

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1961

VOLUME VIII

MADHYA PRADESH

PART VI

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

No. 1

DISTRICT SEHORE, TAHSIL ICHHAWAR, VILLAGE KULHARI

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UBLISHED BY THE MANAGER OF PUBLICATIONS, DELHI
AND
MENT CENTRAL PRESS, MADHYA PRADESH, BHOPAL.

Price Rs. 3·60 nP. or 5 sh. 1 or $0.75 Cents.

FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dr. B. K. Roy Burman has been responsible for going through each monograph and offering helpful criticism and advice which were much welcomed by my colleagues. 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.

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 an appendix.

NEW DELHI :
The 24th May 1962.

A. MITRA,
Registrar-General, India

PREFACE

This monograph presents a study of a nucleated village, Kulhari, covered by a community development block and not so distantly situated as to remain unaffected by urban influence. The numerically important castes in this multi-ethnic village are Gehlots (a sect of Rajputs) and the scheduled castes: Chamars and Balahis. Though not the highest in terms of conventional or traditional ranking of castes, Gehlot is the dominant caste, numerically as well as culturally. It is striking how immensely their culture has affected the culture of the scheduled castes. Though the influence of caste is quite perceptible, it has not affected the overall sense of unity in the village.

The field work in connection with the survey was initially done by the Progress Assistant of the community development block, and later on followed up by me. In a study like this, where an attempt is made to cover the "microcosm" of the village, the field work while giving an appearance of having been completed, is always found wanting in some respect or the other at the time of drafting the report. This naturally involved numerous visits on my part and it has to be placed on record that the people bore with patience and cheerfulness the irksome demands made by me on them.

The difficulties in a survey like this by an administrator—even if of the Census Organisation—are quite obvious. A village community is often a closed citadel and communication is not easy. The people look upon others with mistrust and have their own misgivings. When approached to show their ornaments, they thought that the Government on the pretext of a survey, intended to assess the value of their ornaments and subsequently introduce some sort of ceiling on them-their most cherished possession after land! The women-folk were nervous about disclosing the manner of keeping the ornaments, lest they should be stolen! It was difficult for these simple people to understand why someone should be interested in their social, cultural and economic mode of living.

Moreover, as this village is not very much cut off from urban influence the people are conscious that some of their customs are quite boorish and they prefer to say what they think *should be* rather than what *is*. For instance, it was only after some cajoling and coaxing that they disclosed details of *natra* system *i.e.*, a system of remarriage. Similarly, on account of deep-rooted superstitions, the fear of unknown evil is so intimidating that while Balahis admitted observance of *jot* system *i.e.*, a peculiar system of singing *bhajans* after the death of a person or to ward off disease, they refused to give its details.

It has to be emphasized here that the survey is not a study of any particular aspect of social life. As the Registrar-General has stated in his Foreword, this is an attempt to invest the dry bones of village statistics with a flesh and blood account of social structure and social change. The object has been to construct a map of Village India's social structure and the present monograph is just one link in the great chain.

Though the authorship of the monograph is ascribed to me, this does not reflect the real position. The draft was twice re-cast and re-written on the basis of many valuable suggestions by Shri G. Jagathpathi, Superintendent of Census Operations. He has also very kindly re-written some portions of the report. I am, indeed, extremely grateful to him. I am also thankful to Sabir Hussain and R. S. Rathore from my office who have done the photography and line-drawings respectively. The graphs and charts have been ably prepared by Shri M. L. Sharma, Statistical Assistant.

BHOPAL :
The 20th November 1962.

P. K. DIXIT.

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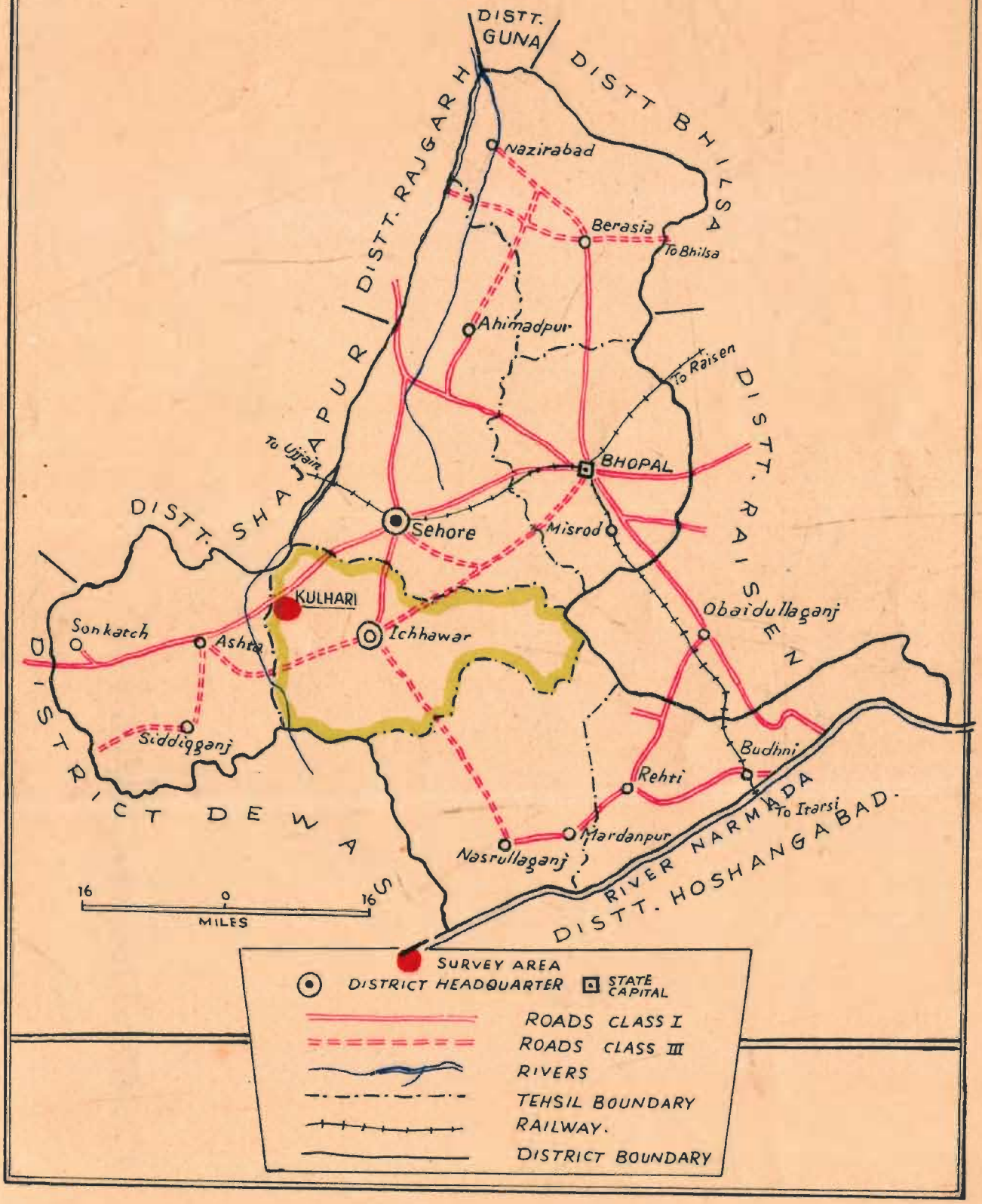
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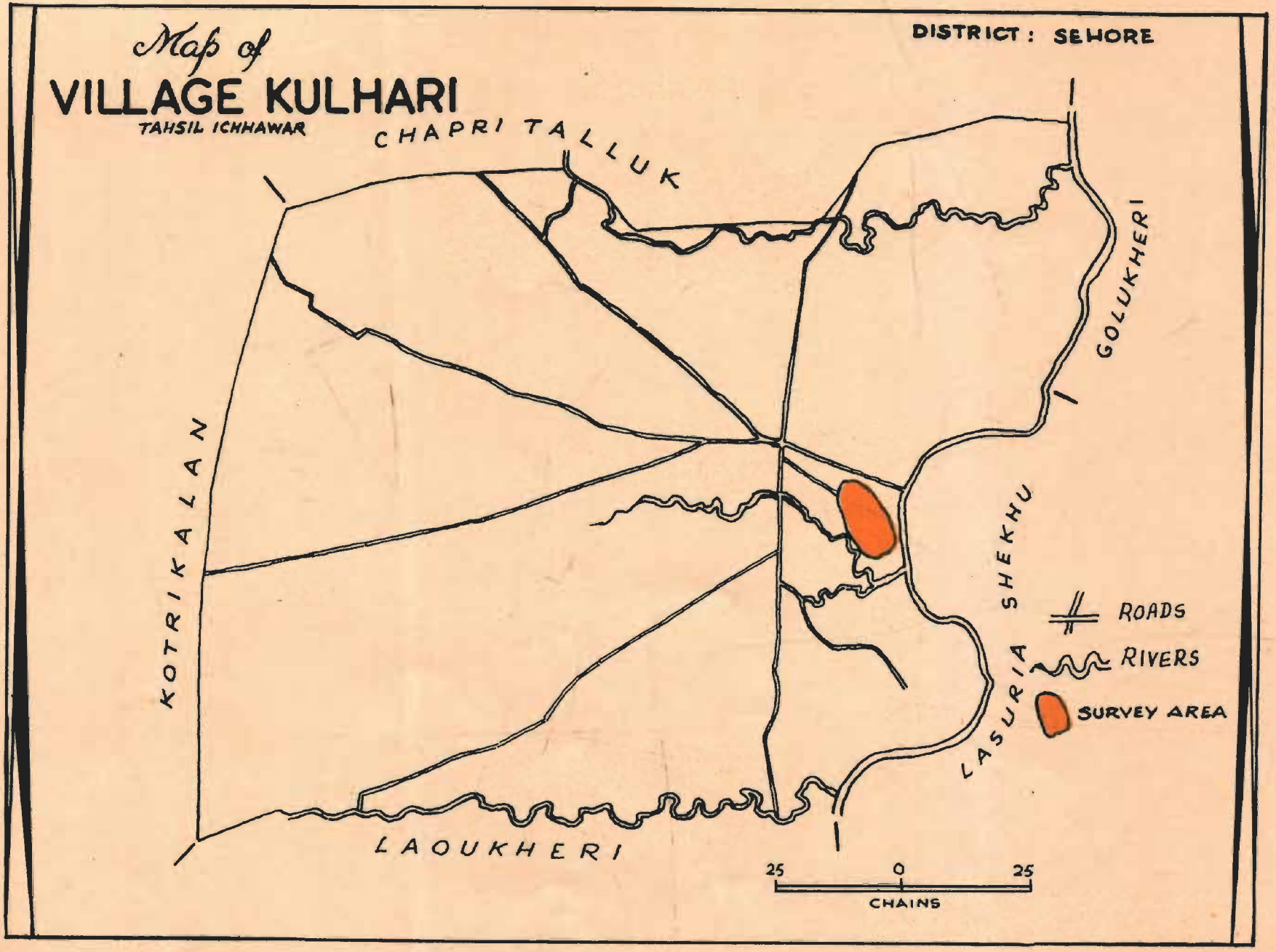
Title-cover design by B. Parganiha, Investigator

GLOSSARY OF SELECT TERMS

Amawasya	day before new moon appears.
Abadi	area of habitation.
Angarkha	cotton wear.
Barat	groom's wedding party.
Bidi	locally made cigarette.
Bittha	store-house for cow-dung cakes.
Chabutra	raised platform.
Choti	sacred tuft of hair.
Chowk	decorative design.
Chulha	cooking oven.
Dahej	dowry.
Devta	god.
Gauna	ritual in marriage cycle.
Durri	mat.
Ghee	clarified butter.
Gotra	sept.
Gur	unrefined sugar.
Hukkah	hubble-bubble pipe.
Kaccha	food not fried.
Khat	charpoy.
Lahanga	sort of petticoat.
Lahsun	garlic.
Mandap	marriage booth.
Mantras	sacred verses.
Muhurat	auspicious date.
Natra	re-marriage.
Odis	pits in river-bed.
Otala	small temple.
Pan	betel.
Prasad	food offered to deity, later distributed
Pucca	food fried in *ghee*.
Puja	worship.
Purnima	day of full moon.
Sagai	betrothal ceremony.
Shradha	propitiatory rite.
Supda	winnowing fan.
Tadi	liquor.

MAP OF DISTRICT SEHORE




Map of
VILLAGE KULHARI
TAHSIL ICHHAWAR
DISTRICT : SEHORE
CHAPRI TALLUK
GOLUKHERI
KOTRIKALAN
SHEKHU
LASURIA
LAOUKHERI
ROADS
RIVERS
SURVEY AREA
25 0 25
CHAINS

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

1. Location—The village Kulhari is situated at 23° 3′ North and 76° 54′ East at an altitude of 1670 feet (M.S.L.) in the north-western corner of the Tahsil Ichhawar, District Sehore formerly known as Nizamat-i-Maghrib (western district) in the erstwhile Bhopal State. It is 4 miles in the interior from the village Imlaha, which is on the first class metalled Bhopal-Indore Road, a distance of 36 miles from the State Capital and only 13 miles from the district headquarters. The village is covered by a community development block, Ichhawar, which is now in the post-intensive stage. On the way to Kulhari from Imlaha, at a distance of 1½ miles, is village Dhamanda upto which a pucca road has been built by villagers with the aid of block funds; over the remaining 2½ miles, however, there is only a cart-track which is open throughout the year except in the monsoon season. From the Tahsil headquarters at Ichhawar, Kulhari is 9 miles away and is connected by a fair-weather cart-track on which public buses ply during the open season. The native means of transport for personal and commercial purposes is the traditional bullock-cart. The approach to Kulhari from Imlaha gives a panoramic view as the river Ajnal winds its way through the terrain and palm trees all through its course give a beautiful line-up. The river, which is a boon to the village Kulhari, caresses it on its eastern border.

2. Origin of Village—The village is perched on an undulating surface at a slight elevation. The soil is black cotton, class II, comparatively rich, but ill-suited for construction of wells, etc., as, just after a depth of about two feet black stone is found which makes digging hard and hazardous. Nevertheless, as production of sugarcane yields high returns because of the proximity of the sugar factory at Sehore, people dig pits, 10—15 feet deep in the bed of the river which they call *odis* and irrigate their fields. The total area of the village is 1,242.64 acres.

Nothing is known as to how and when the village came to be first inhabited. There is no mention about the place in the Bhopal State Gazetteer, compiled by Captain, C. E. Luard and published in 1907. Inhabitants of the village are hardly able to say anything about the origin of the village and its present name, Kulhari which literally means an "axe". However, the guess is, that as the village is situated on the bank of the river which has long rows of palm trees, the first settlers must have cleared off the wood by axes and therefore, probably assigned it the name it has. From the accounts of people, the village appears to be 350—400 years old.

The entire village speaks Malvi.

3. Population Trends—The following table traces the growth of population of the village since 1911:—

Year	Males	Females	No. of persons	Occupied houses
1911 ..	92	63	155	33
1921 ..	76	51	127	21
1931 ..	89	90	179	34
1941 ..	90	96	186	38
1951 ..	99	86	185	43
1961 ..	141	141	282	59

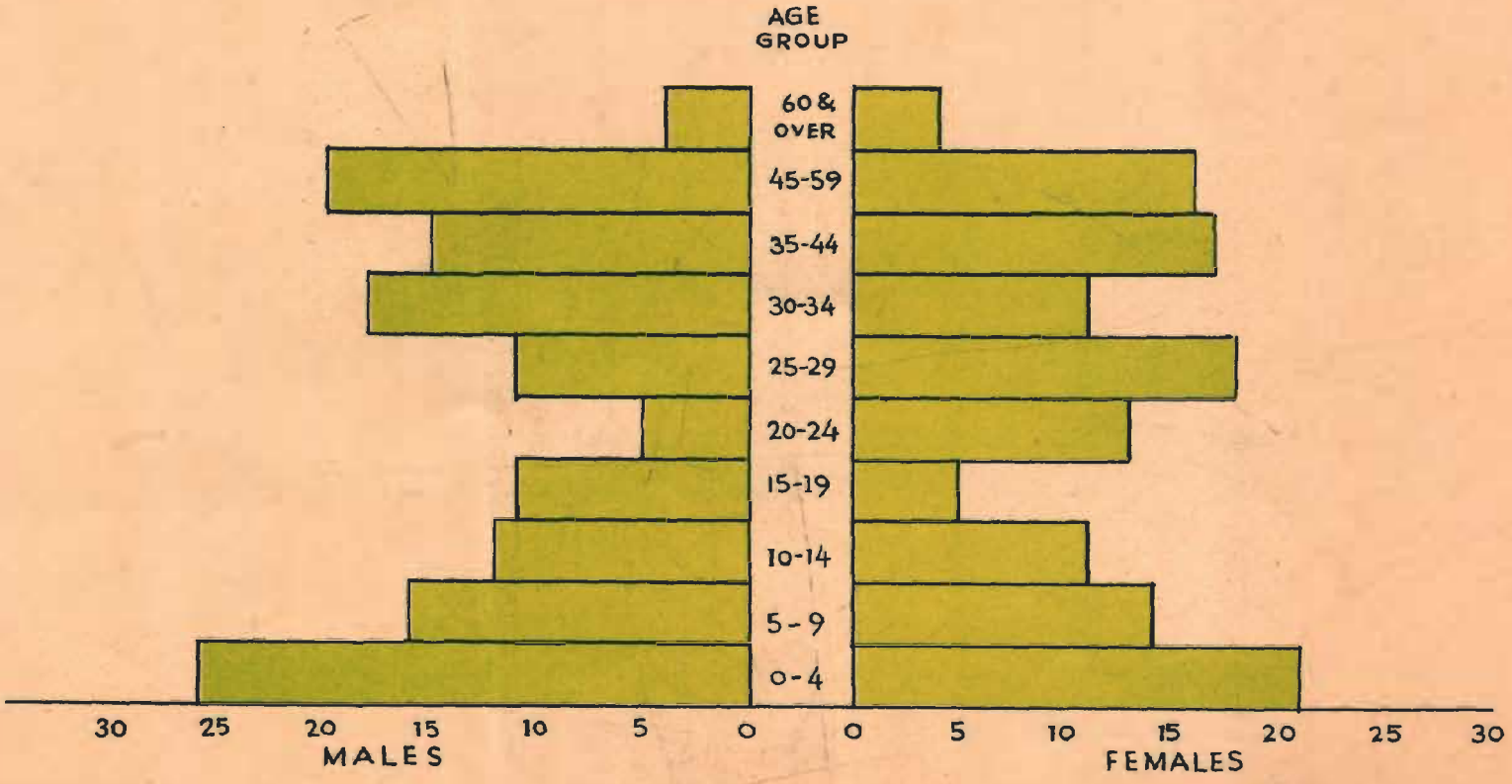
The population figures of 1921 show a fall which is quite understandable as influenza which broke out in a virulent form in 1918-19 must have taken its toll from this village also. From 1921—1951, the population has remained almost static. But, the figures for 1961 show a big spurt during the last decade, a rise of 52.43 per cent. There has been no migration to the village during the period but the high rise is ascribed to a fall in the death rate as malaria is completely controlled and the absence of epidemics. The statistics of birth and death rates over the last decade are, however, not available. The sex ratio is exactly one; males 141, females 141.

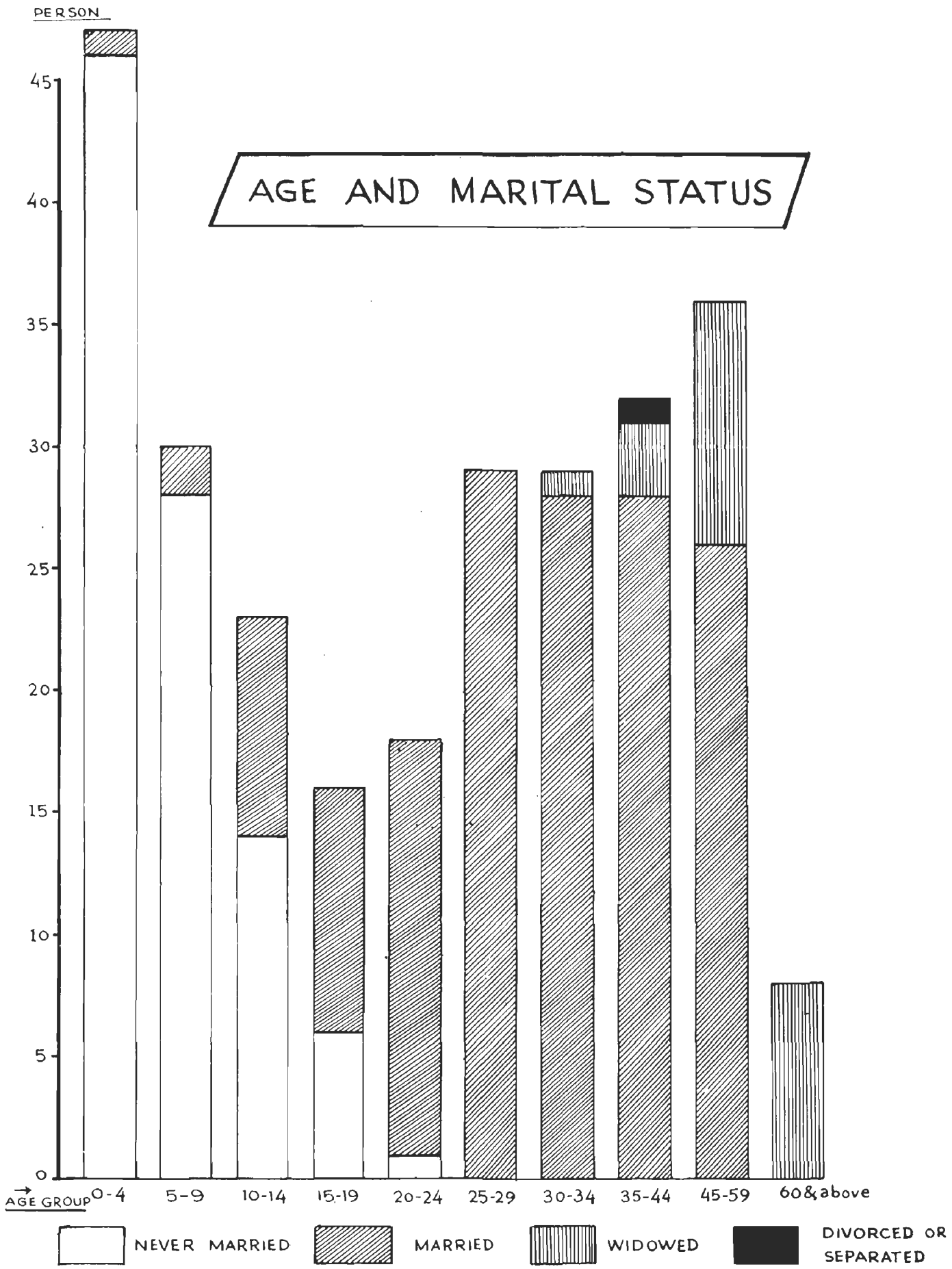
There is a slight variation in population figures, gathered from investigation in months of April-May which stand at 268; 137 males and 131 females which may be because some members of marriage parties may have stayed in the village during the entire enumeration period.

4. Literacy—Ignorance is still bliss in the village, where only 12 persons, 11 males and 1 female, out of a total of 268 persons are literates, *i.e.*, literacy is only 4.4 per cent and that too not one of them is educated upto matriculation. That there is not one person in the age-group 5—9 who is literate shows that people in the village have not seriously taken up the education of their children. There is no adult literacy centre in the village and therefore, illiteracy amongst age-groups 35—44, 45—59, 60 and above can be easily understood. Only one woman is literate. People are apathetic about educating their daughters as they have a feeling that education makes them licentious. Even in the case of boys, education just upto the stage when they can read "Ramayana" with felicity is considered adequate. Further education is considered superfluous. Table V confirms the generalisations given above.

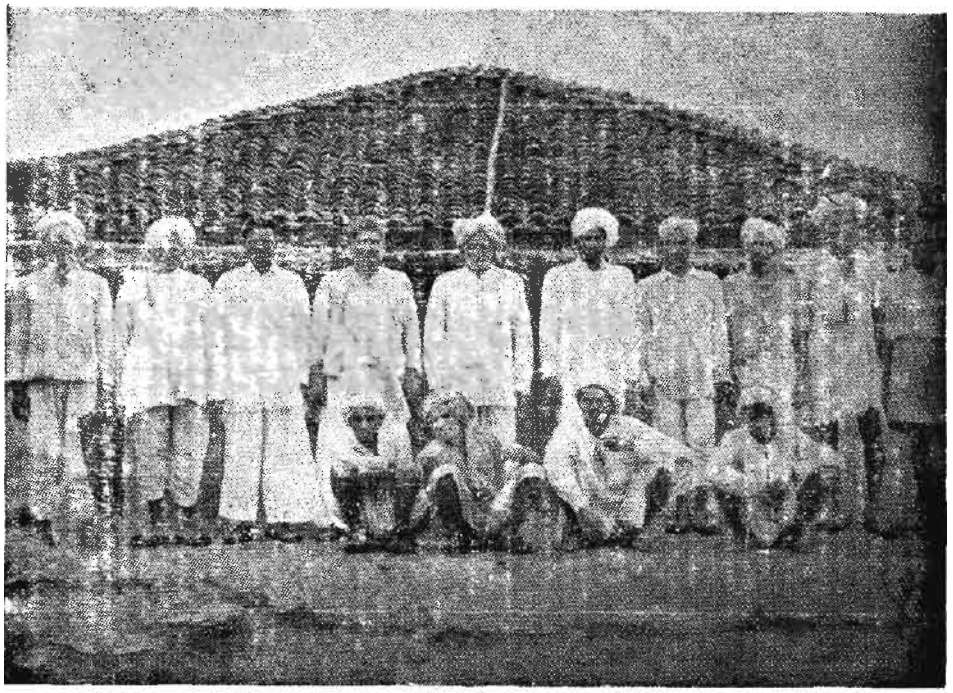
5. Age and Marital Status—Tweneyone persons in the age-group 0-19 are married which indicates that early marriages are quite common. Another relevant feature is that, upto age-group 35, there is not a single widow in the village as widow remarriages are easily arranged and widows in fact fetch double the price of virgins! It is customary for parents not to give their virgin daughters in marriage to widowers: therefore, a widower can generally marry only a widow and parents of widows demand very high prices ranging between Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000. The sex-life in the village appears to be well-balanced as there is only one person, who is living separated.

POPULATION BY AGE - GROUP

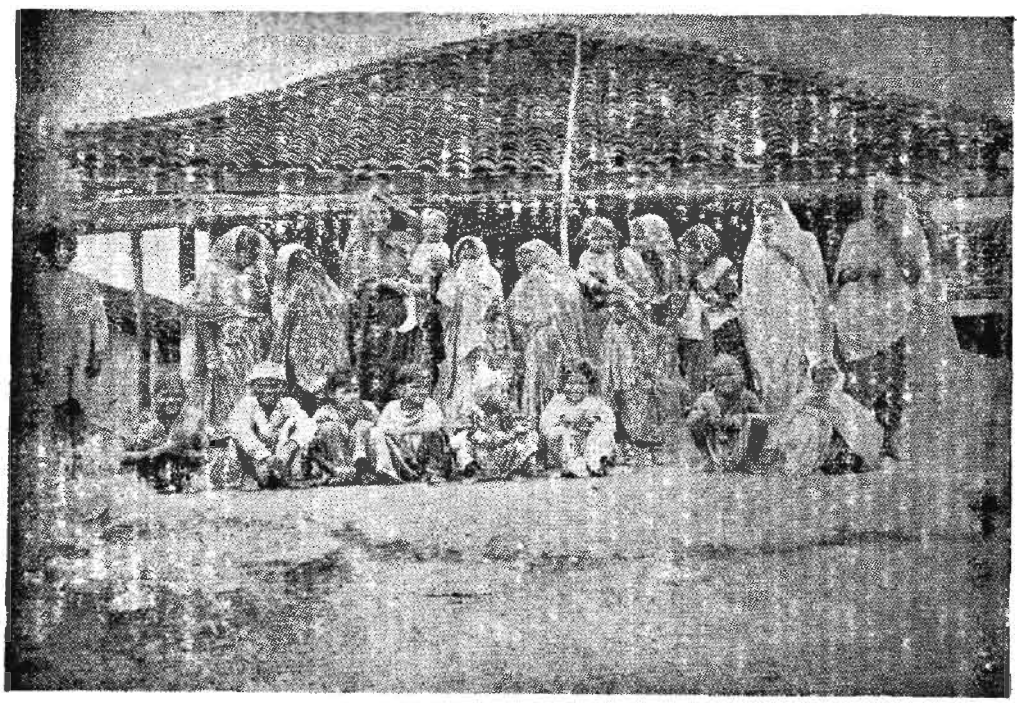



PERSON
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
AGE AND MARITAL STATUS
AGE GROUP
0-4
5-9
10-14
15-19
20-24
25-29
30-34
35-44
45-59
60&above
NEVER MARRIED
MARRIED
WIDOWED
DIVORCED OR SEPARATED

A Group of Men-folk.



A Group of Women-folk.



CHAPTER II

CASTES IN THE VILLAGE

6. Castes in the Village—Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars are the three important castes in the village, all of them belonging to the Hindu religion. In all, there are 59 households in the village, of which 28 are Gehlots, 20 Balahis and 5 Chamars, 2 Carpenters, 1 Khati, 1 Brahmin, 1 Kumhar and 1 Muslim. Balahis and Chamars, scheduled castes, number 123, 98 are Balahis and 25 Chamars. The majority is of Gehlots, who are 118 and the remaining are 7 Carpenters and 6 Muslims.

7. Gehlots—Gehlots belong to the sub-clan of Rajputs and fall in the upper stratum of Hindu Society. Authorities on the ancient history of India hold divided opinions as to the origin of Rajputs. Most are agreed that they came from beyond the northern confines of India. Col. Todd, a political officer in Rajputana more than a hundred years ago and author of that classic work, "The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan" ascribes to them a Scythic origin. Another authority maintains that the origin of many clans dates from the Saka or the Kushan invasion which began about the middle of the second century B. C. Yet another historian claims for them descent from the White Huns who destroyed the Gupta Empire in A. D. 480. The bards give various clans mystical descent from Sun, Moon and Fire. The tribes of the solar line are the Sesodias (Gehlots) of Mewar, Banswara, Dungarpur, Partabgarh and Sahapura.....The Sesodia branch of the Gehlots migrated from Gujrat and occupied what is now the south-western portion of Mewar, their earliest inscriptions being dated 645 A. D.....It is interesting to note that of the Rajput clans, only three are now represented by the ruling Princes of Rajputana, namely, the Sesodias (Gehlots), Jadaos and Chauhans.

"Of all the Hindu Rajputs found at the present time in Rajputana, 91 P. C. belong to one or other of the well-defined exogamous clans known as Bargujar, Chauhan, Gehlot, Gour, Jadov, Jhala, Kachwaha, Parihar, Ponwar, Rathor, Solanki and Tonwar. Within some of these are important subdivisions which in some cases have outnumbered the parent clan and except for the tie of exogamy, have almost a separate existence. For instance, Gehlot includes the far more numerous and important sub-division of Sesodia who rule in Mewar, Banswara, Dungarpur, Patabgarh and Shapura".[1]

About Gehlots, Rev. M. A. Sherring writes: "The tribe is descended from a child born in a cave, whose mother, a Ranee of the Royal House of the Balabhi was the only person who escaped when the city was sacked. The word "Gehlot" means "cave-born". They are one of the 31 Royal Rajput tribes". [2]

An authentic account of the origin of the tribe is found in Col. Todd's, "Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan". He says: "Atleast ten genealogical lists derived from the most opposite sources, agree in making Keneks'en the founder of this dynasty; and assign his emigration from the most northern of the provinces of India to the Peninsula of Sourashtra in A. D. 154.....Rama had two sons, Loh and Kush: from the former the Rana's family (Rana of Mewar's) claim descent. He is stated to have built Lahore, the ancient Loh-kote and the branch from which the princes of Mewar are descended resided there until Keneks'en emigrated to Dwarka. The difficulty of tracing these races through a long period of years is greatly increased by the custom of changing the appellation of the tribe, from conquest, locality or personal celebrity. Sen (army) seems to have been the martial termination for many generations; this was followed by Dit or Aditya, a term for the 'Sun'. The first change in the name of the tribe was on their expulsion from Sourashtra, when for the generic term of Sooryavanshi was substituted the particular appellation of Gehlot.....The Gehlote branch of the Sooryavanshi still retain the name of "Seesodia".

1. Census of India, 1931, Rajputana Agency Report, Page 134.

2. Hindu Tribal Castes —Vol. III, P. 35. 1881 edition.



N
W E
S

CHAMARS
BALAHIS
GEHLOTS
KHATI
BRAHMAN
SUTARS
PINJARA
KUMHAR

Village Kulhari

HOUSES SHOWING
DISTRIBUTION of CASTES

"A few generations afterwards, the capital was shifted to Balabhipura, now known in humbled condition as Balabhi, ten miles north-west of Bhownagar in Gujarat. This was sacked by an invader and of the prince's family, the queen Pooshpavati alone escaped the sack of Balabhi who sought refuge in a cave in the mountains of Mallia, where she was delivered of a son. The child was designated Goha or "cave-born". Later on, he was elected as chief by Bhils and his name became the patronymic of his descendants, who were styled Gohilote, classically Grahilote, in time softened to Gehlote". 1

The account, thus, traces the origin of Gehlots and their survival through the ages.They are now scattered all over the Malwa Plateau and are the dominant caste in the village. To be sure, they have not inherited martial tendencies from their illustrious forefathers and are simple folk engaged in agriculture. Their customs and traditions, we will have occasion to take up in detail later on.

8. Balahis (Balais)—A reference to Balahis is found thus in the 1931 Census Report of Central India Agency, Part I, "An impure caste of village watchmen, they are considered to be untouchables and live on the outskirts of the village. They have no tradition of migration and in all probability are the subjugated aborigines of Malwa and form the earliest strata of population. From time immemorial, the Balahi has been the village watchman and drudge. In the old days, a village officer and an authority on the village boundaries and everything pertaining to the village, he was 'ex-officio', the "Patel's Spy".

Balahis are mostly found in Nimar, Hoshangabad and Malwa region of the State. It is a low functional caste of weavers and village watchmen, probably an offshoot of Koris. The name is a corruption of the Hindi, Butahi, one who calls or a messenger. In the Mahakoshal region of the State, they have received accretions from the spinner caste of Katias, themselves probably a branch of the Koris and from the Mahars. In Hoshangabad District, they are alternately called Mahars, while in Burhanpur in East Nimar District, they are called 'Bunkar' or weaver by outsiders.

Social Organisation—The sub-castes or endogamous groups distinctly indicate the functional character of the caste, the names given being Nimari, Gannore, Katia, Kori and Mahar. Of these, Katia, Kori and Mahar are the names of distinct castes. Nimar Balahi are said to rank the lowest as they eat the flesh of dead cattle which others refuse to eat. The Katias weave the finer kinds of cloth and rank a little higher than the others. In Burhanpur, as already stated, the caste are known as Bunkar and they are probably identical with the Punkas of Khandesh; 'Bunkar' is simply an occupational term meaning a weaver.

Caste Restrictions—They may not draw water from a village well and unless a separate one is assigned to them, may pay others to draw water from them. At marriages, the Balahi, receives as his perquisite the leaf plates used for feasts with the leavings of food upon them and at funerals he takes the cloth which covers the corpse on its way to the burning ghat.

Marriage—The caste have the usual system of exogamous groups such of which have names after villages, while the designations of others are apparently nick-names given to the founder of the clan as Bagmar, Bhagona, etc. They employ a Brahmin to draw the horoscopes of a bridal couple and fix the date of their wedding, but if he says the marriage is inauspicious, they merely obtain the permission of the caste panchayat and celebrate it on a Saturday or Sunday. Apparently, however, they do not consult real Brahmins but merely priests of their own castes whom they call Balahi Brahmans. After marriage, a girl goes to her husband's house for a few days and returns. The first Diwali or *Akhatij* festival after the wedding must also be passed at the husband's house but consummation is not effected until the *gauna ceremony* is performed on her attainment of puberty. Bride price is paid. A widow is forbidden to marry her late husband's brother or other relatives. At the wedding, she is dressed in new clothes and the foreheads of the couple are marked with cow-dung as a sign of purification. Then they proceed by night to the husband's place; she enters her husband's house carrying two water-pots on her head as a token of fertility which she is to bring to it.

1. Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan—Vol. I. Pages 178—184.

Caste Admissions—The Balahis will admit any Hindu into the community except a man of the very lowest caste and also Gonds and Korkus. The neophyte is shaved clean and made to lie on the ground under a string-cot, a number of Balahis sit on this cot and wash themselves letting the water drip from their bodies drenching the man below; he then gives a feast to the caste fellows and is considered to have become a Balahi. It is reported that they will also receive back into the community Balahi women who have lived with men of other castes and even Jains and Mohammedans.

9. Chamars—Chamars are cobblers and are regarded as 'untouchables'. But, Chamars in this village do not fall in the functional pattern and are all engaged in agriculture.

Russel and Hiralal describe them as "The caste of tanners and menial labourers of Northern India. The name is derived from the Sanskrit, Charmkara, a worker in leather and according to classical tradition, the chamar is the offspring of a chandal or sweeper woman by a man of the fisher caste". 1

"The Chamars", Sir H. Risley states, "trace their own pedigree to Ravi or Raidas, the famous disciple of Ramanand at the end of the 14th century. Another tradition current among them alleges that their original ancestor was the youngest of four brothers who went to bathe in a river and found a cow struggling in quicksand. They sent the youngest in to rescue the animal, but before he could get to the spot it had been drowned. He was compelled therefore, by his brothers to remove the carcass and after he had done this, they turned him out of their caste and gave him the name of chamar". 2.

Sir H. Risley considers that "The average chamar is hardly distinguishable in point of features. stature or complexion from the members of those non-Aryan races from whose ranks we should primarily expect the profession of leather-dressers to be recruited". 3. Again, Sir Henry Eliot writing of the chamars of North-West Provinces says. "Chamars are reputed to be a dark race and a fair chamar is said to be as rare an object as a black brahman". The saying is:—

"Karia Brahman, Gor Chamar,

Inke sath na utariye par".

"Do not cross a river in the same boat with a black brahman or a fair chamar, both being of evil omen".

The caste is divided into a large number of exogamous groups or sections, whose names as might be expected present a great diversity of character. Some are borrowed from Rajput clans like Rilwar and Bakodia in this village.

Marriage—A man must not take a wife from his own section nor in some localities from that of his mother or either of his grand-mothers. Generally, the union of first cousins in prohibited. Adult marriage is the rule, but those who wish to improve their social position have taken to disposing of their daughters at an early age. Matches are always arranged by the parents and it is the business of the boy's father to find a bride for his son. The bride price is generally in the range of one hundred to two hundred rupees these days.

Widow marriage and divorce—Widows commonly remarry and may take for their second husband anybody they please, except their own relatives and their late husband's elder brothers and ascendant relations. When a widow marries a second time, her first husband's property remains with his family and also the children; unless they are very young, when the mother may keep them for a few years and subsequently send them back to their father's relatives.

Funeral Customs—Russel and Hiralal say, "The caste usually bury the dead with their feet to the North like Gonds and other aboriginal tribes, under the belief that heaven lies in the North". 4. But, this practice is not prevalent in this village, who like Gehlots and Balahis, cremate dead bodies.

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1. Castes and Tribes in C. P. and Berar—Vol. II, Page 409 Russel and Hiralal.
2. Tribes and Castes of Bengal —H.Risley.
3. *Ibid*, Page 409.
4. *Ibid.*

Social Status—They rank at the very bottom of the social scale and contact with his person is considered to be a defilement by high-caste Hindus. He can not draw water from a common well.

The caste do not employ Brahmins for their ceremonies, but consult them for the selection of auspicious days as this business can be performed by the Brahmin at home and he need not enter the Chamar's house.

10. Other Castes—Of other castes, there are only two households of Sutars (Carpenters), one Brahmin, one Khati, one Kumhar, and one Pinjara (Muslim).

11. Caste heirarchy—Caste divisions in the village are rigid as of yore and determine all social relations. There is no tendency in the village towards social deviation by changing caste names. The following statement of caste-hierarchy will be found useful:—

Caste	Higher Caste	Lower Caste
1. Brahmin ..	..	Khati. Gehlot. Sutars (Carpenters). Kumhar (Potter). Balahi. Chamar.
2. Khati	Brahmin	Gehlot. Sutar (Carpenter). Kumhar (Potter). Balahi. Chamars.
3. Gehlot	Brahmin, Khati ..	Sutar (Carpenter). Kumhar (Potter). Balahi. Chamar.
4. Sutar	Brahmin, Khati, Gehlot	Kumhar (Potter). Balahi. Chamar.
5. Kumhar	Brahmin, Khati, Gehlot, Sutar (Carpenter).	Chamar. Balahi.
6. Balahi	Brahmin, Khati, Gehlot, Sutar (Carpenter), Kumhar (Potter).	Chamar.
7. Chamar	All other castes	Nil.

Brahmins are unanimously considered as belonging to the highest caste and Chamars to the lowest. If in a village Chamars do not inhabit, then Balahis undoubtedly occupy the bottom. Chamars consider themselves superior to Balahis and Balahis consider themselves superior to Chamars. But, people of other castes place Chamars at the bottom. About the origin of Khatis, little is known but they are acknowledged to be superior to Gehlots, Sutars and Kumhars. How far this is due to their superior financial position, may be a very interesting subject of study as Khatis in this region are all wealthy and considered to be the best agriculturists. Khatis are fair-looking and their women are known for their fine and handsome features.

The interesting thing to note is that the only Muslim family in the village, is accorded a position higher than scheduled castes of Balahis and Chamars. Thus, while the Muslim family will sit in the same *khat* (charpoy used for sleeping as well as sitting and resting purposes in the village) with Gehlots, Khatis and Brahmins; Balahis and Chamars will sit on the floor in the courtyard and will not be allowed entry inside the house. Chamars have a separate well for themselves, but Balahis have their own pride and will not draw water from it. They depend on river water as they do not have a well exclusively for themselves and can not draw water from wells of Gehlots. Brahmins, Khatis, Sutars, Kumhars and Gehlots draw water from a common source.

Adrian C. Mayer has very truly said, "The ranking of castes is nowhere more clearly seen than in the commensal rules of eating, drinking and smoking". 1 He further observes, "The commensal hierarchy is based on the theory that each caste has a certain quality of ritual purity which is lessened or polluted by certain commensal contacts with castes having an inferior quality". 2. Gehlots will not touch food at a Chamar or Balahi's house; but Chamars and Balahis will take both *kaccha* and *pucca* food at Gehlots'. Khatis will not eat at a Gehlot's house while Gehlots will do so at a Khati's place. While the higher castes will unhesitatingly sit with the Muslim family, it is not invited at marriages and other festivals for eating together.

In smoking, the *bidi* has replaced the traditional *hukka* and has found favour with one and all. When people sit together, it is customary to pass on the *bidi* to another after one or two puffs. But, caste-exclusiveness is strictly maintained in this. Thus, a Gehlot will pass on his *bidi* to another Gehlot only and not to a Khati or a Sutar or a Kumhar.

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1. Caste and Kinship in the Central India--Adrian C. Mayer, P. 59.
2. *Ibid* P. 33.

CHAPTER III

HEALTH, SANITATION AND DWELLINGS

12. Health, Sanitation and Drainage—There is not a single public latrine or urinal in village and most of the people go in the nearby fields for the purpose. Water channels (for drainage) do not exist and even little rains make the village lanes puddled and slushy. Luckily, the village is situated at an elevated level and water finds its outlet naturally. No medical facilities, indigenous or allopathic are available and there is no mid-wife to attend to maternity cases except one local untrained 'dai'. No Vaidya, Unani or Ayurvedic, practises or resides in the place. For medical treatment, people mostly depend on the block dispensary at village Dhamanda, 2½ miles from the place. The nearest maternity hospital is at Ichhawar. But, the general health of the people is satisfactory and, in the last decade, epidemics have never broken out. People feel that malaria has been greatly controlled now and, as D. D. T. is regularly sprayed, cases of malaria are very few; otherwise, malaria used to severely affect them during the rainy season which in turn used to affect their agricultural operations also.

Cattle-diseases also have been controlled to an appreciable extent. The whole village has been covered by the anti-rinderpest scheme. But, there is no artificial insemination or key-village centre nor pedigree bulls for improving livestock. The total pasturage is 97.85 acres while cattle heads are 317. The pasturage may be said to be adequate for the present. Stall feeding of cattle is not done.

The common source of drinking water is wells, but Balahis who number 98, do not have a well exclusively for themselves and still depend on river water all the year round for drinking and other purposes. One consoling feature is that river water is not used directly, but a *jhiria* is made in the river bed, *i.e.,* a little away from the main stream, a pit is dug where river water appears through percolation and is comparatively pure. During the months of May and June, wells become dry and then the entire village depends on these *jhirias* for their drinking and other needs.

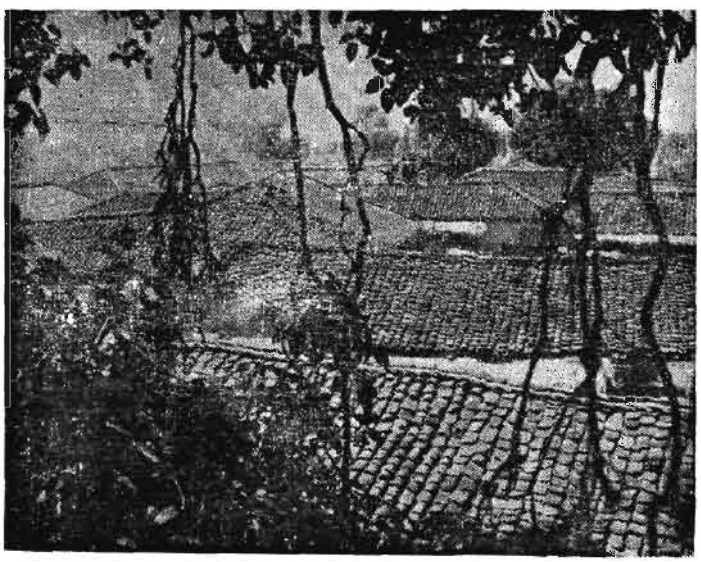
People bathe only once in two-three days though the river flows close-by, hardly 100 yards away from the *abadi.* They could not ascribe any reason for this delinquency. It is just solvenliness. Soap is an unknown commodity, black earth is used for cleaning bodies. Oil is applied on the hair only. Some women prefer *ghee,* (clarified butter) as this fixes hair for some days and avoids the botheration of daily attending to hair.

The clothes are also washed only when a bath is taken. Washing soap and washing soda are not used: only a wooden piece about 1½ feet in length and 6" to 9" in width, called *mongra* is used for beating the clothes for cleaning. When dried up, clothes are not ironed and pressed. White clothes like dhoti, therefore, appear only dull white. Women seldom wear white clothes and dirt is, therefore, easily concealed in the gay-coloured apparel.

When a cut or wound is sustained on the body, first-aid is rendered by applying kerosene oil or red chilly is fried and applied after wrapping in a piece of cloth. In case of high fever, *gur,* boiled in milk is taken unless it becomes unavoidable to see the compounder in the nearby village. For common colds, they take fried *lahsun* with vegetables.

The morning hygiene is not an important matter with people. Daily cleaning of teeth is not done by *neem* or *babul* twigs or any other dentifrice; cow-dung ash is used for the purpose.

13. Dwellings—There are as many residential houses as are the households in the village. The picture below shows a general view of the houses from the top of a tree and will confirm the statement that houses are in a cluster, in a compact area. All the houses appearing in the picture, have *desi* tiles; which are flat and have partly to be replaced every



A view of houses

year. These tiles are made by villagers themselves. It is not a practice to have what we call windows in a house, but some houses have a few openings left out in walls at high points near the roof which serve as ventilators. In one or two houses, such openings have been left just above the doors.

All the houses are *kaccha* whose average life, without repairs, is about 12 years; but if maintained properly and repaired regularly, it is believed that they last for roughly 20 years. The material of walls consists of earth in which is mixed wheat straw; and plastering is done by yellow earth mixed with straw. The roofing is commonly done with *desi* tiles, only one house in the village has roofing of dried sugar-cane stems and other leaves. Not a single house is a rented one. The average cost of a house ranges between Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,000. The building material *i.e.*, desi tiles, earth, straw and timber are all easily available. For rafters, teak is used; if it is not available, wood from palm trees. Generally, a plinth of two-three feet height is given. In the foundation black stones are put.

Out of a total of 59 households, 48 are living in houses which have only one room, apart from kitchens and cattle-sheds, 7 are living in two-roomed houses, 2 in three-roomed houses, 1 in a four-roomed house and 1 in a five-roomed house. This is an unfailing indicator of the poverty of the people. There are 24 households where 4—6 persons share one sleeping room and 17 households where 2—3 persons share one sleeping room. Thus, there is no privacy in a house. When family planning methods are thought of for the teeming villages of the country, the inadequacy of privacy in an average house needs to be well remembered.

Similarly, there is no privacy between the houses as well. A quarrel among the members of the house can never remain a family affair but soon gets currency as the houses are close to each other and very often the walls separating them are common.

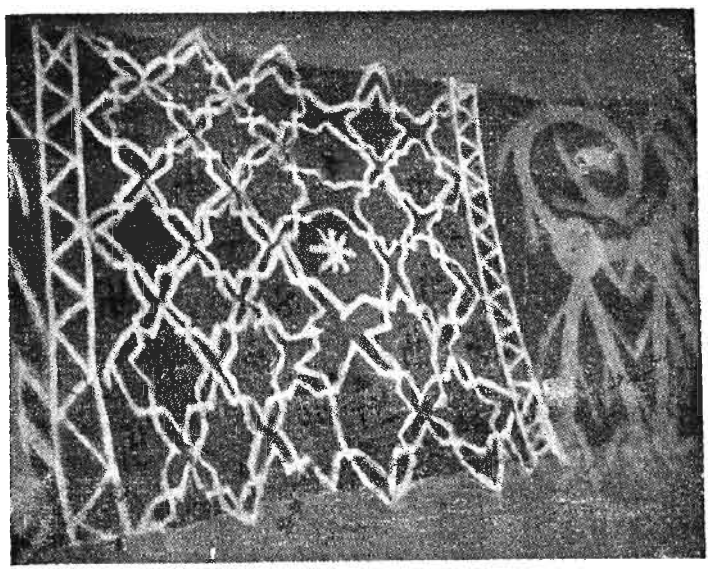
Without exception, a kitchen is the darkest room in every house of the village; in fact the darkness is so manifest that it becomes difficult to guess whether it is day or night. Cooking is done with the help of the light of burning fuel even in daytime. At the time of laying the foundation of a house, first the *muhurat, i.e.,* an auspicious date is fixed by a pundit and, on this date, mother earth is worshiped by the head of the household at the site of the house before any pick-axe is used and *gur,* is distributed to all persons present. As far as practicable, the entrance of a house does not face the south. When the construction of a house is completed, before occupying it, *Satyanarayan Katha* is held and *prasad* distributed to all men and women.

The houses on the two sides of the main road of the village generally face each other and the houses of three important castes, Gehlots, Chamars and Balahis are in separate but closely linked clusters. Entering the village from the north and along the main road, one finds that the first cluster of houses belongs to Balahis, next in the heart of the village are the Gehlots, whose houses can be easily identified by the distinctive fancy patterns on the exterior of the walls and at the end of the village are Chamars. These patterns are generally painted on the exterior of sidewells by *geru* (red chalk) or white *khidia mitti*. As the pictures on the right indicate, these patterns are cleverly done and houses look picturesque. Gehlots could not assign any reason for this, but thought they did it only because it lends gaiety to houses and they particularly do it with exuberant gusto at the time of marriages in their families.

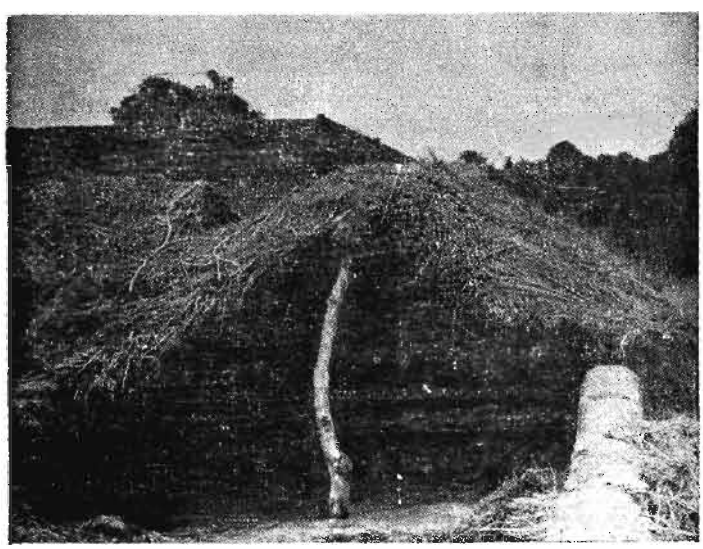


Picturesque paintings on walls of houses.

The houses of scheduled castes, Balahis and Chamars are at the two ends of the village *abadi* but not segregated from the main basti, and, though they are in separate clusters, these clusters are closely linked together.



A few families have built their cattle-sheds separately near these houses, where space was available for the purpose. The picture on the right shows two such cattle-sheds in the foreground. The height of such cattle-sheds in the middle is hardly 5-6 feet; the height of sidewalls which are *kaccha* is about 2-3 feet and roofing is of sun-dried sugarcane stems. There are no compost pits near about to make use of cow-dung and urine, cow-dung is used for making cow-dung cakes (used as fuel) but urine goes to waste.

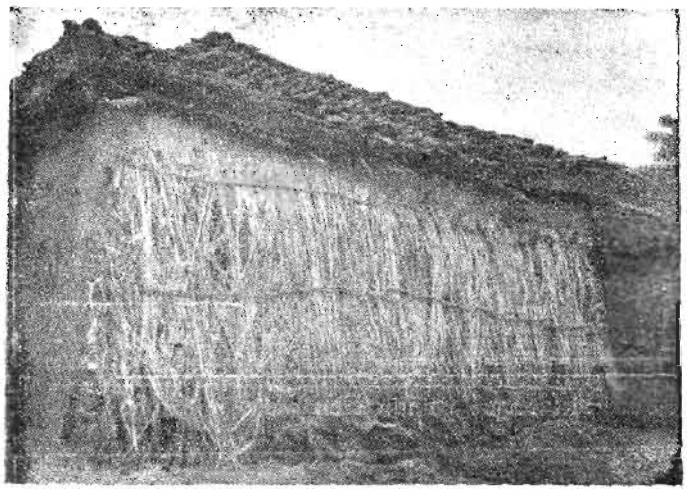


Cattle-Sheds

Mention here must be made of the practice of protecting house-walls from rains. Pegs are permanently fixed in outside walls. From hemp, a sort of a mat about 9″ thick is made just sufficient in size to cover the exterior of the walls which has to take the pressure of the shower. This mat is

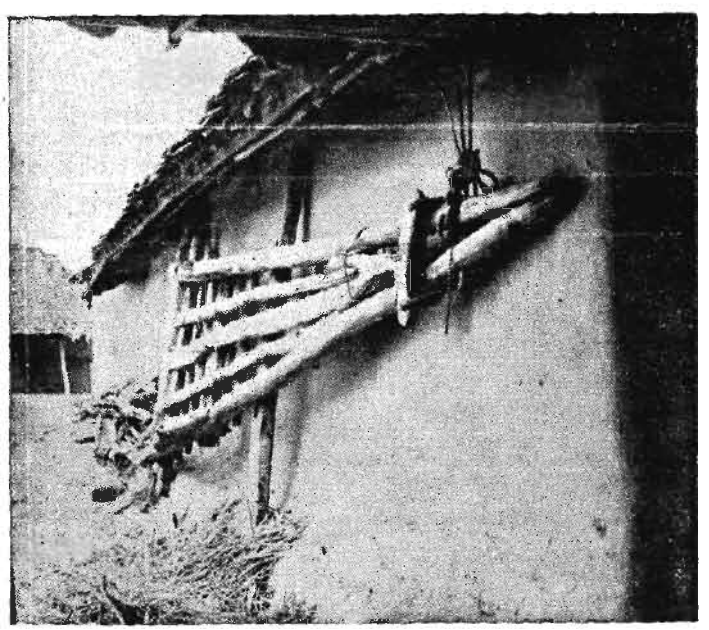
hung on the pegs of the walls and removed after the monsoon is over.

The picture below shows one such mat hung on wall pegs for protection from rains.



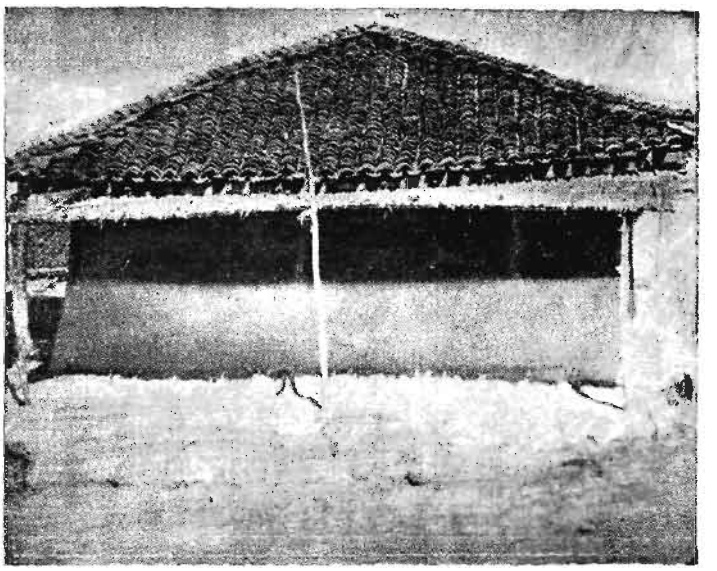
Hemp mat used for protection of walls.

During the rainy season, bullock-carts fall into dis-use in the village and the body of the bullock-carts is dismantled and hung on the sides of walls in the manner indicated in the picture below. This is generally done, for want of space inside the houses.

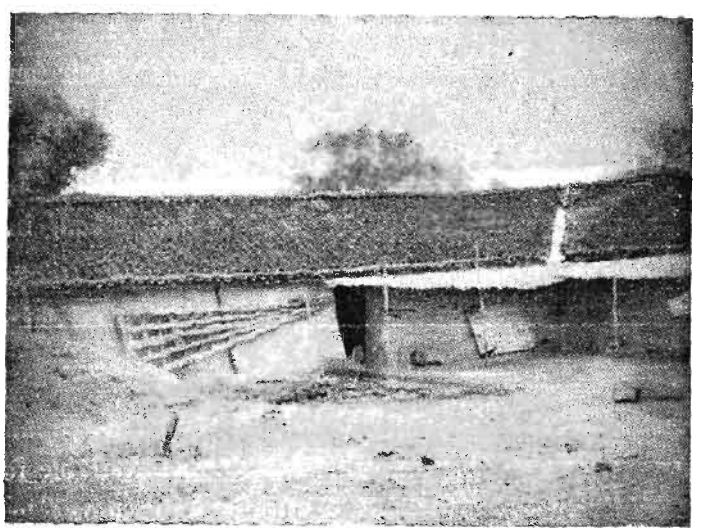


Body of bullock-cart hung on the wall.

14. House of a well-to-do family—The two pictures on the right show the front and the continuation



House of a well-to-do family



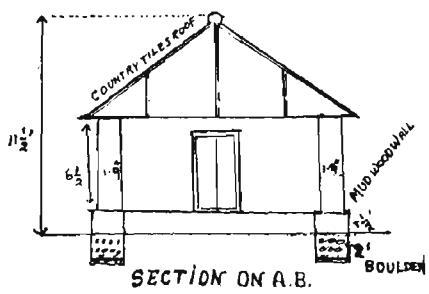
of the house of Prem Narain Khati, acknowledged as a rich person in the village. The house is *kaccha*, the walls are of mud, rafters of teak wood and roofing, of *desi* tiles. The first picture shows the portion of the house used for dwelling purposes. Obviously the construction is not based on any plan. In the front, there is a 3 feet high wall; a door for entrance has been provided from the right side.

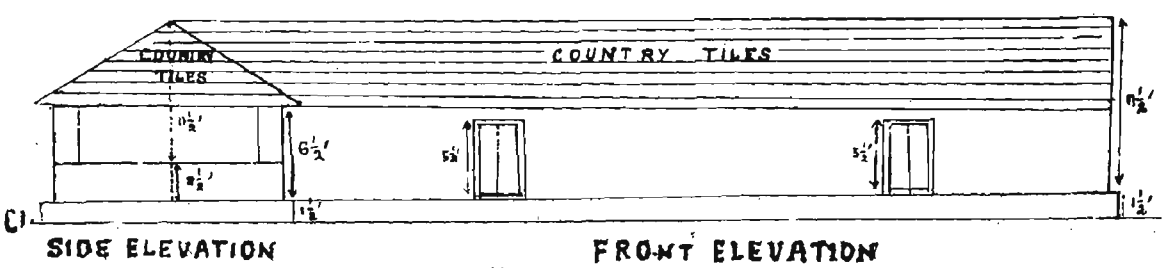
The second picture shows the house in continuation, used as cattle-shed and the body of the bullock-cart, hung on the wall, is clearly visible. On the right corner tin-sheets have been fixed up by the owner which serve as an improvised verandah for sleeping purposes.

PRAIMNARAIN'S HOUSE

(Showing front and side elevations)

(SCALE. 1" 10')





The picture below vividly brings out the curved nature of the side-wall Walls have no sharp edges and, as bricks are not used, they are not straight.



As bricks are not used, walls are not straight.

15. House of a middle-class family—The two pictures on the next page, show the house of Raghunath Chamar, a middle-class-family. There is no separate cattle-shed and just with the help of four supporting pillars and roofing of sugarcane stems, an extension in front of the house has been made to serve as a cattle-shed. Protection to the wall in front from rains has been provided according to the general practice. Wall is *kaccha* and roofing of *desi* tiles. The second picture brings into prominence the fact that the wall is not straight and there are no sharp edges at ends. The plinth is only 1 foot high.

16. House of a poor family—This is the house of Rajakhan, a poor person: the two pictures, on the next page tell the story. It is long one-room house, with one door and one ventilator in front, walls of mud and roofing of dried *khakra* (Butea Frondosa) and sugarcane stems, rafters of palm wood locally cut by the owner himself. The same room is used for cooking, sleeping, living and also as a cattle-shed. The second picture shows the curved nature of wall and clearly brings out the details of roofing. *Khakra* leaves can be seen protruding. At the time of roofing first *khakra* leaves are arranged and, above them, dried sugarcane leaves are so cleverly arranged that rain water slides away. To ensure that the roof is not blown away by wind, unshapely pieces of log are put in the roof at some places. As the wall is not protected from rains, holes are visible.

A strange practice in the village is that of making *bittha* which may appropriately be called a store-house for cow-dung cakes.

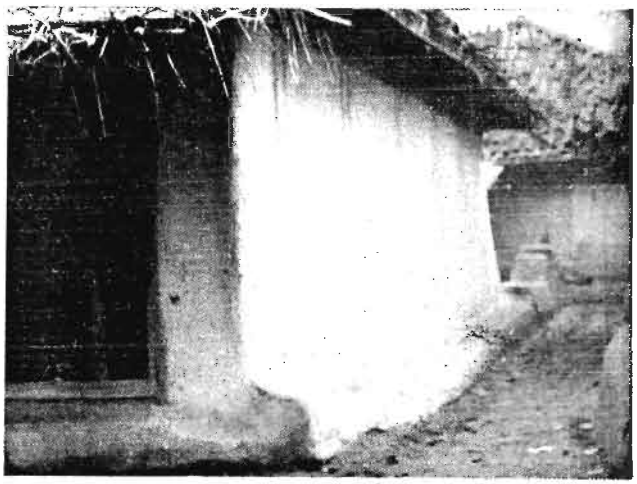


A 'Bittha'

The picture above shows one such *bittha* prominently. The method of making a *bittha* is simple. Cow-dung cakes are stacked on the ground and, on all sides and the top, plastered with cow-dung mixed with straw. Then, at the top, logs are placed, mud is simply pasted and dried leaves fixed thereon. A *bittha* is not more than four-feet high and the circular dark ring in the front is the way to the *bittha* which is closed by cow-dung, after removing cakes whenever necessary.

HOUSE OF A MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY





HOUSE OF A POOR FAMILY

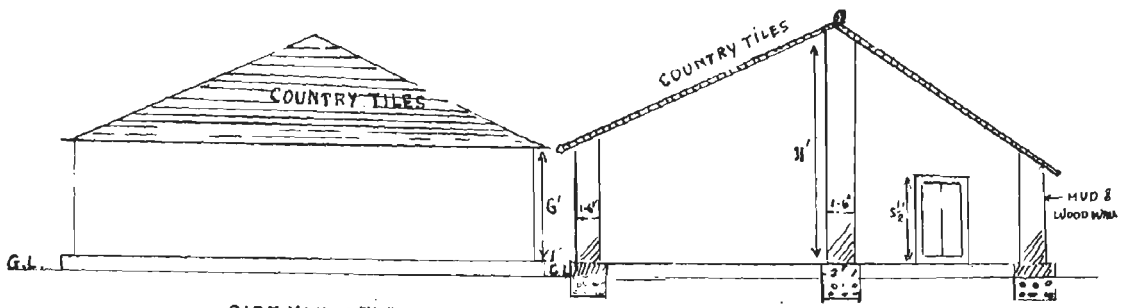


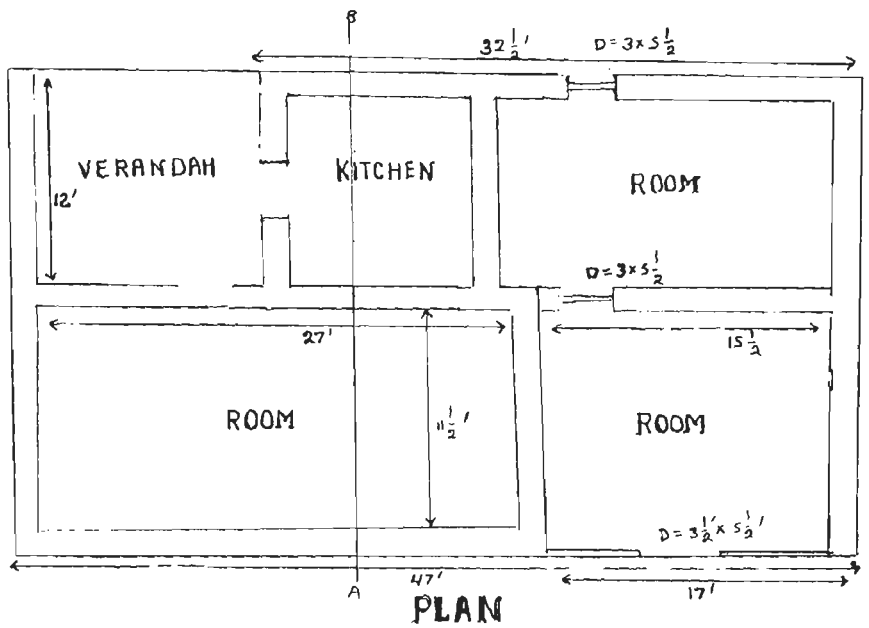


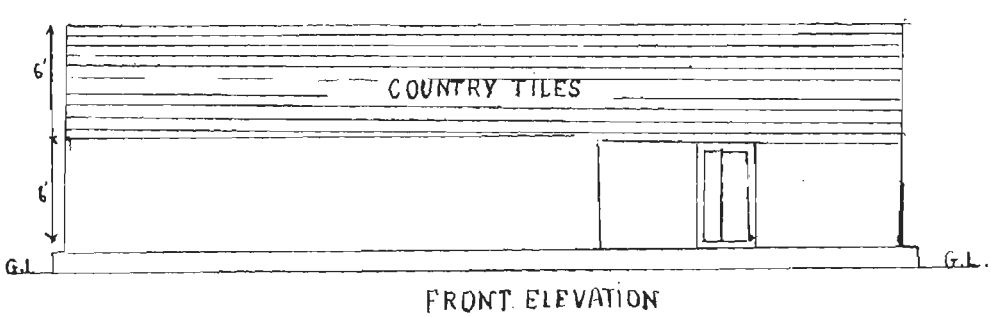
RAGHUNATH'S HOUSE

(Showing front and side elevations)

SCALE: 1" = 8'



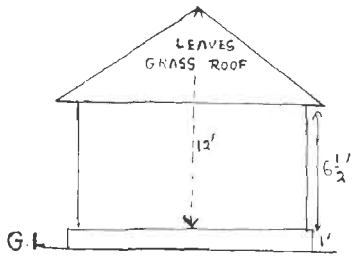




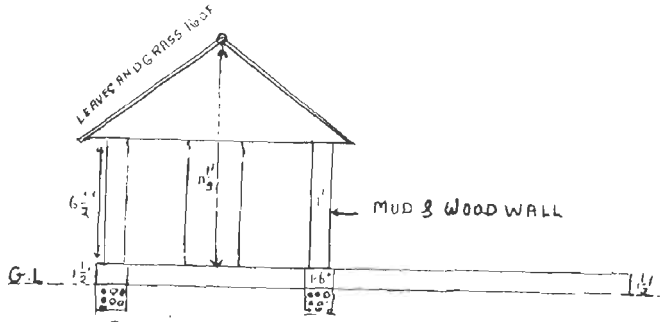
RAJAKHAN'S, HOUSE

(showing front and side elevations)

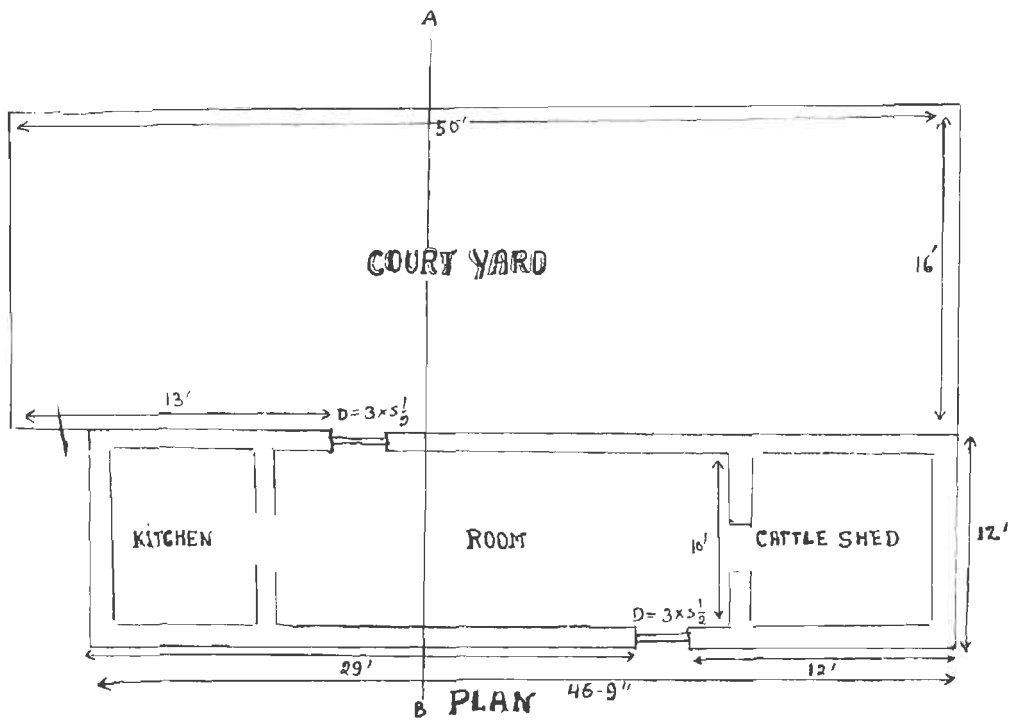
(SCALE. 1" 8')

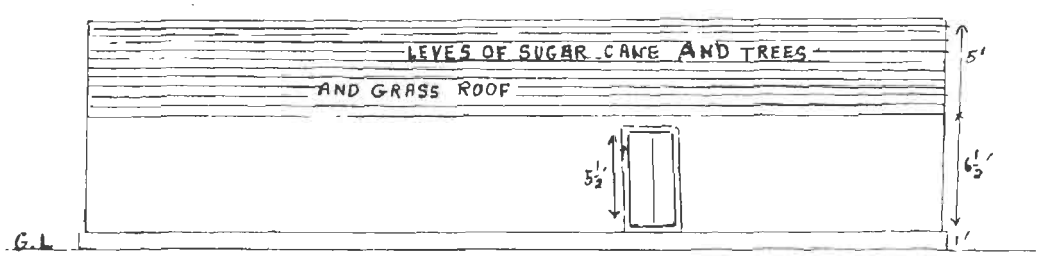


SIDE ELEVATION



SECTION ON A.B





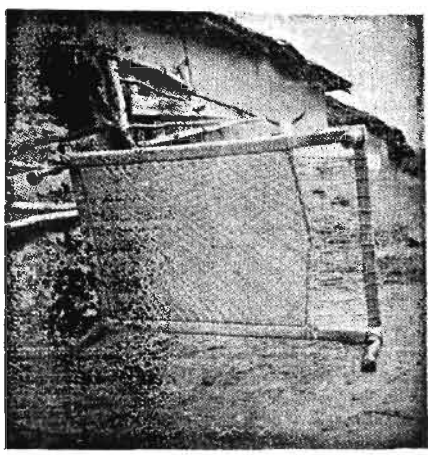
FRONT ELEVATION

The picture on the right shows these *bitthas* on the outskirts of the village on government land reserved for pasturage. It may be noted that these *bitthas* have no marks of identification and villagers identify them as they identify their cattle. Their size varies according to the cattle-wealth of the families.

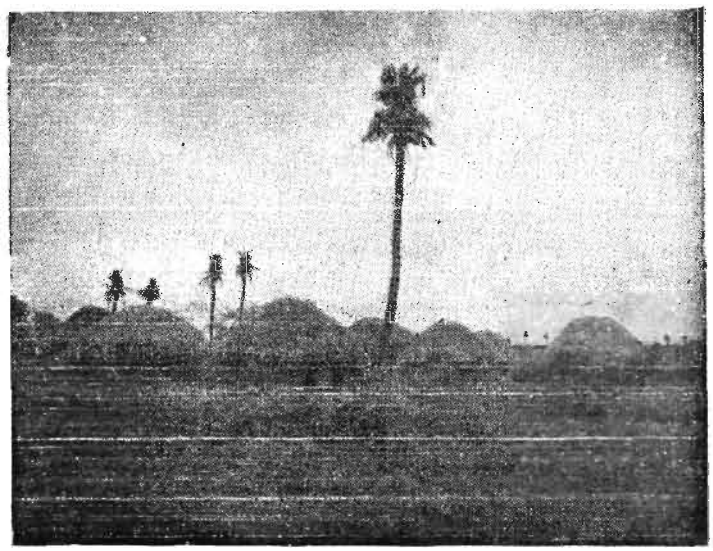
18. Furniture and utensils—There is no semblance of furniture in the entire village. The *khat* which is used for sleeping, is also used for sitting and resting during the day. If there are many guests, all people sit on a *durri* or a mat, made at home of palm leaves.

The picture below shows a *khat,* the rope for which is made by villagers themselves out of hemp grown in their fields. This rope is quite sturdy and lasts 8 to 10 years and is so closely woven, that it makes a *khat* as comfortable as a *niwar* bed.

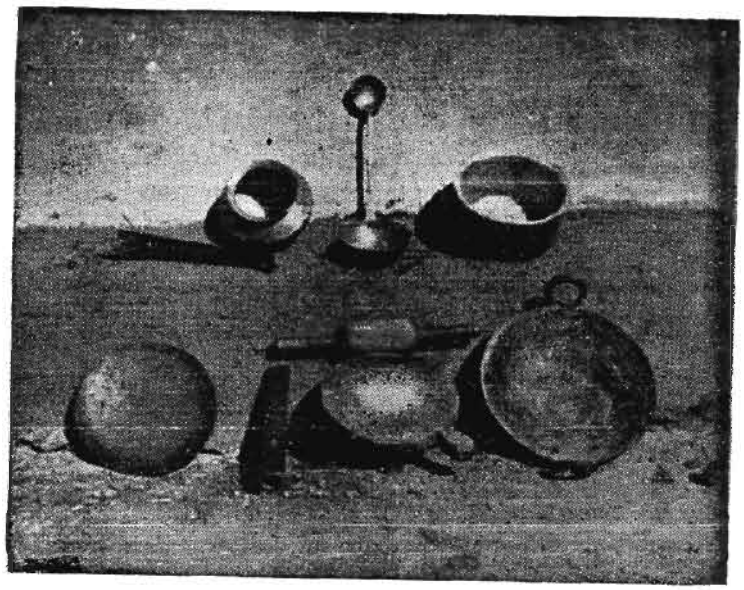
As for utensils, mostly brass utensils commonly used in an average Indian house are used and there is nothing particular to mention about them. The picture on the right shows the common cooking utensils.



Khat - made with rope prepared by the villagers themselves.



'Bitthas' on the outskirts of the village.



Common cooking utensils.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

19. Detailed description of Gehlots—As mentioned earlier, the three important communities in the village are; Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars, professing the same religion. The striking feature of the village life is harmony and a sense of oneness which bind them. Adrian C. Mayer rightly observes: "It would be a mistake to think of the village as a mere collection of separate caste groups. For many of the people's interests centre inside the village and provide village-wide participation in some events (*e.g.* the major festivals of the year).....The closeness is based on daily contacts in work and/or residence". 1. Balahis and Chamars have adapted themselves to such an extent that the customs and culture of the dominant caste, Gehlots, are now their customs and culture. In fact, from dress, ornaments and their way of living, it is impossible to distinguish one community from the other. It is, therefore, proposed to cover dress, ornaments, rites at birth, death and marriage of Gehlots only in detail and, where there is a variation, that will be particularly mentioned. In fact, it may be very instructive, if a comparative study of customs of Balahis and Chamars in this village is made with their counterparts in villages where these castes are dominant.

20. Dress and Ornaments—The common wear for males in an *angarkha* or a *salukha* above the waist, a dhoti below the waist and a turban (made-up head-dress) on the head. *Angarkha* is full-sleeved cotton wear, with one button at the neck and two buttons in front. This is worn all the year round, but in winter, inside *angarkha,* a cotton jacket is also worn. *Salukha* is half-sleeved with three-four buttons in front. The village patel in the picture on the right is seen wearing an *angarkha,* and a turban on the head. The length of the turban cloth is amazing generally 150 feet. But, this type of turban is used only on festive occasions and when they go as guests. Remarking about this, Russel and Hiralal have observed, "The most distinctive feature of a Rajput dress was formerly his turban; the more voluminous and heavy this was, the greater distinction attached to the bearer. The cloth was wound



Village Patel wearing "Angarkha" and a turban.

in many folds above the head, or cocked over one ear as a special mark of pride. An Englishman once remarked to the Minister of the Rao of Kutch on the size and weight of his turban, when the latter replied, "Oh, this is nothing, it only weighs fifteen pounds". 2. The turban normally used is of much smaller length.

1. Caste and Kinship in Central India, Page 132.
2. Tribes and Castes of the C. P., Page 426.

Wearing it is an art in itself. The picture on the next page brings out of the distinctive features of these dresses. However, shirts in place of *angarkha* or *salukha*, and the cap in place of the turban are also coming into vogue now. There is no difference



The bridegroom

in the dresses worn normally and those worn on festive occasions, during marriages, etc. The only difference is that people, who can afford to do so, use silk clothes in place of cotton ones during festive occasions. Nylon clothes have not yet entered the village. At the time of marriages the bride-groom wears **bandi-shirt-coat**, a sort of a double-breasted cotton coat (instead of buttons, cloth strings are used) and, over the *bandi-coat*, a cotton *shawl* is wrapped criss-cross, as shown in the picture above.

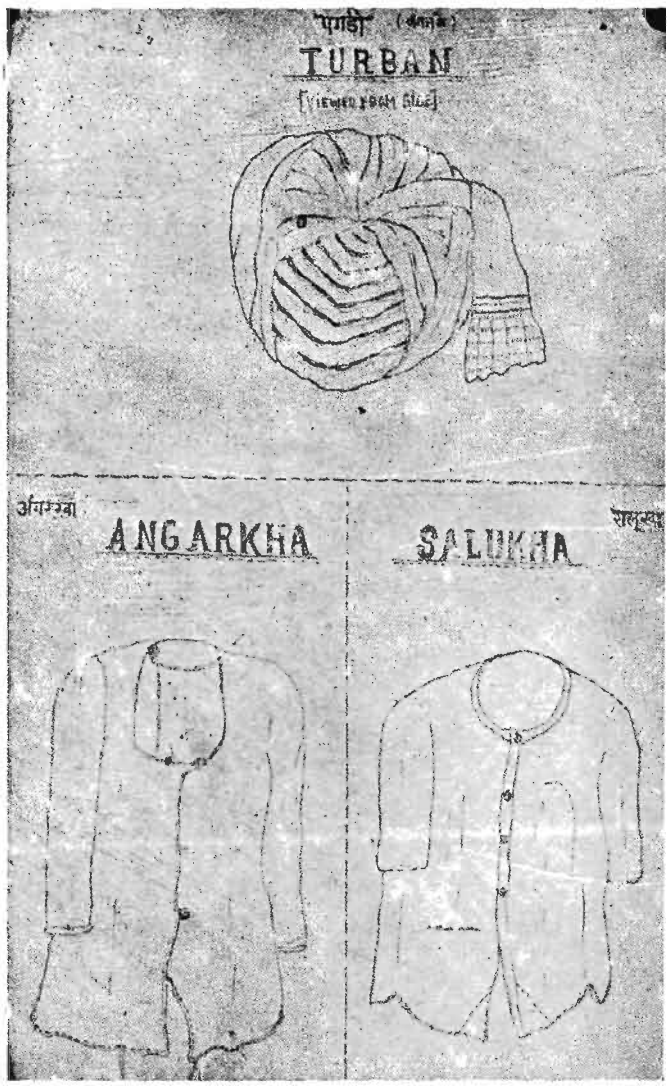
Women-folk commonly wear choli, *lahanga*, and *lugra*. Choli is a sort of a bodice, generally in bi-colours of red and black and open at the back, tied by a string. *Lugra*, covers head, back and shoulders. The photo below, shows choli and *lugra* as seen from the front. *Lahanga* is a sort of a petti-coat and is usually in dark, gay colours.

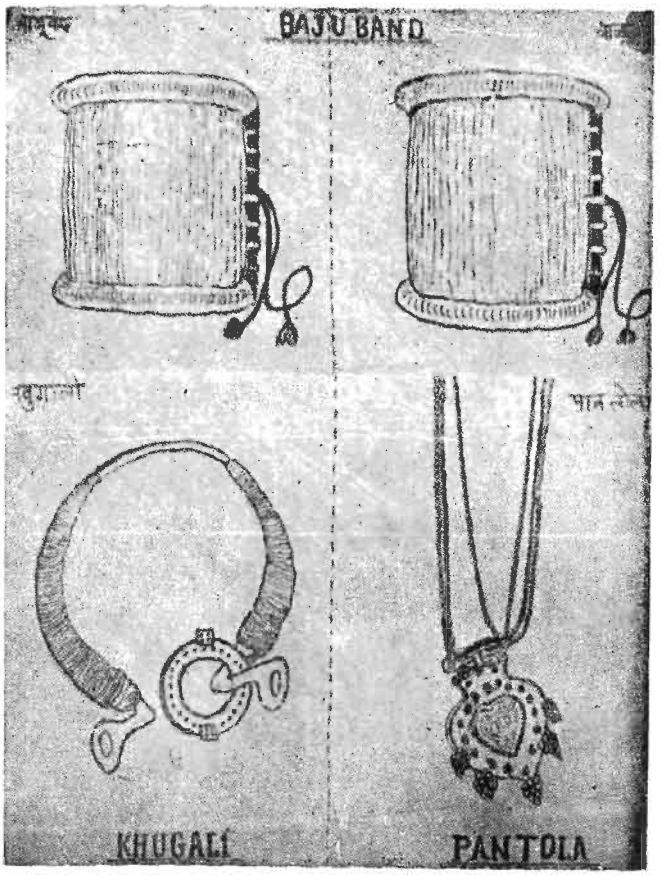


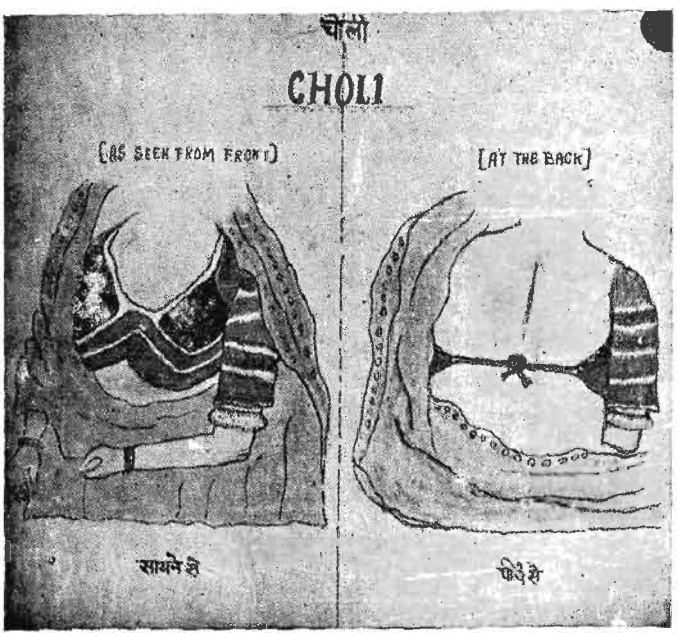
A woman wearing 'choli' and 'lugra'

A bride, on the occasion of her marriage, wears a slightly different dress. In place of *lahanga*, she wears, what is called a *misru*, a petti-coat of bright-coloured silk and a sari of 6 yards length, which covers head, back and shoulders also and replaces the commonly worn *lugra*. The silken blouse is called *kanchali blouse*.

DETAILS OF DRESSES AND ORNAMENTS

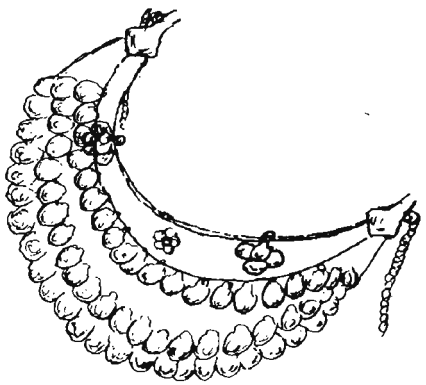






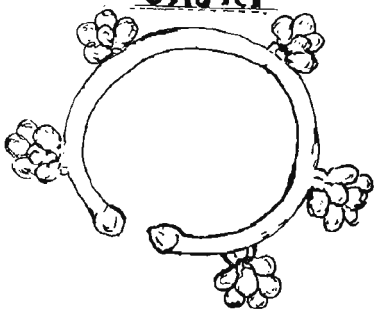
छोगा

CHOGA



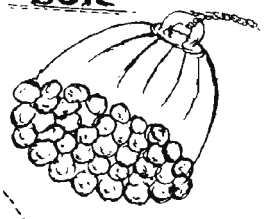
GAJRI

गजरी



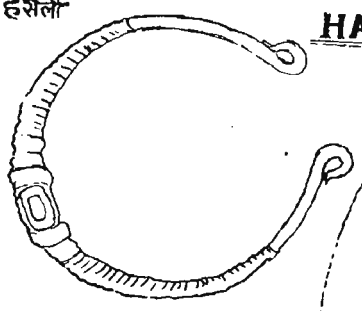
BOR

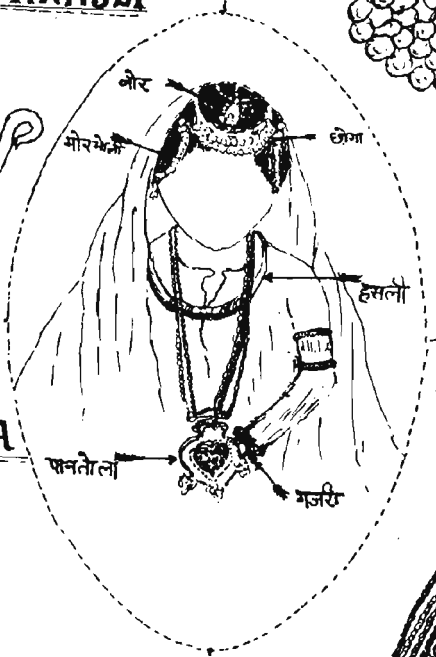
बोर



हँसली

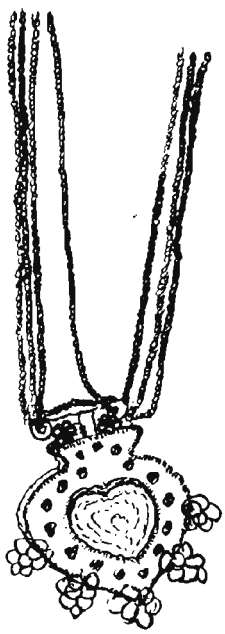
HANSLI



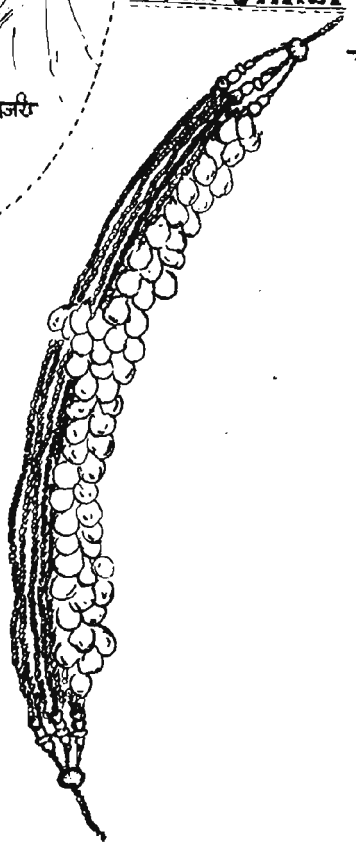


पानतोला

PANTOLA



MOR JHALI



The picture below shows a recently-married bride in complete wedding dress. The tender age of the bride may also be noted.

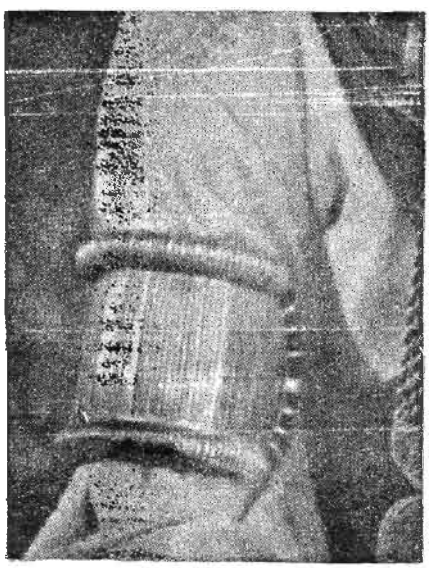


The bride

21. Ornaments—The attachment of villagers to ornaments is too well-known to be stressed. There is not a single family in the village where one member or another does not wear ornaments. But, all castes use only silver ornaments as they cannot afford gold. Out of 59 households, 4 use ornaments of the value of Rs. 100, 48 of value of Rs. 500 and 6 of Rs. 1,000, 1 of Rs. 2,000; a great majority thus have ornaments worth about Rs. 500 only; which is all the saving they have. For safe custody, ornaments which are not used for daily wear, are kept in an earthen pitcher and, in the kitchen, near about the *chaulha*, a small pit is made, the earthen pitcher is placed in it and then covered by cow-dung plaster. (This fact was very reluctantly disclosed as the women feared that their ornaments may get stolen[1]). This business is so neatly done that no one else in the house except the person doing it can easily unearth the pitcher.

Ornaments of daily wear of girls are *bor* on head and *khugali* around neck. Boys do not wear anything, except that some wear *kadis*, *i.e.*, silver bangles above ankles.

Grown-up men do not wear ornaments. But, at the time of marriage, the bride-groom decks himself lavishly with ornaments, *baju-band* on both arms, *khugali* around the neck and *pan-tola* in front



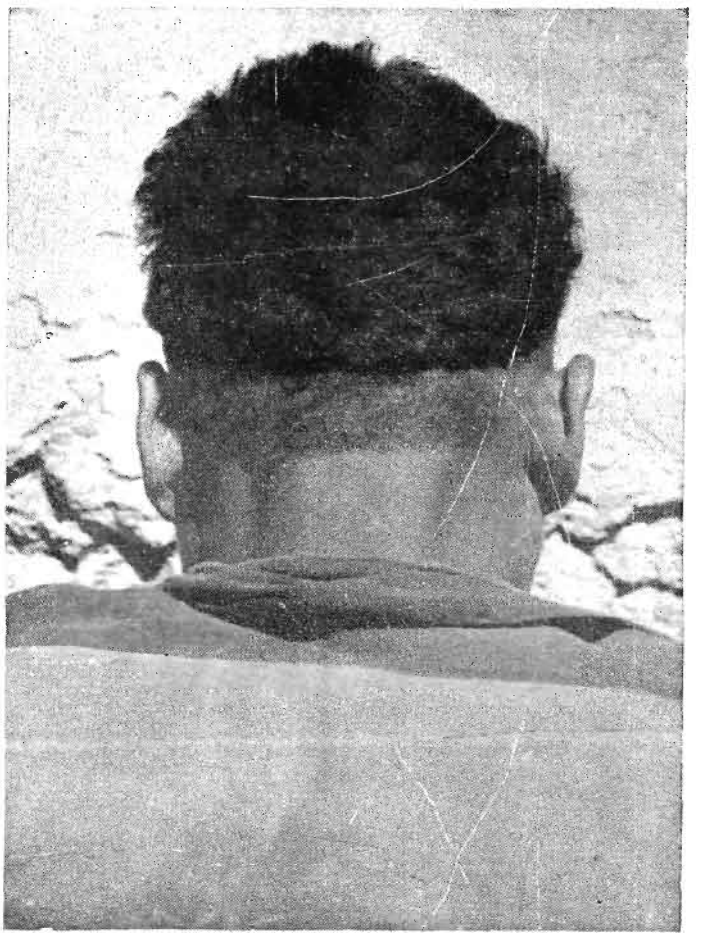
Baju-band.

dangling around the abdomen. All the ornaments are of silver, *baju bands*, being the heaviest. The *baju-band*, as shown above, are used on the upper part of arms and the point to note is that the ornament is so artistically made that it is flexible to an appreciable extent and therefore can be used on different arms without difficulty. On the back of the arm, the *baju-band* is tied by black cotton string. *Khugali* also is a heavy ornament. It is made in such a way that one end has a sort of a stud which easily fits in the large ring at the other end. *Khugali* then, cannot easily slip off. The last ornament of the bride-groom is, *pan tola* which is a *pan-shaped* (*pipal* tree leaf) 1 solid silver piece, bracketed in a long silver chain. This ornament has special significance as it is a common

1. A leaf of ficus



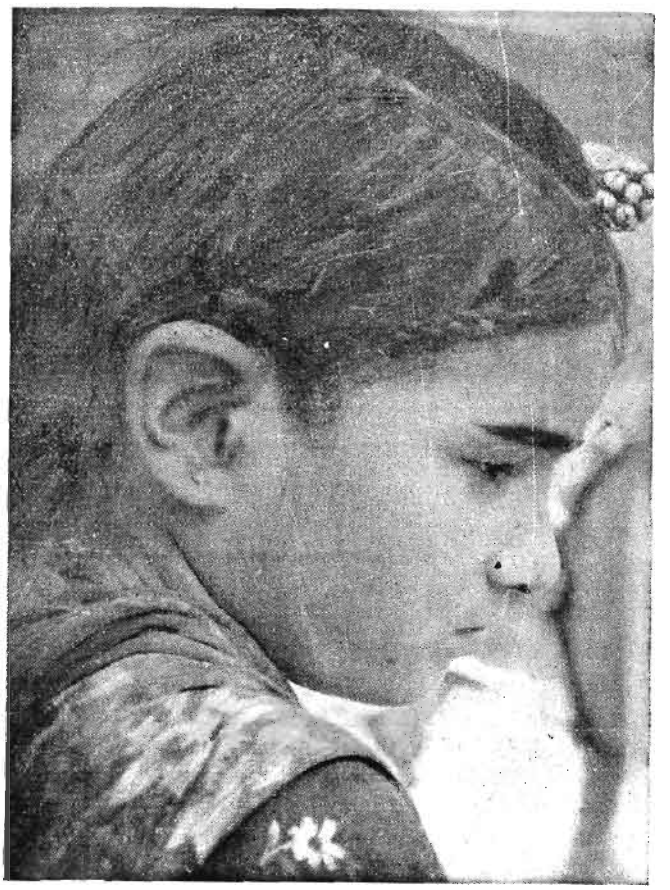
Front.



Back



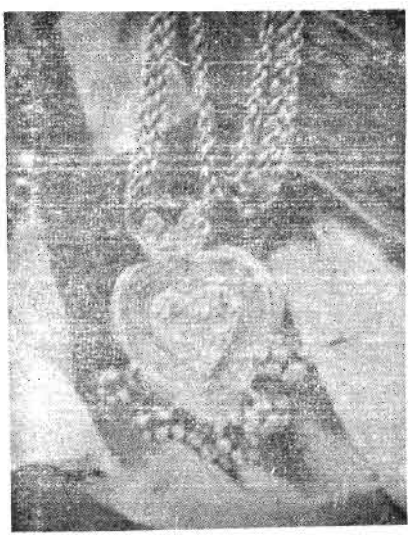
Side



Girl's hair style.

belief, that the person wearing it, will not be bitten by a snake. It is believed that a man who is snake-bitten can be cured if *pipal* leaves are brought near his ears.

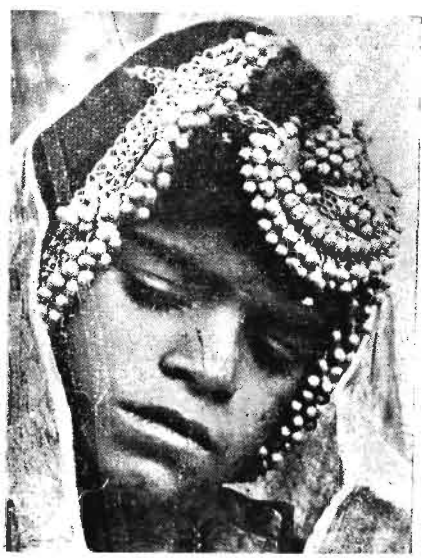
The picture below shows a *pan-tola* in detail. These three ornaments are common to a bride also. In addition, she wears *gajri* in both



Pan-tola.

the hands, *bor* on the top of the head at the parting of the hair, *choga* on the forehead and *morjhali* on both sides of the head coming upto ears. All the ornaments worn on the head have one thing in common, small silver balls called *gurias* are supported by silver chains.

The picture below shows these ornaments graphically. *Gajri* worn on both hands above the



Choga and morjhali.

wrist, is a silver bangle with small *gurias* dangling at some points and so producing a soft sound.

Ordinarily, women wear *bor and morjhali* on head and *hasli* around neck; *bali ghungru* in the upper part of the ears, and *kadis* in feet above ankles. *Bali Ghungru* may be seen in the picture below. All married women, of course, wear *bichiya* as sign of *sohag*, i.e., the married state.

22. Hair Style—Men have no particular hair-style, the three pictures on the preceding page give the front, side and the back view of a Gehlot's hair-style. The *choti i.e.*, the sacred tuft of hair, is kept by men of all castes in the village excepting, of course, the one Pinjara. The barber is annually paid in the form of grain.



Juda.

Women make a sort of a *juda* at the middle of the head and *choti* is kept at the back or tied around *juda*. Women always keep this *juda* covered by *lugara* or *odhani*. Picture above shows an old woman with a *juda* and a *choti*. The *choti* of girls goes round the head and is tied up at the back.

23. Foot-wear—The picture below shows a man's foot-wear. The foot-wear of women is what is called



Foot-wear.

panhayya. They are open in front, with one leather strap 1½" wide in front and a high strap at the back. On the occasion of marriage, *panhayya* are specially made for the bride with gay-coloured bright paper called *Panni* and coloured threads pasted on the front leather straps.

24. Manners and Customs—(*i*) *Birth Customs*:—At the time of the birth of a child, if it is a male baby, *thali* which is ordinarily used for taking meals, is rung like a bell and, if it is a female child, *supda* (a winnowing fan) is softly beaten like a drum.

Mundan ceremony is held anytime between the age of 45 days to 5 years when the head of the child is closely shaved, its ears are pierced with a needle. The women of the village assemble on the occasion and sing songs to accompaniment of a *dholaki*. No ceremony is performed for naming a child after birth. New names have not come into fashion and old names like Chainya, Ram Prasad, Bhuri etc. continue.

(ii) *Janeu*—The sacred thread ceremony (*Janeu*) is not observed by any caste excepting the one Brahmin family that is in the village.

(iii) *Marriage Customs*—Girls are commonly married before they attain the age of puberty. In fact, *sagai, i.e.*, betrothal ceremonies are made when they are only 2-3 years old; sometimes even newly born babies are betrothed. At the time of the ceremony, relations of the boy with whom *sagai* has been settled, come to the girl's place and offer sweets and clothes to the girl which is known as *godi bharna*. On this occasion about Rs. 50—60 are spent by the girl's father in feasting and drinking *tadi*. *Sagai* once made, is not broken and ends in the marriage of the pair after a few years. Obviously, marriage offers are initiated by parents of both parties and the boy or the girl is not consulted.

As stated earlier, girls are married usually in the age-range of 10-12 years. Their partners are between the age-range of 15-19 years. At the time of marriage, at the bride's place, on the first day, ladies of the house go out in a field, dig some earth and, on return, make a *chulha* and one or two other vessels. On the second day, God 'Ganesh' is worshipped at home which is known as 'Ganesh Pujan' day. Male relations of the bride and invitees of the village, bring out a procession, rejoice and play at the beat of *dholaki*, each man taking two batons in his hands and matching it with batons of others making thereby a peculiar sound. At the return of the procession, which is called *binayki*, women sing and dance, each in turn, in the courtyard of the bride's place. There is no dancing in groups or teams. The picture below shows a girl dancing at a marriage. The *chowk* on the foreground may be noted. The mother of the bride is presenting *neochawar* (i.e., a cash present which may range from one anna to a rupee) to a barber woman who is customarily entitled to it. The *kadis* commonly worn by women may also be marked.



A girl dancing at a marriage.

Feasting and revelry continue for seven days and on the 9th day, a *mandap* is fixed and the party of the bridge-groom, known as *barat*, arrives in the evening. *Barat* consists of only relations of the bride-groom. It stays for two nights and one day.

After the *barat* is received by relations of the bride, late in the evening, *lagna*, is arranged in which in the presence of the *Pandit* who chants *mantras*, the hand of bride is given to the bride-groom. On the next day, the bride and the bride-groom together complete seven rounds of the sacred

fire under the *mandap* which is known as *bhanwar*. If the bride's father is poor, before arranging the marriage, he demands an amount between Rs. 200-400 from the bride-groom's father to cover marriage expenses but this custom is now fast disappearing. The morning after *bhanwar*, the bride leaves for the bride-groom's place along with the *barati* and the marriage ceremony is thus, finalised.

Appendix 'A' gives description of a marriage ceremony in greater detail.

"*Gauna*"—The auspicious date of *gauna*, after which consummation takes place, comes only once in a year on the 11th day after *Diwali*. *Gauna* is arranged after the girl has attained the age of puberty and the menstruation cycle has started. The peculiar custom is that the husband does not come to the wife's place, only his father with select relations comes and takes his daughter-in-law. No particular ceremony is observed on the occasion. *Gauna* thus, is cheaply completed.

(iii) *Rites re: death*—When the death of a person in the family is felt imminent and ordained, the body is brought down from the *khat* and placed respectfully on the floor. Milk or some other liquid (but not *ganga jal*—Ganga water, as in the case of Brahmins, Kayasthas, Vaishyas, etc.) is administered to him at frequent intervals till he breathes his last. If the person is a male, the body is covered with a new white cloth; if a female, with a new red cloth. People from the village gather and the bier is prepared. Four persons at four corners of the bier carry the deceased on their shoulders which is called *kandha dena*. These four persons are generally the nearest relations of the deceased.

At the burning *ghat*, the funeral pyre is prepared, first firewood is placed and then cow-dung cakes are arranged at the top. The body is placed on the pyre with feet towards the north under the belief that heaven lies in that direction. The corpse is then gradually covered with cow-dung cakes and in the process, all the clothes of the body are removed. The saying is that, as a man comes into this world naked, he must also depart naked. The eldest son of the deceased and, if he had no son, a near relation lits the pyre. If the deceased is a married woman whose husband is living the pyre is lit by the husband.

The dead are never carried to the burning *ghat* at night. If the person dies late in the evening or at night, the body is taken for cremation only in the morning on next day. Children below one year are not cremated but buried.

No food is cooked in the house of mourning on the first day; it is sent from a neighbour's house. The period of mourning is three days. For eleven days, fried things are not taken and the use of turmeric is prohibited.

On the third day after cremation, ashes of the deceased are collected and immersed in the river. Those who are well-off, take ashes to the Kshipra river, near Ujjain. If they reach at night, they sleep with ashes tied round the neck and immerse them next day. Before immersing the ashes, *dhoop* is presented *i.e.*, a mixture of ghee and *gur* are offered on to the ember.

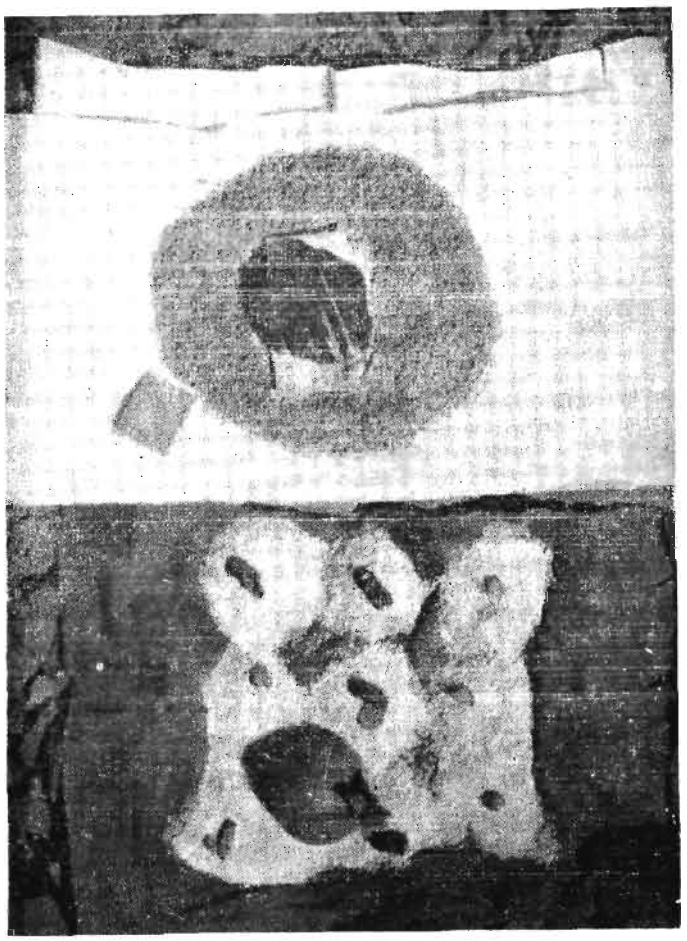
Relations of the dead, both from the agnate and the cognate side, come to the house of mourning but they take care to avoid Sundays and Wednesdays which are considered inauspicious. On the 11th day, what is called *ghata* is arranged, a Brahmin and a barber are taken to the river and, if the death is of a father, mother or elder brother, the head and chin are completely shaved; but if the death is of a younger brother, elder brothers will get only their heads shaved but not the moustache.

To propitiate the spirit of the deceased, the Brahmin arranges *pinda dan*, *i.e.*, offering at a propitiary rite. For this purpose, two pieces of red and white cloth, wheat flour, rice, flour of *urad* dal, *gur*, one cocoanut, nine almonds, nine *Singhara*, [1] nine betel nuts, fourteen *paise* and four yards of red thread are needed. These things as arranged on the red and the white pieces of cloth

1. Trapa-bicornis.

can be clearly seen in the picture below and are given to the Brahmin after the ceremony is over.

The nearest relation of the deceased (generally the eldest son) is first clean shaved by the barber and after a dip in the river, the Brahmin gives him a sacred thread which he wears as a necessary preparation for the *pinda-dan*. First the Brahmin prepares ten *pindas* (oval-shaped cakes) of *urad* flour and the person offering turmeric on them immerses them in water. He, then, again takes a dip in the river. Thus, thrice the *pindas* are prepared



Articles of Pinda-dan.

by the Brahmin and they are immersed in the river and each time, the person has to take a dip in the water to purify himself. Finally, one *pinda* of boiled rice is prepared and kept on a leaf-plate under a miniature *mandap i.e.,* booth. The nearest relation wearing the sacred thread, the Brahmin chanting *shlokas*, the *mandap* and the *rice pinda* may be noted in the picture on the right.

When the offerings to the *rice-pinda* are in progress, the Brahmin insists that a *go-dan*, i.e., gift of a cow should be given him so that the gateway of heaven is opened to the spirit of the deceased. If the person can not promise this, he has to pay cash. Even the poorest person pays not less than fifty rupees on the occasion.



Brahmin Chanting Shlokas

After the offerings to the *rice-pinda* are over, it is also immersed in the river along with the *mandap*. The people then return and the feast is arranged in which boiled rice, *dal*, ghee and *masti* (a special preparation made of oval-shaped cakes of wheat flour pummelled and mixed with ghee and sugar) are served. Later in the evening, the person who had offered the *pindas*, goes to the temple and removes the sacred thread there. The *ghata* thus, is over which is probably so called as the propitiatory rites are performed on the *ghat*, *i.e.*, the bank of a river.

If the deceased has left a widow behind him, she does not show her face to anyone during these eleven days. A strange practice is that, if the death is of a married woman, on the 11th day, while the feasting is done in her husband's house, nine women are invited to a feast at her father's house also. Another strange practice is that of getting eleven *karwan*, (earthen pitchers specially made by the potter for the occasion) and arranging them in a circle: eleven women of the house eat, each sitting by the side of one *karwan*.

For eleven days after death, the most favourite thing of the deceased, is daily placed in a corner in the roof. For instance, if the deceased had been fond of tobacco-eating, a small quantity of it will be regularly placed in a corner of the roof for eleven days.

If the family is rich enough, on the eleventh day, a *mandap* of sugarcane stems is put up and the marriage of a cow with a bull is symbolically performed. This is called marriage of *keda-kedi*. If the deceased was a female, the cow and if a male, the bull, is branded with a heated iron and set free. The branded cow or the bull is not used for agricultural or domestic purposes by anyone in the village. It is a *dan* in the memory of the deceased, but a peculiar *dan* as no one is the receiver.

In the month of *Konvar* (September-October) on *Amavasya* (the day before new moon appears), *shradha*, with feasting is arranged. On this day, only *dhoop* is given in the sacred memory of the deceased. They do not have the custom of making *pindas* in memory of ancestors.

25. Other Customs—*Dowry System*—Before marriage is finally settled, parents of the daughter, if poor, usually demand a price between Rs. 200—300 which is not a price of the daughter in lieu of marriage but merely an arrangement to meet marriage expenses. This custom, however, is now fast disappearing.

The *dahej* given by parents of the bride, is not previously fixed or bargained for, but given voluntarily according to status. The evils of dowry system are thus, absent in these so called "inferior castes".

At the time of widow-remarriage, however, parents of the widow demand prices ranging between Rs.1,600—2,000. This is probably because, according to custom, a widower is given only a widow in remarriage and the choice, therefore, becomes very much limited. The pride of a widower gets very much hurt if he is unable to bag a widow and therefore, he is prepared to marry (within realm), whatever the cost.

Divorce—Divorce is not taboo but usually, it is not resorted to. The system called *natra i.e.,* re-marriage is prevalent, under which a lady may leave her first husband and re-marry. The peculiarity is that a man does not initiate a divorce but, if the relations with the wife become unhappy, he can indirectly do so by persistently ill-treating his wife, so that she will ultimately escape to her parents' house and refuse to go back. Naturally, after some time, parents arrange the second marriage of the daughter, which is called *natra*. When a second marriage is settled, parents demand a price from the prospective bridegroom out of which a stipulated share has to be paid to the previous husband. This share is called *jhagde ki rakam* literally, price of the breach of intimate relations. After this share is paid, relations of the wife get completely severed from her husband and the way for the second marriage becomes clear.

Occasionally, if the husband is very poor and parents of the daughter have a prospective rich person in view, they goad her to act in careless ways in her husband's house, so that he has to ill-treat or beat her and provide an excuse to sever off marriage relations.

When marriage by *natra* is performed, there is no solemnising ceremony. On the evening of Tuesday or Saturday, the bridegroom quietly comes with a few relations, takes good food and *tadi* in the night and leaves before dawn along with his bride. No one in the village is invited. It is considered inauspicious to see the bridegroom carrying away the bride and the superstition is that, if they are seen leaving the village by anyone, the bridegroom will die. Thus, the entire village makes a sort of an implicit conspiracy in not seeing the marriage party leaving the place. Except the price paid to the bride's father before *natra* is settled, no expenditure is involved in re-marriage.

If the woman re-marrying by *natra*, has children by her first husband; they all remain at their father's place. But, if a child is a suckling, she takes it with her and sends it back after one or two years.

A widow is also remarried by *natra* system. The custom of divorce appears to have come to stay in certain castes of the Hindus by mere efflux of time. Probably, divorce came to be recognised by

custom and custom, becoming old, acquired the force of law. That seems to be the only explanation of the prevalence of the divorce system in the castes like Gehlots, Khatis, Balahis and Chamars because in "Manu-Smriti", a divorce in a Hindu family is not envisaged. Thus, until the present Hindu Marriage Act was passed, divorce in particular castes of the Hindus came to be recognised by force of custom only.

System of "Jot"—Balahis have a peculiar system, called *jot* or *jyote*, literally meaning a flame. *Jot* is arranged on two types of occasion (i) on the death of a person (ii) when an evil or illness in the house is warded off. On the death of a person, the spot where he dies in the house, is cleaned with cow-dung and, throughout the night, an earthen lamp is kept burning on the spot. Balahis sing *bhajans* and verses of Kabir the whole night and no one, who is not invited is supposed to join in the *jot*. The superstition is that, if an uninvited person enters the place and sees *jot*, he will face the wrath of Dev. Even the mention of the *jot* system is considered sacrilegious. *Jot* is similarly observed, if a promise is made to Dev to observe it if a particular evil or disease is warded off.

Another strange system—A very curious system amongst Balahis is that, they will never swear in the name of a dog. The reason given is that a dog can with non-chalance urinate on any idol and therefore, it is the most powerful *Devta*. Their behaviour, however, is very queer as, if necessary, they do not hesitate to thrash this powerful *Devta*.

26. Customs Relating to Inheritance—On the death of the head of a household, property passes on to his sons, and is equally shared by them. If the person had no son, then the property is inherited by daughters. If the person has no offspring, he may adopt a near relation.

27. Consanguinity among communities—Marriage with persons related by blood is prohibited in all the three important communities in the village. Marriage in the same *gotra* is also prohibited, for instance, a Gehlot Parihar will not marry in the Parihar *gotra*, and a Chamar Puner will not marry in the Punner *gotra*. Marriages are generally arranged outside the village.

28. *"Tadi"* drinking—On all occasions of merriment like marriages and festivals like Holi and Diwali, it is customary for men folk to drink *tadi* profusely. As there is no prohibition in the area, they have no difficulty in purchasing it from the government contractor in the nearby village and illicit distillation, therefore, does not seem to be common.

CHAPTER V

VILLAGE ECONOMY

29. Occupational Pattern—There is no household industry in the village. Agriculture may be said to be the main and the only occupation, as 48 out of 59 households are owner-cultivators and ten agricultural labourers. Though the double- cropped area (only 20.25 acres) is negligible and people just sit with hands crossed for at least six months in the year, they have no inclination to economically better their lot or reduce their indebtedness. The table given below, shows the pattern of cultivation in the last decade of the four principal crops in the village. (1) *Jowar, Mung, Tuar,* (2) Paddy, (3) Wheat, Gram, *Arhar* and (4) Sugar-cane. *Jowar, Mung, Tuar* and Wheat, Gram, *Arhar* are mentioned together, because, they are generally grown together at the same time by villagers.

Year	Names of Crops--		Jowar, Mung, Tuar	Paddy	Wheat, Gram, Arhar	Sugar-cane		Total acreage under cultivation	
1950-51	Irrigated	(i)	..	..	..	20.54	(i)	20.54	273.38
	Un-Irrigated..	(ii)	201.24	22.62	28.98	..	(ii)	252.84	
1951-52	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	1.57	20.73	(i)	22.30	271.61
		(ii)	214.81	21.10	13.40	..	(ii)	249.31	
1952-53	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	13.78	2.36	(i)	16.14	355.57
		(ii)	304.81	11.21	23.41	..	(ii)	339.43	
1953-54	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	12.12	4.23	(i)	16.35	338.91
		(ii)	228.60	17.40	76.56	..	(ii)	322.56	
1954-55	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	10.84	12.32	(i)	23.16	354.47
		(ii)	260.82	19.60	150.89	..	(ii)	331.31	
1955-56	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	9.31	23.33	(i)	32.64	367.83
		(ii)	143.13	18.83	173.23	..	(ii)	335.19	
1956-57	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	3.47	28.43	(i)	31.90	445.34
		(ii)	76.77	26.23	310.44	..	(ii)	413.44	
1957-58	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	13.37	26.33	(i)	39.74	450.22
		(ii)	235.16	29.31	146.07	..	(ii)	410.48	
1958-59	. „ ..	(i)	..	..	17.80	18.62	(i)	36.42	501.03
		(ii)	139.67	32.25	292.69	..	(i)	464.61	
1959-60	.. „ ..	(i)	..	..	23.03	35.03	(i)	58.06	593.35
		(ii)	215.05	35.15	285.09	..	(ii)	535.29	
1960-61	.. „ ..	(i)		..	15.10	32.15	(i)	47.25	576.41
		(ii)	245.21	33.10	250.85	..	(i)	529.16	

It will be seen that the total area under cultivation during the last decade has more than doubled. But the figures are mis-leading as this has not brought commensurate prosperity to the village. The additional area brought under the plough is 303.03 acres out of which 141.47 acres are being cultivated by people of adjoining villages. Thus the additional area (161.56 acres), brought under cultivation by land holders of the village is insignificant. During the same period, population increased by 52.43 per cent and there is not a single family which has not grown in size. The increase in the area under cultivation attributable to the agriculturists of this village is 59.10 per cent i.e., slightly higher than the increase in population. The area of cultivation per capita has stayed more or less at a constant level. There has been no great increase in the irrigated area (36.42 − 20.54 = 15.88 acres) but the use of fertiliser has become more popular (51 mds.) though it is still negligible and can not increase unless irrigation becomes more wide-spread. So, in physical terms, output per head has probably remained more or less constant. The increase in cultivated area has therefore to be mainly explained by the higher population pressure: the contribution of the rise in prices does not seem to be great because there is no pronounced tendency (cf. sugar-cane) to increase investment in agriculture (irrigation and fertiliser) and thereby ensure a bigger agricultural surplus which alone can bring the benefit of higher prices to the individual cultivator. Subsistence farming is, therefore, still the rule and, in this sense, the village community is largely 'primitive'-this conclusion is however ideological and, *ipso facto*, not definitive. Anything more definitive will require scientific study of a much bigger sample.

The area under paddy and sugarcane has not shewn any appreciable increase during the 10 year period. Both the crops require a lot of water and, irrigation facilities being limited and average rainfall only 40" in a year, naturally these two crops have not found favour with the people. Within the limitations of irrigation facilities, however, sugarcane production is preferred by cultivators as it brings them good returns, the sugar factory being only 17 miles away (which is at the district headquarters).

30. Agricultural Practices—The area under old fallow is 245.61 acres while the area under current fallow is nil.

The total cultivable land remaining uncultivated is 21.4 acres. A strange thing is that people never leave land under current fallow, nor practice any rotation of crops. Field bunding is not done.

A striking feature of village life is that at the time of sowing or harvesting, no labour shortage is felt as the operations being not synchronized, one family assists another and the problem is met by mutual co-operation. Similarly, the shortage of ploughs is met by borrowing from others. Whether these practices can be institutionalised and whether these non-monetized interpersonal exchanges can in due course evolve into more positive and democratic corporate action in the economic field is, however, problematical.

If there is a failure of crop in any season, the villagers switch on to consumption of inferior grain like *jowar*, *bajra*, *kodon*, *kutki etc.* In such a contingency, what they normally save for seed is also consumed. When the sowing season approaches, they borrow grain from a *sahukar* with the promise to return one and a quarter times the quantity after harvest.

(i) *Use of Fertilizer*—The use of fertilizer is slowly becoming popular. 14 households use fertilizer in 75 acres. In the last five years, fertilizer has been used in following quantities.

Years	Ammonium Sulphate (Mds.)	Super-Phosphate	Compost Pits	Green Manure Acres
1956-57	12	..	2	5
1957-58	18	..	5	9
1958-59	18	..	12	13
1959-60	24	..	30	15
1960-61	15	..	36	20

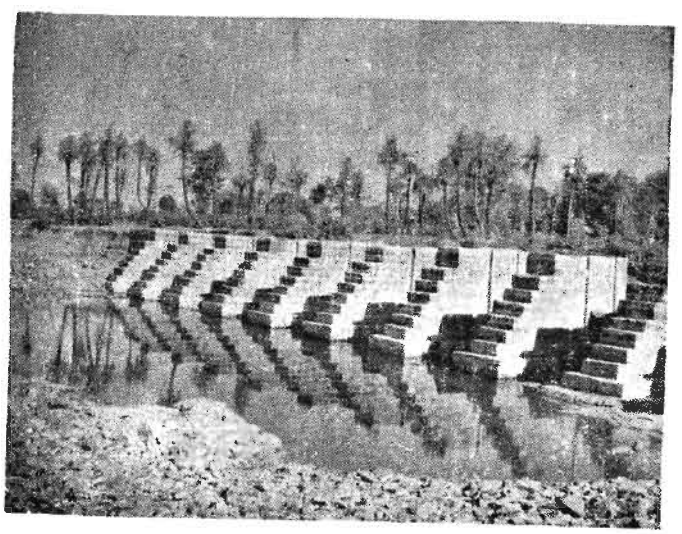
PUCCA SEER

[EXACT MEASUREMENT]



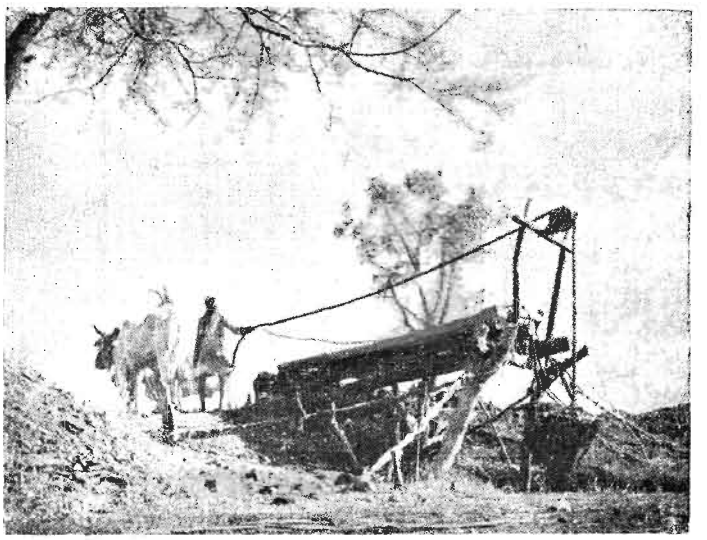
Chemical fertilizer is used only in small doses as the soil is of poor quality and there is little irrigation. Area under green manuring has increased four-fold and the number of compost pits has increased to 36. Cowdung is used for fuel.

(ii) *Irrigation*—From 20.54 acres of land under irrigation in 1950-51, the irrigated area now is 47.25 acres, not a marked increase considering the period (just about 2.7 acres per year) and the fact that agricultural prices have been high. Out of this, 9 acres are irrigated by wells and the rest by river water through flood irrigation by *moat system*. A barrage



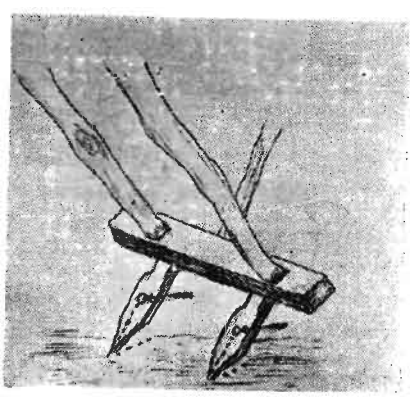
View of the barrage constructed by the people.

has been constructed by the people with the aid of government money a few years ago which very much helps in irrigation. People are not required to pay water rates for the use of water. No regular water channels have been made for irrigation fields. However, people dig deep pits in the bed of river, called *odis* where the river water flows in and with the help of *chadas*, draw water for irrigation. One such *chadas* is shown in the picture below. One family owns a diesel pump also



"Chadas"—helping in taking out water for irrigation

(iii) *Sowing*—For paddy, sowing is done by drilling. Transplantation is not followed. Improved seed covers 60 per cent of total acreage. In sugarcane, variety numbers 419 and 421, in *jowar*, *Dudhmagar* and *Peechia Chichawda* and in wheat, C-591 which is a rust-resistant variety of seed, are used; only in paddy, improved variety is not supplied by block authorities. Sowing is generally done by *do-phan* with the help of bullocks. *Do-phan*, as the name suggests, is a wooden implement with two blades of iron and, as it has two blades, as contrasted with the normal practice of using one, it doubles the speed of sowing.



The villager's sowing implement.

One such *do phan* is seen in the picture above.

31. Trade and Commerce—The nearest market for wholesale trade is Sehore, 17 miles and for retail trade, Imlaha, 4 miles from the village. After harvesting the crop, people after estimating the quantity required for home consumption and seed, take the rest for sale to Sehore *mandi* where, they feel, they do not get a fair price because brokers called *adhatias* form a ring and dictate terms. The conditions of perfect competition are thus, absent in the whole-sale market. As there is no co-operative marketing society in or about the place, nor a place where the cultivator can store his grain, he has no power of waiting and has to sell his grain for whatever price it fetches.

Unscruplous practices have been followed by traders in weights and measures until quite recently. In the erstwhile Bhopal State of which the district was a component part, a seer used to be what was called the *pucca* seer of 96 tolas in place of the standard seer of 80 tolas. The traders used to mulct by purchasing by *pucca* seer and selling by standard seer and thus, make profits merely by weighing fraudulently. Similarly, a *pucca* maund used to be of 40 *pucca* seers, i.e., heavier by 640 tolas than the standard maund. A diagram of the *pucca* seer which has duped many gullible cultivators in the past is given on the left page. The diagram is to scale and bears the inscription in Urdu in the name of Nawab Sultan Jehan Begum, Bhopal. The figure "Rs. 96" means that it is 96 tolas in weight.

There is not a single trader in the village, big or small; nor a licensed money-lender. One, Raghunath, a Chamar in the village, lends money at the exorbitant rate of Rs. 2 per cent per month. Generally, money is lent on trust alone. This is explained by his personal knowledge of the credit-worthiness of the people. People do not go to a bank for their monetary needs; though lately some of them have started approaching the credit society at Dhamanda for their needs.

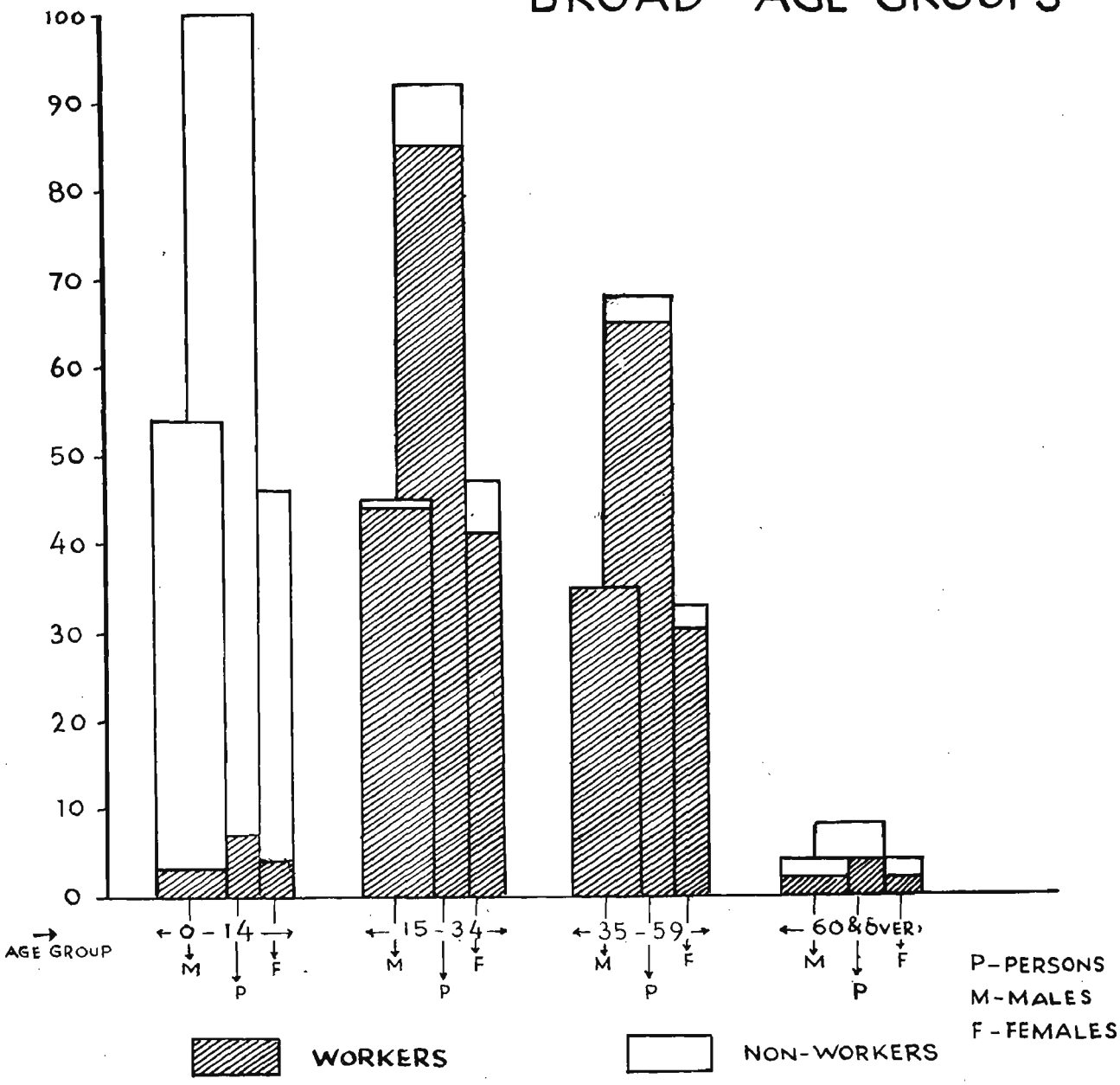
32. Other Occupations and Non-Workers—Business and industry are unknown to the village. There are two carpenter families, but out of them only one carpenter family engages itself in its traditional occupation and that too only part-time. The potter family explained that the clay nearabout was not of good quality which did not permit fine work in pottery and therefore, it mainly devoted itself to agriculture. Only one person has the semblance of a small shop in his house, where he sells *pan, bidi* and kerosene. All other requirements like tea, til oil, spices etc., have to be purchased from the village, Imlaha.

Out of a total of 268 persons, 161 are workers and 107 non-workers. In the age-group 15-34, only 7 are non-workers out of 92. Males and females work together on fields as cultivators or labourers. Most of the non-workers do only household work. Out of 93 non-workers in age-group 0-14, only two are school-going, rest merely idle away their time occasionally doing odd jobs on fields. Not a single person is in search of employment outside the village obviously an indication of a 'primitive' sense of security within the small community.

As we have seen earlier, the population of the village during the last decade has increased by 52.43 per cent. It is evident that pressure on land has been increasing and increasing numbers are being accommodated merely because of family ties. Therefore, the conclusion can very safely be drawn that there is a great deal of under-employment and disguised unemployment in the village.

There is no person depending on alms or prostitution. Presently, there is no one in the village, who has been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. The village is free from the evils of beggary and prostitution and life is quite peaceful.

WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS BY BROAD AGE GROUPS



33. Diet and Nutrition—Out of a total of 59 families, 42 take meals three times a day, 10 out of them also take tea in the morning and 15 families take meals only twice a day. All the three castes, Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars are non-vegetarians, but take meat and fish only and not eggs as they can not afford them. Goat-meat is preferred and cow's meat is prohibited. People catch fish from the river and seldom purchase if from the market. Meat is not generally taken as few families can afford it. The staple food of the entire village is bread of *jowar*, which is taken day in and day out with monotonous regularity, along with *dal* and at times, with potato or onion. The intake of milk depends on milch cattle at home and is never purchased. No one in the village sells milk, curd or ghee.

The preponderance of cereals in diet can be easily appreciated from the following figures.

			Maunds
1	Jowar ..	Annual produce ..	877.20
		Annual consumption	824.00
2.	Wheat ..	Annual Produce ..	206.00
		Annual consumption..	347.00
3.	Gram ..	Annual produce ..	53.00
		Annual consumption..	129.00

The diet of the people is clearly unbalanced, there being no place for vegetables, fruits or milk; and the dependence on just one cereal being almost complete.

34. Indebtedness—The figures of indebtedness are alarming, aggregate indebtedness amounting to Rs. 28,010. In families with an annual income of Rs. 240 and below, average indebtedness per family is Rs. 315. In families with annual incomes exceeding Rs. 1,200, average indebtedness is Rs. 1552. Thus, the paradoxical position is that, the richer people are, the more heavily are they indebted, probably because of better repaying capacity. Of the causes of indebtedness, 30 per cent borrowings are for household cultivation, 28 per cent for ordinary wants like purchase of grain for consumption and 18 per cent for marriages. Thus, 30 per cent of debt is for *unproductive purposes*.

But what is really more alarming is the attitude of people towards debt. Indebtedness is not yet considered to be a social stigma and people do not feel ashamed of it. All the three communities consider it a sacred duty to clear off the debt incurred by deceased parents and, in turn, feel that they must bequeath indebtedness to their children. As long as this mental approach continues, there will be indebtedness in spite of prosperity and the village moneylender will continue to flourish as the only thing he has to see is whether the borrower has a sufficient number of sons or not to pay back the amount.

35. Economic Indicators—Fourty-eight households are mainly cultivators, out of them, 15 have annual incomes exceeding 1,200 Rs., 8 between 960—1,200 Rs., 13 between 720—960 Rs., 7 between 480—720 Rs. and 5 between 240 Rs. and below.

Ten households eke out their living on agricultural labour, 1 family earns an income exceeding Rs. 1,200 per annum, 3 between Rs. 720—960, 5 between 480—720 Rs. and 1 below Rs. 240. The significant fact is that, whether engaged as owner-cultivator or as an agricultural labourer, earnings are highest where the average number of gainfully employed persons from the household is highest. In 15 families engaged in agriculture, who are earning above Rs. 1,200 annually, the average number employed from every family is 4.2. Similarly, 7 members from the house are workers in the family earning more than Rs. 1,200, they work as labourers. This also shows that wages given to agricultural labour are very low as the income per month per worker comes to only Rs. 14.18 n.p.

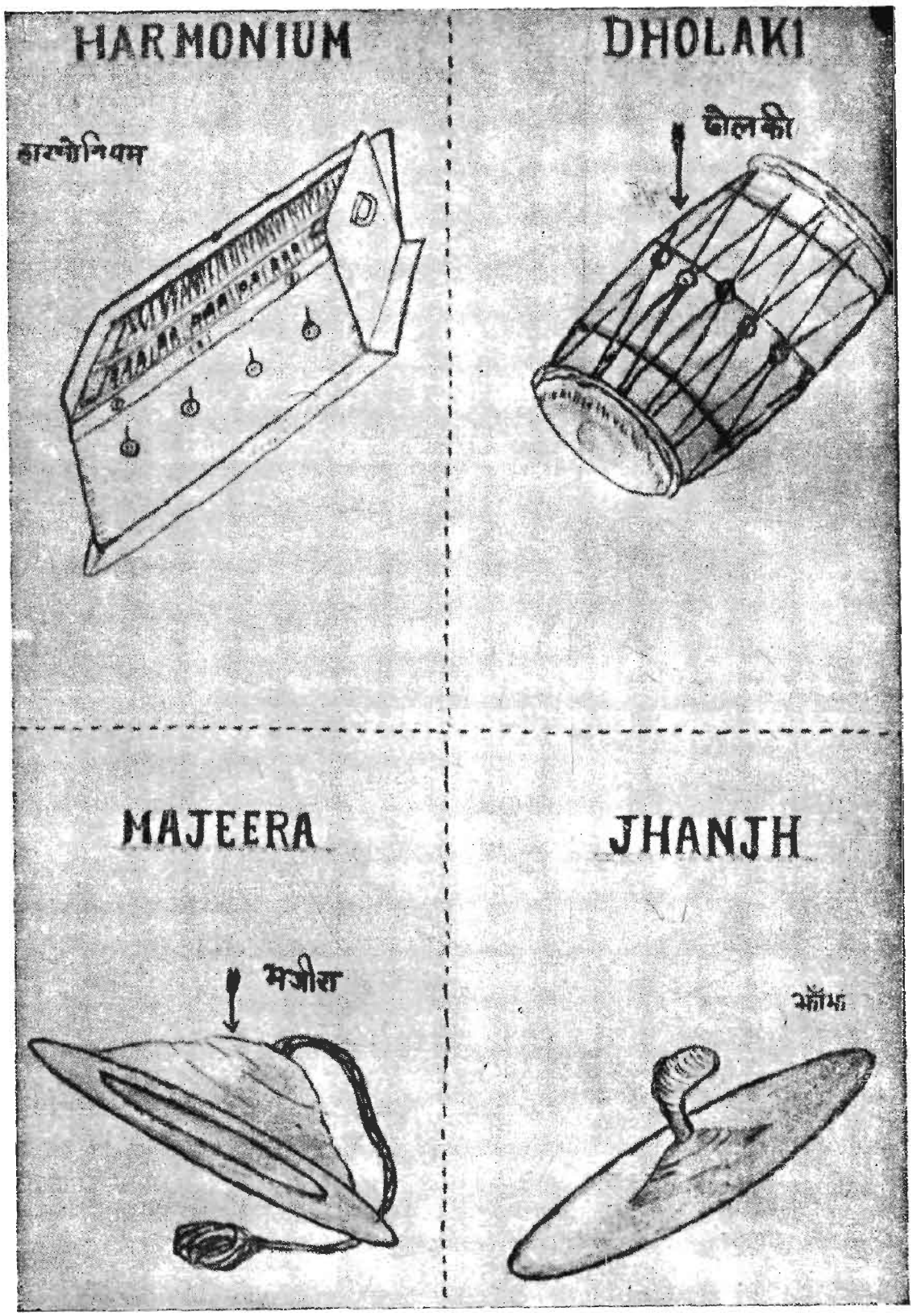
Inspite of heavy indebtedness, people feel that economically they are better off as the price level has remained high and their wants have remained few and simple. The only item of expenditure which has been a consistent drain is *tadi i.e.*, liquor. Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars are all addicted to drink and have never given a thought to prohibition. At least, twice a week, adult male members of the house treat themselves to *tadi*. On festive occasions *tadi* is drunk to capacity and even a casual reference to *tadi* brings a gleam to their eyes. *Tadi drinking is not considered as socially or morally* degrading and, therefore, in the near future it does not appear likely that expenditure on this item will show any decline.

Tadi drinking is a favourite also (probably) because, the only recreation of villagers is simple card-playing. They do not play chess or *chopada* and do not indulge in gambling. Occasionally, they sit together and sing *bhajans* or listen to "Ramayana". The musical instruments commonly used are, harmonium, *dholki, jhani* and *manjeera*. The photo alongside shows a party, singing *bhajans* in an ecstatic mood.

People are not fond of seeing the cinema but if they go to Schore or Ashta on some business and if they have to stay at night, they see pictures. If women and children have also gone with them, they are asked to look after the bullocks of the bullock-cart and generally men-folk only visit cinema houses.



Enjoying a 'Bhajan'.


HARMONIUM
हारमोनियम
DHOLAKI
ढोलकी
MAJEERA
मजीरा
JHANJH
झाँझ

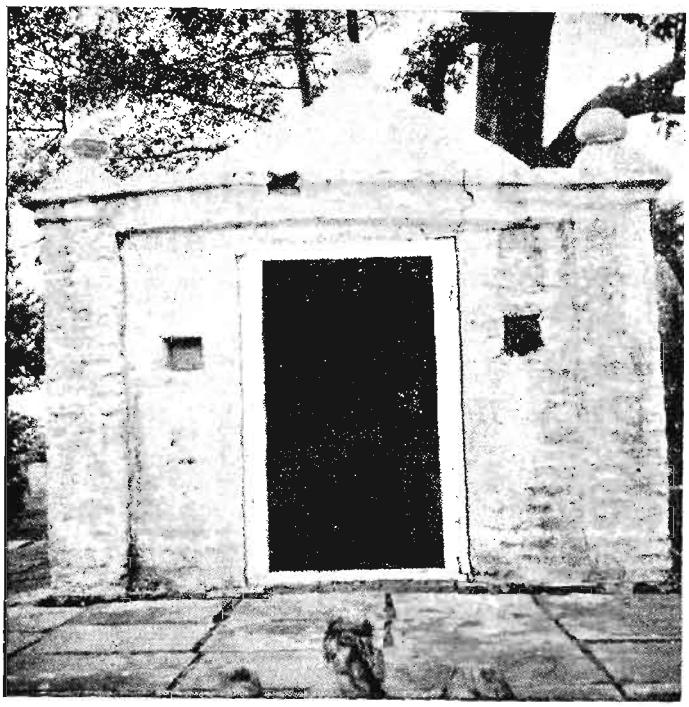
CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

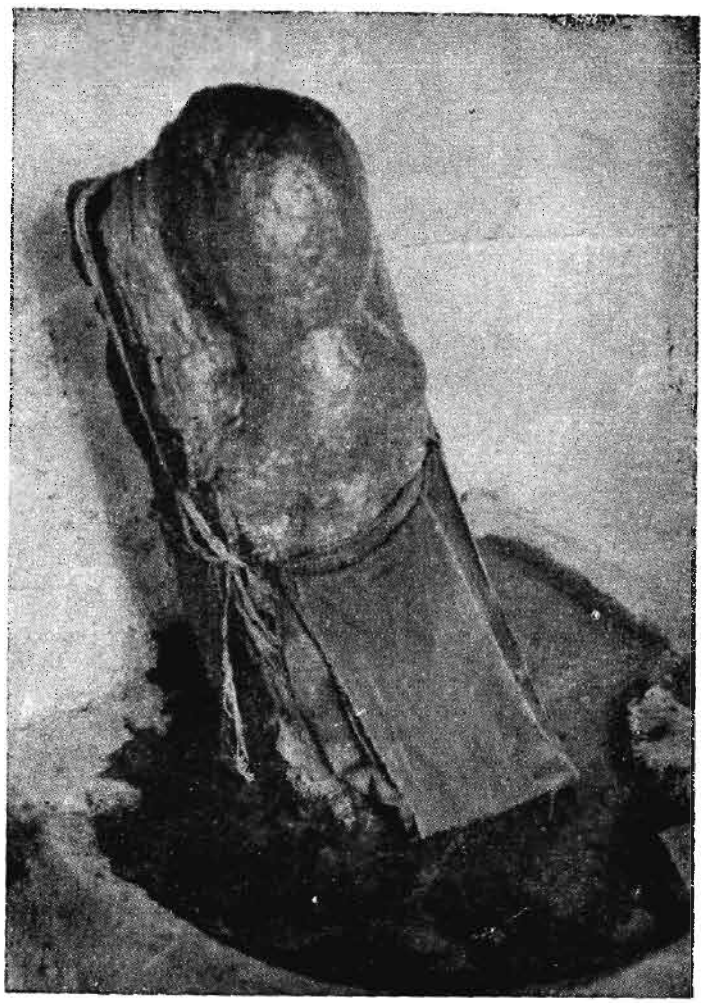
36. Superstitions—When a dog cries in the night, it is believed that someone in the village will breathe his last. If a crow sits on the head of a person, the message is sent to the nearest relation by him, that he is dead under the belief that evil will remain at bay. Seeing a male cat mating with a female cat is considered a bad omen and is avoided. A strange superstition is that if an owl is heard howling, a child should not be allowed to cry or else, it will not survive. Of days, Sunday and Wednesday are taken as inauspicious for a journey.

37. Tattooing—Tattooing is quite common among women of Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars but it is rare among men. The common form of tattooing is making a few dots on faces to beautify them. Tattooing costs less than two annas.

38. Place of worship—Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars—none of them keep or worship idols at home. There is one idol of "Hanuman" and one of "Devi Durga" on a *chabutra* (*i.e.*, a rasied platform, near a pipal tree about 100 yards from the village). Since ages, Gehlots have been worshipping these gods and they do not know how and when they were installed. Just 4—5 years ago, around the idol of "Hanuman", an *otala* (small temple) has been made and a Brahmin (from the only Brahmin family in the village) morning and evening, offers *puja* to the deity. There is no property in the name of the deity. Every household contributes 4 maunds of grain to the Brahmin in the form of remuneration. The picture below gives a view of the *otala* from a distance, the deity is also seen in the background; the other picture gives a glimpse of the deity from inside.



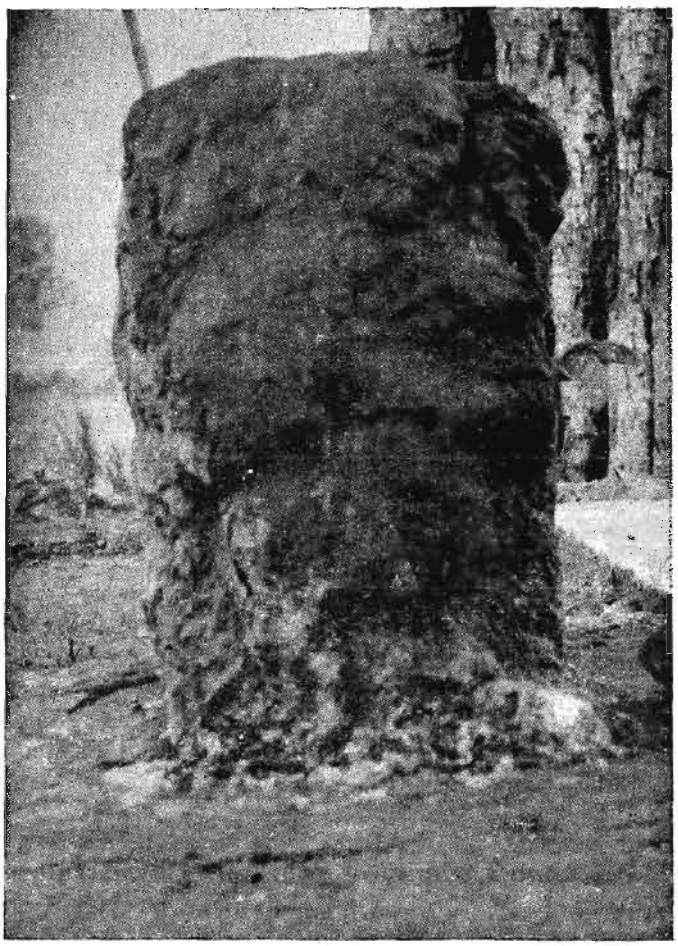
'Otala' housing the Deity.



Closer view of the Deity.

The deity has no features except that a rough shape of the head is perceptible. As is customary, the deity is completely smeared with *sindoor* (red oxide) and the piece of cloth, wrapped in the front lower portion, is also red.

Hardly 10 feet away from the *otala* is the idol of "Devi Durga". This is also, as will be seen from the picture below a block without features. On

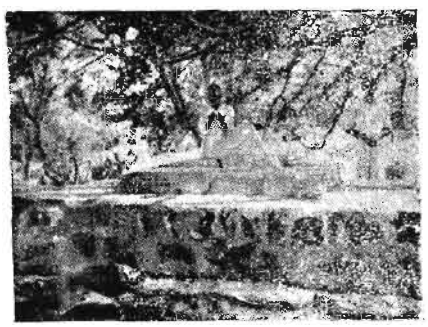


'Durga Devi'

the day of Dussehra, Gehlots immolate a goat before the "Devi" and distribute *prasad* to every family. "Devi" is not regularly worshipped and there is no *pujari* for the deity. Balahis and Chamars do not enter the *chabutra* of the deities and send their offerings through the Brahmin or a Gehlot. There is also one *bara* tree in the village where Gehlots at times sacrifice goats. This tree is believed to have sprung up on the spot where one of their ancestors had died. But it is not held sacred and children of all castes play freely about it.

39. Fair—One also comes across in the village a *dargah* of a *Pir*. This was built many years ago in memory of a *Pir, i.e.,* a person who had attained divine powers. The legend associated is that the *Pir* had entered earth from this sacred place and mysteriously appeared in a distant village. Hindus and Muslims alike hold it in respect. Every year, once a *jatra, i.e.,* a fair, is held here and about 400-500 people from nearby villages assemble. *Bedins* (prostitutes) are invited from a nearby village who dance and sing the whole night and people of the village take meals only after return from the *jatra* in the dawn. It is a one day, one night affair. A few shops also come to the place on the day.

The picture below shows the *dargah*. The *jatra* is held merely for recreation. Two rupees per



'Dargah'

chulha, i.e., per family are collected from the village to meet expenses of the *jatra*.

The *bedins* who are invited on the occasion, are each paid Rs. 100. *Bedins* are divided in two sections (i) Kola Bhutia and (ii) Bidia. These *bedins* belong to the former section. They are professional singers, dancers and prostitutes with the difference that they do not put on any make-up for their business. Generally, they do not marry and 'keep' men who bring customers and sit idle. There is little doubt that they freely breed venereal diseases. (One person in the village confessed that he was suffering from a venereal disease on account of his contact with a *bedin*). They do not look down upon their profession, but some of them have changed to agriculture in this area and started living a decent life after marrying.

40. Important Festivals and Sacrifices—The important festivals are Holi, Dussehra and Diwali celebrated with gaiety by the communities in the village.

(i) *Holi*—Holi is celebrated on *Purnima* (full-moon night) in the month of Falgun (February-March) by all the communities and is a festival of merry-making and revelry. The village chowkidar, a Balahi, collects cow-dung cakes from every household and deposits them in a stack where the holy fire is lit in the morning. Only cow-dung cakes are used for the purpose. In the morning, *gulal* is sprinkled on the holy fire, people—men and women—both sing *holy* and as an expression of sympathy, visit those houses where there was a death in the last one year. This is a touching and very human aspect of the festival as celebrated by people in the village. This signifies that all the people commonly share the joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains of the world.

Later on, all men and women gather in a place and *gur* is distributed to all. Then, men and women separately sprinkle colour amongst themselves. On return, men drown themselves in *tadi* and women attend to domestic work.

(ii) *Dussehra*—The festival of sacrifice is Dussehra which falls 20 days before Diwali in the month of October. Gehlots immolate a goat at the altar of "Devi Durga" and *prasad* is distributed to all the people in the village.

(iii) *Diwali*—The festival of light falls on *Amavasya* in the month of Kartik (October-November). Every family cleans its house with cow-dung and cattle are washed in the river. On the night, 16 earthen lamps are lit. People could not provide any reason why only 16 lamps, not less nor more, are lit but merely said it is customary. The peculiar thing is that, though Diwali is believed to be a festival of Goddess Luxmi and she is worshipped by Brahmins, Vaishyas and others; Gehlots, Balahis and Chamars do not make offerings to Goddess Luxmi. The only ceremony performed is to make a small *chowk* (*i.e.*, a decorative design), on the floor and in a winnowing fan 16 earthen lamps are placed, lit and *dhoop* is presented, *i.e.*, offer mixture of *gur* and ghee on to the embers.

On the following day, people decorate their cattle in different colours and worship them. Fireworks are also displayed. On Diwali day, people do not work nor do they engage their cattle in any agricultural operation.

People drink *tadi* like water on Diwali and take rich food which consists of *puri, halwa* and *khir*.

The festivals of Holi and Diwali are described in detail in Appendix 'B'.

41. Untouchability—Balahis and Chamars do not enter the *chabutra* where deities of "Devi" and "Hanuman" are placed. Chamars have a separate well of their own and do not fetch water from wells of Gehlots. Balahis depend on river water. But, in social behaviour, there is no tinge of hatred towards Balahis and Chamars.

42. Village Institutions—The village, being very small has no panchayat of its own and is covered by the Panchayat in Dhamanda village. Two persons, Raghunath Chamar and Pannalal Gehlot, from the village are members of the Dhamanda Panchayat. The Panchayat is said to be functioning successfully. There is also a large-sized credit society in Dhamanda and 25 persons from the village are its members.

There is no caste panchayat of Gehlots, Balahis or Chamars in the village. But, there is a village panchayat, not legally constituted, which meets informally. There is no head of the panchayat and the members are not elected. The panchayat deals with matters both insignificant and important, ranging from matters of *mar-pit* to questions of shares in property, boundaries of fields, etc.

The procedure for calling the panchayat is simple. The aggrieved person calls members of the village who assemble in the evening. The other party is then sent for and those who have witnessed the occurrence are heard. The explanation of the defaulting party is also listened to. The members then come to a decision by majority which is very often obeyed by both the parties; failing which recourse to a court of law is advised.

The witnesses are administered oath of *Gangajee*. People from all castes including Balahis and Chamars sit in the panchayat. People have faith that justice will be done irrespective of caste or creed. There are very few instances where people resort to a court of law. The village being a very small compact unit, the moral pressure of the decisions of the informal panchayat is very effective.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The village is covered by Ichhawar Community Development Block which is now in the post-intensive stage, but it does not appear to have derived any significant benefit out of it. If the community development programme professes to bring about a change in the outlook of the people, there is hardly any change noticeable here. Ignorance still continues to be bliss, adults are not keen on educating their children, family planning is unknown nor does there seem to be any scope for it as long as the habitation continues to be as it is, the attitude towards indebtedness is fatalistic and the addiction to liquor continues unabated.

People continue to be orthodox and "unpolluted" by modern civilization. Their habits are still very simple and frugal. They make their own houses utilizing the raw material locally available; make their *khats* which serve them as multi-purpose furniture, are their own washermen and make the best use of materials locally available.

Cultivators are shrewd enough to realise where there economic betterment lies. Sinking *odis* by the traditional pick-axe in the bed of river, which is a tough task, is done by them with pleasure as they know well that sugarcane production fetches them good returns. They, thus, have sound common-sense and only need to be guided on the right lines.

The striking feature of village life is community living. The village forms one large family where people commonly share their pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows. By mutual help and sympathy, problems of shortage of labourers and ploughs for the agricultural operations are solved. The fairs and the festivals are jointly celebrated. The informal village panchayat decides most of the disputes in a simple, inexpensive and expeditious manner. The effect of all this is that life has not passed on to, what Jaya Prakash Narain aptly calls, "Robotism".

People are extremely religious and think that present education has served its purpose after a child has become learned enough to read "Ramayana" well. The saying in the village is, *"Thora Padha Hal se Gaya, Jyada Padha Ghar Se Gaya"*, meaning "Little educated, (the boy) leaves the plough and if educated well, he leaves the house.". Thus as it is, people in the village see no practical utility of education.

As the entire village is only a big agricultural family, there is perceptible unemployment-disguised and real-in the village.

If people can not go to the fields, they just sit with hands crossed and can undoubtedly augment their earnings by taking to cottage industries. But, even if they take to cottage industries and the surplus on land migrate for other employment avenues, the millenium will still be receding until there is a complete shake-up in their mental attitude to indebtedness and *tadi* drinking.

APPENDIX A

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

The custom of *sagai, i.e.,* betrothal ceremony is prevalent among the Gehlots. Soon after her birth or within the age of 2-3 years, a girl is engaged and generally *sagai* is not broken off unless the death of one of the partners makes it inevitable. Naturally, as *sagai* takes place very early in their life and marriage is also solemnised before girls and boys attain the age of maturity, marriages are arranged by their parents and they take marriage as a necessary ritual. The common belief is that marriages are made in heaven.

Marriage negotiations are finalised by parents of both sides informally and they, then approach a Brahmin *Pundit* for *lagna, i.e.,* auspicious date and time of marriage.

A few days before the date of marriage, the parents of the bride-to-be send for the *Pundit* who writes a *Lagna Patrika,* literally a *Patrika* containing an invitation for the *lagna, i.e.,* marriage. The dates of (i) *Khanagar*—the day when ladies of the house go out and dig *mitti,* (ii) *Ganesh Pujan*—worship of Lord Ganesh and (iii) *Barat Agman*—the day the bride-groom's party is to arrive, are mentioned in the *Patrika* and all the relations of the bridegroom, both from the mother's side and the father's side, are invited. *Huldi* (turmeric powder) is sprinkled on the *Patrika* and, with one rupee, it is wrapped by red thread and sent to the bridegroom's place through a Brahmin or a barber about 15 days before the date of marriage. *Huldi* and red thread are used on the patrika as they are considered auspicious. The dates mentioned in the *Patrika* are observed in the bride-groom's place also. Postal invitations are sent to the relations living in far off places and those living near about, are invited through a Brahmin or a barber. The procedure of personal invitations is this—the Brahmin or the barber mixes some rice grain with *huldi* and puts this on the front threshold of each invited house and also announces the dates of marriage. After the despatch of the *Lagna-Patrika,* the marriage offer becomes irrevocable.

The customs followed on each day of the marriage ceremony are detailed below.

(i) Khanagar—First is the day of *Khanagar.* The ladies of the house and the neighbourhood assemble in the evening and go out together. They dig some *mitti* and return with it. Later on, they make a *chulha* (cooking oven) out of the *mitti* and also one or two utensils. Preparations like rice and *puri* are cooked on this *chulha* on the next day for 'Devi Puja'. A widow can not take a hand in making this *chulha.* Women sing together to the accompaniment of a *dholaki,* clean wheat, rice and other cereals. This is, in fact, the day when marriage preparations commence. No one from the village is invited to the feast this day which is restricted to members of the house.

(ii) Ganesh Pujan—The second day, two *pujans* are performed, in the morning to Devi Mata and in the night to Lord Ganesh. The object of Mata *puja* is to ensure that no evil may visit the house. The bridegroom and his near relations go to Devi Mata and he has to fast until the puja is over. He goes with two small red flags in his hands; the parents carry *puri,* cooked rice and a coconut and offer them to the deity. *Kum-kum,* mixed in rice and water is sprinkled and *dhoop* is given which completes the *puja.* The bridgroom does not participate but merely remains present. The small red flags brought by him, are placed near the deity by his parents.

On all sacred functions, the blessings of Lord Ganesh are invoked. Therefore, as a marriage is considered a sacrament, God Ganesh is worshipped in the night. He is believed to be very fond of a *laddu,* and, is therefore, worshipped in the form of a *laddu.* The *laddu* is prepared this way: Wheat flour is mixed with water and oval-shaped cakes called *gahad* are made, roasted, and mixed with *ghee* and sugar. Five *laddus* are made. The *puja* is performed by the bridgroom in the presence of the pundit who chants *mantras.*

After Ganesh-Puja, turmeric mixed with water is massaged on the whole body of the bridegroom excepting the palms and the feet where *mehndi* is pasted in ordinary patterns. Till late in the night, ladies of the house and of the neighbourhood sing and dance by turns. The lady dancing also sings and the strain is repeated by others.

On the third day, the bridegroom along with all members of the house is invited by a near relation for feasting and drinking. This, by turn, continues for 8 days at the bride-groom's and the bride's places. If they do not have relations rich enough to invite them for 8 days, the feasting continues at their own houses.

The daily routine for these eight days is that, after the feast is over in the night, men and women come out with the bridegroom (or the bride as the case may be) in the *chowk*. Men-folk play *binayki, i.e.,* each man takes two batons in his hands and playfully matches them with batons of others. *Dholaki* is also played. Woman sit separately together and sing marriage songs termed as *Banna, Gali,* etc. Some of these songs are given in the end.

(iii) Mandap—On the 9th day, in the morning the *mandap* is prepared generally in front of the house and, if not convenient, in the courtyard. The *mandap* is a sort of a shed supported by four poles and the top is of bamboo and *jamun* leaves. Why *jamun* leaves are particularly used, is not known. Four small pits have to be made for fixing the poles and in one of them, the 'Pundit' puts a pice and a nut. *Gur* is distributed to all people present. After the *mandap* is ready, a *khambha* i.e., at 3 feet long rectangular post painted with turmeric and oil, is fixed which is an infallible sign that a marriage is taking place in the house. All marriage rites are held near the *khambha*. A *khambha* literally means a pillar.

In the evening, people of all castes in the village are invited. The relations of the bride-groom from the mother's side arrive by this time and bring wedding dresses for the bridegroom. They join in the feast and *tadi* is taken afterwards.

On the tenth day, people from the village are again invited and the relations from the mother's side, present wedding dresses to the bridegroom and clothes like *dhoti* and *turban* to his parents in the *mandap*. Till this day, the functions held in the bride-groom and the bride's place are exactly similar.

It is on the 11th day that the *barat* which consists of males only, leaves for the bride's place; the departure is timed in such a way that it reaches the bride's place by evening. The relatives of the bridegroom and people of other castes including the Chamars and the Balahis of the village are the members of the *barat* party.

The relations of the bride receive the *barat* and members of both the sides hug each other. The relations of the bride, then, offer clothes to the bridegroom and also ornaments, if they can afford to do so.

Later in the night, the *lagna* is solemnised. In the *chowk* in the *mandap,* the bride and the bride groom are seated together and the hand of the bride is placed in the hand of the bridegroom which signifies that they have become life-long partners. The *'Pundit'* chants *mantras* and the *dhapra* (*i.e.,* a village drum) is played. In the early hours of the morning, the relations of the parties are treated to a feast.

Next morning, there is no function except common feasting in the afternoon. In feasts, the Balahis and the Chamars are seated separately. In the evening, the bride and the bridegroom are seated together in the *chowk,* the shawl of the bridegroom is tied to the brids's sari indicating their union in the eyes of society. Holy pyre called *vedi* is lit and in the presence of the 'Pundit' and the relations, the pair go round the *vedi* seven times. This is called *bhanwar.* This having been done, the pair then is again seated in the *chowk.* In front of them is placed turmeric mixed with water in a large size *thali* called *konpar.* The relations of the bride come in turn, touch the feet of the pair with the turmeric water and make presents which are usually in cash. This rite is called *per-pujan, i.e.,* worshipping the feet. The bride's father makes presents of 7-9 or 11 cooking utensils, (generally of brass) a cow (called *"go-dan"*) and also silver and gold ornaments according to his status This constitutes what is called *dahej.* According to the custom, the cooking utensils are always presented in odd numbers.

The 13th day is the final day of the marriage celebrations. The afternoon feast over, the bride's father presents 7, 9 or 11 pairs of clothes to the near relations of the bridegroom.

Then comes off the final touching ceremony of *bida* when the bride meets all her relations before leaving for her new abode. The marriage is thus over.

Two marriage songs are given below:—

(1)

रघुनन्दन बीन बजाओ कि नहीं
Oh God flute (will you) play or not

कछु आज नाचेगा कछु काल नाचेगा
Few today will dance, few tomorrow will dance

अठन्नी रोज मांगेगा चवन्नी रोज
Eight anna day will demand, four anna day will

मांगेगा
demand

रुपइया रात मांगेगा
Rupee night will demand

रघुनन्दन बीन बजाओ कि नहीं.
Oh God flute play or not.

(This is a song called *gali* i.e., song in abusive language, full of slander. During the time of marriage, it is customary to sing such songs which are always addressed to the bride-groom's father by ladies in the bride's house. The strain of such songs has nothing to do whatever with the contents and is generally in the name of God, so that His sacred name is repeated.)

The song above merely says that, if the bride-groom's father wants ladies of the house to dance for him, they will demand 4 to 8 annas for dancing during day-time and a rupee for dancing in the night. (The slander implied may be noted).

(2)

जमुना के ओले गंगा के पहिले
Jamuna this bank, Ganga other bank

साजन जुंवा डोटा खेले
Dear consort gamble chese play

खेलत-खेलत भई बड़ी देर
Playing happened much late

लाड़-लड़ीका साजन लड़की हारी आया
Dear consort bride lost has

हारता-हारता ग्वाला केडी लक्ष्मी हार जाता
Losing hersdsman, calf Luxmi lose could

रावल लड़की (बेटी) क्यों हारी आया
Consort bride why lost

हारता-हारता पायेगा कि तेड़न
Could lose feet ornament

तांबा पीतल हो तो बदली भी जांय
Copper brass if can be exchanged

साजन समधी बदली न जांय
Husband bride's father be exchanged not can

रुपइया हो तो परख लवें
Rupee if weighed can be

समधी-साजन परखे न जाँय
Bride's father husband be weighed not can

The gist is that between the bank of the Jamuna and the Ganga, the dear one has been playing chess till late and lost his bride in the gamble. The advice tendered to him is that he could have lost the calf, Luxmi or the ornaments of his feet but he could not have lost the bride. The bride's father can not be exchanged like brass and copper and his value can not be weighed like a rupee.

The sentiments expressed in the song are tender and touching.

APPENDIX B

MAJOR FESTIVALS

People in the village do not know why they celebrate their most important festivals (Holi and Diwali) and what mythological legends are associated with them. They celebrate them simply because it is customary and they have seen their forefathers doing so.

(i) Holi—"Holi" falls in the month of *Falgun* (February-March) on the full-moon day. It is undoubtedly a festival of merry-making and mirth. But the joyous mood of the people is intimately dependent on the rabi crop which is almost ready for harvesting at the time. If the crop is good, "Holi" is celebrated with gay abandon.

The village chowkidar, a Balahi, collects cow-dung cakes from every household and puts them in a stack in the place of 'Holi'. It is to be noted that only cow-dung cakes are used for 'Holi' fire and firewood is not at all used. The people have no explanation for this practice. At the place of the 'Holi', *puja* is done by sprinkling *kum-kum* and offering *puri* and rice after the stack has been completed. Later on, all the people assemble together and sing *holi* to the accompaniment of *dholaki*, harmonium, *jhanjha* and *manjeera* until dawn when they disperse and collect at the place of 'Holi', each person bringing a little fire from home. This is pooled and the stack is kindled. After a few hours, men and women separately visit the 'Holi', make *parikrama*, (rounds of the holy fire) sing *holi* and sprinkle *gulal* (red powder) on smouldering fire.

They, then return collectively, rejoicing and singing and visit all the houses in the village where some one died in the previous one year. They throw colour and *gulal* on members of such households. This practice is an expression that the death of a person from a house is a loss to the entire village and they commonly share the sufferings as they do the joys.

Men and women, in separate groups then collect in a common place, throw about colour and *gulal* and sing *holi*. This goes on for about an hour and, later on, every household contributes a little *gur* and if people from other villages have also come, they also give their shares. The *gur* collected is distributed to all persons present. On return, men-folk drown themselves in *tadi* and women-folk attend to household work. It is not customary to invite guests on the occasion or to dance in groups or individually.

Two songs of "Holi" are rendered below:—

मैं होली कैसे खेलूं रे सांवरिया के संग
I Holi How Play Lord Krishna with

कोरा कोरा कलश मंगाय, जिस में घोला रंग
New new pitcher sent for in which mixed colour

भर पिचकारी बदन पर मारी लाल सुर्ख कर दीनी
full colour-pump body on sprayed red bright done

मैं होली कैसे खेलूं रे सांवरिया के संग
I Holi how play Lord Krishna with

(The substance is the *Gopi* says, how am I to play "Holi" with Lord Krishna (weak as I am)? Lord sent for a fresh, new pitcher and mixing colour in it has drenched me completely in bright red colour. (Now I am alone and helpless). How am I to play "Holi" with Lord Krishna ?).

II

फागन आयो रे
Falgun has come

नंदी का वीर मोहे क्यों न लें जाये
Husband's sisters's brother me why not take.

पहिलारी आवन म्हारो ससुरो भी आयो
First invitation my father-in-law came

ऊनी बुडलया की लार म्हारो जाय रें बलाय
That old man with my go evil

फागुन आयो रे
Falgun has come.

नंदी का बीर म्हारे क्यों न ले जाये
Husband's sister's brother me why not take

पहिलारी आवुन म्हारो देवर भी आयो
First invitation my husband's brother also came

ऊनी तोरया की लार म्हारो जाय रे बलाय
That boy with my go evil

फागुन आयो रे
Falgun has come.

दूसरारी आवुन म्हारो सायबो भी आयो
Second invitation my husband also came

ऊनी साहिबा की लार हूं तो कल की तैयार
That husband with, I am since yesterday ready.

फागुन आयो रे
Falgun has come!

(The newly married bride who is at her father's place says: Falgun has come. Why has my husband not come to take me? The first time, my old father-in-law (said contemptuously) came to take me and I refused to go. Then my husband's younger brother (again said contemptuously) also came to take me and I likewise refused to go. The second time, my husband has come (said with marked respect) and lo! I have made all preparations since yesterday to accompany him. Falgun has come. Why has my husband not come to take me).

(ii) Diwali—This is the second important festival celebrated with zest and gaiety. This falls on *Amawasya* in the month of *Kartika*. People take their cattle to the river in the day and affectionately bathe them. The reason given is that they consider cattle their Luxmi, their wealth. No one in the village works on the day.

In the evening, 16 earthen lamps are arranged in a *supda* (winnowing-fan) filled to the brim with til oil and lit. A *chowk* is made on floor with flour; the *supda* with lamps is placed on it and *dhoop* is given of ghee, *gur* and rice grain. This is done only after the cattle have returned home in the evening after grazing. There is no particular reason why only 16 lamps, not more nor less, are lit; but custom has it so. The peculiar thing is that, Goddess Luxmi-Goddess of Wealth-is not worshipped No special item of food is cooked in the night and no one is particularly invited. Fireworks are displayed by children in the night. The bullocks are not employed in any agricultural operation this day.

The following morning is the festival of cattle: they are gorgeously decorated by *hiramchi* (chocolate colour) and other colours. The patterns are made by indigenous methods like earthen lamps and potato-pieces dipped in colour. The horns of the cattle are also decorated in variegated colours. On the heads of the cows, peacock feathers are neatly arranged. In addition, what are called *patya*, *kodis* interlaced in a string are also put around the neck which are sonorific. The buffaloes are be-decked with *khugalo* (i.e., two feet long rope with coloured cotton threads wrapped above it). All the cattle are then worshipped. *tilak* is done with *kum-kum* and rice grain; rice and *puri* are offered to them. Then, *arati* is done (in a *thali* a ghee wick is made, lit and reverently moved in a semicircular fashion in front of the cattle) and they are left free for grazing.

Later a *gowardhan* i.e., a symbolic mountain out of cow-dung is made and worshipped by offering milk, curd, *puri* and rice. It is well-known that this is done in memory of Lord Krishna who had lifted up the Gowardhan mountain to protect the cattle of the village from the wrath of Lord Indra-God of Rains.

Throughout the day, the people indulge in revelry. They assemble together and forget themselves in *tadi*. The remarkable thing is that, though they drink together, everyone pays for his share individually. The women-folk do not drink.

TABLE I

Area, Households and Population

Area in Acres	Total No. of Households	Persons	Males	Females
1242.64	59	268	137	131

TABLE II

Age-Groups

Persons	Total of ages	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-59	60 & Over	Age Not Stated
Males	137	26	16	12	11	5	11	18	15	20	4	..
Females	131	21	14	11	5	13	18	11	17	16	4	..
Total	268	47	30	23	16	18	29	29	32	36	8	..

TABLE III

Size and Composition of Households

Total No. of households	Single member households	Two to four member households	Four to six member households	Seven to nine member households	Ten and above member households
59	2	17	33	5	2

TABLE IV

Age and Marital Status

Age Groups	Total Population			Never Married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or Separated	
	Persons	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
0-4 ..	47	26	21	25	21	1	0	0	0	0	0
5-9 ..	30	16	14	15	13	1	1	0	0	0	0
10-14 ..	23	12	11	8	6	4	5	0	0	0	0
15-19 ..	16	11	5	6	0	5	5	0	0	0	0
20-24 ..	18	5	13	1	0	4	13	0	0	0	0
25-29 ..	29	11	18	0	0	11	18	0	0	0	0
30-34 ..	29	18	11	0	0	17	11	1	0	0	0
35-44 ..	32	15	17	0	0	14	14	1	2	0	1
45-59 ..	36	19	17	0	0	17	8	2	9	0	0
60 & above	8	4	4	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0
Total	268	137	131	55	40	74	75	8	15	0	1

TABLE V

Literacy

Age Group	Total			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or Jr. Basic		Matric or Hr. Secondary		Intermediate	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
0—4 ..	47	26	21	26	21	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9 ..	30	16	14	16	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14 ..	23	12	11	10	11	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
15—19 ..	16	11	5	7	5	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..
20—24 ..	18	5	13	3	13	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
25—29 ..	29	11	18	10	18	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
30—34 ..	29	18	11	17	10	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
35—44 ..	32	15	17	14	17	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
44—59 ..	36	20	16	20	16	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 & over.	8	4	4	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Age not Stated.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

TABLE VI

WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS BY SEX AND BROAD AGE-GROUPS

Age Groups	Total			Total workers			Total non-workers		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
0-14	100	54	46	7	3	4	93	51	42
15-34	92	45	47	85	44	41	7	1	6
35-59	68	35	33	65	35	30	3	..	3
60 & over	8	3	5	4	2	2	4	1	3

TABLE VII

Workers By Sex, Broad Age-groups and Occupation

Age Groups	Cottage Industry			Agricultural Labour			Cultivator			Others		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
0-14	..	..	..	2	..	2	5	3	2	..	..	..
15- 34	..	..	..	15	8	7	68	36	32	1	..	1
35-59	..	..	..	8	4	4	54	29	25	3	2	1
60 & over.	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	2	2	..	..	..

TABLE VIII

Workers By Sex, Broad Age-Group, Industry, Business, Cultivations Belonging to the House-Hold

Age groups	Total workers			Working in Industry belonging to H. Hold			Working in Business belonging to H. Hold			Working in Cultivation belonging to the House-Hold.		
	Persons	Males	Femles	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
0-14 ..	7	3	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	3	4
15-34 ..	85	44	41	..	..	..	..	..	..	85	44	41
35-59 ..	65	35	30	..	..	..	3	2	1	62	33	29
60 & above	4	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	2	2

TABLE IX

Non-Workers by Sex, Broad Age-groups and Nature of Activity

Age groups	Total No. of Non-Workers			Persons engaged in house-hold work only			Full time students or Children attending school			Sick, old and Infants			Retd Persons unemployed, rentiers, Persons living on Agri. & Non-Agri. royalty, rent or dividend or other persons of independent means		
	Persons	Mls.	F. Mls.	Persons	Mls.	F. Mls.	Persons	Mls.	F. Mls.	Persons	Mls.	F. mls.	Persons	Mls.	F. Mls.
0-14 ..	93	51	42	91	49	42	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15-34 ..	7	1	6	7	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
35-59 ..	3	..	3	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 & Over.	4	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	1	3	..	..	..

TABLE IX (*contd.*)

Age Groups	Beggars, Vagrants, Independent women without indication of source of income and others of unspecific source of income			Inmates of Penal, Mental and charitable institutions			Persons Seeking employment			Persons who have no special reason for not seeking employment and who do not belong to any other category		
	Persons	Ml.	F.	Persons	Ml.	F.	Persons	Ml.	F.	Persons	Ml.	F.
0-14 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15-34 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
35-59 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 & over	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

TABLE X

House-Holds classified by Religion, Caste or Sub-Caste

	No. of Households		No. of Households	Hindus Sub-Caste	No. of Households
Hindus	58	Mohammedan (Pinjara.)	1	Chamar	5
				Balahi	20
				Carpenter	2
				Gehlot	28
				Khati	1
				Brahmin	1
				Kumhar	2

TABLE XI

Households by Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes

Total No. of households belonging to the Scheduled Castes	Names of Scheduled Castes	No. of households in each Scheduled Caste	Total No. of households belonging to the Scheduled Tribes	Names of Scheduled Tribes	No. of households in each Scheduled Tribe
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
25	Chamar	5	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Balahi	20	..	..	..

TABLE XII

Households by No. of rooms sleeping and No. of persons occupying

No. of Rooms	Total No. of households	No. of households according to No. of persons in the households				
		1 person	2-3 Persons	4-6 Persons	7-9 Persons	10 Persons and over
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
No Regular room	..	..	..	..	..	..
One Room	48	2	17	24	4	1
Two Rooms	7	..	..	6	1	..
Three Rooms	2	..	..	1	..	1
Four Rooms	1	..	..	1	..	..
Five Rooms & Over ..	1	..	..	..	..	..

TABLE XIII

Houses used wholly or partly as dwellings by wall and roof of material

Total No. of Census Houses	Material of wall									Material of roof						
	Green leaves, reed or Bamboo	Timber	Mud	Unburnt Brick	Burnt Brick	C. sheet or other metal sheets	Stone	Cement Concrete	All other materials	Green leaves reeds thatch of Bamboo	Tiles slate Shingle	Corrugated Iron Zinc or other metal sheets	Asbestos Cement Sheets	Brick & Lime	Concrete & Stone slabs	All other materials
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
59			All 59 houses-Kaccha houses	..	..	..	..	...	..	1	Country tiles-58 houses					

TABLE XIV

Household by Tenure Status

Total No. of Households	Households with separate sleeping rooms for each couple	Households living in rented houses	Households living in their own houses
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
59	..	..	59

TABLE XV

Domestic Animals

Total No. of households	Cows	Bulls	Buffaloes	She-Buffaloes	Goats	Sheep	Pigs	Bullocks	Fowls					
									Ducks	Indigluous	Rhod Island	White leghorn	Black Minarca	Any other breed
59	12	45	2	5	5	..	..	95	..	5	..	..	..	34

TABLE XVI

Furniture and Miscellaneous Goods

Total No. of Households	Chairs	Tables	Cots	Stools	Benches	Alimirahs	Petromax	Electric light	Battery Torch light	Kerosene Stove	Bicycles	Gramophone	Radio	Bullock-Cart
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
59	..	..	125	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	47

TABLE XVII (A)

Distribution of Households by Occupation, Income and No. of Members

Occupation	Income group p.m.	No. of house-holds	No. of persons per household by						
			Males above 14	Females above 14	Children between 10-14	Children between 6 & 10	Children under 6	Total	Average No. of gainfully employed people per household
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Rs.								
Cultivator ..	20 & below	5	6	6	..	..	..	12	2.4
	20—30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	30—40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	40—60	7	8	5	..	..	..	13	1.8
	60—80	13	14	12	2	..	..	22	2.1
	80—100	8	7	10	1	..	..	18	2.2
	100 & above	15	34	28	1	..	..	63	4.2
Agricultural Labour	20 & below	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	1.0
	20—30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	30—40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	40—60	5	6	6	..	..	..	12	2.4
	60—80	3	3	3	1	..	..	7	2.3
	80—100	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	100 & above	1	2	2	1	..	..	5	7.0
Others ..	20 & below	1	2	1	..	..	..	3	1.5
	20—30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	30—40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	40—60	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60—80	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	80—100	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	100 & above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

TABLE XVII (B)

Staple Food

Total No. of Households	Name of the Community	Total No. of the households in the community	Name of the community	Total No. of households in the community	Name of the community	Total No. of households in the community	Name of the community	Total No. of households in the community
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
59	Chamar ..	5	Balai ..	20	Gehlot..	28	Brahmin	1
	Pinjara ..	1	Kumahar	1	Carpenter	2	Khati ..	1

the staple food of all the 59 Households is *jowar*

TABLE XVII (C)

Diet (Food other than Staple Food)

Total No. of households	Name of the Community	Total No. of households in the community	Households taking pulses vegetables, meat, milk products, eggs, sweets, spices and oil and other item besides staple food	Households taking pulses, vegetables milk and milk products, sweets, spices, oil and any other item besides staple food	Households using meat or pulses, vegetables and eggs etc. but not milk	Households using meat and/or pulses or vegetables but not milk and eggs
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
59	Gehlot ..	28	..	..	..	28
	Balahi ..	20	..	..	..	19
	Chamar ..	5	..	..	..	5
	Carpenter ..	2	..	2	..	..
	Brahmin ..	1	..	1	..	..
	Kumhar ..	1	..	1	..	..
	Pinjara ..	1	..	1	..	..
	Khati ..	1	..	1	..	..

TABLE XVII (D)

Diet

Total No. of house-holds	Name of the community	Total No. of households in the community	Households having breakfast, noon meal & supper & tea in morning	Households having breakfast noon meal & supper with coffee or tea with light dishes between noon meal & supper	Households having breakfast, noon meal & supper only	Households having breakfast & noon meal only with or without tea at other times	Households having meals & supper only with or without tea
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
59	Chamar ..	5	2	..	2	..	1
	Balahi ..	20	..	..	14	..	6
	Carpenter ..	2	..	..	2	..	..
	Gehlot ..	28	7	..	13	1	7
	Pinjara ..	1	..	..	1	..	..
	Kumhar ..	1	..	..	..	1	.
	Brahman ..	1	..	..	..	..	1
	Khati ..	1	1	..	..	..	..

TABLE XVIII

Ornaments

		Total No. of Households
1.	Total No. of Households in the Community	59
2.	Total No. of households wearing ornaments	59
3.	Households in which males, females and children are wearing ornaments ..	6
4.	Households in which males and females are wearing ornaments	5
5.	Households in which males only are wearing ornaments	1
6.	Households in which females only are wearing ornaments	26
7.	Households in which only children are wearing ornaments	1
8.	Households in which females and children are wearing ornaments	19
9.	Households in which males and children are wearing ornaments	..
10.	Households using no ornaments	..
11.	No. of Households using ornaments of the value of Rs. 100	4
12.	No. of Households using ornaments of the value of Rs. 500	48
13.	No. of Households using ornaments up to Rs. 1,000	6
14.	No. of Households using ornaments up to Rs. 1,500	..
15.	No. of Households using ornaments up to Rs. 2,000	1
16.	No. of Households using ornaments up to Rs. 2,500	..
17.	No. of Households using ornaments up to Rs. 3,000 and above	..

TABLE XIX

Agricultural produce of Cultivation run by the households and their disposal

Name of Produce	Jowar	Paddy	Cotton	Sugar	Wheat
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer
1. Annual quantity produced	877.20	240.20	31.0	1994.0	206.10
2. Total Annual Quantity consumed by the producing households.	824.0	122.0	0.0	48.0	347.20
3. Annual quantity available for sale.	53.20	118.20	31.0	1846.0	..

Agricultural Produce of Cultivation run by the households and their disposal (contd.)

Name of produces	Gram	Maize	Massor	Peas	Pepper
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer	Mds. Seer
1. Annual quantity produced.	53.0	28.1	7.0	3.0	14.0
2. Total annual quantity consumed by the producing households.	129.0	10.5	6.30	1.0	2.0
3. Total annual quantity available for sale.	..	17.6	0.70	2.0	12.0

TABLE XX

Indebtedness

Indebtedness by income groups					Indebtedness	
Income Group	Total No. of *house-holds*	No. of *house-holds* in debt	Per cent of *column* 3 to col. 2	Average *indebted-ness per* household in debt	Causes	Amount of debt
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(1)	(2)
				Rs. nP.		Rs. nP.
Rs. 20 and below..	7	4	56%	315.00		
Rs. 20-30 ..	..	..	..	..	(a) Purchase of land. ..	1,000.00
Rs. 30-40 ..	..	..	..	..	(b) House construction or repairs to existing building.	2,270.00
Rs. 40-60 ..	12	8	66%	303.12		
Rs. 60-80 ..	16	15	93%	624.60	(e) Marriages.	3,175.00
Rs. 80-100 ..	8	8	100%	302.50	(d) Funerals.	..
Rs. 100 and above	16	14	87.5%	952.14	(e) To give dowry. ..	..
					(f) To clear out old out-standing debt.	..
					(g) Sickness.	720.00
					(h) Ordinary wants. ..	7,475.00
					(i) Household cultivation.	11,230.00
					(j) Industry run by the household.	..
					(k) Liquor	140.00
					Total ..	28,010.00