Hindus. Their original custom appears to have been the one described in Russell's book[1]—*i.e.* "The dead are usually buried with the feet pointing to the north in opposition to the Hindu practice, and this fact has been adduced in evidence of the Gond belief that their ancestors came from the north." The body is kept with its face to the ground in case of male and on its back in case of female. After keeping the body in the pit, *mukh matti* is given by the chief mourner. Corresponding rite in case of cremation is *mukh agni*. The pit is then covered, and it is necessary that each member of the party should put some earth in the pit. Thereafter the mourners go for a purificatory bath in the river; the first person to take bath is the person who has given *mukh matti* or *mukh agni*, and others follow suit. Women also go to the river for the purificatory bath, and it is at that time that glass bangles of the deceased's widow are broken.

Period of mourning;

The period of mourning is reported to be ten days in the case of a male death and nine days in the case of female death. It is to be noted that formerly the Gonds used to observe mourning only for three days[2]—and Gonds of

1. Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces, Vol. III, Page 89.
2. *Ibid.* Page 91.

Jaitpuri have changed the period as a result of Hindu influence. During this period, the house of deceased is held to be ceremonially impure, and members of the caste are prohibited from accepting anything for eating or drinking from the bereaved family. On the third day of the death, in case of cremation, the ashes of the deceased are collected and taken to Narmada for immersion by the person who has given *mukh agni* to the deceased. On the ninth or the tenth day, the washerman from Bhita takes clothes of the family for washing, and the barber from the same village comes and shaves the heads of male members of the bereaved family. During the period of ceremonial impurity, frying of edibles in oil or *ghi* is prohibited by the bereaved family and they are also tabooed from eating mutton or fish. After the period of ceremonial impurity is over, a feast is given to the caste members.

Treatment of persons suffering from leprosy etc:

Corpses of persons who have suffered from leprosy are never cremated but are buried. It is believed that if a leper is burnt, the disease will become a hereditary phenomenon in the family. In case of death due to small-pox, it is believed that the body of the deceased remains possessed of the goddess, and cremation would amount to burning the goddess. Such persons, therefore, are never cremated. Persons dying of snakebite and typhoid also are never cremated. These practices, and the accompanying beliefs are shared by the Kols, Kachhis and Mehras also.

Other practices and beliefs—belief in reincarnation:

The Gonds of Jaitpuri believe that the spirit of dead persons are reborn in children. They, therefore, sometimes make some mark on the body of the dead person; and subsequently when a child is born search for that mark on its person. A similar practice has been described by Russell and Hiralal[1].

The Koonra:

Sometimes, the villagers make a long heap of stones outside the village boundary in honour of a dead man. This is known as *koonra*. In Jaitpuri there are two such heaps of stones. One of them was erected after the death of Lal singh's father. Regarding this practice Russell and Hiralal observe[2]:—

"Elsewhere a long heap of stones is made in honour of a dead man, sometimes with a flat-topped post at the head. This is specially done for men who have died from epidemic disease or by an accident, and passers-by fling stones on the heap with the idea that the dead man's spirit will thereby be kept down and prevented from returning to trouble the living". The practice adverted to in this quotation and the belief accompanying it are still found in the Gonds of Jaitpuri.

Kol:

Milk is put in the mouth of the dying person who is placed on the ground just before death. If death takes place on the cot, the body is taken to the funeral ground on the cot itself. It is not compulsory to drape the corpse in new clothes, though it is considered better to, and resourceful persons invariably, do so. The corpse is bathed and turmeric paste and oil are applied to it. It is then kept on a bier made of bamboo and wood. The bier is taken on shoulders by four persons, the first to do so being the son, brother or husband of the deceased. When the funeral procession reaches outside the village the bier is kept on the ground and the procession is resumed after a very brief halt, with a different set of persons carrying the bier. The corpse is stripped bare of the clothes, and placed in the pit, in which a coin is also put in token of having acquired right over the land, for, like Gonds. Kols also will not bury their dead in no man's land. Again as in the case of Gonds, the corpse of a female is put on its back in the pit, while a male corpse is put with its face downwards. The Kols also keep the feet of dead person towards the south, sharing the same belief as the Gonds.

In Kols, ceremonial impurity lasts for nine days in case of females and ten days in case of males. During this period, persons may go to the bereaved family but may not accept water or any eatables from them. On the last day of the period of mourning, a *nai* from Balhwara village shaves the heads of near relatives of the deceased, except those whose parents are alive. In Kols, once a man gets his hair shaved, he has to get them shaved whenever an elder person of the family dies. The washerman, also from Balhwara village, washes the clothes of the family on that day. On the ninth or tenth day, according by, as the deceased was a female or male, members of the caste are given a feast.

In case of infants below one year of age. the impurity is removed soon after the burial. Kols of Jaitpuri do not cremate the dead, for reasons of poverty. If a person dies of cholera or small-pox, they throw the corpse into the river.

1. The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India, Vol. III, Page 94.
2. *Ibid* Page 93.

Kachhis:

The Kachhis of Jaitpuri always cremate the dead. Sacred water of Ganga, or should that not be available, milk is put in the mouth of the dying person, who is removed from the cot just before death. Before taking the corpse to the crematorium, it is bathed, and rubbed with oil and turmeric powder. It is then draped in a new cloth, and put on the funeral bier. The bier is carried on shoulders by four persons, and according to custom the first person to give shoulder is the eldest son, or brother or husband of the deceased. The last journey is attended by all the near relatives of the deceased who chant *Ram nama satya hai* as they go to the crematorium in procession. The fire with which the body is to be consumed is taken to the crematorium from the house in an earthen pot, and the man who carries this pot leads the procession. Before reaching the cremation ground, the funeral bier is kept on the ground and the usual rite of offering a few coins to the watch-keeper's of the *Shmashan* performed. At the crematorium, the body is kept on the pyre and the chief mourner—who is the eldest son, or brother or husband of the deceased lights the fire. Other members of the procession throw pieces of wood in the pyre.

The ashes are collected on the third day and taken to Allahabad for immersion in the sacred water of the Ganga. On the last day of the period of mourning—which in case of Kachhis also—is nine days in case of females and ten days in case of males,—the clothes of the family are given to the washerman. The elder members of the family get their heads shaved, the only restriction being in case of persons whose parents are alive. Casteman are fed for two days, *i.e.* on the 12th and the 13th days.

The Kachhis of Jaitpuri observe the same superstitions relating to persons dying of leprosy, small-pox and snakebite, as are shared by other sections of the population.

Mehra:

The manner of disposing of the dead in the Mehra family is the same as in the case of Kachhis. The period of ceremonial impurity is also the same. A special feature is however the *chauka* ceremony of the Kabirpanthis—which is performed on the tenth day by the family's 'Guru' who comes from Barela.

General:

From the foregoing descriptions of the practices and beliefs pertaining to the major crises of life, one thing is abundantly clear, *i.e.* that the communities living in Jaitpuri have more or less adopted the ordinary Hindu practices and such variations as have been observed represent the persistence of the old tribal practices. Another significant fact that emerges is the almost total absence of inter-caste and inter-hamlet social inter-course in the village on the occasions of the major crises of life. For performance of traditional services the Kols depend on village Balhwara, while the Gonds and Kachhis living in Jaitpuri get the traditional services from Bhita.

CHAPTER III

Village Economy

Economic Resources:

With majority of its inhabitants depending for their living on cultivation or wood-cutting as the principal or subsidiary occupation, the economy of Jaitpuri depends chiefly on its land and forest resources. A study of these two resources will, therefore, be of great help for a proper appreciation of its economic structure. Accordingly, in the subsequent paragraphs these two factors are described briefly.

Land:

The total land area of the village is 671·83 acres. Of this 3·75 acres is the settled (inhabited) area in both the hamlets, which also includes the area under roads. At the settlement, an area of 73.73 acres was covered by the bed of river Gaur, and the numerous *nullahs* which join it; hills and rocks accounted for an area of 145.09 acres and about an equal area, 143.57 acres, was occupied by shrubs and inferior forest growth. Thus, at settlement, an area of 305.69 acres was held under tenures. The fifty one years that have passed since settlement have substantially reduced the area under shrubs and inferior forests, with a corresponding increase in the occupied area. Areas under other heads have also changed. The following statement gives the areas under each of these heads as at the time of settlement and as at the time of this enquiry.

AREA IN ACRES

S. No.	Description of land	At Settlement	% of total area	At the time of enquiry	% of total area
1.	Area under rocks and hills	145.09	21.61	121.25	18.04
2.	Settled area	3.75	0.53	3.75	0.53
3.	Area under small tree forest	143.57	21.38	65.46	9.78
4.	Area under water	73.73	10.98	72.41	10.77
5.	Total occupied area	305.69	45.50	408.96	60.86
6.	Net cropped area	195.88	29.15	187.00	27.83
7.	Double cropped area	0.13	0.02	9.00	1.34
8.	Irrigated area	0.73	0.10	—	—

Jaitpuri is not very fortunate in respect of its land resources. Its soils are very poor. The Settlement Report of Jabalpur Tahsil (Statement, Barela Group of Jabalpur Tahsil—Page 72) describes the soils of the village in these words "the soils dry very quickly and scour towards the river bank. Out of 288 acres classified, 251 are mutfarkat; there is no secure land, and *kodon* and *til* are the only crops of importance". A more detailed study of the soil classes of the village was made from the settlement *misl* of the village, from which the following table has been abstracted:—

S. No.	Soil type	Area (in acres)
1	*Mund I tagarbandhia*	17.34
2	*Mund I tagar ujarha*	2.64
3	*Mund II tagarbandhia*	3.45
4	*Mund II tagarbandhia ujarha*	1.57
5	*Mund II, mutfarkat*	13.13
6	*Domatta bandhwas ujarha*	3.50
7	*Domatta tagarbandhia ujahra*	0.78
8	*Domatta saman*	0.25
9	*Domatta mutfarkat*	72.40
10	*Patarua mutfarkat*	152.37
11	*Patarua mutfarkat geonda*	6.78
12	*Bhatua mutfarkat*	21.40
13	*Bhatua mutfarkat geonda*	3.46
14	*Badi bila abpashi*	6.78
15	*Badi abpashi*	1.00
	Total ...	306.69

Mund I and Mund II are essentially *rabi* soils, and are never sown with rice. *Tagarbandhia* and *bandhwas* are embanked wheat fields, while *tagar* is the unembanked wheat land. It is thus seen that at settlement, only an area of 25 acres could be sown with wheat. As will appear presently, the area under wheat has not changed since settlement, and this acreage represents the area of wheat lands even today. At the time of settlement, an area of 173.41 acres was covered by soil classed as *Patarua mutfarkat* and *Bhatua mutfarkat*. *Patarua* soil is described in the Settlement Report of Jabalpur Tahsil in these words "This class consists of soil which is too thin and poor to include in the *mund, domatta* and *sehara* classes. In crop capacity, it is not good enough for the production of rice or wheat, and it is left fallow for about three years at a time". *Bhatua* which is even more inferior is a "red soil, always shallow and stony, which is found on the slopes of hills and ravines'. This soil is fit only for producing oilseed and small millets like *kodon* and must be given resting fallows from 5 to 7 years. According to settlement report, *mutfarkat* land is inferior land, incapable of producing garden crops. From this, it follows that the 268.38 acres which is classed as *mutfarkat* is not fit for producing the principal *rabi* and *kharif* crops, *i.e.* wheat and rice respectively. The 104 acres of area which has come to be occupied after settlement has been drawn from land recorded as hills and rocks and small tree forest, and can not be expected to be of good quality—fit for the production of rice or wheat. Hence, there is no sensible error in supposing that crop-producing capacity of the occupied area with respect to production of superior crops—has not materially changed since settlement. Thus, as regards land resources, Jaitpuri has not been favoured by nature, and the major portion of its land is fit only for crops like *kodon, kutki,* gram etc. It is also clear that the chances of developing Jaitpuri as an agricultural village are extremely limited and its growing population will have to lean more and more on occupations other than agriculture for its living.

Forest:

As observed by the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission in their Report (1960-61), the tribal people live in a symbiotic relationship with nature, particularly the forest, and the latter is an important factor in the tribal economy. This relationship between forest and the tribes is a feature which belongs to prehistoric antiquity; and, if the tribal cultures have been able to preserve something of their pristine glory, the credit goes to their forest sanctuaries. As has been indicated earlier, though situated in the neighbourhood of a city, Jaitpuri is surrounded by forests on three sides. To its north lies the Lower Gour Reserve Forest, while to the west and south lie the forests of Gadheri and Sukhlalpur. Of the village proper also, quite an extensive area is covered by forest. The forest in the vicinity of the village appears to be poor in timber, *sagon* (*Tectona grandis*) and *sal* are not to be found. The poverty of the forest in respect of timber content is not however vital to the village economy which depends principally on the sale of fuel wood and bamboo poles. Both these commodities are available in an abundance in the village forest and the reserve forest. Besides, the forest contains fruit trees like *achar, tendu, mahua, harra, aonla, baheda, ber* etc. fruits of which are plucked by the villagers. The forest also contains grass which serves the needs of village cattle. In the area of the village proper also grass grows in abundance and quite a few land-holders from outside the village use their lands in Jaitpuri for growing grass only. In the village *nistar-patrak*, thirteen survey numbers with an area of 58.78 acres are recorded as having been reserved for meeting the grazing needs of the village cattle;

while these, and one more survey number measuring 119.60 acres are also to cater for the fuel and timber requirements of the people of the village.

Livestock:

The live-stock wealth of the village is shown in the statement on page 46 which has been prepared from information furnished by the village patwari from his *titamma milan khasra*. The total cattle population of the village is 322 of which roughly 33% consist of goats. Milch cattle —cows and buffaloes constitute only 4.6% of the total livestock population, while bulls under the plough make up 14.7%. Dry cattle account for 15.3% of the total.

Other resources:

Gaur which makes the boundary of the village for a considerable distance is a perennial river with high banks. About rivers of the tahsil generally, the settlement report says— "The rivers of the tahsil flow between high banks and provide little or no water for irrigation. Generally speaking they have an adverse influence upon villages which are very close to them; for in such villages the soils dry with unusual rapidity and a seed bed is only available for a few days after the rains stop". The remark applies in all force to river Gaur in Jaitpuri. The possibility of lift irrigation of lands lying on its bank however deserves to be examined. There is also the possibility of development of fishing in the waters of the river.

B. Factors influencing economic life in village

Land Reforms:

Jaitpuri was a *malguzari* village. Prior to the enactment of the M. P. Abolition of Proprietary Rights Act of 1950, all lands in the village vested in the *malguzar* or proprietor of the village. The tillers of soil held land from him under two types of tenures, the absolute occupancy and occupancy tenure. In Jaitpuri the tenants were all occupancy tenants. These tenures, and the rights appurtenant thereto in favour of the tenants were defined and regulated by the C. P. Tenancy Act of 1920. The Absolute Occupancy Tenant had somewhat greater rights in his land, but he could not generally transfer his interest in land without reference to the landlord, who enjoyed a right of preemption. The rights of transfer of land enjoyed by the occupancy tenants were extremely limited as will be seen from the following quotations from relevant sections of the Act.

"Section11.—The interest of an occupancy tenant shall on his death pass by inheritance in accordance with his personal law—

Provided that—

(i) no person snall take any interest during the life-time of any ancestor of such person in the male line of descent from the tenant;

(ii) no collateral shall be entitled to inherit unless he is a male in a male line of ascent or descent and within seven degrees of kindred from the tenant.

Section 12 (1).—An occupancy tenant may transfer his holding only to the extent and in the manner herein indicated, namely:—

(i) he may sublet any right in his holding for one agricultural year, provided that no contract for such lease shall be made more than two months before the year to which it relates, or shall contain a covenant to renew;

(ii) he may transfer, otherwise than by a simple mortgage as defined in the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, any right in his holding to any cotenant or person, who if he survived the tenant without nearer heirs would inherit his right."

The absolute occupancy tenant was not subject to ejectment by the *malguzar* for any cause, but the occupancy tenant could be ejected by him through a revenue officer for arrears of rent. Thus, it is seen that the people of Jaitpuri held land belonging to the *malguzar*, and enjoyed certain rights and safeguards. In actual practice, the safeguards provided by the tenancy enactment could, and were always flouted by the *malguzars*, particularly in the case of the occupancy tenants. Thus whatever their *dejure* status over the land held by them might have been, the *defacto* position was that the occupancy tenants enjoyed their lands at the pleasure of the *malguzar*. The latter could always find out ways of ejecting the tenants from their lands, more so because the tenantry was extremely poor and ignorant. The evil effect of this was that the *malguzar* and his aides in the village extracted *begar* or forced unpaid labour from the tenants. They were under an illegal obligation to work in the *malguzar's* fields at the times of sowing and harvesting. Seen in this back-ground of the exploitation of an ignorant and poverty-ridden agricultural community by an unscrupulous *malguzar*, the M. P. Abolition of Proprietary Rights Act of 1950— which abolished this age old tyrannical institution of village landlordism was a radical measure of far-reaching implications to the village community. With the enactment of this Act, Government stepped into the shoes of the *malguzar*, and all rights which formerly vested in the *malguzar* came to be vested in the Government. The tenants now held their

lands directly from the Government. The people of Jaitpuri hailed the change with unmixed feelings of joy and satisfaction. No more were they under an illegal obligation to perform forced labour on the fields of the *malguzar*.

The next big stride forward in the matter of land reforms was taken with the enactment of the M. P. Land Revenue Code of 1954. By this piece of legislation, the old tenures *malik makbooja*, absolute occupancy and occupancy were abolished and, in their place, two new tenures, *bhumiswamis* and *bhumidharis* were created. The land holders of Jaitpuri who were occupancy tenants now became bhumidharis. The Act widened the rights of transfer of the peasantry in the land. The erstwhile occupancy tenants who now became *bhumidharis* could transfer, otherwise than by way of mortgage—any interest in land. The rights over trees standing in the holding also were changed. In the past, an occupancy tenant enjoyed the same rights in fruit trees in his holding as he had in the holding, and he could fell and appropriate the timber of *babul* (*Acacia arabica*). He had also the right to propagate lac on *palas* trees (*Butea frondosa*) standing in the holding. The Land Revenue Code of 1954 made the *bhumidhari* master of all trees except timber trees standing in his holding. In respect of timber trees, the *bhumidhari* could enjoy the usufruct and could propagate lac on them. It may be remarked that the provisions which affected the people of Jaitpuri most were those pertaining to rights of transfer. The provisions pertaining to trees did not make much difference to the people because there are no timber trees reported to be standing on their holdings and they continued to enjoy the usufruct of the non-timber trees as usual. The M. P. Land Revenue Code of 1959 was another big and effective step in the direction of eliminating the absentee-landlord and it placed on the statute book measures of deep significance to the land-holding classes. It simplified the tenure further by creating only one class of tenure-holders, the *bhumiswamis*. This affected the people of Jaitpuri in an important respect, because all the land-holders in the village were *bhumidharis* and now they became *bhumiswamis*. For the first time they held the land in ownerlike possession. They became owners of all trees standing in the holding—timber or non-timber. The new code however imposed a restriction on transfer of land with a view to protect the tenants. The restriction is that no sale of land will be valid unless it leaves with the *bhumiswami* an area of 5 acres in the case of irrigated land and 10 acres in the case of dry land. There is an uninformed criticism of this restriction on the ground that it has reduced the ability of the people to raise credit for social and other purposes. The people of Jaitpuri were not aware of the main and driving principle behind the enactment, namely, that land must eventually belong to the person who cultivates it. Effect is sought to be given to this principle by providing for the conferral of *bhumiswami* rights on persons, who cultivate lands belonging to others. The code has also fixed the maximum rent payable by a tenant to his *bhumiswami*. It appears that, in Jaitpuri, these fundamental changes introduced by the Act are not known to the people, who continue to behave as if the Act had not been passed at all in so far as these matters are concerned.

There has been little improvement of land in the village.

Industrialisation and trends of Urbanisation:

There has been no industrialisation in the village, or in the neighbouring villages. It is found that people of Jaitpuri do not work in the manufacturing concerns controlled by the army in Jabalpur *viz.* the Gun Carriage Factory and Ordnance Factory. Other industrial establishments in the city have also failed to absorb the villagers. One Gond has even got his name registered with Employment Exchange at Jabalpur but he has not been able to get any job. The village economy is almost unaffected by urban contact except to the extent that six Gond families have recently taken to the business of selling milk in addition to their primary occupation of agriculture. This is definitely traceable to the impact of urban ideas, as it involves a change from the traditional Gond occupation of cultivation or agricultural labour or wood-cutting.

Industrialisation and trends of Urbanisation:

The deplorable state of communications in the village has been adverted to in the opening chapter. Goods transport in the village is almost in the primeval stage. The village has only two bullock-carts, and no bicycles. Construction of a link road connecting the village to the ridge-road which terminates at Gaur will provide some impetus to the village economy. Existence of a cartable road may induce some villagers' to purchase carts and bicycles for carrying their products to the market. As it is, men and women have to negotiate a difficult climb by a foot-path, carrying a heavy load of fuel on their heads. If they could be helped to acquire bullock-carts, they would be able to take much more fuel wood at a time to the market, and that would increase their income and improve their economic status.

Livelihood Classes:

Furnished below is a statement which shows the livelihood pattern of Jaitpuri returned

at the 1951, Census. It has been taken from the District Census Handbook of 1951:—

Description	Male	Female
1. Cultivators on owned lands and their dependents	77	59
2. Cultivators of unowned lands and dependents	—	—
3. Cultivating labourers and their dependents	3	8
4. Non-cultivating owners and their dependents	—	—
5. Production other than cultivation and dependents	1	—
6. Commerce	—	—
7. Transport	—	—
8. Other Services and miscellaneous sources	18	15
Total ..	99	82

Analysis of this statement shows that in 1951, the population of the village depended for their livelihood mainly on the cultivation of owned lands. As many as 77 males and 59 females together making up 75% of the population derived their living from this source. Of the 25% that depended for their living on avocations other than cultivation of owned lands, 18% depended on other services, and the remaining 7% were supported by labour on cultivation and by production other than cultivation.

The livelihood classes returned at the 1961 Census are shown in the following statement:—

Description of class	No. of persons	
	Male	Female
1. Cultivation	31	3
2. Agricultural labour	25	21
3. Mining, forestry etc.	1	—
4. At household industry	—	—
5. Manufacture other than household industry	—	—
6. In construction	—	—
7. Trade and Commerce	1	—
8. Transport and Communications.	—	—
9. Other services	6	9
10. Non-workers	42	83

At the very outset, it must be pointed out that the 1951 figures do not show the actual number of workers working in the various occupations, but they include their dependents also. In the 1961 Census the actual number of workers only in the various working categories has been shown and the non-workers have been shown separately. As it is, therefore, direct comparability between the two sets of figures is not possible. It will however be seen that in 1961 Census, out of a total of 97 persons—males and females, returned as working, 35 are principally working on cultivation in owned or unowned lands. The greatest number of persons are included in the class of agricultural labourers, *i.e.*, 46 in absolute numbers or 47% of the total working population. It would, therefore, broadly appear that the number of workers engaged in cultivation on owned or unowned lands has decreased considerably while the number of agricultural labourers has registered a phenomenal increase. The number of workers shown in other services is 15% of total working population, which indicates that probably there has not been any appreciable change in the number of persons eking out their living from other services during the ten years.

Statistics of both censuses however fail to reflect the correct economic picture of the village. The 1951 Census figures create an impression that the economy of the village was over-whelmingly agricultural at the census with 75% of village population deriving their living from cultivating owned lands. The 1961 Census figures correct this impression by showing that only 35% of the working population of the village follow the occupation of cultivation of owned or unowned lands. It must be stated that nothing has happened during the intercensal period to change the nature of the village economy, and by and large the economic pattern of the village has remained unchanged. There is a tendency in villagers to return cultivation as their occupation—even if the land owned by them is less than an acre. This tendency results in an inflation of the number of cultivators. In the 1961 Census the picture is relatively correct because of the introduction of the concept of principal and secondary works.

Both the 1951 and 1961 Censuses fail to bring out the most important aspect of the village economy—namely the dependence of majority of its population on the calling of cutting and selling fire-wood and bamboo-poles, either as a principal or subsidiary occupation. The persons classified in the 1961 Census as belonging to other services, and also probably in the 1951 Census, are the small number of persons who returned themselves as wood-cutters. Actually, their classification in the class 'other services' is not correct, and they must be put in the third category of workers of

the 1961 Census Classification, *viz.*, working in forestry etc. Enquiry has shown that there is only one person in the village—the *Kotwar*—who can correctly be classified in the category 'other services'. All others who have been shown as belonging to that category have been misclassified and should be treated as belonging to the third category. The copies of the individual slips of persons of the village filled in at the 1961 Census—which were prepared before breaking of the pads show that a large number of persons returned as cultivators or agricutural labourers have also been returned as wood-cutters. Thus, of the 31 males who returned themselves as cultivators, ten persons returned themselves as wood-cutters also, while of the 25 males returned as agricultural labourers, eighteen have been returned as wood-cutters also. The enumerator had failed to indicate the principal work in the individual slips, and according to working instructions for the editing and sorting of the slips, cultivation or agricultural labour was treated as the principal work whenever the enumerator himself had failed to indicate it. Similarly fifteen of the women workers who have been classed as agricultural labourers have also been returned as wood-cutters. It would thus be seen that 47 persons, classed as cultivators and agricultural labourers were returned in the 1961 Census as wood-cutters also; though the figures do not show that position on account of the mistake committed at the source by the enumerator. From the information returned in the enquiry in connection with this survey,

Distribution of Households by occupation, income and number of members

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Occupation	All households	Households with monthly income: Less than Rs. 25	Rs. 25-50	Rs. 51-75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 & over	Total No. of members in households mentioned in Col. 2	No. of persons in the household: Males above 12	Females above 12	Males below 12	Females below 12	No. of equivalent adult males per household	No. of gainfully employed people in the household
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
GOND													
1 Agriculture only	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	1	1	—	—	—	2
2 Agriculture principal work with wood-cutting or milk selling as second work	7	—	3	2	—	2	31	10	10	6	5	—	14
3 Wood-cutting principal work with cultivation or agricultural labour as subsidiary	15	—	2	8	5	—	94	29	32	15	18	—	63
Work Wood-cutting only	4	—	3	1	—	—	16	4	5	2	5	—	9
Total ...	27	—	9	11	5	2	143	44	48	23	28	—	88
KOL													
1 Wood-cutting principal work with agriculture	8	—	7	1	—	—	40	12	11	11	6	—	22
2 Wood-cutters only	8	3	4	1	—	—	26	6	10	3	7	—	15
Total ...	16	3	11	2	—	—	66	18	21	14	13	—	37
OTHERS													
Cultivation (P)	2	—	1	1	—	—	8	2	2	2	2	—	4
Wood-cutting (P)	2	—	2	—	—	—	3	2	1	—	—	—	3
Service	1	—	—	1	—	—	3	1	1	1	—	—	1
Total ...	5	—	3	2	—	—	14	5	4	3	2	—	8
Grand Total ...	48	3	23	15	5	2	223	67	73	40	43	—	133

the emergent pattern of division of the population into the livelihood classes is shown by table on page 40. A look at this table shows that out of the total of 48 families in the village, consisting of 223 persons, only one family with two persons depends entirely for its sustenance on agriculture. The family is however by no means in an enviable position as may be seen from the fact that it belongs to the income group 25-50. Nine families, (roughly 18%) with a population of 31 persons and a working force of 14 persons follow principally the occupation of cultivation with wood-cutting, agricultural labour or milk-selling as their secondary work. Families with wood-cutting as their principal occupation and cultivation and/or agricultural labour as the subsidiary occupation number twentyfive or more than 50% of the total number of families and consist of 138 persons with 88 persons constituting its working force. Thus, 62% of the population depends on wood-cutting as its principal occupation. Twelve families, 2.5% of all the families, cosisting of 42 persons constituting a little less than 19% of the total population, are engaged only in wood-cutting as their occupation. Combining the last two segments, it would be seen that forest furnishes the principal means of living of 75% of the families, containing 81% of the total population. Thus, the economy of the village is predominantly dependent upon the forest, with cultivation claiming a second place.

Castes and livelihood classes:

A study of the distribution of the population into livelihood classes analysed according to castes yields some interesting results. Thus the table on page 40 shows that about 30% of the Gond households are following agriculture as the principal or only occupation, while in Kols no household has got cultivation as its principal occupation. The number of families depending only on wood-cutting is twice as large in the Kols as in the Gonds. These figures are in conformity with the land holding pattern in the village which is given on page 44. The families who follow wood-cutting as their only occupation are the landless families. Families, which hold less than five acres of land, and families which hold more than five acres but where pressure of population is greater follow wood-cutting as a principal occupation. The families which pursue cultivation as a principal occupation are generally those holding more than seven acres of land; but almost all these families are also obliged to take to wood-cutting as a subsidiary occupation to supplement their incomes.

Table on page 40 brings out another significant fact about the economy of this village. It is found that the families which are pursuing wood-cutting as a principal occupation with cultivation or agricultural labour as a secondary occupation are better off, on an average, than families following other occupations or combinations of occupations. Thus thirteen of the fifteen Gond households which combine wood-cutting with agriculture belong to income group 51-100. This may perhaps be due to these households having a larger number of working members.

Ownership of economic resources—Forest in village economy:

The geographical situation of the village in the middle of a forest is an important factor in moulding its economy. It is to a very great extent a day-to-day economy depending mainly on the exploitation of fuel—wood and bamboo—resources of the forest. Forest also provides the grass for the village cattle which would be quite significant on conversion to money-value. To a smaller but nonetheless an appreciable extent, the collection of such forest produce as *mahua* fruits and seeds, *achar* (which has the valuable bye-product *chironji*), *tendu*, *aonla*, *harra* etc., is an important supplement to the income of an average household in the village. The wood and bamboo required for making or repairing the agricultural implements, and for constructing or repairing their houses is also supplied by the forest. If the money-values of all these items of the household's economy are cumulated, it would easily swell the annual income of the household by any amount varying between Rs. 50 and 100. In this context, it is appropriate to examine the nature and extent of the rights enjoyed by the villagers in the village forest to-day, as also in the historical perspective. The latter would among other things, require a study of the changes brought about in such rights by the abolition of proprietary rights and by the forest policies enunciated by the Government from time to time.

The forest in the village which included, according to the last settlement of the village an area of 288.86 acres—belonged to the *malguzar* of the village. But though he was the owner of the village, the *malguzar* did not enjoy rights in the village waste lands, streams and other features to the exclusion of other residents of the village. Communal rights in these had existed from mediaeval times, and when the British Government created the *malguzari* tenure for village management and revenue collection, these rights were recognized very clearly. The Central Provinces Settlement Instructions (page 15) observe that it is not correct to state that customs only were recorded at the grant of

proprietary rights, for "the record was a record-of-rights as well as of customs that had become rights, and further the grant of proprietary rights is defined in the original *sanad* of proprietary rights of various districts as a provisional grant depending entirely upon the recognition by the *malguzar* of the communal right laid down". In the earlier thirty years' settlements, there were entries of right to graze on common land, entries limiting the right of collection of *mahua* to actual residents of the village, entries laying down the right for the village herd to graze at large over the holding of individuals after removal of crops, and many similar entries which emphasize communal interests to the exclusion of the individual. "The waste land was included in the village for communal reasons, to supply the village agricultural requirements in grazing and other items, as well as for extension of cultivation". Thus, while recording the *malguzar* as sole proprietor of village waste lands, Government endeavoured to maintain the traditional communal rights of the residents, by making specific entries in the *wazibularz* of the village, and also by legalising the making of rules for management of forests, for securing the communal interest. The legal provision enabling Government to make rules as observed above was contained in section 202 of the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act of 1917.

The *Wajibularz* of Jaitpuri subjoined to the settlement *misl* of the village contains records of customs regarding grazing, collection of forest produce, collection of timber and fuel wood and other allied customs. As regards grazing, the herd of the village cultivators could graze at large in the village forest, without any fee. Other persons in the village, and persons from other villages were not entitled to free grazing right, but they could also graze their cattle in the village wastelands on paying *chari* or grazing fee to the *malguzar*. The residents of the village could collect fuel-wood, grass, roots, leaves, creepers etc., from the village forest free of charge; they could also take dried and wet bamboos free. As regards timber for construction and repair of houses and agricultural implements, the villagers were entitled to cut *satkatha* timber; but they could take timber of other species from the forest only with the prior permission of the *malguzar*. The right to collection of *mahua, bhilma, tendu, achar* etc., was also free of any charge. In actual practice, however, the *malguzar* used to take from each cultivator a present of one rupee per annum known as *fagua*—and in lieu thereof he permitted them the right to collect fuel-wood, bamboo, thorns, and bushes, jungle fruits, *satkatha* timber and of grazing etc. Landless persons were however, not required to pay this *fagua* of one rupee. Persons not residing in the village could graze their cattle in the village waste lands after the payment of a sum per annum known as *chari* or "grazing fee". The villagers did not stand in the knowledge of the amount of the *chari*.

Changes after abolition of malguzari:

As a result of the abolition of *malguzari* in 1951, ownership of village forests passed from the *malguzar* to the Government. The rights and privileges enjoyed by the villagers in the erstwhile *malguzari* forest however continued as of old, and they were incorporated in the village administration paper part of the *Nistar Patrak* prepared provisionally under provisions of the Madhya Pradesh Abolition of Proprietary Rights Act, and finalised subsequently under provisions of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1954. There was no disturbance in the pattern of rights of *nistar* due to abolition of proprietary rights, and even during this enquiry, people of Jaitpuri did not come out with any *nistar* grievances.

Government Forest:

As has been observed more than once in the preceding pages, village Jaitpuri adjoins the Lower Gaur Government Reserve Forest. The enjoyment of produce of Government Forests by villagers of adjoining villages was governed by the policy resolution of 1894, of the Government of India. This recognised the rights and privileges enjoyed by such villagers in the forest, and sought to 'regulate these rights' and 'restrict' the privileges with a view to protect the forest for public benefit. It would not be out of place to quote the extract giving the cardinal principle of Government's Forest Policy of 1894.

"The sole object with which State forests are administered is the public benefit. In some case the public to be benefitted are the whole body of tax-payers; in others the people of the tract within which the forest is situated; but in almost all cases, the constitution and preservation of a forest involve, in greater or lesser degree, the regulation of rights and restriction of privileges of user in the forest area which have previously been enjoyed by the inhabitants of its immediate neighbourhood. This regulation and restriction are justified only when the advantage to be gained by the public is great, and the cardinal principle to be observed is that the rights and privileges of individuals must be limited, otherwise than for their own benefit, only in such degree as is absolutely necessary to secure that advantage".

Consistently with this policy, a class of forests known as 'minor forests' producing only inferior species of timber or smaller growth of better sorts and pasture lands were to be managed mainly in the interest of local population, preserving the wood and grass from destruction and regulating their use in such a way that the people were protected against their own improvidence—and "to meet these objectives, all considerations of revenue were to be subordinated[1]". The people of Jaitpuri enjoyed the right of free collection of natural forest produce and dried wood for domestic uses from the neighbouring reserved forest. Their needs however were satisfied in the main from the *malguzari* forest, and demands on the reserved forest had to be made only occasionally.

The new forest policy of the Government is guided by the National Forest Policy enunciated in 1952, which states *inter alia*—

"Village forests are intended, in the main, to serve the needs of the surrounding villages in respect of small timber for housing and agricultural implements, fire wood etc. The supply for such requirements should be made available at non-competitive rates, provided they are utilised by villagers themselves and not traded in. The management of such village forests should aim at meeting the present as well as the future needs of the local population". In the old Madhya Pradesh, these fundamentals were further elaborated in the Government's decision on the report of the Forest Policy Committee. In reply to certain queries during the course of this enquiry relating to the *Nistar* rights enjoyed by the people of Jaitpuri in the adjoining reserved and protected forests, the Divisional Forest Officer, Jabalpur replied as follows "No right are fixed in Reserve Forest except that village like other villages. The village is attached for *nistar* requirements in Purwa *Ad-hoc* Forest Scheme, from where the villagers will be given free *nistar* as per prevailing rights". On enquiry from residents of the village, it could not be confirmed that they actually enjoy any free *nistar* from Purwa *ad-hoc* felling series. They were not sure about the name of the village from where their requirements of bamboo and wood could be met, but thought that it was probably Padaria Nistar Depot. They also told that in the past, *ravanna* for collecting fuel wood used to be issued from Umaria, but now that practice has stopped. In fact, as already observed they do not bother about permit etc., and satisfy their requirements of fuel wood for domestic consumption as also for commercial purposes from the forest adjoining the village, whether it be the reserved forest or the *ex-malguzari* forest. As regards grazing *nistar*, our informants told us that four cattle for every plough were entitled for free grazing in the Government forest, and thereafter, for the next two cattle one and a half anna per cattle was charged. For every cattle in excess of the first six, the cultivator has to pay a grazing fee of twelve annas per head of cattle. According to the Government decision however, all cultivators in the village owning eight or fewer heads of cattle are permitted free grazing for the first four heads of cattle, and the rest on concessional rates. A cultivator however who owns more than eight heads of cattle is not entiled to free grazing for his cattle; he can however graze the first six cattle on concessional rates and the rest on commercial rates. The grazing of course is to be in the grazing unit to which the village is attached and for Jaitpuri it is in the neighbouring reserved forest.

Though it has no practical bearing on the residents of Jaitpuri, it would be quite instructive to describe the official procedure prescribed to be followed by the villagers if they choose to satisfy their *nistar* and other requirements in the manner laid down by rules. It is as follows: The forest produce—timber, fuelwood and bamboos—which is available for supply to the villagers is ascertained, and intimation thereof is given by the Divisional Forest Officer to the Collector of the district. The latter allocates the produce villagewise, and intimates the *Gram Panchayats* and *Nistar Panchayats* accordingly. (Till recently Jaitpuri did not have any Village *Panchayat*, or *Nistar Panchayat*). Forest produce is distributed to the cultivators on a villagewise basis, *i.e.* people from a particular village will get their requirements of the forest produce from the quota allocated to their village by the Collector from 15th January to 15th May, but thereafter the distribution is made to persons of all villages, even from unexpended quota of other villages.

A cultivator who requires timber must first obtain from the *Gram Panchayat* or *Gram Sabha* (This latter institution is to be set up for every village under section 232 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code 1959; residents of Jaitpuri did not confirm the existence of any such *Sabha* in their village, though, one may very probably exist in the official records) a certificate as to his being a cultivator of the village, and as to the genuineness of his need. With this certificate and his receipt book, he then has to go to the village where the licensed vendor meant for his village resides. It is not infrequently that licensed vendors for different

1. Page 127, "Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission".

types of forest produce reside in different villages. The licensed vendor, after receiving the scheduled price of the forest produce from the cultivator, would issue a *nistar* pass to him, and with this, he must now approach the forest official who will finally issue the produce in question from a *nistari* depot fixed for the village. Sometimes the forest official concerned lives in a village different from the village where the forest depot is situated. Residents of Jaitpuri are expected to satisfy their requirements of timber (of the description available) from the *nistari* depot at Purwa, after obtaining the *nistar* pass from the vendor of Umaria. The forest guard who would issue the timber lives at Amjhar. The issues are only made on Mondays and Tuesdays to the people of Jaitpuri. As regards fuel wood, the *nistari* pass has again to to be obtained from the vendor at Umaria, but in this case, the produce is supplied at Umaria itself by the forest guard. For their bamboo requirements, people of Jaitpuri are expected to go to Padaria, a village about four or five miles beyond Umaria which is itself about ten miles from Jaitpuri, from where they get the *nistar* pass. The final supply will however be made from the coupe at Dasrathpur. The *nistari* rate for bamboo is stated to be Rs. 3 per hundred while its commercial rate is Rs. 13 per hundred. The rates for fuelwood are likewise Rs. 2 per cart load for *nistar*, and Rs. 3 per cart load for commercial purposes. The *nistar*-scheme published by the Divisional Forest Officer, Jabalpur, from where this information is obtained does not contain any rate for headloads of fuel or bamboos.

It is thus seen that the official procedure laid down to be followed by the villagers in order to satisfy their *nistar* and commercial requirements of forest produce is rather cumbersome, and justifies the remark made by the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission that "the inconvenience caused is out of all proportion". No wonder, though it is unfortunate, that the people of Jaitpuri who derive their sustenance mainly from the sale of forest produce take law into their own hands and carry on their trade in manner, which from the evidence available is not strictly speaking, licit.

Both the protected forest in the village and the reserve forest in its vicinity contain bamboo in abundance. The villagers cut bamboo and take it for sale to the town; in this also, there seemed to be a good deal of unauthorised cutting.

Ownership pattern of land:

Though the total occupied area of the village is 408 acres, that should not lead one to think that it is all held by people of Jaitpuri, or for that matter, that it is all cultivated. Information abstracted from the land records maintained by the village *Patwari* shows that persons from outside the village hold an area of 233.54 acres—which makes up roughly 56% of the entire occupied area. Thus, residents of the village are owners of only 44% of the total occupied area of their village. This cannot be said to be an encouraging picture from the point of view of the village economy. Even of this area all is not cultivated. Some land has, of necessity got to be left fallow in accordance with agricultural usage, and previous discussion regarding soil classes has shown that such area in Jaitpuri is quite considerable.

The pattern of land distribution is seen from the following table:—

No. of households possessing land in acres

Name of community	Landless	0—1	1—3	3—5	5—7	7—9	9+
Gond	8	1	4	6	3	1	4
Kol	7	1	2	4	2	—	—
Kachhis	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Mehra	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Others	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	17	2	6	11	6	1	5

In this table, the upper limit of each class interval is not included in the interval. Of the total land held by people of Jaitpuri Gonds own approximately 121 acres—or roughly 70%. The Kols, with their 35.28 acres own about 20%; while others, *i.e.*. Kachhis and Mehra own the remaining 10%. Of the 27 Gond households, land is owned by 19 Gond families, which gives roughly 6 acres of land on an average per landholding family. If we exclude the four families which hold more than nine acres of land each, the land held by the remaining fifteen landholding families drops to five acres on an average. Eight Gond families do not possess any land of their own; but four of these are reported to cultivate land taken from others on lease though this is against the land law.

Kols, who contribute 30.2% to village population own only 20% of the land held by people of Jaitpuri. The average per landholding family, in the case of Kols, comes to 3.8 acres. Seven Kol households, *i.e.*, about 44% of all Kol households are landless. The two Kachhi families hold on an average eight acres of land each, while the single Mehra family holds 4.08 acres. The castewise distribution of land shows that Kols own less land than they should—if their number is taken into consideration. The Gonds own slightly more land in proportion to their population.

FORM—A

Name of Village — Jaitpuri
Settlement No. — 257
Patwari Circle No.— 57
Assessment group. — Barela 3
No in group.

Circle Note Book—Malguzari

1. Total Area ... 671.83
2. Area of home farm at Settlement ... 31.50
3. Area held by tenants malik makbuzas, and holder of malkiyat sarkar and non-agricultural land at settlement } 270.58
4. Tolal land revenue ... Rs. 226/-
5. Proportion of kist ... Re. 1/-

	Rs.
As at settlement	... 259/12/
Rent	... 36/-/-
Value of home farm	... 16/12/-
Siwai	
Total	... 312/8/-

Year	Occupied Area	Area of home farm	Area held by tenants, malik makbuza and holders of milkiyat sarkar & non-agricultural land	Details of Cropping Principal Crops: Net cropped Area	Double cropped Area	Wheat and birra	Gram	Paddy	Irrigated Area	Total Kharif Area	Total Rabi Area	No. of plough cattle	Rental demand including Malik makbuza revenue & payment of holders of milkiyat sarkar and non-agricultural land	Rental collection including malik makbuza revenue and payment of milkiyat sarkar and non-agricultural land upto 30th September, 61	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Bando-bast	306	31	271	196	...	5	5	4	1	185	11	12	260/-	...	...
1953-54	380	...	380	264	2	12	38	6	...	210	56	61	498/-	388/-	...
1954-55	387	...	387	380	25	25	61	2	...	316	89	60	503/-	408/-	...
1955-56	387	23	364	380	25	26	61	2	...	316	89	55	504/-	395/-	...
1956-57	387	...	387	181	15	27	44	7	...	106	90	75	503/-	434/-	...
1957-58	387	23	362	154	3	15	37	35	...	98	59	79	503/-	...	...
1958-59	409	23	384	167	12	12	58	12.80	...	88	108	56	515/-	790/-	...
1959-60	409	...	407	146	12	20	55	9	...	61	98	93	515/-	310/-	...
1960-61	409	...	409	187	9	21	84	6	...	75	121	51	515.00	279.00	...

Cropping Pattern:

The cropping—pattern at settlement and during the last seven years is shown in the accompanying table—which has been abstracted from the Circle Note-book in Form 'A', maintained by the *Kanungo* at the tahsil headquarters. It is seen from this table that the net-cropped area which was 196 acres at the time of settlement has fallen to 187 acres in the year 1960-61 despite an increase of about 103 acres in the occupied area. The net cropped area is shown to have reached the peak figure of 380 acres in two successive years namely 1954-55 and 1955-56. This appears to be due to a phenomenal increase in the area under *kharif* crops—*i.e.*, *kodon, kutki,* etc. The correctness of these figures is very doubtful—and I feel safe in ignoring them. Even after that it is found that the net cultivated area in the village does not show a regular change in one direction. It is rather a whimsically fluctuating quantity. This is to be expected also, for the simple reason that a very large area—more than one third of the total occupied area is covered by soils of the *patarua* and *bhatua* types, which have to be given long resting fallows. Hence the cropped area will be greater in years when land is brought under the plough, and smaller in years when it is left fallow. A study of the table brings out another significant trend of the cropping pattern, *i.e.* the area of *rabi* crops is increasing—while the area under *kharif* crops is decreasing. The

area under rice—the principal *kharif* crop has generally been negligible—except in 1957-58, when it occupied an area of 34.77 acres. The area however dropped down sharply in the succeeding year and thereafter has been steadily decreasing. In 1960-61 it was only six acres as compared to four acres at the time of settlement. The area under wheat or *birra*—which was five acres at settlement has now risen to twenty-one acres—it appears that the area has almost stabilised. Area under gram has shown a steady increase; it has risen in 1960-61 to 84 acres—which is about seventeen times the settlement area of five acres. The areas under *kharif* and *rabi* crops have shown corresponding variations. If we exclude abnormal years, we see that area under *kharif* crops has been steadily coming down. From 185 at settlement, it has come to 75 acres in the year 1960-61. The *rabi* area has risen from 11 acres to 121 acres after settlement. To conclude, we find that as regards the net cropped area, the position has not materially altered since settlement, there being only a decline of nine acres over the fifty-one years. The population has, however increased by about 13%. The nature of crops has also materially changed since settlement; whereas at settlement 94% of the net area sown was under *kharif* crops, now that area has dwindled to 40%, while area under *rabi* crops has risen from 6% to 60%. All said and done, though there may be some gratification over the increase in *rabi* area, the crop-history of the village cannot be said by any stretch of imagination to be an encouraging one. There being no further possibility of making inroads on the unoccupied area with a view to divert it to cultivation, and more than half of the present occupied area being already held by persons from outside, it is imperative that in times to come people of Jaitpuri will have to be weaned away from cultivation in ever greater numbers, and follow other occupations—which will mostly be connected with forestry.

Animal husbandry:

Table below has been compiled from the *Titamma Milan Khasra* maintained by *patwari* of the village and it shows the distribution of cattle wealth in the village.

Name of caste or tribe	Ploughs	Bulls	Milch cows	Dry cows	He-calves	She-calves	Milch buffaloes	Dry buffaloes	Calves and buffaloes	Goats	Cocks & hens
Gond	18	35	6	33	30	14	6	6	12	11	—
Kol	6	14	3	10	4	12	—	—	—	106	35
Others	1	2	1	4	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
Total	25	51	10	47	36	27	6	6	12	117	35

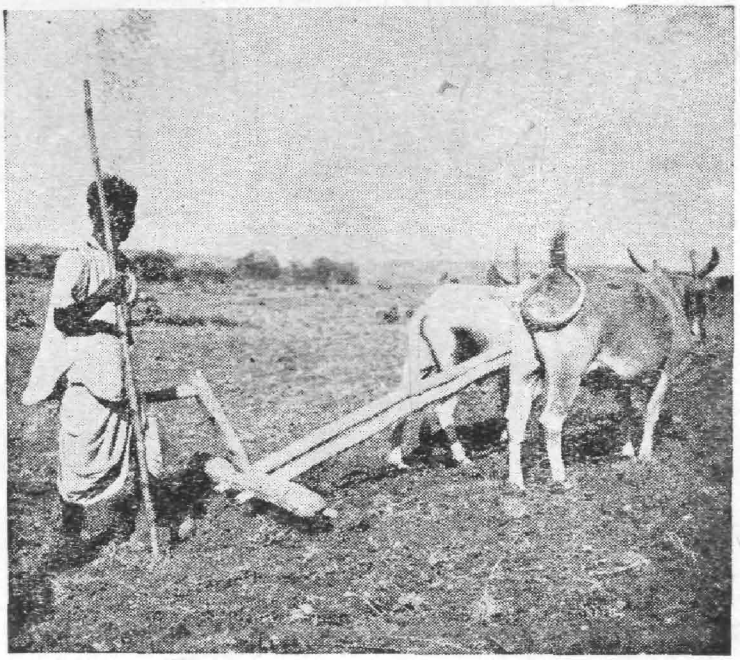
It is seen that Gonds own roughly two-thirds of the plough-bulls. This number however is not sufficient for the eighteen ploughs owned by them. Three Gond cultivating households do not possess a plough, nor any bull. They take the plough and bulls on hire at the time of sowing from other Gonds—who are reported to charge Rs. five per day for the service. The Kols own 24% of the plough-bulls which are sufficient for the six ploughs owned by them. Gonds own most of the milch cows and buffaloes. The milch cattle owned by Gonds yield milk varying in quantity from 20 seers in all in summer to 40 seers in winter. Five Gond families have even taken to selling of milk as a subsidiary occupation. The Kols possess 90% of the goats, and all the cocks and hens and though none of them has returned poultry farming or goat-rearing as his occupation, there is reason to believe that some of them are carrying on these occupations.

There is ample scope for improvement of the position with respect to cattle-wealth in the village. About 50% or more of village soil is not suitable for growing wheat and rice and a considerable part of it could with profit be diverted for raising grass. The reserve and protected forests in the vicinity of the village also provide grass for cattle. Live-stock and dairy farming, therefore, on a household industry basis could possibly be encouraged in the village.

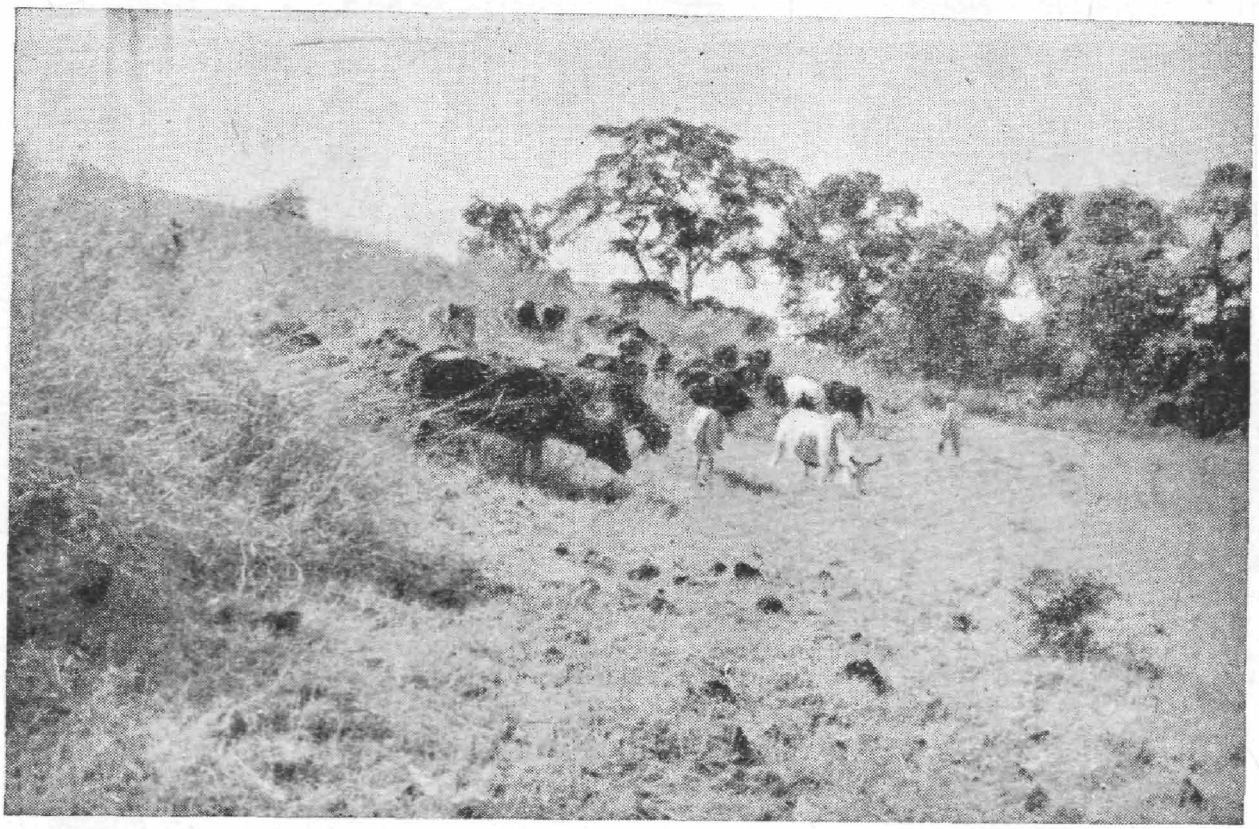
Primary and subsidiary occupations:

Table on page 40 gives a break up of the population according to primary and subsidiary occupations. The table has already been discussed in this chapter. Presently I shall make a few additional points. The first is that cutting and selling of wood is the occupation followed to a varying extent by all but three or four households either as a principal occupation or to supplement their income. Even the comparatively better-off families owning more than nine acres of land pursue the occupation. The extreme popularity of this occupation is a characteristic feature of the village. The Kols, who complain of being troubled by floods of Gaur in the rainy season—and who were questioned as to why should they not abandon the village and settle in some secure place, answered—"We shall never go away from the neighbourhood of the forest. If we are given land in village Gadheri which adjoins the forest, we will go, but we will never go away from the

PLATE XXII

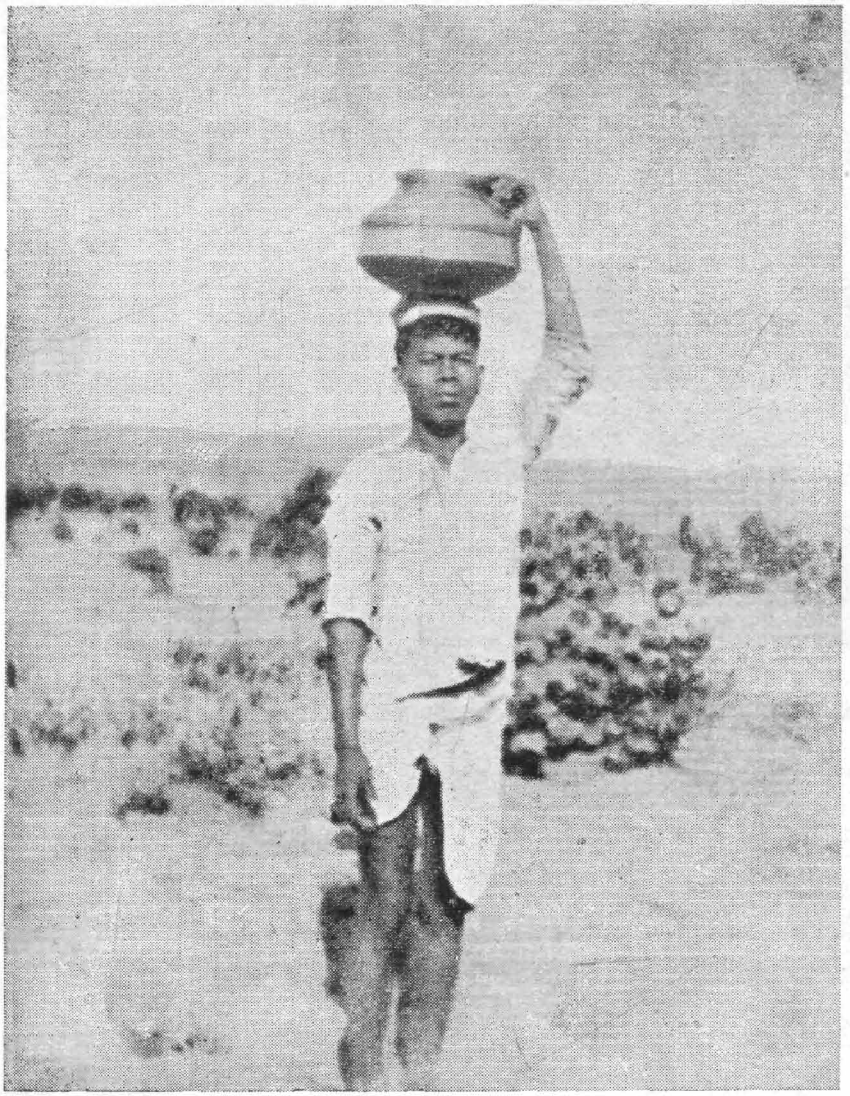


A *bakhar* in the field



Village cattle grazing in the village waste

PLATE XXIII



A Gond going to Bhita
for selling milk (left)

Headloads of firewood and
bamboo being taken
to Jabalpur market (below)

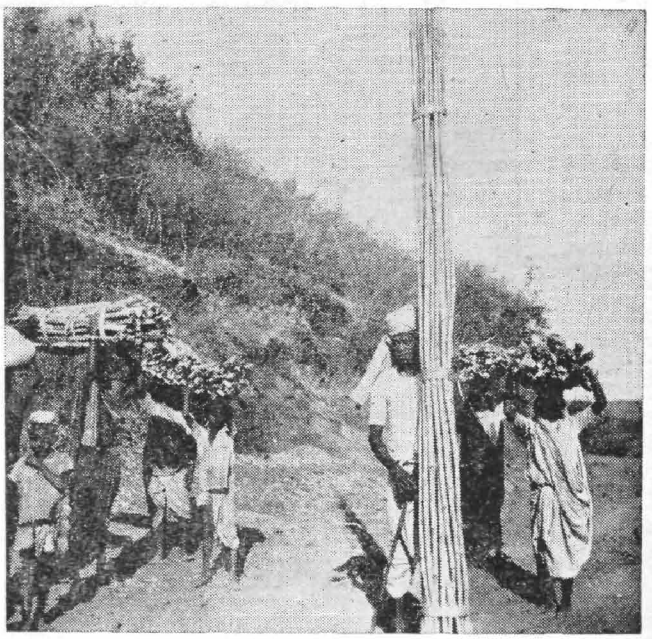
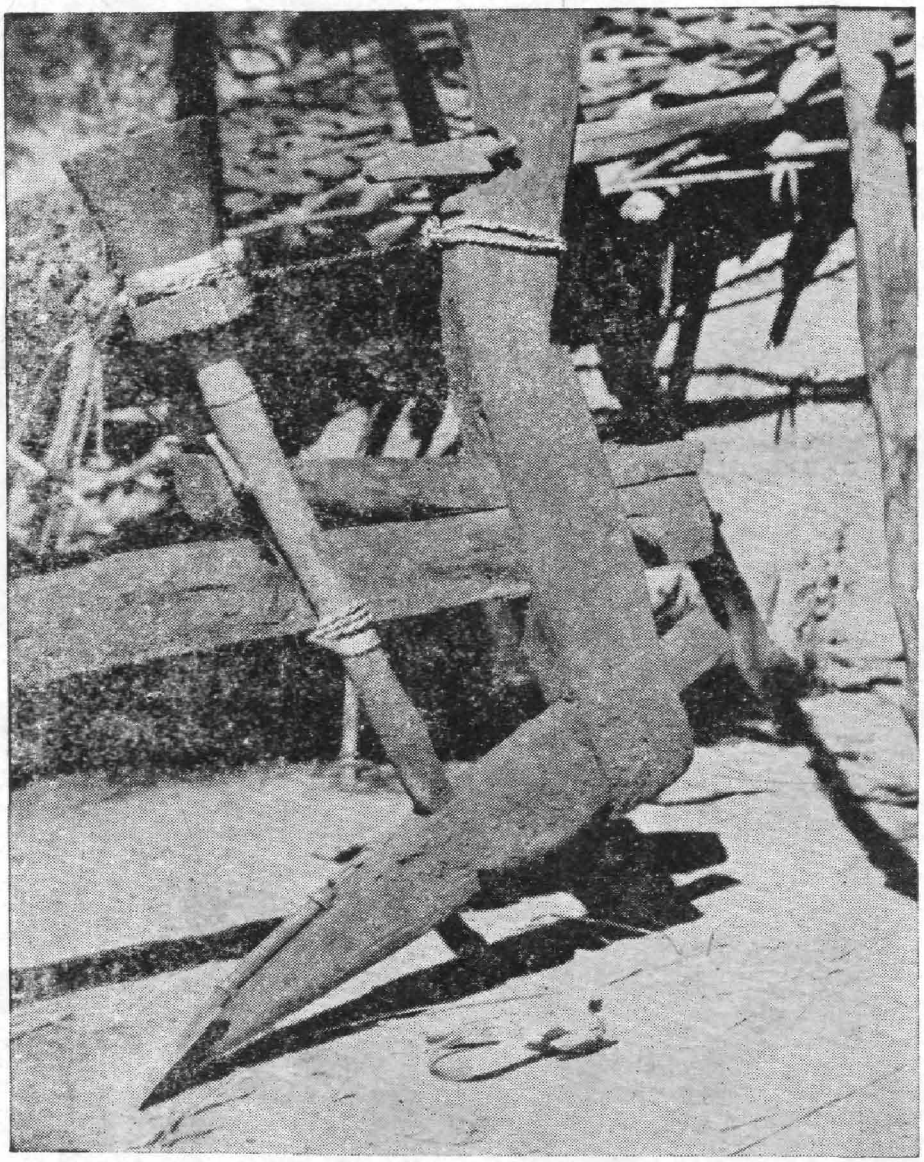


PLATE XXIV



A *hal* (plough)

forest". This expression of the communal will of Kols of Jaitpuri is a very significant thing and it indicates the part played by forest in their economic life. They are prepared to leave their lands but they will not live away from the forest. This also shows that Kols of Jaitpuri attach a second place to agriculture.

Milk-selling as subsidiary occupation:

Another subsidiary occupation is selling of milk which is carried on by five Gond families. They are however not deriving the maximum advantage from this occupation, and on account of their ignorance, and to some extent complacency, half of the money which is legitimately theirs finds its way into the pocket of the middleman. The Gonds do not directly sell the milk to the consumers—who live in Jabalpur. One Gond boy collects the milk from all the households and takes it to village Temar, from where it is collected by the Ahir coming from village Gadheri. The latter sells the milk at Jabalpur. The Gonds sell the milk to the Ahir at five annas a seer (Gonds of Jaitpuri have not yet heard of the kilogram) in winter and six annas a seer in summer. The Ahir sells the same at twelve annas a seer at Jabalpur. The Gonds are thus getting only half the value of their product. The authorities in charge of community development may render some real help to the ignorant people, so that they may not be mulcted of the profit which legitimately belongs to them.

Seasonal migration of labour:

Agricultural labour is a seasonal occupation, pursued by households that do not own sufficient land or own no land. There is a seasonal migration of, on an average, fifty men and women from the village to the *haveli* area in Patan Tahsil at the harvesting season—*i.e.*, *Chait*. These people stay in the *haveli* tract for about a month. Those who have a little cultivation of their own complete the harvest of their fields before going to the *haveli*. These labourers are paid in kind at the rate of six *kuros* per harvested *khandi*.

Household—Industry:

There is one Gond household engaged in household industry—*i.e.* repairing of agricutural implements. This is a seasonal industry lasting for about a month in the cultivating season. The clientele of the household is confined to cultivators of Jaitpuri hamlet. Payment is made in kind. *Biri*-making, a household industry which is very common in Jabalpur Tahsil is conspicuosly absent in the village.

Trade and Commerce:

There is no shop in the village. In connection with their occupation, people go to Jabalpur almost daily and purchase the necessaries of life from there. Satola, the only Mohamadan in the village keeps one or two bundles of *biris* in his house for selling. The total capital invested by him is of the order of 15 to 20 rupees. He does not get enough from the business to maintain himself and he also is obliged to sell wood.

To sum up, principal occupations in the village are wood-cutting or agriculture with agriculture or wood-cutting as subsidiary occupations. In addition some of the households carry on the business of selling milk, while some do agricultural labour at the sowing and harvesting seasons. There is only one household in the village which is engaged in the household industry of carpentry. It is a Gond household and the industry is conducted seasonally for about one month.

Traditional Occupations:

According to Russell, 'the primary occupation of the Gonds in former times was hunting and fishing', but he admitted that their opportunities in this respect have been greatly cricumscribed by the conservation of the game in Government forest. In his celebrated work on the tribes and castes, reference to which has already been made more than once in this report, he has described several ingenious devices for trapping animals followed by the Gonds. The Gonds of Jaitpuri, who have tried to boost up their social status by arrogating to themselves the high sounding caste name 'Gond Thakur', could hardly be expected to follow these age-old practices. As described even by Russell, "the Gonds are mainly engaged in agriculture, and the great bulk of them are farm servants or labourers". The Gonds of Jaitpuri consider cultivation as their main traditional occupation. Besides, they also work as field-labourers or as labourers in other trades. Other castes in the neighbouring villages refer to the Gonds as *kisan* (farmer), and this usage only confirms that in the region the Gonds have been traditionally working as agriculturists. Besides, the Gonds of Jaitpuri have traditionally taken to wood-cutting also as a principal or subsidiary occupation which they do not consider as an inferior calling. The only deviation from these two traditional callings is afforded by one family which has taken to carpentry. Budhu Gond says that he has got this subsidiary occupation from his father. It is significant to note that he is not paid anything in cash for his services, but like the traditional carpenters, he is paid in kind. Five Gond families have also taken to selling of milk in addition to their traditional occupation. Besides these specific cases involving changes from traditional occupations, Gonds

of Jaitpuri expressed readiness to take to any other occupation including services—except occupations traditionally associated with the unclean castes, namely basketry; leather-works, etc. This change in outlook towards traditional occupation is beyond doubt attributable to urban contacts.

Kols:

W. Crooke[1] in his "Tribes and Castes of the North-West Provinces" states that "most Kols are ploughmen; a few have land of their own". The Gazetteer of Jabalpur District also describes the Kols as farm-labourers, and general labourers. The Kols of Jaitpuri have in addition to their traditional occupation, taken to wood-cutting. Though the Kols did not admit this to our investigators it appears that some Kols also pursue goat-rearing and poultry-farming as a household-industry.

Kachhis:

The two Kachhis of Jaitpuri have given up their traditional occupation of raising garden vegetable crops. Instead they have taken to ordinary cultivation; and as a secondary occupation to wood-cutting.

Mehra:

The traditional occupation of Mehras even today is weaving of cloth. In addition to this, the Mehras constitute the bulk of the village watchmen in this tahsil. The Mehra of Jaitpuri is the village watchman. His father was also a village watchman. The traditional occupation of weaving was given up in his father's time.

Description of different occupations:

(1) *Wood-cutting.*—This happens to be the principal occupation of a majority of persons in the village. People go to the forest and collect dry wood and make it into a stack—by tying it with clippings of bamboo poles. Generally, the people collect the wood on one day and take it to the market for selling on the following day. The only implement required is an axe, which every household possesses. In fact, the axe is the inseparable companion of these forest tribes in some parts of the State—and, though Jaitpuri is the neighbour of a big city, the axe continues to dominate the economic life of its people. It is reported to cost about two rupees, at the shops of the ironsmiths of village Barela. The commodity is taken to the Gorabazar market of Jabalpur on head, and one headload fetches from Rs. 1 and 25 nP. to Rs. 1 and 50 nP. easily. In the eight clear months, this occupation brings about Rs. 25 per month to the family. The greatest point aganist this occupation is that it seems to be carried on on the sly.

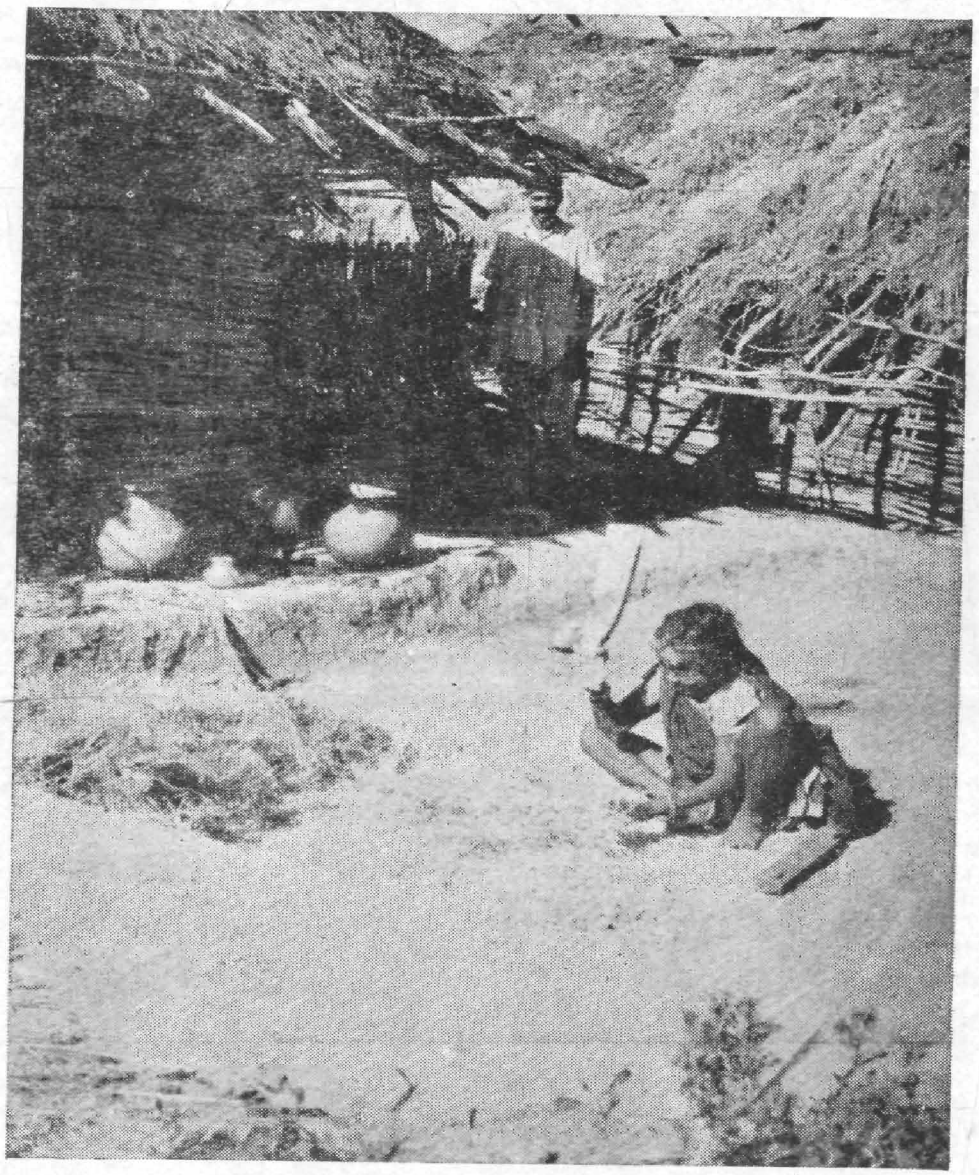
(2) *Agriculture.*—Cultivation on owned—lands or lands taken from others is carried on by as many as twenty-three Gond families and eight Kol families. The principal crops grown are *kodon;* gram and *birra.* Besides these, other millets like maize, and kutki, and rice are also grown. *Rye, ramtila* etc. are some of the non-cereal cash crops that are grown. The wet crops are known as *kharif* crops; while the dry crops are known as *rabi.* The terms *kharif* and *rabi* are used only in official records. The local terms for them are *siyari* and *unhari* respectively.

Though Jaitpuri is so close to the city of Jabalupr, this proximity has failed to change the outlook of the village on the traditional methods of cultivation. The plough, locally known as the *bakhar,* the *hal* or harrow, the pickaxe, locally known as *phaoda,* and the *kudali* are the chief implements of agriculture. The *hal* and *bakhar* are shown in the photograph. The various parts of a plough may be seen in the sketch.

For the *unhari* or *rabi* crops, the field is first *bakharred.* This is done to uproot the wheat and gram stalks, and to turn the earth. This is done in the month of *Baisakh*—after the agricultural festival of *Akhti* a local corruption of *Akshaya Tritiya.* On this day, the people of Jaitpuri divine the extent of rainfall expected in each of the months of the rainy season—*i.e. Ashadh; Sawan; Bhadon* and *Kuar.* This is done as follows: an earthen pitcher full of water is placed on four clods of earth; each of which is given a name which is the name of one of the four months of rain. The pitcher is kept thus for the whole night. Following morning the clods are examined. The amount of rain in any month is divined from the extent of wetness of the clod bearing the name of that month. After the first *bakharring* the field is allowed to remain undisturbed in the four months of rain. In the month of *Kuar*—*i.e.* October, the fields are again ploughed and then harrowed. The seed is then sown by means of a *nari*—which is only an iron-tube fixed to the harrow so that its lower end reaches into the ground. The seed to be sown is put into the upper end while the plough is being driven. Before starting the regular sowing, five handfuls of grain are put by means of the *nari* at five different points in the field. Also, before starting sowing operations, all castes in the village propitiate *Bhainsasur* the god of crops, by offering *pooja.* After sowing, the only thing the villagers do is to watch and protect the fields from wild animals and birds. The rabi crops do not require any weeding. Harvesting takes place in the month of March.

1. Op. Cit Vol. III, page 315.

PLATE XXVI



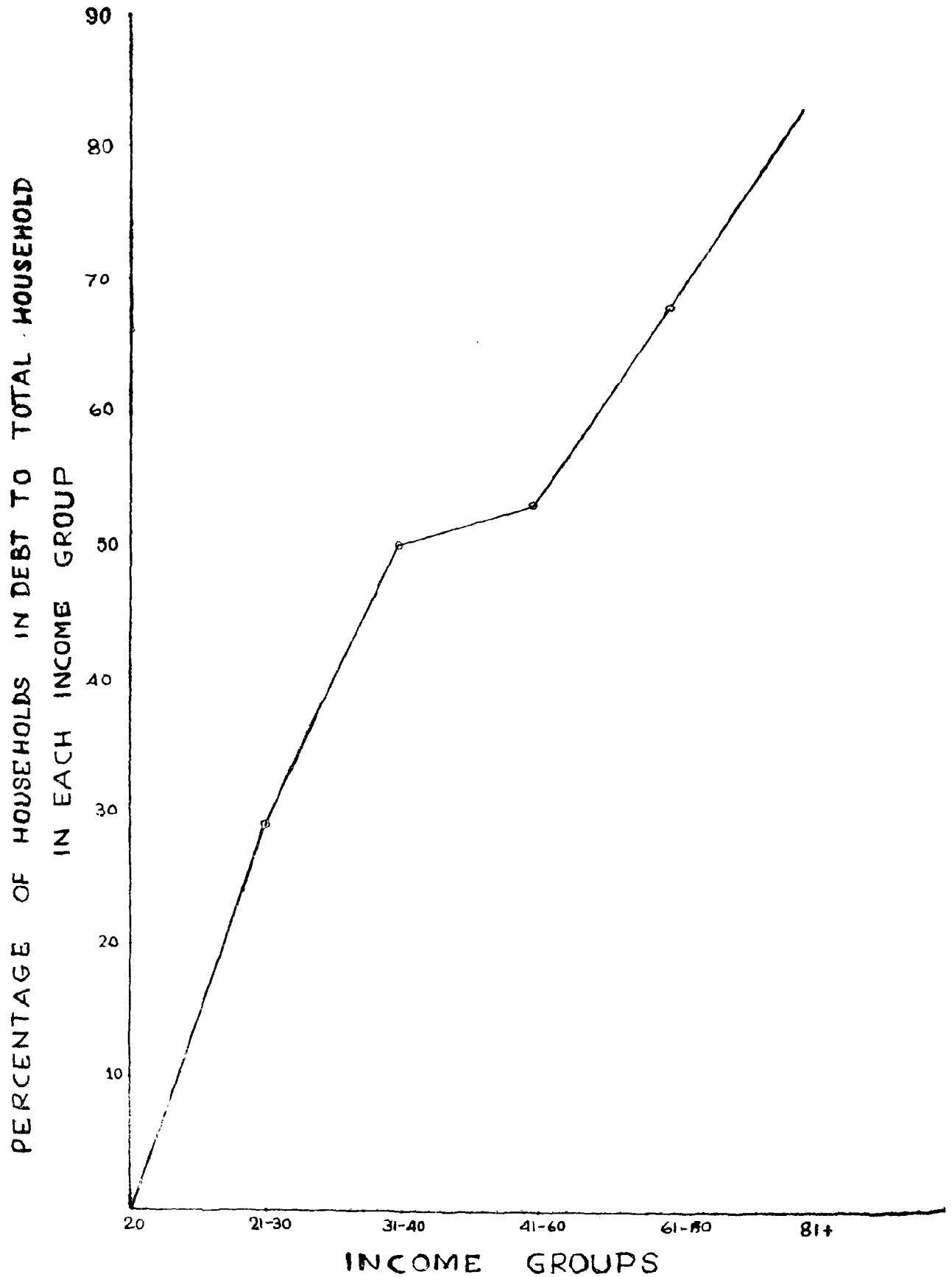
Old Gond woman threshing kodon

PLATE XXVII



Bringing headloads of harvested grain.

PLATE XXIX


PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN DEBT TO TOTAL HOUSEHOLD IN EACH INCOME GROUP
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
20
21-30
31-40
41-60
61-80
81+
INCOME GROUPS

Kodon:

This crop is grown on almost every type of soil. Before sowing the field is *bakharred* twice. About ten seers of seed grain are sown in an acre. Sowing takes place in the month of July. *Kodon* is regarded as a very virile millet and does not require any manuring or irrigation. It is harvested in the month of November. A weed known as *agia* causes great harm to the crop. About the weed, the villagers told the following couplet

"Magh nachhatra barse Asrara,
माघ नक्षत्र बरसे असरारा

Kuanrai agia Maghai Tusara"
कुआरे अगिया माघे तुसारा

i.e. if there is heavy rain during, *magh nachhatra*, it results in agia (to *kodon*) in *Kuar*, and to *tusar* (to wheat) in *magh* (January). *Kodon* is said to yield remarkable out-turns in favourable years.

Agricultural rituals at sowing and harvesting:

At the *kharif* sowing Gonds observe the following practice. All Gonds take small quantities of *kodon, urad, rahar, tilli*, etc. to the shrine of Khermai. The village Baiga, Umrao Singh makes *pooja* to the goddess with the seed-grains brought by the cultivators. After that, the cultivators mix these grains with the seed before sowing it. This practice is called *Bidri Karna*. The word *bidri* appears to be a corruption of the sanskrit *Vridhi* meaning increase. The practice is associated with the hope of getting a bumper crop. According to Sukhda Kotwar who narrated the above, the Kols do not follow this practice.

Another practice followed at the time of reaping is to leave a small portion of the corner (खूटा) of the field uncut. The villagers of Jaitpuri did not disclose the name of this practice but, from the District Gazetteer, it appears that the practice is called *barhona*, something which will add to the produce of the crop. The grain so left is cut subsequently and the bundle of sheaves made from this grain is tied to the central pole of the 'threshing-floor'.

Irrigation and use of fertilizers:

No irrigation facilities are available in the village. As already indicated Gaur is a river with high banks and is of no use for irrigation purposes. One Gond had tried to sink a well in his field by taking a *taccavi* loan from the Government. He could not however succeed in reaching water level and all his money was exhausted. It is also amazing that villagers have not learnt the use of organic or inorganic fertilizers. Most of the crops grown. *i.e.*, *kodon* and gram do not require any fertilizers. The small area of about twenty-five acres which is under wheat and *birra* also is not irrigated or manured. Similarly, no improved seed has been used by the villagers so far. Thus, it is apparent that in their agricultural practices, people of Jaitpuri continue to follow the age-old practices. They have not taken to any improved methods of cultivation. This state of affiars, sad as it is, causes surprise when it is seen that Jaitpuri has been included in a Community Development Block for last ten years, and that the Block headquarters is only ten miles from the village.

Indebtedness.

Indebtendness by income-group:

Table A given below presents the indebtedness prevailing in the village according to income groups. The table brings out a significant fact, that the proportion of indebted to total households in the various income-groups increases with the income. In other words persons deriving higher incomes are also those who are heavily indebted. The average indebtedness per household in debt also shows an increasing trend with rise in incomes. Thus, average indebtedness of families belonging to income group 21-30 is Rs. 35, while the same for incomes greater than Rs. 80 is 292.8, *i.e.*, more than eight times the average indebtedness of the first income group. These phenomena are presented graphically also in the accompanying diagrams.

A—INDEBTEDNESS

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Income Group	Indebtednesss by Income Group			
	Total No. of Households	No. of House-holds in debt	Percentage of Col. 3 to Col. 2	Average indebted-ness per House-hold in debt
1	2	3	4	5
Rs. 20 & Below	3	—	—	—
Rs. 21 to 30	7	2	28.5	35.0
Rs. 31 to 40	6	3	50.0	38.3
Rs. 41 to 60	20	11	52.4	143.9
Rs. 61 to 80	6	4	66.0	118.5
Rs. 81 & over	6	5	83.3	292.8
Total ...	48	25	52.0	

The reason for the aforesaid trends is obvious. Those at the lowest strata of incomes belong to smaller family units and are not obliged to take loans for marriages and cultivation—the twin causes that account for bulk of the indebtedness. Secondly, those in higher income-groups possess most landed property and their capacity to raise credit is correspondingly higher.

Indebtedness by Causes:

Table B given below presents the indebtedness of the village from the standpoint of causes of indebtedness. Of the total indebtedness of Rs. 3,805 at the time of this enquiry, it is seen that marriages and household cultivation account for Rs. 3,038 which is roughly 80% of the total indebtedness. The remaining 20% of the loans were raised to meet a variety of expenses like repairs to house, ordinary wants, and funerals. Marriages entail the heaviest borrowing—40.8% of the total, while household cultivation claims a close second place wih 39% of the total. Ordinary wants like purchase of cloth, and grain account for 8.6% while undefined social functions claim 7.7%.

The debts for household cultivation are taken from Government or the Bank as *taccavi* while the debt for marriages and other social purposes is raised from unregistered moneylenders of Gorabazar. Kishora Gond of Jaitpuri also advances petty loans to his fellow villagers. The rate of interest charged by the moneylenders at Gorabazar is simply exorbitant *i.e.*, ½ anna per rupee per month which comes to Rs. 37.50% per annum. It appears that the villagers take indebtedness as a necessary evil, and do not exhibit any anxiety to be free from it. They also take the usurious rate of interest without demur. What is important for them is that they get the loan whenever they want it. The rate of interest is immaterial to them.

B—INDEBTEDNESS BY CAUSES

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Indebtedness by cause of debt

Cause	Amount of debt in Rs.	Number of families in debt	Percentage of debt due to this cause to the total amount of debt
1	2	3	4
(a) Purchase of land	—	—	—
(b) House construction or repairs to existing buildings	100.00	1	2.6
(c) Marriages	1554.00	9	40.8
(d) Funerals	50.00	1	1.3
(e) To give dowry	—	—	—
(f) To clear outstanding debts	—	—	—
(g) Sickness	—	—	—
(h) Ordinary wants	327.00	7	8.6
(i) Household Cultivation	1484.00	8	39·0
(j) Industry run by the household	—	—	—
(k) Business run by the household	—	—	—
(l) Social functions (undefined)	290.00	3	7.7
	3805.00	29	100·0

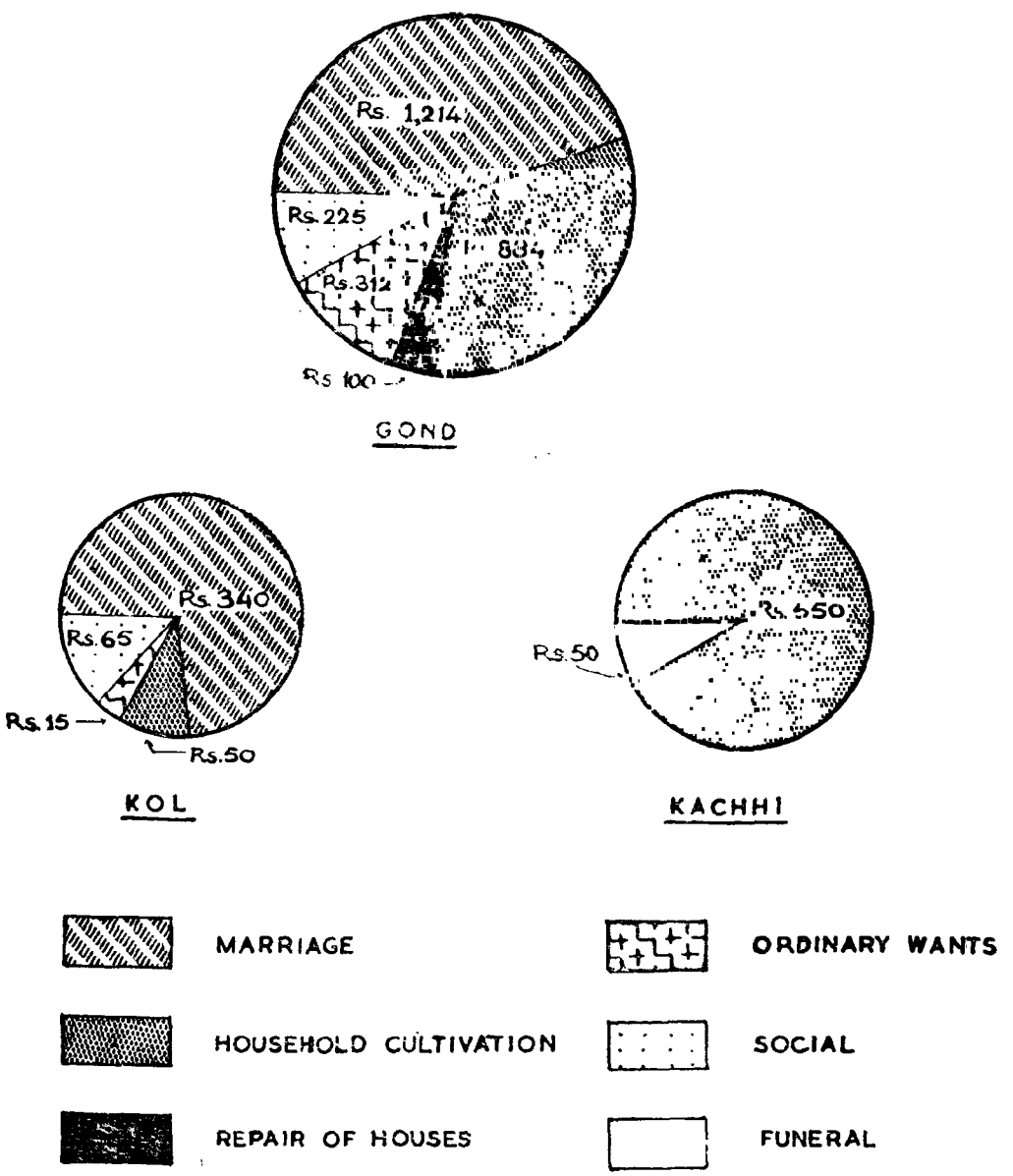
Only one case in which ornaments were mortgaged was reported. In others the loans appear to be given on mere faith-possibly based on past experience of the money lenders with his creditors.

Indebtedness by communities:

Indebtdeness by the major communities and the purpose for which loan is raised is furnished below.

PLATE XXX

INDEBTEDNESS BY COMMUNITIES AND CAUSES



Indebtedness by Community

(In Rupees)

S. No.	Purpose	Gond	Kol	Kachhi	Others
1.	Marriage	1214·00	340·00	—	—
2.	Household cultivation	884·00	50·00	550·00	—
3.	Repairs to houses	100.00	—	—	—
4.	Funeral	—	—	50.00	—
5.	Ordinary wants	312·00	15·00	—	—
6.	Social	225·00	65·00	—	—
Total ...		2735·00	470·00	600·00	—

Of the total debt of Rs. 3,805 Gonds contributing 65.3% to the village population share 72% of the total indebtedness; the Kols who form 30.2% of the population are indebted to the extent of 12% of the total village debt, while Kachhis who form about 2% of the population share about 16% of the debt. It thus appears that Kols are the least indebted of the communities living in the village.

Indebtedness by the length of debt and repayment:

The statement below shows a break up of the debt according to its period.

Years	Amount of debt (Rupees)	Repayment
1951	500.00	—
1954	100.00	16.00
1957	700.00	200.00
1959	640.00	61.00
1960	1,865.00	—
Total ...	3,805.00	277.00

The statement shows that a little less than half the debt was raised in 1960 and it remains wholly unpaid. The oldest debt relates to year 1951. This was taken by Sheodayal Kachhi for sinking a well. Of the total debt of Rs. 3,805 only Rs. 277 were reported to have been cleared till the time of this enquiry.

Payments for Services in kind:

Barber.—Payment to the barber is made in kind by the cultivating households—*i.e.* he is annually paid five *kuros* of inferior grain per head per household. The non-cultivators have however to pay for his services in cash. The cultivators of Jaitpuri similarly do not make payments in cash to Budhu Gond, but pay him in kind at the rate of five *kuros* of grain per plough possessed by the household. Payments to washerman, Basorin, Kumhar, Lohar etc. are made partly in kind and partly in cash.

CHAPTER IV

The People
A Demographic Study

Population Variations since 1891—Migration:

The following table gives the population of the village in the censuses of 1891, 1901, 1911, 1951 and 1961. Sexwise break-up of the figure for the years 1891 and 1901 was not available. Unfortunately, the population figures for the censuses of 1921, 1931 and 1941 were also not available in the district.

Year	Persons	Males	Females	Remarks
1891	208	—	—	Sexwise figures were not available in the hand book of the year 1911, from which these figures are taken.
1901	166	—	—	
1911	198	97	101	
1921	—	—	—	
1931	—	—	—	
1941	—	—	—	
1951	181	99	82	
1961	222	106	116	

A look at the table shows that there was a phenomenal decline of 20% in the population during the decade 1891-1901. This abnormal drop was, however, not peculiar to the village under study but was a common feature of the whole province. The decade was characterised by a series of calamities like famines, scarcities and pestilences, which swept away large numbers of persons in most parts of the province. To quote the Census of India report of 1901 (Vol. I).

"A succession of bad seasons culminated in the first great famine of 1896-97, which was followed, after a single year's respite by the widespread calamity of 1899-1900. Epidemics of cholera prevailed in seven years out of the period and malarial fever was on several occasions unusually frequent and severe. These disasters, coming upon a weakened and impoverished people, reduced their number to 11,873,029 persons, a decline of 1,071,776 or 8.3 percent." Discussing the causes that contributed to the decline in the population, the report puts forth the following three factors—

(i) emigration exceeding immigration,

(ii) a reduced birth-rate and

(iii) an enhanced death-rate. Of these three, the first cause accounted for only an insignificant proportion of the census decrease. The report held that the chief factors responsible for the decrease were a reduced birth-rate and an enhanced death-rate.

The percentage decline in the population of the village during the decade was however more than double the decline in the population of the whole province. It is relevant in this context that though the decrease was 8.3 percent for the

population of the province as a whole, it was much greater in the case of particular tribes. To quote the same census report, "The Dravidian Tribes, resourceless, suspicious, living a hand-to-mouth life in the jungle and unwilling to change their ways, have lost 3,84,000 or nearly 12 percent of their number. Of the larger tribes, the Kols have been reduced by 15 percent, the Kandhs by 14, the Gonds by 13, the Halwas by 11 and the Sawaras by 8." The incidence of the natural calamities again was not uniform in all the districts. Jabalpur District was one of the worst sufferers—as is shown by the following quotation from Jabalpur Gazetteer.—"'Severe epidemics ravaged the district during the years 1889, 1891, 1896, 1897 and 1900; the three last—mentioned were years of disastrous famine, in whose train cholera usually stalks". The decline of 20 percent in the population of village Jaitpuri, a poor tribal village, should, therefore, not cause much surprise.

The following decade, *i.e.* 1901-11 saw a remarkable recovery of the population from the misfortunes it had suffered during the previous dacade. This was reflected in the census count of 1911, which registered an increase of 17.9 percent for the province as a whole. The village under study was no exception, and its population increased by 19 percent during this decade.

The population figures for the village are not available for the three succeeding dacades, *i.e.* 1911-21, 1921-31 and 1931-41—which makes the demographic study of the village under study very difficult. It is however known that, taken as a whole, the decade 1911-21 was again not very congenial to the growth of the population in this tract. The following excerpt taken from the Provincial Census Report, 1931 refers to the calamities that befell the population during the later part of the decade:

"The *kharif* crop of 1918 was however less than half the normal, and as the result of drought the *rabi* area shrank by 30 percent. Famine or scarcity were declared over an area of 51,000 square miles inhabited by 6½ million people. Distress was aggravated by the appearance in September 1918 of the fatal influenza epidemic, which was officially estimated to have increased the death rate during the last three months of the year by 52.59 of the deduced population and continued well into 1919. The Census Report of India 1921, stated that the actual number of deaths from this cause in the province was 924, 949. A crisis resulted from the combination of calamities, which the province weathered with a wonderful power of resistance but in 1920-21 the monsoon again failed and famine or scarcity were once more declared over large areas. The Jubbulpore and Berar divisions suffered most and the distress among the aborigines owing to the influenza scourge must be mentioned". It is thus clear that the dacade was not only not congenial to normal population growth in the province but that it was particularly so in the Jabalpur Division and the class of people affected most were the aborigines. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to suppose that Jaitpuri must have lost a sizeable proportion of its population during the dacade in question. This supposition seems justified because a scrutiny of the population variation in the village over the period 1891-1911 shows that, while the village gets badly mauled by natural calamities, it possesses an equally good power of recovery in better times. We can, therefore, put the decline in population of the village during 1911-21 at about 20 percent, so that in absolute numbers, the population of the village in the year 1921 should have stood in the neighbourhood of 160 persons. Thus, for the thirty years following 1921, we can take the population increase for the village as 21 persons, *i.e.* 13 percent of the deduced population for the year 1921. This increase is very small in comparison to the all India increase of 44 percent. The small increase is suggestive of loss in population owing to migration during this period, which is corroborated from a study of the settlement *Misl* of the village. According to this last mentioned document, at the time of settlement in 1911, among the families living in this village were some belonging to the Gosai, Dhobi, Dhimar, Kurmi and Ahir and Kachera castes. All these castes are not represented in the village now and enquiry has revealed that no emigration took place during the period 1951-60. It is, therefore, clear that these families left the village some time after the year 1921 but before 1951.

During the last decade the population of the village has recorded an increase of 41 persons, *i.e.* 22.6 percent over the 1951 population. For analysing the causes of this large increase, the vital statistics of the village maintained by the village Kotwar were studied and tabulated in a table (Page 56) which shows the numbers of male and female births and deaths every year from 1951 to 1960. It is seen from the table that out of the total increase of 41 persons in the village population, the component due to natural increase, *i.e.* excess of births over deaths is 29. Balance of migration accounts for an increase of 12 persons in the village population.

Over the seventy-year period 1891-1961, the population of the village has increased only by 14 persons. This is a very insignificant increase as compared to the increase in the population of other areas. The periodical vicissitudes through which the village has passed cannot adequately account for this small increase, for they were common to the whole area. It points to considerable emigration from the village during the

period. As has been indicated earlier, there has been considerable migration from the village of communities other than Gonds and Kols. This migration of certain castes only from the village is phenomenon which deserves closer study. Enquiries were made from the villagers regarding the emigration of persons belonging to these communities. As pointed out in the first chapter, the Jaitpuri hamlet of the village was gutted by a fire about thirty years ago. After this mishap the *malguzar* left the village, and persons belonging to the communities other than Gonds followed suit within the space of a few years. There is thus reason to think that the *malguzar* had provided an authoritarian and unifying force holding together the diverse elements represented by the various communities residing in the village. It is appropriate at this stage to note that Jaitpuri did not have a well balanced and integrated composite population. Except Gonds and Kols, who were sufficient in numbers for the proper enjoyment of a social and cultural group-life, other castes were in a numerical minority with not more than one to two households each. The *malguzar* was the only stabilising force, and as soon as this force was removed, the equilibrium was disturbed. The equilibrium could have been restored had more families belonging to these castes migrated into Jaitpuri. But, this was not feasible for economic reasons, as there was not much culturable land in the village. It thus appears to be reasonably certain that after the exit from the village scene of the *malguzar* these castes could not properly adjust themselves with the Gonds—who were a labouring caste and socially at a very low level—and left the village. The Kachhis showed greater adaptability and continued to stay in the village. Thus during the space of about thirty years, all the minority castes except Kachhis have left Jaitpuri hamlet of the village.

Incidentally, the migratory trends from villages which do not have proper inter-caste adjustments indicate how strong caste forces are in the Indian rural community. Apropos this it may be mentioned that, wherever they have come in contact with other Hindu castes, the tribal communities, Gonds and Kols, are not happy. Generally, they live in villages which are not inhabited by other castes. Even when they live in the villages having a composite population, they have, like the untouchable castes, their separate quarters called *tolas* as is clear from the following quotation from the Jabalpur District Gazetteer. "The low castes such as the Gonds, Kols, and Chamars have their separate *mohallahs* in the village. These have special names *e.g.* Kolwanpura, Chamaran tola, Bharyan tola". This trend to lead an exclusive group-life requires study in the case of the Gonds and Kols who do not suffer from the disabilities of the untouchable castes. To the present writer, the explanation appears to be that though the tribes have adopted many ways and customs of the Hindus, they have not completely broken away from their primitive customs. Their adherence to the latter often makes them a butt of ridicule to the other castes. During this enquiry, the investigators observed a deliberate attempt on the part of these tribes to hide their peculiar customs—even the names of the tribal gods. This of course is in part attributable to the impact of urban ideas on them, but to a great extent this represents an important aspect of the psychological make-up of the tribes.

Density of Population:

Area of the village is 671.83 acres, so that, taking this total area into consideration the density of population is 0.33 person per acre or 211 persons per square mile. In order, however, to get an idea of congestion or over-crowding prevailing in the village, we must calculate the density with reference to the actual *abadi* or settled area. The latter is only 2.30 acres, and gives us a density of 97 persons per acre or 62,080 persons to a square-mile. This matter is considered in greater detail in another chapter.

Area, Houses and Population

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Area in		Density	No. of houses	No. of households	Population		
Acres	Hectares				Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
671.83	271·83	0.33 person per acre or 211 persons per sq. mile	48	48	223	107	116

Age-structure and sex-ratio:

Table below shows the age-distribution, according to sex, and the marital status of the village population. Figure (opposite page 58) is the age-pyramid, which pictorially describes the sex-wise distribution of the population in the important age-groups.

Age and Marital Status

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Age Group	Total Population			Never Married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or Separated		Unspecified Status	
	Person	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
All ages	222	106	116	50	51	51	51	5	13	—	1	—	—
0-4	44	20	24	20	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	29	12	17	12	17								
10-14	21	12	9	12	8	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19	16	6	10	5	2	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
20-24	19	9	10	1	—	8	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-29	19	7	12	—	—	7	11	—	—	—	1	—	—
30-34	12	8	4	—	—	8	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
35-39	16	11	5	—	—	9	5	2	—	—	—	—	—
40-44	15	5	10	—	—	4	9	1	1	—	—	—	—
45-49	6	4	2	—	—	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
50-54	10	7	3	—	—	7	—	—	3	—	—	—	—
55-59	4	3	1	—	—	2	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
60 & over	11	2	9	—	—	1	1	1	8	—	—	—	—
Age not stated													

On analysis of the table, and the available census data we are led to the following significant observations:—

(*i*) The sex-ratio study for the census of 1911, 1951 and 1961, for which sex-wise population figures are available shows a preponderance of the fair sex over their male counter-parts in 1911 and 1961, while in 1951, the males out-numbered the females. The following table gives the sex-ratio for the three years :—

1911	—	1041
1951	—	828
1961	—	1094

Since, the sex-ratio figures are not available for the 1921, 1931 and 1941 censuses, it is not possible to account for the drop from 1041 to 828 in the forty-year period 1911-51; whether it was a gradual decline in one direction or an irregular affair. The sharp increase of the sex-ratio from 828 in 1951 to 1094 in 1961, was however studied with reference to the vital statistics maintained by the village Kotwar. The results of the study are tabulated in the following table.

Births and deaths in the village from 1951 to 1960

Year	Male birth	Female birth	Male death	Female death	Male (Net)	Female (Net)
1951	3	2	2	—	1	2
1952	3	1	4	3	1	2
1953	4	4	2	6	2	2
1954	6	4	7	3	1	1
1955	5	9	5	2	—	7
1956	2	5	6	2	4	3
1957	4	3	2	3	2	—
1958	8	2	6	1	2	1
1959	2	5	1	—	1	5
1960	9	7	4	—	5	7
Total	46	42	39	20	7	22

It will be seen from this table that the abnormal incresae in female population during the decade is not due to nature favouring female rather than male births. On the other hand, it is found that during the decade, the male births exceeded the female births by four. The mortality was however much greater in the case of males than

in the case of females. This fact is also deducible from table above, in which we find a preponderance of females over males in the age groups 0-4, 5-9 and 60 and over, persons belonging to which are more susceptible to death than persons belonging to other age-groups. Since the sex-ratio is fluctuating, no generalisation correlating the preponderance of the female sex to its greater power of survival in the tribes can be put forth.

(ii) There is a preponderance of females over males in the 0-4, 5-9, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 40-44 and 60 and over age-groups. Particular mention should be made of the preponderance in the first and the last of these age-groups as it is suggestive of the fact that during the decade, the hand of death fell more heavily on man than on women among infants and old persons. This conclusion is confirmed from a study of the vital statistics of the decade in question.

(iii) The smaller number of girls in the 10-14 age-groups points to the possible prevalance of early marriages and consequent emigration in their case; the loss not being offset by immigration due to marriage. In fact, the enquiry about the age at marriage of girls has brought out that girls in the village are married when they are 12 to 15 years of age; while boys are married when they are 15 to 20 years of age.

(iv) The percentage of the number of persons in the various age-groups to the total population with a sex-wise break-up is shown in the following scheme:—

Age group	Percentage to total population	Male	Female
0-4	19.8	9.0	10.8
5-9	13.1	5.4	7.7
10-14	9.5	5.4	4.1
15-19	7.2	2.7	4.5
20-24	8.5	4.1	4.4
25-29	8.5	3.1	5.4
30-34	5.4	3.6	1.8
35-44	13.9	7.2	6.7
45-54	7.2	5.0	2.2
55-59	1.8	1.4	0.4
60 & over	5.1	0.4	4.7
	100.00	47.3	52.7

Thus, among every five persons in the village, one is an infant or a very young child below five years of age. Every third person in the village is a child below ten years of age. Young men and women who are over 15 years of age but who have not completed 35 years constitute 29.6 percent, *i.e.*, roughly one third of the population. The middle-aged component, *i.e.*, (35-54) accounts for 21.1 percent or a fifth of the population. Elderly persons more than 55 years of age constitute 6.9 percent, and, out of every three elderly persons, two are women.

(v) The number of unmarried persons is almost equal to the number of married persons, each being 45.5 percent of the total population. Also, for every unmarried boy and girl, there corresponds a married man and woman. The number of persons who have lost their spouses by death or otherwise is nine percent of the population.

(vi) There is no married person below nine years of age, while there is only one unmarried person who is above twenty years of age. The figures prove the complete absence of infant marriages or marriages of very young children. They also show that almost all persons are married before they complete twenty years of age. In order to arrive at the relative ages of boys and girls at marriage, a further analysis of the composite age-group is needed. The statement given below shows the percentage of unmarried males and females to total males and females in the age-groups 10-14, 15-19 and 20-24.

Age group	Percentage of unmarried to total	
	Males	Females
10-14	100	89
15-19	83	20
20-24	11	—

It is thus clear that marriages of girls start when they are about 12 years of age, but only one out of nine girls of that age is married. Most of the girls are married before they attain an average age of 17 years, (the actual age generally is less than that) while among boys of about the same age only one in five is married.

(vii) Out of the fourteen widows, twelve are over fifty years of age, while the remaining two are over 35 years of age. The conspicuous absence of widows in the younger age-groups points to the almost universal prevalence of remarriage after widowhood unless the widows are past the marrying age. This is an important aspect of tribal society which has been dealt with more fully in an earlier chapter.

Disease and Sickness:

Only four cases of persons falling sick for more than three consecutive days during the year preceding this enquiry were reported. The diseases were diagnosed in two cases, and only in one case, regular treatment of a doctor from the town was resorted to. The other diagnosed case—which was not treated—was that of small-pox. It is necessary to point out that even educated persons in the towns do not treat cases of small-pox, the superstition being that the disease is caused by the wrath of the goddess Sitlamai. In cases of small-pox the people of Jaitpuri, therefore, perform *pooja* to propitiate the goddess Sitlamai and Mahamaiya and also observe certain taboos which will be described in the section pertaining to religion in the fourth chapter. No medicines were taken in the two cases which were not diagnosed. It should be remembered that the Gonds, Kols, Kachhis and Mehras of Jaitpuri are primarily believers in demonology, and consider most diseases to be caused by the influence of evil spirits. But for a few cases involving high fever, they first take resort to *jharai* and other magical rites known to the caste 'baiga' for curing the ailments. A recourse to allopathic treatment becomes necessary only when the 'baiga' fails.

Skin diseases and their cure:

Skin diseases are commonly seen in the village. The reason can be traced to the unhygienic living habits of the people. They are not very particular about body cleanliness, and though they professed to our investigators to be bathing once in four or five days, to me the observation made in Mandla District Gazetteer about the bathing habits of Gonds appears to be more in conformity with facts about the village. According to the Gazetteer "The Gonds are not very particular about their personal appearance and are at little pains to keep themselves and their clothing clean. It is only on the rare occasions when they go to market or attend a marriage that they think of washing their clothes". The general prevalence of skin disease in the village should, therefore, not cause much surprise. Usually Jaitpurians do not consult a doctor for skin diseases, but apply the indigenous medicines or devices available in the village. Thus, in case of fresh wounds, the treatment is to urinate on it immediately. If the wound is old, the milk of *tilsa* flower is applied on it. The same treatment is applied for scabies. In case of burns, the treatment is by way of applying common ink, pig's fat or heated leaves of the plant *gawar-patha* to the affected part. If there is a fracture, the fractured part is tied with hot *puri* (flour cakes fried in *ghee*), and then powdered bark of *harjhuri* tree is applied over it. For tooth aches, it is usual to keep tobacco in the mouth, or to apply tobacco dust to the aching tooth. If a person suffers from diarrhoea, he is given water boiled with pieces of the bark of *maida* tree or the fruit of *bel* tree. The common eyesore is treated by applying a solution of common alum to the eyes.

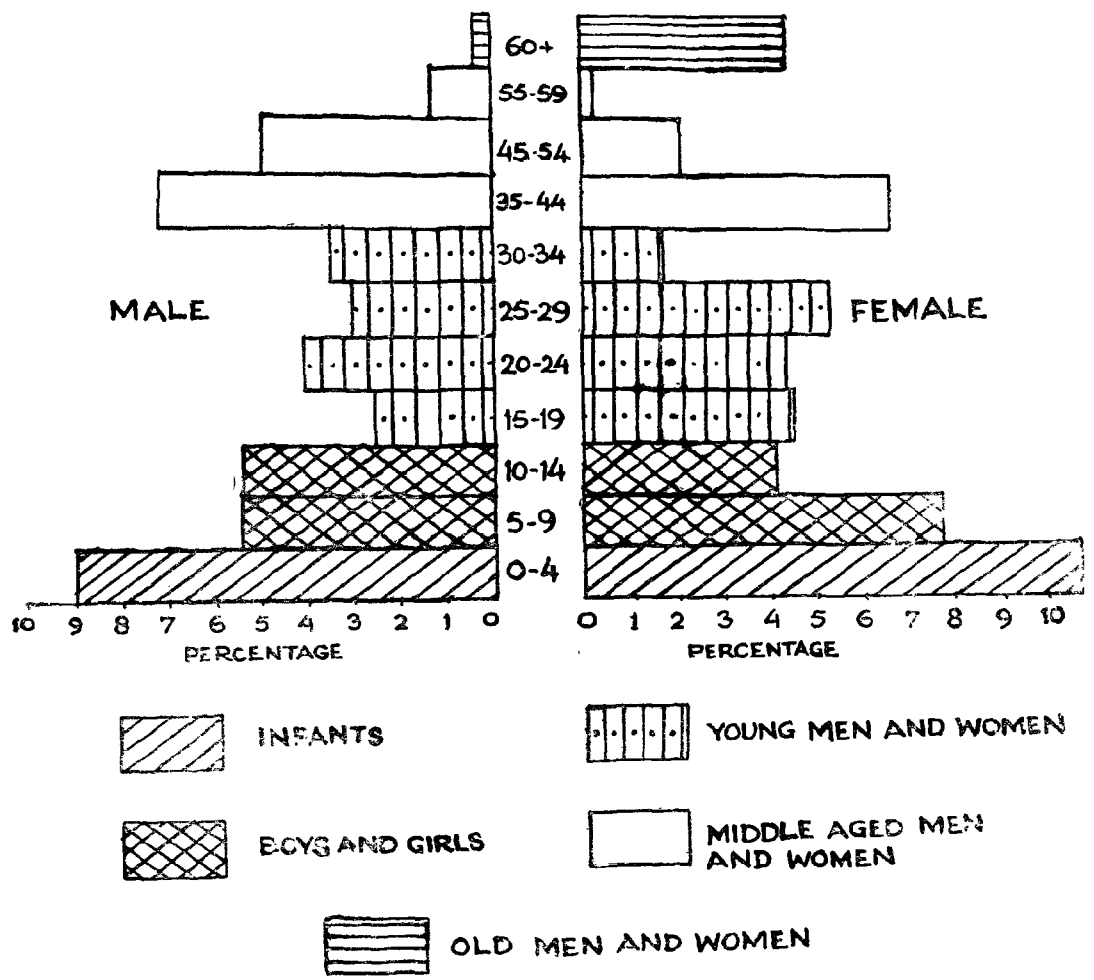
Leprosy.—There is one leper in the village. There was no evidence that the villagers ostracise the leper on account of the disease. On the other hand, he moves freely with the villagers and even enjoys respect because he is the 'दीवान' Diwan of the caste.

Literacy and Education:

Table on page 59 shows the distribution of literacy and education in the village. It is at once manifest that the village is hopelessly backward in respect of education. What is worse, the number of even just literate persons has dwindled during the last ten years as would be indicated from the fact that as against eleven persons who were returned as literates (without any educational standards) at the 1951 Census, the present Census returned only six as belonging to this category. Literacy among females continues to be zero. It would appear that the attitude of villagers is one of complete apathy and indifference towards education. There may be some justification for this view—but it does not represent the whole truth. The villagers—particularly the Gonds—seemed to be aware of the need and importance of educating their

PLATE XXXI

SEX AND AGE-STRUCTURE



Literacy and Education

Age groups	Total Population			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or Basic		Matric or Higher Secondary		Intermediates		Graduates		Diploma-holders		Holders of oriental titles		Any other qualification	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
All ages	222	106	116	100	116	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
0-4	44	20	24	20	24		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	29	12	17	12	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14	21	12	9	12	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19	16	6	10	6	10		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20-24	19	9	10	8	10	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-29	19	7	12	7	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
30-34	12	8	4	7	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35-39	16	11	5	9	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
40-44	15	5	10	5	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45-49	6	4	2	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
50-54	10	7	3	6	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55-59	4	3	1	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
60 & over	11	2	9	1	9	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

children. Their difficulties in this matter are genuine and cannot easily be dismissed. It has already been pointed out in the opening chapter that rivers Gaur and Ranway, and forest-covered ridges separate the village from villages Balhwara and Bhita which are supposed to cater to the primary education of the village children. It is impossible for the children to go to these villages during the monsoon months. During the open months also, it is not safe for children to cross the river Gaur in case of village Balhwara and the forest-covered ridges in case of village Bhita. The urge of the villagers to educate their children is indicated from the fact that two of the Gond families of Jaitpuri have kept their children in village Hinotia with their relatives for the purpose. Others cannot afford education at that cost. The villagers were unanimous in their demand of a school for their village, and there is great force in their demand.

Table above also shows literacy by age-groups. It is significant to note that there is no literate person below twenty years of age. There is only one literate in the age-group 20-24, the remaining five being over thirty years. The table clearly brings out that no child from the village goes to the school. Of the six literate persons, five are Gonds, while the sixth is the Brahamin Forest-Guard. It therefore appears that the Kols are more indifferent towards education than the Gonds.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:

It is seen from table below that there are no scheduled tribes in the village. In Jabalpur District the tribes Gonds and Kols are scheduled in all the tahsils of the district except Jabalpur. The reason for this could not be ascertained during this enquiry but it must be placed on record that this exclusion is very much resented by the tribes not only in Jaitpuri but also in other areas of the tahsil.

There are five persons, one male and four females, of scheduled caste in the village. They are of the Mehra household.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Jaitpuri

Scheduled Castes				Scheduled Tribes			
No. of Households	Persons	Males	Females	No. of Household	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I	5	1	4	—	—	—	—

Explanation of discrepancy:

The total population of the village as per 1961 Census is 222 whereas the schedules filled in connection with this enquiry—which took place in the month of May 1961—show the population as 223. The difference is due to the fact that the only Mohammadan of the village had not been counted at the census as he was absent for the entire period of enumeration, having gone to his relative in Niwas tahsil. The tables which have been prepared from the individual slips therefore show the population as 222 while those abstracted from the schedules prepared for the survey show the population as 223.

CHAPTER V

Social Structure

Caste Structure:

In considering the place of caste in the social structure of the predominantly tribal population of Jaitpuri, one is perforce led to think whether it is correct to equate the Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri with the ordinary Hindu castes. This, in turn, leads to a consideration of the meaning of 'caste' in the context of Hindu society. Of the various definitions of the term 'caste', the one given by M. Senart and quoted by Sir H. Risley in the All India Census Report of 1901 appears to be the most comprehensive. M. Senart describes a caste "as a close corporation, in theory, at any rate, rigorously hereditary; equipped with a certain traditional and independent organisation, including a chief and a council, meeting on occasion in assemblies of more or less plenary authority and joining in the celebration of certain festivals; bound together by a common occupation, observing certain common usages which relate more particularly to marriage, to food and to questions of ceremonial pollution; and ruling its members by the exercise of a jurisdiction the extent of which varies but which succeeds, by the sanction of some penalties and above all by the power of revocable exclusion from the group, in making the authority of the community felt". In the Census Report of 1901, Sir Risley had called attention to the "process of the gradual and insensible transformation of the tribes into castes". In Jabalpur District this process of absorption of the tribes into Hindu fold has been going on for a very long time. Jaitpuri is surrounded by villages which are either wholly inhabited by recognised Hindu castes or which have a large proportion of these castes. It may be recalled that Jaitpuri itself had in its population households of the Hindu castes. Its landlords have been Hindus. All these factors have accelerated the process referred to by Risley, and the present day Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri have been integrated into the Hindu fold almost completely, having forgotton their tribal tongue, and exhibiting all the characteristics of a 'caste' in the definition quoted above. This, and the fact that the communities concerned have started referring to them as such, justify us in treating them as Hindu castes.

Gradation in caste hierarchy:

In his classical work. 'The Castes and Tribes of Central Provinces' Russell has classified the numerous Hindu castes into five broad groups. "The highest consist of those castes who now claim to be directly descended from Brahamans, Kshatriyas or Vaishyas, the three higher of the four classical castes.* The second

* The *dwij* or twice born castes-who put on the sacred thread. The reference is to the four *Varnas* Brahaman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra.

comprises of what are known as pure or good castes. The principal mark of their caste-status is that a brahamin will take water to drink from them, and perform ceremonies in their houses. They may be classified into three divisions; the higher agricultural castes, higher artisan castes and serving castes, from whom a brahamin will take water. The third group contains those castes from whom a brahamin will not take water; but their touch does not convey impurity and they are permitted to enter Hindu temples. They consist mainly of certain cultivating castes of low status, some of them recently derived from indigenous tribes. In the fourth group are placed the non-Aryan or indigenous tribes. Most of these cannot properly be said to form part of the Hindu social system, but for practical purposes, they are admitted and are considered to rank below all castes except those who cannot be touched. The lowest group consist of the impure castes whose touch is considered to defile the higher castes".

The admission of the non-Aryan indigenous tribes to the Hindu caste hierarchy has been excellently discussed by Russell in his treatise which may be referred to by those interested in details. For our present purpose, suffice it to say that the Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri fall into the third group of the Hindu castes—comprising of cultivating castes of a low status—from whom a brahamin may not take water but whose touch does not defile him so as to necessitate a purificatory bath. They enjoy the privilege of traditional services of the serving menial castes like the barber, washerman, ahir, etc., which are by usage available to other agricultural castes.

Relative positions in caste hierarchy.

Of the five castes living in Jaitpuri, the brahamin incontrovertibly is regarded as the highest. The villagers address him as *maharaj* and will sit on the ground only in his presence. They also touch the feet of the Brahamin priest who comes to the village from Balhwara. About the superiority of the Kachhis in the caste hierarchy also there is no dispute. He is accorded the second place. There is however absence of unanimity regarding the *interse* social gradation of the remaining three castes *viz.* the Gond, Kol and Mehra. Members of each of these castes regard the other two as inferior to them—and before strangers, would refer to them in terms which are far from complimentary. Thus, a Mehra, when asked as to how expectant mothers were treated in the Gond and Kol families replied *"Gondan men bachcha hot he tab tak lakdi bikaut he"* (*i.e.* in the Gonds, women are made to sell fire-wood right upto the day of delivery). Another bantering remark of the Mehra regarding Gonds and Kols was *"Baiga, Kol, Bharia, Gondan me to galin men hi bachcha ho jaut he"* (*i.e.* in Baigas, Kols, Bharias and Gonds, children are born in the lanes). The Gonds have tried to rise higher in the caste-hierarchy by appending the word *Thakur* to the name of their caste. The Kols regard the Gond as inferior to them because the latter permit marriages with near relatives (the Gonds disclaim this allegation) and because they do not employ a Brahamin priest to officiate at their marriages. It is however possible to determine the positions of these tribal castes in the society from the customs relating to commensality and from the manner in which they exchange greetings. It is observed that, when a Kol and Gond meet one another, the Kol is the first to accost with the words *Jai Ram Ji Ki* and the Gond returns the compliment by saying *"Ram Ram"*. The words *Jai Ram Ji Ki* (*i.e.* victory to Ramji) are generally used when saluting a person of higher social status, while the words *Ram Ram* are used when greeting social equal—or social inferiors. It is also observed that, in mixed sittings, the Gond will occupy a higher seat, maintaining some distance from the Kol. The Gond will not brook sitting on the same cot with a Kol. The refusal of the Basorin from Bhita to attend to Kol births is another fact showing the lower social status of Kols. All these observed facts justify the conclusion that Gonds stand higher than Kols in the social hierarchy. There are historical reasons also for the comparative superiority of the Gonds in the social ladder. Mention has already been made of the fact that Gond dynasties were ruling over a large territory of eastern and north-eastern Madhya Pradesh prior to the advent of British rule, so much so that the State was alternatively known as Gondwana. Even after their reign came to an end, Gond families continued to be in possession of large estates. According to Settlement Report of Jabalpur District, out of a total of 2,582 villages in the district at the time of settlement, 407 were held by the Gonds. Besides, Gonds constituted 30% of the tenantry in Jabalpur Tahsil at the time of the last settlement. It is, therefore, only natural that they would enjoy a higher social status than that enjoyed by tribes who depended entirely on general manual labour for eking out their livelihood. Thus historical facts are in conformity with observed practices, and there should remain no doubt that the Gonds are higher than Kols and Mehras in social status.

Regarding the relative positions of Kols and Mehras on the social scale available evidence tilts the balance in favour of the former. Mehra has been described as an impure caste by Russell. The Jubbulpore District Gazetteer also places the Mehras in the category of impure castes, bracketing them with the

Chamars and Mochis. True that the stigma of untouchability no longer attaches to the Mehras in Jaitpuri and in the region about it, still that should not misguide us into accepting the Mehra's claim for a higher status. The Kols seem to stand higher than Mehras in social ranking.

The only Mohamadan resident of the village enjoys an equal social status with the Gonds. This fact flows as a corollary from the fact that he has been allowed to live in the village on equal terms though he had taken a Gond woman of the village for his mistress. We can thus present the social gradation of the castes living in Jaitpuri by the following scheme.

S. No.	Name of caste	Higher castes	Lower castes
1.	Brahmin	None	Gond, Kol, Kachhi, Mehra
2.	Kachhi	Brahmin	Gond, Kol, Mehra
3.	Gond	Brahmin and Kachhi	Kol and Mehra
4.	Kol	Brahmin, Kachhi, Gond	Mehra
5.	Mehra	Brahmin, Kachhi, Gond and Kol	None

Village Organisation:

In the administrative organisation of the village, the Patel customarily stands at the top. The Patel is the link between the villagers and the administrative authorities. He combines in his office a dual role—*i.e.* on the one hand, he is a representative of government in the village and in that capacity is charged with certain revenue and police functions; and on the other, he is a spokesman of the villagers to the outside world. Unfortunately, the present incumbent of the office for Jaitpuri hardly comes up to these requirements. He is a brahamin from neighbouring village Temar and cannot be expected, as is natural, to take much interest in the affairs of village Jaitpuri. His interest in the village is apparently confined to the collection of land revenue for which he is remunerated on a commission basis. Under the existing law, the Patel of a village should reside in the village. The Patel of Jaitpuri is however living in village Temar so that people of Jaitpuri have none to speak for them to the multifarious government agencies. The result is that the village has so far been neglected by all the authorities that matter.

Other Government Officials in village:

Of the other persons living in the village who look after the Government interests, mention may be made of the Kotwar and Forest Guard. The Kotwar is the village watchman. His principal duties are to assist visiting government officials in the village and to report the commission of cognisable offences in the village to the police. He is required to visit Barela Police Station on a fixed day every week along with the records filled in (or to be correct, got filled in by him because the Kotwar of Jaitpuri is innocent of reading and writing) by him. He keeps an eye on all strangers visiting the village. Besides this, he keeps the record of vital statistics of the village in his 'Birth and Death Register', there being a legal obligation on him to register all births and deaths. In lieu of his services, he holds revenue-free land in the village, and is also paid every year by the Government an amount which, together with three times the land revenue assessed on his service-land, should be equal to Rs. 192. In addition to this, the Kotwar visits houses of both the hamlets on festive occasions, and recevies grain payments from them. This latter type of payment in kind is not provided for by law, and the villagers are under no obligation to make it. They however invariably do so, because of longstanding usage, and the fact that it is in their own interest to keep the Kotwar satisfied.

In Jaitpuri, the office of Kotwar is significant in another way—he is an important channel of inter-hamlet relationship in the village. He is the only person who is invited by all castes in the functions connected with major crisis of life, and functions in certain specified ceremonial roles. He is invariably contacted in case of a birth or death occurring in any of the hamlets. Since the village Patel is not residing in the village, people look to the Kotwar whenever they have to approach the government authorities.

The other official living in the village is the Forest Guard. As already stated, Jaitpuri is surrounded by Government reserve and protected forests. The Forest Guard is meant for keeping a watch over these forests. He comes into the village picture because of the fact that the majority of villagers in Jaitpuri follow wood-cutting as a principal or subsidiary occupation. They, therefore, necessarily come in daily contact with the Forest Guard. They cannot think of displeasing him. On the other hand, the villagers told our investigator that they have to keep him in good humour. Almost all the villagers carry on their occupation of cutting and selling fire-wood and bamboo on the sly. Forest Guard is, therefore, a much dreaded

The caste panchayats of Gonds and Kols can more appropriately be called the panchayats of caste elders. Each panchayat is assembled on an *adhoc* basis, usually on the initiative of the person who is aggrieved by the breach of a caste rule. There is no fixed place for the sittings of the panchayat. In Jaitpuri hamlet, usually it sits in the court yard of Kishora Gond who also usually acts as the *Sirpanch* being the richest and the oldest man in the village. Other *panchas* are chosen, the considerations governing the choice being age, and status. In Jaitpuri, Imratlal, Suklal, Bhola, Umrao and Harcharan usually act as the *panchas*. In Kharhar-ghat hamlet, the panchayat usually holds its sittings in the ground adjoining the *chabootra* of Khermai. Sukhda Kol, Bhograj, Leela, Jiwan and Mirkha Kols are the caste *panchas*.

The most important function of the caste panchayat is to adjudicate upon disputes between its members involving breach of a caste norm. Sometimes, disputes of a personal nature, are also considered. The power behind panchayats enabling them to enforce their mandates, or to secure their compliance, is the power of social ostracization. This means denying to the person who chooses to disobey the caste mandate the privilege of commensality. Needless to say that, in villages, this acts as a really effective deterrant. The punishment awarded by the panchayat generally consists in reprimanding the person who is adjudged guilty, and in requiring him to pay a penalty. The penalty may be imposed either in cash, or by requiring the penalised person to feed the caste. The latter is the normal mode of inflicting the penalties, and recourse to cash fines is very rare. In order properly to understand the nature of disputes settled by the panchayats, as also to understand their constitution and procedure, a few case-studies were made during this survey. A brief description of these cases is given below:—

Case I.

Ta and *Ma*, young Gonds of Jaitpuri were alleged to have enticed away the young daughter of *Ag* and kept her for a night in the jungle. At the instance of *Ag*, a caste panchayat was assembled in *Kr*'s courtyard, in which the caste *Panchas* from villages Dumna and Gadheri also participated. On interrogation by *Panchas*, *Ta* and *Ma* denied the charge completely. *Ag* also could not substantiate the charge. The matter was reported to the police—who also dropped it in the absence of any proof.

Case II.

This was an off-shoot of the first Panchayat. At the instance of *Bh* Gond, who is cousin of *Ag*, another meeting of the caste panchayat took place in the house of *Ur* Gond. In this panchayat, *panchas* required *Ag* to explain to them why he had falsely implicated *Ta* and *Ma*. *Ag* could not give any explanation to the satisfaction of the *Panchas*. The latter then demanded a feast from *Ag*. *Ag* however declined to oblige the *panchas* by giving a feast. The panchayat has, therefore, ousted *Ag* from the caste till he bows down to its mandate.

Case III.

Sk Gond's widowed sister-in-law conceived and alleged that *Sk* was responsible for the conception. She was living with her parents in Hinotia village. *Sk* denied the paternity of the child. Thereupon, at the initiative of the woman, *panchas* from Kakartala, Dumna, and Hinotia met in Jaitpuri at the crossing in front of *U*'s house. *Panchas* of Jaitpuri also participated. After hearing the parties, *Panchas* returned the verdict that *Sk* was not the child's father—because the woman did not bring the matter before the *Panchas* at the earliest moment when it became known to her. She flouted the verdict of the *panchas* and maintained that *Sk* was the father of the child. When a child was born to her, she reported the name of *Sk* as its father to the Kotwar. The *Panchas* have ex-communicated the woman from the caste for giving birth to an illegitimate child. She has, in her turn, taken the matter to the court for establishing her innocence.

Case IV.

Hj Kachhi of Jaitpuri has kept the widow of *Ke* Gond as his mistress. The woman was first living in the house of her brother-in-law, from where she eloped with *Hj* Kachhi. The two could not muster courage to go back to the village for about two years. However they were allowed again to live in the village but only after the caste panchayat of Gonds had rebuked *Hj* for his misconduct. A fine of Rs. 50 - was imposed on *Hj*, who paid it. The woman was ousted from Gond caste. *Hj* was not subject to the jurisdiction of Gond Panchayat as far as his removal from caste was concerned. He was however removed from the caste by his own caste Panchayat at village Ukhri.

Case V.

Mg, a married man who lived with his wife in Jaitpuri, developed intimacy with his mother's sister. The intimacy remained secret for some time, but *Mg*'s wife soon discovered it. She reported the matter to caste elders, who however refused to believe her version which revealed a very serious breach of norm.

Mg's wife thereupon deserted her husband. The intimacy however soon became public when *Mg*'s mother's sister became pregnant. Both of them were given a thrashing by *Ag*, maternal uncle of *Mg*. Caste Panchayat reprimanded *Mg* for his grave misconduct and also called upon him to give two feasts to the panchayat. Pending this *Mg* has been removed from caste along with his concubine. He has not so far complied with the mandate of the panchayat.

Kols:

Case VI.

Bg Kol's son—who was minor had killed a dog about a year ago. The caste panchayat ousted *Bg* Kol from caste till he gave a feast to the caste. *Bg* Kol obeyed the caste mandate and was readmitted to the caste.

Case VII.

Bg Kol had a dispute with his brother *Li* Kol regarding distribution of paternal lands. The matter was referred to the caste panchayat. The verdict of the panchayat was respected by both the brothers.

On considering the cases described above we find that in Gonds, most of the breaches related to sex taboos. Again, the Gond Panchayat is not very effective in securing compliance of its orders by its members. The Kol Panchayat appears to be more effective in this respect. In the case of *Hj* Kachhi, the caste Panchayat of Gonds acted like an inter-caste village Panchayat. *Inter alia,* this case shows that Jaitpuri hamlet is principally a Gond settlement and other castes may live there provided that they do not displease the majority caste.

Leadership Pattern:

No single person in the village can claim to be a leader of both the hamlets. Since the village acts more or less as two units in its internal organisation, it is not reasonable also to expect one man leadership in the village. The absence of effective leadership in the village also follows from the fact that it does not have its own Patel. No doubt *Kr*, Gond commands a measure of respect from the villagers on account of his age, and the fact that he was the agent of the proprietor in the days of *malguzari,* but his influence is waning. He is too old and senile to impose his will on the community. His nephew *Bh* has broken away from him and is always trying to find out opportunities to humiliate him. The caste panchayat which demanded a feast from *Ag, Kr*'s son was initiated by *Bh*, and this may possibly be the reason for *Ag*'s flouting the caste verdict. Yet another person trying to get a place in the leadership of the hamlet is *Bl* Gond. He however is not very resourceful and cannot make his voice felt in matters of caste. This, in short, is the pattern of leadership in Jaitpuri hamlet.

In caste matters, Kols appear to be a well-knit group. This appears to follow from the fact that no breaches of sex taboos were reported in their caste. The panchayat of the Kols is effective. Its orders are not flouted. Kols of Kharharghat have an effective caste leader in Sukha Kol, who, according to Kotwar Sukhlal, has four boys of the community to follow him wherever he goes, and who has the guts to see that whatever he says is done. (*Sukha hamesha char ladke sang lekar chalta hai. Usmen dam hai, Wah jo kahta hai, wah bat hoti hai*).

Family Structure and Relationships:

In Jaitpuri, families are patrilineal, *i.e.* reckoned through the father. They are also patrilocal in character. The institution of *Lamsena* in which the husband comes and lives in the wife's village—of which there are three cases in Jaitpuri—is only an exception to the rule of patrilocal residence. As is natural, headship of the family vests in the eldest male member of the family. When the eldest member is not a male, the female is sometimes designated as the head. But that is only a token gesture signifying respect; the *de facto* head is always the eldest male of the family except when he is unequal to the responsibility due to minority or some other cause.

Table I shows the distribution of families living in the village into simple or elementary, intermediate and joint types, divided according to the major castes Gonds and Kols. For the purpose of this table a joint family is regarded as one consisting of married couple with married sons or married brothers and their children. Intermediate families are those consisting of married couple and unmarried brothers or sisters and one of the parents. A simple family is of course composed of married couple and their unmarried children. A look at the table referred to above shows that for the village as a whole 32 or 66% of all the households have families of the simple type. Families of the intermediate type live in 17% of all the households, while joint families account for a little more than 10% of the households. The remaining families which live in a little less than 7% of the households have been classified as others. Thus in the village as a whole, simple families are preferred to joint and intermediate families. The joint family appears to be decaying. The intermediate families represent the transition from the joint to the simple family.

TABLE I

Caste/tribe or community and nature of family

Name of village : Jaitpuri (Based on item 3 of model Schedule)

Caste/Tribe or Community	Total number of households	Types of families living in the households				Remarks
		Simple	Intermediate	Joint	Others	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gond	27	15	7	4	1	
2. Kol	16	13	1	1	1	
3. Kachhi	2	2	—	—	—	
4. Brahmin	1	1	—	—	—	
5. Mehra	1	1	—	—	—	
6. Mohamadan	1	—	—	—	1	
Total ...	48	32	8	5	3	

Simple family = Consists of husband, wife and unmarried children.
Intermediate = Married couple and unmarried brother, sister one of the parents.
Joint = Married couple with married sons daughters or with married brothers/sisters.

TABLE II

Households by Number of Rooms & by Number of Persons Occupying

Name of Village Jaitpuri

Total Number of Households	Total Number of Rooms	Total Number of Family members	Households with no regular room		Households with one room		Households with two rooms		Households with three rooms		Households with four rooms		Households with five rooms		Households with five rooms and more	
			No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of house-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers	No. of House-holds	Total No. of family mem-bers
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Gond—27	29	143	—	—	25	130	2	13								
Kol —16	20	66	—	—	12	38	4	28								
Others—5	5	14	—	—	5	14	—	—								
Total...48	54	223	—	—	42	182	6	41								

Remark:—Every house has a verandah of about 4' width—on three sides of it, and a court yard. In most cases, there is another room for cattle. In case of families with two rooms, the second room is utilised for cooking purposes.

Analysing the figures separately for the major communities, it is seen that 56% of the families living in Gond households are simple, while for the Kol families that number is as high as 81%. The difference is significant and is *prima facie* suggestive of a Kol preference for a smaller family unit. This view is strengthened by the fact that in Kols there is only one household, i.e. 6% of all households with a joint-family, while for Gonds that percentage is 14. The cause of disintegration of the joint family is reportedly a lack of adjustment subsequent to marriage between sons and parents. This maladjustment does not arise, as is often the case, from intra-family tensions, particularly quarrels between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. In Jaitpuri, the cause of separation appears to be the pathetic dearth of *lebensraum* leading to absence of conjugal privacy. Table II shows that of the 48 house-

holds in the village, 42 having 182 persons live in houses which have only one room, which is an all purpose room. For the village the total area of floor in the rooms is 3,686 square feet, and of the floor in the verandahs 2,440 sq. ft. The area per head, therefore, comes to approximately 34 square feet, which breaks into 20 square feet of room area and 14 square feet of verandah-area. The figures point to a very unsatisfactory state of affairs, and there is no wonder that married couples want to have their independent houses.

Size of Households:

In a community where the majority of the family units are of the simple or elementary type, consisting of a married couple and their unmarried children, it is natural to expect most of the households to range in size from 2 to 6 members. This expectation is confirmed from Table III which shows that of the total of 48 households in the village, ten range in size from 2 to 3 while twenty-five have a composition ranging from 4 to 6 persons. The two together, *i.e.* households having a composition ranging from 2 to 6 persons number 35 (about 75% of all households) and they include 59% of the village population. There are three single-member households. Two of these belong to the Kols and consist of old widows who chose to remain unmarried while the third is the household of the Mohamadan Satola who has also lost his spouse. Households having a membership of more than seven persons are ten in number of which seven are Gond and three Kols. These include together a population of about 40%. Only three households, two of which are Gonds, have more than ten members. The largest family is that of a Gond and it consists of 12 members.

TABLE III

Size and Composition of Households

Name of Village: Jaitpuri

Total number of Households	Size of Household														
	Single member			2-3 Members			4-6 Members			7-9 Members			10 members & over		
	House-holds	Males	Fema-les	House-holds	Males	Fema-les	House-holds	Males	Fema-les	House-holds	Males	Fema-les	House-holds	Males	Fema-les
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Gond 27	—	—	—	3	5	4	17	31	39	5	20	22	2	13	9
Kol 16	2	—	2	4	4	5	7	14	16	2	8	7	1	6	4
Others 5	1	1	—	3	5	3	1	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total ... 48	3	1	2	10	14	12	25	46	59	7	28	29	3	19	13

Average size of family:

The average size of family, for the village as a whole, and for the two major castes, with sex-wise break up is presented in the following statement.

Average per family

Name of unit	Persons	Male	Female
1. Village	4.65	2.23	2.42
2. Gonds	5.30	2.56	2.74
3. Kols	4.13	2.00	2.13
4. Others	2.80	1.40	1.40

The slight excess of males over females in the village as a whole and in the major communities may be noted.

Constitution of average family:

The 4.65 persons in an average family, can be broken up as follows.-

1.	No. of infants in the family *i.e.* children below 4.	0.92
2.	No. of children between 5 and 14	1.05
3.	Adolescents 15-19.	0.34
4.	Young persons from 20-34	1.05
5.	Middle aged persons 35-59.	1.06
6.	Old persons over 60.	0.23
	Total ...	4.65

Average family broken up according to workers and nonworkers & Sex

In the statement furnished below, an average family in the village is broken up into workers and non-workers.

	Workers			*Non-workers*		
Size of family	P	M	F	P	M	F
4.65	2.03	1.35	0.68	2.62	0.88	1.74

Intra-family relationship: web of family ties:

In every family, as already stated, the eldest male member is regarded as the head, and he is respected by all other members of the family. Gonds, Kachhis and Kols refer to him as *siyan*, while Mehras use the word *mukhia* for denoting the head. The head is responsible for properly managing the affairs of the family. Incomes earned by other members of the family go into the common pool, which is at the command of the head. When the head of the family is so old as to verge on senility the *defacto* management of household affairs is done by the next senior most member of the house.

Husband-wife relationship:

Customarily the husband enjoys a superior status over his wife who treats him as her *dhani* or lord while the latter refers to his wife as *mal* (*i.e.* property). A husband is at liberty to have two or more wives at a time in the Gonds and Kols but polyandry is not permitted. Conjugal relations are on the whole reported to be happy, and only two cases of desertion of the husband by a wife were reported. Both the cases were in the Gonds, and in both cases, the cause of desertion was the infidelity of the husband. The practice of wife-beating is not found in any of the hamlets in the village.

Father-in-law daughter-in-law relationship:

Purdah is not observed by the daughters-in-law in the presence of the father-in-law. She however keeps her head covered, whenever she comes across the father-in-law; and her attempt is always to maintain a respectable distance from him. Loquaciousness in the daughters-in-law in the presence of their parents-in-law is considered bad etiquette.

Daughter-in-law mother-in-law relationship:

In the few Gond and Kol houses, which are still joint in their family structure, the relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is reported to be cordial. Generally both of them share the household work, or go to work on the field or for selling fuel wood. When the mother-in-law is unable to work on account of old age, she usually spends her time in looking after her grand-children.

Father-child relationship:

Looking after children is considered to be a peculiarly feminine speciality, and fathers are seldom seen publicly fondling their children. Child-beating also is not in vouge in the village. Usually when the parents go out to work, the infants are taken by them to the fields. If however there are siblings in the house, who have not yet started to help their parents on the fields, the children are committed to their care.

TERMS OF KINSHIP

Name of Relationship	Kinship Terms			
	Gond	Kol	Kachhi	Mehra
1. Father	*Dadda*	*Dadda*	*Dadda*	*Dadda*
2. Mother	*Bau*	*Bau*	*Bau*	*Bau*
3. Father's elder brother	*Baredada*	*Baredada*	*Baredada*	*Baredada*
4. Father's younger brother	*Kakka*	*Kakka*	*Kakka*	*Kakka*
5. Elder brother	*Babboo*	*Babboo*	*Bhaiya*	*Bhaiya*
6. Elder sister	*Baiya*	*Didi*	*Didi*	*Didi*
7. Son	*Babua*	*Babua*	*By name*	*Babua*
8. Daughter	*By name*	*By name*	*By name*	*By name*
9. Grand father	*Dada*	*Baba*	*Dada*	*Baba*
10. Grand mother	*Dadi*	*Ajibau*	*Aji*	*Aji*
11. Mother's brother	*Mamma*	*Mama*	*Mama*	*Mama*
12. Mother's brother's wife	*Mai*	*Main*	*Main*	*Main*
13. Mother's sister (elder)	*Bari bau*	*Bari bai*	*Baribau*	*Baribau*
14. Father's sister	*Fua*	*Fua*	*Fua*	*Fua*
15. Father's sister's husband	*Foofa*	*Foofa*	*Foofa*	*Foofa*
16. Sister's childern	*Bhanej*	*Bhanej*	*Bhanej*	*Bhanej*
17. Wife's elder sister	*Jeth sas*	*Bari*	*Jeth sas*	*Jeth sas*
18. Wife's younger sister	*Sali bai*	*Sali*	*Sali*	*Sali*
19. Wife's brother	*Baboo*	*Baboo*	*Baboo*	*Baboo*
20. Wife's brother's wife	*Dulhiaju*	*Dulhiyaju*	*Dulhiyaju*	*Dulhiyaju*
21. Husband's younger brother	*Dewar*	*Dewar*	*Dewar*	*Dewar*
22. Husband's elder brother	*Jeth*	*Jeth*	*Jeth*	*Jeth*
23. Husband's sister	*Nanad*	*Nanad*	*Nanad*	*Nanad*
24. Wife's father	*Sasur*	*Raoji*	*Sasur*	*Sasur*
25. Wife's mother	*Sas*	*Rautalin*	*Sas*	*Sas*

Religions and sects:

With the exception of one man who professes the Islamic faith, the entire population of Jaitpuri is Hindu. The only Mohammedan of the village is Satola, born of a Kurmi Hindu father and Mohammedan mother. He does not know the difference between the Sunni and Shia sects of his religion, and does not believe in reading *namaj* daily, nor does he have any idea of the teachings contained in the 'holy book'. The Mehra family of Jaitpuri is *Kabir-panthi* which can be considered to be a sect of the Hindu religion.

Hinduism of Gonds and Kols of Jaitpuri is not the Hinduism of the scriptures and Hindu religious texts. Theirs is a practical religion, manifested periodically in offerings and sacrifices to the gods, there being no place for worship in their day-to-day life. It is a quaint mixture of animism and Hinduism, but the classification of their beliefs into these types is not a simple affair. Their pantheon includes the village gods common in the region, the peculiarly tribal gods, and the Hindu gods worshipped all over India. Of the village gods, which are worshipped by all Hindu castes living in the village, mention may be made of Khermai, Sardamai, Sitalamai and Mahamaiya, and Hardaul. "Khermai is the goddess of the earth or village (probably the name is derived from *Khera* or village) and is treated as a local incarnation of Devi". As has been stated earlier, Gonds and Kols have separate places for the worship of Khermai. In Jaitpuri, she is worshipped by Umraosingh, *baiga* of the Gonds, while in Kharharghat hamlet, Leela Kol is incharge of her worship. She is the most revered of the village gods and goddesses. Incarnation of the *devi*, she is the favourate Goddess of the Kols, and according to Russell, "They carry her iron tridents about with them wherever they go". The Kols of Jaitpuri were not seen moving

about with her *trishula*, but every Kol house contains the *trishula*. Twice a year, in the month of *Kunwar* and *Chait*, the *baiga* becomes possessed of the Devi and in that state of trance is considered to have supernatural powers. The Jabalpur District Gazetteer contains the following description of the phenomenon of *Bhao Charhana* as it is called. "Twice a year in the months of Kunwar and Chait they sow Jawara or barley in pots and take it out on the 9th day of the month to be consigned to a river or a tank. At that time the afflatus of Devi descends on some of her worshippers who jump about like mad men. This is called *Bhao charhna* and to a person so affected a trident or bana as it is called is given. He pierces his cheek with it and lets it remain there for hours together without showing any signs of pain. When the trident is taken out the hole quickly fills up".

The Gonds observe *Bhandar* every year in the month of *katak* at the seat of the *'Khermai'*. All males of Jaitpuri hamlet participate in the *Bhandara* for which purpose subscription is levied from every house. Offerings of a goat and wine are made to the Devi and after that a community feast is arranged. Sardamai is yet another goddess, commanding worship from all sections of the Hindu population. The villagers were unable to say anything about the Goddess except that she has come from Maihar.

Another favourite village god is Hardaul, whose story is known to some of the villagers. Imratlal Gond of Jaitpuri narrated the story of Hardaul in the following words—"Jujhar Singh, King of Orchha, had a brother named Hardaul and a sister named Kunjimati. Hardaul was very much devoted to his sister-in-law, wife of Jujhar Singh. Their relationship, which was based on pure affection, however came to be suspected by Jujharsingh who hatched a conspiracy to kill Hardaul by administering him poison in food. Accordingly he invited Hardaul for a feast. When Hardaul set out to go to his brother's house, certain ill omens were observed. Disregarding them, he went. On the entrance door he was accosted by his loving sister-in-law who warned Hardaul against the conspiracy. Hardaul was however bent upon establishing his innocence even at the cost of his life and he ate the poisoned food. He died. Later on Hardaul's ghost attended a marriage at the house of Kunjamati and the bride-groom was able to see him." The villagers were not able to say, how Hardaul came to be worshipped as a godling. They only know that in the depths of the night when the whole world is asleep and only ghosts and spirits are abroad, Hardaul deo prowls in the village mounted on horseback, driving away the evil spirits from the village. It is noteworthy that the worship of Hardaul is prevalent in a very widespread region. In some regions, he is known as 'Hardaul Lala', *'Lala'* being a fond term of endearment used by sisters-in-law for younger brothers of their husbands. About the spread of the worship of Hardaul, the following account from Jabalpur District Gazetteer is interesting.

"The murder created much sensation, and shrines were erected to propitiate his ghost at many places between the Jamuna and the Nermuda. Previous to 1817 his worship had been confined to a few people in Bundelkhand. But when the cholera appeared in Lord Hastings army during the Pindari war, the camp happened to be pitched at Chandpuri Seonari on the Sindh, near a grove of trees, beneath whose shade lie the ashes of Hardaul Lala under a small shrine. The ghost of the murdered prince is said to have been especially incensed by the slaughter of a cow for beef, and from that time Cholera spread all over India. Then temples were everywhere erected and offerings made to appease him."

Midwaiya Deo is the god of the field boundary or *med* as it is called in Hindi. According to the District Gazetteer, "He never has a shrine erected to him but every tenant, when he begins sowing and cutting the crops, offers a little curd and rice and a coconut, laying them on the boundary of the field and saying the name of Mirhoia deo. It is believed among agriculturists that if this godling is neglected he will flatten the corn by a wind or cause the cart to break on its way to the door." It is to be noted that though the inhabitants of Jaitpuri subscribe to the practices described in the Gazetteer, they have deviated from the account insofar as they have given a place to the godling. Yet another godling universally worshipped by all sections of the villagers is the Ghatoiya deo, who is popularly known as *Talaiyawala*, because his seat is always on the crossing of a *nullah* or near a small pond. It is believed that, if a bride going to her husband's house for the first time neglects to propitiate this godling, she will certainly fall ill. Pregnant women must also make obeisance to this god whenever they happen to cross his shrine. Nagdeo or the serpent god is worshipped in every house on the occasion of *Nagpanchmi*—which falls on the bright fortnight of the month of *Shrawan* (August-July). Bhainsasur or the buffalo-god is worshipped before starting sowing or harvesting operations. The godling lives under trees near the boundary of some of the fields.

Worship of Hindu Gods:

Besides the aforesaid village gods, the villagers have started worshipping the familiar Hindu-gods like Mahadeo or Shiva, Hanuman or the monkey god associated with the great epic God Ram; Ram and Krishna. They have established a stone to represent Shiv near the old well. Recently, the villagers have set up a stone to represent the god Hanumana. There are no shrines for the gods Ram and Krishna, because unlike other gods, who are satisfied with seats under trees, tradition has fixed for these Hindu gods abodes in the form of a temple which the villagers cannot afford.

Saint Thanthanpal of Jamunia:

A saint known as Thanthanpal exercises great influence on the religious life of the village. This saint resides in village Jamunia, and is held to be a *'Siddha'* by the villagers. He is reverentially known as *'Dadaji'*. The 'Dadaji' is particularly pleased when people organise *bhajan mandli* to chant 'Sitaram' without break. On the *Sankranti* day, under instructions from the *'Dadaji'* the Gonds of Jaitpuri sat-up the whole night and chanted 'Sitaram'. They also performed a 'yagna' on the fateful occasion of the coming together of the eight planets in the same house, to ward off possible disasters. The villagers frequently go to Jamunia to have *darshan* of 'Thanthanpal'.

"Satyanarain Ki Katha" is also now becoming popular. The *Pooja* associated with this *'Katha'* is performed by the Brahamin priest from village Balhwara. The villagers did not seem to know any thing of the details of the *Katha*. Its only significance to them is that it is a mark of 'Hindusim' and will help their identification with other Hindu castes. The Brahamin priest from Balhwara is held in high esteem by the villagers, and he never fails to visit the village on the occasion of the Hindu festivals. The villagers make cash presents to him ranging from two annas to four annas and also make payments in kind at the time of every visit. The priest's interest in the villagers is however confined to the collection of his payments in cash or kind, and he does not bother about instructing them seriously in religious practices and beliefs.

Animism in village religion:

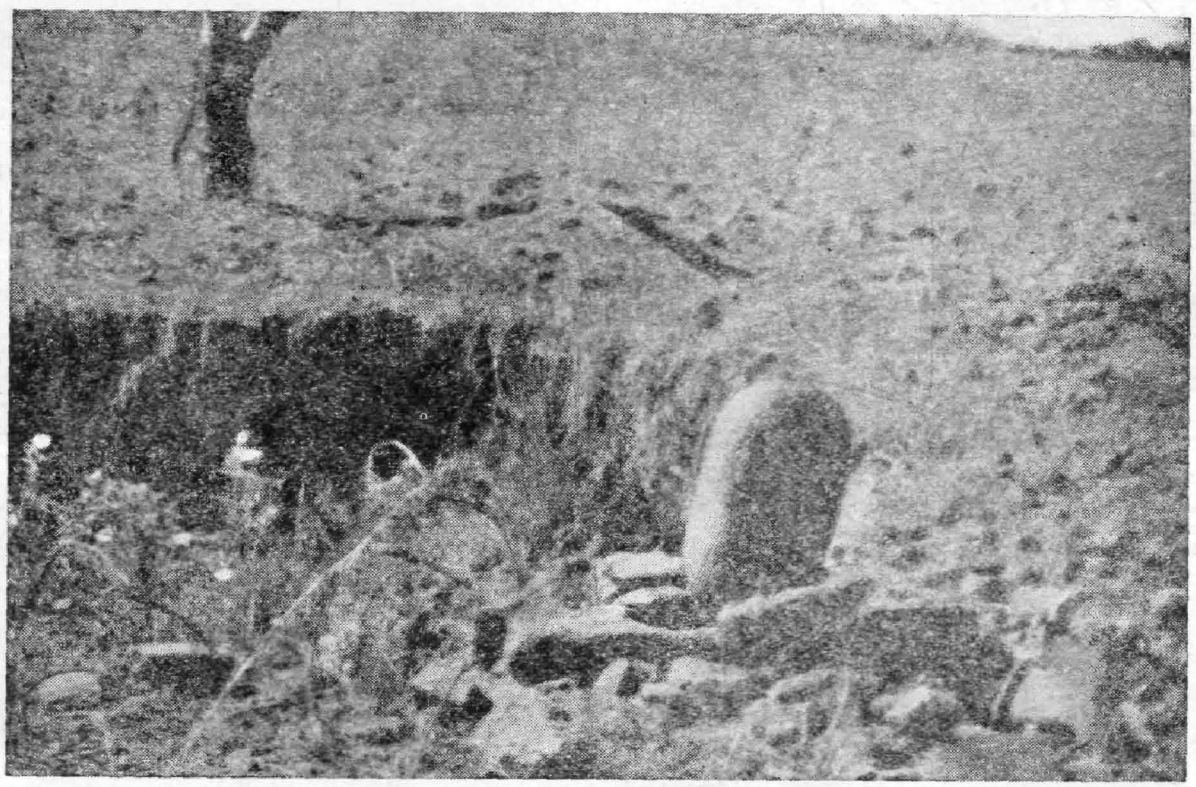
In considering the religious life of the Gonds of Jaitpuri, we must not forget that till yesterday they were animists, worshipping their tribal gods and spirits. Contact with Hindu neighbours in other villages has enabled them to pick-up a smattering knowledge of Hindu gods; but animism continues to have a deep hold on their minds. According to Risley, the animists do not worship anthropomorphic gods; the subjects of their worship are formless "powers, elements, tendencies, mostly impersonal in their character; shapeless phantasms of which no image can be made and no definite idea can be formed".

The tribal division of the Gonds into worshippers of four, five, six or seven Gods is found in the village but no one was able to correctly name the gods worshipped by him. A worshipper of six gods named the following—(1) *Aja Purkha*, (2) *Parja Purkha*, (3) *Atarkara*, (4) *Atarjhorba*, (5) *Aggaddan*, (6) *Dar*. The first two of these are the ancestor gods—*aja* being the term for grand-father and *parja* being a corruption of *Paraja* meaning a great grand-father and point to the prevalence of ancestor worship in the Gonds, reference to which has been made by Russell in his treatise. The meaning of other four names could not be ascertained. It is however very doubtful whether the six gods enumerated above really denote the names of the six gods—of which the respondent's sect is the worshipper. Other persons in the village were not able to name any of the gods and hence the above version remains uncorroborated.

Burra Deo:

Burra Deo, the great god of the Gond pantheon is supposed to reside in the *saj* tree outside the village. According to Russell, *Burra Deo* has an iron image, which is wrapped in grass and tied to the *saj* tree. On page 102 of his book, 'Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces' Russell has given an interesting account of the steps by which the *Burra Deo* which was originally identical with the *Saj* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*) came to be represented by an iron image. It would be useful to quote the relevant passage from Russel. "It would appear however that he was originally the *'Saj'* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*), an important forest tree growing to a considerable height, which is much revered by the Gonds. They do not cut this tree, nor its branches, except for ceremonial purposes, and their most sacred form of oath is to swear by the name of *Burra Deo* holding a branch of the Saj tree above the head. If *Burra Deo* was first the *Saj* tree, then we may surmise that when Gonds discovered iron they held it more sacred than the tree because it was more important, as the material from which their axes and spears were made. And therefore *Burra Deo* became an iron chain hanging from the *Saj* tree. The axe is Gond's most valuable implement, as with it he cut down the

PLATE XXXII



A *Shiv-Ling* in Jaitpuri hamlet

PLATE XXXIII



Other village gods

formerly persons aspiring for the *panja* (an emblem of the Mahant's Office) had to study *Sanskrit* for two years at Damakhera, and thoroughly imbibe the precepts and philosophy of the Sect. Even that was not sufficient. A donation of Rs. 500/- had also to be made to the *Guru*, before a *mahantship* could be bestowed on an aspirant of the office. The Mahant spoke rather contemptuously of the Panikas,[1] and said that under their domination at Damakhera, securing of the *panja* had become commonplace, rather a business affair. In fact, he said, there was a regular trade in the name of religion and *mahantship* was being bestowed on undeserving persons for a paltry gift of Rs. 5.00 only. The views expressed by the Mahant, exaggerated though they may be, indicate the attitude of the followers of the Sect in Jabalpur country and point to the prevalence of caste domination even in more or less reformist Sects. Eulogising Guru Shri Prakashmani of Kashi, Jamunadas told our investigator, that he was a man learned in the precepts and philosophy of the sect, and whatever presents he received at the *Jamats* (religious congregations at the time of the Guru's visit), he distributed it to the schools of the Sect.

The *Mahant* was very critical of the attitude in general of the *adherents* of his sect to the 'religion'. The people, he said, do not know the word of the *Sahib* (the founder of the Sect), and the few who know do not care to delve deep into its inner meaning and the philosophy at the back of it. Though the Kabirpanthis declare themselves to be *nirgunias* (believing in the formless and attributeless God—and eschewing idol worship), they worship idols. Besides the prohibition of idol-worship the Kabirpanthis are also forbidden to eat meat and to drink liquor. The Mehra of Kharharghat follows only one of these three enjoinments *viz.*, the one relating to abstinence from drinking liquor, thus proving true the allegations of the *Mahant* vis a vis the followers of the Sect.

Mahant **Jamunadas** exercises jurisdiction over 30 villages including Jaitpuri. He visits these villages occasionally for performing the *chouka* ceremony. The *chouka*, according to him, can be performed at any time, but is compulsory at the time of a death in the family. Normally, somewhat better-off persons perform the *chouka* ceremony once in a year, but those who cannot afford it that frequently also have to perform the *chouka* at times of crisis of life. Generally, at the *chouka*, the officiating *Mahant* receives a gift of Rs. 1.25, a coconut and a piece of cloth, but those who can afford pay more also. *Chouka* marks the initiation of the new-born to the Sect. It is described in the Jabalpur district Gazetteer as follows "The initiation of Kabirpanthi is called *chouka*. A pot of water is placed on the ground with a lamp over it, and songs are sung in praise of Kabir to the accompaniment of the music of cymbals. A *bira*, consisting of pan, gur, and a little core of the coconut is eaten by the person to be initiated and each member of his family and a *mantra* or sacred verse is whispered in his ear. A *kanthi* or small garland of beads is tied round his neck and the initiation is complete. At death the ceremony is repeated with the exception of the omission of the sacred verse."

The *Mahant* can also initiate and give the *mantra* to persons not belonging to the Sect. such persons being, more or less, personal disciples of the *Mahant*. The rite of thus initiating and making a disciple, is known as *"Kan phoonkna"* and the *mahant* is the *Kanphukha guru* of these disciples.

Gaon Bandhna:

The ceremony of *Gaon bandhna* is observed as an annual ritual in the month of *Baisakh*. The ceremonies are separately observed for the two hamlets. Umrao Gond, Baiga of Jaitpuri performs the ceremony for Jaitpuri tola—while Leela Kol does it for the Kharharghat hamlet. The person who performs this ceremony is called *gunia*. The ceremony is performed early in the morning before anybody is awake for no man or animal may go outside the village when the ceremony is being performed. The fact of *gaon bandhna* is widely publicised the previous evening through the Kotwar, so that no one may stir out of house when the ceremony is being performed. At the appointed hour, the tribal priest accompanied by a few old men of the village takes a round of the whole village, and offers drops of liquor and blood of cock at the shrine of each village godling. The last deity so visited and propitiated is the Khermai. Thereafter the party go out of the village, and eat the cock away. It is said that the *Baiga* priest keeps in all the kind gods, but drives the evil spirits away. The expenses incurred in the ceremony are shared by the whole community on the basis of cash contributions of one to two annas per household. It is considered that after this the whole village is secure, and is not pestered by evil spirits for the whole year.

1 The ranks of the Kabirpanthi Sect consist of person belonging to the weaving Hindu castes like Panikas, Mehras, Gandas etc. It may be recalled that tradition ascribes the same occupation to the founder of the Sect Kabirdas.

Household Gods:

Besides the village Gods common to all the village communities, and the particular tribal gods, every house has a separate pantheon of household gods. In every house of a Kol or Gond, a place is earmarked for the household gods. This is called 'Deothan' (Place of gods) and is usually in the form of a small earthen platform in or outside the house. The Gonds and Kols are very reluctant to divulge the names of these gods—and only one Gond gave out the names of the gods of his household as Deswali, Asmani and Bhairam.

Community Festivals and Fairs:

Of the important community festivals mention may be made of the Jawara; Holi; Dussehra; Diwali; Rakhi; Hariri Amavasya; Tija; Ramnavami and Janmastami etc. These festivals are observed by all the communities in the village except the Mohamadan. The festivals bring with them pleasure and happiness to the villagers, and are occasions of much rejoicing. They provide much-needed relief from the drudgery of their daily routine. In the absence of the more sophisticated avenues of recreation, open to their brethren in the towns, villagers make most of the opportunities given to them by the festivals for social enjoyment. In the following paragraphs the important festivals are described.

The Jawaras:

This is the most important festival of the rural communities and is observed twice a year during the first nine days of Chaitra (March-April) and Kunwar (September-October). Owing to its synchronising with the agricultural operations of sowing and harvesting, the *Jawaras* are described as agricultural festivals. All the communities—Gonds, Kols, Kachhis and Mehra in the village observe this festival. It deserves to be noted that Russell has not made a mention of 'Jawaras' as a Gond festival in his treatise, and therefore it is reasonable to consider that Gonds of Jaitpuri have adopted this agricultural festival from the other castes living in the village. The Mehra who professes the Kabirpanthi sect observes the 'Jawara' with as much gusto as the other communities. Jawara festival is an important festival observed almost in the same manner over large areas of the State. Therefore the following account of the festival *in extenso* is reproduced from the Jabalpur District Gazetteer.

"The sowing of the *Jawaras* takes place during the first nine days of the months of *Kunwar* and *Chaitra* (corresponding roughly to September and March). On the first day a small room in the house is cleaned and white-washed. Some earth is then brought from the fields and mixed with manure in a basket. A male member of the family sows wheat in the basket, bathing before he does so. The basket is placed in the room prepared for it, which is called the *diwala* or the temple and the same man attends on it throughout the nine days, fasting all day and eating only milk and fruit at night. A lamp is kept continually burning in the room, and fed with ghee instead of oil, the wick being ignited by a flint, and not with fire kindled in the ordinary way, as this is blown by the mouth and therefore considered impure. During the period of nine days called *naoratra*, the plants are watered, and long stalks spring up. On the 8th day the 'hom' ceremony is performed, and the gunias or devotees are possessed by the Devi. On the evening of the ninth day the women putting on their best clothes walk out of the houses with the pots of grain on their heads singing songs in praise of Devi. The men accompany them beating drums and cymbals. The devotees pierce their cheeks with long iron needles, and walk in the procession. The pots are taken to a tank and thrown in, the stalks of grain being kept and distributed as a mark of amity. The wheat which is sown in *kunwar* gives a forecast of the spring crops. A plant is pulled out and the return of the crop will be the same number of times the seed as it has roots. The woman who gets to the tank first counts the number of plants in her pot, and this gives the price of wheat in rupees per *mani*. Sometimes marks of red rust appear on the plants, and this shows that the crop will suffer from rust. The ceremony performed in *Chaitra* is said to be a sort of harvest thanks-giving."

Holi:

Like *jawaras* the *holi* or the festival of colours, also is observed by all sections of the villagers. A mention has been made of this festival by Russell in the chapter on Gonds, and it follows therefore that the Gonds have been observing the festival along with other Hindus for a long time. The festival proper falls on the 15th day of the bright fortnight in the month of *Phalgun*. But the village communities of Jaitpuri start enjoying themselves by singing *phag* right from the day of *Basant Panchmi*. Colour however is not sprinkled till the *Dhuderi i.e.* the day following the 'holi' bonfire. On the *Poornima* day a big bonfire is made—one in each tola. The Kotwar lights the 'holi' in the Kharhar-ghat hamlet while in Jaitpuri hamlet, in the absence of Kotwar, that distinction is given to Umrao, the *Baiga*. The holi fire is worshipped by village women, who also take a part of the fire to their homes. According to custom, this fire should be kept alight the whole year. On the following day, which is known as *Dhuderi* people sprinkle colour on one another. Mud and

dirt also are freely used by the revellers, who sing all sorts of obscene songs in their mood of ribaldry. Young men of the hamlet form into procession and indulge in eve-teasing to a considerable extent. Normally, the women do not take serious notice of the youngsters, but there are instances when serious disputes take place. The *holi* mood continues in the village almost unabated till the day of *Rang Panchmi*, but thereafter, though the singing of songs called *phag* continues, there is no ribaldry or obscenity associated with them.

Other festivals:

On the 'Dasahara' day, people worship goddess Kali in their houses. Eating of white gourd is tabooed before *Dussehra*. The whole village goes to the city of Jabalpur for seeing the *Dussehra* festival. The festival at Jabalpur draws huge crowds from the surrounding villages and poses a serious law and order problem to the police and magisterial authorities. On the *Krishnashtami* and *Ramnavmi* days, some members of each house-hold observe fasts. Printed pictures of Ram and Krishna are purchased from Jabalpur market and worshipped. Another minor festival is *Til Sankranti* on which day the priest from Balhwara reads out *Sankrant* to groups of devotees. On enquiry from the priest, it came to light that he simply reads out from an almanac, the forecasts for the year. It would be suggested from this that the priest plays upon the religious credulity of the villagers—for the practice of listening to the forecasts in the almanac has nothing of religion in it. I have already elsewhere hinted at the exploitation of the villagers by the priest from Balhwara. I cannot help observing at this place, that the Hinduism that is being taught to the tribal communities in Jaitpuri has nothing of the principles of Hinduism in it. The ridiculous ideas and practices that are being presented to the rural community of Jaitpuri through the Brahamin priest are likely to do more harm than good to these simple people.

At the time of *Diwali* festival, cattle are worshipped. Their horns are coloured, and feathers of peacock are tied to them. Patches of green and red dyes are daubed on their bodies. The cattle are given salt, and some *khichri*—to eat. Another festival in which the cattle are given *khichri* to eat is the *Hariri Amawasya*. On this day, no work relating to agriculture is done.

Besides these other Hindu festivals are observed, more or less in the usual manner and their description therefore is not being given. Except the 'Bhandara', no other festivals peculiar to tribes is reportedly observed.

Belief in magic and witchcraft:

People believe in witchcraft though they denied that there were any witches in the village. Women who practise witchcraft are called *Sondhan*. The Kotwar who previously lived in Jaitpuri tola—said that he left it on losing his children by witchcraft. He even said he had seen drops of blood in his house. He was however not prepared to disclose the name of the woman whom he suspected of sorcery.

Common Superstitions and Omens:

Like other Hindus, people of Jaitpuri also believe in many superstitions and omens. Some of the superstitions and beliefs are described below.

About diseases:

(1) Whenever a person is sick with small-pox, the goddess of small-pox is considered to have entered the house. The fact is indicated by hanging a branch of the *nim* (Melia Indica) tree over the door of the house, because *nim* is the favourite tree of the goddess and she is supposed to reside in it. Visits by in-mates of the house to other houses in the village, and the entry of other persons into the house are tabooed. A woman in her menstrual period is not allowed to enter the house, as it is believed that if she sees the victim, he would lose his eyes.

(2) If a man dies of small-pox, the goddess is supposed to reside in his body. The corpse is therefore never burnt—for burning would mean burning the goddess.

(3) A leper when he dies is never cremated. It is believed that if a leper is cremated the disease would become hereditary.

Others:

(4) If at the time of setting out, somebody sneezes it is considered to be an ill augury. The setting out is then deferred for a while.

(5) Similarly, when a person sees a dog twitching his ears, when starting for a journey, it is taken to be an ill omen.

(6) If a jackal crosses the way from left to right while going it is considered to be an ill omen. To counteract the evil effect, a branch of *chheola* (*palas*) tree is broken and kept on the road; and the person tramples it under his foot and proceeds further. Crossing of the way by a jackal from right to left is considered to be good.

(7) If air comes out from wood when it is burning, it is believed that somebody is remembering the person near the fire.

(8) Crossing of a road by a snake when starting for a journey is taken to be a bad sign.

(9) Meeting a one eyed-man while going somewhere is taken to be an ill omen. This superstition is versified in the following:

'Mile kana to laut ghar ana' i.e., if a one-eyed fellow meets you on the way, you must come back to your house.

(10) Seeing an empty pitcher when starting is taken to be a bad omen. On the other hand, it is considered auspicious to meet a person carrying pitcher filled with water.

(11) If a man has pain in his waist, he would ask a person who was born with legs coming out first to kick him. It is believed that on being kicked by such a person, the pain disappears.

(12) Superstitions are attached to castes also. If a person going out on some errand happens to see a 'teli' before he has seen any one else, he would come back to his house. Seeing a *teli* after other persons have been seen is not considered inauspicious.

(13) The crying of an owl from housetop is taken to be an evil omen. Similarly, if some one sees the mating of crows, it is taken to be an indication of the approaching death of some dear one. To nullify the evil effect, false news of the death of the dear one is spread.

(14) If ants are seen going to their holes carrying their eggs it is taken as an indication of approaching rain.

(15) Similarly if the common *chidiya* is seen bathing in sand, it is taken to be an omen of on-coming rain.

(16) People do not put on a *kora* (*i.e.,* new cloth which has not been washed) cloth; the superstition being that only a corpse can use a *kora* cloth.

(17) Kols do not touch the dung of a horse.

Dances, Songs and other recreation:

The tribal communities of Jaitpuri disown their traditional tribal dances. The only occasion when there is dancing in their houses is marriage, when men and women of the village get intoxicated and dance, sometimes for the whole night. The change in their attitude to dancing is no doubt to be attributed to urban impact on their way of looking at things. One can also detect in it the caste Hindu prejudice against all forms of dancing.

Enquiries in Gond villages where Hinduisation and urbanisation have not advanced to any appreciable degree show that in Jabalpur and Mandla districts the Gonds and Kols have three or four important folk dances—*viz.,* the *Karma,* the *Saila* and *Reina.* The participants in a *Saila* dance are all males, while in *Reina* only women take part. *Karma* is a mixed dance requiring participation of both the sexes. *Saila* and *Reina* are danced after the *Kharif* harvest but before the festival of *Holi.* The *saila* brings out an unique example of inter-village relationship in the remoter Gond villages. Parties of young men who are called *Sailhars* visit villages of the neighbourhood. The party is guest to the village and is treated to a feast—of liquor and food. The dance continues sometimes for hours together to the accompaniment of music of *mandar.* It is customary for the host village to return the compliment by sending a party of its *Sailhars* to the first village. *Reina* dance does not require any musical instruments. The rhythm of the dance is kept up by the clapping of two groups of women. The *reina* comes very close to the *'sua' nach* of Chhatisgarh villages.

The *Karma* is principally the spring dance of the tribes—Gonds, Kols, and Baigas. The dance is accompanied by music of *timki* and *'madar'* and songs which are in the form of questions and answers are sung by the men and women participants of the dance. The theme of these songs is often sexual. This is why many sophisticated Gonds now regard this dance as a social evil, which they say is bringing disgrace to their community. The 'Gond Thakurs' of Jaitpuri who consider themselves superior to the other Gonds, who cling to the tribal traditions, disclaim any connection with the *Karma.* It should be pointed out that opposition to *Karma* in a section of the Gonds is not of recent origin. As early as the year 1940, Mr. W. V. Grigson, I.C.S., Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Officer, had referred in his report (The Aboriginal Problem in the Central Provinces and Berar) to the Rajgond movement which was directed against all dancing in general and the *Karma* dance in particular. In recent times, the circle of opposition to dancing has widened and has come to embrace within its fold Gonds other than Rajgonds. This decay of an important aspect of tribal culture in Jaitpuri is a very unfortunate affair and none would be thankful to the twin forces of urbanisation and Hinduisation that are responsible for it.

Having denied to themselves the easy means of recreation afforded by the tribal folk dance, the communities living in Jaitpuri have tried to fill up the gap by the periodical

communal singing of *bhajans, fag, dadaria* etc. In each hamlet there are young men who are gifted with good voices and they are the organisers of these meets. The *Bhajans* are sung, accompanied by the music of *Madar, Dholak* and *Manjira.* A few typical bhajans are being reproduced below.

I. *"Ram dhon sab jana;*
Ek din Ram ghar sabe jana;
Matti odhna, Matti bichhona;
Matti men mil jana;
Ek din Ramghar sab jana,
Ka ghar men tum aye wahan se,
Ka ghar men tune jana;
Mutthi bandh ke aye wahan se;
Hath pasare jana;

(To Ram, all have to go; one day, to Ram's house all will go; Earth is the cover; Earth is the bed; In earth one has to mingle;)

"In what state did you come from there;

"In what state will you return; You came from there with clenched fists;

Will go back with open palm".

The *bhajan* has a deep philosophic content. It brings out the transient nature of this world, and indicates the futility of material possessions.

Dadra.—II:

"Neebu babure tare na jaiyo,
kante lag jaihen;

Bare se bahua ke lane mundri ledai;
Nai pahro nai pahro kante lag Jaihen;
Bare se bahua ke lane chuda le dai;
Nai pahro nai pahro kate lag Jaihen,
Bare se bahua ke lane sutiya le dai;
Nai pahno nai pahno kante lag Jaihen.
and so on.

"Below lemon and *babul* trees do not go; thorns will prick".

"From the 'bada', *mundri* is brought for the bride; Do not wear; do not wear; thorns will prick;"

"From the 'bada', *chooda* is brought for the bride; do not put on, do not put on, thorns will prick etc."

Dadaria.—III.

Sadak men to hirna lade,
Bagia men lade mor,
Sadakia ki yori hoy;
Sadak men to Machchho lago
Koi chahe ras lehun,
Sadakia ki yori hoy.

"Deer fight on the road;

A pair of peacocks fight in the garden;

"On the road there is a beehive;
Some one wants to taste its honey;

(It is to be remembered that the *dadaria* songs are often sung by the village women when coming back from the market. They are frequently sung on the road.)

Fag.—I:

"Sankat bhari paro Ramdal men,

Great danger has befallen the camp of Ram,

Lakshman ko mare ban;

Lakshman has been hit by an arrow,

Lakshman ko mare ban Meghnad ghat lagai;

Meghnad, taking opportunity has hit Lakshman with arrow,

Lakshman ko shakti lagi, apda puri ai;

To Lakshman 'shakti' has struck, calamity has come,

Lakhan kuar vyakul bhae, bhool gai sab shan;

Prince Lakshman restless; (he) has forgotten all pride,

Hirde men shakti lagi, vyapo dukh mahan;

In the heart, the 'shakti' has hit, great sorrow has pervaded (Ram's camp),

(2) *Sati satdhari chita pe thadi he*
Meghnad ki nar;

Chaste, full of power, on pyre stood Meghnath's wife,

Meghnad ki nar, chita chandan rachwai,

Meghnath's wife Pyre of sandalwood got prepared,

Kar solah shringar, sati ko roop banai,

Made sixteen embellishments, form of 'sati' assumed.

Ang ang gahna pahin, sati Sulochan nar

In every limb, put on ornaments; sati Sulochana,

Sati dekhne ko chale, purwasi nar naar;

To see 'sati' came, men and women dwellers of Town.

Other recreations:

The young boys of the village are still not interested in seeing the motion pictures. This is because they do not have the proper facilities. They sometimes play country games like *kabaddi* etc. Middle-aged and older persons—both male and female—pass their hours of leisure in idle gossip.

Communications and level of awareness:

Jaitpuri is an isolated village, surrounded on all sides by forest-covered ridges. Its isolation is accentuated by the additional circumstance that it does not lie on the route to other villages. There are only six literate persons in the village, none of whom is interested in reading newspapers. The villagers do not receive any letters. Most of them of course go to Jabalpur on every alternate day; this daily contact with the city life has not brought any corresponding increase in their level of awareness. They continue to be innocent of all that is going on in this problem-loaded wide world of ours. They do not have any interest outside the narrow sphere—with which they come in contact in socio-religious, cultural and economic matters. They have no knowledge about the weapons of mass destruction which modern science is adding to the armouries of the nuclear powers. They do not have any idea of the country or the province, or the governments. They only know that Jawaharlal Nehru is the king of India and he is ruling us. They appeared to have some vague and hazy notions about elections. They appeared to have been led to believe that, if they vote for a candidate, he must do something in return for them. People in Kharharghat hamlet told our investigator that they would ask the candidate for election to dig a well in their village, and to construct the road linking their village to the fair weather road, mentioned in the opening chapter. They were very critical of the false promises and assurances held out to them by candidates at the 1957 elections; and appeared to have become wiser by the experience. In order that there would be no deceiving this time, they said, they would ask the candidates to execute the works before they expected their votes. A very facile argument indeed. But the conversation of the villagers clearly indicated their growing awareness of the value of their vote.

Awareness of Development authorities:

None of the villagers had knowledge that their village was included in the Barela Development Block. They said that no Block official had ever visited the village*. They did not know who the Block Development Officer was, and what were his duties and functions in relation to development of the village. They had not heard of any of the Extension Officers, nor of the Gram Sewak. The villagers did not know anything about the duties of the various block officials. They however knew of the Police Station at Barela and the tahsil courts. They also know about the magisterial courts and the tahsildar and naib-tahsildar. The tahsildar and the naib-tahsildar were also not reported to have visited the village. Once only some Naib-Tahsildar had called them at the village Bhita in connection with the application for well of the villagers.

Attitudes about Government:

The villagers feel that Government is duty bound to do something for their betterment, and that the Government has so far neglected them. Their casual talks gave an impression that they had lost all faith in the Government—which had failed to do any concrete thing for their improvement. Their views about Government are reflected in the following sentences utterred by them during this enquiry:—

"Government has not done anything for us so far. Our Panchayat can do more work than the government."

"Government officials know only how to eat money. The tragedy is that even after greasing their palm, our work is not done—how can persons who expect bribes from us along with the applications do anything for us? We have lost faith in the Government."

"The British Government used to give us all facilities. From the time Congress Government has come in power, we have become poorer. How can we have any belief in you as long as you do not do anything concrete for our betterment".

"It will be favour if the Government lets us live."

"So far the Government has not done anything for us".

"The Government can improve our condition, only if it wants to".

The above statements candid as they are, lead on analysis to the following conclusions:—

(1) The people of Jaitpuri are not satisfied with the government machinery. They harbour the belief that the present Government is incapable of delivering any goods to them. This reveals some level of awareness of the obligations of Government to its people.

(2) There is however no corresponding awareness of the obligations and duties which are expected of citizens.

(3) Their grievance against the Government is based mainly on the alleged non-fulfilment of some of their pressing needs and problems, and on the corruption allegedly rampant in its officials.

* The BDO in answer to our enquries replied that some of his officials had visited the village. This was however not confirmed by the villagers nor by the Kotwar.

(4) There have been no efforts on political or official levels to explain the benefits that have been conferred on the people by the Government in the form of legislations. It is also apparent that political and social workers do not grace the village by their visit, nor have they tried to keep otherwise in touch with the needs and grievances of the villagers. The villagers, loss of patience is therefore not unnatural and should not cause surprise.

(5) The authorities of the development block have not taken sympathetic interest in the problems of this village. If what the villagers assert is true, and *prima facie* there seemed to be no reason for them to slander the Government machinery—it is unfortunate that, for the last ten years no block official has visited the village. The Gram Sewak who is expected to maintain contacts at the level of the family also appears to have chosen to be apathetic to the village. Jaitpuri village brings to the surface the important fact that the Community Development Programme has failed to produce any impact in many villages. Ten years of inclusion in a development block have not brought about any change in the village, and what is worse the villagers have now become sceptical of anything that is associated with Government.

Views about untouchability.

Untouchability is still reportedly practised in the village. The people of Jaitpuri will not allow a man of the impure caste to draw water from their well. Except one or two Kols, all others were ignorant of the Act, which has made untouchability an offence.

Views about family-planning.

The villagers do not feel inclined to talk about family planning. They still cling to the old idea that children are gift of God, and God will feed the child whom he has brought into this world. They have no aspirations for improving their standard of living and their only worry appears to be to have enough for eating.

Views about statutory village Panchayats:

Jaitpurians do not appear to be enthusiastic about having a statutory village panchayat. They hold that their caste panchayats are quite good. Their indfference to the statutory village panchayat was demonstrated recently when the revenue authorities wanted to nominate three persons from their village—two Gonds and one Kol for election to the Panchayat which is proposed to be set-up. None from the two hamlets offered to become a 'panch' of the statutory 'panchayat'. The plea taken was that they did not have money enough to pay the nomination fee. The reason given is not satisfactory; and it seemed only an excuse for keeping out of the proposed *panchayat.*

Conclusion:

In the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to present the social, cultural and economic life of village Jaitpuri in its various aspects. Cutting and selling of wood being the mainstay of its economy, Jaitpuri cannot advance any claim to be a typical village of the region. The population of Jaitpuri is predominantly tribal, with no representation of the traditional serving castes like carpenter, black-smith, washerman, oil-crusher, Basor, Chamar, Ahir, etc., or of the castes traditionally enjoying a superior social status like the Brahamins, Banias or the Thakurs. The result is that Jaitpuri is treated as an inconsequential village in the area. It is, therefore, not very unnatural that the village has come to possess what, in the absence of a more appropriate word, I would call an inferiority complex. If it were permissible to think of villages as having personalities, I would even say that Jaitpuri has got an inhibited personality—a personality which is unable to blossom out with confident splendour. The perpetual attitude of neglect of the official and non-official agencies towards the village has tended to accentuate this complex, its initial reaction to Government sponsored activities being one of scepticism, if not one of downright opposition.

One of the important objects of this study was to form some idea of the changes that are expected to be brought about in the social, cultural and economic life of village communities in the wake of the "forces" released by the community development programme. The picture of the village emerging from this study shows that, by and large, Jaitpuri has remained unaffected by these forces, there being no evidence of any significant change in the way of life of its people. From the point of view of communications, it remains as backward as ever before, its contact with the villages in the vicinity being cut off for considerable periods during the monsoon. People in the village still depend on their muscular strength for transport of their goods. In the educational field too, the village has failed to register any progress; on the other hand, it has deteriorated during the past ten years.

There has been a decay in the social organisation of the village. People have forgotten the tribal legends about their origin, and many were not able to tell even their "*gotra*". The decay in their social institutions is probably a phase of the transition from the tribal to the dominant culture. They have even severed connection with their tribal dances which form an integral part of tribal culture. But it would be wrong to say that the tribal roots have been entirely forgotten. The resulting ideological and emotional conflict probably accounts for the decay of their social organisation.

In respect of dress, there is a perceptible change towards urbanisation. Shirts are fast replacing the old *salookas* and though the *pardhania* still holds sway amongst the grown-ups, short pants and *chhaddis* have started making their appearance amongst the younger generation.

The religion of the people is in a state of flux. Though they call themselves Hindus, the influence of their old beliefs continues to mould their lives. As observed by Hutton "wherever hill or forest tribes live in permanent daily contact with Hindus, their religion rapidly assimilates itself to that of their Hindu neighbour though the old method of their thinking is unchanged". The sage Thanthanpal of Jamania a neighbouring village was a force to reckon with in the village, and his influence had accelerated the process of assimilation of the tribal religion into Hinduism.

The one aspect of their life and very important aspect which has refused to register any change is their economy. Theirs is almost a stagnant economy, hardly enabling the population to reach even a minimum subsistence level of living. Their methods of cultivation are archaic. There has not been any noticeable attempt on their part to increase the output by taking to improved methods of cultivation. The land per capita is hardly adequate to enable them to eke out their living from cultivation alone. Though a few households have taken to milk-selling as a subsidiary occupation, they do not exert themselves to derive the maximum benefit therefrom.

It cannot be disputed that the people share a part of the responsibility for their present backward state. It cannot at the same time be lost sight of that no agency, governmental or otherwise, has tried to help them, or give them guidance. As has been stated earlier, the people contend that they are not aware of anything like the community development programme. The picture of village Jaitpuri is however not one of complete hopelessness. There is a silver lining to the dark cloud of stagnancy and despondency that pervades the village horizon. The people have in them an urge for improving their condition. They want their communications to be improved; they want a school for their children and they want more land. A few of them are even prepared to take to services. This desire of the villagers for a better life is a heartening indication and beckons hopefully to the future. Their problems deserve to be considered sympathetically. Adequate help should be extended to them by way of provision of necessary resources, and last but not the least, by helping the evolution of necessary village leadership, initiative and an attitude of self-help. Then only can Jaitpuri take its rightful place in this age of momentous changes; then only can its people shape their destinies in keeping with their aspirations and genius, and play their role actively in the progress of the country as a whole.

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GLOSSARY

Abadi	The area reserved from time to time in a village in a non-urban area for the residence of its inhabitants or for ancillary purposes.
Achar	*Buchanania latifolia;* also pickles.
Agni	Fire.
Agwani	Formal reception of the bridegroom's party outside the village.
Ajwain	A kind of aromatic seed.
Badhai	Also spelt 'Barhai'; a carpenter.
Baiga	Village priest and sorcerer.
Bari	A food item.
Bhajan	Devotional song.
Bhanwar	A marriage ritual consisting in going round the marriage post.
Bhutta	Maize corn.
Chari	Bride price.
Chauk	A design made with flour during festivities.
Chaddi	Male underpant.
Chhathi	Meaning sixth, is a birth ritual.
Chilam	A clay pipe.
Chidiya	The common house sparrow.
Chironji	Corolla of the 'achar' fruit.
Dadariya	Folk song consisting of short couplets set to music.
Dahej	Dowry.
Dal	An item of food consisting of boiled pulse.
Desh	Country of residence; original habitat.
Dhimar	A caste of water carriers and fishermen.
Dholak	A musical instrument.
Dhoti	Indian wear for lower part of the body.
Doha	A type of poetical composition consisting of two lines.
Dwarchar	A marriage ritual.
Fag	Songs sung after holi.
Faldan	A marriage ritual preceding betrothal.
Ghat	A narrow passage over a range of mountains; a pass.
Got	Corruption of Sanskrit Gotra; meaning lineage counted from paternal side; Exogamous division.
Gauna	A ritual after marriage generally indicating its consummation.
Ghee	Clarified butter.
Gari	Songs often with obscene insinuations sung by women at the occasion of marriage.
Guru	Spiritual guide, preceptor; teacher.
Gunia	Village sorcerer.
Harira	A preparation of *gur,* (jaggery); *ghi, sonth,* etc., given to women after child birth.

Haveli	A fertile plain.
Haldi	Turmeric.
Janwasa	Place where the *'Barat'* or bridegrooms's party stays.
Jhopdi	Hut.
Khichri	A food preparation of boiled rice and pulse.
Kachcha	In relation to houses, it means 'mud-built house'; in relation to well, the term means 'not lined' and in relation to food, it refers to 'not fried'.
Kathri	An improvised mattress of rags.
Khamb	Post or pillar; the marriage post.
Kotwar	Village watchman.
Laddoo	Sweet-meat balls.
Madwa	A shed; the marriage shed.
Malguzar	Proprietor of a non-raiyatwari village.
Mahant	The priest and manager of a temple.
Mundan	Ritual shaving of the head of a child for the first time; tonsuring.
Mandar	A musical instrument; cymbal.
Mayna	A marriage ritual.
Mundri	Ring.
Munga	*Moringa pterogosperma.*
Mutfarkat	Miscellaneous; referred to land, it means an inferior type of soil which cannot even grow garden crops.
Mukhmatti	Death ritual; literally meaning 'giving earth in the mouth of the dead'.
Mukhagni	'Giving fire in the mouth of the dead person'.
Nai	Barbar caste.
Nain	Woman of the Nai caste.
Nistar	Rights enjoyed by villagers on Government land.
Nistar Patrak	A record of the nistar rights.
Namaj	Mohamadan prayer.
Pacca	Opposite of 'kachcha'.
Purdah	Custom requiring women to cover their faces.
Pandit	A Brahamin priest.
Pali	Group.
Rahar	*Cajanus indicus.*
Rajai	A quilt.
Sari	A woman's garment.
Supari	Areca nut.
Shamshan	Cremation ground.
Sanad	A title deed.
Trishul	Trident, a weapon of the Devi.
Tulsi	Basil plant, *Ocymum sanctum.*
Teli	A caste of oil-crushers.
Wajibularz	Village Administration Paper.