

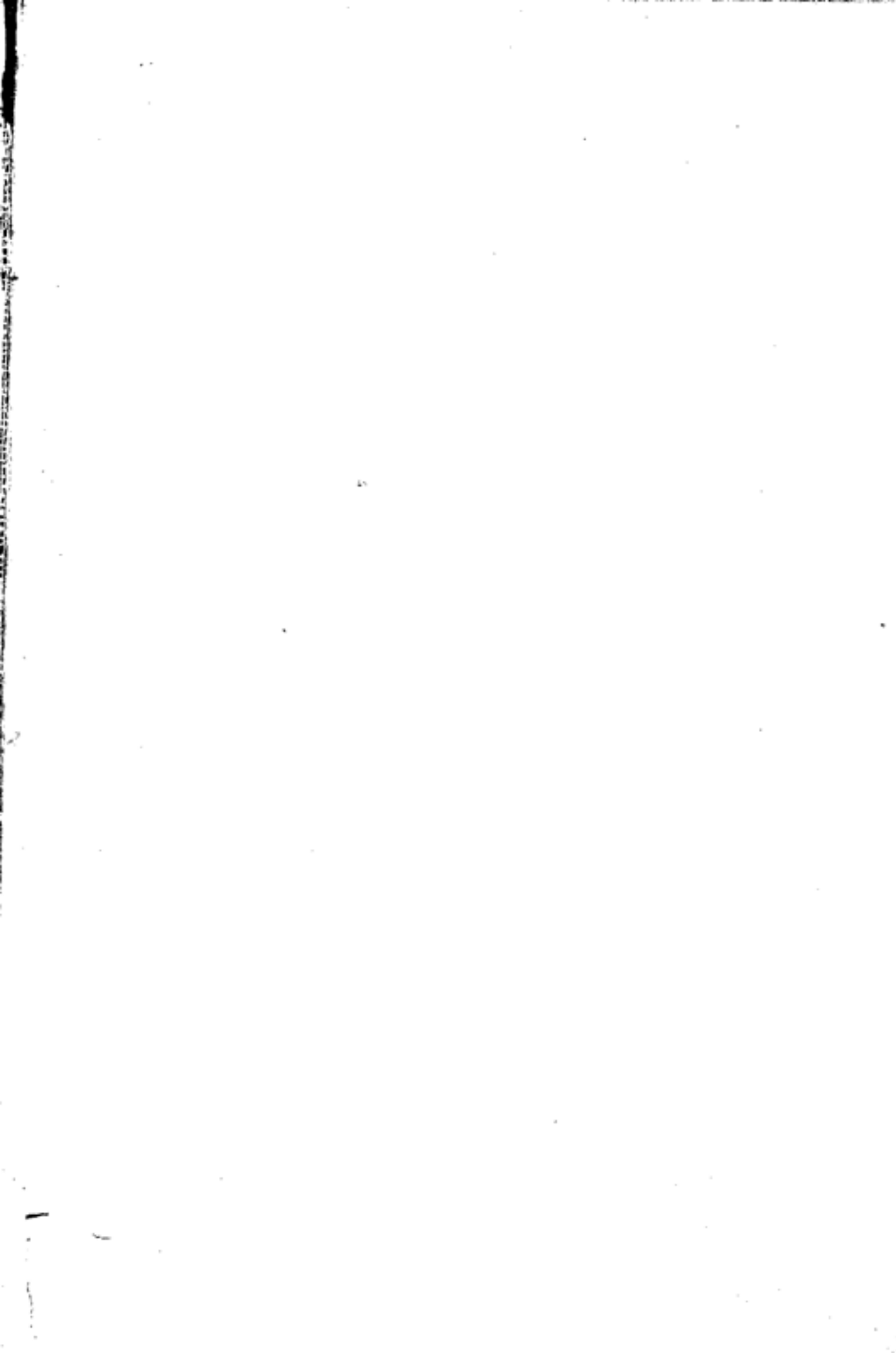
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OVER

THE SHEPHERDS  
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# The Shepherds of India

[A Socio-Cultural Study of sheep and cattle-rearing communities]

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DR. S. S. SHASHI



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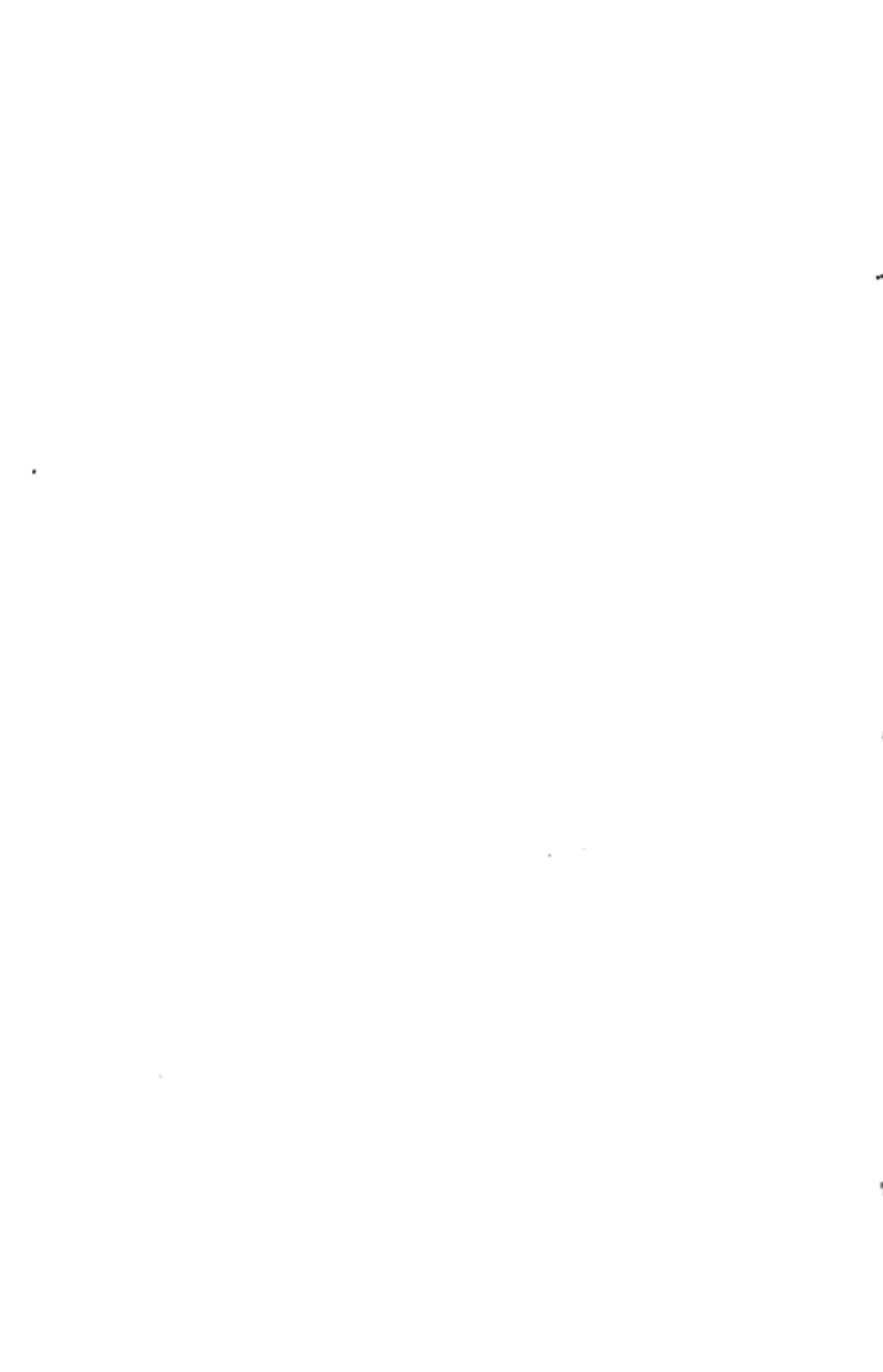
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प्रथम नई दिल्ली

केन्द्रीय पुरातत्व प्रस्तकारालय

*Dedicated to*

Dr. R. N. Saksena, Ph.D., D. Litt  
who has devoted his life to the cause of  
INDIAN SOCIOLOGY



## PREFACE

The present treatise is a brief study of the shepherds of India and is the result of my long association with the people of various sub-castes and tribal groups of this community.

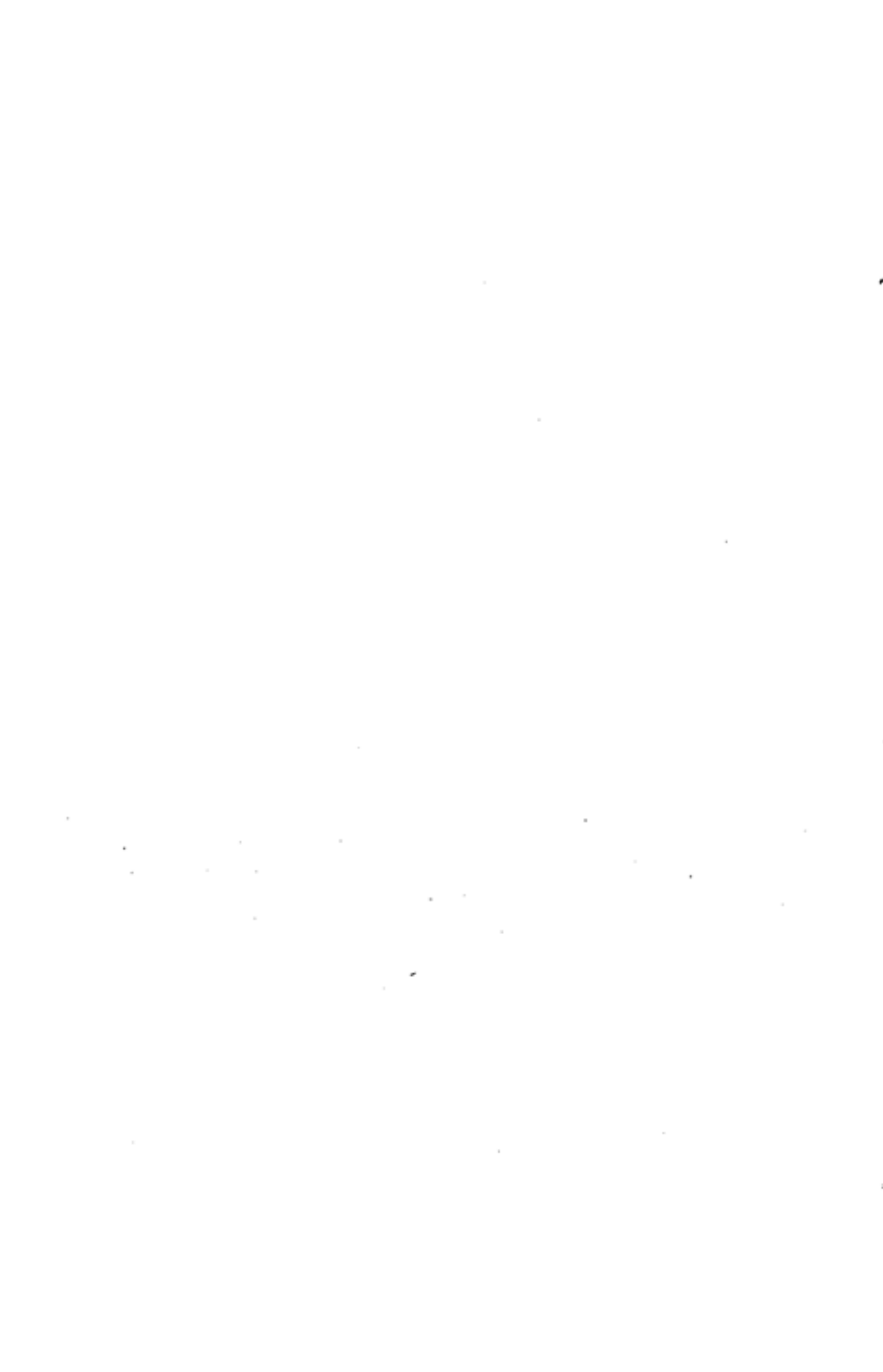
While conducting social research on Gaddi, a sheep rearing tribe of Himachal Pradesh, I was fascinated by these simple and nice people and became determined to make an advanced study of the shepherd community living in different parts of India. For this purpose, I undertook several extensive tours of the country and collected the basic material, applying a number of methodologies, participant and non-participant observations, village surveys, questionnaires, group discussions etc.

I record my special debt to the late Pandit Dharm Dev Shastri, former Secretary, Bhartiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh, who encouraged me to work among the tribals, particularly the Gaddi shepherds of Himalayas. I am grateful to my respected teacher, Dr. R.N. Saksena, former Director of the Institute of Social Sciences, Agra University (now at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla) whose guidance has been a source of great inspiration to me. As a token of affection and regard, I humbly and respectfully dedicate this book to him.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge my thanks to scores of my friends belonging to the various sub-castes and groups of the shepherd community of India.

Last, but not least, my special gratitudes are due to late Mr. K.V. Gopalaratnam who like an elder brother had always been a source of inspiration and valuable help to me in all respects.

S.S. SHASHI



**Some other books by the same author**

- \* Himachal—Nature's Peaceful Paradise
- \* Nomads of the Himalayas
- \* The Night life of Indian Tribes
- \* A Sociological Study of Gaddi Tribe
- \* Our Tribal Children
- \* Defenders of India
- \* Jawan—The Pride of the Nation
- \* Tribes of Himachal Pradesh
- \* Encyclopaedia of Indian Army Regiments
- \* The Tribal Women of India





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## CHAPTER I

### THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

"Society is God", exclaimed the famous French Sociologist, Emile Durkheim. This view was expressed earlier also by some scholars. One can hear the proverb of *Panch Parmeshwar* even today in Indian villages. Gandhiji's idea of *Panchayatiraj* was nurtured in this background.

Man is a social animal. The social process governs his life. He feels drawn to another human being because of his basic needs and desires whose fulfilment rests on contact with others. These result in social relationship, responses, interaction and communication. Society is an amalgam of co-operation, adjustments and affinity. Ethics, customs, laws and institutions are formed to control the society.

MacIver says that society is a system of usages and procedures of authority and mutual aid. According to Talcot Parsons, society may be defined as the total complex of human relationship and Lapiere thinks of it as the pattern and not the people. The definitions given by various sociologists may differ in words but one thing is common. Without interaction, no society can exist and it is the inter-relationship which forms a society—may be an abstract term.

Social scientists believe that the primitive man who had difficulty in collecting his food, reared various animals, cattle and sheep which provided him with milk, butter and wool. This profession is found all over the world. Man took to wool after he gave up wearing bark. The shepherds propagated firs and made woollen garments. This was a significant discovery.

The various castes and sub-castes of shepherds had a common ancestry. The root becomes obscure because of the difference in culture and language. Geographical environment, living conditions and social set up play an important role. Those in the cold region

wear woollen garments. Physical cleanliness is not paramount to all; for instance, the Malundis<sup>1</sup> of Himachal Pradesh. On the other hand, the priestly Kurabas of South India do not even drink water without having a bath. Similarly those in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bengal and other states follow different norms prevalent in their respective surroundings.

## HABITAT

The Shepherd community live in forests, in villages and in cities, too. They lead a community life in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Himachal Pradesh. They are found in large numbers in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. In Uttar Pradesh they are concentrated in areas from Saharanpur to Varanasi. Indore in Madhya Pradesh is regarded as the old principality of this community. There had been Dhangar rulers and Maharani Ahilyabai was the most famous of them. Vijayanagar in Karnataka, which was founded by two Kurabas, Hukka—Bukka, is regarded as their stronghold. The royal family of Karoli is believed to have links with this community. Sheep, a pet animal of this community can be seen in the royal seal. It is said that the Ghosipura railway station of Gwalior is named after this community.

Dhangars, Oraon Dhangar (shepherds) are also settled in Chota Nagpur, West Bengal, Bihar and Assam. It is said that they belonged to Gujarat and Konkan in the early period. They migrated and settled in other states in due course. Some consider them as tribals of Chota Nagpur. Those who live in remote areas or forests in Madhya Pradesh or Karnataka have been declared as Scheduled Tribe.

The Gaddis are the shepherds of Himachal Pradesh. They are a semi-nomadic tribe and are found in Chamba and Kangra districts.

Some scholars are of the view that the shepherds who migrated from the west and call themselves Marathas have settled down in Gwalior and Anupshahar and later in Bullandshahar.<sup>2</sup> It is said

1. A shepherd nomad of Himachal Pradesh, who hardly takes a bath.

2. William Crooks : *Tribes and Castes of North West Frontier of India*, Vol. 2 (1806), p. 146 & 361.

that Dhangars migrated from Maharashtra and settled in these areas.

## ETYMOLOGY

Though this community is known by different names, colloquially it is associated with sheep or cowherds. For instance, the Hindi word *Gadariya* is a compound one of *Gadar* and *ya*. *Gaddar* is a Prakrit word which means sheep and the suffix *ya* makes it pertaining to the community of shepherds. Some scholars hold that the words *Gadar* and *Arya* formed *Gadararya* or *Gadarya*. Possibly it later became a derivative of *Gadariya*. There is also a view that they were the custodians or defenders of *Garh* (fort) and hence were called *Gadariyas*. Similarly, the Kannada word *Kuri* means sheep from which the term Kurba was derived.

The word Dhangar is derived from cattle wealth. The suffix *Gar* is indicative of cattle-grazers or shepherds. 'Dangar' is inscribed in a Buddhist cave in Pune district of Maharashtra. This cave, it is believed, has its origins between the first and the third centuries. Dr. Bhagwan Lal Indraji maintains, it is derived from the word 'Dhangar'. Some scholars believe it is associated with the Sanskrit word 'Dhang' which means a hill. This community is called Dhangar because it dwelt in hills. The Sanskrit word *Dandaka* means the dwellers of jungles. The Marathi *Maidapal* is of shepherds. We find *Dan* and *Kuri* in Kannada and hence some feel that the word 'Dhangar' originated from this. Yet *Dhangar* is a synonym of cattle-grazers which is used for this class in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and other States. In this class is reckoned 'Nikhar' a sub group. In fact, when the practice of offering sacrifice increased, Buddhist influence permeated. Many cattle-grazers became Buddhists. Later Shankaracharya gave the call for purification. Meanwhile differences arose between the Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhists. Consequently, those who took to Buddhism rejoined the Hindu faith. And those who went through the purification, began to call themselves 'Nikhar' i.e. purified. Many, however, did not change their names and used the old term *Dhangar*. In fact, the customs, habits and traditions of *Dhangars* and *Nikhars* are almost similar and there are inter-marriages. In this context, we hear of different practices in some parts of North India which will be discussed later.

The most prevalent word in Uttar Pradesh is Pal or Baghel. Many of this community add the words Pal, Rajpal, Pali or Baghel to their names. *Pal* means one who rears sheep or cattle and Baghel is equivalent to lion. Endowed with the strength of a lion, whether they call themselves Pal or Baghel they take pride in calling themselves Kshatriya, Marhatta, Rajput or Thakur. Their geneology would reveal that they belong to a branch of Kshatriyas. The majority of *gotras* are of Kshatriya class. The *gotras* of other classes are also found in this community. It looks as if it is a mixture of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and other communities. Some *gotras* of this community are also from tribals. In fact, *Gadariya* (shepherd) or *Gwala* (cowherd) was no particular community but an occupation which the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and other castes have taken to. Those who fled to jungles and hills to escape conversion during the Moghal period made cattle grazing their profession and were called Ahir, or Gadariya. Initially, they were economically sound but their condition deteriorated in jungle surroundings. Thus an honourable community came to be looked upon as nomads and were reduced to the plight of *Sudras*.

It is essential to mention here some theories. The word Dhangar, historians believe, must have been associated with Dhaval village. V. S. Srivastava<sup>1</sup> has also referred to four princes of this village. These princes were Ajpal, Dhanpal, Gopal and Ranadhaval. Later, in this book there is a mention of Lokhande Dhangara. This proves that Dhangara are a part of Maratha Society.

In this context, according to Chintamani Vinayak Vaidya, the Gaikwad, Holkar, Scindia States of Gujarat and North India cannot be different. Pallav, Rashtrakoot, Kadamb, Sendrak and the pure Maratha Royal dynasties were connected with Chalukyas. This leaves, no doubt that it is an ancient Maratha sect.

Baghel is a branch of Solanki dynasty whose ancestors are found in large numbers in Bundelkhand. This word is also used for Meshpal society but it is surprising that its use was more in vogue in Mathura, Agra and Gwalior districts and not elsewhere.

Jagdish Singh Gahlot, a historian says that Solanki were in the south of Ayodhya from where they went to Gujarat and therefrom to Rajputana. Their kingdom was in Sirohi, Marwar, Chitor

1. *Are Rajput Maratha Marriages Morganatic?* Aitishashik, Gaurav Granth Mala Gokhale Building, Poona 1952 p. 198-201.

(Mewar) and Bagad. Charan-Bhato called this sect Agnivansh but the stone and copper edicts of 600 B.C. to 1600 did not inscribe them as Agnivanshi. They certainly belong to the dynasty of Chandravanshi and Pandavas.

Emperor Alaudin Khilji's brother Ulgakhan seized the Solanki ruler's, Kingdom, Anhilwada in 1356 (1299 A.D.). A branch of Solanki's having stayed in Vyaghrapalli (Bagheli) village, ten miles from Anhilwada Patan and hence they were well-known as Vyaghrapalliya or Bhaghels. The ruler of Rewa in Madhya Pradesh belongs to this Baghela branch. The present area of Solankis is Rewa, Loonawada, Bansda and Tharad.

In certain districts of Haryana and Rajasthan, they are referred to as Maratha Rajput. The ruler of this society, Maharani Ahalyabai Holkar had sent them there to settle. Virendra Kumar Vidyanand Srivastava<sup>1</sup> holds that the Maratha village Dhawal in Maharashtra derived its name from the word Dhangar. He says :

The word *Pal* is a derivative of *Meshpal*. Alongwith cattle rearing, it carries the sound of welfare of people. Its use is found in many places. It is interesting that Palistan is a place near Chitor and Palestine was the birth place of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself was likened to a shepherd. *Pal* in Nepali and Sikkimese means a good goat from which wool garments are made. *Paleej* means ewe. She was the ancient goddess of shepherds in Europe. Another meaning of *Pal* is group. Among the Meos of Rewari Tehsil of Haryana are Dhangar Pal, Ahir Pal and others of whom some embraced Islam.

The word Pal might well be in use to describe this community since the days of Raja Kushal Pal Singh but there is, doubtless, a lot of history behind it. This word was in evidence ranging from the Pal Dynasty rulers of Bengal to those of Pallavas of South India. Let us have a look at the available names of rulers of this dynasty.

*The Rulers of Pal dynasties of Bengal (543 AD—1947) :*

Gopal, Dharampal, Vakyapal, Devpal, Jaipal, Vighrapal, Rajyapal, Mahipal, Nebhpal, Rajpal, Madanpal, Mahendrapal, Govindpal.

1. Virendra K. Vidyanand Srivastava : *Are Rajput Maratha Marriages Morga-natic ?* p. 200.



*Rathores of Badaun and Rulers of Pal Dynasty :*

Vigrahapal, Bhuwanpal, Madanpal, Devpal, Bhimpal, Surpal Amritpal, Lakhanpal etc.

*The Rajas of the ruling dynasty of Indraprastha—Delhi :*

Rajpal, Mohanpal, Samudrapal, Chandrapal, Sahaypal, Devpal, Narsingpal, Sempal, Raghupal, Govindpal, Amritpal, Valipal, Mahipal, Haripal, Seespal, Madanpal, Karmpal, Abhyapal, Dhujhabpal, Udaypal, Yashpal.

*The dynastic genealogy of the Raghuvanshi rulers of Kannauj (800 A.D.—1021) :*

Mahendrapal, Mahipal, Vinayakpal, Mahendrapal, Devpal, Vijaypal, Rajyapal, Trilochan pal, Yashpal etc.

*The Ruling Family of Punjab (977—1027)*

Jaipal, Anantpal, Sukhpal, Trilochanpal, Bhimpal, etc.

## THE RULING COMMUNITY

One finds in this community Gahlot, Tomar, Rathore, Prammar, Chauhan, Solanki, Parihar Sengar, Baghel, Yadav etc. The names of the 36 Kshatriya clans are as follows :

1. Eksevak Ichavakukakusya or Suryavanshi (Sun Race);
2. Indu Somvanshi or Chandravanshi (Moon Race); 3. Gahlot Sisodiya, Raghuvanshi ; 4. Yadu (Bhatti, Jareja, Jadoo, Banaphar) ; 5. Tabar or Tomar ; 6. Rathore, Rathod ; 7. Kuchwah ; 8. Prammar or Panwar ; 9. Chauhan (Hada, Bhadoriya) ; 10. Chalukya or Salanki (Baghel) ; 11. Parihar or Pratihara ; 12. Chobda ; 13. Tak or Takshak (Snake Race) ; 14. Jeet Gate or Jat ; 15. Hun or Hul (Dhangar) ; 16. Kathi or Katti ; 17. Balla ; 18. Jhala Makvana ; 19. Jaitva or Kamari ; 20. Gohil ; 21. Sarviya ; 22. Silar or Sular ; 23. Devi or Davi ; 24. Gar or Goud ; 25. Dar, Doda and Dodha ; 26. Dharobal (Garhwal) or Geharvar (Budela) ; 27. Bir Gujar or Badh Gujar ; 28. Sengar ; 29. Sikarwal ; 30. Baees or Bais ; 31. Dahima ; 32. Johiya ; 33. Mohil ; 34. Nikump ; 35. Rajpal ; and 36. Dohima.

According to a Karnataka saying, there was no community or gotra before the advent of Kurba community's gotra, came into vogue after its birth.

Ahir, Gadariya and Gujjar are classified as one in North India. Many proverbs are current :

(1) Ahir, Gadariya, Gujjar

The three are one

(2) Ahir, Gadariya, Gujjar, Gwala

All four are one.

Gaderi of Bengal, Ghosi of Bhopal, Gangajali of Bihar, Bharwad and Rabari of Rajasthan and Gujarat denote the meaning of cattle grazers. The Meshpal society is called by various names in different States. Following is the list of the names by which they are called:

<i>Name of State or Area</i>	<i>Name of Caste or sub-caste</i>
1. Uttar Pradesh	Pal, Palkshatriya, Baghel, Baghela, Dhangar, Nikhar, Gadariya, Gawal, Gwala, Maratha.
2. Haryana and Punjab	Pal, Rajpal, Marhatta, Gadariya
3. Bihar	Pal, Gadar, Rajpal, Gadariya, Bhedwar, Gangajali, Bhagat.
4. Rajasthan	Pal, Gadariya, Rewadi, Banjara, Bhaghela, Bharwad.
5. Maharashtra	Dhangar, Khutekar, Hatkar, Hatgar, Banjara, Waghle, Gwala, Maratha.
6. Madhya Pradesh	Dhangar, Baghel, Gadariya, Ghosi, Neekhar, Pal, Baghela, Ahir, Yadav, Gval, Gvali, Bharud.
7. Mysore	Kurba, Dhangar
8. Bengal	Gaderi, Pal, Haldhar
9. Himachal Pradesh	Gaddi, Pal.
10. Orissa	Orawan, Oraon, Kurkh, Saile, Agrayya.
11. Madras	Kurumba.
12. Gujarat	Rabari, Bharud

## MIGRATION

Scholars hold different views about their migration, just as some think that Aryans originated from Central Asia while others believe that India is their original home. Gandhar is known as land of Sheep grazers. The Dhangars and Nikhars of Uttar Pradesh, a branch of Maharashtra shepherds, travelled through Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi to far-flung areas with their cattle. Another branch went towards Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and a third towards Bengal and Orissa. Some tribals went from Uttar Pradesh to Bihar while others to Haryana and Punjab.

Some anthropologists are of the view that this society is older than the Aryan residents of India. Risley says they belonged to the Dravidian group. The Gaddi tribe, however, belong to the Aryan race. Similarly the ancestors of North Indians were also Aryans or a mixed blood of Aryan and Dravidian. Being in jungles they became black but in physical features they resemble Aryans. Infact, there is no pure race in the world. There has been a mixture of blood by way of inter-caste and inter-tribe marriages.

Bharwars are the residents of Gujarat. A folk-tale classifies Bharwars as belonging to the community of Mahars; Krishna's father Nanda, was of this caste. It is also an accepted fact that they went from Gokul-Brindavan near Mathura and settled there. Some scholars are of the view that these people went from Mewar to Gujarat, Kathiawar and Kutch. It is surprising that while they move with Rabari society they have no matrimonial links.<sup>1</sup>

The Gaddis of Himachal hail from Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh or Bengal. As many Rajputs were being deprived of their sacred thread and were being persecuted in Aurangzeb's reign, they took refuge in the hills. There was no other vocation except rearing cattle, sheep and goats. Hence they took to this profession. In course of time they emerged as a caste.

1. Tribes and castes of Bombay : Vol. I : Page 118.

## CHAPTER II

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### ABORIGINAL SHEPHERDS

J. H. Hutton has classified the Indian races in six categories : (1) Negrito (2) Proto-Australoid (3) Mediterranean (4) Alpine (5) Mangoloid and (6) Indo-Aryan.

Negritos have migrated from a Pacific island. Yellow in complexion, they have curly black hair. They have mostly settled down in Assam, Andaman, Nicobar, Malabar and Burma.

Proto-Australoid live in Palaestine. They are Dravidian aborigines. Their colour varies between chocolate and black. They are the dwellers of Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean regions who have given birth to Mohenjodaro and Indus Civilization. Alpines are said to be the admixture of Mangols and Dravidians. They spread their civilization around 3,000 B.C. They came to India through the Pamir Plateau.

Mangloid belong to Mangol tribe who migrated to Bengal and Assam and settled down there. The Indo-Aryans made North India their home. They settled in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and gradually mingling with other cultures, spread to South and East India.

Risley has accepted three main castes. Dravidian and an admixture of Indo-Aryans are found in many parts, and the mingling of the two forms—the third in some areas. Geographical conditions, in fact, greatly influence human life. The atmosphere gives rise to many necessities. Food clothing occupation, essentials of life, travel, communication, habits and customs are all dependent on the environment. It is clear that nature surroundings and climate influence human behaviour and conduct.

As one makes a study of the shepherd society, on the basis of the above theories, one is driven to two classifications, namely,

Nordic or Indo-Aryan and Proto Australoid. Some believe that those of the first category have settled in North India and the second in South. This theory does not, however, seem plausible; the relative occupation, activities and economic condition of the two are identical. Hence one has to accept that the ancestors were common. A majority of them are found in North, Central and Western India. Their physical build, features etc. closely resemble Nordic or Indo-Aryans. Those who went to the South have been absorbed by the Dravidian culture though not fundamentally. Hence the ancestors of all were Dhangars who like the pre-historic societies lived in jungles and hills and led the life of sheep and goat grazers.

### VEDIC PERIOD

The age of hunting came to an end. Man began to pay more attention to cattle wealth. Cows joined the company of goats and sheep. The dwellers of jungle began to settle at one place. Villages gradually sprang up and an orderly life emerged.

It was in this period that shearing of wool started. It was spun on spindles. There was a new enlightenment; a shepherd was seen weaving. Others looked at him in wonder while he was engrossed in his work. Ultimately, a small blanket was ready. That is said to be the birth of the art of cloth making.

Apart from jungle fruits, cultivable land was available. Later, the utility of the fruit trees was discovered. It was in this period that the *Vedic Mantras* were composed. *Rig Veda* is a composition of these times. Gradually other Vedas came into existence. Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda, saw the light of day. The Ashram stage began. Life was divided into four stages—*Brahamacharya*, *Garhastha*, *Vanaprastha* and *Sanyasa*. The stages laid down the conduct of life but the family system had not yet emerged. Social scientists believe there was neither the institution of family nor its firm functions. It was a permissive society and a woman could have relations with several males. Once when someone took his mother for sexual entertainment, Svetketu was very angry with his father. The father said : 'Son, cows and women are similar.' Svetketu did not like this and since then he announced monogamy as a general rule. This practice became prevalent in the whole society. *Niyog* (sex relation with husband's permission

for bearing children) lingered for a while but the healthy concept of family led to the progress of society.

## MIDDLE AGES

Civilization was definitely emerging from the narrow walls which surrounded it in Middle ages and was laying foundations for the modern world. Men began to be conscious of their rights and duties. New inventions were made. Vedic culture broke its embankments to flood foreign lands. The relationship of the ruler and ruled was established. The society had leaders of different classes. India became a Republic in the true sense of the term. The decisions of panchayats had become binding. If there were any shortcomings in the ruler he was deposed by the subjects. This was the golden era of Middle Ages.

This age could not last long. The orthodox pundits began to exploit the rites and rituals. Varna system got spoiled. Hitherto one could opt into any Varna as per his aptitude but this was not liked by selfish Brahmins. Thus, the caste system was born. An Individual was called a *Brahmin* or a *Sudra*, birth being the sole criterion.

Castes led to sub-castes. Inter-caste matrimony and dining ceased. Brother was separated from brother by caste just because the two were found to pursue different avocations. If ever a Brahmin unconsciously took water offered by a *chandal* (meanial), he was ex-communicated. His family became *shudras*. Similar was the miserable condition of *Kshatriyas* and others. For trivial matters, they were sent out of the fold and deprived of their occupation.

The evils of caste system become evident. The sub-castes were further fragmented into more sub-sects, each becoming a water-tight compartment. Inter-class dining and matrimony was taboo. India became a nation of slaves. Child and incompatible marriages, superstition and blind belief, were rampant.

It must, however, be stated that despite disparities and conversion of faith, many sub-castes kept alive the culture, tradition of their original caste in some form or another. The Meos and Ranghad Rajputs among Muslims still observe many Hindu rites.

Social sanction and communal panchayats arbitrariness was the order of the day. The panchayats were riddled with flaws. The

foundations of British imperialism were laid. They exploited the internal differences and adopted the policy of 'Divide and Rule'.

Times changed. English became the State language. The whole country was unified through the medium of this foreign language. There was general resentment against foreign rule and the struggle for freedom began. A new Hindu society *sans* untouchability emerged. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand gave a new turn to society. Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the national scene. He raised his voice against the caste system and started a movement for the uplift of depressed classes.

### **SHEEP—A Philosophy of Life:**

The word *Mesh* is significant from many aspects. There are references to it in vedic literature—Astrology, Puranas and other works in some form or the other. There are prayers in Rig Veda : "Oh God ! May we prosper in sheep and cattle. We do not kill anyone but lead a free life in the jungles and graze our cattle reciting mantras."

*Mesh* is given the foremost place in Astrology. And it takes precedence among the 12 *Rashis*. The Panchangs (almanac) carry the picture of the sheep. It has an honoured role in arriving at conclusions. Vedas<sup>1</sup> record that scholars wore woollen garments knit by themselves. In the Rig Veda period Rishis kept goats and sheep in their Ashrams which their disciples grazed. According to Rigveda<sup>2</sup>, the Rishis and Scholars wore woollen garments and used them.

The sheep have provided many Indian proverbs. We hear of : (sheep manoeuvre, gentle as a lamb, an absolute lamb, etc. In fact, the way nature has made them simple and gentle, evokes human sympathy and pity. Any one who comes across a lambkin is tempted to cradle it in the arms. Collective unity, successful leadership, adherence to a principle are symbolised by a flock of sheep. How one wishes that man had imbibed some of the virtues of this simple animal.

The word *Kuri* meaning Sheep in the Kannada language, also connotes knowledge. One propagating knowledge is called Kurba

1. Yajurveda—19-80.

2. Rigveda —10-26.

i.e. Shepherd. From this point of view seep is the embodiment of knowledge and gives birth to a new philosophy. It is possible that among its grazers were scholars who composed the Upanishads and the Shastras. There is no doubt that the practice of rearing cattle was prevalent in the Ashrams and this ancient animal was popular among Aryans.

The sanctity attached to this animal is found not only in the ancient Hindu Scripture but also in the *Bible* and the *Koran*. Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammed had a genuine love for sheep. Sheep figure in their teachings and parables. The Buddha too greatly loved sheep. The Buddha was not a shepherd but was greatly impressed with the simple life. Jesus Christ called himself a good shepherd. Lord Krishna of Yadu dynasty also comes in this class of shepherds. As a boy he had grazed cattle. Sheep have their economic value too. For instance : (1) It gives us milk from which, butter, ghee are made. (2) Clothings are made from its wool. If there were no seep it would be difficult to live through the winter. (3) Sheep's urine has medicinal value. (4) Naturopaths believe that by sleeping amidst sheep tuberculosis can be cured. (5) The hide of dead sheep is put to many uses. Today, the poor sheep and goats become an indispensable source of food for meat eaters.

It has been noticed that if footwear or boots are kept in an inverted way in the ears of sheep, it will not move. The sheep has become a popular animal because of its many qualities. Our Government has appreciated its utility. By importing top class sheep from Australia, efforts are being made to overcome wool shortage.

During our survey on the popularity of the profession, an 80-year-old villager said with considerable emotion that the majority of shepherd youth looked upon this profession as below their dignity. Not only this but also the weaving of blankets. In fact, it is a pitiable state. The reason is that men of other societies have acquired a sway on their paternal profession. Dhariwal, Jamnagar, and other places have woollen mills where men of this society are hardly found.

There is a need to revive this industry. The jungles should be allotted to those who want to take up this profession or who are already in this profession. One should think of goat, the cousin of sheep. Its milk is not only of top class but highly nutritive.



There are glowing references to its rich qualities in Ayurveda. Hence, Mahatma Gandhi took its milk throughout his life. The goat also is a lovable creature but is cleverer than the sheep. The sheep is really an embodiment of simplicity, gentleness, non-violence, strength and absence of hatred. It is a philosophy by itself.

## CHAPTER III

### SOCIAL STRUCTURE

#### North India

The social set up in North India bears a close resemblance to that of Aryans. The father is the head of the family and its bread winner. The wife is considered the lady of the house and assumes the entire responsibility of running the household. The children, till they became eligible for marriage, depend on the father's income. There is a long list of relations and dependants. All these are known by different terms. The paternal side relatives are *Chacha*, *Tau*, *Baba* and paternal cousins and the maternal ones are *Mama*, *Nana*, and maternal cousins. The paternal and maternal aunts too had their due place. Similarly the women are addressed by different names.

Joint family system is on the wane. In the past, there was a common kitchen for members of a family upto the third generation but now as soon as a boy is married, he thinks of setting up a new home. Girls are hardly able to adjust themselves with their mother-in-law or sisters-in-law. Hence for the sake of domestic bliss, families are breaking up. Social scientists feel that the gradual disappearance of joint families is because of the spirit of dominance; industrialisation has also led to smaller families. Educated youth do not like to keep their wives with parents when they go for employment. Patriarchal and monogamic systems are prevalent in North India. Widow re-marriage is not considered bad. In some cases, an elder brother's widow is re-married to a younger one. Not unoften such unnatural union results in divorce though judicial separations are negligible in this society.

There has been considerable improvements in the status of women after the attainment of independence. But the Gaddi women despite being an embodiment of beauty are a cursed lot.

They have to work in the fields. The men in comparison do not put in half the industry. Hence they grow old prematurely. Women in villages have to work so hard that they fall a prey to so many misfortunes and sacrifice themselves at the altar of society. The one who steps into the house as a bride becomes a victim of struggle, strife and negligence.

### **Central India**

Indore in Central India and Maharashtra are taken to belong to the Dhangar belt. Theirs is a patriarchial and monogamic pattern of Society but their marriage customs vary and are nearer to south India. Marriage between maternal uncle and niece are prevalent—an inheritance from Dravidian culture.

The master of the house is the father and mother is the lady of the house. The women, like their counterparts in North India are dependent but those under the influence of royal household are objects of veneration, true to the saying that "where woman is worshipped, Gods dwell". May be the women are object of worship because of the valour of Ahilyabai.

The society is divided into two sects in Central India. (1) Dhangars of Indore under royal patronage and (2) The average Dhangar of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

One hears that the Dhangars enjoying the royal patronage consider themselves superior to the other Dhangars. They do not think it worthwhile to help others. The writer has received many letters wherein the Royal Dhangars are described as arrogant. It is possible that princely surroundings have made them forget their bretheren but this is not true of everyone.

### **South India**

The social pattern of South India being mingled with Dravidian culture, matriarchal influence is paramount. In Kurba society, however, the father is the head of the family and mother runs the home. Here one is named after the father or the village, hence the names are long. The caste is generally not associated with the name.

The condition of joint families is as bad as elsewhere. Women, compared to other regions, are better placed. Marriage between maternal uncle and niece has social sanction and is performed with due enthusiasm. Many Kurbas were surprised when told

that such marriage are not considered good and one never dream of such alliance in North India because a niece is akin to a daughter. They feel that such alliances contribute to harmony.

The customs change further in Madras (Tamil Nadu) and Kerala. Their social set-up is entirely different from that of North India. Just as their customs are strange to us, so are ours to them.

### THE NORTH INDIAN SHEPHERDS (PAL, DHANGAR, BAGHEL, GADARIYA)

India is a land of diversities, yet there is unity. There are different customs, traditions and languages even in one state. A discernible change is noticed in pronunciation after every five miles. Though Hindi is the language of the populace, there are different dialects and pronunciations.

Jungles being predominant in North India, the shepherd community settled down in large number. They reared sheep and goats while some were engaged in agriculture. There was considerable income in the profession. The agriculturist took loans from them when required. This society was then doubtless prosperous and cheerful. Their wants were few and life was simple and peaceful. They were free from mental stresses and strains. How delightful must have been their lives!

Gradually, the jungles were cleared. Many agricultural farms sprang up. The crops encroached on the meadows meant for goats and sheep and made it impossible for them to dwell in the villages. Consequently, the Pals were driven to make the jungles their habitat and they pitched their tents in backward areas. A majority left the avocation and took to dairy farming, weaving of blankets and agriculture. The youth and the educated have come to look upon this hereditary profession with contempt.

### **The People**

This society is called in North India as Pal, Pal Kshatriya, Rajpal, Beghel, Gadariya and Pali. Dhangar and Nikhar are the two principal wings of this society and are called by the above-mentioned names. In Bihar they are called Gangajali, Bhediha and Gaderi and speak Hindi or local dialects.

As I have already mentioned, they are found from Saharanpur district to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. They have their pockets in Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Their colour

and features are those of Aryans but because of the mixture of Dravidian blood, those of darker complexion are also found. It is natural to be dark because of exposure to sun and inclement weather.

### **Marriage and other Customs**

They follow the patriarchal system and practise monogamy. The father is the head of the family. Barring two or three gotras, there are inter-marriages according to the Hindu marriage custom. Though there is a laxity, the gotras of parents are avoided. Child marriages are still prevalent in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and the backward areas of Bihar. The writer received an invitation from a pleader of this community for the wedding of his 13 year girl with a 16 year High School student. If this is the state of affairs among the educated, the condition among illiterates could easily be guessed. In certain areas of Delhi, Punjab and Western Uttar Pradesh, child marriages are being condemned but in distant rural areas, there is very little change.

Barring Aligarh, Agra, Farrukhabad, Mainpuri and some other districts, dowry is not much prevalent, but the evil influence of this custom has gradually gripped the whole society. Sums ranging from Rs. 51 to Rs. 10001 are offered at engagement and allied occasions. At places, the figure is further increased. In some areas, cash and gifts constitute the ceremony. It is surprising to observe that 11 to 51 pairs of clothes are offered to the bridegroom in Saharanpur, Muzzafurnagar and Agra districts while in Meerut, Kanpur and Allahabad districts this custom has no special significance. Similarly, the custom of *Bhat* (dowry to be given by the brother to the sisters) is prevalent in different forms. Besides several pairs of clothes, a brother offers to the sister on the occasion of her daughter's or son's marriage cash gifts ranging between Rs. 11 and Rs. 51 or more, Rs. 11 and Rs. 301 or more and a similar number of utensils. This custom takes a different shape to the east of Moradabad, at Kanpur, Allahabad and other regions. Here the brother brings only one pair of clothes for each i.e. for his sister, brother-in-law and children. It may surprise some that a sister offers sugar candy to the brother on the occasion and also gives a rupee. This practice is found nowhere in western Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. There, a brother's offering is proportionate to his prosperity. There are some common

customs too in the society. For example, the marriage party goes from the groom's side and no women are generally allowed to join the marriage party except in a few stray cases in some big cities. The practice of *Ata-Sata* (marriage by exchange) was prevalent in several places but it is almost extinct now a days. The priest officiates in the marriage ceremony. *Sapt Padi* and *Bhanwar* are performed as per Hindu custom. The family deity is worshipped. The *barat* generally leaves on third day, but the system, as in cities, is changing. Now the *barat* leaves on the second day and the same day in big cities. Economic condition is the main reason. Like other high-class communities, this society also spends lavishly on marriages and offers dowry according to social status.

The bride has to observe several kinds of social customs. The practice of untying of *Kangan* and *Chadi mar* (tapping each other lightly with a cane—perhaps indicative of equal rights) are prevalent. One, however, is surprised that in some areas of Hamirpur (Uttar Pradesh) on the bride reaching the husband's house, the couple are made to sit out and a piglet is shown around in the motion of *Arti*. They believe that, the pair become immune to the evil effects of spirits. At places, sacrifice of hen is performed. This custom is not found anywhere else.

In Madhya Pradesh some marriage customs differ from those of Uttar Pradesh. For example, at the time of wedding, the bride is brought by the husband of the bride's father's sister to the *Vedi*, but in Uttar Pradesh it is the bride's mother's sister who performs the rite. Again, while in Madhya Pradesh turmeric mixed rice is sprinkled by the groom on the bride and vice versa, it is not the same in Uttar Pradesh. The custom of worshipping the feet is common in Gwalior when the members of the family offer the groom from Re. 1 to Rs. 10. Each member of the bridegroom's party get one or more rupee. *Tika* is performed by the bride's father or maternal uncle—a custom not prevalent in western Uttar Pradesh.

Another interesting practice is that the maternal uncle has to touch the niece's feet—a custom prevalent among the Gaddi tribe, sub castes of Rajputs and Vaishyas too.

### Other Customs

There are two other unique customs among Madhya Pradesh shepherds. On the 15th day of a child's birth, there is a ceremony called Chowk where the maternal uncle presents clothes to the child, his sister and sister's husband. If an elder brother visits his younger sister, he offers a certain amount for the food he takes in her house. On the 13th day of one's death, the deceased's son and daughter-in-law are made to stand in the midst of relatives and go around seven times with a knot in their attire uttering "Oh God, give us bread."

*Bura* (powdered jaggery) is not taken anywhere in western Uttar Pradesh, but I learnt on my visit to Agra that the son-in-law takes it to his parents-in-law's house during the month of Sawan where it is eaten by all and the son-in-law gets some money for it. This custom is in vogue in some areas of Mathura, Bullandshahr and Aligarh. In Muzzaffarnagar, Saharanpur and Bijnor districts, a brother visits his sister on the occasion of *Bhai Duj* and makes gifts while in Meerut, Delhi and other places it is the other way round.

A venerable old man of Jalun of Uttar Pradesh told that 20 years ago, it was not considered good for women to wear golden jewellery and only silver ornaments were worn. Today, however, wearing of silver and gold ornaments has become common.

### Religion and Magic

This society practises Hinduism and worships all the deities, Ram, Krishna, Shiva, Vishnu, Hanuman, Kali, Chandi and Lakshmi with due reverence. The social, family and village deities are worshipped on certain occasions. Villages being engulfed in ignorance, there is considerable belief in black magic and witchcraft. The witch doctor is generally summoned for treating the after-effects of sorcery. They tend cattle, goats and sheep and do various kinds of pujas to ward off evils. *Shradh* is performed for the dead. Bathing at sacred places and worship at temples are the other practices in common with the Hindu society. Thanks to the influence of Arya Smaj, blind faith is on the decline. Education too has contributed in a large measure to dispelling blind faith. Some wear sacred thread (*yagyopavit*) too. Though the majority are vegetarians, at places meat eating and use of alcohol is not uncommon. It is said people used to drink on

the occasion of deaths in this community at Allahabad. People would drink before taking the corpse for cremation. May be such customs are remanants of the past. Such practices are not heard of any whereelse.

In Gwalior, another deity—*Jakh* is worshipped on Raksha Bandhan. The puja is performed with bushes, trees and leaves. It is believed that a goat was saved from falling into a river by a bush. There were some other trees which could have saved her. Hence, the tree is accepted as a protector. It is surprising that none is aware of it in Karnal or Agra or Aligarh.

Trees are worshipped by scheduled tribes as they are considered to be protectors and saviours. There are certain taboos, too. The worshipping of *Jakh* deity is a proof of old tribal custom. The shepherd community to escape from evil effects light up a *Langari* during Diwali and Holi festivals. For this religious ceremony, lights are made out of flour and pure ghee is poured in. Later, they are waved as *arti* on sheep and goats and then kept on the bank of a river. This ceremony, it is believed, keeps the cattle healthy. After Diwali, Govardhan (worship of cows) is performed with great enthusiasm.

Dussehra is the popular festival of the society. Arms are worshipped on Vijayadashmi day. They wear new clothes before lighting up the effigy of Ravana. Wooden sticks (*Lathis*) iron weapons and domestic goods are kept in the courtyard. This mode of worship is an indication that this society is a wing of Kshatriyas. In Haryana and Rajasthan a bridegroom carries a sword or knife—a custom that speaks of Kshatriya association.

Raksha Bandhan, Ram Naumi, Karva Chauth, Janamashtami and other festivals are observed as in other Hindu sects. Satyanarayana puja too is performed. The society believes in Kirtan, puja and rituals for warding of evils.

### Funeral Ceremonies

A bath is taken after cremating the dead. On the fourth day of cremation the bones are collected and consigned at Hardwar or Allahabad in the Ganga. A 13-day mourning is observed. On the 13th day, all relations and friends gather and after community feeding disperse. My survey reveals that about 20 years ago hundreds used to gather on the 13th day and stayed on for two or three days, thus burdening the deceased's family with the task



of feeding them. Now, there is a social consciousness in this respect though the custom exists in some form on the other in backward areas.

### Gotra System

The Gotras of Dhangars and Nikhars are the same among Pal-Baghels. For example, Chauhan, Parihar, Sisodiya, Chandel, Bhadoriya, Solanki, etc. Hence, as one turns attention on the origin of the gotras, one finds two types—Rishi gotra and Kul gotra.

Scholars believe that Rishi Gotra is named after the *Rishis* in whose ashrams they had their education. For instance, Bhardwaj, Gautam, etc. Students of all communities studied in the Ashrams. Later, these students had gotras associated with their *gurus*. The Rishi laid down several subjects for the study of Vedas. And these subjects formed the basis of *gotras*. The student who studied a particular branch came to be known by that and declared himself by the *gotra* of that Rishi. This practice has been followed by generations. Today, many do not know their *rishi gotra*, but mention *community gotras* during marriages. In royal families it is called community gotras and these are numerically large. These gotras are based on place, qualities and profession. For instance, those who hailed from Sisodh called themselves Sisodhiyas and those from Baiswada as Bais.

Comparison with other gotras reveal that 80 per cent of them are similar to Kshatriyas though 15 per cent resemble those of Brahmins, Vaishs and backward classes. It appears that the gotras who practice these professions lost their identity though they retained their family gotras.

There is an interesting folk tale on the question of similarity between Dhangars and Nikhars. A wealthy man in the shepherd community had so many sheep and goats that they literally raised money for him. Like all wealthy men he was infatuated by a beauty and got entangled. The community protested vainly. Eventually, she was annexed to the community and called Kareva. The progeny through marriage and Kareva was called Dhangars and Nikhars. The father was common but mothers were different. What is surprising is that no one knows whether Nikhars or Dhangars were off spring through married wives. All this, in fact, seems to be an imaginary story.

Another version is that two brothers of this sect lived in a village. They loved each other dearly and had a joint family for some time. Later, there were differences on the division of property. Their wives were the root cause of the differences. Eventually, they split and began to call each other names like Ochara—an abusive word. Some one once asked : “If your elder brother is Ochara what would you be?” The younger brother at once said: “What am I? I am a Nikhara. Don’t you see how neat and clean my wife keeps the house.” Whatever be the substance in these tales, it is clear that Dhangar and Nikhar belong to the same family. It is not proper to treat them as different castes.

In fact when Shankaracharya purified the Buddhist-Dhangars many Dhangars called themselves Nikhar or were purified and many Dhangars used this word. Hence from this point of view every Dhangar (Cattle rearer) is Nikhar (purified) and every Nikhar is Dhangar. It looks strange that in the past there were no matrimonial alliances between these two groups although they would dine and smoke together. But it is heartening that now with the spread of education and the exigencies of time they have united again and there are matrimonial ties.

### **Social and Economic Status**

The paucity of jungles has made this community give up their paternal avocation. Some families maintain sheep and goats while a majority sell milk, engage themselves in agriculture, labour and other employment. It is said that the Baghels of Agra are experts in masonry. A mason, named Champaram has made a significant contribution in the building of Taj Mahal. This community has not made any further progress in this art. The educated people are doctors, teachers and engineers, or in other profession. The economic condition of the majority is unsatisfactory, and the villages are in a deplorable state. The number of labourers too has increased. Poverty, disease and unemployment have gripped them. They neither get governmental protection nor social security. They have failed to make a mark in politics or earn a place in society. Their co-sect of Ahirs have made considerable progress. There are many members of Parliament belonging to Ahir community while the shepherd community of North has (at the time of writing this book) no legislator.

The shepherds are bracketed with Ahirs socially. Barring the upper classes like Brahmins, Rajput and Vaishns, Ahirs do not practise untouchability, but treat the shepherds as inferiors. The shepherds considered themselves superiors to the potters, Kahars, and gardeners in the social hierarchy. The community is economically poorer—compared to backward classes. Yet they are patriotic. There is no dearth of service and sacrifice. Many youth have joined the army and are engaged in serving the nation. This community also took part in the freedom struggle and several of its youth courted imprisonment.

### DHANGARS OF INDORE AND MAHARASHTRA

Dhangar is an ancient word which can be found engraved in Buddhists' caves in Poona. There are different views of scholars about this community. Sir Risely believes that they hail from Sithia branch of Dravidians whereas German scholars feel that they are pre-Aryan tribes, who gave protection to Aryans. And they have made significant contribution to Aryan and Aryan cultures. My own view is that just as many Kshatriyas who reared sheep and goats were called Gadriyas, similarly the Kshatriyas of Maharashtra by adopting this profession became members of the larger family of Dhangars. This community got amalgamated with Aryans in North India and the Dravidians in the South. It played a major role in the spread of the composite culture. In fact, the Dhangars must have originally hailed from Madhya Pradesh or Maharashtra and spread all over India. They are considered lower Kshatriyas in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Many feel that they were Dhusuanta tribe who are called Kshatriyas. The exemplary courage and valour of Ahilyabai and Malharrao Holkar has given them the status of Rajputs. Earlier, these rulers were also considered of low castes.

### **Habitation and Occupation**

Dhangars are spread over the whole of Maharashtra and Indore in Madhya Pradesh. Their physical stature is attractive. One finds both dark and fair complexioned people. In South, the people are dark because of inter-mingling with the Dravidians. Their main occupation is blanket weaving, rearing sheep, goats, cattle and running *Astabal*. Now they attained a higher status because of the spread of education. Their cows were of high milk

yielding variety in the part. The oxen of the Gujarati Dhangar (Rabari sect) were considered very strong. The paucity of grazing places is affecting the profession of cattle grazers and they have begun taking to other occupations.

The length of their houses in rural areas is comparatively more than others. Windows are practically not seen. Their standard of living is simple or like middle class people. A Dhangar's attire is a turban, a blanket across the shoulders, chappal or rural footwear and a wooden stick. The Dhangars in Maharashtra rear goats in large numbers whereas in Rajasthan Bharwars rear.

### Sub Castes

There are four types of Dhangars : (1) Asal Dhangar, (2) Hatkar (Bargir Dhangar) or Bhalaiat, (3) Ahir and (4) Khilakari.

A famous Dhangar scholar of Maharashtra, Mr. Shankar Baburao Lande, mentions 35 sub-castes in his paper (1) Ahir, (2) Asal, (3) Vanuji, (4) Bargeband or Medkari (Barge), (5) Dange or Dunge, (6) Gadge, (7) Gavali, (8) Ghogtunya, (9) Hatkar or Jhendeval, (10) Holkar, (11) Kangar, (12) Khellari or Thillari, (13) Khilkari, (14) Khuetkar or Khute, (15) Kuketkar, (16) Lad, (17) Mendhe, (18) Mahske or Mahskar, (19) Sanger or Sanagar, (20) Shegar, (21) Shikotya, (22) Utegan, (23) Kuche, (24) Tiramule, (25) Varadi or Borade, (26) Kanore or Kande, (27) Jade, (28) Landse, (29) Gadra, (30) Telange, (31) Maratha, (32) Mahurai, (33) Barge, (34) Langote, (35) Vaiddu Dhangar.

Some people don't include all these castes in Dhangars. They believe that only grazers belong to it and not those associated with butchery.

One Indologist believe that the off-spring of a low caste father and Mahisya mother belong to this community. Children born of a Kshatriya father and a Vaish mother are called Mahisya. Some believe they are the progeny of Tap Rishi, or that the community is born of Lord Shiva.

According to a Maharashtrian folktale the sheep and goat come out from their habitat into the fields following the entry of a snake in their habitat. The farmers were worried. They approached Lord Shiva with the request that the cattle should be withdrawn from the field. Lord Shiva said that being a part of

creation they had every right but he would create the Dhangar community to look after them and protect the fields.

Another story has it that the Dhangars were created by the Khandova deity. He instructed them to look after sheep and goats. Dhangars consider Khandva as the supreme deity. Though they eat together, there are no inter-marriages. Thanks to the spread of literacy, alliances are being made. All these sub-sects call themselves Dhangars.

### **Marriage and other Customs**

The Dhangar's is a patriarchal society practising monogamy. The father is the head of the family but as one goes southward, matriarchal influence is dominant. Marriages between maternal uncle and niece are prevalent and the marriage customs bears a close similarity with those in the South. Among Dhangars of Maharashtra and Indore, the marriageable age for men is between 14 and 25 while it is between 6 and 14 for women. Child marriages were very common in the past but now-a-days they are on the decline. Brahmins fix the auspicious movement for marriage. And if a Brahmin is not readily available, they have alternate arrangements. Three couples are made to sit outside the house. A goat or sheep is let loose. If it goes on their right side, it is considered auspicious but if it goes to the left, they wait for an hour or two and do it all over again.

The people of other castes prepare bow and arrow of Mandva Dhangars. The lower proportion of a grind stone is placed in a cane basket (used for separating husk) when the marriage ceremony is performed. The groom is made to stand in it. On all four sides branches of a particular tree are placed. The bride and groom are made to stand and a cloth is spread. Widow marriage is prevalent among Dhangars like other non-Brahmin communities.

### **Religious Beliefs**

The Dhangars have full faith in all the Hindu deities. Shaiv and Bhagwat are the two branches of their religion. They worship Bitthal, Mahadeo, Khandoba, Viroba, Bhairoba, Maruti, Shani, Satbai, Jokhai and other deities. Though these people are vegetarians by nature they use liquor and meat occasionally.

Khandoba is their main deity, though the deity is worshipped by Brahmins and other communities as well. How the Kandoba is an object of worship of other communities, is worthy of research.

### **Badhya-Murli**

The worship of this deity led to the Devdasi system among the Dhangars. Childless parents vow to this deity that if they beget children, they will dedicate them to the deity. Hence if a boy is born, he is called Badhya and a girl Murli. The girl, Murli is married to the deity, Khandoba. She spends her life begging for alms. Later, her condition became as pitiable as that of Buddhist Bhikshunis. Corruption set in the temples, making worship meaningless. The youth, dedicated to the deity, too had become morally tainted.

The life of the dedicated youth resembled the Kundbi community. Murali applied turmeric powder on the forehead and wore a rosary. Some are still found in Jaijuri who with Badhyas frequent Maharashtra villages, singing hymns and collecting alms. It is strange that Marathas and lower caste people treat Badhyas with respect.

Jaijuri, a town in Pune district of Maharashtra is a sacred place for Brahmins and other high castes. On a hillock, there is a temple of Malhari Martand. The deity belongs to Holkar family and Malharrao Holkar laid the temple pavements. There is Shivling and idols of tortoises. Behind the Shivling is an idol of Mahakasa Kant whom the people call Khandoba, The Khandoba is a reincarnation of Shiva, it is believed. It is said that there was a colony of Mani Mallzra Asuras near the valley. As they oppressed the Aryans, Lord Shiva reincarnated as Mallahas astride a horse and destroyed them. Hence, not only Dhangars but others too felt grateful for this deliverance. This place is visited by married couples. There is also a temple of horse which is visited by many in a spirit of reverence.

### **Socio-Economic Status**

According to Scholars the Socio-Economic Status in 18th century was very low. They had neither the right to wear the sacred thread nor could they move on terms of equality with

others. Malharrao Holkar and Ahilyabai too were considered inferior but when they exhibited their valour and courage and protected the Hindu society they were declared Kshatriyas—though of an inferior class.

The economic condition too was not very good. The people who reared sheep and goats in large numbers and dealt in blankets, became prosperous to some extent. Lack of education resulted in their being denied high places in administration and politics. Now with the spread of literacy, many people are going abroad. The Dhangars, who enjoyed royal patronage, are economically better off than others. Yet, the overall picture is depressing.

### **Dhangar Army**

The Dhangars raised their army when Aurangzeb invaded Maharashtra. Malharrao Holkar was the first to form the Dhangar Army and a cavalry. General Tukojirao Holkar (I) was the first Dhangar who hoisted the Maratha banner in Attock. The Dhangar army under the leadership of Yeshwant Rao Holkar had a stiff fight against the British and Mukandra and Bharatpur. The British reputation suffered a severe jolt and hence hundreds of Dhangars were hanged in Barar. This very Holkar Dynasty started the revolt against the British before 1857. Doubtless, the service and sacrifice of Dhangars is in no way less than those of others. They had been a martial race. Prof. Malhotra of Deccan College, Pune, in his studies has proved that this community had made spears and shields in ancient days. The eminent sociologist, Dr. Iravati Karve began research on this community but she passed away without completing the task. Dr. Malhotra is making efforts in this direction. Reproduced below is an extract about his report.

“Dr Malhotra of Deccan College has found four habitations of 40,000 or 50,000 years ago in Dhavalpuri village of Ahmednagar district. Skilled workmen of pre-historic age produced various tools in their factory and visited numerous places with the intention of selling. The Dhangars of Dhavalpuri did not dwell in caves. The huge caves in the nearby hills do not indicate any human habitation.

"The Dhangars of Dhavalpuri apart from boring holes and chiseling, made many smooth and sharp weapons like arrow heads."

"The finding of pre-historic localities in Maharashtra has helped historians to make a fresh study. The Dhangars, who visited distant places, influenced hill culture, the historical evidences of Dhavalpuri are similar to those of Stone Age. On the basis of these similarities, the view that there was an independent and not foisted culture and developed area gains ground."

### KURBAS OF KARNATAKA

If one wishes to see progressive shepherds, a visit to Mysore is a must. Here one finds from the common shepherds to members of Parliament. The educationists, advocates legislators and M.Ps belonging to this community make one feel that they are a part of high-class and progressive social set-up. The writer, who had the pleasure of having long discussions with many Mysorians, was convinced that as able administrators they were taking their state towards progress and occupying high places, laying the foundations of new India. It was this society that established the Kurba Kingdom of Vijayanagar. The Kshatriya blood runs in their veins. This society does not lag behind in any sphere of activity, be it education, medicine, social welfare or defence. Despite attaining great heights, the society has not lost its basic traits. If one asks about their community, they will without the least hesitation call themselves Kurba (shepherd). This is, indeed, a proof of their self-respect and large heartedness. They have pride in their ancestral occupation.

The word Kurba, Kuraba or Kuruba is derived from the Kannada word *Kuri* which means sheep and Kurba means a shepherd. Though the State Government classified them among backward classes, they have by their unique wisdom fine organizational gifts and political awareness came to occupy coveted places in the State and at the centre. The Gaddis of Himachal are rich but they are nomadic, the Pal Kshatriyas and Baghels of Uttar Pradesh wasted their energies for securing high places in the Varna system, the Dhangars of Maharashtra despite being administrators are enamoured of being called scheduled tribes but the way of life of the Kurbas of Karnataka is endearing. The Kurbas of Karnataka while they are proud of the legacy of Hukka



and Bukka of Vijayanagar, are working shoulder to shoulder with others for the national reconstruction. Let us cast a brief glance at their customs, habits and religious belief.

### **Habitation and Occupation**

The Kurba society is found in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. They are in large number in Karnataka and Kannada is their mother tongue. The educated ones know English and Hindi besides their mother tongue. Agriculture and rearing of cattle are the main occupations in the rural areas. Where there are jungles and fodder, sheep and goats are reared in good number and the industry is there on a large scale. People, as in other places, are drifting far from wool industry but wherever they have adopted this, the economic condition is good. The educated people have taken to government service, educational, medical and legal professions.

### **Social and Economic Status**

This society, compared to other sub castes elsewhere, is progressive and enlightened. In Karnataka and South India, there are three classes in Hindu society :— (1) Brahmins (2) Non-Brahmins and (3) Untouchables.

Lingayats are in pre-dominance among Brahmins while Vakkaligas and Kurbas are placed among non-Brahmins. Agriculture and rearing of cattle are their main occupations. Among other classes are Periyar and untouchables. Kurbas, though not untouchables, are reckoned by Brahmins as backward.

The Kurbas are to some extent economically sound and socially advanced but this does not mean that all the rural Kurbas are rich. In fact, they have also been exploited by other rich classes. Hence in comparison to other high classes, the Kurbas are still backward community.

It is necessary to clarify about the Vokkaligars basically agriculturists and are also called Gaur. They consider themselves higher to Kurbas though they are a wing of the society. Just as the Ahirs of Uttar Pradesh consider themselves higher to Pal community, the Vokkaligars feel they are superior to Kurbas. These differences are, however, on the decrease now-a-days.

Wadiyar, a term used for Kurba society, essentially means shepherd. He was the head of the group and took the place

of *guru*. This name was attached to the names of Mysore rulers. The Wadiyar had *Mathas*, which were supervised by *Kurba gurus*.

Some families of this society are traditional heads of the *Mathas*. There are many *mathas* connected with this society whose rightful claimant to the headship is a detached person. He leads as pious a life as a Brahmin or a preist. He performs the functions of a *guru* in religious institutions and festivals. He is respected by even communities other than *Kurbas*.

The *Kurba gurus* have been keeping alive spiritual strength. Their counsel is sought on the occasions of births, deaths and other social occasions. It is said their blessings helps one to lead a happy life. The *gurus* are of two types—married and unmarried. The married ones live with their families but do not enjoy worldly pleasures. For them society is the family. To them the sheep is as sacred as a cow. They maintain themselves and the families on the offerings made to the temples. They wear saffron coloured clothes. The unmarried *gurus* practise all through their lives and maintain themselves as laid down in the scriptures. The *gurus* are also invited in world religious conferences. In fact, it should be no exaggeration if one says they had been universal *gurus*. Many educated Pal Kshatriyas and Baghels of North India acknowledge them as their *gurus*.

### Marriage and other Customs

The *Kurba* society is patriarchal and monogamic but maternal influence is greater than in North India; farther South, Dravidian influence has created matriarchal families. Away from their Northern brethren, they have settled in predominantly Dravidian areas and have adopted their customs and traditions. As alliances between maternal uncle and niece is rampant even among Brahmins, it is not surprising that the *Kurbas* have taken to this custom. Hence even among *Kurubas* marriages between maternal uncle and niece are taking place. It is, however, to be noted that it should be the elder sister's daughter and there should not be much disparity in the ages of the two. If the boy is not sufficiently aged, the niece is married in some other families.

The system of dowry was not prevalent but now it is being demanded in cash and kind. Horoscopes are consulted for fixing

the auspicious moment of union. A third party has discussions and relations are established.

The marriage customs are different. The groom ties *mangal sootra* made of gold round the bride's neck. It is held very sacred and is regarded as a sign of wedlock. The girl is given clothes and jewellery.

Kurbas do not follow the purdah system. The bride and bridegroom take the blessings of old men present. Divorce is not in vogue. Marriage is a sacred religious custom very different from any agreement.

### Religions and Magic

Kurbas are of a religious bent of mind, moralistic and have high character. They celebrate Dussehra and Mahanavami with great enthusiasm. It is said that when Hukka and Bukka established Vijaynagar empire, the Kurba rulers began the practice of celebrating Dussehra to commemorate their victory and since then Dussehra has become popular. Arms and the deities of Durga and Kali are worshipped. Arms are worshipped in some form or the other by the *Meshpal society* on the occasion of Dussehra.

The *tantric* tradition greatly influences the society. Just as the *Gaddis* of Himachal have acquired the knowledge of black magic, similarly the Kurbas of Karnataka have magical gifts. The Kurba under *tantric* influence begins nodding his head. He is never tired and replies in trance to the questions put to him. Though a coconut is broken on the medium's head, he does not feel a wee bit. It is surprising that in an age of scientific progress, the Kurbas have so much of *tantric* power which defies logic or reason.

Cleanliness is given prominence in this religious-minded society. People prefer to go bare footed not only in villages but in towns too. They wear knee-length *dhoti* and *Kurta*. Women wear sari in the South Indian style.

It is notable that the Kurba society has two branches similar to Dhargar—Nikhar of North India. They are (1) Wool owners (2) Cotton owners. In fact, two Kurbas brothers settled down in different areas long long ago. As their children attained the age of marriage, one brother could not get in time a bangle of wool, the tying of which was customary. He had to tie a cotton bangle which offended his brother. Hence he claimed to be of a different

sect. The two are united again because of the spread of education and matrimonial alliances, are made.

There are many hostels and community centres belonging to society. They are no doubt anxious to establish contacts and strengthen ties with other Indian shepherds.

### KURAMBAS

Farther south of Karnataka, one comes across Kuramba tribe who are dark complexioned shepherds. It appears that some Dhangars of Maharashtra settled in Karnataka while some proceeded towards Tamil Nadu. They found their natural habitat in dense jungles. Hence in conditions favourable to cattle rearing, they found a way of livelihood. The word Kuramba is derived from Kurba.

It is said the Kurbas or Kurambas of the South are the oldest society. They laid the foundation of the city of Pulala. This area was known as Kurumba Nadu which means the kingdom of shepherds. The place was ruled by Raja Vir Varma and the later rulers had Varma as a part of their name. Some historians are of the view that these shepherd rulers built vessels, established factories and made coins. These coins had the picture of Kurambas. On one side there was a picture and a ship and two bullocks. This means their empire extended beyond the seas and had given preference to rearing cattle instead of sheep.

Idyar or rearers of cattle too belong to this class. They had close ties with Kurumbas and had social links. The Kurumbas social customs and traditions bear close resemblance to those of the Kurbas of Karnataka.

### BHARWADS

The word Bharwad probably emanated from Medwar, meaning the rearer of sheep. Though they have close links with the Mewars of Rajasthan their customs and traditions are different. Their main occupation is rearing of sheep and goats and cattle. These tall, strong, moustachioed men, sporting peards and wearing protective garments, take their animals for grazing to the fields and their women folk clad in woollen, carry milk-filled vessels to the market. It is the women in Bharwads that deal in milk. It is curious to see Bharwad women wearing woollen petticoats and blouses during the major part of the year. Their beauty is remi-

niscent of that of Gaddi women of Himachal. It looks as though they have inherited the beauty of the hills.

Historians feel that they emanated from Baluchistan. Their Rajput attire and way of living is a proof of the fact that their ancestors must have been rulers some time or the other. It has to be conceded that the blood of Maratha Dhangars flows in their veins.

### GOPALS

The urban people of the society are called cattle herders (Gopalans). They are generally vegetarians. They have plenty of milk in their houses. The Gopalaks occupy almost every place and look after the social needs. Their economic condition is much better compared to Rabaris.

The hand that rocked the cradle, the term associated with Krishna's mother, Yasoda is prevalent here. A guest is greatly respected and the custom of rocking the guest in a swing is in vogue. This is also found in some other communities. If you happen to have such an experience, you are bound to think of your nursery days.

### RABARIS

A red turban, knee-high dhoti, a thick shawl around the shoulders, thick growth of moustache and beard, a big staff slung on the shoulders, homemade footwear, bleating sheep are associated with a Rabari shepherd. His love for his animals is matchless—in fact, sheep and goats are his life breath. Some Rabaris are also seen keeping the company of camels.

Rabari means the master of a herd of sheep. The sheep graze in a carefree manner in the heroic land of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Though they have enough wool and milk and their economic condition is good, the profit is not proportionate.

Their customs and traditions are similar to those of other Hindu societies. They celebrate almost all the festivals. Rathore *gotra* is most common. Their womenfolk are beautiful and have Kshatriya look.

### AHIRS

Like the Marhattas of Indore who call themselves Dhangar Ahirs, the Ahirs of Maharashtra (Distt, Chalisgaon) prefer to be

known as Ahir Dhangars. In fact, Ahir is also a gotra of shepherds. In North India the Ahirs, who call themselves Yadav, were at one time a wing of this society. Meshpal is the old form of Gopal. Today many Meshpals have become Gopals. In fact, we should call them Bhainspal (Buffalo rearers) as selling of buffalo milk is the main occupation of the two. Though there are no matrimonial links, inter-dining takes place.

Some scholars believe the word 'Ahir' is the corrupt derivation of Abhir. Lexicons mention Abhir as *Guala* (Milkman) or *maha sudra*. I somehow feel that the word is the corrupt version of Arya as this caste generally follows Aryan customs, hence one can hardly understand their not being regarded Aryans.

Some consider that Ahirs are Romans. I don't agree with William Hunter's conclusion that Ahir is derived from worshippers of snake (Ahi). In fact, cow was the object of veneration of these people. Hence association with snake is baseless. For that matter Nag Panchmi is a Hindu festival and snake is worshipped in some form or the other and it is unfair to associate Ahirs alone with them.

It is believed the Ahirs originally belonged to Western Khan. From there they went to Nasik, Kutch, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab and other States. Ahirs all over India call themselves Yaduvanshi (Belonging to Yadu dynasty). Krishna was this dynasty; hence many of the customs associated with him are found in this society.

They were rulers in different regions. For example, the rulers of Ahirwad, Abhirpalli, Ahrar, Abhirghad and other old States were called Ahir Rana.

The Ahirs led a simple life. They wore coarse cloth and consumed ghee and milk. They are generally vegetarians and nutritive food has made them strong.

The womenfolk help in making fodder for the cattle, milking and allied work. This society, compared to Meshpals, has made enough progress like the Kurbas of Karnataka.

#### THE GADDIS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once remarked, the time has come for us to guard the Himalayas which have till now been guarding us.

"Though superficially well known today, the Himalayas still are little explored, and yet they offer a highly rewarding field of research. For, like all great mountain ranges they have in the course of time offered a refuge to races, cultures, religions and arts which elsewhere are forgotten, wiped out or merged beyond recognition into other social units or later forms of civilisation. Many interesting problems which confront the ethnologist, historian and archeologist, may await their solution in these valleys", wrote Hermann Goetz in his book "The early wooden Temples of Chamba".

Obviously, the life in the mountain region is hard. Every moment of life is a struggle with the elements. Yet the great difficulties of the environment have not been able to suppress the initiative and adventurous spirit of man. On the other hand, they have evoked a high degree of adaptive skill and uncommon vigour which is responsible for the self-sufficient agricultural economy of the region. The picturesque terrace fields on the slopes bear testimony to the extraordinary degree of strenuous toil and resourcefulness.

### **Perturbed Front**

The Himalayas being the perturbed front of India since the Chinese invasion, it was a national problem to study the nomadic people particularly the Gaddis of this region intensively and comprehensively. The writer had the privilege to work among them as a participant observer. One who ever had been in those difficult areas, can never forget the Brahmaur valley possessing a very narrow gorge flanked by almost perpendicular cliffs on either side of the Budhal stream which joins Ravi.

The Gaddis reside exclusively upon the snowy range which divides Chamba from Kangra. A few have vandered down into the valley which skirts the base of the Chain but the great majority lives on the heights above. They are found from an elevation of 4000 to 7000 ft above which altitude there is little or no cultivation. A large number of the tribals live in Chamba and Kangra Districts of Himachal Pradesh.

### **The People and Habitat**

The Gaddis are a semi-nomadic, semi-agricultural and semi-pastoral tribe. They pass six months in migration in search of grass and fodder for their cattle and seasonal employment for them

selves and six months in their villages, sowing and harvesting their crops.

As a race, they are very simple, fierce, stalwart and virtuous and as a whole are a very interesting tribe. Sturdily built, very often bow legged, the tribals are accustomed to enduring great hardships in any sort of weather, owing to the migratory life most of them lead. They are frank, peaceful and merry in their manners. Due to exposure to sun and rain, they have a slightly dark wheatish complexion. The women folk are pleasing and comely and have the reputation of being modest and chaste. They are bashful and courteous too.

Raja Sansar Chand II of Kangra developed a fancy for a Gaddi girl and married her. She was called a Gaddi Rani. And this event is rightly the theme of a folk song of the Gaddis.

The Gaddi was grazing his goats  
And Gaddan her cows  
Her earthen pitcher broke on the rocks  
The cows ate grass  
Raja Sansar Chand beheld it  
And the young face  
He fall in love  
And married her.

A Gaddi woman can be seen in migration carrying loads equal to that of a man. She carries the luggage on her shoulders and ties her little child to the load, holds some utensil in one hand, helps her another child with the other hand, and covers the inaccessible and impassable mountainous paths of the Himalayas. Thus, she accompanies her husband through thick and thin, sharing his trials and tribulations as a real better half.

### **Nomads in migration**

The hard life of the Gaddis can be observed while they are in migration with their flock. A shepherd carries some light utensils of aluminium and an iron pan (Tawa). He invariably keeps a *hukka* in one hand. With a *khalru* of cereals and other essential and limited articles loaded on his bank, he follows his flock. He carries his tobacco in a leather pouch. He does not have any spare cloth



with him and wears a traditional *chola* in which some newborn kids or lambs sleep.

During the journey, a shepherd cooks simple meals consisting of maize-flour bread, *masuri dal* or vegetable if available. Sometimes, salt, green chillies and raw onions fill the plate.

Since he does not keep any tent with him, he sleeps under the open sky. During inclement weather, he lies under the shade of a tree, a projecting rock or in a cave. In the absence of these, he doubles himself with a bundle and lies among the sheep and the goats. A blanket is as good as his bedding and the dora (200 ft long woollen rope worn by every Gaddi around the back) serves as pillow.

The Gaddi dogs are so fierce that they can repel the attack of a bear or a panther. They watch their master's flock and protect them. The Gaddis are very fond of their dogs. They would not easily part with them for love or money.

The shepherd also sells his sheep and goats if the bargain is favourable, or if he is in need of money. Being God-fearing and superstitious, he sacrifices a he-goat on certain difficult passes. He never takes bath, seldom cleans his teeth, and thus leads absolutely a nomadic life. But it is surprising to note that despite his indifference of personal hygiene he is very healthy and quite happy.

He covers between 5 to 7 miles a day. He has to exert himself much in keeping his flocks on the right path. This work is done with the assistance of the dogs or by whistling to which the sheep and goats amazingly respond.

Every shepherd invariably carries a flute with him. When he plays a folk tune, the hills echo and the hill girl suspends her work to listen.

### **The Gaddi Army**

The Gaddis have their glorious history. According to a well-known historian, J. Hutchinson, Brahmaur (Chamba) is the oldest principality in India. Maru was the first to settle in this place. He was a man of religious disposition and belonged to the ruling family of Ayodhya. Renouncing his age-old kingdom, he wandered from place to place in quest of peace and ultimately reached Chamba.

Narad Pal waged a war for 12 years with Chamba, whose forces advanced to Mandankot near Mandi. This war is still

recalled in folklores. The Gaddi army, as the Chamba force is correctly called besieged the Rana of Manali in the lower fort on the 'Gaddi Padhar' for three months. Eventually the Kulu people got rid of these invaders by treachery. During them across the Kothi gorge, after a peace had been patched up by inviting them to a social gathering, they took away the bridge in the darkness.

During all the military expeditions, the army of the Kings of Brahmaur must have consisted in bulk of Gaddis and that was why, even after the shifting of the capital to Chamba their forces were generally called the Gaddi Army.

Even today, there is a good number of brave soldiers belonging to this tribe serving in the Indian Army.

### **Religious beliefs**

"Men generally believe that their conscious being will not end at death, but will continue indefinitely or for ever, long after the frail corporeal envelope which lodged it for a time has mouldered in dust", says J. C. Frazer, a great Anthropologist in his book, "The Fear of the Dead in Primitive Religion".

Religion indeed has played a very important role in the life of our country. It is the centre around which the whole of Indian social life rotates. Each one of thousand and one sects has dissented only to come back to the fold within about three generations, contributing its own special technique of normative, teleological goal-seeking patterns of behaviour to the broad, general stream of Indian design. Hence, Indian religion is essentially a traditional way of life.

The Gaddis are worshippers of Lord Shiva, but propitiate their deities and spirits by sacrificing sheep and goats.

This tribe follows Hindu tradition and religion in its own way. Its religion presents some interesting features and religion plays a vital role in their life. Animal sacrifice is a very common characteristic of their rituals. Most of their Gods and deities are considered non-vegetarians and in any religious ceremony an offering of goats and sheep is made.

### **Supreme Deity**

The supreme deity of Gaddis is Lord Shiva, who creates the world and destroys it on doomsday. They worship him but their

worship is catholic to a degree. A folklore on Shiva goes like this :

“The Gaddi was grazing his flock  
The Gaddan offered incense to Shiva  
To the Gaddi he gave sheep  
And to the Gaddan—beauty.”

This shows their faith in Shiva who is supposed to give them health, wealth and beauty. He fulfils all the desires of his devotees. It is because of this pervasive faith of the people that this land is called “Shiv bhumi”. The Chaurasi area in Brahmaur has a magnificent temple of Harihar with a number of Shiva-lingas. In Brahmaur proper, there is no temple dedicated to Laksmi Narain, Krishna and Rama although the people observe Janmasthmi and to a certain extent Ram Navami too.

### **Deities and Spirits**

The Gaddis believe in several evil spirits, which are propitiated on certain occasions. They are known as Avtars—spirits raised to the level of local deities out of fear and awe. An Avtar is the spirit of a person who died issueless. It causes sickness and warns of impending mishaps in dreams. It creates panic in the heart of the person who later falls sick. To scare away the ghost, Jemanwala is performed. The sick person dons clothes, which are made for the spirit with a silver image of the dead and then worships the Avtar's idol, which is usually set up near a stream. Goats are sacrificed to appease these spirits.

Kailu Bir or Kailung is believed to be the demon that causes abortion. It is believed to cause harm to a pregnant woman. To propitiate this spirit, a pregnant woman puts aside four copper coins with her necklace in the name of Kailu. Two or three months after delivery, the priest with the woman worships the demon which is sanctified by reciting mantras and worshipped with an offer of a he-goat which is sacrificed on this occasion.

Gunga is another disease spirit believed to attack cattle, especially cows. This powerful demon is worshipped by setting aside an iron pan full of bread in its name. A piece of iron is made and the deity taken into the cattleshed where it is worshipped by the sacred fire. A he-goat, is killed and some drops of blood

are sprayed on the iron. Immediately after this, cakes are offered and some of them are eaten by only a member of the household and the rest of the cakes are buried.

### **Bangalauds**

The tribals believe that if the rituals regarding Devo-samskar are not performed properly, the deceased soul would not get peace. Thus the angry soul may harm his relations. The dead may also visit the homes of his descendants and relatives in dream. To pacify the soul, people voluntarily construct small houses in the name of the deceased. These houses are called Bangalauds or Bedangs. These are built on the outskirts of the Village in open places. The travellers can also stay in these houses. But above all, the soul of the dead one lies in eternal peace and may bestow benefits on the relatives of the deceased.

### **Rituals and Sacrifices**

A high priest is attired in the typical Gaddi dress wearing a silken turban, a golden kantha round his neck and some gold rings in the ears but no shoes. He carries a heavy silver mace and a Thali with articles of puja—red vermillion, rice, flowers, a piece of red cloth, the ball, the shankh and milk. The Pujari, is generally a Brahmin but it is a peculiar feature of their religion that a priest (chela) belonging to a menial group is considered to be the best of all. In some parts of the country a lower caste man cannot enter a temple whereas a priest there belongs to a lower community.

The animal meant for a sacrifice is first bathed. Fulast (flower and rice) is offered on its head and water is dropped with drub (grass) and the devotee holds a copper coin in his hand. If the animal shivers, it is an indication of God having accepted it as an offering. After this, a third person kills the animal. The priest chants some mantras and receives skin, head and one leg of the animal and the rest of the body goes to the slaughter house.

The sacrifices are mostly made while putting new fields under plough; removing the incapacity of a field for growing wheat; laying the foundation stone of a house and laying the central beam of a roof; celebrating births and marriages; on the 12th and the 14th day of a death; before a journey and for propitiating evil spirits.

Here is an interesting event which I can never forget. Two days before I reached the Budhal river, a young man fell into a river and died instantaneously. On hearing the news of the death, his relatives reached the spot with two he-goats and sacrificed them in the name of the deceased so that the departed soul might rest in peace.

Chela (priest and magic man) is the guide without whose consent people do not even send children to school. The Gaddis in their every day life are very religious. Even a literate Gaddi has full confidence in chelas or priests.

### Types of Magic

Like other tribes, the Gaddis believe in magic which is also part and parcel of their religion. The magician achieves the desired end by the ritual techniques and not by making any appeal to the spirits. There are *chelas* who act as magic men. They possess some special power, which is either inborn or achieved by training. There are four types of this magic.

1. VASHIKARAN. The patient's eyes become as that of an owl's and he cannot utter a single word.
2. MARAN. Poison is given to a person through magic for killing him.
3. CONTAGIOUS. A part of an animal is carried to acquire its characteristics, or as a protection against us.
4. OTHERS. To make any body a leper or a skeleton.

### Dayan or Witchcraft

Magic is the great object to be obtained through the witch ritual.

The Dayans, according to the sayings of the tribals, masquerade in the guise of women during the day. As soon as night sets in, they leave their beds and put broomsticks in their places. Thus, they use a spell on their family members who feel as if they are there. The *Dayan* rides on *Garur*, lion or *mriq* and flies away. All the *Dayans* assemble in a forest and sing and dance throughout the night. They return to their homes before the people wake up at dayn.

If a *Dayan* wants to kill a person, she flies to a *jot* or *dhar* and brings some herb with her. Later on, she feeds the same to the man or woman concerned who, if not treated by a Chela in time,

dies of an unknown disease. The *dayans* are considered very dangerous by the village community but they are not as many as in other hill tribes.

The Gaddis, like Santhals of Bihar, believe that the power of witch-craft is not inborn but acquired by training. The *dayan* herself does not persuade any woman or girl for such training. The learner comes to her to get training in witchcraft.

### Witch Doctor

Besides the other *chelas* of various gods, there is a witch doctor who is named as *Gardi chela*. He worships almost every (tribal) God. He cures those patients who are victims of some black magic. The *dolis* (the patients) gather at his residence for treatment. He starts playing on *dupatra* (an instrument like sitar, made of goat's intestines) to the beat of a drum. Meanwhile he throws a kauri towards the *dolis* who fall into a trance and start dancing. Consequently, they disclose the name of the *dayan* who gave them a *booti* (herb).

After this, the *chela* asks the patient to dip his palm and feet in the water already filled in a bucket. Then he waves with a peacock's *muttha* on the patient's body. As a result, some dust, hair, thread etc. come out of the patient's body and fall in the bucket of water. The process goes on for about a week, till the *doli* recovers his health. I collected information about many instances of such treatment in the area.

### Mani

Sometimes, a person buries hair, *trishul*, dhoor of the dead and an effigy of *setisariyan* (turmaric) in the house of his enemy with the help of a magician. Consequently, all the members of the family fall sick and remain sick continuously. Then a *chela* is called for their treatment. He brings a *mani* (wooden pot) and keeps it in the centre of the house. Some neighbours gather around it. A *kanquana* (red thread) is tied on the wrist of an outsider, and the *mani* is put into his *kanquana* tied hand. The *chela* chants the *mantras* and drops the grains of rice or *Mah*. After this, *mani* starts moving and fetches the man to that place where magic has been done. It automatically turns down there. The man is asked to come to his seat and the *chela* rechants the *mantras* for getting the proof again. When the same action is

performed three times, the chela asks the people to dig the floor, where the *mani* turned down and thus the buried articles are sought and consequently all the family members recover. *Mani* is also used for securing stolen goods.

### Chela in trance

To induce a chela into a trance, he is seated cross-legged and incense is burnt before him. The people assemble around him and inspire him by chanting the praise of Manimahesh, Shiv, Kelang, Burbuhari etc.

‘Olmale Manimaheswar ki Jai

„ Shivashakti ki Jai

„ Chadollawali ki Jai

„ Burbuhari ki Jai

„ Kelang Vazir ki Jai

„ Apshakti ki Jai

„ Battiwali ki Jai

After a few seconds, the Chela begins to sway and shake and is seized with religious fervour. Meanwhile, a glass of water is also given to him who turns it down but not a single drop of water falls down. He sprinkles some of the drops on his body and the rest of it is given to the patients. They drink this water and are believed to be totally cured. He also throws vermilion around himself and part of it, he keeps on his tongue and the rest of it he rubs on his mouth. At times, he tries to inflict injuries on his naked back with a *bunngal* (iron bar) and other sharp pointed instruments.

He is seldom hurt. When he is in a complete frenzied mood and stop playing, it is the appropriate time to ask him questions which the devotees do by making cash offerings.

A black coloured he-goat is also sacrificed at the time of inducting the *chela* into trance. The chela sucks its blood and throws the caracass away.

The essence of this magical operation is the muttered formula, *mantra*, which contains a benediction or sets forth the constraint to be exercised upon an object or person.

### A cursed life

Man is of course an organism adapted to nature. As such he is ultimately dependent on his geographical environment. Wide fluctuations in geographical conditions set limits. However, given relative stability of natural conditions such as man now enjoys, he can become master of his natural environment rather than remaining its slave. But the Gaddi fabric of life seems to be quite different. They are still slaves of nature and depend on traditional profession. A folk song depicts a clear picture of their hard life.

'Ho truti mere chhiken ri  
                     Kachhi vo baria bhale ho,  
 Ho kachhi Na truti-truti  
                     dilo ra paritan ho,  
 Ho bura hands Bhattia ra rahana  
                     Vo baria bhalo ho  
 Ho bura hunds Jhangra ra jina  
                     Vo baria bhale ho.'

A newly married couple is in migration, crossing the inaccessible paths of Himalayas. The wife is tired and feels pain in her legs. She complains that she did not enjoy even a single night peacefully after her marriage. She blames her husband that this is all due to their migratory life.

### Nomadism a blot

"We are no more keen to lead the migratory life. Nobody likes to leave his home and hearth and wander hither and thither like nomads six months of the year except for the sake of the belly".

These are the words of a young Gaddan of Chatrari village of whom the author asked her views on migratory life. During a public opinion poll, conducted in the Gaddi villages, the author gathered the following interesting data about the causes of their migratory habits.

### Causes of nomadism

1. Scarcity of fodder for the flocks during the winter season;
2. Unsuitability of snowfall to the sheep and goats;



3. Scarcity of foodstuffs in that the yield of the crops is not up to the mark.
4. Non-availability of seasonal employment in the region;
5. Cultivation of land by a few in district Kangra for which they have to move;
6. Health-hazard of severe winter;
7. An urge to migrate because of a long-standing habit ; and
8. Association of migration with the mythical migration of Lord Siva from Kailash to Chamba.

Only eight per cent responses in our public opinion polls were associated with certain conditions regarding their will to lead the migratory life; the remaining 92% respondents felt the migration to be inconvenient.

### **Problems of adjustment**

The author interviewed many persons working as labourers, wood cutters, coolies and domestic servants in Chamba town. On this basis, he came to the conclusion that a Gaddi can adjust himself to any type of circumstances provided he is humanly treated. Gaddis complain that people, particularly Government officers, hate them and do not treat them sympathically. The ultimate solution lies neither in isolation of the tribals nor in an indiscriminate and unregulated contact. Dr. Guha thinks that in devising a suitable machinery for the administration of the tribal population, both these factors will have to be taken into consideration.

The solution to this problem is to appoint the officers in this region from amongst the tribals. It is a matter of some satisfaction that there is a number of Gaddi teachers in various primary schools but unfortunately, suitable candidates from amongst the tribe are not available even for the lower posts. On the basis of our multifarious study of the Gaddi tribe, it is considered that the following suggestions for its uplift, welfare and progress may prove helpful.

### **Suggestions**

1. The Gaddis should be induced to give up their habit of leading a migratory life. With this end in view, they should

- be provided with seasonal employment or remunerative indoor jobs, particularly in winter.
2. An adequate and regular supply of cereals to the tribals may be ensured the year round.
  3. Their complaints against the Forest Department that the authorities are not sympathetic towards them and of delays in issuing of permits for grazing cattle should be attended to.
  4. Some Forest cooperative societies should be organised which may arrange collection of the dhoop and herbs with medicinal value.
  5. Fodder, wood and fuel should be provided to them during the winter season.
  6. The landless farmers should be allotted land for cultivation and modern agricultural implements distributed among them. The canals should be dug to facilities regular and timely irrigation.
  7. As this region is very close to China, our Army must guard them and the civilians should be trained for self-defence.
  8. The Khadi Gramdyog Commission can be a more beneficial agency to them if it increases its work in this area. The craft of weaving and spinning should be encouraged so that the Gaddis need not sell their wool, on the other hand they should prepare cloth from it and then sell them at a good price.
  9. The means of communication need development and the village tracks require reconstruction. Fuller facilities should be provided to the travellers in the rest houses. It has been noticed that in many rest houses even blankets are not available.
  10. The Local Administration should not have a prejudiced or biased attitude. This area (the home of Gaddis) should be declared a scheduled area.
  11. Education must be made compulsory and free for them.
  12. The Government and private welfare agencies should propagate prohibition explaining demerits of *sur* and *akohol* so that they may give up this habit after understanding its consequences.
  13. Animal sacrifice should be stopped with the help of religious agencies. The disciples of Naga Baba can do a lot in this affair.

14. The temples and the historical monuments of Gaddiyar region should be repaired and of renovated.
15. New breeds of sheep, bulls and cows should be popularised.
16. Medical facilities should be provided in rural areas. Family planning schemes should be made popular.
17. A.I.R. may relay some special programme containing folk songs, folk tales and other recreational items for the Gaddis.
18. If a path for travelling by mules is constructed up to Mani Mahesh which is believed as Kailash, it will help for a happy pilgrimage and also increase the income of this region. To preserve their culture, some cultural associations should be established and aided by the Government.
19. The employees and particularly the teachers and social workers, who are appointed in this region, should bear a good moral character and they should be sympathetic to the tribes. The heart of the tribals cannot be won by criticising their social customs and traditional ways. The integration and mutual behaviour between the outsiders and the tribals need courtsey and affection bothways.

Since the Gaddis inhabit our border territories very close to China, they need much more attention from the defence point of view as well. The Government of Himachal Pradesh and some voluntary organisations have launched some welfare schemes in these areas and have succeeded in uplifting them to some extent, but their migratory habits are yet to be checked.

Virtually, these tribals are a very precious part of mankind and deserve a square deal. The future of a nation is linked with the future of its weaker section. As this section rises the nation develops; the nation having developed, the peace is achieved and consequently humanity survives.

### **Other Groups**

Social habits, customs, way of living and values also undergo a change with time, climate and tongue. This is not only true of shepherd (Meshpal) community but of others too. The Dhangar-Nikhar, Pal, Baghel etc. of Uttar Pradesh become Gadar, Gangajali, Bhagat, etc. in Bihar while they are known as Dhangars in Maharashtra, Gari in Malwa, Bharud in Nimar. Similarly, the Kurbas of Karnataka are called Kurumba in Tamil Nadu, orsons

or Saile in Orissa are reckoned in other classes. This society is called by the name of Gaderi and Haldar in Bengal.

Oraons are also found in Chotanaghar, U.P., Bengal, Bihar and Assam. They have two classes Kurkh and Dhangar. They rear can cattle and are also agriculturists. It is said that they migrated from Gujarat and Konkan and settled down these states. The Oraons cleared the jungles and made the barren land a green field. Some feel that they reached the banks of Narmada wandering from Karnataka. Anthropologists have made a rich study of this tribe.

In Rajasthan, at places the shepherds are also called Gujar. Some include the Gonds among the shepherd society. The Gonds are Rajputs but of scheduled tribes. They generally reside in Bidar, Gulbarga, Raichur districts. In fact, those found in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka are a wing of Kurba society. It is said Bamgonda, a Kuruba assisted in building the historic fort of Bidar. Even today names like Khand Gonda, Bir Gonda, Jat Gonda, Hul Gonda, Mal Gonda, Chan Gonda, Rai Gonda, Tulaj Gonda, Shiv Gonds, Shan Gonda and other Gondas are found. Many of their habits and customs are similar to Kurbas. The institution of Devidasi was very rampant in the past but it is on the wane today.

Almost all castes in the Kinners of Himachal Pradesh, Siyok (Kanet) and Kulu rear sheep and goats. It has become a basic profession in the Hill areas. One can visualize sheep grazing from Kashmir to Assam. Really this is a large scale occupation.

## CHAPTER IV

### A SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

Data regarding the Socio-economic conditions based on a sample survey of 1,000 families through questionnaires and personal contacts have been obtained. An attempt has been made to present almost all branches and sub-branches, dynasties of different states. The result obtained has been presented in brief in tables. In this survey, the figures obtained in 1974-75 have been included.

TABLE NO. 1

#### Monthly Average Income

<i>Monthly income in rupees</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
50 to 150	52%
150 to 250	40%
251 to 350	5%
351 and above	3%
	<hr/>
Total	100%
	<hr/>

It is clear from the above table that the majority of this society is poor. Only 3% come under the income group of Rs. 351 and above. Hence from the economic point of view, the society is very backward. Shortage of grazing areas for sheep and goats has led to debaring them from paternal profession. Consequently, the blanket industry too has been adversely affected. As one learns from Table No. 6, a majority of this community is uneducated and have to take to minor jobs for their maintenance. Apart from this, selling of milk is on a large scale.

TABLE NO. 2

**Average Expenditure**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Food	62%
Clothing	25%
Education	1%
Misc.	12%
	<hr/>
Total	100%
	<hr/>

The author had gathered almost similiar data from his earlier socio-economic survey of Gaddis. A major part of their income is spent on food while on education it is nominal i.e. 1% only. Doubtless, illiteracy poses a serious challenge.

TABLE NO. 3

**Family System**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Percentage (Number of families)</i>
Joint Families	26%
Single Families	74%
	<hr/>
Total	100%
	<hr/>

The above table makes it clear that unity is lacking in this society, or else joint families would not have been in such a small number. Joint families are, however, in large number in rural areas and among the uneducated. It is said the advent of a grazer in another village is not welcomed as the jungles have to be shared with the new sheep. There are instances of brothers not being on speaking terms because of quarrels affecting mutual cooperation. The result is that joint families are breaking up. This is the reason that the society, barring Karnataka is not advancing politically.

TABLE NO. 4

**Children's Average**

<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Percentage of Families</i>
Families with one or two children	15%
Families between 3 and 5 children	75%
Families with more than 5 children	10%
Total	100%

This makes it clear that illiteracy is a serious handicap to the Government's family planning programmes because the message has not reached many.

TABLE NO. 5

**Occupations**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>(Percentage No. of Persons)</i>
Milk Trade	53%
Rearing of sheep and goat	10%
Agriculture	19%
Minor jobs and Labour	13%
Trade	3%
Government service	2%
Total	100%

The trade of milk sale in some form or the other is found throughout India. People now prefer to keep cattle in place of sheep and goats. Consequently, this has become a source of income among a large number of families. Many people make a living by selling milk. The figure is negligible in government service—a big challenge to State and Central Government. To educate their children and the few who are educated are unemployed. It is essential for official and non-official agencies to give special

attention in this regard otherwise the welfare programmes will be incomplete. As Table No. 1 and Table No. 2 tell, majority having a monthly income of less than Rs. 250, it is natural that only 1% is spent on education. Hence, people belonging to this category should have free education for their children, educational facilities and scholarships. There should be reservations and priority given for Government jobs.

The Government should accord the necessary facilities for the development of paternal professions (tending sheep and goats) by the uneducated. This will enable them to raise their monthly income.

TABLE NO. 6

**Statewise Education—A comparative data**

<i>State</i>	<i>Percentage (Number of individuals)</i>
Uttar Pradesh	10%
Haryana	8%
Punjab	15%
Rajasthan	5%
Maharashtra	30%
Madhya Pradesh	29%
Karnataka	51%
Tamil Nadu	49%
Bihar	9%
Andhra Pradesh	2%

These statistics reveal that the highest literacy in this society is in Karnataka. Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh come next.

It is surprising that a big State like Uttar Pradesh is backward in this respect. It is worth mentioning that our statistics here include those literate too who have no certificate.



TABLE NO. 7

**Education-based on Age-Group (per cent)**

<i>Age-Group</i>	<i>Literate</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>College</i>
5-14	0	15	0	0	0
15-24	5	10	18	13	5
25-34	3	10	15	11	6
35-44	8	3	11	6	2
45-54	2	5	3	2	1
55-64	1	3	2	1	1
65-74	0	1	2	1	0
75 or above	0	1	1	0	0

The above table makes it clear that this society is educationally backward. Many students are unable to pursue studies after the elementary stage because of economic hardships. Those who pass the Middle examination find it difficult to go in for High School studies. The number of those reaching college standard is very small. Education among women is as good as non-existent. Though I have come across during the survey, graduates and medical practitioners they are but a drop in the ocean of teeming millions.

TABLE NO. 8

**Representation in Paliament**

<i>State</i>	<i>No. of MPs</i>
Uttar Pradesh	0
Punjab	0
Haryana	0
Bihar	0
Himachal Pradesh	0
Madhya Pradesh	0
Karnataka	1
Other States	0
Total	1

It is surprising that in the entire society there is only one M.P. and that too not for big state like Uttar Pradesh but Karnataka. The educational and Socio economic condition are not in favour of organising the society.

TABLE No. 9

**Political representation (In State Assemblies)**

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of MLA's/MLC's</i>
Uttar Pradesh	0
Punjab	0
Haryana	0
Bihar	0
Himachal Pradesh	1
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	3
Karnataka	10
Other States	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

The above state assemblies raises hope of a bright future. Uttar Pradesh has no legislator from this society. Probably this is because of the lack of organisation and the economic and political backwardness. The writer thinks that political progress is the gateway around success.

TABLE No. 10

**Autonomous Bodies (representation in Gram Sabbas, Panchyats and Municipalities)**

	<i>Number</i>
North India	65
South India	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>

When the number of representatives in local bodies can be counted on fingers, it is difficult to think of State and Central levels. Yet, it is a matter for rejoicing that a member of this society from Karnataka is in the Parliament and has been a member of Congress High Command for years together. If due attention is paid to this society in other States too the nation will have many a worthy workers and leaders.

### **Analysis and Conclusion**

From the above data, I have arrived at the following conclusion:

1. This society is socially and economically backward.
2. Barring Karnataka, the educational condition of the whole community is far from satisfactory.
3. They lack in political representation.

Hereunder are some of the suggestions for the around development of this society :

(1) It is essential that the official and non-official agencies should give special attention to these people like other all Scheduled Castes and Tribes. There should be provision for free education and scholarships upto the post-graduate level. It would be proper to give them reservation in government service as well as in legislative assemblies etc. It is surprising that the government has accepted one wing of this society as Scheduled Tribe in Himachal Pradesh and not in any other State; in some areas they get the concessions like scheduled tribe or scheduled castes for the whole society. Proper uniform treatment should be meted out for the development of all these groups.

(2) This society has a Kshtriya lineage; hence there should be special consideration in recruitment to the armed Forces for the youth of this society. They can prove brave and valiant soldiers.

(3) The social workers of this society should not waste their energies in frivolous activities but engage themselves in some substantial work. They should explain the significance of education. It would be ideal if these workers establish educational institutions and hostels in every town and arrange financial help to the needy.

(4) There is an inferiority complex in the educated youth because of the backwardness. Many hide their castes real name. This is a deplorable plight. In fact, they should be proud of their

Khstriya lineage and make due contribution towards national development. It is cowardice to commit suicide because of poor conditions.

(5) Social service is a prelude to political life and for this they must work for a strong and unified society and side by side share with national parties.

(6) For economic improvement, paternal professions should be re-organised on scientific basis. Cottage and small-scale industries may be established. A spirit of dedication, honesty, integrity and missionary zeal is essential.

## CHAPTER V

### EPILOGUE

In the earlier chapters an attempt has been made to analyse the entire shepherd (Meshpal) society in India from the social, economic, cultural and political angles. The conclusions arrived, are briefly as follows :—

1. Though this society is divided into different castes and sub castes, they have a common ancestry; their forefathers migrated from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra to North and South, leading a nomadic life.

2. Sheep-rearing is, perhaps, older than cattle-rearing as it was in vogue in the ancient Ashrams of Rishis. Rigveda and Yajurveda are notable in this context.

3. The society has a glorious history as Maharani Ahilyabai, Yashawantrao Holkar, Maharajas of Vijaynagar, Karauli and the Pallava dynasties of South were from this society. They started from jungle life and established their kingdoms in the country and had an invaluable contribution to India's cultural heritage.

4. A study of their genealogy proves that the community constitute nearly 75 per cent gotras of Kshatriyas, 10 per cent Brahmins, 10 per cent Vaishyas and 5 per cent other castes and tribes. It appears these communities mixed to maintain and protect the purity of their traditional life with Kshatriyas who were in majority. Hence, there is no doubt that because of the mingling of other minorities, the whole community came into Kshatriya fold though Gaddi Brahmins and Kurba priests can be seen among shepherds even today.

5. In course of time, their economic conditions deteriorated. In some regions their condition was even worse than the other castes and scheduled tribes. Illiteracy, ignorance superstition and strifes increased and this simple and honest society lagged behind

others. The society in North India became more backward than that of the south whereas Ahir a similar caste succeeded on many fronts. Both have many similarities in general.

6. A majority of this community are engaged today in rearing cattle and selling milk. The paucity of pastures has made this profession difficult. Some are agriculturists but the number working in government offices or autonomous bodies is negligible. Hence, on the economic plans they are below minimum. Mahatma Gandhi's dream of establishing Ram Rajya will be unfulfilled and would be a rude jolt to national progress if favourable attitude is not made by other societies and government in regard to this simple society.

7. Though the theory of martial races is vanishing and we are marching towards a classless society, casteism has taken deep roots in our country and it will take several years before it is wiped out. Hence it would be ideal if proper representation is given to them in the Armed Forces so that they can guard the nation's frontiers and also recapture the society's lost glory.

### **Nation's Duty**

Today the Kurbas of Karnataka have, no doubt, made good progress. But on the whole, it is very slow. Old values are changing and the nation is facing new challenges. Can the society remain unaffected? The social scientists say that man is influenced by environment. The life that the Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh lead is a blot to all. The picture is more gloomy in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. There is day-by-day deterioration.

This society has never bowed down in the fight against British imperialism, making its due contribution to the country's liberation and stood shoulder to shoulder in the defence of the country. But what a miserable condition to day! Will our social and economic planners peep into it with a sympathetic attitude!

### **Progress and Future**

A study of all castes, sub-castes convinces one that there is enthusiasm and a burning desire to progress. What is lacking is dedicated workers, true leaders who can guide them in true direction. If the social workers alone forget their differences and work

in cooperation, not depending on government or other agencies, there is no reason why they cannot usher in an era of glory and prosperity. The mist enveloping the future will reveal a golden horizon—new dawn and the smile of prosperity.

One wishes, the official and non-official agencies accept the realities!

## *Appendices*





## APPENDIX I

### Genealogy

#### GOTRAS OF NORTH INDIAN SHEPHERDS

*Kulgotra : Prammar, Agnivansh, Rishi, Gotra : Vashisi, Pravar-3*

Branch of Kulgotra	Present name of the Branch
Prammar	Prammar
Hanyar	Hinnvar
Kiloliya	Kiloliya
Hariyar	Riyar
Kalma	Kalam
Bagal	Vaguliya
Oomra-Sumra	Oomra-Sumra
Rirha	Raraha
Joeys	Johiya
Maurya	Moree
Kukan	Kokande
Sugra	Surha
Rehar	Rehar
Hun	Hunn
Surtia	Sutogia
Sodha	Soda
Bareha	Budha
Kachhela	Kachela
Rautele	Rautele
Bakliya	Bakliya

*Kulgotra : Gaur, Chandavansh,  
Rishigotra : Bhardwaj, Pravar-3*

Gaur	Gaur
Nigoty	Nigotiya
Makwada	Makakanna

*Kulgotra : Parihar, Agnivansh**Rishigotra : Pundreek, Pravar-3*

Parihar	Padihar
Naghata	Nikhata
Masaniya	Masaniya
Pariharia	Padihariya
Dhauran	Dhiman

*Kulgotra : Solankhi, Agnivansh**Rishigotra : Bhardwaj, Pravar-3*

Solankhi	Solankhi
Baghela	Baghela
Sarbahia	Sarharia
Katariya	Kutriya

*Kulgotra : Yadav, Chandravansh**Rishigotra : Kodinia, Pravar-3*

Yadav	Yadav
Rahar	Rada
Gaikwad	Gaikwar, Gayakwad
Banafar	Banafar
Bhati	Bhati
Raichandel	Raichandel
Kevala	Kubrella

*Kulgotra : Rathaur, Suryavansh**Rishigotra : Gautam, Pravar-3*

Rathaur	Rathaur, Rathod
Bundela	Bundela
Mohaniya	Mohniya
Raikwar	Raikwar
Gagriya	Gogra
Babariya	Babariya
Kasoomaliya	Kasoomaliya
Gaharwar	Gaharwar
Nikumbhiya	Kumian
Phalsoodiya	Phulsanga
Kanojiya	Kanojiya
Dahiya	Daeeya
Bhilawate	Bhilawate

Chandela  
Hans  
Chandash  
Senger

Chandel  
Haans  
Chandash  
Senger

*Kulgotra—Chauhan, Agnivansh  
Rishi Vats, Pravar-5*

Chauhan  
Kulheeya  
Mukrana  
Bhadoriya  
Gajjala  
Teejwadeya  
Jhoomriya  
Sagar  
Sawariya  
Kachele  
Bilyacha  
Songira  
Sarpata  
Dhudheriya  
Chauhan  
Pavya  
Bhakar  
Bagsariya

Chauhan  
Kulha  
Mukrana  
Bhadoriya  
Gajala  
Teejwadeya  
Jhoomriya  
Sagar  
Sauria  
Kachela  
Bhilayacha  
Songira  
Sapha  
Dhudhediya  
Aabhir, Aheer  
Parviya  
Bhikhar  
Basundhriya

*Kulgotra : Bargoojar, Survansh  
Rishigotra : Kashyap, Pravar-5*

Badgoojar  
Raghvee  
Shikharwal  
Sonchiriya

Badgoojar  
Raghvee  
Shikharwal  
Sonchirya

*Kulgotra : Gahlaut, Suryavansh  
Rishigotra-Kashyap, Pravar-5*

Gahlaut  
Gohil  
Udaipuri  
Kankotak  
Mahil

Gahlaut  
Gohilwal  
Udyadpuri  
Kaikotak  
Mahalee

Godha  
Ghaneria  
Sisodiya  
Mangliya  
Bachhal  
Nadoda  
Kaloom  
Hul  
Gorkha  
Guhela

Godha  
Ghaneria  
Shishodiya  
Mangliya  
Bachhaliya  
Nandoliya  
Kaloom  
Hul  
Gorkha  
Guhela

*Kulgotra : Kachwahe, Suryavansh*

*Rishigotra : Manav, Pravar-3*

Kachwahe  
Bhatiyala  
Gohad  
Bikaliya  
Jamval  
Kalandar

Kachwahe  
Bhartela  
Gohar  
Bakliya  
Jamval  
Kalandar

*Kulgotra : Tomar, Chandravansh*

*Rishigotra : Kodinya, Pravar-3*

Tanwar  
Janghara  
Korav  
Indoliya  
Garhwal  
Dandhola  
Hareliya  
Hantaal  
Dhahlia  
Zhala  
Shishupal  
Kasturi

Thambar  
Janghara  
Korav  
Indoriya  
Garhwal  
Dhundhele  
Hareliya  
Hantaal  
Dhahliya  
Zhala  
Siraswal; Siraswar  
Kasturia

*Kulgotra-Baise, Suryavansh*

*Rishigotra—Bhardwaj, Pravar-3*

Baise  
Baisle  
Kathbaise

Baniya  
Basere  
Kathbaise

Bhadelia	Barulia
Kathi	Katha
Tilok Chandi	Tilok chandi

*Kulgotra: Dixit, Suryavansh*  
*Rishigotra—Kashyap, Pravar-3*

Dixit	Dixit
Barhamniya	Bamniya
Surya	Suriya
Panchotriya	Pachori
Bhariya	Bhiriyar

# CROTRAS OF CENTRAL AND WESTERN INDIA

*Kulgotra : Chauhan, Agnivansh*  
*Rishigotra : Vatas, Pravar-3*

Branch of Kulgotra	Present name of the Branch
Randiye	Randiye
Rav	Raa
Sangal	Sangal
Vande	Vanle
Kote	Kote
Khakre	Khorne
Kharare	Kharse
Khilariya	Khilari
Chaklee	Chikle
Tetiya	Tenchariya
Pardiya	Pawar
Hamveer	Hamveer
Tawre	Thawre
Jamwale	Jamwale
Kamre	Kamre
Abheeriya	Abheeriye
Khoosee	Khoosee, Khasa
Khagariya	Kharagaree
Ghatotiya	Ghator
Jatyane	Jatare
Dewrake	Dewkate
Baghore	Boware

Barar  
 Bhakar  
 Mokar  
 Bagre  
 Seyam  
 Karari  
 Hande  
 Sejpalka  
 Hanuman  
 Gariwala  
 Devre  
 Maskar  
 Dhadap  
 Dalpatte  
 Kalbhar  
 Bhawre  
 Bhadekar  
 Manbhawa  
 Lota  
 Laad  
 Mohit  
 Sakreka  
 Surkee  
 Harpalot  
 Aswareiya  
 Chitrak  
 Bhadokar  
 Warange  
 Pansare

Barar  
 Bhakre  
 Matkar  
 Badle  
 Samse  
 Kedari  
 Hande  
 Sejore  
 Hanumane  
 Gariwan  
 Dhawre, Degar  
 Maskar  
 Dhadap  
 Dalpatte  
 Kalbhar  
 Bhorne  
 Bhadyar  
 Manchare  
 Lite  
 Laad  
 Mohite  
 Sakre  
 Surke  
 Hari Peeraji  
 Ashwale  
 Chitak  
 Bhadikar  
 Warange  
 Pansare

*Kulgotra—Pramar, Agniwansh*  
*Rishigotra—Vashist, Prawar-3*

Moore  
 Darekar  
 Vagve  
 Palve  
 Goojar  
 Diwate  
 Kookar  
 Dawbhaye

Moreya  
 Darekar  
 Vagve  
 Palve  
 Goojar  
 Diwate  
 Kokar  
 Dawade

Dodke	Dobhake
Ghayiwar	Ghamwar
Dhaikle	Daikle
Jagdale	Jagdale
Vagh	Vagh
Dharrav	Dharrav
Mokasi	Mokasi
Khairobi	Khorave
Doifore	Doifore
Dhakra	Dhafaan
Dhunta	Dhoore
Peesa	Peese
Vorar	Vohan
Vareha	Veere
Pawar	Pawar
Dalvi	Dalvi
Vichare	Vichare
Nivalkar	Nivalkar
Sangal	Sangal
Chirfule	Chirfule
Kalpate	Kalpate
Pingla	Pingle
Boran	Borare
Vamala	Vomle
Mandla	Mandleek
Palab	Palab
Kadev	Kadam
Saalap	Saalav
Tavade	Tavade
Namjade	Namjade
Keshkar	Keshkar
Darbare	Darbare

*Kuigotra-Parihar, Agnivash*  
*Rishi—Pundreek, Pravar-3*

Kharwaria	Khemnar
Lulare	Lavre, Lole
Proktat	Proktat
Dhole	Dhole
Ghadge	Ghodge



Vegu  
Dhandhle  
Sindhe  
Prithar  
Vadgare  
Balkhariya

Bagh  
Dhaigude  
Sindhe  
Prithar  
Vadgare  
Balekar

*Kulgotra : Solankhi, Agnivansh  
Rishigotra—Bhardwaj, Pravar-3*

Chalukya  
Patankar  
Patade  
Gunjal  
Virje  
Chulki  
Tamve  
Pandhare  
Randhir  
Naval  
Savant  
Shelar  
Kamble  
Ingle  
Kale  
Mahatre  
Hukrule  
Baghmore  
Ghagh  
Paware  
Shivale  
Pisaal  
Shelke  
Kanwaje  
Saatal  
Ghatge  
Paatade

Chalukya  
Patankar  
Patade  
Gujal  
Virje  
Kulki  
Tanve  
Pandhare  
Randhir  
Naval  
Savant  
Shelar  
Kamble  
Ingle  
Kalekar  
Mahatre  
Hukrule  
Baghmore  
Ghagh  
Paware  
Shivale  
Pisaal  
Shelke  
Kannoja  
Saata  
Ghatge  
Paatade

*Kulgotra—Yadav, Chandravansh  
Rishigotra—Kondinya, pravar-3*

Dhanpal

Dhaanpal

Jaadhav	Jaadhav
Sirke	Sirke
Dhekle	Dhekle
Khatare	Khatare
Jagpal	Jagpal
Malerav	Malerav
Baghele	Baghela
Ghagh	Ghagh
Kanlag	Kanlag
Bhole	Bhole
Umdhare	Umdhare
Duwal	Duwal
Ran Singh	Ran Singh
Jagtap	Jagtap
Nabhaka	Nabhada
Dhampal	Dhampal
Yadav	Yadav
Phalke	Phalke
Bhojke	Bhojke
Pathare	Pathare
Dharat	Dharat
Sinhane	Sinhane
Guhela	Guhela
Ghone	Ghone
Phakre	Phakre
Pingle	Pingle
Aaute	Aaut
Vavle	Vavle
Dhulap	Dhulap
Gori	Goli
Nolko	Nole
Pode	Podre
Pahar	Rahatad
Hatta	Hotte
Nikumh	Nikum
Babar	Bavar
Gadhe	Gadhe
Vulke	Bulke
Makbanna	Mukhmane
Mahajal	Mahajan

Hodhankwale  
Bargale  
Tamar  
Barge  
Namte  
Tureiye  
Lande

Hodge  
Bargal  
Tomar  
Varge  
Namte  
Tureiye  
Lande

*Kulgotra—Sengar, Suryavansh*  
*Rishi : Gautam, Pravar-8*

Sanger  
Jallendhare  
Jangle  
Patel  
Ghogle  
Shelke  
Gawad  
Yashwant  
Jare  
Ghumak  
Sigore  
Bagban  
Mokle

Senger  
Jallandhare  
Jangle  
Patel  
Ghogle  
Shelke  
Gawad  
Yashwant  
Jare  
Ghumak  
Sigore  
Bagban  
Mokle

*Kulgotra—Rathor, Suryavansh*  
*Rishigotra—Gautam, Pravar-4*

Rastrakut  
Raizada  
Chand  
Zhunjar  
Aasardecha  
Govind  
Ghetawat  
Rajag  
Sakpal  
Bhale  
Kokate  
Dater  
Gore  
Jaitsi

Rathod  
Raizada  
Chand  
Zhunjar  
Aachate  
Ganwade  
Ghanepute  
Rajage  
Sankpal  
Bhale  
Kokate  
Datar  
Gore  
Jotsi

Birkar  
Rajka  
Bahar  
Parke  
Chandash  
Bhattee  
Lumbawat  
Hulkar  
Patan

Virkar  
Rahij  
Bahrand  
Parke  
Chandash  
Bhattee  
Labhate  
Hulkar  
Patan

*Kulgotra-Kadamkul, Suryavansh,  
Rishigotra-Manav, Pravar-3*

Kadamba  
Kasale  
Phadatre  
Kale  
Ugade  
Dhumal  
Dhule  
Mahimal  
Aagnai  
Hirwai

Kadam  
Kasale  
Phadtare  
Kale  
Ugade  
Dhumal  
Dhule  
Mahimal  
Aagnai  
Hirwai

*Kulgotra-Kachawai, Suryavansh  
Rishigotra-Manav, Pravar-3*

Saikhai  
Gaikwad  
Ghatge  
Murve  
Kakde  
Karpe  
Kharbhale  
Dinge  
Takte  
Vankhade  
Ghodke  
Dangare  
Girodige  
Singhade  
Kalmun

Sukhai  
Gayakwad  
Ghatge  
Murve  
Kakde  
Karpe  
Kharebhale  
Dinge  
Takte  
Vankhade  
Ghodke  
Dangare  
Gorud  
Singdade  
Kalmukh

Skrsagar	Skrsagar
Gawse	Gawse
Shitole	Shitole
Raul	Raul
Bhagwat	Bhagwat
Deware	Deware
Gaike	Gaike
Goode	Goode
Hooke	Hooke
Kaibare	Kaibare
Aglave	Aglave
Gadhbe	Gadhve
Saruva	Surve
Sitole	Sitole
Ghad	Ghad
Naik	Naik
Gavse	Gavse
Raut	Raut

*Kulgotra : Gahlot. Suryavansh  
Rishigotra—Kashyap, Pravar-3.*

Rane	Rane
Albhai	Aibhai
Tahar	Tagad
Bhonsle	Bhonsle
Ghorpade	Ghorpade
Bhogle	Bhogle
Mahadik	Mahadik
Aangre	Aangre
Lokhade	Lokhade
Nakase	Nakase
Malap	Malap
Talawade	Talawade
Growar	Growar
Sawal	Sawal
Dudhe	Dudhe
Mulik	Mulik
Aahadai	Aahodge
Jirke	Jore
Dawalat	Dalvi

Dorik	Dorik
Sisode	Sisode
Bhoite	Bhoite
Thorat	Thorat
Malusarai	Malusarai
Sakpal	Sakpal
Rao	Rao
Pardhe	Pardhe
Apradhe	Aapradhai
Joshi	Joshi
Rane	Rane
Seegvan	Seegvan
Patak	Patak

*Kulgotra—Tanwar, Yaduvansh,  
Rishigotra—Gargayan, Pravar-3.*

Katiyare	Karkate
Vagde	Vagde
Vulke	Vulke
Malpawar	Malpawar
Fakre	Funke
Tamde	Tamde
Dhawde	Dhawde

#### SOME OTHER GOATRAS OF NORTH INDIA

Khatotika	Billimar
Bilahariya	Manikewale
Sapariya	Kariwal
Pindwar	Marhatiya
Dhakariya	Shreema
Kalpacha	Sahala
Vicholiya	Chamarpede
Kathatariya	Nirwal

Some Goatras were divided into a number of branches like Baniya Goatra was divided into Kuthaliya, Pathariya, Dandimar, Sude, Nahaliya and Kariwal,

Hinnwar or Hiranwal Goatra was divided into Kharsela, Chalan-gia, Tikala, Sheorampuriya, Kalpacha, and Chandel Goatra was divided into Guhiya, Chadiya, and Roy.

*There are some other Goatras which are available in a particular area. For example following Goatras were found in the interior areas of Madhya Pradesh.*

Temaniya,	Vodda
Sethaniya	Dawar
Bhakal	Khanatiya
Dhakar	Danga
Ghataila	Simla
Sarjaliya	Minama
Bargota	Patov
Kaisariya	Bhadu
Hirniya	Ghongharai
Boriya	Rainwal
Danga	Duwaile
Jakhar	Banderbaliya

*Some Other Gotra : Aadwan:* Shitale, Majgul, Otave, Doware, Kanse, Bagul, Datre, Gawte, *Aartik:* Barge Sehje, Seje, Kum, Nagre, Hartare, Gaidre, Rendar, Parde, Sidh, Taite.

### GOTRAS OF KURBAS

- |            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| 1. Bilva   | 14. Uppena       |
| 2. Aslu    | 15. Unne         |
| 3. Asli    | 15. Amme         |
| 4. Andra   | 17. Edwarhdasale |
| 5. Anne    | 18. Ootti        |
| 6. Areseea | 19. Hoothana     |
| 7. Arsu    | 20. Kampala      |
| 8. Utti    | 21. Kachana      |
| 9. Aadini  | 22. Katteda      |
| 10. Aasulu | 23. Kankayana    |
| 11. Arai   | 24. Kaggala      |
| 12. Aanne  | 25. Kavari       |
| 13. Erlu   | 26. Kambali      |

- |               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| 27. Kumbala   | 67. Bavena             |
| 28. Kundan    | 68. Bailda             |
| 29. Kuniva    | 69. Boosa              |
| 30. Keechalu  | 70. Bosala             |
| 31. Kuppiya   | 71. Bhoja              |
| 32. Kolelay   | 72. Beera              |
| 33. Kottey    | 73. Malle              |
| 34. Gali      | 74. Mallige            |
| 35. Gongdi    | 75. Majjana            |
| 36. Gonda     | 76. Maaslu             |
| 37. Chandana  | 77. Manne manne/Mootte |
| 38. Chitlu    | 78. Meechina           |
| 39. Janni     | 79. Mesulu             |
| 40. Jande     | 80. Meesu              |
| 41. Jade      | 81. Mutena             |
| 42. Thagru    | 82. Muruhindana        |
| 43. Tambe     | 83. Mansina            |
| 44. Turugara  | 84. Rajkula            |
| 45. Dande     | 85. Savige             |
| 46. Danni     | 86. Sangam             |
| 47. Dasre     | 87. Sannakambli        |
| 48. Dudedana  | 88. Sampige            |
| 49. Devdaru   | 89. Sangara            |
| 50. Nagre     | 90. Saslu              |
| 51. Nalige    | 91. Samanta            |
| 52. Nali      | 92. Sakala             |
| 53. Nai       | 93. Salwa              |
| 54. Naagra    | 94. Sada               |
| 55. Neelle    | 95. Samanta            |
| 56. Nonaba    | 96. Samanta            |
| 57. Bandi     | 97. Saina              |
| 58. Banni     | 98. Harusha            |
| 59. Baasri    | 99. Hande              |
| 60. Banda     | 100. Hattee            |
| 61. Harivana  | 101. Hattikara         |
| 62. Bangare   | 102. Kandra            |
| 63. Ballari   | 103. Hallu             |
| 64. Basalu    | 104. Hoddee            |
| 65. Bijala    | 105. Sata              |
| 66. Bujjanige |                        |



## GOTRAS (SEPT NAMES) OF GADDIS

*Gaddi Brahmins**Chief Gotras*

1. Bhardwaj
2. Vashist
3. Gautam

*The Brahmins*

Aadhakaru	Bardan
Bhangetu	Bhingara
Chaddu	Chudda
Chadha	Dinna
Dunda	Guna
Jogi	Kerra
Jiringar	Misa
Junnu	Rina
Latta	Tandetu
Muka	Lade
Tanda	Palihan
Tina	Sahadhratx
Langhe	Sipainu
Ranetu	Jhurna
Saunpolu	Jukku
Sudheta	
Jua	
Valna	

*Gaddi Rajputs**Chief Gotra*

1. Uttam
2. Bhardwaj
3. Dewal

*The Rajputs*

Dhanchu	Rane
Sahu	Chohan

Dinsan  
Goknu  
Chaker  
Khuddu  
Pakharu  
Rikhantu  
Charu  
Makratu  
Chutrainya  
Jhibiran  
Jhurjan  
Kholu  
Rohania  
Charhain  
Dhanchu  
Nakletu  
Panjara  
Sahu  
Barsain  
Phakolu  
Taplliag  
Kalsain  
Mongneshi  
Sanglu

Kurralu  
Misan  
Kadan  
Ordian  
Phagan  
Baidu  
Chingain  
Amlaitu  
Gulran  
Jheru  
Junr  
Mukkaran  
Tharrotu  
Gharati  
Mogu  
Padhotaru  
Rusahri  
Sundhu  
Gohaina  
Potu  
Ghunsn  
Lateti  
Sanjuan  
Tatangrn

*The Gaddi Rathi*

Jotain  
Raute  
Salbanu  
Chapher  
Tanan  
Faguir  
Jogian  
Bhajretu  
Ghoru  
Kangheru  
Palhu

Maralotar  
Simuri  
Dageta  
Jamuhan  
Harokar  
Japaintu  
Adap  
Gahri  
Ghul  
Lunersar  
Phakni

*The Gaddi Sippi*

Bamari  
Dilwan  
Katee  
Nagatwan  
Sachal

Bhamere  
Dubni  
Khaschi  
Pulan

## APPENDIX II

### FOLK SONGS AND DANCES OF THE SHEPHERDS

Song and dance are the most natural traits of a race. They provide an effective yardstick of their temperament and the manner they react to the surrounding joy and beauty.

Of all the uninhabited Himalayan people and all the Shepherds of India the Gaddis are easily the most remarkable ones.

With a gorgeous landscape and romantic atmosphere, the Gaddi girl is deeply in love with the hills of Chamba.

Gori is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba  
In every house is a *bindlu*  
In every home a *tiklu*  
In every house are camely brides  
Gori is deeply in love  
With the hills of Chamba

Mani Mahesh is covered with perennial snow, and is regarded as sacred as Kailash. God Siva is believed to have lived here. There are many temple where Lord Siva is worshipped in a typical form. The land of Shiva has been the theme of songs which are known as Anchali. One of the famous Anchalis goes as under:

O'Lord Shiva, if you fulfil our desires  
We shall give you a Nuwala  
And we would make an offer  
Of eighty goats and eighty four sheep.  
O' God, we want your *darshan*,  
A Marriage song goes:  
Who is that beautiful girl  
Sitting with her hair uncombed

Who is sitting with his back turned  
 Oh, Gori is sitting with her hair uncombed  
 And Iswar (Siva) is sitting with his back turned

A Gaddi girl wants to buy some *Bidis* from the market and requests her relations in such a manner that our sympathies are enlisted on hearing the song which goes thus :

In the bazar of town *Biddis* are being sold  
 O'my uncle, please purchase it  
 The cost is so high, how can I purchase it ?  
 O'my father's younger and elder brother, Please buy it !  
 Neither of my father's brothers purchases it  
 So my pious mother, please purchase it.

*Romantic Songs* : During my study of the Himachal Gaddis, I found that they were leading richer and emotional life than any other tribe of the country. The Gaddi is a care-free and happy go-lucky fellow. Whea a Gaddi shepherd plays on his flute, nature nods its head in tune, the hills virbrate with joy and the distant hill girl dances in ecstasy. The love-sick shepherdess starts to sing in reply :

1. I miss you terribly my Gaddi  
 I miss you very very much.
2. This Patwari will not write a letter for me  
 Though I beseech him a thousand times  
 I miss you very much, my beloved Gaddi.
3. I go alone to the spring  
 and drink there in seclusion  
 And suddenly your memory pierces my heart  
 I miss you very much my beloved Gaddi.
4. With naked feet I climbed the hill  
 Hoping to see you when you will return  
 But alas ! my feet are pierced by the sharp thorns  
 And of you there was no sign  
 I miss you very much my beloved Gaddi.

Here are a few lines of another famous song which relate to the broken love story of Kunjua and Chanchalo, translated by Dr. Karan Singh.

## Kunjua and Chanchalo

1. I weep profusely,  
while washing clothes, O Kunjua  
come and speak to me, please  
come and talk with me
2. In your hand is a silk handkerchief, O Chanchalo,  
and my ring is on your finger,  
as a token of our undying love.
3. My lustrous black eyes, O Kunjua, often admired by you  
are now filled with tears and sorrow.  
symbols of our hopeless love
4. On your fair arms  
the red bangles quiver,  
and among them, O Chanchalo,  
is the bracelet I gave you  
in token of my adoration.
5. Do not come to me at midnight, O Kunjua, there  
are five loaded rifles in my house itching to fire at  
your heart.
6. I will surely come at midnight, O Chanchalo,  
what harm can five rifles do  
to my immortal love for you.
7. You are going far away, O Kunjua,  
give me a ring as a token of your love.
8. Do not bother about such trifles. O Chanchalo.  
In Chamba there is gold in plenty  
and I will deck you with ornaments.
9. Do not leave tomorrow night, O Kunjua,  
Do not leave me,  
I would sacrifice my very life  
to keep you here,
10. I must go tomorrow night, O Chanchalo.  
I must go for I have pressing work which  
I cannot ignore.

*FOLK SONGS OF SHEPHERDS OF PLAINS*

Here is a literal translation of some folk songs of the Shepherds of plains:

The bridegroom  
 has reached our garden  
 He looks most handsome  
 His forehead is decorated  
 with a bright *Mukut*  
 When he touched the doors of our house  
 How thrilled it was !  
 How sweet it looked !

This is a marriage song and very popular in U.P. and Bihar.  
 Here is another worship song:

O' Godhan Mandu  
 (A festival connected with the animals)  
 You are the eldest of all  
 None can challenge you  
 None can beat you  
 You are our God  
 O' dear God  
 We pray to you

Here is a folk song of rainy season very common among the  
 shepherds of Madhya Pradesh:

The clouds are thundering  
 And the lightening.....Lightening  
 Like twinkling of the *Bichuwa* (finger's ornament)  
 The rain is dropping  
 O, my darling  
 I had entered in your room  
 without any prior appointment  
 A promise only haunted me

The following song is sung at the time of *Bhat* ceremony :

The drops are showering  
 over the Bindi  
 My mother's son is wet  
 O' dear king cloud  
 please stop for a while

My mother's son is wet  
His clothes are wet  
My mother's son is wet  
There is lightening in the sky  
And here the *Bhat*  
Gives a sound of money  
O' dear king cloud  
Please don't shower now  
My mother's son is wet.

A very popular marriage song of Uttar Pradesh—

Our daughter's grand father  
giving *Kanyadan* (Presenting daughter)  
But her grand mother refuses  
O' lady keep quiet  
Our beloved daughter is  
only for a day with us  
she is like a bird of a tree.  
The daughter's uncle is  
Giving *Kanyadan*  
The daughter's aunt refuses  
O' lady keep quiet  
our beloved daughter is  
only for a day with us  
she is like a bird of bush

Afterwards all the relatives' names are repeated one by one in the song and it ends with a pathetic tone.



# APPENDIX III

## NAMES IN LANGUAGE

The shepherds are known as under in Indian languages and dialects.

Language	Name
1. Hindi	Pal Kshtriya, Dhangar, Baghel, Pal Gadariya
2. Punjabi	As above
3. Urdu	As above
4. Kashmiri	Pohol
5. Sindhi	Redharu
6. Marathi	Dhangar
7. Gujarati	Rabari and Bharwad
8. Bengali	Rakhal (Rakhalu)
9. Assamese	Bherarokhiya
10. Oriya	Meshpalak or Meshapalaka
11. Telugu	Golla (Palavadu)
12. Tamil	Attutidiyan
13. Malayalm	Attiyan
14. Kannada	Kurba, Kurub, Kuraba
15. Sanskrit	Ajpal, Chagal etc.
16. Oraon, Kurk or Dhan- gari dialect	Dhangar

## APPENDIX IV

### THE SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

1. *All India Pal Palkshtriya Mahasabha*—A 60 year old organisation of the Community mostly active in Northern India.
2. *Bharatvarshiya Baghel Sabha*—A popular association covering mostly Agra, Mathura etc.
3. *Sri Kshatriya Dhangar Sewa Sangh*—A very important organisation of royal shepherds belonging to Holkar Dynesty and others, active in Indore.
4. *Kurubara Sangh Karnataka*—An association of highly educated persons of the Community, active in South India.
5. *Dhangar Sabha Uttar Pradesh*—Active in Uttar Pradesh.
6. *Gadaraya Sabha Delhi*—A social body of active in Delhi.
7. *Gopalak Sangh Ahmedabad*—An association of Cowherds belonging to the same community popular in Maharashtra and Gujarat.

## APPENDIX V

### REPORT OF THE CENSUS OF BENGAL 1872.

#### **Gareris**

52. Gareri, known also as Gadariya, are the shepherd class. They probably are an offshoot of the Goallas, though they do not intermarry with them. Along with their occupation of tending sheep, they carry on that of making blankets. In common with the other pastoral tribes enumerated, they hold the custom that when an elder brother dies the next in age marries his widow. They are generally very ignorant, and not unfrequently dishonest. Holkar is a Gareri by caste.

#### **Goallas and Ahirs**

53. The names Goalla and Ahir are used as synonyms in Bihar for the great hardsman class. They have three principal divisions—Gwalbans, Nandbans, and Jadubans. Most of the Goallas of Bihar are Gwalbans. If there is any value in Manu's division of classes, the Goallas should by their occupation be Vaisiyas, whereas they only claim to be pure Sudras, and even that honour is not generally allowed them. Not a few of them are Muhammadans and are termed Gaddi. Many of the Gaddis, however, are shepherds, and it is these, of whom Dr. Hunter has manufactured one of his low classes of Brahmans. The Goallas of Bihar are well known as a turbulent and dishonest people. The term Patna Goalla is almost a reproach throughout Bengal. They are fearless and are celebrated as *lathials*, especially those of certain villages, who are regularly retained for riots even at a great distance from their homes. There is a legend that the Goallas of Santipore in Bengal were imported from Bihar for fighting purposes. The *gots* enumerated are Bechota, Bhoj, Dahiyar, Ghosi, Guriya, Majraut, and Kishnaut. Notwithstanding Elliot's assertion that the Gwalbans have no *gots*, I am assured that all these are Gwalbans.

In many places in the North-West Provinces the Goallas are said to preserve remnants of serpent-worship, and in Orissa the Ahirs are said to be chiefly employed in magic and jugglery. This may possibly explain the name Jadubans; the word Ahir itself is sometimes derived from Ahi, a serpent. The Goallas have had their kings and were apparently at one time a powerful people, as they would be now under one head. Many of them are employed in trade or are zemindars, and drop their caste title so as to be mistaken for Kayasths. They form the bulk of the population in Bihar, and it is therefore more astonishing that a prejudice exists against employing them in the police.

### Dhangars

11. Dhangars, who Colonel Dalton says are merely Oraons under another name, are found in small numbers in Bihar generally, and are numerous in Bhaugulpore, Purneah, and the Sonthal Pergunnahs. Those in Chumparun have, I imagine, been imported as labourers. The Dhangars are a hard-working race, but they apparently have no history whatever. A tribe of the same name is said to be among the pastoral tribe of Madras, but I have not been able to learn any particulars concerning them.

### Oraons

486. Grouping Dhangars as Oraons, we have a total of 208,343 souls for that tribe. Three-fourths of them are found in Lohardugga, and the remainder, with few exceptions, in the estates of Sirgoojah, Jushpore and Gangpore. They are also said to be called Khurnkh, if it is possible to pronounce such a word. The term Dhangar signifies the youth of the tribe.\* They speak a language allied to Tamil, Gond and other Dravidian tongues, and are still free from Hinduisng influences. They are industrious cultivators, and well known throughout India wherever good, honest, hard work is to be done. They are also a merry, light-hearted people much addicted to gluttony and intoxication, and excessively fond of dancing, which is their great national amusement. In Gangpore they are called Kharrias, but they are not to be confounded, Colonel Dalton says, with the Delki or true Kharrias, who belong to the Kol family.

\**Entology* p. 245.

The Paharias (511) and Pandabasi (440) are scattered offshoots of some hill tribe or other which cannot now be more particularly defined. The Pandabasi are said to come from the south, but nothing satisfactory has been ascertained regarding them. The Purans have already been mentioned under Orissa.

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15. Dhangar.—The condition of the Dhangars in Mirzapur is said to have improved to some extent.\* They still mostly serve as ploughmen and day-labourers but some now have land of their own to cultivate. Besides the gods and godlings referred to by Crooke\*\*, they worship deities of minor importance such as Rakshel, Phulwati, Devi, Baghaut or tiger-spirit who is supposed to protect the worshipper, Chithariya Bir who is supposed to reside in some old tree on which they hang pieces of rag as they pass by, and Dhalahiya Bir on whose shrine they place small pebbles.

MEMORIES ON THE HISTORY, FOLK-LORE, AND  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE RACES OF THE NORTH  
WESTERN PROVINCES OF INDIA

by the

Late Sir Henry M. Elliot. K.C.B.

**Gaddi**

A tribe resembling the Ghosis. They are now mostly Muslims, and have a few scattered communities in several Parganahs, such as in Garhmuktesar and Sarawa of Mirat, and the Rampur territory. It is not unusual to call any converted Hindu a Gaddi which is looked on by a true Muslim as a term of reproach.

**Gadariya**

A shepherd. There are several sub-divisions of Gadariyas in these Provinces—Nikhar, Tasselha or Pachhade, Chak, Dhengar, Bareiya, Paihwar, and Bhaiyatar. Of each of these there are also many divisions, which are not worth recounting.

These hold no intimate communication with one another, being as much strangers as any two distinct castes. The most liberal

\*Volume 11, Page 270, para 270.

\*\*Volume 11, Page 269, and 270.

relaxation of this social bondage being that the Nikhar and Dhengar smoke each others hukkas.

As with the Jats and Gujars, so with the Gadariyas, the younger brother marries the elder brother's widow, but the elder brother is prohibited from forming a similar connection with the younger brother's widow—See Karao in Part II.

### Ahir\*

The origin of this tribe, as given in the printed Glossary, cannot be correct for Kup (properly Gop) signifies merely the occupation of a herdsman. Wilson's Sanskrit Dict. p. 299, end Ed. Manu (X.15) says that they are descended from a Brahman by an Ambastha woman, i.e. one of the Baid, or Physician tribe. In the Brahma Purana it is said that they are descended from a Kshatriya father and a woman of the Vaisya caste; but on the question of the descent of the different tribes, the sacred books, as in many other matters, differ very much from each other, and none are to be implicitly trusted.

This pastoral tribe of the Yadubansi stock was formerly of much greater consideration in India than it is at present. In the "Ramayana" and "Mahabharat" the Abhiras in the West are spoken of; and in the Puranic Geography the country on the Western coast of India, from the Tapti to Devagarh, is called Abhira, or the region of Cowherds. When the Kattis arrived in Guzerat, in the eighth century, they found the greater part of the country in possession of the Ahirs. The name of Asirgarh, which Ferishta and the "Khazana Amira" say is derived from Asa Ahir, shows that the tribe was of some importance in the Dekkan also, and there is no doubt that we have trace of the name in the Abiria of Ptolemy, which he places above patalene. Ahirs were also at one time Rajas of Nepal at the beginning of our era, and they are perhaps connected with the Pala, or shepherd, dynasty, which ruled in Bengal from the ninth to the latter part of the eleventh century, and which, if we may put trust in monumental inscriptions, were for some time the universal monarchs of India.—(As Researches, Vol. ix. p. 438).

\*Reference on this subject are: J.R.A.S. xii, 141 J.A.S.B. ix 478, 484, 756, 885. Bombay L.T.i. 287. Lassen, Alterthumsk, i. 539. J.R.A.S.i, 248, Tod's Western India, pp. 358, 421, E. add.

In the North Western Provinces Ahirs are scattered over various pargannahs. We find them in great numbers in the southern parts of the Delhi territory, from Rewari on the borders of Mewat, to the Bikanir frontier, in a tract of country known under the name of Bighoto, g.v. A dense population of Ahirs (Tiklewala) will also be found in a line extending from the Kala Nadi in the neighbourhood of Marehrah, to near Bibameyu on the Jumna (see Atabu); and from Salempur Majhauri in Gorakhpur to Singrauli in Mirzapur. indeed, the Parganah of Ahrorah in the latter district, though now without Ahir Zamindars, derives its name from them, being called Ahirwara in ancient records. The only districts which in the "Ain Akbari" are said to have Ahir Zamindars are Nagina and Sirdhana.

The Ahirs of these Provinces all trace their origin to Mathura, or places a little to the West of it. There appear to be three grand divisions amongst them: the Nandbans, the Jadubans, and Gwalbans (see Gwal)—which acknowledge no connexion, except that of being all Ahirs. Those of the Central Doab usually style themselves Nandbans; those to the West of the Juman and the Upper Doab, Jadubans; and those in the Lower Doab and Benares, Gwalbans. The latter seem to have no sub-divisions, or Gots. The principal Gots of the Nandbans are, Samarphalla, Kishnaut, Bhagta, Bilehnia, Diswar, Nagowa, Kanaudha, Dunr, Rawat, Tengurea, Kor\* Kamaria, Barausia, Mujwar, Dahima, Nirban, Kharkari, Dirhor, Sitolia, Jarwaria, Barothi, Gonda and Phatak; amounting in all to eighty-four. In Bighoto, besides many of these, there are the Molak, Santoria, Khosia, Khallia, Loniwal, Aphariya or Aphiriya, Maila, Mhaila, Khoro, Sesotia, Gandwal, Gird, Bhamsara, Janjaria, Kankauria, and Nigania; amounting in all to sixty four. Many of the two last-named clans have been converted to the Mahomendan faith, and are known as Bangars.\*\*

\*Kor or Kur are held to be inferior to the rest of the caste. See Rec. N.W.P. iv. 137. E. add.

\*\*This term is more strictly confined to Rajputs who have been converted to Mahomedanism; but there are several trades in Delhi, particularly in the district of Rohtak, where the term is indiscriminately applied to Rajputs, whether Mahomedan or Hindu.

The origin of the term is very doubtful, and those who have attempted its etymology are by no means agreed among themselves.

The two villages whence they derive their name are celebrated in local legends for turbulence and contumacy.\*

"Thirty-five kos from Delhi is Kanhaur Nigana; What they sow, they themselves eat, they do not give the grain to the ruler."

Amongst those, the Khoro rank first; but their claim to superiority is denied by the Ahirya, who have certainly in modern times attained the highest distinction. The all, including the Khoro, intermarry on terms of equality, avoiding, like all other Ahirs, only the four Gots nearest related. A man, for instance, cannot marry into his father's, mother's, paternal, or maternal

Tod ("Asiatic Journal", Feb. 1838, p. 107) says, that "Rangri, or Rangrs, is an epithet applied to all Rajput chieftains; from Ringa (in the dialects) signifying a field of battle."

The Enc. Metropol. (Art. "Delhi") says, "Rangars, i.e. turncoats, are Mahomedan renegadoes from the Hindu faith".

Mr. H.T. Prinsep, in a note to p. 442 of his "life of Amir Khan," says, "Rangers are the lower classes bordering on the Western Desert. They are all thieves and robbers, and mostly Musulmauns." He does not attempt the origin of the nation.

Francklin, at p. 285 of his "Memories of G. Thomas, says, "Rangurs are Mohomedan Rajputs" and suggests like the Enc. Metr., that the word implies coloured, or stained or of mixed blood.

Sir J. Malcolm ("Central India, ii 123) says, "that all the Brahmans of Central India, except those who came from the Dekkhan, are classed by the Mahratta conquerers as Rangri or barbarous." At vol. ii. p. 191, he says, "The language taught in Central India is a dialect of the Hindi, termed Rangri, which prevails from Bundelkhand to the Indus." Again at p. 304, he observes, the Rajputs say the word is derived from Ran, signifying battle, and Garh, a fort an epithet asserted to have been given them by one of the Kings of Delhi expressive of their bravery, but the Mahrattas says that the derivation is from Ran, a forest, and Gwri, a barbarian.

The probabilities are in favour of the sanskrit—battle so that Rangur would mean "a warrior",—E. in the Marathi dictionary of Molesworth it is said is used freely in abuse of persons or speech judged to be rule and uncouth.—B.

\*This is the account they themselves give of their origin, but as Kanhaur and Nigana are occupied by Power Rangers, and Kan-k-awria can scarcely be derived from Kan-h-aur. I do not place much confidence in their assertion. Popular legend however, are not easily disproved.

This is not the sign of the instrumental, but a local mark of the dative which is used in several other dialects, as, for instance, in Nepalese, under the form or for the same case.—B.



grandmother's Got; and no intermarriages take place between distant clans. Thus those of the Doab and Bighoto hold little or no personal intercourse, and each declares the other an inferior stock.

Ahirs conform to the customs of Gujars and Jats in respect to the marriage of elder brothers' widows, wherever they are much intermixed, as in the Delhi territory; but the Ahirs of the Central Doab forswear all connexion with those tribes, which they consider of an inferior grade: but as each of these tribes, as well as the Ahir,... claims the superiority, it is not easy to settle their comparative rank, and the difficulty is increased, with regard to the latter, by the close similarity of name. In the Delhi territory, the Ahirs eat, drink, and smoke, in common, not only with Jats and Gujars, but also, under a few restrictions, with Rajputs.\* In other places, Rajputs would indignantly repudiate all connection with Ahirs.

Besides the families above-mentioned, names are also given according to the place of residence. Thus we have the Dhindari of Mewar; the Harianiya of Hariana; the Purbi of the Eastward; the Birjia, of Brij; the Kohkohi of the Bindachal Hills; and the Panjabi of Lahore.

### **Gola,**

An inferior caste, employed in the manufacture of salt. The following contemptuous distich of popular poetry perhaps exalts them above their deserts :

Jat, Gadariya, Gujar Gola.

In charon me hela mela.

"Jat, Gadarya, Gujar, Gola,

These four are all the same sort of people."

### **Gujar,**

A very numerous clan in the N. Western Provinces, formerly notorious for their thieving propensities, but gradually becoming

\*In some of the eastern districts Brahmans will take milk, water, and even food from certain castes of Ahirs, such as the Buiswaria Gwalas. They explain this by saying that the Gwalas are purified by attending on that scared animal, the cow, but it is possible that the alleged origin of the Ahirs from a Brahman father may have something to do with it.—B.

more addicted to habits of peaceful industry. Their importance may be rated by their having given names to the provinces of Guzerat on the western coast of India, and to Gujrat and Gujranwala in the Panjab. They are sometimes considered to be among the aborigines of India, and have been so reckoned by Tod, who somewhat inconsistently declares them also to be a tribe of Rajputs. Sir R. Jenkins says that in the Nagpur Territory they consider themselves to be Rajputs and that, as they are descendants from Lava, Rama's second son, they have an undoubted right to be so considered. In these provinces, however, they do not aspire to so high an origin, contenting themselves generally by saying their ancestors on the male side were Rajputs, who had united themselves with women of inferior lineage. Thus the Rawal Gujars of Panipat say that they are descended from a khokhar Rajput (a clan which has been considered to be the same as the notorious Ghakkat); the Chhokar from Jadon; the Chamayin from a Tuar; the Kalsian of Kairana, and the Mavi, from a Chauhan; the Pilwan from a Pundir; the Adhana from a Bedgular and the Bhatti from Raja Kansal, a Bhatti Rajput from Jaisalmer.

The Gujars are spread all over the Delhi Territory, the Upper Doab, and Upper Rohilkhand, and enumerate eighty-four different tribes.\* In Delhi, the chief tribes are the Chamayin, Khatana, Khare, Barsoi, Chhokar and Rawal. In the Doab,—Sukal, Baisali, Mavi, Rathi, Bhatti, Kasauni, Balesar, Dode, Jindhar, Pilwan, Batar, Adhana, Checha, Kalsian, Ramayan, Nagri, Chhotkana, Badkana, Kasana, Rausa, Khubar, Mundan, Kadahan, Tauhar, Gors, and Kanana. In Rohilkhand,—Batar, Khubar, Khare, Jatili, Motla, Suradna, Purbar, Jindhar, Mahainsi, and Kasane. All these tribes intermarry on terms of equality, the prohibited Gots being only those of the father, mother, and paternal and maternal grandmother.

A great part of the district of Saharanpur was called Gujrat during the last century. By the Gujars themselves it was said to

\*In a pencil note the author quotes a Lt. Robinson as stating that Musulman Gujars are found in Chach Hazara, on the Indus, in Swat, Yusufzai, and on Mahaban; also in Bonair. They are all zamindars, and state that they came from the Province of Guzerat, by way of Vazirabad, in the Punjab. They do not intermarry much with other tribes.—E. add.

consist of three parts, and the division is not only known amongst them to this day, but is usually adopted in ordinary converse. The Khadar, or tract which extends from the upland as far as the Ganges, was called Ghar. From the upland to the Juman, running along the skirts of the town of Saharanpur, and maintaining a high name for productiveness, was called Rutola. Almost all the rest of the district, from the Ganges to the Juman, was called Gujrat proper; the small paragana of Kata only excepted. Gujrat extended down to Kairanah and Jhinjanah, and included Gahgoh, Lakhanauti, Nanauta, and Titron. A part of this tract, tenanted by Khubars, was known also as Badanon, a name affixed by themselves, in order to feed their vanity of being reputed men either of lofty stature, or eminent in war or council. Their common estimate of 125,000 subordinate villages within Gujrat must vanish when it comes to be examined. Three thousand is the utmost they could have possessed. They might perhaps have doubled that, had they included the tract they called Taliayin, which extended from Hastinapur and Baisuma, in a semicircle to south of Mirut, up to Ragput. The Gujars of this tract were rather despised, chiefly because they shaved, and did not live in such a lordly fashion. The tract opposite to Delhi, from Loni to Kasnah, was called Bhatner, from the prevalence of the Bhatti Gujars.

Gujars are rarely found to the eastward of Aligarh in any numbers; but crossing the Juman, we find them in Kunch and the northern parts of Bundelkhand, and the independent state of Sampter is ruled by a Gujar chief. There are many also near the Chambal and the Narbadda. The Gujars, like the Jats, all state that they came from the west country into these parts. Many have been converted to the Mahomedan religion. Upon conversion they are generally styled Thatthar by their brethren of the ancient faith.\*—E.

Gujars are also found in large quantities as far west as the Indus. Those in the Panjab are all Musulmans. As to their origin, the most probable story is that which makes them a cross

\*This is probably only a local term in Panipat.—E—add.

between Rajputs and Ahirs.\* Their habits are more pastoral than agriculture; and I have heard their name derived from gau, a cow, and char (of charna), to graze. I do not accord much credit to this derivation, but it is remarkable that the province of Guzerat, which seems to have been their first abode, lies between the Rajput province of Malwa, etc., and Sindh, where the Abhiri, who are supposed to be the Ahirs, formerly lived. That they are aborigines is clearly disproved by their fine manly Aryan type, in which they closely resemble the Jats, who are constantly found as their neighbours. Gujarat in the Chaj Doab, Gujaranwala in the Rechna, and Gujar Khan in the Sindh Sagar, are named after them; the former is an ancient city which gives name to a district, and was re-built in A.D. 1588 by the Gujars.—B.

\*General Cunningham considers that the Gujars are the same as the Tochari, alias Yuchi, alias Kushan, alias Kaspiroi, alias Thogaril, alias Kueishwang, alias Korson, Korsea, Khoransu, or Korano. This remarkable tribe were, it would seem, originally Tartars, but by a series of events, related apparently by Chinese, Muhammadan, and Greek historians, they were led to give their name to Khorasan; also to Gurjjara-rashtra, the modern Guzerat. It is sufficient merely to mention these speculations; those who care to read them will find them at pp. 25-29 of Part IV of the General's report.—B.



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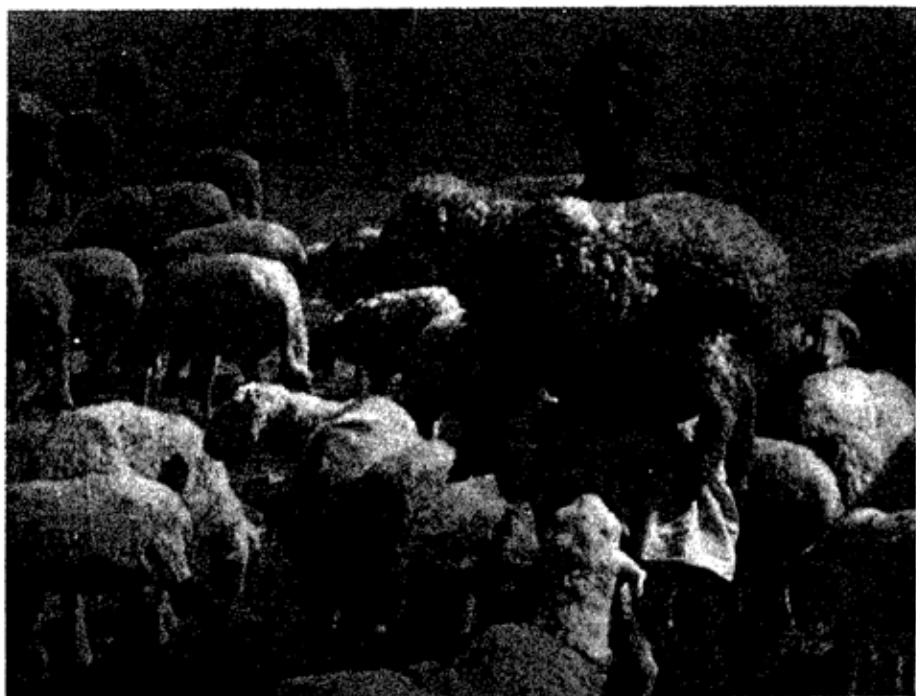
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1. A Gaddi nomad



2. A Shepherd of Madhya Pradesh



3. A Smiling Boy



4. A Rabari Tribal



5. The Beauty of Brahmaur



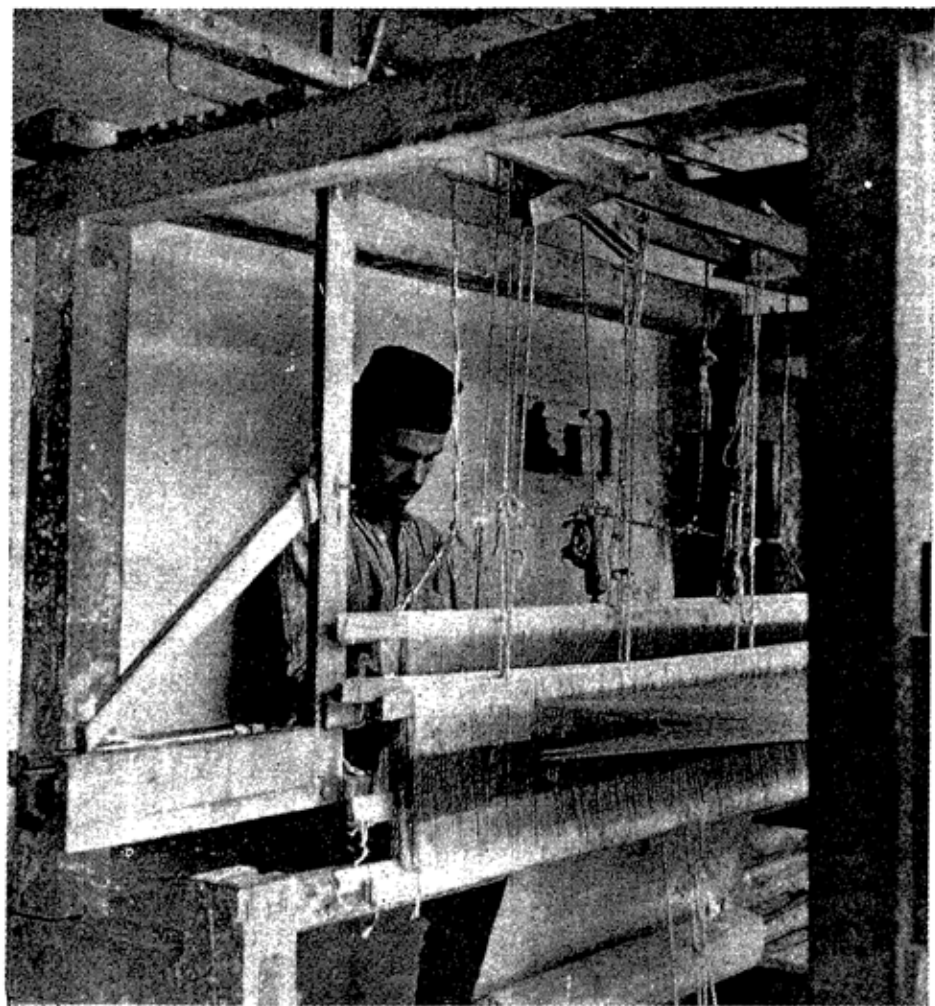
6. Tribal women carrying water pots



7. A Shepherd of Uttar Pradesh



8. The Shepherds of Bihar



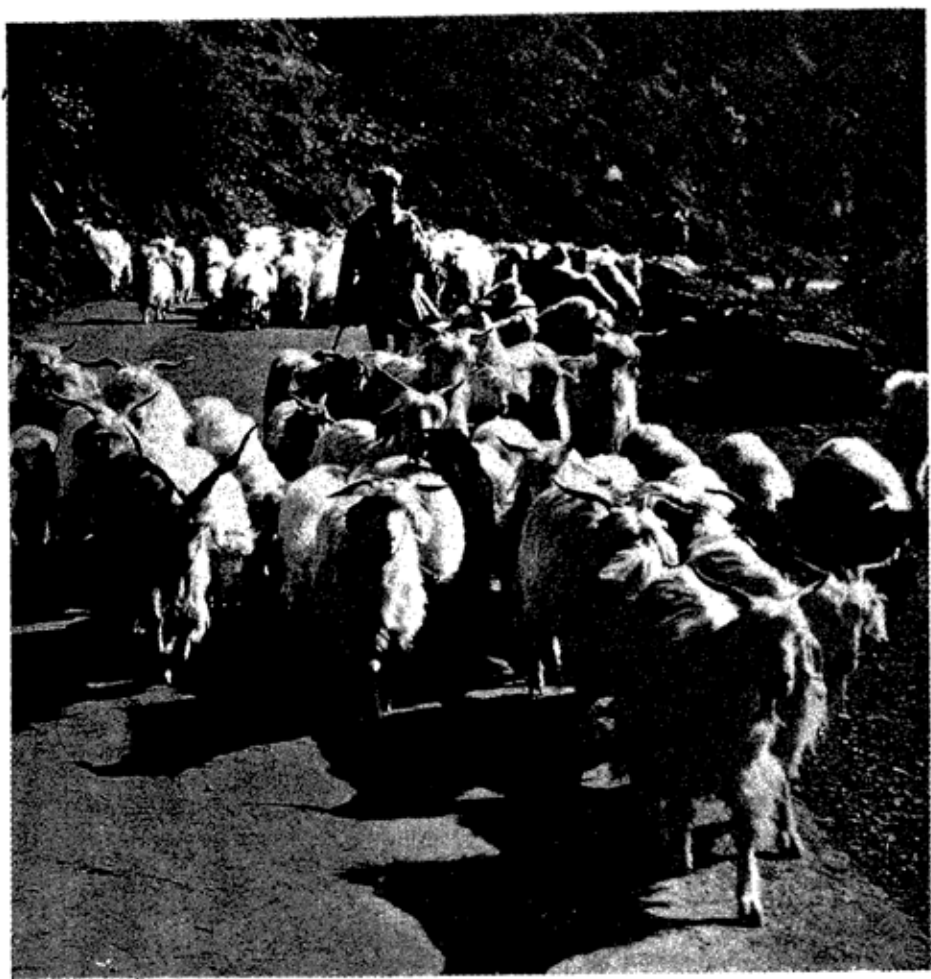
9. Weaving

11. A Gaddi belle



10. A Shepherd woman  
of Saurashtra





12. A shepherd of Himalayas



13. Ready to go in the fields



14. Smile despite difficulties



15. Preparing butter



16. Maharaja of Vijay Nagar



19. His Highness Siyajirao with family



18. Symbol of Karoli Kings showing  
Sheep and Lion



17. Maharaja Pratap Singh



21. A South Indian King



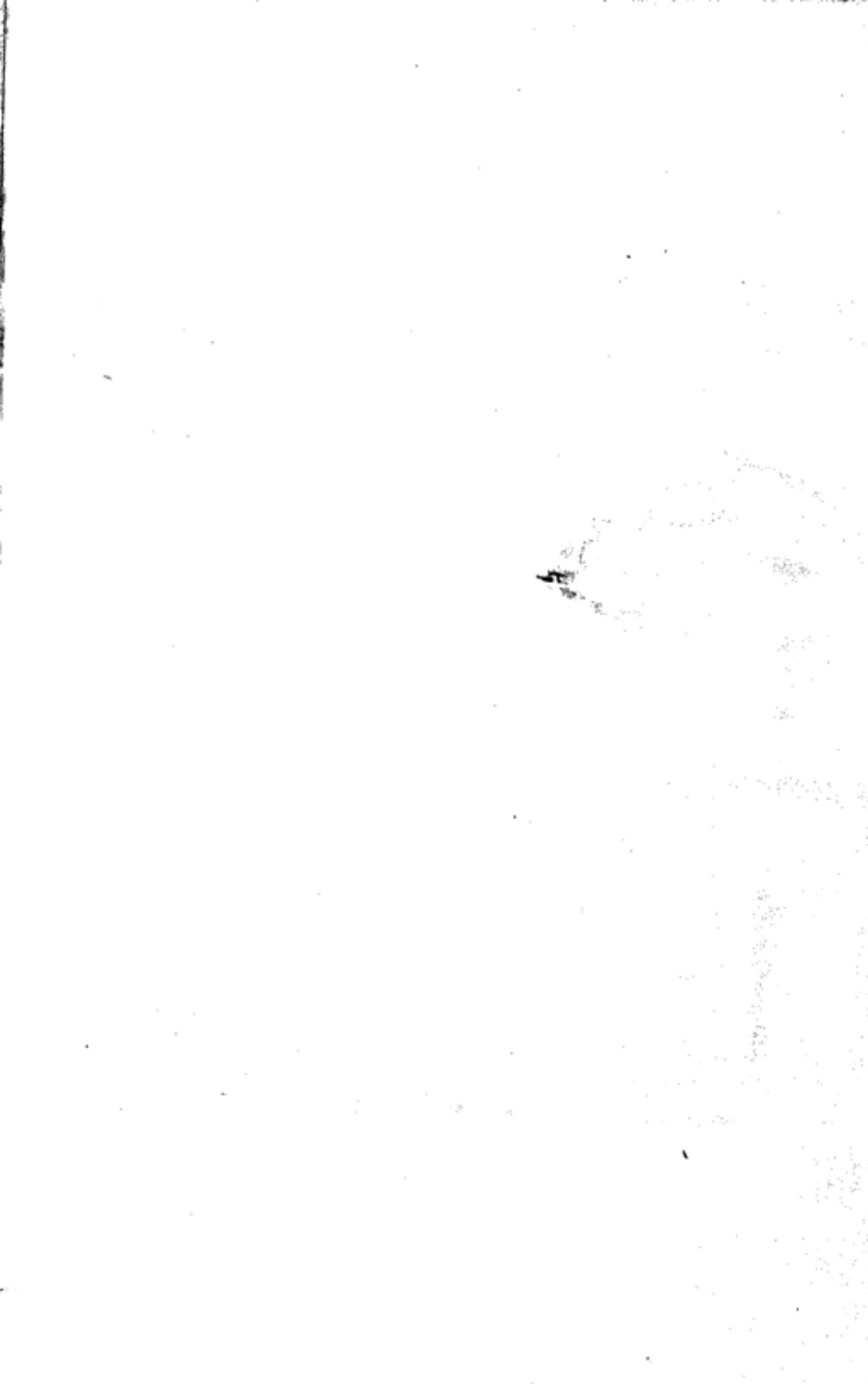
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