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CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

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MADHYA PRADESH

PART (V) B

ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

KAWAR

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F_O_R_E_W_O_R_D

The Constitution lays down that "the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".

To assist States in fulfilling their responsibility in this regard, the 1961 Census provided a series of special tabulations of the social and economic data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are notified by the President under the Constitution and the Parliament is empowered to include in or exclude from the lists, any caste or tribe. During the Census Operations, the enumerators frequently face the problem of identifying the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In the President's notification, though in some cases, the names of the sub-castes and sub-tribes and synonyms are given, there are many cases where such names have not been provided in the list. The Census enumerators, therefore, require guidance about the acceptance or rejection of claims that they come across during the operations of some communities-to be treated as sub-castes or sub-tribes of the notified Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. For this purpose, the Census Organisation has thought it wise to undertake detailed ethnographic studies in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India. This is also in conformity with the past Census tradition of presenting authentic ethnographic account of Indian communities.

For conducting the ethnographic studies, a number of ancillary operations are undertaken by the social studies Unit of the Office of the Registrar General, India, as well as the staff of the Directors of Census Operations in the various States. These ancillary operations include :

- (i) compilation of available information on each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and preparation of bibliography in respect of them;
- (ii) preparation and interpretation of maps showing distribution of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes over time and space; and
- (iii) special studies on cultural, technological and economic changes taking place among the various tribal communities.

Dr. B.K.Roy Burman, Deputy Registrar General, Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit, assisted by Shri A.M.Kurup and Shri T.C.Nag, Research Officers, is coordinating all these studies at the Central level. At the State level, the Directors of Census Operations and his staff are collaborating in conducting the field investigations and preparing the report. Shri Uma Kant Trivedi, Deputy Director of Census Operations (M.P.) supervised the study at the State level and Shri H.C.Jain, Investigator, carried out the field investigation on this community and prepared the draft. I avail of this opportunity to extend my warm thanks to all my colleagues who have undertaken various studies on different aspects of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India.

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P R E F A C E

As an adjunct of 1961 Census, preparation of ethnographic monographs on a number of selected Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and ethnic groups with special status and ethnographic glossaries on all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been taken up by the Census Organisation.

In India the census organisation has a long tradition of undertaking ethnographic studies. Besides, there are certain reasons why, for its own operational purposes, it is necessary for the Census organisation to take up such studies. During census operation, the Census organisation is required to make a complete enumeration of all the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country. The ethnographic studies are required to establish the identity of the various communities including their segments. The social boundaries of various communities are not always rigid, they are in a state of flux. Ethnographic studies are required to keep track of these changes as well, otherwise comparison of consecutive census figures would give altogether wrong picture in respect of them. There is another aspect of study in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in which the census organisation, as well as the welfare and planning agencies are interested - it is ethno-demography. In 1961 Census, separate tables were prepared in respect of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the following items :-

- (i) industrial classification of persons at work and non-workers by sex,
- (ii) age and marital status,
- (iii) education,
- (iv) religion,
- (v) persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Castes,
- (vi) persons not at work classified by sex and type of activity for Scheduled Tribes,
- (vii) mother tongue and bilingualism for Scheduled Tribes.

The data available in these tables are to be analysed in respect of each Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe, so that the historical and cultural factors responsible for the demographic pattern can be identified and the impact of the emergent demographic pattern on the social structure can be determined.

The insight gained by the Census organisation, through ethnographic studies of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be useful for interpretation of the demographic pattern for the country as a whole. Recent studies show that in India, even now, it is difficult to correctly appreciate the various social and economic processes without reference to caste. On the other hand, in the interest of ultimate national goal, caste is not being recorded in census, except in case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The insight gained through ethno-demographic studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is, therefore, of invaluable help for census.

At the same time, such study is very much useful for planning of development activities among the castes or tribes concerned. For instance, if the census shows that great deal of diversification of occupation has taken place among the Parayans of Kerala, it is important for the planners to know whether the community consists of a number of disconnected segments or whether it means that a great deal of individual mobility is taken place where the main focus of community is other than traditional occupation. Again, when among the Bauris of Orissa, it is found that a very high proportion of the population is engaged in agricultural labour and next to them a high proportion is found in cultivation and also that there is considerable diversification of occupation, the following questions of sociological and practical importance arise :-

- (a) What is the historical relation between the agricultural labourers and the cultivators among the Bauris of Orissa? The census data suggests one of the two possible developments, namely, (1) bulk of the Bauris were cultivators and by a process of degeneration of their economy have become agricultural labourers, (2) on the other hand, it is also possible that the bulk of them were agricultural labourers and through a process of improvement of their economic condition, many of them have become cultivators.
- (b) The fact that a considerable diversification of occupation has taken place, suggests that the economy has not remained in a stagnant condition. Here it is to be examined whether the diversification is the result of upward mobility, or downward mobility, or even horizontal mobility, and what is the actual process by which the diversification has taken place.
- (c) The social dimensions corresponding to the diversification in economic life have to be examined.

It is also to be examined whether inspite of diversification of occupation, the ethos of a particular occupation, for instance agriculture, continues to be dominant. In that case, diversification might have created problems of adjustment in values and attitudes.

Instances can be multiplied, but it is not necessary. What have been stated above, are enough to bring out the significance of ethno-demographic studies for planners.

The above dimensions of ethno-demographic studies have evolved through stages. In 1960, at the instance of Shri Mitra, Registrar General of India, a questionnaire for collection of ethnographic data was circulated amongst the Census Directors. In October, 1961, the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit was set up in the office of the Registrar General of India, to coordinate the ethnographic studies and a few other ancillary studies, like village surveys, handicraft surveys, etc. In December, 1961, a Study Camp was organised in Delhi, where the personnel engaged in ethnographic studies, handicrafts studies and other social investigations in the offices of the Census Directors, participated. In the Study Camp, it was considered that the ethnographic notes would mainly aim at making an objective assessment of the state of development of the different scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the context of the changes taking place in technology, economic organisation and total culture pattern of the country. It was further suggested that the primary focus of the study should not be on the exotic elements of the cultures of the different castes and tribes. It should be on the efforts of the communities concerned, to adjust to the modern conditions of life. In the light of the above decisions of the Study Camp, rapid ethnographic studies have been carried on by the staff of the Directors of Census operations as well as by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the office of the Registrar General of India, in different parts of the country. These rapid surveys have brought out a number of methodological and operational problems. In May and June, 1966, two Ethnographic Study Camps were held at Kurseong and Hyderabad, where personnel from the office of the Registrar General of India as well as from the offices of the Census Directors participated. In the Study Camp held at Kurseong, the Secretary, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, and Director, Tribal Welfare, West Bengal, also participated. In these Study Camps, an integrated frame for preparation of ethnographic notes was discussed and adopted. In addition to the studies in respect of each scheduled caste and scheduled tribe separately, a number of subsidiary studies were undertaken by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit of the office of the Registrar General of India, for gaining insight into a number of problems of general nature which have bearing on the different aspects of the lives of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes of the country.

These subsidiary studies are as follows :-

1. Shifting cultivation in Santal Parganas of Bihar and Garo Hills of Assam.
2. Pattern of Rehabilitation of displaced tribals of Rourkela.
3. Socio-economic survey of the Scheduled areas of Rajasthan.
4. Socio-economic developments among the hillmen of North-East India.
5. Social structure and cultural orientation of Christians converted from scheduled castes.
6. Traditional rights of scavenging as claimed by scavengers in urban areas.
7. Grouping of castes and tribes with reference to occupation and inter-group and intra-group comparative study on the basis of the data available in earlier censuses.
8. Social mobility movements among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

On the basis of each of the subsidiary studies indicated above, a separate monograph is under preparation. It is also proposed to prepare separate monographs on a few scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and ethnic groups with special status in each state. Besides, ethnographic glossaries are proposed to be prepared in respect of all scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. For this purpose about one lakh references have been indexed.

The present Report on the Kavar, a Scheduled Tribe in Madhya Pradesh is one of the monographs proposed to be brought out by the Census Organisation. A fairly detailed investigation on the community was undertaken by Shri H.C.Jain, investigator of the office of the Director of Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh under the guidance of Shri U.K.Trivedi, Deputy Director. The draft Report was prepared by Shri H.C.Jain. It was finally edited by the Editorial Board, consisting of Shri U.K.Trivedi, Deputy Director of Census Operations, Madhya Pradesh, Shri A.M.Kurup, Research Officer and myself.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to all the colleagues who collaborated in this project.

Shri H.L.Harit, Investigator, who is looking after the compilation of information from published sources in respect of all scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other special ethnic groups of India deserves mention.

Shri A.Mitra, Registrar General of India for 1961 Census whose farsighted initiative is responsible for social investigations in a large number of fields, including ethnography, deserves thanks of all students of Indology. I have been benefitted not only by his inspiration, but also by his valuable suggestions in connection with the ethnographic studies, as well as the other studies, conducted by the Handicrafts and Social Studies Unit.

The tradition built by Shri Mitra, has been continued by Shri A.Chandra Sekhar, the present Registrar General of India. Under his guidance, the scope of the Social Studies by the Census organisation has been further expanded. In spite of his other preoccupations, he has gone through the final drafts of the ethnographic notes and given a number of valuable suggestions. I avail of this opportunity to express my gratefulness to him.

B.K.Roy Burman.

J. SHI

KAWAR

I. Name, Identity, Origin & History

The name Kavar appears to be a corruption of the word 'Kauravas' and "The Kawars trace their origin from the Kauravas of the Mahabharata, who were defeated by the Pandavas at the great battle of Hastinapur. They say that only two pregnant women survived and fled to the hills of Central India, where they took refuge in the house of a Rawat (grazier) and a Dhobi (washerman) respectively, and the boy and girl children who were born to them became the ancestors of the Kavar tribe." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III p. 380). Similarly Dalton remarks, "Though they are much scattered and the various divisions of the tribe hold little communication with each other, they all tenaciously cling to one tradition of their origin, that they are the descendants of the survivors of the sons of Kuru, called Kauravas of Puranas, who when defeated by the Pandavas at the great battle of Kurukshetra, and driven from Hastinapur, took refuge in the hills of Central India." (Dalton, 1872, p. 132 of reprints 1960). On the other hand Nelson regards "The name is said to be derived from the fact that the ancestors of the tribe fought on the side of the Kauravas against the Pandavas in the great battle of Hastinapur." (Nelson, 1910; p.86). Probably on account of this mythological belief, the Kawars used to keep away from the Pando tribe in the past. The Kawars still believe that they are the descendants of Kuru of Mahabharat and the Pandos are regarded as the descendants of the Pandavas. No segregation is, however, seen now.

The synonyms of this tribe, as given in the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956, are Kavar, Kanwar, Kaur, Gherwa, Rathia, Tanwar or Chattri and the tribe is scheduled in Bastar, Chhindwara, Seoni, Mandla, Raigarh and Surguja districts, (2) Baihar tahsil of Balaghat district, (3) Betul and Bhainsdehi tahsils of Betul district, (4) Bilaspur and Kathghora tahsils of Bilaspur district, (5) Durg and Sanjari tahsils of Durg district, (6) Murwara, Patan and Sihora tahsils of Jabalpur district, (7) Hoshangabad and Sohagpur tahsils of Hoshangabad district, Narsimhapur district, (8) Harsud tahsil of East Nimar, (9) Bindranawagarh, Dhantari and Manasamund tahsils of Raipur district. In the earlier Censuses, the tribe has been referred to by the name Kavar which is the commonest name by which they are known. Russell and Hiralal regard the above synonyms of Kavar of Modification Order with the addition of Kamalbanshi, Paikara, Dudh-Kavar, Chanti and Rautia as endogamous division. Synonyms of the tribe as given in the Modification Order are actually the sub-divisions of the tribe and are not the synonyms. In Bilaspur district the name is pronounced with a nasal accent as 'Kanwar.' The word 'Kaur' appears to be a corruption of the word 'Kavar' and is a sub-section of the tribe though this is the term by which

Hewitt has referred to them in his Settlement Report of Raepore district. (Hewitt, 1869) J.W. Chisholm has described them under 'Kuwar' in his Settlement Report of Belaspore district (Chisholm, 1869). Nelson and Russell and Hiralal described them under Kawar (Nelson, 1910 and Russell and Hiralal, Vol. III, 1916).

Nothing much is known about the history of the tribe but it appears that the Kawars were trusted soldiers of the Haihaibanshi Chiefs of Ratanpur, as the following remark of Hewitt shows:-

"I would be rather inclined to consider them as imperfect Rejpoots who settled in early times among the hills of the Vindhyan range, and so failed in becoming Hindooised like other warlike immigrants. Probably they are of Turanian origin, but are, I think, distinct from the Kolarian and Dravidian races. Early documents extant at Ruttunpore show that they conquered the North-East of the Bilaspore District from the Bhoyas, and there can be little or no doubt that the Chief counsellor and the most trusted followers of the Hyhybunsee Princes were Kaur. It was to Kaur chiefs that they entrusted the hill fortresses of Belaspore on their descent into the plains, while the assistance rendered by the Kaur in the conquest of the south of Raepore and Bustar was rewarded by large grants of land which are still held by their descendants in Dhumturry; the Goudurdeehee Zamindar and the Talooqdar of Bhooteedeeh being both descendants of these colonists."

Similarly Charles Grant remarks, "Early documents extant at Ratanpur show that they conquered the north-east of Bilaspur district from Bhuyas; and there can be little or no doubt that the chief counsellors and the most trusted followers of the Haihai-Bansi princes were Kanwars." (Charles Grant, 1870, p. 413-414).

II. Distribution and Population Trend

The Kawars are included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Maharashtra (2,915, 1961 population) in addition to Madhya Pradesh (328,713, 1961 population). Though the tribe is scheduled in Melghat tahsil of Amravati district, Gadchiroli and Sironcha tahsils of Chanda district and Kelapar, Wani and Yeotmal tahsils of Yeotmal district in Maharashtra, the main concentration is in Chanda district (2,812). But in comparison with Madhya Pradesh the numerical strength of Kawars in Maharashtra is negligible. In 1961 Census, out of the total population of 328,713 (including the synonyms group), 86.3 percent have been returned from Bilaspur division viz., Surguja (92,132), Bilaspur (80,549), and Raigarh (121,763). 10.3 percent have been returned from Raipur division viz., Durg (7,432), Raipur (26,201) and Bastar (455). Outside these two divisions Kawars are found in small numbers in Hoshangabad and Betul districts of Bhopal division and Jabalpur, Mandla, Chhindwara, Seoni and Balaghat districts of Jabalpur division.

In view of the above distribution of the tribe the following observations of Russell and Hiralal appear to be appropriate.

"A primitive tribe living in the hills of the Chhattisgarh district, north of Mahanadi. The hill country comprised in the northern zamindari estates of Bilaspur and the adjoining Feudatory States of Jashpur, Udaipur, Surguja, Chang Bhakar and Korea is the home of the Kawars, and is sometimes known after them as the Kamran." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol. III, p. 389).

The 1961 population of the tribe has been stated above as a total of all synonyms for comparison with the figures of the earlier Censuses. It may, however, be necessary to mention here that these 1961 Census figures relate to those areas only where the tribe is Scheduled. In 1931 Census, the total population of the tribe in the present districts of Madhya Pradesh was 281,781 out of which 99.97 percent were found in the districts of the Bilaspur and Raipur divisions, the former division having a little more than 80 percent of the total number of the Kawars. The remaining were found in the Hoshangabad and Betul districts of Bhopal division and Jabalpur, Chhindwara, Seoni and Sagar districts of Jabalpur division. Comparison of these figures with those of the State Scheduled Tribes population of 1931 is not possible as this can not be worked out for the present state of Madhya Pradesh.

The rise in the population of the tribe during the last 30 years is only 16.69 percent which is much less than the general rise of tribal population of the State (72.6) in that period. This low increase may be due to the fact that Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur districts which have a considerable percentage of the population of the tribe, are only partly declared as Scheduled under Modification Order, 1956. For the convenience of comparability, the population of the tribe as returned in 1931 (recast on the basis of the Modification Order, 1956) and in 1961, is shown in the statement below:-

S.No.	District	Population		Percentage increase or decrease
		1931	1961	
1	2	3	4	5
1	Hoshangabad	4	18	--
2	Betul	7	35	--
3	Sagar	1	--	--
4	Jabalpur	36	8	--
5	Mandla	--	83	--
6	Chhindwara	31	9	--
7	Seoni	18	8	--
8	Balaghat	--	20	--
9	Surguja	48,389	92,132	+ 90.39

1	2	3	4	5
10	Bilaspur	74,412	80,549	+ 8.24
11	Raigarh	102,410	121,763	+ 18.88
12	Durg	24,181	7,432	- 225.36
13	Raipur	31,973	26,201	- 22.79
14	Bastar	319	455	--
15	Rewa	3,934*	--	--
Total		281,781	328,713	+ 16.69

The table above shows that the population of Hoshangabad, Betul, Sagar, Jabalpur, Mandla, Chhindwara, Seoni, Balaghat and Bastar districts is negligible while it is concentrated in the Chhattisgarh districts. The rise of 90.39 percent in Surguja district is substantially more than the general rise of the tribal population of the State in the last 30 years. Raigarh district however, could not reveal the same proportion of increase in the population. This may be due to the high increase in adjacent district of Surguja where the tribe may have immigrated from Raigarh district. The low increase in Bilaspur district and decrease in Durg and Raipur districts is also due to the fact that these districts are partly declared as scheduled under Modification Order, 1956.

In 1931, the return of Kawars from Rewa was 3,934 but the tribe is not scheduled in erstwhile Vindhya Pradesh region now and as such the population of the tribe in 1961 in Rewa and other districts of erstwhile Vindhya Pradesh region is unascertainable.

Population variation of the Kawars during the last 50 years is shown in the statement below (recast on the basis of the present constitution of the State).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>% Difference</u>
1901	111,717	--	--
1911	226,993	113,276	99.61
1921	238,602	11,609	5.11
1931	281,781	43,179	18.09
1961	328,713	46,932	16.69

These figures are taken from previous Censuses. In 1941 and 1951 Censuses separate figures for each tribe were not sorted out.

Note:- * This figure of 3,934 of Rewa has not been included in the total of 1931 population for feasibility of comparison with 1961 figures as the tribe is not scheduled in Rewa district as per Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification) Order, 1956.

Sex-wise rural-urban distribution of different synonymous group of the tribe in 1961 Census is as below:-

Synonymous group	Rural Urban	Population		
		Total	Male	Female
Kawar	Rural	--	--	--
	Urban	--	--	--
Kanwar	Rural	302,072	149,333	152,739
	Urban	--	--	--
Kaur	Rural	21	18	3
	Urban	998	573	425
Cherwa	Rural	23,954	12,218	11,736
	Urban	--	--	--
Rathia	Rural	196	196	--
	Urban	--	--	--
Tanwar	Rural	1,472	825	647
	Urban	--	--	--
Chattri	Rural	--	--	--
	Urban	--	--	--
Total	Rural	327,715	162,590	165,125
	Urban	998	573	425

Significant point in the above table is that the total population of Rathia group is returned as male. No females are returned from this group in 1961 Census. These are returned from Bilaspur district only.

Sexwise age groups of the tribe is as below:-

Age	Male	Female
0 - 14	62,852	60,490
15 - 44	73,970	76,207
45 +	26,283	28,801
Age not stated	58	52
Total	163,163	165,550

The sex ratio i.e., number of females per 1,000 males is 1,019 as against the State sex-ratio of tribes (1,002). It is usually observed that among the tribes the sex-ratio is quite high and as such this needs no comments.

III. Physical Characteristics

As regards racial stock of Kawars, Hewitt and Charles Grant say that probably they are of Turanian origin, but they seem to be distinct from Kolarian and Dravidian races. Dalton introduced Kavar as dark, coarse featured, broad nosed, wide mouthed and thick lipped race decidedly ugly but are taller. (Dalton Notes of a tour in the Tributary Mahals. Journal, Asiatic Society, Bengal). Russell and Hiralal are not definite about their affinity and remark, 'It is probable that they belong to the Dravidian tribal family' (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 390).

IV. Family, Clan, Kinship and other analogous divisions

Kavar family is a partrilocal one with patronymic designations. After marriage the woman goes to live with the husband and acquires husband's 'got'. They have, however, a custom of keeping ghardamda or ghariyah. In case of a man having no sons, he invites his son-in-law to live in his house as a member of the family and after his death, the son-in-law inherits his property. The son-in-law is also asked to live with the family of father-in-law having sons in case he has no property or source of income, and the father-in-law has sufficient land to cultivate. In such cases, the son-in-law is given some land to earn his livelihood and is separated from the family, after some time.

Joint family system which is common in neighbouring Hindus, is prevalent amongst the Kawars. Brothers, their families and the parents generally form a joint family. Common worship, a common house, with separate apartments for each married member of the family and common property are the factors governing the joint family of the Kawars. The head of the family (senior most male member) has an absolute authority over other members. He alone can perform the worship while the others simply observe and the next senior tries to learn the procedure of worship for use in future if required. The right of worship automatically vests on the next senior male member of the family in case of the death of the head of family.

All the members of the family hold the land in common. The produce goes to common granery and the resources are pooled. The defects of the modern Hindu societies are getting way amongst the Kavar also. Everything of the family being a joint property some married couples of the family have their own separate hearths.

Kawars observe ordinary Hindu rules of inheritance. Inheritance and reckoning of lineage is along the male line. After the death of father, property is divided equally among the sons. The eldest son, however, gets something over and above his own share, which is generally worth one anna in a rupee as they put it. In other words 1/16th share of the property is first kept aside and the remaining is divided

equally among all the claimants. This 1/16th share is then given to the eldest son in addition to his own share. This is known as tikayati or jithai and is given to him in lieu of his services required for bringing up the younger ones and looking after the family affairs. Married or unmarried daughters have no share in the father's property. In the past, there was, however, no system of division of family property during the life time of the father and a son claiming partition was only given a pair of bullocks for agricultural operations. He was allowed to work on a common field and given a share in produce. This practice is not in vogue now. If one or more claimants ask for a division, the property is divided equally among the sons and the father. The father may live with the remaining sons but after his death, his share is equally divided among all the sons. The expenditure on his last rites are, however, deducted from his share and given to the persons who perform the last rites. In case the mother survives the father, the share remains with the son who looks after her. It is only after her death that this share is divided equally among all the sons. Deductions of the expenditure on the last rites of mother are, however, made before the division.

Adoption is prevalent among the Kawars and the adopted son has full rights of inheritance. After the division, the right of performance of worships automatically vests in the head of each individual family as each such family constructs his own house separately and keeps the deities in it.

The tribe is divided into 8 endogamous sub-divisions which are Tanwar, Paikhara, Kamalbansi, Dudh-kawar, Rathia, Ratuia, Cherwa and Chanti.

The zamindar group of the tribe call themselves as Tanwar. Practically the whole of this group is confined to the Bilaspur district. They dissociate themselves from the name Kawar or Kanwar. They have attempted social elevation by using sacred-thread, prohibiting widow-marriage and restricting the eating of fowls and drinking of liquor. This group is also known, as Umrao. The Kawars of Surguja district call this group as Badela. As early as, 1868, Chisholm has written about them, "it is an eminent weakness among the heads of all aboriginal races, when they come to occupy a good position and are powerful, that owing to the crafty teaching of the brahmins, they soon become fired with an ambition to link their lineage with the great military caste of the Hindoos. So it is that the upper crust among the Kuwurs would fain pass as Rajpoots, and having imbibed all the sacredness which is supposed to attend an assumption of the thread worn by the twice-born, they call themselves, "Tuwurs," "Raj-kuwars," "Kuwars-bunsees" and soforth" (Chisholm, 1869, p. 54). He states further, "Those who are now socially elevated, will not recognise the poorer and wilder portions of the tribe as brother caste-man at all." (Chisholm, 1869, p. 55). Russell and Hiralal states, -

"The Tanwar group, also known as Umrao, is that to which the zamindars belong and they now claim to be Tamora Rajputs, and wear the sacred-thread..... but they have not induced Brahmins to take water from them or Rajpoots to accept their daughters in marriage." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 390). There is, however, a case of receiving a daughter of a Rajput by one Kanwar chief. Charls Grant states, - "They have always made a claim, though in half hearted way, to be considered as Rajputs connected with the Tuar tribe of the North-West, and their claim has certainly been recognised in one instance, as the first Kanwar Chief of Narra received his estate as a dowry with the daughter of the Rajput Chief of Khariar." (Charles Grant, 1870, p.413-414).

The Paikharas, the biggest sub-division of the tribe who comprise of three-fourth of the total population of the tribe derive their name from the word paik meaning foot-soldiers (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 390). and formerly these were employed as the mercenaries by the Haihaibansi chiefs of Ratanpur in the Bilaspur district. They still worship a two-edged sword known as Jhagra-khand or 'the sword of strike' on the day of the Dasher festival.

The Kamalbansi or the descendents of the 'Lotus' are considered to be the oldest division of the tribe as 'kamal' (lotus) is considered as root of all things on account of the belief that Brahma, the creator of the Universe, was himself born from this flower. In Bilaspur district, the Kamalbansi are considered in rank next to the Tanwars.

Colonel Dalton states, the term 'Dudh' or milk Kavar has the significance of 'Cream of the Kawars' and has considered this sub-division to be the highest. (Dalton, 1872).

The Rathias are a territorial group being immigrants from Rath, a wild tract of Raigarh district. The total population of the Kawars returning themselves as Rathias in the 1961 Census is 196, all of whom are males.

The Rautias are in all probability of mixed origin born of Kavar fathers and Rawat (Ahir) mothers. Even now Rawat girls are taken into tribal fold and the children born of them become legitimate members of the tribe.

The Cherwas are again a hybrid group of Kawars born from the union of Kavar girls with members of the Chero tribe of Chhota Nagpur.

The Chanti group is named after ant and the sub-division is considered to rank lowest in the hierarchy of the tribe.

Of the 8 groups named above, it is only the members of the Chanti, Cherwa and Rautia group who rear pigs and due to this are possibly considered lowest in the tribe.

These endogamous groups described above are further sub-divided into a number of exogamous septs (gots), which are generally totemistic in nature. The term used by the Paikhara Kawars of Surguja district is goti. In the settlement Report, Chisholm, has given the names of 20 'Gots' though he writes that there were more than hundred such gotes. The exogamous septs or gots, mentioned by Chisholm are given below:-

Name of gote

Dooth Koura
Dhungurh
Tillasee or Tuwar
Sandil or Surwaya
Kour
Kothee
Korwar
Munkhia
Sonwanee
Bugwa
Durpun
Chowur
Moorhee
Manjee
Tata
Ghoosoo
Pykra
Chote
Thasra
Ruthia

Chisholm includes some of the endogamous groups also as gotes e.g., Tuwar, Pykra and Ruthia. These, as stated earlier, are endogamous groups and not gotes. Some 117 spet names are mentioned to have been recorded by Russell and Hiralal who considered that there were many more than these. A list of selected names given by Russell and Hiralal (Vol. III, p. 392) is as below:-

<u>Andil</u>	...	Born from an egg
<u>Bagh</u>	...	Tiger
<u>Bichhi</u>	...	Scorpion
<u>Bilwa</u>	...	Cat
<u>Bokra</u>	...	Goat
<u>Chandrama</u>	...	Moon
<u>Chanwar</u>	...	A whisk
<u>Chita</u>	...	Leopard
<u>Chuva</u>	...	A well
<u>Champa</u>	...	A sweet-scented flower
<u>Dehunki</u>	...	A pounding-lever
<u>Darpan</u>	...	A mirror
<u>Gobira</u>	...	A dung insect
<u>Hundra</u>	...	A wolf
<u>Janta</u>	...	Grinding mill
<u>Kothi</u>	...	A store house

<u>Khumari</u>	...	A leaf umbrella
<u>Lodha</u>	...	A wild dog
<u>Mama</u>	...	Maternal uncle
<u>Mahadeo</u>	...	The deity
<u>Nunmutaria</u>	...	A pocket of salt
<u>Sendur</u>	...	Vermillion
<u>Sua</u>	...	A parrot
<u>Telasi</u>	...	Oily
<u>Thanth murra</u>	...	Pressed in sugarcane press

The exogamous septs of Paikhara Kawars of Surguja district are:-

<u>Baghni</u>	...	Tigress
<u>Bhaniara</u>	...	Wanderer of the forest
<u>Bailchor</u>	...	Oxen thief
<u>Benhel</u>	...	A bird
<u>Bhainsa</u>	...	Buffalo
<u>Bichhi</u>	...	Scorpion
<u>Bilwa</u>	...	Cat
<u>Bokra</u>	...	Goat
<u>Chakka</u>	...	Wheel
<u>Dhains</u>	...	Steam of a water-plant
<u>Hundra</u>	...	Wolf
<u>Jhanp</u>	...	Basket
<u>Kainth</u>	...	Man with ink-pot and pen
<u>Koriya</u>	...	A sept of Rathia
<u>Mahavir</u>	...	The deity
<u>Mitova</u>	...	Not known
<u>Mungel</u>	...	Coral
<u>Rankankan</u>	...	One who runs away from the battle
<u>Singar</u>	...	Not known
<u>Sikta</u>	...	Fox

In the Paikhara sub-division, an image of the totem is made by the bridegroom at the time of marriage and this is shown to the family of the bride. This image is made of flour and baked in oil. The meaning of this custom is possibly to represent his pedigree and to prove his legitimacy. The bride similarly prepares an image of the totem plant or animal of the father's family and shows it to the bridegroom and the members of his party. In this regard they relate a story. "Once there lived a couple who had a son and a cat. The cat was as dear to them as their son. The cat used to remain always with one or the other family member. They arranged the marriage of their son and erected a madwa for marriage ceremonies. During the rituals of marriage this cat remained below the madwa despite repeated efforts to remove it from there. It used to follow either the groom or the parents. Being tired of this, they put a basket over it so that it could not move. Since then there is a custom of making an image of a cat at the time of any marriage of any person of Bilwa got and keeping it in madwa." It may possibly be that from that

time this family may have acquired Bilwa got and this custom is still prevalent in the families of Bilwa got. Apart from this no other worship of the totem plant or animal is performed in Kawars. In some cases new got names have been formed by a conjunction of the names of two others such as Bagh-Daharia, Gauria-Sonwani and so on. All these septs are exogamous.

V. Dwelling, Dress, Food, Ornaments and other Material objects:-

Dwellings

The villages in which Kawars reside are now mostly multi-ethnic villages. These villages are generally situated on plains. The settlement pattern is linear. When the Kawars live with other castes and tribes, separate cluster of Kavar houses is usually seen, though this is not always the case. The Kawars do not, however, allow in any case, the Chamars or Craons to settle in their neighbourhood, because both these communities are considered lower in social and economic status by Kawars.

About the dwellings of Kawars, Dalton writes, "I have always found them a well-to-do, clean, industrious people, living in comfortable, carefully constructed and healthily-kept houses and well-dressed. The houses are built like bungalows with verandahs, and there is one to each married member of the family, and they are placed to form a court-yard of family apartments which is kept scrupulously clean." (Dalton, 1872, p. 136).

The houses are more or less of the same pattern with a court-yard in the centre surrounded by three or four rooms as observed by Dalton. The houses are rectangular in shape but there is no particular design for keeping the frontage of the house in any particular direction. And this is not possible also as the most common practice is to keep the front door on the lane or street on which the house is situated. The 'room of Gods' and kitchen are usually kept side by side inside the house and the door of 'room of Gods' invariably faces north. The explanation for keeping the doors of this room to north is only that the sacred river the Ganges flows in north and the south is regarded as in-auspicious. This room of the God is constructed first which is always a bigger one and only after that the kitchen and other rooms are constructed. There is no reservation of any particular room for menstrating women of the household in Rajpur and Parsa villages of Ambikapur tahsil of Surguja district. One Chief of Kavar Panchayat also informed that no room is reserved for such occasions. They may live in any verandah during the period but the entry into the 'room of Gods' and kitchen is strictly prohibited. The entry into these is also restricted to the members of the household and even the married daughter can not enter these rooms. Garbage is also strictly prohibited to be kept in the 'room of Gods.'

The produce is stored by constructing a kothi in the 'room of Gods' which is the biggest room in the house.

A portion of a verandah is used for keeping water vessels and is used as bathroom also. There is no planned drainage in these houses. Only a passage in a wall is made to pass the water to the bari which is a common feature behind the Kawar house. A mud wall is generally stretched along the bari to prevent the destruction of the produce from cattle. Dhenki is another special feature inside a Kawar house. It is always fixed somewhere in the verandah. Cattle are kept in a shed constructed just close to the front-door so that they may go out and come back without any disturbance to the family. As in any other village of the region, latrines are also not provided in Kawar houses. Both males and females go to the nearby fields for defecation. The fields thus serve as public latrines. Children use the bari or the open space behind the house. Women generally take water with them while going to ease themselves but the men go to the tanks or nearby nala.

Wells have platforms surrounding them. People take bath at these wells and also wash their clothes beating them on the platform allowing the dirty water to flow back into it. Twigs and leaves from surrounding trees also fall into the well, which is never cleaned though the twigs and leaves decay into it. Disinfectants such as potassium permanganate or calcium are not used to clean the water of the wells, with the result that mosquitoes and other germs flourish in and around the wells. The water is never filtered when used for drinking and cooking purposes. The source of water both for drinking and other uses is a well. The water of nearby nala or river is also used for these purposes. Windows and ventilators also do not find any place in any Kawar houses which is generally the practice all throughout the region.

The walls are usually made of mud in which husk of Kodon is mixed to impart it some consistency and plastered by black clay. In the absence of Kodon husk, paddy husk is also used, though not popular, and is said to be inferior in quality to Kodon husk. The rafters and beams are usually of Harra (Terminalis chebula) wood and inter-woven with bamboo splits. Door panes are also made of Harra wood. Tiles made locally are used for roofing.

Before constructing a house, it is invariably observed whether the plot is haunted by any spirit or not. This observation is done by one of the following methods:-

1. On the selected plot and particularly at the place where the room of Gods is to be constructed, an axe is struck in the evening. The next morning it is seen whether the axe is in the same position or not. If the position of the axe is disturbed in any way, the plot will not be used for construction of the house.

2. A small pit is dug on the selected plot and water is filled in it. The movement of water in that pit is watched. If it moves clockwise, the plot is supposed to be auspicious otherwise it is abandoned.

No other ceremony is performed before the construction of the house. The house is always constructed in off-season i.e. April-May and almost the whole work pertaining to construction is done by the family members. Assistance from the co-tribal families is, however, entertained. The labourers are not engaged. Even the work of a carpenter is done by people themselves.

Fifth, seventh and ninth of the month according to Hindu Calendar are supposed to be auspicious dates for entering into a new house. On this day the services of a Brahmin are not requisitioned. The head of the family performs the puja. The expenditure of this puja varies according to the resources of the family. It ranges from only dhup, jaggery and a coconut to the sacrifice of a goat. If a goat is sacrificed at this ceremony, it will invariably be white or red in colour. For this colour specification they have no explanation. The prasad of this puja is, however, distributed among the people of the same sept.

Dress

Russell and Hiralal remark, "The dress of the Kawars presents no special features calling for remark." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 401). R.K.Deshpande has the following to say on their dress, "The adult men wear dhoti covering the body from the waist to about the knees. They do not generally expose the buttocks. The adult women wear sarees like Uraon women with the difference that the portion of cloth tied round the waist is not disproportionately small. The married women generally cover their head while the unmarried young girls keep their heads bare" (Deshpande, Tribes of India, 1950, p. 113). There is nothing worth remarking about the dress of males and they put on the same dress as is common in the area. The women have taken to wearing blouse known as ihula and bandi. At the time of marriage, the dress of a bridegroom consists of a dhoti, Kurta and white jama. He also wears new shoes. A head gear termed locally as mour is also used. Yellow lugda (6 yards sari), a blouse of any colour and a patmouri (head gear) are the requirements for a bride. She does not wear shoes at this occasion. Mour and patmouri are prepared from chind leaves and the mali prepares them. The cost of these varies according to the paying capacity of the purchaser.

gar generally costs from Rs.1.00 to Rs.5.00 and patmouri from Rs.0.50 and Rs.2.00. Clean clothes are worn at the occasion of any puja. There is nothing particular in the dress of a priest.

Ornaments

"Women wear pewter ornaments on the feet and silver or pewter rings on the neck. They decorate the ears with silver pendants, but as a rule do not wear nose-rings." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol. III, p. 401). Ornaments worn by the females in the ears are known as tarki and khinwa. Halka and hansli are the ornaments of the neck. Halka is a necklace of silver imitation rupees beaded in a thread and sometimes actual rupees are also used. In the middle of this necklace, a heart-shaped piece of silver is put. Batam is just a variant of halka and in this four-annas (25 paise) coins are used in place of rupees. Hansli is the solid ring of silver worn round the neck. Ornaments of the wrist are the choora and ainthi and those of the legs are beda and chutki. A kanta of brass or gold (an ornament in the form of a pin) is worn in nose. The use of nose-ring is still prohibited but they have no reason to account for this. Small gold rings are worn by men with better means.

Personal decoration

Tattooing is considered to be an important piece of ornament on the female body, and it is believed that a woman would not be entitled to go to heaven unless she gets herself tattooed just after marriage. It is also said that these are only ornaments which go with the body after the death as the expenditure once incurred over the tattooing cannot be recouped by sale or mortgage as in the case of other ornaments of any metal. And also after death the tattooing marks cannot be taken out from the body and as such they always go with the body of the female. Unmarried girls also get themselves tattooed but the designs for them are different. They get the tattooing done only on the face which is known as tipa. Married women get themselves tattooed on the arms, neck and legs. Russell and Hiralal's remark, "Women are tattooed on the breast with a figure of Krishna," (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol. III, p. 401) is not found to be in vogue now. Common designs are those of flowers, leaves and some geometrical forms; name is usually not got tattooed.

Tattooing is got done from the professional tattooers who visit the villages and halt there. These professional tattooers assert themselves as belonging to the Badi caste but are in all probability members of the Dewar caste. The women among them perform the operations of tattooing.

The charges vary according to the labour involved in tattooing. Rs.1.00 is, however, invariably the charges for tattooing a tipa on the face of a unmarried girl.

Hair cutting of both children and grown ups is done by the persons of barber caste on payment of charges. These charges are paid annually @ 5 tambi (10 seers) per adult male and 2 tambi (4 seers) per child. The charges cover hair-cutting and shaving both.

Food and drink

Rice is the staple food of the tribe and at least three preparations are made out of it, viz., bhat (rice cooked in the ordinary way) pej (gruel) and basi (cooked rice soaked in water and allowed to remain for the night and eaten on the next day) Kodon and inferior millets are also eaten by the tribe. Pulses and vegetables are eaten only occasionally. The poorer section also eats flowers of the Sal tree mixed with mahua. Sal is locally known as sakhua. In order to remove their bitterness in taste these flowers are required to be boiled 3 to 5 times. After each boiling operation, these are washed in cold water. During the days of scarcity, this is the only food of the common men.

The tribe is non-vegetarian by habit and the Kawars eat goat and fowl and also other jungle animals that they kill. Russell and Hiralal write, "The Kavar eat flesh, fowls and pork, but abjures beef, crocodiles, monkeys and reptiles. From birds he selects the parrot, dove, pigeon, quail and partridge as fit for food. The higher sub-tribes have now given up eating pork and the Tanwars abstain from fowls also." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 402). Similarly Deshpande, R.K. writes, "The Kawars are meat-eaters. Except the Rathias, the other two classes (Dodhari Kavar and Paikhara Kavar) do not eat pork." (Tribes of India, 1950, p. 114). The Paikhara Kawars of Surguja district do not eat pork and also abjures parrot, owl and pigeon at these days. Meat of animals like deers and sambhars and fish is also preserved after drying it and mixing salt. The tribe does not eat snakes of any kind as some of the jungle tribes do.

Use of liquor is fairly common in the tribe and is a necessary item in all the festive ceremonies. Besides the use of local distillery liquor, they prepare rice liquor which is a must at the marriage and death ceremonies. The local preparation of the rice liquor is as below:-

In a big earthen pot water is put for boiling. As soon as this water reaches the boiling point, 3 tambis (nearly 6 Kgs.) of usna (per boiled) rice is then mixed in it. When the rice is cooked, the pot is taken down from

the hearth and the rice is spread over a place on the ground already cleaned for the purpose. The roots of (1) Khadhar, (2) Kunka, (3) Kumhada (Pumpkin), (4) Tendu (Diospyrostomentosa), (5) Ber (Zizyphus jujuba), (6) Chidchida (Snake-gourd), (7) leaves of Jack-tree, (8) black cumin seeds, (9) bark of lodh (Symploco racemoza), (10) Bansrikanda, (11) Trila Kanda, (12) Jurbala, (13) Teirai, (14) Bhoirai, (15) Kamarladia, (16) Patalmuni, (17) Patalkumhada, (18) Banmunga, (19) Cheelho and (20) Jhumkakanda are reduced to powder and this powder is divided into 48 parts. All these parts of this powder are then tied separately in the straw of paddy which are known as ranogoti. These ranogoti are then spread over the cooked rice. When it gets cool, the rice along with these 48 ranogoti is again put in the earthen pot. No water is now added in the above mixture and the mouth of the pot is sealed firmly with clay. This is then kept for a period of 5 or 6 days. During this period all the rice will be fused and the liquid thus prepared is taken out of the pot. The remains of the above medicines are kept aside and the liquid is drunk with water. This is known as handiapeena.

Other intoxicants like bhanga and ganja are also in use. Bhang leaves with the seeds of cucumber, black pepper, aniseeds are made in to a paste and in that milk and sugar are mixed and drunk. Bhang leaves are also some times mixed with tobacco and smoked in chilam. Ganja is smoked in chilam. Tobacco is very commonly used in smoking and the Kawars smoke it either in eathern pipe called chilam or in the leaf-pipe called chongi.

Equipments

Nagar, Kurri, and Pata are the three main agricultural equipments of the Kawars and are the same as used in the region. Nagar is a ploughing implement and is made of wood available in the nearby forest viz., Saja (Terminalia tomentosa) and sarai (Shereo robusta). This consists of a long wood shaft and a curved wooden structure. The lower end of the curved structure is bent inward and to it an iron blade known as loha is fixed. The whole of the structure of the nagar except the iron blade is made by the Kawars themselves. The services of a carpenter are not utilized. The iron blade is, however, obtained from the blacksmith. Kurri is used for throwing the soil from one place to another for levelling. It is a wooden implement and has a flat broad portion at one end and a long handle at the other. Pata is an implement used for breaking the clods. It is also used when there is excessive rains and the fields are not suited for sowing. In such a case pata is used on and again and the field becomes swampy resulting in

quicker evaporation of excess water. This consists of a flat wooden beam in which two long wooden poles are fixed converging at the opposite end. Kurri and pata are prepared by the Kawars themselves from the wood available in forests. Jua (Yoke) is invariably fixed in all the above implements. Bullocks or buffaloes are used for drawing these implements. Besides the above, kodi (shovel), kudari (pick-axe) tangi (axe) and hansua (sickle) are the other agricultural implements. Jhalgi (Hindi: Kawar) is used for transferring earth to the fields and sirhi is used for transferring the crops from field to the khalihan (threshing ground). The carts are not used for this purpose. The sirhi is made of bamboo wood resembling a kawar. Bow and arrow are used for hunting and the net is used for fishing. There is nothing in particular as regards household equipments. The articles of necessity viz., bucket, thali, katori, glass and earthen vessels are purchased from local market. They have no equipments of their own for recording time and space. Bihan (before sun rise), Satdhari (after sun rise), Dopahar (Midday), Berdharkna (after 4 P.M.) Sam (evening), Bivanijun (7-8 P.M.), Adirat (Midnight) and Bhinsar (4 A.M.) are the terms used by the Kawars for some specific timings. Distances are expressed in term of kos (2 miles) while shorter distances are measured by hath ($1\frac{1}{2}$ feet). Grain is measured by tambi (2 seers).

VI. Environmental Sanitation, hygienic habits, diseases and treatment

Environmental sanitation

The houses are kept absolutely neat and tidy by a regular washing of cattle-dung and clay. The women take great pains in regularly washing the inside and outside of the house. The floor too is regularly washed with cattle dung. This practice is, however, not characteristic of this tribe only; it may be said to be a characteristic of the entire region. The portion of road or lane in front of the house is also swept regularly. Nearby fields are used for attending the call of nature and as such the question of disposal of night soil does not arise. Kawars being agriculturists, cattle are found in each household and garbage is never thrown out but is given to the cattle to eat.

Hygienic Habits

Kawars both males and females take bath daily. It may be on a well or nearby nala or river. While bathing the body is rubbed and cleaned thoroughly. There is no hesitation among women in cleaning any part of the body despite the bathing place being in open. The bath is

taken in open as if it is being taken in a closed bathroom. At times women take bath inside the house also. The use of bathing soap is uncommon and a black clay known as mur misini mati (hair cleaning earth.) is used for cleaning the hair both by men and women. Sometimes, as after the menstruation period, the women may also cleanse their hair with washing soda. A piece of stone or brick is used to clean ankles and soles of feet. The teeth are cleaned with the twig (datoun) preferably of sakhua tree. This cleaning is done just before taking a bath and not necessarily in the morning. The superfluous hair of arm-pit of men are shaved by the barber. The arm-pits of women are also absolutely clean always. The method employed for removing these hair is to take warm ash from the hearth and rub it thoroughly in the region and then extract the hair.

The hair is combed with kakai and women may help one another in combing. The use of any cosmetics is not prevalent among the Kawars. Generally men do not apply oil on their hair.

Washing soap is not used for washing the clothes. Wood ash is commonly applied for washing the dirty clothes. This ash is first boiled in water and then the clothes are dipped in it. After sometime they are washed either at well or in river water. Similarly utensils are cleaned with the ash of paddy husk and at times with clay.

Diseases

Kawars rarely go to an allopathic or ayurvedic dispensary for treatment and depend firstly on their own indigenous medicines and herbs for curing ordinary ailments, and secondly, the Baiga, the medicineman is called for Jhad-phoonk (drive away the evil spirit). He is supposed to be an expert in removing the affliction of 'evil-eye'. Suna-ghotna is a totka used for removing the effects of evil spirit. Two handful of rice are kept in a winnowing fan. The winnowing fan is taken in the left hand and by the other hand the rice is set in motion in front of the person supposed to be affected by evil spirit. During the whole process songs of three types are sung by the witch doctor. First jhatka (a threat) is sung, after that hankni (to drive away) is sung and the last one is a song which in fact is in the praise of the evil spirit and the promises of offering are made in this song. After the cure, the witch doctor is given the articles promised for offerings on the place of the spirit. Generally a coconut, vermillion, a cock or a he goat are offered. The baiga also knows the use of some indigenous medicines.

The causes of diseases are not known to the Kawars and they also do not interpret the cause of any disease except the cholera and small pox which are supposed to be caused by goddess Kalika Mai or as a result of the misdeeds of the witches.

The prescriptions for some of the common ailments are:-

Hurt and Wound

1. Mustard oil is rubbed;
2. Oil of goh (lizard) is extracted and rubbed. If the wound has become septic, cotton soaked in mustard oil is placed over the wound. This is termed locally as potni bandhna.

Fever

Malaria

Known as jar. This is treated by giving decoction of kari-jiri and root of ber tree.

Intermittent fever

The roots of pipal, sakhua and one more tree are extracted from some place which is circumambulated five times by the person affected by this fever. After that these roots are boiled in water and the decoction is given as medicine. This circumambulation is known as jar bandhna.

Head-ache (Mur dhkhan)

Motha kanda is ground and the paste is applied.

Ear trouble

The juice of the leaves of pipal is extracted and put on fire. When it becomes hot, it is put into the ears.

Eye-trouble

The milk of ramrendi is applied to the eyes.

Skin diseases viz., pimple, an ulcer, or abscess etc.

The liquid like gum is extracted from the stems of sakhua tree in which mustard oil is mixed. This becomes like a paste and applied to the spot. The disease is

locally known as kandai (a pimple) and rot-kandai (ulcer or abscess). For suppuration of the ulcer or abscess, the excreta of rats and garlic are ground and mixed with ghee. This paste is applied. After the suppuration of the ulcer or abscess, cotton soaked into mustard oil is placed over it.

Vomiting

A thread is taken out from the stem of andi tree and five or seven knots are tied in it. This thread is then tied on the neck.

Stomach ache

Ash from the hearth is taken and put on the umbilicus.

Loose motions (pet-ihardays)

Rice is prepared and cold water is poured seven times over it. The water is separated after that and salt is mixed in that rice. Only five morsels are given to eat to the patient and cold water is also given to drink immediately after taking that rice.

Dysentery (aonpet)

The seeds of lakada tree are taken out from its fruits and given to the patient.

Tooth-ache

The gum of sakhua is put over the tooth and fermented.

Cold and Cough

Hot water of rice is drunk and hot mustard oil is rubbed in the neck.

Small pox

No treatment is given to the patient, only moving of a neem twig gently up and down his body so as to ease the itching sensation. Worship of goddess Kalika mai, the deity of small pox is done regularly. They are, however, not indifferent towards vaccination and children are got vaccinated.

Cholera

The disease is believed to be caused by the goddess Kalika mai to whom offerings of a goat is made. The native remedy for cholera is only onion juice. They are, however, not averse to inoculation against cholera and any preventive measures taken by the Health Department are welcomed.

Besides the indigenous medicines, cauterization is also common. A thick nail or a piece of iron rod is put in burning fire it is taken out when it becomes completely red. A piece of cloth soaked in butter milk is then put on the spot to be cauterized and then this red hot iron is put on the spot thrice. Sometimes a brass plate is kept on the place to be cauterized and then the process is gone through.

Attitude towards modern system of medicines

Due to contacts with city life and Government officials stationed in villages, there is a tendency among the villagers as also in Kawars to consult medical practitioners but that only after native remedies and witch doctors have failed. A Primary Health Centre has been established by the Government at each of the Development Block headquarters and the medical facilities of the centre are often availed of by the Kawars.

As regards family planning, they have no definite opinion. Some say children are god gift and it is beyond the human power to obstruct the process. The opinion of the other section is that in these days it is useful to have a limited family but they abstain from the modern methods of family planning. They have their own medicine for this purpose, known as lalgulab (not rose). The tuber of this lalgulab along with its stem is made to paste and taken with water or milk by the ladies. Their belief is that after taking this medicine conception does not take place.

VII. Language and Literacy

"The tribe have lost their own language, if they ever had one, and now speak a corrupt form of Chhattisgarhi dialect of Hindi." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 390). In 1961 Census, 80.97 per cent of the tribe have returned Hindi as their mother tongue. Chhattisgarhi, as the mother-tongue has been returned only by 18.38 per cent and Sadri by 0.59 per cent. 6,461 persons or 1.9 per cent of them are bilinguals.

In the 1961 Census, 32,343 or 9.8 per cent (males 29,761; females 2,582) have been returned as literates and the figures of literates of various groups for the tribe as a whole are given below:-

Standard	Total	Males	Females
Total Literates	32,343	29,761	2,582
(a) Literates without any educational standard	24,729	22,520	2,209
(b) Primary or Junior Basic	7,546	7,174	372
(c) Matriculation and above	68	67	1

Analysis of the figures of literacy among the different synonymous groups also shows that those groups which ascribe themselves a higher social status show higher percentage of literacy e.g., among Tanwar and Kaur, the percentage of literacy is about 30 per cent, while among the Cherwa and Kanwar which are believed to be at a lower level, the literacy is as low as 4.6 and 6.7 per cent respectively.

In literacy however, the tribe is ahead of the total Scheduled Tribes of the State and of the rural population of Surguja district except the literacy of females. It is also ahead of Gond living in the district of Surguja in literacy. The percentage of literacy for the State, Surguja district, Scheduled Tribes of the State, Kavar and Gond are shown below:-

Region	% of literated and educated					
	Total		Male		Female	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Madhya Pradesh	12.73	43.52	21.81	56.51	3.36	28.35
Surguja district	7.81	39.44	13.62	52.25	1.78	23.57
Scheduled Tribes of the State	4.98	15.46	9.06	24.81	0.93	4.77
Kavar Tribe	9.79	28.56	18.15	43.28	1.54	8.71
Gond Tribe	4.96	17.58	9.4	29.6	0.8	4.3

VIII. Economic Life

Service in the army is claimed to be the traditional occupation of the tribe and the Kawars were, probably, trusted soldiers of the Haihaibansi Chieftains of Ratanpur. The Routia section of them weave ropes and make sleeping cots though this occupation is considered to be degrading by other sections of Kawars. It is seen from the returns of the present Census that 60.6 per cent of the tribe is engaged in cultivation and agricultural labour (54.9 per cent as cultivators; 5.6 per cent as agricultural labourer). If the non-workers are kept out of consideration, 88.5 per cent and 9.1 per cent of the 'workers' are engaged respectively in cultivation and agricultural labour. Agriculture and agricultural labour thus form the mainstay of Kavar economy and many of them are substantial cultivators. 0.9 per cent of workers in the tribe are engaged in mining, quarrying, and allied activities; these represent the figures for those Kawars who work in the coal mines of Surguja district. Many of the Kawars have also entered Government service and are in the employment of the local bodies as teachers and in other subordinate posts. 0.9 per cent of the Kavar workers' have returned themselves as engaged in 'other service.'

As compared to the other tribes living in the vicinity the Kawars have a more balanced and developed economy. There is nothing special in their mode of cultivation, however, their methods of cultivation are as below:-

Preparation of field

Kawars do not wait for any specific time for starting the preparation of their fields. As and when they get time from other agricultural operations, they add the soil to their fields so as to make them in a proper level. Digging of soil is done by kodi and it is transferred to the field by ihalgi. Kurri is used for levelling the field and the clods are broken by the pata. Ploughing is done by the nagar.

Sowing

Ritual connected with the sowing

Before the actual sowing is started, one day the cultivator gets up early in the dark hour of the morning and goes to the field with fire in a piece of a tile, some cotton, dhup, ghee and jaggery and the offerings of these are made at the field. After the offerings, a handful of paddy seeds is sown broadcast and the pata is set in motion over the seed sown. This is done to save the crop from evil eye. The whole process is done in a dark hour so that none else could see.

The paddy is the main crop and its sowing operations are of the following types:-

1. Khurra (dry sowing)
2. Ropa (Transplantation method)
3. Chopi (post germination method)

Khurra

Before the rains set in i.e., in the month of May, the dry fields are ploughed and the paddy is sown by broadcasting method. This is known as ihora-bunana.

Ropa

One who has good fields and the other resources viz., labour, manure etc. sows their fields by transplantation method. Seedlings are prepared and after one or two good showers of monsoon, the land is ploughed and dung manure is well mixed with soil. The germinated seed is then planted but the planting is never done in a line.

Chopi

Chopi is the method of sowing used by those who could not sow their lands either by khurra or by ropa methods. This method is always used when the cultivator gets fairly late in sowing their fields. The embankment of the field is broken at a place so that the monsoon water collected there may flow out. The pata is then used on and again to make the soil of the field swampy so as to evaporate the excess water early. A day before the sowing, the seed is tied in a piece of cloth and soddened in water so that it germinates the next day. The soaked and germinated seed is then sown broadcast.

After the paddy seed has germinated well and the plants are about a foot in height, the fields are closed properly and water is stored. For the proper growth of paddy rain showers in the month of October are essential as no irrigation facilities are available. Weeding is not at all in practice among the Kawars. Reaping begins in the month of November. This is done by the family members with sickle. Those who have enough land and can afford engage labour. The crop is then transferred to the threshing ground which is prepared invariably near the house in the village. This is done by sirhi. Carts are not used. Threshing is done by bullocks. Threshing is known as nisai. Small quantity of crop is, however, threshed by a flat piece of wood. This is done by hand. Winnowing is done by a winnowing fan (soopa) standing on the floor itself. Stool, as else where, for standing during the winnowing operation is not in use.

Varieties of paddy

Godadhan (a local variety of paddy) which is grown in dand land (land without embankments) is much preferred. This is sown in 70 to 80 percent of land. The broadcast method of sowing is used and reaped by October end. The other variety preferred is Kardhanadhan (a variety of paddy). This is black in colour with red rice in it. This is an early variety of paddy and reaped within 60 to 65 days. Besides these other varieties including the improved varieties are also sown.

Diseases

Banki and Gandhi are the two diseases of paddy known to the Kawars of Surguja. Banki affects the stem of the plant and make the plant dry. On detection of the disease, the embankments are broken and water is allowed to flow out of the field. The branch of bhilwa (Semicarpus anacardium) tree is then pitched in the field. The other method to remove the effect of the disease is to mix the dung of an elephant in the water of the field. Gandhi affects the flowers and to remove this a plant of barhi is pitched in the field.

Other crops

A number of varieties of millets viz., miiri, medo, sama, kodo (Paspalum scrobiculatum), madia etc., are grown by the Kawars. These are sown broadcast on the light soil. Pulses viz., rahila (gram), moong, kulthi, arhar (Cajanus indicus), urad (Phaseolus radiatus) etc., are also grown. Except arhar all other pulses are sown in Rabi crop. Arhar is, however, sown with kharif crops which is reaped in the month of March.

Wheat is also now sown. In vacant fields it is sown in the month of October. In the paddy fields, it is, however, sown as soon as the paddy is reaped i.e., December and as such double crop is reaped in some of the fields.

Joundhari (Maize) is grown in bari. After the first shower of monsoon, bari is ploughed. Dung manure is mixed in the soil and maize is sown broadcast. It is reaped in October and mustard is sown. Those who can afford, dig a well without masonry (Indara) in the bari. By irrigation from this well, vegetables such as potato, cauli flower, onion, brinjal, cucumber etc., are grown and sold in markets.

IX. Life cycle

Kawars are aware of the biological basis of conception. They realise, however, that mere sexual-intercourse will not necessarily lead to a conception unless there is some ancestral spirit longing to take birth in the family and the blessings of God should be there. On the other hand if God does not like the conception to result in the birth of a child, there is no power on earth which can check abortion. Attempts are, however, made by the Kawars to check the abortion by calling a witch doctor who performs some ihad-phonk (exorcision). The normal attitude towards marriage is to have a child and this should be fulfilled within three or four years after the marriage. If a woman does not conceive by this time, she is supposed to be sterile and is not liked. She is said to be of Kachhideh (unripe body). She is given some magic treatment. It is also believed that if a barren woman eats the plecenta or drinks a decoction made of it, she would become fertile.

The cessation of woman's menses for a period of two or three months is a symptom of conception. But this alone is not enough. The Kusrain (Midwife) is called to attend the expectant mother who diagnoses a woman's pregnancy through some signs. The other symptom of a expected mother is that she must have some fever after about 10 days from cessation of menstruation. They believe that as soon as the process of formation of the body of the child starts in womb, the expectant mother becomes yellowish and develops bad taste and loses appetite. She looks prettier. In three months' time head and in the fifth month both the hands of the prospective child are formed. Life is instilled in the sixth month. And by this time all the parts of the body come into existence in the womb. The vomiting trouble and other complications also stop automatically they believe. The pregnant woman is referred as bhari deh (Heavy body).

There are some restrictions for a pregnant woman. They are:-

1. She is not allowed to go to tank, river and forest as she is required to bend there which may harm the child in womb.
2. She is not allowed to eat kathal because it is believed that child in womb may have thorns like the Kathal.
3. She is not allowed to eat the meat of hare for the child may have hair like a hare.

4. She is not allowed to go towards the burial ground as enroute the burial ground there is every possibility of her being affected by an evil spirit.

Kawars do not celebrate the pregnancy in any way. The expectant mother is, however, given to eat all that she craves for. The craving for a particular item to eat enables others to read the nature of child to be born. For example, if she craves for milk, curd and dry fruits, the child will be fortunate one and possess noble character and on the other hand if she demands meat or fish, it is said that the child will be rather unfortunate and cruel by nature.

Foretelling of sex of child in womb

Kawars feel that the sex of the child in the womb can be more or less accurately predicted by experienced persons and by observation of the activities of the pregnant woman. These observances are as below:-

1. If she puts more weight on her right foot, the child would be a male one.
2. In case of a male child, the waist of the pregnant woman becomes thin.
3. She will feel very uneasy and always tired if there is a male child in her womb.

They also predict the sex of a unborn child by tearing a stem moha kanda. If the part of stem so torn is thick on the right side, the male issue is predicted and if this thick part is towards the left side, a female child is expected.

No room in the house is reserved for deliveries which generally take place in one of the rooms or verandahs. The verandah is, however, covered by putting curtains of tat-patti. Usually a Chamar or Ghasia woman works as the Kusrain (midwife). The delivery takes place in a sitting posture and not in the recumbent one. "The umbilical cord is cut by the midwife, if the parents wish the boy to become eloquent she buries it in the village Council place; if they wish him to be a good trader, in the market; if they desire him to be pious, before some shrine; in the case of a girl, the cord is usually buried in a dung-heap, which is regarded as an emblem of fertility." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 396). The description given by Russell and Hiralal is not observed by the tribe now. The umbilical cord is cut by an iron blade viz., knife, sickle etc. without a piece of wood attached to it,

otherwise this implement is polluted. The umbilical cord and placenta are invariably buried in the same room where delivery has taken place and fire is burnt on the place for six days. It is very carefully watched, that the placenta is not taken away by the Kusrain (mid-wife). The midwife gets 6 seers of rice as remuneration for cutting umbilical cord and assisting the woman in delivery.

If the delivery is delayed, the roots of tamarind tree which has not given fruits, are extracted and tied with hair of pregnant woman. It is believed that this relieves the woman to some extent from pains and makes the delivery easy. The roots of chidchidi are also used for this purpose. A fishing net is hung outside the door of the delivery. The evil spirits attracted towards the delivery room are believed to get entangled in the fishing net.

Immediately after delivery, the mother is given a decoction of some herbs and roots and next two days she is given a decoction of aiwain, piper and haldi only. The birth pollution lasts for five days that is till the chatti ceremony. Chhatti ceremony is performed on the fifth day (though Chhatti exactly means sixth). On this day, the heads of the child and father are shaved by the barber for which he gets two annas in case of a girl and four annas in case of a boy. The clothes of the mother and child are washed by the dhobi who gets one rupee irrespective of the sex of the child. Kusrain attends the woman and the child for all these five days. She massages oil and performs other services such as washing of clothes, sweeping of the room etc. For all this she gets 3 tambi (6 seers) rice and one rupee in cash.

On Chhatti day the child is taken out, placed over a winnowing-fan in which some paddy is kept and covered with a piece of new cloth. Till this day the father is not allowed to see the child. A Brahmin Pandit is now invited and consulted on the auspiciousness or otherwise of the stars. In all such cases all male members of the household are prohibited from seeing the child till the pandit declares his verdict.

After barhi (twelfth day) the woman is allowed to cook the food. She may, however, perform all the household duties except touching water and cooked rice after chhatti.

Naming ceremony takes place in the fifth month in case of a boy and in the fourth month in case of a girl. On this day lips of the child are touched with rice and milk. This is called annaprasan. Russell and Hiralal say in this regards, "Five months after birth the lips of the child are touched with rice and milk and it is named." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III. p.396). This annaprasan is invariably done by the sian (old man or woman) of the household. If there is none in the family, a neighbour is called.

"When twins are born, a metal vessel is broken to sever the connection between them, as it is believed that otherwise they must die at the same time." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p.397-398). This is now not observed by the Kawars. To avert the ill-luck caused by a birth of a boy after three girls or a girl after three boys, oil and salt is thrown away and the mother gives one of her bangles to the midwife. This child is referred to as titura (boy) and tituri (girl).

No special protection and care of the child is taken. The child is, however, protected from exposure. Children are rarely beaten in Chhattisgarh and among the Kawars also the same holds good. Male child is generally preferred as he will be an addition to the working force of the family in agricultural operations, while the girl will leave the parents' house after marriage. This is also due to the low bride price (Rs.20/- only) prevailing among the tribe. Kawars are not generally aware of the family planning. They do not think in terms of a particular number of children as in their opinion it is the blessing of God to have children and their number cannot be fixed by mortal beings. The segregation of sex is observed at the age 7 or 8 years when the girl starts wearing dhoti and bandi.

Pre-marital mixing among the Kawars is allowed to the extent that a young girl can talk with the boys of her age. But pre-marital sex-relations are strictly prohibited. Though there is strict segregation of sexes, they can always develop personal likes and intimacies by meeting together in markets, jungles and other places. This may also result in pre-marital sex-relations and if the couple belongs to the same sub-division this relationship may result into marriage also. In other cases it is tried to get the matter hushed up and the marriage is arranged. The informant was asked as to how the pre-marital sex relations develop when the child marriages are preferred in the tribe and the brides start living with their husbands as soon as they reach their 10th year of age. His reply can very well be explained in the words of Dr.Majumdar, "With a wife and children at home, to love and protect whom is the husband's privilege and duty, he often loves another woman, or rather exhibits feelings of lust towards her, and the wife who by the tenderest bonds of nature should be devoted to her husband and children might offer herself to another man. If married men and women behave so it is not strange that unmarried boys and girls step into the same pitfalls throwing aside the affection of fathers and mothers, and the allegiance they owe to them, and allowing their homes the nests in which they were nurtured -- to be filled with unhappiness by their wilful, wanton ways of living;" (Majumdar, 1958, p. 231).

Marriage

Kawars say that a girl is usually married before she attains puberty i.e., before the age of 12 years. The statement appears to be correct as they say that the marriage of a girl whose menses have started before marriage, is not referred to bihay but it is referred to nibah, although all the ceremonies of a marriage are performed in nibah. This first menstruation is termed as ghat utarna and the marriage after ghat utarna is not preferred. But prevalence of child marriage does not get support from the statistics of 1961 Census. This may probably be due to instructions for not tabulating the marriage between the age 0-9 and all were recorded as "Never married." Only 7.15 per cent of females in the age-group 0-14 are married in the tribe while the percentage of married females in the age-group 15-44 is 88.88. They are aware of the Sharda Act and this may be the reason for less returns of married females in the age-group of 0-14. A boy is married at the age of 16 years when he is supposed to handle a nagar. The percentage of married males in the age-group 0-14 as per 1961 Census statistics is 3.6 only. The accuracy of the statement of Kawars about the age at marriage of a boy cannot be explained further as there are no such statistics pertaining to marital status of 0-16 age-group.

Marriages are restricted to each sub-division of the tribe and a marriage within the same gotra is prohibited. Cross-cousin marriages are preferred. The marriage with mother's sister's daughter is not allowed. Widow re-marriage is prevalent except in Tanwar sub-tribe who think themselves of superior social status. Consanguineous marriages are locked upon and junior levirate and junior sororate is a common practice, except in Tanwar sub-division. A man is allowed to have more than one wife at a time but this practice is limited to zamindars, Tanwar sub-division and persons of good resources.

As in the case of other tribes in these areas, it is the girl who is sought after for marriage and marriage negotiations start from the boy's side. Having selected a bride for his son, the boy's father sends some friends to her village and they address a friend of the girl's family saying, "So-and-so (giving his name and village) would like to have a cup of pej (boiled rice-water) from you; what do you say? The proposal is communicated to the girl's family and if they approve of it, they commence preparing the rice-water which is partaken by the parties and their friends. If the bride's people do not begin cooking the pej, it is understood that the proposal is rejected." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p.393). This procedure is still in vogue. Sometimes the persons from boy's side say, "We have pierced a stick in your roof; where is it gone?" This is an indication of

demanding a girl of the family in marriage. If persons from girl's side approve the proposal, they will say, "the stick pierced is at its place; who will remove the stick of sagaman (relatives)?" In selection of a bride, it is seen that she matches the groom in height, health and age. As regards the complexion, there is no preference. She should, however, possess a well built body without any infirmity. The selection is generally done by the father of the boy. The father of the girl also sees the boy before the final settlement. He also considers the same things. Besides negotiation, the practice of intrusion and elopement are also in vogue among the Kawars. Five different types or modes of procuring a mate are known among the Kawars, they are:-

1. Bihav
2. Nibah
3. Sagai
4. Dhoku and
5. Golond

Sukh-dam (bride price) is Rs.20.00 in each case. The marriage expenditure is, however, not fixed and it is settled according to the status of both the parties. In case the bride's father possesses good resources, he may demand the minimum expenditure viz., 7 khandi rice, $\frac{1}{2}$ maund gur and oil. In other cases the full expenditure including a goat, rice, dal, gur, tel and liquor is asked for.

Bihav

After the negotiations are completed Rupees two are given to the girl in token of the settlement of the marriage. This may be referred to betrothal. The persons who go for this also take with them some gur and chewala which is distributed among the tribe men present at the occasion. The date of marriage is also fixed at this time. Brahmin is not consulted about the auspicious date for marriage. The marriage is always performed on any odd date of Hindu months. Magh, Falgun and Vaishakh are preferred for marriage and the marriage may be performed on any of the odd dates viz., panchmi, saptmi, navmi etc. The marriage of the eldest son or daughter is never fixed in the month of Jeth. Payment of bride price and expenditure on marriage is made only in case of Bihav and Nibah.

Ceremonies connected with Bihav:

Marriage ceremonies start with erection of a madwa. Two days before the marriage the madwa is constructed in front of the house of the bride/bride-groom with poles of bamboo and covered with mango-leaves. Before constructing the madwa, Baiga (pujari or priest) is called who performs some puja at the place of construction of the madwa and throws some water beyond the limits of the madwa. For this he is paid according to the resources of the family. In case the party is poor, the Baiga gets only one meal. In the centre of the madwa, branches of ber, mango, bamboo and sidha, trees along with a nagar are fixed. These five kinds of wood represent five panchas. On the day of erection of the madwa, parents of both groom and bride observe fast and partake food only after the ceremony is over. A kalash is also kept in the centre of the madwa on the earth brought from the field of the Baiga.

Tel chadana.

Oil and turmeric powder is anointed on the bodies of the bride and bride-groom in their respective houses. The anointment starts from below feet to head. This is done by the family members both males and females, and under the madwa. This ceremony is performed on the day of erection of the madwa, and the ceremony is known as tel-chadana.

On the next day the groom is bathed under the madwa. He is asked to sit for bathing in a shallow large dish of metal and a little water from this dish is taken to the bride's house which is given to the bride for bathing. This water is referred to rayaspani. If rayaspani is not given to the bride for bathing, the bride's parents view it seriously. This is the first and foremost thing which is demanded by bride's side. On this day, i.e., a day before the marriage, the groom's party reaches the village of the bride. They are given a separate room or house to stay. This place is referred as janwasa.

On the day of marriage, clothes and ornaments are sent for the bride which she puts on and gets ready for the marriage. She is not allowed to have any thing belonging to her parent's house on her body at the time of marriage. These things are taken by bhasur (bride-groom's elder brother) and put before the elderly persons of bride's side. As soon as the bride and groom are ready in their marriage dresses, they are escorted to the Madwa. The couple goes round the marriage post six times (i.e. the five kinds of wood). This circumambulation is done anti-clockwise and the groom follows the bride. After circumambulation, the couple sits near the marriage post and at times a curtain

is put around the couple. The bridegroom then puts vermillion on the head of the bride between the hair parting. After this ceremony is over, the Brahmin performs the hom (fire offerings) and the couple bows before the room of Dulha Deo and other elderly persons present there.

"After the marriage, the bride's parents wash the feet of the couple in milk, and then drink it in abatement for the sin committed in bringing their daughter into the world." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p.394). The practice of drinking the milk and water in which the feet of the couple are washed is in vogue but some times it is only touched with the head and thrown on the chhani. The ceremony is just a modification of pany-poojina or pany-pakharna (worshipping the feet) practised in other castes and tribes and is an exhibition of the regard and respect which the bride's parents now possess for the son-in-law and the daughter. Due to the couple's high honour during the period, the water/milk is not thrown in a dirty place. This washing of feet is done in a new thali and with a new lota which becomes the property of the couple.

After pany-pakharna, the bride-groom takes the bride to janwasa where she is given bangles to wear and something to eat. After a little time she returns to her parents house.

Just after a little break the bridegroom comes back to the bride's house where khichri is offered to him. Before partaking it the bridegroom demands some presents from his father-in-law which may be a cow or a golden ring. Chiwra (flattened rice) and gur (Jaggery) are distributed to all the persons present by the bride-groom's father and in the evening the father of the bride gives a feast to the marriage party and to the members of the tribe living in the village.

Next day in the morning, the bridegroom takes away the bride and returns to his village along with the marriage party. In the house of the bride-groom the ceremonies are repeated, the difference being that whereas previously the direction of oil putting was from feet to head while this time it is from head to feet. This ritual is known as tel-utarna, and done by the barber. In his absence, the parents of the groom may perform the ritual. The couple then goes to the tank or some stream or river and bathes there together, each throwing 5 pots-full of water-over the other. On return the bridegroom shoots arrows at seven straw images of deer over his bride's shoulders and the bride brings back the arrows shot. In some cases she also puts some sugar in the mouth of the bridegroom after each shot. After living with her husband for 3 days, the bride returns to her parent's house on the

fourth day. She goes back with her husband after a year of so when he comes to his father-in-law's house accompanied by some friends and relatives and brings some presents for the bride. The ceremony is known as gawan.

The parents do not eat at the daughter's house after her marriage. However, if it cannot be avoided she is paid for the meals by the parents. This restriction is observed in case the marriage is performed before her menstruation started i.e. bihay. They say in bihay the girl is bestowed. In case of a nibah this is not done and there is no restriction in eating at her place.

Nibah

All the ceremonies of a bihay are performed in nibah. This type of marriage is a regular marriage of a virgin girl except that the menstruation of the girl has started before the marriage which is not preferred in the tribe and such marriage is referred to as nibah.

Sagai

Remarriage of a widow is a common practice in the tribe except in Tanwar sub-division. The younger brother has a prior claim over the widow of his elder brother and only with his consent she can re-marry some other person. If he does not agree to this, he is paid in lieu of his claim. The amount of this claim is determined by the panchayat. Sagai is a simple ceremony, only a feast to the relatives and bangles to the widow completes the ceremony.

Dhoku

This is a marriage by intrusion. The woman simply walks into the house of her paramour and declares that he is her husband. She does not leave the house despite torturing and beating by the family members of the man. The man is thus compelled to make her his wife by offering choori. Though this type of marriage is recognised by the panchayat, Kawars have no explanation for adopting this course of intrusion by girls, married women and widows. Dubey remarks, "The pathoo course is adopted by unmarried women, by widows and chhandwa who because of their illicit exploits become pregnant and when it is difficult to suppress the pregnancy, they adopt this mode." (Dubey, 1967, Village Survey Monograph, Kosa p. 58). Paithoo is the term for Dhaku in Durg district and chhandwa is a divorced or separated woman. This explanation appears to be logical.

Golond

This is a marriage by exchange. In this case one family gives a girl in marriage to the other and receives a girl of that family in marriage. In this type of marriage, no bride price is paid by either side and also the marriage expenditure is borne by the respective party. In case one party being financially weak, the other may help it.

If a man keeps a married woman as concubine or performs the marriage with her by way of dhoku or elopes with her, he has to pay the penalty to her former husband. This penalty is decided by the panchayat and generally fixed as high as possible. The reason for fixing a high penalty is that a large portion of the amount of penalty goes to the mukhiya, some is divided among the panchas and the remaining is given to the claimant. This penalty is known as bunda. Elopement of an unmarried girl is not common in the tribe due to the prevalence of early marriages.

Divorce and separation

As per 1961 Census returns, 1.13 per cent males and 0.93 per cent females are divorced or separated. This figure represents the marital status of Kawars at the time of 1961 enumeration and the figures of remarriages after divorce or separation are not included.

Divorce and separation is, however, common in the tribe. The serious mutual conflict among the couple or ill-treatment by the husband is the common reason for a woman to leave the house of her husband. In case of illicit relations of the wife with some other person, the husband also forces her to leave the house. In all such cases if a woman arranges her re-marriage, no procedure or sanction of the panchayat is required for divorce or separation. The former husband, if willing to keep her with him, will be entitled for bunda, which will be awarded by the tribe panchayat and the new husband will be forced to pay. In case the husband is not willing to keep her with him and forces her to leave the house, she may go to panchayat and request the panchayat to compel her husband to allow her to live with him. The panchayat tries for this and if the attempts of the panchayat fail, the husband is debarred from bunda if she arranges her re-marriage. In case of divorce and separation children always remain with the father.

Death

When it is noticed that a person is breathing his last, his body is laid on the ground with the feet towards the south. If, however, the death takes place before the person could be laid on the ground, the corpse is similarly

laid on the ground. Body of a person dying in the night is kept in the house till the following morning and a wick lamp is kept burning near it.

The corpse is not bathed but oil and turmeric are rubbed over it. The corpse is taken to the burial or cremation ground on a cot put upside down and keeping the head of the deceased towards the ground. The disposal of the dead body is by burial but cremation is normally the practice in the well-to-do classes of the tribe and also when the dead person was a reputed baiga or has died at ripe old age leaving behind a big family.

"The corpse is laid on its side in the grave with head to the north and face to the east. A little til, cotton, urad and rice are thrown in the grave to serve as seed-grains for the dead man's cultivation in the other world. A dish, a drinking vessel and a cooking pot are placed on the grave with the same idea, but are afterwards taken by the Dhobi (washerman)" (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol.III, p. 397).

The position of the corpse in the grave or on the pyre as observed among the Kawars of Surguja district is as below:-

In case of man, the corpse with head to the north and face to the east is laid on the chest in the grave or on pyre as the case may be, that is, in the ventral position. In case of a woman, the position is dorsal i.e. the corpse is laid on the back with the chest skywards but the head will remain towards north and the face towards east. Kawars says that Ganges the sacred river is in north and God Jagdish (Jagannathpuri) is in the east as such the head and face are kept in these directions.

The pyre is lighted by the eldest son of the deceased. If there is no son, this is done by the nearest relative. On return from the burial ground, roties or ghungri are served to the persons attending the funeral. After this the date of din is fixed and from this time only pollution starts. After cremation, the last remains known as rakhi are collected on the third day and immersed in some stream or river. Except the chief mourner, that is the person who set fire to the pyre, everybody else gets his head shaved on the third day; the chief mourner gets his head shaved later on twelfth day.

The tribe has a custom of 'feeding the dead! Two earthen pots are tied to a branch of a pipal tree near the cremation ground. The base of these is perforated and a cloth wick is put into the holes.

Water is filled in one of the pots and it drops on the ground through the wick. In the other pot, an earthen wick-lamp is burnt in the evening. The chief mourner cooks his own food in the house and before he starts eating, he puts a small part of it in a leaf plate on the roof of the house where it is eaten away by birds. It is believed that the spirit of the deceased gets food in this manner.

The mourning period for adults lasts for ten days and during this time the household of the deceased does not take fried food or meat. The chief mourner keeps a lota and piece of iron always with him during the period of mourning. He neither eats the food cooked by others nor the food cooked by him is eaten by any one else. On the twelfth day the chief mourner goes to a tank or a nearby stream and gets his head shaved there and bathes in the stream or the tank. A Brahmin is called to perform the rites on this occasion and when the Brahmin recites mantras the person takes a fresh dip into the water. Five balls of flour known as pinda are prepared, a ritual is performed as directed by the pandit and then they are thrown into the river. The pandit is presented with a new cot, a new bed-sheet and five pallees of rice.

Six months after the death a ceremony known as chhamasi is performed. On this occasion, Satyanarayan-ki-katha is got recited in the house and a feast is given to relatives and caste people. In case of children below 10 years of age, these elaborate death rites are not performed. The mourning period for children below 10 years is only five days.

X. Religion

Religion as Frazer has said must be the perfect combination of two i.e. belief and practice and this practice ordinarily leads a man to religious festivals. There are some festivals which produce the belief itself that is to say without that festival the belief is of no use. These religious festivals are the symbols of belief. (Quoted by Vidyarthi, 1966, p. 88). Kawars have strong belief in the existence of deities and spirits. However, Russell and Hiralal say, "The religion of the Kawars is entirely of animistic character." (Russell and Hiralal, 1916, Vol. III, p. 399). They feel that these deities and spirits are at the root of all evils and misery that befall on them.

The religion and religious beliefs of the Kawars are a mixture of the Hindu beliefs and practices and the tribal religion. 99.97 per cent of the Kawars have returned Hindu as their religion in 1961 Census, only 0.03 per cent returning Christianity, Islam and Kabirpanthi.

110 Christians (109 males and 1 female), 7 Kabirpanthi (6 males and 1 female) and 1 male Muslim form this 0-3 per cent population of Kawars who have returned their religion other than Hindu. Out of these 118 persons, 117 belong to the Kanwar sub-division who are believed to be at lower level in the tribe. Only 1 person is from Kaur sub-division. They have a vague idea of a supreme deity whom they call Bhagwan and identify him with the Sun. It is a taboo for women to perform or actively participate in the worship of the deities. They may only witness the ceremonies. The taboo is imposed because the women, due to menstruation and child birth are regarded to be unclean and unfit to worship the deities.

Apart from Bhagwan who does not require any formal and elaborate worship, there are a number of other deities. One of these is Dulha Deo (Bridegroom deity). As stated earlier, every house has a room reserved for this deity and it is this deity who is paid reverence at the time of marriage. There is no idol of the deity but the room of the house is washed with cattle-dung and rice, milk, turmeric and vermillion are offered at the place so washed in his name. Another important deity is Thakur Deo who is considered to be a deity of agriculture and harvest. The other deities are the Jhagra Khand (the double edged sword) who as the sword, is propitiated at the time of the Dasahara festival; Baghara Deo (tiger god) who is believed to be the deity protecting the cattle from the attacks of wild animals. Mandwa Rani or the goddess of the shed, is a local deity in the Korwa tract of Bilaspur district and is believed to put people on right tract when they get lost in the forests and to provide food and water to the wayfarers. Sat-Bahini or seven sisters are supposed to be on the river banks. Puraniha (Lotus one) is supposed to dwell in tanks in which lotus flower is grown.

Two other deities found to be worshipped by the Kawars of Surguja district, are Kalika Mai and Sarna. Kalika Mai is the village goddess and the deity of the small pox and cholera. Sarna is a deity of agriculture and is supposed to live on a tree of the same name. He is propitiated before sowing operations begin. The whole village assembles near a tree where the baiga or the tribal priest offers rice, milk, turmeric and vermillion to the deity at the foot of the tree and sacrifices a goat. He gives paddy seeds to each cultivator and it is this seed that is sown first in the field.

Important Festivals

1. Karma
2. Gangadasahara
3. Sohurai
4. Chherta
5. Holi

Calendar of Festivals

- Bhadra (September)
Jyaistha (May-June)
Kartika (October-November)
Pausa (December-January)
Phalgun (February-March).

The tribe observed some of the Hindu festivals and also festivals which are essentially tribal. The Hindu festivals are Holi, Ekadashi (Sohorai) and Tilsankranti (Chherta) but these Hindu festivals have been parochialised.

Karma

The festival falls on the tenth day of the waxing-moon fortnight of the month of Bhadra. It is a festival of dance and music. A branch of Karma tree (Nuclea parvifolia) is put in some open space or in the spacious courtyard of one of the villagers and here the boys and girls of the village perform the Karma dance.

Ganga Dasahara

Ganga Dasahara falls in the month of Jyaising on the 10th of the waxing-moon fortnight. The importance of the festival is in taking a bath in any river, stream, or lake and a gay multitude collect near the source of water. There was freedom for merriment and sexual jokes and misbehaviour sometimes reached to an extreme. Many restrictions have been placed on this frivolity and Ganga Dasahara celebrated now is of a very sober type.

Sohorai

This is also referred to Ekadashi festival which falls on the eleventh day of the waning moon-fortnight of the month of Kartika. This festival is spread over a number of days. The special theme of the festival is the well-being of their cattle. The men observe fast on this day, decorate the cattle and worship them. Much affection and reverence is shown to the cattle and they are given a special diet. Harnessing the cattle or treating them harshly during the festival is strictly taboed. A goat is sacrificed in the name of the protector deity, Bagharra Deo and the meat of the goat is partaken by the males only. It is a taboo for the women to eat. The women may, however, eat the coconut offered to the deity. But women in menstruation can not even eat this coconut.

Chherta

The common Hindu festival, Til Sankranti is celebrated as Chherta, festival. Chherta means the end i.e., the end of the agricultural year. The districts of Surguja, Raigarh and Bilaspur are predominantly rice growing tracts and January, when this festival is celebrated, is almost the end of the agricultural year. On this day both boys and girls of the tribe form small groups and go from house to house shouting Chherta-Chherchhera and they get gifts of paddy or rice from the houses where they go.

The collected rice is then sold and a picnic party is arranged on the same day.

Holi

Phag or Holi falls on the full-moon day of the month of Phalguna and lasts upto the Tuesday next. Holi fire is burnt in the common fashion and after the fire is burnt, every body present takes a handful of ash from the burnt out fire and blows it. The ash so blown is supposed to drive away the evil spirits from the village.

XI. Leisure, Recreation & Child Play

Kawars are so busy eking out their subsistence that they have hardly any free leisure and even when they have some free time they do not know how to utilize it. Such free time is, therefore, wasted in idle gossip. Conversation is a pastime. People of all castes are seen sitting in groups in evenings and chatting on various subjects. The gatherings are usually seen in front of the houses of prominent villagers such as gotia, patel etc. The usual topics of such conversations are the out-turn of crops, cattle diseases, quarrels in the village and so on. Children also sometimes join these people otherwise they play the games picked up in the school viz., kho-kho, Kabbaddi etc.

XII. Relation among different Segments of the Community

No recognised segments except the endogamous groups of Kawars which have been mentioned earlier have been noticed among the Kawars of Rajpur, Batoli and Sarbhoka villages of Surguja district. Domination of the poor section by the well-to-do ones is, however, there. Education is the other factor which gives some superiority over the uneducated people of the community. Educated persons are usually in Government service and they are often consulted when any notice for court attendance or any other paper from any office is received. Age, of course, may be the third factor of superiority and their experience of worldly affairs is often utilized.

A woman in Kawars looks after the domestic affairs, brings up children and participates actively in her husband's agricultural pursuits. She has no right to perform the puja of deities. She can only witness it. Prevalence of polygamy among the Kawars is another factor which dominates the position of a woman. A Kavar woman is in full grip of her husband.

XIII. Inter-community Relationship

It is a privilege of mali (gardener) to supply mour and pat-mouri to the Kawars at the time of marriage, and they are paid in cash for this. Blacksmith and barber work on iajmani system. The remuneration of blacksmith is calculated per nagar possessed by a family. And for this he has to repair tangia, kodi and hansiva. For new ones they are separately paid. Barber gets 5 tambis of rice annually for each adult male member of the family and 2 tambis per child.

Services of the Brahmin are utilized at births, marriages and deaths by persons who can afford the expenditure involved. The Brahmin is paid according to the resources of the family. Kusrain who belongs to Gashia caste is called to attend the woman in delivery period. She performs all services during the period and paid for that. Washerman, however, washes the clothes after any death takes place in the Kavar family and he is paid at the same time for that.

Except the Oraons and Chamars, all the ethnic groups live almost in adjoining paras or even in a mixed paras. They mix with each other and draw water from the same well. The Kawars have commensality of food with the Gonds but not with the Oraons, Pandos and Korwas whom they regard as lower to themselves. Similarly they do not take water and food from members of the Chamar caste. Due to their better economic status Kawars dominate the other groups except those of marwari-banias who are the traders and money-lenders in the area. Kawars in social hierarchy are also high as they are the persons who used to be appointed as gotia in erst-while Surguja State. After the merger of the State, they have occupied the post of patels in the villages.

XIV. Structure of Social Control, Prestige & Leadership

Every village has a caste panchayat of its own. The head of this panchayat is known as mukhiya ('Pradhan' according to Russell and Hiralal). This is not a hereditary office but is occupied by a person of great experience who of course used to be an old man of good financial position. The cases taken up by the caste-panchayat deal with irregular unions, illegal sexual intimacy, disputes over marriage and divorce, family quarrels and petty quarrels in the caste. In case this panchayat fails to decide the dispute, the bigger one is called. The head of this bigger panchayat is known as sunwani or thakur. This office of the sunwani is a hereditary one and the father of the present sunwani was also the head of the bigger panchayat. Except that the sunwani is a rich man, there are no other qualifications of the head of the panchayat.

In case of Bunda, however, the presence of sunwani is essential. The panchayat is called by one of the party in dispute. The number of members of the panchayat may be at the discretion of the person who calls a panchayat as it is an expensive affair for the person inviting a Panchayat. A feast to the members of the panchayat is a must in which meat of goat and liquor are invariably served. If the complainant is able to sustain the charge by producing evidence and witnesses, the defaulter is fined. The amount of this penalty goes to the members of the panchayat if the offence is against the community and if it is against the person alone, 3/4th of the amount of penalty is given to the complainant and the remaining is distributed among the members. In case of non-payment of the penalty, the person is out-casted. For re-admission to the caste-fold the person has to give a feast to the community and members of the panchayat in which meat and liquor are the necessary items. He has also to pay the amount of the penalty. A.E.Nelson states, "They are said to be very slow in making up their minds and a saying about them is, 'The Ganda's panchayat (caste committee) always ends in a quarrel, the Gond's panchayat cares only for the feast; and the Kawar's panchayat takes a year to arrive at a decision.' But when the Kawars have decided they act with vigour." (Nelson, 1910, Vol.A.P.89).

Apart from the caste-panchayat, there is a village-panchayat where the Kawars live with other tribes and castes. The village-panchayats decide cases of inter-caste disputes.

XV. Social Reform and Welfare

The tribe has adopted several customs observed by the Hindus. Participation of the Brahmin in birth, marriage and death rituals of Kawars has already been described. As back as 1872, Dalton described the case of a Sati in the tribe, which is a definite proof of the attempt of the tribe towards social elevation because cases of Sati are extremely rare, (practically unknown) amongst tribes. Discarding widow remarriages, prohibition of meat and liquor by Tanwars, one of the sub-division of the Kawars is another example of their attempt for social climbing. There is, however, no organised association as such and no organised movements also have been started in the tribe.

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GLOSSARY

<u>Ain</u>	-	An ornament worn on wrist by ladies
<u>Aiwain</u>	-	A kind of aromatic seed
<u>Andi</u>	-	<u>Palma christi</u>
<u>Badela</u>	-	Superior
<u>Bandi</u>	-	A blouse made of thicker cloth
<u>Bari</u>	-	Vegetable garden attached to the houses
<u>Batam</u>	-	A necklace of four annas (25 paise) coins
<u>Ber</u>	-	<u>Zizyphus jujuba</u>
<u>Bhang</u>	-	A narcotic
<u>Chewada</u>	-	Parched rice
<u>Chhani</u>	-	Roof
<u>Chhatti</u>	-	First ceremony performed after child birth
<u>Chid Chidi</u>	-	A local plant
<u>Chind</u>	-	<u>Butea frondosa</u>
<u>Choor</u>	-	An ornament worn on wrist by ladies
<u>Choori</u>	-	Bangle
<u>Chutki</u>	-	An ornament worn on fingers by ladies
<u>Dal</u>	-	Pulse
<u>Dhenki</u>	-	Husking lever
<u>Dhoti</u>	-	A dress of a man secured by a knot little below the navel and allowed to go upto the ankles
<u>Dhoop</u>	-	An incense
<u>Din</u>	-	The day fixed for removing pollution after any death
<u>Falgun</u>	-	The twelfth month of Hindu calendar (Feb-March)

<u>Gania</u>	-	The hemp (<u>Cannabis sativa</u>)
<u>Ghar-damda</u>	-	A son-in-law staying at wife's place
<u>Ghariia</u>	-	-do- -do-
<u>Ghungri</u>	-	Boiled wheat or Juar
<u>Got</u>	-	Sept
<u>Goti</u>	-	Sept
<u>Gotia</u>	-	Malguzar
<u>Haldi</u>	-	Termeric
<u>Halka</u>	-	An ornament of the neck
<u>Hansiya</u>	-	Sickle
<u>Harra</u>	-	<u>Terminalia Chebula</u>
<u>Jajmani</u>	-	Patron of a traditional village servant
<u>Jama</u>	-	Loose garment of bridegroom
<u>Jeth</u>	-	Third month of Hindu calender (May-June)
<u>Jhad-phonk</u>	-	Removing the effect of evil spirit by reciting some sacred text
<u>Jhula</u>	-	Blouse
<u>Jithai</u>	-	A right over the property of father of elder brother
<u>Kada</u>	-	An ornament of the leg
<u>Kakai</u>	-	Comb
<u>Kalas</u>	-	A brass pot filled with water
<u>Kanta</u>	-	Nose pin
<u>Katori</u>	-	A brass cup
<u>Kari-jiri</u>	-	Black cumin seed
<u>Khichri</u>	-	A dish prepared from rice and pulse boiled together
<u>Khinwa</u>	-	An ornament of the ear
<u>Kodi</u>	-	A spade
<u>Kodon</u>	-	A course variety of wild grain

<u>Kothi</u>	-	An earthen receptacle for storing grain
<u>Kurta</u>	-	A loose garment of the male
<u>Lota</u>	-	A brass pot
<u>Madwa</u>	-	Canopy under which marriage ceremony takes place
<u>Magh</u>	-	Eleventh month of Hindu calender (Jan-Feb.)
<u>Mahua</u>	-	<u>Bassia latifolia</u>
<u>Mali</u>	-	Gardener
<u>Motha-Kanda</u>	-	A local plant
<u>Mantras</u>	-	Sacred text
<u>Mour</u>	-	Headgear of the bridegroom
<u>Mukhiya</u>	-	Leader
<u>Nagar</u>	-	An agricultural implement
<u>Nala</u>	-	A stream
<u>Naymi</u>	-	Ninth date of Hindu month
<u>Neem</u>	-	<u>Melia indica</u>
<u>Panchas</u>	-	Members of the panchayat
<u>Panchmi</u>	-	Fifth date of Hindu month
<u>Para</u>	-	A ward
<u>Patmouri</u>	-	Headgear of the bride
<u>Pipal</u>	-	<u>Ficus religiosa</u>
<u>Piper</u>	-	Peeper
<u>Prasad</u>	-	Anything offered to the deity and distributed among worshippers.
<u>Puja</u>	-	Worship
<u>Roti</u>	-	Bread
<u>Sagaman</u>	-	Relatives
<u>Sakhua (Sal)</u>	-	<u>Shorea robusta</u>
<u>Saptmi</u>	-	Seventh date of Hindu month
<u>Tangia</u>	-	An axe
<u>Tarki</u>	-	An ornament of the ear
<u>Tat-pattis</u>	-	Gunny bags
<u>Tel</u>	-	Oil
<u>Thali</u>	-	Brass plate
<u>Takayati</u>	-	Same as <u>jithai</u>
<u>Tipa</u>	-	A dot tattooed on the face
<u>Vaishakh</u>	-	Second month of Hindu calender