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A
VILLAGE SURVEY

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By
R. C. PAL SINGH

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CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XX—PART VI—No. 25

HIMACHAL PRADESH

A Village Survey of

B I R

Mandi Sadar Tehsil, Mandi District

Investigation and Draft

by

DHARAM PAL KAPUR

Guidance and Final Draft

by

RIKHI RAM SHARMA

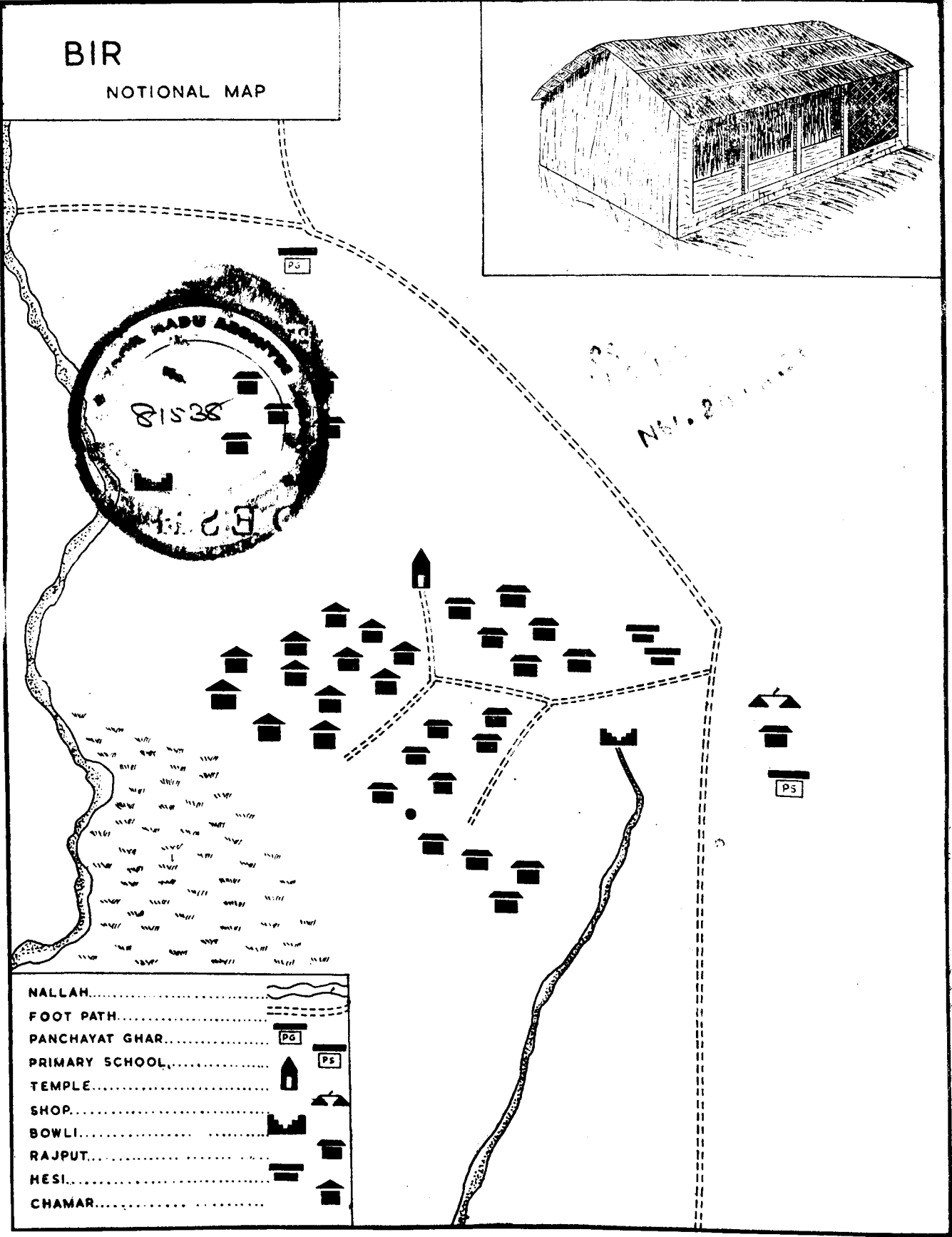
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS

Editor

RAM CHANDRA PAL SINGH

of the Indian Administrative Service

SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS,
HIMACHAL PRADESH



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FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500--700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from 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 unawareness in the

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quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September, 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record in situ of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and foot-wear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities; festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March, 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitudes and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immoveable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored

their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December, 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve; to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation.

New Delhi
July 30, 1964.

ASOK MITRA
Registrar General, India

PREFACE

In our monograph series Bir represents Mandi Sadar tehsil. It is only 9 kms from Mandi town, the District Headquarters. Its selection for socio-economic survey was made keeping in view the general pattern of life representative of an average type of village in the Tehsil. Proximity to the town and the post Independence Changes are the main factors which have some significant bearing on the general conditions of life of the villagers. Some of the tillers of land in Bir were only tenants as the land belonged to the business community of Mandi town, but after the Himachal Pradesh Abolition of big landed estates and Land Reforms Act 1955 the tenants got the opportunity to acquire the proprietary rights after paying a nominal amount as compensation.

Bir is a medium sized village predominantly inhabited by Rajputs. Their study with

other castes living in the village will reveal certain aspects of life which give an idea how they live and behave with each other. In this publication we have tried to give an idea about the interdependence of castes. People have the opportunity of availing of the facilities such as better education for their children and better medical facilities nearest their homes.

I would like to convey my warm gratitude to all those who rendered useful cooperation in bringing out this monograph.

I hope this little piece of work like others will come up to the expectations of the lovers of the Census Publications.

RAM CHANDRA PAL SINGH

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I The Village

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Introduction

Bir is a small village just six miles from Mandi. It lies on a hill-top behind the hospital, facing the Mandi-Pathankot road running on the opposite bank of river Beas. Ganpati road runs through the Civil Hospital Mandi. At a distance of about two miles, a kacha narrow track along Garud ka nala ascends to the top of the hill. This hill is known as 'Gandharv-ka Kwal'. To reach the village one has to walk a couple of miles more. On the way one has a good fascinating view of Mandi and the adjoining villages.

The village is inhabited mainly by two castes; Rajputs and Chamars with two households of Hesis. The economy of the village primarily depends on agriculture, characterised by old practices of farming. Chamars are engaged in their traditional work of shoe-making. Apart from working in their own fields, they work also as agricultural labourers. Villagers visit Mandi frequently. Some are employed in Government Offices. A few young men are receiving training in the Sericulture Centre at Mandi. Hesis have no land. They go to Mandi to play their musical instruments to earn livelihood.

Bir is surrounded by other villages of Tungal illaqua. It represents cultural, social and economical aspects of the area. The villagers have their own rural atmosphere which is marked by their trend towards education, social contacts with each other and inclination towards modern changes. In Mandi town there is marked tendency to parade the post independence achievements, but the village gives the impression of being neglected.

History

History of the village is neither known to the villagers nor it is available in the Revenue records. It is, however, said that it was a barren land which was granted by the then ruler to the fore-fathers of the present owners of the land. The inhabitants of the village came from the surrounding villages to the village to till the land. The land is said to have been the abode of a minor hill-god known as 'Bir'. It is on this account that the village acquired this name. Villagers inform that in his snow-white clothes, Bir has been encountered by many of them late at night.

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Market

The village has only one shop. A Rajput belonging to the village runs it. Tobacco, condiments, ghee, kerosene, sarson oil, soap, grains, sugar, sugar drops, pulses, stationery articles, jaggery and other miscellaneous articles of day-to-day use are available in this shop. The co-operative society which has a small office and a store at Lag deals in controlled articles. The villagers make use of the village shop in case of necessity, otherwise their main market is at Mandi. The villagers have their suppliers called modis there. They purchase everything which they require from the modi's shop and carry it to the village. Sometimes, the villagers are found carrying even vegetables and earthen-pots purchased from the town. The commodities which the villagers sell in the town are fire-wood, ghee and sometime grains. Some families from the area, but not from Bir, sell milk also. The articles which they purchase, are cloth, pig-iron for agricultural implements, utensils, vegetables, oils and other articles of day-to-day use which they can afford and carry to the village. Rates in the town are lower than in the village shop.

Communication

The nearest bus stop is at Mandi, at a distance of six miles. Mandi is further linked by a net-work of roads with other tehsil headquarters and the state capital at Simla. It is also connected with Rupar by a beautiful pucca road which runs through Bilaspur where one can have a grand view of the artificial lake Gobind Sagar created as a result of Building of Bhakra Dam. The nearest rail-head is Jogindar Nagar, 35 miles away from Mandi. The distance between Mandi and Bir has to be covered on foot.

Transport is a big problem that the villagers have to face. This needs improvement. The footpath is narrow and the climbing is quite tough. Mules do not ply. Everything has to be carried on human back. Men and women carrying loads of fire-wood on their heads are often seen on their way to town. During monsoons and rains, the track becomes very slippery and difficult to cross.

There is no post-office in the village. Branch post-office at village Dheon covers it. The

mail is delivered on every third day. The villagers do not make much use of this branch post-office. They visit Mandi town quite frequently and receive their mail care of some body residing in the town.

Flora

The flora of the village and the surrounding area has been collected from the Range Officer, Mandi. The description of the plants and trees has been taken from (Plants of the Punjab) by C. J. Bamber, M.V.O. Colonel, Indian Medical Service, Fellow of the Linnean Society:—

Alha—*Rubus biflorus*—A large shrub with alternate stipulate compound leaves; branches spreading with many prickles. Fruit is round with a column in the centre covered with 20—30 very small drupes, succulent, sweet, red, or orange, a minute stone in each drupe, pitted.

Aru—*Prunus persica*—A tree with alternate stipulate simple leaves. Bark is brownish and rough. Branches are thick; leaves oblong-lanceolate. Fruit is round, velvety, fleshy and edible. It is sweet, green with a tinge of red when ripe, stone deeply and irregularly furrowed and thick.

Baikhal—*Prinsepia utilis*—A medium sized plant, staggling, smooth, spinous, spines often leafy. Leaves are narrow, lanceolate and dark green. Flowers white. Oil is expressed from the seeds and is used for illuminating, and as an external remedy in rheumatism.

Ban—*Quercus incana*—It is a large tree with alternate stipulate simple leaves. The leaves when young pinkish and woolly all over, when mature dark green and smooth above, white or grey woolly beneath. The wood used as fuel.

Beuns—*Salix Wallichiana*—Large bark, greenish grey, young parts velvety or woolly becoming nearly smooth; leaves 2—5 inches long, margins usually even, green and hairy above, white silky velvet beneath. Bark used for making rope.

Birel—*Grewia Oppositifolia*—A medium sized tree with alternate stipulate simple leaves. Bark is ash coloured, herbaceous parts more or less with stellate hairs; leaves 3 inches long in two rows along branches. Stipules more than 1/3 inch, linear, soon falling off; flowers in short clusters, opposite to leaves, white to yellow; drupes smooth or thinly hairy; fleshy, dark green, nuts one-

celled, one-seeded, size of peas. Leaves used as fodder and bark for fire.

Brahami—*Hydrocotyle asiatica*—Is a small prostrate herbs with alternate stipulate simple leaves. It is perennial, succulent, very slightly velvety, stems prostrate, rooting at the joints, branches zigzag erect; leaves $\frac{1}{2}$ — $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, kidney shaped or circular, round, toothed, long-stalked, shining, stipules small. This plant is supposed to be used in leprosy, as it is a cutaneous stimulant and alternative. The leaves are sometimes used as a pot herb.

Chil—*Pinus longifolia*—It is a large tree with alternate exstipulate simple leaves. Leaves are needle-like. Bark is corky and in thin crisp pieces, reddish-brown, inner bark brick red. Leaves in cluster of 3, light green, sheaths grey, Gandabaroza, turpentine and tar are obtained from this tree. The wood is much used, but rots in the wet.

Daru—*Punica granatum*—A shrub with opposite exstipulate simple leaves, petals ununited. Bark is dark grey, branchlets often spinous; leaves 1— $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, sometimes hardly opposite or clustered. Flowers vivid red, fruit round with a thick reddish brown leathery rind, crowned by the calyx, seeds, angled in ruby red flesh with sweetish astringent juice. The bark is used as a tan, a dye and a vermifuge.

Dodani—*Sapindus mukorossi*—A tree with alternate exstipulate compound leaves with petals ununited. Bark is grey; leaves even pinnate, crowded at the ends of branches. Flowers white or purple in branching racemes, petals 4, as a rule fringed with hairs and with 2 woolly scales on each side of the stalk. Fruit fleshy, round, one seeded, covering saponaceous, wrinkled when dry, yellow, seed black, loose in the fruit when dry. Fruit is commonly used instead of soap for washing clothes.

Drek—*Melia azedarach*—A medium sized tree. Bark smooth, dark grey; leaves bipinnate or tripinnate. Flowers lilac, sweet scented in branching racemes. Fruit yellow, round, wrinkled, 5-seeded. The leaves are used as fodder and wood as timber.

Gandhelu—*Murraya Koenigii*—It is a small strong scented tree with brown bark, usually velvety or woolly. Flowers white in terminal flat-topped branching racemes, sepals 5. Fruit black, wrinkled, seeds embedded in a gummy substance. The leaves are stomachic and used to flavour curries.

Jhamirdi—*Citrus medica*—A large shrub with bark greenish grey, smooth, long axillary spines. Fruit oblong or round, rind thick or thin, yellow when ripe pulp cellular and juicy, usually acid. Used for making pickles.

Kakkare—*Pistacia integerrima*—Tree with bark rough grey, large crooked galls, kakrisingi, form on the leaves in autumn and are sold as medicine. Flowers are small, red. Seeds are membranous coated. The heart wood is used for carving and furniture.

Kasmal—*Berberis lycium*—A small shrub with bark white, leaves sessile, narrowly lanceolate. Berry ovoid violet, covered with a bloom. Rasout, an extract from the root, is used as a febrifuge.

Khata malora—*Rumex hastatus*—It is a herb, erect with alternate stipulate lobbed leaves petals none. It is medium sized, root perennial, stems and branches grooved, smooth; leaves stalked, 3 lobed, 2 lobes projecting backwards, narrow or not lobed, broadly triangular. This plant is used as pot herb.

Malora—*Polygonum alatum*—Small to medium size herb, annual, very variable, with short broad-winged leaf stalk; flowers minute, white, purplish or red in heads, the leaves are used as an application to swellings.

Ohi—*Ajlbizzia stipulata*—A medium sized tree, bark grey, with short vertical wrinkles crossed by deeper horizontal cracks, stipules large, sharp-pointed, flowers odourless, yellowish white, stamens tinged with red. Wood used as timber.

Pipal—*Ficus religiosa*—A large tree, usually epiphytal, smooth; leaves leathery, shining above, based broad, point long, leaf stalk slender, fruit sessile in pairs, smooth, depressed, spheroidal, dark purple when ripe. A sacred tree.

Papri—*Podophyllum emodi*—A herb of small to medium size, perennial, smooth, succulent, rootstock creeping; scaly, 2 leaved, flower stalk 6—18 inches; leafy above; flower solitary, white, rarely pink, soon falling off, stigma crest like; berry ovoid, edible, seed small many. It is used as a purgative.

Phegli—*Tylophora hirsuta*—A perennial tree, twining, twining stem stout, densely felyed, hairs reflexed; leaves ovate or ovate-lanceolate, short or long-pointed, velvety or felted on both surfaces, base round. Fruit is edible.

Simbal—*Bombax malabaricum*—A large tree. Trunk more or less buttressed, bran-

ches and young stem covered with conical prickles; leaves digitate; flowers appearing before the leaves, crimson or yellow, calyx leathery, silky felted within; stamens many, joined below into a tube; capsule oblong, downy, green seeds smooth covered with silky wool. A very handsome forest tree. Pod bearing.

Taur—*Bauhinia Vahlia*—A very large tree, woody, stems and branches one to two hundred feet long, two tendrils at the end of branchlets, young parts rusty or grey-velvety; leaves 4—18 inches across, deeply notched, divided to 1/3rd of its length into 2 blunt lobes, almost leathery, dark green and slightly hairy above, belted beneath. Flowers white, in dense terminal long-stalked flat-topped racemes. This plant produces a good fibre. Leaves are used as plates and for making leaf umbrellas.

Toot—*Morus alba*—A small tree; leaves ovate, pointed, toothed; flowers on spikes, fruiting spikes (berries) white or red, sweet, short, ovoid, consisting of fleshy calyces, each containing seed. The wood is used as timber and fruits eaten.

Tirmira—*Zanthoxylum alatum*—A large shrub, strongly aromatic, bark corky, strong prickles on the branches, leaf stalks and midribs of leaves and leaflets, branches dotted with white specks; leaves unequally pinnate, two stipular spines at the base of the winged leaf stalk, gland-dotted, margin with a few small teeth; flowers small, yellow, crowded on small velvety lateral branching racemes; fruit small, pale, red, round drupes, one seed in each carpel, black shining, used as a condiment; the branches are used as tooth brushes.

Fauna

The information regarding fauna found in the village and the surrounding areas has been obtained from the Range-officer of Forests. The description has been taken from 'Strendale's Mammalia of India' by Frank Finn and 'Popular Hand-book of Indian Birds' by Hugh Whistler, F.Z.S.

ANIMALS—BAGH, CHITRA OR MIRAG—LEOPARD
—FELIS PARDUS PANTHER

A clean, long limbed, though compact body, hair close and short, colour pale fulvous yellow with clearly defined spots in rosettes. Leopards are good climber, and much

more active in springing than tiger. They are more courageous, and more independent of water. Their prey consists of practically anything they can capture, and they will often keep a part of the kill-up in a tree.

Bandar—Rhesus monkey—*Innus* or *Macacus rhesus*—Short, close side whispers, no beared, hair on head lying straight back, tail not more than half length of head and body. Coat brown becoming redder or yellow lower behind. Face and other bare parts flesh-coloured or red.

Chakchundar—Musk rat—Distinguished from an ordinary rat by its long snout, very small eyes, comparatively short tail, small ears and bluish grey fur. The snout, ears, feet, and tail are flesh coloured, and about four inches. The musk-rat has been known to eat bread, and to tackle a large frog and a scorpion.

Cham-gadar—bat—*Cynotercus marginatus*—Brown, either yellowish or greyish, in tint, wings dusky brown, ears edged with white. It hangs upon cluster of trees. It is very voracious, specially favouring plantains, quavas and mangoes and will eat them more than its own weight in three hours, the food passing through its body almost unchanged.

Ghoru or Pij—Goral—*Nemorkacudus goral*—It is much like a drab she-goat with white throat and dark spinal and leg-stipes, tail also black. Horns nearly parallel coat rather coarse. It is a common animal between 3,000 and 8,000 feet, often lives near habitations, and is not easily driven away by shooting. Although not herding like a true goat, it is often found in pairs or small parties of about half a dozen, feeding in morning and evening, and frequently at various situation either rocky, wooded or grassy.

Giddar—*Canis aureus*—Smaller than an ordinary dog with shorter ears and tail. Colour tan, with a mixture of black alone, tip of tail black. It is a best known animal both as prowler and scavenger. It is mischievous too occasionally, and will commit havoc amongst poultry and young kids and lambs. As a general rule, it is harmless, timid creature. It takes readily to vegetables too. Corn is one of the things chiefly affected.

Lakkar bagha—*Hyaena striata*—A large animal, dog-like in general form, but with stripped coat and long moustaches like a cat. Coat coarse and rather rough, dull grey stripped with black or brown. The *Hyaena* is solitary animal, generally found in open country, haunting rocks and low cover, and hiding by day in caves or in its own barrows. It is very destructive to dogs.

Eern—Flying fox—*Pteropus edwardsii*—A very large tail-less fox-head bat with black wings about four feet in expanse and a body length of seven to ten inches fur black and tan, the lighter colour in front.

Kakar—*Cervulus muntjac*—Commonly found in the hill forest and seldom goes higher than 6,000 feet. It is about one yard long. Tail about as long as head. Coat close and very sleek, bright bay with black streaks along the face-ridges inside, throat groin, and under side of tail white. It is very subtle in its movements carrying head low, and creeping like a seal. It eats meat of all kinds greedily. Its call in a coarse sharp bark whenever it takes its name of barking deer.

BIRDS—**Kau**—Common house crow—*Corvus splendens* *Vicillot*—Upper parts brownish live to ashy tinged across the shoulders and sometimes also the crown with vinous red. The male has a short blunt spar above the hind toe.

Black Partridge—*Francolinus* *Linnacus*:—A typical partridge found in thick ground cover, and attracting attention by its extra-ordinary creating call. Top of the head and nape blackish-brown, the feathers broadly edged with pale brown and on the nape with white. The food consists of grain, seeds, green shoots, ants and various insects.

Chirian—House Sparrows—*Passer Domesticus* *Linnacus*—Length six inches. Male, top of head ashy grey, bordered from above the eye with chest-nut which gradually encroached until the whole hind neck, back and shoulders are chest nut streaked with black. Female, A pale fufous-white streak streaked with black and fufous on the upper back.

Titur—Impeyan pheasant, kolsa-white crested kalij, More peacock, shikra—Pine marten and other kinds of birds are found.

Residential Pattern

The village can be divided into three residential settlements. In the first, there are only three or four houses. The building one comes-across while entering the village, is the school. This is only two roomed-hut like structure with a spacious ground facing it. Next is the Patwar-khana. It was under construction. There is a shop and the house of the shop-keeper. The main abadi is located on the outer side of a valley which remains dry most of the year. The abadi is a cluster of houses divided by a lane. This division is on the basis of the two main castes residing in the village. The houses of Rajputs and Hesis are on one side as one enters the main abadi. The Chamars have their houses to the other side. The houses have grown up

in cluster with little or no planning. There are no proper lanes and the dwellings are linked with each other through rough and ill-marked passages. Apart from these two, there is a hamlet known as Lag at about half a mile from the village. There are four houses, offices of Panchayat and Cooperative Societies and a tailor's shop.

Cremation Ground

The Chamars have their cremation ground in Garud ka nala. This is nearby the village. The Rajputs carry their deads to Mandi. They cremate the body on the bank of river Beas. This place is known a 'Dhara-ri Nari'.

Source of Water Supply

The two main castes, Chamars and Rajputs have separate bowlies from where they fetch water for drinking purposes. Sometimes

during shortage Harijans get water from other drinking sources.

Physical Aspects

For physical aspects, Forest Working Plan for Mandi State Forests by R. MacLagan Gorrie, D. Sc., I.F.S. is quoted as in Appendix.

Climate

Bir is situated at the height of about 4,000 feet above sea level. There, the summer is moderate whereas the winter is a bit severe. Gandheru and Gandharav forests lie close to the village. These forests have also some effect on the climate of the village. The village experience light snow-falls sometimes. It would be interesting to give rainfall data from the nearest source that is Mandi in the Appendix. The average yearly rainfall of the village is between 50 to 70 inches.

II The People

Population

Bir is inhabited by three castes. These are Rajputs, Chamars and Hesis. The caste-wise break-up of the population is:—

Community	No. of House-holds	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
Rajputs	20	155	73	82
Chamars	14	133	67	66
Hesis	2	13	7	6
Total	36	301	147	154

Brief notes on each castes are:—

Rajputs—Rajputs are the pre-dominant caste living in the village. Out of a total of thirty-six households, twenty belong to them. Their total population is 155 persons consisting of 73 males and 82 females. The actual origin of these Rajputs and the place from where they came to the village is not known. They are of the view that they belonged to the surrounding villages. They came to the village to till the land which belonged to residents of Mandi town. Now many Rajputs possess their own land. Sub-divisions and gotra-wise break-up of the Rajput households is as under:—

Sub-division	Gotra	No of House-holds
Baid	Gaur	7
Bhargani	Bhardwaj	1
Hewni	Bhardwaj	3
Jaryal	Shandil	2
Lagwar	Bhardwaj	1
Mohila	Kondlya	2
Sokohu	Kashyap	3
Rana	Kashyap	1

These Rajputs do not inter-dine and inter-drink with the Chamars and Hesis of the village. They do not even take part in their festivities and sorrows. They do not inter-marry in the same gotra. The marriages are contracted within the village and in the nearby villages. There being no Brahman residing in the village, a purohit from Mandi is engaged to perform the religious rituals.

Chamars—According to the population of the village, the Chamars have second place. Out of the total households of 36, fourteen belong to them. Their population is 133 persons consisting of 67 males and 66 females. Their percentage comes to 44.17. The actual origin of these Chamars is not known to them. Their major occupation is agriculture. A few are engaged in their traditional occupation of shoemaking. Two Chamars are getting training in weaving at Mandi. A few are employed as peon. Many work as labourers at Mandi. One is a carpenter. Their women-folk, besides helping their menfolk in agricultural operations, sell fire-wood at Mandi town. All of them profess themselves to belong to Bhardwaj Gotra. Shoe-makers call themselves 'mochi'. Other simply say that they are Chamars. A trend has been found in other villages that Chamars hesitate to call themselves as such. Generally they like to be called Rajputs. No such trend is found in Bir.

Chamars are invited by Rajputs on various ceremonies. The feasts are served to them outside the house. The Chamars have their separate bowli for the supply of drinking water. Rajputs do not make use of this bowli. Similarly Chamars are not permitted to make use of bowli belonging to Rajputs.

Hesi—There are only two households of Hesis. Their population is thirteen persons consisting of seven males and six females. The Hesis do not possess land. They are engaged as musician. At the time of harvesting, they go from house to house to play the music. In return, they get food-grains. Hesis marry within the same gotra. They profess themselves to belong to Kondlya gotra. Widow remarriage is common among them.

Languages

Mandeali is spoken in the village. Extract from 'Linguistic Survey of India' collected and edited by Sir G.R. Grierson, K.C.S.I., Ph. D., I.C.S. (Retd) shall be of interest to the readers. These are given in Appendix III of the monograph.

House Type

There are thirty six households in Bir. Except one or two houses, all are shared by more than one households. The house construction there is influenced by the availability of local material, the physical aspects of the village and the prevalent traditions in the area. The houses, grouped in a cluster, are generally single storeyed, the size and layout of the houses vary according to the economical status and the requirement of the owners. We find four types of houses in the village. These are Chawki type, houses with 'U' and 'L' shape lay-out. The fourth type is houses with single wing.

Chawki Type—These houses have four wings which enclose a spacious court-yard. Every wing has a verandah towards the inner side of the house. The entrance is left in the middle or at one corner of the wing facing the village street. In a few houses, entrance is direct through verandah, but in others it is through the court-yard. These houses have gabled roofs with one slope towards the outer side of the house and the other towards the court-yard. The court-yard is generally pucca, paved with thick slates, stone slabs or with rammed earth. To drain away the water, an under floor out-let is provided at one corner of the court-yard. In these houses, every wing has two to three rooms of different sizes. All the rooms have separate entrances through verandah. The rooms can be inter-connected. In many cases, one or two wings of the house are left without any room. As these houses are enclosed from all the four sides, the ventilation and windows are provided in the outer walls. The windows are small square or round openings in the wall fitted with wooden bars. Such houses are a few in the village.

'U' Type Houses—These are a few in number. Such houses have three wings. Every wing has a verandah facing towards the court-yard. The approach to the house is from the open side, direct through verandah. Efforts are made to have the open side of the house towards the sun. Then privacy is the governing factor. To maintain it, the sunny aspect of the house is sometimes ignored. Each wing of the house has two to

three rooms. One of the wings can be without any room. The roofing is gabled with hipped ends. Ventilation and window are provided both in inner and outer walls. The court-yard is semipucca. It is used for drying grains. The let-out for the drains is through the open side. The 'U' type houses are a few in the village.

'L' Type Houses—These have two wings one larger than the other. Each wing has a verandah towards the inner side facing the spacious court-yard. The court-yard is generally kacha. The larger wing has two to three rooms of different sizes. Approach to the house is through the verandah or through the court-yard. To maintain the privacy, the houses face towards the opposite direction of the street. Roofing is gabled with hipped ends. Most of the houses in the village are of 'L' type.

Houses with Single Wing—Those who cannot afford a bigger house construct such type of houses. These houses have two to three rooms with a verandah in front. The court-yard is smaller. To maintain the privacy, the back of the house face towards the village street. Such houses are not many.

The villagers possess limited land. The soil is dry and not so fertile. Efforts are made to utilise minimum land for purposes other than agriculture. The houses have, therefore, been constructed in a cluster on rocky surface which is of minimum use for agriculture. The foundation has not to be dug deeper. The depth varies between one and a half feet to two and a half feet. The width is kept one and a half feet. Before digging the foundation, a formal puja is held at the site. Filling is done up to the thickness of 6 to 9 inches at the base with boulders which are easily available in the nullahs nearby. In case sufficient hard surface is struck for the foundation, filling is avoid. The foundation is generally dug before the rains. It is kept un-attended for the entire season. This checks further sinking.

For laying the foundation stone, an auspicious day is fixed by the purohit. Months of Asvina and Chaitra are preferred. Navratras fall in these month. Asvina falls after the rains are over, and it is considered to be the best month for starting the construction work. On this day Basti ceremony is observed. A havan is performed. The big foundation stone is worshipped by applying kungu, mauli, drub and flowers to it. Jaggery is dis-

tributed to all present. After this is over, the raising of the foundation starts with masonry work. The stones used are of random shape and size. Mud mortar is extensively used for masonry work. The clay found in the village is of good quality for construction work. The shaping of structure also starts with the raising of the foundation. The thickness of walls up to the plinth level is the same as of the base of the foundation. The off-set system is not in vogue in the village. The plinth level is kept upto the level of the verandah. It varies from one and a half feet to two feet. After the completion of the walls upto this level, the portions in between the walls is filled with flints, irregular pieces of stones and clay. This brings the floor in level with the walls upto plinth level. The floor is then rammed thoroughly to ensure the firmness.

Side by side, the carpenter goes on preparing the door and window frames. The section of door and window frames is kept 3" x 4". Grooves or rebates for fixing the door shutters are not provided. These are fixed by means of pivots provided at the bottom and top corners of the door frames. In a few houses newly constructed, hinged doors with penelled shutters are provided. The size of windows vary from house to house. The doors in old houses are 3' x 4'. In new houses, the size is 3' x 5'.

Door frames are then placed at the proposed places. Construction of walls is carried on till the walls reach the roof height. Openings for niches and window are, however left. The height of the walls varies from 5 to 7 feet. Then the outer edge of the verandah is paved with flat thick stones. Corbal stones serving as base for verandah posts are fixed at required spacings. Corbal stone is generally 9" x 9" x 9" in size. It is dressed in ornamental way, but sometimes undressed stones are used. The verandah posts are fixed in a hole made for the purpose at the top of corbal stones. Brassumar is then placed over these posts. This is followed by roofing.

Two opposite smaller walls are raised to form a triangle. These serve as base for the purlins. At the top corners, a ridge pole is placed. Then the rafters are placed with one end resting on the ridge pole and the other on the walls. Purlins are fixed cross-wise on the rafters with the ends resting on the battered walls. For rafters and purlins, both bamboo and timber are used. Slates are then fixed on purlins, from the gable and

to the ridge. The joint at the ridge is covered by giving over-lap over the slates fixed in the opposite slope. The houses in the villages are generally without ceiling.

This is followed by work in the interior of the house. Both sides of the walls are plastered with thick layer of clay mixed with cow dung. When dry, white washing of makol is done. In a few houses, loshti is applied in the lower portion of walls in the interior side.

Mandla & Kyari—In the houses of Rajputs, a Mandla is provided in the centre of the court-yard. Mandla is a big piece of stone, chiselled into three stepped slabs. Its base and top are flat with square surface. The upper-most slab is the smallest in size and lower-most, the biggest. On one side of the upper most slab, an image of Ganesha is carved. Mandla is worshipped daily by a married woman, in the morning. A few houses have Kyari. It is a stone structure of about 1½' x 1½' x 4' size. Its top surface is used as bed for growing tulsi plants. Kyari and Mandla have religious sanctity. These are not found in the houses belonging to Chamars and Hesis.

In one of the corners, a small round depression is carved in one of the stones. This pit serves as pestle for pounding paddy. The villagers cover verandah with bamboo mattings. This covered portion is used as kitchen. Every house has a cow shed adjacent to it. The cow-shed is a rough structure with thatched roof. The walls are either matkandha type or made of bamboo matting. In a few houses matkandha walls are constructed instead of stone walls.

Matkandha walls—For constructing matkandha walls, clay, straws, and some times small pebbles are used. These walls are constructed above the plinth level. Two or three frames of wooden planks are made. This frame is fixed by giving temporary supports where the wall is to be constructed. The wooden frame is filled with a mixture of moist clay, straw and pebbles. It is then rammed thoroughly with wooden beaters. This is then left to dry and in the meantime other portion of the wall is taken up. This process is continued until the wall attains the desired height. The wooden frames are removed when the mortar becomes completely dry.

Housing Material—Clay, stones, timber, bamboos and slates form the main material

for the construction of house. Clay and stones are available in sufficient quantity near by village. The stones they use is of inferior type, though better stone is available within the radius of 5 miles. Bamboo is available in the village. A few villagers have bamboo trees in their own fields. Others purchase at the rate of Re. 1/- per pole. For timber, the villagers make use of the trees grown in their own fields. They are right-holders in Gandhiru Forest which is at a distance of about 2 miles. According to this right, the villagers enjoy the right of obtaining trees from forest on concessional rates. In return they have to help the Department in protecting of the forests from fire and similar calamities. The required number of trees are sanctioned by the Forest Department on the recommendation of the illaqua Panchayat. The slates used are coarse, thick and of irregular shape. These are available locally in a quarry at a distance of

about five miles.

In a few houses fine slates have been used. These are fetched from Mandi. Carriage charges come to Rs. 12/- to Rs. 15/- per hundred. The rates of the slates are:

Size	Rates
8" x 16"	Rs. 16 per hundred
9" x 18"	Rs. 18 per hundred
10" x 20"	Rs. 20 per hundred

The slates used in the village are generally of 10" x 20" size.

The houses are constructed on individual basis. All the expenditure has to be borne by the owner of the house. Community help on reciprocal basis is rendered for fetching the material. Free meals have to be served to those who come to render free help.

The following table gives break-up of house-holds by number of rooms and by number of persons occupying.

Number of Households	Number of rooms	Number of family members	Households with one room		With two rooms		With three rooms		With four rooms		With five rooms	
			No. of House-holds	No. of family members	No. of house-holds	No. of family members	No. of house-holds	No. of family members	No. of house-holds	No. of family members	No. of house-holds	No. of family members
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Chamars	21	133	9	62	4	51	..	..	1	20	..	..
Hesi	2	13	2	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rajputs	61	155	2	4	8	43	2	20	5	57	3	31
Total	84	301	13	79	12	94	2	20	6	77	3	31

The total population of the village is 301 persons. They possess 84 rooms. Each room is thus shared by 3.6 persons. 133 chamars have 21 rooms, and so, each room is shared by 6.3 Chamars. 13 hesis have got 4 rooms. Similarly 155 Rajputs possess 61 rooms, and the average comes to 2.54 Rajputs occupying each room. From these figures it is clear that the Chamars are in worst plight, though Rajputs and Hesis are also not in any happy position.

Local names for the various parts of the house and material used for construction are,

Angan	..	..	Courtyard
Bharti	..	..	Filling
Bhind	..	..	Plinth level
Chakka	..	..	Slates

L/B(N)6SCOHP-4

Dara	..	..	Random stones
Dhehar	..	..	Sill
Dwar Sakha	..	..	Door frames
Gara	..	..	Mud mortar
Gawain	..	..	Cow shed
Jirde	..	..	Bamboo mating
Kandh	..	..	Walls
Kainchi	..	..	Truss
Laatha	..	..	Ridge pole
Kari	..	..	Purlin
Kursi	..	..	Corbal stone
Newn	..	..	Foundation
Obra	..	..	Small side room
Ota	..	..	Verandah
Palre	..	..	Door shutters
Per-swan	..	..	Steps
Raak	..	..	Thick flat stones
Ratha	..	..	Stone layer
Shangar	..	..	Door chains
Takki	..	..	Window
Thamh	..	..	Verandah poles
Teer	..	..	Niche

Household Goods

The interior of the houses are scantily furnished. Neither the villagers have so much accommodation that they can furnish their

houses nor they have money to spare for the purpose. Luxuries are, in fact, unknown to them. The table indicates the details of the household goods possessed:

Caste	No. of Households possessing						
	Cot	Chair	Table	Mirror	Bench	Stool	Wall-Shelf
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rajputs	18	3	2	20	1	3	18
Chamars	4	..	..	14	1	..	7
Hesis	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	22	3	2	34	2	3	26

Out of total of 36 households, 18 households of Rajputs and 4 Chamars possess cots. None of the Hesis has any cot. The cots possessed by the villagers have bamboo frames with wooden legs. The thin jute string is used for weaving the top of the cots. Niwar, being comparatively costly, is rarely used. Only four Rajputs have Niwar cots. Chairs are possessed by 3 households of Rajputs. Whenever more chairs are required, the villagers bring them from the Panchayat Ghar and school. Generally people sit on the floor with a piece of gunny bag or a mat under them. These mats are made locally by the women folk. Khajra plants are in abundance in the nearby forests. The women fetch bundles of leaves of these plants. These leaves are dried and woven into mats. Wooden seats or Paltras are also used for sitting purpose.

Only two house-holds possess tables. Often, villagers make use of wooden packing cases, whenever, they felt the need of a table. Almirahs are found in 5 houses. Wall-shelves are common. As many as 26 houses have wall-shelves. Similarly all the households possess a mirror.

Food-grains are stored in a barrel shaped bamboo containers. These are perus. These are made locally by employing a bamboo weaver from Deodha. Deodha is a mile away from Bir. The name of bamboo weaver is Phana. He charges two seers of grains for a cantiner of capacity of two mounds of grains. In addition to this, the villagers serve him

with two meals a day. The outer walls of this container are plastered with cow dung. Capacity of a container varies from four to eight mound. Its height varies from four to six feet. Besides these, kothari are used for storing grains. These are strong big rectangular boxes of thick wooden planks. The thickness of planks varies from 1½ to 2 inches. Every household possesses a ghurtu to grind the grains. The rice is husked by means of ukhal and murha. Similarly, every household possesses a hurricane lantern or the ordinary type of wick lamp. There is no radio-set with any of the house-hold. A few have torches. There is no idea in keeping a bicycle or a bullock-cart. Changers, winnowing fans and bamboo baskets are found in almost every household.

Dress

The villagers dress simply. They use cotton and woollen clothes. In summer, the peasant works in his fields in few clothes. His dress consists of kachha or lion cloth and a vest. His everyday dress consists of:—

UPPER GARMENTS—Cap—Different types of caps used are Gandhi cap, made of khaddar cloth, skull cap made of malmal or of white long cloth, bushehari cap, fur cap and monkey cap.

Turban—Some older people wear turban. In State times the wearing of saafa was very common when the villagers had to go

to the courts. Now the use of turban is disappearing fast. A turban can be of any agreeable colour.

Banyan—A vest is called Banyan.

Shirts—Shirts of common types with or without collar are used. Coarse white or coloured khaddar, drill and twill cloth is used. Villagers are particular to have pockets in the shirt. The shirt with collar has sleeves with cuffs. The shirt of the other pattern has rectangular bottom and the sleeves without cuffs.

Bush Shirts—readymade bush-shirts of common type are worn by the youngsters.

Jawahar Jacket—Waist coat buttoned up to neck. It is made of gabroon, coarse khaddar and woollen patti.

Sadri—It is a waist coat and may be of cotton or woollen cloth depending on the season. It is common with the elders though young men also wear it during winter months.

Pull-overs—Common type of pull-overs are with sleeves or without sleeves. These are either purchased ready made or knitted by the women. The wool used sometimes is of sheep kept by the villagers.

Coat—Woollen coats of coarse tweed or locally made patties are used in winter. Elders have liking for buttoned-up coats but the youngsters prefer to wear frock coats. Coats of cotton cloth are used in summer.

LOWER GARMENTS

Kachha—An underwear made of coarse khaddar or grey militia. Kachha of stripped cloth are very common.

Knicker—These are shorts and worn by the school boys. These form part of their uniform and are of khaki or blue drill.

Pyjama—It is made of plain lathha, gabroon and stripped cloth. In winter, pyjama is made of coarse khaddar, militia cloth and woollen patti. Among elders, loose fit pyjama is popular. The youngsters have liking for pyjama of loose bottom.

Women's dress consists of:—

Dopatta—This is a head-gear. Coloured dopattas are common. The cloth used is malmal, khaddar, shafoon and any other dyed coarse cloth. A Rajput widow wears dopatta of white colour. Sometimes women

like to adorn the border of dopatta with twinkling half moons and stars of metal.

Shawl and Pattu—Shawl may be of pashmina or wool, and may have borders of black, blue or red colours. Some women wear pattus of black and white checks in winter.

Kameez—A shirt with collars and sleeves like men's shirts. It has buttons in the front and a side pocket. The young women prefer shirts like those worn in cities. The cloth used is printed or plain.

Koti—A waist coat with the back of the same cloth. It is made of woollen cloth, or knitting wool which they purchase from Mandi.

Salwar—The young women wear Salwar. The pattern and the cut of the Salwar is the same as elsewhere. The cloth used is of coarse, cheaper and of inferior quality. Coloured cloth is preferred.

Suthan—Suthan is popular among old women. It is tight at the anklets and a bit loose over the thighs. Suthan of black suff is preferred.

Tailoring—The villagers get their clothes tailored at Mandi. A tailor from the town also opens a temporary shop in the village for a few days at the time of harvest. His charges are:—

Men's shirt	Re. 0.62
Pyjama	Re. 0.37
Cotton Coat	Rs. 6.00
Woollen Coat	Rs. 9.00
Waist Coat	Rs. 2.00
Women's Shirt	Re. 0.75
Salwar	Re. 0.50

Ornaments

The natural urge of a woman to look at her best is reflected in her penchant for ornaments and jewellery with which she adorns herself. Apart from the love, the jewellery reflects the material well being of a person. The more the ornaments, the better off a person is considered to be economically. The ornaments worn by the woman are many, but one may not be able to afford all of them. These are of traditional designs

and heavy. Excepting a few light ornaments of gold, all are made of silver. With the passage of time, liking for lighter ornaments of new designs is developing and the traditionally heavy pieces are going out of use. The ornaments are purchased from Mandi where a number of gold and silver-smiths have their shops. The ornaments commonly used are:—

Chauk—This is a hemispherical hollow ornament made of silver with designs embossed all round it. It is worn by all married ladies, young or old, at the top of the head. It weighs four to six tolas.

Clip—A silver or brass hair pin fastened just above the ears. These keep the hair in place.

Shingar Patti or Dora—A silver or gold ornament worn round the forehead. It is a chain of small flat beads. It weighs three to four tolas.

Teek—Is a silver or gold ornament triangular in shape. It is studded with a triangular mirror. It is fastened to the hair by means of a chain. It rests on the forehead. The weight of the ornament is one to one and a half tolas.

ORNAMENTS FOR EAR

Jhumku—Another type of ear-rings of silver weighing one to two tolas.

Kan bala—An ear-ring of big size. A pair weighs two to four tolas.

Kan balyan—A set of 4 to 5 small ear-rings worn in each ear. These are silver ornaments and a set weighs 4 to 6 tolas.

Kan-phul—A bunch of silver flowers weighing one to one and a half tola.

Kante—Another type of ear-rings of gold. A pair weighs half to one tola.

ORNAMENTS FOR NOSE

Bala—A big nose-ring of silver. It weighs three to five tolas.

Balu—A small ring of gold. It is studded with small imitation pearls. It weighs one to one and a half tola.

Laung—A sort of bigger tilli with a bigger top studded with three or four imitation stones.

Tilli—A tiny cylinder of gold studded with a tiny imitation pearl at one end.

ORNAMENTS FOR NECK

Jantar—In fact it is not an ornament. It is a small thin rectangular container of a tawiz.

It is made of silver or bronze sheet. It is worn either round the neck or round the arm.

Kantha—Another name for it is 'Har'. It is a heavy type of necklace of silver. It has various designs and weighs 15 to 25 tolas.

Kanthi—An ornament worn tight around the neck. It has also various designs, and weighs one to one and a half tala.

Locket—A lighter type of necklace of silver or gold. It weighs one to two tolas.

ORNAMENTS FOR WRIST

Bangan—Ordinary glass bangles.

Karohlu—Round hollow bracelets like Snangan. A pair weighs five to ten tolas.

Snangan—Solid round bracelets of silver with some pattern like the lion head at the ends. A pair weighs ten to fifteen tolas.

MISCELLANEOUS ORNAMENTS

Arsi—A silver thumb-ring with a triangular or round looking glass fixed on a silver slab of the same shape. It weighs 1½ to 2 tolas.

Dand-Khurkni—A silver tooth prick.

Kan-Khurkni—Thin silver bar with its one end shaped like a small spoon. It is used for extracting the ears wax.

Mundri—Gold or silver finger ring of half to one tola.

Nanties—Small ear-rings of gold worn by the men.

Panzeb—Silver anklets twelve to fifteen tolas in weight.

Phul—Silver rings for toes.

Utensils

In Bir, both earthen and metallic utensils are used. There being no potter or a shop dealing in metallic utensils in the village or nearby, the utensils are purchased from Mandi. The metallic utensils are used for cooking and serving the food. The earthen-pots are used for storing and boiling Lashi, for storing some sour dishes, pickles and ghee, or for fetching water and preparing 'Dharubari' or Lugri.

The metallic utensils are generally of brass, aluminium, iron and bronze alloy (Kansa).

The metallic utensils commonly used in the village are:—

Balti—Iron bucket for fetching and storing water.

Baltuwin—A big metallic round utensil used for boiling rice and vegetables in more quantity when there is a general feast.

Chimta—Iron tong.

Daba—It is a metal utensil with a flat bottom used for cooking vegetables and rice. Its mouth and the bottom has the same diameter. Its body is barrel-shaped.

Deg—It is a metallic utensil used for storing water.

Glass—Brass tumbler.

Gharolu or Bantu—Brass pitcher.

Gagar—Round brass pitcher.

Karchhi—Service spoon.

Lap or Chamcha—Spoon.

Kotoru—Bowls of brass or bronze alloy for serving vegetables.

Lundha—A iron pan tasla.

Lota—Brass utensil for drinking water.

Parat—An iron or brass round disc with walls around, used for kneading flour.

Patila—Brass utensil used for cooking vegetables.

Tarmarah—It is a big brass utensil used for heating water.

Tawa—Iron pan for baking bread.

Voharu—A round metallic utensil with round thick bottom and narrow mouth, used for cooking pulses and other eatables which take sufficient time for cooking.

Earthen Utensils—Ghara—Earthen pitcher for keeping the water cool.

Handi—Pitcher of small size used for boiling water.

Kanartu—Earthen trough.

Kunda—An earthen trough used for putting milk to turn it into curd.

Marit Ban—An earthen jar to store pickles.

Naroru—Wooden bowl used for storing sour dishes and vegetables.

Food and Drinks

There are two main castes in Bir, Rajputs and Chamars. Rajputs depend entirely on agriculture, but there are a few individuals who are employed in Government Offices as peons or on other jobs. Chamars, in addition to their traditional profession of shoe-making, work as labourers at Mandi, sell fire-wood, which they cut from the nearby forest and also are employed in their agricultural fields. Due to this variation in their

daily work, one finds variation in the timings of their daily in-take. Rajputs, who work in the field throughout the day, take their meals four times a day whereas, the Chamars have their meals three times a day, there being no difference in the type of meals.

The chief staples of food of the village Bir are maize, wheat, rice and koda. Rice and maize are very favourite grains. Maize is taken from September till April and May alongwith koda. After that, wheat harvest matures and for the rest of period, wheat is consumed in the form of bread. Rice is taken almost once a day throughout the year but when the stock of rice is exhausted, the peasant depends on other cereals like wheat, koda and maize. Before going to their morning work, the men folk have some bread which is generally remainder of night re-past. No vegetable is taken in the morning. The bread is taken with tea or a pinch of salt. This is called 'Noharu'. At noon, they take full meals. This consists of Dal Bhat (pulses and rice) and Jhol. Juice of Jhamirdi (a sour fruit) or Namuan (galgal) and pickles are also taken alongwith their meals. In the evening, when the peasants return to their homes after their day's work, they again feel urge for taking meals. This time, the meals consist of bread which is the carryover of lunch, pulses and vegetables which the villagers grow in their kitchen gardens or bring from Mandi town whenever they go there. To this meal, the villagers give the name of 'Dopehari'. At night, the villagers take their dinner which consists of bread and boiled or fried vegetables. The vegetables which the villagers grow in their kitchengardens, are pumpkin, cucumber, ladyfingers, galgal (Namuan), Paillr, Jhamirdi, Gangheri Sadaphal, Sarson-Ka-saag, spinach, kachalu-ke-patte and dhaniya etc. The vegetables are generally grown in the village during the rainy season.

Apart from the daily routine diet which has already been described, the villagers prepare some special dishes which are discussed as under:—

Askloos—Askloos are also prepared on festive occasions. Rice is ground into flour and the ground flour is mixed with water to form a paste. This is poured in the holes of a mould made of stone slab. The mould is then covered with a slab of stone and heat is applied, when baked, these are eaten. These are baked either by mixing ghee and salt in it or with vegetables and fried pulses.

Babroos—Babroos or malpuras are prepared by the villagers on the festive occasions which will be discussed later on in the chapter pertaining to 'Social and Cultural Life'. Babroos are prepared by kneading Maida into thin paste. To this paste, sugar is added to taste. The paste, when put in boiling ghee attain round and flat shape.

Bhaturus—As part of their daily diet, the villagers do not take ordinary chapaties. Instead they prepare bhaturus. Bhaturus are thick loaves prepared from leavened wheat flour. The kneaded flour is allowed to ferment for a number of hours depending on temperature. When the flour gets fermented to the required degree, the kneaded flour is turned into round thick loaves. Then these are baked on the pan.

Bhallas—Bhallas are prepared in the village on 'Bissu' and 'Sair' festivals. These are prepared from urd-ki-dal which is well soaked in water and ground into paste. Spices and salt are added to the paste and then beaten thoroughly. Then small balls are formed of the paste where-after the balls are shaped into rings of desired size. These rings are then fried in ghee.

Jhol—The villagers add Jhol to the plain rice which is taken with pulses. This Jhol adds taste and is prepared by boiling Lassi (Skimmed curd) and adding turmeric, salt and spices to taste.

Khír—Khír is either prepared on the festivals or during the Shradh to which the villagers call 'Kanyaukat'. It is served to the Brahmins during the Shradh. Khír is prepared by boiling rice in milk instead of water. Sugar is also added.

Pakori—The process of preparing Pakori is the same as 'Bhallas' except that the balls of the paste of 'Mash-ki-dal' given the shape of small round cakes instead of rings. These cakes are baked on the iron pan then boiled in Lassi.

Potandas—Potandas or puras are prepared by the villagers on a festival called 'Potanda saja'. For potandas, maida or ordinary wheat flour is turned into a thin paste. Then a small quantity of ghee is applied to the hot iron pan and the thin paste of wheat flour is plastered on the pan by means of a pad of cloth. When this thin layer of flour paste becomes well baked, potanda becomes ready for eating purpose. Potanda is generally taken with milk or khír.

Birth, Marriage and Death Customs

Birth Rituals—Before the birth of a child takes place, pregnant mother has to undergo the Ahawin ceremony in case of the first child. She also takes maximum precautions to avoid abortion and miscarriage. Among the Rajputs, a pregnant woman is not allowed to go to the burning ground or to a stream and to a lonely place not frequently visited by people. She is neither permitted to see a dead body nor any dreadful sight. According to the villagers, these sights leave behind evil effects on the child in womb. Similarly, when a woman is in advanced stage of pregnancy, she shuns doing any such work that involves physical exertion. She does not attend to cattle, does not go to fields to assist her men folk. This is not, however, true in the case of the Chamar women. They attend to all their routine duties till the time of delivery.

The Ahawin ceremony takes place on the beginning of eighth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day is fixed by the purohit. In the morning, on that day, the pregnant woman, accompanied by her nearest relatives and the purohit, to go to the village of her parents. In Bir, marriages are contracted in the near-by villages. The pregnant women have, therefore, not to go too far-off distances for observing Ahawin ceremony. The party carries with it necessary provisions and a goat. In the destined village, they en-camp nearby a bowl or a spring. The pregnant woman takes bath with the spring water and puts on new clothes presented by her parents. The purohit worships the spring and the nav-grah while the pregnant woman keeps sitting in front of him. At night, the goat is sacrificed and the entire party observe jagra. They keep themselves busy in singing bhajans. A feast is held on the next day. Meat of the sacrificed goat is served. The skull, however, goes to the purohit. In addition to this, he gets Rupee one and four annas and the old clothes of the pregnant woman. The party proceeds back to the village when the feast is over. Villagers are of the view that the child is likely to be deaf, dumb, or have some other deformity, if this ceremony is not performed. They also informed that the observance of this ceremony is declining day by day.

At the time of delivery the pregnant woman is made to lie on floor in one of the rooms reserved for the purpose. Her bedding consists of a mattress pad with old rags or paral and an old pattu or a dohrú. The woman is completely segregated. Excepting

the women attending on her no one is allowed to enter into the room. The Development Department has employed a mid-wife to conduct the delivery cases. Her head-quarter is in the adjoining village, two miles away from Bir. The midwife is said to be untrained. The villagers, therefore prefer old and experienced women of the village to conduct the delivery cases rather than to employ the mid-wife for the purpose. Occasionally, services of trained and experienced mid-wife from Mandi are also secured. Her fee was Rs. 7-50 but now it has been raised to Rs. 12 plus food-grains and clothes.

Among Rajputs, the male members are not allowed to enter the room until the Chhat ceremony is performed. This ceremony is observed on the sixth day. Chamars do not observe it. On this day, the mother is given bath. The purohit is called. Havan is performed and nav-grah worshipped. A feast on small scale is thrown to the nearest relatives. Gunter is sprinkled all over the house. The elderly persons pointed out that the ban on males on entering the room of confinement is dying out now. The young fathers do not resist the temptation of having a look at their tiny new-comer. On the birth of a son, time is noted and conveyed to purohit. The purohit then prepares the horoscope. Chamars do not note the time and no horoscope is prepared in their case.

As long as the woman is confined to bed, every one who touches her, has to take bath. Either the woman who conducts the delivery or some other woman engaged for the purpose, attends to the new-born baby and the mother during the period of confinement. After the delivery, the mother is given warm pure desi ghee to drink as much as she can. During the period of confinement, which lasts till the purification takes place, the mother is fed upon rich diet. Kohani, a mixture of dry fruits like almonds, chohara, cocoanut and dakh fried in ghee, is given from time to time. Babroos and lugra are also given. After Chhat, the mother is permitted to have usual diet consisting of wheat bread and bhat. But ghee is still given to her to enable her to recoupe her strength. After child birth, the mother may be given desi ghee from four to ten Kilos depending upon how much the family can afford. The baby is breast fed. To keep the bowls in order, he is made to suck Garsut and Bal-Jewan-Ghutti which is purchased from bazar. Garsut is prepared from ajwain and other things.

Rajputs celebrate the purification on the thirteenth day and the Chamars on the

sixteenth day. This day is known as 'Gun-trara'. On this day, the house is cleaned. Panch-grabh, a mixture of curd, milk, ghee, Ganga Jal and gunter is sprinkled in the house. Every member of the house-hold takes bath. The utensils are cleaned. Women wash and do their hair. The mother and the child are given bath and new clothes. The purohit is called in to perform the rites. Ganesha is worshipped and the sacred fire fed by mango or pipal wood it lit. On this day, the bhiyai of the male child is made. Bhiyai is a small cone about six inches in circumference at the base and about four inches in height. The purohit chants mantras by means of which the bhiyai is supposed to be invested with life. The female relatives fetch water from the bowl. Cowdung mixed with a few drops of water from each pot, is plastered on the bhiyai. The bhiyai is preserved throughout the life-span of the child. It is worshipped on every birth day and at the time of marriage. The bhiyai is consigned to the waters of Beas on the death of the man concerned. The parents of the new born child throw a feast to the relatives and friends. The kith and kins, who gather on the occasion, have the first glimpse of the child. As a token of kinship and relation with the household, they present some coins ranging from four annas to a rupee are given to the child. The mother's parents send clothes and a piece of jewellery, if they can afford, to the mother. Clothes are also sent to the child. The kamins who perform menial jobs for the household, come to offer drub. The offering of drub conveys the congratulations. For offering drub, the Chamar gets four annas, the Lohar also four annas, Majhara gets two annas and the Nai gets rupee one and four annas. All these kamins except the Chamars come from other villages. Hesi also does not miss his chance. He comes with his shehnai to play on and gets some grains and money. There are no fixed rates for him. The kith and kins also convey their badhai and in return the children get money ranging from one to four annas.

The child is given solid food six months after the birth. The ceremony is known as lugru. On an auspicious day fixed by the purohit lugro is prepared and the child is made to lick a bit of it after performing a minor ceremony. Kheer, bread, fruits, sweets and milk are placed before the child. Whichever thing he touches, indicates his taste in future life. Similarly articles like books, pen, sword, coins and scales are

placed. The thing which it catches hold of first, is supposed to suggest the profession which the child may follow one day. It is after this day, that the child can be taken outside the house. For Nam-Karan-Sanskar, no uniform day is fixed. It can be observed on the Lugru day and in other cases on the Gunter day. Yet in another cases, it can be observed on any auspicious day fixed by the purohit. On this day, havan is performed and nav-grahs worshipped. The purohit suggests the first letter and accordingly some suitable name beginning with the first letter suggested by the priest is chosen and given to the child.

Mundan Ceremony—The hair-cutting ceremony of a male child takes place at the ages of two and a half, five, seven and nine years. The ceremony is known as 'Jarolan' or 'Jat dena'. The hair of a child cannot be cut until this ceremony is observed. In practice, however, this belief is on the decline. Generally hair cut for the first time is kept preserved. Whenever, they find suitable opportunity, the family deity called kulaj is visited and the hair offered with a minor ceremony. Kulaj is a family deity. Jat ceremony is observed both by Rajputs and Chamars. The Rajputs have their kulaj at Naina Devi at Rawalsar and at Deo Dhar. The Chamars have Sidhs as their kulaj. For Rajputs, the ceremony is performed by the family purohit. Havan is performed, Nav-grah and Ganesha are worshipped while mantras are chanted by the purohit. The barber cut the hair with a pair of scissors, leaving Jattu on boy's head. Jattu is a bunch of hair commonly known as 'Bodi'. The barber gets old clothes of the boy alongwith the fee amounting to eleven takkas. The hair, so cut are preserved. On this day, the relatives, friends and neighbours are served with a feast. On the next day, a party consisting of nearest relatives and the purohit proceed to the place of kulaj. There, the hair is offered to kulaj and a goat is sacrificed. A formal feast is held and then the ceremony varies from Rs. 300 to 400.

The Chamars also celebrate the later part of the ceremony in the same way. They do not at all observe the part except that the hair cut for the first time are preserved with a bandha of Rs. 1.25 and a coconut.

Janeo Ceremony—Janeo, the sacred thread is worn by the Hindus of higher caste. This ceremony is held at the age of nine or eleven. In village Bir, this ceremony is generally observed alongwith the marriage by the Rajputs only. The ceremony takes place in the court-yard of the house. The court-yard

is cleaned, thin mixture of cow-dung and water is sprinkled. The walls are plastered with loshti. The ceremony is conducted by the purohit who also acts as 'Guru' of the boy who is to be given the sacred thread. The boy is made to take bath and to attire as a yogi. He wears a pair of wooden sandals, a dhoti or a partan, ear-rings fashioned out of kneaded flour, a jholi of white long cloth. He puts on a mirgchhala i.e. the skin of a deer. In his hands, he carries a wooden phowari and a staff. Then after a minor ritual, he receives Guru-mantra which is Gayatri Mantra. He also receives Janeo and wears it over his left shoulder and under his right arm. The Guru also gives him sermons that he should protect his brahamcharya, should devote to his studies, obey his parents, should get up early in the morning and offer daily prayers. He should clean his hands thrice with mud after answering the call of nature. He should suspend the Janeo over his ears while going for making water or for answering the call of nature. He should not climb up a tree and avoid swimming across a river.

Then the boy is made to beg for bhichha i.e. alms. All the women and relatives assembled on the occasion, offer him alms consisting of sohagis. This is followed by a feast.

Marriage Ceremony—In the village Bir, following forms of marriages are prevalent:—

Dharam Pun—In this type of marriage, the parents given their daughter in marriage without receiving any payment for her daughter from the parents of the boy, or from the boy in case he has no parents. This type of marriage is common only among Rajputs.

Bata Sata—This type of marriage can easily be termed as 'Marriage by Exchange'. In this type of marriage, series of marriages are contracted among the relatives of both bride and bride-groom, but no money is involved for contracting such marriages. Following can be the best example of this type of marriage:—

'A' betrothes his daughter to the son of 'B', who gives his niece to the brother of 'C', who gives his sister to the son of 'D', who gives his daughter in marriage to the nephew of 'A'. In this type of marriage, it can be possible that all the persons 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' involved in the chain may not belong to the same village. Such marriages are common both among Rajputs and Chamars. These marriages are contracted when parties cannot afford to pay the price

of the bride. When asked whether such contracts involve disputes, the villagers informed that there is every possibility, but there existed no such case in the village. The likelihood of the dispute is that the one of the parties backs out and then it becomes impossible to keep up the other claims intact. The position can become really difficult if one or more marriages in the series have already materialised.

Ghar Jwantru or Kamsi—In this type of marriage, the bride-groom serves in the house of the bride's parents. The period is agreed upon by mutual consent. On completion of this period which is generally about eight years, the bride-groom becomes entitled to his bride. Only one such case exists in the village among Chamars. The villagers informed that this form of marriage is hardly popular as there is every likelihood of breaches. Therefore, it is on the decline. This system is found among Chamars only.

Barina—In this form of marriage, the father of the girl accepts money for his daughter. The price involved is fixed by mutual agreement between the two parties. In the village, this type of marriage is contracted only among Chamars. While surveying the village, the Investigator could gather that this type is also prevalent among the Rajputs also, but when they were asked, they did not come out with the information. They say that they do not sell their daughters. The price charged for a girl among the Chamars ranges from Rs. 300 to Rs. 500.

Both among Rajputs and Chamars, the marriage is contracted outside blood groups, in the near-by villages. There does not exist even a single case of consanguinity or inter-caste marriage. In the past, marriage used to be contracted, when the boy was of ten to twelve years old and the girl of eight to ten years. Now the marriages are contracted at the age of sixteen to twenty-two years in the case of boys and twelve to eighteen years in the case of girls. The initiative is not taken by the father or brothers of the girls. On the other hand, it is the boy's father or in the absence of father, his next kin or guardian who approaches the girl's father for this purpose. In case, the boy's father has no direct contract with the girl's father, he generally secures the assistance of some influential persons who accompany him and recommend his case. This system, is called as 'Rabari Dena'. When the girl's father agrees to the proposal, the boy's father presents

a silver ornament to the girl. The cost of the ornament depends upon one's economic resources. This ornament is generally a 'Balu' (Nose-ring), weighing one to two tolas. The system is called 'Rupna Dena'. Then the girl's father makes a public declaration in the presence of his kith and kins, to this effect. Gur is distributed. The ceremony is observed only when the marriage is to be of 'Dharam Pun' type. While contracting marriages by 'Bata Sata', 'Ghar Jwantru' or 'Barina', the terms for the marriage are settled before the betrothal is made public. In case of Barina, the money is received by the girl's parents in shape of ornaments which they give to the girl when the marriage takes place. Sometimes, the parents of the boy have also to bear the marriage expenses of the girl. It was a custom among the villagers that the betrothal used to be settled well before the marriage and the instances of break-up were not rare. Now this system is on the decline and the marriages take place within a year or so after the betrothal.

After the engagement, the boy's parents or the representatives accompanied by the representatives of girl's side consult the purohit and fix the day for marriage. This is called 'Biyah joranra'. The marriage ceremony starts ten to fifteen days before the actual date of the marriage, with marriage songs which will be reproduced in the Appendix. The women from the neighbourhood and having relations with the household gather for the purpose. They sing the songs for an hour or half. While departing, gur and soaked grams fried in mustard oil are distributed among the ladies. The marriage songs are sung daily in the late evening. When the marriage approaches near, the relatives, friends and neighbours are contacted personally by a representative of the household and invitations to attend the function are extended to them. This is termed 'Neondra Panra'.

One or two days before the marriage, the relatives of bride-groom and the bride gather in the house of the maternal uncle of the bride-groom. The purohits of both the parties read out the detailed programme (Mahurat) of every important item of the marriage. Then both the parties confirm these and those who attend the function, get Gur. This is 'Lagnotri Likhna'. The purohit of the bride-groom accompanied by the barber proceeds to the Bride's parents' house and deliver the Lagnotri. Some of the households mark the marriage ceremony with 'Sat Narayan Ki Katha'. This item of

the marriage is not necessary. Only those who can afford, observe it. On this day, some members who desire so, keep fast upto night. The invitees gather and hear 'Sat Narayan Ki Katha'. It is read out by the purohit. After the katha is over, the invitees get 'Parshad' and leave for their homes. On this day, a ceremony known as 'Kulaj Thapna' is also performed. 'Kulaj' has already been defined while discussing Mundan ceremony. One of the ladies who keep fast, dips her hand in vermillion water and reproduces impression of her hand on a piece of yellow cloth. At night, the ladies keep awake late. They keep themselves busy in singing song in honour of their 'Kulaj'.

On the first day of the ceremony, the bride and the bride-groom are given bath at their respective homes. Mehndi is applied to the hands of the bride. Then Tel ceremony takes place. First of all women gather in one of the rooms fixed for the purpose. There, rough figures of bride and bride-groom on the wall with vermillion water are drawn. This ceremony is known as 'Dehra Belna' and is performed at the time fixed for the purpose. A Phiri, wooden structure with four legs of about six inches in length with a platform, is placed just below the wall where the figures are drawn. The Pihri is plastered with 'Loshti' and image of Ganesha is placed in it. This image is worshipped by the bride and the bride-groom at their respective houses while the purohit chants mantras connected with the ceremony. After this, Torans are fixed on the door of the room where image of Ganesha is installed, and at the main gate of the house. At the bride's parents' house, 'Bedi' is fixed in the court-yard in addition to the 'Torans'. Torans are thin poles of Simbal wood. Alongwith Torans, stems of banana are also fixed. The expenses of Bedi and Torans are borne by the maternal uncles of the bride and bride-groom. The poles of Toran and Bedi are dyed in yellow and reddish colours. Then the bride and the bride-groom sit with two bowls of leaves containing some vermillion and mustard oil and a bunch of Dub grass. The head dress of the bride consists of a Dopatta of reddish colour with a ring made of a sort of straw known as Munjh. The bride-groom wears cap with the same ring of Munjh. The bride wears a nose-ring also. The invitees visit the house and apply some vermillion to the forehead of the bride or bride-groom and put some oil with the bunch of grass blades on the head. Those who come for the purpose, are feasted. The menu consists of boiled rice, pulses and one or two

vegetables. After the Tel ceremony is over, the bride-groom again worships Ganesha, where-after, the barber does his hair-cutting. Then he takes bath. His old clothes go to the barber. In the bride's parents' house, similar formalities are observed. The clothes of the bride go to the Nain (wife of the barber) who does the bride's hair. In case the 'Mahurat' of departure of the marriage party does not fall on the same day, the bride-groom leaves his house accompanied by the procession for another house or to his maternal uncle's house, if it happens to be in the village or in the nearby village. Before doing so, the bride-groom wears new clothes presented by his in-laws, pagri and sehra. It was a custom in the village that the bride-groom used to suck the breasts of his mother before leaving his house, but this is done rarely now and is meeting decline. While leaving the house, the ladies who generally are aunts of the bride-groom, wave arti over him. This is done twice while the purohit goes on chanting the mantras meant for the ceremony.

On the fixed day and at fixed time, the bride-groom proceeds to the village of his father-in-laws. He goes in a palki accompanied by the marriage party. The musicians also accompany him. There, the party is received by the father and other relatives of the bride and are made to stay in a house already arranged by the in-laws, near their own house. At appointed time, the bride-groom along with his marriage-party proceeds to his in-laws house where he is received by the aunts of the bride with Arti. On the gate, these ladies worship him and the father-in-law and mother-in-law receive him and wash his feet. Then the party is made to worship the Ganesha. After performance of the marriage, the main features of which are 'Lagna', 'Phere', 'Muhn Dakhai' and 'Bedi', the marriage-party is served with lunch. On this day, the bride-groom and the parents of the bride observe fast until the ceremonies are over. After 'Phere' ceremony, the bride-groom is made to have a glimpse of the face of bride. The ceremony is known as 'Muhn Ughrai'. After this, the boy's side present the girl with new clothes and ornaments and the ceremony is known as 'Bagga'. The container of these clothes and jewellery is called 'Baggeri-Patari'. There is a system of giving dowry which consists of a few pieces of silver ornaments and a cot with a formal bedding. The bedding consists of a quilt, pillow, bed-sheet and mattress of inferior cloth and cotton. The expenditure

on dowry comes to Rs. 150 to Rs. 300. As a matter of course, the wedding party stays as guests of bride's parents, for one or two days. When the ceremony is over, the Barat (wedding-party) known as 'Janitrus' comes back with the bride in a palki accompanied by their relatives. It is a custom among the villagers that it is the bride-grooms' palki which should follow the palki of the bride. The whole procession however follows the musicians. The musical instruments in the village consist of dhol, nigara, shehnai and dafla.

When they reach the bride-groom's house, arti is performed at the entrance. The couple is taken inside the house with a dori (red cotton string) round the bride's back. The bride at this time is clad in a 'Lahan-chora', a special dress worn by the bride. It covers whole of the body from head down to ankles of the bride. The couple then worship Ganesha. A game known as 'Dudh Mundri' is then played by the bride and bride-groom. A pot containing milky water and curd is placed before them and the sister-in-law throws a ring known as 'Mundri' into the pot from above and both of them try to hunt for it. Who-so-ever finds it, is supposed to be superior to the other in their future life. The grand feast known as 'Bari Dham' or 'Andel' is served on the next day to the invitees who are the relatives, friends and neighbours of the household. The feast is extended to the Kamins who belong to Scheduled Castes, but they are not allowed to mix with the others while the feast is being served. What the villagers do is that they make them sit in the open place outside the house, and the meals are served to them there. The Rajputs do not, however, join the feasts given by the Chamars. After the feast, the bride returns with her brother or uncle who stay there for the purpose, to her parents' house. The bride-groom goes to the house of his in-laws and brings back the bride on an auspicious day.

There is no convention prevailing in the village to obtain permission of the boy or the girl for marriage. There are only a few cases of marriages within the village, other-

wise marriages take place in the nearby villages. Marriages with relatives is not contracted. However, there are instances of marriages within the same 'Gotra' among Chamars. So far as the marriage expenditure is concerned, the boy's side has to incur more, since they have to arrange for the ornaments and clothes both for the bride and the bride-groom. The expenditure, on the marriage of a Rajput boy ranges from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 3,000. The approximate expenditure over a girl's marriage has been calculated by a Rajput household upto Rs. 1,000 to 2,000. Among Chamars, the expenditure is a bit less. A Chamar manages to get his son or a daughter married within Rs. 1,000.

Widow Re-marriage—Widow re-marriage is not allowed among the Rajputs. It, however, exist among the Chamars, but it takes place with the near relative or brother of the deceased husband. There are two such cases among the Chamars of the village. When widow re-marriage is contracted with other than the brother of the deceased husband, it is called Dharewa Karewa. In case of re-marriage with the brother of the deceased husband, it is called Jhanjhrara. In the two cases in the village, the younger brothers have appropriated the widows of their deceased elder brothers. There is one case among the Turis where a woman was married thrice after the death of her two former husbands.

Polyandry is not practised in the village. A few cases of polygamy are found, but it is not also popular.

The following table shows that out of total of 147 males and 154 females, 74 males and 70 females are un-married. The majority of these never-married persons are from age-group of 0 to 14 years. In this age-group, only 3 women are married. This indicates that early marriages are not in vogue in the village. In age-group 15 to 34 years, out of 50 men and 45 women, 34 men and 42 women are married. This shows that marriages are generally contracted at the age above 15 years. In age-group 35 to 59 years, no one is un-married. Similarly no one is un-married in the age-group of 60 years and over.

Age-Groups (Years)	Total Population			Never Married		Married		Widowed		Unspecified status	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
All ages	301	147	154	74	70	69	71	3	13	1	..
0 to 14	131	59	72	59	69	..	3	..	..	..	..
15 to 34	95	50	45	15	1	34	42	..	2	1	..
35 to 59	52	26	26	..	..	25	22	1	4	..	..
60 and over	23	12	11	..	..	10	4	2	7	..	..

Death Ceremony—When a person is in his death-bed, he is made to give away in charity, a cow or some cash symbolising the price of a cow, grains, clothes, utensils and some cash. This is not true for Chamars. However, every Rajput follows it. The quantity depends on one's economic position. Ganges water, gold, munga, etc., and panjratana are placed in his mouth before he dies. It is inauspicious if one dies while lying on the cot. To avoid it, the dying person is removed from the room and laid on the floor of the verandah. This is known as 'Barah-jo-kadhana'. The floor is first plastered with cow-dung and til, drubh and kungu are sprinkled on it. Bed consists of blankets only. These can be washed and used again. The dying man is laid on the pattu with his head towards the north. The 'Diva Mansana' ceremony also takes place before the death. Earthen, or wheat-flour lamps are given in alms, and one is kept burning day and night for ten days. While the corpse is lying in the house, the ladies related to the deceased, put on white dhoties and collect round the dead body and weep loudly. While doing so, they relate the qualities of the deceased. This is called 'Chhuna'. The corpse is bathed and is made to wear new clothes. It is cremated as soon as possible if it be that of a person more than 28 months old. Below this age, the dead body is either buried or sunk by adding some weight to the body, in river Beas. After the corpse is bathed, it is placed on a bier. It is covered with a Doshala or Chaddar. The first pind is placed on the deceased's breast. The bier is then lifted on shoulders of four near kinsmen, who wear dhoties and go bare-footed. While carrying the body, its feet should point outwards. A second pind is offered as the body reaches mid-way between the house and the Shamshan ghat. For Bir, this place is near about the place where one has to cross the Nala of Garud. The third pind is offered at the Shamshan-ghat.

When an old man dies, a pice, daru, akhrot, grain etc. are thrown over the bier. This ceremony is known as 'Phasaka satna'. The mourners carry wood along with them to the Shamshan-ghat. The pyre should be arranged north to south. When the pyre has been constructed, the Shawl is removed. It becomes the property of Raur who leads the procession and play upon the conch shell (Sankh). The Acharaj also accompanies the procession. He chants verse 'Ram nam' sat hai', 'Hari-ka-nam sat hai'. He is the man who performs the death rites. The

Acharaj of the villagers of Bir resides at Mandi. He is called for when necessity arises. The shroud is torn near the mouth of the dead body and panjratni and ghee are poured into it. The nearest kinsmen generally the eldest son lit the fire near the head of the body and subsequently on all sides. Thus the pyre is completely lit. After the head of the dead body is burnt, the mourners throw pieces of sandal wood on the pyre and pay their last homage to deceased. Thereafter, they go to their respective homes where they take bath and change their clothes.

On the third day, the kinsmen of the deceased accompanied by the Acharaj go to the Shamshan-ghat, wash the ashes with water and pick up all the bones. The bigger bones are called 'Chhais' and are thrown into the water. This ceremony is called 'Chhai dhona'. The smaller bones are called 'Astu' or 'Phul'. These are washed with Ganges water and put in a silk bag and thrown into the Ganges at Hardwar before Dasand, i.e. tenth day after the death. Those who can afford to go to Hardwar, take 'Astus' with them, otherwise, these are kept preserved until the household finds some one going to Hardwar. In such case, the restriction of sending them to Hardwar within ten days is not observed. Pinds are daily offered till the dasand, one pind on the first day, two on the second day and so on. On the tenth day, ten pinds are offered and all the relatives wash their clothes and utensils and sprinkle Ganges water and Gunter (cow's urine) in the house. The Kirya ceremony takes place on the thirteenth day after the death. Till this day, the kinsmen of the deceased take one meal a day. They are forbidden the use of heeng. On the Kirya day, full clothes, a cot and utensils are given to the Acharaj. This ceremony is known as 'Dhini'. 360 pinds are offered on this day for the whole of the year. The near relatives of the deceased also bring some chabina and give it to the members of the bereaved family, after this day they begin to take two meals a day. The Heeng ceremony takes place on the seventeenth day. On this day, there is a feast and the mourning is over.

On the first, second and death-anniversaries, 'Dhins' are given to the Acharaj. These anniversaries are called 'Pahli barski', 'Duji Barski' and 'Tiji Barski' respectively. The fourth anniversary is known as 'Chau-barkha'. Dhins is given to the Acharaj, full

suit of clothes are given to a purohit and his wife and feast is held. After the Chau-barkha, Sharadha is performed annually.

A few superstitions are linked with death. Every month has five days of Panchaks. In case, a person dies in the Panchaks, it is believed that five persons will die in the near future from the same house and to avoid it, five images made of barley-flour

are burnt with him. If a man falls from a tree and dies, or if a man dies before the pre-death ceremonies have been performed, the deceased is called a 'Pret' and it is believed that he remains a 'Pret' until certain rites are performed at Kurukshetar, and Hardwar. In case, the household cannot afford to send some one to Hardwar, a human image is made and a diva lit before it.

III Economy

Economic resources

Agriculture is the pivot around which the economy of the villagers revolves. About 92 per cent of households possess land and cultivate it. Other factors like manual labour, village industry which mainly consists of shoe making government and private service, fire-wood selling and ghee selling and shop-keeping supplement it. Then there is

one carpenter and two Hesis who earn their livelihood by playing on Shehnai from house to house. A few youngsters are receiving training in sericulture at Mandi.

The women folk attend to agriculture, do spinning work and make mats, beside doing other odd jobs in the household. The table gives the statistical data about the workers and non-workers in the village.

Age Group	Total Population			Workers			Non-Workers		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	301	147	154	132	82	50	169	65	104
0-14	131	59	72	..	..	..	131	59	72
15-34	96	50	46	77	45	32	19	3	14
35-59	52	26	26	44	26	18	8	..	8
60 and over	22	12	10	11	11	..	11	1	10

The total population of the village is 301 persons 147 males and 154 females. Out of them 132 persons, 82 males and 50 females

are workers, and 169 persons, 65 males and 104 females are non-workers. The percentage of workers comes out to about 44 percent.

The break-up of the population according to the occupations is:—

Age Group	Occupational Agriculture			Occupation 2 Service			Occupation 3 Service and Agriculture		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	85	37	48	6	6	..	3	3	..
0-14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15-34	54	23	31	5	5	..	2	2	..
35-59	23	5	18	1	1	..	1	1	..
60 and over	9	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Age Group	Occupation 4 Agriculture and Labour			Occupation 5 Agriculture and Shop			Occupation 6 Musician		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	13	12	..	1	1	..	3	3	..
0-14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15-34	7	7	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
35-59	5	4	1	1	1	..	2	2	..
60 and over	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Age Group	Occupation 7 Agriculture and Carpentry			Occupation 8 Agriculture and Shoemaking			Occupation 9 Labour			Occupation 10		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
All ages	2	2	..	9	9	..	4	3	1	6	6	..
0-14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15-34	..	..	..	6	6	..	2	1	1	3	..	..
35-59	1	1	..	3	3	..	1	1	..	3	3	..
60 and over	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

The percentage of workers in age group 0-14 is nil. This age-group includes infants who cannot do any work. The other reason for non-workers in this group is that this group also includes school going children. Those who do not go to school tend to the grazing of cattles.

The percentage of workers in age-group 15 to 34 years comes to about 80. In age-group 35 to 59 years, it comes to about 85 whereas in age-group 60 and over the percentage is about 50 per cent. The ratio between men and women workers works out to 41 to 25 against the ratio of their population of 21 to 22. Women assist their men in every agricultural operations except ploughing. They attend to their usual house-hold duties, make khajra mats, knit pull-overs. It has been seen that the women of Chamars also sell fire wood in the town, though they do not come out with this information. Chamar women also assist their men in making shoes. They do embroidery work of tila on the upper part of the shoes.

The male workers with service as their profession are employed in Government Offices. Most of them return to the village at night. They help the other members of the household in agricultural work, whenever they get time. No one in the village has come out with the information that they sell ghee, but it is gathered by the Investigator that there are a couple of households which do once a while. It is not their full time occupation. To have a fair knowledge of the village economy, it would be interesting to discuss the economic conditions of a few households. Five households including 2 of Rajputs, 2 of Chamars and 1 of a Hesi have been selected for the purpose.

Let us take up a Rajput household. The House No. is 11 and the head of the household is Sobha. It is a joint family and the composition of the family is:—

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to the Head of the Household	Sex M/F	Age in complete Years (last birthday)
1	Sobha	Self	M	80
2	Devya	Son	M	36
3	Rattan	Son	M	23
4	Sher Singh	Son	M	21
5	Bikhramu	Wife	F	74
6	Damodri	Son's wife	F	29
7	Jai Vandi	Son's wife	F	19
8	Tek Chand	Son's son	M	9
9	Roshan	Son's son	M	7
10	Govind	Son's son	M	3
11	Krishna	Son's daughter	F	5
12	Khemi	Son's daughter	F	0

The household own 1 acre land and have leased in 5 acres. The cattle wealth of the household consists of bullocks 2, cows 2, buffaloes 2, she calves 2 and he-calf 1, goats and sheep 14.

Sobha, the head of the household is an old man of 80 years, but he still continues to work in his fields. Two of the three sons of Sobha are employed as peons at Mandi. Rattan Singh, the third son of Sobha, knows carpentry. According to the statement given by Sobha, the annual produce which they get from the land is:—

Paddy	13 maunds
Maize	10 maunds
Wheat	9 maunds
Mash	1/2 maund
Koda	6 maunds

Apart from this produce, the household has an annual income of about Rs. 2,200. The house hold pays Rs. 2 as land revenue. Apart from this they have to pay Rs. 15 and 1½ maunds of grains for the land they have leased in. Two sons of Devya, Tek Chand and Roshan are studying in 4th and 2nd class in the local school. On education, they spend little. Sobha informed that the produce which they get from the land is not sufficient and they have to spend most of their income on the purchase of food-grains.

The household has to pay Rs. 600 as debt which was incurred by them on account of marriage of a daughter of Sobha. The source from which loan was obtained has not been disclosed, but the interest is being paid at the rate of 20 per cent per annum.

Now, it will be worthwhile to discuss a Chamar household. There is one Chuhrya. No. of his house is 57. His family composition is:—

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to the Head of Household	Sex M/F	Age in complete Years (last birthday)
1	Chuhrya	Self	M	32
2	Dila Ram	Brother	M	24
3	Shukri	Wife	F	27
4	Surtu	Brother's wife	F	23
5	Ram Dass	Son	M	9
6	Balu	Son	M	5
7	Durga	Son	M	1
8	Hari Singh	Brother's son	M	5
9	Santra	Brother's daughter	F	1
10	Chuhi	Mother	F	60

The household possesses only one acre of land and the live-stock with the household is:—

Bulls	2
Cows	2
He-Calf	1
She-calf	1

Chuhrya, the head of the household is engaged in agriculture and his traditional village industry is shoe making. His brother Dila Ram is employed in Military and stays away from the village. Chuhrya is assisted by the women folk in his agricultural operations. Though the head of the household does not indicate that the women folk of his household carry loads of fire wood to Mandi town for sale, but it appears to be true. The household owns one acre of land and pay Rs. 1.87 as land revenue. According to statements made by Chuhrya, the annual produce of their land is:—

Maize	4 maunds
Wheat	2 maunds
Paddy	1 maund

The annual income excluding the produce from the land has been stated about Rs. 1,500. This income includes the money sent by Dila Ram his brother. Like Sobha, the land with the household is not sufficient. The most of money is therefore, spent on foodgrains. Only one male child, Ram Dass, one of three sons of Chuhrya, is studying in 2nd class in the local primary school. The household declares itself sufficient and has not to pay any debts.

Now let us discuss a 'Hesi' household. There is one Mastu. He is head of the household. His family composition is as under:—

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to the Head of the Household	Sex M/F	Age in complete Years (last birthday)
1	Mastu	Self	M	40
2	Kokla	Wife	F	31
3	Kamala	Daughter	F	13
4	Dhani	Daughter	F	11
5	Amru	Son	M	10
6	Brestu	Son	M	8
7	Soma	Daughter	F	2
8	Murti	Son	M	4
9	Bhau	Son	M	0

The number of house of which Mastu is the head of household is 83. The household

does not possess any land, and the live-stock with them is as under:—

Cows	2
He calves	2

The head of the household is neither employed anywhere nor does any manual labour. So the question arises as to how he earns his livelihood. He has large family to support. One of his daughter Dhani and two of his sons, Amru and Brestu are studying in the local school in 2nd, 2nd and 1st Class respectively. Naturally, it must be quite a handsome of amount which is required to fulfill his day to day needs. To achieve his ends what he does is that he has a round of villages with his Shehnai, visits some of the houses, play upon his instruments and collects grains which must be sufficient for the daily consumption of his family, and to meet the other miscellaneous expenditure of the household. The household has not to pay any debt.

Now let us take another household of Rajputs. The head of the household is Jethu. The house number is 72. The family composition is as under:—

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to the Head of the Household	Sex M/F	Age in complete Years (last birthday)
1	Jethu	Self	M	65
2	Bhagat	Son	M	27
3	Hirda	Son	M	26
4	Karam Singh	Son	M	17
5	Kadshi	Wife	F	55
6	Budhi	Daughter	F	13
7	Kagdu	Son's wife	F	26
8	Narbada	Son's daughter	F	5
9	Bimla	Son's daughter	F	2
10	Darumti	Son's wife	F	23
11	Ruko	Son's daughter	F	4
12	Dalipa	Son's son	M	0
13	Manchali	Son's wife	F	16
14	Kashalya	Son's daughter	F	0

The household possesses about 5 acres as their own land and 4/5 acres of land leased in. The live-stock with the household is as under:—

Buffaloes	2
She-calves of buffalo	2
Cows	4
Bulls	4
He-calves	2
Sheep	5
Goats	20

Jethu the head of the household and his youngest son Karam Singh are wholly employed in their agricultural operations. Bhagat, the eldest son is employed as a manual labourer and Hirda is a peon at Mandi. The approximate annual produce which they get from their land is:—

Koda	10 maunds
Maize	26 maunds
Mash	1 maunds
Paddy	22 maunds
Wheat	21 maunds

The household pay land revenue of Rs. 16. Extra income from the service and labour has stated about Rs. 1,100 per annum.

No one, from the household is receiving education. The household has to pay Rs. 1,100 as debt which they incurred for the marriages in the family and treatment.

To have a better idea about the village economy, let us take household No. 23, one more household of Chamars. The head of the household is Sidhu. The family composition of Sidhu is as under:—

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to the Head of the Household	Sex M/F	Age in complete Years (last birthday)
1	Sidhu	Self	M	53
2	Khanu	Wife	F	51
3	Haru	Son	M	27
4	Lalman	Son	M	23
5	Kahan	Brother	M	35
6	Kunan	Son	M	16
7	Gyahri	Son's wife	F	25
8	Homa	Son's daughter	F	0
9	Sukri	Son's wife	F	21
10	Shankru	Mother	F	90
11	Mathru	Brother's wife	F	15

The household possesses 4 acres of their own land and live-stock with them is as under:—

Bulls	4
Cow	1
Buffalo	1

Sidhu, the head of the household is employed for the whole time, in his agricultural operations. His wife Khanu do a little bit of labour and earns money. Haru, the eldest son is insane. Second son, Lalman is the only Matriculate in the village. He is employed in Military. Kahan, the brother of Sidhu is employed outside the Mandi district in private service. Kunan, the youngest son of Sidhu is receiving education in the village. Siaglu where there exists a middle school. He is in eighth class. The annual produce which the household get from the land is:—

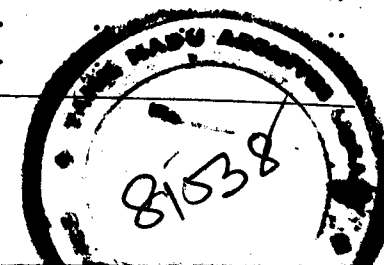
Koda	3 maunds
Maize	9 maunds
Mash	1 maund
Paddy	17 maunds
Wheat	7 maunds

The other income of the household amounts to about Rs. 2,000 per annum. The household pays land revenue of about Rs. 12. Most of the expenditure incurred by the household is on the purchase of foodgrains. They have to pay debt of Rs. 800 which was incurred on account of marriages of the sons of Sidhu, over the treatment of Haru for his insanity and to purchase of land.

Non Workers

Workers engaged in various activities have fully been discussed. Now we may discuss the non-workers. The table gives details about them.

Age Group	Total non-workers			Persons engaged in household duties		Full time students or children attending school		Dependents, infants and children not attending school and persons permanently disabled	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
All ages	169	65	104	..	30	28	7	37	67
0-14	131	59	72	..	..	25	7	34	65
15-34	19	5	14	..	14	3	..	2	..
35-59	8	..	8	..	8	..	..	..	..
60 and over	11	1	10	..	8	..	..	..	..



Out of the total population of 301 persons 169 are non-workers. Out of these 169 non-workers 65 are males and 104 females. Twenty five boys and 7 girls in the age-group 0—14 are full time students. Similarly, in age-group 15—34 years, 3 boys are students. In all, there are 34 students belonging to the village. Persons engaged in household duties only, are 14 women in age-group 15—34 years, 8 in age-group 35 to 59 years and 8 in age-group 60 years and over. Persons falling in the category of 'dependents, infants and children not attending the school' and persons permanently disabled, are 34 males and 65 females in age-group 0—14 years 2 men in the age-group 15—34 years and 1 man and 2 women in age-group of 60 years and over.

Income

The villagers are reluctant to come out with the information regarding their incomes and the figures quoted in the table may be taken to give a very rough idea. There is no household which could fall within the very low income-group of Rs. 25 per month. One Rajput engaged in agriculture,

comes within the income-group of Rs. 26 to Rs. 50 per month. Four households of Rajputs, having their source of income from agriculture, agriculture and labour service and agriculture fall within the income group of Rs. 51 to Rs. 75 per month. Among Chamars 2 households engaged in agriculture and labour, 1 engaged in agriculture labour and service fall in the income-group of Rs. 51 to Rs. 75 per month. Both the households of Hesi also have their monthly income falling in this group. In income group Rs. 76 to Rs. 100 per month there is one household of Rajputs having its source of income from service only. The Chamars have their two households, one engaged in agriculture and labour and the other labour and service in this income group. Out of 36 households 23 fall in income group of Rs. 101 and over per month. These include 14 households of Rajputs and 9 households of Chamars. The source of income of these households includes agriculture, service, labour, shoe-making, carpentry and shop-keeping. All these figures indicate that the economical condition of the villagers is neither good nor bad.

Caste-wise Monthly Income of the Village V

Main	Subsidiary	Source of Income	Households in the range of			
			Below Rs. 50	Rs. 51—75	Rs. 76-100	Rs. 101 and above
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RAJPUT						
Agriculture	..	Agriculture	1	1	..	..
Service	..	Service	..	..	1	..
Agriculture	Carpenter service and labour	Agriculture, carpenter	..	..	..	1
Agriculture	Shopkeeper	Agriculture, shopkeeper	..	..	..	1
Agriculture	Labourer	Agriculture, labourer	..	1	..	2
Agriculture	Service	Agriculture, service	..	..	..	3
Agriculture	Labourer and service	Agriculture, labourer	..	1	..	4
Service	Agriculture and labourer	Service, agriculture	..	..	..	2
Service	Agriculture	Service and agriculture	..	1	..	1
CHAMAR						
Agriculture	Labourer	Agriculture, labourer	..	2	1	..
Agriculture	Labourer and service	Agriculture, labourer	..	1	..	4
Labourer	Service	Labourer and service	..	..	1	..
Labourer	Cobbler and service	Labourer and cobbler	..	..	..	1
Agriculture	Service and carpentry	Agriculture, service	..	..	..	1
Agriculture	Cobbler	Agriculture, cobbler, service and labourer	..	..	..	2
Agriculture	Cobbler	Agriculture, cobbler and service	..	..	..	1
HESI						
Musician	..	Musician	..	2	..	..

Expenditure

The average monthly expenditure per household represents amount spent by the household on main items like food, clothing, education and other items. The 'other items', include expenditure on travelling, religious ceremonies, recreations, amusements, lighting, fuel, medical aid and agricultural operations. The table would show that the main item of expenditure is on the food articles which gradually increase with the economical condition of the household. Though the villagers possess land, but it is not sufficient to meet out their demand of foodgrains for the whole of the year. There may be a few exceptions, but most of the households have to purchase extra grains. The expenditure on education is little, because so far as the education upto the primary or middle stan-

dard is concerned, it costs very little. The expenditure as returned in the table depicts nominal school fees, books and stationery. No one from the village is studying in the college.

The villagers try to adjust their expenditure within their income, but still the borrowing cannot be dispensed with in a society. Except for a few, the day to day expenditure of all the households is met from their income. At times they have to borrow on account of marriages, repairs and construction of houses and treatment of patients suffering from prolonged disease. If the present times are able to influence them to cut short their marriage and death expenditure, it would help in establishing their economy on a better footing.

Average Monthly Expenditure by Income Groups

Items of Expenditure	Below Rs. 50		Rs. 51—75		Rs. 76—100		Rs. 101 and over	
	No. of Households	Average Expenditure	No. of Households	Average Expenditure	No. of Households	Average Expenditure	No. of Households	Average Expenditure
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
RAJPUT								
Food	1	29.40	4	40.99	1	41.66	14	112.60
Clothing	1	4.16	4	10.41	1	12.50	14	20.83
Education	..	..	2	.66	..	..	9	1.99
Others	1	2.16	4	5.58	1	14.75	14	25.44
CHAMAR								
Food	..	..	3	41.06	2	41.66	9	96.10
Clothing	..	..	3	12.58	2	16.46	9	17.83
Education	..	..	1	.41	2	.16	4	2.41
Others	..	..	3	6.75	2	20.16	9	24.52
HESI								
Food	..	..	2	43.33	..	..	..	..
Clothing	..	..	2	4.33	..	..	..	..
Education	..	..	1	1.25	..	..	..	..
Others	..	..	2	1.91	..	..	..	..

Indebtedness

Out of 36 households in the village 12 are under debt. The table gives the details of indebtedness by causes:—

Causes	Amount of debt	Number of families in debt
House construction or repairs to the existing building	Rs. 2,100/-	3
Marriages	Rs. 2,750/-	5
Funerals	Rs. 100/-	1
Purchase of bullocks	Rs. 290/-	1
Ordinary wants	Rs. 100/-	1
Sickness, purchase of land	Rs. 600/-	1

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The table shows that the villagers are not in the habit of taking loan unnecessarily. The majority of the households had to borrow money on account of marriages and construction or repair of the houses. The villagers do not come out with the information regarding the source from which they get loan. It appears that their money lenders are in Mandi town. Sometimes the loan may be obtained from the fellow villager. The rate of interest varies from 10 per cent to 20 per cent.

Agriculture

It is evident, that the villagers depend on agriculture to a great extent, though many of them have other subsidiary occupations

which supplement their income. Break-up of the households owning or possessing land or have given out land to others for cultivation is as under:—

Community	Nature of interest on land	Number of Households and extent of land									
		No land	5 cents and below	5—10 cents	10—20 cents	21—50 cents	51 cents to 1 acre	1 to 2.4 acres	2.5 to 4.9 acres	5 to 10 acres	10 acres & above
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Rajput	1. Land owned	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	8	10	..
	2. Land held direct from Government under less substantial than ownership.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	3. Land held from private persons or institutions.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	4. Land given out to private persons or institutions.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chamar	1. Land owned	..	..	..	..	1	2	8	1	2	..
	2. Land held direct from government under less substantial than ownership.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	3. Land held from private persons or institutions.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	4. Land given out to private persons or institutions.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hesi	1. Land owned	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	2. Land held direct from government under less substantial than ownership	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	3. Land held from private persons or institutions.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	4. Land given out to private persons or institution.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total		3	..	..	..	2	2	8	9	12	..

Figures in the above table would show that out of 36 households in the village only 3 households including one of a Rajput and two of Hesis, do not possess any land. Among the rest 33 households, 2 households possess land 21 to 50 cents, 2 households 51 cents to 1 acre, 8 households possess 1 to 2.4 acres, 9

households possess 2.5 to 4.9 acres and 12 households possess 5 to 10 acres of land. There is not a single household which possess more than 10 acres of land. Again, the break-up of the households engaged in cultivation, industry or business belonging to the household is as under:—

Total number of households	Households engaged in cultivation only	Households engaged in industry only	Households engaged in business only	Households engaged in cultivation industry & business	Households engaged in cultivation & industry	Households engaged in cultivation & business	Households engaged in industry and business
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
36	22	..	..	..	5	1	..

The above table gives description only in respect of 28 households. Remaining 8 households are engaged in music (all Hesi are engaged in this trade), service and agriculture and labour and agriculture.

Before we discuss over the matter further, the land utilization statement supplied by the Patwari of the village is reproduced below. This information has been procured for the last nine years.

LAND UTILIZATION STATEMENT

The figures are in acres)

Sall (Year)	Kul Bhu-gaulic Kashetra-phal (Total geo-graphic area)	Jungal (Forest)	Banjar & gair mumkin agraj (Barren & Uncultivable)	Arazi brai digar (land put to Non-agriculture use)	Banjar kabal kasht (cultivable land)	Chirand mustkil digar (Permanent grazing land)	Land under Misc. trees crops and groves not included	Current fallow land	Other fallow land	Nett area sown	Total cropped area	Area sown more than once
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1952-53	185	..	4 (Gair-Mumkin)	..	..	32 (Khandi-ater-stony land)	..	1	..	136 (Un-irrigated land)	206 (Un-irrigated land)	70 (Un-irrigated land)
1953-54	185	..	12 (B) 4(G.M.)	..	..	32 (S.L.)	..	..	..	138 (U.I.)	218 (U.I.)	80 (U.I.)
1954-55	188	..	4(G.M.) 12 (b)	..	..	33(S.L.)	..	..	..	139 (U.I.)	198 (U.I.)	59 (U.I.)
1955-56	188	..	4(G.M.) 12(B)	..	..	33(S.L.)	..	..	..	139 (U.I.)	223 (U.I.)	84 (U.I.)
1956-57	188	..	4(G.M.) 12(B)	..	..	33(S.L.)	..	..	..	139 (U.I.)	245 (U.I.)	106 (U.I.)
1957-58	188	..	4(G.M.) 12(B)	..	..	33(S.L.)	..	..	..	141 (U.I.)	244 (U.I.)	103 (U.I.)
1958-59	195	..	4(G.M.) 14(B)	..	1	33(S.L.)	..	5	..	138 (U.I.)	215 (U.I.)	76 (U.I.)
1959-60	197	..	4(G.M.) 14(B)	..	1	33(S.L.)	..	2	..	143 (U.I.)	206 (U.I.)	63 (U.I.)
1960-61	197	..	4(G.M.) 14(B)	..	1	33(S.L.)	..	1	..	144 (U.I.)	229 (U.I.)	85 (U.I.)

The above abbreviations are explained as under :—

(G.M.) Gair Mumkin (Uncultivable) (B) Beed (Terrace) (S.L.) Stony Land (U.I.) Non-irrigated.

The table indicates that the area of the village in the years 1952-53 and 1953-54 was 185 acres. The village did not and does not include any forest. The net area sown was 136 and 138 acres. During the years 1954-55, 1955-56, 1956-57 and 1957-58 the area of the village increased to 188 acres from 185 acres during the previous years. This was due to certain changes in the revenue record. There was also increase in net area sown. It being 139, 139, 139 and 141 acres. The total cropped area also found an increase. It being 198, 223, 245 and 244 acres. From 188 acres in 1957-58 the area of village increased to 195 acres in 1958-59 and to 197 acres in the year 1959-60. In the year

1960-61 it remained the same. This increase in the area of the village has also been attributed to the minor adjustments in revenue records. Net area sown during these years was 138, 143 and 144 acres. The total cropped area was 215, 206 and 229 acres. There is no permanent pasture-land in the village and Khandiater (land full of stones and pebbles) of 33 acres. Before the year 1954-55 this type of land consisted of 32 acres. For the variation in the net area sown and total cropped area during one particular year to the another, no specific reason is assigned by the villagers or the Patwari. The latest area figure of the land under cultivation in the village is 144 acres. The total number of the

households in the village being 36, the average land holding of the country being 7.5 acres and that of the adjoining States of Punjab, U.P. being 12 and 2.5 acres respectively, according to the land holding Census conducted in 1956 by the Government of India.

In village Bir, both crops, Kharif and Rabi are harvested. The Kharif crops are paddy, maize, kodra, mash and kolath and those harvested in Rabi are wheat, barley and tobacco. To have a full view of these crops, the Jinaswar statement supplied by the Patwari is reproduced as under:—

RABI CROP

Year	Nature of land	Crops harvested				Total crop harvested	Area of crop failed
		Wheat (W)	Barley (B)	Tobacco (T)	Onion (O)		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1953	. . N.I.	43/28	..	..	..	43	28
1954	. . N.I.	79	3	1	..	83	..
1955	. . N.I.	61	2	1	..	64	..
1956	. . N.I.	83	5	..	..	88	..
1957	. . N.I.	85	1	..	..	86	..
1958	. . N.I.	104	2	..	..	106	..
1959	. . N.I.	75	3	..	..	78	..
1960	. . N.I.	60	1	2	..	62	..
1961	. . N.I.	84	..	..	1	85	..

Year	Total area sown	Deduct area that has been sown more than once	Balance correct area in which crops were sown	Total assessment of harvest	Incident of assessment on area of crops harvested	Kefiyatt babat aam mall fasal aur khasu waje indraj kharaba	
1	9	10	11	12	13	14	14
1953	. . 71	..	71	84	Rs. 1.18	Rs. W0.50	Rs.
1954	. . 83	..	83	85	1.05	W0.81	
1955	. . 64	..	64	85	1.33	B0.81	T0.87
1956	. . 88	..	88	85	0.95	W0.87	B0.87
1957	. . 86	..	86	85	0.98	W0.81	B0.81
1958	. . 106	..	106	85	0.80	W9.95	B1.00
1959	. . 78	..	78	86	1.10	W0.87	B0.87
1960	. . 62	..	62	86	1.39	W0.87	B0.87
1961	. . 85	..	85	..	1.07	T0.87	O0.8

- NOTES—1. 'W' stands for wheat.
2. 'B' stands for barley.
3. 'T' stands for tobacco.
4. 'O' stands for onion.
5. 'N.I.' stands for Non-irrigated.
6. The above areas are in acres.

KHARIF CROP

Year	Nature of land	Crops harvested						Total crop harvested	Area of crop failed
		Paddy	Maize	Koda	Mash	Kolath	Kachalu		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1952	 N.I.	50	23	58	3	1	..	135	..
1953	 N.I.	65	21	44	4	1	..	135	..
1954	 N.I.	51	20	56	6	1	..	134	..
1955	 N.I.	55	29	40	11	..	..	135	..
1956	 B.I.	61	48	38	12	..	..	159	..
1957	 N.I.	41	41	50	6	..	..	138	..
1958	 N.I.	44	40	53	..	..	..	137	..
1959	 N.I.	38	43	63	..	..	..	144	..
1960	 N.I.	50	43	50	..	..	1	144	..
1961	 N.I.	60	38	46	..	..	..	144	..

Year	Total area sown	Deduct area that has been sown more than once	Balance correct area in which crops were sown	Total assessment of harvest	Incident of assessment on area of crops harvested	Kefiyatt babat aam haal fasal aur khasu waje indraj kharaba			
1	11	12	13	14	15	16			
1952	. . . 135	..	315	169	Rs. 1.25	P 0.81	Mz 0.81	Kd 0.75	
						Ms 0.75	Kt 0.75		
1953	. . . 135	..	315	169	1.25	P 0.87	Mz 0.81	Kd 0.87	
						Ms 0.75	Kt 0.75		
1954	. . . 134	..	134	171	1.28	P 0.87	Mz 0.94	Kd	
						Ms 0.75	Kt 0.75		
1955	. . . 135	..	135	171	1.27	P 0.94	Mz 0.94	Kd 0.94	
						Ms 0.81			
1956	. . . 159	..	159	171	1.07	P 0.9	Mz 0.94	Kd 0.94	
						Ms 0.87			
1957	. . . 138	..	138	171	1.23	P 0.88	Mz 0.88	Kd 0.88	
						Ms 0.88			
1958	. . . 137	..	137	173	1.26	P 0.88	Mz 0.88	Kd 0.88	
1959	. . . 144	..	144	180	1.25	P 0.87	Mz 0.87	Kd 0.87	
1960	. . . 144	..	144	183	1.25	P 0.87	Mz 0.87	Kd 0.87	
1961	. . . 144	..	144	183	1.25	P 0.87	Mz 0.87	Kd 0.87	

NOTES:—

1. 'P' stands for paddy, 'Mz' for maize, 'Kd' for koda, 'Ms' for mash, 'Kt' for kolath and 'Kl' for kachalu.
2. The above areas are in acres.
3. Figures in columns 15 and 16 indicate rupees.

The Rabi crops produced in the village are wheat, barley, tobacco and onions. The area under cultivation for barley, tobacco and onions had been negligible. From 1953 onwards, onion was cultivated only in one acre during the year 1961. Tobacco was cultivated during the years 1954, 1955 and 1960. The area under cultivation was one acre each year. Similarly, acreage under barley cultivation was 3, 2, 5, 1, 3 and 1 during the years, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959 and 1960 respectively. Keeping these figures in view it can safely be said that the main Rabi crop of the village Bir is wheat only. It also becomes clear that there has been no particular change in the cropping pattern in Rabi crops since 1953 except in the year 1961 when a new crop of onion was added. The variation in the total area under cultivation was also negligible except for the year 1958 when it touched the highest acreage of 106 as compared to 86 in 1957 and 88 in 1956. The Patwari of the village and the villagers when asked for the reasons of this increase in area, could not explain anything about it. However, this acreage decreased subsequently to 78 in the following year, 1959 and to 62 in the year 1960. In the year 1953, the total area sown for Rabi crops was 71 acres, but the area which produced crop was 43 acres only. The crop failed in the remaining area of 28 acres. The cause for this failure is attributed to the less and untimely rains. The entire land under cultivation in the village, is non-irrigated. The agriculturists depend totally upon the rains. The statement shows that from 1953 onwards it was only once in the year 1953 when the rains failed.

The Kharif crops produced in the village, are paddy, maize, koda, mash, kolath and kachalu.

Practices connected with agriculture. Calendar of agricultural activities

January—Pausa/Magha	Preparing and manuring of plots for tobacco. Deep ploughing, cleaning of soil for maize and paddy. Threshing of paddy if the peasants have spare time.
February—Magha/Phalguna	Weeding in wheat and barley fields. Manuring the kitchen gardens for sowing vegetables. Preparing fields for onions. Burning of waste material like dead roots of koda and grass in paddy fields.
March—Phalguna/Chaitra	Hoeing of tobacco. Thinning of wheat plants where growth is thick. Second ploughing for maize. Sowing of onion. Weeding of wheat.

April—Chjatra/Vaisakha	Harvesting of barley. The field for maize are manured, ploughed for the third time and levelled. Preparation of soil for paddy.
May—Vaisakha/Jyaistha	Threshing and winnowing of barley. Harvesting of wheat. Threshing and winnowing of wheat. Preparing fields for Koda. Sowing of Koda. Preparing of soil for maize. Sowing of maize. Harrowing and levelling of paddy fields.
June—Jyaistha/Asadha	Winnowing of wheat. Light harrowing with donalith of Koda fields. Light harrowing of paddy fields.
July—Asadha/Shravana	Harrowing of Koda fields for the third and fourth time with donalith. Sowing of mash and kolath. Harrowing of maize fields. Hoeing and weeding of paddy fields.
August—Shravana/Bhadra	Hoeing and weeding of Koda fields. Hoeing and weeding of maize. Harrowing and levelling of paddy fields.
September—Bhadra/Ashvina	Cleaning of fields for wheat and barley. Hoeing of mash and kolath. Ripening of maize crop. Weeding in paddy fields. Harvesting of maize.
October—Ashvina/Kartika	First ploughing of barley and wheat fields. Preparation of soil for sowing wheat and barley. Harvesting of Koda crop. Threshing of maize. Harvesting of paddy.
November—Kartika/Margashirsha	Threshing of paddy, manuring of wheat and barley fields. Ploughing for the second time and levelling of wheat and barley fields. Sowing of wheat and barley.
December—Margashirsha/Pausa	Weeding of barley and wheat fields. Threshing of grains from the maize cobs.

RABI CROPS—Barley-Hordium Vulgare—It is a minor crop. From the Jinswar statement, it is clear that the land under barley cultivation varied from 1 to 3 acres. The average yield of barley in the village is 4 to 5 maunds per acre.

The sowing and harvesting months coincide with those of wheat. There being no facilities for irrigation, the maturity of the crop depends on the rains in winter. The farming practices of barley are the same as those of wheat.

Wheat-Triticum sativum—Wheat is the main Rabi crop of the village. About a week after harvesting paddy in the beginning of October, the land is ploughed deep. Clods are broken and the unwanted material removed. The roots of paddy plants are left over in the fields. These serve as manure. After cleaning the land, organic manure

in sufficient quantity is added and the seed sown by scattering it by broadcast method. Then the land is ploughed and levelled. In one bigha 4 to 5 pathas of seed is sown. These operations are completed towards the end of November.

After about twenty to twenty five days, wheat seeds start germinating. No hoeing is done in the village for wheat, but the weeds are removed in March. The plant is about six inches high in December and these are thinned where the growth is dense.

By the end of April, the crop ripens and the harvesting season starts in May. The plants are cut with sickles, from the middle of the stem, small bundles are prepared and fetched to the threshing floor. These are dried for 4 to 5 days and then the threshing work starts. The dried plants are spread over the floor and the cattle are made to tread over them. Then by winnowing the rhaff is removed.

KHARIF CROPS

Koda—After harvesting wheat in May, the soil is ploughed and cleaned of unwanted material like pebbles, stones, weeds and dead roots. Levelling is done with Sohaga. The seed is sown by broadcasting method in the end of May. After sowing the soil is again ploughed and levelled. In the middle of June harrowing is done. This operation is repeated four times after an interval of 15 days. At the time of fourth 'Donalith' which is called 'Chohar dena', seeds of Mash and Kolath are also sown in the space left over in between the plants of Koda. This operation is done towards the end of July. In the middle of August, hoeing with khilni is done and the weeds are removed. The crop ripens in October. Only cobs are removed by means of sickle, from the plants. Threshing is done by beating the cobs with sticks. Koda is said to be ever-lasting grain, and the people keep it stored for many years. The average yield of Koda in the village is 6 to 7 maunds per acre.

Maize—Zea Mays—Maize is a main crop. It forms the staple food. Every effort is made to have a good crop of maize. The soil is ploughed deep in January. Grass and other plants are removed from the hedges. Then the land is levelled. It is then kept fallow. In March the soil is again ploughed and levelled with sohaga. Organic and farm manure in sufficient quantity is added in April. The soil is again ploughed for the third time and

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manure mixed thoroughly. In the end of May, after a shower of rains, the seed is sown by broadcast method.

Again after a shower of rains, towards the middle of June, harrowing is done with the help of donalith. The weeds are also removed. Hoeing and weeding with khilni is again done in the end of June. This is followed by light ploughing in the end of July. In August, weeds are again removed and hoeing done with khilni.

The crop ripens in September and is harvested in the end of the month. The villagers including women enter the fields and cut the fully grown maize plants, bundles are made and carried home. Here, all the members of the household collect and remove the cobs from the plants. The cobs are dried in the threshing ground, courtyard of the house and at any other safe and sunny ground. When completely dried, the grains are separated by beating the cobs with sticks.

Paddy—Oryza—After harvesting Koda in October the soil is kept fallow. In the month of January, the soil is ploughed deep. Pebbles and weeds are removed. The women folk clean the hedges. Dry roots of Koda grass and other plants are collected in the fields and burnt. The ash is spread over and the soil is levelled with sohaga after a week. Pebbles and other unwanted material are again removed. Then the land is kept as it is.

In the beginning of April after a shower of rains farmers make three parties. One party goes on scattering the seed by broadcasting method. The second party goes on ploughing and the third party keep them busy in levelling the land. Before these operations the land is lightly ploughed and cleaned. Five days after sowing harrowing with donalith is done and the soil levelled with sohaga. After a shower of rains harrowing and levelling is again repeated. This is repeated in the end of June and August when weeds are also removed. Weeding is repeated in the beginning of September. The crop ripens in October, and harvested in the end of the month.

The plants are cut from the bottom and spread over the field. In November when these plants get dried after four or five days, bundles are made and carried to threshing ground. There, they are stored in heaps made in such a manner that rains may not damage the grains. In December or January, when the villagers have no other work to do threshing is taken up.

The plants are spread on the ground and cattle made to tread over, winnowing is done side by side by the women. The soil of the village is un-irrigated and stony. The yield is therefore quite low i.e. 6 to 8 maunds per acre.

Local terms connected with Agricultural Operations—

Marodhi . . .	Manuring
Khawara . . .	Threshing ground
Lunna . . .	Harvesting
Gahana . . .	Threshing
Punna . . .	Winnowing
Bahana . . .	Sowing
Mai pherna . . .	Levelling
Parali behana . . .	Deep Ploughing of the soil before sowing wheat
Taru dena . . .	Removing of pebbles and grass after 1st ploughing for paddy.
Chhumb dena . . .	First harrowing and levelling the soil after sowing the paddy.
Munger pherna . . .	Harrowing of the soil for the second time for paddy.
Syanda . . .	Removing the weeds in paddy fields in September.
Sita . . .	Cob.
Harrom dena . . .	Harrowing of paddy fields for the third time.
Harod dena . . .	Light ploughing
Kohar . . .	1st harrowing for Koda
Dohar . . .	2nd harrowing for Koda
Trehar . . .	3rd harrowing for Koda
Chohar . . .	4th harrowing for Koda.

Agricultural implements

The tools and equipment used by the villagers are age-old. In most of the cases, they are locally made. Some are purchased from Mandi. The villagers get their implements prepared from Brestu, a blacksmith in village Kathiana, about half a mile from the village. The blacksmith gets 8 seers of grains at the harvesting of Kharif crop and 4 seers of grains at Rabi crop for sharpening and repairs of the implements from time to time. For making new implements the charges are different for different implements. The list of the implements is given below:—

Implement	Use	Approximate Cost
Aree—Saw	Cutting wood	3.00
Axe	Cutting wood	5.00
Belcha—spade	Digging	6.00
Danlti	Harrowing	5.00

Implement	Use	Approximate Cost
Dratu—sickle	Harvesting	1.50
Darat—bigger sickle	Cutting wood	4.00
Gainti	Digging	8.00
Hal—Plough	Ploughing	10.00
Jungra—Yoke	Yoking the bulls	6.00
Jhabbai	Digging	25.00
Kodal	Hoing	3.00
Khilni	Hoeing	1.00
Kilta	Carrying manure	2.00
Khurpi	Hoing	1.50
Mai	Levelling	3.00
Jhawra	Digging	4.00
Patha	Measuring grains	1.00
Shoop	Winnowing	2.00
Tokri	Carrying grains	1.00

Weeds—The various weeds which grow in the village are Jawi, Rori, Pit Papra, Dudhi, Gungra and Milkari. These are removed by hand.

Pest and Diseases

Crop	Pest	Disease
Paddy	White ant, Rat	1. Semi loose smut and loose smut 2. Rusts
Maize	Maize borer, Blester, beetle	..
Paddy	Rice Hispa, Rice lug, Rice beetle	Paddy blast.
Wheat	White ant, rats	Wheat rust-loose smut

Organisation of Man-Power

All the members of the family contribute at the time of various agricultural activities. While the men perform the hard duties like ploughing and digging, women perform most of the work pertaining to sowing, hoeing, weeding and harvesting and winnowing. They also help in carrying the harvest, manure and husk. Apart from this they attend to cattles, clean the shed and sweep the threshing ground.

During the peak season, if a household cannot cope with the work, they have to engage labourers. These are Chamars and are engaged for carrying manure while sowing and harvesting of wheat. For paddy, labourers are engaged for harvesting. These labourers are paid 2 pathas of paddy per day plus meals for the day. A patha weighs about 1.75 kgs.

Animal Husbandry

Live Stock—The table gives the position of live-stock possessed by the villagers :—

Caste	Cows		He-calves		She-calves		Goats		Sheep		Buffalo		Bulls		Poultry birds		
	No. of		No. of		No. of		No. of		No. of		No. of		No. of		No. of		
	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	House-holds	Total No.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
Rajput	.	19	53	13	28	8	12	8	125	13	66	12	25	17	51	..	..
Chamar	.	12	24	4	6	2	3	1	14	2	3	5	6	13	28	3	8
Hesi	.	1	2	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Out of total of 36 households, 32 households possess cows. The total number of cows in the village is 79. Thus each household has more than two cows. Thirteen households of Rajputs, 4 households of Chamars and one household of Hesi have 36 he-calves. Ten households possess 15 she-calves. 31 buffaloes are possessed by 12 households of Rajputs and 5 of Chamars. Thirty households have 79 bulls. Poultry birds are possessed by Chamars only. Three households have 8 birds. There are 139 goats and 69 sheep possessed by 24 households. The milch cattle with the villagers are thus plenty in number. The yield from these cattle is low ranging from 8 to 12 chhataks per day. Poultry birds are not popular in the village. This can be a good industry if the villagers are induced to keep these birds. They have a ready market at Mandi for poultry produce.

The villagers buy their buffaloes, cows and bulls from Bhangrotu and Suket at the time of Nalwari fair. They also sell their unwanted cattle to the traders who come from Rupar, Hoshiarpur and Haryana. Mostly these traders purchase calves and weak bulls of hill breed at cheap price. They feed these cattle well and sell at handsome price next year. A pair of good desi bullocks may cost 300 to 500. The villagers go in for cheap bullocks, costing Rs. 200 to 300 a pair.

Buffaloes—There are 31 buffaloes in the village. These are owned by 12 households of Rajputs and 5 of Chamars. All these buffaloes are of pahari breed. The buffaloes generally start yielding milk at the age of 3 to 4 years and continue for 8 to 9 years. Daily milk yield per buffalo is 3 to 5 seers. A pahari buffalo cost Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. The cattle are given green leaves, grass, dried

hay and sometime oil cakes and chokar. The villagers give salt to the cattle to lick.

Sheep and Goats—There are 139 goats and 69 sheep in the village. These are purchased from Gaddis who wander near about in winter, for 10 to 12 rupees. Generally, these are purchased as kids and lambs at Rs. 10 or 12 per head and are also sold at a handsome price of Rs. 40 to 50 per goat. Apart from fetching money, the goats are good source of supply of manure. The sheep are reared for obtaining wool which the villagers spin and make cloth and pattoos.

The cattle are kept in sheds during the night. These sheds are a hut sort of construction with thatched roofs. Some of the sheds have bamboo walls. Every household possessing cattle, has a shed adjacent to the main house. The villagers keep the sheds clean, but the construction of the sheds are such that they are dingy dump and dark. The breed of the cattle in the village is the sound as in other hill villages.

Household Industries

The prominent household industry in the village is tanning and shoe-making. It is practised by 9 households of Chamars. Five of them have tanning and shoe-making as primary occupation. Apart from this, the ladies of the village spin wool, make mats khajara chatais and binas (seats) of maize stalk. A couple of boys are receiving training in sericulture at Mandi. These boys are of the view that there will be no scope for their work in the village and they shall prefer to be employed some-where after the completion of their training. A villager had a loom some ten years ago, but, then he

died and the work was not attended to by any body. The loom was still lying in his house.

Tanning and Shoe-making—The dead buffaloes are the pre-requisite of the Chamars engaged in tanning and shoe-making. In return, the Chamar has to give two pairs of desi shoes to the owner of the buffalo. After removing the skin from the dead animal, it is dried thoroughly in the sun for 5 to 7 days. Then it is kept immersed in water containing lime, for 3 to 5 days. This is followed by cleaning the skin thoroughly. For this purpose, the skin is kept in running water for 8 to 10 days. It is then again kept immersed in water containing powdered leaves of ambla trees. Then the skin is filled with water containing bark of ban and sama tree and kept suspended for two to three days. The tanning process is complete after drying the skin thoroughly.

Besides making ordinary desi juta, the shoe-makers of Bir also prepare jutas having beautiful tilla embroidery. The raw material used for making shoes consists of leather, golden thread and ordinary thread. The tools used are:—

1. Mungri for beating the leather
2. Rambi for cutting the leather
3. Kundi for stitching
4. Laplayar for punching
5. Furma shoe frame
6. Shil a slab of stone
7. Fali cutting is done on it.
8. Jamoor for stretching the leather
9. Sansi for stretching the leather
10. Punch for slotting.

The process of making shoes is universal and simple. For soling, thick leather is used and it is prepared separately first. Then the upper part is cut according to the required design. Embroidery is done by the women and when the upper is ready, it is stitched with bottom already prepared. Generally payment is made in grains. For one pair of mardana (male) juta, the cobbler gets 6 kg. of grains and for a pair of Zenana (female) juta 5 Kg. of grains. For repairs, the cobbler gets about 19 kg. of grains at the time of harvesting.

Carpentry—There is only one carpenter in the village. Apart from the wooden parts of agricultural implements the carpenter is engaged in the construction of houses. In Bir, carpenter is paid in cash and the wages vary from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per day. The tools used are usual which consist of a saw, tesa, files, randa, barma, nihan, hammers, zam-moor, sanni, pendulum and a spirit level and a measuring tape or foot-measure.

Basket-making—There is one basket maker in village Deodha, a mile from the village. The villagers employ him when they feel the need of baskets etc. In addition to the meals for the full day his charges are:—

Basket—2 seers of grains for a basket of capacity of 20 seers.

Changer—8 seers of grains.

Jirda—2 seers per yard.

Obnu—4 seers.

Peru—2 seers of grains for a peru of 20 seers capacity.

Winnowing Fan—4 seers.

The raw material i.e. bamboo is supplied by the villagers. The technique of making all these articles is the same as else-where.

Khajra mats—A plant known as khajra is found in abundance in the forests near the village. Women folk set out early in the morning and come back near-about noon-time with a heap of khajra leaves on their head. These leaves are then dried and woven with hand to make a beautiful mat. No instrument is used for making these mats. Some times, these leaves are dyed by boiling them in water to which red or blue or green dye purchased from Mandi is added. These dyed leaves are used to weave various patterns.

Co-operative Societies and Panchayats

Bahudya Sehkari Sabha Samiti, Bir—The Multipurpose Co-operative Society, Bir has been functioning under the name and style of Bahudaya Sehkari Sabha Samiti, Bir since 20th November, 1955 with its office at Lag. This society covers all the villages included in the Panchayat Circle, Tarnoh. The objectives of the society are:—

- (1) To advance loans to the members to purchase land, bulls, agricultural implements and seeds.

- (2) To advance loans for the construction and repairs of the houses.
- (3) To arrange the purchase and sale of household farming requirements and produce of the members.
- (4) To make provisions of educational assistance and recreational facilities to its members.
- (5) To facilitate the supply of controlled articles to the members and the villagers.

At the time of its establishment the society had 17 members with each having one share of Rs. 10 and Re. 1 as membership fee. Thus the society started with a capital of Rs. 187. The managing committee of the society comprises of a President, a Vice-President, Treasurer and four members. This managing committee is called the Board of Directors. They decide the policies of the society and the Secretary who gets an annual honorarium of Rs. 200 maintains the records. There is a part-time Chawkidar-cum-peoni who is paid Rs. 75 per year. In 1955, the society had 4 members from Bir. At present the number of members of the society is 56 which include 5 from Bir. These are Mangsar, Narain, Devi Ram, Khanu and Ghaula. Two of them are Chamars. No one from the village is a member of Board of Directors.

The society can advance maximum loan upto Rs. 500. In case the loan is less than Rs. 100, it is recovered in two instalments at the time of harvesting. If it exceeds Rs. 100, it is recovered in two years in four instalments. Uptil now, the Society has advanced Rs. 900 to 8 members. The society has received Rs. 450 as subsidy from the Government. Balance in hand with Society is Rs. 85.58.

The society has a sale Depot for the sale of sugar, rice and rock salt. The stock with Society is sugar worth Rs. 119, 8 bags of gur worth Rs. 116 and rice worth Rs. 103. The villagers do not appear to be happy with the working of the society. They say that only a few are benefited and the majority of the members and the villagers in general have no say.

Traditional Panchayats—Traditional Panchayats used to be a forceful organisation in the village before the formation of statutory Panchayats. Various matters arising out of cattle tres-pass, field demarcations, family quarrels and other minor disputes used to be decided in such Panchayats. These used to be temporary members, and appointed to decide a particular dispute. The parties under dispute approached the village elders

and men of influence to settle the dispute. Each party used to have one or two spokesmen who represented the case before these elders. After hearing both the parties, the decision was given and the arbitration so appointed was obviously dissolved. The decision made by them used, however, to be binding on both the parties. In case a party violated the decision, the other party again could approach the members of the arbitration to make the decision effective.

Such organisations had no legal instruments to get the decisions made by them effective, but the villagers explain that no one could dare to disobey. There was always fear of ex-communication. Chamars had no separate traditional Panchayat of their own. They too used to approach the elderly men among Rajputs. However, they had their own spokesmen.

With the opening of statutory Panchayats which have legal sanctions, these traditional Panchayats have gone into background. The cases are generally, now referred to the Gram Panchayat.

Gram and Nyaya Panchayats—The Gram Panchayat, Tarnoh, which includes Bir came into existence on the 1st January, 1955. It has its office at Lag, a hamlet of the village. The villages which are covered by this Panchayat Circle are:—

1. Arthhi
2. Bari
3. Barnyari
4. Bhaled
5. Bibhru
6. Bir
7. Chamarhwan
8. Dhanyari
9. Dhewn
10. Gadyara
11. Jalon
12. Jajar
13. Jamanra
14. Jandrora
15. Kathayana
16. Khad Kalyana
17. Kuthar
18. Kukri Khad
19. Kuttar
20. Laswai Khad
21. Ropri
22. Sadoh
23. Sakarwahn
24. Tarnoh
25. Thara.

The total members of the Panchayat are 21 which includes Pradhan and Up-Pradhan. Members from the village are Mangsaru, Shiv Ram, Phinu, Mrs. Chamari and Mrs. Naiku. The present members were elected in March, 1958. For the election the entire circle was divided into eight constituencies. Members to Gram Panchayat, Pradhan and Up-Pradhan are elected by show of hand. In Nayaya Panchayat, the number of members is 15 and there is only one member from the village Bir. This Panchayat was established in February, 1959. The members of Nayaya Panchayat are also elected by show of hands. Sarpanch and Naib-Sarpanch are further elected by the elected members.

In Himachal Pradesh, the working of the Panchayats is governed by the Himachal Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act of 1952. The powers, functions and the jurisdiction of Panchayats have been described as:—

1. Construction, repair, maintenance, cleaning and lighting of public streets.
2. Sanitation and taking curative and preventive measures in respect of infectious diseases and epidemic.
3. Registering births, deaths and marriages and maintenance of the registers.
4. Regulating places for disposal of dead bodies of human beings and animals and of other offensive matters.
5. Regulation of melas and markets within its area except those managed by the State Government.
6. Establishing and maintaining primary schools for boys and girls.
7. Establishment, management and care of common grazing grounds and land for the common benefit of the persons residing within its jurisdiction.
8. Construction, repair and maintenance of public wells, tanks and ponds for the supply of water for drinking, washing and bathing purposes, and regulation of sources of water supply for drinking purposes.
9. Assisting the development of agriculture, commerce and industry.
10. The maintenance of such records relating to cattle census, population and other statistics as may be prescribed.

11. Maintenance of all such roads, water courses and hydroelectric installations the management of which has been undertaken by the Panchayat with the sanction of the State Government.
12. Necessary financial or labour contribution for the construction of public roads, or water courses within the Gram Sabha area under the development programme of the State Government.
13. Fulfilling any other obligation imposed by any other law on a Gram Sabha.

There are a few discretionary functions of Panchayat. These include:—

- (a) Planting and maintaining trees at the sides of public streets and in other public places.
- (b) The improved breeding and medical treatment of cattle and prevention of disease in them.
- (c) Organizing subject to rules prescribed, a village volunteer force for watch and ward, for assisting Gram Panchayat and Nayaya Panchayat in the discharge of their functions and for the services of summons and notices issued by them.
- (d) Prohibiting or regulating the curing, tanning and drying of skins within 220 yards of the abadi.
- (e) Setting up organisations to promote good will and social harmony between different communities.
- (f) Maintenance and regulation of public radios.

Under the Himachal Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, the jurisdiction of Nyaya Panchayat shall extend to any suit of the following description if its value does not exceed one hundred rupees:—

- (a) A suit for money due on contract other than a contract in respect of immovable property.
- (b) A suit for the recovery of movable property or for the value thereof.
- (c) A suit for compensation for wrongfully taking or damaging a movable property.
- (d) A suit for damages caused by cattle tres-pass.

A case can be presented to the Panchayat either in writing or orally. The Gram Panchayat tries reconciliation for three months failing which it issues a certificate and the party pursues in Nyaya Panchayat.

The achievement of Gram Panchayat, Tarnoh are:

1. Construction of 8 bowlies in villages Bir, Jamanra, Kathyana, Kuthar, Nalhog and Khad Kalyana.
2. Laying of 2,000 feet long pipe line in village Khad Kalyana.
3. Construction of 2 mile foot path.
4. Construction of additional room in school building, Bir.

The Panchayat has a library of 274 books. It maintains implements which are loaned to the villagers when village paths and roads are to be constructed by contributory labour. Similarly, there are some musical instruments and furniture articles which the villagers can make use of.

In all 11 Diwani and 44 criminal cases came up before the Panchayat. Out of these 45 cases were disposed of by the Samjhota Committee appointed by the Gram Panchayat and these cases ended in compromise. Out of 10 cases referred to the Nyaya Panchayat, 9 more cases ended in compromise and in one criminal case, the accused was fined Rs. 10. In this criminal case Kesar Singh of Sadoh village was the complainant and Reshmu from the same village was respondent. The quarrel was over a kuhl. Reshmu diverted the kuhl to his fields while according to the local customs it was the turn of Kesar Singh to use the kuhl for the irrigation of his fields at that particular time and period. This dispute led to exchange of hot words and Kesar Singh filed the case with the Panchayat. From the statements of

the witness, the Panchayat decided that Reshmu was at fault and was fined Rs. 10 for misbehaviour. Reshmu duly paid the fine levied upon him.

The budget of the Panchayat for the year 1961-62 was:—

Income		Rs.
Opening balance	...	1,615
Aid from Block	...	325
Pay grants	...	780
Swai	...	...
Local rate	...	548
Nyaya Panchayat	...	100
Donations	...	25
Shamjhota Samiti	...	100
Miscellaneous	...	150
Shramdan	...	1,754
Expenditure		
Rent of building	...	120
Pay	...	780
Construction of Panchayat building	...	2,000
Construction of bowlies	...	1,799
Furniture	...	50
Sports Goods	...	25
T.A.	...	100
Radio	...	75
Tea Set	...	20
Cots	...	50
Miscellaneous	...	198

IV Social and Cultural Life

Population Comparison with 1961

According to 1951 Census, the population of the village was 191 persons. In 1961 it increased to 261. The percentage increase comes to 36.65. According to the figures collected by the Investigator during the survey,

the population comes to 301 persons, 147 men and 154 women.

Age and Sex-wise Distribution

The table indicates the age-wise distribution of the population:

Total of all ages			0—4		5—9		10—14		15—19		20—24		25—29		30—34		35—44		45—59		60 & over	
P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
301	147	154	21	29	22	27	16	16	16	16	11	19	17	14	6	7	12	13	14	13	12	10

Birth and Death

The figures obtained from the birth and death register maintained by Secretary Panchayat are:—

Year	Birth		Death	
	M	F	M	F
1955	2	2	..	..
1956	6	4	2	..
1957	11	6	..	..
1958	4	1	1	..
1959	2	2	3	..
1960	3	4	1	1
1961	8	6	3	2
1962	4	7	2	2

The families have been divided into four types. These are simple, intermediate, joint and others.

- A simple family consists of husband, wife and unmarried children.
- An intermediate family consists of married couple and unmarried brothers, sisters, one of the parents.
- Joint family consists of married couple with married sons/daughters or with married brothers/sisters.
- Other type of families consist of single member.

The Secretary Panchayat states that the villagers generally notify births and deaths in the office of Panchayat. However, omissions can be possible sometime. The Chowkidar of the Panchayat also collects these figures when he happens to visit a particular village.

Family Structure

The table indicates figures regarding nature of families in the village:

Caste	Total No. of H.Holds	Type of Families living in the Households			
		Simple	Inter-mediate	Joint	Others
Chamar	14	3	3	8	..
Hesi	2	1	1	..	..
Rajput	20	7	3	8	2

There are 11 simple families, 7 intermediate, 16 joint and 2 with single member, in the village. This indicates that the villagers believe more in joint family system. The eldest member of the house is the head of the family. All the decisions regarding family affairs are taken with his consent. He keeps harmony in the family, he always tries to meet every reasonable demand of other members. In a joint family, every earning member deposits his income with the head of the family. It is then his responsibility to run the family. Sometimes minor disputes crop up within the brothers or their wives and this leads to separation. In such events the property is distributed equally among the brothers. The figures showing size and composition of the households are:—

Total No. of House Holds	Single Member			2—3 Members			4—6 Members			7—9 Members			10 Members and above		
	H.H.	M	F	H.H.	M	F	H.H.	M	F	H.H.	M	F	H.H.	M	F
36	2	1	1	3	3	4	9	23	24	8	33	31	14	87	94

The figures in the table indicate that there are only two households with a single member each. Three households have 2 to 3 members each. There are 9 households with 4 to 6 members each and 8 households with 7 to 9 members each. Households with 10 members and above are maximum. This again confirm that the villagers prefer joint family system.

Inheritance of Property

The Hindu Law of Succession Act has been enforced by Government, but in actual munda band is prevalent in the village. According to this sons inherited the property in equal shares. Daughters had no right over the property. In case of man leaving behind a widow, the property was distributed in equal shares among the widow and the sons. Thus if a man left behind four sons and a widow, the property was to be distributed in five equal shares. Generally the widow mother joins one of her sons. Then he supports her. He enjoys her share of property.

Untouchability

Castism has deep roots in Hindu society. This village is in no way a different one. On the basis of two main castes there, it had been divided into two sections. These are Chamars and Rajputs. Rajputs are called Zamindars by the Chamars. Chamars are Scheduled Castes. They are considered inferior by the Rajputs. They do not inter-drink and inter-dine with them. They do not attend their functions and festivals. On the other hand Rajputs invite the Chamars to feasts held on various ceremonies like marriages. They are, however served outside the house. Entry to the only temple in the village is prohibited for them. Both the castes have separate bowlies for the supply of drinking water. A Chamar cannot make use of the bowli belonging to the Rajputs. Similarly, a Rajput shuns drinking water of the bowli belonging to Chamars.

Status of Women

Women play a most important part in running the household. Beside being the house-wives, the women in the village help their men folk in every walk of life. Except for ploughing, the women assist men in all other agricultural operations. She also contributes towards the economy of the house by employing herself in household duties and household industry. She weaves khajra mats and binas, knits pull-overs and other such things. She fetches water from the bowli, brings fodder for the cattle from the

jungle. She attends to the cattle and livestock, milk them and churn curd to extract butter. The Chamar women sell fuel in the town and it adds to the economy.

Temple

The fact that the village is so close to Mandi and the villagers have frequent contacts in the town, has hardly any bearing on the social and cultural life of the villagers. The village has usual rural atmosphere which is marked by the trend of the villagers towards modern changes. The villagers have their own beliefs and superstitions. They believe in various Hindu gods. The prominent are, Shiva, Kali, Tarna Mata, Ram, Krishna, Durga, various Birs and the local deities Bala Kamhesar and Kamrah. The villagers have recently built a small shrine over the image of Kamrah. This god has an interesting legend which is associated with the epic age of Mahabharata.

In Dwaper Yug, during the time of Mahabharata, there was a great king named Rattan Jachha. He was known as one of the mightiest king of that period. Being famous for his generosity, no one went empty handed from his palace. Anything, a beggar desired was granted to him by the king. By such virtue of his, the king had attained super-natural power. Unfortunately, this was the period when Kaurwas and Pandwas were at daggers drawn and the war was considered inevitable. Victory was sure to the side which could make the great king Rattan Jachha as their ally. Both the rivals Kaurwas and Pandwas approached him, but Kaurwas could secure the alliance. This was a great setback to the Pandwas and they had to make the counter plans. They had a conference and after long discussions it was decided that Lord Krishna should be consulted to suggest some counter action. Yudhishtra and Arjuna were deputed for the project. They begged Lord Krishna to guide them. After a lot of thinking a plan was drawn up that the generosity of the kind Rattan Jachha should be made use of. It was then decided that Arjuna should disguise himself as a beggar and call upon him for alms.

On the next day Arjuna disguised himself as beggar and went to the palace of Rattan Jachha. The king in his usual way came out to receive the beggar. He asked him to let him know the name of the article the beggar wanted in alms. The beggar—Arjuna— informed the king that the article which he wanted was very dear to him and he would

not like to part with that. He would, therefore, not disclose his desire until the king promised to fulfil it. The king, thereupon, informed the beggar that it was not an ordinary man to whom he had come, but it was the greatest king Rattan Jachha who was known for his generosity and from whose doors no beggar had so far gone empty handed. The tradition would be kept intact in his case too and anything he desired would be granted to him. Then the beggar disclosed his desire and asked the king to give him his head. The king was astonished to know it. He became suspicious about the beggar, whom he doubted, was someone from the Pandwas. He then set his super-natural powers to work and by virtue of them could know that it was Arjuna who had come to betray him. Already he had given his words to help the Kaurwas in the war. On the other hand, he had to give his head to the beggar who was Arjuna, the enemy of the Kaurwas. The king was, therefore, in a fix as how to fulfil his promise with both Kaurwas and the beggar. In case he gave his head to the beggar, it was not possible for him to help Kaurwas in war against Pandwas and if he did not give his head to the beggar, he had to back out his words. He wanted to keep his words with both the parties and after a good deal of thinking, the king told the beggar that he would give his head to him provided it was preserved and placed on a high platform to be constructed at the sight of the war, so that it could have the full view of the war field. Arjuna promised to do so. Then the king drew his sword and beheaded himself. Arjuna picked up the head and went to Lord Krishna.

When the war broke out and both the rival armies stood facing each other, a high platform was constructed and the head of the king Rattan Jachha was placed on it. So that the head had a full view of both the armies. When the war started, it is said that by virtue of his super-natural powers, the head of Rattan Jachha acted as if it were alive. When his head saw that Kaurwas were losing the war, the head began to laugh loudly and by this laughter thousands of Pandwas started dying. In this way, Pandwas found it difficult to attain the victory. They again consulted Lord Krishna and prayed him to get them out of this peril. Lord Krishna told the Pandwas that there was no other way out except that he himself should pray the king to stop the destruction of Pandwas. Then Lord Krishna accompanied by the five Pandwas went to the platform and prayed him to stop helping the Kaurwas. Lord Krishna promised

him that the Pandwas would worship him as one of their gods if he acceded to their request. On pursuation of Lord Krishna Rattan Jachha stopped laughing and the Pandwas could attain their victory.

The Pandwas, thus started worshipping Rattan Jachha as a god. It is said that one day, Rattan Jachha gave vision to the Pandwas and asked them to install his idol in some sacred place. To do this Pandwas started on journey to find out the sacred place and reached Kamrah which is in Mandi district. They found the place suitable and installed the idol of Rattan Jachha there. It is why God Jachha acquired the name of Kamrah Dev. It is said that the Pandwas while on their journey to Kamrah, took rest at many places. They installed a token image of Jachha wherever they took rest. Bir is one of the places where Pandwas took rest. Thus an image was installed there also.

Gugga—There is a shrine of Gugga on the way to village from Mandi. The villagers have great faith in Gugga and narrate an interesting legend:—

In Marwar, there were two sisters named Kasla and Basla. Neither of them had any child. To have one, Basla meditated in honour of Lord Brahma for twelve years continuously. But her desire remained unfulfilled. Again she meditated in honour of Lord Vishnu, for twelve years more, but to no avail. In the mean time it so happened that Guru Gorakh Nath alongwith his millions of disciples came to Marwar. By his presence in that land, the deserts turned into greenery and the dry wells swelled with water. Hearing this, Basla sent one of her maid servants to the saint to beg him to visit her. The Guru gave his consent and on next Sunday he knocked at her door. Basla received him with great honour. Then she ordered her maids to bring heaps of fruits, sweets and food to be served to the Guru. Gorakh Nath took out a dish from his 'jholi' and asked Basla to put all the eatables in that dish. Basla was amazed to see that all those eatables could not fill the dish. Then she ordered for more, but the dish remained empty. Realising the dilemma of Basla, the Guru again took out two peas from his jholi and placed them in the dish. The Basla was wonder-struck to see that the dish had filled to its brim with delicious food. Basla was very much impressed to see all these miracles. She prayed to the Guru that she wanted a son. He gave his blessings and said that she would bear one, if she meditated for another 12 years and chant the name

of Guru Gorakh Nath. He directed her that the site of meditation should be kept very clean. It should be cleaned with her tongue and swept with her hair. After the meditation she should come to his Kutiya in Kajli Ban where she would get a fruit from him. After eating this fruit, she would conceive a son.

Basla, in all her earnestness followed the direction of the Guru. When eleven years of meditation were over, her sister Kasla came to know about the boon Basla had received from Guru Gorakh Nath. She was jealous of her and in accomplishment with her religious brother, Sankhu conspired to grab the fruit from Basla when she was to get from the Guru. To attain her ends, she pretended to be sick and wanted to go to the shrine of Guru Gorakh Nath for propitiation. She asked Basla to lend her the robe in which she propitiated the Guru. Basla was very simple and did not doubt the bonafides of her sister. She gave away the robe. Kasla put on the robe and knocked at the doors of the shrine of Guru Gorakh Nath. She pretended herself to be Basla and begged him for the boon, as she had completed the twelve years' penance. Guru Gorakh Nath was misled and took her to be Basla. He, however, was very angry upon her for not acting according to his directions and coming earlier than the appointed day. She pretended to forget the particular day and begged the pardon, of the Guru. Gorakh Nath, taking into consideration the penance she had done, pardoned her. He, then took out two grains from his jholi and gave them to Kasla. He directed her to eat them so that she could conceive a child.

Thus Kasla achieved her ends and came back to Basla. She taunted Basla that inspite of her 12 years' penance in honour of Lord Brahma and further 12 years' penance in honour of Lord Vishnu and still further 12 years' penance in honour of Guru Gorakh Nath she gained nothing, while she was going to conceive a child only by going to the shrine of Guru Gorakh Nath to propitiate him. Basla smelt the rat and on the following Sunday she took bath and decorated her hair with jasmine flowers. Then she dressed herself in white robe and went to the shrine of the Guru. There she informed him that she had completed the 12 years' penance and she was entitled for the fruit as promised by him. Hearing this Guru became angry and rebuked her for her greed. He said that she had already got the fruit and in asking for one more she was going to cheat him. This confirmed Basla's doubt about her

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sister Kasla. She apprised the Guru how her sister Kasla had cheated him. The Guru then by virtue of his spiritual powers derived the truth. To learn it, he became furious and in his fury he blew a horn. By the sound of the horn, the earth began to tremble and it started raining heavily. He cursed that the grain given by him to Kasla would not bear a son. Then from his jholi he gave roots of some tree to Basla. He directed her to powder it and mix it in two separate bowls. While drinking from the first bowl, she should invoke the name of Gugga. From the second bowl, the name of Gugri should be invoked. The stone on which the root was powdered should be licked by her mare, and the name of Neela be invoked.

Basla went back to Marwar and followed the direction of the Guru. After the nine months of pregnancy she was going to her parent's house, riding on a bull. Kasla came to know it and made her religious brother, Sankhu, who was a serpent, to bite the bull. The bull died and Basla came to a great grief. But Gugga from her womb consoled her and requested her to go back. He also restored life to the bull. After the completion of ten months, Basla gave birth to a son, Kasla to a daughter. They were named Gugga and Gugri. The mare also gave birth, the horse was named Neela.

Gugga is said to have performed great heroic deeds during his life. It is said that while he was a child, Kasla again tried to take his life by applying potent poison on her breast which she allowed the child Gugga to suck. The poison had no effect upon the child. On the other hand, the child sucked blood of Kasla through her breast and killed her. Again two rivals of Gugga, named Arjan and Surjan, in the disguise of Gugga stole the cow Kapila which had been given in alms to a Brahmini by his father. The cow was supernatural. It had golden horns and gave so much milk that 12 maunds of butter was extracted from it daily. The rivals of Gugga thought that the Brahmini would not bear the loss of the cow. She would kill herself and throw curse on Gugga to become a leper. When the Brahmini came to know that Gugga had stolen her unique cow, she went to him and asked him to restore her cow. In case he failed she threatened him that she would take her life and the curse would fall upon him. Thus, Gugga riding on his horse Neela set out in search. In restoring the cow, Gugga had to fight very hard and in these fights he lost his head. It is said that Gugga fought against his enemies without the head and restored the cow.

Bala Kamhesar—Bala Kamhesar is a minor god and is said to be the one of the kins of Kamrah. In the village, a small shrine of this god is found. Villagers could not narrate any legend of this shrine. They, however, have faith in this god. They offer a jagra, every third year on Baisakhi in honour of this god. In the morning dhoop and babroos night.

also sacrifice a goat. At night hymns are are offered to the deity. Some households sung and villagers keep awake till mid-

Kulaj—Every household has a family god which is known as Kulaj. The villagers have Budha Bingal, Naina Devi and Prasar as their family gods. The temple of Budha Bingal is at about seven miles from Mandi towards Jogindarnagar. The Temple of Naina Devi is at Rawalsar, about 17 miles from Mandi. Hair preserved at the time of hair cutting ceremony are offered to Kulaj. A goat is sacrificed and a feast held.

Bir—The village is said to have acquired its name from the word Bir. People are of view that the village was the abode of a Bir, which they think is a good spirit. Some are of the opinion that Bir is also a minor god which guard the villagers against evil spirits. There are a few villagers who said that they came across Bir guiding them late at night. He is clad in snow-white robe and ensure the safety of the villagers while they happen to go out at night. Bir is worshipped on Sunday by offering dhoop and rote.

Sidhs—The villagers believe in various Sidhs. The cult of Sidhs has been described in 'Punjab Gazetteers' Mandi State, 1920 Volume XII-A. The relevant extract reproduced might be of interest.

"The Siddhs are widely venerated, and as in Hoshiarpur their shrines are often found on the tops of hills. The compiler of the Hoshiarpur Gazetteer describes them as the local divinities of the out Himalayas and to a limited extent this is true of the western and northern parts of Mandi, but they are practically unknown in the higher hills and even where their cult is popular, there are as much household as local deities. The origin of the cult is obscure. Some describe the Siddhs as holy men, but they are often found associated with Shiva worship and this is particularly the case in the Bhangal and neighbouring waziris where a famous shrine of Balak Rupi is situated. This god is generally recognised as manifestation of Shiva. But in the courtyard of most houses in the tract is a small shrine of the type usually dedicated to a Siddh. Sometimes the people describe it as one in honour of a Siddh and at others as in honour of

Balak Rupi. This confusion would seem to show that the veneration of the Siddhs is a branch of Shivaism.

The domestic shrine of a Siddh usually stands on a solid base about four feet from the ground. It is open in the front and is roofed with slates. Sometimes the shrine contains an image and sometimes only the foot-marks of the Siddh. Such marks have been described as those of Budha, but the identification is very improbable, and it may be noted they are not peculiar to the Siddhs. At the main approaches to the village, or at a short distance from a temple, pillars will often be seen surmounted with a flat slab of stone on which are carved foot-marks, a tiger and a trident. These are sacred to Devi and their object is generally to invoke her power against any evil influence which may approach the temple or village. Sometimes such pillars appear to represent the path by which the presiding spirit has entered his temple, or to act as sign-posts by which he may find his way when he goes on a journey.

To return to the shrines of the Siddhs, the symbolic offerings usually seen there are the pastoral crook, the wooden sandals of the ascetic and his wooden arm-rest which, when not in use, he carries over his shoulder. The first fruits of harvest are offered at the shrine and a Siddh is supposed to protect his votaries from illness and other calamities. He often possesses people and this is a sign that they must devote themselves to his service. The symbol of dedication is a pair of diminutive silver horns attached to a thread worn round the neck. These are worn for the rest of man's life, and he must also make regular offerings at the shrine of the Siddh, but generally no other services are demanded. Sometimes, when a suppliant vows an offering to the god if a certain boon is granted, he will wear a necklet either of string or rice-straw until the compact has been fulfilled by both parties. He is then at liberty to remove it.

The local shrines of the Siddhs are greatly frequented by women, Sunday being the most popular day of worship. Like Nar Singh, the Siddh bestows progeny, and children vouchsafed in answer to prayer are often dedicated to him, the silver horns being fastened round their necks soon after birth. They are henceforth the sevaks or servants of the god. Again, a Siddh is promised that a vigil will be kept in his name if he grants some request, and should he do so the members of several families—men, women and children—gather at his shrine on the day appointed. A goat is sacrificed

and an offering of a loaf made. The votaries sing and dance all night, many of them coming under his favour and showing the usual signs of possession. No one must sleep so long as the vigil lasts."

Fairs and Festivals

Fairs and festivals have great impact over the social and cultural life of the villagers. Fairs are occasions for merriment and humour. Villagers await eagerly for the dates on which such fairs are held. One fair on a minor scale is held in the village, but then the villagers enjoy fairs held in the surrounding villages. The notable fairs are:—

Nahori or Nyoju Jatar—This fair is held on the 1st of Jayaistha. On this occasion, newly harvested wheat is offered to local deity Prasar. This fair is held from the time immemorial. This fair is a sort of local one which is attended by about 500 to 700 persons belonging to the village and to the surrounding areas. The villagers enjoy Sur, a local drink. The fair is organised by the villagers themselves and highlights of the fair are sports by the school children. The fair is not important so far as the economic aspect of the villagers is concerned. Four to five shopkeepers belonging to the surrounding villages set their stalls. Sweets, articles of merchandise including cheap soaps, cheap type of toys, cosmetics, flutes, ektara are main items of sale. Ice-cream sellers from Mandi are a great attraction for the children.

Surgani Jatar—This fair is held on the 2nd Asadha at village Badgaon. The village is about 2 miles from Bir. This is a religious fair in which people pay their veneration to the local deity Surgani. Some offer a goat in sacrifice. No history of the fair is available. About 400 to 500 persons from the surrounding villages and Mandi town attend the fair. The fair is organised by the Panchayat. The highlights of the fair are merry-go-rounds, sports by the school children, dance parties organised by biri and cigarette dealers and magicians. About 10 to 20 hawkers and shopkeepers install their small shops in the fair. These shopkeepers are from Mandi, Saigaloo, Chaloh, Sadhiana and Bir. The stalls include those of fruits and dry fruits, chat shops, confectionery and general merchandise.

In addition to these local fairs, the villagers enjoy Shivratri fair at Mandi, Mahu Nag fair at Gutkar, Nalwari fair at Bhangrotu and Nalwari fair at Suket.

The villagers have a cycle of festivals which they celebrate. The important festivals are:—

Bara Tehwar—It falls in the month of Chaitra. It marks the commencement of the new year. On this day, new clothes are worn by the children. Purohit is summoned. He worships Ganesha and reads extracts from jantri which predict good or evil effects of stars on various Rashis during the coming year. Gur and mishri is distributed as Parsad. The women observe fast.

Bashoa—The festival is celebrated on the 1st of Vaisakha every year. Chamars as well as Rajputs celebrate it. Married daughters and their husbands are invited to feast. Askloos, babroos and bhallas are special dishes.

The ritual observed is that earthen pitchers are given away to Brahmins and a few of villagers go to Rawalsar to have a dip in the holy lake there. Chamars enjoy lot of Sur.

Naulaj—This falls on the 1st of Jayaistha. Babroos are offered to the local deity. Married daughters are invited. There is a local fair on this day.

Nag Panchami—It falls in the month of Sravana. On this day, rote—thick sweetened loaf fried in ghee is offered to the Nags. A rough figure of a snake is drawn on one of the walls of cow-shed with loshti—brownish clay, and worshipped. This is believed to be a safeguard against snake-bite.

Shiv Chautri—It falls on the first of Sravana. The purohit visits every house and paste a piece of paper on the top of each door frame. On it a Sanskrit shaloka is written and a square sub-divided into sixteen small equal squares is drawn. In these small squares, figures up to 16 are written in such a way that the sum of every row comes to thirty-four. Hence it is called chautri which means thirty-four. This shaloka and the figures drive away the evil spirits to enter the house. Shiv chautri is believed to invoke the blessings of Lord Shiva.

Salunu—This is Raksha-bandhan. It is celebrated on the day of new moon in Sravana. The purohit visits each of his jajmans to tie red thread called rakhis around the wrist. While doing so, he chants a mantra. The clients pay dakshana to the purohit. Married sisters are invited for lunch and they also tie silken threads called rakhis around the wrists of their brothers. They too get some money.

Haritalika—This falls on the 3rd day after the amawasya of Bhadra. Women keep fast on this day. It is believed that fast on this day invokes the blessings of Shiva for the safety and welfare of the husbands. Parvati kept this fast and got Shiva as her husband. By keeping this fast, the girls hope to get good husbands.

Pathar Chauth—Pathar Chauth falls on the 4th day of Shukal-paksh in Bhadra. People believe that if they see the moon on this day, they are likely to fall prey of some false accusation. If at all some one sees the moon by mistake, the evil effect is warded off by instigating someone to abuse him and to achieve this end stones are thrown on the roofs of neighbouring houses. Naturally this invites abuses and so the curse is supposed to have no effect.

Gugga Naumi—It falls on the 9th day of black half in the month of Bhadra. The villagers go to the shrine of Gugga and pay homage to the deity.

Janam Ashtami—It falls on the 8th day of the dark half in the month of Sravana or Bhadra. Almost every adult in the house keeps fast. On this day Lord Krishna was born and in some houses a swing carrying an idol or image of the Lord is hung. The household deities are worshipped at midnight and phalahar taken. Kirtans are held.

Sair—It is one of the chief festivals which the villagers celebrate. It falls on the first day of Ashvina. At previous night a basket containing galgal, doob grass and a maize cob is placed in one of the rooms. A maize cob is also placed in every room and it is a must for every one to have the darshan of the cob early in the next morning. Babroos are prepared and offered to Sair. Children enjoy a game of walnuts. Women and children wear new clothes. Special dish of this day is kheer along with babroos. This day marks the end of the rainy season and the villagers thank the God of rains for not failing them.

Navratras—Nine Navratras fall in the month of Ashvina. These are auspicious days for starting any new work. Engagements are made in Navratras. Havan and paath to achieve some boon are performed in these days. In Mandi town a fair at Tarna Devi Temple is held. Villagers also attend this fair.

Durga Ashtami—It falls on the 8th day of Navratras. Havan is performed on this day and 9 unmarried girls are worshipped. Halwa is prepared and offered to these girls. Women keep fast and eat only phalahar.

Dussehra—This is a famous festival which falls in Ashvina. Villagers celebrate Ram's victory over Ravana. On this day delicious dishes are prepared. These are askloos, patandas and kheer.

Diwali—Diwali is celebrated all over the hills in somewhat the same manner. It falls in Kartika usually fifteen days after Dussehra. It is said that on the return of Rama from 14 years' exile, the public of Ayodhya held a big celebration. They cleaned their houses and the city. The paths and roads were decorated. Sweets were distributed and at night the city was illuminated. Since then this is celebrated as a festival. Now goddess Laxmi is worshipped.

In the evening, villagers prepare special dishes and exchange them with friends and relatives. Earthen lamps in which sarson oil is used, are lit. The villagers make big grass balls and lit them. A string is attached to such a grass ball and every male member of the household whirls the burning grass ball by holding it the other end of the string. The dishes prepared on this day are halwa, patandas, babroos, kheer and askloos.

Barlaj—This falls on the next day of Diwali. On this day the agricultural implements are worshipped by the villagers. Shop-keeper worships his scale and account books. The students their books, copies, pen and pencil. Babroos and bhallas are offered to the local deity which is also worshipped.

Hoi Hatthi—This festival falls before Diwali. The women keep fast on this day for the welfare of their children. They draw rough figures on the wall and worship it. This is hoi workshop. The mothers apply vermilion to their sons and offer them luchis.

Bhai Dooj—This falls on the third day after Diwali. This is a festival of brothers and sisters. The sisters apply vermilion on the fore-heads of their brothers. They also offer sweets, pan and supari, and crushed cocoanut to their brothers. In return, the brothers give money, clothes and other presents to their sisters.

Lohri—It falls on the 1st of Magha a few days before Lohri, girls below seven years of age go from door to door and sing Lohri songs. In return they get some money or Gur. Sesamum and gur balls are relished on this day. These balls are called Tilaoe. The women keep fast. At night fire is lit. The special dish of Lohri is khichri—a hotch potch of pulses and rice taken with ghee.

Shivratri—This festival comes in the month of Phalguna and is celebrated in

honour of Lord Shiva. The villagers keep fast on this day. It is said that on this day Lord Shiva married the daughter of Himachal. On this marriage the devotees of Shiva rejoiced and kept fast. Among the villagers Shivratri is considered the best day for marriage ceremony.

Holi—This festival also falls in Phalguna and marks the end of winter. A few days before Holi, the boys go from house to house and collect fuel which they burn on the crossings of the village paths. The villagers celebrate Holi by playing with coloured water and powder. At night a big fire is burnt.

Holi is associated with Prahlad and his aunt Holika. Prahlad was the son of Harinyakashyap who had proclaimed himself as god and had prohibited the worship of Lord Vishnu. But his son Prahlad did not accept it and became a devout follower of Vishnu. Harinyakashyap tried his best to kill him by hurling him down from a high mountain and by many other means, but every time Prahlad had a miraculous escape on account of divine help. Prahlad had an aunt, his father's sister, Holika by name, who had acquired by some means the miraculous power that fire would not harm her. She offered to Harinyakashyap her services to enable him to get rid of Prahlad who was proving to be thorn in his side. So one day she got built a huge pyre of wood cunningly hidden under the gaily decorated seat on which she sat. She sent for Prahlad and took him in her lap and started caressing him. Meantime, as already planned, the pyre was put to fire. All expected that Prahlad would be consumed by the fire and Holika by virtue of the miraculous power she enjoyed would remain unseathed. When Prahlad saw this he started reciting Lord Vishnu's prayer and this had the desired result. Prahlad escaped from the blazing fire unharmed and Holika notwithstanding the immunity she had hitherto enjoyed from fire, was reduced to ashes. To commemorate this event, Holi is celebrated and a big log fire is burnt in the evening to symbolise the burning of Holika.

Common Beliefs and Superstitions

A good many beliefs and superstitions prevail in the village. Many of them are common in most of hill villages, but these might be of interest to the readers.

No agricultural operation is performed on a saja, the first day of Vikrami month. For sowing Tuesday is the auspicious day and

for harvesting Sunday. If a new land is to be ploughed for the first time, a goat is sacrificed. At each harvesting purohit of the household gets 5 pathas of grains. Similarly grains are offered to local deity. Other beliefs are:—

Women are prohibited to comb their hair, wash clothes and do stitching work on a festival day. All these things are also prohibited on a day when someone from the house goes on a long journey.

The house should not be swept after some one from the house leaves the house for long journey.

After taking bath, it is believed to be good if some water is offered to sun towards the sun.

It is considered bad if a fruit or flower is plucked after sun set.

It is considered bad to borrow salt from any one.

To place a shoe up side down is considered a bad omen.

To start on a long journey on Sunday is avoided.

To come across an empty pitcher, a naked person, widow, a Brahmin with tika on his forehead, fighting dogs and a snake are considered bad omens to start on a journey.

To come across a pitcher full of water, unmarried girl, a cow, a milk-maid are good omens to start on a journey.

To kill a snake is considered inauspicious.

Witch Craft

People believe in witch-craft. An extract from Mandi Gazetteer is reproduced below:

"Mandi and Suket have always been famous for their witches. The Ghoghar-kidhar not far from Jhatingri, is notorious for the battle which ranges there on the 16th Bhadon each year. The combatants are the gods and the witches. If the former win, there will be little sickness during the year, but the crops will be poor; if the latter are victorious, the harvest will be bountiful, but there will be many deaths amongst the people. On the night of battle the graziers remove their cattle from near the place on the ridge where the rival hosts assemble and the peasants are always careful not to go outside after night fall. The doors are securely bolted, thorn branches placed before them, charms nailed on the lintels and mustard seed sprinkled on the fields

and around the houses and the cattle sheds. That night one should always sleep on the left side, for otherwise witch may snatch away one's heart. Fever contracted that day is 'witch's fever', and very difficult to cure; if it is shaman off before the Diwali, the patient will die.

Formerly, several methods were practised for the detection of witches. The most popular was the water test. A woman suspected to witchcraft was tied in a blanket and then thrown into a pond. If she sank, she was innocent; but then she rarely survived the treatment; if she floated, as all witches do, she was put to death. So, in any case, she gave no further trouble. Trial by ordeal was sometimes adopted. Two balls of flour, one containing gold and the other silver, were placed in a vessel of water. The suspect was bathed and made to stand on a sacred square. She then picked out one of the balls, silver proclaiming her innocence while gold confirmed her guilt. Or gain when a witch was known to be doing mischief, the women of the neighbourhood were paraded before a gur or diviner of the god, who was in a state of ecstasy. Each woman spat on the ground as she passed, and if the gur took no notice she left with an unblemished character; but if the gur springing forward began to wallop her with his iron scourge, then she was proved a witch and was lucky if she escaped with her life.

These practices are now rarely followed; but persons who are suspected of witchcraft are carefully avoided. Only a few months ago the writer received a petition from a woman living in a village from which the spirit of the local deity had fled. Disgusted with his subjects he had run away and his diviner could not in consequence, come under the divine afflatus. The villagers suspected the petitioner having bewitched the god and she complained that they were ill-treating her. She protested her innocence, bringing a counter charge against the diviner's wife; who she alleged to be the cause of all the trouble. Finally she asked that the police should be allowed to investigate according to ancient custom and to punish the guilty one. The request, it need hardly be added, was not granted."

Education

Villagers are quite aware that only the education can brighten the future of their children and the village. A few, however, explain that it is difficult for them to spare the children to attend the school. They say, they shall have no one to tend to the grazing of the cattle, if they do so. Anyhow, by and by these people will be forced to realise that for children, education is more important than grazing the cattle. The table gives the figures regarding literacy in the village:—

Age groups	Total Population			Illiterate		Literate without educational Standard		Primary or Basic		Matric or Higher Secondary	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
All ages	301	147	154	85	146	41	8	19	..	2	..
0—14	131	59	72	32	65	23	7	4	..	..	..
15—34	95	50	45	22	44	13	1	13	..	2	..
35—59	52	26	26	19	26	5	..	2	..	..	..
60 and Over	23	12	11	12	11	..	..	..	..	..	..

Out of a total population of 301 persons, 70 persons, including 62 men and 8 women are literate. The literacy percentage comes to about 23 which is low. There are two matriculates and 19 men who are primary or basic pass. 41 men and 8 women are literate without educational standard. This includes students belonging to the village.

Government Junior Basic School, Bir— There is a Junior Basic School in the village. The school was opened in 1955 when villagers raised some funds through contribution. The school was taken over by the Government in 1958. The present staff of the school is 2 Matric Basic trained and 1 Middle J.B. teacher. Villages from which the students read in this school are

Kathiana, Dheun, Gadiada, Deoha, Kutla, Dhar, Khanet, Lote, Jamannu, Bhared, Khaprera, Parwar, Uprela Tarnoh, Lag, Badgaon, Dibharu and Balhori. All these villages are within a radius of about 2 miles. Crafts taught in the school are weaving and mud toy making. The strength of school is 71 students which also includes 54 boys and 17 girls. Class-wise strength is 14 boys and 7 girls in 1st class, 13 boys and 7 girls in second, 16 boys and 2 girls in 3rd, 5 boys and 1 girl in 4th and 6 boys in fifth class. The strength of students during corresponding period in past two years was 60 including 50 boys and 10 girls and 57 including 53 boys and 4 girls. Thus there is a gradual rise in the number of students each year.

School Building—The present school building is the same which was constructed by the villagers by free labour and funds raised through donations. It is a two roomed building with a small verandah. The roof is thatched and leaks. It is in dilapidated condition and can give way any time if proper repairs are not taken up. Classes are generally held on the ground facing the building. In the event of a shower the school has to be closed. The Panchayat of the village has been able to obtain Rs 1,600 as aid for the addition of a new room and repair of the existing building. The construction of the new room was in progress and the Up-Pradhan of the Panchayat who is from the village was taking good interest in its completion.

Medical

The villagers have faith in all types of treatment including allopathic, ayurvedic and jantar mantar. They have no knowledge about the homoeopathy, as this type of treatment is not popular in the entire area. Even at Mandi there was no practitioner of homoeopathy 3 to 4 years back. There is no practitioner of any type in the village. The nearest place where medical facilities are available is the Civil Hospital, Mandi which is on their way to Mandi. Instead of carrying the patient to the hospital, any relative of the patient going to the town, visits the hospital. He explains the disease to the doctor and gets the medicine. In certain cases, when patient does not recover, he is got admitted as an indoor patient. The villagers also rely upon Ghopu Vaid to a great extent. Whenever a villager is seriously ill someone runs to Mandi to bring the Vaid.

The common diseases in the village are fevers, common cold, cough, influenza, dysentery and sometimes diarrhoea. Malaria

has been almost totally eradicated. Sometime there may be a case of typhoid or pneumonia. There is no case of T.B. or V.D. The village has been covered under the National Malaria Eradication Programme. Under the scheme regular D.D.T. spraying is done by the department. The villagers have a general complaint about the havoc created by the rats. They say that the number of rats has increased due to the death of cats on account of eating rats poisoned by D.D.T. A team of B.C.G. had also a round of the village for their tests. Necessary preventive measures were taken by them in suspected cases which were found carrying the germs of the disease.

For minor ailments, instead of running to the town for treatment, the villagers try their own indigenous method.

Fever—For ordinary fever simple concoction of chhoti ilaichi is gievn. This is prepared by boiling 1 to 5 ilaichi in water. When water is reduced to 4th quantity, the contents are allowed to cool. If fever is due to disorders of stomach ajwain is also added.

For fevers due to bad cold, a packet of ready made joshanda purchased from Mandi is boiled in about a half seer of water. When it is reduced to about 2 chhataks, it is strained through a cloth and administered to the patient. The residue is preserved for the second doze after which it is sometimes thrown out.

For fevers due to cold, bari ilaichi, ajwain, mulathi, banafasa dried albukhara, gur and saunf and boiled in water which is given to the patient.

Cough—For cough any of the following may be taken—

- 1. Mulathi is given to suck.
- 2. Honey dissolved in luke warm water.
- 3. Pepper and magh pipal mixed in honey.
- 4. Extract of Ajwain.
- 5. Jangiharar, rind of pomegranate are powdered and mixed with ash of maize cobs. This powder is given with honey.

Sore Throat—Banafasa is heated in small quantity of water and tied around the throat. Saline gargles also relieve the sore throat.

Tooth-ache—Tobacco or chillies are filled in the cavity.

Stomach-ache—Harar, ajwain and mitha saunf, Guma salt are powdered and given to the patient.

Eye-sore—A mixture of Rasaunt and honey are applied for eye troubles.

Ear-trouble—Luke-warm mustard or til oil give relief in ear troubles.

Simple cut or wound—The sufferer is asked to urinate on the wound. Haldi or ashes of a silk cloth are another remedies also applied on the cut.

Boils—Linseeds, soap, onion and gur are ground to form a thick paste. The mixture is roasted in mustard oil and applied on the boil.

Family Planning—The villagers understand the implications of having a big family. It appears that little measures have been taken in this direction by the authorities in the village. The villagers may adopt the measures if efforts are made to educate them and the appliances supplied.

V CONCLUSION

Bir though 9 Kilometers from Mandi, the district headquarters is slightly touched by urban influence. Untouchability has been abolished under the law, but in actual practice there is no going away from the old practices, Chamars are not allowed to enter the houses of Rajputs nor there is a common water source. They do not inter-dine or inter-smoke but there is co-operation among both the castes. Chamars are invariably invited by Rajputs on all important occasions like marriages and births and they are carrying on their traditional work. They are treated as an important section of the society.

With the spread of education people are becoming conscious about the education of their children. To-day one can see the children going to the school with satchels slung over their shoulders; formerly they were seen in the grazing fields with sticks in their hands tending cattle. There is only a primary school in the village which caters to the need of their elementary education. Facilities for higher education are available at Mandi and the villagers are in advantageous position to

avail of this facility provided they have the means.

Major economy of the village revolves around agriculture but nearness of the town is an important factor to supplement their income by selling milk, fuel wood and availing of other employment avenues which usually exist in towns. Their frequent visits to the town and closer contacts with the urban people keep them abreast of all happenings or a few among them who are literate may also be a bit aware of the political changes and thus claim some importance in the village. Otherwise at present there are no visible signs that the general condition of the village or its residents is set for a change for the better. One or two among them may at some distant future be able to be rather well off than others but such exceptions do not add to the prosperity or material well being of the village as a whole. Bir, therefore, though lying on the fringe of a town, has nothing much to gain and cannot expect any change for the better in the near future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Extract from Forest Working Plan for Mandi State Forests by R. Machlagan Govie, D.Sc., I.F.S.

Configuration:—The Beas enters Mandi from the Kulu valley by a specular gorge, and flows west to Mandi town, where it turns abruptly north, later twisting gradually westward again to enter Kangra district near Sandhol. Its main right bank tributaries, the Chuli, Uhl and Luni, rise in the high hills of the Kulu and Banghal border to the North, while on its left bank, the main side-streams are the Trithan, Ghor, Bakhli, Jiuni and Suketi, which rise in the Sutlej-Beas water-shed in the southeast, and the Sonj which drains the lower hills in the west.

The State territory is roughly diamond shaped with the south-east and north-west extremities in high hill tracts, which run up to 13,000 feet on the flanks of the great Dhauladhar range in the north and to nearly 11,000 feet at some points on the Sutlej-Beas water-shed west of the Jalori Pass. The whole of the eastern half of the State between these ranges is decidedly mountainous. The Beas running in a deep gorge in many places 5,000 feet below points which are less than two miles map distance from the river. South of Mandi, the valley of Suketi forms the Balh plains the only really flat piece of ground in the whole State, and west of this is series of lower rolling hills rising to about 4,000 ft. The forests occur at all elevations from 3,000 to 11,000 feet.

The water-shed between these Beas tributaries all tend to form a series of ridges running North North-west to South South-east across the State, but severed in the middle by the gorge of the Beas itself. Some of the more important have not generally accepted name, for instance, the Sutlej-Beas water-shed in variously known as Kamrunag dhar, Konjira dhar and Shikari dhar while the spur of Dhauladhar on the Kulu border has half a dozen different names between Nargu peak in the north and Tung Devi peak above the Largi gorge. The only feature with the widely accepted name is the Ghoggar dhar which separates the Uhl from the

Beas between Mandi town and the Kangra border, and which is itself and outlier of the main Dhauladhar to the north.

Geology:—The chief geological feature is the boundary fault which separates the younger sedimentary character has been altered and is no longer recognizable. This fault line runs almost north and south through Jogindernagar, Drong, Mandi town and west of the Balh plains to Sundarnagar in Suket. To the west of this line are found the conglomerates, sand-stones, grits and occasional lime-stone beds of the Nahan and Sabathu groups of the Simla series, all definitely sedimentary and only slightly altered by earth pressure. To the east of this line and comprising of most of the hillier country, are slates and shales, gritty and laminated but older sedimentary rocks of the Himalayan series. In addition, and often closely mixed up with the slate and shale, are metamorphic rocks of which the commonest are mica, schist, darker hornblend schist and quartzite which is a sort of crystalline and very hard sandstone; all of these yield a much more powdery soil than the slates. Two other special types of rocks are (i) the massive cliffs of greenish basalt which from the crest of the upper Ghoggar dhar and the Hathipur-Mandara precipices along the Kulu boundary, and (ii) the greenish caps which constitute practically all the hills above 7,000 feet in Seraj and Nahan ranges, and again in the higher parts of Uhl basin; these are all outliers from the great metaphoric moss which makes up the High Himalayas to the North.

From silvi-cultural stand point, there is not very much difference in the values of the soils derived from those different rocks, except that the percentage of clay is very higher west of the boundary fault than it is elsewhere. This the soil of the lower western chil forests is a hard and shallow and clay, which when heavily grazed after rain, becomes absolutely puddled, compact and sterile for lack of proper aeration. The sandier soils of the higher hills, on the other hand,

do not bind but break down to a powder under heavy grazing, bading to rapid erosion from all pastures and frequently to the complete loss of all soil by gullying down to bare

rock. The soil from the slates and shales occupies on intermediate position between these two other types, as it usually contains an appreciable amount of clay. The grey rubby loam which is common soil derived from the black slates and shales is more friable than the red clays, but more cohesive than the yellow gneissose sands. Under cultivation or heavy grazing, the soil losses from this middle type are enormously heavy, as is well seen in the steeper slopes throughout Harabagh range.

A confusing but common feature in the Mandi hills is that contorted beds of schist slates are found at the bottoms of natas, lying below the gneissose layers which form the upper water-sheds, as in Devi dhar, Chaurasni and Magru. Being below, one would expect those slate beds to be older than the gneiss, but this is not so. The real explanation is that these mountain streams have remained in the same channels throughout the

whole period of slow Himalayan uplift i.e. they have always been at work on which they found originally to be the weaker rocks hence they have remained in these

shaley clefts which now form gaps between the blocks of the gneiss cap. Good quality slate is extracted from many such places, but much of the slate used in the villages is coarse and brittle so it can only be used in thick and heavy slabs, requiring very heavy timber frames to support them.

Another characteristic of the junction between the gneiss cap and the shales is large deposits of kaemalite, or iron ore, in Juini, Bakhali, Churi and Uhl valleys, the commercial development of which may provide an opportunity for using hitherto undeveloped oak wood. The iron ore is a soft flaky ferruginous quartzite, almost like graphite in appearance. It was worked by local dhaugris until the Forest Settlement put a stop to this because it was uneconomic as compared with bazar iron, and the use of dark for charcoal had become a serious nuisance.

APPENDIX II

Rain-fall record of Mandi (in inches)

Name of Month	Year										
	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
						in.		mm.	mm.	mm.	
January	..	3.44	2.96	4.87	3.42	3.62	3.62	2.10 mm.	..	53.8	118.3
February	..	2.61	0.69	7.85	0.70	0.42	0.42	0.26 in.	..	..	138.0
March	..	2.61	0.53	1.23	2.57	3.06	3.06	1.38 in.	42.2	81.7	10.6
April	..	1.45	1.30	..	1.57	2.71	2.71	34.3 mm.	14.7	24.4	43.1
May	..	0.27	1.33	0.19	1.15	3.27	3.27	25.9 mm.	44.0	8.1	26.2
June	..	9.90	7.53	3.83	2.44	5.64	5.64	35.5 mm.	40.5	87.3	137.13
July	..	8.36	29.66	24.06	19.60	24.14	24.14	778.6 mm.	441.4	572.0	779.9
August	..	22.28	17.40	29.55	20.62	7.80	7.80	417.1 mm.	341.9	497.7	439.1
September	..	1.72	2.71	8.97	10.43	7.49	7.49	170.1 mm.	254.7	194.9	152.1
October	..	..	..	..	28.64	1.95	1.95	38.6 mm.	57.6	10.2	39.0
November	..	..	..	..	..	1.10	1.10	..	11.1	..	14.2
December	..	1.18	1.03	..	2.39	2.37	2.37	70.9 mm.	..	29.2	1.36

APPENDIX III

'Extract from Linguistic Survey of India

by Sir G. R. Greirson'

THE MANDI GROUP

Where spoken—The state of Mandi lies between Kulu and the district of Kangra. Immediately to its south lies the State of Suket, which is separated from the Simla Hill States by the river Sutlaj. North of Mandi lies the Chhota Banghal canton of the Kangra district, as explained ante (P. 6699, footnote). This canton is almost uninhabited, and is divided into two portions by a mountain chain running north and south. The language of the few inhabitants of the 18th hamlets of the Eastern portion of Chhota Banghal is Kului more or less mixed with Mandeali, while that of the western portion is the Kangri form of the Dogra dialect Punjabi. These facts must be known in order to understand the dialectic division of Mandeali.

The language of Mandi is called Mandeali, and that of Suket is called Suketi, the two being closely connected.

The mountainous South Eastern portion of Mandi is Mandeali dialect. The Kulu Siraj is immediately to its East, but the language is not Siraji. It is Mandeali slightly mixed with that language, and is called Mandeali Pahari. Mandeali proper is spoken over the rest of the State, and Mr. Bailey recognizes three varieties of it. The first is that spoken in the main portion of the State south of the river Bias, excluding the Mandeali Pahari tract. This is the standard dialect north of the Bias what Mr. Bailey calls Northern Mandeali, and in the extreme north of the State is the Chhota Banghali dialect, spoken in a portion of Chhota Banghal which belongs administratively to Mandi. The two latter differ very slightly from standard

Mandeali, and will not be considered separately in these pages. Any important dialectic peculiarities will be dealt with in describing the standard dialect. For the purposes of this survey no separate specimens were received for Northern Mandeali or Chhota Banghali, and the only available authority for these is the account given by the Rev. T. Grahame Bailey in the State Gazetteer and reprinted in his languages of the Northern Himalayas. Published by the Royal Asiatic Society in the year 1908.

Mr. Bailey says that there are said to be three dialects of Suketi but that this is evidently an over refinement. The dialects are named Pahar, Dhar and Bahal. Any information available regarding these three will be given under the head of Suketi.

The people of this tract are prejudiced against learning foreign languages, and this accounts for the accuracy and consistence with which the specimens given below have been recorded. Mandeali is evidently a dialect that has a standard to which its speakers endeavour to adhere.

No separate returns have been received from Northern Mandeali or for Chhota Banghali, both being included under the general head of Mandeali. The total number of speakers of this Group has been returned as follows:—

Mandeali	...	...	150,000
Mandeali Pahari	...	...	10,000
Suketi	...	...	52,184
Total	...	...	212,184

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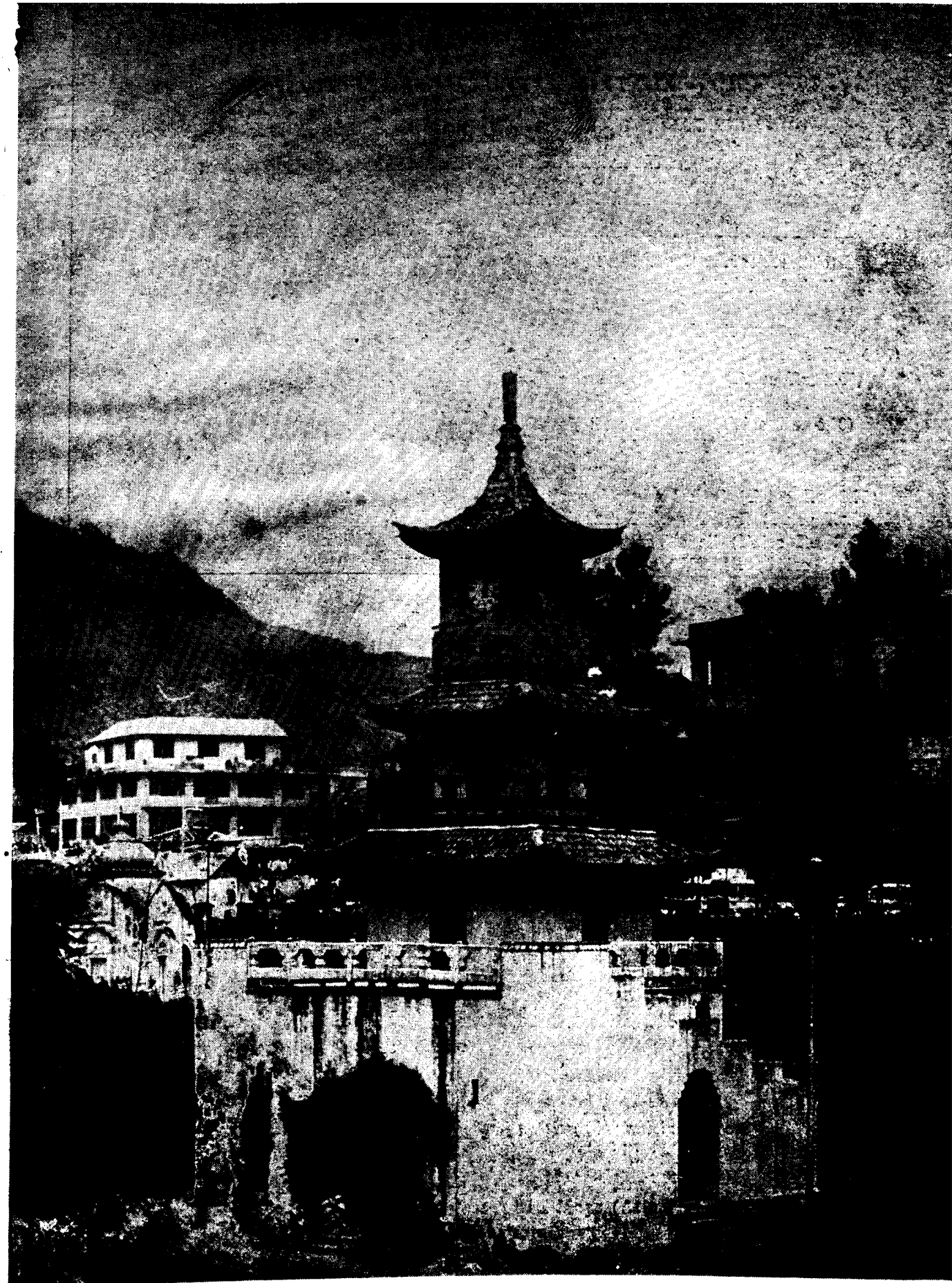
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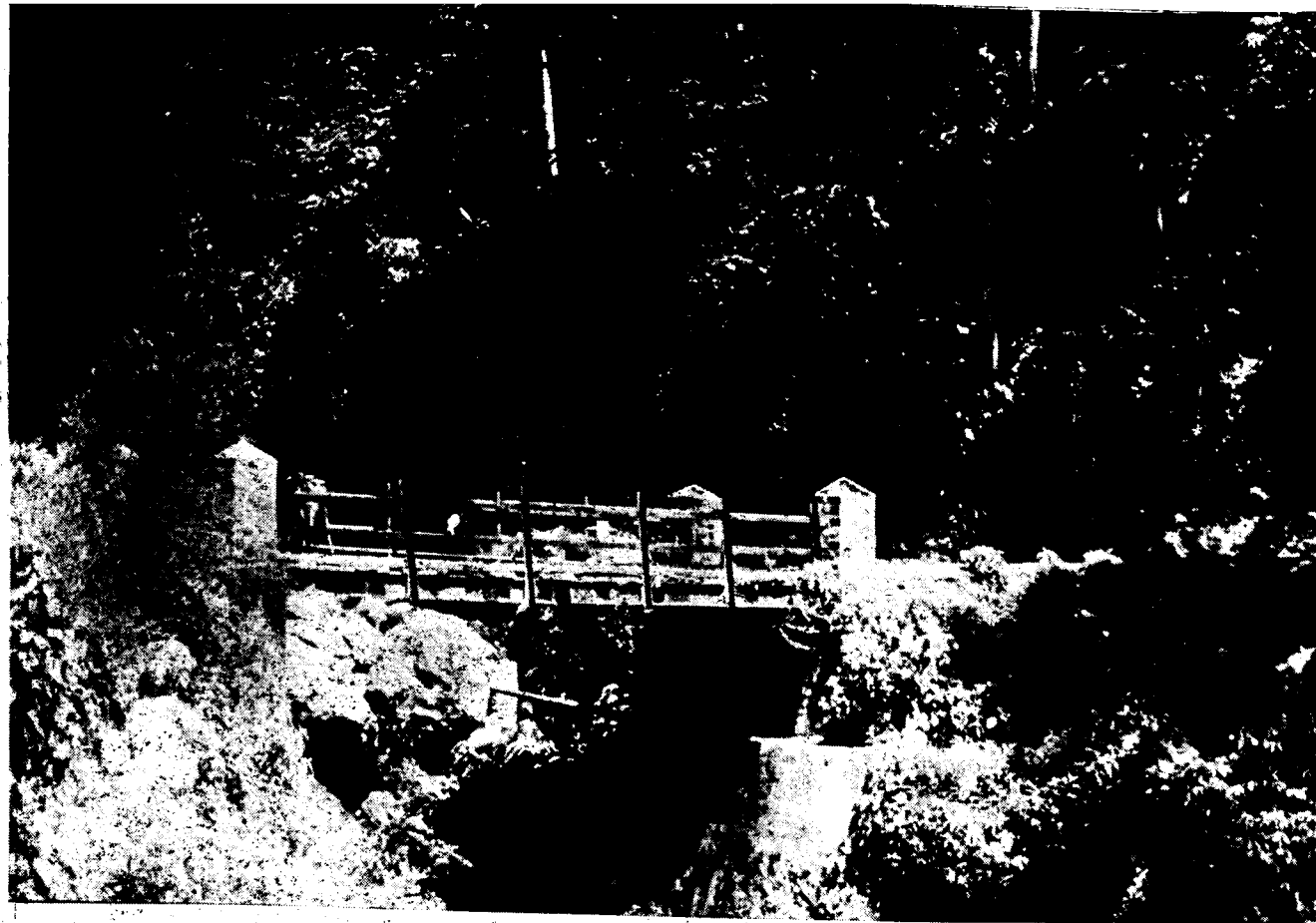
District Handbook—Mahasu

District Handbook—Sirmur

District Handbook—Kinnaur (Price Rs. 4.80)



Municipal Park with clock tower at Mandi.

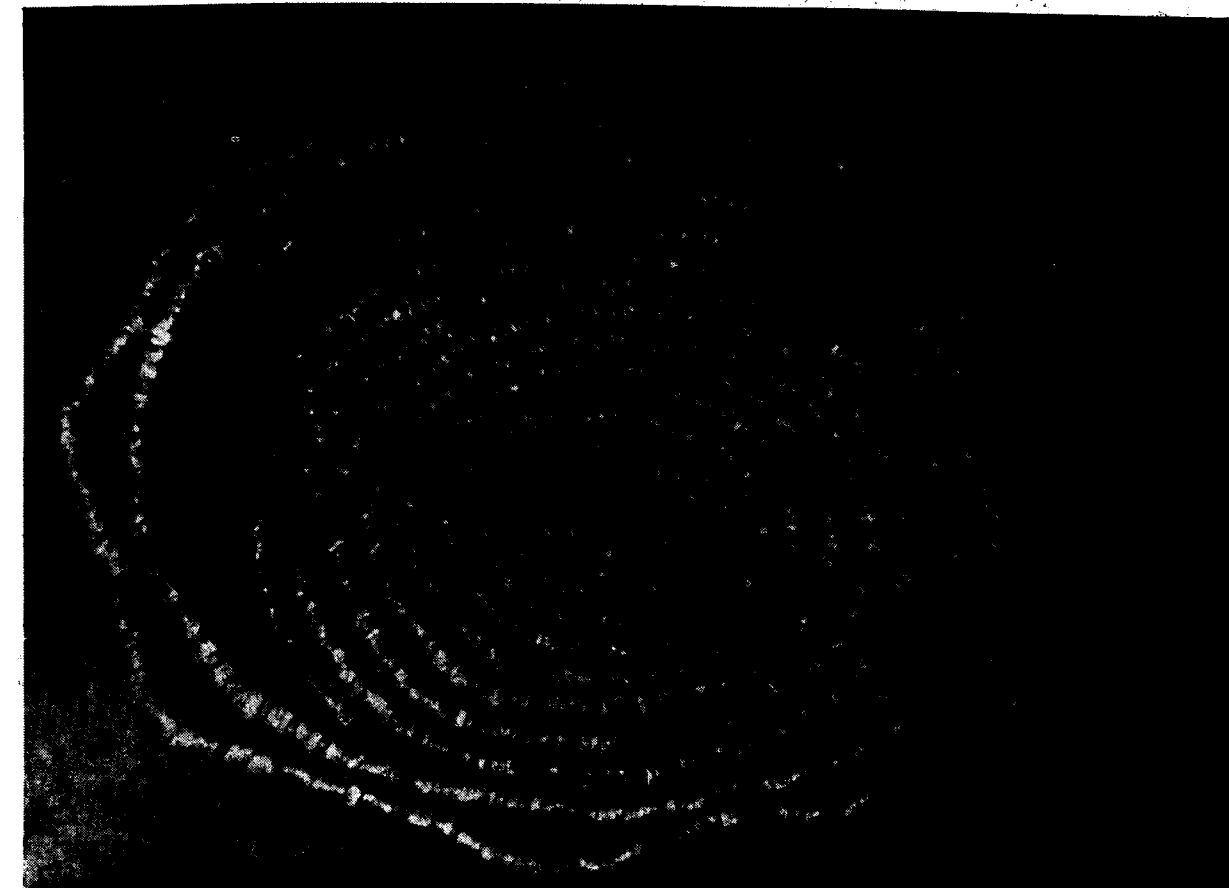


A Bridge on the Khud.



A small basket for domestic use made of rice stalks.

A Nagal plant used for making baskets.





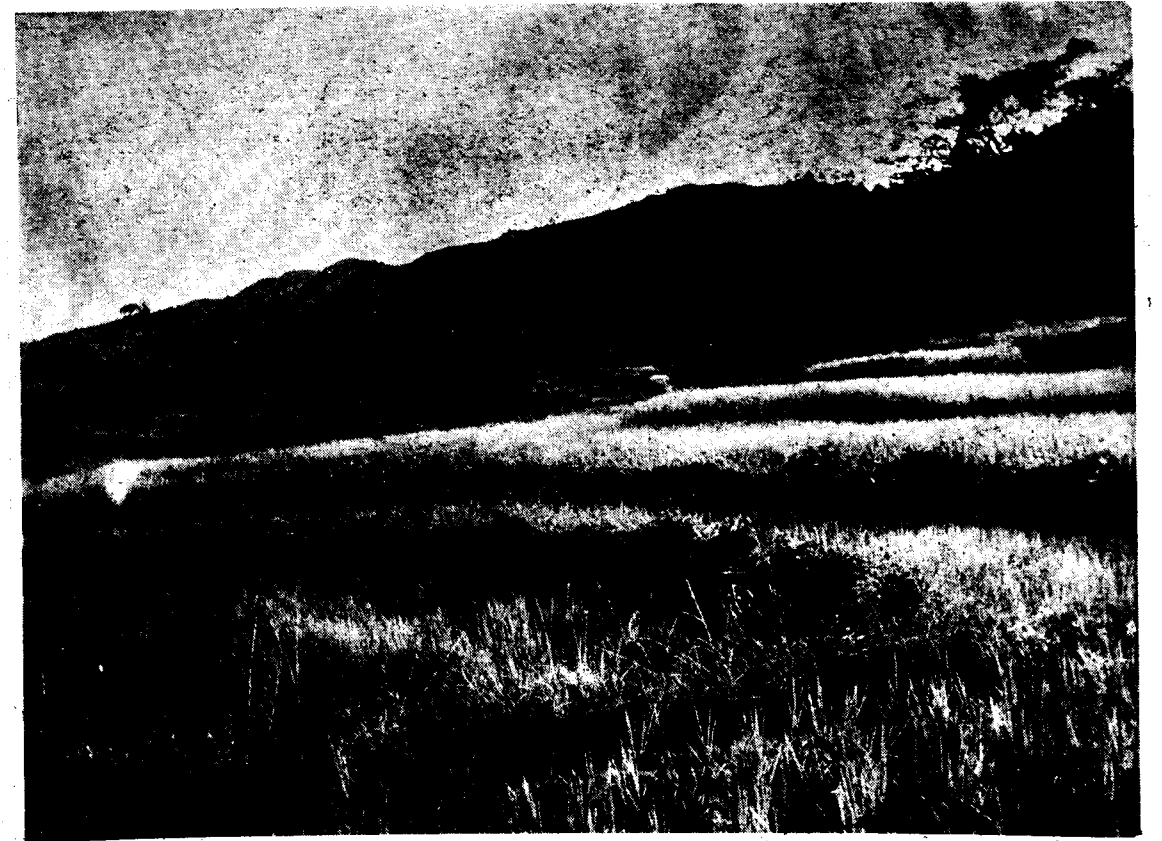
Bush palm—used for basket-making.



Banana plants



A village belle



Paddy fields



Dry grass piled for winter use



Goats



Okhli



Village musicians



Village deity



Grinding flour



Improvised rain coat



Lotus leaves



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