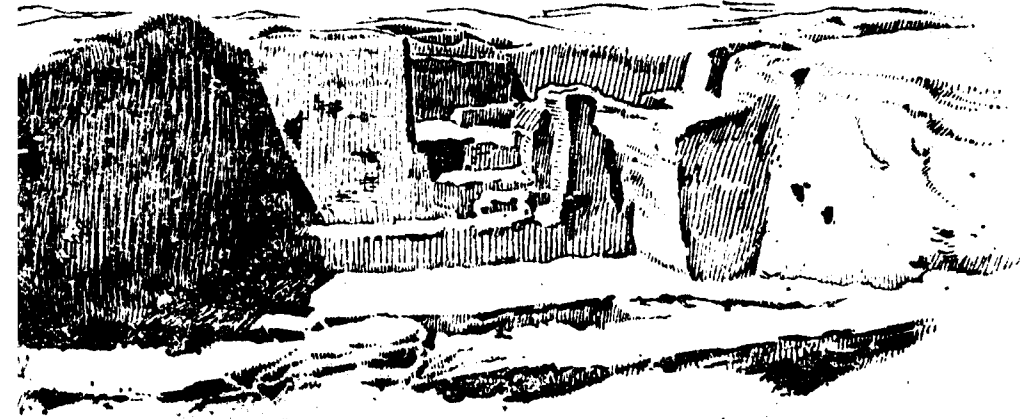


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**CENSUS OF INDIA
1961**

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Rang Mahal

A
VILLAGE SURVEY
RAJASTHAN

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... on way to a well on a dusty day





CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XIV

RAJASTHAN

PART VI - B

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

4. RANGMAHAL

Field Investigation and First Draft by
R. C. BHARGAVA

Supervision and Final Draft by
G. R. GUPTA

Editor
C. S. GUPTA
OF THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE
Superintendent of Census Operations, Rajasthan.

1965



FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundation of demography in this sub-continent, 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 centralisation 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 invert 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 chooge 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.

(iv)

(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 Surveys 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 passenger-; 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, movable and immovable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May, 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June, 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and

(v)

administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December 1961, when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in

quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve : to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The Schedules finally adopted for the monographs have been printed in an appendix.

New Delhi,
July 30, 1964.

A. MITRA
Registrar General, India.

Villages selected for the Survey

<i>Village</i>	<i>Tehsil</i>	<i>District</i>
Rang Mahal ...	Suratgarh	Ganganagar
Mukam ...	Nokha	Bikaner
Mudh ...	Kolayat	"
Bajawa ...	Udaipurwati	Jhunjhunu
Bhangarh ...	Rajgarh	Alwar
Hasanpur ...	Tijara	"
Poonchhari ...	Deeg	Bharatpur
Aghapur ...	Bharatpur	"
Sanganer ...	Sanganer	Jaipur
Chimanpura ...	Bairath	"
Nangal Soosawatan ...	Amber	"
Abhaneri ...	Baswa	"
Shivpura Ghata ...	Beawar	Ajmer
Ramdeora ...	Pokaran	Jaisalmer
Bujawar ...	Jodhpur	Jodhpur
Kalijal ...	Jodhpur	"
Malar ...	Phalodi	"
Bhadwasi ...	Nagaur	Nagaur
Goriya ...	Bali	Pali
Tilwara ...	Pachpadra	Barmer
Ramsin ...	Pachpadra	"
Janvi ...	Sanchor	Jalor
Hotigaon ...	Sanchor	"
Nichlagarh ...	Abu Road	Sirohi
Bagor ...	Mandal	Bhilwara
Panarwa ...	Phalasia	Udaipur
Manpur ...	Phalasia	"
Kailashpuri ...	Girwa	"
Sadri Ranawatan ...	Bhupalsagar	"
Khajoor ...	Kushalgarh	Banswara
Peepalkhoont ...	Ghatol	"
Ramnagar ...	Bundi	Bundi
Sanwara ...	Shahbad	Kota
Gagron ...	Kanwas	"
Kaithoon ...	Ladpura	"
Kyasara ...	Dag	Jhalawar

PREFACE

The present village of Rangmahal stands on the debris of the millennia old flourishing township of the same name well known to the archaeologists as being contemporaneous with the Indus Valley Civilization cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. More than half of the population of the Abode of Pleasure, for that is what Rangmahal literally means, comprises of the untouchables – the Nayaks, the Meghwals and the Baoris, the rest being mostly made up of the sturdy Jat community. This monograph presents the socio-economic aspects of the diverse community life of the village.

The study was taken up firstly by Sarvashri R. C. Bhargava, M. Com., and B. L. Sharma, M. A. (Soc.) during the period from the 1st of December to 9th December 1961 but later the work was carried on by the former alone who visited the village during April 1962 for about 10 days. Shri G. R. Gupta, M. A., LL. B., has supervised this study. Photography of this village was conducted by the investigator himself. The dusty effects are indicative of the fact that this was done in the summer. Miss Apeksha Rao has contributed a few line drawings for this report. Shri S. R. Luhadia has seen this through the press.

I express my gratitude to Shri Asok Mitra, Registrar General, India and Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Officer on Special Duty for their guidance in this work.

I thank my Deputy Superintendent, Dr. U. B. Mathur, who has assisted me in editing this report. My thanks are also due to Shri Roshan Lal, B. D. O., Suratgarh and Sarvashri Satya Pal Takhar and Raghuvir Singh Takhar of the village for their assistance during the period of investigation.

Ram Bagh Palace Annexe,
Jaipur.
2nd October, 1965.

C. S. GUPTA
Superintendent, Census Operations,
Rajasthan.

CENSUS PUBLICATIONS

for

Rajasthan State

The Rajasthan 1961 Census Publications, which will have volume No. XIV in All India Census series, will be published in the following parts :—

Part I-A	...	General Report.
Part I-B	...	Subsidiary Tables.
Part II-A	...	General Population Tables (A Series) and Primary Census Abstract.
Part II-B (i)	...	Economic Tables (B Series, Tables I-IV).
Part II-B (ii)	...	Economic Tables (B Series, Tables V-IX).
Part II-C (i)	...	Cultural Tables (C Series).
Part II-C (ii)	...	Migration Tables (D Series).
Part III	...	Household Economic Tables (B Series, Tables X-XVII).
Part IV-A	...	Report on Housing and Establishments.
Part IV-B	...	Housing & Establishment Tables (E Series).
Part V-A	...	Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
Part V-B	...	Ethnographic notes on Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.
Part VI-A to F	...	Survey of Selected Villages.
Part VII-A	...	Survey of Selected Crafts.
Part VII-B	...	Notes on Selected Fairs & Festivals.
Part VIII-A	...	*Census Administration Report (Enumeration).
Part VIII-B	...	*Census Administration Report (Tabulation).
Part IX-A & B	...	Census Atlas.

A separate District Census Handbook prepared by this office will be issued by the Government of Rajasthan for each of the 26 districts.

*Not for sale.

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TEHSIL SURATGARH

DISTRICT GANGANAGAR

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CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

RANGMAHAL is a small village in tehsil Suratgarh situated at 29°21' north latitude and 73°59' east longitude, at a distance of about 6 km in the north-east of the town of Suratgarh. It is bounded on the north by *Bir* of Suratgarh and village Bareka, on the east and south-east by village Takharwala and on the south by village Kishanpura. Rangmahal itself has a railway station on the metre gauge line of the Northern Railway on Suratgarh-Hanumangarh section; but it is 8 km from the village proper. As no conveyance is available at the railway station, visitors have to cover the distance by camel or bullock-cart or jeep. People from Rangmahal desiring to go anywhere by train, entrain at Suratgarh. No bus service plies in this area. Camel is the most common form of transport in this sandy tract. It is believed that the site of the ancient and historical place of Rangmahal, literally a Palace of pleasure, is situated at a distance of about 3 km from the present village of Rangmahal. The old Rangmahal is said to have been the Capital of a Johiya Rajput chief and is believed to have been the centre of a very old civilization. Excavations have been made in the vicinity of Rangmahal from time to time, the last one was from 1952 to 1954 by a Swedish delegation headed by Miss Hanna Rydh.

2. Rangmahal is situated on the dried-up bed of the river Ghaggar, about 185 m above M.S.L., the surrounding area being some 12-25 m higher. This area is a part of the Great Indian Desert, a remarkably flat area between high mountain ranges and plateaus of Kirthar and Sulaiman (in Baluchistan), the Salt Range of Sind (in Pakistan) and the Himalayas and Aravalli (in India). During the rains many small basins and dried up river-beds such as the part of the bed of Ghaggar near Suratgarh, hold water temporarily.

3. From a physiographical point of view the desert area can be sub-divided into four

sections on the basis of its structure, geology and climate. These sub-divisions are :

- (i) Thar, most of the western part of which now belongs to Pakistan.
- (ii) Pat area with many saline lakes.
- (iii) The Ghaggar plain having a large number of dried river-beds and ancient channels.
- (iv) Semi-arid steppe desert of the uplands of Rajasthan.

4. The Rangmahal region forms the central part of the aforesaid Ghaggar plain. In the bed of the Ghaggar here the soil consists of a more or less continuous succession of sandy ridges, locally called *dhora* or *tiba*, between which are valleys, known as *johal* or *debri*, of firmer and in some places of loamy soil. These valleys occasionally turn into level plains of considerable extent, and are then known as *tals*. The soil on the summits of the ridges is generally too light for tillage, but with suitable rainfall fair crops can be raised on their slopes, *utar*, and especially in the valleys which benefit by the drainage of rain water from the sand-hills. Too heavy rain will, however, wash away the seed sown on the sides of the ridges, and the *utar* fields, being of lighter soil, can not stand continuous cultivation for as long a period as the *johal* or *tal* fields, the soil of which is superior. Writing about it M. B. Pithawalla, in his 'Great Indian Desert', states "the special feature of it is that there is a large number of dried river-beds and ancient channels now waterless and abandoned but flanked by continuous ridges of sand-hills, even protected by growth of scrub in the midst of the riverine beds. Seen from the air they disclose a pattern of a gigantic river system which must have once flowed perennially and allowed a large number of human settlements which must have been flourishing cities in the past. The beds show firm loamy soil

lying between light sand areas on either side and so rich that even a slight shower of rain would make it very fertile. Parts of the flooded plains, called 'kutch' land, once flooded by rivers, now lie barren. The fluviatile character of the alluvium in this tract has been marked in the silt, sand and gravel of the mantle containing fresh water. The wind agency has completed its work and spread loess all over. There is an average rainfall of about 10" but in lean years it is as low as 3". The result is that agricultural life is uncertain and people live only on pastoral plain. If this area is given enough water, the desert can be turned into a garden."*

Eolian sediments around Rangmahal

5. Most of the Rajasthan desert is covered with sand, blown by the winds. In the plains formed by river-beds, which are now dry, fine alluvium, rocks are seldom met with. Throughout the greater part of the territory the plain is either undulating or interspersed with shifting sand-hills, on the slopes of which are seen the light furrows formed by the action of the winds suggesting a sea shore.

6. The eolian sediments are sand and dust. The action of strong winds on the sand forms the dunes which are of three types, viz :

- (i) the transverse dune with ridges running perpendicular to the prevailing winds,
- (ii) longitudinal dune which is formed by the action of cross-winds. Such dunes are parallel to the direction of the strongest wind and
- (iii) the downs or the sand deposits with a flat or undulating and irregular surface.

In the Rangmahal area it is the first type of dunes i. e. transverse dunes which are most common. The Lakha Dhora dune situated near the Rangmahal dune is of the same type. The ridge of Lakha Dhora is about 50 m in height above

*Bulletin of the National Institute of Sciences of India - No. 1 - Issued September 1952 - p. 144.

the dried bed of Ghaggar. Beneath its surface of fresh blown sand are said to be old dunes which show traces of ancient settlements. The old dunes of Lakha Dhora and Rangmahal present a picturesque site from a distance, being profusely strewn over with fragments of red coloured pottery of the Grey Ware period. On the southern bank of the Ghaggar, between Rangmahal and Suratgarh, lie areas covered with undulating sheets of sand. They were formed by winds blowing from north and north-west. They have a scanty scrub vegetation.

7. In the Ghaggar bed, from Anupgarh, (128 kilometres north-west of Suratgarh) to Hanumangarh, the soil is hard loam which increases in hardness and consistency till the centre of the bed is reached. The admixture of clay increases as one goes east-ward and the soil takes a darker tinge. The tract on either side of the Ghaggar bed (*nali* area) is called *dhora* or *rohi* according as the quality of light sandy soil is greater or less. In the heavier soil costly crops can be produced if plentiful moisture is made available. The scantiness of average rainfall, however, renders the out-turn extremely low. Therefore, from an agricultural point of view, the area is much less valuable than it could otherwise be.

8. A special feature of the Ghaggar *nali* is that it is flooded, at almost regular intervals, towards the end of the monsoon season. The floods appear to have been more regular since 1886 than they had been prior to that date. Before that year floods occurred at intervals of 5 to 6 years but now they occur almost every second or third year. In September, 1962, the flood that visited the area was unprecedented. The entire tract surrounding Suratgarh tehsil was under water. P. J. Fagans in his Settlement Report 1893 (unpublished) has observed "The increase in the regularity of the floods appears to be due to the fact that the lakes on the course of the river Ghaggar in tehsil Sirsa are only depressions connected by high level channels. The bed has a tendency to assume one uniform level throughout and in consequence the depressions are being filled up and the intervening channel eroded and the

level of the flowing water thus tends to fall lower and lower, the result of which is that water can not spread over the adjacent land to the extent to which it could when the bed was higher. Less water is thus expended and more is left to flow on into Bikaner region. The processes have continued year after year and thereby the increase in the floods in the Suratgarh area has been caused."

Climate

9. The climate of village Rangmahal is characterised by extremes of temperature. It is very hot in summer and exceedingly cold in winter as would appear from the record for 7 years kept at the district headquarters of Ganganagar :

Year	Temperature in Centigrade	
	Maximum	Minimum
1954	47.2	0.5
1955	46.1	2.2
1956	47.2	2.8
1957	46.0	3.0
1958	47.0	5.0
1959	47.0	2.2
1960	47.0	2.2

During the summer i. e. the months of May, June and upto mid-July, the winds blow violently throughout the day. Due to sand all round, however, it cools down immediately after the sunset and the nights are invariably cool and pleasant.

10. The average rainfall, according to the records of the tehsil headquarters at Suratgarh, is 16 cm. The figures of rainfall in cm from the year 1951 to 1960 are given below :

Year	Rainfall	Year	Rainfall
1951	12.50	1956	17.86
1952	12.39	1957	15.75
1953	10.59	1958	22.15
1954	15.21	1959	23.29
1955	15.70	1960	24.20

The climate of the village on the whole is quite healthy. As it is situated on the dry bed of a river, it has none of the unhealthy features which characterise the watery areas. It has been,

however, noticed that the Ghaggar water is most unsuitable for drinking purposes. It is held that it causes fever, enlarged spleen and goitre. Villages along its banks are under-populated as it is apprehended that the families residing in these become extinct in the fourth generation. In Rangmahal, the bed of the river is dry from November to June and its water, which is available only during the rains, is never used for drinking purposes. The water of the local tank and the well has no such bad effects.

Flora

11. The area is very poor in vegetation. Here and there trees and bushes are noticeable singly or in clumps. It is difficult to find sufficient supply of wood for making agricultural implements. Cattle-dung cakes and roots and twigs of the Phog plant are utilised for fuel. Commonly found trees are Ber (*Zizyphus jujuba*), Jal (*Salvadora cleoides*), Kher (*Acacia catechu*) and Khejri (*Prosopis spicigera*). Occasionally, Neem, Pipal and Imli or Keekar are also seen. Bushes of Aak, Phog, Bui, Sajji, Pala, Karel and Thor are found in moderate numbers in the area. The roots and twigs of Phog bushes are very valuable. They are utilised for giving support to the sides of wells and also in construction of the walls of huts. Considerable quantity of soda is manufactured from Lama and Sajji. When burnt they yield a crude form of sodium carbonate which is utilised in washing and dyeing cloth. The fruits of the Kair plant are produced in abundance. They are utilised as vegetables or turned into pickles. The area is further characterised by the growth of a number of grasses which form excellent fodder for cattle and other animals, and hence are very valuable to the residents of the area.

Fauna

12. Wild animals are not expected to be abundant in the desert area. Deer, foxes, rabbits, lizards and snakes are, however, numerous. Information regarding birds and insects and other animals found in the region is very meagre and nothing can be said as to the existence or absence of the types of animals that may actually be met with in this area.

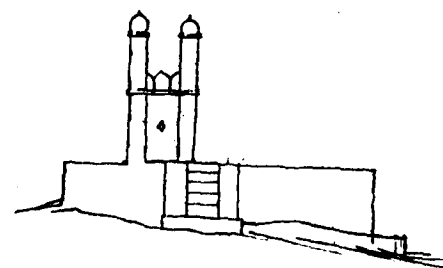
Size and number of households

13. The village, Rangmahal, extends over an area of 5,868 acres. There are 83 households in it with a total population of 355: 194 males and 161 females. The density of population thus comes to 15 persons per sq km. Community-wise break-up of these figures is given below :

Community	Households	Persons	Males	Females
Nayak	27	115	65	50
Jat	18	77	46	31
Meghwal	18	70	38	32
Baori	10	52	20	32
Jogi	5	23	15	8
Kumhar	4	17	9	8
Brahmin	1	1	1	-
Total	83	355	194	161

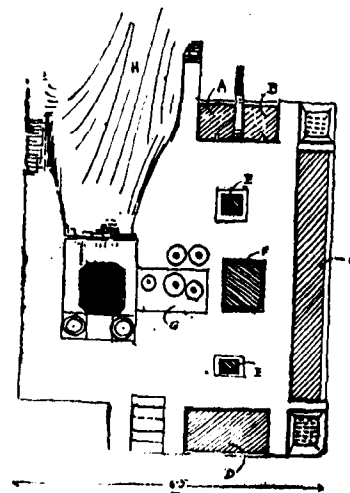
Sources of water

14. The main source of water for purpose of drinking as well as washing continues to be the tank and the well. Morning and evening, the young women are seen fetching water from the tank. Although there are only one tank and one well in the village, they are sufficient to meet the daily supply of water to the villagers throughout the year. The well is said to be



some 150 years old when the village was established. The Jats claim that it was constructed by Shri Chainoji Takhar the founder of the present village. It was repaired in the year 1949 by the Block authorities. One remarkable thing about the well is that people of all communities, including the Scheduled Castes can get their

supply of water from it. There are separate arrangements for different communities. In the



sketch above are shown the arrangements made for the different Communities in connection with obtaining supply from this well. Places indicated by A, B & G indicate arrangements made for the Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Brahmins respectively. From E and F the Jats take water while D is meant for all other castes. C is the place from where the cattle drink water. This is meant for the passage used by bullocks or camels for drawing water from the well. Water from this well is drawn with the help of bullocks or camels through a *charas* (big leather bag). The bullocks, camels and the workers for drawing water from the well are arranged turn by turn according to their mutual understanding.

Residential pattern

15. The village is not built according to any definite plan. There are no systematic lanes in the village, nor are specific areas occupied by different communities. No doubt the houses of persons belonging to a community are more or less contiguous, yet they are not systematically separated into groups. The mass of houses has taken the form of a shapeless cluster. It is, however, noteworthy that the clean castes, namely

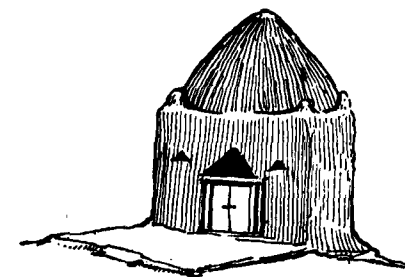
those of the Brahmin, the Jat and the Kumhar have their houses in the centre of the village. The houses of the Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris are localised in one part a little away from the houses of the Jats and the Kumhars. At a distance of about 200 m towards the south are the houses of the Jogis, a semi-nomadic community.

Crematorium

16. There are two crematoriums one on the northern side of the village at some distance from the village tank and the other on the southern side. The former is used by the members of the clean castes and the Nayaks; and the latter by the Jogis. The Meghwals bury their dead. The burial ground is situated to the west of the village, on the slope of Lakha Dhora.

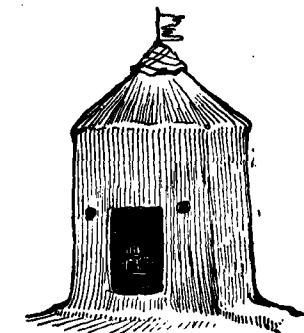
Public places

17. There is no place of any importance in the village which may be given the name of a public place. Members of different communities assemble when required at the house of the person who calls the meeting or in an open place convenient to them. There is a platform dedicated to god Shri Ram Chandraji whose idol along with his consort Sita, is installed there. On one side of this platform are the idols of Shiva and Hanuman also. The Jogis have recently constructed a shrine of Guru Gorakhnath. They refer to him



invariably as Bhagwan. In the shrine they have placed a framed photo of Guruji. The shrine of Ramdeoiji is also situated near this shrine. It was constructed last year by Jogis. The Nayaks and the

Meghwals also shared its cost. In this shrine is to be seen a photo of Ramdeoiji alongwith his



disciple Dali Bai. Both these shrines are kutcha structures of mud mixed with cow-dung. The approximate size of these shrines is 1.5m x 1m.

18. To the west of the dune of old Rangmahal there is another dune, 50 m high. It is known as 'Lakhaji-ka-Teela' or 'Lakha Dhora'. Finds of pottery at its foot show that it was of an earlier origin than even that of the old Rangmahal.

Welfare and administrative institutions

19. There is a Primary School in the village. Other welfare institutions such as the hospital, the Police Station, the headquarters of the Panchayat Samiti and the Nyaya Panchayat, are at Suratgarh. Rangmahal is included in the village Panchayat of Rampura. There is no market in the village. The people go to Suratgarh for obtaining things of daily requirements.

History of the village

20. The present village of Rangmahal does not appear to be older than two centuries. It derives its name from the ancient town of Rangmahal whose site is supposed to be marked by a dune nearby. According to a local tradition it was in the Samvat 1875 (1818 A. D.) that a Jat named Chainoji Takhar came here from Badhal, a village near Sikar of the former State of Jaipur. The modus operandi of founding a village during

that time was that the leader of the intending settlers applied to the *Raj* for permission to found a village on payment of a handsome fee *nazrana*. The permission was accorded by a sealed document drawn up in favour of the applicant who was appointed *Chaudhary* or headman of the new settlement. He received no title or right as owner or landlord in the defined area. He virtually became a State Officer with some measure of State authority, and his duty was to settle *assamis* (cultivators) to get the waste brought under cultivation, to realise customary dues from the other cultivators on behalf of the State and deposit it in the Treasury. For the performance of these duties the *Chaudhary* was remunerated by being allowed to hold certain area of land or the whole (*subhkar*) of the cultivation rent free, and to realise dues such as fees at marriages, weighment fees, etc. from the other cultivators. Having thus obtained the authority from the State, the *Chaudhary* proceeded to collect as many cultivators as he could for in a waste land, as the desert region then was, there was, safety and

comfort in numbers. It was in this manner that the present village was founded by Chainoji Takhar. The amount of *nazrana* paid by him to the Bikaner *Durbar* is not known. Chainoji's second son Tulsi had two sons, Khadgo and Chetan. Khadgo's son was Ganesho, Genesho's Rawat, and Rawat's Devilal. Chetan had two sons Pemaram and Gangaram. The latter died without leaving any issue. The former had two sons Devaram and Chunaram, both of whom have at present a numerous progeny. It is thus in Chainoji's 5th generation that Chaudhary Devilal and a number of others are to be found in the village. Rupa Meghwal, ancestor of the present Meghwals, came to the village in 1843 and Dana Nayak three years later. The date of settlement of the Baori households could not be established with any certainty. It is, however, believed that they also followed the Meghwals and the Nayaks more or less for the purpose of security. The households of the Brahmin, the Kumhars and the Jogis seem to be of recent origin. The Jogis came to the village not more than 20 years ago.

The Nayak

22. The word *nayak* has its origin in Sanskrit where it means a commander. How this word came to be associated with the Thori community of Rajasthan is not quite certain. The Nayaks claim descent from the historic Suryavanshi Rajputs and specifically from king Ajayapal. It is believed that during the mediaeval times the ancestors of the present Nayaks occupied posts of some responsibility in the services of the Rajput princes of Rajputana. Due to frequent outrages of Muslim invaders they lost heart and to save themselves from slaughter, took shelter in the remote out-of-the-way places, got mixed up with primitive communities, acquired their habits and customs, and became their leaders or Nayaks. No confirmation of the above is, however, available.

23. The word *thori*, a common name for Nayaks, is used in a derogatory sense amounting almost to an abuse by the people of the higher caste. They are untouchables and are not allowed to build their huts adjacent to the households of the high caste people. Their habitations are, therefore, located usually at an appreciable distance from the main *abadi*. They are not allowed to draw water from the common village wells, and have to depend on the mercy of the higher castes or to get their supply from the dirty ponds from which cattle are served. During living memory the Nayak's profession has been that of a syce or a groom who attends on a horseman or of a person who carries messages or dak from one place to another. The Nayak women serve as

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

Rangmahal, as has already been stated is a small village inhabited by 7 communities. Out of the total number of 83 households, 27 are of the Nayaks, 18 of the Meghwals, 28 of the Jats, 10 of the Baoris, 5 of the Jogis, 4 of the Kumhars and 1 of the Brahmin.

midwives which is considered to be the work of the lowest type and no high caste woman is ordinarily prepared to undertake it for communities other than her own.

24. The Nayaks are divided into following *gotras*.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Adiyo | 2. Alsika |
| 3. Asayat | 4. Athwal |
| 5. Baberwal | 6. Bagri |
| 7. Barabasa | 8. Barar |
| 9. Barsan | 10. Bedwal |
| 11. Beleo | 12. Bhand |
| 13. Bharootium | 14. Bogya |
| 15. Bokra | 16. Boyat |
| 17. Byocho | 18. Chaperwal |
| 19. Charan | 20. Chawriya |
| 21. Chedbal | 22. Cheergo |
| 23. Chidaliya | 24. Choor |
| 25. Dabla | 26. Daglo |
| 27. Dhadhwal | 28. Dupgo |
| 29. Durambal | 30. Gageliya |
| 31. Gangandiya | 32. Gangeloya |
| 33. Gathara | 34. Gayachand |
| 35. Ghas | 36. Ghawari |
| 37. Ghoghlya | 38. Ghoran |
| 39. Ghoyar | 40. Gigana |
| 41. Godalo | 42. Godyala |
| 43. Gudi | 44. Gulgach |
| 45. Guwardan | 46. Hobana |
| 47. Jajotra | 48. Jakhtiyo |
| 49. Jas | 50. Jaser |
| 51. Jediya | 52. Kagro |
| 53. Kaliyano | 54. Karba |
| 55. Khangark | 56. Khardu |
| 57. Lawa | 58. Liriyo |
| 59. Lohara | 60. Looto |
| 61. Loth | 62. Lugariya |
| 63. Makwana | 64. Mal |
| 65. Malkhat | 66. Mar |
| 67. Mena | 68. Nimbal |
| 69. Parad | 70. Patoono |

71. Poombo	72. Potano
73. Ros	74. Ruburyo
75. Sangeloya	76. Sarch
77. Sarsar	78. Sarwan
79. Sonwal	80. Sunar
81. Suriya	82. Tak
83. Tudlai	84. Umarwal

The Nayaks of Rangmahal, however, belong to the following 9 *gotras* :

Gayachand	5 households
Chawriya	5 -do-
Lugariya	3 -do-
Loth	3 -do-
Karba	3 -do-
Dhadhwal	2 -do-
Lohara	2 -do-
Jakhtiyo	2 -do-
Malkhat	2 -do-

They have got marriage relations with the following *gotras* :

1. Bogya	2. Dabla	3. Ghas
4. Jas	5. Karba	6. Mal
7. Ros	8. Sonwal	9. Tak

25. According to the Census of 1961, in Bikaner district of Rajasthan there are altogether 10,945 persons of the Nayak community, of whom 5,682 are males and 5,263 females; and they form about 7% of the total Nayak population of Rajasthan. In caste hierarchy they occupy a status almost equal to that of the Meghwals.

26. Their original profession of menial service in the local armies is no longer open to them as no such armies now exist. They, however, engage themselves in agriculture.

The Meghwal

27. The Meghwals or Chamars derive their name from their occupation of dealing in leather. The word *chamar* is derived from the Sanskrit *chamakar* which means a leather worker. Chamars used to skin the dead animals and to tan their hides. They also used to feed themselves on carrion. They have now given up these

practices and have taken to agriculture. They, however, continue to make articles of leather such as shoes, leather buckets, leather ropes, etc. though they have given up skinning and tanning. They are divided into a number of sub-divisions or *gotras* ; and the households residing in Rangmahal belong to the following :

Kanwalia	2
Kadela	2
Jani	6
Jaipal	2
Panwar	3
Chiniya	3

The Jat

28. The Jats are by far the most important agricultural community of Rajasthan. They are supposed to have originated from god Shiva's *jata* (lock). Col. Tod considers Jats to be of Indo-Scythian stock. He identifies them with Getae of ancient times and is of the view that they migrated from Central Asia to India about the time of emperor Cyrus. Discussing the origin of the Jats he observes:

"It has been already remarked that the Jat divided with the Takshak the claim of being the present name of the various tribes called Scythic, invaders of India; and there is now before the author an inscription of the 5th century applying both epithets to the same prince, who is invested moreover with the Scythic quality of worshipping the sun. It states, likewise, that the mother of this Jat prince was of Yadu race; strengthening their claims to a niche amongst the thirty-six Rajkulas, as well as their Yadu descent...

"The Jats inhabited the country on the borders of Multan, along the river that runs by the mountains of Joud. When Mahmud reached Multan, finding the Jat country defended by great rivers, he built fifteen hundred boats, each armed with six iron spikes, projecting from their prows, to prevent their being boarded by the enemy, expert in this kind of warfare. In each boat he placed twenty archers, and some with fire balls of naphtha to burn the Jat fleet. The monarch having determined on their extirpation, awaited

the result at Multan. The Jats sent their wives, children and effects to Sind Sagar and launched four thousand or, as others say, eight thousand boats well armed to meet the Ghaznians. A terrible conflict ensued, but the projecting spikes sunk the Jat boats while others were set on fire. Few escaped from this scene of terror; and those who did not, met with the more severe fate of captivity.

"Many doubtless did escape; and it is most probable that the Jat communities, on whose overthrow the State of Bikaner was founded, were remnants of this very war-fare."*

29. There are 18 households of the Jat community in Rangmahal and they belong to the following *gotras* which are exogamous in themselves and endogamous in regard to one another.

Takhai	8
Dhayal	2
Bamboo	1
Bana	1
Dhookia	1
Oda	1
Kasyana	1
Khod	1
Daiya	1
Punia	1

A young Jat, is in appearance tall, brave and physically strong. He is laborious and hard working, preserving at the same time, the original instinct of independence. He is to be feared if met alone in a jungle as the saying goes:

जंगल जाट न छेडिये, हाथे बीच किराड़,
राजपूत कभी ना छेडिये, जब तब करे विनाश ।

"Do not provoke a Jat in the jungle or a Baniya in his shop and never a Rajput, who is sure to bring ruin sometime or other."

30. The Jats are acknowledged to be the best cultivators of the village and are famous for great diligence in improving their land. According to a saying, "जाट जहाँ ठाढ़", a village inhabited

*Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan vol-I.p.89-90

by Jats is always expected to be in a flourishing condition. Jat women and children work with the males in the fields and the natural aptitude of the community for agriculture is illustrated by another saying meaning 'A Jat's son when as big as the catch of a persian wheel has a plough handle for a play-thing.' Jat women are held in



high esteem. 'A persian wheel bucket, and a Jat woman are never superfluous, the one fertilizes the field the other populates the village'. A Jat is usually addressed as *chaudhary*. He has a sense of humour, too, and he is very outspoken. The jugglers and acrobats do not like to perform in his presence as he is ever ready to expose his so-called skill.

The Baori

31. During the pre-independence days Baoris were included in the list of the so called criminal tribes. Characterising the criminal tribes as an ethnic pageant, Lord Ronaldshay writes "Another element in the population to which the general appellation criminal tribes has been given may be taken as an example of arrested ethical evolution. It is estimated that there are 4,000,000 of these troublesome and unattractive people scattered over the face of the land. It has been said of them

that the whole structure of their social habits is conceived upon the basis of crime. Their distinguishing characteristic is, in fact, the practice of burglary or theft as an hereditary occupation. Their moral code is a simple one consisting of the solitary commandment 'Thou shalt not be found out'. They declared that they cannot live without intoxicating drinks. The children are taught a single game for their amusement, the preparation for commission of and hiding after theft and dacoity."*

32. The Baoris were in fact one of the first criminal tribes of India. The sphere of their operations extended throughout the length and breadth of the country. They not only committed robberies, burglaries and thefts but also practised the art of manufacturing and passing counterfeit coins. They were expert cattle and sheep-lifters and had their regular receivers in most of the cattle fairs. They carried with them a small quantity of wheat, a tin of sandal seeds, and a tuft of peacock feathers, all in a bundle. They were very superstitious and never embarked on an enterprise without first ascertaining by omens whether it would be attended with success. This they did by taking at random some grains and counting their number, the omen being considered good or bad according as the number of seeds was odd or even.

33. As early as in the twenties a retired police officer E. Ramchandra Shastri published "Elementary History of the Criminal Tribes" in which he took a hopeful view of the future of the criminal classes, and remarked: "Penalty should not be too light to tempt a criminal to repeat his conduct. It should not be too heavy to make him wretched. The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code are there. There is the house of correction. The security system aids the prevention of crimes. Reclamation is a good method of reforming the criminal classes in general and the juveniles in particular, as it imparts instruction with strict supervision. The application and observance of moral hygiene aids as well the curative treatment of crimes.

* India-A Bird's Eyeview-page 203

"The Criminal Tribes Act is a very effective measure of legislation. Tribes are registered, their centres located and activities restricted: their talents which are misdirected are directed towards industrial and agricultural pursuits. Reformatory schools build up the life of the young ones of the tribes. They are given free education. They are shown the use of labour, while young, they pick up manual training and other useful work."

34. After the country became free it was considered no longer expedient to retain the Criminal Tribes Act. Consequently it was repealed. It is, however, significant that even in the old set-up the Baoris of the former Bikaner State were not included in the category of criminal tribes.*

35. There are 10 households of Baoris in Rangmahal, 6 of whom belong to Dandal, 3 to Bhati and 1 to Chohan *gotra*. They served as village watchmen formerly and are said to have proved themselves trustworthy. They have been practising agriculture and the villagers never had any occasion to complain about them.

The Jogi

36. The word *jogi* which is taken to be synonymous with Nath is derived from the Sanskrit word *jojin* a magician or a conjurer. They are a class of vagrants easily distinguishable because of their ochre-coloured dress, who earn precarious livelihood as snake charmers and jugglers and are known as 'Kalbelias'. The word *kal* means death and *belia* means conqueror. A cobra being black and the most venomous of reptiles is regarded symbolic of poison and death; hence a Kalbelia has come to mean a person who overpowers snakes and other poisonous creatures. Kalbelias appear to have taken to snake-charming as their main economic pursuit. It is said that thousands of years ago the disciples of Jullunder Nath challenged their respective *ilamdars* (masters of the craft) and declared that one who successfully drank a cup of poison would be considered as a genuine *ilamdar*. In response none but Kanlipav, the twelfth disciple of Jullunder Nath came forward. He took the poison and stood the test

*Vide extract from Criminal Tribes Act Committee Report, 1949-50.

and was hailed as the best *ilamdar*. The number of generations which sprung from this Jogi or *baba*, put on ochre or *bhagwa* coloured clothes, and played with snakes came to be known as Kalbelias. Kalbelias worship god Shiva. Their preceptor *sadhu* Surtaj resides in village Degai in Marwar. Kalbelias live by begging and agriculture. They keep beggar's bowls which they break when they quarrel amongst themselves as the proverb goes "जोगी जोगी लड़े और खप्परों को हनें" The Kalbelias claim that their power of charming the reptiles, usually a cobra, is an occult gift. But evidence in support of the claim is entirely lacking. The business handed down from father to son is a trick pure and simple, based on the intimate knowledge of the ways of the reptile whose fangs are usually removed. Cases are reported where the charmer has allowed himself to be bitten by the snake and where this is not an illusion, or where the reptile is not a non-poisonous one, it is possible the charmer had gained a measure of immunity by frequent inoculations with an attenuated preparation of venom from various serpents. The snake-charmer creates an impression that a cobra is brought under control by the spell of music of the reed-pipe. Actually the cobra is deaf having no ears. On the slightest tremor the cobra rises, spreads its hood and sways to the motion of the *poongi* of the Kalbelia. Kalbelia's life is, however, very hard. Very meagre income is derived from this risky profession. This is the reason why the Kalbelias adopt multiple occupations. In addition to snake-charming and agriculture they work as suppliers of mill-stones, *hadmuch* or red-clay, and baskets. They work on farms and factories. The care of cattle, cooking and other household work, and physiological handicaps prevent Kalbelia women from offering full co-operation to their menfolk in their risky job.

37. The following are the reasons which account for the sad economic plight of the Kalbelias:

- (1) They are badly addicted to the vice of drinking.
- (2) The family expenditure is much more than the meagre income which they are able to earn.

(3) Much labour and money are spent in the earning ventures and the net residue is exceedingly meagre.

(4) They are bound up with an orthodox code of social regulations of their community and consequently there is a lot of expenditure on matrimonial, social and religious ceremonies.

(5) The Kalbelias inspite of their poverty are of an aristocratic trend. They work according to their mood and do not care for tomorrow. They are lavish in spending money.

(6) They are tragic victims of money lenders. They have little cash with them. Whatever little they earn they invest in silver ornaments which they pledge with the money-lender. Whenever they stand in need of money he takes full advantage of their helplessness, and charges exorbitant rate of interest.

38. Out of the 5 households of the Jogis, 2 are of Gujar *gotra*, 2 of Bhandaria and one of Chabbalia.

The Kumhar

39. The word Kumhar is derived from the Sanskrit word *kumbhakar*, *kumbha* meaning a water-jar. Kumhars are also known as Prajapatis. According to Sir Henry Elliot, they are the offspring of a Kahari woman by a Shudra, while Mr. Colebrooke holds them to be the descendants of a Brahmin Chhatri girl. The Kumhars, however, trace their descent from Jullunder Nath the supposed grandson of Brahma. There are four households of Kumhars in Rangmahal. 3 of them belong to Marwal *gotra* and one to Ladona.

The Brahmin

40. There is only one Brahmin household in the village and it belongs to the Gaur *gotra*. The family has got some land to its credit. The male cultivates the land and officiates at the ceremonies of the Jats, the Nayaks and the Kumhars.

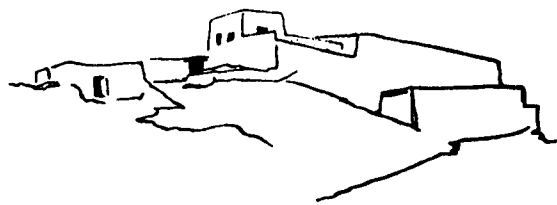
House-type

41. Out of the 83 houses in the village 20 are pucca and the remaining 63 kutcha. The pucca houses are mostly occupied by the Brahmin, some Jat and some Kumbar families.

42. The Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris occupy a separate portion of the village a little away from where the Brahmin, the Jats and the Kumhars live. The Jogis or Naths have a separate block of their own. It is said that some 20 years ago there was an unprecedented flood with the result that the water in the village tank rose to an abnormally high level inundating the

Number of rooms	Total No. of households	Number of households according to number of persons				
		1	2-3	4-6	7-9	10 & above
1	8	6	2	-	-	-
2	35	-	12	17	6	-
3	33	-	10	20	3	-
4	7	-	2	2	2	1
Total	83	6	26	39	11	1

44. All the houses except one are single storeyed. The house belonging to Chaudhary Devilal Takhar (Jat) is double storeyed. When



a house is constructed a Brahmin is consulted with regard to the auspicious time for starting the construction work. Apart from this no other ceremony is performed. A site facing east is generally preferred but the villagers do not have any rigid ideas about this. They construct their houses so as to obtain maximum light and air. The depth of the foundation is about 1 m in case of masonry houses and about ½ m for kutcha ones. Walls are constructed of unbaked mud bricks. They are raised to a height of about 2.5 m. The

houses of the Meghwals and the Nayaks which were situated near it. Consequently they were shifted from the northern side of the village to the southern side on a higher and safer level. Since then they are occupying that site.

43. Out of the 83 households, 12 are such as have more than 7 members each, 39 have 4 to 6 members, 26 have 2 to 3, and 6 have only one. Of the 83 houses, 7 have 4 living rooms, 33 have 3 living rooms 35 two living rooms, and 8 one living room. It is the Jogis who have the most limited accommodation. Other communities are better off. The following table gives distribution of houses with regard to the number of rooms :

outer houses in case of the Jats serve for *batthak* (sitting room) which is about 3 m in height. The roofs of the pucca houses are made of wooden planks or slabs fixed at intervals of about 30 cm. They are covered by a network of small wooden sticks about 1.5 cm thick. A layer of dry grass, locally called *chhan*, of the thickness of about 1.5 to 2.5 cm is laid over the wooden network. This is followed by a layer of mud mixed with cow-dung. The walls are plastered on the inside with the same mixture. Some niches are kept in the walls which are used for keeping articles of every day use. No provision is made for latrines and bath-rooms. In the pucca house a separate kitchen is provided. The kutcha houses are covered with thatched roofs. No windows or ventilators are provided in the walls. Some holes are, however, left in them, which serve for ventilation. The kitchen is usually dark. There is no outlet for smoke. It is surprising how women carry on their work in such dingy places. Pucca buildings are called *ora* and the kutcha ones *jhonpras*. The *jhonpras* are of two types, rectangular and circular. The doors are made of split bamboos.

45. Separate commodious cattle-sheds are provided in each house and there are extensive courtyards for stacking hay and straw and storing grains. Construction work is undertaken with the help of persons engaged locally. Mostly the work is carried out with mutual help. If the payment is made, it is nominal. There is no shortage of labour in the village required for construction of roofs of pucca houses. Skilled labour whenever required is obtained from Suratgarh. The houses of Jats are noteworthy for their size and comfort. They are so constructed that privacy is maintained for women. The guests are entertained in the outer houses which stand apart from the inner portion. This is not the case with the houses of other communities. Cleanliness is maintained in the houses of the Jats, the Kumhars and the Brahmin. The conditions in the habitations of the Nayaks, the



Meghwals and the Jogis are more or less unhygienic. For decorating the walls of the houses the villagers use calendars and cheap pictures of gods, heroes, popular leaders or film stars. In the Jat houses these are generally displayed in their sitting rooms. Generally the Jogis have single room tenements.



Besides this they construct a bamboo shed on one side of the room which gives shelter to them and their household articles like pitchers etc. are seen kept there. This shed is also used as a kitchen.

46. The floors of all the types of houses are levelled by filling earth and finally are given a coat of cow-dung and mud. The grain

containers, called *kothis*, are made of round walls of mud which are plastered with cow-dung mixed with straw. At the top are placed wooden logs which also are coated with mud, and dry leaves are placed on them. The grain-containers are about 1 m high.

47. In most of the houses there is a small niche in the inner apartment where an idol or a painted picture of the family god is kept. In the inner courtyard there is fixed a *ghatti* (handmill) and *onkhal* (stone mortar).

48. The approximate cost of the construction of a masonry room of 3 m × 1 m size is Rs. 350 to 400. A *jhonpra* costs about Rs. 125 to Rs. 150. Only the wooden slabs for the roofs are required to be brought from Suratgarh. The rest of the material is available in the village itself. For the first entry in the new house an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with a pandit at Suratgarh and the family members enjoy a dinner consisting of *lapsi*, a preparation with *gur*, and a lot of ghee. No community feast is held but presents of some sweet dish are made to relations and friends.

Household goods

49. Apart from the cooking utensils which are generally of brass, aluminium and baked earth, bronze plates for serving food, earthen pots for storage of water and articles of every day use, there are few articles in the village households. As to furniture a few chairs, tables and mirrors and a few dozen bedsteads, most of which are owned by the members of the Jat community, are all that could be found in the village. The *machas* or charpoys are the most important articles of use in the Jat households. Apart from their utility for sleeping they serve the purposes of sitting and resting during the day. A couple of them are to be found in the outer sitting room of a Jat household where the visitors and others are made to sit on them. If however, the number of visitors is more than what could be accommodated on the charpoys, all of them squat on the floor which is covered with carpets or sheets of thick cloth known as *tajams*. The well-to-do households have a few

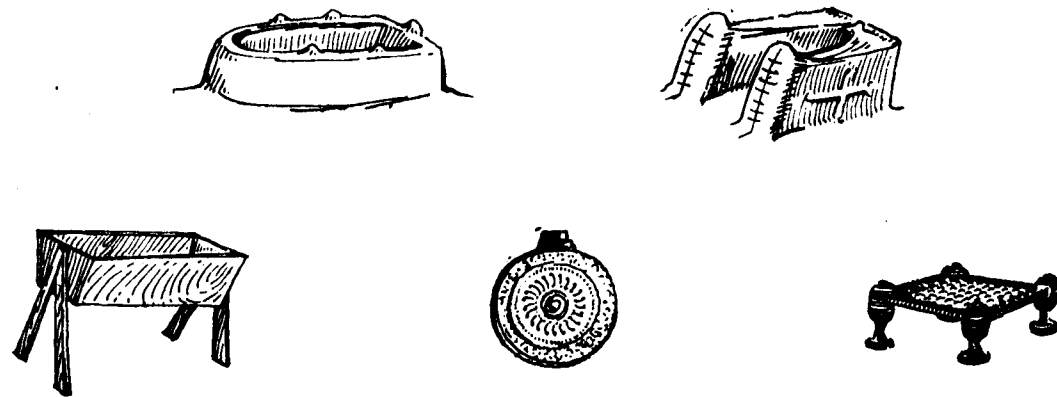
steel trunks also in which they keep their clothes. People also have small *pidhas* (baby-cot) which is also used as a seat by elder men. Devilal Jat has a couple of mosquito nets also.

Pillows are not in common use but bedsheets are commonly used to cover the bedsteads. Community-wise distribution of these articles may be seen in the following table :

Community	Total No. of households	Number of houses possessing								
		Charpoy	Chair	Table	Mirror	Watch	Torch	Lamp	Radio	Cycle
Brahmin	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Jat	18	18	4	4	18	3	11	17	1	2
Kumhar	4	4	—	—	4	—	—	2	—	—
Nayak	27	10	—	—	5	—	—	7	—	—
Meghwal	18	9	—	—	9	—	—	5	—	—
Baori	10	4	—	—	2	—	—	3	—	—
Nath	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

50. The households of the Jogis have some articles which are peculiar to them, the most important of which is the *poongi* or the reed wind pipe and the *khanjari*. They have also big cotton bags which are hung at the two ends of a flexible wooden pole some 2 m long and which are utilised for keeping the bamboo baskets in which they carry the snakes, *nevla* (mongoose) *ajgar* (Boa constrictor), some herbs,

ghungroo (trinklets) and the like. The Nayaks, the Meghwals and the Baoris, being economically very backward, have hardly any beds and few other articles necessary for daily use. Articles used in all the households are available at Suratgarh. A manger and the *choolas* (hearths) are invariably found in all the households. The villagers while going out keep with them a *kunjha* (decorated earthen flask) full of water.



Dress

51. The village people dress themselves simply and lightly. Leaving aside the members of the Jat community, the Kumhars and the Brahmin, most of the village people go half-naked. Their articles of dress are restricted to those of the barest necessity. Amongst the Jats

there is a fusion of fashions of Bikaner and the Punjab. They clad themselves in coarse clothes made of cheap material.

52. The main articles of the male dress are the turban, a shirt or a loose *kurta* known as *chola* and Dhoti or *tahmad*. Some people still put on short *angarkhas* which are full

sleeved tight cotton jackets covering the body upto the waist and having three or more buttons. Signs of urbanisation in this regard are distinctly noticeable among the members of the Jat community. The younger generation goes bareheaded and puts on shirts, bushcoats and trousers. The footwear used is locally manufactured. During winter they put on woollen jackets and carry woollen blankets on their shoulders.

53. The Kumhars, the Nayaks and the Meghwals put on the usual articles of dress with slight modifications to suit their respective professions. They cover their heads with small pieces of long cloth known as *patia*, 4 or 5 m in length. The *dhotis* (loin cloth) which they wear are of smaller size and of small width which cover the waist and legs only upto the knees. Children of the Jat community, specially the school-going boys, put on shirts, and shorts or trousers. Girls put on *salvar* and *kamij*. The children of the Meghwals, the Nayaks, the Baoris and the Jogis go almost naked upto the age of 6 or 7.

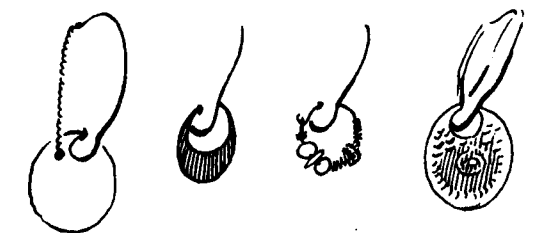
54. The dress of the females in the village consists of the inevitable *odhni*, 2.3×1.4 m, which covers the head and is wrapped around the body, the *kanchli* i.e. the half-sleeved bodice which covers only the breasts and is tied at the back with two pairs of string. Over the *kanchli* is put on a half sleeved *kurti* which covers the body from the neck down to the thighs or a blouse which ends at the waist, and the *ghagra* or skirt which is made of coarse printed long-cloth. The *odhnis* used are generally of red or yellow colour, interspersed with spots, and with printed or tied borders and *pallas*. Widows dress themselves generally in black garments. On festive occasions there is not much difference except that the articles of dress are new, clean and tidy.

55. The Jogis have a peculiar dress of their own. Males put on turbans and *angarkhas* or *kurtas* or shirts all of which bear saffron colour with a reddish tinge, known as *bhagwa*. To cover the lower part of the body they invariably put on *dhoti*.

Ornaments

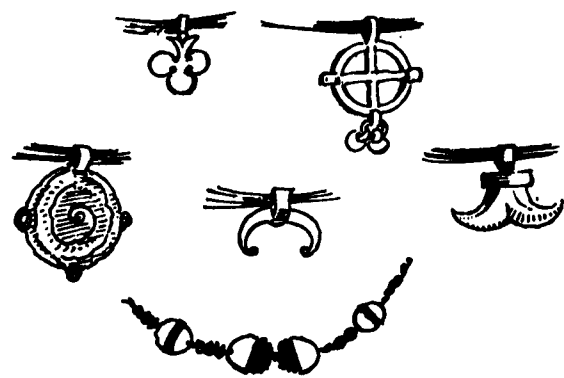
56. As usual the women folk of the village are fond of ornaments. The economic position of the Jats enables them to provide gold and silver ornaments to their women. This is, however, not so in respect of other classes. The Kumhar, the Meghwal, the Nayak and the Jogi women mostly use silver ornaments. The ornaments of daily use are not many. The *bor* or *rakhdi* is the most essential head ornament for women. No married women dare go without it. It is a round disc, 7 to 10 cm in diameter, having decorative enamel work with blue, yellow and red imitation jewels. Widows and unmarried girls do not put on this ornament. An adjunct to the *bor* is the *phoolpatti* which is attached to the *bor* on the forehead. The *bor* is held in position at the middle of the forehead with the help of strings drawn sideways and then tied to a tuft of the hair at the back. The *phoolpatti* are flat pieces of gold or silver plate of the width of about 1.5 cm. The latter are decorated with enamel work.

57. The ornament worn in the ear is known as *bhujalis*. A pair of *bhujalis* weighs about 20 g. The disc of a *bhujali* measures about 4 cm at its diameter. Plain and thin wire rings are also worn in the ears. These are known as *doria*. They are of various designs and metals. The ornament



for the nose worn by married women is called *nathdi*, which is made of gold or silver wire and is studded with imitation, pearls and jewels. Unmarried girls and married women use a nose-pin, *long* (clove) instead. It is made of silver and is studded with a real jewel. The ornament for the neck is called *galsari*. It is a necklace of gold

or silver studded occasionally with imitation jewels. Another ornament for the neck is called *hansli*. It is made of silver, thick in the middle and thinner at the ends. When the ornament is worn the ends are hooked with each other. The Jat women wear necklaces made of gold *mohars* which are strung together by means of gold chains. There are different types of lockets and necklaces worn by Jogis and others in Rangmahal.



58. Fore-arms are decorated with ivory or lac *churis* or bangles, the number of which may vary from 5 to 11 for each hand. Above the elbow are worn circular gold or silver bangles called *taddas*. Many women put on a set of ivory bangles on the hind arm as well, above the *taddas*. They decorate their fingers with rings of gold or silver. Ornaments for the leg are mostly of silver.

Vegetarian				Non-vegetarian			
Number of households	Persons	Males	Females	Number of households	Persons	Males	Females
24	102	62	40	59	254	132	122

63. Daily bill of fare of the ordinary individual is very simple and it hardly ever varies. The following are some of the usual vegetarian dishes:

Sogra: Thick bread of bajra baked rather hard.

Rab: Flour boiled in diluted butter milk generally cooked in the evening and kept for use the next morning.

These consist of a set the items of which go by the name of *kadla*, *anwala*, *nevri*, *payal*, etc. Silver rings are put on the toes also.

59. Men have their taste confined to gold or silver rings which are worn on fingers. The Jogis are, however, fond of wearing silver necklaces with lockets bearing the effigies of snakes or some local heroes; and various types of rings.

60. A woman's ornaments are the family property. She has personally no right over them and may not sell them or give them away, unless they have been given to her by her parents as personal wedding presents.

61. For the safe custody of the ornaments, which are not worn daily, the villagers make small holes or pits in the floor of an inner apartment of their house. Ornaments are placed in an earthen pitcher which is then deposited in the pit and covered with a stone slab and cow-dung and mud is plastered over it. Only the responsible elderly persons of the household can locate the pit. It is at the time of feast, fairs and festivals that they are taken out and used.

Food habits and drink

62. The Brahmin, the Jat and the Kumhar households are vegetarian while the rest are non-vegetarian. The following table gives the number of households and population of the village divided into the two categories :

Khich: Husked bajra mixed with moth in the proportion of 4: 1; and then boiled thick in water and improved by addition of ghee.

Chapati: Cake of wheat flour.

Dalia: Coarse grain flour boiled thick in water.

Vegetables: Apart from the moth pulse and onions, which are more or less freely available, no

vegetables are generally seen. However, pods of Kair, Khejra, Phog and other trees and shrubs are stocked for the year and consumed after being boiled. At times the only relish use is of *chatni* (sauce) prepared by crushing salt and chillies in the ratio of 2 : 1.

64. The villagers take meals thrice a day, namely, the morning breakfast, before 8 A.M., lunch at noon and finally the supper after sunset. Those who take two meals do it by having a very late breakfast and an early supper. The following table gives the number of households taking meals twice or thrice a day:

Community	Total No. of households	Households having meals	
		3 times a day	2 times a day
Nayak	27	22	5
Jat	18	13	5
Meghwal	18	16	2
Baori	10	9	1
Jogi	5	-	5
Kumhar	4	4	-
Brahmin	1	1	-
Total	83	65	18

65. The Jats are in possession of milch cattle and they take milk and ghee in fairly good quantities. Ghee and sarson (mustard) oils are used as a medium for cooking. Ghee is, of course, of local manufacture. Sugar is not commonly used. *Gur* or jaggery is, however, eaten in liberal quantities. On festive occasions as also to entertain guests special dishes of *lapsi*, rice, *halwa*, *churma* and *kheer* are prepared. *Lapsi* is made by first heating coarse flour of wheat on an iron pan and then boiling it soft in a solution of jaggery. For preparing *halwa*, fine flour of wheat is first fried in ghee; when its colour becomes brownish boiling water is poured on it. This is followed by the addition of a solution of sugar or *gur* in appropriate quantity. For *churma* balls of wheat flour are made after adding a little ghee to the flour. These are then baked on fire made of dried cow-dung cakes. The baked balls are then reduced to a fine powder, which is again warmed on a pan. After sometime

i.e. when the powder is slightly cooled down, sugar and ghee are added and balls of *churma* are prepared. *Kheer* is prepared by boiling rice in milk. When the rice has become soft, sugar, big cardamom powder and finely cut kernel of a coconut are mixed with it and served. Cooked food is preserved in *balianda*. It consists of two



earthen pots fixed together in the ground. The food is put in these pots and covered with a lid.

66. Those who own milch animals provide milk for their children twice a day. The Nayaks and the Meghwals serve their children with goat's milk.

67. The communities who are not strictly vegetarian occasionally take meat of goat or ram. This is done on festive occasions of Holi, Dashera and also when they have guests to entertain. No eggs or fish are available locally or at Suratgarh and their use, on that account, is out of question. Tea has reached the village and the people have become accustomed to it. The Brahmin and the Jats add milk and sugar to the beverage. The rest of the communities put *gur* into it and generally drink it twice a day. Excepting the Brahmins, most of the village people are addicted to drink. They obtain the supplies of liquor from Suratgarh. Holi, Deshera, Diwali and social functions of marriage, and feasts on death are marked by drinking bouts. The residents of Rangmahal are, however, not hard drunkards. Smoking is common enough among all the communities of the village excepting the Brahmin. Tobacco is smoked in wooden or earthen pipes. Many of the Jats have the luxurious *hooka* but *bidis* and cigarettes have come into vogue as they are very convenient to obtain. Women are not addicted to smoking. But the older dames of the Meghwal, the Baori and the Nayak communities and many of the Jogi community are habituated to smoking.

Musical instruments

68. The most popular and important instrument of sound in the village is the *dholak* (drum). It is a hollow wooden piece covered on both sides with goat's skin. It is played with a wooden stick in the right hand and a thin bamboo strip in the left. The drum is played on all ceremonial occasions, especially on the festive nights of Holi. In the households of Jogis, *poongi*, *ghungroo* and *bansari* (flute) are also seen. Some *poongis* have double reed decorated pipes. One can mark seal on a *poongi* which shows Baba Nanak squatting under a tree. *Khanjari* otherwise called *prempyari* is also commonly found in the Jogi households.

Public health and sanitation

69. The village is on the whole a clean one. The houses are spacious and built properly. They present a welcome appearance. The lanes between them are broad and cleanliness is maintained therein. No latrines are provided in the houses. But the villagers go quite a long distance from the habitation to answer calls of nature. The refuge and the cow-dung are also accumulated in pits pretty far away from the dwellings.

70. The standard of cleanliness among the Jats, both men and women, is fairly good. They take bath regularly and use soap. Other communities such as the Meghwals, the Nayaks, the Baoris and the Jogis are not at all particular about cleanliness of their bodies and clothes. As a matter of fact the clothes they possess are not many and hence the question of washing them frequently does not arise. They take their bath after long intervals.

71. No medical facilities are available in the village. The nearest place where there is a Government hospital is Suratgarh. There is no maternity centre even at Suratgarh, nor are serious surgical cases undertaken in the hospital. Such patients have to go either to Bikaner or to Ganganagar. The common diseases are, however, fever, malaria, dysentery etc. which are cured by indigenous medicines or by the medical aid available at Suratgarh.

Language

72. The dialect spoken in this area is Marwari with an accent noticeable in Bikaner and with a tinge of Punjabi also.

Birth

73. The first menstruation in a girl occurs near about the age of 14 years. There is no special ceremony observed on the occasion. The girl keeps herself indoors and does not mix with others. She also refrains from doing the household work for a period of 4 days. Baoris and the Jogis do not follow this rule. Their girls carry on the ordinary avocation of life without any demur. In other communities the girl is considered unclean for four days. On the fourth day she is given a bath after which she resumes her household work. Pregnancy is detected by cessation of menses, morning sickness and enlargement of breasts. It is always a matter of interest and some delight for the family when a daughter-in-law is pregnant for the first time. The economic condition of the household does not, in any way, cause worry, because it is believed that children are born by the grace of God and a married couple is bound to have as many children as they are destined to have. Ideas of family planning and birth control do not agitate the minds of the villagers in the least. Most of them consider introduction of artificial means of birth control as undue interference in their religious life.

74. A woman continues to do all her routine in the early stages of her pregnancy. Later she is permitted to do only light work. The first delivery is arranged at the husband's house unless the parents of the girl are very keen to take her to their place, in which case the girl goes to her father's house in the seventh month of pregnancy. Except the Jats other communities perform a ceremony known as *ograhni* in the 5th or 7th month of the pregnancy. This is attended by all women relatives, friends and neighbours. Those who flock to the house, sing songs relating to the feelings of a pregnant woman from the time she conceives till she delivers. They also give vent to the feeling of great delight which the would-be

mother and her relatives feel in view of the coming incident. On that day the husband and the wife jointly perform the worship of god Ganesh. A coconut is placed in the lap of the pregnant woman. The assembled women are given presents and sweets. After the worship of god Ganesh is over the sister of husband performs the *arti* ceremony for which she is usually given a present, more often a rupee.

75. There is no nurse or midwife in the village. Deliveries are attended by an old women of the Meghwal community named Sanu. In many cases, however, old women who have adequate experience are called for assistance. Umbilical cord is cut with a knife and placenta is collected in an iron pan, and buried in a deep pit in the courtyard of the house. This work is done by the father of the child or, in his absence, by any elder male member of the family. The customary beating of a brass or a bronze plate is resorted to on the birth of a male child and that of winnowing scoop on that of a female child. It is done by the husband's sister if she is present at the moment, otherwise, by any elderly woman of the house. The following are a few of the various songs that are sung at the time of birth of a male child in the Jat community :

उड़ उड़ ए म्हारी सारस राणी
बैठ बाबेजी रे घर
बाबेजी पूछे, म्हारी बहू के सुत जायो ?
कंवर घेन्डियो जायो
घर मांडणियो जायो
कुल तारणियो जायो ।

"O my Saras (crane) Rani, fly, fly and perch on the palace of my father-in-law. The father-in-law asks the bird whether his daughter-in-law has given birth to a male child. The bird replies in the affirmative : A *kumar* (son) has been born, who will help in the maintenance of the family line progeny."

गुड़ का गाढ़ा आया रस मेवा ले
घेन्डियो की भूवा बटवाने रस मेवा आई
गुड़ियों तो आगिणो राखी रस मेवा ले
तिरियां छोटी २ डलियां बांटी रस मेवा री

"Cart loads of jaggery, sugar and dry fruits have been received as a sequel of the birth of the male child, whose *bua* (father's sister) has come to distribute them as present among friends and relatives. The carts have been unloaded in the courtyard of the house and the contents divided in small baskets for presentation to the women of friends, relations and other dear ones."

76. For about a week after the delivery has taken place the young mother and other members of the household are considered unclean. The family members do not mix freely with others during the period and, in consultation with a Brahmin priest, a day is fixed for giving the first bath to the mother of the newly born child and for performance of Sun worship. This is not later than 8th or 10th day. After the bath the period of uncleanness is supposed to be over. The mother, however, continues to take rest and is not allowed to do any household work till she performs the worship of water god for which also an auspicious day is determined by the priest. On that day the mother is taken to a tank or well in a procession when the women sing songs and rice, moong and vermilion powder are thrown in the water. On return from this worship, the stone hand-mill is worshipped. Among the Jats the mother is given nutritious food which consists of large quantities of milk and preparations of dill seeds, dry ginger, coriander, gum and dry fruits, treated with liberal quantities of ghee and sugar and supplemented with loaves of wheat bread, *khichri*, *dalia*, etc.

77. The other communities, whose economic condition does not allow them to feed mother on a lavish scale, content themselves by giving her powder of dill seeds mixed with jaggery paste, and *khichri* and *dalia*. The infant is fed on its mother's milk for about a year. When this stops, the child is given goat's milk. After it attains the age of 1½ years, a ceremony known as *botna* is performed and the child is given the first semi-liquid diet of grain which consists of coarse flour of wheat or rice and moong pulse boiled in water, or coarse flour of wheat boiled in milk.

78. On an auspicious day which is usually the 9th day of the bright half of Chaitra or

Ashvin in the first half of the third year the first hair of the male child are cut. This is done at the place of some deity through whose blessings the child is supposed to have been born. The sister of the child's father holds the child in her arms when the hair are cut. The hair are offered to the deity and afterwards thrown in the tank. A horoscope is prepared at the time of water-worship by a priest at Suratgarh. The name giving ceremony is also performed on the occasion.

79. Barrenness in a woman is considered to be a state of grave misfortune. A barren woman is looked down upon with disdain. A woman makes vows, or performs acts of austerity by keeping fasts on some days, or wears charms and amulets if she failed to deliver a child within a reasonable number of years after her marriage. It is, however, worthy of note that at the time of Survey there was no married barren woman in the village.

80. Abortion carries with it a sense of great shame and dishonour. Occasion for it can arise only if an unmarried girl became pregnant but no such incident is reported to have happened during the last so many decades. If a woman miscarries it is attributed to the displeasure of the gods or to the effect of an evil eye. To ward off the misfortune in future, the family deity is worshipped.

Marriage

81. Parents arrange marriages for their sons and daughters when they attain the age of 18 to 22 years and 14 to 16 years respectively. Early marriages are not held these days except in the case of the Meghwals and the Nayaks among whom younger sisters of a grown up girl are sometimes married along with her. This is done with a view to economise. Sometimes the betrothal is made a few years before the marriage actually takes place. The first thing which is considered before betrothal is the suitability of the *gotras*. The *gotras* of father, mother, paternal grand-mother and maternal grand-mother of the couple may not clash with each other. The next thing which comes up for

consideration is the economic status of the two families. If these are satisfactory, further negotiations are held through common friends or relatives. On a auspicious day a representative of the girl's side brings the customary present of a coconut, *gur* and some clothes which are presented to the boy in the presence of the elders of the family and others in the neighbourhood. On this occasion wine and opium are served to guests in the communities of the Jats, the Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris. After some time, on another auspicious day, a return of similar presents is made by the boy's father to the girl when, at the latter's house, feasting and merry-making is held to entertain the guests. In these communities marriage by exchange is also not infrequent. The marriage ceremony is held on an auspicious day i.e. Basant Panchami (which comes in January-February) and Aksya Tritiya in Baisakh (April), or some other day which may be considered suitable by the priest. The usual custom of sending the *lagan* i.e. invitation letter from the side of the girl to the boy's father, anointing of the bride groom and the bride with turmeric paste, indulging in songs and dances is observed.

82. The following song which is sung during ceremonies performed before the marriage is actually celebrated gives a glimpse of the domestic life of the Jats who are greatly fond of good horses and mares:

बोड़ी शोभा देवे मेरे जामी के बार
बछेरी मेरे मन भावे
पी भावे जल जमना रो नीर
चर भावे खेड़ केरी दूब
फोड़ भावे सगा सम्बन्धी को ताल
करि भावे सगा संबन्धी से सलाम

"The restless mare tethered at the door of my beloved father gives a magnificent appearance. The young mare looks very splendid and I cannot take away my thoughts for her. The mare goes and drinks water in the stream of the river Jamuna, feeds herself on the green turf of the meadow, goes and breaks the dam of the tank of our *samdhi* (father-in-law of bride or bridegroom) and returns after paying respects to him."

83. On the celebration of the marriage ladies sing:

अब म्हारी लाइली को पहलो ए फेरो
अब म्हारी लाइली को दूजो ए फेरो
अब म्हारी लाइली को तीजो ए फेरो
चौथे ये फेरे हुई म्हारी लाइली पराई

"The first *phera* (circumambulation round fire) of our dear daughter has now taken place. It is now the second *phera* and now the third. At the fourth *phera* our beloved daughter goes to the family of a stranger."

84. The marriage party goes from the village to the bride's place on the day of marriage riding on the camels where at the auspicious hour the marriage ceremony is performed. A Pandit officiates at all marriages except those of the Jogis and the Nayaks. The usual ceremonies of *toran*, *agnihotra*, *hathleva* and *phas* are then performed. In all cases the *phas* are limited to four in number. At the time of *kanyadan*, dowry is given. The Jats present their daughters with cows according to their financial status. Among other communities, which happen to be poor, a symbolic amount of Rs. 5 or 7 is presented by way of *godan*.

85. Though there is no legal or customary bar to polygamy in the village, polygamous marriages are absent. Polyandry, under the circumstances, is unthinkable. Widow re-marriage is, however, allowed among all the communities except that of the Brahmin. There is no bar to a widow marrying the younger brother of her deceased husband; but it is not obligatory on her to do so. A widow desirous of contracting the second marriage, which is known as *nata*, stands at the threshold of her house. The would-be husband carries a bundle of grass on his head. The widow takes it down and carries it inside followed by the person and the ceremony is over. If, however, the *nata* is initiated on behalf of the male, the woman carries a pitcher full of water on her head. The man takes the pot and enters the house followed by the widow.

86. Divorce is rare in the village although there is no bar to it also. A husband may leave

a duly wedded wife on the ground of her unfaithfulness. A married woman may run away from the husband due to his cruelty and marry another person. In such cases the new husbands compensate the former ones by payment of cash which may vary from Rs. 250 to Rs. 1,000 or more.

Death

87. Except the Meghwals all other communities cremate their dead. The Meghwals are the followers of Ramdeoji and bury their dead although some of them also have begun to cremate. When it is certain that a person is about to die, he is removed from the cot to the ground. The place is cleansed by a coating of cow-dung and cow-urine before the dying person is placed on it. Ganges water and Tulsi leaf are then put in his mouth and his eyes are closed. After breathing has stopped and it is certain that the person is dead, the body is given a wash preferably with warm water. A word is sent to all relations and friends in the village who gather at the spot at once. The dead body is then covered with a new cloth which is white in the case of males and yellow or crimson red in the case of married females and dark red in case of widows. The dead body is placed on a bamboo frame and taken to the cremation ground. Among the Jats a *pind* i.e. ball of flour is prepared and placed on bier. It is thrown away half way between the house and the cremation ground, where the bier is placed on the ground. The near relatives of the deceased get themselves shaved. Ashes are collected on the third day and are sent to Hardwar or to the nearest holy place. Among the Meghwals, before a dead body is placed on the bier, the nails of fingers and toes are cut, and they are sent for being thrown in the Ganges. The following song is one of those few that are sung after the death of an elderly person :

खटा सूं आयो थान प्राणी विमान
खटा सूं आयो थान बडेरो पालकी
दरगा सूं आयो हरगो हिडोलो
दरगा सूं आई पालकी ।

"From where has the *viman* (aeroplane) and *palaki* (palanquin) have come for you, O ! departing soul ?

Your forefathers have sent these things from the abode of the gods."

88. For 12 days after the death of a person mourning period is observed and the family of the deceased is considered to be unclean. On the 12th day there is a community dinner, after which ceremonial function of tying the turban to the head of the successor of the deceased is held. For 12 months, on the day of death in each month, among the Jats a Brahmin is fed. When six months are over a community feast, known as *chhamahi* is held and after 12 months the *barasi*. Then annual *shradh* is performed in the darker fortnight of the month of Aswin on the day of the death of the deceased.

Mourning is observed for a year. During this period the widow of the deceased laments in the early hours of the morning on each festival day. When the deceased is a person of an advanced age, mourning is stopped. It is often observed, much earlier. This is done when some marriage ceremony is held in the family or a birth of a male child takes place. In that case near relatives like the father-in-law or the brother-in-law of the son of the deceased, come to pay a special visit on the thirteenth day or on a festival some time after death. New relatives are assembled; opium is circulated, and a saffron or red turban is given to the successor of the deceased. This replaces his white *sapha* which he had been wearing during the period of mourning.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY

Rangmahal is an agricultural village. Out of the 83 households, 65 are in possession of land. Those who do not have it either cultivate land belonging to others on the basis of a fixed share in the produce, or earn their livelihood by agricultural or casual labour. Animal husbandry is resorted to not as a major source of profit but merely for supplementing their diet with milk and ghee.

90. The total area of the village according to the tehsil records is 5,868 acres. During the Census of 1941 the area recorded was 3,898 acres and during 1951, 3,368 acres. The increase in area in 1961 as compared to 1951 is attributed to territorial changes. Land belonging to other villages, regarding which exact information is not readily available, is said to have been attached to this village. The land may be classified as under :

	Area in acres
Total area of the village	5,868
Land put to use other than cultivation	143
Banjar land	1,932
Parat or waste land	2,456
Cultivated land	1,337

Out of the total 1,337 acres of cultivated land, the irrigated land is 254 acres and the unirrigated 1,083 acres. Out of the total area of the village 257 acres of land is covered by the Bhakra project and the rest, 5,611 acres, fall in the Naurangdesar distributory or the Rajasthan Canal Project. It

may, however, be noted that the details for irrigating land from Naurangdesar distributory or the Rajasthan Canal have not yet been finally worked out.

Land holdings

91. The land utilised for agricultural purposes in the village is 22.8 per cent of the entire area. The cultivable land not actually cultivated is only 32.9 per cent and the waste land is 41.7 per cent. 143 acres which form only 4 per cent of the total area is occupied by *abadi*, tank, well, crematoriums, lanes, etc. There is no forest in the village nor are there any hills and perennial rivers. No land is reserved for pasturage. People graze their cattle on land which they do not cultivate. The total land utilised for agriculture is distributed into holdings of various sizes as would be seen from the following table :

Land holdings (in acres)	No. of households
0 - 5	3
5 - 10	12
10 - 15	11
15 - 20	11
20 - 25	16
25 - 30	10
30 and over	2
	65

92. The following table gives community-wise break-up regarding the possession of land-holding :

Community	Total No. of households	Total land (in acres)	Land holdings (in acres)							Land less	Average land holding
			0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30+		
Nayak	27	337	1	7	1	3	8	2	-	5	12.5
Meghwal	18	208	-	1	1	2	1	5	-	8	11.5
Jat	18	370	1	1	5	3	5	1	2	-	20.6
Baori	10	139	-	1	1	2	2	2	-	2	13.9
Jogi	5	36	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	2	7.0
Kumhar	4	30	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	7.5
Brahmin	1	14	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	14.0
Total	83	1,134	3	12	11	11	16	10	2	18	13.7

93. It is evident from the above table that all the households of the Jat community possess land. Although their holdings vary in size, the average holding of a Jat household comes to 20.6 acres as against 13.7 acres for the village householder as a whole. The maximum number of landless households is to be found in the Meghwal community. 44.4 per cent of the households in this community are landless, whereas 40 per cent households of Jogis, 25 per cent of Kumhars, 20 per cent of Baoris and 19.5 per cent of Nayaks, fall in this category. The Jat community occupies 32.6 per cent of the total cultivated area. The landless households of the various communities working as agricultural labourers or as workers claiming share in agriculture produce is described in the following table :

Community	Land less families	Working as agr. labourers	Working on land as shareholders in produce
Nayak	5	4	1
Meghwal	8	8	-
Baori	2	2	-
Jogi	2	-	2
Kumhar	1	-	1
Total	18	14	4

Name of crop	Tillage & soil preparation	Sowing period	Irrigation	Weeding and hoeing.	Harvesting	Remarks.
1. Bajra	End of March to end of April	25th June to 20th July	Nil	20th Aug. to 15th September	End of Sept. to end of October	Threshing done after Rabi sowing
2. Moth	After the first rainfall	10th July to 15th August	Nil	-do-	-do-	
3. Wheat	10th Sept. to 15th Nov.	20th Oct. to 15th Dec.	Nali area	1st January to 30th January	10th April to 15th May.	
4. Barley	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	20th March to 2nd week of April	
5. Gram	25th Sept. to 15th Oct.	1st Oct. to 20th Oct.	-do-	Not done	-do-	
6. Mustard	-do-	October to November	-do-	15th Dec. to 30th January	15th March to 30th March	

94. No statistics are available of the ownership of land in regard to the last Census and hence it is not possible to make a comparison.

Crops

95. Two crops are sown in the village, namely the Kharif and the Rabi. Bajra and moth are the most important products of the Kharif crop. Bajra is sown in May or June depending on whether there are some showers by that time. With subsequent rains a fair crop is obtained. Moth is an equally important grain and it occupies almost an equal area during the Kharif crop. Till is a less important crop. Its cultivation is not very expensive. The Rabi crop consists of wheat, barley, mustard (sarson) and gram. Wheat is sown particularly in the *nali* area i.e. area reached by the floods of the Ghaggar. It is sown in the Kartik (late October) or, if the floods subside later, in November or early December. Barley and gram are sown after two preliminary ploughings in the middle of October.

Crop calendar

96. The following table gives the calendar of agricultural activities in the village :

97. The following table gives the area of land covered by the Kharif and the Rabi crops during the year 1959-60:

Kharif (In acres)				Rabi (In acres)			
Name of produce	Land	Irrigated	Un-irrigated	Name of produce	Land	Irrigated	Un-irrigated
Bajra	243	-	243	Wheat	94	30	64
Moth	230	-	230	Barley	93	42	51
Til	57	-	57	Gram	120	33	87
Gowar	127	-	127	Sarson	186	102	84
				Taramira	187	47	140
Total	657	-	657	Total	680	254	426

Irrigation

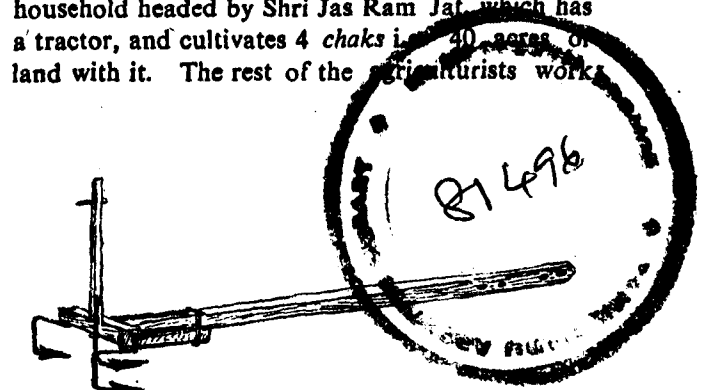
98. In the *nali* area, as has been said already, the floods of Ghaggar irrigate the land. The area is flooded by the main channel (*dhar*) which runs close to the southern boundary of the area or from the minor channels (*phat*) which branch off from the main one. The overflow from the *dhar* is, of course, less uncertain than that from the minor channels (*phat*) as the former is filled earlier than the latter. No attempts are made to increase the area of irrigation by means of artificial cuts or nullahs. The soil in the main channel and, to a less extent, in the beds of the minor channels is hard and clayey, and generally cannot be sown unless flooded. At the sides of the *nali* area, which are not so fully flooded as the central portion is and having a similar proportion of pure clay, can be cultivated on rainfall alone without being flooded. After being flooded the *katchi* area generally comes up in sufficient time to allow Kharif crops, principally, jowar and gawar being sown there. The *dhar* or central area does not emerge in time for this and is generally sown with wheat for which the harder soil is more adapted.

Agricultural operations

99. The agricultural methods employed in the village are of the simplest type. In the light and sandy soil the labour of ploughing is very small. With a camel plough 2 acres of land can be tilled in a day. In the more loamy soil the area ploughed is slightly less but more time is available for the tillage of heavy soil as moisture is better retained in it. More trouble is, however,

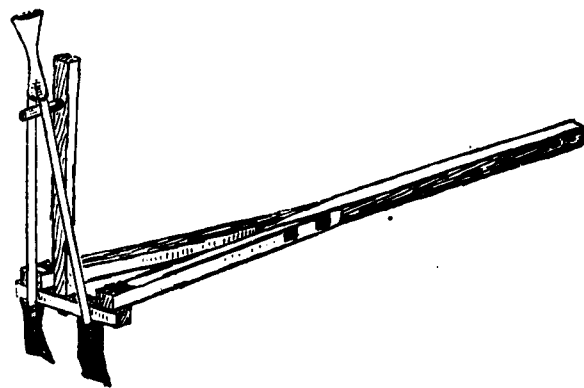
taken by the cultivator for the Rabi crop which is sown in the loamy soil. The land is given two preliminary ploughings; and, after each ploughing, it is harrowed and levelled with a flat board.

100. The tools and implements for agriculture are of the age old type. The more important tools that are commonly used by the villagers are the plough (*Triphali* or *Dunali Hal*), the spade (*phawra*), the pick-axe (*kudali*), the shovel (*khurpa*), the sickle (*Dantli*) and the chopper (*gandasa*). There is, however, one household headed by Shri Jas Ram Jat, which has a tractor, and cultivates 4 *chaks* i.e. 40 acres of land with it. The rest of the agriculturists work



with ploughs driven by bullocks or camels. In cultivation the old stereotyped techniques are in vogue. First they cut down the grass and other useless shrubs. Then the land is ploughed twice. The Kharif crops are sown with the help of a plough. For Rabi a piece of wood, which is called *maiz* in the local dialect, is used for levelling the land and then again the plough is used. This operation is repeated two or three times and then the seeds are sown.

101. For the sowing of the crop *beejani* which has two bamboo tubes fitted together with a funnel at the upper end is attached to the plough (*Dunali hal*) in such a manner that the lower end



of the tubes are just a few cm behind the plough share. The seeds pass through the tube into the furrow and are covered with soil when the next furrow is drawn.

102. In view of the developments that are likely to take place in the coming years in the field of agriculture, there is bound to be a large demand for the agricultural implements. At present production of agricultural implements in the State is limited to a few small scale units. There is a proposal for the establishment of a large scale implement workshop at Jaipur. In view of the large demand that is expected, it has been proposed that one unit with a capacity of about 2,000 tons of agricultural implements be set up during the Third Plan at Kota and two units in the 4th Plan, of which Suratgarh would be one as the area around it will develop in due course.

103. As the crops ripen the cultivators make their abode temporarily in *jhonpras* (huts) in their fields in order to protect the crops from the attack of birds and wild animals while ripening and after they have been cut and are lying near the threshing floor.

Manpower

104. There is no shortage of manpower for agricultural operations in the village. Generally

the family members undertake all activities but those who possess more land and cannot cultivate it themselves, either rent it out on a partnership basis or engage labourers. The households who do not own land generally work as labourers. The rate of payment varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 per day for a male adult; and from Re. 1 to Rs. 2 for adult female. Children above the age of 15 years are paid 50 paise to Re. 1 per day. Some households employ persons on a slightly permanent basis; and they are paid Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per month, in addition to food. The estimated expenditure involved in agricultural activities in the Kharif crop is about Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 per acre while for the Rabi crop it varies from Rs. 75 to Rs. 125 per acre. Out of the total produce villagers retain sufficient quantities for their use during the year and the remaining is disposed of at Suratgarh.

Animal husbandry

105. Cows, bullocks, sheep, camel and, to a certain extent, buffaloes are an important part of the wealth of the village people. The importance of the cattle is due, in a great measure, to a number of excellent grasses which grow in the district, and which, in years of good rainfall, provide abundant fodder for the animals. The principal grasses are Dhaman, Sevan, Bharoont, Ghanti, Kheo, Baru, Har, Murat, Duchav and Lambro. Of these Dhaman is somewhat scarce and is confined to the more loamy soil. Kheo and Kair grow abundantly in the *nali* area although they are not very good for grazing. Very little of the immense supplies of grasses which grow in the years of good rainfall are stored for use in times of draught. The animal wealth of the village is as follows:

Cow	152
Bullock	41
Bull	1
She-buffalo	31
Camel	63
Sheep	348
Goat	135
Mule	16

From the above figures it will be seen that the number of bullocks and camels which draw the

plough in the village is 104. For 1,337 acres of cultivated land there are only 52 units of draught animals available. Thus each unit has to plough nearly 26 acres which appears to be a bit, too, high for the animals. The shortage of draught cattle is a serious handicap to the prosperity of the average peasants in the village who find it difficult to till their fields in time with the limited number of cattle at their disposal. They have, therefore, to borrow them from their neighbours and consequently they have to modify their agricultural schedules to some extent to fit in with the convenience of others. This enforced waiting results in untimely seeding and poor crops.

106. There is a fairly good number of milch cattle in the village. There are 319 heads of cattle for 355 persons which is the total population of the village. Most of the milk and milk products are consumed by the people and consequently they are healthy and sturdy.

107. Income is derived from cattle in various ways of which the sale of young stock of cows and buffaloes is one. The sale of sheep wool and young ones of sheep is another important item, as it brings in cash. Buffaloes are more valuable than cows as they give more milk. A cow in milk will, with fair grazing, give 375 grams of ghee per day for six months and a buffalo twice this quantity for eight months. The youngs of cows and buffaloes are always

kept. Steers are kept for three to four years and then sold for Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 a piece to travelling traders or at a fair. A cow calves once in a year and a buffalo once in two years. According to a rough estimate the average profits from a cow may be put at Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 and from a buffalo at Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 per month.

108. The Bikaner wool is famous for its quality and excellence, and profits from its sale are in no way insignificant. The yield of wool may be put at 70 kg for 45 sheep per annum. This gives about Rs. 6 per annum as the value of the wool from a single sheep.

109. The camel, too, is of great value in the area. It is indeed treated as a family member by the agriculturists. It serves as a domestic beast of burden, to carry grain, water, etc. and as a pack animal to carry goods for hire. It is harnessed to the plough and is more useful than a bullock in the sandy area and is less costly to maintain. It serves also for riding. The owner is further benefitted from the sale of camel's young ones and wool. A camel on an average costs Rs. 500 to 800 or even Rs. 1,000.

Workers and non-workers

110. Out of the total of 355 persons, 203 are workers and the remaining 152 non-workers. The following table gives the distribution of workers according to sex and broad age groups:

Age groups	Persons	Total		Persons	Total workers		Persons	Total Non-workers	
		Males	Females		Males	Females		Males	Females
All ages	355	194	161	203	117	86	152	77	75
0 - 14	151	76	75	-	-	-	151	76	75
15 - 34	110	64	46	110	64	46	-	-	-
35 - 59	77	41	36	77	41	36	-	-	-
60 & over	17	13	4	16	12	4	1	1	-

111. From the above table it would be seen that the workers form 57.2 per cent of the entire population while 42.8 per cent are dependent on them. 57.6 per cent of the total

number of workers are males and the rest females. The females help the males in their agricultural activities in addition to their household and domestic duties.

112. The classification of the non-workers by sex and broad age groups is given below :

Age groups	Total non-workers			Persons engaged in household duties		Children attending School		Sick, old and infants	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	152	77	75	30	49	24	1	23	25
0 - 14	151	76	75	30	49	24	1	22	25
15 - 34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 59	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
60 & over	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

113. Out of the total number of non-workers 31.5 per cent are infants, sick and old persons. About 16.4 per cent are of the school-going age and the remaining 32.2 per cent are engaged in the household industries and other domestic works. There is only one person above the age of 60 years who is not a worker.

Primary and subsidiary occupations

114. Out of 83 households in the village, 65 are engaged in agriculture. They have animal husbandry as their subsidiary occupation. The primary occupation of the remaining 18 families is labour and animal husbandry, their subsidiary occupation being agriculture. There has been no change in the traditional occupation during the last decade nor does there appear to be any tendency to change in the near future.

115. There is no industry in the village. Hunting and fishing are not done as there is no scope for them. Opportunities for *shikar* are almost non-existent.

116. Villagers have to dispose of their surplus produce in the market at Suratgarh. This

is done through brokers. There is no Co-operative Society in the village. The villagers have to obtain loans from the money-lenders of Suratgarh whenever they stand in need of the same and they have to pay high rate of interest which may vary from 12 to 25 per cent per annum. Loans are advanced for one season and are repayable at the time of the disposal of the harvest. No security is offered as the standing crops are their own security. The condition of crops is an essential factor which is kept in view while the loans are advanced. If crops show to be poor very little money is available. Accounts are kept in books of the money-lenders. Instruments of loan are reduced to writing and entered in these books. Those who are literate sign them. Others affix their thumb impressions thereon.

Income and expenditure

117. The total income of the different communities in the village is Rs. 112,740. It works out at Rs. 1,358 per annum per household, the per capita income being Rs. 318.50. The following table shows the entire income (in rupees) of the village, its sources, average per family and per capita income of members of different communities :

Community	Total No. of households	Total income	Sources		Average per family income	Average per capita income
			Salary and wages	Animal husbandry		
Jat	18	36,650	-	34,620	2,036	476
Baori	10	11,100	2,050	8,700	1,110	213
Kumhar	4	3,720	1,320	2,160	930	219
Brahmin	1	600	-	480	600	600
Meghwal	18	21,170	5,950	14,400	1,176	302
Jogi	5	4,950	180	4,520	990	215
Nayak	27	34,550	6,920	27,130	1,280	300
Total	83	1,12,740	16,420	92,010	1,358	318.50

118. It would be observed from the above statistics that the economic condition of the households of the Jat community is far better than that of other communities in the village. The main source of income of the villagers is cultivation. 81.6 per cent of the total income is derived from agriculture and 14.6 per cent from labour. The Brahmin and the Jats do not have any income from labour. Of the total income

only 3.8 per cent can be attributed to animal husbandry. This does not, of course, give a correct picture because the consumption of milk products is not satisfactorily accounted for; and information regarding the exact value of the products so consumed is not available.

119. The following table gives the distribution of households in various income groups :

Community	Total No. of households	Monthly income groups						
		0-20	20-30	30-40	40-60	60-80	80-100	100 & over
Nayak	27	-	-	-	2	2	4	19
Jat	18	-	-	-	-	-	1	17
Meghwal	18	-	-	-	-	2	4	12
Baori	10	-	-	-	5	3	2	-
Jogi	5	-	1	-	2	2	-	-
Kumhar	4	-	-	-	2	-	2	-
Brahmin	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

120. It would be seen from the above table that the maximum number of households i.e. 57.8 per cent fall in the income group of Rs. 100 and above. 12 households have their incomes less than Rs. 60 per month. Reliable data regarding expenditure of the households on various items is not available. People are reticent in furnishing information in this regard. However, a rough idea based on sample survey of some typical families in the village leads one to the following results :

Food	55 per cent
Agriculture	15 -do-
Clothing	10 -do-
Conveyance	5 -do-
Education	2 -do-
Recreation	2 -do-
Miscellaneous	11 -do-

Indebtedness

121. The following table gives the figures showing the indebtedness of the people in the village and the purpose for which the loans had been obtained:

Causes	Amount of debt (Rs.)	Average for families in debt (Rs.)	Percentage of debts due to cause to the total debt
(a) Purchase of land, cattle, agricultural implements	6,550	467.85	38.7
(b) Housing	-	-	-
(c) Social ceremonies	8,650	455.26	51.2
(d) Sickness	-	-	-
(e) Business	-	-	-
(f) Household cultivation and other purposes	1,700	566.66	10.1
Total	16,900	676.00	

122. It would be seen from the above table that most of the debts i.e. 51.2 per cent have been contracted for social ceremonies. Then comes the item of purchase of cattle, agricultural implements, seeds, etc. which amounts to only 38.7 per cent. The distribution of debt community-wise along with the purposes for which the loans had been obtained is given in the following table:

Community	Causes (in rupees)			
	Total indebtedness	Purchase of land, cattle and agri. implements	Social ceremonies	Other purposes
Nayak	8,100	3,000	5,100	-
Jat	350	150	-	200
Meghwal	5,100	2,000	2,100	1,000
Baori	2,800	1,150	1,300	350
Jogi	300	100	50	150
Kumhar	250	150	100	-
Brahmin	-	-	-	-
Total	16,900	6,550	8,650	1,700

123. It would be observed from the above table that the Jat community is the least burdened with debt. The Jats generally obtain loan for productive purposes. The rest of the communities appear more or less to be deeply in debt as they mostly obtain debts to perform their social functions. The only Brahmin household in the village does not have any debt.

124. The extent of indebtedness of the households in various income groups may be seen in the following table:

Income groups (monthly)	Total No. of households	No. of households in debt	Percentage of Col. 3 to 2	Total amount of indebtedness	Average indebtedness
Below Rs. 20	-	-	-	-	-
Rs. 20 - 30	1	-	-	-	-
Rs. 30 - 40	-	-	-	-	-
Rs. 40 - 60	12	9	75.0	5,850	650
Rs. 60 - 80	9	7	77.7	4,950	703
Rs. 80 - 100	13	3	25.0	1,200	400
Rs. 100 & over	48	6	12.6	4,900	-

125. The maximum number of nine households under debt falls in the income group 40-60 and 7 households in the income group 60-80. The minimum number of households

under debt are in the income group Rs. 100 and above. Out of 48 households in this group only 6 are under debt. The only household in the income group 20-30 has no debt.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The total population of village Rangmahal in the year 1961 was 355, of which 194 were males and 161 females, comprising of 183 households. Thus on the average there were 4.27 members in one household. The males formed 54.64 per cent and the females 45.36 per cent of the total population. This means that for every 100 males there were 83 females as against 91 in rural areas for India.

Sex ratio

127. The age distribution according to the sex is given in the following table:

Age group	Persons	Males	Females
All ages	355	194	161
0 - 4	47	22	25
5 - 9	57	26	31
10 - 14	47	28	19
15 - 19	23	19	4
20 - 24	24	11	13
25 - 29	33	19	14
30 - 34	30	15	15
35 - 44	45	28	17
45 - 59	32	13	19
60 and over	17	13	4

demarcating a span of years with the object of excluding that part of the population which cannot work on account of its age. The population in the working age is taken to include all persons between the age of 15 to 60 and above. According to this principle the total number of persons in working age in 1961 was 204 i.e. 54.64 per cent of the entire population as against 57 per cent of such population for entire Rajasthan. Out of it 118 i.e. 57.85 per cent were males and 86 i.e. 42.15 per cent were females. The paucity of females was, therefore, even more pronounced in the working population of the village. This indicates a higher mortality of females relative to that of males in the working age, than in other ages, and also an increase in the proportion of female births during the last decade.

129. The statistics for births, diseases and deaths are not available as there is no machinery at present for maintenance of such records. The Village Panchayat is still in its infancy and has not taken up this important work seriously.

Marital conditions

128. The population in the working age is estimated in accordance with general practice by

130. The following table gives statistics relating to marital conditions in the village:

Age group	Total population			Unmarried		Married		Widowed	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	355	194	161	109	75	77	77	8	9
0 - 9	104	48	56	48	56	-	-	-	-
10 - 14	47	28	19	28	19	-	-	-	-
15 - 19	23	19	4	18	-	1	4	-	-
20 - 24	24	11	13	6	-	5	13	-	-
25 - 29	33	19	14	3	-	16	14	-	-
30 - 34	30	15	15	4	-	11	15	-	-
35 - 39	26	12	14	-	-	12	14	-	-
40 - 44	19	16	3	1	-	15	1	-	2
45 - 49	8	1	7	-	-	1	6	-	1
50 - 54	17	11	6	-	-	9	4	2	2
55 - 59	7	1	6	-	-	1	5	-	1
60 - 64	14	11	3	-	-	5	1	6	2
65 - 69	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
70 & above	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1

131. A scrutiny of the statistics contained in the above table shows that 51.8 per cent of the entire population are unmarried. Out of the total number of unmarried persons 59.2 per cent are males and 40.8 per cent females. There is no married couple in the age group 10-14 and only 1 married male and 4 married females in the age group 15-19 from which it is clear that child marriages are not at all in vogue in the village. The number of married persons in the age groups from 15 to 70 is 77 males and 77 females. Among the widowed persons there are 8 males and 9 females. It is worthy of note that the widowed males fall in the age groups 50 to 54 and 60 to 64. The widowed females, however, fall in the age group 40 and above and one of them is more than 70 years old indicating that longevity in females is

more marked than among the males which is possibly due to their simple habits, outdoor life and good climatic conditions of the village. There are no cases of child widows or of divorced and separated persons in the village.

132. One salient fact that emerges from the above statistics is that girls are married when they attain the age of 15 years while boys are married pretty late i.e. near about or after the age of 20 years.

Education

133. The following table gives statistics regarding the standard of education and literacy of the village people :

Age group	Total			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or junior basic	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	355	194	161	142	160	28	-	24	1
0 - 4	47	22	25	22	25	-	-	-	-
5 - 9	57	26	31	18	30	-	-	8	1
10 - 14	47	28	19	12	19	-	-	16	-
15 - 19	23	19	4	12	4	7	-	-	-
20 - 24	24	11	13	10	13	1	-	-	-
25 - 29	33	19	14	16	14	3	-	-	-
30 - 34	30	15	15	10	15	5	-	-	-
35 - 44	45	28	17	20	17	8	-	-	-
45 - 59	32	13	19	10	19	3	-	-	-
60 & over	17	13	4	12	4	1	-	-	-

134 It is clear at the very first sight that the educational standard in the village is very poor. People do not appear to be particular about sending their children to the school. Out of the entire population of the village only 10.7 per cent are those who are either going to school or are literate without any educational standard. The condition of female education is all the more deplorable. There is only one girl in the village and that too in the age group 5-9 who attends the school. Out of the total number of 104 children of school-going age, only 25 i.e. 24 per cent are attending the school. The obvious reason for this backwardness appears to be that the village people like their young ones more to get adapted to agricultural work than sending them to school. So far as female education is concerned, firstly, there

appears to them no necessity of educating their girls, secondly, they are averse to the idea of sending their daughters to school to study along with the boys. The Primary School which has been functioning in the village for the last three years has failed to create enthusiasm among the villagers for educating their children. They are, however, gradually realising the importance of education. At the time of the last visit of the investigator to the village there were 30 boys on the roll of the school who were distributed in two classes. The standard of education among the adults is all the more poor. Out of the total number of 204 persons above the age of 15, only 12 are such as can simply read and write. There is no arrangement for adult education in the village. Only one boy in the village was reading in the matriculation standard

in the High School at Suratgarh. It is a matter of regret that educational standard in the entire area of surrounding villages is extremely poor. The data regarding literacy of the five surrounding villages is given below:

Name of village	Total population	Literacy in percentage
Chak Nali Rampura	151	41.7
Bareka	378	5.5
Kishanpura	575	8.0
Takharwala	Unpopulated	-
Suratgarh	1,569	47.4
Rangmahal	355	10.7

135. It would be seen from the above figures that throughout the area excepting the town of Suratgarh and the village, Chak Nali

Rampura, the standard of literacy is exceedingly poor. It is, however, remarkable that the standard of literacy in village Chak Nali Rampura is only a little less than what is found in the town of Suratgarh. The reason appears to be that the railway station of Rangmahal is very near to this village. Due to the presence of the railway staff Primary School in that village is well attended.

Family structure

136. The joint family system predominates in the villages of Rajasthan. In Rangmahal, however, this is not the case. Out of the total number of 83 families, no less than 63 are simple ones and 10 Intermediate. There are only 9 households which are living jointly. The following table gives a community-wise statement of family structure in the village:

Community	Total No. of households	Types of families living in the households			
		Simple	Intermediate	Joint	Others
Nayak	27	19	3	5	-
Jat	18	12	5	-	1
Meghwal	18	15	2	1	-
Baori	10	9	-	1	-
Nath	5	3	-	2	-
Kumhar	4	4	-	-	-
Brahmin	1	1	-	-	-

The most significant thing which emerges from the above table is that there are no joint families among the Jats in the village and so is the case with the Kumhars. It is only the 5 households of the Nayaks, 2 of the Jogis, 1 of the Baori and 1 of the Meghwal who have joint families. In one of the Jat households, there is a mendicant living who is considered a family member though he is actually not so. The household considers him as their *guru*. He stays for most of the time in the village and occasionally goes out for travel. The main reason for the disintegration of the institution of joint family in Rangmahal appears to be that formerly there were a number of quarrels and litigations regarding water rights and for possession of land and rights appurtenant thereto. This created bad blood and undue complications in the social life of the villagers; and, to overcome this difficulty, they are reported

to have decided that they should not live jointly after a male member of the family becomes adult and gets himself married. As soon as the marriage takes place the person begins to live separately. A father distributes his property among the sons even while he is alive. This leads to fragmentation of holdings but eliminates chances of friction. The standard set by the Jats in this respect has affected the life of other communities as well; and this is the reason why we find a very small number of joint families in the village.

Inheritance

137. In matter of inheritance of property the village people follow the old customary Hindu Law. Accordingly the sons of the deceased person get equal shares in his property. The people are well aware of the fact that according to the more recent statute the girls also acquire a share in the

maternal property but the villagers look at this statutory provision with disfavour. They are lead against it as they think the applications of this law will introduce unnecessary complications in their family life which has lately been troubled by quarrels and feuds.

Intra-family relationship

138. The intra-family relationship among the various members of the households residing in the village is on the whole very cordial. The father naturally enjoys the greatest authority in a household to the last moment of his life. The sons pay due respect to him. As a father separates his sons after giving them their due share in the family property, no sooner than they are married, the chances of friction between them are automatically eliminated. A bond of natural love and affection is however, established and even the married sons consult their father and abide by his advice in all important matters affecting their welfare. Daughters bear filial love towards their father. It is the attempt of every father to see that his daughter is married in a family which, if not of a higher status, is at least equal to his own. At the time of marriage the parents try to give as much as lies within their power to their daughter by way of dowry. Many a time they exceed the limits of their means and contract debts to meet this obligation. Naturally, therefore, a daughter, who is well provided for in her father-in-law's house, feels greatful to her parents for her happy life; and she does not bear any grudge for having been deprived of inheritance in her patrimony. Mothers are equally solicitous of the welfare of their sons and daughters. A mother's love is, however, more towards her daughters than for her sons as she feels that they are well cared for by the father. A daughter is greatly helpful to her mother in all her household work and in field and naturally she has got a soft corner in her heart for her. After marriage the partings between the mother and daughter are always very pathetic and a mother never fails to give something to her daughter secretly apart from what she receives from her parents openly. The relations between the brothers and brothers and sisters

are, too, very cordial. As the grown up and married brothers have their separate dwellings and they earn their livelihood separately, there are no quarrels between them and their mutual relations are always very friendly. The relations between a husband and wife are quite happy. There may occasionally be some difference of opinion between the two on matters relating to management of family affairs; but they are very short lived for they are soon amicably settled. Occasions may, however, arise when due to temperamental reasons or some extreneous influences the married life of a couple may be seriously disturbed and in that case separation becomes inevitable. In all the communities of the village except the sole household of the Brahmin the institution of *nata* or re-marriage is there and a displeased wife and a dissatisfied huband can have recourse to it. The married woman has only to run away from her husband to find a new one and the husband may bring another wife after the separation.

139. The opportunities for meetings between the mother's brother and a sister's son are not very frequent. They generally meet on ceremonial occasions and then they are received very cordially. The relations between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law, too, are quite affectionate. The daughter-in-law helps her mother-in-law in all her work and during times of sickness she acts as a nurse and renders all possible assistance to the household. The mother-in-law on her part takes good care of the daughter-in-law and does not allow her to be put to any difficulty for want of things of daily use.

Leisures and recreation

140. As is inevitable there are very few pastimes in the village for adults as well as the children. The children enjoy themselves with games such as *kabaddi*, *gilli-danda*, etc. Girls have their own ways of recreation. They play hide and seek. During the rains they enjoy themselves on swings which hang down from some big trees. Suratgarh has a cinema house and, it being very near, young men very often go there to enjoy the pictures. There is one radio set in the village and people assemble there to hear the daily news

and other broadcasts. The elders sit at the place of a common friend and *hookah* goes round with



inevitable gossip during which matters relating to the village are discussed.

Fairs and festivals

141. The festivals which are usually observed among the Hindus everywhere are a common feature of Rangmahal as well. The following festivals are observed :

Month	Festival
Chaitra	Sheetla Asthami Navaratra Ramnavmi
Baisakh Shrawan	Akshya Tritiya Nag Panchami Raksha Bandhan Janmasthami
Ashwin	Navaratra Dashera
Kartik Magh	Diwali Basant Panchami Shivratri
Phalgun	Holi

142. On every festival people are in a holiday mood. They cleanse their houses especially on Holi and Diwali, give a coating of cow-dung to the floor, take a bath, wear the best dresses they possess, and cook customary special dishes according to the means of the household.

Among the Jat community more importance is attached to Raksha Bandhan, Janmasthami and Dashera. Nag Panchami is a special festival for the members of the Jogi community. On this day they are in a specially jubilant mood. The male Kalbelias go about in parties playing on their *poogni* singing songs and giving a display of snakes and other venomous creatures which they carry in their baskets. The following are some of the charming tunes played by the Kalbelias on their reed pipes :

पाड़ोसरा बड़ी चकोर, ले गइ ईं दूरी

"The neighbour is very clever. She has made good with my *indhoni* (a thick ring made of cotton, silk or *moonj* strings and placed on head by women to facilitate carrying of pots of water or other loads)."

सागर पाणीड़ा नहि जाऊं निजर लग जाय मोय

"I will not go to the tank to fetch water, lest I may be caught by an evil eye."

अरे शंकरया रे घमक चाल मति चाल
मालवा दूरी रे, भायला मालवा दूरे

"O Shankaria ! do not walk with a thumping gait (of dance). Malwa is far off my friend, very far off."

खराबा वालो आयो
डाबी में सुइयां ल्यायोरे
थने कठे छिपाऊं म्हारी आलीजा
खराबा वालो आयो

"The vaccinator has come with the small box of needles. Where shall I hide you my beloved, the vaccinator has come?"

हालूडो हींवे रे दरजी दो दिन मोड़ो हींवेरे ।
म्हारा छेज भंवर रो जाड़ियो सिलाब हींवेरे ।
जाणो मेला में

"My *haluda* i.e. *odhna* or scarf is being stitched, but the tailor is delaying it by two days, although he is hurrying up the *jadia*, the narrow strip of cloth worn over the turban, of my gay husband. I am worried because I have to attend the fair."

The Kalbelia women are distinguished for their romance and pleasantry. They entertain their hard-working husbands with their dances and enchanting songs. On Nag Panchami day four or five of them go in a group to the neighbouring village of Rampura or to the town of Suratgarh and entertain their patrons with their dances. While two of them dance the rest continue to sing to the accompaniment of *chang*. They are rewarded with small coins and sweets. The average earning of a group comes to Rs. 5 to Rs. 10. The Kalbelias consider the Nag Panchami as their greatest festival. It is believed that on this day they release old serpents in their custody and retain only the younger and newer ones. Holi is by far the most popular festival in which all the communities indulge freely. It is a festival which heralds the spring and specially young folk go about singing lewd songs, sprinkling coloured water on one another and a general atmosphere of license prevails. The Meghwals, the Jogis and many of the Jats indulge in drinking and go in procession through the streets. Women sprinkle coloured water on one another and on their brothers or near male relatives.

143. It is needless to go into details of the mythical stories attached to each of these festivals and the customary rites that are observed by the village people in regard to these as they are fairly common and well known. Navaratra is dedicated to the goddess Durga, Ramnavmi marks the birth day of Shri Ramchandra, and Janmasthami that of Krishna. Aksaya Tritiya is indeed a festival of the agriculturists. On this day they prepare sweet dishes of *khich* and *kheer* and celebrate the harvest of the Rabi crop that has already been reaped and the sowing of the Kharif crop that is impending. Raksha Bandhan falls generally in the month of August. The Brahmin renews his *janeu* (sacred thread) on this day. Cotton or silk *rakhis* (wrist-bands) are tied on the wrist of brothers by their sisters for which they are rewarded with small presents of a rupee or two or some pieces of costume. Women sometime honour strangers by recognising them as their brothers and they put *rakhi* on the wrist of such persons. The Brahmin also goes round the village and ties *rakhi* to the wrists of the male population and gets a few paise from each in return.

144. As to the folk songs and dances they are sung on ceremonial occasions of birth and marriage and festivals. While going to attend a fair, women sing delightful songs two of which are reproduced here. The first song is regarding *gorband* which is a beautiful piece woven out of cotton or silk threads of bright colours studded with shells and pebbles. It is used as an article of decoration for a camel and extends from the saddle upto the ears covering the camel's entire neck and presents a very attractive appearance. It runs as follows :

म्हारो गोरबन्द निखरालो
गायां चरावता गोरबन्द गूथ्यो
भैयां चरावती पोयो हो राज, म्हारो ...
चवदा बीसी में जाकूड़ो मोनायो
म्हारो भूरियो जाकूड़ो तरस्यो जावे हो राज, म्हारो ...
आठ कुवा नोनख बावड़ी
म्हारो पणियार्यां रीती जावे हो राज, म्हारो ...
डूंगर चढ़ी ने गोरबन्द गायो
म्हारी जोघाण कछेड़ी हमलायो हो राज, म्हारो ...
खारा समंदसू कोडा मंगाया
गढ़ बीकानेर जाय पोया पोया हो राज, म्हारो ...
गोरबन्द यारे कारखो म्हे तो
नव दिन नरणी रेगो रेगो हो राज, म्हारो ...

"How beautiful and exquisite is my *gorband*. I knitted it while grazing the cows and studded it with shells and pebbles while tending the buffaloes. I purchased my Bhuria, the brown camel, for Rs. 280. He is yearning for a *gorband*. There are eight lacs of wells and nine lacs of *bavris* (step wells) in the country and yet the *paniharis* (housewives going to fetch water) are returning to their homes with empty pitchers. The song of *gorband*, I sang from the top of the hill, its sound reverberated right in the courts of Jodhpur. The shells for the *gorband* were obtained from the salt sea and they were strung at Bikaner. My lovely *gorband*! you know, I have fasted full nine days to complete thee. How beautiful my *gorband* looks!"

145. The subject matter of the second song is the *panihari* i. e. a housewife going to fetch water from a tank or a well.

कुण जी खुदाया कुवा बावड़ी ए, पणिहारी जी ए लो
मिरगा नेणी जी ए लो,
कुण जी बंधाया तलाब बालाजी ?
रतन कुवो मुख सांकड़ो ए पणिहारी जी ए लो
जोला लेणी जी ए लो लांबी लागे नेत्र बाला जी
सुसरे जी खुदाया कुवा बावड़ी, साहेब जी बंधायो तलाब,
बालाजी पणिहारी जी ए लो, मिरगा नेणी जी ए लो
सोना रूपारो थारो बेवड़ो, उजलदंती जी ए लो
पणिहारी जी ए लो, नाजकड़ी पणिहारी, बालाजी

"O! my beautiful *panihari*, the fawn-eyed damsel! who has sunk the wells and the *bavris* here? who has constructed the dams of the tanks?"

My lovely lady, proceeding with the gait of an elephant, you see that the mouth of the precious well is very narrow and it takes a long rope to draw water out of it. Will you kindly let me know who has sunk the well and who has constructed the dam?"

The *paniharin* replies, "my father-in-law has got the well and the *bavris* sunk and my beloved husband has constructed the dam of the tank.

O *panihari*! the jars that you are bearing on your head are made of gold and silver. Your teeth are shining like pearls. Your delicate form looks exceedingly graceful. You have stolen away the hearts of onlookers!"

Religion

146. All the communities in the village are the followers of the Hindu religion. There is a small temple in the village in which there is an idol of the god Shri Ram and his consort Sita. On one side of the platform on which this temple is erected, are placed the idols of gods Shiva and Hanuman. All the communities in the village worship these gods and perform special rituals on the day sacred to each of them. The village people are, however, not very orthodox in this matter. Some of the members of the Jat community have come under the influence of the Arya Samaj. They do not have much faith in idol worship. They have studied seriously Satyarth Prakash, the work of the great religious reformer Swami Dayanand Saraswati, and have greatly modified their views on religion. However, the

people are generally the followers of Sanatan Dharm. The Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris worship Ramdeoiji, Pabuji, Tejaji and Gogaji in addition. These are heroes from Marwar. Many Jats wear around the neck a silver plate bearing the effigy of Teja on horseback with a sword drawn in the act of biting the tongue. Recently Jogis have constructed a small temple of mud mixed with cow-dung, in which they have placed a framed photo of Jallandar Nath. The people of this community pay daily visit to this temple.

147. The Brahmin performs worship at the temple of Shri Ram daily and collects the *chadawa* (offerings) that is presented occasionally by the village people. There is no special expenditure incurred on the maintenance of the temples.

Village organisation

148. The various communities in the village are interdependent. It has already been seen that the entire village depends mostly on agriculture for livelihood. Those who do not possess land are engaged in agricultural labour. Thus there is a bond of common interest which binds the communities in general and there is hardly any rivalry between one community and the other. Each one of the communities has its caste Panchayat which governs the social etiquette of its members. The function of these Panchayats these days is to assist the households in performance of the rituals and functions at the time of birth, marriage and death. Formerly some of their time was occupied in deciding disputes between the community members but more recently such disputes are becoming infrequent and the caste Panchayats are gradually losing their importance.

149. Rangmahal is represented in the statutory village Panchayat of Rampura in which there are the following 13 villages :

1. Rampura
2. Prempura
3. Rangmahal
4. Chak Nali Rampura
5. Jhal Kherawali

6. Bareka
7. Karnisar
8. Sagar
9. Chak Utrada Karnisar
10. Chak Nali Karnisar
11. Bhagwansar
12. Chak Nali Bhagwansar
13. Beer Suratgarh.

There are 9 members in this Panchayat but none of them is from Rangmahal. There are 3 from Rampura, 1 from Prempura, 1 from Bareka, 2 from Karnisar, 1 from Sagar and 1 from Bhagwansar. The village Panchayat is still in its infancy and appears not to have found its feet so far. It has not done anything towards the development of Rangmahal as yet.

Voluntary organisation

150. There is at present no voluntary organisation in the village nor is there any club,

library or gymnasium. The people do feel the want of a library and a reading room but have not done anything so far.

Untouchability

151. The people of the village are aware of the legislation prohibiting untouchability but it continues still to a great extent. The Brahmin, the Jats and the Kumhars consider the Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris as untouchables. They do not take food or water from their hands and think them as members of castes far below their own. The Meghwals, the Nayaks and the Baoris have a feeling of resentment. They take things lightly and have no strength enough to protest. The result is that things are going on as they used to go a decade ago. With the spread of education, however, there is bound to some change for the better.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The mound of Rangmahal, regarding which a lot of literature has been published and salient features of which have been depicted elsewhere in this monograph, must have been the scene of a living civilization full of life and interesting activities, which might well have justified the appellation Rangmahal, abode of pleasure. It seems it was not only a village but a flourishing town and at least a nucleus of a civilization which was widespread. The present village is a shadow of what it must have been a couple of millennia ago. This is the impression which a reader of reports of archaeological expeditions in the region can be expected to carry. The coloured pieces of pottery found in pits during the excavations do not, however, appear, at least to the untrained eye, in any way different from, say, pieces of pots one comes across in the bazar near the railway station of Suratgarh hardly 6 km away. Rangmahal has nothing special or singular about it today ; it is just like any other collection of hamlets in the desert region wherein scarcity of water is taken for granted and where annual floods which visit the area of Suratgarh tehsil now, prove to be a menace of another kind. The schemes for the control of the Ghaggar flood-waters made by the Government will, no doubt, turn a veritable curse into a boon ; and we can be pretty sure that, after the costly schemes entailing crores of rupees, have been successfully completed, the region will become a

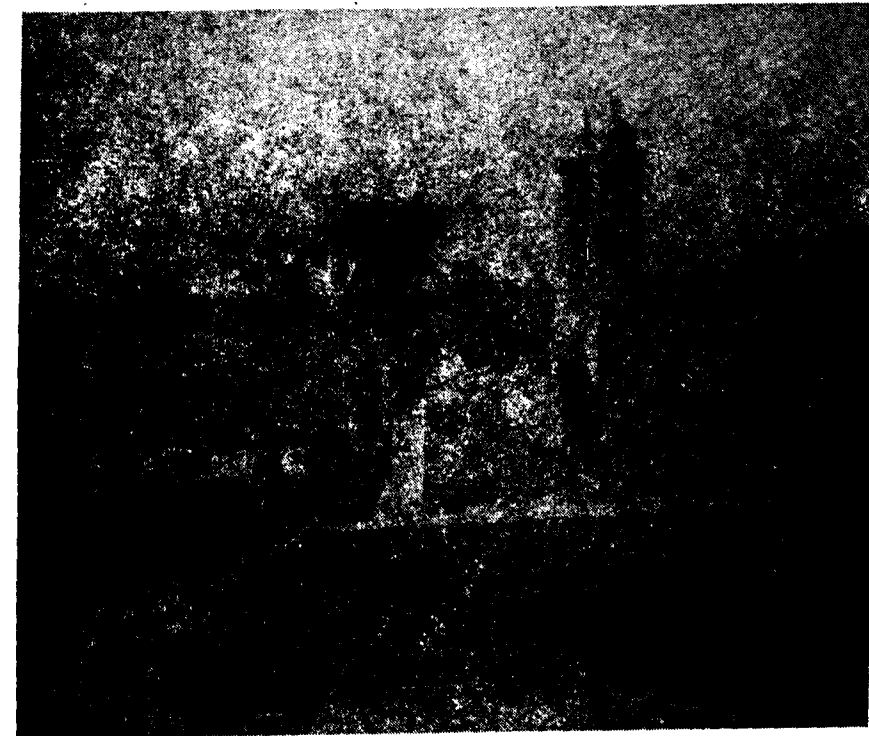
rich granary meeting food-needs of not only Rajasthan but of other Indian States also.

153. The nearness of the now famous Suratgarh Farm, state-managed and mechanised and established with Russian help, will prove to be of great benefit. The sturdy hardworking farmers of Rangmahal are not slow in learning things which are of advantage to them. The simple implements which they are presently using, show a distinct liking for improved kinds. For rapid increase in agricultural produce, which our country so urgently needs so as to become self-sufficient and also to save much-needed foreign exchange, it is necessary to give priority to the maximum utilization of the facilities of irrigation and to select schemes of soil conservation. It is education in the broadest sense that will ultimately make the people move with the times and improve their lot. With the opening of more schools, the number of well informed intelligent cultivators will gradually rise, and greater economic incentives will persuade them to use the most advanced means and methods of farming.

154. If there is only one tractor in Rangmahal today, there will be, let us hope, a dozen after a decade. The various development schemes and plans put into operation are having their impact in the right direction ; and we can be sure of a prosperous future for the people.

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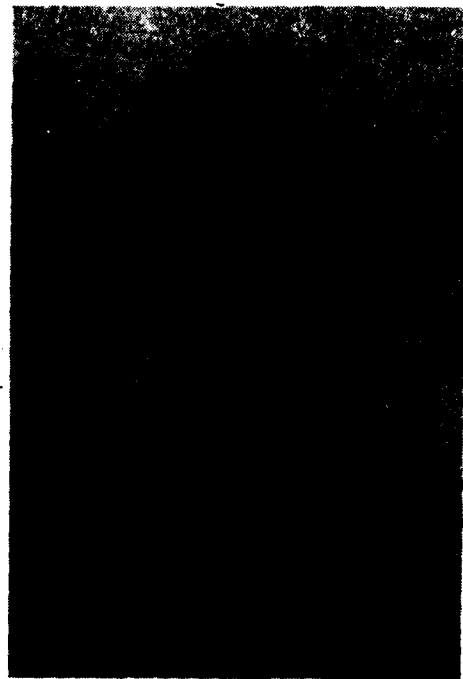
The only well in the village



In scorching heat, women on way to village well



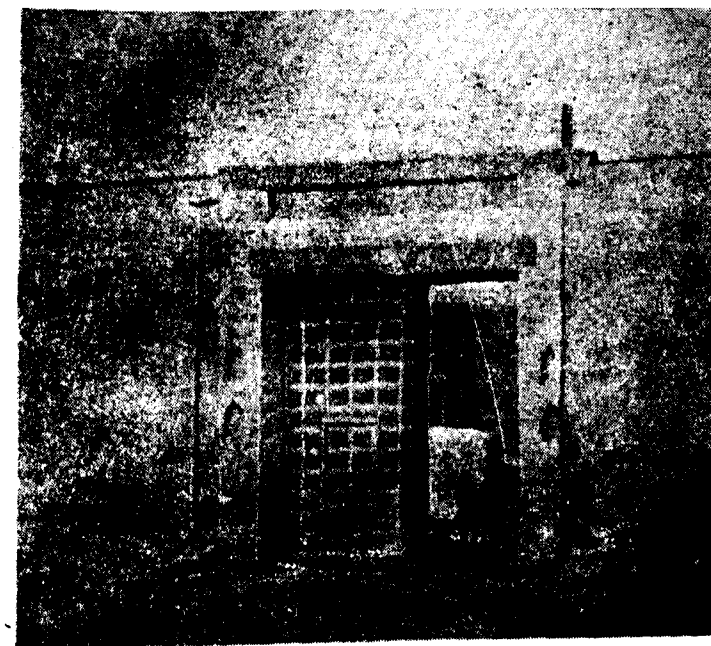
Sturdy Jat woman drawing water from the well



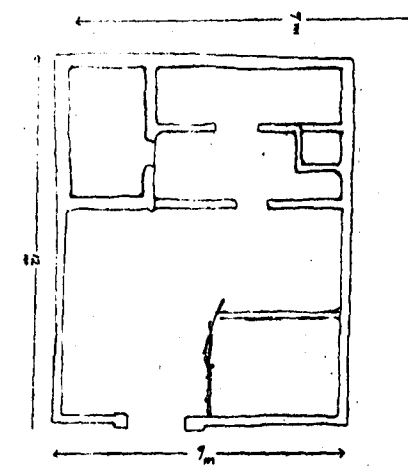
Nathu Nayak (65 years)



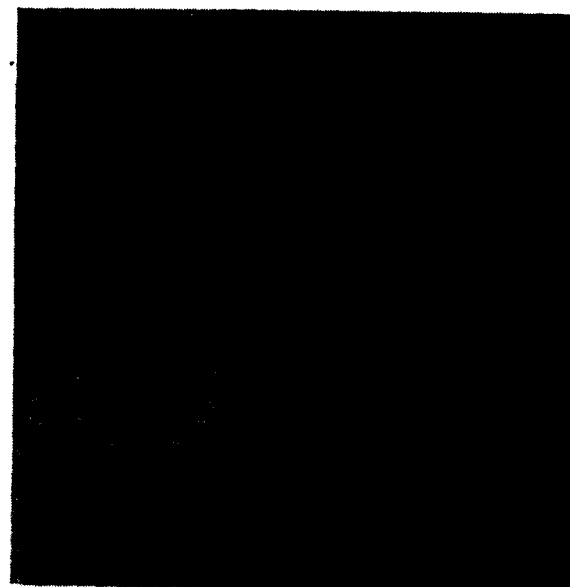
A young Jogi woman



Main gate of Jes Ram Jat's house



Plan of a poor Nayak's mud house



Sheokaran and Rooparam Kumhars



Ramji Takhar Jat (75 years)



A group of Jogis recreating themselves



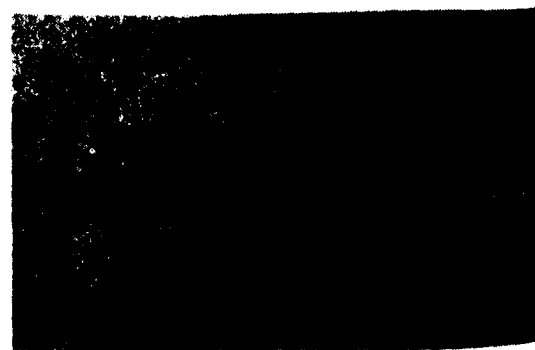
Guddi, a Jat girl with her brother



Jugannath Jogi

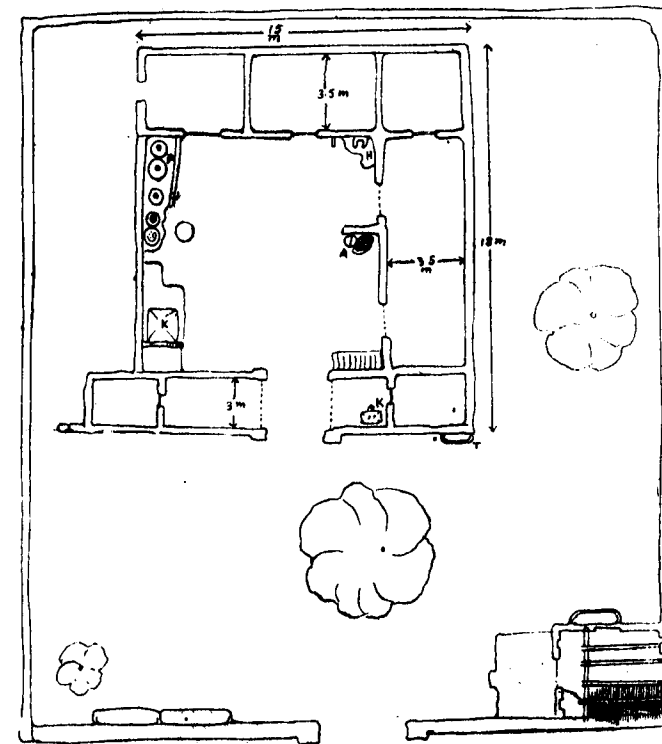


The ship of the desert works as a water-carrier

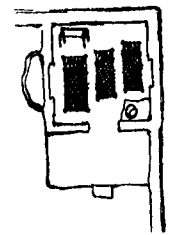


The Primary School

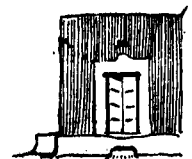
PLAN OF THE HOUSE OF CHAUDHARY SATYA PAL JAT



The Plan of the house. In the corner is a guest-house and in front of the main gate is the residence of the Chaudhary



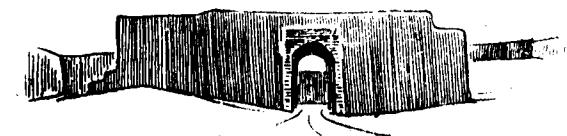
Plan of the guest-house



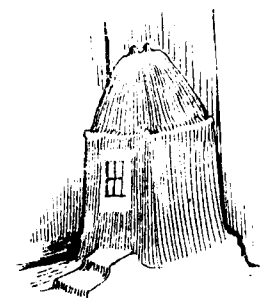
Front view of the guest-house



A small *kothi* from the courtyard of Chaudhary's residence

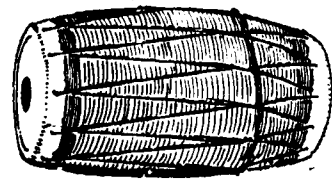


Front view of the residence of the Chaudhary



Another *kothi* looking like a village shrine from near the gate of Chaudhary's residence. It has a capacity for storing about one quintal of corn

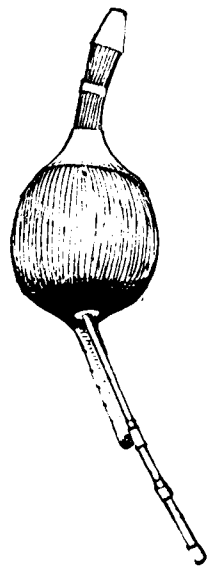
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



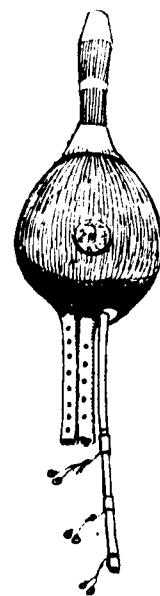
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)

- (a) The Dholak
- (b) Khanjari, otherwise called Prempyasi, used by the Jogis
- (c) Double-reed decorated Pipe (Poongi) of a Jogi
- (d) Front view of the Poongi
- (e) The seal of the Poongi of the Jogi shows Baba Nanak squatting under a tree

APPENDIX A

EXTRACTS FROM SOME PUBLISHED LITERATURE

Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan - Col. James Tod, Vol - 11, P. 144

Amidst these ruins of the Johiyas, the name of Sekundar Roomy (Alexander the Great) has fixed itself and the desert retains the tradition that the ruin called 'Rungmahl', the 'painted palace', near Dandoosir, was the capital of a prince of this region, punished by visitation of the Macedonian conqueror; History affords on evidence of Alexander's passage of the Garah though the scene of his severest conflict was in that nook of the Punjab, not remote from the lands of the Johiyas but though the chronicler of Alexander does not sanction our indulging in this speculation, the total darkness in which we appear doomed to remain with regard to Bactria and the petty Grecian kingdoms on the Indus, established by him, does not forbid our surmise, that by some of these, perhaps, the descendants of Python, such a visitation might have happened. The same traditions assert that these regions were not always either arid or desolate and the living chronicle alluded to in the note, repeated the stanza elsewhere given, which dated its deterioration from the drying up of the Hakra river which came from the Punjab and flowing through the heart of this country, emptied itself into the Indus between Ror Bekher and Ootch.

Proceedings of the Symposium on the Rajputana Desert, National Institute of Sciences of India, 1952

The Rajputana Desert - Its Archaeological Aspect - B. P. Ghosh, P. 41

The Rangmahal pottery industry was very sturdy and productive. The shapes represented are many, and the painted designs in black, or rarely, in crimson, on a bright red background, consist of innumerable varieties, both naturalistic and geometrical.

The slip, designs and fabric of the Rangmahal pottery are readily distinguishable from the Harappa, but from the existence of a few types common to both, it appears that the Rangmahal pottery, by a process of 'atavison' which is not yet explained, inherited or imitated a few Harappa traits. On the other hand, some of its features persist in the present day pottery of the Suratgarh-Anupgarh region. As I said just now, some of the sites of the culture are very extensive; a few of them have mud fortifications around them. Brick-bats are plentiful on most of the sites, indicating the existence of brick houses. Other finds from the sites include terracota human and animal figurines, including painted bulls, faience and shell bangles, a large number of beads of different shapes etc.

That the culture flourished in the early centuries A.D., there is little doubt. This is borne out not only by one or two similar pottery types found in equivalent levels at Ahichchhatra, Hastinapura, Kausambi and other excavated sites but by the discovery of one or two Kushan coins on the Bikaner sites themselves. But as some of the Rangmahal mounds are very high, as much as 35 or 40 feet they must represent the accumulation of several centuries. In the Drishadvati valley the Rangmahal culture persists, but, like the Harappa, in a somewhat modified form.

Protohistoric Period (C. 3000 B.C. - 500 B.C.)

(a) It is the protohistoric period which is most interesting from the point of view of the past condition of Rajputana. So far only some parts of Northern Rajputana, along the banks of the Ghaggar, and its tributary, (known as the Chitang in East Punjab), in Bikaner State are explored. The Ghaggar, as well as its tributary, have their source in the south-western Himalayan region. There is evidence to show that these two rivers are the ancient Sarasvati and the Drishadvati mentioned in the Rigveda. Though anciently both these streams were perhaps mighty rivers, and even now carry some water during their journey through E. Punjab, by the time they reach the Bikaner territory, their beds are practically dry. So, only narrow belts of land on either side of the Ghaggar can be irrigated. But the river has, as Stein and Ghosh found, over more than 100 miles its length a bed not less than two miles and in places 4 miles or more in width. "This bed is lined on both sides by dunes varying in height but gathered into continuous bands of ridges." These are not river banks, but dunes of wind-borne sand from adjacent deserts formed by the vegetation growing in riverine belts once watered by seasonal floods. These sandy ridges have prevented the river bed from being smothered by fresh deposits of dune-sand.

(b) Archaeology reveals when the Ghaggar and its tributary could have carried the life-giving water. Along their banks Stein and Ghosh found numerous mounds strewn with potsherds, large well-burnt bricks, and actual remains of kilns. The mound at Bhatner is about 100 ft. high, those at Bhadrakali and Fattengarh, about 50 ft. those at Kalibanga, Ranagmahal, Karnisar, Bhawar, about 40 ft. and Sandhanawala, Kudwala etc. on the Hakra between 30 to 50 ft. These mounds known locally as *ther* or *theri*, are bare of all vegetation and covered with pieces of broken pottery, and sometimes with flint blades and cores. Archaeologically, these pottery remains can be assigned to at least three periods. The earliest pottery is often painted, and is identical with or similar to that found at Harappa in the Panjab or at Mohenjodaro etc. in Sind. The stone tools also probably belong to this period. To the second period belongs a pottery which is now well defined by Ghosh. It is Grey Ware, painted with black designs. The most prolific pottery is of the third period. It is also a fine ware, red and painted in black. Though, no one site gives the pottery of all these periods, still Ghosh has been able to prove by a number of trial excavations that the first group is the earliest, and the last, latest.

From the analogy of the Harappa or the Indus culture, it may be said that the most prosperous period might be about 1500-2000 B. C. or still earlier. Desiccation, natural or artificial, had then probably set in, which reaching its maximum about the beginning of the Christian era, made the lower reaches of the Hakra-Ghaggar completely uninhabitable. It is not unlikely that witnessing the increasing aridity, the population trend from about the 3rd century B. C. or a little before was towards the habitation of the more fertile eastern zone.

The creep of the desert - K. V. Krishnamurthy - P. 134-136

In a very revealing analysis, made as early as in 1893, about the disappearance of rivers Saraswati and Hakra, Oldham (1893) points out that this drying up is not due to a diminished rainfall of the region in recent years, but is most probably due to the changes in the course of the river Sutlej. Talking of the Saraswati and the Ghaggar, he writes, "There is nothing, however, in history to show that they ever contained much more water than they do now. Indeed, all records that have come down to us point to

the contrary." "And, yet, in the Rigveda, we are told of a large and rapid river flowing from the mountains to the sea. The Mahabharata describes the same stream as losing itself in the sands." According to Oldham, the now extinct river Hakra had, in the Vedic times, an eastern arm comprising the Ghaggar, Wah, Sonamwal or Sirhind Nadi and a western arm formed by the three branches each known as Naiwal. In the Vedic age, the Sutlej was flowing through the western arm of Hakra into the Arabian sea, but when it changed its course to join the Indus through the Beas, the Saraswati, which had been a tributary, was left in possession of the deserted channel in the sands of which its waters were swallowed up. "It is of course impossible to fix any period for this change, but it may be presumed that it took place between the Vedic period and that of Manu, when we first hear of the disappearance of the Saraswati in the sands."

A keen insight into and knowledge of Indology is apparent in the analysis of Oldham as he quotes extensively from Hindu scriptures, mythology and history in support of his conclusions. But the significant point in his analysis in the present context is that the desert extended up to Phulra and Sirsa even in the Mahabharata age as it does now.....

Viewing from a different perspective, on the basis of a survey of ancient sites along the Saraswati river, Stein (1942) confirms the main postulations of Oldham, change in the regime of the river Sutlej and the consequential drying up of the Hakra and the Saraswati. "Lower down the Hakra", writes Stein, "the main change was due to the Sutlej having in late prehistoric times abandoned the bed which before had joined the Ghaggar, the result of a law affecting all rivers whose course lies over the alluvial plains." Of the Ghaggar he says, "evidence shows that down the historical times the Ghaggar carried water for irrigation under existing climatic conditions much farther than it does now." The reference to "existing climatic conditions" is significant in that it shows that the drying up of the river is not due to any possible meteorological changes in the region but is an offshoot of the extinction of Hakra as a result of the change in the course of the Sutlej.

Incidentally, the researches of Oldham and Stein make it clear that the 'northering' of the Sutlej is not a result of the encroachment of the desert conditions but, on the contrary, is the cause for the desiccation in the region even in historic times.

All this goes to show that the desert conditions now existing are very nearly the same as those existed over three to four thousand years ago and that, even if there had been any increase in their extent in recent times, it is only very small.

Rang Mahal - Henna Rydh*The bed of river Ghaggar - K. Gosta Eriksson - P. 32-33*

The sequence of strata described above provides incontrovertible evidence that the bed of the Ghaggar in the period under discussion, was sometimes more or less dry and at other times full of running water. The fluvial periods occurred either as the result of exceptionally rainy periods in the Siwalik Range, as a result of which the water in the bed of the Ghaggar and its tributaries extended much further westwards than it does now a days, or during periods when the Sutlej overflowed its banks and entered the bed of the Ghaggar and other river beds. The final drying up of the Ghaggar at Rangmahal, as we can see from the series of sedimental layers, was the last stage in a sequence of periods during which the

amount of water in the river bed gradually decreased. The exact dating of this occurrence is not as yet known, but it can be dated in general terms. Now a days the bed of the Ghaggar is only covered at the peak of the monsoon rains, and even when this happens the water is only a couple of decimetres deep. As the bed of the Ghaggar in the Rangmahal region hardly slopes at all the water is almost stagnant and in certain comparatively small areas forms temporary lakes, analogous in type to "playa" lakes. The accumulation of clastic sediments is insignificant if we ignore the wind-blown sand-dunes. The monsoon rains bring a number of salts to the area and these crystallize out in certain places during the dry season.

Oldham (1893, P. 59) has discussed the drying up of this part of the Ghaggar and puts forward the theory, based partly on historical tradition and partly on certain legends, that the Ghaggar became disconnected from the Sutlej "between the Vedic time and that of Manu". However, neither "the Vedic time" nor "the time of Manu" can be used for dating, as they represent long and relatively undefined periods of time.

The geological investigations have produced no direct evidence to date the drying up of the river. Both the archaeological finds and certain climatological features, however, indicate that the Ghaggar, in the area under discussion, did not carry water as a river, after the middle of the sixth century A. D. For example the fact that Rangmahal was deserted as a settlement site must in some way be connected with the drying up of the Ghaggar. The archaeological excavations have shown that Rangmahal was inhabited in the first half of the first millennium A. D. and the geological investigations have shown that the Ghaggar became dry during the latter part of the period of settlement. The final drying up of the Ghaggar must have taken place at some time during the sixth century A. D. .

The Ghaggar, as we have suggested, carried water temporarily for some time before it finally dried up. There seems, however, to have been a fair amount of water available in the river bed itself up to the end of the period of habitation, judging from the fragments of grains of rice, straw and chaff which were found in almost every layer of the mound and which were especially plentiful in the topmost layers.

Certain climatological data also indicate that the settlement sites in this area were presumably deserted in the last years of the sixth century. The climate in the Near East from about 850 B. C. to about 700 A. D. was approximately the same as that which pertains to day, although it may have been somewhat drier. Between 590 A. D. and 645 A. D. a very marked dry period occurred which caused migrations of peoples in this part of the world; this dry period was especially marked in those areas which even in more normal climatic conditions had a scanty or insufficient water supply. The exceptionally dry climate presumably pertained in N. W. India, or at least affected the climate there, and at the same time influenced the lives of the peoples in that area, and especially those living in the deserts. Such a long and extremely dry period as this must have caused a diminution in the water supply of the Ghaggar, which was at that time completely dependent on the monsoon rains; the diminution may have been so considerable that it became impossible to maintain a water supply there all the year round. If we also consider the growing sterility of the area, which resulted in a shortage of food for the cattle, it becomes clear that it would be out of the question for permanent inhabitants to live there. This dry period, therefore was probably responsible for the desertion of Rangmahal and possibly even of other sites in the same area the inhabitants presumably moving on in search of less dry areas.

APPENDIX

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1961

Socio-Economic Survey of selected villages in Rajasthan

[A] HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE

Name of District

Name of Tehsil

Name and Code No. of village

Code No. of Household

I. General Description

	Total	Male	Female
1. Total No. of Members			

1. Total No. of Members
2. Religion of Household
3. Language of Household
4. Tribe/Caste and Sub-tribe/Sub-caste of Household
5. Household vegetarian or non-vegetarian

II. Composition of Household

[illegible]

III. Duration of Residence

1. Does the Household originally belong to the village ?
2. If so, immigrated from where, when and why ?

IV. Settlement pattern

1. How this house has been laid out in the scheme of the settlement ?

V. House Type and Household Effects

1. What is the general ground plan of house ?
2. Is the house (a) owned or (b) rented or (c) owned but partly rented out ?
3. What is the condition of the house (a) properly maintained or (b) dilapidated ?
4. What materials have been used in the construction of—
 - (a) Outer walls
 - (b) Roof
 - (c) Floors
5. No. of room in the house used for—
 - (a) Living
 - (b) Other purposes
6. Has the house a separate—
 - (a) Kitchen
 - (b) Bath-room
 - (c) Latrine
 - (d) Cattle-shed
7. Has the house been decorated with—
 - (a) Folk art drawing on walls, floors etc.
 - (b) Pictures
 - (c) Other items
8. Does the house contain—
 - (a) Furniture
 - (b) Lighting arrangement
 - (c) Utensils
 - (d) Other items
 - (e) Conveyance

(Give full Particulars)

VI. Dietary Habits

1. How many times a day the members of Household take meals ?

Contents of each meal

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

2. What is the ordinary medium of cooking ?

3. How many members of the Household usually take daily :—

(a) Tea

(b) Tobacco for

(i) eating

(ii) smoking

(c) Liquor

(d) Opium

VII. Dress and other Body Adornments

A. Dress

1. Common dress worn by :—

Male

Female

2. Whether dress is made locally or obtained from outside the village ?

B. Ornaments**3. Ornaments usually worn and description of material**

<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
Name and description of ornaments	Material	Name and description of ornaments	Material
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

C. Hair style**4. General hair style of the head amongst :—***(a) Male**(b) Female***5. Do male members generally keep beards and moustaches ?****D. Tattooing****6. Is body tattooed ? Describe parts of body tattooed and peculiarities thereof.****E. Toilet****7. What toilets and cosmetics are generally used ?****F. Footwear****8. Is footwear used by all members ?****VIII. Health and Sanitary Habits****1. At what intervals of time members usually take bath ?****2. At what intervals of time do they wash their clothes ?****3. What material is used to wash:—***(a) Body**(b) Clothes***4. Do they clean the house daily ?****5. Do they keep the utensils clean ?****6. Is their bedding clean ?****7. What measures are adopted at the time of :—****A. Illness :—***(a) No action taken**(b) Aid sought from village witch or other local quacks**(c) Ayurvedic or Unani treatment**(d) Allopathic treatment***B. Maternity :—***(a) Case done at home through—**(i) Untrained dai (ii) Trained midwife**(b) Case done outside home through—
Maternity centre or Hospital***IX. Recreation****1. What type of games are undertaken ?****2. Folk-songs and Dances with peculiar local musical instruments, if any****3. Fairs and other festivities****X. Social customs****1. Any peculiar social rite of the Household****A. Marriage :—****2. Any peculiarities in rites of marriage****3. At what age marriage is usually performed of :—***(a) Male**(b) Female***4. Is Divorce and remarriage permissible ?****5. Is marriage allowed within the Tribe or Caste only or it can take place beyond the Tribe or Caste ?****6. Is dowry usually taken or given ? if so, in what form and of what estimated value ?****7. Is system of dowry on the increase or decrease ?****8. Usual total expenditure incurred on :—***(a) Boy's marriage**(b) Girl's marriage*

B. Funerals:—

9. Any peculiar rites observed on the occasion of death
10. Is feast held on death? If so, estimated expenditure thereon and No. of persons participating in such feast

C. Inheritance:—

11. Any peculiar customs followed at the time of inheritance
How inheritance devolves on surviving members?

XI. Beliefs and Superstitions

1. Beliefs in Particular god or goddess
2. Belief in Particular spirit etc.
3. Location of object of worship in the house and mode of worship
4. Does the household believe in particular customs associated with change of seasons, cultivation etc.?
5. Whether certain days, plants, persons, animals, other objects or happenings are considered lucky or unlucky?

XII. Social Organisation

1. How the household is governed in social matters:—

- (a) By Head of Household only
- (b) By Caste or Tribe Panchayat
or
- (c) By village Panchayat

2. How these Panchayats are formed
3. Composition of these Panchayats?
4. How these Panchayats Act?

XIII. Occupation**A. Traditional:—**

1. Whether the Household continues the traditional occupation?
2. If not, why discontinued?
3. If continued, is it principal or secondary?
4. Has any effort been made to improve the traditional occupation?

B. Household Industry:—

1. Nature of Household industry undertaken and its products
2. No. of members of Household engaged:—
(a) Whole-time
(b) Part-time

C. Household cultivation:—

1. Area of land under cultivation, irrigated and unirrigated separately
2. No. of members engaged —
(a) Whole-time
(b) Part-time

3. Principal crops etc. raised

D. Other occupations:—

Nature of work with full particulars

XIV. Property

1. How many houses or other immovable property other than agricultural land possessed by the Household? Give details
2. No. and type of livestock and poultry etc. possessed by the Household

XV. Income

Estimated income of the Household from following sources in a year

- (a) Salary and Wages (including pension)
- (b) Cultivation
- (c) Household industry
- (d) Business
- (e) Dairy products
- (f) Rent of land and other property
- (g) Interest or dividends
- (h) Other sources

TOTAL

XVI. Expenditure

1. Is the income of the household sufficient to cover all expenditure?
2. How expenditure not covered by income is met?

XVII. Indebtedness

1. Extent of debts, if any
2. Extent and purpose of debt incurred on—
(a) Purchase of land, cattle, agricultural implements and other agricultural purposes
(b) Housing
(c) Social ceremonies e.g. marriage, funeral rites etc.
(d) Sickness
(e) Business
(f) Other purposes

3. Rate of interest payable on debts
4. Whether debt has increased or decreased during the past 10 years

XVIII. Social and Economic Reforms

1. Is the village covered by N. E. S. Block ? Has the household participated in any of its activities to its advantage ?
2. What works of community benefit have been taken up by the household in the village ?
3. Have land reforms by the abolition of intermediary rights benefitted the household ?
4. Has the Household adopted any improvements in cultivation and started use of improved seeds, fertilisers etc. ?
5. Has the Household's cultivated area and yield of crops increased in recent years ?
6. Has there been any improvement in irrigational facilities ?
7. Has Households become member of some Co-operative society ? What advantage has occurred ?
8. Has it benefitted by loan schemes of the Government granted for agricultural or industrial purposes ?
9. Has village Panchayat proved advantageous to the community ?
10. Has the Household any idea of adopting consolidation of holdings and Co-operative farming in the near future ?
11. Has the Household understood advice of Gram Sewak and followed it ?
12. Has Household got itself vaccinated against smallpox & tuberculosis ?
13. Has Household got its house sprayed with D. D. T. as an anti-malaria measure ?
14. Has Household helped in the construction of a village school, road, drinking water well, Panchayatghar etc. for the benefit of village community ?
15. Has household donated ever for any humanitarian cause e.g. relief of sufferers (flood, fire, famine, epidemics etc.)

Dated.....

Signature of Investigator

[B] VILLAGE SCHEDULE

I. Approach

How village can be reached. Particularly in rainy season ?

II. Location

Exact location of village-Distances from nearest rail-head, road point, bus stand, and Tehsil headquarters and Police Station-height above sea level-longitude and latitude.

III. Topography-Map

Lay-out of the village - physical features - hills - plateau - plains - rivers - ponds-dams-canals-grouping of houses in abadi land-internal lanes & bye-lanes-shopping centre-village forest-pasture-land-shade bearing trees and their arrangement-village water supply system for drinking and irrigation.

IV. Climate

Climate-Temperature-Rainfall-Storms-Floods-Famine etc.

V. Origin and History of village

Origin of village-Local legend about name of village-past history-archaeologicalexexcavations.

VI. Communities

Names of all communities living in the village-distinctive features of each community-their households & number of persons for each separately-do they live in one settlement or scattered and parcelled out in separate groups based on caste considerations etc., i.e., housing arrangement.

VII. Village Administration

How village problems are tackled and solved-Control of Households-Community Panchayats-village Panchayats-village Headmen-Patwari etc.

VIII. Social Life

Division of society into castes and sub-castes-Importance of family-Health and sanitary practices-Food-Dress and ornaments-Hair arrangement-Face decoration-Marriage and position of women- Funeral and other peculiar ceremonies, social evils-Pastime and recreations-Minor items of social interest about etiquette and social behaviour.

IX. Religious beliefs and superstitions

Worship of gods and goddesses, spirits etc.-Places of common religious worship-Community festivals and fairs connected with religious practices-Popular religious beliefs-Ascetic orders-Sacrifices.

X. Educational life

Objects of study-Subjects studied-Facilities for study-General trend of education-Female education-Reaction of elders towards modern methods of education-Libraries-adult education-Vocational education etc.

XI. Economic life

Professions-Agriculture and animal Husbandry-Agricultural practices-Merchandise-Trade and commerce-Exchange and barter-Weights and measures-Labour-Communications-Banking system-Main Markets-Storage.

XII. Art and Architecture

Architectural details-Things of art produced in the village.

XIII. Recent Socio-Economic Reforms

Land Reforms-Improvement of land-Modern agricultural practices-Modern methods of industrial production-Improvement of Cottage Industries-Cooperative Societies and Cooperative Banking system-Development of education-Improvement of social customs-Removal of untouchability-Cooperative farming-Establishment of village Panchayats to improve village administration-Effect of modern health and sanitary practices-B.C.G. and Anti-malaria campaigns etc.

In addition to the instructions already given, information on the following questions should also be collected from prominent village leaders and other intelligent persons.

I. Displaced persons in the village—

- No. of displaced households rehabilitated in this village after partition.
- Whether they consider themselves to be adequately rehabilitated.

II. Awareness of various legislative or executive measures—

- Abolition of Zamindari & intermediary rights.
- Ceiling in ownership of land.
- Transferring ownership rights to the tillers of the soil.
- Changes in Hindu laws of succession and adoption.
- Untouchability.
- Land reclamation & land development.
- Family planning.
- Extension or restriction of the rights of utilisation of forest produce.
 - How and to what extent the villagers have been affected by above.
- Extension or restriction of grazing rights over any area and how it has affected the villagers.
- Measures abolishing forced and bonded labour.

III. Labour and employment—

- Are there educated people in this village searching for jobs ?
How many and since when unemployed ?
- What are the average rates for—
Agriculture labour-Skilled worker in industry-Unskilled worker in industry-
Unskilled general worker

IV. Markets and fairs most commonly visited—

Location-Day on which held-Name of the market-Distance from the village-How reached-Its importance in the region-Commodities exported and imported through it-Any special feature

Fairs most commonly visited—

Name-Date-Location-Its importance in the region (any legend)-How old Size of gathering-Communities participating - Distance from the village-How reached - Commodities sold or purchased-Other activities.

Shops—

What variety of shops-Main commodities sold-When established. (In case shopkeeper belongs to other place-what place) ? Nature of transactions-cash/advance/barter etc.-Side business, if any, such as money lending etc.

V. Educational Institutions—

Where do the children read. If they have to go out of the village where and how far.
How many children involved in such cases.

VI. Maps—

Give a sketch map of the village-north line, main roads & sub-lanes.
Railway line & Station, river-Lay out of village-one symbol for one household-School-Dispensary-Shops-wells (Irrigating & Drinking), ponds, streams etc.
Agricultural fields - pasture - jungles-burning ghat or grave-yards.
Main communities-Settlement pattern.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INVESTIGATOR FOR FILLING
UP THE HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE**

Census in itself is a socio-economic study of the people. Apart from Census no detailed socio-economic survey has been undertaken in Rajasthan State so far. It has been decided to undertake intensive survey of the social and economic life of the people living in selected areas of this State as a separate project but simultaneously with the Census Operations. You have been fully associated in selecting 36 villages in different districts of Rajasthan where socio-economic survey will be undertaken. You have full knowledge about the criteria and the background which have been observed in selecting these villages. Keeping this background in view, you have to make an effort now to undertake the survey but success will mainly depend on your initiative, capacity to investigate various aspects of life in the selected villages and your inclination to undertake deep research. In nut shell, you should treat the socio-economic survey now being entrusted to you as a research project from all points of view.

In respect of each selected village, you have to make laborious research to find out if any published literature is available about the people. You will be interested to know about the history of the village, racial characteristics of the communities living in the village, customs and rites prevalent in different communities and their religious beliefs. You should know about structures of archaeological or architectural importance. You should keenly observe how people actually live and keep themselves occupied. Their main source of sustenance should be a matter of special study by you and if they are turning out things of art you should not fail to describe such beautiful things.

I have finalised a Household Schedule to serve as a guide while you make survey of the social and economic aspects of each household but it is only in a skeleton form. You have to provide real body containing flesh and blood thereon by your keen observation and unstinted labour.

The territorial unit of survey is a village. A list of villages where you are required to undertake survey is enclosed. You have to collect information in respect of each household living in a selected village except in cases of large villages where you have been specifically told to confine your survey to a limited number of households.

You should obtain a map of the village from the Patwari. This will provide to you clear information about the lay-out of the land comprised within the boundary of a village. You shall have to prepare separately a sketch map of Abadi land for this information will not be available in the Patwari's map. In this map you should indicate the boundaries of habitations, main physical features, arrangement of houses, roads, lanes and bye-lanes, village shopping centre, school, dispensary, Panchayat Ghar, places of community worship, drinking water wells and any other places of interest. The village map provided by the Patwari may provide to you the information about the main topographical features, for example, hills, rivers, roads, canals, village ponds, dams, agricultural fields, pasture-land, village jungles, funeral or burial grounds etc. These should be checked up by you and if some of the items are missing in the Patwari's map, you should not fail to indicate them. In the portions of Patwari's map shown as reserved for habitation, you should fill up the necessary particulars as mentioned above from your own observation.

You should keep in view the following instructions while filling the Household Schedule for each household :—

(i) *General Description:—*

After filling up the location of the household by mentioning the name of the district, name of tehsil, name and code number of village and the code number of household assigned at the time of Census House numbering, you shall fill up this part by ascertaining from the Head of the household or some other male or female member who can give satisfactory reply to your question, information about the total number of members in the household classified by sex. The religion of the household, language spoken in the household commonly and the composition of the household on the basis of tribe or caste, classified by sub-tribes or sub-castes, should be mentioned. Also indicate whether the household takes meat, eggs, etc. or is strictly vegetarian.

(ii) *Composition of Household:—*

You have to fully ascertain information about each member of the household. No member should be left out particularly infants and children. If you find that any member is literate and has passed some examination, then the educational standard attained by that member should be clearly mentioned. If any member suffers from any physical disability, for example, blindness, deafness, dumbness, insanity, loss of any limb or any serious contagious disease like leprosy etc., the same should also be clearly mentioned after proper enquiry and observations.

(iii) *Duration of Residence:—*

If the household has been living in the village since its establishment, there is no difficulty; but if it has come from some other place, you have to make searching enquiry from where the household immigrated to the village and what were the reasons which impelled it to leave its original home and to move to another village.

(iv) *Settlement Pattern:—*

It would be interesting to study how houses have been grouped within the Abadi land that is to say whether houses have been laid out communitywise or all communities live together. You should also study the settlement pattern of houses and their construction as to whether they are in a row, leaving lanes and bye-lanes in between such rows or in mixed but undefined pattern.

(v) *Types of Houses and Household Effects:—*

You should observe the different shapes and outer pattern of every house to determine different types of houses available. Whether they are rectangular, circular or oval in shape and whether their roofs are flat or sloping making out different patterns and styles and what is the reason for giving the particular shapes to houses and roofs may be fully observed? For example, you will find in desert areas where wind blows strongly and sand-storms are frequent, people prefer to build houses which are circular with tapering circular roofs. They also keep the height of their houses quite low. Such pattern enables the people to keep their houses safe in such areas and they are not easily blown away even in storms. You should further observe the general condition of houses from outside. It would be possible to judge the economic condition of the household by condition of house in which it lives. Does the household invest yearly to maintain the house in proper order by effecting repairs and undertaking plastering or white-washing etc, or it allows the house to remain in dilapidated condition always crying for necessary repairs? It will be interesting to know what material is usually used for the construction of outer parts of the house for this will depend not only on the availability of the materials used in the proximity of the village but will throw a flood of light on the arrangements done by the people to face inclemencies of weather. Rest of the questions under this sub-head have been designed to find out the status of the household both from

social and economic point of view. A household with substantial means will think of providing several rooms, some reserved for sitting and sleeping and the others for different purposes, for example, a kitchen, bathroom or latrine or cattle-shed. We also want to know how the house has been furnished. Whether it has been decorated, whether it contains necessary amount of furniture, e.g., cots to sleep on, chairs, tables, stools, benches to sit on and take meals, different types of utensils for cooking and eating, and, whether the household possesses its own conveyance, e.g., a bullock-cart, a cycle, a horse, a camel, or any other customary mode of conveyance. You will find that large number of houses in the villages are not lighted during the night daily. It will be interesting to find out what lighting arrangement exists in particular houses.

(vi) *Dietary Habits:—*

You should ascertain how many times each member of the household takes his meals usually and you should describe in detail each item of food that he takes at the time of each meal. It would be interesting if you describe each item of food by local name but to make it intelligible please do not forget to mention the ingredients out of which it is made. The ordinary medium of cooking, e.g., sarson-oil, til-oil, ground-nut oil, vanaspati, real ghee or animal fat etc. should be clearly mentioned. If any member of the household generally takes tea or is addicted to take or smoke opium, tobacco or drink liquor, you should not forget to mention this fact. Indicate total number of members who partake these things.

(vii) *Dress and other Body Adornments:—*

It would be of particular interest if you can mention the local name and describe in detail the typical type of dress that is worn by male and female members of each community living in the village to which a particular household belongs. In respect of a household if you find any peculiarities in the dress of a male and a female member, you should bring out such peculiarities while filling up the Household Schedule. It would not be necessary to repeat the description of dress in all the household schedules if you find similar type of dress being worn generally in the village or in a particular community. Do not forget to mention whether that dress is prepared within the village itself or is got tailored from some outside place. If tailoring arrangement is available in the village it should be specified.

You will find people belonging to the different communities and even within communities different households putting on peculiar type of ornaments. The ornaments worn by adult male and female persons will be found quite different from those worn by boys and girls. You should clearly observe such ornaments, find out their local names and of what metal or alloys they have been made of and then catalogue the entire list. If you observe anything of special beauty and art, please do not forget to describe it as best as you can. If you consider it necessary you can get it photographed later on.

You will also notice that different communities have different hair style. This will be particularly noticeable in the case of women. Hair style serves distinguishing mark between various communities. You should not fail to observe such important physical characteristic. Similarly, you will notice people having beards and moustaches of different shapes and styles.

Another important body adornment which is usually practised in villages by different communities is to subject different parts of their bodies to tattooing. If you find tattooing of the body which is really peculiar, you should describe this fact in detail. The different patterns of gods and goddesses or natural things tattooed on the body should be described. If you find peculiar designs or patterns on the body do not forget to mention them.

It will be interesting to find out what type of local cosmetics and articles of toilets are used by

males and females. You will find people using 'mehandi', 'kumkum' and other types of colours etc. to beautify their bodies. People put 'kajjal' in their eyes and use some articles to colour their lips and gums.

You will find limited number of people using foot-wear. If the foot-wear used by male and female of different communities have any peculiarities in the forms and designs or in respect of the material of which they are made, please bring out all such peculiarities in detail.

(viii) *Health and Sanitary Habits:—*

You should make thorough study about the daily life of the members of the household. Whether they take measures to keep their body clean and the clothes which they put on or sleep upon. You should observe whether the utensils which they use for cooking and eating purposes are properly cleaned or not. It will be interesting to study how the household reacts when a case of illness or maternity occurs.

(ix) *Recreation:—*

You will find villagers do find time for some sort of recreation although their life is extremely busy. If you find indoor or outdoor games being played by particular households do not fail to describe. You will find people playing Indian type of Chess and participating in different types of local outdoor games. You will also find people merry-making and indulging in singing of different types of folk songs and participating in different types of dancing. You should ascertain the local names of dances and then describe peculiar features thereof. As regards folk songs, try to record them in the language they are sung and then try to ascertain their meaning from the people and attempt translation in Hindi or English of the subject matter. If you find peculiar type of local musical instruments being used as an accompaniment to singing and dancing, you should describe the name and peculiar pattern of such instruments. Of course you will describe the main festivities and fairs in which households participate, if they are peculiar to the household itself or to the communities to which it belongs.

(x) *Social Customs:—*

Your Survey would not be complete without making careful but thorough study of social customs and rites peculiar to a household. You will find certain customs and rites are common to all the communities in the village which you may not answer under this head but if you find there are certain customs or rites which are observed in a particular household or in a particular community to which a particular household belongs, then mention its name under different heads, e.g., marriage, funeral, inheritance etc. You will have to interrogate households and if an opportunity occurs, you will not fail to attend performance of such customs and rites so as to observe the ritual yourself.

(xi) *Beliefs and Superstitions:—*

The village folk entertain various types of beliefs and superstitions based on ignorance. They have natural dread of certain objects and happenings which are not easily intelligible to them. They propitiate certain gods and goddesses and evil spirits to keep them content and to refrain from injuring the members of the household. You have to bring out all such odd beliefs and superstitions by closely questioning the household.

(xii) *Social Organisation:—*

You will find the village consists of a closely knit community or communities. The behaviour of each member of a community is strictly controlled by their community Panchayats and at the level of the household by elders of the household. You have to study the pattern of village administration at the household and community level in detail.

(xiii) *Occupation:—*

You must find out the occupation in which a particular household is engaged and describe it in detail. Without this study, you will not be able to find out the source of sustenance of the household.

(xiv) *Property:—*

If the household is prosperous you will find it possessing different types of properties which you have to mention including livestock and poultry etc.

(xv) *Income and Expenditure:—*

We do not propose to undertake any extensive study of income and expenditure of household as it is not possible at the present stage of social organisation in the village. A broad attempt to find out the total income of a household in a year under certain well known heads is to be made and then the income is to be correlated with the total expenditure incurred by the household just to ascertain whether the household's income is sufficient or less than the basic requirement. If the expenditure exceeds the income, you will ascertain how the loss is made good. Invariably the household must be incurring debt or selling out its properties to meet the extra expenditure.

(xvi) *Indebtedness:—*

Most of the households will be found suffering from acute indebtedness. A broad attempt is being made to study this evil from which no household can easily escape in rural areas.

(xvii) *Social and Economic Reforms:—*

Several social and economic reforms have been introduced since the introduction of the First Five Year Plan to improve the living conditions in the villages and to provide better facilities for improved occupations. An attempt is being made to study the impact of such reforms on each household and to judge the extent it has benefitted by them.

In this manner by keeping your eyes open and making constant endeavour as a research assistant you can hope to succeed in bringing out sufficient material in respect of each household of a selected village where you will make the socio-economic survey and then build up a connected picture on which a beautiful monograph can be passed. It will certainly enrich the monograph if you also bring along with you even rough sketches of whatever interesting things you come across in the village.

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INVESTIGATOR FOR FILLING UP THE VILLAGE SCHEDULE

I have separately sent to you instructions for filling the Household Schedule and the printed forms of Household Schedule which you shall use while making Socio-Economic Survey in selected villages. I am now enclosing a form of Village Schedule which has been designed after close discussions with you. The Registrar General of India desires that a separate volume of demy-quarto size containing 500 to 600 pages should be published along with the State Census Report in which detailed account about every selected village in which Socio-Economic Survey has been conducted should be described. In order that the monograph on each village may be both interesting and instructive, you will have to prepare the Village Schedule very carefully.

2. The quality of work will be mainly judged by the wealth of information which you will be able to collect by keen observation in each village. The whole information is to be compiled under different heads given in the Village Schedule. I describe their salient features below to high-light their importance.

(i) *Approach to Village:—*

After describing the location of village, the first head under which you should record your observations is regarding the approach to village. You should clearly describe how one can reach the selected village and whether the route remains open during the rainy season or some alternative routes are to be adopted to reach the village. You should mention the condition of route or routes leading to the village and the customary mode of conveyance available by which a traveller can reach the village.

(ii) *Location of Village:—*

Under this head indicate exact location of the village within the Tehsil and the District, Its approximate distance from the nearest rail-head, road point, bus stand and the Police Station. From the Survey sheets you should determine the exact latitude and longitude of the village and mention the same as well as the height of the village above the sea level.

(iii) *Topography:—*

You should obtain a map of the village from the Patwari. From this map you shall be able to find several topographical details about the village. You must further make a round of the village to observe chief physical features of the village and correctly determine their position in the village map. Thereafter you should prepare a sketch map of the village showing all the main physical features, i.e., hills, plateau, plains, rivers, canals, dams, pasture-land, village forest, drinking water system for the village, shade bearing trees and the situation and lay-out of the village abadi. You should note whether the village is situated at the foot of hill or on its slopes or nestles at the foot of the hill. You should mention why the village has been located at a particular place. You should further indicate the housing arrangement and whether houses face particular directions and, if so, why. Houses are grouped in abadi land and there is a particular system of grouping which is followed in making settlements. You should not forget to notice this important fact. If there are internal roads, lanes and bye-lanes within the abadi or a separate shop centre, you should indicate them. Thus, all salient features which form the landscape of the village should be keenly observed by you and fully described.

(iv) *Climate:—*

What is the general climate of the village? Describe the various seasons and the periodicity thereof. Average rainfall and temperature in different seasons may be indicated. If the village is visited by wind storms or floods or famine or by all of them at regular intervals, investigate the reasons and indicate when such natural havocs occur. Is something being done to improve the climate by limited human efforts?

(v) *Origin and History of village:—*

It will be interesting to find who established the village and when. Describe the original settlers and what is the significance of the name given to the village. After this try to trace out the past history of the village from its origin upto-date. If the original settlers of the village have left and some other communities have settled in place of them, describe them. If there are any notable conditions in the history of the village they should be high-lighted. It does not matter whether such events were merely political or had also social and economic background. If there are ancient remains of certain buildings and places of worship which throw a lurid light on the history of the village, do not forget to describe them. If there had been archaeological excavations in the village which have helped in building up the history of the past, mention full-details. You will have to make special efforts to discover any old literature that may be available relating to the history of the various communities which reside in the village in order to build up some sort of the history of the village. If there are any bards of the communities available, you should not forget to contact them and hear their point of view about the origin and subsequent history of the various communities. Quite painstaking effort will have to be made by you before it would be possible to elicit some reasonable information about the origin and history of the village.

(vi) *Communities:—*

You should ascertain the names of all types of communities that occupy the village at the time of your visit. Thereafter determine the number of Households and the total number of persons in each community separately. Do these communities live together or have they established their separate settlements within the village? Is the abadi of the entire village concentrated at one place or is dispersed? You will find distinctive housing arrangement in various villages depending on caste groups or some other local custom. In certain communities, e.g. Bhils, you will find households living separately at their fields. Under this head, you should also record by keen observation about distinctive features of each community from which it is possible to distinguish them by outside observation. You can describe the outward aspects of their appearance, stature, colour of skin and eyes, shape and size of the nose, particular hair styles and the outward garb that they put on the head and the body. The size of the forehead, prominence of the cheek bones, shape and size of ear lobes and the various types of distinctive ornaments worn by people will lend you great assistance in determining distinctive features of each community.

(vii) *Village administration:—*

You have to find out how different communities living in the village are ruled within the village. First find out the conditions within the household. Whether there is respect for the elders and the Head of the household is supreme in controlling the affairs of all members within the household. Do the women have some voice or not in the management of the household? Then there may be Panchayats of different communities which determine and control relationship between different households belonging to a particular caste or tribe and decide their internal quarrels. How such community panchayats are formed and how they actually administer should be fully described. If there have been any interesting incidents which have come up before such Panchayat for adjudication, how they have dealt with them and what had been their

decision in the past should be described. Then there have been formed Village Panchayats by the Government and there is the institution of Headman and Patwari. What parts these administrative institutions play in the village administration? Have the Headman and Patwari lost their position of importance in the village after the formation of Village Panchayat? Do these institutions continue to be of some benefit to the village community after the formation of Village Panchayat? How the Village Panchayat has been constituted? What is the representation of the different communities in the Village Panchayat? The political leanings of each member of the Village Panchayat may be indicated. Thus you have to broadly describe how village is being actually administered by the Community and by the Governmental agencies existing therein.

(viii) *Social life:—*

It is a very important head of inquiry. You will have to go deep into the division of the village society, castes and sub-castes, tribes and sub-tribes. What is the importance of the family in the social life? You will find different types of pattern of society in respect of different castes and tribes. Somewhere you will find the family rule and somewhere the community rule. Then you will have to describe general conditions of health and sanitary practices relating to different communities as a whole. In some communities you will find people keep their body and clothes neat and clean and avoid all sorts of insanitary habits while in other communities you will find utter carelessness in this matter. Peculiarities of dress and ornaments, hair arrangement, body decorations and food habits should be indicated for communities as a whole. The position of women in different communities and the ceremonies performed at the time of marriages will be interesting to know. There may be other peculiar ceremonies connected with the life of the communities relating to several festivities and funeral. If you find any social evils prevalent in any community which cross the normal moral, religious and health standards, you should surely point them out. You will find villagers in certain communities like to marry their boys and girls at an early age. You may find laxity in sex morals in certain communities and so on. If there are any pastimes and recreations in which certain community takes part and which are peculiar to one or more communities, you should pin point them. It will be of great interest to know how people behave within the household and outside in the social life. What is their standard of etiquette and social behaviour? Do they respect elders of their own community or members of their households or of all communities in general. In this manner you have to keenly observe how different communities living in the village lead their life within the village society and whatever thing of interest is noticeable should be surely recorded.

(ix) *Religious beliefs and superstitions:—*

Religion plays a very important part in the life of village communities. Different communities may be worshipping different types of gods and goddesses and evil spirits. Their mode of worship and place of worship may be quite different. You will find certain communities not worshipping at all while others having one or more places of worship. Does the entire community congregate to worship once in a while? You have to describe different gods or goddesses or spirits in which different communities have faith and how they have built some sort of temples or altars to worship them. You will find certain festivals and fairs which have great importance from the religious point of view for certain communities. What are popular religious places of each community? If there are certain ascetic orders or sects to which certain communities belong which are off-shoots of certain big religions etc. you should not fail to describe them. You will find followers of Ramdeoiji, Gogaji and Jambaji etc. You should describe the origin of such ascetic orders or sects and what are their distinguishing features. You will find several such sects or orders among the Muslims as well as the Hindus. If you find communities indulging in certain special practices in connection with the performance of certain ceremonies and beliefs, you should mention them. In certain communities animals are sacrificed even now-a-days on certain occasions. Apart from the main religious beliefs you will find village communities steeped in large number of superstitions on account of their

ignorance. If there are interesting superstitions for village as a whole or for one or more communities, you should mention them.

(x) *Educational life:—*

You should keenly observe the standard of literacy in the village. Do the people like to send their children to village school if it exists within the village or at some distance from it? What is their feeling about the modern type of education? Do they entertain any doubts about its efficacy? What is the general trend of education in the village and what facilities for imparting education exist in the village? Do the people like to send their girls to schools? Do elders want to educate themselves? Is there a desire for adult education? You should also assess whether they want the usual type of education or vocational education which may train their children and make them more efficient in traditional vocations that are carried on in the village. A farmer will like to train his son in efficient methods of agriculture and cattle keeping rather than impart education of general nature. You should also observe and record whether there are any people in the village who have developed reading habit. Does any body receive a daily or weekly Newspaper? Is there a library in the village from where books are borrowed for study?

(xi) *Economic life:—*

Under this head you have to describe different types of professions in which people are engaged in general, belonging to different communities. Agriculture and Husbandry, Household industry and other types of trade and commerce should be fully described. Agriculture and Dairy products and other merchant-types which are produced within the village or which the people handle should be indicated. The local weights and measures in use and the system of exchange and barter in vogue be clearly described. What are the usual rates of daily wages for labour? Does labour become easily available for different agricultural operations and for assisting in other types of trade and commerce or it is to be obtained from places outside the village. What is the arrangement for storage within the village for keeping local products until they are marketed? Is the produce of the village marketed within the village or usually transported to other main markets? Mention location of such main markets and the means of communication adopted to reach there. How do the people finance the agricultural operations and other types of trade and commerce? Do they merely depend on village money lenders or credit facilities are available through any Co-operative Societies or the Co-operative or other types of banks.

(xii) *Art and Architecture:—*

You will find certain people in the village engaged in turning out things of art and beauty. You will find houses being built with pleasing architectural designs. You should not fail to mention such things of art or architectural significance. If none are produced in the village you may come across old specimens which were once produced in the village. Please mention such things if they exist in the village.

(xiii) *Recent Socio-economic Reforms:—*

The life in the village runs on a model which the village communities have been accustomed to follow for a number of generations. Recently an attempt is being made both by the Government and other social organisations to improve the lot of the people living in the rural areas. The agricultural operations which form the main stay of the village life are sought to be improved by introducing Land Reforms and effecting improvement of agricultural land. The rights of intermediaries on the land which existed between the Government and the actual tillers of the soil have been abolished. Measures for reclamation of land and improvement of land by bunding and use of chemical fertilizers are being introduced. Modern agricultural practices regarding sowing and harvesting are being introduced and at various places improved agricultural machinery e.g. tractors, improved type of agricultural implements etc. have entered the village.

People have installed pumping sets on their wells, run by power generated by electricity or diesel oil. The Government has been providing facilities to grant loan for improving agriculture and cottage industries. It would be interesting to find out what has been the effect of all such reforms introduced to improve agriculture and other types of trade carried on in the village.

Further attempt is being made to improve the social customs and life of the people in the villages. Untouchability is being removed, modern Health and Sanitary practices are being introduced and by the establishment of village panchayats, an attempt is being made to improve the village administration. People are being advised not to marry their sons and daughters at an early age and not to give feasts on the occasion of death of any person in the household. Anti-malaria campaign and B.C.G. campaign are the order of the day. It would be interesting for you to examine every type of Socio-economic reform that has been introduced in the village and to make inquiry to determine what has been its impact on the the village life and its actual effect.

It is not possible to catalogue each and every item which you should observe and make inquiry about in connection with the study of village life from social and economic points of view. These instructions have merely attempted to single out important points on which you should direct your inquiry. You have to keep up a pioneer's attitude of mind who goes to an unknown place and tries to discover all that is beautiful and worth noticing there. You will surely succeed in your endeavour if you will exert yourself to the utmost and try to observe every thing and then make a detailed inquiry to reach at the truth. We attach much more importance to the Village Schedule than to the Household Schedule because the monograph for each village will be mainly based on your observations for the village as a whole.



CS
7.2.1961
14.6.11

ABOUT THIS MONOGRAPH

Village Rangmahal stands on the debris of the millennia old flourishing township of the same name well-known to the archaeologists as being contemporaneous with Indus Valley Civilization cities of Mohenjo - Daro and Harappa.

This monograph presents the socio-economic aspects of the diverse community life of the village.

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