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PART VI - A

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

4. MUKAM

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1965

FOREWORD

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

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

yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

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

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

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

(iv)

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

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500-700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

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

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At

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

(v)

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

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to.

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

*New Delhi,
July 30, 1964.*

A. MITRA
Registrar General, India.

Villages selected for the Survey

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

PREFACE

Followers of saint Jambheswar who propounded twenty nine religious tenets, the Bishnois are an interesting community of Rajasthan. Strict vegetarians, they do not also allow anybody to kill and persons out for a game near their habitations have often been reported to have been disarmed by them. Mostly agriculturists, they are hardy people and their women-folk are known for their remarkable health and beauty. Hindu by religion, they do not cremate but bury their dead.

In this monograph an attempt has been made to study this community in the village where the mortal remains of the founder-saint lie buried. The study was made firstly by Sarvashri R. C. Bhargava, M.Com. and B.L. Sharma, M.A. from 7th May, 1961 to 15th May, 1961 but later the work was carried on by the former alone from 27th September, 1962 to 29th September, 1962 and from 2nd August, 1963 to 5th August, 1963. The work was supervised by Shri G. R. Gupta, M.A., LL.B. and Shri L. R. Pendharker has provided beautiful illustrations to this monograph. Dr. U. B. Mathur, Deputy Superintendent, Census Operations has assisted me in editing. I thank them all.

I extend my gratitude to Shri Asok Mitra, Registrar General, India and Dr. Roy Burman, Officer on Special Duty, for their guidance in this work. I also thank Sarvashri S. S. Pareek and R. S. Bishnoi of the Vidya Mandir Shodh Pratishthan, Bikaner and the Secretary Bishnoi Mahasabha of Hissar for their assistance.

“Chandra-Alok”
Bapunagar, Jaipur.
28th Feb., 1965.

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VILLAGE MUKAM

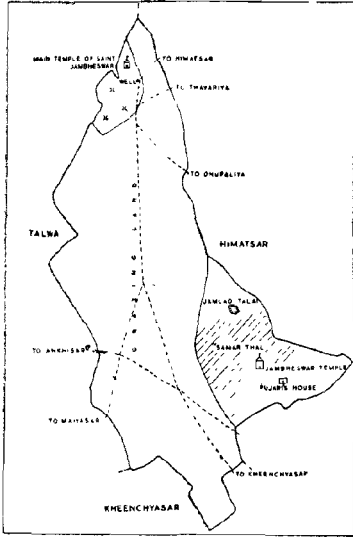
TEHSIL NOKHA

DISTRICT BIKANER

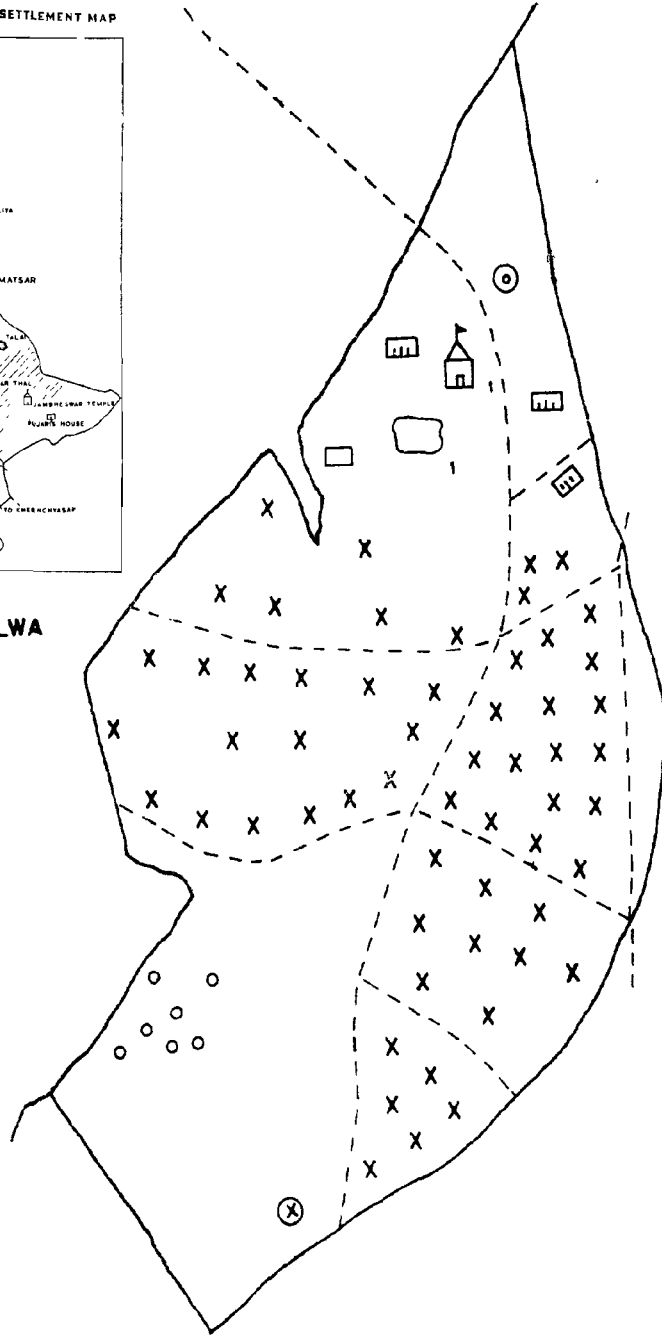
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







TO NOKHA TO SUJANGARH

SETTLEMENT MAP



TALWA

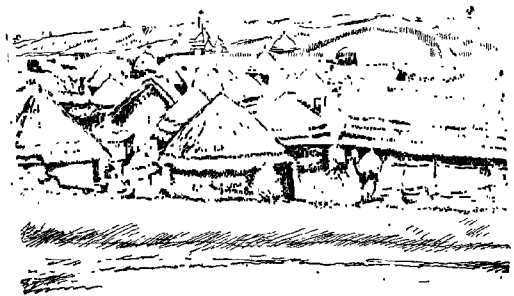


-  TEMPLE
-  WELL
-  DHARAMSHALA
-  CHABUTRA
-  PUCKA HOUSE
-  SCHOOL
-  CHAUDHARY'S HOUSE
-  X HOUSE OF BISHNOIS
-  O " " MEGHWALS
-  1 PUBLIC TAP

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

IN the south-east corner of Bikaner district of Rajasthan, some 80 km away from Bikaner city, at 27° 42' north latitude and 73° 35' east longitude lies a small village called Mukam, the sacred place of the Bishnoi community where the earthly remains of the celebrated Jambheswarji, founder of the Bishnoi sect, lie deposited. It is bounded on the north by village Nimdiyasar, on the east by Himatsar, on the south, partly by Himatsar and partly by Kheenchyasar and on the west by Talwa. On the main road from Bikaner



to Jodhpur, at a distance of 64 km from Bikaner and 164 km from Jodhpur, is the town of Nokha which forms the tehsil headquarters of the circle in which village Mukam is situated at a distance of 16 km on the 375 km long Nokha-Jaipur road. Nokha is a *Dhan mandi*, a rail-head of Northern Railway metre gauge system, a Police Station and the headquarters of the Development Block. There is a bus stand for the village Mukam on the Nokha-Jaipur road and a kutcha diversion of about a kilometre has to be covered to approach the village from it. Regular bus services plying from Bikaner to Jaipur, Bikaner to Salasar and Nokha to Sujangarh touch the Mukam bus stand some fifteen times a day. The village is thus in regular and constant touch with the tehsil and district headquarters and neighbouring villages.

2. Mukam has an area of 1,071 acres and a population of 298 persons. The density of

population comes to 69 persons per sq. kilometre. There are 65 households in the village amongst which the population is distributed as under :

Community	Number of households	Population		
		Persons	Males	Females
Bishnoi	58	248	140	108
Meghwal	7	50	27	23
Total	65	298	167	131

3. This village, which was the main scene of the activities of Jambheswarji, is a centre of pilgrimage for the members of this community who flock from all parts of the country twice a year to pay their homage to the Saint. It was especially with a view to study the socio-economic life of the Bishnoi community which forms bulk of the population of the village, that Mukam was selected for survey.



Physical aspects

4. The village lies in that part of western Rajasthan which is known as *maroosthal*, i.e. the region of death. It is sterile, sandy and inhospitable. It is a dreary waste covered with sand-dunes rising sometimes to a height of 60 to 90 metres

above the ground and desolation becomes more and more marked as one goes westwards. It has been said of this region that "there are more spears than spear grass-heads and blades of steel grow better than blades of corn". The country resembles an undulating sea of sand. Water is exceedingly scarce and is obtainable at 60 to 90 metres below the earth surface.

5. Some of the sand-dunes surrounding the village are moving, while some have by now got fairly stabilized with trees and shrubs growing on them. Forest does not exist any where nor are there any hills in the vicinity. There is no perennial stream of water in this region. The rainfall hardly averages 20 cms a year and there is practically no surface run-off. There are, however, a few local nullahs. Only rain water from hard surface finds its way into them. Most of these nullahs have been impounded in small tanks and the water therein serves for drinking purposes; others get lost after flowing a short distance in the surrounding sand.

6. The period of the early monsoon showers is short and only a limited acreage can be ploughed up. There is no source of irrigation except the rains. The soil is light, sandy and lacks humus. It is, however, quite fertile but it cannot stand heavy cropping because of insufficient rains and lack of irrigational facilities. Everywhere there is dearth of wood even for fuel and people largely rely upon dung cakes for cooking. There is hardly anything in the village like a pasture. During the short period of the rains the land provides a little grazing but the grass is nipped down to its roots by hungry cattle almost as soon as it appears. In the rest of the year the cattle are fed on fodder consisting of dried leaves of Khejra tree and Camel-thorn shrubs and stalks of *bajra*, *moong* and other crops.

Flora and fauna

7. The following trees and shrubs are commonly found in the village :

Ber-*Zizyphus jujuba*

Jal-*Salvadora eliooides Dene*

Khejra-*Procopis spicigera willd*

Bavalia-*Acacia arabica willd*

Keekar-*Acacia aratitrieta*

Aak-*Calotropis procera*

Phog-*Calligonum polygonoides*

Pala-*Zizyphus rotundiabia*

Thor-*Euphorbia rolyeana Boiss*

8. The bark of the Khejra tree is quite valuable. Apart from its being used as fodder for the cattle in time of famine, it is utilised to supplement human diet. The wood of this tree is of a very inferior quality but it is said to become durable if dipped in salt water for sometime.

9. The most common animal found in this region is deer. Fox, hare, hyaena and wolf are also frequently found. Snakes, sand lizard, chameleon, porcupine and reptiles of various kinds are also of common occurrence.

Climate

10. The climate of the place is dry and characterised by extremes of temperature. During summer, heat is intense; hot winds blow with great velocity in the months of May, June and a part of July. Heavy sand-storms are of a frequent occurrence which at times cause breach of rail and road traffic. The heat of the summer during the day is extreme and it becomes unsafe to travel during the afternoon on a summer day as such travel may result in sun-stroke. During the winter, cold is also very severe and trees and vegetables are frequently injured by frost. In summer the temperature rises to 49°C while in winter it falls to -2°C. A relieving feature during the summer season, however, is that every time when there is intense heat continuously for a period of a week or so, a sand-storm or a thunder-storm occurs and it brings down the temperature appreciably for a couple of days. The nights are cool and pleasant as the sand cools down quickly soon after the sun sets.

11. The average annual rainfall recorded at the tehsil headquarters comes to about 20 cms. Two third of the rain is received in the months of July and August. It is easy to appreciate the hardness of the bargain that the people living in

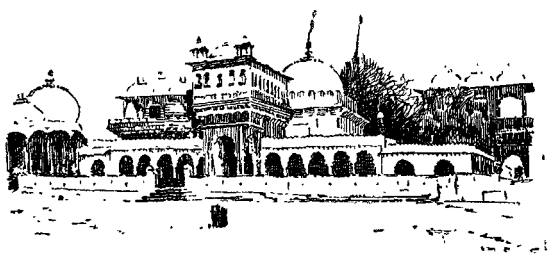
this tract have to make with niggardly nature which surrounds them. The people can grow only limited types of crops, the area they can plough is limited and the ploughing season is also quite short. The farming season is confined to few months of monsoon period, which follow the summer months which are hard and enervating. Despite considerable cattle wealth the people are precluded from serious dairying as there are no pastures worth the name.

12. The struggle for life imposed by nature somehow seems to breed independence in the nature of the persons of this area. Wide open spaces make for self-reliance and harsh nature makes hospitability a law of everyday life. Men and women in this part of the country are healthy and handsome. This is perhaps due to the process of selection and weeding done by nature itself.

Residential pattern

13. The village is situated, at one place with lanes and by-lanes intersecting each other. It is, therefore, a linear cluster or assemblage with a regular open space or straight streets provided between parallel rows of houses.

14. In the centre of the village, there is the temple of Shri Jambheswarji. On both sides of

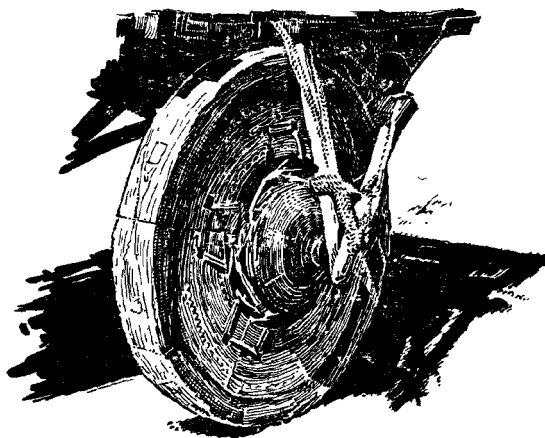


the shrine there are three *dharamshalas*, presently under construction. Proceeding towards the south of the street one would find on both the sides conical or gable roofed huts occupied by the Bishnois. On the southern end of the village is a small sand-dune on which there is a house belonging to Shri Birma Ram Chaudhary, headman of the village. On the southern side of the

shrine there is a separate block of huts belonging to the Meghwals. These huts are distinctly placed apart from those belonging to the Bishnois and the distance between the two groups clearly marks the division which separates these communities.

Communication

15. The common mode of transport in the village is either the bullock-cart or the camel. Camels are used as beasts of burden and are also yoked to the carts. The bullock-carts in Mukam



are of the common type current in Bikaner. A wheel has radial and a pair of spokes. Axle projects through a hub which is of V-type and it gives additional support to the cart. The diameter of the wheel is 90 cms. The local name and size of the various parts of the wheel are as follows :

Circular round ring (<i>pudi</i>)	10.0 cms
Felly (<i>patla</i>)	12.5 cms
Radial pokes (<i>ara</i>)	2.5 cms
Hub round (<i>napo</i>)	2.5 cms (diameter)
Support 'V' (<i>talava</i>)	

Cemetery

16. Neither the Bishnois nor the Meghwals cremate their dead. Both the communities bury them. The Bishnois bury the dead bodies of the grown-up persons in the plain before the shrine of Jambheswarji and that of children in their own

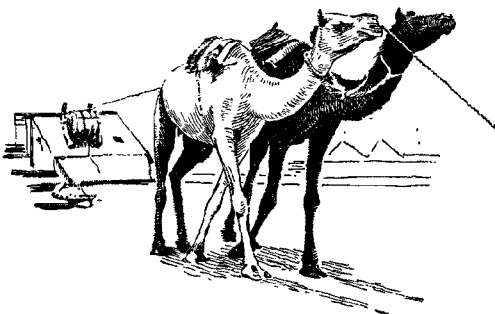
courtyards. The Meghwals bury their dead at a place on the southern extremity of the village behind their households.

Electricity

17. The village has been getting its supply of electricity from Nokha for the last two years. Electric light is provided inside the shrine and at all its four entrances. A few lamp posts have also been installed in the street near the shrine. The *dharamshalas* are also electrified. People have, however, not yet taken electricity in their houses.

Sources of water

18. There is only one well in the village which is the main source of the supply of water. Recently, however, through the good offices of the Bishnoi Mahasabha, water-pipe connections have been obtained from a well in a nearby village Talwa. Due to shortage of power, however, the scheme has not started functioning and the village people have to rely on their own well which is 90 metres deep and is situated about half a kilometre from the village. Water from this well is drawn with the help of bullocks or camels through a *charas* (big leather bag). There are separate arrangements at



this well for the two communities of the village for drawing water. The bullocks and camels and the labour for drawing water from the well are arranged turn by turn, according to their mutual understanding.

Sanitation

19. The village is quite sanitary. Every morning the housewives sweep their houses and lanes and deposit the rubbish at a safe distance from the house at a place which is reserved for it. They also give a coating of cow-dung to the floor of their houses which helps to maintain them in a neat and tidy condition.

Places of worship

20. Apart from the shrine of Jambheswarji there is a replica of the same at Samarthal, the sand-dune near the eastern border of the village where it touches the boundary of village Himatsar.

Public places

21. There is a Primary School and a Panchayatghar in the village. There is no Post-Office but a postman from Himatsar occasionally brings the dak on his periodical rounds once in a week. Mostly letters are delivered to the people when they go to Himatsar on casual visits or are sent with someone who goes there from Mukam, to be delivered to the addressees. The arrangement is, however, very defective. There are a lot of complaints of misdelivery. There is no shop in the village. People have to go to Himatsar to obtain everyday necessities of life.

Origin and history of the village

22. The original settler of the village is said to have been one Malaram Jat, who established himself there in the Vikram Samvat 1535 (1478 A. D.). Seven years later he came under the influence of Jambheswarji and became one of his most ardent followers. At present there are some two hundred families in Mukam and some other villages who trace their descent from him. In Mukam, Shri Birma Ram Chaudhary claims to be the descendant in the fourteenth degree in the direct line of Malaram. He has a son and several grand children.

23. From the *pattas* and *parwanas* granted to the Bishnois of Mukam from time to time by the then Sultans of Delhi and the Rulers of Jodhpur

and the entries in the old records of Bikaner State, copies of which are given in the appendix, the date of establishment of the village appears to be correct.

24. The following extracts from the Punjab Gazetteers (1908) are of special interest :

“The Bishnois probably form a true religious sect among the agricultural population, so much so that the sect has developed into a separate caste which holds no social intercourse with other Hindu tribes. Their social customs will be dealt with in another section, here the main features of their creed only will be noticed. Their principal object of worship is one Jambhaji who was an incarnation of Vishnu. The legend connected with his incarnation is given in the Narsingh Puran as follows :

“One day the door-keepers of the house of Vishnu (Bishanpuri) by name Jai and Bijje refused to allow Brahma’s sons to go in and see Vishnu. Brahma’s sons cursed them and they became *rakshas* or demons under the names of Harnakash and Harnakashap. In order to slay Harnakashap Vishnu became incarnate as Berah. Brahma’s son became incarnate as Phailad, a son of Harnakash. In order to procure salvation (*mukti*) to Harnakash, Vishnu became incarnate as Narsingh. With Phailad 33 *krors* of other creatures (*jiv*) were born. They opposed Harnakash who slew 5 *krors*. When Vishnu, in the form of Narsingh, had killed Harnakash, he asked Phailad what he desired. Phailad said that he desired salvation (*mukti*) for the 28 remaining *krors*. In order to effect the salvation of 12 *krors* who survived the *Kalajug* Vishnu became incarnate as Jambhaji”.

“As an incarnation of Vishnu he is the principal object of veneration among the Bishnois, but Phailad is also worshipped. The Bishnois are of course Hindus, and according to the orthodox standard would be classed as Vaishnavas, but they probably

never think of themselves as such. Their deity is Vishnu, who is to be worshipped through his incarnation Jambhaji. The other deities of the pantheon are neglected or rather regarded as other manifestations of Vishnu. None of the common local deities, such as Guga Pir, appear to be worshipped by them, except the smallpox goddess, Sitla, who as usual comes in for a share of adoration by the women”.

25. It is said that Jambheswarji also known as Jambha Devji, Jambh Rishi or Jambhaji, was born at Peepasar, 16 kilometres from Mukam, on Bhadrapada Krishna 8, Vikram Samvat 1508 (1451 A. D.). His father was one Jhabar



Lohat of the Panwar clan of Rajputs and was the *jagirdar* of that village. It is believed that Jambheswarji was born in the thirtysecond generation in the direct line of the celebrated King Vikramaditya. According to a legend Jambhaji was found by Jhabar Lohat lying under a Khejra tree outside his house.

26. In his childhood Jambheswarji is said to have begun tending the cows which he continued upto the age of twentyseven. After the attainment of this age he is said to have propagated the teachings of his sect. According to another legend Jambheswarji was dumb upto

the age of twelve. The parents were greatly worried on account of this disability of their son and they sought the services of a learned person from Nagaur to perform some ceremonies for curing Jambheswarji of this trouble. Some earthen lamps put at the place of worship by the learned man could not be lighted. Jambheswarji is then said to have lowered an unbaked earthen pot in the well with the aid of an untwisted thread and to have drawn out water from it. As soon as the water was sprinkled on the earthen lamps arranged by the learned man they began to burn spontaneously. All those who witnessed this miracle were wonder-struck and from that moment onwards Jambheswarji was taken to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

27. According to Major Walter § the following is the account of Jambheswarji's life and the Bishnoi sect :

"In the Samvat year 1542 (1486 A. D.) Merta was taken from Rao Duda by Mohindra and he was obliged to fly ; he happened in his flight to alight at the village Peepasar; and at the time of his arrival the dumb Jamba was watering his flocks and herds at the village well. Duda observed that as he made a sign by lifting up his hands only so many of the cows as there was room for at one time at the well came to drink, as one set finished he again held up his hand when another lot of animals came forward to drink and this went on until all had quenched their thirst. Duda thought this a very wonderful proceeding and concluded that the cowherd must be imbued with supernatural powers; he did not like to speak to him there, but when he drove off the cattle, followed him on horse-back. He found that when riding though always keeping in sight he could never overtake him; this again appeared most extraordinary. So dismounting he followed on foot and came up with him. Duda then put his hands together in a position of entreaty and asked his name. The man who had been dumb for thirtyfour years then spoke, said

his name was Jamba, and in return asked Duda what he wanted. Duda related all that had occurred, how he had lost Merta and asked his advice as to what he should do to recover it. Jamba had a small *koolari* (axe) in his hand, and with this he cut a piece of stick from a Kher tree and out of it manufactured a straight sword, this sword, he gave to Rao Duda, told him at once to proceed to Merta and retake it, and that so long as the sword remained in his family he would hold Merta as his appanage. Duda did as he was told and was successful.

"From that time Jamba abandoned his occupation of shepherd and took up his abode on the top of a hill in the boundary of the village of Talwah of Bikaner, three *koss* from Peepasar. In the same year 1486 A.D. there was a great famine in the land. The Jats of all the countries round about where Jamba was living, began to make preparation to emigrate to more favourable lands. Jamba, however, told them that if they would become his followers he would feed them and that there was no necessity for their leaving their country. They obeyed his instructions and became his disciples. He taught them 29 articles of religion and hence his followers took the name of Bishnois from the word *bees* signifying twenty and *nov* or *noi* i. e. nine. They were as follows :
The first two articles are concerning the purification of women and are very similar to the rules laid down in the Levitical law.

The rest are as under :

From the day that a child, whether male or female, begins to eat grain, it should be daily bathed in water.

To be faithful always to one woman.

Whatever a man possesses therewith always to be content.

Always to salute each other five times a day.

To pray to the deity every evening.

Everyday before partaking of food to pour ghee on a fire.

§ Report on the Political Administration of the Rajputana States, 1875-76

Never to speak without consideration.

Water used for drinking or bathing to be filtered.

To carefully examine all wood for burning to see that insect or other living thing is in it.

Never to give way to anger.

Never to thief.

Never to speak evil of anyone.

Never to tell an untruth.

To fast on the 15th of the dark part of each month.

Always call on the name of Vishnu.

Never to take life nor as far as is possible permit others to do so.

Never to cut a green tree.

To eat only such food as is cooked by those of the sect.

To fix a mark on the ear of every goat and sheep so that its life may be safe and as far as possible to make others do the same.

Never to geld a bullock.

Not to eat opium.

Not to drink spirituous liquor.

Not to smoke.

Not to take *bhang*.

Not to let indigo touch the body.

Never to bear enmity to another.

So to live as to be always prepared to die.

“In Jamba’s time the Mohamedans rule over Nagore; they did not approve of his starting a new religion of his own and told him to include some of their tenets in it. Jamba agreed and added the following Mohamedan customs (this is, however, contradicted by later enquiries on the subject) to his articles of religion :

All Bishnois to be buried after death.

In the same way as Bishnois are to call the name of Vishnu so after Vishnu they were to say the words *Allah Bismillah*.

At marriage ceremonies the *phera* or circular movement not to be performed. Two stools to be placed on the left of which is to sit the bride and on the right the bridegroom, when the two are seated ghee is to be burned on a fire before them. The bride and bridegroom’s clothes are to be united by a knot, two pice and some wheat flour mixed with *mehdi* to be placed together. When half the ceremony is over the seats of the two are to be changed, and the priest, who has hitherto been reading from Hindu books, is then to commence to read from Mohamedan ones such as were selected by Jamba. After this is done, the officiating priest pats both bride and bridegroom on the back and the ceremony is at an end.

To shave the top of the head.

Not to separate the hairs of the beard.

“Jamba during his lifetime built a large tank in a jungle tract in the *pergunnah* of Phalodi and near it founded a village which he called after himself Jamba. On the banks of the tank he dug a grave with his own hands and told his disciples to bury him there when he died.

“Jamba died on the ninth of the dark half of the month of Margshirsha, Samvat 1593 (A. D. 1536) on the top of the sand-hill to which he had gone after leaving Peepasar, his disciples, who were with him when he died, would not allow his body to be taken to the grave he had dug for himself near his tank, but said they would bury him where he had died, and this they accordingly did. His grave and a temple erected to him are still to be seen near the village of Talwah of Bikaner, the place is called Mukam from Jamba’s having taken up his *mukam* or abode there.

“On the 15th of the dark part of the month of Phagoon (March) a fair is held at Mukam at which Bishnois assemble in large numbers, and on the 15th of the dark of the month of Chait (April) a similar fair is held at the empty grave prepared by Jamba for himself.

“In the house of a Bishnoi who lives in the village of Rohtoo of Nagore there is still a straight two-edged sword once the property of Jamba with which in former days Bishnois used to kill themselves in the belief of an immediate transfer to paradise. Jamba happened to go to the village of Rohtoo one day, and in alighting from his conveyance, one foot hit on a stone and the impression of the foot was left on it. All Bishnois worship this sword and the stone on which is the impression of Jamba’s foot.

“In many Bishnoi villages is a covered *chabulara* or platform with a model of Jamba’s shrine, and on it a figure of one foot at which all the sect worship as they also do the Khejree and Kunkharoh trees, on the 15th day of the dark part of each month. A Sadh performs the service of the temple, for which he gets his daily food from the village. He does not marry and when one Sadh dies another takes his place by choice; if he has a wife or children he foresakes them and the children live with their mother, in that case she can not remarry, but may do so if she has no children”.

28. The following extract from the Punjab Census Report of 1891, regarding the Bishnoi community is also of special interest :

“Mr. Ibbetson writes of them : They abstain entirely from animal food, and have a peculiar strong regard for animal life, refusing as a rule to accompany a shooting party; they look upon tobacco as unclean in all its forms; they bury their dead at full length, usually at the threshold of the house itself or in the adjoining cattle-shed, or in a

sitting posture like the Hindu *Sanyasis*; they shave off the *choti* or scalp-lock; and they usually clothe themselves in wool as being at all times pure. They are more particular about ceremonial purity than even the strictest Hindu; and there is a saying that if a Bishnoi’s food is first on a string of 20 camels and a man of another caste touches the last camel, the former will throw away his meal. In their marriage ceremonies they mingle Mohamedan with Hindu forms, verses of the Koran being read as well as passages of the *Shastras*, and the *phera* or circumambulation of the fire being apparently omitted. This intermixture is said to be due to the injunctions of one of the Kings of Delhi to the founder of the sect”.

29. The following extract from the Census Report of Bikaner State, 1931, based on the investigations made during that Census, contradicts certain points contained in the observations of Major Walter and Mr. Ibbetson.

“Swami Randhirji succeeded Shri Jambhaji on the latter’s demise, but died soon after by poison administered by Chaina alias Chokha Thapan. After this, Chokha being afraid of consequences fled to Delhi where after embracing Islam, he married a Kazi’s daughter and through his influence secured help from the Emperor and took possession of the shrine and all holy books at Mukam. Chokha then offered the shrine back to the Bishnois on the condition of their owning him after purification and adopting a few Islamic customs. To this they agreed. After that, the practice of wishing a *Niwan Salam* instead of *Niwan Pranam* on a meeting between two Bishnois, that of burying the dead instead of burning them and that of shaving the scalp-lock etc. came into vogue. In the U. P. the Bishnois have been burning their dead now and in the U. P. as well as parts of the Punjab they have started keeping also a *choti*. In any case according to this account it was not through the founder of the sect, as mentioned by Mr. Ibbetson, but through Chokha that

the Islamic customs came to be observed by the Bishnois”.

30. In Jambhaji's teachings as preserved by his followers in the 29 tenets and 120 *sabdas* attributed to him, there is nowhere any reference to the observance of Mohamedan customs or recitation of the verses from the Koran at the time of celebration of marriage among the Bishnois. On the other hand the contents of his *sabdas* 10,11 and 12 make it clear that he was a bitter critic of the practices followed by the Muslims of his day. It appears to be certain that the introduction of the Muslim rites in the ceremonies of the Bishnois and which are conspicuous by their absence now-a-days, relates to a period after the death of Jambhaji, and the account given as a result of investigation done in 1931 Census appears to be more correct than what has been said by Walter

and Ibbetson. The Bishnois of Mukam maintain that no recitations from Koran have ever been made at the time of marriage in the village during their living memory.

31. The foregoing observations give only a bird's eyeview of the life and work of Jambheswarji. In order to have a correct appreciation of the importance of his teachings and the influence he exercised, it is necessary to have a detailed study of the biographies written by his followers such as Mahatma Sarjandas and Swami Brahma Nand and the collection of his *sabdas* entitled 'Jambh Sagar'. In the mediaeval times when ignorance and darkness prevailed in Rajasthan and cruelty occupied the hearts of men, Jambhaji was the torch-bearer who gave them the spark of light and brought forth their latent sense of equality, fraternity and humanity.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

MUKAM is an ancient village. The population figures of the village as recorded during the last three Censuses are as follows :

<i>Year</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
1941	204	114	90
1951	262	141	121
1961	298	167	131

33. It would be seen that there is a steady increase in the population of the village. The figure for 1951 shows an increase of 28% over the population of 1941. The exact reason for this phenomenal increase of 13% over and above the general increase in Rajasthan during this decade is not known. Enquiries made in this regard indicate that there has been no migration during the last two decades. The increase during the last decade has been only 15% which is 11.20% less than the general increase in the population of Rajasthan as a whole. It is, however, worthy of note that there has hardly been any severe famine during the last two decades, nor was the village, visited by any epidemic, during this period. This suggests accelerated growth of population in this village.

34. Out of 298 persons residing in the village 248 (83.22%) are Bishnois and the rest are Meghwals. This shows that the Bishnois in Mukam are almost five times as many as the Meghwals.

Bishnoi

35. Originally the Bishnoi sect was founded in a cosmopolitan spirit and persons belonging to any sect could join it. It was then open to everyone to embrace the new faith. Even the Muslims could be admitted to its fold. In course of time, however, the rigidity of caste system amongst other communities having had its influence on them, Bishnois have also formed themselves into a distinct caste and now the

rigour of the caste is as firm as in any other community. Mostly the persons who joined the Bishnoi sect were Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Jats. They follow the 29 tenets of religion given by Jambheshwarji. No distinctions of the original caste from which the persons were admitted to the Bishnoi sect are now maintained.



Bishnois of one sub-sect freely enter into marital relations with those originating from another sub-sects.

36. In his 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan', Col. Tod writes of the Bishnois as follows :

"Brahmins-Bishnava is the most common sect of Brahmins in the desert and Sinde. The doctrines of Manu with them go for as much as they are worth in the desert, where

'they are a law unto themselves'. They wear the *Junnoo* or badge of their tribe, but it here ceases to be a mark of clerical distinction as no drones are respected; they cultivate, tend cattle, and barter their superfluous ghee for other necessaries. They are most numerous in Dhat, having one hundred of their order in Chore, the residence of the Soda Rana, and several houses in Omurkote, Dharnas, and Mittie. They do not touch fish or smoke tobacco, but will eat food dressed by the hands of a Malli (gardner), or even a Nae (barber caste), nor do they use the *chowka*, or fire place, reckoned indispensable in more civilised regions. Indeed, all classes of Hindus throughout Sindh will partake of food dressed in the *serai* or inn, by the hands of the butearin. They use indiscriminately each other's vessels, without any process of purification but a little sand and water. They do not even burn their dead, but bury them near the threshold; and those who can afford it, raise small *chabootras*, or alters, on which they place an image of Siva and a *gurra* or pot of water. The *Junnoo* or thread which marks the sacerdotal character in Hindustan, is common in these regions to all classes, with the exception of Kolis and Lohars. This practice originated with their Governors, in order to discriminate them from those who have to perform the most servile duties"†

37. Bishnois marry among their own community but are exogamous so far as their own *gotra* is concerned. Some of the *gotras* which are akin to those of Jats are mentioned below :

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. Kaswan | 2. Godara | 3. Khibri |
| 4. Dahukya | 5. Bola | 6. Dahra |
| 7. Gora | 8. Punia | 9. Jani |
| 10. Kapsin | 11. Banjar | 12. Panwar |
| 13. Loea | 14. Bhadu | 15. Khandal |
| 16. Bidar | 17. Khor | 18. Sahu |
| 19. Thori | 20. Janode | 21. Karwa |

38. In Mukam all the Bishnois are of Godara *gotra* excepting one household which belongs to the Punia *gotra*. The latter came from outside and married a Godara girl and settled in the village. The Bishnois of this village have, therefore, to go to other villages for marital relations with the Bishnois of other *gotras*. Bishnois are sturdy people, healthy and possess a very strong and tall physique. They are notable for their strength, vigour and longevity. A Bishnoi can easily be recognised by his typical features.

39. There are ten centres in the country which are considered as sacred by the Bishnois. They hold these villages in special esteem by way of *gurudwaras* :

Jambha : This village is at a distance of 22 kilometres from Phalodi, a sub-division of Jodhpur district. There is a tank in this village which is named *Jambh Sarovar*. This tank is said to have been constructed by Jambheswarji himself. A fair is held at this place on the Amavasya day of Chaitra (April) every year.

Rodu : There is a tradition that one Jokharam Bishnoi who had a daughter was in very strained circumstances. The father and the daughter were both devout followers of Jambheswarji. When the time of the girl's marriage came, there being no one from the side of the maternal uncle of the bride, the question arose as to who was to present *bhat* according to the established custom to the bride's mother. The parents of the girl felt very sad and disconsolate but the girl who reposed implicit faith in Jambhaji kept calm and cheerful and prophesied that Jambhaji would come to her help. When the time for *bhat* arrived every one was holding his breath as to who was going to perform the ceremony as there was none to officiate for the girl's maternal uncle at the function. To the great surprise of all those present, at the crucial moment Jambhaji appeared in response to the silent prayers of the girl, and clad her mother with a *chundri* of nine colours and made

† Vol II p. 258-259

most valuable presents on the occasion which none could even dream of.

Samarthal : This is a lovely sand-dune at a distance of one kilometre from Mukam. It was the principal seat of Jambhaji during the period he propagated his religion. It is indeed a most calm and quiet place for "life more sweet than that of painted pomp; a life 'exempt from public haunt' in a quiet retreat, where for turbulent citizens, the deer, poor dappled fools, are the only native burghers". Almost a 30 metre below is a wild landscape presenting an enchanting valley of sandy ground, interspersed with greenery, which is said to have been the traditional tank dug by the Jats during the famine of St. year 1542, (A. D. 1485). There is no habitation at present at this place except that of a *Sanyasi* who offers worship to the replica of Jambhaji's shrine located in a small temple there, and performs *agnihotra* morning and evening. Bishnois who happen to be near-about at the time of worship go and pay their homage at the temple. It is believed that the place is permeated with the spirit of Jambhaji who is present there in his ethereal body ever since he laid down his mortal body. It is also believed by the Bishnois that the *Svarna nagri* and the golden *Singhasan* (throne) of the celebrated Emperor Vikramaditya lie buried under this sand-dune.

Jangloo-ki-Sathri (Nagaur district) : Saint Jambhaji is said to have taken rest for a night at this place.

Bheemsar-ki-Sathri (Nagaur district) : This is also a place which is supposed to have given shelter to the Saint for a night.

Lohawat-ki-Sathri : It is believed that the Saint once delivered a sermon to Maldev, Ruler of Jodhpur state, at this place.

Lodipur (Muradabad district, U. P.) : Here Jambheswarji planted a Khejra tree at the request of his followers. It is worthwhile

mentioning here that Khejra tree is a special feature of the desert area of Rajasthan and it is seldom to be found in Uttar Pradesh. The existence of a tree of this species at Lodipur is, therefore, quite significant.

Mukam : The village under survey. Jambheswarji was buried here and his *Samadhi* was erected at this place.

Peepasar (Nagaur district) : This is the birth place of Jambheswarji and is situated at a distance of about 17 kilometres from Mukam.

Lalasar (Bikaner district) : Here Jambhaji breathed his last.

40. It is believed that owing to scarcity conditions of recurring famine the Bishnois from Marwar emigrated from time to time to various other places where they could find better conditions of livelihood. At present a large number of this community, the total of which may be several lakhs, is spread over various parts of the country specially in Hissar, Ferozpur, Bijnor, Muradabad, Meerut, Hoshangabad, Jabalpur and Kalpi. In the Punjab most of the Bishnois have their origin from Jats. In the U. P., M.P. and Bengal many Bishnois trace their origin from Brahmins and Agarwals of Vaish community. Some of the Bishnois of U. P. continue to have their marital relations with the Agarwals of the neighbouring places. It is said that Bishnois can now be found in eastern Bengal and in some countries overseas also.

41. The Gayanas are said to have originally been the *Bhats* (Chroniclers) appointed by Jambheswarji. They were proficient in music and hence the name Gayana. They used to compose verses and to record the genealogies of Bishnois and also detailed accounts of notable events regarding the Bishnoi families.

42. In order to officiate as master of ceremonies on the occasions of birth, death and marriage, Thapans were appointed. The word *thapan* is derived from the Sanskrit *sthapan* which means to establish or to set up on a permanent basis. The very nature of the work entrusted to

the Thapans imparted it a special sanctity, and its sacredness was perhaps the only justification for calling them by that designation. The Thapans were prohibited to have marital relations with any other sect except their own. They were expected not even to marry among the Bishnois. But this restriction did not hold good for any long time with the result that the Thapans had marital relations among the Bishnois and in course of time they merged themselves into the Bishnoi community.

43. The Gayanas on the other hand gave up the work of recording the genealogy of the families. They took more and more to the performance of priestly work on ceremonial occasions, so much so that they completely replaced the Thapans. The Gayanas who originated from the Bishnois are now a separate sect, who do not marry except amongst the Gayanas. They now only officiate at the ceremonial functions of this community. They do not go to beg at the doors of other communities. They observe all the rules prescribed for the Bishnois and worship Jambheswarji as their family god.

Meghwal

44. The Meghwals trace their descent from a Brahmin Saint called 'Megh'. Their traditional occupation was the removal of dead animals and their skinning. Those of them who did this work as a profession were termed as *dedh*. They now live on agriculture and agricultural labour. It is said that some hundred years ago when Marwar was troubled by foreign inroads a number of Rajputs, Jats and Charans proclaimed themselves to be Meghwals to save their skin and took to agriculture.

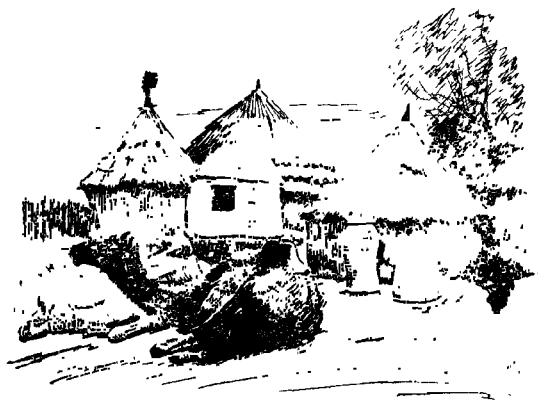
Language

45. The language spoken in the area is Rajasthani with Bikaneri accent.

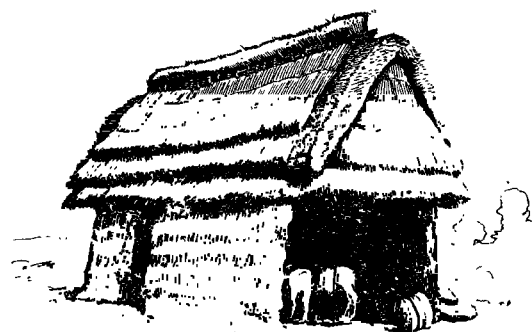
House type

46. The common type of dwellings in the village are circular huts or gable huts. The walls of these houses are made either of mud or of bamboo *jafri* (skeleton) which is also plastered with mud. The houses have got thatched roofs. A household usually possess a number of circular huts and one

or two gabled ones. In a typical household there is a separate structure known as *kotha* which is meant for storing the grain. Then there are three or four huts which serve as living rooms.

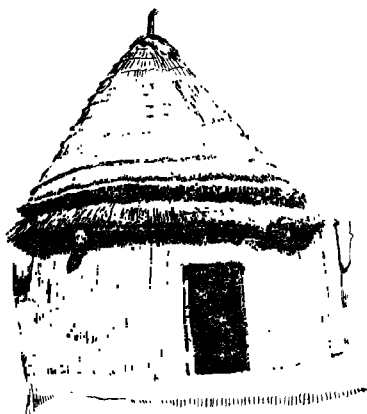


There is a separate kitchen and a cattle-shed. The separate apartments lead to convenience, privacy and maintenance of good sanitary conditions. In times of necessity, cattle-shed is converted



into a guest hut. A circular hut is locally termed as *jhopa* and the gable ones which are closed on three sides as *paidwa*. Five households in the village have houses of brick and mortar and are roofed with stone slabs which are obtained from Nokha or Jodhpur. The temple of Jambhaji and the *dharamshalas* are also pucca. The cost of building a circular hut is Rs. 150 to Rs. 200, of gable hut Rs. 200 to Rs. 250 and in the case of a pucca house expenditure of Rs. 500 to Rs. 800 per room is incurred. The circular hut have a diameter varying between 1.5 to 2.5 metres. The gable huts are 1.5

to 2.5 metres long, 1.2 to 2.0 metres broad and 2 to 2.1 metres high. Huts belonging to Meghwals are smaller in size. Each Meghwal household consists



of two huts on an average. No provision is made for ventilation in the walls of the kutcha houses.

The space between the walls and the thatched roofs allows passage for air and light in the cottages. No ceremony is performed at the time of beginning the construction of a house. When the house is complete, at the time of inauguration some jaggery or sweetmeat is distributed among the neighbours.

47. Every household has got a fencing which is generally made of dry thorn hedges. In the compound of the household there is sufficient open space, in the front as well as at the back. No latrines are provided as people go out for answering the calls of nature in the fields or among the sand-dunes, away from the *abadi*. Floors of the houses are swept twice a day and are coated with the mixture of cow dung and earth, periodically. There are no decorations on the inner walls of the households nor any at the doors of the houses.

48. The table given below gives the distribution of households in each community according to number of rooms, type of construction etc :

Communities	Number of households	Number of persons	Ancestral	Self constructed	Number of living rooms	Average No. of rooms per household
Bishnoi	58	348	26	32	179	3.0
Meghwal	7	50	3	4	9	1.3
Total	65	398	29	36	188	2.8

49. It would be seen here that about 55.4% of the total number of residential structures have been constructed by the existing households. The table further provides data regarding the number of rooms per household. It will be seen that the average number of rooms in the Bishnoi community are 3.0 as against 1.3 in Meghwals. The average number

of rooms per household for the village as a whole works out to 2.8. But the number of rooms per household does not give an adequate picture of the housing conditions of the village. To assess the same one must take into consideration the number of persons living therein. The relevant data is provided in the following table:

Households with number of rooms	Total number of households	Number of persons				
		1	2-3	4-6	7-9	10 and more
One room	5	5	-	-	-	-
Two rooms	22	7	10	5	-	-
Three rooms	20	-	4	14	2	-
Four rooms	11	-	-	4	7	-
Five rooms	7	-	-	-	3	4
Total	65	12	14	23	12	4

50. It would be seen that only 5 households are living in one room houses. About one third of the total households are living in two roomed houses, 30 percent are living in three roomed houses, another 16 percent are living in 4 roomed houses, and those who live in 5 roomed houses constitute a minor proportion of the total number of households in the village.

Dress

51. The dress of the villagers is pretty simple. The items of male dress are *safa* or *phenta* which is tied in a circular fashion on the head, a *kurta* and a *dhoti* which are of hand spun cloth or coarse mill cloth. Women put on *odhni*, *ghagra* and *kanchli* (corset). The *kanchli* is covered by a



kurti (a half sleeved blouse). Girls below 14 wear *salwar* and *kamij* (shirt). During the winter they put on woolen coats but the common article in use is the blanket or the *lohi* which is really very warm and gives effective protection against severe cold of the desert. Men and Women put on country made shoes, the price of a pair varies between Rs. 7 and Rs. 10. Widows do not wear bright coloured garments. They put on dresses of black or deep blue colour and do not put on ornaments.

Tattooing

52. Tattooing is not very common among the Bishnois. Some Bishnoi women, however, bear tattoo marks on their forearms, which are not heavy.

Body decoration

53. On festive occasions, unmarried girls and married women of the entire village apply *mehandi* (Myrtle paste) to their hands and feet.

54. The Bishnoi men wear their moustaches in a singular fashion. They are separated in the middle by the removal of hair at the centre. The beards are also trimmed and the two sides



separated at the middle under the lower lip, right upto the middle of chin. This appears to be a remnant of the muslim influence. Meghwals, however, wear plain moustaches, and no beard.

Ornaments

55. Bishnoi males put on gold *murkis* (ear-rings) in their ears and *bhinthis* (rings) on fingers. Occasionally they wear gold locket also on their

neck which is hung with a thin black woolen or silk string.

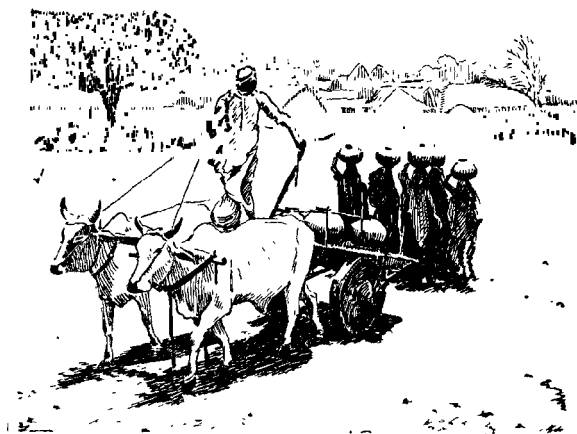
56. The following is the list of ornaments worn by Bishnoi women :

Name of ornament	Where worn	Material used	Remarks
Bor	Head	Gold or Silver	The diameter of Bor is 7.5 to 10 cms. It is worn in the middle of the forehead.
Churi	Forearm	Lac	
Chura	Hand	Silver	
Hansali	Neck	Silver	
Kanthla	Neck	Gold	
Kanthe	Neck	Gold	
Toti	Ear	Gold or silver	
Long	Nose	Gold	
Bhanwaria	Nose	Gold	
Kari and a number of other anklets	Leg	Silver	

57. The most prominent of these is the *bor* or *rakdi* which is worn on the forehead and is of a considerable size. It is studded with bright real or imitation jewels. It is a costly ornament, and its price is at times several hundred rupees. It is, however, invariably worn by married women, as an emblem of their *sohag* (wedlock). The price of the ornaments varies according to the quantity of gold or silver contained therein.

Daily life

58. People in the village start their life pretty early in the morning. They go to the fields by 7 A. M., work there till noon, then take rest for a couple of hours and again resort to work right upto 6 or 7 P. M. The women also get up



early in the morning, grind their corn for the day's necessity, milch the cows and buffaloes, churn the curds, fetch water from the village well, sweep their houses, and courtyards and the lanes outside the houses, and then go out into the fields to assist their husbands in agricultural work. After performing all routine household duties, in the evening the Bishnoi males congregate at a central place, gossip among themselves for an hour or two and then go to bed.

Food

59. The staple food of the villagers is *bajra*. Wheat, barley and gram are also in vogue but used sparingly. Wheat and rice are a delicacy reserved only for special occasions or for the guests. The common preparation which accompanies the loaves of bread is the *rabdi* prepared by boiling *bajra* flour in butter milk. Bishnois are strictly vegetarian. They abhor non-vegetarian diet. Pulses of *moong*, *moth* and *chana* are common enough. Occasionally vegetables such as *ganwar-ki-phali*, *matiri* (raw melon), *kakri* (cucumber), *kachri*, *sangri*, dried up *kakri* and *tindi* (locally termed as *phophalia*) are preserved and boiled to serve as vegetables when fresh ones are not in season. The loaves of *bajra* (millet) called *sogra* (with a lot of ghee in them) taken with *ganwar-ki-phali* or *phophalia* serve as an ideal meal, very delicious as well as nourishing. Milk and ghee are freely available. They are the best

articles of food and go a long way in the maintenance of health and strength. After delivery a Bishnoi woman is given at least half a quintal of fresh ghee during the period of her convalescence. It is mainly due to the wholesome diet, hard labour, regular habits and outdoor life led in fresh air that the people of this village both males and females have got robust health and excellent physique. The Bishnoi women are remarkable for their beauty and strength. It is said that if a young Bishnoi woman holds an adversary under her arm it would be difficult for him to get out of her grip. No one would, therefore, dare insult a Bishnoi woman who is by nature, of a strong character.

60. The Meghwals occasionally take non-vegetarian diet either when a guest is to be entertained or on the eve of festivals.

61. On the occasions of festivals, marriages and feasts the Bishnois make very rich and delicious preparations. Pudding is prepared from *moong* pulse. It is soaked in water, and after removing the husk it is crushed into a very fine paste and then fried in fresh ghee and mixed with a saturated solution of sugar and dry fruits. Sweet or saline preparations of rice, and *churma* (prepared by crushing baked *bajra* bread into a



fine powder and mixing the same with *gur* and profuse quantity of ghee) are served as delicacies on such occasions. On Akshya Tritiya they prepare *khichra* which is of more than one variety. The common preparation is that of husked *bajra*,

crushed into coarse powder mixed with *moong* or *moth* pulse and boiled in water so as to form a pudding. The special dish prepared on this festival is, however, of the whole wheat husked after being soaked in water and then boiling it in milk dressed with ghee. The feasts of Bishnois are very expensive specially those performed after the death of an old family member.

62. People generally take meals thrice a day, firstly the morning breakfast, after which they go to work in the fields and then the mid-day meal and lastly the supper. The common articles of food are the *sogra* (*bajra* bread), and *khichra* with the accompaniment of milk, curds or some simple vegetable. A lot of home made ghee is consumed with *bajra* bread and *khichra* pudding. Ghee is obtained by churning curds. The Bishnois are



very particular about washing themselves early in the morning before their breakfast. This holds good for everyone whether he be a man, woman or a child. It is against etiquette to put on shoes while taking food which is always taken in a clean place. The plate is put on a *patta* (a low pedestal) which helps in the preservation of cleanliness and sanitary conditions. Bishnois do not take meals at the hands of or cooked by other communities. After supper they offer a prayer of thanks giving to the Almighty.

Stimulants and narcotics

63. The Bishnois are forbidden by their religion to drink and smoke. They, therefore, scrupulously avoid liquor as well as tobacco. The Meghwals, however, have no objection to either, although on account of their continued association with the Bishnois they also avoid drinking in the village, but they are habitual smokers. They mix jaggery with tobacco and smoke it with their wooden or earthen pipes.

64. The village people, particularly the Bishnois have developed a great fondness for tea. It is drunk many times during the day by both men and women, and is invariably offered to the guests and visitors as a matter of courtesy. Meghwals can not afford to drink tea to that extent. They have it in the mornings and evenings using *gur* (jaggery) to sweeten it instead of sugar.

Household goods

65. The village people especially the Bishnois are in possession of household goods which are sufficient for their day-to-day requirements. They have got a good number of cooking utensils such as the *patili* (metal pot for preparing pulses and vegetables), *parat* (a shallow pan) for kneading flour, brass or bronze *thalis* (plates) for serving food, *katoras* (big bowls) for serving milk and



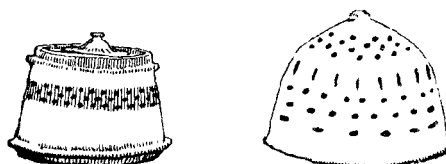
vegetables, *bhagona* or *kadhais* (pans) for heating water and milk, *batkis* (cups), iron *tawa* (heating pan), *lotas* and such other things of day-to-day use. The Meghwals can not afford to have so many metal utensils and have to depend more on earthen ones. A stone mortar and pestle for



crushing condiments, covered earthen pots, small and big for cooking food and storing water, earthen



hara for preservation of food, earthen covers (provided with a number of holes which allow free passage of air and are specially suitable for



guarding food stuffs against flies and insects), wooden ladles or spoons for stirring pulses, *khichra* and *rab*, are generally used by most of the households. A stone *ghatti* (flour mill), apparatus for churning curds, wooden *chakla* (flat and circular disc) and *belan* (roller) for spreading loaves of bread and mud-bins for storing grain are also to be found in every household. Cots woven with *moonj* or hemp strings are the main articles of furniture, although some of the Bishnoi households have got a few chairs, tables and *chowkis* (pedestals) also. A mirror is to be found in each household. There is a radio set with Shri Birma Ram Choudhary and two time-pieces, about half a dozen wrist watches and three torches with some of the Bishnoi households. There are hurricane lanterns in 17 Bishnoi and 2 Meghwal households. The rest of them use earthen lamps or tin boxes called *chymnis* for lighting their houses. Many of the Bishnoi families have got fine carpets made of camel wool.

66. The following table gives the statistics regarding articles of furniture and other things possessed by the households in the village :

Communities	Total No. of households	Number of households possessing									
		Khatia	Chair	Table	Mirror	Chowki	Radio	Watch	Time-piece	Hurricane lantern	Torch
Bishnoi	58	58	5	2	58	11	1	7	2	17	3
Meghwal	7	7	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	2	-
Total	65	65	5	2	63	11	1	7	2	19	3

Life cycle

67. Girls acquire knowledge of sex from the conversation with their intimate friends and from their observation of the married life of their relations in the family. Menstruation starts at the age of 13 or 14. At the time of the first menstruation the girl is kept apart from the other members of the family for five days in complete seclusion. She is not allowed to touch water and fire during this period. On the fifth day she is given a bath and dressed with new clothes. The practice is observed at every subsequent menstruation. Pregnancy is detected by cessation of menses and physiological changes in the body specially the enlargement of breasts and of abdomen at a later stage. No special ceremony is performed at the time of first pregnancy.

68. The villagers are not acquainted with the use of contraceptives. The importance of the methods of Family Planning do not appear to have been explained to them. They are not aware of these things.

69. Abortion is considered as a heinous crime and is not practised. There is no case of barrenness among the married women in the village. When pregnancy is delayed unusually e. g. a woman does not conceive even till the age of 25, special prayers are offered at the shrine of Jambheswarji and vows are kept so that the woman may be graced with the birth of a male child. Cases of still birth are rare and infant mortality is also very limited.

Birth

70. There is no qualified nurse or midwife in the village. Delivery is attended by old and experi-

enced women of the family or of the near relatives. The umbilical cord is cut by a sharp knife or sickle. The placenta is buried in a deep hole outside the cottage.

71. Among the Bishnois as in so many other communities of Rajasthan the birth of a male child is heralded by the ringing of a bronze plate while at the birth of female child a winnowing fan is beaten. Immediately after birth the infant is given a concoction known as *ghunti* with a view to purge its system. On the sixth day after the birth the mother of the new child is given a bath. The members of the family who are considered unclean from the date of the birth of the child are not henceforward considered as such. The *namkaran* (name giving) ceremony is performed on an auspicious day which is determined by a *pandit*. Relations and friends are invited to participate in the function. On the 29th day after the birth, the mother of the child cuts the infant's hair if it be a male one, and on the 30th day the new born baby is baptized into the Bishnoi sect. This is followed by a *havan* which Bishnois term as *yagya*. The ceremony is performed by administering *pahal* which in effect is giving a few drops of water to the accompaniment of the prescribed *mantras* and *sabdhas*. A Gayana Brahmin assists at these ceremonies. The new born child is fed on breast milk for an year, and even afterwards if the mother does not go dry. When the child is more than an year old he is given the milk of cow and is initiated to take some semi-solid food such as *dalia* or *khichri*. Milk is, however, the main component of a child's diet till he attains the age of five.

72. When a girl attains the age of 10 or 11 years, her nose and ears are pierced and zinc rings are put in the holes, which are replaced by silver or gold rings when the wounds heal up.

Marriage

73. Marriage is performed when the boys and girls are sufficiently grown up, marriageable age for boys being 18 and that for girls 14. Child marriages are not in vogue in the village. Marriage among the Bishnois is arranged by the eldest male member of the family. Negotiations for betrothal are made through third parties. No marriage relation can take place among the persons belonging to the *gotras* of the paternal and maternal side. Bishnois never marry outside their sect. At the time of final decision the girl's father or some other member of the family pays a visit to the boy's house. No bride price is given or is acceptable. Nor is any stipulation made for payment of dowry. The girl's father may present to the bridegroom or his relatives whatever he thinks proper according to his means at the time of marriage. If a Bishnoi can afford to do so he would present a cow and a she-camel to his daughter. According to a very old custom a *charkha* is invariably presented to her and dress of *khaddar* (hand spun and hand woven coarse cloth) is considered especially auspicious for the occasion.

74. The most notable feature of marriage ceremony of the Bishnois is the performance of *Agnihotra*. At the time of *havan* the bride and the bridegroom are seated with their faces towards the north. Marriage ceremony always takes place at the bride's house. The bridegroom accompanied by his relatives and friends goes to the bride's place so as to arrive there early in the morning on the day fixed for the marriage. The ceremony takes place in the evening. While *havan* is being performed recitation of *mantras* from the Vedas and *Upnishadas* in praise of God and *agni* and verses relating to *avatars* etc. is held. Then they recite their own *gotras* etc. which is called *shakhochar*. As to the performance of *pheras* it is reported that there are different customs at different places. At some places, specially in Utter Pradesh, the customary seven *pheras* are performed. At other places *pheras* are totally omitted. At some places e. g. Mukam only four *pheras* are in vogue. The statement that verses from Koran were recited along with the *mantras* from Vedas at the time of marriage is highly controversial. Whatever may have been the practice in the remote past the Bishnois of

today assert that at no time in their history verses from Koran were recited at a Bishnoi marriage ceremony. There is a printed book named, 'Vivah Paddhati' of Bishnois which contains the entire text of the *mantras* and verses that are recited at the time of marriage. In this booklet there is not even a single phrase from the Koran. It appears that in the days following the demise of Jambheswarji some of his followers like chokha Thapan, with a view to gain some ulterior ends, introduced the custom of recitation of some stray phrases from the Koran at the time of marriage. But in course of time, when the Bishnoi society was free of this extraneous influence, the custom of reciting verses from the Koran gradually died out and there is no trace of it left now.

75. Divorce is not allowed amongst the Bishnois. No Bishnoi can forsake or drive away his wife. This is strictly forbidden by their religion. Widow marriage is however, permitted. A widow may marry the younger brother of her husband, if she so desires but it is not obligatory for her to do so. The elder brother of the deceased husband cannot marry his younger brother's widow. The rule regarding the exogamy in regard to the *gotra* of the family is applicable to the case of a widow as well. On the occasion of a widow's marriage the would-be husband presents a new suit of clothes and a set of bangles and he takes her to his home on a Saturday night after dining at the house of her parents.

Death

76. Whenever a death takes place amongst Bishnois, the cause of which they are unable to explain by natural causes, they attribute it to some supernatural factors such as the wrath of God or the *pitras*. The dead body of a Bishnoi is buried.

77. When the person is in the last stage and there is no hope of his survival he is taken down from the bed and placed on the ground which is purified with a coating of mixture of cow-dung and cow-urine. The family members remain in attendance and try to make the end as smooth and peaceful as possible.

78. There is nothing in the *sabdas* of Jambheswarji which might be interpreted to mean that

he gave any specific directions for the disposal of dead body among his followers. The present day Bishnois deny that the custom started under the influence of Muslims. They claim that it was partially in vogue amongst the Hindus from times immemorial. On the authority of Vilh Swami, a noted disciple of Jambheswarji, they say that the founder of the sect desired that Bishnoi's dead may be either buried, or thrown away in running water, in accordance with a tenet of Swami Sankaracharya. As Jambhaji's dead body was buried, his followers perhaps considered this method as an ideal one for disposal of the dead. The custom of *sati* was also then in vogue and women used to bury themselves alive along with the dead body of their husbands. There are, however, reasons to believe that this custom, which is in marked contrast to the custom of disposal of dead body amongst Hindus by cremation, started as a result of Muslim influence on the Bishnoi society. The custom of giving burial to the dead was not commonly in vogue amongst the Hindus during the time preceding that under review. Moreover, the burial of dead body at full length is another pointer in the same direction. It is, however, reported that Bishnois have begun to cremate their dead in the Punjab and U. P.

79. When death takes place, intimation is sent to relations and friends in the village, and also other villages in the vicinity. The dead body is washed and covered with a new cloth, white in the case of male and red in the case of female. *Pind* (a ball of flour) is put near the left hand of the deceased which is afterwards shifted to the chest. The dead body is then taken to the open space near the temple and is buried there at full length. The *pind* along with a rupee is then moved towards the head. The very same persons carry the dead body from the house of the deceased to the place of burial without being relieved in the way by others. When the funeral ceremony is over, the persons who attend it take their bath and then return

to their homes. On the third day after the death purificatory rights involving cleansing of houses, washing of all household equipments, etc. take place. All earthen pots used for cooking and for storing water are thrown away. On this day food and water are offered to the soul of the deceased. Friends and relations are also fed. No further ceremony remains to be performed after the aforesaid *tiya* (third day ritual). Children are buried in the open space of the house. No exhumation and secondary disposal of the dead body is in vogue. Nor is it customary to construct a shrine or erect any memorial at the place of burial. After the body has been disposed of by burial no relics remain.

Peculiarities of Meghwal

80. Meghwals have also their own peculiar customs. When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time a feast is held during the seventh month of pregnancy which is termed as *Baiyaji-ka-bhojan*. After delivery takes place the mother of the newly born child is considered unclean until the *Surya puja* ceremony (worship of Sun god) is performed which takes place nearly a month after the delivery.

81. Engagements for marriage are arranged by the parents. On this occasion both parties exchange presents of coconuts, jaggery, opium etc. The marriage ceremonies are simple enough. Seven *phas* are current among the Meghwals. They engage a priest (Garuda Brahmin) to officiate at the ceremony, each item of which is accompanied by appropriate songs. A person can have more than one wife but two real sisters can not marry the same person, nor is a widower permitted to marry the sister of his deceased wife. Remarriage of widows is, of course, current as in other communities of their status. Being the followers of Ramdevji, Meghwals also bury their dead. Their family goddess is Khetla Mata. Tulsi plant is worshipped by Meghwal women as is customary amongst all other Hindu communities.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY

MUKAM being a desert village has got a very limited economy. The people have to depend for their maintenance and other basic needs on agriculture. Although their economic activities consist of maintenance of cattle, goats and sheep, their economy is primarily based on agriculture and most of the households residing in the village have a patch of land on which they grow mainly food grains for their own consumption.

83. Apart from agriculture and animal husbandry, the villagers have no other ostensible means of occupation. During slack season some of them no doubt work as labourers and a few Meghwals engage themselves in leather work as also a few Bishnois as teachers in the neighbouring villages but broadly speaking all the families residing in Mukam are agriculturists.

84. The scope of agriculture is also limited. The people have got limited means. Only one crop is sown, namely the *Kharif* crop. The villagers have to depend totally on rain water. *Rabi* crop is practically unknown as no other source of irrigation is available. Very few wells have so far been constructed. These wells also do not provide sufficient water. The village has not been effected in any way by the reforms introduced by the Government in regard to land nor has any improvement been made on the land in the surrounding villages owned by the inhabitants of this village. Apart from agriculture, animal husbandry, and the traditional occupation of the Meghwals, no industry is to be found in the village.

Land utilisation pattern

85. The total area of the village according to tehsil records is 1,071 acres. Out of this land 1,010 acres is donated to the temple of Jambheswarji and the remaining 61 acres is used for non-agricultural purposes. No cultivation is allowed in the land belonging to the temple. It is

utilised only for grazing cattle with the following restrictions :

- (i) No game is played in this area;
- (ii) No Khejra tree is permitted to be destroyed;
- (iii) No individual is allowed to own any part of the area.

A sum of Rs. 45 per annum is paid by way of land revenue in respect of this land which is controlled by the caste Panchayat.

86. The following are the details of the uncultivable land in the village :

	<i>Area in acres</i>
(a) <i>Abadi</i> land	5.40
(b) Tanks (<i>Kund</i>)	1.76
(c) Well	0.44
(d) Temple	0.58
(e) Ponds	3.12
(f) Others	49.70
	<hr/> 61.00

Land holdings

87. Although no agricultural land is available in Mukam, the inhabitants of this village own land in the neighbouring villages and use it for cultivation. Some of these holdings are very near to the village while others are situated at a distance of 3 to 4 kilometres from the village. With a view to get a clear picture of the land held by the villagers, information about total land held by them in surrounding villages was collected. This information, though not quite accurate, gives some idea of the land held by them :

Land in acres	Number of households		
	Bishnoi	Meghwal	Total
Less than 4	-	1	1
4 - 8	6	2	8
8 - 12	7	1	8
12 - 16	7	2	9
16 - 20	7	-	7
20 - 24	5	1	6
24 - 28	7	-	7
28 - 32	7	-	7
32 - 36	2	-	2
36 - 40	2	-	2
40 and over	1	-	1
Total	51	7	58

88. It would be seen from the above table that out of 65 households in the village only 7 i.e. 10.7% do not own any land. 51 households of the Bishnois possess 970.8 acres and 7 households of Meghwals 123.6 acres of land. The average land holding per household in Bishnoi community comes to 19 acres as against 17.7 acres in Meghwal community. Among Bishnois the minimum holding is 4 acres while the maximum being 42 acres. In Meghwal community the position is, however, different. The maximum holding in Meghwals is 24 acres and the minimum being 2 acres. Out of 51 households of Bishnois, 7 get their land cultivated by engaging labourers who are paid in cash or kind. The remaining 44

households of the Bishnois and 7 of the Meghwals till their land themselves.

Livelihood classes

89. It would be interesting to compare the economic data derived from the Census of 1961 with those of the previous Census of 1951 :

Whereas the total number of workers during 1951 was 97 males and 71 females, it was 123 males and 80 females during 1961. As against 96 male and 71 female cultivators in 1951, there were 102 male and 70 female cultivators in 1961. In other services there was only 1 male in 1951 whereas in 1961 there were 3. As to the persons engaged exclusively in household duties the figure for 1951 for both male and female is nil as against 18 males and 10 females of 1961. It appears that in this category only those persons have been included who on account of their old age or incapacity to take part in agriculture or other outdoor activities have to confine themselves within doors. The number of non-workers during 1951 was 44 males and 50 females while during 1961 it was 56 males and 57 females.

Primary and subsidiary occupation

90. The following table denotes the primary and subsidiary occupations of the village people :

Communities	Number of households	Occupations	
		Primary	Subsidiary
Bishnoi	58	Agriculture	Animal husbandry and Labour
Meghwal	7	-do-	Leather work, Animal husbandry and Labour

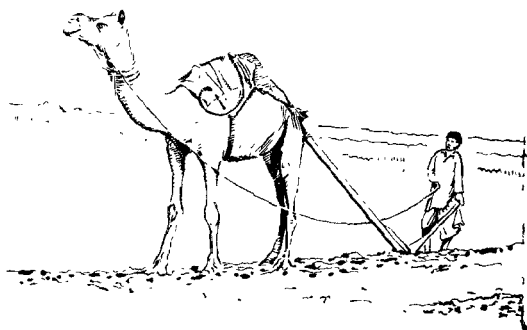
91. The leather work done by the Meghwals as subsidiary occupation is confined to manufacture of shoes of the indigenous type, leather buckets and effecting repairs to them. A pair of shoes costs from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 and a leather bucket about Rs. 30.

Agricultural implements

92. The plough used in the village is not much different from that in vogue in the other

parts of the State. It consists of a thick curved wooden piece of a sufficiently heavy log of the Kikar wood pointed at both ends. The entire body of the plough is about 1 metre high. The bend in its middle divides it into two equal parts. In the centre there is a hole in which the *hal* is fitted. The lower part of the plough is fitted with an iron share *halbani* which is held fast by an iron *chohu* (iron piece). The *hal* is a straight pole which differs in length according as it is to be driven by a pair of bullocks or a camel. In the former case

the length is about 1.5 metres and in the latter about 3 metres. The draught pole is held in position by a small wooden piece *gangda* and at the other end by an iron *kili*. A yoke is fastened to the farther end of the pole which is driven by a pair of bullocks. If the plough is intended to be driven by a camel, the draught pole is attached to a frame



work *pinjdi* fastened tightly to the saddle which rests on the hump of the camel. The movements of the camel are regulated by a pair of strings which are fastened to a small wooden piece passing through the perforated nose of the camel. In the case of light sandy soil only one bullock is sufficient to till the ground. In this case the mechanism



differs from the one used for a pair of bullocks. Instead of one draught pole there are two thinner poles which are attached to the plough by pieces of wood called *tadiyas* and attached to the plough by *bagada*. At the other end is a fixed semi-circular wooden piece *jamanta* which rests on the neck of the bullock. The *halbani* (plough share) is fixed to

the inner side of the lower end of the plough. It is about 30 cms long, slightly pointed at the lower end and resembles a spear head. It is affixed to the lower part of a plough and slightly overlaps it at the tapering end. When the plough is moved forward the *halbani* is tightly pressed against the wooden body. At the time of sowing, a *beejani* (drill) is attached to it. It is a bamboo tube fastened to the plough in such a way that its lower end is just a few cms behind the plough share. The seeds fall through the tube into the furrow and are covered with soil when the next furrow is drawn.

93. *Kudi* (clod crusher) is a heavy and flat piece of wood about 15 cms thick and 30 cms wide. Its length varies from 1 to 1.5 cms according as it is used by one bullock or a pair of bullocks or a camel.

Cost of implements

94. The approximate cost of the implements used by the villagers is as under :

Implements	Cost in Rs.
Plough complete with <i>hal</i> , draught pole and plough share.	10.00
Leveller	10.00
Clod crusher (<i>kudi</i>)	70.00
Seed drill (<i>beejani</i>)	0.50
Axe (<i>kulhari</i>)	3.00
Pick-axe (<i>kassi</i>)	3.00
Spade (<i>phawra</i>)	5.00
<i>Chosangi</i>	2.50
Chober (<i>gandasa</i>)	1.50
Iron blade with handle (<i>khurpi</i>)	2.00
Sickle (<i>dantli</i>)	0.50

Agricultural operations

95. Crop pattern has remained largely unchanged over the decades. It has already been explained that no part of the land in the village is tilled. The villagers have to go outside the village for cultivating the lands which are attached to the neighbouring villages and the grain which they grow is not sufficient for the village popula-

tion. It has to be supplemented by imports from Nokha. The soil is sandy and very little labour is required for ploughing. The actual ploughing operations begin with the first fall of copious rain. The harrowing of the fields is done within three days after the first fall of rain. The beginning of the monsoon is expected in the latter part of Jeth (June). There is a common saying that on the first day after the end of the month of Jeth if there is a rumbling of clouds in the sky the next two months of Asadh and Shrawan would go dry and rain could not be expected before the month of Bhadon.

जेठ बीती पहली पडवा कठेक अम्बर घर हरे
आसाढ़, सावन काढ़ सूखो भादर हुए बिरखा करे ।

It is also commonly believed that it is inauspicious to plough fields on Tuesday. Wednesday is considered auspicious for ploughing and Thursday for harvesting according to the saying :

बुध बावनी, बृहस्पत लावनी

96. Agricultural operations are started by harrowing the fields twice; first lengthwise and then crosswise. When new land is to be brought under the plough bushes and shrubs are first cut. The ground is then roughly levelled by *suhaga*. The cleaning process is called *sur*. The actual ploughing operations start with the first rainfall. The number of ploughings depend on the hardness of the soil. The first ploughing is called *cheer*, second *chank* and the third *bijari*. A bullock ploughs one acre while a pair of bullocks or a camel ploughs two acres per day.

97. Fields are manured by the refuse of the animals which is stored in pits. Cow dung and decomposed hay and the rubbish collected from the houses forms manure.

98. *Nidan* (weeding) is done when seedlings are about 15 to 20 cms high. A harrow is passed between the rows of young plants to remove weeds.

99. Locust menace is also very frequent and to be carefully guarded against. The villagers protect their crops by digging deep trenches round

the fields in which the swarms of hoppers are buried.

Rotation of crop

100. Rotation of crop is hardly known. The fields are sown for 2 to 3 years continuously till the soil shows signs of exhaustion when new land is broken or previously abandoned land re-cultivated. Due to this fact a considerable portion of the holdings of the cultivators consists of waste or fallow land.

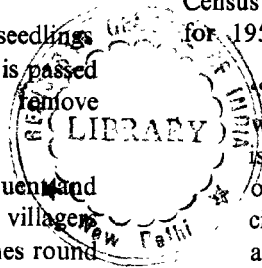
Crops

101. *Bajra* is the most important crop grown in this area. It can be sown in Jeth (May or June) but the more propitious time for growing it is Asadh or Shrawan i.e. the later part of June to July. If the crop is sown after July the yield is very poor. The crop although unirrigated ripens quickly within a period of three months. The produce is estimated from 1 to 2 quintals per acre. The stalks of *bajra* are of no use as fodder. They are utilised for thatching roofs of the houses.

102. *Moth* is the next important produce. It is sown upto the middle of August and takes about 60 days to ripen. It thrives best in light soil. The yield per acre is much the same as *bajra*. The stalks and leaves are utilised as fodder for animals. *Bajra* and *moth* produced here are of a very high quality.

103. The principal fruits available are *matiras* (melons) and *kakri* (cucumber). The former is available in plenty during the rains and is so abundant that big quantities are thrown to the camels. The seeds of melon are crushed into powder and mixed with the flour of cereals. In regard to melon, a quotation from Elphinstone has been given in the Census Handbook, Part I of Bikaner District for 1951.

In the midst of so arid a country, the watermelon (*matira*) the most juicy of fruits, is found in profusion. It is really a subject of wonder to see melons three or four feet in circumference growing from a stalk as slender as that of a common melon in the dry sand



of the desert. They are sown and perhaps require cultivation but they are scattered about, to all appearance as if they are wild. The natives assert that a large melon suffices

to allay the thirst of a horse and his rider".

104. Among the vegetables, radish is most common and easily produced.

Crop Calender

Crop	Tillage and soil preparation	Sowing period	Irrigation	Harvesting
Moth	Sowing with first rain fall (End of June or beginning of July)	10th July to 15th August	Not required	End of September to 15th October
Bajra	Sowing with first rain fall	20th June to July	-do-	End of September

Animal husbandry

105. In the desert villages where rainfall is scarce, people do not wholly depend upon agriculture but also confine themselves to stock breeding and stock rearing. The grass of the desert tract is very nutritious and in addition there are the fodder trees and fodder bushes which act as 'green meat' for the live-stock. Mukam lies in this tract of Rajasthan and its people are very fond of keeping domestic animals. They keep

cows, bullocks, goats and sheep. Few persons also maintain buffaloes. Almost all the families residing in the village have one or more domestic animals. These animals keep themselves alive by grazing in the jungle as the people do not care to give them any regular feed at home. Some well-to-do families, however, store some grass at home and occasionally feed the cattle with the same.

106. The total live-stock population of the village is as under :

Cattle	58-59	59-60	60-61	61-62
Bulls	2	2	1	2
Bullocks above 3 years	18	21	21	25
Cows above 3 years.	48	56	60	64
He calves	45	41	50	48
She calves	54	60	65	70
Total	165	178	196	207
Buffaloes above 3 yrs.	19	22	26	29
He calves	5	6	8	8
She calves	22	28	30	28
Total	46	56	64	65
Goats	12	17	13	8
Sheep	8	10	16	16
Camels	42	43	45	45
Total	275	306	335	343

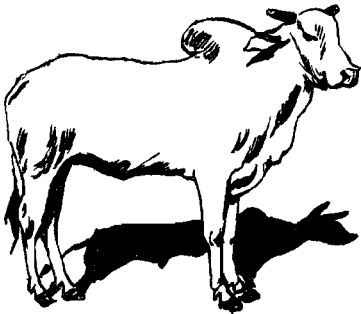
107. During the time of investigation there were 101 milch cattle including buffaloes

and goats. They were owned by 63 families. 26 such families had more than one milch cattle

each. 87 out of 101 milch cattle were owned by the Bishnois.

108. Draught cattle are important in an agricultural village as they provide motive power for plough. There are 70 draught cattle possessed by 50 families. Thus not even all the 58 land owning families possess draught cattle. Out of 51 land owning families of the Bishnoi community, 46 such families maintain draught cattle while 4 out of 7 families of Meghwals possess draught cattle.

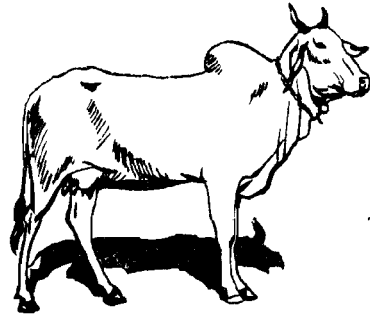
109. The cattle found in the village are of Nagori breed. The bullocks of this breed are



regarded as the best in the whole of India for all kinds of agricultural operations. They have great stamina and surefootedness in work on medium heavy soils or in putting the heavy weights. Being leggy, they are very good and fast trotters. They are famous for their speed in the carts, wells and *raths* (chariots) too. They are in demand in all parts of India and fetch the highest price than any other breed of cattle in India. It is not at all fit for beef purposes. The prevailing colours are the white, the grey and the silver-grey. The average price of a male calf about 1½ years old fetches about Rs. 1,000 and the matured good bullock about Rs. 1,300.

110. Income is derived from cattle in various ways of which the principal are the sale of ghee and young stock of cows and buffaloes. Buffaloes are more valuable than cows as they give more milk and ghee but they do not thrive on brackish water. It is, therefore, difficult to keep

them. The average milk yield of cow is about 4 kg a day. A cow in milk with fair grazing gives about 100 grams of ghee per day for six months



and a buffalo 150 grams for eight to nine months. The heifers (*bachri* or *jhoti*) of cows and buffaloes are always kept. Male calves are generally kept for 3 to 4 years and then sold to travelling traders or at the fair. The buffalo male calves (*jhoia*) are sold for transporting. As a cow calves once in a year and a buffalo once in two years, the sale of the stock is probably not an unimportant source of income.

111. The production of good camels is almost a monopoly of Rajasthan. Besides its use in all kinds of agricultural operations, it is employed as a beast of burden. The camels found in the village are of Bikaneri breed. Being a little more leggy, they possess more speed and the heaviness in the body being absent cover long distances without any strain whatsoever. Their average march per day is about 40 kms. In the village camel is used in a variety of ways. He is used to carry water, grains and other loads. He is harnessed to the plough. He is used as a riding animal and his owner makes fair proceeds from the sale of the camel's young and his wool. Camel is generally regarded as a source of larger income than cow or sheep.

112. Sheep of Marwari breed are found in the village. The Marwari sheep is the finest sheep of India both for its fineness and good yield of wool. It is the hardiest sheep and it thrives even on coarse grasses and goes without water for couple of days. Its wool is famous and the

profit from its sale considerable. From enquiries made in the village the yield of wool may be put at two kilograms per sheep per annum.

Fishing and forestry

113. Mukam lies in the heart of the desert. There is neither any river nor any lake in this area. Hence there is no fishing. The old tank which was constructed in the time of Jambheswarji does not retain any water as its bed is full of sand. There is no forestry in the village.

Commerce

114. It has already been mentioned that there is no market in the village. People obtain their requirements from Himatsar which is situated at a distance of two kms from Mukam.

Marketing

115. No improvement has taken place in the facilities for communication during the recent years and there is very little surplus of agricultural produce or products regarding which there could be a problem of marketing.

Indebtedness

116. The financial position of the villagers is on the whole satisfactory. Their main regular expenditure are on food, spices, clothes etc. Their living is very simple and economic and they incur practically no expenditure on recreation such as games, cinemas or dramas. If there be any savings, they purchase extra clothes for their children and wives. But very few of them are able to save much and infact some of them have to incur debts for purchase of cattle, seeds and agricultural implements. Apart from this most of them have to borrow money for social functions such as marriage and death. Many have also to incur debts for food grains and clothes during lean years. But their debts are not heavy and in most of the cases are repaid in full with interest after harvest.

117. At the time of investigation 31% of the Bishnoi households and 71.5% of the Meghwal households were under debt. The position in

regard to indebtedness of 18 families of Bishnois is as under :

Purposes for which debts incurred	Total debt in rupees	Percentage to total debt
a. Purchase of cattle, seed and agricultural impliments	2400.00	34.8
b. House building	800.00	11.5
c. Marriages	2400.00	34.8
d. Death ceremonies	200.00	2.9
e. Sickness	100.00	1.5
f. Household expenditure during lean period	1000.00	14.5
Total	6900.00	100.0

118. It would be seen that the major part of debt is incurred for the purchase of cattle, seeds and agricultural implements or for solemnization of marriages. Each of these items amounts to 34.8% of the total debt. As far as borrowing money for the purchase of cattle etc. is concerned, this is inevitable for the person whose economy is based on agriculture. But incurring such a huge expenditure on marriages is simply a waste.

119. Among Meghwal community 5 households are under debt. They have obtained loans for the following purposes.

Purposes for which debts incurred	Total debt in rupees	Percentage to total debt
a. Purchase of cattle, seed and agricultural impliments	600.00	42.8
b. House building	200.00	14.3
c. Marriages	200.00	14.3
d. Household expenditure during lean period	400.00	28.6
Total	1400.00	100.0

Finance

120. Mostly people make their own investments for agricultural operations. They store seeds of the previous year for using them in the current year.

121. The economic condition of the agriculturists is fairly satisfactory. It has greatly improved during the last few years, due to the high prices of grain. Indebtedness has been wiped out to a great extent. Debts are obtained from money-lenders at Himatsar on interest, the rate of which varies from 12 to 24 percent per annum. No other banking facilities or co-operative societies are in existence in the village. Loans are advanced without any security. Very few persons have taken advantage of *taccavi* loans from the Government. The reason appears to be that the economic condition of the villagers is fairly sound and consequently they want to avoid the complications which they apprehend, may arise as a result of obtaining loans from the Government. The apprehension is obviously unfounded and could be removed by the Block authorities by suitable publicity and propaganda.

Income and expenditure

122. The households of Mukam can be broadly classified into the following income groups:

Income groups (p. m.)	No. of households
Rs. 20 and below	5
Rs. 20 - 30	11
Rs. 30 - 40	7
Rs. 40 - 60	8
Rs. 60 - 80	2
Rs. 80 - 100	6
Rs. 100 and over	26

123. From the above it would be seen that most of the families fall in the income group of Rs. 100 and above per month. The income of

the families mentioned above is derived from agriculture, animal husbandry and labour. In the normal years the economy of the village appears to be on a sound footing. There are only 16 families in the village whose income is below Rs. 30 per month, but the meagreness of their income does not appear to put any undue strain on their economy as there are limited number of members in these families and their habits are very simple.

124. The above observations are based on rough calculations because it was not possible to extract accurate and reliable information from the villagers regarding their actual income and expenditure. According to what they say the main items of expenditure in these households are as under :

1. Food	50%
2. Clothing	10%
3. Agriculture	20%
4. Social ceremonies	15%
5. Miscellaneous	5%

125. It has been observed that for the item like fuel they have not to spend anything because they use dry cow-dung cakes for this purpose. They have also not to incur any expenditure on education as there is a Primary school in the village where education is free. Normally they have not to spend anything on medicines as they are remarkable for their health and sturdiness. For ordinary diseases they do not take any treatment and if there is a case of serious nature they avail of the medical aid at Nokha. It is thus apparent that the inhabitants of Mukam are able to make both their ends meet out of their meagre incomes.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

AS stated previously, the population of Mukam recorded in the Census of 1961 is 298 persons comprising of 167 (43.7%) males and 131 (56.3%) females. The scheduled caste of Meghwal forms 16% of the entire population.

Population and sex-ratio

127. The distribution of population of the village according to various age groups is given in the following table:

Age groups	Persons	Males	females
All ages	298	167	131
0 - 4	36	16	20
5 - 9	53	32	21
10 - 14	38	18	20
15 - 19	26	18	8
20 - 24	24	14	10
25 - 29	23	14	9
30 - 34	8	7	1
35 - 39	12	4	8
40 - 44	20	10	10
45 - 49	12	9	3
50 - 54	16	7	9
55 - 59	1	-	1
60 and over	29	18	11

128. From the figures given above, it would be seen that the infants and children belonging to

the broad age group 0-14 years account for 42.6% of the total population. In this group 52% are males and 48% are females. This group is followed by the adults in the age group 15-54 years, who account for 47.4% of the total population. Old persons in the age group 55 years and above form a very minor proportion of the total population, their strength being only 10% of the whole.

129. A study of sex-ratio amongst different age groups shows that it is highest amongst the children (95 females per 100 males) and lowest (61 females per 100 males) amongst the old of the age of 55 years and above. Among the adults, there is a great disparity between the two sexes. The comparatively lesser sex-ratio amongst the adults may to a certain extent be attributed to the fact that about 25% of the total persons in this group are unmarried. The sex-ratio for the village as a whole comes to 78 females per 100 males.

Marital status

130. The following table provides statistics in regard to age and marital status of the population of the village:

Age groups	Total population			Never married		Married		Widowed	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	298	167	131	98	65	56	54	13	12
0 - 9	89	48	41	48	41	-	-	-	-
10 - 14	38	18	20	18	19	-	1	-	-
15 - 19	26	18	8	16	4	2	4	-	-
20 - 24	24	14	10	8	1	6	9	-	-
25 - 29	23	14	9	4	-	10	9	-	-
30 - 34	8	7	1	1	-	6	1	-	-
35 - 39	12	4	8	1	-	-	7	3	1
40 - 44	20	10	10	-	-	9	8	1	2
45 - 49	12	9	3	2	-	6	3	1	-
50 - 54	16	7	9	-	-	5	5	2	4
55 - 59	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
60 - 64	15	11	4	-	-	6	3	5	1
65 - 69	5	1	4	-	-	1	3	-	1
70 and over	9	6	3	-	-	5	-	1	3

131. The table shows that out of the total population of 298 souls, 163 are unmarried, 110 are married and the remaining 25 are widowed. There is none in the village belonging to the two groups i.e. divorced and separated. The following table gives the percentage of unmarried, married and widowed persons in the village :

Sex	Unmarried	Married	Widowed
Persons	54.7	37.0	8.3
Males	58.5	34.5	7.0
Females	49.6	41.2	9.2

132. So far as the marital status in the age group 0-14 is concerned we find that marriage amongst infants and children is an exception, more so for males than for females. This age group consists of 66 males and 61 females. Out of this only one female is married. The following table gives the percentage of marital condition of the population over the age of 14 :

Sex	Unmarried	Married	Widowed
Persons	21.7	63.7	14.6
Males	31.7	55.4	12.9
Females	7.2	75.7	17.1

133. Among the persons above the age of 14, we find that married proportion is higher for

females than males. Data reveals that only 5 out of 131 females are unmarried and 4 of them are in the age group 15-19 years and one in the age group 20-24 years. In fact three of them are 15 years old, one 17 years while the fifth one has just attained the age of twenty years. Three out of five have already been betrothed. So far as males are concerned, the table show that 32 i. e. 31.7% are still unmarried. While 16 of them are in the age group 15-19, 8 are in the age group 20-24, 4 in the age group 25-29, one each in 30-34 and 35-39 and two in 45-49. It is interesting to note that except for 4 persons in the comparatively higher age groups, the rest of the persons are all expected to get married sooner or later as the marriage amongst Bishnois is performed at a later age.

134. Among the married persons, there are 56 males and 54 females. The wives of the two married males were not present in the village at the time of enumeration. They were newly married and their *gauna* ceremony had not taken place by that time. There is no case of bigamy.

Literacy

135. The following table shows the position of literacy in the village :

Age groups	Total			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or junior basic	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
All ages	298	167	131	121	126	44	5	2	-
0 - 4	36	16	20	16	20	-	-	-	-
5 - 9	53	32	21	10	20	22	1	-	-
10 - 14	38	18	20	3	17	15	3	-	-
15 - 19	26	18	8	12	8	6	-	-	-
20 - 24	24	14	10	14	10	-	-	-	-
25 - 29	23	14	9	12	8	1	1	1	-
30 - 34	8	7	1	7	1	-	-	-	-
35 - 44	32	14	18	13	18	-	-	1	-
45 - 59	29	16	13	16	13	-	-	-	-
60 and over	29	18	11	18	11	-	-	-	-

136. It is quite evident from the above table that the extent of literacy for the village is very low. Only 51 or 17.1 per cent of the total population reported themselves to be literate. But this

includes the infants (below the age of 5 years) also, for whom the question of literacy does not arise. Thus if we exclude the 36 infants from the total population then the rate of literacy comes to 19.4%.

The corresponding figure of 1951 Census is 14.6%. Taking separately the figures of literacy amongst males and females we find that the percentage of literacy is comparatively higher amongst the males (90%) and rather low amongst females (10%).

137. The position in regard to literacy in the village during the Census of 1961, as compared to the Census of 1951 is given below :

Population 1951	1961	Vari- ation	Literacy in percentage			
			1951		1961	
			Males	Females	Males	Females
261	298	-4.1	25.5	1.4	27.5	3.8

138. The above table indicates that literacy is going up both amongst the males as well as the females. Now there is a growing tendency amongst the villagers to send their children to school. This is evidently the result of opening of a Primary school in the village which has now been in existence for the last four years. People generally send their children to school after they have attained the age of 5. In the age group 5-9 whereas boys are 22, girl is only one. In the age group 10-14, 3 girls are receiving education as against 15 boys, but in the age group 15-19 as against 6 boys the number of girls is nil. In the age group 20 and above there are 3 boys and one girl. It is obvious from the above that the village people are not keen about the education of their girls and it will take some time before they realise the value and utility of female education. There is no one in the village having acquired even Middle standard.

Communities	Total No. of households	Simple	Intermediate	Joint	Others
Bishnoi	58	39	11	8	-
Meghwal	7	2	3	2	-
Total	65	41	14	10	-

143. From the above figures it would be seen that the percentage of joint families in the village is 14.5, that of intermediate, having married couple and unmarried brother or sister and

139. The village Primary school is housed in a *dharamshala* having five rooms with very scanty furniture. There are four classes which are looked after by a single teacher. The children of Meghwal also attend the school. The old prejudice of not permitting their boys to sit with Meghwal boys in the school is gradually dying out. There is, however, need for a multi-teacher school in the village.

Births and deaths

140. The following statistics of births and deaths in village Mukam for the years 1959 to 1962 have been furnished by the village Panchayat :

Year	Births	Deaths
1959	5	2
1960	6	2
1961	5	3
1962	1	4

141. It is obvious from the figures given above that the number of births during 1959, 1960 and 1961 exceeds the number of deaths. In 1962, however, there have been four deaths as against 1 birth. All the deaths are reported to have occurred due to natural causes. The village is reported to have been free from epidemics during all these years.

Family structure

142. The following table indicates the types of families in Mukam:

one of the parents, 21.5, and the rest 41.0 are simple, having husband, wife and unmarried children. There is thus a clear tendency towards disintegration of joint families. There is, however,

no fixed time or period during which joint family may break up. The family breaks up more often when the father dies and the sons find it difficult to pull on amicably. Then they separate and give rise to simple families. Sometimes sons become separate even during the lifetime of their father. The main cause of separation in these cases is the dissension among the females. The wives are unable to pull on amicably for temperamental reasons or in some

cases, due to disparity in income earned by their husbands. In such cases there is no scramble for division of the ancestral property during the lifetime of the father. The sons begin to keep their earnings separate and do not bring them to the common pool.

144. The composition of the households is as under :

Communities	Total No. of households	Single member households	2 or 3 members	4 to 6 members	7 to 9 members	10 and above
Bishnoi	58	11	13	20	10	4
Meghwal	7	1	1	3	2	-
Total	65	12	14	23	12	4

145. There are only four families in the village having 10 or more than 10 members. The maximum number of families i. e. 23 are such who have only 4 to 6 members in a family. There are 12 single member families in the village.

Relationship in family

146. In family matters such as contracting of marriages, performance of caste dinners, celebrations of festivals or religious functions the eldest member of the family is invariably consulted by the juniors and his consent is obtained in regard to the proposal in view. He then takes a leading part in the celebration of the functions.

147. The marital relations between husband and wife are most cordial. The wife is invariably consulted in all matters relating to the family and her advice receives the greatest weight. The husband hands over the entire income to her and she is responsible for running the household.

148. Married women and daughters-in-law of the family observe *purdah* to the extent of keeping their faces veiled in the presence of their elders and not talking to their husbands before them. Every morning women would pay respects to the elders by touching their feet before starting their household work. No *purdah* is observed in the presence of husband's younger brothers and other juniors. It is

a privilege of the *bhabhi* (elder sister-in-law) and the *dewar* (husband's younger brother) to cut jokes and indulge in innocent and harmless tit-bits and merry-making.

Inter-community relationship

149. The village consists of only two communities i. e. Bishnois and the Meghwals. The relations between the two are very cordial. The Meghwals are, of course, the serving class but they are treated in quite a humane way by the Bishnois. They are invited to their functions and they also help them in times of need. The Meghwals take food prepared by the Bishnois but the latter do not take food prepared by the former.

150. There is a cluster of villages surrounding Mukam which are more thickly populated in comparison to other villages of the desert area. The people of these villages take keen interest in the affairs of Mukam and they pay visits to it on all social functions.

Inheritance

151. On the death of the father his property is divided equally between the sons. The girls do not get any share in it. The widowed mother is maintained by the sons with whom she resides, turn by turn, if they do not remain joint and

become separate. The recent legislation conferring rights of inheritance on daughter in the property of the deceased father has no effect in the village. The people are, of course, aware of it but they do not pay any heed to this law, and consider it to be against the tenets of their religion.

Religious activities

152. The day of Amavasya in each month has got a special importance for a Bishnoi.

बाबे आप लियो अवतार, श्याम समरथल आवियो ।
 आवियो छै आप अलेख, भाग परापत पावियो ।
 भाग परापत पावियोने, जै मानो त्याग भाग ।
 अन्दो अजाण अबूक, मूरख किया स्वामी सुजाण ।
 कुमल कुल घण पर हरया, शुद्ध हुआ करणी सार ।
 भगवो बाने विष्णु आयो, आप लियो अवतार ।
 श्याम समरथल आवियो, घुरी ओलख जै आचार ।
 परमेश्वर पूरा घणी, ठग पासीगर चीर ।
 जीव दया पाले घणी, जीव दया पाले घणी ।

(Lord Krishna himself took birth (in the person of Jambheswarji) and came to Samarthal. He came to Samarthal unobtrusively to the great good fortune of the inhabitants of the place. He conferred his benediction on the blind, the ignorant, the poor, the lowly and the lost. He

He keeps fast on that day and does not conduct any work. A congregational *havan* or *agni hotra* is performed in all Bishnoi villages in which all the members of the family, male and female, take part. They burn ghee, kernel of coconut, camphor, refined sugar, sandal wood etc. and chant vedic *mantras* and *sabdas* from the *vani* of Jambheswarji. At times people congregate in the temple and sing *bhajans* or read books, which they call *vani*. Two of their *bhajans* are reproduced below :

taught the lesson of right and pure conduct to all and sundry. God Vishnu put on the garments of a *sanyasi* during this incarnation. He brought the thugs, the thieves and the robbers to the right path. Being all merciful he taught men the lesson of mercy and pity).

पहला फल लेना चाहे तो गुरु चरण मे पडजा ।
 सत गुरु दाता सन बतावे, सेजई सेज चहजा-सतसंग गंग समाना ।
 दूजा फल लेना चाहे तो सत संग नित करना ।
 भोले सने की सबकी सुननी, सुन सुन चित मे धरना-सतसंग गंग समाना ।
 तीजा फल लेना चाहे तो ध्यान उसी का धरना ।
 आपा उलट आपन देखो सन्मुख दर्शन करना-सतसंग गंग समाना ।
 चौथा फल लेना चाहे तो पिछम देश करना ।
 साक साक सत गुरुजी सागे पाक ज्यू फल लेना-सतसंग गंग समाना ।
 नाथ दिलाई चौथा फल पाया, पाया सो फरमाया ।
 निगुंरा सुगुंरा सागे लिया सत में णाम समाया-सतसंग गंग समाना ।

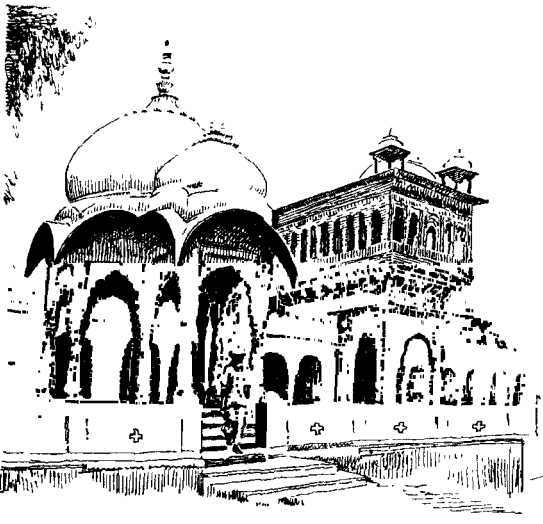
(If thou desirest to get the first fruit, lie down prostrate at the feet of thine *guru*, and follow implicitly all his teachings. *Satsang* (the company of the blessed) is purifying like the touch of the

Ganges. If thou desirest the second fruit, come daily into contact with saints; give thine ear to everyone whether he be simple or learned, and try to remember what thou hearest. If thou

desirest the third fruit, contemplate on the virtues of God. Look into thine heart and thou wouldst find that the Lord is before thee. If thou desirest the fourth fruit, go to the western part of the land, follow the tenets of the master and enjoy fruits as they gradually ripen. The master alone is capable of making the disciple taste the fourth fruit. The *nirgun* (the formless) and the *sagun* (incarnate) are both combined in the unique personality of Shri Jambheswarji.)

Leisure and recreation

153. Apart from the common social and religious festivals and fairs which occur during the various seasons and months of the year, the village people do not have any special mode of recreation. On summer evenings they assemble in groups at the temple compound and spend an hour or two in

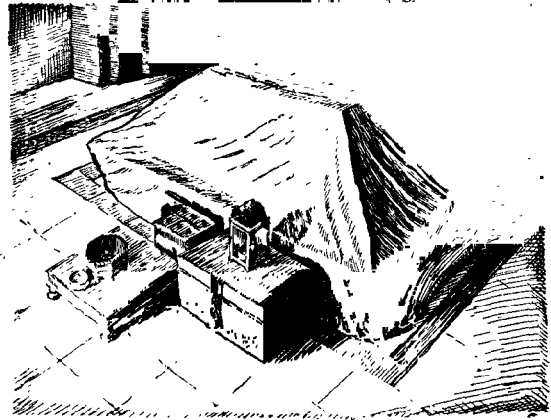


idle gossip and comment on news local and those received from the nearby villages. Children play *kabaddi*, ball and stick, hide and seek and similar other games.

The shrine

154. All social and cultural life of the village revolves round the temple of Jambheswarji. The foundation of the shrine was laid in the village on Margshirsha Krishna 11, Samvat 1593

(A.D. 1537). The building was completed in Samvat 1600 (A. D. 1544), by Jambheswarji's disciple Randhirji. It is a double storied building and has got entrances from three sides which have artistic designs carved on them. There is a stone-paved platform on all the four sides of the temple. In the shrine on the first floor, at a height of some 16 metres from the ground floor in the central hall, is to be found the *samadhi* of Jambheswarji. The



actual vault in which the dead body of the saint was buried is, however, said to be some 30 metres under the ground. There is only one entrance to this hall; the rest of the three sides are closed. On the back of the *samadhi* there is a life size portrait of Jambheswarji. All the three entrances have got balconies on them and are electrified. On all sides of the central hall on the first floor there is marble payement. In the back side of the hall is a verandah in which *havan* is performed. There is a small aperture in this verandah, which opens in the big room on the ground floor, through which the grain received by way of donations is dropped, from time to time.

155. On the ground floor, behind the main hall there are five rooms, in one of which grain is stored. The rest of the rooms are kept vacant and they serve as a guest house for the members of the Managing Committee when they visit the place at the time of the fair. The teacher of the Primary school is permitted the use of some of these rooms during the rest of the year.

156. The temple is looked after by a *pujari* (priest). Entry into the temple including its central



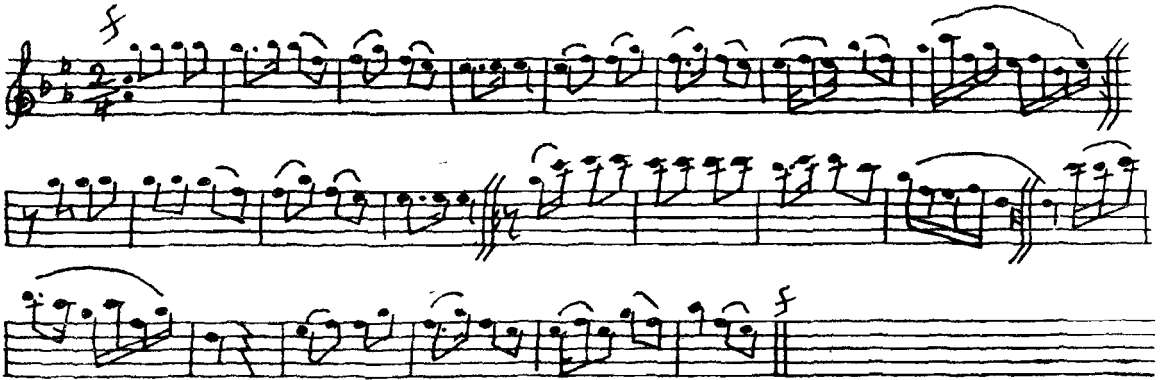
hall at Mukam is open to everybody. Shoes are not allowed inside the temple, nor is any one

allowed to enter the temple bare-headed. On one side of the shrine there is a platform covered by wire gauge which is utilised for scattering the grain to feed pigeons, peacocks and other birds.

157. The affairs of the institution are managed by the Bishnoi Mahasabha. The Executive Committee of the Mahasabha consists of the members from Rajasthan and the Punjab. The committee also administers the fairs which are held in the village.

158. The building of the shrine at Samarthal is very small and simple. Here a replica of Jambheswarji's *samadhi* is installed in one room.

159. At both these places *dipak* (an earthen lamp) is kept lighted all the 24 hours of the day. An *arti* in the praise of the saint is sung every morning and evening in a fascinating tune, the rendering of which in staff notations is given below :



The exact wordings of the *arti* are as under.

कु कू केरा चरण पधारो गुरु जम्बदे महात्मा पुरुष थारी आरती करे.....
जम्बे गुरु ध्यावे तो सरव सिद्धी पावें कोटि जनम केरा पाप भरे... ..
हृदय ज्यु हवेली मांहीं रहो प्रभू रात दिन मोतीडा की प्रभू माला गले
कर्म कमंडल सोवे सीस सोवे टोपी नैना मांही दोय मशाल सी जले.....
सोने को मिहासन प्रभू रेशम केरी गादियां फूला हंदि आसन प्रभू बेढ़यां ही तरे
प्रेम केरा प्याला प्रभू पीवे थारा साधुजन जटा मुकुट तेरे चंवर दुरे.....

संख शहनाई बाजे भीजा बाजे भन न न भेर नगारा बाजे नोबत घुरे
 मजिरा तिकोरा बाजे घंटा बाजे घन न न सबद सुन्या पाप भरे.... ..
 कंचन केरो थाल कपूर केरी बतिया अगर केरो धूप रवि इन्दर ज्यू कदे
 सेज तो सेवे कुबेरसा भंडारी शिव ब्रह्मा धारी आरती करे.....
 आरती में आवे २ शीश निवावे जागरण सुन्यां सू जमराज डरें
 जाहेवे सुतावे गावे नव निधि पावे सीधी मुकती सिधारे बाल ब्रह्म ज्यू तरे

(English rendering given at Page 40)

Fairs and festivals

160. Twice a year a fair is held at Mukam in commemoration of Jambheswarji. The main fair is held on Phalgun Krishna Amavasya. The fair was initiated by his disciples on Phalgun Krishna Amavasya St. 1648. This is attended by more than 12,000 persons who come from all parts of the country to pay their homage to the illustrious founder of the sect. Donations of the value of more than Rs. 20,000 comprising mainly of ghee and *moth* and cash are received at the time of the fair. The *moth* is stored and utilised for feeding the pigeons and birds all the year round which is a special feature of Mukam. Ghee is used for the performance of *havan* on the occasion of the fair and afterwards daily till it does not become stale.

161. The fair which is held on Aswin Krishna Amavasya is a smaller one. The last one was held on the 27th and 28th Sept., 1962. This was attended by about 4,000 persons, most of whom came from the nearby villages riding on camels, bullock-carts and on foot. Some came in carts driven by camels. More than 300 camels out of which some were of the very best type, could be seen in this fair. It was a lovely sight to see healthy young ones of camels accompanying their mothers. There were about 25 shops most of which were from Nokha and Himatsar and some came down even from Bikaner. There were shops of grain, ghee, cloth, books, general merchandise and barbers etc. About half a dozen shops were those of sweetmeat sellers and almost an equal number of tea stalls. Some four shop-keepers were selling the hides which were brought down from the neighbouring villages in carts driven by camels. A few cobblers were also there who mended the *pakhals* (leather bags for

water) and the country made shoes. Three or four heaps of winnowing fans coated with cow-dung were also there. Melons and local cucumber were also brought on camels and carts, for sale at the fair. All persons did roaring business.

162. Big *havans* were held on the platform of the shrine morning and evening extending four to five hours each time at which *mantras* and *sabdhas* of Jambheswarji were recited. Women kept awake all the night over singing songs of religious nature many of which were dedicated to Jambheswarji. In the evening of the 27th september, there was quite a heavy shower and it produced chilly cold but this did not deter the enthusiasm of the pilgrims who kept the night vigil on the platform of the temple under an open sky. At Samarthal also *havan* was performed and a stream of visitors could be seen going from Mukam to the sand-hill to pay their homage to the saint who used to preach there in his life time.

163. The fair was also attended by a number of Bishnoi *sanyasis*. When a Bishnoi renounces the world and decides to lead an ascetic life he takes *diksha* from a *sanyasi* and is then initiated into their order. He puts on the saffron coloured garments worn by *sanyasis* and then spends his time in preaching religion to the members of the community. Most of the *sanyasis* wear their hair long and keep beards. Bishnoi *sanyasis* do not beg at the door of other communities. The members of the Bishnoi community see that the *sanyasis* are well fed and are not put to difficulty for want of clothes. Some of the learned *sanyasis* delivered sermons at the fair which were attended with rapt attention.

164. It is customary for the people who visit Samarthal to take some sand from the *talai* (tank)

at Mukam and deposit it at the foot of the Samarthal dune when they go to pay their homage

there. The village people celebrate the following festivals which are common to Hindus elsewhere.

<u>Name of festival</u>	<u>When held</u>
Sheetla Saptmi	Chaitra (March)
Gangor	Chaitra (April)
Ramnavmi	Chaitra (April)
Akshaya Tritiya	Baisakh (May)
Teej	Shrawan (July-August)
Rakshabandhan	Shrawan (July-August)
Janmashtami	Bhadon (August-September)
Navratra	Aswin (September-October)
Dashera	Aswin (September-October)
Deepmalika	Kartik (October-November)
Sankranti	(January)
Basant Panchmi	Magh (January-February)
Shivratri	Phalgun (March)
Holi	Phalgun (March)

Beliefs

165. Apart from the tenets which the founder of the sect Jambheswarji laid down for the conduct of Bishnois, they honour the village gods and heroes such as Hanumanji, Pabuji and Rangaji. The general belief in *Sheetla Mata* (the goddess of smallpox) is also current here. The goddess is worshipped on the *Sheetla saptmi* day which falls on the 7th day of the first half of the month of Chaitra. It is, however, the teachings of Jambhaji which play a predominant role in Bishnoi's life. They are very orthodox in this matter.

166. Bishnois have a great veneration for the cow. Even the urine and the dung of a cow are considered sacred. Every ritual is accompanied by a coating of the floor of the house with a mixture of cow-dung and cow-urine. The urine of cow, considered antiseptic, helps in keeping the households neat, tidy and healthy. The Khejra and the Pipal trees are held in great esteem by the Bishnois. They take Khejra as a counter part of Tulsi and offer worship to it along with the later. Every Bishnoi woman considers it a part of her daily routine to offer water to the sacred plant of Tulsi and the trees of Pipal and Khejra. There is a tradition among the Bishnois that two celebrated

women of their community laid down their lives in the defence of Khejra tree when they were being cut down in the village named Khejarla, in the former Jodhpur State.

Village organisation

167. Caste Panchayat : The affairs of the temple of Jambhaji at Mukam used to be managed by a caste Panchayat constituted of the leading members of the community residing in Mukam and some other villages in the neighbourhood. There were various complaints of mis-management of the temple and its funds. Consequently at the instance of Bikaner *Durbar* the community on the occasion of Mukam fair held on Phalgun Krishna Amavasya St. 1979 (1922 A.D) by common consent decided that a committee may be formed under the name of Mukam Gurdawara Managing Committee with the following objects:

1. (a) To manage the affairs of the temple of Mukam and the property attached to that temple and the temple at Samarthal.
- (b) To encourage education and to effect general improvement in the conditions of the Bishnoi community.

2. The office bearers of the committee were to be the following:

- (a) President
- (b) Manager
- (c) Cashier
- (d) Store-keeper
- (e) Auditor

3. The committee was empowered:

- (a) to establish schools, libraries and reading rooms and to frame rules for the management thereof;
- (b) to establish *dharamshalas*, orphanages and *sewa-sanghas* for the service of the community and build water tanks, dispensaries, kine-houses etc. and to frame rules for the working of the same;
- (c) to undertake publication of religious books, magazines etc ;
- (d) to frame rules for the working of the Panchayat;
- (e) to collect taxes or subscription at the time of fair and to accept endowments or *chadhava* at the temple.

168. The committee was registered at Lucknow in the name of Bishnoi Mahasabha on the 22nd April, 1936. It has its head office at Hissar. The committee holds its elections at the time of the annual fair. Local Panchayats of the Bishnoi residing in various villages are empowered to decide the local cases according to the rules framed by the Executive Committee. Appeals against the decisions of the local Panchayats are heard by the Executive Committee at the time of its annual session at Mukam. The local Panchayats hold their meetings on the Amavasya day of each month and their annual sessions on the Amavasya of Chaitra and Aswin. The Executive Committee holds its general meeting quarterly. The cases dealt with by the Panchayats are of the following nature :

- (a) cases regarding selling of a cow to butcher which is against the Bishnoi religion ;
- (b) cases regarding abetment of killing of animals in the private fields ;

(c) cases regarding marrying one's daughter against the will of him to whom the girl has already been betrothed ;

(d) cases regarding marriage of widow without the express consent of her deceased husband's relations ;

(e) cases of breach of rules of conduct prescribed by Jambhaji.

169. The punishment given by the Panchayat is in the shape of cash money which is payable immediately on the spot. In cases of serious offences if the Panchayat considers ex-communication necessary, it is difficult for the offender to regain entry into the caste. These are the cases of eating meat, drinking wine and committing adultery.

170. Village Panchayat ; The village panchayat of Mukam consists of the representatives of the villages mentioned below :

1. Mukam	2
2. Talwa	1
3. Nmidiyasar	1
4. Kheenchyasar	1
5. Maiyasar	2
6. Bhomasar	1

171. Two women members have been co-opted both of whom are Bishnoi women from Mukam. The Sarpanch of the Panchayat is a Rajput who comes from Maiyasar. Up-sarpanch is a Bishnoi from Mukam. The secretary of the Panchayat is a teacher who is paid Rs. 15 p. m. The Panchayat meets generally twice a month.

172. The village Panchayat tries to render whatever service it can, on the occasion of the fairs held at Mukam. It is trying to help in the promotion of education in the villages which it represents. Funds are being collected by the village Panchayat for constructing a new school building at Mukam. The Panchayat has got its own house. It is also taking interest to improve the arrangement for the supply of water to the villagers.

173. There is no voluntary organisation or a club or a library in this village.

Social reforms

174. The people are conservative in their views and they are indifferent to reforms such as Family planning and regulation of dowry.

175. The Bishnois consider themselves a separate entity distinct from other Hindu castes notwithstanding the fact that they profess the

Vaishnava religion which is a part and parcel of Hinduism. Anyway, a place can be allocated to them in the caste hierarchy which may lie somewhere between the Brahmins and the Jats.

176. Bishnois of Mukam treat Meghwals as untouchables. They do not take food or water from their hands nor do they allow them to draw water from the village well. When water is supplied from the well in village Talwa the Meghwals are allowed to have their supply from a tap which has been specially allotted to them.

AN ENGLISH RENDERING OF THE ARTI

Welcome to Lord Jambheswar, I offer thee *arti*. Whosoever worships thee attains success and gets the sins of all births washed away ;

Pray, reside in my heart night and day my Lord, who wears a garland of pearls, has a *kamandal* in hand, dons a beautiful cap and has eyes glittering like a flame ;

Thy devotees, who drink from the cup of the nectar of thy love, attain salvation my Lord, who adorns a golden throne with silken cushions spread with flowers and whose hair plaits waive over his crown ;

The conch shells, the clarinet, the bells, the cymbals and the drum all play in thy praise and the hearing of such musical notes removes all the sins ;

In a golden plate with wicks of camphor burning, Lords Sun and Indra offer thee incense. Kubair, the Lord of wealth, spreads thy bed and Lords Shiva and Brahm offer thee *arti* ;

Yamraj, the Lord of death, fears those who attend the *arti*, bow to thee and listen to the night-long prayers, for, those who recite and sing in thy honour attain success, wealth and salvation .

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

VILLAGE Mukam, which has a population hardly of 300 souls, has now been in existence for more than five centuries. Being a desert village, it has to face difficulties that arise out of its geography. Only one crop, *Kharif*, is possible in the region, and for that too, it is totally dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon. Even drinking water is scarce. Famine stares very often in the face of the inhabitants. That the residents of Mukam have successfully withstood the cruelties of nature, speaks highly of their hardihood and stamina.

178. The importance of Mukam is, however, religious as the *samadhi* of Jambheswar, the spiritual preceptor of Bishnois is situated here; and the village will continue to be looked upon with reverence as long as the Bishnoi community lives. The economy and the cultural outlook of the village are dependent on the Bishnois as they are a dominant section of its population. Modern

technology and engineering will undoubtedly make available to them soon drinking water and such other necessities of life which will make it easier and pleasanter. But this is possible only when the primitive, outmoded, orthodox social taboos are given up and education is made to permeate the ignorant mass of villagers for it is in the wake of education that other benefits come.

179. Shall the sturdy men of this village continue to spend their lives in battles against nature, sticking to their traditional views and customs? Will the women folk remain content with carrying precious water in beautiful pitchers and doing other domestic chores, feeling glorified in domestic happiness; or will they ever send their daughters to school to learn new lessons? These are some of the questions to which answers shall have to be quickly found. For it is on these answers that the future of the village depends.



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A P P E N D I C E S

- I. Pattas and Parwanas.**
- II. Sayings of saint Jambheswar**
- III. Some common words with their English equivalents.**
- IV. Household & Village Schedules and Instructions.**

APPENDIX 1

PATTAS AND PARWANAS

(i)

Copy of the *Patta* dated Asoj Sudi 12 Samvat 1851V (1795 A. D.) granted by Maharaja Bhimsingh I of Jodhpur.

श्री राजराजेश्वर महाराजाधिराज महाराजा श्री भीमसिंहजी बचनात् (हुक्म से) जोधपुर वगैरै परगना सम सुतरां गांवरा पटायतां दिसे तथा बिश्नोइयां सु लाग जो सदा बन्दलागे है तिण माफक लीजो सिवाय खेचल न हुवे ।

(विक्रमी) सम्बत् १८५१ आसोज सुदी १२ गढ़ जोधपुर ।

(English translation)

By the Order of Raj Rajendra Maharaja Dhiraj Shri Bhim Singhji (1) of Jodhpur.

In all the parganas of Jodhpur and the villages which have been given by virtue of the *Pattas*, the cesses from Bishnois should be collected at the rates which are in vogue from old times. No extra demands should be made; Asoj Sudi 12 St. 1851; granted at Jodhpur.

(ii)

Copy of *Patta* dated Baisakh Budi 1 Samvat 1900V (1844 A. D.) granted by Mahraja Takhat Singh of Jodhpur.

॥ श्री परमेश्वर जी सत्य छै ॥

श्री राजराजेश्वर महाराजाधिराज श्री तखतसिंह जी बचनात् थापन बिश्नोइयां रां गांवां री सीव में नीली खेजड़ी कोई बाढ़रण (काटने) पावे नहीं, सिकार खेलण पावे नहीं, कोई नीली खेजड़ी बाढ़सी सुकार खेलसी सो दरबार से गुनोगार हो सो-सम्बत् १९०० (विक्रमीय) वैशाख बदी १ - गढ़ जोधपुर ।

(English translation)

By the order of Raj Rajeswar Maharaja-dhiraj Shri Takhat Singhji of Jodhpur. It is hereby ordered that in the villages of Bishnois, cutting of Khejri within the limits of these villages is banned. *Shikar* (game) is also prohibited. If anyone cuts green Khejris or plays *Shikar* he shall be punished by the State. Dated Baisakh Budi 1 St. 1200; granted at Jodhpur.

(iii)

Hindi translation of the original *Parwana* written in Persian dated 15 Jaiked, 980 Hijri (1562 A. D.)

शौर्यशरण राज कल्याणसिंह वाली बीकानेर को यह मालूम हो कि जो आजकल थापन चोखा ने सदर कचहरी में आकर निवेदन किया कि अपने साथ बहुत सी जमात रखता है - और कोई वजह गुजारे की मुर्कारि नहीं है इसलिए उम्मेदवार है कि हमारे गुजारे की सूरत नियत हो जावे-फिर यह अर्जी उनकी, हजूर तक पहुँची हुक्मन मंजूर इस वास्ते माफिक हुक्म के लिखा जाता है कि फी शादी (विवाह) ३) बिश्नोइयों से दिलाते रहो-और गांव तालवे में जमीन करीब ८०० आठ सौ जरीब पुस्ता मन्दिर के पीछे दरबार बादशाही से दी गई है-और दश घर मोचियों के पांच घर मुसलमान कलाल मन्दिर के जमीन में रहते हैं जो कुछ टहल सेवा आदि मन्दिर की होगी वह सब करते रहेंगे कुल जमीन तीन हजार पुस्ता जरीब से मन्दिर की पीछे हैं-जब मेला होगा-बीका-मनोहर सिंह कुवे से पानी खींच कर मेले वालों को पिलावेगा और गांव हिमदसर उत्तर कोण में है और गांव खींचियासर दक्षिण को है और गांव घूपालिया पूर्व को है ।

अण्खीसर आदि २० बीउ गांव इलाके जोधपुर के और १५ पन्द्रह गांव इलाके बीकानेर के कुल ३५ गांव तो मन्दिर के नीचे हैं-सारी आमदनी गांव के रहने वाले मन्दिरवालों को देते रहेंगे अर्थात् मन पीछे एक सेर गरज है कि बिश्नोई मन्दिर वालों को देते रहेंगे । और उनके ही कब्जे (अधिकार) में रहेगा और गांव जंगल में उस जगह शिकार करना (खेलना) हरेक छोटे बड़े को मना है-और तमाम चीजों का महसूल उनको माफ कर दिया गया है-तारीख १५ जियेकद सन् ९८० हीजरी ।

दरबार तारीद १५ जियेकद । नकल दफ्तर हजूर वाला-नकल दफ्तर दीवान आलिया (बड़ा) ।

The following is rendered into English from the Hindi translation of the original *Parwana* written in Persian issued by the Emperor of Dehli on 15 Jivekad, year 980 Hijri (1562 A. D.) to His Highness Maharaja Kalyan Singhji, Ruler of Bikaner.

Chokha Thapan presented himself at the Emperor's court and prayed that a number of persons depended on him for maintenance of which there was no provision and that a grant should, therefore, be made in his favour. This petition received due consideration of his Majesty who was pleased to accept the request. It is, therefore, hereby ordered that a cess of Rs. 3 may be levied on the Bishnois for each marriage celebrated by them. 800 *bighas* of land by *pucca zarib* (chain) has been granted in village Talwa for the temple. There are 10 households of Mochis and 5 households of Muslim Kalals who reside in the land attached to the temple. They will render the usual service to the temple. The total land attached to the temple is 3,000 *bighas* by *pucca zarib*. At the time of the fair Bika Manohar Singh will draw water from the well for the pilgrims. The village Himatsar is in the northern corner, Kheenchiyasar in the south and village Dhupalia in the east. 20 villages including Ankhisar of Jodhpur State and 15 villages of Bikaner State total 35 villages are attached to the temple. From the agricultural produce one *seer* per maund will be paid by all the villagers to the management of the temple who will utilise it for the purpose of the temple. No one, big or small, will be allowed to play game (*shikar*) in the jungle of the village and no customs shall be levied on any thing imported in the village.

APPENDIX I-concl'd.

(iv)

Copy of entry dated Jeth Badi 1, St. 1558 Vikrami in the *Patta* book of the former State of Bikaner.

नकल कागद मोहर छाप

श्री रामजी

॥ स्वस्ति श्री महाराजाधिराज महाराजा श्री सुजारासिंहजी बचनात् श्री महाराजाजी मया कर तालवे मुकाम रै थापना समसत नूँ धरती दीवी छै तेरी बिगत श्री भांमेजी रे देह रे चाढी छै धरती तेरी बिगत १ खेत ५ अखरे खेत पांच तेरी धरती बीघा हजार १ अखरे बीघा हजार एक बीसरी डोरी रा श्री बाबेजी आगे मेले रे ऊँठा सू ढांडा के पीऊँ चरत्ती रे वास्ते पड़त रखाई छै ते मां बीघा हजार १ एक थापनों समसतां नूँ दीवी छै अर बीघा हजार १ एक पड़त मेले रे वास्ते रखाई छै सू राखसी-खेत ५ अखरे खेत पांच तेरी बीघा हजार १ अखरे बीघा हजार एक बीसरी डोरी री थापना समसतां नूँ दीवी छै सूबाह सी अर कोहर १ रा तेवण २ मों - तेवण १ तो आगे सदामन थापन बेगार बाहवे छै - अर तेवण १ सरकार सूँ तै बीवै छै सू पांणी तेवण थापन बेगार बाहसी कोहर रा तेवण २ दोय थापन बेगार बाहसी मेले में पाणी री बोहोताइत राखसी - अर कुंड १ पांणी नूँ सरकार सूँ मेले मां कराड देज सी अर थापन कुंड आगूँच भर राखसी अर तेवण २ को हर रा थितिया बाहसी अर पुराणा कोहर छै सू राठीइ सुजांणी दुवारो रुघनाथोत बाहसी अर धरती - बीघा हजार १ अखरे हजार एक बीसरी डोरी री पड़त राखी छै मेले रे वास्ते सू मेले देह रे नजीक री पड़त राखसी सू ऊँठ बलद धरती मां चरमी सरब खेत १० अखरे दस धरती बीघा हजार २ दाई इयँ मांत दीवी छै सू बाहसी पड़त राखसी सं० १७५८ मिते जेठ बदी १ मुकाम किसनाजी नदी डरां ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥ ॥

(English translation)

His Highness the Maharaja Dhiraj Shri Sujarsinghji of Bikaner hereby orders that he has kindly granted land to the Thapans of Mukam in dedication to the *Samadhi* of Shri Jambhaji, the details of which are as follows :-

5 fields comprising of 1000 *bighas* measured by a chain of 21 Cubits (*Ek-bisri dori*). The land under village Talwa measuring 2000 *bighas* with a chain of 22 cubits. This land shall be reserved for the camels and animals brought to the fair in commemoration of the *Babaji* (Jambhaji). Out of this 1000 *bighas* of land is granted to the Thapans and 1000 *bighas* will be reserved as fallow land for fair. Five fields comprising land measuring 1000 *bighas* (measured by a chain of 21 cubits) is granted to all the Thapans who may cultivate it. Out of the two *Tewans* § one *Tewan* is worked in *begar* by Thapans and another *Tewan* is worked at the instance of the Government. The land will be watered by Thapans in *begar*. Thus both the *Tewan* will be worked by Thapans without any payment. Adequate arrangements for supply of water shall be made by them during the fair.

A tank will be constructed at state expense for use in the fair. The Thapans shall fill the tank with water before the *mela* starts, Two *Tewans* from *Kohar* will be worked permanently and the old *Kohar* will be tilled by Rathore Sujan S/o Duha Rughnathot. Land comprised of 1000 *bighas* measured by a chain of 21 cubits will be kept fallow for the fair. This land shall be adjacent to the village. Camels and bullocks will graze in this land. In all 10 fields comprising of 200 *bighas* of land have been granted which will be tilled or kept fallow as per directions contained herein.

Jeth Badi 1 St. 1758. Given to Kishna of Mukam.

§ *Tewan* is a big hole in the stone slab which is fixed at the mouth of the well and through which the big rope, known as *lao* tied to the leather bucket, passes when the water is drawn from the well.

APPENDIX II

SAYINGS OF SAINT JAMBHESWAR

The following selection of sayings, from the 120 sabdas of Jambheswar give the substance of his teachings.

(i)

रसुवन गोरस घीयन लीयूं
तहां दूध न पाणी ।
गुरु ध्याइये रे ज्ञानी
तोडत मोहा अनिबुर साणी ।
छीजत लोहा पाणी ॥

(ii)

म्हे जपां न जाया जीऊं ।
नव अवतार नमों नारायण
तेपण रूप हमारा थीयूं ।
जपां तो एक निरालम्भ शम्भू
जिहि के माय न पीऊं ।
न तन रक्तुं न तन धातू
न तन ताव न सीऊं ।

(iii)

अति आलस भूला वै भूला
न चीन्हो सुर राया ।
पार ब्रह्म की सुध न जाणी
तो जागे जोग न पाया ।

(iv)

विष्णु ने दोष किसो रे प्राणी
तेरी करणी का उपकारूं ॥

(v)

विष्णु विष्णु तू भज रे प्राणी
पैके लाख उपाजूं ।
रतन काया बैकुण्ठे बासो
जरा मरण भय भाजूं ।

(vi)

मच्छी मच्छ फिरे जल भीतर
तिहि का माध न जोयवा ।
परम तत्व के रूप न रेखा
लीक न लेहूं खोज न लेहूं ।

(vii)

जोगी जंगम नाथ दिगंबर
संन्यासी, ब्राह्मण, ब्रह्मचारी,
मनहठ पढ़िया पंडित,
काजी मुल्ला खेलै आप दुबारी
निश्चै कायों बायों होयसी ।

(viii)

जै कोई आवही हो हो करता
आप जै हुइये पानी ।
जाके बहुती नवणी बहुत ही खवणी
बहुती त्रिया समारणी ।
जाकी तो निज निरमल काया,
जोय जोय देखो ले चढियो असमानी ।

(ix)

क्षमा रूप तप कीजै थोड़े महि थोड़े रो दीजे
होते नाहिन कीजे कृष्ण मया तिहु लोका साक्षी
अमृत फूल फलीजे जोय जोय नाम विष्णु के बीज
अनन्त गुण लिख लीजे ।

(x)

जद पवण न होता पाणी न होता
न होता धर गैणरूं ।
चन्द न होता सूर न होता
न होता गंगदर तारूं ।
सप्त पताल फुराणिद न होता
न होता सागर खारूं ।
तब होता एक निरंजन शम्भू
के होता धन्धू कारूं ।
बात कदो की पूछै लोई
जुग छत्तीस विचारूं ।
ताह परै रे और छत्तीसूं
पहला अन्त न पारूं ॥
म्हे तद पण होता अब पण आछे बल बल होयसां
कह कद कद का करूं विचारूं ।

APPENDIX III

SOME COMMON WORDS WITH THEIR ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS

Common words in		
Roman script	Devnagri script	English Equivalents
1	2	3
Avtar	अवतार	Incarnation
Abadi	आबादी	Village habitation site
Adalat	अदालत	Court
Afsar	अफसर	Officer
Akal	अकाल	Famine
Ara	आरा	Radial spokes
Bajra	बाजरा	Millet
Barat	बारात	Marriage party
Barati	बाराती	A member of marriage party
Basa	बासा	Stale (food)
Batki	बाटकी	A small metal cup
Batna	बटना	A paste made with perfumes, turmeric and flour
Beejni	बीजनी	Seed-drill
Bees	बीस	Twenty
Bhagat	भगत	Disciple
Bhagona	भगोना	A Iron pan
Bhat-h	भाट	Chronicler
Bhat	भात	Presents given by the mother's brother at the time of marriage
Bheja	भेजा	Brain
Bind	बींद	Bride groom
Bindni	बींदनी	Bride
Binthi	बींठी	Ring
Birkha	बिरखा	Rain
Byah	ब्याह	Marriage
Chabutra	चबूतरा	A masonry platform
Chadar	चादर	Sheet or covering
Chana	चना	Gram
Charas	चरस	Leather bag for drawing water
Charkha	चरखा	Spinning wheel
Charpai	चारपाई	A cot
Chaudhary	चौधरी	Headman
Chhach	छाछ	Whey
Chhadi	छडी	Stick
Chhati	छटी	A ceremony on the 6th day after birth

APPENDIX III-*contd.*

1	2	3
Chilam	चिलम	Smoking clay pipe
Choti	चोटी	Scalp-lock
Chowka	चौका	Cooking place
Chowki	चौकी	Pedestal
Chunao	चुनाओ	Election
Chundri	चूँदड़ी	A saree of various colours
Churma	चूरमा	A sweetmeat
Dadi	दाढ़ी	Beard
Dai	दायी	An midwife
Dantli	दान्तली	Sickle
Deewla	दीवला	An earthen lamp
Dhaga	धागा	Thread
Dhan	धान	Grain
Dharamshala	धरमशाला	An inn
Dhoonga	डूँगा	Buttock
Dhoti	धोती	Long cloth covering the lower part of the body
Dokra	डोकरा	An old man
Dokri	डोकरी	An old woman
Gandasa	गन्डासा	Chober
Gaon	गाँव (गाँवो)	Village
Gauna	गौना	Nupital Ceremony
Ghagra	घाघरा	Skirt
Ghar	घर	House
Ghatti	घट्टी	Flour mill
Ghunti	घूँटी	Concoction
Gilas	गिलास	Tumbler
Gobar	गोबर	Cow-dung
Goira	गोत्र	Sub clan
Gunga	गूँगा	Dumb
Gur	गुड़	Jaggery
Gurudwara	गुरूद्वारा	Sacred place
Hal	हल	Plough
Hath	हाथ	Hand
Havan	हवन	Fire offering
Jaccha	जच्चा	Woman who has delivered the birth
Jafri	जाफरी	Skeleton
Jamin	जमीन	Land
Jannao	जनेऊ	Sacred thread
Janwasa	जनवासा	Haulting place for marriage party
Jhopa	भोपा	Circular hut

APPENDIX III-contd.

1	2	3
Jhota	भोटा	Buffalo male calve
Jhoti	भोटी	Buffalo female calve
Jiman	जीमन	Feast
Jimna	जीमना	To take food
Jinawar	जिनावर	Animal
Jiv	जीव	Creature
Juti	जूती	Laceless shoe
Kachri	कचरी	A kind of vegetable
Kadhai	कढ़ाई	Couldren
Kakri	ककड़ी	Cucumber
Kaljug	कलजुग	Age of Kali i. e., this world
Kamij	कमीज	Shirt
Kanchli	कांचली	Corset
Kapal	कपाल	Forehead
Karor	करोड़	Ten million
Karza	करजा	Debt
Kassi	कस्सी	Pick-axe
Katora	कटोरा	Big metal bowl
Kazal	काजल	Soot
Khaddar	खद्दर	Hand woven cloth
Kharif	खरीफ	Rain crop
Kheer	खीर	A pudding made of rice & milk
Khet	खेत	Field
Khurpi	खुरपी	Iron blade with handle
Kisan	किसान	Farmer
Kooa	कूआ	Well
Koolari	कुलाड़ी	Axe
Kos	कोस	Distance about 3 kilometres
Kotha	कोठा	Place for storing grains
Kudi	कुडी	
Kurta	कुड़ता	Collarless shirt
Kurti	कुड़ती	Blouse
Laddo	लाडू	A sweet meat
Lohi	लोही	Blanket
Lota	लोटा	Brass jug
Mandi	मन्डी	Market
Maroosthal	मरूस्थल	Sandy tract
Matha	माथा	Head
Matira	मतीरा	Water melon
Meetha	मीठा	Sweet
Mehandi	मेंहदी	Myrtle paste
Minakh	मिनख	Man
Murki	मुरकी	Ear-ring
Moong	मूंग	Green gram

APPENDIX III-concl.

1	2	3
Moonj	मूज	Hemp string
Mukam	मुकाम	Abode
Mukti	मुक्ती	Salvation
Mundan	मुन्डन	Ceremonial haircut
Namkaran	नामकरण	Namegiving
Nidan	निदान	Weeding
Pag	पग	Leg
Pagothia	पगोधिया	Steps
Parat	परात	A shallow pan
Patta	पट्टा	Deed
Patta	पाटा	Wooden Plank to sit on
Pergunnah	परगनाह	Small administrative division
Phasal	फमल	Crop
Phawra	फाबरा	Spade
Phenta	फेंटा	Turban
Phera	फेरा	Circumambulation
Pind	पिण्ड	A ball of flour
Pitra	पित्रा	Progenitors
Poojan	पूजन	Worship
Rabi	रबी	Winter crop
Rakshas	राक्षस	Demon
Rath	रथ	Chariot
Rewar	रेवड	Flock
Sabda	शब्द	A word (Saying of Jambhaji)
Safa	साफा	Turban
Sagai	सगायी	Engagement
Salwar	सलवार	Baggy trouser
Samadhi	समाधी	Tomb
Sanyasi	मन्यासी	Mendicant
Singashan	सिंघासन	Throne
Sogra	सोगरा	A bajra bread
Suhag	सुहाग	Wedlock
Suhaga	सुहागा	Levellor
Tabar	टाबर	Child
Taccavi	तकावी	Government loans
Talai	तलाई	Tank
Teela	टीला	Dune
Tilak	तिलक	A turmeric mark on forehead
Tingar	टींगर	Child
Tiss	तिस	Thirst
Tiya	तीया	Third day ritual

III. Duration of Residence

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

IV. Settlement Pattern

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

V. House Type and Household Effects

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

(Give full Particulars)

VI. Dietary Habits

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

Contents of each meal

1	2	3	4
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2. What is the ordinary medium of cooking ?

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

(a) Tea

(b) Tobacco for

(i) eating

(ii) smoking

(c) Liquor

(d) Opium

VII. Dress and other Body Adornments

A. *Dress*

1. Common dress worn by:—

Male

Female

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

B. Ornaments

3. Ornaments usually worn and description of material

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

C. Hair style

4. General Hair style of the head amongst—

*(a) Male**(b) Female*

5. Do male members generally keep beards and moustaches ?

D. Tattooing

6. Is body tattooed ? Describe parts of body tattooed and peculiarities thereof.

E. Toilet

7. What toilets and cosmetics are generally used ?

F. Footwear

8. Is footwear used by all members ?

VIII. Health and Sanitary Habits

1. At what intervals of time members usually take bath ?

2. At what intervals of time do they wash their clothes ?

3. What material is used to wash:—

*(a) Body**(b) Clothes*

4. Do they clean the house daily ?
5. Do they keep the utensils clean ?
6. Is their bedding clean ?
7. What measures are adopted at the time of:—

A. Illness—

- (a) No action taken
- (b) Aid sought from village witch or other local quacks
- (c) Ayurvedic or Unani treatment
- (d) Allopathic treatment

B. Maternity—

- (a) Case done at home through—
 - (i) Untrained dai
 - (ii) Trained midwife
- (b) Case done outside home through—
Maternity centre or Hospital

IX. Recreation

1. What type of games are undertaken ?
2. Folk songs and Dances with peculiar local musical instruments, if any
3. Fairs and other festivities

X. Social Customs

1. Any peculiar social rites of the Household

A. Marriage—

2. Any peculiarities in rites of marriage
3. At what age marriage is usually performed of:—
 - (a) Male
 - (b) Female
4. Is Divorce and re-marriage permissible ?
5. Is marriage allowed within the Tribe or Caste only or it can take place beyond the Tribe or Caste ?
6. Is dowry usually taken or given ? If so, in what form and of what estimated value ?
7. Is system of dowry on the increase or decrease ?
8. Usual total expenditure incurred on:—
 - (a) Boy's marriage
 - (b) Girl's marriage

B. Funerals—

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

C. Inheritance—

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

XI. Beliefs and Superstitions

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

XII. Social Organisation

1. How the household is governed in social matters:—
 - (a) By Head of Household only
 - (b) By Caste or Tribe Panchayat
 - or
 - (c) By village Panchayat
2. How these Panchayats are formed ?
3. Composition of these Panchayats ?
4. How these Panchayats act ?

XIII. Occupation**A. Traditional—**

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

B. Household Industry—

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

C. *Household cultivation—*

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

D. *Other occupations—*

Nature of work with full particulars

XIV. Property

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

XV. Income

Estimated income of the Household from following sources in a year

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

TOTAL

XVI. Expenditure

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

XVII. Indebtedness

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

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

XVIII. Social and Economic Reforms

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

Dated.....

Signature of Investigator

[B] VILLAGE SCHEDULE**I. Approach**

How village can be reached. Particularly in rainy season ?

II. Location

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

III. Topography-Map

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

IV. Climate

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

V. Origin and History of village

Origin of village—Local legend about name of village—past history—archaeological excavations.

VI. Communities

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

VII. Village Administration

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

VIII. Social Life

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

IX. Religious beliefs and superstitions

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

X. Educational life

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

XI. Economic life

Professions—Agriculture and Animal Husbandry—Agricultural practices—Merchandise—Trade and commerce—Exchange and barter—Weights and measures—Labour—Communications—Banking system—Main markets—Storage.

XII. Art and Architecture

Architectural details—Things of art produced in the village.

XIII. Recent Socio-Economic Reforms

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

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

I. Displaced persons in the village—

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

II. Awareness of various legislative or executive measures—

- (a) Abolition of Zamindari & intermediary rights.
- (b) Ceiling in ownership of land.
- (c) Transferring ownership rights to the tillers of the soil.
- (d) Changes in Hindu laws of succession and adoption.
- (e) Untouchability.
- (f) Land reclamation & land development.
- (g) Family planning.
- (h) (i) Extension or restriction of the rights of utilisation of forest produce.
(ii) How and to what extent the villagers have been effected by above.
- (i) Extension or restriction of grazing rights over any area and how it has affected the villagers.
- (j) Measures abolishing forced and bounded labour.

III. Labour and employment—

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

IV. Markets and fairs most commonly visited—

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

Fairs most commonly visited—

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

Shops—

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

V. Educational Institutions—

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

VI. Maps—

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

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INVESTIGATOR FOR FILLING UP THE HOUSEHOLD SCHEDULE

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

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

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

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

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

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

(i) *General Description:—*

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

(ii) *Composition of Household:—*

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

(iii) *Duration of Residence :—*

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

(iv) *Settlement Pattern:—*

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

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

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

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

(vi) *Dietary Habits* :—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(viii) *Health and Sanitary Habits* :—

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

(ix) *Recreation* :—

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

(x) *Social Customs* :—

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

(xi) *Beliefs and Superstitions* :—

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

(xii) *Social Organisation* :—

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

(xiii) Occupation:—

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

(xiv) Property:—

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

(xv) Income and Expenditure:—

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

(xvi) Indebtedness:—

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

(xvii) Social and Economic Reforms:—

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

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

(iv) *Climate:—*

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

(v) *Origin and History of village:—*

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

(vi) *Communities:—*

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

(vii) *Village administration:—*

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

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

(viii) *Social life:—*

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

(ix) *Religious beliefs and superstitions:—*

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

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

(x) *Educational life:—*

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

(xi) *Economic life:—*

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

(xii) *Art and Architecture:—*

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

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

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

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

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

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